

Intermediate • B2

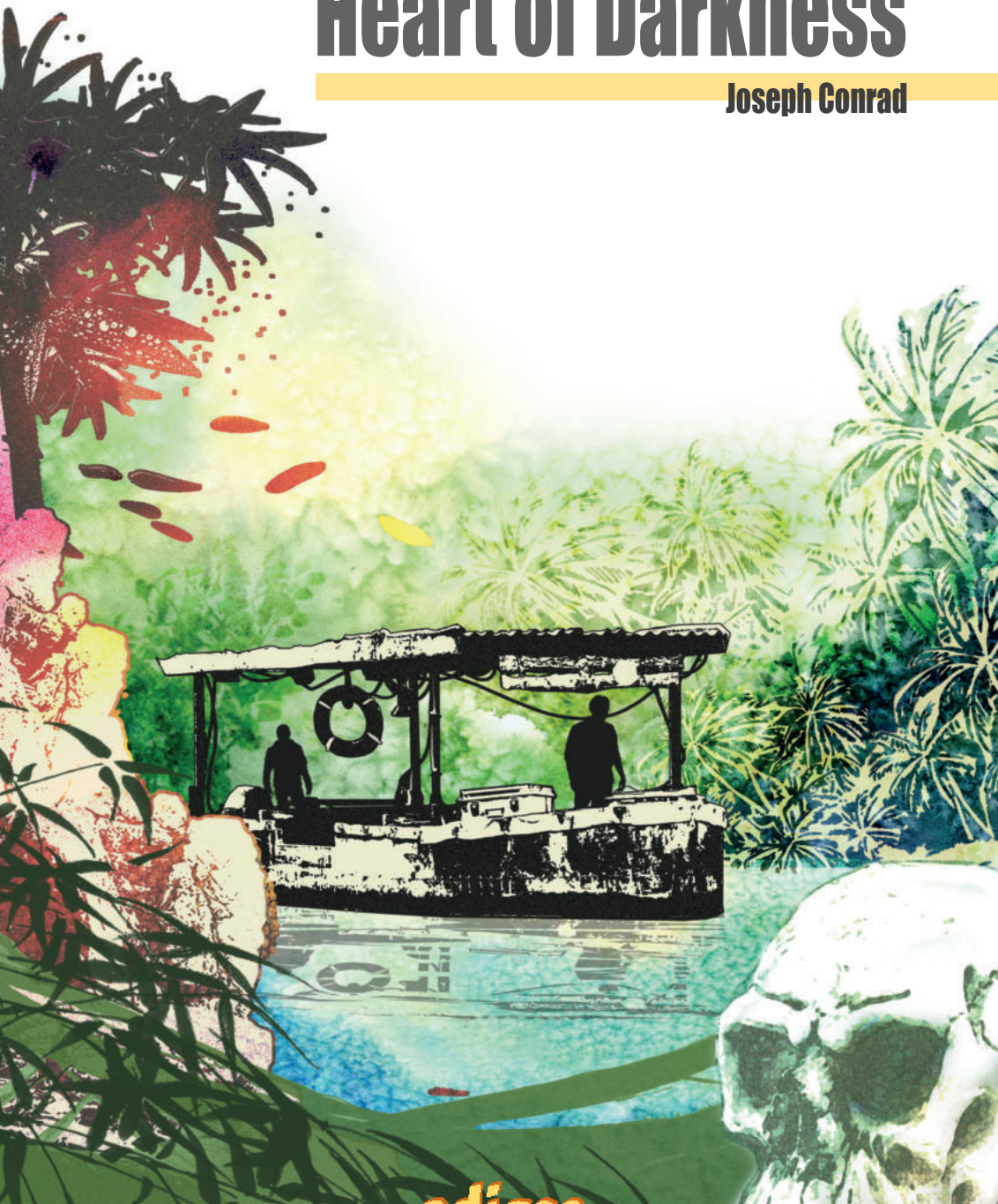


free audio mp3

R A I N B O W S

Heart of Darkness

Joseph Conrad



edisco



R A I N B O W S

Joseph Conrad

Heart of Darkness

Adaptation, dossiers and activities by
Cristina Gioli



edisco



This volume is accompanied by a full recording of the text.

Scan this QR CODE with your smartphone and listen to your book.

**Teacher's Resources available online:
Answer Key, Audioscripts, Summing-up Activities.**

www.edisco.it/rainbows



Project editor: Raffaele Polichetti
Revisor: Tessa Vaughan
Cover: Mauro Borgarello
Design: Manuela Piacenti
Quality controller: Lunella Luzi
Page layout: Studio Pattern, Torino
Printing: La Grafica, Boves (CN), Italy

Copyright © Edisco Editrice
Via Pastrengo 28, 10128 Torino (Italy)
Tel. +39 011.547880
email: info@edisco.it
www.edisco.it

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.

