



LITERACY WORKSHEET

Reading Comprehension

Directions:

Read and answer the questions

Name: _____

SURVIVAL AT SEA

Steven Callahan was 29 years old when he set sail for a trip across the Atlantic Ocean. He had been sailing since he was a teenager, so he was a very good sailor. But he had never sailed across the Atlantic Ocean by himself. This would be his first solo trip.

Steven left the Canary Islands off the northwest coast of Africa on January 29, 1982. He sailed his boat, the *Napoleon Sol*, into the Atlantic Ocean. The trip started well. Six days later, everything changed. Steven was sleeping when an enormous bang made him jump out of bed. He knew right away that something had hit the boat. He saw that water was pouring into his boat. And it was causing the boat to sink quickly.

Steven had to think fast. There was no time to signal for help. He grabbed a few supplies and jumped into his life raft. Then the boat sank. Steven looked around in the water for a clue about what had hit the boat. He thought a whale must have hit it. The whale had caused the boat to split open and sink. At that moment, everything changed for Steven.

The night was dark and cold, and Steven was all alone in the middle of the ocean. He had made it into his life raft, which was named *Rubber Ducky*. But his raft was very small, and he had only a few supplies. Steven knew he would have to fight to survive. His journey would be hard.

Steven and *Rubber Ducky* drifted on the ocean for 76 days. Steven had taken some food from his boat before it sank. It was not enough. Luckily, Steven had also taken a speargun from his ship. He used it to catch fish. Eating fish was the only way he could survive.

Steven faced other troubles, too. The sun was hot. He got bad sunburns. The raft gave him sores on his body. His raft got holes, and Steven had to spend a lot of time fixing them. Steven saw ships passing by him. But no one on the ships saw him. He was too far away.

Surviving was very hard for Steven, but he refused to give up. By the 76th day, Steven had drifted across the entire Atlantic Ocean in his raft. There were fish swimming around his raft. Luckily, this attracted birds. Fishermen saw the birds and knew there were fish in the ocean below. They headed toward the birds. When they got there, the fishermen found Steven! He was rescued.





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Steven Callahan did not give up sailing after that trip. He loved sailing too much to ever stop. In fact, many years later, Steven invented a new kind of life raft to help sailors. He called it the Clam. Since he had been alone in a life raft for many days, he knew what sailors needed to survive. From then on, when Steven set sail, he always brought his Clam.

SURVIVAL AT SEA

Comprehension Questions:

1. This story is about someone who survived a very difficult situation. What other stories do you know of people surviving difficult situations?

2. How do you think someone could survive alone on the ocean for 76 days? What supplies would that person need to survive?

3. If you built your own boat, how would you design it? What would it be made out of? Why ?

4. How do you think Steven felt as he set sail on his first solo trip?

5. What thoughts do you think Steven had after he heard the bang?





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6. How did the fish swimming around Steven's raft help him?

7. What do you think the biggest challenge was for Steven when he was alone in his life raft? Why?

8. How do you think this trip affected Steven as a person? Do you think he changed at all? Why or why not?

