

2. *We're Not Afraid to Die... If We Can All Be Together*

(Gordon Cook And Alan East)

ABOUT THE LESSON

"We're Not Afraid to Die ... If We Can All Be Together," as the title suggests is an adventurous ordeal at sea. It is an account of the narrator's grit and courage to face adversities, especially when one enjoys the faith and support of his kith and kin. The lesson is a heart-rending account of how the family of the narrator – his wife Mary, his son Jonathan, aged 6 and daughter Suzanne, aged 7, had a close encounter with death during their voyage. After crossing Cape Town, their boat 'Wavewalker' was caught in rough seas and was badly damaged by a gigantic wave. The family was badly bruised, still they kept their courage for they found their strength in their togetherness. The lesson is a treatise on courage and valour. If one keeps one's calm in times of adversities and maintains faith and conviction in one's own strength, even God seems to stand by the side of such valiant and brave people.

NOTES

• A Dream Voyage

- a long standing dream of the author to duplicate the round-the-world voyage made 200 years earlier by Captain James Cook (1,05,000 kms)
- author and wife spent 16 years of all their leisure time in improvising their seafaring skills in British waters
- took 'Wavewalker': a professionally built boat 23 metre, 30 ton wooden-hulled beauty
- fitted and tested it in the roughest of waters for months
- set sail in July 1976 with wife Mary, son Jonathan 6, and daughter Suzanne 7, from Plymouth, England

- **First leg of the journey**

- passed pleasantly as the voyagers sailed down the west coast of Africa to Cape Town
- took on board two crewmen - Larry Vigil, an American and Herb Seigler, a Swiss
- set sail for the southern Indian Ocean - the world's roughest seas

- **First signs of impending disaster**

- encountered strong wind on the second day out of Cape Town which continued for the next few weeks
- cause of worry: the alarming size of the waves rising upto 15 metres, as high as the mast
- reached 3500 km. east of Cape Town on Dec. 25
- celebrated Christmas; kept the spirits high despite deterioration in weather conditions

- **January 2 - Preparing for the Worst**

- waves became huge
- voyagers saw endless enormous seas rolling towards them
- screaming of the wind and spray painful to the ears
- to slow down the boat, they dropped the storm jib; lashed a heavy mooring rope in a loop across the stern
- double-lashed everything, went through the life-raft drill
- attached lifelines, donned oilskins and life-jackets

- **Disaster and its aftermath**

- at about 6 p.m. wind dropped; sky became absolutely dark; followed by a growing roar
- author saw a gigantic wave, twice the height of other waves, appearing perfectly vertical

- tremendous explosion shook the deck
- a powerful flow of green and white water broke over the ship
- captain injured: head smashed into the wheel; flew overboard and sank below the waves
- lost consciousness, prepared himself for approaching death
- providential escape for the author: suddenly head popped out of water
- 'Wavewalker' was getting sunk, masts became almost horizontal
- a wave threw the ship upright
- Captain grabbed the guard rails and sailed through the air into *Wavewalker's* main boom
- badly injured with left ribs cracked, teeth broken and mouth filled with blood, the Captain kept his courage found the wheel, lined up the stern for the next wave and hung on
- decks smashed, ship full of water
- **Crew member's show of unparalleled strength**
 - crewmen Larry and Herb started pumping out water
 - Captain half-swam, half-crawled to the children's cabin to enquire after their well-being
 - with no time to worry about the bumped head of his daughter, he struggled back on deck having found a hammer, screws and canvas
 - settled to make necessary repairs to save the ship from sinking
 - managed to stretch canvas and secure water proof hatch covers across gaping holes
 - now water deflected over the side
- **Other problems arose**
 - hand pump started to block with the debris

