

GOOD NIGHT, MR. TOM

LIVING LITERATURE SERIES

MICHELLE MAGORIAN

A PERMA-BOUND PRODUCTION

TEACHER'S GUIDE

GUIDE WRITTEN BY KATHY SAMMIS

SYNOPSIS

With World War II imminent, children from London are evacuated and sent to live in country households where they will presumably be much safer from the expected German bombing. In the village of Little Weirwold, a gruff, robust widower in his sixties, Tom Oakley, becomes the host of William Beech. Willie is thin and sickly-looking, and it soon becomes apparent that the boy has been badly abused by his single mother: he is covered with bruises and sores, he is malnourished, he is fearful of everything, he brings with him nothing but the set of thin clothing he is wearing, plus a belt sent by his mother for when he is bad. All Willie says to Mr. Oakley is "Yes, mister" and "No, mister," so the man says the boy should call him Tom; Willie's response is to say, "Good night, Mr. Tom."

Tom's reaction to the pathetic child is kindness and patience, tinged with some irritation that his forty-year way of life as a recluse is being disturbed. Tom accepts and deals with Willie's fear of most things, and the boy's bedwetting and vomiting. He introduces Willie to animals—especially Tom's delightful dog Sammy—village life, beds, baths, adequate food and clothing, the outdoors, and praise. Tom takes Willie to the neighboring town of Weirwold to shop for the many things Willie needs, including library books. Although Willie is nine years old, he cannot read or write; Tom promises to help Willie learn.

War with Germany is declared. Tom, to the astonishment of the villagers, volunteers to help with community war efforts. Willie meets another evacuee, Zach, the uninhibited, exuberant son of actors, housed at Dr. and Aunt Nance Little's. Willie and Zach become fast friends, and also friends of George Fletcher and the twins, Carrie and Ginnie, much to all of these children's mutual surprise.

School begins. Willie can't be in the older class with his friends and the sympathetic teacher, Mrs. Hartridge, because he can't read or write. Will is humiliated, but Mr. Tom pledges to help, and Will's new friends say they still want to spend out-of-school time with him. His friends, adults and kids alike, give Will his first-ever birthday party, and Will discovers he has a remarkable talent for drawing and dramatics. Mr. Tom agrees to lead the choir, returning to the music he had abandoned when his wife Rachel died. By Christmastime, Willie has earned his place in Mrs. Hartridge's class.

Having finally achieved social and academic success, Willie is suddenly summoned home to London by his mother, who writes that she is ill and needs him. Despondently, Willie and Tom part. Back in London, an astonished Mrs. Beech discovers a newly empowered son whom she resolves to beat back into subservience; her "illness" has resulted in a baby whom Willie is to help take care of. When Tom doesn't hear from Willie for several weeks, the country man goes to London to find the boy. A warden brings him to Mrs. Beech's seemingly deserted

home; Sammy goes berserk outside, so the policeman, warden, and Mr. Tom break in. They find an appalling scene: Willie tied to pipes in a tiny alcove, horribly battered and sitting in his own excrement, clutching his dead baby sister in his arms.

Willie is removed to a hospital. An unnervingly slippery psychiatrist says the boy will be placed in a home for disturbed children. In response, Mr. Tom kidnaps Will from the hospital and takes him home to Little Weirwold, where the loving kindness of the old man, the villagers, and Will's friends eventually restores the boy to his previously transformed condition of mental and physical health. Zach, Will, and Tom spend a wonderful two-week holiday by the sea. The authorities find Will and tell him his mother has committed suicide; Will declares his home is with Mr. Tom and he will not go to an orphanage or into foster care. The authorities agree that Mr. Tom can adopt Will as his own son.

