

Week 21

# *My Family and Other Animals*

by Gerald Durrell

## Unit 1



# Week 21

## Student Checklist

Read Part One of *My Family and Other Animals*.

- “The Speech for the Defence”-chapter 1 (The Unsuspected Isle)
  - Answer comprehension questions, workbook pages 43-44
- Chapters 2-3 (The Strawberry-Pink Villa and The Rose-Beetle Man)
  - Answer comprehension questions, workbook pages 47-48
- Chapters 4-5 (A Bushel of Learning and A Treasure of Spiders)
  - Answer comprehension questions, workbook page 53
- Chapter 6 (The Sweet Spring) and conversation
  - Answer comprehension questions, workbook page 57

Complete lessons on:

- Direct and indirect objects
- Subject-verb agreement
- Other types of verbs
- Analyzing Nonfiction: *Life on the Mississippi*

Write the rest of the comparison/contrast paper:

- Rewrite the rough draft focusing on content, support, and organization
- Rewrite the rough draft focusing on sentence structure, variety, and power
- Rewrite the rough draft focusing on word choice and wordiness
- Write the final draft

Do extra activities (optional)

- \_\_\_\_\_

## Reading

In addition to writing several books, Gerald Durrell was a naturalist, conservationist, and zookeeper. This book is a memoir of part of his childhood. Gerald's older brother, Lawrence Durrell, would become a famous novelist and poet.

Read "The Speech for the Defence"-chapter 1 (The Unsuspected Isle), pages xi-16 of *My Family and Other Animals*.



## Questions

1. How old is the author when his family moves to Corfu?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Whose idea is it to go to Corfu?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. From which country do the family move to Corfu?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. The section titled "The Migration" has two parts with a line break in between. (In my edition, this break occurs on page 5 and the last sentence before the break is, "So we sold the house and fled from the gloom of the English summer, like a flock of migrating seagulls.") The first part of this section is mostly developed using:
  - A. Description
  - B. Dialogue
  - C. Narration
5. The second part of this section (ending at the beginning of chapter 1), is mostly developed using:
  - A. Description
  - B. Dialogue
  - C. Narration
6. Why is Mother disturbed by seeing all the funerals pass by their hotel?  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What does Mother insist they need in a villa?

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8. Why do the family have so much trouble with the cab drivers when they want to go looking for a villa, and who comes to their rescue?

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### Lesson: Direct and Indirect Objects

Let's start this lesson by briefly revisiting basic sentence structure in English. English is an SVO language – subject-verb-object. The subject and verb are required for most proper English sentences (anything beyond a simple answer or exclamation). Consider the sentence:

**Mother is reading.**

*Mother* is our subject, *is reading* is our verb. (It's a verb phrase, but that's not important here.) That's all we need for a sentence. But we can add an object:

**Mother is reading a book.**



Now we know more precisely what Mother is reading. If a verb has an object after it, we call the object a direct object and the verb a transitive verb. (Think of the verb as **trans**mitting something to something.) In the second sentence, *reading* is a transitive verb and *a book* is its direct object. What about the first sentence where we don't know what Mother is reading? There, reading is acting as an intransitive verb because it doesn't have an object.

Many verbs are like this – they can be transitive or intransitive depending on the sentence. But some verbs can only be transitive or intransitive. For example, *to hold* is always transitive. We cannot say *Mother held*. We need to know what she held. *Mother held a book* is a correct sentence and *a book* is the direct object.

I know you're itching to hear about indirect objects, but let's do one more thing here before we move on. There are three pairs of words in English that are closely related to each other, but one of each pair is always transitive and the other is always intransitive, and they often cause confusion. I would like to clear up or prevent that confusion for you.

The three pairs are *lie/lay*, *sit/set*, and *rise/raise*. In all three cases, the first option is the intransitive verb and the second is the transitive verb. In other words, the words *lay*, *set*, and *raise* all require a direct object – something or someone you are laying, setting, or raising. Sample sentences will help:

I need to lie down.

Please lay your clothes neatly on the chair.

Let's sit outside.

Set the groceries anywhere.

Everyone rise and go out the door to your left.

Jen tried raising parakeets, but it didn't go well.



In each pair, the first sentence does not have a direct object. They don't need to because *lie*, *sit*, and *rise* are always intransitive verbs. In each pair, the second sentence has a direct object: *clothes*, *groceries*, and *parakeets*. They must have direct objects because *lay*, *set*, and *raise* are always transitive verbs.

