# COMPREHENSION

**THE SECRET GARDEN**

The flower-bed was not quite bare. It was bare of flowers because the perennial plants had been cut down for their winter rest, but there were tall shrubs and low ones which grew together at the back of the bed, and as the robin hopped about under them she saw him hop over a small pile of freshly turned up earth. He stopped on it to look for a worm. The earth had been turned up because a dog had been trying to dig up a mole and he had scratched quite a deep hole.

Mary looked at it, not really knowing why the hole was there, and as she looked she saw something almost buried in the newly-turned soil. It was something like a ring of rusty iron or brass and when the robin flew up into a tree nearby she put out her hand and picked the ring up. It was more than a ring, however; it was an old key which looked as if it had been buried a long time.

Mistress Mary stood up and looked at it with an almost frightened face as it hung from her finger.

“Perhaps it has been buried for ten years,” she said in a whisper. “Perhaps it is the key to the garden!”

She looked at the key quite a long time. She turned it over and over, and thought about it. As I have said before, she was not a child who had been trained to ask permission or consult her elders about things. All she thought about the key was that if it was the key to the closed garden, and she could find out where the door was, she could perhaps open it and see what was inside the walls, and what had happened to the old rose-trees. It was because it had been shut up so long that she wanted to see it. It seemed as if it must be different from other places and that something strange must have happened to it during ten years. Besides that, if she liked it she could go into it every day and shut the door behind her, and she could make up some play of her own and play it quite alone, because nobody would ever know where she was, but would think the door was still locked and the key buried in the earth. The thought of that pleased her very much.

Living as it were, all by herself in a house with a hundred mysteriously closed rooms and having nothing whatever to do to amuse herself, had set her inactive brain to working and was actually awakening her imagination. There is no doubt that the fresh, strong, pure air from the moor had a great deal to do with it. Just as it had given her an appetite, and fighting with the wind had stirred her blood, so the same things had stirred her mind. In India she had always been too hot and languid and weak to care much about anything, but in this place she was beginning to care and to want to do new things. Already she felt less “contrary,” though she did not know why.

She put the key in her pocket and walked up and down her walk. No one but herself ever seemed to come there, so she could walk slowly and look at the wall, or, rather, at the ivy growing on it. The ivy was the baffling thing. Howsoever carefully she looked she could see nothing but thickly growing, glossy, dark green leaves. She was very much disappointed. Something of her contrariness came back to her as she paced the walk and looked over it at the tree-tops inside. It seemed so silly, she said to herself, to be near it and not be able to get in. She took the key in her pocket when she went back to the house, and she made up her mind that she would always carry it with her when she went out, so that if she ever should find the hidden door she would be ready.

## MCQ Questions

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| **#** | **Type** | **Question** | **Results** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | inference | 1. In the text, it says that the “perennial plants had been cut down for their winter rest.” What does this imply about the plants?    1. They are permanently dead    2. **They will grow again when it is not winter**    3. The winter has completely killed the plant    4. They had a trim for the rest of winter | Winter rest shows they rest in winter so they grow back in other months |
| 2 | fact | 1. Why did Mary think there was a hole in the earth?    1. Because a dog had been trying to dig up a mole    2. Because somebody had buried an old key there    3. **Mary was unclear why there was a hole**    4. A mole had scratched a deep hole | “Mary looked at it, not really knowing why the hole was there”  Although it says the dog did it, she does not know |
| 3 | fact | 1. What did Mary find in the soil?    1. A ring of rusty iron    2. An old brass ring    3. A ring of moles    4. A **key** | “ however; it was an old key which looked as if it had been buried a long time.” |
| 4 | inference | 1. Why do you think she whispered when she found the key?   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Inference: she didn’t want people to dsicover it/ know she found it |
| 5 | phrases | 1. It says “she was not a child who had been trained to ask permission or consult her elders about things” What does this suggest Mary will do with the key?    1. It means that she is a rude child    2. **She will not inform anybody about the key**    3. She will not ask anyone to open the garden    4. It means that she was trained to be independent | She doesn’t ask people to do things first, she just does it anyway. |
| 6 | fact | 1. Why did Mary want to go into the garden initially?    1. She wanted to find out what happened to the rose trees    2. She wanted to have an area where she could play by herself    3. **Because it had been locked up for so long**    4. Because she found the key | “It was because it had been shut up so long that she wanted to see it. “ |
| 7 | Inference | 1. How did Mary find living in the house?    1. **Dull**    2. Exciting    3. Adventurous    4. Mysterious | “having nothing whatever to do to amuse herself, had set her inactive brain to working and was actually awakening her imagination.” |
| 8 |  | 1. Where did Mary live before?   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | In India |
| 9 | T/F | 1. Which of these statements are true?    1. The key had been buried for a decade    2. Something strange had taken place in the garden    3. **The time of year was around Winter**    4. The dog had pulled out the key from the earth | We know from the beginning of the text the trees needed to be cut down for winter |
| 10 | Understanding phrases | 1. How has Mary changed since living in India?   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | She had more energy to eat and be active. She is more interested in the world around here now. She is less contrary. |
| 11 | Inference | Because Mary has changed since living in India, she is now more likely to …   1. **Do what others ask her to do** 2. Find more hidden mysteries 3. Get overweight from all the eating 4. Make more friends with the animals | She is less contrary and she already doesn’t ask for permission. So, now she will listen to others more because she is less hot and the pure air on the moor. |
| 12 | Vocab | What word best describes the ‘walk’ where she can look at the wall?   1. Eerie 2. Long 3. **Isolated** 4. Bleak | “No one but herself ever seemed to come there” |
| 13 | Vocab | How does Mary feel about the ‘ivy’?   1. Terrified 2. Amazed 3. Sympathetic 4. **Confused** |  |
| 14 | Phrases | Why did ‘something of her contrariness come back’?   1. Because she did not like the fact she couldn’t get in 2. Because she couldn’t find the door 3. **Because she could not understand the sense in not being able to get in** 4. It made her angry she didn’t get her way | “ It seemed so silly, she said to herself, to be near it and not be able to get in.”  Contrary means doing the opposite. She obviously wants to go in and that annoys her. But the thing that makes her contrary is that she has the key to get in, but cannot find the door for it. So it feels like she is forced to do the opposite of what she wants. She wants to go in MORE now because she cannot use the key. |
| 15 | Inference | What is brass (line 9)?   1. **A metal** 2. A type of plant 3. A type of tree 4. A type of ring | Only metal can rust |
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| 16 |  | Based on evidence from the text, what impression do you have of Mary. Use PEE to help answer. (3 marks)  Model answer: The impression I have of Mary is that she is immature. For example, in the text it says she find it ‘so silly’ that she can be near the garden and have the key but still not get in. This shows she may be immature because she is taking this situation personally but it was not in anybody’s control. | Answers: Independent, clever, lonely, rude, bold, cheeky, determined, ambitious, immature |
| 17 |  | How does the author create a sense of mystery for the garden and what effect does this have on the reader? Use PEE (4marks)  Model answer: The author creates a sense of mystery around the garden by suggesting that it is locked. For example, the author mentions that there must be a ‘door’ and that it is both ‘locked’ and ‘hidden’. This creates a mystery for the reader because it makes them ask questions about why and want to read on to discover more. | Finding a key but not finding a door, being locked for so long, the key being hidden, knowing that someone has been in the garden before  Effect: makes them interested in reading more |
| 18 |  |  |  |
| 19 |  |  |  |