

From the short story *After Twenty Years* by O. Henry

The policeman on the beat moved up the avenue impressively. The impressiveness was habitual and not for show, for spectators were few. The time was barely 10 o'clock at night, but chilly gusts of wind with a taste of rain in them had well nigh depeopled the streets.

Trying doors as he went, twirling his club with many intricate and artful movements, turning now and then to cast his watchful eye adown the pacific thoroughfare, the officer, with his stalwart form and slight swagger, made a fine picture of a guardian of the peace. The vicinity was one that kept early hours. Now and then you might see the lights of a cigar store or of an all-night lunch counter; but the majority of the doors belonged to business places that had long since been closed.

When about midway of a certain block the policeman suddenly slowed his walk. In the doorway of a darkened hardware store a man leaned, with an unlighted cigar in his mouth. As the policeman walked up to him the man spoke up quickly.

Henry, O. (no date) *After twenty years, Short Stories & Classic Literature for Readers & Teachers*. Available at: <https://americanliterature.com/author/o-henry/short-story/after-twenty-years> (Accessed: 09 June 2023).

1. Why does the policeman's impressiveness not serve as a show?
 - a) There are very few spectators present.
 - b) The policeman dislikes drawing attention to himself.
 - c) The time is late at night.
 - d) The weather conditions have depeopled the streets.

2. What does the policeman do as he walks along the avenue?
 - a) Tries to open doors.
 - b) Twirls his club skillfully.
 - c) Watches the pacific thoroughfare.
 - d) Keeps an eye on the weather.

3. What is the overall atmosphere of the vicinity described in the text?
 - a) Bustling and lively.

- b) Quiet and early-rising.
- c) Dark and deserted.
- d) Noisy and crowded.

4. Why does the policeman slow down his walk?

- a) He notices a suspicious man in a hardware store doorway.
- b) He wants to take a break and rest.
- c) He is tired and needs to catch his breath.
- d) He wants to admire a particular building on the block.

5. How does the man in the doorway respond to the approaching policeman?

- a) He remains silent.
- b) He quickly lights his unlit cigar.
- c) He greets the policeman respectfully.
- d) He tries to run away.

Answers:

- 1. There are very few spectators present.
- 2. Twirls his club skillfully.
- 3. Quiet and early-rising.
- 4. He notices a suspicious man in a hardware store doorway.
- 5. He greets the policeman respectfully.