



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Classic Literature: Little Women

Louisa May Alcott wrote *Little Women* in 1868. It is one of the most beloved children's books of all time. It is the story of the four March sisters: Meg, Jo, Amy, and Beth. They live with their mother while their father is fighting in the Civil War. The family doesn't have much money. They live next door to Mr. Laurence, who is very wealthy, and his grandson, Laurie. The passage below is about Beth, who loves to play the piano. The March family only has a small, out-of-tune piano. The "Mansion of Bliss" is Mr. Laurence's house.

### CHAPTER SIX: BETH FINDS THE PALACE BEAUTIFUL

But Beth, though yearning for the grand piano, could not pluck up courage to go to the 'Mansion of Bliss', as Meg called it. She went once with Jo, but the old gentleman, not being aware of her infirmity, stared at her so hard from under his heavy eyebrows, and said "Hey!" so loud, that he frightened her so much her 'feet chattered on the floor', she never told her mother, and she ran away, declaring she would never go there any more, not even for the dear piano. No persuasions or enticements could overcome her fear, till, the fact coming to Mr. Laurence's ear in some mysterious way, he set about mending matters. During one of the brief calls he made, he artfully led the conversation to music, and talked away about great singers whom he had seen, fine organs he had heard, and told such charming anecdotes that Beth found it impossible to stay in her distant corner, but crept nearer and nearer, as if fascinated. At the back of his chair she stopped and stood listening, with her great eyes wide open and her cheeks red with excitement of this unusual performance. Taking no more notice of her than if she had been a fly, Mr. Laurence talked on about Laurie's lessons and teachers. And presently, as if the idea had just occurred to him, he said to Mrs. March...

"The boy neglects his music now, and I'm glad of it, for he was getting too fond of it. But the piano suffers for want of use. Wouldn't some of your girls like to run over, and practice on it now and then, just to keep it in tune, you know, ma'am?"

Beth took a step forward, and pressed her hands tightly together to keep from clapping them, for this

was an irresistible temptation, and the thought of practicing on that splendid instrument quite took her breath away. Before Mrs. March could reply, Mr. Laurence went on with an odd little nod and smile...

"They needn't see or speak to anyone, but run in at any time. For I'm shut up in my study at the other end of the house, Laurie is out a great deal, and the servants are never near the drawing room after nine o'clock."

Here he rose, as if going, and Beth made up her mind to speak, for that last arrangement left nothing to be desired. "Please, tell the young ladies what I say, and if they don't care to come, why, never mind." Here a little hand slipped into his, and Beth looked up at him with a face full of gratitude, as she said, in her earnest yet timid way...

"Oh sir, they do care, very very much!" "Are you the musical girl?" he asked, without any startling "Hey!" as he looked down at her very kindly.

"I'm Beth. I love it dearly, and I'll come, if you are quite sure nobody will hear me, and be disturbed," she added, fearing to be rude, and trembling at her own boldness as she spoke.

"Not a soul, my dear. The house is empty half the day, so come and drum away as much as you like, and I shall be obliged to you."

"How kind you are, sir!"

Beth blushed like a rose under the friendly look he wore, but she was not frightened now, and gave the hand a grateful squeeze because she had no words to thank him for the precious gift he had given her.





# Little Women: Understanding the Passage

## I. Order of Events

Put the following events in the passage in the order they happened. Mark the first event with a 1, the second with a 2 and so on.

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Laurence visits the Marches.
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Laurence talks about music.
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ Beth says she'll play Mr. Laurence's piano.
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ Beth and Jo visit the 'Mansion of Bliss'
- E. \_\_\_\_\_ Beth listens in a corner.
- F. \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Laurence invites the sisters to play the piano.
- G. \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Laurence says "Hey!" to Beth.

## II. Short Answer

Answer each question below.

1. What caused Beth to overcome her shyness around Mr. Laurence?
2. Why did Mr. Laurence talk about music so much during his visit to the Marches?
3. Why did Mr. Laurence say, "They needn't see or speak to anyone"?





Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Little Women: Understanding the Words

## I. Vocabulary Match

Match each word in Column A with its meaning in Column B

### Column A

1. \_\_\_\_\_ bliss
2. \_\_\_\_\_ chattered
3. \_\_\_\_\_ enticements
4. \_\_\_\_\_ yearning
5. \_\_\_\_\_ anecdotes
6. \_\_\_\_\_ neglects
7. \_\_\_\_\_ infirmity
8. \_\_\_\_\_ artfully
9. \_\_\_\_\_ timid
10. \_\_\_\_\_ earnest

### Column B

- A. ignores
- B. sincere or meaningful
- C. happiness
- D. something that encourages or tempts
- E. shy and afraid
- F. weakness or inability
- G. click rapidly
- H. wanting or desiring
- I. short, funny stories
- J. skillfully

## II. Meaning in Context

Below are quotations from the passage. Use the context of the sentence to circle the correct meaning of the underlined words.

