**Sample Reading Passage**

**Jean-Baptiste Poquelin (1622–1673), better known by his stage name, Molière, was the author of numerous plays. Here, translated from French, is a scene from one of them.**

***from* Scapin’s Tricks**

by Molière

*LEANDRE married without his father’s permission. Although his father does not yet know LEANDRE is married, he is suspicious. To watch his son’s reaction, LEANDRE’s father hints that he has heard “something” from LEANDRE’s servant, SCAPIN. LEANDRE seeks SCAPIN out to punish him, believing that SCAPIN has revealed the secret marriage, even though SCAPIN hasn’t.*

*Enter OCTAVE (a close friend of LEANDRE) with SCAPIN on one side, LEANDRE on the other.*

**LEANDRE:** Aha! Here you are, you rascal!

**SCAPIN:** Sir, your servant, you do me too much honor.

**LEANDRE:** (*drawing his sword*) You are setting me at defiance, I believe . . . Ah! I will teach you how….

**SCAPIN:** (*falling on his knees*) Sir!

**OCTAVE:** (*stepping between them*) Oh! Léandre! 5

**LEANDRE:** No, Octave, do not hold me back.

**SCAPIN:** Sir!

**OCTAVE:** For mercy’s sake!

**LEANDRE:** (*trying to strike at SCAPIN*) Leave me to wreak my anger upon him.

**OCTAVE:** In the name of our friendship, Léandre, do not strike him. 10

**SCAPIN:** What have I done to you, sir? **LEANDRE:** What you have done? You scoundrel! **OCTAVE:** (*restraining LEANDRE*) Gently, gently.

**LEANDRE:** No, Octave, I will have him confess here on the spot the perfidy of which he is guilty. Yes, scoundrel, I know the trick you have played me; I have just been told of it. You did not think the secret would be revealed to me, did you? But I will have you confess it with your own lips, or I will run you through and through with my sword.

**SCAPIN:** Oh, sir, could you really be so cruel as that? 15

**LEANDRE:** Speak, I say.

**SCAPIN:** I have done something against you, sir?

**LEANDRE:** Yes, scoundrel! And your conscience must tell you only too well what it is.

**SCAPIN:** I assure you that I do not know what you mean.

**LEANDRE:** (*going toward SCAPIN to strike him*) You do not know? 20

**OCTAVE:** (*restraining LEANDRE*) Léandre!

**SCAPIN:** Well, sir, since you will have it, I confess that I drank with some of my friends that small cask[1] of Spanish wine you received as a present some days ago, and that it was I who made that opening in the cask, and spilled some water on the ground around it, to make you believe that all the wine had leaked out.

**LEANDRE:** What! Scoundrel, it was you who drank my Spanish wine, and who suffered me to scold the servant so much, because I thought it was she who had played me that trick?

**SCAPIN:** Yes, sir; I am very sorry, sir.

**LEANDRE:** I am glad to know this. But this is not what I am about now. 25

**SCAPIN:** It is not that, sir?

**LEANDRE:** No; it is something else, for which I care much more, and I will have you tell it me.

**SCAPIN:** I do not remember, sir, that I ever did anything else.

**LEANDRE:** (*trying to strike*) Will you speak?

**SCAPIN:** Oh! 30

**OCTAVE:** (*restraining LEANDRE*) Gently.

**SCAPIN:** Yes, sir; it is true that three weeks ago, when you sent me in the evening to take a small watch to the woman you love, and I came back, my clothes spattered with mud and my face covered with blood, I told you that I had been attacked by robbers who had beaten me soundly and had stolen the watch from me. It is true that I told a lie. It was I who kept the watch, sir.

**1** wooden barrel

**LEANDRE:** It was you who stole the watch?

**SCAPIN:** Yes, sir, in order to know the time.

**LEANDRE:** Oh, you are telling me fine things; I have indeed a very faithful servant! 35

But it is not this that I want to know of you.

**SCAPIN:** It is not this?

**LEANDRE:** No, infamous wretch! It is something else that I want you to confess.

**SCAPIN:** Mercy on me!

**LEANDRE:** Speak at once; I will not be put off.

**SCAPIN:** Sir, I have done nothing else. 40

**LEANDRE:** (*trying to strike*) Nothing else?

**OCTAVE:** (*between them*) Oh! I beg you—

**SCAPIN:** Well, sir, you remember that ghost that six months ago cudgeled[2] you soundly, and almost made you break your neck down a cellar, where you fell whilst running away?

