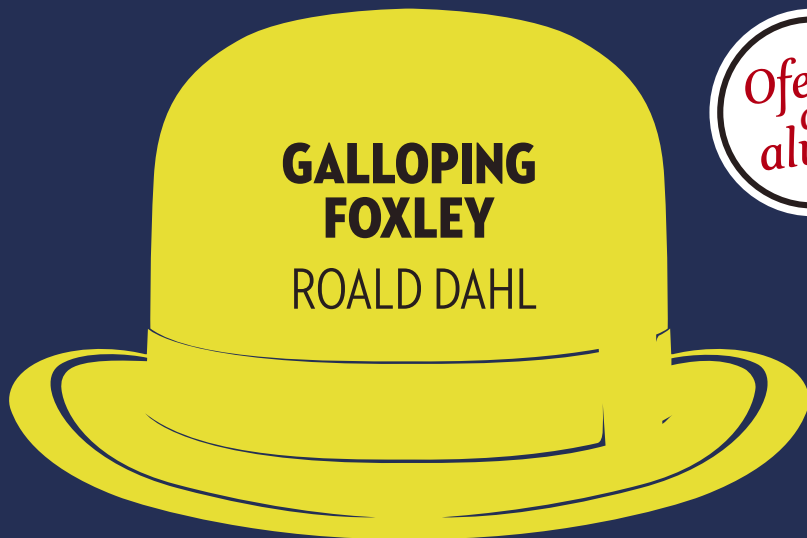




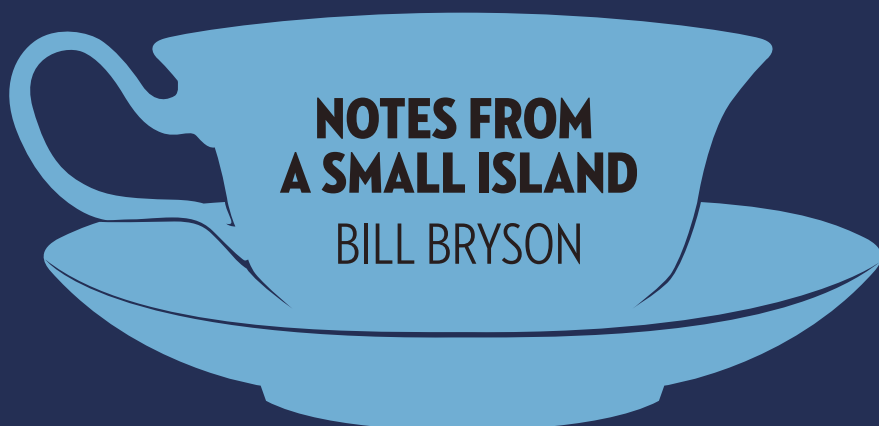
**GALLOPING
FOXLEY**

ROALD DAHL



EXTENSIVE READING
LiNK UP TO YOU!

Inglês
10.º Ano



**NOTES FROM
A SMALL ISLAND**

BILL BRYSON



Texto

LINK UP TO YOU!

Extensive reading

Galloping Foxley

Roald Dahl

Notes from a small island

Bill Bryson

Activities

Carlota Martins

Célia Lopes

Noémia Rodrigues



Texto

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Galloping Foxley

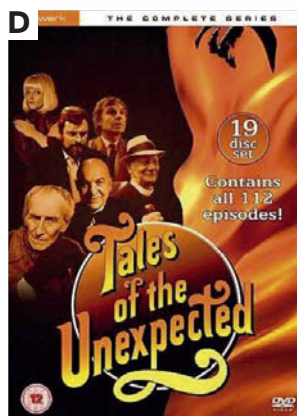
Roald Dahl



Before reading

- These are some of the most famous books or stories written by Roald Dahl that have become popular and successful films.

- Look at the titles and the pictures and check if you have seen any of these films.



- Choose one to tell your class about.

2. Read the biography of Roald Dahl.

Roald Dahl was born in Wales in 1916 to Norwegian parents. When Roald was four years old, his father died, so his mother had to provide for herself and her six children.

At school, he was always homesick. At Repton Public School, the
5 younger boys were often punished by the headmaster and the older
boys called prefects. Roald lays much emphasis on describing the
school-beatups in his books. You could get beaten for small mistakes
like leaving a football sock on the floor, for burning the prefect's toast
at teatime or for forgetting to change into house-shoes at six o'clock.
10 After school, Roald Dahl didn't go to university, but applied for a job at
the Shell company, because he was sure they would send him abroad.
He was sent to East Africa, where he got the adventure he wanted: great
heat, crocodiles, snakes and safaries. When the Second World War
broke out, he went to Nairobi to join the Royal Air Force as a fighter
15 pilot. In 1942, he went to Washington as Assistant Air Attaché.

Roald Dahl with his dogs



Repton School is a school for both day and boarding pupils located in Derbyshire (England) and founded in 1557.



There, he started writing short stories. In 1943, he published his first children's book *The Gremlins* with Walt Disney and in 1945 his first book of short stories appeared in the US. His collections of short stories have been translated into many languages and have been best-sellers all over the world. His books are mostly fantasy, and full of imagination. They are always a little cruel, but never without humour – a thrilling mixture of the grotesque and comic. A frequent motif is that people are not what they appear to be. Roald Dahl didn't only write books for grown-ups, but also for children. About his children's stories he said once: "I make my points by exaggerating wildly. That's the only way to get through to children."

Roald Dahl is perhaps the most popular and best-selling children's book author. However, these stories are so sarcastic and humorous, that also adults appreciate reading them. Roald Dahl died in November 1990. *The Times* called him "one of the most widely read and influential writers of our generation".

www.poemhunter.com/roald-dahl/biography
(Accessed in January 2013)

2.1 Find out:

- a. how long he lived.
- b. the kind of school he went to.
- c. why he chose his first job.
- d. his involvement in the Second World War.
- e. when he started writing.
- f. the characteristics of his writing.
- g. the motif of most his stories.
- h. why adults appreciate his books.



I

Five days a week, for thirty-six years, I have travelled the eight-twelve train to the City. It is never unduly¹ crowded², and it takes me right in to Cannon Street Station, only an eleven and a half minute walk from the door of my office in Austin Friars.

5 I have always liked the process of commuting; every phase of the little journey is a pleasure to me. There is a regularity about it that is agreeable and comforting to a person of habit, and in addition, it serves as a sort of slipway³ along which I am gently but firmly launched⁴ into the waters of daily business routine.

10 Ours is a smallish country station and only nineteen or twenty people gather⁵ there to catch the eight-twelve. We are a group that rarely changes, and when occasionally a new face appears on the platform it causes a certain disclamatory, protestant ripple⁶, like a new bird in a cage of canaries.

But normally, when I arrive in the morning with my usual four minutes to
15 spare, there they all are, these good, solid, steadfast⁷ people, standing in their right places with their right umbrellas and hats and ties and faces and their newspapers under their arms, as unchanged and unchangeable through the years as the furniture in my own living-room, I like that.

Glossary

1 **unduly**: excessivamente

2 **crowded**: lotado

3 **slipway**: rampa

4 **launched**: lançado

5 **gather**: reunir-se

6 **disclamatory ripple**: onda de protestos

7 **steadfast**: firme, sólido



I like also my corner seat by the window and reading *The Times* to the
20 noise and motion of the train. This part of it lasts thirty-two minutes and it
seems to soothe⁸ both my brain and my fretful⁹ old body like a good long
massage, Believe me, there's nothing like routine and regularity for preserving
one's peace of mind. I have now made this morning journey nearly ten
thousand times in all, and I enjoy it more and more every day. Also (irrelevant,
25 but interesting), I have become a sort of clock. I can tell at once if we are
running two, three, or four minutes late, and I never have to look up to know
which station we are stopped at.

The walk at the other end from Cannon Street to my office is neither too
long nor too short – a healthy little perambulation¹⁰ along streets crowded
30 with fellow commuters all proceeding
to their places of work on the same
orderly schedule as myself. It gives me
a sense of assurance to be moving
among these dependable, dignified

Glossary

⁸ **soothe:** acalmar

⁹ **fretful:** agitado

¹⁰ **perambulation:** passeio



35 people who stick to their jobs and don't go gadding about¹¹ all over the world. Their lives, like my own, are regulated nicely by the minute hand of an accurate watch, and very often our paths cross at the same times and places on the street each day.

For example, as I turn the corner into St Swithin's Lane, I invariably come
40 head on with a genteel middle-aged lady who wears silver pince-nez¹² and carries a black brief-case in her hand – a first-rate accountant, I should say, or possibly an executive in the textile industry. When I cross over Threadneedle Street by the traffic lights, nine times out of ten I pass a gentleman who wears a different garden flower in his buttonhole each day. He dresses in black
45 trousers and grey spats and is clearly a punctual and meticulous person, probably a banker, or perhaps a solicitor like myself; and several times in the last twenty-five years, as we have hurried past one another across the street, our eyes have met in a fleeting¹³ glance¹⁴ of mutual approval and respect.

