The quest for a cure – thinking skills and activities

You are going to go on a journey to try and find the ‘Cure’ for a terrible illness. Read the following and then complete the activities to complete your quest.

The story so far

Many years ago, the Emperor Zebulon ruled over the country of Britannica. He was strict, but he was fair, so the people admired him and obeyed his laws. For decades, there was peace in Britannica and the country prospered.

However, Gromitz, the evil wizard, was growing increasingly jealous of Zebulon's power and popularity. He believed he should be ruler of Britannica. Zebulon understood this and offered to work together with Gromitz to rule the country of Britannica. Unfortunately, Gromitz turned out to be both cruel and incompetent, so the people did not respect him.

In the end, Gromitz was so jealous of Zebulon's popularity that he declared war on him, and defeated him, using a strange mixture of chemicals. Many people and animals died, and the countryside was polluted. Zebulon was sent into exile on Tongwe Island, far away in the north. Gromitz ordered that a massive new palace be built for him, containing every luxury that had ever been thought of. As soon as it was finished, he went to live in it, and there he was safe from the effects of the chemicals.

As the years went by, the people of Britannica continued to live their lives as best they could, but a strange illness started sweeping the land. It became clear that the chemical weapon had affected the immune systems of the people. Many people were too ill to work. Everyone was desperate.

Then a rumour began to spread. It was said that Zebulon possessed a cure for any illness. It was also said, however, that he had grown bitter in his old age, and was angry that the citizens of Britannica – including the rebels – had put up with Gromitz for so long without challenging his leadership.

Years passed, and Zebulon finally took pity on the citizens of Britannica. He sent a secret message to the mayor of Britannica (a notorious rebel) declaring that he agreed to negotiate. He was now ready to pass on the secret of the Cure. However, he would only permit one person from Britannica to visit him on Tongwe Island.

The journey would, of course, be perilous ...
Before you continue, make sure you can answer all these questions:

a) What kind of ruler was Zebulon?
b) Why didn't the people like the wizard Gromitz?
c) Why did Gromitz declare war on Zebulon?
d) Why was it inevitable that Gromitz would defeat Zebulon?
e) Why had life become so hard for the people of Britannica?
f) How could Zebulon help the citizens, according to the rumour?
g) Why couldn't the rebels easily get help from Zebulon?
h) Why do you think Zebulon finally took pity on the citizens of Britannica?
i) Why do you think the journey would be so dangerous?

Creating your character

You must start by designing your main character - the hero of the story. Choose three items from each group that will be your character’s ‘strengths’ and then complete the character profile.

### Group 1: physical skills
- hand/eye co-ordination
- sprinting
- rock-climbing
- judo
- rowing a boat
- swimming and lifesaving
- archery
- weightlifting
- good reflexes
- hiking
- horse-riding
- gymnastics
- fishing
- throwing
- ball games
- endurance and stamina
- skateboarding

### Group 2: talents
- map-reading
- art of persuasion (gift of the gab)
- foreign language learning
- mathematical ability
- sign language
- initiative
- good memory
- artistic/visual ability
- scientific ability
- imagination
- problem-solving
- relaxation techniques
- acting
- creative writing
- organisation
- stealth

### Group 3: interests
- machines
- music/singing
- inventing things
- collecting things
- sports/dancing
- nature/the environment
- farming/gardening
- drawing/art/fashion
- survival skills
- journalism
- cooking
- politics
- making things/crafts
- fixing broken things
The quest for a cure – thinking skills and activities

Character profile

Your character’s name

Your character’s age

Your character’s appearance

Family members still living

Pets

Phobias

Physical skills

Talents

Interests
**Law and order in Britannica**

List five of the laws that Gromitz has passed since coming to power in Britannica and the punishment that goes with them. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offence</th>
<th>Punishment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no one shall mention Zebulon’s name</td>
<td>mouth taped up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no one shall insult Gromitz</td>
<td>imprisonment for life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Choosing the rebel**

Finally, the mayor has had enough. He calls a secret meeting by the river at midnight for the local rebels and hopes that one of them will be up for the challenge.

**Task:**

Write the letter that is secretly placed through the letter box of all the known rebels in the town inviting them to the meeting. The meeting is top secret so you will need to work out how to write the letter without anyone else understanding it. You might like to write in a secret code …

At midnight, the mayor welcomes all the rebels to the meeting. He explains that Zebulon has a cure for the illness and it’s Britannica’s only hope. Next, he tries to persuade someone to volunteer to make the journey to Tongwe Island to fetch the Cure from Zebulon. The mayor tries to build people’s self-confidence by offering words of encouragement. Finally, he appeals to the citizens’ sense of duty to Britannica.

