

**Trivia Questions for
The Trumpet of the Swan (1970)
by E. B. White**

Chapter 1 – Sam (pp. 1-7)

1. How old is Sam Beaver?
 - **11**
2. Sam walked “putting one foot straight in front of the other and making very little noise” just like ...*what*?
 - **an Indian**
3. What color are the bills of Trumpeter Swans?
 - **black**
4. What two animals does Sam tell his father that he saw?
 - **a muskrat and a few Red-winged Blackbirds**
5. What is the name of the pilot who brought Sam and his father to Canada?
 - **Shorty**
6. How long does it take for a Trumpeter Swan’s egg to hatch?
 - **35 days**
7. What is the question Sam asks to close his diary the first night?
 - **“Why does a fox bark?”**

Chapter 2 – The Pond (pp. 8-16)

8. E. B. White mentions four animals that were at the pond during the quiet winter months. As a class, can you name them all?
 - **frog**
 - **chipmunk**
 - **jay**
 - **fox**
9. Which animal has a high, rasping bark?
 - **the fox**

10. What are baby foxes called?
 - **kits**
11. Which bird sings the song, “Oh, sweet Canada, Canada, Canada”?
 - **the sparrow**
12. What is the most important thing to a bird in the spring?
 - **building a nest**
13. A Trumpeter Swan is so strong that if one hits you, it is like being hit by a...*what*?
 - **a baseball bat**
14. A female fox is called a...*what*?
 - **a vixen**
15. A male goose is called a...*what*?
 - **a gander**
16. A male cow is called a...*what*?
 - **a bull**
17. A male sheep is called a...*what*?
 - **a ram**
18. A male chicken is called a...*what*?
 - **a rooster**
19. Who says, “It comes naturally. There’s a lot of work to it, but on the whole it is pleasant work”?
 - **the swan wife**

Chapter 3 – A Visitor (pp. 17-28)

20. The unknown visitor watching the swans turns out to be...*who*?
 - **Sam**
21. Who says, “I do not *wish* to be observed”?
 - **the cob**
22. [This is a hard one.] What is the swan’s full name?
 - **Cygnus Buccinator**

23. How many eggs did the swan lay?
 - **five**
24. Why does the female swan leave her nest?
 - **to get a drink of water**
25. Who says, “Look out for the fox, who is creeping toward you...his belly almost touching the ground”?
 - **the cob**
26. What does Sam throw to save the swan eggs?
 - **a stick**
27. Some people say a Trumpeter Swan sounds like a...*what*?
 - **a French horn**
28. Who writes, “An egg, because it contains life, is the most perfect thing there is”?
 - **Sam**
29. Who writes, “a tennis ball will always be just a tennis ball”?
 - **Sam**

Chapter 4 – The Cygnets (pp. 29-41)

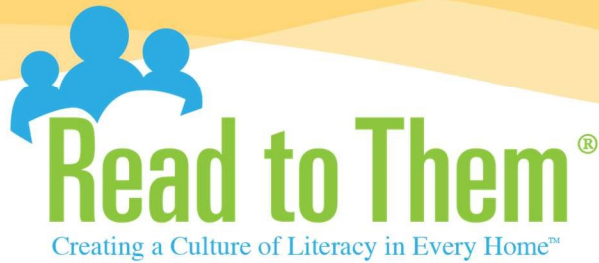
30. What two attributes help baby swans get out of their eggs?
 - **powerful neck-muscle**
 - **small dagger-tooth**
31. Who says, “Here I glide, swanlike”?
 - **the cob**
32. What does Sam have for breakfast before he walks to see the swans?
 - **bacon, toast, and milk**
33. What does Sam use to watch the swans from a distance?
 - **field glasses**
34. Who says, “Welcome to the pond and the swamp adjacent!”?
 - **the cob**



35. Who says, “Swimming is no problem for a swan”?
 - **the cob**
36. Who says, “Be vigilant, be strong, be brave, be graceful”?
 - **the cob**
37. How does the fifth cygnet play with Sam?
 - **by untying his shoelaces**

