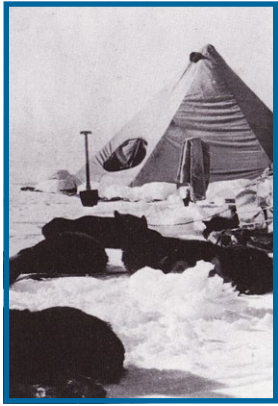




An Extract from George Taylor's Diary

Written during the Terra Nova Expedition to Antarctica, 1910 - 1912

Saturday 12th January 1912



Dear diary,

I write this entry by the dim light of a candle, as the bitterly cold Antarctic night is now upon us.

The most extraordinary thing happened to us today as we trekked across the Beardmore Glacier. It was a long and difficult journey and the skies were becoming dark. Starving and weary, our backpacks were almost empty. Without food, we knew that we would not make it back to our shelter in Victoria Land and we did not dare to think of what would happen to us.

Scott, our group leader, decided that our best chance of survival was to try and catch fish for our supper. We toiled and struggled to the Ross Ice Shelf and began to use our pickaxes to dig a hole through the ice, revealing the freezing, Antarctic water beneath.



Q1a: Which of these places have been mentioned in the text? Tick **three**.

☐

Marie Byrd Land

☐

Victoria Land

☐

Ross Ice Shelf

☐

Beardmore Glacier

☐

Ross Island

☐

Wilkes Land

Q1b: Complete the following sentences about this diary entry. **Circle** your answers.

1) The explorer was writing by the light of a

torch

candle

lamp

lantern

2) The group leader is called

Beardmore

Ross

Victoria

Scott

3) The journey across the Beardmore Glacier was

easy and enjoyable

cold and snowy

long and difficult

short and annoying

Q2: Why did the explorers 'not dare to think of what would happen' to them?



Q3: Find and copy two verbs which show that the journey across the Ross Ice Shelf was difficult.





Of course, we were not carrying a fishing rod and bait. Using what was left from our measly ration pack, we tied a lump of beef, coated in fat, onto one of our shoe laces and dangled it into the murky water below, crossing our frostbitten fingers and hoping that our luck would change.

Suddenly, after what seemed like hours, something began to tug on the lace. All I could think about was the delicious fish I was about to eat and my stomach roared with hunger. Scott pulled the lace back through the hole in the ice and, to our astonishment, the weirdest creature we had ever seen was on the other end.

Q4: Which two items did the explorers use as their fishing rod and bait?



- ---
- ---

Q5: Why did it 'seem like hours' before something tugged on the lace?



Q6: Match the adjectives to the noun they describe in the text.

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| murky ● | ● ration pack |
| delicious ● | ● fingers |
| measly ● | ● water |
| frostbitten ● | ● fish |

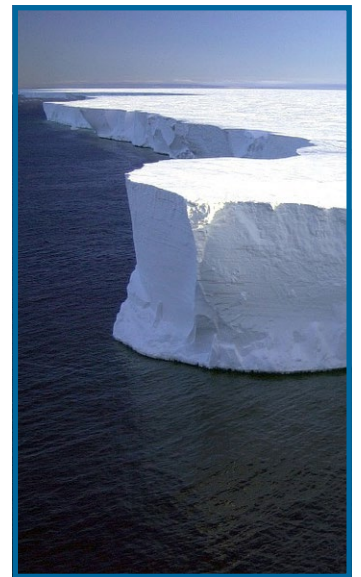


Q7: What creature do you think the explorers had discovered? Give **one** reason.



The creature's snake-like body was long and thin, with two spherical, black eyes, like marbles, bulging from its head. Its scales, which glistened like jewels, shimmered with a rainbow glow, but the creature's skin was translucent; we could see right through it. Lifting it to our snow goggles to take a closer look, we saw bright red blood rushing through its veins, all around its body and back into its heart. What had we discovered?

Feeling uneasy about our new discovery, Scott knew we didn't dare to eat our catch. The whole team nodded in agreement, suddenly not feeling too hungry anymore, as Scott threw the creature back into the icy water. It swam away and into the darkness. Without a word, the team began to head back to camp, our stomachs growling all the way.



Q8: How do you think the explorers were feeling as they headed back to camp? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.



Q9: Explain why you think that the explorers 'didn't dare' to eat their catch.
Use evidence from the text to support your answer.



Q10: Explain how George's feelings change throughout the story.



Q11: Summarise the main points of this text in 20 words or less.