At least half the faces I pass on this little walk are now familiar to me.
50 And good faces they are too, my kind of faces, my kind of people – sound, sedulous¹⁵, businesslike folk with none of that restlessness and glittering eye about them that you see in all these so-called clever types who want to tip the world upside-down with their Labour Governments and socialised medicines and all the rest of it.

55 So you can see that I am, in every sense of the words, a contented commuter or would it be more accurate to say that I was a contented commuter? At the time when I wrote the little autobiographical sketch you have just read – intending to circulate it among the staff of my office as an exhortation¹⁶ and an example – I was giving a perfectly true account of my
60 feelings. But that was a whole week ago, and since then something rather peculiar has happened.

Glossary

¹¹ **gadding about:** deambular

¹² **pince-nez:** monóculo

¹³ **fleeting:** breve

¹⁴ **glance:** olhar

¹⁵ **sedulous:** metuculofo

¹⁶ **exhortation:** persuasão

While reading

What do we know about the main character?

1. Answer the following questions.

- 1.1 How does he go to work?
- 1.2 How long has he been commuting to work?
- 1.3 Where does he work?
- 1.4 What's his job?
- 1.5 What does he so much like about his commuting journey?
- 1.6 What kind of person is he then?
- 1.7 What kind of life does he appreciate?
- 1.8 Why is he writing this story?

What do we know about the station and the journey?

2. Find out information about:

- a. The size and location of the station.
- b. The number of people that catch the train at the station.
- c. How the people are described.
- d. The train's daily time schedule.
- e. How long Perkins' train journey is.
- f. Where he sits on the train.
- g. What he does on the train.
- h. How long the walk it is from the station to his office.

What will happen next?

3. Read the last sentence of the chapter.

"But that was a whole week ago, and since then something rather peculiar has happened." (ll. 60-61)

- 3.1 Translate the sentence.
- 3.2 What do you think might have happened a week ago?

II

As a matter of fact, it started to happen last Tuesday, the very morning that I was carrying the rough draft¹ up to Town in my pocket; and this, to me, was so timely and coincidental that I can only believe it to have been the work of God. God had read my little essay and he had said to himself, "This man Perkins is becoming over-complacent. It is high time I taught him a lesson." I honestly believe that's what happened.



As I say, it was last Tuesday, the Tuesday after Easter, a warm yellow spring morning, and I was striding² on to the platform of our small country station with *The Times* tucked³ under my arm and the draft of "The Contented Commuter" in my pocket, when I immediately became aware that something was wrong. I could actually *feel* that curious little ripple of protest running along the ranks⁴ of my fellow commuters. I stopped and glanced around.

The stranger was standing plumb⁵ in the middle of the platform, feet apart and arms folded, looking for all the world as though he owned the whole place. He was a biggish, thickset⁶ man, and even from behind he somehow managed to convey a powerful impression of arrogance and oil. Very definitely, he was not one of us. He carried a cane instead of an umbrella,

Glossary

¹ **draft:** rascunho

² **striding:** caminhando a passos largos

³ **tucked:** dobrado

⁴ **ranks:** fileiras

⁵ **plumb:** exatamante

⁶ **thickset:** forte

his shoes were brown instead of black, the grey hat was cocked at a ridiculous
 25 angle, and in one way and another there seemed to be an excess of silk and
 polish about his person. More than this I did not care to observe. I walked
 straight past him with my face to the sky, adding, I sincerely hope, a touch
 of real frost to an atmosphere that was already cool.

The train came in. And now, try if you can to imagine my horror when
 30 the new man actually followed me into my own compartment! Nobody had
 done this to me for fifteen years. My colleagues always respect my seniority.
 One of my special little pleasures is to have the place to myself for at least
 one, sometimes two or even three stations. But here, if you please, was this
 fellow, this stranger, straddling⁷ the seat opposite and blowing his nose and
 35 rustling⁸ the *Daily Mail* and lighting a disgusting pipe.

I lowered my *Times* and stole a glance at his face. I suppose he was
 about the same age as me – sixty-two or three – but he had one of those
 unpleasantly handsome, brown, leathery countenances⁹ that you see
 nowadays in advertisements for men's shirts – the lion shooter and the polo
 40 player and the Everest climber and the tropical explorer and the racing
 yachtsman all rolled into one; dark eyebrows, steely eyes, strong white teeth
 clamping the stem of a pipe. Personally, I mistrust all handsome men.
 The superficial pleasures of this life come too easily to them, and they seem
 to walk the world as though they themselves were personally responsible for
 45 their own good looks. I don't mind a *woman* being pretty!

That's different. But in a man, I'm sorry, but somehow or other I find it
 downright offensive. Anyway, here was this one sitting right opposite me
 in the carriage, and I was looking at him over the top of my *Times* when
 suddenly he glanced up and our eyes met.

50 "D'you mind the pipe?" he asked, holding it up in his fingers. That was all
 he said. But the sound of his
 voice had a sudden and
 extraordinary effect upon me. In
 fact, I think I jumped. Then I sort
 55 of froze up and sat staring at him

Glossary

⁷ **straddling**: sentado

⁸ **rustling**: fazer barulho com papel

⁹ **countenance**: face, expressão

for at least a minute before I got a hold of myself and made an answer, "This is a smoker," I said, "so you may do as you please." "I just thought I'd ask." There it was again, that curiously crisp¹⁰, familiar voice, clipping its words and spitting them out very hard and small like a little quick-firing gun
 60 shooting out raspberry seeds. Where had I heard it before? And why did every word seem to strike upon some tiny tender spot far back in my memory? Good heavens, I thought. Pull yourself together. What sort of nonsense is this?

The stranger returned to his paper. I pretended to do the same. But by this
 65 time I was properly put out and I couldn't concentrate at all. Instead, I kept stealing glances at him over the top of the editorial page. It was really an intolerable face, vulgarly, almost lasciviously handsome, with an oily salacious sheen¹¹ all over the skin. But had I or had I not seen it before some time in my life? I began to think I had, because now, even when I looked at it I felt a
 70 peculiar kind of discomfort that I cannot quite describe – something to do with pain and with violence, perhaps even with fear.

We spoke no more during the journey, but you can well imagine that by then my whole routine had been thoroughly upset. My day was ruined; and more than one of my clerks at the office felt the
 75 sharper edge of my tongue, particularly after luncheon when my digestion started acting up on me as well.

The next morning...

Glossary

¹⁰ **crisp**: seca, áspera

¹¹ **salacious sheen**: brilho provocador

While reading

What was the reaction to the stranger at the station?

1. Complete the following sentences.

- a. The Tuesday after Easter there was
- b. The stranger is described as
- c. Perkins's attitude was to
- d. When the train arrived the stranger
- e. While observing the stranger Perkins describes him as
- f. When the stranger exchanges words with him, he realizes that
- g. Perkins's feelings when he looked at the stranger were of

2. Take sentences from the text to describe:

- a. The regular commuters' reaction to the stranger.
- b. The stranger's outfit.
- c. Perkins's reaction to the stranger's voice.

What will happen next?

3. Part II ends with an open sentence:

"The next morning..."

- 3.1 What do you think might have happened the next morning?
- 3.2 Had Perkins really known the stranger somewhere in the past?



There he was again standing in the middle of the platform with his cane and his pipe and his silk scarf and his nauseatingly¹ handsome face. I walked past him and approached a certain Mr Grummitt, a stockbroker who has been commuting with me for over twenty-eight years.

5 I can't say I've ever had an actual conversation with him before – we are rather a reserved lot on our station – but a crisis like this will usually break the ice.

"Grummitt," I whispered. "Who's this bounder²?"

"Search me," Grummitt said, "Pretty unpleasant."

"Very."

10 "Not going to be a regular, I trust."

"Oh God," Grummitt said.

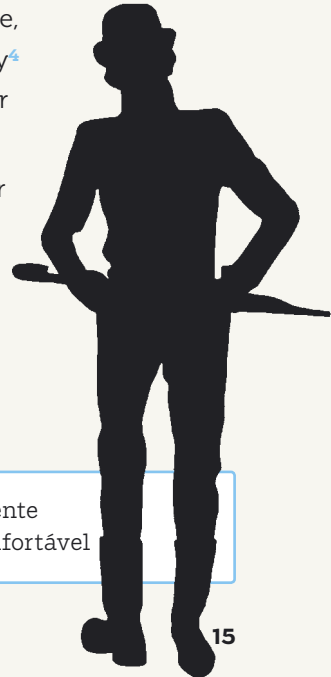
Then the train came in.

This time, to my great relief, the man got into another compartment.

But the following morning I had him with me again.

15 "Well," he said, settling back in the seat directly opposite, "It's a topping³ day." And once again I felt that slow uneasy⁴ stirring of the memory, stronger than ever this time, closer to the surface but not yet quite within my reach.

Then came Friday, the last day of the week, I remember
20 it had rained as I drove to the station, but it was one of those warm sparkling April showers that last only five or six minutes, and when I walked on to the platform, all the umbrellas were rolled up and the sun was shining and there were big white clouds floating in the sky.



