

READING**Elementary****Sherlock Holmes Investigates**

This story about Sherlock Holmes is for students who do not know much English. Reading is a very good way of adding new words to your English vocabulary.
Sherlock Holmes Investigates

The adventure of the speckled band.

Sherlock Holmes did a lot of work in eight years from 1880 to 1890. When I look at what I wrote about his work, I can see that he did many investigations. Some were very sad. Some were funny, and many were very strange. There were no ordinary investigations. Sherlock Holmes worked because he liked it, not for money. He most liked to do investigations which were very strange.

A very strange investigation was about a Surrey family, the Royslotts of Stoke Warren. This happened when Sherlock and I lived in the same house in Baker Street. When it happened, I promised not to tell anyone about it. But now the person I promised is dead, and there are a lot of stories about the death of Dr Grimsby Roylott. Some of the stories are as bad as the truth.

It was early in April, 1883. One morning I opened my eyes and saw Sherlock Holmes by the side of my bed. He usually got out of bed very late, but today the clock on the wall said that it was only a quarter past seven. I was surprised. I was also a little angry, because I don't like to begin the day at a quarter past seven.

"I'm very sorry, Watson, " said Holmes "but everyone is out of bed early today. Mrs Hudson was first, she came to me, and I came to you."

"Is it a fire?"

"No, an investigation. A young lady is here. She is very upset, and she wants to see me. She is in the sitting room. Now, when young ladies come here early in the morning, and get sleepy people out of their beds, I think that they want to tell me something important. Perhaps it is an interesting investigation. Do you want to do the investigation with me? I decided to come to you and ask you."

"My dear Holmes, I am very happy that you asked me."

I quickly put my clothes on and went with my friend down to the sitting room. A lady who was wearing black clothes was sitting near the window. She stood up when we came into the room.

"Good morning, Madam," said Holmes "my name is Sherlock Holmes. This is my friend, Dr Watson, and he will not tell anyone what you say to me. Ah! I am happy to see that we have a fire in the room. Please come close to it and I will bring you a cup of hot coffee because you are very cold."

"I am not cold," said the woman with a soft voice. She sat near the fire. "I am scared , Mr Holmes. I am very frightened."

Her face and body showed that she was a 30 year old woman, but some of her hair was grey, and she was tired and frightened. Sherlock Holmes looked at her.



"Do not be scared," he said.

"I see that you came on the train this morning, " said Holmes.

"You started early, but there was a long journey before you came to the train station."

The lady was amazed, and looked in surprise at my friend.

"There is nothing strange," said Holmes with a smile. "There is dirt on the left arm of your jacket. I can see that it came there this morning. I think it happened when you were going to the station. I can also see a part of a ticket in your glove, so I know that you went on the train."

"You are exactly right," she said. "I left home before six, and came to Waterloo on the first train. Sir, I am very upset and unhappy; I will go mad if my problems do not stop. I have no one to ask for help - except one friend, but he, poor man, cannot help. I have heard about you Mr Holmes, so I came to you; do you think you can help me?"

"I can't pay you now, but I will be married very soon, and then I will have money, and I will pay you."

Source: <http://www.english-online.org.uk/reading/elementread.htm>

Intermediate

Last week you continued reading Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift. I am using the Oxford Bookworms Library Green Series, Adaptations of classic and modern stories for younger readers. In this Library Gulliver's Travels is classified as stage 4 (of the 6 stages), which means approximately 1400 headwords, ideal for intermediate learners. The story is retold by Clare West and is divided into 12 chapters. Today you are going to read the first part of the fifth chapter. After the last chapter you will be given a glossary.

CHAPTER FIVE

A VOYAGE TO BROBDINGNAG

I left Bristol on Jne 20th, 1702, in a ship which was sailing to India. We had good sailing weather until we reached the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, where we landed to get fresh water. We had to stay there for the winter, however, because the ship needed repairs and the captain was ill. In the spring we left Africa and sailed round the island of Madagascar into the Indian Ocean. But on 19th April the wind began to blow very violently from the west, and we were driven to the rest of the Molucca Islands. On 2nd May the wind stopped blowing and the sea was calm. But our captain, who knew that part of the world very well, warned us that there would be a storm next day. So we prepared the ship as well as we could, and waited.

The captain was right. On 3rd May the wind began to get stronger. It was a wild, dangerous wind, blowing from the south this time. We had to take down our sails as the storm hit our ship. Huge waves crashed down to us, and the wind drove our helpless ship eastwards into the Pacific Ocean.



