

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli**  
**Chapters 1 and 2 Comprehension Check**

**Who are the characters?**

Robin	Sir John de Bureford	Lady Maud	Brother Luke

**Use the details below to fill in the character boxes above.**

Robin's mother	Can't walk
Is a monk	Robin's father
Son of a noble family	Takes Robin to St. Mark's
Attends the Queen	Donated money to St. Mark's
Fights in a war	Whittles a boat
Writes on parchment	Speaks French and English

**Thinking Question:**

If Robin's father had not donated money to St. Mark's in the past, would the monks there still have cared for him? What facts from the story support your answer? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli**  
**Chapters 1 and 2 Vocabulary Check**

**Each sentence contains an underlined word from the story. Use the context to decide which answer choice is the best synonym or definition for the underlined word. Circle the clues in the sentence that helped you guess what the word means.**

1. He would learn how to be of service to his liege lord, how to be courteous and gentle, and, at the same time, strong of heart.  
A. angry  
B. fierce  
C. polite  
D. interested
2. Tethered in the courtyard is a jennet ready saddled with blankets whereon thou'lt ride softly.  
A. train  
B. bed  
C. pillow  
D. pony
3. The bells clamored as loudly as ever, but now the sound was associated with the regular procession of the monks going to devotions.  
A. shouted  
B. walked  
C. whispered  
D. prayed
4. Besides that portion reserved for travelers there was an almonry overflowing with the poor of London, seeking food and clothing.  
A. place where the rich get help  
B. place where the poor get help  
C. place where children play  
D. place where monks pray
5. He began to recognize sounds as he had done before, and to associate footsteps and differing gaits with the people to whom they belonged.  
A. ways of eating  
B. ways of walking  
C. ways of studying  
D. ways of riding
6. "It is somewhat awry, with the bow aslant from the stern, but it hath an air, as if it had been battling the storm."  
A. crooked  
B. perfect  
C. wet  
D. straight

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***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli  
Chapters 3 and 4 Comprehension Check**

**Number the events in the order they happened.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Robin begins making a pair of crutches.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Robin whittles a doll for a little girl.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Robin breaks the cross that he's making.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Brother Luke takes Robin fishing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Brother Luke takes Robin to the gardens.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Robin and Brother Luke write Robin's father a letter.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Robin learns to swim.

**Robin learns a lot of things at St. Mark's, and begins to grow and change during his time there. He is learning to use his body, his emotions, and his mind. What are some specific things that Robin is learning? Circle all that apply.**

- |           |          |           |
|-----------|----------|-----------|
| swimming  | painting | history   |
| skiing    | patience | anger     |
| writing   | reading  | happiness |
| whittling | sadness  | astronomy |

**Thinking Questions:**

Do you think Robin will continue to grow and learn new things? What things do you think he will learn? How will he continue to change? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How do you think Robin's life would have been different if he had never become ill and lost the use of his legs?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

***The Door in the Wall, by Marguerite De Angeli***  
**Chapters 3 and 4 Vocabulary Check**

**Word Bank**

abated - decreased in amount or intensity; lessened; faded away

acid - bitter or unpleasantly sharp in taste or smell

minced - made less severe or harsh

discouragement - being without hope or happiness

attend - to give attention

droned - made a continuous, low, humming sound

thrashing - moving wildly or violently

**Use the words from the word bank above to complete the sentences below. Use each word once.**

1. When he realized that his bicycle was broken, Jorge felt great \_\_\_\_\_, knowing that he wouldn't be able to ride in the race.
2. The fan \_\_\_\_\_ through the night, and its steady sound helped me to sleep very soundly.
3. Finally, after Father put ice on my twisted ankle and made me lie down to rest, the throbbing pain \_\_\_\_\_ and I was able to walk again.
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ smell of the campfire's smoke clung to my shirt and jacket, and it took weeks for the pungent odor to fade.
5. When Ellie saw the hurt look on Shamika's face, she wished she had \_\_\_\_\_ her words and been a little gentler and more polite.
6. Joon kept thinking about summer vacation, which was only three days away, so he was not able to \_\_\_\_\_ to his lessons.
7. When I saw the bird \_\_\_\_\_ around on the ground, beating his wings wildly but not able to fly, I knew he was badly hurt.

