

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

TAKE-HOME

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## 16. “I Wonder Part I”

by Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora Archibald Smith  
(Adaptation)

Once upon a time there was a man who had three sons. Their names were Peter, Paul, and they called the youngest brother Youngling. The man didn't have one penny to rub against another. He told his sons that they must go out into the world and try to earn their bread.

Nearby the poor man's cottage was the King's palace. Against the windows of the palace, a great oak tree had sprung up and it took away all the light. The King said he would give treasure to the man who could chop down the oak tree, but no one could do it. As soon as one branch of the oak's trunk flew off, two grew in its place.

The King desired a well to hold water for the whole year. So the King said he would give both money and goods to anyone who could dig him a well that could hold water for a whole year, but no one could do it. The palace lay high, high up on a hill, and they could only dig a few inches before they came upon rock.

The King was set on having these two things done. He had sent out the word far and wide that whoever could cut the big oak in the King's courtyard, and get him a well that would hold water the whole year round, should have the Princess and half the kingdom.

Well! You may easily know there were many men who came to try their luck. All their hacking and digging did not work. The oak tree grew taller at every stroke of the axe, and the rock grew no softer.

So one day the three brothers thought they'd set off and try, too. Their father didn't stop them. When the brothers said they thought of going to the palace, their father said “Yes,” at once, and Peter, Paul, and Youngling went away from their home.

They had not gone far before they came to woods with fir trees. Up along one side of the woods rose a steep hillside, and as they went they heard something chopping away.

“I wonder what is making that chopping sound,” Youngling said.

Youngling decided to go see what was making the chopping sound. Peter and Paul teased him for going. But Youngling didn’t care what they said. He climbed the steep hillside toward where the noise came, and when he reached the place, what do you think he saw?

Why, an axe that stood there chopping away, all by itself, at the trunk of a fir tree.

**Word Count: 431**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

QUESTIONS

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Comprehension Questions

### “I Wonder Part I”

*Assess each student’s comprehension of the selection by asking him or her to respond orally to the following questions one on one with you:*

1. **Inferential** Why did the man tell his sons they had to go out in the world and try to earn their bread?
  - » He didn’t have a penny to rub against another, which means he didn’t have any money, so his sons had to go out and find a way to get what they needed.
2. **Literal** What two things did the King want to have done?
  - » He wanted someone to chop down the oak tree growing against the palace windows and dig a well to hold water for a whole year.
3. **Literal** What made it difficult for men to complete the things the King wanted done?
  - » Every time a branch was cut off the tree, two more grew in its place. The castle was high on a hill and every time men tried to dig a well, they hit rock.
4. **Literal** What does Youngling discover when he goes off on his own?
  - » an axe chopping a tree all by itself