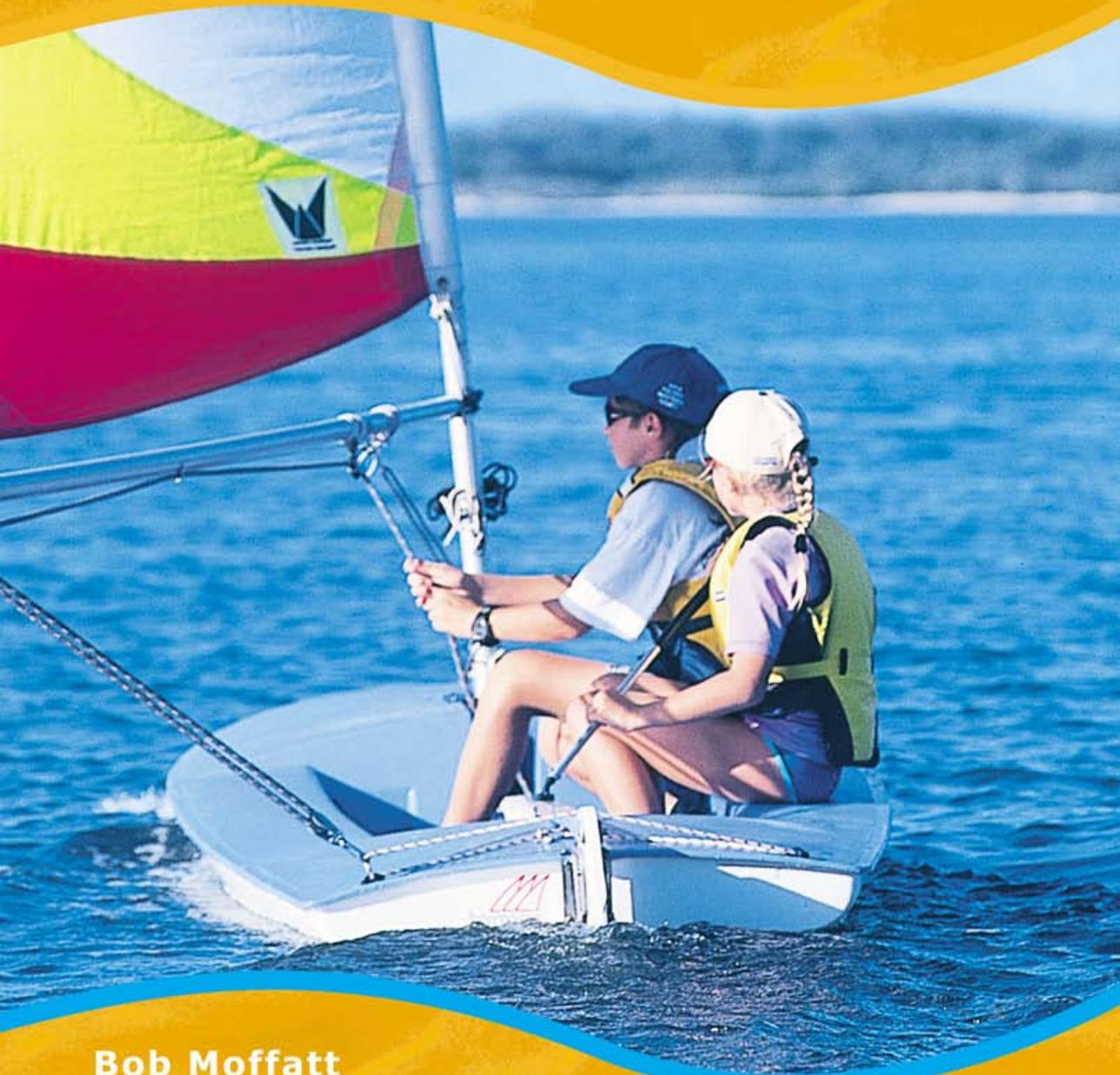




Marine Reader Series

# Let's Go Sailing



**Bob Moffatt  
Bruce Chapman  
Barbara McKenzie**

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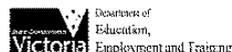
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*PFD's are now called Life Jackets*



# At the sailing club

‘Here we are at the sailing club, Jenny,’ said Mum as she stopped the car.  
‘Look, Matthew’s here already!’

