



Short Stories

for Reading 7
by Davina Ramirez
2022 Edition

this book belongs to:

Short Stories

for Level 7 Academic Reading

by Davina Ramirez

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To the Teacher

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This workbook has also been designed with assessment in mind. Chapter 5 is explicitly designed to elicit assignments that can be evaluated with rubrics such as the LEAP VALUE rubrics for “Intercultural Knowledge and Competence” and “Critical Thinking.” Chapters 6 and 7 can be used the same way, especially if introduced with Ch. 5. Of course, every chapter includes assignments that can be evaluated with rubrics for “Reading.”

I maintain a website with supplementary materials, including slideshows and videos, at <http://spot.pcc.edu/~dramirez>. Those materials are also available to you under the same Creative Commons license. If you use the video lectures for the readings (or create your own), this workbook can be used for the “flipped classroom” approach. You can also alternate, using a traditional approach for some chapters and a flipped approach for others.

I hope you find this workbook useful!

Davina Ramirez

1.- Vocabulary for Discussing Fiction

Know these words and phrases. We will use them when discussing the novel.

Setting

“Setting” is the time and the place of the story. In other words, *when* and *where* does it happen? The answer is the *setting*.

Try It: Identify the settings of each story.

Movie: *Titanic*

Place:

Time:

Fairy tale: “Cinderella”

Place:

Time:

Play: *Romeo and Juliet*

Place:

Time:

Movie: *Star Wars*

Place:

Time:

Setting in More Detail

There are three levels we can consider when discussing setting:

- the smallest and most specific level:
the *micro setting*
- the medium level, or the *meso setting*: in between the smallest and largest levels
- the most general, or the *macro setting*

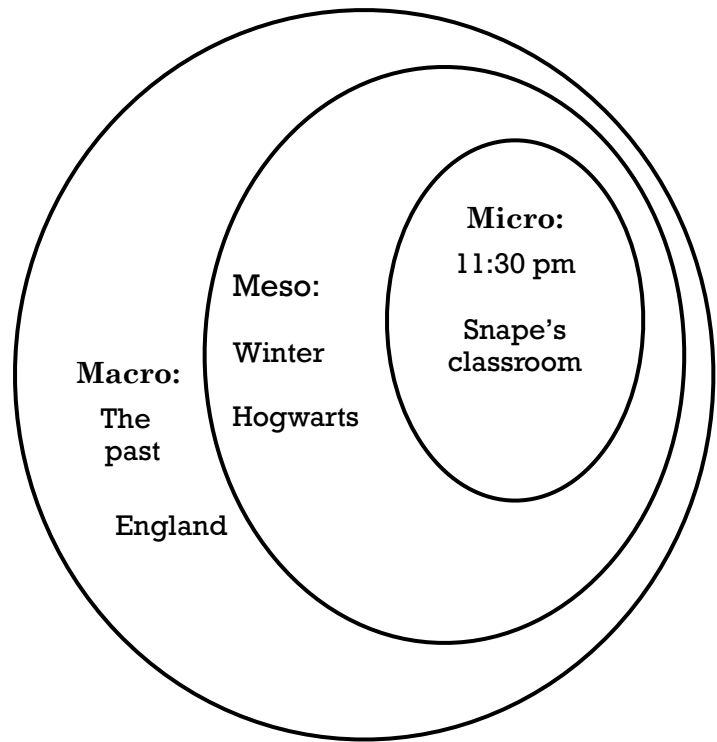


Fig 1. Detailed setting for a chapter from *Harry Potter*

For most fiction, the macro setting does not change. The micro setting changes when the characters move around or a few hours pass.

Try It:

Label the settings for the story "Cinderella." Try to remember at least two different **micro settings** of the story.

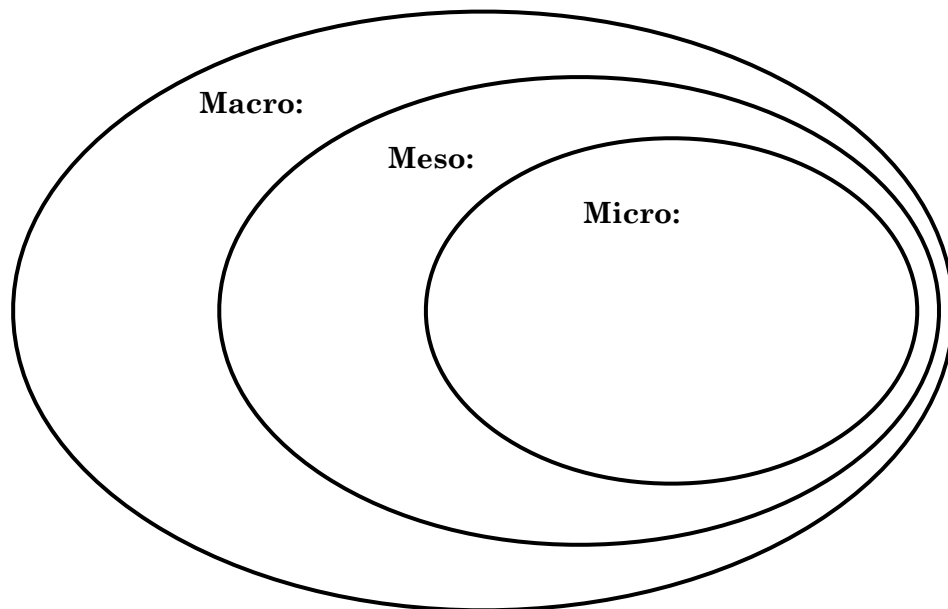


Fig 2. Settings for the fairy tale "Cinderella"

2. Character and Characterization

“Characters” are _____

A character in a work of fiction can be a *main character* or *minor character*.

Main characters make the story happen. The story might be told from their point of view. They are the ones the author spends most time describing. They are the ones whose actions affect the story. It’s common to see these three main character types:

- *a protagonist, also called the “hero” or “good guy”
- *the protagonist’s friend, sidekick or loved one
- *the antagonist, also called the “villain” or “bad guy”

Try It! For each of these works of fiction, list the main characters.

<i>Titanic:</i>	“Cinderella:”	<i>Romeo and Juliet:</i>	<i>Star Wars:</i>

Think About ...

Can an animal be a character?

What else can be a character?

What's the difference between a main character and a minor character?

3. Plot

Plot is “what happens” in a story.

Imagine that someone asks you to tell them the story of a movie you saw. You’ll tell them what happened, in the same time order as the movie showed you. In other words: You’ll tell them *the plot*.

A summary of a story is often just a summary of the *plot*.

One way to summarize a plot is by making a timeline to organize what happened *first, second, third ...* This is the *timeline* method. It puts the story into *chronological order*.

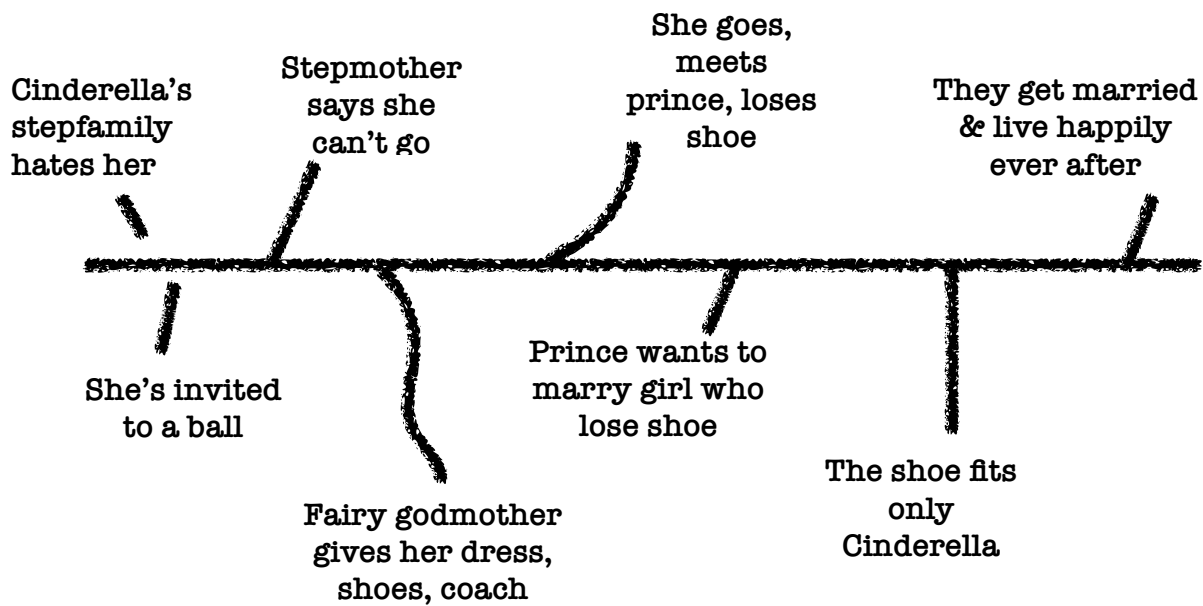
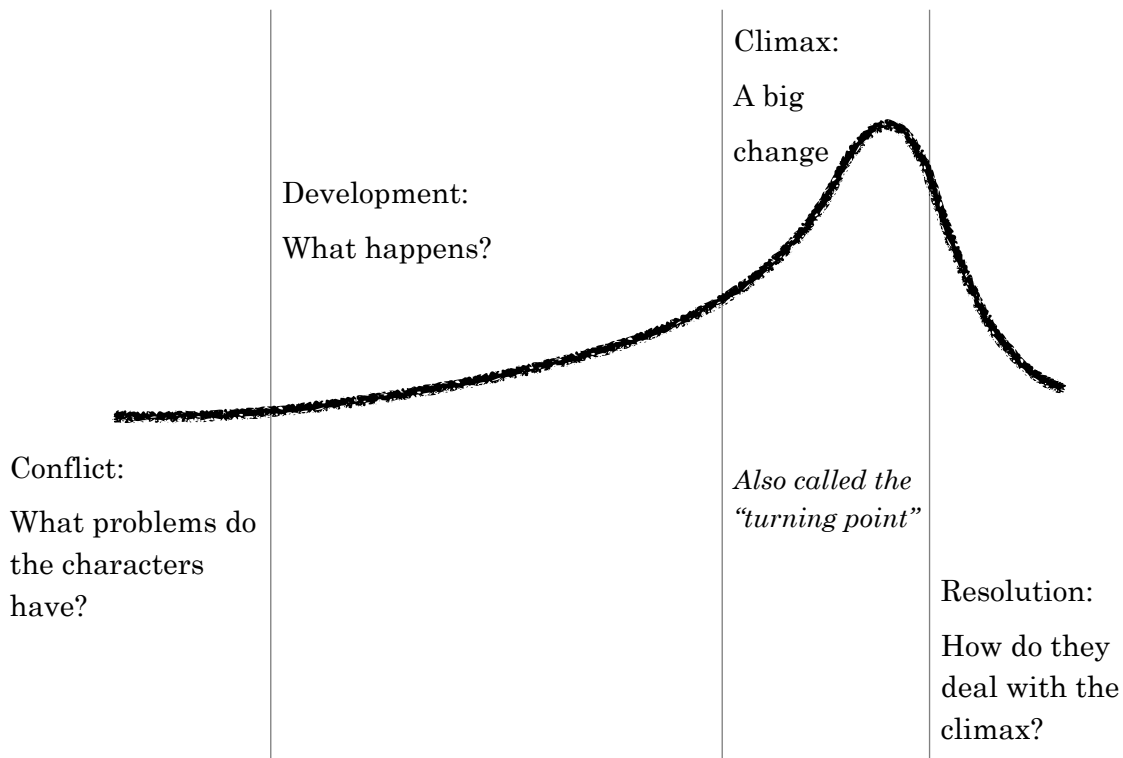


Fig. 3: Timeline for story “Cinderella”

You can also understand the plot by asking “What basic problems do the characters have? How do these problems make the story happen?” This is the narrative arc method.

