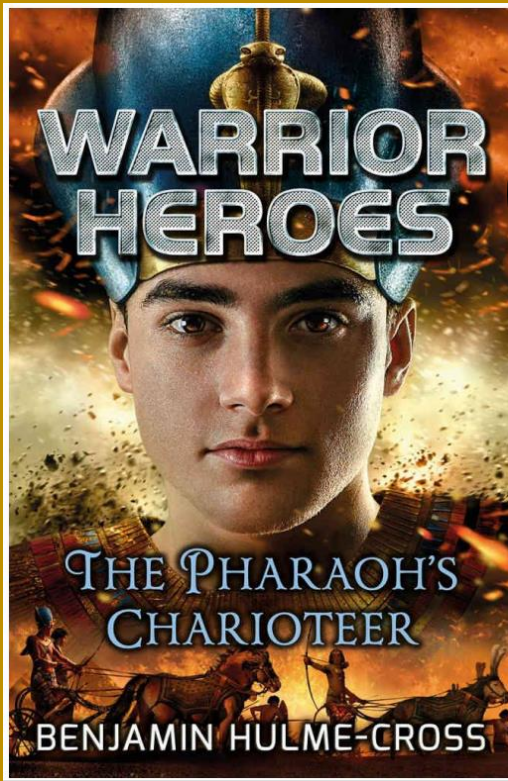


What do you think will happen next?
Use evidence to support your prediction.

"I haven't finished. There were two other youths at the camp when we took you. A boy and a girl. I left a man behind to see what happened. He reports that the boy and the girl ran away from the camp. He tracked them because they weren't heading for Thebes. They were following us..."





Read to the end of page
90.

Remember to use
strategies to help with
your fluency and
expression.

CHAPTER 6



As they stood in the tent where their brothers had been sleeping, Finn and Nefi knew they had a matter of seconds to act.

“Come on,” Nefi hissed. “If we stay we won’t be able to do anything. If we run we may be able to help them.” Finn needed no more convincing. Apart from everything else, he had no desire to stay with the temple guards now that Thami was no longer with them. They heard voices approaching outside, and Nefi rushed to the back of the tent and slashed at it with her knife. Finn followed her through the cut and out into the

night. Stooping low, they ran towards the tethered horses. One of the men was keeping watch over the animals, guarding against hyenas or anything else that might attack in the night. Nefi and Finn dropped to the ground behind a small ridge of earth but as they did so the shouts of the men near the tent caught the guard’s attention and he ran towards his friends. The horses, sensing something was up, were grinding their teeth and pawing at the ground.



Nefi chose the two that were calmest and cut their tethering ropes before leaping up onto one of them. They were much smaller than modern horses, but nonetheless Finn struggled to get on as there was no saddle and no stirrups. After two failed attempts Nefi brought her horse alongside and reached out a hand to help Finn onto his.

“They’re gone!” one of the guards shouted from the other side of the camp. “The boy and the girl are gone!”

Finn and Nefi kicked their horses into action and sped away.

From time to time it seemed to Finn that they were being followed.

They had left the camp far behind, and Nefi had found her way back to the line of hills that the lion had escaped into the previous day. Once they had gained the upper ridge line, Nefi said all they had to do was follow it until morning and they would arrive at the oasis.

The moon had disappeared, but although the desert sky seemed to be filled with more stars than Finn had ever imagined, they did not provide enough light to see by. Certainly there was no hunting party coming after them, but now and again Finn was sure he could hear another horse’s hooves. Each time, they would rein their horses in and listen and each time there would be no sound, but the feeling would not go away until finally they heard, below them rather than behind, the sound of a solitary rider overtaking them and speeding ahead towards the Nubian fortress.

Finn and Nefi stared at one another, dismayed. It seemed too much of a coincidence to hope that the unknown rider was doing anything other than reporting their approach to the Nubians. They dismounted, both suddenly exhausted. They had not slept all night and the adrenaline that had kept them going so far left them empty now they knew they were not being followed by the temple guards. They had no food or water, and no shelter, but pressing ahead towards an enemy who knew they were coming seemed foolish. They sat huddled together with the blankets from the horses' backs around their shoulders. Finn was amazed by how cold he now felt, when during the day the desert was almost too hot to bear.

"We were stupid to think we could help," he said glumly. "We should have let the guards take us back to Thebes."

