

Swallows & Amazons - part one - chapters one, two & three

Chapter One - The Peak in Darien		
1	Why did Roger not run straight across the field?	'He could not run straight against the wind because he was a sailing vessel, a tea-clipper, the <i>Cutty Sark</i> .'
2	What did his brother, John, think about steamships?	'His elder brother John had said only that morning that steamships were just engines in tin boxes.'
3	How did Roger know who the telegram was from?	'He knew that telegrams came only from his father...;
4	Why, for a moment, did Roger want to run straight at his mother?	'...there, in his mother's hand, was the red envelope that had brought the answer.' Roger was desperate to know the answer to the question they had asked their father, but then he remembered that he was being a sailing ship!
5	When had the children first found their way to Darien?	'...on the very evening of their first coming, a fortnight before, the children had found their way through the trees to the far end of the promontory..'
6	Why do you think he had to give the telegram to John, and not to Susan, or Titty?	He was the oldest and would be in charge of them, that's why Mother says that 'it's he who has to see that you are not duffers.' John has to make sure that none of them behave like idiots and put their adventure in danger.
7	What same idea had come to all four children that first evening when they had gazed over the lake?	'All four of them had been filled at once with the same idea. It was not just an island. It was the island, waiting for them. It was their island. With an island like that within sight, who could be content to live on the mainland and sleep in a bed at night?'
8	When might they have been content with pottering about the bay in the rowing boat?	'If there had been no island, no sailing boat, and if the lake had not been so large, the children, no doubt, would have been happy enough to paddle about with oars in the bay by the boathouse.'
9	Why did they eat their bread and marmalade in silence?	The thought of going off on their own, sailing, and living on the island, was such an exciting and huge project they could only think about it. They were so busy thinking about it to themselves that they didn't have the time to chatter. 'The prospect before them was too vast for chatter.'
10	Why was there no room on the back of the telegram in the end?	'They kept remembering things...and then remembering some more...' They were busy writing a list of what to take, and the more they thought, the more they decided they needed to take with them!
Chapter Two - Making Ready		
11	Why had Mother made the tents	'She had decided...that tents would be wanted if the

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	when their father hadn't even given permission and they were still waiting for his answer?	expedition to the island was allowed, and that if it was not allowed, the next best thing would be a camp on shore.'
12	What did any camping site need to enable the children to put up their tents	Trees; and a heap of stones!
13	Why was it important for them to be careful to keep the edges of their groundsheets inside the tents?	'...of if it rains you'll find yourselves sleeping in a puddle.'
14	Why did mother say rugs were not good enough to sleep on?	They would catch cold. 'Mot enough...unless you want to be like the lady who ran away with the wraggle-taggle gypsies and caught her death of cold.'
15	Why do you think that mother wanted to go out with them in the boat the first time they went?	To check they knew what they were doing, and to check that the children were behaving in a safe and sensible manner moving around in the boat.
16	The mast was lying down in the boat when they found her and John had to 'step' the mast, but couldn't do it in the boathouse. What do you think he had to do? What does 'step' mean in this context?	Mother said that you couldn't ge the boat out of the boathouse if he stepped the mast inside as the beam was too low, so John must have to make the mast upright in the boat, that's what 'to step the mast' must mean.
17	What are cleats?	'Then John made the halyard fast on the cleats, which were simply pegs...'
18	Why did John say that mother didn't need to pretend to be Queen Elizabeth anymore?	'He was just going to sail the Swallow for the first time, and he had quite enough to think about without queens.' He had to remember all he'd learnt about sailing and he had to do it all properly and safely to prove to his mother that they were safe enough to be let out alone on the lake.
19	Why did Susan make Titty and Roger crouch on the floor of the boat? So what is the boom?	'...to keep their heads out of the way of the boom. It's the wooden beam that comes out at right angles to the mast that the bottom of the sail is attached to.
20	What was similar about the way John was sailing and Roger in the field the previous day?	'John sailed her up against the wind, tacking from side to side, and making a little every time, just as Roger had done when he had tacked up the field the day before.'
21	What was the Susan's chief task? How do you know?	'The mate's chief task was fitting out the galley...' Susan was getting all the cooking stuff ready. We know that because a kettle, frying pan and saucepan are mentioned (& knives, forks, plates, mugs, spoons).

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Chapter Three - The Voyage to the Island		
22	Why was there very little room in the Swallow when they had finished loading her?	It was full of everything they had to take with them! The cooking pots, the food, the sleeping stuff - everything they needed!
23	Why was Titty's idea such a good one?	She suggested that all the stuff they couldn't fit in could come separately in the rowing boat. This would save the children having to make two or three trips to the island to get everything there.
24	Had they got everything that was on their list? What would have been the problem not having the item they forgot?	No, not the matches! They couldn't have cooked any food, made hot drinks, signalled home.
25	What did John do to make sure he took no risks?	'Also Captain John was taking no risks. At the end of Darien there might be rocks. He held on straight out of the bay until he could see into the bay on the other side of the point.' John headed straight out into the middle of the lake before curving round. He didn't want to hole the boat on any rocks near to shore.
26	Why was John glad that the wind was only light?	The Swallow was heavily laden, full of everything, and having to move around the boat to put up and put down sails would have been difficult.
27	Why did the boat they saw look so odd?	It was long, narrow, had lots of windows and didn't have a mast. It was a house-boat.
28	How do we know for sure that their father is in the Navy?	Susan says that she wished she could live in a boat all the year round and John pointed out that father did. Susan replied, 'Yes, but that's different. A destroyer isn't a houseboat.'
29	What made the children so sure the man on the houseboat was a pirate?	'Just then a large squawk sounded over the water, a large green bird...perched on the rail...of the houseboat.' It was a parrot. Pirates have parrots!
30	Why did all the traffic on the boat not bother the children? Where had they decided they were?	'...the Swallow and her crew moved steadily southward over a desolate ocean sailed for the first time by white seamen.' They were pretending they were intrepid explorers going where no-one had been before!

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Chapter Four - The Hidden Harbour		
1	What were John and Susan's different ideas about what to do first?	'...said Captain John, "let's go and explore." "The first thing to do," said Susan, "is to find the best place for our camp."
2	Why did they want a flat piece of ground?	To put up their tents, so they could sleep. They needed a flat piece of ground to sleep on, or it would have been very uncomfortable.
3	How did they know somebody had been on the island before them and intended to come back?	There was a fireplace and spare sticks. If they hadn't intended to come back they wouldn't have left a heap of sticks ready to make another fire.
4	Why was the rope tying up the tents not made too taut, but allowed to sag a little?	'...because the dew at night would make it shrink.'
5	Why did they realise that mother's tent design was good for the island?	"It's a good thing mother made this sort of tent," said Susan. "The rock is close under the ground everywhere, and we could never have driven any pegs in."
6	Why, when they were lighting the fire, did they not use the sticks that had been left ready?	It was easy to find sticks of their own. They wanted to do everything themselves. There was something not right about just using somebody else's sticks.
7	Why was John unhappy with the landing place of the Swallow?	'Everybody can see it from the mainland, and if it comes on to blow from the east it's a very bad place for the Swallow.' John didn't want everyone to know they were there, they were pretending to be explorers. It was also not safe for the boat in a wind as the boat could get pulled out onto the lake or crash against rocks.
8	Why was John so determined to find a better harbour for the Swallow?	He was in charge of the children and the boat. The boat was their only means of transport. He had to make sure there was no chance of it getting damaged or getting away from them.
9	Why did Titty point out that the new harbour was a perfect place to hide?	No-one could see it from the lake and not even from the island. 'You can't see it from anywhere, even from the island.'
10	Why was Titty sad?	Somebody else knew about their harbour. They weren't the first explorers. "Natives again," said Titty sadly. "That means that somebody else knows even about the harbour."
11	How did they eat the eggs and the rice pudding?	They didn't have it on individual plates. They just ate out of the frying pan and then out of the pudding dish. 'She put the frying pan on the ground, and gave every one a spoon...it too became a common dish, like the frying-pan.'

