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Home reading

(Easy Selections from English Literature)

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PREFACE

We know that you are learning English well. We think you want to know it well and I hope this book will help you. Put the book on your table and read it every day for 15 or 20 minutes. This will improve your English and will help you to learn very many interesting things.

You will read many novels, stories and folk-tales in this book. So, we want to tell you a few words about folk-tales. Many, many years ago when there were no books, newspapers, they were stories. People did not read stories, they told them. In the long winter evenings or gloomy autumn days or sunny summer nights and fresh spring afternoon, when people could not work in the fields, they sat near the fire and told tales. The children listened and when they grew up, they told those stories to their children, and so the tales were passed on for hundreds of years until at last they were written. So, there are easy selections from English Literature. And, also Uzbek people says: "A word enough to the wise". So, make it a habit to read a little in English every day.

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UNIT ONE

THE LAST LEAF

BY O'HENRY

Task 1. Listen and fill the missing words and learn the life and activity of the writer. Tell another works by the writer if you read.

O. Henry's stories often resemble newspaper articles, and they usually end with an interesting twist. William Sydney Porter was born on September 11 in 1862 – died on June 5 in 1910, better known by his pen name O. Henry, was an American writer. O. Henry's short stories are known for their wit, wordplay, warm characterization and clever twist endings. William Sidney Porter was born on September 11, 1862, in Greensboro, North Carolina. His middle name at birth was Sidney; he changed the spelling to Sydney in 1898. His parents were Dr. Algernon Sidney Porter (1825–1888), a physician, and Mary Jane Virginia Swain Porter (1833–1865). They were married on April 20, 1858. When William was three, his mother died from tuberculosis, and he and his father moved into the home of his paternal grandmother. As a child, Porter was always reading, everything from classics to dime novels; his favorite works were Lane's transource languageation of One Thousand and One Nights, and Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy.

Porter graduated from his Aunt Evelyn Maria Porter's elementary school in 1876. He then enrolled at the Lindsey Street High School. His aunt continued to tutor him until he was fifteen. In 1879, he started working in his uncle's drugstore and in 1881, at the age of nineteen; he was licensed as a pharmacist. At the drugstore, he also showed off his natural artistic talents by sketching the townsfolk.

William Sydney Porter was born on Polecat Creek in Guilford County, and raised and educated in Greensboro by an unmarried aunt who ran a private school. Young William Sydney Porter worked in an uncle's drug store until he moved at nineteen to Texas where he held a variety of jobs including paying and receiving teller at the First National Bank of Austin. To supplement his income, he wrote free-lance sketches, and was briefly editor and co-owner of a humorous weekly called The Rolling Stone. While he was working as a columnist for the Houston Daily Post, Porter was indicted for the embezzlement of bank funds during his time as a teller. His trial was delayed for two years first by his escape to New Orleans and Honduras, then by his wife's illness and death.

William Sydney Porter's stories follow a standard formula, dealing with commonplace events in the lives of ordinary people and arriving at a surprise ending through coincidence. His two favorite themes were the situation of the imposter and fate as the one unavoidable reality of life. Some of his best known tales are "The Gift of the Magi," "A Municipal Report," and "The Ransom of Red Chief." Stories which hark back to his North Carolina background include "Let Me Feel Your Pulse" and "The Fool-Killer." Although his stories have been criticized for sentimentality and for their surprise endings, they remain popular to this day for those very reasons, and because of their author's unmistakable affection for the foibles of human nature.

Task 2 Read and learn.

Part one

Many people who are interested in art come to Greenwich Village, which is a section of New York City. They like the Bohemian life the village, and they enjoy living among so many artists. The buildings and apartments are often very old and dirty, but this adds to the interest of the place.

At the top of an old, three story brick house, Sue and Johnsy had their studio. One of them was from the state of Maine, the other from California. They had met in the restaurant of an Eighth Street hotel. Both were artists who had recently come to New York to make their living.

That was in May. In November, a cold, unseen stranger, whom the doctors called pneumonia, visited the city, touching one here and one there with his icy finger.

He touched Johnsy and she lay, scarcely moving, on her painted iron bed, looking through the small window at the blank wall of the opposite building.

One morning the busy doctor invited Sue into the hall.

"She has about one chance in ten to live," he said as he shook down the mercury in his clinical thermometer." And that one chance depends upon her desire to get better. But your little friend has made up her mind that she is going to die. Is she worrying about something?"

"Se wanted to paint a picture of the Bay of Naples some day," said Sue.

"No, something more important — a man perhaps?"

"No."

“Well, perhaps it is a result of her fever and her general physical weakness. But when a patient begins to feel sure that she is going to die, then I subtract fifty percent from the power of medicines. If you can succeed in making her interested in something, in asking, for instance, about the latest exhibit at a local gallery or some other art news, then I can promise you a one-in-five chance for her instead of one-in-ten.”

After the doctor had gone, Sue went into her own room and cried. Later, trying not to show her sadness, she went into Johnsy’s room, whistling.

Johnsy lay under the bedclothes, with her face toward the window. Sue stopped whistling, thinking Johnsy was asleep. But soon Sue heard a low sound, several times repeated. Sue went quickly to the bedside.

Johnsy’s eyes were wide open. She was looking out of the window and counting backwards.

“Twelve,” she said, and a little later, “eleven,” and then “ten” and “nine,” and then “eight — seven.”

