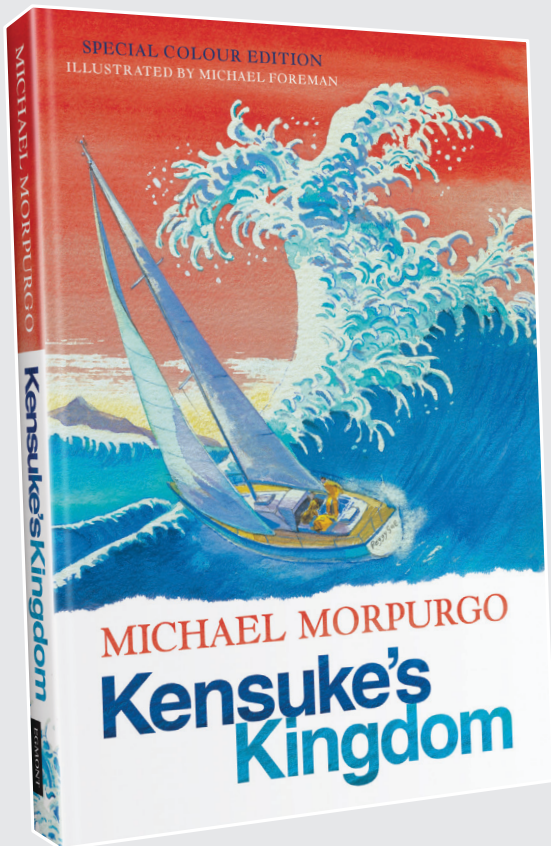


Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Kensuke's Kingdom by **Michael Morpurgo**

About the Author

“*The greater part of writing is daydreaming, dreaming the dream of my story, until it hatches out. I love finishing it and then holding it in my hand and sharing my dream with my readers.*”



Michael Morpurgo was born in 1943. He lives in Devon with his wife, Clare. Michael used to be a primary school teacher before he decided to become a children's book writer. He has written many books, including the bestseller, *War Horse*, which has been made into a West-End play and a film. Michael and his wife also run a children's charity called *Farms for City Children*.

Check out Michael's website at www.michaelmorpurgo.com

And for more information about *Farms for City Children* go to www.farmsforcitychildren.org

Note to the teacher

This set of lesson plans is loosely based on the Year 5 Literacy Framework and covers a range of core skills such as dictionary work and different writing styles. It can be used over a period of 3 weeks to form a unit of work.

However, the suggested activities are in no particular order and not specific only to year 5 so can be used as and when, or as a guided reading activity. All the worksheets are designed to be photocopiable.

Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 1: **Warm up**

Imagine you are on a sailing trip round the world like Michael. You have just docked in a port after your first week and you promised your friends you would keep a blog. Write your first entry in your blog. You might want to think of a title for your blog, and you can include pictures if you wish.

Blog name:

My Name is

I am years old and **I like**

.....

I am **writing** this blog because

.....

The **most amazing** thing I have seen so far is

.....

.....

The **best thing** about the trip is

.....

.....

The **worst thing** about the trip is

.....

.....

The one thing **I really miss** is

.....

.....

Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 2: **Blurb**

Read the blurb again.

“ *I heard the wind above me in the sails. I remember thinking, this is silly, you haven't got your safety harness on, you haven't got your lifejacket on. You shouldn't be doing this. . . I was in the cold of the sea before I could even open my mouth to scream.* ”

Washed up on an island in the Pacific , Michael struggles to survive on his own. With no food and no water, he curls up to die. When he wakes, there is a plate beside him of fish, of fruit, and a bowl of fresh water. He is not alone . . .

What is a blurb?

.....

Why do books have blurbs?

.....

.....

Name **3 things** that you think make a **good blurb**

①

.....

.....

②

.....

.....

③

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.....

Activity 2: **Blurb**

Does this blurb make you want to read the book? **Why/why not?**

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.....

Write a new blurb for the book. Your blurb shouldn't be more than 2 or three sentences long.

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Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 3: Quick comprehension

*Remember
to answer all
questions in
full sentences!*

1. Did Michael have a brother or sister? Copy out the part in the text that tells the reader this information.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2. Why did Michael and his family set off on the Peggy Sue?

