

The Next Step

Reading Skills for Adults

Book 14018

New Brunswick teachers and administrators are constantly searching for new and meaningful learning materials for use by their students. Adult upgrading teachers and coordinators encounter unique challenges in this task. The content, cost, or availability of instructional materials often makes available resources inappropriate or impossible options. Many teachers meet this challenge by creating their own materials.

The development of new partnerships and the availability of new technologies, however, have lessened the burden. Over the past decade partnerships between government agencies, educational institutions, literacy teachers, and others have resulted in the creation of a variety of meaningful and practical materials relevant to New Brunswick. New technologies and their availability in classrooms have facilitated the sharing and use of these materials.

Under the direction of New Brunswick Literacy Coordinators, it was determined that enhancements to both the curriculum and the available instructional materials were required. Several projects have been completed to create instructional materials to support this new curriculum. This project continues this work.

Specifically, the focus of this project is to revise, update, and enhance existing grade-leveled academic learning packages. The result is grade-leveled materials that match the new curriculum, adhere to clear language principles, and allow for better communication of student progress. Additionally, the grade-leveled materials better reflect the experience of New Brunswick adult upgrading students.

Many organizations and individuals have contributed to this project. They include: Jerry Hicks, Literacy Coordinator NBCC-Moncton, National Literacy Secretariat, National Adult Literacy Adult Database, New Brunswick Literacy Coordinators and Community Academic Services Program teachers NBCC-Moncton Curriculum Office, NBCC-Moncton Print Room Staff, and Academic Services Department Head.

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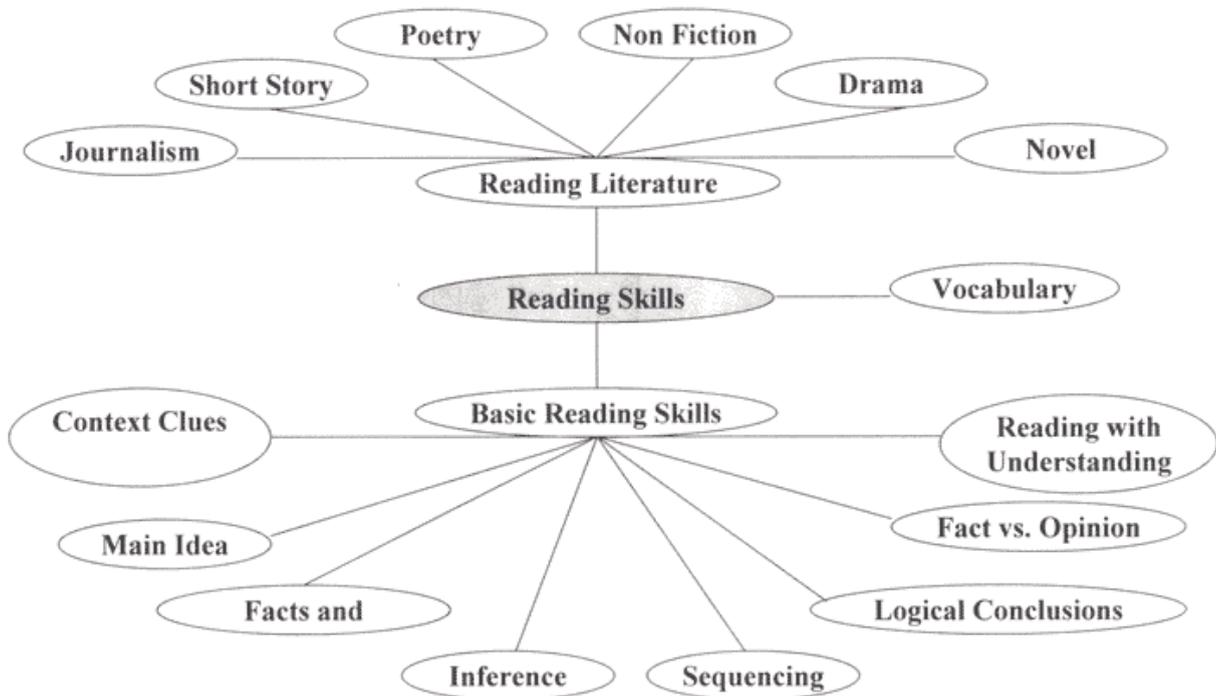
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Concept Map - Reading Skills



Reading Comprehension Skills

Introduction

Reading is a necessary skill in today's world. You will probably need to read material such as bills and letters. Depending on your choice of employment, you may need to read simple directions or you may need to read complicated reports. There are other reasons for reading. Some people read stories for enjoyment; while others enjoy reading educational books for self-improvement. Regardless of your motivation for reading, you need to have some basic skills and some basic tools.

Reading is a form of communication. When two people communicate by talking, they need to use their communication skills. They need to understand what is said, remember what is said, and respond to what is said. Similarly, readers need to understand what is written, remember what is written, and respond to what is written. Because reading involves a number of skills, they can be learned, practiced, and improved.

Like other communication skills, reading becomes easier, more productive, and more enjoyable with practice. Beginning readers often find reading slow. There are many reasons for this. Some reasons include: having a small vocabulary, reading aloud, and lacking knowledge about how to read. Experienced readers are able to understand the meaning of many words, to read silently most of the time, and to use several reading strategies efficiently.

In addition to learning the strategies in this section, one of your goals should be to increase your vocabulary. This means increasing the number of words you are able to recognize and use. The best way to increase your vocabulary is by reading regularly and by reading different types of materials.

Reading to Understand

Regardless of your motivation for reading, your main goal is to understand the information you read. The first step in the reading process is to prepare yourself to understand what you will read. You can prepare yourself physically and mentally.

You can prepare physically by sitting comfortably, reading in a well-lit area, limiting distractions, and keeping a pen and paper close by. You can prepare mentally by clarifying why you are reading, deciding how you will read, and starting with a positive attitude.

Clarifying your purpose for reading

Your purpose for reading will help you to decide how you will read. If your purpose is to learn the dates of events, you will read anything with dates very carefully. You might make some notes as well. If your purpose for reading is to evaluate a writer's style, you will pay attention to the choice of words, variety of sentences, and organization of paragraphs. Perhaps your reason for reading is to learn new facts, to have new experiences, to experience another person's thoughts or feelings, to be entertained, to find the main idea, to summarise the information later, to retell the information to other people, to improve your reading speed, to increase your vocabulary, or to criticize the ideas.



How do I need to read?

How you decide to read depends not only on your purpose, but also on the type of material. You would read a fictional novel quickly to get the main idea if you were simply reading for entertainment. However, reading a technical engineering report requires you to read slowly. You may need to read the report several times before you understand its contents.

How you decide to read depends on other factors as well. Some factors include: your vocabulary, your familiarity with the information, and your familiarity with the type and style of the material. If you are a less experienced reader, you may need to read slower because you will need to focus on each word. If you are a more experienced reader, you may only need to quickly skim the reading material. For example, if you have never read poetry, you may need to read more slowly and carefully than a more experienced reader of poetry. There is also a significant difference between past and recent writers. A poet during the 16th century may have written sonnets or ballads, while modern poets tend to use less rigid formats for their poetry.

Regardless of your purpose for reading, ability to read, or familiarity with the topic or style, the first step in the reading process involves previewing the reading material. Previewing means quickly reading the table of contents, notes about the author, or similar material. This will get you focused on the reading process and it will help you answer the questions: *Why am I reading?* and *How do I need to read?* Once you have prepared physically and mentally to read, you are ready to begin the reading process.

Introduction to the "Reading Process"

Reading is similar to writing in some ways. Both involve a process. The steps in the process are sometimes repeated. The reading process can be divided into three parts. There is a pre-reading process, a reading process, and a post-reading process.

For each part of the reading process, there are specific goals and strategies to be used. A study method called the "SQ3R Study Method" is very useful. The "SQ3R Study Method" has five steps. The first two steps, Survey and Question, are part of the pre-reading process. The Reading step goes is with the reading process. Finally, the Recite and Review steps are used during the post-reading process.

On the following pages, each step, its goals, and its strategies will be explained. To get ready to read these pages, look at the diagram on the next page. Read the title, sub-titles, and look at

any pictures. Stop at the title "Basic Reading Comprehension Skills. Then, start back at the beginning of this section and read carefully.

Are you ready to read?

"The Reading Process"

(SQ3R Method)

Pre-Reading

1. Survey

 *to predict the Main idea*

2. Question

 *to Direct Reading*

Reading

3. Read

 *to Remember / to Understand*

Post-reading

4. Recite

 *to Check Memory / to Check Understanding*

5. Review

 *to Remember / to Understand*

What is pre-reading?

Defining the purpose for reading and deciding how you will need to read can be considered part of the pre-reading process. Other important tasks to be done during the pre-reading process include: thinking about knowledge you already have about a topic, surveying the material you are about to read, guessing at the main idea of the material, and listing questions that will guide your reading.

1. Survey

What is surveying?



Surveying is thinking about what you are about to read. Thinking about reading is called active reading. Active reading is more than simply making the sounds of letters and words. It is more than recognizing words. It is using the information that you are reading.

Why do I need to use surveying

Readers survey what they read to help them understand what they are about to read. Surveying gives the reader some context about the content and, also about how the material has been written. This information guides the reader in deciding how to read the material. It helps the reader focus on what is important and to skip over what is not important.

How do I use surveying?

So how does a person survey what they are about to read? A good reader will survey the parts of written material that often have clues to the topics and the main idea. Some of these places include:

Titles
Sub-titles
Headings
Table of contents
Outlines
Pictures
Illustrations
Tables
Footnotes
First sentences
Last sentences
First paragraphs
Last paragraphs

Try to predict the main ideas, topics, and details that will be presented. If some parts of the material is new, you may want to plan to spend more time reading those sections. If there are new words, you may want to consult a dictionary before you begin. You will understand more when you begin reading. You will also know what section you will need to read carefully and what sections you can scan quickly.

2. Question

What is Questioning?

Questioning is making a list of questions you want answered. It may be a written list or it may be a mental list. There are two types of questions. The first group of questions focus on your predictions. The second group of questions deal with details.



Why do I need to use Questions?

Thinking about questions to ask before you begin reading will make your reading more focused. It also makes you an active reader, which will help you understand and remember what you read. It not only helps you focus on new material, but it helps you predict what you will encounter while reading. Your predictions are tested when you read.

How do I use Questions?

Make a list of predictions. Write them in the form of a question. For example, you might ask is my prediction about the main idea correct. These are some other questions you might want to ask:

What appears to be the main idea?

What details or facts will be used?

How will I need to read?

What are the definitions of new words?

Make a list of specific questions you want answered. For instance, you will want to ask questions like:

Who are the characters?

What is the setting?

What is the conflict?

What is the moral of the story?

For other types of materials, you may think of several general and specific questions to ask. You may decide to add more questions to your list as you go through the reading process. In the "Reading Literature" section, you will find specific questions that apply specifically to each type of literature.

What is reading?

Reading is one part of the communication process between a writer and a reader. The main goal during the reading process is to understand and to remember what you have. You get to try to answer the questions you created during the pre-reading process.

3. Read

What is reading?



Books have been written about the topic of reading. Here we will simply give a definition. Reading is the process of perceiving symbols, decoding symbols, obtaining meaning from symbols, and remembering the meaning. There are strategies that can be used for each part of the reading process.

You have spent a lot of time and energy learning how to perceive and to decode symbols. You have learned how each letter makes a sound, how sounds and letters are grouped to make words, how words are grouped to make parts of sentences, how parts of sentences are grouped to make sentences, and how sentences are grouped to make paragraphs. You have also learned to perceive and decode the meanings of other symbols, such as road signs. Some people encounter barriers to perceiving or decoding written symbols.

Some of these barriers include poor eyesight and distractions. These barriers can be overcome by wearing glasses, reading in good light, removing distractions, and using strategies to focus on specific symbols. One strategy is to use a piece of paper to guide or to cover up the part of the material that is not being read. There are also strategies to improve reading speed. Although this is a valuable skill, it is not more important than understanding and remembering. Reading aloud is a strategy that is suitable for some types of reading. For example, reading poetry or reading difficult material. Rereading is also a strategy. Many people read quickly the first time to get the general idea of some material. The second time they read more carefully for details. They may even read the material a third or fourth time.

Getting meaning from the symbols we perceive and decode is complex. It depends on previous experience and knowledge. For example, a medical doctor and a patient might read the same article. However, it is safe to suggest that the level of meaning might be different.

Remembering what we read can be a challenge. Reading actively will help you remember what you read. There are strategies, which will be mentioned later, that you can use to help you remember.

Why do I need to read actively and critically?

People who read actively and critically are better able to use the information they obtain from reading. People who read actively understand more and they remember more. They understand and remember more because they relate what they are reading to the knowledge they already have. Readers who read critically evaluate the usefulness of the information they read. They are more likely to find flaws in arguments or statements made by the writer. They are also more able to respond to the ideas, opinions, and statements in their reading, because they actively form their own opinions based on clear thinking.

How do I read?

During the reading process, you can use a number of basic skills to help you understand what you read. The basic skills are related to reading actively and reading critically. Most people can improve these skills by practicing reading a variety of different material. The basic skills are listed below.

Finding the main idea

Finding facts and details

Finding sequences and patterns

Using context clues

Making inferences

Making logical conclusions

Sorting facts from opinions

Reading actively and critically will not only help you understand what you read, but it will also help you remember what you read. Many people use other skills and strategies to help them remember.

If you have your own book, you may consider underlining or highlighting key words or phrases that relate to the main idea. Many readers also make notes in the margins of their books. There are different types of notes. Some of these include: questions, answers, relationships, or highlights. A reader might write a question in the margin about material they do not understand with the purpose of finding the answer later. Answers to the questions they listed during the pre-reading process can be written in the margins, making them easier to find later. A reader might also make notes about parts of the material that are related to previous readings or knowledge. Important facts or details might also be highlighted in the margins. Of course if the book you are using needs to be returned, you will need to make notes on your own paper.

You have read actively and critically. You may have read the material several times. You found all of the answers to your questions, and you have looked up the meanings of new words. You must be done, right? Well, not quite. Remember your goal for reading is to understand and to remember. Well most people lose part of their understanding and memory if they stop the reading process now. It is time to move to the post-reading process.

What is post-reading?

There are two steps in the post-reading process. They are named reciting and reviewing. Both of these steps require that the reader do something with the information they have learned.

4. Recite

What is reciting?

Reciting means retelling what you have just read. It is best to use your “own words” to retell what you have read. The most common way of retelling what you have just read is to summarize it. This may mean writing a summary, or may mean speaking aloud. Be sure to compare your summary with the material you have read. You may chose to change your summary slightly by adding or changing parts.



Why do I recite?

Reciting is necessary for two reasons. First, it gives you a chance to check your understanding of the material you have read. Second, it helps you to remember what you have read. It helps you remember because you are used to the information, and because you repeat the information. Most people need to use a new skill or information several times before they remember that skill or information. In the case of a written summary, it can be referred to later for study purposes.

How do I use reciting?

The process of reciting is a two step process. First, summarize the information in the writing. Writers call this a précis You may decide to write a summary or to create a list. Other methods include diagrams and concept maps. Second, study the notes, lists, or diagrams until you feel comfortable that you understand and remember the information. Regardless of the method you choose, be sure to include the main idea, details, and your own comment or opinion about the material.

5. Review

What is reviewing?

Reviewing is the last step in the reading process. The main goal of the reviewing step is to help you remember what you read.



Why do I need to review?

The practice using and repeating the information in the reciting stage is not enough to keep most of the information in your memory. More practice is needed.

How do I review?

Reviewing can be done in several different ways. Some of these include rereading the original material. It also involves reviewing underlined or highlighted notes. It also involves reviewing written summaries and concept maps. You should review material twenty-four hours after reading it. You will also need to review the material periodically.

Basic Reading Comprehension Skills

We have talked about why people read. We have also talked about how people read- "the reading process". Now it is time to talk about several basic and specific reading skills. These skills apply to all types of literature. With practice, a reader can improve his or her ability to understand, remember, and use the information he or she reads.

Some of the basic reading skills includes: finding the main idea, finding facts and details, finding sequences and patterns, using context clues, making inferences, making logical conclusions, and sorting facts from opinions. Although you will have chance to practice these skills one at a time, several skills are actually used at the same time. For example, it is difficult to distinguish fact from opinion if you are not able to find facts.

The Main Idea

One of the main goals for reading is to discover the main idea. Main ideas are referred to as the theme or thesis. For narrative writing the main idea is often called the theme or moral of the story. For expository writing (informative writing), the main idea is often referred to as the thesis.



What are main ideas?

The main idea, theme, thesis, or moral of the story is the writer's message. Sometimes the main idea is clearly and directly stated. This is particularly true for expository writing. Other times the main idea is not clearly stated. For both situations, using all of the basic reading skills will be useful.

How do I find main ideas?

Sometimes main ideas are confused with topics. "Air pollution" is a topic. "Air pollution is hurting specific bird populations by reducing fertility is a main idea. The main idea is a complete statement about a topic, while a topic only names what is being written about.

Finding the topic and the main idea is easy if you know where to look. In expository writing, main ideas, or clues about main ideas, are often found at the beginning or ending of a paragraph. For longer works, information about the main idea is often found in the first and the last paragraphs.

The main idea is not always stated directly. For these situations, you need to infer or decide the main idea from clues. Repeated words or phrases often serve as clues about the main idea. The organization of the facts and details also give clues about the main idea.

Skimming is a skill which is useful for quickly discovering the main idea. Skimming involves quickly reading the parts of sentences or paragraphs that usually contain clues. Title, diagrams, and tables usually offer clues about the main idea. Scanning is another useful skill. It involves looking for specific words, phrases, or patterns. Remember repeated words, phrases, or ideas usually help you infer the main idea.

Practice Exercise 1 A

Main Idea

A.

- Scan the paragraph quickly.
- Predict the main idea.
- Read the paragraph carefully.
- Write the words or phrases related to the main idea

"No parent wants to make his child unhappy. In fact, most parents want the opposite. They want their children to be happy and successful. Unfortunately, some parents go about it the wrong way. They nag their children, they bribe them, threaten them, compare them, bargain with them and do any number of things to try and make them successful and happy. These methods of course, will never work. You can't make a child be these things. A parent must create a loving, stable, consistent environment in which a child can grow to find happiness and success according to his own abilities."

Adapted from, *Intermediate English Skills Development Series Book 3, 3A Main Idea*

Practice Exercise 1 B

Main Idea

B. Answer the questions.

1. What is the topic?

2. Summarize the main idea in one sentence.

3. Was your prediction about the main idea correct?

4. Where did you find clues about the main idea?

5. Write a title for the paragraph.

Facts and Details

Facts and details are the building blocks of all writing. When you read for information, you are looking for the facts and the details.

What are facts and details?

Facts and details support the main idea, thesis, moral, or theme of a piece of writing. Facts and details are used differently in different types of writing. In expository writing, facts may be reasons, statistics, causes, effects, or more. In narratives, facts and details involve settings, characters, and events. Finally, in descriptive writing, facts and details involve sensory details. Recognizing facts and details are important.



It is particularly important when you need to "infer" the main idea because it is not stated directly. Missing details (or misreading details) may lead to an incorrect assumption about the main idea.

How do I find facts and details?

Facts and details are usually easier to find when you know what you are looking for. Asking specific questions during the pre-reading process can help you find facts and details. Reporters use six simple questions to help them find the facts and details they need to infer a main idea and to include in their own writing.

How do I find facts and details?

The six questions are who, what, where, when, why, and how. The form of each question changes slightly, depending on what you are reading. For example, a good "who" question for reading a narrative is "Who are the characters?" For reading a scientific report, a good question might be, "Who did the experiment or wrote the report?"

Remembering facts and details is made easier by visualizing the facts or details, seeing a picture in your head. If it is a narrative, then try to visualize the details of the setting, the voices of the characters, and the other details. If it is a set of instructions, try to visualize your movement and the object at each step. You may also want to make notes or diagrams to help you visualize.

Practice Exercise 2 A

Facts and Details

A.

- Scan the story quickly.
- Read the story carefully.
- Get a mental image of the details
- Write down important details

"The Father, The Son, and The Mule"
(Adapted from an old tale)

A man and his son were leading a mule to town on a long chain. As they were going down the road, they met another man.

"You fools!" said the man. "Why do you not ride the mule?"

So the man put the son on the mule. Then they met some old men.

"Shame!" cried the old man. He shook his fist at the son. "The son rides and the poor father is on foot."

So the son got off and the father got on the mule's back. Then they passed some children sitting in the shade of a tree.

"Look at the big man," said one. "He rides and the little son has to go on foot. What a shame!"

"I wish I could tell what to do," said the father, rubbing his chin. "Come on, son. The thing to do is ride with me. Get up."

But then they passed a man sitting on a chair on the back porch. His wife came out.

"What a shame!" she cried. "How much can that poor mule stand? The man and his son are too much of a load"

"Now what should we do, Father?" asked the son. "Let us chop down a branch from that tree," said the father.

They cut down a long pole. Then they tied the mule's feet to the pole with a chain. They lifted the mule and went on to town. Now all the men rushed out to see the foolish father and his son.

As the father and son passed over a river, the mule shook free, fell into the water, and drowned.

"There!" cried the men. "That will teach you not to be so foolish."

Adapted from, Intermediate English Skills Development Series Book 3, 3B Recalling Details

Practice Exercise 2 B

Facts and Details

B. Answer the questions.

1. Who are the characters?

2. What animals were in the story?

3. Where were the son and the father going?

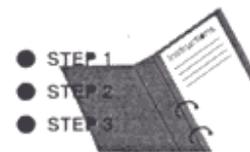
4. Who criticized the pair for riding the mule at the same time?

5. Who wanted the son to ride the mule?

6. How many times did people criticize the son and the father?

Sequencing?

People often think of numbers when they hear the word sequence. The numbers "1,2,3,4" are in sequence. Sentences and paragraphs are also placed in sequence.



What is sequencing?

Sequence refers to the order that symbols appear. The sequence "1,2,3,4" is a logical sequence. There is pattern to the numbers. The numbers are arranged from smallest to largest. They could have been arranged in a different sequence. Likewise, there are a number of different ways to logically organize sentences.

Writers typically arrange sentences, paragraphs, and ideas in one of several patterns. Common patterns include:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <i>Spatial</i> | <i>(near to far)</i> |
| <i>Chronological</i> | <i>(first to last)</i> |
| <i>Logical order</i> | <i>(first step to last step)</i> |
| <i>Specificity</i> | <i>(general to specific)</i> |
| <i>Familiarity</i> | <i>(known to unknown)</i> |
| <i>Comparative</i> | <i>(alternating similarities)</i> |
| <i>Importance</i> | <i>(least important to most important)</i> |
| <i>Cause and effect</i> | <i>(alternating cause and effect)</i> |

There are three common ways of arranging causes and effects. First, all causes and then all effects may be listed. Next, a cause and all of its associated effects may be grouped together. This pattern continues until all of the causes and effects have been discussed. Lastly, the causes and effects may alternate. This forms a chain with each effect becoming the cause for the next effect.

There are two common ways of comparing things or ideas. The first way involves listing all of the details about the first thing or idea and then listing the details related to the second thing or idea. Alternatively, details for each thing or idea may be presented in pairs.

How do I use sequencing?

Recognizing sequences is important. The sequences that detail, fact, or events are placed to reveal relationships between the facts, details, and events. For example, if numbered horses finished a race in the sequence "3,1,2,4", the number three horse was faster than the other horses. If the sequence was "2,4,3,1", the number two horse was faster than the others. A person betting on these races would be very interested in the sequence.

Likewise, writers combine sentences and paragraphs in specific sequences. Recognizing these different patterns allows a reader to predict what will happen and to visualize the events and

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details. This helps a reader understand more and to remember more. Readers need to be able to recognize these patterns to be able to determine the main idea from inferred relationships.

Writers use clues for readers to determine the sequence they use. These words are called transition words. Examples of some transition words follow:

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Spatial</i> | <i>on, in, above, below, beside, near</i> |
| <i>Chronological</i> | <i>before, next, after, meanwhile, until</i> |
| <i>Logical order</i> | <i>first, second, third, next, lastly, finally</i> |
| <i>Specificity</i> | <i>in general, specifically, typically</i> |
| <i>Familiarity</i> | <i>commonly, usually, infrequently, unusually</i> |
| <i>Comparative</i> | <i>on the other hand, on the contrary</i> |
| <i>Importance</i> | <i>the main, the central, the basic, the least</i> |
| <i>Causation and effect</i> | <i>because, since, consequently</i> |

Practice Exercise 3 A

Sequencing

A.