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Chapter Five - First Night on the Island		
12	Why did John think the big pine tree should have a flagstaff on top of it?	'So that we could hoist a flag there as a signal. Supposing Susan and Titty were here alone, while you and I had gone fishing...'
13	How was John going to get the small rope for the lantern?	'We can get plenty of rope with five shillings.' He was going to buy it, not ask mother for it.
14	Why didn't they show the natives the way to their harbour?	'...you never know with natives, even the friendly ones.' John was keeping in character as an explorer. He didn't want anyone to know about it, as they might do something that would give it away to others.
15	Why did Susan not want them to go to the new harbour?	It was further to carry the haybags from there. '...the landing-place is close to the camp. It'll be much easier to carry them from there than through the thicket at the low end of the island.'
16	What did the children have to promise before they were allowed the two lanterns for the tents?	'...if you promise to be careful with them and not set the tents or yourselves on fire.'
17	Why did they have to keep the milk cool during the day?	To stop it going off!
18	Why was mother so sure that Christopher Columbus took his own pillow on his voyages?	'You can sleep without them...but a pillow makes such a lot of difference...'
19	Why is Titty now so sure the man on the houseboat really is a pirate?	'...they do say he's got things in that houseboat worth a fortune.' 'That's his treasure...I knew he was a retired pirate.'
Chapter Six - Island Life		
20	Why did the day begin early for the children?	'Sunshine in a tent is even more waking than sunshine in a room.' It was so light outside, and the walls of the tent were so thin that the light made the children wake up early.
21	Why did they have to dry their seats first before they could sit down in the Swallow?	'Her thwarts were still wet with dew, in spite of the morning sunshine, and they dried places to sit upon with their pocket handkerchiefs.' The dew from the night had made the boat all wet.
22	What did the other children do while Susan was cooking the breakfast?	'...the others were too hungry to go far from the fire while it was being got ready.' They didn't do anything, they were too hungry. They were just waiting for the food to be ready!
23	What was it that they saw on the houseboat that told them the man on it was a pirate?	A cannon!

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24	Why didn't John want to continue talking about the cannon?	'You cannot talk about anything when you are sailing a little boat against a hard wind and you cannot listen to anyone who talks to you.' He had to concentrate on sailing safely.
25	Why did Roger not tack up the field this morning to his mother?	'Now he had no need to tack. He had no need to be a sailing ship. He was a real boy from a real ship, come ashore on business with his captain.'
26	Why had John 'very nearly stopped and knocked' at the door?	'Coming back to them was almost the same thing as exploration.' It seemed odd, as if it was not their holiday home for weeks and weeks but somewhere new now they were sleeping on the island.
27	Why, on the way back, did the Swallow 'fairly race' to the island?	'...with the wind aft'. The wind was behind the boat pushing it along.
28	How long had it taken to go and see mother? How do you know?	All morning. We know because by the time they got back to the island it was dinnertime, and they left after breakfast. "It must be nearly dinnertime," said Roger.'
29	What is scurvy? What do you need to prevent it? So what might it be?	It's a deficiency in Vitamin C. You need to eat green veg and fruit to get it, so that's why mother said to make sure to eat lettuce and peas.
30	Why did Titty wish they had a tame cormorant?	Because they saw the cormorants easily diving and catching fish. It might take longer for them with their rods!

Swallows and Amazons - Part Three - Chapters Seven, Eight & Nine

Chapter Seven - More Island Life		
1	Why was the landing place such a good place for bathing?	'There was sand there, and thought there were stones, they were not as sharp as elsewhere. Also the water did not go deep there suddenly...'
2	Why did Titty pick up a stone from the bottom?	'She picked up a stone from the bottom to make sure that she had really been there...'
3	Why did pearl-diving come to an end 'as soon as the divers saw Captain John coming laden down the field from Dixon's Farm'?	When he had rowed past the divers on his way to get the milk he had said, 'Don't stay in too long. No breakfast for anybody who isn't dry and dressed by them time I'm back with the milk.' Titty and Roger realised that they had only a little time to get themselves out and dry and dressed before he was back, and he wouldn't be very happy if they hadn't done as he'd asked.
4	Were the worms to be used to catch the perch?	In a roundabout way. Mr Dixon said that minnow were better to catch perch with. The worms were to catch the minnow first. Then they could use the minnow to catch the perch.
5	Why did the children need a saucepan half full of water? What does bait mean?	To put the minnow in when they were caught.
6	Why does the author describe the four red floats in the water rather than say 'they got their rods out and were soon all fishing'?	He has used words to draw a picture for the reader. He doesn't need to say what they did. The floats in the water tell the reader that they all knew how to fish and got themselves sorted out.
7	Why did the lines get tangled? What was the problem?	The boat was swinging from side to side. It needed anchoring at both ends. 'We must have an anchor at each end so that the boat won't swing.'
8	How do you think Roger felt when he realised that he had something big on the end of his line?	<i>Take any answer so long as they can justify it from their knowledge of the character and their own personal experiences.</i>
9	Why was the cleaning a dreadful business and who for?	Having to eviscerate the fish! The guts had to be cut out, then burned on the fire and that would have smelt. Scraping scales is hard work, they get everywhere. Susan did all this work!
10	What does careening mean? You should be able to deduce it from its context.	Careen - To turn a ship on its side for cleaning, caulking, or repairing. 'They...pulled her high on the beach, and laid her over first on one side and then on the other...'
11	Why did they find it hard to give a name to the island?	'...were bothered by the thought of the fireplace...perhaps the island had a splendid name already.'

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Chapter Eight - Skull and Cross-bones		
12	Why was Roger 'squirming in the hands of the mate'?	Susan was still sewing the button on to his shirt, but he wanted to jump up and go to see what was going on with the cannon shooting.
13	Why were the children so interested by the little boat?	It might have had something to do with the cannon going off because it had come out of the bay where the houseboat was. It also was being sailed by other children.
14	Why did Titty draw 'a long breath that nearly choked her'?	She was amazed by the sight of the flag on the little boat. She couldn't believe what she was seeing. They'd been pretending when they had decided the man in the houseboat was a pirate and here was a ship with a pirate's flag on!
15	Why did John spread them around the island?	To make sure they knew what was going on with the little boat. To ensure that they weren't attacked without them knowing. To guard all parts of the island that the 'pirates' could land on.
16	What did the children decide about the 'pirates' hauling up and putting down their flag?	'Then they must have hoisted it only because they saw us...' John thought that the flag had been for their benefit as it had gone past near the island and then gone down again once the little ship had passed the island.
17	How did Captain John know that the girls on the little boat could steer really well? What is the 'wake'?	Wake - the track of waves left by a ship or other object moving through the water. '...a long line of wake astern of her, as straight as if it had been laid off with a ruler. The line behind the ship was completely straight. It wasn't wiggly.
18	What did John really mean by saying that they should have a 'pemmican day'?	That they shouldn't hang around to cook lunch but just take a picnic and eat as they went. '...we needn't bother about anything but tea when we get back.'
19	How did John know that he was not steering as well as the girl steering the Amazon?	'...glancing back, he knew that he was not steering so well...' He could see his wake and it wasn't as straight as the girl's. It was wiggly.
20	Why do you think the man on the houseboat shook his fist at them?	Might have mistaken them for the other boat. <i>Any answer is acceptable so long as it is clearly justified using their knowledge of the story up to now.</i>
Chapter Nine - The Arrow with the Green Feather		
21	Why was it late when John woke? There are two reasons.	'They had grown used to sleeping in a tent...yesterday, so much had happened.' The light shining through the tent didn't wake them up any more. They were tired from all the excitement and the hard sailing yesterday.