Shortly afterward, Zach is notified that his father has been seriously wounded in an air raid in London. Zach insists on returning to the city for the weekend to visit his father, and is killed immediately in one of the worst nights to date of the blitz. Will retreats into a shocked shell. He's pulled out of it by a visit to the artist Geoffrey Sanderton, a returned soldier and amputee who lost his best friend in the war. Will sees Geoffrey displaying the dead friend's photograph and using the dead friend's pipe; from this, Will gains the strength to use Zach's things and incorporate Zach's memory into his own ongoing life. He cements a deepening friendship with Carrie, the only village girl to go on to high school, who had been especially close to Zach, and happily looks forward to his continuing life with his dad.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Michelle Magorian was born in Portsmouth, England, in 1947 and grew up in various foreign locations, including Singapore and Perth, Australia. She graduated from the Rose Branford College of Speech and Drama in 1969 with a diploma in speech and drama and earned a film studies certificate from London University in 1984. An actress, dancer, and teacher, Magorian has been a member of various British repertory and touring acting companies, and she trained for two years as a mime at Marcel Marceau's École Internationale de Mime in Paris. She married in 1987 and lives in London.

Writing is a part-time profession for Magorian. She began with plays for her theater group. *Good Night, Mr. Tom* was her first book. It grew out of a short story about the meeting of William Beech and Tom Oakley, inspired by a song in a musical. The initial story about Will and Tom was followed by more, until Magorian decided she had to write an entire book about the two characters. Magorian's second novel, *Back Home*, was published in 1984; it concerns the readjustments faced by a British child evacuated to Vermont for World War II and her mother

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when the girl returns home at war's end. Magorian also published a picture book for young children in 1990, *Who's Going to Take Care of Me?*

CRITICS' CORNER

Good Night, Mr. Tom was a great success, both with critics and at the bookstores. It won the 1982 International Reading Association Children's Book Award and the British Guardian Award for Children's Literature. It was also an ALA Notable Book and ALA Best Book for Young Adults. The *New York Times Book Review* (4/25/82) praised *Mr. Tom* as a "powerful first novel" and concluded, "Willie's sad but eventually triumphant story is told very effectively, with the stark matter-of-factness of a Grimms' fairy tale." The *Times Literary Supplement* (3/27/81) enthused, "This splendid first novel is unashamedly and gloriously sentimental and it cannot fail to be loved by readers of all ages." The *Horn Book* (6/82) praised "the honesty of the characterizations" and the carefully drawn, intimate portrait of village life. The *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books* (3/82) also admired Magorian's skillful use of dialogue and dialect to impart local color and establish character and added, "The ending is tense, dramatic, believable, and satisfying, a happy ending to a touching story of love....This is an old-fashioned story with timeless appeal." *School Library Journal* (4/82) concluded, "It is part irresistible traditional English juvenile adventure and part unrestrained and unabashed melodrama."

Commenting on both of Magorian's novels, Stephanie Nettel (in *Twentieth-Century Children's Writers*) writes, "Her novels reach out and embrace her young readers, enfolding them in a deep, welcoming armchair of a story....Long but luxuriantly flowing and easy to read, Magorian's novels are the sort of books to curl up with in an old-fashioned way....They have a cathartic emotional appeal that is hugely satisfying."

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To gain an understanding of the effects of physical and emotional abuse on a child, and the ways in which those effects can be counteracted
2. To discuss the nature of love and affection and the effects it can have on adults and children alike
3. To consider the dynamics of acceptance or rejection, especially within children's societies
4. To analyze the nature of family relationships, and what makes a true family
5. To examine the elements and benefits of friendship
6. To gain an understanding of the effects of war on civilian populations

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To trace the steps in Will's three healing experiences
2. To identify the elements that build Will's self-esteem
3. To analyze the effects Will has on Tom, and Tom on Will
4. To understand how Zach's friendship affects Will
5. To identify the various ways in which Mrs. Beech has abused Willie, and the effects of that abuse
6. To gain an understanding of village life in England during World War II, and the effects of the German bombing on London and the countryside
7. To note the ways in which everyday detail and dialect enhance the effect of the novel

MEANING STUDY

Below are words or phrases that have a particular meaning in the novel. Explain each as it relates to the book. Use the page numbers in parentheses to reread the term in context if you wish.

