



Oxford
International
Lower Secondary

8

English

Student Book



OXFORD

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1

Crossing rivers

How do we cross rivers?

‘Let’s build bridges, not walls’

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Talk about ...

- How many different ways are there to cross a river?
- Are there any bridges near where you live? How does it feel to walk or drive over a bridge?
- Martin Luther King, Jr. was an activist fighting for the equal rights of black people in the United States in the middle of the twentieth century. What do you think he meant in the opening quotation?

A bridge is a physical structure which allows us to cross over an obstacle, for example a river, a road, or a valley. Bridges can be a powerful symbol, often representing communication, connection, teamwork and progress.

Many popular idioms refer to bridges. What do you think the following mean?

- To burn one’s bridges
- To be water under the bridge
- To cross that bridge later
- A bridge too far
- To bridge the gap



- Work out the meaning of new words
- Look at where words come from

How do we build bridges?

Building bridges requires ingenuity. Over the centuries, there have been many innovations in bridge-building techniques. In this unit, you will learn about some of them.

Bridge building has historically been important to the growth of towns and cities, as well as to enable people to cross rivers, mountains and valleys. The Romans built bridges to help expand their empire across Europe.

Roman bridges are often supported by circular stone arches, which allows a bridge to cover a larger area than the older style of stone slab or wooden beam bridges. An amazing example of a Roman bridge built using arches is the Pont du Gard aqueduct, which was built in 14 CE.



The Pont du Gard aqueduct near Nîmes, southern France

How many different kinds of bridges are there?

Try to name all the different kinds of bridges you can think of in small groups. These days, most bridges make use of one or more of the five basic bridge types: the beam, the arch, the truss, the suspension and the cable-stayed bridge. In each case, the bridge builders need to know what the bridge will be used for (for example, for road, rail or pedestrian use, or all combined) in order to decide on the best methods and materials for its construction.

Word origins

ingenuity (n), meaning 'cleverness in making or inventing things'; comes from the Latin word *ingenium*, meaning 'natural talent'

Related word:

- ingenious

aqueduct (n), comes from two Latin words, *aqua*, meaning 'water', and *ducere*, meaning 'to lead'

Glossary

innovation new method, idea, product

expand become or make larger or more extensive

empire large group of states or countries ruled over by a single monarch, group or sovereign state

arches curved symmetrical structures spanning openings

slab large, thick, flat piece of stone or concrete

beam long, strong piece of timber or metal used to support the roof or floor of a structure

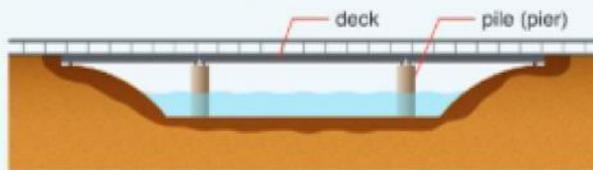
Learning tip

Try to use new words when you write or talk about a topic. Look for connections – maybe you can remember opposites or word roots. Make a list of related technical terms.

- Read non-fiction
- Develop a wide vocabulary through reading

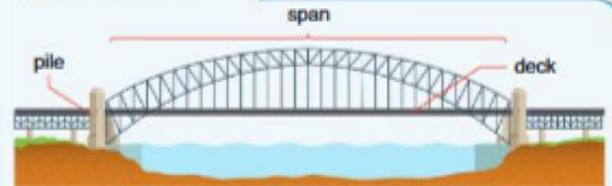
Types of bridge construction

Beam bridge



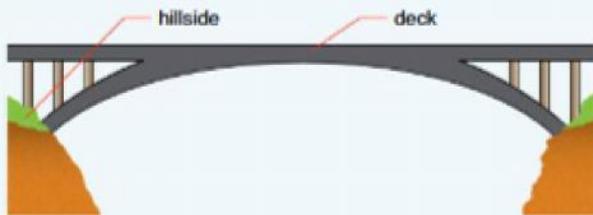
This type of bridge is a good design when trying to span a short gap that is also not very high. A **beam bridge** is supported at each end by land or tall columns. (A column is also called a pier or a pile.)

Arch bridge 1



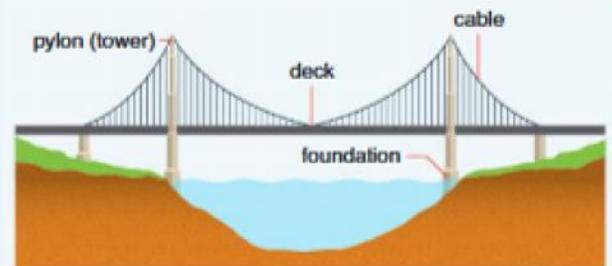
An **arch bridge** supports weight because it is squeezed together. This squeezing force is carried along the curve to the supports at each end. Building an arch bridge is difficult because it is completely unstable until it meets in the middle.

