

The War With Grandpa

by Robert Kimmel Smith

Classroom Favorites

Teacher's Guide by John Chua

A Perma-Bound Production

SYNOPSIS

Peter Stokes is a fifth grader and *The War with Grandpa* is told from his perspective. The story begins with Peter assuring us that he wants to tell the whole truth and that he is typing the story as part of a class assignment. Jenny, Peter's sister, tells him that their grandfather is coming to stay with them and that he will be taking Peter's room. Peter's grandmother died in Florida and Grandpa Jack is lonely and depressed. Peter's mother invites Jack to live with them. Because Grandpa Jack was injured in a construction accident several years ago, he cannot climb the stairs to the guest room in the attic. Instead, Peter will have to move to the guest room.

Peter is immediately horrified by the news, since he regards his room as very much his possession. He reacts very negatively, throwing tantrums and sulking for many days. He promises to himself that when he grows up, he will never make his children do things they do not really want to do. His parents help him move to the guest room on the third floor. He hates it in the attic and is scared of sleeping in the spooky and dark room.

Steve and Billy, two of Peter's friends, tell him to put up a fight and retake his room. They tell him to fight a covert war and intimidate his grandfather. That day, Peter types a secret note to his grandfather, declaring war on him and asking him to give up the room. Peter lets his grandfather know that if he tells his parents about their little "war," he will never talk to him again. For the next few days, Grandpa Jack simply ignores the note and carries on as usual. Peter decides to set Jack's alarm clock to ring at three in the morning. That morning, the alarm rings and Jack walks up to Peter's room to confront him. Although Peter tells Jack that he loves him, he also tells him that he wants his room back.

The next day, Grandpa Jack tells Peter that he is a spoiled child and that when Jack was younger his family lived in poverty. Again, Peter insists on taking his room back. Peter steals his grandfather's slippers. However, Jack finds them easily.

Grandpa Jack invites Peter for a walk to talk about their problem. After Peter insists on continuing the war, Jack slaps him. Peter becomes very angry and tells his grandfather he won't forget or forgive him for this.

For the next few days, Grandpa Jack pretends nothing happened. Then suddenly one day, Peter finds that the game pieces for his Monopoly board game are missing. In the game box is a typed note stating "TWO CAN PLAY THIS GAME." The fact that Jack retaliated unexpectedly draws the two of them closer together. The stealing and hiding of objects becomes a game. One day, Jack invites Peter to go fishing. They have a great

time together and Jack thinks the war is over, but the next day he finds his wrist watch missing. After refusing to return it, Peter nervously waits for days for his grandfather to retaliate. One morning, his alarm clock rings late and Peter discovers that the things he needs to get ready for school are all missing. After running around the house to find them, he gets to school late. During lunchtime, Peter, Steve, and Billy gather around to discuss the "war". Peter comes up with one final plan of attack.

A few days later, Peter steals Jack's dentures. In the morning, Jack angrily enters Peter's room. However, without his teeth, Jack cannot talk clearly. Jack begs Peter to return his dentures. The sight of his helpless grandfather softens Peter's heart. He retrieves the dentures from his hiding place and tells Jack that he feels bad about what has happened. He tells Jack that the war is over.

That morning, Peter and Jack have a serious and sensible conversation together. Grandpa Jack considers all possible options. He decides that he could convert the basement into an apartment. Because Jack used to be in the construction trade, he knows how to install the carpeting, repair the ceiling and panel the walls. The renovation begins and Jack finishes the project in six weeks.

Peter gets his old room back and Grandpa tells his grandson: "Petey, no more wars. From now on the family will talk everything out in the open. Peacefully, I hope."

