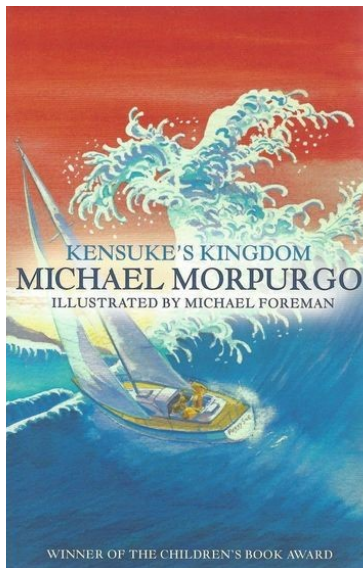


Kensuke's Kingdom

Knowledge Organiser



Blurb:

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 awakes, there is a plate beside him of fish, of fruit, and a bowl of fresh water. He is not alone...

Key Information:

Plot: When Michael's parents lose their jobs, they buy a boat and decide to sail around the world. Michael is swept overboard. He's washed up on an island, where he struggles to survive. Then he discovers that he's not alone. His fellow-castaway, Kensuke, keeps his distance at first. But when Michael's life is threatened, he slowly lets the boy into his world. The two teach and learn from each other until, inevitably, they must part ways....

Setting: An island in the Pacific Ocean. The ship. Michael's home.

Themes: Nature and environmental issues, community and interdependence, and relationships between the old and the young, mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Key Characters:

Michael	The protagonist of the story
Stella Artois	Michael's dog
Kensuke	Elderly Japanese man living on the island
Barnacle Bill	The old mariner who tutored the family to sail
Eddie	Michael's best friend
Michael's parents	His shipmates

Author Voice:

When I was writing Kensuke's Kingdom, I was stuck for a name for a Japanese man. I couldn't think of one that was original or worked for my story. Then I got lucky, I was doing an event at a school in London when a tall Japanese boy came up to get his book signed. I asked him his name and he replied, "Kensuke." And I had the name of my character. Animal names are trickier. It was a boy who came to our farm in Devon with his school who told me the name of his own dog - Stella Artois - an Alsatian.

By Michael Morpurgo

Key Vocabulary:

brackish	(of water) slightly salty, as in river estuaries
cacophony	a harsh discordant mixture of sounds
flotsam	the wreckage of a ship found floating on or washed up by the sea
gesticulate	use gestures, especially dramatic ones, instead of speaking
mellifluous	(of a sound) pleasingly smooth and musical to hear.
obstinate	stubbornly refusing to change one's opinion
outrigger	beam, spar, or framework projecting from or over a boat's side

Key Quotes:

Of course it was a madness. They knew it, even I knew it, but it simply didn't matter. Thinking back, it must have been a kind of inspiration driven by desperation.

There was no howling anymore, but something infinitely more sinister: the shiver of leaves, the cracking of twigs, sudden surreptitious rustlings, and they were near me, all around me. I knew, I was quite sure now, that eyes were watching us. We were being followed.

When I think of Tomodachi, I think of your mother. Your mother, she too lose her baby. She lose you. That very sad thing for her.

Discussion Points:

- Was Kensuke or Michael dangerous to the other?
- Why was Michael torn about leaving Kensuke?
- What comfort would the letter at the end bring?