

READING TEST

DIRECTIONS: The passage below is followed by ten questions. After reading the passage, choose the best answer to each question and fill in the corresponding circle on your answer sheet. You may refer to the passage as often as necessary.

When the triangle sounded in the morning, Jody dressed more quickly even than usual. In the kitchen, while he washed his face and combed back his hair, his mother addressed him irritably. “Don’t
5 you go out until you get a good breakfast in you.”

He went into the dining room and sat at the long white table. He took a steaming hotcake from the platter, arranged two fried eggs on it, covered them with another hotcake and squashed the whole
10 thing with his fork.

His father and Billy Buck came in. Jody knew from the sound on the floor that both of them were wearing flat-heeled shoes, but he peered under the table to make sure. His father turned off the oil
15 lamp, for the day had arrived, and he looked stern and disciplinary, but Billy Buck didn’t look at Jody at all. He avoided the shy questioning eyes of the boy and soaked a whole piece of toast in his coffee.

Carl Tiflin said crossly, “You come with us
20 after breakfast!”

Jody had trouble with his food then, for he felt a kind of doom in the air. . . . The two men stood up from the table and went out into the morning light together, and Jody respectfully followed a
25 little behind them. He tried to keep his mind from running ahead, tried to keep it absolutely motionless.

His mother called, “Carl! Don’t you let it keep him from school.”

They marched past the cypress, where a
30 singletree hung from a limb to butcher the pigs on, and past the black iron kettle, so it was not a pig killing. The sun shone over the hill and threw long, dark shadows of the tree and buildings. They crossed a stubble-field to shortcut to the barn.
35 Jody’s father unhooked the door and they went in. They had been walking toward the sun on the way down. The barn was black as night in contrast and

warm from the hay and from the beasts. Jody’s father moved over toward the one box stall. “Come
40 here!” he ordered. Jody could begin to see things now. He looked into the box stall and then stepped back quickly.

A red pony colt was looking at him out of the stall. Its tense ears were forward and a light of
45 disobedience was in its eyes. Its coat was rough and thick as an airedale’s fur and its mane was long and tangled. Jody’s throat collapsed in on itself and cut his breath short.

“He needs a good currying,” his father said,
50 “and if I ever hear of you not feeding him or leaving his stall dirty, I’ll sell him off in a minute.”

Jody couldn’t bear to look at the pony’s eyes any more. He gazed down at his hands for a moment, and he asked very shyly, “Mine?” No one
55 answered him. He put his hand out toward the pony. Its gray nose came close, sniffing loudly, and then the lips drew back and the strong teeth closed on Jody’s fingers. The pony shook its head up and down and seemed to laugh with amusement. Jody
60 regarded his bruised fingers. “Well,” he said with pride—“Well, I guess he can bite all right.” The two men laughed, somewhat in relief. Carl Tiflin went out of the barn and walked up a side-hill to be by himself, for he was embarrassed, but Billy Buck
65 stayed. It was easier to talk to Billy Buck. Jody asked again—“Mine?”

Adapted from John Steinbeck, *The Red Pony*. ©1961, 1965 by John Steinbeck.

1. After he showed Jody the pony in the barn, Carl Tiflin went off by himself because he felt:
 - A. lonely.
 - B. sad.
 - C. embarrassed.
 - D. amused.
2. The inside of the barn is described in the passage as:
 - F. dark and cold.
 - G. bright and warm.
 - H. airless but bright.
 - J. dark and warm.
7. The narrator says that Jody finds his father:
 - A. harder to talk with than Billy Buck.
 - B. harder to talk with than his mother.
 - C. easier to talk with than Billy Buck.
 - D. just as easy to talk to as his mother or Billy Buck.

3. It can reasonably be inferred from the second "Mine?" (line 66) uttered by Jody that he:
- A. won't curry the horse after school.
 - B. can hardly believe the pony is his.
 - C. is wondering how he's going to afford the pony.
 - D. is embarrassed by what his father has done.
4. Jody had trouble seeing in the barn when he first arrived there because:
- F. he was looking around for his pony.
 - G. all he could see was the red pony.
 - H. he had just been walking toward the sun.
 - J. he had just taken a shady shortcut to the barn.
5. Jody realized he was not headed for a pig killing because he:
- A. ate breakfast with his father and Billy Buck.
 - B. saw his father was wearing flat-heeled shoes.
 - C. would not be able to miss school.
 - D. walked past the singletree and black iron kettle.
6. The narrator's statement that Jody "tried to keep his mind from running ahead" (lines 25–26) suggests that Jody:
- F. is trying not to get too worried or excited about what might happen.
 - G. has great respect for his father and especially for Billy Buck.
 - H. wants to avoid thinking about how he'll be punished for missing school.
 - J. knew exactly why he had to follow his father and Billy Buck.
8. When the narrator says that the two men laughed when Jody said "Well, I guess he can bite all right" (line 61), it can reasonably be inferred that the men felt:
- F. the tension that had built up was relieved.
 - G. confused about what to do to the horse.
 - H. embarrassed that the horse had been so mean.
 - J. surprised that Jody had all his fingers left.
9. The pony that Jody finds in the stall is characterized by a:
- I. rough coat.
 - II. well-curried mane.
 - III. gray nose.
- A. I only
 - B. III only
 - C. I and II only
 - D. I and III only
10. The fact that Jody's father is described as looking "stern and disciplinary" (lines 15–16) suggests that he is:
- F. extremely cruel and mean to Jody.
 - G. unwilling to look Jody in the eye.
 - H. somewhat distant from Jody.
 - J. annoyed at that moment with Jody's mother.

Answer Key					
1	C	5	D	9	D
2	J	6	F	10	H
3	B	7	A		
4	H	8	F		