

# Sounder

## Teacher Key

### Chapter 1

#### pp. 1-10

1. How did the boy get the dog Sounder? (He came to him on the road as a pup.)
2. Why did the boy give up going to school? (too long and cold to walk eight miles)
3. Why was the name Sounder a good name for the dog? (When he tried an animal, he howled loudly.)
4. How did Sounder get his prey (possum or coon)? (clamped jaws behind animal's head)
5. How do you know this family of five is poor? (lived in cabin, ate corn mush, cooked over open fire)
6. Why was the winter worse than last year? (crops failed, colder so fewer coons and possum to eat)
7. What fruit did the family harvest after the first hard frost? (walnuts)
8. Why wouldn't the mother only let the boy eat the crumbs? (She gets \$.15 per pound). If she picks two pounds a night, how much money will she get in a week? (\$2.10)
9. Why did the boy dream of the mighty flood? (His mother told him that story.)

#### pp. 11-18

10. What was cooking on the stove when the boy woke up? (sausage and ham bone)
11. How do you know that the mother is happy while she is cooking? (She's humming.)
12. Why did the mother tell the boy to stop calling Sounder? (He'd wake his father.)
13. Where did the father get the ham? (from the big house)
14. Why did the boy say that Sounder would eat good now? (gets ham-boiling)
15. What time of the year does the boy compare the ham and biscuit dinner too? (Christmas)
16. Why didn't the boy like patches on his pants? (boys laughed at him)
17. Why did the boy say he wouldn't be lonesome even if his mother didn't sing? (He would learn to read.)
18. What is a good title for Chapter 1?

### Chapter 2

#### pp. 19-24

1. Why was only the boy allowed to go wherever he wanted on the road? (other children younger)
2. Why had the three men come to the boy's house? (to arrest his father for stealing the ham)
3. Why wasn't Sounder home when the three men came to the house? (went hunting)
4. If his father doesn't hold Sounder, what will the men do to him? (shoot him)
5. How did the men treat his father at the wagon? (chained him up)

#### pp. 25-34

6. Why did Sounder fall on the road when he was following the wagon? (deputy shot him)
7. How did the boy know that Sounder was still alive? (a sharp yelp)
8. How badly was Sounder injured? (the blast tore the side of his face and shoulder off)
9. Why did the boy's mother tell him to come inside and leave Sounder alone? (animals want to die alone)
10. Why does the boy go back out to the road? (to get the pieces of wood)
11. Why did the boy bring back Sounder's ear? (to put under pillow and make a wish)
12. If Sounder comes back, what does the boy have for him? (cold hamboiling)

### Chapter 3

#### pp. 35-52

1. In morning, why did the boy's mother make him put on his old pants and jacket? (crawling under porch)
2. Where does the boy's mother say that she's going with the walnut kernels? (to store)
3. How did the boy think people would treat his mother when she tried to sell her packages? (meanly)
4. What was the boy going to do with Sounder's ear that he put under his pillow? (bury with Sounder)

5. Why was the boy frightened when he passed houses with curtains? (people watched behind the curtains)
6. What is the answer to the riddle, "if you're inside, you look out, and you're outside looking in, who looks both ways?" (the window)
7. Why was the boy glad that it was winter when he crawled under the cabin for Sounder (snakes)
8. What is the lesson the boy's mother says that he must learn? (he must learn to lose)

#### **Chapter IV**

##### **pp. 52-64**

1. Why had the boy's mother brought home a bottle of vanilla? (make a cake)
2. What did the boy's mother want him to do with the cardboard box? (bring the cake to his father in jail)
3. How did the boy know the time of the year when he walked to town? (Christmas decorations and toys in store windows, and church bells ringing)
4. Why did the jailer say he had to break the contents of the box into four pieces? (it might have a steel file or hacksaw blade in it)
5. How did the boy imagine what would happen to the red-faced jailer? (die like the bull in the pen)
6. Why did the boy practice over and over again what he was going to say to his father in jail? (mother said to act perky and don't grieve your father)
7. Even though the boy practiced, what did he say to his father through the jail bars? (Sounder wasn't dead)
9. What did his father say to the boy? (tell his mother not to grieve; he'd be out soon, and not to come back)

#### **Chapter V**

##### **pp. 65-73**

1. What would the boy tell his mother about the visit with his father? (the jailer was mean, not that the boy shouldn't revisit him)
2. What was the most important question that the boy forgot to ask his father? (where Sounder first came to them as a pup on the road)
3. Why did people hang out lanterns at night time along the road? (so people know company is coming)
4. What will probably happen to his father after the trial? (he'll go to a road camp, quarry, chain gang, or state farm)
5. How did the boy's mother act when he told her that his father didn't want to see the boy again? (she didn't react)
6. What does the wonderful man in the boy's dream want to know? (if the boy wants to learn to read)
7. Why does the boy go to the cabin porch early the next morning after his visit to his father? (hears a faint whine)
8. How did the boy feel when he saw Sounder for the first time after the shot-gun blast? (sick and wanted to cry)
9. How has Sounder changed from before the wound? (one eye, three legged, whining - not barking dog)
10. What is a good title for Chapter V pp. 65-73? (Sounder Comes Home)

