

Jerome K. Jerome

Three Men in a boat



free Audiobook



Jerome K. Jerome

Three Men in a Boat

To Say Nothing of the Dog!

Text adaptation and activities by **Gina D. B. Clemen**

Illustrated by **Franco Grazioli**



Editor: Michela Bruzzo
Design and art direction: Nadia Maestri
Computer graphics: Emilia Coari
Picture research: Laura Lagomarsino

© 2002 Black Cat

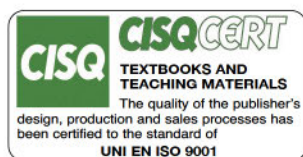
Revised edition
© 2007 Black Cat

Picture credits:

Getty Images: 4; © Private Collection/Photo © Christie's Images/The Bridgeman Art Library: 5; Cideb Archive: 16; © Private Collection/The Stapleton Collection/The Bridgeman Art Library: 17; By kind permission of the Marquess of Tavistock and Trustees of Bedford Estate: 50-51; © Adam Woolflit/CORBIS: 53; © Brigitte Bott/Robert Harding World Imagery/CORBIS: 54; Mary Evans Picture Library: 64; The Granger Collection, New York: 65; Â © World History Archive/TopFoto.co.uk: 75; © Chris Andrews; Chris Andrews Publications/CORBIS: 105; REUTERS/Toby Melville: 107.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the written permission of the publisher.

We would be happy to receive your comments and suggestions, and give you any other information concerning our material.
info@blackcat-cideb.com
blackcat-cideb.com



Printed in Italy by Litoprint, Genoa



Contents



	A Note on Jerome Klapka Jerome	4
	The Victorian Age	5
CHAPTER 1	Health Problems	8
CHAPTER 2	Planning the Trip	18
CHAPTER 3	Packing	25
CHAPTER 4	Ready for the Trip	34
CHAPTER 5	First Day on the Boat	42
CHAPTER 6	Harris Makes Scrambled Eggs	56
CHAPTER 7	The Laughing Tin	67
CHAPTER 8	Montmorency Meets a Cat	76
CHAPTER 9	Fighting Swans	87
CHAPTER 10	Three Men out of a Boat	95
Dossiers	Fox-Terriers	16
	Queen Elizabeth I	50
	Life on the River	53
	Preserving Food	64
	The Magna Carta	74
	Famous People and Places on the Thames	84
	Oxford	105



INTERNET PROJECTS

33, 40, 66, 86, 108

ACTIVITIES

6, 14, 17, 22, 31, 39, 48, 52, 55, 61,
65, 75, 81, 86, 92, 102, 108

EXIT TEST

109

KEY TO EXIT TEST

111



PET Cambridge ESOL PET-style activities 14, 22, 24, 31, 32, 39,
55, 61, 62, 63, 72, 81, 92, 102, 104, 109

T: GRADES 5/6 Trinity-style activities

32, 104

The text is recorded in full.

n. track

end



These symbols indicate the beginning and end of the passages
linked to the listening activities.



Jerome Klapka *Jerome*

Jerome Klapka Jerome was born in the town of Walsall in central England in 1859. His strange second name is a version of his father's second name, Clapp. He left school at the age of fourteen and started working for a railway company. He later worked as a teacher, an actor and a journalist.

In 1888, he published his first book, *On Stage and Off*, and the next year he had

A photo of **Jerome K Jerome** taken in 1890, a year after the publication of *Three Men in a Boat*.

success with *The Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow* and *Three Men in a Boat*.

Jerome wrote *Three Men in a Boat* as soon as he finished his honeymoon, which he and his wife had spent on the River Thames.

The book was so popular that the following year the number of boats registered on the River Thames went up by fifty percent.

In 1892, he was one of the founders of *The Idler*, an illustrated monthly magazine. He also founded a weekly newspaper, *Today*.

His other writing includes *Three Men on the Bummel*, another humorous novel in which the three main characters of *Three Men in a Boat* go on holiday in Germany and have a series of comic adventures, several plays, of which the most successful was *The Passing of the Third Floor Back* (1908), and a book of essays and memories, *My Life and Times* (1926).

He died in 1927 and was buried near the River Thames.

