

Comprehension question for 1 to 7

Sam squinted against the sun at the distant dust trail raked up by the car on its way up to the Big House. The horses kicked and flicked their tails at flies, not caring about their owner's first visit in ten months. Sam waited. Mr Carter didn't come out here unless he had to, which was just fine by Sam. The more he kept out of his boss's way, the longer he'd have a job.

Carter came by later while Sam was chopping wood. Carter lifted his hat as if he were waiting for an appointment with the town priest, and then removed it completely as if he were talking to his mother. He pulled out a pile of paper from his back pocket and held it out.

'Don't pick up your mail often, do you?'

Sam took it without a glance and dropped the envelopes onto the bench.

'Never,' he replied and waited for Carter to say why he was here. The fact it was Carter's house was no explanation and they both knew it. Carter twisted his hat round and round, licking his lips and clearing his throat.

'Nice work fixing those fences,' he said finally.

'I'll be back to the beginning soon,' Sam said. It wasn't a complaint. A fence that took a year to repair meant another year's work to the man who did it well.

'Don't you ever want to take a holiday?'

'And go where?' A holiday meant being back out in the real world, a place even people like Carter travelled to escape from. Sam's escape was his reality and he wasn't going back.

Mr Carter wiped the sweat from the back of his neck. The damp patches on his shirt drew together like shapes in an atlas. His skin was already turning ruddy in the June sun. Otherwise he had the indoor tan of a man that made money while other people did the work.

'I've brought my son with me on this trip. He's had some trouble at school.' Mr Carter's eyes flicked up, blinked rapidly and then shifted back to the hat occupying his hands. 'Not much trouble out here for a young boy.' He attempted a laugh but it came out like a dog's bark.

The two men looked towards the northern end of the property. It stretched as far as the eye could see. Even the fences were barely visible from where they stood. However bored and rebellious a teenage boy might get, it wasn't possible to escape on foot. Sam looked at the biggest of the horses, kicking at the ground with its heavy hooves. Could the boy ride? he wondered. There was a whole load of trouble a good rider could get into out here, miles away from anyone. But maybe there was even more trouble for someone who knew nothing about horses and wanted to get away from his father.

1. What did Carter say to Sam about his fence repair work?

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A | Carter complimented Sam on his fence repair work. | <input type="checkbox"/> B | Carter asked Sam to fix his own fence. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C | Carter criticized Sam's fence repair work. | <input type="checkbox"/> D | Carter ignored Sam's fence repair work. |

2. What is the challenge faced by Sam on Mr Carter's property?

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A | The property is vast and easy to escape on foot. | <input type="checkbox"/> B | The property is small and easy to navigate on foot. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C | The property is well-maintained and easy to escape on foot. | <input type="checkbox"/> D | The property is vast and difficult to escape on foot. |

3. What potential trouble does Sam consider for someone unfamiliar with horses?

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|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A | Lack of knowledge about horse behavior | <input type="checkbox"/> B | Potential health risks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C | Lack of interest in horses | <input type="checkbox"/> D | Difficulty in handling horses |

4. What does Carter ask Sam?

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A | If he has any plans for the weekend | <input type="checkbox"/> B | If he enjoys traveling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C | If he wants to go on a vacation | <input type="checkbox"/> D | If he ever wants to take a holiday |

5. Who is Sam waiting for?

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A | Sam's visit to the Big House | <input type="checkbox"/> B | Mrs Carter's visit to the Big House |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C | No one | <input type="checkbox"/> D | Mr Carter's visit to the Big House |

6. What does Sam wonder about the boy?

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|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A | Can the boy play soccer? | <input type="checkbox"/> B | Can the boy cook? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C | Can the boy ride a bike? | <input type="checkbox"/> D | Can the boy swim? |

7. Who did Carter mention bringing on the trip?

A

His best friend

B

His troubled son

C

His pet dog

D

His daughter