

**SHORT STORY, POEM & CARTOON**

Captain Cook and his men had set out from England in 1768 in the *Endeavour* to explore the South Pacific. They were the first to sail right around New Zealand and through what is today known as the Great Barrier Reef.

The Great Barrier Reef is not just a reef or a line of reefs but a horrid huge zone of them – 80,000 square miles of the age-old remains of the too industrious and indefinitely too abundant coral polyp waiting below the sunlit surface to bite at ships. Their bite is hard and often fatal.

After making the best part of a thousand miles in this sort of thing, examining, checking, surveying all the time, suddenly when she was approaching the end of the reefs area, the *Endeavour* struck. It was in the middle of a peacefully beautiful moonlit night, with the moon throwing brilliant light from one of the close-reefed tops'ls – close-reefed to give minimum speed and still allow the ship to be manageable. There was no sign of danger. Before the leadsman could haul the lead up for another sounding she touched with the horrid, rasping sound of keel on coral, the sudden alarming shock of the floating ship upon the instant stopped and dead. Cook had just turned into the cot in his sleeping cabin. He was up in a flash, 'in his drawers' taking cool and competent command.

Allan Villiers, *Captain Cook, the Seamen's Seaman*

**1. The main impression given by the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph is that...**

- A. the sudden crash was in strong contrast with the peaceful journey.
- B. they had travelled 1 000 miles examining, checking and surveying.
- C. they were sailing at min. manageable speed.
- D. Cook was chief in command.

**2. 'coral polyp waiting...to bite at ships' is an example of...**

- A. Literal statement
- B. Alliteration
- C. Personification
- D. Simile

**3. The function of the last sentence in this passage is to show...**

- A. that Cook had been off duty.
- B. a glimpse of Cook in a moment of crisis.
- C. Cook's carelessness about dress.
- D. the wrecks of old ships were covered with polyps.

**4. 'the age –old remains of the too industrious...polyp' suggests that...**

- A. The polyp died from being over-worked and over-crowded.
- B. The polyp had multiplied in a great abundance.
- C. The oldest corals were the most dangerous to ships.
- D. The ship wrecks were covered with polyps.

**5. 'abundant' means...**

- A. Threatening
- B. Lurking
- C. Plentiful
- D. Dangerous

6. 'surveying' means...
- A. Keeping watch for danger
  - B. Sailing with great care
  - C. Supervising the crew
  - D. Measuring and charting
7. 'rasping' means...
- A. Grating
  - B. Rending
  - C. Screeching
  - D. Sliding
8. 'competent' means...
- A. Complete
  - B. Conservative
  - C. Dignified
  - D. Efficient



Read the poem on the right for questions

9-16.

9. What figurative speech is '*Flowers turned to stone*'?
10. What did the spell of Cook suggest?
11. '*Cook snored loudest*'... What does this point of remark emphasize?
12. What, would you say, is the tone of the poem?
13. The meaning of porthole:
- A. A hole in the stern
  - B. A round window in the bough
14. Which phrase in the last stanza indicates that there were many shoals?
15. '*Puff themselves to sleep..*' probably means:
- A. Smoking pipe
  - B. Singing
16. The "*the coral hedge*" suggests that the reef was
- A. A plant barrier
  - B. An impenetrable wall all around Australia

[16]

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