

CRCT Prep



Grade 5 Reading Comprehension

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from **“THE ADVENTURES OF REDDY FOX”**

Part II

by Thornton W. Burgess

II. GRANNY SHOWS REDDY A TRICK

Every day Granny Fox led Reddy Fox over to the long railroad bridge. She made him run back and forth across it until he had no fear of it whatever. At first it had made him dizzy, but now he could run across at the top of his speed and not mind it in the least. “I don’t see what good it does to be able to run across a bridge; anyone can do that!” exclaimed Reddy one day.

Granny Fox smiled. “Do you remember the first time you tried to do it?” she asked.

Reddy hung his head. Of course he remembered. He remembered that Granny had had to scare him into crossing that first time.

Suddenly Granny Fox lifted her head. “Hark!” she exclaimed.

Reddy pricked up his sharp, pointed ears. Way off back, in the direction from which they had come, they heard the baying of a dog. It wasn’t the voice of Bowser the Hound but of a younger dog. Granny listened for a few minutes. The voice of the dog grew louder as it drew nearer.

“He certainly is following our track,” said Granny Fox. “Now, Reddy, you run across the bridge and watch from the top of the little hill over there. Perhaps I can show you a trick that will teach you why I have made you learn to run across the bridge.”

Reddy trotted across the long bridge and up to the top of the hill, as Granny had told him to. Then he sat down to watch. Granny trotted out in the middle of a field and sat down. Pretty soon a young hound broke out of the bushes, his nose in Granny’s track. Then he looked up and saw her, and his voice grew still more savage and eager. Granny Fox started to run as soon as she was sure that the hound had seen her, but she did not run very fast. Reddy did not know what to make of it, for Granny seemed simply to be playing with the hound and not really trying to get away from him at all. Pretty soon Reddy heard another sound. It was a long, low rumble. Then there was a distant whistle. It was a train.

Granny heard it, too. As she ran, she began to work back toward the long bridge. The train was in sight now. Suddenly Granny Fox started across the bridge so fast that she looked like a little red streak. The dog was close at her heels when she started and he was so eager to catch her that he didn’t see either the bridge or the train. But he couldn’t begin to run as fast as Granny Fox. Oh, my, no! When she

had reached the other side, he wasn't halfway across, and right behind him, whistling for him to get out of the way, was the train.

The hound gave one frightened yelp, and then he did the only thing he could do; he leaped down, down into the swift water below. The last Reddy saw of him he was frantically trying to swim ashore.

"Now you know why I wanted you to learn to cross a bridge; it's a very nice way of getting rid of dogs," said Granny Fox, as she climbed up beside Reddy.

1. Why did Granny Fox want Reddy Fox to learn how to cross a bridge?
 - A. so he could get out of the way of trains
 - B. so he could escape from dogs
 - C. so he could learn not to be afraid
 - D. so he could find his way back home

2. Which word is a synonym for *baying*?
 - A. sailing
 - B. splashing
 - C. howling
 - D. jumping

3. Which BEST describes the mood of this selection?
 - A. humorous
 - B. exciting
 - C. gloomy
 - D. serious

4. What can a reader tell about Granny Fox from this passage?
- A. She was often mean to other animals.
 - B. She has always been scared of bridges.
 - C. She did not care for Reddy Fox.
 - D. She has had many problems with dogs.
5. Which word BEST describes how Reddy Fox felt about the FIRST time he tried to cross the bridge?
- A. excited
 - B. ashamed
 - C. proud
 - D. amused
6. What did Granny Fox do AFTER she heard a distant whistle?
- A. She ran toward the bridge.
 - B. She jumped into the water.
 - C. She told Reddy Fox to run.
 - D. She hid from the young dog.

CHIEF JOSEPH

Chief Joseph had a claim to the Wallowa Valley in Oregon. It dated from the Stevens treaty in 1855. President Grant conceded it to him again in 1873.

Two years later, the concession was revoked. The Wallowa Valley was thrown into the public domain. Anyone could move in. All of Oregon west of the Snake River was opened up.

