

The Bookshop at the End of the Lane

A Fleydo English School Story

A2 Level | Teens (11–16) | Reading | Story | 16 Pages

Noor is fifteen and new in town. She discovers The Binding, a mysterious bookshop where gold-spined books transport readers into other people's stories. Through three magical journeys, Noor learns about empathy, kindness, and courage. When the bookshop is threatened with demolition, she uses everything she has learned to save it.

Learning Objectives

- Read and understand an A2-level story about empathy and kindness (16 pages)
- Learn 65 new vocabulary words in context
- Practise vocabulary with matching and fill-in-the-blank exercises
- Test reading comprehension with 10 multiple-choice questions
- Discuss themes: empathy, the power of stories, community, and finding purpose

1 Read the Story

Chapter 1

The Help Wanted Sign

Noor discovers a very unusual bookshop

Noor was fifteen and new in town. Her family had moved to Ashbury three weeks ago because her father got a job at the local hospital. She missed her old friends, her old school, and her old bedroom. Everything in Ashbury felt grey and unfamiliar.

One rainy afternoon, she noticed a narrow lane with a small bookshop at the end. A hand-written sign in the window said: HELP WANTED — Must Love Stories. She pushed the door open. A bell jingled. Inside, the shop was warm and smelled of old paper and cinnamon. Books covered every wall from floor to ceiling.

Behind the counter sat a woman with silver hair and round glasses. “You must be here about the sign.” “I was just curious,” Noor said. “That’s exactly the right qualification,” the woman said. “I’m Mrs. Ashworth. Welcome to The Binding.”



Chapter 2

The Rules of the Shop

Noor learns that The Binding is no ordinary bookshop

Mrs. Ashworth explained three rules. First, never rearrange the books. Second, if a book falls from a shelf on its own, it is choosing its reader — give it to whoever is nearest. Third, never open a book with a gold spine unless you are ready. “Ready for what?” “Ready to understand.”

Noor started working every afternoon after school: making tea, helping customers, dusting shelves, writing handwritten recommendation cards. The customers were peculiar. A man read the same page every Tuesday for exactly one hour. A girl stood in the poetry section breathing deeply. An old man brought his own cushion and laughed so loudly the tea cups rattled.

But Noor couldn’t stop thinking about the seven books with gold spines, spread across different shelves, thick and old with no titles. “What’s in those gold books?” she asked. “Stories. But not the kind you read. The kind you live.”



Chapter 3

The First Gold Book*Noor opens a book and enters another world*

A gold-spined book fell from the top shelf. Rule Two: it was choosing its reader. Noor opened it. The first page said: Walk through the door, Noor. Her name, in a book probably a hundred years old.

She turned the page and the bookshop disappeared. She was in a marketplace surrounded by colour and noise. A girl her age was crying on a stone step. Her brother was sick and she couldn't afford the medicine. The merchant wanted twenty silver coins; she had only twelve.

Noor negotiated with the merchant, offering to organise his messy shelves and label his bottles in exchange for eight coins. She worked for three hours. The girl bought the medicine. "Thank you. What's your name?" "Noor." "It means light. You are well named." She blinked and was back in the bookshop. The page was blank.



Chapter 4

The Lonely Boy*The second gold book teaches Noor about empathy*

A week later, another gold book fell. Noor didn't hesitate. She found herself in a grey school corridor, watching a boy walk alone past laughing students. He sat at a bench in the playground with his sketchbook.

His drawings were incredible — birds, buildings, and imaginary creatures. "Nobody cares about drawings," he said. "I care," Noor replied. She helped him pin ten of his best pictures on the school noticeboard.

By the end of the day, students were stopping to look. A girl asked Ethan to draw her portrait. A teacher asked him to design the poster for the school play. "How did you know?" Ethan asked. "That all I needed was for one person to notice."



Chapter 5

The Lost Language*Noor faces her biggest challenge yet*

The third gold book transported Noor to a village where nobody could speak. People moved in silence, gesturing in frustration. Children sat in empty classrooms with closed books. The village had forgotten its

language completely.

Noor went to the school, picked up chalk, and drew a sun on the blackboard. “Sun,” she said. A small boy whispered it back. Then louder. Others joined in. Word by word, picture by picture, Noor rebuilt their language.

The old man who had shown her a leafless tree drawing now added leaves and wrote a new word: Remembered. Noor blinked back to the bookshop, her hands trembling. These weren’t just stories. They were lessons in kindness, courage, and paying attention.

Chapter 6

The Developers

The bookshop is in danger

One afternoon, Noor found Mrs. Ashworth sitting very still with a letter. A property developer had bought the lane and wanted to demolish the shop for luxury flats. “Unless we can prove it has heritage value, we have three months.”

Noor started a campaign. She made posters: What did The Binding give you? Share your story. She set up a website, wrote to the newspaper, and posted on social media. The stories came flooding in — a retired teacher saved by a book about grief, a young man inspired not to drop out, a mother whose daughter learned to read with Mrs. Ashworth.

