# Lesson 8: Mood



Name Date

The atmosphere, or **mood**, of a story can be conveyed through surroundings, through weather, and through characters’ actions and thoughts. The phrase *birds chirped gaily in the early-morning sunshine* has a light and happy mood. *The nighthawk released a long, mournful wail* has a sorrowful mood. Writers use the details of the setting, plot, point of view, and the characters themselves to help create a **mood**.

##### DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage in which a boy named Seth realizes that life on the farm may not be for him. As you read, pay attention to the mood. Then answer the questions that follow.

1. Seth lay in bed, staring at the gray wall. *Another morning*, he thought. *Another morning, and nothing has changed*. These days, he woke in a daze, as if a thick fog surrounded his head. Today, he had no desire to get out of bed at all. It was raining hard. He could hear the steady beating of rain on the rooftop, the slick rush of rain as it emptied from the drainpipe to the ground. He could hear his parents’ footsteps below. They were probably drinking coffee, eating the same breakfast of toast and jam. Soon his father would pull his cap down against the rain and trudge outside, today like every other day of his life, to the barn to milk the cows. *Nothing ever changes*, thought Seth.
2. “Seth,” his mother called. “Are you coming? Aren’t you going to help your father?” Slowly, very slowly, Seth rose and dressed. He slid into his work boots, knowing that the ground would be muddy. As he trudged downstairs, he could see his whole future in front of him. He saw years of work boots and mud, years of feeding pigs and milking cows, years of following in his father’s footsteps. The steady rhythm of the rain droned into his head and heart. He wondered how long it would be before he left the farm for good.
   1. Describe the weather in this story. Tell what impact it has on the mood of the passage.

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* 1. How does the author’s choice of words create a specific mood? Identify two or three words or phrases that convey a mood, and explain what mood they convey.



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* 1. What other elements in the story contribute to the sense of mood? Explain.
  2. What larger point is the author making about Seth and his ambitions? How does the mood of the passage help convey this point?

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