1. Billeting Officer (p. 1)
(A billet is lodging, especially for a soldier in private or nonmilitary buildings. In 1939, when World War II was about to begin, and during the war, children from London were sent to live with people in the country, away from the expected bombing of the city. The billeting officer appears at Tom Oakley's door with Little Weirwold's first shipment of evacuated London children and leaves Willie with Tom.)
2. the tales about evacuees (p. 12)
(Evacuees were the children sent out of London to live more safely in the country, as explained above. City children often were very different from the country people with whom they were placed, and Tom hears many tales about the children's wild ways, the difficulty of disciplining them, and their dislike of being in the country, which led to frequent cases of children running away, back to their city homes.)
3. mackintosh (p. 3)
(Mackintosh is the common British term for a raincoat, originally invented by Charles Macintosh [Ed. note: No k in his name] as cloth made waterproof by being sandwiched between India rubber. Tom notices that Willie's only coat, his mackintosh, is quite thin.)
4. fresh coke (p. 5)
(Coke is a form of coal, used in home heating stoves like Tom's. Tom and, later, Will, often add fresh coke to the burning wood and coke in the stove to keep the cottage warm.)
5. putting her blackouts up (p. 21)
(During World War II, the British people were required to cover their windows with blackout curtains from dusk to dawn so German bombers, which came at night, couldn't locate towns and cities by their lights.)
6. a thick jersey (p. 18)
(A jersey is a close-fitting, knitted sweater or shirt. Tom startles Mrs. Fletcher by coming out of his reclusiveness enough to ask her to knit a warm jersey for Willie, who has arrived with only a thin jersey and shorts to wear.)
7. balaclava (p. 28)
(A balaclava is a close-fitting knitted woolen hat that resembles a helmet, covering the head, neck, and tops of the shoulders. Tom realizes Willie also needs a balaclava, since the boy has no hat for the coming cold weather.)
8. gas masks (p. 43)
(As part of preparedness for expected German attacks during World War II, British civilians were to carry gas masks with them in case the Germans used poison gas, as they had in World War I.)
9. a wireless (p. 39)
(Wireless is the British term for radio. In this pre-television era, news of the war came, especially to villagers, via the wireless. In villages like Little Weirwold, not everyone had a radio, so people clustered around the cottages or shops that did house one, as with the Little Weirwold sunflower cottage.)