Sue looked out of the window. What was Johnsy counting? There was only a gray backyard and the blank wall of the opposite house. An old, old vine, dead at the roots, climbed halfway up the wall. The cold breath of autumn had blown almost all the leaves from the vine until its branches were almost bare.

“What is it, dear?” asked Sue.

“Six,” said Johnsy counting? There was only a gray backyard and the blank wall of the opposite house. An old, old vine, dead at the roots, climbed halfway up the wall. the cold breath of autumn had blown almost all the leaves from the vine until its branches were almost bare.

“What is it, dear?” asked Sue.

“Six,” said Johnsy very quietly. “They are falling faster now. Three days ago there were almost a hundred. it makes my head ache to count them. But now it’s easy. There goes another one. There are only five now.”

“Five what, dear? Tell me!” said Sue.

“Leaves. The leaves of that vine. When the last leaf of that vine falls, I must go too. I’ve known that for three days. Didn’t the doctor tell you?”

“The doctor didn’t say any such thing. That is pure foolishness,” said. “What connection has those old with your getting well? And you used to love that old vine so much. Please don’t be silly. The doctor told me this morning that your chances of getting well soon were excellent. Now try to take some of your soup and let me get back to work so that I can make money to buy you some good port wine.”

“There’s no use buying any more wine,” said Johnsy, keeping her eyes fixed on the blank wall of the house opposite. “There goes another leaf. That leaves just four. I want to see the last one fall before it gets dark. Then I’ll go, too.”

“Johnsy, dear,” said Sue, bending over her, “will you promise me to keep your eyes closed and not look out of the window until I have finished working? I must deliver these drawings tomorrow. I need the light; otherwise I would pull down the curtain.”

“Can’t you draw in your room?” said Johnsy coldly.

“I’d rather stay here with you,” said Johnsy, closing her eyes and lying white and still. “Because I want to see the last leaf falls. I’m tired of waiting. I’m tired of thinking.”

“Try to sleep,” said Sue a little later. “I must go downstairs for a minute to get Mr. Behrman, who is going to sit as my model. But I will be right back. And don’t move, and also please promise me not to look out of the window.”

Part two

Old Mr. Behrman was a painter who lived on the first floor beneath Johnsy and Sue. He was more than sixty years old. Behrman was a failure in art. He had always wanted to paint a masterpiece, but he had never begun to paint it. For many years he had painted nothing, except now and then a piece of commercial or advertising work. He earned a little money by serving as a model for those young artists who could not pay the price for a regular model. He drank a great masterpiece he was going to paint. He was a fierce, intense little man who considered himself as a watchdog himself as a watchdog and protector for the two young artists living above him, of whom he was very fond.

Sue found Behrman him in his poorly lighted studio. In one corner of the room stood a blank canvas which had been waiting for twenty-five years to receive the first line of the promised masterpiece. Sue told him of the strange idea which Johnsy had concerning the last leaf, and said that she feared that Johnsy would really die when the last leaf fell.

Old Behrman shouted, "Are there people in the world who are foolish enough to die simply because leaves fall from an old vine? I have never heard of such a thing. Why do you permit such silly ideas to come into her mind? Oh, that poor little Miss Johnsy."

"She is very ill and very weak," explained Sue, "and the fever has left her mind full of strange ideas."

Johnsy was sleeping when they both went upstairs. Sue pulled down the curtain and motioned to Behrman to go into the other room. There they looked out of the window fearfully at the vine. Then they looked at each other for a moment without speaking. A cold rain was falling, mixed with snow. Behrman took a seat and prepared himself to pose for Sue as a model.

When Sue woke up the next morning, she found Johnsy with dull, wide open eyes, looking at the window.

"Put up the curtain. I want to see," Johnsy said quietly.

Sue obeyed.

But, oh, after the heavy rain and the strong wind, one leaf was still hanging on the vine. The last leaf. Still dark green, it hung from a branch some twenty feet above the ground.

"It is the last one," said Johnsy. "I thought it would surely fall during the night. I heard the wind and the rain. It will fall today and I shall die at the same time?"

"Dear Johnsy," said Sue, placing her face close to Johnsy's on the pillow, "think of me if you won't think of me if you won't think of yourself. What shall I do?"

The day passed slowly, and even through the growing darkness of the evening they could see the lone leaf still hanging from the branch against the wall. And then, with the coming of the night, the wind began to blow again, and the rain began to fall heavily.

But the next morning, when Johnsy commanded that the curtain be raised again, the leaf was still there.

Johnsy lay for a long time looking at it. And then she called to Sue.

"I've been a bad girl, Sue." said Johnsy. "Something has made that last stray there just to show me how bad I was. It was a sin to want to die. You may bring me

a little soup now – and then put some pillow behind me and I will sit up and watch you cook.”

An hour later Johnsy said, “Sue, some day I want to paint a picture of the Bay of Naples.”

The doctor come in the afternoon. “You are doing fine,” he said, taking Johnsy’s thin hand in his. “In another week or so you will be perfectly well. And now I must go to see another patient downstairs. His name is Behrman. He is some kind of artist, I believe. Pneumonia, too. He is an old, weak man, and the attack is very severe. There is no hope for him, but I am sending him to the hospital in order to make him more comfortable.”

