LOOKING FOR A RAIN GOD AND OTHER SHORT STORIES FROM AFRICA

A TEACHING & READING GUIDE
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LITERATURE → FICTION → SHORT STORIES

The world’s earliest “literature” was oral, passed along by word of mouth from one person to another and from one generation to the next. This literature was always connected with some important activity—singing, storytelling, religious or social ritual, prayer, teaching, or even magic. As civilizations progressed, however, they began to use writing to preserve their literature. This had the advantage of giving works a stable and lasting form.

Fiction refers to works of prose (i.e., written in paragraphs and not lines, as in poetry, nor as dialogue meant for the stage, as in drama) that have imaginary elements. Although fiction can be inspired by actual events and real people, it usually springs from writers’ imaginations. Fiction is meant to entertain, but it can also provide the reader with a deeper understanding of life. The two major types of fiction are novels and short stories. Both novels and short stories contain four basic elements: plot, character, setting, and theme.

- **PLOT** The sequence of events in a story is called the story’s plot. The plot is a map of what happens, when it happens, and to whom it happens. Plots are almost always built around conflicts—problems or struggles between opposing forces. Although plots differ, a plot usually includes the four stages of development: exposition (introductory material that gives the background of the story), rising action, climax, and falling action (sometimes called resolution).

- **CHARACTER** The characters in a story are the people, animals, or imaginary creatures who take part in the action. In most stories, the events center on one or more main characters. The other characters, called minor characters, interact with the main characters and help move the story along. Characters can be dynamic or static. Dynamic characters change as a result of events, whereas static characters remain unchanged. Writers show characters’ growth and change by presenting carefully chosen details.

- **SETTING** The setting of a story is the particular time and place in which the events occur. A story may be set in a real or an imaginary place. The events may occur in the past, the present, or the future. Vivid descriptions help readers picture the setting in their minds. Setting can play an important role in what happens to the characters and how they respond to conflict.

- **THEME** A theme in a work of fiction is a perception about life or human nature that the writer conveys to the reader. Most themes are not stated directly. A theme in a short story might, for example, be “Life is only as good as you make it” or “Good relationships take work.” Themes can be revealed by: a work’s title, key phrases and statements about big ideas, or the ways characters change and the lessons they learn about life.

How to teach *Looking for a Rain God* in Community Day Secondary Schools:

According to the period allocation, only three 40 minute periods are available per week for English Literature in Form 3. All 30 stories from *Looking for a Rain God* should ideally be covered in two terms (which range from 12-15 weeks). Usually the final two weeks of each term are reserved for end-of-term examinations, so that leaves only 20-25 weeks. With the added difficulties of large class sizes and limited resources: how can this be done?

Plan to get through one story a week: Schedule a double period at the beginning of the week and a single period at the end of the week.

During the 40-minute single period, introduce the story title, author, and any additional background information. Next, read the Story Preview and Make Predictions. Then, complete the Words to Know. By the end of the period, assign students (in groups) to read the story, answer the Comprehension Questions, and identify the setting and characters.

During the 80-minute double period (after the weekend), begin by introducing the new Literary term associated with the story. Ask students to Focus on that term while re-reading the story out loud as a class. Students should also check their answers to the comprehension questions. After reading, groups should work on Guessing Meaning from Context and Making Inferences. Then, you can either fill in the graphic organizer (Analysing the Story) as a class or in groups. Finally, collect each group’s comprehension questions and setting/characters (and possibly other activities) for scoring before discussing the answers as a class to ensure comprehension. Repeat. Some very short stories may take less time...
ACTIVE READER: Skills and Strategies

Before we get started on the stories, let’s review the habits of a successful student and an active reader of fiction. When examples are needed “Looking For a Rain God” by Bessie Head, the first story in this collection, is used. If you want to be an active reader, then as you read, take notes to:

- Connect what you read about people, places, and situations with your personal experiences.
- Write down any phrases, passages, or ideas that you find particularly exciting.
- Write down any questions you have about plot, character, setting, or theme.

**Strategies for understanding plot**

1. Keep track of events as they develop. A chart like this one might help you to visualize the sequence of events.

   ![Event Chart]

2. Identify the main conflict and what causes it. Also, note the minor problems or difficulties that the characters encounter along the way.

3. Note how the characters react to problems they encounter. Predict what they might do next.

4. Ask yourself whether the ending is what you expected.

**Strategies for exploring character**

1. Use the details the writer provides to visualise the characters. Note any special aspects of their appearance that might be clues to their personalities.

2. Look for clues to the motives of the characters.

3. Note the ways in which characters change during the story. Watch for signs of internal conflict—that is, conflict within a character’s mind.

4. Try using a chart like this one.

**Strategies for visualising setting**

1. Look for specific adjectives that help you imagine how the opening scene might look. Watch for details that help you visualise the setting.

2. Pay attention to ways in which setting influences the characters, the plot, or the mood of the story.

**Strategies for determining theme**

1. Question whether the title offers any clues to the theme

2. Think about what any accompanying illustrations reveal about the story.

3. Note any sentences or ideas that you find especially intriguing. They might be clues to the theme.

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**Looking For a Rain God**

- **Character**: Mokgobja
- **Words**: Remembers an ancient rainmaking ceremony
- **Appearance**

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**Strategies for Reading:**

PREDICT Try to figure out what will happen next and how the story might end. Then read on to see how accurate your guesses were.

VISUALISE Visualise characters, events, and settings to help you understand what’s happening.

CONNECT Connect personally with what you’re reading. Think of similarities between the descriptions in the selection and what you have personally experienced, heard about, and read about.

QUESTION Question what happens while you read. Searching for reasons behind characters’ feelings can help you feel closer to what you are reading.

CLARIFY Stop occasionally to review what you understand, and expect to have your understanding change and develop as you read on. Reread and use resources to help clarify your understanding. Also watch for answers to questions you had earlier.

EVALUATE Form opinions about what you read, both while you’re reading and after you’ve finished. Develop your own ideas about characters and events.
Making Inferences
Making inferences about a story involves using the information in the story, as well as your own common sense, to make logical guesses. This skill is especially useful for understanding characters. Writers seldom explain everything about characters’ backgrounds, thoughts, and emotions. By making inferences, readers can supply the missing pieces.

Strategies for making inferences about a character’s background
1. Look for details about the physical environment and about any social, cultural, and moral influences that affect the character.
2. Question why specific details about the character are included in the story. Which details are clues to the character’s inner qualities?
3. Think about things you’ve read or heard that can help you imagine what it would be like to live in the story’s setting.
4. Consider details about the character in the context of the whole story. For example, Mokgobja remembers a rain-making ceremony that was “buried by years of prayer in a Christian church.” From reading history, we know missionaries spread Christianity through Africa. So, we infer that Mokgobja was born in a society with traditional beliefs and later he converted to Christianity.

Strategies for making inferences about a character’s feelings
1. Connect to the character’s experiences. Think about similar experiences you have had and how you felt.
2. As you read dialogue, imagine how you would say the words if you were in the character’s place.
3. Reread descriptions of the character’s gestures and facial expressions. Close your eyes and visualize these. Then think about the emotions you usually associate with the expressions and gestures.

Strategies for making inferences about a character’s behavior
1. Note descriptions of dangers or opportunities in the setting. How might they affect the character?
2. Pay attention to the character’s responses to conflict, setbacks, and opportunities. Try to see a pattern in the character’s behavior—especially one that gives an idea of what to expect as the story develops.
3. Look for symbols and imagery that may hint at what is to come.

Enriching Your Vocabulary
Even great readers encounter unfamiliar words. These tips will help find their meanings.

Use Context Clues:
- The context of a word consists of the punctuation, words, and sentences that surround a word. A word’s context can give you clues about its meaning:
  After 12 hours without food, I was so ravenous that I ate three big patties of nsima.
  You can figure out from the context that ravenous means “extremely hungry.”

Break Words into Parts:
- Breaking a word into its parts can help you understand it. When you see unfamiliar words, try to:
  1. Look for any prefixes or suffixes. Then remove them to try to isolate the root—the word part that contains the core meaning.
  2. Try to think of other words containing each prefix, suffix, or root. Think about what those words mean. Do they have anything in common?
  3. Consider the way the word is used in the sentence. Use the context and the word parts to make a logical guess about its meaning.
  4. Consult a dictionary to see whether your guess is correct.
CRITICAL THINKING:

Critical thinking is the ability to analyse, evaluate, and synthesise ideas or information. Critical thinking goes beyond simply understanding something. It involves making judgments based on reasoning skills.

Avoid Faulty Reasoning:

When you write (or speak) for a persuasive purpose, make sure your logic is valid. Avoid these mistakes in reasoning, called logical fallacies:

- **Overgeneralization**: Conclusions reached on the basis of too little evidence result in the fallacy called overgeneralization. A person who saw three motorcyclists riding without helmets might conclude, "Nobody wears helmets." That conclusion would be an overgeneralization.

- **Circular Reasoning**: When you support an opinion by simply repeating it in different terms, you are using circular reasoning. For example, "Tobacco is a popular cash crop in Malawi because more farmers grow tobacco than any other cash crop." This is an illogical statement because the second part of the sentence simply restates the first part.

- **Either-Or Fallacy**: Assuming that a complex question has only 2 possible answers is called the either-or fallacy. "Either we close the library permanently or students will continue to steal books" is an example of the either-or fallacy. The statement ignores other ways of discouraging students from stealing.

- **Cause-and-Effect Fallacy**: The cause-and-effect fallacy occurs when you say that event B was caused by event A just because event B occurred after event A. Someone might conclude that because students performed poorly on exams the year a new headteacher arrived, that the new headteacher caused the poor performance. However, this cause-and-effect relationship would have to be supported by more specific evidence.

Identifying Modes of Persuasion:

Understanding persuasive techniques can help you evaluate information, make informed decisions, and reject persuasive techniques that are intended to deceive you. Some modes of persuasion appeal to various emotions.

- **Loaded Language**: Loaded language is words or phrases chosen to appeal to the emotions. It is often used in place of facts to shape opinion or to evoke a positive or negative reaction. For example, you might feel positive about a politician who has a plan. You might, however, feel negative about a politician who has a scheme.

Logical Thinking:

Persuasive writing (and speaking) requires good reasoning skills. Two ways of creating logical arguments are deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning.

- **Deductive Arguments**: a deductive argument begins with a generalization, and then advances with facts and evidence that lead to a conclusion. The conclusion is the logical outcome of the premise. A false premise leads to a false conclusion; a valid premise leads to a valid conclusion provided that the specific facts are correct and the reasoning is correct.

- **Inductive Arguments**: an inductive argument begins with specific evidence leading to a conclusion.

James Thurber was well-known for his cartoons. Thurber’s short stories were also well-received. Thurber also wrote a play, a biography, and an autobiography. Thurber was a prolific artist who was successful in more than one discipline.

We still have much to learn about the healing role of plants. In some developing countries, many plants are being destroyed as people burn off forests so they can make a living. It is in our best interest to help these developing nations so that they can preserve their plants.

The conclusion of an inductive argument often includes a qualifying term such as some, often or most. This usage helps to avoid the fallacy of overgeneralization.
ABOUT THIS GUIDE:
For each story from the collection *Looking For a Rain God and Other Short Stories From Africa* there is a Reading Guide. Each Reading Guide is divided into three sections: “Preparing to Read” to use before reading the story, “While Reading” to use as you read, and “Understanding the Story” to use after you have finished reading the story. Below you will find an explanation of each element included in this guide and some tips on how best to use them.

**General Features**
- Each Story Guide is preceded by the title of the story, the author’s name, and the country the author is from. Additionally, a political map highlights each country in the context of the African continent.
- Running along the right edge of each Story Guide is a list of *Idioms & Expressions* that appear in the story, along with definitions or explanation of their meaning. They are listed in the order they appear in the text and may not include every possible instance.
- After Idioms & Expressions, *Key Vocabulary* continue along the right edge of the pages. The key vocabulary were identified using a vocabulary profiler from a corpus of English (http://www.lextutor.ca/vp/eng/). The definitions come from the Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary. To avoid too much repetition, words that appear in the vocabulary list for an earlier story are not repeated for later stories.
- Each entry in the vocabulary lists appears as it is in the story. However, some words (e.g., most adverbs, past tense and participle verbs) undergo a transformation in order to align with the dictionary entry. For example the adjective *shady* is derived from the noun *shade*, so the entry looks like this:

  (shady (adj)) shade (n): slight darkness caused by something blocking the light of the sun

The definition given is for *shade*. *Shady*, then, along with its part of speech is bracketed. While many adverbs, some adjectives, and some nouns are defined this way, the bracketed entry is most commonly used for inflected verbs. Many verbs appear in the vocabulary lists in the simple past tense (i.e., *-ed* form) or the present or past participle (i.e., *-ing* and *-ed* forms). Due to the fact that the simple past and past participle form are very often the same (i.e., *-ed*), they are indicated in their bracketed form with *p.* (for “past” or “past participle”), while the present participle is marked with *pr. part.* (for “present participle). For example:

  (haunted p.) haunt (v): to cause repeated suffering or anxiety  
  OR  
  (consulting pr. part.) consult (v): to discuss something with someone before making a decision

- Finally, each story also includes an original illustration by Peace Corps volunteer Megan Brown (Ed., 2013-15). The illustrations should help activate readers’ minds and help them visualize the setting and characters. Use the illustrations to aid in Making Predictions prior to reading.

**Preparing to Read**
- A brief *Story Preview* appears at the beginning of each Story Guide outlining the plot of the story up to its climax. The Story Preview is intended to give readers an idea of what to expect as they read and to highlight some critical vocabulary before they begin reading. Readers should also try to connect the illustrations to the Story Preview and visualize the setting and the characters before they begin reading.

**BOTTOM-UP & TOP-DOWN: Reading Strategies**
Have you ever been reading something quickly and suddenly arrived at several new words? You are required to slow down your reading to decode the new words. When you do this, you are using bottom-up strategies to understand the words. The best readers in any language are those who integrate elements of both bottom-up and top-down reading strategies.

*Top-down* reading is when comprehension is achieved by using background knowledge and making predictions. Top-down skills include skimming a text for general meaning, scanning a text for specific information, making inferences based on knowledge of the text and the world, and making predictions about what will happen next in a sentence, paragraph, or narrative.

*Bottom-up* strategies include fundamental basics of letter and sound recognition, but also knowledge of collocation (which words/parts of speech are most likely to appear before or after other words/parts of speech) and use of dictionaries to decode unfamiliar words and build working vocabularies.

This Guide integrates bottom-up and top-down reading strategies.
Five words are underlined in each Story Preview and, in the Words To Know section, readers are asked to demonstrate understanding of this vocabulary by correctly filling each word into the five sentences of the Words To Know Section.

Using knowledge of the story gained from the Story Preview, the title, and the illustration provided, readers are next asked to select what they think will happen after the climax by Making Predictions.

While Reading
A varying number of Comprehension Questions are given for each story intending to scaffold readers’ understanding of the stories. The questions are designed to draw students attention to important details in the stories and, hopefully, lead them to accurately identify key events, characters, and changes that take place as the story progresses.

A Literary Term is included with each story along with an explanation. Readers are then asked to Focus their attention on different aspects of the story as they read in order to explore and demonstrate an understanding of each term. A glossary of Literary Terms is included as an appendix.

Understanding the Story
In many of the stories in this collection readers will need to have an understanding of some background knowledge in order to fully comprehend the plot, themes, or some other element of the story. In order to help those readers who may not have this background knowledge, some of this information is included in sections titled Geographical Context, Historical Context, Linguistic Context, About the Author, etc.

Some Key Vocabulary has been intentionally left off the lists. This is because, after each story, readers are asked to guess the meanings of some unknown words based on context. Readers are asked to go back to the story and find certain words in context and try to discern their meanings. One of three different Guessing Meaning From Context activities is used for each story: matching, multiple choice, and gap-fill with a word bank.

An important critical thinking skill in every academic discipline is the ability to make informed inferences based on limited information. While it is hoped that readers are Making Inferences all the time as they are reading, two or three multiple choice inference questions are included in each Story Guide.

Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions are given in each Story Guide. While the suggested answers are not the only correct answers for the comprehension questions, they provide examples of what adequate and accurate answers to those questions would look like.

The Literary Terms have been arranged within the stories so that each term is exemplified in the story with which it is associated. A graphic organizer or a chart is provided in each Story Guide. Readers have an opportunity for Analyzing the Story with regard to the literary term with which it is associated.

Finally, each Story Guide ends with at least one question prompting readers to engage with the story meaningfully or connect it to their own lives and knowledge of the world by Thinking Critically.

CHECK IT OUT!
These are the online resources that were used to make this Guide and a few other cool sites to check out as you continue your study of literature:

wikipedia.org For general information about major world events, important people, and big ideas, Wikipedia is a great place to start. And if it’s too difficult you can always try:
simple.wikipedia.org
dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/learner-english/ For accurate and comprehensive definitions, examples of words in use, and other lexicographically information, an advanced learners’ dictionary, especially this one, is where to go.
bbc.co.uk/learning/subjects/english.shtml For information on grammar, creative writing, and literature, or just to play a language game or learn about the world, try the BBC English Learning portal.
lextutor.ca/vp/eng/ If you have an electronic copy of a text, a quick and accurate way to identify all of the difficult vocabulary is with this vocabulary profiler.
LOOKING FOR A RAIN GOD
Bessie Head—Botswana

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
The village where Mokgobja lives with his family has been suffering from drought for seven years. People there are so desperate that some have even killed themselves.

This year, when rains come in November, Mokgobja goes to the field with his family. At first, there is enough rain and they plough the fields and plant crops. But, then the rain stops and everything gets very dry.

The two small girls, Neo and Boseyong, are too young to worry about the drought and they play with dolls. The two women, Tiro and Nesta, though, are very worried. They wail and cry a lot. Then, Mokgobja remembers an old traditional ceremony where children are given as sacrifices to a rain god.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview above.
1. In the past, people killed animals as _____________ in order to win favor with the gods.
2. To prepare the fields for planting, it is necessary to _____________ them.
3. When it seems like a situation will not improve, people may get quite _____________.
4. People sometimes _____________ and scream when they are very sad or angry.
5. A _____________ happens when not enough rain falls and the earth is very dry.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- Mokgobja will try to sacrifice the two girls, but the women will stop him and kill him instead.
- Mokgobja will sacrifice the two girls and the rain will come.
- Mokgobja will sacrifice the two girls but no rain will come.
- Mokgobja will steal a small child from another family and sacrifice that child.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. What problem has the community been facing when this story takes place?
2. What two events lead Mokgobja and his family to leave for the fields?
3. Who are the two young girls pretending to be when playing with their dolls?
4. Why do the two women “stamp their feet as though they had lost their heads”?
5. Who remembers the rain-making ceremony?
UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Cultural Context:
Religion has always been central to people's lives in Africa. Although the majority of Africans are now Muslim or Christian, traditional religions have endured and still play a big role.

There are many different religious practices on the continent. They share some common features: belief in one God above a host of lesser gods or semi-divine figures; belief in ancestral spirits; the idea of sacrifice, often involving the death of a living thing, to ensure divine protection and generosity; the need to undergo rites of passage to move from childhood to adulthood, from life to death.

In the history of the continent, religion has had a powerful effect on political change: spirit mediums have led revolts against European and African rulers, ancestral spirits have commanded acts of destruction and called for the overthrow of rulers and chiefs. People have sought the help of priests and medicine men to achieve power and wealth.

Guessing Meaning from Context:
The sentences below are from the story. Try to understand the meaning of the bolded words and circle the letter of the answer that gives the correct meaning for each word.

1. These lands are vast clearings in the bush, and the wild bush is lonely too.
   a. extremely big
   b. extremely far
   c. extremely old
   d. extremely hot

2. A seven-year drought fell upon the land and even the watering places began to look as dismal as the dry open thorn-bush country.
   a. exciting and new
   b. strange and interesting
   c. sad and without hope
   d. lush and full of life

3. All their animals had been sold during the bad years to purchase food.
   a. eat
   b. buy
   c. give
   d. refuse

4. He explained the ritual and as he talked, his memory became a conviction and he began to talk with unshakeable authority.
   a. a funny idea or thought
   b. a new feeling or sense
   c. a strong opinion or belief
   d. a strange desire or need

5. But people noted their ashen, terror-stricken faces and a murmur arose.
   a. a loud pounding sound
   b. a deep resonant sound
   c. a soft continuous sound
   d. a high piercing sound

6. At this, the mother of the children broke down and told everything.
   a. became happier and more positive
   b. stopped trying to do something difficult
   c. accepted or approved officially
   d. was unable to control her feelings

7. What happens to the men at the end of the story?

8. What do the men do to the little girls? Why?

Literary term: Theme
A theme is a central idea or message in a work of literature. Sometimes a story has several themes.

Focus: One of the themes in “Looking for a Rain God” is superstition. As you read, think about the superstitious actions that the people in the village, in general, and Mokgobja, in particular, take in response to the drought.
Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.
1. At the beginning of the story, “a number of men went out of their homes and hung themselves to death from trees.” They probably did this because:
   a. they thought their deaths would bring rain
   b. they preferred a quick death to slow starvation
   c. they were tricked by the witch doctors
2. The two little girls are “quite happy” even when the rain doesn’t fall. This is probably because:
   a. they are too young to realize how difficult the situation is
   b. they are confident that the rain will come later
   c. they are small and don’t need very much food
3. When the police ask to see the graves of the two little girls, Tiro tells the truth. She probably does this because:
   a. she wanted to punish Mokgobja and Ramadi
   b. she didn’t think there would be any problem
   c. she was overcome with guilt and remorse

Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:
1. There has been a drought for the past seven years.
2. The rainy season began and there was an announcement in the village about the beginning of ploughing season.
3. They are pretending to be their mother.
4. They knew that the drought was continuing into the current rainy season and they were going to suffer all year.
5. Mokgobja
6. They kill them as sacrifices to a rain god.
7. They are arrested and sentenced to death.

Analysing the Story: Theme
Look back at the explanation of theme. The left column in the chart below contains three themes from the story “Looking For a Rain God.” Try to find evidence for each one and write it in the right column. The first one is done for you. Can you find one more theme?

Superstition
- At the start of the story, villagers are buying “talismans and herbs to rub on the plough”
- Mokgobja and his family believe in a rain-making ceremony involving ritual sacrifice of children

Desperation

Modern vs. Traditional values

Thinking Critically:
- Why were the “charlatans, incanters, and witch-doctors” successful during the drought? Was what they did honest or dishonest, in your opinion?

Tone (n): the quality of a voice
Rags (n): torn pieces of old cloth
Herd (n): a large group of animals that live and feed together
 Weird (adj): strange and unusual, unexpected or not natural
High-pitched (adj): describes a noise that is high and sometimes also loud and unpleasant
Mournful (adj): very sad
Maintain (v): to continue to have; to keep in existence, or not allow to become less
Haunted p. haunt (v): to cause repeated suffering or anxiety
Customs (n): ways of behaving or beliefs which have been established for a very long time
Recall (v): to bring the memory of a past event into your mind
Consulting p. part. consult (v): to discuss something with someone before making a decision
Ritual (n): a set of fixed actions and words performed regularly, especially as part of a ceremony
Unshakeable (adj): if someone’s trust/belief is unshakeable it cannot be made weaker/destroyed
Authority (n): an expert
Nerves (n): bravery or confidence to do something difficult, unpleasant or rude
Smashed p. smash (v): to destroy something completely
Deathly (adj): extreme in a way that is unpleasant
Devouring (adj): describes an emotion that is extremely strong and unusually destructive
Overwhelmed p. overwhelm (v): to cause someone to feel sudden strong emotion
Fled p. flee (v): to escape by running away
Ashen (adj): without colour
Terror-stricken (adj): extremely frightened
Sorrow (n): a feeling of sadness
Assuaged p. assuage (v): to make bad feelings less strong
Subtle (adj): not loud, bright, noticeable or obvious in any way
Starvation (n): the state of having no food for a long period of time, often causing death
Inadmissible (adj): unable to be accepted in a court of law
Evidence (n): one or more reasons for believing that something is or is not true
UNCLE BEN’S CHOICE
Chinua Achebe—Nigeria

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Uncle Ben is a clerk in a city in Nigeria. He is a happy young man and he likes going to dances, drinking, and talking with young women. Ben is very careful, though, not to let any women know where he lives. The only woman who knows is Margaret Jumbo.

On New Year’s Eve, Uncle Ben is out drinking until three o’clock in the morning. When he finally arrives home, he gets into his bed without lighting a candle. He is surprised to discover a naked woman in his bed!

Uncle Ben suspects that the woman is Margaret and he laughs and touches her. When he touches her breasts, though, he is surprised that they are the breasts of a girl. And when he touches her hair, he notices that it is not like an African’s hair, but like a European’s hair.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. Babies are born completely _______________, with no clothes.
2. When doing something dangerous, it is important to be _______________.
3. Christmas _______________ is the night before Christmas Day.
4. The paperwork at the office was filled out by the _______________.
5. He isn’t sure, but he _______________ that his friend is lying to him.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
• The daughter of Uncle Ben’s white boss has come to tell Ben she loves him.
• Uncle Ben is dreaming because he drank too much alcohol.
• Margaret Jumbo is wearing a wig.
• A spirit has come to trade Ben for his soul.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, answer the following questions.
1. Who is narrating the story?
2. What are two ways that the narrator made certain that no woman claimed him?
3. What is White Horse?
4. Who does the narrator think is in his bed?
5. What surprises the narrator when he touches the woman’s hair?
6. Where does the narrator go after he strikes the match?
7. Who does Mathew tell the narrator was in his bed?

Idioms & Expressions:
waw-waw women: (probably) immoral women
selling like hot bread: very popular
to sleep with one eye open: to be very cautious
before you can count A they count B: they are very clever
for (something’s) sake: because of something
wonders will never end: it was truly amazing
as luck would have it: by chance
a white lie: a harmless lie
God forbid: a way of saying you hope something doesn’t happen
it is the same ten and ten pence: there is no difference
opened my eyes: caused me to understand something that I did not understand before
8. According to the narrator, what would have happened if he had slept with the woman in his bed (identify two things)?

**Literary term: Point of view (1st and 3rd)**

“Uncle Ben’s Choice” has a first-person narrator. This means that the story is told in the first person by the main character, Uncle Ben, rather than in the third person. The first-person narrator refers to him- or herself as “I.” Because Uncle Ben tells the story, we see what happens through his eyes. We get a clear sense, not just of what Uncle Ben says and does, but also how Uncle Ben thinks, how he feels, and what he wishes for. We get to know Uncle Ben.

Many stories, however, have a third-person narrator. In fact, most stories in this book have a third-person narrator, including “Looking for a Rain God.” A third-person narrator describes events and characters from outside. This type of narrator tells the story, but does not enter the story or tell us who he or she is.

**Focus:** As you read “Uncle Ben’s Choice,” pay attention to the use of first person pronouns and possessives (i.e., “I,” “me,” “my,” “mine”). How would the story need to be changed if it were told from the third-person point of view?

### UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

**Geographical Context:**

The Niger River is the third-longest river in Africa (after the Nile and the Congo). It is the main river in West Africa and is over 4000 kilometers long. The Niger has played a central role in many West African civilizations. By the 17th century, coastal trade had replaced the trans-Saharan trade, mostly dealing in slaves. During the years when the slave trade flourished, nearly half the total number of slaves exported from Africa came from the Niger delta, which came to be known as the “Slave Coast.”

**The Niger Company** was named for the Niger river (as were the countries Nigeria and Niger). It was a British owned company that helped establish British colonial rule in the region.

**Edinburgh** is the capital city and second largest city in Scotland, while **London** is both the capital city and the largest city in England.

**Cultural Context:**

**Saros** were freed slaves who migrated to Nigeria in the beginning of the 1830s. They were mostly freed and repatriated slaves from various West African and Latin American countries such as Sierra Leone, Brazil and Cuba. Liberated slaves from Brazil and Latin American started migrating to Africa after slavery was abolished on the continent, while others from West Africa were recaptured and freed slaves already resident in Sierra Leone. Many of the returnees chose to return to Nigeria for cultural, missionary, and economic reasons. Many of them were originally descended from the Yoruba of western and central Nigeria.

The returnees mostly resided in the Lagos Colony and other cities in the Niger Delta. Though many were originally dedicated Anglophiles in Nigeria, they later adopted an indigenous and patriotic attitude on Nigerian affairs and were known to be cultural nationalists.

**Key Vocabulary:**

- **tennis** (n): a game played between two or four people on a playing area which involves hitting a small ball across a central net using a racket
- **billiards** (n): a game played on a table covered in green cloth in which a long pole is used to hit balls against each other and into pockets around the table
- **tournament** (n): a competition for teams or single players in which a series of games is played, and the winners of each game play against each other until only one winner is left

**brand new** (adj): completely new, especially not yet used

- **handshake** (n): a greeting, or an act showing that you have made an agreement, in which two people who are facing each other take hold of and shake each other’s right hand

- **elbow** (n): the part in the middle of the arm where it bends, or the part of a piece of clothing which covers this area

- **salaried people** (n): those who are being paid a salary

- **cellar** (n): a room under the ground floor of a building, usually used for storage

- **injections** (n): when someone puts a liquid, especially a drug, into a person’s body using a needle and a syringe


**Monetary Context:**
The pound sterling, commonly known as the *pound*, is the official currency of the United Kingdom. It is subdivided into 100 *pence*. During the British colonial era, the pound was used in many parts of the world, including Nigeria. It is the world’s oldest currency still in use.

**Consumer Context:**
Uncle Ben mentions many different products that he owns or consumes. The *Raleigh Bicycle* Company is a bicycle manufacturer founded in 1885. It is one of the oldest bicycle companies in the world. The phonograph, also called a gramophone or record player, was the first device capable of making recordings and reproducing sound. The Gramophone Company, based in the United Kingdom, was an early recording company and the parent organization of the famous "His Master’s Voice" (HMV) label. Uncle Ben’s *HMW Senior gramophone* refers to one of these.

*White Horse* is a blended Scotch Whisky from Edinburgh, first produced in 1861. *Guinea Gold* was a popular brand of tobacco in the early 1900s.

**About the Author:**
Chinua Achebe (16 November 1930 - 22 March 2013) was a Nigerian novelist, poet, professor, and critic. He was best known for writing the novel, *Things Fall Apart* which was first printed in 1958. It is the most widely read book in modern African literature. Achebe went to Nigeria’s first university, University College. Achebe wrote his first short story at university.

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**
The words in the word bank below are from the story. Find them in the story and try to understand their meaning. Then fill in the spaces in the sentences below with the correct word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD BANK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>surplus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. He got down on his ___ belly ___ to crawl.
2. There is a _________ of workers and not enough jobs.
3. He __________ from Christianity to Islam.
4. The head teacher listened to the parents _________ of a better way to educate their children
5. This problem has _________ researchers for years.
6. ‘Look out!’ I _________ over the noise of the traffic.
7. The prisoners were stripped __________ before forced to shower.
8. The students were nervous on the _________ of their graduation.

**Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:**
1. Uncle Ben
2. He never showed them the road to his house and he never ate the food that they cooked (for fear of love potions).
3. It is a brand of whisky (alcohol).
4. Margaret Jumbo
5. The woman’s hair is soft like a European’s hair.
6. He goes to Mathew Obi’s house.
7. Mami Wota, the Lady of the River Niger
8. He would have been made very wealthy, but he would not be allowed to have children.
Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. When Uncle Ben says “Drunk? It’s not in my dictionary.” He probably means:
   a. he has never heard the word before
   b. he has no experience ever being drunk
   c. he has a small dictionary that is missing some pages

2. When Uncle Ben finds a woman in his bed, he assumes that it is Margaret. This is probably because:
   a. she has visited him like this before
   b. she had told him that she would visit
   c. she is the only one who knows where he lives

3. If Uncle Ben had stayed with Mami Wota, it’s likely he would have:
   a. become very wealthy but had no children
   b. lost his job and started drinking more
   c. married her and had children with her

Analysing the Story: Point of view (1st and 3rd)
Look back at the explanation of point of view. “Uncle Ben’s Choice” is told in Uncle Ben’s voice in the 1st person. But, the same events could have been told to us by a 3rd person narrator like the one in “Looking For a Rain God.” In the left hand column in the table below, some excerpts of Uncle’s Ben’s narration are given. Make changes to the excerpts so that they are from the 3rd person point-of-view. The first one has been done for you. Can you pick out one more excerpt from “Uncle Ben’s Choice” and fill in the final row of the table?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st person narration from Uncle Ben</th>
<th>3rd person narrator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Like all progressive young men, I joined the African Club. We played tennis and billiards.”</td>
<td>Like all progressive young men, Uncle Ben joined the African Club. They played tennis and billiards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“One thing with me is I never mix my drinks. The day I want to drink whisky I call it whisky day; if I want to drink beer tomorrow then I don’t touch any other thing.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“She did not say anything and I suspected she was annoyed because she asked me to take her to the Club that day and I said no. I said to her: ‘If you come there we will meet, I don’t take anybody to the club as such.’ So I suspected that is what is making her vex.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking Critically:
• How old do you think the narrator is when the story takes place? How old do you think the narrator is when he is telling the story? Defend your answer.
• Do you think Mami Wota is real? What other explanation can you give for Uncle Ben’s story?
THE DUBE TRAIN
Can Temba—South Africa

PREPARING TO READ

**Story Preview:**
It is Monday morning and the narrator, along with many other passengers, is on the congested Dube train in South Africa. The narrator is sitting across from a very big hulk of a man.

