

**“A Problem”** by Anton Chekhov  
**“Luck”** by Mark Twain

## Selection Test

### Critical Reading

In the blank, write the letter of the one best answer.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Which of Sasha’s actions causes a family problem?  
a. He leaves the army in disgrace.  
b. He quits his job at the Treasury.  
c. He cashes a false promissory note.  
d. He is arrested.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Which line best illustrates Sasha’s character?  
a. “In short, the family was dear to him for many reasons.”  
b. “It made no difference to him where he was: here in the hall, in prison, or in Siberia.”  
c. “And it’s not in my character to bring myself to commit a crime.”  
d. “When I have the money I help the poor.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. What does Sasha’s uncle mean when he says that it would be “civic cowardice” to help Sasha?  
a. that Sasha is a coward  
b. that the family should not hide behind Sasha’s problems  
c. that civic duty is more important than family honor  
d. that by protecting Sasha from punishment they would be breaking the law
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. When you identify with a character, you  
a. predict how the character will react in a particular situation.  
b. put yourself in the character’s place and share his or her experiences.  
c. analyze the effect of the character’s behavior on others.  
d. draw conclusions about the character’s personality.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. In “A Problem,” how does Sasha Uskov feel when leaving the Colonel’s home with his uncle after the council meeting ?  
a. He feels grateful to his uncle for standing up for him.  
b. He feels humbled by his uncles kindness and is determined to change.  
c. He feels free and wants to party with his friends.  
d. He regrets the trouble that he has caused his family.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. How do you think Ivan Markovitch feels when Sasha asks for another loan?  
a. useful  
b. horrified  
c. happy to oblige  
d. concerned
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Sasha can be considered a static character because  
a. he does not change throughout the story.  
b. he regrets his behavior.  
c. he causes the main problem in the story.  
d. he learns from his experience.

- \_\_\_ 8. Which of the following sentences best reflects the moral of Mark Twain's "Luck"?
- Military heroes invariably turn out to be frauds.
  - Cheating always leads to a disastrous situation.
  - Education is the key to effective leadership.
  - Success may depend more on chance than on merit.
- \_\_\_ 9. As a young teacher, the clergyman coached Scoresby for final examinations to
- get Scoresby a commission in the army.
  - lessen Scoresby's anticipated failure.
  - earn extra money.
  - prove his abilities as a teacher.
- \_\_\_ 10. What is the clergyman's motivation in telling the narrator his opinion of Scoresby?
- He is envious of Scoresby's success.
  - He finds Scoresby's history amusing.
  - He thinks Scoresby is a remarkable person.
  - He wants the narrator to know how important he has been to Scoresby's career.
- \_\_\_ 11. Which of the following words best describes how the clergyman feels after Scoresby passes his final examinations?
- relieved
  - elated
  - remorseful
  - proud
- \_\_\_ 12. In "Luck," how did the narrator feel about Scoresby after hearing the clergyman's story?
- He was disappointed to discover that his long-held suspicions about Scoresby were true.
  - He felt that Scoresby was a genius and that the clergyman was envious of his success.
  - He felt angry that such a fool had received so many honors.
  - He was astonished that a man he had once considered a demigod was nothing more than a lucky fool.
- \_\_\_ 13. The Reverend can be considered a dynamic character because he
- comes to realize that Scoresby will always be blessed by good luck.
  - never wavers in his opinion that Scoresby is a fool.
  - spent much of his life trying to protect Scoresby from himself.
  - realizes that Scoresby is a sweet and lovable person.
- \_\_\_ 14. Is it correct to say that the characterization of Scoresby is static?
- no, because he learns how to succeed in war
  - yes, because he appears never to learn anything
  - yes, because he is totally predictable
  - no, because he becomes famous and admired

### Vocabulary and Grammar

- \_\_\_ 15. The word *vestibule* means
- a high point.
  - real or genuine.
  - a small entrance hall.
  - a person's visage or appearance.

- \_\_\_ 16. What noun or pronoun is modified by the restrictive adjective clause in the following sentence?  
To outsiders who have no personal interest in the matter such questions seem simple.
- outsiders
  - who
  - interest
  - questions
- \_\_\_ 17. Sasha's other paternal uncle, a \_\_\_\_\_ man, sits silently throughout Ivan Markovitch's defense of Sasha.
- prodigious
  - sublime
  - guileless
  - taciturn
- \_\_\_ 18. The word *countenance* means
- the expression of a person's face.
  - a noble person.
  - the appearance of being genuine.
  - an incalculable amount.
- \_\_\_ 19. Identify the restrictive adjective clause in the following sentence.  
So I took my poor little capital that I had saved up through years of work and grinding economy and went with a sigh and bought a cornetcy in his regiment, and away we went to the field.
- So I took my poor little capital
  - that I had saved up through years of work and grinding economy
  - and went with a sigh and bought a cornetcy in his regiment
  - and away we went to the field.
- \_\_\_ 20. Identify the nonrestrictive adjective clause in the following sentence.  
He went through on that purely superficial "cram," and got compliments, too, while others, who knew a thousand times more than he, got plucked.
- He went through on that purely superficial "cram," and got compliments, too
  - while others
  - who knew a thousand times more than he
  - got plucked.

## Essay Questions

- In Chekhov's story "A Problem," Sasha Uskov's behavior causes "a problem" for his family. In an essay, describe what the serious problem that Uskov causes, how he reacts to the problem, how his family reacts to the problem, and how his family goes about trying to resolve the problem. Use details from the story to support your answer.
- Describe in an essay what makes Arthur Scoresby and Sasha Uskov static characters. Then contrast one of these main characters with a dynamic character from the same story. Use examples from the stories to illustrate the difference between static and dynamic characters.
- The clergyman in Twain's story "Luck" describes in detail how he feels about Scoresby's "accomplishments." But what about Scoresby himself? Write an essay describing how Scoresby might feel about his military record, based on what you know about him. How would you feel in a similar situation?