

## Student workbook

Name \_\_\_\_\_

While reading the book we will be developing these reading skills:

# Reading Vipers

**V**ocabulary

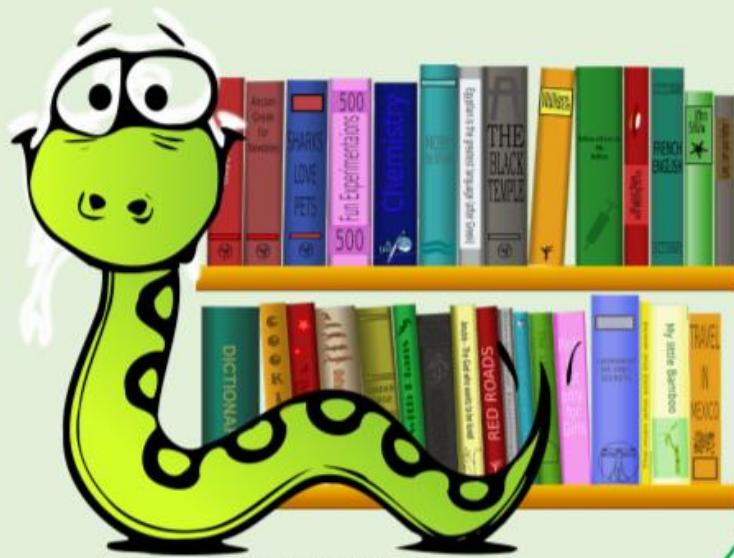
**I**nfer

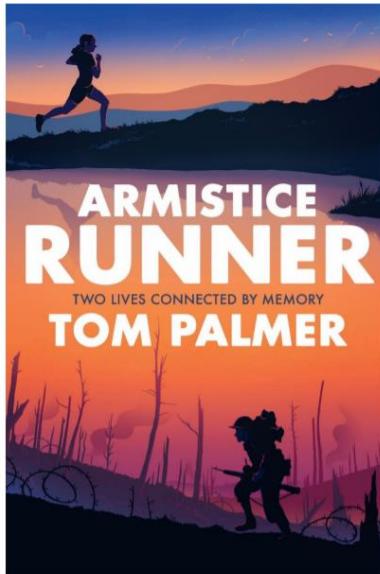
**P**redict

**E**xplain

**R**etrieve

**S**ummarise





## Predict

Before we start to read the book, make some predictions about the book, based on what you can see on the front cover.

1. Who do you think would enjoy reading this book?

2. Where are the characters coming from and going to?

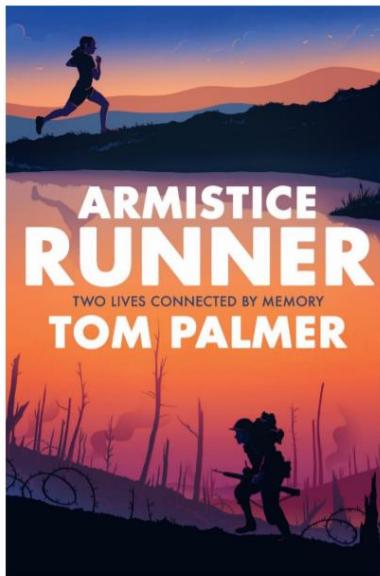
3. What is the connection between the two featured characters?

4. When do you think this book is set?

5. Why are they running?

6. Which character do you think you will empathise with the most?

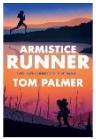
7. How would you feel if you were either of the characters on the cover?



**My predictions about the story ...**

**What makes me think this?**

**Now write a short paragraph about what you think the story might be about**



# Chapter 1



Retrieve

1. Who is the main character in the story?

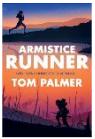
Infer

2. Who is Lily angry with? Explain why.

*My knee was aching.  
I've got a cold coming on.  
I didn't get to bed until late last night.*

3. Why is Lily making up excuses while she's running?

4. The author has used the '**rule of three**' in this chapter. Write a sentence to describe Lily using the rule of three.