A girl gets onto the train and later a tsotsi (a trouble-making young man) also gets onto the train. The tsotsi begins to tease the girl and touch her and she is very frightened. None of the passengers help her though.

One woman, not happy with the tsotsi’s shameless behaviour, yells at the men for not helping the girl. The tsotsi hears the woman, goes over to her and insults her. Because of this, the hulk of a man stands up and challenges the tsotsi.

**Words to Know:**
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Preview.
1. It is rude to _______________ people by saying offensive things.
2. Someone who doesn’t care what other people think is _______________.
3. There were many people at the graduation ceremony and the room was _______________.
4. Brothers and sisters often _______________ each other.
5. Something very large can be called a _______________.

**Making Predictions:**
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- The tsotsi escapes from the train at the next stop.
- The tsotsi apologizes to the woman and stops teasing the girl.
- The tsotsi attacks the man and the man kills him.
- The tsotsi takes out a knife and kills the hulk of a man.

WHILE READING

**Literary term: Setting**
The setting is the time and place of the action of the story. Often, the setting of a story has a casual relationship with the events of the story. The setting of “The Dube Train,” however, is so important to the plot that it provides the title of the story.

**Focus:** As you read “The Dube Train,” pay attention to how the narrator gives you a sense of setting. Can you see the Dube train and its passengers? Why are they where they are? What does the setting tell us about the characters and how does it influence the plot?

**Key Vocabulary:**
(shivering pr. part.) shiver (v): to shake slightly from cold or fear
clogged (adj): filled so that movement or activity is difficult
nauseous (adj): feeling as if you might vomit
(churning (n)) churn (v): If your stomach is churning, you feel ill, usually because you are nervous
debilitated (p.) debilitate (v): to make something physically weak

**Idioms & Expressions:**
God almighty: an expression of anger or surprise. (Some people consider this offensive)
cold calculation: planning not concerned with other’s safety
make gangway: cause people to move so that you can get someone or something through a crowd quickly
helter skelter: quickly and in all directions
Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. Why is the narrator pleased when the train comes?
2. What is impressive about the man seated across from the narrator?
3. What does the tsotsi do to the girl on the train?
4. Why does the woman yell at the men on the train?
5. Why does the hulk of a man finally confront the tsotsi?
6. What does the tsotsi use in the fight with the hulk of a man?
7. What happens to the tsotsi?

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Biblical Context:
The son of Ham finding a word for his awful discovery is a reference to the book of Genesis in the Bible. After Noah and his family survive the Great Flood, they begin to rebuild society. Noah plants grapes and eventually makes wine. One day Noah gets very drunk from his wine and falls asleep in his tent without any clothes. Ham, his son, sees him naked. When Noah wakes up, he finds out that Ham saw him naked and he places a curse on Ham's son, Canaan. Really it was Ham, who made an “awful discovery” and not Canaan, but the two are often combined because, strangely, Canaan receives the curse for his father's transgression.

Linguistic Context:
Throughout the story, the characters use a variety of non-English words. Tsotsi is a Nguni word meaning gangster or a young person with no purpose and probably causing some kind of trouble. Sies is an expression of disgust, disappointment, annoyance, probably from Afrikaans. Hela is a Sesotho interjection meant to get someone’s attention.

Finally, the “hulk of a man” is described by the narrator as looking like a genie. A genie is a a spiritual creature mentioned in Islamic theology. In popular culture, genies are almost depicted as existing inside an old-fashioned oil lamp. If someone finds the lamp and rubs it or performs some other ritual, the genie emerges and is bound to grant the possessor of the lamp three wishes.

Guessing Meaning from Context:
The words in the left column are from the story. The right column has definitions for those words. Look back at the story and try to understand the vocabulary. Then put the letter of its definition on the line next to each word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ruffian</td>
<td>a. unfriendly and not liking or agreeing with something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. tirade</td>
<td>b. a usual or fixed way of doing things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. dart (v)</td>
<td>c. a short simple song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. drowsy</td>
<td>d. (acts of) cruel and violent behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. shove</td>
<td>e. to move quickly or suddenly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. ditty</td>
<td>f. a long angry speech expressing strong disapproval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. hostile</td>
<td>g. a violent, wild and unpleasant person, usually a man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. routine</td>
<td>h. to push someone or something forcefully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. nefarious</td>
<td>i. (especially of activities) evil or immoral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. savagery</td>
<td>j. being in a state between sleeping and being awake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. odd</td>
<td>k. strange or unexpected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

prospect (n): the possibility that something good might happen  
humanity (n): people in general  
impression (n): an idea or opinion of what something is like  
malevolence (n): malevolent (adj): wanting to cause harm/evil  
plumb (adj): exactly  
aspect (n): the appearance or visual effect of a place, or the expression on a person's face  
announcer (n): someone who introduces programmes or reads the news on the television/radio  
loudspeaker (n): a piece of equipment used in public places so large numbers of people can hear someone speaking or music  
fluke (n): something good that has happened that is the result of chance instead of skill or planning  
lacklustrely (adv) lacklustre (adj): without energy and effort  
leaden (adj): dark grey  
platform (n): a raised structure at a railway station, where people get on and off trains  
conveyance belt (n): a continuous moving surface used for transporting objects  
obtrusive (adj): too noticeable  
tilt (v): (to cause to) move into a sloping position  
flaring (adj) flare (v): to (cause to) become wider  
nostrils (n): openings in the nose  
chin (n): the part of a person’s face below their mouth  
stubbled (adj) stubble (n): the short hair on a man’s face  
corded (adj) cord (n): (a length of) rope made of twisted threads  
enormous (adj): extremely large  
heaved (p.) heave (v): to move something using a lot of effort  
overall (n): a piece of clothing that covers both the upper and lower parts of the body  
fascinated (adj): extremely interested  
winking (pr. part) wink (v): to close one eye for a short time  
nipples (n): the dark part of skin which sticks out from the breast  
swayed (p.) sway (v): to move slowly from side to side  
chanted (p.) chant (v): to repeat a word or phrase continuously  
titillating (adj): describes sexual
Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:
1. He is pleased because the train is not full and he gets to have a seat.
2. The man is very large.
3. He touches her and harasses her verbally.
4. The woman is upset that the men are allowing the tsotsi to be so rude.
5. The tsotsi said something (we aren’t told what) very rude to the woman.
6. A knife
7. The hulk of a man grabs him and throws him out the window to his death.

Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.
1. When the narrator sees the tsotsi, he says, “I know the type.” By this he probably means:
   a. he has met this boy before
   b. he has met other boys like this one
   c. he has something to tell this boy
2. After the tsotsi insults the woman, the hulk of a man says “that woman is your mother.” He probably means:
   a. that the woman is literally the boy’s mother
   b. that the woman might adopt the tsotsi
   c. that the woman should be respected
3. The narrator says that “no one expressed sympathy for the boy or man.” This is probably because:
   a. they felt that both received what was deserved
   b. they were very accustomed to such violence
   c. they did not pay attention to what happened to them

Analysing the Story: Setting
Look back at the explanation of setting. In the table below, some details of the setting of “The Dube Train” are given in the left column. Try to decide what the author wants us to understand about the story based on the details he uses to describe the setting. Explain those setting details in the right column. The first one is done for you. Can you identify another detail of the setting that is not in the table?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Details</th>
<th>What the Details Tell Us</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s Monday morning and everyone is on a train.</td>
<td>Everyone is going to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The train has broken windows and doors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The people on the train are tired and unenthusiastic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The train is congested.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking Critically:
- Why do you think that no one (except for the hulk of a man) tries to help the girl or, after he is cut by the tsotsi, the hulk of a man himself?
- Why do you think the tsotsi behaves the way he does?
movement, in a way that shows that you are very confident and think that you are important

**clutch** (p.): clutch (v): to take hold of something tightly, in fear, worry, or pain

**jutting** (adj): just (v): to (cause to) stick out, especially past the edge of something

**panic** (n): a sudden feeling of fear that prevents reasonable thought and action

**whisper** (p.): whisper (v): to make a series of small, weak sounds, expressing pain or unhappiness

**snarl** (p.): snarl (v): to speak or say something angrily and forcefully

**murmur** (n): murmur (v): to speak or say very quietly

**drift** (pr. part.): drift (v): to move slowly, especially as a result of outside forces, with no control over direction

**hail** (v): to call someone in

**echoes** (n): sounds heard after they have reflected off a surface such as a wall or cliff

**stridency** (n): strident (adj): describes a sound which is loud, unpleasant and rough

**ungallant** (adj): gallant (adj): showing no fear of dangerous or difficult things

**rattle** (p.): rattle (v): to worry someone or make someone nervous

**incident** (n): an event which is either unpleasant or unusual

**approach** (p.): approach (v): to come near or nearer to someone or something in space, time, quality or amount

**confluence** (n): the place where two rivers flow together becoming a larger river

**design** (v): to make or draw plans for something

**necessitate** (adj): necessitate (v): to cause something to be needed

**drab** (adj): boring, especially in appearance; having little colour and excitement

**monotonously** (adv): monotonous (adj): staying the same and not changing and therefore boring

**identical** (adj): exactly the same

**gash** (n): a long deep cut, often in the skin

**imposition** (n): when someone expects another to do something that is not convenient for them

**intrigue** (adj): to interest someone a lot, especially by being strange or unusual

**caveman** (n): a modern man who is rude or violent towards others, often women

**vicious** (adj): describes people or actions with an intention to hurt someone badly

**fling** (p.): fling (v): to throw something suddenly and with a lot of force

**lap** (n): the top surface of the upper part
THE WINNER
Barbara Kimenye—Uganda

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Pius Ndawula has won a lot of money in a football pool in Uganda. His best friend Salongo, members of the community, and members of his family all come to congratulate him and stay with him at his house.

A member of this family, Cousin Sarah, begins organizing things in Pius’s house and even speaks for him in a BBC interview. Pius’s friend Mukasa notices that Pius looks worn out by all the clamour in his house and invites Pius to stay with him. Cousin Sarah says that she will stay and take care of Pius’s house.

In the morning, a telegram comes with news. There has been a mistake and Pius has won much less money than they had thought.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. The group of students was making such a ____________ that I couldn’t hear anything.
2. Before cell phones, people received messages by ____________.
3. The old man guessed who would win the matches with his ____________.
4. I was ____________ after a long day and only wanted to go home and sleep.
5. After she decided to run for president, all of the newspapers wanted ____________.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?

- Cousin Sarah will stay and marry Pius because she doesn’t care about the money.
- Pius will play in more football pools and he will lose all of his money trying to win again.
- Cousin Sarah will leave with the rest of Pius’s family because he is poor once again.
- Pius will force all of the people who have been staying at his house to pay for the food that they have eaten.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. What has happened to Pius leading so many people to come to his house?
2. Who is Salongo? What does he do?
3. What does Pius want to do with the money he has won (two things)?
4. How does Pius feel about all of the attention he is receiving because of the football pools?
UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

5. What does the man from the BBC want?
6. Why does Pius go to Yosefu’s house?
7. Who is Cousin Sarah? What does she want from Pius?
8. What news comes in the second telegram?
9. How does Pius react to the news?
10. What do Pius and Cousin Sarah plan to do at the end of the story?

**Key Vocabulary:**

aware (adj): having knowledge or experience of a thing
despite (prep): without taking any notice of or influenced by
downtrodden (adj): badly and unfairly treated
assured (adj): showing skill and confidence
capable (adj): able to do things effectively and skilfully
invested (p.) invest (v): to put money/effort/time into something
preferably (adv): if possible
lurking (pr. part.) lurk (v): to wait or move in a secret way so that you cannot be seen
unpretentious (adj): simple and/or sincere
edification (n): the improvement of the mind and understanding
garrulous (adj): having the habit of talking a lot
lame (adj): (especially of animals) not able to walk correctly because of weakness in the legs
tortuous (adj): not direct/simple (n): useful, important or good enough
caption (n): a short piece of text under a picture which describes the picture or explains it
gloated (p) gloat (v): to feel or express great pleasure or satisfaction because of your own success
bombardment (n) bombard (v): to direct so many things at someone that they find it difficult to deal with them
 nudging (pr. part.) nudge (v): to push something gently
muttered (p) mutter (v): to speak quietly and in a low voice
persistent (adj): trying to do something in a determined way
obscurity (n): when something is not clear, difficult to understand or see
adjust (v): to change slightly
strain (v): to become stretched or to experience pressure
ruthlessly (adv): in a way that you are not thinking or worrying about any pain caused to others

### Historical Context:

**Buganda** is a kingdom within the country of Uganda. The Baganda are the largest ethnic group in Uganda and give the country its name. In pre-colonial times, Buganda was one of the most powerful dynasties in East Africa. In 1894 the British took control of Buganda. In 1962, when Uganda gained independence, the kingdom of Buganda was abolished. It was reinstated in 1993.

**Ssabalangira** is an honorary title for descendants of male royalty in Buganda.

### Cultural Context:

When all of his relatives arrive, Pius’ shamba is described as “a turbulent sea of white kanzus and brilliant busutis.” A busuti, also called a gomesi, is a colorful floor-length dress. It is the most commonly used costume for women in Buganda. Traditional male attire is the kanzu.

The busuti can be worn for any occasion, and in rural areas it’s the form of daily dress. Residents of cities tend to wear it on special occasions such as funerals, and weddings.

A kanzu is a white or cream coloured robe worn by men in the African Great Lakes region. The kanzu is a floor length garment. The men of Buganda in Uganda consider it their most important dress. Kanzu is a Ganda word of Swahili origin, which means "robe" or "tunic".

**Shamba** is also a Swahili word referring to a small subsistence farm for growing crops and fruit-bearing trees, often including the dwelling of the farmer.

### BBC World Service

The BBC is the British Broadcasting Corporation. The BBC World Service is the world’s largest international broadcaster, broadcasting news, speech and discussions in 28 languages to many parts of the world. The World Service was reported to have reached 188 million people a week on average in June 2009. It does not carry advertising, and the English language service broadcasts 24 hours a day.
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**Guessing Meaning from Context:**
The sentences below are from the story. Try to understand the meaning of the **bolded** words and circle the letter of the answer that gives the correct meaning for each word.

1. Every Ugandan newspaper, on the following day, carried a front-page photograph of “Mr. Pius Ndawula and his happy wife,” a caption that caused Pius to shake with **rage** and threaten legal proceedings.
   a. extreme sadness  
   b. extreme joy  
   c. extreme confusion  
   d. extreme anger

2. He was even more seriously **alarmed** when suddenly Salongo gave him a painful dig in the ribs.
   a. happy or joyful about something  
   b. worried or frightened by something  
   c. confused or uncertain about something  
   d. upset or saddened by something

3. Almost blind, and very lame, he had tottered out with the **aid** of a stout stick.
   a. help  
   b. problem  
   c. color  
   d. idea

4. **Overnight** he seemed to become the most popular man in Buganda.
   a. the night before  
   b. during the night  
   c. for one night  
   d. at night

5. They could only call and **briefly** congratulate Pius before being elbowed out of the way by his more garrulous relations.
   a. for now  
   b. for a long time  
   c. for a short time  
   d. for later

6. He was even more confused by Salongo's **constant** nudging and muttered advice.
   a. intermittent  
   b. playful  
   c. serious  
   d. frequent

7. Pius had become very **wary** of Cousin Sarah.
   a. not conscious  
   b. not trusting  
   c. not angry  
   d. not excited

8. 'Your stroke of luck seems to have **exhausted** you, Pius,' Kibuka remarked.
   a. extremely old  
   b. extremely healthy  
   c. extremely tired  
   d. extremely pleased

**Making Inferences:**
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. When Salongo says that cousin Sarah is “a sticker,” he probably means that:
   a. she wants to marry Pius for his money  
   b. she wants to kill Pius and steal his money  
   c. she wants to ask Pius for a loan

2. Pius thinks “that woman did mean business” when he realizes that Sarah had spoken for him to the BBC. By this, he probably means:
   a. that she was planning to start a business  
   b. that she was determined to marry Pius  
   c. that she wanted Pius to hire her

3. After staying at Yosefu's house, Pius goes back to his own home. It is empty.
   His family has probably left because:
   a. they had to go to work and school  
   b. they had eaten all of the available food  
   c. they heard that Pius had won less money

(hacking pr. part.) hack (v): to cut into pieces in a rough and violent way, often without aiming
meager (adj): very small amount
plantain (n): a tropical fruit similar to a banana with green skin
dished (something) out (ph. v): to give something to someone or distribute food to people
acknowledgment (n): accepting that something is true or right
behalf (n): representing
snooping (pr. part.) snoop (v): to look around a place secretly
deny (v): to say that something is not true or to refuse something
contact (n): a person, especially in a high position, who can give you useful information
batch (n): a group of things or people dealt with together
bosom (n): the front of a person's chest
effusively (adv): in a way that shows very strong feeling
momentum (n): the force that keeps an object moving
resemble (v): to look like or be like someone or something
turbulent (adj): involving a lot of sudden changes or violence
limp (adj): soft; not stiff
fragment (n): a small piece or a part, especially when broken from something whole
obliterated (pr. part.) obliterate (v): remove any sign of something
steadfastly (adv): strongly and without stopping
ignore (v): to intentionally not give attention to
mesmerized (adj): feeling so interested by something that you cannot think of anything else
frantically (adv): in a hurried way
span (v): to cover a large space
gap (n): an empty space or opening in the middle of something
audibly (adv): heard easily, loudly
growled (p. v): growl (v): to make a low rough sound, in anger
exasperation (n): frustration
chanted (p. v): chant (v): to repeat/sing a word/phrase continuously
off key (adj): notes slightly higher or lower than they should be
imposing (adj): having an appearance which looks important
definite (adj): certain/clear/fixed
significant (adj): important
**Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:**

1. He won the football pools (and, therefore, a lot of money).
2. Salongo is Pius's best friend. He guards the tomb of Ssabalangira, a great warrior.
3. He wants to extend his coffee plantation, put a new roof on his house, begin raising hens, and help his friend Salongo (by building a new tomb for Ssabalangira).
4. He is overwhelmed by all the people, but happy to have his family around him.
5. He wants an interview with Pius.
6. He is worn out by all the people in his house who want to talk to him and needs a break.
7. Cousin Sarah is the wife of the (no longer living) stepson of one of Pius's cousins.
8. There has been a mistake and Pius has won much less money than they had originally said.
9. He is not angry at the news.
10. They will be married.

**Analysing the Story: Plot**

Look back at the explanation of plot. Pay close attention to the different elements that make up the plot. The following chart shows those elements of a story. The major events in “The Winner” are listed below the chart. Show where events go in the chart by writing the numbers in the appropriate places.

**Thinking Critically:**

- Do you think that all of Pius's family has come to stay at his house only to congratulate him? Or do you think that they have other motives?
- Why does Salongo say that Sarah is 'the real winner' at the end of the story?
- If you won a lot of money in a football pool (or otherwise), what would you do with it?
PREPARING TO READ

**Story Preview:**
Kwame Asante is a successful young scholar in Ghana. He has achieved his ambition and become a very important man in the community. There is a problem though: he is married to Akosua, a beautiful but uneducated woman.

Kwame tells Akosua that he will give her money to start a business of her own. This is because Kwame has decided that he should marry a more educated woman. Akosua, however, does not agree to his plan and argues with him, indignantly. The next day, Akosua leaves their home and goes to her father's house with their children.

Kwame is angry, but he cannot find a way to force Akosua to come home. He decides to marry a school teacher named Martha Aryeetey. After the wedding ceremony, Martha goes to bed, but Kwame sits on the verandah and dozes off. He wakes up when he hears a noise inside. He goes in and sees Akosua sitting there in her bridal clothes.

**Words to Know:**
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.

1. The student hoped that one day he would _____________.
2. The old man always _____________ after lunch.
3. She grew medicinal herbs on the _____________ behind her house.
4. We all knew he was wrong, but still he _____________ refused to admit it.
5. The _____________ had been working at the university for twenty years.

**Making Predictions:**
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?

- Kwame will yell at Akosua for coming into his home and she will kill him.
- Kwame will yell at Akosua for coming into his home and will call the police.
- Kwame will regret what he has done to Akosua and she will ask him to divorce Martha.
- Kwame will regret what he has done to Akosua, but she is not really there and he is dreaming.

**WHILE READING**

**Comprehension Questions:**
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.

1. How long has Kwame been married to Akosua?
2. Why does Kwame want to give Akosua 100 pounds?
3. What does Kwame threaten to do if Akosua disobeys him?
4. Who is Kofi Asare?
5. Where does Akosua go when Kwame leaves for Kumasi?
6. What 2 things does Kwame do to try to get Akosua to return?
7. What does Kwame decide to do about Akosua in the end?
8. Who is Martha Aryeetey? What is her job?
9. What happens at Holy Trinity Church?
10. At 10 p.m., where is Martha and where is Kwame?
11. Who does Kwame see in the sitting-room?
12. What happens to Kwame?
13. What news arrives in the telegram from Kofi Asare?

**Literary term: Poetic Justice**

In real life, people don’t necessarily get what they deserve. Sometimes, good people have bad things happen to them, and bad people have good things happen. However, in fiction, authors can reward or punish characters for their actions. This is called poetic justice.

**Focus:** Pay attention to the actions of characters in “The Torn Veil.” By the end of the story, is there poetic justice? Do some characters get what they deserve while others do not?

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**Historical Context:**

The Gold Coast was a British colony on the Gulf of Guinea in west Africa that became the independent nation of Ghana in 1957. The Gold Coast was a name for the region used by Europeans because of the large gold resources found in the area. Though the slave trade was the principal exchange for many years.

The British Gold Coast was formed in 1867 and Britain steadily expanded its colony through the invasion of local kingdoms, particularly the Ashanti and Fante confederacies. The Ashanti people had controlled much of the territory of Ghana before the Europeans arrived and were often in conflict with them.

The British and the Ashanti fought many wars in the second half of the 19th century. In 1900, Ashanti were decisively defeated in the Ashanti Uprising, resulting in the British capture of the Ashanti capital city of Kumasi.

By 1901, all of the Gold Coast was a British colony, with its kingdoms and tribes considered a single unit. The British exported a variety of natural resources such as gold, metal ores, diamonds, ivory, pepper, timber, grain and cocoa. But by 1945, the native population was demanding more autonomy at the end of the Second World War and the beginnings of the decolonisation process across the world. In 1957 the colony gained independence under the name of Ghana.

**Guessing Meaning Form Context:**

The words in the word bank below are all from the story. Find them in the story and see if you can understand their meaning. Then fill in the spaces in the sentenced below with the correct word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD BANK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>safeguard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The players __strutted__ onto the field and posed for the cameras.
2. The country is _________ for its appalling prison conditions.
3. The castle was built on top of a natural grassy _________.
4. The poster explains how to ___________ against dangers in the home.
5. That was a ___________ decision—you didn’t think about the costs involved.
6. Perhaps you could ___________ your father into taking you to the station.
7. I thought he was a ___________ sort of person.
8. I can’t understand the ___________ of people who hurt defenceless animals.
9. The boy has a great ___________ for football—his favorite sport.

**Key Vocabulary:**

- **uncrushing (adj):** behaving in a way that is dishonest or unfair in order to get what you want
- **qualm (n):** an uncomfortable feeling of doubt about whether you are doing the right thing
- **perfume (n):** a liquid with a pleasant smell, often used on skin
- **nervously (adv):** nervous (adj): worried and anxious
- **ebony (adj):** black in colour
- **peculiar (adj):** strange or unusual
- **designed (adj):** design (v): to make plans for something
- **(shod p.) shoe (v):** to have shoes
- **zest (n):** enthusiasm, eagerness, energy and interest
- **disinfecting (pr. part.)** disinfect (v): to clean something using chemicals that kill very small living things that cause disease
- **passion (n):** a powerful feeling, of love, anger or other emotions
- **abates 3rd person sing.:** abate (v): to become less strong
- **refined (v):** to push suddenly
- **associateship (n):** a position as associate professor in a university
- **coveted (adj):** describes something that people want to have
- **(inanely adv):** inane (adj): with no real meaning or importance
- **consult (v):** to get information from a person, book, etc. with special knowledge on a subject
- **impertinent (adj):** not respectful, often towards someone older or in a higher position than you
- **entitled p.:** entitle (v): to give someone rights to do something
- **stark (adj):** empty, simple or obvious, or without decoration
- **misery (n):** great unhappiness
- **whining (pr. part.):** whine (v): complain or express disappointment or unhappiness repeatedly
- **disgrace (v):** to cause people to stop respecting you by doing something very bad
- **wilful (adj):** determined to do exactly as you want, even if you know it is wrong
- **(doted on p.):** dote (ph v): to love someone completely
Thinking Critically:

- Kwame is allowed to leave his wife, Akosua, with a small sum of money under Native Customary Law. Kwame is happy because it allows him to take a wife better suited to his new position. But the narrator worries that the law doesn’t “safeguard the position of the woman.” Do you think Native Customary Law, as described in this story, is good or bad? Defend your answer.
PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Mary is a young girl from a village in Kenya. She works as a housegirl in Nairobi for Elizabeth and Peter. In the morning, Mary wakes up and goes upstairs. She rouses the children, Okwach, Otieno, Akong’o, and Awino, to prepare them for school.

But she is too slow and Elizabeth yells at her. Peter interferes and defends Mary. Peter and Elizabeth argue because Peter goes out drinking with a girlfriend every night. In the middle of the fight, Peter slaps Elizabeth. Mary, meanwhile, burns the breakfast. Everyone but Mary leaves for work and school.

In the afternoon, Elizabeth returns with the two smallest children. Again, Mary burns the meal and Elizabeth is angry because she must return to work without eating. In the evening, Mary burns dinner. Elizabeth forces her out of the house into the back yard and slams the door behind her.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Preview.
1. It’s their problem and I’m not going to _______________.
2. His new house has three bedrooms _______________ and one on the first floor.
3. She was so angry that she _______________ the door when she left the room.
4. The _______________ is surrounded by a fence, so the dog doesn’t need a chain.
5. She was _______________ from her sleep by a knock on the front door.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- Elizabeth will feel bad for Mary and will let her come back into the house.
- Mary will go stay at a friend’s house for the night.
- Elizabeth will leave Mary outside all night as punishment.
- Mary will run away and return to her home village.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
1. What is Mary’s job?
2. Why is Elizabeth unhappy with her husband, Peter?
3. What does Peter do to Elizabeth?
4. Where does Mary sleep?
5. This story takes place in Nairobi. Is Mary from Nairobi?
6. Mary is very unhappy with her job. Why does she still work for Elizabeth?
7. Who is Mwangi?
8. Is Elizabeth happy with the lunch that Mary prepares?
9. Why does Mary slap Okwach?
10. Where does Mary take the children in the afternoon?
11. Who does Mary meet in the park? What is her job?
12. What happens to the dinner Mary cooks?
13. Where does Mary spend the night until 3 a.m.?
14. Who finds Mary and lets her into the house?

**Literary term: Characters and Characterization**

Characters are the people who participate in the action of a story. The most important characters are the main characters. Less important characters are known as minor characters. The author creates characters through physical descriptions, speech, thoughts, actions, and observations from other characters. This is called characterization.

Focus: “Workday” has many characters. Pay attention to which are the major characters and which are the minor characters. How do you know? Think about how the narrator helps us see and understand the characters. Can you describe them? Can you tell what they are feeling?

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**Cultural Context:**

*Ugali* is a dish of maize flour and water cooked into a thick porridge. It is a staple food of the African Great Lakes region and Southern Africa. In different parts of Africa, ugali has different names: nsima, sembe, posho, etc.

*Chapatis* are one of the staple foods of South Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh). They are a flatbread made from wheat flour and water. They are also common in the Horn of Africa. In many parts of East Africa, colewort is commonly known by the Swahili name, *sukuma wiki*. The literal translation of “sukuma wiki” is “stretch the week.” It is a vegetable that is generally affordable and available all-year round in this region. It forms part of the staple dish in this region together with ugali.

When Mary goes to the park she meets up with another aya, Priscilla. *Aya* is a Hindi (widely spoken language in India) word for a nanny, or a woman who cares for someone else’s children. Like *chapatis*, the word *aya* is a South Asian import to Africa likely as a result of the movement of people between South Asia and British East Africa during British colonial rule in both regions.

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**

The words in the left column are from the story. The right column has definitions for those words. Look back at the story and try to understand the vocabulary. Then put the letter of its definition on the line next to each word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>agony</td>
<td>g. extreme physical or mental pain or suffering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contrite</td>
<td>a. loud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pijamas</td>
<td>b. soft loose clothing which is worn in bed and consists of trousers and a type of shirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corridor</td>
<td>c. a long passage in a building or train, especially with rooms on either side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>remove</td>
<td>d. extremely hot and unpleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resounding</td>
<td>e. feeling very sorry and guilty for something bad that you have done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soundly</td>
<td>f. deeply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stifling</td>
<td>g. extreme physical or mental pain or suffering</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key Vocabulary:**

*Mattress* (n): the part of a bed, made of a strong cloth cover filled with material, which makes the bed comfortable to lie on

*(methodically* (adv)) methodical (adj): describes people who do things in a very ordered way

*Staircase* (n): a set of stairs inside a building

*Bunk beds* (n): two beds fixed together, one on top of the other

*(fetching* pr. part.)* fetch (v): to go to another place to get something and bring it back

*Grill* (n): the surface in a cooker which can be heated to very high temperatures and on which you put food to be cooked

*Deaf* (adj): unable to hear, either completely or partly

*Screw (someone)* (v): to have sex with someone

*(sighed* p.)* sigh (v): to breathe out slowly and noisily, expressing tiredness, sadness, pleasure, etc.

*(guardedly* (adv)) guarded (adj): careful not to give too much information or show how you really feel

*(yanked* p.)* yank (v): to pull something forcefully with a quick movement

*(tugging* pr. part.)* tug (v): to pull something quickly and usually with a lot of force

*Grapple (v): to fight, especially in order to win something

*(snapped* p.)* snap (v): to say something suddenly in an angry way
Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.
1. Mary thinks that “she had never got used to the idea of watching the clock while she worked.” This is probably because:
   a. she completed her work much more quickly before
   b. she never learned to read the time on a clock
   c. she didn’t need to worry about time in the village
2. At lunch, Elizabeth decides not to eat. This is likely because:
   a. she was running late
   b. she was not hungry
   c. she doesn’t like ugali
3. At the end of the story, Peter comes home at 3 a.m. This is because:
   a. he was working late
   b. he had a long journey
   c. he was out drinking

Suggested Answers for Comp. Questions:
1. She is a servant for Elizabeth and her family.
2. He goes out drinking every night and stays with another woman.
3. He slaps her.
4. She sleeps in the sitting-room.
5. No. Mary is from a village.
6. Her family is very poor and she has many younger brothers and sisters.
7. Mwangi is a servant in the house next door.
8. No. Mary burns it.
9. He will not go upstairs for his nap.
10. She takes them to the park.
11. Mary meets Priscilla in the park. She is a servant in another house.
12. Mary burns dinner.
13. Mary spends the night outside of the house.
14. Peter finds Mary and lets her back inside.

Analysing the Story: Characters and Characterization
Look back at the explanation of characters and characterization. We can learn about the characters in a story based on what they do, what they say (or think and feel, if the narrator allows us to know those things), and how they are described. Four of the characters from “Workday” appear below. Look back at the story and see if you can fill in the information. Peter is done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mary</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peter</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Slaps Elizabeth</td>
<td>Yells “Shut up” at his wife</td>
<td>When he leaves in the morning he lets the door slam behind him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stays out late drinking</td>
<td>Tells his wife not to speak like a whore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refuses to drive children to school</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elizabeth</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mwangi</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Description</th>
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Thinking Critically:
- Where is Peter every night? Akong’o sees his father slap his mother and call her a whore. Do you think that will affect the way Akong’o will treat women when he is grown?
- When Peter comes home at the end of the story, he lets Mary into the house. Mary thinks to herself that “he is a good man.” Is Peter a good man?
MISTA COURIFER
Adelaide Casely-Hayford—Sierra Leone

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Mista Courifer is a coffin-maker and a preacher in Freetown, the capital city of Sierra Leone. Though he is an African, he very much likes European things—he wears European clothes and lives in a house built in the European style. Mista Courifer especially wants his son, Tomas, to be like a European.

Mista Courifer buys Tomas clothes from England and he is proud that Tomas works in the government service. Tomas, though, resents that his father buys his clothes and one day decides to burn them all! But his sister, Keren, stops him.

Tomas then confides to his sister that he is unhappy with his job. He thinks that it is unfair that he never gets a holiday. But, to avoid his father’s ire, Tomas doesn’t resign. Instead, he comes to work late, does a poor job, and breaks the rules. Finally, his employer, Mr Buckmaster, calls Tomas into his office.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Preview.
1. She bitterly ___________ her father’s new wife.
2. The old man’s ___________ was feared by all of the children.
3. The new ___________ is so boring that people no longer go to church.
4. I only ___________ my secrets to my closest friends.
5. Before his boss could fire him, he ___________.

Making Predictions:
From the Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions is most probable?
• Tomas will ignore Mr Buckmaster and go to work in Mr Courifer’s workshop.
• Mr Buckmaster will fire Tomas and Mr Courifer will not help his son because he is so angry.
• Tomas will apologize to Mr Buckmaster and begin doing proper work again.
• Mr Buckmaster will grant Tomas a holiday and Tomas will stop wearing European clothes.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. What is Mista Courifer’s profession?
2. What is Mista Courifer’s other “official capacity”?
3. What 2 biblical figures does Mista Courifer like to preach about?
4. Why does Mista Courifer always wear black?
5. Where do Tomas’ clothes come from?
6. How is Keren different from her brother?
7. Why does Tomas decide not to burn all of his clothes?
8. Why does Tomas want to leave his job as a clerk?
9. What does Mr Buckmaster do when Tomas tells him why he is producing poor work?
10. What does Mr Buckmaster tell Mista Courifer that he will do for Tomas?
11. What does Tomas plan to do during his holiday?
12. Is Mista Courifer happy Tomas plans to build a mud hut? Why or why not?
13. What type of clothes does Tomas wear to church at the end of the story?
14. What happens to Mista Courifer at the end of the story?