- electric pump short-circuited
- water level rose threateningly
- two spare hand pumps had been wrenched overboard
- Captain used another electric pump kept under chartroom floor and connected it to an outpipe
- got no replies to Mayday calls
- daughter Sue badly injured : head swollen, eyes enormously black and a deep cut on arm
- showed exemplary courage by not worrying the Captain who made desperate attempts for safety
- **January 3, conditions under control but critical**
 - tremendous leak somewhere below the waterline
 - boat's main rib frames nearly broken
 - *Wavewalker* wouldn't hold together long enough to reach Australia, it was feared
- **Only hope of the Captain**
 - to reach either of the two small islands a few hundred kilometers of east - one of them Ile Amsterdam, a French scientific base
 - could be possible only if the wind slowed down allowing the sail to be hoisted
- **Crucial days - January 4 and 5**
 - after 36 hours of continuous pumping there was only a few centimetres of water left
 - crew had to keep pace with the water still coming in
 - could not set any sail on the mast
 - hoisted the storm jib and headed in the direction of the two islands
 - black clouds built up again at 4 p.m.

- wind back to 40 knots; sea getting higher
- dawn of January 5, situation became desperate
- **Show of Exemplary Courage**
 - Captain's son Jonathan exhibited rare courage by saying, "We aren't afraid of dying if we can all be together."
 - new determination and courage revived in the Captain to fight the sea
 - decided to protect the weakened starboard side
- **Safe at Last**
 - Jan 6 saw 'Wavewalker' ride out of the storm and the wind eased
 - Captain tried to get a reading on the sextant
 - in the chartroom worked on wind speeds, changes of course, drift and current in order to calculate their position
 - checked and rechecked calculations despite all handicaps
 - main compass lost; the spare one not corrected for magnetic variations
 - depending on his calculations asked Larry to steer a course of 185 degrees at around 2 p.m.
 - expected to see the island at about 5 p.m. though he himself was not very sure
 - dozed off; woke up at 6 p.m. disheartened that they had probably missed the island
 - his son Jon and daughter Sue then appeared and hugged him calling him the 'best daddy and the best captain' for they had found the island
 - the voyagers touched shore at Ile Amsterdam.
 - courage, conviction, a keen presence of mind and above all the strength of the family brought them successfully out of their ordeal

TITLE

The title is taken from Jonathan's remark "We aren't afraid of dying if we can all be together – you and Mummy, Sue and I." It is the most telling title the passage could have for it brings out the bravery, grit and courage of the Captain's family and the love each member has for others. Jonathan and Sue's bravery in the face of deadly disaster inspires the Captain to fight the sea and come out victorious against its vicious waters. Fortunately in the end nobody had to die and the family remained united. Their ordeal ended in safety, relief and happiness.

THEME

The passage has a string of themes woven into it. First is the human nature of knowing and exploring the unknown and taking on challenges. Second, human instinct for survival. The tenacious Captain and his crew fight the raging storm tooth and nail and come out safely from the jaws of death. Third, human bravery, grit, courage and determination which are exhibited even by little children Sue and Jonathan, besides their parents and Larry and Herb. Four, element of luck – the Captain's decision to take Larry and Herb as crew proves very lucky for their role is vital in saving the ship. Luckily, a pinprick of an island Ile Amsterdam is near enough for the ship to reach safely. Five, faith in one's optimism and sharp presence of mind. It is these qualities of the Captain which are instrumental in the 'Wavewalker' and its crew's survival.

GLOSSARY

- set sail – start on a sea voyage
- honing – sharpening
- seafaring – travelling by sea
- gales – strong winds
- atrocious – extremely wicked or cruel

- jib - a triangular stay sail
- donned - put on
- stern - the rear end of a ship
- impending - about to happen
- lashed - to beat hard against (something)
- ominous - signalling future disaster or evil
- towered - reached or rose to a great height
- aft - behind
- torrent - a violent stream of water
- hurled - threw with force
- boom - bar
- taut - tightly drawn
- starboard - right side of a ship
- bulged - swelled
- sloshed - moved around with a splashing sound
- bump - a swelling caused by an injury
- bashed open - struck open forcefully
- deflected - turn aside from a straight course
- gaping - a wide opening
- debris - scattered pieces of rubbish or wreckage
- wrenched - twisted, distorted
- dinghies - small open sailing boats
- Mayday calls - calls used as an international radio distress signal
- pinpricks - very small dots
- abated - decreased in force or intensity
- auxiliary - supplementary, kept in reserve
- respite - relief

