

Read the passage below and answer the following questions.

The Shot Heard 'Round the World

By Anne Elliot

1 The insistent voice of his father pulled William Diamond from a deep sleep.

2 "Will! Get up and dressed – quickly!"

3 William rubbed his bleary eyes. His father answered his question before he even asked it.

4 "It's the British. Riders have just come through town saying hundreds of British troops are on their way to Concord. They could be here at any time."

5 William jumped out of bed, pulled on a shirt and trousers, grabbed his drum, and stumbled out into the cool April night air. Dozens of men were in the street, some still pulling on their clothes, making their way to the town green in confused excitement.

6 "Fine night for a fight, say I!" William heard a booming voice say as he and his father got closer to the town square. It was Jonas Parker, an old friend of William's father. "It's about time we stood toe-to-toe with these red-coated bullies!"

7 William's father nodded but said nothing as he checked his musket.

8 "And William, my boy, are you going to get into this scrap yourself, or are you going to be stuck beating on that drum of yours?" Jonas asked. "I've got an old squirrel gun back at the house that you can borrow if you like. It's a bit rusty, but it will do for picking off one of ol' King George's henchmen."

9 "William's a drummer boy; that's his job," William's father said quietly.

10 William tried not to let the disappointment show on his face.

11 "Oh, I know, I know," Jonas said. "It just seems a shame, that's all. The Richardson boy is carrying a musket, and he's seventeen – just a year older than Will, here."

12 "Well, for now, William's place is behind the lines, where a drummer is supposed to be," William's father said.

13 As William felt his face going red, a voice called out. It was Captain John Jessup.

14 "Listen, men! It looks as though the British won't be here for a few hours. I suggest you relax as much as you can for now. We have a busy morning ahead of us."

15 Slowly, the men began to drift away, heading back for their homes or for one of the nearby taverns for a drink of hot cider. William stayed on the green and sat down next to his drum.

16 *Why won't Father let me fight?* he wondered. As talk of revolution had grown over the last year, William hadn't stopped dreaming about taking part in the cause. What could be more glorious than fighting for freedom? Countless times he had imagined himself striding across the battlefield, musket in hand, barking out orders, urging his fellow soldiers onward to attack the British. He imagined Redcoats dropping their weapons and fleeing before him, as well as pretty girls kissing him on the cheek as he marched with the militia through the streets of a free Boston.

17 But William's father would have none of it. "You're far too young," he had said. It had taken William quite a bit of begging even to be a drummer boy. But what glory was there in that?

- 18** Despite the excitement, William found himself growing drowsy in the night air. He let his head rest against his drum, just for a moment.
- 19** The next thing William knew, Captain Jessup was shouting in his ear.
- 20** "Quickly, boy! Sound the call to assembly!"
- 21** William pulled himself up and, without thinking, began pounding out the drumbeat that would bring the militiamen running. The sky had lightened. It was just before dawn. William realized he must have slept for nearly three hours.
- 22** Almost miraculously, nearly 80 men of Lexington appeared within seconds of hearing the drumbeat – from teenagers to men in their 60s.
- 23** "Form lines!" Captain Jessup shouted. The militiamen fell quickly into two uneven ranks and looked out across the green field of the town commons.
- 24** Fifteen tense minutes went by. William could feel his heart pounding inside of his chest. Then, they appeared.
- 25** More than 300 British soldiers, their red coats standing out even in the predawn light, emerged from the woods and marched in a perfect column toward the green. Once there, they wheeled in unison into several long lines to face the militiamen.
- 26** William couldn't help admiring the gallantry and military precision of the soldiers in their bright uniforms. He hoped one day the colonial army would look as heroic as these British did.
- 27** A British officer on horseback trotted out toward the militia.
- 28** "Disperse, you villainous rebels!" he called out. A cheer went up from the British soldiers.
- 29** The militiamen stood silently. William realized that no one on their side knew what to do. Should they try to fight against such overwhelming odds? Should they retreat to Concord? Should they just leave and hope to fight another day?
- 30** The tension grew. The militiamen seemed frozen in place. No one dared move.
- 31** Then, suddenly, a shot rang out. The sound echoed across the green. William couldn't tell where it had come from. Had the British fired? Had a nervous militiaman pulled the trigger?
- 32** Almost immediately, the first rank of British soldiers leveled their muskets at the militiamen. William could swear he saw one muzzle aimed directly at him. Then, the Redcoats vanished behind a cloud of smoke, and a thunderclap of musket shots deafened William. Splinters flew up as musket balls slammed into the trees and buildings behind the militiamen.
- 33** William was almost knocked over as several militiamen ran back to safety. The militia's lines were breaking. William felt a hand grasp his arm. It was his father.
- 34** "We must fall back, quickly! They are too strong for us."
- 35** Just as William began to turn to join the retreat, he saw Jonas Parker. He was slumped on the ground, his hands covering his stomach. Blood oozed between his fingers, staining his white shirt. He looked directly at William, his face twisted in a mixture of terror and confusion.
- 36** William dropped his drum and ran as fast as his feet would carry him. The shame and guilt of running away weren't strong enough to hold him back. He couldn't feel his legs as he ran, he was so numb with fear. His dreams of glory were gone forever. This was a nightmare.

1. In "The Shot Heard 'Round the World," what is the overall mood?

- A. joyful
- B. suspenseful
- C. sad
- D. calm

2. What is the main difference between William and his father?

- A. William isn't friendly with Jonas Parker.
- B. William isn't as good a shot as his father is.
- C. William is more anxious to fight than his father is.
- D. William admires the British, but his father does not.

3. "The Shot Heard 'Round the World" is written from which point of view?

- A. first person
- B. second person
- C. third person limited
- D. third person omniscient

4. In the highlighted paragraph, why does the author have Jonas Parker use words like "scrap," "picking off," and "ol' King Georgie's?"

- A. to show Jonas Parker is a more experienced soldier
- B. to show that Jonas Parker is mean and uneducated
- C. to show that Jonas Parker does not understand the danger of the battle
- D. to show how confident Jonas feels at the beginning of the story

5. How do William's father's feelings reflect the theme of the story?

- A. He does not have any illusions about the glory of war.
- B. He does not believe his people are fighting for a just cause.
- C. He does not believe that people should fight each other for any reason.
- D. He does not think that young people should have to serve their country.