

Teacher's Guide

Name of Text: **Roughing It by Mark Twain**

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Text Dependent Question	Teacher Notes and Possible Textual Evidence For Student Answers
<p>(Q1) Reread the excerpt from <i>Roughing It</i>. Who is the author and what year was this written? Name the place that Twain refers to in <u>Roughing It</u>?</p>	<p>Purpose of the question is to orient students to the text, author, and purpose of the text. Student should understand that an underground mine in Virginia City is being describes and compared to the above the ground city. Possible answers: Line 1: Mark Twain in 1872. “Virginia was a busy city...” Line 3 “Under it was another busy city,” Line 4</p>
<p>(Q2) How does Mark Twain describe the “busy city, down in the bowels of the earth?”</p>	<p>The purpose of this question is to elicit a visual image of the author’s description of the mine. Possible answers: “great population of men” Line 4-5 “Intricate maze of tunnels and drifts...” Line 5-6 “winking sparkle of lights,” Line 6-7 “These timbers were as large as a man’s body...” Line 9 “Imagine such a framework two mile long...” Line 12</p>
<p>(Q3) In line 22, the author cites a Spanish proverb: “it requires a gold mine to “run” a silver one, and it is true.” What does the author mean?</p>	<p>The purpose of this question is to explore the meaning of the proverb and understand that operating a silver mine takes lots of money and resources. Possible answers: It is very expensive to run a silver mine. “imagine what the forest of timbers cost...” Line 17-18 “Twenty ample fortunes...” Line 20-21 “A beggar with a silver mine...” Line 23-24</p>

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<p>(Q4) In line 25, the author states: “ I spoke of the underground Virginia as a city.” What is the author referring to?</p>	<p>The purpose of this question is to show students that the author is describing more than one mine. Possible answers: “...single mine under there, among a great many others;” Line 26 The author is referring to the Gould and Curry Mine as one of many among many other mines.</p>
<p>(Q5) Provide evidence found in the text that illustrates the massive “underground city”. How large were the tunnels? What was the population of miners? How far underneath did the miners need to go into the mine?</p>	<p>The purpose is to realize the extent of the ‘underground city’. To closely distinguish between miners and others who worked at the mines to support the operation. Possible answers: Some tunnels were five miles long, five hundred miners, the mines had the equivalence of thirty miles of streets and about six thousand people working for this operation. “...and tunnels were five miles in extent, altogether, and its population five hundred miners...the underground city had some thirty miles of streets and a population of five or six thousand.” Lines 27-30 “...from twelve to sixteen hundred feet under Virginia and Gold Hill...” Lines 31-32</p>
<p>(Q6) How does Mark Twain describe the working conditions of the mines?</p>	<p>The purpose of this question is to discover the author’s message about the hardships of working in the Virginia City mines. Possible answers: Lines 34-49 Dangerous- “Sometimes men fall down a shaft...” Line 34 Dark- “...you take a candle and tramp through drifts and tunnels...” Line 40 Tiring- “...when your legs fail you at last...” Line 47 Cramped, in a coffin Line 47-48</p>
<p>(Q7) In line 42, the author says, “you select choice specimens from the mass, as souvenirs; you admire the world of skeleton timbering...” What is the author suggesting?</p>	<p>The purpose of this question is to demonstrate that miners may have admired and were awe struck at times working in the mines. Also, miners may have had the opportunity to keep specimens for themselves. These may have been the perks of being a miner. Possible answers: Awesome, you could have a souvenir, some miners may have been proud working in the mines.</p>

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(Q8) What type of writing is this piece? Argumentative/opinion, informative, or narrative? How do you know?

The purpose of this question is to identify genre of writing- possibly to serve as mentor text.

Possible answers:

Informative, since it provides information about what it was like working in the mines.

(Q9) Why would the author tell you, “that you need to never go down again, for you have seen it all”?

Line 56: His writing or this story provides accurate description of life underground in the mines and because the conditions were so serve, why would anyone choose to go down and experience.

Writing Prompt: In “*Roughing It*,” Mark Twain provides a description of working in the Virginia City mines. In your opinion, did the rewards outweigh the difficulties of being a miner in *The Comstock*?

In the space below, create a very specific checklist that helps teachers what exactly to identify in order to measure student success or difficulty with this particular writing assignment on this particular reading. Make sure to use your grade level’s writing standards as a guide. Be clear!

Student writes an opinion piece on the topic or text, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

Statement of Purpose/Focus:

- Introduces a topic or text clearly
- States an opinion

Organization:

- Provides and organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer’s purpose.
- Links opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., *for instance*, *in order to*, *in addition*).
- Provides a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

Elaboration of Evidence:

- Provides reasons that are supported by facts and details