

Read the short story. 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!

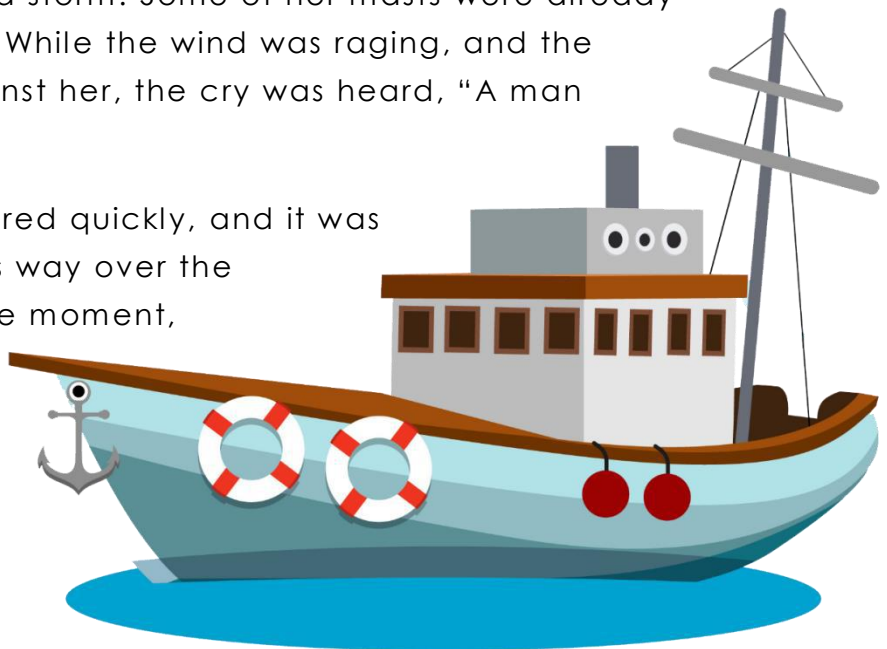
When a storm approaches, the scene changes. The heavy, black clouds appear in the distance and throw a deep, long shade over the world of waters. The captain and sailors soon see in the clouds the dark signs. All hands are then set to work to take in sail.

The hoarse notes of the captain, speaking through his trumpet, are echoed across the ship. They'll be happy 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 ship may hit the rocks.

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 rescue boat was lowered quickly, and it was soon seen bounding on its way over the mountain of 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!



## Grade 5 Reading Comprehension Worksheet

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Finally, the man was found. He had almost drowned, but he was taken on board, and now they made for the ship. The ship rolled so dreadfully that it seemed certain the boat wouldn't make it to the ship. 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 rescue boat was hoisted and landed on the ship with a dreadful crash. It was a desperate way of getting on board, but fortunately everyone was safe.

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 keep 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 this way many valuable lives are saved.

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.



**Questions:**

1. Based on the short story, what is a gale?

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2. Why do lighthouses use fog bells?

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3. Why is it safer for a ship to be in a storm when it is far out at sea?

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4. Give an example about why, as the passage says, "A sailor's life is a hard one."

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**Answers:**

1. Based on the short story, what is a gale?

A gale is a strong wind.

2. Why do lighthouses use fog bells?

Lighthouses use fog bells because their lights cannot be seen in the fog.

3. Why is it safer for a ship to be in a storm when it is far out at sea?

It is safer for a ship to be far out at sea in a storm as there are no rocks or shoreline for the ship to crash into.

4. Give an example about why, as the passage says, "A sailor's life is a hard one."

(Answers will vary) for example: A sailor's life is hard, because they sail through dangerous storms.