The direct object takes the direct force of the action of the verb. What is laid down? The clothes. What is set down? The groceries. What is raised? Parakeets.

Sometimes there is another object in a sentence with a transitive verb. This other object is indirectly receiving the action, and is called the *indirect object*:

**Mother gave Gerald the jar of caterpillars.**

Here, *the jar* is the direct object and *Gerald* is the indirect object. The jar directly receives the action of giving, but it is given to Gerald. Gerald indirectly receives the action of giving.

If you aren't certain about finding direct and indirect objects, ask yourself, "What was given?" Direct objects answer the question "What?" or "Who/Whom?" The answer to that question is *the jar* (not *Gerald*). The indirect object will answer questions like "To whom?" or "For what?" So *Gerald* is the indirect object. Also note that a sentence can have a direct object with no indirect object, but a sentence with an indirect object must also have a direct object.

You can have multiple *direct* and *indirect* objects in a sentence:

**Mother gave food and snacks to Gerald and Larry.**

How does a knowledge of transitive and intransitive verbs, direct and indirect objects help your writing? Understanding the difference between the pairs of words above is important to mastering standard English usage. And any grasp of grammar will help when you start to learn additional languages. Other than that, you'll probably rarely need the technical terms, except on language arts tests and quizzes, like in this book. Most verbs are used enough in daily speech that we automatically know if they need direct objects or not.

### Summary

- Transitive verbs require direct objects but intransitive verbs do not take direct objects.
- Some verbs can be either transitive or intransitive depending on the sentence, but others are always one or the other.
- A direct object is what or who the verb is directly affecting.
- An indirect object is who or what the verb is indirectly affecting.
- Take time to master three pairs of words – lie/lay, sit/set, and rise/raise – as to whether they are transitive or intransitive.

In each sentence, underline the direct object once and the indirect object twice. Not all sentences will have both or either, and some will have more than one.

**Example:** Mother read Gerald a story.

1. Let's sing Perla a song to make her feel better.
2. Please pass me the potatoes and sprouts.
3. The dogs ran behind the carriage, barking madly.
4. If you sit on the lawn your pants will get wet.
5. Please loan me and my brother some money.
6. We're going to raise the flag right after sunrise.
7. Alex asked Saranna and Carrie a difficult question.
8. Don't lie under the table with the cat.
9. Audrey was excited to buy Edith a gift.
10. Set the donation anywhere.
11. Ali told Rita my secret!
12. I rise with the chickens each day.
13. Isaak loaned Rickey his new skateboard and helmet.
14. At the end of your turn, lay down your cards.



## Reading

Read chapters 2-3 (The Strawberry-Pink Villa and The Rose-Beetle Man), pages 17-40 of *My Family and Other Animals*.



## Questions

1. Who becomes like one of the Durrell family?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Each member of the family has their own hobby. List three members and their hobbies.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What does Gerald learn to do, somewhat, with the help of some local peasant girls?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. In the first two paragraphs of chapter 3, what is one detail you could see? One you could hear? One you could taste? One you could smell?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What does Gerald do with the peasant woman Agathi?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What does Yani warn Gerald against?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What does Gerald buy on one of his explorations of the countryside?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. If someone is lying down, what does Achilles try to do?  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. How does Achilles die?

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10. What does Quasimodo refuse to do? What does Quasimodo love?

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11. What events completely change Quasimodo's behavior?

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## Lesson: Subject-Verb Agreement

You use correct subject-verb agreement almost every time you speak, saying things like "Giraffes are endangered." Here, you put the plural *giraffes* with the correct verb *are*. Choosing the correct verb depending on whether the subject is singular or plural is something you do many times a day without thinking about it.

We know a *boy* laughs and *boys* laugh, but let's look at some times it can be trickier to know how to make the subject and verb agree.



### Collective Nouns

Collective nouns are those nouns which name a group: class, army, pack, flock, orchestra, etc. Whether you treat a collective noun like a singular noun (one thing) or a plural noun (made up of many things) depends on what the noun is doing. If all members of the group are acting as a unit, they are treated as a singular. If they are acting as individuals, they are treated as a plural.

The **class works** together on the play.

Here, all members of the class are acting together. They are producing one play together, as a unit, so *class* is treated as a singular noun.

The **class write** their essays over the spring break.