- rigging – the ropes or chain used aboard a ship or boat for controlling sails and masts
- heave-to – come to a stop
- planks – a long, flat piece of timber
- easing – make or becoming less serious
- sextant – an instrument used for measuring the angular distances between objects, used in navigation and surveying
- drift – slow current
- caricature – a picture in which a person's distinctive features are exaggerated for comic effect
- dozed off – slept lightly
- tousled – make (a person's hair) untidy
- bunk – a narrow shelf-like bed
- hug – embrace
- chorused – said the same thing at the same time
- stark – bleak or bare; desolate
(said of a landscape)
- direst – extremely horrible

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

(to be answered in about 40 words each)

- Q1. What difference did you notice between the reaction of the adults and the children when faced with danger? (Textual)**

The voyagers including two adults and two children had a close shave with death in their voyage. While the adults made desperate efforts to save the boat from the raging sea storm and fought for survival, the children exhibited exemplary courage in this situation. The little girl Sue did not even report some of her injuries because she did not want to bother her dad who was desperately struggling for the crew's survival. Instead, she tried to comfort her parents with a beautiful card full of touchy feelings. The son exhibited great courage when he remarked that he was not afraid of dying as long as they were all together.

- Q2. How does the story suggest that optimism helps to endure "the direst stress"? (Textual)**

The story motivates the readers not to panic in times of distress. The voyagers of 'Wavewalker' did not even once lose their hope or show any weakness of character at a time when death was staring them in their faces. With indomitable courage and conviction they beat the odds against them to reach Ile Amsterdam. The story thus conveys the idea that if we can be optimistic and keep hoping for the best in life we can endure "the direst stress". All problems and difficulties of life will automatically shy away from us.

- Q3. What lessons do we learn from such hazardous experiences when we are face-to-face with death? (Textual)**

Whenever one reads of such adventurous ordeals faced by men of courage and conviction, one certainly feels motivated to face the upheavels of life courageously. It is rightly said "cowards die

many times before their death; the valiant face death only once," and they die a hero's death. The lesson also inspires us to maintain our calm even in the face of death. Stress and panic only worsen things. If we accept difficulties as a way of life and face them with a brave front, they just shy away from us. By being optimistic in life and hoping for the best, one can easily conquer all milestones.

Q4. Why do you think people undertake such adventurous expeditions in spite of the risks involved? (Textual)

Thrill and adventure are inherent qualities of man. His inquisitive and innovative nature compels him to undertake arduous journey even if it involves high risk. Explorers like Vasco-de-Gama, Columbus, Robert Peare, Edmundson, Hillary and Tenzing exemplify man's spirit to enquire and explore the unknown and conquer the challenges. We owe more than half of our knowledge and wealth to such remarkable people who dared to dream of the impossible and achieved it.

Q5. List the steps taken by the Captain: (Textual)

(i) to protect the ship when rough weather began

In order to protect the ship from the rough weather, the Captain ordered the boat to be slowed down. The crew dropped the storm jib and lashed a heavy mooring rope in a loop across the stern. Then they double-lashed everything, went through their life-raft drill, attached lifelines, donned oilskins and life jackets and then waited for what was to follow.

(ii) to check the flooding of the water in the ship

To check the flooding of the boat Captain managed to stretch canvas and secure water proof hatch covers across the gaping holes.

Q6. Why did the author undertake the sea journey?

The author wanted to replicate the round the world voyage of Captain James Cook made 200 years ago. It was a dream for the author and his wife to sail in the wake of the famous explorer. Perhaps, the dangers and adventure involved in the voyage and their desire to accomplish something unique beckoned them to undertake the journey.

Q7. What preparations did the author and his wife make for their round the world sea voyage?

In order to replicate the round the world voyage of Captain James Cook made 200 years ago, the author and his wife spent 16 years honing their seafaring skills during their leisure time in British waters. They bought a 23 metre, 30 ton wooden-hulled boat for the voyage and fitted and tested it in the roughest weather they could find as part of their preparation for the real journey.

Q8. How did the first leg of their journey pass and when and where did they sense the first sign of the disaster?