A month before, a neighbour had taken Jenny and her cousin Matthew out for a great afternoon’s sailing. So, when they saw the sailing club’s sign offering lessons for beginners, they knew just what they wanted to do. Jenny talked of nothing else. With Matthew, she spent many hours watching the activities at the sailing club. Finally Jenny’s Mum had rung up and booked today’s lesson. Were they excited!

‘You did remember your hat, didn’t you?’

‘...and sunscreen, and sunglasses. Yes, Mum,’ said Jenny with a grin. The weather was beautiful, and there was a light breeze. Perfect!

‘Hi Matt,’ said Jenny. ‘Ready for action?’

‘You bet,’ said Matthew.

‘Now we need to find your instructor,’ said Mum.

‘Hello!’ said a voice behind them. ‘You must be Jenny and Matthew. My name is Sue, and I’m your instructor this afternoon. Come with me. I’ll show you the boat that you’ll be sailing. Her name is *Dragonfly*.’

‘Enjoy your lesson,’ called Mum. ‘I’ll pick you up at 4 o’clock.’



# Safety and rigging

‘Quick Sue, let’s get *Dragonfly* into the water!’ said Matthew.

‘Yes, let’s!’ shouted Jenny.

‘Wait a minute, you two!’ called Sue. ‘You’ll soon be out on the water. But there are two important tasks to do first. We need to get ourselves ready, and then get the boat ready for sailing. Let’s start.’

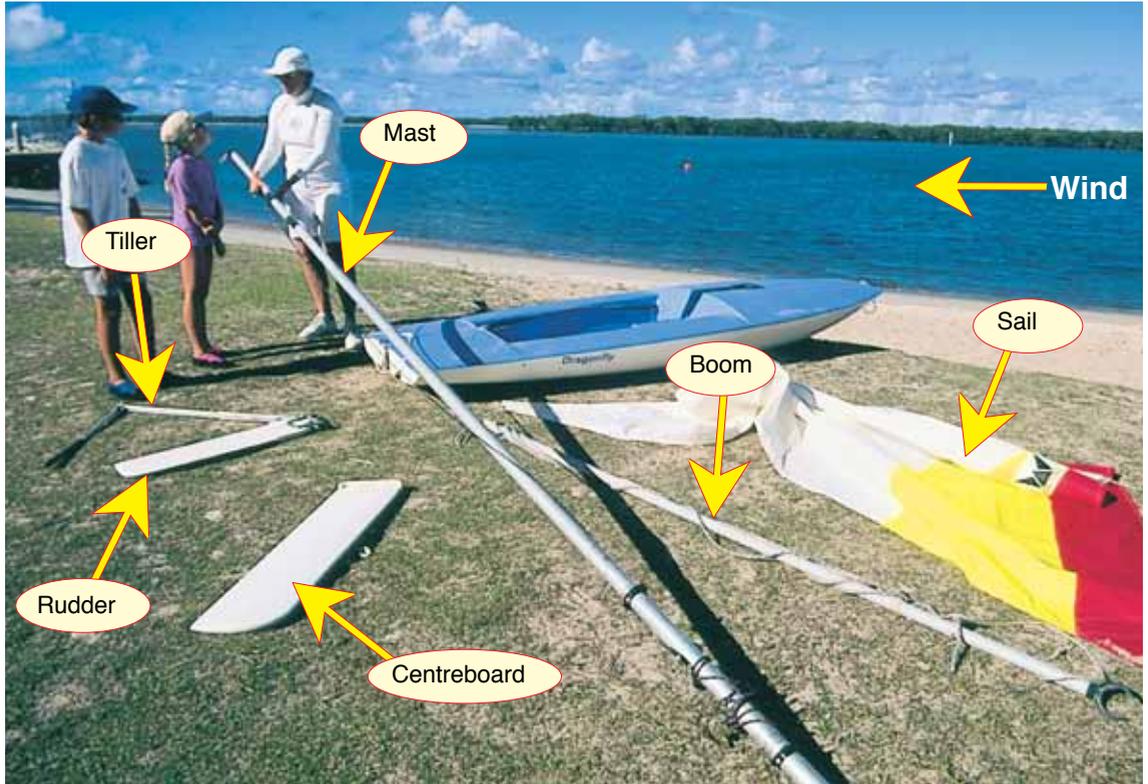
‘First, let’s talk about ourselves and sun safety. When you’re sailing, the wind keeps you cool. You don’t realise the sun is burning you. And it doesn’t just burn you from above. It reflects up from the water too. Even on dull days you can get badly sunburnt. So you **MUST** wear a shirt and a hat, sunglasses and lots of sunscreen. Let’s check ... 4 out of 4 both of you. Well done!’

