

The Wishing Shell

A Fleydo English School Story

A2 Level | Kids (6-10) | Reading | Story | 16 Pages

In this enchanting storybook, twins Mia and Leo discover a magical seashell that grants three wishes. But wishes do not always work the way you expect! Through funny mishaps and surprising twists, they learn that the best things in life — friendship, family, and laughter — cannot be wished for.

Learning Objectives

- Read and understand a longer A2-level adventure story (16 pages)
- Learn 15 new vocabulary words in context
- Practise reading comprehension with multiple-choice questions
- Understand cause and effect in a narrative
- Discuss themes: wishes, gratitude, and what really matters in life

1 Read the Story

Chapter 1: A Perfect Summer Day

Mia and Leo were twins. They were ten years old and they looked almost exactly the same — the same curly brown hair, the same freckles on their noses, and the same big smile. But they were very different in one important way: Mia was brave and adventurous, and Leo was careful and thoughtful. Together, they made a perfect team.

It was the first day of summer holidays, and their family had come to stay in a little cottage by the sea. The cottage was old and white, with blue shutters and a red door, and it sat right on top of a cliff overlooking the most beautiful beach Mia and Leo had ever seen.

"Can we go to the beach? Please, please, PLEASE!" Mia asked, jumping up and down with excitement.

Their mother smiled. "Of course. But stay together, and don't swim too far from the shore."

The twins grabbed their towels and ran down the stone steps to the beach. The sand was golden and warm under their feet. The sea was bright blue, sparkling like a million tiny diamonds in the sunshine. Seagulls flew overhead, calling to each other. It was perfect.

Mia and Leo spent the whole morning playing on the beach. They built a huge sandcastle with towers and walls and a moat filled with seawater. They collected interesting stones and pieces of colourful sea glass. They paddled in the shallow water and chased each other along the shore.

After lunch, Leo sat on a big rock reading his book, while Mia explored the rock pools that appeared when the tide went out. She loved looking at the tiny crabs, the little fish, and the beautiful sea anemones that lived in the pools.

"Leo! Come here! Quick!" Mia suddenly shouted.

Leo put down his book and ran over to where his sister was standing. She was staring at something half-buried in the sand, between two big rocks. It was a seashell, but not an ordinary seashell. This one was the size of a small plate, and it was the most beautiful shell they had ever seen. It was pale pink and white, and it seemed to glow with a soft, warm light from inside.

"Wow," Leo whispered. "What is it?"

"It's a seashell," said Mia. "But look at it — it's glowing! That's not normal, is it?"

Mia reached down and carefully picked up the shell. The moment she touched it, the glow became brighter, and both twins felt a warm tingling in their fingers, like gentle electricity.

Chapter 2: The Voice in the Shell

Mia held the shell up to her ear, the way you do to hear the sound of the ocean. But instead of the normal whooshing sound, she heard something completely different. She heard a voice.

"Hello, children," the voice said. It was soft and ancient, like the sound of waves that had been rolling for a thousand years. "My name is Marina. I am the spirit of this shell. I have been sleeping here for a very long time, waiting for someone kind to find me."

Mia nearly dropped the shell in surprise. "Leo! The shell is TALKING!"

"Don't be silly, Mia. Shells can't talk," Leo said. But then Mia held the shell to Leo's ear, and his eyes grew wide.

"I am real," Marina said gently. "And I have a gift for you both. Because you found me, I can grant you three wishes. Any three things you want in the whole world."

The twins stared at each other. Three wishes! They couldn't believe it!

"But I must warn you," Marina continued, her voice becoming more serious. "Wishes are powerful things. They do not always work the way you expect. Think carefully before you wish. And remember — the most valuable things in life are the things that cannot be wished for."

Mia and Leo sat down on the warm sand, the magical shell between them, and started to think about what they wanted to wish for. Three wishes. What would YOU wish for?

Chapter 3: The First Wish

"I know what I want!" Mia said immediately. She could never wait for anything — she always wanted everything right now. "I wish for the biggest, most delicious ice cream in the whole world!"

Leo rolled his eyes. "Mia! We only have THREE wishes! You're going to waste one on ice cream?"

But it was too late. The shell glowed bright pink, and there was a soft humming sound. Then, right in front of them on the beach, an enormous ice cream appeared. But when Marina said she would grant the wish, she really meant it. This ice cream was ENORMOUS. It was taller than their cottage! It had fifty scoops in every flavour imaginable — chocolate, vanilla, strawberry, mango, pistachio, blueberry, caramel, and many more. It was covered in hundreds of toppings: sprinkles, chocolate sauce, crushed biscuits, fresh berries, and tiny marshmallows.

