




The background of the cover is a vibrant, stylized illustration of a tropical jungle. It features large, dark green leaves with prominent veins, interspersed with clusters of pink, bell-shaped flowers. The overall color palette is dominated by various shades of green and pink, creating a lush and dense atmosphere.

Heart of Darkness

— — — — —
Joseph Conrad

ABOUT THIS BOOK

For the Student

-  Listen to the story and do some activities on your Audio CD.
-  Talk about the story.
-  Prepare for Cambridge English: Preliminary (PET) for schools.

For the Teacher



A state-of-the-art interactive learning environment with 1000s of free online self-correcting activities for your chosen readers.

Go to our Readers Resource site for information on using readers and downloadable Resource Sheets, photocopiable Worksheets, and Tapescripts.

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For lots of great ideas on using Graded Readers consult [Reading Matters](#), the Teacher's Guide to using Helbling Readers.

Level 5 Structures

Modal verb would	Non-defining relative clauses
I'd love to . . .	Present perfect continuous
Future continuous	Used to / would
Present perfect future	Used to / used to doing
Reported speech / verbs / questions	Second conditional
Past perfect	Expressing wishes and regrets
Defining relative clauses	

Structures from other levels are also included.

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BEFORE READING

- 1 This story focuses on a journey along the Congo River, also known as the Zaire, in Africa in 1902. Look at the pictures and words and then use them to complete these sentences from the story. Look up any words you don't know in a dictionary.






desolate	natives
journey	steamboat
wilderness	canoe

- a) We followed the coast of Africa which seemed like the edge of a _____.
- b) Kurtz's station was empty and _____ in the heart of the jungle.
- c) The _____' camps surrounded the place, and the chiefs came to see him every day.
- d) A lone white man paddling back in his _____ with four natives.
- e) But in order to understand the effect this _____ had on me, you need to know a number of things.
- f) I got a job with the company as the captain of a river _____.



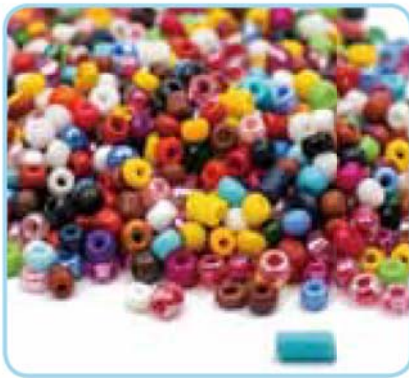
 **2** What do you know about the Congo River and the jungle surrounding it? Work with a partner and do some research on the internet.

3 The main character Marlow says: "I remembered there was a foreign company that **traded** on the Congo River." Read this definition below.

trade

the action of buying and selling goods and services

In 1902 what goods were taken to Africa and what goods were brought back from Africa by traders? Fill in the lists below, choosing from these items.



BEADS



IVORY



COTTON



ALCOHOL



RUBBER



GOLD

TAKEN TO AFRICA

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.....

.....

.....

.....

BROUGHT BACK FROM AFRICA

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Chapter 1



Night was falling. We were sitting on the *Nellie*, a sailing boat. We were anchored¹ in the Thames in London, waiting for the tide² to change so that we could leave. The air was dark, and there was a great gloom³ all over the city. All five of us were experienced sailors and old friends, and we were relaxed together. As the darkness increased, we saw more and more lights on the small boats going backwards and forwards across the river.

“This⁴ has also been one of the dark places of the earth,” said Marlow suddenly.

Marlow was the only one of us who was still working as a sailor. He was a seaman, and also a wanderer⁵. He was interested in the ships, the sea, the foreign ports that he visited and the foreign faces that he saw. And he was also very interested in understanding deeper and more complex things about the places that he visited and the people that he met. So his remark⁶ was not surprising to us, and nobody answered. Then he continued, very slowly:

1 **anchored:** boat was fixed in one place with a heavy chain and object

2 **tide:** rise and fall of the sea that happens twice a day

3 **gloom:** darkness

4 **this:** (here) London

5 **wanderer:** person who likes to travel and explore new places

6 **remark:** spoken opinion



"I was thinking of the very old times, when the Romans first came here¹, nineteen hundred years ago. They sailed up the river Thames to a dark and wild place, with bad weather, bad food and death hiding all around them. But the Romans were strong enough to face the darkness. They were conquerors. They just took what they could get.

Conquest is not a nice thing when you look at it too closely: it is robbery and murder on a large scale. Conquerors, of course have the idea that conquest is something noble, that has real meaning."

Marlow broke off². We watched the lights on the river, waiting patiently for him to continue. After a long silence, Marlow went on³, "I once sailed up a big river," and we knew that he wanted to tell us one of his long inconclusive⁴ stories.

Marlow began his story.

I don't want to bother⁵ you too much with what happened to me personally. But in order to understand the effect this journey had on me, you need to know a number of things: how I got there, what I saw, and how I went up that river to the place where I first met Kurtz.

