MAIN CHARACTERS:

Maia – an orphan who attends the Academy; her parents died in a train crash in Egypt.

Mr Murray – Maia's guardian; also a lawyer.

Mr Clifford Carter – 2nd cousin of Maia's father; he emigrated to Manaus in Brazil with his family; a rubber planter; collects false eyes.

Mrs Carter – his wife

Beatrice and Gwendolyn – their twin daughters

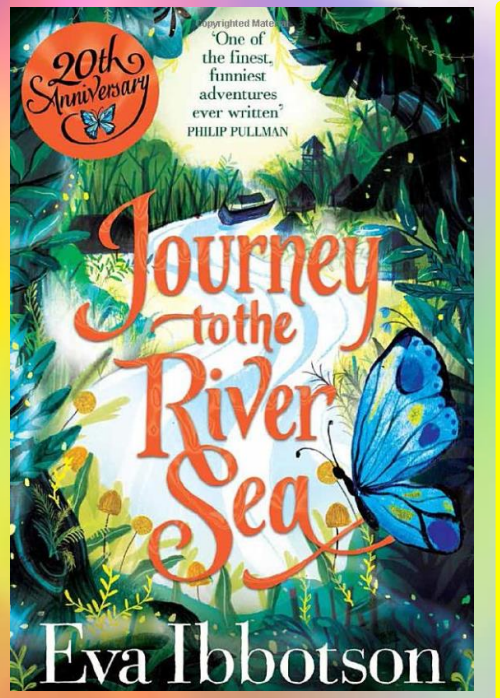
Miss A. Minton ('Minty') – the Carter's governess in Brazil

Clovis King – a young actor; real name is Jimmy Bates.

Furo – the Carter's boatman
Tapi – his wife

Bernard Taverner – an Englishman who settled in Manaus; a naturalist

Finn Taverner – his son



KEY CONCEPTS:

- orphan
- guardian
- foster parent(s)
- boarding school
- governess
- aristocracy
- blood-line
- inheritance

OTHER CHARACTERS:

Miss Banks / Emily Banks – sisters who established and run 'The Mayfair Academy for Young Ladies' in London.

Miss Carlisle – a teacher at the Academy

Hermione/Daisy/Anna/Melanie – classmates of Maia's at The Academy

The Goodley family – a family of touring actors.

Lady Parsons – the former employer of Mrs Carter in England.

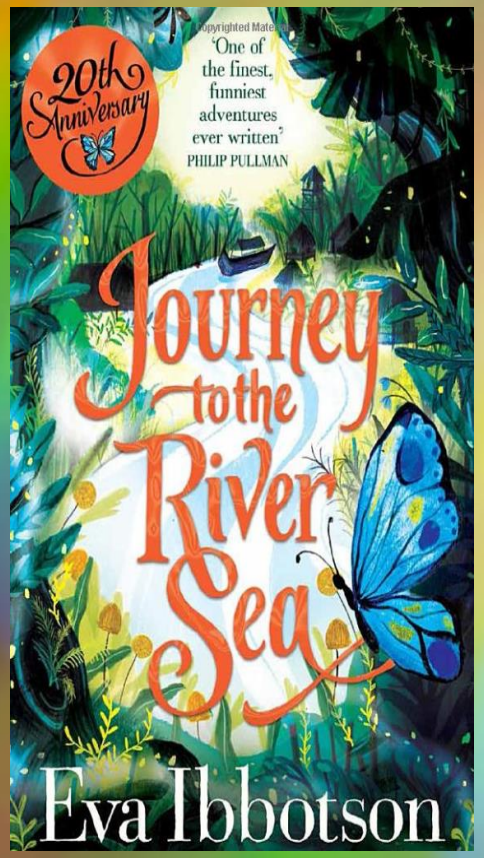
Miss Chisholm / Miss Porterhouse – former governesses for the Carter family

Madame Duchamp – French dance teacher in Manaus

Sergei / Olga Keminsky – Russian children who attend dance classes

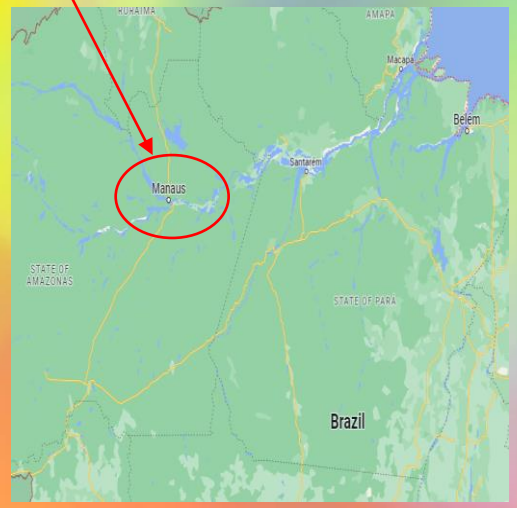
Mr Trapwood / Mr Low – 'the black crows'

Professor Neville Glastonberry – curator of the 'Museum of Natural History' in Manaus



MAIN SETTING:

The main part of the story is set in Brazil, on the banks of the River Amazon and in a city called Manaus.



SETTING VOCABULARY:

- veranda(h)
- bungalow
- hut
- flitgun
- carbolic soap/Lysol/Jeyes
- dugout (canoe)
- lagoon
- landing stage
- jetty
- launch
- typhoid
- matinée

WILDLIFE in the story:

- alligator
- anaconda
- capuchin (monkey)
- capybara
- coati
- hummingbird
- leech
- marmoset
- mosquito
- parakeet
- piranha
- (giant) sloth
- tapir
- turtle

OTHER SETTINGS:

- **The Mayfair Academy for Young Ladies**, London – school attended by Maia and run by Miss Banks
- **RMS Cardinal** – a transatlantic steamboat which takes Maia from Liverpool to Brazil
- **HMS Bishop** – a boat returning to England from Brazil
- The Carters' bungalow in Brazil
- **Littleford-on-Sea** – an (imaginary) small town in the south of England
- **Pension Maria** – a (cheap) guesthouse in Manaus
- **'Westwood'** – the ancestral stately home in England belonging to the Taverner family
- Hidden lagoon and hut – where Finn lives
- **Madame Duchamp's Academy of Dance**, Manaus – where Maia, the twins and the Keminskys learn to dance