The first leg of their journey passed pleasantly as they sailed down the west coast of Africa to Cape Town. It was on their second day out of Cape Town that they encountered strong gales which made the waves rise alarmingly up to 15 metres, as high as the main mast.

Q9. "The disaster left the voyagers shattered both physically and mentally". Comment.

The voyagers encountered the disaster at around 6 p.m. It was preceded by an ominous silence. The wind suddenly dropped and the sky immediately grew dark. A torrent of green and white water broke over the ship smashing the head of the Captain into the wheel. His daughter Suzanne also bumped her

head badly. The vessel was badly damaged and was taking water. The crew were face to face with death in the raging sea. Thus the incident worried them physically and mentally. They prepared themselves for the worst – approaching death.

- Q10. Even after surviving for 15 hours after the disaster struck, the voyagers were doubtful whether they would be able to reach their destination. What was their only hope?**

Even though the voyagers could survive for 15 hours after the wave struck them, they knew that they would not be able to continue with their journey for long as their boat 'Wavewalker' would not hold together for long. Their only hope was if they could locate either of the two small islands, a few hundred kilometers to the east and that too was possible only if the wind and seas abated so that they could hoist the sail.

- Q11. How did the children respond when the Captain went into their cabin to comfort them?**

The children, Jonathan and Suzanne expressed their apprehensions over their survival in the face of their pathetic circumstances. But even at that point their courage and conviction did not fade. His son boldly remarked that they were not at all afraid of dying if they were all together.

- Q12. Was it sheer luck or the skills of the Captain which saved the voyagers?**

No doubt, luck played a major role in the survival of the voyagers for each time they felt the end was near, their boat 'Wavewalker' could withstand the torrents and rode out of the storm. However, eventually it were the seafaring skills of the Captain which came handy. After checking and rechecking his calculations he instructed Larry to steer a course of 185 degrees. His calculations proved right and they eventually touched the shores of Ile Amsterdam.

Q13. What problem did the hand pumps cause? How did the author resolve it?

The hand operated water pump used in flushing out the water flooding 'Wavewalker' began to get blocked up with the ship debris floating around the cabins. The electric water pump short-circuited. The problem compounded with the water level rising threateningly. Fortunately, the author was reminded of a spare electric pump under the chartroom floor. Immediately it was pressed into service to flush out the water.

Q14. "Sue was a brave girl". Give evidence in support of this statement.

Sue was a very brave girl. When the gigantic wave hit the ship, she was badly injured on the head. Her eyes had turn enormous and black because of shock and impact and there was a deep cut on her arm, but she did not report the full extent of her injuries lest her father was distracted from the rescue operation. Later, she tried to cheer up her parents with a greeting card to express her thanks and her hope for the best. Her bravery toughened her father's resolve to fight the sea storm tooth and nail.

Q15. Why did the Captain get no replies for his Mayday calls?

The 'Wavewalker' is braving the sea storm in the remote corner of the southern Indian Ocean, one of the world's roughest seas. It is not surprising that Captain's distress signals or the Mayday calls did not reach any other ship of base and consequently he got no response to them.

Q16. What was the impact of the children's behaviour on the narrator?

The children's show of bravery, their solidarity with the parents, particularly with the father and their fearlessness in the face of death made the Captain all the more determined to fight the raging seas and save their lives, come what way.

Q17. What circumstances made the narrator accept his approaching death?

When the huge wave hit the 'Wavewalker', the Captain's head was smashed into the wheel and he was thrown overboard. While going down under the water he felt that he was going to die. He was reconciled to his fate and felt peaceful even as he lost his consciousness.

Q18. How did the 'Wavewalker' escape capsizing? How did the Captain steady it?

Even as the 'Wavewalker' was about to capsize, it was hurled upright by a wave. The Captain grabbed the guard rails and sailed through the air into the Wavewalker's main boom. Somehow he found the wheel and lined up for the next wave and hung on. This is how the Captain steadied the ship.

Q19. Why was the plan to reach Australia changed?

The 'Wavewalker' was so badly mauled by the ravaging waves that its main rib frames were smashed down to the keel. There was nothing holding up a whole section of the starboard hull except a few cupboard partitions. In this condition, the ship could never make it to Australia. So the plan was changed. Instead, the Captain decided to sail to an island, Ile Amsterdam, a few hundred kilometres away.