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22	'...I fettled you up a baking.' What does this mean? What did Mrs Dixon do?	Did some baking (made toffee) for the children as she'd nothing to do.
23	What was the grave news he intended to tell the other children?	That Mr Turner, from the houseboat, had thought they'd been meddling with his boat,
24	Why did the 'eggs and bread and butter and tea put a stop to talking'?	They were hungry. They just ate and drank and didn't pause to talk.
25	Why did Titty say, 'It's begun...'? What did she think had begun?	The arrow arrived and Titty thought a war had begun. He was trying to get the children off the island. Titty thought that that the island might be his. 'Perhaps this is his island...'
26	Why did they think the arrow came from the retired pirate?	'He's winged his arrow with a feather from his green parrot.' The feather on the arrow could only have come from a parrot and the man on the houseboat had a parrot.
27	How did they know that someone else was on the island?	'There was a sharp crack of a dead stick breaking somewhere in the middle of the island.'
28	'We'll comb the whole island...' What does John mean for them to do?	Comb - to search everywhere in. Search the whole island and find the person who is still on it.
29	How did Roger know that somebody had been there?	'There was a round place where the grass and ferns were pressed flat as if someone had been lying there.' 'He's left his knife...holding up a big clasp knife that he had found in the grass.'
30	Why was it lucky that John made them go flat on their faces?	'An arrow passed harmlessly over their heads.' One of them could have been hurt by the arrow if they hadn't gone down flat.

Swallows and Amazons - Part Four - Chapters Ten, Eleven & Twelve

Chapter Ten - The Parley		
1	How did John make it a fair fight between the Amazons and themselves?	He fainted, making it look as if he was about to charge and made the girls shoot off their arrows. Now the Swallows could charge, without fear of being hurt, as the girls could not get the next arrows ready fast enough.
2	Why did the Amazons point their bows at the ground?	To show they didn't want to fight, that they weren't about to attack back.
3	Why might it have been a near thing if it had come to a fight?	The two girls one was as big and one was bigger than John. They were older, would have been stronger. They could have beaten the others just by being bigger and stronger.
4	What did Susan work out when she realised that the Amazons had taken their boat?	'...they must have taken Swallow themselves, and the only place they could put her is the harbour. Their own ship must be there too. So if they have got our tents we can take both ships.'
5	Why had the Amazons got green parrot feathers?	'...the green feathers are our trophies. We took them ourselves. He was keeping them, to clean his pipes and we boarded his ship and took them.'
6	Why did the Amazons say the island was their's?	'It's been our island for years and years...who built the fireplace? Who marked the harbour?'
7	What did the Amazons reveal about themselves when they asked the Swallows to be careful with their ship and that they hadn't hurt the Swallow or harmed the tents?	That they weren't really bad pirates; that they weren't nasty and weren't intending to have a proper fight with the Swallows.
8	Why did Ruth have to change her name to Nancy?	A great play on words. 'Uncle Jim said that Amazons were ruthless...' So since they were Ruth-less (ie without Ruth), she couldn't keep her name and had to come up with another one!
9	What was the problem with Uncle Jim this year?	'He was friendly last year. This year he's worse than the natives.'
10	Why did the Amazons like it that Titty said that their uncle must be a retired pirate?	It would explain why he was so horrible to them. 'He knows what pirates are. He knows the day will come when he will walk the plank off the deck of his own ship.'
11	What had prevented the Amazons from being allies yesterday?	'We wanted to be allies at once, if only we hadn't promised to be home for lunch.'
12	Why wasn't it an alliance that the Amazons wanted?	'We want the sort of alliance that will let us fight each other if we want to...that's a treaty...of offence and defence...' An alliance would mean that they would fight against common enemies but not against each other. Against each other they would have had to have promised peace.

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Chapter Eleven - In Alliance		
13	What was different about the Amazon from the Swallow?	'She was a much newer boat than the Swallow...but not quite so roomy.' She was the same size length though.
14	Why did the Amazons have the barrel on board?	'it was meant as a water breaker, because our natives thought the water in the lake wasn't fit to drink...we use the water breaker as a puncheon for feastable drinks.'
15	Why do you think the author writes about tying the barrel to the oars so carefully?	In case a reader wants to go away and play pirates him/herself. So that the reader can visualise clearly what is going on.
16	Why did John not want to ask the Amazons about the markings for the harbour?	'...yet, as a captain, it wasn't the sort of thing he liked to ask.' John was supposed to be the captain/the boss of his little crew and he didn't want to have to admit to them, or the Amazons that he didn't know everything.
17	Why did Nancy not seem to see Roger and Titty as they handed her a mug and the toffee? How do we know?	She was busy thinking about the toast they ought to give together. We know from what she says immediately after when she talks about 'the proper thing' to drink to, but that they can't as they are not all pirates.
18	Why does toffee 'not help talking'?	It fills your mouth up and, as it softens, it sticks your teeth together. It makes your mouth full of saliva too so it isn't very easy to talk properly through a mouthful of toffee!
19	Why is Uncle Jim so bad-tempered exactly?	He has a book to write, but the Amazons have kept trying to get him to play with them and distracting him for his task. He has to get it written and the girls haven't understood this and keep interrupting him.
20	Why do you think that the Amazons let off that firework on the houseboat?	They wanted their playmate from the previous year. They wanted to wake Uncle Jim up. They wanted to get their back on Uncle Jim for forbidding them to come near him. They wanted to show that they could get as close to him as they liked despite being ordered to stay away.
21	Why did Nancy suggest they try to capture each other's ship?	'...it'll be very good practice...' If they practice on each other then soon they'll be good enough to capture the houseboat together.
22	Why did John only ask Nancy about the harbour markings when everybody else was busy?	So that they didn't know that he didn't know everything. This way he could ask quietly and Nancy could tell him and no-one else would know that he'd had to ask.
Chapter Twelve - Leading Lights		
23	Why did John intend to put the lanterns up in the harbour?	'...so that we can make a night attack on the Amazon and then find our way back, however dark it is.'

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24	Why did John not plan to put one of the lights in the fork of the tree?	'The fork was high above their reach...only you and I would be able to climb up and light it. We must have it somewhere where we can all light it...' They had to have it somewhere where three of them could light it (not Roger because he wasn't allowed to use matches).
25	Why did John overrule Susan's statement that Roger should be in bed?	He knew it wouldn't take long and he wanted to show them how easy it was to get into the harbour safely with the help of the lights. He wanted to show them the trick Nancy used to really impress them (not looking up, but just rowing and listening to orders about lining up the light).
26	Why did John begin to wonder if he could get them home (if he'd bitten off more than he could chew)?	He'd never done this before in daylight, let alone at night. He might make a complete mess of it and he was responsible for the safety of the other children and the Swallow. He realised that he had to find the lights first and that wasn't easy.
27	What is the unusual use the author has for the colon?	To show how John saw the lights when he looked behind him. '...just once he looked round for himself and saw the two lights one above the other like the stop called a colon, which I am just going to make:'
28	Why was John so delighted?	He'd done it, and it meant that they could return safely to the harbour in the dark and weren't restricted to just day sailing.