**Literary term: Dialect**

Dialect is the form of a language spoken in a particular place by a group of people. Dialects vary in pronunciation, vocabulary, expressions, and grammatical constructions. Writers use dialect to establish setting and describe characters.

**Focus:** The title character of “Mista Courifer” and his daughter, Keren, speak a dialect of English. Pay attention to how their speech is different from that of Tomas and Mr Buckmaster. What do you think the author wants us to understand about the characters by having two of them speak in a dialect?

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**Historical Context:**

The Wolof Empire was a medieval West African state that ruled parts of Senegal and the Gambia from approximately 1350 to 1890. Wolof is the name of the language of the Wolof people. At least 50% of Senegal’s population are native speakers of Wolof. The majority of the Wolof people are Sufi Muslims.

**Biblical Context:**

In the Old Testament book of Jonah, the Prophet Jonah was called by God to Nineveh, which God would destroy if the people didn’t repent. After being rejected, Jonah was swallowed by a great fish (probably a whale). Eventually, after Jonah repented for three days, God made the whale spit Jonah onto land. He then obeyed God and told the people of their sins to God.

In the Book of Genesis, Noah and his family kept believing in God in a time when most people did not. Therefore, God told Noah he was going to flood the world to drown out evil. He told Noah to build a boat called an ark. On the ark, Noah, his family, and two of every kind of animal would survive the flood. To find land Noah sent out a dove, which returned with an olive branch. After the flood, God made a rainbow as a promise that he would never destroy the Earth by flood again.

Mista Courifer is described as descending into de profundis when singing. De profundis references the first words of the Latin translation of Psalm 130:

*From the depths* I have cried out to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.
If you, Lord, were to mark iniquities, who, O Lord, shall stand?
But with you is forgiveness, that you may be revered. I trust in the Lord;
My soul trusts in his word.
My soul waits for the Lord,
More than watchmen wait for the dawn, let Israel hope in the Lord.
For with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.
And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

**Musical Context:**

When Mista Courifer descends into de profundis, he is singing in the pitch (musical level) of bass, or the lowest range of musical notes. But he also soars into treble, or the highest range of musical notes. In music, the key is a particular set of musical notes based on one individual note.

**Key Vocabulary:**

- (incessantly (adv)) incessant (adj): never stopping, especially in an annoying or unpleasant way
- (wagging pr. part.) wag (v): (especially of a tail or finger) to move from side to side or up and down, quickly and repeatedly
- (pendulum n): a device consisting of a weight which moves from one side to the other, especially forming a part of a clock
- (capacity n): a position or job
- (chapel n): a room which is used for Christian worship
- (conducting pr. part.) conduct (v): to organize and perform
- (superintending pr. part.) superintend (v): to be in charge of
- (pulpit n): a raised place in a church for speaking
- (consequently (adv): as a result
- (descended p.) descend (v): to go or come down
- (congregations n): groups of people who come together in a building for worship and prayer
- (soared p.) soar (v): to rise very quickly to a high level
- (volleyed p.) volley (v): to hit or kick a moving ball before it touches the ground
- (mites n): very small animals similar to spiders
- (collapse n): the sudden failure of a system, organization, etc.
- (sheer adj): used to emphasize how very great, important or powerful a quality or feeling is
- (confined p.) confine (v): to limit a person or problem
- (outlying adj): far from centre
- (similarity n): when people or things look or are the same
- (discourse n): communication
- (beloved adj): loved very much
- (adulterous (adj)): adultery (n): sex between a married person and someone their spouse
- (generation n): people of about the same age within a society
- (refuge n): (a place which gives) protection or shelter
- (convinced p.) convince (v): to persuade someone
- (undertakers n): people whose job is to prepare dead bodies and to organize funerals
- (attire n): formal clothes
- (erected p.) erect (v): to build a building, wall or other structure
Guessing Meaning from Context:
The sentences below are from the story. Try to understand the meaning of the **bolded** words and circle the letter of the answer that gives the correct meaning for each word.

1. His voice was **remarkable** for its wonderful gradations of pitch.
   - a. soft
   - b. typical
   - c. loud
   - d. unusual

2. Having read somewhere that English undertakers generally appeared in **sombre** attire, he immediately followed suit.
   - a. bright and colourful
   - b. cheap and ugly
   - c. dark and serious
   - d. new and fancy

3. He had noticed how the houses were built and furnished and had **forthwith** erected himself one after the approved pattern.
   - a. immediately
   - b. cautiously
   - c. slowly
   - d. normally

4. He **summoned up** courage to look boldly at the countenance of his chief.
   - a. remembered very clearly
   - b. lacked or did not have
   - c. called together or gathered
   - d. thought about deeply

5. Mr. Courifer’s **dejection** grew deeper with each moment.
   - a. happiness
   - b. excitement
   - c. anger
   - d. sadness

Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. Tomas receives new European clothes from his father every year, but Keren has never received any. This is probably because:
   - a. she doesn’t want them or think that they are nice
   - b. Mista Courifer thinks sons are more important than daughters
   - c. it is illegal for women to wear such clothes

2. Why did Tomas receive two months for a holiday?
   - a. That was the normal practice in Mr Buckmaster’s office
   - b. He threatened Mr Buckmaster that he would quit otherwise
   - c. Mr Buckmaster listened to Tomas and sympathised with him

3. The story ends by saying, “Mista Courifer is the local preacher no longer.” This probably happened because:
   - a. he was so embarrassed and confused by his son’s decisions
   - b. he decided to let Tomas take his position
   - c. he lost his faith in God and religion completely

Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:

1. He is a coffin maker.
2. He acts as a preacher in the church.
3. He likes to preach about Jonah and Noah.
4. He has read that Englishmen with his profession always wear black.
5. His clothes are all brought from England.
6. She isn’t attractive and doesn’t get English clothes (though she likes them).
7. Keren convinces him not to burn them.
8. He never gets a holiday, but the white men who work in the same place do.
9. Mr Buckmaster listens to Tomas and then grants him a holiday.
10. Mr Buckmaster tells Mr Courifer that he will write a testimonial for Tomas.
11. He plans to marry a woman and build a mud hut.
12. Mr Courifer does not want Tomas to build a mud hut because that is the African style and not the European style.
14. He is so disturbed by his son’s actions that he stops being the local preacher.
**Analysing the Story: Dialect**

Look back at the definition of dialect. Though Mista Courifer speaks in a dialect, we can understand him. In the table below, change Mista Courifer’s speech into standard English. The first one is done for you. Can you find one more instance to add to the chart?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mista Courifer</th>
<th>Standard English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Just like 'e no use for teach woman carpentering; she nebb sabi for hit de nail on de head.</td>
<td>Just like there's no use teaching a woman carpentering; she never knows how to hit the nail on the head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day bof seek a refuge from de swelling waves.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomas, you must larn for make coffins. You get fine chance now.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thinking Critically:**

- Mista Courifer thinks Tomas should dress like the English, work for the English, speak English well, but marry a traditional wife who would be his servant. Tomas wants to marry a woman he loves and respects, but also to dress in Wolof clothes and live in a mud hut. Who do you agree with? Why?
- Mista Courifer and Keren speak a local dialect of English, while Mr Buckmas—in Wolof clothes and live in a mud hut. Who do you agree with? Why?
THE EMPTY BASKET
Grace Ogot—Kenya

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Aloo is returning from the field when she sees a crowd of people outside her hut. She thinks that some misfortune has happened to her small children, Ouma and Akoth, or Anyango, the little girl who cares for them. When she arrives, she learns that the baby, Akoth, is alone in the hut with a huge snake! Aloo is not happy that the men have not tried to save her baby and she calls them cowards. Then she enters the house and bravely rescues her child.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. I hope you always have good luck and never suffer _______________.
2. A large _______________ awaited the president when she came to visit the village.
3. The man _______________ ran into the burning hut to rescue his children.
4. The girls were _______________ by the successful businesswoman who came to speak at their school.
5. Don’t be a _______________! Go fight.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following do you think is most probable?

- Obwalo will escape through a window and kill the snake.
- The snake will bite Obwalo before it escapes into the bush.
- The snake will bite Obwalo, but he will cut off its head and both will die.
- Aloo will try to rescue Obwalo, but the snake will bite her.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. What does Aloo see outside her hut when she is returning from the field?
2. What does she think has happened?
3. Who did Aloo leave at home in the hut?
4. What is inside the hut?
5. Why does Aloo call the men cowards?
6. Which men go into the house?
7. What does Obwalo think is in the basket?
8. What is actually in the basket?
9. How does Obwolo escape?
10. Who kills the snake? How?
11. Who arrives at the end of the story? Why?

**Literary term: Personification**

Personification is a figure of speech in which human qualities are attributed to an object, animal, or idea. Writers use personification to make feelings or images understood by the reader.

**Focus:** The snake in “The Empty Basket” is personified in many different ways. Pay attention to how the author helps us see the snake and feel the fear the people have for the snake by describing it as if it were a human. The snake isn’t the only thing personified in the story, though.

Can you find other example of personification?

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**Biblical Context:**

Pentecost in the Christian church is a religious holiday that takes place 50 days after Easter. It is to remember the coming of the Holy Spirit in the form of a flame to the Apostles and other followers of Jesus as described in the book of Acts in the Bible. This mass baptism is often considered the true beginning of Christianity.

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**

The words in the word bank below are from the story. Find them in the story and try to understand their meaning. Then fill in the spaces in the sentences below with the correct word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD BANK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>amid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. After using the toilet, it is important to wash your hands _________________.
2. The army had to _______________ from the battle after losing many soldiers.
3. His lungs were _______________ damaged from smoking.
4. Their family had to _______________ their home after the flooding began.
5. He was _______________ after falling down and hitting his head on the ground.
6. Although it is not certain, this is _______________ the place where the lion was last seen.
7. All of the remaining bricks were piled up in a _______________.
8. She was not able to hear the teacher _______________ all of the noise of her classmates.
9. The presidential candidate started to spread _______________ rumours about the other political parties.

**Making Inferences:**

Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. When Aloo is standing outside her house, she feels “sick in her stomach.” This is probably because:
   a. she is hungry   b. she is worried   c. she is ill
2. After Obwolo becomes trapped by the snake, the crowd yells “The bedroom window!” They probably yell this because:
   a. The snake is headed for the window   b. Obwolo should escape through the window   c. The window is broken and dangerous

**Key Vocabulary:**

- **panicky** (adj): feeling worried or frightened
- **numb** (adj): If a part of your body is numb, you are unable to feel it, usually for a short time
- **entangle** (v): to become caught in something such as a net or ropes
- **shambles** (n): a state of confusion or untidiness
- **stiffly** (adv): straight/not bending
- **entangled** (adj): entangle (v): to become caught in something such as a net or ropes
- **dignity** (n): calm, serious and controlled behaviour that makes people respect you
- **paralysed** (v): to cause a person or part of the body to lose the ability to move
- **involuntarily** (adv): involuntary (adj): not done by choice; done without the decision or intention of the person involved
- **ghastly** (adv): unpleasant and shocking
- **snatch** (v): to take hold of something suddenly and roughly
- **horrifying** (adj): very shocking
- **furious** (adv): extremely angry
- **puffy** (adj): slightly swollen
- **furious** (adj): extremely angry
- **supplement** (v): to add something to something to make it larger or better
- **meagre** (adj): not enough
- **precariously** (adv): in a way that is likely to fall, be damaged, etc.
- **shattered** (v): shatter (v): to break suddenly into small pieces
- **dignity** (n): calm, serious and controlled behaviour that makes people respect you
- **supplemented** (v): supplement (v): to add something to something to make it larger or better
- **meagre** (adj): not enough
- **clambered** (v): clamber (v): to climb up, across or into somewhere with difficulty
- **sobbing** (v): very shocking
- **flop** (v): to fall or drop heavily
3. Aloo says, “Don’t believe an old man when he says he is tired of living.” She probably says this because:
   a. the old men were the most scared of the snake
   b. the old men were very brave when the snake came out
   c. the old men are believed to have power of the snake

Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:
1. She sees a crowd of people.
2. She thinks that something must have happened to her children.
3. She has left her two year old, Ouma, her baby, Akoth, and Anyango, the young nurse.
4. A giant snake is inside the hut (along with Akoth).
5. She calls them cowards because they won’t enter the hut to rescue her baby.
6. Ochieng and Obwolo go into the hut.
7. Obwolo thinks that there must be nails in the basket.
8. In fact, the snake has hidden itself inside the basket.
9. Obwolo escapes through a window.
10. Obwolo kills the snake with a bow and arrow.
11. Ojwang, Aloo’s husband arrives at the end of the story because the night before he had dreamed that something bad was happening.

Analysing the Story: Personification
Look back at the explanation of personification. As you were reading, perhaps you noticed that some objects and animals are described using the technique of personification. Some of the things that are personified in this story are listed in the left column. Try to find where in the text they are personified and fill in the right column. The first one is done for you. Can you find one more?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is personified?</th>
<th>How is it described?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the snake</td>
<td>“It looked as though it was telling Aloo, ‘I give you only one minute.’”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“...hissing in anger”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“...the snake’s anger”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clouds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the main table</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the uncultivated land</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking Critically:
- After Aloo calls the men cowardly for not rescuing her baby, they want to beat her. They don’t do it, but would it have been justifiable for the men to do so? Why or why not?
PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
A woman has lost her goats. While searching, she asks a man if he has seen them. But the man is deaf. He thinks she is looking for the river and points to it. By coincidence, the goats are there. One of the kids has broken a foot.

The woman is glad that she found her goats and, in gratitude, she tries to give the deaf man the kid. The man thinks that she is accusing him of injuring the kid and he strikes her. As a result, the man and woman go to see the judge.

They explain what happened to the judge. But they don't know that the judge is also deaf. In addition, he is near-sighted!

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. By some strange _______________, he was passing by right when it happened!
2. The man _______________ the oxen repeatedly with a stick so that the oxcart would move.
3. That man is completely _______________. So use your hands to communicate with him.
4. He is so _______________ that he is legally blind.
5. She sent them a present to express her _______________.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- The judge will ask for the kid for himself as payment.
- The judge will believe that they are a married couple arguing.
- The judge will say he is deaf and they'll write their complaints.
- The judge will tell the man to apologize and the woman will give him the kid.

WHILE READING

Literary term: Mood and Tone
Mood is the feeling, or atmosphere, that a writer creates for the reader. Descriptive words, the setting, and figurative language contribute to the mood of a work, as do the sound and rhythm of the language used.

Tone is the attitude the narrator takes toward a subject. Unlike mood, which is intended to shape the reader's emotional response, tone reflects the feelings of the narrator. To identify tone, you might find it helpful to read the story aloud. Try to decide what emotions you feel as you read.

Focus: The tone of “Justice” is formal and serious. The narrator gives a straightforward account of what happened. Certain descriptive words, or the lack of them can contribute to tone. Similarly, some words, especially verbs and adverbs help establish mood. How would you describe the mood of this story?

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. The woman in the story is looking for what?
2. Why does the deaf man point to the river?
3. What happened to one of the woman's kids?
4. What does she try to do with the kid?
5. Why does the deaf man grow angry?
6. What does the deaf man do to the woman?
7. Where do the two go to settle their dispute?
8. What is wrong with the judge?
9. How does the judge think the woman and the deaf man know each other?
10. What does the judge think that the injured kid is?
UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Historical Context:
Ethiopia has one of the most well known histories as a country in Africa and the world. Unlike other African countries, Ethiopia stayed together during the colonial period, except for 5 years when it was ruled by Italians. Ethiopia used to be called Abyssinia. Until 1975, Ethiopia was ruled by Emperors who claimed to be descended from King Solomon of the Old Testament and the Queen of Sheba. The final Emperor was Haile Selassie I (Ras Tafari Makonnen) Among the Rastafari movement, whose followers are estimated at between 600,000 and 1,000,000, Haile Selassie is revered as the returned messiah of the Bible, God incarnate.

Guessing Meaning from Context:
The words in the left column are from the story. The right column has definitions for those words. Look back at the story and try to understand the vocabulary. Then put the letter of its definition on the line next to each word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>spectators</td>
<td>h. a noisy argument or fight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>row</td>
<td>b. to say that someone has done something wrong, illegal, or unkind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emperor</td>
<td>c. a very young baby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affront</td>
<td>d. in a way that is gentle, loving, or sympathetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mistreat</td>
<td>e. to treat a person or animal badly, unfairly, or cruelly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infant</td>
<td>f. a remark or action that is intended to insult or offend someone else</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tenderly</td>
<td>g. a male ruler of an empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accuse</td>
<td>h. people who watch something (like a football match) but do not participate in it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.
1. The deaf man pointed to the river when the woman asked him a question. He probably did this because:
   a. most people need water b. he knew the goats were there c. she signed to him she was thirsty
2. The judge thinks that the kid is:
   a. a gift b. a child c. a problem

Analysing the Story: Mood and Tone
Look back at the explanation of mood and tone. The tone seems to be serious. What about the mood? The setting at the end of the story is a type of court, which would seem to imply a formal and serious mood as well. But to establish the mood, we need to take into account the attitudes of the characters toward the conflict in the story. We can tell the character’s attitudes by paying attention to what they do and how they do it. So, if we document the verbs and adverbs of the story, we can add that information to our developing sense of mood. What words could you find that helped you decide on the mood?

Words contributing to the mood of the story | shouted, solemnly |

So the mood is also serious. But are you sure that the tone is? Are you sure that the narrator wants us to interpret the story seriously? While the words above certainly contribute to a formal tone (and mood), the misunderstandings that arise as a result of the fact that the man is deaf and the judge is both deaf and nearsighted do seem to be rather funny—as if the narrator is laughing at the characters. So if the apparent tone is different from what would be expected for the events depicted and if the tone is at odds with what we think the narrator is feeling, then we might describe the tone as ironic. What misunderstandings happen in the story?

Misunderstandings | The deaf man thinks the woman is looking for water |

Thinking Critically:
- The final sentence in this story is: “How did we ever get along before justice was given to us?” Do you think that this is a serious statement or a joke? Why?
THE CASE OF THE PRISON MONGER
Hama Tuma—Ethiopia

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
The narrator of this story claims that the culture in Ethiopia is to desire very little. There are anomalies, he admits, but most Ethiopians are satisfied with poverty and servility. Those who are not often suffer for wanting more.

The best example of this philosophy of poverty, says the narrator, is the case of the prison-monger, Matteos. He is happy in prison because he is from a poor family. He is young, healthy, and a skilled carpenter, but it is impossible for him to find work.

In prison, Matteos is able to continue his studies, he has a place to stay, and he eats. Each time he is released, he commits a small crime. That way he returns to prison, but won’t be executed. The prosecutor, however, wants the judge to release Matteos this time because he thinks that would be better punishment.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Preview.
1. Joyce Banda was an _____________ because most presidents have been men.
2. ______________ does not suit the chief well.
3. The lawyer is eager to put criminals in jail, so he became a ______________.
4. The criminal was ______________ by the government for his crimes.
5. After many years of study, she developed her own ______________.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- The judge will release Matteos, but Matteos will insult the judge and be sent back to prison.
- The judge will release Matteos and Matteos will commit another crime and receive the death penalty.
- The judge will ignore the prosecutor and send Matteos back to prison.
- The judge will ignore the prosecutor and sentence Matteos to death.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. According to the narrator, why should one not 'yearn for big things'?
2. According to the narrator, what is strange about St Gebre and Zarayacob?
3. What’s the narrator say about Ethiopians who desire more than they have?
4. For the first 7 paragraphs the narrator speaks generally about Ethiopians, but when the prosecutor begins to speak, the story begins. Who is 'the accused'?
5. Each time the prison-monger is released from prison, what does he do?
6. What does the prosecutor want?
7. What do the prison-monger and his defence lawyer want?
8. What is the prison-monger’s name?
9. List three reasons the prison-monger likes to be in prison.
10. How many times has the prison-monger been sent to prison?
11. What happens if the prison-monger commits three more crimes?
12. What is the initial sentence from the judge?
13. Why does the prison-monger insult the judge when he hears the sentence?
14. How does the judge respond to the insults?
15. Is the prison-monger pleased with the final punishment?

**Literary term: Paradox**

A paradox is a statement that appears to contradict itself but, in fact, reveals some element of truth. Religious and spiritual writings often contain paradoxes. Such paradoxes are intended to shake readers out of their normal ways of thinking and point them toward a higher level of understanding.

**Focus:** The plot of “The Case of the Prison-Monger” is based on the paradox that the main character feels more free when he is in prison. Pay attention to the reasons that he gives for this. Do his reasons make sense to you?

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**Historical Context:**

Rising inflation, corruption, a famine, and the growing discontent of urban interest groups meant that Ethiopia was ripe for revolution in the early 1970s. The unrest that began in January 1974 became an outburst of general discontent. The Ethiopian military, with assistance from the Soviet Union, began to both organize and incite a full-fledged revolution.

On September 12, 1974, a provisional administrative council of soldiers, known as the Derg ("committee") seized power from the emperor and installed a government which was socialist in name and military in style. The Derg executed 59 members of the former government. Emperor Haile Selassie died on August 22, 1975. He was allegedly strangled in the basement of his palace.

The Ethiopian Red Terror (1977–1978), was a violent political campaign in Ethiopia that most visibly took place after Communist Mengistu Haile Mariam achieved control of the Derg. It is estimated that 30,000-500,000 people were massacred over the course of the Red Terror (referred to by the narrator of this story as the TM diet).

**The Lenin Prize** was a very important award given by the Soviet Union to individuals for their accomplishments in science, literature, arts, architecture, and technology. It was named for Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, who was the first leader of the Soviet Union until his death in 1924. **The Chairman’s Medal of Valor** and the **Medal of Ingenuity in Accordance with the Teachings of Our Great Chairman** are, presumably, other similar (possibly imaginary) awards.

**St. Gebre the Poor** was an Ethiopian Christian saint. **Zarayacob** (1599–1692) was a seventeenth-century Ethiopian philosopher. His writing came at a period when African philosophy was significantly oral in character. He believed in following one’s natural reasoning instead of believing what one is told by others.

**Key Vocabulary:**

- **realists** (n): someone who hopes for only what seems possible and does not expect more
- **outset** (n): the beginning
- **yearn** (v): to wish strongly, especially something difficult to have
- **(liquidated p.) liquidate** (v): to cause a business to close, so that its assets can be sold to pay debts
- **(swiftly adv) swift (adj):** happening quickly and smoothly
- **terror** (n): (violent action which causes) extreme fear
- **massacres** (n): acts of killing a lot of people
- **(peddled p.) peddle** (v): to sell things, especially by taking them to different places
- **sovereignty** (n): the power of a country to control its own government
- **rabid** (adj): expressing extreme and unreasonable feelings
- **anti-socialist** (adj): someone who opposes socialism
- **(metamorphosed p.) metamorphose** (v): to change into a completely different form or type
- **symbol** (n): a shape or object which represents something else
- **socialism** (n): the set of beliefs which states that all people are equal and should share equally in a country’s money
- **(expounded p.) expound** (v): to give a detailed explanation
- **coherent** (adj): clear/carefully considered; each part connects
- **manuscript** (n): the original copy of a book before it’s printed
- **capacities** (n): the total amounts that can be contained/produced
- **deprivation** (n): when you do not have things that are considered necessary for a pleasant life
- **eternal** (adj): lasting forever
- **court (something)** (v): to try to get support from other people
- **contempt** (n): a strong feeling of disliking someone or something
- **contradictions** (n): when things are the opposite of other things, so one must be wrong
- **(rebelled p.) rebel** (v): to fight against the government or to refuse to obey rules, etc
- **rendition** (n): the way something is performed/written/drawn
- **guerillas** (n): members of an unofficial military group
**Biblical Context:**

*The valley of the shadow of death* is a reference to Psalm 23:4. It is often used as a symbolic description of the world, meaning darkness and death are (symbolic) valleys on earth one must walk through.

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

*He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*

*He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.*

*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

*Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.*

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

**Legal Context:**

“The Case of the Prison Monger” along with other stories in this collection take us to court, or a large room where trials and other legal cases happen. In this story, Matteos is the accused, or the person on trial, because he violated the law. His defence counsel is arguing his case in opposition to the prosecutor. The prosecutor is responsible for proving that the accused is guilty. Evidence is given by both sides and witnesses are called to answer questions on the witness stand. At the end of a trial, the judge must give a sentence appropriate to the crime according to the penal code. If the crime is severe, the accused could be sent to a labour camp or even receive a death sentence.

**Making Inferences:**

Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. The narrator says that St Gebre the Poor and Zarayacob are anomalies in their society. By this he means that most Ethiopians:
   a. are not religious    
   b. eat too much food    
   c. dislike thinking

2. Based on the things that the narrator and the prison-monger say, Ethiopian society at the time this story takes place is probably:
   a. repressive and run by a dictatorship    
   b. progressive and run by a king    
   c. flourishing and democratic

3. The narrator probably feels how about the prison-monger:
   a. he is impressive but hard to understand    
   b. he is repulsive but worthy of sympathy    
   c. he is strange but likely to be imitated

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**

The sentences below are from the story. Try to understand the meaning of the bolded words and circle the letter of the answer that gives the correct meaning for each word.

1. We do not even think about it, we just act by reflex.
   a. a purposeful reaction to something    
   b. an uncontrollable reaction to something    
   c. a belief in the afterlife    
   d. a strong desire to win something

2. All in order to keep what he has—absolute power.
   a. much    
   b. some    
   c. little    
   d. total

3. The less you expect, the less you get frustrated, and the greater is your happiness if you get more.
   a. busy    
   b. lonely    
   c. annoyed    
   d. sad

**upheavals** (n): great changes, involving difficulty or trouble

**mutiny** (n): when a group of people, especially soldiers, to take control from the authorities

**adherents** (n): people who support a particular person/principle

**cherish** (v): to love, protect and care for someone or something

**robust** (adj): strong and healthy

**contribute** (v): to give something, especially money, in order to achieve something together with other people

**inventiveness** (n): inventive

**addict** (n): a person who cannot stop doing something harmful

**via** (prep): through; using

**correspondence** (n): official or business letters

**comrade** (n): a friend who you have been involved in difficult or dangerous activities with

**shoplifting** (n): the illegal act of taking goods from a shop without paying for them

**kleptomania** (n): kleptomania (n): a very strong and uncontrollable wish to steal, especially without any need or purpose

**prisonomaniac** (n): [not a real word] a strong and uncontrollable wish to be in prison

**suffocate** (v): to ) die because they do not have enough oxygen

**reverse** (n): the opposite of what has been suggested

**claustrophobia** (n): fear of being in closed spaces

**dozen** (n): twelve

**pavement** (n): a path with a hard surface on one or both sides of a road, that people walk on

**guttersnipe** (n): a child who is dirty and dressed badly

**submit** (v): to offer something for a decision made by others

**release** (v): to give freedom or move to someone

**cooped up** (ph v): to keep in a closed space

**roam** (v): to move about without a clear idea of what you are doing

**illusion** (n): an idea or belief which is not true

**writhe** (v): to make large twisting movements with the body
Thinking Critically:

- The narrator claims at the beginning of this story that if you are ambitious (desire great things), then you will not only fail, but lose what you already have. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
- How does the prison-monger get what he wants at the end of the story? Who is smarter: the prison-monger or the judge? Justify your answer.
FLIGHT
Sindiwe Magona—South Africa

PREPARING TO READ

**Story Preview:**
The narrator of this story is remembering a time when she was a young girl in her home village.

She is outside playing with other children when a commotion distracts them from their dolls. An old man is yelling 'catch her.' The narrator can see a woman attempting to elude a group of male pursuers over a mountain covered in clouds.

The woman is the new wife of the narrator's uncle. The narrator just watches her aunt scurry over the mountain and hopes that she will not be captured.

**Words to Know:**
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.

1. The antelope ____________ the hunters and disappeared into the forest.
2. Park officials found a warthog that was ____________ by a poacher's trap.
3. He looked up to see what all the ____________ was about.
4. She sped up on her bicycle to escape her ____________.
5. The mouse ____________ quickly across the floor.

**Making Predictions:**
From the Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?

- The woman will escape over the mountain and the narrator will feel sad that her aunt has gone.
- The woman will escape over the mountain and the narrator will feel excited for her.
- The woman will be captured by the men and brought back quietly to the community.
- The woman will be captured by the men and punished in front of the whole community.

**WHILE READING**

**Literary term: Imagery**

Imagery consists of descriptive words and phrases that re-create sensory experiences for the reader. The majority of images are visual, but imagery may also appeal to the other senses.

**Focus:** Usually images are a only a small part of a story, but "Flight" consists almost entirely of the narrator's images as she remembers the events from her childhood. As you read, try to see the scene that is described. Are there instances of imagery appealing to senses other than sight?

**Comprehension Questions:**
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.

1. When the story begins, what is the narrator doing?
2. What is the old man shouting? Why?
3. How does the narrator feel as she watches the scene described?
4. What helps the woman escape her pursuers?
5. How is the narrator related to the woman escaping over the mountains?
6. Has the woman been living in the narrator’s community for a long time?
7. Is the narrator a child or an adult when the story takes place?
8. Where is the woman’s husband?

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Guessing Meaning from Context:
The words in the word bank below are all from the story. Find them in the story and see if you can understand their meaning. Then fill in the spaces in the sentences below with the correct word.

WORD BANK

earnest jumbled bony distress capture glimpse flitting rearranged

1. After I ran all the way to the stage, I could ___________ the bus as it turned the corner and sped away.
2. Did the man eventually ___________ his runaway goat?
3. Because their child was malnourished, he looked very ___________.
4. As he sat for the exam, the boy felt ___________ since he had not studied.
5. When I came home, I could not find anything because it had all been ___________ by my sister.
6. The club wants someone who is ___________ to step up and be a leader.
7. Birds were ___________ across the sky.
8. My thoughts were ___________ and I could not think clearly.

Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:
1. The narrator is playing with dolls.
2. The old man is shouting 'catch her' because a woman is trying to run away from the community.
3. The narrator is nervous for the woman and hopeful that she escapes.
4. There is a lot of mist on the mountain.
5. The woman is married to the narrator’s uncle.
6. No. The woman was a new wife.
7. The narrator is a child when the story takes place, but she is telling the story as an adult.
8. The woman’s husband is working in mines far away from the community.

Analysing the Story: Imagery
Look back at the explanation of imagery. “Flight” includes many instances of imagery despite its short length. In fact, there are instances of visual (seeing), tactile (feeling), and auditory (hearing) imagery. Find at least 2 of each and fill in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seeing</th>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Hearing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anyway, half the mountain disappeared.</td>
<td>My insides churned. A hot ball of fear curled inside my stomach.</td>
<td>Cries of 'Khawulele! 'Wen’umntu'! shattered the stillness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking Critically:
• The old man cries ‘Mbambeni’ which we are told means ‘catch her.’ He also yells ‘Khawelele’ and 'Wen’umntu.' What do you think these mean? Why?
THE OLIVE TREE
Tololwa Marti Mollel—Tanzania

PREPARING TO READ

**Story Preview:**
Nyangusi lives on his Grandfather’s farm with many cousins. The large farm is filled with fruit trees and, according to Nyangusi and his cousins, demons. But there is only one olive tree and it marks the farthest point in the farm. Grandfather often asks his grandchildren to go on errands at night. If he thinks that you ran to or from your destination because of fear, he punishes you by sending you to get a leaf from the olive tree. Grandfather hates cowardice. Nyangusi has never been told to go to the olive tree at night because, on night errands, he always stops before entering Grandfather’s hut and slows down his breathing to fool Grandfather. But one day, while on an errand for Grandmother, Nyangusi is caught red-handed. He runs right into Grandfather and falls down.

**Words to Know:**
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Preview.
1. The superstitious children believed that the forest was filled with ____________.
2. The boy had been stealing from the vegetable garden for weeks before he was ____________.
3. I wasn’t ____________ by the mask. I knew it was you!
4. My mother sent me on an ____________ to the store.
5. A river ____________ the border between the districts.

**Making Predictions:**
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- Nyangusi will be sent to the olive tree by Grandfather and return with a hundred leaves.
- Nyangusi will not be sent to the olive tree because he was going on an errand for Grandmother.
- Nyangusi will not be sent to the olive tree until much later when he has forgotten about it.
- Nyangusi will be sent to the olive tree by Grandfather, but will refuse to go.

WHILE READING

**Comprehension Questions:**
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. What does ‘olmukuna’ mean?
2. What is at the ‘olmukuna’ on Grandfather’s farm?
3. What does Grandfather often ask his grandchildren to do?
4. How does Grandfather tell if his grandchildren were afraid while on errands?

**Idioms & Expressions:**
hammering of your heart: the physical signs that you are frightened or nervous
pounding of blood in your veins: the physical signs that you are frightened or nervous
5. If he thinks one of his grandchildren was afraid, what’s the punishment?
6. Does the narrator run with fear when he is on errands? Why or why not?
7. Before the events described in the story, how many times has the narrator been sent to get a leaf from the olive tree?
8. What is a ‘nenauner’?
9. What happens to the narrator when Grandmother sends him for salt?
10. What are three differences between Grandmother’s and Grandfather’s huts?
11. What does Grandfather ask the narrator to do two weeks later?
12. What happens to the narrator when he hears the owl?
13. What does Grandfather tell the narrator at the end of the story?