- Scan the story quickly.
- Read the story carefully.
- Visualize the details
- Remember the sequence of events

Labrador Doctor

"In 1892, Dr. Wilfred Grenfell went to live and work in Labrador. He wanted to help the poor people there who had no doctor. For forty-two years he worked among the people he loved. His first small mission finally grew into four hospitals before he died.

Dr. Grenfell learned to travel like the people of Labrador, by dog-sled in his Eskimo furs, and slept on the trail at thirty degrees below zero with his dogs.

The danger of travelling alone on the ice or in the cold never held Dr. Grenfell back. More than once he nearly gave his life to help someone else;

On Easter Sunday in 1908, two men brought a message from Brent Island that a boy was very sick. Grenfell was afraid the boy might die. He set off alone across Hare Bay with his komatik, an Eskimo sled, with a team of dogs. Spring was coming, and the ice started to soften.

Suddenly the ice broke. Dr. Grenfell swam through the icy cold water to cut his dogs free. The he and the dogs climbed up on a large block of floating ice.

Adapted from, Intermediate English Skills Development Series Book 3, 3C Sequence of Events

Practice Exercise 3 B

Sequencing

B. Answer the questions.

1. What type of essay is this (expository, descriptive, narrative)?

2. What has the writer sequenced (facts, details, examples, events)?

3. How has the writer organized the facts, details, examples, or events?

4. List the transition words used by the writer to clarify the sequence?

5. What was the first event?

6. List and number five important events in the story.

Context Clues

Context is sometimes called "The Big Picture". People live their lives in the context of the place and time they live. The meaning of events and experiences are determined by the context of the situation. The more experience a person has, the better able he or she is to use the context of the situation to learn new things.



What are context clues?

The more experience you have reading, and the greater the size of your vocabulary, the better you will be able to use the "Big Picture" to learn the meaning of new words or phrases. Without understanding the "Big Picture", or the general meaning of what you read, you will not be able to read as quickly, or understand as much.

You will need to rely on the dictionary more often to look up words. Using the dictionary is a good thing to do when you can't guess the meaning of a word or if you want to check your guess. Using a dictionary too often means that your reading is interrupted. This makes it more difficult to understand and to remember what you read.

Writers use words, phrases, clauses, and punctuation to put words and ideas in context.

How do I use context clues?

You can figure out the meaning words by using the context of what you are reading to help or guess. Writers leave context clues to help you discover the meaning of words or phrases. Writers often leave context clues in the following areas:

between comma

Joe, using the white cane, crossed the street.

between brackets

Her car (she hoped) would last another winter.

in definitions

She was voted Miss Congeniality. Congenial refers to her friendly way of dealing with other people.

in examples

The names of the parts of speech include: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections.

in footnotes marked by asterisks (*) or numbers (12)

by comparisons beginning with "like" or "as"

Learning to use the other basic reading skills will also help you to see the "Big Picture", or main idea, of what you read.

Practice Exercise 4 A

Context Clues

A.

- Scan the story quickly.
- Read the story carefully.
- Visualize the details.
- Predict what words are used to fill in the blanks.

"Winter in our part of the world begins on December 22, on what astronomers call the _____ 1 _____. It lasts from winter to the _____ 2 _____, on March 21. Spring extends from the spring equinox to the _____ 3 _____, June 21. Summer in our part of the world starts with summer solstice and lasts until September 23, the _____ 4 _____.

Running around the Earth, exactly halfway between the north pole and south pole, is an imaginary line called the _____ 5 _____. The equator divides the Earth into two _____ 6 _____ or half spheres. We live in the Northern Hemisphere. The other side of the Earth, including _____ 7 _____, is in the Southern Hemisphere. The Southern Hemisphere experiences the seasons at opposite times of the year from us. For example, when we are experiencing summer, June 21 until September 23, people in the Southern Hemisphere are experiencing winter, it is the opposite season in the Southern Hemisphere."

Adapted from, Intermediate Academic Upgrading Science Learning Packages IAU-S 7.2

Practice Exercise 4 B

Context Clues

B. Use context clues to help you pick the word for each blank. Write the correct word beside each number.

winter solstice

Australia

autumn equinox

spring equinox

hemispheres

summer solstice

equator

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Inferences

Writers do not state all of the facts sometimes. They also do not directly state the main idea. Writers expect you to fill in the missing pieces or to discover the main idea for yourself. A fiction writer may leave some facts out because it is reasonable to expect you to assume certain facts. For example, if it is snowing, then you can assume that it is winter. It would have been a waste of paper for the writer to include a sentence stating that it is winter. Making inferences is like putting a puzzle together which is missing a few pieces. You can still recognize the big picture.



Fiction writers and advertisement writers also expect readers to make inferences. For example, a car company might show an ad where several friends are driving in a car, the friends have expensive clothes on, the friends are laughing and joking, and the pedestrians stare at the car as they speed by. The inference the advertisers want to make is not stated. However, you can infer that if you buy their car you lead an exciting life. This type of inference is based on emotions and desires rather than logic. They want you to infer that you need them. Making good inferences helps you understand and remember information. It also helps you make good decisions.

What are inferences?

Inferences are guesses or assumptions. Making these types of assumptions is sometimes called "reading between the lines". Writers may expect you to infer the main idea of a paragraph or a story. You may also need to infer what will happen next. Often a character's personality can be inferred from details the writers give. These types of inferences move from the known to the unknown, or they move from specific details to general qualities.

How do I make inferences?

The best way to make inferences is to carefully read the facts and details presented. It is also important to understand how the facts and details are organized. Making notes, highlighting, numbering, and outlining can help you keep track of important details, facts, examples, and events.

Knowing all of the "important" details will help you predict the "the next step". Important details support the main idea. There may be other details which make the story more enjoyable, yet they do not contribute to making an inference. Once you have all of the facts and you know how they have been organized, you are ready to "read between the lines".

Practice Exercise 5 A

Inferences

A.

- Scan the story quickly.
- Read the story carefully.
- Visualize the details.
- Write down the **"most important"** facts or details

The Pony

Little Buffalo watched his father and older brothers ride off on their ponies across the plains to go hunting. His heart was full of longing to be old enough to have his pony and go with them. Feeling lonely he wandered down to the stream to play. There he moulded a tiny horse from the soft mud and collected twigs to build a corral for it. Little Buffalo pretended to ride his pony down to the water. He held the mud pony's nose in the cool water to drink, and he heaped blades of fresh grass in front of him to eat, every day he played with the mud pony.

One night he had a dream. His mud pony had grown as big as his father's pony. It came to him and spoke just like a person, "The Sun God has seen you playing with me. He is pleased with you. I can be a real live pony." When the sun rose the next morning, Little Buffalo ran down to the stream. There stood a fine pony with a long mane and friendly eyes. The pony spoke to Little Buffalo again, "The sun god has told me that I belong to you. But he said that you must do one thing for me every night. You must put a blanket over me to keep the rain off or I'll be ruined."

Little Buffalo was excited and happy. He jumped on the pony 's back and raced across the prairies. His pony could run faster than any other pony in the tribe. The older hunters envied him.

As Little Buffalo grew older, he became the best hunter in the tribe. Faithfully, he covered his best friend, the mud pony, with a warm blanket every night, until one night, after a successful hunt and a great feast, he went to sleep. He forgot his duty to the pony and to the sun god. The next morning heavy drops of rain on the tepee woke him up ...

Adapted from, Intermediate English Skills Development Series Book 3, 2C Meaning From Context

Practice Exercise 5 B

Inferences

B. Answer the questions.

1. List six "**important**" details from the story.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____

2. Based on the six details, predict the ending of the story. Write your answer in a paragraph.

Logical Conclusions

$$1 + 1 = 2$$

In some ways, making logical conclusions is similar to making inference. Both rely on facts and details. There are three steps that most people follow to make logical conclusions. These steps are: gather information, organize the information, and make a logical conclusion.

People who are good at making logical conclusions are aware of what and how they think. A person needs to be aware of how and what they think because it influences the conclusions they make. In other words their personal biases will prevent them from gathering all of the needed information, organizing the information logically, and finding logical relationships between the facts and details. Making logical conclusions involves not only evaluating other peoples conclusions but also your own conclusions.

What are logical conclusions?

Logical conclusions are valid or true conclusions. They are based on careful and conscious thought. They are made by using facts to come to a conclusion. They are free of slanted thinking, biased thinking, and faulty thinking.

Writers may use slanted expressions, biased expressions, or faulty expressions consciously or unconsciously. As a reader, you need to look for these elements. If a writer uses these intentionally, they are attempting to persuade a reader that their argument is logical when it is not. Slanted arguments are one-sided arguments. Writers present one side of a problem. A writer might present mostly negative facts or they might present mostly positive facts. Always ask yourself if the writer has left out facts and details and what is their purpose for writing.

Biased writing is similar to slanted writing. Neither gives a full and objective account of the facts and details. Biased writing contains more of the writer's opinions rather than facts and details. Biased and slanted writing may be found anywhere. Letters to the editor, editorials, and advertisements commonly have slanted or biased writing. It is important to know who wrote an article and why the person wrote the article.

Biased and slanted writing uses language that stirs the emotions of the reader rather than encouraging the reader to think. For example, a writer might write an article about a new car for a car magazine. Compare the following sentence.

"The plastic used in the interior of the car fades over several years."

"The junk used in the interior of the car fades over several years."

or

"The steel used in the frames of the car add strength."

"The space-age metal used in the frames of the car add strength."

The words *junk* and *plastic* refer to the same type of material. However, the word *junk* also has a negative meaning. It expresses an emotional judgment about the material. Similarly, the words *steel* and *space-age metal*, refer to the same material. The words *wonder metal* have a positive emotional meaning.

Reading Comprehension #14018

These words can be placed in one of two categories. Words like *plastic* and *steel* have one meaning. They are denotive. Their meaning is clear and direct. Words such as *junk* and *space-age* metal are connotative. They have an emotional meaning as well as their basic meaning. Propaganda, persuasive writing intended to make people think, act or feel a certain way to control them, often uses connotative language.

Some writers produce slanted or biased work. They are not aware of their thinking, they choose words or phrases carelessly, or they require more practice to improve their writing skills. In addition to slanted or biased writing, writers may use faulty thinking to prove their arguments. Faulty thinking often appeals to the reader's emotions. In this way, the reader is distracted from carefully evaluating the facts, details, and conclusions in the writing.

"Faulty thinking" may be based in part on slanted or biased arguments or unreliable facts. The rules used to form logical conclusions may also be faulty or wrong. Read the definitions of different types of "faulty thinking". "Faulty conclusions" have been *italicized*.

1. **Hasty Generalizations** are made when few facts are known or the facts are not evaluated for their usefulness.

Example Janet sees a co-worker with a silver ball point pen which looks the same as her pen. *Her co-worker must have stolen her pen.*

2. **Mistaking the Cause** is done when all possible causes are not evaluated. It leads to incorrect conclusions about cause and effect relationships.

Example Kim has been sick for three days. She takes an herbal remedy on the third day. The next day, she feels much better. *Kim concludes the remedy cured her.*

3. **False Analogies** are made when things have few similarities. Conclusions based on this type of comparison are illogical and unsupportable.

Example Borrowing a stranger's car without asking is like borrowing a car from a friend *because you don't intend to keep either car.*

4. **Ignoring the Question** means that a small, unimportant part of the question receives the writer's focus. Conclusions have little to do with the question or problem.

Example Jerry drops out of high school. He explains to his parents that he has found a job working ten hours a week. He explains that this is a good move *because he will be earning a regular pay check. He is also entitled to a ten percent staff discount, and he will save money because he will no longer need to buy paper or pens.*

5. **Begging the question** involves making assumptions or skipping steps to solve a problem. Conclusions are not supported by facts.

Example Catherine is a second string hockey player. Her team won the playoffs this year. *Catherine must be a very skilled player for her team to have won.*

6. **Name Calling** involves drawing attention away from facts and details. Instead, emphasis is placed on criticizing a person. Emotion, slant, and bias often support name-calling.

Example Look at Stan. He wears the old wrinkled suits everyday. He is like a ghost from the twenties. He only comes out of his office for breaks and lunch. He is so antisocial. *He would make a poor manager.*

7. **Misusing Statistics** may be done intentionally or unintentionally. People who misuse statistics use them to prove something they do not prove.

Example In 1890 seventy three percent of the people on Nova Scotia and New Brunswick wanted the two provinces to join and to become one province. *People today must want the provinces to join together.*

8. **"Jumping on the Bandwagon"** means assuming that the statements said to be held by a group of people must be correct without evaluating the facts or details.

Example Randy, Denise, and Craig bought tickets to the monster truck show this weekend. *I guess I should buy tickets for the monster truck show, too.*

9. **Appeal to Authority** encourages readers to accept the opinions expressed by "experts". Testimonials about isolated experiences or opinions are used in place of detailed and balanced presentations of facts.

Example Tyler Groove, world renowned pan flute player, smokes Fire Stick Cigarettes. Tyler said it helps him relax and think clearly after a concert or anytime at all. *I should smoke Fire Stick Cigarettes, too, and I will be able to relax and think clearly.*

Study the tables on the following pages. They offer some tips on how to avoid "faulty thinking", as well as how to make logical conclusions.

| Faulty Thinking | Do not | Do |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| 1. Hasty Generalization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Make general statements about isolated events b. Use all, none, some, most, everyone to describe isolated events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Make general statements frequent and common events b. Use all, none, some, most, everyone to describe frequent and common events |
| 2. Mistaking the Cause | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assume a cause and effect relationship b. Assume a cause and effect relationship based on one observation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Evaluate all possible causes of an effect b. Determine cause and effect relationships based on many observations |
| 3. False Analogy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Make comparisons between things with few similarities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Make comparisons between things with many similarities |
| 4. Ignoring the Question | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Only answer part of the total question | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Answer all parts of the question |
| 5. Begging the Question | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assume or leave out important facts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Prove and include all needed facts |
| 6. Name Calling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Criticize the person | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Evaluate the facts and the details |
| 7. Misusing Statistics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use averages to prove or support a point b. Compare unrelated statistics c. Use statistics based on small sample sizes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use specific statistics to prove or support a point b. Compare related statistics c. Use statistics based on large sample sizes |
| 8. Bandwagon | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assume what "everyone else" believes is true | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Evaluate statistics and arguments for yourself |

| Faulty Thinking | Do not | Do |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| 9. Appeal to Authority | a. Assume famous people are "experts" b. Assume famous people make logical conclusions | a. Evaluate facts and arguments for yourself b. Evaluate the reliability of an "expert" |

How do I make logical conclusions?

Making logical conclusions is similar to working on a puzzle. When you connect the pieces of a puzzle together, you end up with a picture. Likewise, when you add the facts or details together, you get an answer or conclusion to a question or a problem. You get the "big picture". This type of thinking is called **inductive reasoning**.

One type of inductive thinking uses the "**if-then**" model. The "if-then" model of thinking involves combining facts and rules to form a conclusion. Be sure to include all the possible "ifs" (facts, details, and causes) or your conclusion may not be correct.

Example "If you get a job, if you save your money, if you apply for a loan, if your loan application is approved, if you find a house you want to buy, if you can afford the house, **then** you can own your own house."

The second type of thinking is called **deductive thinking**. Deductive thinking involves taking the "whole", a finished puzzle for example, and dividing it into its pieces. This allows a person to answer a specific question or to solve a problem about a specific part of a puzzle.

Syllogisms, a type of deductive thinking, has three parts. The parts are the **major premise** (a general truth or idea), the **minor premise** (a specific idea), and the **conclusion**. The conclusion is formed by relating the major premise to the minor premise to form a logical relationship. It is important to ensure that the major premise is true. If it is not true, any conclusion formed will not be logical.

| | | |
|----------------|----------------------|---|
| Example | Major premise | All people were once babies. |
| | Minor premise | Sylvia is a person. |
| | Conclusion | <i>Therefore, Sylvia was once a baby.</i> |

Practice Exercise 6 A

Slanted and Biased Language

A. Rewrite these sentences. Eliminate or change words that communicate biased or slanted messages.

1. My philosophy professor is eccentric.

2. Did you hear the propaganda about the government program?

3. The coward said she didn't want to smoke drugs.

4. The loudmouth from the union made some ridiculous demands.

5. We need to find an extroverted person for the position of chairperson for our action group.

6. Sandra's aggressive demands for a promotion, after spending fifteen years in the same job, surprised management.

7. Betty's idea to start a recycling program at the office is a radical idea.

8. Paul said he wanted to meet some chicks at the dance.

9. The dumb jock received a football scholarship.

10. I don't like the use of blue in those ugly paintings.

Practice Exercise 7 A

Logical Conclusions

A. Read each section. Answer the questions.

Example

Tanya returned to her office to continue her meeting with Sandra and to drink the cup of coffee she had poured. Upon returning to her office, she discovers that Sandra has left. She finds an empty coffee cup (not hers), with lilac coloured lipstick, on the desk. Tanya is wearing ruby red lipstick today. Tanya concludes that Sandra has accidentally taken her coffee cup.

Answer:

Deductive thinking: Tanya deduced that Sandra has her freshly poured cup of coffee. She also believes that Sandra coffee cup on Tanya 's desk.

1. A police officer responded to an emergency call. The dispatcher said no words were spoken, but a breathing sound was heard for a minute and a half before it stopped. The police officer had to break a window to enter the house because the doors were locked. The police officer saw the telephone lying on the floor. The telephone was wet. After a search, only a dog was found in the house. The police officer concluded the dog had accidentally pushed speed dial for 911.

a. Was inductive thinking or deductive thinking used?

b. Why did the officer conclude the dog called 911?

c. Was it a logical conclusion? Why or why not?

Practice Exercise 7 A - continued

Logical Conclusions

2. Your daughter told you she would learn the results of the soccer try-out at school today. She went to soccer camp during the summer, and the coaches at the camp said she improved considerably. Your daughter arrives home at 5:30 and asks you to buy her a new pair of cleats.

a. Will inductive thinking or deductive thinking be used to reach a conclusion?

b. What will be your conclusion?

c. Will it be a logical conclusion? Why or why not?

3. On a cool September night, you are driving your police car past a farm. At three A.M., you see five young males trying to push a goat into the back seat of a car, which has several bumper stickers naming a local university. You decide to stop and investigate.

a. Will inductive thinking or deductive thinking be used to reach a conclusion?

b. What will be your conclusion?

c. Will it be a logical conclusion? Why or why not?

Practice Exercise 7 A - continued

Logical Conclusions

4. You are enjoying your vacation from your job as a prison guard. You pass the garbage truck that goes to the prison on your way to buy some groceries. As you are loading your car with groceries, you notice a man wearing prisoner clothes and smelling of strong garbage. At the same time you hear on the radio that a person has escaped from the prison.

a. Will inductive thinking or deductive thinking be used?

b. What will be your conclusion?

c. Will it be a logical conclusion? Why or why not?

Practice Exercise 8 A

Faulty Thinking

- A. For each sentence, state whether the statement is logical or faulty. If it is a faulty statement, name the type of faulty thinking used and explain why.

Example

Larry saw Greg talking to his girlfriend at noon. *Greg must have been asking his girlfriend out on a date.*

Answer

Faulty thinking

Hasty Generalization - Larry has no information about the conversation between Greg and his girlfriend.

1. After talking to three doctors, reading twelve current medical reports, and looking at electronic medical journals on the Internet, Kim decided to eat foods with less fat.
2. If that grey-haired, senile, cop could stop eating donuts long enough, the crime rate would go down by twenty percent.
3. Bert interviewed five people in his class. Eighty percent of the people he surveyed felt that the local music station should switch to "heavy metal" rock twenty-four hours a day. Bert concluded that eighty percent of the people in Fredericton would listen to that radio station if they switched to "heavy metal".

Practice Exercise 8 A - continued

Faulty Thinking

A.

4. Barry asked Colleen what she would like to have for their anniversary dinner Tuesday night. She said she would like to have stuffed duck. Bert likes stuffed duck. He decided to cook stuffed duck.
5. Luke was offered a call centre job where he would call people and try to collect overdue bills. The call centre is on King Street. Luke decided to take the job because he likes the name King Street.
6. Vegetarians eat vegetables and they are very healthy people. Cucumbers are a type of vegetable. A person could become very healthy by eating only cucumbers.
7. It was windy and rainy yesterday. Angela has a cold today. Wind and rain caused Angela to become ill today.
8. Sasha Checkov, world-renowned scientist from Russia, says that *Straight Cut* razors are able to provide the best shave because they are scientifically designed. Listen to Dr. Checkov and buy *Straight Cut* razors.
9. Everyone on my rugby team will be wearing pink shirts and socks with their tuxedos at the school dance. I should wear a pink shirt and pink socks.
10. Nine thousand people were given one Vitamin ZZ pill every day for ten years. An additional nine thousand people were given no Vitamin ZZ pills. All of the people in the study followed the same diet. Eight thousand people from the Vitamin ZZ group experienced no loss of eyesight. Eight thousand people from the no Vitamin ZZ group experienced a ten percent decline in eyesight. The scientist concluded that most people should take Vitamin ZZ to help reduce the loss of eyesight over time.

Fact vs. Opinion

People need good information to make good decisions. The reader's job is to evaluate the information, facts, details, and examples which writers use to support their arguments. Advertisers often combine facts and opinions to encourage people to think or feel a specific way. Beware; sometimes the facts and the details are unreliable. It is up to you to decide whether you are reading provable facts or unproven opinions.



What are facts and opinions?

Reliable facts are provable. Generally, they come from reliable sources; people who are knowledgeable and who avoid biased or slanted presentation of the facts. Facts may take the form of statements, statistics, examples, photographs, and more. Writers create believable, reliable statements or arguments by including many reliable facts from a variety of reliable sources.

Example

Hubert Ross, national manager with the federal Department of Transportation, stated that there have been no reported problems with the Little Seat ® car seat.

Opinions are statements of what a person believes. They are not provable. Sometimes opinions are mistaken as facts. Careful evaluation of statements will allow you to determine whether they are provable. Although, opinions are useful, they should not be used as the basis for making conclusions.

Example

Sharon, the owner of a children's clothing store, said that she doesn't believe there are any problems with the Little Seat ® car seat.

How do I separate facts from opinion

Facts provided in support of a statement or argument should be evaluated for their reliability and usefulness. Evaluate these elements when determining the reliability and usefulness of facts:

Presence of biased language

Reliability of source

Up-to-date information

Use of several sources

Faulty thinking

It is particularly important to evaluate the source of the facts. Reliable sources are recognized experts about a topic, recently published articles, and state the eliminations and value of the information. This means they explain how their facts can be used properly as well as how they

cannot be used. For example, a scientist who discovers a new drug would explain the positive effects of the drug as well as the negative effects of the drug. It is also important to evaluate the motive of the person. If the scientist owns the company that produced the drug, the scientist might be more inclined to focus on the positive effects of the drug. As a reader you should verify the scientists statements by reading other experts' statements about the new drug.

Opinions should not be the only source of information used to make decisions. Combined with other facts they do serve a role in making decisions. Opinions are also useful because they allow us to discover another person's beliefs and experiences. Predictions about future events are always opinions. Several factors should be considered when evaluating the usefulness of an opinion. Some factors to consider include:

Presence of unbiased language

Indication that an opinion is being presented

Presents a balanced argument for opinion

Shows clear relationship between supporting details and the opinion

Practice Exercise 9 A

Facts vs. Opinion

A. Read each statement. Write "F" for facts beside factual statements. Write "O" for opinion beside opinions.

1. Chignecto Bay is found between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.
2. I feel mad when the government is careless with the taxpayers' money.
3. February second is Ground Hog Day.
4. The German language should be taught in all public schools.
5. Four of my co-workers were sick with the flu today.
6. Fifteen people at the dinner meeting ordered steak and potatoes.
7. Rain is a bad thing.
8. Everyone should buy a big screen television.
9. If everyone in the class paid five dollars, we would have fifty dollars to pay the end of the year party.
10. Ben will win the election.

