



Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Grade 11

Answer Key

The Perfect Tenant

I want to say, right at the start, that I have always been an exceptionally reasonable landlord. Ask anyone. My previous tenants adored me, more or less, and if a few of them left slightly earlier than their leases technically required, that was surely a matter of their own circumstances and had nothing whatsoever to do with me. I mention this only so you understand the kind of person you are dealing with before I tell you about Mrs. Alcott.

Mrs. Alcott moved into the downstairs unit in March, and I noticed almost immediately that she kept unusual hours, coming and going at times that seemed, frankly, designed to avoid me. I found this suspicious, though I could not say exactly why, and I began, purely out of diligence, keeping a small notebook of her comings and goings. By April, the notebook had several pages. I want to be clear that this was not excessive. Any responsible property owner would have done precisely the same thing.

When Mrs. Alcott filed a complaint with the city about a leaking pipe I had, if I am being generous with myself, been meaning to fix for some time, I felt this was a deeply unreasonable overreaction on her part. I had, after all, texted her three times about scheduling a repair, and it was hardly my fault that all three of those texts happened to be sent after eleven at night, when I do my best thinking. She called this harassment, which I found frankly insulting, given how reasonable I have always been.

By June, Mrs. Alcott had moved out, citing, in a letter to the property management company, my "erratic and intimidating behavior" as the primary reason. I want the record to reflect that I was shocked, genuinely shocked, by this characterization. I have reread her letter several times since, and I still cannot locate a single specific incident in it that I would personally describe as intimidating. Confusing, certainly. Unfair, without question. But intimidating? I remain, to this day, at an absolute loss.

Circle the Correct Answer

1. According to the narrator, why did he begin keeping a notebook about Mrs. Alcott?

Answer: b) He found her hours suspicious, out of what he calls diligence

2. What complaint did Mrs. Alcott file with the city?

Answer: a) About a leaking pipe the narrator had been meaning to fix

3. When did the narrator send his texts about scheduling a repair?

Answer: b) After eleven at night

4. What reason did Mrs. Alcott give for moving out, in her letter to the property management company?

Answer: b) The narrator's "erratic and intimidating behavior"

True or False

5. The narrator describes himself as an exceptionally reasonable landlord.

Answer: True

6. The narrator sent his repair texts during reasonable daytime hours.

Answer: False

7. The narrator agrees completely with Mrs. Alcott's description of his behavior.

Answer: False

Fill in the Blank

8. The narrator says he began keeping the notebook purely out of _____.

Answer: diligence

9. The narrator says he remains, to this day, at an absolute _____.

Answer: loss

Think and Explain

10. This story is narrated by an unreliable narrator, meaning the reader has reason to doubt his version of events. Identify two specific details in the text that suggest the narrator's self-perception does not match how his behavior would likely appear to others.

Sample answer: Accept reasonable answers identifying details such as keeping a detailed surveillance notebook on a tenant while calling it 'diligence,' texting after eleven at night while insisting he was being reasonable, or dismissing a formal harassment complaint as an overreaction, all of which contradict his self-description as an exceptionally reasonable landlord.

11. Why might an author choose to tell this story from the landlord's biased point of view instead of from Mrs. Alcott's perspective or a neutral narrator? What effect does

this choice have on the reader?

Sample answer: Accept reasonable answers noting that telling the story from the landlord's self-justifying point of view forces the reader to actively read between the lines and draw their own conclusions, creating dramatic irony and a more engaging, critical reading experience than a neutral account would, since the reader must recognize the gap between the narrator's claims and the implied truth.