Arch bridge 2



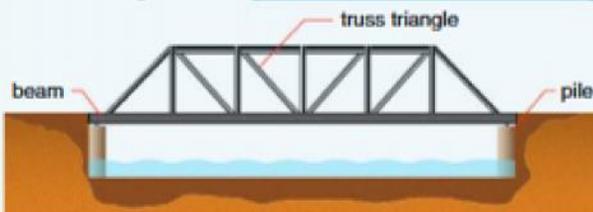
This is another form of the **arch bridge** used in valley or hillside locations to bridge land masses. Some of the most spectacular bridges have been built in remote mountain locations using this difficult and adaptable form of construction.

Suspension bridge



The **suspension bridge** is the best kind of bridge to go over a large body of water. A suspension bridge hangs from steel cables. Because the deck is hung in the air, it must be either heavy or stiff, or both, to limit movement.

Truss bridge



The **truss bridge** is like a beam bridge except that it is much stronger. These bridges use a truss pattern of triangles for structural support. Truss bridges are often used for railway bridges as they can support the great weight and vibrations of the trains.

Cable-stayed bridge



A **cable-stayed bridge** is like a suspension bridge, but the cables are tied directly from the deck to the pylon towers instead of from a hanging cable. Cable-stayed bridges use less cable and can be built much faster than suspension bridges.

Another famous bridge

Below is a text about an ancient wooden bridge in the university city of Cambridge, UK.

The Mathematical Bridge

The city of Cambridge boasts as many as 24 bridges. They cross the River Cam which gives the city its name. One of the most recognizable of these bridges is the Mathematical Bridge – also known simply as the Wooden Bridge – which connects two buildings of Queens’ College (Cambridge University) on either side of the River Cam.

Local legend has it that Sir Isaac Newton was the mastermind behind the bridge’s design. Newton, the man who introduced the world to the law of gravity, was a Fellow and Professor of Mathematics at Trinity College (Cambridge University). The story goes that Newton designed the bridge so it could be constructed without any fixings (nut and bolts) at the joints. The legend describes a group of students who took the bridge apart to see how it was constructed but then found that they were unable to reconstruct it without using bolts to hold it together.

In truth, the bridge was built in 1749 by James Essex the Younger, 22 years after the death of Isaac Newton. It is true that it has been rebuilt to the same design, but there have always been fixings at the joints. However, the fixings on the original bridge were less visible than those on the current structure, possibly leading to the story of the hapless students.

It was rebuilt once in 1866 and again in 1905. In 1866, the bridge deck was changed from a stepped design to the current sloped deck. In 1905, a complete rebuild of the bridge was required due to weathering of the original oak structure.



Glossary

deck road of a bridge

pile vertical support driven into the ground that carries the weight of the bridge

span section between two pylons

pylon tower-like vertical support

suspension cable braided wire that supports a bridge

Talk about ...

Why do you think local people prefer to think of the bridge designer as Isaac Newton? Write down your thoughts.

- Use implicit and explicit evidence from a text to answer questions
- Explain how punctuation creates effects
- Discuss a topic using specialized vocabulary

Comprehension

A 

Look at 'Types of bridge construction'.

- 1 Which is the best construction to use to bridge a valley between two mountains?
- 2 What is another word for a column?
- 3 Which construction is mostly used on railway lines? Why?
- 4 Which type of bridge would you choose to span a wide river?
- 5 What advantage does a cable-stayed bridge have over a suspension bridge?

B 

Look at 'The Mathematical Bridge'.

- 1 Give one word in the first paragraph that shows that local people are proud of Cambridge's bridges.
- 2 Explain why dashes are used in the first paragraph.
- 3 Give two phrases in the second paragraph that suggest that the legend about Isaac Newton and the building of the bridge isn't true.
- 4 Give one word in the third paragraph which means the same as the word 'unfortunate'.

Can you solve this puzzle?

Ali, John, Haniya and Maria are on holiday in Sri Lanka. They are out walking when they come to an old wooden bridge suspended over a wild river. The bridge is weak and only able to carry the weight of two of them at a time. They need to get over the bridge as quickly as possible as it is getting dark. To keep safe, they need a torch for each crossing. However, they only have one torch between them and the bridge is too long to throw the torch back across the bridge.

John has hurt his leg and is limping so it will take him 10 minutes to cross the bridge. Haniya has blisters on her feet so it will take her 5 minutes to walk across slowly. Maria can walk across quickly in 2 minutes and Ali can jog across in 1 minute.

Ali thinks for a moment and declares that the crossing can be completed in 17 minutes. There is no trick. How is it done?

Be a bridge builder

In small groups, use paper to construct your own type of bridge between two books of equal thickness. Have a competition to see which group can design the bridge that carries the most weight. You can test how strong and sturdy the bridge is by using coins or small stones.



Stretch zone

Look at the photo of the stone bridge. Write one paragraph explaining why the arch does not collapse.



