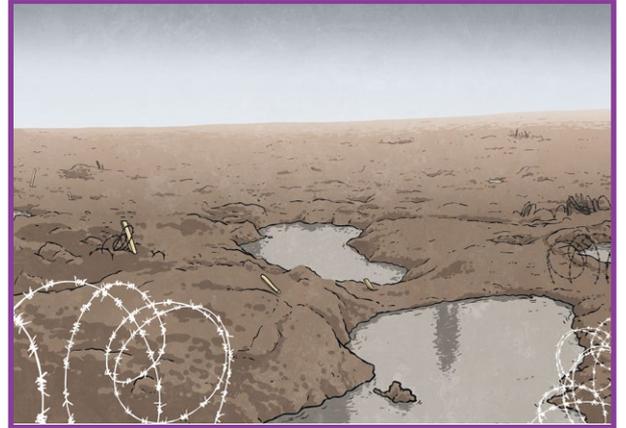


# Improving Your Reading with Predicting Pip: Time to Begin



A young man was shaving. His feet rested upon a broad plank embedded in mud and the tiny glass in which he saw himself hung upon a wall of raw, reeking earth. A sky, sombre and leaden, arched above him, and gentle flakes of snow fell in the sodden trench around him. The face that looked back at him had been changed greatly in the last six months. His cheeks were thinner and there was a slight sinking at the temples, telling of the dangers he had endured.

He finished his task and put away his shaving materials in a little niche that he had dug with his own hands in the wall of the trench. As he did, he heard a roar that turned to a shriek and caught a fleeting glimpse of a black shadow passing over his head. Then, a huge shell burst behind them, and the air was filled with hissing fragments of steel.



"It's time to begin," said John, looking at his watch. "We'd better lie close for the next hour."

1. What do you think John did next? Why do you think this?

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2. What else do we need to know about in order to fully understand John's situation? Give two points.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Based on this extract, what do you think the rest of the story will be about?

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4. In this extract, what impression is the reader given about what John's future will be like? Explain your answer, using evidence from the text to support your views.

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# Answers

1. What do you think John did next? Why do you think this?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that John put on his helmet and found a safe place to watch from.**

2. What else do we need to know about in order to fully understand John's situation? Give two points.

**Accept any two reasonable points, such as: who John is fighting; who is trying to hurt John; how long he is predicted to be there; whether they are winning or losing; who the enemy is; how many people are on John's side; how they are doing so far.**

3. Based on this extract, what do you think the rest of the story will be about?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think the rest of the story will be about how John and his team secure victory in the war and what they have to do to win.**

4. In this extract, what impression is the reader given about what John's future will be like? Discuss two points, using evidence from the text to support your views.

**Pupils' own responses should contain two acceptable points, at least one of which is supported by evidence from the text, such as: The reader is given the impression that John's future will be dangerous because shells burst behind him during this extract. They are also given the impression that he will be there for a long time because he has been there for six months already.**