Name: _____ Date: _____

Nausicaa Helps a Stranger

Reading level 7 (3rd grade) · 324 words

Nausicaa was the daughter of a king. Her family lived in a palace by the sea. One night, a goddess named Athena gave her an idea.

"The clothes are dirty," thought Nausicaa. "Tomorrow I will wash them at the river." In the morning she asked her father for a wagon.

Her friends came along. They piled clothes and food in the wagon. Then they rode down to the river.

At the river, they washed the clothes in the water. They spread them on the stones to dry. Then they sat down to eat.

After lunch, the girls played a game with a ball. Nausicaa threw it high, and a friend missed it. The ball bounced into the bushes.

Someone was sleeping there! An exhausted man sat up in the leaves. A storm had sunk his ship.

The girls shrieked and ran away. But Nausicaa stood still. "This man needs our help," she said.

The stranger spoke gently. "I have been lost at sea," he said. Nausicaa told him the name of her island.

She gave him a cloak and some food. He washed in the river, and he ate hungrily. "You are wonderfully kind," he said.

"Come with us to the palace," she said. "My mother and father will help you." The stranger came along.

At the palace, they met the king and queen. They welcomed him warmly. "No guest is ever turned away," said the king.

They gave him a bath and new clothes. The king planned a feast. He promised a ship to take him home.

At the feast, a singer sang about a long war. The stranger hid his face in his cloak. He was thinking of his home.

"We have not asked your name," said the king. "Will you tell us now?" The stranger put down his cloak.

"I am a traveller from Ithaca," he said. "My name is Odysseus." A ship was made ready, and he sailed for home.

Questions

1. Why did Nausicaa go to the river?

A. To catch fish
B. To wash the clothes
C. To meet a king

2. What rolled into the bushes?

A. A ball
B. A wagon
C. A cloak

3. Who was sleeping in the bushes?

A. The queen
B. A friend
C. A tired stranger

4. Why did Nausicaa not run like her friends?

A. She did not like them
B. She was tired
C. She saw that he needed help

5. In this story, what does "guest" mean?

A. A kind of ship
B. A visitor who is welcome
C. A song

6. What did Nausicaa's kindness lead to?

A. Odysseus got a ship home
B. A war
C. A new game

Words to know

stranger: someone new
palace: a king's home
shrieked: screamed
guest: a welcome visitor

Answer key: Nausicaa Helps a Stranger

1. B. To wash the clothes
2. A. A ball
3. C. A tired stranger
4. C. She saw that he needed help
5. B. A visitor who is welcome
6. A. Odysseus got a ship home