Glossary

¹ **nauseatingly:** que causa náuseas

² **bounder:** pessoa desagradável

³ **topping:** excelente

⁴ **uneasy:** desconfortável

25 In spite of this, I felt depressed. There was no pleasure in this journey for me any longer. I knew the stranger would be there. And sure enough, he was, standing with his legs apart just as though he owned the place, and this time swinging his cane casually back and forth through the air.

The cane! That did it! I stopped like I'd been shot.

30 "It's Foxley!" I cried under my breath. "Galloping Foxley! And still swinging his cane!" I stepped closer to get a better look.

I tell you I've never had such a shock in all my life. It was Foxley all right. Bruce Foxley or Galloping Foxley as we used to call him. And the last time I'd seen him, let me see – it was at school and I was no more than twelve
35 or thirteen years old.

At that point the train came in, and heaven help me if he didn't get into my compartment once again. He put his hat and cane up on the rack, then turned and sat down and began lighting his pipe. He glanced up at me through the smoke with those rather small cold eyes and he said, "*Ripping*
40 day, isn't it. Just like summer." There was no mistaking the voice now. It hadn't changed at all. Except that the things I had been used to hearing it say were different.

All right, Perkins," it used to say, " All right, you nasty little boy. I am about to beat you again." How long ago was that? It must be nearly fifty years.

45 Extraordinary, though, how little the features had altered. Still the same arrogant tilt⁵ of the chin, the flaring⁶ nostrils, the contemptuous⁷ staring eyes that were too small and a shade too close together for comfort; still the same habit of thrusting⁸ his face forward at you, impinging on you, pushing you into a corner; and even the hair I could remember – coarse⁹
50 and slightly wavy, with just a trace of oil all over it, like a well-tossed salad.

Glossary

⁵ **tilt:** levantar

⁶ **flaring:** largas

⁷ **contemptuous:** desdenhoso

⁸ **thrusting:** atirar

⁹ **coarse:** áspero

He used to keep a bottle of green hair mixture on the side table in his study – when you have to dust a room you get to know and to hate all the objects in it – and this bottle had the royal coat of arms on the label and the name of a shop in Bond Street, and under that, in small print, it said “By Appointment
55 – Hairdressers To His Majesty King Edward VII,” I can remember that particularly because it seemed so funny that a shop should want to boast about being hairdresser to someone who was practically bald – even a monarch.

And now I watched Foxley settle back in his seat and
60 begin reading the paper. It was a curious sensation, sitting only a yard away from this man who fifty years before had made me so miserable that I had once contemplated suicide. He hadn’t recognised me; there wasn’t much danger of that because of my moustache. I felt fairly
65 sure I was safe and could sit there and watch him all I wanted.



While reading

What are the signs that something is about to happen?

1. Find evidence in the text to state if the sentences are True (T) or False (F).

a. The regular commuters had a close relationship with each other.

T F

b. Perkins is slowly recollecting his memory of the stranger.

T F

c. Perkins's memory is awakened by the stranger's gestures and posture.

T F

2. Answer the following questions.

2.1 What was the weather like on that Friday?

2.2 How was Perkins's mood like?

2.3 Can that mood premonition something good or bad about what is about to happen?

2.4 What's his reaction when he identified the stranger?

2.5 What did that tell us about their former relationship?

2.6 Pick up all the words Perkins used to describe Foxley.

2.7 Are the adjectives used positive or negative in meaning? How does that reveal Perkins's feelings towards Foxley?

2.8 Pick a sentence from the text to show how seriously Foxley had hurt Perkins in the past.

What will happen next?

3. Read the last paragraph of Part III.

3.1 Where might Perkins and Foxley have known each other?

3.2 Discuss what the meaning of the nickname Galloping Foxley may be.

IV

Looking back on it, there seems little doubt that I suffered very badly at the hands of Bruce Foxley my first year in school, and strangely enough, the unwitting¹ cause of it all was my father. I was twelve and a half when I first went off to this fine old public school. That was, let me see, in 1907. My father, who wore a silk topper and morning coat, escorted me to the station, and I can remember how we were standing on the platform among piles of wooden tuck-boxes and trunks and what seemed like thousands of very large boys milling about and talking and shouting at one another, when suddenly somebody who was wanting to get by us gave my father a great push from behind and nearly knocked him off his feet.

My father, who was a small, courteous, dignified person, turned around with surprising speed and seized the culprit by the wrist.

"Don't they teach you better manners than that at this school, young man?" he said.

The boy, at least a head taller than my father, looked down at him with a cold, arrogant-laughing glare, and said nothing.

"It seems to me," my father said, staring back at him, "that an apology would be in order." But the boy just kept on looking down his nose at my father with this funny little arrogant smile at the corners of his mouth and his chin kept coming further and further out.

Glossary

¹ **unwitting**: involuntário



25 "You strike me as being an impudent² and ill-mannered³ boy; my father went on. "And I can only pray that you are an exception in your school. I would not wish for any son of mine to pick up such habits."

At this point, the big boy inclined his head slightly in my direction, and a pair of small, cold, rather close together eyes looked down into mine. I was not
30 particularly frightened at the time; I knew nothing about the power of senior boys over junior boys at public schools; and I can remember that I looked straight back at him in support of my father, whom I adored and respected.

When my father started to say something more, the boy simply turned away and sauntered slowly down the platform into the crowd.

35 Bruce Foxley never forgot this episode; and of course the really unlucky thing about it for me was that when I arrived at school I found myself in the same "house" as him. Even worse than that – I was in his study. He was doing his last year, and he was a prefect⁴ – "a boazer" we called it – and as such he was officially permitted to beat any of the fags⁵ in the house.

40 But being in his study, I automatically became his own particular, personal slave. I was his valet and cook and maid and errand-boy, and it was my duty to see that he never lifted a finger for himself unless absolutely necessary. In no society that I know of in the world is a servant imposed upon to the extent that we wretched⁶ little fags were imposed upon by the boazers at
45 school. In frosty or snowy weather I even had to sit on the seat of the lavatory (which was in an unheated outhouse) every morning after breakfast to warm it before Foxley came along.

I could remember how he used to saunter⁷ across the room in his loose-jointed, elegant way, and if a chair were in his path he would knock it aside

Glossary

² **impudent:** rude

³ **ill-mannered:** mal-educado

⁴ **prefect:** aluno mais velho com autoridade sobre os mais novos

⁵ **fags:** rapazes mais novos numa escola privada

⁶ **wretched:** malvados

⁷ **saunter:** caminhar a passo lento

50 and I would have to run over and pick it up. He wore silk shirts and always had a silk handkerchief tucked up his sleeve, and his shoes were made by someone called Lobb (who also had a royal crest). They were pointed shoes, and it was my duty to rub the leather with a bone for fifteen minutes each day to make it shine.

55 But the worst memories of all had to do with the changing-room.

I could see myself now, a small pale shrimp of a boy standing just inside the door of this huge room in my pyjamas and bedroom slippers and brown camel-hair dressing-gown. A single bright electric bulb was hanging on a flex⁸ from the ceiling, and all around the walls the black and yellow football shirts with their sweaty smell filling the room, and the voice, the clipped, pip-spitting voice was saying. "So which is it to be this time? Six with the dressing-gown on – or four with it off?" I never could bring myself to answer this question. I would simply stand there staring down at the dirty floor-planks, dizzy with fear and unable to think of anything except that this other
60 larger boy would soon start smashing away at me with his long, thin, white stick, slowly, scientifically, skilfully, legally, and with apparent relish, and I would bleed. Five hours earlier, I had failed to get the fire to light in his study. I had spent my pocket money on a box of special firelighters and I had held a newspaper across the chimney opening to make a draught and I had knelt
65 down in front of it and blown my guts out into the bottom of the grate⁹; but the coals would not burn.

"If you're too obstinate to answer," the voice was saying, "then I'll have to decide for you." I wanted desperately to answer because I knew which one I had to choose. It's the first thing you learn when you arrive. Always
75 keep the dressing-gown on and take the extra strokes, otherwise you're almost certain to get cut. Even three with it on is better than one with it off.

Glossary

⁸ **flex:** cabo elétrico

⁹ **grate:** grade da lareira

“Take it off then and get into the far corner and touch your toes. I’m going to give you four.” Slowly I would take it off and lay it on the ledge¹⁰ above the boot-lockers. And slowly I would walk over to the far corner, cold and naked
80 now in my cotton pyjamas, treading softly and seeing everything around me suddenly very bright and flat and far away, like a magic lantern picture, and very big, and very unreal, and sort of swimming through the water in my eyes.

“Go on and touch your toes. Tighter – much tighter than that.” Then he would walk down to the far end of the changing room and I would be
85 watching him upside down between my legs, and he would disappear through a doorway that led down two steps into what we called “the basin-passage”. This was a stone-floored corridor with wash basins along one wall, and beyond it was the bathroom. When Foxley disappeared I knew he was walking down to the far end of the basin-passage.