In this sentence, each class member is writing their own essay, so *class* is treated as a plural noun. Even though each member is performing the same action, they aren't working as a unit, and that is why the noun is thought of as the individuals rather than the collective.

If you aren't sure which way it's supposed to be when writing, you can often rewrite it in a way that is clearer:



The **students write** their essays over the spring break.

Of course if you were to replace *class* in the first sentence with *students*, you would also change the verb, as *students* is always a plural verb:

The **students work** on the play together.

But – if the meaning of the first sentence also included people who weren't students – maybe the teacher and teacher's aide – you would have to think of something different:

**Everyone** in the class, including the teacher and her aide, **works** on the play together.



That sentence brings us to our next topic.

## Indefinite Pronouns

We looked at these earlier this year, in our study of pronouns. These are the pronouns that don't require an antecedent, words like *anybody*, *nothing*, and *everyone*. It can be tricky to make these pronouns agree properly with their verbs. It will help if you learn that some indefinite pronouns are always singular, some are always plural, and some can be both.

The indefinite pronouns that are always singular are those that end in *-body*, *-one*, and *-thing*. This group also includes these pronouns: *one*, *another*, *each*, *either*, *neither*, and *much*.

**Everybody wants** to be heard.

**Something is** wrong with the tractor.

The park or the beach? **Either is** fine with me.

The indefinite pronouns that are always plural are *both*, *few*, *many*, and *several*:

The park or the beach? **Both are** fun.

**Many enjoy** getting away from home for a long weekend.

The indefinite pronouns *all*, *more*, *some*, and *none* are sometimes singular and sometimes plural. It depends on what they're referring to. If they're referring to something singular, then they're singular. If they're referring to something plural, then they're plural.

**All** the rolls **taste** strange. (*Rolls* is plural, so we use the plural verb *taste*.)

**All** the water **tastes** strange too. (*Water* is singular, so now the verb is the singular *tastes*.)

**Some** cookies **have** fallen behind the stove. (*Cookies* is plural, so we use *have*.)

**More** dough **has** been made. (*Dough* is singular, so we use *has*.)

### Compound subjects

A compound subject is created using two or more subjects and a coordinating conjunction (usually *and* or *or*). This can get confusing, but let's stick to the most common situations. If the subjects are joined by *and*, usually they are treated as plural:

Gerald **and** Larry **ride** in the carriage.

If the subjects are joined by *or* (or by the correlative conjunctions *either/or* or *neither/nor*), they are not joined in the same way as they are when joined by *and*. The purpose of these words is to separate (either this or that, but not both). This means the verb agrees with whatever the noun is – singular or plural.

I'm not sure if Italy **or** Greece **is** my favorite vacation spot.

**Neither** the toilets **nor** the funerals **upset** Gerald.

Here you see that if you use two plural words (toilets/funerals) you treat the subject as plural, but if you use two singular words (Italy/Greece), you treat the subject as singular, even though it is a compound subject.

But what if you are using *or* and one of the subjects is singular while the other is plural? What if we want to talk about Italy and the Greek Islands? Of course, if we are joining them with *and*, it's plural: *Italy and the Greek Islands are my favorite vacation spots*. But with *or*, which do you choose? See if you can guess the rule from these sentences:



Either Italy or the Greek Islands are my favorite vacation spot.

Either the Greek Islands or Italy is my favorite vacation spot.

Here, the verb changes depending on the order of the subjects. You match the verb to the subject nearest it. Since *Islands* is plural, we use a plural verb in the first sentence. Since *Italy* is singular, we use the singular verb in the second sentence.

### Intervening Phrases

Sometimes a phrase, such as a prepositional phrase, comes between the subject and the verb. Don't let these fool you.

The **dogs** behind the carriage **is** loud.      Wrong

The **dogs** behind the carriage **are** loud.      Right

Sometimes people get confused, thinking the verb should go with *carriage*, and of course we would say *the carriage is loud*. But *behind the carriage* is the prepositional phrase, not the subject. So if you aren't sure, remove the intervening phrase in your mind and you'll see that *the dogs are loud*.

## Dollars

This word is special. If you're talking about it as a quantity of money, it's singular, but if you're talking about the bills themselves, it's plural:

Twenty dollars **is** a lot of money for a pair of socks.

Dollars **are** welcome in some other countries as well.



## There

When you start a sentence with “there” the subject follows the verb. So the verb needs to agree with that subject (not with *there*):

Waiter, there **is** a hair in my soup!

