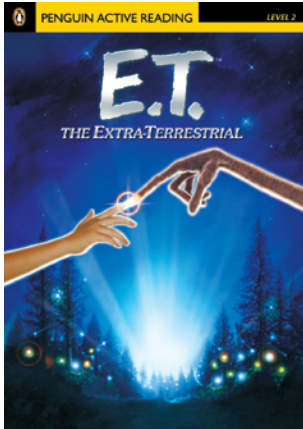




## E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial

William Kotzwinkle

Based on a screenplay by Melissa Mathison



### About the author

William Kotzwinkle, who was born in 1943, was originally an actor. When he discovered that the lines he made up were better than the ones he had to learn, he left acting and took up writing instead. At first he wrote plays, then fiction. His most popular works to date are *E.T.: The Extra Terrestrial* and *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*. He has written many books, eighteen of them for children, including *E.T.: The Book of the Green Planet*, a very imaginative story about E.T. back on his own planet. Most of his books contain some fantasy, though they are not all science fiction. He won the World Fantasy Award for Best Novel in 1977, and he has also won the National Magazine Award for fiction.

### Summary

This is the book of the world-famous movie, directed by Steven Spielberg. An alien, E.T., short for Extra-Terrestrial, is left behind on earth when his spaceship has to leave suddenly. He is all alone at night on a strange planet. He is outside a family's house, and the children know 'something' is out there. One of the children, Elliott, goes out to look, but E.T. runs away. He's in danger because there are scientists in the wood nearby who are looking for him. Later, E.T. makes friends with Elliott, who brings him into the house without his mother knowing. Elliot takes care of E.T. with the help of his brother and sister. They teach him to speak and help him to send messages home by making a transmitter. He leaves the house at Halloween, when everyone is dressed up. But E.T. gets sick and Elliott feels sick too. He knows E.T. must get back to his planet or he will die. There is a chase

including the scientists and the police. E.T. finally escapes by making Elliott's bicycle fly up into the sky away from everyone. Then his spaceship arrives to take him home.

**Chapters 1–2:** A spaceship lands in the forest and some scientists hear it. One extra-terrestrial, E.T., walks to the end of the forest to see the town, but then hears his friends saying that they are leaving. He runs back to the spaceship but it leaves without him. Mary is at home in the bedroom and her sons, Elliott and Michael, are in the kitchen. E.T. walks to their house and looks into the kitchen. Elliott sees something outside so he throws an orange at it, hitting E.T. near the heart. E.T. throws it back. Later, Elliott runs out into the yard with his dog and sees E.T., who starts to run away but Elliott tells him not to go.

**Chapters 3–4:** E.T. is hiding in the trees and Elliott puts some chocolates, which lead back to the house, on the ground. E.T. follows the chocolates up into Elliott's bedroom and falls asleep. The next day Elliott stays home from school and makes a bed in the closet for E.T. E.T. sees a fork and the record player and thinks that he could use them to talk to his friends.

**Chapters 5–6:** Elliott introduces E.T. to Michael and Gertie, his sister, and when they touch E.T., he can see inside them. When Elliott shows E.T. a world map, E.T. makes five balls rise up in the air to show Elliott where he comes from. At night, Elliott goes to watch the scientists driving about in their vans. The next day, Elliott tells his friends at school about the spaceman. Gertie is at home and teaches E.T. to speak with her computer. When Elliot gets home, E.T. tells him, 'E.T. phone home.'

**Chapters 7–8:** E.T. starts to make a transmitter using the computer. The children's mom comes into the room, but she doesn't see E.T. The scientists listen to a conversation between Elliott and Michael. Elliott and Michael take E.T. out for Halloween and people give them candy. Then E.T. makes the bikes fly into the forest where they start the transmitter.

**Chapters 9–10:** There is no answer from E.T.'s friends in space. E.T. gets sadder and weaker, and Elliott feels sick too. Mary sees E.T. and then the scientists put plastic over the house. They examine E.T., which hurts Elliott too. E.T. dies but then a light touches E.T.'s finger and his heart shines again. Michael drives the scientists' van away with E.T. and Elliott inside.



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**Chapter 11:** Elliott rides into the forest with his friends and E.T. makes the bikes go up into the sky. The spaceship is above them in the forest and E.T. says goodbye to Gertie and Elliott before walking into the spaceship.

### Background and themes

**Differences:** The main theme is about being an outsider. In the early part of the story, E.T. is alone and frightened because he doesn't know anything about the place he is in. He doesn't speak the language, has never been in a house. He is quite different from humans. An alien is someone who feels alone and is different from the people around them.

**Friendship:** E.T. and Elliott become such close friends that each feels whatever the other feels. When E.T. falls ill, Elliott also becomes ill. They are brave when they finally separate. Not all friendships can last forever. One of the ideas in the story is that friendship can develop unexpectedly. E.T. is unlike anyone else, but this doesn't stop Elliott befriending him.

**Independence:** The children want to be independent of adults. They manage to get E.T. safely back to his own planet by themselves, without the grown-ups helping, and they stop the grown-ups, such as the scientists, the police and government agents, from catching him.

