



The Swimming Pool

Kevin pulled on his swimming shorts and grabbed a towel from the bathroom floor. It was damp, but that didn't bother him. It was going to get wet anyway when he used it to dry himself off. It was the same towel he'd used the day before, after swimming. And the day before that.

There wasn't a real swimming pool in his town. The only one they'd had, had closed down a few years before. "Not enough business," the council had said. Kevin had cried for days about that. He used to go every day after school to mess around in the water with his friends. They'd learned how to do a perfect cannonball in the deep end. It had taken Kevin a while to pluck up the courage: he preferred the shallow end where his feet touched the floor.

It looked like things might be better this summer. Kevin's friend Aggie had discovered a place where they could swim outdoors and not have to worry about anybody closing it down. There was a slow river that skirted around the outside of the village, and Aggie had found a bend behind Farmer Gibb's field that was perfect. The sandy shore sloped gracefully into the water, and there was an old maple tree on the far bank with branches thick enough for a rope-swing.

Kevin had been worried about his mum; he felt she could be a bit over-protective of him, at times. Sure enough, she'd insisted on visiting the place before they could go and swim there, but once she saw it, she was all for it. They had to promise to take an adult with them whenever they went, which seemed fair enough to Kevin.

Aggie's older sister Paulette was supervising them today. She was nearly seventeen, and Kevin thought she was the coolest person he'd ever met. She always took a book with her and sat on the side of the river reading, while Kevin and his friends entertained themselves.

When Aggie and Paulette pulled onto Kevin's drive on their bikes, he leapt from his bed and raced downstairs. His mum nearly fell over when he gave her a quick kiss before bolting out of the door. He grabbed his bike from the porch and swung himself onto the seat in one movement. His friends laughed as he shot past them onto the pavement.

On the way to the river, they called in at their other friend's homes. Dom and Sally joined them on their bikes, but Claire said she'd have to meet them later, she still had homework to do. By the time they'd reached the edge of the field, the five of them were hot, sweaty and definitely ready for the cold water.

It took them another five minutes to push their bikes through the knee-high grass in the field, but when they finally made it to the river, Kevin let out a cry of anger. A dozen other children were already playing in the water. They'd strung an old tyre over the branch of the maple and were swinging out over the deepest part and dropping in with a splash.

"They've ruined it!" wailed Kevin.

Grumbling to each other, the children lay down their bikes and waited for their turn in the water.

**1**

How does Kevin feel about swimming?

Give two impressions, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

Impression	Evidence

3 marks

2

a) Where did Kevin and his friends swim before?

1 mark

b) How did he feel when it closed? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

2 marks

**3**

Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	False
Kevin took a clean towel when he went swimming.		
Aggie owned the field next to the river.		
Aggie's sister was older than the boys.		
When they got to the river, they found other children already there.		

2 marks**4**

Why didn't Claire go to the river with the others?

1 mark**5**

Find a phrase that tells you that Kevin's mother cared a lot about him.

1 mark