

COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

- I. ‘What are you doing, Tom?’ she asked. ‘Nothing.’ ‘Nothing.’ ‘Look at your hand and your mouth. I told you not to eat the jam.’ ‘Oh! Aunt Polly, look behind you!’ The old lady looked and Tom ran away. Aunt Polly was surprised and then she laughed. ‘I never learn. Tom always plays tricks on me and I never learn. I love Tom. He’s my sister’s child – she’s dead. But it’s not easy to look after him. Tomorrow is Saturday and there’s no school. But Tom must work tomorrow. He hates work but he must do it.’

Tom lived in the small village of St. Petersburg with his Aunt Polly, his brother Sid and his sister Mary. The summer evenings were long, and in the evenings Tom liked walking around the village. One evening he saw a big boy in front of him. The boy was a stranger.

1. ‘What are you doing, Tom?’ she asked. Whom does ‘she’ refer to?
2. Why was Aunt Polly surprised and laughed?
3. State true or false.
Aunt Polly is always tricked by Tom.
4. How are Tom and Aunt Polly related?
5. How many family members does Tom have? Who are they?

- II. ‘I’m going swimming but you can’t come with me. You’re working,’ said Ben. ‘Do you call this work?’ asked Tom. ‘Of course it’s work. You’re painting a fence,’ said Ben. ‘Maybe it’s work but maybe it isn’t. I like it!’ said Tom, ‘I can swim every day, but I can’t paint a fence every day.’

Ben watched Tom. He painted slowly and carefully. He often stopped to and moved back from the fence. He looked at his work and smiled. Ben was suddenly interested in the fence and said, ‘Let me paint a little, Tom.’ Tom thought for a moment. ‘I’m sorry, Ben. Aunt Polly wants me to do it because I’m very good at painting. My brother Sid wanted to do it, but he’s not good at painting.’ ‘Oh please, Tom! Please can I paint? I’m good at painting too. Here, you can have some of my apple.’ ‘No, Ben I can’t’ – ‘Then take all of my apple!’

1. What is the work Tom was doing?
2. Was Tom really enjoying his work?
3. Who was suddenly interested in painting the fence?
4. What did Ben offer Tom to give him a chance to paint the fence?
5. What do you think of Tom from the above incident?
 - a. Tom is hard working.
 - b. Tom is plain natured.
 - c. Tom is cunning.

- III.** The next day was Sunday. Tom wore clean Sunday clothes – he hated them! Tom, Sid and Mary always went to Sunday school on Sunday morning. But Tom was not a good student and never listened to the teacher.

After Sunday school Tom and his family went to the church. This Sunday he had a big black beetle in his pocket. When the Reverend started speaking, Tom took the black beetle out of his pocket. He put it on the floor. There was a little dog in the church. It saw the beetle and wanted to play with it. Suddenly the beetle bit the dog's nose. The little dog barked and everyone looked at it. It jumped and ran after the black beetle. It ran all about the church barking and making a lot of noise.

The people in the church laughed silently. Their faces were red. The Reverend continued talking but no one listened to him.

1. Where did Tom and his family go after Sunday school?
2. What did Tom have in his pocket?
3. Why did Tom bring the black beetle to church?
4. Why was the little dog barking?
5. Why were the people's faces red?

- IV.** 'Really?' asked Tom. 'Well, old Mrs. Hopkins told me. She's a witch and she knows about these things,' said Huck.

'Can I come with you?' asked Tom. 'Of course! Or are you afraid of ghosts?' asked Huck. 'Afraid of ghosts! Of course not!' said Tom. 'Come and call me at my window at eleven o'clock tonight.'

Tom was late for school. The teacher was angry and said, 'Thomas Sawyer! Why are you late again?' Suddenly Tom saw a new girl in the classroom. She had blue eyes and long blond hair. She was very beautiful. Tom looked at her. He was in love! There was a free chair next to her and Tom wanted to sit there. But how? Tom thought quickly and said, 'I stopped to talk to Huckleberry Finn.'

