

## Year 5

# Danger on the Prairie 3

## Inference 2d

That morning, Ma went to the fields with some water for Pa and Jacob. Mary was playing on a quilt on the floor. At first, I didn't hear the odd sound.

My heart stopped for a moment when I heard that rattling noise. A rattlesnake was only three feet from Mary!

My mind raced as I tried to figure out what I should do. I couldn't let that snake get any closer to Mary. Everyone knew that a bite from a rattlesnake meant death.

I thought about leaving Mary to find Ma, but just then, the snake slithered a little closer to my sister. At the same time, Mary looked up and noticed the snake. She didn't know what it was, but her eyes grew round with fear. She started to get up off the quilt.

I knew then that there was no time to get help. I was going to have to handle this situation on my own. Both my life and that of my baby sister depended on it. First, I had to get Mary to stay still. Maybe she heard the fear in my voice as I whispered to her to sit down because she plopped back down onto the quilt. She didn't take her eyes off that snake, and neither did I.

In the silence of the room, the rattling sounded loud and frightening. Mary started to whimper, so I shushed her softly. "It's all right," I whispered, "just stay still and be really quiet."

I turned very slowly to look around the room for something I could use against the snake. My foot caught on a blanket, which gave me an idea. It was risky, but I had to try something. Slowly, carefully, I picked up the blanket in my shaking hands. I gathered it up to my chest, where my heart was racing a mile a minute.

I looked at the snake, which was starting to inch closer to Mary. As quietly as I could, I took two giant steps forward and threw the blanket towards the snake. As the blanket flew through the air, I yelled, "Run, Mary! Run to the door!"

I burst through the door with Mary in my arms just as Pa, Ma and Jacob came back from the fields. Pa's eyes were filled with worry. I was breathing so heavily I could hardly speak. I mumbled, "Snake...rattles...Mary... blanket..."

Pa understood. He and Jacob rushed into the house and removed the snake. Ma hugged Mary and me. I knew then that I would never again take my baby sister for granted.

That first summer on the prairie, we learned so many new things. We learned how to farm the dry, hot, dusty land and how to prepare sod bricks and build a house. We learned how to preserve vegetables for the winter and keep a dirt floor clean. However, the lessons I learned from the deadly rattlesnake will always stand out in my mind. I learned that I could stand on my own two feet, that I could rely on myself, and that snakes like to live in grass houses.

# Questions

1 How did Mary feel when she first saw the rattlesnake?

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Give **one** piece of evidence to show how you know this.

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2 Read from *'I thought about leaving Mary to find Ma...'* to *"It's all right," I whispered, "just stay still and be really quiet."*

Tick **two** statements that are true about Emma.

Tick **two**.

She was scared.

She had been face-to-face with a rattlesnake before.

She knew everything would be ok.

She knew exactly what to do.

She was trying to be brave.

3 Read paragraphs 5, 6 and 7.

How can you tell that Emma is frightened?

Give **three** ways.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4

Read from *'I burst through the door with Mary in my arms just as Pa, Ma and Jacob came back from the fields.'*

Draw **three** lines to match each character to the most suitable description.

Pa

brave

Emma

worried

Jacob

panic-stricken

5

What **impression** do you get of how Pa felt when they returned to the house and found out Emma had rescued Mary from a deadly rattlesnake?

Give **two** impressions, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Answers

1 How did Mary feel when she first saw the rattlesnake?

Frightened/scared/terrified/worried/fearful/panicked (or similar).

Give **one** piece of evidence to show how you know this.

My heart stopped for a moment (when I heard that rattling noise).

2 Read from 'I thought about leaving Mary to find Ma..' to "It's all right," I whispered, "just stay still and be really quiet."

Tick **two** statements that are true about Emma.

Tick **two**.



She was scared.



She had been face-to-face with a rattlesnake before.



She knew everything would be ok.



She knew exactly what to do.



She was trying to be brave.

3 Read paragraphs 5, 6 and 7.

How can you tell that Emma is frightened?

Give **three** ways.

Accept any three of the following (also accept paraphrases of the below):

Maybe she heard the fear in my voice.

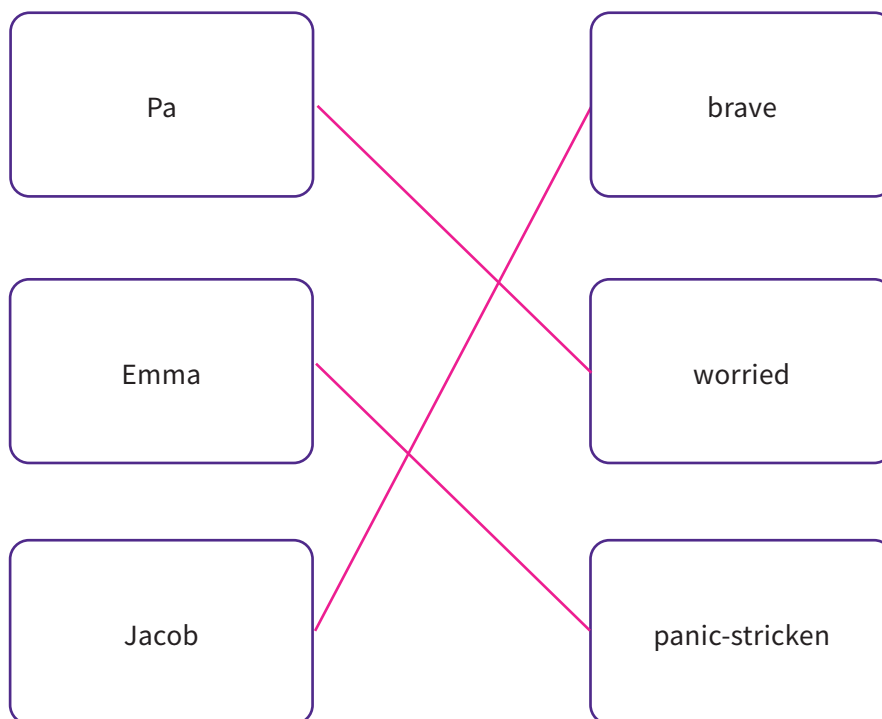
(In the silence of the room) the rattling sounded loud and frightening.

I picked up the blanket in my shaking hands.

(I gathered it up to my chest) where my heart was racing a mile a minute.

- 4 Read from 'I burst through the door with Mary in my arms just as Pa, Ma and Jacob came back from the fields.'

Draw **three** lines to match each character to the most suitable description.



- 5 What **impression** do you get of how Pa felt when they returned to the house and found out Emma had rescued Mary from a deadly rattlesnake?

Give **two** impressions, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

Worried/concerned/anxious – Pa’s eyes were filled with worry.

Brave/fearless/courageous - Pa understood. He and Jacob rushed into the house and removed the snake.