Literary term: Protagonist
The protagonist is the central character or hero of a story. The protagonist is always involved in the central conflict of the plot and often changes during the course of the story. When a story is told from the 1st person point of view, the narrator is often, but not always, the protagonist.

Focus: As you read “The Olive Tree,” pay attention to what Nyangusi does and thinks. Does he change over the course of the story?

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Guessing Meaning from Context:
The words in the left column are from the story. The right column has definitions for those words. Look back at the story and try to understand the vocabulary. Then put the letter of its definition on the line next to each word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. unique</td>
<td>a. showing strong feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. respond</td>
<td>b. successfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. coward</td>
<td>c. in a way that is funny and not serious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. collision</td>
<td>d. too bad to be expressed in words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. playfully</td>
<td>e. existed in large numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. unutterable</td>
<td>f. a person who avoids danger, difficulty, or pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. abounded</td>
<td>g. the situation of being alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. solitude</td>
<td>h. having a very pleasant taste or smell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. triumphantly</td>
<td>i. very great in amount or degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. delicious</td>
<td>j. an accident when two things hit each other with force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. tremendous</td>
<td>k. to say or do something as a reaction to something else</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. ardent</td>
<td>l. special or unusual in some way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.
1. Nyangusi says that those boys or girls who refused to go get an olive leaf, got Grandfather’s ‘strap’ instead. By this, he probably means that Grandfather:
   a. made cowards wear the strap to embarrass them
   b. beat cowards with the strap to punish them
   c. asked cowards to find the strap to keep them busy
2. Grandfather probably thinks that Grandmother’s tales about monsters and ‘nenauner’ are:
   a. frightening and true
   b. funny and interesting
   c. blasphemous and false
3. Nyangusi says that he and another boy stay in Grandfather’s hut. The other boy is probably Nyangusi’s:
   a. cousin
   b. uncle
   c. nephew

Key Vocabulary:
imaginable (adj): possible to think of
olive tree (n): a Mediterranean tree that produces a small bitter green or black fruit that is eaten or used to produce oil
jungle (n): a tropical forest with trees growing very close together
(craziest superlative) crazy (adj): stupid or not sensible
(nightmarish (adj)) nightmare (n): a frightening/upsetting dream
eucalyptus (n): a type of tree, found especially in Australia, which produces an oil smell used in medicine and industry
task (n): a piece of work to be done, especially one done regularly, unwillingly or with difficulty
dawn (n): the time of day when light begins to appear in the sky
terrified (adj): very frightened
(thumping pr. part) thump (v): If your heart thumps, it beats more strongly and quickly than usual, from exercise/fear/excitement
(infested adj) infest (v): (of animals and insects which carry disease) to cause a problem by being present in large numbers
(rumoured p.) rumour (v): an unofficial interesting story or piece of news that might be true or invented, which quickly spreads from person to person
hide (n): the strong thick skin of an animal used for making leather
(inspecting pr. part) inspect (v): to look at something or someone carefully in order to discover information, especially about their quality or condition
sunset (n): the time in the evening when the sun goes down
moonless (adj): When there is no moon in the sky
pounding (n): a thumping sound
impatient (adj): easily annoyed because you have to wait
croaked (p.) croak (v): to speak with a rough voice because you have a sore or dry throat, you
ankle (n): the joint between the foot and the leg
(huddled p.) huddle (v): to hold your arms and legs close to your body, because of cold or fear
hearthstones (n): stones in the area around a fireplace or the area of floor in front of it
**Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:**

1. “Olmukuna” is the Maasai word for the farthest point on the farm.
2. There is an olive tree at the “olmukuna” of Grandfather’s farm.
3. He often asks his grandchildren to go on errands for him, sometimes at night.
4. He could tell they had been frightened because of the beating of their hearts or frightened looks in their eyes.
5. The punishment was to go to the olive tree at night and bring back a leaf.
6. Yes, he does.
7. No, he has not. Every time he is sent on a night errand, he stops and calms down and slows his breathing and heart before going in front of Grandfather.
8. A 'nenauner' is an imagined creature in the scary stories told by Grandmother.
9. The narrator is running while on the errand out of fear and runs directly into Grandfather.
10. Grandmother’s hut has a grass thatched roof, while Grandfather’s has a corrugated iron roof. Grandfather’s hut is where the two oldest boys stay, while the other grandchildren stay in Grandmother’s hut. Grandfather’s hut is warmer because she cooks there. Grandfather’s hut smells like tobacco from his smoking. Grandmother’s hut is one big room, while Grandfather’s hut is divided into three rooms.
11. Grandfather asks the narrator to go to ‘olmukuna’ and get an olive leaf.
12. He is frightened by the owl and runs into a tree and is injured.
13. Grandfather tells the narrator that when he is well he will still have to go get the olive leaf.

**Suggested Answers for Critical Thinking:**

1. Why do you think Grandfather waited 2 weeks to send Nyangusi to the olive tree?
2. Do you think the character of Grandfather is fair? Is he cruel? Is he loving? Why or why not?

**At the start of the story…**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nyangusi has never been sent to the olive tree as a punishment.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nyangusi has always managed to control his breathing and heart beat before seeing Grandfather after a night errand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyangusi promises himself that he will not be afraid and will bring back twenty leaves from the olive tree.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thinking Critically:**

- Why do you think Grandfather waited 2 weeks to send Nyangusi to the olive tree?
- Do you think the character of Grandfather is fair? Is he cruel? Is he loving? Why or why not?
DIFFERENT VALUES
Barbara Makhalisa—Zimbabwe

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Liza is a thirty-two year old domestic worker in Zimbabwe. Though she is supposed to be playing with Popi, her employer's dog, she is talking on the phone with her friend Clara. She tells Clara that she hates playing with the dog and she complains about her work.

Liza continues to talk about people she knows. Their friend Tina is married to a miserly man who won't let her use his first name. Another friend has to contend with the beastly treatment of a drunken husband. Liza then talks about how the police have been arresting all women found outside in the evening for prostitution, even though the women have done nothing wrong.

Liza has to hang up because the woman she works for returns. The woman asks Liza why she hasn't played more with Popi and Liza says she hurt her ankle. The woman calls Tommy, another servant.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. Poverty drove her to _______________, even though she hated having sex for money.
2. Lots of people have _______________ about the noise coming from the bar.
3. The _______________ student was always pushing and teasing other students.
4. He was so _______________ that he would not pay the school fees for his daughters because he wanted to save the money.
5. At the age of nine, he had the death of his parents to _______________.

Making Predictions:
From the Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following do you think is most probable?
• The woman will ask Tommy if Liza hurt her ankle and he will lie for Liza because he loves her.
• The woman will tell Tommy to play with Popi and he will be angry that he must do Liza's work.
• The woman will tell Tommy to play with Popi but Tommy will tell the woman that Liza is lying.
• The woman will ask Tommy if Liza hurt her ankle and he will tell her that Liza is lying.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
1. Who is Clara? Who is Popi?
2. How is the narrator communicating with Clara?
3. What is the narrator's job? Does she like it?
4. Who is Tina? Who is the 'miser'?
5. Is the narrator supposed to be on the phone?
6. What does the narrator say is typical of marriage?

Idioms & Expressions:
huffing and puffing away: breathing heavily from physical exercise
whirl of a time: lots of fun
energy to burn: extra power to be physically and mentally active
shelled off some of the extra fat: became thinner
it beats me: said when you do not understand a situation
not a bean to our names: we are very poor
high and mighty airs: false ways of behaving that are intended to make other people feel that you are important and belong to a high social class
all for outward show: in order for others to see, but not real
makes his senses snap: to lose control of your good judgment
set a thief to catch a thief: in order to catch a criminal, you have to think like a criminal
UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Cultural Context
Among the Shona people of Zimbabwe, a n'anga are traditional healers who use a combination of herbs, medical advice and spiritual guidance to heal people. They are believed to have religious powers to tell fortunes, and to change, heal, bless or even kill people. Traditionally N'angas were people's main source of help in all matters of life. They existed for decades well before the British colonial era.

Muti is a term for traditional medicine in Southern Africa as far north as Lake Tanganyika. In Southern Africa, the word muti is in widespread use in most indigenous African languages, as well as in South African English and Afrikaans where it is sometimes used as a slang word for medicine in general.

Gender Context:
In the early 1980s, under Robert Mugabe's government in Zimbabwe soldiers and policemen seized hundreds of women, including several foreign teachers and schoolgirls, in what they said was a crackdown on prostitution. Soldiers and policemen raided nightclubs, movie theaters, hotels, supermarkets and some homes. At least 800 women were detained. No men were arrested.

Guessing Meaning from Context:
The sentences below are from the story. Try to understand the meaning of the bolded words and circle the letter of the answer that gives the correct meaning for each word.

1. That is the only benefit I get for my efforts, though I am not particularly grateful, because I just hate it all.
   a. a small effect  
   b. a bad effect  
   c. a good effect  
   d. a big effect

2. My dear—don't you be deceived by all this outward gloss and high and mighty airs about education from abroad.
   a. discouraged  
   b. fooled  
   c. depressed  
   d. impressed

3. Some husbands like 'Miser' treat their wives in the most atrocious fashion.
   a. terrible  
   b. generous  
   c. loving  
   d. silly

4. Yes, probably that good furniture and other property in there are all for outward show and prestige, you know—shocking!
   a. wealth  
   b. status  
   c. shame  
   d. celebration

Literary term: Metaphor
A metaphor is a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two things that are basically not alike but that have something in common. Unlike similes, metaphors do not use the words like or as.

Focus: In “Different Values,” Liza refers to prostitution as “an age-old social cancer.” We know that prostitution is not a cancer, but we understand her point that it can be harmful just as cancer is harmful. Can you find one or two other metaphors in this story?

Key Vocabulary:
madam (n): employer
bored (adj): feeling unhappy because something is not interesting or you have nothing to do
(drool) pr. part. drool (v): to let saliva flow from your mouth
resume (v): If an activity resumes, it starts again after a pause
lawn (n): an area of grass which is cut regularly to keep it short
silly (adj): showing little thought
pranks (n): tricks that are intended to be funny but not to cause harm or damage
soiled (adj): dirty
nappies (n): squares of thick soft paper or cloth which are fastened around a baby's bottom and between its legs to absorb its waste
circumstances (n): a fact that makes a situation the way it is
minimum wage (n): the smallest amount of money that an employer is legally allowed to pay someone who works for them
better off (adj): to be in a better situation when smith happens
communal (adj): belonging to or used by a group of people rather than one single person
fowls (n): birds of a type that is used to produce meat or eggs
5. I’ve heard from very **reliable** sources that she is not permitted to call him by his first name, yet all the office girls use his first name.
   - a. able to be read  
   - b. able to be heard  
   - c. able to be found  
   - d. able to be trusted

6. I know she is not **finicky** but we’ve been on the phone for ages.
   - a. difficult to please  
   - b. difficult to talk to  
   - c. difficult to understand  
   - d. difficult to believe

**Making Inferences:**
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. “Lolly” is most likely:
   - a. Clara’s child  
   - b. Clara’s employer’s child  
   - c. Liza’s employer’s child

2. For some time Clara and Liza are discussing their friend Tina. Liza says that she has “never seen her wearing lipstick yet she used to before she got married.” This is probably because:
   - a. her husband forbids it  
   - b. she no longer wishes to wear it  
   - c. she can no longer afford it

3. Mushumbi Pools are probably:
   - a. a shopping center  
   - b. a detention center  
   - c. a learning center

**Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:**

1. Clara is a friend of the narrator and a servant in another home. Popi is a dog that belongs to the narrator’s employers.

2. The narrator and Clara are talking on the phone.

3. The narrator is a servant and one of her responsibilities is to play with Popi, the dog, and clean up his messes. She really dislikes it.

4. Tina is a friend of the narrator. The miser is the husband of friend of theirs.

5. No, she is not supposed to be on the phone.

6. The narrator says that typical marriages are unhappy.

7. Women on the street at night are arrested as prostitutes even if they are not.

8. The narrator hangs up because her employer (madam) returns home.

9. Tommy is the gardener, another servant in the same home as the narrator.

10. The narrator’s name is Liza.

11. Madam asks Tommy to play with Popi because Liza says she hurt her ankle.

12. No, she is lying about her ankle.

**Analysing the Story: Metaphor**

Look back at the explanation of **metaphor**. Two metaphors from the story are listed in the table below. Try to give the meaning of the second one. Then, include any other metaphors that you found in the left column and give an explanation for it in the right column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metaphor</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution is an age-old social cancer</td>
<td><strong>Prostitution has been around for a very long time and there is no way to keep it out of society</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some of us who haven’t a bean to our names are better off than her.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thinking Critically:**

- When Liza’s madam returns she can tell that Liza was on the phone. How?
- Which character do you sympathise with more, Liza or her madam? Why?
They Sold My Sister
Leteipa Ole Sunkuli—Kenya

Preparing to Read

Story Preview:
Naliki is a young girl in rural Kenya. One day some people come to visit her home. They are very rich and give her parents many gifts as a dowry for her sister, Nyamalo. They wish for Nyamalo to marry their son, Ole Sirayo. Naliki’s father tells her brother Tumuka to go and bring Nyamalo from boarding school. But Tumuka defiantly says that he will not go. So, their father goes and escorts Nyamalo home. When Nyamalo learns that she is to be married to Ole Sirayo, she and her mother weep.

Still, Nyamalo knows that she must go. Naliki accompanies her sister to her new home. That night, Nyamalo tries to sleep in Naliki’s bed, but Ole Sirayo is angry. They yell and then Ole Sirayo picks up Nyamalo and forces her into his bed.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. Before they could be married, the man had to pay a _______________ to his bride’s parents.
2. The woman _______________ a lot when her son joined the army and left home.
3. The prisoners were _______________ by two guards back to the prison.
4. Tomorrow I will _______________ my older brother to the depot when he leaves for town.
5. The soldier _______________ refused to obey orders.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- Naliki will stay with her sister and marry Ole Sirayo’s brother.
- Naliki will run away because she is scared and never return to her home.
- Naliki will return home and her father will try to marry her off as well.
- Naliki will tell her parents what happened and they will come rescue Nyamalo.

While Reading

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. How old is the narrator?
2. Who comes to visit the narrator’s family? Why?
3. Where is Nyamalo?
4. Why won’t Tumuka go to get Nyamalo?
5. Is Nyamalo happy that she is to be married?
6. Who travels with Nyamalo to her new husband’s home?
7. Where does Nyamalo stay for the first four nights at her husband’s home?
8. What does Nyamalo try to do on the first night she stays with Ole Sirayo?
9. What does Ole Sirayo want?
10. What does Ole Sirayo do when Nyamalo won’t obey him?  
11. What does the narrator do the next day?  
12. Who comes to visit the narrator’s home two years later?  
13. What does this man want?  
14. What does the narrator say that she will do?

**Literary term: Antagonist**

The antagonist in a story is the character in opposition to the hero, or protagonist. Sometimes the antagonist is not a character, but something else, like a force of nature (the drought in “Looking For a Rain God”), some aspect of society (lack of opportunity in “The Case of the Prison Monger”), or an internal force within the protagonist (fear in “The Olive Tree”).

**Focus:** As you read “They Sold My Sister,” see if you can identify the antagonist(s). Try to identify not only more than one character acting as antagonists, but also aspects of the society in the story that act as antagonists.

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**Linguistic Context:**

Many of the male characters in “They Sold My Sister,” indeed even the author, have the word *Ole* as part of their names. *Ole* means “Son of.”

**Gender Context:**

Female genital mutilation (FGM), also known as female circumcision, is the ritual removal of some of the external female genitalia. FGM is primarily concentrated in Africa and the Middle East. The procedures differ by ethnic group, including: removal of the clitoral hood and clitoral glans (the visible part of the clitoris), removal of the inner labia and, in severe form (known as infibulation), removal of the labia and closure of the vulva. Health effects vary, but can include recurrent infections, chronic pain, cysts, an inability to get pregnant, complications during childbirth and fatal bleeding. There are no known health benefits. The practice stems from gender inequality, attempts to control women’s sexuality, and ideas about purity and aesthetics. It is usually carried out by women, who fear that not cutting their daughters will expose the girls to social exclusion. FGM has been outlawed in most countries where it occurs, but laws are poorly enforced. The United Nations has recognized FGM as a human-rights violation. In parts of Africa, a traditional marriage ceremony depends on payment of a *bride price* to be valid. In some parts of sub-Saharan Africa, the bride price must be paid first in order for the couple to get permission to marry in church or in other civil ceremonies. The amount can vary from a token to a great sum.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the visits between families to negotiate the bride price are traditional customs that are considered by many Africans to be central to African marriage and society. In some African cultures, the price of a bride is connected with her reputation and esteem in the community, an aspect that has been criticized as demeaning to women.

**Making Inferences:**

Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. How old is Naliki at the end of the story?  
   a. 10  
   b. 12  
   c. 14

2. Naliki says that her father’s “hands quaked as he took the money” offered by the father of the man to marry her sister. His hands ‘quaked’ probably because he was feeling:  
   a. nervous  
   b. sad  
   c. excited

**proverbs (n):** short sentences, etc., usually known by many people, stating something commonly experienced or giving advice  
**(circumcised (adj)) circumcision (v):** to cut the protecting loose skin off a boy’s penis, or to cut away a girl’s clitoris and the skin around it, for medical, traditional or religious reasons  
**(agape (adj)):** with the mouth open, showing surprise or shock  
**(cheeks (n)):** the soft part of your face which is below your eye and between your mouth and ear  
**(forsake (v)):** to leave someone forever—when they need you  
**(shed (v)):** to get rid of something you do not need or want  
**(departure (n)):** when a person or vehicle, etc. leaves somewhere  
**(loincloth (n)):** a cloth that hangs down from around the waist, worn by men in hot countries  
**(belt (n)):** a strip of leather or material worn around the waist to support clothes or for decoration  
**(waist (n)):** the part of the body above and narrower than the hips  
**(ornament (n)):** an object which is beautiful rather than useful  
**(gourdful (n)):** the contents of the shell of a large fruit  
**(anointed (p). anoint (v)):** to make someone holy in a ceremony by putting holy water or oil on them  
**(promenade (n)):** a path for walking on, especially next to the sea  
**(transferred (p). transfer (v)):** to move someone or something from one place, vehicle, person or group to another  
**(choke (v)):** If you choke, you stop breathing because something is blocking your throat  
**(eaves (n)):** the edge of a roof that sticks out over the top of a wall  
**(eavesdropping (pr. part) eavesdrop (v)):** to listen to someone’s private conversation without them knowing  
**(heifer (n)):** a young cow that has not yet given birth  
**(inquired (p). inquire (v)):** to ask for information
3. When Nyamalo is leaving for her husband’s home, her father says “This girl will bring us shame.” He probably says this because:
   a. she is marrying a bad man
   b. she is too young to be married
   c. she is clearly unhappy with the marriage

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**
The words in the word bank below are all from the story. Find them in the story and see if you can understand their meaning. Then fill in the spaces in the sentences below with the correct word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD BANK</th>
<th>insolent</th>
<th>wad</th>
<th>resolutely</th>
<th>politely</th>
<th>tremulous</th>
<th>offensive</th>
<th>fond</th>
<th>embraced</th>
<th>bitterly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. When she went to pay the driver, he pulled out a __**wad**__ of bills.
2. We ___________ each other when we saw each other for the first time in a year.
3. To gain another person’s respect, it helps to behave ___________ when you first meet.
4. When my father was young, he was very ___________ of playing football.
5. Because he was afraid, when he spoke his voice was ___________.
6. The teacher made ___________ comments about women, and as a result, he was fired.
7. Their relationship ended ___________ because they could not stop fighting with one another.
8. Because the student acted ___________ on a daily basis, he was expelled from school.
9. Her parents wanted her to get married, but she continued to ___________ deny proposals because she wanted to continue with her education.

**Suggested Answers for Comp. Questions:**
1. The narrator is ten years old when the story begins.
2. Some men and women visit the narrator’s home to meet her parents and pay a dowry for Nyamalo.
3. Nyamalo is away at boarding school.
4. He won’t go because he disagrees with his parents and wants Nyamalo to finish school.
5. No, she is very unhappy.
6. Her mother-in-law and father-in-law come to take her home and the narrator goes along as well.

**Analysing the Story: Antagonist**
The narrator of this story is also the protagonist, along with her brother, Tumuka, and her sister, Nyamalo. The three of them face many different problems throughout the story, including: Maasai culture, their parents, Ole Sirayo, and Ole Timau. Look back at the explanation of antagonist. In the table below, the left column contains some problems they face. In the right column, fill in the principle antagonist for each one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Antagonist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nyamalo is forced to leave school.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyamalo is forced to marry.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyamalo is forced to sleep with her husband.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naliki fears that she will be forced to marry.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thinking Critically:**
- The narrator of this story is a young girl, but the author is a grown man. As you were reading could you tell that the author was a man? If so, how?
- Can you write a brief (2-3 paragraph) story from the perspective of a 1st person narrator who is very different from yourself?
- Tumuka and his father disagree very strongly about Nyamalo’s education. Who do you agree with? Why?
THE INTRUDER
Peter Songa—Uganda

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Mungo is from Dar-es-Salaam, the capital of Tanzania, but he is visiting Engaruka in Maasailand, a very rural and traditional part of the country. Two Maasai (local people who raise cattle) see him and come to greet him. Mungo feels uneasy, so he increases the volume on his radio to interest the Maasai. Mungo and the Maasai begin chatting. Mungo looks out at the harsh land around them. He asks the Maasai why they don’t live in the nearby mountains where the land is greener. But the Maasai are not cultivators and the mountains would be difficult for their cattle.

Mungo and the Maasai discuss Dar-es-Salaam and listen to the radio. They see an aeroplane in the sky. Mungo wonders if the Maasai would like to live in Dar-es-Salaam. Then, the Maasai yell excitedly because they see a car approaching.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. The Sahara Desert is a ________ area without water or vegetation.
2. I cannot hear the radio. Could you ________?
3. The only way to travel from Malawi to America is by ________.
4. She felt ________ when the stranger began asking her questions.
5. Many people in Malawi are ________, growing maize and tobacco.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- The car will pass by and Mungo will decide to stay with the Maasai.
- The car will pick up the Maasai and leave Mungo in Maasailand.
- Mungo will ask the Maasai to go to Dar-es-Salaam with him and they will go.
- Mungo will say goodbye to the Maasai and go to Dar-es-Salaam in the car.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
1. While Mungo is sitting on the hill, who approaches him?
2. Why does Mungo increase the volume on his radio?
3. What does “Ol Donyo” mean?
4. Why does Mungo tell the Maasai the price of radios in cows and not money?
5. What are the “black colonialists” doing in Maasailand?
6. Why do the Maasai live on the plain though the mountains are greener?
7. Where is Mungo from?
8. Other than Mungo, what other “intruders” show up in Maasailand?
9. Mungo wonders if these Maasai would like to live in a big city like Dar-es-Salaam. Does he that think they would like it? Why or why not?
10. What does Mungo dream of doing in Maasailand?
UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Cultural Context:
The Maasai are an ethnic group of people living in Kenya and the north of Tanzania. The Maasai are pastoralists, and are known as fearsome warriors and cattle-rustlers. A Maasai homestead, or *manyatta*, is a group of low huts made of bent branches daubed with dried mud and cow-dung surrounded by a thorn fence, with separate huts for the father, and each wife with her young children.

Linguistic Context:
The Swahili language or *Kiswahili* is a Bantu language. It is spoken by various communities in the African Great Lakes region and Southeast Africa, including Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Although only around fifteen million people speak Swahili as a mother tongue, it is used as a *lingua franca* in much of Southeast Africa. Swahili serves as an official language of Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and the DRC. It is also an official language of the African Union.

Some Swahili vocabulary is derived from Arabic through contact with Arabic-speaking Muslim inhabitants of the Swahili Coast. It has also incorporated German, Portuguese, English, Hindi and French words into its vocabulary through contact with empire builders, traders and slavers during the past five centuries.

*Jambo, Bwana* is a Kiswahili salutation meaning, “Hello, sir.” When the Maasai say this to Mungo he replies with *Sijambo. Abari gani?* or “Hello, how are you?”

Geographical Context:
*Engaruka* is an abandoned system of ruins in the Great Rift Valley of northern Tanzania. Sometime in the 15th century, an iron age farming community developed with a large continuous village area on the slope of the Rift Valley escarpment. Several thousand people lived there and developed an intricate irrigation and cultivation system, involving a stone-block canal channelling water where needed. It is uncertain who these people were or why they left. Today, the area of Engaruka is inhabited primarily by Maasai.

Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. Based on the story, the Maasai most likely don’t use:
   a. money  
   b. spears  
   c. milk
2. Mungo is glad the two Maasai don’t ask how a man from ‘Dasalamu’ can be hear in a box so far away probably because:
   a. it is illegal to share that information with the Maasai  
   b. he is tired of talking with the Maasai  
   c. he doesn’t know how to explain it to them

Key Vocabulary:
- crag (n): a high rough mass of rock which sticks out from the land around it
- dome-shaped (adj): shaped like one-half of a ball
- flatness (n): the quality of being level and without curved, high or hollow parts
- vanished (p): vanish (v): to disappear or stop being present or existing, especially in a sudden, surprising way
- harshly (adv): harsh (adj): unpleasant, unkind, cruel or unnecessarily severe
- tumbling (pr. part.) tumble (v): to fall quickly and without control
- gorge (n): a deep narrow valley with steep sides, usually formed by a river or stream cutting through hard rock
- transistor radio set (n): a small radio containing transistors, used especially in the p.
- panting (pr. part.) pant (v): to breathe quickly and loudly through your mouth, usually because you have been doing something very energetic
- exposing (pr. part.) expose (v): to remove what is covering something so that it can be seen
- coppery (adj): reddish-brown
- ventured (p): venture (v): a new activity, usually in business, which involves risk
- ensued (p): ensue (v): to happen after something else, especially as a result of it
- concentration (n): the ability to think carefully about something you are doing and nothing else
- tilled (p): till (v): to prepare and use land for growing crops
- colonialists (n): a group of people who live in a colony
- newcomer (n): someone who has recently arrived in a place
- scourges (n): something or someone that causes great suffering or a lot of trouble
- alternative (n): something that is different from something else, especially from what is usual, and offering the possibility of choice
- pastoralists (n) pastoral (adj): farming which involves keeping sheep, cattle, etc.
3. The ‘intruders’ in the story are:
   a. the river, mountains, and oasis
   b. the Maasai, cows, and their spears
   c. Mungo, the aeroplane, and the Land Rover

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**
The words in the left column are from the story. The right column has definitions for those words. Look back at the story and try to understand the vocabulary. Then put the letter of its definition on the line next to each word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. volcano</td>
<td>a. a place in a desert where there is water and therefore plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. extinct</td>
<td>b. the farthest place you can see where the sky touches the land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. horizon</td>
<td>c. to explain something in more detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. onlooker</td>
<td>d. no longer active or alive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. oasis</td>
<td>e. a person who watches something but is not involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. balanced</td>
<td>f. to stop moving or doing something suddenly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. handicapped</td>
<td>g. a mountain with a hole at the top through which lava is released</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. clad</td>
<td>h. the most important pieces of information about something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. elaborate</td>
<td>i. describes a condition when things are of equal weight or force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. gist</td>
<td>j. dressed or wearing or covered with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. halt</td>
<td>k. not able to use part of your mind because it is damaged</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:**
1. Two Maasai approach Mungo while he is sitting on the hill.
2. He is nervous about the Maasai and thinks the radio will interest them.
3. It means “mountain.”
4. The Maasai don’t use money.
5. They are cultivating the fertile land near the river.
6. The plain is better for the cows which are their primary source of livelihood.
7. Mungo is probably from Dar-es-Salaam.
8. An aeroplane flies over them.
9. He decides they would not like the city because they are and dependent on their families/communities and in the city they would not have that support.
10. He thinks about developing the land and turning it into a city.

**Analysing the Story: Simile**
Look back at the explanation of simile. Remember: not every use of 'like' or ‘as’ is a simile. But, every simile will have ‘like’ or ‘as’ in it! In the chart below put some examples of similes from the story in the left column and explain their meaning in the right. One is done for you. Can you find another example of a simile and add it the chart?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simile</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Engaruka spread out before him like a shallow bowl.”</td>
<td>The view of the land in Engaruka was flat and resembled a wide, open dish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“He was like a fly sitting on a limp of food.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The basin was like a hot bath in the afternoon heat.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thinking Critically:**
- Authors often write about characters that may share different beliefs or values than they hold themselves. Do you think the author of this story is sympathetic of Mungo or do you think he sees Mungo as foolish? Why?
THE TOILET
Gcina Mhlope—South Africa

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
The narrator of this story is a young woman who has just finished secondary school. Instead of listening to her elders and doing something respectable, like teaching or nursing, she goes to stay with her sister in Johannesburg.

In Johannesburg, she stays secretly in her sister’s room in the house of her sister’s employer. At first, she just reads all day, but later she gets a job in a factory. So that her sister’s employer will not see her, the narrator has to sneak out of her sister’s room very early in the morning. But this means that she must wait outside for two hours before getting a bus to work.

One day, to escape the rain during her two hour wait, the narrator goes into a public toilet. She discovers that very few people use that toilet and she begins to go there regularly to read and daydream. Some time later, the narrator is discovered by the white woman who employs her sister while she is waiting outside of her sister’s room. After this happens, she feels a longing to get to ‘her’ toilet.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. He never paid attention. He was always lost in a __________.
2. His mother did not think that his new job working in a bar was __________.
3. __________ is an important health care profession.
4. He felt a great sense of __________ to see his wife when he received a letter from her.
5. I managed to __________ in when no one was looking.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- The narrator will go to the toilet the next morning, but someone else will be inside it.
- The narrator will go to the toilet the next morning and begin writing a story.
- The narrator will take her sister to the toilet the next morning.
- The narrator will decide never to go to the toilet again.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. What did the narrator’s mother wish that the narrator had done when she finished secondary school?
2. How old do you think the narrator is when this story takes place?
3. Where does the narrator stay when she goes to Johannesburg?
4. What are “Fair Lady” and “Women’s Weekly”?
5. Eventually, where does the narrator go to work?
6. Who is Gwendolene?
7. Why does the narrator have to sneak in and out of her sister’s room?
8. Why did the narrator first go into the public toilet?
9. What does the narrator think about while sitting in the toilet?
10. One Thursday evening, the narrator goes into the back yard at the usual time, but her sister is not in the room. What does the narrator do?
11. When the dogs discover the narrator, who comes to see what has happened?
12. What had occurred that morning between the narrator and her sister?
13. How does the narrator’s sister react when she finds her in the street?
14. When the narrator goes to the toilet the next morning, what does she do?

**Literary term: Foreshadowing**

Foreshadowing is a writer’s use of hints or clues to indicate events and situations that will occur later in the plot. The use of this technique creates suspense while preparing the reader for what is to come.

**Focus:** The opening paragraph of “The Toilet” includes clues about how the story will end. As you begin reading the story, can you guess what the protagonist will do at the end of the story?

### UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

**Historical Context:**

Apartheid (which is an Afrikaans word meaning “apartness”) was a political and social system in South Africa while it was under white minority rule (meaning white people ruled the country, even though there were a minority) from 1948 to 1994. Under apartheid, the people of South Africa were divided by their race and the races were forced to live apart from each other. There were laws that kept up the racial separation. The system of apartheid in South Africa was ended in 1994 during the presidency of Frederik Willem de Klerk. Nelson Mandela was then elected as the first black president. Both were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts.

**Linguistic Context:**

South Africa has 11 official languages. Most South Africans speak more than one. Two of the languages spoken in South Africa, Afrikaans and English, came from Europe. The other nine languages are Bantu. Sotho is spoken by around 4 million South Africans. Zulu is spoken by nearly 10 million South Africans and is the mother language of almost one quarter of South Africans. Xhosa is very closely related to Zulu and is spoken by almost 8 million people.

**Monetary Context:**

The Rand is the currency of South Africa. The rand is subdivided into 100 cents. It is the currency of the Common Monetary Area between South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho. It takes its name from the Witwatersrand, the ridge where most of South Africa’s gold deposits were found.

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**

The sentences below are from the story. Try to understand the meaning of the bolded words and circle the letter of the answer that gives the correct meaning for each word.

1. Then I got this temporary job in a clothing factory in town.
   a. low-paying  
   b. not lasting long  
   c. high-paying  
   d. lasting a long time
2. The noise was comforting—to know I had escaped the wet, only a few heavy drops had got me.
   a. making you feel dry  
   b. making you feel worried  
   c. making you feel calmer  
   d. making you feel stronger
Analysing the Story: Foreshadowing

Look back at the explanation of foreshadowing. There are several hints about how the story will turn out. The left column of the table below contains some instances of foreshadowing. In the right column, write what is foreshadowed by each instance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instance of foreshadowing</th>
<th>What is foreshadowed?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“People thought these professions were respectable, but I knew I wanted to do something different.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I was getting bored with the books I was reading—the love stories all sounded the same.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I bought myself a notebook in which I was hoping to write something.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking Critically:

- The story begins with the narrator saying that sometimes she “wanted to give up and be a good girl who listened to her elders” and become a teacher or a nurse. Do you think this would have been a good idea for the narrator? Why or why not?
BINDEH’S GIFT
Sarif Easmon—Sierra Leone

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
This story is told by Kallon in the present day to Mr Brassfoot. They are standing on a rock above Moa Falls that was once used by war leaders to punish cowards in battle by drowning them. The story Kallon tells describes events that took place long ago in the 1800s:

Kai Borie is an old war leader who has assembled his entire army around the rock for the execution of his nephew and heir, Bensali. Kai Borie asks Bensali to tell his story once again. Bensali explains that he led a war party to scale the walls of the enemies’ camp. But, somehow, their enemies knew about the attack and Bensali's brothers were killed. Though Bensali managed to kill Gbaserie, the leader of the enemies, Bensali was badly injured and ran away. This is why he will be executed.

