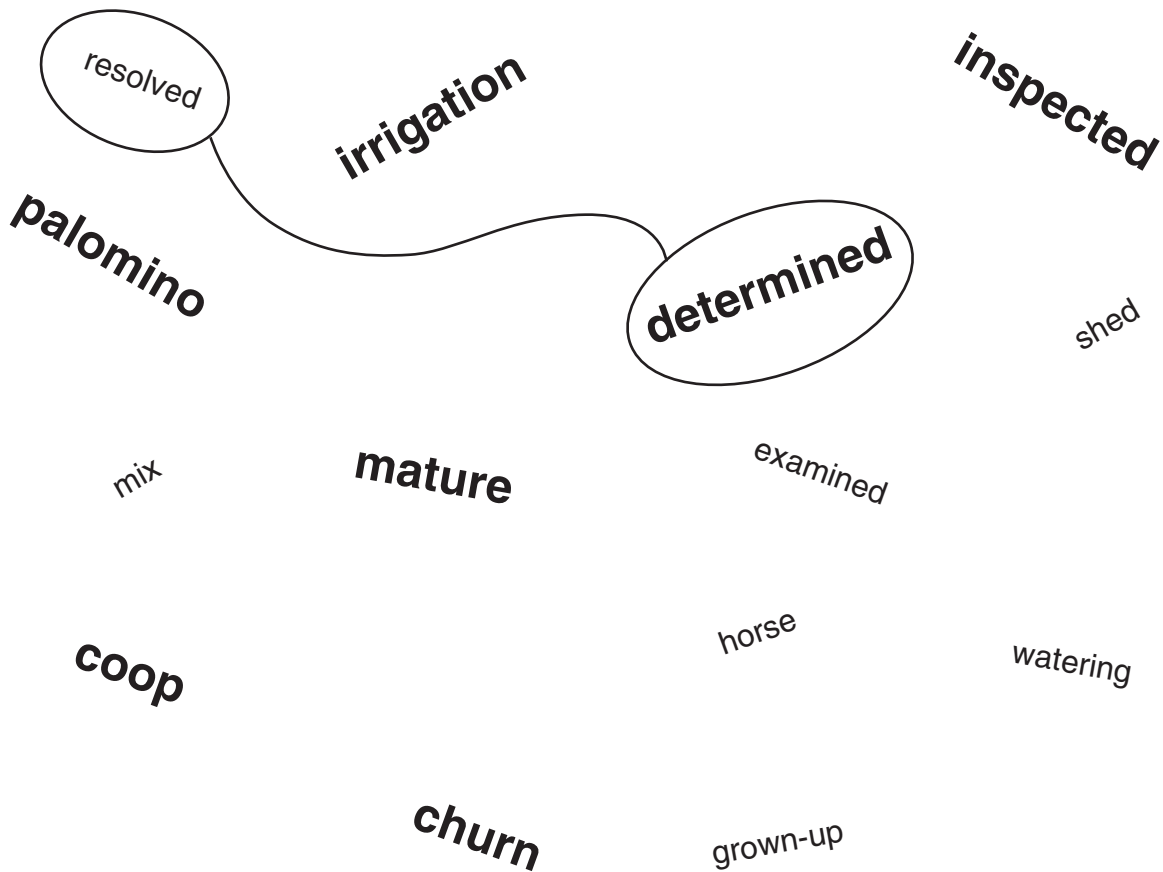


Chapters 1–2

Vocabulary:

Part One:

Connect the vocabulary words in bold type to their definitions by drawing a line between them. One is done as an example.



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Part Two:

Now use each vocabulary word in a sentence of your own to demonstrate your understanding of its meaning.