Chapter 5 – Louis (pp. 42-51)

38. What is the first thing that attracted the swan to the cob?
 - **his wonderful voice**
39. Where did they meet?
 - **Montana (specifically, the Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge)**
40. Who says, “My son is a Trumpeter Swan; he should have a voice like a trumpet”?
 - **the cob (Louis’s father)**
41. Louis’s father asks him to beep, and when he can’t beep, he asks him to... *what*?
 - **burble**
42. The word dumb doesn’t mean stupid. What does it mean?
 - **Mute**
43. Who says, “Do not let an unnatural sadness settle over you”?
 - **the cob (Louis’s father)**
44. Who says, “The world is full of talkers, but it is rare to find anyone who listens”?
 - **the cob (Louis’s father)**
45. Who says, “Be of good cheer! Enjoy life; learn to fly! Eat well; drink well! Use your ears; use your eyes!”?
 - **the cob (Louis’s father)**
46. Who says, “Fate is cruel”?
 - **Louis**



Chapter 6 – Off to Montana (pp. 52-61)

47. Who says, “leaves are turning red, pink, and pale yellow...The time has come for us to leave this pond”?
 - **the cob**
48. According to the cob, what sound does the little owl make?
 - **“co-co-co-co”**
49. What sound does the partridge make?
 - **“kwit-kwit”**
50. According to the cob, flying is largely a matter of having the right attitude and...*what*?
 - **good wing feathers**
51. What does “exalted” mean?
 - **“strong, glad, firm, high, proud, successful, satisfied, powerful, and elevated – as though you had conquered life and had a high purpose”**
52. Who thinks aloud, “Suppose I fail”?
 - **Louis**
53. Who says, “This is sensational...I feel exalted, and I’m not dizzy”?
 - **Louis**

Chapter 7 – School Days (pp. 62-77)

54. Louis may not be able to talk, but what can he do better than his brother and sisters?
 - **swim**
55. When Louis finally finds Sam Beaver, what is Sam doing?
 - **chopping wood**
56. What do the Beavers give Louis to eat?
 - **oats and corn**
57. What is the name of the teacher who teaches Louis how to read and write?
 - **Mrs. Hammerbotham**
58. Who says, “No birds! I’ve got enough troubles”?
 - **Mrs. Hammerbotham**

59. Who says, "...he's got to have a name"?
 - **Mrs. Hammerbotham**
60. In school, if Louis wants to go outside, what is he supposed to do?
 - **raise one wing**
61. What's the first word Louis is asked to write?
 - **c-a-t**
62. What's the second word Louis is asked to write?
 - **c-a-t-a-s-t-r-o-p-h-e**

Chapter 8 – Love (pp. 78-90)

63. Who says, "I am disinclined to leave these attractive lakes now, in the fall of the year, with winter coming on"?
 - **Louis's father, the cob**
64. What were Louis's brothers and sisters doing when Louis finally returned to Red Rock Lakes?
 - **playing water polo**
65. What is around Louis's neck when he arrives back at Red Rock Lakes?
 - **a slate with a chalk pencil**
66. What was the first message Louis wrote on his slate for his family?
 - **"Hi, there!"**
67. What does "coy" mean?
 - **shy; pretending like you're not interested**
68. What is the name of the swan Louis falls in love with?
 - **Serena**
69. What does Louis write on his slate to communicate his feelings to Serena?
 - **"I love you"**
70. Where does Louis's mother suggest Louis's father go to find a trumpet for Louis?
 - **Billings, Montana**



71. Who says, “What a swan! I just hope he knows what he’s doing”?
 - **Louis’s mother**
72. Who does she say this about?
 - **Louis’s father**

Chapter 9 – The Trumpet (pp. 91-98)

73. What is Louis’s father’s “noble quest”?
 - **to find a trumpet for his son**
74. Who says, “Help! We’ve been robbed”?
 - **the clerk at the music store**
75. Who says, “I have become a thief”?
 - **Louis’s father**
76. What is the estimated cost of damage to the music store?
 - **\$900**
77. Who says, “I have visited a great city teeming with life and commerce”?
 - **Louis’s father**
78. What does Louis write on his slate when his father presents him with the trumpet?
 - **“Thank you”**

Chapter 10 – Money Troubles (pp. 99-110)

79. What is the name of the place that Sam Beaver lives?
 - **the Bar Nothing Ranch**
80. Who says, “Almost everybody has a money problem”?
 - **Sam Beaver**

Let’s learn the bugle calls...