##### **pp. 74-75**

11. Why doesn't the boy go to the jail to revisit his father? (he said not to; he'd send word by the preacher)
12. How did the mother finally learn what had happened to the boy's father? (people at big house read her the court news)
13. What was his father's sentence? (hard labor and time off for good behavior)
14. What is a good title for Chapter V pp. 73-75? (Father Gets Hard Labor)

#### **Chapter VI**

##### **pp. 76 - 75**

1. How did the boy work now that his father was away? (field worker)
2. What did the boy answer when asked how old he was? (he didn't remember his age)

3. Why does the boy think his mother should let him go find his father? (because everyone (Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph in the bible are always going on a journey)
4. Why can't the boy find his father when he goes from place to place, year after year? (moved his father from quarry to bean farm)
5. What was the wonderful thing that the boy got on his journeys in search of his father? (newspapers and magazines)
6. What did the boy like his mother to tell the stories of David and Joseph over and over again? (happy endings)
7. Why did the boy like to hear the wind passing through the tops of the trees like a giant broom? (because the Lord told David, it was the Lord fighting on his side and he would win)
8. What is a good title for Chapter VI (Without Father)

### **Chapter VII**

#### **pp. 83-89**

1. How did Sounder act when the boy returned from his trips? (meet him on the road, and rub him with his paw and whine)
2. If though the mother would say that she wished he didn't go looking for his father, how do you know she really wanted the boy to find him? (she'd pack a piece of bread and meat)
3. Why couldn't the boy tell which convict was his father at the road camp? (because the convicts crawled from stone to stone, so he couldn't tell by their walk)
4. Why did the guard laugh at the boy when he was watching the convicts at the fence? (because the boy caught himself and blood was dripping down)
5. How did the boy know that his father wasn't washing the stones at the road camp? (his father would have grabbed the guard by the neck)
6. When the guard threw the scrap of metal over the fence, who did the boy compare himself and the guard to? (David and Goliath)
7. What is a good title for Chapter VII pp. 83-89 (David Meets Goliath)

#### **pp. 90-98**

8. What did the boy find dumped in the trash from the man at the building? ( a brown-backed book of stories)
9. Why was the boy sad when he finally found the book of stories? (he didn't understand the words)
10. Why was the boy happy when he passed the unpainted cabins rather than the painted houses? (people were friendlier)
11. How did the boy know that he was passing a school, not a cabin? (door was at the end, 2 children playing outside, stove pipe sticking out)
12. How did the school day end for the children the day the boy passed by it? (a dozen dogs chasing a pig)
13. Why wasn't the boy afraid of the school master? ( he learned to sniff out danger and spot meanness)
14. How did the school master say that he would help the boy? (he'd take the boy home and wash the dried blood off with soapy water)
15. What grew on the man's plant that he was nursing back to health? (a flower)
16. Why did the man say that people should read the boy's book? (written by Montaigne, a soldier turned philosopher/writer)
17. What the story of Cyrus about that the school teacher told the boy? ( a soldier who would sell his house, not for a kingdom, but for a friend)
18. How did the boy feel about the school teacher? (he'd made a friend)
19. What is a good title for Chapter VII pp. 80-89 (The Boy Makes a Friend)

### **Chapter VIII**

#### **pp. 99-101**

1. What did the boy's mother think the something he had to tell was about? (the boy's father)
2. What was the something the boy told his mother and younger brother and sisters about? (the teacher)
3. How does the boy's mother react to the school teacher's offer? ( Go live with the school teacher child; it's a sign; the Lord has come to you)
4. What is a good title for Chapter VIII pp. 99-101 (The Lord Works in Mysterious Ways)

**pp. 101- 113**

5. Why did the boy only come home from school in the summer time? (to pay the rent for the cabin)
6. Why does the boy's mother call some summer days "dog days"? ( the heat is so bad that the dogs go mad)
7. Why does the teacher say summer days are called "dog days"? ( from the Dog Star that rises and sets during the hot summer days)
8. Why is the dog whining at the figure way down the road? (it's his father)
9. Why did the mother and the boy think it might be a cow or mule (it dragged its feet and raised and lowered its head)
10. How did Sounder act toward the shape coming up the road? (barked and raced down the road)
11. Why was the boy's mother shocked when she saw her husband after six years? (one side of his body – arm and leg, was lifeless)
12. Why did the boy's mother think that his father would finally be happy? (he could go hunting)
13. Why did the dog lead the boy to his father out in the woods ? (he was dead)
14. What is a good title for Chapter VIII? (The Greatest Peace)

**pp. 113**

15. Why doesn't Sounder have any spirit for living? (Sounder died)
16. What do you think it means that if it blooms once it goes on blooming forever? (like Sounder, it lives on the hearts of those who remember it)

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## Student Guide

### Chapter I

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2. Why did the boy give up going to school?
3. Why was the name Sounder a good name for the dog?
4. How did Sounder get his prey (possum or coon)?
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6. Why was the winter worse than last year?
7. What fruit did the family harvest after the first hard frost?
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