

# Short Stories

## for Level 8 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 6 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 7, 8 and 9 can be used the same way, especially if introduced with Ch. 6. 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

## Chapter 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. When and where does it happen?

**Try It: Identify the settings of each story.**

Movie: Titanic

Place:

Time:

---

Place:

Fairy tale: “Cinderella”

Time:

---

Play: Romeo and Juliet

Place:

Time:

---

Place:

Movie: Star Wars

Time:

## 2. Character and Characterization

“Characters” are \_\_\_\_\_

---

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

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

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

### Think About ...

*Can an animal be a character?*

*How can the reader distinguish between a main character and a minor character?*

## 3. Plot

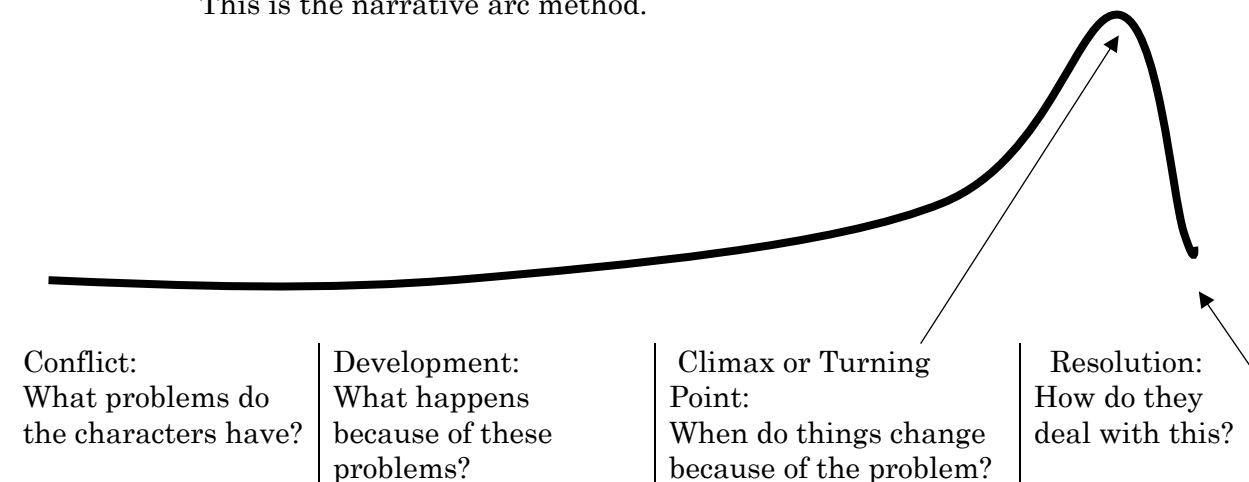
Plot is “what happens” in a story.

When a person summarizes a movie they have seen, they’re summarizing the plot.

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.



**Try It:**

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



**Titanic**

**Conflict:**

Rose and Jack are in love, but he's poor and she's engaged

**Development:**

They meet, they fall in love, Jack draws a picture of Rose nude, her finance is angry

**Climax:**

The ship hits an iceberg and sinks. Jack dies

**Resolution:**

Rose lives a long life but always remembers Jack

**Notice that everything that happens in the "Development" section is a result of the basic conflict. If Jack were rich, or if Rose was not engaged, their falling in love would not be a problem ... or very interesting**



**"Cinderella"**

**Conflict:**

**Development:**

**Climax:**

**Resolution:**

## More about Conflict

There are three basic types of conflict.

### Person vs. Self

A person's problem is within themselves. They cannot make a choice, or they make bad choices.

### Person vs. Person

Two characters disagree with each other, which causes problems.

### Person vs. Environment

There are many possible meanings of "environment" here. It might mean a group of people; it might mean the physical, natural environment; it might mean society or laws.

Create a narrative arc for a story of your choice.



Conflict:

Development:

Climax:

Resolution:

These first three concepts - Setting, Character, Plot - answer the key questions  
**“Where? When? Who? What? Why?”**

#### 4. Mood, Tone:

**The feeling or emotion that the writer attempts to create in the reader.**

Do you know these tone words?

melancholy \* neurotic \* anxious \* scandalized  
nostalgic \* quizzical \* hectoring \* sarcastic \* ironic

#### 5. Theme:

**The major concept the writer wants to explore with their work.**

**The theme is usually a universal, abstract idea.**

**Examples: “love,” “family loyalty,” “human behavior in wartime.”**

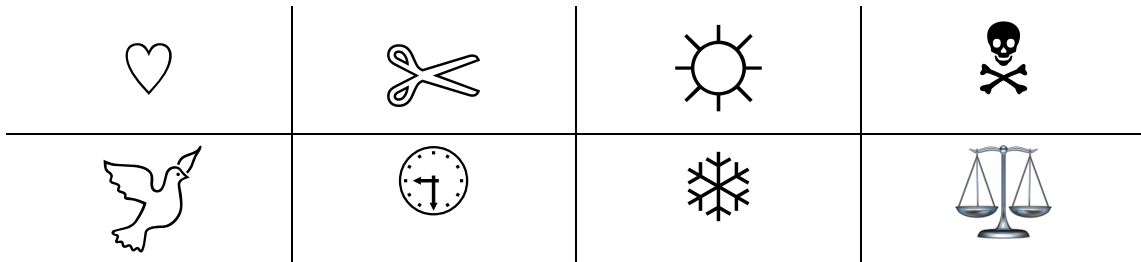
Try It:

Write one or more reasonable themes below each artistic work below.

**Movie: *Titanic* \* Play: *Romeo and Juliet* \* Fairy Tale: “Cinderella”**

#### 6. Symbol:

A *symbol* (noun) is a noun that represents a bigger idea. 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 form is ***symbolic***.

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

## 7. 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**: that’s where the metaphor describes something non-human by comparing it to a human.