## Chapter 2

Vocabulary What do these words mean?

rival

scowled

ripple

Summarise What happened in the last chapter?

Knowledge Retrieval Who is Abbie?

Why are they going to visit their grandparents?



Vocabulary

1. What is wrong with Gran? Tick the right answer.

- She has chickenpox
- She's fallen and broken her hip
- She has a type of dementia

Infer

2. Who is driving the car. Give two reasons to explain how you know.

3. Why does Lily get annoyed when it appears that Tim knows what she's thinking?

*Lily looked into her dad's bloodshot eyes.*

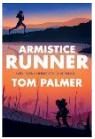
4. Why are his eyes bloodshot? Tick **all** of the possible reasons then explain which one is the most likely.

- He might have something in his eye
- He might have an eye infection
- It might be sunny
- He might have hay fever
- He might have been crying
- It might be windy
- He might have not had enough sleep

Which of these is **most likely**?

Explain

5. Why does the author mean when he says, "***Lily could see some sheep walking in a long dotted line up a track***"?



# Chapter 3

Vocabulary What do these words mean?

fell race

Summarise What happened in the last chapter?

Knowledge Retrieval Which part of the country is the family driving to?

What bad news did Dad share with them on the journey?



Retrieve

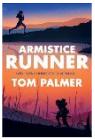
1. Fill in the boxes to compare what the house used to be like before and what it looks like now.

What the house used to be like	What the house is like now

- Vocabulary 2. What does Grandad mean when he says, "***the rest will have to go to the dogs***"?

- Retrieve 3. Where do the dogs live now and how does that make Lily feel?  
4. What makes Lily smile as she enters the front room?

- Infer 5. Why does Lily hesitate before hugging Gran?  
6. How is Tim feeling when he first sees his Gran? Use evidence from the text to explain how you know.  
7. Why does Dad leave the room?



# Chapter 4

Vocabulary What do these words mean?

injured

fells

trenches

distressed

Summarise What happened in the last chapter?

Knowledge Retrieval What has changed since the last time they visited their grandparents' house?

1)

2)

Who is Ernest?



*She ran her hands along the rough pale wood of the box, then touched the metal hinges and catch that held the lid in place. On one side THREE CARTRIDGES FOR MORTARS was stencilled in faded black letters.*

Vocabulary

1. Some words have more than one meaning. Tick the correct meaning for each word as it is used in the extract above.

catch	
If you <b>catch</b> an object that is moving through the air, you seize it with your hands.	A <b>catch</b> on a window, door, or container is a device that fastens it.
cartridge	
A <b>cartridge</b> is a metal or cardboard tube containing a bullet and an explosive substance.	A <b>cartridge</b> is part of a machine or device that can be easily removed and replaced when it is worn out or empty.
mortar	
<b>Mortar</b> is a mixture of sand, water and cement or lime which is put between bricks to hold them together.	A <b>mortar</b> is a big gun which fires missiles high into the air over a short distance.

*"He never explained why he stopped running," she said. "We always thought it was to do with the war, but the men who came home never spoke about what happened to them. And no one ever asked them."*

Infer

2. Why do you think they didn't speak about it no one ever asked them?

Predict

3. What reason do you think Ernest had for not running again?

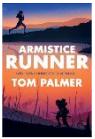
Retrieve

4. What did Ernest get his three medals for?

a)

b)

c)



# Chapters 5 and 6

Vocabulary What do these words mean?

insisted

Alzheimer's

limp

fell

dubbin

decade

route

Summarise What happened in the last chapter?

Knowledge Retrieval When they opened the box of Ernest's things, what was inside?

What is the difference between a log book and a diary?



*Lily stared up at the sky. It was as black as the hills around them. The only difference between land and sky was that the sky was pinpricked with the pulse of tiny stars.*

Explain

1. Explain why the author has chosen to use the word '**pulse**'.

Vocabulary

2. Look at p.37. Find and copy the phrase that tells us that Tim is crying.

Retrieve

3. Who is Ernest writing to in his diary?

*She made it special for you. A hero's breakfast, she called it. But I hope you don't have to be a hero.*

Infer

4. What does Ernest mean when he says "**I hope you don't have to be a hero**"?

Retrieve

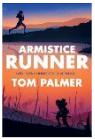
5. Look at p.44. What does father describe as "**fanciful nonsense**"? Why does he describe them in this way?