**LEANDRE:** Well?

**SCAPIN:** It was I, sir, who was playing the ghost. 45

**LEANDRE:** It was you, wretch, who were playing the ghost?

**SCAPIN:** Only to frighten you a little, and to cure you of the habit of making us go out every night as you did.

**LEANDRE:** I will remember in proper time and place all I have just heard. But I’ll have you speak about the present matter, and tell me what it is you said to my father.

**SCAPIN:** What I said to your father?

**LEANDRE:** Yes, scoundrel, to my father! 50

**SCAPIN:** Why, I have not seen him since his return!

2 to beat with a stick

**LEANDRE:** You have not seen him?

**SCAPIN:** No, sir.

**LEANDRE:** Is that the truth?

**SCAPIN:** The perfect truth, and he shall tell you so himself. 55

**LEANDRE:** And yet it was he himself who told me.

**SCAPIN:** With your permission, sir, he did not tell you the truth.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Throughout the scene, Léandre calls Scapin names such as “rascal,” “scoundrel,” and “wretch.” By repeatedly calling him such names, Léandre makes it clear that he believes Scapin to be a

A. beggar.

B. clown.

C. slob.

D. villain.

2. Rather than accusing Scapin directly in this scene, Léandre insists that his servant confess what he has done. What is **most likely** the author’s reason for staging the scene in this way?

A. to create suspicion about Léandre’s motivations

B. to magnify the audience’s outrage at Léandre’s treatment of Scapin

C. to allow the audience time to figure out who is lying

D. to increase the opportunity for humorous and surprising revelations

3. As Léandre interacts with Scapin in this scene, what does he learn about Scapin’s character that contrasts **most strongly** with his understanding of a good servant’s behavior?

A. Scapin is willing to let someone else take the blame for his actions.

B. Scapin sees nothing wrong with stealing from his master.

C. Scapin is capable of physically assaulting his master.

D. Scapin is unable to distinguish right from wrong.

4. What detail from this scene suggests that Léandre has previously entrusted Scapin with his secrets?

A. Léandre believes Scapin’s faithful nature will force him to tell the truth.

B. Léandre allowed Scapin and his friends free access to the wine.

C. Léandre asked Scapin to take a gift to the woman he loves.

D. Léandre told Scapin to lie to his father about the ghost.

5. Which fact about the social customs of this time does Léandre’s treatment of Scapin **most** clearly reveal?

A. Dishonesty was considered worse than criminal activity.

B. Wealthy people could treat their servants harshly.

C. Confession of crimes could lead to lighter punishment.

D. The wealthy expected to be robbed by their servants.

6. What is the **best** statement of a central idea from the *beginning* of Scapin's Tricks?

* 1. "In the name of our friendship, Léandre, do not strike him."
  2. "Speak at once; I will not be put off."
  3. "But I will have you confess it with your own lips..".
  4. "For mercy’s sake!"

7. What is the **best** theme of Scapin's Tricks?

* 1. Don't always believe what others tell you.
  2. Servants always play tricks on people.
  3. It is good to have a friend in a fight.
  4. Don't keep marriage a secret.

8. What is the **best** statement of a central idea from the *end* of Scapin's Tricks?

* 1. It was I, sir, who was playing the ghost
  2. With your permission, sir, he did not tell you the truth.
  3. You have not seen him?
  4. Yes, scoundrel, to my father!

9. What example of irony best captures a central idea in this scene?

* 1. Though angered by Scapin's lying trickery, Leandre lies to his own father
  2. Though Scapin lies to his master, he also admits that he stole a valuable watch
  3. Though servants are generally trusted, Leandre does not trust scapin at all
  4. Though innocent of what his master suspects, Scapin confesses to other deeds.

*Questions 12 -22 pertain to the following passage:*

**Helen Adams Keller** (June 27, 1880 – June 1, 1968) was an American author, [political activist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_activist), and [lecturer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lecturer). She was the first [deaf-blind](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deaf-blindness) person to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree. The story of how Keller's teacher, [Anne Sullivan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anne_Sullivan), broke through the isolation imposed by a near complete lack of language, allowing the girl to blossom as she learned to communicate, has become widely known through the dramatic depictions of the play and film [*The Miracle Worker*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Miracle_Worker). ***The Story of My Life***, first published in 1903, is [Helen Keller](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helen_Keller)'s [autobiography](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autobiography) detailing her early life, especially her experiences with [Anne Sullivan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anne_Sullivan).

