

BEGINNER LEVEL

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The Macmillan Readers provide a choice of enjoyable reading materials for learners of English. The series is published at six levels – Starter, Beginner, Elementary, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate and Upper.

Level Control

Information, structure and vocabulary are controlled to suit the students' ability at each level.

The number of words at each level:

Starter	about 300 basic words
Beginner	about 600 basic words
Elementary	about 1100 basic words
Pre-intermediate	about 1400 basic words
Intermediate	about 1600 basic words
Upper	about 2200 basic words

Answer Keys

An answer key for the *Exercises* section can be found at www.macmillanenglish.com/readers

Audio Download

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A Note About This Story

The time: 1625

The place: France

In 1625, a young man called D'Artagnan comes to Paris. D'Artagnan wants to be a King's musketeer. Musketeers are special soldiers. Some musketeers work for King Louis and some work for Cardinal Richelieu. The King's musketeers do not like the cardinal's musketeers. Sometimes they fight each other.

D'Artagnan is friends with three of the King's musketeers. Their names are Athos, Aramis and Porthos. Monsieur de Treville is the captain of the King's musketeers.

At this time there are problems between England and France. People think there will be a war. Cardinal Richelieu is a powerful man. He is very close to King Louis. The cardinal does not like the English.

D'Artagnan is in love with a pretty young girl called Constance. Constance is Queen Anne's maid.

Queen Anne is from Austria. She is married to King Louis but they are not happy. Anne is secretly in love with an English man – the Duke of Buckingham. The Queen gives the Duke of Buckingham some diamonds. The diamonds were a present from the King to the Queen. Buckingham takes the diamonds back to London. But the cardinal knows about the diamonds. The cardinal wants to stop the Queen and Buckingham's love.

A Note About The Author

Alexandre Dumas was born on 24th July 1802 in Villers-Cotteret, a town in northern France. His father was a soldier in Napoleon's army. His father died when Dumas was four years old. Dumas' mother was poor, so he could not go to school. But Dumas read a lot of books and he liked telling stories.

At the age of twenty, Dumas moved to Paris. He worked for the Duc D'Orleans, who later became King of France. Dumas wrote historical plays and novels. His most famous are *The Three Musketeers*, *The Man in the Iron Mask* and *The Count of Monte Cristo*. People liked his stories because they were very exciting. Dumas became rich and famous. He liked eating and drinking. He also liked beautiful women. Dumas had four children. His oldest son's name was Alexandre. He became a writer too.

In 1851, Dumas moved to Brussels in Belgium. After Belgium, he lived in Russia for two years. His books were very popular in Russia because many Russians spoke French. Dumas was very happy there. Later he moved to Italy and started a newspaper there. Finally, he returned to Paris in 1864. He died on the 5th of December 1870 in Puy in northern France. His body now lies next to Victor Hugo and Voltaire in Paris. Many of his books are now films.

