

Macmillan Literature Collections

Welcome to the *Macmillan Literature Collections* – a series of advanced-level readers containing original, unsimplified short stories written by famous classic and modern writers. We hope that these stories will help to ease the transition from graded readers to reading authentic novels.

Each collection in the series includes:

Introduction

- an introduction to the short story
- tips for reading authentic texts in English
- a carefully-chosen selection of classic and modern short stories.

The stories

Each story is presented in three parts: the introduction and pre-reading support material; the story; and post-reading activities. Each part includes the following sections:

- *About the author* – in-depth information about the author and their work
- *About the story* – information about the story, including background information about setting and cultural references
- *Summary* – a brief summary of the story that does not give away the ending.

Pre-reading activities

- *Key vocabulary* – a chance to look at some of the more difficult vocabulary related to the main themes and style of the story before reading the story
- *Main themes* – a brief discussion of the main themes, with questions to keep in mind as you read.

The story

You will find numbered footnotes in the stories. These explain cultural and historical references, and key words that you will need to understand the text. Many of these footnotes give definitions of words which are very formal, old-fashioned or rarely used in modern English. You will find more common, useful words and phrases from the stories in the *Glossary* at the end of the book. Words included in the *Glossary* will appear in **bold**.

Post-reading activities

- *Understanding the story* – comprehension questions that will help you make sure you have understood the story
- *Language study* – a section that presents and practises key linguistic and structural features of authentic literary texts (you will find an index of the areas covered at the end of the book)
- *Literary analysis* – discussion questions that guide you to an in-depth appreciation of the story, its structure, its characters and its style.

In addition, at the end of each book there are:

- suggested *Essay questions*
- a comprehensive *Glossary* highlighting useful vocabulary from each story
- an index for the *Language study* section.

How to use these books

You can use these books in whatever way you want. You may want to start from the beginning and work your way through. You may want to pick and choose. The *Contents* page gives a very brief, one-line introduction to each story to help you decide where to start. You may want to learn about the author and the story before you read each one, or you may prefer to read the story first and then find out more about it afterwards. Remember that the stories and exercises can be challenging, so you may want to spend quite a long time studying each one. The most important thing is to enjoy the collection – to enjoy reading, to enjoy the stories and to enjoy the language that has been used to create them.

Answer keys

In many cases you can check your answers in the story by using the page references given. However, an Answer key for all the exercises is available at www.macmillanenglish.com/readers.

Introduction

What is a short story?

A short story is shorter than a novel, but often longer than an article. It tells a story which can usually be read quite quickly. It often concentrates on one, central event; it has a limited number of characters, and takes place within a short space of time.

History of the short story

Stories and storytelling have existed for as long as people have had language. People love, and need, stories. They help us explain and understand the world. Before people could read or write, storytellers travelled from village to village, telling stories.

The first written stories developed from this storytelling tradition. Two of the best known examples of early, written stories in Europe appeared in the 14th century. Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Boccaccio's *Decameron* are both based on the same idea – a group of people who are travelling or living together for a short time, agree to tell each other stories. Their individual short stories are presented together as one long story.

The first modern short stories appeared at the beginning of the 19th century. Early examples of short story collections include the *Fairy Tales* (1824–26) of the Brothers Grimm, and Edgar Allan Poe's *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* (1840). In the late 19th century, printed magazines and journals became very popular and more and more short stories were published. By the 20th century most well-known magazines included short stories in every issue and the publishers paid a lot of money for them. In 1952 Ernest Hemingway's short story, 'The Old Man and the Sea', helped sell more than five million copies of the magazine *Life* in just two days.

The short story today

Today, short stories are often published in collections called anthologies. They are usually grouped according to a particular category – by theme, topic, national origin, time, or author. Some newspapers and magazines continue to print individual stories. Many short stories are first published on the Internet, with authors posting them on special interest websites and in online magazines.