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10. called up (p. 116)
(After enlisting in the armed forces, young men waited to be summoned—called up—to active duty. Michael Fletcher impatiently waits for about two months for his calling-up; he will be killed in the war.)
 11. rucksack (p. 178), haversack (pp. 19, 203)
(A haversack is a single-shouldered bag worn over the shoulder, used to carry provisions or other goods. Tom carries one, for instance, when shopping in the village and when carrying clothes and food for Will when he goes to London searching for the boy. A rucksack is a type of knapsack, a bag for supplies carried on the back by hikers, bicyclists, etc. Willie returns to London with a rucksack full of his newly acquired possessions.)
 12. panniers (pp. 256, 269)
(Panniers are a pair of baskets carried on a frame over the rear wheel of a bicycle [or across the back of a horse or other carrying animal] to carry supplies. Tom, Zach, and Will carry their supplies in panniers on their bicycling trip.)
 13. gramophone (p. 278)
(Gramophone is a trademarked name for a phonograph, a record player. The artist Geoffrey Sanderton unwittingly terrifies all the children except Will on their expedition to Spooky Cott when he plays the Brahms violin concerto—which sounds like a wailing ghost—on his gramophone.)
 14. cheeky (pp. 187, 307)
(Cheeky means impudent or insolent. Mrs. Beech is horrified to discover that Willie has become talkative and forward, and smiles—character traits that make him cheeky, to her. Later, Will is glad that Zach brought out the cheeky parts of himself, which Will considers to be his outgoing qualities.)
 15. scarlatina (p. 158)
(Scarlatina is another term for scarlet fever, an acute communicable disease with a high fever, sore throat, and skin rash. Tom's wife and infant son died of scarlatina soon after the child's birth, the event that triggered Tom's reclusiveness.)
2. What new experiences and things does Willie encounter in his first few weeks with Mr. Tom?
(He encounters a live squirrel, for the first time, in the graveyard and is initially terrified, and touches and makes friends with a dog. He sees fields and other aspects of a typical country landscape, which amaze him. He sees his first cow, and watches it being milked. He eats his first piece of cake, has his own room, sleeps inside a bed, hears his very first word of praise, is given his first present (an apple from Mrs. Miller at the store), chooses something for himself for the first time, gets his first comic, wears pajamas, gets himself and his clothes dirty, takes a bath, and makes his first friends.)
 3. What incorrect or abnormal ideas has Will's mother taught him about life and human relationships?
(Perhaps worst, Mrs. Beech has told Willie that she is kinder than most mothers and only beats him softly; he has no idea that it's not natural to be beaten constantly, and he believes he is very sinful. She has told him that all dogs give fatal bites, that doctors are bad people, that red is a sinful color, that you must never ask anyone for help, that is it very wrong to get your clothes dirty, and that kissing and sex are sins that send you to hell and, therefore, that babies like Trudy come from Jesus.)
 4. What shocking changes does Will's mother find in her son when he returns to London? What is her reaction?
(First Mrs. Beech notices the physical change in Will: He is upright, well-dressed in warm clothing, and has filled out; his hair is thick and shiny. Then she realizes he acts quite differently too. He no longer seems cowed, and she is horrified to see him smile, something she couldn't remember ever happening before. He talks easily, he says people like him [a sinful commission of pride], he asks her questions and interrupts her, and, most stunning of all, he actually disagrees with some things she says. Mrs. Beech's reaction to Willie's emergence as a person in his own right is to tell herself that it will take a lot of hard work to silence her son back into blind obedience. When Willie tells her that one of his friends is Jewish, Mrs. Beech flips into a savage frenzy, beating Willie senseless.)

COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important, and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

Literal Level

1. What things does Tom notice that indicate Willie has been abused?
(The boy is unnaturally thin and sickly appearing, indicating malnourishment; he is covered with bruises and sores, and cringes when Tom picks up the poker for the stove, making it clear he thinks Tom is going to beat him with the implement; Willie has only the clothes he is wearing, and they are very thin—his mother has sent nothing else for him to wear; the boy is terrified of everything, including Sammy the dog and the cart horse Dobbs, and he is unfamiliar with such everyday aspects of life as taking a bath, and sleeping in bed, not under the bed; even though Willie is nine years old, he can't read or write, and he has no friends. And Willie's mother has included a belt "for when he's bad" with the scanty items in his carry bag from London.)

Interpretive Level

5. What influence does Zach have on William?
(At first, Zach's enthusiasm and exuberance overwhelm Willie, but Zach's cheerful insistence on being friends carries Will along and helps bring him out of his shell of timidity. Zach discards the "sissy" name of Willie in favor of Will, and admires Will's talent for drawing and acting. All of this builds Will's previously nonexistent self-esteem, and Zach's unquenchable high spirits infect Will with an energy and enthusiasm and playfulness the boy never before had.)
6. What effect does Will have on Mr. Tom?
(Before Will's arrival, Tom Oakley was a recluse. He had withdrawn from society in mourning after the deaths of his young wife and infant son forty years before, and the withdrawal had come to seem normal and soon solidified into a way of life. When Will first arrives, Tom is somewhat annoyed that his rigid daily routine is finally being disturbed. But Tom's growing affection for Will softens his demeanor and draws the widower into frequent contact with his fellow villagers. Tom participates in village affairs

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for the first time, volunteering for war-related duties and leading the choir. Forced to confront his memories of Rachel by entering the art shop and buying paints for Will, Tom finds that the heavy burden of sadness about her death has been lightened. Even his physical appearance changes: Mrs. Fletcher notices that the furrows and wrinkles of his face have softened; she and the other villagers, as well as Tom himself, recognize the outwardly gruff person as a kindly old man.)

