

# THROUGH THE TUNNEL

*Doris Lessing*



**Text Opener**

THROUGH THE TUNNEL

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

What is something difficult or challenging that you have done?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Check the reasons that explain why you did this.

- To test or improve myself
- For excitement
- To feel more grown up
- To be accepted or respected by a group
- To compete against others
- To \_\_\_\_\_

Now discuss this question with your class:

**How can doing something difficult change someone?**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

During your second reading of the story, you marked places where Jerry is acting like a **child**, and places where he is acting like a **grownup**.



Now look over your notes and write down what you think is the most grown-up thing Jerry does.

The most grown-up thing Jerry does is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_


I think this is a grown-up thing to do because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

At the beginning of the story, when Jerry’s mother asks him if he is tired of the usual beach, Jerry says “Oh, no!” and smiles with an “unfailing impulse of **contrition.**”

**contrition**

 a feeling of deep regret for one’s faults or serious wrongdoings

What **fault or wrongdoing** does Jerry **feel regret about**?

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_

How does Jerry feel he *should* act toward his mother?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Why does Jerry feel this way?

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Now answer this interpretive question:

**Why is Jerry able to overcome his feeling of contrition and tell his mother what he really wants to do?**

---

---

---

---

---

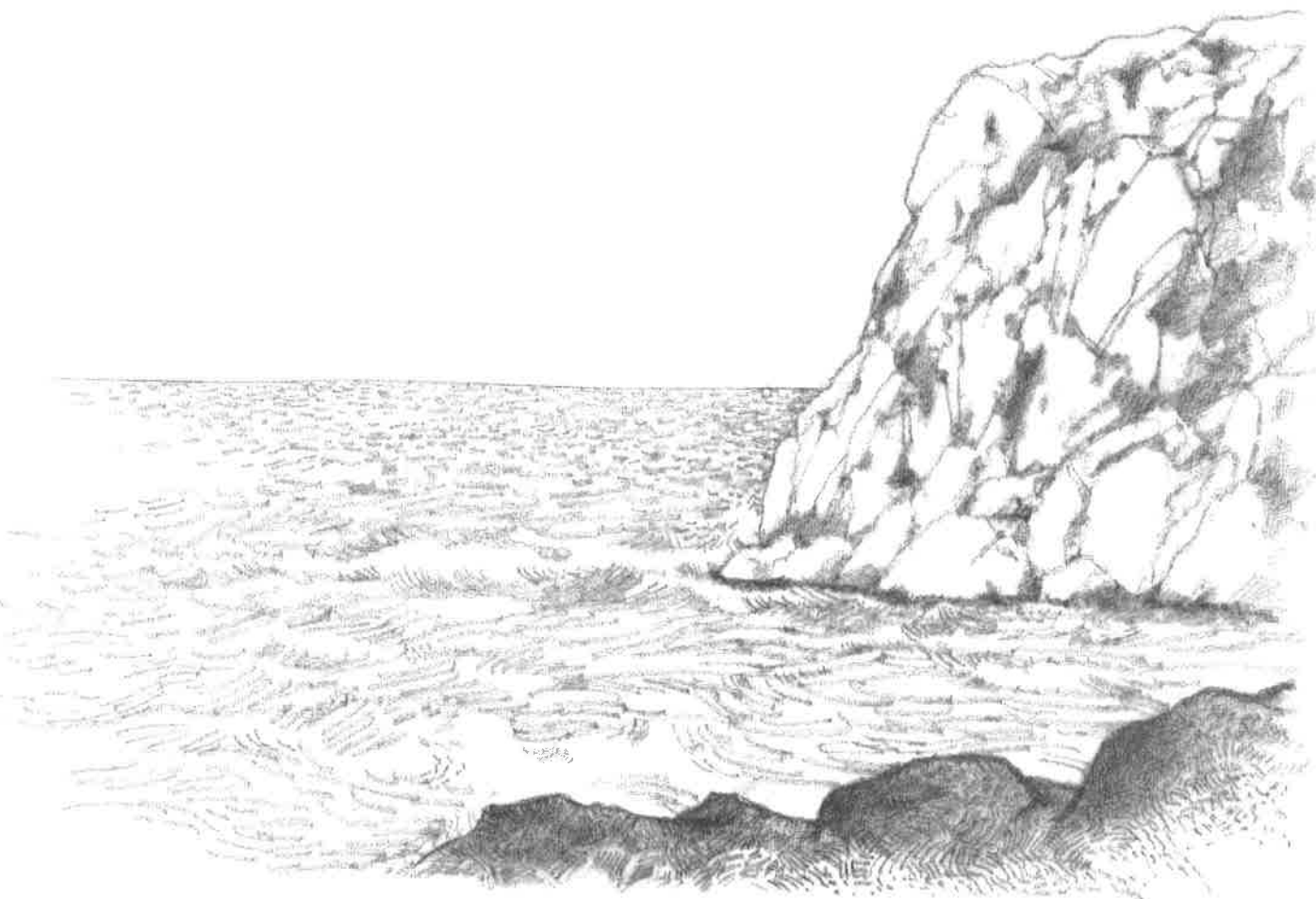
---

---

---

---

---





Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Make notes for a story about a boy or girl who sets a difficult challenge for himself or herself.

What are your character's strengths and weaknesses?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Where does the story take place?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Your Story Idea

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Why does your character take on this challenge?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

How does your character feel different afterward?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Make notes for an essay that answers this question:

**Do you think that Jerry's accomplishment of swimming through the tunnel was worth the risk?**

Begin by writing down what Jerry **risks** and **gains** when he does each of the following things.

**Devotes his whole vacation to rigorous training**

What Jerry risks: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What Jerry gains: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Doesn't tell his mother what he does every day at the rocks**

What Jerry risks: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What Jerry gains: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Swims through the tunnel, instead of waiting until next year**

What Jerry risks: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What Jerry gains: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Other things Jerry risks or gains:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Now look over the risks and gains that you noted and write down your conclusion.  
This can be the first sentence in your essay.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_