"Oh my!" Mia gasped, staring up at the giant ice cream tower above her.

But there was a big problem. The sun was very hot. And what happens to ice cream in the hot sun? It melts. Very, very quickly.

Within two minutes, rivers of melted ice cream started flowing down the enormous tower. Chocolate rivers ran across the sand. Strawberry streams poured into the rock pools. Vanilla waterfalls splashed onto the beach towels. The seagulls went crazy, diving down to eat the sweet, sticky mess.

"Oh no! It's melting everywhere!" Leo shouted, jumping back as a wave of melted mango ice cream reached his feet.

"I'm sorry! I didn't think it would be THIS big!" Mia cried, trying to eat as much as she could, but it was impossible. There was too much.

By the time the ice cream had completely melted, the entire beach was a sticky, colourful mess. Their towels were covered in chocolate sauce. Their sandcastle was now a caramel castle. Even the seagulls were pink and brown from all the ice cream.

Leo looked at Mia and shook his head slowly. "One wish wasted."

Mia looked embarrassed. "Okay, okay. I learned my lesson. Next time, we think more carefully." She looked at the seashell, which was glowing gently in the sun. "Sorry, Marina."

"That is quite alright, dear," Marina's gentle voice said from the shell. "Most people waste their first wish. It is normal. You still have two wishes left. Use them wisely."

Chapter 4: The Second Wish

The next morning, the twins walked along the beach thinking about their second wish. They had to be smarter this time.

"We should wish for something useful," Leo said thoughtfully. "Something that will last."

"What about money?" Mia suggested. "If we had lots of money, we could buy anything we wanted!"

Leo thought about this. It did sound good. But then he remembered Marina's warning: wishes do not always work the way you expect.

"What if we wish to be the most popular children in our town?" Mia said. "Everyone would want to be our friend!"

Leo liked this idea better. He missed his school friends during the holidays, and he sometimes felt shy when meeting new people. Having everyone like them sounded wonderful.

"Okay," he said. "Let's do it."

Mia held up the seashell and said clearly: "We wish to be the most popular children in our town!"

The shell glowed bright blue this time, and there was a louder humming sound than before. Then everything went quiet.

When they got back to the cottage, things had already changed. There were twenty-three messages on their mother's phone from parents in their town asking if Mia and Leo could come to play. There were thirty-four party invitations in their email. There were twelve letters pushed under the cottage door, all from children who wanted to be their best friend.

At first, it was amazing! Children they had never even met came to the cottage to say hello. The ice cream shop owner gave them free ice cream every day. The toy shop sent them presents. Everyone in the town smiled at them and waved.

But after three days, it became a nightmare.

People started knocking on their door at seven o'clock in the morning. "Can Mia and Leo come out to play?" Children followed them everywhere — to the beach, to the shops, even to the bathroom! They could not have a single quiet moment. When they tried to read books, someone would interrupt them. When they tried to eat dinner with their family, strangers would knock on

the window to wave at them.

"I can't take this anymore!" Leo said on the fourth night, hiding under his blanket. "There were FORTY children waiting outside our house this morning. Forty!"

"I know," Mia said miserably. "A girl followed me into the bathroom today. The BATHROOM, Leo!"

"We need to undo this wish," Leo said. "This isn't real popularity. These people don't really know us. They just like us because of the magic. That's not the same as real friendship."

Mia picked up the seashell. "Marina, can we use our third wish to undo the second wish?"

"Of course you can," Marina said softly. "But then you will have no wishes left. Are you sure?"

The twins looked at each other and nodded at exactly the same time. "Yes. We're sure."

Chapter 5: The Third Wish

"We wish that everything goes back to normal," Mia and Leo said together.

The shell glowed bright gold. There was a flash of warm light, and then everything was quiet. The next morning, nobody knocked on their door. No letters arrived. No phone calls came. The town was peaceful and normal again.

"Thank goodness," Leo said with a huge sigh of relief as they walked to the beach.

But Mia felt sad. "We wasted all three wishes, Leo. Three! And we have nothing to show for it. No ice cream. No friends. Nothing."

Leo put his arm around his sister's shoulder. "That's not true, Mia. We learned something really important."

"What?"

"We learned that the things we wished for — amazing food and popularity — they didn't make us happy. The ice cream made a mess. The popularity made us miserable. Maybe Marina was right. Maybe the most valuable things can't be wished for."

Mia thought about this as they walked along the shore. The waves rolled gently onto the sand. The sun was warm on their faces. A seagull flew overhead, calling out to the blue sky. And suddenly, Mia realised something.