7. Compare the Will who reacts when the authorities come to Mr. Tom's cottage to take him away with the Willie who arrived at Mr. Tom's cottage.
(When the authorities come, Will looks the people straight in the eye and states flatly that he is not willing to go to an orphanage, that his home is with Mr. Tom and he is staying there. He is very positive about what he wants, and disagrees firmly with the warden. He leaves the room angrily and whirls around to restate his firm position. This is a physically and psychologically sturdy young boy. He is utterly unlike the timid, nervous, silent Willie who arrived at Mr. Tom's, a boy completely beaten into subservience, who would never say what he wanted—who didn't even know he could have a choice about anything—and who would never contradict or disagree with anything anyone in authority said. That earlier Willie had no self-confidence and simply miserably accepted anything that happened to him.)

Critical Level

8. Why do you think the author included the prime minister's speech (p. 66) about what evil things Britons will be fighting against in the war that is just beginning?
(The evils that Prime Minister Chamberlain enumerates are brute force, bad faith, injustice, oppression, and persecution. As we read these dreadful-sounding but abstract concepts, we realize that they have all been carried out in reality against Willie, in the treatment doled out to the boy by his mother.)
9. Some critics found some of the scenes in the novel "drawn out or even unnecessary." Identify some of these scenes, and tell why you think they are too long or not necessary. Or identify some scenes that may seem unimportant, and explain why you think they are necessary.
(Answers will vary.)
10. Critics call this a "sentimental" novel. Do you agree? Why? Do you think it's all right for a novel to be "sentimental"? Why or why not?
(Answers will vary.)

Creative Level

(Answers will vary.)

11. Describe what would have happened if Willie had been taken to the home for disturbed children under the care of Mr. Stelton, the psychiatrist from the hospital.
12. Imagining you are Zach, write some diary entries describing life in Little Weirwold and your growing friendship with Will.
13. Write some of the letters from Mr. Tom to Will after the boy returns to his mother in London. Be sure the letters are full of details about the activities of the various people of Little Weirwold.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Science

1. Reread the description of Willie's physical reaction to fear in the paragraph at the bottom of page 10 and the top of page 11. If fear is an emotion, how does it cause these physical symptoms? Describe your own physical reactions at a time when you felt afraid. Were they like Willie's?
2. Create an illustrated guide to dogs of Sammy's breed. (Caution: Sammy is described as a collie, but once you read about collies, you may decide that Sammy doesn't quite fit into that breed.)
3. Prepare an oral report on how gas masks work. If possible, include an actual gas mask.
4. Experiment with making blackout curtains; not a sliver of light should show through the window. What materials and methods of securing the curtains work best?

Social Studies and Geography

1. Research the relationship between speech/accents/dialect and social class in Great Britain, past and present. After you've finished your research, view the video *My Fair Lady* for an entertaining commentary on that relationship.
2. Prepare an oral report on the British school system, explaining the ways in which it is different from the U.S. public school system.
3. Research and prepare reports (oral or written) on the following aspects of World War II and Great Britain:
 - a. the dramatic evacuation at Dunkirk;
 - b. the German bombing of Britain and the Battle of Britain;
 - c. the evacuation of children from London to the countryside;
 - d. civilian use of gas masks;
 - e. the effect of the war on women's independence.
4. On a poster-map of England, or just of London, show dates and places of heavy German bombing during the war. If possible, give casualty figures. (Also Art.)

Music

1. Arrange a carol sing, as the villagers of Little Weirwold did. Include holiday songs from a variety of cultures.
2. See if you can find the music to the "old rousing song" sung by Zach, Tom, and Will on page 255 of the novel.

Language Arts

1. Create a glossary of British words from the novel.
2. Identify the different dialects or types of British speech represented in the novel. Try to find recordings of different types of British speech so you can hear the individual sounds.
3. The author uses a variety of adverbs to make her writing more vivid. Make a collection of these adverbs and their definitions. Then note which ones the author uses to show Tom's gruff way of speaking and behaving.
4. Notice the way the author uses vibrant action verbs to demonstrate Will's transformation into a healthy, high-spirited boy. Underline these verbs in the following two paragraphs: "Willie ran back into the house..." (page 174) and "I don't care if..." (page 177). Then write an action-verb-packed paragraph of your own.

