

Setting and Mood Quiz

Setting and Mood

Read and answer questions 1-4.

1. Read the following passage.

The ship bobbed up and down, back and forth, in the stormy sea. Waves crashed over its sides again and again. Some crew members struggled to take down the sails, which flapped uncontrollably in the high wind. Others worked on deck, furiously bailing water over the side to keep the ship afloat.

The setting of this passage creates a mood of—

- A. peacefulness
- B. dreaminess
- C. anger
- D. wildness

2. Which example of imagery would help create a somber, or sad, mood?

- A. Paint peeled from the walls of the silent, empty playroom.
- B. The roses on the table filled the kitchen with a sweet smell.
- C. Cool, clear water bubbled up from the secret spring.
- D. A warm breeze blew along the sunny beach.

3. Read the following passage.

It was a new morning. Kathleen got out of bed and stretched as she walked to the window. She looked down at the young, green trees surrounding the garden below. The sun had just come up. The sky was blue, and the air was fresh. Kathleen said to herself, "On a day like this, I'm ready for anything!"

Which detail of the setting does NOT add to the cheerful mood of this passage?

- A. the new morning
- B. Kathleen's bed
- C. the young, green trees
- D. the blue sky and fresh air

4. Read the following passage.

The bells in the old tower continued to echo through the rainy morning. Their ringing sounded like shouts of "Guilty!" to Leah.

"If only they would stop!" she thought wildly. She pressed her hands to her ears, trying to block out the sound. It seemed, however, that the bells were growing louder than ever! Leah suddenly screamed, "Someone help me—please!"

The mood of the selection is created through the image of—

- A. the look of the tower
- B. the feel of the rain
- C. the sound of the bells
- D. the feel of Leah's hands

Read the following passage and answer questions 5-7.

Morning. The sea is calm. It has only the faintest whiff of smell. The sun, newly emerged from the water, hangs low in the sky. Small waves lap the shore, clinging briefly to the sand and then receding, as if they, too, are half asleep. Near the horizon, the water is a light blue-green, still and smooth as glass. The sand, which just yesterday was crowded with bathers, is now bare and clean, blown smooth by the wind. The sand sifts softly under her feet. Kayla can hear nothing but the swish of her skirt, the small sucking sound of her flip-flops. The beach is deserted. Small gusts of breeze flatten the sand, as if an invisible hand is caressing it. Everything seems to glitter in the clear light.

Kayla walks closer to the water, letting the waves lap her feet. She imagines diving in, feeling its warm salty strength buoying her up. Her mind feels drowsy with happiness.

She keeps on walking, past the apartments and cafes and restaurants that line the boardwalk. Fishermen are gathered just beyond the end of the boardwalk, unrolling nets, pulling boats out to sea. As she passes them, she suddenly feels a pang of fear. To her relief, the fishermen hardly look at her. They look past her, out to the sea, as if they are in one dream and she is in another.

Now they are far behind her. All she sees is sky and sand. What a lovely morning, she thinks, but her heart is still thumping strangely. She passes a pile of soda cans and the charred remains of a fire. She peers uneasily behind the sand dunes. No one is there. Still, the thought that someone slept here makes her uneasy. She walks faster now, kicking up sand with her wide strides.

Suddenly, she stumbles over a fish head, and lets out an involuntary cry. Its bulging, vacant eyes have been pecked by birds. Dozens of birds are swooping around this spot. They surround her, filling the air with raw, rough cries. "Go away! Go away!" she cries, flailing her arms. They fly above her reach, still watching her from overhead. The sun has disappeared behind a cloud. Thick clouds now hang on the horizon. The sea is the color of dulled metal. I wonder what time it is, she thinks. Suddenly, she wishes she were home.

- 5. PART A: Which of the following words best describes the mood of the first paragraph?**

A. bored
B. cheerful
C. peaceful
D. mysterious

PART B: Provide two pieces of evidence from the passage that helped you identify the mood in question 5?

- 6. In which paragraph does the mood of the passage shift?**
- A. Paragraph 2
B. Paragraph 3
C. Paragraph 4
D. Paragraph 5

- 7. The author of this story most likely includes this change in mood to**

A. help the reader better understand the setting of the story.
B. make the reader understand how dangerous the beach can be.
C. create a false feeling of safety and allow the reader to experience the events as Kayla does.
D. create a story that is more complicated and complex and doesn't just make the reader feel one thing.

Read and answer questions 8-9.

