On the Beach

Book key

1 Open answers
2 a Open answers
   b 1 aircraft  2 submarine  3 cart
3 a summer
   b some wheels
   c bicycle
   d a submarine
   e American
   f Brisbane
   g five months
   h sailing
   i Moira
4 a There is no petrol for cars after the war. Oil and petrol came to Australia from the countries in the north, and people there are all dead.
   b They can walk or use a bicycle or a horse. Some people have small carts which they pull behind a bicycle or a horse. In the towns there are electric streetcars, and between the cities there are trains which use coal as fuel.
   c The American ships use oil as their fuel. After the war, they couldn’t get more fuel. They came to Brisbane, but now they have no fuel to go anywhere.
   d Scorpion doesn’t use oil. It has nuclear engines. It has fuel to travel anywhere in the world.
   e Commander Towers is an American and the United States was destroyed in the war. All the people there are dead. Americans in Australia are very sad about this, of course, and the Australians try not to talk about anything American. Mary is anxious that Towers will be sad during his visit and spoil their quiet life.
   f Towers knows that his family are all dead, but he is bravely continuing to work. He talks normally about his family. He pretends that they are alive and well and he will go back to them in September (when he dies). Moira Davidson is very upset by the situation. She doesn’t want to work. She just goes to parties and drinks a lot. Peter and Mary have a small child. They try to live a very normal life. They work and look after their house, garden and baby. They know that they will die, but they have a positive, sensible attitude to everything.
5 Open answers

6 a X  b ✓  c ✓  d ✓  e ✓  f ✓  g ✓  h X  i ✓
7 a Moira is talking to Dwight Towers. Dwight is filling his time with his work. It helps him to forget the situation. Moira doesn’t want to be serious about anything. She just drinks a lot and goes to parties. This is her ‘work’, which keeps her busy.
   b John Osborne, the scientist, is talking to Moira. He is another man, like Towers, who is serious about his work. He thinks that Moira is a fool who cannot face the situation. Moira doesn’t want to face it until she must.
   c Moira is talking to Dwight Towers. They are walking through the city on Saturday night. Some people are dancing in a hotel and a lot of people are drunk. It tells us that the people are not all like Towers, Holmes and Osborne. A lot of people are like Moira. They only want to drink and forget. But it also tells us that people’s behaviour is getting better. It was worse just after the war.
   d The Prime Minister, Mr Donald Ritchie, is talking to Towers. They are talking about Scorpion’s first trip to the north. They will go near some towns in north Australia and there might be people still alive there. He says it is very important that these people do not see the submarine. It might give them false hopes. The people on Scorpion mustn’t communicate with them. Also they mustn’t take any people into the submarine. They would probably be radioactive and could kill all the others in the submarine.

8 Open answers

9 a 6  b 2  c 5  d 7  e 9  f 1  g 3  h 8  i 4
10 a 1 Moira and Mary
   2 Dwight Towers
   3 No, he’s not. (His wife is dead.)
   4 Open answer (Moira clearly likes Dwight and Mary can see this. But Moira pretends not to be interested in him, because he is married. Mary reminds Moira that Dwight’s family are all dead, so he isn’t married now. We can’t believe that Moira isn’t interested in Dwight, but she knows that he is still very much in love with his dead family.)

b 1 Moira is talking to Dwight Towers.
   2 They are about Dwight’s family in the US. She asks about his son, young Dwight. Towers says that the boy will go into the Navy, like him.
This is a dangerous question because they both know that the boy and all the family are already dead. These questions could make Towers very sad and upset.

11 Open answers

12 a Moira  
   b Peter  
   c Dwight  
   d John  
   e Jennifer  
   f Goldie  
   g Mary  
   h Sunderstrom  
   i Moira

13 Possible answers:
   a The main destination is Seattle, because radio signals are coming from there. The signals make no sense, but they show that there is electric power and a working radio there. They have to check if somebody there is alive and sending the signals. The dangers are the high radiation and the mines around the American coast.
   b At the beginning of the book, Moira is drinking all the time and going to parties. She has no interest in life. After she meets Dwight, she starts to do things. She doesn’t drink, she goes sailing and looks at art with Dwight, and she finally starts to learn typing.
   c 1 Moira Davidson  
      2 John Osborne  
      3 Dwight Towers  
      4 Mary and Peter Holmes. They are doing this to give a purpose to their lives. They know they are going to die soon, but they are trying to pretend that all will be well.

14 Open answers

15 a Scorpion is making the journey to check the radiation levels along the west coast of the United States, and to find out if somebody is sending radio signals from Seattle.
   b From the south-west.
   c Open answers

16 a  9  b  3  c  4  d  6  e  2  f  1  g  8  h  7  i  5

17 a The radio signals were sent by chance. A broken window was moving in the wind and touching the radio key from time to time. There was electricity in that area from water power.
   b The ships couldn’t move south because they didn’t have any fuel. The men had to stay with the ships and the officers had to stay with their men.

