

THE MYSTERIOUS ISLE

Read the text and choose the word that best fits the gap.

In the early morning of 23 January, 2009, the most powerful storm for a decade hit western France. With wind speeds in (1)_____ of 120 miles per hour, it flattened forests, (2)_____ down power lines and caused massive destruction to buildings and roads. But it also left behind an extraordinary creation. Seven miles out to sea at the (3)_____ where the Atlantic Ocean meets the estuary of the River Gironde, a small island had (4)_____ out of the water. Locals soon gave it the name "The Mysterious Isle." What was so remarkable, (5)_____ its sudden apparition, was the fact that the island (6)_____ intact in what is often quite a hostile sea environment. It could well become a permanent (7)_____.

Scientists quickly realized the the island's appearance (8)_____ a unique opportunity to study the creation and development of a new ecosystem. Within months, it had been colonized by seabirds, insects and vegetation.

