



Where the Red Fern Grows

by Wilson Rawls

Teacher's Guide

Written By Mary Ellen Snodgrass

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Synopsis

Chapter 1

While leaving his office in Snake River Valley, Idaho, in the mid-1900s, William Colman rescues Buddie, a redbone hound attacked by a pack of dogs. Buddie's cunning and bravery and the crude leather and baling wire collar evoke childhood memories. Colman leads him home, bathes and massages him, then feeds him. The restless dog bids farewell and heads down the alley toward his master. Returning to his fireside, Colman caresses two trophies he won in boyhood.

Chapter 2

Because of his mother's Cherokee blood, ten-year-old Billy and his family live in a log house in the Oklahoma Ozarks. The boy, infected by the "dog-wanting disease," rejects his father's suggestion of a collie pup. His parents are too poor to buy pure-bred hunting hounds. Billy traps rats, a prize hen, opossums, skunks, rabbits, and squirrels. Still yearning for a dog, he tries to leave home and makes his mother cry with his begging.

Chapter 3

One day, Billy finds an ad in a sportsman's magazine for registered redbone coon hounds at \$25 each. He confides to Grandpa that he intends to buy the dogs. The first year, he hoards \$27.46. By the second year, he reaches the full \$50. Grandpa contacts the kennel.

Chapter 4

Billy learns that the price has dropped to \$40. He must collect his dogs at the Tahlequah train depot.

He steals out barefoot that night and follows railroad tracks and the Illinois River thirty miles through the mountains to the depot. Town scares him. He spends the remaining ten dollars for overalls, yard goods, and candy for his family. Boys playing in the schoolyard question his bare feet and call him a hillbilly.

Chapter 5

The kind stationmaster comments that some puppies have arrived for Billy Colman. He rips the crate open; the pups lick his sore feet. The marshal rescues him from a gang. In the Sparrow Hawk Mountains, Billy and his dogs spend the night in a cave. During the night, Billy awakens to the scream of a mountain lion.

Chapter 6

At midday, Billy approaches home. He names the dogs Old Dan and Little Ann. After the family opens their gifts, Billy feeds the puppies. He describes town and his night at "Robber's Cave." His father ponders moving the children near a school. Billy beds the pups down in the corn crib and makes personalized collars.

Chapter 7

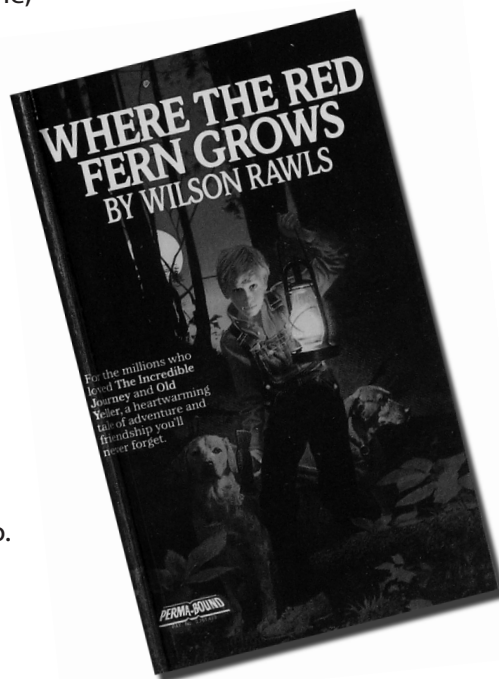
Billy locates a large coon in his trap and trains Dan and Ann with the scent of its hide. The hounds combine Dan's strength with Ann's intelligence to form a successful hunting duo.

Chapter 8

On a frosty night, the trio sets out for the first hunt. The dogs tree the coon in a giant sycamore. Billy chops with his ax. At sunrise, he awakens to his father's approach and continues chopping.

Chapter 9

By late evening, Billy is worn out and tearful.



Grandpa helps him construct a scarecrow to fool the coon. On the drive home for supper, Grandpa praises his grandson's will power and determination. Billy prays for strength to bring down the tree. A strong wind falls it; the dogs kill the coon.

Chapter 10

The price of skins rises to ten dollars. Grandpa keeps count of the number of kills. From November to February, the trio hunt as a team.

Chapter 11

After a five-day blizzard, Billy wades naked into the river to rescue Ann. On his return home, he conceals the danger he had faced.

Chapter 12

At the mill, Billy encounters the Pritchard boys, teenage sons of an outlaw family who challenge Billy and his dogs to tree the ghost coon. Grandpa finances a two-dollar bet. The next night, the Pritchards predict failure for the hunt.

Chapter 13

Billy refuses to concede and locates the coon in a post. Because he lets the coon live, the Pritchards threaten to beat him. Billy claims the two dollar bet. Rubin threatens Billy with a knife. Their dog Blue attacks Ann and Dan. Rubin impales himself on his ax and dies. The Pritchards conduct a private burial. The death causes Billy nightmares; he leaves a bouquet of dried flowers at the grave.

Chapter 14

On the seventeenth of the month, a few days after Rubin's death, Grandpa encourages Billy to go on a championship coon hunt on the twenty-third. Grandpa has paid the entry fee and believes that Billy can win.

Chapter 15

At the contest, the men camp for the night at Bluebird Creek. Ann enters the beauty contest and wins a silver cup. Twenty-five entrants draw for position in the elimination rounds. Billy gets the fourth night.

Chapter 16

On the hunt, Billy's dogs tree the first coon. Around 3:00 A. M., the group pauses for Grandpa to dry his clothes after he falls in the river. During one run, Dan and Ann pursue their prey through the

hunters' camp. At sunrise, Billy qualifies for the final round. During the contest, Dan and Ann battle a coon underwater.

Chapter 17

A high wind threatens the hunters. On sleety ground, the judge, Grandpa, Billy, and his father push on. Grandpa falls and must be carried out of the canebrake. Shortly before 5:00 A. M., Papa locates three coons.

Chapter 18

At dawn, Mr. Kyle arrives with a search party. Billy wins a gold cup for the largest catch and the three hundred-dollar purse. At home, he presents the cups to his sisters and the money to his mother.

Chapter 19

Three weeks later, Billy hunts Cyclone Timber country, where Dan trees a mountain lion. Ann is hurt and Dan mortally injured. Although Billy's mother tenderly washes the wound, Dan soon dies. Ann drags herself to Dan's grave and dies with her head near her mate.

Chapter 20

The next spring, the Colmans prepare to leave the farm. Billy returns to the dogs' grave, which is covered in red fern. According to an Indian legend, only angels plant red fern, which never dies. Billy never returns to the Ozarks.

Timeline of the Action

1830	The Cherokees are forcibly removed from Georgia to Indian Territory.
1890	The Oklahoma Territory is established.
1893	The Dawes Commission allocates Indian land.
1901	Indians are made U.S. citizens.
1907	Oklahoma becomes a state.
1913	Billy is born.
1925	Billy finds an ad for registered redbone coon hounds.
1926	Billy saves \$27.46.
1927	After saving \$50, Billy buys the hounds. Winter: Billy hunts with his dogs.
1928	Early February: After he threatens Billy, Rubin impales himself on his ax and dies.
Feb. 17	Grandpa encourages Billy to go on a

- championship coon hunt.
- Feb. 23** At the beauty contest, Little Ann wins a silver cup.
- Feb. 27** Billy's dogs tree the first coon.
- Feb. 28** Billy wins a gold cup for the largest catch and the three hundred dollar purse.
- March** Dan trees a mountain lion. Ann is hurt; Dan is mortally injured and soon dies. Two days later Ann stops eating.
- next day spring** Ann dies with her head on Dan's grave. As the Colmans leave the farm, Billy returns to the dogs' grave, which is covered in red fern.