An Extract from George Taylor's Diary **Answers**

Q1a: Which of these places have been mentioned in the text? Tick **three**.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ☐ Marie Byrd Land | ☒ Victoria Land | ☒ Ross Ice Shelf |
| ☒ Beardmore Glacier | ☐ Ross Island | ☐ Wilkes Land |

Q1b: Complete the following sentences about this diary entry. **Circle** your answers.

1) The explorer was writing by the light of a

torch

candle

lamp

lantern

2) The group leader is called

Beardmore

Ross

Victoria

Scott

3) The journey across the Beardmore Glacier was

easy and
enjoyable

cold and snowy

**long and
difficult**

short and
annoying

Q2: Why did the explorers 'not dare to think of what would happen' to them?

Accept any reasonable answer which suggests that the explorers knew that they would not survive without food / in such a harsh and inhospitable climate and it is not something that they wished to think about.

Q3: Find and copy two verbs which show that the journey across the Ross Ice Shelf was difficult.

Accept the verbs 'toiled' and 'struggled' only

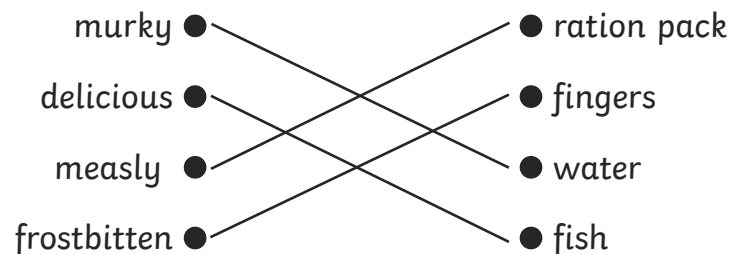
Q4: Which two items did the explorers use as their fishing rod and bait?

- **Accept the following answers only, in any order:**
- **a shoe lace**
- **a lump of beef (coated in fat)**

Q5: Why did it 'seem like hours' before something tugged on the lace?

Accept any reasonable answer which makes reference to the explorers' hunger whilst they waited for the fish, e.g. 'It could have seemed like hours because the explorers were so hungry that time dragged on whilst they waited for a fish to bite.'

Q6: Match the adjectives to the noun they describe in the text.



Q7: What creature do you think the explorers had discovered? Give **one** reason.

Accept any reasonable prediction about the nature of the creature, provided that one valid reason is given which is deduced from the text, e.g.

- I think that the creature is an eel because the text says that its body was snake-like, long and thin.
- The creature could be a fish because it says in the text that it is covered in scales.

It could be some sort of undiscovered sea lizard because its eyes were big and bulging from its head.

Q8: How do you think the explorers were feeling as they headed back to camp?
Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Accept any answer stating that the explorers felt hungry, disappointed, annoyed, sad or despondent, as long as it is accompanied by a reasonable justification from the text, such as:

- The explorers felt disappointed because the text says that Scott had thrown the fish back into the water and they were hoping to eat it.
- The explorers felt hungry because it says in the text that their stomachs were growling.
- The explorers could have felt despondent because they walked back to their camp 'without a word' to each other. This shows they were feeling down.

Q9: Explain why you think that the explorers 'didn't dare' to eat their catch.
Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Accept any answer which discusses the unusual appearance of the creature or the fact that it was previously undiscovered, such as:

- The explorers didn't dare to eat it because the text says that its body was 'snake-like' and humans do not eat snakes.
- They didn't dare to eat it because of its unusual appearance. It might not have been appetising because they could see the 'bright red blood rushing through its veins'.
- In the text, George says 'what had we discovered?' They would not want to eat something if they were not sure what it was.
- The explorers might have thought that it looked disgusting because its eyes were 'bulging from its head'.

Q10: Explain how George's feelings change throughout the story.

Accept answers which show George's feelings peak and trough, from negative, to somewhat positive and back to negative at the end, e.g.

- At first George feels low because the journey is difficult. When he thinks he will be getting food, his mood changes and becomes positive and hopeful, but when he realises that he will not be eating, George becomes downhearted and disappointed again.

Q11: Summarise the main points of this text in 20 words or less.

Accept any reasonable summary which mentions the key parts of the text within twenty words, e.g.

- The explorers were hungry. They fished for supper. They could not eat what they caught and trekked back to camp.
- Explorers in Antarctica found an undiscovered creature when fishing for supper but did not eat it and went hungry.