

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Dream Horses

The moon shone down on the boy who had been washed ashore. He was still gripping the length of broken mast that he had clung onto during the storm. This length of wood had probably saved his life.

He awoke to see a herd of pale horses cropping the tough beach grass. He could hear their gentle breathing. He sat up suddenly, scanning the beach for other people. Then he started to cry as he remembered the crash of the falling mast and the sudden weight of the sail that swept him overboard. Where was everyone?

1 What is the main point the first paragraph is trying to make?

Tick **one** box.

The boy and his family
were having a moonlight
picnic on the beach.

☐

The boy and his
friends were having
fun during a storm.

☐

The boy has been
shipwrecked.

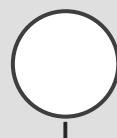
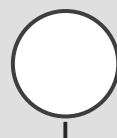
☐

The boy has been
for a swim.

☐

2 How do you think clinging to the length of wood saved his life?

3 Find and copy **two** words from the first paragraph that mean the same as 'held' or 'holding'.



4

What was the main reason the boy began to cry?

Tick **one** box.

He was
frightened. ☐

He didn't like
the horses. ☐

He was tired. ☐

He had splinters
in his hand from
holding the mast. ☐

One of the horses nibbled his hair and he felt its warm breath on his cheek. It was strangely comforting. He lay down again and, listening to the wash of the tide, he drifted back off to sleep.

When Matthew next awoke, the sun was high in the sky and the horses were gone.

He got up, feeling bruised all over, and stumbled along the beach to look for them. The only sign they had been there was half-moon prints in the sand, near the sea.



Suddenly, he heard someone calling his name. He turned and saw the first mate scrambling out of the longboat from the clipper. "Are you all right, lad?" he asked, hugging Matthew fiercely. "We've been searching the island for you all night."

"Island? But the horses? I saw horses ..." stammered Matthew, remembering the reassurance he found from them in the night. Had he dreamed them? He looked along the beach and saw the hoof-prints being slowly erased by the tide.

5

Find and copy **one** word from the first paragraph of the story on page 2 that means 'gently bite'.

6

Why do you think Matthew went back to sleep?

7

How do you know that the first mate had been worried about Matthew? Tick **two** boxes.

He called Matthew's name.

☐

He was in a longboat.

☐

He hugged Matthew fiercely.

☐

He called Matthew 'lad'.

☐

He told Matthew that he was on an island.

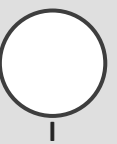
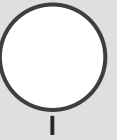
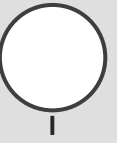
☐

He had been searching all night.

☐

8

What did Matthew see on the beach that made him think the horses had been real?



“You’re a lucky lad if you’ve seen the wild horses of Sable Island,” said the sailor. “Some say the horses pull people from the sea and guard them till they’re safe. Others claim they’re dream horses. What do you think, lad?”

Matthew looked down to see the last evidence of the horses being washed away. He remembered the soothing warmth of their breath. Dream horses? He didn’t think so.

9

Why did the author write ‘Dream horses?’ as a question?

10

Do you think Matthew should have told the first mate what he had seen? Start your answer with ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ and then give a reason, making links to the story.

For teacher use

Your mark	_____ out of 12
What went well	
How to improve	