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Math

1. Draw a diagram of an Anderson air raid shelter. Include dimensions of the steel sheets, and the length and depth of the trench. Include a list of the materials and tools needed. (Also **Science**.)
2. Prepare a class display of British money (pictures or actual coins and bills). Show each denomination, display the current exchange rate, and calculate what a variety of common U.S. items like cassettes, tee-shirts, and hamburgers would cost in British money.

Art

1. Draw a diagram, or make a model, of either the village of Little Weirwold or the complex of Tom's cottage, the graveyard, and the church.
2. Illustrate an action scene from the novel, such as Sammy scabbling at the door to Mrs. Beech's home while Tom tries to persuade the warden and policeman to break in.
3. Imagine you are Willie, and draw a picture of Tom as he looks to Willie when they first meet (see page 2 of the novel) and how he appears to Will at the end of the novel.
4. Make a model of a thatched-roof cottage, complete with thatching.

Health

1. Report (orally or in writing) on how to treat severe malnutrition.
2. Find out about the common causes of maternal death in childbirth in the early years of the 20th century. Was death from scarlet fever, as in Rachel's case, common?

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. With classmates, role-play some scenes from the novel, such as: play rehearsal, the expedition to Spooky Cott, the friends' meeting up in Will's room, and choir practice.
2. Write some daily diary entries for Zach, Carrie, Will, Mrs. Hartridge, or George.
3. Will encounters many strange things in the country that he's never seen before. Do you live in a city? What country things have you never been face to face with?
4. With classmates, play out a courtroom scene where authorities make a judgment about Tom's taking Will away from the hospital (has he broken the law? should he be arrested?) and decide on Tom's petition to adopt Will.
5. Describe a friend of yours who is very different from you. How did you become friends? What good things do each of you get out of your friendship?
6. In an essay or in a small group, write or talk about an older person you are close to and express what that person adds to your life.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. In the novel's final line, Will declares, with surprise, "Dad, I'm growing!" Trace the steps by which Will grows all through the novel.
2. "Good night, Mr. Tom" becomes "Good night, Dad" by the end of the novel. Relate the novel's flow through the progress of Tom's and Will's relationship.
3. Make a list of the main characters in the novel. Next to each name, give the members of that person's family, physical characteristics, activities or profession, and the character's

role in the novel. Finally, explain the character's relationship to Will and his or her effect on the boy.

4. Describe in detail the major scenes, or settings of the novel—for example, Tom's cottage and the graveyard, the church, the village school, the Littles' cottage, Spooky Cott, Will's bedroom, Deptford, the hospital, and Weirwold. Then explain what major events of the plot take place in each of these settings.

RELATED READING

Back Home. Michelle Magorian.
A Christmas Carol. Charles Dickens.
Heidi. Johanna Spyri.
Just So Stories. Rudyard Kipling.
The Secret Garden. Frances Hodgson Burnett.
The Wind in the Willows. Kenneth Grahame.

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The Horn Book Magazine, 6/82, pp. 299-300.
New York Times Book Review, 4/25/82, p. 34.
School Library Journal, 4/82, p. 73.
Something About the Author. Vol. 67. Detroit: Gale, 1992.
Times Literary Supplement, 3/27/81, p. 337.
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VOCABULARY TEST

Match each underlined word with its meaning listed below. Write the letter of the meaning in the space next to the sentence number.