- Research a topic from different sources and make notes
- Make a presentation, using verbal and non-verbal techniques

Present your favourite bridge

Find pictures of famous bridges around the world. Use the text 'Types of bridge construction' on page 6 to work out which type of construction each bridge uses. Can you find a picture of each type of bridge construction?

Choose one of the bridges to research. You are going to make notes for a presentation. Find out about its:

- geographical position (Where in the world is it? What areas does it connect?)
- history (When was it built? Has it been rebuilt at any time?)
- structure (What makes it strong? How is the weight distributed?)
- importance (Why is it famous? Is it an important landmark? How does it benefit local people?)
- significance to the history of bridge design and construction.

Make an illustration or a 3D model to explain the technical features of your bridge. Use your notes and visual support material to make a presentation in class.



Students in Budapest, Hungary add more weight to their pasta bridge. How much more before it breaks?

Rialto Bridge, Venice, Italy



Can you identify these bridges?

Match the photos to the notes below.

The Chengyang Bridge over the Linxi River in China's Guangxi province has a covered corridor and five pagoda-style pavilions erected over the piers. Covered bridges, traditional to this region, are also known as 'wind-and-rain' bridges.

The Garabit Viaduct spans the Truyère River near Ruynes-en-Margeride, Cantal, France. The bridge was constructed between 1880 and 1884 by Gustave Eiffel before he began work on the Eiffel Tower.

Isambard Kingdom Brunel won a competition in 1830 for his design of the Clifton Suspension Bridge over the River Avon in Bristol, UK. At the time of construction (completed 1864), it had the longest span of any bridge in the world.

The Stari Most (meaning 'old bridge' in English) crosses the River Neretva in Mostar, Bosnia Herzegovina. The bridge was commissioned by Suleiman the Magnificent in 1557 to replace an older wooden bridge. It was destroyed in 1993 in the Bosnian War and rebuilt in 1997.

This bridge was made famous by the film and the novel, *The Bridge over the River Kwai* based on the experience of POWs who worked on the Thailand-Burma railway in the 1940s.

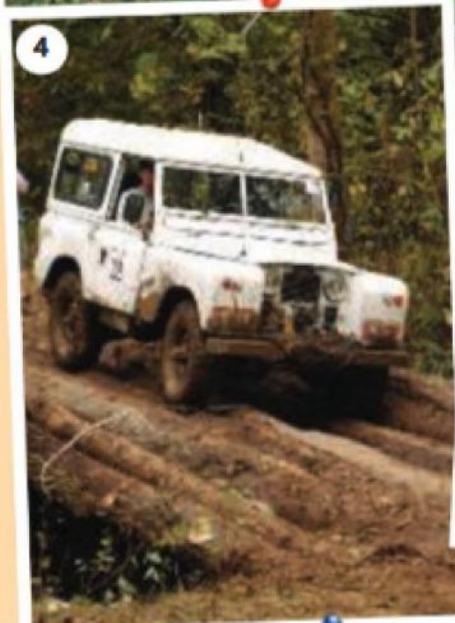
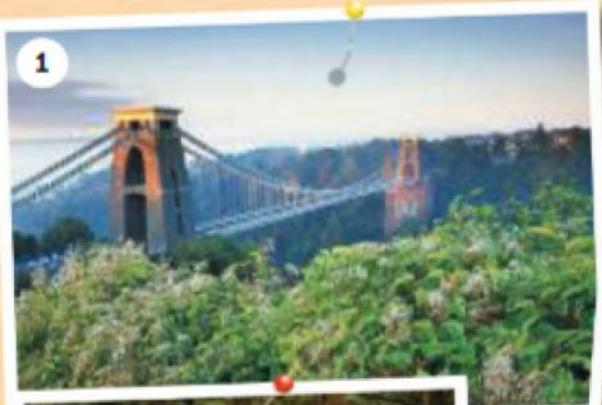
The Tarr Steps in Somerset, UK, is an old stone clapper bridge, made without any cement or mortar. Historians are divided over it possibly dating back to pre-historic times and it (more likely) having medieval origins of circa 1400 CE.

Built in 1973, the Bosphorus Bridge in Turkey links the two sides of Istanbul and the continents of Asia and Europe.

This suspended rope bridge over the lagoon at Sentosa, Singapore, is only for pedestrians. It swings and sways as you walk.

A Land Rover is crossing a log bridge, which could be anywhere in the world.

