Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
"BRING THE CLASSICS TO LIFE"

THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

LEVEL 5

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About the Author

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was born in 1859 and died in 1930. He went to Edinburgh University in Scotland, studied medicine and became a doctor. While he was a doctor in London, he began writing Sherlock Holmes stories. His first book was A Study in Scarlet. His stories became so successful that he left medicine in 1890 to become a full-time writer of mystery and adventure.

Some other well-known stories written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle are A Sign of Four, The Return of Sherlock Holmes and The Hound of the Baskervilles.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>SYNOPSIS</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>The Adventure of the Speckled Band</td>
<td>A young woman asks Holmes to find out how her sister died. Holmes and Watson learn that the young lady mentioned a &quot;speckled band&quot; moments before she died.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>The Red-Headed League</td>
<td>Holmes investigates a strange case where a man with red hair is tricked so that two criminals can dig a tunnel.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>A Case of Identity</td>
<td>A woman whose fiancé deserted her on the day of the wedding asks Holmes to find her missing would-be husband. Holmes and Watson uncover a cruel plot by the woman's mother and stepfather.</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>The Boscombe Valley Mystery</td>
<td>Holmes sends for Watson to help him free a young man who has been wrongly accused of killing his father. The evidence seems to clearly prove the young man's guilt, but Holmes thinks otherwise and finally finds the real killer.</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>The Man with the Twisted Lip</td>
<td>Holmes is looking for a gentleman who has disappeared. His only clue is a beggar with a twisted lip.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle</td>
<td>A rare and valuable gem turns up in a goose that is about to be cooked for dinner. Holmes tracks down the goose, tracks down the gem, and then finds the real thief, all from clues he finds from a missing hat.</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor</td>
<td>One of London's royal class surprises everyone by marrying a wealthy but unknown American girl. The Noble gets his own surprise when the bride disappears after the wedding.</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet</td>
<td>A banker is given an expensive jewel to watch for the weekend, and it is stolen. Holmes finds the thief.</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>A Scandal in Bohemia</td>
<td>Even the great Sherlock Holmes can't solve every case. This is one case where Holmes is outwitted by a woman who is blackmailing a king.</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb</td>
<td>Dr. Watson gets a patient with a missing thumb. As he hears more of the story, Watson is convinced it is a case for Holmes. Holmes is led on a strange trail that eventually brings him to counterfeiters and a giant machine.</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comprehension Check Answer Key ............................................. 67
Vocabulary Check Answer Key .................................................. 69
# WORDS USED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story 31</th>
<th>Story 32</th>
<th>Story 33</th>
<th>Story 34</th>
<th>Story 35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>coil</td>
<td>charm</td>
<td>accounting</td>
<td>grim</td>
<td>cheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>observe</td>
<td>confuse</td>
<td>ceremony</td>
<td>lawyer</td>
<td>confess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>serpent</td>
<td>flee</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>official</td>
<td>hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspicious</td>
<td>determine</td>
<td>independence</td>
<td>sincere</td>
<td>outfit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>victim</td>
<td>opportunity</td>
<td>miserable</td>
<td>undertake</td>
<td>rotten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weapon</td>
<td>scalp</td>
<td>risk</td>
<td>youth</td>
<td>various</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