1 **here:** (here) London

2 **broke off:** (here) stopped speaking

3 **went on:** continued

4 **inconclusive:** without a satisfactory end

5 **bother:** annoy; tell



A good story

- Which of these elements are important for you in a story? Tick (✓).
 - Background and description.
 - Good plot with lots of action.
 - Satisfactory ending.
 - Hidden meaning and moral.
 - Convincing characters.



I was hanging around London, resting before looking for my next job. At first I wanted to go back to sea, but I couldn't find a ship. Then one day I saw a map in a shop window that I had seen as a boy. It was a map of a big dark area near the equator with a huge river in its center. I decided that I wanted to go there: to Africa.

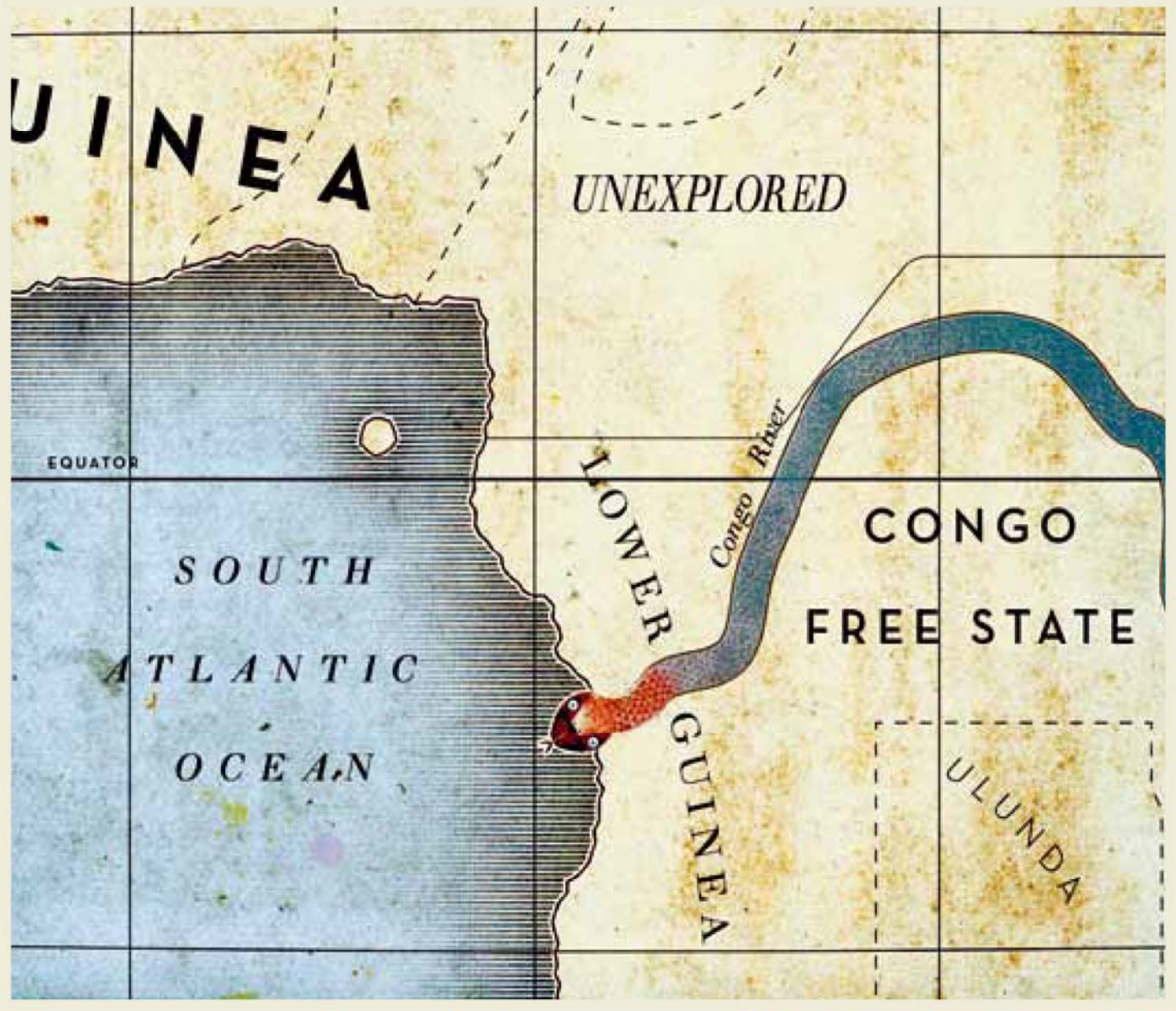
I remembered there was a foreign company that traded⁶ on the Congo River, and that I had an aunt who knew one of the bosses of that same company. And so thanks to my aunt I got a job with the company as the captain of a river steamboat⁷.

⁶ **traded:** bought and sold things

⁷ **steamboat:** boat which moves by steam power



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