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Robert Kimmel Smith was born in 1930 in Brooklyn, New York, to Theodore Smith and Sally Kimmel. As a child, he loved to read and dreamed of becoming a writer. However, his parents told him that he would never make a living as a writer and told him to become a doctor. At their urging he attended Brooklyn College and became a pre-med major. After performing poorly in science and math courses, Smith dropped out of college and was drafted into the Army. In the U.S. Army, Smith read a lot while stationed in Germany. After finishing his tour of duty, Smith met and fell in love with Claire Medley, another bibliophile. He married her in 1954.

In 1957 he started working as a copy writer in an advertising agency. It gave him the opportunity to write ads about all kinds of things. It also helped him hone his writing skills. It was not until 1970 that he quit his advertising career and began writing stories full-time. He wrote his first published story about a boy who loved eating chocolate. It was a story he used to tell his daughter. Smith went on to write a suspense thriller about children and then also wrote a series of adult novels. Eventually, Smith went back to children's books, concentrating on stories with serious topics and dealing with these issues in a

humorous manner. *The War with Grandpa* grew out of a comment made by Smith's son Roger, who said he loved his room very much. *School Library Journal* called it a story which teaches about "the causes and effects of war and human dignity." Smith now lives in Brooklyn and his wife is his literary agent. He also writes plays and television scripts. *Chocolate Fever* was made into a CBS TV show. His novel, *Jane's House*, was made into a television movie in 1993.

CRITIC'S CORNER

Critics have generally praised Robert Kimmel Smith for his insightful handling of serious issues in his books for children. One reviewer from the American Library Association's *Booklist* praised Smith's ability to convey the "emotional pain of children in the throes of adjusting [to new familial situations]."

The War with Grandpa won the Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award, the William Allen White Award, and the Mark Twain Award. The *Baltimore Sun* called it a work which tells "an honest tale of a painful family adjustment."

Smith has also ventured into writing adult novels. His "Sadie Shapiro" series about the adventures of an old lady have been critically and financially successful. However it is mainly his works for children which garner awards. His best selling book, *Chocolate Fever*, received the Children's Book Award in 1980. *Jane's House* won the American Library Association Best Book Award in 1983. He was also named the Eugene O'Neill Playwright in 1971 when his play, *A Little Singing, A Little Dancing* was produced at the O'Neill Memorial Theatre.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To discuss societal expectations of the roles children play and the respect they pay to elders
2. To contrast growing up during the Great Depression with childhood today
3. To define nuclear family and extended family
4. To explore the problems which arise when children feel psychologically alienated or isolated
5. To discuss how children and adults cope with anger
6. To define sacrifice and selfishness
7. To discuss childhood fears and how children deal with them
8. To discuss how families resolve internal conflicts
9. To discuss the roles parents and grandparents play in teaching children

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To discuss what Peter thinks of Jennifer, his sister
2. To consider how Jack responds to Peter's threats
3. To describe how the "war" between Peter and Jack escalates
4. To note how Peter describes himself
5. To understand how Peter can treat his grandfather harshly
6. To explain why Peter can act like a spoiled child
7. To discuss why Grandpa Jack turns stealing and hiding things into a game
8. To understand why Grandpa Jack slaps Peter
9. To understand why Jennifer wants to be the center of attention

MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, sentences or thought units that have a particular meaning in this work. Explain the meaning of each. (Page numbers pinpoint the context in which each item appears.)