18–19 Open answers

20 a Scorpion  
   b Falmouth  
   c Harkaway  
   d Ferrari  
   e Sydney  
   f Tooradin  
   g Melbourne  
   h Cape Town  
   i Montevideo  
   j the Dandenong Mountains

21 Possible answers:
   a People are much more relaxed. Money is not important. People take what they want from shops if they can find it. They accept that they will soon be dead and they are doing the things they want to do. The streets are getting dirty and smelly. Shops are closing down.
   b At first, petrol was difficult to get and very expensive. People saved it and didn’t use it. Now they realise that they will be dead in a few weeks, so they are using what they have. The aircraft carrier, Sydney, also has a lot of fuel for the planes. Now they don’t need it, so they can use it. The army saved petrol too and now they don’t need that.

22–23 Open answers

24 a 5  b 4  c 1  d 3  e 8  f 7  g 2  h 6

25 Peter Holmes stays at home with Mary until they are both ill. He puts Jennifer to sleep first, then they go to bed and take the tablets. Dwight takes his submarine out to sea with the last of the men. After two hours and ten minutes, they sink the submarine. Moira would like to go with Dwight, but it is not allowed. So she drives to a hill where she can see the submarine on its way out to sea. At the time when Dwight sinks it, she takes the tablets. John wins the Grand Prix in his Ferrari. His mother is dead. He sits in his car for the last time and takes the tablets.

26–35 Open answers

Discussion activities key

1 Open answers (The United States dropped the nuclear bombs to force the Japanese government to surrender, which they finally did.)

2–3 Open answers
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4 Nuclear fuel/power, petrol/oil, coal. Open answers.
5–18 Open answers

Activity worksheets key
1  a  Airspeed Ltd
   b  Nevil Shute Norway
   c  61
   d  He worked in a department of the Navy designing arms.
   e  adventure fiction
   f  A Town Like Alice
   g  New Mexico – July 1945
   h  70,000 immediately, and then many more from burns and radiation poisoning.
   i  because they were in danger from the radiation caused by the nuclear bombs tested there between 1946 and 1958.
2  a  2  b  4  c  5  d  1  e  8  f  7  g  6  h  3
3  Open answers
4  a  About 81
   b  nuclear power
   c  She doesn’t think he wants to stay because it will make him think of his own home and he will be sad.
   d  30 km
   e  She thinks it is not fair a) that they have to die because other people wanted a war, and b) that she cannot now go to Europe and America.
5  Open answers
6  a  Dwight Towers
   b  John Osborne
   c  Dwight Towers
   d  the captain and men of the Swordfish
   e  Moira Davidson
7  Open answers
8  a  What is alive in Cairns?
   b  What does Dwight want to read?
   c  How many bombs were dropped in the war?
   d  Did the Chinese want to kill the Russians?
   e  Why did Russia want Shanghai?
   f  Who bombed London and Washington?
9  Open answers
10 a  2  b  3  c  1  d  3  e  2
11 Open answers
12  a  Mary is angry when Peter tells her she may have to kill Jennifer.
   b  Osborne’s car reaches 240 kilometres an hour.
   c  Scorpion will not go to San Francisco because there are unknown mines.
   d  Moira is learning to be a secretary.
   e  The Scorpion will be below the surface for about one month.
   f  Dwight does not like the religious paintings.
   g  Dwight buys fishing equipment for his son.
13  Open answers
14  Harbour Edmonds – where Ralph Swain leaves the submarine.
   Santa Maria – where Lieutenant Sunderstrom goes on shore to examine the radio station.
   Los Angeles
   San Francisco
   Fort Bragg
   Grays Harbour
   Cape Flattery
   Edmonds
15 a  because of the mines
   b  lights
   c  an explosion
   d  because if he is radioactive he will make everyone die.
   e  Boeings
   f  He has enough air to live for 2 hours. He stays there for one and a half hours.
   g  At first he is glad to be out in the beautiful sunshine. He sees a dead body and is a little upset.
   h  He takes off all his protective clothes and washes himself well.
16–18  Open answers
19 a  F  There is nothing to do on Scorpion.
   b  F  John Osborne thinks Tierra del Fuego will be the last place to die.
   c  T
   d  F  Mary is shocked by Melbourne because it is dirty and smelly.
   e  F  John Osborne wins the Grand Prix.
   f  T
20  Open answers
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Progress test key
1 a ×  b ✓  c ✓  d ✓  e ×
2 a Commander Towers  
   b Osborne  
   c Moira  
   d Dwight and Moira  
   e The prime minister
3 a detector  
   b politicians  
   c radiation  
   d pushchair  
   e headache
4 a The prime minister is asking Commander Towers to look for any signs of life.  
   b Peter is asking why the politicians do not stop the war.  
   c Dwight is telling the Admiral that no signs of life have been found except a dog.  
   d Dwight is telling Moira why Swordfish went to look at New York.
5 a bathroom  
   b WATERS  
   c wind  
   d submarine  
   e fishing
6 a ✓  
   b × Osborne has got a Ferrari.  
   c × Dwight has two children in America.  
   d ✓  
   e ✓
7 a ‘How much fuel have you got?’  
   b ‘What do you feel when you’re racing?’  
   c ‘Are you taking Scorpion out to sea again?’  
   d ‘Is there any work to do?’  
   e ‘Do you want to watch the Grand Prix?’
8 a reports to  
   b dead  
   c in a car accident  
   d naval