Swallows and Amazons - part Five - Chapters thirteen, fourteen and fifteen

Chapter Thirteen - The Charcoal-burners		
1	Why was a dead calm 'most unfit for war'?	The children couldn't sail a sailing boat with no wind. Not being able to sail meant that they couldn't have their battles with the Amazons.
2	Why was Roger allowed to row for the milk?	Because John had said he could earlier if there was a calm day. 'You said we might the first calm day.'
3	Why was Roger and Titty's course 'not a very straight one'?	They weren't perfect rowers; when they each had an oar, Titty, being older, was stronger than Roger. So the course would veer a bit. When they took it in turn to steer, they weren't perfect steerers (helmsmen) either!
4	What did John decide they could be since there was 'no war to bother about'?	'...we may as well be explorers.'
5	Why did they intend to 'bring back a fresh store of firewood'? Why couldn't they just fetch it from around the island?	'Firewood was getting difficult to find on the island and there was plenty of it along the high-water mark on the shores of the lake...' The children had collected all the good stuff lying around on the ground on the island and now needed more.
6	Why is it always 'better to make a fire on the shore than among the trees'?	Safety! At least on the shore the water is close by. Among the trees, it would be easy for a fire to get out of control and end up with the trees on fire.
7	Why were the children not worried about getting lost on the way back?	'...we can't go far wrong if we keep going straight down on the way back. That will bring us to the lake anyway...' So long as they moved downhill, they would eventually have to reach the shore where the land met the sea!
8	What is a 'patteran'?	'It's what gypsies make to show each other which way they have gone. You take a long stick and a short one and put them in the road across each other, so that the long stick shows the way.'
9	Why was the old man 'as wrinkled as a walnut and as brown...'?	From working out in the open air, squinting at the sun and getting suntanned.
10	Why did the old man say, 'You'll see better than bats in a minute'?	'You'll get used to the dark in a minute...' Going from bright light to dark it takes time for your eyes to get accustomed to the dimmer light, but they do.
11	Why did all the Swallows jump up 'as if they had sat on a pin'?	'Well, you're sitting on him...' They had been sitting practically on top of the adder and hadn't known it. Once they knew they were scared!
12	Why, when the Swallows 'shrank back' did they not look away?	They were wary of the adder as it was a poisonous snake, but they were still fascinated by it. They'd never been so close to something so dangerous; it was a challenge!

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Chapter Fourteen - The Letter from Captain Flint		
13	Why was Titty annoyed as she left the island?	'Because the Amazons discovered them too. They discovered our island. There's nothing left for us to discover for ourselves.' Wherever they had been they found that the Amazons had been there before. They were never intrepid explorers, never the first people to set foot somewhere.
14	Define 'galumphing'.	'...partly jumping and partly galloping...'
15	Why was it a good thing that they hadn't seen the patteran?	'Our footprints will throw them off the scent. They'll go on and on down the path.' They would confuse anyone who wanted to follow them. They had come back to the patteran and the pathway they had made up from the shore, but people tracking them might just see their footsteps going down the path.
16	Why has the author described Susan lighting the fire and the kettle so carefully?	He wants the reader to be able to go away and try it out himself if he wants to. He's teaching the reader as well as telling the story. The reader is learning what to do without realising that he is being taught.
17	Why did the mate say that 'It's a good thing it's so calm...'	The boat was so laden with wood that the water level was close to the gunwale (top edge of the boat). If there had been any wind there would have been waves which could have slopped over the edge of the boat, made the children wet, made the wood wet, and even caused it to sink.
18	Why did it take a long time for the Swallow to be neat and tidy again?	'..small firewood is as untidy a cargo as you can have.' John picked up every single leaf and 'twig as big as a match...'
19	Why did Roger call Mr Turner a 'beast'?	He had accused them of doing something they had not done. '...we've never touched his houseboat.'
20	Why was John so gloomy?	He felt it was unfair to be accused of something they had not done. He was also frustrated as they couldn't do anything about it as they couldn't go and see the Amazons because of the lack of wind.
Chapter Fifteen - Captain John visits Captain Flint		
21	What was John listening for when he woke up in the morning?	The wind. He wanted to be able to go and discuss the problem with Captain Flint with the Amazons.
22	Why was a mate's job not an easy one?	'...with a hungry crew to feed...there were eggs to boil, and bread and butter to cut.

Swallows and Amazons - part Five - Chapters thirteen, fourteen and fifteen

23	Why were the Swallows so sure that the Amazons would have wanted Captain Flint to know the natives' message?	'They wouldn't like anyone else to break into his houseboat, especially when they're going to break into it themselves.'
24	Why did Captain John go when he was so obviously reluctant to?	He didn't want the houseboat to be broken into by natives, yet he felt he was going against the Amazons by going to warn Captain Flint. He wanted to do the right thing.
25	How was it obvious the man was leaving the houseboat?	The suitcase and the birdcage with the parrot in were in the rowing boat. There was a car waiting on shore in the bay.
26	Why would the man not let John speak?	He was so angry at everything that had happened to his houseboat that even though John was trying to explain he wasn't prepared to listen.
27	Why did John not tell the man that it was all the Amazons' fault?	He didn't want to dob them in; after all they were allies now. 'It would never do to give the Amazons away.'
28	Why did John go off by himself when he got back to the island?	He hadn't like being called a liar. He hadn't been rude back to Captain Flint but I am sure he would have liked to. He needed to be by himself to calm down before he could talk about it sensibly again with the others.

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Sixteen, Seventeen & Eighteen

Chapter Sixteen - The Birthday Party		
1	Why would John's 'arms not pull, and his legs...not gather up and kick as hard as they ought to'?	He was getting tired; the swim was further than he had thought.
2	Why, when they saw the natives, did they rush back to put their camp in order?	Well, it was their mum; she expected them to keep everything neat and tidy and of course they didn't necessarily, so they had to go and do it before they arrived and she was disappointed with them.
3	What was Vicky's birthday present from her mother?	'Vicky's got a lamb and an elephant.'
4	Why did Vicky like the elephant best?	'...because it was smaller. The lamb was so large it was always being put down and forgotten.' She could hold the elephant and carry it everywhere.
5	Why did Roger want to show his swimming off at once?	He was so eager to show that he could really swim, which was something he'd been working on for a bit. He didn't want to wait.
6	Had mother really just come to celebrate Vicky's birthday?	No, she'd come to check up on them because of what she'd heard from the Amazons' mum and Mrs Dixon about interfering with the houseboat. She wanted to make sure they were still remembering to behave properly.
7	Why was there silence when mother said that Mrs Blackett had said that 'her tomboys lead him a terrible life'?	They didn't want to 'dob' them in. They knew everything that the Amazons had been doing to their uncle, but they weren't going to tell a grown-up, even if it was their mum.
8	Why did John suggest that Titty and Roger whistle for a wind?	They only had a week left of their adventures. They needed the wind to do their capturing and chasing and battles with the Amazons.
Chapter Seventeen - A Fair Wind		
9	Why did they make so many plans that evening?	It was all down to the wind and the direction it came from. With sailing you have to go where the wind takes you, so they had to plan accordingly. 'A southerly wind would mean one plan and a northerly wind another...'
10	Which wind would the Swallows prefer?	'A southerly would make it easy for the Swallows to sail to Amazon River.' So, a southerly; they didn't want to lose the island.
11	What were the two things that John said were important?	'...to know exactly what you want to do and to do it in the manner that your enemy least expects.'