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***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli**  
**Chapters 5 and 6 Comprehension Check**

**Answer these questions about events in the story.**

1. Which character brings Robin the letter from his father?  
A. Brother Luke                      B. John de Bureford  
C. Sir Peter                              D. John-go-in-the-Wynd
2. What is the name of the horse that Brother Luke and John-go-in-the-Wynd share on the journey?  
A. Jenny                                  B. Jennet  
C. Bayard                                 D. Bernard
3. The travelers had to sleep outdoors in the rain after taking a wrong turn. What did Robin sleep under to stay dry?  
A. A hollow log                      B. A tent  
C. The horse                              D. A tree
4. What were the thieves at the White Hart trying to steal?  
A. The horses                            B. The leather bag  
C. The food                                D. A saddle

**Foreshadowing:**

Marguerite de Angeli uses the description of the White Hart to help the readers predict that something bad will happen. Reread the description. What details make you think that this is a bad place?

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**Thinking Question:**

On the morning that Robin leaves St. Mark's, the narrator says, "He felt sorry to leave Brother Matthew and all the others who had been so good to him, but it was exciting to start out on the long journey." What do you think Robin will miss most about St. Mark's? What do you think his new life will be like?

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***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli**  
**Chapters 5 and 6 Vocabulary Check**

**Using the Context:** The following passage from the story contains a lot of unfamiliar words. If you use the context, you can guess what each word means. For each underlined word in the story, write a guess in the blank for what each word means. Then match the underlined words with their definitions below.

Passage:

One Friday toward the end of September the monks of the choir stood practicing in the chantry \_\_\_\_\_. Standing by the lectern \_\_\_\_\_ to turn the pages of the missal \_\_\_\_\_ was Robin in scarlet cassock \_\_\_\_\_ and white linen cotta \_\_\_\_\_. They were singing the Sanctus, and had just come to the Amen when the verger \_\_\_\_\_ appeared.

**Definition Matching:**

\_\_\_ 1. chantry

\_\_\_ 2. lectern

\_\_\_ 3. missal

\_\_\_ 4. cassock

\_\_\_ 5. cotta

\_\_\_ 6. verger

A. A long garment with sleeves and a close-fitting waist, worn by members of the clergy and church helpers.

B. A person acting as an assistant during church services.

C. An altar or chapel where prayers are said.

D. A book containing prayers and prayer responses.

E. A short gown, worn over a longer garment.

F. A stand for holding books or papers.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli**  
**Chapters 7 and 8 Comprehension Check**

At St. Mark's	At St. Mark's and at Lindsay	At Lindsay

**Compare and Contrast: When Robin leaves St. Mark's and goes to live at Lindsay, his life changes. Many things are different, but others are the same. Use the details from the detail bank below to complete the diagram above.**

**Detail bank:**

Robin has a chamber in the keep	Robin enjoys woodworking	Robin lives in a church
Robin lives in a castle	Brother Luke is Robin's teacher	Robin swims every day
John's mother lives nearby	Robin learns to read	Robin makes a boat
Robin learns to use crutches	Sir Peter is Robin's guardian	Robin plays with other boys

**Thinking Question**

Add two of your own details to each column above.



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***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli**  
**Chapters 9 and 10 Comprehension Check**

**When the water in the well begins to run out, Robin plans a way to get help to save Lindsay. Answer the following questions about his plan:**

1. Each of the following people has a role in Robin's plan. What role does each person play?

A. Denis

B. William the Farrier's son

C. Brother Luke

D. John-go-in-the-Wynd

E. Robin

2. Robin begins his plan by going to the house where John-go-in-the-Wynd's mother lives. What steps and paths does he take to get there?

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3. Robin is happier at the end of the book than he was in the beginning. List some reasons why he is happier. Think about ways that Robin is physically and emotionally healthier.

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**Thinking Question**

What do you think Robin's life will be like ten years after the book ends?

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***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli**  
**Chapters 9 and 10 Vocabulary Check**

**Many of the words describing Robin's life in Sir Peter's castle are unfamiliar to contemporary readers. Use the context in the story below to fill in the blanks with words from the word bank, all of which came from *The Door in the Wall*.**

**Word Bank**

portcullis - a grate made of iron or wood that can be lowered to block passage through an entryway.

yeoman - an attendant or servant in a royal household

farrier - a person who shoes horses.

armory - a place where weapons are stored.

turret - a small tower that is part of a larger castle.

lancer - a soldier on horseback, whose main weapon is a long, pointed rod.

drover - a person who herds or drives cattle or sheep.

Henri was a (1)\_\_\_\_\_. He took pleasure in his work because he loved horses, and caring for a horse's feet meant caring for the whole horse. He was headed toward his favorite fishing spot when he spotted Matthew, the (2)\_\_\_\_\_, who said that his sheep were acting strangely.

