



# **Grade 8**

# **Self-study pack**

**10<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

**Please use this workbook to study at home during the school cancellations. You can print it and write the answers on the paper, or complete the work in your notebook.**



# ORDINARY SUPERHEROES

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## Man and mutt escape icy death

Not a soul was in sight when Eric Green took his Huskie dog, Copper, for a walk along the frozen Delaware and Raritan Canal in rural Hopewell, N.J., on Dec. 15. “I was at my girlfriend’s,” recalls Green, 27, a salesman, “and Copper had to go.” He unleashed the dog near some bushes, but, spying ducks nearby, she bolted—and plunged through the ice. Frantic to save his pal, Green raced after her—and, a moment later, was in the water too, fighting for his life.

“I couldn’t touch the bottom,” says Green, who, after 15 minutes, began to feel weak and numb. “I was like, ‘I can’t believe I’m going to die.’”

And so he might have, if Kevin Phillips hadn’t pulled off Route 29. “I saw a dog sticking out of the

canal—then somebody’s hand,” says Phillips, 36, a security company manager. He waded in, but the current proved too strong. So he drove to the other side of the canal, and went in again; this time he reached Green, “but his hands were frozen; he couldn’t keep hold.” Finally, Phillips took a tow rope he’d put in his pick-up just days before, hooked it to the truck, tied it around his own waist and, on his third try, pulled Green to shore. Then he jumped back in and carried Copper to safety. Says Phillips: “I would’ve done it for the dog alone.”

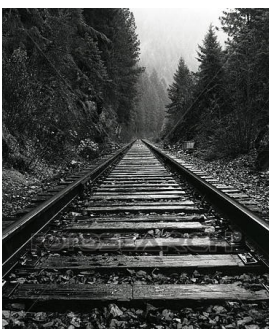
Man and dog recovered—and Phillips and Green, who live 100 miles

apart in eastern Pennsylvania, have become friends, visiting occasionally and exchanging e-mails several times a week. “I don’t know what I can do,” Green says, “to repay Kevin for what he has done.”



*The icy canal in Hopewell, N.J.*

## Train track terror



The wind was whipping fiercely when Nikki Maratea, her younger sister Alex, and Nikki’s 3-week-old son Derrian went to

catch an elevated train in Philadelphia near the home they shared with their mother. Thinking she had put the brake on the stroller, Nikki, 20, let it go to argue with the cashier, who insisted she pay the \$2 fare before moving to the platform. A moment later Alex, then 10, looked towards her nephew—but he and his stroller were gone. “I said, ‘Nikki,’” Alex recalls, “‘where’s the baby?’” They could hear Derrian’s cries, but saw no sign of him. “Then,” Alex

says, “I looked down.” What she saw was a nightmare: The stroller, blown by the wind, was lying on the tracks, about four feet below, with “a little arm moving out from under it,” Alex says. Several blocks away, a train was speeding towards the station.

Within seconds Alex jumped onto the tracks. Luckily missing the electrified rail that powers the trains, she scooped up Derrian and handed him to Nikki. Derrian suffered

scratches and a broken arm, which have since healed. Alex’s quick action Feb. 17 was “awesome,” says Nikki, who is now living with Derrian’s father, a cook. “But that’s how she is. If she can help, she tries.” Pennsylvania governor Ed Rendell sent Alex a letter of commendation, and the city gave her an award. “Everybody thinks I am so brave and a real hero,” says Alex, a fifth grader in Clifton Heights, Pa. “But I am just a normal girl.”

## Real-life “Daredevil” rescues friend from fire

Jim Sherman and Annie Smith had enjoyed the news and *The Simpsons* together on the evening of March 27 when Sherman decided it was time to go to bed. Bidding his neighbour good night, Sherman, blind since birth, used his cane and Smith’s fence to find his way back from her house to his RV next door in Conroe, Texas.

Once in bed, Sherman, 55, turned on the baby monitor that Smith’s daughter Debbie—a nurse who worked nights—had bought for both their homes so Sherman could keep an ear out for Smith, 85, who is legally blind and has Alzheimer’s disease. Shortly after 10 p.m., Sherman started to hear odd noises over the monitor and then Annie’s frantic voice: “Jim, the house is on fire!”

Sherman sprang into action. “I knew if I were to wait,” he recalls, “it might be too late.” He made his way to Smith’s front door, left open for her dogs. “I could smell smoke,” he says. “I asked ‘Where are you?’ She shouted, ‘I’m over here at the back.’” Following the sound of Annie’s voice,



*Blind hero saves the day, like the comic book hero “Daredevil”*

Sherman found her near the bathroom. Taking her hands, he led her out of the house. “You could hear roaring and crackling,” Sherman recalls. “It was like an oven.”