90 Foxley always did that. Then, in the distance, but echoing loud among the basins and the tiles, I would hear the noise of his shoes on the stone floor as he started galloping forward, and through my legs I would see him leaping up the two steps into the changing-room and come bounding towards me with his face thrust forward and the cane held high in the air.

95 This was the moment when I shut my eyes and waited for the crack and told myself that whatever happened I must not straighten up.

Anyone who has been properly beaten will tell you that the real pain does not come until about eight or ten seconds after the stroke. The stroke itself is merely a loud crack and a sort of blunt thud against your backside, numbing
100 you completely (I’m told a bullet wound does the same). But later on, oh my heavens, it feels as if someone is laying a red hot poker right across your naked buttocks and it is absolutely impossible to prevent yourself from reaching back and clutching it with your fingers.

Glossary

¹⁰ ledge: parapeito



105 Foxley knew all about this time lag, and the slow walk back over a distance that must altogether have been fifteen yards gave each stroke plenty of time to reach the peak of its pain before the next one was delivered.

On the fourth stroke I would invariably straighten up. I couldn't help it. It was an automatic defence reaction from a body that had had as much as
110 it could stand.

"You flinched¹¹," Foxley would say. "That one doesn't count, Go on – down you get." The next time I would remember to grip¹² my ankles.

Afterwards he would watch me as I walked over – very still now and holding my backside – to put on my dressing-gown, but I would always try to
115 keep turned away from him so he couldn't see my face. And when I went out, it would be, "Hey, you! Come back!"

I was in the passage then, and I would stop and turn and stand in the doorway, waiting.

"Come here. Come on, come back here. Now – haven't you forgotten
120 something? All I could think of at that moment was the excruciating burning pain in my behind.

"You strike me as being an impudent and ill-mannered boy," he would say, imitating my father's voice. "Don't they teach you better manners than that at this school?", "Thank... you," I would stammer, "Thank... you... for the beating."
125 And then back up the dark stairs to the dormitory and it became much better then because it was all over and the pain was going and the others were clustering round and treating me with a certain rough sympathy born of having gone through the same thing themselves, many times.

"Hey, Perkins, let's have a look."

130 "How many d'you get?"

Glossary

¹¹ **flinch**: mexer

¹² **grip**: agarrar

"Five, wasn't it? We heard them easily from here."

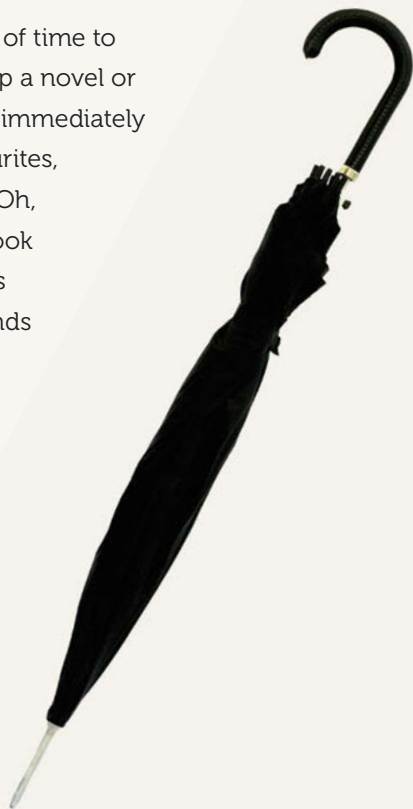
"Come on, man. Let's see the marks." I would take down my pyjamas and stand there while this group of experts solemnly examined the damage.

135 "Rather far apart, aren't they? Not quite up to Foxley's usual standard." "Two of them are close. Actually touching. Look – these two are beauties!" "That low one was a rotten shot." "Did he go right down the basin-passage to start his run?" "You got an extra one for flinching, didn't you?" "By golly, old Foxley's really got it in for *you*, Perkins, "Bleeding a bit too. Better wash it, you know. Then the door would open and Foxley would be there, and everyone would
140 scatter and pretend to be doing his teeth or saying his prayers while I was left standing in the centre of the room with my pants down.

"What's going on here?" Foxley would say, taking a quick look at his own handiwork. "You – Perkins! Put your pyjamas on properly and get into bed." And that was the end of a day.

145 Through the week, I never had a moment of time to myself. If Foxley saw me in the study taking up a novel or perhaps opening my stamp album, he would immediately find something for me to do. One of his favourites, especially when it was raining outside, was, "Oh,
150 Perkins, I think a bunch of wild irises would look rather nice on my desk, don't you?" Wild irises grew only around Orange Ponds. Orange Ponds was two miles down the road and half a mile across the fields.

155 I would get up from my chair, put on my raincoat and my straw hat, take my umbrella – my brolly – and set off on this long and lonely trek. The straw hat had to be worn at all times outdoors, but it
160 was easily destroyed by rain; therefore the brolly was necessary to protect the hat.



On the other hand, you can't keep a brolly over your head while scrambling¹³ about on a woody bank looking for irises, so to save my hat from ruin I would put it on the ground under my brolly while I searched for flowers. In this way,
165 I caught many colds.

But the most dreaded day was Sunday. Sunday was for cleaning the study, and how well I can remember the terror of those mornings, the frantic¹⁴ dusting and scrubbing, and then the waiting for Foxley to come in to inspect.

170 Finished?" he would ask. "I... I think so." Then he would stroll over to the drawer of his desk and take out a single white glove, fitting it slowly on to his right hand, pushing each finger well home, and I would stand there watching and trembling as he moved around the room running his white-gloved forefinger along the picture tops, the skirting¹⁵, the shelves, the window sills,
175 the lamp shades. I never took my eyes off that finger. For me it was an instrument of doom.

Nearly always, it managed to discover some tiny crack that I had overlooked or perhaps hadn't even thought about; and when this happened Foxley would turn slowly around, smiling that dangerous little smile that
180 wasn't a smile, holding up the white finger so that I should see for myself the thin smudge of dust that lay along the side of it. "Well," he would say. "So you're a lazy little boy. Aren't you?" No answer.

"Aren't you?" "I thought I dusted it all." Are you or are you not a nasty, lazy little boy?, "Y-yes." "But your father wouldn't want you to grow up like that,
185 would he? Your father is very particular about manners, is he not?" No answer. "I asked you, is your father particular about manners?" "Perhaps – yes." "Therefore I will be doing him a favour if I punish you, won't I?" "I don't know." "Won't I?" "Y-yes?" "We will meet later then, after prayers, in the changing-room." The rest of the day
190 would be spent in an agony of waiting for the evening to come. Oh my goodness, how it was all coming back to me now.

Glossary

¹³ **scrambling**: trepar

¹⁴ **frantic**: frenético

¹⁵ **skirting**: rodapé



Sunday was also letter-writing
time. "Dear Mummy and Daddy
195 – thank you very much for your
letter. I hope you are both well. I am,
except I have got a cold because
I got caught in the rain but it will
soon be over. Yesterday we played
200 Shrewsbury and beat them 4-2.
I watched and Foxley who you know
is the head of our house scored one of our goals.

Thank you very much for the cake. With love from William." I usually went
to the lavatory to write my letter, or to the boot-hole, or the bathroom – any
205 place out of Foxley's way."

But I had to watch the time. Tea was at four-thirty and Foxley's toast had
to be ready. Every day I had to make toast for Foxley, and on weekdays there
were no fires allowed in the studies, so all the fags, each making toast for his
own studyholder, would have to crowd around the one small fire in the
210 library, jockeying for position with his toasting-fork. Under these conditions,
I still had to see that Foxley's toast was (1) very crisp, (2) not burned at all, (3)
hot and ready exactly on time. To fail in any one of these requirements was
a "beatable offence".

"Hey, you! What's this?"

215 "It's toast."

"Is this really your idea of toast?"

"Well..."

"You're too idle to make it right, aren't you?"

"I try to make it."

220 "You know what they do to an idle horse, Perkins?"

"No."

"Are you a horse?"

"No." "Well – anyway, you're an ass – ha, ha – so I think you qualify. I'll be seeing you later." Oh, the agony of those days. To burn Foxley's toast was a
 225 "beatable offence". So was forgetting to take the mud off Foxley's football boots. So was failing to hang up Foxley's football clothes. So was rolling up Foxley's broom the wrong way round. So was banging the study door when Foxley was working. So was filling Foxley's bath too hot for him. So was not cleaning the buttons properly on Foxley's O.T.C. uniform. So was making
 230 those blue metal-polish smudges on the uniform itself. So was failing to shine the soles of Foxley's shoes. So was leaving Foxley's study untidy at any time. In fact, so far as Foxley was concerned, I was practically a beatable offence myself.

I glanced out of the window. My goodness, we were nearly there. I must
 235 have been dreaming away like this for quite a while, and I hadn't even opened my *Times*. Foxley was still leaning back in the corner seat opposite me reading his *Daily Mail*, and through a cloud of blue smoke from his pipe I could see the top half of his face over the newspaper, the small bright eyes, the corrugated¹⁶ forehead, the wavy, slightly oily hair.

