From *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë

The din was on the causeway: a horse was coming; the windings of the lane yet hid it, but it approached. I was just leaving the stile; yet, as the path was narrow, I sat still to let it go by. In those days I was young, and all sorts of fancies bright and dark tenanted my mind: the memories of nursery stories were there amongst other rubbish; and when they recurred, maturing youth added to them a vigour and vividness beyond what childhood could give. As this horse approached, and as I watched for it to appear through the dusk, I remembered certain of Bessie's tales, whereas figured a North-of-England spirit called a "Gytrash"; which, in the form of a horse, mule, or large dog, haunted solitary ways, and sometimes came upon belated travellers, as this horse was now coming upon me.

It was very near, but not yet in sight; when, in addition to the tramp, tramp, I heard a rush under the hedge, and close down by the hazel stems glided a great dog, whose black and white colour made him a distinct object against the trees. It was exactly one mask of Bessie's Gytrash – a lion-like creature with long hair and a huge head: it passed me, however, quietly enough; not staying to look up, with strange pretercanine eyes, in my face, as I half expected it would. The horse followed – a tall steed, and on its back a rider. The man, the human being, broke the spell at once. Nothing ever rode the Gytrash: it was always alone; and goblins, to my notions, though they might tenant the dumb carcasses of beasts, could scarce cover shelter in the common-place human form. No Gytrash was this – only a traveller taking a short cut to Millcote.

Read the text, then answer the questions.

1. *"In those days I was young, and all sorts of fancies bright and dark tenanted my mind: the memories of nursery stories were there amongst other rubbish"*. What image of Jane's mind does the author give you in this description? What words does she use to help in this?

2. What do the words *"vigour and vividness"* tell you about the effect Jane's childhood imaginings have on her now?

3. Why does the approach of the horse remind Jane of Bessie's Gytrash tales? Tick all that apply.

   Because she owned a horse called Gytrash. ☐

   Because the Gytrash appeared to people travelling alone. ☐

   Because the spirit often appeared as a horse. ☐

   Because she remembered the tale, which was often about a mule or dog. ☐

4. Explain the meaning of *"exactly one mask of Bessie's Gytrash"*. Why do you think the author chose this phrase?

5. How did Jane feel when she saw the horse rider, and why?

6. What sort of supernatural creature do you think a Gytrash is? Find words and phrases in the text to support your answer.

7. What does this text tell you about Jane?