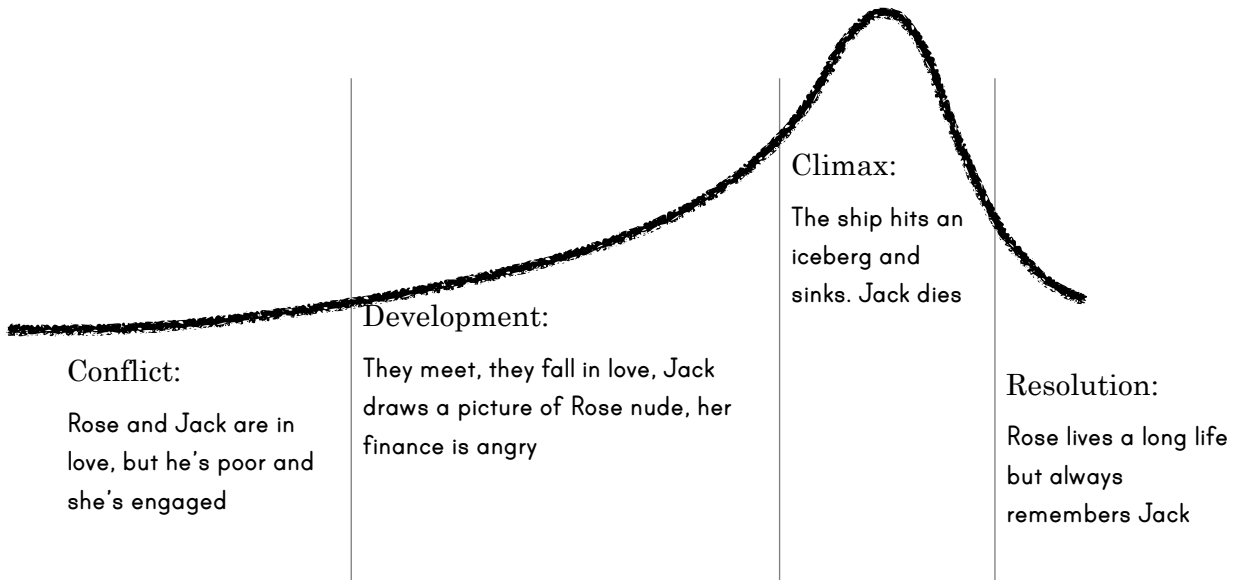


A Narrative Arc is a curved line with 4 sections. Every work of fiction - and every good “story” - has all 4 sections. The line (the "arc") rises to show how active or exciting the story is.

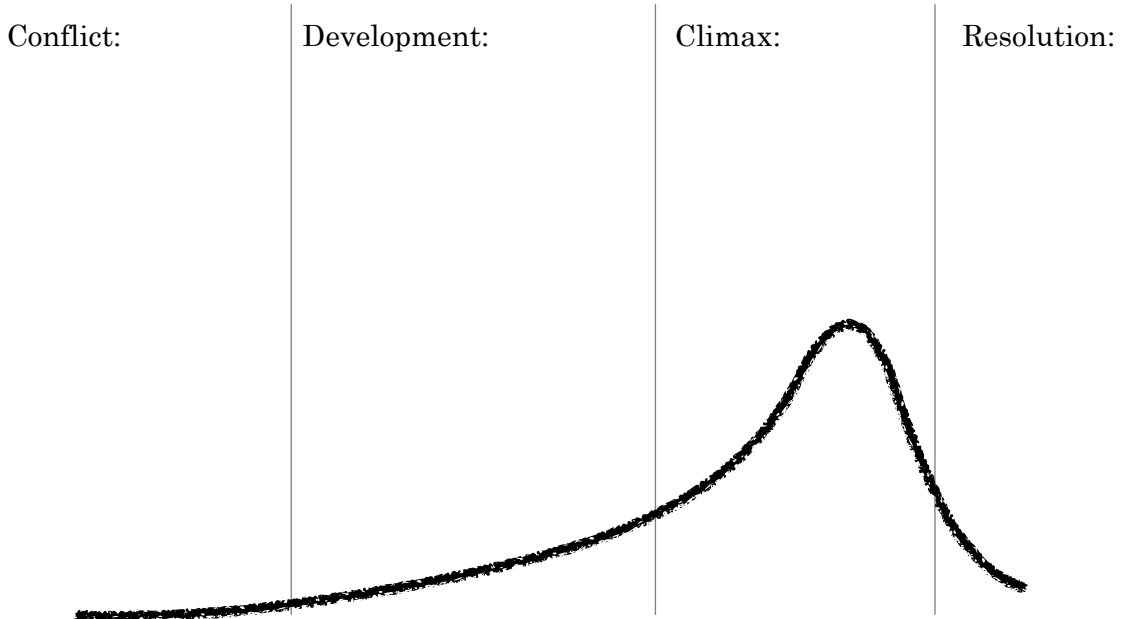
Try It:

Fill out the narrative arc for the stories we've been talking about. The first is done as an example.

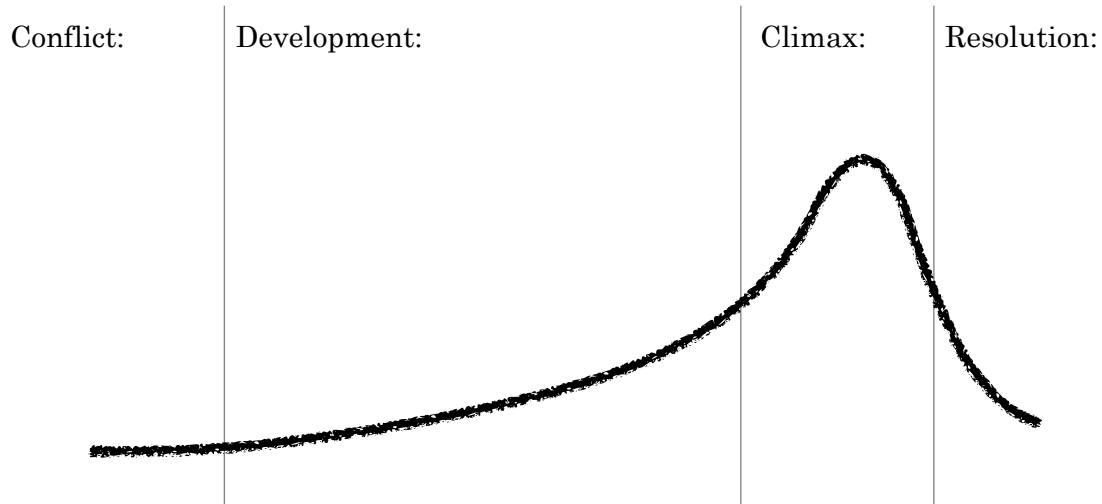
1. *Titanic*



2. "Cinderella"



3. Create a narrative arc for a story of your choice.



**Notice that these first three concepts answer the key questions
“Where? When? Who? What? Why?”**

Literary Terms

There are many words used to discuss writing. Students are both writers and readers, so these words are useful to know.

Writing Type	Definition
_____ Fiction	A. The story of a person's life, written by someone else
_____ Non-fiction	B. A short piece of writing on one topic that includes a thesis statement
_____ Biography	C. A long work of fiction
_____ Autobiography	D. Writing that tells a story, either real or imaginary
_____ Memoir	E. Writing based on real people and events
_____ Exposition	F. A traditional story meant to entertain or teach
_____ Narrative	G. A narrative based on a person's memories
_____ Essay	H. Writing that explains or defines something
_____ Myth	I. A long work of fiction told with pictures
_____ Folk Tale	J. Writing about imaginary people and events
_____ Novel	K. A traditional story meant to explain the world
_____ Graphic Novel	L. The story of a person's life, written by the person

When we speak about writing types, we can use the words *text* or *reading* for any type of writing.

More about Specific Types of Short Fiction

There are many varieties of short fiction. These short works can be considered “short stories” in some ways, but not in others. Each form has its own unique cultural role. Humans created each type to fulfill a certain cultural need, which shapes their forms. Here are five common types of traditional short fiction.

Myth

Myths are some of the oldest stories ever told. ancient humans, looking around the mysterious natural world, created stories to explain what they saw. Myths answer the questions: Where did we come from? Why do we exist? Who created this world? Why does the sun rise, the winter come, the rainbow appear?

Western culture is founded on Greek and Roman cultures. These two cultures shared many of the same stories, although the languages were different. These stories have many of the same characters. Most come from a large family of gods who walked on Earth and often interacted with humans. The mythology of Greece and of Rome influence Western culture even today.

Many myths have these qualities: They involve gods, humans with god-like qualities, half-human, half-animal monsters, or humans who transform into animals or plants. They are set in ancient times. They often explain natural phenomena, answering questions like “Why do we hear thunder?” or “What happens after we die?” Finally, a single myth is often part of a much larger set of stories about the same characters.

Myths You Know:

Parables

A parable is a short story used to explain a difficult idea. Parables are traditionally used in religion. These short stories are meant to make you think deeply about a complex spiritual idea. Many parables are extremely short; some are only a sentence or two long. The characters in the parable are usually not named. While every parable has a lesson, it is sometimes very difficult to figure out what the lesson is.

Parables You Know:

Fable

Like a parable, a fable is meant to teach a lesson. However, a fable's lesson is always very clear, and is often part of the story itself. Fables often have speaking animals as characters. the last line of the fable usually shares the lesson, which is called the *moral*.

Fables You Know:

Folktale

Every human culture has countless folktales. These are the stories spoken aloud and shared from the time before technology was used for entertainment. Folktales are shared for amusement and pleasure, but they also share cultural values such as *what a parent is responsible for, what makes a good wife or a bad wife, how power should be handled, and why people should be honest*. Unlike a fable, a typical folktale does not end with a specific moral. the characters of a folktale are often human. Sometimes the teller of a folktale includes qualities to make it more authentic, adding sentences like “This happened in my grandmother’s time” or by naming a specific town or part of a country.

There is no strong division between a folktale and a myth, but folktales are typically more informal, passed along by word of mouth and not written down. Unlike a myth, a folktale almost never has a god as a character, and the characters in one folktale usually do not appear in any other folktale.

Fairy Tale

Fairy tales are a special group of folktales which are often told to children. While a folktale might be extremely violent or scary, a fairytale typically focuses on more pleasant things, such as fairies, talking animals, and treasure. The plot of a fairy tale is almost always the same: a person faces a challenge, and if they are good, honest and kind, they are rewarded - with marriage if they are female and with wealth if they are male. Interestingly, many fairy tales told today include a stepmother as a *villain*, or “bad guy.”

Like a fable, a fairy tale usually has some sort of lesson, but the lesson is implied rather than direct. The first words of a fairy tale are usually “Once upon a time,” and the last words are usually “... And they lived happily ever after.”

Folktales or Fairy Tales You Know:

Storytelling Practice

Think of all the many, many stories that you know. Choose one that you like and prepared to tell it to a small group of classmates. You should speak for just a few minutes. When each person has told their story, fill out this form as a group. Try to identify which category the story belongs to.

<p>1. What story did you hear? Use the traditional title or give it one.</p>	<p>What type of story is it? Discuss why it fits this category.</p> <p>myth</p> <p>parable</p> <p>fable</p> <p>folktale</p> <p>fairy tale</p>
<p>2. What story did you hear? Use the traditional title or give it one.</p>	<p>What type of story is it? Discuss why it fits this category.</p> <p>myth</p> <p>parable</p> <p>fable</p> <p>folktale</p> <p>fairy tale</p>
<p>3. What story did you hear? Use the traditional title or give it one.</p>	<p>What type of story is it? Discuss why it fits this category.</p> <p>myth</p> <p>parable</p> <p>fable</p> <p>folktale</p> <p>fairy tale</p>

When you're done: What was the most common story type? Why?

Think of stories that fit the other categories.

2. Fun Home Excerpt

Fun Home is a graphic novel. It is a **memoir** (reflection on the writer's life) written by Alison Bechdel and first published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in 2006. The language in this graphic novel is challenging. Use the background given here and the beautifully drawn pictures in the excerpt to help you understand the emotions Allison feels in Chapter 1.

Start by reading these myths aloud in small groups. Figure out the bold words: guess, discuss or look them up.