1. 'Can I come with you?' asked Tom. Where did Tom want to go with Huck?
2. Why was Tom late to school?
3. Write the masculine gender of the word 'witch'.
4. At what time did Tom and Huck plan to go to the graveyard?
5. What is the word which is used to describe the colour of the girl's hair in the passage and what does it mean?

- V.** 'Ghosts!' said Huck, 'I can see ghosts! They're coming over here. I'm really scared!' 'Can ghosts see us?' asked Tom. 'Ghosts can see everything,' answered Huck, 'Oh, why did I come here?' 'Don't be afraid. We must be very quiet,' said Tom.

The three ghosts moved quietly in the graveyard. They came close to Tom and Huck. 'Tom,' whispered Huck. They are not ghosts. They're humans. One of them is Muff

Potter.’ ‘You’re right. And there’s Injun Joe and Dr Robinson. But why are they here?’ said Tom. They’re grave robbers. They want to rob a grave. The doctor wants a dead body,’ said Huck. ‘But why?’ asked Tom. ‘He cuts bodies and studies them. My father told me about Dr Robinson,’ said Huck.

1. State true or false.
Tom and Huck are not afraid of ghosts.
2. Who are the three ghosts they saw? Name them.
3. What does Dr Robinson do with the dead bodies?
4. Who told Huck about Dr Robinson?
5. Pick the word the passage which means ‘to speak in a quiet voice, especially without vibration of the vocal cords’.

VI. First he robbed the dead doctor. Then he put the bloody knife into Muff’s right hand. A few minutes passed and Muff moved a little and opened his eyes. He pushed the doctor’s body away. He looked at the knife in his hand. ‘What – what happened, Joe?’ he asked slowly. Injun Joe said, ‘Something very bad, Muff. Why did you kill him?’ ‘I didn’t kill him!’ said Muff. He was very confused, ‘I drank too much whisky last night. I don’t remember anything! Tell me, Joe. What happened?’ ‘You fought with the doctor. He hit you on the head and you fell to the ground. Then you got up, took your knife and killed him,’ said Injun Joe. ‘I don’t understand, Joe. I never fought with a knife. I didn’t want to kill Dr Robinson. He was young and he had a future. Oh, this is terrible! It was the whisky,’ cried Muff, ‘Joe, don’t tell anyone, please.’

‘I won’t tell anyone, Muff. But now you must leave this graveyard quickly. Go!’ said Injun Joe.

1. Who killed the doctor?
2. Who robbed the dead doctor?
3. Do you think Muff regretted killing the doctor? Support your answer with a sentence or two from the passage?
4. Did Injun Joe keep up his promise he gave to Muff?
5. Why did Muff believe that he killed the doctor though he remembers that he did not fight with a knife?

VII. Jackson’s Island was a small island in the Mississippi river. It was about three miles south of St. Petersburg. No one lived on the island. ‘Huckleberry Finn can come with us too,’ said Tom, ‘Remember Joe, don’t tell your mother, father or anyone about our adventure. Go home and bring some food. We’ll meet here at midnight.’ Tom and Joe were excited. At midnight the three boys met on the river.

Tom brought meat to eat. Joe brought some bread and Huck brought a frying pan. They found a small raft and they went down the river to Jackson’s Island. When they arrived on the island they made a fire and cooked some meat.

‘This is fun!’ said Joe. ‘We’re free and we can do everything we want!’ said Tom. ‘What do pirates do?’ asked Huck. ‘They go on ships and take money. Then they go to an island and hide it in a safe place,’ said Tom. The three boys were happy and slept under the stars.

1. Where is Jackson’s Island?
2. Who went to Jackson’s Island?
3. Why did they go to Jackson’s Island?
4. What do the pirates do?
5. Raft is a ----- .
 - a. a thick rope
 - b. a small round shaped boat
 - c. a flat structure of wood used as a boat

VIII. ‘Well, there will be funeral for us on Sunday at the church,’ said Tom. Huck and Joe looked at him with big eyes. ‘And now I have a great idea. Listen-’ Tom told Huck and Joe his great idea. They liked it and laughed.

