

## A DOG'S TALE

### Warm Up

Do you have a pet? If yes, tell me about your pet. If you do not have a pet, talk about any animal that you have seen.

Look at this picture.



If you could have a pet, which of these animals would you like to have as a pet?

Do you think a pet wants to talk to its owner?

What would the pet want to talk about?

### Vocabulary

nursery: (here) a room in a house for the use of young children. It can also mean a school for young children. Or, a place where young plants and trees are grown for sale or for planting elsewhere.

crib: a small bed for a little baby



fireplace: a place for a fire, especially at the base of a chimney



lofty: (here) tall

gauzy stuff: (here) see-through cloth

flaming up: flames of fire going up

dragged: pulled

tugged: pulled

waist-band: a band fitting around the waist



creature: (here) the baby, but generally used for a living being like an animal

cursed beast: (here) damned creature

furiously: angrily

garret: top floor or attic



twilight: the time between night and sunrise or between sunset and night; also refers to the kind of light in the sky during the time between night and day, or between day and night.

Let us read this story about a dog.

## **A Dog's Tale by Mark Twain**

One day I was standing a watch in the nursery. That is to say, I was asleep on the bed. The baby was asleep in the crib, which was alongside the bed, on the side next to the fireplace. It was the kind of crib that has a lofty tent over it made of gauzy stuff that you can see through. The nurse was out, and we two sleepers were alone. A spark from the wood-fire was shot out, and it lit on the slope of the tent. I suppose a quiet interval followed, then a scream from the baby awoke me, and there was that tent flaming up toward the ceiling! Before I could think, I sprang to the floor in my fright, and in a second was half-way to the door; but in the next half second, I was back on the bed again. I reached my head through the flames and dragged the baby out by the waist-band, and tugged it along, and we fell to the floor together in a cloud of smoke; I snatched a new hold, and dragged the screaming little creature along and out at the door and around the bend of the hall, and was still tugging away, all excited and happy and proud, when the master's voice shouted: "Begone you cursed beast!" and I jumped to save

myself; but he was furiously quick, and chased me up, striking furiously at me with his cane, I dodging this way and that, in terror, and at last a strong blow fell upon my left foreleg, which made me shriek and fall, for the moment, helpless; the cane went up for another blow, but never descended, for the nurse's voice rang wildly out, "The nursery's on fire!" and the master rushed away in that direction, and my other bones were saved.

The pain was cruel, but, no matter, I must not lose any time; he might come back at any moment; so I limped on three legs to the other end of the hall, where there was a dark little stairway leading up into a garret where old boxes and such things were kept. I searched my way through the dark among the piles of things and hid. In that blessed stillness, my terrors fell little by little away, and I was at peace and slept. It was a good rest I had, but I woke before the twilight had come again. I was feeling fairly comfortable, and I could think out a plan now. I made a very good one; which was, to creep down, all the way down the back stairs, and hide behind the cellar door, and slip out and escape.

Then—well, then the calling began again! It was Sadie's voice, and she was crying; my name was falling from her lips all broken, poor thing, and I could not believe my ears for the joy of it when I heard her say: “Come back to us—oh, come back to us, and forgive—it is all so sad without our—” I broke in with SUCH a grateful little yelp, and the next moment Sadie was plunging and stumbling through the darkness and the lumber and shouting for the family to hear, “She's found, she's found!”

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3174/3174-h/3174-h.htm>

## Comprehension

- A. Tick the most appropriate answer.
1. The speaker in the passage is
    - a. a dog
    - b. a nurse
    - c. a young girl
    - d. a young boy
  2. The dog was
    - a. beside the fireplace

- b. in the crib
  - c. on the bed
  - d. alongside the bed
3. The two sleepers in the nursery were
- a. the nurse and the baby
  - b. the dog and the nurse
  - c. the baby and the dog
  - d. the master and the dog
4. The dog caught the baby by the
- a. collar
  - b. waistband
  - c. net
  - d. shirt
5. The dog was limping because
- a. the flames had injured him
  - b. he had been hit
  - c. the smoke had blinded him
  - d. he had jumped
6. The dog was filled with joy
- a. when he had rescued the baby
  - b. when he could sleep peacefully

- c. when he decided to creep away
- d. when he heard Sadie's voice

B. Write short answers. (or answer orally in your own words)

1. How did the dog bring the baby out of the room?
2. Why did the master hit the dog?
3. What made Sadie ask the dog to forgive them?

C. Write in about 40 words why we can say that the dog was loyal to the family.

D. Find words in the passage that mean the same as:

1. pulling \_\_\_\_\_
2. go away \_\_\_\_\_
3. hitting \_\_\_\_\_
4. came down \_\_\_\_\_
5. run away \_\_\_\_\_



E. Use the words from 'vocabulary' to complete the sentences.

1. Sumit lit the pile of hay with a match stick and soon it was \_\_\_\_\_ toward the sky.
2. I \_\_\_\_\_ at the rope until I pulled the boat closer to the shore.
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ tower seemed to reach the sky.
4. The children were playing in the \_\_\_\_\_ when we reached the house.
5. The young boy yelled \_\_\_\_\_. He was very angry.
6. The irate farmer called his bullock a \_\_\_\_\_ because it would not move fast enough.
7. The baby slept peacefully in its \_\_\_\_\_.
8. I \_\_\_\_\_ the suitcase across the street.
9. The old trunks have been stored in the \_\_\_\_\_ until we find a better place for them.

10. The \_\_\_\_\_ of this skirt is adjustable, so it can fit many sizes.
11. The veil of the bride was made of \_\_\_\_\_ so we could see her face.
12. Please pile up the wood in the \_\_\_\_\_ so that we can light a fire when it gets cold.
13. At \_\_\_\_\_ the sky turns a pretty pink and looks really lovely.
14. The \_\_\_\_\_ looked miserable because it had got wet in the rain.

F. Make sentences with the words given under 'Vocabulary'. Your sentences should make the meaning of the word clear.