

THE DOOR IN THE WALL

Dr. Betty Powers Francis
READING RIGHT
© 2005, 1989

THE DOOR IN THE WALL

Synopsis

This story is set in medieval England where boys grow up to be knights. People everywhere are sick from the great plague, and Robin the main character is also sick. He has lost the use of his legs but his parents don't know this, because his father is off fighting for the King, and his mother is keeping the queen company.

The guide who was going to take Robin to the castle of Sir Peter never arrived, and his housekeeper is too ill to take care of him. Brother Luke, a friar, hears about it and is sent to help Robin. The friar begins to teach Robin to read and write, which was very uncommon for the time. Brother Luke is instructed to take Robin to Sir Peter's castle.

During the trip, while staying at an inn, Robin overhears some thieves, and his quick thinking saves their lives as they make a fast escape. Later at the castle, his courage saves the castle and the enclosed village when he sneaks out through the attacking armies and gets help. When his parents return, he is fearful that they will no longer love him, since he cannot meet their expectations to become a knight. His parents, as well as the king, however, see his strength of character, and he does get to be a knight in spite of his handicap. The theme that for every wall in our lives there is a door provides a realistic ending for Robin.

THE DOOR IN THE WALL

Lesson 1

Sections 1-2

1. Where were Robin's father and mother?
2. What city does this story start in, and what is the cause of so many people being sick?
3. What project did Brother Luke give Robin to help him pass the time?
4. In what order did these people come into Robin's life?
_____ Geoffrey Atte-Water
_____ Dame Ellen
_____ Brother Luke
5. What does "impertinent" mean?
("Fie on thee for an impertinent lad!")
6. During what time period does this story take place? List two clues.

THE DOOR IN THE WALL

Lesson 2

Section 3-5

1. Besides whittling, what else is Brother Luke planning on teaching Robin to do?

2. What type of wood did Robin use to make the doll?

3. What type of exercise did he participate in daily?

4. After receiving the letter from his father, what was Robin supposed to do?

5. Give the definition of pilgrimage.
("It is indeed a sort of pilgrimage," said Brother Luke...)

6. When Robin says he understand the meaning of the door in the wall in section 3 he thinks it means:
 - A. There are many walls in our lives but if you keep looking there are also doors or ways to get through the wall.
 - B. That the friar's garden has walls that surround it and he will get to the door quicker if he reads.
 - C. There are many doors in the walls of the city and they will all take you outside.

7. Why did Robin believe he would never be a knight in armor and go to battle?

THE DOOR IN THE WALL

Lesson 3

Sections 6 - 7

1. What was the friar's opinion of the White Hart Inn?

2. Robin was very excited when he saw the sign. What did the sign say?

3. John-go-in-the-Wynd gave Robin some directions that he made sure Robin knew by heart. These directions were to what place?

4. Which happened first, the fair or the thieves' attack?

5. What is a Punch and Judy show?
 - A. A carnival
 - B. A French play
 - C. An English puppet show

6. Why did Robin dread meeting Sir Peter?

7. How does Robin's quick thinking help save them while they are at the Inn?

THE DOOR IN THE WALL

Lesson 4

Sections 8-9

1. What new project is John-go-in-the-Wynd helping Robin work on?

2. During the fog, what happened that changed the schedule at the castle?
 - A. It was too dark to work.
 - B. The castle was attacked.
 - C. There was a celebration.

3. What was Robin's plan to help?

4. What is the first event that Robin encountered?
_____ Crossing the stream
_____ Swimming the icy river
_____ Arriving at John's cottage
_____ Taking the path through the fields

5. What previous events with the friars helped prepare Robin for his attempt to save Sir Peter and the castle?

6. What does "commotion" mean?

7. Was Robin afraid to go for help? Explain your answer.

THE DOOR IN THE WALL

Lesson 5

Section 10

1. What was to be the signal for the defenders to start the attack?
2. What reasons does Robin's father give for not minding that his son cannot use his legs?
3. What honors did the King bestow upon Robin after he arrived?
4. "The Welsh are routed," was the cry of the people. What does routed mean?
5. How did Robin feel about the return of his parents when he saw them coming? Explain your answer.
6. What door in the wall has Robin found that the friar is referring to at the end of the story?
7. Tell about a problem (wall) that you have had and how you overcame it (door).

THE DOOR IN THE WALL

Answer Key

Lesson 1

1. Robin's father was at war and his mother was helping the queen.
2. The story starts out in London, England and the people are sick with the plague.
3. Brother Luke gave Robin some wood to whittle into a cross to help pass the time.
4. The correct order is 3, 1, and 2.
5. Impertinent means rude or insolent
6. The story takes place during the Middle Ages. The plague, knights, castles, illustrations, and information on the back jacket are all clues as to the time period.

Lesson 2

1. Besides whittling Brother Luke is planning on teaching robin to read, write, and swim.
2. To make the doll Robin uses pine, because it is soft.
3. Robin exercises daily by swimming.
4. After receiving the letter from his father, Robin was supposed to go to Sir Peter of Lindsey.
5. A pilgrimage means to go on a long meaningful journey for religious reasons
6. A
7. Robin believed he would never become a knight in armor because he was unable to use his legs to ride horses or to do other things that knights did.

Lesson 3

1. The friar thought the White Hart Inn innocent enough even with a fearsome look.
2. The sign was the one that announced the fair.
3. The directions were to his mother's house where he would be staying.
4. The thieves attacked first.
5. C

6. Robin dreads meeting Sir Peter because he was crippled and he thinks that Sir Peter might think he is useless.
7. Robin overhears the thieves talking and he quickly wakes Brother Luke and they are able to safely escape.

Lesson 4

1. Robin's new project is to make a harp.
2. B
3. Robin's plan was to sneak out of the castle and get John-go-in-the-Wynd, who could get the needed help for the castle.
4. Swimming the icy river.
5. The events that helped prepare Robin were: swimming everyday, strengthening his legs so he could walk, and the self-confidence the friars gave him.
6. Commotion means an interrupting noise.
7. Answers will vary. Either side could have been taken as long as the answer is supported with reasons.

Lesson 5

1. The signal was the sound of the bells.
2. The reasons were his courage, craftsmanship, and the spirit of singing.
3. The King made Robin a knight and gave him a jeweled collar.
4. The Welsh are routed means that they were defeated.
5. Robin is very excited to see his parents because he has missed them. He is also a little nervous since they do not yet know that he does not have complete use of his legs.
6. The door (solution) that the friar is referring to is the courageous way Robin has used his abilities to help those around him.
7. Answers will vary.