Sunday was the day of the funeral. There were no happy faces in St. Petersburg. Everyone in the village was in the small church. Aunt Polly, Sid, Mary and Joe Harper’s family were all dressed in black. The Reverend said many kind words about the three boys. The boy’s families cried and cried. Becky Thatcher cried. Everyone cried a lot.

There was great silence for a moment. Then Aunt Polly, Mary and Joe’s mother ran to the boys. They kissed Tom and Joe. Aunt Polly cried and then laughed. Poor Huck did not know what to do. No one kissed him. He stared moving away but Tom stopped him.

‘Aunt Polly, it’s not right. Someone must be happy to see Huck,’ said Tom. ‘Oh, you’re right, Tom!’ cried Aunt Polly and she kissed Huck.

1. Whose funeral is being conducted on Sunday?
2. Why were Aunt Polly, Sid, Mary and Joe Harper’s family dressed in black?
3. What was Tom’s plan?
4. Why did everyone in St. Petersburg cry in the church?
5. Why did no one kiss Huck when he returned?

IX. They went to the small jail and they saw Muff. He was happy to see them. ‘No one remembers old Muff any more. But you’re my friends and you remember me. Thank you, boys!’ said Muff smiling. Now Tom felt terrible. He was worried about the trial. He could not sleep at night. Everyone in the village went to Muff Potter’s trial. Muff looked old, tired and unhappy. Injun Joe was at the trial too. During the trial there were many questions and answers. All the answers were against old Muff. Then the lawyer said, ‘Call Thomas Sawyer!’ Everyone was surprised and looked at Tom.

1. Who went to see Muff in the jail?

2. Why was Muff in the jail?
 3. All the answers were against old Muff. That means...
 - a. Muff is cornered as a criminal.
 - b. Muff is innocent.
 - c. Muff really planned the crime.
 4. Was Muff happy to see Tom and Huck?
 5. Why did the lawyer call Tom?
- X.** When the boys heard his voice they were terrified, ‘That’s Injun Joe!’ whispered Huck. The boys’ faces became white. ‘What are we going to do with the --\$ in silver coins? That was a very good robbery!’ said the small, dirty man. Let’s take about --\$ with us now and hide the bag here. We can come back to get it soon,’ said Injun Joe. The small, dirty man moved a big stone in the fireplace and pulled out a bag. He took some money from the bag. Injun Joe started digging near the fireplace with his knife. Tom and Huck watched with excitement. There was a real treasure downstairs! Six hundred dollars was a wonderful treasure for two young boys! Suddenly Injun Joe stopped digging. ‘There’s something here! I think it’s a box,’ he said. He found an old box and opened it.
1. The boys’ faces became white.
 - a. They covered their faces with white powder.
 - b. They were afraid.
 - c. They were curious.
 2. Why did Injun Joe start digging near the fire place?
 3. Why were Tom and Huck excited though they were afraid of Injun Joe?
 4. What did Injun Joe find while he was digging?
 5. Write the noun form of the verb ‘terrified’.
- XI.** In the evening the other children returned to the boat. They laughed and talked, they were very tired. They did not see that Tom and Becky were not there. The boat took them back to St. Petersburg.

Huck saw the boat but he did not know about the picnic. The mothers of St. Petersburg did not like him. They never invited him to birthday picnics. But tonight Huck was not interested in the birthday picnics. He was interested in Injun Joe’s treasure. He hid behind a tree and watched an old house. ‘Injun Joe’s in that house,’ he thought, ‘I’ll stay here and wait. When he comes out I’ll follow him and I’ll find the treasure.’ It was late and very dark. Soon two men came out. It was Injun Joe and his friend. Huck followed them quietly. ‘They’re going to Widow Dougals’s House,’ thought Huck, ‘But why?’ Suddenly the two men stopped. Injun Joe said, ‘Many years ago Widow Dougals’s husband was very cruel to me. Now I want to hurt the widow. I want to cut her face, her nose and her ears. And you must help me.’

1. Why were Tom and Becky not with the other children?
2. Why did Huck not know about the picnic?
3. What was Huck interested in that night?
4. Why were the two men going to Widow Dougals's house?
5. State true or false.