Author Sketch

Woodrow Wilson Rawls, noted southwestern storyteller and chronicler of the pioneer spirit, lived in the raw, exciting early days of Oklahoma's statehood. Born in Scrapper, Cherokee country, on September 24, 1913, Rawls was the son of Winnie Hatfield, a Cherokee, and Minzy O. Rawls, a farmer. He and his sisters were home-schooled and took turns repeating their mother's stories aloud. Rawls valued Jack London's *The Call of the Wild*. He remarked, "It was my first real treasure and I carried it with me wherever I went. I read it every chance I got. One day while I was working in the fields, I got the idea that I would like to write a book like *Call of the Wild*."



In 1928, the family moved from Tahlequah to Muskogee, where the children attended school. Rawls scrounged bits of paper, covered them with words, and stored them in a trunk. To aid his family, he abandoned school in the eighth grade and wandered from state to state working as a carpenter. He found jobs in a British Columbia lumber yard, in construction in Mexico and South America, in an Oregon shipyard, on five dam construction jobs, and along Alaska's Alcan Highway. After marrying Sophie Ann Styczinski in Idaho Falls, Idaho, in 1958, he burned his early scribblings, which contained five full manuscripts, including "The Secret of the Red Fern." In his words, "I was sure it was pure trash." With his wife's encouragement, he settled into full-time writing and lecturing. Rawls rewrote his lost story as *Where the Red Fern Grows*, which

appeared as *Hounds of Youth* in a three-part serial and several newspaper reprints before its publication by Doubleday in 1961. For the next two decades, he lectured to young students, urging them to read, study, and stay in school. His second novel, *Summer of the Monkeys*, brought him expanded recognition. He died December 16, 1984.

Critic's Corner

Although his output is slim, Rawls found favor with librarians, teachers, and parents, who responded to his emphasis on family values and resourceful heroes. *McCalls* magazine commented that his first novel "restores faith in the word heartwarming." *Where the Red Fern Grows* won him the Evansville Book Award, Michigan Young Readers Award, and a place on Syracuse's Gold Star List. In March 1974, Doty-Dayton Productions produced a cinema version, starring James Whitmore, Beverly Garland, and Stewart Peterson.

After the completion of *Summer of the Monkeys*, Rawls earned the William Allen White Children's Book Award, a Golden Archer Award, Maud Hard Lovelace Book Award, California Young Reader Medal Award, and the Sequoyah Children's Book Award. During his residency in Cornell, Wisconsin, and Idaho Falls, he enjoyed hunting and fishing as a break from literary projects. His collected papers, including an assortment of letters from school children organized by state, reside in the Cherokee National Historical Society, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, where a special exhibit was opened in spring 1987.

Rawls' Published Works

Where the Red Fern Grows, 1961
Summer of the Monkeys, 1976

Related Reading

Joy Adamson, *Born Free*
 William Armstrong, *Sounder*
 Avi, *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*
 William Barrett, *The Lilies of the Field*
 Hal Borland, *When the Legends Die*
 Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*
 Forrest Carter, *The Education of Little Tree*
 Paulo Coelho, *The Alchemist*

Jean Craighead George, *Julie of the Wolves* and *My Side of the Mountain*
Paula Fox, *Slave Dancer*
Doris Gates, *Blue Willow*
Fred Gipson, *Old Yeller*
Robin Graham, *Dove*
Robert Heinlein, *Farmer in the Sky*, *The Star Beast* and *Starman Jones*
Irene Hunt, *No Promises in the Wind*
Theodora Kroeber, *Ishi*
Jack London, *Call of the Wild*
Lois Lowry, *The Giver*
N. Scott Momaday, *The Way to Rainy Mountain*
Scott O'Dell, *The Island of the Blue Dolphins*
Katherine Paterson, *The Great Gilly Hopkins*
Gary Paulsen, *Nightjohn* and *Hatchet*
Robert Newton Peck, *The Day No Pigs Would Die*
Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, *The Yearling*
John Steinbeck, *The Red Pony*
Yoko Kawashima Watkins, *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*

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"Publisher's Weekly All-Time Bestselling Paperback Children's Books," www.bookwire.com/pw/articles/childrens.
"Scholarship Honors Wilson Rawls," *Reading Today*, December 1997, p. 11.
Silvey, Anita, ed. *Children's Books and Their Creators*. Boston: HoughtonMifflin, 1995.
Something About the Author, Volume 22. Detroit: Gale, 1981.
Ward, Martha E., ed. *Authors of Books for Young People*. Metuchen, N. J.: Scarecrow, 1990.
Who's Who in the West. Wilmette, Ill.: Marquis, 1965.

General Objectives

1. To define a framework novel
2. To acknowledge the importance of responsibility
3. To enumerate examples of loyalty
4. To contrast intense emotions of unlike characters
5. To consider the significance of legends
6. To evaluate the themes of pride, confidence, and self-esteem
7. To discuss the effect of poverty
8. To characterize a good sport
9. To list examples of action scenes
10. To analyze the author's objectivity
11. To characterize the acceptance of death
12. To debate the value of negative themes, particularly revenge and violence
13. To particularize place, animals, plants, and natural hazards

Specific Objectives

1. To outline the methods by which Billy acquires his dogs
2. To describe the family's hardships in the Ozarks
3. To characterize the Colman family as survivors
4. To analyze how Billy trains the dogs
5. To discuss the rules of hunting competitions
6. To account for Grandpa's injury
7. To describe the family's move from the cabin
8. To explain how Grandpa and Papa influence Billy
9. To contrast the Pritchards and the Colmans

10. To note why Billy visits Rubin's grave
11. To analyze the scene in which Dan is mortally injured
12. To characterize Billy's mother as nurse, counselor, and comforter

Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of Wilson Rawls' fiction, present the following terms and applications:

Bildungsroman: literally a "formation novel," which describes the coming-of-age of an untried or naive youth. Billy develops from a child to a man by actualizing his ambition to own and train hunting hounds. To earn money, he first masters trapping. Along the way, he encounters universal difficulties, particularly the problems of distance, obstacles, and bullying from a town gang and local boys. In overcoming difficulties, Billy employs physical exertion, prayer, logic, and trial and error. By the end of the novel, he recognizes that owning animals means caring for them during illness and burying them when they die. The hard decision to move away from the farm will cause Billy to face new challenges at another location. The author's depiction of his character suggests that he is equal to hardship and that he will continue to thrive from the lessons he learned in boyhood.