Vocabulary

6. Explain the difference between the way the word **limp** is used in these two chapters.

When James saw me coming, he pulled away from the crowd and limped over. p.46

His sturdy little body went limp in her arms. P.38



# Chapter 7

Vocabulary What do these words mean?

hearth

eased

Summarise What happened in the last chapters?

Knowledge Retrieval Who is Fred?

Where is Fred?



*I sprinted up the hill, trying to catch a glimpse of our cottage. I saw the front door was shut, and in that moment I realised all the front doors in the village were shut. And that was strange. Doors are always open in our village.*

*I knew then Fred.*

Retrieve

1. What was unusual about the village that morning?

Infer

2. What did Ernest **know**?

3. Why did Lily go and hug her brother?

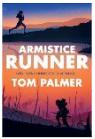
Retrieve

4. Who is Frank Thwaite?

5. Why is he living in the hills above the village?

Predict

6. Imagine you are Ernest. How might you feel towards Frank Thwaite, knowing what has happened to your brother?



# Chapter 8

Vocabulary What do these words mean?

shore

bunting

cluster

uneasy

log book

Summarise What happened in the last chapter?

Knowledge Retrieval What has happened to Fred?

How did the family hear the news?



*With morning, light. Your bed, my bed, your coat hanging on the back of the door, your trunk with the picture of the cat you burned into it when you were fifteen and Father went mad at you. I looked at all that and I wished it was dark again.*

Infer

1. Why did Ernest wish it was dark again?

*I need you up on your feet. I need you to give them a purpose. To give them their bloody breakfast if it comes to it.*

Explain

2. Explain why the author has included the word **bloody**.

Vocabulary

3. Is Fred older or younger than Ernest? Why does Billy call him **your kid**?

Infer

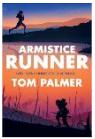
4. Why does Ernest want the race to go ahead?

5. Why has Mother come to the village wearing her **Sunday best**?

*Her jaw was rigid and she was leaning her weight onto my arm. It took all my strength to hold her up.*

This is an example of a “show, not tell” sentence, where the author shows us how the character is feeling, rather than telling us. Write your own “show, not tell” sentence to describe Ernest feeling determined to win the race in Fred’s honour.





# Chapters 9 and 10

## Vocabulary

What do these words mean?

glanced

log book

fell

rival

vast

descend

## Summarise

What happened in the last chapter?

## Knowledge Retrieval

Who decided to cancel the race?

Who persuaded him to let the race go ahead?



*"Are you going for a run today, Abbie" Gran asked.*

Retrieve

1. Lily is shocked by Gran's question. Why? Give two reasons.

Explain

2. When Lily tells Gran that Fred died during the war, she has a very strong reaction. Why is it odd for Gran to have such strong emotional feelings towards Fred?

Infer

3. Why does Lily want to go out for a run on her own?

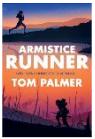
Summarise

4. Apart from Ernest's diaries, Lily has three things on her mind when she goes for her run. What are they?

*She wanted to see what would happen if she pushed and pushed, Faster, faster. Harder, harder.*

This is an example of a “rule of three” sentence, where the author lists three things which are related. Write your own “rule of three” sentence to describe what Gran might be doing when Lily gets back.





# Chapter 11

Vocabulary What do these words mean?

route

barely

scree

accelerated

descent

jolting

bracken

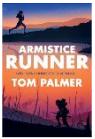
vaulted

Summarise What happened in the last chapters?

Knowledge Retrieval Gran displayed three symptoms of Alzheimer's. What were they?



