



Word Choice in *Little Women*



Answer the following questions about the author's word choice in the adapted excerpt from *Little Women*.

Sample Answers

1. **Part A:** In the first paragraph, the author uses the word **stalked** to describe how Hannah, the housekeeper, moves. What does this word suggest about Hannah?

- A. She is in a big rush.
- B. She is in a bad mood.**
- C. She is feeling cheerful.
- D. She is very anxious.

Part B: Which of the following phrases from the text supports your answer to Part A?

- A. "These turnovers were an institution"
- B. "comforting to their hands on cold mornings"
- C. "no matter how busy or grumpy she might be"**
- D. "The poor things got no other lunch"

2. Select **two** of the following phrases from the text that best show that the girls did not enjoy their winter walks to work.

- A. "cold mornings"
- B. "long and bleak"**
- C. "snowy walk"
- D. "wintry weather"
- E. "bitter wind"**
- F. "hard work"

3. Choose the phrase below that best describes the meaning of the word **tramped** as it is used in paragraph 2.

- A. plodded heavily**
- B. strolled lazily
- C. skipped cheerfully
- D. crept carefully

4. In paragraph 3, Alcott writes, "for whatever their mood might be, the last glimpse of that motherly face was sure to affect them like sunshine." Describe what the simile shows about how Marmee's smile affects Jo and Meg.

It shows that their mother's loving smile always makes them feel warmer, brighter, and more cheerful.

5. In paragraph 6, Jo says, "I like good, strong words that mean something," after Meg tells her not to use words like "rascals" and "ungrateful wretches." What do Jo's words show about her attitude?

- A. She does not have a high opinion of her sister.
- B. She is more critical of others than of herself.
- C. She dislikes using words that upset other people.
- D. She believes in being honest, even if it is unpleasant.**

6. In paragraph 8, Jo calls Meg a "blighted being" and implies that Meg feels sorry for herself. Write two phrases from the last three paragraphs that show that Jo is merely joking and that she really does love her sister.

- 1) **"Meg laughed at the nonsense and felt better"**
- 2) **"Jo gave her sister an encouraging pat"**

