Wayne Rooney: Captain of England (Biography) by Tom and Matt Oldfield

Wayne Rooney was born in Croxeth, Liverpool in 1985. He is regarded by some as the best footballer in England and one of the best in the world. He showed promise from a very young age, joining the Everton Academy aged 9 and making his professional debut for the club at 16. He made his first appearance for England aged 17 and his talent was soon recognised by Manchester United, who bought the striker for £25.6 million when he was 18. He is one of Manchester United’s and England’s top goal scorers.

Questions to ask before reading the text with your reading group:
1) Which football team do you support?
2) Have you heard of Wayne Rooney? What do you already know about him?
3) What would you like to find out about him?

As pupils read the text, encourage them to focus on what they think the features of biographies are. After reading the text, ask the pupils the first question from their group’s section and discuss. They will then record this into their books and work independently, while you go around to the other pupils.

Section 1:
1a) How many fans were chanting Rooney’s name?
1b) Who were Manchester United playing on the 28th September 2004?
1c) Look at the key pieces of information below. Write them in order of when it appears in the text:
   - Rooney put on the Manchester United shirt.
   - Many fans had Rooney on the back of their shirts.
   - Rooney wanted to make up for lost time.
   - He thought about his journey.
1d) What do you think a biography is?
1e) Look at the summary. Who wrote the biography?

Section 2:
2a) Name two footballers who Rooney was following in their footsteps.
2b) Why have the authors put quotation marks around the text in line 1?
2c) What do you think the word ‘debut’ (line 14) means? You can use a dictionary.
2d) What is the ‘Theatre of Dreams’. Use the glossary to help you.
2e) Why do you think Ryan Giggs patted Rooney on his back before he went on the pitch?

Section 3:
3a) Why do you think this match ‘wasn’t just any game’ (line 5)?
3b) The word ‘whirlwind’ on line 12 is: (choose one)
   - an adjective
   - an adverb
   - a verb
   - a pronoun
3c) What does the word suggest about the way Rooney’s career has developed?
3d) Explain why Rooney was late starting the season.
3e) What does the phrase ‘the hairs on his neck stood on end’ suggest about how Rooney was feeling?
3f) What do you think a biography is?
3g) How is the crowd feeling in lines 22-24? How can you tell?
3h) Why do you think the authors decided to begin Rooney’s biography with this passage?
‘Roo-ney! Roo-ney! Roo-ney!’

It was the sound of 75,000 fans chanting his name. Wayne just stared straight ahead down the tunnel. His heart was beating fast — in fact, it had been pounding since he put on the famous red Manchester United shirt in the dressing room ten minutes earlier. It was a long time since he had felt this nervous playing football. But then this wasn’t just any game.

It was 28 September 2004 and he was just minutes away from the start of his United career. Where was the referee? ‘Come on, let’s go,’ he muttered to himself.

That night’s game against Turkish giants Fenerbahce in the Champions League was the start of a new chapter for Wayne. He was following in the footsteps of George Best, Bobby Charlton, Eric Cantona, Bryan Robson and so many other United legends. Now Wayne would have the chance to add his name to that list.

As he thought about his whirlwind journey from the streets of Croxteth in Liverpool to the Theatre of Dreams*, he smiled to himself. He had started his first Premier League game for Everton just two years ago and now he was about to make his debut for one of the biggest clubs in the world. The hairs on his neck stood on end.

A broken bone in his foot had delayed his debut and United had begun the season without him. But all anyone wanted to know was when Wayne would be back. When would United fans get their first glimpse of the teenage sensation who had cost £30 million that summer? And how would he top his incredible performances at Euro 2004?

Wayne wanted to make up for lost time. His foot had been fine in training this week and he just hoped there would be no pain once he put it to the test in a real game.

As crowds of United fans walked down Sir Matt Busby Way that night, there was a different buzz in the air. Wayne would be making his debut and they were going to share in that experience. Many of them already had ‘Roo-ney’ on the back of their United shirts.

Just before the teams took to the pitch, Ryan Giggs walked up to Wayne and patted him on the back. Maybe he could sense the newcomer’s nerves. ‘Don’t put too much pressure on yourself tonight. Just enjoy it — you only get to make your Manchester United debut once!’

He winked then shook Wayne’s hand. ‘The club’s going to be in your hands some day soon. This is where it all begins for you.’
Week 5 Comprehension  *Wayne Rooney: Captain of England (Biography) by Tom and Matt Oldfield*

**Extension activities:**
- Ask pupils to write a diary entry from Rooney’s perspective on the night before his Manchester United debut. They should use information from the extract to help them imagine how he might be feeling.
- As a class, make a list of the features of biographies and then ask pupils if they can identify any of them in the extract.

**Answers**

### Section 1:

1a) 75 000?
1b) Fenerbahce
1c) Rooney put on the Manchester United shirt. He thought about his journey. Rooney wanted to make up for lost time. Many fans had Rooney on the back of their shirts.
1d) E.g. Events about someone’s life written by someone else.
1e) Tom and Matt Oldfield

### Section 2:

2a) Any two of the following: George Best; Bobby Charlton; Eric Cantona; Bryan Robson
2b) E.g. To show that the words are being chanted by the crowd.
2c) E.g. first appearance; introduction; entrance
2d) The nickname for Manchester United’s football stadium
2e) E.g. Wayne might have looked nervous and he wanted to reassure him.

### Section 3:

3a) E.g. Because it was his first game playing for Manchester United, so it was very important to him.
3b) an adjective
3c) E.g. Whirlwinds move very fast, so it suggests that Rooney’s career has moved quickly.
3d) E.g. Because he had a broken bone in his foot.
3e) E.g. It suggests that he was nervous.
3f) E.g. Events about someone’s life written by someone else.
3g) E.g. They are excited to see Rooney play for their club for the first time. There is a ‘buzz’ in the air and many of them have his name on their shirts.
3h) Any appropriate answer. E.g. Because it was a very significant moment in his life. It says in the last line that this match was where his career really begun.