The old stage coach was rumbling along the dusty road that runs from Maplewood to Riverboro. The day was as warm as midsummer, though it was only the middle of May, and Mr. Jeremiah Cobb was favoring the horses as much as possible, yet never losing sight of the fact that he carried the mail. The hills were many, and the reins lay loosely in his hands as he lolled back in his seat and extended one foot and leg luxuriously over the dashboard. His brimmed hat of worn felt was well pulled over his eyes, and he revolved a quid of tobacco in his left cheek.

There was one passenger in the coach,—a small dark-haired person in a glossy buff calico dress. She was so slender and so stiffly starched that she slid from space to space on the leather cushions, though she braced herself against the middle seat with her feet and extended her cotton-gloved hands on each side, in order to maintain some sort of balance.

Whenever the wheels sank farther than usual into a rut, or jolted suddenly over a stone, she bounded involuntarily into the air, came down again, pushed back her funny little straw hat, and picked up or settled more firmly a small pink sunshade, which seemed to be her chief responsibility,—unless we except a bead purse, into which she looked whenever the condition of the roads would permit, finding great apparent satisfaction in that its precious contents neither disappeared nor grew less. Mr. Cobb guessed nothing of these harassing details of travel, his business being to carry people to their destinations, not, necessarily, to make them comfortable on the way. Indeed he had forgotten the very existence of this one unnoteworthy little passenger.

When he was about to leave the post-office in Maplewood that morning, a woman had alighted from a wagon, and coming up to him, inquired whether this were the Riverboro stage, and if he were Mr. Cobb. Being answered in the affirmative, she nodded to a child who was eagerly waiting for the answer, and who ran towards her as if she feared to be a moment too late. The child might have been ten or eleven years old perhaps, but whatever the number of her summers, she had an air of being small for her age. Her mother helped her into the stage coach, deposited a bundle and a bouquet of lilacs beside her, and finally paid the fare, counting out the silver with great care.

"I want you should take her to my sisters' in Riverboro," she said. "Do you know Mirandy and Jane Sawyer? They live in the brick house."

Lord bless your soul, he knew 'em as well as if he'd made 'em!

"Well, she's going there, and they're expecting her. Will you keep an eye on her, please? If she can get out anywhere and get with folks, or get anybody in to keep her company, she'll do it. Good-bye, Rebecca; try not to get into any mischief, and sit quiet, so you'll look neat an' nice when you get there. Don't be any trouble to Mr. Cobb.—You see, she's kind of excited.—We came on the cars from Temperance yesterday, slept all night at my cousin's, and drove from her house—eight miles it is—this morning."

"Good-by, mother, don't worry; you know it isn't as if I hadn't travelled before."

The woman gave a short sardonic laugh and said in an explanatory way to Mr. Cobb, "She's been to Wareham and stayed over night; that isn't much to be journey-proud on!"

"It WAS TRAVELING, mother," said the child eagerly and willfully. "It was leaving the farm, and putting up lunch in a basket, and a little riding and a little steam cars, and we carried our nightgowns."

D, b, d, a

D, a, d, c

B, c, a, a

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| 1 | What do we learn about the road from Maplewood to Riverboro?   1. That it is long and winding 2. That it is hot and messy 3. That it was hilly and grassy 4. **That it is dry and arid** | rumbling along the dusty road that runs from Maplewood to Riverboro. |
| 2 | Which one statement best describes how Mr Jeremiah Cobb is feeling?   1. He is feeling happy 2. **He is feeling relaxed** 3. He is feeling overworked 4. He is feeling tired | “he hills were many, and the reins lay loosely in his hands as he lolled back in his seat and extended one foot and leg luxuriously over the dashboard.” shows us he is taking it easy. |
| 3 | What is the brim of the hat used for?   1. Covering eyes from the wind 2. Covering eyes when you need to sleep 3. Covering eyes from the dust 4. **Covering eyes from the sun.** | inference |
| 4 | Why was the dark-haired woman finding the journey difficult?   1. **The land was uneven and caused the stagecoach to be bumpy** 2. She was too small and light to sit comfortably 3. She is rich and not used to this form of transportation 4. The stagecoach was empty and so it was bumpier | “Whenever the wheels sank farther than usual into a rut, or jolted suddenly over a stone, she bounded involuntarily into the ai” |
| 5 | What piece of information about the dark-haired lady is not mentioned?   1. What her body looks like 2. What she tried to do was regain balance 3. What she used to block out the sun’s light 4. **What was in her purse** |  |
| 6 | What does “she looked whenever the condition of the roads would permit, finding great apparent satisfaction in that its precious contents neither disappeared nor grew less.” suggest the reason she looked into her purse was?   1. **To check if everything in there was still fine** 2. To check if there is more of whatever there is in there 3. To make herself happy by looking at it again 4. To ensure that it remains hidden in the purse. |  |
| 7 | What does “his business being to carry people to their destinations, not, necessarily, to make them comfortable on the way” tell us about the type of person Mr Cobb is?   1. He is not interested in their opinions 2. He is only interested in providing the best possible service 3. He goes above and beyond to get people to their destination 4. **He is focused on doing his job and not on anything else** |  |
| 8 | What word best replaces alighted line \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   1. Lit up 2. Escaped 3. **Got off** 4. Set fire |  |
| 9 | How are the woman and the child feeling at the Riverboro stage?   1. Relieved 2. **Urgent** 3. Concerned 4. Astonished |  |
| 10 | What is unusual about the child?   1. She is eager 2. She is young 3. **She is small for her size** 4. She is by herself | **she had an air of being small for her age** |
| 11 | On line \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the mother describes the daughter as excited, but another word may fit better there. WHich word?   1. **Exhausted** 2. Amusing 3. Confused 4. Nervous | We came on the cars from Temperance yesterday, slept all night at my cousin's, and drove from her house—eight miles it is—this morning." |
| 12 | What does the mother’s laugh suggest about what she thinks about the daughter’s comments?   1. **She thinks the journey is easy compared to the journey she just done is about to do** 2. She thinks her daughter is just being stubborn and chatting back to her 3. She thinks her daughter is being proud for no reason 4. She thinks her daughter is being rude and laughs because she is embarrassed |  |
| 13 | Describe the little girl’s character using quotes from the story. |  |