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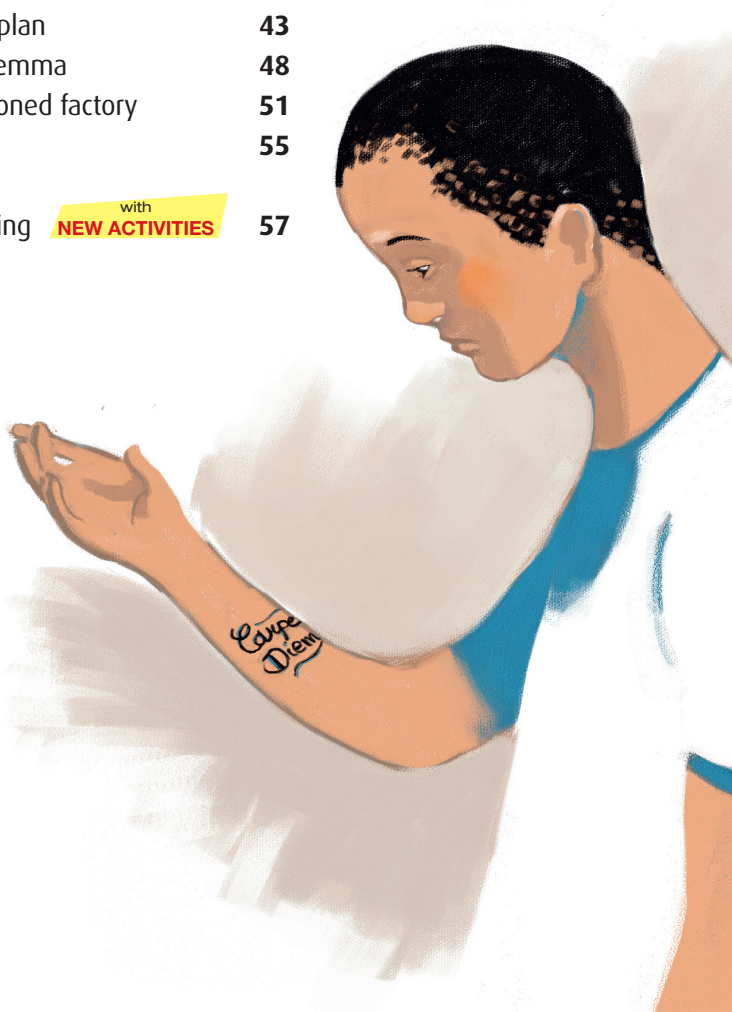


BEFORE READING

1 The story *The Coconut Seller* takes place in Brazil. How much do you know about Brazil? Do the quiz and find out!

a What is the capital of Brazil?
- 1 ☐ Rio de Janeiro
- 2 ☐ Brasília
- 3 ☐ São Paulo

b Which is the largest city in Brazil?
- 1 ☐ São Paulo
- 2 ☐ Salvador
- 3 ☐ Rio de Janeiro

c What is the official language in Brazil?
- 1 ☐ Spanish
- 2 ☐ French
- 3 ☐ Portuguese

d Which country was Brazil a colony of?
- 1 ☐ Portugal
- 2 ☐ Great Britain
- 3 ☐ Spain

e Which of the following ecosystems does Brazil's large territory include?
- 1 ☐ the Amazon Rainforest
- 2 ☐ the Great Barrier Reef
- 3 ☐ the Atacama Desert

f What is the famous Sugarloaf in Brazil?
- 1 ☐ a typical sweet
- 2 ☐ a mountain in Rio de Janeiro
- 3 ☐ a popular beach in Bahia

g Which of the following is NOT a famous beach in Rio de Janeiro.
- 1 ☐ Copacabana
- 2 ☐ Ipanema
- 3 ☐ Pantanal

h What is samba?
- 1 ☐ a type of Brazilian dance and music genre
- 2 ☐ a typical Brazilian dish
- 3 ☐ a Brazilian festival

2 Listen and check the answers.

3 With a partner, write a quiz about another country you know or would like to visit. Then exchange your quiz with another pair.