<p>Pasiphae: /pæsɪfeɪ/ horrible: cursed: cheating: hungered for: flesh: maze: prey: victims:</p>	<h3>1. The Myth of the Minotaur</h3> <p>The Minotaur was a monster that was half bull and half human. It was born to Queen Pasiphae, the wife of King Minos. The story is too long to explain here, but this horrible child was the result of the Queen being cursed by the gods. When the Minotaur grew up, it hungered for human flesh. King Minos decided to keep it and feed his enemies' children to it. He needed a prison for the Minotaur where the creature could live but not escape. To solve this problem, he went to the inventor Daedalus. Daedalus built a huge, complex maze called the Labyrinth. It was so difficult to get in or out, the Minotaur could not escape – and neither could his human prey. King Minos could put his victims in to the Labyrinth, where the Minotaur would eventually find them and eat them.</p>
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<p>sacrifice: Ariadne: /3-iʏ æd niʏ/ Theseus: /Θiʏ siʏ ʌs/</p> <p>fasten:</p> <p>thread:</p> <p>escape:</p> <p>elope:</p> <p>imprison:</p> <p>guarded:</p>	<h2>2. The Myth of Theseus</h2> <p>Theseus was a prince from the city of Athens. He was sent to King Minos as a human sacrifice. However, Minos's daughter, Ariadne, saw Theseus and fell in love with him. Her father refused to listen to her and insisted on placing Theseus into the Labyrinth.</p> <p>Ariadne went to Daedalus and asked him for advice. Daedalus suggested that she could fasten a long thread near the entrance to the Labyrinth. Theseus could take this thread and leave it behind him as he entered the Labyrinth, then follow it to escape. She did this. Theseus entered the Labyrinth, fought the Minotaur and killed it, and then escaped by following the thread. Ariadne and Theseus then ran away together. When King Minos learned that Daedalus had helped his daughter to elope, he punished Daedalus by imprisoning him with his son Icarus on a small, rocky island which was guarded by his soldiers from all sides.</p>
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<p>Daedalus: /dɛdələs/ Icarus: /Ik ə rəs/ barren: genius: gifted: leapt: thrilled: melt: over-confidence:</p>	<h3>3. The Myth of Daedalus and Icarus</h3> <p>Daedalus and Icarus were given a small amount of food each day, but there was almost nothing on the barren island to eat or to do. However, Daedalus was a true genius and the most gifted inventor of his time. He collected beeswax from the bees that lived on the island. He collected feathers from the seabirds who flew by the island. Eventually, he had enough beeswax and feathers to form into huge wings. He attached two wings to his son Icarus and two wings to himself. Father and son leapt off a rocky cliff and began to fly. Young Icarus was so thrilled that he began to go higher and higher. His father shouted at him, warning him not to fly too close to the sun, because the heat would melt the beeswax. In his excitement and over-confidence, Icarus ignored him. As he flew higher and higher, the wax softened, and the feathers fell out of the wings. Icarus fell to his death in the ocean below.</p>
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Check your understanding: Can you retell each myth in a few sentences without looking at the readings?

* * *

Before You Read:

Discuss some or all of these questions. Take notes in the spaces provided here.

1. Based only on your life experience, what percentage of families are really happy? Is this percentage different in different countries?
2. Many people have a hobby, something they enjoy doing in their free time. Is a hobby always healthy? What are problems hobbies can cause?
3. Americans often believe that the job a person does should fit their interests or passions. What do you think of this idea?
4. Every parent keeps some secrets from their children. What secrets are OK to keep, and what secrets might be dangerous?
5. Is it important for fathers to show affection to their children?
6. How much freedom should children have to choose their own clothes or hairstyle?

Reading in “Chunks”

A “chunk” is a group of words that “go together” and create a meaning. A good reader reads a “chunk” together as one unit. Read this part of the story aloud or listen to your instructor read. Add glosses (a gloss is a note about meaning) as needed.

Story	Glosses
<p>Like many fathers, mine could occasionally be prevailed on for a spot of “airplane.” As he launched me, my full weight would fall on the pivot point between his feet and my stomach. It was a discomfort well worth the rare physical contact, and certainly worth the moment of perfect balance when I soared above him. In the circus, acrobatics where one person lies on the floor balancing another are called “Icarian games.” Considering the fate of Icarus after he flouted his father's advice and flew so close to the Sun his wings melted perhaps some dark humor is intended. In our particular reenactment of this mythic relationship, it was not me but my father who was to plummet from the sky. But before he did so, he managed to get quite a lot done.</p>	<p>I could get my dad to play the game “airplane” with me</p> <p>it hurt my stomach but it was worth it because he usually didn’t touch me or hug me and it was fun to balance</p> <p>maybe the name is a joke because Icarus fell and died</p> <p>We were like the myth but I didn’t fall instead my dad fell</p>

Cultural Background

Some stories are set in a culture very different from the ones we know. Maybe they are set in the far past, or maybe they are set in a country with traditions and expectations that we don't know about. This can make characters' actions hard to understand. This section is meant to help explain a few key parts of this story's cultural background.

Alison Bechdel was a child in the 1970s. She was raised in a small town in the state of Pennsylvania. Her family appeared to be a perfectly normal, and actually quite successful, American family from the outside, but the feelings within the family were much more difficult.

Styles of the 1970's

The 1970s were a time of major cultural changes. One small way you can see this is in the clothing that Alison wears as a child. "Unisex" – what we would call "gender-neutral" today – clothing and hairstyles were popular.

Peace signs  and happy faces  were stylish at the time.

Sexual Identity

In the 1970s, gay people began to fight for social acceptance throughout the US. This was a big change from hundreds of years of American culture. Most gay and lesbian people in the 1970s would hide or deny their identity. Most communities would not accept a gay person. Many gay people probably could not accept themselves. Suicide was common as a solution to the unhappiness of being a gay or lesbian person at a time when homosexuality was hated.

Literature

Alison's family was, as she says in the memoir, unusual. Both of her parents were teachers. In fact, they were English teachers. They loved literature and reading. In this graphic novel, Alison's father can be seen reading novels that symbolize some of his problems.

"It's a Wonderful Life"

This classic Christmas movie was made in 1946. It has been popular ever since. From the 1970s until today, this movie is shown on TV every Christmas season. It's the story of a "perfect" father and family man who faces a major problem, wishes he had never been born, and finds out what life would be like if he did not exist.

Vocabulary

The reading for this section is extremely challenging. It includes many words used in architecture and design. There are also many difficult academic words. Discuss words on this list to understand their meanings, but *do not try to memorize the definitions*. Instead, predict the mood of the reading and some ideas you might expect.

- 1) **flout** – rebel against, refuse to obey
- 2) **monomaniacal** – focused only on one thing, to the point of insanity
- 3) **plummet** – fall straight down at high speed
- 4) **mansion** – large, impressive house
- 5) **demur** – say something isn't true; deny
- 6) **resent** – feel something is unfair and feel angry about it
- 7) **implication** – the conclusion you reach from something that isn't directly stated
- 8) **conjure** – create by magic
- 9) **legerdemain** – skillful use of the hand to do magic tricks
- 10) **alchemist** – a person who magically changes one substance into another
- 11) **savant** – person with extraordinary knowledge of one specific area
- 12) **indifferent** – doesn't care about
- 13) **blithely** – happily, in a carefree way
- 14) **Spartan** – Refers to ancient Sparta, a society which was based completely around the military and preparation for war. Art of all kinds as considered useless in Sparta.
- 15) **Athenian** – Refers to ancient Athens, a society based around art, beauty and philosophy.
- 16) **Victorian** – The time period when Queen Victoria ruled England, 1837-1901. A time of conservative social rules and detailed, heavy decorating styles.
- 17) **butch** – a slang word meaning tough, masculine, aggressive
- 18) **nelly** – a slang word meaning girlish, feminine, unmanly
- 19) **utilitarian** – Adjective meaning designed only for use, without considering attractiveness
- 20) **aesthete** – a person who has a special, intense appreciation for beauty

- 21) **obscured** - hidden
- 22) **embellishment** – unnecessary decoration
- 23) **retrospect** – looking back in time
- 24) **sham** – fake, false
- 25) **simulacrum** – an imitation of something real
- 26) **period** – made to look like it comes from a specific time in the past
- 27) **Chippendale** – a famous furniture designer from the 1800s
- 28) **idle remark** – something said without thinking
- 29) **margin for error** – forgiveness for small mistakes
- 30) **tailspin** – falling down in an uncontrollable way
- 31) **buss** – a dry, formal kiss
- 32) **unaccountably** – for no reason
- 33) **Scale model** – a perfect reproduction that's much smaller than the original
- 34) **self-loathing** – hating yourself, hating something about yourself that you can't change
- 35) **aromatic musk** – old, pleasant smell
- 36) **meticulous** – careful, precise
- 37) **tension** – uncomfortable situation where you cannot relax
- 38) **incandescent** – shining brightly, like a light bulb
- 39) **The bar is lower** – expectations are low; nobody expects you to do well
- 40) **suffusion** – slow spreading feeling
- 41) **sluiced** – rinse with a free flow of water
- 42) **retroactively** – applying something from today to the past
- 43) **converse** – a situation that is in some ways the reverse of another situation
- 44) **amputee** – person whose arm or leg has been removed
- 45) **flesh-and-blood** – real, alive

Plot

In this chapter, not much “happens.” Instead, we enter Bechdel’s memories. She shares the look and emotions of her childhood home. We see moments of love, of work, and of violence. We see the basic conflict that her entire 240-page memoir will explore.

However, there is no traditional narrative arc. For this reason, it is difficult to analyze this reading by summarizing it.

***Fun Home* is ...**

- ★ narrative
- ★ non-fiction
- ★ memoir
- ★ a graphic novel

Some memoirs are autobiographical, but this novel does NOT tell the entire story of Bechdel’s life, so it is not an autobiography.

Literature Terms:

Three important words to understand as we discuss writing are *author*, *character* and *narrator*.

- ★ The *author* is the person who wrote the text. A text can have more than one author. Usually, the name of the author is clear. However, sometimes the author is unknown, or *anonymous*; sometimes the author uses a false name, or *pseudonym* to hide their real identity. The *author* of this reading is Alison Bechdel. When we write about her, we will usually use her last name only.
- ★ A *character* is a person in the story. A character might represent a real person or an imaginary one. A character could represent the author, or an imaginary version of the author. However, a character is not a real person: they exist only in the text. The main *character* in this reading is the little girl Alison.
- ★ The *narrator* is “the one who tells the story.” In fiction, some narrators represent a character in the story, and some narrators represent the author.

Read the excerpt several times. Remember: Once is not enough for college!

Sentence Exploration

Many of Bechdel's sentences have complex grammar and contain rich meaning. These sentences need to be read carefully. Bechdel also states two shocking facts about her father in the same way – very casually and non-dramatically. These simple sentences also need to be analyzed carefully. Write glosses – not exact paraphrases, but general explanation of the meanings – for these sentences.

- 1) When other children called our house a mansion, I would demur.

- 2) I resented the implication that my family was rich, or unusual in any way.

- 3) ... these were not so much bought as produced from thin air by my father's remarkable legedermain.

- 4) Daedalus too, was indifferent to the human cost of his projects.

- 5) In theory, his arrangement with my mother was more cooperative. In practice it was not.

6) My father began to see morally suspect to me long before I knew that he actually had a dark secret.

7) He used his skillful artifice not to make things, but to make things appear to be what they were not.

8) Although I'm good at enumerating my father's flaws, it's hard for me to sustain much anger at him.

9) ... his absence resonated retroactively, echoing back through all the time I knew him.

10) Maybe it was the converse of the way amputees feel pain in a missing limb.

Comprehension

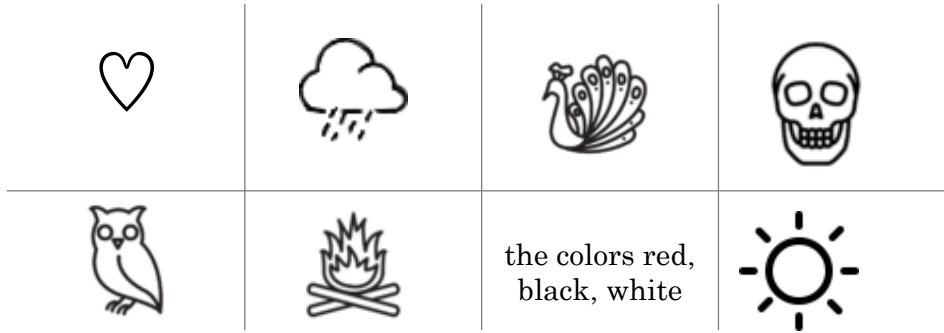
After you've read the story a few times, discuss these questions.

1. Does Alison love her father? What in the story supports your answer?
2. Compare the Christmas memories Bechdel shows us on page 11 with the image on the top of page 13. Are they both true memories?
3. On page 14, Alison says she *resented* something. What is the quote? What does it mean?
4. On page 15, Alison compares herself to her father. How are they different?
5. Explain the panel on the top of page 17. What do we learn here?
6. Alison described one time she kissed her father goodnight. Why does she show this story? How did it go? How did she feel after kissing him?
7. *Fun Home* has been protested and banned in some places. Can you guess why? What's your reaction to that?

