

Name: _____

Date: _____

Mid-Year Test

One Step at a Time

- 1) It was just yesterday that Papa and their brother, Fritz, had taken the cows to the high pasture, leaving the children in charge of herding the goats up and down the mountain. "Remember," their father commanded, "the goats are our only wealth. You must keep them from straying or falling. Let nothing happen to the goats lest we go hungry when winter comes. You can do it one step at a time."
- 2) But the way so far had not been easy. First, a thunderstorm forced the children to seek cover. The drenching rain unearthed a boulder, causing an avalanche that blocked their path. The only solution was to find a new way over the mountain. But as night fell, they'd taken shelter with the elderly herdsman.
- 3) "I have packed more bread and cheese for your lunches," the herdsman said now as the children finished eating breakfast. Leneli took the bundle and slung it on the iron point of her alpenstock. Not only was the sturdy staff good for carrying things, it was also helpful when climbing and crossing dangerous ice.
- 4) "Come Bello," called Seppi, sending the dog ahead. The goats were busy frisking, butting, and devouring the rich grass. But soon Bello had them rounded up and ready.
- 5) "I will travel with you," the old herdsman said, and he accompanied the children a little way up the steep mountain path. The morning air was clear and sparkling, and the sun shone on the snow-capped peaks. It seemed impossible there was danger with such beauty to behold.
- 6) Soon the group reached a rise and saw the path threading through forests and between high cliffs hugging a valley. Snow-fed waterfalls splashed into a stream. The path ended where a tiny white steeple marked the herdsman's home village.
- 7) "It is many miles over the mountain but this is far enough for me," the herdsman announced. "I must return to my cheese-making. Follow the path and do not be afraid. "
- 8) "We'll never make it!" cried Seppi.
- 9) "Yes, you will," the herdsman replied with a wave. "One step at a time."

- 10) In an hour the children had reached a dark forest. "I d-don't like this," stammered Leneli. "It's too dark. The trees remind me of trolls."
- 11) "Pooh," said Seppi, but he, too, glanced over his shoulder.
- 12) The path wound in and out, and the children were so busy looking for it, they did not see the shadow that was skimming over the ground. Just in time, they looked up as a great bird dipped toward the goats. But it flapped off when Bello barked. All the commotion startled the herd, which galloped headlong through the woods.
- 13) Bello raced after them, but the children lagged behind, dodging trees and roots. Their father's warning words pounded in their ears. Then the trees parted and they burst through to find themselves teetering at the edge of a precipice. The cliff was so steep that one more step would send them flying like birds. They backed away, joining the huddled goats, and Bello crouched between them and the drop-off. He whined, eyeing Seppi and Leneli with concern.
- 14) "Shhh, Bello, it's okay," Seppi murmured. Then he took some salt from his pocket as Fritz had taught him and edged toward the goats. Goats loved salt, and Nanni stretched out her neck. But just as she was about to take a lick, a terrific screech echoed off the craggy cliffs. A golden eagle swooped toward them, his menacing talons grazing Nanni. Leneli leaped up and screamed. That and Bello's furious barking sent the eagle soaring to dizzying heights, his claws empty.
- 15) Luckily, the goats fled back into the woods in a mad stampede and not off the cliff. Finally, the flock stopped at a gurgling brook where the goats drank. The children, who had finally caught up, tended Nanni. But her wound was not mortal. "She'll be fine with a little rest," said Seppi, his chest still heaving. The children sat on a rock and Leneli removed the food bundle from her alpenstock. How good the bread and cheese tasted.
- 16) After lunch, the children trudged on. Soon they came to a deep channel worn through the rocks. "How will we cross?" Seppi moaned. By now his legs were aching and his arms felt soft as their mother's goat cheese.
- 17) "I think I know," Leneli said after looking about. She drove the goats to a place where the troop could ford the stream. Soon the whole caravan had waded in and emerged dripping on the other side.
- 18) "Good! Now we'll take the path along that cliff," said Seppi, pointing.