Reading authentic literary texts in English

Reading authentic literary texts can be difficult. They may contain grammatical structures you have not studied, or expressions and sayings you are not familiar with. Unlike graded readers, they have not been written for language students. The words have been chosen to create a particular effect, not because they are easy or difficult. But you do not need to understand every word to understand and enjoy the story. When you are reading in your own language you will often read so quickly that you skip over words, and read for the general effect, rather than the details. Try to do the same when you are reading in English. Remember that stopping to look up every word you don't know slows you down and stops you enjoying the story.

When you are reading authentic short stories, remember:

- It should be a pleasure!
- You should read at your own pace.
- Let the story carry you along – don't worry about looking up every word you don't understand.
- Don't worry about difficult words unless they stop you from understanding the story.
- Try not to use the *Glossary* or a dictionary when you are reading.

You might want to make a note of words to look up later, especially key words that you see several times (see *Using a Dictionary* on page 9 for more tips on looking up and recording new words). But remember, you can always go back again when you have finished the story. That is the beauty of reading short stories – they are short! You can finish one quite quickly, especially if you do not worry about understanding every single word; then you can start again at the beginning and take your time to re-read difficult passages and look up key words.

Preparing yourself for a story

It is always a good idea to prepare yourself, mentally, before starting a story.

- Look at the title. What does it tell you about the story? What do you expect the story to be about?
- If there is a summary, read it. This will help you focus your attention on the story as you read.
- Quickly read the first few paragraphs and answer these questions:
Where is it set?

Keeping a record

When you have looked in your dictionary, decide if the word could be interesting or useful to you. If it is, make a note of it, and write down its definition. Make a note of the sentence where you found it in the story, then write one or two more examples of your own. Only do this for those words you think you will need to use in the future.

Here is an example of how you might record the word *lull*.

'with just murmur enough to lull one to repose'

Lull - to make you feel relaxed enough to go to sleep

e.g. The quiet sound of the waves lulled me to sleep

The mother sang to her baby to lull it to sleep

Literary analysis

The *Literary analysis* section is written to encourage you to consider the stories in more depth. This will help you to appreciate them better and develop your analytical skills. This section is particularly useful for those students who are studying, or intending to study, literature in the medium of English. Each section includes literary terms with which you may or may not be familiar.

Macmillan Readers website

For more help with understanding these literary terms, and to find Answer keys to all the exercises and activities, visit the Macmillan Readers website at www.macmillanenglish.com/readers. There you will also find a wealth of resources to help your language learning in English, from listening exercises to articles on academic and creative writing.

The Voyage

by Katherine Mansfield

About the author

Katherine Mansfield Beauchamp was born in 1888 in Wellington, New Zealand, into a middle-class family. Her father was an important and respected banker and businessman.

Mansfield said she was 'always writing' and her first work was published when she was nine years old. As a child, she went to a school in Karori, a village in the hills outside the capital city of Wellington, later returning to the city itself. But she was a rebellious child who thought New Zealand was too rural, old-fashioned and conservative. In 1903, she travelled to London, where she studied at Queen's College and wrote for the college magazine. A fellow student described her as 'a girl of great vitality, impulsive and strong-willed'.

Mansfield returned to New Zealand in 1906 where she took up music and studied typing and bookkeeping¹. But she was restless and unhappy and in 1908, having persuaded her father to give her a yearly allowance of £100, she moved back to England. She never visited New Zealand again.

In England she went to literary parties but was not very impressed by them. They all seemed rather superficial. 'Pretty rooms and pretty people, pretty coffee, and cigarettes out of a silver tankard ... I was wretched,' she remembered.

In 1909, hurt by the end of an affair with a young violinist, Garnet Trowell, Mansfield made a sudden decision to marry George Bowden, a singing teacher, but she left him a few days after the wedding, returning to her relationship with Trowell. She travelled with his opera company, and became pregnant, but then separated from him again. Mansfield stayed with an old friend, Ida Baker, until her aunt arrived from New Zealand; she took Mansfield to Bavaria in Germany, where she hoped the famous healing waters would calm her down. Mansfield's baby was born dead.

