

Sample Pages from
Objective Tests
with
Thinking and Writing Prompts
and Answer Keys

for

Where the Red Fern Grows

by Wilson Rawls



A Teaching Pack

by Margaret Whisnant

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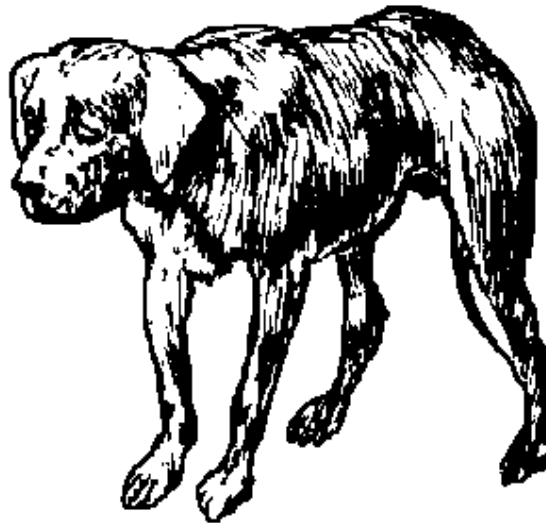
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WHERE THE RED FERN GROWS

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Chapters I-II

Write either **True** or **False** in the blank before each statement.

- _____ 1. The pack of dogs that Billy encountered was attacking one, lone dog.
- _____ 2. The dog in the group that caught Billy's eye was a redbone hound.
- _____ 3. When Billy broke up the dogfight, the redbone attacked him.
- _____ 4. Billy had memories of a hound that died so that he might live.
- _____ 5. Billy thought that the old hound probably belonged to someone who lived in town.
- _____ 6. The redbone had a tag on its collar with the name "Hunter" engraved on it.



- _____ 7. After being fed and bathed, the redbone escaped through a hole in Billy's backyard fence.
- _____ 8. Billy knew the dog was a hunting hound and that penning him would break his will to live.
- _____ 9. Billy tried to make himself believe the dog was headed home to the Ozark Mountains.
- _____ 10. It was possible the dog had been stolen or sold by his master.
- _____ 11. Billy felt lonely and depressed after the hound left because of the sad memories the dog brought back to him.
- _____ 12. As an adult, Billy lived in the Snake River Valley of Idaho.
- _____ 13. The story behind the cups that Billy kept on his mantle went back more than fifty years.

WHERE THE RED FERN GROWS

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Chapters III-IV

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank before each question.

