

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

Chapter One - The Peak in Darien

1	Why did Roger not run straight across the field?
2	What did his brother, John, think about steamships?
3	How did Roger know who the telegram was from?
4	Why, for a moment, did Roger want to run straight at his mother?
5	When had the children first found their way to Darien?
6	Why do you think he had to give the telegram to John, and not to Susan, or Titty?
7	What same idea had come to all four children that first evening when they had gazed over the lake?
8	When might they have been content with pottering about the bay in the rowing boat?
9	Why did they eat their bread and marmalade in silence?
10	Why was there no room on the back of the telegram in the end?

Chapter Two - Making Ready

11	Why had Mother made the tents when their father hadn't even given permission and they were still waiting for his answer?
12	What did any camping site need to enable the children to put up their tents
13	Why was it important for them to be careful to keep the edges of their groundsheets inside the tents?
14	Why did mother say rugs were not good enough to sleep on?
15	Why do you think that mother wanted to go out with them in the boat the first time they went?
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?
17	What are cleats?
18	Why did John say that mother didn't need to pretend to be Queen Elizabeth anymore?
19	Why did Susan make Titty and Roger crouch on the floor of the boat? So what is the boom?
20	What was similar about the way John was sailing and Roger in the field the previous day?
21	What was the Susan's chief task? How do you know?

Chapter Three - The Voyage to the Island

22	Why was there very little room in the Swallow when they had finished loading her?
23	Why was Titty's idea such a good one?
24	Had they got everything that was on their list? What would have been the problem not having the item they forgot?
25	What did John do to make sure he took no risks?
26	Why was John glad that the wind was only light?
27	Why did the boat they saw look so odd?
28	How do we know for sure that their father is in the Navy?
29	What made the children so sure the man on the houseboat was a pirate?
30	Why did all the traffic on the boat not bother the children? Where had they decided they were?

Swallows & Amazons - part two - chapters four, five & six

Chapter Four - The Hidden Harbour

1	What were John and Susan's different ideas about what to do first?
2	Why did they want a flat piece of ground?
3	How did they know somebody had been on the island before them and intended to come back?
4	Why was the rope tying up the tents not made too taut, but allowed to sag a little?
5	Why did they realise that mother's tent design was good for the island?
6	Why, when they were lighting the fire, did they not use the sticks that had been left ready?
7	Why was John unhappy with the landing place of the Swallow?
8	Why was John so determined to find a better harbour for the Swallow?
9	Why did Titty point out that the new harbour was a perfect place to hide?
10	Why was Titty sad?
11	How did they eat the eggs and the rice pudding?

Chapter Five - First Night on the Island

12	Why did John think the big pine tree should have a flagstaff on top of it?
13	How was John going to get the small rope for the lantern?
14	Why didn't they show the natives the way to their harbour?
15	Why did Susan not want them to go to the new harbour?
16	What did the children have to promise before they were allowed the two lanterns for the tents?
17	Why did they have to keep the milk cool during the day?
18	Why was mother so sure that Christopher Columbus took his own pillow on his voyages?
19	Why is Titty now so sure the man on the houseboat really is a pirate?

Chapter Six - Island Life

20	Why did the day begin early for the children?
21	Why did they have to dry their seats first before they could sit down in the Swallow?
22	What did the other children do while Susan was cooking the breakfast?
23	What was it that they saw on the houseboat that told them the man on it was a pirate?
24	Why didn't John want to continue talking about the cannon?
25	Why did Roger not tack up the field this morning to his mother?
26	Why had John 'very nearly stopped and knocked' at the door?
27	Why, on the way back, did the Swallow 'fairly race' to the island?
28	How long had it taken to go and see mother? How do you know?
29	What is scurvy? What do you need to prevent it? So what might it be?
30	Why did Titty wish they had a tame cormorant?

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?
2	Why did Titty pick up a stone from the bottom?
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'?
4	Were the worms to be used to catch the perch?
5	Why did the children need a saucepan half full of water? What does bait mean?
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'?
7	Why did the lines get tangled? What was the problem?
8	How do you think Roger felt when he realised that he had something big on the end of his line?
9	Why was the cleaning a dreadful business and who for?
10	What does careening mean? You should be able to deduce it from its context.
11	Why did they find it hard to give a name to the island?

