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Hi, I'm Zadie.
This is my story.
I love sports. Look through the book.
Can you guess my favourite
sports?

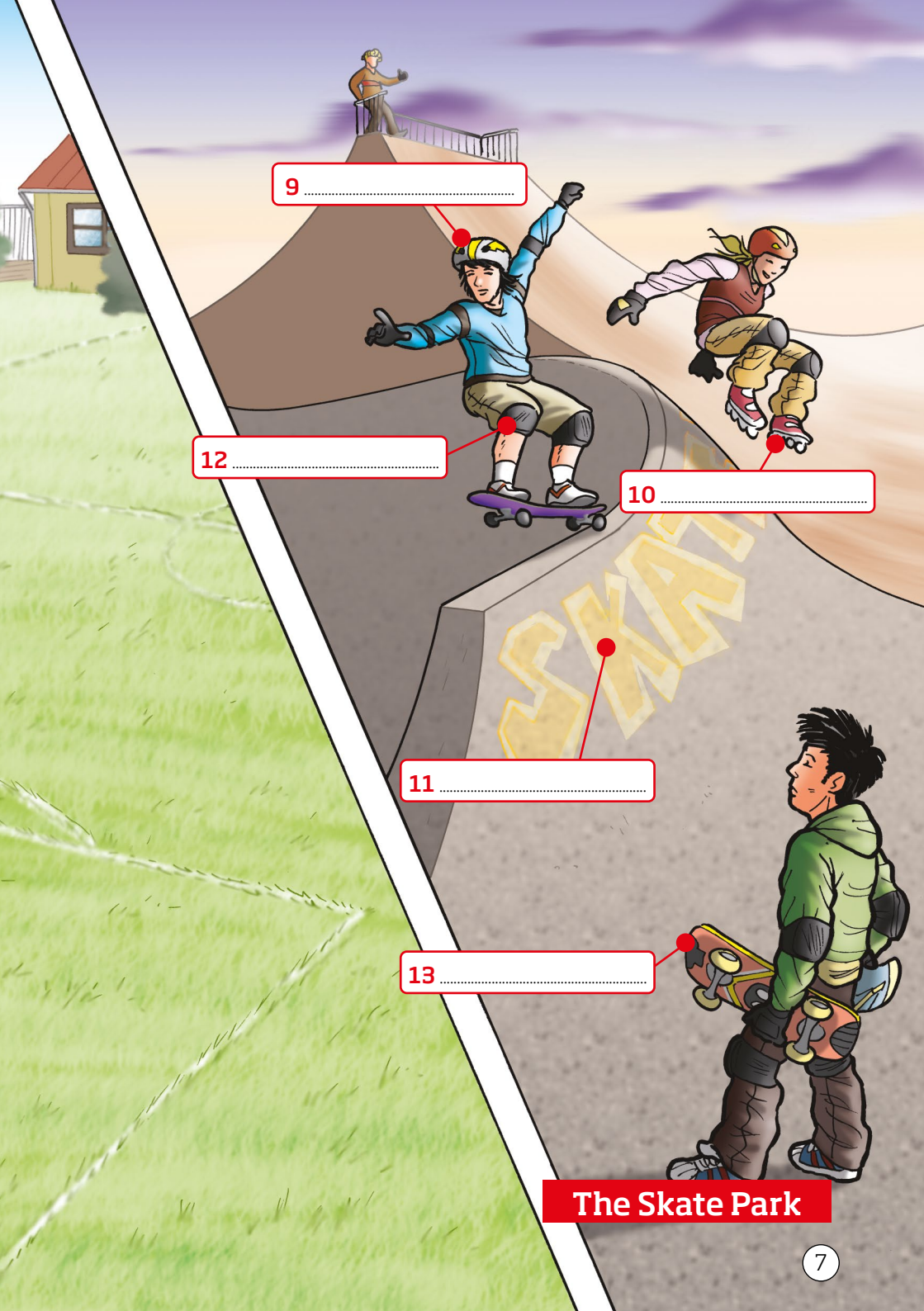


Before Reading

1 Look at the pictures and answer the questions on pages 8 and 9.



The Football Pitch



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The Skate Park



It's a cold, wet afternoon in April.

It's a perfect day for sitting in a warm classroom, sending text messages to friends and looking out of the window. It's a perfect day for sitting in a warm office, sending emails and surfing the net[•]. It's a perfect day for looking for new clothes in the warm shopping centre. Or for sitting at home, drinking hot chocolate and watching afternoon TV.

But on the sports field of Westbourne High School, two football teams are running up and down, kicking[•] a heavy[•], wet football. It's an important match – the semi-final of the girls' football championship[•] between Westbourne and New Milton.

THWACK!

The goalkeeper kicks the football high into the air.

The team in red shirts run up the pitch[•], the team in blue shirts run back.

A girl in a red shirt, with black hair and brown eyes, watches the ball carefully. She walks slowly into the centre circle.

BOING!

A girl in a blue shirt heads[•] the ball. It flies up into the grey air.

BIFF!

The ball lands[•] at the feet of the girl with black hair. She immediately starts running towards the blue team's goal.

'Go on, Zadie!' her teammates[•] shout.



Zadie runs quickly. The girls from New Milton can't catch her. But then, in front of her, Zadie sees a tall girl in a blue shirt. She's big. She's fast. And she's right • in front of her!

But Zadie has an idea.

Zadie kicks the ball to the girl's left, and then runs to the girl's right. The tall girl is confused. She looks at the ball, she looks at Zadie. She doesn't know which way to move. So Zadie runs past her, and gets the ball on the other side!

Now, she has only the goalkeeper to beat •.



The goalkeeper waves her arms and opens her legs, ready to jump in any direction. But Zadie has a better idea.

THUMP!

She kicks the ball between the goalkeeper's legs into the back of the New Milton net.

'Goal!!!'

Holly, Grace and her other teammates run up to Zadie, smiling happily. The score is 1–0 to Westbourne. And there are only another fifteen minutes to play.

The game is nearly over.

But now Zadie is having fun.

With twelve minutes to play, Zadie jumps into the air and kicks the ball over her head. It's her famous scissor kick! The ball shoots into the back of the New Milton goal.

CRASH!

With five minutes to play, Zadie crosses the ball to Grace, who heads it past the goalkeeper.

BANG!

And in the last minute of the match, Zadie stops the ball with her chest, turns to her left, then kicks the ball with all her power. It goes like a rocket into the New Milton net.

WALLOP!

The referee blows her whistle. It's the end of the game. Westbourne are in the final!

Once again, Zadie is the hero.