There **are** flies in it too!

## Summary

- When using a collective noun, the noun takes the singular verb form if the collective is acting as a unit and the plural verb form if they are not.
- Some indefinite pronouns always take a singular verb, some always take a plural verb, and some can do either, depending on what they're referring to.
- A compound subject can be treated as singular or plural, depending on how it is joined and the order of the subjects.
- Intervening phrases (such as prepositional phrases) do not change subject-verb agreement.
- The words “dollars” and “there” can take the singular or plural verb form, depending on the sentence.

Underline the correct form of each verb.

**Example: No one is/are at the door.**

1. The herbs from the garden taste/tastes wonderful!
2. Few cross/crosses the mountain path and survive.
3. There are/is three tortoises left in the sack.
4. A tortoise and a pigeon was/were Gerald's first pets on the island.
5. There are/is a pigeon on the end of the bed!
6. Everybody want/wants basically the same things from life.
7. My cousins or their mother visit/visits us each summer.
8. More cookies are/is on the plate and some milk are/is in the refrigerator.
9. A cake, a pie, or cookies are/is a safe bet for a potluck.
10. Five dollars are/is an excellent price for a tortoise.
11. The crowd surge/surges towards the exit.
12. Dollars buy/buys even more here than the local currency.



## Reading

Read chapters 4-5 (A Bushel of Learning and A Treasure of Spiders), pages 40-63 of *My Family and Other Animals*.



## Questions

1. What does George teach Gerald that enhances his pastime of viewing the natural world?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What does George do while Gerald is trying to do his math assignment?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What does George work into the various subjects to increase Gerald's interest?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What new friend does Gerald make, and why is this friend particularly wonderful to Gerald?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Why does Gerald make a lot of noise while approaching Yani's house?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What has Yani caught that he shows to Gerald?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Lesson: Other Types of Verbs

In Week 2 we had a lesson on verbs. This lesson focused on action verbs (verbs which show action, even if it sometimes looks like inaction such as *to stay* or *to think*) and helping verbs (verbs like *to be* or *to have* when they accompany action verbs to change the verb's tense: *I am going*, *You have been swimming*). Today let's look at some other types of verbs.

### Modals

*Modal* is a technical grammar term for certain types of helping verbs. It's not pronounced like *model*, but has a long o: MŌ-del. Here they are:

- Can/could/be able to
- May/might
- Should/ought to
- Would
- Must/have to
- Will/shall



While other helping verbs change a verb's tense, modals have a different job. Modals help us:

- talk about ability: Spiro **could** get whatever the family wanted.
- ask permission: Margo said, "**May** I have more toast, please?"
- talk about possibilities: Gerald **should** be able to learn Greek, if he talks with people enough.
- indicate necessity: Leslie **must** shoot his gun further away from the house.
- show intention: "I **will** have peace and quiet!" Larry yelled.

There's not much more to say about modals. We use them, accurately, all the time. You might want to add the word "modal" to your vocabulary, in case you encounter it on a test.

### Gerunds

A gerund is a verb ending in -ing that acts as a noun. All gerunds end in -ing, but not all verbs that end in -ing are gerunds.

**Running** is great exercise.

Too bad I hate **running**.

Gerald and Roger **are running** up the hill.

*Running* in the first sentence is a gerund. It looks like a verb, but it's acting like a noun. What is great exercise? Running is great exercise. It is the subject of the sentence.

*Running* is also a gerund in the second sentence. What do I hate? Running – just like I might hate coffee or horror films or polyester. It is the direct object. But in the third sentence, *running* is the verb. It tells us what Gerald and Roger are doing.

How to tell when an -ing verb is a gerund and when it's not? If it has a helping verb with it,

it's not a gerund. Only verbs get helping verbs. Be careful though. The same word can act as a helping verb or a linking verb:

Fred **is swimming** in the river.

Fred's favorite exercise **is swimming**.

In the first sentence, *is* acts as a helping verb, so *swimming* is a verb. In the second sentence, *is* acts as a linking verb, so *swimming* is a gerund. If you're unsure, try replacing the word with another noun. *Fred is soccer in the river.* That makes no sense. But *Fred's favorite exercise is soccer* is a reasonable sentence, so that tells you that *swimming* is acting as a noun in that sentence.

But since linking verbs have come up, let's turn to them now.

