

Key Stage Two English

Set A Reading Booklet

This booklet contains:

The Fisherman
Summit Success for Intrepid Becky
Wild Camping



The Fisherman

The fisherman goes out at dawn
When every one's abed,
And from the bottom of the sea
Draws up his daily bread.

His life is strange; half on the shore
And half upon the sea —
Not quite a fish, and yet not quite
The same as you and me.

The fisherman has curious eyes;
They make you feel so queer,
As if they had seen many things
Of wonder and of fear.

They're like the sea on foggy days, —
Not gray, nor yet quite blue;
They're like the wondrous tales he tells
Not quite — yet maybe — true.

He knows so much of boats and tides,
Of winds and clouds and sky!
But when I tell of city things,
He sniffs and shuts one eye!

by Abbie Farwell Brown

Summit Success for Intrepid Becky

A librarian from Braunston has raised thousands of pounds for charity by successfully climbing Mont Blanc — the highest mountain in Western Europe.

By Gemma Ibbotson

Located in the Alps mountain range, Mont Blanc stands 4810m high and lies on the border between France and Italy. The permanently snow-covered summit gives the mountain its name, which means ‘White Mountain’ in English. Those tough enough to reach the top are greeted not only by breath-taking views, but also by dangerously low temperatures and ferocious winds.

Becky Arnott, 32, has recently returned from conquering this majestic mountain, and her feat has raised an astonishing £14 000 for charity. Becky has always enjoyed family



Becky on her way up to the summit of Mont Blanc, displaying her new skill with ice axes. Despite the difficulty of the ascent, she still had a smile on her face.

walks in the countryside, but climbing Mont Blanc was significantly harder than anything she had ever done previously. Before preparing for the challenge, she had never climbed higher than 1000m and she had never been on a mountain in the snow.

“My feet felt as though they were stuck in cement and I began to doubt that I could reach the top.”

“I knew that it wasn’t going to be a walk in the park,” joked Becky. “I did some training on snowy mountains in Scotland and I hiked up two smaller mountains in the Alps to

get used to the kinds of conditions I would face on Mont Blanc. I also had to learn how to walk on snow using crampons — spikes that fit to the bottom of your shoes — and an ice axe. This was tricky at first because it was much more technical than anything I was used to.” Training complete, Becky set off on the gruelling two-day climb in early April.

“Becky had prepared well for the challenge, but even experienced mountaineers can find Mont Blanc a real struggle,” explained Jean-Claude Durand, a mountain guide who accompanied Becky. “The climb is demanding and dangerous, and bad weather can turn a safe situation on its head within minutes. The high altitude is also a major problem because the higher you climb, the less oxygen there is, making it more difficult to breathe. Many people feel sick or dizzy as a result.”

“I did find the altitude the hardest bit,” agrees Becky. “I spent some time high in the mountains to let my body get accustomed to it, but all that climbing was tough going. As we tackled the final ascent, my lungs were burning, my feet felt as though they were stuck in cement and I began to doubt that I could reach the top. Thankfully, Jean-Claude kept encouraging me and I was spurred on by remembering the children at Holden Park. I cried tears of joy as we arrived on the summit.”

“Access to the outdoors may reduce the children’s recovery time.”

It is the patients and staff at Holden Park Children’s Hospital who will benefit from Becky’s epic achievement. Becky’s young nephew, Kamal, spent three months there last year and Becky was keen to give something back to the hospital. “Kamal received brilliant care at Holden Park and thanks to everyone there, he made a full recovery.”



It’s easy to see how Mont Blanc (the ‘White Mountain’) gets its name. The beautiful summit is permanently covered in snow.

“I was speaking to one of the nurses about wanting to help the hospital, and he mentioned that they were trying to raise some money to create a new garden space. That was the spark of inspiration for climbing Mont Blanc.”

The staff at Holden Park are understandably delighted — not least because this is one of the largest amounts of money ever raised for the hospital by one person. In the garden which the money will help to create, the children will be able to play, sit outdoors and relax and even help the staff do some gardening to grow fruit, vegetables and flowers. Staff are hopeful that access to the outdoors may reduce the children’s recovery time, as well as make their stay more enjoyable. “We’ll be able to offer more activities to help the children build up strength and distract them from their problems,” said a nurse from Holden Park.

“I never dreamt I’d raise so much money!”

Becky was taken aback by the amount of money that was donated. “People gave so generously,” she said. “I’d like to thank everyone who donated — I never dreamt I’d raise so much money!”

Becky’s challenging ascent certainly seems to have caught people’s attention. “I can’t even imagine trying to climb such a big mountain, so Becky’s willingness to do this for charity made a real

impression on me,” said Patricia Ohuruogo, a local councillor who donated to Becky’s cause. “I was thrilled when I heard that she had been successful, and it’s wonderful that she has managed to raise so much money.”

Following her fundraising success, Becky is planning to attempt more challenges to support Holden Park in the future. We wish her all the best in completing her next quest — whatever it may be!

Holden Park needs to raise more money — and you can help.

- Come to the cake sale at the hospital on 24th May from 11am to 2pm.
- Join in the 5km charity fun run around the Holden Park grounds on 15th June from 10am.



