

The Devil and Tom Walker

Worksheet

A - Instructions: On a separate piece of paper look up each word and write a definition. Use a dictionary or reference PC to assist you. Please write out the word and then the definition.

Inlet	Termagant	Daunted	Endeavor
Meager	Impregnable	Propitiate	Woeful
Miserly	Melancholy	Obliterate	Indifference
Forlorn	Incantation	Confound	Ostentation
Articulate	Perplex	Clamor	Superfluous
Tantalize	Begrimed	Carrion	

B - Instructions: On a separate sheet of paper answer the following questions. Express your answers using complete sentences.

1. What 'signature' does Tom find when he returns home?
2. What discovery gives Tom a clue about his wife's fate?
3. What does the history of the swamp tell you about the human activities that are of special interest and profit to the devil?
4. What occupation does Tom take up at the suggestion of the devil?
5. After Tom disappears, what happens to his wealth?
6. In literary tradition, the devil takes on many forms and disguises, since he has 'business' all over the world. Here the fullest description of him occurs when Tom first meets him.
 - a. What details of his physical appearance give him this 'Everyman' quality?
 - b. What details remind us that he is the devil in traditional terms?
7. One way Irving suggests that this story is really a folktale is by shifting back and forth between events that the narrator reports on his own account and those he attributes to hearsay by such signals as "it was asserted," "it was whispered," or "according to old stories." Examine this device in the opening paragraph.
 - a. For what facts does the narrator take direct responsibility?
 - b. What is attributed to hearsay?

C - Instructions: Character: On your own paper, respond to the following writing prompt. Irving takes little apparent trouble to characterize Tom and his wife as individuals. In the second paragraph, they are presented as "so miserly that they even conspire to cheat each other" of their common property. Yet there are some differences between them, if not in greed at least in temper. What characteristics of the wife suggest that she already belongs to the devil and that he will get her without having to bargain?