81. What’s the bugle call that signals time to wake up in the morning?
 - **reveille (re-vuh-lee)**
82. What’s the bugle call that signals meal time?
 - **mess call**

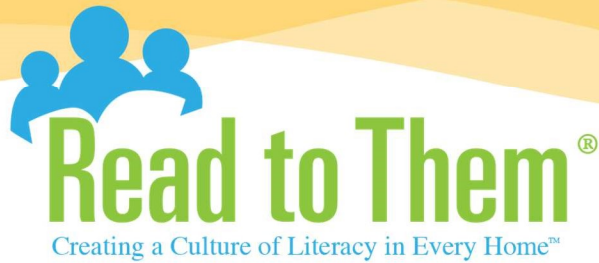
83. What's the bugle call that signals lights out and time for bed?
- **taps**
84. Who says, "Off we go to Ontario, beneath the open sky!"?
- **Sam's father, Mr. Beaver**

Chapter 11 – Camp Kookooskoos (pp. 111-117)

85. Where is Camp Kookooskoos located?
- **Ontario**
86. How many boys attended Camp Kookooskoos?
- **about forty**
87. What's the name of the director of Camp Kookooskoos?
- **Mr. Brickle**
88. How much money will Louis get paid for the camp season?
- **one hundred dollars**
89. Who says, "I don't care for birds"?
- **Applegate Skinner**
90. Who says, "Everyone is entitled to his likes and dislikes"?
- **Mr. Brickle**
91. What does "Kookooskoos" mean?
- **Great Horned Owl**

Chapter 12 – A Rescue (pp. 118-133)

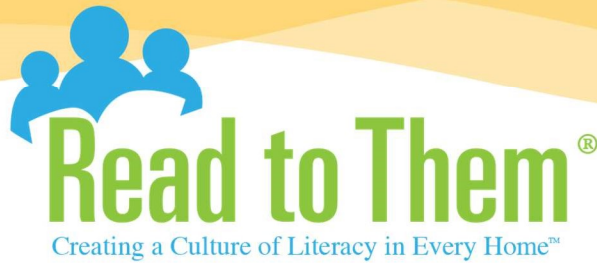
92. What game did the campers play after supper?
- **volleyball**
93. What animal makes a soft "co-co-co-co" sound?
- **a Sawwhet Owl**
94. What was wrong with the skunk?
- **It had its head stuck in a tin can.**



95. Who was in the direction of the skunk when he squirted?
 - **Mr. Brickle**
96. Who said, “We’ll all remember this malodorous event for a long time to come”?
 - **Mr. Brickle**
97. Who did Louis rescue?
 - **Applegate Skinner**
98. Who did Mr. Brickle call “our most distinguished counselor”?
 - **Louis**
99. What was Louis awarded with for saving Applegate Skinner?
 - **the Lifesaving Medal**

Chapter 13 – End of Summer (pp. 134-140)

100. How many valves does a trumpet have?
 - **three**
101. What sound did the big bullfrogs make?
 - **“troonk”**
102. Since Louis didn’t have any pockets, where did he keep the money he earned?
 - **in a waterproof drawstring bag around his neck**
103. Now that summer is over, where does Sam suggest Louis look for a new job?
 - **in Boston, with the Swan Boat**
104. Why does Louis ask Sam to cut the webbing on one foot?
 - **to allow him to wiggle his toes and press the three valves on his trumpet individually**
105. With the webbing on one foot cut, it makes it easier for Louis to play the trumpet. What does it make it harder for him to do?
 - **swim**
106. Who did Louis compose a song for?
 - **Serena**



