



**THE VILLAGE**  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
"We Nurture Dreams"

**We're not afraid to die...if we can all be together**  
**Section A**

**Question 1.**

**What was the narrator's purpose of making the voyage from Plymouth, in 1976?**

**Question 2.**

**What preparations did the author and his wife make for their round-the-world sea voyage?**

**Question 3.**

**Describe the narrator's boat in the chapter 'We're Not Afraid to Die ...If We Can All Be Together'.**

**Question 4.**

**Who were Larry and Herb?**

**Question 5.**

**Describe the weather conditions on January 2.**

**Question 6.**

**Describe the weather and sea conditions leading to the wave hit to 'Wavewalker'. What was the effect of the wave hit?**

**Question 7.**

**Describe the disaster of the large wave which destructed the narrator's boat.**

**Question 8.**

**How did the disaster strike 'Wavewalker'?**

**Question 9.**

**How did the narrator suffer due to the wave hit?**

**Question 10.**

**What measures were taken to save the ship from sinking?**

**Question 11.**

**What problems did they face in these efforts?**

**Question 12.**

**How did Sue suffer when the wave struck the ship?**

**Question 13.**

**How did Sue and Jonathan face the disaster that struck their ship?**

**Or**

**How did the narrator's children Jonathan and Suzanne show courage in the hour of great storm?**

**Question 14.**

**Why did the captain get no replies to his Mayday calls?**

**Answer:**

**The captain did not get any response to his Mayday calls as his boat was in a rather remote corner of the world.**

**Question 15.**

**Were the children afraid during this ordeal?**

**Question 16.**

**What was the only hope for these sailors?**

**Question 17.**

**How did the voyagers on Wavewalker finally manage to reach the lie Amsterdam?**

**Question 18.**

**What efforts did the narrators make to save the ship? How were their lives saved?**

## **Section B**

**Question 1.**

**The story 'We're Not Afraid to Die' has a lesson 'optimism helps to endure direst stress'. Do you agree? Why/Why not?**

**Question 2.**

**'We're Not Afraid to Die ... If We Can All Be Together' traces down the saga of hardship and bravery as portrayed in this adventure story.**

**Question 3.**

**'Our optimistic attitude helps us to face extremely dangerous situations.' Discuss with reference to the story 'We're Not Afraid to Die....'**

**Question 4.**

**How did the children's presence and behaviour during the crisis affect the narrator?**

**Question 5.**

**What qualities helped the Captain of the ship and his crew overcome the crisis?**

**Question 6.**

**'We're Not Afraid to Die' is a story of adventure. Helen Keller, blind and deaf American writer and social reformer, said, "Life is either a daring adventure or nothing." Write an article in about 100 words on the topic 'Adventure makes life worth living'.**

**Question 7.**

**In the words of the captain of Wavewalker, the crew was 'cheerful and optimistic under direst stress,' and was able to bring the ship out of crisis. James Branch Cabell, the American novelist and essayist, says, "The optimist proclaims that we live in the best of worlds; and the pessimist fears this is true."**

**Write an article in about 100 words showing how optimism is infinitely preferable to pessimism.**



**THE VILLAGE**  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
"We Nurture Dreams"

**We're not afraid to die...if we can all be together**  
**Solutions**  
**Section A**

**Question 1.**

**What was the narrator's purpose of making the voyage from Plymouth, in 1976?**

**Answer:**

**The narrator's purpose of making the voyage in 1976 was to duplicate the round-the-world voyage undertaken 200 years earlier by Captain James Cook. This idea had inspired their thoughts for 16 years and they spent their leisure time practising their seafaring skills in British waters.**

**Question 2.**

**What preparations did the author and his wife make for their round-the-world sea voyage?**

**Answer:**

**Honed their seafaring skills.**

**Question 3.**

**Describe the narrator's boat in the chapter 'We're Not Afraid to Die ...If We Can All Be Together'.**

**Answer:**

**A revolutionary, pedal driven watercraft built for fun, speed and stability – It could cruise all kinds of water passengers could travel in dry comfort at a pace few can match – It's the closest thing to walking on water.**

**Question 4.**

**Who were Larry and Herb?**

**Answer:**

**Larry Vigil, an American and Herb Seigler, a Swiss seaman, were taken on board 'Wavewalker' as crew members to help in the voyage through the Southern Indian Ocean.**

**Question 5.**

**Describe the weather conditions on January 2.**

**Answer:**

**In January 2, the weather was disastrous for the saviours. The winds were screaming and sending up giant sprays of water. When the wind dropped, the sky darkened and the waves towered up high like enormous clouds.**