Q20. How did Sue and the author describe Ile Amsterdam?

Jubilation, excitement, thrill and relief were written large on Sue's face when she broke the news to her father that the 'Wavewalker' had reached Ile Amsterdam. She said that it was as big as a battleship. The Captain described it as the most beautiful island in the world because he and the crew had been saved as the island was within reach.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

(to be answered in about 120 – 150 words each)

- Q1. The story "We're Not Afraid to Die... If We Can All Be Together" suggests that the value of optimism helps to endure "the direst stress". What other lessons and values do you learn from the hazardous experiences of the voyagers of 'Wavewalker'?**

The story motivates readers not to panic in times of distress. The voyagers of 'Wavewalker' did not even once lose their hope or show any weakness of character at a time when death was staring them in their faces. With indomitable courage and conviction they beat all odds against them to reach Ile Amsterdam. The story thus conveys the idea that if we can be optimistic and keep hoping for the best in life we can endure "the direst stress". All problems and difficulties of life will automatically shy away from us.

The reading of such adventurous ordeals faced by men of courage and conviction, certainly motivate one to face the upheavals of life courageously. It is rightly said "Cowards die many times before their death; the valiant face death only once;" and when the valiant do die they die as heroes' death. The lesson also inspires us to maintain our calm in crisis. Stress and panic only worsen the situation. If we accept difficulties as a way of life and face them with a brave front, they soon fade away. By being utterly positive and by not losing faith in oneself, one can conquer all milestones.

- Q2. What personality traits and values are revealed by the narrator and his family's decision to undertake the adventurous expedition? Do you think they are desirable traits and values?**

Thrill and adventure are inherent qualities of the brave and daring. Their inquisitive and innovative nature compels them to undertake arduous journey even if it involves high risk. Explorers

like Vasco-de-Gama, Columbus, Robert Peare, Emundson, Hillary and Tenzing exemplify human spirit to enquire and explore the unknown and conquer the challenges. We owe more than half of our knowledge and wealth to such remarkable people who dared to dream of the impossible and achieved it. That is what makes these traits and values so very desirable.

The narrator too, was prompted by such a spirit. He along with his family wanted to replicate the round the world voyage of Captain James Cook made 200 years ago. It was a dream for the author and his wife to sail like the famous explorer. The dangers and adventure involved in the voyage and their desire to accomplish something unique beckoned them to undertake the journey. Moreover, absolutely confident of their seafaring skills they wished their children to get such an exposure right from the beginning so that the values of fearlessness, self-confidence and courage could be inculcated in them.

Q3. What personal and professional values helped young Jonathan and Suzanne to face the crisis without getting panicky? What was the impact of the children's reaction on their father?

Barely six to seven years of age, Jonathan and Suzanne displayed exemplary bravery when they came face to face with death in the raging sea. This wouldn't have been possible had their parents not groomed them with certain values right from the beginning. Rather than wailing and weeping during the disastrous ordeal, these brave children maintained their composure. When the gigantic wave hit the ship, Suzanne was badly injured on the head. Her eyes had turned enormous and black because of shock and impact. There was also a deep cut on her arm but she didn't report the full extent of her injuries lest her father was distracted from the rescue operation. Later, she tried to cheer her parents with a greeting card expressing her thanks and her hope for the

best. Even the little Jonathan boldly remarked that they were not at all afraid of dying if they were all together. Their bravery and panic-free approach not only toughened their father's resolve to fight the sea storm tooth and nail but also proved instrumental in bringing out the 'best' in their Daddy who was their captain, too.

- Q4. Imagine you are Mary and it is day 2 of the Wavewalker's arrival on the shore of Ile Amsterdam. Write a diary entry to express your feelings on your family's ordeal at the sea. In particular describe what personal and professional values helped you all to pull a nearly impossible escape.**

8th January 1977

9.00 a.m.