If you would like to get involved, contact Holden Park’s Fundraising Manager, Sam Napier.



Wild Camping

It wasn't just spiders. People always presumed that it was just spiders, but Callum was scared of pretty much anything that moved. And now the day he'd been dreading had arrived: the day when creepy-crawlies would replace cushions and bugs would replace beds. He had never been camping before, but just the thought of it left Callum feeling queasy. Why would anyone choose to sleep in the woods rather than in a house?

"All ready, Cal?" shouted his dad enthusiastically. "The sun is shining, the tent is packed and the wilderness awaits us!"

Callum wished his dad wouldn't call it "the wilderness". It was bad enough that they were spending the weekend in the woods, without having to pretend that they were trekking to the Arctic. He slumped into the passenger seat of the car and prepared himself for the hour-long journey, which would probably be spent listening to his dad chattering away, as excited as a rabbit in a carrot field. At least it wasn't raining, he thought desperately, clutching onto the only positive he could think of.

It was his sister's hamster that had done it, almost two years ago. Callum had never really been interested in animals, but after the rest of the family had excitedly cuddled and cooed over the new pet, it was passed to him. He'd hoped to hold it for a few seconds, give it a stroke and then give it back, but the furry critter had other ideas. It scuttled up his arm, ran across his chest and jumped down into his lap. Panicked by the hamster's frenzied movement, Callum tried to grab it, but it responded by biting him hard on the finger. The bite only hurt a little bit, but Callum had vowed that he would never hold an animal ever again.



The first fat droplets of rain splashed onto the forest floor just as Callum and his dad got the campfire going. “Better get these sausages on,” chirped Dad.

Callum’s face was as colourless as the slate grey sky, and every rustling leaf, crunching twig and cooing pigeon made him flinch. The towering regiments of trees that surrounded their camp appeared cold and threatening to Callum, and he felt a long way from home. “There’s nothing out here that will bother us, Cal. It’s great being surrounded by nature.”

Callum wanted to believe him, but he was suspicious of the forest’s hidden army of birds, bugs and beasts and was keen to avoid meeting them. Even watching the dancing flames of the campfire and eating the sausages – normally his favourite – brought him little comfort.

“What was that?” exclaimed Callum. Something had sped behind the campfire and disappeared into the undergrowth. Squirrel? Fox? Wolf? His mind flicked through an imaginary picture book of woodland creatures. Whatever it was, he hadn’t seen it properly and couldn’t tell how big it was – it had just been a flash of grey in the dusky light. “Dad, did you see that?”

“I didn’t see anything,” replied Dad. “It was probably just a spark from the fire.” But Callum knew he’d seen something, and he didn’t like the fact that it had been so close.

It was getting dark now, and as night fell the natural orchestra of the forest struck up a different, more sinister tune. The pattering of the rain had eventually subsided, leaving behind only the sounds of the forest which swirled around Callum. Another noise: a persistent rustling. This time much closer.



“Dad, can you hear that?” asked Callum. “It sounds as though there is something in the tent.”

Dad looked up from his book and chuckled gently, “It’s just the wind blowing some leaves around – don’t worry, Cal.”

Callum smiled nervously and tried to ignore the noise, but he knew it was there. What was it? Rat? Badger? Snake?

Dad let out a loud, exaggerated yawn and suggested that they head to bed for the night. Callum was sure that he wouldn’t sleep, but there were no obvious signs of any unwelcome visitors in the tent. He unrolled his sleeping bag, tucked himself inside it and listened in the darkness to the clumsy rustling of his dad doing the same.

“Night, Cal,” said Dad.

“Night, Dad,” replied Cal.

“Get out! Hey! Ouch!” Panic pulsed through Callum’s veins as he was startled by his dad’s frantic shouting. “Arrgghh! No! Ow!” Bewildered, Callum stretched his trembling hand across to where his bedside lamp would be, but found only the smooth canvas of the tent lining and quickly remembered where he was. He dived out of his sleeping bag to find his torch, accompanied by a soundtrack of his dad’s grunting and a shrill squealing that he presumed was coming from his dad’s attacker. After what felt like hours of scrabbling around, Callum finally recovered his torch and quickly shone it across the tent, fearful of what its yellowish light would reveal.



Now illuminated was his dad, wrestling with his sleeping bag as if it were a slippery sea monster. It took a few more seconds for Callum's eyes to fall upon the terrible creature that his dad was trying to discover and defeat. There, sitting next to his dad's inflatable pillow, with panicked wide eyes and twitching ears, was a fluffy grey rabbit. Callum was simultaneously relieved that it was only a rabbit and terrified that the creature was so close, but at that moment he noticed that his dad – still writhing in his sleeping bag – was about to come toppling down on top of it. Without thinking, he thrust his arms forward and grabbed the rabbit.

Thud. Dad and his sleeping bag crashed onto the floor. With a groan, he slowly picked himself up and looked sheepishly towards Callum. To his surprise, he found his son clutching a small grey rabbit. Without saying anything, Callum edged towards the entrance of the tent, opened the zip, and gently ushered the rabbit out into the woods.