

Comprehension Workbook 6

Flood

Trapped by floodwaters

Flood



Mud



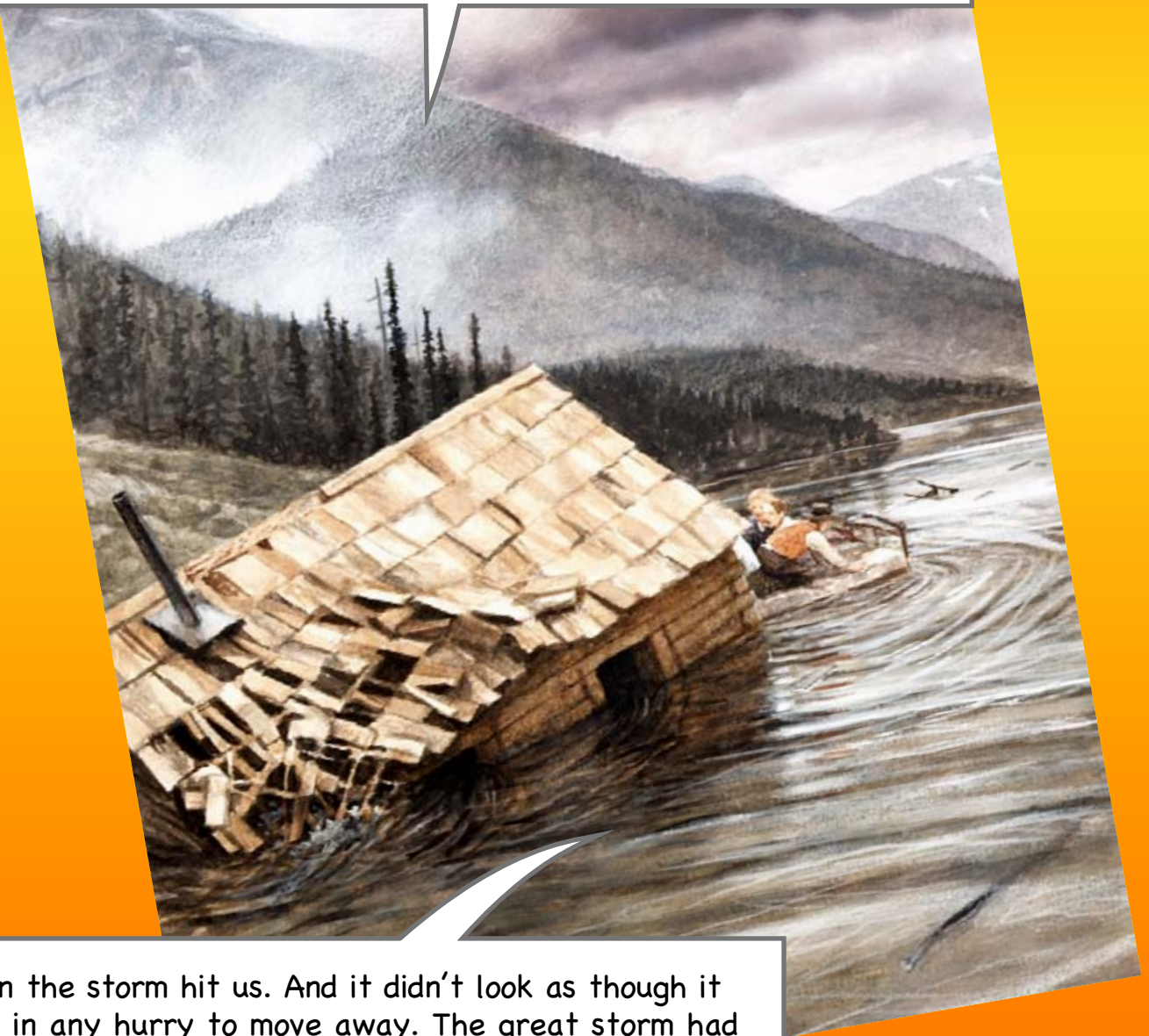
Flooded cabin



Find out about the meaning of stories and articles

Trapped!

