

the hospital gate, there was a near pile-up as the leading donkey swerved, lost his footing and he and the cart tumbled over. The race was over.

And then the trouble began. I assumed the winner was the one who completed the race but it was not seen that way by everyone. Apart from the two jockeys and 'officials' (who, it turned out, were actually monitoring the race) there were over a hundred punters who had all staked money on the race, and therefore had strong opinions. Some were claiming that the donkey had fallen because the other one had been ridden too close to him. Voices were raised, fists were out and tempers rising. Everyone gathered around one jockey and official, while the bookmakers were trying to insist that the race should be re-run.

Yaqoob and Iqbal were nervous of hanging around a volatile situation. They agreed to find out for me what was happening, ordering me to stay inside the car as they were swallowed up by the crowd. They emerged sometime later. 'It's still not resolved,' said Iqbal, 'but it's starting to get nasty. I think we should leave.' As we drove away, Yaqoob reflected on his driving skills. 'I really enjoyed that,' he said as we drove off at a more sedate pace. 'But I don't even have my licence yet because I'm underage!'

They both found this hilarious, but I was glad he hadn't told me before; an inexperienced, underage driver causing a massive pile-up in the middle of the high-stakes donkey race could have caused problems.

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

Emma Levine's purpose in writing her book was to describe and inform. She obviously has to engage the reader and hold their interest. As you study this text, you need to think about how she does this.

ACTIVITY 1

A01

SKILLS CRITICAL THINKING, ANALYSIS

▼ THREE RACES

The passage seems a straightforward description and narrative of the race, but it isn't. First of all, there is not just one race happening, but three:

- the donkey race
- the spectators' race
- the writer's race to get the best pictures.

- 1 Find one quotation for each of these in order to show that there are three races taking place.
- 2 Is the main focus of the reader's interest the race, or the people involved in it? What do you think? Find some evidence to support your point of view.

STRUCTURE

The passage can be defined as a series of linked paragraphs, describing events in chronological order and concluding with the end of the race and the writer's overview of what happened. The internal structure is much more complex than this simple outline suggests.