

Don't Stop Now!

Aims

- To introduce students to the main characters in the story.
- To introduce students to the setting and to the initial action.

1 Ask students to read the People in the Story list and tell you how they think they are connected.

Answers: Paolo is the owner of the Web Café; Kate is Paolo's daughter; Matt delivers drinks to the Web Café; Paolo knew the Vassallo brothers in Malta.

2 Tell students that in *Don't Stop Now!* Paolo's Web Café is in the Soho district of London. Ask them if they know anything about Soho. You might elicit/mention some of the well-known places in and around the area to help them (e.g. Carnaby Street, China Town, Leicester Square and Piccadilly Circus).

Make a list of anything they can tell you on the board, then ask them to read Extract 1 to find out more. What sort of place does it sound like?

Answers: Soho is a place of entertainment with cinemas, restaurants and music. There are nice and bad people there. It sounds interesting but dangerous.

3 Remind students that Paolo runs a Web Café. Ask them what a Web Café is. What do people do there and why?

Answers: People go there to have something to eat and drink while they buy time to use the computers to send emails and use the Internet, often because they are away from their own computers.

4 Tell students that the book is called *Don't Stop Now!* Ask them to think of some situations in which a person might say this to someone.

Possible answer: You might say this when someone has started doing something that needs to be finished, but he or she needs to be encouraged to get the job done; e.g. to encourage a person who is climbing a mountain but getting tired, to carry on climbing until he or she reaches the top.

5 Ask students to read Extracts 2, which come from the start of the story. Ask them what happens in the Web Café and who they think did it.

Answers: a window in the café is broken; a message is delivered; Matt and Kate see no one; Kate and her father believe that it was done by 'those two men' (i.e. the Vassallo brothers).

Ask what they think the message 'Don't stop now!' might mean in this context – who should not stop what and why? Refer students to the list of characters to prompt their ideas.

6 The story is narrated from the viewpoint of Matt. Ask students to read Extracts 3 and write a description of Matt. Ask them to include facts they have learned about him and to think of adjectives that describe his personality.

7 Tell students that Matt helps Kate to deliver the pizzas that evening. Ask them to read Extracts 4 and decide what the 'special pizza' might be and who it was delivered to. NB: what was in the 'special' pizza box is deliberately left blank. Based on what they know about Matt and Kate, ask students to work in pairs to consider what Matt and Kate might say to each other when she comes out of the office. Ask them to write the dialogue between Matt and Kate. They should then perform it for another pair.

8 From what they have read, ask students to tell you what genre this story is.

Answer: thriller – although they might add romance, because of the Kate/Matt relationship.

9 Ask students to work in pairs and come up with their own version of the story, given what they know about the characters, their relationships and the problems at the Web Café. Ask them to tell it to another pair, then call back some ideas in a whole-class setting.

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People in the Story

Matt: he drives a soft drinks delivery lorry

Kate: she is Paolo's daughter; she's a student and sometimes helps in the Web Café

Paolo: he is a Maltese man who owns the Web Café, which is also a pizza restaurant with a takeaway and home delivery service

Antonio/Victor Vassallo: they are two 'businessmen' brothers from Malta

Extract 1

In the day it's famous for music and films. At night people come and eat in the restaurants. Expensive restaurants and cheap restaurants; Italian restaurants and Chinese restaurants . . . In Soho you can buy anything and anyone. There are lots of nice people in Soho. But there are also lots of people who are . . . not very nice.

Extracts 2

- Crash!
'Aaah!'
I looked up from my coffee. 'Crash!' – that was the café window. And 'Aaah!' – that was Kate.
People in the café shouted. Kate and I ran to the window. There was no one there.
- She walked over to her father and took his hand.
'Was it those men?' she asked.
Paolo answered slowly, 'Yes, I think it was.'
- I saw a small piece of paper near the window. There was writing on the paper, but I didn't understand it. It wasn't in English. I gave the paper to Paolo.
- 'What does it say?' I asked.
Kate looked round again . . . 'It's in Maltese. It says "Don't stop now!"'
- 'Who wrote this?' I asked.
'One of two men – I don't know which,' Kate said. I think my father knew them in Malta a long time ago.'

Extracts 3

- . . . I turned to Kate and put my arm round her. 'Are you all right?' I asked
- I take drinks to the shops and cafés. I do judo most evenings and I'm good at it. I'm not rich and famous. And I don't know a lot.
- Kate is Paolo's daughter. She's a student, but she helps him in the café. She's why I go there a lot.
- People often find it easy to talk to me. Everyone, not just friends. Well, not my family. My mother and father are dead, and I don't have any brothers or sisters. I don't have a wife – sometimes there's a girl, but only for a short time.
- I'm 20, and I love football and judo. I also love Kate, but she doesn't know that.

Extracts 4

- 'Please, help me with the pizzas.' . . .
'OK,' I said. 'But when?'
'Now,' Kate answered. 'All right, Papa?'
Paolo smiled. 'All right,' he said. 'Thank you Matt – you're a good friend. Oh, and there's also a "special" pizza, Kate. You know what to do.'
Kate looked at her father. 'I understand,' she said.
- I looked at my watch. Eight o'clock. I was hungry. I looked around, but I couldn't see Kate. I opened the box on the motorbike. There was only one pizza in it. It was the 'special' pizza. What was a 'special' pizza anyway? I quickly opened the 'special' pizza box. But there was no pizza in it, only a
- I got off the motorbike and started to walk to the office door. Just then Kate came out. She had the pizza box under her arm. She wasn't smiling. A man in a long coat closed the door behind her.