‘Now we can get the boat ready,’ said Sue, laying all the parts out on the grass in front of the sailing club. She explained that putting the parts in place on the boat is called rigging the boat.

‘Here we have the mast, sail, boom, rudder and centreboard. We rig the boat before putting her into the water,’ Sue told them, ‘and we’ll face her towards the wind.’

Sue picked up the mast. ‘This is where the sail goes,’ she said, pointing.

‘First we need to fix the sail to the mast,’ continued Sue. ‘Jenny, could you hold the mast please? Matthew, let’s feed the sail over the end of the mast.’



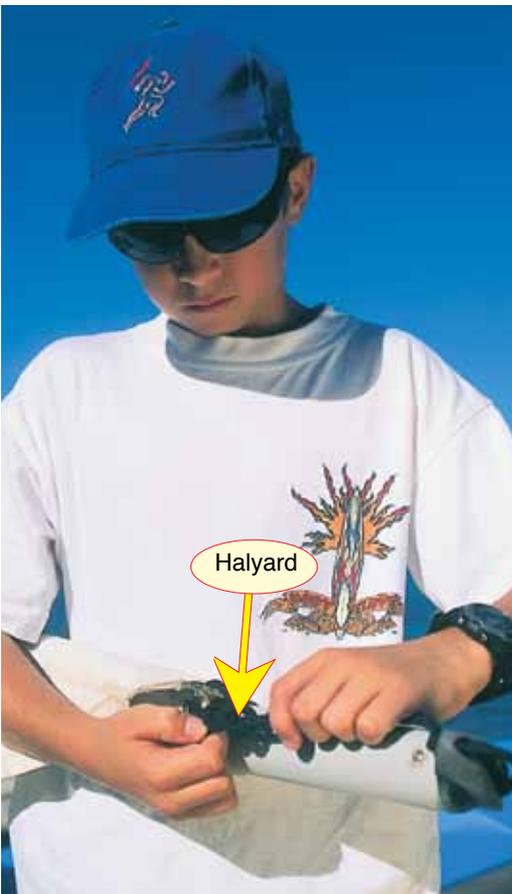
There are lots of new names to learn



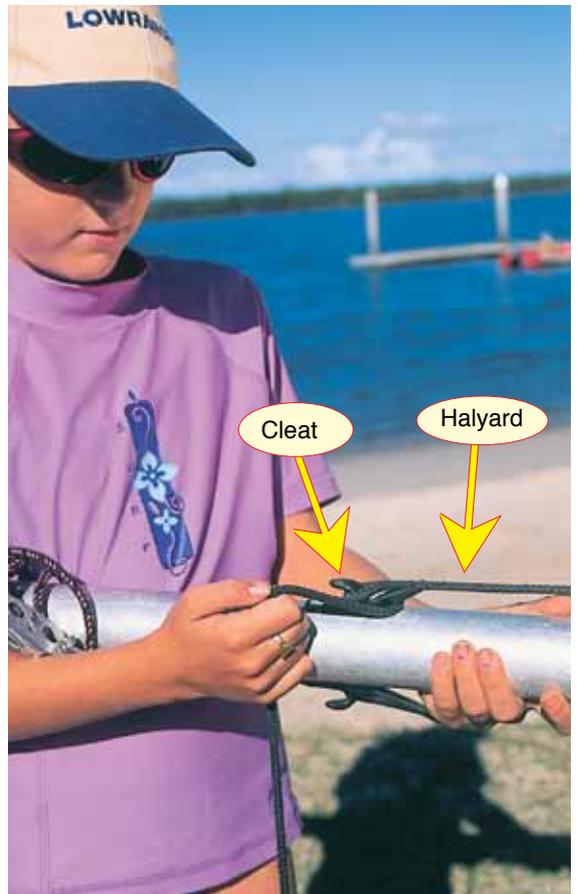
Feeding the sail onto the mast

‘Good. We’ve got the sail on the mast. Now we must fix this rope to the sail and over the top of the mast. This rope is called the halyard.’