Within two weeks, over three hundred stories. A full-page article in the newspaper. A petition with four thousand signatures sent to the local council.

Chapter 7

The Seventh Book

The last gold book has one final lesson

The council declared The Binding a Heritage Building. The developer withdrew. The bookshop was safe. That evening, the seventh and final gold book fell gently into Noor’s hands.

This time, she didn’t go anywhere. The pages were filled with writing — her story. The marketplace, Ethan, the village, the campaign. On the last page: “Every person carries a story. The bravest thing you can do is listen to someone else’s story and help them rewrite it.”

The gold spine dimmed. The magic was done. But the lesson was permanent. She looked around the shop — the old books, the dusty shelves, the warm light. This place had given her a purpose.

Outside, the evening sun turned the lane golden. She locked the door, put the key in her pocket, and walked home. She wasn't the new girl anymore. She was the girl who worked at The Binding — where stories breathed and books chose their readers.

*Every person carries a story.
The bravest thing you can do is listen.
— The Seventh Gold Book*



2 Key Vocabulary

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

Word	Type	Definition	Example
local	adj	relating to a nearby area	<i>Her father got a job at the local hospital.</i>
jingled	verb	made a light ringing sound	<i>A bell jingled above her head.</i>
cinnamon	noun	a sweet brown spice	<i>The shop smelled of cinnamon.</i>
ceiling	noun	the top surface inside a room	<i>Books covered the wall to the ceiling.</i>
qualification	noun	quality making someone suitable	<i>Curiosity was the right qualification.</i>
rearrange	verb	put in a different order	<i>Never rearrange the books.</i>
spine	noun	narrow part of a book on a shelf	<i>The gold spine glowed faintly.</i>
understand	verb	know the meaning of something	<i>Ready to understand.</i>
handwritten	adj	written by hand, not typed	<i>She wrote handwritten cards.</i>
recommendations	noun	suggestions about what to try	<i>She wrote recommendations for each book.</i>
peculiar	adj	strange in an interesting way	<i>The customers were peculiar.</i>
poetry	noun	writing in lines with rhythm	<i>She stood in the poetry section.</i>
cushion	noun	a soft bag for sitting on	<i>He brought his own cushion.</i>
dentist	noun	a doctor for teeth	<i>Mrs. Ashworth was at the dentist.</i>
leather	adj	material made from animal skin	<i>The cover was plain dark leather.</i>
disappeared	verb	stopped being visible	<i>The bookshop disappeared.</i>
marketplace	noun	open area for buying and selling	<i>She was standing in a marketplace.</i>
fabrics	noun	types of cloth or material	<i>People were selling fabrics and spices.</i>
almonds	noun	oval nuts with a light shell	<i>The air smelled of roasted almonds.</i>

afford	verb	have enough money for something	<i>We can't afford the medicine.</i>
merchant	noun	person who buys and sells goods	<i>The merchant wanted twenty coins.</i>
herbs	noun	plants for flavour or medicine	<i>A shop of glass bottles and herbs.</i>
negotiated	verb	discussed to reach agreement	<i>Noor negotiated with the merchant.</i>
messy	adj	untidy; not neat	<i>She organised his messy shelves.</i>
agreed	verb	said yes to a plan	<i>The merchant agreed.</i>
blinked	verb	closed and opened eyes quickly	<i>Noor blinked and was back.</i>
hesitate	verb	wait because unsure	<i>She didn't hesitate this time.</i>
corridor	noun	long narrow passage	<i>She was in a grey school corridor.</i>
sketchbook	noun	book of blank pages for drawing	<i>He took out his sketchbook.</i>
startled	adj	suddenly surprised	<i>He looked startled.</i>
incredible	adj	extremely good	<i>The drawings were incredible.</i>
creatures	noun	living things, especially animals	<i>Imaginary creatures on the page.</i>
amazing	adj	very good and surprising	<i>These are amazing.</i>
noticeboard	noun	board for putting information on	<i>She pinned pictures on the noticeboard.</i>
portrait	noun	picture of a person	<i>A girl asked for her portrait.</i>
lessons	noun	experiences that teach something	<i>These were lessons in kindness.</i>
courage	noun	ability to do frightening things	<i>Lessons in courage.</i>
gesturing	verb	moving hands to show meaning	<i>People were gesturing in silence.</i>
frustration	noun	feeling upset when blocked	<i>Their faces were full of frustration.</i>
classrooms	noun	rooms where lessons happen	<i>Children sat in empty classrooms.</i>
forgotten	verb	been unable to remember	<i>The village had forgotten its language.</i>