240 Looking at him now, after all that time, was a peculiar and rather exciting experience. I knew he was no longer dangerous, but the old memories were still there and I didn't feel altogether comfortable in his presence. It was something like being inside the cage with a tame¹⁷ tiger.

What nonsense is this? I asked myself. Don't be so stupid. My heavens, if
 245 you wanted to you could go ahead and tell him exactly what you thought of him and he couldn't touch you. Hey – that was an idea! Except that – well – after all, was it worth it? I was too old for that sort of thing now, and I wasn't sure that I really felt much anger towards him anyway. So what should I do? I couldn't sit there staring at him
 250 like an idiot.

At that point, a little impish fancy¹⁸ began to take a hold of me.

Glossary

¹⁶ **corrugated:** enrugada

¹⁷ **tamed:** amestrado

¹⁸ **impish fancy:** vontade maliciosa

While reading

What happened at school?

1. Find information in the text to complete the table below.

The kind of tasks Perkins had to do for Foxley	The kind of punishment	The reasons why he might punish him

What do you think/feel about this episode at school?

2. Answer the following questions.

- 2.1 Did William Perkins's father's reaction trigger Foxley's behaviour or would he have bullied William all the same?
- 2.2 What does William Perkins's submissive reaction to Foxley's aggressions tell us about him as a boy? Would you have reacted the same way?
- 2.3 What would you have done if you were one of Foxley's mates? Explain.
- 2.4 Why didn't William Perkins's tell his parents about what was happening at school?
- 2.5 These events took place in 1907. Do episodes like these still happen today?

What will happen next?

3. Read the last paragraphs of Part IV which takes place on the train.

- 3.1 What's William reasoning about this?
- 3.2 Bearing the last sentence in mind, what do you think he will do next?
- 3.3 What would you do if you were William?

V

What I would like to do, I told myself, would be to lean across and tap him lightly on the knee and tell him who I was. Then I would watch his face. After that, I would begin talking about our schooldays together, making it just loud enough for the other people in the carriage to hear. I would remind him playfully of some of the things he used to do to me, and perhaps even describe the changing-room beatings so as to embarrass him a trifle¹. A bit of teasing² and discomfort wouldn't do him any harm. And it would do me an awful lot of good.

Suddenly he glanced up and caught me staring at him. It was the second time this had happened, and I noticed a flicker³ of irritation in his eyes.

All right, I told myself. Here we go. But keep it pleasant and sociable and polite. It'll be much more effective that way, more embarrassing for him.

So I smiled at him and gave him a courteous little nod. Then, raising my voice, "I said, I do hope you'll excuse me. I'd like to introduce myself." I was leaning forward watching him closely so as not to miss the reaction. My name is Perkins, William Perkins – and I was at Repton in 1907." The others in the carriage were sitting very still, and I could sense that they were all listening and waiting to see what would happen next.

"I'm glad to meet you," he said, lowering the paper to his lap. Mine's Fortescue – Jocelyn Fortescue. Eton, 1916."

Glossary

- ¹ **a trifle:** um bocadinho
- ² **tease:** arrelhar
- ³ **flicker:** ligeira



After reading

How does William want to take revenge?

1. Complete the SUMMARY OF William's intention with words from the text.

William thought that the best thing to do was to **a.** Foxley who he was and **b.** about their **c.** and the **d.** at the changing-room. He would do it in a very **e.** voice so that other people could **f.** This way he would cause some **g.** and **h.** in Foxley, which would make him feel really **i.** So he decided to **j.** himself and told Foxley that his **k.** was William and that he had been in **l.** in 1907. "Foxley" answered that his name was **m.** and he had been in **n.** in 1916.

2. Answer the following questions.

- 2.1 Does William take his revenge on Foxley? Explain.
- 2.2 Do you think that Jocelyn Fortescue really is who he says he is, or is he actually Galloping Foxley trying to hide his identity?
- 2.3 Do you think William's behaviour and personality are the outcome of the years he was bullied? Explain.



Notes from a small island

Bill Bryson



Before reading

1. Look at the map of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland and do some research to complete it with the most important cities.



2. Read the following text which contains a brief synopsis of the book in which you find the excerpts you are about to read.

After nearly two decades in Britain, Bill Bryson made the decision to move back to the States for a while, to let his kids experience life in another country. But before leaving his much-loved home in North Yorkshire, Bryson insisted on taking one last trip around Britain, a sort of valedictory tour of the green and kindly island that had for so long been his home. He journeys from the south of England up to John O'Groat's in Scotland, exploring a myriad of historic and modern cities and landmarks along the way. He does so entirely on public transport.

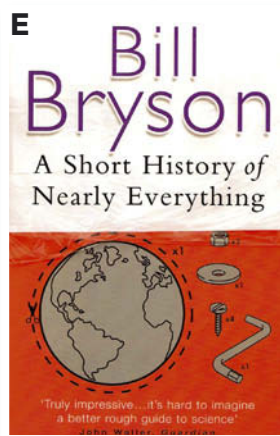
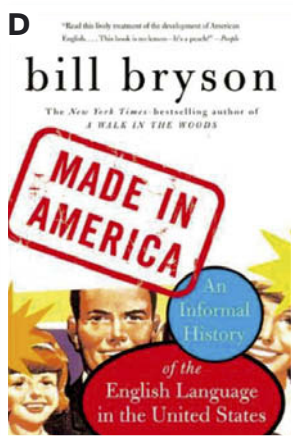
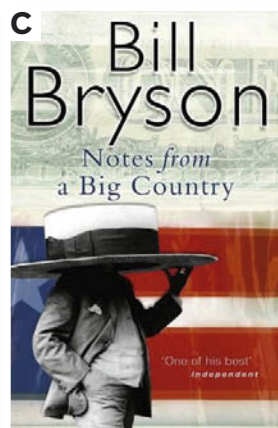
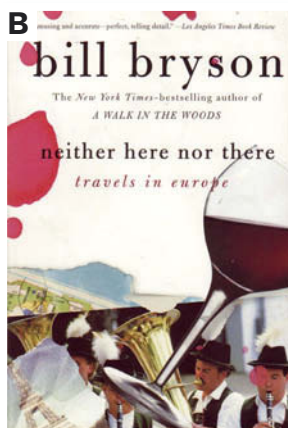
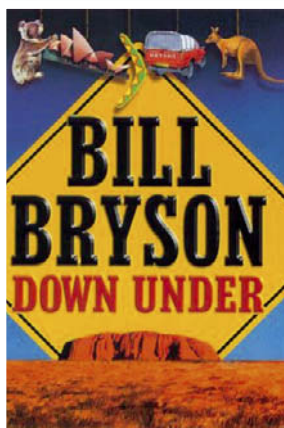
Bill Bryson's *Notes from a Small Island* is a love letter to England; it's a careful look at what makes the people distinctive, the sense of history pervasive, and a hilarious take on modern life.

<http://medievalbookworm.com/reviews/review-notes-from-a-small-island-bill-bryson>
(Accessed in February 2013)

2.1 Now check the text to find out:

- a.** how long Bill Bryson has lived in Britain.
- b.** the place where he lived in Britain.
- c.** why he decided to leave for the USA.
- d.** what he decided to do before leaving Britain.
- e.** how he decided to do it.
- f.** what the book is about.

3. Look at the covers of other books from the same author. Analyse the covers and the title and discuss what they may be about.





Goodness me, but isn't London big? It seems to start about twenty minutes after you leave Dover and just goes on and on, mile after mile of endless grey suburbs with their wandering ranks of terraced houses and stuccoed semis that always look more or less identical from a train, as if they've been squeezed out of a very large version of one of those machines they use to make sausages. How, I always wonder, do all the millions of occupants find their way back to the right boxes each night in such a complex and anonymous sprawl?

I'm sure I couldn't. London remains a vast and exhilarating mystery to me. I lived and worked in or around it for eight years, watched London news on television, read the evening papers, ranged extensively through its streets to attend weddings and retirement parties or go on hare-brained quests for bargains in far-flung breakers' yards, and still I find that there are great fragments of it that I have not just never visited but never heard of. It constantly amazes me to read the *Evening Standard* or chat with an acquaintance and encounter some reference to a district that has managed to elude my ken for twenty-one years. "We've just bought a little place in Fag End, near Tungsten Heath," somebody will say and I'll think, I've never heard of that. How can this possibly be?



20 I had stuck a *London A-Z* in my rucksack and came across it now while searching unsuccessfully for half a Mars bar I was sure was in there. Plucking it out, I idly leafed through its busy pages, as ever amazed and quietly excited to find it peppered with districts, villages, sometimes small swallowed cities whose names, I would swear, had not been there the last time I looked. (...)