The Story of My Life

By Helen Keller

THE most important day I remember in all my life is the one on which my teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan, came to me. I am filled with wonder when I

consider the immeasurable contrasts between the two lives which it

connects. It was the third of March, 1887, three months before I was seven years old.

On the afternoon of that eventful day, I stood on the porch, dumb, expectant. I guessed vaguely from my mother's signs and from the hurrying to and fro in the house that something unusual was about to happen, so I went to the door and waited on the steps. The afternoon sun penetrated the mass of honeysuckle that covered the porch, and fell on my upturned face. My fingers lingered almost unconsciously on the familiar leaves and blossoms which had just come forth to greet the sweet southern spring. I did not know what the future held of marvel or surprise for me. Anger and bitterness had preyed upon me continually for weeks and a deep languor had succeeded this passionate struggle.

Have you ever been at sea in a dense fog, when it seemed as if a tangible white darkness shut you in, and the great ship, tense and anxious, groped her way toward the shore with plummet and sounding-line, and you waited with beating heart for something to happen? I was like that ship before my education began, only I was without compass or sounding-line, and had no way of knowing how near the harbour was. "Light! give me light!" was the wordless cry of my soul, and the light of love shone on me in that very hour.

I felt approaching footsteps. I stretched out my hand as I supposed to my mother. Some one took it, and I was caught up and held close in the arms of her who had come to reveal all things to me, and, more than all things else, to love me.

The morning after my teacher came she led me into her room and gave me a doll. The little blind children at the Perkins Institution had sent it and Laura Bridgman had dressed it; but I did not know this until afterward. When I had played with it a little while, Miss Sullivan slowly spelled into my hand the word "d-o-l-l." I was at once interested in this finger play and tried to imitate it. When I finally succeeded in making the letters correctly I was flushed with childish pleasure and pride. Running downstairs to my mother I held up my hand and made the letters for doll. I did not know that I was spelling a word or even that words existed; I was simply making my fingers go in monkey-like imitation. In the days that followed I learned to spell in this uncomprehending way a great many words, among them *pin, hat, cup* and a few verbs like *sit, stand* and *walk.* But my teacher had been with me several weeks before I understood that everything has a name.

One day, while I was playing with my new doll, Miss Sullivan put my big rag doll into my lap also, spelled "d-o-l-l" and tried to make me understand that "d-o-l-l" applied to both. Earlier in the day we had had a tussle over the

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words "m-u-g" and "w-a-t-e-r." Miss Sullivan had tried to impress it upon me that "m-u-g" is *mug* and that "w-a-t-e-r" is *water*, but I persisted in confounding the two. In despair she had dropped the subject for the time, only to renew it at the first opportunity. I became impatient at her repeated attempts and, seizing the new doll, I dashed it upon the floor. I was keenly delighted when I felt the fragments of the broken doll at my feet. Neither sorrow nor regret followed my passionate outburst. I had not loved the doll. In the still, dark world in which I lived there was no strong sentiment of tenderness. I felt my teacher sweep the fragments to one side of the hearth, and I had a sense of satisfaction that the cause of my discomfort was removed. She brought me my hat, and I knew I was going out into the warm sunshine. This thought, if a wordless sensation may be called a thought, made me hop and skip with pleasure.

We walked down the path to the well-house, attracted by the fragrance of the honeysuckle with which it was covered. Some one was drawing water and my teacher placed my hand under the spout. As the cool stream gushed over one hand she spelled into the other the word water, first slowly, then rapidly. I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motions of her fingers. Suddenly I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten–a thrill of returning thought; and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I knew then that "w-a-t-e-r" meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free! There were barriers still, it is true, but barriers that could in time be swept away.

I left the well-house eager to learn. Everything had a name, and each name gave birth to a new thought. As we returned to the house every object which I touched seemed to quiver with life. That was because I saw everything with the strange, new sight that had come to me. On entering the door I remembered the doll I had broken. I felt my way to the hearth and picked up the pieces. I tried vainly to put them together. Then my eyes filled with tears; for I realized what I had done, and for the first time I felt repentance and sorrow.

I learned a great many new words that day. I do not remember what they all were; but I do know that *mother, father, sister, teacher* were among them– words that were to make the world blossom for me, "like Aaron's rod, with flowers." It would have been difficult to find a happier child than I was as I lay in my crib at the close of the eventful day and lived over the joys it had brought me, and for the first time longed for a new day to come.

I RECALL many incidents of the summer of 1887 that followed my soul's sudden awakening. I did nothing but explore with my hands and learn the name of every object that I touched; and the more I handled things and learned their names and uses, the more joyous and confident grew my sense of kinship with the rest of the world.