**Task:**

Write the text of the mayor’s speech.

You could use the below text to start you off:

*Citizens of Britannica!*

*Welcome! I am delighted that so many of you have broken the curfew tonight and made your way through the darkness to this meeting. I commend your courage!*

*Citizens, you are gathered here tonight to take part in one of the most momentous meetings in Britannica’s history …*
Packing your bag

You have put yourself forward for the quest and been chosen! You don't know how long the trip will take, but it could be at least two months. You will be travelling for part of the journey on foot, so you have decided to take a rucksack to carry all your possessions.

Task:

Make a list of all the things you will take with you using the table below.

You will be able to buy some provisions for your journey, because the people of Britannica have raised 250 gold zobs (1 zob = 50p). From the list, choose the provisions you want to take with you, making sure you don't spend all the money; you may need it later (for bribes).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Swiss army knife</td>
<td>30 zob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A can of mosquito spray</td>
<td>5 zob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterproof jacket</td>
<td>75 zob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wash kit</td>
<td>50 zob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food to last you for the journey</td>
<td>100 zob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First aid kit</td>
<td>80 zob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lotion which gives 10 minutes of invisibility</td>
<td>200 zob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torch</td>
<td>70 zob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matches</td>
<td>30 zob</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember: During your journey, you will only be able to use things that you have taken with you. You won't be able to take the risk of going into shops. So think carefully about your list.

The journey in the hay cart

After a tearful farewell with your family, you set off in a hay cart for a seven hour journey to Oban which is on the way to Britannica. You finally arrive in Oban and the driver lets you out of the hay cart, looking relieved. He's not the only one! You have had a little rest, and now it's only a two hour walk to the docks. You set off, feeling tired but hopeful. The end of the first part of the journey seems to be in sight and the sun is setting. Then, while walking up the road towards Oban's city gate, you see someone approaching you. You have a very nasty feeling that this person is going to be trouble ...
Encounter with Gromitz’ spy

He is, indeed, a spy for Gromitz and he suspects that you might be making your way to Tongwe Island. How are you going to get out of this mess? (Look back at your physical strengths and your other skills and attributes. You must be faithful to your character.)

Task:
Write the script of your encounter with this person and how you try to get out of it! Include full details in the stage directions.

You could start like this:

**Man:** (suspiciously) I haven’t seen you around here before, have I?

**You:** (trying to sound calm) Er … no, I’m just visiting my aunt in Oban.

**Man:** (eyebrows raised) Really? What’s her name? I know everyone in Oban …

**You:** (gulping) Errmm …

You finally arrive in the town centre and manage to find a comfy looking field to sleep in. Today is your last chance to write to your family, before you set off for Tongwe Island.

Task:
Write a letter to reassure your family and / or friends that you have arrived safely in Oban.

Make sure you do the following:

* write the address out correctly at the top of the letter. The field is in the town of Oban and is called ‘Comfy Field’. It is situated in McKenzie Street, at number 43. The postcode is OB4 3YP.

* make up a date to put at the top of your letter

* greet your family, and ask about their health, the weather, etc.

* describe your journey in the hay cart and your encounter with the spy in a positive way, even though it was actually very frightening (you don’t want to upset your family…). Be as optimistic as possible about the journey ahead, but don’t mention Zebulon. If your letter is intercepted by spies, your family could get into trouble

* sign the letter, maybe with a nickname, in case your letter is intercepted

* design the stamp that goes on the envelope. Don’t forget that the currency of Britannica is the zob
In the morning you walk down to the docks and find some fisher folk who are willing to give you a ride over to Tongwe Island in their boat, if you'll spend day fishing with them. You do and the fisher folk are impressed with your fishing skills and have decided to help you all they can. They give you a detailed map of Tongwe Island, showing the location of Zebulon's castle.

Task:

Draw the map of Tongwe Island.

You must include on the map: the bay where you landed, the path up the cliffs from the bay, one small town, six small villages, two main roads, four minor roads, some hills, an area of woodland, a small swamp, a river, and Zebulon's castle. Make a good key to your map. And make sure your map makes geographical sense. Roads need to lead somewhere, and water flows from high to low ground!

Meeting Zebulon for the first time

After a long and exhausting journey, you finally reach Zebulon's castle. A servant takes you straight to your room where you immediately get into bed and fall sound asleep. You wake up a couple of hours later refreshed and ready for dinner. To your amazement, there is a little menu by your plate. Zebulon tells you that he likes to have three different choices for each course of his evening meal, and he likes all kinds of food, including dishes from other countries.

