

Trouble River

by Betsy Byars

Discussion Questions

1. Grandma got an uneasy feeling in chapter 1. Have you had an uneasy feeling? When?
2. Have you ever tried to make something large like Dewey's raft and be criticized? Did you succeed in making it?
3. Why did Dewey ride his raft after his grandma heard about it and told him not to ride it?
4. Is Grandma superstitious? Why or why not?
5. Dewey can be described brave, rash, or stubborn. Which one can you support the most?
6. Write a summary of the major events of pages 1-42.

Questions For Ch 5-8

1. Why did grandma say "Things come to a pretty pass when the dog rides and the old woman has to walk"? What do you think it refers to?
2. Has there ever been a time when your pet did not listen to you? How did you react?
3. Why do you think grandma is so strict?
4. Why do you think Indians made raids?
5. What do you think is the main idea in this part?

End-of-book Questions

What does Dewey learn from his experiences in the book?

How can you relate to Dewey?

What was the main message in the book?

How did grandma's feelings change about Dewey's boats?

What was the author's style of writing in this book?

Writing Suggestions

Write of an imaginary adventure similar to Dewey's adventure. Be sure to include how the adventure got started and make scenarios similar to the ones in Trouble River.

Say Dewey kept a diary. Write a diary entry about what happened before they got to camp.

Summarize the major events in this book into 1 or 2 paragraphs.

Write at least 2 or 3 chapters from Charlie's (the dog's) point of view.

Write a news story about Dewey and grandma's experiences.

Sequencing Activity

Put these events in the order that they happened:

- _____ Charlie attacks the Indian
- _____ Dewey heard a screech owl
- _____ Grandma repeatedly called Dewey
- _____ They get stuck on the bank
- _____ An Indian comes to Dewey's house
- _____ Grandma had an uneasy feeling
- _____ Dewey told Grandma he was building a raft
- _____ They start their escape on the raft
- _____ They see wolves
- _____ Dewey finishes the raft

Inferences

1) Pg. 8: Grandma mentions that she sometimes gets a “feeling” about something. What feeling did she get one time while she was eating supper at night?

- a) That something would happen to her father.
- b) That something had happened to Ben.
- c) That a UFO was going to land on the roof.
- d) That something would happen to Will’s hand.

2) Pg. 29: What did the word “boat” bring to Grandma’s mind?

- a) Strong steamboats of the Missouri.
- b) Rusty steamboats of the Mississippi.
- c) Her old cat, “Boats,” who liked to swim.
- d) Sail boats.

3) Pg. 47: What did Grandma say, in disgust, that she was never asked to do in all her life?

- a) Shoot a bear.
- b) Calculate the square root of pi.
- c) Wade through muddy water in her good shoes.
- d) Jump out of a moving boat.

4) Pg. 69: Who did grandma think Dewey was?

- a) Will
- b) Mr. Dargan
- c) Ben
- d) Mickey mouse

5) Pg. 72-73: What did Dewey think he wanted?

- a) A clock and a letter.
- b) A pit and a pendulum.
- c) A knife, spyglass, and compass.
- d) A roast goose and a nice bed.

- 6) "It's good enough for a raft"(Dewey)
"It aint good for nothing. Nothing!"(Grandma). From these passages, you can conclude that
- Grandma is stubborn
 - Grandma is mean
 - Grandma is nice

- 7) "Grandma, listen to me." He grabbed her hand. "We'll go down the river to the Dargans, Grandma. We'll go down the river! From these passages, you can conclude that
- Dewey is bored
 - Dewey is happy
 - Dewey is hopeful

- 8) "Well, if it *was* an owl," she said testily, "then it means somebody's going to die." "That's just an old saying". From these passages, you can conclude that
- Grandma is scared
 - Grandma is superstitious
 - Grandma is odd

- 9) "Get ready to stop boy."
"Yes'm."
"Only wait till we get closer."
"Yes'm."
"I'll tell you when to stop."
"Yes'm."