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Sixteen, Seventeen & Eighteen

12	What advantage do the Swallows have over the Amazons?	'There's just one thing that we can do that they think we can't do. We can find Wild Cat Island in the dark, and bring our ship into harbour. They know about the marks, but they don't know that we have made them into leading lights. So they'll be sure that we shall make our attack early enough to get home by daylight. Well we won't.'
13	Why could they not try to take the Amazons' boat during the day?	They would be seen, either by the Amazons or by anybody else living with them or nearby. 'The pirate's harbour may be in sight of their house...there may be natives all over the place who would give the alarm.'
14	Why did Titty have to stay on the island?	Roger was too young to be left on his own, John had promised to look after him. John and Susan would be needed to sail both the boats, one each. She wanted to anyway.
15	Why did Titty whistle 'Spanish Ladies over and over again?	She wanted to whistle up a wind as there was still no wind. It's a sailor's saying that you can whistle one up.
16	What happened after breakfast to make the children happier?	'...a little ripple showed on the water...the fog moved...and began to lift.' It was the first signs of a wind arriving. If there was no wind the water would be completely still and the fog would stay where it was.
17	Once the lantern was in place what did John make sure of?	That Titty could manage it all by herself, pulling it down, lighting it, sending it back up, tying it in place safely. 'Let's see you bring the lantern down, light it, hoist it up again, and make it fast.'
18	How would Titty know when to light the lanterns for the harbour?	'...until you hear us give the owl call.'
19	Why was John not too bothered that the Amazons might have got a head start on them?	'They won't have had time with the wind against them...' With the wind blowing into the river, the girls would find it very difficult to get out. They would have to do a lot of tacking to get anywhere; basically go three times as far as the Swallows had to since the wind was aiming straight at the river and was perfect for them.
20	Why did Susan put the milk in the harbour?	'...to keep it cool.' There was no fridge and she wanted to make sure that Titty could have plenty of drinks all day without the milk going off.

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Sixteen, Seventeen & Eighteen

Chapter Eighteen - Robinson Crusoe and Man Friday		
21	Why did she move Susan's haybag?	She wanted to make it obvious that she was on her own, stranded on a desert island. She couldn't take down the boys' tent, but by moving the haybag it looked as if only one person lived in this tent. She wanted her game to be as realistic as possible.
22	What helped to make her feel that she was really alone on the island?	'Even the buzzing of the bees in the heather just behind the tent helped to make her feel that there was no one else on the island.'
23	What had spoilt <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> for her?	'That was the thing that had spoilt <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> . In the end he came home.'
24	What did she do as there were no goats?	'She took out her knife and began pruning the branches to make the path better.' She wanted to be able to run along the path if she had to.
25	How is a dipper different to a cormorant?	'Suddenly the dipper jumped feet first into the water. It did not dive like a cormorant, but dropped in...'
26	Why did Man Friday sniff at the butter?	It's a dairy product. No fridge, so like the milk it will go off. She sniffed it to make sure it had not gone rancid.
27	Where had mother been born?	Australia. '...told about her own childhood on a sheep station in Australia...'
28	Why did mother want Titty to go back with her?	She was her mum! She wanted to make sure she was all right. She didn't like the idea of leaving her on her own on the island without the others.
29	Why could Titty not see through the telescope properly?	She was crying! She was only a little girl and she'd enjoyed having her mum to herself. Having her leave made the island seem a very lonely place to be on her own.

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Nineteen, Twenty and Twenty-one

Chapter Nineteen - The Amazon River		
1	Why would they be taken for a fisherman?	Because they would be keeping close to the land. A fisherman will only go out as far as he needs to.
2	Why had they cruised in and out of the islands in the morning?	'...made sure that the Amazons were not lurking among them, waiting for a chance to capture the island once again.'
3	What were the advantages of anchoring 'close under' an island?	'From there they had been able to look out over the northern part of the lake without being seen themselves, and all day long they had kept a close watch on the promontory behind which, they knew, lay the Amazon River and the stronghold of the Amazon pirates.'
4	Why could they not turn the day into an ordinary picnic?	They had left Titty behind to light them into the harbour. It would be unfair to have fun when she'd been left behind.
5	What is a waste of an island?	'...landing on an island without making a fire is a waste of an island.'
6	Why did they want the sun to set so much?	To start their attack and enter the Amazon River to sail up it and capture the Amazon.
7	Why was it a problem when Roger rowed?	'He's making a fair lot of noise and splash...' He could give them away to natives or even the Amazons.
8	Why didn't John have to row?	'But just then a line of ripples crept over the green and silver surface of the smooth water.' The wind came back.
9	What was John's dilemma?	'I don't want to get there too soon...but I do want to get into the river while it's still light enough to see but late enough for the pirates to be off their guard and feasting in their stronghold.'
10	Why did John lower the sail himself?	'He could not trust even Susan to lower it without making a noise.'
11	How did the children know that the Amazons had hidden their boat up the river?	'We know they haven't put to sea, for we've been watching all day.'
Chapter Twenty - Titty Alone		
12	Why did Titty move all over the island after her mother had gone?	She had been busy talking and being with her mother and she hadn't been on the lookout for anything untoward. Somebody might have landed or sailed close without her knowing so she had to go and check now.
13	Why did Titty stop writing in the log?	'She had caught up with herself. There was nothing else to say until something more happened.' She'd written everything that had happened, and couldn't write any more. Nothing else had happened!

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Nineteen, Twenty and Twenty-one

14	Why did thinking about Captain Flint bother her?	'She remembered the message...she remembered... She remembered the message from the charcoal-burners and how John had tried to deliver the message but not been allowed to. Now they'd gone off to capture the boat and wouldn't see the Amazons for another day. More delay in giving the message to the main in the houseboat.
15	Why didn't Titty swim to see the light?	'He might be carried away by an ocean current...' Titty suddenly had qualms about going out in the water on her own. She worried about getting out of her depth and not getting back. We can infer that from what she thought.
16	What did Titty think when she heard the sound of a boat?	That it was the Swallow coming back with Roger, John and Susan.
17	Why was it better for Titty to have a torch?	She ran down to the harbour; she could have tripped and if she'd had a lamp it could have cut her or even set fire to her clothes.
18	Why was she feeling bad?	'What if they'd been waiting a long time...What if they had tried to make the harbour in the dark and were wrecked on the rocks outside?' She knew she hadn't been alert as she should have been. Anyone could have crept on the island and she might have lost the island for them.
19	What puzzled the girls (the Amazons)?	They saw the lights and assumed all of the Swallows were there. They couldn't understand how they had got back faster than themselves 'What beats me...is how ever they managed to get here before us...they just lit the lights...and scooted back to camp...'
20	Why did she feel it was her fault that the island had been taken?	'If only she had not lit the lights they could never have come in till dawn, and by then the Swallows would be back.' She felt it was all her fault.
21	What was the problem once Titty had rowed the Amazon out?	She didn't know what to do. She couldn't get back as one of the lights had gone out; she didn't have enough energy to keep rowing the boat.
22	What did she have to check before throwing the anchor out?	'She remembered hearing John tell Susan never to let go of the anchor without making sure that the end of the anchor rope was made fast.'
23	What did the unknown men do with the box?	'There was a noise of scrambling on stones, some curses, and then the noise of heavy stones being thrown down on something made of wood and metal.' They buried something.