1. Gorilla warfare. Hiding behind rocks and trees. Wearing a mask. (p. 43)
(*Steve and Peter mean guerrilla warfare. It comes from the Spanish word guerrilla which means small war. Guerrilla wars involved small units of armed soldiers fighting a larger group by ambushing, engaging in small skirmishes, sabotaging, and other irregular methods of warfare. The unusual and covert war between Grandpa and Peter can thus be considered a guerrilla war.*)
2. The reason I'm telling you about moping is because that is exactly what Grandpa was doing. Except he called it resting. (p. 36)
(*The reason why Grandpa Jack has been so depressed is that his wife died a few months ago. It wasn't always that way. When Peter was younger, his grandfather was a lot livelier. He took Peter out often and was always a lot of fun. Now with his construction injury and his wife gone, Jack does not seem to have a lot of happiness left in him. He sits around the house a lot and feels depressed.*)
3. And now Grandpa had something wrong with his leg that Mom called arthritis. (p. 32)
(*Arthritis is a general term covering various ailments involving pain caused by the inflammation of the joints in the body. It is a common illness among older people, especially those who have suffered some kind of bone injury. Sometimes the injury never completely heals, leading to inflammation of the joints.*)
4. It reminded me of this story about an old Greek guy named Damocles who went to a party where they hung a sword over his head by a hair. (p. 104)
(*The story Peter mentions is the ancient Greek legend of Damocles. Damocles was a courtier who flattered his ruler, Dionysus the tyrant of Syracuse. At one party, Dionysus hung a sword by a hair over Damocles's head to show that Damocles's flattery and happiness may one day come to a sudden end. Damocles's sword is now used as a simile to illustrate the fear one has for an impending doom. Having stolen Grandpa Jack's watch, Peter nervously waits for Jack's revenge.*)
5. So you can see why I felt a little sad later that night when I sneaked into my old room and stole Grandpa's wristwatch. (p. 99)
(*Peter feels awful about stealing his grandfather's watch not only because his grandfather treasures it greatly but because he had just spent a marvelous day fishing with him. In fact, Jack thought that their little war was over after the great time they spent together. The watch was especially precious to Jack because it was given to him by his wife for their fortieth wedding anniversary. Since his wife is now dead, the watch means a lot to Jack.*)
6. "Positively Machiavellian," Steve said. (p. 68)
(*Steve, a history buff, knows about Machiavelli, an Italian writer and politician during the Renaissance. In his book The Prince, Machiavelli urged rulers to disregard conven-*

tional morality in their campaigns to gain power and strengthen their states. "Machiavellian" is used to describe attempts to achieve political goals by relying on deceit and guile.)

7. We were eating lunch at our usual table in the lunchroom. Wait a minute, that's not exactly right. Billy and Steve were eating lunch. I was begging lunch. (p. 118)
(After Grandpa Jack retaliated by hiding all the things Peter needed for school, Peter's morning routine becomes a mess. He could not find his toothbrush, his school books, the laces for his shoes, and other things he needed for school. Naturally, in the confusion of getting ready for school, he forgot his lunch as well. When he got to school, he had to beg his friends for lunch.)
8. "I think it should begin with me," Jenny said, "because I found out Grandpa was coming to live here before you even knew about it." (p. 2)
(Peter's assignment for his fifth grade class is to write about something which happened to him. While writing in his room, his sister Jenny comes in. She suggests that since Peter is writing a story about their grandfather coming to live with them, he should begin with writing about her because she knew about his arrival before Peter did. Peter's impression of Jenny is that she wants to be the center of attention and is always bothering him.)
9. I was learning something about Grandpa. He was one of the world's best ignorers. (p. 51)
(After Peter declares war on his grandfather by giving him a note demanding that he returns his room, Grandpa Jack completely ignores his declaration of war. In fact, Jack pretends nothing unusual has happened. By ignoring Peter's threat, Jack dismisses the entire affair as a joke. This frustrates Peter greatly, causing him to "escalate" the war.)
10. I saw a funny look pass from Mom to Dad. (p. 14)
(Peter's parents were worried about breaking the bad news to him. Obviously, the parents had agreed to move Peter out of his room without consulting him. The "worried" look hints at the fact that they have been discussing about the move behind Peter's back. Peter thus is especially angry that he was not consulted about this decision. He feels he is being moved to the attic like a piece of old unwanted furniture. Peter's outburst reveals the depth of his anger.)

COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer these 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 from the work.

