

Reading Booklet

Sample 2016 Key Stage 2 English Reading Booklet - Fiction



**The Dual World
of Anders Arnfield**

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This is an extract from a fantasy story about a young boy who lives in another world during his dreams. His experiences there are influenced by his ordinary waking life and the clues of his dream world guide his actions in the normal life he leads during his daytime reality.

Fuelled by rage and revenge, Anders Arnfield stood in front of the giant gates of Pengreg Hall and raised his sword to face the snarling creature ahead. In front of him, and for miles beyond, lay the ruins of the ancient Gunders Wood, which were now just smouldering ashes as the once tall trees lay forlorn on the forest floor. Behind the great house over his shoulder, he could sense the path to freedom but he was determined not to take the easy way out.

There was no doubt in Anders' mind that the creature bearing down on him was the same klingenot he had encountered in his previous dreams - a creature that he had so often doubted could be real. It sure looked real right now as he found himself not only prey to this huge four-legged beast, but with the sole responsibility to defeat it. Over many months, he had become used to the dual world that he had gradually found himself living in: by night, the strange and mysterious happenings of Gunders Wood, overlooked by the marvellous Pengreg Hall; by day, trying to fathom how those happenings linked to and influenced his ordinary school life.

Casting his mind back two years, the young boy thought of the precious box given to him by his late grandmother after she returned to Norway. How he wished she was still alive to answer his millions of questions. Was there a vital clue in the box that

he was missing, right now? Every part of the contents had turned out to be a clue to something or other. Some days he cursed the gift that his grandmother had given him: not the gift of the box, but the gift that she had passed down in some other way. As often as he may curse it, however, he couldn't imagine life being any different to the way that it had become.

Unfortunately, he had little time to ponder his many burning questions. All that imminently mattered was how to hold off the baying beast ahead. With its arched, stegosaurus-like spine and flaring nostrils, the klingenot was close enough for Anders to smell its stale breath. He told himself that the creature must represent something or someone in the real world – that's how everything had been so far in all of Anders' adventures around Gunders Wood. Although he was furious to see the destruction of the once beautiful woodland that he had grown to love, Anders could see that the creature in front of him was angry too.

Glowing brightly like a neon sign, the word 'angry' burned into his mind, his consciousness, but it did not feel complete. The word was missing something. The creature was not just angry; it was hangry. As always, the word didn't make any sense to Anders. Holding the gaze of the bulging eyes and writhing head, he desperately tried to make time for himself to think, as he simultaneously tossed the words around in his mind. Angry. Hangry. Hungry. Finally, the realisation began to dawn on him. Anders' mind felt as foggy as the thick air that hung over the rough, open landscape around him, and he was almost certain that the two were linked – but he felt a certainty that he was on the verge of solving something. Like a clearing of the mist, he could see the swirls of an explanation forming through his muddled mind. Hangry: the creature's anger was driven by hunger.



Visions from the past flashed into his brain, featuring contented klingenots roaming peacefully in pairs through the surrounding Gunders Wood. In every image, they were eating the leaves and foliage from the branches. Creatures of other varied shapes and sizes wandered amongst them, unharmed and in no anticipation of any danger. Anders had felt these images before – not necessarily been there, but felt them. Only snapshots and sections of this wonderful world had been revealed to him, but he recognised some of the unusual beings that lurked around both then and now. There were the squibs, which reminded him of jellyfish but shuffled around awkwardly on land, and the belchers, easily identified by their burping, gurgling sound. As wonderful as these creatures were and as privileged as Anders felt to frequent their world, right now, they didn't absorb his focus. The important part of the images flickering past him were definitely the klingenots and most importantly of all, he was drawn to the way they lifted their old-looking heads and plucked their food purposefully from the trees.

It is hard enough for a normal person to try to make sense of a dream after they had woken up, let alone trying to figure out disguised meanings and messages while still immersed in them. Yet thoughts and reasoning seemed to be falling into place. Anger would only fuel more anger. Instinctively, the boy knew that he had to put down his sword. As he did so, the roar of the creature distorted in pitch and volume, changing into a groan. Anders still felt vulnerable. Overwhelmingly aware that he was not yet safe, if he could just distract the beast momentarily then he might get a chance in the waking world to influence what happened next.

Turning tentatively to the right, Anders focused all his energy onto the misty window at the far end of the hall's front. Once before, he had been able to pull off something like this but the effort and concentration was so great right now that he felt a knot forming in his forehead. Could he do it? Through the strain came a single quiet tap. It was working. *Tap, tap* – louder. Squeezing his eyes tightly shut, he willed his thoughts all into the single direction. *Tap, tap, tap*. The noise he was creating on the window was enough to gain the attention of the klingenot. In an instant, the beast's large,

pointed ears twitched and rotated. It swung its head to the left and narrowed its eyes to focus on the far window. Anders knew that this was his chance and he seized it.