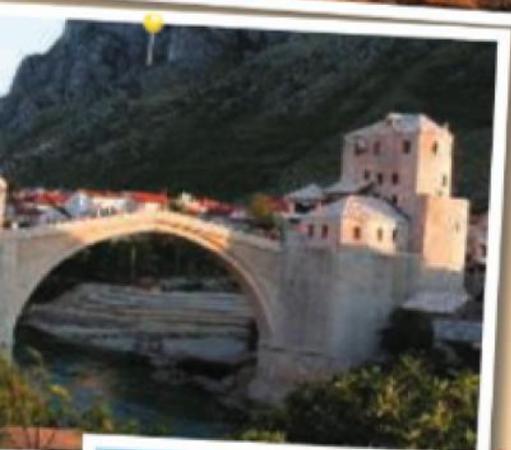
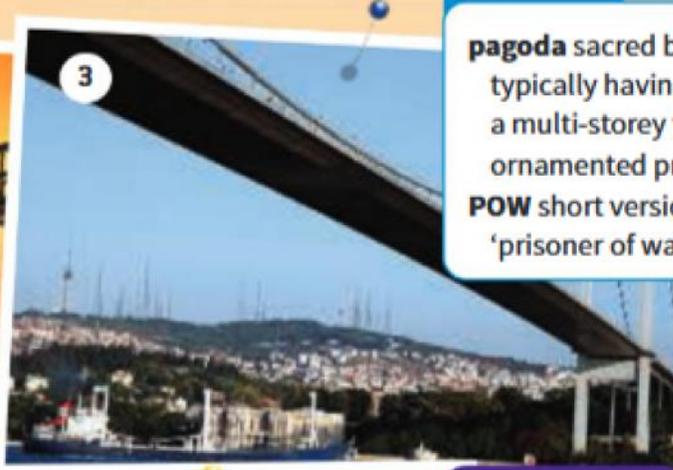
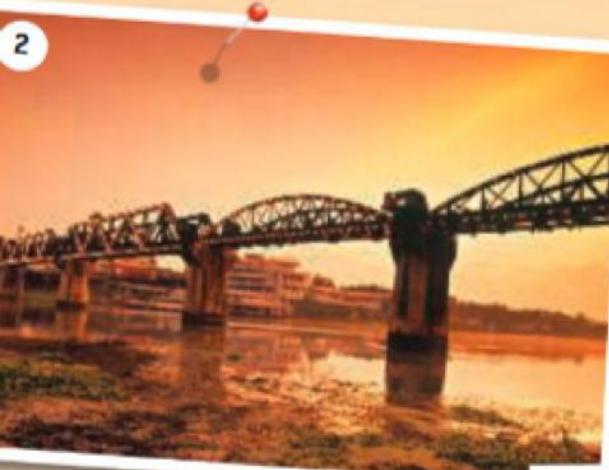
- Contribute to group discussion and communicate ideas confidently
- Discuss a topic using specialized vocabulary



- Work out the meaning of new words
- Discuss a topic using specialized vocabulary

Glossary

pagoda sacred building, typically having the form of a multi-storey tower with an ornamented projecting roof
POW short version of 'prisoner of war'



Word origins

viaduct (n), meaning 'road or railway raised higher than its surroundings'; comes from two Latin words, *via*, meaning 'road', and *ducere*, meaning 'to lead'



Talk about ...

- What kind of bridges are they?
- What can go over them?
- Could you point to where these bridges are on a world map?
- What is special about these bridges?