## **Linking Verbs**

While action verbs tell what the subject of the sentence is doing, linking verbs tell what the subject of the sentence is. Some examples:

Gerald **was** a boy.

Margo **is** Gerald's sister.

Spiro **will be** helpful.

Here we see three verb tenses for *to be* – past, present, and future. In each case, they are acting as linking verbs. These sentences could be expressed as *Gerald = a boy*, *Margo = Gerald's sister*, and *Spiro = helpful*. A linking verb links something or someone in the subject portion of the sentence with something, someone, or a quality in the predicate portion.

*To be* is the most used linking verb, but it is not the only one. *To become* is another related one. It might be more surprising to know that some of the verbs associated with the senses can be either action verbs or linking verbs, depending on the sentence:

Larry **smells** the eggs cooking.

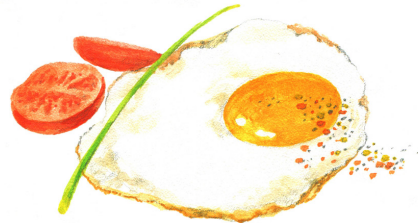
The eggs **smell** delicious.

Achilles **tasted** the strawberry.

The strawberry **tasted** amazing!

Gerald **felt** the bark of the Cyprus tree.

The bark **felt** rough and cool.



In all these examples, the verbs in the first sentences are action verbs and those in the second sentence are linking verbs. Larry is doing the action of smelling. But when we say, "The eggs smell delicious," we are saying "The eggs = delicious." That pattern is true in the other two examples.

In Week 6, in the lesson on phrases, you already learned about participles (verbs that act as adjectives) and the infinitive (*to be*, *to jump*). In all these cases, there isn't much that will make a difference with your writing, but learning the terminology of different verbs can help you better understand sentence construction. With that in mind, we're now going to look at one last type of verb.

### Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs are actually my favorite type of verb. Phrasal verbs are not verb phrases, but they do consist of a verb plus something else. Phrasal verbs are verbs plus another word, usually a preposition or adverb, that go together. The phrasal verb doesn't have the same meaning as its verb portion, and in fact can have a vastly different meaning.

Consider the verb *to throw*. We all know this is an action verb that means to take something and hurl or toss it. But the phrasal verb *throw out* means to dispose of something. If I tell you to throw out the bad potato salad in the fridge, you aren't going to open the door and hurl it outside. More likely you'll scrape it into the garbage or compost heap with no actual throwing involved. Similarly, if instead you were foolish enough to eat some of that potato salad, you might then *throw up*, another activity that involves no actual throwing.

Understanding phrasal verbs becomes important when trying to understand a sentence like this:

Maureen threw out the potato salad.

When asked to parse such a sentence, many people will say that *out the potato salad* is a prepositional phrase. They recognize that *out* is often a preposition, so that seems to make sense. But it's not correct. Instead, *threw out* is the verb and *the potato salad* is the direct object (not the object of the preposition). There are many phrasal verbs in English. If you're curious you can search for a list on line. I think it's fun to see how prepositions and adverbs can change a verb's meaning. And they're a good thing to know about if you're given a test on prepositional phrases so they don't fool you. But otherwise they won't affect your language arts skills.



## Summary

- Modals are a type of helping verb that express such concepts as ability, necessity, and intention.
- Gerunds are verbs acting as nouns.
- Linking verbs express that the subject is something or some quality.
- *To be* is the most common linking verb, but there are others.
- Phrasal verbs are verbs with a preposition or adverb that changes the verb's meaning.



## Reading

Read chapter 6 (The Sweet Spring) and conversation, pages 63-79 of *My Family and Other Animals*.

## Questions

1. Gerald loves Theodore's study. List three things in it that Gerald approves of.

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2. Spring has come, and each family member reacts differently. List any two members of the family and how they react or what they do during this spring.

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3. What does Larry do that greatly annoys Mother?

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4. What do you think the family will do next?

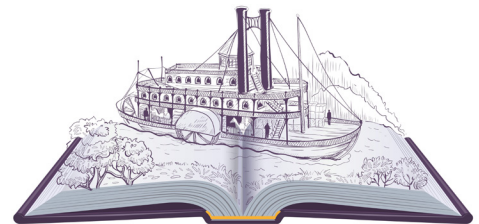
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## Lesson: Analyzing Nonfiction: *Life on the Mississippi*

Read Chapter 5 from *Life on the Mississippi* by Mark Twain and answer the questions. The first three chapters of this book give a history of the Mississippi River. In Chapter 4, Twain describes how he and other boys in his hometown wanted to be riverboat pilots, but he could not get a pilot to teach him. So Twain runs away.