.....

.....

.....

3. How did Michael end up on the island?

.....

.....

.....

4. Use **three** adjectives to describe how Michael felt when he first arrived on the island:

①

②

③

Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 4: **Dictionary work**

Michael Morpurgo uses rich, descriptive language in his books to make the story of Kensuke's Kingdom as vivid as possible. Sometimes when we are reading we can understand the meaning of the word even if we have never seen it before. The following sentences have been provided to give you context for the meaning of some difficult words. You can look up the passage by referring to the page numbers. Have a guess at what the word might mean and then look up the definition in a dictionary.

1. "Kensuke never once **reproached** me for what I had done." (p. 139)

My guess

.....

.....

Dictionary definition

.....

.....

2. "Sometimes as I **enunciated** a new word , I noticed that his eyes would light up." (p. 120)

My guess

.....

.....

Dictionary definition

.....

.....

Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 4: **Dictionary work**

3. "He was **diminutive**, no taller than me, and as old a man as I have ever seen." (p.71)

My guess

.....

Dictionary definition

.....

4. "Even then, as I stood there, that first morning, filled with **apprehension** at the terrifying implications of my situation . . ." (p.53)

My guess

.....

Dictionary definition

.....

5. "Some of the bites, particularly on my legs, had now swelled up and become **suppurating** red sores." (p.82)

My guess

.....

Dictionary definition

.....

.....

Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 5: **For and against**

Michael's father is the one who decides that the family will travel around the world. Do you think that this would be a good idea if your family set off round the world together? **Complete the chart with your reasons for and against.**

For

1. It would be a really exciting.....
adventure and would be great fun.....
2. One long holiday and no school.....

Against

1. It would be scary, sailing into.....
the unknown.....
2. Too much time with mum and dad.....

Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 6: **Writing a balanced argument**

Use the following phrases to write a balanced argument about sailing around the world.

- I am not sure that sailing around the world with my family would be a good thing because . . .
- On the other hand . . .
- However . . .
- One good thing about it would be . . .
- Nevertheless . . .
- Another point of view is . . .
- In conclusion . . .

A large rectangular writing area with horizontal dotted lines for text. The area is framed by a thin black border and is set against a light gray background. The dotted lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the writing area, providing a guide for handwriting.

