

ON SCREEN

STARRING

Tom Hanks,
Helen Hunt and Valerie
Wildman

Cast Away

Directed by Robert Zemeckis (2001)



DVD



The story on screen so far...

Tom Hanks plays Chuck Noland, an ambitious engineer for the delivery company Fed Ex. His life is ruled by the clock; 'We live or die by the clock,' he says in the film, but his own clock-work routine ends suddenly when, on a business trip, he is involved in a plane crash which leaves him stranded and alone on a remote island in the Pacific Ocean, where he will remain for four years.

Over to you

- 1** You are going to watch the scene in which Chuck has just been washed up onto the shore in his life-raft. Before you watch imagine yourself in this situation and put the following survival tasks in your order of priority (1, 2, 3, etc.) Compare your lists in class explaining your choice.

- find food
- look for inhabitants on the island
- build a raft
- make a fire
- find fresh water
- build a shelter

- 2** Now watch the scene and fill in the gaps with the words below.

silhouette washed-up deserted sunset wet photo beach survived feet plane-crash pulls sand watch plane sign

Chuck Noland has just been (1) on to the island. He (2) the life-raft onto the (3) while carrying some boxes he found from the (4). He then takes off his (5) clothes under the trees and shouts for help. The island seems to be completely (6) so Chuck then 'writes' a big HELP (7) in the (8) with his (9) hoping that a (10) might see it. Later we see him looking at the (11) of his girlfriend inside an old (12) which has (13)

the crash with him. The scene ends with Chuck's (14) sitting on the beach in the (15).

- 3** In this scene do you think the island looks a) exotic or b) hostile. Why?
- 4** What two things does Chuck do in this scene from the list of survival priorities in exercise 1.
- 5** From what you read about Chuck in the introduction why do you think he looks after the boxes (which were being delivered by his company)?
- 6** Why is it also ironic for him that he still has his pocket watch, which no longer works?
- 7** In *Robinson Crusoe* Robinson has one advantage over Chuck Noland when he arrives on the island. Read the first lines from Text 1 of the novel again and say what it is.
- 8** If you found yourself in this situation what do you think you'd miss the most from your present life?
- family
 - friends
 - little luxuries (bed, etc.)
 - TV
 - other (specify)
- 9** James C. Simmons, author of *Castaway in Paradise* says how Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe* has never been out of print as it represents, although in a rather romantic way, one of man's most popular fantasies. Why could the idea of being alone on a deserted island be especially appealing in our modern times?