Symbolism

“Symbolism” is a way that a writer adds meaning to their work. A symbol is a thing or action that has a meaning in addition to its obvious, superficial meaning. A white bird, for example, might symbolize peace. *Fun Home* is rich in symbolism.

Here are some pictures that are common symbols; what does each one represent? Is it different depending on your culture?



Be careful about the word “symbol:” there is a difference between *symbolism* (noun) and *symbolize* (verb). The adjective is *symbolic*.

Writers use symbolism in many ways. Whenever a writer describes a noun, consider if the noun could represent a bigger idea.

- 1) On page 22, Bechdel compares the warm feeling as her father poured hot water over her. with the “unbearable” cold when the water stopped. What does this symbolize?
- 2) On page 23, there are five drawing of Alison with her father. Compare each drawing to the next one. How do these drawings symbolize their relationship?

3. “There Will Come Soft Rains”

“There Will Come Soft Rains” is a short story written by the great American science-fiction author Ray Bradbury. It was first published in 1950 and appears in *The Martian Chronicles*.

Poem

There Will Come Soft Rains

by Sara Teasdale, 1920

There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground,
And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;

And frogs in the pools singing at night,
And wild plum trees in tremulous white;

Robins will wear their feathery fire,
Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;

And not one will know of the war, not one
Will care at last when it is done.

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree,
If mankind perished utterly;

And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn
Would scarcely know that we were gone.

- What does the poem mean?

- Do you agree with the poem’s prediction?

Before You Read

Answer each with a short discussion. Use complete sentences.

1. What are *nuclear weapons*? Have they been used before? When?
2. What are the effects of a nuclear bomb?
3. What was the *Cold War*? When did it happen? Why did it happen?
4. What modern devices make a “smart” house?
5. Will all houses be “smart houses” in the future?
6. Do you have any “smart home” devices? Do you want to live in a smart home?

Reading in Chunks

Read this part of the story aloud or listen to your instructor read. Answer the questions.

Story	Questions
<p>In the living room the voice-clock sang, <i>Tick-tock, seven o'clock,</i> <i>time to get up, time to get up, seven o'clock!</i> as if it were afraid that nobody would. The morning house lay empty. The clock ticked on, repeating and repeating its sounds into the emptiness. <i>Seven-nine, breakfast time, seven-nine!</i> In the kitchen the breakfast stove gave a hissing sigh and ejected from its warm interior eight pieces of perfectly browned toast, eight eggs sunnyside up, sixteen slices of bacon, two coffees, and two cool glasses of milk.</p> <p>“Today is August 4, 2026,” said a second voice from the kitchen ceiling, “in the city of Allendale, California.” It repeated the date three times for memory's sake. “Today is Mr. Featherstone's birthday. Today is the anniversary of Tilita's marriage. Insurance is payable, as are the water, gas, and light bills.” Somewhere in the walls, relays clicked, memory tapes glided under electric eye.</p> <p><i>Eight-one, tick-tock, eight-one o'clock,</i> <i>off to school, off to work, run, run, eight-one!</i></p> <p>But no doors slammed, no carpets took the soft tread of rubber heels. It was raining outside. The weather box on the front door sang quietly: "Rain, rain, go away; rubbers, raincoats for today..." And the rain tapped on the empty house, echoing.</p>	<p>What is a “voice-clock”?</p> <p>Is it actually afraid?</p> <p>Why are some words in italics?</p> <p>Describe the family who would eat this breakfast.</p> <p>What kind of technology are “relays” and “memory tapes?” Do we use these technologies today?</p> <p>Why is the house empty? Guess.</p>

Cultural Background

“All Summer in a Day” was written in 1950. Ray Bradbury, the writer, was one of the original creators of the science fiction genre.

The US in 1950

The 1940’s and 1950’s – after WWII – were a period of incredible technological change. Many everyday objects for us – cars, phones, computers – were available to common people for the first time ever, and that changed American culture. Everyday people were more comfortable than ever before.

Most countries at this time could be divided into two groups: the capitalist and democratic group, which included the US and Western Europe, and the Communist group, which included Russia. At this time Russia was called the USSR.

Learn more about post-war America here:

<https://www.history.com/news/post-world-war-ii-boom-economy>

The Cold War

But these technological advances had a dark side. These technologies were also used for war. The US and the Soviet Union were enemies; both sides raced to create more powerful weapons, rockets, satellites, computers, bombs. People in both countries lived in non-stop fear of the other side. This competition was called the “Cold War.” It affected the US by creating a feeling of distrust and fear. Americans were suspicious and sometimes accused each other of being “Communists.” The Cold War went on until the 1980s, and it affected many countries.

Learn more about the Cold War here:

https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold_War

Learn about the Space Race here:

https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_Race

Was your home country also affected by the Cold War? Brainstorm a few facts you know about the U.S. and your home country at that time.

Science Fiction

Because of the fast technological development, humans suddenly were thinking about the possibility of entering outer space and traveling to the moon, to other planets, even to the stars. This changed the imagination of everyday people. A new kind of writing developed: science fiction. This was fiction that told stories that were only possible with technology that was different from the world of that time. Many stories were about space travel. Other common topics were robots and atomic bombs.

Learn more about science fiction here:

https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science_fiction

Format

Stories like “August 2026: There Will Come Soft Rains” appeared in magazines like *Fantastic Stories*. Notice the use of quotation marks and italics. Why is each used?

Vocabulary

Here are some verbs you will read in the short story. Write a translation into your language of each word.

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| 1) tick: | 10) flush: |
| 2) hiss: | 11) dart: |
| 3) eject: | 12) crawl: |
| 4) click: | 13) thud: |
| 5) glide: | 14) whirl: |
| 6) slam: | 15) knead: |
| 7) chime: | 16) fade: |
| 8) scrape: | 17) whirl: |
| 9) digest: | 18) pelt: |

Fill in the blanks with the correct words:

radioactive paranoia cavort tremulous oblivious sublime

1. Great art, nature and religion give people _____ emotions.
2. People suffering from _____ don't trust other people.
3. Baby goats are funny to watch as they, _____ with their friends.
4. Chernobyl and Fukushima are two places with heavy _____ contamination.
5. The _____ little dog hid under the table, shaking with fear.
6. The calm kindergarten teacher seemed _____ to the screaming children.

Words in Context

Read each sentence. Guess the meaning of the underlined words.

- 1) In the kitchen the breakfast stove gave a hissing sigh and ejected from its warm interior eight pieces of perfectly browned toast.

hissing:

interior:

browned:

- 2) Outside, the garage chimed and lifted its door to reveal the waiting car.

reveal:

- 3) The dirty dishes were dropped into a hot washer and emerged twinkling dry

emerged:

twinkling:

- 4) The house stood alone in a city of rubble and ashes.

rubble:

- 5) The garden sprinklers whirled up in golden founts.

founts:

- 6) The water pelted windowpanes.

pelt:

- 7) The water ran down the charred west side where the house had been burned evenly free of its white paint.

charred:

After You Read: Setting

Where and when does this story take place? Find exact quotes from the story to support your ideas.

Place: Macro

Micro

Time: Macro

Micro

* * *

Plot

What happens in this story? Complete the time-order list.

1. The family lived happily in their house
2. The parents and the two children were playing outside
3. _____
4. On the day of the story, _____
5. The family dog _____
6. At 12:00, _____
7. At 2:00, _____
8. At 10:00, _____
9. The next morning, _____

Figurative Language

Figurative language is an expressive, emotional way to add description to writing. The writer **compares two things** creatively. There are two general kinds of figurative language:

- ◆ **A simile** is figurative language that uses “like” or “as.”
- ◆ **A metaphor** is figurative language that does NOT use “like” or “as.”
 - There’s a special kind of metaphor called **personification**: the metaphor describes something non-human by comparing it to a human.

Examples:

1. I slept like a log. (S)
2. He’s as dumb as a box of rocks. (S)
3. They fought like cats and dogs. (S)
4. "Built Like A Rock" (Chevrolet ad) (S)
5. “Either way ... he died like a bug under a microscope.” - *Stephen King* (S)
6. In the garden, eggplants grow curving like ox horns. (S)
7. The noise split the air. (M)
8. “If you plant ice, you’re going to harvest wind.” - *The Grateful Dead* (M)
9. I'm drowning in work. (M)
10. “Baby, you’re a firework.” - *Katy Perry* (M)
11. “Life is a box of chocolates. You never know what you’ll get.” - *Forrest Gump* (M)
12. New York is the city that never sleeps. (M)
13. “I wandered lonely as a cloud.” - *William Wordsworth* (M)
14. Necessity is the mother of invention. (M, P)
15. The old hardwood floor groaned under his heavy steps. (M, P)
16. The lonely train whistle called out in the night. (M, P)
17. The snow wrapped a white blanket around each tree. (M, P)
18. “From the kitchen came the coughing of bellows.” - *Ha Jin* (M, P)
19. “Because I could not stop for Death - He kindly stopped for me -” - *Dickinson* (M, P)

Try It: Finish these examples of figurative language.

- 1) I am as tall as - a redwood in the forest .
- 2) I am funny like a _____.
- 3) I am as fast as a _____.
- 4) I am as happy as a _____.
- 5) I am as clever as a _____.
- 6) The snow is a soft white blanket .
- 7) Her heart is a _____.
- 8) My teacher is a _____.
- 9) The world is a _____.
- 10) My best friend is a _____.
- 11) The wind screamed .
- 12) The ocean waves _____.
- 13) The sunlight _____.
- 14) The volcano _____.
- 15) The snake _____.

**This story has strong personification.
As you read, identify some ways the house is *personified*.**

Sentence Exploration

Explain these sentences. Don't try to paraphrase; focus on explaining what's happening in the story in simple words.

1. Out of warrens in the wall, tiny robot mice darted. The rooms were acrawl with the small cleaning animals, all rubber and metal.

2. The entire west face of the house was black, save for five places. Here the silhouette in paint of a man mowing a lawn.

3. The dog, once huge and fleshy, but now gone to bone and covered with sores, moved in and through the house, tracking mud.

4. At four o'clock the tables folded like great butterflies back through the paneled walls.

5. Somewhere, sighing, a pump shrugged to a stop.

Deeper Understanding

Write a complete paragraph to answer each question. Use quotations where you feel they will help you answer fully. If your teacher instructs you, choose several questions and write complete paragraphs to answer.

1) What has probably happened to the city?

2) Why was the west face of the house black? How did the silhouettes get there?

3) Who is the main character of this story?

4) One adjective that describes the character: _____

“Prove it!” – Write a quote from the story that supports the adjective

5) One different adjective that describes the character’s personality:

“Prove it!” – Write a quote from the story that supports the adjective

6) Conflict: What is the main conflict of this story?

7) Connection: How does this story connect to the poem? How are their themes similar – and what is the big difference between them?

* * *

Literature Circle

In a literature circle, each member takes a different role (questioner, clarifier, illustrator or extender). After you prepare, you will present your part to the entire “circle.” Each person will speak for 5-10 minutes. You should prepare something to share to the group as you talk: either a handout or a slideshow.

Questioner

1. Write five “easy” questions that might be on a quiz for EACH story. These can be “true/false” or “yes/no” type questions; there should be ONE correct answer. These are like Costa’s “Level 1” questions below. Ask your group the questions.
2. Then, write one or two “discussion” questions for each story. Maybe you should choose an interesting quote and ask “What does this mean?” Maybe you should ask about a character, “Why did they act that way?” These questions could have many “right” answers, because they are more about the opinions of the person answering. These should be like Costa’s “Level 2” or “Level 3” questions. Of course – you must be able to answer all your own questions!

Costa's Levels of Inquiry

<p>Level One Questions: Comprehension</p> <p>Readers can point to one correct answer in the text. Words found in these questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *define *describe *name, identify *list *True/False or Yes / No 	<p>Level 1 Example Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the word “maniac”. • Describe the dog’s appearance. • What is on the side of the house? • True or false: The street is full of houses that look the same as this house.
<p>Level Two Questions: Inference</p> <p>Readers infer answers from what the text implicitly states, finding answers in several places in the text. These questions ask you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *analyze *compare *contrast *put in time order *describe character’s motivations and personalities 	<p>Level 2 Example Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would the house be comfortable to live in? Why? • Who does the house care for more: itself or the dog?
<p>Level Three Questions: Connections</p> <p>Readers think beyond the text. Answers are based on the reader’s research, knowledge or experience. These questions ask you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *connect *imagine *predict *put in context *compare to another reading 	<p>Level 3 Example Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened to the city of Allendale? Who did that? • How does this short story reflect the Cold War?