### I Want to be a Cub-pilot

Months afterward the hope within me struggled to a reluctant death, and I found myself without an ambition. But I was ashamed to go home. I was in Cincinnati, and I set to work to map out a new career. I had been reading about the recent exploration of the river Amazon by an expedition sent out by our government. It was said that the expedition, owing to difficulties, had not thoroughly explored a part of the country

lying about the head-waters, some four thousand miles from the mouth of the river. It was only about fifteen hundred miles from Cincinnati to New Orleans, where I could doubtless get a ship. I had thirty dollars left; I would go and complete the exploration of the Amazon. This was all the thought I gave to the subject. I never was great in matters of detail. I packed my valise, and took passage on an ancient tub called the 'Paul Jones,' for New Orleans. For the sum of sixteen dollars I had the scarred and tarnished splendors of 'her' main saloon principally to myself, for she was not a creature to attract the eye of wiser travelers.

When we presently got under way and went poking down the broad Ohio, I became a new being, and the subject of my own admiration. I was a traveler! A word never had tasted so good in my mouth before. I had an exultant sense of being bound for mysterious lands and distant climes which I never have felt in so uplifting a degree since. I was in such a glorified condition that all ignoble feelings departed out of me, and I was able to look down and pity the untraveled with a compassion that had hardly a trace of contempt in it. Still, when we stopped at villages and wood-yards, I could not help lolling carelessly upon the railings of the boiler deck to enjoy the envy of the country boys on the bank. If they did not seem to discover me, I presently sneezed to attract their attention, or moved to a position where they could not help seeing me. And as soon as I knew they saw me I gaped and stretched, and gave other signs of being mightily bored with traveling.

I kept my hat off all the time, and stayed where the wind and the sun could strike me, because I wanted to get the bronzed and weather-beaten look of an old traveler. Before the second day was half gone I experienced a joy which filled me with the purest gratitude; for I saw that the skin had begun to blister and peel off my face and neck. I wished that the boys and girls at home could see me now.



We reached Louisville in time – at least the neighborhood of it. We stuck hard and fast on the rocks in the middle of the river, and lay there four days. I was now beginning to feel a strong sense of being a part of the boat's family, a sort of infant son to the captain and the younger brother to the officers. There is no estimating the pride I took in this grandeur, or the affection that began to swell and grow in me for those people. I could not know how the lordly steamboatman scorns that sort of presumption in a mere landsman. I particularly longed to acquire the least trifle of notice from the big stormy mate, and I was on the alert for an opportunity to do him a service to that end. It came at last. The riotous powwow of setting a spar was going on down on the forecastle, and I went down there and stood around in the way – or mostly skipping out of it – till the mate suddenly roared a general order for somebody to bring him a capstan bar. I sprang to his side and said: "Tell me where it is – I'll fetch it!"

If a rag-picker had offered to do a diplomatic service for the Emperor of Russia, the monarch could not have been more astounded than the mate was. He even stopped swearing. He stood and stared down at me. It took him ten seconds to scrape his disjointed remains together again. Then he said impressively: 'Well, if this don't beat hell!' and turned to his work with the air of a man who had been confronted with a problem too abstruse for solution.

I crept away, and courted solitude for the rest of the day. I did not go to dinner; I stayed away from supper until everybody else had finished. I did not feel so much like a member of the boat's family now as before. However, my spirits returned, in installments, as we pursued our way down the river. I was sorry I hated the mate so, because it was not in (young) human nature not to admire him. He was huge and muscular, his face was bearded and whiskered all over; he had a red woman and a blue woman tattooed on his right arm, - one on each side of a blue anchor with a red rope to it; and in the matter of profanity he was sublime. When he was getting out cargo at a landing, I was always where I could see and hear. He felt all the majesty of his great position, and made the world feel it, too. When he gave even the simplest order, he discharged it like a blast of lightning, and sent a long, reverberating peal of profanity thundering after it. I could not help contrasting the way in which the average landsman would give an order, with the mate's way of doing it. If the landsman should wish the gang-plank moved a foot farther forward, he would probably say: 'James, or William, one of you push that plank forward, please;' but put the mate in his place and he would roar out: 'Here, now, start that gang-plank for'ard! Lively, now! *what're* you about! Snatch it! SNATCH it! There! There! Aft again! aft again! don't you hear me. Dash it to dash! are you going to *sleep* over it! 'Vast heaving. 'Vast heaving, I tell you! Going to heave it clear astern? *Where're* you going with that barrel! *For'ard* with it 'fore I make you swallow it, you dash-dash-dash-*dashed* split-between a tired mud-turtle and a crippled hearse-horse!'