Examples, from more ordinary to more literary:

1. Last night, I slept like a log. (S)
2. This dress is perfect because it fits like a glove. (S)
3. He’s as dumb as a box of rocks. (S)
4. They fought like cats and dogs. (S)
5. “Baby, you’re a firework.” (Katy Perry) (M)
6. “You ain’t nothin’ but a hound dog, cryin’ all the time.” (Elvis Presley) (M)
7. Your explanation is as clear as mud. (S)
8. “But soft! What light through yonder window breaks? It is the East, and Juliet is the sun.” (William Shakespeare) (M)
9. “Built Like A Rock” (Chevrolet ad) (S)
10. You’re as cold as ice. (S)
11. I’m drowning in work. (M)
12. He had hoped to sail on the ocean of love, but found himself lost in a desert. (M, M)
13. The lonely train whistle called out in the night. (M, P)
14. The snow wrapped a white blanket around each tree. (M, P)
15. In the garden, eggplants grow curving like ox horns. (S)
16. The noise split the air. (M)
17. And with those four words, her happiness died. (M)
18. Her dark eyes were not bad-looking, like a pair of tadpoles. (Ha Jin) (S)
19. From the kitchen came the coughing of bellows. (Ha Jin) (M, P)
20. “Therefore the moon, pale in her anger, washes all the air.” (Shakespeare) (M, P)

### Try It:

1. I am as tall as a redwood in the forest .
2. I 'm hungry as a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. I'm as fast as a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. I'm as happy as a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. I'm as clever as a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The snow is a fluffy 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. Mt. St. Helens \_\_\_\_\_.
15. The snake \_\_\_\_\_.

### 8. Foreshadowing:

A hint about something that will happen later in the story.

### 9. Irony:

This is related to *sarcasm*. When you use sarcasm, you use a word with the opposite meaning of your REAL emotions. If you're late to class, your teacher might say "Thanks for being so early!" If you spill coffee on your shirt, you might say, "Oh, great!"

Similarly, when a writer uses *irony*, they create a situation that is the opposite of a character's emotions.

## 10. 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.”

### Omniscient Narrator

“Omniscient” means “knowing everything.” An *omniscient narrator* is exactly that – a narrator who knows everything, like what characters think and feel. Usually, narrators focus on one character and share mostly what that one person thinks and feels, but narrators can also explain the emotional state of every character.

### Second Person

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.”

## Summary of Reading Vocabulary: Your Notes

Fill in these pages with your own definitions of these terms.

1. **Setting**

What are the two parts you **MUST** consider when discussing “setting”?

2. **Character, characterization**

What types of characters are there?

3. **Plot**

Plot can be analyzed with a *narrative arc*.

What are the four parts of a narrative arc?

Plot can also be analyzed with a *timeline*.

How is that different from a narrative arc?

4. **Mood**

5. **Theme**

6. **Symbol, symbolize**

## 7. Figurative language

What is it?

How is a *metaphor* different from a *simile*?

What is special about the metaphor called *personification*?

## 8. Foreshadowing

## 9. Irony

## 10. Point of View

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 2 - Study Guide: "Story of an Hour"

Kate Chopin was a well-loved and very popular American feminist writer. She lived from 1850–1904, during the time when women were not allowed to vote; she was the mother of six children and lived in the American South. Many of her stories are in the public domain, including this one.

### Before You Read: Background

This short story is considered a classic of American feminist literature. It was written in 1895, a time when upper-middle-class women lived very restricted, controlled lives. While working-class women worked exhausting jobs and long hours, women in wealthier families would not work. They were treated like children; they had no access to money, were not allowed to own property or vote, and their husbands would make all decisions for them. Obviously, this could be extremely frustrating.

There are a few different characters, but only one **main character**. The story takes place over just one hour - just as the title indicates.

The writing style of the late 1800s was often very formal and difficult to understand, and there are some challenging sentences in this short story. However, overall, the tone of the story is fairly modern and easy to understand. In fact, the change in language through this story - from old-fashioned and difficult to more clear, modern and direct - may be one of the themes that Chopin wanted her readers to experience.

### While You Read: Highlighters and Dictionaries

After you learn something about the background of a piece of fiction, you should *preview* the reading itself. Previewing fiction is different from previewing an article or textbook. Simply look over the story; look for any illustrations; check how long it is. This will help you plan your reading time. Where do you like to be as you read? How much time will you need?

It is a good idea to highlight or *annotate* the text as you read. You may want to use two different colors, or two different pen types: one to highlight vocabulary you don't understand, and the other to highlight interesting ideas that may be keys to understanding the whole story.

The first time you read, try not to focus on the words you don't know. Try to finish the whole story, then go back to work on vocabulary at a different time. Be careful not to "kill" the story by working on too many words. Instead, always return to the most important question: "What happened?"

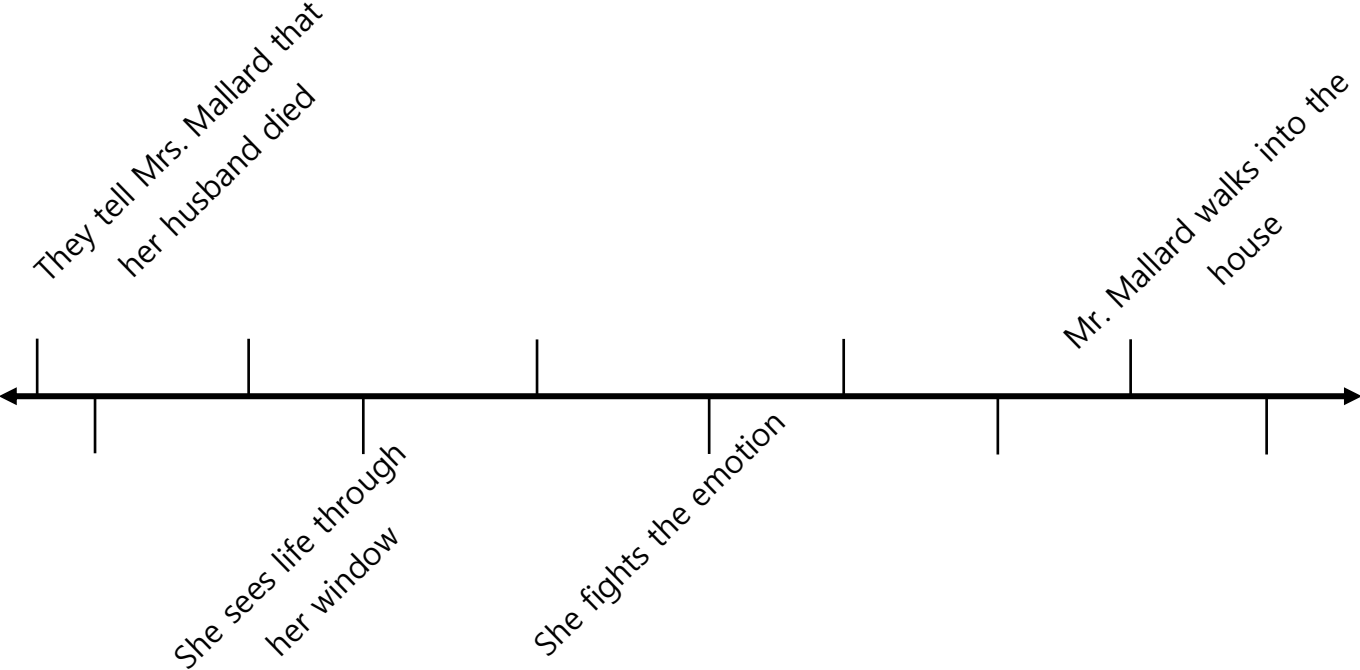
### Keep in Mind

Have you ever been aware of a difference between what you were EXPECTED to feel and what you REALLY felt? When? What was that like? This may help you understand the story.