Clarifier

Your task is to understand and explain key sentences from the story.

Make a list of some of the figurative language in the story: at least five important similes and ten metaphors. Choose examples that are interesting to you. Share the list with your group. Label each example: simile, metaphor, or metaphor + personification. Be prepared to explain what two things are compared in each example, and don't forget to use quotation marks around each quote!

Illustrator

Your task is to put key moments from the story into art to help everyone see it.

Create a slideshow with pictures that illustrate four or more key moments from the story. You can draw the scenes in any way you like: pencil, pen, paint or with a painting program. However, you may NOT simply download images that other people have created. The pictures don't need to look realistic or "professional," but they should demonstrate important moments from the story and have details your group can recognize.

Extenders: Bradbury

Make notes in the chart below and explain these connections to your group.

1950s theme from the story:	History: Why did Americans feel this?
Fear of nuclear war	
Excitement about new technology	
Fear of new technology	

4. “On Seeing the 100% Perfect Girl One Beautiful April Morning”

“On Seeing the...” was written in 1981 and appears in Murakami’s 1993 story collection, *The Elephant Vanishes*. This is a wildly popular short story, and many film, musical and spoken-word versions are available online.

Before you read, choose topics and BRIEFLY do some research. Discuss what you learn in groups. Complete the chart below with the information you learn from research or from classmates.

Topic 1: Who Is Haruki Murakami?

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1) Murakami is an American writer. | T | F |
| 2) Murakami is a teacher. | T | F |
| 3) He lives in New York now. | T | F |
| 4) He is most famous for writing short stories. | T | F |
| 5) Murakami is no longer alive. | T | F |
| 6) What is one interesting fact you learned about him? | | |

Topic 2: What is the Harajuku neighborhood like?

Explain why you chose those adjectives. Share some pictures with your group to support your description.

A. Choose four adjectives to describe Japan's economy in the 1980s.

B. Choose four adjectives to describe the city of Tokyo.

C. Choose four adjectives to describe the neighborhood of Harajuku.

Topic 3: What are some expectations around dating and marriage in Japan?

1) Most Japanese marriages today are arranged.	T	F
2) It's common for Japanese people to start dating in high school.	T	F
3) It's considered bad for Japanese women to date before marriage.	T	F
4) Couples in Japan often hold hands and kiss in public.	T	F
5) It's hard to start a conversation with a stranger in Japan.	T	F
Any other interesting facts?		

Read in Chunks

Listen to your instructor read once, then read the section aloud in small groups.

One beautiful April morning,
on a narrow side street
in Tokyo's fashionable Harajuku neighborhood,
I walked past the 100% perfect girl.
Tell you the truth,
she's not that good-looking.
She doesn't stand out
in any way.
Her clothes
are nothing special.
The back of her hair
is still bent out of shape
from sleep.
She isn't young, either –
must be near thirty,
not even close to a "girl," properly speaking.
But still,
I know from fifty yards away:
She's the 100% perfect girl for me.
The moment I see her,
there's a rumbling in my chest,
and my mouth is as dry as a desert.
Maybe you
have your own particular favorite type of girl –
one with slim ankles, say,
or big eyes,
or graceful fingers,
or you're drawn for no good reason
to girls who take their time with every meal.
I have my own preferences, of course.

Sometimes in a restaurant
I'll catch myself staring
at the girl at the next table to mine
because I like the shape of her nose.
But no one can insist
that his 100% perfect girl
correspond
to some preconceived type.
Much as I like noses,
I can't recall the shape of hers –
or even if she had one.
All I can remember for sure
is that she was no great beauty.
It's weird.
"Yesterday on the street
I passed the 100% perfect girl,"
I tell someone.
"Yeah?" he says.
"Good-looking?"
"Not really."
"Your favorite type, then?"
"I don't know.
I can't seem to remember anything about her –
the shape of her eyes
or the size of her breasts."
"Strange."
"Yeah. Strange."
"So anyhow," he says,
already bored,
"what did you do? Talk to her? Follow her?"
"Nah. Just passed her on the street."
She's walking east to west,
and I west to east.
It's a really nice April morning.

Vocabulary

Here are some words that appear in the story. Check their meanings if you don't know them.

1. correspond	12.lull (n)
2. preconceived	13.indifferent
3. complexities	14.unmerciful
4. crammed (v, to cram)	15.piggy bank
5. antique	16.unremitting
6. potentiality	17.full-fledged
7. go to pieces	18.gleam
8. asphalt	19.glimmer (v, to glimmer)
9. strides	20.rumble, rumbling
10.cosmic	21.glow
11.sliver	22.clarity

Read the complete story.

Remember, once is not enough for college!

* * *

After Reading

Check your understanding.

- A. The 100% perfect girl is always beautiful. T F
- B. The friend is interested in his story. T F
- C. Harajuku is a crowded neighborhood. T F
- D. The narrator really met his 100% perfect match when he was a teenager. T F
- E. The man who tells us the story had the flu. T F
- F. How old is the main character?
- G. Characters: Who is in the story?

Point of View

Every story is told from a **point of view**. The person telling the story is called the **narrator** and the story is told from his or her point of view. The reader sees and understands the story the way that the narrator explains it. There are different points of view an author can use.

First Person

If the narrator is actually in the story, the author is using a **first-person point of view**. When telling the story, the narrator will use first-person pronouns such as “I,” “mine” and “we.” A **first-person narrator** is usually the main character, but not always. If you have ever read a Sherlock Holmes story, you might remember that the “I” in those stories is Dr. Watson, not Sherlock.

Third Person

If the narrator is not one of the characters, the author is using a **third-person point of view**. This kind of narrator is a storyteller and uses third-person pronouns such as “he,” “she,” and “they.”

(What about **second-person point of view**? It’s possible, but this is a rare style. These are stories told with the **second person pronoun** – “**you**.” For example, “You entered the room and looked around. Your hat was on the ground, and you picked it up. It was a cool day, and you hoped that it would not rain.”)

Structure: Identify the qualities of each of these sections.

First line of section 1:

One beautiful April morning, on a narrow side street in Tokyo's fashionable Harajuku neighborhood, I walked past the 100% perfect girl.

Point of View: First-person or Third-person?	What tense is used in this section?	Tone: More formal or more informal?

First line of section 2:

She's walking east to west, and I west to east. It's a really nice April morning.

Point of View: First-person or Third-person?	What tense is used in this section?	Tone: More formal or more informal?

First line of section 3:

Once upon a time, there lived a boy and a girl.

Point of View: First-person or Third-person?	What tense is used in this section?	Tone: More formal or more informal?

Narrative Arc

There are two stories told in this short story. In the “**realistic**” story, not much happens. The conflict is internal – inside the narrator. The second story is structured like a fairy tale; the language is different and the plot is magical. Complete this chart for each of the two stories.

Conflict:	Climax, or Turning Point: What happens to create a realization or change in a main character?	Resolution: What did the character realize or learn? How are they changed?
Narrator vs Self		
The couple vs The world		

Figurative Language

Read each sentence and notice the underlined figurative language. Identify the type of figurative language. Figure out what two things are compared for each. The first one here is done as an example.

1) “Potentiality knocks on the door of my heart.”

◆ Metaphor or Simile?

◆ What 2 things are compared?

His heart is compared to a house or building, something with a door

2) “As they sat and talked, however, a tiny, tiny sliver of doubt took root in their hearts.”

◆ Metaphor or Simile?

◆ What 2 things are compared?

3) “When they awoke, their heads were as empty as the young D. H. Lawrence’s piggy bank.”

◆ Metaphor or Simile?

◆ What 2 things are compared?

4) “The cold, indifferent waves of fate proceeded to toss them unmercifully.”

◆ Metaphor or Simile?

◆ What 2 things are compared?

5) Find another instance of figurative language. Write it here:

◆ Metaphor or Simile?

◆ What 2 things are compared?

Paraphrase these sentences into informal language.

- a) He was not unusually handsome, and she was not especially beautiful.
- b) If I found myself in that situation, I'd probably go to pieces.
- c) But the glow of their memories was far too weak ...
- d) The test they had agreed upon, however, was entirely unnecessary.
- e) Without a word, they passed each other, disappearing into the crowd.

Reflection Writing

Write a paragraph or an essay, as your instructor directs you, to discuss one or more of these questions. Discuss these questions in small groups before writing.

- A. Think about why the narrator of this story did not approach or speak to his “perfect girl.” Which reasons are cultural and which reasons are personal? Is there a difference?
- B. The narrator chooses to deal with the pain of losing his “perfect girl” by making up a story. What does this tell you about his personality? Do you respect this choice?
- C. How important is it to find your “perfect” partner, or your “perfect” love? Does such a thing really exist? What would you consider giving up or losing to find this kind of love?

* * *

5. Folk Tale: “La Llorona”

A folk tale is a story told among a specific group of people. These stories are not usually written. Parents tell their children these stories, friends share them with each other, and generations of people pass them down through time.

Folk tales have an important role in sharing cultural values. As a culture changes, its values change too, and folk tales quickly change to reflect the new ideas. The following story is a folk tale from Mexico. The original story was probably told nearly 500 years ago, after Mexico was invaded by the Spanish. Today, it is still told. It is a special kind of ghost story that continues to change as Mexican society changes.

Start by reading these three versions of the La Llorona /la yo^wro^wnə/ story. Consider reading aloud, or listening to your instructor read aloud.

Version 1

This is how my grandmother told it to me. It all happened a long, long time ago. It was in a small town in Mexico. There was an Indian woman living there. Some people say her name was Luisa. She loved to go out drinking and dancing at night. She was tall and beautiful, and she always wore a long white dress, and a wide hat with a long white veil that covered her face, because that was the style of those days. When she entered a bar to drink and dance, she took the hat off. Luisa earned her money by going with men, a different man every night. Mostly, these were married men who left their wives, girlfriends and children at home. Of course, this is a dangerous life. More than once Luisa became pregnant. She knew that she could never be a good mother, so she drowned each newborn in the creek that flowed by that town. Other times, a man might beat her. Eventually, one of these men, a married man, killed her. But she couldn't get into Heaven. Her spirit was judged by God and sentenced to walk by the rivers and streets of this world looking for her lost children. So from then until now, when darkness comes, her spirit appears, on streets near bars or near rivers, dressed in that same long white dress and long white veil she wore when she was alive. She cries without stopping. And people say that if her crying sounds loud, she is far away, and if her crying sounds very soft, she is near. From all that weeping, her eyes are gone, leaving two empty black holes.

Her mouth has gotten wide from wailing and looks like a horse's mouth. There are deep scars down her face from her tears. But when Luisa – La Llorona, they call her now – appears on the street, the long white veil covers her face. Her long white dress looks elegant in the dark. She moves down the street seductively, looking for drunken, faithless men. Without a word, she approaches them and offers her hand. Over the years lots of these men have gone with her, forgetting their wives and families. Sometimes a man is lucky and sees La Llorona lift up her veil in time, and he can get away. But usually we find their dead bodies later, naked, next to rivers or creeks. That's here in the US too. Wherever Mexican people go to live, La Llorona follows us, taking revenge on men who betray their families.

Version 2

People say that in a town near the border between the U.S. and Mexico, there was a woman who fell in love with an American. He came across the border to live with her. Soon, they married and had two little children. She was happy, but after a while, her husband told her he needed to go back to the U.S. He needed a job and money, and in that small town there were no jobs. He promised many times to return. Well, he crossed the river and went back to the U.S., and at first he came back to see her regularly, always bringing money and food. But a few months went by and he stopped coming. She wrote him letters, but there was no way to know if he ever got them. She became more and more desperate. She thought that he had abandoned her, and even worse, abandoned their children, stayed with her all the time. It was like a worm eating at her. Finally, she made up her mind to cross the river and find him, wherever he was. Crossing the river is dangerous, and her children were heavy. They slipped from her arms and drowned, but she made it back to the shore alive. She screamed the names of her children and looked for them frantically, in the water, in the weeds, on the rocks. She walked up and down the side of that river, calling their names and looking for them, for a week without resting or eating. Her clothes became tattered and torn, her skin crusted over with dirt, and her voice cracked from calling her children. All this time, her tears never stopped flowing down her face. Her body became thinner and thinner. After another week of this, she was dead. She was

like a skeleton. But even after death, she kept crying, and she kept searching for her children. Night after night, you can hear her voice moaning and weeping just over the sound of the river running. They call her spirit La Llorona, The Crying Woman. The people in that town say if you fight with your family, La Llorona might appear to you as a warning, and if a child is out alone after dark, La Llorona might mistake them as her own child and take them in her arms, killing them instantly. Many people have seen her, not only in that town, but by rivers all through towns on both sides of the US border.