Irony: an implied discrepancy between what is said or done and what is meant. Rawls tempers the excitement of winning the gold and silver cups with the next hunt, which is so lethal that Dan dies from shock and loss of blood, causing Ann to give up and succumb near her mate. As though balancing the forces in a human life, Rawls causes Billy to move from emotional high to the worst sufferings of his life. At a low, Mama remarks, "Everyone needs help some time in his life." The comment captures the author's intent in showing Grandpa and Papa helping at the hunt and the whole family supporting Billy during his period of trial and grief. However, Billy remains responsible for himself and never allows others to do what he knows is his job.

Local Color: the use of geographic, linguistic, and social exotica or detail to establish the authenticity of a realistic narrative, as embodied in Billy's walk up the Illinois River and Frisco Railroad tracks and his coon hunts in the Sparrow Hawk Mountains and Cyclone Timber country. Rawls intensifies the

beauties of eastern Oklahoma with details about the flora and fauna as well as the terrain. Balancing positive and negative aspects of nature, Rawls characterizes the hardships and joys of coon hunting, which introduce Billy to woodsmanship and survival methods.

Cross-Curricular Sources

For more information about bullying, the Ozarks, the Cherokee Strip, coon hunting, and other subjects and issues deriving from the novel, consult these sources:

Acting on Your Values, Rosen Publishing Group
Characters in Crisis, Center for Humanities
Learning to Cope, Educational Impressions
Making Decisions: Activities in Values and Character Education, Bright Ideas
What Now? Deciding What's Right, Bright Ideas

Also, consult these web sites:

"Bullying: A Survival Guide,"
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/bully/deal.htm>.
 "The Cherokee Strip,"
<http://www.harvestcomm.net/personal/bjs-bytes/chkstrip.htm>.
 "The Cherokee Strip Land Run Centennial,"
<http://bioc90.athscsa.edu/natnet/archive/nl/9309/0220.html>.
 "Coon Hunting Page,"
<http://www.angelfire.com/pa/PJSDOG>
 "The Ozark Mountains,"
<http://www.ecodev.stats>.
 "OzarkPlateau,"
<http://encarta.msn.com/index/concise/0vol10E/019aa000.asp>.

Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in Wilson Rawls' *Where the Red Fern Grows* should include these aspects:

Themes

- poverty
- longing
- survival
- ambition
- learning
- menace

- achievement
- guilt
- loss
- separation

Motifs

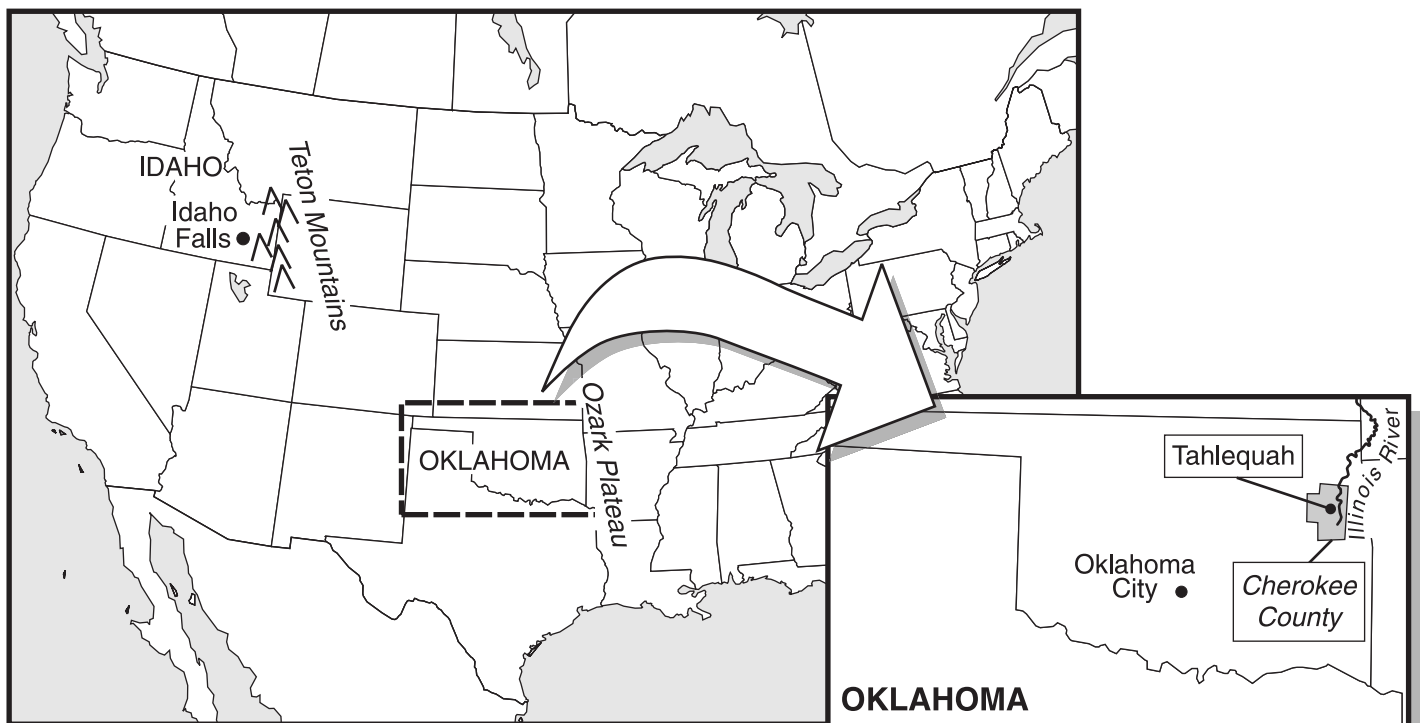
- developing a plan to achieve a dream
- overcoming obstacles through logic and work
- competing on an adult level
- taking responsibility for actions
- accepting change

The Importance of Setting

The milieu of *Where the Red Fern Grows* places Billy's family in rugged terrain during the early years of Oklahoma's statehood. The parents struggle to rear children on a farm in the years preceding the Great Depression. The physical terrain of Billy's adventures is richly textured, varying with extremes of temperature and weather and additional extremes of topography. Over all, Billy evolves an abiding appreciation of the Oklahoma hills that still haunts him in mid-century, when he is located in Idaho, far west of the land he once called home.

The time frame is equally important in accounting for limited technology, which forces Billy to hunt coons by lantern light. The interplay of light and dark amplifies character emotions, exposing Billy to the goodness and encouragement of his parents and grandfather as well as to the town gang, stalking mountain lion, and menacing Pritchard family.

The overall verisimilitude of Rawls' setting indicates that the novel lies close to personal experience in a land that he recalls from his childhood. The appearance of the red fern at the end links less to actual plant life than to a symbolic blessing of the high point in Billy's boyhood—the camaraderie and great love he shared with his dogs. The novel closes with a poignant reminder that he never returned to the Oklahoma hill country. In retrospect, he yearns less for his dogs than for his childhood home, epitomized by the sigh of a mountain breeze, scent of redbuds, papaws, and dogwoods, and the feel of sycamore bark.



Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain each. Chapter and page numbers note the context from which the item is taken.