After You Read: Comprehension

1) Timeline: What Happened?

Complete the timeline with the events of the story in the order they happened.



## 2) Narrative Arc: What Happened?

Complete these Narrative Arc. Indicate at least one major conflict; “Story of an Hour” certainly has more than one. Write a few major events (three or four) in the “Development” section. Be careful with “Climax” and “Resolution.” In this story, the Climax is *what Mrs. Mallard experiences – the change in her emotions*. Some stories do not have a clear Resolution, but “Story of an Hour” does!

### "Story of an Hour" Narrative Arc



**3) More Detail: What's the setting?**

Time of day: (Why do you say this?)

Place: (Can you really be specific?)

**4) More detail: What's Mrs. Mallard's personality?**

Write some adjectives that fit.

On the surface, she seems ...	Hidden inside, she is ...
-------------------------------	---------------------------

**Sentence by Sentence Analysis**

Summarize this passage from the story.

“She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which someone was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.”

**Paraphrase these sentences from the story. Use normal, simple language.**

A. "When the storm of grief had spent itself she went away to her room alone."

B. "Now her bosom rose and fell tumultuously."

C. "She breathed a quick prayer that life might be long. It was only yesterday she had thought with a shudder that life might be long."

### **Discussion Notes**

A. Is the story realistic? Was it realistic in the past? Could it happen today?

B. Does Mrs. Mallard hate her husband?

C. Is Mr. Mallard a bad husband? What evidence do you have to support your answer?

D. What does Mrs. Mallard want from life that she does not get?

E. In your opinion, is the story's ending more happy or sad?

## Chapter 3 - Study Guide: "Chrysanthemums"

These questions are based on the background readings found on the website and the lectures. Use the links about the authors in particular.

### Background:

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| a) Steinbeck graduated from Stanford University.                           | T | F |
| b) Steinbeck never won a major literary prize.                             | T | F |
| c) Steinbeck was sympathetic to the Nazis in WW II.                        | T | F |
| d) Steinbeck was conservative politically.                                 | T | F |
| e) At the end of the 1930's, the U.S. had just finished a major world war. | T | F |
| f) Women in the 1930s were allowed to vote.                                | T | F |
| g) Farming in California was usually a good way to get rich.               | T | F |

**Vocabulary.** What does the bold word mean? Take a guess – DON'T use a dictionary!

- 1) The cattle on the higher slopes were becoming **shaggy** and rough-coated.
- 2) With her **trowel** she turned the soil over and over, and smoothed it and patted it firm.
- 3) The horse and the donkey **drooped** like unwatered flowers.
- 4) The **rangy** dog **darted** from between the wheels and ran ahead.
- 5) And I can beat the **dents** out of little pots.
- 6) I've read how the fighting gloves get heavy and **soggy** with blood.
- 7) He replied with some **asperity**, "It might surprise you what them beasts can pull through."

## **Before You Read: Cultural Context**

Watch the video lecture "John Steinbeck: His Life, Times and Values" for more discussion of these points.

### **California**

John Steinbeck is a distinctively Californian writer. He was born in California's Central Valley - a huge area with exceptionally rich soil and wonderful weather. He lived all his life between the farms of this area and the Pacific Ocean. He knew the lives of farmworkers and of fishermen, and he respected these hard-working, poorly educated people. During his lifetime, California was a diverse state with people from many countries and races, and Steinbeck respected them all. He was sensitive to the beauty of the landscape and wrote strong descriptions of the hills, fogs, beaches and fields of this part of California.

### **The Great Depression and the Dust Bowl**

During the 1930s, the United States suffered two catastrophes. One was economic. The crash of Wall Street in 1929 led to massive unemployment in every state. The dollar became nearly worthless. Families lost their homes and were broken up. People living in farming communities were first affected less than city people. However, as time went on, every part of America was affected by massive unemployment and homelessness.

At the same time as this disaster, another problem was developing. In the Midwest of the country, in states like Oklahoma, Kansas and Iowa, settlers had been farming intensively for about 100 years. This land had never been farmed before that, and the farming techniques of these European settlers were harsh. As a result, the top layers of the soil were becoming dried and lifeless. Then, starting in about 1931, there were several years of high temperatures, strong winds, and little rain.

The result was a shocking environmental problem. Tens of thousands of tons of dry dirt flew up into the winds, creating dust storms that turned the sky completely black and buried towns completely. Homes were ruined. Cars and machinery were destroyed. Many people died, and the survivors had to leave their communities for survival.

Thousands of these homeless, desperate people eventually came to California. Many people there turned their back on these poor, dirty, needy people. Steinbeck saw this. His reaction was sympathetic.

### **Steinbeck's View of Women**

One of Steinbeck's strongest values was the value of every human life. He believed in helping each person, in kindness, and in freedom. He had great admiration for the women he saw. He noticed that while poor people worked hard, poor women worked harder than men, and that women held families together in the worst situations. He noticed that while poor people lacked freedom, women at every economic level had less freedom than men. The women characters in his writing generally face two types of challenges. First, they face difficult environments, and second, they are limited by their roles as wives or mothers. His women characters are not always "nice" or "good" people, but Steinbeck always writes with a sense of respect for their difficult lives.

## After You Read

**Comprehension: Answer these questions with a short sentence.**

1. What season is it in the story?
2. Is the farm a busy place?
3. Does Elisa work on the orchard?
4. Do you think that women often attend boxing matches at the time of “The Chrysanthemums”?
5. What animals are pulling the tinker’s wagon?
6. What work does Elisa give to the tinker?
7. Is the tinker travelling north or south?
8. Does Henry really know his wife?
9. What does Elisa see in the road?
10. How does she feel when she sees this?

## Narrative Arc

There are several major conflicts in this story. First there is conflict between Elisa and herself (she is dissatisfied with her life; she is strong, but has no opportunity to use her strength). There is conflict between Elisa and Henry (he does not understand her, and they seem like strangers to each other at times). Finally, her interaction with the tinker is a clear personality conflict. Think about each of these conflicts and write the climax or turning point and the resolution, if any.