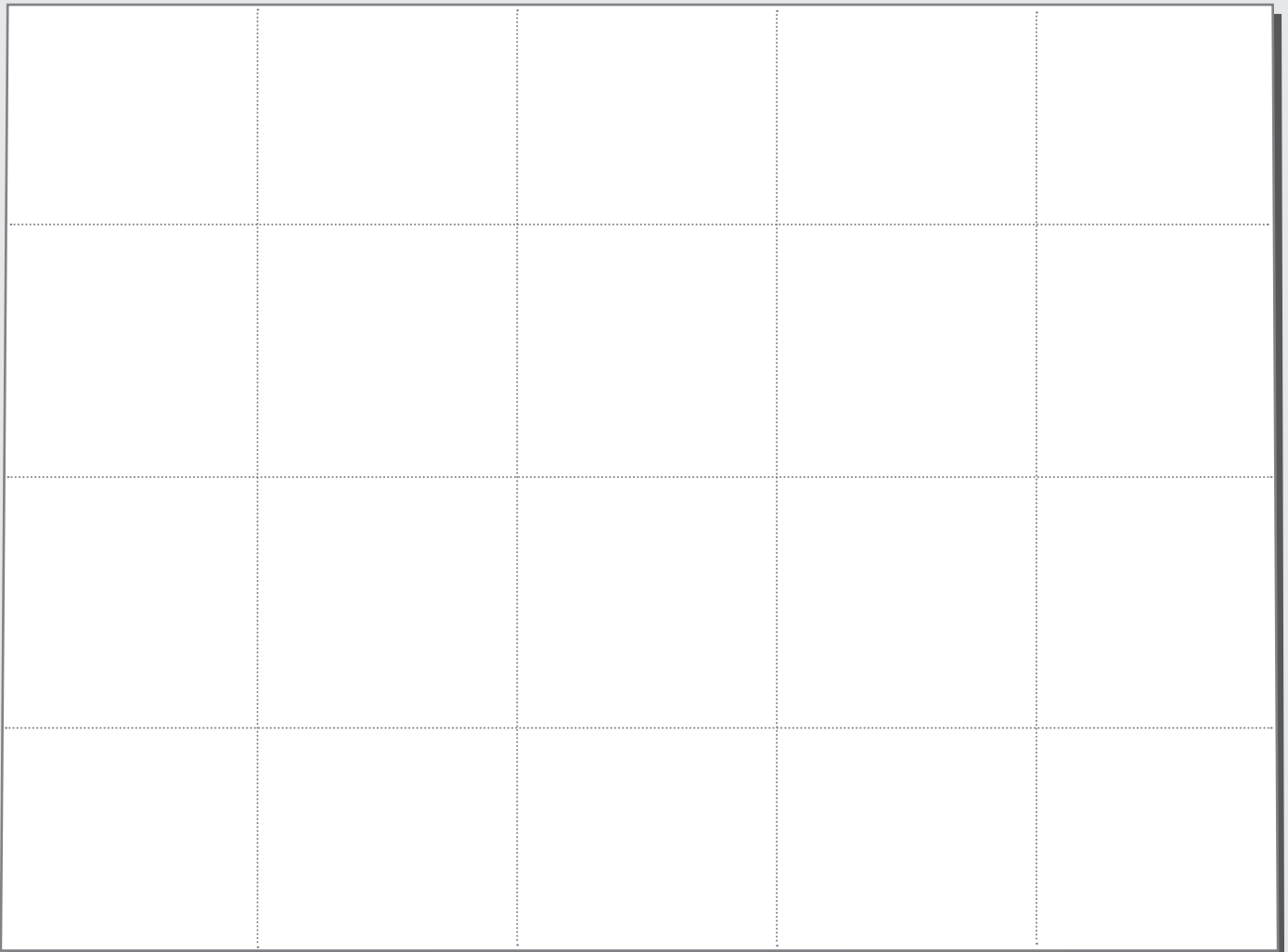
Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 7: Drawing the island

Re-read the passage below:

“ The Island looked perhaps two or three miles in length, no more. It was shaped a bit like an elongated peanut, but longer at one end than the other. There was a long swathe of brilliant white beach on both sides of the island, and at the far end another hill, the slopes steeper and more thickly wooded, but not so high as mine. With the exception of these twin peaks the entire island seemed to be covered with forest. So far as I could see there was no sign of any human life. Even then, as I stood there, that first morning, filled with apprehension at the terrifying implications of my dreadful situation, I remember thinking how wonderful it was, a green jewel of an island framed in white, the sea all about it a silken shimmering blue. Strangely, perhaps comforted somehow by the extraordinary beauty of the place, I was not at all down-hearted. On the contrary I felt strangely elated. I was alive. Stella Artois was alive. We had survived. (p.53) ”

Now draw a map of the island from the description. Label your map with as much detail as you can.



Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 8: **Missing person's poster**

Michael's Mum and Dad must have been really worried when Michael went missing. Imagine you are either his Mum or Dad and try to design a missing persons poster to find him again. Here are some pointers to help you get started:

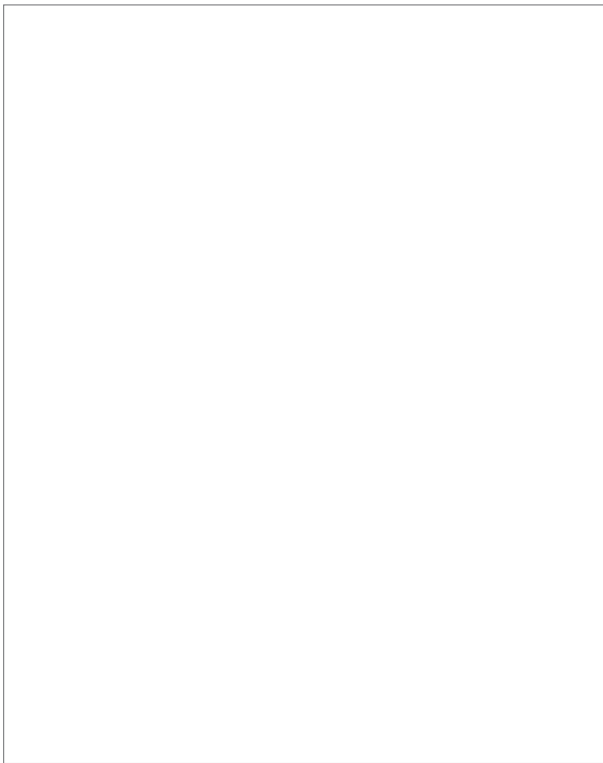
- Think about what information needs to be included in a missing person's poster
- How would you describe Michael?
- What evidence can you find in the text to support your ideas?

Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 8: **Missing person's poster**

MISSING

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS PERSON?



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

PLEASE HELP!!!

.....

.....

.....

.....

Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 9: Writing a dialogue

Read the last paragraph from the book again:

“ For almost a year my mother and father had searched for me. No one would help them, for no one would believe I could still be alive – not a chance in a million, they said. My father too – he later admitted – had given me up for dead. But never my mother. So far as she was concerned I was alive, I had to be alive. She simply knew it in her heart. So they had sailed from island to island, searching on until they had found me. ”

Once Michael and Stella had gone missing, Michael's Mum and Dad must have had some very difficult conversations. Imagine a conversation between Michael's Mum and Dad. Then in pairs, act out the conversation. You can use this as a starter if you like:

Dad: Do you think we should carry on looking for him? It's been over six months now..... (Pause)

Mum:

Dad:

Mum:

Dad:

Mum:

Dad:

Mum:

Dad:

Mum:

Dad:

Activity 10: **Writing from another point of view**

A large rectangular writing area with horizontal dotted lines for text entry. The area is framed by a thin black border and is set against a light gray background. The dotted lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the writing area.



26 Friday, 27 May 2005 Evening Standard

RIDDLE OF TWO OCTOGENARIANS DISCOVERED ON REMOTE PHILIPPINE ISLAND



Puzzle: the sister-in-law of Tsuzuki Nakauchi visits his memorial in Japan

Japanese soldiers 'hiding out since 1945 in mountains'

BY PAUL SIMS

TWO elderly men found on a remote island are believed to be Japanese soldiers, in hiding since 1945 and desperate to go home.

Diplomats from Tokyo are investigating the claims of the men, identified by a news agency as Yoshio Yamakawa, 87, and Tsuzuki Nakauchi, 83. Their

story emerged when a logger ran into them in the mountains of the southern Philippine island of Mindanao.

They told him they wanted to return to Japan but were afraid of being court-martialed for get-

ting separated from their division and withdrawing from action. They had equipment that suggests they are former soldiers.

According to reports there may be more than 40 other Japanese soldiers living in the mountains, all wanting to go home almost 60 years since Japan formally surrendered.

Japanese embassy representatives are going to the region to interview the men. Prime minister Junichiro Koizumi said in Tokyo he hoped the mystery would be cleared up soon.

He said: "It is a surprise if it's true. We are checking it now."

The reports are reminiscent of Lieutenant Hiroo Onoda, who believed the war was still on when he was found in the jungles of the Philippines in 1974.

He refused to give up until the Japanese government flew in his former commander to tell him personally that the war was over.



JAPANESE SOLDIERS SAID TO HAVE BEEN HIDING FOR 60 YEARS



Wartime: a family photograph of Tsuzuki Nakauchi, believed to be one of the two men

Daily Mail, Saturday, May 28, 2005

Is the war really over?



Riding out: A young Tsuzuki Nakauchi

From **Simon Atkinson** in Manila

TWO Japanese soldiers who did not know the Second World War was over have been found in the Philippines jungle after hiding out for 60 years, it was reported last night.

The men, aged 85 and 87, are said to want to return home - but fear they may face a court-martial for desertion. Japanese diplomats who flew to the Philippines had hoped to officially identify the two yesterday at a meeting arranged in the city of General Santos, 800 miles south of the capital Manila.