Questions 1-4 Literal Level

1. Why does Peter make a fuss about moving upstairs to the guest room?
(Peter loves his room. He is extremely possessive of his room. No one else in his family has ever lived in it. Peter is especially upset because he was not consulted before being told that he must move upstairs. In addition, Peter is scared about of sleeping in a dark and mysterious guest room in the attic. He is also not happy because he thinks his parents are not really listening to his complaints.)
2. How does Peter declare war on his grandfather and how does Jack react?
(After Peter's friends, Billy and Steve, encouraged him to fight a "guerrilla" war against his grandfather to win back his room, Peter drops off a "Declaration of War" in Grandpa Jack's room. The note states: "YOU HAVE STOLEN SOMETHING THAT BELONGS TO ME. YOU HAVE TAKEN MY ROOM AND I WANT IT BACK. THIS IS A WARNING. YOU HAVE 24 HOURS TO GIVE ME BACK WHAT IS MINE. OR ELSE WAR WILL BEGIN." But Grandpa Jack completely ignores the note, and the twenty-four deadline came and left without any consequences. Peter is entirely surprised and frustrated by this turn of events.)
3. Why does Peter tell this story about his grandfather moving into his house?
(First, Mrs. Klein assigns everyone in her class to write a story of something important which happened to them. Second, Peter wants to write about something he did which he is not proud of. Third, Peter also wants to record the events and his thoughts so that he does not forget them later. His story becomes almost like a journal or confession and also a record of the things he learned because of the trouble he caused.)
4. What aspects of the fishing experience does Peter enjoy?
(Peter enjoys immensely his fishing experience with his grandfather. He likes traveling in a small boat, the sunlight reflecting on the water, and the cool breeze blowing on his face. He especially likes the feeling of catching and reeling in a fish. He enjoys learning how to row a boat, bait a hook, and clean a fish. For Peter, the entire fishing trip was a thrilling experience and he liked every moment of it. They enjoy the trip so much that they decide to go fishing many more times together.)

Questions 5-6 Interpretative Level

5. What does Peter learn from writing this story?
(Peter learns many things from writing about his war with his grandfather. First, he learns that to resolve conflicts, he must talk openly about his problems rather than fighting covertly with family members. Second, he realizes that war is not fun and that people get hurt when they fight for what they want. Third, he learns that writing is hard work, especially in the beginning. Finally, he discovers he enjoys writing and may want to become a writer when he grows older.)
6. Why does Grandpa Jack not tell Peter's parents about the problems Peter is having with him.
(Although Peter threatens his grandfather that if he tells his parents about their little fight, he would never talk to him again, Grandpa Jack does not really take this threat seriously. At first, Jack tries to ignore the whole thing so he does not tell Peter's parents. Then, Jack thinks he can solve the problem by talking to Peter. Jack also turns the entire war into a fun game between the two of them. Finally, because of their "war," Peter and Jack bond in a way they otherwise never would have. Together the two of them resolve their conflict. Telling Peter's parents thus never really becomes an issue.)

Questions 7 and 8 Critical Level

7. Why does Robert Kimmel Smith not directly criticize Peter's selfishness and cruel actions?

(Answers will vary greatly. Accept all reasonable answers. It is not entirely clear why the author does not overtly condemn Peter's actions and cruelty to his grandfather, for in the end, Peter seems to have gotten off without punishment for his disrespectful and insolent behavior. In fact, Peter gets what he wants, moving back into his room at the conclusion of the story. But this does not necessarily mean that the author approves of Peter's actions. In fact, Peter tells us that he is ashamed of his actions. However, the fact that Peter finally achieves his goal by rude behavior may bother some readers. But we know that Peter finally learns an important lesson, that war hurts and is not the way to get what one wants.)

