

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

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

## 18. “I Wonder Part III”

by Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora Archibald Smith  
(Adaptation)

When the brothers had gone a little farther, they came to the King’s palace. So many men had come to try their luck. The oak tree was now twice as wide and tall as it had been at first since two branches grew for every one they chopped out with their axes.

The King had started to punish those who failed to cut down the oak tree. If a man failed, he was put on an island. But the two brothers were quite sure they could chop down the oak tree. Peter, as he was the oldest, was to try first. When Peter chopped into the tree, two new branches grew where he cut with the axe. So the King’s men seized him and put him out on the island.

Now Paul was to try his luck, but the same thing happened to him! When he had swung the axe for two or three strokes, the oak tree began to grow. The King’s men seized Paul and put him out on the island.

So now it was Youngling’s turn to try. He took his axe out of his bag and fitted it to its handle.

“Chop away!” said he to his axe, and away it chopped, making the wood chips fly, so that it wasn’t long before down came the oak.

When that was done, Youngling pulled out his shovel from his bag.

“Dig away!” said he to his spade, and so the spade began to dig until the earth and rock flew out in splinters, and he soon had the well deep enough.

And when he had got it big and deep, Youngling took out his walnut and laid it in one corner of the well, and pulled the plug of moss out.

“Trickle and run,” said Youngling, and so the walnut trickled and ran until the water gushed out of the hole in a stream, and in a short time the well was filled.

Since Youngling had chopped down the oak tree and dug a well in the palace yard, he got the Princess and half the kingdom. It was good that Peter and Paul were on an island so they didn’t have to hear everyone say, “Well, Youngling wasn’t so much out of his mind when he took to wondering about things after all!”

**Word Count: 387**