]

Vocabulary

What is vocabulary?

Vocabulary is very important to the reader, the writer, or the speaker. The more words you recognize, understand, and use, the better able you will be to read and understand the literature you need and want to read.

Once you have learned to use the basic vocabulary used in most literature, you will be ready to expand your vocabulary. Some types of jobs or hobbies require you to learn vocabulary that is specific to the job or hobby. For example, a carpenter needs to be familiar with words which are related to the construction or manufacturing industries. Mastering the vocabulary of your trade indicates that you have achieved a certain mastery of the trade. There are several ways you can increase your vocabulary.

Try to vary the material you read. This may mean reading fiction and non-fiction. Other more specific examples include: novels, poetry, plays, newspapers, journals, or reports. You will find new ways to use words you are already familiar with, and you will learn the meanings and uses of new words. You can also increase your vocabulary by writing and talking.

You could open a dictionary and start learning each word. Unless you are extremely motivated, this approach may not last long. The best way to increase your vocabulary is to read literature that you want to read. This can mean reading because you want to learn a new skill to get a job, or it can mean reading for personal entertainment. Even when you narrow the types of new words you want to learn, it can still be a challenge. Thankfully, there are some strategies and tools you can use to make learning new vocabulary easier.

Structural strategies involve recognizing prefixes, suffixes, letter patterns, and root words. If you can recognize and understand the meanings of word parts, you will be able to discover the meaning of many new words you encounter.

Contextual strategies involve using familiar words and ideas to discover the meanings of new words. Understanding how ideas are joined to produce sentences and paragraphs will also help you discover the meanings of new words.

The last set of strategies involves using what you know about letters and sounds to discover how to say new words. You could ask another person how to say a new word, or you could look in a dictionary; but using phonetic strategies can make this task easier.

Sometimes not possible to guess the meaning and use of a new word. For challenging words and phrases, the dictionary is the best tool for determining their exact meaning, pronunciation, and use.

Homonyms and Idioms

Homonyms and idioms can be confusing. The words "there", "their", and "they're" sound the same, but they have different spellings, meanings, and uses. The word "there" refers to a place. The word "their" is used to show possession, and the word "they're" is used as a contraction for "they are". These words are called homonyms. Dictionaries may list homonyms for words that are frequently confused.

Reading Comprehension #14018

Idioms are words or phrases. They have specific meanings that are often different from the meanings of the individual words. For example, the idiom "Let's not reinvent the wheel" means use the existing solution rather than wasting time trying to discover another solution to the same problem. It has nothing to do with making wheels. Dictionaries often have explanations for common idioms.

You may want to try some of the following strategies to help you learn new words or phrases.

- Guess at the word's/phrase's meaning and use.
- Check a dictionary for the exact meaning and use.
- Read the word/phrase aloud.
- Check to see if the word/phrase has more than one meaning.
- Check for words/ phrases with similar meanings.
- Practice writing the word/phrase correctly on paper.
- Find a way to remember the word or phrase (mnemonic device).
- Keep a list of new words/phrases.
- Practice using the word/phrase in reading, writing, or speaking.

Look carefully at the following examples of homonyms and idioms. Use some or the above strategies to help you learn these new words and phrases.

Homonyms

beach (*sandy shore*)

for (*a preposition*)

rap (*knock*)

beat (*defeat*)

forth (*out*)

read (*did read*)

berth (*sleeping place*)

foul (*impure*)

right (*proper*)

board (*timber or council*)

gait (*way of moving*)

ring (*circle*)

boarder (*a person*)

grate (*crossed bars*)

road (*highway*)

beech (*a tree*)

four (*a number*)

wrap (*covering*)

beet (*vegetable*)

fourth (*after three*)

red (*color*)

birth (*act of being born*)

fowl (*bird*)

rite (*ceremony*)

bored (*weary or drilled holes*)

gate (*fence door*)

wring (*to twist*)

border (*edge*)

great (*important*)

rode (*did drive*)

Practice Exercise 10 A, B, C

Homonyms

A. What is a homonym? Write a complete definition and give one example.

B. Pick the word that best completes the sentences.

1. My grandfather used (beach, beech) to make the cabinet.
2. Go (for, four) lunch now, but be back (for, four) 1:30.
3. I predict the home team will (beat, beet) the visiting team by ten points.
4. My office is the (forth, fourth) office on the right hand side of the hall.
5. Jennifer (read, red) sixteen books during the summer break..
6. There is a (foul, fowl) odour coming from the garbage bin by the back door.
7. We will celebrate the (right, rite) of initiation on Sunday morning.
8. (Ring, Wring) the water out of your beach towel before you hang it up to dry.
9. How long is the Canadian-USA (boarder, border)?
10. Lillian, will you (great, grate) a cup of cheese for the casserole?

C. Write one sentence with each word. Use the word correctly.

1. bored

2. gait

3. rode

4. berth

5. wrap

Idioms

“get the boot”

“the shoe is on the other foot”

“too big for one’s boots”

“wipe one’s boots on”

“in the black”

“black out”

“black ball”

“black book”

“black market”

“out of the blue”

Meaning

fired or dismissed

the situation is reversed

having too high an opinion of oneself

to insult

to have a profit or no debt

to become unconscious

ostracize

a book containing the names of
people to be punished

illegal selling of goods

unexpected

Practice Exercise 11 A, B

Idioms

A. What is an idiom? Write a complete definition and give one example.

B. Rewrite these sentences. Replace idioms with clear language.

1. The announcement about the plant closure came out of the blue.

2. This is the first year our business has operated in the black.

3. No one was surprised when the coach got the boot.

4. The chemical smell caused people to black out.

5. David has become too big for his boots since he was asked to fill in for the manager for a week.

How can word structure help?

The main part of any word is called the "root word". The meaning of many root words can be changed simply by adding or removing parts of words. These parts of words are called prefixes and suffixes. Prefixes are added to the beginning of a root word, while suffixes are added to the end of a root word. Look at how the root word "cover" can be changed.

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Prefix | Root Word | Suffix |
| <i>dis-</i> | cover | -y |
| | | |
| <i>discovery</i> | | |

Knowing the meaning, spelling, and pronunciation of frequently used prefixes and suffixes will allow you to discover meanings, to say correctly, and to spell many new words correctly. One of the easiest ways of making an antonym, a word with the opposite meaning, is to add a prefix. Some common antonym forming prefixes include: de-, die-, in-, im-, il-, and ir-. Study the meaning and spelling of prefixes and suffixes on the following pages.

| Prefixes | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| en- | in |
| ex- | out of |
| extra- | beyond |
| for- | prohibit |
| fore- | front |
| hemi- | half |
| hexa- | six |
| homo- | same |
| in-, il-, im-, ir- | not |
| inter- | between, among |

| Suffixes | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| -dom | quality of |
| -ery | place for |
| -ory | place for |
| -est | the most |
| -ed | characterized by |
| -er | one who |
| -or | one who |
| -fold | multiplied by |
| -ful | full of |
| -fy | to make |

Practice Exercise 12 A, B

Word Structure

A. Add a root word to each **prefix**. Use the word in a sentence. Underline the word.

1. ex-

2. extra-

3. in-

4. ir-

5. inter-

B. Add a root word to each **suffix**. Use the word in a sentence. Underline the word.

1. -dom

2. -ery

3. -er

4. -or

5. -ful

How can context clues help?

Writers often leave clues for readers to find. These clues help readers understand the meaning of new words or concepts. Using these clues will give you a general idea about the meaning of new words. Looking in the dictionary is still the best way to discover the exact meaning and use of a word.

Writers will leave clues in specific parts of sentences and paragraphs. Look for context clues in the following places:

1. **Immediately after a new word**

Writers may rename a person, a thing, or an idea immediately after a new word. This information is often found between commas. Read these examples.

My lawyer, **Mrs. Russell**, was nominated for the position of chairperson.

Polysaccharides, **sugar**, is used as an energy source by many organisms.

2. **Before or after a new word**

Writers may include additional information in phrases or clauses. This information may come before or after the new word. It is usually separated from the main sentence by a comma or semicolon. Read these sentences.

Some organisms reproduce by the process of mitosis- **a copying of important information followed by cell division**.

3. **In the following sentence**

Writers may give a definition for a new wording in a following sentence. Look at the example.

Sudden bursts of high energy particles, called solar flares, occur when magnetic fields become strong on parts of the sun. The sun is also responsible for solar wind. **Solar wind is a stream of low energy particles given off by the sun.**

Practice Exercise 13 A

Context Clues

- A. Read the paragraph. Use context clues to write a general definition for each underlined word. Use a dictionary to write an exact definition.

Fossil fuels are often used as energy sources for generating electricity. However, the burning of these fuels contribute to air pollution. Coal has a high sulphur content. The sulphur is not burned completely during combustion of the coal and is released into the air as sulphur oxide. Coal is high in sulphur because the ancient plants and animals that were compressed to form coal contained sulphur in their tissues. Oil and tar release many of the same pollutants as coal when the energy and byproducts are produced during the burning process. Pollution from this source could be reduced by burning these compressed and chemically altered plants and animals at higher temperatures, installation of chemical scrubbers to remove harmful pollutants, or a decreased use of fossil fuels.

Adapted from the "Intermediate Academic Upgrading-Science" learning packages; IA U-S 4.2

1. combustion

- a. General definition —

- b. Specific definition —

2. Fossil fuels

- a. General definition —

- b. Specific definition —

How can phonics help?

Words are created by combining letters together in specific patterns. For example, all words have at least one vowel. Each letter is associated with a specific sound. Sometimes groups of letters are associated with a sound. Recognizing the repeating patterns and combinations of letters can help you guess at the pronunciation of a word.

Dictionaries often show you how to pronounce a word by dividing the word into syllables. Syllables are parts of a word, - one or more letters, which contains one vowel sound. The word "I" has one vowel and it makes one vowel sound. The word "I" is a one syllable word. Words often have more than one vowel. The word *bake*, for example, has two vowels- "a", "e". However, the "e" is silent and makes no sound, therefore the word *bake* is also a one syllable word. How many syllables does the word *forest* have?

"forest"

Say the word three times.

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| How many vowels are there? | 2 |
| How many vowel sounds are there? | 2 |
| The two syllables are divided by a dot | <i>for*est</i> |

There are six basic guidelines to dividing words into syllables. Although the guidelines are useful, there are always exceptions to the guidelines. Consult a good dictionary when in doubt. Look at the following tables. **V** means vowel. **C** means a consonant (a letter that is not a vowel). "r" means the letter "r", while "le" means the letters "le".

Guidelines for Dividing Words Into Syllables

| Pattern | Example | Divided Words | Syllables |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| VC•CV | slumber whisker | slum•ber whis•ker | 2 2 |
| prefix• root | declaim shouted | de•claim shout•ed | 2 2 |
| or | | | |
| root •suffix | | | |
| V•CV (Sometimes before a consonant, consonant blend, or digraph if the first vowel is long) | replay motel | re•play mo•tel | 2 2 |
| or | | | |
| VC•V (Sometimes after a consonant, consonant blend, or consonant digraph if the first vowel is short) | model edit | mod•el ed•it | 2 2 |
| VR• | farther larger | far•ther lar•ger | 2 2 |
| C•Cle | sprinkle stubble | sprin•kle stub•ble | 2 2 |

Practice Exercise 14 A

Syllables

- A. Read each word aloud three times. Break the word into syllables. Write the dictionary way of breaking the word into syllables.

| Word | <i>Syllables</i> Guess | Dictionary |
|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| hexagon | _____ | _____ |
| ex-wife | _____ | _____ |
| irrational | _____ | _____ |
| interoffice | _____ | _____ |
| illegal | _____ | _____ |
| freedom | _____ | _____ |
| sensory | _____ | _____ |
| baked | _____ | _____ |
| joyful | _____ | _____ |

Reading Literature

The word literature has more than one definition, some people define it as anything you read - books, magazines, bills, letters, reports, advertisements, etc. We will define literature more narrowly here.

Books, articles, essays, poems, short stories, novels, and biographies may fit into this category of literature if they have the following characteristics:

Represent high quality writing

Talk about familiar human problems

Highlight truths about the "human experience"

Clarify our position in the world

You may find that some types of literature are easier to read than others. Firstly, the reading difficulty of a piece of literature depends on your level of mastery of the basic reading skills. Secondly, each type of literature has a unique organization and a unique vocabulary. For example, if you have never read a poem, you may find it a challenge because the vocabulary is unfamiliar, the sentence structure is different, and more literary devices are used.

Reading quality literature, even if it is a challenge at first, will improve your reading skills, increase your vocabulary, improve your thinking skills, and improve your writing skills. Reading carefully and evaluating the literature of skilled writers will guide you in developing your own writing style

As you study this section on reading literature, pay attention to the differences between the types of literature. Read carefully to find differences in how each type of literature is structured, how words are used, the author's message, the effectiveness of the type of literature in communicating the author's message. You will also find similarities. Literature from a specific time in history, region, or culture will often have similarities in topics, style, structure, or other aspects of literature.

Figures of Speech and Literary Devices

Writers use figures of speech and literary devices to make their writing more interesting, more concise, more musical, and more emotional. Some of the more commonly used forms of figures of speech and literary devices are mentioned here.

Anecdote

Anecdotes are brief, often humorous, stories about a person's feelings and thoughts about a specific situation. Writers use anecdotes to make their writing feel more personal and to interject some humour.

Metaphor

Metaphors are comparisons between two things. The words "like" or "as" are not used. Writers use metaphors to create a detailed image for the reader. Readers are able to get vivid mental images without having to read a long description.

The passenger train snaked its way through the Rocky mountains.

Similes

Similes are comparisons between two things. The words "like" or "as" are used. Writers use metaphors to create a detailed image for the reader. Readers are able to get vivid mental images without having to read a long description.

"..... And all their ancient faces like rain-beaten stones."

*"A gaze, blank, pitiless as the sun.
Liberal hopefulness"*

Personification

Personification is giving human-like thoughts, feelings, and behaviours to objects or ideas. The writer makes the association of powerful human emotions to objects, situations, and ideas. Writers use this technique to stir the emotions of the reader.

Wilfred Owen's

*What passing bells for those who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifle's rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them from prayers or bells
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells,
And bugles calling for them from sad shrines.*

Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of similar beginning consonant sounds of several words. Writers use this technique to highlight elements of their writing and to make their writing musical.

*Scarecrows dressed in latest **s**tyles.
With frozen **s**miles.
To chase love away.*

Assonance

Assonance is the repetition of similar vowel sounds of several words. Writers use this technique to highlight elements of their writing and to make their writing musical.

Excerpt from "The Raid"

William Everson

*They came out **o**f the **s**un **u**ndetected,
Who had lain **i**n the **t**hin **s**hips
All night **l**ong **o**n the **c**old **o**cean.*

Consonance

Consonance is the repetition of similar ending consonant sounds of several words. Writers use this technique to highlight elements of their writing and to make their writing musical.

"Snake"

D.H. Lawrence

*He reached **d**own **n** from a fissure in the
earth — **w**all in the gloom
And trailed his **y**ellow-**b**rown slackness
soft-**b**ellied **d**own, over the edge
of the **s**tone trough.*

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is the careful selection and use of words which sound similar to the objects or the events they name.

*The wet logs **hissed** then **crackled** as the fire gained momentum.*

*That sound of **sizzling** hot bacon made me remember.*

Hyperboles

Hyperboles is the use of words and phrases to exaggerate a thought, feeling, object, or event. Writers use this technique to create humour or sarcasm.

"I've told you a million times not to exaggerate."

Symbolism

Symbolism is the use of symbols, often objects, that have strong associations with well-known events or experiences.

For example, many ornaments and collectibles have been created depicting the people and events of the terrorist attack on the United States of America on September 11, 2002.

Pun

Pun is the use of similar sounding words with quite different meanings to create humour.

*A flea and a fly in the flue
Were caught, so what could they do?
Said the fly, "Let us **flee**."
"Let us fly," said the **flea**.
So they **flew** through a flaw in the **flue**.*

Irony

Irony can be observed when a writer's intended message is clearly the opposite of what is written.

Yeah, sure I agree with you.

Flashback

Flashbacks are descriptions of previous events during the present time in a narrative. Writers will describe previous events to provide background or to help explain more recent events.

Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is the use of words, phrases, or actions as signals that readers can use to infer future events in a narrative.

Years later, she would be known for that secret deed.

Poetry

What is poetry?

Poetry has existed for centuries. Originally, most forms of poetry were communicated orally. History, culture, beliefs, and morals were passed down from generation to generation. Poetry was used to communicate information because it was easier for the listeners and singers to remember.

Poetry is easier to remember when it has rhythm and rhyme. Generally, most poetry, even modern poetry, has rhythm. Rhythm is the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables of language. The language of poetry tends to be more rhythmic than every day language. Poetry which rhymes is also easier to remember. Until the modern day, poets followed strict rules for using rhythm and rhyme. Modern poets may or may not use rhyme.

In addition to rhyme and rhythm, poetry is distinguished from other types of writing for the poet's choice of topics or themes. Most poetry deals with topics of an emotional or philosophical nature. Love, revenge, tragedy, triumph, celebration, war, and adventure are a few of the topics commonly addressed in poetry.

Poets try to address these topics using as few words as possible. They accomplish this by relying on figures of speech which amplify the emotions of the reader while reducing the number of words needed to communicate the message.

The last major distinction between poetry and prose, every day writing, is the organization and structure of words and lines. A number of lines of poetry, also called verses, are organized into stanzas. Stanzas are roughly equivalent to a paragraph in prose. Each line of a poem is usually capitalized.

What is rhythm?

Rhythm refers to the pattern of stressed syllables and unstressed syllables of language. It is sometimes referred to as "meter". Normal speech has a natural rhythm. Some parts of words receive more emphasis when we say them out loud than others do. In poetry, the poet is more conscious of the rhythm. Often the poet will try to create predictable patterns of rhythm to create a specific tone. For example, a faster, more energetic rhythm might be used for a humorous topic. A slower and a longer rhythm might be used for a more serious topic.

You can indicate the rhythm of the words in a poem by using special marks to show which syllables are emphasized. These marks are placed over each syllable of a word. Stressed syllables are indicated by a "/", while unstressed syllables are indicated by a "u". Patterns of stressed syllables and unstressed syllables are separated by "|". One pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables is called a foot. Look at the table below to learn the names of common stress patterns.

| <i>Rhythm</i> | <i>Stress Pattern</i> | <i>Example</i> |
|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Iambic | u / | u / to day |
| Trochaic | / u | / u Mon day |
| Anapestic | u u / | u u / in ter rupt |
| Dactylic | / u u | / u u Sa tur day |

Dictionaries are valuable tools when reading poetry. In addition to revealing the meanings of new words, dictionaries can be used to discover how words are broken into syllables, how the syllables are stressed, and how words are pronounced.

Most lines of a poem have several feet. The number of feet found in a line of poetry is given a name. A prefix is added to the word "meter" to tell you how many feet are present. Look at the tables below to learn the names of common feet patterns.

Feet Patterns

- monometer* (One foot)
- dimeter* (Two foot)
- trimeter* (Three foot)
- tetrameter* (Four foot)
- pentameter* (Five foot)
- hexameter* (Six foot)

The names for the stress pattern and name for the number of feet in a line can be combined to name a line of poetry. Some examples include:

iambic tetrameter

u / u / u / u /
 |And I | was wan | dering | in a trice. |

iambic pentameter

u / u / u / u / u /
 |They al | so serve| who on | ly stand | and wait|

Notice that the syllables of a single foot may consist of one word or extend over more than one word. The word "only", for example, is divided between two feet.

What is rhyme?

Rhyme is the same as rhythm. Rhyme refers to patterns of common sounds, while rhythm refers to the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables. There are different types of rhyme. The most common type of rhyme involves patterns of similar sounds at the end of a line. The pattern of rhyming sounds in a poem is called the "rhyme scheme". Rhyme schemes are indicated with letters. The letter A is written beside the first line. All lines of the poem that rhyme with the first line also receive the letter A. The next line not rhyming with the first line is given the letter B. All sentences rhyming with this line are also given the letter B. The process continues until all of the lines receive a letter. Look at the example below.

Excerpt from Australia

A.D. Hope

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>They call her a young country, but they lie</i> | A |
| <i>She is the last of lands, the emptiest</i> | B |
| <i>A woman beyond her change of life, a breast</i> | A |
| <i>Still tender, but within the womb is dry.</i> | B |

Not all poems rhyme perfectly. Some poetry only has parts that rhyme. This is called imperfect rhyme. Other poetry does not rhyme at all. This is called free verse.

A Season In Hell

by Arthur Rimbaud

*My eternal soul,
Redeem your promise,
In spite if the night alone
And the day on fire.*

How to read poetry

There are many types of poetry. Some forms of poetry are easier to read than others. You should follow the reading process. Most people will need to read a poem three or more times. Generally, poems are best read aloud. This is particularly important for poetry that relies on rhyme or rhythm to convey its message.

The first time you read a poem, you should read it to get a sense of its main idea. Next, you will want to read it to get a greater sense of the main idea, as well as to understand the form and techniques the poet used. Finally, you will want to read carefully to understand the details included in the poem, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the poet's techniques.

As you read, highlight unfamiliar words or phrases. Look for the meanings of these words in a dictionary or an encyclopaedia. You will also want to do some research about the author and the period the writer was living in. Poets often use words with more than one meaning. It is worthwhile asking yourself whether other interpretations are available.

Look carefully for the figures of speech the author uses. Ask your self whether they are used effectively to create images or to express emotions. You will also want to discover the point of view the poem has been written from. This means who is speaking in the poem, and who is listening to the speaker. Ask yourself how the poet from this poem spoke and why he wrote it the way he did. What is the main idea?

What types of poetry are there?

Narrative

Narrative poems tell stories. They may vary in style, use of rhyme, and rhythm. Epic poems tend to be longer poems with emphasis on the plot of the story. Epic poems often deal with adventures and heroes. The story centers around the hero's ability to reach a major achievement. The Ballad also tells a story and is a narrative poem.

Ballads, most of which are anonymous, are poems that tell stories about people who experience dramatic events such as murder, war, revenge, love, and jealousy. Originally, ballads were songs that were shared and changed by many people. The stories often included elements of magic or superstition as part of their stories. Dialogue is a key element in most ballads. Although it takes many forms, the traditional ballad has four line stanzas with a rhyme scheme of AABB. Parts of the ballad are repeated to give it its musical quality.

The Ballad on the following page has five line stanzas with a rhyme scheme of ABAAB.

A Ballad: The Lake of The Dismal

Thomas Moore

They made her a grave, too cold and damp A
For a soul so warm and true; B
And she's gone to the Lake of the Dismal Swamp, A
Where, all night long, by a fire-fly lamp, A
She paddles her white canoe. B

And her fire-fly lamp I soon shall see,
And her paddle I soon shall hear;
Long and loving our life shall be,
And I'll hide the maid in a cypress tree,
When the footstep of death is near.

Away to the Dismal Swamp he speeds--
His path was rugged and sore,
Through tangled juniper, beds of reeds,
Through many a fen where the serpent feeds,
And man never trod before.

And when on the earth he sunk to sleep,
If slumber his eyelids knew,
He lay where the deadly vine doth weep
Its venomous tear and nightly steep
The flesh with blistering dew!

And near him the she-wolf stirr'd the brake,
And the copper-snake breath'd in his ear,
Till he starting cried, from his dream awake,
"Oh! when shall I see the dusky Lake,
And the white canoe of my dear?"

He saw the Lake, and a meteor bright
Quick over its surface play'd-
"Welcome," he said, "my dear one's light!"
And the dim shore echoed for many a night
The name of the death-cold maid.

Till he hollow'd a boat of the birchen bark,
Which carried him off from shore;
Far, far he follow'd the meteor spark,
The wind was high and the clouds were dark,
And the boat return'd no more.

But oft, from the Indian hunter's camp,
This lover and maid so true
Are seen at the hour of midnight damp
To cross the Lake by a fire-fly lamp,
And paddle their white canoe.

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Practice Exercise 15 A, B

Narrative Poetry

A. The first part and the last part of a long narrative poem follows. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading.

- Skim the title and poem quickly
- Predict what the poem is about
- Think of questions to answer while you read
- Read the poem twice aloud without stopping
- Read the poem again carefully
- Answer the questions

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the poem.

