

"Where the Red Fern Grows"

_____ Name _____

Date _____

Directions: Read the selection excerpt. Then answer the following questions.

I came into Tahlequah from the northeast. At the outskirts of town, I hid my flour sack and provisions, keeping the gunny sack. I walked into town.

I was scared of Tahlequah and the people. I had never seen such a big town and so many people. There was store after store, some of them two stories high. The wagon yard had wagons on top of wagons; teams, buggies, and horses.

Two young ladies about my age stopped, stared at me, and then giggled. My blood boiled, but I could understand. After all, I had three sisters. They couldn't help it because they were womenfolks. I went on.

I saw a big man coming up the street. The bright shiny star on his vest looked as big as a bucket. I saw the long, black gun at his side and I froze in my tracks. I'd heard of sheriffs and marshals, but had never seen one. Stories repeated about them in the mountains told how fast they were with a gun, and how many men they had killed.

The closer he came, the more frightened I got. I knew it was the end of me. It seemed like a miracle that he passes by, hardly glancing at me. Breathing a sigh, I walked on, seeing the wonders of the world.

Passing a large store window, I stopped and stared. There in the window was the most wonderful sight I had ever seen; everything under the sun; overalls, jackets, bolts of beautiful cloth, new harnesses, collars, bridles; and then my eyes did pop open.

I saw something else. The sun was just right, and the plate glass was a perfect mirror. I saw the full reflection of myself for the first time in my life.

I could see that I did look a little odd. My straw-colored hair was long and shaggy, and was bushed out like a corn tassel that had been hit by a wind. I tried to smooth it down with my hands. This helped some but not much. What it needed was a good combing and I had no comb.

My overalls were patches and faded but they were clean. My shirt had pulled out. I tucked it back in.

I took one look at my bare feet and winced. They were as brown as dead sycamore leaves. The spider web pattern of raw, red scratches looked odd in the saddle-brown skin. I thought, "Well, I won't have to pick any more blackberries and the scratches will soon go away."

I pumped up one of my arms and thought surely the muscle was going to pop right through my thin blue shirt. I stuck out my tongue. It was as red as pokeberry juice and anything that color was supposed to be healthy.

After making a few faces at myself, I put my thumbs in my ears and was making mule ears when two old women came by. They stopped and stared at me. I stared back. As they tuned to go on their way, I heard one of them say something to the other. The words were hard to catch, but I did hear one word: "Wild." As I said before, they couldn't help it; they were womenfolks.

As I turned to leave, my eyes again fell on the overalls and the bolts of cloth. I thought of my mother, father, and sisters. Here was an opportunity to make amends for leaving home without telling anyone.

I entered the store. I bought a pair of overalls for Papa. After telling the storekeeper how bug my mother and sisters were, I bought several yards of cloth. I also bought a large sack of candy.

Glancing down at my bare feet, the storekeeper said, "I have some good shoes."

I told him I didn't need any shoes.

He asked if that would be all.

I nodded.

He added up the bill. I handed him my ten dollars. He gave me my change.

After wrapping up the bundles, he helped me put them in my sack. Lifting it to my shoulder, I turned and left the store.

Out on the street, I picked out a friendly-looking old man and asked him where the depot was. He told me to go down to the last street and turn right, go as far as I could, and I couldn't miss it. I thanked him and started on my way.

Leaving the main part of town, I started up a long street through the residential section. I had never seen so many beautiful houses, and they were all different colors. The lawns were neat and clean

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and looked like green carpets. I saw a man pushing some kind of a mowing machine. I stopped to watch the whirling blades. He gawked at me. I hurried on.

I heard a lot of shouting and laughing ahead of me. Not wanting to miss anything, I walked a little faster. I saw what was making the noise. More kids than I had ever seen were playing around a big red brick building. I thought some rich man lived there and was giving a party for his children. Walking up to the edge of the playground, I stopped to watch.

The boys and girls were about my age, and were as thick as flies around a sorghum mill. They were milling, running, and jumping. Teeter-totters and swings were loaded down with them. Everyone was laughing and having a big time.

Over against the building, a large blue pipe ran up on an angle from the ground. A few feet from the top there was a bend in it. The pipe seemed to go into the building. Boys were crawling into its dark mouth. I counted nine of them. One boy stood about six feet from the opening with a stick in his hand.

Staring goggle-eyed, trying to figure out what they were doing, I got a surprise. Out of the hollow pipe spurted a boy. He sailed through the air and lit on his feet. The boy with the stick marked the ground where he landed. All nine of them came shooting out, one behind the other. As each boy landed, a new mark was scratched.

They ganged around looking at the lines. There was a lot of loud talking, pointing, and arguing. Then all lines were erased and a new scorekeeper was picked out. The others crawled back into the pipe.