Some holidaymakers were having a fine time in their riverside cabin – until it rained, and rained and rained...



Then the storm hit us. And it didn't look as though it was in any hurry to move away. The great storm had become trapped among the mountains and it was about to release all of its water into our little valley.

It started to rain, just a few spots at first, but then more and more heavily. We started to get wet, but then hailstones the size of walnuts started to fall out of the sky. So we became curious about our river.

We looked out. When we had come in out of the rain, the Magic River was running like a trickle in the bottom of its bed – no more than ankle deep. Now it was at the top of its banks, and rising as we watched. It was only then that we realised that the riverside spot we had chosen for our cabin could be a very dangerous place indeed.

We opened the front door to think of a way of getting out, but by then the river was flooding over its banks and the whole house was surrounded by water. There didn't seem any chance that we could all make our way to the valley side, and so we thought that the safest thing to do was to sit tight. Now we were about to find out just how fearful a river can be!

Soon we began to get frightened. In just a few minutes the water started coming in under the door. Ma got everyone to pile all of our precious belongings onto the beds and the tables, anywhere out of reach of the water. By then we knew it was going to be bad, and we also knew it was too late to get out.

All around us was an incredible noise. There was the rushing of the water and the thudding of boulders as they were bounced outside of our cabin by the flooding waters. Occasionally the whole cabin shook as a boulder was bounced right against the wall. And all the time the water kept rising. Soon it was around our ankles. We put our dog, Jake, up on one of the beds and tried not to think of what would happen next. We were so helpless.

Within five minutes the water had poured in so much that it was up to our waists. It was then that the beds started floating and we really thought we were gonners. The water was so cold, and it smelled awful, too. It was not just water, you see, but mud as well. Brown, clinging mud and cold, cold water. Ma said we had better get up on the beds and hold tight. Then the windows burst with the pressure of the water. Now the water was pouring in through the windows – we had become part of the river!



Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'precious'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'precious' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'precious'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'precious'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'precious' means.



Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: trickle	dribble

3

Summarising

(the gist of the story)

To summarise means to rewrite the story in a shorter version using as many of our key words from Task 2 as needed.

1 Write a heading for your summary.

2 Now write the main idea in one sentence.
e.g. "This story tells us..."

3 Now add some detail to the main idea by writing more sentences after it.

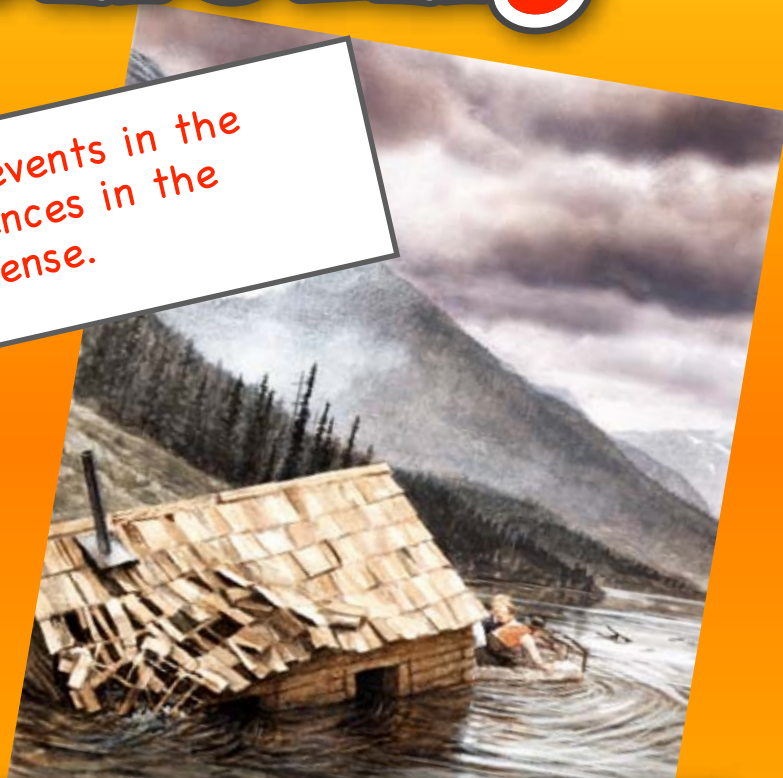
**Finally,
can you rewrite your
summary to make it better?**

1. Look out for errors such as using the same word too often – use alternatives.
2. Make sure you have summarised the author's purpose in your OWN words.
3. Make sure your summary is in a logical order.
4. Is your summary informative AND interesting to others?

