

4 a Now read the rest of the extract. Tick (✓) true and cross (X) false. Underline the words in the text that helped you decide.

- 1 Gus felt uneasy about the light going.
- 2 Jack stayed outside to make the most of the remaining light.
- 3 Jack first realised something was wrong when he saw the figure.
- 4 The figure was completely silent.
- 5 Jack's instincts told him the figure wasn't alive.
- 6 The dogs howled at the figure.

'So that's that,' Gus said quietly.
 Four months without the sun. It doesn't seem real.
 In the doghouse, the dogs began to howl.
 'They feel it too,' said Gus.
 I forced a smile. 'Gus, I think they're just hungry.'
 His mouth twisted. 'Well, they'll have to wait a few hours.
 Are you coming in?'
 'In a bit.' I still had time before I was due to transmit the readings. I didn't want to lose any of that crimson glow.
 Listening to the diminishing crunch of Gus' boots, I watched it fade behind the cliffs, like embers growing cold. The moon wasn't up yet but there was still enough light to see by. No wind. The dogs had stopped howling.
 Out of nowhere, for no reason, I was afraid. Not merely apprehensive. This was deep, pounding, visceral dread. My skin prickled. My heart thudded in my throat. My senses were stretched taut. My body knew before I did that I was not alone.
 Thirty yards away on the rock, something moved.
 I tried to cry out. My tongue stuck to the roof of my mouth.
 It crouched at the edge of the rocks. It was streaming wet. It had just hauled itself from the sea. And yet the stillness was absolute. No sound of droplets pattering on snow. No creak of waterproofs as it rose. Slowly. Awkwardly.
 I knew at once that it wasn't some trapper from a nearby camp, or a polar mirage, or 'a trick of the light'. I knew what it was. I knew, with some ancient part of me, that it wasn't alive.
 Behind me the cabin door creaked open. Yellow light spilled on the snow.
 'Jack?' called Gus. 'It's nearly twelve thirty. The transmission ...'
 I tried to reply. I couldn't.
 The rocks were empty. It was gone.
 I stood breathing through my mouth. I stammered an answer to Gus; I said I was fine, told him I was coming in soon.

b Discuss the questions.

- What do you think might have happened if Gus hadn't opened the door?
- Why do you think Jack told Gus he was fine?
- What do you think Jack saw?

5 Read *Active Study*. Check the meanings of any words you don't know and find any examples in the extract above.

Verbs of speaking

Said should not be overused in writing dialogue. Here are some words to use instead.

1 Words that describe how something is said

gasped, giggled, laughed, muttered, screamed, shouted, sighed, snorted, stammered, whispered

2 Words that describe the function of what was said

added, agreed, answered, argued, begged, called, claimed, complained, declared, exclaimed, explained, insisted, pleaded, protested, replied, suggested, urged, went on

Don't use these verbs if the function is very obvious:

'I agree'. Not: '~~agree~~' she agreed.

Also note that it is not always necessary to use a speaking verb after direct speech, if it is clear who is speaking.

6 Complete the sentences with a suitable function verb. More than one answer may be possible.

- 1 'But I didn't do it!' she _____.
- 2 'Don't leave me!' he _____.
- 3 'You are so untidy!' he _____.
- 4 'Take the short cut' she _____.
- 5 'Oh, go on!' she _____.
- 6 'Well, it all started when ...' he _____.

7 Imagine the conversation when Jack goes back into the cabin after seeing the figure. What does he tell Gus about what he has seen? Write the dialogue, using some of the words from the active study.

Jack went into the cabin, shutting the door behind him. 'Are you alright?' asked Gus. ...