I figured out how the game was played. After climbing to the top of the slide, the boys turned around and sat down. One at a time, they came flying down, and out, feet first. The one that shot out the furthest was the winner. I thought how wonderful it would be if I could slide down just one time.

One boy, spying me standing on the corner, came over. Looking me up and down, he asked, "Do you go to school here?"

I said, "School?"

He said, "Sure. School. What did you think it was?"

"Oh. No, I don't go to school here."

"Do you go to Jefferson?"

"No. I don't go there either."

"Don't you go to school at all?"

"Sure I go to school."

"Where?"

"At home."

"You go to school at home?"

I nodded.

"What grade are you in?"

I said I wasn't in any grade.

Puzzled, he said, "You go to school at home, and don't know what grade you're in. Who teaches you?"

"My mother."

"What does she teach you?"

I said, "Reading, writing, and arithmetic, and I bet I'm just as good at it as you are."

He asked, "Don't you have any shoes?"

I said, "Sure, I have shoes."

"Why aren't you wearing them?"

"I don't wear shoes until it gets cold."

He laughed and asked where I lived.

I said, "Back in the hills."

He said, "Oh, you're a hillbilly."

He ran back to the mob. I saw him pointing at me and talking to several boys. They started my way, yelling "Hillbilly, hillbilly."

Just before they reached me, a bell started ringing. Turning they ran to the front of the building, lined up in two long lines, and marching like little tin soldiers, disappeared inside the school.

The playground was silent. I was all alone, and felt lonely and sad. I heard a noise on my right. I didn't have to turn around to recognize what it was. Someone was using a hoe. I'd know that sound if I heard it on a dark night. It was a little old white-headed woman working in a flower bed.

Looking again at the long, blue pipe, I thought, "There's no one around. Maybe I could have one slide anyway."

I eased over and looked up into the dark hollow. It looked scary, but I thought of all the other boys I had seen crawl into it. I could see the last mark on the ground, and thought, "I bet I can beat that."

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Laying my sack down, I started climbing up. The farther I went, the darker and more scary it got. Just as I reached the top, my feet slipped. Down I sailed. All the way down I tried to grab on to something, but there was nothing to grab.

I'm sure some great champions had slid out of that pipe, and no doubt more than one world record had been broken, but if someone had been there when I came out, I know the record I set would stand today in all its glory.

I came out just like I went in, feet first and belly down. My legs were spread out like a bean-shooter stalk. Arms flailing the air, I zoomed out and up. I seemed to hang suspended in air at the peak of my climb. I could see the hard-packed ground far below.

As I started down, I shut my eyes tight and gritted my teeth. This didn't seem to help. With a splattering sound, I landed. I felt the air whoosh out between my teeth. I tried to scream, but had no wind left to make a sound.

After bouncing a couple of times, I finally settled down to earth. I lay spread-eagled for a few seconds, and then slowly got to my knees.

Hearing loud laughter, I looked around. It was the little old lady with the hoe in her hand. She hollered and asked how I like it. Without answering, I grabbed up my gunny sack and left. Far up the street, I looked back. The little old lady was sitting down, rocking with laughter.

I couldn't understand these town people. If they weren't staring at a fellow, they were laughing at him.

1. What generalization did Billy have about Sheriffs and Marshalls?

- a). They were aggressive and unfair.
- b). They were helpful and caring.
- c). They were disrespectful and rowdy.
- d). They were calm and resourceful.

2. Which sentence is an example of a simile.

- a). The bright shiny star on his vest was a big bucket.
- b). The bright shiny star on his vest lit up the town.
- c). The bright shiny star on his vest looked as big as a bucket.
- d). The bright shiny star on his vest jumped out at Billy.

3. What connotation does the word *hillbilly* have?

- a). rich
- b). uneducated
- c). intelligent
- d). popular

4. Which detail supports the following generalization?

Most people in Tahlequah aren't used to seeing outsiders.

- a). "The closer he came, the more frightened I got."
- b). "Looking me up and down, he asked, *Do you go to school here?*"
- c). "Glancing down at my bare feet the storekeeper said I have some good shoes."
- d). "Two young ladies about my age stopped, stared at me and then giggled."

5. What does the word *bolts* mean in the following sentence?

*There is the window was the most wonderful sight I had ever seen; everything under the sun; overalls, jackets, **bolts** of beautiful cloth, new harnesses, collars, bridles; and then my eyes did pop open.*

- a) large rolls of cloth
- b) a threaded pin that screws into a nut
- c) a flash of lightening
- d) to run away quickly

Theme 3.1 AASD Core Assessment "Where the Red Fern Grows"

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6. Written Response (3 Points)

Identify one character trait to describe Billy. Explain why you chose that trait using at least 2 details from the story to support your response.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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Directions: Read the selection excerpt. Then answer the following questions.

