

Improving Your Reading with Arlo the Author: The Sunset Sailor



A light canoe of bark, containing a single human figure, moved silently up the stream. The clear and deep water coming through rocky soil babbled gently at the edges, where it lapped the land, but, in the centre, the full current flowed steadily and without noise.

The thin shadows of early dusk were falling, casting a dark tint over the world; a tint touched here and there with living fire from the sun. One glowing streak of sunlight pierced the heavy forest and fell directly upon the figure in the boat, just as a hidden light illuminates a great picture while the rest is left in shadow.

In the canoe sat a young boy yet he swung the great paddle with an ease and speed of the strongest man in the West. The canoe remained still for a few moments, in the centre of the amber light, and its occupant, with a slight swaying motion of the paddle, held it steady in the current.



1. **Find** and **copy** three phrases from the first paragraph which suggest peacefulness.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2. *a tint touched here and there with living fire from the sun*
What does this phrase suggest about the sun's light?

3. **Find** and **copy** an example of personification from the text and explain how it contributes to meaning.

4. Look at the third paragraph of the extract.
List **two** impressions that you are given about the occupant of the canoe.

1. _____

2. _____



Answers

1. Find and copy three phrases from the first paragraph which suggest peacefulness.
Accept any three of the following reasonable points: moved silently; babbled gently; lapped the land; without noise.
2. *a tint touched here and there with living fire from the sun*
What does this phrase suggest about the sun's light?
Pupils' own responses, such as: It suggests that it is like a fire – flickering in movement and bright orange in colour.
3. Find and copy an example of personification from the text and explain how it contributes to meaning.
Pupils' own responses, such as: An example of personification is when the text says that 'one glowing streak of sunlight pierced the heavy forest'. This gives the effect that the sun's rays are sharp and have cut through the trees, which makes it clear how bright and vibrant the light from the sun is.
4. Look at the third paragraph of the extract.
List **two** impressions that you are given about the occupant of the canoe.
Accept any two reasonable points, such as: He was young in age; He was incredibly strong for his age; He had good control of the boat; He was situated in the centre of the boat; He moved easily and quickly; He controlled the paddle well; He found the task of steering the boat easy.