

47 Ronin: A Samurai Story from Japan

Before Reading

1

1 No
2 Yes
3 No
4 Yes
5 Yes
6 Yes

2

1 b
2 a
3 b
4 c

While Reading

Chapters 1 to 3

1 Lord Kira was the teacher of ceremony at the palace.
2 It was a crime to draw a sword in the Shogun’s palace.
3 It was the samurai way to take revenge for a lord’s death.
4 The ronin were loyal to their lord in life and in death.
5 The cook in Oishi’s house was a spy for Lord Kira.

Chapters 4 and 5

1 Because the ronin did not want the servants to the Uesugi house and call for help.
2 It meant that Lord Kira was in the bed only a few minutes ago, so he was probably not far away.
3 He wanted Lord Kira to commit seppuku, to die bravely, with honour.

After Reading

1

1 + 14 Lord Asano was angry with Lord Kira because Kira called him ‘stupid’ and ‘slow’.
2 + 18 He drew a sword and attacked Kira, but it was a crime to draw a sword inside the palace.
3 + 12 The punishment for this crime was death, so Lord Asano committed seppuku.
4 + 10 Lord Asano’s samurai were now ronin, and they wanted revenge for their lord’s death.
5 + 13 They planned to attack Lord Kira and kill him, but it was two years before they could attack.
6 + 15 Lord Kira was afraid of an attack by Asano’s ronin, so he put many Uesugi guards around his mansion.
7 + 11 On the night of the attack Oishi and his men looked for Lord Kira everywhere in the mansion, and at last they found him in the wood store.
8 + 17 Lord Kira did not want to commit seppuku, so Oishi cut off his head with a sword.
9 + 16 The ronin carried Kira’s head on a spear to Sengaku-ji, and placed the head in front of Lord Asano’s grave.

2

3 Hara: ‘Why is Oishi spending all his time in the town with all kinds of bad men?’
8 Kataoka: ‘Because he’s clever.’
5 Hara: ‘Clever? What do you mean, ‘clever’? How is that clever, Kataoka?’
4 Kataoka: ‘It’s clever because it’s hiding something. Think about it, Hara. What do we ronin all want?’
9 Hara: ‘We want revenge on Lord Kira, of course. We’re going to attack his mansion, find him, and kill him.’
12 Kataoka: ‘Yes, we are. And Lord Kira knows that. So he’s watching Oishi, our captain. And what does Kira see?’
1 Hara: ‘He sees a samurai without honour.’
10 Kataoka: ‘Right, Hara! And who is afraid of a samurai without honour?’
7 Hara: ‘Nobody. Ah! I begin to understand! So what happens next, Kataoka?’
2 Kataoka: ‘This happens – when Kira is no longer afraid of us ronin, what’s he going to do?’
13 Hara: ‘He’s going to send the Uesugi guards home.’
6 Kataoka: ‘Right again! And then, when there’s only a small number of guards round his mansion, we can . . .’
11 Hara: ‘. . . attack! You’re right, Kataoka – it is clever!’
3

1. captain
2. sailor
3. revenge
4. warrior
5. sword
6. honour
7. ceremonial
8. master
9. mansion
10. castle

4. The hidden word is punishment.
5. Open answers.
6. Open answers.