1. The land we lived on was Cherokee land, allotted to my mother because of the Cherokee blood that flowed in her veins. (Chap. 2, p. 8)
(Although Woodrow Wilson Rawls is not widely known as a native American author, he makes clear the fact that his mother is Cherokee and that his family has a farm on land made available to Indians during the Indian resettlement of the early twentieth century, when many tribes were being placed on or near the Cherokee Strip. The early history of Cherokee removal from eastern U. S. tribal territory became known as the "trail of tears," a brutal military operation begun in the Appalachias in 1838 with the aid of 7,000 troops. For decades, surviving Cherokees divided themselves into two groups—those who came willingly and those who were forced to abandon their homes and move to Oklahoma.)
2. I remembered a passage from the Bible my mother had read to us: "God helps those who help themselves." (Chap. 3, p. 18)
(The Colman children, thirty miles from the public school in Tahlequah, are home-schooled. Early on, Billy is influenced by his mother's love of the Bible and by her belief that God helps people in time of trouble. However, Rawls incorrectly identifies this aphorism, which originates from Benjamin Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanac.)
3. He said, "Oh, you're a hillbilly." (Chap. 3, p. 32)
(On his pilgrimage to the Tahlequah depot, Billy learns something about living in town and dealing with class prejudice. Labeled a hillbilly and taunted with cries of "dog boy," he suffers the injustice of name-calling and does little to retaliate until a gang attacks him and he is forced to defend himself. Billy discovers that the sheriff is his friend by virtue of the man's admiration for his spunk in earning the money for the pups over a two-year period. The sheriff concludes, "There's not a one in that bunch with that kind of grit.")
4. It was the scream of a mountain lion. (Chap. 5, p. 45)
(In an episode crudely foreshadowing Dan's death, Billy and his pups cower from the shriek of the mountain lion, which stalks Robber's Cave, where they spend the night on their return from Tahlequah. Billy, already so dedicated to his animals that he was

"ready to die for my dogs," ponders the doughty courage of the male pup. The still unnamed dog surprises his owner by "[running] to the mouth of the cave and [bawling] back at him." The event prefigures Dan's last noble act—the treeing of the animal that rips his underside, causing his death from loss of blood, shock, and pain. In Chap. 19, Billy comments, "He gave his life for me, that's what he did—just laid down his life for me. How can I ever forget something like that?")

5. After what seemed like an eternity I saw him coming. He was carrying a brace and bit, that was all. (Chap. 7, p. 55)
(Throughout the novel, Grandpa is the significant backer of Billy's determination to hunt coons. Grandpa does not coddle or supercede Billy by solving all his problems, but he remains a keen observer of the boy's progress, notes that he needs shoes more than he needs dogs, orders the pups, and advances him the money for the bet and the championship hunt. At crucial moments, he assists Billy in solving problems by turning them into learning situations. Although Rawls never fully identifies or characterizes Grandpa, the relationship of the boy and his grandfather serves as the guidance and opportunity that helps Billy lift his family from poverty.)
6. By some strange twist of nature, Little Ann was destined to go through life without being a mother. (Chap. 10, p. 103)
(Billy suffers several setbacks along the way to a satisfying career as a hunter. Rawls makes little comment on a significant moneymaking opportunity—the breeding and training of coon dogs, which is rendered impossible by Little Ann's inability to conceive pups. Billy, perhaps too young to comment on the dog's infertility, passes off the disappointment by noting that "she was stunted in growth . . . the runt in a large litter. That may have had something to do with it.")
7. Once again I said a prayer, but this time the words were different. I didn't ask for a miracle. In every way a young boy could, I said "thanks." My second prayer wasn't said with just words. All of my heart and soul was in it. (Chap. 11, p. 121)
(Rawls emphasizes the religious faith of the Colman family, which results from his mother's biblical study and communion with God. As a Christian, the boy believes that he must thank as well as entreat the Almighty for the ambitions that drive him. The realism of the final chapters draws Billy into the deep mystery of loss, a quandary with which worshipful people have always wrestled. As his second dog lies dead beside him, he looks upward and inquires, "Why did they have to die? Why must I hurt so? What have I done wrong?" His mother, approaching the grieving child, tries to explain that Christ him-

self suffered while he was on earth and that Billy cannot expect to live a normal life without some grief. Her tears, however, indicate that she, too, has great difficulty in facing her child's anguish.)

8. I laid the flowers on the fresh mound of earth, and then turned around and scooted for the timber. (Chap. 13, p. 151)

(Despite his father's command to stop "fooling around with the Pritchards," Billy cannot rest after the cataclysmic scene of Rubin pleading for him to pull the ax from his body, ending his misery with a swift onrush of blood. The humble gift of dried flowers borne to the lonely stretch of land where the Pritchards bury their dead symbolizes Billy's courage and acceptance of adult duty. He appeases his conscience, which impels him to do penance. The furtive graveside response of Mrs. Pritchard releases Billy from tormented dreams and allows him once more to hunt with his dogs.)

9. Instead of the two cups I expected to see, he set out three and filled them to the brim with the strong black liquid. (Chap. 15, p. 171)

(As a coming of age motif, this scene indicates the delicacy of Rawls' revelation of Billy as evolving man. Grandpa, the character who responds most openly to Billy's good qualities, gives him adequate feedback and guidance when he moves from a plateau to a higher plane of adult behavior. In this scene, Grandpa confers a badge of manhood, the right to drink coffee with men. Billy makes the passage in silence and notes: "Grandpa and Papa paid no attention to what I did. My head swelled up as big as a number-four washtub. I thought, 'I'm not only big enough to help Papa with the farm. Now I'm big enough to drink coffee.'")

10. Papa was undecided. Making up his mind, he stepped away from the tree and said to the others, "I'm going on with him. You fellows coming, or going back?" (Chap. 17, p. 199)

(Papa, an undefined and slightly wishy-washy character in most scenes, reveals something of his own manhood as he demonstrates confidence in Billy. At length, he makes a significant show of belief in his son. Acknowledging Billy's fear that the animals, too tenacious to give in to the blizzard, will die rather than quit, Papa continues the hunt. Grandpa and the judge, falling in behind the pair, follow Billy into the storm.)

Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important; you should be ready to

defend your answers with quotations from the novel.

Questions 1-5 Literal Level

1. Describe the setting of the novel.

(Billy Colman's family lives in a log cabin in the Ozark Mountains thirty miles from Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Bounded by the Illinois River and the Frisco tracks, the way to town passes Robber's Cave in the Sparrow Hawk Mountains, where Billy and his pups spend the first night. The texture of land surrounding the area provides interest for Billy's frequent night hunts, particularly his set-to with the giant sycamore, his discovery of the Ghost Coon in the hollow locust post, and the variety of physical barriers that enhance the excitement of the championship coon hunt. Another factor in the setting is the beauty of nature, which fills Billy with love for the outdoors, where he grows confident of his ability to cope with danger and learns to depend on his dogs to locate the wily raccoons that thrive in the canebrakes, bayous, and river banks of northwest Oklahoma. In adulthood, he longs for the homeland he left at age thirteen.)

2. Give proof of Billy's understanding of dogs.

(From the beginning, Billy does not rush his acquaintance with the tiny pups, which sniff his feet and learn to know him. On the road home, he allows them the freedom of their own legs, then returns them to the sack as they grow too weary for the journey. During their training, he quickly differentiates between the strength and loyalty of the male and the intelligence and ingenuity of the female. Rather than try to exterminate weaknesses, he encourages the dogs to rely on each other's strengths.