traditions	noun n	customs passed between generations	<i>The traditions had no voices.</i>
blackboard	noun n	board for writing with chalk	<i>She drew a sun on the blackboard.</i>
whispered	verb	spoke very quietly	<i>A small boy whispered.</i>
rebuilt	verb	built again after being lost	<i>She rebuilt their language.</i>
imperfect	adjective	not perfect but still good	<i>Messy, imperfect, joyful noise.</i>
joyful	adjective	full of happiness	<i>Joyful noise filled the village.</i>
trembling	adjective	shaking from strong emotion	<i>Her hands were trembling.</i>
property	noun n	land and buildings owned	<i>A property developer bought the lane.</i>
developer	noun n	person who builds buildings	<i>The developer wanted luxury flats.</i>
demolish	verb	completely destroy a building	<i>They wanted to demolish the shop.</i>
luxury	adjective	very expensive and comfortable	<i>Luxury flats.</i>
heritage	noun n	important things from the past	<i>Prove the building has heritage value.</i>
campaign	noun n	planned activities for a goal	<i>She started a campaign.</i>
social media	noun n	websites for sharing content	<i>She posted on social media.</i>
grief	noun n	deep sadness after a loss	<i>A book about grief saved my life.</i>
article	noun n	writing in a newspaper	<i>A full-page article was published.</i>
council	noun n	people who manage a town	<i>The council received a petition.</i>
petition	noun n	request signed by many people	<i>A petition with four thousand signatures.</i>
signatures	noun n	names written by hand	<i>Four thousand signatures.</i>
declared	verb	said officially	<i>The council declared it a Heritage Building.</i>
bravest	adjective	most courageous	<i>The bravest thing you can do.</i>

rewrite	verb	write again in a better way	<i>Help them rewrite their story.</i>
permanent	adj	lasting forever	<i>The lesson was permanent.</i>
purpose	nou n	reason something exists	<i>The shop gave her a purpose.</i>

3 Fill in the Blanks

Choose the correct word to complete each sentence.

Word Bank: lane | qualification | spines | negotiated | creatures | forgotten | developer | campaign | petition | purpose

1. Noor noticed a small bookshop at the end of a narrow _____.
2. Mrs. Ashworth said Noor had exactly the right _____ for the job.
3. The books with gold _____ were mysterious and glowed faintly.
4. Noor _____ with the merchant to get the medicine.
5. Ethan's drawings of birds and _____ were incredible.
6. The village had _____ its language completely.
7. A property _____ wanted to demolish the bookshop.
8. Noor started a _____ to save The Binding.
9. Over four thousand people signed the _____.
10. The seventh gold book taught Noor about her _____ in life.

Answer Key

1. lane
2. qualification
3. spines
4. negotiated
5. creatures
6. forgotten
7. developer
8. campaign
9. petition
10. purpose

4 Comprehension Quiz

Choose the correct answer for each question.

Question 1. Why did Noor move to Ashbury?

- A) She won a scholarship
- B) Her father got a job at the local hospital
- C) She wanted to find the bookshop
- D) Her mother was born there

Question 2. What was written on the help wanted sign?

- A) Must Have Experience
- B) Must Love Stories
- C) Must Be Over 18
- D) Must Read Fast

Question 3. What was Rule Two of the bookshop?

- A) Never touch the gold books
- B) Always make tea for customers
- C) A book that falls is choosing its reader
- D) Close the shop at five o'clock

Question 4. What happened when Noor opened the first gold book?

- A) She fell asleep
- B) The book talked to her
- C) She entered a marketplace in another world
- D) Mrs. Ashworth appeared

Question 5. How did Noor help the girl in the marketplace?

- A) She gave her money
- B) She worked for the merchant to earn coins
- C) She stole the medicine
- D) She called a doctor

Question 6. What was Ethan's hidden talent?

- A) Singing
- B) Writing poetry
- C) Drawing incredible pictures
- D) Playing the piano

Question 7. What had the village in the third gold book lost?

- A) Its buildings
- B) Its money
- C) Its language
- D) Its leader

Question 8. Why was the bookshop in danger?

- A) A fire damaged the building
- B) Mrs. Ashworth was leaving town
- C) A developer wanted to demolish it for luxury flats
- D) Nobody bought books anymore

Question 9. How did Noor save the bookshop?

- A) She bought the building herself
- B) She started a campaign collecting people's stories
- C) She asked the gold books for help
- D) She wrote to the government

Question 10. What was special about the seventh gold book?

- A) It was empty
- B) It told Noor's own story
- C) It transported her to space
- D) It belonged to Mrs. Ashworth

5 Quiz Answer Key

Q	Correct Answer
1	B) Her father got a job at the local hospital
2	B) Must Love Stories
3	C) A book that falls is choosing its reader
4	C) She entered a marketplace in another world
5	B) She worked for the merchant to earn coins
6	C) Drawing incredible pictures
7	C) Its language
8	C) A developer wanted to demolish it for luxury flats
9	B) She started a campaign collecting people's stories
10	B) It told Noor's own story

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“Every person carries a story. The bravest thing you can do is listen.”

— The Seventh Gold Book