**The movie:** Steven Spielberg directed the movie and Melissa Mathison wrote the screenplay, for which she was nominated for Best Screenplay Academy Award. The concept for *E.T.* was based on an imaginary friend Spielberg had created after his parents' divorce. First released by Universal Studios in 1982, *E.T.* was a blockbuster, surpassing *Star Wars* to become the most financially successful film released up until that point. It was a great success with both children and adults. It made \$701 million worldwide and won four Oscars. The film was re-released in 1985, and in 2002, the year of its twentieth anniversary, as Spielberg said he wanted to let a new generation see it. This latest version has computerized special effects, some new scenes, new sounds, E.T. moves better and he can run. In the 1982 movie the police are holding guns, in the new movie, they hold phones.

### Discussion activities

#### Before reading

- Write and discuss:** Write the word 'spaceship' on the board and check that students know the meaning. Tell students to make a list of words they think are related to spaceships. Put the students in small groups and ask them to compare their lists.
- Discuss:** Write 'Earth' on the board. Ask the students: *What do you know about Earth?*

#### Chapters 1–2

##### While reading (At the end of p. 3)

- Pair work:** Ask students to talk about what they know about the extra-terrestrials in the book: *Where do extra-terrestrials come from? Why are they different? Are they intelligent? Who or what can they talk to? Are they friendly? Why do their hearts shine?*
- Discuss:** Explain to students that the extra-terrestrial is going to walk to the town. Ask them if they have ever been to a new town. Ask them what could happen to the extra-terrestrial: *When you visited a new place did you like it? What was different? What problems can people have in a new place? What do you think the extra-terrestrial will do wrong? Do you think the extra-terrestrial will have problems?*

#### After reading

- Write:** Write 'He saw the beautiful lights of the spaceship.' on the board. Ask students to say who in Chapters 1–2 sees this (E.T.). Now, have students write a sentence to say what he is thinking at that particular moment. Students read out their sentences.

#### Chapters 3–4

##### While reading (at the end of p. 12)

- Guess:** Put students into small groups to imagine what will happen with E.T. and Elliott. Students tell their stories to the rest of the class and they vote for the best or most original.

#### After reading

- Pair work:** Write the following words on the board: *hungry, afraid, chocolate, tired, closet, felt, loud.* Have the students talk and write in pairs to say how these words were used in Chapters 3–4.

#### Chapters 5–6

##### Before reading

- Write and discuss:** Write the word 'computer' on the board and check that students know the meaning. Tell students to make a list of words they know related to computers. Put the students in small groups and ask them to compare their lists. Now ask them to discuss how often they use computers, what they use them for and if they often have problems with them.



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- 9 **Discuss:** Write 'telephone' on the board. Ask the students to discuss the following questions: *How often do you use a phone? What do you use it for? How important is the phone to you?*
- 10 **Role play:** Put students in pairs to act out the conversation between Elliott and Michael.  
Student A: *You are Elliott. Talk to your brother. Tell him about E.T. and how you found him and why he is in your bedroom.*  
Student B: *Ask questions about E.T. Ask about where he's from, what he's doing here and what you are going to do.*

### After reading

- 11 **Write and guess:** Put students in pairs and ask them to choose a short paragraph from Chapters 5–6. Tell them to write it again, making five changes to words in the text. Students then read out their paragraphs to the other students, who identify the mistakes.

### Chapters 7–8

#### Before reading

- 12 **Discuss:** Talk about E.T.'s problem and possible solutions: *What is E.T.'s problem? What are the solutions? How do you think he feels? What do you think will happen when he works on the computer? How can Elliott help him?*

#### After reading

- 13 **Write and ask:** Write 'Why was E.T.'s finger hot?' on the board and elicit the answer (Because he was building a transmitter). Ask students to write another question about Chapters 7–8. Check their work as they do this. Now have students stand up and mingle, asking and answering each other's questions.

### Chapters 9–10

#### Before reading

- 14 **Pair work:** Give students five minutes to write a list of all the words they know in English that could be related to scientists. The pair with the most words wins. Check their words by having them read out the list and write the words on the board.

### After reading

- 15 **Write and guess:** Ask students in pairs to choose one picture from Chapters 9–10 and to write a sentence to describe what is happening. Then students can read out their sentences and the other students guess the picture.

### Chapter 11

#### Before reading

- 16 **Pair work:** Tell students to write down what they think will happen to E.T. if the spaceship doesn't come and the scientists catch him. Then write down what they think will happen to Elliott too.

#### After reading

- 17 **Act and guess:** Put students in small groups and ask them to choose one scene from the whole book. Tell them they have to mime the scene. Give them time to practise and then get them to perform it for the whole class. The rest of the students have to say what is happening.
- 18 **Write:** Put students in pairs to write a list of all the good things and the bad things that happen to E.T. in the book. Check the answers with the whole class and have a vote about whether they are mostly good or bad.
- 19 **Role play:** Put students in pairs to imagine a telephone conversation between Elliott and E.T. just after the end of the book. E.T. explains what happened when the spaceship left and Elliott talks about the scientists, his friends and his family.
- 20 **Write:** Tell students to imagine they are E.T. They write a letter to Elliott to thank him for his help and tell him what a good friend he is.
- 21 **Pair work:** Choose two short dialogues from the book and organise the students in pairs. One student reads their part of the dialogue and the other student must make up their part of the dialogue without reading. Now the students change roles to read the second dialogue.

### Vocabulary activities

For the Word list and vocabulary activities, go to [www.penguinreaders.com](http://www.penguinreaders.com).