Chapter 14 – Boston (pp. 141-149)

107. What was the name of the park that Louis saw in Boston?
- **the Public Garden**
108. What did Louis write on his slate for the Boatman?
- **“Have trumpet. Need work.”**
109. What is the first song Louis plays for the Boatman at the Public Garden?
- **“Row, Row, Row Your Boat”**
110. What salary does the Boatman offer Louis?
- **\$100 per week**
111. Where does the Boatman get Louis a room for the night?
- **the Ritz Carlton Hotel**

Chapter 15 – A Night at the Ritz (pp. 150-165)

112. The desk clerk at the Ritz doesn't want to let Louis spend the night because he's afraid Louis might have...*what*?
- **lice**
113. What is the name of the song Louis plays in the hotel?
- **“There's a Small Hotel”**
114. Where does Louis sleep in his hotel room?
- **the bathtub**
115. How much does Louis leave the bellboy for his first tip?
- **one dollar**
116. How many sandwiches does Louis order without mayonnaise?
- **eleven**
117. In his letter to Sam, Louis agrees with him and says that Boston is very...*what*?
- **pleasant**
118. Louis writes, “A hotel room, even though it has every convenience, can be a ...*what* ...place?”
- **lonely**



Chapter 16 – Philadelphia (pp. 166-177)

119. Where does the Boatman decide to let Louis sleep (instead of the hotel) on the second night?
 - **the lake**
120. What is the name of the man who hires Louis in Philadelphia?
 - **Lucky Lucas**
121. Where in the zoo does Louis plan on meeting Abe “Lucky” Lucas?
 - **The Bird Lake**
122. Can you name one of the four songs that Louis mentions as his favorite?
 - **“Lazy River”**
 - **“Beautiful Dreamer”**
 - **“Oh, Ever in the Greening Spring”**
 - **“Now the Day Is Over”**
123. What song does Louis like to play in the afternoon?
 - **“Now the Day is Over”**
124. What is the source of the pinging noise on his trumpet when Louis is playing Brahms’ “Cradle Song”?
 - **a boy firing a BB gun**
125. How is Louis supposed to get from the Philadelphia Zoo to the nightclub where he is supposed to play his trumpet?
 - **by taxi**
126. What is surgically removed from most of the swans who swim on the luxury lagoon?
 - **the tip of one wing**
127. What does Louis have to do (or agree to do) to avoid being pinioned at the Philadelphia Zoo?
 - **give a concert each Sunday**
128. What are the names of the three swans already at the lake at the Philadelphia Zoo?
 - **Curiosity**
 - **Felicity**
 - **Apathy**

Chapter 17 – Serena (pp. 178-198)

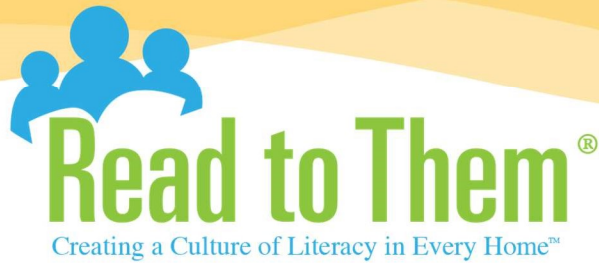
129. Which day of the week does Louis not visit the nightclub?
 • **Sunday**
130. At first, what does Louis think the object in the sky is?
 • **a flying saucer**
131. Who says, “When in love, one must take risks”?
 • **Louis**
132. What song does Louis decide to play to greet Serena?
 • **“Beautiful Dreamer, Wake unto Me”**
133. The Philadelphia newspaper writes that “some of his notes are like...*what*...held up to the light”?
 • **jewels**
134. Which animal at the lake stole Louis’s trumpet?
 • **a wood duck**
135. What is the sound that Serena and Louis make to communicate with one another?
 • **“Ko-hoh”**
136. [This is a hard one.] As a class, can you name all twenty-nine of the animals at the zoo that heard Louis play “Beautiful Dreamer” for Serena? (If not all, how many?)
- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| • bears | • wallaby | • weasel |
| • lions/cats | • anteater | • llama |
| • hippo | • peafowl | • white-tailed deer |
| • yak | • bowerbird | • rabbit |
| • coon | • flamingo | • snake |
| • skunk | • foxes | • possum |
| • otter | • monkeys/baboons | • armadillo |
| • dromedary | • gray wolf | • pigeon |
| • kudu | • badger | • cockatoo |
| • beaver | • ring-tail coati | |
137. What’s the second song Louis plays for Serena?
 • **“Oh, Ever in the Greening Spring”**

