

**10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

## Lesson 41, School Days 162-164

**“A Child’s Christmas in Wales”****by Dylan Thomas; Memoir****(Contains a lesson in using the subjunctive mood)**

1. Read the story, answering comprehension questions as you read.
2. **Vocabulary:** Study vocabulary terms, then take/retake the quiz until you score 100%.

**Comprehension Questions:**

1. This memoir was written by Welsh poet, Dylan Thomas, one of history’s most famous poets. With this in mind, you might expect a fair share of poetic language including imagery, similes, metaphors, personification, hyperbole, etc. We will use this opportunity to refresh your memory concerning these poetic devices. The lengthy second sentence contains imagery, simile, and personification. Can you find these?
2. Why were the boys waiting for cats?
3. Mr. Prothero is described as “waving his slipper as though he were conducting.” What poetic device is used here?
4. Note the sentence construction above that says “as though he were conducting” rather than as though he was conducting. The poet’s grammatical construction is, of course, correct because he is using the “subjunctive mood.” Whenever a sentence or phrase expresses a condition or situation which is uncertain or clearly not factual, the phrase must follow the proper subjunctive grammatical construction. For example, one should say, “If I were a betting man, I would put my money in the stock market.” Words like “if” and “as though” are clues that you probably need to use the subjunctive mood. Consider the song that says, “If I were a carpenter and you were a lady...” He does not sing, “If I was a carpenter.” Even though there’s only one person, you should say “were” in the subjunctive mood. Usually, if a clause follows a verb that expresses a wish or a doubt, the verb in that clause should be subjunctive. Here are two more example of the use of subjunctive mood: “If I were your boss, I would have fired you already.” and “I wish I were a rich man.” Now **you** come up with two sentences on your own correctly using the subjunctive mood.
5. What ridiculous question did Jim’s aunt ask the fireman?
6. What did the boys do where it says, “they crunched up to the doors and mittened on them manfully”?
7. What is meant by the statement that “the bells that the children could hear were inside them”?
8. Look up the term belfries. Then consider the context (*nighttime and snowing*) and explain how the belfries mentioned could be both “bat-black” and “snow-white.”

9. Consider this passage: “Ours has got a black knocker . . . and then they stood in the white welcome mat in the little, drifted porches and huffed and puffed, making ghosts with their breath, and jogged from foot to foot like small boys wanting to go out.” Now, list five examples of imagery in that passage above.
10. What idea do you think is conveyed by the phrase, “books that told me everything about the wasp except why.”?
11. When the narrator says “The wind through the trees made noises as of old and unpleasant and maybe webfooted men wheezing in caves,” what is he talking about, and how does this help us understand their little-boy terror?
12. What happened that made the boys run home from caroling?