The next day, Sue comes to the bed where Johnsy lay.”The doctor tells me that soon you will be perfectly well again,” Sue said, putting her arm around Johnsy. Johnsy. Johnsy smiled at her happily.

“Isn’t it wonderful?” Sue continued.”But now I have something sad to tell you. Old Mr. Behrman died this morning of pneumonia. They found him two days ago in his room. He was helpless with pain and fever. His shoes and clothing were wet and icy. No one could understand where he had gone on such a terrible night. Then they found a ladder and a lantern which was still lighted. They also found some paint and a brush which was still with green paint.”

“Do you understand what happened?” Sue asked with tears in her eyes. “During the night – in all that wind and rain – Mr. Behrman climbed up and painted a green leaf on the wall off the house across from us. Didn’t you think it was strange that the leaf never moved when the wind blew? Ah, darling, it was Behrman’s true masterpiece – he painted it there the night that the last leaf fell.”

Task 3. Comprehension and Discussion of the part one:

- 1. What is a pen name? What was the real name of O. Henry?*
- 2. Where does the story take place? Why it is an interesting place?*
- 3. What are the names of two young women in the story?*
- 4. How do the women make a living?*
- 5. What was Johnsy’s illness?*
- 6. Why did the doctor believe that Johnsy’s desire to life was important?*
- 7. What did the doctor think Johnsy’s chances were?*

8. *How did he think her chances could be improved?*
9. *Why was Johnsy counting the falling leaves? What did she think would happen when the last leaf fell?*
10. *Why did Sue have to leave the room?*

Task 4. Comprehension and Discussion of the part two:

1. *Who was Mr. Behrman? How did he make a living?*
2. *What did he think of Sue and Johnsy?*
3. *What did Behrman say when Sue told him of Johnsy's idea?*
4. *What was the weather like during Johnsy's illness?*
5. *What gave Johnsy the hope to get better?*
6. *How did Behrman catch Pneumonia?*
7. *What do you think of Behrman's last act (and first painting)?*
8. *What is Pneumonia? How do the doctors treat this illness today?*
9. *Do you know any artists? What kind of arts do you enjoy?*
10. *Are the most people as generous as Mr. Behrman? Give some examples.*

Task 5 Use each of the following terms in a sentence:

Pen name, an interesting twist, Bohemian, story (of a building), to make a living, to feel sure, patient, to succeed in making someone feel something, vine, root, port wine, otherwise, fierce, canvas, to pose, model, pillow, branch, to command, sin severe, icy, ladder lantern, paint, brush, to climb up, masterpiece.

Task 6 Underline or circle the term on the right that has a SIMILAR meaning to the term on the left.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Example: <i>silly</i> | <i>seldom\sad\weak\foolish</i> |
| 1. <i>Scarcely</i> | <i>frequently\ rapid\rarely\usually</i> |
| 2. <i>Make up one's mind</i> | <i>hesitate\prefer\decide\refuse</i> |
| 3. <i>Permit</i> | <i>refuse\allow\dare\enjoy</i> |

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 4. Perhaps | maybe\always\allow\anyway |
| 5. For instance | often\for example\fortunately\forever |
| 6. Watchdog | madman\clock\guardian\animal |
| 7. There is no hope | we're hopeful\hope is everywhere\it is
Always possible \it's useless |
| 8. Above | beneath\over\beside\under |
| 9. Would rather | must\ought to\insist on\prefer |
| 10. Resemble | look like\occupy\paint\try |

Task 7 Circle or underline the word on the right RHYMES with the word on the left.

Example: **Would** **gold\good\shoulder\loud**

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| 1. Sign | lion\line\seen\been |
| 2. Knees | niece\peace\sneeze\face |
| 3. Comb | come\tomb\thumb\home |
| 4. Could | cold\pulled\good\soiled |
| 5. Drawer | far\store\near\under |
| 6. Climb | limb\dumb\clam\time |
| 7. Ache | catch\touch\take\like |
| 8. Passed | least\fast\lasted\hissed |
| 9. Was | cause\has\does\is |
| 10. Mind | kind\send\hand\pinned |

Task 8 Change the following sentences first to the past tense and then to the present perfect tense.

Example: *They enjoy living among so many artists.*

(They enjoyed living among so many artists.

They have enjoyed living among so many artists.)

1. *The adds to the interest of the place.*
2. *They are living in a three story building.*
3. *The artist is visiting the city.*
4. *She lies on her bed all day.*
5. *Is she worrying about it?*
6. *She doesn't want to die.*
7. *She is feeling very ill.*
8. *The doctor is leaving.*
9. *The leaves will fall slowly.*
10. *He works in his studio all afternoon.*

UNIT TWO

THE STOLEN LETTER

BY EDGAR ALLAN POE

Task 1 Listen and learn the life of the writer and fill in the missing words:

During his lifetime Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) was more popular in France than in his native United States. Poe's stories always have an air of psychological mystery or horror. Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), American writer, known as a poet and critic but most famous as the first master of the short-story form (see Short Story), especially tales of the mysterious and macabre. The literary merits of Poe's writings have been debated since his death, but his works have remained popular and many major American and European writers have professed their artistic debt to him. Born in Boston, Massachusetts, Poe was orphaned in his early childhood and was raised by John Allan, a successful businessman of Richmond, Virginia. Taken by the Allan family to England at the age of six, Poe was placed in a private school. Upon returning to the United States in 1820, he continued to study in private schools. He attended the University of Virginia for a year, but in 1827 his foster father, displeased by the young man's drinking and gambling, refused to pay his debts and forced him to work as a clerk.