Billy keeps steady watch over his pets. He tends to their minor injuries with salve, peroxide, and a leather foot cover. During the championship hunt, his uncanny sense of their dependability affords him the courage he needs to face hunting blind in a blizzard. By utilizing his awareness of Little Ann's fear of guns, he compels her to return and lead him to her mate. At the end of their relationship, when faced with the mountain lion, Billy bravely defends the dogs he loves and who love him enough in return to risk their lives to save him.)

3. Explain the dramatic situation at the beginning of the novel.

(As the novel opens, William Colman, the adult version of Billy, demonstrates his lifelong love and appreciation for animals by rescuing a weary old redbone hound from a pack of attackers. Removed from the Oklahoma setting, Colman, who lives in Snake River Valley, Idaho, relives the "dog-wanting disease" of his late childhood years as he massages, feeds, and comforts Buddie. The sight of a homemade collar with crude lettering brings back the memories of his own experience with Little Ann and Old Dan and prefigures their homemade collars and ulti-

mately their homemade headstone. The appearance of Colman as an adult reassures the reader that the boy in the story grows up with the same qualities he revealed in childhood and that, long removed from hunting the Ozark wilds, he remains sympathetic to animals.)

4. What are the roles of Papa and Grandpa in the story?

(Billy's father and grandfather perform contrasting roles in the story. As Billy's male model, Papa goes quietly about the dreary work of farming and feeding a family of five. He depends on his young son, yet is compassionate toward the boy's need for something of his own. After Rubin's death, Papa takes control of the fearful death scene, summons authorities, and returns in foul weather to report that the event is ended and that Billy should never see the Pritchards again. When Papa is invited to the championship hunt, he thinks over his responsibilities to the four females before agreeing to accompany Billy. At the hunt, Papa's belief in his son provides the impetus to the win, which requires adults to follow the boy in search of Old Dan and the last three coons, which win the trophy for Billy's dogs.

Not a daily part of Billy's life, Grandpa is nonetheless keenly aware of his grandson's sensitivity, self-reliance, and determination. At crucial moments in the story, Grandpa provides what Papa cannot—the order for the dogs, money for the bet, and entry in the championship hunt. More adventuresome than Papa, Grandpa loves his grandson for his daring and ambition. At the hunt, Grandpa does not allow his injury to deter Billy, who, out of love and respect for the old man, heats the coon skins and wraps them around the injured foot to ease Grandpa's suffering. When Billy's parents discuss the possibility of sending him to help Grandpa at the store, Billy does not reject an opportunity to show gratitude to the person who has displayed the most support for his coon hunting.)

5. Describe the Colman family's need for money.

(Living on a farm in northwestern Oklahoma in the 1920s, the Colmans enter the Depression era with little more than their wagon, housewares, Billy's earnings from coon hunting, and the championship purse of \$300. The children appear well fed. Billy has no shoes, but he does not hesitate to save money for dogs instead of shoes. To Mama, the real need is neither clothing nor food but education for her family, who depend on home-schooling, which to her is an insubstantial substitute for public school.

At the end of the novel, while Billy sorts out the pain of losing his dogs and wonders why God leaves him in such misery, Papa carries the shoe box to the kitchen and reveals that, through Billy's determination to hunt coons and sell their hides, the family is financially able to answer Mama's prayers. In tribute to the dogs, Papa says, "This is the money earned by Old Dan and Little Ann. I've managed to make the farm feed us and clothe us and

I've saved every cent your furs brought in. We now have enough." To Mama, the money is a miracle that will keep the family together in their move from the log cabin to town and a better life for the Colman children.)

Questions 6-8 Interpretive Level

6. Discuss the importance of nature to the novel.

(Nature is neither glorified nor diminished in the novel. To Billy, the beauties of the seasons accentuate his wanderings in the woods. On his first hunt, he rhapsodizes: "It was a beautiful night, still and frosty. A big grinning Ozark moon had the countryside bathed in a soft yellow glow. The starlit heaven reminded me of a large blue umbrella, outspread and with the handle broken off." Billy and the dogs enjoy the blossoming of fragrant dogwood, papaw, and redbud and the sounds of birds. Even foul weather fails to daunt their enthusiasm for being outdoors.

As a farm child, Billy understands that nature also provides a livelihood, which, in his case, is the sale of animal hides. Just like the slaughter of chickens for the supper table, hunting exploits living things, which must die in order to be beneficial. By cashing in on the fashion in coonskin coats, Billy utilizes nature's bounty and, through an appreciation of its splendors and its dangers, learns important lessons about living in harmony with the outdoors.)

7. Give examples of violence in the novel.

(From the arrival of the traps, Billy recognizes that he cannot hunt animals without accepting death as a part of the bargain. When Papa kills the first trapped animal, Billy winces, but makes no demur about having to slaughter animals in order to hunt. In most of his encounters, the actual killing is not depicted. In the scene in which the Ghost Coon cries piteously, Billy spares the animal because it is unique and, more than the average coon, worthy of reprieve. The scene also foreshadows his relieving Rubin of the tortuous ax in his body, which he begs to have removed. By withdrawing the ax, Billy brings about both death and relief, although the act causes him nighttime torment in the form of bad dreams and recurrent bad thoughts.

The violence of Old Dan's fight with the mountain lion is a simple matter of survival of the fittest. Because his animals bravely ward off a wild beast, Billy is able to sink his ax into the mountain lion's spine. The horror of the event is the fact that Dan, in protecting his master, is too seriously wounded to survive. Mama carefully cleanses his intestines and replaces the organs and stitches them into place, but the effort is not enough to repair the damage. In quick succession, Billy watches the demise of Old Dan, who collapses in his arms, and the gradual decline of Little Ann, who cannot survive as the living half of a team. In the final chapters, Billy knows in the depths of his heart that violence and loss are a part of living, especially in the wilds of the Oklahoma woods.)

8. Discuss the purpose of the final chapters. (*Grieved that his questions about reward and pain go unanswered, Billy visits his dogs' graves and looks to heaven for comfort. His answer comes in the form of his mother's sincere Christianity, which strengthens her trust even when she has no reply to Billy's emotional upheaval. The coming together of ambition, gain, and loss occurs in the final scenes as Papa reveals Billy's earnings and announces that the family will stay together and move to town.*)

As though a supernatural ending were needed to bless the existence of two dogs, the author provides a Cherokee legend of the red fern, planted by angels and enduring forever. Billy, who is wrenched by the move from home and troubled by the deaths of his beloved dogs, leaves the departing wagon and revisits the gravesite long enough to pay his respects. The promise of the eternal red fern gladdens his heart. As though affirming the beauty and permanence of his dogs' love and loyalty, the living plant becomes an enduring monument.)

Questions 9 and 10 Critical Level

9. Discuss what Billy learns from his loss of the dogs. (*The lesson of the novel is not easy for children to accept. Billy loves a pair of living creatures who engage in a dangerous mission in supplying him with coon skins. He rewards them with devotion, good care, loyalty, and as much safety as he can supply. However, no one is able to ward off all the dangers of the forest. As demonstrated by their first night together, the three are feeble warriors against the mountain lion, which Billy deters with fire. At this early point in their mutual love, Dan proves that he intends to give his all if Billy is ever in need.*)

When the day arrives that the mountain lion again menaces Billy, Dan and Ann join forces to weaken its attack so that Billy can kill it. The effort costs Ann some injury and Dan his life. Billy learns from their suffering and deaths that he must pay for the rescue in human terms—with the emptiness that accompanies an unforeseen loss of something dear.

