

Practice Comprehension 1- Pieces Of Silver

a) In Paragraph 1, what made the boys leave all their activities in an instant? [1]

The ringing of the bell / the assembly bell.

b) Explain what the writer means when he uses the words, "some glanced apprehensively." [2]

Glance = Glimpse // quickly looked // peered // peeped

Apprehensively = with worry // fearfully // nervously // anxiously

c) How do you think the younger boys felt when the headmasters gaze fell upon them? [1]

Any one from:
Scared // Uneasy // nervous // anxious

d) Identify two details that show the boys listened to everything Mr. Megahey ordered. [2]

Detail 1:

An one from -

① They chanted good morning at his command // they followed each 'shun' command.

Detail 2:

② They continued singing the hymn he started

③ They did not settle down / sit without his commands

e) Why do you think the boys were physically beaten? What outcome was the school administration trying to get out of this action? [1]

Answer from Paragraph 4: Credit all responses that refer to:-

- To discipline the boys // To make sure they followed the rules // to ensure cleanliness.

f) Give the most important reason why there were different reactions to the different donations given by the students. [1]

The school wanted to collect more money // urge everyone to donate more.

g) How does Clement feel about reciting the passage? Give two details from the text to support your answer. [3]

Clement's Feeling:

Embarrassed // Ashamed

Details:

- eyes downcast

- recite the passage in a choked, monotonous tone

- his voice sank back

h)-i- In the story, one major problem that the Davecot family faces is implied. What is the problem? [1]

They are poor // financial constraints

-ii- How does this problem affect Clement's social life? [1]

He got humiliated at school // he got made fun of // other students laugh at him because of his inability to donate // he is a social outcast.

j) Explain using your own words the different feelings of the different boys in school that day. Give three details from anywhere in the text to support your answer. [3]

- Any feeling from the following that has NOT been mentioned previously:
→ Credit other logical options where detail matches the feeling.

1. Afraid / Tense / In dread (incl. fear of punishment) – “pall of silence... you could have heard a pin drop”; Head's stern look; boys hauled out; mention of strokes/switches.
2. Self-conscious / Embarrassed / Mortified – “tried feverishly to make their nails and hands presentable.”
3. Shamed / Humiliated / Ridiculed / Belittled – made to mount the platform; an X “the symbol of shame” on foreheads.
4. Resentful / Bitter / upset – boys “muttered” after threats and taunts.
5. Brave / Resolute
6. Amused / Gloating / Mocking (Making fun) – “to the delight of the rest of the school”; “The cruel laughter went up to the rafters.”

(b) Explain why the writer uses the word 'acting' in the phrase, "hauled out of the ranks and ordered in to the acting head. (line 15-16)

= Temporary head // was a substitute // was only filling in // was only there for a short period of time. [1]

(c) Read this sentence from the text: “He now sauntered along the edge of his platform and fixed, one after the other, each of the standing boys with a look of complete scorn.”

What effect does the writer suggest about the headmaster's attitude by using the phrase 'complete scorn.' (line 48)

Synonyms: Extreme contempt/disdain/hate | Associations: Villians / enemies
Result: He looked down upon the boys / he thought they were inferior / thought the boys were worthless. [2]

(d) What two impressions does the writer want to convey to the reader in this sentence:

"With a grave gesture, bestowed upon him the fag-end of a stick of chalk with the injunction that it not be used about the school"