25 I flipped to the index, and for want of anything better to do, absorbed myself there. I calculated that there are 45,687 street names in London (give or take), including 21 Gloucester Roads, 32 Mayfields, 35 Cavendishes, 66 Orchards, 74 Victorias, 111 Station Roads or similar, 159 Churches, 25 Avenue Roads, 35 The Avenues, and other multiples without number. There are, however,

30 surprisingly few really interesting sounding places. There are a few streets that sound like medical complaints (Glyceina Avenue, Shingles Lane, Burnfoot Avenue), a few that sound like names on an anatomical chart (Thyrapia and Pendula Roads), a few that sound vaguely unsavoury (Cold Blow Lane, Droop Street, Gutter Lane, Dicey Avenue) and a few that are

35 pleasingly ridiculous (Coldbath Square, Glimpsing Green, Hamshades Close, Cactus Walk, Nutter Lane, The Butts), but there is very little that could be called truly arresting.

I spent half an hour amusing myself in this way, pleased to be entering a metropolis of such dazzling and unknowable complexity, and had the bonus

40 pleasure, when I returned the book to the bag, of finding the half-eaten Mars bar, its leading edge covered in a small festival of lint, which didn't do a great deal for the flavour but did add some useful bulk.

45 Victoria Station was swarming with the usual complement of lost-looking tourists, lurking touts and passed-out drunks. I can't remember the last time I saw anyone at Victoria who looked like

50 he was there to catch a train.

(...)



I took a cab to Hazlitt's Hotel on Frith Street. I like Hazlitt's because it's intentionally obscure – it doesn't even have a sign out front – which puts you in a rare position of strength with your cab driver. Let me say right now that

55 London cab drivers are, without question, the finest in the world. They're trustworthy, safe, generally friendly, always polite. They keep their vehicles spotless inside and out, and they will put themselves to the most extraordinary inconvenience to drop you at the front entrance of your destination. There are really only two odd things about them. One is that they

60 cannot drive more than 200 feet in a straight line. I've never understood this, but no matter where you are or what the driving conditions, every 200 feet a little bell goes off in their heads and they abruptly lunge down a side-street. And when you get to your hotel or railway station or wherever it is you are going, they like to drive you all the way around it at least once so that you

65 can see it from all angles before alighting.



The other distinctive thing about them, and the reasons I like to go to Hazlitt's, is that they cannot bear to admit that they don't know the location of something they feel they ought to know, like a hotel. (...) So what they do instead is probe. They drive for a bit, then glance at you in the mirror and in
70 an over-casual voice say, "Hazlitt's – that's the one on Curzon Street, innit, guv? Opposite the Blue Lion?" But the instant they see a knowing smile of demurral forming on your lips, they hastily say, "No, hang on a minute. I'm thinking of the Hazelbury. Yeah, the Hazelbury. You want Hazlitt's, right?" He'll drive on a bit in a fairly random direction. "That's this side of Shepherd's
75 Bush, innit?" he'll suggest speculatively.

When you tell him that it's on Frith Street, he says, "Yeah, that's the one. Course it is. I know it – modern place, lots of glass.

"Actually, it's an eighteenth-century brick building."

"Course it is. I know it." And he immediately executes a dramatic U-turn,
80 causing a passing cyclist to steer into a lamppost. "Yeah, you had me thinking of the Hazelbury," the driver adds, chuckling as if to say it's a lucky thing he sorted that one out for you, and then lunges down a little side-street off the Strand called Running Sore Lane or Sphinctre Passage, which, like so much else in London, you had never noticed was there before.

85 Hazlitt's is a nice hotel, but the thing I like about it is that it doesn't act like a hotel. It's been there for years, and the staff are friendly – always a novelty in a big city hotel – but they do manage to give the *slight* impression that they haven't been doing this for very long. Tell them that you have a reservation and want to check in and they get a kind of panicked look and
90 begin a perplexed search through drawers for registrations cards and room keys. It's really quite charming. And the delightful girls who clean the rooms – which, let me say, are always spotless and exceedingly comfortable – seldom seem to have what might be called a total command of English, so that when you ask them for a bar of soap or something, you see that they are
95 watching your mouth closely and then, pretty generally, they return after a bit with a hopeful look bearing a pot plant or a commode or something that is manifestly not soap. It's a wonderful place. I wouldn't go anywhere else.

(...)

I do find London exciting. Much as I hate to agree with the tedious old git
100 Samuel Johnson, and despite the pompous imbecility of his famous remark
about when a man is tired of London he is tired of life, I can't dispute it. After
seven years of living in the country in the sort of place where a dead cow
draws a crowd, London can seem a bit dazzling.

I can never understand why Londoners fail to see that they live in the
105 most wonderful city in the world. It is far more beautiful and interesting than
Paris, if you ask me, and more lively than anywhere but New York – and even
New York can't touch it in lots of important ways. It has more history, finer
parks, a livelier and more varied press, better theatres, more numerous
orchestras and museums, leafier squares, safer streets, and more courteous
110 inhabitants than any other large city in the world.

And it has more congenial small things – incidental civilities you might
call them – than any other city I know: cheery red pillar boxes, drivers who
actually stop for you on pedestrian crossings, lovely forgotten churches with
wonderful names like St. Andrew by the Wardrobe and St. Gilles Cripplegate,
115 sudden pockets of quiet like Lincoln's Inn and Red Lion Square, interesting
statues of obscure Victorians in togas, pubs, black cabs, double-decker buses,
helpful policemen, polite notices, people who will stop to help you when you
fall down or drop your shopping, benches everywhere. What other great city
would trouble to put blue plaques on houses to let you know what famous
120 person once lived there or warn you to look left or right before stepping off
the kerb? I'll tell you. None.



I hadn't been back to Wapping since I'd left there in the summer of 1986 and was eager to see it again. I had arranged to meet an old friend and colleague, so I went now to Chancery Lane and caught an Underground train. I do like the Underground. There's something surreal about plunging into the bowels of the earth to catch a train. It's a little world of its own down there, with its own strange winds and weather systems, its own eerie noises and oily smells. Even when you've descended so far into the earth that you've lost your bearings utterly and wouldn't be in the least surprised to pass a troop of blackened miners coming off shift, there's always the rumble and tremble of a train passing somewhere on an unknown line even further below. And it all happens in such orderly quiet: all these thousands of people passing on stairs and escalators, stepping on and off crowded trains, sliding off into the darkness with wobbling heads, and never speaking, like characters from *Night of the Living Dead*.

As I stood on the platform beneath another, fairly recent London civility – namely an electronic board announcing that the next train to Hainault would be arriving in 4 mins



– I turned my attention to the greatest of all civilities: the London Underground Map. What a piece of

35 perfection it is, created in 1931 by a forgotten hero named Harry Beck, an out-of-work draughtsman who realized that when you
40 are underground it doesn't matter where you are. Beck



saw – and what an intuitive stroke this was – that as long as the stations were presented in their right sequence with their interchanges clearly delineated, he could freely distort scale, indeed abandon it altogether.

45 He gave his map the orderly precision of an electrical wiring system, and in so doing created an entirely new, *imaginary* London that has very little to do with the disorderly geography of the city above.

(...)

The best part of Underground travel is that you never actually see the
50 places above you. You have to imagine them. In other cities station names are unimaginative and mundane: Lexington Avenue, Postdammerplatz, Third Street South but in London the names sound sylvan and beckoning: Stamford Brook, Turnham Green, Bromley-by-Bow, Maida Vale, Drayton Park. There isn't a city up there, it's a Jane Austen novel.





And so to Bournemouth. I arrived at five thirty in the evening in a driving rain. Night had fallen heavily and the streets were full of swishing cars, their headlights sweeping through bullets of shiny rain. I'd lived in Bournemouth for two years and thought I knew it reasonably well, but the area around the station had been extensively rebuilt, with new roads and office blocks and one of those befuddling networks of pedestrian subways that compel you to surface every few minutes like a gopher to see where you are.

By the time I reached the East Cliff, a neighbourhood of medium-sized hotels perched high above a black sea, I was soaked through and muttering. The only thing to be said for Bournemouth is that you are certainly spoiled for choice with hotels. Among the many gleaming palaces of comfort that lined every street for blocks around, I selected an establishment on a side-street for no reason other than that I rather liked its sign: neat capitals in pink neon glowing beckoningly through the slicing rain.



I stepped inside, shedding water, and I could see at a glance it was a good choice – clean, nicely old-fashioned, attractively priced at £26 B&B according to a notice on the wall, and with the kind of smothering warmth that makes your glasses steam and brings on sneezing fits. I decanted
20 several ounces of water from my sleeve and asked for a single room for two nights.

“Is it raining out?” the reception girl asked brightly as I filled in the registration card between sneezes and pauses to wipe water from my face with the back of my arm.

25 “No, my ship sank and I had to swim the last seven miles.”

“Oh, yes?” she went on in a manner that made me suspect she was not attending my words closely. “And will you be dining with us tonight, Mr. –” she glanced at my water-smeared card “– Mr. Brylcreem” I considered the alternative – a long slog through stair-roads of rain – and felt inclined to stay in.
30 Besides, between her cheerily bean-sized brain and my smeared scrawl, there was every chance they would charge the meal to another room. I said I’d eat in, accepted a key and drippingly found my way to my room.

