

CONTENTS

About the Author	6
About the Book	7
FACT FILE In love with steam trains	8
Characters	10
Before Reading	12
1 The beginning	17
2 The young thief	22
3 The old gentleman	30
4 A Russian visitor	37
5 Saving the train	43
6 The terrible secret	50
7 The boy in the red jumper	56
8 The end	64
After Reading <small>with</small> NEW ACTIVITIES	69

IN LOVE WITH STEAM TRAINS

The Railway Children is set in a time when steam trains are real wonders of technology. Children are excited just to see them pass. Now we have many types of fast and technological trains, but the appeal of steam trains is still powerful.

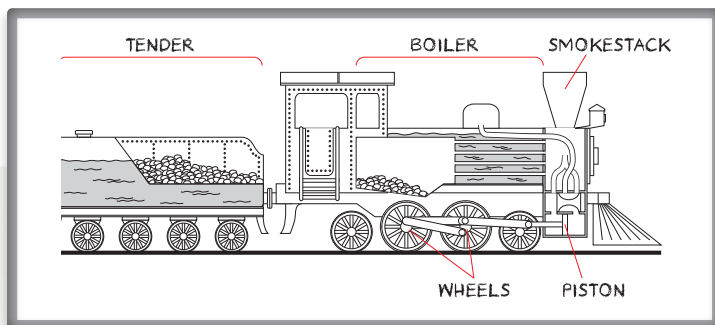
The first steam locomotive is invented in the early nineteenth century by Richard Trevithick. It transports iron from an ironworks in Wales to the nearest canal. Soon this new means of transport is used by people, too. The idea of using tracks to guide wheeled vehicles is very old. It is first used in mines, with people or horses pulling minerals along wooden tracks. After the invention of the steam engine in 1774, these wooden tracks are replaced by stronger metal tracks.

The trains in *The Railway Children* have an **engine** at the front. A coal fire heats water in a **boiler** to make steam. The steam then moves the **pistons** which turn the wheels. Smoke from the fire comes out of the **smokestack** at the front of the boiler. Both coal and water are stored in a **tender** behind the locomotive.



GLOSSARY

- **appeal:** ability to interest
- **iron:** heavy metal
- **ironworks:** place where iron is made into objects
- **is set:** happens
- **locomotive:** old word for a train engine
- **mines:** places where minerals are taken from the ground



Today's **High-Speed Trains** run on electricity and they need extra-strong straight railroad tracks. But very slow trains are still important: **Mountain Trains** carry passengers up hills and mountains, and **Snow Trains** are ideal when the snow on the tracks is too deep for even a snowplow[•]. And, of course, we must not forget **Freight Trains**, which transport huge loads and even cargo containers.

Search the web for information about two famous locomotives: *Rocket* and *Catch Me Who Can!*



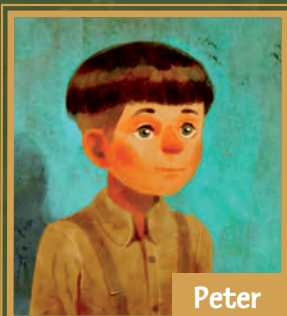
- **snowplow:** vehicle that can move through deep snow
- **transports:** moves

- **wheeled vehicles:** carts, trains, cars etc.
- **wonders:** really great things

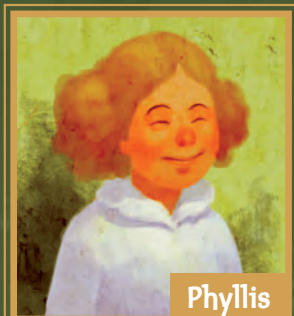
THE RAILWAY CHILDREN



Roberta



Peter



Phyllis



Mother



Father





The old gentleman



The station
master



Mr Szczepansky



Jim



BEFORE READING

- 1 **▶ MP3** Listen to an extract from the story and write the ages of the children.



Roberta is Peter is Phyllis is

- 2 **▶ MP3** Listen again and answer the questions about the characters in Exercise 1.

a What does everyone call Roberta?

.....

b What does Peter want to be?

.....

c What does Phyllis try hard to do?

.....

- 3 **▶ MP3** Listen to another extract and complete the sentences about the children's parents.

a Mother: she writes She often reads them to the children

b Father: he is always ready to
..... in the evenings.