"They won't return to the castle," explained Matthew. "They're acting as if something terrible has happened."

Henri decided not to go fishing, and hurried back toward the castle. As he walked, he heard thundering feet. He turned and saw Saul, the (3)\_\_\_\_\_, galloping toward him on one of the King's horses. Saul was dressed in armor, and was carrying a long, pointed weapon with him.

"Is something amiss at the castle?" asked Henri. "Matthew says the sheep are acting strange, and that they won't return home."

"The King's (4)\_\_\_\_\_ asked me to come," said Saul. "He was keeping watch from the (5)\_\_\_\_\_ when he saw a band of travelers headed toward the castle. He lowered the (6)\_\_\_\_\_ to keep the castle safe, then went to the (7)\_\_\_\_\_ to count the bows and swords. He brought me this shield and asked me to come send the travelers on their way."

"It's a good thing I shod Daniel last week!" said Henri. "You'll be able to ride quickly today!"

"Yes," replied Saul as he rode away, "You're the best farrier around!"

***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli**  
**Enrichment Activity - A Medieval Game**

**Duck on a Rock: When Robin plays with his friends in Lindsay, he plays some games that we still play today. The boys play hide-and-seek, which children still love; and shooting-at-a-mark, which is simply target practice. Duck on a rock, though, isn't played anymore--probably because it was so dangerous! Read the following medieval version of the game, and then play the safe version.**

Medieval Version: When Robin and his friends played duck on a rock, they would have found a tree stump and set a large rock, called a drake, on top of it. Each boy would find a smaller rock, called a duck, of his own, and the boys would form a large circle around the stump. One boy, the guard, stayed next to the stump, with his duck at his feet.

When play started, the boys circling the stump would throw their ducks at the drake, trying to knock it down. When the drake fell over, the guard had to put the drake back on the stump, and then retrieve his own duck. Then he could chase the other children, who had to run to get their ducks and make it back to the circle before the guard tagged them. If the guard tagged a child, then that boy would become the guard. If not, then he'd stay the guard for another round.

1. How could kids playing Robin's version of duck on a rock have gotten hurt?

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Safe version: Put a bowling pin or stuffed animal on an overturned box. Give each player a hacky sac or other soft ball. Use the same rules as the medieval version.

2. How is this version safer?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli**  
**Writing Activity - Robin's Diary**

**In the beginning of *The Door in the Wall*, Robin's mother and father both go to serve the King and Queen; Robin becomes sick and loses the use of his legs; and Brother Luke, a stranger, comes to rescue Robin, taking him to live in an unfamiliar place. And that's just the first chapter!**

**Robin's life continues to be eventful throughout the book. List at least five other major events from Robin's life in the story. For each event, write a sentence or two to describe what you think Robin's feelings and emotions would have been at the time:**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

**Keeping a Diary**

Many people keep diaries or journals to help them deal with difficult times, and to help them remember good times. Robin didn't keep a diary, but if he had, it would have been full of stories! Choose two of the events you listed, and, pretending that you're Robin, write a diary entry for each one.

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## ***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli** **The Life of Marguerite de Angeli**

Marguerite de Angeli's life had two main focuses: her art and her family. Both were constants in a long and happy life.

Mrs. de Angeli was born Marguerite Lofft on March 14, 1889 in Lapeer, Michigan. As a child, she enjoyed singing, writing and drawing. At age 15 she got her first job--singing! She concentrated on singing and auditioned for the Oscar Hammerstein Opera Company at age 20. Her parents convinced her not to join the company, and a year later she married John Daily de Angeli, whom she had known for two years.

In 1916, John and Marguerite, along with their two sons, Jack and Arthur, moved to Detroit, Michigan. It was there that Mrs. de Angeli rediscovered her artistic talents. She took a few drawing classes and had a daughter, Nina. Then, in 1921, she met a neighbor, Maurice Bower. Mr. Bower was a professional illustrator, and he became Mrs. de Angeli's mentor and tutor. Under his guidance, her drawings improved to publishable quality. In 1922, she sold her first illustrations to a church publication.

For the next 13 years, Mrs. de Angeli concentrated on her family. The de Angelis were blessed with two more children, Ted and Maurey. Then, in 1935, Mrs. de Angeli wrote her first book, *Ted and Nina Go to the Grocery Store*. She enjoyed writing and her books were popular. She spent the rest of her life writing, with great success. Her books have won both the Newbery Medal and the Caldecott (honor) Medal, plus many other awards. *The Door in the Wall* and *Bright April* are perhaps her best-known and best-loved books. Mrs. de Angeli died on June 16, 1987. She was 98 years old.

