**SOCIAL SERVICES**

**READING SKILLS**

**THE BOY FROM THE RIVER**

It was a cold night. The wind was strong. The streets were empty. The city was silent.

Inside **The Hope Center**, Sarah sat at her desk. She was a social **worker**. She helped the **poor**, the **elderly**, and the **children**. She wanted to **support** them. She wanted to **help**.

Then, the door opened. A small boy stood there. His clothes were wet. His face was pale. His eyes were dark and full of fear.

Sarah stood up **quickly**. “Come inside,” she said. “You are **safe** here.”

The boy walked in **slowly**. A **worker** brought him a blanket. Another **worker** gave him warm **food**. But the boy did not eat. He just sat and stared at the fire.

Sarah sat beside him. “What is your name?”

The boy whispered, “Tom.”

She smiled. “Where is your **family**?”

Tom looked at her. “I don’t know.”

Sarah felt strange. She had seen this boy before. But where?

She picked up an old newspaper from her desk. The headline said:

**"Missing Child – Five Years Ago"**

Her hands shook. The photo in the newspaper… it was him. The same face. The same dark eyes. But there was something impossible.

He had not aged.

The lights flickered. The fire grew small. The room became cold.

Then, there was a knock on the door.

An **elderly** man stood outside. His hands were shaking. His face was tired.

“I need to see the boy,” he said.

Sarah hesitated. “Who are you?”

The man’s voice broke. “I am his grandfather.”

She turned to Tom. “Do you know him?”

Tom’s eyes filled with tears. He nodded **slowly**.

The old man sat beside him. His hands touched Tom’s face, searching for something lost in time.

“Tom disappeared five years ago,” he said softly. “It was a stormy night. He went to the river to play… but he never came back.”

Sarah felt cold. “But… he is here now. And he is still a child.”

The old man sighed. “Tom was lost… between time.”

The **community** watched in silence. The fire crackled.

Tom whispered, “I fell into the river. But I did not sink. The water was warm. I saw a light. I heard voices. And then… I woke up here.”

Sarah’s heart beat fast.

Tom looked at his grandfather. “Am I real?”

The old man held his hand. “Yes, Tom. You are real. And you are **home** now.”

Sarah took a deep breath. “We will **support** you, Tom. We will take **care** of you.”

The doctor checked him **carefully**. “He is **sick**,” she said. “He needs rest.”

Tom took a deep breath. “I am happy now. I am not lost anymore.”

The next morning, Sarah and the old man took Tom to the river. The water was still. The wind was soft. Tom looked at the river and whispered, “This is where I disappeared.”

The old man hugged him tight. “Now, you are **safe**.”

Sarah smiled. Tom had a **family** again. He had a **home**.

And The Hope Center had helped one more lost soul find his way back.

**📌 1. TRUE OR FALSE? – "Is It Real?"**

Read the sentences below. **Write (T) for True or (F) for False.**

1. \_\_\_ The story takes place on a hot summer night.
2. \_\_\_ Sarah is a doctor at The Hope Center.
3. \_\_\_ Tom's clothes were wet when he arrived at the center.
4. \_\_\_ Sarah finds Tom’s photo in a new magazine.
5. \_\_\_ The old man who comes to the center is Tom’s grandfather.
6. \_\_\_ Tom disappeared five years ago.
7. \_\_\_ Tom remembers what happened in the river.
8. \_\_\_ At the end, Tom leaves the center alone.
9. \_\_\_ Sarah takes Tom to the police.
10. \_\_\_ The Hope Center is a place that helps people.

**📌 2. MULTIPLE CHOICE – "What Do You Know?"**

Choose the **correct** answer. ✅

1. What is The Hope Center?  
   a) A hospital  
   b) A social service center  
   c) A police station
2. How does Tom look when he arrives?  
   a) Dry and happy  
   b) Wet and pale  
   c) Angry and loud
3. What does Sarah find in the newspaper?  
   a) A missing child report  
   b) A weather report  
   c) An advertisement
4. Who is the old man?  
   a) A stranger  
   b) A police officer  
   c) Tom’s grandfather
5. What does Tom say about the river?  
   a) He saw a light and heard voices  
   b) He played in the water and went home  
   c) He sank quickly
6. How does Sarah react to Tom’s story?  
   a) She does not believe him  
   b) She feels confused and surprised  
   c) She calls the police immediately
7. What does the doctor say about Tom?  
   a) He is sick and needs rest  
   b) He is very strong  
   c) He is just hungry
8. Where does Sarah take Tom the next morning?  
   a) To the police station  
   b) To the river  
   c) To the hospital
9. How does Tom feel at the end?  
   a) Happy and safe  
   b) Scared and lost  
   c) Angry and confused
10. What is the main idea of the story?  
    a) The importance of family and finding home  
    b) The dangers of swimming in a river  
    c) How to work at a social service center

**📌 3. FILL IN THE BLANKS – "Complete the Mystery"**

Use the words below to complete the sentences.

**(safe, support, family, problem, listen, carefully, quickly, sick, visit, center)**

1. The Hope \_\_\_\_\_\_ helps people who need help.
2. Sarah wants to \_\_\_\_\_\_ Tom and make him feel better.
3. Tom does not remember his \_\_\_\_\_\_.
4. The doctor checks Tom \_\_\_\_\_\_ and sees that he is weak.
5. The old man says Tom was lost in time, and that is a big \_\_\_\_\_\_.
6. Tom feels \_\_\_\_\_\_ when Sarah gives him food and a blanket.
7. The next morning, Sarah and the old man \_\_\_\_\_\_ the river.
8. Tom gets \_\_\_\_\_\_ after being in the cold for too long.
9. The workers work \_\_\_\_\_\_ because there are many people who need help.
10. Sarah likes to \_\_\_\_\_\_ to people’s stories before helping them.

