

5th Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Read the passage. Then answer each question.

A SHIP IN A STORM

Did you ever go far out into the great ocean? How beautiful it is to be out at sea when the sea is smooth and still!

Let a storm approach, and the scene is changed. The heavy, black clouds appear in the distance and throw a deep, deathlike shade over the world of waters. The captain and sailors soon see in the clouds the signs of evil. All hands are then set to work to take in sail.

The hoarse notes of the captain, speaking through his trumpet, are echoed from lip to lip among the rigging. Happy will it be, if all is made snug before the gale strikes the vessel.

At last, the gale comes like a vast moving mountain of air. It strikes the ship. The vessel heaves and groans under the dreadful weight and struggles to escape through the foaming waters. If she is far out at sea, she will be likely to ride out the storm in safety. But if the wind is driving her upon the shore, the poor sailors will hardly escape being dashed upon the rocks and drowned.

Once there was a ship in a storm. Some of her masts were already broken, and her sails lost. While the wind was raging, and the billows were dashing against her, the cry was heard, "A man has fallen overboard!"

The boat was lowered quickly, and she was soon seen bounding on her way over the mountain waves. At one moment, the boat seemed lifted to the skies, and the next, it sank down and appeared to be lost beneath the waves!

Finally, the man was found. He had almost drowned; but he was taken on board, and now they made for the ship. But the ship rolled so dreadfully that it seemed certain the boat wouldn't make it to her. And now, what should they do?

The captain told one of the men to go aloft and throw down a rope. This was tied fast to the boat, and when the sea was somewhat calm, the boat was hoisted and landed on the ship with a dreadful crash. It was a desperate way of getting on board, but fortunately no lives were lost.

On the dangerous points along our seacoast are lighthouses which can be seen far out at sea and serve as guides to ships. Sometimes the fog is so dense that these lights cannot be seen, but most lighthouses have great fog bells or fog horns; some of the latter are made to sound by steam and can be heard for a long distance. These bells and horns are kept sounding as long as the fog lasts.

There are also many life-saving stations along the coast where trained men are ready with lifeboats. "When a ship is driven ashore they at once go to the rescue of those on board, and thus many valuable lives are saved.

Take it all in all; a sailor's life is a very hard one. Our young friends owe a debt of gratitude to those whose home is upon the great waters, and who bring them the luxuries of other countries.

1. Based on the passage, what is a **gale**?
2. Why do lighthouses use fog bells?
3. Why is it safer for a ship to be in a storm when it is far out at sea?
4. Give an example about why, as the passage says, "A sailor's life is a hard one."

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Read the passage. Then choose the best answer to each question.

HARRY AND ANNIE

Harry and Annie lived a mile from town, but they went there to school every day. It was a pleasant walk down the lane and through the meadow by the pond. I hardly know whether they liked it better in summer or in winter. They used to pretend that they were travelers exploring a new country and would scatter leaves on the road so that they might find their way back again.

When the ice was thick and firm, they walked across the pond. But their mother did not like to have them do this unless someone was with them. "Don't go across the pond today, children," she said as she kissed them and bade them goodbye one morning; "it is beginning to thaw."

"All right, mother," said Harry, not very good-naturedly because he was very fond of running and sliding on the ice. When they came to the pond, the ice looked hard and safe. "There," said he to his sister. "I knew it hadn't thawed any. Mother is always afraid we will drown. Come along, we will have a good time sliding. The school bell will not ring for an hour at least."

"But you promised mother," said Annie.

"No, I didn't. I only said 'All right,' and it is all right."

"I didn't say anything, so I can do as I like," said Annie.

So they stepped on the ice, and started to go across the pond. They had not gone far before the ice gave way, and they fell into the water. A man who was at work near the shore heard the screams of the children and plunged into the water to save them. Harry managed to get to the shore without any help, but poor Annie was nearly drowned before the man could reach her. Harry went home almost frozen and told his mother how disobedient he had been. He remembered the lesson learned that day as long as he lived.

5th Questions:

1. What probably happened next?
2. What do Harry's actions tell you about him as a person?
3. What does the word **thaw** from the story mean?
4. Why do you think Harry and Annie scattered leaves across the road?

5th Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Read the passage. Then answer each question.

QUEEN HULDA AND THE FLAX

There was once a poor peasant named Hans. He lived with his wife and children in a valley at the foot of a snow-capped mountain.

Hans often drove his sheep to pasture up the mountain side. He always carried his crossbow with him to protect the sheep. He was a skillful marksman.

Once in a while, Hans would shoot a deer. The deer meat would serve as food for his family for many days.

One day Hans was watching his sheep while they grazed on the mountain side. Suddenly a deer appeared. Its spreading antlers glittered in the morning sunlight with wonderful brightness.

The deer bounded across the pasture to the rocks higher up the mountain. Hans followed quickly, hoping to approach near enough to shoot an arrow. From rock to rock, higher and higher, Hans followed the deer until at last they were at the summit of the mountain.

They sped over the snow until the deer disappeared. Hans followed more slowly along a dark and narrow tunnel. Suddenly he caught a glimpse of a bright light in the distance. He walked on and soon reached a brightly lit cave. From the walls and ceiling of the cave hung many wonderful crystals and precious stones.

A tall woman dressed in pure white stood in the midst of the cave. A golden girdle was fastened about her waist. A crown set with jewels rested on her head. In her hand she held a bunch of blue flowers.

Lovely maidens in dainty robes with graceful wreaths of Alpine roses on their heads attended their queen.

Overcome with wonder, Hans knelt before the beautiful woman. As if in a dream, he heard her say very softly, "Choose for yourself what you will of my treasures--gold, or silver, or precious stones."

"Most gracious queen," replied Hans, "I ask only for the flowers in your hand." The queen was pleased, and she gave the flowers to Hans at once.

"You have chosen well," said she. "Also take these seeds and sow them in your fields."

Suddenly a peal of thunder shook the grotto. When it had ceased, Hans found himself standing alone on the mountain.

When Hans reached home, he showed his wife the blue flowers and the seeds that had been given him by the queen. "Wonderful crystals and precious stones hang from the walls and ceiling of the cave, but the queen is more beautiful than all!" exclaimed Hans.

"Why did you not choose some of the diamonds and gold?" asked his wife, and she scolded Hans roundly because he had taken only flowers and seeds.

Hans made no reply, but he went to the fields and plowed the ground. Then he carefully sowed the seeds that the queen had given him.

The weeks passed by. Tiny green leaves began to show above the ground. The plants grew taller and taller, and then the blue flowers began to appear. The flowers were so beautiful that even the angry wife was pleased. She had never seen anything like them.

Hans watched his fields day and night. One moonlight night, he saw the lovely queen from the cave walking about among the flowers with her maidens. They seemed to be guarding the blossoms.

At last the flowers had withered, and the seeds were ripe. Then the queen appeared at the cottage door.

The queen said, "I am Queen Hulda. I have come to teach you how to spin and weave."

"The blue flowers that your husband chose are called flax," added the queen. "I love it very much."

Queen Hulda taught Hans and his wife how to spin and weave linen cloth from the fibers of the flax plants. Many people bought the linen and the flax seeds so that Hans and his wife became very rich.

Questions:

1. How does the story let us know the deer is special?
2. Why was the Queen pleased that Hans chose the flower?
3. What does the word **peal** mean in the sentence, "Suddenly a **peal** of thunder shook the grotto?"
4. Why does the wife change her mind about the flowers Hans chose?