



Island for Sale

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Summary

A young Scotsman, Duncan McTavish, lives in a big castle with his dog, Jock, on a small Scottish island called Lana. He likes it, but as he cannot afford to pay his electricity bills, he has to sell the island. Mr Moneybags, an estate agent in London, finds a buyer: Leaping Larry, an American rock star who visits the island with his girlfriend, Roxanne. Roxanne hates the cold, dark castle. She is very angry, so they go back to California. Mr Moneybags doesn't want to sell the castle now. Duncan is very unhappy. But then he meets Jean, a teacher who likes painting pictures of the island. Jean has an idea: tourists can stay at the castle and she can teach them to paint pictures. Duncan and Jean get married and live happily in the castle, which is now full of tourists.

Background and themes

Scotland: In northwest Europe, Scotland forms part of the United Kingdom. Apart from the mainland, it consists of over 790 islands. It has its own laws, education system and traditions, but it is not a sovereign state. It is very popular with tourists.

Castles: Big ancient residences generally built in medieval times and owned by rich people. They are sometimes hired for special occasions (weddings, conferences) and are used by tourists interested in a different kind of holiday.

Islands for sale: In some countries islands are not sold as private property, as they are part of the national territory.

Lifestyles: Duncan leads a simple life, though he is the owner of the island. Larry and Roxanne have a different idea of what an interesting life is.

Discussion activities

Section 1, pages 1–7

Before reading

- Discuss:** Talk about the book cover. Have students look at the cover in pairs and do the following.
 - Make a file card. Have students identify title, author, publisher and ISBN and write a file card for the book.
 - Read the title. *What do you think the story is about?*
 - Describe the picture. *What are the people doing? Would you like to live on this island in Scotland? What do you know about Scotland? Find information in books and on the Internet.*

After reading

- Role play:** Ask students to role play the telephone conversation on page 2 between Duncan and Mr Moneybags.

Section 2, pages 10–13

Before reading

- Guess:** Have students look at the picture on page 10 and predict what will happen next. Offer options:
 - Larry and Roxanne love the island and they buy it.*
 - Larry and Roxanne love the island but it is too expensive. They can't buy it.*
 - Larry likes the island but Roxanne doesn't so they don't buy it.*

After reading

- Discuss:** Talk about buying the island. Ask students to imagine Larry's arguments to convince Roxanne that Lana is the ideal place to live in. Get them to make a list of the points he could make.
 - The castle is beautiful.*
 - You can fish every day.*

Section 3, pages 16–19

Before reading

- Guess:** Duncan needs £5,000. He can't get the money from Leaping Larry or Mr Moneybags. What can he do?

After reading

- Discuss:** Talk about the solution to the problem. Students decide which is the best summary of this section.
 - Duncan meets a girl with an answer for his money problems and his life.*
 - Painting holidays are a good idea to make a lot of money.*
 - Teachers and painters always have good ideas for money problems.*
- Read carefully:** Students add the following to their file cards: a short summary of the story and their opinion of the book.

Vocabulary activities

For the Word list and vocabulary activities, go to www.penguinreaders.com.