Poe, disliking his new duties intensely, quit the job, thus estranging Allan, and went to Boston. There his first book, Tamerlane and Other Poems (1827), was published anonymously. Shortly afterward Poe enlisted in the U.S. Army and served a two-year term. In 1829 his second volume of verse, Al Aaraaf, was published, and he effected reconciliation with Allan, who secured him an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy. After only a few months at the academy Poe was dismissed for neglect of duty, and his foster father disowned him permanently. Poe's third book, Poems, appeared in 1831, and the following year he moved to Baltimore, where he lived with his aunt and her 11-year-old daughter, Virginia Clemm. The following year his tale "A MS. Found in a Bottle" won a contest sponsored by the Baltimore Saturday Visitor. From 1835 to 1837 Poe was an editor of the Southern Literary Messenger. In 1836 he married his young cousin. Throughout the next decade, much of which was marred by his wife's long illness, Poe worked as an editor for various periodicals in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and in New York City. In 1847 Virginia died and Poe himself became ill; his disastrous addiction to liquor and his alleged use of drugs, recorded by contemporaries, may have contributed to his early death.

Task 2 Read and learn.

Part one

In Paris, just after dark one evening in the autumn of 18--, I was enjoying the company of an old friend, C. Auguste Dupin, in his small library. The door of the room was opened suddenly and another old friend, Monsieur G., head of the Paris police, entered.

We were glad to see Monsieur G., for we had not seen him for several years. He said that he had come to consult us, or rather to ask the opinion of my friend Dupin, about some official business which was causing him a great deal of trouble.

"I wish tell you in a few words what it is," he said, "but before I begin, let me tell you that this is a matter of great secrecy, and I might lose my job if people know that I had told someone about it."

"Proceed," said I.

"Well, I have received confidential information that a document of great importance has been stolen from the royal apartments. The thief is Minister D. The person from whom the letter was stolen needs it badly. But, of course, he cannot proceed openly and he has asked me to take care of the problem."

“My first act,” he went on, “was to make a careful inspection of the minister’s apartment. Of course, I had to do this secretly and without his knowledge because we do not want the minister to know that we suspect him. Fortunately, the daily habits of the minister helped me greatly. He is frequently absent from home at night. He has only a few servants and they do not sleep in his apartment. I have keys, as you know, with which I can open any door in Paris. For three months, I was busy personally searching his apartment. It is now a question of my honor and my reputation. In addition, the reward is enormous. Therefore, I continued to search for a long time. This thief is a very clever man. I searched every corner of his apartment, but I still couldn’t find the paper.”

“It is possible,” I suggested, “that the minister had the letter but has hidden it somewhere outside the apartment.”

“Oh, no!” said Monsieur G. “Twice he has been stopped on the street by my own men, pretending to be thieves, and they have searched him carefully.”

“Tell us,” said I, “exactly what you did in your search of the apartment.”

“I have had experience in these matters,” answered Monsieur G. “Thus, I examined the apartment room by room, spending an entire week in each room. We examined the furniture. We opened every drawer, and I also looked for secret drawers. Next, we examined the chairs. We removed the tops from all the tables.”

“But,” I said, “you were not able to take apart all the pieces of furniture. That would be impossible.”

“Of course,” he answered, “but we did better. We examined every section of each piece of furniture under a very powerful microscope, and we found no indications or marks that the furniture had been touched or disturbed in any way to create a hiding place for the letter. After we had examined the furniture, we examined the apartment itself. We divided the entire surface into sections so that we could not possibly miss any. Then we inspected each square inch of the apartment.”

“You examined the grounds around the house?”

“Yes, but that was no trouble. The grounds are paved with bricks. We examined each brick, and also the grass between the bricks, and found no indication that anything had been touched or mowed.”

“You looked among the minister’s papers, of course, and into the books of his library?”

“Certainly, we opened every package. We not only opened every book but turned every page. We also inspected the cover of each book with our microscope.”

“You examined the floors beneath the carpets?”

“ Certainly! We removed every carpet and examined every board beneath the carpet ? ”

“ And the papers on the walls ? ”

“ Yes.”

“You looked in the cellar ?”

“ We did.”

“ Than,” I said, “you have been making a mistake, and the letter is not in the apartment.”

“I am afraid you are right,” said Monsiuer G. “ And now, Dupin, what would you advise me to do ?”

“ I would advise you to make a second careful search of the apartment,” said Dupin.

“ But I am sure the letter is not in the apartment,” said Monsiuer G.

“I have no better advice to give you,” said Dupin. “Of course, you have an accurate description of the letter.”

“ Oh yes,” said the officer. Than, producing a notebook, he began to read a description of the missing letter. Soon afterward he left, a very unhappy man.

Part two

About a month later, Monsiuer G. visited us again. We were seated in the library as before.

“Well, what about the missing letter?” I asking him after he sat down. “ I suppose you have decided at last that the minister is too clever to be caught. ”

“Damn it, yes,” he said. “ I examined the apartment again, as Dupin suggested, but without success.”

“How much money has been offered as the reward?” asked Dupin.