The People in This Story



D'Artagnan



Athos



Aramis



Porthos



Constance



Milady



Cardinal Richelieu



Rochefort



The Duke of Buckingham



Queen Anne



The King



de Winter



Planchet



Monsieur de Treville

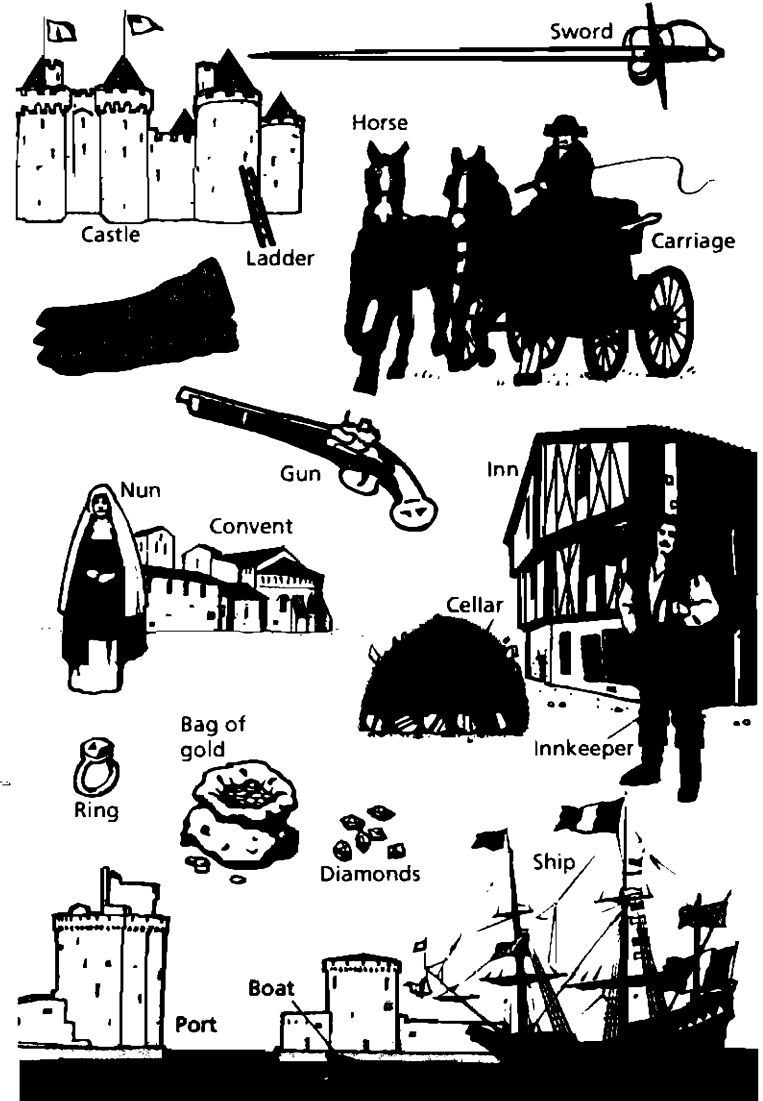


Felton



Grimaud

A Picture Dictionary



1

Diamonds and Gold

It was April 1625. Queen Anne of France was in her bedroom with her maid, Constance. The Queen was very unhappy. The King wanted her to wear some diamonds at a dance. The diamonds were a present to the Queen from the King. The dance was in two weeks' time.

'I cannot wear the diamonds. I gave them to the Duke of Buckingham,' Anne told Constance. 'But now the Duke is in England. The King will be very angry.'

The Queen started to cry. Constance knew the Queen was right. The diamonds were a big problem.

Then Constance had an idea. 'Madam,' she said. 'I know someone who can help you.'

'Really? Who?' asked the Queen.

'I have a friend,' Constance replied. 'His name is D'Artagnan. He is the bravest man in France.'

'Oh Constance! Go and ask him now,' the Queen said. 'I hope he can do it. I will give him a lot of money. But tell him it must be a secret.'

'I will, Madam,' Constance said. She left the palace and ran to D'Artagnan's home. She knocked on the door.

'Hello?' D'Artagnan shouted. 'Who is it?'

'It's me, Constance,' she replied. D'Artagnan opened the door. D'Artagnan was a young man who wanted to be a musketeer in the King's army. He was brave and handsome. He was in love with Constance.

'My darling!' D'Artagnan said. He tried to kiss Constance, but she stopped him. Constance was very pretty and she loved D'Artagnan. But the Queen was in danger. The diamonds were the most important thing now.

'Not now D'Artagnan,' Constance said. 'Please ... you must help me.'

'How can I help you my darling?' D'Artagnan asked. 'You know I will do anything for you.'

'You must keep it a secret,' Constance said.

'Of course I'll keep it a secret, my love,' replied D'Artagnan. 'Please tell me what it is.'

'You must go to England, D'Artagnan.'

'To England?'

'Yes,' Constance replied. 'You must find the Duke of Buckingham. Ask him for the Queen's diamonds. She needs them back.'

'But how can I go to England?' D'Artagnan asked. 'I haven't got any money.'

'Here, take this,' Constance said. She gave him a small bag. The bag was full of gold.