8. What is the author's message about the nature of war?

(Grandpa Jack is the voice of the author and he tells Peter about the many negative effects of war. Peter compares his situation with someone taking his territory in the board game of Risk. But Jack tells him that "wars are about power and greed" (p. 71). War is definitely not a game, he tells Peter. Jack also advises Peter that there are better ways to settle disputes without having to go to war. At the end of the story, both people realize that wars start when "your enemy does something bad to you, so you do something worse to him" (p. 127). "Maybe this is how wars get started and just go on and on," Jack says (p. 127). Jack understands that the family made many mistakes and that the first mistake was Peter's parents taking something away from him and not discussing it with him. The best way to prevent war is talking and resolving conflicts together.)

Questions 9-11 Creative Level

9. Pick one or more scenes from *The War with Grandpa* and write a humorous skit involving Peter and Jack hiding each other's things. Why would such a situation be funny? How would their actions confuse them and mess up their daily routine?
10. Create a new board game for Grandpa Jack, Jenny, and Peter that would help them learn to resolve conflicts together. What kinds of goals would this game have? How would players win the game?
11. Pick a chapter from *The War with Grandpa* and rewrite it from the point of view of Jack. How would his perspective be different? What does Jack think of Peter's behavior?

LITERARY TERMS AND LANGUAGE

Students should be aware of the following literary terms and language. The notes below may help them better understand the work.

First person narrative occurs when the writer tells a story from his or her point of view using the first person pronoun. Journals, confessions, and diaries are examples of texts written from the first person point of view. Such narratives usually provide a very personalized and opinionated account of events. Objectivity tends to be minimized with first person narratives. Because of the personalized view, readers tend to sympathize with the narrator.

Prologues and epilogues set a story in context. Prologues

occur at the start of the story and epilogues conclude the narrative. They are often necessary to make the story complete. In *The War with Grandpa*, these sections tell us why exactly Peter is writing this story. In the epilogue, we also get a hint about Peter's future. He likes writing so much that he may want to become a writer one day.

Language The author adopts an informal literary style, using vernacular and ordinary language to tell the story. At one point, in the chapter entitled "And Dirty Words", Peter uses invented words to substitute for the those words he and his friends use but which are unsuitable in print. The author's informal language adds a feeling of authenticity to the work and keeps the story lively. The spontaneous and natural language makes it feel that Peter is talking directly to the reader. The reader thus feels a connection to the narrator.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Psychology

1. Discuss the problems associated with isolation and loneliness. How does Peter feel alienated? Does Jack feel unwanted by his family? Suggest possible solutions to feelings of rejection and loneliness.
2. Discuss how people deal with the death of a family member. What are some psychological reactions or stages a person go through after the death of a relative or close friend (note: it may help to research the findings of Elizabeth Kubler-Ross who is famous for her work on psychological reactions to trauma).

Art and Design

1. Create a design for a new room in your house or apartment. What is the purpose of this room? Create an illustration for this new room. What would the ceilings, walls, and floor look like? What kind of furniture would come with this room?
2. Richard Lauter drew the illustrations for *The War with Grandpa*. Do you think the illustrations portray the characters accurately? Pick one of the illustrations and recreate it with pencil and paper.

Science and Health

1. Investigate the effects the moon's gravitational pull has on tides. Write a report about the relationship between the moon and the changing of the tides.
2. Write a report about arthritis. Why do older people tend to suffer from this more than young people. How can people prevent the pain of arthritis? What kinds of treatment are available?
3. Investigate the connection between smoking and emphysema.

Language Arts

1. Keep a journal detailing your daily activities. Report on your relationship with your family members and friends. What would you add in the journal about them? What would you leave out of your journal?
2. Rewrite Chapter 37. What kind of epilogue would you prefer?
3. Compose a definition of family. Compare your definition with that of your class-mates. Do different cultures have different definitions of family?

Mathematics and Social Science

1. What is the science of demographics? Take a look at the latest national census. What percent of the national population is below nineteen? What percentage of the population is over sixty? How do you expect the changing demographics to affect your future?
2. Investigate the term socialized medicine. How is health care an important issue for families?