# NECESSARY WORDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>baboon</th>
<th>assistant</th>
<th>deserted</th>
<th>guilty</th>
<th>beggar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>slither</td>
<td>criminal</td>
<td>exist</td>
<td>murder</td>
<td>penniless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speckled</td>
<td>expression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>suspicion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### WORDS USED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story 36</th>
<th>Story 37</th>
<th>Story 38</th>
<th>Story 39</th>
<th>Story 40</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>burglar</td>
<td>discuss</td>
<td>advice</td>
<td>ease</td>
<td>bewilder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concentrate</td>
<td>loyal</td>
<td>decision</td>
<td>nerves</td>
<td>describe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>humorous</td>
<td>remark</td>
<td>evidence</td>
<td>pledge</td>
<td>evil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perplex</td>
<td>seldom</td>
<td>gain</td>
<td>sorrow</td>
<td>fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject</td>
<td>terrace</td>
<td>innocent</td>
<td>underneath</td>
<td>horrible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>valuable</td>
<td>wedding</td>
<td>kindness</td>
<td>wealth</td>
<td>limb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NECESSARY WORDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>carbuncle</th>
<th>absolutely</th>
<th>assumed</th>
<th>embarrassed</th>
<th>beryl</th>
<th>blackmail</th>
<th>ceiling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>definitely</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>coronet</td>
<td>identity</td>
<td>counterfeiter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>situation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>photographs</td>
<td>crumbling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>scandal</td>
<td>investigate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>terrified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND

PREPARATION

Key Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>coil</td>
<td>(koil') to wrap around something</td>
<td>She wrapped the rope around the tree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>observe</td>
<td>(əb zərv') to watch something very closely</td>
<td>She observed the bird closely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>serpent</td>
<td>(sər pənt') a snake; a reptile with a long body and no arms or legs</td>
<td>She saw a snake slithering along the ground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspicious</td>
<td>(so spisẖ es) to mistrust something; to feel someone is guilty but not be able to prove it</td>
<td>The police were suspicious when they questioned him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>victim</td>
<td>(viḵ təm) a person who is killed, injured, fooled or cheated, either on purpose or by accident</td>
<td>The victim was hurt in the car crash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weapon</td>
<td>(wep̱ ən) something that can be used to fight with, like a gun, a club, a knife or a rock</td>
<td>The weapon he used was a sharp stick.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND

Necessary Words

baboon (bā bōon´) a member of the ape family that makes loud screeching sounds and is usually not friendly. The baboon was in a large cage.

slither (slǐth´ər) to slip and slide from side to side. We watched the snake slither through the grass.

speckled (spēk´əld) covered with small spots or dots. Her sweater was speckled with gold thread.

temper (tēm´pər) a state of mind; a habit of becoming easily upset or angry. My mother lost her temper and yelled at me for being too noisy while she was on the telephone.

viper (vi´pər) a type of snake that is poisonous. The viper was on display in a locked cage.

People

Sherlock Holmes a very famous detective

Dr. Watson a doctor and good friend of Sherlock Holmes
THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND

Dr. Watson and Mr. Holmes look around Julia's bedroom in search of a clue.

**Preview:**
1. Read the name of the story.
2. Look at the picture.
3. Read the sentence under the picture.
4. Read the first three paragraphs of the story.
5. Then answer the following question.

You learned from your preview that Helen Stoner

___ a. is in love with Sherlock Holmes.
___ b. is very ill.
___ c. believes Dr. Watson is in love with her.
___ d. believes her sister has been a victim of a crime.

*Turn to the Comprehension Check on page 10 for the right answer.*

**Now read the story.**

Read to find out what really happened to Julia Stoner.
The Adventure of the Speckled Band

My name is Dr. Watson. For many years it has been my pleasure to work as a companion to the world’s greatest detective, Sherlock Holmes.

One of Holmes’s most famous cases involved a mysterious "speckled band." Holmes and I were having breakfast one morning at his home on Baker Street when a young woman named Helen Stoner arrived.

"Oh please Mr. Holmes, you’re the only one who can help me," said Helen. "I believe that my poor sister Julia has been the victim of a terrible crime, but I can’t prove it."

Holmes asked the young lady to tell her story. It seemed that her stepfather was a heartless man with a short temper. He didn’t want the girls to get married because he would lose the money that their mom had given them when she died. He tried everything he could to keep them at home but, one day, Julia told him she was getting married.

That night, Helen woke up to a terrible scream. She went to her sister’s room and saw her lying on the floor. Her sister was gasping for air. She was having trouble breathing.

