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THE HOUSE OF HEROES BOOKS

For as long as anyone can remember, the White Owl and the Black Owl have fought over the Crystal Eggs. A thousand years ago, the White Owl's followers put the Black Owl in prison. Now the Black Owl's followers want to free him, and his power is getting stronger. In the House of Heroes, the White Owl travels through time and space to find people who can help him keep the Black Owl in prison. But these heroes have to go into new worlds and do things they have never done before.



Meet Kim, Leon and Ana.

Kim, Leon and Ana are ordinary teenagers. They like to spend time in the park in the Old Town after school. Sometimes, it's a bit boring, and they want something interesting to happen. So, when they see something unusual in the park, they want to know what it is. How do they find the House of Heroes? Where do their adventures take them? And can *they* become heroes, too?

The Black Owl is one of the books in the House of Heroes mystery adventure series. Each book is a maze reader, which means that you, the reader, can make decisions along the way about what the characters do next in the story. Each decision you make will lead you to a different version of the story and a unique ending: so choose carefully!

To help you make the best decisions, you need to know these words. Use a dictionary to look them up.

challenge portal

THE BLACK OWL



Tyto

Alba

GUESS!

How do you think Leon, Ana and Kim know Alba and Tyto? In the story, one person is described as angry, and another person says they are bored. Who do you think is angry and who is bored?

Who do you think the guitar belongs to?



Ana

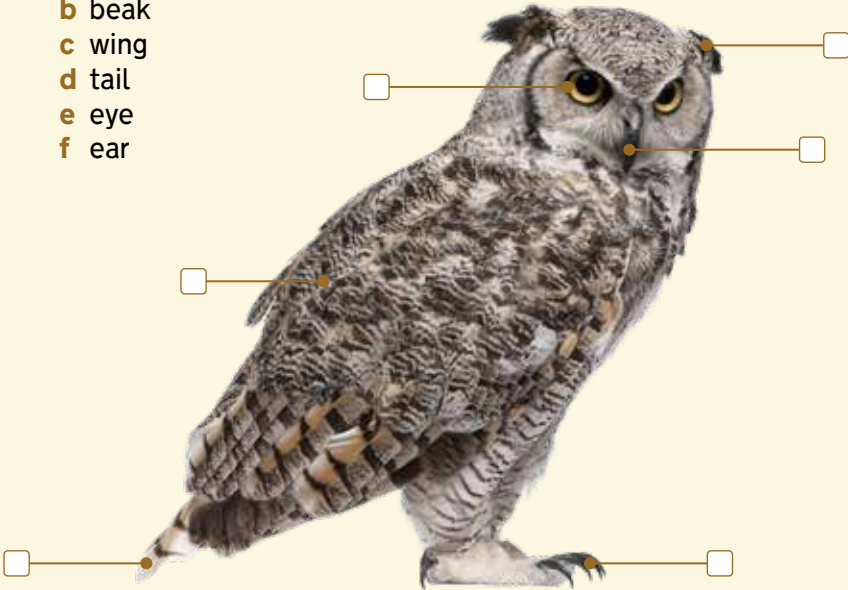
Kim

Leon

BEFORE READING

1 Match the words to the parts of the owl.

- a talon
- b beak
- c wing
- d tail
- e eye
- f ear



2 True or false?

- a All owls hunt for food at night.
- b A group of owls is called a parliament.
- c Owls can turn their necks 270°.
- d The smallest owl in the world is about 13 cm tall.
- e The sound an owl makes is called a 'horn'.
- f There are 100 types of owls.
- g Most owls fly at about 65 km an hour.
- h You can't hear an owl when it flies.

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3 Read the first lines of Chapter 1.
Then answer the questions.



Kim picked up an empty plastic bottle off the street and kicked it. It flew up, hit a parked car and fell into a bin.

‘Yes!’ she said.

Leon stopped playing his guitar. ‘GOAL!’ he shouted.

