

Name - \_\_\_\_\_

Start time - \_\_ : \_\_

End time - \_\_ : \_\_

Read the following poem carefully and answer the questions that follow.

### The Reading Mother

I had a mother who read to me  
Sagas of pirates who scoured the sea,  
Cutlasses clenched in their yellow teeth,  
“Blackbirds” stowed in the hold beneath.

I had a Mother who read me lays  
Of ancient and gallant and golden days;  
Stories of Marmion and Ivanhoe,  
Which every boy has a right to know.

I had a Mother who read me tales  
Of Gelert the hound of the hills of Wales,  
True to his trust till his tragic death,  
Faithfulness blent with his final breath.

I had a Mother who read me the things  
That wholesome life to the boy heart brings –  
Stories that stir with an upward touch,  
Oh, that each mother of boys were such!

You may have tangible wealth untold;  
Caskets of jewels and coffer of gold.  
Richer than I you can never be –  
I had a Mother who read to me.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Name - \_\_\_\_\_

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Questions:

1. What kinds of stories did the speaker's mother read to him?
2. What does the phrase "Blackbirds stowed in the hold beneath" symbolize in the context of the poem?
3. How does the hound Gelert symbolize faithfulness in the poem?
4. What is the central theme of the poem regarding the impact of a mother's reading on her child?
5. How does the speaker's tone change throughout the poem, and what emotions are conveyed?
6. How does the poem convey the idea that the stories read by the mother have a lasting influence on the speaker?
7. Why do you think the speaker values the stories his mother read to him more than tangible wealth?
8. Comment on the use of repetition in the poem. Why might the poet have chosen to repeat certain phrases or words?