For several days we struggled with the wind and waves, but at last the storm died away and the sea was calm again. Luckily, our ship was not badly damaged, but we had been driven over two thousand kilometres to the east. None of us knew exactly where we were, so the captain decided to continue sailing eastwards, where we had never been before. We sailed on for another two weeks.

Finally, on 16th June, 1703, we saw a large island with a small piece of land joined on it. I later discovered that this country was called Brobdingnag. The captain sent some of his sailors in a boat to land there and bring back some fresh water. I went with them because I was interested in seeing a new country. We were delighted to be on land again, and while the men looked for a river or a lake, I walked for about a kilometre away from the beach.

TO BE CONTINUED

Advanced

Meet Robodog

THE WORLD'S LARGEST AND MOST ADVANCED COMMERCIAL LEGGED ROBOT RE-WRITES ROBOTICS RULEBOOKS

RoboScience, a UK company specialising in commercial robotic technology, recently launched its RS-01 RoboDog - the world's most powerful, most advanced and largest commercial legged robot. Compared to other robotic animals, such as those produced by Sony, this new invention is the "Formula 1" of robotic pets.

Technical and design breakthroughs made during the creation of this remarkable new robot will form the platform for next-generation lightweight robots that will automate many ordinary tasks and eliminate human involvement in high-risk commercial and military environments. Nick Wirth - formerly a designer of Formula One racing cars and co-founder and technical director of RoboScience - and a small team of highly-skilled specialists created the RoboDog in only seven months using a state-of-the-art computer-aided design tool provided by software house UGS.

Mark Oates, co-founder and marketing director of Northamptonshire based RoboScience, said, "All legged robots now for sale are nothing more than entertainment. This is an advanced computer in animal form - it's history in the making. We have done what was thought impossible - creating a robot that is light and strong, yet large enough to show the true potential of legged robotics that are genuinely useful to human life." The RoboDog will be sold as a hand-made limited edition product tailored to the customers' requirements. A maximum of 200 robots will be offered for sale worldwide over the course of this year at a price of £20,000.

The RoboDog is the size of an adult Labrador and is powerful enough to raise itself from the ground carrying a five-year old child. Its sophisticated motor capabilities and balancing software allow it to climb obstacles and perform handstands, and its motion and colour detection sensors enable it to find and kick a football. It connects to the Internet via a wireless network, and can be controlled from a PC. It can also recognise sixty oral commands.

Production versions of the RoboDog will allow owners to view locations remotely via an on-board camera or have the RoboDog access and read aloud e-mails. The RoboDog is 820mm long, 670mm tall and 370 mm wide and thanks to its advanced carbon-fibre and Kevlar construction, it weighs only 12kg (26 lbs) and can operate independently for 1.5 hours.



The manufacturers intend to licence elements of the RoboDog technology to companies in fields as diverse as industrial automation, special effects, security and military services. Mark Oates adds, "For companies struggling with the limitations of current robotics technology, this is - quite literally - tomorrow's world today! This RoboDog also proves that legged robots can now have the size and power to perform in high-risk environments, whether that is a power station or a minefield. After all, the loss of a robot is an inconvenience; the death of a human being is a tragedy."

The Robodog has been designed and developed in a remarkably short space of time. Nick Wirth says "This is breakthrough technology created at breakneck speed."

WORDS:

breakthrough: new development - co founder: one of the creators - customer: client - formerly: who used to be - genuine: real, authentic - highly skilled: extremely competent - in the making: taking place - inconvenience: pity, disadvantage - involvement: participation - launch: put on the market, begin to sell - lbs: pounds - licence: allow the use of - limited edition: made in a limited number of units - location: site, situation, place - motor capabilities: ability to move - perform a handstand: stand on one's hands, or one's front feet - pet: domestic animal - platform: basis - power station: place where electricity is generated - remotely: from a distance - state-of-the-art: most modern possible - tailored to: adapted to.

WORKSHEET

Robodog

Language: this document is in ordinary technical English. It is for very advanced learners only. Pay attention to the typical features of technical language, notably the technical vocabulary, the compound and complex noun groups, and the use of passives or participles.

Rephrasing:

Explain the meaning of the following expressions:

commercial robotic technology

Technical and design breakthroughs

Next-generation lightweight robots

High risk military environments

Computer aided design tools

Northamptonshire based Roboscience

Worldwide

Balancing software

Motion and colour detection sensors

High risk environments



Reading for information:

Answer these questions....

1. Why is Robodog an important technological breakthrough?
2. What is perhaps its most significant feature?
3. How does one operate a Robodog?
4. Why is Robodog useful for military purposes?

Source: <http://linguapress.com/advanced/robodog.htm>

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