

Gone! Margaret Johnson

Aims

- To make students interested in the book.
- To familiarise students with the fantasy genre.

NB You may find that many of the activities described below can be exploited better in your students' own language or mother tongue if you speak it. The mother tongue, if used carefully as a resource, can facilitate your students' progress in English and help them to understand the context of the story, thus preparing them to understand it better when they read it.

Pre-reading Activities

- 1 Tell students that the title of the book is *Gone!* Make sure they realise that the title includes an exclamation mark. Elicit/teach the meaning of 'gone'. Students guess what might be 'gone' in the story. Encourage them to 'think big' with some questions – eg 'Do you think it is some money? An animal from the zoo? Someone famous?' Write their suggestions on the board.
- 2 Write the following types of genres of story in a list on the board: *thriller, adventure story, fantasy, horror, comedy*. Check students understand their meaning by eliciting films or books that are examples of each genre. Students guess what type of story *Gone!* might be.
- 3 Tell students that the genre of *Gone!* is fantasy. Did anyone guess correctly? Elicit more examples of fantasy stories or films.
Possible answers: The Lord of the Rings trilogy, Harry Potter stories.
- 4 Ask students to read Extract 1 and to write down the names of the characters in the extract.
Answers: Tom, his sister Annie and Tom's father. When they have finished, ask students *Who is the main character?*
Answer: Tom.
- 5 Ask students to make a table in their notebooks with the headings: 'Facts about Tom' and 'Things we can guess about Tom'. Then ask students to read Extract 1 again and, in pairs, complete their table. Feedback and check answers.

Suggested answers

Facts about Tom: Tom is twelve. It's his birthday. He has a sister, Annie. His father works at home. Tom has got some birthday money. He wants to go shopping.

Things we can guess about Tom: Tom wants to be with his family on his birthday. He isn't very happy.

- 6 Ask students for their opinions on birthdays – eg *Do you think they are important? What do you normally do on your birthday? Describe your 'perfect birthday'.* Write key vocabulary (eg birthday present, cake, party, etc.) on the board.
- 7 Now ask students what they think Tom's perfect birthday would be and write their suggestions on the board. Remind them that *Gone!* is a fantasy story. Ask *Do you think Tom will have a perfect birthday?* Elicit ideas as to what might go wrong or make Tom's birthday very different to usual.
- 8 Students look at Illustration 1 (Winston Park) and describe what is happening in the park.
Possible answers: Some children are playing football. Parents are playing with their children. A girl is reading.
Elicit the name of a similar place in your town/city. Tell students that Tom takes four photos in this park. Show them Illustration 2 (the cover of the book) and elicit one of the photographs he takes.
Suggested answer: He takes a photo of a football game.
Working in pairs, students guess what the other three photos might be. Write their guesses on the board.
- 9 Ask them if they have ever taken an unusual or important photo. If they could take a photo of anything in the world, what would it be and why?
- 10 Ask students to read Extract 2, and tell them that this extract takes place towards the end of the story. Tell them *Something very important is going to happen in the story*. Remind them once again that *Gone!* is a fantasy story and elicit some guesses – the crazier the better! – about what this might be. (NB Don't tell them what happens at this stage. Wait until they read the book themselves.)

Post-reading Activities _____

- 1 When students finish the book, ask them *What do you think of the ending of the story? Can you think of a better ending?*
- 2 Ask students to write a summary of the story of *Gone!* in the most interesting way they can on a small piece of paper, eg the size of a playing card (about 60 mm x 90 mm). Tell them that they need not worry about their English being perfect. Post the summaries on the wall so students can read them.
- 3 Ask students to imagine that Tom from *Gone!* appears in class. Ask *How do you think he is feeling?* Then tell students to think of some questions to ask Tom. Working in pairs, one student is Tom and the other asks some questions. Now swap roles.
- 4 Say *Imagine the author of Gone! is in the classroom.* Ask *What do you want to say to her? Are there any questions you want to ask her?*

Extract 1

Tom's sister, Annie, comes down from her room. 'Happy birthday, little brother!' she says. 'Twelve today!'

Tom smiles. He likes being twelve.

'Can I give you your birthday present this afternoon?' Annie asks. 'I'm going shopping this morning with my friends.' She goes to the door.

'I want to go shopping,' Tom starts to say, but Annie doesn't hear.

'Enjoy your birthday,' she says. Then she leaves too.

Now Tom's father is the only person at home. Tom finds him at his desk. He's working on his computer. Tom's father works at home, and he works all the time. Tom walks into his father's office and his father turns and looks at him. 'Hello, Tom,' he says. 'What are you going to do with your birthday money?'

'I don't know, Dad,' Tom says. 'Can we go shopping?'

Tom's father is looking at his computer again. 'Not today, Tom,' he says. 'I must finish this work. Where's Annie?'

'She's shopping with her friends,' Tom says.

He knows his father isn't listening. He's reading an email on his computer.

'That's nice,' he says, but he doesn't look at Tom. 'Have a good time!'

Extract 2

Tom leaves the house and walks to his mother's café – Kathy's Coffee Shop.

The café sells food all day. Lots of people go there on Saturdays. Tom can see his mother in the café. She looks hot. There are people at all the tables and they're all waiting for their food.

'Mum's tired,' Tom thinks. 'She works a lot.'

He goes into the café.

His mother sees him.

'Hello, Tom,' she says. 'Why are you here on your birthday?'

'I'm here to help you,' he says.

His mother smiles.

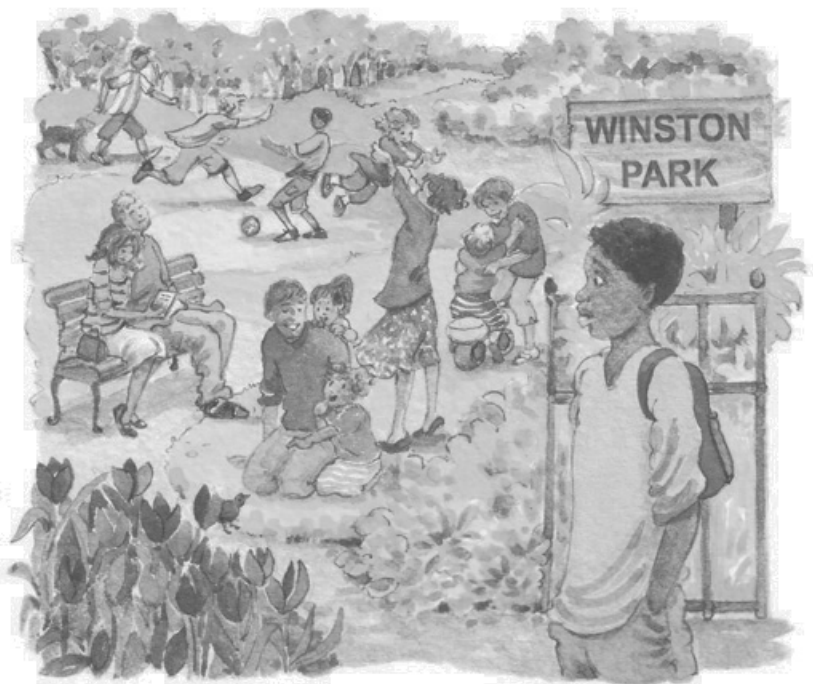
'Oh, thank you, Tom,' she says. 'People want plates and cups for their food and drinks,' she says. 'They're all dirty.'

She takes Tom to the dirty plates and cups in the kitchen.

'Can you wash them for me?' she asks.

My notes

Illustration 1 _____



My notes _____

Illustration 2 _____