<b>Conflict:</b>	<b>Climax, or Turning Point:</b> What happens to create a realization or change in a main character?	<b>Resolution:</b> What did the character realize or learn? Are they changed? How?

<b>Conflict:</b>	<b>Climax, or Turning Point:</b> What happens to create a realization or change in a main character?	<b>Resolution:</b> What did the character realize or learn? Are they changed? How?

<b>Conflict:</b>	<b>Climax, or Turning Point:</b> What happens to create a realization or change in a main character?	<b>Resolution:</b> What did the character realize or learn? Are they changed? How?

### Figurative Language

Identify the comparison made in each quote and explain what it. First, is it a metaphor or a simile? Second, what two things are compared?

1. “The high **gray-flannel** fog of winter” (p. 1)
  - ★ Is this a metaphor or simile?
  - ★ What two things are compared?
  
2. “Her **terrier fingers** destroyed such pests before they could get started.” (p. 2)
  - ★ Is this a metaphor or simile?
  - ★ What two things are compared?
  
3. “The horse and the donkey **drooped like unwatered flowers.**” (p. 4)
  - ★ Is this a metaphor or simile?
  - ★ What two things are compared?

## Deeper Meanings

Read the passage, then answer the question with a complete paragraph. Your topic sentence should make it clear which question you are answering.

- 1) Her figure looked blocked and heavy in her gardening costume, a man's black hat pulled low down over her eyes, clod-hopper shoes, a figured print dress almost completely covered by a big corduroy apron with four big pockets to hold the snips, the trowel and scratcher, the seeds and the knife she worked with. She wore heavy leather gloves to protect her hands while she worked.

**This is the first image Steinbeck gives us of Elisa. How is it different from the way women are often described? Why did he do this? (Also think of his choice later to describe her face as “handsome” – not “pretty.”)**

- 2) In the kitchen she reached behind the stove and felt the water tank. It was full of hot water from the noonday cooking. In the bathroom she tore off her soiled clothes and flung them into the corner. And then she scrubbed herself with a little block of pumice, legs and thighs, loins and chest and arms, until her skin was scratched and red. When she had dried herself she stood in front of a mirror in her bedroom and looked at her body. She tightened her stomach and threw out her chest. She turned and looked over her shoulder at her back.

**Imagine Elisa's thoughts at this moment. Why did she scrub herself until her “skin was scratched and red”? What was she trying to remove?**

- 3) Elisa went into the house. She heard him drive to the gate and idle down his motor, and then she took a long time to put on her hat. She pulled it here and pressed it there. When Henry turned the motor off she slipped into her coat and went out.

**Why did Elisa wait until Henry turned the car off to exit from the house?**

- 4) “The Chrysanthemums” was written at the very end of the 1940s, when the economic worries of the 1930s were still affecting thousands of people. Do you think that the tinker was the first man to approach the farm and ask for a small job or some money? Does this affect your opinion of Eliza's reaction to him?

5) When the tinker expresses interest in the chrysanthemums, Elisa's attitude toward him changes dramatically. Why?

6) When Elisa tries to explain how she feels about gardening, the tinker says he might understand her.

"Maybe I know," he said. "Sometimes in the night in the wagon there--"

**Just that small gesture makes Elisa very emotional, to the point where she interrupts him and almost touches him. What does this show about her life? Her emotions?**

7) She looked toward the river road where the willow-line was still yellow with frosted leaves so that under the high grey fog they seemed a thin band of sunshine. This was the only color in the grey afternoon. She sat unmoving for a long time. Her eyes blinked rarely.

**Why does she look in that direction? What is she possibly thinking about?**

8) She heard the gate bang shut and set herself for Henry's arrival ...

Henry came banging out of the door, shoving his tie inside his vest as he came. Elisa stiffened and her face grew tight.

**What do these quotes indicate about Elisa's attitude toward Henry?**



## Chapter 4 – Costa’s Levels of Inquiry

There are several possible ways to use these study guides. Here are some suggestions.

### 1. Complete the exercises independently

You can work through some or all the exercises as homework or in class, working in small groups to discuss the answers.

### 2. Discuss in a literature circle

A literature circle is a small group of readers who discuss their reading in depth. There are many possible ways to form a literature circle; usually, each participant in a lit circle has a different job. If you do work in a lit circle, then each participant can choose one or more of the Study Guide questions and work on them independently before getting together with other members of the circle. Some suggested roles for members of a lit circle are:

- \* **Questioner:** This person either writes or answers several comprehension questions about the reading. They should have a clear idea about the answers. They asked the group their questions and lead a discussion about them. The questioner may want to bring a handout for other members of the circle with their questions printed on it.
- \* **Character expert:** This person defines who the major characters are and describes their characters. They choose adjectives and quotations to support their ideas. This person may want to bring a handout with pictures or drawings of the characters to support their ideas.
- \* **Summarizer:** This person creates a summary of the plot to share with the group. This person might choose a timeline, a narrative arc, or a Time-order list as a way to summarize what happens in the story. They might want to bring a handout with their timeline or narrative arc to share with other group members, or they might want to prepare a small poster to share.
- \* **Clarifier:** This person is responsible for explaining some challenging quotations or words to the group. The teacher might assign some phrases, the group might choose some lines, or the clarifier might choose their own difficult parts. They should be able to explain the difficult sections until everyone in the group understands them.
- \* **Extender:** This person goes beyond the story itself to understand it. They may choose to research the author’s life or the time period when the story was written. The extender can think about ways the story connects to today, or focus on predicting what will happen after the story ends. Their goal is to help the group understand the story at a deeper level. Several people can take the role of Extender, but they should focus on different things.

If you choose to complete the study guide in a lit circle, meet in your group to divide the tasks fairly. Your teacher may prefer you to discuss the reading in your circle, then use your notes to complete the study guide, or they may prefer you to complete the study guide as part of the literature circle discussion.

### **3. Poster presentation**

To prepare a poster presentation, a group will work in a similar way to the literature circle. Each person should have a specific job within the group. Each person should be responsible for choosing and creating an attractive visual that explains some aspect of the story: setting, characters, plot, context, and meaning. As a group, design your poster, following any specific requirements your teacher gives you. You may choose to present your poster verbally to the class, or simply share by displaying it to everyone.

### **4. Slideshow presentation**

You might want to do this type of presentation individually, or work in a group. Your teacher might provide a basic slide show for you to complete. Include pictures – always remember to give the source for every picture! – and quotes from the story. Present your slideshow to the class and explain each slide. This is a great opportunity to be creative.