Chapter Eight - Skull and Cross-bones

12	Why was Roger 'squirming in the hands of the mate'?
13	Why were the children so interested by the little boat?
14	Why did Titty draw 'a long breath that nearly choked her'?
15	Why did John spread them around the island?
16	What did the children decide about the 'pirates' hauling up and putting down their flag?
17	How did Captain John know that the girls on the little boat could steer really well? What is the 'wake'?
18	What did John really mean by saying that they should have a 'pemmican day'?
19	How did John know that he was not steering as well as the girl steering the Amazon?
20	Why do you think the man on the houseboat shook his fist at them?

Chapter Nine - The Arrow with the Green Feather

21	Why was it late when John woke? There are two reasons.
22	'...I fettled you up a baking.' What does this mean? What did Mrs Dixon do?
23	What was the grave news he intended to tell the other children?
24	Why did the 'eggs and bread and butter and tea put a stop to talking'?
25	Why did Titty say, 'It's begun...'? What did she think had begun?
26	Why did they think the arrow came from the retired pirate?
27	How did they know that someone else was on the island?
28	'We'll comb the whole island...' What does John mean for them to do?
29	How did Roger know that somebody had been there?
30	Why was it lucky that John made them go flat on their faces?

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?
2	Why did the Amazons point their bows at the ground?
3	Why might it have been a near thing if it had come to a fight?
4	What did Susan work out when she realised that the Amazons had taken their boat?
5	Why had the Amazons got green parrot feathers?
6	Why did the Amazons say the island was their's?
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?
8	Why did Ruth have to change her name to Nancy?
9	What was the problem with Uncle Jim this year?
10	Why did the Amazons like it that Titty said that their uncle must be a retired pirate?
11	What had prevented the Amazons from being allies yesterday?
12	Why wasn't it an alliance that the Amazons wanted?
Chapter Eleven - In Alliance	
13	What was different about the Amazon from the Swallow?
14	Why did the Amazons have the barrel on board?
15	Why do you think the author writes about tying the barrel to the oars so carefully?
16	Why did John not want to ask the Amazons about the markings for the harbour?
17	Why did Nancy not seem to see Roger and Titty as they handed her a mug and the toffee? How do we know?
18	Why does toffee 'not help talking'?
19	Why is Uncle Jim so bad-tempered exactly?
20	Why do you think that the Amazons let off that firework on the houseboat?
21	Why did Nancy suggest they try to capture each other's ship?
22	Why did John only ask Nancy about the harbour markings when everybody else was busy?
Chapter Twelve - Leading Lights	
23	Why did John intend to put the lanterns up in the harbour?
24	Why did John not plan to put one of the lights in the fork of the tree?
25	Why did John overrule Susan's statement that Roger should be in bed?
26	Why did John begin to wonder if he could get them home (if he'd bitten off more than he could chew)?
27	What is the unusual use the author has for the colon?
28	Why was John so delighted?

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'?
2	Why was Roger allowed to row for the milk?
3	Why was Roger and Titty's course 'not a very straight one'?
4	What did John decide they could be since there was 'no war to bother about'?
5	Why did they intend to 'bring back a fresh store of firewood'? Why couldn't they just fetch it from around the island?
6	Why is it always 'better to make a fire on the shore than among the trees'?
7	Why were the children not worried about getting lost on the way back?
8	What is a 'patteran'?
9	Why was the old man 'as wrinkled as a walnut and as brown...'?
10	Why did the old man say, 'You'll see better than bats in a minute'?
11	Why did all the Swallows jump up 'as if they had sat on a pin'?
12	Why, when the Swallows 'shrank back' did they not look away?

Chapter Fourteen - The Letter from Captain Flint

13	Why was Titty annoyed as she left the island?
14	Define 'galumphing'.
15	Why was it a good thing that they hadn't seen the patteran?
16	Why has the author described Susan lighting the fire and the kettle so carefully?
17	Why did the mate say that 'It's a good thing it's so calm...'
18	Why did it take a long time for the Swallow to be neat and tidy again?
19	Why did Roger call Mr Turner a 'beast'?
20	Why was John so gloomy?

Chapter Fifteen - Captain John visits Captain Flint

21	What was John listening for when he woke up in the morning?
22	Why was a mate's job not an easy one?
23	Why were the Swallows so sure that the Amazons would have wanted Captain Flint to know the natives' message?
24	Why did Captain John go when he was so obviously reluctant to?
25	How was it obvious the man was leaving the houseboat?
26	Why would the man not let John speak?
27	Why did John not tell the man that it was all the Amazons' fault?
28	Why did John go off by himself when he got back to the island?