1. "Beth...could not pluck up courage to go"

- A. hope for      B. gather or find      C. let go      D. find time

2. "he set about mending matters"

- A. sewing clothes      B. asking advice      C. caring about a person      D. fixing a situation

3. " 'But the piano suffers for want of use. ' "

- A. is hurt by the lack of      B. gets lots of      C. has no particular      D. needs care more than

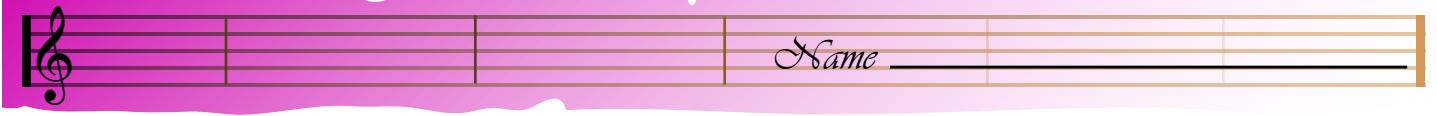
4. " 'the servants are never near the drawing room after nine o'clock ' "

- A. dining room      B. kitchen      C. artist's studio      D. living room or parlor

5. " 'I shall be obliged to you ' "

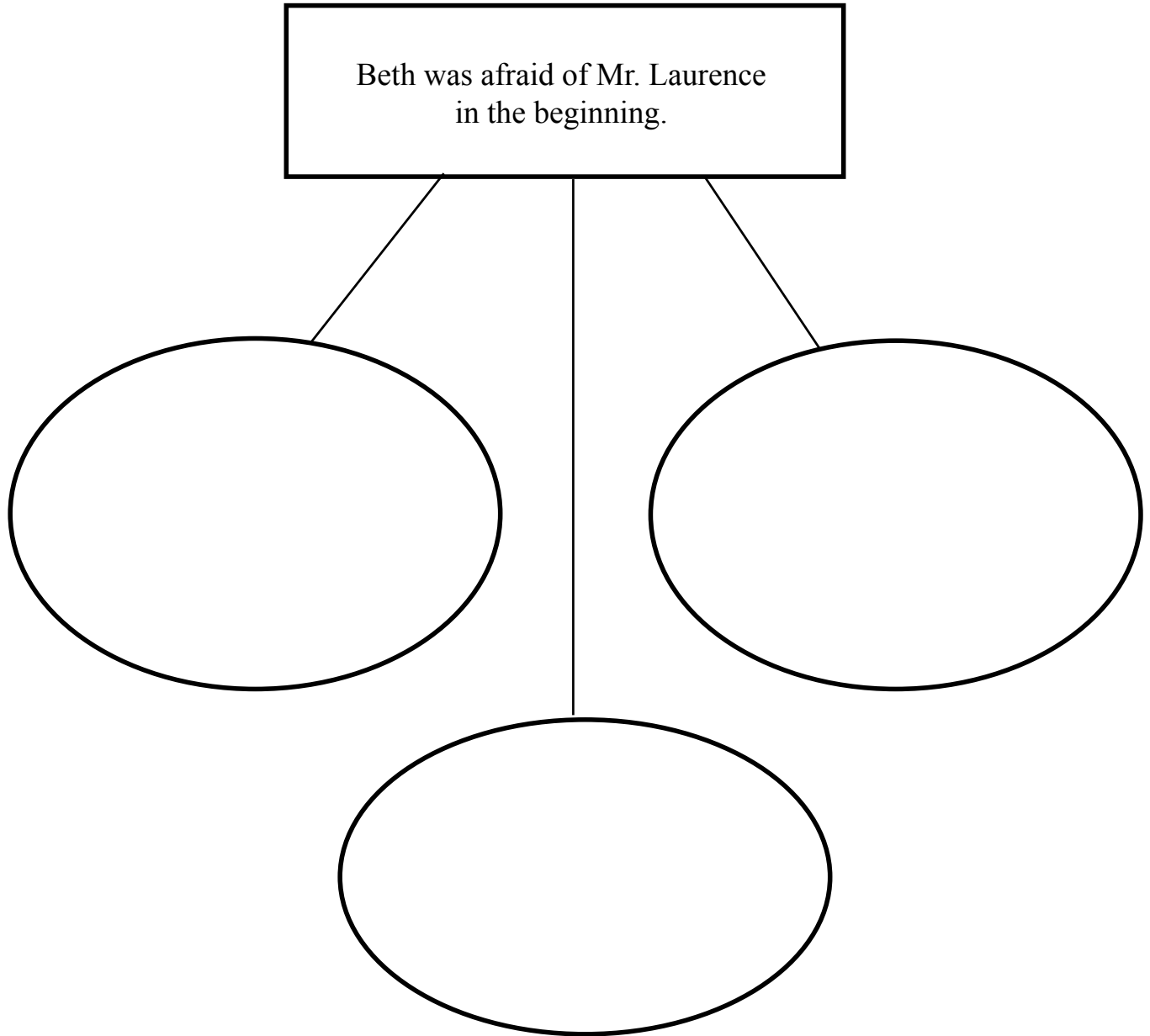
- A. a comfort      B. talking      C. grateful      D. listening





## Little Women: Find the Supporting Evidence

Below is one of the main ideas of the passage. Find three examples from the text that supports this main idea.





Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Little Women: The Meetings of Beth and Mr. Laurence

The passage from Little Women tells of two times Beth and Mr. Laurence meet. Compare the two meetings. How did each character act in each meeting? How were the meetings different? What was the difference in the ending of each meeting? Which was the happier meeting?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Little Women Word Search

Circle each word from the list in the puzzle. The words can go in any direction.

Q	O	T	C	H	A	T	T	E	R	E	D	N	B	C
I	L	A	U	R	E	N	C	E	S	N	A	B	W	D
P	U	V	Z	N	H	J	R	Y	O	T	S	A	O	O
D	B	E	T	H	V	C	T	K	K	I	N	D	L	Y
F	G	P	R	A	C	T	I	C	E	C	P	N	H	N
O	C	B	A	B	O	R	M	I	q	E	D	V	D	P
E	H	U	G	U	O	R	I	Q	E	M	G	E	V	I
K	Y	L	A	N	E	C	D	O	T	E	S	O	R	A
J	T	E	O	B	L	I	G	E	D	N	T	D	B	N
M	T	Z	B	N	L	R	R	F	N	T	T	L	L	O
U	E	M	A	R	C	H	O	W	P	S	E	O	I	K
S	R	G	V	D	O	Q	W	H	C	L	S	C	S	K
I	E	F	H	C	G	W	M	T	P	E	N	A	S	M
C	D	W	Q	M	A	N	S	I	O	N	N	J	U	A

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|-----------|-------------|----------|---------|----------|
| ANECDOTES | CHATTERED   | KINDLY   | MANSION | PIANO    |
| BETH      | ENTICEMENTS | LAURENCE | MUSIC   | PRACTICE |
| BLISS     | EYEBROWS    | MARCH    | OBLIGED | TIMID    |





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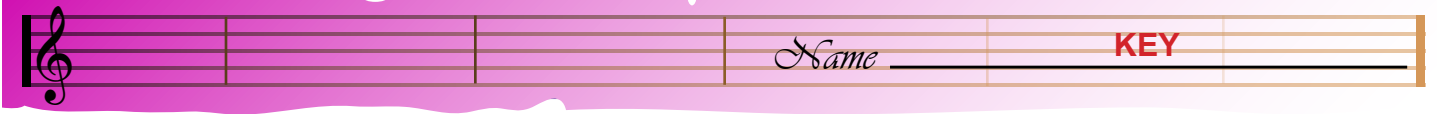
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Put the following events in the passage in the order they happened. Mark the first event with a 1, the second with a 2 and so on.

- A.   3   Mr. Laurence visits the Marches.
- B.   4   Mr. Laurence talks about music.
- C.   7   Beth says she'll play Mr. Laurence's piano.
- D.   1   Beth and Jo visit the 'Mansion of Bliss'
- E.   5   Beth listens in a corner.
- F.   6   Mr. Laurence invites the sisters to play the piano.
- G.   2   Mr. Laurence says "Hey!" to Beth.

## II. Short Answer

Answer each question below.

**Actual student's answers will vary. Correct answers should include references to:**

1. What caused Beth to overcome her shyness around Mr. Laurence?

**She wanted very much to play his piano.**

2. Why did Mr. Laurence talk about music so much during his visit to the Marches?

**He knew Beth loved music, and he thought she might forget her shyness.**

3. Why did Mr. Laurence say, "They needn't see or speak to anyone"?

**Since Beth was shy, he wanted her to feel comfortable coming to his house.**







Name \_\_\_\_\_

KEY

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Match each word in Column A with its meaning in Column B

Column A		Column B
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2. <u>    G    </u>	chattered	B. sincere or meaningful
3. <u>    D    </u>	enticements	C. happiness
4. <u>    H    </u>	yearning	D. something that encourages or tempts
5. <u>    I    </u>	anecdotes	E. shy and afraid
6. <u>    A    </u>	neglects	F. weakness or inability
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Below is one of the main ideas of the passage. Find three examples from the text that supports this main idea.

Beth was afraid of Mr. Laurence  
in the beginning.

Student's answers may vary.  
Example of correct answers:

"Beth, though yearning for  
the grand piano, could not  
pluck up courage to go"

"he frightened her so much  
her 'feet chattered  
on the floor' "

"but she was not  
frightened now"







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D	B	E	T	H	V	C	T	K	K	I	N	D	L	Y
F	G	P	R	A	C	T	I	C	E	C	P	N	H	N
O	C	B	A	B	O	R	M	I	q	E	D	V	D	P
E	H	U	G	U	O	R	I	Q	E	M	G	E	V	I
K	Y	L	A	N	E	C	D	O	T	E	S	O	R	A
J	T	E	O	B	L	I	G	E	D	N	T	D	B	N
M	T	Z	B	N	L	R	R	F	N	T	T	L	L	O
U	E	M	A	R	C	H	O	W	P	S	E	O	I	K
S	R	G	V	D	O	Q	W	H	C	L	S	C	S	K
I	E	F	H	C	G	W	M	T	P	E	N	A	S	M
C	D	W	Q	M	A	N	S	I	O	N	N	J	U	A

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