Worksheet
Level 6

A Dangerous Sky  Michael Austen

Before reading

1. Look at the front cover of the book. What does the picture show? (Be specific with details.)
2. What do you think the relationship is between the picture and the title?
3. Read the blurb on the back cover. What do you find out about Francesca and Doug?
4. Look at the list of characters on page 4. What do Doug, Tom Brennan and George Scott have in common?
5. What job do you think Francesca might do? What part might her employer’s children play in the story?
6. If you have the recording, listen to Chapter 1.

Check your reading

Chapter 1

1. Where does the first chapter take place?
2. What is the main focus of this chapter entitled ‘Control!’?
3. What do you find out about Francesca’s background?
4. How does she feel at first, and then later?
5. Why is Doug full of admiration for Francesca at the end?

Chapter 2

1. Who said: ‘These lessons might be rather more fun than I’d imagined’, and why?
2. Who said: ‘Stupid, selfish dreamer!’ , and why?
3. Who said: ‘So, how was it?’ , and what about?
4. Who said: ‘I have been worried sick!’ , and why?
5. Who said: ‘It was even better than I’d dreamed!’ , and about what?
6. How does Francesca feel about (a) Andrea? (b) Doug?

Chapter 3

1. What is a stall?
2. What three things had Francesca already practised in her previous lessons?
3. What two things does Doug tell Francesca to check before the stall?

Chapter 4

1. This chapter takes place in three different places. What are they?
2. Match the beginnings and endings:
   a) Francesca worries about Doug putting his hand on her knee,
   b) Francesca doesn’t know anything about Doug’s private life,
   c) After they had dragged the Cessna out of the hangar,
   d) They headed for the coast,
   e) When they practised stalling again,
      1) Doug explained how to check the plane before flying.
      2) she hadn’t panicked and Doug hadn’t touched her.
      3) but is not sure if he only did it to calm her after the first stall.
      4) and practised descending.
      5) but she thinks he is married with two young daughters.
3. What do you think about Doug’s behaviour towards Francesca and the things that he says? Do you think she is right to be concerned?

Chapter 5

1. Why does Francesca miss her bus home?
2. How does she decide to get home, and why would it be a problem?
3. How does she feel about getting into Doug’s car?
4. What does Doug ask about that she doesn’t like?
5. Why does she get worried when they get into the city?
6. What does he do that frightens her when they stop, and why does it frighten her?

Chapter 6

1. Who says or writes these things about whom?
   a) ‘I just don’t like him.’
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2. In the second section of the chapter, Francesca phones Doug. Which of these things does she say (write T for True) and which ones doesn't she say (write F for False):
   a) ___ I want to cancel my next lesson.
   b) ___ I want to cancel my flying course.
   c) ___ I want my money back.
   d) ___ You sexually harassed me.
   e) ___ I hate you.
   f) ___ I’m definitely going back to Switzerland.
   g) ___ I’m going to take lessons with ‘Flying Start’.

Chapter 7

1. Why did Francesca:
   a) find it difficult to concentrate on what Doug was telling her about landing?
   b) think that they had crashed when she made her first landing?
   c) find it impossible to take off the second time?
   d) shout ‘Take your hand off me!’?

2. Who took the plane back to the hangar and why?

3. What do you think will happen next?

Chapter 8

1. Put these events into the correct order:
   a) Francesca sees the ‘Flying Start’ sign.
   b) Francesca meets Tom Brennan.
   c) Francesca gets a picture of an owl from Tom.
   d) Francesca leaves the airfield.
   e) Francesca goes into the hangar and looks at the planes.
   f) Francesca tells Tom lots of things about herself.
   g) Francesca starts to walk home because the bus has gone.
   h) Francesca has a cup of bad coffee with Tom.

2. In what ways is Tom different from Doug?

Chapter 9

1. In the first section of this chapter:
   a) What does Francesca wish she had done?
   b) What animal does she associate with Doug Barker?
   c) What happened to Doug in Southampton?
   d) Why does what happened in Southampton particularly worry her?
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6. Although Francesca took off and landed the plane herself, what does she realise about George?
7. What do George and Francesca do when they land?
8. How does Francesca feel at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 12

1. Write T (True) or F (False) for these statements about the first part of the chapter.
   a) ___ Tom treats Francesca differently from her ex-boyfriend, Andrea.
   b) ___ Tom thinks Francesca’s wish to be a pilot is strange.
   c) ___ Tom had wanted to go art college, but his father hadn’t let him go.
   d) ___ Francesca tells Tom that he rescued her.
   e) ___ Tom kisses Francesca when they get back to her house.
2. In the second part of the chapter, Francesca does two take-offs and landings with George. What does George do then?
3. After that, what does Francesca do?
4. How does Francesca feel afterwards?

Chapter 13

1. In what three ways does Francesca celebrate her first solo flight?
2. What happens with Tom after the dinner?
3. In the phone-call with Doug:
   a) How does Doug know Francesca made her first flight?
   b) Why does Doug say she lied and tricked him?
   c) What does she say that makes him very angry?
   d) In what way does Doug threaten her?
   e) How does the call end?
4. How does Francesca feel after the phone-call?
5. What do you think that Francesca should do now?
6. What do you think that Doug might do?

