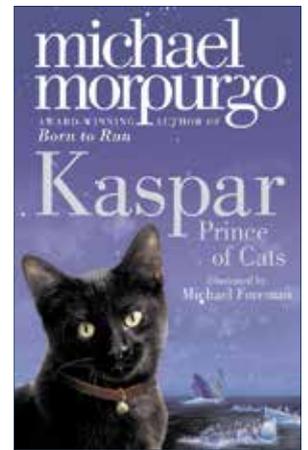


michael morpurgo



Kaspar Prince of Cats



Kaspar Prince of Cats – Nine Lives

“He is beautiful – the most beautiful cat in all of Russia, in all of England, in all of the whole world. There is no other cat like Prince Kaspar. He is not smart, he is magnificent...”

(Kaspar Prince of Cats, Chapter 1, The Coming of Kaspar, Page 18)



They say that a cat has nine lives. In the story we learn about three of Kaspar's lives;

- His life with the Countess Kandinsky.
- His life with Johnny Trott at the Savoy hotel.
- His life with Lizziebeth in America.

Imagine that Kaspar had six lives prior to meeting the Countess Kandinsky.

Where did he live?

Who did he meet?

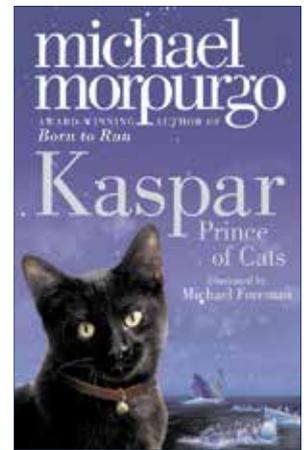
What adventures did he have?

Tell the story of one of Kaspar's other lives.

michael morpurgo



Kaspar Prince of Cats



Kaspar Prince of Cats – Lucky Charms

'Lizziebeth claimed that it had to be Kaspar who had brought luck to all of us. Because of Kaspar, she said, they had survived the night in the boat, and because of Kaspar she had recovered from her pneumonia.

I had a big argument with her about that. Much as I loved Kaspar, I never much believed in superstitions. You might as well say, I told her, that it was Kaspar who had brought us bad luck in the first place, the worst luck, that maybe it was because Kaspar was on board that the Titanic had sunk in the first place. "Nonsense," Lizziebeth retorted. "It was an iceberg, not Kaspar that sank the Titanic!" I think I discovered then, if I hadn't before, that I could never have an argument with Lizziebeth and expect to win, that one way or another she would always have the last word.'

(Kaspar Prince of Cats, Chapter 10, A New Life, Page 189)

Think back to all of the events that took place in the book since Johnny met Kaspar;

- Meeting the Countess and attending her concert.
- The Countess being struck down by an omnibus.
- Johnny keeping Kaspar in his own room.
- Meeting and making friends with Lizziebeth, then being rewarded for rescuing her from the roof of the Savoy Hotel.
- Having his reward money taken from him by Skullface.
- Stowing away on the Titanic.
- Living with Lizzie and her family in America.
- Surviving the trenches in the First World War.

Keeping these events in mind, write two arguments.

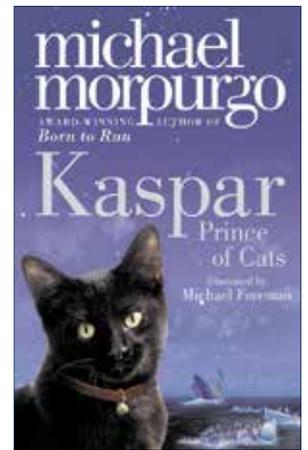
1. How Kaspar brought Johnny and Lizziebeth good luck.

2. How Kaspar brought Johnny and Lizziebeth bad luck.

**Share your arguments with a friend. Which do they think is the most persuasive?
Was Kaspar lucky or unlucky?**

michael morpurgo

Kaspar Prince of Cats



Kaspar Prince of Cats – Story Detective

'I'm a story detective. I hunt down clues because I need evidence to write my stories. So what was the evidence behind the writing of Kaspar?'

A year ago I was asked to be Writer-in-Residence at the Savoy Hotel in London. This involved putting on some literary events and staying for three months at the Savoy. My wife Clare and I had a bed the size of Ireland, and breakfast every morning looking out over the Thames. Everyone in the hotel was very kind. We were treated like royalty – which was great!

Then one day, in the corridor next to the American Bar, I met Kaspar, the Savoy Cat. He was sitting there in a glass showcase – a sculpture of a huge black cat – very elegant, very superior. I made enquiries, as detectives do, and found out why he was there.

One day, almost a hundred years ago, thirteen men sat down to a dinner party at the Savoy. One of them scoffed loudly at the suggestion that thirteen might be an unlucky number, said it was so much tosh. Only a few weeks later, he was shot down in his office in Johannesburg, South Africa. Thereafter The Savoy decided that they would never again allow thirteen people to sit down together for dinner. They would always have a fourteenth chair, and sitting on the fourteenth chair, there would be a specially carved sculpture of a lucky black cat. He was known as Kaspar.

My first clue.

My second clue: I came down to breakfast one morning, and was walking down the red carpeted stairs into the River Restaurant, when I looked up and had a sudden sense of déjà vu. The whole décor and atmosphere reminded me of pictures I'd seen of the restaurant on the Titanic. I knew then my story would be about a cat called Kaspar, who would live at the Savoy and become the only cat to survive the sinking of the Titanic.

But it was the people who lived and worked at the Savoy who gave me my last and most vital clue. I discovered that they came from every corner of the globe. And I soon discovered also that their lives were very different from the lives of the guests they looked after. It would have been very much like this, I thought, in 1912, at the time the Titanic went down.

My evidence was complete. A little dreamtime, to make some sense of all the clues, and I could begin my story, about how Kaspar was brought to the Savoy by a very famous diva – an opera singer, a Countess from Russia... You know the rest by now, unless you've read this postscript first – I'll be very cross with you if you haven't!

Michael Morpurgo

(Kaspar Prince of Cats, Postscript, Page 208)

Become a story detective.

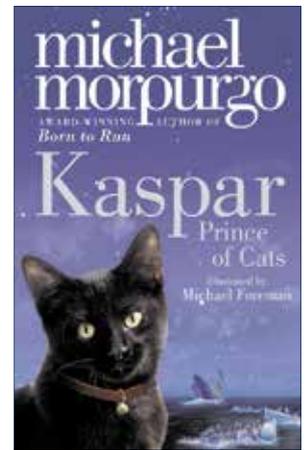
Use the following pictures as clues to put together a plan for your own story.



michael morpurgo



Kaspar Prince of Cats



Kaspar Prince of Cats – Story Detective

STORY PLANNING SHEET

Paragraph 1 – Opening Paragraph – Introduces the characters, sets the scene.

Paragraph 2 – Build Up – Tension or action begins to build, atmosphere is created, hints are given that something is about to take place.

Paragraph 3 – Main Event – A problem occurs involving the main character which he/she needs to resolve. Detailed description and feelings need to be expressed here.

Paragraph 4 – Resolution – The character(s) find a solution to the problem in last paragraph. Something is done or said to resolve the situation.

Paragraph 5 – Ending – All the ends of the story are tied together in a traditional story. Alternative endings include a twist in the tail or a cliff-hanger ending.