Every effort has been made to acknowledge and contact the source and/or copyright holder of material used in this book. The publisher apologizes for any unintentional errors or omissions and will be pleased to make corrections in future editions. All lyrics, music and films quoted are for review, study or critical purposes.

Reprint

5 4 3 2 1 0

2027 2026 2025 2024 2023 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

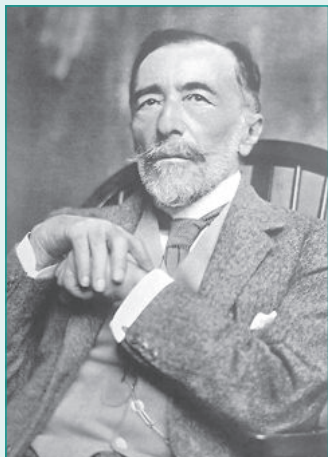
• Joseph Conrad	4
Chapter 1 – The unnamed Sailor’s narrative	7
• Extension: <i>Colonialism</i>	24
Chapter 2 – Getting nearer	27
• Extension: <i>Belgian colonisation of the Congo</i>	46
Chapter 3 – Along the Great River	49
• Extension: <i>The White Man’s mission</i>	68
Chapter 4 – The Harlequin	71
• Extension: <i>Marlow’s journey</i>	90
Chapter 5 – The horror! The horror!	93
• Extension: <i>Features, themes and symbols</i>	112
• PICTURE GALLERY	116
• SUMMING-UP ACTIVITIES	118
• GLOSSARY	123



From *Heart of Darkness* (film by N. Roeg, 1994)

The Author

Joseph Conrad



Joseph Conrad (1857-1924), whose real name was Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski, was born on 3rd December 1857 in Ukraine, which was part of the Russian Empire at the time, but had formerly belonged to Poland. His parents were Polish aristocrats and patriots, who were found guilty of conspiring against Russia and consequently exiled to Northern Russia. They both died at a young age of tuberculosis, and Joseph, who was then eleven, was placed in the care of his maternal uncle.

As a boy, Conrad was not in good health and had poor school results, but, although disliking school discipline, he was curious and well-read¹. He knew French, German and Russian. From an early age, he expressed the wish to become a sailor, so, when he was sixteen, his uncle sent him to Marseilles to start his career. He spent the next four years on French ships, mainly travelling to and from the West Indies. It was a wild period, during which he gambled² heavily, ran into debt and was even involved in the smuggling³ of weapons.

He attempted suicide by shooting himself in the chest, but survived and then joined the British Merchant Navy, where he served for the next sixteen years, rising from steward⁴ to master mariner⁵. He probably began studying English just before he started working on British ships, but English became the language in which he would write all his books.

He managed to acquire an extremely wide vocabulary and to master its many possibilities, so that it eventually became his second language.

1. *well-read*: someone who has learnt a lot about different subjects by reading.
2. *gamble*: to play games in the hope of winning money.
3. *smuggling*: the act of taking goods illegally into or out of a country.
4. *steward*: a man who works on a means of transport (ship, aircraft, train) looking after passengers and serving meals.
5. *master mariner*: a seaman who is qualified to be a captain.

His experiences at sea, travelling to Australia, Singapore, India, the East Indies and the Belgian Congo – where *Heart of Darkness* is set – were the material for most of his stories.

In 1886, he became a British citizen and in 1894, he left the sea because of ill health. He finally settled in England and devoted himself to writing. Two years later, he married and went on to have two sons.

Conrad wrote 13 novels and 28 short stories, plus two volumes of memoirs. During his lifetime, his stories were successful and he was admired for the richness of his language and his tales of adventures at sea in exotic places. However, his main interest lay with the moral nature of the individual, especially when, in solitude and isolation, they have to face the dangers of nature and their own doubts about good and evil.

Among his best-known works, besides *Heart of Darkness*, published in 1902, we remember:

The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' (1897), about a black seaman who is dying of tuberculosis on board the ship “Narcissus”, and whose destiny influences the lives of the other sailors; *Lord Jim* (1900), the story of an officer on a ship who abandons its passengers during a dangerous storm in order to save his own life. The dishonour following this act of cowardice will torment him, until he eventually redeems himself⁶ with a heroic death; *Youth* (1902), the record of a sea-voyage to the East, narrated by Marlow, the same character who is the narrator of *Heart of Darkness*. The voyage, besides being an adventure in itself, is also symbolical of the passage from youth to maturity. Other works are *Nostromo* (1904), *The Secret Agent* (1907) and *Victory* (1915).