Chapter 18 – Freedom (pp. 199-211)

138. As Louis prepares to attack the zookeeper to protect Serena, he lowered his beak just like a...*what*?
- **a lance**
139. Who says, “You’re a very unusual young cob. ... You’re a great trumpeter – one of the best”?
- **the Head Man at the Philadelphia Zoo**
140. Who says, “It wasn’t an act of God. It was a high wind”?
- **Louis**
141. “What more can a young cob ask?” the Head Man asks. What is Louis’s answer?
- **“Freedom”**
142. Louis says, “Safety is all well and good: I prefer...*what*”?
- **freedom**
143. Who does Louis send a telegram to?
- **Sam Beaver**
144. Sam arrives with a sleeping bag, a rucksack, and a...*what*?
- **a hunting knife**
145. As a class, can you name all eight items in Sam’s rucksack?
- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| • toothbrush | • comb |
| • clean shirt | • hand ax |
| • pocket compass | • notebook |
| • pencil | • food |
146. Who writes, “The sky is my living room”?
- **Louis**

Chapter 19 – A Talk About Money (pp. 212-224)

147. “Why did you come here?” the Head Man asks Sam. What is his answer?
- **to defend freedom**
148. Who says, “I would go anywhere to help a bird”?
- **Sam Beaver**



149. The Head Man says he once had a gorilla that drew crowds. What was the name of the gorilla?
- **Bamboo**
150. The Head Man observes that animals don't need to acquire things. Sam's says that at least one animal does. What animal?
- **a rat**
151. Louis plays the lines from what song just before he and Serena take off for Canada?
- ***"Off we go into the wild blue yonder."***

Chapter 20 – Billings (pp. 225-242)

152. What's the first song Louis plays when he returns home to his family?
- ***"There's no place like home. Home, home sweet home."***
153. Who says, "I shall redeem my honor"?
- **Louis's father**
154. Who says, "I welcome danger and adventure"?
- **Louis's father**
155. Who says, "Good-bye, little lakes of the north!"?
- **Louis's father**
156. Who resolves the dispute between the storekeeper, the policeman, and the game warden in Billings, Montana?
- **Judge Ricketts**
157. The little boy, Alfred, who witnessed Louis's father crash into the music store was on his way where?
- **the candy store**
158. The men in the ambulance give Louis's father a shot of...*what*?
- **penicillin**
159. Who says, "Everyone is innocent, the swan is honest, the debt is paid, the storekeeper is rich, and the case is dismissed"?
- **the Judge (Judge Ricketts)**



160. Where does the storekeeper decide to donate the extra money?
- **the Audubon Society**
161. Who says, “It doesn’t look bad to me. I think you just got nicked”?
- **Louis’s mother**

Chapter 21 – The Greening Spring (pp. 243-252)

162. Finally, back in Canada, where does Serena choose to build her nest?
- **an old muskrat lodge**
163. How many cygnets did Louis and Serena hatch?
- **four**
164. When Louis takes his family to Boston, what does Serena eat at the Ritz?
- **watercress sandwiches**
165. Where are the Red Rock Lakes in Montana?
- **the Centennial Valley**
166. What’s the last question Sam Beaver asks in his diary in *The Trumpet of the Swan*?
- **“What does ‘crepuscular’ mean?”**