



Short answer questions

Reading Lesson 9: Short answer questions

Dick Turpin

Dick Turpin was an English highwayman (a robber who would steal from travellers). Highwaymen, in general, have been romanticised, much as pirates are. Even in their time, they were portrayed in popular media as dashing and exciting. Dick Turpin is one of the best examples of that. Turpin was born in the early 1700s, baptised in 1705, and died by execution in 1739.

In early life, it is likely that Turpin worked as a butcher, before starting his life of crime as an associate of a gang of deer thieves in Essex. Turpin continued building his nefarious resume with stints as a poacher, a burglar, and a horse thief, before the gang's dissolution.

This was when Turpin turned to the crime for which he is remembered: highway robbery.

Sadly, the story for which Turpin is most famous - an overnight journey from London to York on a horse named Black Bess - is fictional. William Harrison Ainsworth, probably drawing on an existing myth, immortalized the impossible feat in his 1834 novel *Rockwood*. Ainsworth went some way to creating the modern portrayal of Turpin as a likable, dashing rogue.

Dick Turpin carried out a string of robberies from 1735 onwards. Turpin is reported to have worked in a trio of highwaymen for a time - his companions were Matthew King and Stephen Potter. This partnership came to a sudden end in Whitechapel, after King was shot in a melee involving local police. There are many different reports of this night, with some claiming that Turpin fired the fatal round.

After the death of his colleague, Turpin took on the alias of John Palmer and posed as a horse trader between East Riding of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire (historic counties of England). He blended in locally, even hunting alongside fine gentlemen in the area.



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Nevertheless, his temper seems, in the end, to have been his undoing. He shot another man's gamecock in the street on October 2nd, 1738 - and, when told off, threatened a man with the same fate. Turpin was arrested, and it emerged that he had also stolen horses - a capital offense - under the name of Palmer.

Turpin's identity was soon found out, and he was executed by hanging on April 7, 1739. A personality cult arose around him, and his story quickly became the stuff of legends.

Answer the questions below.

Choose NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER from the passage for each answer.

1. What was the cause of Dick Turpin's death?
2. Before he turned to crime, what was Turpin's probable profession?
3. Which crime is Turpin most associated with?
4. Where did Turpin's association with Matthew King and Stephen Potter end?
5. What was the other name that Turpin used?



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