Conrad died in 1924 and was buried in Canterbury.



6. *redeem oneself*: to do something good to compensate for something bad that one has done.



BEFORE READING

- 1 The story you are going to read is set in Africa in the late 1890s, in what is now called the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Use the Internet to look for the following information:
 - a. What was the name of the country when *Heart of Darkness* was published (1899)?
 - b. Was it an independent state?
 - c. Who dominated it?
 - d. When did it become a Belgian colony?
 - e. When did it acquire independence?
- 2 Why do you think the Europeans of the period were interested in the Congo? Choose the correct option.
 - a. To exploit its raw materials.
 - b. To export their manufactured goods.
 - c. To import Congolese manufactured goods.
- 3 Most of the story develops along the Congo River. Look at the following picture of it and say what its form reminds you of.
 - a. A snake;
 - b. A bird;
 - c. A head

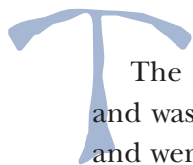


The Congo River

Heart of Darkness

The unnamed Sailor's narrative

Chapter 1



The *Nellie*, the sailing boat we were in, turned on its anchor¹ and was finally still. We were close to the mouth of the Thames and were supposed to go down the river, but the tide² was rising and there was no favourable wind. There was nothing to do but wait for the low tide to push us out to sea.



An immense expanse³ of water stretched before us. In the distance, the sea and sky were fused together, while the sails of many boats seemed like red-pointed rocks rising from the sea. A thin fog covered the low shores and the air was dark above Gravesend⁴. Behind us it seemed even thicker, like a heavy, funereal cloak over the biggest – and greatest – town on earth⁵.

With me on the ship was the Director of Companies, who was our captain and our host. The four of us looked at him affectionately while he checked that the anchor was in the correct position. We felt united by the sea; it held our hearts together through long periods of separation and made us tolerant of each other.

Then there was the Lawyer – the best of men – who, because of his old age and his many virtues, was sitting on the only cushion on deck. The others were the Accountant, who had already brought out a box of dominoes⁶ and Marlow, who was sitting cross-legged⁷, leaning against a mast⁸.

He had a thin face, yellow skin, a straight back and a serious look. In that position, with his arms at his sides and the palms of his hands upwards, he looked like a pagan god.

When the Director came to sit among us, we lazily exchanged a few words and then there was silence for a while. For some reason,

1. *anchor*: a heavy metal object attached to a chain, which is thrown to the bottom of the sea in order to prevent a boat or ship from moving.
2. *tide*: the rise and fall of the sea, which happens twice a day.
3. *expanse*: a large area of sea or land.
4. *Gravesend*: a small town, on the

right bank of the river Thames.

5. It refers to London.
6. *dominoes*: small rectangular objects used for playing games.
7. *cross-legged*: sitting with your feet crossed over each other.
8. *mast*: one of the poles that support the sails on a ship.

we didn't begin that game of dominoes. The day was ending in a bright sunset, the water was shining peacefully before us and only the fog to the west, the fog of the city, seemed to become thicker every minute.

At last, the sun went down and became red, without rays and without heat, as if killed by the touch of that darkness that covered all the people of the city.

It was very peaceful; the old river was resting, and, as we looked at it, we thought of its past. That river had seen and served all the men of whom the nation is proud, from Sir Francis Drake⁹ to Sir John Franklin¹⁰. It had carried all the most glorious ships, as well as captains, admirals and traders¹¹ going to the East, hunters for gold or fame, adventurers and settlers: all of them had passed on that stream. The river had seen the dreams of men and the seeds of future empires.

Then Marlow suddenly said,

“But this has also been one of the dark places of the earth.”

His strange remark did not surprise us. It was just like him to say something like that because he was different from most sailors, who are usually simple and direct. They live a rather quiet life aboard the ship that is their home and are not very interested in the countries their ship sails to. Marlow, instead, was a wanderer and had deep thoughts.

“I was thinking of very old times,” he added, “when the Romans first came here, nineteen hundred years ago, and brought the light of civilisation into the wilderness¹². Imagine a commander of a trireme¹³ in the Mediterranean, who was suddenly ordered to come here, to the North. Imagine him here – the very end of the world at the time – facing a sea the colour of lead¹⁴, a sky the colour of smoke, and going up this river: forest, savages¹⁵, cold,

9. *Sir Francis Drake (1545-1596)*: sea captain, pirate and explorer, famous for his circumnavigation of the world.
10. *Sir John Franklin (1786-1847)*: British officer and explorer of the Arctic.
11. *trader*: someone who buys and sells goods.
12. *wilderness*: an empty, wild area of land, not cultivated or inhabited.