BEFORE READING

1 Check you know the meanings of the words below. They are all used in the story to describe three of the main characters: Bruno, Clara, and Zeca. Put the words you think might refer to each of them in the column below each picture.

poor tough bad-tempered optimistic rich menacing
enthusiastic muscular gorgeous thug hard-working
fair-skinned anxious criminal shy

Bruno	Clara	Zeca

2 One of the three people above is the 'cocout seller' of the title. Who do you think it is? Who do you think are the hero and the villain of this story? Give reasons.

BRUNO

Bruno stopped what he was doing for a moment and sat down on a low wall in front of the beach. He stared out to sea with a broad• smile on his face, lost in thought as he enjoyed a moment's rest.

It was a hot, sultry• day, like most summer days in Rio de Janeiro. It was only 11 o'clock in the morning and the temperature was already 35° C, and the humidity 82%. As usual, Bruno was wearing colorful, knee-length Bermuda shorts, a white sleeveless T-shirt, and a pair of blue flip-flops. The warm sea breeze• felt good against the smooth, dark skin of his face. This was the day Bruno's life was going to change forever.

A group of girls walked past and smiled over at Bruno. He was slim and good-looking, with short jet-black• hair and sparkling• dark brown eyes. But Bruno wasn't just another good-looking guy•. He was one of life's genuine nice guys. He had a very distinctive, deep voice, that was also pleasant and cheerful and warm. But he didn't use his voice to win people over•. No, whenever Bruno did say anything, it was always relevant and meaningful. His classmates at school teased him about being shy, but Bruno never got embarrassed or nervous; it was just the way he was. He kept himself to himself. And only spoke when he had something to say. Oh, and he had one of those irresistible smiles that light up your day. And he constantly looked on the bright side of things, and was optimistic about everything. Quite simply, he was a nice happy guy, and you couldn't help but• like him.

- **breeze:** light wind
- **broad:** (here) big
- **guy:** male
- **jet-black:** very black
- **sparkling:** bright and shiny
- **sultry:** (of weather) hot and heavy
- **win people over:** convince people of what he was saying
- **you couldn't help but:** it was impossible not to

Bruno gazed• blankly at the hustle and bustle• on Ipanema• beach. The beach was crowded with rich, beautiful people, mainly Brazilians, but there were also lots of wealthy tourists. There were the usual sunworshippers• and surfers, and several groups of people playing football, volleyball and footvolley, a combination of volleyball and football which was invented in Brazil. Bruno looked to his right at the two mountains in the distance – the "Dois Irmãos" – the Two Brothers. *Rio is such a beautiful place to live,* he thought to himself.

BRAZIL

What do you know about Brazil?

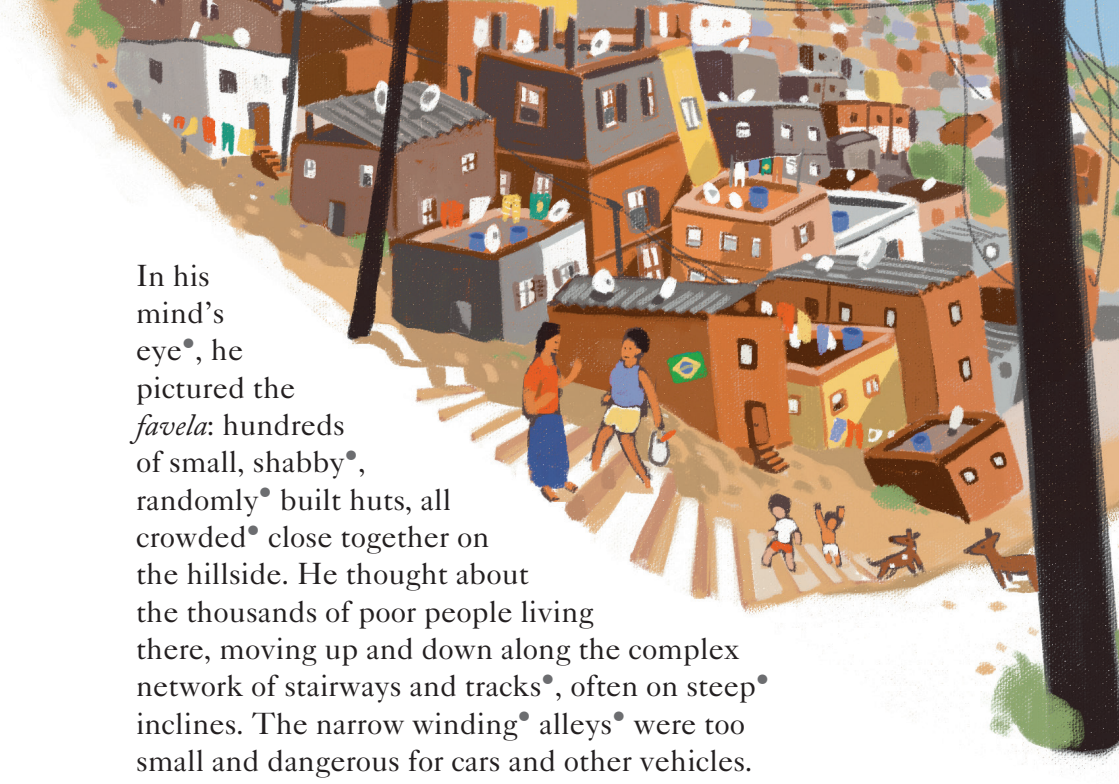
Think, then share ideas with a partner.