In 1877, it was determined to remove the Nez Perce from Oregon. They were to be sent to a reservation in Idaho.

Chief White Bird sent word that he would not be removed. He and his people did not want to be put on a reservation. The Nez Perce decided to escape to Canada. The army tried to stop them. An unequal war began. It was between retreating bands of Nez Perce and companies of United States cavalry.

The Native Americans crossed through Yellowstone Park. They crossed the Yellowstone River. They were closely followed by the army. In the battle that ensued near the mouth of Eagle Creek six chiefs and twenty-five warriors were killed. Thirty-eight men were wounded. For the army, two officers and twenty-one men were killed. Four officers and thirty-eight men were wounded. The whole camp of about 450 men, women, and children fell into Colonel Miles' hands. General Howard reached the battlefield just in time to be present at the surrender.

Chief Joseph conducted this retreat with very extraordinary skill. He beat Colonel Gibbon. Gibbon had fifteen officers, 146 troopers, and thirty-four volunteers. He stampeded General Howard's horses and pack train. He fought Colonel Sturgis on the Yellowstone River and almost won. Chief Joseph came very near to making good his retreat to British America.

Of this campaign General Sherman has said the following:

The Native Americans throughout displayed a courage and skill that elicited universal praise. They abstained from scalping. They let captive women go free. They did not commit indiscriminate murder of peaceful families, which is usual. They fought with almost scientific skill, using advance and rear guards, skirmish lines, and field fortifications.

1. The author's purpose in writing this passage is to
 - A. persuade readers to visit Yellowstone Park's historic sites.
 - B. entertain readers with a tale of soldiers chasing the Nez Perce.
 - C. inform the reader about a terrible event for the Nez Perce.
 - D. convince the reader that reservations are not good places to live.

“An unequal war began.”

2. The prefix *un-* in *unequal* means
 - A. more.
 - B. under.
 - C. before.
 - D. not.

3. Why did the army attack Chief White Bird and the Nez Perce?
 - A. The army was upset about being defeated.
 - B. The army wanted to attack Canada.
 - C. The Nez Perce were killing innocent people.
 - D. The Nez Perce refused to go to a reservation.

SLAVES AND PLANTATIONS

A plantation was often a hive of activity. The planter's residence anchored the central complex. Nearby there were often storage sheds, corrals, and slave housing.

Cotton growing so exhausted the soil that land had to be constantly cleared to open new fields, even on plantations where flooding periodically replenished the earth. An overseer and some slaves moved to housing near the new fields. Sometimes, even the planter followed. He would have a new residence built near the new fields.

Plantations were often largely self-sufficient. Machines helped grind grains and corn, saw lumber, or gin and bail cotton. There were countless skilled tasks needed to keep plantations functioning. Slaves performed many of them. Independent contractors did others. There were blacksmiths, wagon makers, well diggers, harness makers and carpenters. Mechanics kept the mills operating.

By far, slaves performed the majority of work. How they were treated varied depending upon their skills and the dispositions of their owners. Plantation slaves were normally divided into three classes. There were house servants, field hands, and skilled craftsmen. The craftsmen included blacksmiths, carpenters, and masons.

Men, women, and children as young as seven years old worked as field hands. Day after day, they spent long hours, from dawn to dusk, under a scorching sun. Overseers stood ready, with whips in many instances, to ensure maximum productivity from everyone.

Owners had a financial interest in keeping slaves fed, clothed, and housed to prevent ill health from spreading and crippling the workforce. They also had a competing goal of trying to keep costs low. The resulting compromise often meant providing the bare minimum in subsistence.

Slaves' quarters were generally flimsy wooden structures with one or two rooms and a fireplace. Their clothes were made of the cheapest fabric often sewn by slave women. Food, rationed weekly, tended to be cheap and monotonous. Some plantation owners allowed slaves to supplement their diets with food grown in small private plots.