**📌 4. MATCHING GAME**

Match the words with their meanings.

1. **Safe**
2. **Support**
3. **Community**
4. **Carefully**
5. **Visit**
6. **Problem**
7. **Quickly**
8. **Family**

a) A group of people living together  
b) Not in danger  
c) To give help or assistance  
d) With attention and thought  
e) To go and see someone  
f) Something difficult  
g) In a fast way  
h) Parents, children, and relatives

**📌 5. CREATIVE THINKING – "What Happens Next?"**

Continue the story! Write **4-5 sentences** to imagine what happens after Tom sees the river.

* Does he remember more things?
* Does the river show another mystery?
* Does Sarah finally believe everything?
* How does Tom feel at that moment?

**📌 6. PICTURE IT! – "Draw the Scene"**

Choose **one scene from the story** and **draw it**! 🎨✨

* Tom arriving at The Hope Center
* Sarah looking at the newspaper
* The old man meeting Tom
* Tom standing near the river

**📌 7. DISCUSSION TIME – "If You Were Sarah..."**

Imagine **you are Sarah**.

* What would you say to Tom?
* How would you make him feel safe?
* Would you believe his story? Why or why not?

Write **5-6 sentences** explaining what you would do.

**📌 8. REWRITE THE STORY – "Alternative Ending"**

Write a **new ending** for the story!

* What if Tom never really existed?
* What if the old man was hiding something?
* What if Sarah found out a new mystery?

Write **5-6 sentences** imagining a different way to end the story.

**📌 9. SECRET LETTER – "Tom’s Message"**

Write a **letter from Tom** to Sarah **after a few years**.

* Does he still remember the river?
* How is his life now?
* What does he say about that night?

Write a **short letter (5-7 sentences)** from Tom’s point of view!

**📌 10. TIME TRAVEL MYSTERY – "What If You Were Lost?"**

Imagine **you are lost in time like Tom**.

* Where do you go?
* What year is it?
* Who do you meet?
* How do you return?

Write **5-6 sentences** about your own **time travel** mystery!

**📌 11. FIND THE EVIDENCE – "Fact or Fiction?"**

Look at Tom’s story again. **Find three things that sound real and three things that sound impossible.**

Write them down and explain why!

**📌 12. CHOOSE A SIDE – "Do You Believe in the Mystery?"**

Tom’s story is mysterious. **Do you think it is real, or do you think something else happened?**

Write **your opinion in 5-6 sentences** explaining if you **believe Tom's experience** or if you think something else is the truth!

**📌 13. SOUNDTRACK OF THE STORY – "What Does Mystery Sound Like?" 🎵**

🎶 **Imagine The Boy from the River is a Movie.** 🎶

Your task is to **create a soundtrack** for the story!

👉 **Step 1:** Choose **three moments** from the story.  
👉 **Step 2:** Find or imagine a **song, melody, or sound** that matches each moment.  
👉 **Step 3:** Explain **why** you chose that sound.

💡 **Example Answer:**

1. **Tom enters The Hope Center** – 🎵 *Mysterious, slow piano music* – "Because it feels cold and unknown, just like the moment Tom arrives."
2. **Sarah finds the newspaper** – 🎶 *A sudden drum sound or shocking music* – "This is the moment of realization! It must sound dramatic."
3. **Tom stands by the river at the end** – 🌊 *Soft water sounds, peaceful melody* – "The mystery is closing, and Tom feels safe."

✨ **BONUS:** If possible, play the music you chose for your class and let them guess which part of the story it matches! 🎧🎭

**📌 14. THE RIVER’S TEST – "Who Can Cross the Time Gate?" ⏳🌊**

🔮 **What if the river is not just a river… but a gateway in time?** 🔮

Tom came back, but maybe **others are still lost in time**. The river only allows those who **pass its test** to return.

**Your mission:** **Prove that YOU can cross the river safely and return to the present!**

**Step 1: Answer the River’s Three Riddles 🔍**

The river does not speak in normal words. It speaks in **riddles**! Solve these three **mystical questions** to prove you are worthy.

1. **I have no voice, but I whisper. I have no hands, but I hold secrets. I have no eyes, but I see the past. What am I?**  
   a) The wind  
   b) The river  
   c) A dream
2. **The more you take from me, the bigger I get. What am I?**  
   a) A hole  
   b) A shadow  
   c) A secret
3. **I exist in yesterday, today, and tomorrow. You can’t touch me, but you can feel me. What am I?**  
   a) Time  
   b) Light  
   c) A story

**Step 2: Create Your "River Name" 🌊✨**

If the river allows you to cross, you must **leave your real name behind** and take a **new identity**.

👉 **Your river name =** (First letter of your first name) + (First thing you see near you) + (A color you like).

💡 **Example:**

* If your name is **Sarah**, you see a **lamp**, and your favorite color is **blue**, your river name is **S-Lamp-Blue**.
* If your name is **Jack**, you see a **book**, and you like **red**, your river name is **J-Book-Red**.

**Step 3: The Final Choice – Will You Cross? 🕰️🚪**

The river gives **one final warning**:

*"Once you cross, you might not return the same. Do you still wish to enter?"*

**Write your decision.**

* **YES?** → Explain **why** you want to enter the time gate.
* **NO?** → Explain **why** you are afraid to enter.

💡 **Example:**  
*"Yes! I want to cross because I need to find out what happened to Tom. I am not afraid!"*  
OR  
*"No, I will not cross. The river is too mysterious, and I don’t trust it!"*