13. *trireme*: an ancient ship which had three rows of oars, used by the Romans.
14. *lead*: a very heavy metal, grey in colour.
15. *savage*: (noun) a person whose way of life is still primitive or ‘uncivilised’. (It is an old-fashioned term used in Conrad’s time, nowadays considered offensive.)



"The Nellie, the sailing boat we were in..."

fog, tempests, disease, exile and death. Death must have been everywhere, they must have died like flies. But he managed to carry out his orders!”

“Or imagine a young Roman citizen of a good family, arriving here with some prefect¹⁶ with the purpose of making money. Imagine him landing in a swamp¹⁷ and marching through the woods to reach some inland post¹⁸. Imagine him surrounded by the mysterious, savage life of the wilderness. He has to live in the middle of it and he hates it, but the horror is also fascinating and it starts to affect him, weakening his mind. Imagine his desire to escape and the impossibility of doing so, his final giving up of hope and his hate...”

“I’m sure none of us would have felt exactly like that. What saves us in our difficult situations is our efficiency, the pride in our work. But these Romans were not colonists, they did not come to work, they came to conquer¹⁹, to grab all they could. It was just robbery with violence and murder on a great scale.”

“The conquest of the earth – which means taking it away from those who have a different skin colour or a flatter nose than ourselves – is not a pretty thing when you consider it! What makes it seem less bad is an idea at the back of it: the belief that the conquest is the only means by which civilised people can bring civilisation to the savages.”

He stopped speaking for a while, then he said,

“I suppose you remember that I was a sailor on a river, for a while. That was the culminating point of my experiences and the farthest I went. It was my meeting with the “darkness”, and yet it seemed to throw a kind of light on everything about me – and into my thoughts.”

After this rather mysterious introduction, he began telling his story, which I am now going to relate to you as best as I remember.

16. *prefect*: a type of military or civil official in ancient Rome.

17. *swamp*: an area of soft, wet ground.

18. *post*: the place where a soldier is assigned.

19. *conquer*: to take control of foreign lands or people by force.



“But these Romans were not colonists... they came to conquer...”

MARLOW'S NARRATIVE

I had just returned to London after spending about six years in the East: the Indian Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, the China Seas. I was having a period of rest. It was fine for a while, but then I got tired of resting and began looking for a new ship. But nobody seemed interested in having me.

You should know that, when I was a little child, I was fascinated by maps, especially by the blank spaces in them, which marked the places that hadn't been explored yet. One of these blank spaces, the biggest of them, attracted me particularly. I used to think, 'When I grow up, I'll go there'. Of course, by this time, it was not a blank space on the map any longer; now it was the Congo, and it had become a Belgian possession. In it there was a big river²⁰ which, on the map, looked like a giant snake, with its head in the sea, its body resting in a curve over a vast country and its tail lost in the depth of the land. And as I looked at it on the map, it still fascinated me.

20. It is the Congo River.

Heart of Darkness

I thought how I still wanted to go there and I remembered that there was a big Trading²¹ Company on that river. I was sure that they must need some sort of boat to go up and down the river: steamboats²², of course.

The Company was based in Brussels, and, since I had an aunt there who knew many important people, I asked her to help me get a job as the skipper²³ of a river steamboat. She enthusiastically approved of the idea and was very glad to do something for me. She wrote,

"It is a glorious idea. I think I can help you because I know the wife of a director in the Administration, and also a man who has a lot of influence."

Thanks to her, I got my appointment²⁴, and I got it quickly, because it seems that one of their captains had been killed in a fight with the natives and they needed a new one immediately.

It was only months and months afterwards that I heard that the original quarrel had been about the bargain for some hens. Apparently the captain, a Dane called Fresleven, felt that he had been cheated by the chief of the village, so he had gone ashore and started to beat the old man cruelly, while the people of the village watched him in shock. Hearing the desperate cries of his father, the chief's son had thrown a spear at Fresleven and killed him, and the whole population of the village had fled into the jungle. In a panic and fearing other problems, the steamboat had left in a hurry, too, while the body had been left there. Nobody seemed to care much about his remains, until I, who had substituted him, got there with the intention of burying them. I found the village deserted, the huts falling down, and the grass so high that it hid his bones. Nobody had touched him after his death.

21. *trading*: the business of buying and selling goods.

22. *steamboat*: a boat that moves thanks to steam power.

23. *skipper*: the captain of a boat.

24. *appointment*: the act of officially assigning a job to someone.



Brussels, Porte de Namur 1900

“Fresleven was the gentlest, quietest creature that ever walked on earth,” somebody told me. Yet he had been capable of such brutality²⁵ for such a silly reason. I was not surprised. He had been out there for two years and the wilderness, the “darkness”, had changed him.