As nature smooths over the grave and sprouts the red fern, Billy evolves a greater respect for God, the grower of everlasting foliage that marks the remains of his beloved dogs. From his adult perspective, he looks back on the misery of the dogs' deaths and thinks only of the red fern, the token of God's love. Without returning to Oklahoma to witness it, he declares, "Yes, I know it is still there, for in my heart I believe the legend of the sacred red fern."

10. What qualities make *Where the Red Fern Grows* a classic young adult novel? (*Stories of ambition, hard work, and self-reliance are always welcome in the canon of young adult literature. This novel, more than most, carries extra worth in the form of family values and the religious overtones of faith in a higher being. Although the preponderance of the book deals with Billy's survivalism and love for his dogs, the implied meaning is that, through his devotion to the task of hunting coons, he not only rescues his family from poverty, but provides himself with a comfortable future, as demonstrated by the adult man who introduces the story.*)

As an added token of the book's worth, the themes of faith and gratitude suggest that children like Billy, who follow their innate talents and make the best of their home situations, deserve the comforts of a good life. The love that William Colman bestows on Buddie proves that Billy, grown to adulthood, bears the marks of solid character and humanistic training. From his hard-working father, he learns to keep trying. From his tough old grandfather, he learns to value support and freedom. From his Cherokee mother, he gains strength of heart and an appreciation of education.)

Questions 11-13 Creative Level

11. Lead a panel discussion of why Billy has the "dog-wanting disease." Explain how a child from Tahlequah, a big-city apartment complex, or a foreign country might have a similar need.
12. Explain in a short oral presentation the significance of each of these scenes:
- the arrival of the pups
 - Grandpa's accident
 - the beauty contest
 - the night in Robber's Cave
 - the capture of the first coonskin
 - the fall of the giant sycamore
 - Rubin's death
 - Mama's concern for Billy's grief
 - the move from the farm
 - the discovery of red fern on the graves.
13. In a theme, discuss how the story would change if the Colmans had decided not to leave the log cabin or if Ann had survived her mate.

Across the Curriculum

Language and Speech

1. Select an action-packed paragraph. Underline all action terms. Compose advice to writers concerning the use of strong verbs to capture action.
2. Compose a letter to Billy in which you praise his hunting expertise, respect for parents and grandparents, and love and devotion for the two hounds. Discuss Mama's empathy for his loss and her attempts to assuage his grief.
3. Explain the term "Cherokee Strip."

Science and Health

1. Compose a lecture on the raccoon and its nocturnal habits. Add information about other animals that roam the Ozarks at night, such as the screech owl, bat, and mountain lion.
2. Sketch different types of hunting dogs—red-bone, blue tick, walkers, and blood hounds. Add more exotic breeds and explain how each is trained for a particular type of work, such as leading the blind, pulling heavy loads, locating lost people, and protecting property and human life.
3. Explain in a paragraph why Dan's injuries are life threatening. Include comment on shock, loss of blood, infection, and dehydration.
4. Explain to a small group what survival techniques Billy employs in the wild, for example, staying warm and dry and avoiding injury with his ax.

Geography

1. Create a mural or web site that introduces the route that takes Billy up the railroad tracks to town to pick up his dogs, to the cave for the night, and back home. Emphasize the school ground, depot, store window, Illinois River, school yard, and other landmarks.
2. Locate a detailed map of the northeastern quarter of Oklahoma. Indicate Scrapper, the Ozark Mountains, Illinois River, Cherokee

reservation, Oklahoma City, and Tahlequah, where Rawls' manuscripts and personal papers are housed.

Art and Music

1. Design a road sign indicating the way from the Ozarks to Tahlequah, a handbill advertising a pair of coon hounds, a letterhead from William Colman's office, a placard or banner welcoming competitors in the coon hunt, a poster offering a reward for the Pritchards, pamphlets on Cherokee history, business cards for Grandpa, an announcement or television news item about Little Ann's silver cup, or a travel brochure covering the areas Wilson Rawls traveled as carpenter and construction worker.
2. Make a mural of the championship hunt. Designate tents for twenty-five entrants, buggies and horses, and the river. Contrast Little Ann and Old Dan with larger dogs.
3. Listen to recorded music, such as Aaron Copland's "Appalachian Spring," which suggests Billy's love for the Ozark Mountains and his appreciation of Little Ann and Old Dan.
4. Draw a cartoon strip depicting Billy's first hunt and his assault on the giant sycamore. Choose volunteers to act out the parts.

Law

Invite readers to determine whether or not Billy is at fault for Rubin's death. Decide whether Billy should testify at a hearing that the Pritchard's attempted extortion, threatened bodily harm, and verbally abused him.

Economics

1. Make an oral report on the hunting and trapping industry in North America. Explain how the business led explorers such as Jim Bridgers and Daniel Boone into unknown territory and brought riches to John Jacob Astor and the French *coureurs de bois*. Compare the boldness and bravery of frontiersmen with that of Billy and his dogs. Include current attitudes toward hunting and trapping as sport and business.

2. Suggest ways that going to school will increase Billy's earning power in adulthood.
3. Research the value of money in the 1920s as compared its value today. What jobs would be comparable to Billy's use of hunting to save \$50.00?

Social Studies

1. Compose a paragraph in which you explain how childhood experiences and a knowledge of hunting in the Ozark Mountains influenced Wilson Rawls' writing career. If you need help finding facts, refer to library sources such as *Something About the Author*, *Authors of Books for Young People*, or *Contemporary Authors*.
2. Explain the pejorative nature of the term "hill-billy." Compare its meaning with other words that connect people with where they live, particularly Okie, backwoodsman, briar hopper, nester, squatter, sandlapper, and swamp rat.

Psychology

1. Make contrasting chalkboard definitions of bullying, coercion, perseverance, determination, and trial and error. Explain how the terms apply to Billy's adventures.
2. Lead a discussion of how animals help isolated people deal with boredom and loneliness. Suggest types of animals that might benefit different ages and personalities. Refer specifically to Billy's hounds and to his appreciation for their loyalty and protection.
3. Contrast Billy's loss with that of people who have experienced similar sufferings.

Mathematics and Computers

1. Using a scale of miles, estimate the distance from Idaho Falls and Tahlequah to Scrapper, Oklahoma.
2. Explain a mathematical method of determining the height of the sycamore tree before its fall.

Literature

1. Write a radio script retelling the Indian legend of the red fern. Read your version into a tape recorder.
2. Write a memoir of Grandpa from William Colman's point of view. Comment on the old man's pluck during the blizzard, his willingness to bet two dollars, and his sacrifice to help Billy win the gold cup.
3. Listen to recorded poems about animals. Compose poetic lines to express your own experiences with farm animals, pets, wild birds, insects, and other life forms. Write one stanza commemorating Old Dan, Little Ann, the ghost coon, and the mountain lion.