- From these passages, you can conclude that
- Grandma is strict
 - Grandma is helpful
 - Grandma knows when to stop a boat

Sequencing Answer Key

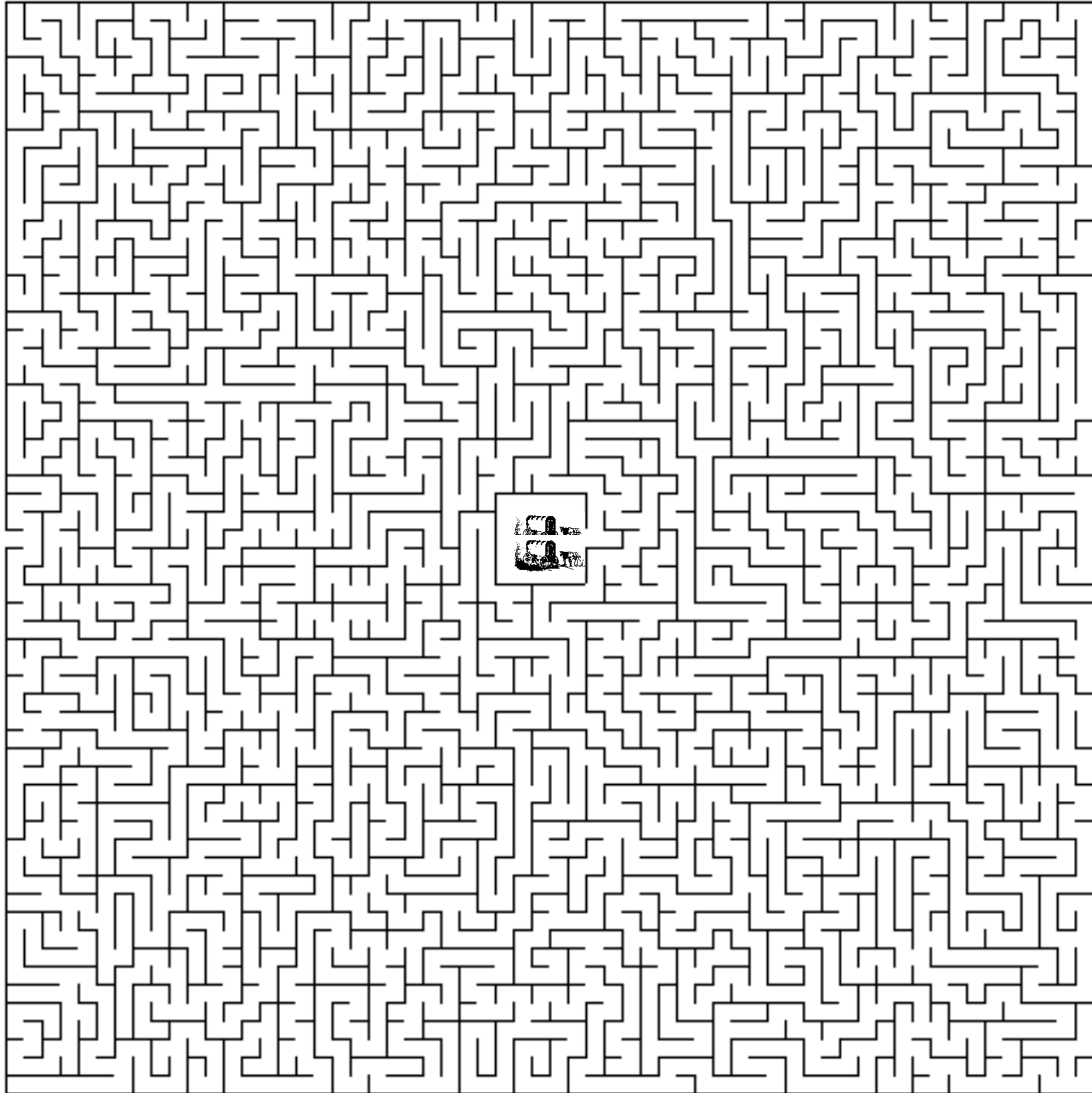
1. Grandma repeatedly called Dewey
2. Dewey told Grandma he was building a raft
3. Grandma had an uneasy feeling
4. Dewey heard a screech owl
5. Dewey finishes the raft
6. An Indian comes to Dewey's house
7. Charlie attacks the Indian
8. They start their escape on the raft
9. They get stuck on the bank
10. They see wolves

Inference Answer Key

- 1) Pg. 8:
b) → That something had happened to Ben.
- 2) Pg. 29:
a) → Strong steam-boats of the Missouri.
- 3) Pg. 47:
c) → Wade through muddy water in her good shoes.
- 4) Pg. 69:
b) → Mr. Dargan
- 5) Pg. 72-73:
d) → A roast goose and a nice bed.
- 6) a. → Grandma is stubborn
- 7) c. → Dewey is hopeful
- 8) b. → Grandma is superstitious
- 9) b. → Grandma is helpful

Trouble River

Guide the boat to the camp



<http://puzzlemaker.school.discovery.com/code/BuildWordSearch.asp>