The Victorian Age

Three Men in a Boat was written in 1889, towards the end of the nineteenth-century and towards the end of the Victorian age, so called because from 1837 till 1901 Queen Victoria was the British queen. She had nine children from her marriage with Prince Albert, her German husband, but after the early death of Albert in 1861 she never remarried and had little to do with public life. She was very popular, however, and hers was the longest reign in British history. During her reign Britain became a very rich country and the British Empire became the biggest in the world: Victoria was declared empress of India in 1876.



An Omnibus Ride to Picadilly Circus (1885) by Alfred Morgan. Middle-class passengers share an early version of a bus, which was pulled by horses.



There were great changes in the way of life for almost everybody. Most people now lived in towns and cities and worked in industry, making products in factories, or in commerce, buying and selling things.

The rich and middle classes had a good quality of life, but many of the workers lived and worked in very bad conditions. Some writers, particularly Charles Dickens (1812-70), protested against these social problems in their writing.

Life was hard, too, for workers in the country, but most British people who lived in the towns and cities liked the idea of country life, and the three men in this story who decide to take a holiday on the river show the typical middle-class Victorian attraction to country life.

1 Comprehension check

Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)? Correct the false ones.

	T	F
1 <i>Three Men in a Boat</i> was written in the twentieth-century.	☐	☐
2 Queen Victoria was married to an English prince.	☐	☐
3 Queen Victoria was the head of the biggest empire in the world.	☐	☐
4 Most people lived in the country in the Victorian age.	☐	☐
5 In the towns and cities, everybody lived and worked in very bad conditions.	☐	☐

2 Discussion

In your country in the nineteenth-century, what did people think about life in the cities and towns and life in the country?

Before you read

1 Vocabulary

Look at these illnesses:

- If you feel *dizzy* it feels as if your head is going around and that you might fall over.
- *Housemaid's knee* is very painful. Fluid collects on your knees: it hurts!
- A *liver disease* affects your *liver*, a large organ in your body which cleans your blood.

Which of the above are the least and most dangerous, do you think?

2 Reading pictures

Look at the picture on page 11 of the three men in our story (not forgetting Montmorency, the dog).

- Do they seem to have any of the illnesses described in activity 1?
- Do they seem to have a healthy way of living?



3 Listening

track 02

Listen to the first part of Chapter One and decide if these sentences are true (T) or false (F). Correct the false ones.

- 1 The four friends were in the kitchen.
- 2 They were discussing their favourite restaurant.
- 3 Montmorency felt dizzy.
- 4 J visited the library at the British Museum.
- 5 J has known the doctor for a long time.
- 6 The doctor gave J a medical dictionary to read.
- 7 The chemist did not have the medicines J needed.
- 8 George had liver problems.

T	F
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐



Health Problems

There were four of us — George, William Samuel Harris, myself (my friends call me J), and Montmorency. We were sitting in my room and were smoking and talking about our bad health.



track 02

We were all feeling very ill, and we were unhappy about it. Harris said he felt dizzy sometimes. George felt dizzy, too.

My big problem was my liver. I knew I had a bad liver. I had read about all the symptoms of liver disease in a book. I had every symptom that was written.

Every time I read about an illness, I realise that I have it.

One day, I had a little health problem. I went to the British Museum Library to read about it. After some time, I began reading about another illness. I don't remember the name now, but it was something terrible. I knew I had that terrible illness, too.

I began reading the book from the letter 'a' to the letter 'z'. I had the symptoms of all the diseases in the book, except for one!

Health Problems

I didn't have housemaid's knee. This made me a bit unhappy. Why didn't I have housemaid's knee, too?

With all the diseases I had, I knew my life was short. I tried to examine myself. I tried to feel my heart. I tried to look at my tongue. When I had walked into the library, I had been a happy, healthy man. When I left it, I was a very ill man.

I went to see my doctor. He is an old friend. Whenever I think I am ill, he examines me and says I am fine. A doctor really must have practice! This time, I thought, he will get more practice with me than with a thousand normal patients. After all, normal patients have only one or two diseases each.

'Well, what's wrong with you?' he asked.

I said, 'If I tell you what is wrong with me, you will die before I finish. Life is too short! I'll tell you what is not wrong with me... I don't have housemaid's knee. But I have everything else.'

I told him about what I had read at the library.

He looked at me carefully. He listened to my heart and looked at my tongue. After that, he wrote a prescription¹ and gave it to me. I put it in my pocket and went out.

I didn't read the prescription. I took it to the chemist's and gave it to him. He read it and gave it back to me. He said, 'I don't have the things on the prescription.'