"Leo," she said slowly, "I think we already have the things that matter. We have each other. We have Mum and Dad. We have this beautiful beach. We have a whole summer ahead of us. We don't need wishes for any of that."

Chapter 6: The Real Treasure

That afternoon, the twins went back to the rock pool where they had found the shell. Mia held it up one last time.

"Marina? Are you still there?"

"I am always here, dear child," the soft voice answered. "You have used all three wishes. But I want to tell you something. In all the years I have been granting wishes — and it has been many, many years — very few people have learned the lesson that you two have learned today."

"What lesson?" Leo asked.

"That the best things in life are free. Love. Family. Friendship. Laughter. The feeling of sand between your toes. The sound of waves on the shore. The warmth of the sun on your skin. These things cost nothing, but they are worth more than all the wishes in the world."

"But if wishes don't make you happy, why do you grant them?" Mia asked.

Marina laughed softly. "Because sometimes people need to get what they wish for before they can understand what they truly need. You wished for the biggest ice cream in the world, and it taught you that more is not always better. You wished for popularity, and it taught you that real friendship cannot be forced. These are important lessons, and now you will never forget them."

"Thank you, Marina," Mia said. "For the wishes AND for the lessons."

"You are very welcome, children. Now, I have one more gift for you. It is not a wish — it is something even better."

The shell glowed one final time, softer and warmer than before. When the glow faded, the twins noticed something different about the beach around them. The rock pool was full of the most colourful fish they had ever seen — bright blue, vivid orange, deep purple. Tiny seahorses floated between the rocks. A small octopus waved one of its arms at them.

"This is my real gift," Marina said. "I have brought some of the ocean's most magical creatures to live in these rock pools, so that you will always have something beautiful to discover when you come to this beach. No wishes needed — just open your eyes and look."

Mia and Leo spent the rest of the afternoon watching the incredible creatures in the rock pools. They saw fish in colours they did not even know existed. They watched the octopus change from purple to green to brown, hiding perfectly against the rocks. They found tiny starfish clinging to the stones.

And they realised that this — this quiet, beautiful, free moment — was better than any wish could ever be.

Chapter 7: New Friends

The next morning, something wonderful happened — but it had nothing to do with magic.

Mia and Leo were building another sandcastle on the beach when they noticed two other children walking towards them. A girl with short blonde hair and a boy with glasses, both about the same age as the twins. They looked a little bit shy and nervous.

"Hello," the girl said quietly. "My name is Emma, and this is my brother Jake. We're staying in the cottage next to yours. We saw your sandcastle and... well... it looks amazing. Could we help you build it?"

Mia grinned. "Of course! I'm Mia, and this is Leo. Do you want to make the towers? We need four big towers."

Just like that, without any magic, without any wishes, the four children became friends. Real friends. They spent the whole day together, building the biggest sandcastle the beach had ever seen. It had twelve towers, a drawbridge made from driftwood, and a flag made from a leaf on top of each tower.

They paddled in the sea together, splashing and laughing. They shared their lunch — Leo's cheese sandwiches, Mia's apples, Emma's crisps, and Jake's chocolate biscuits. They told each other jokes and funny stories until their stomachs hurt from laughing so much.

As the sun started to go down, painting the sky in beautiful shades of orange, pink and purple, the four children sat on the beach together, tired but happy.

"This was the best day of the whole summer," Jake said, pushing his glasses up his nose.

"The best day ever," Emma agreed.

Mia looked at Leo and smiled. He smiled back. They were both thinking the same thing: this — real friendship, real laughter, a real connection with people who liked them for who they were — this was worth more than a hundred wishes.

"Do you want to play again tomorrow?" Leo asked.

"YES!" Emma and Jake said together, and everyone laughed.

That evening, walking back to the cottage, Mia whispered to Leo, "You know what? I'm glad we wasted those three wishes."

"Wasted? I don't think we wasted them at all," Leo whispered back. "I think we used them perfectly. We learned exactly what we needed to learn."

Mia held the seashell in her pocket. It was not glowing anymore — it looked like an ordinary, beautiful shell now. But every time she touched it, she felt warm inside, because it reminded her of the most important lesson she had ever learned.

Some things in life are better than wishes. And those things are already yours. You just have to notice them.

Chapter 8: One Last Surprise

On the very last day of the summer holidays, Mia took the seashell to the beach one more time. She held it up to her ear, but Marina's voice was gone. The shell was quiet.

"Thank you, Marina," Mia whispered. "Wherever you are."

She placed the shell carefully back in the sand between the two rocks where she had found it, so that one day another child would discover it and learn the same lessons she had learned.

Then she ran back to Leo, Emma and Jake, who were waiting for her at the water's edge.

