

Name: _____

The Railway Children

Edith Nesbit

Edith Nesbit wrote **The Railway Children** in 1906. It is the story of of an English family with three children named Peter, Phyllis, and Roberta. The mother and children move to a house near a railway, or railroad track, after the father has been put in prison. In the passage below, the children and their mother have just arrived at their new house very late in the day. No one is at the house to greet them. The house is dark, there are boxes everywhere, and there is no dinner ready. The mother and the children have just opened a box in the cellar that has food and candles.

Chapter II. Peter's coal-mine.

"Hooray!" said Mother; "here are some candles—the very first thing! You girls go and light them. You'll find some saucers and things. Just drop a little candle-grease in the saucer and stick the candle upright in it."

"How many shall we light?"

"As many as ever you like," said Mother, gaily. "The great thing is to be cheerful. Nobody can be cheerful in the dark except owls and dormice."

So the girls lighted candles. The head of the first match flew off and stuck to Phyllis's finger; but, as Roberta said, it was only a little burn, and she might have had to be a Roman martyr and be burned whole if she had happened to live in the days when those things were fashionable.

Then, when the dining-room was lighted by fourteen candles, Roberta fetched coal and wood and lighted a fire.

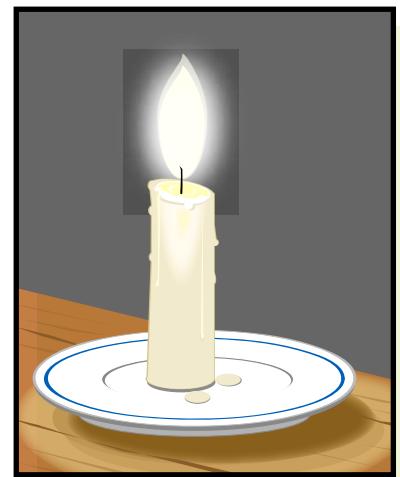
"It's very cold for May," she said, feeling what a grown-up thing it was to say.

The fire-light and the candle-light made the dining-room look very different, for now you could see that the dark walls were of wood, carved here and there into little wreaths and loops.

The girls hastily 'tidied' the room, which meant putting the chairs against the wall, and piling all the odds and ends into a corner and partly hiding them with the big leather arm-chair that Father used to sit in after dinner.

"Bravo!" cried Mother, coming in with a tray full of things. "This is something like! I'll just get a tablecloth and then—"

The tablecloth was in a box with a proper lock that was opened with a key and not with a shovel, and when the cloth was spread on the table, a real feast was laid out on it.



Name: _____

Understanding The Railway Children

Part I. Order of Events

Place the following actions in the story in the correct order by writing 1 in front of the first thing that happened, 2 in front of the second thing that happened, and so on.

- A. _____ The girls lit fourteen candles.
- B. _____ Phyllis burned her finger.
- C. _____ Mother tells the girls to light candles.
- D. _____ Roberta lit a fire.
- E. _____ The girls moved the chairs.

Part II. Multiple Choice

Circle the correct answer to each question.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Who did Mother say was cheerful in the dark? | D. Stone with paintings of fruit |
| A. Bats and spiders | 4. Roberta said it was very cold for what? |
| B. Owls and dormice | A. September |
| C. Rabbits and owls | B. May |
| D. Rats and mice | C. Summer |
| | D. June |
| 2. The lock on the box was opened with what? | 5. Mother took what out of the box? |
| A. A shovel and not a key | A. A feast |
| B. A knob and not a shovel | B. A shovel |
| C. A knob and not a key | C. A tablecloth |
| D. A key and not a shovel | D. Candlesticks |
| 3. When the candles were lit, what did the dining-room walls look like? | |
| A. Wood with carving of wreaths and loops | |
| B. Plaster with pictures of flowers | |
| C. Wood with painted animals | |



Name: _____

Vocabulary in The Railway Children

I. Vocabulary Match

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

Column A

1. _____ gaily
2. _____ fetched
3. _____ martyr
4. _____ tidied
5. _____ fashionable
6. _____ feast
7. _____ upright
8. _____ candle-grease
9. _____ hastily
10. _____ dormice

Column B

- A. wax from a candle
- B. made neat
- C. popular trend
- D. someone who is killed for their beliefs
- E. quickly; hurriedly
- F. small furry rodents, like squirrels
- G. happily or joyfully
- H. a large meal
- I. standing up or erect
- J. went and brought back

Part II. Using Interjections

Interjections are words that express a sudden feeling. In the passage from *The Railway Children*, Mother uses two interjections: “Bravo!” and “Hooray!” Both of these interjections are happy ones. Other interjections can express surprise, pain, or disappointment. Interjections are usually followed by an exclamation point.

