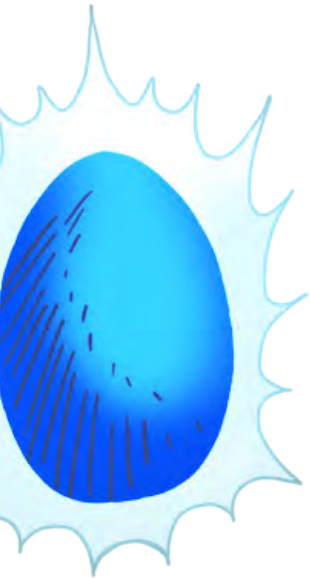


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## THE HOUSE OF HEROES BOOKS

The evil Black Owl and the good White Owl are enemies. Thanks to the White Owl and his followers, the Black Owl is now in prison. Now the Black Owl's followers want to free him, but they need to find special crystal eggs to open his prison. The White Owl lives with Alba in the House of Heroes. They travel through time and space to find heroes who can help them to find the crystal eggs first.

But these heroes have to travel to new worlds, and some of them do not come back.



### Meet Tom.

Tom has no parents or family. He lives on the streets in London. He has no job and no money. Sometimes people give him money or food, but sometimes he has to take what he needs. One day, a policeman sees him take some food and he runs after Tom. Tom goes down an alleyway and opens a door. He's in the House of Heroes. Who does he meet? And how does he get out again?

*The Blue Egg* is the first book in the House of Heroes mystery adventure series. Each book is a maze reader, which means that you, the reader, can make decisions along the way about what the characters do in the story. Each decision you make leads you to a different version of the story and a unique ending: so choose carefully!

**To help you make the best decisions you need to know these words. Use a dictionary to look them up.**

crystal    evil    monster    power

# BEFORE READING

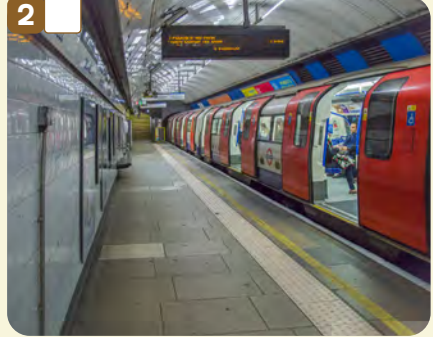
1 Match the words to the photos.


a carriage


b car

c underground train


d cart



2  Which types of transport in Exercise 1 do people use today?

3  Look at the characters on pages 8 and 9.

Who do you think is from the present and who do you think is from the past?

4  Work in pairs. Find and write five mistakes in this picture of London in 1880.



- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTER 1

# Tom



**Guess! What does Tom find?**

- A** A secret door.
- B** A secret box.
- C** A secret letter.
- D** Some money.





Tom is sitting on the bridge. He's watching the people walking by in their nice hats and coats. It's morning, but the sky is dark and grey, and the road is full of horses and carts and carriages.

The year is 1880. Tom has no shoes and he isn't wearing a hat. His coat is old and it's too small for him. He's cold, hungry and tired. Tom is twelve years old and he lives on the streets. He doesn't have a family.

A rich man with a big hat and shiny shoes walks over the bridge. He is with a woman. The woman looks at Tom and smiles. Then she says something to the man.

The man takes a small coin out of his pocket. He throws it at Tom, but it falls into a puddle. Tom jumps down into the road and quickly picks it up.

## Glossary

- **bridge:** 
- **coin:** 
- **jumps:** (here) moves quickly
- **picks up:** takes in his hand

- **pocket:** 

- **puddle:** water on the road from rain
- **shiny:** clean and bright
- **throws:** sends through the air



PARK  
PIES

‘Hey, you! Move out of my way!’ shouts a man on a cart. The cart is full of meat pies and they look very good. Tom jumps up, then he runs behind the cart and takes a pie. The man doesn’t see him.

‘HEY!’ shouts a policeman. ‘STOP THIEF!’

Tom runs. He runs around the horses and jumps over the puddles. The policeman runs after him. Tom runs as quickly as he can.

‘Stop that boy!’ shouts the policeman. He blows his whistle, and Tom looks behind him. There are lots of policemen running after him now.

Tom runs across the street and jumps over some boxes by a fruit shop. He sees an alleyway. He runs into the alleyway and hides behind a big box. Now he can eat his pie!

Just as he’s opening his mouth, he hears a noise. The policeman is walking towards him.

Tom thinks quickly and throws the pie in the policeman’s face. Then he runs down the alleyway. It’s very dark and there’s a strange fog all around him. He can’t see anything. But he can hear the policeman behind him. He runs and runs and runs. Until, BANG!

He runs into a wall at the end of the alleyway. Oh no! Tom puts his hands on the wall. He’s looking for a door or a window. Yes! There’s a door, but it’s locked! No problem for Tom – he knows how to open locked doors. Tom works at the door for a moment, then – CLICK. The door opens and he goes inside. It’s dark, and he can’t see anything. The door closes behind him. He listens for the policeman, but everything is quiet.



## Glossary


- **blows:** uses his mouth to force air and make a noise
- **fog:** thick low cloud when it is wet
- **hides:** goes where no one can see him
- **locked:** shut with a key
- **pies:** type of food, often meat or vegetables that are covered in pastry and baked
- **whistle:** see picture above




# AFTER READING VOCABULARY

1 Write the words under the pictures.



2  Find where these things are mentioned in the book, then ask a partner questions.

CAN YOU FIND THE SUNGLASSES? WHEN DOES TOM USE THEM?

3  Think of the story. Which item in Exercise 1 is the odd one out and why?

## K A2 Key English Test Reading and Writing Part 1

1 Choose the correct answers.

1

### House of Heroes shop



We buy and sell old things

113A Coates Alleyway, London

- A The shop is for sale.
- B The shop gives you money for old things.
- C The shop only sells new things.

2



### Tower of London

#### OPENING HOURS

Monday-Friday 10.00-4.00

Saturday 10.00-5.00

Sunday 11.00-12.30

Half price tickets available on Mondays.

- A On Mondays tickets are more expensive.
- B The Tower of London is not open on Mondays.
- C The Tower of London is only open for one and a half hours on Sunday.

3



Alba,

I've got the Blue Egg, but I don't know how to get back to the House of Heroes. I'm at Westminster underground station. Where do I go next?

Tom

Why did Tom write this message?

- A to ask Alba where to find the Blue Egg
- B to ask Alba for directions
- C to let Alba know where he is