What is your country famous for?

What tourist attractions are there?

Then he turned around and looked at the sophisticated, high-rise• apartment buildings along the beachfront. Ipanema was one of the best and most expensive places to live in Rio. But Bruno was really thinking of where *he* lived. Bruno lived in a *favela*, a kind of poor shanty• town, called Morro do Cantagalo, on the hill, behind these expensive flats.

- **gazed:** looked in a fixed way
- **high-rise:** tall (of buildings); with many levels/floors
- **hustle and bustle:** busy movement
- **Ipanema:** rich neighbourhood in the south of Rio de Janeiro
- **shanty:** with poor, badly built houses and huts
- **sunworshippers:** people who love lying in the sun



In his mind's eye•, he pictured the *favela*: hundreds of small, shabby•, randomly• built huts, all crowded• close together on the hillside. He thought about the thousands of poor people living there, moving up and down along the complex network of stairways and tracks•, often on steep• inclines. The narrow winding• alleys• were too small and dangerous for cars and other vehicles.

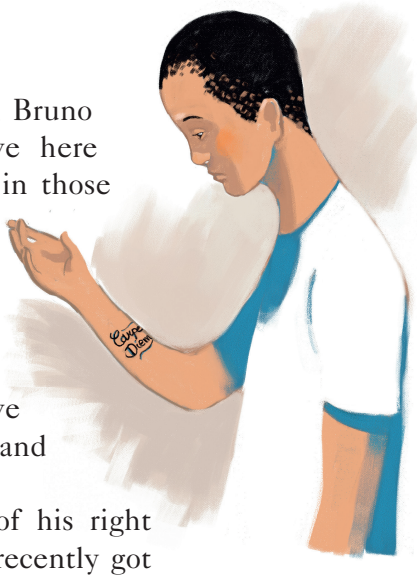
The *favela* certainly wasn't an easy place to live, and young people often turned to a life of crime. Bruno suddenly thought of Zeca. Zeca started stealing when he was only eight years old, now he was the neighborhood tough guy•. Bruno hadn't seen him for years, and he wasn't sorry. *It's an unfair world we live in,* Bruno thought. *If you're poor, you don't get much education, and you've little chance of escaping from this situation.* Bruno shivered and quickly thought of something more positive. He smiled as he thought of his mom, and all the other ordinary people who lived in the *favela*, trying to earn an honest living. Day after day they walked up and down the steep steps into Rio, to their low-paid, unskilled jobs. But they always had a smile and a big hello for everyone they met.

- **alleys:** narrow streets
- **crowded:** (here) built close together
- **mind's eye:** imagination
- **randomly:** in an unplanned way
- **shabby:** in bad condition
- **steep:** difficult to climb
- **tough guy:** bully
- **tracks:** paths
- **winding:** that turn round and round

When he was about eight years old, Bruno asked his mother, 'Why do we live here and not down there near the beach in those beautiful apartment blocks?'