Task:

Design the menu for your evening meal, showing various choices for starter, main course and dessert. Also show which drinks are available.

Tongwe Star article

Zebulon owns the daily newspaper on the island, but his chief reporter is off sick. After dinner, he tells you that he needs you to write a front page article for the paper, before he can think about helping you with the 'Cure'.
Task:

Choose one of the stories from the list and write a front page article for the Tongwe Star.

a) Two young people unsuccessfully tried to rob the Tongwe Bank.

b) Tongwe River has burst its banks and flooded a village.

c) Tongwe’s Mayor has been arrested for driving recklessly up the main road.

The list of ingredients

Zebulon tells you that these are the ingredients for the Cure. Unscramble the anagrams to collect the items!

**From the kitchen:**

E C S E H E ............................................

E M R C A ............................................

T R T E B U ...........................................

G Y H O R T U ......................................

A M D S T U R .....................................

**From the garden:**

T O C R A R ..........................................

P E P L A ............................................

M O T A O T .........................................

L S I O ..............................................

S A L I B ............................................

Making the magic water – the basis of the Cure.

This is what you will have to do to make the magic water:

- When you have collected the items, heat them up together in a big pot.

- When the mixture boils, you must trap the steam.

- When the steam cools it will become magic water.

- That is the basis of the Cure, but only the basis.

(In order to make the Cure active, you will have to add a drop of the final ingredient to the magic water. Zebulon is being very secretive about that final ingredient ...)

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You are now desperate to get your hands on the final ingredient of the Cure, and get back home. Read the following poem and work out what is required of you.

‘The time has come,’ the traveller thought,  
‘I must approach him now.  
I dread this quest to find a cure  
But I have made a vow.’

‘I vowed to quest, and quest I shall,  
Until that cure is mine,  
I have the basis for the cure,  
The rest I’ll get in time.’

The traveller now approached the man  
And gave this mournful cry:  
‘Oh help me, please, to make the cure,  
My family all will die!’

‘Fear not, my man,’ Zebulon said,  
As calm as calm could be,  
And as he spoke, the waves did break  
And boil in the roaring sea.

‘The cure you seek,’ the old man said,  
Has come within your grasp,  
But traveller, you must listen well,  
For there is one more task.’

The traveller listened eagerly,  
At last the chance had come  
To complete the task, collect the cure  
And make the journey home.

The sun came up upon the right  
Bringing the light of day,  
‘This is the task,’ Zebulon said,  
‘Go down towards the bay...

‘... And underneath an arching rock  
A little cave you’ll find,  
The waves lap in, the waves lap out,  
Whipped up by the wind.’
The traveller knew the arching rock
And nodded eagerly,
Planning the journey down the cliff
Towards the boiling sea.

But wait,’ the old man said, ‘because
A trophy you must bring.
Inside that cave there lives a crab
With poison in its sting.”

‘A vicious crab?’ the traveller thought,
Feeling quite unsure,
‘You must bring back that crab alive,
If you would have your cure.

‘Without fresh poison from its shell
The cure would have no power,
And anyone who drank a draft
Would die within the hour.’

All day long the traveller planned
Until the stars burned bright,
Then the traveller thought, ‘I’ll get some rest,
I’ll sleep throughout the night.’

But when the sun rose up again
The traveller heaved a sigh,
‘I know I must complete this task,
And I know that I may die.’

Task:

Write a piece of narrative in the past tense describing your descent down the cliff, and your ascent back up again carrying the live crab.

Use the following example to help you.

Extract from Beast Quest – Krabb, Master of the Sea, by Adam Blade.

The boulder-like object appeared again, twenty paces away from the starboard box. It rose out of the water, trailing seaweed. Looking closer,
Tom made out two wicked eyes, swivelling madly in the hollows of a thick shell.

The water around them suddenly became rough and Tom hurriedly dropped the sail, hoping that the boat wouldn’t capsize. He heard Silver howling nervously as more rock-like fragments broke the surface of the waves. It took Tom a moment to realise what they were - huge jointed legs protruding from the sea. This was no boulder – it was a Beast!

As the creature continued to rise from the water, it swung its huge pincers back and forth. Tom noticed that one of the tips pulsed with a strange, bright green substance. The monster was so huge that it blotted out the sun, throwing their tiny vessel into shadow.

**Coming home**

You successfully find the crab and bring it back to the castle to make the Cure. You thank Zebulon and embark on the long journey home with the Cure safe and secure in your rucksack. When you arrive home you ‘release’ the Cure and everyone is saved! The people of Britannica are extremely grateful and throw you a big celebratory party.

**Task:**

Show your party in the form of a cartoon strip. Include captions and speech bubbles.