Retrieve	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The village fell race has taken place for over a hundred years. What was different about it this time?<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a)</li><li>b)</li></ol></li></ol>
	<p><i>And I remembered what you said about choosing a line. Navigating. Using my head, not just my legs, to race.</i></p>
Explain	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. Why has the author used the word <b>navigating</b> in a sentence on its own.</li></ol>
Infer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. When Ernest take his ribbon, why does Mrs Grierson give him a <b>sad smile</b>?</li></ol>
Retrieve	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Look at p.85. Find a copy a sentence that uses the <b>rule of three</b>.</li></ol>
Infer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Why does Arthur tell Ernest to win the race?</li></ol>
Predict	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>6. Who do you think the man in uniform standing at the side of the road might be?</li></ol>
Summarise	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. Why does Ernest not want to be congratulated?</li></ol>



# Chapter 12

Vocabulary What do these words mean?

hearth

insisted

faltering

rigid

black pudding

trenches

Summarise What happened in the last chapter?

Knowledge Retrieval Who won the race?

What did he do at the end of the race?



*She glared at me, saying nothing.  
“I want to go and fight,” I said.  
“I know you do,” she muttered. “I’m your mother. I know what you’re going to think next even before you do.”*

Infer

1. What does this suggest about Ernest’s mother?

- a) She is disappointed in him
- b) She knows her son very well
- c) She doesn’t understand why he wants to go

*“He’s passed away,” I said in a quiet voice.  
“Passed away?” Mother shouted as the kettle screamed.*

Explain

2. Why does the author say the kettle **screamed**?

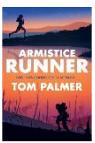
Retrieve  
Infer

3. How much time has passed between Ernest deciding to go and him leaving?  
Why do you think he left so quickly?
4. Look at p.96. Find and copy the phrase that tells us that Ernest’s mother has decided to give Ernest her blessing to go to war.

*But that whole eye-for-an-eye thing didn’t feel right. p.97*

Vocabulary

5. What does the phrase **eye-for-an-eye** refer to?
  - a) patience
  - b) revenge
  - c) forgiveness
  - d) determination



# Chapter 13

Vocabulary	<p>What do these words mean?</p> <p>trench</p> <p>U-boats</p> <p>battalions</p> <p>fell race</p> <p>regiment</p> <p>revenge</p>
Summarise	<p>What happened in the last chapter?</p>
Knowledge Retrieval	<p>Why was Ernest prepared to sneak out of the house early in the morning to go to fight in the war?</p> <p>What did his mother do to show that she accepted the fact that he'd chosen to go?</p>



Retrieve

1. a) Look at p.99. What three things has Ernest learnt to do?  
b) What literary structure has the author used here?

Vocabulary

2. Some words have more than one meaning. Tick the correct meaning for each word as it is used in this chapter.

**reserve**

A **reserve** is a group of soldiers who are ready to join a military operation if they are needed.

A **reserve** is an area of land where the animals, birds, and plants are officially protected.

**shell**

The **shell** of a building, boat, car, or other structure is the outside frame of it.

A **shell** is a weapon consisting of a metal container filled with explosives that can be fired from a large gun over long distances.

**leave**

If you ask for **leave** to do something, you ask for permission to do it.

If you are on **leave**, you are not working at your job.

Retrieve

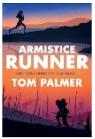
3. Where had Ernest seen Captain Whitaker before?

Infer

4. When talking about the fell race, what did Ernest mean when he said, "**To be honest, the news made it easier, sir**"?

Summarise

5. What two skills did Ernest have that would be useful to Captain Whitaker?



# Chapter 14

Vocabulary	<p>What do these words mean?</p> <p>trench</p> <p>troop</p> <p>private</p> <p>terrain</p> <p>recce</p> <p>ridge</p> <p>battalion</p> <p>shells</p>
Summarise	<p>What happened in the last chapter?</p>
Knowledge Retrieval	<p>Where did Captain Whitaker first meet Ernest?</p> <p>How did Ernest feel when he was asked to work for Capt. Whitaker?</p>



*All the time I did my best to try to adjust to the way the air was thumping with explosions and the way I could feel the earth shudder under my feet, as if there was some terrible ogre down there.*