Huck was waiting for Injun Joe behind the tree because he knew that Injun was going to hurt Widow Dougals.

- XII.** 'Mr. Welsh, help, help!' Mr. Welsh opened the door. 'Mr. Welsh, please help me! Two men want to kill Widow Dougals!' Mr. Welsh and his sons took their rifles. They ran to the widow's house. Suddenly there was a loud shot. Injun Joe and his friend escaped, and the widow was not hurt.

The next morning Huck returned to see Mr. Welsh. 'You're a courageous boy, Huck,' said Mr. Welsh, 'You saved the widow's life. The two men escaped but we'll find them. Sit down and have breakfast with us!' Huck was happy because he saved the widow's life. And now he had new friends, Mr. Welsh and his family. That morning all people of St. Petersburg knew that Tom and Becky were lost in McDougal's Cave and they were worried.

1. Why is Huck asking for Mr. Welsh's help?
2. Did Mr. Welsh catch Injun Joe and his friend? What happened to them?
3. What are the two reasons for which Huck was happy?
4. Why were the people of St. Petersburg worried?
 - a. because the Widow was attacked.
 - b. because they knew Injun Joe was involved in the attack.
 - c. because they came to know that Tom and Becky were lost.
5. Write the noun form of 'courageous'?

- XIII.** Tom and Becky were happy but very tired and hungry. Becky stayed in bed for many days because she was weak. Tom stayed in bed for a few days too. Sometime after the adventure in the cave, Tom went to visit Becky. Mr. Thatcher asked Tom, 'Do you want to go to the cave again?' 'Oh, I'm not afraid of the cave,' said Tom. 'Well, nobody is going to the cave again. There are big doors in front of the entrance now. And I have the keys,' said Mr. Thatcher. 'What!' Tom's face became white. 'Is something wrong, Tom?' asked Mr. Thatcher. 'Injun Joe is in the cave!' cried Tom. Many men from St. Petersburg went to the cave and opened the big doors. They found Injun Joe on the ground. He was dead.

1. Why were Tom and Becky in bed for a few days?
2. State true or false.

Tom doesn't want to go to the cave anymore.
3. What did Mr. Thatcher say with Tom about the cave?

4. Why did Tom's face turn white when he heard that the cave is closed?
5. What happened to Injun Joe in the cave?

XIV. They took a small boat and went down the Mississippi River to McDougal's Cave. 'Look, Huck, here's the other entrance,' said Tom. 'It's very small,' said Huck. Tom and Huck went into the cave. They were careful and used the long string to help them. Tom suddenly stopped and said, 'I saw Injun Joe here.' 'His ghost is probably here too,' said Huck, 'Let's go now!' 'His ghost isn't here. It's probably at the other entrance.' 'Well, alright. But let's hurry,' said Huck. Tom looked around slowly and then cried. 'Look here's the cross!' There was a black cross on the wall of the wall of the cave. 'You're right! It's the cross!' said Huck. Let's dig under the cross.' They dug and dug. Finally they found a small room. There was a small bed, some old candles and a few bottles. And there was the treasure box! They opened it and saw the gold and silver coins. 'We're rich Tom, we're rich!' cried Huck, 'This is wonderful!' 'I always knew it!' said Tom, 'Now let's take out treasure and leave.' They followed the long string and were soon out of the cave.

The two boys took their treasure to Aunt Polly's house.

1. Why did Tom and Huck return to the cave after such a bitter experience?
2. State true or false.
Tom and Huck believe in ghosts.
3. What did Tom and Huck use to help them in the cave?
4. Where did they find the treasure box?
5. Where did they take the treasure box to?

ESSAY QUESTIONS (25 lines each)

1. Write a character sketch of Tom Sawyer.
2. What is the part played by Injun Joe in the life of Tom Sawyer?
3. Describe in detail the major incidents in which Tom and Huck were involved?
4. What are the turning points in the story? Discuss the main events in the plot.
5. Give a character analysis of Huckleberry Finn.
6. Write at least five lines about the following characters.
 - a. Aunt Polly
 - b. Muff Potter
 - c. Becky Thatcher