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Nineteen, Twenty and Twenty-one

Chapter Twenty-one - Swallows in the Dark		
24	What made Roger panic?	Susan had jokingly compared the lilies to octopi and that made Roger remember something Titty had told him. He began to think they might be scary and really come out and catch him. His own imagination made him panic - he could see it happening.
25	Why did Susan say it was no good steering?	She could steer but she didn't know where she was going because of it being dark! 'It's no good steering...I can't see where to go.'
26	'Dowse your glim', explain what this means.	Turn the light off. Extinguish the light.
27	How did the Swallows feel now they were out at sea again?	'The spirits of the Swallow's crew had risen very much now that they were at sea once more...' They felt much happier being out on the lake where they could move in all directions and could find a way, rather than being stuck in a river, surrounded by reeds.
28	Why was John so silent after the chocolate?	He knew just how dark it was on the lake; he could be sailing them onto rocks or the shore without even knowing it if his calculations were wrong. They could wreck the boat and they'd all be in trouble; and they'd left Titty on her own for too long. '...the darkness of the night even darker than it really was...he could not really tell how near they might be to the shore. He was the captain of the Swallow and must not wreck his ship.'
29	Why did John decide to land on the private island?	He had to break the rules for once; he had to make sure his crew was safe, and if that meant breaking the rules then he'd do it. They couldn't keep sailing all night and they needed some sleep. 'The natives are all asleep anyhow...Only duffers would try to get through the islands in dark as black as this.'
30	What went through Susan and John's minds as they sailed past the farm?	'It was not an altogether comfortable thought...' They thought about what their mother would say if they knew they'd left Titty alone all night AND took Roger on an all-nighter and let him sleep in the bottom of the boat AND knew that they had sailed across the lake in the dark!

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Twenty-Two, Twenty-Three & Twenty-Four

Chapter Twenty-Two - The White Flag		
1	Why was Roger so unexcited about Titty being the Amazon?	He's only a little boy. They were up very late last night remember. He was still fast asleep really so wasn't awake enough to take in the fact that Titty had taken the Amazon!
2	Why was there a blanket flapping in the wind?	'It's a white flag...they're surrendering.' A white flag is a symbol of surrender.
3	Why did Titty say 'Fine', when she meant 'Aye, aye'?	'...she was steering Amazon for the first time. It was no wonder that she used the wrong words.'
4	Why was John so cautious about the blanket?	'They might try to rush the Amazon as we bring her in.' He didn't trust that it was actually true; he thought it might be a trick, and the Amazons would try to get their own boat back as the Swallows sailed into the harbour thinking the Amazons had surrendered, and they'd won.
5	Why could Titty not see clearly what the Amazons were doing?	'She was sailing their ship, and she wanted them to see that she could do it. She wanted to leave a wake as straight as theirs.' She wanted them to see that she was good at sailing their ship.
6	Why does Captain Nancy say, 'I could have swallowed the anchor'?	She was so surprised that Titty had, on her own, managed to dupe them and steal their boat.
7	What hadn't Nancy realised about the Swallow's plan that she thought was so great?	That it wasn't actually the real plan, but had purely happened by chance.
8	What was the Amazons' plan?	'My mate was to put me ashore...I was going to hide...and...I was going to collar Swallow and go off...' To drop Peggy on the island to hide and then steal the Swallows when her crew returned to camp.
9	What does Peggy mean: 'It was a whole one and a half'?	They had an argument which Nancy called a bit. Peggy said one and a half to explain just how much bigger an argument it was. It was a really big one because it was a whole one and a half as compare to the bit that Nancy called it! By saying one and a half, Peggy is saying that it was much bigger than a normal argument the two of them might have.
10	What two reasons did Nancy have for being so generous about the chocolate Titty had eaten?	1: 'Then we found a seed cake and ate it.' 2: 'You'd earned it.' 1: They'd eaten the Swallows' cake, and Titty had eaten the Amazons' chocolate, so it was fair. 2: Titty had been so successful in taking the Amazon that Nancy could not begrudge Titty their chocolate. She'd deserved it.

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Twenty-Two, Twenty-Three & Twenty-Four

Chapter Twenty-Three - Taking Breath		
11	Why had John jumped up so quickly to get the milk when he'd seen the time?	'If Mr Dixon had gone along to Holly Howe to ask what had happened...mother would have been bound to think that something had gone wrong.' He didn't want anyone to worry mother and make her too interested in what exactly they had been up to. He knew she wouldn't have been very happy if she knew they'd been out all night with Roger AND left Titty home alone on the island! He would have had a lot of explaining to do.
12	Why did Roger nearly spill the beans to Mrs Dixon about what they'd been up to?	It had been so exciting; he wanted them to know what they'd done and how he'd been a real part of it. He was desperate to tell anyone about it. It was the first time it had happened to him.
13	'They went down the field with the hearts of those who have had to cross some rather thin ice'. What does the author mean?	They had so very nearly been in trouble by not turning up on time, and they'd nearly been in trouble by telling the natives what they'd been up to. They had avoided trouble by the skin of their teeth; and by not telling all the truth.
14	'Susan was in a very native mood'. What sort of mood was she in?	She was being a bit bossy, a bit 'motherish'; a bit too thoughtful, reminding them of all the boring stuff they had to do, like washing up and other chores ; she wasn't remembering to be an explorer.
15	Why do you think Mother did not get very irate (throw a real wobbly) when John owned up to being out all night?	Mother trusted John to be sensible; she wanted her children to go off and be independent. She had let out enough information for him to know that she was actually keeping a very close eye on them and knew much of what was going on. She was very reasonable and realised they were growing up and wanted to go off and do their own thing. She knew if she made John promise anything he would stick to it, so she used that to make sure nothing like this would happen again.
16	How did Titty know the pirates on Cormorant Island were real pirates?	'Of course, real ones. They swore like anything.' Pirates swear, and these men did too, ergo, they obviously must be pirates; especially as they were burying 'treasure'.
17	What symbols did they use on the map to show Dixon's Farm?	'...a little figure and a cow.'
Chapter Twenty-Four - Grave News from Houseboat Bay		
18	What made the Amazons feel themselves again?	'...a good night's sleep...'

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Twenty-Two, Twenty-Three & Twenty-Four

19	What did John and Susan think about Titty's 'treasure'?	'Sometimes she doesn't know what has happened and what hasn't...' They didn't think it was real. They thought Titty was getting mixed up with what really happened and what happened in her imagination as a pirate!
20	Why didn't they get anything extra from Dixon's Farm?	'We'd hardly said good morning to Mrs Dixon before she said we ought never to have touched the houseboat...she didn't give us any cake or molasses. Not even an apple...' Mrs Dixon thought they had been involved in something involving the houseboat, despite their protestations; so she didn't feel like giving them anything extra!
21	What made them think something was going on in Houseboat Bay?	'That's the third boat I've seen go into Houseboat Bay...there's a motor launch going in now with a lot of people on it...something's happening in Houseboat Bay...boats going in one after another.'
22	Why has the author referred to the events in Houseboat Bay over a whole page?	To build up anticipation of what was to come. To make the reader curious and want to read on. To emphasise how important these events are going to be for the storyline (and the children).
23	Why was John so interested in Houseboat Bay?	'I suppose he's been telling them all that we have been touching his beastly houseboat.' I wonder what <i>is</i> happening...Don't think about him...' He didn't like the way they'd been accused of fiddling with the houseboat when they hadn't; and that he'd not been listened to when he'd gone to try and talk to the Captain. He couldn't stop thinking about how unfair it was for them to get a bad reputation when it wasn't them!
24	Why did the policeman struggle with his coat?	'...until at last he got out of it a big red handkerchief, with which he mopped his face.'
25	Why were Peggy and Nancy able to speak to the policeman so rudely?	'His mother used to be mother's nurse, and she was our nurse too when we were very young...He isn't afraid of anybody except his mother...and us, of course.' They knew him well; had been brought up knowing about him from his mother so his policeman's uniform didn't make them respect him, or be afraid of him.
26	How was it known that the houseboat was broken into; after all Uncle Jim was still away?	'Someone else saw those lights too...The motorman who knew that Uncle Jim was away. So in the morning he went to see and found the cabin door swinging open and the whole place upside down.'