Sue showed the children how to use the halyard to pull the sail up the mast, and how to tie it off. ‘Jenny, you can tie off the halyard around that cleat at the bottom of the mast. That’s right. Very good.’



Matthew ties the halyard to the top of the sail



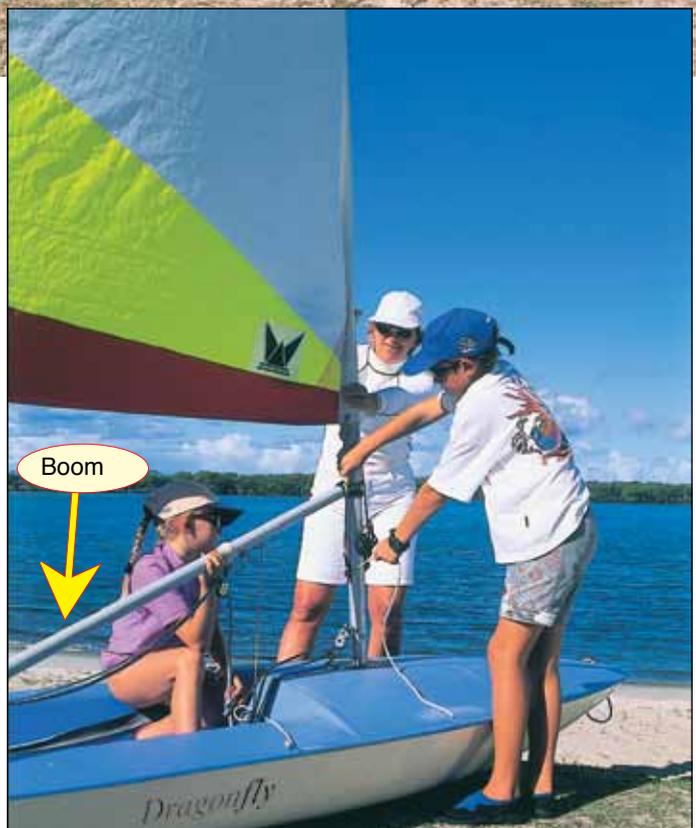
Jenny ties the halyard to the cleat on the mast



Sue helped Jenny and Matthew put the mast into the boat. ‘See how it locks into the deck so that it won’t come out,’ she said.

‘How do we fix the boom?’ asked Jenny.

‘That requires team work,’ replied Sue. ‘Matthew, this time you hold the mast. Jenny, you help me attach the boom to the mast, and then hook the sail on the end of the boom.’





‘That other rope attached to the boom is called the main sheet,’ Sue told them. ‘You’ll see later how we attach it to the hull of the boat.’

‘Now Matthew, see that rope attached to the mast? It’s called the vang. You can connect it onto the boom.’

Attaching the end of the sail to the boom



Connecting the vang — this holds the boom down when the sail fills with wind.



## Fixing the rudder

‘That’s the mast, the sail and the boom in place. Two parts left to fix — the rudder and the centreboard,’ said Sue.

‘I know what a rudder is,’ said Jenny. ‘You use it to steer a boat. But what’s a centreboard?’

‘The centreboard keeps the boat going in a straight line,’ replied Sue, ‘even when the wind is blowing from the side. It extends below the boat. So we don’t put it down until we’re in deeper water.’

Jenny attached the rudder to *Dragonfly*’s stern and fixed the tiller on top. ‘On the end of the tiller is the tiller extension,’ Sue told them. ‘This is the part you hold to move the rudder and steer the boat.’

Sue continued, ‘Remember, when you move the tiller to the right, the boat moves to the left. When you move it to the left, the boat goes right.’

‘Huh?’ exclaimed Jenny and Matthew.