Anyway, thanks to his death I got my appointment much sooner than I expected. I hurried to get ready and forty-eight hours later I crossed the Channel²⁶ to go to the offices of my new employers and sign the contract. In a few hours I arrived in Brussels, a city that always makes me think of a white sepulchre²⁷. My prejudice, no doubt.

I had no difficulty in finding the headquarters of the Company: it was the biggest building in town. But it was in a narrow, dark, deserted street, surrounded by high houses and a deadly silence. I saw enormous double doors open and I went up a staircase; then, I opened the first door I found. Inside there were two women, one fat and the other slim, who were knitting black wool. The slim one walked towards me without a word and led me into a waiting room.

“My name is Marlow,” I said, and looked around me.

25. *brutality*: extreme violence and cruelty.

26. *the Channel*: the part of the Atlantic Ocean that separates England from France.

27. *sepulchre*: a structure, usually made of stone, where a dead body is buried.

There was a table in the middle of the room and some plain chairs around the outside. On one of the walls there was a large, shining map of Africa, marked with all the colours of the rainbow. The place where I was going was marked in yellow, at the very centre of the map: the Congo.

Almost immediately, a door opened and a white-haired secretary led me into the office of the head of the Company, the man who controlled millions and men.

He shook hands with me, declared himself satisfied with my French, and finally dismissed²⁸ me with a “*Bon voyage*”. In about forty-five seconds, I was again in the waiting room with the secretary.

“Will you sign these documents, please, sir?” he said, and he seemed full of compassion and sympathy. I began to feel a little uneasy, there was something sinister in the atmosphere, and, after signing all the required documents, I was glad to get out.

In the other room, the two women were still knitting black wool; people were arriving and the younger woman was walking to the door and back to introduce them.

“There is still the visit to the doctor,” the secretary had said. “Don’t worry, it is only a simple formality.”

A young clerk came from upstairs to take me there, but it was a bit early for the doctor, so I proposed a drink.

“The Company is doing great things out there,” said the young man as we sat in a café, drinking our vermouths²⁹. “The profits are enormous.”

“Then I’m surprised that you don’t go out there yourself, to make your fortune,” I said.

“I’m not as foolish as I look!” he answered, then he emptied his glass and we rose to go.

The old doctor, a little unshaven man in an old coat and slippers³⁰, felt my pulse and mumbled,

“Good, good for the Congo.”

Then he asked me if I would let him measure my head, in the interest of science.

28. *dismiss*: to ask someone to leave.

29. *vermouth*: a type of strong wine, aromatised with herbs and spices.

30. *slippers*: soft, comfortable shoes that you wear in the house.

"I always measure the heads of those going out there," he said.

"And when they come back, too?" I asked, somewhat annoyed.

"No, I never see them; besides, the changes take place inside the head, not outside," he answered. Then he added,

"Has there ever been any madness in the family?"

At this point I was really annoyed, but he continued calmly,

"It would be interesting to be able to watch the mental changes of the individuals who go out there... I have a little theory about that. Anyway, avoid exposure to the sun and always keep calm. In the tropics one must keep calm at all costs. *Du calme, du calme. Adieu.*"

After the visit to the Company, I had one more thing to do, that is say good-bye to my good aunt. She was happy and proud that she had been able to secure me the job, and, in the course of our conversation, I understood that she had described me to a lot of people as an exceptional man that the Company was very lucky to have.

"But, aunt, I'm only going to take charge of a small steamboat! With a little whistle³¹!" I said, embarrassed by her enthusiasm.

"Nonsense! Yours is a noble mission," she replied.

I realised that she saw me as a messenger of light, a sort of apostle³² who was going to bring civilisation and truth to the poor savages. There was a lot of such rubbish in the newspapers in those days, and the good woman believed it all.



"...the two women were still knitting black wool!"

31. *whistle*: here meaning steam whistle, a device attached to the steam boiler of a boat to produce a loud sound.

32. *apostle*: one of the disciples of Jesus Christ, who went from place to place to tell people about him.

“Don’t forget that the Company is run for profit,” I said, but that did not make her change her mind.

“It’s only right that people who work should be paid,” she replied, in fact.

It’s surprising how out of touch with truth women are. They live in a world of their own, which is very beautiful, but not real.

We had tea together – the last decent cup of tea for many days – then she hugged me, told me to write often, and I left. When I was in the street, I had a strange feeling that I was an impostor³³.

I was used to getting ready to move to any part of the world in twenty-four hours, but curiously I had a moment of uncertainty. For a second or two, I felt as if, instead of going to the centre of Africa, I was going to the centre of the Earth.