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'?
2	Why, when they saw the natives, did they rush back to put their camp in order?
3	What was Vicky's birthday present from her mother?
4	Why did Vicky like the elephant best?
5	Why did Roger want to show his swimming off at once?
6	Had mother really just come to celebrate Vicky's birthday?
7	Why was there silence when mother said that Mrs Blackett had said that 'her tomboys lead him a terrible life'?
8	Why did John suggest that Titty and Roger whistle for a wind?

Chapter Seventeen - A Fair Wind

9	Why did they make so many plans that evening?
10	Which wind would the Swallows prefer?
11	What were the two things that John said were important?
12	What advantage do the Swallows have over the Amazons?
13	Why could they not try to take the Amazons' boat during the day?
14	Why did Titty have to stay on the island?
15	Why did Titty whistle 'Spanish Ladies over and over again'?
16	What happened after breakfast to make the children happier?
17	Once the lantern was in place what did John make sure of?
18	How would Titty know when to light the lanterns for the harbour?
19	Why was John not too bothered that the Amazons might have got a head start on them?
20	Why did Susan put the milk in the harbour?

Chapter Eighteen - Robinson Crusoe and Man Friday

21	Why did she move Susan's haybag?
22	What helped to make her feel that she was really alone on the island?
23	What had spoiled <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> for her?
24	What did she do as there were no goats?
25	How is a dipper different to a cormorant?
26	Why did Man Friday sniff at the butter?
27	Where had mother been born?
28	Why did mother want Titty to go back with her?
29	Why could Titty not see through the telescope properly?

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

Chapter Nineteen - The Amazon River

1	Why would they be taken for a fisherman?
2	Why had they cruised in and out of the islands in the morning?
3	What were the advantages of anchoring 'close under' an island?
4	Why could they not turn the day into an ordinary picnic?
5	What is a waste of an island?
6	Why did they want the sun to set so much?
7	Why was it a problem when Roger rowed?
8	Why didn't John have to row?
9	What was John's dilemma?
10	Why did John lower the sail himself?
11	How did the children know that the Amazons had hidden their boat up the river?

Chapter Twenty - Titty Alone

12	Why did Titty move all over the island after her mother had gone?
13	Why did Titty stop writing in the log?
14	Why did thinking about Captain Flint bother her?
15	Why didn't Titty swim to see the light?
16	What did Titty think when she heard the sound of a boat?
17	Why was it better for Titty to have a torch?
18	Why was she feeling bad?
19	What puzzled the girls (the Amazons)?
20	Why did she feel it was her fault that the island had been taken?
21	What was the problem once Titty had rowed the Amazon out?
22	What did she have to check before throwing the anchor out?
23	What did the unknown men do with the box?

Chapter Twenty-one - Swallows in the Dark

24	What made Roger panic?
25	Why did Susan say it was no good steering?
26	'Dowse your glim', explain what this means.
27	How did the Swallows feel now they were out at sea again?
28	Why was John so silent after the chocolate?
29	Why did John decide to land on the private island?
30	What went through Susan and John's minds as they sailed past the farm?

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?
- 2 Why was there a blanket flapping in the wind?
- 3 Why did Titty say 'Fine', when she meant 'Aye, aye'?
- 4 Why was John so cautious about the blanket?
- 5 Why could Titty not see clearly what the Amazons were doing?
- 6 Why does Captain Nancy say, 'I could have swallowed the anchor'?
- 7 What hadn't Nancy realised about the Swallow's plan that she thought was so great?
- 8 What was the Amazons' plan?
- 9 What does Peggy mean: 'It was a whole one and a half'?
- 10 What two reasons did Nancy have for being so generous about the chocolate Titty had eaten?

Chapter Twenty-Three - Taking Breath

- 11 Why had John jumped up so quickly to get the milk when he'd seen the time?
- 12 Why did Roger nearly spill the beans to Mrs Dixon about what they'd been up to?
- 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?
- 14 'Susan was in a very native mood'. What sort of mood was she in?
- 15 Why do you think Mother did not get very irate (throw a real wobbly) when John owned up to being out all night?
- 16 How did Titty know the pirates on Cormorant Island were real pirates?
- 17 What symbols did they use on the map to show Dixon's Farm?

Chapter Twenty-Four - Grave News from Houseboat Bay

- 18 What made the Amazons feel themselves again?
- 19 What did John and Susan think about Titty's 'treasure'?
- 20 Why didn't they get anything extra from Dixon's Farm?
- 21 What made them think something was going on in Houseboat Bay?
- 22 Why has the author referred to the events in Houseboat Bay over a whole page?
- 23 Why was John so interested in Houseboat Bay?
- 24 Why did the policeman struggle with his coat?
- 25 Why were Peggy and Nancy able to speak to the policeman so rudely?
- 26 How was it known that the houseboat was broken into; after all Uncle Jim was still away?
- 27 Why was Uncle Jim so upset about the burglary?
- 28 Why couldn't the girls tell their Uncle that it wasn't the Swallows on the houseboat?
- 29 Why did Nancy turn very red?

