Name: _____ Date: _____

Thor in the Little Boat

Reading level 7 (3rd grade) · 321 words

Thor was the strongest of the Norse gods. He put on a plain coat. He did not want anybody to recognize him.

He walked a long way. At dark, he reached a giant's farm. The giant, Hymir, let the stranger stay.

At dawn, Hymir got ready to go fishing. "May I row with you?" asked Thor politely.

The giant looked at him carefully. "You are young and small," he said. "You will be cold and tired."

Thor kept his temper. "Row as far as you like," he said. "We will see who asks to turn back."

Thor took a great lump of meat for bait. Hymir pushed the little boat into the water. They both climbed in.

Thor rowed so hard that the boat seemed to fly. Hymir, in the front, could hardly keep up.

"Here is the place for flatfish," said Hymir. "No," said Thor. "We will go farther."

The land was a thin gray line. Hymir looked pale. "The Midgard Serpent lives here," he said.

Thor only smiled. He rowed a little farther. Then he said, "This is the perfect spot."

Thor tied an enormous hook to his line. The hook was as big as an anchor. He put the meat on it and dropped it in.

Down went the line to the sea floor. Nothing happened for a long while.

Far below, the enormous serpent smelled the meat. It swallowed the hook. Then it pulled away with terrible strength.

The line went tight. Thor pulled so hard that his feet pressed the boat.

Up, up came the serpent. Its enormous head rose beside the boat. Its eyes were like round shields.

Hymir turned as white as snow with terror. He snatched out his knife and cut the line. The serpent slid back into the sea.

Thor was not pleased. The boat was filling, though, so they rowed home. The Norse said the serpent still lies in the sea.

Questions

1. Who was Hymir?

A. A giant
B. A fisherman king
C. Thor's brother

2. What did Hymir say about Thor at the start?

A. He was too young and small
B. He was too loud
C. He was too old

3. What came up on Thor's line?

A. A big fish
B. The Midgard Serpent
C. An old boot

4. Why did Hymir cut the line?

A. He wanted more fish
B. He was afraid of the serpent
C. Thor told him to

5. The line went tight. What does tight mean here?

A. Pulled hard and straight
B. Very long
C. Soft and loose

Words to know

serpent: a huge snake
temper: angry feelings
bait: food on a hook
anchor: a heavy boat hook

Answer key: Thor in the Little Boat

1. A. A giant
2. A. He was too young and small
3. B. The Midgard Serpent
4. B. He was afraid of the serpent
5. A. Pulled hard and straight