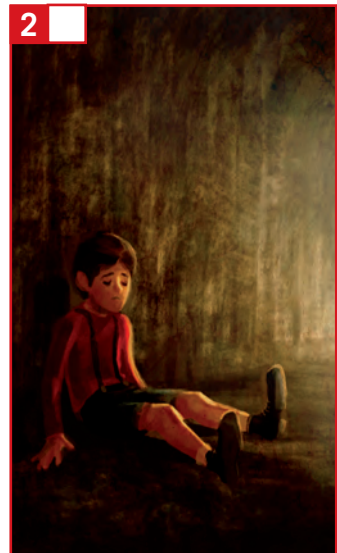
4 Look at the titles of the chapters on page 3. Answer the questions below. Write the number of the chapter in the box.

In which chapter do the children:

- a** ☐ move from their house in London to a small house in the country?
- b** ☐ meet a person from another country?
- c** ☐ do a very brave thing?
- d** ☐ make friends with another child?

5 Read four sentences from the story. Which two sentences match the pictures? Write a, b, c or d in the box.

- a** 'Let's go down and look at the railway,' says Peter.
- b** 'It's like a big green dragon!' says Phyllis.
- c** 'Stop!' says Bobbie suddenly. 'Listen! What's that?'
- d** 'Can you stand?' asks Peter.



1 THE BEGINNING

1 Roberta, Peter and Phyllis live in a comfortable house in London. Roberta, or Bobbie as everyone calls her, is twelve. Peter comes next. He's ten and he wants to be an engineer. Phyllis is eight. She tries very hard to be good. They are lucky children. They have a lot of toys, a beautiful playroom• and a dog called James. They also have a wonderful mother. She is almost always at home. She writes stories. She often reads them to the children after tea. And their father is wonderful, too. He works very hard in a government office all day, but he is always ready to play a game in the evenings. They are a very happy family. Then one day something happens and their lives change.

It's supper time and the family are in the dining room. Peter wants to speak to his father. He has something very important to ask him. His favourite toy, a model railway engine•, is broken. Peter knows that his father is very clever and can mend• all sorts of• things. He's sure that Father can mend his engine, too. But Father is still eating and Peter must be patient•.

Finally Father puts down his knife and fork. Peter looks at his mother. 'Can I now?' his face says. Mother understands.

'Peter has something to ask you, dear,' she says to Father.

'What's the problem, Peter?' Father asks.

Peter tells him about the engine. He puts the broken toy on the table in front of his father.

'Can you mend it, Father?'

'Mmm,' says Father looking at the engine very carefully. 'Yes, I can. But not tonight. It's too late now. I can do it on Saturday.'

GLOSSARY

- **all sorts of:** many different kinds
- **mend:** repair something that is broken
- **model railway engine:**

- **patient:** able to wait for a long time
- **playroom:** room for children to play in



At that moment someone knocks• on the front door. Ruth the maid• goes to open it. Two minutes later she comes into the dining room.

‘Two men want to speak to you, sir,’ she says to Father. ‘They’re in the study.’

ROOMS

How many rooms have you got in your house or flat?

What’s the name of the room where you

- sleep?
- have a shower?
- prepare meals?

Which is your favourite room at home?

Why do you like it?

‘Try to send them away quickly, dear,’ Mother says in a quiet voice to Father. ‘It’s almost the children’s bedtime.’

Many minutes pass. The voices in the study are loud and angry. Mother is worried. She gets up and goes to the study, too. More time passes. Finally Mother comes back to the dining room. Her face is white and she looks very upset•.

GLOSSARY

- **knocks:** makes a noise on the door because they want someone to open it
- **maid:** (job) woman who cleans the house, serves meals, etc.
- **upset:** unhappy

‘Go to bed now, my darlings,’ she says.

‘But what about Father?’ Phyllis asks.

‘Father must go away on business•,’ replies Mother. ‘Now, please, go to bed immediately!’

‘Is it bad news, Mother?’ whispers• Bobbie.

‘I can’t tell you anything tonight, my darling,’ says Mother kissing her. ‘Go, dear! Now!’

The next morning Mother leaves the house before the children get up. They have breakfast alone in the dining room. They are all sad and worried.

‘Something’s very wrong,’ says Peter.

Mother is still not there at one o’clock when they come home from school. And she’s not there at tea time. She finally arrives at seven o’clock. She looks ill and tired.

