

Original Passage:

Exploring the World of English 789 *Introduction to Precis Writing*

Exercise 8

Abridged from 'Far Away and Long Ago' by W.H. Hudson.
Write a precis of the following passage in not more than 80 words.

Snakes were common about us: snakes of seven or eight different kinds, green in the green grass, and yellow and dusky – mottled in the dry and barren places and in withered herbage, so that it was difficult to detect them. Sometimes they intruded into the dwelling rooms, and at all seasons a nest or colony of snakes existed in the thick old foundations of the house, and under the flooring. In winter they hibernated there, tangled together in a cluster no doubt, and in summer nights they were at home, coiled at their ease or gliding ghost-like about their subterranean apartments. I would lie awake and listen to them by the hour. For although it may be news to some closet ophiologists, serpents are not all so mute as we think them. At all events this kind, the *philodryas aestivus* – a beautiful and harmless colubrine snake, two and half to three feet long, marked all over with inky black on a vivid green ground – not only emitted a sound when lying undisturbed in his den, but several individuals would hold a conversation together which seemed endless, for I generally fell asleep before it was finished: a hissing conversation it is true, but not unmodulated, or without considerable variety in it, a long sibilation would be followed by distinctly-heard ticking sounds, as of a husky-ticking clock, and after ten or twenty or thirty ticks another hiss, like a long expiring sigh, sometimes with a tremble in it as of a dry leaf swiftly vibrating in the wind. No sooner would one cease than another would begin; and so it would go on. It was dark in my room, and to my excited imagination, the serpents were no longer under the floor, but out, gliding hither and thither over it, with uplifted heads, in a kind of mystic dance; and I often shivered to think what my bare feet might touch if I were to thrust a leg out and let it hand over the bedside.

10 Keys

Precis:

Snakes Roaming Here and There

The writer wrote that snakes are everywhere on the surface. They lived under the surface or outside it, depends on different seasons. Also, the writer usually heard the sounds hissing sounds of the snakes before asleep. There were distinct sounds followed by one another. Once, in a dark night, he shocked after envisaging that the snakes were not under the floor but "roaming" around him. It scared him, what if he laid his leg from his bed and touched the snake.

Precis Words: 43

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