8. Look at the following image.



The mood of this image can best be described as

- A. violent
- B. gloomy
- C. playful
- D. frustrating

9. Look at the following image.



The mood of this image can best be described as

- A. sad
- B. bored
- C. excited
- D. worried

Read the following passage and answer questions 10-17.

from Year of the Black Pony

by Walt Morey

- 1 It seemed like I traveled a long time hunched down inside my coat. A kind of numbness came over me and I just sat there. Then I began to think I should be getting near home. I tried to fight myself into alertness by shaking my head and rubbing a mitten across my face. The house, the barn, should be coming out of this white wall at me any minute. At least I should hit a fence I could follow or something familiar.
- 2 The driving push of the storm kept clawing at me. I felt drowsy and dull. I remembered that I'd heard this was the first indication of freezing. That frightened me into becoming more alert. I considered getting off and walking to restore circulation. But if I did I wouldn't be able to get on again. Sometime later I became aware that something had changed. I stopped Lucifer and tried to reason it out. Then I knew. The wind was no longer hitting me on the right side. It was almost at my back. Had the wind shifted or were we heading in another direction? Had I unconsciously turned Lucifer to get away from the wind, or had he done it? Had whatever happened just taken place or was it some minutes ago? I decided to retrace my tracks to see if I'd turned.
- 3 Within a couple of hundred feet the tracks were filled with blowing snow. I stopped and looked about completely awake now. In a few feet I could see there was nothing familiar, nothing to give me a clue as to which direction I'd been heading or was headed now. I put the storm on my right side again. Then I sat there. I'd been traveling with the storm almost at my back for some time. So even if I was now headed in the right direction I was so far off course I could miss the house as much as half a mile or even a mile. That could be fatal. I was confused. In this freezing, savage storm I was utterly lost.

4 For a minute I almost panicked and whipped Lucifer up to drive him straight into the storm and ride and ride. All I could think was that I was going to freeze to death. I remember stories of people getting lost between the house and barn and freezing to death. Then I got hold of myself. The only way I'd get out of this alive was to keep my head. I had probably the best horse in the valley under me. Frank had said that if I got lost wandering around Lucifer would bring me home. Cats and dogs and horses had that homing instinct. But if I let Lucifer have his head could he find his way in this storm? And would he go to our place or back to his old home at Fletcher's? It didn't matter, I decided, just so he got someplace where there was shelter.

5 I tied the reins around his neck, then lay down flat along his back to get all the warmth I could from his body, put my arms around his neck, and said, "It's up to you, Lucifer. Let's go. Take us home, boy."

6 Lucifer turned partially into the wind and started off as if he knew exactly where he was going.

7 I lost track of time. I began to wonder if I was beginning to freeze because I didn't seem quite so cold, or was the heat from the pony's body getting through to me. I was conscious of the constant rhythm of his walking, the cut of the wind and the endless driving snow. Sometimes I lifted my head to try to spot something familiar. I recognized nothing. I passed brush clumps almost buried by drifting snow, crossed several shallow gullies, and once skirted a low hill. They were all strange. Finally I put my head down, shut my eyes, and gave myself completely into my pony's keeping. He plodded straight ahead never faltering. How long we traveled that way I don't know. I began to wonder, vaguely, if he, too, was wandering in a circle, lost. Then I was aware he'd stopped. I raised my head and we were right in front of the barn.

10. The event described in this excerpt takes place in a—

- A. landscaped suburban community with grassy yards.
- B. large city park with trees and meadows.
- C. tropical forest with dense undergrowth.
- D. farming area with pastures and barns.

11. By setting the episode over an unknown period of time, the author shows that the—

- A. horse wants to live.
- B. storm has become more severe.
- C. narrator has become disoriented.
- D. region is very large.

12. In paragraph 4, the phrase "keep my head" means —

- A. ask questions
- B. become lost
- C. stay calm
- D. turn around

13. In paragraph 4, the phrase "have his head" means —

- A. get something to eat
- B. wander aimlessly
- C. turn around
- D. go where he wants

14. In paragraph 3, the narrator says, "In a few feet I could see there was nothing familiar, nothing to give me a clue as to which direction I'd been heading or was headed now." That statement creates a mood of—

- A. calmness
- B. fearfulness
- C. happiness
- D. weariness

15. In paragraph 5, the narrator says, "Take us home, boy." What mood is created by this statement?

- A. carefree
- B. hopeful
- C. somber
- D. weary

16. Which image appeals to the reader's sense of touch?

- A. *blowing snow* (paragraph 3)
- B. *fight myself into alertness* (paragraph 1)
- C. *this white wall* (paragraph 1)
- D. *heat from the pony's body* (paragraph 7)