Multimedia

1. Review a movie which depicts old people (e.g., *Grumpy Old Men*, *Cocoon*). Present an oral report on how Hollywood portrays older people.
2. Interview an older member of your community with a video camera. Create a list of questions to ask him or her (e.g., what do they think of children these days, what it was like when they were young, etc.).

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Draw a time line depicting the major confrontations Peter has with his Grandpa Jack. Discuss how these confrontations lead to a climatic resolution.
2. Invite a retiree in your community to talk to your class. What kinds of daily interactions do the young have with older people? What can we learn from older members of the community?
3. Create an oral history project which records the reminiscences of older family members about a time before your birth.
4. In a small group, develop a definition of war. When is a conflict a war? What is a cold war? Compare your definition with those made by other groups.
5. Research some of the special needs old people have. What kinds of health problems can impede their daily activities? Suggests ways other members of the community can help older people live better?
6. Create a model for a house that could accommodate the needs of five family members of different ages. What facilities do children need (e.g., a playroom or play ground)? What about old people?
7. Write an obituary for Jack's wife. How do you picture her life?
8. Join a discussion group to talk about how people deal with the death of a close friend or family members. Discuss how you would help a grieving friend or family member.
9. Discuss what happens when family members are not consulted regarding major decisions that would affect them.
10. Investigate the health problems associated with smoking. Examine the different ways people try to stop smoking. Compare your findings.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. List the major characters in *The War with Grandpa*. Describe each with three adjectives. Choose a quotation from each character which best describes him or her.
2. Compose definitions of selfishness, love, sacrifice, and stubbornness.
3. Write about an occasion in which you sacrifice your own happiness or needs for another person. Explain your actions and describe the results.

OTHER WORKS BY ROBERT KIMMEL SMITH

Chocolate Fever (1971)
Ransom (1971)
Sadie Shapiro's Knitting Book (1973)
Sadie Shapiro in Miami (1977)
Sadie Shapiro, Matchmaker (1979)
Jelly Belly (1981)
Jane's House (1982)
Mostly Michael (1987)
Bobby Baseball (1989)
The Squeaky Wheel (1992)

RELATED READING

Karen Ackerman, *Just Like Max*
Terence Blacker, *Homebird*
A.E. Cannon, *Amazing Gracie*
Cara DeVito, *Where I Want to Be*
Berlie Doherty, *White Peak Farm*
Sharon Hart, *Addy: A Visit with Great-Grandma*
Lee Bennett Hopkins, *Mama*
Jackie French Koller, *If I Had One Wish...*
Lael Little, *Blue Skye*
Jim Naughton, *My Brother Stealing Second*
Jacqueline Roy, *Soul Daddy*
Gloria Whelan, *A Time to Keep Silent*

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Booklist, August 1982, p. 1484.
Horn Book, January/February 1990, pp. 66-67.
New York Times Book Review, May 13, 1984.
"Review of *The War with Grandpa*," *Baltimore Sun*, August 5, 1984.
Something About the Author, Vol. 77. Detroit: Gale, 1994, pp. 196-200.
School Library Journal, August 1982; April 1984; July 1987; October 1990.

VOCABULARY TEST

Using the terms below, complete each citation or description below with one or more details from *The War with Grandpa*.

arthritis	emphysema	indubitably	olfactory	tantrum
courtesy	expression	Machiavelli	smothered	truce
Damocles	horn-rimmed	moonlighting	solemn	tutu