Even though women are not allowed at such a ceremony, Bindeh, Bensali’s wife, comes up to the rock where Kai Borie is and asks him to have mercy on Bensali. When Kai Borie will not listen, Bindeh says that she has one final gift for Kai Borie in a basket she has brought with her.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.

1. In some cultures, the _____________ of a leader is the first born son.
2. She did not want her children to play near the river because they could fall in and _____________.
3. When the politician visited the village, everyone _______________ at the grounds.
4. The captured thief begged for _______________.
5. The children _______________ the school walls and ran from school.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?

- The basket contains gold and money and Kai Borie will accept it and free Bensali.
- The basket contains the head of Kai Borie’s greatest enemy and he will accept it and free Bensali.
- The basket contains the head of Kai Borie’s wife and Bindeh will throw it at Kai Borie before leaping into the falls.
- The basket contains deadly snakes and Bindeh will throw it at Kai Borie before leaping over the falls.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.

1. What is Kailondo’s rock? Where is it?
2. What was Kailondo’s rock used for in the 1860s (and earlier)?
3. Who is Kai Borie?
4. Who is Bensali?
5. Why are the “war boys” gathered at the river?
6. What does Kai Borie want Bensali to tell?
7. A week earlier, what was Bensali sent to do?
8. What went wrong with the attack?
9. Who is Gbaserie? Who kills him?
10. Why did Bensali stop fighting?
11. Kai Borie tells how he lost his eye. What happened?
12. Who comes to the rock where the men are assembled?
13. What does she want?
14. When she unties the cloth around her body, what does everyone see?
15. Who does Kai Bories say will be his new heir?
16. What does Bindeh do with the basket? What happens to her?
17. What is in the basket?
18. What happens to Kai Borie?
19. What happens to Bensali?

**Literary term: Frame Story**

A frame story exists when a story is told within a narrative setting or frame—hence creating a story within a story.

**Focus:** “Bindeh’s Gift” is an example of a frame story. Can you separate the frame (more recent) form the story inside (in the past)?

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**Cultural Context:**

In Sierra Leone, as in many other countries in Africa and elsewhere, mothers carry infants on their backs. In Sierra Leone this is done with a brightly colored cloth or lappa. This cloth is often used as a skirt or a blouse as well. The cloth is very similar in style and use to the zitenje of Malawi.

**Geographical Context:**

The Moa Falls likely appear somewhere on the Moa River (also known as the Makona River). It arises in the highlands of Guinea and flows southwest, forming parts of the Guinea–Liberia and the Guinea–Sierra Leone borders.

**Historical Context:**

When Europeans first arrived at Sierra Leone, slavery among African peoples was rare. If Africans were not much interested in acquiring slaves, the Portuguese—as well as the Dutch, French, and English who arrived later—certainly were. Initially, their method was to cruise the coast, conducting kidnapping raids when opportunities arose. Soon, however, they found local actors willing to partner with them in these vicious but profitable affairs: some chiefs were willing to part with a few of the less desirable members of their tribes for a price; others went into the war business—a bevy of battle captives could be sold for a fortune in European rum, cloth, beads, copper, or muskets.

The slave owners were originally white and foreigners, but the late eighteenth century saw the emergence of powerful slave-trading chiefs, who were said to own large numbers of ‘domestic slaves.’ Export slavery remained a major business in Sierra Leone from the late 15th century to the mid 19th century. It was estimated in 1789 that 74,000 slaves were exported annually from West Africa. The transatlantic slave trade was banned by the British in 1807, but illegal slave trading continued for several decades after that.

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**Key Vocabulary:**

- **granite** (n): a very hard, grey and black rock, used for building
- **trussed up** (ph v): to tie the arms/legs of someone together tightly with rope to prevent them from moving/escaping
- **stalwart** (n): person who has been loyal for a long time
- **recovered** (p.): recover (v): to get back something lost, especially health, ability, possessions,
- **leap** (v): to make a large jump or sudden movement
- **vapour** (n): gas or extremely small drops of liquid which result from the heating of a liquid
- **upstream** (adj): (moving) on a river or stream towards its origin
- **evanescently** (adv) evanescent (adj): lasting for only a short time, then disappearing quickly
- **cauldron** (n): a large round container for cooking in, usually supported over a fire

---
Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:

1. Bindeh’s act in this story ends both her own and Kai Borie’s lives. Just before he dies, how does Kai Borie probably feel about her act:
   a. resentment and reluctance
   b. anger and vengeance
   c. forgiveness and awe

Making Inferences:

Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. When his wife died, he was overcome with ___________ and depression.
   a. the waterfall is very loud
   b. Mr Brassfoot is nearly deaf
   c. Kallon is extremely excited

2. Two soldiers escort Bensali to the rock where he is to be executed. One of the soldiers whispers “Courage, Bensali” to him. He probably does this because:
   a. He is worried that he will die with Bensali
   b. He will be the one who executes Bensali
   c. He still respects and likes Bensali

3. Bensali is wounded and loses the use of one of his arms.

4. Many claimed the election was a ___________ and their votes weren’t counted.

5. There were so many stars in the sky they appeared ___________.

6. Please do not make an ___________ unless you have proof.

7. After his friends betrayed him, he was ___________.

8. Since she was very good at the experiment, the teacher asked her to ___________ the procedure.

9. I wasn’t very ___________ on going to the party since I don’t like social events with big crowds.

10. When his wife died, he was overcome with ___________ and depression.

Guessing Meaning from Context:

The sentences below are from the story. Try to understand the meaning of the bolded words and circle the letter of the answer that gives the correct meaning for each word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD BANK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>demonstrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relentlessly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The rain fell ___________ for days causing damage to homes and fields.

2. After losing many soldiers, the rebels were forced to ___________.

3. Overcome with jealousy, the man watched his rival and the woman he loved with a ___________ expression on his face.

4. Many claimed the election was a ___________ and their votes weren’t counted.

5. There were so many stars in the sky they appeared ___________.

6. Please do not make an ___________ unless you have proof.

7. After his friends betrayed him, he was ___________.

8. Since she was very good at the experiment, the teacher asked her to ___________ the procedure.

9. I wasn’t very ___________ on going to the party since I don’t like social events with big crowds.

10. When his wife died, he was overcome with ___________ and depression.

Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:

1. Kailondo’s Rock is a boulder above a large waterfall.

2. It was used to execute cowards in battle.

3. He was a war chief in the 1800s.

4. Bensali was the son of Kai Borie’s sister and his hier.

5. They are gathered to witness the execution of Bensali.

6. He wants Bensali to tell the story of the battle and his cowardice.

7. He was sent to attack the war town of Gbaserie, an enemy of Kai Borie.

8. Gbaserie knew about the attack and he and his men trapped Bensali and the others inside the town and defeated them badly.

9. Gbaserie is the leader of the enemy town and Bensali kills him.

10. Bensali is wounded and loses the use of one of his arms.

11. Kai Borie was hunting a deer as a young man and was attacked by a leopard.

12. Bindeh, the wife of Bensali, comes to the rock along with her grandmother.

(blasted p.) blast (v): to break through or hit something with a very strong force

(gouged p.) gouge (v): to make a hole in something in a rough way

awhile (adv): for a short time

administration (n): the arrangements needed to control the operation of plans/organizations

palm (n): the inside part of your hand from your wrist to fingers

enact (v): to put something into action, especially to change something into a law

amateurish (adj): having no skill

battlefields (n): places where battles are fought

create (v): to make something new

nimbus (adj): dark clouds which often produce rain

shock wave (n): a very strong reaction that spreads through a group of people when something surprising or bad happens

concourse (n): a large space or room in a public building such as a station or airport which people meet in or pass through

blaze (v): to burn brightly and strongly

palisades (n): a strong fence made out of wooden or iron poles that is used to protect people or a place from being attacked

downstream (adj): in the direction a river or stream is flowing

statue (n): an object made from a hard material, especially stone/metal, to look like a person

be carved (v): to make something by cutting into especially wood or stone

 chiaroscuro (n): the use of areas of light/darkness in a painting

(glinted p.) glint (v): to produce small bright flashes of light reflected from a surface

indefinite (adj): not exact, not clear, or without clear limits

eerie (adv) eerie (adj): strange in a frightening/mysterious way

shaft (n): a pole or rod forming the handle of a tool or weapon

fester (v): becomes infected/produces pus

rhythm (n): a strong pattern of sounds, words or musical notes used in music, poetry and dancing

unaided (adj): without any help
13. She wants Kai Borie to forgive Bensali and free him.
14. She reveals that she is pregnant with Bensali’s child.
15. Kai Borie declares that Bindeh’s child will be his heir.
16. She puts the basket over Kai Borie’s head, then leaps over the falls and dies.
17. Many poisonous snakes are in the basket.
18. Kai Borie is bitten many times by the snakes and dies.

### Analysing the Story: Frame Story

Look back at the explanation of frame story. The opening of the story begins in the present day with Kallon talking to Mr Brassfoot. But after a few paragraphs, Kallon starts telling a long story about Kailondo’s Rock and that becomes the majority of the narrative. Were you able to separate the two? Fill in the missing information about the elements of the two narrative inside and outside of the frame. Some of the blanks have been filled in for you.

### Thinking Critically:
- Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between the protagonist and the antagonist in a story. Bensali is a passive character who has lost his honour in his society, Kai Borie is willing to sacrifice his heir in order to continue waging war, Bindeh kills herself, her unborn child, and Kai Borie all to save Bensali. Which character do you think is the protagonist? Why?
- Which character do you sympathise with the most? Why?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outside frame story</th>
<th>Inside frame story</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characters</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Kallon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mr Brassfoot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- White</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place</strong></td>
<td>Kailondo’s Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td>Present day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(twitching pr. part.) twitch (v): (to cause) to make a sudden small movement with a part of the body, usually without intending to expressionless (adj): not showing what someone thinks or feels sortie (n): a short quick attack by a military force, such as a small group of soldiers or an aircraft, made against an enemy position fatal (adj): causes death (hardly (adv)) hardly (adj): strong enough to bear extreme conditions or difficult situations equivalent (n): having the same amount, value, purpose, qualities (stooped p.) stoop (v): to bend the top half of the body down heartbreak (n): feelings of great sadness or disappointment (emboldened p.) embolden (v): to make someone brave (gushed p.) gush (v): to flow/send out quickly, in large amounts (seasoned p.) season (v): to improve the flavour of savoury food by adding salt, herbs or spices (willed p.) will (v): to try to make something happen by the power of your thoughts furry (adj): covered with fur savage (adj): extremely violent
THE VILLAGE PASTOR
Leonard Kibera—Kenya

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Reverend Mwaura is a highly respected Christian pastor in his village in Kenya. He is struggling with his community, however, because a new bar, Muriuki’s, has opened next to his church. All of the men in the village, against the advice of the pastor, go to Muriuki’s on Sunday instead of church. The pastor is so perturbed that on Christmas Day, he leads his small congregation into Muriuki’s and sings hymns. The men in the bar are surprised by this, but they all respect the pastor, so they do not protest. Some people in the bar are secretly fighting the British colonialists in the Mau Mau rebellion. They explain to the pastor that they do not wish to worship in a white man’s religion. The pastor gives up and takes his congregation back to the church. After a few minutes, though, the pastor is surprised to see all the men from the bar coming into his church. Then, a young British soldier with a rifle bursts in searching for a terrorist who has taken shelter in the church.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. When it started to rain, they _______________ inside.
2. Though it was bad news, he didn’t seem _______________ when he heard.
3. The choir gathered every week to practice singing _______________.
4. The _______________ showed up in the village to run the new church the community had built.
5. The students _______________ when the teacher punished them without a good reason.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- The pastor will yell at the soldier for being rude and tell him to look for the terrorists in Muriuki’s.
- The pastor will point out the terrorist and then continue with the service.
- The pastor will ignore the soldier and the soldier will shoot and kill the pastor.
- The pastor will tell the men in the church to attack the soldier and kill him.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. Is Reverend Mwaura respected in his community? Why or why not?
2. What problem does the reverend face in his community?
3. What is Muriuki’s?
4. On what day does this story take place?
5. Why are the men missing from the church?
6. Where does Reverend Mwaura take the people at church?
7. Why did Muriuki build his bar near the church?
8. What reason do the men in the bar give for not going to church?
9. When the reverend returns to the church, who comes in after him?
10. Who shoots a gun? Why?
11. How does the Reverend Mwaura respond?
12. When the Johnnie leaves, where do the men from Muriuki’s go?
13. When Reverend Mwaura dies, do many people come to mourn him?

Literary term: Epithet

An epithet is a brief descriptive phrase that points out traits associated with a particular person or thing. An epithet is often used for characterization.

Focus: Many of the characters in “The Village Pastor” are described using epithets. Pay attention to them as you read. Do they help you understand who the characters are?

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Historical Context:
The Mau Mau Rebellion was a military conflict in Kenya between 1952 and 1960. Many British settlers came to Kenya at the beginning of the twentieth century because the soil in Kenya was very fertile and Kenya was under British colonial control. In the years after World War II, Britain slowly began a process of decolonization. In Kenya, the white settlers owned much of the valuable land, making the process of decolonization more complicated. The Mau Mau started as a secret society in opposition to British rule. The Mau Mau were organized by Kikuyu people, the largest ethnic group in Kenya.

The Mau Mau were never widely supported by the Kenyan public, and the British ultimately defeated the rebels. However, in the years following the rebellion, Kenyans gained the rights to own more of the land, eventually leading to complete independence in 1963. While both sides in the conflict committed terrible violence, the Mau Mau are now remembered as early freedom fighters in Kenya.

Jomo Kenyatta, who was later elected the first president of independent Kenya, was accused of organizing the Mau Mau. He was a well-educated intellectual who authored several books, and is remembered as a Pan-Africanist. He is also the father of Kenya’s fourth and current President Uhuru Kenyatta.

Cultural Context:
In this story, Reverend Mwaura exclaims that Jesus was not an Englishman, but a Jew. Jews consider themselves as a people, therefore a Jew is one who practices the religion of Judaism, but is also of Jewish heritage. The Old Testament in the Christian Bible is a Jewish text and, indeed, Jesus was Jewish.

Israel is the only Jewish country, but there are Jewish minorities in many places in the world. Most of them live in large cities in the United States, Argentina, Europe and Australia. Both Israel and the U.S. have over five million Jews.

Jews have been victims of various persecutions. One of the most well known happened during the Second World War, when almost six million Jews were killed by the Nazis. It is known as The Holocaust. Many Jewish people have done great things in science, literature, business, and the arts. Albert Einstein, who came up with the equation E=mc2, was Jewish.

Key Vocabulary:

(enviably (adv)) enviable (adj): If someone is in an enviable situation, you wish you were also in that situation
(endeavoured (p)) endeavour (v): to try to do something
(scriptural (adj)) scriptures (n): the holy writings of a religion
(combat (v)): to try to stop something unpleasant or harmful from happening or increasing
(apparently (adv): used to say you have read or been told something although you are not certain it is true
(attitude (n): a feeling or opinion about something, or a way of behaving that is caused by this
(mete (v): to give or order a punishment or make someone receive cruel or unfair treatment
(trodden (p)) tread (v): to put your foot on something or to press something with your foot
(unflinching (adj): not frightened of danger or unpleasantness
(unmovable (adj): fixed and impossible to move
(horde (n): large group of people
(consisted (p)) consist (v): to be made of or formed from
(indulgences (n): when you allow someone or yourself to have something enjoyable, especially more than is good for you
(hangover (n): a feeling of illness after drinking too much alcohol
(sobered (v): to be- come less drunk, or to make someone become less drunk
(serenity (n)) serene (adj): peaceful/calm; worried by nothing
(thoriated (p)) intercept (v): to stop something/someone before they are able to reach a place
(diverted (p)) divert (v): to cause something to change direction
(get kicked out (p)) get kicked out (p): to be forced to leave a place or organization
(acquainted (adj): familiar (with)
(padre (n): priest (Spanish for father)
(blemished (adj)) blemish (v): to spoil something
(sought (p)) seek (v): to try to find or get something, especially that which is not a physical object
(carols (n): happy or religious songs, sung at Christmas
**Biblical Context:**
Much of the language in “The Village Pastor” is taken from Christianity. Allusions are made to many different stories form the bible and expressions are taken from the Christian register.

The five foolish virgins is a reference to a parable told by Jesus. Jesus’ parables are simple and memorable stories, often with imagery, and each conveys a message. According to the Gospel of Mathew, Jesus tells the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins. A bridegroom, or man about to be married, is coming in the night and ten virgins go to meet him. Five are wise and five are foolish. They all bring lamps, but only the wise virgins bring enough oil to keep their lamps lit. At midnight, when the bridegroom is coming, the foolish virgins run out of oil, leave to get more, and miss the bridegroom’s arrival. The bridegroom is salvation into heaven, the wise virgins are saved while the foolish virgins are damned.

Prodigal is a reference to another of Jesus’ parables, The Prodigal Son. It is found only in the Gospel of Luke. The parable is about a son who wastes his share of his father’s estate. He repents and returns to his father’s house. He is welcomed and a feast is held. His older, dutiful brother who has worked without reward for his father resents the forgiveness of the prodigal son. His father reminds the older son that all he has is is. He says they should still celebrate the return of the younger boy because he has come back to them. The Christian God, or father, is forgiving of sinners if they ask for forgiveness.

Gehenna is used in the New Testament to mean hell. Sodom and Gomorrah are two ancient cities mentioned in the Book of Genesis. Both cities were destroyed by fire from God because of their sexual wickedness, including rape and child sexual abuse. Because Jesus is often compared to a shepherd in the New Testament, Christians who believe in him are referred to as the faithful sheep or the Lord’s flock. According to the Gospel of Mathew, Jesus says “get thee behind me, Satan” to Peter the Apostle when he believes that Peter is trying to tempt him. When the Village Pastor says “get thee behind the Lord, Satan” to the owner of the bar, he is implying that alcohol is a temptation from the devil.

**Linguistic Context:**
Thee means “you” in an older version of English used in a popular translation of the bible. When preaching, the Village Pastor often uses this older English, such as when he says guideth and protecteth, for “guides and protects.”

**Making Inferences:**
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. In his sermon, Reverend Mwaura says that the night before he had assembled his family together to pray and was surprised to find out that his second son was ‘under that roof.’ ‘That roof’ probably means:
   - a. the church
   - b. Muriuki’s
   - c. the forest
2. When Reverend Mwaura is in the bar, Kairu says to him, “This is no black man who has done this to me.” By this he probably means:
   - a. a white man caused him to lose his leg
   - b. he got his religious beliefs from a black man
   - c. his alcohol addiction was caused by Christianity
3. When Reverend Mwaura goes back to his church, he is surprised that so many of the men join him. The men probably come into the church because:
   - a. Reverend Mwaura helped them to remember their faith
   - b. They were escaping British soldiers searching for rebels
   - c. Their wives made them feel guilty for drinking on Christmas
Guessing Meaning from Context:
The words in the left column are from the story. The right column has definitions for those words. Look back at the story and try to understand the vocabulary. Then put the letter of its definition on the line next to each word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. navigate</td>
<td>h. a large group of people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. patronising</td>
<td>b. familiar with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. unflinching</td>
<td>c. a place where someone lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. horde</td>
<td>d. the total amount that can be contained or produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. duly</td>
<td>e. willing to give money, help, or kindness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. acquainted</td>
<td>f. not showing the expected level of respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. escapism</td>
<td>g. drunk or very intoxicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. abode</td>
<td>h. to direct the way across water or land, in a ship, aircraft, or car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. generous</td>
<td>i. avoiding real life by thinking about exciting, impossible activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. inebriated</td>
<td>j. not frightened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. capacity</td>
<td>k. in the correct way or at the correct time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. irreverent</td>
<td>l. speaking to someone as if that person is stupid/unimportant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:
1. Reverend Mwaura is highly respected because he lives honorably.
2. Many of the men in the village prefer to go to the bar than to his church.
3. Muriuki’s is a popular bar next to Reverend Mwaura’s church.
4. It takes place on Christmas Day.
5. They have recently received their Christmas bonuses and are spending the money at Muriuki’s.
6. Reverend Mwaura leads the people into the bar signing hymns.
7. Near the church was the only place that he owned land.
8. They don’t believe in the Christian God of the Europeans because of the things that have happened to them by the Europeans.
9. All of the men from the bar come into the church behind the reverend.
10. A “Johnnie,” or British soldier, shoots a gun into the air to get everyone’s attention. He is searching for one of the Mau Mau rebels (“terrorists”).
11. Reverend Mwaura yells at the soldier for being disrespectful in a church.
12. After the Johnnie leaves, all the men go back to the bar.
13. Yes, many people come to mourn the reverend.

Analysing the Story: Epithet
Look back at the explanation of epithet. Different epithets are used throughout “The Village Pastor” to refer to characters and to places. Four epithets from the story are listed in the table below. Look back at the story and see if you can identify what or whom each refers to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Epithet</th>
<th>Describes what/who?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The Lord’s house”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“the padre”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Satan” and “the devil”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Johnnie”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking Critically:
- Some of the men say they do not go to the Christian church because it is a white man’s religion and they are fighting white colonialists. The Reverend says Jesus is not connected with the English. Who do you agree with? Why?
IN THE SHADOW OF WAR
Ben Okri—Nigeria

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Omovo is a young boy living with his father in a village in Nigeria. He and his father listen to an old radio about the war happening in the interior of the country. They hear that there will be an eclipse of the moon that night. Omovo’s father leaves and Omovo sits on the windowsill. He is waiting to see a woman with a black veil who passes by each day. He has heard that she has no shadow and he wants to see if that is true. Across the street, three soldiers who came to the village that day are drinking and playing a game. Omovo notices that the soldiers are giving children money, so he goes outside. One of the soldiers tells him they are looking for a woman with a black veil. But when the soldier tries to give him money, he refuses. He goes back to the window and succumbs to sleep. When he wakes, the woman has already passed by and the soldiers are stumbling after her. Omovo runs outside and follows them into the woods.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. There are fewer people living in the _________________ than along the coast.
2. As the sun went down, the ________________ of the tree got longer and longer.
3. When the moon passes in front of the sun, it is called an _________________.
4. She ________________ over the roots of a tree as she tried to find her way in the dark.
5. I felt it would only be a matter of time before she ________________ to my charms.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- Omovo will catch up with the woman in the black veil and warn her about the soldiers.
- Omovo will see the soldiers murder the woman in the black veil and run away.
- Omovo will see the woman murder the soldiers and then ask to join her.
- Omovo will catch up with the soldiers and tell them where the woman in the black veil stays.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. Who does Omovo watch from the window?
2. Who is Omovo waiting to see?
3. What strange event will happen that night?
4. What does Omovo do when his father leaves?
5. When Omovo notices that the children outside are being given money by the soldiers, what does he do?
6. Who are the soldiers looking for?
7. What do the soldiers do when the woman in the black veil walks past?
8. What does Omovo do?
9. Where does the woman go?
10. When the soldiers capture the woman, what do they do?
11. What does Omovo see in the water?
12. When the soldiers shoot the woman, what happens to Omovo?
13. Who brings Omovo home?

Literary term: Suspense

Suspense is the excitement or tension that readers feel as they become involved in a story and eager to know the outcome of the plot.

Focus: As you read “In the Shadow of War,” try to predict what will happen to the characters. Do you begin to feel anxious or worried for the protagonist or the woman with the black veil?

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Historical Context:

From 1901 to 1960, the United Kingdom ruled Nigeria. However, by 1960 the people wanted independence very much, and Britain finally let them have it. For some time after this, Nigeria was a dictatorship, where the leaders stayed in control even if many people disliked them. At this time, Nigeria had a big war called the Biafra War with Christian Igbo people who wanted their own country called “Biafra.” They did not get their country, and hundreds of thousands of people were killed.

Linguistic Context:

Grundig is a brand of German-made radio. Similar to the minibus system in Malawi, the danfo in Nigeria are small, dilapidated buses used for public transportation. Kwashiorkor is a disease of malnutrition that results from protein deficiency and causes children’s stomachs to bloat. Kobo is the smallest currency in Nigeria. 100 kobo equals 1 naira.

Guessing Meaning from Context:

The sentences below are from the story. Try to understand the meaning of the bolded words and circle the letter of the answer that gives the correct meaning for each word.

1. Then he struggled into the shabby coat that he had long outgrown.
   a. in good condition    c. very fashionable
   b. in poor condition    d. made of leather
2. The heat was stupefying.
   a. making you feel more healthy    c. making you unable to think clearly
   b. making you worried    d. making you feel lonely
3. The three soldiers drank palm wine and played draughts beneath the sun’s oppressive glare.
   a. extremely hot    c. cruel and unfair
   b. kind and generous    d. very bright
4. He followed her through the dense vegetation.
   a. thick    c. dangerous
   b. dark    d. tall

libation (n): a drink of alcohol
briefcase (n): a rectangular case, used for carrying documents
(agitated p.) agitate (v): to make someone feel anxious or angry
flinch (v): to make a sudden small movement because of pain
(sleepwalking pr. part.) sleepwalker (n): a person who gets out of bed and walks while sleeping
draughts (n): a game for two people, each with twelve circular pieces which are moved on a board
(mischievously (adv)) mischievous (adj): behaving in a way which is slightly bad but not intended to cause harm or damage
crowing (v): When a cock crows, it makes a very long and loud sharp cry
dispiritedly (adv) dispirited (adj): not feeling hopeful about a particular situation or problem
(yawned p.) yawn (v): to open the mouth wide and take a lot of air into the lungs and slowly send it out, usually when tired/bored
(apologized p.) apologize (v): to tell someone that you are sorry for having done something
(splitted v.) to divide into two or more parts
(faded p.) fade (v): to lose colour or strength gradually
wrappers (n): pieces of paper or plastic which cover/protect things
shawl (n): pieces of cloth worn especially by women or girls over shoulders and/or head
(flaked v.) flake (v): to come off a surface in thin pieces
ostentatious (adj): too obviously showing your money, possessions or power, in an attempt to make other people admire you
skeleton (n): the frame of bones supporting a body
(slithered p.) slither (v): (of bodies) to move easily/quickly across a surface while twisting/curving undergrowth (n): a mass of bushes, small trees and plants growing under trees of a forest
5. Blocks lay crumbled in heaps and the workers’ sheds were deserted.
   a. abandoned  b. dry  c. full  d. broken
6. The lights changed over the forest and for the first time Omovo saw that the dead animals on the river were in fact the corpses of grown men.
   a. old clothes  b. dead bodies  c. canoes  d. livestock

**Making Inferences:**
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.
1. The soldiers outside are giving children money most likely because:
   a. they want the children to help them find the woman in the black veil
   b. they want to help the children pay for basic needs
   c. they want the children to go buy them palm wine
2. Omovo follows the soldiers as they pursue the woman wearing a black veil. This shows that he is:
   a. intelligent  b. hardworking  c. curious
3. The woman with the black veil visits a cave. She most likely goes there to:
   a. practice witchcraft with other women  b. hide from the soldiers who are following her  c. provide supplies and food to a group of rebels

**Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:**
1. He sees three soldiers come into the village.
2. He is waiting to see a woman in a black veil who passes by everyday.
3. There will be an eclipse of the moon.
4. He turns the radio back on.
5. He goes outside and walks past the soldiers.
6. They are looking for the woman in the black veil.
7. They get up and walk behind her.
8. He follows the soldiers and the woman.
9. She goes into the forest and then to a camp in the woods.
10. They beat her and ask her where the others are and then tear off her veil.
11. He sees rotting human bodies.
12. He ran from the forest, tripped over roots, hit his head, and blacked out.
13. The soldiers brought Omovo back to his father.

**Analysing the Story: Suspense**
Look back at the explanation of suspense. Suspense is created when we are emotionally invested in characters and their situations and actively try to anticipate their fates. Some moments from the plot are listed in the chart below. Fill in how each moment made you feel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What happens in the story?</th>
<th>How does it make you feel?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omovo is waiting for the woman to go past his house.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omovo wakes up and sees the soldiers following the woman into the woods.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omovo sees that the soldiers have captured the woman in the black veil.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thinking Critically:**
- Why do you think Omovo didn’t take the 10 kobo the soldier offered to him?
- How do you think the woman with the veil received the scars on her face?
- Do you think the soldiers were good or bad people? Why or why not?
COUNTRY LOVERS
Nadine Gordimer—South Africa

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Paulus Eysendyck is the son of a white farmer in South Africa. As a child he is good friends with Thebedi, the daughter of one of the black labourers on the farm. This is normal. But, by adolescence the black children are supposed to start treating their former playmates like masters and not friends.
This is a problem for Paulus and Thebedi. Even though Paulus goes away to boarding school and Thebedi stays on the farm, they continue their friendship and even allow it to become physically intimate. As they grow older, they meet in secret and have sex.
They both know that their relationship cannot continue into adulthood and, eventually, Thebedi marries a bricklayer named Njabulo. He loves her very much. He even cares for the child that Thebedi gives birth to that is actually Paulus' child. A rumour about the light-skinned child reaches Paulus and prompts him to go to Thebedi and Njabulo's house to see it.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. They hired a ____________ to build the foundation of the new school block.
2. ____________ occurs between childhood and adulthood.
3. When she left the village with her family, the girl said goodbye to all of her ________________.
4. Worries about the President’s health have ____________ some to question if he will run again.
5. I only share ____________ secrets with my closest friends.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- Paulus will poison the child so that there is no evidence of his relationship with Thebedi.
- Paulus will tell Thebedi to go away from the farm with the child so that no one will find out.
- Paulus will ask Thebedi to divorce Njabulo so that she can marry him.
- Paulus will take the child away from Thebedi and bring it to live with his parents.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. The white and black children play together on the farm when they are young, but what happens around adolescence?
2. What is different about Paulus and Thebedi?
3. What does Paulus buy for Thebedi in the shop?

Idioms & Expressions:
forms of address: formal ways of referring to certain people
the sister school: girls' school associated with a school for boys
have a crush on: a strong, temporary feeling of liking someone
there was no disgrace in that: that was not behaviour which causes embarrassment and the loss of other people's respect
token movement: movement which shows that you are doing something, even though the results are limited in their effect
here and there: different places
hold up my head: remain confident and proud

Key Vocabulary:
(surpassed p.) surpass (v): to do or be better than
cinema (n): a theatre where people pay to watch films
transition (n): a change from one form to another, or the process by which this happens
woodwork (n): the activity of making objects from wood
spans (n): set of oxen
craze (n): an activity, object or idea that is extremely popular, usually for a short time
4. What does Thebe tell her father about the gift? What does she tell the
other girls?
5. During the holidays, where do Thebe and Paulus go?
6. What do they do one summer afternoon?
7. Where does Paulus take the neighbors’ daughters during his last year of
secondary school?
8. Where do Paulus' parents go sometimes on Saturday afternoons?
9. What does Thebe do when Paulus' parents leave?
10. Why does she have to leave before dawn?
11. What does Njabulo ask Thebe's parents?
12. Who is the father of Thebe's baby? How can you tell?
13. What does Njabulo do when Thebe gives birth?
14. When Paulus hears that Thebe had a baby, what does he do?
15. What happens to the baby?
16. While Njabulo is burying the baby, what happens?
17. When the police question Thebe, what does she tell them?
18. A year later, at trial, what does Thebe say?
19. Why is Paulus freed (provide two reasons)?

**Literary term: Alliteration**

Alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words.

**Focus:** Especially during the long descriptive scenes, “Country Lovers” has
many instances of alliteration. Can you find one?

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**About the Author:**

Nadine Gordimer (20 November 1923–13 July 2014) was
a South African writer, political activist and recipient of
the 1991 Nobel Prize in Literature. Gordimer’s writing
was influential in the struggle against apartheid in South
Africa. She was active in the anti-apartheid movement,
joining the African National Congress during the days when the organization
was banned. She was also very active in HIV/AIDS causes.

**Wildlife Context:**

The Nile monitor is a large member of the monitor lizard family found throughout Africa. It is also called a
leguaan. Nile monitors can grow to over 200 cm. They have muscular bodies, strong legs, and powerful jaws. Their teeth are sharp and pointed in juvenile animals and become blunt and peg-like in adults.

White stinkwood is a species of tree that is common across large areas of the South and East of Southern Africa, ranging from a tall forest tree to a medium-sized tree in bushveld and open country, to a shrub on rocky soil. And the Cape willow is a tall, graceful, evergreen willow tree. It grows along riverbanks in South Africa, and is used for a wide range of traditional medicines.

**Linguistic Context:**

A number of Afrikaans words are used throughout this story, especially to
describe the landscape. A kraal is an enclosure for livestock, or a rural village of huts surrounded by a stockade. The word may come from the Dutch “kraal,” meaning bead, as in the beads of a necklace – kraals are generally round in shape. Koppies are small hills, while veld refers to open grassland, from the
Dutch for "field." *Plateland*, meaning farmland or countryside, is literally “flat land” in Afrikaans, it now refers to any rural area in which agriculture takes place.

**Consumer Context:**

*Mercedes*-Benz is a German automobile manufacturer. The brand is used for luxury automobiles, buses, coaches, and trucks.

