

## Chapter- 2

# Chapter Name- We are not afraid to die

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

#### Gordon Cook

Gordon Cook (born December 3, 1978, in Toronto) is a two-time Canadian Olympic sailor. He sails for the Royal Canadian Yacht Club. He is the son of Stephen Cook and Linda Cook. He had a great interest in writing stories too. Cook and Remocker became the first Canadians to sail a 49er in an Olympic Regatta at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, where they finished 14th.

#### Alan East: -

Alan was admitted to the Roll of Solicitors in 2003 and has gained extensive experience as a litigator, manager and legal trainer. In 2004 he co-founded and managed a standard niche practise specialising in Criminal Litigation and Prison Law, gaining higher audience rights in criminal proceedings and working as a Duty Solicitor. In 2007 he joined the Crown Prosecution Service as a Senior Crown Prosecutor.

In 2010 Alan joined Coventry University as a Senior Lecturer in Law and worked passionately to support access to justice working closely with Central England Law Centre. In 2016 he became a director of Coventry Independent Advice Service.

Finally, Alan is a co-founder of a multi-academy trust Central Academies Trust which has as its aim improving standards in Secondary Education.

### INTRODUCTION

Written by Gordon Cook and Alan East, the story is about a 37-year-old businessman named the narrator. He has a wife named Mary and two children, Jonathan, aged six and Suzanne, aged 7. He and his wife both dream of a voyage around the world on their ship 'Wave walker', a 23-meter-long, 30 tons wooden-hulled, just like that of the famous Captain James Cook.

The whole family started sailing from Plymouth, England, in July 1976. The initial phase of the three-year-long journey was from Africa to Cape Town. It was pleasant. While heading east, along with two newly hired crewmen, strong waves hit them, and their survival became a question. The story tells us about how they fought each day and survived until the end.

**VOCABULARY****Word – Meaning**

1. set sail – started a sea voyage
2. duplicate – repeat
3. voyage – a journey over the sea
4. in the wake of – following
5. leisure – spare
6. honing – improving
7. seafaring skills – knowledge of navigation, handling a sailboat and its equipment etc.
8. Wave walker – the name of their boat
9. wooden-hulled
10. beauty – beautiful boat made of wood
11. fitting it out – furnishing it
12. leg – part
13. crewmen – men to work on the ship
14. Swiss – from Switzerland
15. tackle – handle
16. out of – after starting from
17. gales – extremely strong winds
18. found us – we were
19. atrocious – very unpleasant
20. storm jib – small sail used at the time of a storm
21. making – going at the speed of
22. knots – nautical miles per hour
23. lashed – fastened
24. mooring – used for tying the boat to a fixed object
25. stern – the back part
26. life-raft drill – practising how to climb into a lifeboat if the main boat sinks
27. lifelines – ropes fixed around the bodies of persons to prevent drowning
28. oilskins – waterproof clothing
29. life jackets – jackets without sleeves that can be filled with air to help persons to float in the sea
30. impending – approaching
31. ominous silence – quietness just before some dangerous happening
32. aft of – behind
33. breaking crest – top of wave overturning

34. ride over – go above
35. torrent – a significant amount
36. overboard – into the sea
37. popped out – came out suddenly
38. capsizing – overturning
39. strayed past – came through
40. taut – tightly
41. guard rails – rails on the outside of the deck of the boat
42. sailed – was thrown
43. boom – long pole to which the bottom of a sail is attached
44. ragdoll – very light object
45. lined up – straightened
46. hung on – held the boat tightly
47. abandon – leave
48. hatch – door leading below the deck
49. scrambled – ran
50. like madmen – very hard
51. timbers – wood planks
52. starboard – right side
53. bulged – swelled
54. sloshed – moved noisily
55. bunk – sleeping berth
56. bashed – broken
57. taking – drawing in
58. gaping – big
59. stream – fall like a stream
60. deflected – moved away
61. block up – get stuck
62. debris – broken pieces of material
63. short-circuited – became electrically defective
64. wrenched – removed and thrown from where they were fixed
65. forestay sail – big front sail
66. dinghies – small open boats used for emergencies
67. anchor – heavy metal object used to keep the ship fixed in one place
68. chartroom – room in the boat where maps are kept
69. out-pipe – drainage pipe
70. working – transmitting messages on
71. Mayday calls – distress messages sent over the radio



72. made more of – highlighted
73. waterline – the level of the boat in the water
74. rib frames – wooden pieces forming the frame of the boat
75. keel – long wood/steel piece fixed vertically at the bottom of the boat to keep it vertical
76. rigging – ropes that balance the mast of the boat
77. sextant – instrument measuring angles and distances used for calculating the position of a boat
78. compass – an instrument used for checking direction tousled head-head with hair not arranged
79. offshore – near the shore

### SUB-CONCEPTS

- Hard work, determination and power of perseverance can overcome all the problems
- Feasibility of triumph over the fear of death
- Realising the importance of the individual in the journey
- Optimism as an antidote to negativity
- "Where there is a will, there is away."

### THEME OF THE LESSON

- Endurance
- Perseverance
- The importance of keeping near and dear one
- The fact that courage, bravery, and togetherness can remedy any illness in the world.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE LESSON

- I had dreamt of sailing
- To duplicate the round-the-world voyage (a long journey by sea or space) made 200 years earlier by Captain James Cook.
- It describes their thrilling journey across the sea and their close encounter with death during their voyage.
- The plot talks about their possible attempts to save their lives.