- _____ 1. "It's obligatory and it's for the war effort."
_____ 2. A few dark clouds scudded across the sky.
_____ 3. "You can put that ole bag down," Tom said gruffly.
_____ 4. Willie's fingers were mauve with the cold.
_____ 5. Willie's arms and legs were covered with bruises, weals, and sores.
_____ 6. Willie looked apprehensively at Sammy, who was sniffing his feet.
_____ 7. Tom was a little flattered at the rapt attention he was receiving.
_____ 8. Rain and hail bounced on the tiled roof with venom.
_____ 9. "Good night, William," said Tom, tousling Willie's hair.
_____ 10. "Mr. Tom's a bit of a recluse, I believe," said Zach.
_____ 11. "No, he ent delicate," said Tom sharply. "Leastways, not for long."
_____ 12. "Ain't it?" Willie queried.
_____ 13. Charlie stood back aghast at the light showing through the blackout curtain.
_____ 14. "Well, not exactly," said Zach uncomfortably, a little perturbed.
_____ 15. "I'd like to!" blurted out Willie.
_____ 16. Willie soon became so absorbed in his painting that he continued, oblivious of the clatter of slamming desks.
_____ 17. Mrs. Beech had expected Willie to be more subservient, but even his voice sounded louder.
_____ 18. "Come on. Move on there," said a loud brusque voice.
_____ 19. "They ent got one of his sort in the village, see, and anyway"—Willie faltered for a second.
_____ 20. Slumping, Tom began to walk dejectedly towards the lobby.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| a. forgetful | k. marks from being hit |
| b. asked | l. severely, with an edge |
| c. poison | m. short and harsh |
| d. required | n. very gloomily |
| e. disturbed | o. spoke without thinking |
| f. fearfully | p. moved swiftly |
| g. shocked | q. roughly |
| h. ruffling up | r. very submissive |
| i. purple | s. completely absorbed |
| j. hesitated | t. solitary person |

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COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Read each quotation. In the list below, find the character who spoke the words. Write the letter of the character in the space next to the quotation number. You will use some character names more than once.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| a. Tom | f. Mrs. Beech |
| b. Will | g. Mrs. Hartridge |
| c. Carrie | h. Emilia Thorne |
| d. Zach | i. Aunt Nance (Mrs. Little) |
| e. George | j. Lucy |

- _____ 1. "Yer not to feel bad about not bein' able to read and that. It ent all that good when you can. You jes' gits given more lessons."
- _____ 2. "I must be good. I must be good."
- _____ 3. "Ulloo." "Bye, Dreema."
- _____ 4. "I don't want to get married. Imagine having to do housework all the time, every day. Yuk!"
- _____ 5. "You've been poisoned by the devil!"
- _____ 6. "Takes yer time, everythin' 'as its own time."
- _____ 7. "Mulled wine? We've missed you coming round."
- _____ 8. "Oh, I'm sorry about that, William. I would have liked you in my class."
- _____ 9. "Wizard! Callooh! Callay!"
- _____ 10. "William, I'd like you to play the part of Scrooge."

Part II: Fill-In (30 points)

Write a word in each blank to make each statement true.

1. Tom's wife was named _____.
2. Carrie and Ginnie are _____ sisters.
3. The man who lives in Spooky Cott is a talented professional _____.
4. Cities and large towns in England are going through _____ attacks by the enemy in the war.
5. The village Tom lives in is called _____.
6. Will's name for his baby sister is _____.
7. Tom's last name is _____.
8. Everyone must put up _____ on their windows at the end of the day.
9. The real name of the seaside town that Zach calls "Salt-in-the-Mouth" is _____.
10. A village woman, Mrs. _____, knits clothes for Will.
11. Tom usually travels in a _____ when he goes to the nearby town for supplies.
12. The village kids call the children from London _____ because the city kids aren't used to country ways.
13. Tom's horse is named _____.
14. Zach is not a Christian; instead, he is _____.
15. _____ is the only village girl who goes to high school.

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COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (30 points)

Read each character description. In the list below, find the character who matches the description. Write the letter of the character in the space next to the description number. Use each name only once.