**Question 6.**

**Describe the weather and sea conditions leading to the wave hit to 'Wavewalker'. What was the effect of the wave hit?**

**Answer:**

**The hit followed a wind drop. The sky darkened followed by a roaring wave with a frightful breaking crest. An explosion hit the vessel smashing the captain's head against the wheel and making the masts lie horizontally.**

**Question 7.**

**Describe the disaster of the large wave which destructed the narrator's boat.**

**Answer:**

**The large wave hurled the boat upright, jerked the captain's lifeline taut and smashed the decks. Broken timbers hung perilously and the entire starboard side bulged inwards so that water broke over the boat.**

**Question 8.**

**How did the disaster strike 'Wavewalker'?**

**Answer:**

**As the mast of the boat was near horizontal, a wave hurled the boat upright. It hit the vessel with an explosion-like roar. The ship was filled with water but the captain could not leave the wheel to examine the damage.**

**Question 9.**

**How did the narrator suffer due to the wave hit?**

**Answer:**

**The narrator was flung overboard and sank below the waves. When his head bobbed up, he grabbed the guard rails, sailed**

through the air and fell on the deck. His ribs were cracked, his teeth broken and his mouth was bleeding.

**Question 10.**

**What measures were taken to save the ship from sinking?**

**Answer:**

The captain controlled the direction of the ship to meet the waves. Larry and Herb pumped sea water out and fixed the starboard side holes with canvas and waterproof hatch covers.

**Question 11.**

**What problems did they face in these efforts?**

**Answer:**

Additional problems arose when their handpumps were blocked by debris, the electric pump short-circuited and the water level rose threateningly. Sadly, the two handpumps had been wrenched overboard but an electric pump below the chartroom proved to be a saviour.

**Question 12.**

**How did Sue suffer when the wave struck the ship?**

**Answer:**

Sue had received a bump above her eyes. It kept hurting and swelled alarmingly, leading to two enormous black eyes. She even had a deep cut in her arm, but remained stoic because she did not want to worry her parents.

**Question 13.**

**How did Sue and Jonathan face the disaster that struck their ship?**

**Or**

**How did the narrator's children Jonathan and Suzanne show courage in the hour of great storm?**

**Answer:**

Jonathan showed courage and said he wasn't afraid of dying if all of them died together. Suzanne, too, quietly bore her pain. She made a card expressing her love and gave it to her father.

**Question 14.**

**Why did the captain get no replies to his Mayday calls?**

**Answer:**

**The captain did not get any response to his Mayday calls as his boat was in a rather remote corner of the world.**

**Question 15.**

**Were the children afraid during this ordeal?**

**Answer:**

**The children must have been scared but Jonathan told his father that he was not afraid to die if they could all be together.**

**Question 16.**

**What was the only hope for these sailors?**

**Answer:**

**To reach lie Amsterdam, one of the two tiny islands in the Indian Ocean.**

**Question 17.**

**How did the voyagers on Wavewalker finally manage to reach the lie Amsterdam?**

**Answer:**

**Due to the knowledge of the sea in the area and good seamanship of the captain and crew of 'Wavewalker', the voyagers finally managed to reach the lie Amsterdam.**

**Question 18.**

**What efforts did the narrators make to save the ship? How were their lives saved?**

**Answer:**

**The narrator and his wife worked as a team and controlled the steering to meet the waves. They covered the gaping holes with canvas and hatch cover, while Larry and Herb pumped out the water and saved the boat from drowning.**

## **Section B**

**Question 1.**

**The story 'We're Not Afraid to Die' has a lesson 'optimism helps to endure direst stress'. Do you agree? Why/Why not?**

**Answer:**

**The real life account of survival against impossible odds in 'We're Not Afraid to die...' is a story of courage, determination and optimism. The narrator, his wife and two children were on the**



**Wavewalker on a round-the-world voyage. In the Indian Ocean, they encountered bad weather and their boat was badly battered. The narrator was thrown overboard, but managed to get back on the boat.**

**The children too were injured. The boat was getting flooded, but nobody gave up. The narrator kept trying to save the boat. The children had faith in their father. They pumped out water from the boat, but more water came in. Gradually, the fury of the storm eased, but the boat was still leaking. The narrator was able to steer the boat to lie Amsterdam 165 km away. Throughout this ordeal, all the members on the boat, including the children, remained hopeful and cheerful. Never did anyone show despair. Their optimism was a source of strength to the narrator.**

**Question 2.**

**'We're Not Afraid to Die ... If We Can All Be Together' traces down the saga of hardship and bravery as portrayed in this adventure story.**