Dear Diary

Thank God, the ordeal is over! Staying at wheel for hours, together with no ray of hope in sight was indeed not an easy job but when you are the wife of an excellent sailor who never loses his cool and the mother of those two little brave kids who silently support their parents without showing any signs of panic, nothing seems to be difficult.

Even in the face of crisis, I was aware of the courage that my little ones were displaying. There was neither any trace of panic nor of self-pity. Their self-confidence and their faith in their father was unparalleled. My dear little ones found strength in the togetherness of the family. What a mature approach! This crisis has made me feel very proud of my children. Some credit should also go to us parents who have instilled in them some enduring human values like courage, fearlessness, love and camaraderie.

My heart also goes out to Larry Vigil and Herb Seigler, our comrades in crisis. Thank you guys for your undaunted courage and amazing seafaring skills that made our escape possible!

You are simply awesome. I salute your bravery and your professionalism.

Mary

Q5. "... you are the best daddy in the whole world – and the best Captain". What values made the narrator deserve this complement?

The Captain of the boat 'Wavewalker' proved to be a man of great courage, commitment and conviction. Committed to his dream of replicating the round-the-world voyage made 200 years earlier by Captain James Cook, he spent all his leisure time for 16 long years in polishing and refining his seafaring skills. His dexterity is highlighted in the fact that he spent months in fitting and testing the boat 'Wavewalker' in the roughest of seas to meet any eventuality on sea. In the wake of the disaster on sea he exhibited rare calm and as a skilled Captain he made all necessary preparations to face the disaster – carrying out the life-raft drill, attaching lifelines, donning oilskins and life jackets and so on. He did not lose heart even when he had a close shave with death. Unmindful of his injuries and those of the others, he went about repairing the boat to save it from sinking. Finally, it was his navigational skills and his decision to steer a course of 185 degrees that took the 'Wavewalker' to touch the shores of Ile Amsterdam.

He also proved to be the best daddy for he gave his children the first lesson in bravery and saved their lives. He was touched to the core on seeing the love and concern of his children and the strength they showed in their togetherness and like a perfect father he made every effort to pull his children out of the danger. The narrator thus ideally proved to be the best father and the best Captain.

Q6 "The story "We're not Afraid to Die ..." is a saga of values like courage and bravery in the face of adversities of life". Comment.

"Cowards die many times before their death ... the valiant face it only once". This conviction of the brave and courageous is beautifully highlighted through the lesson "We're Not Afraid to Die ..."

The Captain's undertaking to replicate Captain James Cook's voyage was challenging as they were to sail in some of the roughest seas of the world. So, they exposed themselves to rigorous training before commencing the journey. Not long after the journey began, the boat ran into rough weather and was badly damaged by the onslaught of high rising waves. Unfazed by this, the voyagers kept their spirits high and made all out efforts to save the boat and their lives.

Even in the direst of circumstances the Captain did not give up hope and utilized all his seafaring skills to protect the ship from sinking and to pump out water. The most touching instance was when his little daughter Suzanne, though badly hurt did not report the full extent of her injuries for she did not want to worry her father when he was making desperate attempts to save all of them. His son Jonathan also exhibited exemplary courage when he remarked that he was not afraid of dying if they could all be together.

Luck certainly favours the brave. The voyagers were able to come out of a near death experience after four days. The Captain, with his uncanny sense of seafaring skills was able to direct the ship to Ile Amsterdam, their only hope for survival. "We're not afraid of Dying" thus proves to be a saga of courage and bravery.

Q7. Describe the mental condition of the voyagers on 4 and 5 January.

(Textual)

January 4 and 5 saw the voyagers encountering worse conditions as the weather conditions continued to deteriorate. 36 hours of continuous pumping left them both physically and mentally

exhausted. The fear of death lurked in their minds and they felt that if they were unable to locate one of the two islands their survival was almost impossible. The badly damaged boat certainly could not take them to Australia.

Getting some respite from the drastic situation on the noon of 4th January, they had their first meal in two days, but even this respite was short lived as around 4 p.m. black clouds appeared again. By the dawn of January 5, the situation worsened. With a heavy heart the narrator went to the children's room and was touched when they expressed their fear whether they were going to die. They however exhibited exemplary courage when they remarked that they did not fear death if they were together. The thought expressed their courage and conviction to fight any eventuality as long as the family was together.

