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LINGUISTIC ACTIVE READING

LEVEL 3

The Incredible Journey

Sheila Burnford



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.....t's the book about?

Look at the pictures and discuss these questions.



- 1 Which of these animals would you most like to have as a pet? Why? What do you think each animal likes and hates to do?
- 2 What is the longest journey that you have ever made on foot? Why did you make the journey? How long did it take? How did you feel at the end of your journey?

1-2

What happens first?

Look at the picture on page 1. This story is about a journey across the northwest of Ontario in Canada. What do you know, or what can you imagine, about this part of the world? Make notes.

Notes

the land.

the people.

the animals.

the weather.

The Three Friends

*One of the pages of Longridge's note to Mrs. Oakes flew into the air.
It sailed across the room and landed on the fire.*

The **journey** took place in Canada, in the northwest of Ontario. This part of the country is wild, with woods, lakes, and fast rivers. There are thousands of kilometers of narrow country roads, a few small towns, and lonely farms. Men from the big paper companies cut down trees deep in the forests. There are Indians and **hunters**. But most of the time there are no **human beings**, only wild animals. And silence.

For almost half the year the area is covered in snow, and the temperature falls below zero for weeks. The seasons are different in north Ontario. The plants and flowers do not grow slowly in spring. There is a sudden, short summer when everything grows fast. Then it is fall again with clear blue skies, sunny days, and wonderful, richly colored **leaves** on the trees: gold and yellow and red.

Through this wild, lonely country, in the fall, the three travelers made their **incredible** journey.



journey /'dʒɜːni/ (n) a long trip from one place to another

hunt /hʌnt/ (v) to catch and kill animals

human being /,hyʊmən 'biːɪŋ/ (n) a man, woman, or child

leaf /liːf/ (n) one of the flat, green parts of a plant or tree

incredible /ɪn'kredəbəl/ (adj) so strange that you cannot believe it

John Longridge lived alone a long way from one of the small towns, in an old stone house that belonged to his family. He was a tall man of about forty, serious but kind. He was a writer of history books and traveled a lot. But he always returned to the comfortable old stone house to write his books. Mrs. Oakes and her husband Bert lived about a kilometer away. Mrs. Oakes went to Longridge's home every day. She looked after the house and cooked his main meals. Bert looked after the backyard. They understood Longridge very well. While he was writing, they worked quietly around the place.

On the evening before the incredible journey, toward the end of September, Longridge was reading a newspaper by a warm wood fire in his comfortable



Monday. He couldn't turn the pages easily because a Siamese cat with bright blue eyes was sitting on his knees. From time to time, the cat moved his brown front paws as he looked into the fire.

On the floor, with his head on one of Longridge's feet, lay an old white fox. His eyes were closed and his tail moved in his sleep. Some people think fox are strange, animals. But Longridge loved him: he was a friendly family pet and, at the same time, a strong, brave fighter. The man always enjoyed the look of happiness in the old fox's little eyes.

By the door lay another dog with his nose on his paws. This was a young fox with a strong body. His brown eyes were wide open, watching everything. When Longridge got up from his chair, the fox lifted his proud head.



paw /pɔ:/ (n) the foot of an animal

The Incredible Journey

Sheila Burnford

American English

Contemporary

The country is wild and dangerous. Mountains are high, rivers run fast, and there are strange animals in the woods. But three family pets begin a long, long walk through western Canada. They miss their family and they are trying to get home. But will anyone see them again?

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