- 19) "It's not wide enough for us and the goats," Leneli said. "You go ahead and we'll follow. Just keep calling, so I'll know the way."
- 20) Seppi forged ahead. Leneli followed, guided by the sound of his voice. They forced their way over piles of rocks and around curves until they met at a clearing overlooking a wide range of foothills.
- 21) The green slopes were spattered yellow with daffodils. The goats, wild with delight at seeing the fresh pasture, leaped forward and began to graze. Bello and the children collapsed in the grass among them.
- 22) After resting, they stood and noticed a sheet of ice past the long slopes. A glacier nosed into the valley below. "We've got to cross somehow," Seppi said to Leneli.
- 23) The children understood the dangers of the glaciers—slow-moving monsters, full of seams and cracks. The powerful beasts crept downward cutting the alpine valleys.
- 24) Even the goats seemed worried, their eyes round as cheeses and their bleats becoming frantic. At the edge of the glacier Seppi said, "I'll go first with the goats. You and Bello follow. We all must work together. Stick in your alpenstock often to be sure we are on solid ice. We don't want to fall through the crust."
- 25) The worst obstacle was a deep crack in the ice. But Seppi walked along the rift until he found a jagged ice bridge. The walls of ice gleamed with wonderful greens and blues, but Seppi had no heart to admire them.
- 26) "Follow in my footsteps," he shouted back to Leneli and started across. The goats hesitated and Bello whined.
- 27) Leneli swallowed hard but proceeded pushing them forward. "One step at a time," she whispered to herself.
- 28) Soon they were all across. Seppi grabbed them in a welcoming hug. "We'll soon be on green grass again!" Even Bello wagged with joy, and the goats sprang forward, snatching at mouthfuls of grass. A farmhouse beckoned in the distance and seemed to grow as they neared it. At last the travelers pattered into the door-yard.
- 29) The noise of bleating goats and a barking dog brought the farmer's wife to the door. For a moment she stood looking at them in astonishment. "Where in the world did you come from? What do you want here?"

- 30) Leneli saw the woman's kind face so like her mother's and burst into tears. The woman clattered down the steps and patted her while Seppi told her their story. "You must be as hungry as wolves," the woman cried. "I'll get you something to eat, and you can tell me every word."
- 31) Soon she was flying about the kitchen and when Seppi was outside giving a bone to Bello, the smell of pancakes and soup drifted to him. In no time, the children were seated at the table with steaming bowls and plates heaped with pancakes.
- 32) "My husband will soon return from the high alps with his cattle and a load of cheeses on his back," the woman said. "I am often lonely in his absence. So I am glad for your company, if only for a single night."
- 33) After supper the woman helped the children milk the goats. When the sun went down, she sent them to bed so they would be well rested for their long walk the next day.
- 34) "Tomorrow you will return safely to your mother," the farmer's wife assured them. "One step at a time."

Creepy, Crawly Healers

- 1) Let's face it. The thought of maggots and leeches makes most people shiver. And spiders make some people's skin crawl. But these creatures are sometimes creepy, crawly healers!

Maggots

- 2) Maggots are baby blowflies. They look like little caterpillars and are germ-free. Just as caterpillars turn into butterflies, maggots turn into flies. Maggots eat dead tissue. Tissue is cells that work together to perform a specific function in the body. Maggots are usually gross, but they can help people who have a serious wound that won't heal. How?
- 3) Maggots can clean and disinfect serious wounds that refuse to heal. Sometimes wounds are so bad that doctors think about removing the body part that has the wound. Instead, the doctors place maggots on the wound for two or three days. The maggots feed on the infected part of a wound and crawl away when they have finished. It is necessary for the wound to be covered with a special dressing, or bandage, so that the maggots stay in place. When the dead tissue is removed, the maggots activate the growth of healthy new tissue in the body.
- 4) Using maggots to help heal wounds is not a new idea; they have been used in this way for thousands of years. During a war in Europe in the early 1800s, doctors found soldiers with wounds crawling with maggots. They discovered that these soldiers survived more often than soldiers whose wounds were free of these creatures. During the Civil War, doctors placed maggots in soldiers' wounds to help them heal. Maggots also were used during both world wars. Then new antibiotics, medicines that fight infection, were developed. With the availability of antibiotics, doctors stopped using maggots on a regular basis.
- 5) In the late twentieth century, maggots were used only when modern practices failed to heal a wound. Scientists performed a study in 1989 and discovered that maggots were safe and useful. In 2004, a U.S. government agency approved a special brand of maggots. Their use has increased because antibiotics do not heal all infections.