- Recognize the structure and main features of a newspaper article

Spotlight: Millau Viaduct, France

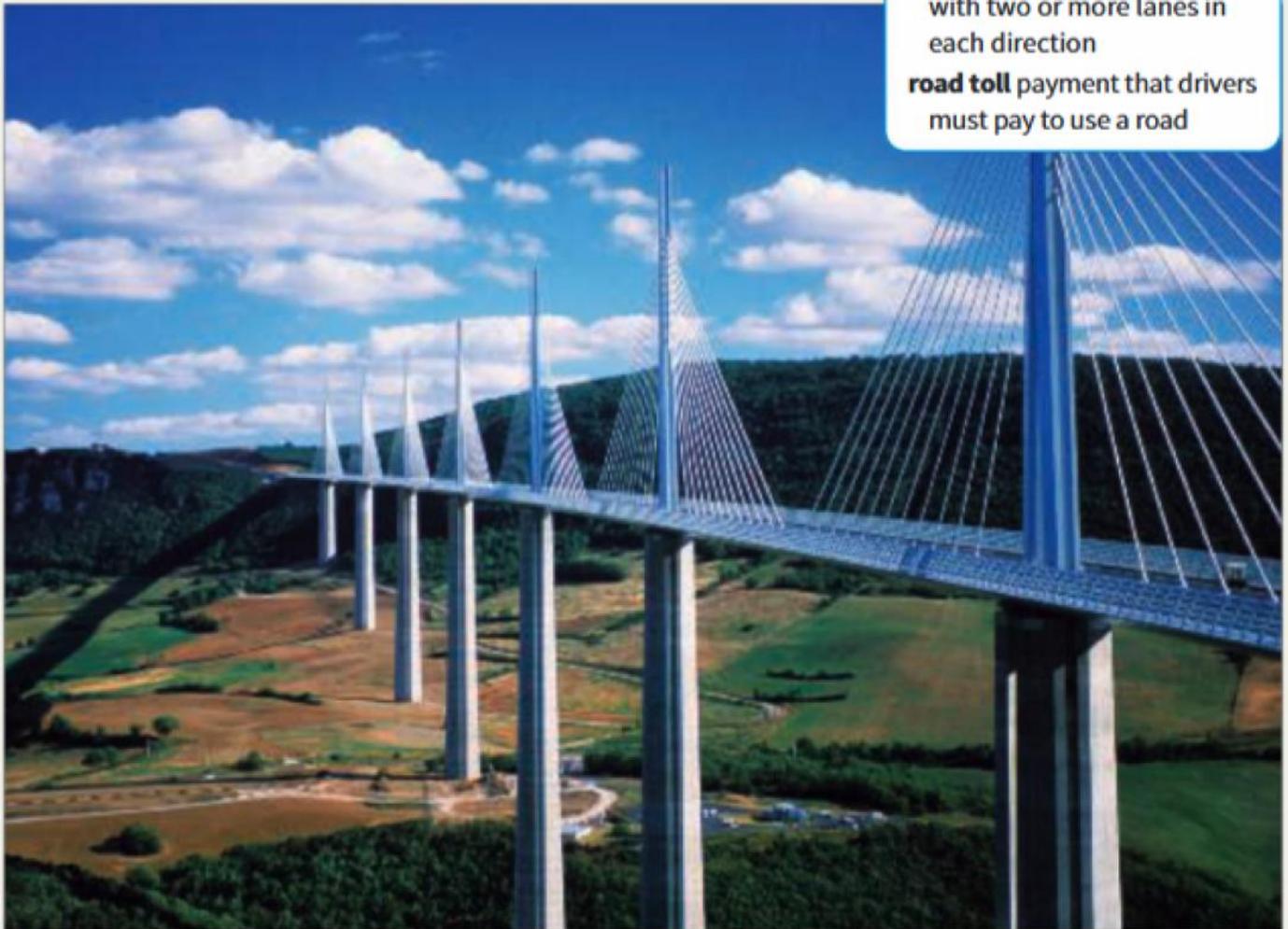
Read the article introduction and fact file on the Millau Viaduct.

An engineering wonder of the twenty-first century

The Millau Viaduct is the world's highest road bridge. It crosses the River Tarn at Millau in southern France. It was designed by the British architect Norman Foster and built by the French construction group Eiffage. The Millau Viaduct is the highest and heaviest bridge ever built. However, it is also widely admired for its elegance, apparent lightness and delicate structure as well as its sheer strength. Not only does the Millau Viaduct appear to defy gravity, but it is also a magnificent example of a courageous work of modern art.

Glossary

- elegance** quality of being graceful and stylish in appearance or manner
- delicate** very fine in texture or structure
- defy** disobey, resist or not follow the normal order of things
- elevated** situated or placed higher than the surrounding area
- dual carriageway** road with two or more lanes in each direction
- road toll** payment that drivers must pay to use a road



The Millau Viaduct, built in Southern Massif Central, France

- Recognize the structure and main features of a fact file
- Write a fact file

FACT FILE

- Millau is pronounced 'me-yo'.
- Construction was completed in 2004.
- Height: 343 metres at its highest point, making it the most elevated roadway in the world. It is higher than the Eiffel Tower.
- Total length: 2.4 kilometres.
- Width: 25 metres. The dual carriageway is suspended nearly 250 metres above the River Tarn. The deck structure is light but very strong.
- Weight: 242,000 tonnes (36,000 of steel and 206,000 of concrete).
- The Millau Viaduct will carry 10,000 vehicles a day, rising to 25,000 during the summer.
- It took more than 500 people three years to construct the bridge.
- The £276 million cost will be repaid by road tolls.
- The road slopes down at a 30° angle from north to south.

Comprehension



- 1 What kind of bridge is the Millau Viaduct?
- 2 What was the final cost of building the bridge?
- 3 How is France able to pay for the building of the bridge?



- 1 The bridge is admired for its 'delicate structure' and 'lightness'. Explain in your own words how this can be the case when the bridge is also heavier than any other bridge in the world.
- 2 What are the writer's own opinions of the bridge? Give two opinions.
- 3 The Millau Viaduct is the highest bridge in the world. 'Highest' is a superlative. The superlative is formed by the suffix *-est* (for example, 'smallest') or by the word 'most' before the adjective (for example, 'most beautiful'). Find another example of each kind of superlative form in the article or fact file.
- 4 Write down more superlative forms (for example, 'the most beautiful', 'the most dangerous', 'the longest', 'the oldest').



- 1 The article introduction describes the creation of the bridge as 'courageous'. Do you agree? Why? Why not?

Language tip

Adjectives and adverbs come in three different forms: the positive (such as 'high', 'comfortable'), the comparative (such as 'higher', 'more comfortable') and the superlative (such as 'highest', 'most comfortable').