Pick five interjections from the word bank below. Write a sentence for each one.

Word Bank

ouch	whoops	oops
wow	yea	yikes
oh	ugh	ahh
yahoo	boo	hey

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

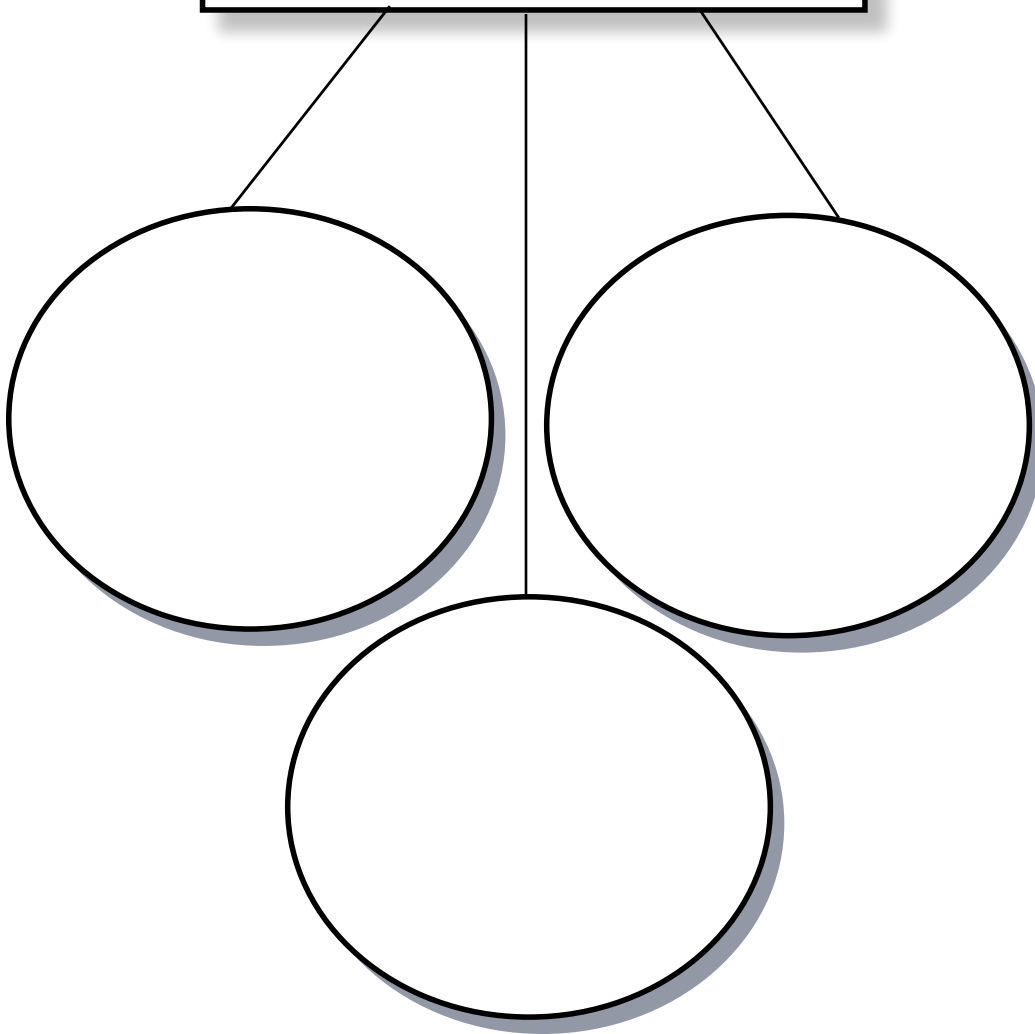
Name: _____



The Railway Children: Find the Supporting Evidence

Below is one of the main ideas of the passage. What are three ideas from the passage that support this main idea.