I left Belgium on a French steamer which stopped at every port along the African coast – dropping off³⁴ soldiers and custom-house³⁵ officers. During the journey, I spent my time watching the coast. You know, watching a coast as it slips by is like observing a mystery. The coast is there before you – sometimes it seems to be smiling gently, sometimes it looks angry, or inviting, or unkind, or savage, but it always seems to whisper, ‘Come and find out’.

This particular coast was dark and unchanging; it was the edge of an endless jungle – so dark-green that it was almost black – which ran in a straight line along the blue sea. The sun was fierce and the land, seen through the sea mist, seemed to shine and sweat.

Every now and then, you could see a grey-white spot by the beach, with a flag flying over it. It was a settlement³⁶, maybe some centuries old, which still looked no bigger than a pinhead³⁷ against

33. *impostor*: a person who pretends to be someone else.

34. *drop off*: to take someone or something to a certain place, and then leave.

35. *custom-house*: in a seaport, a building where customs – that is,

taxes on goods which enter or leave the country – are paid and collected.

36. *settlement*: a place, not inhabited before, where people go to live and establish a community.

37. *pinhead*: the round end of a pin.



"I left Belgium on a French steamer..."

that background. There we stopped, dropped off soldiers, and then went on and dropped custom-house clerks in another spot in the wilderness. And so on, dropping off soldiers and clerks. I heard that some got drowned in the surf³⁸, but nobody seemed particularly to care. They were just thrown out there and on we went.

Every day the coast looked the same, as though we hadn't moved, but we passed various places – trading places – with names like Grand Bassam³⁹ and Little Popo⁴⁰.

Since I was a passenger, I had nothing to do all day and I felt isolated among those men with whom I had nothing in common. This fact, the quiet of the sea and the coast which never changed seemed to keep me away from the truth of things.

38. *surf*: the foam and sound of the waves as they reach the shore or hit rocks.

39. *Grand Bassam*: a town in south-eastern Ivory Coast.

40. *Little Popo*: former name of Aneho, a town in south-eastern Togo, which had a Portuguese slave market.

I spent hours listening to the sound of the waves, which was pleasant, like the voice of a brother. It was something natural and good, which had a meaning and a reason to exist.

Now and then, however, a boat which came from the shore gave me a momentary contact with reality. Black men were rowing it, you could see the whites of their eyes shining from a great distance. They shouted, they sang, they were covered in sweat. They had strong muscles and bones, a wild vitality and an intense energy which was as natural as the waves along the coast. They belonged there, they needed no excuse for being there.

I looked at them and for a while I felt I was still in a world of simple, clear facts, but this feeling would not last long. Something would happen to destroy it.

Once, for example, we passed close to a man-of-war⁴¹ anchored off the coast, which we were supposed to deliver some mail to. It seemed so small against the background of the sea and the jungle! There was absolutely nothing there, not even a hut, but the ship was firing⁴² shells⁴³ into the empty wilderness. It seems the French had one of their wars going on over there.

In that enormous expanse of earth, sky and water, they were firing into a continent! It seemed so useless, so impossible to understand. One big gun after another would shoot: there was the sound of the explosion, a little flame and a little white smoke while a tiny shell was sent out and disappeared in the jungle... and nothing happened. Nothing could happen!

I thought it was madness and I didn't change my mind even when someone told me that they were shooting because there was a camp of natives – he called them 'enemies' – hidden in the jungle somewhere.

Anyway, we carried the mail to the man-of-war and went on. I heard that the men in that lonely ship were dying of fever at the rate of three a day.

41. *man-of-war*: a heavily armed ship, used for war.

42. *fire*: to shoot.

43. *shell*: a container filled with explosives which is shot from a large gun.

The unnamed Sailor's narrative

We stopped at some more places with stupid names, where nothing goes on except death and trade, and the air is still and hot like in a tomb.

We sailed along the coast, which was bordered by dangerous surf, as if Nature herself had tried to keep invaders off. Then we went in and out of rivers which made me think of death in life. Their banks, in fact, were mud, their waters were thick with slime⁴⁴.

We didn't stop anywhere long enough for me to get a precise impression, but this part of the journey gave me a growing feeling of oppression and fear.

44. *slime*: soft, viscous, slippery matter, like the coating of fish, for example.



African coastline

WORKING ON THE TEXT

1 Complete the following sentences with the appropriate character's name.

- a. introduces Marlow's story.
- b. mentions the British heroes who sailed on the Thames.
- c. says that England used to be a place of "darkness".
- d. had always been fascinated by maps.
- e. helped Marlow to get a job with the Company.
- f. was killed by a village chief's son.
- g. said that Brussels reminded him of a white sepulchre.
- h. had no intention of going to the Congo.
- i. wanted to measure Marlow's head.
- j. considered Marlow's job in the Congo as a noble mission.
- k. was used to getting ready to move in twenty-four hours.
- l. were dying of fever at the rate of three a day.