When the time of daisies and buttercups came Miss Sullivan took me by the hand across the fields, where men were preparing the earth for the seed, to

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the banks of the Tennessee River, and there, sitting on the warm grass, I had my first lessons in the beneficence of nature. I learned how the sun and the rain make to grow out of the ground every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, how birds build their nests and live and thrive from land to land, how the squirrel, the deer, the lion and every other creature finds food and shelter. As my knowledge of things grew I felt more and more the delight of the world I was in. Long before I learned to do a sum in arithmetic or describe the shape of the earth, Miss Sullivan had taught me to find beauty in the fragrant woods, in every blade of grass, and in the curves and dimples of my baby sister's hand. She linked my earliest thoughts with nature, and made me feel that "birds and flowers and I were happy peers."

But about this time I had an experience which taught me that nature is not always kind. One day my teacher and I were returning from a long ramble. The morning had been fine, but it was growing warm and sultry when at last we turned our faces homeward. Two or three times we stopped to rest under a tree by the wayside. Our last halt was under a wild cherry tree a short distance from the house. The shade was grateful, and the tree was so easy to climb that with my teacher's assistance I was able to scramble to a seat in the branches. It was so cool up in the tree that Miss Sullivan proposed that we have our luncheon there. I promised to keep still while she went to the house to fetch it.

Suddenly a change passed over the tree. All the sun's warmth left the air. I knew the sky was black, because all the heat, which meant light to me, had died out of the atmosphere. A strange odour came up from the earth. I knew it, it was the odour that always precedes a thunderstorm, and a nameless fear clutched at my heart. I felt absolutely alone, cut off from my friends and the firm earth. The immense, the unknown, enfolded me. I remained still and expectant; a chilling terror crept over me. I longed for my teacher's return; but above all things I wanted to get down from that tree.

There was a moment of sinister silence, then a multitudinous stirring of the leaves. A shiver ran through the tree, and the wind sent forth a blast that would have knocked me off had I not clung to the branch with might and main. The tree swayed and strained. The small twigs snapped and fell about me in showers. A wild impulse to jump seized me, but terror held me fast. I crouched down in the fork of the tree. The branches lashed about me. I felt the intermittent jarring that came now and then, as if something heavy had fallen and the shock had traveled up till it reached the limb I sat on. It worked my suspense up to the highest point, and just as I was thinking the tree and I should fall together, my teacher seized my hand and helped me down. I clung to her, trembling with joy to feel the earth under my feet once more. I had learned a new lesson–that nature "wages open war against her children, and under softest touch hides treacherous claws."

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**10. In paragraph 11, the word *beneficence* means…**

Ⓐ Kindness

Ⓑ Generosity

Ⓒ Stinginess

Ⓓ Danger

**11. Paragraphs 6 and 7 are mainly about the narrator…**

Ⓐ Learning to write words with a pencil

Ⓑ Learning the difference between a mug and water

Ⓒ Learning that she can have a temper tantrum to get what she wants

Ⓓ Learning that words have meaning

**12. In paragraphs 13 and 14, Helen felt nervous because…**

Ⓐ She was lost

Ⓑ She was alone

Ⓒ It was raining

Ⓓ It was windy

**13. Which sentence best explains what Helen learned from Miss Sullivan?**

Ⓐ I learned a great many new words that day

Ⓑ There were barriers still, it is true, but barriers that could in time be swept away

Ⓒ Everything had a name, and each name gave birth to a new thought

Ⓓ It would have been difficult to find a happier child than I was as I lay in my crib at the close of the eventful day and lived over the joys it had brought me, and for the first time longed for a new day to come

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**14. Which aspect of the selection best shows the close bond between Helen and Miss**

**Sullivan?**

Ⓐ The moment when Miss Sullivan spells “d-o-l-l” into Helen’s hand

Ⓑ When Helen cried in paragraph 8

Ⓒ When Miss Sullivan proposed eating lunch by the cherry tree

Ⓓ The moment when Miss Sullivan pulled Helen from the tree

**15. What is a major theme of the passage?**

Ⓐ Family ties

Ⓑ Discovery

Ⓒ Disappointment

Ⓓ Youth

**16. By telling the story in the order that events occur, the author helps the reader**

**understand…**

Ⓐ The change that Helen underwent after meeting Miss Sullivan

Ⓑ The way in which Helen learned to control her temper tantrums

Ⓒ The strategies Miss Sullivan used to control Helen

Ⓓ The confusion that Helen felt when she was with Miss Sullivan