'But you're a chemist, aren't you?' I asked.

He said, 'You're right, sir. I'm a chemist. I don't have a shop and a hotel.'

1. **prescription** : written order for medicine.

Three Men in a Boat

I read the prescription. It said:

Every six hours: 1 lb¹ of good, fresh meat

1 pint of beer

Every morning: 1 ten-mile walk

Go to bed no later than 11 o'clock each night and don't read books about things you don't understand.

I followed the doctor's prescription. It saved my life. I now feel rather well, except for my liver problem. The main symptom of liver disease is 'a general feeling of sleepiness² and no interest in working.'

I have suffered from this illness ever since I was a boy. Medical science was not advanced in those days. Doctors did not know that I had liver illness. They thought I was lazy. People called me 'a lazy little devil', and said, 'go and do your work.' They did not know I was ill with liver disease. Instead of giving me liver pills, they gave me blows³ on the head. Those blows were good for me, because after each blow I went to do my work. That old remedy worked better than a box of modern pills.

That evening, George, William Harris and I sat in my room. We described our illnesses. I explained to George and William Harris how I felt in the morning. William Harris told us how he felt when he went to bed. Then George stood up, and told us how he felt at night.

1. **lb** : written abbreviation for pound. It is equal to 0.454 kilograms.

2. **sleepiness** : desire to sleep.

3. **blows** : hard hits with the hand or object.



Three Men in a Boat

George always thinks he is ill, but there is really nothing wrong with him.



end

At that moment, Mrs Poppets, the housekeeper, ¹ served our dinner. We were not hungry. We ate some meat, onions and cake. We had no interest in food.

We began talking about our illnesses again. We all knew that our illnesses were caused by too much work.

‘We need a rest,’ said Harris.

‘A rest and a change,’ George added. ‘Our minds are tired from too much work. We must rest our minds.’

‘Let’s go to the countryside!’ I said. ‘We’ll find a nice, quiet place, with no people.’

Harris said, ‘Oh, how boring! In the country everyone goes to bed at eight o’clock. You can’t even find a newspaper! If you want a rest and a change, then the best place is the sea.’

‘What a terrible idea!’ I said. ‘A sea trip gives you seasickness. ² Who wants a whole week of seasickness? You leave on Monday and you’re feeling well. On Tuesday you feel worse. Then on Wednesday you’re really sick. On Thursday and Friday you’re almost dead. On Saturday you can finally drink a few teaspoons of tea. On Sunday you can walk again and eat some food. Then on Monday you’re happy, because it’s time to get off the boat.’

So George said, ‘Let’s go up the river. We’ll have fresh air and quiet on the river. The hard work on the boat will make us hungry, so we’ll enjoy our food. We’ll be so tired at the end of the day, that we’ll sleep well.’

1. **housekeeper** : person who cooks and cares for the house.

2. **seasickness** : feeling sick in the stomach because of the movement of a boat on water.

Health Problems

Harris said, ‘You don’t have any trouble sleeping, George. There are only twenty-four hours in the day, and you sleep most of that time. If you sleep any more, you’re dead! However, I like your idea of a holiday on the River Thames.’

I liked it too. George was surprised that we both liked his idea. The only one who didn’t like the idea was Montmorency, my fox-terrier.¹ He looked at us with his big eyes.

‘You like the idea, but I don’t,’ his face said. ‘On the river there’s nothing for me to do. I don’t like looking at the trees. I certainly don’t smoke. If I see a rat, you won’t stop the boat so I can run after it. When I’m asleep, you’ll probably rock² the boat, and I’ll fall into the river. The whole idea is stupid.’

We were three to one. So we decided to go on the river trip.

1. **fox-terrier** : a type of dog (see picture on page 11).

2. **rock** : move from side to side, forward and backward.

The text and **beyond**

PET 1 **Comprehension check**

For each question choose the correct answer, A, B, C or D.

- 1 What is the person telling the story called?

A ☐ Montmorency	B ☐ George
C ☐ J	D ☐ William Samuel Harris
- 2 Why did J go to the British Museum Library?

A ☐ to get some information on health
B ☐ to talk to his doctor
C ☐ to meet Harris and George
D ☐ to read his favourite books
- 3 What did the chemist give J?

A ☐ the medicine
B ☐ the prescription
C ☐ some advice
D ☐ some meat
- 4 What does liver disease cause?