1. lacings

2. Streamed

3. Valiant

4. Tramped

5. ravenous

Excerpt from *The Forsaken*

Duncan Campbell Scott

Part I

Once in the winter
Out on a lake
In the heart of the north-land,
Far from the Fort
And far from the hunters,
A Chippewa woman
With her sick baby,
Crouched in the last hours
Of a great storm.
Frozen and hungry,
She fished through the ice
With a line of the twisted
Bark of the cedar,
And a rabbit-bone hook
Polished and barbed;
Fished with the bare hook
All through the wild day,
Fished and caught nothing
While the young chieftain
Tugged at her breasts,
Or slept in the lacings
Of the warm tikanagan.
All the lake-surface
Streamed with the hissing
Of millions of ice flakes
Hurled by the wind;
Behind her the round
Of a lonely island
Roared like a fire

With the voice of the storm
In the deeps of the cedars.
Valiant, unshaken,
She took of her own flesh,
Baited the fish-hook,
Drew in a gray-trout,
Drew in his fellows,
Heaped them beside her,
Dead in the snow.
Valiant, unshaken,
She faced the long distance,
Wolf-haunted and lonely,
Sure of her goal
And the life of her dear one.
Tramped for two days,
On the third in the morning,
Saw the strong bulk
Of the Fort by the river,

*Saw the wood-smoke
Hang soft in the spruces,
Heard the keen yelp
Of the ravenous huskies
Fighting for whitefish.
Then she had rest.*

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Practice Exercise 15 C

Narrative Poetry

C. Answer the questions.

1. Is the title of the poem appropriate? Explain why or why not.

2. Summarize the major events of the excerpt.

3. How would you describe the personality of the Chippewa woman? Use examples from the poem to support your answer.

Sonnet

Although less common today, the sonnet is still used as a form of poetry. Typical themes deal with spiritual or emotional. There are two major forms of the sonnet. There are Italian and Elizabethan forms. Both forms consist of fourteen lines.

The Italian sonnet has eight line stanzas (named an octave) and a six-line stanza (named a sestet). The first eight lines present a problem. The following six lines are used to present a solution to the problem. The Italian sonnet also has a predictable rhyme scheme. The octave has a rhyme scheme of **ABBAABBA**. The sestet follows one of the following rhyme schemes: **CDECDE**, **CDCCDC**, or **CDEDCE**. Each line typically has iambic pentameter meter.

The Elizabethan sonnet is divided into four parts. The first three parts consist of four lines each (called quatrains). The last part consists of two lines (called a rhyming couplet). The rhyming couplet provides the conclusion to the theme presented in the three quatrains. The Elizabethan (also called the Shakespearean sonnet) uses iambic pentameter meter, and it has a rhyme scheme of **ABAB CDCD EFEF GG**.

Practice Exercise 16 A, B

Narrative Poetry

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following sonnet.

- Skim the title and poem quickly
- Predict what the poem is about
- Think of questions to answer while you read
- Read the poem twice aloud without stopping
- Read the poem again carefully
- Answer the questions

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the poem.

1. sovereign

2. frail

3. Base

4. celestial

5. endite

Amoretti III: The Sovereign Beauty

Edmund Spencer

*The sovereign beauty which I do admire,
Witness the world how worthy to be praised:
The light whereof hath kindled heavenly fire
In my frail spirit, by her from baseness raised;
That being now with her huge brightness dazed,
Base thing I can no more endure to view;
But looking still on her, I stand amazed
At wondrous sight of so celestial hue.
So when my tongue would speak her praises due,
It stopped is with thought's astonishment:
And when my pen would write her titles true,
It ravish'd is with fancy's wonderment.
Yet in my heart I then both speak and write
The wonder that my wit cannot endite.*

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Practice Exercise 16 C

Narrative Poetry

C. Answer the questions.

1. What is the complete rhyme scheme for the poem? Write it on the line below.

2. What is the main idea or theme of the sonnet?

3. Is this an example of an Italian or an Elizabethan sonnet? Explain your answer in a paragraph.

4. What literary device is used in the following quote?

"So when my tongue would speak her praises due,"

Limerick

Limericks are fun poems. Their main purpose is to entertain the reader. The topics are usually absurd. The poet often changes the spellings of words or uses pun, a play on words, to create the desired effect. The ending of a limerick often presents a twist. Limericks have a specific structure.

Although there are variations, most limericks are made of five lines. The meter usually consists of three lines of anapestic trimeter and two lines of anapestic dimeter. The rhyme scheme is usually **AABBA**.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| u | u | / | u | / | u | u | / | | |
| <i>There was a young la dy of Niger</i> | | | | | | | | | A |
| u | u | / | u | u | / | u | u | / | |
| <i>Who smiled as she rode on a tiger;</i> | | | | | | | | | A |
| u | u | / | | u | u | / | | | |
| <i>They came back from the ride</i> | | | | | | | | | B |
| u | u | / | u | u | / | | | | |
| <i>With the la dy inside</i> | | | | | | | | | B |
| u | u | / | u | u | / | u | u | / | |
| <i>The smile's on the face of the tiger.</i> | | | | | | | | | A |

Read these limericks for fun. Notice the rhyme scheme for each poem.

| | |
|---|----------|
| <i>A flea and a fly in a flue</i> | A |
| <i>were caught, so what could they do?</i> | A |
| <i>Said the fly, "Let us flee."</i> | B |
| <i>"Let us fly," said the flea.</i> | B |
| <i>So they flew through a flaw in the flue.</i> | A |

| | |
|---|----------|
| <i>There was an old man of Nantucket</i> | A |
| <i>who kept all his cash in a bucket;</i> | A |
| <i>But his daughter, named Nan,</i> | B |
| <i>Ran away with a man</i> | B |
| <i>And as for the bucket, Nantucket.</i> | A |

Practice Exercise 17 A, B

Limericks

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading the following limerick.

- Skim the title and poem quickly
- Predict what the poem is about
- Think of questions to answer while you read
- Read the poem twice aloud without stopping
- Read the poem again carefully
- Answer the questions

Princeton Tiger

*There was a young lady named Ruth,
Who had a great passion for truth,
She said she would die
Before she would lie,
And she died in the prime of her youth.*

Ogden Nash

B. Answer the questions.

1. What is the rhyme scheme for this limerick?

2. Define irony in your own words.

3. Explain the irony in this poem.

Haiku

The haiku was traditionally a Japanese form of poetry. Its purpose is to create an image while encouraging deep thought. The topic usually deals with nature themes.

Haiku is one of the shortest forms of poetry. The last line is sometimes unfinished, requiring the reader to complete the poem. It usually has three lines with no rhyme scheme. Its structure comes from the fact that the first line has five syllables, the second line has seven syllables, and the last line has five syllables. Only the first letter of the first word is capitalized, unlike other familiar forms of poetry, where each line is capitalized.

*I | know | the | geese | do
eat | the | grain | greed | i | ly; | but
when | they | go | a | way*

*My hut in spring!
True, there is nothing in it -
just everything.*

Sodo

Practice Exercise 18 A, B

Haikus

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading the following haikus.

- Skim the title and poem quickly
- Predict what the poem is about
- Think of questions to answer while you read
- Read the poem twice aloud without stopping
- Read the poem again carefully
- Answer the questions

*A snake! Though it passes,
Eyes that had glared at me
Stay in the bushes*

Kyoski

B. Answer the questions.

1. In your own words, describe what image you see after reading this poem.

2. Change the word snake to human. What theme or message about human nature would be presented?

3. How does the poem make you feel? What does the poem mean to you?

Concrete

Concrete poems take many different forms. Concrete poetry is sometimes called shape or form poetry. Concrete poetry relies on the placement of words on paper rather than rhyme or rhythm. This form of poetry has become more popular in recent times as poets moved away from rigid structure and rhyme.

Read the poem "Easter Wings" on the next page. It is printed sideways to create the outline of wings. Read the poem for fun.

Easter Wings

George Herbert

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more,
Till he became
Most poore:
With thee
O let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories:
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

My tender age in sorrow did beginne
And still with sicknesses and shame.
Thou didst so punish sinne,
That I became
Most thinne.
With thee
Let me combine,
And feel thy victorie;
For, if I imp my wing on thine,
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

Short Stories

What are short stories?

Short stories are narratives. Narratives have a plot, characters, setting, theme, and tone. Originally, short stories were passed on by word of mouth, as were narrative poems. These stories took the form of fables, myths, tales, and legends. Many of today's fables, myths, and legends were shared between cultures. Each group of people changes the stories to fit in their own culture.

The modern short story, longer than most myths, legends and fables, became more popular during the time North America was being settled by Europeans. The modern short story has a

unified plot structure, limited character development, limited setting development, and unified narration. Most short stories are less than 15000 words in length.

Short stories may be fictional, or they may be based on fact and fiction. Ghost stories and science fiction are examples of short stories, which may have elements of fact and fiction. Ghost stories have existed much longer than science fiction. The developments in science and in technology have offered new settings and characters to present familiar conflicts and plots. The short story will continue to be a desirable form for writers because of its flexibility.

How to read short stories

When you read a short story, look for evidence of a unified plot structure, limited character development, limited setting development, and unified narration. Look for a beginning, middle, and an ending to the plot. Also, determine what point of view the narrator is speaking from.

Determine who is telling the story. Is the narrator a character in the story or is the narrator an observer? Look carefully at the pronouns used in the story to give you clues. The point of view will influence the way the conflict and the characters' personalities are revealed.

There may be more than one level of conflict. Clues to the type of conflict are revealed through events, dialogue, and description. The conflict is centred on the main character. The character may need to deal with conflict involving

character vs. character
character vs. self
character vs. nature
character vs. fate

Short story writers often provide an ironic twist at the end of the plot. An ironic twist involves an event or outcome which contradicts the predicted outcome. Read carefully, and you will discover the clues the writer leaves to help you predict the outcome.

The qualities of each character can be revealed through dialogue, action, character comments, narrator comments, and inferences. Look for these details so you will be able to create a mental picture of each character. Main characters are round characters; writers present both positive and negative characteristics of the main character. Writers may only reveal specific traits of minor characters. Minor characters are referred to as flat characters. Try to distinguish round characters from flat characters. Also, try to list adjectives that describe each character.

The mood of many short stories is usually established after the first two or three paragraphs. You should be able to describe the mood. It helps to be aware of how the writer creates the mood. Is it the setting that contributes mostly to the mood?

Short stories usually express only one theme. It may be stated or you may need to infer it. Look for repetition of words, phrases, or events to help you infer the theme.

What literary devices are used in short stories?

Many authors use a variety of literary devices to create the mood. Some of the more common literary devices to watch for include: Allusion, irony, foreshadowing, mystery, sarcasm, stereotyping, understatement, humour, satire, and dialogue. There are more devices than the ones listed here. Try to find these devices in the short stories you are about to read. Look for them in other types of narrative also.

Allusion is a reference made to an event, object, or time. Unless the reader is aware of the reference they will miss out on the hidden meaning. Researching the author's background and the setting of the story may help you catch these references.

Irony refers to the discrepancy between an expected outcome from an action or actions and the actual outcome. It would be ironic that a person purposely tries to get fired and ends up with a promotion.

Foreshadowing is hints at the future. Writers leave clues that can help you predict the outcome of a story.

Mystery is created in a number of ways. Writers present isolated or incomplete observations. The reader naturally responds by asking a question such as "why" or "how". The only way to answer the question is to continue reading.

Sarcasm is often found in the dialogue between characters or comments made by the narrator. A character makes a statement, but he or she clearly means the opposite of the statement. The reader knows this by paying attention to the tone of the character.

Stereotyping creates flat characters. Specific generalized traits are attributed to a character or characters. These characteristics may be either negative or positive.

Understatement is to highlight important or extra ordinary events by treating them as unimportant, expected events. Writers use understatement as another way of highlighting an event. It also provides insights into the values and perceptions of the characters.

Humour can be created using different techniques. It is to entertain the reader. It is also a way for the writer to develop the tone or mood of the story. Satire is a form of humour which mocks or criticizes people. Writers may use jokes, irony, dialogue, satire, or hyperbole to create humour.

Satire is a form of writing which mocks or makes fun of a person, group, or other target. The writer seems to say one thing but the writer makes it clear the opposite message is intended.

Dialogue is conversation. It takes the form of direct quotes. Each time a new speaker talks a new paragraph is started. Dialogue is used to reveal details about a character's personality. Writers also use dialogue to fill in blanks in information in the plot.

When you discover that a writer uses one or more of these devices, try to determine why the writer used them and decide if they were used effectively.

What types of short stories are there?

Traditional forms of short narratives are still popular today. Fables, myths, legends, and tales continue to delight readers. Writers have added the modern short story, tall tales, science fiction, and horror stories to the material available to readers. Each form has the typical elements of a narrative - plot, character, setting, and narrator.

Although they all have similar elements, they also have differences.

Fables

Fables come from the oral tradition of story telling. Local tribes created and passed on fables as a form of moral education. Many fables directly state the moral it communicates at the end of its story. Animals with human qualities serve as characters. Each character symbolizes a specific aspect of human nature. The message being communicated was more important than character development, setting development, or plot development.

Practice Exercise 19 A, B

Fables

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

- Skim the title and story quickly
- Predict what the story is about
- Think of questions to answer while you read
- Read the story once without stopping
- Read the story again carefully
- Answer the questions

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. prospect

2. quenching

3. plant

4. merely

The Fox and The Goat

A fox fell into a well and was unable to get out again. By and by, a thirsty Goat came by, and seeing the Fox in the well asked him if the water was good. "Good?" said the Fox, "It's the best water I ever tasted in all my life. Come down and try it yourself." The Goat thought of nothing but the prospect of quenching his thirst, and jumped in at once. When he had had enough to drink, he looked about, like the Fox, for some way of getting out, but could find none.

Presently, the Fox said, "I have an idea. You stand on your hind legs, and plant your forelegs firmly against the side of the well, and then I'll climb on to your back, and, from there, by stepping on your horns, I can get out. And when I'm out, I'll help you out too."

The Goat did as he was requested, and the Fox climbed on to his back and so out of the well; and then he coolly walked away. The Goat called loudly after him and reminded him of his promise to help him out but the Fox merely turned and said, "If you had as much sense in your head as you have hair in your beard you wouldn't have got into the well without making certain that you could get out again."

Look before you leap.

Practice Exercise 19 C

Fables

C. Answer the following questions.

1. What human qualities does the goat display?

2. What human qualities does the fox display?

3. What is the moral or theme of this fable.

4. Do you agree with the moral? Explain your answer.

Myths

Myths were written to explain how creation came about and how people should lead "moral" lives. Myths, too, have their origins in oral story telling. The characters are normally gods or goddesses. Although the characters have special abilities, they still behave as humans with both negative and positive characteristics.

Greek authors have written many of the myths that still exist today. These writers, most of whose names are unknown, appealed to people's emotions by placing the characters in fantastic situations.

Practice Exercise 20 A, B

Myths

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

- Skim the title and story quickly
- Predict what the story is about
- Think of questions to answer while you read
- Read the story once without stopping
- Read the story again carefully
- Answer the questions

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. jealous

2. mythology

3. quarrelsome

4. reverence

5. Olympus

The Flood

Jupiter ruled the world for many hundreds of years. Then one day he began to wonder how the people on earth were getting along. Disguising himself as a human being, he went down to see for himself.

Everywhere Jupiter went he found trouble. People were greedy and jealous and quarrelsome. They no longer had any reverence for the gods.

Jupiter was so angry that he went back to Olympus determined to remove every single man and woman from the beautiful earth they had spoiled. He covered the whole sky with clouds and commanded the winds to whip and twist them. Into the whirling mass he sent the rain, and the rain poured down into the rivers and the sea and over all earth. The flood rose higher and higher.

The frightened people fled up the highest mountains, but the flood rose over the mountains. When at last the rain stopped, there were only two people left on earth. They were Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha, who had climbed to the top of Mount Parnassus. Jupiter spared them because they were good.

When the sun dried the earth again, Deucalion and Pyrrha found a temple, half ruined and covered with wet moss. Here they thanked the gods for saving them and prayed that someone on Olympus would tell them what to do all alone on earth. A voice answered them from the temple. It told them to go down from the mountain and as they went, to throw stones ahead of them. Deucalion and Pyrrha did this, and as the stones fell, they changed slowly into men and women.

In this way, in the time the Greeks and Romans called the Stone Age, human beings came to live on earth again. This wonderful story in mythology is about these people, and their children, and their grandchildren, and the gods they lived with.

Practice Exercise 20 C

Myths

C. Answer the questions.

1. What characteristics of a myth can be found in the story?

2. What human characteristics does Jupiter display?

3. Summarize the event that matches each part of the plot.

a. introduction

b. rising action

c. climax

d. denouement (ending)

Legends

Unlike myths and fables, legends have human characters. As with myths the characters often have special abilities or strengths. They use these characteristics to solve a problem or to win a challenge. The characters or events of legends are based on some fact. Many popular legends originated from Greek literature where characters were thrust into heroic battles or adventurous quests.

As with most narratives, legends have characters, plots, and settings. Legends tend to have more characters and greater plot development than do myths and fables. The language used to describe characters and events is direct: yet, it is also more descriptive and lofty. Many of today's tales come from the legend tradition.

Practice Exercise 21 A, B

Legends

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

- Skim the title and story quickly
- Predict what the story is about
- Think of questions to answer while you read
- Read the story once without stopping
- Read the story again carefully
- Answer the questions

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. famine

2. rascal

3. thicket

4. outwit

5. account

The Tar Baby

Once upon a time there was a water famine, and the runs went dry, and there wasn't any water to be found anywhere, so all the animals in the forest met together to see what could be done about it. The lion and the bear, and the wolf and the fox, and the giraffe and the monkey and elephant, and even the rabbit — everybody who lived in the forest, was there, and they all tried to think of some plan by which they could get water. At last they decided to dig a well, and everybody said he would help — all except the rabbit, who always was a lazy little rascal, and he said he wouldn't dig.

So the animals all said, "Very well, Mr. Rabbit, if you won't help dig this well, you shan't have one drop of water to drink."

But the rabbit just laughed and said, as smart as you please, "Never mind, you dig the well and I'll get a drink all right." Now the animals all worked very hard, all except the rabbit, and soon they had the well so deep that they struck water and they all got a drink and went away to their homes in the forest. But the very next morning what should they find but the rabbit's footprints in the mud at the mouth of the well, and they knew he had come in the night and stolen some water. So they all began to think how they could keep that lazy little rabbit from getting a drink, and they all talked and talked and talked, and after a while they decided that someone must watch the well, but no one seemed to want to stay up to do it.

Finally, the bear said, "I'll watch the well the first night. You just go to bed, and I'll show old Mr. Rabbit that he won't get any water while I'm around."

So all the animals went away and left him, and the bear sat down by the well. By and by the rabbit came out of the thicket on the hillside and there he saw old bear guarding the well. At first he didn't know what to do. Then he sat down and began to sing:

"Ch ra ra, will you, will you, can you?
Cha ra ra, will you, will you, can you?"

Presently the old bear lifted up his head and looked around. "Where's all that pretty music coming from?" he said. The rabbit kept on singing:

"Cha ra ra, will you, will you, can you?
Cha ra ra, will you, will you, can you?"

Then the bear began to dance, and after while he danced so far away that the rabbit wasn't afraid of him any longer, and so he climbed down into the well and got a drink and ran away into the thicket.

Now when the animals came the next morning and found the rabbit's footprints in the mud, they made all kinds of fun of old Mr. Bear. They said, "Mr. Bear, you are a fine person to watch the well. Why, even Mr. Rabbit can outwit you."

But the bear said, "The rabbit had nothing to do with it. I was sitting here wide-awake, when suddenly the most beautiful music came right down out of the sky. At least I think it came down out of the sky, for when I went to look for it, I could not find it, and it must have been while I was gone that Mr. Rabbit stole the water." "Anyway," said the animals, "we can't trust you any more. Mr. Monkey, you had better watch the well tonight, and mind you, you'd better be pretty careful or old Mr. Rabbit will fool you." "I'd like to see him do it," said the monkey. "Just let him try." So the animals set the monkey to watch the well.

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Presently it grew dark, and all the stars came out and then the rabbit slipped out of the thicket and peeped over in the direction of the well. There he saw the monkey. Then he sat down on the hillside and began to sing:

*"Cha ra ra, will you, will you, can you?
Cha ra ra, will you, will you, can you?"*

Then the monkey peered down into the well. "It isn't the stars," said he. The rabbit kept on singing.

This time the monkey looked toward the forest. "It must be the leaves," said he. "Anyway, it's too good music to let go to waste." So he began to dance, and after a while he danced so far away that the rabbit wasn't afraid, so he climbed down into the well and got a drink and ran off into the thicket.

Well, the next morning, when the animals came down and found the footprints again, you should have heard them talk to the monkey. They said, "Mr. Monkey, you are no better than Mr. Bear; neither of you is of any account. You can't catch a rabbit." And the monkey said, "It wasn't old Mr. Rabbit's fault at all that I left that well. He had nothing to do with it. All at once the most beautiful music that you ever heard came out of the woods, and I went to see who was making it." But the animals only laughed at him. Then they tried to get someone else to watch the well that night. No one would do it. So they thought and thought and thought about what to do next. Finally the fox spoke up. "I'll tell you what let's do," said he. "Let's make a tar man and set him to watch the well." "Let's do," said the other animals together. So they worked the whole day long building a tar man and set him to watch the well.

That night the rabbit crept out of the thicket, and there he saw the tar man. So he sat down on the hillside and began to sing:

*"Cha ra ra, will you, will you, can you?
Cha ra ra, will you, will you, can you?"*

But the man never heard. The rabbit kept on singing:

*"Cha ra ra, will you, will you, can you?
Cha ra ra, will you, will you, can you?"*

The tar man never spoke a word.

The rabbit came up close to the tar man. "Look here," he said, "you get out of my way and let me down into the well." The tar man never moved. "If you don't get out of my way, I'll hit you with my fist," said the rabbit. The tar man never moved a finger. Then the rabbit raised his fist and struck the tar man as hard as he could, and his right fist stuck tight in the tar. "Now you let go of my fists or I'll kick you with my foot," said the rabbit. The tar man never budged an inch. Then the rabbit kicked him with his right foot, and his right foot stuck tight in the tar. "Now you let go of my foot or I'll kick you with my other foot," said the rabbit. The tar man never stirred. Then the rabbit kicked him with his left foot, and his left foot stuck tight in the tar. "Now you let me go or I'll butt you with my head," said the rabbit. And he butted him with his head, and there he was; and there the other animals found him the next morning.

Well, you should have heard those animals laugh. "Oh, oh, Mr. Rabbit," they said. "Now we'll see whether you steal any more of our water or not. We're going to lay you across a log and cut your head off" "Oh, please do," said the rabbit. "I've always wanted to have my head cut off. I'd

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rather die that way than any other way I know." "Then we won't do it," said the other animals. "We are not going to kill you any way you like. We are going to shoot you." "That's better" said the rabbit. "If I had just stopped to think, I'd have asked you to do that in the first place. Please shoot me." "No, we'll not shoot you," said the other animals; and they had to think and think for a long time.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," said the bear. "We'll put you into a cupboard and let you eat and eat and eat until you are as fat as butter then we'll throw you up into the air and let you come down and burst." "Oh, please don't!" said the rabbit. "I never wanted to die that way. Just do anything else, but please don't burst me." "Then that's exactly what we'll do," said all the other animals together.

So they put the rabbit into the cupboard and they fed him pie and cake and sugar, everything that was good; and by and by he got just as fat as butter. And then they took him out on the hillside and the lion took a paw, and the fox took a paw, and the bear took a paw, and the monkey took a paw; and then they swung him back and forth, and back and forth, saying: "One for the money, two for the show, three to make ready, and four to go." And they tossed him into the air, and he came down and lit on his feet and said:

*"Yip, my name's Molly Cotton-tail;
Catch me if you can."*

And off he ran into the thicket.