Chapter 14

1. Match the beginnings and endings:
   a) Francesca doesn’t tell anybody
   b) Tom tells Francesca that
   c) George tells Tom and Francesca
   d) They fly to a grass airfield at Beccles
   e) As they start to go home
   f) George thinks that Francesca should have
      1) that Doug is a womaniser and deserves what he gets.
      2) Doug has been thrown out by his wife.
      3) learnt how to deal with engine failure with Doug Barker.
      4) about her horrible phone-call from Doug.
      5) George tells her they have engine failure.
      6) where Francesca lands and takes off solo.
2. How does Francesca feel when she gets to the airfield, and when does she feel better?

Chapter 15

1. Tick the correct statement about the first section of the chapter:
   a) 1. _____ Francesca sees Doug waiting outside her house.
      2. _____ Francesca sees a car like Doug’s outside her house.
   b) 1. _____ Francesca goes to Tom’s flat for a meal.
      2. _____ Tom takes Francesca out for a meal.
   c) 1. _____ Francesca wants to pay Tom for one of his bird pictures.
      2. _____ Francesca wants Tom to draw her and offers to pay.
   d) 1. _____ Tom cooked the food himself, but Francesca doesn’t like it.
      2. _____ Tom cooked the food himself and it turned out well.
   e) 1. _____ Francesca asks Tom about Doug’s car.
      2. _____ Francesca asks Tom about Doug’s wife.
   f) 1. _____ Tom takes Francesca home because she spoils the evening.
      2. _____ Francesca gets Tom to take her home and spoils the evening.

2. What is a ‘landaway’?
3. Where does Francesca fly to and who signs the logbook?
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4. Which is correct? As she flies back to Norwich, Francesca
   a) thinks about Doug all the time.
   b) thinks she sees Doug’s plane in the sky.
   c) sees Doug flying his plane very close to her.
   d) sees a plane she thinks is Doug’s flying close to her.
5. When Francesca gets out of the plane, she __________ .
6. What do you think Francesca should do?

Chapter 16

1. What is the word for what Doug is doing to Francesca?
2. Who does she go to for help?
3. What does she do the morning after she gets the text message from Doug?
4. What does Doug know about Francesca’s private life that surprises her?
5. Doug says he doesn’t want anything from Francesca, but that he likes doing something. What?
6. In what way does Doug act violently?
7. What does Francesca do in response to this action?

Chapter 17

1. What has Francesca decided at the start of the chapter?
2. What pieces of news does Tom give her when she phones Flying Start?
   a) about Fastwings
   b) about Doug
   c) about his plane
3. What does Francesca realise about herself and Tom?
4. What is a PFL?
5. Does Francesca handle the PFL well?
6. What does George say about the PFL?

Chapter 18

1. In the first section of the chapter
   a) What does Tom tell Francesca about Doug?
   b) What does Francesca tell Tom about Doug?
   c) What doesn’t Francesca tell Tom about Doug?
2. In the second section of the chapter, what do we find out about Francesca’s lessons?
3. What has Francesca got to do next, and what does it involve?
4. Put the events in the third section in the correct order:
   a) Francesca checks the plane.
   b) Tom drives her to the airfield.
   c) Tom kisses Francesca goodbye.
   d) Francesca plans her flight route incorrectly.
   e) Francesca sees Doug’s Audi outside her house.
   f) Tom and Francesca fill the plane up with fuel.
5. What puzzles Tom when they are putting fuel into the plane?

Chapter 19

1. Just before she takes off, how does Francesca feel?
2. How does she feel once she is up in the air?
3. What happens when she is one minute into the flight?
4. Why does she have to go back?
5. What happens to the plane after she has given her height and position?
6. Where does she do the emergency landing?

Chapter 20

1. Put Doug’s actions in the correct order:
   a) He phoned the control tower and said what he’d done.
   b) He sat in his car watching as she started to take off.
   c) He waited in his car until the police took him away.
   d) He put water into Francesca’s fuel tank.
   e) He phoned the police and told them what he’d done.
   f) He realised that if she took off she might crash and die.
2. When Tom finishes the story, what does Francesca ask to do? Why?
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3. Does Tom try to stop her? How does she feel about that?
4. What does she realise as she is waiting to take off?
5. What is the last thing she does in the book?

After reading

Choose some of these activities.
1. Choose one of the three main characters – Francesca, Tom, Doug – and write two or three paragraphs about them, describing what sort of person they are.
2. Write a short article called ‘Getting Your Private Pilot’s Licence’, using the information from the story to describe what the student pilot should expect.
3. Think of another title for A Dangerous Sky and give reasons for your choice.
4. Write some paragraphs about Francesca’s situation with Doug, saying how well you think she handled it, and explaining what other things she could have done.
5. Write an email to the author, Michael Austen, saying what you like and don’t like about this story.
6. If you were going to make a film of this story, which well-known actors would you choose to play the three main characters (Francesca, Tom, Doug) and why?
7. Make a quiz about this story for other students (e.g. some True/False questions, or some correct/incorrect sentences).
8. Write a newspaper report about Doug Barker’s crime, mentioning his family and business problems.
9. Write about Francesca’s life in the year following this story.