Solitary

Dismayed

Foolish

Glumly

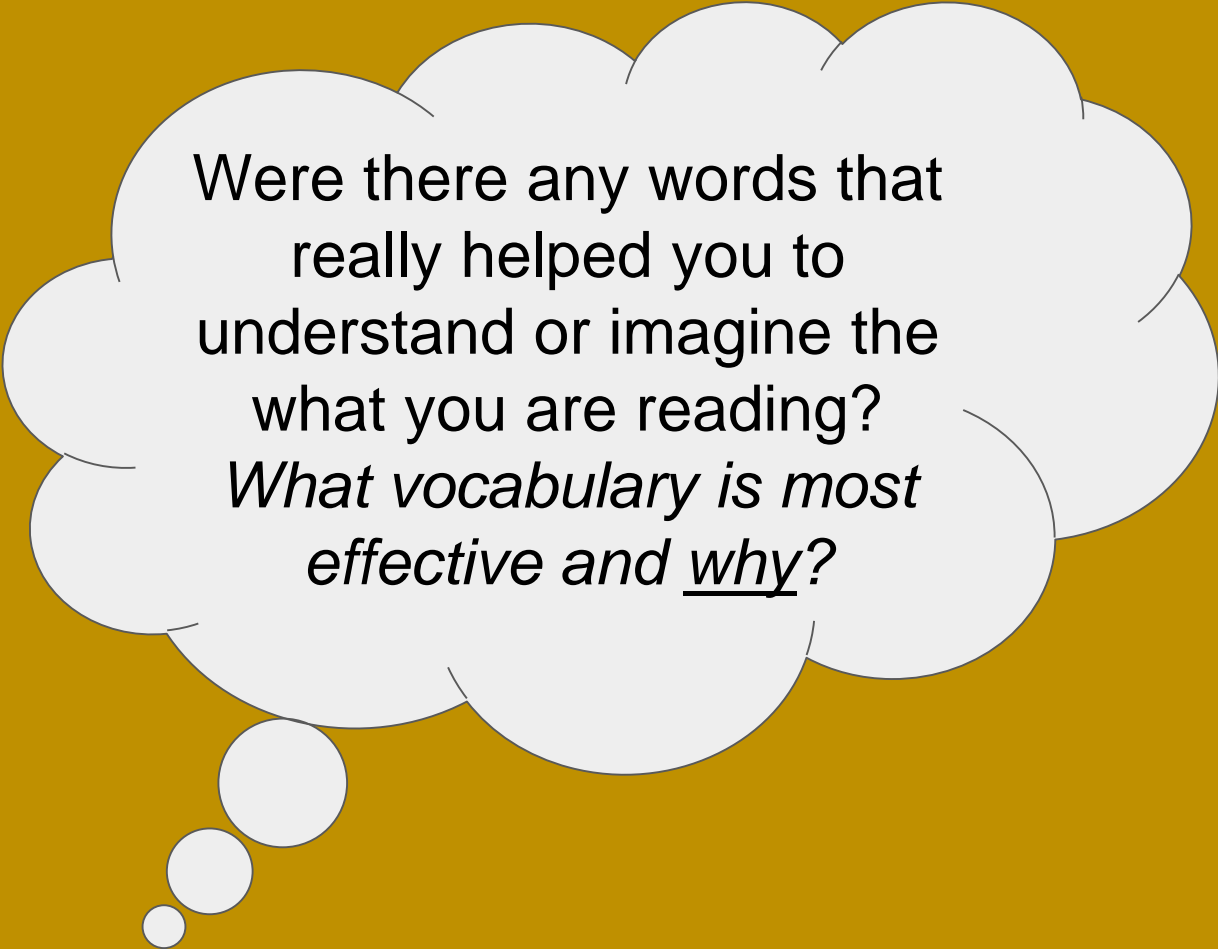
Restless

Parched

Yelp

Swishing

Hobbled




Were there any words that
really helped you to
understand or imagine the
what you are reading?
*What vocabulary is most
effective and why?*

<i>Solitary</i>	<i>alone</i>	<i>Dismayed</i>
<i>to have no courage</i>	<i>Foolish</i>	<i>Glumly</i>
<i>showing a lack of sense</i>	<i>silently gloomy</i>	<i>not able to rest</i>
<i>Restless</i>	<i>a need for water</i>	<i>Yelp</i>
<i>Hobbled</i>	<i>Parched</i>	<i>to walk with a limp</i>
<i>a quick or sharp cry</i>	<i>Swishing</i>	<i>a movement or sound</i>

Match the words to the definitions then write them in your books.

Remember to use the text and read around the word to help you!

L.O. I am learning to understand what I have read.



Let's read the
rest of the
chapter...

"They would never have let us warn my father though. They'd have killed us before letting that happen. We had to run. All we can do for now is try to survive. Anyway, get some sleep. We'll need energy tomorrow if we're going to make it." Nefi lay down and Finn did the same, and they both drifted into a restless, uncomfortable half-sleep.

Finn woke, throat parched and sore, as the sky began to lighten with the first approaches of dawn. He looked over at Nefi, who was snoring softly, and rubbed his eyes in astonishment. Beyond where she lay, the ground fell gently away, sloping down towards the desert floor. Except it wasn't the desert he could see. Unknowingly, they had stopped at the end of the range of hills and ahead, in plain sight, lay a lake. It was surrounded by a belt of vegetation that was dotted with small clusters of mud-brick houses and beyond its opposite bank, rising up out of the desert, was a fortified town.