Practice Exercise 21 C

Legends

C. Answer the questions.

1. What characteristics of a legend are present in this story?

2. Describe the personality of the Rabbit. Give example from the story.

3. What literary device is used in the following quotation?

"...he got just as fat as butter." _____

4. Number each event in chronological sequence.

- ___ *They all began to think how they could protect their water.*
- ___ *They fed the rabbit.*
- ___ *The monkey stood guard.*
- ___ *The rabbit became stuck in the tar.*
- ___ *They decided to dig a well.*
- ___ *The bear stood guard.*
- ___ *The rabbit escaped.*

Tales and Tall Tales

Tales are similar to legends. Human characters encounter unique situations. Many tales have moral lessons that are stated directly or indirectly. Fairytales are included in this category of narratives. They often begin with phrases such as, "Once upon a time..."

Tall tales, like legends, have human characters performing super human acts. Tall tales are a more recent form of legend. They were developed in North America during rapid growth and settlement by immigrants. The stories entertained workers, and they were a unifying force showing people's pride in their work and their nationalities. The characters are often presented as being much bigger than the average person. The characters or events of many tall tales are based on some fact.

The characters and events in tall tales typically take place in frontier North America and in lumber and mining camps. The character uses extraordinary skills or strength to overcome a challenge or problem. Some tall tales tell a single story, while other tall tales have been extended over a period of time. The same character is presented with new challenges to overcome in each adventure.

Practice Exercise 22 A, B

Tales

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

- Skim the title and story quickly
- Predict what the story is about
- Think of questions to answer while you read
- Read the story once without stopping
- Read the story again carefully
- Answer the questions

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. scorcher

2. awful

3. real

4. course

Catch Tale

You don't see bears around as often as you used to. But I remember seeing one once when I was out picking raspberries. It was the end of August and it was hot. It was a real scorcher! And there I was, down on my knees making my way around the raspberry canes. Suddenly, I came nose to nose with this great, black bear.

He was doing the same thing, of course. He was eating the raspberries, stripping them off with his big paw and stuffing them in his mouth. He was surprised and annoyed that I was picking his berries, because he growled and got up on his hind legs. Well, I didn't hang around.

I took off down the old woods road, and when I looked back he was coming along after me on all fours. Bears can run pretty fast. I can run pretty fast, too. I was running the mile in about two minutes, at least. But so was the bear, and he was right behind me.

I ran and ran and ran. It was awful hot. The sweat was just pouring off me. I'd look back every once in a while, and the bear seemed to be getting a little closer. So I put on a little more effort and I ran for an awful long time. I was getting tired, too. But the bear was still coming on. He wasn't getting any farther away. In fact, he was just as close as he could be.

So I ran and ran and ran. I ran for an awful long time. And just when I thought I couldn't run another step, I came to this lake. It was frozen over a little bit. There was just an inch of ice over it, and I knew that it would hold me if I ran over it real fast, and I knew if the bear followed me, it wouldn't hold him.

So I ran out onto the ice, and I stopped in the middle. And there came the bear, charging after me. He paused for a minute when he saw me out there, then he ran right out on the ice. He got just about halfway when the ice cracked and gave way and down he went and drowned. That was the end of him.

"Hey! That can't be true. You said it was summertime and awful hot. There couldn't be any ice on the lake then!"

Yup, it's true all right. It was summertime when I started running. But like I said, I ran for an awful long time.



Practice Exercise 22 C

Tales

C. Answer the questions.

1. What characteristics of a tale are present in this story?

2. How does the writer create suspense in the story (word choice, organization, etc.)?

3. Why does the writer use dialogue at the end of the tale?

Practice Exercise 23 A, B

Tall Tales

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

- Skim the title and story quickly
- Predict what the story is about
- Think of questions to answer while you read
- Read the story once without stopping
- Read the story again carefully
- Answer the questions

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. sauntered

2. loafing

3. indulging

4. ceased

5. amiable

Paul's Camp In Maine

by Wallace Wadsworth

Paul's first task, after he and the Seven Axmen had finally come to the place in the Deacon's woods where he intended to build his camp, was to get rid of the Gumberoos and Agropelters. So while the Axmen all seated themselves, leaned their backs comfortably against broad tree trunks and lit their pipes, Paul stood thinking out some method of driving the troublesome creatures away. Paul was a great thinker, and there was never any problem that could keep him puzzled long.

"The Gumberoos are afraid of fire," he said to himself "and they will run away if they notice even the least sign of it. Now that is a weakness that I ought to be able to use against them — but how?" and he thought so hard over the matter that the Seven Axmen could hear the low whir of his brain working. Just then a big cloud of smoke from one of the Axmen's pipes floated up and encircled Paul's head, and when he finally stopped coughing and had caught his breath again a look of great satisfaction spread over his face. He had figured out a way to drive the Gumberoos away.

"I want you bullies to rest up for a few days," he said to the Seven Axmen, and there was a twinkle in his eyes. "There's plenty of hard work on the job ahead, but I'm not quite ready for you to start on it yet. So just you sit around and take things easy for a while until I am ready for you to begin," and he tossed down his big tobacco pouch where all could reach it and sauntered away.

The Seven Axmen looked at one another and grinned, and then they proceeded to fill up their pipes again. If their new boss wanted to pay them their wages just for loafing, why, they were perfectly willing to accommodate him. They had often looked forward to such a time as this, when they might take their ease and talk and smoke together, all without being worried by the thought that they were leaving necessary tasks undone or were losing valuable working time. Never before had the opportunity of indulging in such fancied leisure come to them, and now they settled back to enjoy themselves to the fullest extent.

Many were the subjects, which they discussed, and great the problems, which they settled. Countless were the tales of woodland adventure, which they told, and mighty were the labours each performed in the telling. Oh, wonderful men, those Seven Axmen — wonderful in brain as well as in muscle. So tireless were their minds that they could listen to the same joke a hundred times a day and laugh each time harder than the last.

And all the time while they rested they smoked their pipes, wonderful old pipes, which they had used constantly through many, many years. Each one used up two bushels of tobacco every time it was filled, and by the time the second day had come to an end the contents of Paul's tobacco pouch were almost half gone. The smoke hung over the land like a cloud, and for hundreds of miles there was not a Gumberoo to be found in the woods.

The fierce creatures, sniffing the strangling smoke, which filled the air, had been fooled into thinking that a terrible fire was raging through the forest. Frightened nearly out of their wits, they had scrambled away as fast as they could roll. No one knows how far they went ere their flight ceased, for they were never seen nor heard of again in that part of the country.

Getting rid of the Agropelters was the next task, and this required a little more work. Paul called the Seven Axmen to him, and they were very glad to put away their pipes and gather around him. They had smoked so much that their tongues were sore, and their two-day rest had grown

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so tiresome that they were anxious to get back to hard work again. "These Agropelters all hide away in the hollows of dead trees," Paul told them. "Now I want you to get your axes and wander through the timber. Every time you see a dead tree, or one with a hollow in it, chop it down and split it open. After you have done that, we'll start putting up the camp."

With a whoop, the Seven Axmen set about the task as if it were a great game. Being so large and strong, they had no fear of the animals, and as one blow from their great axes was usually enough to smash even the biggest hollow tree into splinters, they worked very fast. It was only a day or so before there was not a hollow tree to be found standing in all the Deacon's timberland, and with their hiding places all gone, the Agropelters also fled far away.

Paul was very much pleased that the woods were now safe for ordinary men, and he praised the Seven Axmen highly for their work. He set them to putting up bunkhouses and stables and the cook shanty for the new camp, and he ordered the Little Chore Boy to carry the word far and near that now, since the dangerous animals were all driven out of the woods, he would be giving high pay that winter to all good loggers who cared to join his crew.

Men soon began drifting into camp from every direction, and Paul hired all the best ones. A man had to be extra good to get a job with Paul Bunyan, but even so it wasn't so very long before he had gathered together as sturdy a bunch of woodsmen as has ever been seen.

It was along about this time that he made a trip back to town, where he saw the Deacon again and arranged all the little matters that were so far unsettled regarding the work, and when he started on his return trip to camp he was accompanied by Ole, the smith. Ole, or the Big Swede, as he was quite often called, was a slow-witted but amiable chap whose mind could never hold more than one idea at a time. He was gigantic in size — though not as big as Paul — and was a past-master in all that had to do with his trade of metal-working. From the first, he regarded Paul with a liking that was almost worship, and next to Paul in his affections came Babe, the Great Blue Ox. Indeed, so remarkable was his admiration for the magnificent animal that Paul at once turned over to him the duty of caring for Babe, which task he gladly accepted and continued to perform through many years. When finally his work as smith began to demand all of his time, he reluctantly turned Babe over to the gentle ministrations of Brimstone Bill, but that did not happen until a long while later.

Paul had taken the Blue Ox with him to town, and there he loaded him with all the supplies that would be needed for the camp and crew during the winter. When everything had been packed on Babe's back, the animal was so heavily laden that on the way back to camp he sank to his knees in the solid rock at nearly every step. These footprints later filled with water and became the countless lakes, which are to be found today scattered throughout the state of Maine.

Babe was compelled to go slowly, of course, on account of the great load he carried, and so Paul had to camp overnight along the way. He took the packs from the Ox's back, turned the big animal out to graze, and after eating supper he and Ole lay down to sleep.

The Blue Ox, however, was for some strange reason in a restless mood that night, and after feeding all that he cared to, he wandered away for many miles before he finally found a place that suited his particular idea of what a bedding ground should be. There he lay down, and it is quite possible that he was very much amused in thinking of the trouble which his master would have in finding him the next morning. The Ox was a very wise creature, and every now and then he liked to play a little joke on Paul.

Along about dawn Paul Bunyan awoke and looked about for his pet. Not a glimpse of him could he get in any direction, though he whistled so loudly for him that the nearby trees were shattered into bits. At last, after he and Ole had eaten their breakfast and Babe still did not

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appear, Paul knew that the joke was on him. "He thinks he has put up a little trick on me," he said to Ole with a grin. "You go ahead and make up the packs again, while I play hide-and-peek for a while," and as the Big Swede started gathering everything together again he set off trailing the missing animal.

Babe's tracks were so large that it took three men, standing close together, to see across one of them, and they were so far apart that no one could follow them but Paul, who was an expert trailer, no one else ever being able to equal him in this ability. So remarkable was he in this respect that he could follow any tracks that were ever made, no matter how old or how faint they were. It is told of him that he once came across the carcass of a bull moose that had died of old age, and having a couple of hours to spare, and being also of an inquiring turn of mind, he followed the tracks of the moose back to the place where it had been born.

Being such an expert, therefore, it did not take him very long to locate Babe. The Great Blue Ox, when he at last came across him, was lying down contentedly chewing his cud, and waiting for his master to come and find him. "You worthless critter!" Paul said to him, and thwacked him good-naturedly with his hand. "Look at the trouble you have put me to, and just look at the damage you have done here," and he pointed to the great hollow place in the ground, which Babe had wallowed out while lying there. The Ox's only reply was to smother Paul for a moment with a loving, juicy lick of his great tongue, and then together they set off to where Ole was waiting for them.

Anyone, by looking at a map of the state of Maine, can easily locate Moosehead Lake, which is, as history shows, the place where the Great Blue Ox lay down.

By the time that Paul, Ole, and Babe arrived at the logging camp, the first snow had begun to fall, and Paul began to work in earnest. He organized his crew so that each gang of men had a certain task to do, and the rules he developed here and used in his later logging operations have been followed more or less in all lumber camps ever since.

For instance, in the Great Lakes states, where the lumber industry probably reached its highest development, the work of the average logging crew was done much in this way: A gang of choppers would first go through the woods clearing the way. After them would come the sawyers, one man carrying in an axe for marking the direction of each tree's fall and a wedge to use, if necessary, in guiding it, while two others would fell the tree with a crosscut saw. (Paul was the inventor of the two-man saw used in logging, and Ole made up a number from his plans for use in his camps.) The saw having done its work, as the tree began to topple the sawyers would get back out of the way, giving a loud yell, "Timber-r!" as a warning to anyone else nearby, and the great trunk would come swishing and crashing to the ground.

Then would come the scaler, who would measure the fallen trees into the proper log lengths, and the sawyers would cut them at his marks. Next, the skidding crew or swampers would clear the way for the teamsters, who would drag or haul the logs to the stagings by the stream. Winter was always best for logging, for then the logs could be easily skidded over the icy roads which had been made slippery by sprinkling water on them until they were paved with hard and solid ice.

At the stream the deckers would pile the logs on the skyways, from which, in the spring when the freshets filled the stream with swift water, they would be dumped to float down-river on the big drive. When the time of the drive came, the entire crew would join in following it, riding the logs with calked boots and carrying pike pole or peavy, fighting jams and snaking stranded logs off the banks all along the way. When the logs finally reached the booms of the sawmill toward which they were headed, the logger's work was over, and he usually celebrated the ending of the

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drive in a grand and glorious manner, fighting out old grudges accumulated during the winter and otherwise enjoying himself.

That is something of the way a logging crew usually works. Of course, Paul had the help of the remarkable Babe and of such mighty woodsmen as the Seven Axmen, and he did things in his own peculiar way, which no one else could hope to imitate. In the main, however, the camps of later years were organized much after the fashion that he established.

No one, certainly, could be expected to copy him in the matter of straightening out crooked logging trails. It was all wild country where Paul did his logging, and about the only roads, which he found through the woods were the trails and paths made by the wild animals that had travelled over them for hundreds of years. Paul decided to use these game trails as logging roads, but they twisted and turned in every direction and were all so crooked that they had to be straightened before any use could be made of them. It is well known that the Great Blue Ox was so powerful that he could pull anything that had two ends, and so when Paul wanted a crooked logging trail straightened out, he would just hitch Babe up to one end of it, tell his pet to go ahead, and, low and behold! the crooked trail would be pulled out perfectly straight.

There was one particularly bad stretch of road, about twenty or thirty miles long, that gave Babe and Paul a lot of trouble before they finally got all the crooks pulled out of it. It certainly must have been the crookedest road in the world. It twisted and turned so much that it spelled out every letter of the alphabet, some of the letters two or three times. Paul taught Babe how to read just by leading him over it a few times, and men going along it met themselves coming from the other direction so often that the whole camp was near crazy before long.

So Paul decided that the road would have to be straightened out without any further delay, and with that end in view he ordered Ole to make for him the strongest chain he knew how. The Big Swede set to work with a will, and when the chain was completed it had links four feet long and two feet across and the steel they were made of was thirteen inches thick.

The chain being ready, Paul hitched Babe up to one end of the road. At his master's word the Great Blue Ox began to puff and pull and strain away as he had never done before, and at last he got the end pulled out a little ways. Paul chirped to him again, and he pulled harder than ever. With every tug he made, one of the twists in the road would straighten out, and then Babe would pull away again, hind legs straight out behind and belly to the ground. It was the hardest job Babe had ever been put up against, but he stuck to it most admirably.

When the task was finally done, the Ox was nearly fagged out, a condition that he had never known before, and that big chain had been pulled on so hard that it was pulled out into a solid steel bar. The road was straightened out, however, which was the thing Paul wanted, and he considered the time and energy expended as well worthwhile, since the nuisance had been transformed into something useful. He found, though, that since all the kinks and twists had been pulled out, there was now a whole lot more of the road than was needed, but — never being a person who could stand to waste anything which might be useful — he rolled up all the extra length and laid it down in a place where there had never been a road before but where one might come in handy some time.

Nor was the straightening of crooked roads the only useful work which the Great Blue Ox did. It was also his task to skid or drag the logs from the stumps to the rollways by the streams, where they were stored for the drives. Babe was always obedient, and a tireless and patient worker. It is said that the timber of nineteen states, except a few scant sections here and there which Paul Bunyan did not touch, was skidded from the stumps by the all-powerful Great Blue Ox. He was docile and willing and could be depended upon for the performance of almost any task set him, except that once in a while he would develop a sudden streak of mischief and drink a river dry

behind a drive or run off into the woods. Sometimes he would step on a ridge that formed the bank of the river and smash it down so that the river would start running out through his tracks, thus changing its course entirely from what Paul had counted on.

The cutting of the Deacon's timber tract went ahead so fast that Paul began looking ahead and wondering what he would do next. He was very much gratified to find that his fame had already begun to spread, so that he was offered enough logging contracts to keep him busy in that section of the country for several years to come. He was never one to shirk a task, was Paul, and the assurance of having ahead of him all the work that he could do made him happy indeed.

Practice Exercise 23 C

Tall Tales

C. Answer the questions.

1. What characteristics of a tall tale are present in this story.

Practice Exercise 23 D

Tall Tales

D. Circle the letter that best answers the question.

1. _____ Axmen helped Paul scare away the Gumberoos and Agropelters.
 - a. 5
 - b. 6
 - c. 7
 - d. 8

2. Paul knew the Gumberoos were afraid of _____.
 - a. loud noises
 - b. fire
 - c. smoke
 - d. people

3. The Axemen used _____ bushels of tobacco each time they filled their pipes.
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4

4. Paul knew the Agropelters lived in _____.
 - a. hollows of dead trees
 - b. tops of dead trees
 - c. roots of dead trees
 - d. branches of young trees

Practice Exercise 23 D - continued

Tall Tales

D. Circle the letter that best answers the question.

5. Babe was _____.

- a. the smith
- b. the cook
- c. the Deacon
- d. Paul's Ox

6. Ole was _____.

- a. the smith
- b. the cook
- c. the Deacon
- d. Paul's Ox

7. Paul's ox was responsible for creating _____ Lake.

- a. Oxhead
- b. Bearhead
- c. Moosehead
- d. Northhead

8. Paul was responsible for inventing the _____.

- a. chainsaw
- b. hacksaw
- c. two-man saw
- d. two-headed axe

Modern Short Story

Modern short stories deal with ordinary people. The plots and settings may vary considerably. Some stories are set in the past or the present, while others are set in the future. The length of this form of literature still limits the plot and the setting. Modern writers tend to focus more on character development. Often readers are left to infer from clues the qualities of the characters or setting. Many short stories offer a moral lesson or philosophical statement about humans and the human experience.

Practice Exercise 24 A, B

Modern Short Story

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. solid

2. callow

3. genteel

4. melancholy

5. prominent

6. pugnaciously

7. opulence

The Taipan

by W. Somerset Maugham

No one knew better than he that he was an important person. He was number one in not the least important branch of the most important English firm in China. He had worked his way up through solid ability and he looked back with a faint smile at the callow clerk who had come out to China thirty years before. When he remembered the modest home he had come from, a little red house in a long row of little red houses, in Barnes, a suburb which, aiming desperately at the genteel, achieves only a sordid melancholy, and compared it with the magnificent stone mansion, with its wide verandas and spacious rooms, which was at once the office of the company and his own residence, he chuckled with satisfaction. He had come a long way since then. He thought of the high tea to which he sat down when he came home from school (he was at St. Paul's), with his father and mother and his two sisters, a slice of cold meat, a great deal of bread and butter and plenty of milk in his tea, everyone helping himself and then he thought of the state in which now he ate his evening meal. He always dressed and whether he was alone or not he expected the three boys to wait at table. His number one boy knew exactly what he liked and he never had to bother himself with the details of housekeeping; but he always had a set dinner with soup and fish, entré roast, sweet and savory, so that if he wanted to ask anyone in at the last moment he could. He liked his food and he did not see why when he was alone he should have less good a dinner than when he had a guest.

He had indeed gone far. That was why he did not care to go home now, he had not been to England for ten years, and he took his leave in Japan or Vancouver, where he was sure of meeting old friends from the China coast. He knew no one at home. His sisters had married in their own station, their husbands were clerks and their sons were clerks; there was nothing between him and them, they bored him. He satisfied the claims of relationship by sending them every Christmas a piece of fine silk, some elaborate embroidery, or a case of tea. He was not a mean man and as long as his mother lived he had made an allowance. But when the time came for him to retire he had no intention of going back to England, he had seen too many men do that and he knew how often it was a failure, what with bridge and his ponies and golf he expected to get through the rest of his life very comfortable, But he had a good many years before he need think of retiring. In another five or six Higgins would be going home and then he would take charge of the head office in Shanghai. Meanwhile he was very happy where he was, he could save money, which you couldn't do in Shanghai, and have a good time into the bargain. This place had another advantage over Shanghai: he was the most prominent man in the community and what he said went. Even the consul took care to keep on the right side of him. Once a consul and he had been at loggerheads and it was not he who had gone to the wall. The taipan thrust out his jaw pugnaciously as he thought of the incident.

But he smiled, for he felt in an excellent humour. He was walking back to his office from a capital luncheon at the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Bank. They did you very well there. The food was first-rate and there was plenty of liquor. He had started with a couple of cocktails, then he had some excellent sauterne and he had finished up with two glasses of port and some fine old brandy. He felt good. And when he left he did a thing that was rare with him; he walked. His bearers with his chair kept a few paces behind him in case he felt inclined to slip into it, but he enjoyed stretching his legs. He did not get enough exercise these days. Now that he was too heavy to ride it was difficult to get exercise. But if he was too heavy to ride he could still keep ponies, and as he strolled along in the balmy air he thought of the spring meeting. He had a couple of griffins that he had hopes of and one of the lads in his office had turned out a fine jockey (he must see they didn't sneak him away, or Higgins in Shanghai would give a pot of money to get him over there) and he ought to pull off two or three races. He flattered himself that he had the finest stable in the city. He pouted his broad chest like a pigeon. It was a beautiful day, and it was good to be alive.

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He paused as he came to the cemetery. It stood there, neat and orderly, as an evident sign of the community's opulence. He never passed the cemetery without a little glow of pride. He was pleased to be an Englishman. For the cemetery stood in a place, valueless when it was chosen, which with the increase of the city's affluence was now worth a great deal of money. It had been suggested that the graves should be moved to another spot and the land sold for building, but the feeling of the community was against it. It gave the taipan a sense of satisfaction to think that their dead rested on the most valuable site on the island. It showed that there were things they cared for more than money. Money be blown! When it came to "the things that mattered" (this was a favourite phrase with the taipan), well, one remembered that money wasn't everything.

And now he thought he would take a stroll through. He looked at the graves. They were neatly kept and the pathways were free from weeds. There was a look of prosperity. And as he sauntered along he read the names on the tombstones. Here were three side by side; the captain, the first mate, and the second mate of the barque Mary Baxter, who had all perished together in the typhoon of 1908. He remembered it well. There was a little group of two missionaries, their wives and children, who had been massacred during the Boxer troubles. Shocking thing that had been! Not that he took much stock in missionaries; but, hang it all, one couldn't have these damned Chinese massacring them. Then he came to a cross with a name on it he knew. Good chap, Edward Mulock, but he couldn't stand his liquor, drank himself to death, poor devil, at twenty-five; the taipan had known a lot of them do that; there were several more neat crosses with a man's name on them and the age, twenty-five, twenty-six, or twenty-seven; it was always the same story; they had come out to China; they had never seen so much money before, they were good fellows and they wanted to drink with the rest: they couldn't stand it, and there they were in the cemetery. You had to have a strong head and a fine constitution to drink drink for drink on the China coast. Of course it was very sad, but the taipan could hardly help a smile when he thought how many of those young fellows he had drunk underground. And there was a death that had been useful, a fellow in his own firm, senior to him and a clever chap too: if that fellow had lived he might not have been taipan now. Truly the ways of fate were inscrutable. Ah, and here was little Mrs. Turner, Violet Turner, she had been a pretty little thing, he had had quite an affair with her; he had been devilish cut up when she died. He looked at her age on the tombstone. She'd be no chicken if she were alive now. And as he thought of all those dead people a sense of satisfaction spread through him. He had beaten them all. They were dead and he was alive, and by George he'd scored them off. His eyes collected in one picture all those crowded graves and he smiled scornfully. He very nearly rubbed his hands.

"No one ever thought I was a fool" he muttered.

He had a feeling of good-natured contempt for the gibbering dead. Then, as he strolled along, he came suddenly upon two coolies digging a grave. He was astonished, for he had not heard that anyone in the community was dead.

"Who the devil's that for?" he said aloud.

The coolies did not even look at him, they went on with their work, standing in the grave, deep down, and they shovelled up heavy clods of earth. Though he had been so long in China he knew no Chinese, in his day it was not thought necessary to learn the damned language, and he asked the coolies in English whose grave they were digging. They did not understand. They answered him in Chinese and he cursed them for ignorant fools. He knew that Mrs. Broome's child was ailing and it might have died, but he would certainly have heard of it, and besides, that wasn't a child's grave, it was a man's and a big man's too. It was uncanny. He wished he hadn't gone into the cemetery; he hurried out and stepped into his chair. His good-humour had all gone and there was an uneasy frown on his face. The moment he got back to his office he called to his number two:

"I say, Peters, who's dead, d'you know?"

