

## Comprehension Worksheet

*Adapted from a story by Frank H. Stockton. He was born at Philadelphia, April 5, 1834, and when quite a young boy used to write stories for his own pleasure. He was once a designer and engraver on wood, and afterwards an editor; but he now devotes himself entirely to writing, not only for young but also for grown people.*

### THE RIGHT WAY

"O Andy!" said little Jenny Murdock, "I'm so glad you came along this way. I can't get over."

"Can't get over?" said Andrew. "Why what's the matter?"

"The bridge is gone," said Jenny. "When I came across after breakfast it was there, and now it's over on the other side, and how can I get back home?"

"Why, so it is," said Andrew. "It was all right when I came over a little while ago, but old Donald pulls it on the other side every morning after he has driven his cows across, and I don't think he has any right to do it. I suppose he thinks the bridge was made for him and his cows."

"Now I must go down to the big bridge, Andy, and I want you to go with me. I'm afraid to go through all those dark woods by myself," said Jenny.

"But I can't go, Jenny," said Andrew, "it's nearly school time now."

Andrew was a Scotch boy, and a fine fellow. He was next to the head of his school, and he was as good at play as he was at his book. Jenny Murdock, his most particular friend, was a little girl who lived very near Andrew's home. She had no brothers or sisters, but Andrew had always been as good as a brother to her; and, therefore, when she stood by the water's edge that morning, just ready to burst into tears, she thought all her troubles over when she saw Andrew coming along the road.

He had always helped her out of her troubles before, and she saw no reason why he should not do it now. She had crossed the creek in search of wild flowers, and when she wished to return had found the bridge removed, as Andrew supposed, by old Donald McKensie, who pastured his cows on this side of the creek. This stream was not very wide, nor very deep at its edges, but the center it

was four or five feet deep; and in the spring the water ran very swiftly, so that wading across it, either by cattle or men, was quite a difficult undertaking. As for Jenny, she could not get across at all without a bridge, and there was none nearer than the wagon bridge, a mile and a half below.

"You will go with me, Andy, won't you?" said the little girl.

"And be late to school?" said he. "I have not been late yet, you know, Jenny."

"Perhaps Dominie Black will think you have been sick or had to mind the cows," said Jenny.

"He won't think so unless I tell him," said Andrew, "and you know I won't do that."

"If we were to run all the way, would you be too late?" said Jenny.

"If we were to run all the way to the bridge, and I were to run all the way back, I should not get to school till after copy time. I expect every minute to hear the school bell ring," said Andrew.

"But what can I do, then?" said poor little Jenny. "I can't wait here till school's out, and I don't want to go up to the schoolhouse, for all the boys to laugh at me."

"No," said Andrew, reflecting very seriously, "I must take you home some way or other. It won't do to leave you here, and, no matter where you might stay, your mother would be very much troubled about you."

"Yes," said Jenny, "she would think I was drowned." Time pressed, and Jenny's countenance became more and more overcast, but Andrew could think of no way in which he could take the little girl home without being late and losing his standing in the school.

It was impossible to get her across the stream at any place nearer than the "big bridge;" he would not take her that way, and make up a false story to account for his lateness at school, and he could not leave her alone or take her with him. What was to be done? While several absurd and impracticable plans were passing through his brain, the school bell began to ring, and he must start immediately to reach the schoolhouse in time. And now his anxiety and perplexity became more

intense than ever; and Jenny, looking up into his troubled countenance, began to cry.

Andrew, who had never before failed to be at the school door before the first tap of the bell, began to despair. Was there nothing to be done? Yes! A happy thought passed through his mind. How strange that he should not have thought of it before! He would ask Dominie Black to let him take Jenny home. What could be more sensible and straightforward than such a plan?

Of course, the good old schoolmaster gave Andrew the desired permission, and everything ended happily. But the best thing about the whole affair was the lesson that the young Scotch boy learned that day.

The lesson was this: when we are puzzling our brains with plans to help ourselves out of trouble, let us always stop a moment in our planning, and try to think if there is not some simple way out of the difficulty, which shall be in every respect perfectly right. If we do this, we shall probably find a way more easy and satisfactory than any which we can devise.

**DEFINITIONS—**

Particular - not ordinary, worthy of particular attention, chief

Dominie - the Scotch name for school-master

Reflecting - thinking earnestly

Overcast - covered with gloom

Account - to state the reasons

Impracticable - not possible

Anxiety - care, trouble of mind

Devise - plan, contrive

Questions: Answer the following questions in your notebook.

1. Why could not Jenny cross the stream?
2. Whom did she ask to help her?
3. What can you tell about Andrew?
4. Who was Jenny Murdock?
5. What did Jenny wish Andrew to do? Why

## Elements of a Story

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Author:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Who?**

**Characters**

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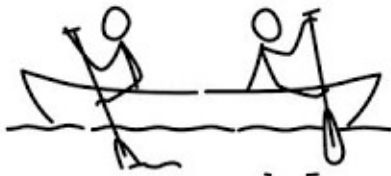
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**Setting**

**Where?**

**When?**



**Conflict:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Solution:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What happened in the story?**

**Beginning:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Middle:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**End:**

\_\_\_\_\_