2 Answer the following questions.

- a. What did Marlow think about the conquest of other people's lands?
- b. What can make it seem better?
- c. Why did Marlow choose the Trading Company whose headquarters were in Brussels?
- d. Why did Marlow get the job so quickly?
- e. Did Fresleven have a violent, cruel nature?
- f. What did the doctor think about the wild places the Company agents were sent to?
- g. What did the doctor suspect about Marlow?
- h. Was Marlow's job an important one?
- i. Why was his aunt so proud of him?
- j. What did Marlow think about women's ideas?
- k. What did Marlow do during the journey to the Congo?
- l. What was Marlow's opinion of the French man-of-war firing into the jungle?

- 3 The idea of *darkness* appears at the very beginning of the story. Tick the situations in which it is mentioned.
- a. The River Thames in modern times.
 - b. The River Thames when the Romans arrived.
 - c. Marlow's experience in the East.
 - d. Marlow's experience in the Congo.
 - e. The setting of the sun in Brussels.
 - f. Marlow's aunt's sitting-room.
 - g. The street where the Company head-quarters were.
 - h. The African coast.
 - i. The sea.
 - j. Fresleven's violence.

WORKING ON VOCABULARY

- 4 Match the following adjectives from the text to their correct definitions.
- a. funereal 1. Ready to accept other people's ideas.
 - b. pagan 2. Not moving.
 - c. tolerant 3. Sad, as if suitable for a funeral.
 - d. still (adj) 4. Of a religion that is not any of the main world religions.
 - e. uneasy 5. Very attractive and interesting.
 - f. fierce 6. Good or socially accepted.
 - g. fascinating 7. Making you feel something evil is going to happen.
 - h. sinister 8. Uncomfortable or worried about something.
 - i. decent 9. Without limit or end.
 - j. endless 10. Violent and aggressive.



WORKING ON GRAMMAR

- 5 Turn the sentences from *Direct Speech* into *Indirect Speech* as shown in the example.
- He used to think, "When I grow up, I'll go to the Congo."
He used to think that when he grew up, he would go to the Congo.

- a. "But this," Marlow said, "has also been one of the dark places of the earth."

- b. "Imagine a commander of a trireme in the Mediterranean," said Marlow to the other sailors.
- c. "None of us would have felt like that," he added.
- d. "Could you help me get a job as a skipper?" he asked his aunt.
- e. "Why doesn't the clerk go to the Congo?" Marlow wondered.
- f. "Has there ever been any madness in the family?" the doctor wanted to know.
- g. "But I'm only going to take charge of a small steamboat!" Marlow exclaimed.
- h. "It's only right that people who work should be paid," his aunt replied.

WORKING ON SKILLS

Listening



6

B2 Practice

Listen to a slightly adapted passage from the original story and complete the sentences with a word or a short phrase.

- a. Marlow found himself again in the waiting room with the secretary.
- b. He began to feel
- c. The younger woman was walking
- d. The old woman had a big nose and a pair of glasses on the tip of it.
- e. Two young men with faces were being led to the office.
- f. She threw at them the same quick glance of
- g. She seemed
- h. Farewell, wool!

Speaking

7

Working with a partner, discuss the doctor's attitude towards people who go to the Congo to work for the Company. Then look at the dialogue below between the young clerk and Marlow. Why do you think the clerk makes this remark?

"Then I'm surprised that you don't go out there yourself to make your fortune," I said.

"I'm not as foolish as I look!" he answered.



Writing

- 8 **B2 Practice** Imagine you are Marlow's aunt and you have received a letter from Marlow. This is part of it:

Dear Aunt,
Could you please help me get a job with a company which has business in the Congo? I would like to become the captain of a steamboat on the big river there. Maybe you know somebody important who could introduce me? I am an experienced sailor and I can provide job references if necessary.

Now write an appropriate answer in 140-190 words.



The Congo River

COLONIALISM



The "Declaration of Independence" by J.Trumbull (1819)

The word 'colonialism' describes the system by which one country acquires control over another one, exploiting its resources and occupying it with settlers. This way, the conquering¹ country creates an empire, often imposing² its own language and values over the conquered one.

The practice of colonialism already existed in ancient civilisations; starting from around 1550 B.C, Egypt, Phoenicia, Greece and Rome extended their territories into nearby areas imposing their rule by force and establishing colonies.

In the Middle Ages (1299 A.D.), the Turks created the Ottoman Empire which lasted for over 600 years and which, at the moment of its greatest expansion, controlled a good part of South-Eastern Europe, Northern Africa and Western Asia.

