

WARM UP

1 Put a tick (✓) next to the type of information you think you will find in the text. Then read the passage and check.

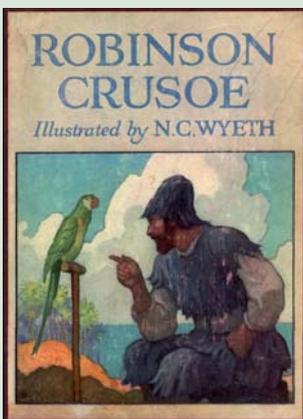
- 1 Information about the weather
- 2 Information about the time
- 3 Number of shocks
- 4 Crusoe's feelings
- 5 Add something else you think you will be able to find: \_\_\_\_\_

GLOSSARY

posts: *puntelli*  
fallen in: *crollato*

MORE ABOUT...

*Robinson Crusoe* is a novel by **Daniel Defoe** (1660-1731) which was first published in 1719. Defoe was born in London. He enjoyed travelling and his fiction reflects this interest; his character, Robinson Crusoe, changes his life by voyaging far from his native England. Based on the true story of a shipwrecked sailor named Alexander Selkirk, Defoe wants to show that the individual can modify his destiny through action.



## A famous earthquake in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*

*Robinson Crusoe* is an adventure book about a sailor who is shipwrecked and finds himself alone on a desert island, where he spends about 30 years. In the following text, Crusoe has just built a shelter but he risks losing everything because of an earthquake.

The very next day after this wall was finished I had almost had all my labour overthrown at once, and myself killed. The case was thus: as I was busy in the inside, behind my tent, just at the entrance into my cave, I was terribly frightened with a most dreadful, surprising thing indeed; for all of a sudden I found the earth come crumbling down from the roof of my cave, and from the edge of the hill over my head, and two of the posts I had set up in the cave cracked in a frightful manner. I was heartily scared: but thought nothing of what was really the cause, only thinking that the top of my cave was falling in, as some of it had done before; and for fear I should be buried in it, I ran forward to my ladder, and not thinking myself safe there neither, I got over my wall for fear of the pieces of the hill which I expected might roll down upon me.



I had no sooner stepped down upon the firm ground, that I plainly saw it was a terrible earthquake, for the ground I stood on shook three times at about eight minutes' distance, with three such shocks as would have overturned the strongest building that could be supposed to have stood on the earth; and a great piece of the top of a rock, which stood about half a mile from me, next the sea, fell down with such a terrible noise as I never heard in all my life. I perceived also that the very sea was put into a violent motion by it; and I believe the shocks were stronger under the water than on the island. I was so much amazed with the thing itself, (having never felt the like, nor discoursed with any one that had) that I was like one dead or stupefied; and the motion of the earth made my stomach sick, like one that was tossed at sea: but the noise of the falling of the rock awakened me, as it were; and rousing me from the stupefied condition I was in, filled me with horror; and I thought of nothing then but the hill falling upon my tent and all my household goods, and burying all at once; and this sunk my very soul within me a second time.

After the third shock was over, and I felt no more for some time, I began to take courage; yet I had not heart enough to go over my wall again, for fear of being buried alive, but sat still upon the ground greatly cast down and disconsolate, not knowing what to do. All this while I had not the least serious religious thought; nothing but the common *Lord have mercy upon me!* and when it was over, that went away too.

From *Robinson Crusoe* by D. Defoe

## READING COMPREHENSION

## 2 Read the passage again and choose the correct option.

- 1 When the earthquake happens, Crusoe is...
  - A working inside the cave.
  - B climbing a ladder.
  - C finishing a wall.
  
- 2 At the first shock...
  - A the posts crack and the earth begins to fall from the top of the hill.
  - B the roof cracks, so Crusoe begins to repair the posts.
  - C some earth falls from the roof and two of the posts he has put up crack noisily.
  
- 3 At first...
  - A Crusoe does not realize what it is, but he is terribly frightened.
  - B he understands it is a terrible earthquake and he is afraid of being buried alive.
  - C he waits until the noise is over.
  
- 4 His first reaction is...
  - A to start to repair the roof.
  - B to rush out.
  - C to sit still, not knowing what to do.
  
- 5 Crusoe describes the earthquake as...
  - A a terrible noise and three shocks under the sea water.
  - B three violent shocks, a huge rock falling down the hill, the sea churned up.
  - C a shock lasting eight minutes, then again three shocks and a building starting to tumble down.
  
- 6 The movement of the earth makes Crusoe feel...
  - A seasick.
  - B airsick.
  - C carsick.
  
- 7 After the earthquake Crusoe...
  - A pulls himself together and goes back to his tent.
  - B sits in shock unable to do anything.
  - C is aware he is hurt.

## VOCABULARY

## 3 Choose the correct meaning of the following words.

- |              |  |   |  |
|--------------|--|---|--|
| 1 overthrown | a <input type="checkbox"/> vanished        | b <input type="checkbox"/> concluded        | c <input type="checkbox"/> destroyed             |
| 2 crumbling  | a <input type="checkbox"/> falling         | b <input type="checkbox"/> folding          | c <input type="checkbox"/> burning               |
| 3 buried     | a <input type="checkbox"/> swallowed       | b <input type="checkbox"/> placed in a tomb | c <input type="checkbox"/> completely covered    |
| 4 stepped    | a <input type="checkbox"/> placed his foot | b <input type="checkbox"/> hit              | c <input type="checkbox"/> measured the distance |
| 5 overturned | a <input type="checkbox"/> modified        | b <input type="checkbox"/> moved            | c <input type="checkbox"/> destroyed             |
| 6 perceived  | a <input type="checkbox"/> heard           | b <input type="checkbox"/> saw              | c <input type="checkbox"/> understood            |
| 7 amazed     | a <input type="checkbox"/> surprised       | b <input type="checkbox"/> perplexed        | c <input type="checkbox"/> excited               |
| 8 tossed     | a <input type="checkbox"/> thrown          | b <input type="checkbox"/> slipped          | c <input type="checkbox"/> put                   |
| 9 cast down  | a <input type="checkbox"/> impressed       | b <input type="checkbox"/> depressed        | c <input type="checkbox"/> stupefied             |

## SPEAKING

- 4 **FCE** Have you ever felt an earthquake? If yes, say where and when it happened, what you were doing, what you felt, what you thought, what you did. Describe the reactions of the people around you. If no, imagine how you would feel and what you would do.