1. "I expect you to treat him just like a member of the family. With respect and _____."
2. That is a _____ promise, so help me God.
3. Grandpa Jack suffers from _____ after having broken his leg.
4. Steve is taller than me and thinner and he wears these _____ eyeglasses.
5. "When two warring parties want to meet and talk things out, they put up a white flag of _____ and then meet under it and have a powwow."
6. Jenny disappeared for a few minutes, then came marching down the steps from her room wearing her _____.
7. Little Jenny got her father alone at all different times, climbed up on his lap, and _____ him with kisses to get him to buy her the tutu.
8. "_____" Steve said. "Your nose and smelling glands, your sense of smell."
9. "Precisely," Steve said, grinning. "Or _____."
10. It reminded me of this story about an old Greek guy named _____ who went to a party where they hung a sword over his head by a hair.
11. They mostly worked in the evenings. _____, Grandpa called it.
12. She even threw herself down on the floor and had a _____.
13. "_____. He was this old Italian prince," Steve said. "He figured out all the moves you can make on an enemy a long time ago."
14. Jack's wife suffered from _____, which she got from smoking too much.
15. Mom was looking at me with such a happy _____ on her face that I had to smile.

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (30 points)

Match the following descriptions with characters. Choose your answers from the list of characters below. You may use some answers more than once and some not at all.

- | | | | | |
|----------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| A. Jenny | C. Peter's father | E. Billy | G. Peter | I. Peter's grandmother |
| B. Steve | D. Mrs. Klein | F. Peter's mother | H. Grandpa Jack | |

- ___ 1. is a good Risk game player.
- ___ 2. enjoys taking ballet lessons.
- ___ 3. is Peter's fifth grade teacher.
- ___ 4. is an accountant.
- ___ 5. was in a construction accident.
- ___ 6. likes to do chin-ups.
- ___ 7. wears a tutu when she dances.
- ___ 8. takes Peter fishing.
- ___ 9. is Jack's daughter.
- ___ 10. uses the alias "The Secret Warrior."
- ___ 11. suffered from emphysema and died.
- ___ 12. hides the game pieces from Peter's Monopoly game.
- ___ 13. would love to take baseball lessons.
- ___ 14. signs a secret note with the alias "The Old Man."
- ___ 15. is the narrator of the story.

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

Write a word or phrase to complete each statement.

- 1. The story opens with Peter explaining _____.
- 2. When Grandpa Jack arrives, Peter has to give up _____.
- 3. Grandpa Jack and Peter go to Cold Spring Harbor to _____.
- 4. Peter learns about guerrilla warfare from _____.
- 5. At the end of the story, Grandpa Jack decides to move _____.
- 6. Peter dedicates the last chapter to _____.
- 7. Peter hides his grandfather's watch in _____.
- 8. Jack hangs a sign on Peter's door that says _____.
- 9. After Jack hides the things Peter needs for school, Peter forgets to bring his _____.
- 10. Jack explains to Peter how the moon's gravitational pull affects _____.

Part III: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either **T** for true or **F** if any part is false.

- 1. Peter took the news of his grandfather's arrival very well.
- 2. Jenny was the first to tell Peter that Grandpa Jack will take his room.
- 3. Billy and Steve are Peter's friends.
- 4. Jack is able to convert a basement into an apartment.
- 5. Peter starts a secret war with his grandfather.
- 6. Jenny always wants to show her dancing to her family.
- 7. Peter has an accident and breaks his leg.
- 8. Jack slaps Peter on his face.
- 9. Peter's father uses the basement as an office.
- 10. Mrs. Klein does not give Peter any encouragement.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. Contrast Jenny and Peter. How are they different?
- 2. Describe an occasion when a relative or friend came to stay with your family.
- 3. Explain why open discussions are a good way to resolve conflicts.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Short Answer (20 points)

Use a word or phrase from the lettered list to identify each of the people referred to in the boldfaced words below.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| A. Peter | C. Machiavelli | E. Mrs. Klein | G. Peter's father |
| B. Grandpa Jack | D. Jenny | F. Peter's mother | H. Billy |

- ___ 1. It did not take **him** too long to discover that his watch is missing.
- ___ 2. "I liked **your** old room better. It was roomier. And it had more light. And it didn't gave a smell."
- ___ 3. During Tax Time **he** disappears downstairs into his office in the basement and doesn't come out until it is over.
- ___ 4. "**He** was this old Italian prince," Steve said. "He figured out all the moves you can make on an enemy a long time ago."
- ___ 5. **She** went on a campaign for a tutu that was disgusting.
- ___ 6. **I** learned how to row a boat. It was hard to do.
- ___ 7. And I sure hope **you** don't take too much off for bad spelling and grammar.
- ___ 8. **I** think when I grow up I might be a writer.
- ___ 9. "**I'll** play with Grandpa then, if you're going to be so mean," she said.
- ___ 10. "Children," **she** said, "I have some wonderful news."