**Explain**

1. Why has the author chosen an ogre to describe this scene?

**Summarise**

2. Look at p.110 paragraph 1. In just one sentence, what did Ernest spend his time doing?

**Retrieve**

3. Why is it harder running with a message than it was running in the fell race?

4. When Ernest was sent with his first message, he was happy. Find and copy the sentence that tells us this.

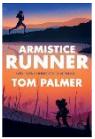
**Infer**

5. Why did Ernest laugh when he saw the aeroplane that almost shot him?

**Predict**

6. At the end of the chapter, Lily is keen to find out what happened next. ***She needed to know he was safe, that nothing bad had happened to her great-great grandad or to Captain Whitaker.***

Do you think Ernest will survive the war? Explain your answer.



# Chapters 15 and 16

Vocabulary What do these words mean?

fells

log books

uneasy

glancing

retreat

resist

collapsed

landscape

tarns

Summarise What happened in the last chapter?

Knowledge Retrieval Why was Ernest told it would be better to be shot than caught?

What was Ernest excited to see?



"I used to walk on the fells with my granddad," Gran said. "He took me up there and showed me an old sheep hut where a man used to live. Granddad told me he lived there all the years of the war. And nobody knew except him. He was hiding from the fighting."

Retrieve

1. Who is Gran talking about?

Infer

2. Why do you think Gran decides that she's like to go for a walk on the fells now?

*Then, without noticing that Gran's new red scarf was no longer on the coat stand, she walked upstairs to bed.*

Predict

3. What does this suggest has happened? Explain how you know.

Vocabulary

4. Some words have more than one meaning. Tick the correct meaning for each word as it is used in this chapter.

My brother taught me the trick – of reading the landscape, remembering it, **adjusting** it.

When you **adjust to** a new situation, you get used to it by changing your behaviour or your ideas.

If you **adjust** something, you change it so that it is more effective or appropriate.

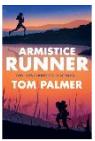
I have a **volume** of Worsdworth in my pack.

The **volume** of a radio, television, or sound system is the loudness of the sound it produces.

A **volume** is a book.

Infer

5. Why does Ernest spend **more time out in no man's land trying not to like Captain Whitaker too much?**



# Chapter 17

Vocabulary What do these words mean?

leafed

advancing

trenches

shells

amid

revenge

no man's land

craters

private

bunker

Armistice

Summarise What happened in the last chapters?

Knowledge Retrieval Where do the family think Gran is?



*Who doesn't want this war to be over? Anyone would be mad to want it to go on. But for me it's a problem. I am still doing this for you, Fred. I still want revenge for your death. If Captain Whitaker hadn't singled me out as a runner, I'd have seen a lot more action and a lot more Germans. Not that I blame the man.*

Retrieve

1. Ernest writes that the end of the war is a problem for him. Why?

Vocabulary

2. In the extract, find and copy a phrase which means **chosen**.

3. What does the word **ample** mean?

- a) example
- b) none
- c) plenty

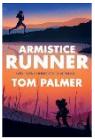
4. When Ernest writes, "**If someone held a fell race tomorrow, I'd fancy my chances,**" what does he mean?

5. Look at p.128. Find and copy a word that means to produce a large number of piece of work.

*"But I should say that is one of the finest, most human things I've heard since I've been out in this abattoir."*

Explain

6. Why has the author chosen to use the word **abattoir**?



# Chapters 18 and 19

Vocabulary	<p>What do these words mean?</p> <p>retreat</p> <p>advance</p> <p>HQ</p> <p>sentries</p> <p>teetering</p> <p>brink</p> <p>relentless</p> <p>barrage</p> <p>thronged</p> <p>amid</p>
Summarise	What happened in the last chapter?
Knowledge Retrieval	What does Ernest say that surprises Captain Whitaker?