¹ the job of recording an organization's financial accounts

Mansfield stayed in Germany, where she became interested in the work of the Russian writer, Anton Chekhov. Much of his work focused on the psychological conflicts of people's characters and relationships, a feature of Mansfield's own later writing. For now, she wrote satirical stories about German characters. In 1910, when she returned to England, these stories were published in the journal *The New Age*. Later that year, a collection of her stories was published under the title, *In a German Pension*.

Although Mansfield's writing was going well, her health was not. She became ill, and she continued to suffer from poor health for the rest of her life.

In 1911, Mansfield met John Middleton Murry, a Socialist and former literary critic. They married in 1918. Mansfield co-edited and contributed to a series of journals. Until 1914, she published stories in *Rhythm* and *The Blue Review*, and Mansfield and Murray became closely associated with other writers of the day such as D.H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley and Virginia Woolf.

In 1915, Mansfield's younger brother Leslie was killed in the First World War. Mansfield was very upset and unhappy and began to look back to happy memories of her childhood. She wrote *Prelude*, one of her most famous stories, during this period. In the same year, Mansfield discovered she had tuberculosis².

In her last years, Mansfield spent a lot of time in southern France and Switzerland, trying out different treatments for tuberculosis. She felt close to death, and she wrote obsessively about her childhood and about the country of her birth. The stories in her most famous collection, *The Garden Party*, were written at this time. She died on 9th January 1923, near Fontainebleau, France, at the age of 34.

Only three volumes of Mansfield's stories were published during her lifetime, but her influence on the development of the short story is notable. After her death, John Middleton Murry re-edited and published most of her writing.

About the story

The short story *The Voyage* is set in New Zealand. It was first published in the British newspaper *The Sphere* in December 1921. In 1922, it appeared as part of the collection of short stories *The Garden Party*.

2 a serious infectious disease affecting your lungs

It is one of Mansfield's later stories and reflects her preoccupation with the country of her birth and childhood at that time.

Background information

The Picton boat

The story is set in New Zealand in the early years of the 20th century. It describes a journey between the two islands that form New Zealand, North Island and South Island. Picton is situated on the northern tip of South Island. The Picton boat in the story probably left from near Wellington, the capital of North Island and crossed the strait separating the two islands to Picton. It was a journey of a few hours and many passengers would sit up all night for the journey. The Strait between the North and South Islands is known as the Cook Strait. Captain Cook was an 18th century British explorer who was the first European to sail between the North and South Islands. Today, regular ferry services run between Picton and Wellington. Although Cook Strait is only 24 kilometres wide at its narrowest point, the ferry journey covers 70 kilometres. The Strait often experiences rough water and heavy swells (waves) from strong winds, especially from the south.

Mourning

The grandmother and granddaughter who are the main characters of the story are in mourning. They are grieving over the death of the young girl's mother.

It is a custom in many countries, including New Zealand at the time, for members of a family where someone has died to observe a period of mourning. This involves showing their grief for their loved one by dressing in black clothes. Older people often dressed in black for many years after the death of a close family member. At the time of the story, it was not unusual for young children to also follow this custom.

The grandmother wears a black 'ulster' or overcoat. Her black gloves are also mentioned and the black net which she wears over her hair. The granddaughter wears a black coat and skirt, a black blouse, and a hat with a black rose.

Summary

It may help you to know something about what happens in the story before you read it. Don't worry, this summary does **not** tell you how the story ends!

Fenella and her grandmother are going on a journey. They are accompanied to the harbour by Fenella's father to catch the Picton boat to the South Island where Fenella's grandparents live. Fenella's mother has recently died and she is going to stay with her grandparents.

They are taking an overnight boat with a cabin to sleep in. The grandmother has travelled on the boat before, but for Fenella it is the first time. The two head immediately for their cabin and prepare for bed. When they wake up the next morning they have arrived in the harbour in Picton and they make their way to the grandparents' house to be greeted by Fenella's grandfather.