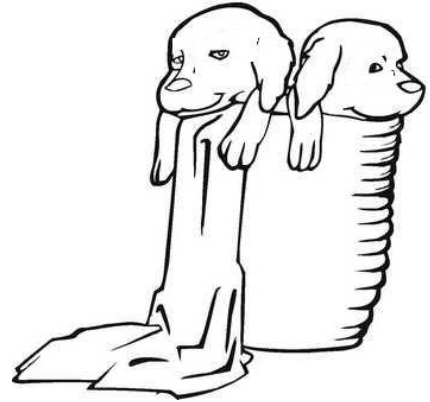
- _____ 1. During the time he was working with his father, Billy's dog-wanting disease (A) disappeared for a while, (B) burned itself down, (C) got worse.
- _____ 2. Billy found the sportsman's magazine (A) where fishermen had camped, (B) in the trash at the store, (C) wrapped around some fish his father bought.
- _____ 3. The magazine ad for the redbone coon hounds was from a kennel in (A) Oklahoma, (B) Kentucky, (C) Tennessee.
- _____ 4. The puppies were (A) ten dollars each, (B) fifteen dollars each, (C) twenty-five dollars each.
- _____ 5. The passage from the Bible that Billy remembered was: (A) *God helps those who help themselves*, (B) *The meek shall inherit the Earth*, (C) *The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want*.
- _____ 6. For a bank, Billy used (A) his mother's old cookie jar, (B) an empty cigar box he found at the fishermen's camp, (C) a K.C. Baking Powder can he took from the trash pile behind the barn.
- _____ 7. How much money did Billy put in his bank when he began saving? (A) fifty cents, (B) twenty-three cents, (C) a dollar and three cents.
- _____ 8. Billy hid his money (A) near the river, (B) under the porch, (C) in the hay loft.
- _____ 9. Which of the following was **not** something Billy sold to make money? (A) animal carvings, (B) minnows and crawfish, (C) fresh vegetables.
- _____ 10. Billy sold the berries he picked to (A) the fishermen, (B) his grandfather, (C) his neighbors.
- _____ 11. Billy's grandpa promised not to say anything to his father and to (A) order the dogs when Billy had the money, (B) buy all the berries Billy could pick, (C) loan Billy some of the money he needed.
- _____ 12. When he was twelve, after a year of saving, Bill had (A) twenty-seven dollars and forty-six cents, (B) forty-one dollars and twelve cents, (C) thirty-two dollars and ten cents.
- _____ 13. Billy had the money he needed at the end of (A) the third year, (B) the second year, (C) a year and a half.
- _____ 14. When he learned about the money and saw Billy's cut, scratched feet, Grandpa (A) cried, (B) was sure Billy had stolen the money, (C) told Billy's dad right away.
- _____ 15. Before Billy left the store, Grandpa (A) warned that he might not be able to find two pups, (B) put the money in his safe, (C) gave him a quarter bag of candy.
- _____ 16. Billy had (A) a younger brother and sister, (B) an older brother and two little sisters, (C) three little sisters.
- _____ 17. When Grandpa heard from the kennel, the price of each dog was (A) five dollars higher, (B) five dollars cheaper, (C) ten dollar more.

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Chapters V-VI

Write either **Yes** or **No** in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Was the stationmaster a rude, unfriendly man?
- _____ 2. Did the stationmaster know Billy's dad?
- _____ 3. When he picked up the pups, did Billy cry?
- _____ 4. Did the stationmaster ask Billy to pay the feed bill?
- _____ 5. Did the stationmaster cut two slits in Billy's gunny sack and poke each pup's head through a hole?
- _____ 6. As Billy passed through town, did people compliment him on his pair of fine pups?
- _____ 7. Did Billy hit Freckle-face because he pulled the little girl pup's ear?
- _____ 8. Did the marshal save Billy from being beaten by the mob of boys?
- _____ 9. Had Billy ever had a bottle of pop before the marshal bought one for him?
- _____ 10. By the time he was ready to leave town for the long journey home, was Billy afraid of the marshal?
- _____ 11. Did Billy spend the night in a cave in the Sparrow Hawk Mountains?
- _____ 12. Was the boy pup bold and aggressive?
- _____ 13. Was the girl dog much smarter than the boy dog?
- _____ 14. Was it the scent of a human and the bark of the boy dog that frightened away the prowling mountain lion?
- _____ 15. Was Billy able to lighten his load by taking the pups out of the sack and encouraging them to follow him?
- _____ 16. Did Billy decide to tell his parents the truth about the pups?
- _____ 17. Did Billy find the names Dan and Ann carved on a sycamore tree in the same fishermen's camp where he had found the magazine?
- _____ 18. Was Billy eager to get home and show the pups to his family?
- _____ 19. Did Billy see worry and grief in his mother's eyes when he returned home?
- _____ 20. Did Billy's family have any idea where he had been?
- _____ 21. When Billy told about his bad experiences in town, did his father promise that the family would always live in the hills?
- _____ 22. Did Billy's father want his children to have a good education?
- _____ 23. Was the slide, where Billy saw the children playing, actually a fire escape?
- _____ 24. Did Billy scratch the dog's names on their hand-made collars?
- _____ 25. Did Billy believe God heard his prayer and helped him get the pups?