**Look at Me
(A Dog Needs a Home)**

I'm waiting here in foster care for you to
come and see
The one the others have passed by, please, stop and
look at me!
I'm not alone here in my quest to find myself a place
Where someone will have love for me and softly
stroke my face.
We're not so young in years they say, although we're
young at heart
If you'll take a chance with us -- please know we'll do
our part.
Our faces have a bit of white, our legs a slower gait
Our hearts so full of love to give -- but still we sit and
wait.
A younger dog is what folks want, one who romps
and plays
They won't take the time to look at us -- just think
we're old and grey.
Little do they know the things we have to offer them
Manners learned and quiet souls -- good dogs all
we've been.
There are those here too, whose souls were
damaged and in pain
Before they came to this safe place and learned to
trust again.
When new folks come and look at them, they seem
withdrawn and shy.
Time is all they need to learn that new bonds they
can tie.
Patience, love and gentle hands is all they ask of you
In exchange - their hearts they give you in their lives
so new.
We may not be the perfect dogs in everybody's eye
Too big, too small, too brown, too slow, too black,
too old, too shy.
But unless you sit and take the time and see all that
we can be
You'll miss the best that is right here -- Please stop --

HEY -- Look at ME!

7. What can you infer about the dogs feelings?

- a) The dog is feeling sad and lonely.
- b) The dog is feeling excited.
- c). The dog is feeling frightened.
- d). The dog is feeling playful.

8. What is another word that could be used to replace the word *withdrawn*?

When new folks come and look at them, they seem withdrawn and shy.

- a). outgoing
- b). loud
- c). unsociable
- d). playful

9. What is another title that could be used for this poem?

- a) Puppy Love
- b) Bad to the Bone
- c) Who Let the Dogs Out?
- d) Rescue Me

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Directions: Choose the best answer for each question.

1. Choose the tense of the underlined verb.

The sun shines throughout the day.

- a) past
- b) present
- c) future

2. Which sentence includes a verb in the past tense?

- a) The big man was coming up the street.
- b) In a flash I made up my mind.
- c) I will get some good shoes.
- d) I was scared of Tahlequah and the people.

3. Choose the future tense of the verb *talk*.

- a) talks
- b) will talk
- c) talked
- d) talking

4. Which sentence maintains the correct verb tense throughout?

- a) The women walked to the store tomorrow.
- b) The package will arrive yesterday.
- c) Tomorrow Billy will go get his dogs.
- d) The dogs are barking all day tomorrow.

5. Which word is a homograph?

- a) tear
- b) hanger
- c) news
- d) to

6. Choose the sentence in which your spelling word is correct.

- a) Don't lose your balance.
- b) The auther visited our school.
- c) Six minis two is four.
- d) Billy went on a journey.

7. Choose the sentence in which your spelling word is correct.

- a) The lawyer pleaded the case.
- b) Do you recquire two forms of I.D.?
- c) Please whisper in the library.
- d) When I get home, I will do the landary.

8. Coose the linking verb in the following sentence:

She was wearing a new dress to the dance.

- a) wearing
- b) dance
- c) was
- d) a

9. Construct a sentence using the following vocabulary words in context: *adoration, determination.*

Theme 3.1 AASD Core Assessment
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Answer Key

- | | | | |
|----|---|---------------------|------------|
| 1. | a | Generalization | CC.1.3.6.B |
| 2. | c | Figurative Language | CC.1.3.6.F |
| 3. | b | Vocabulary | CC.1.3.6.J |
| 4. | d | Generalization | CC.1.3.6.B |
| 5. | a | Vocabulary | CC.1.3.6.J |
| 6. | | open ended | CC.1.3.6.C |
- 3- Student identifies character trait and uses 2 details from the text to support.
2- Student identifies character trait and uses 1 detail from the text to support / or student uses 2 details from the text without identifying a character trait
1- Student either identifies a character trait OR identifies 1 detail from the text
0- Student was off topic/left the answer blank
- | | | | |
|----|---|--------------|------------|
| 7. | a | Inference | CC.1.3.6.B |
| 8. | c | Vocabulary | CC.1.3.6.J |
| 9. | d | Central Idea | CC.1.3.6.A |
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- | | | | |
|----|---|----------|------------|
| 1. | b | grammar | CC.1.4.6.F |
| 2. | d | grammar | CC.1.4.6.F |
| 3. | b | grammar | CC.1.4.6.F |
| 4. | c | grammar | CC.1.4.6.F |
| 5. | a | grammar | CC.1.4.6.F |
| 6. | d | spelling | CC.1.4.6.F |
| 7. | c | spelling | CC.1.4.6.F |
| 8. | c | grammar | CC.1.4.6.F |
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- | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------|------------|
| 9. | | Teacher discretion | CC.1.4.6.F |
|----|--|--------------------|------------|