“A great deal,” he said. “In fact, the amount has been doubled recently. But if it were three times as much, I still couldn’t find it. But I will give my personal check for fifty thousand francs to anyone who gets that letter for me.”

“In that case,” said Dupin, “you can write me a check for that amount. When you have signed the check, I will give you the letter.”

Both Monsiuer G. and I were greatly surprised. For a moment the officer remained speechless, but then, recovering himself, he picked up a pen and wrote a check for fifty thousand francs and handed it to Dupin. Dupin examined the check carefully and then put it into his pocket. Than he unlocked a drawer and took out a latter and gave it to Monsiuer G. It was the stolen letter. The officer accepted it with a trembling hand. He read its contents and then rushed from the room and from the house. When he had gone, Dupin began to explain to me how had gotten the letter.

“I know the minister in question very well,” he said. “He is a mathematician and a poet — and also a very clever and daring man. I knew that such a man would be familiar with all the usual actions of police and that he would prepare himself against them. His frequent absences from home at night were only a trick. He knew that the police would search every corner of his apartment, and so he permitted them to do it freely. I saw that he would do something very simple.

“The police, however, never suspected that the minister had placed the letter clearly under the nose of everybody in order to prevent anyone from seeing it.”

“With ths in mind, I put on a pair of dark glasses and went to visit the minister on fine morning in his apartment. I told him that my eyes were very weak and that, therefore, I had to wear dark glasses. But with my dark glasses I was able to inspect the whole apartment without his noticing the movement of my eyes. Finally, I noticed a small box in full view on the mantelpiece. In this box were five or six visiting cards and a letter. The letter was very dirty and was torn across the middle. It had been put carelessly into one of the sections of the box. As soon as I saw the letter, I was sure it was the one I was looking for. Certainly it was different in appearance from the original letter. The address on the envelope was different; the handwriting on the envelope had also been changed. It looked as if the letter had been written by a woman. But the size was the same. All these things, in the view of every visitor to the apartment, made me suspicious. I examined the letter as carefully as I could without the minister’s noticing me, and it was clear to me that

the letter had been turned inside out, like a glove, and readdressed and changed slightly. I later said good-bye to the minister but left my cigarette case on the table intentionally.

“The next morning I called upon him again to get my cigarette case. We began to converse again, but suddenly there was a pistol shot in the street. Minister D. rushed to the window and remained there several minutes looking into the street. Actually, it was all part of my plan. One of my own men had fired the shot in order to attract attention. Anyway, while Minister D. was busy at the window, I stopped to the mantelpiece, took the letter, and replaced it with an exact copy which I had prepared at home and brought with me.”

“But why did you replace the letter with a copy? Why didn't you take the letter openly on your first visit and leave?”

“Minister D. is a clever and dangerous man,” Dupin replied. “There are many men in the house whom he employs. If I had done the foolish thing which you suggest, it is possible I would never have left the place alive and the good people of Paris would never have heard of me again.”

Task 3 Comprehension and discussion

- 1. What was unusual about Edgar Allan Poe's popularity?*
- 2. Why did Monsieur G. go to visit Dupin?*
- 3. What was stolen? By whom?*
- 4. How did Monsieur G. search the apartment of the man he suspected?*
- 5. Why did he discontinue the search? After how long?*
- 6. Why did the police search the apartment secretly?*
- 7. What did they stop the minister on the street?*
- 8. What did they do in his library?*
- 9. Why did the search around the grounds give the police little trouble?*
- 10. What was Dupin's advice?*

Task 4 Comprehension and discussion

- 1. What did the police officer say when he returned a month later?*

2. *How much was offered as a reward for finding the letter?*
3. *Describe the manner in which Dupin received the reward.*
4. *What did he know about the minister?*
5. *What did Dupin pretend when he went to the minister's house?*
6. *Where was the stolen letter?*
7. *How did Dupin distract the minister?*
8. *Why did Dupin replace the letter with a copy?*
9. *What qualities does a person need in order to be a good detective like Dupin?*
10. *How do most detectives investigate crimes?*

Task 5 Use each of the following terms in a sentence:

Psychological, mystery, just after dark, a great deal, confidential, ton proceed, honor, reputation, twice, indication, beneath, an accurate description, speechless, mathematician, freely, appearance, under one's nose, mantelpiece, in order to.

Task 6 Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with one of the terms from the list. Change the form is necessary.

<i>To permit</i>	<i>inside out</i>	<i>to be able</i>
<i>In full view all</i>	<i>in addition</i>	<i><u>to put on</u></i>
<i>To double</i>	<i>to make a mistake</i>	<i>of course</i>
<i>Simple</i>	<i>microscope</i>	

Example: *It was cold outside, so before we left the house we pun on our coats.*

1. *The box was there on the mantelpiece _____ everyone in the room.*
2. *"Did you search the room?" he asked " _____,I did" I answered impatiently.*

3. He _____ us to search the entire apartment.
4. They _____ the reward from 25 000 to 50 000 francs.
5. If you want to examine the evidence carefully, you may have to look at it under a _____.
6. It's not quite as _____ as you think; it's much more complicated.
7. _____ to the house, we also searched the yard.
8. We turned the room _____ looking for the letter, but we were unable to find it.
9. I think I _____ on my last test; I won't get a perfect score.
10. _____ you _____ to understand the directions? If not, I'll help you.