**Making Inferences:**

Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. Thebedi lies to her family and friends about who gave her the belt and earrings. She probably does this because:
   a. She thinks they will steal them from her
   b. She does not want them to discover her relationship with Paulus
   c. She does not like to share personal information with others

2. The other people living in the kraal are not surprised when Thebedi gives birth so shortly after marrying Njabulo. This is most likely because:
   a. They know it is normal for a couple to have sex before getting married
   b. They know that she has been sleeping with Paulus
   c. They know that the first pregnancy is always short

3. Paulus leaves the court with his head hidden underneath his mother’s jacket. This is probably because:
   a. It is raining hard
   b. He does not like being photographed
   c. He is ashamed

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**

The words in the word bank below are from the story. Find them in the story and try to understand their meaning. Then fill in the spaces in the sentences below with the correct word.

**WORD BANK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unspoken</th>
<th>Prosperous</th>
<th>Ideally</th>
<th>Exaggerating</th>
<th>Attentively</th>
<th>Erode</th>
<th>Graze</th>
<th>Flirt</th>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Substitute</th>
<th>Sweetheart</th>
<th>Indicates</th>
<th>Self-pity</th>
<th>Coincide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. Although __*ideally*__ each student would have a desk, we are able to share.
2. He listened to the instructions __________ so that he would not miss any information.
3. Although I can write with my left hand, my right hand is much more ____________.
4. I think they were __________ when they said the homework was impossible - this isn’t so bad!
5. At first, her business was not making a lot of money but now it is quite ____________.
6. Research __________ that more and more people are moving to cities.
7. When cooking, if you do not have one ingredient, you can __________ it with another similar ingredient.
8. It is inappropriate for teachers to __________ with students.
9. Feeling __________ can lead to a loss of confidence.
10. When they became friends, they made an __________ agreement to always support each other.
11. The banks of the Shire are slowly __________ and some villages near the river are in danger.
12. Her graduation from high school __________ with her eighteenth birthday.
13. Every morning the boy had to take the goats out to a field to ____________.
14. The young man brought flowers to his ____________ every day for a month.
Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:

1. The white children go to boarding schools and the black children begin to treat them like masters and mistresses instead of friends.
2. They continue to be friends after Paulus goes away to boarding school.
3. He buys her a red plastic belt and gilt hoop earrings.
4. She tells her father it was a gift from the missus (Paulus' mother). She tells the other girls that she has a sweetheart on another farm.
5. They go down to a dried-up river bed.
6. They have sex.
7. He drives them to dances and to the drive-in cinema.
8. They go to visit their daughters who are married and live on different farms.
9. She comes up to the house and stays with Paulus.
10. She leaves before dawn so that the servants who come in the morning don’t see her in the house.
11. Njabulo asks to marry Thebedi.
12. Paulus is the father. You can tell he is the father because of the light skin and light coloured eyes of the baby.
13. Njabulo treats the baby like his own, buys her things, and cares for her.
14. He goes over to the kraal to see it.
15. Paulus poisons her and kills her.
16. Before he can finish, the police come to investigate.
17. She tells them that she saw Paulus poison the baby.
18. She says that Paulus did not poison the baby.
19. Paulus is freed because Thebedi tells two different stories making her testimony useless and there is insufficient proof to convict Paulus.

Analysing the Story: Alliteration

Look back at the explanation of alliteration. Nadine Gordimer is a master of style and has very tight control over the sound of her writing. Some passages that contain alliteration are listed in the table below. Can you identify the alliterative sounds in the passages? The first one is done for you. Can you find one more passage in the story and ad it to the table?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passage</th>
<th>Alliterative sounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“While he talked he twisted and tugged at the roots of white stinkwood and Cape willow trees that looped out of the groded earth around them.”</td>
<td>w, t, e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“When he has learnt how to tease and flirt and fondle quite intimately these girls who were the daughters of prosperous farmers like his father…”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“She revealed the closed, pale, plump, tiny face, with a bubble of spit at the corner of the mouth, the spidery pink hands stirring.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking Critically:

- Thebedi tells two different stories to the authorities about what happened when her baby died. Why do you think she did this? If you were Thebedi what would you have done?
THE REFUGEE
James Appe—Uganda

PREPARING TO READ
Story Preview:
Margaret Abiyo has left her home country because of war and is living in a refugee camp. She is unhappy to be living in such a place and, nostalgically, she remembers much happier times. She is not used to such poverty or solitude. While she is remembering the past, three local men enter her hut. They are brothers: Wani, Pitcha, and Duku. They explain that, if she is willing, Duku would like to marry her. Margaret tells them that she needs to think about it. They promise to return in three days.

Duku is in high spirits because he is certain Margaret will marry him. But Margaret thinks it is degrading that these men should even ask her about marriage.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. During the war in Mozambique, many _____________ came to Malawi.
2. The proud boy thought that digging the latrine was _____________ work.
3. The priest prefers to pray in _____________, so there are no distractions.
4. I have been away from home for a long time, so when I see pictures of my parents' home, I feel _____________.
5. After winning the football match, he was in _____________.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
• Margaret will leave the refugee camp angrily and return to her home.
• The men will return and Margaret will decide to marry Duku.
• The men will return, but Margaret will say she could never marry Duku.
• Margaret’s rich husband will come to the camp and rescue her.

WHILE READING
Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. Is Margaret feeling happy at the beginning of the story?
2. What are her living conditions like?
3. Who comes to visit Margaret?
4. Which brother speaks first?
5. Why is it difficult for the brothers to speak to Margaret?
6. What do the brothers want?
7. How does Margaret respond?
8. Why is Duku happy after leaving Margaret’s house?
9. What’s Margaret think of the brothers and their plan?
10. When the brothers return, what do they talk about?
11. Is Margaret and educated woman?
12. Do the men speak English?
13. Are the men happy when they leave Margaret?
14. What do they learn about Margaret at the end?
UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Linguistic Context:
The Kuku language belongs to the Bari language group, of the Southeastern Nilotic branch of the Nilotic language family of the Southern Sudan and Northern Uganda. There are less than 100,000 native speakers of Kuku.

Institutional Context:
At the end of the story, it is revealed that Margaret Abiyo is a recent graduate of Makerere University. Makerere University Kampala (MUK) is Uganda’s largest institution of higher learning. MUK became an independent national university in 1970 when the University of East Africa was split into three independent universities: University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, Makerere University in Uganda, and University of Nairobi in Kenya.

Makerere was home to many post-independence African leaders, including former Ugandan president Milton Obote and Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere. Former Tanzanian president Benjamin Mkapa current president of the DRC Joseph Kabila and recent Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki are also Makerere alumni.

After independence, Makerere was a focal point for literary activity central to African nationalist culture. Writers including Ali Mazrui, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, Paul Theroux, and V. S. Naipaul spent time at Makerere during their careers.

Biographical Context:
Christopher Okigbo (1930–1967) was a Nigerian poet, who died fighting for the independence of Biafra. He is today widely recognized as an outstanding postcolonial English-language African poet and one of the major modernist writers of the 20th century.

Alex La Guma (1925–1985) was a South African novelist whose work helped characterise the movement against the apartheid era in South Africa. La Guma’s vivid style, distinctive dialogue, and realistic, sympathetic portrayal of oppressed groups have made him one of the most notable South African writers of the 20th century. He is the author of the story “Out of Darkness.”

Ali Al’amin Mazrui (1933–2014), was an academic and a political writer on African and Islamic studies and North–South relations. He was born in Mombasa, Kenya. He was critical of African socialism and all strains of Marxism. He argued that a revised liberalism could help the continent and described himself as a proponent of a unique ideology of African liberalism. He believed the current capitalist system was deeply exploitative of Africa, and that the West rarely if ever lived up to their liberal ideals and could be described as global apartheid.

Literary term: Irony
In literature, irony frequently occurs when there is a difference between what is expected or desired and what actually happens. For example, what a character thinks will happen to him or her may turn out to be the exact opposite of what actually happens.

Focus: There are many instances of irony in “The Refugee.” The brothers expectations about and desires for Margaret are quickly undermined by Margaret herself. Although, the brothers don’t know this until the end. Pay attention to the ironic things that Margaret says and the that the brothers say and do.

Key Vocabulary:
set the storm going: did something to cause a very angry reaction from a lot of people
won over his heart: caused him to love her
towering giant: (metaphorical) a very successful and powerful person or organization
take undue advantage: treat someone badly in order to get something good from them
in awe: a feeling of great respect often mixed with fear/surprise
closely at his heels: directly behind him
bid her ageing mother farewell: said goodbye to her mother who was old
trouble broke out: If something dangerous or unpleasant breaks out, it suddenly starts
(don’t) judge a book from the cover: said to show that you cannot know what something or someone is like by looking only at their appearance
empty the contents of the stomach: (vomiting) vomiting
opulent: (adj): expensive and luxurious
luxurious

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Historical Context:
It is unclear from the story which conflict has caused Margaret Abiyo to become a refugee in Sudan. She was most likely fleeing either the Uganda-Tanzania War of 1978-1979 or the Ugandan Bush War that went on from 1981-1986.
Milton Obote was the Ugandan leader following the end of British colonial rule, but Idi Amin seized power in a military coup in 1971. The Tanzanian leader Julius Nyerere offered sanctuary to Obote and 20,000 refugees fleeing Amin’s attempts to wipe out opposition. A year later, a group of exiles based in Tanzania attempted, unsuccessfully, to invade Uganda and remove Amin. Amin blamed Nyerere for backing and arming his enemies and in 1978 Uganda declared war on Tanzania. Nyerere mobilized the Tanzania People’s Defence Force and counter-attacked. Despite support from Libya, Tanzania quickly defeated Amin’s forces. Following Amin’s defeat, there was intense competition in Uganda for power. Obote’s party won the 1980 election, but the leader of a smaller political faction, Yowere Museveni, alleged election fraud and declared an armed rebellion. The fighting went on for many years and by 1985 forces loyal to Obote had nearly defeated Musuveni’s forces. However, tribal rivalries and weariness of war led to an internal coup against Obote and, in 1986, Museveni became president.

Ideological Context:

Communism is a way of running an economy and a government in which the means of production (factories, equipment, etc.) are commonly owned, and in which there are no social classes. These ideas were first proposed by German thinkers Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1830-1895) in the Communist Manifesto. In 1917, Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky led a Russian group called the Bolsheviks in the October Revolution. They established the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). By the 1960s, one-third of the countries in the world identified as communist. The other two-thirds of the world still lived in capitalism, and this led to a world-wide divide between capitalist countries and communist countries. This was called the "Cold War" because it was not fought with weapons or armies, but competing ideas. During the 1980s, the USA and the Soviet Union were competing to have the biggest army and having the most dangerous weapons. This was called the "Arms Race."

In 1991, the Soviet Union broke up. However, around a quarter of the world’s people still live in states controlled by a communist party. Most of these are in China. The other countries include Cuba, Vietnam, and Laos.

Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.
1. On their second visit, Duku, Wani, and Pitcha boast of the number of their cows and the size of their fields. They do this most likely to:
   a. try to hire Abiyo to work for them
   b. try and sell this property to Abiyo
   c. influence Abiyo to marry one of them
2. After Abiyo yells at them in English, the three brothers immediately leave. This is most likely because:
   a. they think she is casting spells on them
   b. they are embarrassed
   c. they hate the English language
3. Duku says Abiyo has "insulted him beyond what his manhood could endure." This shows that he is:
   a. lonely
   b. courageous
   c. prideful

Villains (n): bad people who harm others or break the law
Trek (n): a long walk over land such as hills, mountains or forests
Intake (n): an act of taking in something, especially breath
Stagnant (adj): (of water/air) not moving, and smelling unpleasant
Hooligan (n): a person who acts in a violent way without thinking and causes damage
Prolongation (n): prolong (v): to make last a longer time
Wasting her time (pr. part.) waste time (v): to not make good use of the hours available
Disobedient (adj): refusing to do what someone in authority tells you to do
Economic (adj): relating to trade, industry and money
Analyse (v): to study or examine something in detail, in order to discover more about it
Logistics (n): the careful organization of a complicated activity so that it happens in a successful and effective way
Shifted (p.) shift (v): to (cause something or someone to) move or change from one position or direction to another
Spell bound (adj): having your attention completely held by something, so that you cannot think about anything else
Baffled (adj): baffle (v): to cause someone to be completely unable to understand/explain something
 Abruptly (adv) abrupt (adj): describes something that is sudden and unexpected
Inaudible (adj): unable to be heard
Taking honours (n): If you complete a school or university qualification with honours, you achieve a high standard.
Betrothed (adj): a person someone has promised to marry or has been promised to as a marriage partner
Lecturer (n): someone who teaches at a college or university
Guessing Meaning from Context:
The words in the left column are from the story. The right column has definitions for those words. Look back at the story and try to understand the vocabulary. Then put the letter of its definition on the line next to each word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. consume</td>
<td>h. a. wrong or false</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. compulsory</td>
<td>i. b. wise, especially as a result of great experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. dignified</td>
<td>c. controlled, serious, and calm, and therefore deserving respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. erroneous</td>
<td>d. to compare two things to show the differences between them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. conceal</td>
<td>e. required by a law or a rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. sage</td>
<td>f. to suffer something difficult, unpleasant, or painful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. exploitation</td>
<td>g. an idea or behaviour that is silly or stupid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. contrast</td>
<td>h. to use fuel, energy, or time OR to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. nonsense</td>
<td>i. to hide something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. incoherent</td>
<td>j. unable to be understood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. endure</td>
<td>k. a situation in which someone treats someone else unfairly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:
1. No, she is angry.
2. She is living in a place that is dirty and poorly constructed.
3. Three local brothers, Wani, Pitcha, and Duku, come to visit her.
4. Wani speaks first.
5. They are struggling to speak with her because they do not speak the same language.
6. They want Margaret to marry Duku.
7. She tells them that she needs to think about it and to give her time to think.
8. He is happy because he is certain that Margaret will marry him.
9. She is furious that they would ask her such things and would never marry one of those men.
10. They sit and list off all of their possessions.
11. Yes, she speaks English and seems to know about a lot of different topics.
12. No, they do not.
13. No, they are embarrassed and angry.
14. They find out that she is a graduate from Makerere University and is promised to marry another man.

Analysing the Story: Irony
Look back at the explanation of irony. Hopefully you understood not only what happened, but how characters in the story felt. Without understanding the expectations and desires of the characters, it is hard to identify irony. Some ironic passages from the story are listed in the table below. Can you explain why they are ironic? Can you find one other instance of irony?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What a character says or does</th>
<th>Why it is ironic...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Margaret says: “You visit me, it is good for me. You want me to live with you, it is also good.”</td>
<td>She despises the men, is not happy they visited, and is insulted that one of them wants to marry her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After leaving Margaret the first time: “Duku was in high spirits. “</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duku says that: “these women refugees were always ready to pick up any man to look after them.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking Critically:
• This story is written in English, but we are supposed to understand that the dialogue for most of the story is in Kuku. At the end of this story, “Abiyo wanted to explain things to them and let reason fight reason, and so end this nonsense. She could not explain things in Kuku, the local language, so instead she shifted to English.” Explain this quote in your own words. According to the passage, why does Abiyo shift to English? Do you think there are any other reasons?
CERTAIN WINDS FROM THE SOUTH
Ama Ata Aidoo—Ghana

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Hawa, the daughter of M’ma Asana, has recently given birth in rural Ghana. One night, M’ma Asana hears someone coming toward the house and wishes it were her husband. But she knows that is impossible. In fact, it is Hawa’s husband, Issa. He tells M’ma Asana that he will go south to find work.

He cannot take Hawa and their child, Fuseni, because Fuseni is very young and his navel could get infected. Issa says he will return next Ramadan. M’ma Asana cannot sleep after Issa leaves. She thinks that the same problems she experienced are repeating for her daughter.

In the morning, she wakes Hawa up and tells her that Issa has gone. Hawa feels miserable when she hears this. M’ma Asana tells Hawa a story about another man who left his wife and newborn child to go south. This was twenty years ago and the man was a soldier.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. ______________ is a time of fasting for Muslims.
2. The ____________ calf struggled to stand for the first time.
3. All the tomato plants are ______________ with a virus.
4. What a ____________ existence! How can anyone live in such conditions?
5. The ____________ connects the baby to her mother in the womb.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
• The man was M’ma Asana’s brother and never returned.
• The man was M’ma Asana’s cousin and he is back in the village now.
• The man was Hawa’s uncle and he returned to collect his wife and child.
• The man was Hawa’s father and he died in the war.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. In the opening of this story, we see M’ma Asana moving around her home and thinking. Is she happy with the situation they are in?
2. Who is Fuseni? Why is he special?
3. Who comes to talk to M’ma Asana? How is he related to M’ma Asana?
4. What is Issa concerned about?
5. Where is Issa going? Why?
6. Does Issa tell his wife that he is leaving?
7. What does M’ma Asana tell Hawa when she wakes up?
8. What did Memunat do in the story that M’ma Asana tells to Hawa?
9. Who was the soldier M’ma Asana is telling Hawa about?
10. Where does he go?
11. What happens to him?
12. If M’ma Asana had gone to prove her marriage, what would have happened?

**Literary term: Dialogue**

When you read a play, you learn about its plot, or story, mainly from the dialogue that takes place among the characters—that is, from the character’s conversations. In short stories, although authors can also use narration (tell the story directly), dialogue usually remains important. To be effective, dialogue must be natural and must seem appropriate for the particular characters.

**Focus:** As you read “Certain Winds from the South,” ask yourself if the dialogue, especially between M’ma Asana and Issa, helped tell the story and if it seemed natural and appropriate for the characters.

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**Religious Context:**

*Islam* is an Abrahamic religion and monotheistic religion whose holy book is called the Qur’an. The religion was founded in the Arabian Peninsula and people who follow Islam are called Muslims. Muslims believe that there is only one God, who is called *Allah* in the Arabic language.

Muslims believe that *Muhammad* was the last of many *prophets* from God. They believe that the Qur’an is the exact word of God, as revealed to Muhammad. The two largest branches are the Sunnis and the Shi’ites. Other groups include Sufis, Ahmadis, and Ibadis. Islam has rules based on the Qur’an called “*Sharia*.” Muslim lawyers have studied Sharia and written down their ideas about how to judge different cases. These ideas about Sharia are called Fiqh.

*Ramadan* is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Muslims worldwide observe this as a month of fasting. This annual observance is regarded as one of the Five Pillars of Islam. The month lasts 29–30 days based on the visual sightings of the crescent moon, according to numerous biographical accounts compiled in the hadiths.

**Cultural Context:**

The *Gonja* were a powerful people in northern Ghana. The *Grunshies* were a smaller tribe of people in the same region. Pre-colonial Gonja society was stratified into castes, with a ruling class, a Muslim trader class, an animist commoner class, and a slave class. Its economy depended largely on trade in slaves and *kola nuts*.

**Meteorological Context:**

The *Harmattan* is a hot, dry, and dusty wind blowing over West Africa. This northeasterly wind blows from the Sahara Desert into the Gulf of Guinea between the end of November and mid-March. The Harmattan brings desert-like weather conditions: lowers the humidity, dissipates cloud cover, prevents rainfall formation and sometimes creates big clouds of dust or sand which can even result in violent duststorms or sandstorms.

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**

The sentences below are from the story. Try to understand the meaning of the bolded words and circle the letter of the answer that gives the correct meaning for each word.

1. M’ma Asana eyed the *wretched* pile of cola-nuts, spat, and picked up the reed-bowl.
   a. of good quality
   b. of a small amount
   c. of poor quality
   d. of a large amount

2. She *stooped* over the nuts.
   a. squatted
   b. leaned forward
   c. cried
   d. fell

3. In the old days, there were bucks and you got scolded for serving a woman in *maternity* a duicker.
   a. the state of being married
   b. the state of being a child
   c. the state of being a mother
   d. the state of being a woman
4. They of the wilderness, it is they who go south to cut grass.
   a. undeveloped land          b. poor towns          c. urban areas          d. foreign lands

5. Oh, the scandal she caused herself then!
   a. an action or event that brings respect to a person
   b. an action or event that causes a person to be shamed
   c. an action or event that makes a person happy
   d. an action or event that makes a person rich

6. And from time to time, some will shoot up, searing my womb, singeing my intestines and burning up and up and up until I screamed with madness when it got into my head.
   a. filling          b. healing          c. emptying          d. burning

**Making Inferences:**
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. Issa does not tell his wife Hawa that he is leaving for the south. This is likely because:
   a. Hawa would not care          b. Hawa would tell the neighbors          c. Hawa would not let him go

2. M’ma Asana thinks, “If only it could be my husband,” when she sees someone walking through the grass.
   This is probably because:
   a. she misses her husband          b. her husband owes her money          c. she wants to kill her husband

3. M’ma Asana says, “It was him I wanted not his body turned into gold.” This shows M’ma Asana is:
   a. greedy          b. loving          c. selfish

**Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:**
1. No. She is remembering better times when there were more children and more food.
2. Fuseni is M’ma Asana’s grandson. He’s special because it’s been a long time since a baby was born there.
3. Issa comes to speak with M’ma Asana. He is her son-in-law.
4. He is worried about his newborn son and whether his umbilical cord had become infected.
5. He is going south (to the coast) in order to find work.
6. No, she is sleeping and he does not wake her. He only tells M’ma Asana.
7. That Issa has gone.
8. During the war, Memunat had an affair with a soldier after another man had paid a dowry to her father.
9. The soldier was Hawa’s father.
10. He went to fight for the British in WWII.
11. He was killed.
12. If she had gone south, she could have claimed money from the government as the widow of a soldier.

**Analysing the Story: Dialogue**
Look back at the explanation of dialogue. There is dialogue at the beginning of this story between Issa and M’ma Asana. But when Issa leaves, the story becomes a long monologue (only one person speaking). We understand that M’ma Asana is talking to her daughter, Hawa, though. And there are clues that Hawa is speaking too, even if we don’t see what she says. Some passages of M’ma Asana’s monologue are listed in the table below. Can you provide Hawa’s voice and turn the monologue into a dialogue?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M’ma Asana</th>
<th>Hawa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“But us, we are different. I had not been betrothed.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Do you ask me why I say “we”? Because this man was your father. Ah-ah, you open your mouth and eyes wide? Yes, my child, it is of your father I am speaking.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“No, I was not lying when I told you that he died. But keep quiet and listen. He was going south to get himself a house for married soldiers.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thinking Critically:**
- WWII took place in the 1940s, ending in 1945. In what decade does this story happen? How do you know?
- If you were M’ma Asana’s husband in the 1940s and you were a soldier during colonial rule, would you have gone to fight in WWII in Europe? Why or why not?
FIREFLY
Adewale Maja-Pearce—Nigeria

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
The man and his wife are from a village in Nigeria. But they have come to Lagos with their baby for the man to work. The baby is very ill—wheezing and coughing, but they have no money to get proper medical care for the frail infant. The man’s wife thinks they should have stayed in the village because her father could have helped them. In Lagos, they know no one. The man had insisted that they come to Lagos, though, because he didn’t want to work for his wife’s father. Any other opportunity had been destroyed by soldiers in the war.
The man says he will ask his master (employer) for help and tells his wife it will be all right. She contemptuously dismisses him. She is furious with him. The man feels helpless and leaves the room.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. The boy felt ____________ when he was captured by the enemy.
2. The headteacher watched ______________ as the latecomers arrived to school.
3. I was ______________ that the referee counted the goal even though the player was offside.
4. The man was ______________ from smoking too many cigarettes.
5. The child’s arm broke easily because his bones were ______________.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
• The man will go find a doctor, but when they return to the room his wife and child will be gone.
• The man will go back inside, but the child will have died and his wife will leave him.
• The man will abandon his wife and the child will recover.
• The man will buy medicine for the child, but he will return to the room too late to save his child.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. Is the child in the story healthy or sick?
2. What do the man and woman need naira for?
3. Where does the man say that he will get money?
4. Does his wife believe him?
5. How does his wife think their child fell ill?
6. Why did they leave the village?
7. Why does the man go out of the room?
8. When he comes back, what has happened?
9. What does the woman do at the end of the story?
UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Monetary Context:
The naira was introduced in 1973 in Nigeria, replacing the British pound at a rate of 2 naira = 1 pound. The Naira is subdivided into 100 kobo.

Guessing Meaning from Context:
The words in the word bank below are all from the story. Find them in the story and see if you can understand their meaning. Then fill in the spaces in the sentences below with the correct word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>subsided</th>
<th>vulnerable</th>
<th>contort</th>
<th>presence</th>
<th>withdraw</th>
<th>presently</th>
<th>uncertainly</th>
<th>acknowledge</th>
<th>hovering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. Government officials are _______ making a plan to address the issue.
2. I promised my family that I would not _______ from school.
3. Yesterday we saw a helicopter _______ in the sky.
4. They refuse to _______ that they were involved in the scandal.
5. Today we are honored by the _______ of the chief himself.
6. We should always try to protect the most _______ members of our society.
7. After the rain finally _______, we were able to play the match.
8. Because neither of us knew the answer, we looked at each other _______.
9. In the talent show, he used to _______ his body into strange positions.

Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. At the start of the story, the man puts his hand on his wife's shoulder, but she does not “acknowledge his presence” probably because:
   a. she doesn’t feel it
   b. she is angry with him
   c. she is asleep

2. The woman tells the man that “it is finished.” By this she means that:
   a. the child is dead
   b. dinner is ready
   c. there is no more money

Suggested Answers for Comp. Questions:
1. The child is very sick.
2. The naira is needed to buy medicine.
3. He says he will get the money from his employer.
4. She does not believe him.
5. She says that he fell ill while they were travelling to Lagos from the village.
6. The man wanted to find work.
7. He felt like an intruder in the room.
8. The baby has died.
9. She packs her suitcase as if she is leaving the man.

Analysing the Story: Onomatopoeia
Look back at the explanation of onomatopoeia. Though this is a very short story, there are at least three clear examples of onomatopoeia. Remember, examples of onomatopoeia are going to be words that suggest sounds based on how the words themselves sound. One example from this story is the wheezing of the child. Wheezing is the high, rough noise made while breathing because of some difficulty. When someone wheezes they make a sound similar to the sound of the word wheeze. At least two other examples of onomatopoeia are in the story. Can you identify them?

Thinking Critically:
• Who do you sympathise with more in this story: the husband or the wife?
THE PIG
Doris Lessing—Zimbabwe

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Jonas is an old labourer on a large farm owned by a white farmer in Botswana. Most of the year, he does odd jobs around the farm. During growing season, however, he guards the fields from wild animals with a rifle.
Every year the yield from the harvest is less than expected because some labourers steal from the field at night. So, this year, the farmer has asked Jonas to shoot at anything he hears in the field at night—even if they are humans!
Jonas is old-fashioned and has recently taken a young second wife. As a result, he is not pleased with his job because he does not want to leave his young wife alone at night. Instead of guarding the fields, Jonas watches his own hut every night. On the night of a party on the farm, Jonas sees a young man go into the hut where his young wife stays.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Preview.
1. In addition to his regular duties, the watchman does _____________ around the school.
2. The headteacher was _____________ with the good performance of students on their exams.
3. She is not _____________. She wears trousers everyday.
4. The tobacco _____________ for farmers in Malawi increased last year due to better farming methods.
5. It is illegal to carry a _____________ in town.

Making Predictions:
From the Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- Jonas will tell the farmer about the young man and the young man will be asked to leave.
- Jonas will become very sad and shoot himself with the rifle.
- Jonas will go into the hut and find his young wife with the young man.
- Jonas will wait for the young man to come out of the hut and will kill him.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. What do the labourers normally do on Saturday after being paid?
2. What does the farmer have them do on this Saturday?
3. What happens to the farmer’s crops every year?
4. When warning labourers not to steal, who does the farmer call for?
5. What is this man’s job?
6. What is Jonas’ problem? Why doesn’t he want to guard the fields this year?
7. Is the farmer sympathetic with Jonas?
8. Why does Jonas not go in to eat that night?
9. What does Jonas do instead of going to the fields?
10. What event takes place the next Saturday?
11. Who had Jonas seen with his young wife? How does he feel about it?
12. What does the young man remind Jonas of?
13. Who does Jonas see go into his house?
14. When the young man comes out, what does Jonas do?
15. How do Jonas' feelings about the young man change? Why?
16. What does Jonas do to the young man?

**Literary term: Symbolism**

A **symbol** is a thing (most often some type of concrete object) that represents an idea or group of ideas. For example, some common symbols are a dove (as a sign of peace), a lion (as a symbol of courage), or a flag (as an emblem of a country).

**Focus:** As you read “The Pig,” pay attention to the things Jonas thinks about. Are any of them symbols in Jonas’ mind?

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**About the Author:**

Doris Lessing (1919–2013) was born in Iran to British parents. When she was 6 years old, her family moved to the British colony of Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) to farm maize on about 1,000 acres of bush. She remained in Africa until she was thirty years old when she moved to England.

This story comes from a collection of short stories she wrote entitled *African Stories*. In 2007 she was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.

**Wildlife Context:**

*Waterbuck* are large antelopes found in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Gender Context:**

*Polygamy* is a practice in which more than two people are joined in marriage. A majority of the world’s countries and nearly all of the world’s developed nations do not permit polygamy, and there have been growing calls for the abolition of the practice in developing countries. While polygamy refers to either a man with many wives or a woman with many husbands, in practice polygamy refers exclusively to polygyny (a man has more than one wife). Polygyny has been described as a form of human rights abuse. International human rights organizations, as well as women’s rights groups in many countries, have called for its abolition.

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**

The words in the left column are from the story. The right column has definitions for those words. Look back at the story and try to understand the vocabulary. Then put the letter of its definition on the line next to each word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. reverberate</td>
<td>a. as a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. cynical</td>
<td>b. unfriendly and not liking or agreeing with something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. collectively</td>
<td>c. to make a big mistake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. infuriated</td>
<td>d. not willing to do something and therefore slow in doing it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. reluctant</td>
<td>e. believing people are only interested in themselves and not sincere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. mock</td>
<td>f. to be repeated many times (usually a sound)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. submissive</td>
<td>g. describes a person who allows other people to control them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. hostile</td>
<td>h. to spread across or move away over a large area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. gradually</td>
<td>i. to shine by reflecting light from a wet, oily, or smooth surface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. blunder</td>
<td>j. slowly over a period of time or over a distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. disperse</td>
<td>k. to laugh at someone, often in a funny but unkind way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. glisten</td>
<td>l. very angry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vocabulary:**

*foliage* (n): the leaves of a plant or tree

*(bunched p.)* bunch (v): If material bunches up, it moves into tight folds

*copper* (n): reddish-brown metal used for making wire and coins

*sacks* (n): large bags made of strong cloth, paper or plastic, used to store large amounts

*(fined p.)* fine (v): to charge someone an amount of money as a punishment

*(conde...*(n)) condescend (v): If you condescend to do something, you agree to do something which you do not consider to be good enough for you

*stilled (p.)* still (v): to make something stop moving

*sombre* (adj): serious, sad and without humour/entertainment

*fond* (adj): having a great liking for someone or something

*cured* (adj): to treat food, tobacco, etc. with smoke or salt, etc. in order to stop it decaying

*buck* (n): male of some animals

*nevertheless* (adv): despite what has just been said or referred to

*(bluff n.)* bluff (v): to deceive someone by making them think that you are going to do something when you have no intention of doing it, or that you know something you do not know

*good humour* (n): friendly or in a good mood

*heartache* (n): great sadness

*pathless* (n): without any roads, so that it is easy to get lost

*(drifting adj)* drift (v): to move slowly, especially as a result of outside forces

*(betrayal n)* betray (v): to not be loyal to your country or a person, by helping their enemies

*(gnawing pr. part.)* gnaw (v): to bite something repeatedly, usually gradually destroying it

*stilts* (n): a set of long pieces of wood or metal used to support a building so it is above the ground

*platforms* (n): a flat raised area

*vigil* (n): (an act of) staying awake, especially at night, in order to be with an ill person, or to express political disagreement
**Making Inferences:**

Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. When the farmer says “human pig,” he most likely means:
   a. someone who has no manners
   b. someone who looks like a pig
   c. someone stealing crops

2. The young man and Jonas’ young wife are most likely:
   a. lovers
   b. siblings
   c. good friends

3. Over the course of the story, Jonas is jealous of the young man. But, in addition to jealousy he has other feelings about him that change from:
   a. awe to disgust
   b. hatred to respect
   c. fear to friendship

**Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:**

1. Normally, they disperse (go back to their homes).
2. He has them wait for an announcement and call the women and children.
3. Every year, the labourers steal from the fields at night.
4. He calls Jonas.
5. Jonas does odd jobs most of the year, but during the rainy season he guards the field at night with a rifle.
6. Jonas has a new young wife that he does not want to leave alone every night.
7. No.
8. He’s unhappy and doesn’t want to see his wives (who he thinks mock him).
9. He stands next to a tree near his house all night.
10. A beer drink, or party, takes place on the farm on Saturday.
11. He saw a young man chatting with his wife and he is very upset about it.
12. The young man makes Jonas think of a waterbuck that he had shot last year.
13. He sees the young man go into his house.
15. He loses respect for the young man who is walking clumsily and loudly.
16. He shoots him.