But Peters knew nothing. The taipan was puzzled. He called one of the native clerks and sent him to the cemetery to ask the coolies. He began to sign his letters. The clerk came back and said the coolies had gone and there was no one to ask. The taipan began to feel vaguely annoyed; he did not like things to happen of which he knew nothing. His own boy would know, his boy always knew everything, and he sent for him; but the boy had heard of no death in the community.

"I knew no one was dead," said the taipan irritable. "But what's the grave for?"

He told the boy to go to the overseer of the cemetery and find out what the devil he had dug a grave for when no one was dead.

"Let me have a whisky and soda before you go," he added, as the boy was leaving the room.

He did not know why the sight of the grave had made him uncomfortable. But he tried to put it out of his mind. He felt better when he had drunk the whisky, and he finished his work. He went upstairs and turned over the pages of Punch. In a few minutes he would go to the club and play a rubber or two of bridge before dinner. But it would ease his mind to hear what his boy had to say and he waited for his return. In a little while the boy came back and he brought the overseer with him.

"What are you having a grave dug for?" he asked the overseer point blank. "Nobody's dead."

"I no dig grave," said the man.

"What the devil do you mean by that? There were two coolies digging a grave this afternoon."

But he did not say them. He grew very red as he choked them down. The two Chinese looked at him with their steady eyes. For a moment his breath failed him.

"All right. Get out," he gasped.

But as soon as they were gone he shouted for the boy again, and when he came, maddeningly impassive, he told him to bring some whisky. He rubbed his sweating face with a handkerchief. His hand trembled when he lifted the glass to his lips. They could say what they liked, but he had seen the grave. Why, he could hear still the dull thud as the coolies threw the spadefuls of earth on the ground above them. What did it mean? He could feel his heart beating. He felt strangely ill at ease. But he pulled himself together. It was all nonsense. If there was no grave there it must have been an hallucination. The best thing he could do was to go to the club, and if he ran across the doctor he would ask him to give him a look over.

Everyone in the club looked just the same as ever. He did not know why he should have expected them to look different. It was a comfort. These men, living for many years with one another's lives that were methodically regulated, had acquired a number of little idiosyncrasies — one of them hummed incessantly while he played bridge, another insisted on drinking beer through a straw — and these tricks which had so often irritated the taipan now gave him a sense of security. He needed it, for he could not get out of his head that strange sight he had seen; he played bridge very badly, his partner was censorious, and the taipan lost his temper. He thought the men were looking at him oddly. He wondered what they saw in him that was unaccustomed.

*Suddenly he felt he could not bear to stay in the club any longer. As he went out he saw the doctor reading *The Times* in the reading-room, but he could not bring himself to speak to him.*

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He wanted to see for himself whether that grave was really there and stepping into his chair he told his bearers to take him to the cemetery. You couldn't have an hallucination twice, could you? And besides, he would take the overseer in with him and if the grave was not there he wouldn't see it, and if it was he'd give the overseer the soundest thrashing he'd ever had. But the overseer was nowhere to be found. He had gone out and taken the keys with him. When the taipan found he could not get into the cemetery he felt suddenly exhausted. He got back into his chair and told his bearers to take him home. He would lie down for half an hour before dinner. He was tired out. That was it. He had heard that people had hallucinations when they were tired. When his boy came in to put out his clothes for dinner it was only by an effort of will that he got up. He had a strong inclination not to dress that evening, but he resisted it; he made it a rule to dress, he had dressed every evening for twenty years and it would never do to break this rule. But he ordered a bottle of champagne with his dinner and that made him feel more comfortable. Afterwards he told the boy to bring him the best brandy. When he had drunk a couple of glasses of this he felt himself again. Hallucinations be damned! He went to the billiard-room and practised a few difficult shots. There could not be much the matter with him when his eye was so sure. When he went to bed he sank immediately into a sound sleep.

But suddenly he awoke. He had dreamed of that open grave and the coolies digging leisurely. He was sure he had seen them. It was absurd to say it was an hallucination when he had seen them with his own eyes. Then he heard the rattle of the night-watchman going his rounds. It broke upon the stillness of the night so harshly that it made him jump out of his skin. And then terror seized him. He felt a horror of the winding multitudinous streets of the Chinese city, and there was something ghastly and terrible in the convoluted roofs of the temples with their devils grimacing and tortured. He loathed the smells that assaulted his nostrils. And the people. Those myriads of blue-clad coolies, and the beggars in their filthy rags, and the merchants and the magistrates, sleek, smiling, and inscrutable, in their long black gowns. They seemed to press upon him with menace. He hated the country. China. Why had he ever come? He was panic-stricken now. He must get out. He would not stay another year, another month. What did he care about Shanghai?

"Oh, my God," he cried, "if I were only safely back in England." He could not bear to be buried among all these yellow men, with their slanting eyes and their ginning faces. He wanted to be buried at home, not in that grave he had seen that day. He could never rest there. Never. What did it matter what people thought? Let them think what they liked. The only thing that mattered was to get away while he had the chance.

He got out of bed and wrote to the head of the firm and said he had discovered he was dangerously ill. He must be replaced. He could not stay longer than was absolutely necessary. He must go home at once.

They found the letter in the morning clenched in the taipan's hand. He had slipped down between the desk and the chair. He was stone dead.

Practice Exercise 24 C

Modern Short Story

C. Answer the questions.

1. What point of view is used in the story (1st person, 3rd person limited, or 3rd person omniscient)?

2. How is the Taipans's death foreshadowed? Give three examples.

3. How does the mood of the story change. Give examples.

Practice Exercise 24 C - continued

Modern Short Story

C.

4. What is the theme or moral of the story?

Science fiction

Science fiction has many of the qualities of non-science fiction short stories. Its distinguishing quality is its setting. Characters may be humans, androids, robots, or other characters. The events of the story take place somewhere in the future. The plot may be influenced not only by the time the story takes place, but also, it may be influenced by the place. Many science fiction stories occur in outer space or on other planets. The writer provides sufficient detail about the characters, the time, and the location of the action to make the reader see and believe the setting as being possible.

Practice Exercise 25 A, B

Modern Short Story

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. gleaming

2. excursion

3. hearth

4. incredulously

5. serene

6. slumbering

7. throng

September 2005: The Martian

By Ray Bradbury

The blue mountains lifted into the rain and the rain fell down into the long canals and old LaFarge and his wife came out of their house to watch.

"First rain this season," LaFarge pointed out.

"It's good," said his wife.

"Very welcome."

They shut the door. Inside, they warmed their hands at a fire. They shivered. In the distance, through the window, they saw rain gleaming on the sides of the rocket, which had brought them from Earth.

"There's only one thing," said LaFarge, looking at his hands.

"What's that?" asked his wife.

"I wish we could have brought Tom with us."

"Oh, now, Lafe!"

"I won't start again; I'm sorry."

"We came here to enjoy our old age in peace, not to think of Tom. He's been dead so long now, we should try to forget him and everything on Earth."

"You're right," he said, and turned his hands again to the heat. He gazed into the fire. "I won't speak of it any more. It's just I miss driving out to Green Lawn Park every Sunday to put flowers on his marker. It used to be our only excursion."

The blue rain fell gently upon the house.

At nine o'clock they went to bed and lay quietly, hand in hand, he fifty-five, she sixty, in the raining darkness.

"Anna?" he called softly.

"Yes?" she replied.

"Did you hear something?"

They both listened to the rain and the wind.

"Nothing," she said.

"Someone whistling," he said.

"No, I didn't hear it."

"I'm going to get up to see anyhow."

He put on his robe and walked through the house to the front door. Hesitating, he pulled the door wide, and rain fell cold upon his face. The wind blew.

In the dooryard stood a small figure.

Lightning cracked the sky, and a wash of white colour illuminated the face looking in at old LaFarge there in the doorway.

"Who's there?" called LaFarge, trembling.

No answer.

"Who is it? What do you want?"

Still not a word.

He felt very weak and tired and numb. "Who are you?" he cried.

His wife entered behind him and took his arm. "Why are you shouting?"

"A small boy's standing in the yard and won't answer me," said the old man, trembling. "He looks like Tom!"

"Come to bed, you're dreaming."

"But he's there; see for yourself"

He pulled the door wider to let her see. The cold wind blew and the thin rain fell upon the soil and the figure stood looking at them with distant eyes. The old woman held to the doorway.

"Go away!" she said, waving one hand. "Go away!"

"Doesn't it look like Tom?" asked the old man.

The figure didn't move.

"I'm afraid," said the old woman. "Lock the door and come to bed. I won't have anything to do with it."

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She vanished, moaning to herself into the bedroom.

The old man stood with the wind raining coldness on his hands.

"Tom," he said softly. "Tom, if that's you, if by some chance it is you, Tom, I'll leave the door unlatched. And if you're cold and want to come in to warm yourself just come in later and lie by the hearth, there're some fur rugs there."

He shut but did not lock the door.

His wife felt him return to bed, and shuddered. "It's a terrible night. I feel so old," she said, sobbing.

"Hush, hush," he gentled her, and held her in his arms.

"Go to sleep."

After a long while she slept.

And then, very quietly, as he listened, he heard the front door open, the rain and wind come in, the door shut. He heard soft footsteps on the hearth and gentle breathing.

"Tom," he said to himself

Lightning struck in the sky and broke the blackness apart. In the morning the sun was very hot.

Mr. LaFarge opened the door into the living room and glanced all about, quickly.

The hearthrugs were empty.

LaFarge sighed. "I'm getting old," he said.

He went out to walk to the canal to fetch a bucket of clear water to wash in. At the front door he almost knocked young Tom down carrying a bucket already filled to the brim. "Good morning, Father!"

"Morning, Tom." The old man fell aside. The young boy, barefooted, hurried across the room, set the bucket down, and turned smiling. "It's a fine day!"

"Yes, it is," said the old man incredulously. The boy acted as if nothing was unusual. He began to wash his face with the water.

The old man moved forward. "Tom, how did you get here? You're alive?"

"Shouldn't I be?" The boy glanced up.

"But, Tom, Green Lawn Park, every Sunday, the flowers and..." LaFarge had to sit down. The boy came and stood before him and took his hand. The old man felt of the fingers, warm and firm.

"You're really here, it's not a dream?"

"You do want me to be here, don't you?" The boy seemed worried.

"Yes, yes, Tom!"

"Then why ask questions? Accept me!"

"But your mother; the shock..."

"Don't worry about her. During the night I sang to both of you, and you'll accept me more because of it, especially her. I know what the shock is. Wait till she comes, you'll see." He laughed, shaking his head of coppery, curled hair. His eyes were very blue and clear.

"Good morning Lafe, Tom." Mother came from the bedroom, putting her hair up into a bun. "Isn't it a fine day?"

Tom turned to laugh in his father's face. "You see?"

They ate a very good lunch, all three of them, in the shade behind the house. Mrs. LaFarge had found an old bottle of sunflower wine she had put away, and they all had a drink of that. Mr. LaFarge had never seen his wife's face so bright. If there was any doubt in her mind about Tom, she didn't voice it. It was a completely natural thing to her. And it was also becoming natural to LaFarge himself.

While Mother cleared the dishes, LaFarge leaned toward his son and said confidentially, "How old are you now, Son?"

"Don't you know, Father? Fourteen, of course."

"Who are you, really? You can't be Tom, but you are someone. Who?"

"Don't." Startled, the boy put his hands to his face.

"You can tell me," said the old man. "I'll understand. You're a Martian, aren't you? I've heard tales of the Martians; nothing definite. Stories about how rare Martians are and when they come among us they come to Earth Men. There's something about you-you're Tom and yet you're not."

"Why can't you accept me and stop talking?" cried the boy. His hands completely shielded his face. "Don't doubt, please don't doubt me!" He turned and ran from the table.

Reading Comprehension #14018

"Tom, come back!"

But the boy ran off along the canal toward the distant town.

"Where's Tom going?" asked Anna, returning for more dishes. She looked at her husband's face.

"Did you say something to bother him?"

"Anna," he said, taking her hand. "Anna, do you remember anything about Green Lawn Park, a market, and Tom having pneumonia?"

"What are you talking about?" She laughed.

"Never mind," he said quietly.

In the distance the dust drifted down after Tom had run along the canal rim. At five in the afternoon, with the sunset, Tom returned. He looked doubtfully at his father. "Are you going to ask me anything?" he wanted to know.

"No questions," said LaFarge.

The boy smiled his white smile. "Swell."

"Where've you been?"

"Near the town. I almost didn't come back. I was almost" -the boy sought for a word- "trapped."

"How do you mean 'trapped'?"

"I passed a small tin house by the canal and I was almost made so I couldn't come back here ever again to see you. I don't know how to explain it to you, there's no way, I can't tell you, even I don't know; it's strange, I don't want to talk about it."

"We won't then. Better wash up, boy. Suppertime."

The boy ran.

Perhaps ten minutes later a boat floated down the serene surface of the canal, a tall lanky man with black hair poling it along with leisurely drives of his arms. "Evening, Brother LaFarge," he said, pausing at his task.

"Evening, Saul, what's the word?"

"All kinds of words tonight. You know that fellow named Nomland who lives down the canal in the tin hut?" LaFarge stiffened. "Yes?"

"You know what sort of rascal he was?"

"Rumour has it he left Earth because he killed a man?"

Saul leaned on his wet pole, gazing at LaFarge. "Remember the name of the man he killed?"

"Right. Gillings. Well, about two hours ago Mr. Nomland came running to town crying about how he had seen Gillings, alive, here on Mars, today, this afternoon! He tried to get the jail to lock him up safe. The jail wouldn't. So Nomland went home, and twenty minutes ago, as I get the story, blew his brains out with a gun. I just came from there."

"Well, well," said LaFarge.

"The darnedest things happen," said Saul. "Well, good night, LaFarge."

"Good night."

The boat drifted on down the serene canal waters.

"Supper's hot," called the old woman.

Mr. LaFarge sat down to his supper and, knife in hand, looked over at Tom. "Tom," he said,

"What did you do this afternoon?"

"Nothing," said Tom, his mouth full. "Why?"

"Just wanted to know." The old man tucked his napkin in.

At seven that night the old woman wanted to go to town. "Haven't been there in months," she said. But Tom desisted. "I'm afraid of the town," he said. "The people. I don't want to go there."

"Such talk for a grown boy," said Anna. "I won't listen to it. You'll come along. I say so."

"Anna, if the boy doesn't want to..." started the old man.

But there was no arguing. She hustled them into the canal-boat and they floated up the canal under the evening stars, Tom lying on his back, his eyes closed; asleep or not, there was no telling. The old man looked at him steadily, wondering. Who is this, he thought, in need of love as much as we? Who is he and what is he that, out of loneliness, he comes into the alien camp and assumes the voice and face of memory and stands among us, accepted and happy at last? From what mountain, what cave, what small last race of people remaining on this world when the rockets came from Earth? The old man shook his head. There was no way to know. This, to all purposes, was Tom.

The old man looked at the town ahead and did not like it, but then he returned to thoughts of

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Tom and Anna again and he thought of himself. Perhaps this is wrong to keep Tom but a little while, when nothing can come of it but trouble and sorrow, but how are we to give up the very thing we've wanted, no matter if it stays only a day and is gone, making the emptiness emptier, the dark nights darker, the rainy nights wetter? You might as well force the food from our mouths as take this one from us.

And he looked at the boy slumbering so peacefully at the bottom of the boat. The boy whimpered with some dream. "The people," he murmured in his sleep. "Changing and changing. The trap." "There, there, boy." LaFarge stroked the boy's soft curls and Tom ceased.

LaFarge helped wife and son from the boat.

"Here we are!" Anna smiled at all the lights, listening to the music from the drinking houses, the pianos, the phonographs, watching people, arm in arm, striding by in the crowded streets.

"I wish I was home," said Tom.

"You never talked that way before," said his mother. "You always liked Saturday nights in town." "Stay close to me," whispered Tom. "I don't want to get trapped."

Anna overheard. "Stop talking that way; come along!"

LaFarge noticed that the boy held his hand. LaFarge squeezed it. "I'll stick with you, Tommy-boy." He looked at the throngs coming and going, and it worried him also. "We won't stay long." "Nonsense, we'll spend the evening," said Anna.

They crossed a street, and three drunken men careened into them. There was much confusion, a separation, a wheeling about, and then LaFarge stood stunned.

Tom was gone.

"Where is he?" asked Anna irritably. "Him always running off alone any chance he gets. Tom!" she called.

Mr. LaFarge hurried through the crowd, but Tom was gone.

"He'll come back; he'll be at the boat when we leave," said Anna certainly, steering her husband back toward the motion-picture theatre. There was a sudden commotion in the crowd, and a man and woman rushed by LaFarge. He recognized them. Joe Spaulding and his wife. They were gone before he could speak to them.

Looking back anxiously, he purchased the tickets for the theatre and allowed his wife to draw him into the unwelcome darkness.

Tom was not at the landing at eleven o'clock. Mrs. LaFarge turned very pale.

"Now, Mother," said LaFarge, "don't worry. I'll find him. Wait here."

"Hurry back." Her voice faded into the ripple of water.

He walked through the night streets, hands in pockets. All about, lights were going out one by one. A few people were still leaning out their windows, for the night was warm, even though the sky still held storm clouds from time to time among the stars. As he walked he recalled the boy's constant references to being trapped, his fear of crowds and cities. There was no sense in it, thought the old man tiredly.

Perhaps the boy was gone forever, perhaps he had never been. LaFarge turned in at a particular alley, watching the numbers.

"Hello there, LaFarge."

A man sat in his doorway, smoking a pipe.

"Hello, Mike."

"You and your woman quarrel? You out walking it off?"

"No. Just walking."

"You look like you lost something. Speaking of things," said Mike, "somebody got found this evening. You know Joe Spaulding? You remember his daughter Lavinia?"

"Yes." LaFarge was cold. It all seemed a repeated dream. He knew which words would come next.

"Lavinia came home tonight," said Mike, smoking. "You recall, she was lost on the dead sea bottoms about a month ago? They found what they thought was her body, badly deteriorated, and ever since the Spaulding family's been no good. Joe went around saying she wasn't dead, that wasn't really her body. Guess he was right. Tonight Lavinia showed up."

"Where?" LaFarge felt his breath come swiftly, his heart pounding.

"On Main Street. The Spauldings were buying tickets for a show. And there, all of a sudden, in the crowd, was Lavinia. Must have been quite a scene. She didn't know them first off. They

followed her half down a street and spoke to her. Then she remembered."

"Did you see her?"

"No, but I heard her singing. Remember how she used to sing 'The Bonnie Banks of Loch Lomond'? I heard her trilling out for her father a while ago over there in their house. It was good to hear; her such a beautiful girl. A shame, I thought, her dead; and now with her back again it's fine. Here now, you look weak yourself. Better come in for a spot of whisky..."

"Thanks, no, Mike." The old man moved away. He heard Mike say good night and did not answer, but fixed his eyes upon the two-storey building where rambling clusters of crimson Martian flowers lay upon the high crystal roof. Around back, above the garden, was a twisted iron balcony, and the windows above were lighted. It was very late, and still he thought to himself: What will happen to Anna if I don't bring Tom home with me? This second shock, this second death, what will it do to her? Will she remember the first death, too, and this dream, and the sudden vanishing? Oh God, I've got to find Tom, or what will come of Anna? Poor Anna, waiting there at the landing. He paused and lifted his head. Somewhere above, voices bade other soft voices good night, doors turned and shut, lights dimmed, and a gentle singing continued. A moment later a girl no more than eighteen, very lovely, came out upon the balcony.

LaFarge called up through the wind that was blowing.

The girl turned and looked down. "Who's there?" she cried.

"It's me," said the old man, and realizing this reply to be silly and strange, fell silent, his lips working. Should he call out, "Tom, my son, this is your father?" How to speak to her? She would think him quite insane and summon her parents.

The girl bent forward in the flowing light. "I know you," she replied softly. "Please go; there's nothing you can do."

"You've got to come back!" It escaped LaFarge before he could prevent it.

The moonlit figure above drew into shadow, so there was no identity, only a voice. "I'm not your son any more," it said. "We should never have come to town."

"Anna's waiting at the landing!"

"I'm sorry," said the quiet voice. "But what can I do? I'm happy here, I'm loved, even as you loved me. I am what I am, and I take what can be taken; it's too late now, they've caught me."

"But Anna, the shock to her. Think of that."

"The thoughts are too strong in this house; it's like being imprisoned. I can't change myself back."

"You are Tom, you were Tom, weren't you? You aren't joking with an old man, you're not really Lavinia Spaulding?"

"I'm not anyone, I'm just myself whatever I am, I am something, and now I'm something you can't help."

"You're not safe in the town. It's better out on the canal where no one can hurt you," pleaded the old man.

"That's true." The voice hesitated. "But I must consider these people now. How would they feel if in the morning, I was gone again, this time for good? Anyway, the mother knows what I am; she guessed, even as you did. If you can't have the reality, a dream is just as good. Perhaps I'm not their dead one back, but I'm something almost better to them; an ideal shaped by their minds. I have a choice of hurting them or your wife."

"They're a family of five. They can stand your loss better!"

"Please," said the voice. "I'm tired."

The old man's voice hardened. "You've got to come. I can't let Anna be hurt again. You're our son. You're my son, and you belong to us."

"No, please!" The shadow trembled.

"You don't belong to this house or these people."

"No, don't do this to me!"

"Tom, Tom, Son, listen to me. Come back, slip down the vines, boy. Come along, Anna's waiting; we'll give you a good home, everything you want." He stared and stared upward, willing it to be.

The shadows drifted, the vines rustled.

At last the quiet voice said, "All right, Father."

"Tom!"

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In the moonlight the quick figure of a boy slid down through the vines. LaFarge put up his arms to catch him.

The room lights flashed on. A voice issued from one of the grilled windows. "Who's down there?" "Hurry, boy!"

More lights, more voices. "Stop, I have a gun! Vinny, are you all right?" A running of feet. Together the old man and the boy ran across the garden. A shot sounded. The bullet struck the wall as they slammed the gate.

"Tom, you go that way; I'll go here and lead them off! Run to the canal; I'll meet you there in ten minutes, boy!"

They parted.

The moon hid behind a cloud. The old man ran in darkness.

"Anna, I'm here!"

The old woman helped him, trembling, into the boat.

"Where's Tom?"

"He'll be here in a minute," panted LaFarge.

They turned to watch the alleys and the sleeping town. Late strollers were still out: a policeman, a night watchman, a rocket pilot, several lonely men coming home from some nocturnal rendezvous, four men and women issuing from a bar, laughing. Music played dimly somewhere.

"Why doesn't he come?" asked the old woman.

"He'll come, he'll come." But LaFarge was not certain. Suppose the boy had been caught again, somehow, somehow, in his travel down to the landing, running through the midnight streets between the dark houses. It was a long run, even for a young boy. But he should have reached here first.

And now, far away, along the moonlit avenue, a figure ran.

LaFarge cried out and then silenced himself for also far away was another sound of voices and running feet.

Lights blazed on in window after window. Across the open plaza leading to the landing, the one figure ran. It was not Tom; it was only a running shape with a face like silver shining in the light of the globes clustered about the plaza. And as it rushed nearer, nearer, it became more familiar, until when it reached the landing it was Tom! Anna flung up her hands. LaFarge hurried to cast off. But already it was too late.

For out of the avenue and across the silent plaza now came one man, another, a woman, two other men, Mr. Spaulding, all running. They stopped, bewildered. They stared about, wanting to go back because this could be only a nightmare, it was quite insane. But they came on again, hesitantly, stopping, starting.

It was too late. The night, the event, was over.

LaFarge twisted the mooring rope in his fingers. He was very cold and lonely. The people raised and put down their feet in the moonlight, drifting with great speed, wide-eyed, until the crowd, all ten of them, halted at the landing. They peered wildly down into the boat. They cried out.

"Don't move, LaFarge!" Spaulding had a gun.

And now it was evident what had happened. Tom flashing through the moonlit streets, alone, passing people. A policeman seeing the figure dart past. The policeman pivoting, stared at the face, calling a name, giving pursuit. "You stop!" Seeing a criminal face. All along the way, the same thing, men here, women there, night watchmen, rocket pilots. The swift figure meaning everything to them, all identities, all persons, all names. How many different faces shaped over Tom's face, all wrong?

