Mutiny on the Bounty

Have you ever heard of the “Mutiny on the Bounty”? It’s not only the story of a book and a film. The mutiny really happened on the British Royal Navy ship HMS Bounty in 1788. She left England in 1787 with destination Tahiti in the South Pacific. The original reason of the voyage was to transport breadfruit trees from Tahiti to Jamaica.

There were forty-four men on board. William Bligh was the captain of the ship and Fletcher Christian his first officer.

The voyage was very difficult and Bligh was a very strict captain. But at least they arrived in Tahiti and Bligh and his crew made friends with the king, Otoo. The sailors stayed for five months making friends with the people from Tahiti and doing their job, collecting breadfruit trees. When the Bounty left Tahiti, the first officer Fletcher Christian and some men were not very happy about going on another long voyage with Bligh. So, one night they decided to organise the mutiny.

Captain Bligh and eighteen sailors were put into an open launch. They got some food and some water for their journey, while Christian and the rest of the crew sailed back to Tahiti.

Bligh and his men sailed seven thousand kilometres in their boat to Timor. There they were rescued by Dutch sailors and went back to England.

In 1791 another ship, the Pandorra under the command of Captain Edwards, sailed to Tahiti to find and arrest the mutineers. But they couldn’t find all of the mutineers. The ship started to sail back to England but unfortunately ran aground on a reef and sank. Some men of the crew and four prisoners died, the others were brought back to England were they were hanged for their mutiny. Only one sailor, Peter Heywood, was pardoned. He had been too young at the time the mutiny took place.

In 1814, when the Pitcairn Islands were discovered, a last mutineer, John Adams was found. He had left Tahiti together with nine women and some children. He never returned to England and was granted amnesty. The capital of the Pitcairn Islands has still his name Adamstown.

adapted from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutiny_on_the_Bounty and
Oxford Book Worms Library, Stage 1

Text based Tasks

1. Which of the statements are true or false according to the text? Mark the right answers.

	statement	**True**	**False**
a	Captain William Bligh wanted to take breadfruit trees to Jamaica.		
b	The journey started in 1788.		
c	Bligh was a very friendly and brave captain.		
d	When Bligh and his men got to Tahiti they met the king.		
e	Bligh and his men were left in Tahiti.		
f	Fletcher Christian and some men went back to Tahiti.		
g	Captain Edwards should catch the mutineers three years later.		

2. Questions on the text.

Answer the questions below in one to five words/numbers.

a) What was Fletcher Christian's job on the Bounty before the mutiny?

_____

b) Why did Christian and some men mutiny?

_____

c) What did the mutineers do with Bligh and his men?

_____

d) Who rescued Bligh's launch?

_____

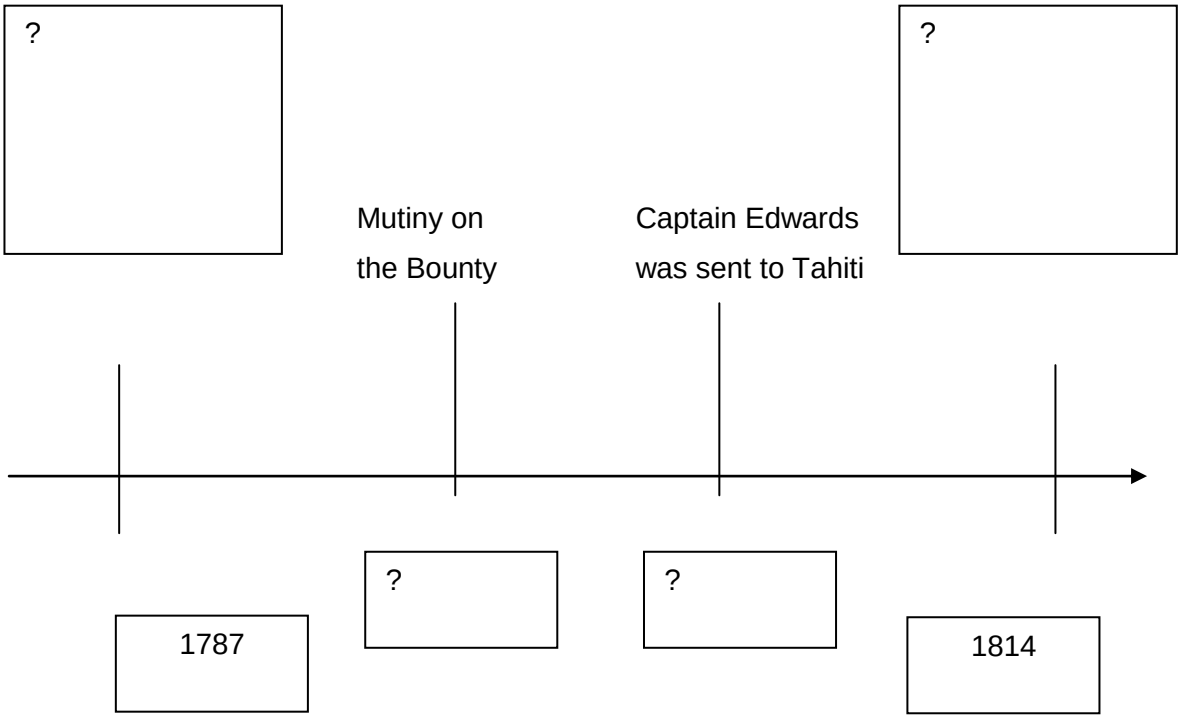
e) What happened to some mutineers a few years later? (2 facts)

_____

_____

Time Line

3. Complete the time line in key words/numbers according to the text.



4. Find a suitable German translation for the following phrases from the text.

a) were put into an open launch (line 13)

b) made friends with the king (line 8)

c) he was pardoned (line 21)

d) to find and arrest the mutineers (line 18)