Robin Hood and Little John

They'd passed the graveyard on the edge of the village by the light of a full moon, and the hoot of an owl signalled their passage. They spent the next few hours **trudging** through the gloom of the forest on their way back to Nottingham. Mist hung about the ground at knee height, giving the forest an **ethereal** feel. Robin's friend, Will, turned to him and confessed quietly he wasn't happy about the uncomfortable silence which **enveloped** the woods. Usually, even at such an early hour, the woods were filled with noises, but tonight all was deathly silent.

They reached the river crossing just after dawn had broken and found a sun-dappled space to sit, eat and rest a while before crossing the water into the part of the forest inhabited by **outlaws**. Robin stood and stretched before retrieving his pack, his quiver and his bow. "Come on!" he said to Will, who lay napping on the heather and he nudged him with the toe of his boot. "How much longer is it?" said Will screwing up his face and shielding his eyes from the low hanging sun, "we've been walking all night!"

"Not much further," said Robin, "but keep your wits about you now…you never know who is lurking in the woods on the Wester' side."

Vocabulary Focus

1. Use a dictionary to find the word 'ethereal' can you write a definition for it in your own words?

2. What do you think the word 'enveloped' means?

3. Which word in the text tells you that outlaws lived in the forest?

4. Outlaw is a compound word made of two smaller words. What do you think it means?

5. What does the word trudging tell us about the way the two of them move through the forest?

6. Which word in the second paragraph means someone is 'lying in wait?'

Answers:

Vocabulary Focus

1. delicate and light in a way that seems to be otherworldly.

2. to wrap up, cover or surround completely.

3. inhabited

4. Outside of the law – someone who has broken the law, especially one who has escaped.

5. That they are walking slowly because they are tired.

6. lurking