Among the many hundreds of things that have come a long way in Britain since 1973, and if you stop to think about it for even a moment, you’ll see that
35 the list is impressively long, few have come further than the average hotel room. Nowadays you get a colour TV, coffee-making tray with a little packet of modestly tasty biscuits, a private bath with fluffy towels, a little basket of cotton-wool balls in rainbow colours, and an array of sachets or little plastic bottles of shampoo, bath gel and moisturizing lotion. My room even had an
40 adequate bedside light and two soft pillows. I was very happy. I ran a deep bath, emptied into it all the gels and moisturizing creams (don’t be alarmed; I’ve studied this closely and can assure you that they are all the same substance), and, as a fiesta of airy bubbles began their slow ascent towards a position some three feet above the top of the bath, returned to the room and
45 slipped easily into the self-absorbed habits of the lone traveller, unpacking my rucksack with deliberative care, draping wet clothes over the radiator, laying out clean ones on the bed with as much fastidiousness as if I were about to

go to my first high-school prom, arranging a travel clock and reading material with exact precision on the bedside table, adjusting the lightning to
50 a level of considered cosiness and retiring, in perky spirits and with a good book, for a long wallow in the sort of luxuriant foam seldom seen outside of Joan Collins movies.

(...)

Afterwards, fancying a bit of an outing, I caught a bus to Christchurch
55 with a view to walking back. I got a seat at the top front of a yellow double-decker. There is something awfully exhilarating about riding on the top of a double-decker. You can see into upstairs windows and peer down on the tops of people's heads at bus stops (and when they come up the stairs a moment later you can look at them with a knowing look that says: "I've just seen the
60 top of your head") and there's the frisson of excitement that comes with careering round a corner or roundabout on the brink of catastrophe. You get an entirely fresh perspective on the world. Towns generally look more handsome from the top deck of a bus, but nowhere more so than Bournemouth. At street level, it's essentially like any other English town – lots
65 of building society offices and chain stores, all with big plate – glass windows – but upstairs you suddenly realize that you are in one of Britain's great Victorian communities.

(...)

One of the charms of the British is that they have so little idea of their own
70 virtues, and nowhere is this more true than with their happiness. You will laugh to hear me say it, but they are the happiest people on earth. Honestly. Watch any two Britons in conversation and see how long it is before they smile or laugh over some joke or pleasantry. It won't be more than a few seconds. I once shared a railway compartment between Dunkirk and Brussels with two
75 French-speaking business men who were obviously old friends or colleagues. They talked genially the whole journey, but not once in two hours did I see either of them raise a flicker of a smile. You could imagine the same thing with Germans or Swiss or Spaniards or even Italians, but with Britons – never.

And the British are so easy to please.

80 It is the most extraordinary thing. They actually like their pleasures small. That is why, I suppose, so many of their treats – teacakes, scones, crumpets, rock cakes, 85 rich tea biscuits, fruit Shrewsburys – are so cautiously flavourful. They are the only people in the world who think of jam and currants as thrilling constituents of a pudding or cake. Offer 90 them something genuinely tempting – a slice of gâteau or a choice of chocolates from a box – and they will nearly always hesitate and begin to worry that it's unwarranted and excessive, as if any 95 pleasure beyond a very modest threshold is vaguely unseemly.

"Oh, I shouldn't really," they say.

"Oh, go on," you prod encouragingly.

"Well, just a small one then," they say and dartingly take a small one and 100 then get a look as if they have just done something *terribly* devilish. All this is completely alien to the American mind. To an American the whole purpose of living, the one constant confirmation of continued existence, is to cram as much sensual pleasure as possible into one's mouth more or less continuously. Gratification, instant and lavish, is a birthright.

(...)





I was heading for Newcastle, by way of York, when I did another impetuous thing. I got off at Durham, intending to poke around the cathedral for an hour or so and fell in love with it instantly in a serious way. Why, it's wonderful – a perfect little city – and I kept thinking: "Why did no one tell me about this?" I know, of course, that it had a fine Norman cathedral but I had no idea that it was so *splendid*. I couldn't believe that not once in twenty years had anyone said to me, "You've never been Durham? Good God, man, you must go at once! Please – take my car." I had read countless travel pieces in Sunday papers about weekends away in York, Canterbury, Norwich, even Lincoln, but I couldn't remember reading a single one about Durham, and when I asked friends about it, I found hardly any who had ever been there. So let me say it now: if you have never been to Durham, go at once. Take my car. It's wonderful.

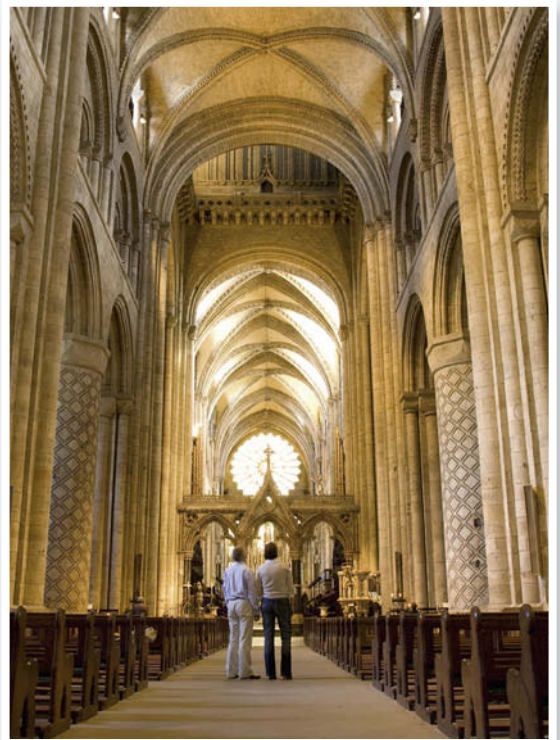
The cathedral, a mountain of reddish-brown stone standing high above a lazy green loop of the River Wear, is, of course, its glory. Everything about it



was perfect – not just its setting and execution but also no less notably, the way it is run today. For a start there was no nagging for money, no “voluntary” admission fee. Outside there was simply a discreet thing announcing that it cost £700,000 a year to maintain the cathedral and that it was now engaged
20 on a £400,000 renovation project on the east wing and that they would very much appreciate any spare money that visitors might give them. Inside, there were two modest collecting boxes and nothing else- no clutter, no nagging notices, no irksome bulletin board or stupid Eisenhower flags, nothing at all to detract from the unutterable soaring majesty of the interior. It was a
25 perfect day to see it. Sun slanted lavishly through the stained-glass windows, highlighting the stone pillars with their sumptuously grooved patterns and spattering the floors with motes of colour. There were even wooden pews.

I’m no judge of these things, but the window at the choir end looked to me at least the equal of the more
30 famous one at York, and this one at least you could see in all its splendour since it wasn’t tucked away in the transept. And the stained-glass window at the other
35 end was even finer. Well, I can’t talk about this without bubbling because it was just so wonderful. As I stood there, one of only a dozen or so visitors, a verger
40 passed and issued a cheery hello. I was charmed by this show of friendliness and captivated to find myself amid such perfection and I unhesitatingly gave Durham
45 my vote for best cathedral on planet Earth.

(...)





And so I went to Edinburgh. Can there anywhere be a more beautiful and beguiling¹ city to arrive at by train early on a crisp, dark November evening? To emerge from the bustling subterranean bowels of Waverly Station and find yourself in the very heart of such a glorious city is a happy experience indeed. I hadn't been to Edinburgh for years and had forgotten just how captivating it can be. Every monument was lit with golden floodlights – the castle and Bank of Scotland headquarters on the hill, the Balmoral Hotel and the Scott Memorial down below- which gave them a certain eerie grandeur. The city was a bustle of end-of-day activity. Buses swept through Princes Street and shop and office workers scurried along the pavement, hastening home to have their haggis and cok-a-leekie soup and indulge in a few swirls or whatever it is Scots do when the sun goes down.

I'd booked a room in the Caledonian Hotel, which was a rash and extravagant thing to do, but it's a terrific building and an Edinburgh institution and I just had to be part of it for one night so I set off for it



Glossary

¹ **beguiling:** atraente e interessante

down Princes Street, past the Gothic rocket ship of the Scott Memorial, unexpectedly exhilarated to find myself among the hurrying throngs and the sight of the castle on its craggy mount outlined against a pale evening sky.

30 To a surprising extent, and far more than in Wales, Edinburgh felt like a different country. The buildings were thin and tall in an un-English fashion, the money was different, even the air and light felt different in some ineffable northern way.

Every bookshop window was full of books about Scotland or by Scottish
35 authors. And of course the voices were different. I walked along, feeling as if I had left England far behind, and then I walked past something familiar and thought in surprise, "Oh, look, they have Marks & Spencer here," as if I were in Reykjavik or Stavanger and oughtn't to expect to find British things. It was most refreshing.

40 I checked into the Caledonian, dumped my things in the room and immediately returned to the streets, eager to be out in the open air and to take in whatever Edinburgh had to offer. (...) I passed the time browsing in the windows of the many tourist shops that stand along it, reflecting on what a lot of things the Scots have given the world – kilts, bagpipes, tam-o'-shanters,
45 tins of oatcakes, bright yellow jumpers with diamond patterns of the sort favoured by Ronnie Corbett, plaster casts of Greyfriars, sacks of haggis – and how little anyone but a Scot would want them.