Version 3

In those days, the Spanish had come to Mexico. After many battles and many betrayals the conquistadors had crushed the Aztec Empire. The people of the Mixtec, the Mexica, the Tlaxcaltec, the Purépecha and many more lost control of their lands and their governments. The Spanish had brought horses, iron weapons, guns, cannons. They had brought new diseases from Europe which killed children and adults, the strong and the weak, equally. The ancient civilizations of Mexico were forced to kneel to the newcomers. The old religions were now illegal, and the language of Spain was erasing the thousands of languages spoken in those places.

In those days, an Indian woman lived. She was tall and gentle, graceful and beautiful, and for these reasons, a Spanish commander had seen her and taken her. She lived like his wife, and over time, had given him three boy children. The oldest could walk, the next could crawl, and the youngest was still in her arms. These three baby boys, half European and half Indian mestizos, were the pride of her life. The commander left soon after the youngest was born, telling her he would return when his important business was complete. In a small house near the river she lived, waiting for the Spanish commander to return and be a father to her children.

One night, as she passed by the street with one baby in her arms, one baby on her back, and one baby held by the hand, she saw her husband in a carriage. By his side was a Spanish lady. Her skin was as white as his. She called his name. Standing in street, holding his children, she called to him. He did not turn his head, he did not look her way, he did not even stop laughing and gazing into the eyes of the beautiful Spanish lady next to him. And the carriage passed, and disappeared down the street, while the Indian woman stood with her three mestizo children, sons of the Spanish commander.

At this moment, as her heart broke, a madness took over her mind. A spirit entered her body. To the river she ran, with one son in her arms, one son on her back, and one son held by the hand. There she killed them. One by one, she drowned her babies in the river.

As life left the body of her smallest son, a moment of stillness came to her mind. She looked at the water and she looked at her empty hands, her empty arms. Where were her sons? In that split second, she realized their bodies were in the river. Weeping and wailing, she threw herself into the river and drowned.

Freed from her body, her spirit sank down, moving from this world to the next. Her soul entered Mictlán, the land of the dead. But she was not allowed to escape the pain of this world. Her spirit would be allowed to journey through the afterlife only if her three sons accompanied her. Her spirit, crying bitterly, returned alone to the river's side. When darkness came, her spirit wandered, her empty arms aching for her children, weeping endlessly.

Even today her spirit wanders, searching for her lost children. By the edges of rivers and creeks she searches for her half-Indian, half-Spanish sons, wailing from her unbearable loss into the darkness with no relief. If La Llorona, The Weeping Woman, finds a naughty child outside in the dusk, then in a flash, she will carry that child into the river, still weeping, her dark face marked by the deep tracks of her endless tears. Once again she will try to enter Mictlán with a child in her arms, and once again she will be refused. Night after night, La Llorona seeks to enter the afterlife, but night after night she is forced to return, crying in endless grief for her dead children.

Comprehension

1) Write a timeline for each of the three stories.

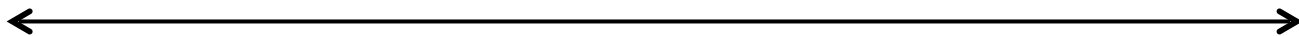
Version 1



Version 2



Version 3



Identify Differences and Similarities

In what key ways are the stories different?

Is the main character a good mother?	What religion do you guess the society is – traditional or Christian?	When was this version told? What clues support your idea?	Why does the main character become a ghost?	Who does the ghost La Llorona kill, and why?
Version 1:				
Version 2:				
Version 3:				

In what key ways are the stories the same? Write your ideas here as a brainstorm.

1) motherhood:

2) drowning:

3) husband/men:

4) race/ethnicity/culture:

5) the afterlife:

6) ghosts/spirits:

7) Other:

Literature Circle: La Llorona

After reading all three stories, choose a role and form small groups. First, work with others who have the same role that you do. Discuss your task and answer each question until you feel confident enough to teach it to others.

Then, form small groups with people who have different roles than you do. Start by reading the different versions aloud. Then, share your ideas. Be sure to keep track of time.

Summarizer: Create a narrative arc /timeline of the basic story. Include 5-10 points.

Character Expert: Create a list of the main characters. Choose 3 to 5 personality adjectives that describe these characters.

Extender: If you understand the cultural background of these stories, or if you have heard the story yourself, explain it to your group.

Questioner: Ask a “deeper meaning” question about each version of the folk tale.

Illustrator: Create your own original illustrations one for each of the three versions. Include details from the story that your group can recognize.

* * *

Cultural Values

“Cultural Values” are the beliefs and principles that a group of people share. Fables are a ways that cultures and communities share those beliefs.

Cultural values are beliefs about the “best” or “right” ways to behave. They are beliefs about what human qualities are more valuable than others. Some societies have a stronger belief that “*Traditional ways are best,*” while others believe “*Things get better over time.*” These cultural values influence the choices people make and the directions of societies.

Cultural values are shared by stories. For example, if “*It’s important to be generous*” is a cultural value for a group of people, they will tell their children stories where the hero gets rewarded for being generous. If “*Show respect for elders*” is a cultural value, they will tell scary stories where characters who don’t take care of their grandparents have terrible consequences.

- A. What cultural values do these three different versions of the same basic story show? What message does each story give to people?
- B. Which version would fit your own cultural values the best? Why?

6. “The Necklace”

Guy deMaupassant was a French writer of the late 1800s. He was raised by a single mother, a cultured, intelligent and independent woman. He fought in the Franco-Prussian War as a young man. DeMaupassant spent ten years of his adulthood as a Navy clerk, published his first works in 1880, and wrote steadily until his death by suicide in 1893. Many people consider him the “father of the modern short story.”

Before you begin “The Necklace,” think about these questions. Discuss them with classmates. You may want to make some notes on this page.

- 1) What is “social mobility”? Clarify your understanding.
- 2) How much social mobility does your home country have? How much social mobility does the US have? Does social mobility affect people’s happiness? How?
- 3) What is your attitude towards debt? How much debt is acceptable in your home country? How much is acceptable here? What do you think about it?
- 4) Every person’s life is affected by things they cannot control. Some people call this fate, or destiny; some people call it karma; some people call it luck, or chance. what do these different words mean? Which word best describes your attitude about the unpredictability of life?

Suggestions for Group Work

If you choose to work on this chapter in a literature circle, or to present it as a slideshow or poster presentation, consider dividing the work in this way. Not every group needs to have all roles represented. However, every group should read some or all of the story aloud, and every group should discuss the “Deeper Meanings” exercise together.

Extenders

Extenders can read about the cultural background and add to it, or research deMaupassant’s life, or continue writing the story by adding a paragraph or two about what happens after this story ends.

Clarifiers

Clarifiers can focus on the vocabulary and create a presentation to give examples of each word. For example, they can create a slide show, poster or handout with pictures to illustrate ten new or interesting words they find in the story.

Summarizers

Summarizers can create a timeline and a narrative arc. Choose one or two conflicts and describe how each conflict is resolved.

Questioners

Questioners can answer the “Understanding the Plot” questions, and they can also add their own questions.

Character Experts

Character experts can focus on describing the changes the main character experiences. Who is she at the Beginning of the story, and who is she at the end of the story?

Theme

This powerful short story explores several themes, including the power of unpredictable events to change the direction of a person’s life, social status, and acceptance of your situation in life. If you choose to discuss theme, choose a theme and present your understanding of how the short story explores that theme. There are many discussions of this question available online.

Vocabulary: Check your understanding of these words.

1. colleague

2. compound

3. comprised

4. consulted

5. contrasted

6. convinced

7. detected

8. economical

9. equipped

10. finally

11. hierarchy

12. instruction

13. labors

14. ministerial, ministry

15. obtain

16. perceived

17.physical

18.prospect

19.published

20.removed

21.route

22.select

23.similar

24.sole

25.sought

26.stylish

27.substitution

28.sum

French Nouns and Names

1. antechamber

2. aristocratic

3. cabinet

4. candelabra

5. Champs Elysees
6. clerk
7. dowry
8. franc
9. louis
10. Madame Georges Ramponneau
11. Nanterre
12. quail
13. Rue des Martyrs
14. Seine
15. tapestry
16. tradesman
17. waltz

Cultural Background

“The Necklace” was first published in 1884. French society at that time was very distinctive.

France at the End of the 19th Century

The French Revolution had ended in 1799. By the time of this story, France was a fairly modern democracy. However, the traditional class system, where people who were born into “royalty” were considered far superior to ordinary people, still affected peoples’ psychology.

Household Costs

One *franc* in 1880 was a silver coin that would be worth roughly \$13 in today’s dollars. One *louis* was a gold coin that was worth 20 francs. A typical middle-class French household would have a certain amount of money in the bank, which would pay some interest, and which would never be taken out, as this was the only form of income a household would have in case of illness or old age.

Debt

The modern system of personal credit – the credit card and bank loans – did not exist in 19th century France. If you wanted a loan, you would have to ask a friend or family member for the money. Loans were rare, and interest rates were high.

Reading in Chunks

Read or listen to your instructor. Add glosses and comments.

The girl
was one of those
pretty and charming young creatures
who sometimes are born,
as if by a slip of fate,
into a family of **clerks**.
She had no **dowry**,
no expectation of inheriting money,
no way of being known, understood, loved, married
by any rich and distinguished man;
so she let herself
be married to
a little clerk
of the **Ministry** of Public Instruction.
She dressed plainly
because she could not dress well,
but she was as unhappy
as if she had really
fallen from a higher class;
since with women
there is neither **caste nor rank**,
for beauty, grace and charm
take the place of **aristocratic birth**.
Natural **ingenuity**,
instinct for what is **elegant**,
a **supple** mind
are their **sole hierarchy**,

and often
make middle-class women
the equals of the very greatest ladies.
Mathilde suffered endlessly,
feeling herself
born to enjoy all delicacies and all luxuries.
She was **distressed**
at the poverty of her dwelling,
at the bareness of the walls,
at the shabby chairs,
the ugliness of the curtains.
All those things,
of which another woman of her **rank**
would never even have been **conscious**,
tortured her and made her angry.
...
She thought of silent **antechambers**
hung with Oriental tapestry,
illuminated by tall bronze **candelabra**,
and of two great **footmen**
in knee **breeches**
who sleep in the big armchairs,
made drowsy
by the **oppressive** heat of the stove.
She thought of long reception halls
hung with ancient silk,
of the **dainty** cabinets
containing priceless **curiosities**
and of the **flirtatious**, perfumed reception rooms
made for chatting at five o'clock
with **intimate** friends,
with men famous
and **sought after** ...

Setting

Where and when does this story take place? Based on this short reading, guess! What clues make you think so? Write a few words to support your guess.

Place: City, countryside, suburbia?

Why?

What country?

Time: In the past, present or future?

Why?