‘You’ll soon learn when you start sailing,’ laughed Sue. ‘Now don’t forget, we still need to connect the main sheet to the hull of the boat. We do this by attaching it onto the traveller through a pulley.’

‘Main sheet, traveller... How will we ever remember all this?’ protested Matthew.

‘Don’t worry, you’ll learn,’ smiled Sue. ‘Just one final thing,’ she reminded them. ‘Remember the bung. It stops the inside of the boat filling with water!’



# Getting the boat into the water

‘Right,’ said Sue. ‘Almost ready. But to be safe on the water, we need our PFD’s. Let’s check these out for size. Comfortable?’

At last it was time to put *Dragonfly* into the water. ‘I need your help,’ said Sue. ‘She’s heavier than she looks! Lift using your leg muscles, not your back. Stand near the mast, one on each side, and I’ll take the stern. Ready on the count of three? One, two, three — lift!’

‘Okay. Now let’s keep the bow pointing into the wind as we walk to the water. Otherwise the sail will catch the wind and the boom could hit someone,’ she warned them.

‘All right, lower the boat into the water.’ *Splash!*

‘I’ll hold the bow into the wind, so you can both climb aboard.’

## Personal flotation device — PFD

PFD or personal flotation device, is a piece of safety equipment people wear to help them float in water.

There are three types of PFD.

- PFD 1 has a collar and is designed to keep your head in a safe floating position.
- PFD 2 is like a PFD 1 but does not have a collar.
- PFD 3 is a lightweight vest to allow greater arm movements for sports people such a waterskiers.

Jenny and Matthew are wearing a PFD 2.



Make sure you lift by using your leg muscles



## On the water

‘Well, kids,’ said Sue, ‘You’re sunsafe, your life jackets are on, and the boat’s rigging has been checked. Are you ready to start sailing?’

‘Yeah!’ shouted Jenny.

‘Matthew, you can steer going out, while Jenny looks after the sail. You can change places when you turn and sail back to shore. Here Jenny, hold the main sheet so you can control the sail.’

Sue pushed the boat into deeper water.

‘Watch as I lower the centreboard,’ she said, ‘so that the boat will sail straight. And I’ll push the rudder down. Can you see that red marker ahead?’

Jenny and Matthew nodded yes. ‘That’s where you’re going,’ said Sue. ‘The wind is blowing almost towards you, but on your right side — the starboard side. When we turn around at the mark, the wind will be almost behind you coming back.’

‘What do we do when we turn around?’ asked Matthew.

‘It’s all right, I’ll be close by,’ replied Sue. ‘I’ll be following you in the rescue boat and I’ll talk you through each stage.’ Sue jumped in the rescue boat. ‘Ready? Let’s go!’



## Sailing at last

‘Pull on the mainsheet, Jenny,’ called Sue from the rescue boat. *Dragonfly* slowly began to move. ‘This is called close reaching. You’re sailing close to the direction the wind is coming from.’

‘Now Matthew,’ said Sue, ‘Try steering. Move the tiller to starboard — to the right. That’s it. See, the boat turns to port — to the left. Jenny, pull on the sheet just a little. See how the wind is filling the sail?’

‘We’re sailing! We’re sailing!’ shouted Matthew.

‘Sit on the windward side of the boat — the side the wind is blowing from,’ called Sue, ‘so that the boat sails flat on the water. And keep watching that red marker.’

‘This is great!’ said Jenny.



# Heading for shore

*Dragonfly* soon reached the red marker. ‘This is where you turn around and head for shore,’ said Sue, ‘And it’s your turn to steer, Jenny. Remember the boom!’ The children awkwardly changed places.

‘Turn the boat carefully, Jenny,’ Sue told her. ‘Push the tiller away from yourself. That’s the way, Jenny. You have to turn the boat into and then through the wind. That’s right. Easy does it. Pull the sheet in, Matthew. Mind your heads both of you. The boom will swing across.’

Now the boat was facing towards the sailing club. Matthew pulled the sail in tight and the boat began to move. ‘The wind is blowing on our backs!’ he shouted.

‘Matthew, let the sheet slide through your hand until the sail just begins to flap, and then pull the sheet in again until the flapping stops,’ said Sue. ‘Good. Hold on tight! The sail is now set and the boat is moving faster.’