Leeches

- 6) Leeches, which are in the earthworm family, have been used for thousands of years to cure a variety of illnesses. They live mostly in freshwater, such as ponds and lakes. Leeches are found all over the world. They attach themselves to people by biting them and sucking out their blood. This causes the person's blood to flow. When a body part—say, a foot—is repaired, it is easy enough to fix the arteries that bring the blood in. It is harder to fix the tiny veins that take the blood out. If the blood can't leave, a clot may form and cause the tissue in the foot to die. Leeches solve the problem by eating the old blood. They also release special chemical compounds that keep the blood flowing and deaden the pain.

- 7) Most doctors stopped using leeches in the twentieth century. But some doctors still use them after certain kinds of surgery. In 1985, one doctor reattached a young girl's ear, then used leeches to help clear a blood clot that formed in the ear. After this success, doctors began using leeches to reduce severe swelling after operations. A company in Britain has created a leech farm. It supplies leeches to doctors all over the world.

Spiders

- 8) Some people scream or squirm when they walk into a spiderweb. But scientists are finding that the fine silk these creatures spin may have medical benefits. The use of spiderwebs to help heal wounds and clot blood has been found in folklore from 2,000 years ago. This natural material is said to be stronger than steel. Scientists have found no evidence that spider silk kills germs. But it could be used to help reproduce tissue that has been damaged in common knee injuries.
- 9) Since scientists know that spider silk has benefits, it is being developed in a lab. Spider silk with medication on it could be used to stitch up wounds. The stitches look like beads on a string. The beads contain glue droplets. Using this material will help wounds heal without leaving any scars.
- 10) The use of maggots, leeches, and spiders is creepy business. But most patients welcome them, especially if these little healers save their lives.

Peter Klaus the Goatherd

In a German village there dwelt a man named Peter Klaus. No one could persuade him to learn a trade. But he liked being out of doors, wandering the fields and woods, enjoying the world.

His neighbors sometimes hired him to take care of their goats. Every morning he drove a great flock of billies and nannies up the slopes of Kyffhäuser Mountain. While they nibbled grass, he wandered in the groves and glens or snoozed on a sunny boulder. In the evening, he gathered the goats and coaxed them back to the village.

One morning, soon after reaching the pasture, Peter missed the prettiest nanny goat in the flock. He hunted for her among the rocks and in underbrush. He called to her, climbing to the top of the hill to search the country for miles around. But he found no stray goat.

When evening came and it was time to go home, he pulled his beard and cried out in anguish, "Nothing like this has ever happened! I can't return with one of the flock lost!" But to his surprise, as he rounded them up, there she was!

When the same thing kept happening, Peter was puzzled. Finally, he watched her constantly, and when the flock passed a broken-down wall at the foot of a hill, she dropped behind and disappeared by a hawthorn bush.

Peter examined the wall he had seen many times. People said it was the remnants of an old castle. On closer inspection, he saw a hole large enough for a goat or a man on all fours to pass through. And that is just what he did the next day. He followed the nanny through, creeping on hands and knees until he found himself in a long and lofty cavern. Sunlight streamed through crevices, and there at the far end he saw her busily picking up plump oat grains trickling down from the ceiling above.

Then Peter heard stamping feet and whinnying horses. "Somebody has a stable up there," he said. "But I know these hills like the back of my hand and have never seen that house."

Then, to his surprise, a door opened and a peculiar little fellow with a big head and saucer-sized eyes entered.

"Good morning to you, sir," said Peter, thinking the strange man was the stable hand. "I beg your pardon for entering without an invitation. May I serve you?"