**Analysing the Story: Symbolism**

Look back at the explanation of symbolism. Jonas compares the young man in the story to a waterbuck and to a pig at different points in the story. Both are used to represent different ideas or feelings that Jonas is having about the young man. In the table below, fill in what the waterbuck and the pig are meant to symbolise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>What it represents...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The waterbuck</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A pig</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thinking Critically:**

- Doris Lessing was a white woman. In fact, her father was a farmer in Zimbabwe (then called Rhodesia) and, perhaps, provided some of the inspiration for the farmer in this story. Do you think she sympathises with the farmer in the story? What do you think it means that the farmer is never given a name, but referred to simply as ‘the farmer’?
Out of Darkness
Alex La Guma—South Africa

Preparing to Read

Story Preview:
The narrator is in prison in South Africa with many other prisoners. One of the convicts, called Old Cockroach by the others, is insane. He is in prison for culpable homicide, or killing someone by accident. The narrator tries to talk to him sometimes, but Old Cockroach doesn’t make sense, even though he seems to be very intelligent.

Old Cockroach often mentions 'Cora' and 'Joey', but the narrator has no idea who these people are. One time, Old Cockroach thinks that he sees 'Joey', but it is really Smiley Abrams, a large and primitive murderer in the prison.

It is very hot and dirty inside the narrator’s prison cell and it is hard to sleep. During one of these moments, the narrator asks about 'Cora' and Old Cockroach begins to tell him about how he ended up in prison.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. ___________ live in the crack in the wall and only come out at night.
2. The cave painting was just a few ___________ lines on the wall.
3. Some students feel that sitting in a classroom all day is as bad as a prison ___________.
4. When the man left his infant daughter by the river and she drowned, he was charged with ___________.
5. The guards were watching over a row of ___________ digging a ditch as punishment.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?

• Old Cockroach will tell him that Cora was his wife, Joey killed her, but he was blamed.
• Old Cockroach will tell him that Cora and Joey were his children and he hit them with his car.
• Old Cockroach will tell him that Cora was his ex-girlfriend and he killed his friend, Joey, in a fight.
• Old Cockroach will tell him that Cora and Joey were his friends and died when he crashed a car while drunk.

While Reading

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. Where is the narrator?
2. What is wrong with 'Old Cockroach'?
3. Why is Old Cockroach in prison?
4. Does the narrator know who Cora is?
5. Who is Smiley Abrams?
6. What does the narrator want to know more about?

Idioms & Expressions:
unhinged him: made him crazy or act crazy
clamped up tight: won’t speak
butt of their depraved humour: to be a person who is joked about or laughed at
wolking his food: eating his food very quickly
confirming my old suspicion: proving that a belief or an opinion which was previously not completely certain is true
lose my head: to lose control and not act in a calm way
cracked his skull: hit and broke the bones of his head
7. After the guard yells at the prisoners, what does Smiley Abrams do?
8. What was Old Cockroach's profession before he was sent to prison?
9. Why is it difficult to sleep where they are? (Give 3 reasons)
10. That night, Old Cockroach tells a story about his past. Who was Cora?
11. What was different about Cora?
12. Who was Joey? What happened to him?

**Literary term: Allusion**

An allusion is an indirect reference to another literary work or to a famous person, place, or event.

**Focus:** “Out of Darkness” refers to many famous works of literature, people, and events. Sometimes they are referred to directly and sometimes they are alluded to. How many allusions do you recognize?

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**Literary Context:**

*Romeo and Juliet* is a play written by William Shakespeare. It is set in Italy and is about the love between two young people from noble families that are enemies.

*Treasure Island* is a book by Robert Louis Stevenson. It was published in 1883. It is about pirates and a treasure hunt on a tropical isle. Traditionally considered a coming-of-age story, Treasure Island is a tale noted for its atmosphere, characters, and action, and also as a wry commentary on the ambiguity of morality – as seen in Long John Silver – unusual for children’s literature.

**Linguistic Context:**

This story takes place during apartheid. All of the prisoners are black, but the jailers are probably white. The jailers are quoted using Afrikaans and English when they speak with the prisoners.

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**

The sentences below are from the story. Try to understand the meaning of the bolded words and circle the letter of the answer that gives the correct meaning for each word.

1. In the dark the other bodies turned, cursed, and tried to settle back into a the heat and the stench of the latrine seemed to take advantage of the darkness.
   - a big hole
   - a surrounding area
   - d. a very bad smell

2. He had entered the seventh year of his ten-year sentence for culpable homicide, and being shut up so long had unhinged him somewhat.
   - a. to make a person lazy
   - c. to make a person very sad
   - b. to make a person lonely
   - d. to make a person mentally ill

3. His insanity was of a gentle quality that came in spells.
   - a. short periods of time
   - c. long periods of time
   - b. short periods of drought
   - d. long periods of drought

4. Old Cockroach sat near me, smiling his gentle smile and wolfing his food.
   - a. vomiting up
   - c. eating quickly
   - b. throwing away
   - d. ignoring totally

5. An allusion is an indirect reference to another literary work or to a famous person, place, or event.
   - a. a big hole
   - c. an entrance
   - b. a surrounding area
   - d. a very bad smell

**Key Vocabulary:**

- (soothingly (adv)) soothing (adj): making you feel calm
- snail (n): a small creature with a soft wet body and a round shell, that moves very slowly
- (friendliness (n)) friendly (adj): behaving in a pleasant, kind way
- peep hole (n): a small hole through which you can look
- inmates (n): people in a prison
- (probing pr. part) probe (v): to try to discover information that other people do not want you to know, by asking questions
- (clanging pr. part) clang (v): to make a loud deep ringing sound like that of metal being hit
- (lashing out pr. part) lash out (ph v): to suddenly attack someone or something physically or criticise them in an angry way
- bastards (n): unpleasant people
- vacant (n): not filled
- flint (n): (a piece of) stone or metal to produce a flame
- contraptions (n): machines that look awkward or old-fashioned
- (cupped p.) cup (v): to hold your hands in the shape of a cup
- canvas (n): strong, rough cloth
- wreckage (n): the separated parts of a badly damaged object
- imperfections (n): faults or weaknesses
- shins (n): the front parts of your legs between knee and foot
- ragged (adj): (of clothes) not in good condition; torn
- negroid (adj): having the physical features of a black person
- kinky (adj): unusual or strange
- skull (n): the bones of the head, gratings (n): structures made of metal bars which cover a hole
- finality (n): the quality of being finished and unable to be changed
- (retreated p.) retreat (v): to go away from a place or person to escape from fighting or danger
- (trumpeted p.) trumpet (v): to announce something proudly
- filthy (adj): extremely dirty
- (receded p.) recede (v): to move further away into the distance
- (hunked p.) hunch (v): to lean forward with shoulders raised
- (hawked p.) hawk (v): to prepare to spit
- (stalked p.) stalk (v): to follow something as closely as possible
6. From all around us grunts, curses, and tiny cries came like **suppressed** voices out of hell.
   a. joyful  
   b. restrained  
   c. pleasant  
   d. celebratory

**Making Inferences:**
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.
1. While the prisoners are Africans, we are supposed to understand that the guards are probably white because they:
   a. are described that way  
   b. speak Afrikaans  
   c. wear boots
2. The narrator thinks ‘Old Cockroach’ is an educated man mainly because of:
   a. the clothes he wears  
   b. his visitors  
   c. what he says
3. Old Cockroach says that Cora started going to places that he couldn’t take her. This is most likely because he was:
   a. too poor  
   b. too black  
   c. too uneducated

**Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:**
1. The narrator is in prison.
2. Old Cockroach is crazy.
3. He was convicted of culpable homicide and sentenced to 10 years in prison.
4. No. Old Cockroach mentions her name often, but the narrator does not know who she is.
5. Smiley Abrams is a murderer who is in prison with the narrator and Old Cockroach. He is big and dangerous.
6. The narrator wants to know more about Old Cockroach’s past.
7. He walks over to the door and spits on it.
8. He was a teacher.
9. It is very hot, they are all covered in lice, and it smells very bad.
10. Cora was a girl that he was in love with and had planned to marry.
11. She was very light-skinned and could pass for white and go to places that Old Cockroach could not go to.
12. Joey was Old Cockroach’s friend. When Joey called Old Cockroach a fool for being upset about Cora, Old Cockroach hit him and accidentally killed him.

**Analysing the Story: Allusion**
Look back at the explanation of allusion. The story that Old Cockroach tells alludes to the period of apartheid in South Africa (and, in fact, we are supposed to understand that the story is set in apartheid). Old Cockroach makes a few other allusions throughout the course of the story. What are they? What do they tell us about Old Cockroach?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allusions</th>
<th>What do they tell us about Old Cockroach?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Thinking Critically:**
- The black people in this story are living under the oppressive apartheid system in South Africa. Cora is able to ‘pass’ as white because of her light skin. As a result, she is able to go to all of the places reserved for whites only. Old Cockroach cannot and, therefore, is left behind by the woman he loves. Do you agree with Cora’s actions? Why or why not?
- Can you understand Old Cockroach’s violent reaction to Cora’s rejection? Or do you think Old Cockroach should have forgotten about Cora? Defend your answer.
ASEMKA
Aya Kwei Armah—Ghana

PREPARING TO READ

**Story Preview:**
The narrator of this story, Asemka, lives in a house where many different families live together. One of these residents is Mr Ainoo. At first, Mr Ainoo lives alone and Asemka tries to assist him with household chores. But this is in vain. Mr Ainoo will not allow her to help and tells her to mind her own business.

Later, Mr Ainoo marries. Soon after, his daughter from a first marriage, Essie, comes to live with them. Asemka tries not to bother him, but eventually tells him that he will regret having his daughter live with his second wife—Asemka says the daughter needs to be with an older woman whom she respects. But Mr Ainoo won’t listen. He says it’s natural for a daughter to turn against her mother.

One day, another man, Mr Mensah comes to live in the house. He is quiet and lives alone. Asemka cooks him food and asks him when he will marry. Mr Mensah says he wants to live alone. Essie, meanwhile, is constantly quarrelling with her stepmother. That is when Asemka begins to see Essie going over to talk to Mr Mensah everyday.

**Words to Know:**
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. Though she always defended her son, she ____________ him when he was caught stealing.
2. My ____________ married my father when I was ten years old.
3. It is natural that brothers and sister ____________ with each other.
4. The efforts to find the thief were ____________. He could not be found.
5. I left school at 16, but now that I can’t find a job I really ____________ it.

**Making Predictions:**
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- Mr Mensah will ask Mr Ainoo to marry his daughter.
- Mr Ainoo will become angry with Mr Mensah and threaten him.
- Mr Mensah will leave and Essie will have become pregnant.
- Mr Ainoo will force Essie to go live with her grandmother.

WHILE READING

**Comprehension Questions:**
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. Are Asemka and Mr Ainoo good friends?
2. Why does Asemka try to help Mr Ainoo?
3. What does Mr Ainoo tell the narrator when she tries to help him?
4. Who comes to live with Mr Ainoo?
5. What does Asemka think is bad about the new situation in Mr Ainoo’s home?
6. Does Mr Ainoo agree with Asemka?
7. What does Asemka think is natural for a girl to feel towards her mother as she reaches adulthood?
8. Who is Mr Mensah?
9. What does Asemka do for him one day?
10. What does Asemka notice about Essie?
11. When Essie is away at night, where does she tell her stepmother she has gone?
12. Asemka worries about the relationship between Mr Mensah and Essie. Why doesn’t she tell anyone?
13. What happens to Mr Mensah? What about Essie?
Literary term: Euphemism

Euphemism is the use of mild or indirect words or expressions to substitute for others that are considered to be too harsh or blunt when referring to something unpleasant or embarrassing (especially sexual).

Focus: While you read, pay attention to the language choices made by the narrator. She is middle-aged and conservative and therefore relies on euphemism to avoid feelings of embarrassment.

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Guessing Meaning from Context:
The words in the word bank below are from the story. Find them in the story and try to understand their meaning. Then fill in the spaces in the sentences below with the correct word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD BANK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maiden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>downward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The __________ trend in dropouts was encouraging.
2. Let's not make any __________ decisions before we know all of the facts.
3. They always eat lunch promptly at __________.
4. She likes to let fruit __________ before she eats it because it tastes sweeter.
5. The kid was __________ from the mother goat.
6. You have all the __________ needed for this job.
7. He was afraid to __________ his strict parents.
8. Girls are referred to as __________ in many old English stories.

Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.
1. Mr Ainoo is probably living alone at the start of the story because:
   a. he divorced his wife
   b. he was not yet married
   c. his wife died
2. Kojo is probably the narrator’s:
   a. husband     b. son     c. neighbour

Analysing the Story: Euphemism

Look back at the explanation of euphemism. The expression “mind your own business”, for example, is a euphemism because it shifts focus from the speaker to the listener—unlike “don’t trouble my peace.” Asemka uses euphemistic phrases to avoid mentioning unpleasant things directly throughout the story. Find the expressions in the table below in the story and see if you can interpret their true meaning (pay particular attention to the italicized words). The first one is done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Euphemism</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;lost his wife&quot;</td>
<td>His wife died.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;before the young man can regret his love&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“the lazy time”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking Critically:
- Mr Ainoo claims that “it is natural for a girl to turn against her stepmother for a time, and even if her own mother were alive, she would turn against her, because it is the way human beings grow.” BUT the narrator says “What foolishness to think a girl must turn against her mother!” Who do you agree with? Why?
NOORJEHAN
Ahmed Essop—South Africa

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
The narrator of this story is a teacher in South Africa. Noorjehan is a gifted student in his English class. One day, Noorjehan stops coming to school. A fortnight later, the narrator receives a letter from her explaining that her parents have forced her to leave school so that she can get married.

Noorjehan explains that the relatives of the man she is supposed to marry have come to scrutinise her. She is very unhappy. She asks the narrator to come to speak with her father and dissuade him from forcing her to marry because she wants to continue her studies.

The narrator does as she asks, but Noorjehan’s father will not listen. Noorjehan continues to write letters to the narrator about her marriage. Just before the date of the wedding, Noorjehan sends an urgent message to the narrator, asking him to meet her at the train station.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.
1. I tried to ____________ my friend from leaving school, but he left anyway.
2. I am going away for two weeks. I will return in a ____________.
3. Chimwemwe is the best footballer in the school. He is a ____________ athlete.
4. After the accident, it was ____________ that we go to the hospital.
5. He ____________ the boys closely, trying to figure out who was lying.

Making Predictions:
From the Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?
- Noorjehan will meet her future husband and introduce him to the narrator.
- Noorjehan will say goodbye to the narrator and leave in a train.
- Noorjehan and the narrator will leave on a train.
- Noorjehan will try to leave on a train but the narrator will stop her.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. How does the narrator know Noorjehan?
2. Why does Noorjehan leave school?
3. How does she communicate with the narrator?
4. What does Noorjehan ask the narrator to do?
5. Does Noorjehan’s father take the narrator’s advice about his daughter?
6. What is one reason Noorjehan doesn’t want to marry?
7. Where does Noorjehan ask the narrator to meet her?
8. What is Noorjehan planning to do?
9. Who knows about her plan?
10. What does Noorjehan ask the narrator about himself?
11. What does the narrator find strange about the last thing that Noorjehan says before the train leaves?
12. What does the narrator realize after the train has gone?

**Literary term: Epiphany**

Epiphany is an experience of sudden and striking realization. Generally the term is used to describe scientific breakthrough, religious or philosophical discoveries, but it can apply in any situation in which an enlightening realization allows a problem or situation to be understood from a new and deeper perspective. In literature, characters typically experience an epiphany at the end of the story.

**Focus:** The narrator of this story has an epiphany. Pay attention to what happens and see if you can anticipate the realization he will have at the end of the story. There are clues given throughout the story.

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**Literary Context:**

A fairy tale or fairy story is a type of short story that typically features European folkloric fantasy characters, such as dwarves, elves, fairies, giants, gnomes, goblins, mermaids, trolls, or witches, and usually magic or enchantments.

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**

The words in the left column are from the story. The right column has definitions for those words. Look back at the story and try to understand the vocabulary. Then put the letter of its definition on the line next to each word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. impeccable</td>
<td>h. plain and without decoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. complexion</td>
<td>i. confused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. lounge</td>
<td>j. an unpleasant situation that is difficult to get out of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. romantic</td>
<td>k. the natural appearance of a person's skin, especially colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. idle</td>
<td>l. not working or being used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. isolated</td>
<td>m. a plain and without decoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. significance</td>
<td>n. perfect, having no problems or bad parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. sentimental</td>
<td>o. a plain and without decoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. predicament</td>
<td>p. a plain and without decoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. austere</td>
<td>q. a plain and without decoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. pedestrians</td>
<td>r. a plain and without decoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. bewilderment</td>
<td>s. a plain and without decoration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Making Inferences:**

Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. When the narrator visits Noorjehan's house, her father reacts with:
   a. furious anger  
   b. courteous indifference  
   c. excited interest

2. Noorjehan probably asks the narrator to come to the train station because:
   a. she has no one else that she can tell about her decision
   b. they have been best friends for many years
   c. he will carry an important message for her to her parents

3. Noorjehan probably asks the narrator when he intends to marry because:
   a. she thinks he is getting very old
   b. she needs the advice of an unmarried man
   c. she wants him to marry her

**Key Vocabulary:**

- **career (n):** the job that you do during your working life
- **matriculation (n):** to be formally admitted to study at a university or college
- **auburn (adj):** reddish brown
- **plaits (n):** lengths of hair divided into three parts which are then crossed a special pattern
- **clasps (n):** a small metal device used to fasten a belt/bag/jewelry
- **set off (ph v):** to make something look attractive by providing a contrast to it
- **definition (n):** description of the features of something
- **blooming (pr. part):** to open
- **wraith (n):** something which is pale/weak/without a clear shape
- **tutor (n):** a teacher who works with one student or a small group
- **semi-detached (adj):** A semi-detached house is joined to another similar house on one side
- **identity (n):** who a person is, or qualities of a person which make them different from others
- **impassively (adv):** impassive (adj): describes a person's face when it expresses no emotion
- **lace (n):** a decorative cloth which is made by weaving thin thread in delicate patterns
- **tepidly (adv):** tepid (adj): describes an unenthusiastic reaction
- **engaged (adj):** having formally agreed to marry
- **welfare (n):** physical and mental health and happiness of a person
- **transaction (n):** when money is exchanged
- **longing (n):** a feeling of wanting something very much
- **generated p. (v):** to cause something to exist
Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:

1. He is her English teacher.
2. Her parents decided to keep her at home so she can prepare to be married.
3. She writes him letters.
4. She asks him to come speak to her father and try to dissuade him from forcing her into marriage.
5. No.
6. She doesn’t know the man she is supposed to marry, so she neither loves nor hates him.
7. She asks him to meet her at Park Station (the train station).
8. She is planning to run away from home and go to Cape Town.
9. Only the narrator knows of her plan.
10. She asks him when he will marry.
11. He thinks that she is being overly formal with him.
12. He realizes that Noorjehan had romantic feelings (loved) him.

Analysing the Story: Epiphany

Look back at the explanation of epiphany. If you look back at the story, you will find lots of clues that should have made the situation clear to the narrator earlier. But, for the sake of suspense and as is so often true of real life, he doesn’t realize that Noorjehan loves him until she is gone. Put the clues from the story about Noorjehan’s feelings in the boxes below. One is done for you.

Thinking Critically:

- Do you think that a parent should have the right to pull a child out of school? Should there be laws ensuring that children stay in school until they reach a certain age/educational level? Defend your answer.

| acutely (adv): extremely sustained (pr. part) sustain (v): to cause or allow something to continue for a period of time refashion (n): to make in a different way medley (n): a mixture gems (n): precious stones adorning (pr. part) adorn (v): to add something decorative to a person or thing terraces (n): a row of often small houses joined together along their side walls hysteria (n): extreme fear, excitement, anger, etc. which cannot be controlled strained (adj) strain (v): to become stretched or to experience pressure, or to make something do or experience this irrelevant (adj): not related detected (p.) detect (v): to notice something that is partly hidden or not clear tremor (n): a slight shaking, especially because of nervousness ignited (p.) ignite (v): to cause a dangerous situation to begin fervent (adj): describes beliefs that are strongly and sincerely felt implicated (p.) implicate (v): to show that someone is involved in a crime or partly responsible withholding (pr. part) withhold (v): to refuse to give something or to keep back something restore (v): to return something or someone to an earlier good condition or position dutiful (adj): doing everything that you should do hissing (pr. part) hiss (v): to make a noise which is like the first sound in the word ’sing’ but which lasts a lot longer furnaces (n): containers which are heated to a very high temperature compartment (n): one of the separate areas inside a vehicle, especially a train jotting down (pr. part) jot down (ph v): to write something quickly on a piece of paper so that you remember it cramped (adj): not having enough space or time washstand (n): a small table with a container of water for washing incarcerated (p.) incarcerate (v): to keep in a closed place and prevent from leaving unfeeling (adj): not feeling sympathy for other people’s suffering initial (adj): at the beginning strident (adj): describes a sound which is loud/unpleasant/rough formality (n): when something or someone is serious/correct atmosphere (n): the character or mood of a place or situation register (v): If something registers, someone realises it implicit (adj): suggested trenchant (adj): severe, expressing strong criticism conceived (p.) conceive (v): to imagine something cathartic (adj) catharsis (n): the process of releasing strong emotions through a particular activity or experience rejection (n): when someone refuses to accept or believe someone or something innermost (adj): most secret and hidden, or nearest to the centre
THE GIRL WITH THE TWISTED FUTURE
Mia Couto—Mozambique

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Joseldo Bastante is a mechanic in a village in Mozambique. One day, he hears that a young man has been earning a lot of money as a contortionist working for an impresario in the city. Joseldo has 12 children and decides that one of them should become a contortionist to earn more money for the family. He chooses his daughter, Filomeninha.

Joseldo makes Filomeninha practise stretching and twisting and bending her body. He even ties her to a petrol drum at night to make her more flexible. Filomeninha grows increasingly ill from the extreme practice and even begins vomiting.

There is no news of the impresario for some time until, one day, Joseldo hears that he is back in the city preparing for a show. Joseldo puts a new dress on his daughter and they take a train into the city. At this point, Filomeninha is very ill. She is trembling and feels cold even though the weather is hot.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.

1. When he came out of the water, he was ____________ with cold.
2. The ____________ could move her body in ways that seemed impossible.
3. I cannot touch my toes without bending my knees. I am not very ____________.
4. The brothers filled a large ____________ with water at the borehole and took it home in an oxcart.
5. The ____________ organized a drama production and a music festival in the trading center.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?

- The impresario will not want a contortionist and Filomeninha will die.
- The impresario will hire Filomeninha and she will become very famous.
- The impresario will not be in the city and Filomeninha will start her own show.
- The impresario will refuse to meet with Filomeninha and they will return home.

WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.

1. Joseldo hears stories about a boy who makes money doing what?
2. What does he decide his eldest daughter, Filomeninha, should do?
3. What does Josendo do with the petrol drums?
4. How is Filomeninha progressing with her stretching? How is she feeling?
5. After some time, what news of the impresario reaches Josendo?
6. Where do Filomeninha and Josendo go? How do they travel?
7. How does Filomeninha feel while traveling?
8. When they find the impresario, does he hire Filomeninha?
9. What does the impresario say is the new sensation?
10. What happens to Filomeninha?

**Literary term: Hyperbole**

Hyperbole is a figure of speech in which the truth is exaggerated for emphasis or for humorous effect. The expression “I'm so hungry I could eat a horse” is an example of hyperbole.

**Focus:** As you read the story, pay attention to the language that is used. Are any descriptions too exaggerated to be true?

**UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

**Athletic Context:**

Contortion (sometimes contortionism) is an unusual form of physical display which involves the dramatic bending and flexing of the human body. Contortion is often part of acrobatics and circus acts. In general, “contortionists” have unusual natural flexibility, which is then enhanced through acrobatic training, or they put themselves through intense, repetitive and consistent training to gain this flexibility. However, even those with genetic, sex, or age disadvantages can attain the same level of flexibility albeit with slower progress.

In some countries like Mongolia and Russia many people (mainly girls) learn contortion and it is considered a nationally respected art form that holds cultural importance. For hundreds of years contortionists have entertained crowds all over Mongolia. Contortionists usually start practicing from a very early age.

**Gymnastics** is a sport involving the performance of exercises requiring physical strength, flexibility, power, agility, coordination, grace, balance and control. Gymnastics evolved from exercises used by the ancient Greeks that included skills for mounting and dismounting a horse, and from circus performance skills.

**Guessing Meaning from Context:**

The sentences below are from the story. Try to understand the meaning of the **bolded** words and circle the letter of the answer that gives the correct meaning for each word.

1. It was in this way that he managed to hear of some **prospects** for his eldest daughter, Filomeninha.
   a. potential husbands
   b. chances for success
   c. bad news
   d. excellent schools

2. In order to hasten his preparations, Josendo Bastante brought from the workshop one of those **enormous** petrol drums.
   a. very old
   b. very shiny
   c. very big
   d. very intelligent

3. When they unbound her, the girl was bent over backwards, her blood flow irregular, and her joints **disjointed**.
   a. not connected
   b. not painful
   c. not strong
   d. not flexible

4. What does Josendo do with the petrol drums?
5. How is Filomeninha progressing with her stretching? How is she feeling?
6. After some time, what news of the impresario reaches Josendo?
7. Where do Filomeninha and Josendo go? How do they travel?
8. When they find the impresario, does he hire Filomeninha?
9. What does the impresario say is the new sensation?
10. What happens to Filomeninha?

**Key Vocabulary:**

- **twisted** (adj): bent so that the original shape is changed or destroyed
- **engage** (v): to employ someone
- **rear** (n): a person’s bottom
- **front** (n): the part of a building, object or person’s body which faces forward or which is most often seen or used
- **rotate** (v): to (cause to) turn in a circle, around a fixed point
- **twist** (n): a change in the way in which something happens
- **elastic** (adj): describes material that is able to stretch and be returned to its original shape/size
- **talent** (n): a natural ability to be good at something, especially without being taught
- **belt** (v): to hit someone or something hard, especially with violence
- **display** (v): to arrange something or a collection of things so that they can be seen by the public
- **recipient** (n): a person who receives something
- **court** (v): to have a romantic relationship with someone that you hope to marry
- **unbind** (v): to release someone or something from a rope, string, etc. that has been tying them up
- **reaction** (n): behaviour, a feeling or an action that is a direct result of something else
- **abandoned** (adj): abandon (v): to stop doing an activity before you have finished it
- **bats** (adj): small animals like mice with wings that fly at night
- **clues** (n): signs or some information which help you to find the answer to a problem, question or mystery
- **whereabouts** (n): the place where a person or thing is
4. On the train the mechanic gloated over his thoughts: a fruit is not harvested in a hurry.
   a. felt humbled by his good luck
   b. felt worried about the consequences of his actions
   c. felt guilt at harming someone else
   d. felt pleased with his success in a prideful way
5. Nor did the oversized dress hide her shuddering.
   a. shaking
   b. crying
   c. thinking
   d. bleeding
6. On the way back, Joselo bemoaned his fate.
   a. felt unhappy about
   b. felt excited about
   c. felt afraid of
   d. felt grateful for

Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.
1. Joselo tells Filomeninha to take off her scarf. She was probably wearing a scarf because:
   a. she was cold
   b. she is Muslim
   c. she was covering burns
2. Even though it is hot on the train, Filomeninha complains of being cold. This is probably because she:
   a. is ill
   b. is pregnant
   c. is not wearing enough clothing
3. At the end of the story, Filomeninha is most likely:
   a. sleeping
   b. practicing
   c. dead

Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:
1. Twisting and bending his body in incredible ways for an audience (as a contortionist).
2. He decides that she should become a famous contortionist.
3. He ties Filomeninha to it at night so that her back would start to curve.
4. She is making little progress and feeling very ill.
5. He hears that the impresario is back in the city.
6. They go to the city and they travel by train.
7. She feels very ill and cold even though it is hot.
8. No.
9. He says he is looking for people who can chew metal with their teeth.
10. She dies.

Analysing the Story: Hyperbole
Look back at the explanation of hyperbole. The premise of this story is based on the hyperbole of the lorry drivers who Joselo talks to, each adding "a twist to the elastic talents of the boy." Can you figure out the meaning of some other hyperbolic statements from this story? Put the meaning for each in the right column in the table below. The first one is done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hyperbole</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The young man earned enough money to fill boxes, suitcases and cooking pots.”</td>
<td>He earned a lot of money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The girl’s shivers were even stronger that the rocking of the train.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Her body fell, twisted and weightless onto her father’s lap.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking Critically:
- How realistic do you think this story is? Are there parents who force their children to do things that are harmful even though they want good things for them? What motivates Joselo in the story?
THE MUSIC OF THE VIOLIN
Njabulo S. Ndebele—South Africa

PREPARING TO READ

Story Preview:
Vukani is a secondary student in South Africa from a wealthy black family. He is sitting in his room doing his homework, but he can hear his parents laughing and chatting about politics and culture with two guests in the sitting room. He knows that they will eventually come to ask him to play the violin. When he hears his mother suggest that to the guests, Vukani shuts his bedroom door.

Vukani thinks about all the times he has been ridiculed and humiliated because of the violin. Once, in school, someone had taken the violin while he was in the toilet and only returned it the next morning. Another time a gang of boys harassed him in the street. He told his mother that the violin was causing him problems but she would not listen.

Just as Vukani suspects, his mother leads the guests into his room and his father hands him the violin. They ask him to play, even though he is obviously upset. As Vukani tries to tell his parents he does not want to play the violin any more, there is an explosion in the kitchen—Vukani’s older sister, Teboho, had dropped something in the kitchen. Their mother screams at Teboho and slaps her. Then she returns to Vukani’s room so he can play. Vukani sympathizes with his sister and doesn’t want to let her down.

Words to Know:
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Preview.
1. I have to go to the party. It’s for my best friend and I can’t _____________.
2. He rarely answered questions in class for fear of being ____________ by his classmates.
3. There was an ____________ when the two minibuses hit each other. Luckily, no one was killed.
4. The teacher was ____________ when the headteacher yelled at him in front of the students.
5. The drunken man shouted at the woman in the street, ____________ her.

Making Predictions:
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?

- Vukani will tell his parents that he no longer wishes to play the violin and his mother will slap him.
- Vukani will tell his parents that he no longer wishes to play the violin and his mother will understand.
- Vukani will play the violin for the guests because he doesn’t want to disappoint his parents.
- Vukani will play the violin for the guests because he wants to impress them with his talent.

Idioms & Expressions:
what bosh!: what nonsense!
jolly good: used to express approval of something that someone has said or done
filling him with dread: giving him a strong sense of fear
peal of laughter: a long, loud laugh, or series of laughs
clapping her hands: making a short loud noise by hitting your hands together
pursue the matter further: continue trying to discover information about a subject
raptures of delight: an expression of extreme pleasure and happiness or excitement
WHILE READING

Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. What is Vukani doing at the beginning of the story?
2. What can he hear in the living room?
3. What is Vukani’s father’s profession?
4. Who is Teboho? How does Vukani feel about her?
5. When Vukani opens his door again, what are his mother and the other woman talking about?
6. Where is Teboho returning to in 6 weeks?
7. What does Vukani’s mother suggest to the guests?
8. Does Vukani want that to happen?
9. Who is Doksi?
10. Vukani feels ambivalent about his violin (It brings him both pleasure and pain). What else makes him feel that way?
11. If Vukani refuses to play the violin for the guests, what will his mother say?
12. What happened to teacher Maseko? Why?
13. What happened to Vukani’s violin one day while he was in the toilet?
14. Who is Gwendoline?
15. What does Doksi suggest they do to find Vukani’s violin?
16. The next morning the violin has been returned to the steps of Vukani’s house. When Vukani tells his parents that he didn’t put it there, do they believe him?
17. What do the gang of boys shout at Vukani while he is walking home?
18. What do they do to him?
19. What does Bhuko say about Vukani’s sister?
20. Is Vukani’s mother sympathetic of the difficulties he faces with his violin?
21. Is Vukani’s violin expensive?
22. While Vukani is trying to get the courage to tell his parents that he doesn’t want to play the violin, what happens?
23. What does Vukani think about when his mother tries to get him to play the violin?
24. What happens at the end of the story?

Literary term: Flashback
A flashback is an account of a conversation, an episode, or an event that happened before the beginning of the story. By revealing significant thoughts, experiences, or events in a character’s life, a flashback can help readers understand a character’s present situation. Flashbacks may take the form of reminiscences, dream sequences, or descriptions by third-person narrators; they usually interrupt the chronological flow of a story. Flashbacks may contain foreshadowing or other clues to the outcome of the story.

Focus: Pay attention to the various flashbacks that happen in the story. How can you tell when a flashback happens? What does the flashback help you to understand?