17. By using the phrase "kept clawing at me" in paragraph 2, the narrator creates an image of the storm as —

- A. alive
- B. peaceful
- C. serious
- D. wet

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

from The Open Boat

by Stephen Crane

- 1 It would be difficult to describe the subtle brotherhood of men that was here established on the seas. No one said that it was so. No one mentioned it. But it dwelt in the boat, and each man felt it warm him.
- 2 They were a captain, an oiler, a cook, and a correspondent, and they were friends, friends in a more curiously iron-bound degree than may be common. The hurt captain, lying against the water-jar in the bow, spoke always in a low voice and calmly, but he could never command a more ready and swiftly obedient crew than the motley three of the dinghy. It was more than a mere recognition of what was best for the common safety. There was surely in it a quality that was personal and heartfelt. And after this devotion to the commander of the boat there was this comradeship that the correspondent, for instance, who had been taught to be cynical of men, knew even at the time was the best experience of his life. But no one said that it was so. No one mentioned it.
- 3 "I wish we had a sail," remarked the captain. "We might try my overcoat on the end of an oar and give you two boys a chance to rest." So the cook and the correspondent held the mast and spread wide the overcoat. The oiler steered, and the little boat made good way with her new rig. Sometimes the oiler had to scull sharply to keep a sea from breaking into the boat, but otherwise sailing was a success.
- 4 Meanwhile the lighthouse had been growing slowly larger. It had now almost assumed color, and appeared like a little grey shadow on the sky. The man at the oars could not be prevented from turning his head rather often to try for a glimpse of this little grey shadow.
- 5 At last, from the top of each wave the men in the tossing boat could see land. Even as the lighthouse was an upright shadow on the sky, this land seemed but a long black shadow on the sea. It certainly was thinner than paper. "We must be about opposite New Smyrna," said the cook, who had coasted this shore often in schooners. "Captain, by the way, I believe they abandoned that life-saving station there about a year ago."
- 6 "Did they?" said the captain.
- 7 The wind slowly died away. The cook and the correspondent were not now obliged to slave in order to hold high the oar. But the waves continued their old impetuous swooping at the dinghy, and the little craft, no longer under way, struggled woundily over them. The oiler or the correspondent took the oars again.
- 8 Shipwrecks are apropos of nothing. If men could only train for them and have them occur when the men had reached pink condition, there would be less drowning at sea. Of the four in the dinghy none had slept any time worth mentioning for two days and two nights previous to embarking in the dinghy, and in the excitement of clambering about the deck of a foundering ship they had also forgotten to eat heartily.

9 For these reasons, and for others, neither the oiler nor the correspondent was fond of rowing at this time. The correspondent wondered ingenuously how in the name of all that was sane could there be people who thought it amusing to row a boat. It was not an amusement; it was a diabolical punishment, and even a genius of mental aberrations could never conclude that it was anything but a horror to the muscles and a crime against the back. He mentioned to the boat in general how the amusement of rowing struck him, and the weary-faced oiler smiled in full sympathy. Previously to the foundering, by the way, the oiler had worked double-watch in the engine-room of the ship.

10 "Take her easy, now, boys," said the captain. "Don't spend yourselves. If we have to run a surf you'll need all your strength, because we'll sure have to swim for it. Take your time."

11 Slowly the land arose from the sea. From a black line it became a line of black and a line of white, trees and sand. Finally, the captain said that he could make out a house on the shore. "That's the house of refuge, sure," said the cook. "They'll see us before long, and come out after us."

12 The distant lighthouse reared high. "The keeper ought to be able to make us out now, if he's looking through a glass," said the captain. "He'll notify the life-saving people."

13 "None of those other boats could have got ashore to give word of the wreck," said the oiler, in a low voice. "Else the lifeboat would be out hunting us."

14 Slowly and beautifully the land loomed out of the sea. The wind came again. It had veered from the north-east to the south-east. Finally, a new sound struck the ears of the men in the boat. It was the low thunder of the surf on the shore. "We'll never be able to make the lighthouse now," said the captain. "Swing her head a little more north, Billie," said he.

15 "A little more north, sir," said the oiler.

16 Whereupon the little boat turned her nose once more down the wind, and all but the oarsman watched the shore grow. Under the influence of this expansion doubt and direful apprehension was leaving the minds of the men. The management of the boat was still most absorbing, but it could not prevent a quiet cheerfulness. In an hour, perhaps, they would be ashore.

17 Their backbones had become thoroughly used to balancing in the boat, and they now rode this wild colt of a dinghy like circus men. The correspondent thought that he had been drenched to the skin, but happening to feel in the top pocket of his coat, he found therein eight cigars. Four of them were soaked with sea-water; four were perfectly scatheless. After a search, somebody produced three dry matches, and thereupon the four waifs rode impudently in their little boat, and with an assurance of an impending rescue shining in their eyes, puffed at the big cigars and judged well and ill of all men. Everybody took a drink of water.

18. Choose two ways that the harsh conditions and remote location of the setting contribute to the passage.

- A. They symbolize the characters' desire for freedom and adventure.
- B. They provide conflict that propels the action and character development in the story.
- C. They allow the author to focus on the environment rather than character development.
- D. They permit the author to illustrate the basic principles used to navigate the sea.
- E. They help explain the need for cooperation among the men.
- F. They illustrate why some members of the crew struggle more than others.

19. Which two sentences from the story add suspense by showing that some characters have doubts that they will be rescued?

- A. "The hurt captain, lying against the water-jar in the bow, spoke always in a low voice and calmly, but he could never command a more ready and swiftly obedient crew than the motley three of the dinghy." (Paragraph 2)
- B. "'We might try my overcoat on the end of an oar and give you two boys a chance to rest.'" (Paragraph 3)
- C. "'Captain, by the way, I believe they abandoned that life-saving station there about a year ago.'" (Paragraph 5)
- D. "The cook and the correspondent were not now obliged to slave in order to hold high the oar." (Paragraph 7)
- E. "Of the four in the dinghy none had slept any time worth mentioning for two days and two nights previous to embarking in the dinghy, and in the excitement of clambering about the deck of a foundering ship they had also forgotten to eat heartily." (Paragraph 8)
- F. "'None of those other boats could have got ashore to give word of the wreck,' said the oiler, in a low voice." (Paragraph 13)