‘My darlings,’ she says. ‘I have some bad news. Father must be away for a long time. Please don’t ask me any questions. I’m very tired now. But I need your help. Be good children and don’t argue• with each other. And be happy. Do you promise?’

‘Yes, Mother,’ they all say together.

‘And please don’t worry!’

But the children are worried. Very worried. They don’t understand. Why must Father go away for a long time? Where’s he going? And why is Mother so upset?

The following weeks are horrible. Mother is almost never at home, and Ruth the maid goes away. An aunt comes to visit, but she doesn’t spend much time with them. She’s too busy.

• **argue:** speak to each other in an angry way

• **on business:** for his job
• **whispers:** speaks very quietly



One morning when they are having breakfast Mother says, 'My darlings, we must leave this big house and move to a small one in the country. It's white and very nice. It's also near a station, so we can go there by train. Now hurry up and finish your breakfast. We must start packing• immediately.'

They are very busy during the following days. First they pack their clothes. Then they fill box after box with useful things for their new home: plates, cups, candles•, blankets•, and also tables and chairs. Bobbie wants to take a pretty cupboard• from the sitting room, but Mother says no.

'We must play at being poor people,' she says. But when she sees Bobbie's sad face, she adds quickly, 'Only for a short time I hope.'

GLOSSARY

- **blankets:** thick covers made of wool for a bed
- **candles:**



- **cupboard:** piece of furniture with doors
- **packing:** putting things in boxes or bags to take somewhere

A week later they're ready to leave. They take a taxi to the station in the afternoon. The train journey to the new house is very long. At first the children are excited and enjoy looking out of the window. But then it gets dark outside and they begin to feel sleepy•. When they finally arrive, Mother says, 'The boxes must go on the cart•. We can walk to the house. It isn't far.'

The children are cold and tired but they don't complain•. They know they must be brave•. There are no lights along the road and it's very dark. They follow the cart up a hill, through a gate, across a muddy• field, and then down a hill.

'Here it is!' says Mother suddenly. 'This is the house!'

The driver of the cart has the key. He opens the door and they all go inside. The house is very dark but the driver lights• a candle for them. Then he brings in the boxes. Mother opens one and takes out some biscuits and jam for supper. The children are hungry after the long day, but they are also very tired.

'Let's find the blankets and go to bed now,' says Mother. 'Tomorrow we can unpack• everything and you can look around the house and the garden. Goodnight, my darlings. Sleep well.'




-
- **brave:** not afraid
 - **cart:**
 - **complain:** say that they aren't happy with something



- **lights:** gives fire to
- **muddy:** dirty
- **sleepy:** tired
- **unpack:** take things out of boxes and bags

AFTER READING VOCABULARY

1  **Three words are related to each other but one is not. Which one? Find the odd one out. Then explain why to a partner.**

a envelope rake magazine newspaper

b matter maid porter miner

c blankets pyjamas sheet cheeks

d brave quick polite kind

e fence gate hill tunnel

f cart cellar attic playroom

g upset editor worried sad

h bandage medicine signal headache

2 **Complete the word formation table below with words from the text.**

ADJECTIVE	NOUN
HAPPY	HAPPINESS
REAL
.....	COMFORT
DIRTY
.....	FAME
MUDDY
.....	CARE
PROUD
.....	WIND
CURIOUS
.....	ILLNESS

K A2 Key English Test Reading and Writing Part 4

1 Complete the sentences by choosing the best word (A, B, or C) for each space.

- 1 Peter knows some French words and decides to them.
A try **B** tell **C** speak
- 2 He goes down the hill, the railway line and into the tunnel.
A cross **B** below **C** along
- 3 When the man starts crying, Bobbie feels sorry him.
A to **B** for **C** with
- 4 Now Mother has more free time because the maid does all the
A homeworks **B** housework **C** homework
- 5 'What's the matter?' asks Phyllis in a very voice.
A sleeping **B** slippery **C** sleepy
- 6 Mother is very surprised. '..... strange!' she says.
A That **B** What **C** How
- 7 Boys don't usually like hands.
A holding **B** keeping **C** changing
- 8 a The children smile at other.
A the **B** any **C** each

K A2 Key English Test Reading and Writing Part 6

2 Imagine the railway children cannot write the letter on page 34; they ask you to do it for them. Write a similar letter saying:

- **who** the children are
- **what** the problem is
- **what** they need
- **where** they live.