Q8. Describe the shifts in the narration of the events as indicated in the three sections of the text. Give a subtitle to each section.

(Textual)

The narrative of the author's ordeal at the sea is divided into three sections which can easily be described as 'Dream Ends up in Disaster,' 'Battle of Survival,' 'Out of the Jaws of Death.'

The first section describes the author and his family's excitement over their decision to replicate Captain James Cook's 1,05,000 kilometre long round the world voyage made two hundred years ago. So there is excitement and euphoria in the beginning which soon turns into concern and worry as the weather changes after Cape Town. The narrative acquires a tone of alarm and an uncanny fear of the impending disaster. There is an element of horror in it. When the gigantic sea waves strike the vessel, the narrative concentrates on the consequences of the disaster and the crew's response to it. There is panic and desperation in the tone e.g. "We're sinking" screams Mary and the Captain, Larry

and Herb go about their job of steadying and saving the ship by pumping out water and plugging the gaping holes. During this struggle the Captain keeps his mind above his shoulders. Brave Sue does not fully report her injuries completely to save her father some trouble.

The struggle continues in the second section. So the tone here also is one of fear, worry, desperation and urgency. Somehow the ship survives and there is a brief lull. Jonathan's remarks "We're not afraid to die" which reveals his bravery and his love for the family leaves the father speechless but determined to fight the sea with everything. The fear of death continues as Mary and the Captain sit together holding their hands. Sue's card brings another silver lining in the darkest hours of the crew who decide "somehow we had to make it."

The third section opens with the author, though totally exhausted, making endless calculations to steer the ship to safety. There is a tone of hopelessness and uncertainty as he goes down to his bunk for rest after asking Larry to steer a course of 185 degrees. The section concludes on a note of great relief and happiness as Sue and Jonathan hug their father in joy and thanks-giving. After all, his courage and his seafaring acumen had saved their lives. The ship reaches Ile Amsterdam and the crew gets a rousing welcome by the inhabitants of the French scientific base.

Q8. 'Wavewalker' touched the shores of Ile Amsterdam on January 6, 1977 after an ordeal at sea.

As a newspaper reporter, write a report on 'Wavewalker's' journey from Plymouth, England to Ile Amsterdam.

'WAVEWALKER' - AN ORDEAL OF COURAGE AND CONVICTION

Ile Amsterdam, January 7: 'Wavewalker', a 23 metre, 20 ton wooden-hulled beauty touched the shores of Ile Amsterdam yesterday after successfully braving a week long ordeal in the

roughest seas of the world. The voyagers, the narrator, his wife Mary, son Jonathan, 6, daughter Suzanne, 7 and crewmen American Larry Vigil and Swiss Herb Seigler had set sail in July 1976 in pursuit of their dream of duplicating the round-the-world voyage made 200 years earlier by Captain James Cook.

Sailing down the west of Africa to Cape Town, the first leg of the journey passed quite pleasantly. On the second day out of Cape Town the voyagers encountered strong gales with the waves rising alarmingly upto 15 metres high. By January 2 the weather conditions deteriorated further and the waves became gigantic. The real disaster occurred at about 6.00 p.m. when a large wave struck the ship with a frightful breaking crest. The Captain who was at the wheel was thrown overboard but he refused to give in. He along with the other crew members made desperate efforts to save the ship from sinking by plugging the gaping holes. They managed to keep the water level sufficiently under control by January 3 by pumping out water.

Even the captain's children showed exemplary courage. His daughter Suzanne bore her cuts and injuries bravely because she did not want to bother her father. Son Jonathan assured his father that they were not afraid of dying as long as they all were together. The Captain was then determined to make it to safety. By carefully checking his charts and making detailed calculations, he concluded that their survival rested on their locating either of the two small islands a few hundred kilometres to the east. The 'Wavewalker', he knew, would not hold long enough to reach Australia. He asked Larry to steer a course of 185 degrees. Lady luck smiled on the voyagers when the Captain's calculations proved right and they touched the shores of Ile Amsterdam at 6.00 p.m. on January 6.