But the men failed to show up at a hotel, apparently because they were nervous about large crowds that had gathered.

The diplomats are trying to contact a mediator to schedule another meeting this weekend.

Japanese media named the men as 87-year-old Yoshio Yamakawa from Osaka, and 85-year-old Tsuzuki Nakauchi, but the Tokyo government refused to confirm their identities.

Nakauchi's family released an undated picture of him as a young lance corporal on a horse, but gave no further details.

The discovery of the men comes 31 years after a Japanese officer, Lieutenant Hiroo Onoda, was found living in the jungle on the Filipino island of Lubang. He thought the war was still on, refusing to believe news dropped by aircraft saying it was over.

Onoda would not give himself up until the Japanese government formally told him that his country had surrendered to the Allies in September 1945. He was pardoned by Philippines president Ferdinand Marcos and returned home a hero.

Yesterday Japan's prime minister Junichiro Koizumi said it is unclear whether the two newly-found men are genuine soldiers,

Two Japanese soldiers are found holding out in jungle after 60 years

or whether they had known the war ended 60 years ago. "If this is true, it's quite a surprise," he added. "They've really done well to stay alive this long." He said the government would make every effort to repatriate them, if that is what they want.

The men were found in the mountains' Columbo area of Mindanao island - now a hotbed of kidnapping gangs and Muslim rebels. Local news reports said they had made contact with a Japanese who was searching for

the remains of soldiers in the area. Genji Ichikawa, chairman of a veterans group in Japan, said he believed the reports to be true, and had been told that several other soldiers are living in the mountains of Mindanao.

"It's amazing they were able to survive for 60 years," he added. "Of course I am stunned."

The Philippines was the scene of murderous fighting at the end of the war as U.S. troops drove out the Japanese, who had invaded in 1941. Hiroo Onoda,

trained in guerrilla warfare, was left in the jungle with a small band of soldiers and forbidden by his commander to commit suicide. He was told: "We'll come back for you whatever happens."

The remaining soldiers died, but Onoda survived on bananas and coconuts. In October 1945, he first saw a leaflet that claimed the war was over - but dismissed it as an Allied ruse.

After returning to Japan, he moved to Brazil, and was last heard of running a ranch there.

Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 12: Writing a letter

At the end of the book, Michael Morpurgo includes a postscript.

Dear Michael,

I write to tell you, in my bad English, that my name is Michiya Ogawa. I am the son of Dr Kensuke Ogawa. Until I read your book I thought my father had died in the war. My mother died only three years ago still believing this. As you say in your book, we lived in Nagasaki, but we were very lucky. Before the bomb fell we went into the countryside to see my grandmother for a few days. So we lived.

I have no memories of my father, only some photographs and your book. It would be a pleasure to talk to someone who knew my father as you did. Maybe one day we could meet. I hope so.

*With my best wishes,
Michiya Ogawa.*

Imagine that Kensuke has just found out that his son is still alive.

Dear Father,

After reading a book called 'Kensuke's Kingdom' by an English author, Michael Morpurgo, I have discovered that you are alive! After all these years of thinking you were dead. I cannot explain how happy this makes me and I have so many questions I want to ask you.

However, I imagine you would like to hear about my mother. She died three years ago believing that you had died. She was very sad but we kept each other company and talked about you a lot. We were very lucky that day the bomb fell as we went to see grandma out in the countryside. We stayed with grandma until the bombs stopped.

For many years Nagasaki was an ugly place but now it has been rebuilt and there are people who do not even remember the bombing. Like my son, who is named Kensuke after you.

Please write to me telling me all your news. Where have you lived all this time? How did you come to be on an island?

Your son, Michiya

Write a letter as Kensuke in response to Michiya's letter, explaining what happened. Use your research, the newspaper articles and the text to help you.

Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Activity 12: **Writing a letter**

Dear Michiya,.....

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Love from Kensuke.....

日本
笑う
愛
祿
先生

Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Extra Sheet

A large white rectangular area with horizontal dotted lines for writing, intended for lesson activities. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page.



Kensuke's Kingdom Lesson Activities

Extra Sheet