Modern colonialism began in the 15th century, in the so-called 'Age of Discovery'. The Portuguese, looking for new trade routes, were the first to conquer territories in North Africa and then the islands of Cape Verde and Madeira. Soon, the Spanish also began the exploration of new routes. In 1492, Christopher Columbus, looking for the Indies

1. *conquer*: to take control of a place or people by military force.

2. *impose*: to force someone to accept something.

and financed by the Spanish monarchs, landed instead in the Bahamas, conquering them in the name of Spain.

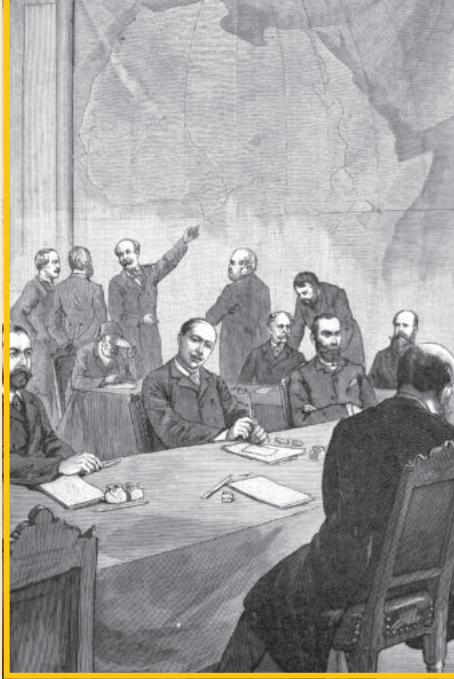
Over time, Portugal and Spain built enormous empires occupying territories in the Americas, India, Africa and Asia. Soon, other European powers, such as England, France, Germany, Russia and the Netherlands, followed them in conquering territories abroad and creating their own empires. Then, during the 18th and 19th centuries, some of the colonised countries obtained independence, starting in 1776, when the American Revolution obliged England to grant freedom to the colonies which became the United States.

In the final part of the 19th century, the European colonial powers started to concentrate on the African continent. In order to avoid violent disputes amongst themselves over the possession of African lands, the Berlin conference of 1884-1885 regulated European colonisation and trade in Africa by establishing international guidelines for the 'New Imperialism'. The imperial powers, which already possessed large areas along the coasts of Africa, were allowed to move inland³ and claim new territories. It was the so-called 'Scramble⁴ for Africa', in the period of 1885-1914. As a result, the African continent was invaded and partitioned⁵.

By 1914, most of the world's countries had been colonised by a European power. Then, decolonisation gradually began. After the Second World War, the major European colonial powers – the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium – were very weak and some were in ruins. By contrast, the two new superpowers, the United States and the U.S.S.R., were ready to help and support the liberation movements of the colonies which were fighting for their independence. By doing so, they hoped to attract the new free countries into their sphere of influence.

Eventually, the British government granted independence to India in 1947. France recognised the independence of the Indo-Chinese peninsula in 1954, of Morocco and Tunisia in 1956, and of Algeria in 1962, but only after a long and painful war.

By 1980, the large majority of the African countries were decolonised.



The 'Scramble for Africa' (the Berlin Conference, 1884-1885)

3. *inland*: away from the sea, into the middle of a country.

4. *scramble*: the act of hurrying in order

to get something.

5. *partition*: to divide a country in different areas.



Heart of Darkness

Heart of Darkness (1899) tells the story of Charles Marlow, a sailor who takes on the job of steamboat captain with a Belgian ivory trading company in the African interior. The novel is a strong critique of European colonial rule in Africa, implicitly commenting on imperialism and racism. It also examines the themes of evil, power and morality, mainly through the central fictional character, Kurtz, a cruel, charismatic ivory trader and commander of a trading post. The native Africans see him as a demigod, so he manages to collect huge quantities of ivory and sets up a reign of terror in the darkness of the African jungle. The reader is enriched with inserts about the main themes and symbols of this novel.

beginner

• **A1** (*Breakthrough*)

elementary

• **A2** (*Waystage*)

pre-intermediate

• **B1** (*Threshold*)



intermediate

• **B2** (*Vantage*)

post-intermediate

• **C1** (*Effectiveness*)

Levels of accredited examination boards:	
Cambridge English:	<i>First</i>
Trinity:	<i>Grade 7, 8 / ISE II</i>
City & Guilds (Pitman):	<i>Intermediate</i>
ESB:	<i>Intermediate 2, 3</i>
Edexcel:	<i>Intermediate</i>



This volume is accompanied by a full recording of the text. Scan the QR CODE inside the book.

Teacher's Resources available online:
Answer Key, Audioscripts, Summing-up Activities.

www.edisco.it/rainbows