"It was the speckled band," she whispered to Helen, "the speckled band." A few seconds later she died.

After Helen had told this story, Holmes stood up. He looked very worried. I could tell that he was suspicious.

"Tell me," he said to Helen, "did you see this speckled band?" Helen said she hadn’t. "Does your stepfather keep strange animals around the house?" asked Holmes.

"Why yes, he does," said Helen, surprised. "He keeps all kinds of animals around. We even have a baboon on the grounds. Why do you ask?"

"I will explain later," said Holmes. "One more question. Is your stepfather’s bedroom next to your sister’s?" Helen said it was, and also told us that her stepfather insisted she sleep in Julia’s room from now on.

"Hmmm," said Holmes. "That’s very odd. I think that Watson and I will come over to your house so I can observe the situation more closely."

As we were leaving, he said to me, "Watson, I believe that you should bring a weapon. I have a feeling this could get dangerous."

Once we arrived at Helen’s house, we went right to the bedroom. Holmes observed the bedroom carefully. "Why is this rope here?" he asked, pointing to a rope next to the bed that hung from the ceiling.

"That’s the bell rope to call the servants," answered Helen. "But it doesn’t work."

Holmes looked at me for a moment, but he didn’t say anything. Finally, he spoke.

"Watson and I will sleep here tonight. You must not come into this room for any reason. And whatever you do, don’t tell your stepfather that we are here."

Helen looked confused, but she agreed. After she left the room, Holmes said to me, "I guess we’d better get as comfortable as we can. We have a long night ahead. Do you have a weapon?" I showed him my cane. "Good," he said, "give it to me. We have to be completely silent. We can’t make the slightest sound."

We sat and waited. I was getting tired. I had to admit that I fell asleep. When I woke up, it was night, and completely dark in the room. I had forgotten that Holmes said to be quiet, and I was about to call his name, when I heard a hissing sound.

"Watson," Holmes yelled, "Look out!" The lights suddenly went on. Holmes had the cane and was beating something that looked like a coil on the bed. At first, I couldn’t tell what it was. Then I realized it was the speckled band. Only it wasn’t really a band. It was a snake!

The snake slithered up the bell rope and disappeared. "Quick!" shouted Holmes. "We must hurry!"

We ran out into the hall. Helen had heard the noise and came to see what was going on. Holmes raced past her and opened the door to her stepfather’s room. Just then, we heard her stepfather yell, followed by a loud crash.

When we walked in the room, Helen’s stepfather was lying on the floor, dead. Helen gave out a cry. "Look," she said, "on his head. It’s the speckled band!"

The snake was in a coil around her stepfather’s head. "That’s no band," said Holmes. "That’s a poisonous snake called a viper. Your stepfather trained it to kill your sister, and he was going to use it on you. That’s why he put the bell rope in her room, so the speckled serpent could slither down from the ceiling and bite whoever was in the bed. That’s also why he wanted you to sleep in her room. He wanted you to be the next victim. Then he could have all the money your mom left you, to himself. But when I attacked it with the cane, the snake got angry and attacked your stepfather instead. After you told me that he kept strange animals, I became suspicious. It was obvious that your sister had been poisoned, and what better way to poison someone than with a deadly serpent!"

And that solved the mystery of the speckled band.
THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND

COMPREHENSION CHECK

Choose the best answer.

1. Helen Stoner told Sherlock that her stepfather didn't want her or her sister, Julia, to get married because
   ___a. he didn't want to live alone.
   ___b. he didn't like the men they dated.
   ___c. he would lose the money that their mother had left them.
   ___d. their mother wouldn't like it.

2. First, Helen heard a terrible scream. Next, she ran into her sister's room. Then,
   ___a. she saw her sister, Julia, lying on the floor.
   ___b. she saw her stepfather lying on the floor.
   ___c. she saw her mother in the hall.
   ___d. she went to see Sherlock Holmes.