**Vocabulary to Study Quiz A:**

**Lapland:** Finland, Norway, and Sweden

**callous:** uncaring

**sidle:** walk/move sideways

**Hudson Bay:** Busy shipping inlet in Northeast Canada

**prey:** animal hunted as food

**bombilating:** buzzing; droning

**Pompeii:** Roman city destroyed by a volcano in 79 AD

**daft:** silly; foolish

**shawling:** draping like a shawl

**monger:** seller; peddler; broker

**tam-o-shanters:** brimless Scottish caps, AKA tams

**tea-cozy:** tiny sweater wrapped around teapot to keep it warm

**busbies:** tall fur caps worn by British palace guards

**balACLAVAS:** knit caps for head/neck

**crocheted:** sewed using a hooked needle

**nose-bag:** feeding bag hung on a horse’s snout

**tram-conductor:** street-car driver

**catapult:** giant machine to hurl boulders against fortifications

**marzipan:** candy made of sugar almonds, and egg-whites

**Leonardo da Vinci:** engineer, inventor, sculptor, and painter

**sugar fags:** candy cigarettes

**taproom:** pub; bar

**bussed:** kissed

**gas-brackets:** gas-light wall fixtures

**judiciously:** with good judgment

**Vocabulary Quiz A:**

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| ___ Lapland:           | a. pub; bar  |
| ___ callous:           | b. knit caps for head/neck                               |
| ___ sidle:             | c. buzzing; droning                                      |
| ___ Hudson Bay:        | d. silly; foolish  |
| ___ prey:              | e. with good judgment                                    |
| ___ bombilating:       | f. uncaring  |
| ___ Pompeii:           | g. sewed using a hooked needle                           |
| ___ daft:              | h. walk/move sideways                                    |
| ___ shawling:          | i. feeding bag hung on a horse's snout                   |
| ___ monger:            | j. gas-light wall fixtures                               |
| ___ tam-o-shanters:    | k. tiny sweater wrapped around teapot to keep it warm    |
| ___ tea-cozy:          | l. Finland, Norway, and Sweden                           |
| ___ busbies:           | m. draping like a shawl                                  |
| ___ balaclavas:        | n. busy shipping inlet in Northeast Canada               |
| ___ crocheted:         | o. candy made of sugar almonds, and egg-whites           |
| ___ nose-bag:          | p. animal hunted as food                                 |
| ___ tram-conductor:    | q. seller; peddler; broker                               |
| ___ catapult:          | r. tall fur caps worn by British palace guards           |
| ___ marzipan:          | s. street-car driver                                     |
| ___ Leonardo da vinci: | t. engineer, inventor, sculptor, and painter             |
| ___ sugar fags:        | u. kissed  |
| ___ taproom:           | v. Roman city destroyed by a volcano in 79 AD            |
| ___ bussed:            | w. candy cigarettes                                      |
| ___ gas-brackets:      | x. giant machine to hurl boulders against fortifications |
| ___ judiciously:       | y. brimless Scottish caps, AKA tams                      |

**Vocabulary to Study Quiz B:**

**brittle:** stiff and easily broken

**trod:** walked upon

**fawn:** tan

**bowler:** round hat with a narrow brim:

**spats:** warm covering for ankles

**constitutional:** health-walk

**hale:** healthy

**forlorn:** abandoned

**briars:** tobacco smoking pipes

**mince:** finely chopped spicy food

**bullfinch:** red-bellied European bird

**stridently:** spoken harshly/loudly/demandingly

**exquisite:** acute; intense as used here (but usually delicate/flawless)

**scuttled:** walked at a quick, shuffling pace

**tureens:** deep, covered serving bowl

**elderberry:** edible black/red drupe

**thrush:** plain-colored bird with speckled breast

**festoons:** hanging decorative ribbons

**Chinese lanterns:** glowing translucent lamps

**man-o-war:** warship

**dewlap:** skin-flaps under chins of lizards, dogs, elderly people

**shambled:** shuffled awkwardly

**ambled:** walk leisurely

**cat-called:** made a raucous noise to publicly shame

**excelsior:** Latin, meaning onward and upward

**trolls:** dwarf or giant cave-dweller in folklore

**Vocabulary Quiz B:**

___ brittle:	a. healthy
___ trod:	b. hanging decorative ribbons
___ fawn:	c. tobacco smoking pipes
___ bowler:	d. warship
___ spats:	e. acute; intense as used here (but usually delicate/flawless)
___ constitutional:	f. stiff and easily broken
___ hale:	g. made a raucous noise to publicly shame
___ forlorn:	h. plain-colored bird with speckled breast
___ briars:	i. finely chopped spicy food
___ mince:	j. tan
___ bullfinch:	k. health-walk
___ stridently:	l. red-bellied European bird
___ exquisite:	m. deep, covered serving bowls
___ scuttled:	n. glowing translucent lamps
___ tureens:	o. shuffled awkwardly
___ elderberry:	p. Latin, meaning onward and upward
___ thrush:	q. edible black/red drupe
___ festoons:	r. dwarf or giant cave-dweller in folklore
___ Chinese lanterns:	s. walk leisurely
___ man-o-war:	t. skin-flaps under chins of lizards, dogs, elderly people
___ dewlaps:	u. walked at a quick, shuffling pace
___ shambled:	v. spoken harshly/loudly/demandingly
___ ambled:	w. abandoned
___ cat-called:	x. warm covering for ankles
___ excelsior:	y. walked upon
___ trolls:	z. round hat with a narrow brim

**Quiz Keys for "A Child's Christmas..." Vocabulary**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
l	f
f	y
h	j
n	z
p	x
c	k
v	a
d	w
m	c
q	i
y	l
k	v
r	e
b	u
g	m
i	q
s	h
x	b
o	n
t	d
w	t
a	o
u	s
j	g
e	p
	r