

## Text 1:

*The below extract is the exposition of a short story by author John Wain written in 1980. Wain was well known for his short stories on social commentary.*

Swiftly free-wheeling, their breath coming easily, the man and the boy steered their bicycles down the short dip which led them from woodland into open country. Then they looked ahead and saw that the road began to climb.

“Now Rob,” said Mr Willison, settling his plump haunches firmly on the saddle, just up that rise and we’ll get off and have a good rest.”

“Can’t we rest now?” the boy asked. “My legs feel all funny. As if they’re turning to water.”

“Rest at the top,” said Mr Willison firmly. “Remember what I told you? The first thing any athlete has to learn is to break the fatigue barrier.”

“I’ve broken it already. I was feeling tired when we were going along the main road and I—“

“When the fatigue sets in, the thing to do is to keep going until it wears off. Then you get your second wind and your second endurance.”

“I’ve already done that.”

“Up we go,” said Mr Willison, “and at the top we’ll have a good rest.” He panted slightly and stood on his pedals, causing his machine to sway from side to side in a laboured manner.

Rob, falling silent, pushed doggedly at his pedals. Slowly, the pair wavered up the straight road to the top. Once there, Mr Willison dismounted with exaggerated steadiness, laid his bicycle carefully on its side, and spread his jacket on the ground before sinking down to rest. Rob slid hastily from the saddle and flung himself full-length on the grass.

“Don’t lie there,” said his father. “You’ll catch cold.”

“I’m all right. I’m warm.”

“Come and sit on this. When you’re overheated, that’s just when you’re prone to—“

“I’m all right, Dad. I want to lie here. My back aches.”

“Your back needs strengthening, that’s why it aches. It’s a pity we don’t live near a river where you could get some rowing.”

The boy did not answer, and Mr Willison, aware that he was beginning to sound like a nagging, over-anxious parent, allowed himself to be defeated and did not press the suggestion about Rob’s coming to sit on his jacket. Instead, he waited a moment and then glanced at his watch. “We must get going in a minute.”

“What? I thought we were going to have a rest.”

“Well, we’re having one, aren’t we?” said Mr Willison reasonably. “I’ve got my breath back, so surely you must have.”

“My back still aches. I want to lie here a bit.”

“Sorry,” said Mr Willison, getting up and moving over to his bicycle. “We’ve got at least twelve miles to do and lunch is at one.”

“Dad, why did we have to come so far if we’ve got to get back for one o’ clock? I know, let’s find a telephone box and ring up Mum and tell her we—“

“Nothing doing. There’s no reason why two fit men shouldn’t cycle twelve miles in an hour and ten minutes.”

**Text 2:**



Photographic image accompanying article titled: **'Today's children have stronger bonds with their fathers: Study reports modern dads are more hands-on and less afraid of showing emotion than previous generations'**.