Some of the rare first-person descriptions of what it was like to be a slave came from interviews given by elderly blacks to writers hired by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s. Former slave George Womble of Columbus, born in 1843 in Georgia, remembered:

I never saw my father. He was sold before I was old enough to recognize him as being my father. I was still quite young when my mother was sold to a plantation owner who lived in New Orleans. As she was being put on the wagon to be taken away, I heard her say, "Let me see my poor child one more time because I know I'll never see him again." That was the last time I ever saw or heard of her.

My master, who was Mr. Robert Ridley, had me placed in his house. I was taught to wait tables and to do all kind of house work. . . .

When Marse Robert died, I was still a small boy. . . . I was sold to Mrs. Ridley's brother, Enoch Womble. He paid his sister \$500 for me.

The slaves all got up long before day and prepared their breakfasts. Then, before it was light enough to see clearly they were standing in the field holding their hoes and other implements. . . .

An overseer was hired by the master to see that the work was done properly. If any of the slaves were careless about their work, a sound whipping was administered. Field hands also got whippings when they failed to pick the required 300 pounds of cotton daily.

Julia Brown, another former slave in Georgia, was interviewed in Atlanta in 1939:

There were six of us children. . . . We didn't stay together long. I was given away when I was just a baby. I never did see my mama again.

I was given to the Mitchell family. . . . I was put to work in the fields when I was five years old, picking cotton and hoeing. I slept on the floor nine years, winter and summer, sick and well.

I had such a hard time. That mistress Mitchell didn't care what happened to us. . . . She used to lash us with a cowhide whip. When she died, I went from one family to another. All the owners was pretty much the same. . . . Some of the white folks [however] was very kind to their slaves. Some didn't believe in slavery and some freed them before the war and even give them land and homes.

Slaves generally worked six days a week with Sundays off. Some enjoyed occasional festivities allowed by slaveowners. Carrie Hudson, also from Georgia, recalled that her master sometimes allowed slaves to hold a dance on Saturday nights. She remembered that there were also some other pleasurable moments. One of her favorites was Christmastime when "there would be plenty of fresh meat, and there was heaps of good chickens, turkeys, cake, candies, and just everything good." For a week at Christmas, slaves were not required to work. They spent the time visiting each other's cabins and feasting.

Regardless of the extent of the slaveholders' good will, slaves were still prisoners with few, if any, opportunities for bettering their lives. In most cases, they were never allowed to leave the plantation or farm without written permission, a restriction backed by law in many southern states.

By 1770, in Georgia, for example, the law stipulated that slaves could not leave their owners' land without a ticket signed by the owner or another person in charge of the slave. According to the law, "Every slave who shall be found without a ticket, or without a white person in his or her company, shall be punished with whipping on the bare back, not exceeding twenty lashes."

1. New land had to be constantly cleared for farming because the
 - A. soil became exhausted.
 - B. cotton became too thick.
 - C. slaves refused to work.
 - D. fields were flooded by rivers.

2. This passage does NOT tell us that farm machines
 - A. ground grains.
 - B. sawed lumber.
 - C. harvested grains.
 - D. ginned cotton.

"A plantation was often a hive of activity."

3. What does the phrase *hive of activity* mean?
 - A. bees' nest
 - B. distant field
 - C. farming town
 - D. busy place

4. In this passage, the class of slaves that had the hardest lives were the
- A. house servants.
 - B. skilled craftsmen.
 - C. field hands.
 - D. mechanics.
5. In this passage, the word *flimsy* means
- A. warm.
 - B. sad.
 - C. weak.
 - D. old.
6. Which word is an antonym of *recalled*?
- A. relaxed
 - B. explained
 - C. lost
 - D. forgot
7. Which sentence expresses the main idea in the passage?
- A. Farming machines could do some chores, but slaves had to do the rest.
 - B. Slaves had difficult, often painful, lives with very few comforts.
 - C. Many former slaves told their stories to hired writers in the 1930s.
 - D. Slaves were not allowed to leave their owner's land without permission.