A ☐ tiredness
B ☐ hunger
C ☐ anger
D ☐ thirst
- 5 George, Harris and J had their dinner

A ☐ but they were not interested in food.
B ☐ but they did not like it because it was cold.
C ☐ and they ate a lot.
D ☐ in Mrs Poppets's kitchen.
- 6 Harris wanted to go to the sea

A ☐ because he had a sailing boat.
B ☐ because he didn't suffer from seasickness.
C ☐ because he liked sitting on the beach.
D ☐ but J didn't like the idea.

7 What did Montmorency like doing?

- A ☐ swimming in the river
 B ☐ chasing rats
 C ☐ smoking
 D ☐ sleeping on the boat

2 Vocabulary

Do you remember the new words from Chapter One? Read the definitions below and write the correct letters in the gaps to make a word.

- 1 a person who doesn't like working is: _ _ _ _
 2 medicines are sold here: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
 3 a written order for medicine:
 _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
 4 a large organ of the body which cleans blood: _ _ _ _ _
 5 not well in health: _ _ _
 6 a desire to sleep: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
 7 a person who looks after your house:
 _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
 8 a short journey: _ _ _ _
 9 an illness: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

What's your score?/9

Now write your own sentence using at least two words from the word puzzle.

3 Discussion

The three men in Chapter One are worried about their health. They think they have all kinds of illnesses, but there is nothing really wrong with them. This kind of person is called a hypochondriac. Do you know anyone who is a hypochondriac? What is he/she always worried about? How could you help this person?

Fox-Terriers

Dogs have been the companions of people for more than 7,000 years. It is believed that today's dog comes from the wolf,¹ and today there are about 225 types of dogs in the world.

Fox-terriers are of British origin and they were present in the days of the Roman Empire.

Fox-Terriers are brave, aggressive dogs and they have always been used to hunt² foxes and rats. They are very good at finding and killing rats and in the nineteenth-century there were rat-killing competitions: people bought tickets to watch fights between fox-terriers and rats. A terrier called Billy, who weighed about 26 pounds (11 kilos), killed 100 rats in 6 minutes 25 seconds in a competition held in Westminster, London, on 13 October 1822.

In literature, fox-terriers are mentioned as early as 1359. Even then,

they were used as hunting dogs.

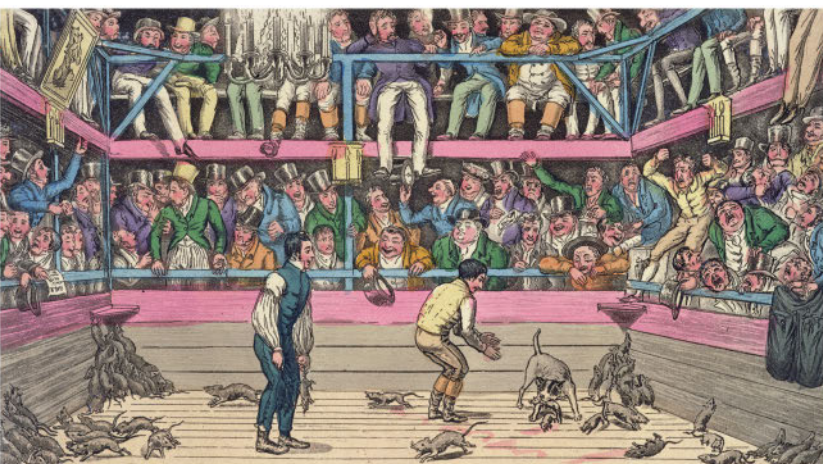
Today there are about 22 kinds of terriers.

The larger ones are used as guard dogs or police dogs.



1. **wolf** : a wild animal which looks like a big dog.

2. **hunt** : to run after in order to catch and kill.



The celebrated Dog Billy Killing 100 Rats at the Westminster Pit (1825), a print by Pierce Egan. Such competitions were popular, and spectators bet money on the time taken.

1 Speaking

What kind of dog do you like, and why? Prepare a short talk.

2 Vocabulary

Do this crossword puzzle.

Across

- 3  opposite of beautiful
 7 we use it to smell
 9 large terriers are used as...
 11 run after in order to catch, kill

Down

- 1 terrier who killed many rats
 2 friend
 4  brave
 8  a terrier is a kind of ...
 10 a terrier is a kind of ...

