

Comprehension: The Iron Man

Reading Extract

The Iron Man stood silently on the cliff edge, his enormous metal feet planted firmly on the cold ground. The wind howled around him as the waves crashed violently below. His glowing eyes searched the dark sea while rusted bolts creaked in his arms and legs.

Far below, fishermen hurried to pull their boats safely into the harbour before the storm grew worse. Suddenly, the Iron Man bent down and reached into the water. Slowly, he lifted out a tangled fishing net that had wrapped itself around a struggling boat.

The fishermen stared in shock. At first, they had feared the giant metal figure. Stories had spread across the town about missing tractors, crushed fences, and strange footprints in muddy fields. But now, as the Iron Man carefully placed the damaged boat onto the shore, their fear began to fade.

A young boy named Ben stepped forward bravely. "Thank you," he called.

The Iron Man looked down at the tiny figure. His giant metal hand opened slowly, revealing a small silver compass that had fallen from the boat.

Ben smiled nervously and took the compass. For the first time, the Iron Man's eyes glowed warmly instead of fiercely.

Questions

Retrieval Questions

1. Where was the Iron Man standing at the beginning of the extract?
 2. What was the weather like?
 3. What had become tangled around the boat?
 4. What did the Iron Man give to Ben?
 5. What had people in the town been saying about the Iron Man?
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Inference Questions

1. Why were the fishermen shocked when the Iron Man helped the boat?
 2. What does the phrase "their fear began to fade" suggest about the fishermen's feelings?
 3. Why do you think Ben stepped forward when nobody else did?
 4. What might the glowing eyes symbolise at the end of the extract?
 5. How do you think the townspeople's opinion of the Iron Man may change after this event?
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Vocabulary Questions

1. Find and copy one word that means “very large.”
 2. What does the word “violently” tell you about the waves?
 3. What does “creaked” suggest about the Iron Man’s movements?
 4. What is a “harbour”?
 5. Explain the meaning of the word “fiercely” as it is used in the extract.
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Challenge Questions

1. Why do you think the writer chose to set the scene during a storm?
 2. How does the writer make the Iron Man seem both frightening and kind?
 3. Predict what could happen next in the story.
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Answer Guide

1. On the edge of a cliff.
2. It was stormy and windy.
3. A tangled fishing net.
4. A small silver compass.
5. They said he had caused damage such as crushed fences and missing tractors.
6. They expected him to be dangerous, not helpful.
7. They were beginning to trust him.
8. He was brave and recognised that the Iron Man had helped them.
9. The glowing eyes may symbolise kindness or friendship.
10. They may become less afraid and more accepting of him.
11. “Enormous.”
12. The waves were rough and powerful.
13. His movements were stiff and noisy.
14. A place where boats are kept safely.
15. In a powerful or frightening way.
16. The storm creates tension and excitement.
17. The writer describes his huge size and glowing eyes but also shows him helping others.
18. Answers may vary.