The little man did not answer but eyed Peter comically. With a chuckle, he beckoned Peter to follow. Peter was too good-natured to refuse and was curious besides. So he followed his eccentric guide through the door and up a long flight of stairs until he felt warm sun and saw grass beneath his feet.

He was in a square courtyard surrounded by stone walls and towering trees. His guide led him through another broad cavern and out upon a lush lawn fenced on every side by tall cliffs. Near one end of the lawn were twelve knights playing at ninepins. The knights were dressed in long hose and silver-buckled shoes. Their snow-white hair and beards reached almost to their knees.

They scarcely noticed Peter. They were too busy with their bowling, and no one spoke. The guide motioned to Peter to pick up the ninepins and return the bowling balls to the bowlers. When they bowled, the balls thundered over the grass and frightened Peter out of his wits. Trembling, he strived to serve them as he best he could.

By and by, however, he felt better. The players weren't in a hurry, so he was able to keep up and take a look around besides. That is when he noticed a pitcher of drink and twelve golden goblets on a table. He was so thirsty he picked up the pitcher and drank right out of it.

The drink made him bold, and every time one of the bowling balls rolled toward the table he would run and take another sip from the pitcher. At last, his head felt heavy and he fell into the grass, snoring.

When Peter Klaus awoke, he found himself lying on the grass where he usually fed his goats. He sat up and looked around. There were the rocks upon which he'd sat and the same hills he'd roamed. There was the brook he'd followed so often. But the trees and shrubs were huge, and many he did not remember.

He looked for his goats and called, but none came. When he tried to track them, all the well-known paths were overgrown.

"Strange!" Peter muttered, rubbing his eyes. "I will go back to the village and see if the beasts are there." But his legs were so stiff. He stumbled along, wondering why he ached so much. He wasn't that old!

Soon he came to a spot from which he could see the village spread out at the bottom of the valley. It was as pretty as ever. He hurried to the main road, hoping his flock was there, but it wasn't!

He passed people on the road, but he didn't know a soul. They looked at him so curiously, and in the village the people gaped at him from their doorways. He noticed some stroking their chins and chuckling, and when he reached up, he discovered he had a beard a foot long!

"Am I crazy?" Peter wondered. "Or maybe the world is insane? Where am I?"

But he knew he was home. The church and the main street looked the same, and the great mountain towered above them as it had done all his life.

Finally, Peter came to his own house. At least he thought it was his house. The roof was caving in, and the door was off its hinges. The rooms were dusty and bare and when he called his wife and children, no one answered. Outside, a strange dog snarled at him and an odd man told Peter to scat.

Soon a crowd gathered, laughing at his long beard and tattered clothes. One thoughtful woman, though, asked him what he wanted. "I don't know," he answered. "I came here to find my goats, and everything is lost. Does anybody know Kurt Steffen, the blacksmith?"

"Why, Kurt Steffen went to the wars years ago," the woman said. "Nobody has heard from him since."

Peter looked more dazed than ever. His lips quivered as he asked, "Where is Valentine Meyer, the shoemaker?"

Another old woman answered, "Valentine has been in the cemetery nearly 20 years."

Peter thought that he had seen both old women before, but they'd been his own age. He was about to ask another question when a sprightly young mother, who looked like his wife, came down the street. She was leading a little girl about four years of age and had a year-old baby on her hip. He leaned against the wall for support.

"Does anybody know Peter Klaus, the goat-herd?" he stammered.

"Peter Klaus!" cried the young mother. "That was my father's name. He has been lost since I was four years old. His flock came home without him one evening. Everyone searched but could not find him."

"Are you little Maria?" asked Peter, trembling harder than ever.

"My name is Maria, but I am no longer little."

"I am your father!" cried Peter. "Peter Klaus who was lost!"

Everyone was astonished, and Maria and her children rushed into his arms crying, "Welcome, father! I felt sure it was you as soon as I saw you."

Soon the village elders came to greet him. "Peter Klaus? It seems only yesterday you drove our goats to the pasture. Welcome, old neighbor! We are glad you're home at last."