Task 7 Place the adverb in its normal position in each sentence.

Example: He leaves the key in the drawer. (often)

He often leaves the key in the drawer.

1. I ask for his advice before I do anything. (always)
2. She leaves the houses before noon. (seldom)
3. He makes a mistake. (rarely)
4. He gives advice without being asked for it. (never)
5. It rains in the spring in New York. (often)
6. She reads aloud to her children. (hardly ever)
7. She looks out the window before she goes out. (always)
8. He wakes up before the alarm goes off. (rarely)
9. He was able to use that machine properly. (never)
10. I am at work by 9 a.m. (usually)

Task 8 *Change the following sentences so that the object of the two-word becomes a pronoun.*

Example: *She cut up the meat.*

She cut it up.

1. *She took out the cups.*
2. *He's going to put on his hat.*
3. *I had to cut off Mr. Smith before she finished speaking.*
4. *I asked them to wake up my uncle at five o'clock.*
5. *I want to take Sally out some night next week.*
6. *I'm going to take off my sweater when I go in the house.*
7. *He is getting ready to put away the dishes.*
8. *She wanted him to try on that suit.*
9. *She had to cut her hair because it was too long.*
10. *I put down my book in the living room.*

UNIT THREE

THE CELEBRATED JUMPING FROG OF CALAVERAS COUNTY

BY MARK TWAIN

Task 1 *Listen and learn the life of the writer and fill in the missing words:*

Mark Twain was the pen name of Samuel Langhorne Clemens (1835-1910). His most famous stories were about Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, but it was this short story which first made him famous.

Clemens was born in Florida, Missouri, on November 30, 1835, and moved with his family to Hannibal, Missouri, a port on the Mississippi River, when he was four years old. There he received a public school education and spent his childhood in contact with the people who made their living from the river. After the death of his father in 1847, Clemens was apprenticed to two Hannibal printers, and in 1851 he began setting type for and contributing sketches to his brother Orion's Hannibal Journal. Subsequently he worked as a printer in Keokuk, Iowa; New York City; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and other cities.

In 1857 Clemens set out for New Orleans by riverboat, with the intention of going on to South America in search of adventure. Talks with the boat's pilot, however, revived Clemens's boyhood dream of "learning the river," and he was taken on as an apprentice. He received his license as a pilot in 1859 and worked as a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River until the American Civil War (1861-1865) brought an end to travel on the river. In 1861 Clemens served briefly as a volunteer soldier in the Confederate cavalry. Later that year he accompanied Orion to the newly created Nevada Territory, where he tried his hand at silver mining.

Twain's work was inspired by the unconventional American West, and the popularity of his work marked the end of the domination of American literature by New England writers. He is justly renowned as a humorist but was not always appreciated by the writers of his time as anything more than that. Successive generations of writers, however, recognized the role that Twain played in creating a truly American literature. He portrayed uniquely American subjects in a humorous and colloquial, yet poetic, language. His success in creating this plain but evocative language precipitated the end of American reverence for British and European culture and for the more formal language associated with those traditions. His adherence to American themes, settings, and language set him apart from many other novelists of the day and had a powerful effect on such later American writers as Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner, both of whom pointed to Twain as an inspiration for their own writing.

In Twain's later years he wrote less, but he became a celebrity, frequently speaking out on public issues. He also came to be known for the white linen suit he always wore when making public appearances. Twain received an honorary

doctorate from the University of Oxford in 1907. When he died he left an uncompleted autobiography, which was eventually edited by his secretary, Albert Bigelow Paine, and published in 1924. In the mid-20th century controversy arose regarding the teaching of Huckleberry Finn in schools because of the book's supposed racism. Some parents and school boards felt that the portrayal of Jim provided a negative stereotype of blacks, and they objected to Twain's use of the racial slurs of his time (Jim is called "Nigger Jim"). Yet Huckleberry Finn provides an indictment of racism, and many teachers believe that, if well taught, the book opens students' eyes to issues of racism, freedom, conscience, and self-definition in American society.

Task 2 Read and learn.

Part one

Because a friend of mine asked me, I called on good natured, talkative old Simon Wheeler and asked him about my friend's friend, Leonidas W. Smiley. This story is the story result of that visit. I have a deep suspicion that Leonidas W. Smiley doesn't exist; that my friend from the East never knew such a person; and that he made the request of me as a joke. I think he imagined that if I went to Wheeler and asked him about Smiley, then Wheeler would make up a story and bore me to death with some terribly long, exasperating, useless tale. If that was my friend's plan, it succeeded.

I found Simon Wheeler dozing comfortably by the barroom stove of the dilapidated tavern in the decayed mining camp of Angel's, and I noticed that he was fat and baldheaded. He looked gentle, and his face showed him to be a happy, peaceful man. He awakened and greeted me enthusiastically. I told him that a friend of mine had asked me to ask around about an old friend of his from childhood. My friend's old friend was named Leonidas W. Smiley. I further explained that my friend thought that Smiley was a young minister of the Gospel and that he lived in Angel's Camp – or at least he used to. I told Wheeler that I would be very grateful if he could tell me anything about Smiley, since I wanted to honor my friend's request.