### CHARACTERS

- **The narrator:** He is a 37-year-old businessman. He wants to duplicate the round-the-world journey made by Captain James Cook 200 years earlier. He spends a long time improving his sea skills and finally begins his journey with his wife Mary, six-year-old son Jonathan and seven-year-old daughter Suzanne.

- **Mary:** She is the narrator's wife. She supports her husband's dream and improves her sea skills. She joins her husband on their planned three-year voyage.
- **Larry Vigil:** An American who joins the narrator and Mary at Cape Town to help them tackle one of the world's roughest seas.
- **Herb Seigler:** A Swiss who also joins them at Cape Town to help them cross the southern Indian Ocean.
- **Suzanne:** The narrator's seven-year-old daughter displays immense courage throughout their voyage.
- **Jonathan:** He is the narrator's six-year-old son who shows immense strength and optimism even in difficult times.

### SUMMARY

The narrator and his wife plan a voyage around the world, just like famous Captain James Cook. They have been preparing and perfecting their seafaring skills for the past 16 years. They get a ship that is 23 meters long and weighs 30 tons wooden-hulled, named Wave Walker. They test it in the rough weather for months.

In July 1976, they all started their journey from Plymouth, England. They sail from Africa to Cape Town, which was quite a pleasant journey. Before heading East, the narrator hired two crewmen, Larry Vigil and Herb Seigler, to help them tackle one of the roughest sea – the Southern Indian Ocean.

They encounter strong and alarming waves during the second day. By December 25, they all manage to reach 35,000 kilometres east of Cape Town. The family, somehow, manages to surpass the bad weather and celebrates Christmas together.

The weather changes for the worse, and on January 2, the big waves hit them. They try to slow the ship down by dropping storm jib and hit a heavy mooring rope in a loop across a stern, but it doesn't help much. They carry their life-raft drill, attach lifelines, don life jackets and oilskins.

Later, in the evening, a vertical and huge wave strikes the ship, and the narrator is thrown off from the boat. He accepts his 'approaching death and starts losing consciousness. When the ship is about to overturn, a vast wave hit again and turns it right back. He suffers injuries in the ribs and mouth. He grabs the guard rail and sails into the ship's main boom.

He instructs his wife Mary to guard the wheel as he realises that the ship has water in the lower parts. His crewman starts pumping out the water. The narrator goes to his children's cabin and checks on them. His daughter, Sue, informs him about a bump on her head, which he ignores because his primary concern is to save the ship.

The narrator does water-proofing on the gaping holes. This makes water deviate on the right side. The hand pump gets blocked due to debris, and the electric-pump gets short-circuited.

However, he later finds a spare electric pump and connects it to drain the water. They all keep pumping the water all night long. There's Mayday calls are not answered as they are in the remotest corner of the world.

Sue, on the other hand, has now a swollen black eye and a deep cut on her arm. On being asked by her father about her injuries, she tells him she didn't want him to worry as he was trying to save them. After 15 hours, the situation gets under control. The narrator decides to work in rotation and rests. The water levels are controlled, but the leaks were still there, below the waterline.

The ship is in bad shape now. It is not in a condition to reach Australia, and so, they decide to go to the nearest island, Ile Amsterdam, a French Scientific base. As their supporting engines were also damaged, the ship's chances to reach the destination are low.

After pumping the water out continuously for 36 hours, they took a sigh of relief. Only a few centimetres of water was left to be pumped out of the boat. They hoisted the storm jib as the mainmast was destroyed. They ate their first meal in two days, some corned beef and crackers. The weather soon started changing, and again the black clouds took over by the morning of January 5. His son, Jonathan, told him that he didn't fear death as long as they were all together. This filled him with determination to fight the sea.

The struggle continued, and the narrator tried his best to protect the weakened starboard side. The same evening, the narrator and his wife sat together, holding hands, thinking that their end was near. His children continuously supported him, which gave him moral support to keep going.

The Wavewalker sailed through the storm and made it. The narrator then calculated their exact position by working on the wind speed. While he was brainstorming, Sue gave him a card that she had made expressing her love and gratitude towards the family.

He instructed Larry to steer the course to 185 degrees. He said that if they were lucky, they could hope to find an island by 5 pm. He dozed off and suddenly got up around 6 pm. He believed that they didn't make it and was disappointed. His son came and informed him about how they reached the Ile Amsterdam Island, and he called him 'best daddy' and 'best captain'.

They reached the island with little struggle and with the help of inhabitants. The whole team, the family and two crew members never stopped trying. Their struggle and hard work finally saved them.

## MIND MAP

### WE ARE NOT AFRAID TO DIE... (BY GORDON COOK & ALAN EAST)

**About the Author-**  
GORDON COOK & ALAN EAST

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**Characters :**

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**Mary:** She is the narrator's wife. She supports her husband's dream.  
**Larry Vigil & Seigler:** An American **Herb and A** Swiss who also joins them cross the southern Indian Ocean. **Suzanne:** The narrator's seven-year-old daughter Jonathan: He is the narrator's six-year-old son

**Theme of the lesson**

Endurance, Perseverance  
The importance of keeping near and dear one  
The fact that courage, bravery, and togetherness

**Lesson Contents**

- THE VOYAGE BEGINS
- THE PROBLEMS BEGIN DURING THE VOYAGE
- DISASTER STRIKES
- FRANTIC SURVIVAL ATTEMPTS
- DAMAGED AND LOST EQUIPMENT
- PINPRICKS IN THE VAST OCEAN
- "WE AREN'T AFRAID TO DIE... IF WE CAN ALL BE TOGETHER"
- THE MOST BEAUTIFUL ISLAND IN THE WORLD!