Gently, he shook Nefi awake and pointed. As soon as she saw the oasis she leapt to her feet.



“We should get down there for water now. The later we leave it the more people will see us.”

They folded their blankets up and draped them over the horses’ backs, then clambered up and began to pick their way down towards the oasis. They were about half way down when the slope steepened and the horses became extremely anxious. Nefi slipped to the ground and Finn was about to follow suit when he caught sight of a young lion, watching from a rock to the side of them. Worse, the horses saw the lion at the same moment. Both of them whinnied and reared, and Finn was thrown onto the rocks as they bolted. He landed awkwardly and let out a yelp of pain as his foot cracked against hard stone.

The lion, tail swishing, stayed on its perch.

Nefi rushed to Finn’s side and helped him up. Finn looked around at the lion in panic.

“Don’t worry about him,” she soothed. “They don’t usually attack, as long as you keep out of their way. Can you walk?”

Finn took a single tentative step and yelped again.

“Come,” said Nefi, putting Finn’s arm over her shoulder. “We’ll walk together.”



ECHO!

The lion watched with lazy interest as they hobbled away, and although he did not follow them, Finn once again found himself looking nervously over his shoulder at regular intervals.

“What are we going to do?” he croaked, all moisture in his mouth now long gone.

“The first thing is to get water,” said Nefi. “Then we can think further ahead.” Neither of them voiced their concerns, though they had plenty. Their greatest problem was that one of them couldn’t walk and the horses had run away. How would they get back to Thebes?

By the time they reached the edge of the lake, the sun was beginning to float up from the horizon, warming the air almost immediately. They drank deeply and washed the dirt from their faces, and slowly they began to feel a little more alive. Finn washed his bad foot, squeezing it and poking at it gingerly. At no point on the way down had he felt like he was going to be able to walk off the injury and he knew that it was likely he had fractured a bone.



“So, what are we going to do?” Finn asked again. But before Nefi could answer they heard a young voice behind them.

“Have you travelled from far?” The voice belonged to a boy of eight or nine years. He had a curved stick, a bit like a boomerang, in one hand and a pair of dead birds in the other. “I was hunting with my throwing stick and I saw you walk down. Did you sleep in the hills?” Nefi nodded.

“Then you should come with me. My mother will give you food. You want food?” Nefi and Finn looked at one another. They had little choice but to trust the boy. They needed food, and here was someone offering it.

“Where do you live, little one?” Nefi asked.

“Hey! I’m not so little. I killed the food you’ll eat, remember that!” he replied. “I’m Caro by the way, and I live in the village on this side of the lake.”

Caro kept up a steady chatter as he led the hobbling pair towards one of the groups of mud huts that Finn had noticed earlier, and presently to a door and into one of the houses.

“Mother! Travellers!” Caro shouted as Finn and Nefi glanced around. They were in a modest but clean room with rush matting on the floor. Off to one side there appeared to be a kitchen, and to the rear some sort of garden area. It came as a surprise to Finn when he noticed stairs up to another floor. Caro’s mother came down and looked at her new guests warily.



“They came from the hills, Mother. The boy has hurt his foot and they don’t have any food.”

“What happened?” she asked.

“We were travelling with friends near Thebes,” said Finn quickly, going on to explain that their camp had been attacked and he and Nefi had escaped on horseback. He didn’t mention the kidnapping.

“So you are Egyptian then?” the woman asked. There seemed little point trying to offer a different story, and they both nodded.

“Caro,” she said to her son, “go and find your father out in the fields and tell him that I need to speak to him but do it quietly. Don’t tell anyone about our guests just yet.”

Finn could have hugged her, and she saw the relief in his and Nefi’s faces.



ECHO!

“Well, whoever you are you have suffered and you must rest here and let me feed you.”

She began busying herself with food preparations and the two travellers settled down on floor cushions. Finn realised that rescuing Arthur and Thami was almost impossible now, but they had made it to the oasis, they were in sight of the fortress and so all was not lost. When Caro’s mother placed a bowl of something rather similar to porridge in front of him, he began to feel that things were looking up.

They were half way through their meal when Caro returned with his father, who seemed remarkably relaxed about having two strangers as guests in his house. He listened carefully as Caro and his wife explained what they knew of the travellers and said nothing for a while when they had finished.

“There is a rumour,” he said at length, “that two Egyptian prisoners were taken in the desert last night and brought to the fortress.”



ECHO!

Perform an extract from the chapter.



It's time to perform!

Practise reading your favourite part of the chapter.
Read it 3 times then perform to me or someone at home!

PLOT

Let's discuss what has happened so far.

Retell the chapter to someone.

What might happen next?

Themes



Characters