### **Activity:**

Use the information in the above biography to create a timeline of Marguerite de Angeli's life.

***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli**  
**Life in the Middle Ages**

*The Door in the Wall* is set in the Middle Ages, during the fourteenth century. It is clear from the novel that Robin's life is very different from life in the twenty-first century. Two of the aspects of Robin's life that are different from our own are the Black Death and knighthood.

In the Middle Ages, a disease known as the Black Death, or the plague, spread through Europe, killing one third of the population. This deadly disease first appeared in 1347, and came back periodically until the 1700s. People who were sick with the plague broke out in large black spots called buboes. The buboes were swollen lymph nodes that oozed pus and blood. The characteristic markings caused by the plague gave it the names Bubonic Plague and Black Death.

There are two major explanations of where the Black Death came from. Most people believe that the illness was a plague carried by rats and passed to humans through fleabites. Some scientists, though, think that the Black Death was not caused by plague at all, but by the anthrax virus. The debate has not been settled.

Knights in the Middle Ages went through a lengthy training process. You didn't have to be of noble birth to enter into knighthood, but few poor boys could afford the equipment and training. A future knight would be taught at home until he was about seven, and then would be sent to another noble household to serve as a page. As a page, the boy would learn basic skills of knighthood while acting as a servant to his elders. Around age fourteen, the boy would become a squire, or one knight's servant. He would serve and learn from that knight until he was about twenty, at which time he himself would become a knight.

**Thinking Questions:**

Modern doctors know a lot more than medieval doctors did about how disease is spread and cured. What advice would a modern doctor give to a medieval doctor about how to lessen the death toll from an outbreak of the Black Death?

If you were a noble-born boy in the Middle Ages, what duties would you have at your age? What do you think your life would be like?

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***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli**  
**Extension Activity: Maps and Math**

**Robin, Brother Luke, and John-go-in-the-Wynd set off on a long journey to take Robin from St. Mark's to Lindsay. It was a journey that could be made in less than two hours by car, but it took Robin's group over a week.**

1. List some reasons why travel in the Middle Ages was so different from travel today.

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Marguerite de Angeli gives her readers some information to help them figure out where the fictional town of Lindsay is located:

- Lindsay is about 100 miles from St. Mark's, which is in London.
- The journey from St. Mark's to Lindsay takes 9 days.
- The travelers pass through Oxford, which they reach at the end of the fourth day of their journey.
- Lindsay is near the English/Welsh border.

The following information is not in the text, but will help you answer the questions:

- Oxford is about 50 miles northwest of London
- The Welsh border is west of both Oxford and London
- In October, the sun rises at about 8:00 a.m. in London and sets at about 7:30 p.m.

2. How far is Lindsay from Oxford?
3. How many miles do the travelers walk each day?
4. If the travelers walk for all but four sunlit hours each day, how many miles per hour do they travel?
5. If it takes the group half of one day and half of the next to get through the big forest near Lindsay, then how big is the forest?
6. Draw a map of the group's journey. Use clues from the book to put the following places on your map: London, the White Hart, Oxford, Wychwood Bec, Lindsay.

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## ***The Door in the Wall*, by Marguerite De Angeli** **Doors as Symbols**

What is a **symbol**? A symbol is something that represents something else. For example, a wedding ring is a symbol of everlasting love. Many things in everyday life can be thought of as symbols. What does each of the following common symbols represent?

1. A red light--
2. Ten candles on a cake--
3. A sign with a picture of a deer on it--
4. A string tied around a finger--
5. A checkered flag--

There are many mentions of doors in *The Door in the Wall*, starting with the title. Some of the doors are real, but most of them are symbolic.

- In the first chapter, Brother Luke tells Robin, "Thou hast only to follow the wall far enough and there will be a door in it."
- In the third chapter, Brother Luke says that he will teach Robin to read because "reading is another door in the wall."
- In the fourth chapter, Brother Luke tells Robin, "Remember, even thy crutches can be a door in the wall."
- In the seventh chapter, Sir Peter tells Robin, "If we cannot serve in one way, there is always another. If we do what we are able, a door always opens to something else."

### **Answer the questions about doors:**

1. What do you think that the doors in the book are symbols of?
2. What else in Robin's life could be compared to a door?
3. What symbolic doors did Robin's illness close to him? What doors did it open?
4. What symbolic doors did Robin open in Brother Luke's life? In John's?
5. What doors have opened in your life? What doors do you think will open later?

