

Comprehension Practice

Simon groped his way out of sleep, immediately remembering that the twins had a secret. Naturally, it was one he didn't share. He was always being left out now. But he was getting used to that, so why was he so scared?

- 1) *How does the writer create tension at the start of the extract? (2 Marks)*
- 2) *How does the writer show to the reader that Simon is feeling isolated? (2 Marks)*

He stumbled out of bed and pulled back the curtains, gazing at the broad sweep of the Thames at the bottom of the garden. The river was a reassuring sight, calm and familiar, a slight haze rising from the surface in the early summer morning. The Thames was an old friend, always changing yet always the same, unlike the twins. They had a secret and they were afraid.

- 3) *How does the description of the twins help the reader to understand their relationship? (4 Marks)*

Jack and Tom seemed much closer than before, cutting their younger brother Simon out completely. The way they looked at each other, whispered in their room, exchanged uneasy glances, seemed so obvious that they couldn't understand why Mum and Dad hadn't started to ask questions. But then they were so wrapped up in being busy, in getting edgy with each other, that Simon reckoned it wasn't so surprising they hadn't noticed. It couldn't be his imagination though. It had to be for real. Worse still, Simon felt that he had lost Jack. They had always been so close. Tom was different, much more self-contained, but Jack had always been protective of Simon – as if he needed to fight someone else's battles as well as his own. Then, just a week ago,

0203 565 0539

www.trefoiltutors.co.uk
office@trefoiltutors.co.uk



Jack had seemed to withdraw, quite suddenly, as though he had gone into a room and slammed the door.

Several times Simon had been on the point of asking the twins what was going on, but at the last moment he couldn't find the words, as if he was being bounced off an invisible wall that was protecting his brothers. As a result he began to watch them carefully and noticed they were watching each other in a way they had never done before – rather as if something nasty was creeping up on them and it was a competition as to who was going to cry out first. It was a weird feeling but Simon was sure he was right. The twins were scared and Simon was scared for them.

What had they done?

4) Using your own words what picture of Jack and Tom do you get in this passage? (6 Marks)

5) What view of Simon does the writer create? Refer to the passage to support your answer (6 Marks)