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WHOLE BOOK TEST

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. The lost dog Billy found on his way home from work was (A) wearing an old identification tag, (B) involved in a dog fight, (C) well-fed, but obviously lost.
- _____ 2. Which of the following was **not** a way the lost dog and Billy's hunting dogs were alike? They (A) were redbone hounds, (B) wore handmade collars held together with wire, (C) were larger than the average for their breed.
- _____ 3. As an adult, Billy lived in the Snake River Valley of (A) Oklahoma, (B) Idaho, (C) Missouri.
- _____ 4. As a child, Billy and his family lived in the Ozarks of (A) Oklahoma, (B) Idaho, (C) Arkansas.
- _____ 5. Billy's father earned a living for the family by (A) working for the railroad, (B) selling furs, (C) farming.
- _____ 6. Billy's mother (A) had Cherokee blood in her veins, (B) was originally from Virginia, (C) had inherited their land from her father.
- _____ 7. Billy's parents wanted to move out of the hills (A) so they could get better jobs, (B) so their children could go to school and be educated, (C) because there were so many dangerous animals in the area.
- _____ 8. Billy's dog-wanting began when he was (A) ten years old, (B) twelve years old, (C) fourteen years old.



- _____ 9. Which of the following was **not** something that Billy caught in the traps his father gave to him? (A) Samie, the cat, (B) one of his mother's prize chickens, (C) a coon.

WHERE THE RED FERN GROWS

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***Something to Think About . . .
Something to Write About . . .***



Where the Red Fern Grows is described on the book cover as being a *heartwarming adventure*.

- Explain how this statement is true.
 - What parts of the story can also be described as *cruel-hearted*?
 - Which events of the story can be said to *pull at your heartstrings*?
 - How is the story also *heartbreaking*?
-

Billy remembered the passage from the Bible Mama had read: “God helps those who help themselves.”

- Explain how Billy used this thought to get his dogs. Why didn't he just pester his parents until they gave in?
 - If you had a desire for something as strong as Billy's dog-wanting, how could you use the idea in the Bible passage to get what you wanted?
 - Why is earning what you want a better method than having it given to you?
-

What do you think each of the following people from Tahlequah thought of Billy? How would each person describe his appearance, behavior, and personality to someone else?

the stationmaster

the kids in the schoolyard

the marshal

the little old lady with the hoe in her hand

About Your Teaching Pack. . .

The primary goal in creating the teaching packs for children's novels is to provide a **classroom-ready**, non-threatening method for checking student comprehension and stretching thinking skills. **When used as a basic guide for teaching a novel, the materials offer many and varied opportunities for learning.**

Use your teaching pack as a guide and lead your students into discovering new ideas about

THE PLOT

Each test page is actually an outline of the plot. In your teaching pack, the chain of related events that tell the story has been pulled from the novel and reformatted into a series of questions. Whether they are aware of their ability or not, all good readers sense the **rhythm** of the **connected** events that compose the plot; and consequently **comprehend** the story. This "plot rhythm" is the basic structure of the tests.

To further your students' understanding of plot, try the following activities:

Summarizing the Story: Using only the chapter questions as a guide, have your students write a summary of the chapter. For a set of ten questions, limit the number of sentences they may write to seven. For twenty questions, allow no more than twelve sentences.

Reporting the News: Have students write a newspaper article, based on the events from a set of questions, and add the *who, what, when, where, why* format. Some needed information may be located in previous chapters.

Twisting the Plot: Choose one or two questions from each chapter and change its answer—true to false, no to yes, or a different answer—and explain how changing a single (or several) events would change the story. To further illustrate the rhythm of a good story, try changing the answers to one complete set of questions. Your students will see how difficult, if not impossible, it is to tell a sensible story from a tangled set of events.

THE CHARACTERS

Questions that illustrate character motivation and personality are purposely included. Too often, when they are asked to tell what kind of person a story character is, the only answer many of our students can muster is "nice."