## Using Titles in Your Writing: Format and Attribution

Remember the rules:

- ★ Titles use special capitalization rules. All words begin with a capital letter, EXCEPT function words of 4 letters or less. Typically, the last word is capitalized as well.
- ★ Short story titles are indicated with quotation marks (“ ”).
- ★ Book titles are indicated with *italics* or, when writing by hand, underline.

**In general, titles of shorter works are in quotation marks.**

**Title of longer works are italicized.**

“Short Story Title” ----- *Book Title*

“Article Title” ----- *Title of the Magazine*

“Title of a Poem” ----- *Title of the Book of Poetry*

“Song Title” ----- *Title of an Album*

“Title of a News Story” ----- *Title of a Newspaper*

### Example 1: Newspaper

The name of the newspaper is *The Oregonian*.  
Use italics when typing.

*If you write by hand, underline The Oregonian.*

The title of the main story is "Wildfire Closes I-5 South of the Border."

The newspaper follows its own capitalization rules. I need to follow college writing rules.



### Example 2: Magazine



The name of the magazine is *Newsweek*. Use italics when typing.

*If you write by hand, underline Newsweek.*

The title of the cover story is "The Nixon Tapes."

Correct these sentences. Don't change **ANYTHING** except the format! Add capital letters, underlining, and quotation marks as needed.

1. According to the new york times, Zika virus is spreading.
2. Stephen King is a horror writer whose books include carrie and the shining.
3. King also wrote a short story called children of the corn which was made into a movie.
4. The movie children of the corn was much longer than the original story.
5. Do you know Beyoncé's song single ladies?
6. The story barn burning by Murakami appears in the book the elephant vanishes.
7. Steinbeck wrote the novel of mice and men as well as the novella the pearl.
8. The magazine time published several articles about Steinbeck during his life.
9. The poet Maya Angelou wrote the poem still I rise, which inspires many people today.
10. Almost everyone knows the play romeo and juliet, but the play the comedy of errors is less well-known.

## Chapter 5 - “The Rabbits Who Caused All the Trouble”

Three traditional story forms are the parable, the myth, and the fable. These forms are ancient – and you probably know many examples already.

**Parable:** A story meant to teach a deep, difficult lesson. Usually religious.

**Myth:** A story meant to explain the world. Topics often include “How the world was created” and “How humans began.”

**Fable:** A story meant to teach a lesson about how to act to children. They often have animals as main characters, and they usually end with a moral – a very clear lesson in the form of a proverb.

This modern fable was written in 1939 by a famous American humorist. Thurber was both a cartoonist and a writer; he specialized in short stories and one-panel cartoons.

The language is slangy and informal. Here are a few phrases or words to look out for:

1. Crazy about
2. Bolt of lightning
3. Civilize
4. At a great distance
5. Escapists
6. Shamed (v)
7. Desert island
8. Descended on
9. An internal matter

## Cultural Context

### 1939: The Rise of Fascism

During the 1930s, the United States struggled with the economic and environmental challenges of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl. During the same years, the countries of Europe and Asia were undergoing huge changes, as well. In many countries, especially Germany, Italy and Japan, forceful leaders were taking power away from ordinary people and concentrating power in their own hands. Hitler, Mussolini, Fumimaro Konoe and others each believed that their own races and countries were superior to others. These fascist movements began by identifying groups of their own citizens that were "different" - those with a different religion, ethnicity or political beliefs. They moved on to threatening, jailing and murdering these citizens. Eventually, these countries attacked neighboring countries, starting World War II.

The U.S. and Britain, along with Canada, Australia and many developing countries, witnessed these changes with mixed reactions. Some citizens agreed with the ideas of fascism. Some thought that people attacked by the fascist countries, like the Jewish people in Germany, probably deserved it. Others reacted fearfully and preferred to "mind their own business." They felt that violence and abuse in one country should be left inside that country, and the victims should defend themselves. Eventually, World War II began, but it took years for countries to make that decision.

Thurber wrote and published "The Rabbits Who Caused All the Trouble" in 1939. It is important to know that Hitler had been arresting and murdering tens of thousands of Jews, Roma, communists and gay people since 1933. It is also important to know that many Americans refused to believe this was true, while others believed it was a terrible thing, but that nothing could be done to help.

## Irony

Thurber often wrote *ironic* short stories, and this one is typical. One way to understand *irony* is to review the concept of *sarcasm*. Sarcasm is a type of humor based on saying things that are the opposite of the actual situation. When your hair is messy, a friend might say "Looking good!" When you look up at a dark, cloudy, rainy sky, you might say "Another beautiful day." Sarcasm is often a way to deal with an uncomfortable situation.

Irony is used by writers who create one emotion with their writing, but also create a situation - a setting, character or plot - that is the opposite. The reader is aware of this, but the characters aren't. One example from the Disney movie *The Little Mermaid* is that the mermaid, Ariel, gives up her voice to win the love of Prince Eric. However, he is searching for a girl with a beautiful voice, so he refuses to fall in love with her. For the viewer, the situation is ironic, because we know it was Ariel whose voice affected him so strongly.

## Fable: "The Rabbits Who Caused All the Trouble"

By James Thurber

Within the memory of the youngest child there was a family of rabbits who lived near a pack of wolves. The wolves announced that they did not like the way the rabbits were living. (The wolves were crazy about the way they themselves were living, because it was the only way to live.) One night several wolves were killed in an earthquake and this was blamed on the rabbits, for it is well known that rabbits pound on the ground with their hind legs and cause earthquakes. On another night one of the wolves was killed by a bolt of lightning and this was also blamed on the rabbits, for it is well known that lettuce-eaters cause lightning. The wolves threatened to civilize the rabbits if they didn't behave, and the rabbits decided to run away to a desert island. But the other animals, who lived at a great distance, shamed them, saying, "You must stay where you are and be brave. This is no world for escapists. If the wolves attack you, we will come to your aid in all probability." So the rabbits continued to live near the wolves and one day there was a terrible flood which drowned a great many wolves. This was blamed on the rabbits, for it is well known that carrot-nibblers with long ears cause floods. The wolves descended on the rabbits, for their own good, and imprisoned them in a dark cave, for their own protection.

When nothing was heard about the rabbits for some weeks, the other animals demanded to know what had happened to them. The wolves replied that the rabbits had been eaten and since they had been eaten the affair was a purely internal matter. But the other animals warned that they might possibly unite against the wolves unless some reason was given for the destruction of the rabbits. So the wolves gave them one. "They were trying to escape," said the wolves, "and, as you know, this is no world for escapists."