Let me say right here, flat out, that I have the greatest fondness and admiration for Scotland and her clever, cherry-cheeked people. Did you know
50 that Scotland produces more university students per capita than any other nation in Europe? And it has churned out a rollcall of worthies far out of proportion to its modest size – Stevenson, Watt, Lyell, Lister, Burns, Scott, Conan Doyle, J. M. Barrie, Adam Smith, Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Telford, Lord Kelvin, John Logie Baird, Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Ian McCaskill,
55 to name but a few. Among much else we owe the Scots are whisky, raincoats, rubber wellies, the bicycle pedal, the telephone, tarmac, penicillin... and think how insupportable life would be without those. So, thank you, Scotland.

(...)



(...)

Suddenly, in the space of a moment, I realized what it was that I loved about Britain – which is to say, all of it. Every last bit of it, good and bad – Marmite¹, village fêtes², country lanes, people saying “mustn’t grumble” and “I’m terribly sorry but”, people apologizing to *me* when I conk them with a careless elbow, milk in bottles, beans on toast, haymaking in June, stinging nettles, seaside piers, Ordnance Survey maps, crumpets, hot-water bottles as a necessity, drizzly Sundays – every bit of it.

What a wondrous place this was – crazy, of course, but adorable to the tiniest degree. What other country, after all, could have come up with place names like Tooting Bec and Farleigh Wallop, or a game like cricket that goes on for three days and never seems to start? (...) What other nation in the world could possibly have given us William Shakespeare, pork pies³, Christopher Wren, Windsor Great Park, the Open University and the chocolate digestive biscuit? None, of course.

How easily we lose sight of all this. What an enigma Britain will seem to historians when they look back on the second half of the twentieth century. Here is a country that fought and won a noble war, dismantled a mighty empire in a generally benign and enlightened way, created a far-seeing welfare state – in short, did nearly everything right- and then spent the rest of the century looking on itself as a chronic failure. The fact is that this is still the best place in the world for most things – to post a letter, go for a walk, watch television, buy a book, venture out for a drink, go to a museum, use the bank, get lost, seek help, or stand on a hillside and take in a view.

All of this came to me in the space of a lingering moment. I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again. I like it here. I like it more than I can tell you. And then I turned from the gate and got in the car and knew without doubt that I would be back.

Glossary

- ¹ **marmite:** substância de fermento
- ² **fêtes:** festas
- ³ **pies:** tartes

While reading

Chapter 1 (pages 34-38)

Part 1 (lines 1-51)

1. Match the meaning of the following words in context with the given synonyms or definitions.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. endless (l. 3) | 1. wild; crazy |
| b. semis (l. 4) | 2. went |
| c. sprawl (l. 8) | 3. crowded and hectic |
| d. ranged (l. 11) | 4. a type of house |
| e. hare-brained (l. 12) | 5. knowledge, awareness |
| f. ken (l. 17) | 6. sellers; vendors |
| g. idly (l. 22) | 7. numerous |
| h. peppered (l. 23) | 8. in a slow, lazy way |
| i. swarming (l. 45) | 9. mass; extension |
| j. touts (l. 47) | 10. dotted; sprinkled |

2. Answer the following questions.

- 2.1** How is the author travelling?
- 2.2** Where did he depart for this journey?
- 2.3** Define “suburbs”.
- 2.4** What do we learn about the suburbs of London?
- 2.5** What does the author imply when he tells us “I’ve never heard of that. How can this be possible?”
- 2.6** Explain what the book *London A-Z* is.
- 2.7** Does the author think London has interesting place names? Explain.

Part 2 (lines 52-97)

3. Read the author's description of the London cab drivers and find out:

- a. their characteristics;
- b. the first odd thing about them;
- c. the second odd thing about them.

4. Write down what we know about the Hazlitt's Hotel concerning...

- a. the location.
- b. the type of building.
- c. the staff.
- d. the maids.

Part 3 (lines 98-121)

5. List the adjectives the author uses to express his opinion about London and describe the city.

6. Complete the table below identifying all the positive things the author says we can find in London.

Places	People
Facilities	Objects

7. After reading the whole chapter do the following activities.

- 7.1** Analyse the way the author feels about London and write a short paragraph describing it.
- 7.2** Having read the author's feelings about London, explain his agreement with the statement on line 00 "When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life".
- 7.3** Look for pictures and/or information about all the reference points of the city according to the following.

Pictures	Hazlitt's Hotel • Red pillar boxes • Lincoln's Inn • Red Lion Square • Black cabs • Double-decker buses • Policemen • Blue plaque on a door • Look left or look right signs
Information	Victoria Station • Samuel Johnson.

Chapter 2 (pages 39-40)**1. Find synonyms in the first paragraph for the following words.**

- a.** excited, enthusiastic **c.** strange, creepy
b. insides **d.** bobbing, swaying

2. Explain the following sentences.

- a.** "... you've lost your bearings utterly..." (ll. 7-8)
b. "... what an intuitive stroke this was..." (l. 42)
c. "... the names sound sylvan and beckoning..." (l. 52)
d. "There isn't a city up there, it's a Jane Austen novel." (l. 54)

3. Make a summary of all the things we learn in this chapter about the London Underground map.**4. Look for pictures and/or information about the things/people below.**

Pictures	London Underground Map
Information	The London Underground • Harry Beck • Jane Austen

Chapter 3 (pages 41-44)

Part 1 (lines 1-52)

1. Read the definition of the following words from the text and find a word/ definition in your own language that expresses the same meaning.
 - a. swishing: moving quickly and noisily
 - b. befuddling: confusing
 - c. beckoningly: in a way that attracts you to it
 - d. smothering: impossible to resist
 - e. slog: a walk that involves effort
 - f. drippingly: with drops of water falling all over
 - g. fastidiousness: a lot of care and precision
 - h. perky: cheerful
 - i. wallow: to lie and roll about in water
2. Find evidence in the text for the following ideas.
 - a. The city of Bournemouth didn't look like the author remembered it.
 - b. There are many hotels to choose from in Bournemouth.
 - c. The author was ironical to the reception girl.
 - d. He thinks the girl is not very smart.
 - e. The room was equipped with all the major commodities available in hotels.

Part 2 (lines 53-67)

3. Answer the following questions.
 - 3.1 What does the author mean when he says, "... fancying a bit of an outing" (l. 54)?
 - 3.2 How did he go to Christchurch?
 - 3.3 Pick up a sentence from the text that shows that the author loves riding on the double-decker bus.
 - 3.4 Find three reasons why he loves it.

Part 3 (lines 68-105)**4. Read the text and do the following activities.**

- a.** Find the three main characteristics of British people that make them so charming, according to the author.
- b.** Describe the main difference between British people and American people. Select two sentences from the text that show us that difference.
- c.** Find information or pictures of the following typical British food referred to in the text: *teacakes, scones, crumpets, rock cakes, tea biscuits, fruit Shrewburys, jam, currant*.

Chapter 4 (pages 45-46)**1. Read the first paragraph and answer the following questions.**

- 1.1** Where is the author stopping to see the cathedral?
- 1.2** What is the message the author is trying to convey when he describes his feelings using an imaginary dialogue?

2. Read paragraph two to find out:

- a.** what he is praising when he says “but also no less notably, the way it is run today”. (l. 16)
- b.** what he is simultaneously criticising.

3. Read the whole chapter and fill in the table with information about the cathedral.

	Information
Location	
Building	
Architectural features	

Chapter 5 (pages 47-48)

1. Read the first and second paragraphs and find:
 - a. the words the author uses to describe the city of Edinburgh.
 - b. what the use of those words tells us about the author's feelings about the city.
 - c. some famous places/monuments in Edinburgh.
 - d. where the author is staying and why.
2. Read the third paragraph and explain why the author says that he felt like he was in a different country.
3. Read the rest of the chapter and note down what Scotland has given to the world:

Objects/things	Food/drink
People	Important discoveries/inventions

4. Make small groups and gather pictures and/or information about everything that Scotland has given to the world which is mentioned in the previous exercise. Present your findings to the class.

Chapter 6 (page 49)

1. Complete the table by identifying what the author likes about Britain.

Habits and traditions	Typical objects
Food	Places
People	

2. What does the author criticise about the British attitude towards themselves and their history?
3. The author says Britain is the best place in the world to do a lot of things. Read what is said between lines 21-24 and explain what the author means to praise when he says this.

After reading

1. After reading the excerpts from the book, give a title to each of the chapters and explain your choice.
2. Go through the map on page 32 and choose a city. Imagine that you want to visit it and want to find out everything you can about it. Find information about:
 - Its location;
 - The normal weather;
 - Its monuments and places;
 - How to get there;
 - Its inhabitants;
 - Its customs and/or traditions...
3. Then present your research to the class with pictures and other resources.

Este Caderno é parte integrante do Manual *Link Up To You!*,
10.º ano, não podendo ser vendido separadamente.



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