

27. A Flood of Help by David White

A ¹The rain continued to fall, the people were soaked, but their determination did not falter. ²The houses needed saving, and so the houses would be saved.

B ³Rain had drenched the town for nine hours straight, and the river had been overflowing its banks for the last 15 minutes. ⁴One by one, the families had secured the inside of their homes and piled sandbags around the outside. ⁵By the thousands, the raindrops fell.

C ⁶"Mom, can we take a break?" Pam Mathis said, her arms limp at her sides.

D ⁷"Is the rain taking a break?" her mother replied wearily. ⁸"Our neighbors need our help. ⁹They'd do the same for us."

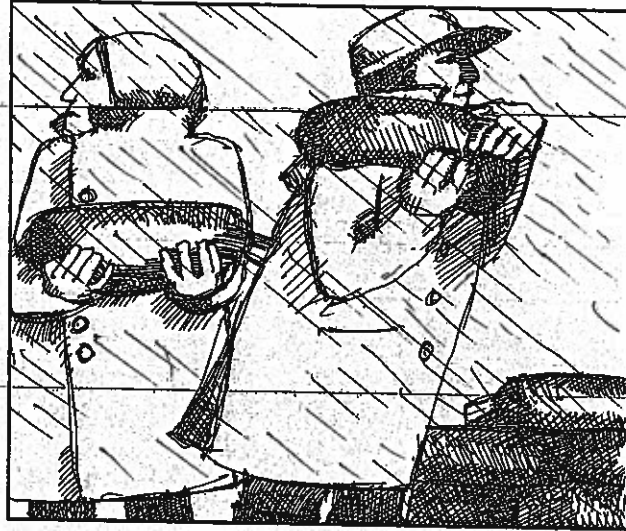
E ¹⁰"You're right," Pam said, sighing as she and her brother and sister resumed filling the sturdy bags with sand.

F ¹¹Many of the rest of the 80 residents of Carruth quickly but carefully tied the tops of the bags and heaved them onto the Jordans' and the Chows' trucks for transport across town to the danger zones.

G ¹²The only houses still in danger were the Miller house and the Mendes cottage, both farmhouses whose surrounding land was washing away. ¹³The Millers had lost their entire crop in the last flood, five years ago. ¹⁴They faced a similar fate now.

H ¹⁵The sandbags arrived and were stacked around the threatened houses as people offered up silent and spoken prayers for dry skies. ¹⁶It wasn't just the Millers and the Mendeses who would suffer if the houses and farms were lost. ¹⁷The community depended on those farms for their vegetables. ¹⁸The Mendeses also had two large apple orchards, in which squashed apples now slumped in the mud.

I ¹⁹For one thrilling moment, the



clouds parted, the sky lightened, and the rain stopped. ²⁰"Our prayers have been answered!" Sally Smith cried. ²¹Desperate eyes turned skyward. ²²Just as suddenly, the rain returned. ²³Grim looks replaced hopeful smiles, and the work continued.

J ²⁴Word of the rising floodwaters brought help: 60 people from nearby Lewiston arrived to lend their hands and strong backs to the daunting task at hand. ²⁵With renewed vigor, the Mathises, Millers, Mendeses, and all the rest of the people of Carruth shoveled, tied, and stacked. ²⁶Hoping against hope and bolstered by the arrival of fresh troops, they were determined to triumph.

K ²⁷An hour later, all was quiet. ²⁸The torrent had become a drizzle and then disappeared. ²⁹Dark clouds dotted the sky, but an easterly wind was blowing them away. ³⁰The houses were not flooded. ³¹The Millers thought some of their vegetable crop had a chance of recovering. ³²The Mendeses said their grain would probably survive. ³³The apple trees had taken a beating but were still standing. ³⁴The people of Lewiston took home with them the eternal gratitude of their neighbors.

L ³⁵As the sun brightened and the day lengthened, the people of Carruth slept.

DIRECTIONS: Choose or write the best answer to each of the following questions using the evidence presented in the passage. When required, list specific sentence numbers or paragraph letters from the story to support your answer.

- 1. Which of these statements best captures the main idea?
 - A. Rain threatens a town.
 - B. A river overflows its banks.
 - C. People from a neighboring town help out.
 - D. Neighbors work together to save two houses and farms.

- 2. How would the loss of the farms affect the rest of the community?

Give the number of the sentence that best supports your answer. ____

- 3. The mood of the people of Carruth is
 - A. hopeless.
 - B. thoughtful.
 - C. determined.
 - D. overwhelmed.

List the numbers of the 2 sentences that best support your answer. ____, ____

- 4. Why were the Miller house and the Mendes cottage threatened?

Give the number of the sentence that best supports your answer. ____

- 5. The author suggests that the people aren't sure they will save the houses. Give two phrases from paragraph I to support that idea.

- 6. What does *torrent* mean, as used in sentence 28?
 - A. windstorm
 - B. thunderstorm
 - C. heavy rain
 - D. heavy flooding

- 7. What is the condition of the houses other than those belonging to Mendes and Miller?
 - A. They have been washed away.
 - B. They have been abandoned.
 - C. They have been secured.
 - D. They have been demolished.

List the numbers of the 2 sentences that best support your answer. ____, ____

- 8. Based on information in the passage, you could say that in general, the people of Carruth are
 - A. helpful.
 - B. unfriendly.
 - C. secretive.
 - D. unprepared.

- 9. Explain how the people of Carruth are like the apple trees.

Give the number of the sentence that best supports your answer. ____