'But remember,' Constance said. 'This is a secret. Don't tell anyone. The King must not know about the diamonds.'



'I promise my darling,' D'Artagnan said.

'You must be careful,' Constance said. 'There are many people who don't like the Queen or Buckingham. They will try to stop you. Please come back alive, my love.'

Constance kissed him quickly, and then she left. D'Artagnan was very happy. Constance loved him and the Queen wanted him to do something important. He had to go to England immediately. But first he had to visit his friends, the three musketeers. Their names were Porthos, Aramis and Athos.

2

The Journey to Calais

Aramis and Porthos were at Athos's house. They were very bored. There were no wars. They did not have much money because there was no fighting.

Then D'Artagnan arrived with his servant, Planchet. He was very excited.

'Hello!' the three men said. 'Why are you so excited?'

'I can't tell you,' D'Artagnan said. 'It's a secret. I've come to say goodbye.'

'Goodbye? Where are you going?' Athos asked.

'I'm going to England,' D'Artagnan replied. 'Someone needs my help. I must get to Calais tonight. But it will be dangerous. There are people who will try to stop me.'

'We must come with you,' Aramis said.

'But I can't tell you the secret,' D'Artagnan said.

'That's not important,' Aramis replied. 'You know the musketeer's motto: "All for one, and one for all!" Four men will be stronger than one.'

'No, Aramis. We can't go,' Porthos said.

'Why not?' Aramis asked.

'Because we haven't got any money,' Porthos said. 'How can we buy horses?'

'But money isn't a problem,' D'Artagnan replied. And he showed his friends the bag of gold.

'Hooray!' the musketeers shouted. 'All for one, and one for all!'

The next morning they left Athos' house. First they bought eight horses. There were four horses for D'Artagnan and the three musketeers. There were four more horses for their servants.



The four friends left Paris at two o'clock in the morning. The next morning they had breakfast at an inn. There was another traveller in the inn. The traveller saw D'Artagnan and his three friends. He saw they were from the King's musketeers. Then the traveller said loudly,

'The cardinal is the best man in France.'

'My friend,' Porthos replied. 'You must be very stupid. The best man in France is the King.'

'Don't call me stupid,' the traveller shouted.

'Then don't say that the cardinal is better than the King,' Porthos replied.

Suddenly, the man and Porthos started fighting. D'Artagnan, Athos and Aramis wanted to help but they were in a hurry. There was not enough time. They decided to leave Porthos at the inn.

'Now we are seven,' D'Artagnan said.

Two hours later they saw some men working on the road. The musketeers tried to pass. Suddenly the men pulled out some guns.



'Give us your money, now!' the men shouted. There was a fight and one of the men shot Aramis in the arm.

D'Artagnan, Athos and Aramis rode away quickly but Aramis was very hurt. Soon they had to stop.

'I can't go to Calais like this,' Aramis said. 'I am bleeding. I must stay here.'

Aramis and Porthos's two servants stayed with Aramis. Now only Athos, D'Artagnan and their servants were

left. That night Athos and D'Artagnan slept at an inn near Amiens.

The next morning, Athos tried to pay the bill. But the innkeeper was not happy.

'This isn't real money,' he said.

Athos was very angry. 'Of course it's real money. I am not a thief!' he shouted.

Suddenly four strange men entered the room. They were big and they did not look friendly. The men moved towards Athos. Athos knew something was wrong. The men wanted to stop Athos and D'Artagnan. They did not want them to go to England!

'Run!' Athos shouted to D'Artagnan. D'Artagnan and Planchet quickly got on their horses and left the inn.

'What will happen to Athos?' Planchet asked.

'I don't know,' D'Artagnan replied. 'But someone doesn't want us to go to England!'

3

The Duke of Buckingham

The next day D'Artagnan and Planchet came to the port of Calais. They went straight to the boats. A man and his servant stood in front of them. The man spoke to the captain of one of the boats.

'I need to go to England,' the man said.

'That's not possible,' the captain replied. 'You cannot leave France. You must have the cardinal's permission.'