

## The Stolen Boat

### Comprehension I.

#### Question 1

Who does 'her' in the first line refer to?

**Answer:**

The cool summer breeze.

#### Question 2

Where was the boat moored?

**Answer:**

The boat was moored inside a rocky cave, tied to a willow tree.

#### Question 3

What does 'home' in line 3 refer to?

**Answer:**

It refers to the usual place where the boat was moored.

#### Question 4

What does 'her' in line 4 refer to?

**Answer:**

The boat.

#### Question 5

Why does the poet use words like 'home' and 'her' while talking about an inanimate boat?

**Answer:**

The poet's deep attachment to the boat makes it feel almost human in his mind, giving it a personal presence.

#### Question 6

What stealthy act does the boy commit?

**Answer:**

The boy secretly takes the boat without the owner's permission.

**Question 7**

What sound is captured in lines 6 and 7?

**Answer:**

The mountain echoes of the oars splashing in the water.

**Question 8**

What visual image is created in lines 8 to 10?

**Answer:**

The image of small ripples forming in the water due to the moving oars, slowly fading away, leaving a long stretch of reflected moonlight on the water's surface.

**Question 9**

What does 'they' in line 10 refer to?

**Answer:**

The small ripples in the water.

**Question 10**

How many peaks are mentioned in the poem? Which one is bigger?

**Answer:**

Two peaks are mentioned:

1. A craggy ridge, which the boy initially wants to reach.
2. A massive, dark peak that suddenly appears before him, which is the larger one.

**Question 11**

a) What is the boat compared to in lines 19 and 20?

**Answer:**

A swan gliding smoothly in the water.

b) The purpose of the comparison is:

- a. To highlight the beauty and grace of the swan.
- b. To highlight the beauty and grace of the boat.
- c. To highlight the graceful movement of the boat.

**Answer:**

(c) To highlight the graceful movement of the boat.

### Question 12

In the expression 'troubled pleasure' (line 6):

a) What pleasurable experience of the narrator does 'pleasure' refer to?

**Answer:**

Taking the boat away by himself.

b) The narrator's pleasure is 'troubled' because:

- a. His conscience pricks him for his stealthy act.
- b. The pleasure is short-lived.
- c. He is scared of being caught.

**Answer:**

(a) His conscience pricks him for his stealthy act.

### Question 13

Read carefully lines 21 to 26.

b) Pick out details of the peak that appears fearful to the boy.

**Answer:**

- The peak rises suddenly from behind the craggy ridge.
- It is black and massive.
- It grows larger until it towers between the boy and the stars.
- It seems to be following him with measured steps.

c) The lines describe the movement of the peak. Is it real or imagined?

**Answer:**

It is the boy's imagination, influenced by his guilt over stealing the boat.

d) In the boy's imagination, the movement is:

- a. Threatening and menacing.
- b. Lively and graceful.
- c. Friendly and inviting.

**Answer:**

(a) Threatening and menacing.

#### **Question 14**

a) In the phrase “trembling oars,” who is trembling?

**Answer:**

The boy is trembling.

b) Name the figure of speech in this expression.

**Answer:**

Transferred Epithet.

c) The boy is trembling because:

- a. He is frightened by the ‘approaching’ peak.
- b. His guilty conscience troubles him.
- c. He is cold.

**Answer:**

(a) He is frightened by the ‘approaching’ peak.

#### **Question 15**

The episode of the stolen boat ends with the boy returning the boat to its original place (line 32). The remaining lines of the poem (lines 33 to 44) deal with:

- a. The lasting memory of the experience.
- b. Details not connected with the experience.
- c. The mysterious shapes and images haunt him.

**Answer:**

(c) The mysterious shapes and images haunt him.

#### **Question 16**

Wordsworth defined poetry as “emotion recollected in tranquillity.” What dominant emotion from the boat experience is recollected by the poet?

**Answer:**

The overwhelming fear was caused by the sight of the huge, dark peak.