*Moral: Run, don't walk, to the nearest desert island.*

**Title:** "The Rabbits Who Caused All the Trouble"

**Main Characters:**



Conflict:

Development:

Climax:

Resolution:

**Review:**

1. Make a list of the things which the wolves blame on the rabbits and of the reasons the wolves give. How could you describe these reasons?
2. Consider the way the other animals behave. How do you explain their behavior?
3. Could the rabbits have been saved? Could the wolves have been stopped?
4. This fable was written in 1939. What do you think Thurber was thinking of when he wrote it? Who do you think the wolves, the rabbits and the other animals represent?
5. What other political situations can you think of that are (or were) similar to the fable?



## Chapter 6 – Study Guide: “Paranoia”

This recently published short story by Shirley Jackson can be found in *The New Yorker*.

1. Context: Explain a possible connection between the U.S. national mood - politically or socially – and the story.

2. Main Character: Name: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Adjective that describes him physically: \_\_\_\_\_

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

4. Adjective that describes his personality: \_\_\_\_\_

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

5. Conflict: What type of conflict does the story have (person/person, person/self, person/society)?

6. Plot: Complete a narrative arc on our own paper. Include the major events of the story in the “Development” section.



## Chapter 7 - Myths: “Demeter and Persephone”

### Types of Short Fiction

There are many types 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:

## Version 1

### Seasons Come to the World

The story of the abduction of Persephone is a touching explanation for the harshness of Winter and the sweetness of Spring. Hades, god of the Underworld, saw the young goddess Persephone, daughter of the goddess Demeter, and instantly fell in love. He was so overwhelmed by Persephone's sweet charms that, instead of wooing her, he abducted her and brought her down to his kingdom under the earth.

While Hades courted Persephone in the Underworld, her mother began to miss her. Demeter sat in her new temple at Eleusis and cursed the earth with famine. Seeds would not grow. Plowed fields remained empty. For the first time, cold rains and snow fell down. Zeus and the other immortals were worried that this would be the end of mortal life on earth and thus, their worshipers would die. One by one, the gods begged her to forgive and forget, but Demeter was unmoved.

Zeus sent the messenger god Hermes to speak gentle words to Hades and persuade him to let Persephone return to her brooding mother. Hades was sympathetic, but he was also intent on keeping his bride. He offered Persephone a pomegranate. For every seed she ate, Persephone would have to return to the Underworld for one month. Today, when she rises up to return to the surface, the warm days of Spring return.

Adapted from <http://messagenet.com/myths/bios/hades.html>

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## Version 2

### Demeter: Humankind's Earth Mother

The Greek myth of Demeter and Persephone tells the story of a mother who discovers that her daughter has been stolen away by Hades, and will remain with him for six months out of each year. Farmers relied on Demeter, whose name originally meant 'earth mother,' for success growing crops. Before Hades married Persephone, Demeter was happy, and Spring lasted all year. After her daughter left, Demeter sadly neglected the farmers; the earth hardened and was covered in snow and frost. In contrast, the spring and summer months, when mother and daughter reunite, are those of rejoicing, flowers in bloom, and the time of warmth and fertility.

In this Greek myth, Demeter, the earth mother, has the power to both give and deny warmth, sunshine, and life itself. A mother so powerful and so vengeful is an ambivalent figure in myth and history. "Mother Nature" is both life-giving and murderous, loving and bitterly cruel. These ideas shape modern images of, and beliefs about, mother, nature and women in general.

Adapted from <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~amerstu/ce/summer97/mother.html>

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## Version 3

### The Legacy of Rape

The families of the Greek gods were complex. Demeter, goddess of the harvest, is the sister to Zeus, Hades and Poseidon, and thus originally lived on Mount Olympus with the other gods. Unfortunately, Poseidon, god of the oceans, desired her. To avoid him, she fled to the forest of Arcadia, where she transformed herself into a mare. Poseidon was able to find her, however; he transformed himself into a stallion and raped her. She became pregnant and gave birth to Arion, a talking horse.

Outraged and traumatized, Demeter stayed hidden in the caverns of Arcadia. Eventually, Zeus talked her into returning to Olympus. However, in later years, Zeus himself attacked and raped his own sister. Again, Demeter gave birth to a child created by rape. This was her daughter Persephone.

In the well-known myth, Demeter is driven mad by the kidnapping and rape of her beloved only child. Often her grief is represented simply as “mother’s love” or loneliness. However, remembering Demeter’s tragic, painful life, we may also see a mother who has survived rape but failed to protect her daughter from the same. Her suffering at the violence her child endured became the suffering of the Earth itself.

Adapted from <http://hunter.apana.org.au/~gallae/pantheon/myth/demeter.htm>

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#### **Version 4**

##### **Selfishness of the Gods**

Most myths involving Demeter are about her obsessive search for Persephone. She is so determined to find her daughter that she abandons her responsibilities. Demeter selfishly lets the rest of the earth suffer from cold winds, rains and snow - which the earth had never seen before - until she gets her daughter back. Many people die from her choice, but to this powerful goddess, their lives are meaningless.

For the humans of ancient Greece and for us today, life itself can seem random and cruel. For a time, the sun shines on us, and good fortune comes our way. Then, suddenly, through no fault of our own, bad luck arrives and interrupts our plans. Mythology provided ancient people with a sense that life is not, in fact, random; every event, pleasant or miserable, has a logical reason, even if we are not aware of it. Furthermore, these myths spread the idea that large forces, invisible to ordinary people, changed the world around us. These ideas were incorporated into the modern view of science.

Adapted from: [http://www.cornellcollege.edu/classical\\_studies/myth/demeter/](http://www.cornellcollege.edu/classical_studies/myth/demeter/)

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#### **Version 5**

##### **Persephone's Independence**

Persephone's childhood had been, in some ways, ideal. An only child, she received all of her mother's love and attention. With only her mother for company, Persephone grew from infant to young woman, spending her days picking flowers and playing in the warm days of the endless spring, completely sheltered by her overprotective mother. Imagine her shock, then, when Hades - strong, powerful Hades, god of the entire underworld - appeared and declared his love. What teenager could resist this adventure? All her life, her mother had controlled everything, including the weather itself. There had been no chance of dating, or even meeting a boy. Did she feel guilty as she ran away from her mother, or was this first taste of independence more thrilling? Persephone's transition, from over-protected child to independent woman, becoming Queen of her own kingdom and leaving her controlling mother behind, is the journey every woman must make in order to truly take control of her own life.