Simon Wheeler backed me into a corner and blockaded me there with his chair. He then sat down and proceeded to tell me the most boring, monotonous story I had ever heard. He never smiled, he never frowned, he never changed his voice from the gentle-flowing key which he started with, and he never showed the

slightest amount of enthusiasm. His story was flat and dull. But, interesting to note, throughout the entire tale he showed himself to be earnest and sincere. It was a wild tale (as you will soon see, since I am going to repeat it word for word), but he never showed me that he thought it wasn't true. It never occurred to him that it was a story either. He regarded it as a truly important matter, and he clearly admired its two heroes as men of taste, wit, and intelligence. I let him tell it in his own way and never interrupted him once. Here is his story:

“Reverend Leonidas W.... Hmm, Reverend.... Well, there was a fellow here once by the name of Jim Smiley, but no Leonidas.... That was back in the winter of 1849 – or maybe it was the spring of '50 – I don't remember exactly, but what makes me think it was one or the other of those times is that the big flume wasn't finished when he first came to Angel's Camp. But anyway, he was the most curious man you ever saw about betting. He would bet on anything and everything he could, and if he couldn't get anyone to bet on the other side, then he'd change sides. It didn't matter which side he was on, as long as he could bet. If he had a bet on with a person, he was happy; if he didn't, he wasn't satisfied until he did. And the interesting thing is that he was pretty lucky. He almost always won his bets, even when he had changed sides on a bet. He was always waiting and ready for someone to come along so he could offer him some sort of bet. If there was a horse race, he'd bet all he had, and at the end of it he'd either be broke or he'd have a lot of money. If there was a dog fight, he'd bet on it; if there was a cat fight, he'd bet on it; if there was a chicken fight, he'd bet on it; why, if there were two birds sitting on a fence, he'd bet you which one would fly first. Even if he saw a little bug on the ground walking along somewhere, he'd bet you how long it would take the bug to get there (wherever it was the bug was going), and then he'd follow that bug all day to see if he won. Lots of people are still here who remember Jim. They'll tell you what he was like. It never made a bit of difference to him – he'd bet on anything. One time the preacher's wife was sick and we all thought she was going to die. A few days later, the preacher came out and told us how the Lord had smiled on his good wife and that she was going to live. Smiley offered to bet him a dollar that she wouldn't.

“Smiley owned a horse while he was here. We used to kid him and call her the fifteen – minute nag because she was so slow, but actually she wasn't too slow, we just liked to kid Jim. He used to win money betting on her. She was sick a lot, so in races the others used to give her a few hundred yards' head start. The other horses would always catch up and pass her, but then near the end of the race, she'd get all excited and desperate and start running faster. She looked silly. She looked as if she were going to fall down with her crazy legs going in all directions and with her

coughing and sneezing and almost falling over, but somehow she would pull all of her strength together at the very end and she almost always won by a nose.

“Jim also had a fighting dog which he named after the President, Andrew Jackson. That was the ugliest dog on earth, and he looked as if he were about to die any minute, and when he didn’t look that way, he looked as if he wanted to steal something like a common thief. But when the time came to fight another dog, Jim’s pup d was another dog. At first, Jim’s dog appeared ready to lose to the other dog. The other dog would run him around and tackle him, bite him, and throw him all over the ring. People would start to increase their bets against Andrew Jackson. Then, all of a sudden, Jim’s pup would come alive. He’d grab the other dog by the hind legs and freeze to them. He wouldn’t chew, you understand, he would just hold on until the other dog had to give up.

“Smiley always won money on the dog. Always except once, that is. The dog had to fight another dog, as usual, but this time the other dog had no find no legs. Well, old Andrew Jackson didn’t know what to make of it and he lost that fight. Afterwards, he just shook his head, slinked off past Smiley as though he were ashamed of what had happened, and then lay down and died”

Part two

“Smiley had all kinds of other animals which he used to bet on, too. He had other dogs, chickens, cats, and several others which I can’t even remember. One time he caught a frog and decided he would teach it to jump. He worked with that frog for about three months, and you can bet that at the end of that time the frog was a pretty good jumper. Jim would give the little beast a punch and the frog would leap higher than any frog you’ve ever seen. That frog would whirl around in the air and land on its feet just like a cat. He was also good at catching flies.

“Smiley named his frog Daniel Webster and claimed that all any frog ever wanted was a good education. He trained the frog so well that all he had to say was ‘Flies, Daniel, flies!’ and quick as a wink that frog would leap off the floor to wherever the fly was, catch it with his tongue, and land back where he started. When he landed, the frog would act as if nothing had happened. He’d just scratch his head with his hind foot as if he did that sort of thing all the time. Daniel Webster’s best trick was jumping from a seated position; that is, with no running head start. Whenever there was an opportunity for Daniel to test his jumping, Smiley would try to find someone to bet with. He was proud of that frog and wanted to show him off to people.

“One day a stranger came into town and saw Smiley carrying the box which served as the frog’s house. ‘What might it be that you’ve got in the box?’ he asked Smiley.

“Smiley sensed a possible bet, so he acted indifferently. Oh, it’s nothing much,’ he answered, ‘just a frog.’

“Well, what’s he good for?’ asked the fellow as he looked into the box and observed the ordinary – looking animal.

“Carelessly and easily, Smiley said, ‘He’s only good for me one thing n this world; he can out jump any frog in Calaveras County.’

“The fellow took the box and looked hard and long into it again, then he shook his head. ‘He doesn’t look any different from any other frog I’ve ever seen. I don’t believe he’s any better either.’