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Twenty-Two, Twenty-Three & Twenty-Four

27	Why was Uncle Jim so upset about the burglary?	'They've taken his old cabin trunk...the book he's been writing all summer...' They'd stolen his book; not anything else. He'd spent hours on writing that book; put all his effort into writing that book; and now it was gone (this was in the days before computers. He wouldn't have had another copy.
28	Why couldn't the girls tell their Uncle that it wasn't the Swallows on the houseboat?	'...because you were up the Amazon River when we saw the light in his ship, but Peggy nudged me just in time and I remembered that we were in bed that night so I shut up.' They weren't supposed to have been out that night in the boat; they were supposed to have been home in bed, asleep! They'd been on their way to the island where Titty was on her own when they'd seen the light; they'd been marooned on the island when Titty stole their boat; if you remember they had to rush back early the next morning when Susan, Roger and John returned so that it looked like they had been in their bedroom all night!
29	Why did Nancy turn very red?	'He saw us when we sailed up the lake to see where you went, and he thought it was us who put that firework on his cabin roof.' She was so embarrassed; it was their fault! If they hadn't put the firework on their uncle's roof and let it off because they were fed up with their uncle working then he wouldn't be blaming the Swallows now. She felt ashamed; that the Swallows were being blamed when they should have been blamed.

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Twenty-Five, Twenty-Six & Twenty-Seven

Chapter Twenty-Five - Captain Flint gets the Black Spot		
1	Why did Captain Flint have assegais and tomahawks?	'They were relics of Captain Flint's travels...' They were souvenirs.
2	Why did Captain Flint throw, 'desperately' the elephant out of the window?	It was broken too badly to be mended. It reminded him of one of his travels. Everything on this boat had meaning for him and he was very upset that someone had come aboard and thrown his stuff around so carelessly and maliciously. He was 'desperate' because he was just too upset at the loss of the one thing that meant so much to him - his book.
3	Why did the thieves take the box, after all there was all sorts of other stuff around they could have taken?	'...he took the box simply because it was heavy and he couldn't open it.' Because the box was locked the thief assumed that there must have been something valuable in there and so took it; it was valuable for Captain Flint - his book - but it wasn't the valuables that the thief had thought it might be full of.
4	What was the title that Captain Flint had given his book?	'...Mixed Moss by 'A Rolling Stone'.'
5	Why was Captain Flint so sure it was the Swallows who had done it?	'...those nieces of mine had nothing to do with it. They do play the game, and they'd never have wrecked my cabin for me. But that boy. I didn't like his lying to me about his firework on my cabin roof. Boys are capable of anything...even good ones. I was a bad one myself...' He believed that the Amazons knew the rules with him and certainly wouldn't have messed up the cabin. However he knew how naughty and horrible boys could be as he'd been pretty naughty himself when young so he could believe that John did it all.
6	Why did Nancy row away from the houseboat so fast?	'...anxious to show the Swallows that she was holding no parley with the enemy...' She knew the others would be watching and wanted them to realise that she was not chatting or being too friendly with Captain Flint.
7	Why did he set off after Nancy so quickly?	'Whatever happened, he must see the boy at once and put things right.' He realised what he'd done, falsely accusing John and so setting the police onto him; now he had to see him to apologise and explain and get his forgiveness.

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Twenty-Five, Twenty-Six & Twenty-Seven

Chapter Twenty-Six - He Makes Peace and Declares War		
8	How did the children work out that Nancy was being chased?	'And she rowing fit to bust...not she. He's giving chase.' The fact that she was rowing so fast gave them the idea that she was being chased; especially as Captain Flint was following her in his boat.
9	What told the children that Captain Flint was not mad at them?	'His voice was mild.' He didn't sound angry at all.
10	Why was there 'a most unpleasant lump in Captain John's throat'?	'He found that it was almost more upsetting to have things put right than it had been when they went wrong.' He was so relieved that the Captain didn't now believe it was him and was apologising because he'd got the wrong end of the stick that he was almost in tears with relief.
11	Why did Captain Flint say: 'I've been paid for it in a way'?	If he hadn't have sent John away believing he was the one who'd set off the firework, then he'd have listened to the message and his book would not have been stolen.
12	Why did Titty say that she wished they had sunk the houseboat?	She was John's sister, so being loyal, what upset John upset her. She is a bit of a passionate child, all hot and cold; she doesn't see the calm way only the extremes.
13	Why did Captain Flint agree now to have a war between them all?	'I'll do anything I can to make up. I've wasted my own summer, writing a book, and I've wasted some of yours too...I've got nothing else to do now and I'll make up for lost time.' He was sorry now that he'd wasted so much time being bad-tempered and sending his nieces away. Now he had nothing better to do, so he had the time and was willing.
14	Why did Captain Flint want his book back?	'All the same, I'd like to get it back. You've no idea what a job it is writing a book. Keeping a log is bad enough.' Since he'd put so much time and effort into writing it he wanted it back so that he could see the results of all his effort.
15	What do the Amazons mean when they say they were in 'bed properly'?	It means that is where they were supposed to be but weren't! Everyone thought that they were in bed but actually they were sailing down to take the island.
16	Why did Captain Flint row 'as if he were still racing after Nancy'?	He really wanted to get his book back and from what Titty said there might be a chance to just find it again himself, which would be great.
Chapter - Twenty-Seven - The Battle in Houseboat Bay		
17	Why did the Amazons wake up first?	'...because for some time they had been sleeping in a house, and had not grown accustomed...to the early morning sunlight through the white tent walls.'

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Twenty-Five, Twenty-Six & Twenty-Seven

18	What was the boarding plan?	'Our plan will be to reach into the bay, and then come head to wind one on each side of him...He'll go for one lot of us. He can't go for both. The others'll get aboard and take him in the rear.' The Swallows and Amazons would approach the houseboat from the same direction but then split up and go on either side of the houseboat and both board at the same time. Captain Flint could only then attack one team and the other could attack from behind.
19	Why were the children not terrified when the Captain used the cannon?	"It's only the wad," shouted Nancy.' They knew he didn't have cannonball; the splash in the water was only the plug he put in on top of the gunpowder. They had also met him and knew that he was going to play fairly with them. Cannons with balls would not be fair playing!
20	Why, once they'd caught the Captain, could they not take him to the plank via the cabin roof?	"Cabin roof won't bear me," said the prisoner.' The cabin roof wasn't made for walking on, so it wasn't safe for Captain Flint to walk across - it could give way and he'd get hurt and the cabin would be damaged.
21	What did they intend to use for the Captain to walk the plank?	'...there was a springboard, from which, on happier days, the owner of the houseboat was accustomed to take his morning dive.' It was a diving board!
22	Why was Captain Flint laughing so much?	'Roger, the boy, had picked up the big sun helmet, and put it on, and the whole of his head was inside it.' Roger had put on the Captain's hat but it was much too big and had covered his entire head! It would have looked very funny!
23	Why did John and Susan not put their hands up at first for making the Captain walk the plank?	'I think we ought to give him a chance...untie his arms, and let him swim for it.' They were uneasy about throwing him off the houseboat with his hands tied - it was dangerous and he could drown. They wanted to play fairly and this was unfair playing. That's why John said about untying his arms.
24	How good a player was the Captain?	A good player; he shook on the plank; he swayed around when blindfolded; he pretended his legs couldn't support him when he had to stand up. He made it fun and more real for the children.
25	What, from the feast, did the parrot like best?	'The parrot had a bite of almost everything, but seemed to like lump sugar best.'