Comparative: used to compare one person, thing, action or state to another.

For example: 'This bridge is higher than the Eiffel Tower.'

Superlative: used to compare one thing to all others in the same category.

For example: 'This bridge is the highest bridge in France.'



Stretch zone

Write down the superlative forms of 'much', 'bad', 'little' and 'far'.

Write your own fact file

Choose a famous bridge from another country and write a fact file about it.

A frightening experience

The events in the following text took place in Russia over 200 years ago. Ivan was in charge of the family servants who were bringing the writer, Sergei Askanoff, home from school for the summer holidays. They had to cross the River Kama by ferryboat. At the time, Sergei was just nine years old.

- Read and enjoy autobiography set in a different time and culture
- Recognize the structure and main features of autobiography
- Work out the meaning of new words

Crossing the river

In the afternoon we reached the bank of the Kama River. Opposite us was the village to which we were going to cross by ferryboat. On the bank, waiting to cross with us, were three loaded carts with their drivers, and a group of villagers. The women were carrying baskets full of berries which they were carrying home. The ferryboat was tied to the bank, but there was no ferryman to row us across the river. After some discussion, the villagers and my family servants decided to take us across the river themselves. One of the villagers said he had been a ferryman for some years so he would take the steering oar and guide the ferryboat across.

The mighty Kama, one of Russia's major rivers



The ferryboat was loaded. The three carts with their drivers, my carriage with its three horses and my family servants, the villagers and the women with their baskets were all loaded on board. The man who said he was a ferryman took his place at the steering oar. My servant Ivan had the courage and strength of ten men and he and some villagers took the other oars.

Although the village was directly opposite, we had to row upstream for more than a verst before turning across the river. This was to avoid the current of the angry Kama River.

The boat was moving slowly upstream when a black cloud suddenly appeared and covered the horizon. A violent summer storm was approaching. To save time, the men rowed only part of the necessary verst upstream. They then murmured a prayer and started to row straight across the river. But before we reached the middle of the river, the sky and the water grew black, the wind blew like a hurricane, and thunder and lightning broke over us. The man at the steering oar dropped his oar in panic and confessed that he had never been a ferryman and could not steer. The women shrieked in terror. I was so frightened that I just shook with terror and could not make a sound.

The current carried us down several versts to a sandbank in the river about a hundred yards from the bank, where we came to a halt. Ivan sprang into the chest-high water. He made the quietest of our horses jump off the ferryboat. He managed to put me on it and told me to hang onto the horse's mane. Then he led the horse by its bridle as great waves of black water rushed past. Suddenly Ivan disappeared into deep water and my horse began to swim. I have never forgotten the terror which I felt at that moment.

I felt as though I was drowning in the great black waves, but Ivan was a strong swimmer. He swam on to the shallow water where he could stand without letting go of the horse's bridle. Then he brought us safely to the bank. I was taken off the horse almost unconscious with my hands stiff from clinging to the horse's mane. Soon I recovered and was very happy to find that everyone was safe.

SERGEI ASKANOFF

- Read and enjoy autobiography set in a different time and culture
- Recognize the structure and main features of autobiography
- Work out the meaning of new words

Glossary

ferryboat boat or ship for conveying passengers and goods, especially as a regular service over a short distance

steering oar oversized oar or board to control the direction of a ship before the invention of the rudder

verst old Russian measurement of distance – about one kilometre

current water moving downhill in a river

hurricane storm with a violent wind, in particular a tropical cyclone in the Caribbean

bridle headgear used to control a horse

Comprehension



- 1 What kind of boat took the people across the river? How was it powered?
- 2 What had the women been doing?
- 3 Why did the ferryboat have to go upstream before crossing the river?
- 4 What do you think a sandbank is? (line 32)
- 5 What's the difference between chest-high water, deep water and shallow water?



- 1 Look at the following words from the text. Use the context in the text to decide whether the word is a verb or a noun. Then match each word to its correct definition.

Word	Meaning
bank (line 1)	come to a sudden stop
murmured (line 24)	growth of long hair on the neck of a horse, lion or other mammal
confessed (line 29)	the land alongside or sloping down to a river or lake
halt (line 34)	said something in a low voice
mane (line 36)	admitted committing a crime or doing something wrong

- 2 How does the author build up the tension and sense of fear in the fourth paragraph?
- 3 Why do you think one of the villagers lied about his previous experience on ferryboats?
- 4 What sort of man do you think Ivan is?



- 1 Think about frightening experiences you have had. Take turns to describe your frightening experience. What happened? How did you resolve the situation? What could you have done to stop the situation from happening or to make the situation better? Whose was the most frightening experience?

Write about your experiences

Choose one of the frightening experiences and write an account. Remember to include lots of exciting adverbs and adjectives as well as powerful verbs.