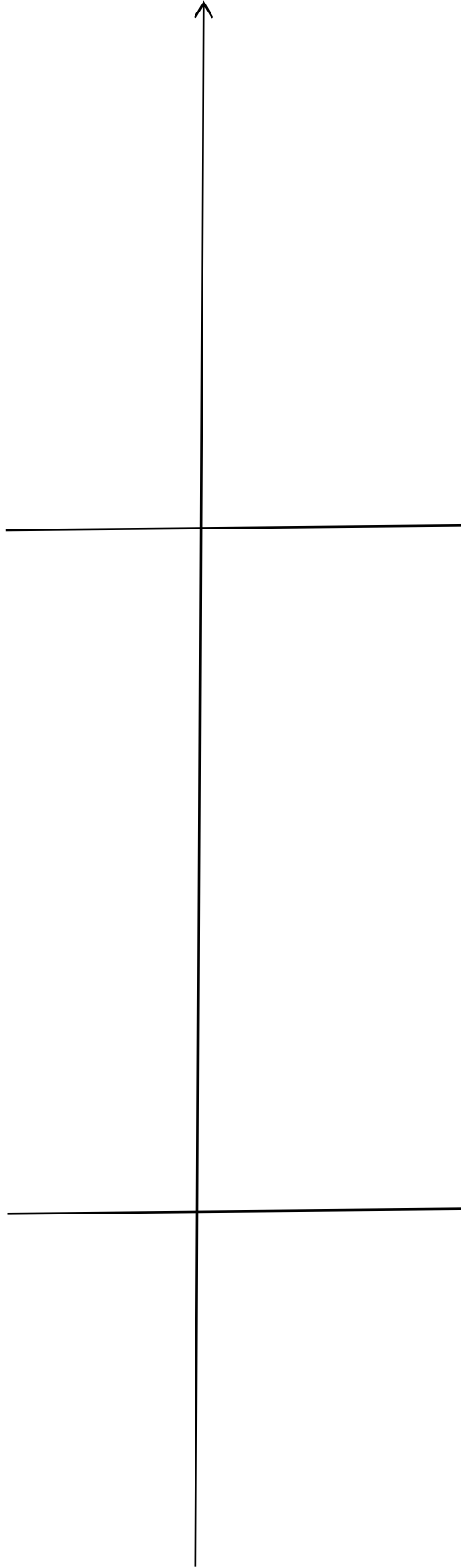
## Identify Differences and Similarities

In what key ways are the stories different?

	What is the relationship between mother and daughter?	Is Demeter a sympathetic character?	
Version 1:			
Version 2:			
Version 3:			
Version 4:			
Version 5:			

**In what key ways are the stories the same?**

What basic events  
happen in ALL  
versions of this myth?  
Complete the timeline.







## Chapter 8 – Write Your Own Study Guide

### Study Guide Project

After reading the story several times and discussing all the given questions, create your own study guide to one of these stories, or a new story your instructor assigns. Please include the following sections.

#### 1) Cultural Background.

Your “Cultural Background” section should explore the factual history of the time when the story was written and the personal history of the writer. Make it clear how these facts affect our understanding of the story.

#### 2) Comprehension.

These are questions that check: Did you read the story? Did you understand it? The correct answers to these questions can be found in the story itself. Example question types include:

- a) True/False, Yes/No
- b) Vocabulary – Highlight challenging words as you read
- c) Paraphrase – Choose interesting sentences and explain them
- d) Setting - Time and Place
- e) Characters -Who is in the story? What do they look like?
- f) Summary - What happened? - Timeline or Time-Order List

#### 3) Deeper Understanding

These are questions that check how deeply you understood the story. Example question types include:

- a) Characterizations: What personalities do the characters have? Describe them, and support your descriptions.
- b) Motivation: Why did the characters do something?
- c) Inference: What did the characters do in their lives before we meet them in the story? How much money do the characters have? Why might that be?
- d) Predictions: What will happen later, after the end of the story?
- e) Compare: How are the characters different at the end of the story compared to the beginning? In other words, how did the characters change?
- f) Narrative Arc: What’s the conflict? The climax? The resolution?

Follow your instructor’s guidelines about how long your study guide should be. In general, you should have more “Comprehension” questions than “Deeper Understanding” questions.

Turn in two versions of your Study Guide: one with no answers, and one completely answered. Alternatively, you can turn in a Study Guide with no answers, exchange with a classmate, and answer their Study Guide.



## Chapter 9 - Study Guide: “Man and Wife”

“Man and Wife” is a short story by Katie Chase that appeared in the Summer 2007 issue of the *Missouri Review*. The story is available on [their website](#). It also appears in *The Best American Short Stories 2008*.

Before You Read: Discuss these questions in groups.

1. What is an appropriate age to get married? Should a husband and wife be the same age, different ages, or is it unimportant? What are some advantages and disadvantages to age differences between spouses?
2. How important is money in marriage? In the past, how important was it? Is it a good reason to get married today?
3. Think about marriage traditions around the world. In the past, how common were *arranged marriages*? What is an arranged marriage? Did your home country have this tradition in the past, and does it have this tradition now?
4. What is *child marriage*? What countries have practiced this in the past and today? What is the worst aspect of child marriage? Are there any positive aspects?
5. Is it more important to think about the first stage of marriage or the last stage of marriage when choosing a partner? In other words, how should people make decisions about marriage: by thinking of the first ten years of marriage, when you're young, or by predicting the last ten years, when you're old?

## Read in Chunks

Listen or read aloud. Add notes to help you understand.

<p>They say every girl remembers that special day when everything starts to change.</p> <p>I was lying under the tree in my parents' backyard, an oak old enough to give shade but too young to be climbed, when Dad's car pulled into the garage.</p> <p>All afternoon I'd been riding bikes with Stacie, but we had a fight when she proposed we play in my basement— it <i>was</i> getting too hot out, but I was convinced she was only using me for my Barbies. This was eight years ago. I was nine and a half years old.</p> <p>Dad came out and stood in the driveway, briefcase in hand,</p> <p>watching me pull up grass. “Mary Ellen!”</p> <p>I yanked one final clump, root and dirt dangling from my hands, and sat up.</p> <p>“Come inside. I have wonderful news.”</p>	<p>Who is the narrator? What do you guess the story will be about?</p> <p>The oak tree is a symbol: OLD ENOUGH for one use, TOO YOUNG for another use</p> <p>Bikes, fighting, and Barbies are all very childish things</p> <p>How old is the narrator now?</p>
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In the kitchen Dad was embracing my mother,  
his arms around her small, apron-knotted waist.

“I can’t believe it went through,”  
she was saying.

She turned to me with shiny eyes,  
cleared her throat,  
and said in her sharp voice,  
“Mary, go get down the good glasses.”