“ ‘Maybe that’s because you don’t understand frogs the way I do,’ Smiley said, smiling. ‘Maybe you haven’t had any experience. Maybe you’re just an amateur when it comes to frogs. Anyway, it’s my opinion that this frog beat any frog in the county and I’ve got forty dollars here that I’ll bet against any frog you can put up against mine.’

“ ‘ Well, I’m just a stranger here,’ the man said sadly, ‘and I don’t have a frog, but if I had one, I’d bet you,’”

“Smiley smiled slowly. ‘ that all right, that’s all right. If you just hold my box here for a minute, I’ll go and you a frog.’ And that’s what happened. The fellow took the box with Daniel Webster in it while Smiley went off to find a suitable opponent for a jumping contest. They both put up forty dollars, winner take a jumping contest. They both put forty dollars, winner take all.

“While he was waiting for Smiley to return, the fellow took the frog out of the box and him a few teaspoons of whiskey. Of course he didn’t tell Smiley that he had this, and when Smiley returned from the swamp with a good-looking frog to serve as Daniel’s opponent, the fellow had put quite a bit of liquor into the little beast.

“Smiley was excited, as he always was when there was a bet. ‘Put the two of them next to each other on this line on the floor, and I’ll give the word to begin.’ Smiley shouted and the two men touched their frogs, but Daniel Webster didn’t move. The other frog leaped straight up and then hopped off in a lively manner all the way across the room. Smiley’s frog straightened its legs and reached up as

though to jump, but then settled back down as though his feet were glued to the floor. Smiley was sad and disgusted, but he had no idea what the matter was.

“The fellow took the money and started to leave, but as he was going out the door, he turned, jerked his thumb at Daniel and said, ‘He’s not so good. Any old swamp frog can out jump him!’

“Smiley just stood there a long time looking down at his frog and wondering what was wrong with him. ‘He looks fat and saggy,’ he finally said as he reached down to pick Daniel up. ‘Good Lord, he weighs five pounds!’ Smiley shouted, and at that moment the frog belched up a couple of ounces of whiskey. When Smiley realized what had happened, he was so mad he could hardly see straight, and he started chasing after the fellow who had won his money, but he never caught him. One other time...”

At this moment someone called to see what the person wanted. “Don’t move, stranger,” he said to me as he got up from his chair, “ I’ll only be gone a minute. I want to tell you about another time when Smiley had a yellow, one-eyed cow with no tail, just a short stump that looked like a banana...”

I had neither time nor inclination to hear about the afflicted cow, so I waited until Wheeler was halfway across the street, and then I ran out of Angel’s Camp as I could.

Task 3 Comprehension and Discussion of the part one.

- 1. What was Mark Twain’s real name?*
- 2. What did the narrator suspect about his Eastern friend’s request?*
- 3. Who were the following: Leonidas W. Smiley, Jim Smiley, and Simon Wheeler?*
- 4. Where did the narrator find Wheeler? What did he look like?*
- 5. What manner did Wheeler use when he told the story?*
- 6. How did Wheeler use when he told the story?*
- 7. What did he say about Smiley and betting?*
- 8. How did Smiley’s horse perform in races?*

9. *What did Smiley's dog look like? What was its name?*
10. *How did the dog die?*

Task 4 Comprehension and Discussion of the part two.

1. *What other kinds of animals did smiley own besides his dog?*
2. *Who was Daniel Webster? What did Smiley train him to do?*
3. *What did the stranger say when he saw Daniel's box?*
4. *Why did Smiley go to the swamp?*
5. *What did the stranger do while Smiley was at the swamp?*
6. *What do you think would happen if you gave a small animal some whiskey?*
7. *Why couldn't Daniel jump? How much did Smiley lose because he couldn't jump?*
8. *What did Smiley do when he figured out what had happened?*
9. *Do you like to bet? What kinds of contests or games do people bet on in your area?*
10. *Why did the narrator of this story wonder if Wheeler's story were true?*

Task 5 Use each of the following terms in a sentence:

Talkative, suspicion, to make up story, exasperating, to doze, dilapidated, at least, monotonous, sincere, as long as, some sort of, head start, to win by a nose, to give up, that is, to whirl, quick as a wink, to be proud, to belch, ounce, hardly.

Task 6 Match the word in the left column with its OPPOSITE in the right column.

Example: a 4. suitable a. inappropriate

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| ___ 1. talkative | a. inappropriate |
| ___ 2. hind | b. unusual |
| ___ 3. freeze | c. silent |
| ___ 4. suitable | d. calm |
| ___ 5. carelessly | e. dull |
| ___ 6. stranger | f. standing |
| ___ 7. seated | g. boil |
| ___ 8. excited | h. front |
| ___ 9. interesting | i. carefully |
| ___ 10. ordinary | j. friend |

Task 7 Change the following sentences to the past perfect tense.

Example: *I went to Angel's Camp.*

I had gone to Angel's Camp.

1. *He wrote many famous stories.*
2. *Smiley won all his bets.*
3. *We saw the one-eyed cow.*
4. *He catches flies with his tongues.*
5. *Did you make a request?*
6. *He didn't drink any liquor.*
7. *We have always bet on horse races.*
8. *He was dozing comfortably.*
9. *He bet on one and then he changed sides.*