After You Read

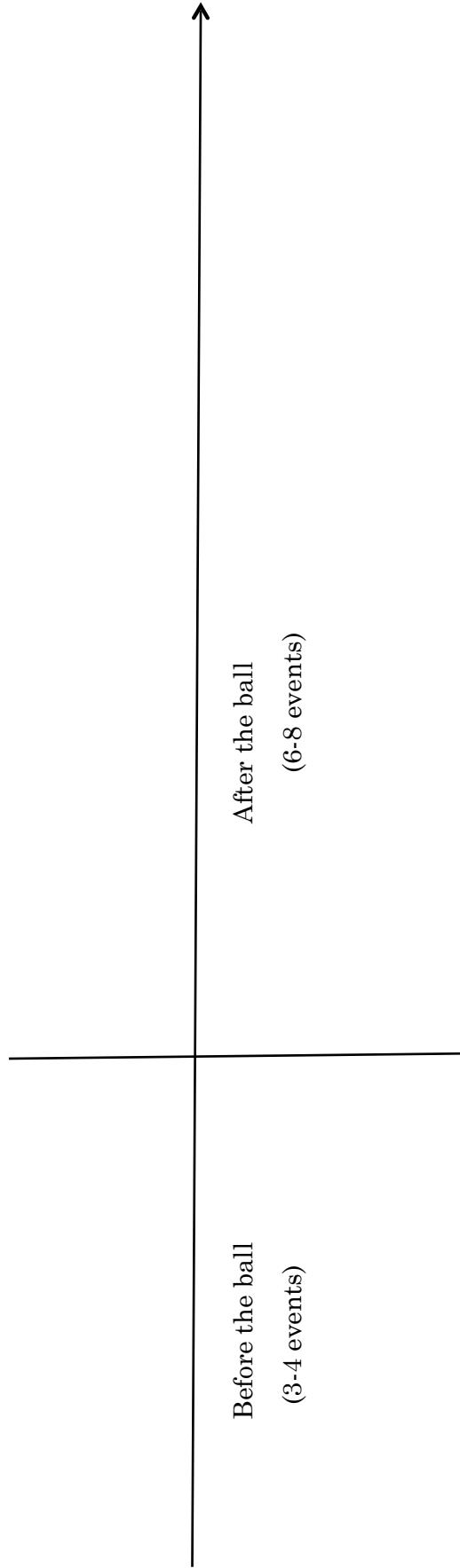
Prediction

What will happen after the ending of this story?

Plot

What happens in this story?

Complete the timeline.



Glosses

Write your own gloss of each sentence. Don't focus on synonyms; instead, try to communicate the meaning of each sentence.

- 1) ... with women there is neither caste nor rank, for beauty, grace and charm take the place of aristocratic birth.

- 2) Natural ingenuity, instinct for what is elegant, a supple mind are their sole hierarchy, and often make middle-class women the equals of the very greatest ladies.

- 3) She had a friend, a former schoolmate at their convent school, who was rich, and whom she did not like to go to see any more because she felt so sad when she came home.

- 4) She reflected several seconds, making her calculations and also considering what sum she could ask without drawing an immediate refusal and a frightened exclamation from her economical husband.

5) He compromised all the rest of his life, risked taking a loan without even knowing whether he could pay it back; and, frightened by the trouble yet to come, by the misery that was about to fall upon him, by the prospect of all the physical suffering and moral tortures that he was to suffer, he went to get the new necklace, laying upon the jeweler's counter thirty-six thousand francs.

6) Every month they had to pay off some debts, renew others, obtain more time.

Understanding the Plot

Discuss these questions to clarify your understanding.

1. Why is Mathilde Loisel unhappy?
2. Does she love her husband?
3. Does he love her?
4. How did Madame Loisel meet Madame Forestier?
5. Did Mathilde have a good time at the ball?
6. Why did Mathilde rush out of the ball quickly?
7. After the ball, both husband and wife are a bit unhappy, but for different reasons. Name each person's reasons.
8. Name three ways the Loisels get enough money to buy the replacement necklace.
9. Name three ways their lives change after buying the diamond necklace.
10. Why does Madame Forestier still look young at the end of the story?

Character Traits:

At the Beginning of the Story ...

Does the character have this quality when the story begins?

	Adaptable	Adaptable	Brave	Considerate	Considerate	Demanding	Demanding	Generous	Generous	Honest	Honest	Nervous	Nervous	Proud	Proud	Stubborn	Stubborn	Strong
Quality:																		
Character:																		
Mathilde Loisel																		
Monsieur Loisel																		
Madame Forestier																		

At the End of the Story ...

Does the character have this quality at the end of the story?

Quality:										
Character:										
Mathilde Loisel										
Monsieur Loisel										
Madame Forestier										

Characterization

Focus on Madame Loisel. Choose some adjectives that describe her at both the beginning and the end of the story, then explain in your own words why that adjective fits her. Consider translating adjectives from your first language.

1. At the start of the story, Madame Loisel is - _____

This adjective fits her because:

.....

2. At the start of the story, Madame Loisel is - _____

This adjective fits her because:

3. At the end of the story, Madame Loisel is - _____

This adjective fits her because:

4. At the end of the story, Madame Loisel is - _____

This adjective fits her because:

Theme

After reading this short story at least two times, think about the following themes which the story “The Necklace” explores. Respond with a paragraph discussing the theme. How does the story express the theme? Support your ideas with quotations. Your topic sentence should make it clear what question you are answering.

1. One theme is the contrast between *what seems to be true and what is actually true*. What characters and objects in the story *appear* to be one thing, and are actually another?
2. One theme of “The Necklace” is that *random chance can affect the whole direction of a person’s life*. Was the change in the Loisel’s lives really due to chance, or to their choices?
3. Another theme of the story is *suffering*, and how suffering can change us. In what ways does Madame Loisel suffer? Did she suffer more before losing the necklace, or afterwards? What about her husband?
4. A theme that may help us understand this story is *the power of personality*. What personality traits of the Loisels led them to hide the loss of the necklace? Would you describe them primarily as *proud* people, *honorable* people, or *dishonest* people?
5. A final theme to consider is *debt*. How does debt affect people? How does it affect a society?

Symbolism

Remember: A symbol in fiction is a thing that has a bigger meaning. For example, a white dove might symbolize peace. A sunrise might symbolize a new beginning. Discuss these quotations from the story. What symbolism do you recognize? Write notes in the space given.

- A. “You might wear **natural flowers**,” said her husband. “They’re very stylish at this time of year. For ten francs you can get two or three magnificent roses.”
She was not convinced.
- B. It took them to their dwelling in the **Rue des Martyrs**, and sadly they mounted the stairs to their flat.
- C. And she smiled with a **joy** that was at once proud and **child-like**.
- D. A major symbol is **the necklace** itself — jewelry that looks valuable but isn’t. What does it symbolize?

7. “The Lottery”

“The Lottery” was first published in *The New Yorker* and is available on the magazine’s website.

Before you read: Discuss these questions as a class.

- 1) Learn about the concept of “the *scapegoat*.” What is a scapegoat in a family? What is a scapegoat in a society?
- 2) Which societies have made sacrifices of living beings? What do you know about these traditions? Why do societies do this?
- 3) What is a *witch trial*? What do you know about this part of history? Where were witch trials held? What was the usual result?
- 4) What event happens on June 21?

Reading in Chunks

Read this part of the story aloud or listen to your instructor. Add glosses and comments.

The morning of June 27th
was clear and sunny,
with the fresh warmth
of a full-summer day;
the flowers were blossoming profusely
and the grass was richly green.
The people of the village began to gather
in the square,
between the post office and the bank,
around ten o'clock;
in some towns
there were so many people
that the lottery took two days
and had to be started on June 26th,
but in this village,
where there were only about three hundred people,
the whole lottery
took less than two hours,
so it could begin at ten o'clock in the morning
and still be through in time
to allow the villagers to get home
for noon dinner.
The children assembled first, of course.
School was recently over for the summer,
and the feeling of liberty
sat uneasily on most of them;

they tended to gather together quietly
for a while
before they broke into boisterous play,
and their talk
was still of the classroom and the teacher,
of books and reprimands.

Bobby Martin
had already stuffed his pockets
full of stones,
and the other boys
soon followed his example,
selecting the smoothest and roundest stones;
Bobby and Harry Jones
and Dickie Delacroix —
the villagers pronounced this name “Dellacroy” —
eventually made a great pile of stones
in one corner of the square
and guarded it
against the raids of the other boys.

Before You Read

Vocabulary

These are AWL words from “The Lottery.” Check the meanings.

Reprimand		Crane (verb)
Boisterous	Shabby	Soberly
Survey	Perfunctory	Consult
Reluctant	Interminably	Formally

Research the Story

Find the answers to these questions.

- A. “The Lottery” was the most popular story ever published in *The New Yorker*. T F
- B. Shirley Jackson was Jewish. T F
- C. Jackson never married. T F
- D. “The Lottery” is probably about anti-Jewish prejudice. T F
- E. Jackson was born in San Francisco but moved to New England as an adult. T F
- F. Jackson left college after one year. T F
- G. Most Americans have read “The Lottery.” T F
- H. Name another Shirley Jackson story or novel.

After You Read

Inference: Jackson never tells us exactly what happens at the end of this story. What do you guess happened?

Timeline: Summarize the story by choosing the major events and putting them into chronological order.

Explain the Quote

Each of these sentences allows you to infer some facts about the story. Decide what we, the readers, should guess based on the given sentence. You might want to use a resource like the SparkNotes or Shmoop webpages to help.

- 1) “The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around ten o’clock; in some towns there were so many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 20th, but in this village, where there were only about three hundred people, the whole lottery took less than two hours, so it could begin at ten o’clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner.” *Question: What does this tell you about the lottery tradition?*

- 2) “The villagers kept their distance, leaving a space between themselves and the stool, and when Mr. Summers said, ‘Some of you fellows want to give me a hand?’ there was a hesitation ...” *Question: Why do they hesitate?*

- 3) “First thing you know, we’d all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns.” *Question: Why did the people originally have a lottery?*

4) “All right,” Mr. Summers said. “Open the papers. Harry, you open little Dave’s.”
Question: How young is Dave? What does this show about the lottery?

5) “And someone gave little Davy Hutchinson a few pebbles.” *Question: Why does Davy get pebbles – what will he do with them?*

Foreshadowing

Look through the story and find two examples of foreshadowing. Explain the foreshadowing and support your idea with a quote. Take a look at the example.

Example:

One father, Mr. Martin, sees his son by the pile of stones. He "spoke up sharply" and calls his son away. He doesn't want the boy near the stones. The stones will be used in a bad way.

1)

2)

Symbolism: Names

The names of the villagers seem to have a symbolic meaning. For example, Mr. Warner gives warnings about what he thinks will happen if they stop having the lottery. Write a possible symbolic meaning for the given names.

Example: Mr. Warner	He gives a <u>warning</u> . He says if they stop doing the lottery people will go back to living in caves.
Mr. Graves	
Mr. Summers	
Delacroix <i>(hint: what do these words mean in French?)</i>	
Hutchinson <i>(hint: look up the year 1637 together with this name)</i>	

Answering with Support

Use your own paper. Use a quote to support the answer if it will help.

1. What job do the Martins have in the town? Prove it with a quote. Give the page number.
2. Mrs. Delacroix picks up a very large stone to throw at her “friend.” Is this a sign of how much she likes Tessie, or the opposite?
3. Consider these two themes: “betrayal” (look it up!) and “hypocrisy” (look it up!) Which theme does this quote support? Explain.

“Bill Hutchinson went over to his wife and forced the slip of paper out of her hand. It had a black spot on it, the black spot Mr. Summers had made the night before with the heavy pencil in the coal company office. Bill Hutchinson held it up, and there was a stir in the crowd.”

4. Consider these two themes: “betrayal” (look it up!) and “hypocrisy” (look it up!) Which theme does this quote support? Explain.

Suddenly, Tessie Hutchinson shouted to Mr. Summers, “You didn’t give him time enough to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn’t fair!”

Prediction

In the world where “The Lottery” takes place, what will happen to the tradition in the future? Why? Write a paragraph to explain what you think will happen.

Inference

Does the lottery always happen on the same date? Why?

8. Story: The Necklace

by Guy de Maupassant

First published in 1884

The girl was one of those pretty and charming young creatures who sometimes are born, as if by a slip of fate, into a family of **clerks**. She had no **dowry**, no expectation of inheriting money, no way of being known, understood, loved, married by any rich and distinguished man; so she let herself be married to a little clerk of the **Ministry** of Public Instruction.

She dressed plainly because she could not dress well, but she was as unhappy as if she had really fallen from a higher class; since with women there is neither **caste nor rank**, for beauty, grace and charm take the place of **aristocratic birth**. Natural **ingenuity, instinct** for what is **elegant**, a **supple** mind are their **sole hierarchy**, and often make middle-class women the equals of the very greatest ladies.

Mathilde suffered endlessly, feeling herself born to enjoy all delicacies and all luxuries. She was **distressed** at the poverty of her dwelling, at the bareness of the walls, at the shabby chairs, the ugliness of the curtains. All those things, of which another woman of her rank would never even have been **conscious**, tortured her and made her angry. The sight of the little country woman who did her hardest housework gave her

despairing regrets and bewildering dreams. She thought of silent **antechambers** hung with Oriental tapestry, illumined by tall bronze candelabra, and of two great footmen in knee breeches who sleep in the big armchairs, made drowsy by the **oppressive** heat of the stove. She thought of long reception halls hung with ancient silk, of the **dainty** cabinets containing priceless curiosities and of the little **flirtatious** perfumed reception rooms made for chatting at five o'clock with **intimate** friends, with men famous and sought after, whom all women **envy** and whose attention they all desire.