- | | | |
|-----------|----------------|-------------------|
| a. Tom | f. Dr. Little | k. Mrs. Hartridge |
| b. Will | g. Mrs. Little | l. Trudy |
| c. Zach | h. George | m. Sammy |
| d. Carrie | i. Mrs. Beech | n. Rachel |
| e. Ginnie | j. Lucy | o. Emilia Thorne |

- _____ 1. Thin and sickly looking, pale with limp sandy hair and dull gray eyes.
- _____ 2. A chubby six-year-old with brown curly hair, earth smudged over two enormous pink cheeks.
- _____ 3. Long carrot-colored hair fought into plaits while the remainder stuck out in frizzy, uncontrollable waves.
- _____ 4. A small black and white collie.
- _____ 5. Beautiful, with violet blue eyes and a single long flaxen plait.
- _____ 6. A plump, red-faced man who was attempting vainly to wipe the steam from his spectacles.
- _____ 7. A healthy, robust, stockily built man with a head of thick white hair.
- _____ 8. Thin and tinged with a grayish hue.
- _____ 9. A stocky boy of about eleven with thick, straight, brown hair.
- _____ 10. Wearing a navy jumper, a cream-coloured blouse and a navy tie with a wide green and narrow red stripe.
- _____ 11. A tall, thin, angular woman in her thirties, with spectacles and fine auburn hair swept back untidily into a bun.
- _____ 12. Very pale, almost yellow in color, with lips so blue that it seemed every ounce of blood had been drained from them.
- _____ 13. His body was wiry and tanned and he had a thick crop of black curly hair, which looked badly in need of cutting.
- _____ 14. A gentle-hearted wild young girl who died.
- _____ 15. A tall, thin, freckled woman with closely cropped iron-gray hair. A cigarette dangled in her mouth.

Part II: True/False (20 points)

In the space provided, write T if the statement is completely true, or write F if any part of the statement is false.

- _____ 1. Will causes Zach's death.
- _____ 2. Carrie goes to high school, very unusual for a country girl.
- _____ 3. Mrs. Fletcher knits clothes for Will.
- _____ 4. The schoolteacher in London helped Will learn to read and write.
- _____ 5. Mr. Tom's wife died in the London bombing.
- _____ 6. Will discovers he has a talent for drawing and acting.
- _____ 7. Many people think children evacuated from London are wild, undisciplined, and ready to run away at any time.
- _____ 8. The husband of Mrs. Hartridge, the teacher, is killed in the war.
- _____ 9. Sammy growls and threatens Willie at first, until the two get to know each other.
- _____ 10. Zach's parents have abused him, as Will's mother did him.

GOOD NIGHT, MR. TOM

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Test

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. d | 11. l |
| 2. p | 12. b |
| 3. q | 13. g |
| 4. i | 14. e |
| 5. k | 15. o |
| 6. f | 16. a |
| 7. s | 17. r |
| 8. c | 18. m |
| 9. h | 19. j |
| 10. t | 20. n |

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. e | 6. a |
| 2. b | 7. i |
| 3. j | 8. g |
| 4. c | 9. d |
| 5. f | 10. h |

Part II: Fill-In (30 points)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Rachel | 9. Salmouth |
| 2. twin | 10. Fletcher |
| 3. artist | 11. cart |
| 4. bombing | 12. townees |
| 5. Little Weirwold | 13. Dobbs |
| 6. Trudy | 14. Jewish |
| 7. Oakley | 15. Carrie |
| 8. blackouts (blackout curtains) | |

Part III: True/False (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. T |
| 2. F | 7. T |
| 3. T | 8. F |
| 4. T | 9. T |
| 5. F | 10. T |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Matching (30 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 9. h |
| 2. j | 10. d |
| 3. e | 11. o |
| 4. m | 12. i |
| 5. k | 13. c |
| 6. f | 14. n |
| 7. a | 15. g |
| 8. l | |

Part II: True/False (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. T |
| 2. T | 7. T |
| 3. T | 8. F |
| 4. F | 9. F |
| 5. F | 10. F |

Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

1. Zacharias Wrench
2. Beech
3. Deptford
4. actors
5. Aunt Nance
6. bicycles
7. Trudy, Mrs. Beech, Michael Fletcher, Zach
8. Spooky Cott
9. World War II
10. air raid shelter

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.



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