

# The Double Bass Mystery

Jeremy Harmer

## Before reading

1. Look at the front cover and back cover blurb. What do you know about this city?
2. Look at the picture on page 4. Which people and musical instruments do you like?
3. Match the chapter titles with the sentences from each chapter.

Chapter 1 A bit of a problem

Chapter 2 A beautiful day

Chapter 3 A newspaper, a beach

Chapter 4 The concert

Chapter 5 Screams in the night

- a At five to ten we walked on to the theatre stage and sat down. The audience stopped talking.
  - b Then I heard a different sound. Somebody was shouting. No, it was worse than that.
  - c 'We've got lots of free time. Let's go to the beach or something.'
  - d Most of them were in Spanish or Catalan, but there was one from Britain. I began to read it. There was a story about a painting.
  - e 'My double bass? What's wrong with my double bass?'
4. If you have the cassette, listen to Chapter 1.

## Check your reading

### CHAPTER 1

1. Match the beginnings and endings.

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 1 The Barston Symphony Orchestra arrived in Spain       | a by coach. |
| 2 The Barston Symphony Orchestra travelled to Barcelona | b by truck. |
| 3 The big instruments got to Barcelona                  | c by plane. |

2. Match the numbers and phrases.

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1 85 | a Penny's age                                      |
| 2 26 | b the number of double basses in the BSO           |
| 3 8  | c the number of months Penny has played in the BSO |
| 4 6  | d the number of people in the BSO                  |

### CHAPTER 2

1. Who is ...

- a Simon's girlfriend?
- b 33 years old?
- c double bass number one?
- d Penny and Simon's friend?

Simon Adriana Candida Penny

2. Look at page 8. What do you think Simon is thinking about?

### CHAPTER 3

1. True or false?
  - a Penny read a Spanish newspaper.
  - b The thieves took the painting and its frame.
  - c The police found Penny's double bass.
  - d Frank and Adriana were shouting at each other.
  - e There weren't any cars in the middle of the Ramblas.
  - f Penny was happy in Barcelona.

### CHAPTER 4

1. Correct the summary.

The concert started at half past nine. They played four pieces of music. Penny didn't play very well. Simon sat at the back of the theatre for the first half of the concert and after the break he sat at the front. After the concert had finished, Penny couldn't find Simon. Adriana said she knew where he was. Penny left the theatre with Frank and they walked down the Ramblas to a restaurant. When Penny got back to her room she watched television and then went to bed.

2. Where do you think Simon is?

### CHAPTER 5

1. Look at the words in italics. Who is *I, you, he, she*?

- a *I* was dreaming about double basses and violinists.
- b *She* was half-asleep, still in her night-dress.
- c *She* screamed again.
- d '*He's* dead!'
- e '*He's* very good-looking with his dark hair and those eyes.'
- f 'Where were *you* last night?'
- g 'Haven't *you* listened to me?'

Frank Marilyn Simon Penny Adriana Inspector Portillo

### CHAPTER 6

1. Match the questions and answers.

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 So you think I'm stupid, do you?          | a Well, no we didn't.              |
| 2 Where were you last night?                | b No, of course not.               |
| 3 And after the concert?                    | c That's a very personal question. |
| 4 Do you have a boyfriend in the orchestra? | d I came back to the hotel.        |
| 5 Did you spend the night together?         | e I was at the concert.            |

### CHAPTER 7

1. Who said what?

- a 'Frank was like a father to me.'
- b 'I'm looking for Penny, actually.'
- c 'We ask the questions.'
- d 'You should ask me about Candida.'

Martin Inspector Portillo Adriana Penny

2. Do you think Candida killed Frank? Why or why not?

# The Double Bass Mystery

Jeremy Harmer

## CHAPTER 8

1. True, false or don't know?
  - a Penny and Simon went to a restaurant together.
  - b Penny wanted to talk to Adriana about Simon.
  - c Marilyn and Candida both loved Frank.
  - d Candida pushed Frank out of the window.
  - e Adriana made Marilyn stop shouting.
  - f Simon was in the hotel when Penny got back.
2. What do you think Simon knows?

## CHAPTER 9

1. Put the events in the right order.
  - a The police found a painting in Paris.
  - b Two men took Penny's double bass from the truck.
  - c Two men opened the truck with a key.
  - d The truck drivers had a meal and a cup of coffee.
  - e Somebody took a painting from the Tate Gallery.
  - f The big instruments were put into a truck.
  - g Somebody put a painting inside Penny's double bass case.

## CHAPTER 10

1. Look at the words in italics. Who is *I*, *you*, *he*, *she*?
  - a *He* needed to think about his problems.
  - b *She* sent him letters, gave him things, talked to him, followed him everywhere.
  - c *He* gave Simon a large brown envelope.
  - d 'Why did *you* do it?'
  - e '*I* wanted more money.'
  - f '*I* don't want to see *you* again.'
  - g When *I* walked out of the police station *I* didn't look back.

Penny   the Frenchman   Frank   Simon   Marilyn
2. What two things told the police that Simon killed Frank?

## CHAPTER 11

1. Who ...
  - a didn't go to Bilbao?
  - b had a secret?
  - c was in Adriana's room the night Frank was killed?
  - d found something she had lost?
  - e came to Bilbao to find Penny?

Martin   Simon   Inspector Portillo   Adriana   Penny
2. What question does Inspector Portillo ask Penny? What do you think her answer is?

## After reading

Choose some of these activities.

1. Write a sentence about each picture.
2. Imagine you are Penny. Write a postcard to a friend at the end of your first day in Barcelona.
3. Look at Chapter 6. Inspector Portillo talks to Simon next. What questions does Inspector Portillo ask Simon?
4. Look at page 40. Frank phoned the police. Write the conversation.
5. Word search. There are 10 words from the story in this puzzle. How many can you find?

I	C	A	P	T	E	V	O	P	Z
N	O	R	C	H	E	S	T	R	A
S	M	V	O	E	P	O	C	Y	T
T	P	I	N	A	M	U	S	I	C
R	O	O	D	T	S	N	O	D	O
U	S	L	U	R	A	D	E	L	N
M	E	I	C	E	S	V	A	W	C
E	R	N	T	D	F	I	N	S	E
N	T	L	O	P	L	A	Y	E	R
T	H	E	R	F	B	O	N	R	T

6. Which character do you like the most? Why?
7. What happens after the end of the story? Write about Penny's next trip to Spain.
8. Do you think *The Double Bass Mystery* is a good title? Can you think of any other good titles?
9. Make your own activities for other students to do.  
e.g. Make a word puzzle or write some True/False questions.
10. Here is the blurb from another book at this level.

### Superbird

A spaceship crashes on a strange planet and everyone on it dies – except for one person. She helps the people of the planet to build their own spaceship, and returns home in it. But when she is back home with her own people, the real trouble begins.

Do you want to read *Superbird*?

**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

ISBN 0-521-96589-6



9 780521 965897 >