'That's just the way things are, dear,' his mother replied. 'In this world, there are rich people and there are poor people, and we are poor. There's no way we could ever live like them.' He did not really understand this at that time.

Bruno then looked at the inside of his right forearm and the black tattoo he had recently got done there.



Carpe diem was a quote from his favorite movie, *Dead Poets Society*. He'd seen the movie five years ago, and it had had a profound effect on him. The story was about an English teacher, John Keating, in a school for boys. His lessons are unusual and unorthodox•, and he inspires his students to change their lives and find the courage to do what they want in life. He tells them constantly, 'Carpe diem. Seize• the day, boys! Make your lives extraordinary!'

- **seize:** grab; take with your hands
- **unorthodox:** not usual or traditional

Yes! That's it! Bruno thought at the time. *Things are not the way they are just because that's the way they are. We can change things. We can live the life we want!*

MOVIES

What is your favourite movie? Why? What is it about?

Have you ever seen a movie or read a book that has changed your way of thinking?

Do you think that we can change things and live the life we want?

Tell a partner.

Bruno decided there and then that he would not live the same life as his parents. He was determined to break away from the hardship• and poverty, and find a better life for himself and his family. He started to read as much as he possibly could, borrowing• books from the local library. He began studying really hard at school, too. And he did very well, getting high grades in all his subjects. But then, two years ago, he had to leave school and go to work to help his family. That is when he got this job, selling coconuts at a small kiosk• on the beachfront in Ipanema.

'Come on, Bruno, I have customers waiting!' his boss shouted, slightly annoyed that Bruno was still sitting on the wall.

'Okay, I'm coming!'

Bruno quickly stopped his daydreaming and jumped up. His break was over. It was time to get back to work.

- **borrowing:** taking something for a period of time
- **hardship:** economic difficulties
- **kiosk:** small open building (often selling newspapers or food)

NEW

AFTER READING

VOCABULARY

1 Use five of the words in the box to complete the sentences.

array	crash	dilemma	hideout
manners	shanty	waste	winding

a Bruno was astonished by the bewildering ..... of knives, forks, spoons, plates and glasses on the tables.

b One member of the gang took Bruno to their ..... .

c The narrow ..... alleys in the favela were dangerous for cars and other vehicles.

d Clara was doing a ..... course for the university entrance exam.

e Bruno's mother reminded her son to mind his ..... and not pretend to be someone he was not.

2 Write sentences with the three words left out in Exercise 1.

3 Unscramble the following words with the help of their meaning.

a	**eotncur**	.....	flat surface in a shop or kiosk
b	**utemrt**	.....	say something in a low voice
c	**rouustbt**	.....	sudden expression of anger
d	**foflroopo**	.....	so well planned that it cannot fail
e	**struyl**	.....	(of weather) hot and heavy
f	**conuebr**	.....	security staff member in a club
g	**telcommipn**	.....	nice comment about a person

NEW

AFTER READING

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH EXAMS

P B1 Preliminary English Test Reading Part 5

1 Complete each sentence by choosing the correct answer (A, B, C or D).

1 Bruno kept ..... to himself, and only spoke when he had something to say.
A quiet B himself C silence D talking

2 He looked at his right forearm and the black tattoo he had recently got ..... there.
A done B down C made D it

3 Bruno was a fast worker, and ..... soon all the customers were served.
A pretty B quickly C nice D ready

4 Bruno suddenly sensed that he was ..... looked at.
A actually B already C almost D being

5 Pedro had very strong opinions, often ..... to even consider what other people thought.
A allowing B admitting C forbidding D refusing

6 'You'll get used to ..... a tie!' Tiago told Bruno.
A wearing B wear C and wear D have

7 Bruno's mother looked at her son and gave a chuckle ..... delight.
A on B with C of D for

8 Bruno didn't have the ..... idea what *al dente* meant.
A true B smallest C slightest D best

9 'Your father would go mad if he ever ..... out where you're going!' he said.
A finds B found C will find D would find

10 Clara wished with all her heart that Bruno ..... come back quickly.
A has B would C to D will