**Answer:**

**The ship encountered strong gales. They double-lashed everything but an enormous wave smashed the captain's head, cracked his ribs, and broke his teeth, while throwing him overboard.**

**Later, clinging to the guard rails he managed to be tossed back. The ship was filled with water as the starboard gaped open, broken timber lay strewn and more water crept in.**

**While Mary held the wheel, he checked on the children and covered the starboard hole with waterproof hatch covers. Their Mayday calls went unheeded all night, adding to the distress.**

**After 15 hours of battling the waves, they calculated their chances of reaching lie Amsterdam, but 36 hours later, they were afloat, even as weather conditions deteriorated.**

**By 5 p.m. the captain had dozed off after ordering Larry to steer a course of 185 degrees. The next he knew was his children congratulating him on locating the island.**

### **Question 3.**

**'Our optimistic attitude helps us to face extremely dangerous situations.' Discuss with reference to the story 'We're Not Afraid to Die....'**

**Answer:**

**It was the optimism of the narrator, the captain of the Wavewalker, that saved the lives of his family and the crew members. The craft suffered serious damage during the storm and could have sunk with all on board. But the narrator had an extremely positive approach. There was never a thought of giving up or allowing the situation to overwhelm him. Rather, he constantly looked for solutions as problems came up one after the other.**

**The narrator was calm throughout the crisis and was, therefore, able to meet the challenges of the moment. He and his crew members were determined to weather the storm. He was thrown overboard but came back and hung on to the wheel. He arranged for pumping the sea water out.**

**The children were a great source of strength to him. Their faith in him heightened his desire to protect them and his ship. Because of his calmness, he was able to make the best use of his navigation skills and seamanship.**

### **Question 4.**

**How did the children's presence and behaviour during the crisis affect the narrator?**

**Answer:**

**The children on board were fully aware of the crisis looming over their boat and yet did not panic or express their anxiety, which strengthened the narrator's resolve to save the ship. His determination to fight against all odds was further strengthened when his son proclaimed that they did not mind dying, but only wished to die together. This encouraging bravery sharpened the narrator's innovative streak as he worked meticulously at calculating wind speeds, changes of course, drift and current, to reach their destination.**

**When Sue had handed the narrator a 'Thank-you' card, the touching gesture dispelled negativity and boosted his determination. Even when he turned skeptical of his calculations about reaching the island, the children still had implicit faith in him and believed he had guided them to the safety of the island.**

**Question 5.**

**What qualities helped the Captain of the ship and his crew overcome the crisis?**

**Answer:**

**The boat was in the hands of an able captain, who had impeccable seamanship skills. Like all seasoned salts, he believed in a back-up plan, for every emergency. He was an ideal parent who found strength in the gestures of affection and consideration his children displayed, and forgetting self-preservation, worked for the common good. He was innovative and managed to connect the electric pump under the chartroom floor to save the situation. When proper tools were destroyed, he used makeshift devices to calculate their course at sea for reaching the tiny islands.**

**The captain showed remarkable perseverance and was not deterred by the many setbacks he encountered. Though realistic about their slim chances to reach safety, he did not demonstrate his anxiety and thus managed to everyone confident. This leadership trait inspired his shipmates to remain buoyant.**

**Question 6.**

**'We're Not Afraid to Die' is a story of adventure. Helen Keller, blind and deaf American writer and social reformer, said, "Life is either a daring adventure or nothing." Write an article in about 100 words on the topic 'Adventure makes life worth living'.**

**Answer:**

**Adventure Makes Life Worth Living (Choose your points)**

**What goes into adventure?**

- **do the unusual**
- **take risks**
- **do what no one has/few have done before**

**What does adventure give us?**

- **thrill**
- **a sense of achievement**
- **fame and money**
- **satisfaction and happiness**

**Adventurous people know how to work as a team.**

**Some famous adventurers – Edmund Hilary (conquered Everest), James Cameron (made a solo journey to the deepest trench in the Pacific Ocean).**

**Question 7.**

**In the words of the captain of Wavewalker, the crew was 'cheerful and optimistic under direst stress,' and was able to bring the ship out of crisis. James Branch Cabell, the American novelist and essayist, says, "The optimist proclaims that we live in the best of worlds; and the pessimist fears this is true."**

**Write an article in about 100 words showing how optimism is infinitely preferable to pessimism.**

**Answer:**

**Optimism – the ability to see something positive in the most difficult circumstances.**

- **Optimism enables one to find solutions to seemingly impossible situations.**
- **Optimism keeps a man hopeful.**
- **A man continues to strive and work if he is optimistic.**

**Pessimism, on the other hand, leads to despair, inactivity and failure.**