All down the way the pursued and the pursuing, the dream and the dreamers, the quarry and the hounds. All down the way the sudden revilement, the flash of familiar eyes, the cry of an old, old name, the remembrances of other times. The crowd multiplying. Everyone leaping forward as, like an image reflected from ten thousand mirrors, ten thousand eyes, the running dream came and went, a different face to those ahead, those behind, those yet to be met, those unseen.

And here they all are now, at the boat, wanting the dream for their own, just as we want him to be Tom, not Lavinia or William or Roger or any other, thought LaFarge. But it's all done now. The thing has gone too far.

"Come up, all of you!" Spaulding ordered them.

Tom stepped up from the boat. Spaulding seized his wrist. "You're coming home with me."

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I know."

"Wait," said the policeman. "He's my prisoner. Name's Dexter wanted for murder."

"No!" a woman sobbed "It's my husband! I guess I know my husband!"

Other voices objected. The crowd thickened about him, putting out their wild hands, seizing and demanding. Tom screamed.

Before their eyes he changed.

He was Tom and James and a man named Switchman, another named Butterfield; he was the town mayor and a young girl Judith and the husband William and the wife Clarisse. He was melting wax shaping to their minds. They shouted, they pressed forward, pleading. He screamed, threw out his hands, his face dissolving to each demand.

"Tom!" cried LaFarge. "Alice!" another. "William!" They snatched his wrists, whirled him about, until with one last shriek of horror he fell.

He lay on the stones, melted, was cooling, his face all faces, one eye blue, the other golden, hair that was brown, red, yellow, black, one eyebrow thick, one thin, one hand large, one small.

They stood over him and put their fingers to their mouths. They bent down.

"He's dead," someone said at last.

It began to rain.

The rain fell upon the people, and they looked up at the sky.

Slowly, and then more quickly, they turned and walked away and then started running, scattering from the scene. In a minute the place was desolate. Only Mr. and Mrs. LaFarge remained, looking down, hand in hand, terrified.

The rain fell upon the upturned, unrecognizable face.

Anna said nothing but began to cry.

"Come along home, Anna, there's nothing we can do," said the old man.

They climbed down into the boat and went back along the canal in the darkness. They entered their house and lit a small fire and warmed their hands. They went to bed and lay together, cold and thin, listening to the rain returned to the roof above them.

"Listen," said LaFarge at midnight. "Did you hear something?"

"Nothing, nothing."

"I'll go look anyway."

He fumbled across the dark room and waited by the outer door for a long time before he opened it.

He pulled the door wide and looked out.

Rain poured from the black sky upon the empty dooryard, into the canal and among the blue mountains.

He waited five minutes and then softly, his hands wet, he shut and bolted the door.

Practice Exercise 25 C

Science Fiction

C. Answer the questions.

1. What point of view is used in the story (1st person, 3rd person limited, or 3rd person omniscient)?

2. How is rain used to add to the tone or mood of the story?

3. What is the theme or moral of the story? Explain your answer.

Novels

What are novels?

The novel is distinguished from the other forms of narrative literature by its length and by the development of its parts. Like other narratives it has a plot, setting, and characters. Plots tend to be well developed. In fact, a novel may have one or more sub-plots, (smaller stories). Each plot or sub-plot has a beginning, a middle, and an ending. Sub-plots may serve to develop the main plot, or they may be used as a distraction from the main plot. The distraction may offer humour to distract from a serious main plot. The events of the plot and sub-plot are developed in a number of places and times.

A novel's setting is greatly expanded compared to the short story. The novel may take place over an extended period of time. The events of the novel may also take place in several places. Each time and place requires that the author add details specific to each time and place. The changes in time and place in a novel may impact the characters and the other events in small or large ways. A more developed setting allows us to get to know the characters better. We also get to see how characters act in different times and places.

Novels tend to have a greater number of characters than other forms of literature. Some characters may be involved in the main plot while other characters may only appear in sub-plots. There may be more than one main character. We get to know the main characters well because the writer shows us most of the characters' qualities, positive and negative. We also get to see changes in the main characters.

What types of novels are there

There thousands of novels available to read. All novels have the basic parts of a narrative. They may differ in several ways. Some novels are used to entertain and to instruct. These novels have serious themes and offer advice on moral behaviour. Other novels specialize in a specific type of setting or plot. For example, there are historic novels, science fiction novels, mystery novels, Western novels, adventure novels, romance novels, and more.

How do I read novels

Part of the pre-reading process includes researching information about the author, the author's time period, and the setting of the novel. Some of this information may be included with the novel. You may want to consult a dictionary, encyclopedia, or the internet to find more information. This part of the pre-reading process will give you the context for the novel.

As part of the reading process you should gather information about the setting of the novel. The setting includes both the time and the place of the novel. Look for changes in the setting. Determine what techniques or literary devices the writer uses to develop a believable setting. Determine to what extent the setting influences the characters and the plot. The setting usually contributes to the development of the mood of the novel.

Look for the overall mood of the novel. Is it happy, sad, cold, violent, passionate? Determine how the writer creates the mood. Does the writer use dialogue to develop the mood? Is the description of the setting important to establishing the mood? Is there a narrator, and how does the narrator contribute to the mood? Perhaps the narrator uses words or phrases in a humorous way.

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The point of view of the narrator will impact mood development differently. First person point of view may be appropriate to develop intense personal feelings or moods. Third person narration might be used to create a critical or satirical mood. The development of the plot is also an important factor in mood development.

Many novels contain a main plot with several sub-plots. Ask yourself whether the writer uses the sub plots to enhance the main plot or to distract from the main plot. What parts of plot development are emphasised? For example, is there a short or a long conclusion. Is there one conflict, or are there several conflicts? Are the characters introduced early in the plot development, or does the writer slowly reveal the qualities of the characters?

After establishing who are the main characters, and who are the minor characters, you should determine how the writer develops and uses each character. Does the author rely on direct statements about the characters, or does the writer use dialogue and action to infer character qualities? You will also want to read carefully to see how other aspects of the novel, such as the setting, impact the characters. Do the characters change significantly, or do they change only slightly? The amount of change a character undergoes may hint at the theme or themes of the novel.

If a character changes little in attitude and ability, the author may be suggesting that, after a point, humans are not capable of change. This inability to change may lead to the characters down falls. Where sub plots exist, the author may have included theme also. How do the main themes and the themes from the sub-plots interact? Are the themes related, or are they different? Lastly, do you agree with the theme?

As part of the post-reading process, it is important to evaluate how reading the novel affected you as a reader. Did you enjoy reading the novel? Why or why not? Are there specific events, settings, or characters that stand out? Why? What techniques or literary devices did the writer use to make the event, setting, or character to stand out? Was the novel a challenge to read because of the writer's style and choice of words? Finally, would you read another novel from the same author?

Finding the answers to these questions can be challenging. You may need to reread the novel to answer some questions. When you answer these questions, it is important to be able to offer details or quotes from the novel to support your answers. This may mean using your scanning or skimming skills to find examples. For instance, it is not enough to say that the mood is sombre and hopeless. You need to support the statement with examples such as the description of the setting or the thoughts and feelings of the characters.

Practice Exercise 26 A, B

Modern Short Story

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. Mojave

2. ominous

3. spontaneously

4. talismanic

5. imperceptibly

6. Double Indemnity

7. Capris

Some Dreamers of the Golden Dream (Excerpt)

by Joan Didion

This is a story about the love and death in the golden land, and begins with the country. The San Bernardino Valley lies only an hour east of Los Angeles by the San Bernardino Freeway but is in certain ways an alien place: not the coastal California of the subtropical twilights and the soft westerlies off the Pacific but a harsher California, haunted by the Mojave just beyond the mountains, devastated by the hot dry Santa Ana wind that comes down through the passes at 100 miles an hour and whines through the eucalyptus windbreaks and works on the nerves. October is the bad month for the wind, the month when breathing is difficult and the hills blaze up spontaneously. There has been no rain since April. Every voice seems a scream. It is the season of suicide and divorce and prickly dread, wherever the wind blows.

The Mormons settled this ominous country, and then they abandoned it, but by the time they left, the first orange tree had been planted and for the next hundred years the San Bernardino Valley would draw a kind of people who imagined they might live among the talismanic fruit and prosper in the dry air, people who brought with them Midwestern ways of building and cooking and praying and who tried to graft those ways upon the land. The graft took in curious ways. This is the California where it is possible to live and die without ever eating an artichoke, without ever meeting a Catholic or a Jew. This is the California where it is easy to Dial-A-Devotion, but hard to buy a book. This is the country in which a belief in the literal interpretation of Genesis has slipped imperceptibly into a belief in the literal interpretation of Double Indemnity, the country of the teased hair and the Capris and the girls for whom all life's promise come down to a waltz-length white wedding dress and the birth of a Kimberly or a Sherry or a Debbi and a Tijuana divorce and a return to hairdressers' school. "We were just crazy kids," they say without regret, and look to the future. The future always looks good in the golden land, because no one remembers the past. Here is where the hot wind blows and the old ways do not seem relevant, where the divorce rate is double the national average and where one person in every thirty-eight lives in a trailer. Here is the last stop for all those who come from somewhere else, for all those who drifted away from the cold and the past and the old ways. Here is where they are trying to find a new life style, trying to find it in the only places they know to look: the movies and the newspapers. The case of Lucille Marie Maxwell Miller is a tabloid monument to that new life style.

Practice Exercise 26 C

Novel

C. Answer the questions.

1. Describe the setting for the story. Use examples from the story.

2. How does the setting affect the people who live in the San Bernardino Valley?

Practice Exercise 26 C

Novel

C.

3. Write a brief explanation about the meaning of the underlined words in each quotation.

a. "The San Bernardino Valley ... but is in certain ways an alien place..."

b. "...a harsher California, haunted by the Mojave ... and works on the nerves."

c. "The future always looks good in the golden land, because no one remembers the past."

d. "The case of Lucille Marie Maxwell Miller is a tabloid monument to that new life style...."

Non Fiction

What is non-fiction?

Non-fiction includes essays, biographies, autobiographies, diaries, and journals. Occasionally, fiction writers will use one of these forms to create fictional stories. The main purpose of these forms of writing is to present facts. Authors may have additional reasons for writing non-fiction.

Essays are used to explore a range of topics. Essay topics range from explaining complex relationships between facts, to encouraging discussion about controversial topics. Biographies and auto-biographies, especially modern forms, focus on revealing the thoughts, feelings, and actions of a person. Diaries keep records of the personal thoughts, feelings, or observations of one person. Journals, like diaries, record events or observations on a regular basis, often daily.

Many forms of non-fiction require research or thought on the part of the writer. This research is found in these types of literature in the form of quotes, references, or bibliographies. Writers use a variety of styles. Some writers use a concise, direct style, while others use longer, less formal style.

What types of non-fiction are there?

Biography and Autobiography

Biographies and autobiographies are the stories about individuals and their experiences. Biography writers choose a person, complete research, and write about the person. Autobiographies, however, are written by the person being described. Modern biographies tend to focus on trying to understand the person's motivations and to understand their "inner thoughts".

Biographies and auto biographies are written about many famous people. They are also written about ordinary people. Some biographies and autobiographies focus on specific events or personality traits of a person. This type of writing is often seen in "Hollywood biographies" of famous people. Often these are written quickly and are sold quickly. The best literature presents a well balanced account of a person's personalities and abilities. "Good" biographies are recognized by their balanced approach and evidence of comprehensive research. Evidence of research include number of quotes from a variety of sources as well as a bibliography outlining the written sources used.

How to read biographies and autobiographies

When reading biographies and autobiographies, it is important to read critically. You will need to distinguish fact from opinion. You will also need to evaluate the evidences and the sources. Are the sources reliable? How well do the sources know the person being described? How much access did the biographer have with the person being described? Lastly, is the writer's style appropriate?

Some biographers present every detail about a person while others provide only as much detail as needed to support the statement. A balanced style of including positive and negative qualities of a person is preferred to a slanted or a biased account of a person. Finally, does the writer use of facts, quotes, anecdotes, and other research used effectively?

Practice Exercise 27 A, B

Biographies and Autobiographies

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. segregation

2. prestigious

3. Baroque

4. haphazard

5. foresight

6. loathsome

7. innocuous

Bring on the Empty Horses (Excerpt)

by David Niven

Excerpt #1 The Playpen

The "film folk," I discovered, unwound at their favourite playgrounds, the beaches, the mountains at Arrowhead and the Big Bear and the desert at Palm Springs - - a tiny colony in the middle of Indian-owned land which boasted a main street and two hotels. Santa Anita Racecourse was also a very popular with them, and there were various country clubs, which dispensed golf, tennis, and an extraordinary degree of segregation. Not one had a black member, and several refused to have Jewish members, prompting the Jewish community to start their own country club and to take in no Gentiles. (They also found oil in satisfactory quantities beneath their fairways, which provided them with a splendid opportunity for nose thumbing.) But the topper was the prestigious Los Angeles Country Club, which adamantly refused to have anything whatever to do with anyone in the motion-picture industry irrespective of race, creed or colour.

Greater Los Angeles, a city which grew more quickly than the city planners had planned, was not remarkable for its beauty, and it was necessary to disregard the largely temporary appearance of the buildings and the unsightly forests of poles and overhead wiring and concentrate on its truly remarkable setting, in the horseshoe of the San Gabriel Mountains, and on the sunsets.

In Hollywood itself, a place of dusty Baroque charm, one important thoroughfare, La Cienega Boulevard, with great subservience separated on either side of an oil derrick pumping slowly like a praying mantis, and in the scrub-covered hills above, underlining its claim to fame, was a forty-foot-high wooden sign: **HOLLYWOODLAND**.

Beverly Hills, another suburb, had gone against the haphazard planning of Greatest Los Angeles, and when the Rodeo Land and Water Company decided to develop its gently sloping acreage, it had the great good taste and foresight to send for an expert from Kew Gardens, London, who planted a different species of tree for every street, and thereafter a fascinating variety of architecture proliferated beneath maples, magnolias, palms, corals, pines, sycamores, flowering eucalyptus, elms, olives, jacaranda, and oaks. A home in Beverly Hills was the status symbol of success in the prewar motion-picture industry, and the area boasted more private swimming pools and detectives to the square mile than anywhere else in the world.

Excerpt #2 Degrees of Friendliness

Less than two years after the end of the World War II the first microbes of a foul disease that was to spread across the fair face of the United States surfaced in Hollywood. Senator Joseph McCarthy and his two loathsome lieutenants, Cohn and Schine, had not yet succeeded in infecting the land with McCarthyism, but a cry of "There are Reds under Hollywood's beds" was raised in Washington, and the House Committee on Un-American Affairs opened an investigation on Communist infiltration of the motion picture industry. Immense publicity was generated by the ensuing circus like proceedings under the chairmanship of a highly biased gentleman named Parnell Thomas. Richard Nixon was a member of the investigation team.

Some full-blooded support for the theory Hollywood was in grave danger of becoming a tool of the Communist Party was given by a long list of "friendly" witnesses, including L. B. Mayer, the head of MGM; Jack Warner of Warner Brothers; Walt Disney; Gary Cooper; Robert Montgomery; Adolphe Menjou; George Murphy, later U.S. Senator from California; Ronald Reagan, who became governor of the same state; and Ginger Rogers' mother, who remained Ginger Rogers'

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mother. Between them these "friendly witnesses" named a few of their fellow workers as Communists and pointed to a larger group as "acting like Communists." Before long, all these people were paraded before Parnell Thomas and Co.; many became known as the unfriendly witnesses.

Hollywood, by instinct and common sense, was a town largely disinterested in politics, it was a community dedicated to the manufacture of mass entertainment for people all over the world, regardless of how they voted, but it was also traditionally relaxed about those who took their politics seriously. Of course, we know that a few among us were Communists, but we also knew that others were Holy Rollers and that quite a number practised black magic, but so long as the Communist Party was officially recognized by the government and not outlawed in the United States, Hollywood did not feel that people who felt strongly enough to join it should be treated like criminals.

So the great majority watched sadly while a small minority tore itself to pieces. It all seemed so unnecessary, because it was quite impossible for a tiny group of writers, directors, and actors to subvert for Communist propaganda the motion-picture industry when the whole business was in the hands of a dozen men.

The writers and directors could possibly inject small doses of Communist ideology into innocent-looking scripts, and perhaps the actors might be capable of giving an innocuous line a sinister twist, but the producers controlled the finished pictures, and there was just no way that the Seven Dwarfs could be Reds under Snow White's bed unless Walt Disney wanted them there.

The macabre farce unfolded, and Parnell Thomas allowed the friendly witnesses to make opening statements but denied the same opportunity to the unfriendly witnesses. The crunch question, which the unfriendly witnesses all faced was this. "Are you now, or have you ever been, a member of the Communist Party?"

If a witness stated that he was a Communist, he was then required by Parnell Thomas to inform on his fellow party members. If he declined to do so, he went to jail for contempt. If he denied that he was a Communist and was then proved to be a party member, he went to jail for perjury, and if he refused to answer the question at all, he could go to jail for contempt of Congress.

In the end ten witnesses went to jail, the best known of whom were the writer John Howard Lawson, whom Parnell Thomas ordered to be forcibly removed from the witness stand by armed guards when he insisted loudly that his rights as an American citizen were being invaded; Dalton Trumbo, the writer, who was refused an opportunity to cross-question witnesses when they stated that he had Communist Party affiliations; the writer Sam Ornitz, who was also forcibly removed after an altercation with Parnell Thomas; the well-known director Eddie Dmytiyk, who, because he claimed constitutional immunity, was refused a chance to cross-question witnesses; and the writer Ring Lardner, Jr., who was denied the opportunity to read a closing statement in his own defence.

Practice Exercise 27 C

Biographies and Autobiographies

C. Answer the questions.

Excerpt #1 The Playpen

1. How does the writer feel about "Hollywood folk"? Give examples.

2. What literary device is used in the following quotation?

"...of an oil derrick pumping slowly like a praying mantis, ..."

Excerpt #2 Degrees of Friendliness

3. Who are the "friendly witnesses"?

4. Who are the "unfriendly witnesses"?

Journals and Diaries

Journals and diaries are first person accounts of personal events or experiences. Journals may be found more often detailing the daily events that take place at work or in society. Ship's Captains, for example, would record the daily events of a voyage. Diaries tend to cover more personal experiences and reactions to the experiences.

How to read journals and diaries?

It is important to do some research about the time period, geographic location, and societal structure to be able to put journals and diaries in context. Depending on the setting for a journal or a diary, a reader may need to look up unfamiliar vocabulary in a dictionary.

Readers must also keep in mind that diaries in particular, present an individual's thoughts, feelings, and opinions. The language may be unedited and informal. Focus on understanding the persons' feelings and thoughts rather than the quality of the prose.

Practice Exercise 28 A, B

Diaries and Journals

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. proposition

2. cabled

3. peremptory

4. tumblers

5. hodman

6. hostelries

7. congenial

The Private Diaries of H. Rider Haggard (Excerpt)

by H. Rider Haggard

6th August, 1914

It is very hard to have to sit here taking evidence on canned lobsters and such matters when the Judgement Day of nations has dawned upon the world.

Digby, Canada 9th August, 1914

This morning I put a proposition by wire before Longman (Charles Longman published many of Rider Haggard 's books and was a personal friend.) to the effect that I should write a History of the War — of course I mean if we live to see the end of it and are victorious, since in the other event no one would wish to read a history of it. It was an expensive business, as the cable companies have withdrawn all weekend privileges and full "urgent" rates must be charged for everything that is cabled.

St. John, Canada 10th August, 1914

In the evening there arrived a peremptory telegram from H.M 's Government recalling us home after we have completed our work in the Maritime Provinces, a week hence. But how are we to get home under present circumstances? No British vessels are advertised to run, and I do not want to be obliged to travel by an American line, which would betray a lack of confidence in our ability to keep the seas open.

Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island 16th August, 1914

Here we are established in a hotel, which is about as uncomfortable in the matter of service as are the majority of Canadian hostelries. However, we have managed to get more whisky, for which one must be grateful in a 'dry' State. The tyranny of these liquor laws is really overpowering. It is a perfect insult to travellers that they should not be allowed to drink what is necessary to them because the inhabitants of any given place are afraid that, if tempted, they may exceed. Moreover the restrictions are quite ineffectiv, and only result in the pernicious habit of drinking between meals. The people who gulp down tumblers of iced water or cups of tannin essence (proper tea they seldom make in Canada) with their meat, often enough consume whisky or brandy before or after, when of course it is harmful. With the rest, this total abstinence seems to produce a certain flatness and tameness of mind as to tend to a strange lack of imagination. This may be fancy, but it strikes many besides myself I think that, for the most part, water-drinkers are dull dogs.

22nd June, 1916

Today is my birthday amidst all this crowd of strangers in which I take no interest and who take not interest in me - - except as a penny peep-show to some of them. Today I have definitely entered upon old age, for at sixty a man is old. Especially when he begins young as I did. Let me look round: of my early friends but two remain and one of these is broken-hearted. For me the world is largely peopled with dead; I walk among ghosts, especially at night. Well ere long I must join their company; ten years more the Psalm ist would give me, but with my weakened health I cannot expect as much, even should I escape accidents. My work, for the most part, lies behind me, rather poor stuff too - - yet I will say this: I have worked. My talent may be of copper not of gold - - how can I judge of my own abilities? - - but I have put it to the best use I could. My opportunities have not been many, and for the most part I have made them for myself

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the book writing, the agricultural research business, the public work for instance. Of course I might have done more in the last line by going into Parliament. But this really I have never been able to afford since, except in the case of Labour members, it has designedly been made to suit the rich alone. Especially has this been the policy of the Conservative Party which wants wealth and does not want ability. Also, it is scarcely a place for a self-respecting man who sets store by honesty of purpose and would call his soul his own, though the narrow party politician may find in it a congenial career. Therefore, such as I must remain mere hodman Peris, labouring and suffering without the Gate.

Calgary, Alberta 11th July, 1916

Here there was a luncheon at 11:30! (by true time, daylight-saving being in force) attended by some 300 people. It really was a great success. I made some play with the Alp, Mount Sir Rider, which has been named after me (that is if the geographical Board of Canada consents), saying it would make the best and most enduring of tombstones - and exciting laughter by speculations on the possibility of its being taxed as an 'improved lot' with the result that my descendants would be ruined etc - and then turned to the serious subjects. I never had a better audience, but oh! What a bore is this water drinking by compulsion, and how dreary! The luncheon ended with rousing cheers for myself followed by 'God Save the King'. It is a curious world. Here they give my name to a towering Alp; in Norfolk they would not bestow it on a 'pightle'! (a small meadow)

Ditchingham 8th June, 1917

Yesterday I received the bill for the rent of the telephone at 26 Ashley Gardens. I have already paid a £4 fine for the installation of this telephone and now, in addition to this and to ordinary rent, I am charged an entire pound for contingencies and expenses. I wonder if it is all legal.

No rain yet, the drought is becoming serious but the weather is beautiful for every purpose except farming.

10th November, 1918

The Kaiser and his son, the Crown Prince, have abdicated. The 'All-Highest' is in the dust, and the 'glittering armour' rusts upon Time's mulch-heap; the mailed fist smites no more, the 'destructive sword' ceases to rattle in its Imperial scabbard, the 'good old German God' is no longer exhibited to the world ventriloquising and nodding his head like an ancient Egyptian deity in a temple! In short, the curtain has rung down upon the Imperial Cinema Show, and all the tinsel and pinchbeck trappings, filled-gold sceptres, gilded crowns, and the rest are cast to moulder in the bin of discarded footlight properties. Never more will the ex-Kaiser, never more will any monarch, as I believe, be able to arrogate to himself a flesh different to that of the herd of men, or to flaunt the banner of a Right Divine in the faces of the struggling peoples.

11th November, 1918

There is Peace. To this city, flags hanging flaccid in the November damps, a few bells rung out of time (for lack of ringers), some cheering from recruits of the Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk regiments, who now will never be called upon to feel a wound or crawl down a ditch of Flanders' mud, and the explosion of certain bombs, which can be spared, proclaim that there is Peace.

