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“Spring was moving in the air ...”

Reading Notes

1. Mole
2. Water Rat, Ratty
3. Otter
4. Badger
5. Toad
6. River
7. bijou
8. sculls
9. hedgerow
10. copse
11. weir
12. punting

Vocabulary

1. Something up above was calling him imperiously
2. soft breezes caressed his heated brow, and after the seclusion of the cellarage he had lived in
3. the impatient and contemptuous Mole, who trotted along the side of the hedge chaffing the other rabbits
4. the insatiable sea
5. the Mole stepped gingerly down
6. This was an impromptu affair.
7. the emancipated Mole
Comprehension Questions

1. Reread the first two sentences of Ch. 1. What do they tell us about the personality of Mole?
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

2. What animals does Mole meet first above ground, and what happens?
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

3. What bewitches, entrances, and fascinates Mole and changes his life?
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

4. There are four “worlds” depicted in the first chapter. Name and describe each.
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
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5. Mole, Ratty, Badger, and Toad represent character types. Describe each in one sentence.
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
1. Read the paragraph describing Mole’s first encounter with the river, beginning, “He thought his happiness was complete.” Underline the alliteration. What are the two metaphors used to describe the “personality” of the river?

2. Water Rat describes his home, the River, starting with, “By it and with it and on it and in it …” and continuing on for two paragraphs. Is this a universal sentiment, one that all people feel about their own towns, villages, or neighborhoods?

3. What two rules of “animal etiquette” have you learned? Are they good ones?

4. Probably the most famous passage from *The Wind in the Willows* is “There is nothing, absolutely nothing half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats.” Begin reading with “Nice? It’s the only thing.” and continue to the end of the paragraph. Do you agree with Rat’s description of the charm of boating? Does your family have a boat? Summarize or put into your own words what Rat says about boating. Is this true of all hobbies?


6. “By it and with it and on it and in it,” said the Rat. “It’s brother and sister to me, and aunts, and company, and food and drink, and (naturally) washing. It’s my world and I don’t want any other.” Of what quote from *Treasure Island* does this remind you?

7. The author uses animals to describe the “human condition” and human characters types. What other books or stories do this? Why do you think this technique is effective?
Quotations

Who said that? When? And about what or whom?

1. “Bother! O Blow! Hang spring-cleaning!”

2. “Up we go! Up we go!”

3. “Sixpence for the privilege of passing by the private road!”

4. “Onion-sauce! Onion-sauce!”

5. “We don’t go there very much, we river-bankers.”

6. “Beyond the Wild Wood comes the Wide World.”

7. “That’s just the sort of fellow he is! Simply hates Society!”