3. Before Julia died, she whispered to Helen that
   ___a. she should get married.
   ___b. it was the speckled band.
   ___c. it was an accident.
   ___d. it was her heart.

4. When Holmes asked Helen about her stepfather, he learned that
   ___a. he was a kind man.
   ___b. he was an ill man.
   ___c. he loved his stepdaughters.
   ___d. he kept many kinds of animals around the house.

5. In the Stoner home, Sherlock discovered
   ___a. Julia and her mother.
   ___b. the bell rope in Julia's room didn't work.
   ___c. the stepfather was a good man.
   ___d. there was nothing to worry about.

6. The speckled band was
   ___a. a handkerchief.
   ___b. a tight rubber band.
   ___c. a poisonous snake.
   ___d. a group of singers.

7. The snake killed both Julia and
   ___a. her mother.
   ___b. Sherlock Holmes.
   ___c. Dr. Watson.
   ___d. her stepfather.

8. Helen's stepfather wanted the speckled band to
   ___a. kill Helen too.
   ___b. kill Sherlock.
   ___c. go to the zoo.
   ___d. stay in the cage.

9. Another name for this story could be
   ___a. "Breakfast with Sherlock."
   ___b. "The Evil Stepfather."
   ___c. "The Wedding."
   ___d. "Good Luck."

10. This story is mainly about
    ___a. how to train animals.
    ___b. what Sherlock Holmes eats for breakfast.
    ___c. what good friends Sherlock and Watson are.
    ___d. how and why a young woman died.

Check your answers with the key on page 67.
THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND

VOCABULARY CHECK

 coil observe serpent suspicious victim weapon

I. Sentences to Finish

Fill in the blank in each sentence with the correct key word from the box above.

1. My science homework was to __________ an experiment and write notes.

2. The police were looking for the __________ used in the robbery.

3. The teacher was __________ of the student's behavior.

4. The __________ was rushed to the hospital.

5. It was hard to see the snake because it had wrapped itself up in a __________.

6. Another name for a snake is a __________.

II. Making Sense of Sentences

Are the following statements true or false? Place an X next to the correct answer.

1. If I am suspicious of you, I trust you completely. ___True ___False

2. A victim is medicine you take every day. ___True ___False

3. A serpent is a snake. ___True ___False

4. A coil is something you cook with. ___True ___False

5. When you observe something, you can't see it. ___True ___False

6. A knife, a club, or a rock can be used as a weapon. ___True ___False

Check your answers with the key on page 69.
# Bring the Classics to Life

## Titles in this Series

### Reading Level 1.0 – 2.0

- White Fang
- Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm
- Little Women
- Swiss Family Robinson
- The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
- Rip Van Winkle
- Heidi
- Uncle Tom’s Cabin
- The Jungle Book
- A Christmas Carol

### Reading Level 2.0 – 3.0

- Black Beauty
- Tom Sawyer
- The Call of the Wild
- Treasure Island
- The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood
- The Prince and the Pauper
- The Man Without a Country
- The Hunchback of Notre Dame
- Silas Marner
- Around the World in 80 Days

### Reading Level 3.0 – 4.0

- Robinson Crusoe
- The Red Badge of Courage
- Kidnapped
- The Invisible Man
- The Man in the Iron Mask
- The War of the Worlds
- Sea Wolf
- Oliver Twist
A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court
Frankenstein

**Reading Level 4.0 – 5.0**

Captains Courageous
Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde
The Time Machine
Gulliver’s Travels
20,000 Leagues Under the Sea
The Pathfinder
From the Earth To the Moon
David Copperfield
The Pioneers
The Picture of Dorian Gray

**Reading Level 5.0 – 6.0**

Metropolis
The Hound of the Baskervilles
Kim
The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
A Journey to the Center of the Earth
Ivanhoe
Last of the Mohicans
Moby Dick
The Count of Monte Cristo
A Tale of Two Cities