1. inspected: _____

2. palomino: _____

3. determined: _____

4. churn: _____

5. mature: _____

6. irrigation: _____

7. coop: _____

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Questions:

1. To make a story interesting, an author must portray the people in ways that make them seem real. The author will write about the way a character looks, what he says and does, and what others say about him. This is called *characterization*. What do each of the following passages from the book tell us about the character in parentheses?
 - a. . . . Willy discovered that Grandfather was still in bed. There could be only one explanation. Grandfather was playing. It was another trick.
(Grandfather)

 - b. A ten-year-old boy cannot run a farm. But you can't tell a ten-year-old boy that. Especially a boy like little Willy. (Willy)

 - c. A friend of Grandfather's offered to help, but little Willy said no. "Don't accept help unless you can pay for it," Grandfather had always said. "Especially from friends." (Grandfather)

 - d. The situation appeared hopeless. But little Willy was determined. He would dig up the potatoes by hand if he had to. And then Searchlight solved the problem. She walked over and stood in front of the plow. In her mouth was the harness she wore during the winter when she pulled the snow sled. (Searchlight)

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8. When three weeks pass and Grandfather doesn't get any better, what does Doc Smith suggest that Willy should do? How does Willy respond to Doc Smith's suggestion? Why?

9. What does Willy discover in Grandfather's strongbox? What does he conclude from this?

10. How does Searchlight help Willy bring in the potato harvest?

11. When Willy shows Grandfather the money from the potato harvest, how does Grandfather respond? What does Willy understand from this response?

Thinking About the Story:

12. When Grandfather will not get out of bed, why does Willy think that Grandfather is just playing?

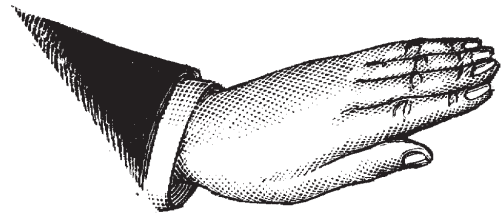
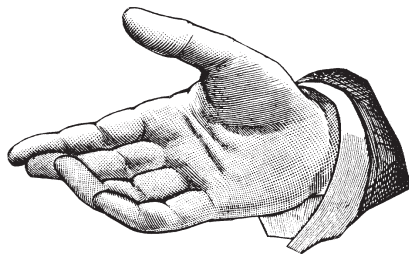
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13. What plan does Willy come up with for making his Grandfather well?

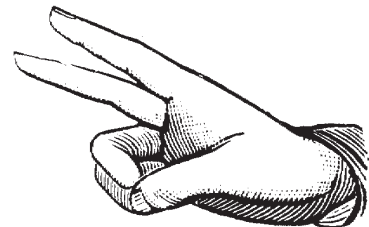
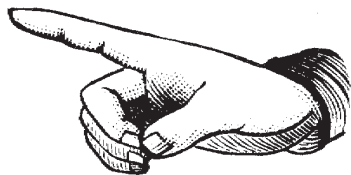
14. How do you think Searchlight got her name?

15. The author writes that Willy buys things at Lester's General store on credit against the year's potato crop. What does this mean?

16. Grandfather uses hand signals to communicate to Willy. What do each of the following hand signals mean to Willy?



Palm Up: _____ Palm Down: _____



One Finger: _____ Two Fingers: _____

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17. Both Doc Smith and Miss Williams say that Willy asks too many questions. What had Grandfather said about this? Is asking questions a good way of learning? Why or why not?

18. Grandfather had always said, “Don’t accept help unless you can pay for it, . . . especially from friends.” Why might Grandfather have advised Willy to not accept help from friends if he could not pay them? Do you agree with this advice? Why or why not?

19. If a friend were in need and asked you to help him with some work—mowing the lawn when he was sick, for example—would you expect to be paid? Why or why not?

Dig Deeper:

20. Doc Smith explains Grandfather’s illness by saying,

It happens when a person gives up. Gives up on life. For whatever reason. Starts up here in the mind first; then it spreads to the body. It’s a real sickness, all right. And there’s no cure except in the person’s own mind. I’m sorry, child, but it appears that your grandfather just doesn’t want to live anymore.

Read each of the following five passages. What words of comfort for those who have “given up” may be found in these verses?

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a. Psalm 42:11—

b. Jeremiah 29:11—

c. Isaiah 40:28–31—

d. John 16:33—

e. Romans 8:28—

21. What are some ways you can comfort someone who feels so sad they don't want to do anything? List three ideas:

Go Figure:

Willy harvested 200 bushels of potatoes per acre. Each bushel weighed 60 pounds. How many pounds of potatoes were in each acre? How many tons is that?