Pre-reading activities

Key vocabulary

This section will help you familiarize yourself with some of the more specific vocabulary used in the story. You may want to use it to help you before you start reading, or as a revision exercise after you have finished the story.

The boat and the harbour

Some specific vocabulary is used to describe both the harbour and the boat.

1 Read the descriptions of the boat and the harbour below and match the words in bold with their definitions.

A The boat they were travelling on was a passenger boat. Passengers could choose to spend the night sitting in a seat in the (1) **saloon** or take a (2) **cabin**. The cabin that Fenella and her grandmother took had two beds. They were (3) **bunk beds**, with a narrow ladder leading up to the top (4) **berth**. It also had a (5) **washstand** and a small (6) **couch**. To board the boat they had to walk up a (7) **gangway** from the (8) **wharf** to one of the upper (9) **decks**. (10) **Stewards and stewardesses** helped the passengers to find their cabins and settle in.

- a) a bed on a train or ship
- b) a big room on a ship where passengers can sit together and talk, play games etc
- c) a flat board or metal structure that can be put in place between a boat and land to let people get off or on the boat
- d) a long, low comfortable seat that two or three people can sit on
- e) a private room on a ship for a passenger to sleep in
- f) a structure built for boats to stop at, at the edge of the land or leading from the land out into the water
- g) a tall table with a bowl of water used in the past for washing your face or hands
- h) the men and women who look after passengers on board the boat
- i) the outside top part of a ship that you can walk on
- j) two small beds that are joined together with one above the other

B The harbour was a busy place, full of movement and sounds. There were (1) **cranes** lifting heavy goods onto the ships and

Main themes

Before you read the story, you may want to think about some of its main themes. The questions will help you think about the story as you are reading it for the first time. There is more discussion of the main themes in the *Literary analysis* section after the story.

Love and loss

Fenella is a little girl whose mother has recently died. Fenella's father is sending her away to live with his parents. The story conveys a mixture of emotions – sadness at the loss of Fenella's mother and Fenella's sadness at having to leave her father, but it is also clear that the family is a close and loving one.

9 As you read the story, think about the relationships between the family members and ask yourself:

- How do Fenella's feelings fluctuate during the story?
- How are her feelings influenced by the reactions of the adults around her?

Childhood and change

The feelings described in the story are largely those of Fenella. She is a young child. She has a loving relationship with her grandma whom she obeys unquestioningly. Despite the sadness she feels, she is young enough to be excited by the new experience of travelling by boat to a place she has never been to before. All the details of the journey and the landscape make a vivid impression on her. The sense of adventure and youthful optimism, despite everything, are vividly conveyed.

10 As you read the story, ask yourself:

- How do Fenella's reactions to the voyage differ from those of her grandma?
- How does the writer convey Fenella's hopes and fears about the future?



The Voyage

by Katherine Mansfield

The Picton boat was due to leave at half-past eleven. It was a beautiful night, mild, starry, only when they got out of the cab³ and started to walk down the Old Wharf that jutted out into the harbour, a faint wind blowing off the water ruffled under Fenella's hat, and she put up her hand to keep it on. It was dark on the Old Wharf, very dark; the wool sheds, the cattle trucks, the cranes standing up so high, the little squat railway engine, all seemed carved out of solid darkness. Here and there on a rounded wood-pile, that was like the **stalk** of a huge black mushroom, there hung a lantern, but it seemed afraid to **unfurl** its timid, **quivering** light in all that blackness; it burned softly, as if for itself.

Fenella's father pushed on with quick, nervous strides. Beside him her grandma bustled along in her crackling black ulster⁴; they went so fast that she had now and again to give an undignified little **skip** to keep up with them. As well as her luggage strapped into a neat sausage, Fenella carried clasped to her her grandma's umbrella, and the handle, which was a swan's head, kept giving her shoulder a sharp little peck as if it too wanted her to hurry... Men, their caps pulled down, their collars turned up, swung by; a few women all muffled scurried along; and one tiny boy, only his little black arms and legs showing out of a white woolly shawl, was **jerked** along angrily between his father and mother; he looked like a baby fly that had fallen into the cream.