There is nothing wrong with rewriting; even the best authors rewrite their work.

123 4 Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.



Ma said to get up onto the beds.

We had become part of the river.

The river was flooding over the banks.

Soon the water started coming in under the door.

The riverside spot we had chosen for our cabin could be a very dangerous place indeed.

It started to rain, just a few drops at first, but then more and more heavily.



Get to the facts

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the facts of the story.



1 Where was the cabin?

2 Which words tell us about how heavily the rain was falling?

3 What noise did the moving boulders make?

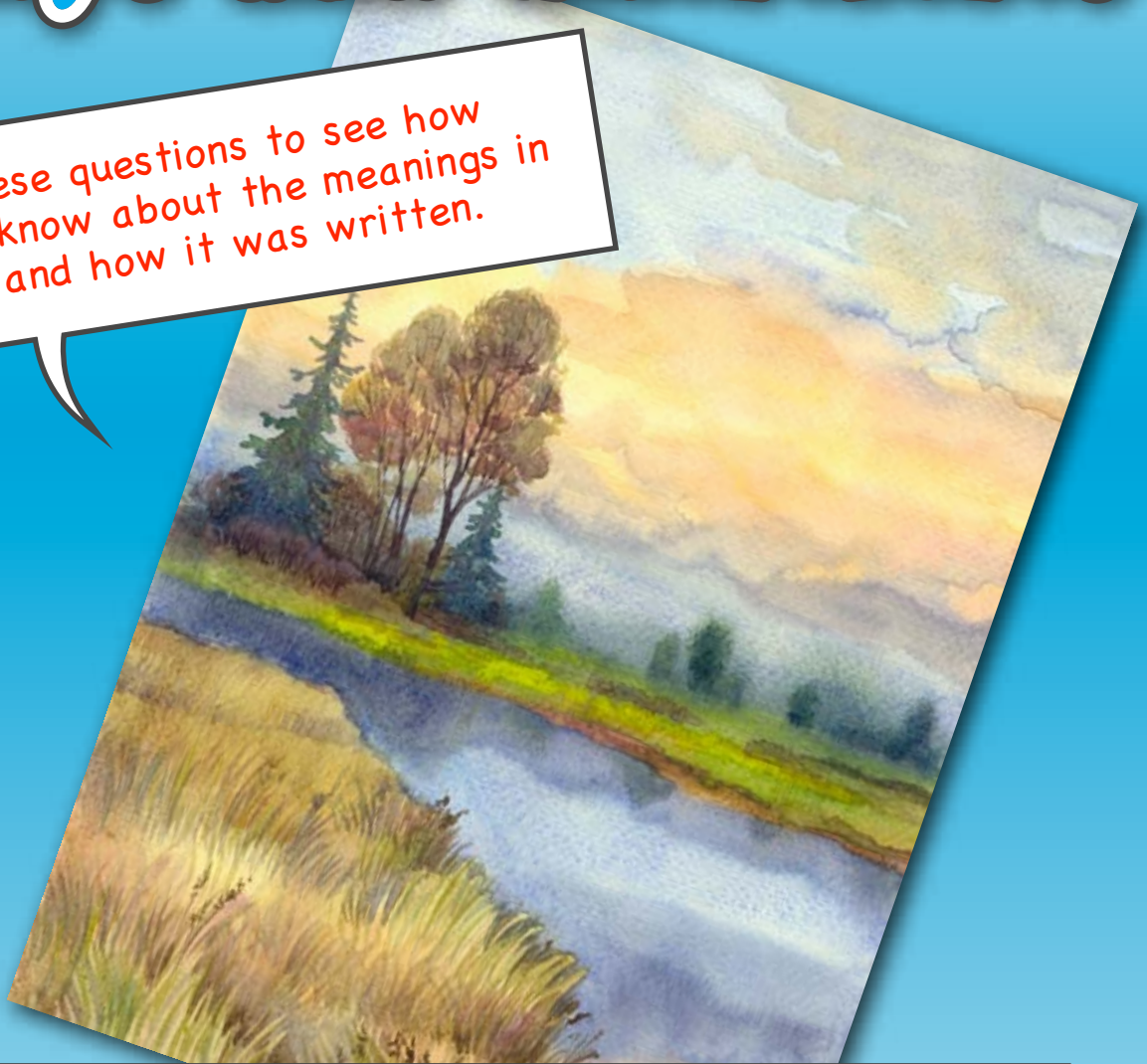
4 Who told everyone what to do?