Light makes things better.



Name: _____



The Railway Children: What Would You Do Today?

The Railway Children was written before electric lights were used by everyone. The girls used candles to light the room. We use electric lights now, but sometimes the electricity goes out. Write a story about how you would light a room if you had no candles and no electric lights, like lamps. What things could you use to light a room? How would it look when it was lit up? Would it be cheerful or scary?

[illegible]

Name: _____

The Railway Children Word Search

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

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

CANDLES
DINING
FEAST

FIRE
KEY
MATCH

MOTHER
OWLS
PHYLLIS

ROBERTA
ROOM
TABLECLOTH

The Railway Children

Edith Nesbit

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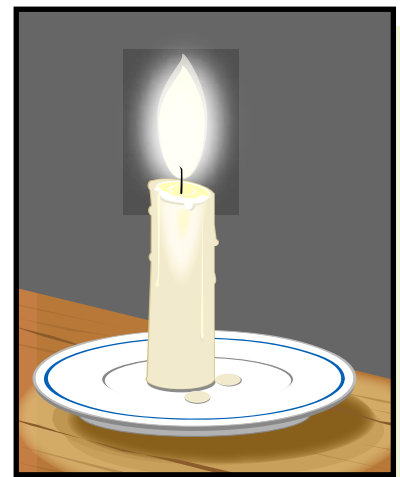
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Name: _____ **KEY**

Understanding The Railway Children

Part I. Order of Events

Place the following actions in the story in the correct order by writing 1 in front of the first thing that happened, 2 in front of the second thing that happened, and so on.

Actual student's answers may vary. Example of correct answers.

- A. 3 The girls lit fourteen candles.
- B. 2 Phyllis burned her finger.
- C. 1 Mother tells the girls to light candles.
- D. 3 Roberta lit a fire.
- E. 4 The girls moved the chairs.

Part II. Multiple Choice

Circle the correct answer to each question.

1. Who did Mother say was cheerful in the dark?

- A. Bats and spiders
- ☒ B. Owls and dormice
- C. Rabbits and owls
- D. Rats and mice

2. The lock on the box was opened with what?

- A. A shovel and not a key
- B. A knob and not a shovel
- C. A knob and not a key
- ☒ D. A key and not a shovel

3. When the candles were lit, what did the dining-room walls look like?

- ☒ A. Wood with carving of wreaths and loops
- B. Plaster with pictures of flowers
- C. Wood with painted animals

D. Stone with paintings of fruit

4. Roberta said it was very cold for what?

- A. September
- ☒ B. May
- C. Summer
- D. June

5. Mother took what out of the box?

- A. A feast
- B. A shovel
- ☒ C. A tablecloth
- D. Candlesticks



Name: _____ **KEY**

Vocabulary in The Railway Children

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2. _____ **J** _____ fetched
3. _____ **D** _____ martyr
4. _____ **B** _____ tidied
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7. _____ **I** _____ upright
8. _____ **A** _____ candle-grease
9. _____ **E** _____ hastily
10. _____ **F** _____ dormice

Column B

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- B. made neat
- C. popular trend
- D. someone who is killed for their beliefs
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Interjections are words that express a sudden feeling. In the passage from *The Railway Children*, Mother uses two interjections: "Bravo!" and "Hooray!" Both of these interjections are happy ones. Other interjections can express surprise, pain, or disappointment. Interjections are usually followed by an exclamation point.

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wow	yea	yikes
oh	ugh	ahh
yahoo	boo	hey

Student's choice

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Name: _____ **KEY**



The Railway Children: Find the Supporting Evidence

Below is one of the main ideas of the passage. What are three ideas from the passage that support this main idea.

Light makes things better.

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

Mother thought no one
"can be cheerful in the
dark except owls
and dormice."

The cande-light helped
the girls to "see that the
dark walls were
of wood."

When she saw the lighted
room, Mother said "Bravo!"

KEY

[illegible]

Name: _____ **KEY**

The Railway Children Word Search

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



CANDLES
DINING
FEAST

FIRE
KEY
MATCH

MOTHER
OWLS
PHYLLIS

ROBERTA
ROOM
TABLECLOTH