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Underline an answer to complete each statement below.

- Grandpa Jack hides (Peter's watch, Peter's Monopoly game pieces, baseball, Jenny's dress) much to everyone's surprise.
- Grandpa Jack takes Peter and Jenny (shopping, to the library, for a bike ride, fishing).
- After Jack hides the things Peter needs for school, Peter has to beg get (money, lunch, books and supplies, toys) from Steve and Billy.
- Peter's father sometimes works in (the attic, Steve's school, the basement, Peter's room).
- Steve likes to show off his (knowledge, baseball cards, athletic skills, goldfish).
- The last thing Peter steals from Grandpa Jack are his (socks, dentures, pants, fishing rods).
- Peter writes about his experience with Grandpa Jack because (Mrs. Klein told him to write about a real story, he wants to record the events in a diary, Jennifer tells him to write it, his mother asks him to write it).
- At the end of the story, he tells Mrs. Klein that (writing is tiring, he made up the story, he doesn't want to write anymore, getting himself to start writing is the hardest part about writing).
- Jack converts the basement into his own (recreational room, apartment, garage, laboratory).
- Jenny is the first to (tell Peter about Jack's arrival, tell Peter to steal Jack's watch, volunteer to sleep in the guest room, go fishing with Jack).

Part III: Identification (20 points)

Place an **X** by any statement that is true of Peter.

- 1. refuses to take advice from Steve and Billy to fight a secret war with Grandpa Jack.
- 2. takes his parents fishing.
- 3. likes to play board games.
- 4. learns to like writing stories.
- 5. steals his grandfather's slippers.
- 6. enjoys fishing with Grandpa Jack.
- 7. confronts a bully coming home from school.
- 8. learns that war should not be taken lightly.
- 9. does not want to take piano lessons.
- 10. likes collecting baseball cards.

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Do you like the ending of the story? Do you think Peter should be punished for his bad behavior? Why or why not?
2. Explain why parents make decisions about their children without consulting them. Give an example of someone in your family making an important decision for you. How you feel about that decision?
3. In what ways are Jenny and Peter typical of children you know? In what ways are they not?

ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY TEST

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. courtesy | 9. indubitably |
| 2. solemn | 10. Damocles |
| 3. arthritis | 11. moonlighting |
| 4. horn-rimmed | 12. tantrum |
| 5. truce | 13. Machiavelli |
| 6. tutu | 14. emphysema |
| 7. smothered | 15. expression |
| 8. olfactory | |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. E | 11. I |
| 2. A | 7. A | 12. H |
| 3. D | 8. H | 13. G |
| 4. C | 9. F | 14. H |
| 5. H | 10. G | 15. G |

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

1. that he is writing a true story about his "war" with his grandfather who moved in with his family
2. his room
3. fish
4. Steve
5. to the basement
6. his teacher, Mrs. Klein
7. his sock
8. Pete's Place
9. lunch
10. the tides

Part III: True/False (20 points)

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

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Short Answer (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. A |
| 2. H | 7. E |
| 3. G | 8. A |
| 4. C | 9. D |
| 5. D | 10. F |

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

1. Peter's Monopoly game pieces
2. fishing
3. lunch
4. the basement
5. knowledge
6. dentures
7. Mrs. Klein told him to write a real story
8. getting himself to start writing is the hardest part about writing
9. apartment
10. tell Peter about Jack's arrival

Part III: Identification (20 points)

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

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.



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