The fire, started by a faulty electrical connection, gutted the house and

killed Annie’s cat and three kittens. But mother and daughter realize that, if not for Sherman, the outcome could have been much worse. “There is no way I can express my gratitude—it’s too enormous,” Debbie says. Adds Annie: “He couldn’t see, but he went into that burning house and got me out.”

*Do you have a story for us?*

*Please send us your story of everyday heroism to:*



252 Cherry Lane,  
Kansas City,  
Kansas  
13561

## School bus shock and sadness

Julie Corson, 15, hopped on the school bus, took a seat up front and stared out of the window, while about 20 other kids chattered and listened to MP3s. But then, less than a mile from Newark Valley High School in Upstate New York, the morning of March 6, the bus started swerving. No one knew it then, but Ed Card, the 69-year-old driver, had suffered a heart attack. “He was going off the road—we were hitting mailboxes,” Corson says. Worse still, the bus was

careering straight for the side of a mattress store. Now cries of fear filled the bus—and the cool-headed Corson went to work. “I got on my hands and knees and moved Mr. Card’s foot off the gas,” she recalls. “Then I pushed my hands on the brake.”

The bus skidded to a stop just a few feet short of the building. None of the kids were hurt, but many were still screaming—and Card lay slouched over in his seat, slipping into unconsciousness.

Corson, a freshman, grabbed the bus radio and called for help while Samantha Lindquist, 16, and Jackie Celiberti, 16, soothed the stricken man. “I just held him and said, ‘It’s gonna be okay, Mr. Card,’” Celiberti says. Sadly, it wasn’t: He died en route to the hospital. The kids miss their grandfatherly driver, who often handed out candy to his passengers. “Even if he was having a bad day, he’d open the door with a smile and say something funny,” Corson re-



*An American school bus*

members. But as passenger Austin Brocius, 15, points out, “It easily could have been a lot worse. I think it’s really, really good what they did.”

## **“Man and mutt escape icy death”**

**First, skim read the text. Then answer the questions in your notebook.**

1. Why did Copper run onto the frozen canal?
  - a. She had to go
  - b. She saw some animals
  - c. She felt scared
  - d. She was too cold
2. Explain in your own words the steps Kevin Phillips took to rescue Eric Green and Copper.
3. Why do you think Eric Green and Kevin Phillips stayed in touch?
4. Which phrase from the text tells us that Eric Green and his dog were the only ones in the area?
5. What kind of vehicle was Kevin Phillips driving?
6. How did Eric Green feel after 15 minutes in the cold water?
7. In what two ways do Eric Green and Kevin Phillips keep in touch?
8. Which two verbs describe Copper’s movements as he ran away from Eric Green?
9. What is Kevin Phillips’s job?
10. Why did Kevin Phillips go to the other side of the canal after his first rescue attempt?

## **“Train track terror”**

**First, skim read the text. Then answer the questions in your notebook.**

1. Why did Nikki leave the stroller?
  - a. She was already on the train
  - b. She was with her nephew
  - c. She was receiving an award
  - d. She was having a dispute
2. Explain in your own words why Alex was lucky when she jumped onto the tracks.
3. According to the text, in what way(s) was Derrian injured?
4. Who is Ed Rendell?
5. What did Nikki say about Alex’s quick action?
6. Does Alex think she is brave? Give evidence from the text to support your answer.
7. Who did Nikki and Alex live with at the time of the accident?
8. Who does Nikki live with now?
9. How are Alex and Derrian (the baby) related?
10. How did Alex know that Derrian was still alive after the stroller fell onto the tracks?

## **“Real-life daredevil rescues friend from fire”**

**First, skim read the text. Then answer the questions in your notebook.**

1. Explain in your own words how Sherman got to his house
2. Compare and contrast how Annie and her daughter felt about Sherman’s rescue.
3. Explain the meaning of the phrase ‘keep an ear out for’ as used in the text.
4. Identify the phrase in the text that shows Sherman reacted very quickly when he knew there was a fire.
5. What two medical problems did Annie Smith suffer from?
6. Explain the relevance of the cartoon picture used in this article.
7. Find and quote a simile used in the account of the story. What is it referring to?

## **“School bus shock and sadness”**

**First, skim read the text. Then answer the questions in your notebook.**

1. The linguistic device used in the title of this text is...
  - a. A simile
  - b. A metaphor
  - c. Alliteration
  - d. Personification
2. What is it that Carlson was doing on the bus before the emergency, which was different from the other kids?
3. Carlson is described as cool headed. Either explain what this means or give a synonym for it.
4. Identify a word in the text that shows Carlson is in his first year at the school.
5. Find evidence in the text that the driver was well loved by the children.
6. Explain in your own words the role Samantha Lindquist played in the story.
7. Identify three words in the article that describe the movement of the bus.
8. What phrase in the text tells us how the children in the bus were feeling?
9. Write a three sentence summary of this article.