Ashley felt uneasy when they came to the fork in the track. The map hadn’t shown it. “We’ll follow the left fork,” Duncan had said, showing the confidence of a brother eighteen months older. ‘He’s a know-all,’ Ashley had thought. Yet it was his lack of organisation that had left them without a compass.

The distance on the map had seemed shorter - about four kilometres as the crow flies - but the track twisted like a snake as it made its way from the coast to the lake.

Ever since the family started holidaying at Starfish Cove, Ashley had wanted to hike to Lake Hordern. Her parents had finally agreed on the condition that Duncan went too. “Listen to Duncan,” they had instructed.

Now they were lost on the ridge, surrounded by dense forest. To make the situation worse a thick mist had come down. Duncan muttered something about going back the way they had come - if only he had made that suggestion earlier. It was then she heard the babbling sound. She headed for the stream, Duncan following in silence.

Eventually they reached the stony shore just around the headland from the cove. “Thank goodness you two are safe. Well done Duncan!” said his parents.

Duncan said nothing.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Ashley feel uneasy?
2. “...about four kilometres, as the crow flies...” What does as the crow flies mean?
3. How did Ashley show that she did not have confidence in Duncan?
4. Why was Duncan in charge?
5. If Ashley had no confidence in Duncan, why do you think she went with him?
6. How could the mist coming down make the situation worse?
7. Why do you think Duncan followed Ashley in silence?
8. How did Duncan and Ashley get back?
9. Do you think their parents had become worried? Why do you think that?
10. How do you think Duncan felt at the end? Why do you think that?