In your efforts to remove "nice" from your students' literary vocabulary, try this idea:

Character Charts: Display individual charts for the main characters. As the chapters are read, record **facts, behaviors, or events** that relate to the each character. Then connect the items with several appropriate words such as **empathetic, brave, calloused, bold, untrustworthy**, etc. The teacher can take the lead by contributing the first few words and then assigning the task of identifying more terms to students. Record the word collections on the charts with the story facts.

This information is a valuable student resource when displayed in the room for all to see and use during a writing assignment. In creating and using character charts, students will soon begin writing more fluently and insightfully about story personalities.

Use the charts to encourage your students to try some "predicting" or "detective" writing about what the character(s) might do next or what might have happened after the story ended. Let the charts help your students recognize **CHARACTER CHANGE (dynamics)**.

Another fun activity with the charts is to match a book personality with a zodiac sign. Students must justify their reason for thinking a character is a particular sign by citing his/her behaviors, words, reactions to situations, etc. that prove the match.

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

(Implied Meaning)

Because the primary goal for the objective questions is **basic comprehension**, items requiring a student to **interpret** an event or a character's behavior are not included. Always included, however, are questions that *establish the existence of a story component carrying an implied meaning.*

MAKING PREDICTIONS

(Recognizing Story Clues)

Authors subtly place clues in the story line giving the reader hints as to what is about to happen. Like the implied meaning, these clues are brought to the reader's attention in the form of a question. Once a student learns to spot the gems, his/her ability to comprehend and enjoy a story tends to leap forward.

Use "thinking-out-loud" class discussions to list all the possible meanings of the clue questions. Have your student write their individual predictions (no sharing or telling), store the papers until the novel is finished, and then retrieve them for reading. Sometimes, a wrong prediction makes a story as good as the original.

OTHER FUCTIONS

The objective test pages are excellent discussion guides for both whole groups and small groups. They work well as homework reading guides and as conferencing tools. They are also useful management tools for teachers who wish to use multiple titles in one classroom.

IMPROVING/DEVELOPING LISTENING SKILLS

Rather than always requiring your students to answer test questions on a printed page, surprise them (and save paper!!) by occasionally doing the test orally.

Try this technique:

Student Rules for an Oral Test:

The teacher will read each question *two times*. No comments or questions that interrupt this initial phase of the test are allowed.

When all questions have been read, individual students may ask for repeats of any question he/she wishes to hear again.

No interruptions/comments during the re-reading part of the test.

Teacher Rules for an Oral Test:

The teacher will read each question *two times*. Except to remind students that a re-reading phase will following after the last question, he/she will not respond to comment/question during this period.

The teacher will repeat **any** and **all** questions (even if it results in reading the same question multiple times).

(The second teacher rule is a *vital* part of the exercise. Asking for multiple repeats of a question does not mean students aren't paying attention. It does indicate their desire to *understand* and *answer* the question correctly.)

As students become more comfortable and experienced with oral test-taking, the number of requests for repeated questions will diminish. An added bonus to this technique is that skills learned in these testing periods tend to translate into other situations where teacher-talking and student-listening are required components of learning.

Higher Level Thinking Skills

The second section of your teaching pack, SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT/SOMETHING TO WRITE ABOUT, addresses the higher level thinking skills of Bloom's Taxonomy. These open-ended prompts engage students in in-depth character analysis, cause and effect, vocabulary building, application of story elements to real life, etc. A variety of difficulty levels accommodates the needs of individual students, including the gifted

Final Note

The Novel Teaching Packs are designed for use as supplementary material that supports a total reading program. It is my goal to provide busy teachers with a classroom-ready, practical resource loaded with motivational and learning opportunities for their students. It is my hope that your purchase will prove to be a hard-working instructional component for years to come. Thanks for choosing one of my products for your classroom.



Margaret Whisnant, Author