‘I’m bored,’ said Ana. She walked over and kicked the bin.



a Who is in the scene?

b Where are they?

c What is Leon doing?

d Why do you think Ana is bored?

e Why does Kim say ‘Yes!’?

f Imagine you are in this story. Are you more like Kim, Ana or Leon? Explain why.

CHAPTER 3

The challenge



Guess! What happens next?

- A** Alba sends them home.
- B** Another person comes into the shop.
- C** They fight Alba.
- D** They listen to Alba's story.



The three teenagers looked at the man with the big white owl. Kim started laughing. She laughed and laughed and laughed. Then she fell off the sofa.

‘Haha! What did you say? A black owl wants to kill us. Really? Kill us? An owl? An owl wants to kill us? Oh, that is HILARIOUS!’ Is this a joke? Are we on TV?’ Kim said.

She stopped laughing and stood up. ‘Show us the way out of this place, NOW!’

‘Kim, stop shouting!’ said Ana. ‘I’m getting a headache.’

‘It’s alright,’ said Alba. ‘I see you need some proof.’

‘No, I just want to go,’ said Kim.

‘What proof?’ said Ana.

‘Look into the fire,’ said Alba. ‘Tyto? Please?’

The white owl flapped its wings and flew around the room. The three teenagers looked at the fire. There was a bright white light around Tyto.

The flames from the fire grew bigger and bigger. The light hurt their eyes. Suddenly, it stopped. They could see a city in the fire. The city was burning. A huge dark shape flew over it, and black creatures ran through the streets. There were people lying everywhere. They weren’t moving.

‘What... what is that?’ said Leon, in shock.

‘That is what the Black Owl did the last time,’ said Alba. ‘The House has chosen you. You must stop him this time,’ he said.

Glossary

- **creatures:** living things (but not plants)
- **flapped:** moved up and down
- **hilarious:** very funny
- **in shock:** (here) frightened and confused
- **joke:** funny story to make people laugh
- **proof:** fact to show it is true
- **shape:** physical form of something



His face was sad. Ana smiled.

‘Stop him? Chose us? What?’ said Leon.

‘The objects in this house can help you. Choose an object and the doors open. Go through a door. Complete the challenge’. Come home. Don’t fail.’

‘Why? What happens?’ said Leon.

‘You will not come home. I am sorry, but this is the way things are.’

Alba went quiet and stared into the fire. The fire was normal again.

‘I cannot believe this!’ said Kim. ‘We have to get out of here.’

‘You can try,’ said Alba.

Tyto flew back to him and sat on the top of the chair. He put his head under his wing. Alba closed his eyes.

Leon looked at Kim. They didn’t like this. Together they picked up Ana from the floor and walked out of the room.

They looked everywhere – behind every shelf and table, in every cupboard and wardrobe, but there were no doors. There was no way out.

‘He’s telling the truth’,’ said Ana.

‘It’s not possible!’ said Kim.

Ana smiled. ‘Let’s choose some objects and see what happens,’ she said.

Over to you! What happens next?

- A Ana chooses the objects. Go to page 27. ➤
- B Kim chooses the objects. Go to page 35. ➤

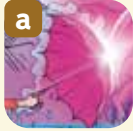
Glossary

- **challenge:** something new and difficult to do
- **fail:** be unsuccessful
- **picked up:** took from the floor or a table
- **truth:** true/real fact
- **wardrobe:** tall cupboard for clothes

AFTER READING VOCABULARY

1 Label the pictures. Then match each character to the object they used in the story you read. You will use three of them.

elephant ring umbrella flute



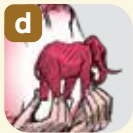
ANA



LEON



KIM



2 Write a sentence explaining how each character used their object from Exercise 1 in the story.

a Leon

b Ana

c Kim

AFTER READING CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH EXAMS

K A2 Key English Test Listening Part 1



1 Listen to five short conversations. For questions a–e, put a tick (✓) next to the correct answer.

a What object does Ana pick up?



b Who goes through the door last?



c What colour are the creature's eyes?

BROWN

BLUE

PINK

d What is on top of the sand dune?

another door

a big animal

a skeleton

e Which way does Ana think they should go next?