5 What was the name of the dog?



Whys and wherefores

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the meanings in the story and how it was written.



1 If the beds floated, what do you think they were made from?

2 Why had the house become part of the river?

3 Find all the words that tell of a frightening situation. Which other similar words would you think the author could have used?

4 How deep was the river originally? Why could they no longer ford it?



Opinions matter

Answer these questions to give your views and to develop the story.

- 1 Which do you judge would have been more dangerous, to be inside or outside the cabin?
- 2 Rewrite the story as though it were an article in a newspaper that a reporter had written after the event.
- 3 Write about whether you were scared by the story.
- 4 What would you have done in the situation?
- 5 Put yourself in the role of this young boy who is carrying his belongings through his village that has been destroyed by a flood. What do you imagine he might be thinking?





Talking it through

It often helps if a group of people get together and discuss a problem.



Discussion topic: Dealing with a flood

Discuss which places might be more safe from flooding than others, and what you should do if you lived in a place where flooding was likely. You might like to make up a safety poster with a set of easily-read instructions on it.



Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.



The day the flood came

The picture shows a river flooding in through a town. Make up a story about yourself as a part of a family who live in one of the apartments over the shops on this street.

Trapped

Some holidaymakers were having a fine time in their riverside cabin – until it rained, and rained and rained...

Then the storm hit us. And it didn't look as though it was in any hurry to move away. The great storm had become trapped among the mountains and it was about to release all of its water into our little valley.

It started to rain, just a few spots at first, but then more and more heavily. We started to get wet, but then hailstones the size of walnuts started to fall out of the sky. So we became curious about our river.

We looked out. When we had come in out of the rain, the Magic River was running like a trickle in the bottom of its bed – no more than ankle deep. Now it was at the top of its banks, and rising as we watched. It was only then that we realised that the riverside spot we had chosen for our cabin could be a very dangerous place indeed.

We opened the front door to think of a way of getting out, but by then the river was flooding over its banks and the whole house was surrounded by water. There didn't seem any chance that we could all make our way to the valley side, and so we thought that the safest thing to do was to sit tight. Now we were about to find out just how fearful a river can be!

Soon we began to get frightened. In just a few minutes the water started coming in under the door. Ma got everyone to pile all of our precious belongings on the beds and the tables, anywhere out of reach of the water. By then we knew it was going to be bad, and we also knew it was too late to get out.

All around us was an incredible noise. There was the rushing of the water and the thudding of boulders as they were bounced outside of our cabin by the flooding waters. Occasionally the whole cabin shook as a boulder was bounced right against the wall. And all the time the water kept rising. Soon it was around our ankles. We put our dog, Jake, up on one of the beds and tried not to think of what would happen next. We were so helpless.

Within five minutes the water had poured in so much that it was up to our waists. It was then that the beds started floating and we really thought we were gonners. The water was so cold, and it smelled awful, too. It was not just water, you see, but mud as well. Brown, clinging mud and cold, cold water. Ma said we had better get up on the beds and hold tight. Then the windows burst with the pressure of the water. Now the water was pouring in through the windows — we had become part of the river!