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

South African Context:
This story takes place in Soweto, a poor part of Johannesburg, South Africa, the largest city in the country. The name comes from SOuth WEstern T0wnships. During Colonialism, slowly the black people living in Johannesburg were concentrated in townships outside the city. After World War II, when the Afri-

Key Vocabulary:
- **gave the impression:** to cause others to understand something
- **encyclopaedia britannica:** a set of books containing many articles arranged in alphabetical order which deal either with the whole of human knowledge
- **monopoly and chess:** two different games played on a board
- **ganged up on me:** united as a group against me
- **in the mood:** to feel like doing or having something
- **soothe your heart:** make it possible for you to stop worrying about whether someone loves you or not
- **corner of his eye:** If you see something out of/from the corner of your eye, you see it but not clearly because it is to your side
- **tail tucked between legs:** feeling ashamed/embarrassed because you failed/made a mistake
- **made to specifications:** following a detailed description of how something should be done/made
- **a note of defiance:** indicating that you may refuse to obey
- **tail tucked between legs:** feeling ashamed/embarrassed because you failed/made a mistake
- **a note of defiance:** indicating that you may refuse to obey
- **exchanged glances:** when two people look at each other briefly, often communicating a feeling with the look
- **nuclear family:** a family consisting of two parents and their children, but not including aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc
- **pledge:** an assurance or promise
- **tie the knot:** to get married
- **xenophobia:** fear of strangers or aliens
- **neighbours:** those who live next door or nearby
- **aunt:** a female relative, usually the mother’s sister
- **an uncle:** a male relative, usually the father’s brother
- **grandfather:** the father’s father
- **grandmother:** the mother’s mother
- **cousin:** a relative through your parents
- **extension:** an additional part of something
- **upstairs:** in the upper part of a building
- **downstairs:** in the lower part of a building
- **in the living room:** in the main room of a house
- **on the stairs:** going up or down the steps in a building
- **in the toilet:** in a restroom
- **bathroom:** a room in a house where washing and personal hygiene activities take place
- **in the washroom:** a public restroom
- **upstairs:** in the upper part of a building
- **downstairs:** in the lower part of a building
- **a set of books containing many articles arranged in alphabetical order which deal either with the whole of human knowledge**
- **two different games played on a board**
- **united as a group against me**
- **to feel like doing or having something**
- **make it possible for you to stop worrying about whether someone loves you or not**
- **If you see something out of/from the corner of your eye, you see it but not clearly because it is to your side**
- **feeling ashamed/embarrassed because you failed/made a mistake**
- **following a detailed description of how something should be done/made**
- **indicating that you may refuse to obey**
- **when two people look at each other briefly, often communicating a feeling with the look**
- **a family consisting of two parents and their children, but not including aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc**
- **to happen repeatedly while something else is happening**
- **the process of starting or creating something**
- **the state of being successful/having a lot of money**
- **a wooden musical instrument with four strings which is held against the neck and played by moving a bow across the strings**
- **very loud**
- **a short ringing sound like pieces of glass or metal knocking lightly together**
- **filled with soft material**
- **to make something certain to happen**
- **a brand of tissue**

While Reading South African Context:
This story takes place in Soweto, a poor part of Johannesburg, South Africa, the largest city in the country. The name comes from SOuth WEstern T0wnships. During Colonialism, slowly the black people living in Johannesburg were concentrated in townships outside the city. After World War II, when the Afri-
kaner National Party took control of the government of South Africa, apartheid was implemented and Soweto became much larger. Under apartheid, whites in South Africa enjoyed the highest standard of living in Africa, on par with Europe, while Blacks remained relatively impoverished.

Soweto is most widely known for the Soweto Uprising in 1976 when mass protests broke out over a government policy to use Afrikaans as the language of instruction in schools. Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu both spent time living in Soweto during their struggles against apartheid.

**Afrikaans** is a language that is based on Dutch (the language spoken in the Netherlands in Europe). Dutch was the common language among early European settlers in South Africa. Afrikaans was considered a Dutch dialect until the early 20th century, when it began to be widely known as a different language. The name Afrikaans is simply the Dutch word for African, and the language is the African form of Dutch. **Boer** is the Afrikaans word for farmer. In the early days of colonialism, the Dutch settlers were called Boers. Later, they became referred to more frequently as Afrikaners.

The word *kaffir* was used in the former South Africa to refer to a black person. Now an offensive ethnic slur, it was formerly a neutral term for South African blacks. The term acquired a distinctly derogatory meaning in the context of South African history, especially during the Apartheid era.

**Biblical Context:**

*Moses parted the sea* is a reference to Moses, a religious leader, lawgiver, and prophet according to the Hebrew Bible. According to the Book of Exodus, Moses was born in a time when his people were increasing in number and the Egyptian Pharaoh was worried that they might help Egypt's enemies. Moses' Hebrew mother, Jochebed, hid him when the Pharaoh ordered all newborn Hebrew boys to be killed, and he ended up being adopted into the Egyptian royal family. After killing an Egyptian slave-master, Moses fled across the Red Sea to Midian where he tended the flocks of Jethro. After the Ten Plagues were unleashed on Egypt, Moses led the Hebrew people out of Egypt, parting the Red Sea so that they could escape. It was at this time that Moses received the Ten Commandments. Despite living to the age of 120, Moses died before reaching the Land of Israel.

While in the New Testament, the God of Christianity is portrayed as forgiving and loving, the Jewish God of the Old Testament is characterized as having many of the flaws of humanity such as jealousy, anger, and pettiness. The *God of the Old Testament* was fully capable of exacting vengeance on humanity (the Great Flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, the Tower of Babel, etc.).

In the Gospel of Mathew, 4:19, Jesus sees Simon (Peter) and his brother, Andrew, fishing in the Sea of Galilee. He tells them to throw away their nets for he will make them *fishers of men*. This expression is often used when Christians are trying to convince other people to believe what they believe.

**Literary Context:**

Thomas Gray (1716–1771) was an English poet, letter-writer, classical scholar and professor at Cambridge University. He is widely known for his Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard, published in 1751.

> Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
> The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
> Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air.
Musicological Context:
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) was a famous German composer. Franz Liszt (1811-1886) was a Hungarian composer, virtuoso pianist, conductor, and teacher. Antonin Dvorak (1841-1904) was a Czech composer.

Guessing Meaning from Context:
The words in the word bank below are all from the story. Find them in the story and see if you can understand their meaning. Then fill in the spaces in the sentences below with the correct word.

**WORD BANK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>focus</th>
<th>apprehensive</th>
<th>normally</th>
<th>genius</th>
<th>hypocrites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>futile</td>
<td>dread</td>
<td>mischievous</td>
<td>boast</td>
<td>ordeal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. He was **apprehensive** about going to the city because he heard it was dangerous.
2. I __________ do not accept late homework, but because you were ill, I will make an exception.
3. __________ children cause their parents a lot of anxiety.
4. Her family was very proud of her for having survived the __________.
5. Many consider __________ about your accomplishments to be bad manners.
6. Because she found the correct solution to the difficult equation, the teacher called her a __________.
7. He did not like __________ who said that they believed something but then did something else.
8. Since I am afraid of being trapped in small spaces, I __________ having to travel on a minibus.
9. After studying for an hour straight, he found it difficult to __________ and decided to take a break.
10. It was __________ to try to convince them because they never changed their minds.

Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.

1. When his violin is stolen, Vukani wants to go tell the principal, but then changes his mind. He probably decides not to tell the principal because:
   a. the principal would not help
   b. the other children would think poorly of him
   c. the violin was surely already destroyed
2. The boys harass Vukani in the street about his violin. The probably do this because the violin is:
   a. famous
   b. strange
   c. common
3. Vukani’s mother is heard crying from her bedroom at the end of the story. She is most likely crying because she is:
   a. ashamed and angry
   b. sad and lonely
   c. injured and in pain

Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:

1. He is in his room doing his homework.
2. He hears his parents and their guests chatting loudly.
3. He is a school inspector.
4. Teboho is Vukani’s sister and they are very close, especially recently.
5. They are discussing recipes.
6. She is returning to university (varsity).
7. She suggests that they go to Vukani’s room and ask him to play the violin.
8. No!
9. Doksi is Vukani’s best friend.
10. He says that it is like Miss Yende’s red dress.
11. She will call him ungrateful.
12. He was fired from his job for being critical of the apartheid system.
13. Someone in his school took it and he couldn’t find it.
14. Gwendoline is a girl in Vukani’s class that he thinks he loves.
15. He thinks they should challenge someone to fight.
16. No, they accuse him of lying and putting the violin there himself.
17. They shout “music man” at him.
18. They surround him and harass him in the street.
19. He says that he wants her.
20. No.
21. Yes, it is very expensive.
22. His sister breaks a dish in the other room and his mother gets very angry.
23. He thinks about his sister and how he wants to support her.
24. Vukani says he won’t play, his mother hits him, and Teboho runs in to help Vukani.

**Analysing the Story: Flashback**

Look back at the explanation of *flashback*. This story uses flashback repeatedly to help establish the conflict and tell us more about the characters. Were you able to notice when the narration was flashing back and when it was returning to the present? Fill in the gaps in the chart below indicating how the flashback begins in the narrative and how it is ended and the narrative returned to the present. Then think about what you learned from the flashback and fill in the central column. Can you find one more instance of flashback to add to the chart?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is the flashback opened?</th>
<th>What do we learn?</th>
<th>How are we brought back to the present?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Then he thought of Doksi, his friend.”</td>
<td>“Now, Vukani was suddenly fascinated by a desire to see the books on the desk aflame.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Vukani remembered what teacher Maseko had said at assembly one morning.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“That Friday, as on all Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, he had carried his violin to school.”</td>
<td>We see a frightening and humiliating experience that Vukani suffered because of his violin and his mother’s indifference.</td>
<td>“Then the door opened.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thinking Critically:**

- Concerto (n): a long piece of music for one or more solo instruments and an orchestra
  - Composer (n): a person who writes classical music
  - Orchestra (n): a large group of musicians who play many different instruments together
  - Swallow (v): to cause food, drink, pills, etc. to move from your mouth into your stomach by using the muscles of your throat
  - Dissipate (v): to (cause to) gradually disappear
  - Amiss (adj): wrong; not suitable or as expected
  - Hitherto (adv): until now
  - Massive (adj): very large in size, amount, or number
  - Disintegrate (v): to become weaker or to be destroyed by breaking into small pieces
  - Dash (v): to hit with great force, especially causing damage
  - Restrain (v): to control the actions or behaviour of someone by force
  - Slur (n): a woman who is unusually untidy and lazy
  - Scuffle (n): a short and sudden fight, involving few people
  - Rattle (v): to (cause to) make a noise like a series of knocks
  - Diversion (n): something that takes your attention away from something else
  - Mimic (v): to copy the way in which a particular person usually speaks and moves, usually in order to make other people laugh
  - Prize (v): to think that something or someone is valuable/important
  - Disapprove (v): to feel that something or someone is bad, wrong, etc.
  - Envious (adj): wishing you had what another person has
  - Cheeky (adj): slightly rude or showing no respect, but often in a funny way
  - Brute (n): a rough and sometimes violent man
  - Justify (v): to give or to be a good reason for
  - Bereaved (adj): having a close relation/friend who recently died
Ndaziona is a secondary school student in a village in Malawi. His grandfather, Akunjila, visits one Saturday afternoon. While Akunjila waits for his son, Ndaziona's father, to come home he drinks kachasu, a locally distilled alcohol. Ndaziona is trying to concentrate on his homework, but his grandfather is getting inebriated and wants to chat. Ndaziona's father is out drinking and may not return until late. So, Ndaziona eats supper with his grandfather. Akunjila tells Ndaziona stories about Ndaziona's father—about how he was a hard worker and a good fighter. Ndaziona is a little surprised by these stories because the only time he saw his father fight, he was very drunk and lost the fight. He has also seen his father beat up his mother and he doesn't have the same respect for his father’s actions that his grandfather seems to have.

Then, Akunjila tries to convince Ndaziona to drink with him. He says that both he and Ndaziona’s father started to drink alcohol at Ndaziona’s age and that it would make him a man. This makes Ndaziona think about the bullies at school. He knows that they would be impressed if he braggs to them that he got very drunk over the weekend.

**Words to Know:**
Fill in the blanks with the underlined vocabulary from the Story Preview.

1. It is important to _______________ when driving an oxcart so that there is no accident.
2. The woman _______________ her own alcohol and sold it for a profit.
3. Two students came to the disco _______________ and were suspended from school.
4. The girl _______________ to all her friends about the gift she received from her aunt.
5. Though he was nice to adults, the student was a _______________ to younger children.

**Making Predictions:**
From the Story Preview, try to predict what will happen next in the story. Which of the following predictions do you think is most probable?

- Ndaziona drinks with his grandfather, but when his father arrives home he beats Ndaziona.
- Ndaziona drinks with his grandfather, and when his father arrives home he joins them.
- Ndaziona doesn’t drink with his grandfather because he dislikes how his father and grandfather act when drinking.
- Ndaziona doesn’t drink with his grandfather because his grandfather finishes the bottle and it’s too late to buy more.
Comprehension Questions:
As you read the story, try to answer the following questions.
1. At the beginning of the story, what is Ndaziona doing?
2. Who comes to visit Ndaziona’s house?
3. Why is Akunjila unhappy?
4. Was Ndaziona happy when he saw his grandfather coming?
5. How far away is the township?
6. How does Ndaziona travel there?
7. What happened the last time Ndaziona went to get kachasu for Akunjila?
8. What does Ndaziona do when his Grandfather gets close to the door?
9. According to Ndaziona, what is good about Akunjila’s visits?
10. What do Akunjila and Ndaziona do together?
11. Who is Nkhutukumve?
12. Why doesn’t Akunjila want drinking water?
13. What did Ndaziona’s father think about Ndakulapa and Ndaziona’s mother?
14. At what age did Ndaziona’s father start drinking alcohol?
15. What happened when Ndaziona’s mother was pregnant the second time?
16. After dinner what does Akunjila want?
17. Who is Ndilekeni?
18. What does Ndaziona think will happen at school if he drinks with Akunjila?
19. What does he think will happen when his father returns if he drinks?
20. What does Ndaziona do?

 Literary term: Conflict

Conflict is a struggle between opposing forces and is the basis of plot in dramatic and narrative literature. The conflict provides the interest or suspense in a short story, novel, narrative poem, or nonfiction narrative. External conflict occurs when a character is pitted against an outside force, such as another character, a physical obstacle, or an aspect of nature or society. Internal conflict occurs when the struggle takes place within the character’s mind.

Focus: There is both external and internal conflict in this story. But the major conflict is internal. Pay attention to Ndaziona’s thoughts, as well as his actions and words, and try to decide what the internal conflict is.

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

Guessing Meaning from Context:
The words in the left column are from the story. The right column has definitions for those words. Look back at the story and try to understand the vocabulary. Then put the letter of its definition on the line next to each word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>periodic</td>
<td>a. showing you are sorry for doing something wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hospitality</td>
<td>b. to develop quickly and be successful or common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apologetic</td>
<td>c. small pieces or parts of something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accumulate</td>
<td>d. to officially tell people about something important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alleviated</td>
<td>e. a special right or advantage that a somebody has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fragments</td>
<td>f. friendly and generous behaviour towards guests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>privilege</td>
<td>g. bad-tempered and not speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proclaim</td>
<td>h. happening often and at regular times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flourish</td>
<td>i. to repeat something you already said, often to emphasize it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>squinting</td>
<td>j. to gradually get more and more of something over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reiterate</td>
<td>k. looking at something with your eyes partly shut in order to keep out bright light or see better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sullen</td>
<td>l. to make something less severe or less painful</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(snorted p.) snort (v): to make an explosive sound by forcing air quickly up or down the nose
replacements (n): things which you use in place of other things
thugs (n): men who act violently
(molesting pr. part) molest (v): to touch or attack someone in a sexual way, against their wishes
hieroglyphs (n): pictures or symbols which represent words, used in some writing systems
slab (n): a thick, flat piece of a solid substance
knickknacks (n): small, decorative objects, especially in a house
pebbles (n): small stones
(corresponded with p.) correspond (with) (v): to communicate by writing a letter
gloom (n): when it is dark and difficult to see well
(overlooked p.) overlook (v): to fail to notice/consider something
dismay (n): a feeling of unhappiness and disappointment
(harbourd p.) harbour (v): to think about or feel something, usually for a long period of time
saddle (n): the seat of a bicycle
embankment (n): an artificial slope made of earth or stones
twigs (n): small, thin branches of a tree or bush
(churned p.) churn (v): to mix something with great force
(admonished p.) admonish (v): to tell someone that they have done something wrong
floppy (adj): soft and not able to keep a firm shape or position
frayed (adj): with the threads at the edge coming loose
khaki (n): a dark, yellowish-green cloth, often worn by soldiers
galvanized (p.) galvanize (v): to cause someone to take action suddenly
(proffered p.) proffer (v): to offer advice or an opinion
binges (n): occasions when an activity is done in an extreme way, especially eating or drinking
bruises (n): injuries or marks as a result of being hit by something
(impertinence (n)) impertinent (adj): rude and not respectful
pantry (n): a small room in a house where food is kept
Making Inferences:
Circle the letter of the answer that best completes each of the following statements.
1. Ndaziona is probably:
   a. 10-12 years old   b. 13-15 years old   c. 16-18 years old
2. What had most likely happened to Ndaziona’s father when he came home with “bruises, cuts, and wounds”?
   a. he was in a bike accident   b. he was in a fight   c. he was in a work accident
3. Ndaziona’s mother gets a deep cut on her forehead probably because:
   a. she slipped and hit it by accident   b. her husband was beating her   c. she cut herself on purpose

Suggested Answers for Comprehension Questions:
1. He is in his room working on homework
2. Akunjila, Ndaziona’s grandfather, the father of his father.
3. He is unhappy because his son is not at home to drink kachasu with him.
4. No. He remembers the unhappy events that happen when Akunjila visits.
5. The township is 3 kilometers away.
6. He travels on his father’s bike, which is much too big for him.
7. He runs out to greet Akunjila and help him with his things.
8. Akunjila always brings something fresh from the gardens in the village.
9. They eat dinner.
10. Ndilekeni is Ndaziona’s uncle.
12. Akunjila doesn’t want water because he wants to keep drinking his kachasu.
13. He thought that they were having an affair.
14. He started drinking alcohol when he was very young—maybe 13 years old.
15. His father had hit her because he thought the baby wasn’t his and the baby was miscarried (died before being born).
16. He wants Ndaziona to drink with him.
17. He is a bully at Ndaziona’s school.
18. He will be able to tell everyone that he got drunk and they will be impressed.
19. His father will beat him.
20. He runs away to his room.

Analysing the Story: Conflict
Look back at the explanation of conflict. There are moments of external conflict, but the main conflict for Ndaziona is internal. His male role models act a certain way and he has to decide if he wants to be like them or not. In the diagram below two details are given that represent either side of the conflict for Ndaziona. Can you provide two more? What’s the ultimate decision that Ndaziona makes to resolve this conflict?

Thinking Critically:
• Akunjila says to Ndaziona that his father is a real man. As a teenager “he was already drinking and fighting for his women.” Do you think Ndaziona agrees with Akunjila? Why or why not?
• Do you agree with Akunjila? Why or why not?
Glossary of Literary Terms

Theme
A **theme** is a central idea or message in a work of literature. Sometimes a story has several themes.

Point of view (1st and 3rd)
A **first-person narrator** is often also the main character. The first-person narrator refers to him- or herself as "I." We see what happens through the character’s eyes. We get a clear sense, not just of what the character says and does, but also how he or she thinks, feels, and wants.

Many stories, however, have a **third-person narrator**. A third-person narrator describes events and characters from outside. This narrator tells the story, but does not enter the story or say who he or she is.

Setting
The **setting** is the time and place of the action of the story. Often, the setting of a story has a casual relationship with the events of the story. Other times, the setting is central to the plot of a story.

Plot
The **plot** is the sequence of actions and events in a story. Often, a plot has four parts:
- The **exposition**, or introduction, is usually the beginning of the story where the main character(s) and situation are introduced
- In the **rising action**, complications, or events, happen and cause difficulties for the main character(s)
- The **climax** of the story, or the most important event, usually occurs near the end of the story and affects the final outcome.
- The **falling action**, or conclusion, of a story is where the situation is resolved in some way and the story comes to an end.

Poetic Justice
In real life, people don’t necessarily get what they deserve. Sometimes, good people have bad things happen to them, and bad people have good things happen. However, in fiction, authors can reward or punish characters for their actions. This is called **poetic justice**.

Characters and Characterization
**Characters** are the people who participate in the action of a story. The most important characters are the **main characters**. Less important characters are **minor characters**. The author creates characters through physical descriptions, speech, thoughts, actions, and observations from other characters. This is called **characterization**.

Dialect
A **dialect** is the form of a language spoken in a particular place by a distinct group of people. Dialects vary in pronunciation, vocabulary, expressions, and grammatical constructions. Writers use dialect to establish the setting and to describe the characters.

Personification
**Personification** is a figure of speech in which human qualities are attributed to an object, animal, or idea. Writers use personification to make feelings or images understood by the reader.

Mood and Tone
**Mood** is the feeling, or atmosphere, that a writer creates for the reader. Descriptive words, the setting, and figurative language contribute to the mood of a work, as do the sound and rhythm of the language used.

**Tone** is the attitude the writer takes toward a subject. Unlike mood, which is intended to shape the reader’s emotional response, tone reflects the feelings of the writer. To identify tone, you might find it helpful to read the story aloud. Try to decide what emotions you feel as you read.

Paradox
A **paradox** is a statement that appears to contradict itself but, in fact, reveals some element of truth. Religious and spiritual writings often contain paradoxes. Such paradoxes are intended to shake readers out of their normal ways of thinking and point them toward a higher level of understanding.

Imagery
**Imagery** consists of descriptive words and phrases that re-create sensory experiences for the reader. The majority of images are visual, but imagery may also appeal to the other senses.

Protagonist
The **protagonist** is the central character or hero of a story. The protagonist is always involved in the central conflict of the plot and often changes during the course of the story. When a story is told from the 1st person point of view, the narrator is often, but not always, the protagonist.

Metaphor
A **metaphor** is a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two things that are basically not alike but that have something in common. Unlike similes, metaphors do not use the words like or as.
Antagonist
The antagonist in a story is the character in opposition to the protagonist. Sometimes the antagonist is not a character, but something else—a force of nature, an aspect of society, or an internal force within the protagonist.

Simile
A simile is a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two things using the word like or as.

Foreshadowing
Foreshadowing is a writer’s use of hints or clues to indicate events and situations that will occur later in the plot. The use of this technique creates suspense while preparing the reader for what is to come.

Frame Story
A frame story exists when a story is told within a narrative setting or frame—hence creating a story within a story.

Epithet
An epithet is a brief descriptive phrase that points out traits associated with a particular person or thing. An epithet is often used for characterization.

Suspense
Suspense is the excitement or tension that readers feel as they become involved in a story and eager to know the outcome of the plot.

Alliteration
Alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words.

Irony
In literature, irony frequently occurs when there is a difference between what is expected or desired and what actually happens. For example, what a character thinks will happen to him or her may turn out to be the exact opposite of what actually happens.

Dialogue
When you read a play, you learn about its plot, or story, mainly from the dialogue that takes place among the characters—that is, from the character’s conversations. In short stories, although authors can also use narration (tell the story directly), dialogue usually remains important. To be effective, dialogue must be natural and must seem appropriate for the particular characters.

Onomatopoeia
Onomatopoeia is the use of words such as pow, buzz, and crunch whose sounds suggest their meanings.

Symbolism
A symbol is a thing (most often a concrete object of some type) that represents an idea or a group of ideas. For example, some common symbols are a dove (as a sign of peace), a lion (as a symbol of courage), or a flag (as an emblem of a country).

Allusion
An allusion is an indirect reference to another literary work or to a famous person, place, or event.

Euphemism
A euphemism is a word or phrase used to avoid something unpleasant or offensive.

Epiphany
Epiphany is an experience of sudden and striking realization. Generally the term is used to describe scientific breakthrough, religious or philosophical discoveries, but it can apply in any situation in which an enlightening realization allows a problem or situation to be understood from a new and deeper perspective. In literature, characters typically experience an epiphany at the end of the story.

Hyperbole
Hyperbole is a figure of speech in which the truth is exaggerated for emphasis or for humorous effect. The expression “I’m so hungry I could eat a horse” is an example of hyperbole.

Flashback
A flashback is an account of a conversation, an episode, or an event that happened before the beginning of the story. By revealing significant thoughts, experiences, or events in a character’s life, a flashback can help readers understand a character’s present situation. Flashbacks may take the form of reminiscences, dream sequences, or descriptions by third-person narrators; they usually interrupt the chronological flow of a story. Flashbacks may contain foreshadowing or other clues to the outcome of the story.

Conflict
Conflict is a struggle between opposing forces and is the basis of plot in dramatic and narrative literature. The conflict provides the interest or suspense in a short story, novel, narrative poem, or nonfiction narrative. External conflict occurs when a character is pitted against an outside force, such as another character, a physical obstacle, or an aspect of nature or society. Internal conflict occurs when the struggle takes place within the character’s mind.
Answer Key

• **LOOKING FOR A RAIN GOD**
  Words to Know
  sacrifices, plough, desperate, wail, drought
  Making Predictions
  Mokgobja will sacrifice the two girls but no rain will come.
  Guessing Meaning from Context
  a, c, b, c, c, b
  Making Inferences
  b, a, c

• **UNCLE BEN’S CHOICE**
  Words to Know
  naked, careful, eve, clerk, suspects
  Making Predictions
  A spirit has come to trade Ben for his soul.
  Guessing Meaning from Context
  Belly, surplus, converted, desirous, vexed, hollered, naked, eve
  Making Inferences
  b, a, c

• **THE DUBE TRAIN**
  Words to Know
  insult, shameless, congested, tease, hulk
  Making Predictions
  The tsotsi attacks the man and the man kills him.
  Guessing Meaning from Context
  g, f, e, j, h, c, a, b, l, d, k
  Making Inferences
  b, c, b

• **THE WINNER**
  Words to Know
  clamour, telegram, football pool, worn out, interviews
  Making Predictions
  Cousin Sarah will stay and marry Pius because she doesn't care about the money.
  Guessing Meaning from Context
  a, b, a, b, c, d, b, c
  Making Inferences
  a, b, c

• **THE TORN VEIL**
  Words to Know
  achieve his ambition, dozing off, verandah, indignantly, scholar
  Making Predictions
  Kwame will regret what he has done to Akosua, but she is not really there and he is dreaming.
  Guessing Meaning from Context
  strutted, notorious, mound, safeguard, rash, coax, decent, mentality, zeal
  Making Inferences
  b, b, a

• **WORKDAY**
  Words to Know
  interfere, upstairs, slammed, back yard, roused
  Making Predictions
  Elizabeth will leave Mary outside all night as punishment.
  Guessing Meaning from Context
  g, e, b, c, h, a, f, d
  Making Inferences
  c, a, c

• **MISTA COURIFER**
  Words to Know
  resents, resign, preacher, confide, ire
  Making Predictions
  Mr Buckmaster will grant Tomas a holiday and Tomas will stop wearing European clothes.
  Guessing Meaning from Context
  d, c, a, b, d
  Making Inferences
  a, c, a

• **THE EMPTY BASKET**
  Words to Know
  misfortune, crowd, courageously, inspired, coward
  Making Predictions
  Obwalo will escape through a window and kill the snake.
  Guessing Meaning from Context
  Thoroughly, retreat, permanently, abandon, dazed, supposed, heap, amid, malicious
  Making Inferences
  b, b, a

• **JUSTICE**
  Words to Know
  coincidence, struck, deaf, near-sighted, grateful
  Making Predictions
  The judge will believe that they are a married couple arguing.
  Guessing Meaning from Context
  The judge will believe that they are a married couple arguing.
  Making Inferences
  a, b

• **THE CASE OF THE PRISON-MONGER**
  Words to Know
  anomaly, servility, prosecutor, executed, philosophy
  Making Predictions
  The judge will release Matteos, but Matteos will insult the judge and be sent back to prison.
  Guessing Meaning from Context
  b, d, c, a, b, d
  Making Inferences
  c, a, b
• **FLIGHT**
  
  **Words to Know**
  eluded, captured, commotion, pursuers, scurried

  **Making Predictions**
  The woman will escape over the mountain and the narrator will feel excited for her.

  **Guessing Meaning from Context**
  glimpse, capture, bony, distress, rearranged, earnest, flitting, jumbled

• **THE OLIVE TREE**
  
  **Words to Know**
  demons, caught red-handed, fooled, errand, marks

  **Making Predictions**
  Nyangusi will not be sent to the olive tree until much later when he has forgotten about it.

  **Guessing Meaning from Context**
  l, k, f, j, d, e, g, b, h, i, a

  **Making Inferences**
  b, c, a

• **DIFFERENT VALUES**
  
  **Words to Know**
  prostitution, complained, beastly, miserly, contend with

  **Making Predictions**
  The woman will tell Tommy to play with Popi and he will be angry that he must do Liza’s work.

  **Guessing Meaning from Context**
  c, b, a, b, d, a

  **Making Inferences**
  b, a, b

• **THEY SOLD MY SISTER**
  
  **Words to Know**
  dowry, wept, escorted, accompany, defiantly

  **Making Predictions**
  Naliki will return home and her father will try to marry her off as well.

  **Guessing Meaning from Context**
  wad, embraced, politely, fond, tremulous, offensive, bitterly, insolent, resolutely

  **Making Inferences**
  b, c, c

• **THE INTRUDER**
  
  **Words to Know**
  harsh, turn it up, aeroplane, uneasy, cultivators

  **Making Predictions**
  Mungo will say goodbye to the Maasai and go to Dar-es-Salaam in the car.

  **Guessing Meaning from Context**
  g, d, b, e, a, l, k, j, c, h, f

  **Making Inferences**
  a, c, c

• **THE TOILET**
  
  **Words to Know**
  daydream, respectable, nursing, longing, sneak

  **Making Predictions**
  The narrator will go to the toilet the next morning and begin writing a story.

  **Guessing Meaning from Context**
  b, c, a, d, c

  **Making Inferences**
  b, b, c

• **BINDEH’S GIFT**
  
  **Words to Know**
  heir, drown, assembled, mercy, scaled

  **Making Predictions**
  The basket contains deadly snakes and Bindeh will throw it at Kai Borie before leaping over the falls.

  **Guessing Meaning from Context**
  relentlessly, retreat, hideous, sham, numberless, accusation, seething, demonstrates, keen, grief,

  **Making Inferences**
  a, c, c

• **THE VILLAGE PASTOR**
  
  **Words to Know**
  took shelter, perturbed, hymns, pastor, protested

  **Making Predictions**
  The pastor will yell at the soldier for being rude and tell him to look for the terrorists in Muriuki’s.

  **Guessing Meaning from Context**
  h, l, j, a, k, b, i, c, e, g, d, f

  **Making Inferences**
  b, a, b

• **IN THE SHADOW OF WAR**
  
  **Words to Know**
  interior, shadow, eclipse, stumbled, succumbed

  **Making Predictions**
  Omovo will see the soldiers murder the woman in the black veil and run away.

  **Guessing Meaning from Context**
  b, c, a, d, b

  **Making Inferences**
  a, c, c

• **COUNTRY LOVERS**
  
  **Words to Know**
  bricklayer, adolescence, playmates, prompted, intimate

  **Making Predictions**
  Paulus will poison the child so that there is no evidence of his relationship with Thebedi.

  **Guessing Meaning from Context**
  ideally, attentively, dominant, exaggerating, prosperous, indicates, substitute, flirt, self-pity, unspoken, eroding, coincided, graze, sweetheart

  **Making Inferences**
  a, b, c
• **THE REFUGEE**
Words to Know
refugees, degrading, solitude, nostalgia/nostalgic, high spirits
Making Predictions
The men will return, but Margaret will say she could never marry Duku.
Guessing Meaning from Context
h, e, a, i, b, k, d, g, j, f
Making Inferences
c, b, c

• **CERTAIN WINDS FROM THE SOUTH**
Words to Know
Ramadan, infected, newborn, miserable, navel
Making Predictions
The man was Hawa's father and he died in the war.
Guessing Meaning from Context
c, b, c, a, b, d
Making Inferences
c, a, b

• **FIREFLY**
Words to Know
helpless, contemptuously, furious, wheezing, frail
Making Predictions
The man will go back inside, but the child will have died and his wife will leave him.
Guessing Meaning from Context
f, e, a, l, d, k, g, b, j, c, h, i
Making Inferences
c, a, a

• **THE PIG**
Words to Know
odd jobs, pleased, old-fashioned, yield, rifle
Making Predictions
Jonas will wait for the young man to come out of the hut and will kill him.
Guessing Meaning from Context
f, e, a, l, d, k, g, b, j, c, h, i
Making Inferences
c, a, a

• **OUT OF DARKNESS**
Words to Know
cockroaches, primitive, cell, culpable homicide, convicts
Making Predictions
Old Cockroach will tell him that Cora was his ex-girlfriend and he killed his friend, Joey, in a fight.
Guessing Meaning from Context
c, d, a, c, d, b
Making Inferences
b, c, b

• **ASEMKA**
Words to Know
turned against, stepmother, quarrel, in vain, regret
Making Predictions
Mr Mensah will leave and Essie will have become pregnant.
Guessing Meaning from Context
downward, hasty, noontime, ripen, suckling, skills, disobey, maiden
Making Inferences
c, b

• **NOORJEHAN**
Words to Know
dissuade, fortnight, gifted, urgent, scrutinised
Making Predictions
Noorjehan will say goodbye to the narrator and leave in a train.
Guessing Meaning from Context
h, k, f, b, l, d, g, j, a, e, i
Making Inferences
b, a, c

• **THE GIRL WITH THE TWISTED FUTURE**
Words to Know
trembling, contortionist, flexible, drum, impresario
Making Predictions
The impresario will not want a contortionist and Filomeninha will die.
Guessing Meaning from Context
a, c, a, d, a, a
Making Inferences
b, a, c

• **THE MUSIC OF THE VIOLIN**
Words to Know
let her down, ridiculed, explosion, humiliated, harassed
Making Predictions
Vukani will tell his parents that he no longer wishes to play the violin and his mother will slap him.
Guessing Meaning from Context
apprehensive, normally, mischievous, boast, genius, hypocrites, dread, focus, futile
Making Inferences
b, a, a

• **GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM**
Words to Know
concentrate, distilled, inebriated, bragged, bully
Making Predictions
Ndaziona doesn't drink with his grandfather because he dislikes how his father and grandfather act when drinking.
Guessing Meaning from Context
h, f, a, j, l, c, e, d, b, k, i, g
Making Inferences
b, b, b