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Twenty-Five, Twenty-Six & Twenty-Seven

26	Why did Captain Flint open his mouth and shut it again?	'He looked hard at Nancy Blackett, and then at a jampot on a shelf, in which there was a single green feather...' He realised that the Amazons had stolen his feathers for their arrows.
27	Why did Titty not intend to go fishing on the next day?	'I'm going treasure-hunting.' She intended to go and have another hunt for the treasure she heard being left on Cormorant Island. She wanted to find it and prove it herself right.
28	Why did the children have to get back?	"Our harbour lights are not lit"... "We must get back before dark." They had to get back to the island while it was still light as the landing lights were not lit and without them they could not enter the secret harbour safely.

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Twenty-Eight, Twenty-Nine, Thirty & Thirty-One

Chapter Twenty-Eight - The Treasure on Cormorant Island		
1	Why would Titty not have been allowed to go off with Roger by herself?	'...she knew that if there had been a strong wind she and Roger would not have been allowed to go off in the Swallow by themselves, without the captain or the mate.'
2	Why was Titty so eager to get away?	"Somebody may get it first." She was worried that the thieves would return for the treasure before she could get there and find it herself.
3	Why did the children catch minnows, after all they were going off proper fishing with the Captain later?	They needed them for bait for the bigger fish, if you remember from much earlier in the book.
4	Why did Titty need a pickaxe?	'The treasure may be fathoms deep.' She thought she might have to do some digging to find it, after all she heard the sound of moving stones and pebbles on that night.
5	What did Titty think the cormorants were doing?	"They're guarding the treasure," said Titty.'
6	Why did Captain Flint not wave back?	'They waved, but he was rowing with his back to them, and at the other side of the lake.' He could not see them, he had his back to them, and other things on his mind!
7	Why did Titty watch the boat for a while once they'd landed?	'...watching her ship, which rode quietly at the end of the long painter, clear of all danger.' It wasn't just her boat; it belonged to all of them. She had to make sure it was secure, wouldn't float off; and that it was safe, wouldn't scrape against rocks.
8	Why was it difficult to walk on the island?	'The rocks stuck up at all angles. There were deep clefts between them, big enough to take a foot and small enough to make it difficult to get the foot out again. Then there were lots of loose stones which slipped all ways when you trod on them.'
9	What sort of bones did they find on the island?	'It's the kingfisher's nest...those are the bones of minnows he's eaten. Not pirate bones at all.' Tiny ones.
10	Why did the pipe make a difference to Titty?	'Even Titty had begun to think that perhaps she must have dreamed of the pirates landing here...but now she had in her hand a solid proof that someone had been here besides the cormorants and the kingfisher.'

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Twenty-Eight, Twenty-Nine, Thirty & Thirty-One

11	Why did she know that the treasure must be near by?	'They didn't go far away, because I heard them banging about all the time.' They didn't go far away as she heard them all the time they were on the island; their voices didn't ever fade as if they were going away.
12	What did she find when she moved the big stone?	'...a black corner of iron that showed under the stone she had moved.'
Chapter Twenty-Nine - Two Sorts of Fish		
13	Why did Titty and Roger not have to row across the lake to tell the others what they had found?	'The whaling party had decided it had done enough whaling, and was on its way home.' Susan thought the two had been on their own long enough, and the Captain suggested finding them and giving them a tow home.
14	Why did they stick a wooden fish in the hole the chest came out of?	Titty had heard the robber say: 'We'll come fishing and catch something worth having.' So Captain Flint carved a wooden fish as a joke to annoy the thieves when they came to collect the chest.
15	Why did Captain Flint tell the children never to write a book?	'Never any of you start writing books. It isn't worth it. This summer has been harder work for me than all the thirty years of knocking up and down that went before it.' He'd found it really hard work; harder than anything he'd ever done before.
16	What did Titty say she wanted above anything else?	'You did say that you were going to bring me back a parrot...and there isn't anything in the world I'd rather have.' A parrot - a green one.
17	Where did Captain Flint go off to?	'I must go off at once to tell the police to stop making inquiries.'
18	Why did Titty volunteer to steer the Swallow, sitting in it on her own?	'...now, when everybody knew she had been right, just for a minute or two she did not want to do any talking.' She was so pleased that what she heard had led to finding the chest; and that what she had said had happened HAD happened; she didn't want to talk to the others as if it hadn't happened. She wanted to wallow in her being right, and her finding the chest. She wanted to sit there with a big smile on her face!
19	Why did Roger think it was good that there were no sharks in Shark Bay?	He realised if there had been sharks then Captain Flint would not be alive still, and he wouldn't have a chance of getting the monkey he promised him!

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Twenty-Eight, Twenty-Nine, Thirty & Thirty-One

20	Why did they eat with fingers that night?	'There are a lot of bones in fresh-water sharks...fingers were better than forks at pulling them out.' It was easier to pick all the bones out with their fingers than with forks.
21	Why did they not change the name of the island Titty found the treasure on?	"Oh, look here...we call it Cormorant Island too. And treasure is only there sometimes, but cormorants are there always.' The Amazons called it Cormorant Island as well; they didn't want to upset them, so they came up with the a compromise (the x on the map for the treasure).
22	Why did Titty get mixed up with what Captain Flint wrote on the label attached to the parrot cage?	She thought he meant life with a lower-case 'l' and knew she had not saved his life, while he meant life with a capital letter meaning his book in which he had written all about his life.
23	What were the two favourite ideas they had for the following year?	'Everybody liked the idea of the shaggy hill ponies to carry the explorers' packs. But then, everybody liked the idea of sailing to the Baltic.'
24	Why did Captain Flint decide to leave?	'...but isn't it about time some of you people went to bed?' He was thinking in an uncle-ish fashion and thought that the children ought to be in bed as it was so late.
Chapter Thirty - The Storm		
25	What did the change in the weather remind the children?	'...there came a sudden change of weather to remind them that the summer too was near its end.' Their holiday was nearly over; they would have to go back to their normal life and be proper well-behaved children.
26	How did Roger react to the storm?	"He's firing! He's going to fire again!" He was back in the battle of Houseboat Bay...' He had been dreaming about the battle in Houseboat Bay and the thunder was the sound of the cannon going off.
27	Why did Nancy get up?	"To bring some firewood in...Don't you remember the last time it rained and all the wood got wet and we couldn't get our fire to light?"
28	Why was John ashamed?	'Then, ashamed that he had not remembered them earlier, John thought of the boats.' He had only been thinking about the tents and not what the storm, with its wind, was doing to the boats. Something terrible could have happened to them.

Swallows and Amazons - Chapters Twenty-Eight, Twenty-Nine, Thirty & Thirty-One

Chapter Thirty-One - The Sailors' Return		
29	Why did everyone head for the island that morning?	It had been a huge storm. They were all concerned for the children and their safety.
30	Why did Nancy snort when Captain Flint referred to them as 'children'?	Because the children, in their adventures, did not think of themselves as children but as adventurers and castaways; after a night like that when they had spent hours talking about their adventures on the high sea they didn't want to just be called 'children'.