"What were you doing?" Leo asked.

"Saying goodbye to an old friend," Mia said, smiling. "And leaving a gift for someone new."

The four friends spent their last afternoon together swimming, laughing, and promising to write to each other every single week.

"We'll come back next summer," Leo told Emma and Jake. "I promise."

"We'll be here," Emma said. "Waiting."

And as the sun went down on the last day of summer, four children stood on a beautiful beach, watching the sky turn gold, knowing that the greatest treasure in the world was standing right beside them.

No magic needed. No wishes required. Just love, friendship, and a perfect summer day.

The End

And so, if you ever find a glowing seashell on a beach, hold it to your ear. You might hear the whisper of the waves. Or you might hear the voice of Marina, the ancient spirit of the sea.

But before you make your wish, look around you first. Look at the people who love you. Look at the beauty of the world. Look at the friends by your side.

Because the best things in life are not the things you wish for. They are the things you already have.

2 Key Vocabulary

These words from the story will help you improve your English.

Word	Type	Definition	Example
twins	<i>noun</i>	two children born at the same time to the same mother	<i>Mia and Leo were twins.</i>
seashell	<i>noun</i>	the hard outer covering of a sea creature	<i>They found a beautiful seashell on the beach.</i>
grant	<i>verb</i>	to give someone what they ask for	<i>The shell could grant three wishes.</i>
wish	<i>noun</i>	something you want to happen	<i>They had three wishes to use.</i>
ancient	<i>adj</i>	very, very old; from a long time ago	<i>Marina's voice sounded ancient and wise.</i>
suddenly	<i>adv</i>	quickly and without warning	<i>Suddenly, a huge ice cream appeared.</i>
enormous	<i>adj</i>	very, very big	<i>The ice cream was enormous!</i>
frightened	<i>adj</i>	feeling afraid or scared	<i>Leo felt frightened by all the attention.</i>
realised	<i>verb</i>	understood something for the first time	<i>Mia realised that wishes weren't so great.</i>
greedy	<i>adj</i>	wanting more than you need	<i>The first wish was a bit greedy.</i>
ungrateful	<i>adj</i>	not thankful for what you have	<i>They didn't want to be ungrateful.</i>
immediately	<i>adv</i>	right now; without waiting	<i>The wish came true immediately.</i>
valuable	<i>adj</i>	worth a lot; very important	<i>The most valuable things are free.</i>
whispered	<i>verb</i>	spoke very quietly	<i>"Thank you," Mia whispered to the shell.</i>
treasure	<i>noun</i>	something very precious and special	<i>Their real treasure was friendship.</i>

3 Comprehension Quiz

Choose the correct answer for each question.

Question 1. Where did Mia and Leo go for the summer holidays?

- A. To the mountains
- B. To a cottage by the sea
- C. To their grandmother's house
- D. To a big city

Question 2. How many wishes did the seashell grant?

- A. One
- B. Two
- C. Three
- D. Unlimited

Question 3. What was Mia's first wish?

- A. A new bicycle
- B. The biggest ice cream in the world
- C. A puppy
- D. A million pounds

Question 4. What happened to the enormous ice cream?

- A. They ate it all
- B. It flew away
- C. It melted in the sun and made a huge mess
- D. It turned into a cake

Question 5. What was the second wish?

- A. To be very rich
- B. To fly like birds
- C. To be the most popular children in town
- D. To have a swimming pool

Question 6. Why did the twins want to undo the popularity wish?

- A. People followed them everywhere and they had no peace
- B. They became too famous
- C. They didn't like the presents
- D. Their mother was angry

Question 7. What did Marina say about the best things in life?

- A. They are very expensive
- B. They require hard work
- C. They are free and cannot be wished for
- D. They come from seashells

Question 8. Who were Emma and Jake?

- A. Mia and Leo's cousins
- B. Children staying in the cottage next door
- C. Characters from a book
- D. Marina's children

Question 9. What did Mia do with the seashell at the end?

- A. She took it home
- B. She threw it in the sea
- C. She put it back so another child could find it
- D. She gave it to Emma

Question 10. What is the main lesson of the story?

- A. Ice cream is delicious
- B. Popularity is important
- C. Seashells are magical
- D. The best things in life are already yours

4 Answer Key

Q	Correct Answer
1	B. To a cottage by the sea
2	C. Three
3	B. The biggest ice cream in the world
4	C. It melted in the sun and made a huge mess
5	C. To be the most popular children in town
6	A. People followed them everywhere and they had no peace
7	C. They are free and cannot be wished for
8	B. Children staying in the cottage next door
9	C. She put it back so another child could find it
10	D. The best things in life are already yours