

Grade 6 | Term 2 Literature Resource Pack

The Hobbit- Chapters 10

Note:

- Each comprehension is designed in the style of **Cambridge Primary Stage 6** and carries a total of **25 marks**, supporting practice for **Paper 2 – Fiction**.
- It is recommended that each comprehension be completed within **30 minutes**

Task 1: Chapter 10 – The Spell Begins to Break

Read the extract carefully and answer the questions that follow.

The following passage is an extract of chapter 10. Background of the chapter:

As Bilbo and the dwarves travel down the Forest River in barrels, they reach the vast Long Lake for the first time. This passage describes their arrival at Lake-town, a busy settlement of Men with a rich but half-forgotten history linked to the Lonely Mountain and the dragon.

The sun had set when turning with another sweep towards the East the forest-river rushed into the Long Lake. There it had a wide mouth with stony clifflike gates at either side whose feet were piled with shingles. The Long Lake! Bilbo had never imagined that any water that was not the sea could look so big. It was so wide that the opposite shores looked small and far, but it was so long that its northerly end, which pointed towards the Mountain, could not be seen at all. Only from the map did Bilbo know that away up there, where the stars of the Wain were already twinkling, the Running River came down into the lake from Dale and with the Forest River filled with deep waters what must once have been a great deep rocky valley. At the southern end the doubled waters poured out again over high waterfalls and ran away hurriedly to unknown lands. In the still evening air the noise of the falls could be heard like a distant roar.

Not far from the mouth of the Forest River was the strange town he heard the elves speak of in the king's cellars. It was not built on the shore, though there were the few huts and building there, but right out on the surface of the lake, protected from the swirl of the entering river by promontory of rock which formed a calm bay. A great bridge made of wood ran out to where on huge piles made of forest trees was built a busy wooden town, not a town of elves but of Men, who still dared to dwell here under the shadow of the distant-dragon mountain. They still thrived on the trade that came up the great river from the South and was carted past the fall to their town; but in the great days of old, when Dale in the North was rich and prosperous, they had been wealthy and powerful, and there had been fleets of boats on the waters, and some were filled with gold and some with warriors in armour, and there had been wars and deeds which were now only a legend. The rotting piles of a greater town could still be seen along the shores when the waters sank in drought.

But men remembered little of all that, though some still sang old songs of the dwarf-kings of the Mountain, Thror and Thrain of the race of Durin, and of the coming of the Dragon, and the fall of the lords of Dale. Some sang too that Thror and Thrain would come back one day and gold would flow in rivers, through the mountain-gates, and all that land would be filled with new song and new laughter. But this pleasant legend did not much affect their daily business.

As soon as the raft of barrels came in sight boats rowed out from the piles of the town, and voices hailed the raft-steerers. Then ropes were cast and oars were pulled, and soon the raft was drawn out of the current of the Forest River and towed away round the high shoulder of rock into the little bay of Lake-town. There it was moored not far from the shoreward head of the great bridge. Soon men would come up from the South and take some of the casks away, and others they would fill with goods they had brought to be taken back up the stream to the Wood-elves' home. In the meanwhile the barrels were left afloat while the elves of the raft and the boatmen went to feast in Lake-town.

Answer the following questions:

1. "The Long Lake! Bilbo had never imagined that any water that was not the sea could look so big."

Find and copy a word from the **first paragraph** that describes the small stones or pebbles found at the edge of the lake. [1]

2. "...where the stars of the Wain were already twinkling..."

Based on the context, what do you think the "**Wain**" refers to? [1]

3. "They still *throve* on the trade that came up the great river..."

Which word is closest in meaning to the word **throve**? [1]

- a. Struggled
- b. Flourished
- c. Depended
- d. Travelled

4. "...protected from the swirl of the entering river by a promontory of rock..."

Explain what a **promontory** is, using the clues in the sentence. [1]

5. "But this pleasant legend did not much affect their daily business." Write a **synonym** for the word

legend as it is used in the lines above. [1]

6. According to the first paragraph, why could Bilbo not see the northerly end of the lake? [1]

7. Give **two** reasons why Lake-town was built on the water rather than on the shore. [2]

8. How does the author suggest that the town was once much larger than it is now? [2]

9. Why do the men of the town still sing songs about Thror and Thrain? [2]

10. "...the noise of the falls could be heard like a distant roar." Identify the figure of speech used here and explain what it suggests about the power of the water. [2]

11. The author describes the mountain as the "distant-dragon mountain." What does this specific choice of words tell the reader about the townspeople's feelings toward the mountain? [2]

12. In the **second paragraph**, the author mentions "gold" and "warriors in armour." How do these specific images contrast (shows an opposite image) with the description of the "rotting piles" of the old town? [2]

13. "The Long Lake!" Why has the author used an exclamation mark here? [1]

14. "It was not built on the shore... but right out on the surface of the lake..." Identify the **conjunction** in this sentence and explain its function. [2]

15. Look at the **last paragraph**. How does the sentence structure change to show that the action is moving faster? [2]

16. Do you think the people of Lake-town are brave or foolish to live "under the shadow" of the mountain? Use evidence from the text to support your answer. [2]

Qs.	Answer / Assessment Objective	Marks
1	Shingles (Accept 'piled with shingles').	1
2	A constellation or group of stars (referring to the Big Dipper/Ursa Major).	1
3	B) Flourished	1
4	A piece of land/rock that sticks out into the water. (Must mention it acting as a barrier or point).	1
5	Myth / Tale / Story / Folklore.	1
6	The lake was too long / it was so long the end could not be seen.	1
7	1. For protection (from the river's current/enemies). 2. For trade (easy access to the boats/river).	2
8	The text mentions " rotting piles " of a "greater town" that can be seen when water levels are low.	2
9	They remember the " wealth and power " of the past and hope that the kings will return so " gold would flow in rivers " again.	2
10	Simile. It suggests the water is loud, powerful, and perhaps dangerous/intimidating like a wild animal.	2
11	It suggests a sense of fear, caution, or omen . It shows the mountain is defined by the threat that lives inside it.	2
12	It creates a contrast between the "wealthy and powerful" past (gold/warriors) and the "rotting," decaying present state of the ruins.	2
13	To show Bilbo's amazement/wonder at the scale of the lake.	1
14	Conjunction: " but ". Function: To show contrast between where the town was not built and where it was.	2
15	The author uses shorter clauses or a list of actions ("ropes were cast," "oars were pulled") to show a sense of coordinated, busy movement.	2
16	Personal Response: Brave: They continue to "thrive" and trade despite the dragon. Foolish: They live in the "shadow" of a known danger for the sake of "daily business." (1 mark for opinion, 1 mark for text evidence).	2