- Discuss the context and setting in which a story is written
- Explore how setting and character are developed
- Use context in a text to identify word class
- Write an account, using a model text



Stretch zone

An autobiography is what a writer writes about his or her own life. The ancient Greek word *auto* means 'self'. Can you think of some other words which begin with the prefix *auto*-? For example, the first cars were called 'automobiles' because they moved by themselves without horses pulling them.

- Explain how language features and figurative language create effects

When do bridges and rivers mean something else?

Look back at the idioms on page 4. Sometimes when writers use the phrases 'building bridges' or 'crossing rivers', they mean something else. You are not meant to take the meaning literally but metaphorically.

Writers, poets and artists often build bridges in their minds, and use the image as a metaphor, a poetic idea, or a way of talking about things differently.

We may use an image of crossing a flooded river to talk about another kind of challenge altogether. This challenge may be just as daunting as a big river. Sometimes these metaphors are such good ways to talk about real life that they become idioms and proverbs.

Explaining proverbs

What is a proverb? How are proverbs different to idioms? What do you think each of these three proverbs means? (Sometimes we know their sources, sometimes we don't!)

It's a big river indeed that cannot be crossed.
(Maori proverb from New Zealand)

Don't change horses while crossing a river.

If you are good at building bridges, you will never fall into the abyss!

Think of a situation that would fit each proverb.

- Consider how you will explain the situation to your classmates.
- Include a lot of detail on the circumstances and background.
- Describe the feelings of those involved.

Walls or bridges?

What did Martin Luther King, Jr. mean when he said, "Let's build bridges, not walls"?

At his inauguration as South African leader in 1994, Nelson Mandela said: "The time for the healing of the wounds has come. The moment to bridge the chasms that divide us has come. The time to build is upon us." What idea do you think he was trying to express? What do you think 'the chasms that divide us' are and what metaphorical bridges could be built to bring us together?

Word origins

literally (adv), refers to a straight interpretation of the facts; comes from the Latin word *littera*, meaning 'letter of the alphabet'

Related words:

- literal
- literature
- letter

metaphorically (adv), refers to saying one thing to mean another; comes via Latin from the Greek verb *metapherein*, meaning 'to transfer'

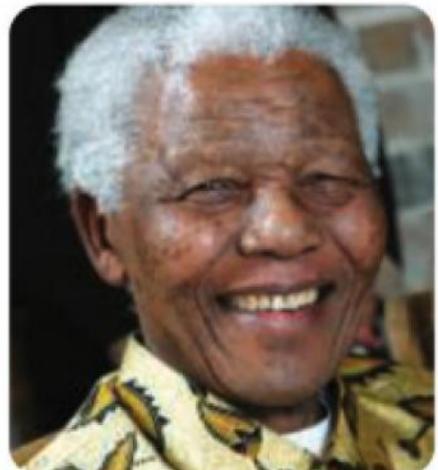
Related words:

- metaphor
- metaphorical

Glossary

inauguration formal ceremony to establish a new leader

chasm deep opening in the ground



Nelson Mandela

Stretch zone

Think of more proverbs and idioms connected to bridges or crossing rivers. Explain what they mean.

- Read and enjoy poetry
- Discuss the features of different types of poems
- Discuss how poets play with themes and conventions

Building bridges

See if you can work out the writer's message in this poem.

The Bridge Builder

- An old man, going a lone highway,
 Came, at the evening, cold and gray,
 To a chasm, vast, and deep, and wide,
 Through which was flowing a sullen tide.
- 5 The old man crossed in the twilight dim;
 The sullen stream had no fears for him;
 But he turned, when safe on the other side,
 And built a bridge to span the tide.
- “Old man,” said a fellow pilgrim, near,
 10 “You are wasting strength with building here;
 Your journey will end with the ending day;
 You never again must pass this way;
 You have crossed the chasm, deep and wide,
 Why build you the bridge at the eventide?”
- 15 The builder lifted his old gray head:
 “Good friend, in the path I have come,” he said,
 “There followeth after me today
 A youth, whose feet must pass this way.
 This chasm, that has been naught to me,
 20 To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be.
 He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
 Good friend, I am building the bridge for him.”

