

Time allowed: 1¼ hours

1. Read the following passage very carefully, then answer the questions below:

WAITING

Tom has arranged to meet Huckleberry Finn for an expedition into the graveyard late at night.

At half past nine that night, Tom and Sid were sent to bed as usual. They said their prayers, and Sid was soon asleep. Tom lay awake and waited in restless impatience. When it seemed to him that it must be nearly daylight, he heard the clock strike ten! This was despair. He would have tossed and fidgeted, as his nerves demanded, but he was afraid he might wake Sid. So he lay still and stared up into the dark. Everything was dismally still. By-and-by, out of the stillness little scarcely perceptible noises began to emphasize themselves. The ticking of the clock began to bring itself into notice. Old beams began to crack mysteriously. The stairs creaked faintly. Evidently spirits were abroad. A measured, muffled snore issued from Aunt Polly's chamber. And now the tiresome chirping of a cricket that no human ingenuity could locate began. Next the ghastly ticking of a death-watch beetle in the wall at the bed's head made Tom shudder - it meant that somebody's days were numbered. Then the howl of a far-off dog rose on the night air and was answered by a fainter howl from a remoter distance. Tom was in an agony. At last he was satisfied that time had ceased and eternity begun; he began to doze in spite of himself; the clock chimed eleven, but he did not hear it. And then there came, mingling with his half-formed dreams, a most melancholy caterwauling. The raising of a neighbouring window disturbed him. A cry of 'Scat! you devil!' and the crash of an empty bottle against the back of his aunt's wood-shed brought him wide awake, and a single minute later he was dressed and out of the window and creeping along the roof of the porch on all fours. He 'meow'd' with caution once or twice as he went; then jumped to the roof of the wood-shed, and thence to the ground. Huckleberry Finn was there, with his dead cat. The boys moved off and disappeared in the gloom. At the end of half an hour they were wading through the tall grass of the graveyard.

- (a) What were Tom's feelings when the clock struck ten, and why?
- (b) "Evidently spirits were abroad." What were the sounds that made Tom fear ghosts were moving about the house?
- (c) As Tom lay awake, he heard sounds of other living things. What were they?
- (d) What did Tom mean by "somebody's days were numbered"? What made him think that?
- (e) Explain in your own words what it was that disturbed the neighbours and what sounds finally woke Tom.
- (f) What noises did Tom make as he climbed over the porch? Why did he do this?
- (g) Explain as clearly as you can in your own words what each of the following means:-
- (i) little scarcely perceptible noises
 - (ii) that no human ingenuity could locate
 - (iii) from a remoter distance
- (h) Write about 10 lines of your own describing Tom's thoughts and feelings as he lay awake that night.

2. Read the poem very carefully before answering the questions below.

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far off sound of a silver bell?
Sand strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts ranged all round,
~~Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;~~
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sat with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sat on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of a far-off bell.
She sighed, she looked up through the clear green sea;
She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore today.
~~"Twill be Easter-time in the world - ah me!~~
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee."
I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the waves;
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves!"
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday?

- (a) Who is the speaker in this poem, and to whom is he speaking?
- (b) What were the "sweet bells" they heard?
- (c) Who do you think "she" is? Explain the reasons for the answer you give.
- (d) Where do you think she has gone and why did she go?
- (e) How did the speaker feel about her going away? Which lines seem to show his feelings most clearly?
- (f) From the first section of the poem, what picture do you get of the place where the speaker lived? Write about 6 lines, using your own words and giving as many details as you can.