I wished I could talk like that.

When the soreness of my adventure with the mate had somewhat worn off, I began timidly to make up to the humblest official connected with the boat - the night watchman. He snubbed my advances at first, but I presently ventured to offer him a new chalk pipe; and that softened him. So he allowed me to sit with him by the big bell on the hurricane deck, and in time he melted into conversation. He could not well have helped it, I hung with such homage on his words and so plainly showed that I felt honored by his notice. He told me the names of dim capes and shadowy islands as we glided by them in the solemnity of the night, under the winking stars, and by and by got to talking about himself. He seemed over-sentimental for a man whose salary was six dollars a week - or rather he might have seemed so to an older person than I. But I drank in his words hungrily, and with a faith that might have moved mountains if it had been applied judiciously. What was it to me that he was soiled and seedy and fragrant with gin? What was it to me that his grammar was bad, his construction worse, and his profanity so void of art that it was an element of weakness rather than strength in his conversation? He was a wronged man, a man

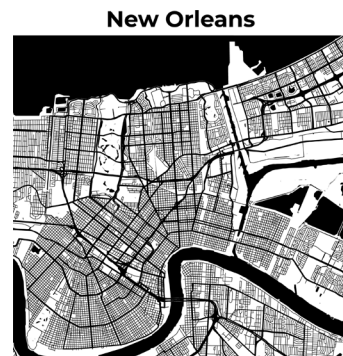
who had seen trouble, and that was enough for me. As he mellowed into his plaintive history his tears dripped upon the lantern in his lap, and I cried, too, from sympathy.

He said he was the son of an English nobleman – either an earl or an alderman, he could not remember which, but believed was both; his father, the nobleman, loved him, but his mother hated him from the cradle; and so while he was still a little boy he was sent to ‘one of them old, ancient colleges’ – he couldn’t remember which; and by and by his father died and his mother seized the property and ‘shook’ him as he phrased it. After his mother shook him, members of the nobility with whom he was acquainted used their influence to get him the position of ‘loblolly-boy in a ship;’ and from that point my watchman threw off all trammels of date and locality and branched out into a narrative that bristled all along with incredible adventures; a narrative that was so reeking with bloodshed and so crammed with hair-breadth escapes and the most engaging and unconscious personal villainies, that I sat speechless, enjoying, shuddering, wondering, worshipping.

It was a sore blight to find out afterwards that he was a low, vulgar, ignorant, sentimental, half-witted humbug, an untraveled native of the wilds of Illinois, who had absorbed wildcat literature and appropriated its marvels, until in time he had woven odds and ends of the mess into this yarn, and then gone on telling it to fledglings like me, until he had come to believe it himself.

1. “I packed my valise, and took passage on an ancient tub called the ‘Paul Jones,’ for New Orleans.” Strictly from context, what is the most likely definition of *valise*?

- A. Books
- B. Clothes
- C. Gun
- D. Suitcase



2. Which of these best describes the boat Twain is on (the *Paul Jones*)?

- A. Fast and modern
- B. Old and falling apart
- C. Old-fashioned but beautiful
- D. The best boat of its type

3. How much does Twain pay for his passage to New Orleans?

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4. According to Twain, how far is the journey from Cincinnati to New Orleans?

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5. What is Twain's ultimate destination?
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6. Twain was 21 years old during this part of his story, but he was much older when he wrote the book. How does Twain view his younger self (i.e., what tone does he use)?
- A. He views his younger self with amusement
  - B. He is bitter about things he did and what happened to him
  - C. He is proud about what he was
  - D. He takes a serious tone
7. When Twain is traveling on the boat, why does he want the boys on shore to see him?
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8. Which two methods does Twain primarily use for developing the mate's character? (Underline two)
- A. Actions
  - B. Description
  - C. Dialogue
  - D. Other people's opinions
9. At two points Twain specifically says that he felt or thought something only because he was younger. Name one of the two things.
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