#### **Question 17**

Many days after the stolen boat experience, the narrator was haunted by a mysterious presence within him. Pick out details of this presence from lines 37 to 44.

**Answer:**

- A deep, lingering darkness overshadowed his thoughts.
- His mind felt isolated and deserted.
- No pleasant images of nature—trees, sea, or sky—remained.
- Instead, his thoughts were filled with mighty, formless beings that moved slowly through his mind.
- These figures haunted him both in his waking thoughts and in his dreams.

## Comprehension II.

### Question 1

**She was an elfin pinnacle**

1. What does 'she' refer to?

**Answer:**

The little boat.

2. What is the figure of speech used here?

**Answer:**

Personification.

3. What does 'elfin' mean?

**Answer:**

Very small in size.

4. What is the figure of speech used in 'elfin pinnacle'?

**Answer:**

Metaphor.

5. What quality in the movement of the boat is highlighted in the comparison?

**Answer:**

The smooth, pleasant, and light movement of the boat.

**Question 2**

**With trembling oars, I turned, And through the silent water  
stole my way Back to the covert of the willow tree.**

1. What is the figure of speech used in the first line?

**Answer:**

Transferred Epithet.

2. What made the boy tremble?

**Answer:**

The sudden appearance of the huge, black peak, seemed to move with a measured step towards him.

3. What does the boy want to do with the boat?

**Answer:**

The boy wanted to take the boat towards a craggy ridge.

**Comprehension III.**

**Question 1**

Why did Wordsworth say that his moving the boat is an act of stealth? Why was he guilty of his act?

**Answer:**

The boy's act of taking the boat was described as stealthy because he did not have permission to row it. Either he was too young to use it alone, or the boat's owner did not allow others to use it. Since he neither informed the owner nor sought permission, Wordsworth refers to his action as an "act of stealth." The boy's initial joy and excitement of adventure were overshadowed by a sense of guilt, as he knew he was doing something wrong.

## Question 2

Describe the effect that the spectacle of the peak had on the poet's mind.

### Answer:

Initially, the poet aimed to row his boat toward a craggy ridge. However, he was startled by the sudden appearance of a towering, black peak that seemed to loom larger as he advanced. The more he rowed, the more immense and menacing it appeared, giving the illusion that it was moving toward him with a deliberate and measured step. This unsettling sight filled him with fear and caused him to retreat back toward the rocky cave.

## Question 3

To Wordsworth, nature was a living presence. Pick out any 5 details from the poem to support this.

### Answer:

1. *"One summer evening"* – This phrase personifies the evening, giving it a peaceful and serene presence.
2. *"Small circles glittering idly in the moon"* – This imagery brings the water to life, portraying its gentle movement under moonlight.
3. *"She was an elfin pinnace"* – The boat is personified, making it seem like a magical, living entity.
4. *"My boat went heaving through the water like a swan"* – The smooth, graceful motion of the boat is compared to a living creature.
5. *"A huge peak, black and huge, as if with voluntary power instinct, upreared its head"* – The peak is described as if it is alive, rising with intention and watching the boy.

## The Stolen Boat Poem Summary



### **A Summer Night's Adventure**

On a cool summer evening, a young boy is tempted into mischief. Unable to resist, he unties a moored boat and ventures out onto the open water all by himself.

The surroundings are still and silent, making the splash of the oars echo loudly in his ears, mirroring the rapid beat of his guilty heart. The moon casts a pale glow over the water, its reflection shimmering beautifully. The boat glides smoothly, as gracefully as a swan.

Determined, the boy steers toward a craggy ridge. However, as he approaches, a massive, dark peak seems to rise from behind the ridge. The more he rows forward, the larger and more menacing it appears. Soon, it looms before him, as if advancing with deliberate intent.

Overcome with fear, the boy hastily turns back. With trembling hands, he navigates the boat to safety, swiftly mooring it back in the cave.

Yet, the experience leaves a lasting impact. For days and nights afterwards, he is haunted by the terrifying image of the



immense peak, which, in his mind, continues to move toward him with an eerie, relentless presence.

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