History and Current Events

1. Characterize the lives of Cherokee families in the early years of Oklahoma's history.
2. Discuss with a small group why Wilson Rawls downplayed the fact that he was Cherokee. Determine how multiculturalism has replaced him among native American authors.

Education

1. Brainstorm the types of lessons that would introduce Billy and his sisters to city life, for example, explanations of vehicle traffic, a study of banking and postal systems, and an introduction to the jobs of mayor, dogcatcher, city librarian, judge, and sheriff.

Student Involvement Activities

1. Read Marjorie Kinnan Rawling's *The Yearling*, Fred Gipson's *Old Yeller*, William Armstrong's *Sounder*, N. Scott Momaday's *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, or John Steinbeck's *The Red Pony*. Explain what the main characters have in common with Billy. Discuss qualities that give them strength in difficult situations. Explain how each responds to loss.
2. List the chores necessary to the running of a farm in the early 1900s, such as chopping and stacking firewood, feeding animals, growing vegetables, and storing hay. Discuss how mechanized farming has eased the agricul-

tural burden, such as the use of chainsaws, tractors, combines, and balers.

3. Compare the upbringing of the Pritchard boys with that of Billy and his sisters. Cite examples that indicate the differences in their parents' attitudes.
4. Write a newspaper account of the championship coon hunt. Describe how Billy's partnership with his dogs impresses the judge and the search party. Strengthen your writing with direct quotations from Mr. Kyle, Mr. Benson, Papa, and Grandpa.
5. Compose an extended definition of maturity. Explain how Billy achieves maturity through small increments of awareness and appreciation, such as willingness to walk thirty miles to town to get the pups and the decision to place flowers on Rubin's grave. Relate Billy's maturation to events in your own life when you learned a valuable lesson through pain, humiliation, or loss.
6. Role-play the part of Grandpa and Papa on the championship coon hunt. Demonstrate Billy's dilemma in wanting to spare Grandpa pain and his determination to wait for Dan's call. Project how Billy and Grandpa will remain close after the Colmans move to town.
7. Watch a videotape of *Where the Red Fern Grows*. Discuss what filming adds to the original text. Comment on the portrayal of Billy, Grandpa, Rubin, and the dogs.
8. Discuss the role of prayer in the story. Explain why Billy rejects prayer after Dan dies and what the growth of the red fern indicates about God's concern for his dogs.
9. Write a diary entry from the point of view of Billy's sisters. Describe your move from the Ozark hills to town. Explain adjustments that cause you the most anguish.
10. Make a detailed study of the the plants and animals that grow near Scraper, Oklahoma. Highlight the ones that benefit human residents, such as animals that provide food,

healing, and warm pelts or plants that give shade, fruit, nuts, and firewood.

Alternate Assessment

1. List examples of teamwork, fear, dishonesty, loyalty, admiration for nature, ingenuity, men-ace, and guilt in Billy's childhood.
2. Compile a list of actions that demonstrate Billy's use of logic.
3. Compose a scene in which Billy arrives at his new home and acquires another dog.
4. Make a character list and explain the character traits of each, including Rubin's violent nature, Billy's impatience, Little Ann's fear of guns, the gang's intolerance, Grandpa's support, Papa's ambitions for his children, the sheriff's admiration, and Mama's religious faith.
5. Account for Billy's decision to let the Ghost coon live.

Vocabulary

Select words from the list below to complete each sentence that follows.

allotted	begrudgingly	fared	locust	rimrock
aromatic	canebrake	ferret	lull	slaughter
auger	civet	gawking	mackinaw	sniffing
backtracked	coaxed	hoop	momentum	squabble
backtracking	cobbler	jubilant	petrified	superstition
baling	commotion	jugular	rattling	trough
banty	doused	lithe	reason	verge
bawling	eddy	locked	redbone	washout

1. It picked up _____ as the heavy weight of the overbalanced top dove for the ground.
2. His _____-like eyes kept darting here and there.
3. After my talk with Papa, I went to Mama. I _____ no better there.
4. In the spring the _____ scent of wild flowers, redbuds, papaws, and dogwoods, drifting on the wind currents, spread over the valley and around our home.
5. Jerking loose from me, he ran over to the tree, reared up on it, and started _____.
6. Going over to the post, I saw it was a large black _____ put there many years ago to hang the gate.
7. The still _____ waters next to the banks had frozen, but out in the middle, where the current was swift, the water was running, leaving a trough in the ice pack.
8. Then she rubbed me all over with some liniment that burned like fire and smelled like a _____ cat.
9. "It's called the _____ trick," he said.
10. "Come on, boy," I _____.
11. With the sticks and some _____ wire, Grandpa made a frame that looked almost like a gingerbread man.
12. Grandpa walked over to a _____ of cheese and cut off two chunks about the size of my fist.
13. "That's six days from now," he said in a _____ voice.
14. It'll be all mine, nobody's but mine, and I'll put my _____ eggs in it.
15. During the _____ I felt hands slapping me on the back and heard the word "congratulations" time after time.
16. My dog's breathing grew faster and faster, and there was a terrible _____ in his throat.
17. The hound ran up to the graveyard and started _____ and bawling.
18. With my ax handle, I pried open his _____ jaws.
19. There would be no more wars, _____, or murder; no greed or selfishness.
20. You don't believe that hogwash _____, do you?
21. I knew he was seeking to cut the all-important vein, the _____.
22. I stopped, _____ with fear.
23. The long, _____, body dipped low to the ground.
24. The Good Lord has a _____ for everything he does.
25. He _____ on his original trail for a way.

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Identification (30 points)

Identify the character or animal described below.

- _____ 1. tires of getting caught in Billy's traps.
- _____ 2. wants a cup in which to keep banty eggs.
- _____ 3. requires medical care from the shock of seeing Rubin's death.
- _____ 4. spreads dried flowers on Rubin's grave.
- _____ 5. digs a snowbank and lights a fire.
- _____ 6. allows Buddie to leave.
- _____ 7. scolds Grandpa for being a baby.
- _____ 8. starts a fight with Billy's dogs after they tree the Ghost Coon.
- _____ 9. blames himself for placing the two-dollar bet.
- _____ 10. returns to the scene of Rubin's death to summon help and settle matters.
- _____ 11. treats Grandpa's bruised foot with expert care.
- _____ 12. assures Billy that dogs go to heaven.
- _____ 13. is Billy's hero.
- _____ 14. makes slits in the burlap sack and inserts the pups.
- _____ 15. treats Billy to a soda.

Part II: Completion (20 points)

Fill in each blank with a setting from the list that follows.

barn	Frisco tracks	mill	Robber's Cave	Snake River Valley
Bluebird Creek	Illinois River	Oklahoma	schoolyard	sycamore
depot	Kentucky	Ozarks	Scraper	Tahlequah

1. Billy and his father and grandfather journey to _____ to a championship coon hunt.
2. Billy awkwardly slides down a blue pipe at the _____.
3. William Colman, a resident of the _____, tends a weary old hound wearing a homemade collar.
4. Grandpa erects a stocking cap scarecrow at the _____.
5. On a trip to the _____, Billy is intercepted by the Pritchard boys, who come to buy chewing tobacco.
6. The baking powder can resides under the eaves of the Colman _____.
7. At the mouth of _____, the male pup displays his fearlessness.
8. Billy follows the _____ and the river thirty miles into Tahlequah.
9. Hunting in _____, Billy's dogs are badly injured by a mountain lion.
10. Dan and Ann are shipped in a wooden crate from a kennel in _____.

Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

Part III: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either T for true or F for false.

- _____ 1. Billy is aware that Little Ann is gun-shy.
- _____ 2. Billy keeps to himself the fact that he braved an icy river to rescue Little Ann.
- _____ 3. Mama agrees that going into the woods would be less dangerous if Billy had a gun.
- _____ 4. The other hunters pay little attention to the skills of Billy's undersized dogs.
- _____ 5. Grandpa thinks that Billy's money should go toward buying Papa some red mules.
- _____ 6. Grandpa is aware that the Pritchard boys are not to be trusted alone in the store.
- _____ 7. In the moonlight, Billy sees Mama feeding his dogs.
- _____ 8. Mr. Kyle will not allow Papa to chop down the tree in which the three coons hide.
- _____ 9. The contents of the shoebox help the Colmans move closer to a school.
- _____ 10. Billy makes friends with the "dog boy."

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. Discuss why Billy wants his own dogs.
- 2. Describe how Billy honors the dead dogs.
- 3. Describe Grandpa's role in the novel.
- 4. Analyze Billy's relations with his sisters and parents.
- 5. Contrast Little Ann and Old Dan as hunters.

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Short Answer (20 points)

Answer each of the following questions.

- _____ 1. Where does Billy find the sportsman's magazine?
- _____ 2. Which animal is locked into the corncrib?
- _____ 3. What does Billy want to replace the double-bitted ax?
- _____ 4. From whom does Billy hide at the Pritchard grave?
- _____ 5. Who buys Billy his first soda?
- _____ 6. What does Billy wrap around Grandpa's ankle?
- _____ 7. What kind of house do the Colmans vacate?
- _____ 8. Who wants a trophy in which to keep banty eggs?
- _____ 9. How far is it from Billy's house to Tahlequah?
- _____ 10. In what state is the kennel?

Part II: Description (30 points)

Place an X by every statement that is true of Billy.

- _____ 1. is generous toward his sisters and parents.
- _____ 2. attacks children who call him "dog boy."
- _____ 3. needs a coonskin to use in the pups' training.
- _____ 4. carves a marker from sandstone.
- _____ 5. fears that Rainie will stab him during a night hunt.
- _____ 6. returns to Rubin's body and reports his death to the authorities.
- _____ 7. hopes to buy another dog when the family settles in Tahlequah.
- _____ 8. trusts his dogs not to give up the hunt.
- _____ 9. would not mind helping Grandpa at the store.
- _____ 10. leaves his lantern at Rubin's grave.
- _____ 11. trusts the stationmaster because the man has a bird.
- _____ 12. looks forward to sliding down the blue pipe a second time.
- _____ 13. follows the Frisco tracks into town.
- _____ 14. chews tobacco.
- _____ 15. uses Grandpa's hairbrush to groom Little Ann.

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part III: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Underline an answer to complete each statement below.

1. Billy lives in the **(Tetons, Ozarks, vicinity of Bluebird Creek, Snake River Valley)**.
2. Billy constructs a **(pine box, steel trap, blue pipe slide, money bank)** with his own hands.
3. At **(Grandpa's mill, Shannon Ford, the giant sycamore, Robber's Cave)**, the small male pup proves its ferocity.
4. During his walk down the street in Tahlequah, Billy looks at **(Christmas decorations, his reflection in the glass, yard goods, guns and candy)**.
5. It takes Billy two years to **(train the pups, save \$50, trap the first coon skin, get up the courage to enter a championship hunt)**.
6. According to the legend, the red fern is planted **(near graves, by angels, on Cherokee land, only in the Tetons)**.
7. Billy's family suffers from **(illiteracy, envy, insecurity, poverty)**.
8. At the championship hunt, Billy **(pays a \$25 fee, camps near Dr. Lathman, draws the fourth night, proves that Little Ann is not gun-shy)**.
9. Papa demonstrates that Billy is growing up by **(buying him a gun, serving him coffee, sending him to the sorghum mill alone, letting him chop down a giant sycamore)**.
10. At the dogs' grave, Mama indicates that **(dogs go to heaven, God does not cause suffering, Billy must pray for more dogs, leaving the farm will bring an end to his sorrow)**.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Describe how Old Dan and Little Ann die.
2. Give evidence that Billy respects his grandfather's opinion.
3. Explain how Billy wins two cups.
4. Describe Little Ann's intelligence.
5. Discuss the contents of the shoebox.

Answer Key

VOCABULARY

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. momentum | 14. banty |
| 2. ferret | 15. commotion |
| 3. fared | 16. rattling |
| 4. aromatic | 17. sniffing |
| 5. bawling | 18. locked |
| 6. locust | 19. slaughter |
| 7. eddy | 20. superstition |
| 8. civet | 21. jugular |
| 9. backtracking | 22. petrified |
| 10. coaxed | 23. lithe |
| 11. baling | 24. reason |
| 12. hoop | 25. backtracked |
| 13. jubilant | |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Identification (30 points)

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Samie | 9. Grandpa |
| 2. little sister | 10. Papa |
| 3. Rainie | 11. Dr. Lathman |
| 4. Mrs. Pritchard | 12. Mama |
| 5. Billy | 13. Daniel Boone |
| 6. William Colman | 14. stationmaster |
| 7. Nannie | 15. marshal |
| 8. Old Blue | |

Part II: Completion (20 points)

1. Bluebird Creek
2. schoolyard
3. Snake River Valley
4. sycamore
5. mill
6. barn
7. Robber's Cave
8. Frisco tracks
9. Cyclone Timber
10. Kentucky

Part III: True/False (20 points)

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

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Short Answer (20 points)

1. fishermen's camp
2. Little Ann
3. gun
4. Mrs. Pritchard
5. marshal
6. coonskin
7. log cabin
8. Billy's little sister
9. thirty miles
10. Kentucky

Part II: Completion (30 points)

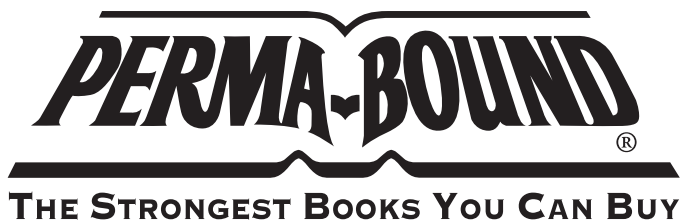
- | | | |
|------|------|-------|
| 1. X | 6. | 11. X |
| 2. | 7. | 12. |
| 3. X | 8. X | 13. X |
| 4. X | 9. X | 14. |
| 5. | 10. | 15. X |

Part III: Multiple Choice (20 points)

1. Ozarks
2. pine box
3. Robber's Cave
4. his reflection in the glass
5. save \$50
6. by angels
7. poverty
8. draws the fourth night
9. serving him coffee
10. dogs go to heaven

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.



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