When she sat down to dinner, before the round table covered with a tablecloth on its third day of use, across from her husband, who uncovered the soup tureen and declared with a delighted air, "Ah, the good soup! I don't know anything better than that," she thought of **dainty** dinners, of shining silverware, of **tapestries** that covered the walls with portraits and with strange birds flying through a fairy forest; and she thought of delicious dishes served on marvelous plates and of the whispered **gallantries** to which you listen with a **sphinxlike** smile while you are eating the pink meat of a trout or the wings of a quail.

She had no gowns, no jewels, nothing. And she loved nothing but that. She felt made for that. She would have liked so

much to please, to be envied, to be charming, to be sought after.

She had a friend, a former schoolmate at their **convent** school, who was rich, and whom she did not like to go to see any more because she felt so sad when she came home.

But one evening her husband reached home with a **triumphant air** and holding a large envelope in his hand.

“There,” said he, “there is something for you.”

She tore the paper quickly and drew out a printed card which bore these words:

*The Minister of Public Instruction
and Madame Georges Ramponneau
request the honor of
M. and Madame Loisel's company
at the palace of the Ministry
on Monday evening, January 18th.*

Instead of being delighted, as her husband had hoped, she threw the invitation on the table irritably, muttering:

“What do you want me to do with that?”

“Why, my dear, I thought you would be glad. You never go out, and this is such a fine opportunity. I had great trouble to get it. Everyone wants to go; it is very **select**, and they are not giving many invitations to clerks. The whole official world will be there.”

She looked at him with an **irritated glance** and said impatiently:

“And what do you wish me to put on my back?”

He had not thought of that. He **stammered**:

“Why, the **gown** you go to the theatre in. It looks very good to me.”

He stopped, **distracted**, seeing that his wife was weeping. Two great tears ran slowly from the corners of her eyes toward the corners of her mouth.

“What’s the matter? What’s the matter?” he answered.

By a violent effort she overcame her grief and replied in a calm voice, while she wiped her wet cheeks:

“Nothing. Only I have no **gown**, and, therefore, I can’t go to this ball. Give your card to some **colleague** whose wife is **better equipped** than I am.”

He was in despair. He **resumed**:

“Come, let us see, Mathilde. How much would it cost, a **suitable** gown, which you could use on other occasions—something very simple?”

She **reflected** several seconds, making her **calculations** and also considering what sum she could ask without drawing an immediate refusal and a frightened exclamation from her **economical** husband.

Finally she replied hesitating:

“I don’t know exactly, but I think I could manage it with four hundred francs.”

He grew a little pale, because he was saving, bit by bit, just that amount to buy a gun and treat himself to a little shooting next summer in the Nanterre countryside, with several friends who went to shoot **larks** there on Sundays.

But he said:

“Very well. I will give you four hundred francs. And try to have a pretty gown.”

The day of the ball drew near and Madame Loisel seemed sad, uneasy, anxious. Her dress was ready, however. Her husband said to her one evening:

“What is the matter? Come, you have seemed very strange these last three days.”

And she answered:

“It **annoys** me not to have a single piece of jewelry, not a single ornament, nothing to put on. I shall look poverty-stricken. I would almost rather not go at all.”

“You might wear natural flowers,” said her husband. “They’re very stylish at this time of year. For ten francs you can get two or three magnificent roses.”

She was not **convinced**.

“No; there’s nothing more **humiliating** than to look poor among other women who are rich.”

“How stupid you are!” her husband cried. “Go look up your friend, Madame Forestier, and ask her to lend you some jewels. You’re close enough with her to do that.”

She uttered a cry of joy:

“True! I never thought of it.”

The next day she went to her friend and told her of her distress.

Madame Forestier went to a wardrobe with a mirror, took out a large jewel box, brought it back, opened it and said to Madame Loisel:

“Choose, my dear.”

She saw first some bracelets, then a pearl necklace, then a Venetian gold cross set with precious stones, of admirable workmanship. She tried on the **ornaments** before the mirror, **hesitated** and could not make up her mind to part with them, to give them back. She kept asking:

“Haven’t you any more?”

“Why, yes. Look further; I don’t know what you like.”

Suddenly she discovered, in a black satin box, a **superb** diamond necklace, and her heart **throbbed** with an **immoderate desire**. Her hands **trembled** as she took it. She fastened it round her throat, outside her high-necked, dull day dress and was lost in **ecstasy** at her reflection in the mirror.

Then she asked, hesitating, filled with anxious doubt:

“Will you lend me this, only this?”

“Why, yes, certainly.”

She threw her arms round her friend’s neck, kissed her **passionately**, then **fled** with her treasure.

The night of the ball arrived. Madame Loisel was a great success. She was prettier than any other woman present, elegant, graceful, smiling and wild with joy. All the men looked at her, asked her name, **sought** to be introduced. All the **attachés of the Cabinet** wished to **waltz** with her. She was noticed by the minister himself.

She danced with **rapture**, with passion, intoxicated by pleasure, forgetting all in the triumph of her beauty, in the glory of her success, in a sort of cloud of happiness comprised of admiration, awakened desires and that sense of triumph which is so sweet to woman’s heart.

She left the ball about four o’clock in the morning. Her husband had been sleeping since midnight in a little deserted **antechamber** with three other gentlemen whose wives were enjoying the ball.

He threw over her shoulders the shawls he had brought, the modest wraps of common life, the **poverty** of which contrasted with the elegance of the ball dress. She felt this and wished to escape so as not to be shamed by the other women, who were **wrapping** themselves in **costly** furs.

Loisel held her back, saying: “Wait a bit. You will catch cold outside. I will call a cab.”

But she did not listen to him and rapidly descended the stairs. When they reached the street they could not find a carriage and began to look for one, shouting after the cabmen passing at a distance.

They went toward the Seine in despair, **shivering** with cold. At last they found by the riverside one of those **ancient** night cabs which, as though they were ashamed to show their shabbiness during the day, are never seen round Paris until after dark.

It took them to their dwelling in the Rue des Martyrs, and sadly they mounted the stairs to their flat. All was ended for her. As to him, he **reflected** that he must be at the ministry at ten o’clock that morning.

She removed her wraps before the glass so as to see herself once more in all her glory. But suddenly she **uttered** a cry. She no longer had the necklace around her neck!

“What is the matter with you?” demanded her husband, already half undressed.

She turned **distractedly** toward him.

“I have – I have – I’ve lost Madame Forestier’s necklace,” she cried.

He stood up, bewildered.

“What! – how? Impossible!”

They looked among the folds of her skirt, of her cloak, in her pockets, everywhere, but did not find it.

“You’re sure you had it on when you left the ball?” he asked.

“Yes, I felt it in the **vestibule** of the minister’s house.”

“But if you had lost it in the street we should have heard it fall. It must be in the cab.”

“Yes, probably. Did you take his number?”

“No. And you—didn’t you notice it?”

“No.”

They looked, **thunderstruck**, at each other. At last Loisel put on his clothes.

“I shall go back on foot,” said he, “over the whole **route**, to see whether I can find it.”

He went out. She sat waiting on a chair in her ball dress, without strength to go to bed, overwhelmed, without any fire, without a thought.

Her husband returned about seven o’clock. He had found nothing.

He went to police headquarters, to the newspaper offices to offer a reward; he went to the cab companies – everywhere, in fact, where he was **urged** by the smallest spark of hope.

She waited all day, in the same **condition** of mad fear before this terrible **calamity**.

Loisel returned at night with a hollow, pale face. He had discovered nothing.

“You must write to your friend,” said he, “that you have broken the clasp of her necklace and that you are having it **mended**. That will give us time.”

She wrote at his **dictation**.

At the end of a week they had lost all hope. Loisel, who had aged five years, declared:

“We must consider how to replace that necklace.”

The next day they took the box that had contained it and went to the jeweler whose name was found within. He consulted his books.

“It was not I, madame, who sold that necklace; I must simply have furnished the case.”

Then they went from jeweler to jeweler, searching for a necklace like the other, trying to recall it, both sick with **chagrin** and grief.

They found, in a shop at the Palais Royal, a string of diamonds that seemed to them exactly like the one they had lost. It was worth forty thousand francs. They could have it for thirty-six.

So they begged the jeweler not to sell it for three days yet. And they made a bargain that he should buy it back for thirty-four thousand francs, in case they should find the lost necklace before the end of February.

Loisel **possessed** eighteen thousand francs which his father had left him. He would borrow the rest.

He did borrow, asking a thousand francs of one, five hundred of another, five **louis** here, three louis there. He signed promises, took up **ruinous debts**, dealt with usurers and every kind of lender. He **compromised** all the rest of his life, risked taking a loan without even knowing whether he could pay it back; and, frightened by the trouble yet to come, by the **misery** that was about to fall upon him, by the **prospect** of all the physical suffering and **moral tortures** that he was to suffer, he went to get the new necklace, laying upon the jeweler's counter thirty-six thousand francs.

When Madame Loisel took back the necklace Madame Forestier said to her with a **chilly** manner:

“You should have returned it sooner; I might have needed it.”

She did not open the case, as her friend had so much feared. If she had **detected** the **substitution**, what would she have thought, what would she have said? Would she not have taken Madame Loisel for a thief?

After this, Madame Loisel knew the horrible existence of the needy. She **endured** it, however, with sudden heroism. That dreadful debt must be paid. She would pay it. They dismissed their servant; they moved; they rented a **attic** under the roof.

She came to know what heavy housework meant and the **odious** labors of the kitchen. She washed the dishes, using her dainty fingers and rosy nails on greasy pots and pans. She washed the soiled linen, the shirts and the dishcloths, which she dried upon a line; she carried the **slops** down to the street every morning and carried up the water, stopping for breath at every landing. And dressed like a working-class woman she went to the fruiterer, the grocer, the butcher, a basket on her arm, bargaining, facing disrespect, defending her miserable money, penny by penny.

Every month they had to pay off some debts, renew others, **obtain** more time.

Her husband worked evenings, doing accounting for a tradesman, and late at night he often copied **manuscripts** for five cents a page.

This life lasted ten years.

At the end of ten years they had paid everything, everything, with the rates of **usury** and the **accumulations** of the **compound interest**.

Madame Loisel looked old now. She had become the woman of **impoverished**

households – strong and hard and rough. With **frowsy** hair, skirts **askew** and red hands, she talked loudly while washing the floor with great swishes of water. But sometimes, when her husband was at the office, she sat down near the window and she thought of that gay evening of long ago, of that ball where she had been so beautiful and so admired.

What would have happened if she had not lost that necklace? Who knows? who knows? How strange and changeful is life! How small a thing is needed to make or **ruin** us!

But one Sunday, having gone to take a walk in the Champs Elysees to refresh herself after the **labors** of the week, she suddenly **perceived** a woman who was leading a child. It was Madame Forestier, still young, still beautiful, still charming.

Madame Loisel felt moved. Should she speak to her? Yes, certainly. And now that she had paid, she would tell her all about it. Why not?

She went up.

“Good-day, Jeanne.”

The other, astonished to be familiarly addressed by this plain, working-class housewife, did not recognize her at all and **stammered**:

“But—madame! – I do not know – You must have mistaken –”

“No. I am Mathilde Loisel.”

Her friend uttered a cry.

“Oh, my poor Mathilde! How you are changed!”

“Yes, I have had a pretty hard life, since I last saw you, and great poverty – and that because of you!”

“Of me! How so?”

“Do you remember that diamond necklace you lent me to wear at the ministerial ball?”

“Yes. Well?”

“Well, I lost it.”

“What do you mean? You brought it back.”

“I brought you back another exactly like it. And it has taken us ten years to pay for it. You can understand that it was not easy for us, for us who had nothing. At last it is ended, and I am very glad.”

Madame Forestier had stopped.

“You say that you bought a necklace of diamonds to replace mine?”

“Yes. You never noticed it, then! They were very similar.”

And she smiled with a joy that was at once proud and child-like.

Madame Forestier, deeply moved, took her hands.

“Oh, my poor Mathilde! Why, my necklace was **fake**! It was worth at most only five hundred francs!” ♦

