

Read the text.

A young native Alaskan girl, Bright Dawn, takes her father's place in a gruelling dogsled race that covers 1,600 kilometres. Running with ears laid back and nose in the air, Black Star, leader of her dog team, guides them through dangers on the race trail.

The Iditarod Great Sled Race

1 The country beyond looked wild and forsaken. Scattered trees were ragged and bent over by fierce winds. It was very cold. My feet stuck to the sled runners. They felt as if they belonged to somebody else.

 I drove the team faster than I ever had before. At times we were
5 running at fifteen miles an hour. The dogs opened their jaws and scooped up snow as they ran.

 The trail wound through steep hills and the temperature was now much below zero. My eyelashes gathered frost and began to feel like splinters. I had a hard time seeing and had to depend on Black Star.

10 I was travelling on a lagoon formed by the Innoko River, when the trail began to tremble. At once I realised that we were on ice, thin ice, no more than a couple of inches thick. Ahead of us it was billowing like waves on the sea.

 Black Star saw the billows too and stopped the dogs. If we went on,
15 the whole team, all of us, would go crashing down into the rushing river. We were trapped. Panic seized me. Black Star stood with his ears curled back tight against his head. He was trying to decide where to go, to the right or to the left. I was of no help. It was Black Star's decision.

 At last he turned toward a line of trees that marked the shore. He
20 went slowly and the team followed him.

 The ice grew thinner. It creaked beneath the weight of the sled. Through the ice I could see fish swimming and blue water racing over the rocks. Black Star's head was up and his ears alert, his bushy tail curved

high over his back. The rest of the team were dragging their tails. Suddenly Black Star pulled up. Then, slowly gathering speed, with the bank only a few yards away, he made a dash and scrambled safely to shore. The next five dogs followed him. Then the ice broke and the rest of the team fell through into the swirling water. The sled went with them and I went with the sled.

Dazed and blinded, I held tight to the sled handlebar. The dogs were
30 struggling against the current, their heads up and silent. There was a grey mist among the trees, but I had a glimpse of my leader. He and his five dogs were pulling on the towline. With all my strength I shouted, 'Go, Black Star, go!'

Adapted from *Black Star, Bright Dawn* by Scott O'Dell



Answer these questions.

1. Number these statements 1 – 3 so that they are in the right order.

Black Star and five dogs make it to the shore.	
Bright Dawn and some dogs crash through the ice.	
Bright Dawn and the dog team are travelling very fast.	

2. Find a phrase between lines 5 – 10 which shows that Bright Dawn treats Black Star as the leader.

3. A **simile** is a way of describing something by comparing it to something else. Similes use the words 'like' or 'as'.

a. Find and copy the simile between lines 10 – 15.

b. Based on the what you read, describe Black Star's appearance using two similes.



4. The **mood** is the atmosphere within the story.

The author has created a mood of tension and movement.

Copy two words/phrases/sentences from the story that create this mood.

a. _____

b. _____

5. How do you think the story will end? Write an ending to this story.

6. Authors use **imagery** to help you experience the story through your senses. How did the imagery below appeal to your senses?

	As I read...	I imagined ...
a	'...gruelling dogsled...'	I imagined _____ _____ _____
b	'The country beyond looked wild and forsaken. Scattered trees were ragged and bent over by fierce winds.'	I _____ _____ _____
c	'My feet stuck to the [sled] runners.'	I _____ _____ _____
d	'The dogs opened their jaws and scooped up snow as they ran.'	I _____ _____ _____
e	'My eyelashes gathered frost and began to feel like splinters.'	I _____ _____ _____
f.	'It creaked beneath the weight of the sled.'	I _____ _____ _____
g	'...the swirling water...'	I _____ _____ _____