I am thankful that I began to keep this diary, imperfect and full of mistakes and misjudgments as without doubt it is, and have been able to continue it through the weary years, with scarcely a day missed up to the present hour. At any rate it is a record of what an average not unobservant

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man, whose lot it has been to endure those years, thought and experienced in the course of them, and therefore perhaps of some value, at any rate, for future time.

It is true that I have not been in the actual fighting, though I have known what it is to have the great shells exploding round me, and what is worse round my women folk, and on more than one occasion. Also I have passed many perils on the seas. But if I were a younger man and had been called to take my place in the trenches, an opportunity that I could wish had come to me, it is probably that my outlook would have been more limited, as I should only have known what was passing within my immediate ken. Again it had not been my lot to stand at the front of high affairs, but then those who did probably have kept no record of all that happened about them or the struggle. I was in Canada and that during its continuance I have travelled round the Empire and come in touch with the most of its leaders, also from time to time with some importance at home. I trust too that my work for the Empire, although at present it is in suspense, will bear fruit, direct or indirect. So perhaps on the whole I have no cause to complain of my occasions.

And - - there is the diary of the four-and-a-half years, and as I write the guns or maroons are firing and I hear the cheers of Victory!

26th March, 1925

It is a long while since I made an entry in this diary, for the good reason that I have been laid up very ill with a horrible disease of the bladder that has been threatening me for some months, and am indeed still laid up and suffering many unpleasant things on which I will not dwell. I do so now, however, to record the death of Lord Curzon who is buried today and over whom a service was celebrated yesterday with much pomp in Westminster Abbey. He was taken ill at Cambridge, moved to London, operated on, suffered for a fortnight and passed away. To my mind, magnificent as it was, and in many ways successful, publicly speaking, his career was still a failure. He could never catch the ear of the crowd; his cold and rather lofty manner was against him. In short he had not the art of popularity. May this great servant of his country forever rest in honour and in peace.

By mid-April Rider Haggard's condition had so deteriorated that he was taken to London for further examination. On 11th of May an operation was performed which, according to the doctors, was entirely successful. Three days later, about mid-day, Rider Haggard died. In the chancel of Ditchingham Church his ashes were laid beneath a slab of black marble inscribed with the words of his choice:

*"Here lie the ashes of Henry Rider Haggard
Knight Bachelor
Knight of the British Empire
Who, with a humble heart, strove to serve his country"*

Practice Exercise 28 C

Diaries and Journals

C. Answer the questions.

1. Place these events in the correct sequence.

- a. ___ H. Rider Haggard is honoured at a luncheon for having a mountain named after him.
- b. ___ H. Rider Haggard celebrates his 60th Birthday.
- c. ___ Peace is declared on November 11, 1918.
- d. ___ H. Rider Haggard dies.
- e. ___ Lord Curzon is buried at Westminster Abbey.
- f. ___ H. Rider Haggard considers writing a book about the History of the War.
- g. ___ The Kaiser and his son, the Crown Prince abdicate.

2. Does the inscription on H. Rider Haggard's tombstone match the person revealed through his personal diary? Explain.

Essays

The essay has its origins in French literature. Modern essays may be formal or informal. Most essays can be placed in one of three categories. Descriptive essays describe; expository essays explain; and narrative essays tell stories. Essay may highlight relationships between facts, comment on current events or issues, or persuade people to think or act on controversial issues.

How to read essays

Essays must be read carefully by determining the reader's purpose for writing. Readers should focus on separating facts from opinions. Readers also need to evaluate the logic used to reach any conclusions. Recognize the techniques some writers use to persuade readers to think or act based on opinions. Don't allow faulty logic and emotional appeals to cloud your judgement of the facts.

Practice Exercise 29 A, B

Essays

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. casually

2. bristled

3. glorious

4. sensibilities

5. discontent

6. engorged

7. cosmic

Spring Fever, or a Case of Restlessness

"It's just spring fever," he said, quite casually. She bristled with annoyance. She didn't like his instant diagnosis of her feelings. She didn't like the fact that he had labelled it a disease and then implied that she would soon be cured of it.

"Maybe it's healthy," she snapped back. "Maybe I don't want to get over it."

Later, thinking about it alone, she decided that he was probably right. It had been the kind of glorious day that favours spring fever the way a swamp favours malaria. It was a May day, and the guard that northerners wear to protect them from the physical awareness of winter had suddenly dropped like layers of clothing onto the floor.

Around her were littered all sorts of lumbering emotional accessories, as if they were the blankets, hats and mittens of winter life. She had the sort of fever that heightens sensibilities rather than thermometers.

The warm May breeze had sent goose bumps across her complacency, and satisfaction sprouted up like her new snap peas.

She felt free-floating discontent, an effect without an object. It wasn't the sort of discontent that comes justifiably when something is wrong. It came rather from an engorged sense of what might be. She was suffering a shy ache for the possible, the what next.

It occurred to her that people mourn for what might have been at three o'clock in the morning. They long for what might-yet-be when this fever strikes.

It was ironic. It wasn't fair. People who survive the hostility of winter deserve some sort of peace in the spring, the languid pleasure that comes after resistance. They deserve to feel the ease of belonging in the universe, instead of battling it.

Instead they get spring fever. That great yawning want.

Was it just some cosmic joke, some cosmic reminder that life never quite lets you off the hook? Was it a mystical memo saying that surviving isn't enough, "just living" isn't a good enough reason for living?

Was spring fever a metabolic insistence on more? The woman remembered a few years back when a friend of hers had emerged unscathed from a serious automobile crash. Days after the first giggly gratitude had worn off this friend had become suddenly restless and searching. Within months she had produced her own life accidents, turning her job over, choosing marriage. Her survival had demanded some justification. She had felt forced to change the norm, pursue some new meaning.

In a smaller way, perhaps, people who merely survive another winter are stuck with the same need.

She thought about how many of us live—surrounding ourselves with security systems, battering down all the hatches against the Januarys and Februarys.

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Then, suddenly, for no apparent reason, when the snow alert is over and May arrives, security seems so limiting and stability feels like defeat rather than achievement. In the place of safety comes the urge to risk, to break patterns, to discover.

In one of his rambling lectures, Alan Watts once said that the most revolutionary question a person could ask is: "What do I want?" There is a feverishness in that question. It's a self-interrogation worthy of spring.

The people who merely assume that the question has a multiple-choice answer check off jogging or love affairs. They decide that their free-floating discontent is anchored to one of the secure decks of their lives and cut loose—from jobs, families, towns.

*But the question always comes back, resisting any final examination. Spring fever, after all, germinates questions, not answers. It is a great, amorphous, rebellious **why**.*

No, she supposed it wouldn't last long. Whether this is a disease or a moment of radiating health, it has a long incubation and short season.

Sooner or later, the elixirs of routines, the pleasant tonics of her life, would "cure" her. She knew that now, though she hadn't when she was younger. The gorgeous discontent was just spring fever and it, too, would pass. She said that with a sense of regret and also, yes, a sense of relief.

Practice Exercise 29 C

Essays

C. Answer the questions.

1. What type of essay is this (expository, descriptive, persuasive)?

2. Explain the meaning of the following quotation.

"She had the sort of fever that heightens sensibilities rather than thermometers."

3. What literary device is used in the following quotation?

"... satisfaction sprouted up like her new snap peas."

4. What is the writers message?

Practice Exercise 29 C - continued

Essays

C.

5. Have you experienced the same type of "spring fever" as the writer?

Journalism

What is journalism?

Journalism refers to the writing of material specifically for the purpose of being published in a newspaper, magazine, or similar type of reading material. Newspapers and magazine are really businesses. Because they are businesses, there are factors that affect the content and style of their publications.

One important factor is that advertisements, a major source of money for the operation of a newspaper, is included as part of the "content" of the publication. This may be in the form of a small advertisement, a full page ad, or an insert. There are other factors that influence the content of a publication.

Some factors that affect the content of a publication include: editorial policy, wishes of the advertisers, availability of information, and interests of readers. Editorial policy may mean that some stories are emphasized while other stories are de-emphasized. Some stories may also be presented in a slanted or biased way. Advertisers may make requests about the content, or treatment of content, which might affect their companies.

Content also varies with the availability of information, and it varies with the publication's focus. Some publishers may not be able to access some information because they can't afford to hire staff, or they can't afford to buy finished stories from companies specializing in writing stories and then selling them to news organizations. These companies are called wire services. Some publications offer local, provincial, national, and international news while other publications offer more local or more national news. Ultimately, the content of a publication depends on the decisions made by its editor or editors.

Stories may be included or excluded based on the interests and desires of the readers. For example, local news stories may be of more interest to a group of readers than international news. Magazines tend to focus on specific groups of readers. Craft magazines, for instance, target people who enjoy specific crafts. The challenge for publishers is to interest as many people as possible. There are two ways of getting buyers interested in a publication.

One easy way of keeping people interested in a publication is to keep the content and style current. The other way is to use techniques that catch the readers attention. The presentation of the content can be objective or subjective. Readers want news that is objective, reliable, and understandable. Objective and reliable reporting of stories is based on balanced presentation of the facts from reliable sources. We have already said that there are barriers to receiving consistent reporting of objective stories. People also respond to subjective (opinion based) content.

"Human interest" stories cause readers to become emotionally involved with a story. Taken to the extreme, these stories become sensationalized "human interest" stories called "tabloid stories." The emphasis in these stories is on details about the people involved. This means the physical and emotional details of the events and the people involved. Regardless of whether the content is presented in an objective or a subjective way, people expect details. This means writers need to provide details about the who, what, where, when, why, and how.

Writers recognize the need to present this information quickly and clearly. Titles are written to allude to the content of the article as well as to capture the reader's attention. Most of the details are presented in the first sentence of the article. The first sentences of an article is called the lead. Less important details follow. This organization of the facts is sometimes referred to as the

inverted pyramid form of organization. The use of photographs and the placement of content are also considered.

What types of journalism are there?

Newspapers and magazines (periodicals) are the most common types of publications. Despite their differences, they have many similarities. Look at the tables outlining the parts, content, and purpose of each section.

| Newspapers | | |
|--|--|---|
| Part | Content | Purpose |
| Masthead | Name of newspaper Editorial information Subscription information | Identify newspaper Contact information |
| Index | Listing of parts | Assist readers |
| Front Page | Important news Human interest stories | Capture attention |
| Editorial Page | Editorial Letters to the editor Political cartoons Opinion columns | Persuade Inform Entertain |
| Section: Sports | News Scores Profiles Schedules | Entertain Inform |
| Section: Finance & Business | Stock Market report Business news Profiles Projections | Inform Entertain |
| Section: Classified | Paid Ads Obituaries Announcements | Sell Inform |
| Section: Arts & Leisure | Schedules & reviews Advice Columns Comics Fashion Health Travel | Entertain Inform |
| Section: Weather | Forecasts Related articles | Inform |
| Advertisements | Paid ads | Sell Persuade |
| Other | Other news articles | Entertain and Inform |

Magazines

| Part | Content | Purpose |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Cover | Title and highlights | Interest |
| Table of Contents | Lists contents | Assist reader |
| Editorial | Editorial Letters to the editor | Persuade Inform Entertain |
| Feature Articles | Longer high interest articles | Entertain Inform |
| Columns | Shorter, regular expository or persuasive articles | Entertain Inform Persuade |
| Ads | Paid ads | Sell Persuade |

How to read newspapers and periodicals

Read newspaper and magazines critically. The first step to reading this type of material critically is to be aware of how and why newspapers and magazines exist. Newspapers and magazines are businesses with varying levels of dependence on advertisers for their existence.

A reader should not assume that all they read is objective or reliable reporting of facts. You will need to use your basic reading skills to recognize fact from opinion. You will need to be able to recognize slanted or biased presentation of arguments. You will also need to be able to recognize faulty logic in both the articles and the advertisements. The following is a list of specific questions you should try to answer:

Who are the major advertisers in the publication?

Does the publication routinely emphasize or exclude specific groups, topics, or issues?

Where are the most important stories placed in a publication?

Does the publication emphasize or sensationalize less important stories?

Does the publication omit important facts creating an unbalanced account of the fact?

Does the publication rely on faulty logic to prove a point-specifically:

*Compare unlike issues, facts, or examples (**False analogy**)*

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*Emphasize a person's characteristics rather than the facts (**Name calling**)*

*Focus on a small, unimportant aspect of an issue at the expense of the real issue (**Ignore the question**)*

*Use statistics to prove points they don't prove (**Misuse statistics**)*

*Imply an argument is correct simply because other people believe the argument (**Bandwagon**)*

*Represent knowledgeable famous people as experts (**Appeal to authority**)*

Practice Exercise 30 A, B

Objective Article

A. Find an objective article in your local or provincial newspaper.

B. Answer the questions.

1. Name the newspaper.

2. Write the title of the article. Is the title appropriate?

3. Summarize the story in a paragraph.

4. Does the article use biased language or a slanted approach? Give examples.

Practice Exercise 30 B - continued

Objective Article

B.

5. Does the story deserve the attention the newspaper has given it? Why or why not?

6. What are your thoughts and feelings about the article?

Practice Exercise 31 A, B

Human Interest Article

A. Find a human interest article in your local or provincial newspaper.

B. Answer the questions.

1. Name the newspaper.

2. Write the title of the article. Is the title appropriate?

3. Summarize the story in a paragraph.

4. Does the article use biased language or a slanted approach? Give examples.

Practice Exercise 31 B - continued

Human Interest Article

B.

5. Does the story deserve the attention the newspaper has given it? Why or why not?

6. What are your thoughts and feelings about the article?

Practice Exercise 32 A, B

Editorial Article

A. Find an editorial cartoon in your local or provincial newspaper.

B. Answer the questions.

1. Name the newspaper.

2. Write the title of the cartoon. Is the title appropriate?

3. Summarize the cartoon's message.

4. Is the cartoon's message biased or slanted? Explain.

Practice Exercise 32 B - continued

Editorial Article

B.

5. How did the cartoonist create humour?

6. What are your thoughts and feelings about the article?

Drama

What is drama?

Drama refers to plays. Plays may be read at home or they may be viewed in a theatre. Each experience offers different things to the reader or to the viewer. Some people enjoy following a play while listening to sound recordings of the authors performances. This allows a person to focus on the dialogue.

Unlike other forms of literature, plays depend on the use of dialogue to communicate the plot, characters, and setting. In addition to the written or spoken dialogue, readers can use the written directions included in the play to learn more about the plot, character, and setting. Viewers of plays have the advantage of seeing the characters, props, and set to learn more about the elements of the play. Another advantage of viewing a play is sound is used to communicate information. The way actors deliver, speak, their lines reveals information about the plot and characters. Music, or other sound effects, may also be used to help bring the plot and characters to life.

Plays have a unique structure compared to other forms of literature. Scenes are the basic unit of action in a play. They deal with a specific conflict. A number of scenes are organized into an act. A play may have one act or more. Modern plays typically contain three to five acts. Acts signal a major change in the play.

How to read drama

Whether reading or watching a play, you should try to attend to specifics details and to try and answer some basic questions to understand the play. You may need to read the play several times out loud to truly understand a play. You will want to pay careful attention to the stage directions as well as the dialogue. For performances, you will want to listen to the dialogue carefully. You will also need to watch and listen carefully to picture how the stage directions are acted out on the stage. The simplest and easiest part to determine is the play's structure. For example, you will want to know, "How many acts are there?" and "How many scenes are in each act?"

The next set of questions deal with the characters. How many and who are the characters? Has the playwright included any stereotypical characters? How does the playwright reveal the personalities of the characters? Once you have determined the structure of the play and the characters, it is time to consider the setting.

The setting involves the setting the playwright places his characters in as well as the actual stage and props used by the actors. How is the setting of the story represented on stage? Are elaborate and colourful props used for the setting, or are few props used? For live (stage) performances, how are light and music used to create the stories setting? Is a narrator used to clarify aspects of the setting by simply stating the place and the time? Finally, does the stage allow the actors the freedom they need to act out the events of the plot?

The plot is obviously plot to the structure, setting, and characters in the play. How do these elements influence the plot? Where do the main conflicts appear in the play? Who is involved in the conflicts? Are lights, music, or other devices used to signal or foreshadow conflicts? Most importantly, what is the theme or the message of the play?

What types of drama are there?

Plays can be categorized based on the number of characters or the number of acts. For example, some plays have only one character while others have several characters. Plays may consist of one act, however they usually consist of three to five acts. Plays can be categorized by the way their themes are presented.

Plays may fall into one of the following categories. They may be: comedies, tragedies, historical, or contemporary. Comedies rely on humour and other literary devices to communicate their messages in a funny way. Tragedies often end with death or destruction of characters. Historical plays attempt to re-enact past events or characters of significance, such as kings or queens. Contemporary plays portray modern characters dealing with modern issues. These plays often allow playwrights to offer their perceptions and thoughts on significant human issues.

Practice Exercise 33 A, B

Drama

A. Use the reading process to guide you in your reading of the following story.

B. Write a complete definition for each word as it is used in the story.

1. primps

2. mending

3. bottom

4. scandalized

5. rough

6. worm

7. incarnate

Death of a Salesman (Excerpt)

by Arthur Miller

ACT ONE

LINDA. But you're doing wonderful, dear. You're making seventy to a hundred dollars a week.

WILLY. But I gotta be at it ten, twelve hours a day. Other men - - I don't know-they do it easier. I don't know why - - I can't stop myself - - I talk too much. A man ought a come in with a few words. One thing about Charley. He's a man of few words, and they respect him.

LINDA. You don't talk too, much, you're just lively.

WILLY (*smiling*). Well, I figure, what the hell, life is short, a couple of jokes.
TO HIMSELF. I joke too much! (*The smile goes.*)

LINDA. Why? You're - -

WILLY. I'm fat. I'm very - - foolish to look at, Linda. I didn't tell you, but Christmas time I happened to be calling on F.H. Stewarts, and a salesman I know, as I was going in to see the buyer I heard him say something about - - walrus. And I - - I cracked him right across the face. I won't take that. I simply will not take that. But they do laugh at me. I know that.

LINDA. Darling...

WILLY. I gotta overcome it. I know I gotta overcome it. I'm not dressing to advantage, maybe.

LINDA. Willy, darling, you're the handsomest man in the world - -

WILLY. Oh, no, Linda.

LINDA. To me you are. (*Slight pause.*) The handsomest.

From the darkness is heard the laughter of a woman. Willy doesn't turn to it, but it continues through Linda's lines.

LINDA. And the boys, Willy. Few man are idolized by their children the way you are.

Music is heard as behind a screen, to the left of the hous., The Woman, dimly seen, is dressing.

WILLY. (*with great feeling*) . You're the best there is, Linda, you're a pal, you know that? On the road - - on the road I want to grab you sometimes and just kiss the life outa you.

The laughter is loud now, and he moves into a brightening area at the left, where The Woman has come from behind the screen and is standing, putting on her hat, looking into a "mirror" and laughing.

WILLY. 'Cause I get so lonely - - especially when business is bad and there's nobody to talk to. I get the feeling that I'll never sell anything again, that I won't make a living for you, or a business, a business for the boys. (*He talks through The Woman 's subsiding laughter; The Woman primps at the "mirror."*) There's so much I want to make for - -

- THE WOMAN.** Me? You didn't make me, Willy. I picked you.
- WILLY.** (*pleased*). You picked me?
- THE WOMAN.** (*who is quite proper-looking. Willy's age*). I did. I've been sitting at that desk watching all the salesman go by, day in, day out. But you've got such a sense of humor, and we do have such a good time together, don't we?
- WILLY.** Sure, sure. (He takes her in his arms.) Why do you have to go now?
- THE WOMAN.** It's two o'clock...
- WILLY.** No, come on in! (*He pulls her.*)
- THE WOMAN.** ...my sister'll be scandalized. When'll you be back?
- WILLY.** Oh, two weeks about. Will you come up again?
- THE WOMAN.** Sure thing. You do make me laugh. It's good for me. (*She squeezes his arm, kisses him.*) And I think you're a wonderful man.
- WILLY.** You picked me, heh?
- THE WOMAN.** Sure. Because you're so sweet. And such a kidder.
- WILLY.** Well, I'll see you next time I'm in Boston.
- THE WOMAN.** I'll put you right through to the buyers.
- WILLY.** (*slapping her bottom*). Right. Well, bottoms up!
- THE WOMAN.** (*slaps him gently and laughs*). You just kill me, Willy. (*He suddenly grabs her and kisses her toughly.*) You kill me. And thanks for the stockings. I love a lot of stockings. Well, good night.
- WILLY.** Good night. And keep your pores open!
- THE WOMAN.** Oh, Willy!
- The Woman bursts out laughing, and Linda's laughter blends in. The Woman disappears into the dark. Now the area at the kitchen table brightens. Linda is sitting where she was at the kitchen table, but now is mending a pair of her silk stockings.*
- LINDA.** You are, Willy. The handsomest man. You've got no reason to feel that - -
- WILLY.** (*coming out of the The Woman's dimming area and going over to Linda*). I'll make it all up to you, Linda, I'll - -
- LINDA.** There's nothing to make up, dear. You're doing fine, better than - -
- WILLY.** (*noticing her mending*). What's that?
- LINDA.** Just mending my stockings. They're so expensive - -
- WILLY.** (*angrily, taking them from her*). I won't have you mending stockings in this house! Now throw them out!
- Linda puts the stockings in her pocket.*
- BERNARD.** (*entering on the run*). Where is he? If he doesn't study!

Reading Comprehension #14018

- WILLY.** *(moving to the forestage, with great agitation).* You'll give him the answers!
- BERNARD.** I do, but I can't on a Regents! That's a state exam! They're liable to arrest me!
- WILLY.** Where is he? I'll whip him. I'll whip him!
- LINDA.** And he'd better give back that football, Willy, it's not nice.
- WILLY.** Biff! Where is he? Why is he taking everything?
- LINDA.** He's too rough with the girls, Willy. All the mothers are afraid of him!
- WILLY.** I'll whip him!
- BERNARD.** He's driving the car without a license!
- The Woman's laugh is heard.*
- WILLY.** Shut up!
- LINDA.** All the mothers - -
- WILLY.** Shut up!
- BERNARD.** *(backing quietly away and out).* Mr. Birnbaum says he's stuck up.
- WILLY.** Get outa here!
- BERNARD.** If he doesn't buckle down he'll flunk math! *(He goes off)*
- LINDA.** He's right, Willy, you've gotta - -
- WILLY.** *(exploding at her).* There's nothing the matter with him! You want him to be a worm, like Bernard? He's got spirit, personality...
- As he speaks, Linda, almost in tears, exits into the living room. Willy is alone in the kitchen, wilting and staring. The leaves are gone. It is night again, and the apartment houses look down from behind.*
- WILLY.** WILLY. Loaded with it. Loaded! What is he stealing? He's giving it back, isn't he? Why is he stealing? What did I tell him? I never in my life told him anything but decent things.
- Happy in pajamas has come down the stairs; Willy suddenly becomes aware of Happy's presence.*
- HAPPY.** Let's go now, come on.
- WILLY.** *(sitting down at the kitchen table).* Huh! Why did she have to wax the floors herself? Every time she waxes the floors she keels over. She knows that!
- HAPPY.** Shh! Take it easy. What brought you back tonight?
- WILLY.** I got an awful scare. Nearly hit a kid in Yonkers. God! Why didn't I go to Alaska with my brother Ben that time! Ben! That man was a genius, that man was success incarnate! What a mistake! He begged me to go.
- HAPPY.** Well, there's no use in - -

Reading Comprehension #14018

- WILLY.** You guys! There was a man started with the clothes on his back and ended up with diamond mines!
- HAPPY.** Boy, someday I'd like to know how he did it.
- WILLY.** What's the mystery? He knew what he wanted and went out and got it! Walked into a jungle, and comes out, the age of twenty-one, and he's rich! The world is an oyster, but you don't crack it open on a mattress!
- HAPPY.** Pop, I told you I'm gonna retire you for life.
- WILLY.** You'll retire me for life on seventy goddamned dollars a week? And your women and your car and your apartment, and you'll retire me for life! Christ's sake, I couldn't get past Yonkers today! Where are you guys? Where are you? The woods are burning! I can't drive a car!

Practice Exercise 33 C - continued

Drama

C.

3. What is ironic about Linda mending her stockings? Why did Willy get angry about this?

4. Biff, one of Willy's sons, does not appear in the above excerpt. Reading the other characters' dialogue carefully, how would you describe Biff?