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

Chapter Twenty-Five - Captain Flint gets the Black Spot

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| 1 | Why did Captain Flint have assegais and tomahawks? |
| 2 | Why did Captain Flint throw, 'desperately' the elephant out of the window? |
| 3 | Why did the thieves take the box, after all there was all sorts of other stuff around they could have taken? |
| 4 | What was the title that Captain Flint had given his book? |
| 5 | Why was Captain Flint so sure it was the Swallows who had done it? |
| 6 | Why did Nancy row away from the houseboat so fast? |
| 7 | Why did he set off after Nancy so quickly? |

Chapter Twenty-Six - He Makes Peace and Declares War

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| 8 | How did the children work out that Nancy was being chased? |
| 9 | What told the children that Captain Flint was not mad at them? |
| 10 | Why was there 'a most unpleasant lump in Captain John's throat'? |
| 11 | Why did Captain Flint say: 'I've been paid for it in a way'? |
| 12 | Why did Titty say that she wished they had sunk the houseboat? |
| 13 | Why did Captain Flint agree now to have a war between them all? |
| 14 | Why did Captain Flint want his book back? |
| 15 | What do the Amazons mean when they say they were in 'bed properly'? |
| 16 | Why did Captain Flint row 'as if he were still racing after Nancy'? |

Chapter - Twenty-Seven - The Battle in Houseboat Bay

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| 17 | Why did the Amazons wake up first? |
| 18 | What was the boarding plan? |
| 19 | Why were the children not terrified when the Captain used the cannon? |
| 20 | Why, once they'd caught the Captain, could they not take him to the plank via the cabin roof? |
| 21 | What did they intend to use for the Captain to walk the plank? |
| 22 | Why was Captain Flint laughing so much? |
| 23 | Why did John and Susan not put their hands up at first for making the Captain walk the plank? |
| 24 | How good a player was the Captain? |
| 25 | What, from the feast, did the parrot like best? |
| 26 | Why did Captain Flint open his mouth and shut it again? |
| 27 | Why did Titty not intend to go fishing on the next day? |
| 28 | Why did the children have to get back? |

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

Chapter Twenty-Eight - The Treasure on Cormorant Island

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| 1 | Why would Titty not have been allowed to go off with Roger by herself? |
| 2 | Why was Titty so eager to get away? |
| 3 | Why did the children catch minnows, after all they were going off proper fishing with the Captain later? |
| 4 | Why did Titty need a pickaxe? |
| 5 | What did Titty think the cormorants were doing? |
| 6 | Why did Captain Flint not wave back? |
| 7 | Why did Titty watch the boat for a while once they'd landed? |
| 8 | Why was it difficult to walk on the island? |
| 9 | What sort of bones did they find on the island? |
| 10 | Why did the pipe make a difference to Titty? |
| 11 | Why did she know that the treasure must be near by? |
| 12 | What did she find when she moved the big stone? |

Chapter Twenty-Nine - Two Sorts of Fish

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| 13 | Why did Titty and Roger not have to row across the lake to tell the others what they had found? |
| 14 | Why did they stick a wooden fish in the hole the chest came out of? |
| 15 | Why did Captain Flint tell the children never to write a book? |
| 16 | What did Titty say she wanted above anything else? |
| 17 | Where did Captain Flint go off to? |
| 18 | Why did Titty volunteer to steer the Swallow, sitting in it on her own? |
| 19 | Why did Roger think it was good that there were no sharks in Shark Bay? |
| 20 | Why did they eat with fingers that night? |
| 21 | Why did they not change the name of the island Titty found the treasure on? |
| 22 | Why did Titty get mixed up with what Captain Flint wrote on the label attached to the parrot cage? |
| 23 | What were the two favourite ideas they had for the following year? |
| 24 | Why did Captain Flint decide to leave? |

Chapter Thirty - The Storm

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| 25 | What did the change in the weather remind the children? |
| 26 | How did Roger react to the storm? |
| 27 | Why did Nancy get up? |
| 28 | Why was John ashamed? |

Chapter Thirty-One - The Sailors' Return

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| 29 | Why did everyone head for the island that morning? |
| 30 | Why did Nancy snort when Captain Flint referred to them as 'children'? |