

Comprehension Worksheet

MEDDLESOME MATTY

1. Oh, how one ugly trick has spoiled
The sweetest and the best!
Matilda, though a pleasant child,
One grievous fault possessed,
Which, like a cloud before the skies,
Hid all her better qualities.
2. Sometimes, she'd lift the teapot lid
To peep at what was in it;
Or tilt, the kettle, if you did
But turn your back a minute.
In vain you told her not to touch,
Her trick of meddling grew so much.
3. Her grand mamma went out one day,
And, by mistake, she laid
Her spectacles and snuffbox gay,
Too near the little maid;
"Ah! well," thought she, "I'll try them on,
As soon as grand mamma is gone."
4. Forthwith, she placed upon her nose
The glasses large and wide;
And looking round, as I suppose,
The snuffbox, too, she spied.
"Oh, what a pretty box is this!
I'll open it," said little miss.
5. "I know that grandmamma would say,
'Don't meddle with it, dear;'
But then she's far enough away,
And no one else is near;
Beside, what can there be amiss
In opening such a box as this?"
6. So, thumb and finger went to work
To move the stubborn lid;
And, presently, a mighty jerk
The mighty mischief did;
For all at once, Ah! Woeful case!
The snuff came puffing in her face.
7. Poor eyes, and nose, and mouth, and
chin
A dismal sight presented;
And as the snuff got further in,
Sincerely she repented.
In vain she ran about for ease,
She could do nothing else but sneeze.
8. She dashed the spectacles away,
To wipe her tingling eyes;
And, as in twenty bits they lay,
Her grandmamma she spies.
"Heyday! And what's the matter now?"
Cried grandmamma, with angry brow.
9. Matilda, smarting with the pain,
And tingling still, and sore,
Made many a promise to refrain
From meddling evermore;
And 't is a fact, as I have heard,
She ever since has kept her word.

Exercises

1. Match the meanings of the following words in bold as used in the passage.

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|---------------------|---------------------------|
| a. Qualities | wrong, faulty |
| b. Meddling | sad, sorrowful |
| c. Forthwith | smarting |
| d. Spied | traits of character |
| e. Amiss | interfering without right |
| f. Woeful | at once |
| g. Tingling | to keep from |
| h. Refrain | saw |

2. What did Matilda do?

3. How was she punished?

4. What effect did it have on her?

5. Determine the era this scene may have taken place.
