

How to be a Pirate - Cressida Cowell

Lesson 1

Before reading...

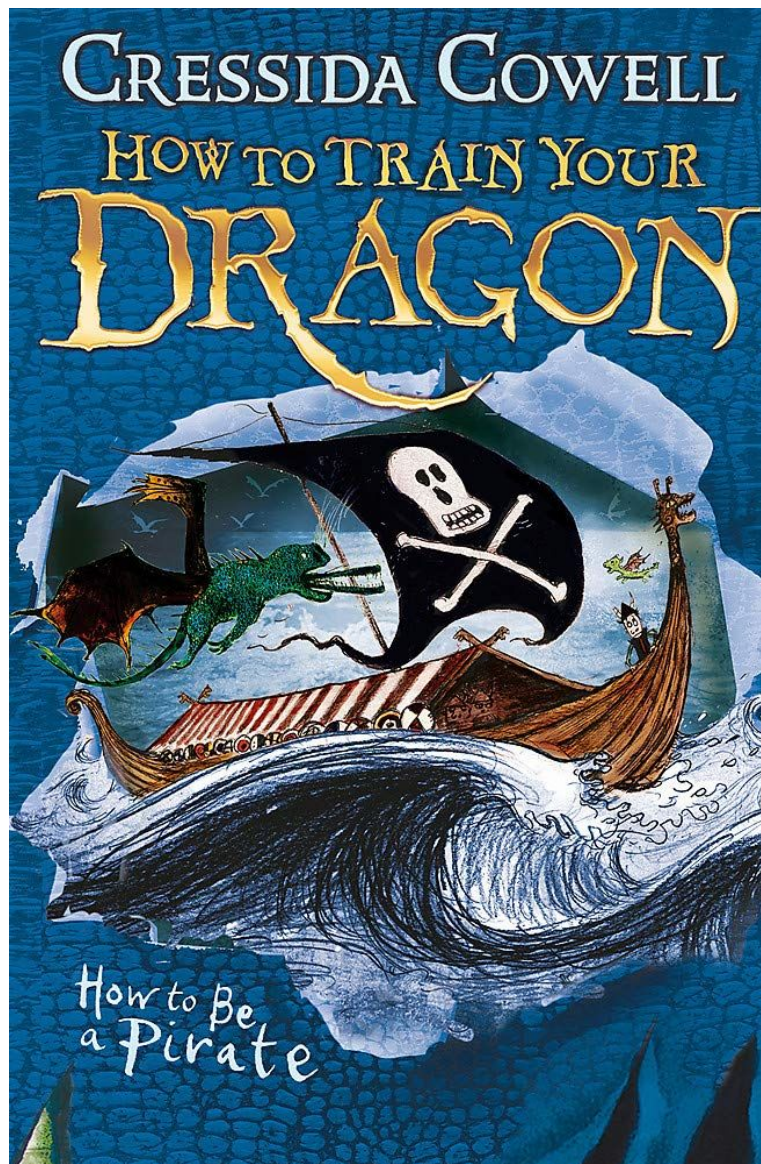
Look at the front cover.

- What do you think the book will be about?
- What things can you see on the front cover?
- What sort of story will it be?
- Who might enjoy it?

Now read the blurb...

- Were any of your predictions correct?

Front Cover



The Opening Lines

Read the first lines of the book (below) and think about the following questions:

Thor was SERIOUSLY annoyed.

He had sent a mighty summer storm to claw up the seas around the bleak little Isle of Berk. A black wind was shrieking across the wild and angry ocean. Furious thunder boomed overhead. Lightning speared into the water.

Only a madman would think it was the kind of weather for a pleasant sail.

But, amazingly, there was one ship being hurled violently from wave to wave, the hungry ocean chewing at her sides, hoping to tip her over and swallow the souls aboard and grind their bones into sand.

The madman in charge of this ship was Gobber the Belch. Gobber ran the Pirate Training Programme on the Isle of Berk and this crazy voyage was, in fact, one of Gobber's lessons, Swordfighting at Sea – (Beginners Only).

'OK, YOU DRIPPY LOT!' yelled Gobber, a six-and-a-half-foot hairy muscle-bound lunatic, with a beard like a ferret having a fit and biceps the size of your head. 'PUT YOUR BACKS INTO IT, FOR THOR'S SAKE. YOU ARE NOT AN ICKLE PRETTY JELLYFISH... HICCUP, YOU ARE ROWING LIKE AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD... THE FAT BIT OF THE OAR GOES IN THE WATER... WE HAVEN'T GOT ALL YEAR TO GET THERE...' etc. etc.

Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third gritted his teeth as a big wave came screaming over the side and hit him full in the face.

Hiccup is, in fact, the Hero of this story, although you would never have guessed this to look at him. He was on the small side and had the sort of face that was almost entirely unmemorable.

Comprehension

Chapter 3: A CHANCE IN A MILLION

The object that had holed the boat, thereby saving Hiccup from Death at the hands of Dogsbreath the Duhbrain, was a large, heavy, six foot by three foot BOX.

It now floated up to within reaching distance of where Hiccup was treading water. There were a couple of iron handles on the sides, very handy for grabbing on to.

About twenty minutes earlier, some laughing members of the Meathead Tribe had thrown this box into the sea at Meathead Island, which was a couple of miles away. The winds had carried it a considerable distance in that short time.

And the chances of that particular box travelling all that way, and then in the middle of the whole wild and lonely ocean happening to hole the ship just in time to save Hiccup's life, must have been thousands, no, millions to one.

If you were a fanciful person, you might have said that it was almost as if that box was looking for Hiccup.

But we are not fanciful people, and that would be ridiculous.

No sooner had Hiccup grabbed hold of one of the iron handles with a sigh of relief, than a gigantic wave lifted him and the box way, way up, and then deposited them crashing down only a couple of feet away from where Toothless was trying to keep Fishlegs from going under for the third and what would have been final time.

Questions

1. *How big is the object that had holed the boat?*
2. *What does the name 'Dogsbreath the Duhbrain' suggest his character?*
3. *How much earlier had the box been thrown into the sea?*
4. *How many times had Fishlegs gone under the water already?*
5. *What were the chances that the box would make its way to Hiccup in time to save him?*

Vocabulary

1. Fanciful
2. Gigantic
3. Indescribable
4. Anxiety
5. Begrudgingly
6. Disturbance
7. Grisly
8. Bellow
9. Thoughtful
10. Pathetic
11. Straggly
12. Mindless
13. Slash
14. Experly
15. Deliberate
16. Irritable
17. Enthusiastic
18. Hitch
19. Ghastly
20. Considerable

HOMEWORK

How does Cowell **build tension** in these chapters?

OR

Write a **short story** using **at least 5 new words** (above) that we learned from these chapters.