WILL ALLEN DROMGOOLE

Glossary

highway main road

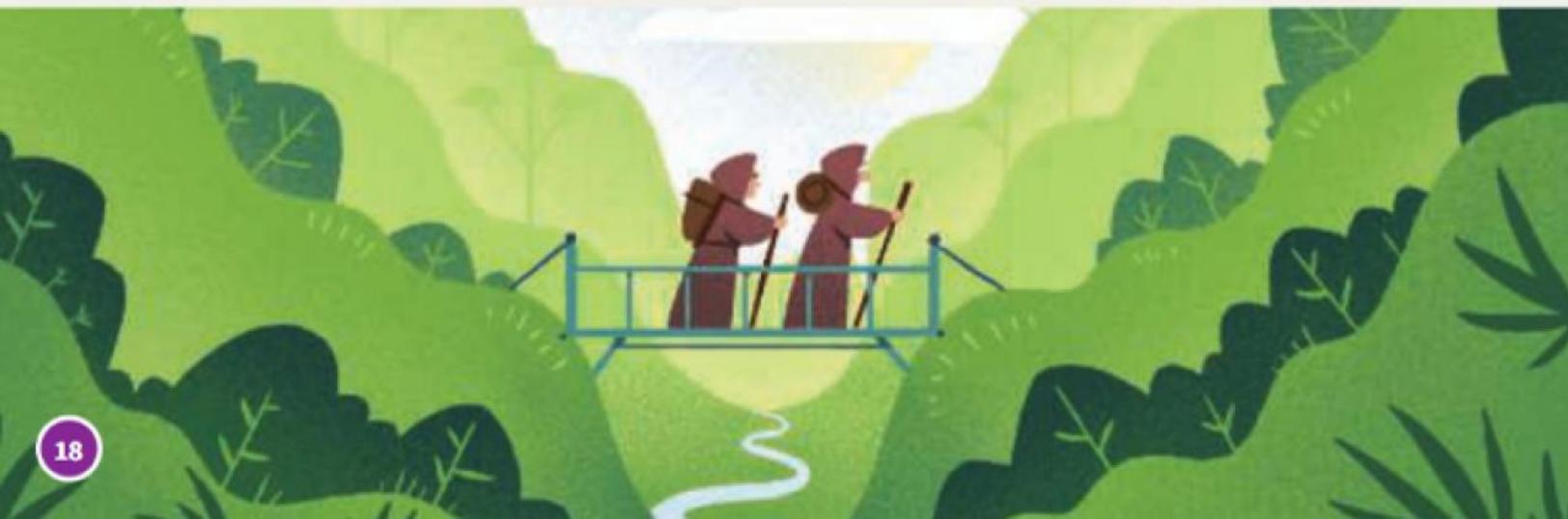
sullen bad-tempered and sulky

tide alternate rising and falling of the sea

twilight soft glowing light from the sky when the sun is going down below the horizon

pilgrim person who travels a long distance to visit a significant place

eventide end of the day; evening



- Use implicit and explicit evidence from a text to answer questions
- Explain how structure and language features create effects
- Write an article

Comprehension



- 1 What problem does the old man face?
- 2 Why is his fellow pilgrim surprised by the old man's actions?
- 3 What explanation does the old man give for building the bridge?
- 4 Who does the third pilgrim represent?
- 5 Copy and complete the table below by writing **three** adjectives to describe each of the pilgrims' characters.

experienced practical curious inexperienced
helpful carefree innocent self-centred considerate

The old pilgrim	The fellow pilgrim	The young pilgrim



- 1 What is the rhyme scheme of the poem? What kind of feeling does this create?
- 2 Give an example of personification from the first stanza.
- 3 Look at the following phrases. What do they mean?
 - 'span the tide' (line 8)
 - 'never again must pass this way' (line 12)
 - 'naught to me' (line 19)



- 1 In pairs, discuss the main themes of the poem and what message the poem is conveying.
- 2 Did you enjoy the poem? What did you like/dislike most about the poem?
- 3 What kind of things can this generation do to help the next generation or make the next generation's life better?

Write a magazine article

Imagine that you face a great challenge in your life – one you are not sure you can overcome. Someone like the old pilgrim arrives. They help you to face up to the challenge and conquer it. Write an article for your school magazine about the experience and how it affected your life. Think about:

- the challenge you faced
- who the old pilgrim was (for example, a friend, teacher, or family member)
- how they helped you overcome the challenge and how that made you feel.



Look back at 'The Bridge Builder'. What chasms can you imagine in your own life? Who would you behave like – the pilgrim who found a way across and moved on, or the old man who found a way across and then built a bridge to make the way easier for others? Explain your choice.

2

Communication

How do we communicate without words?

‘The most important thing in communication is hearing what isn’t said’

PETER DRUCKER

Talk about ...

- What does the quotation mean? Do you think that this is always true?
- Friendships and relationships often break down due to poor communication between people. Do you think it is important that friends can communicate well with each other? Why? Why not?
- What is the best way to communicate with someone? What skills characterize a good listener?
- Apart from the words spoken, how else is a message communicated?

When we think about communication, we usually think about speech, reading and writing, email, texting, and so on. All these methods of communication use words, whether written or spoken.

Communication without words is called ‘non-verbal’. The most basic form of non-verbal communication is the expression on our faces. We also express our emotions through:

- our body language – think about what happens to your shoulders when you are sad
- our hands – what happens to your hands when you are excited?

Often it is not what we say, but how we say it that matters most.

Word origins

verbal (adj), comes from the Latin word *verbum*, meaning ‘word’

Related word:

- verbalize

mime (n), comes from the Greek word *mimos*, meaning ‘mimic’