## ***The Door in the Wall, by Marguerite De Angeli*** **Answers**

### **Page 1**

Robin: son of a noble family, can't walk, whittles a boat

Sir John de Bureford: Robin's father, donated money to St. Mark's, fights in a war

Lady Maud: Robin's mother, attends the Queen, speaks French and English

Brother Luke: is a monk, writes on parchment, takes Robin to St. Mark's

**Thinking Question:** Answers will vary, but should mention the number of poor and sick that St. Mark's takes in and cares for.

### **Page 2**

1. c
2. d
3. a
4. b
5. b
6. a

### **Page 3**

7, 4, 2, 5, 1, 3, 6

The following should be circled: swimming, writing, whittling, patience, reading, history, happiness.

**Thinking Question:** Answers will vary, but should mention that Robin would have learned to be a knight in the household of Sir Peter de Linsdsay

### **Page 4**

1. discouragement
2. droned
3. abated
4. acrid
5. minced
6. attend
7. thrashing

### **Page 5**

1. d
2. c
3. a
4. b

**Foreshadowing:** Brother Luke says that the White Hart has “a fearsome look,” then John says, “I have a doubt whether this be a good place to stay. There are ill-seeming ruffians sitting by the fire, and the goodwife hath a slatternly look, but we have no choice.”

**Thinking Question:** Answers will vary, but should mention how kind the monks have been and that he will be learning how to be a knight.

***The Door in the Wall, by Marguerite De Angeli***  
**Answers**

**Page 6:**

Synonym choice will vary

**Matching:**

1. C
2. F
3. D
4. A
5. E
6. B

**Page 7**

At St. Marks: Robin lives in a church, Robin learns to read, Robin learns to use crutches, Robin makes a boat

At St. Mark's and at Lindsay: Brother Luke is Robin's teacher, Robin swims every day, Robin enjoys woodworking, Robin plays with the other boys

At Lindsay: Robin has a chamber in the keep, John's mother lives nearby, Robin lives in a castle, Sir Peter is Robin's guardian

**Page 8:**

1. B
2. A
3. B
4. B
5. B
6. A
7. B
8. A

**Page 9:**

1. A. Denis - Discovers that the well is running low; brings Robin clothes
1. B. William the Farrier's son - Loans Robin his clothes
1. C. Brother Luke - Drips oil into the lock, helps Robin out of the city walls
1. D. John-go-in-the-Wynd - Goes to get help from Lord Fitzhugh
1. E. Robin - Sneaks out of the city to ask John-go-in-the-Wynd to go get help
2. Robin first climbs down a steep bank and swims across the river. Then he takes a path to a field, crosses the field, and crosses a shallow stream. He walks up a steep field, then takes a path through a wide forest. Finally he finds John's mother's house.
3. Robin is physically stronger, and able to move freely using his crutches. He has learned patience and is not as angry as he was in the beginning of the book. He has also learned many skills, such as reading, writing, woodworking, and musical skills.

**Thinking Question:** Answers will vary, but should account for Robin's many skills and large group of family and friends.

***The Door in the Wall, by Marguerite De Angeli***  
**Answers**

**Page 10**

1. farrier
2. drover
3. lancer
4. yeoman
5. turret
6. portcullis
7. armory

**Page 11**

1. A rock could have hit them.
2. Hacky sacs are much softer than rocks. Getting hit by a soft ball wouldn't hurt as badly.

**Page 12**

Answers will vary. Some possible events include learning to swim, learning to read, learning to use crutches, going to live at Lindsay, saving the castle, and being reunited with his parents.

**Page 15**

1. Answers will vary. Suggested answers: There were no hotels or fast food restaurants; roads and maps were poor.
2. About 50 miles
3. 11.1 miles
4. 1.6 miles per hour
5. About 11 miles long

**Page 16**

1. A red light-- Stop
  2. Ten candles on a cake-- Tenth birthday
  3. A sign with a picture of a deer on it-- Caution: deer crossing
  4. A string tied around a finger-- Don't forget
  5. A checkered flag-- Go (used in racing)
- 
1. Opportunities or possibilities in life.
  2. Answers will vary. Whittling, friendships, religion, music are all possibilities.
  3. The chance to be a knight was taken away. The knowledge he got as St. Mark's was opened.
  4. Robin opened the chance to travel to Brother Luke, and the chance to own land to John.
  5. Answers will vary.