



Question 4.

- (a) Tom was not really ill but he pretended to be ill
- (b) Usually he made a lot of fuss to take Aunt Polly's medicines, but this time he took the medicines quietly.
- (c) His aunt was worried because he was not his usual self: instead he showed an unusual interest in the medicine.
- (d) Aunt Polly could read Tom's thoughts.
- (e) Aunt Polly loved Tom Sawyer.

Answer:

(a) The excerpt has been taken from a novel by Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. It is the 12th chapter of the book named *The Cat and the Pain-Killer*.

Tom was not really ill; he was sad though for Becky Thatcher as she was not coming to school; she was unwell. He was utterly depressed. He had lost interest in almost everything on the dear planet, war or even piracy. On top of everything, his Aunt Polly was experimenting with almost every remedy to pull Tom out of his melancholic mood. However, nothing would help. Finally, she discovered syrup, pain killer, and would give it to Tom. He knew his aunt's infatuation with the medicines; so, rather than refusing to take the medicine he showed interest in the syrup and started asking more of it. Aunt Polly also got irritated due to the extreme interest of Tom in the medicine. The reality was different however; Tom was actually mending health of a crack in the sitting-room floor with the syrup.

(b) Tom's aunt Polly had an infatuation with patent medicines and all new fangled methods of producing health or mending it. Whenever something fresh in this line came out, she was in a fever, right away, to try it on anybody that came handy. When Tom fell sick and was depressed, she tried every remedy on him. However, the boy only grew more and more melancholy and pale and dejected. She gave him variety of hot baths, chalked out a diet plan for him and what not. Tom had become indifferent to all the remedies Aunt Polly gave to him. So, she tried one last thing on the boy. She got syrup this time, pain killer, and hoped it to work. This last treatment was absolutely unbearable for the boy and so he came up with a plan; he did not refuse to take the medicine, rather showed interest and asked more and more of it. Aunt Polly also was taken aback at the boy's behaviour. The reality was however different and for Aunt Polly to discover later at how Tom was dosing the floor of the sitting-room with it to avoid the torture. Aunt did realize how the tonic was a torture to the boy and did not punish him.

(c) Tom was an indomitable boy who fancied his own whims and was not to be tamed easily. He was sad because his love Becky Thatcher was not coming to the school for she was not keeping well. The boy was thrown into melancholy and felt dejected. Seeing this, his aunt Polly tried all sorts of remedies and medicines on him. This only made him more irritable and cranky. Tired of all the experiments of his aunt, Tom finally came up with a plan to avoid anymore torture. When he was introduced to the pain killer syrup, he showed extraordinary interest and pretended that he liked it

immensely. The aunt was astonished at his behaviour and it was only for her to discover later that the boy was dosing the floor of sitting-room. Then she realized that it was actually a trick that Tom played on her to avoid drinking the pain killer syrup.

(d) Tom was in a state of depression when Becky Thatcher stopped coming to school. Aunt Polly saw the boy and felt miserable for him. She loved Tom a lot and could not stand his condition. She read his mind; she knew that he longed for Becky. She knew how much he loved her. So, she decided to take care of him and stuffed him with all sorts of medicines, gave him variety of baths and popped him up with pain killer. She wanted the boy to be healthy and cheerful like before. She did what she could to make him smile again, though it had some negative effects on the boy. However, her devotion was honest for her nephew.

(e) Tom Sawyer lived with his Aunt Polly and half brother Sid. Although Aunt Polly was a disciplinarian and Tom a mischievous one, both had a deep bond that connected them. Aunt Polly loved the boy immensely and cared for him a lot. She knew when he was sad and what made him happy. They both challenged each other's wit. When Tom got depressed for the reason that Becky Thatcher was not attending the school for she was keeping unwell, Aunt read Tom's mind that it was disturbing him and this was the reason for why he hung around Becky's father's house every night. Tom had lost interest in almost everything, from a roguish boy he had turned melancholic and dejected. Aunt couldn't stand this, so she started trying every remedy on her nephew. She wanted him to be himself again and she worked hard for it. It was her love for the boy that made her do it all to bring back his happiness.

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