‘This is hard work,’ exclaimed Matthew. ‘The sail is pulling very hard on the sheet.’

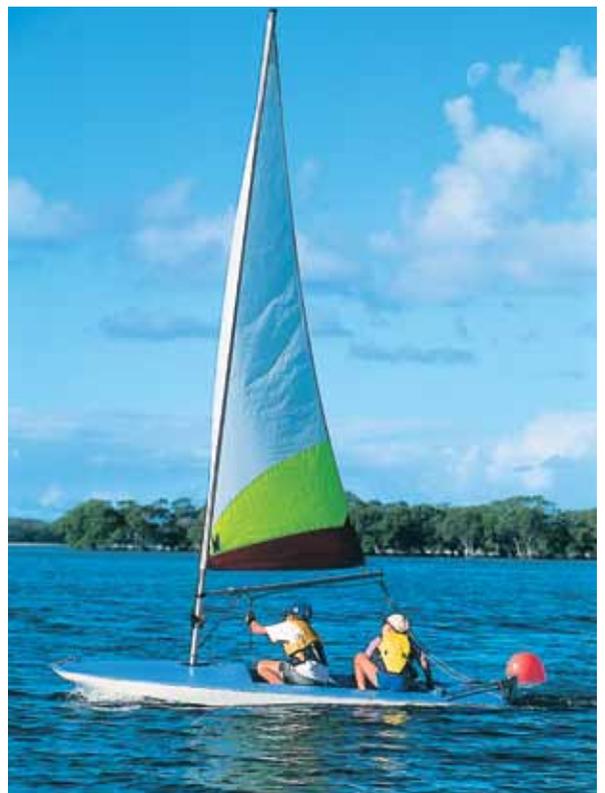
‘That’s right,’ called Sue. ‘Hold on tight.’

Jenny exclaimed, ‘*Dragonfly* feels as if she is alive!’

‘Does she ever!’ shouted Matthew.

Just before reaching the shore, Sue got them to turn again for the red marker and change places. Sometimes the wind was stronger, and at times there was almost no wind at all.

Jenny and Matthew were starting to feel like real sailors.



# A mishap

*Dragonfly* sailed back towards the sailing club. Jenny was getting good at this. Suddenly she said, 'Look there's Mum on the beach! I can see her waving.' Jenny waved back.

'Watch out, Jenny!' Matthew shouted. 'Watch out for the boom!' Too late. The boom swung across and hit Jenny on the head.

'Ouch!' exclaimed Jenny.

'Are you all right, Jen?' asked Matthew.

'I'm okay, thanks Matt,' replied Jenny. 'It does hurt a bit. Bet I'll have a bruise tomorrow.'

'The boom can give you a nasty bump and a fright' called Sue. 'You have to concentrate. The wind will blow the boom across if you change direction.'

'Yes,' said Jenny, pulling a face. 'I'll remember next time!'



Look there's Mum on the beach!

# Shallow water

The boat reached the shallow water. The centreboard started to scrape on the sand.

‘Lift the centreboard, Matthew,’ called Sue, ‘and turn the boat towards the wind, Jenny. See how that stops the wind filling the sail and slows the boat to a stop?’

‘Here comes the boom!’ shouted Jenny.

‘Good call, Jenny!’ grinned Sue.

*Dragonfly* gently came to rest on the sandy bottom.



# Back at the beach

Jenny's mum walked down the beach towards them. She held *Dragonfly* while the children stepped out of the boat on the windward side. 'I'm sorry I distracted you and made you bump your head,' she said to Jenny.

'That's all right, Mum,' replied Jenny grinning. 'Sailors always get a few bruises.'

'Anyway, did you enjoy yourselves?' Mum asked.

'It was great!' said Jenny and Matthew both at once.

'They did very well,' said Sue to Mum.

'Can we come again next weekend?' pleaded Jenny. 'Please, Mum. Please!'

Mum smiled. 'Well, perhaps,' she said.

The children helped Sue dismantle the rigging. They tried to name all the parts and were surprised how many they had learnt. Once the boat was washed down and stored, it was time to go home.

'Thanks Sue!' shouted Jenny and Matthew as they hopped in the car.

Sue waved. 'See you again next week, kids.'



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