*The main danger now isn't snipers and shellfire. It's the chaos the Germans leave behind – blowing up bridges, felling trees across roads and burning out all the roofs.*

Infer

1. Why do you think the Germans are doing that?

Retrieve

2. Look at the date of this diary entry. How close is it to the end of the war?

Infer

3. Look at p.134. Why do you think the soldier made a beeline for the piano?

Explain

4. Did the author describe the soldier's death effectively? Explain your answer.

*The Major looked up at me. He was seated, his feet up on an ammunition box.*

Infer

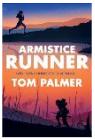
5. What does his seated position suggest?

Summarise

6. Why do you think Dad agrees to let Lily go?

Infer

7. How does Granddad feel when he sees Gran? Use evidence from the text to explain your answer.



# Chapters 20 and 21

Vocabulary	<p>What do these words mean?</p> <p>hostilities</p> <p>cease</p> <p>Armistice</p> <p>shaft</p> <p>amid</p> <p>sniper</p> <p>exposed</p> <p>mused</p> <p>vital</p>
Summarise	<p>What happened in the last chapters?</p>
Knowledge Retrieval	<p>Where has the shell hit?</p> <p>Who found Gran?</p>



"Hostilities will cease at 1100 hours today, 11 November, sir," I reported, breathing in smoke and dust. "Troops will stand fast on the line reached at that hour."

Vocabulary

- What does *stand fast* mean?

Retrieve

- Why does Ernest promise to give up running?

Infer

- Explain what the author means when he says:

*Back to saving the injured man, because if we didn't, the Armistice would mean nothing to him and a lot less to us.*

Your answer should have two parts – what it would mean for:

a) him

b) us

*...even though hostilities were about to finish, about to come to a longed-for end, the Great War could still play one last vicious trick on us.*

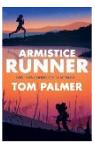
*On me.*

- What trick is this referring to?

Explain

- Why is ***On me*** in a separate paragraph?

- Look at the bottom on p.160. How are the men feeling? Explain how you know.



# Chapters 22 and 23

Vocabulary What do these words mean?

shell

intact

rasping

revenge

Summarise What happened in the last chapters?

Knowledge Retrieval What has Ernest agreed to give up in exchange for Captain Whitaker's life?

Ernest has one final job to do. What is it?



*Then I saw a huddle of people cowering in the open.*

*This was their town. They were the people of the town. But they looked more like vagrants in a strange city.*

Vocabulary

1. Why were the people **cowering**?

*"Who does one last soldier matter to?" she said again, her voice rasping as her anger rose.*

*I heard myself say it before I thought it.*

*"His mother?" I suggested.*

*She stepped back like I'd slapped her.*

*And in that moment, none of the others intervened. They all avoided my eyes. But she was still eyeing me, the tight rage of her face collapsing.*

*"D'accord," she muttered.*

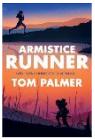
2. Find and copy a word that means the same as **get involved**.

Infer

3. The woman **stepped back like I'd slapped her**. Why? What might she be thinking at that moment?

4. Why do you think she agrees to let the German soldier go?

5. Why do you think that Ernest ends this chapter by saying:  
*I could never have killed him Fred?*



# Chapters 24 and 25

Vocabulary What do these words mean?

barely

adrenaline

rigid

tarn

revenge

descent

rival

accelerated

emerged

Summarise What happened in the last chapters?

Knowledge Retrieval Who had the French villagers captured?

What did they want to do to him?



Dear Ernest,

Greetings from München. We have beautiful weather. And I have beautiful news also. I am a father. Our son was born one day ago. He is strong and lean and has wide-open eyes. His name is Ernest. Send me a postcard soon, my friend.

Thomas

Retrieve

1. Who is Thomas?
  - a) Captain Whittaker
  - b) An old school friend
  - c) The German soldier

Infer

2. Explain why Thomas sent this postcard to Ernest. What does it tell us about their relationship?
  
  
  
  
  
3. Why do you think this postcard had been handled more than any of the others?

"Come on Lily," came a shout from the side of the fell. A man's voice, but whose?

5. Whose voice do you think might be encouraging Lily?

Write a short book review explaining what you liked about the book and who you would recommend it to.

English

**Compiled by Denise Forrest**