Then suddenly, so suddenly that Fenella and her grandma both **leapt**, there sounded from behind the largest woolshed, that had a trail of smoke hanging over it, 'Mia-oo-oo-O-O!'

³ a horse-drawn vehicle hired for public transport. Cab is also used as another name for taxi.

⁴ an overcoat.

'First whistle,' said her father briefly, and at that moment they came in sight of the Picton boat. Lying beside the dark wharf, all **strung**, all **beaded** with round golden lights, the Picton boat looked as if she⁵ was more ready to sail among stars than out into the cold sea. People pressed along the gangway. First went her grandma, then her father, then Fenella. There was a high step down on to the deck, and an old sailor in a jersey standing by gave her his dry, hard hand. They were there; they stepped out of the way of the hurrying people, and standing under a little iron stairway that led to the upper deck they began to say good-bye.

'There, mother, there's your luggage!' said Fenella's father, giving grandma another strapped-up sausage.

'Thank you, Frank.'

'And you've got your cabin tickets safe?'

'Yes, dear.'

'And your other tickets?'

Grandma felt for them inside her glove and showed him the **tips**.

'That's right.'

He sounded stern, but Fenella, eagerly watching him, saw that he looked tired and sad. 'Mia-oo-oo-O-O!' The second whistle blared just above their heads, and a voice like a cry shouted, 'Any more for the gangway?'

'You'll give my love to father,' Fenella saw her father's lips say. And her grandma, very agitated, answered, 'Of course I will, dear. Go now. You'll be left. Go now, Frank. Go now.'

'It's all right, mother. I've got another three minutes.' To her surprise Fenella saw her father take off his hat. He clasped grandma in his arms and pressed her to him. 'God bless you, mother!' she heard him say.

And grandma put her hand, with the black thread glove that was **worn through** on her ring finger, against his cheek, and she sobbed, 'God bless you, my own brave son!'

This was so awful that Fenella quickly turned her back on them, swallowed once, twice, and frowned terribly at a little green star on a mast head. But she had to turn round again; her father was going.

'Good-bye, Fenella. Be a good girl.' His cold, wet moustache brushed her cheek. But Fenella caught hold of the lapels of his coat.

'How long am I going to stay?' she whispered anxiously. He wouldn't look at her. He shook her off gently, and gently said, 'We'll see about that. Here! Where's your hand?' He pressed something into her palm. 'Here's a shilling⁶ in case you should need it.'

A shilling! She must be going away for ever! 'Father!' cried Fenella. But he was gone. He was the last off the ship. The sailors put their shoulders to the gangway. A huge coil of dark rope went flying through the air and fell 'thump' on the wharf. A bell rang; a whistle shrilled. Silently the dark wharf began to slip, to slide, to **edge away** from them. Now there was a rush of water between. Fenella **strained** to see with all her **might**. 'Was that father turning round?' –or waving? –or standing alone? –or walking off by himself? The strip of water grew broader, darker. Now the Picton boat began to swing round steady, pointing out to sea. It was no good looking any longer. There was nothing to be seen but a few lights, the face of the town clock hanging in the air, and more lights, little patches of them, on the dark hills.

The freshening⁷ wind tugged at Fenella's skirts; she went back to her grandma. To her relief grandma seemed no longer sad. She had put the two sausages of luggage one on top of the other, and she was sitting on them, her hands folded, her head a little on one side. There was an intent, bright look on her face. Then Fenella saw that her lips were moving and guessed that she was **praying**. But the old woman gave her a bright nod as if to say the **prayer** was nearly over. She unclasped her hands, sighed,

5 boats are often referred to as "she"

6 a coin used in the past worth 12 pence. For Fenella this would have seemed like a lot of money.

7 adjective used to describe wind: getting colder and stronger