I pushed a chair to the cupboards  
and climbed onto the countertop.

Two glass flutes for my parents,  
and for myself  
a plastic version I’d salvaged from last New Year’s,  
the first time I’d been allowed,  
and encouraged,  
to stay up past midnight  
and seen how close  
the early hours of the next day  
were to night.

Dad took down the last leftover bottle of champagne  
and popped it open,  
showering the kitchen floor.

My mother laughed and wiped her hands on her polka-dotted apron,  
as if  
she’d gotten wet.

She’s surprised “it went through” – what went through?  
What has been achieved?

Climbing on counter to reach glasses =

She kept something from a New Year’s party, which is usually an adult celebration

Mother does NOT get wet but she –

<p>“Hold up your glass, Mary Ell,” said Dad.</p> <p>He filled it halfway, and theirs to the rim.</p> <p>When in the past I’d been curious about alcohol, my parents had frowned, taken a drink, and feigned expressions of disgust.</p> <p>On New Year’s, for instance, my cup had held plain orange juice, and the next morning, while my parents still slept, I’d had orange juice in it again.</p> <p>“A toast.” My mother held up her glass and waited. I waited, too.</p> <p>The champagne fizzed, bubbles rising.</p> <p>“To Mary,” said Dad, and then he stopped, choked up.</p> <p>“Our own little girl, to be a woman,” my mother said.</p> <p>“Bottoms up.”</p>	<p>Full glasses, half-full glass: why?</p> <p>They both wait for Dad</p> <p>“to be a woman” = Bottoms up =</p>
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## Comprehension

Answer after you have read the story once or twice. For the short-answer questions, write one or more complete sentences.

1. Mary Ellen's parents worked hard for a year or more to arrange the marriage with Mr. Middleton. T F
2. Mary's mother got married at age 9. T F
3. Mary Ellen and Stacie have always been close friends. T F
4. Mr. Middleton picks Mary Ellen up and holds her in his arms on the wedding day. T F
5. Mary Ellen and Mr. Middleton both have to say "I do" to get married. T F
6. Mary Ellen falls in love with Mr. Middleton after a year of marriage. T F
7. In a few years, Mary Ellen will control her parent's lives. T F
8. Who is the narrator of this story - her name and her age at the time she tells the story?
9. How is a marriage arranged in this society: who asks, who agrees, how does the process work? -
10. What's the moment of legal marriage in this story?
11. Mr. Middleton **strokes Mary Ellen on the back** after they are married. This gesture is repeated at least two other times in the story. What characters touch someone on the back? What characters get touched?

12. Identify the main conflict in the story. What type of conflict is it (character vs. self, character vs. character, or character vs. society)?

13. What's the climax and resolution?

**Symbols.** What is a possible symbolic meaning of the quote? Explain in your own words.

<p>Quote:          "I was lying under ... an <b>oak</b> old enough to give shade but too young to be climbed" (p. 28)</p>	<p>Symbol: Oak tree</p>
<p>"They clinked their glasses together, and mine met theirs dully, with a tap that brought an end to the <b>pleasant ringing</b> they'd created" (p. 28).</p>	<p>Symbol: The ringing sound of the parent's glasses</p>
<p>"They clinked their glasses together, and mine met theirs <b>dully, with a tap</b> that brought an end to the pleasant ringing they'd created" (p. 28).</p>	<p>Symbol: The "tap" of Mary Ellen's plastic glass</p>
<p>"I pictured that the dress would dirty as I ran; it would rip and tear, and then I would know I was free" (p 39).</p>	<p>Symbol: The wedding dress</p>

Think about these quotations. Match each one to the closest meaning.

1. When in the past I'd been curious about alcohol, my parents had frowned, taken a drink, and feigned expressions of disgust (p 28).

Mary Ellen's parents would pretend that drinking was disgusting to make it less attractive to her	Her parents disliked alcohol and wanted her to know it
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2. Stacie picked apart her chain and let the flowered weeds fall—she had a theory they could again take root (p 30).

Stacie is a destructive force and critical of Mary Ellen	Stacie believes that normal childhood life can continue despite being a wife
--	--

3. "Pay close attention: what he wants the most may be very small, and you can wait out the rest." (p 32)

Mary Ellen's mother suggests that she wait until she is older to become a wife	Mary Ellen's mother suggests that she might not be forced into sex
--	--

4. The metal tray was heavy, but my arms grew stronger, and I learned to balance it on my shoulder (p 34).

Over time, Mary Ellen learns to deal with the mental pressure of accepting "being a wife"	Mary Ellen is growing up and maturing
---	---------------------------------------

5. "Can you show me another way they might sleep?" he asked (p 36).

Mr. Middleton misses the innocence of childhood and playing with toys	Mr. Middleton wants to be sure that his future bride has some idea about what sex is
---	--

6. For all his skill in the world of business, I think he understands less about the world without than I do (p 37).

Mary Ellen knows something about human nature that Mr. Middleton doesn't	What is most important in the world is not business, but relationships.
--	---

7. They didn't seem particularly impressed or unnerved. I yearned for either response, to anchor my own (p 38).

Mary Ellen feels that it was amazing, but creepy, that Mr. Middleton visited her when she was home alone, but her parents don't care	Mary Ellen is confused about the visit and wants her parents to guide her
--	---

8. I knew that I had done the right thing, the only thing I could, but still, I felt foolish (p 40).

Mary Ellen believes that she must try to be free, even if she loses	Mary Ellen realizes she doesn't have good judgement and she still makes foolish decisions
---	---

9. Now I believe that the hardest part of the game is staying in it, holding on to your stake (p 42).

The job of a woman and wife is a difficult, 24-hour-a-day job	It's easy for women to lose their financial future
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## Chapter 10 – Study Guide: “What You Pawn I Will Redeem”

This short story by Sherman Alexie is printed in his short-story collection *Ten Little Indians*. It is also available on the *New Yorker* website.

### Research

**Divide into several groups. Spend a short time researching tribal groups of Native Americans. Choose one tribe, research for approximately 20 minutes, and then explain some key facts to the class.**

### Tribes That Appear in the Story:

Salish, Aleut, Plains, Yakima, Colville.

**These quotes are important to understanding the overall story, but the language might be tricky. Be sure you understand them.**

1. I've broken a few hearts in my time, but we've all done that, so I'm nothing special in that regard. I'm a boring heartbreaker, too. I never dated or married more than one woman at a time. I didn't break hearts into pieces overnight. I broke them slowly and carefully.
2. Rose of Sharon is a big woman, about seven feet tall if you're measuring over-all effect and about five feet tall if you're only talking about the physical.

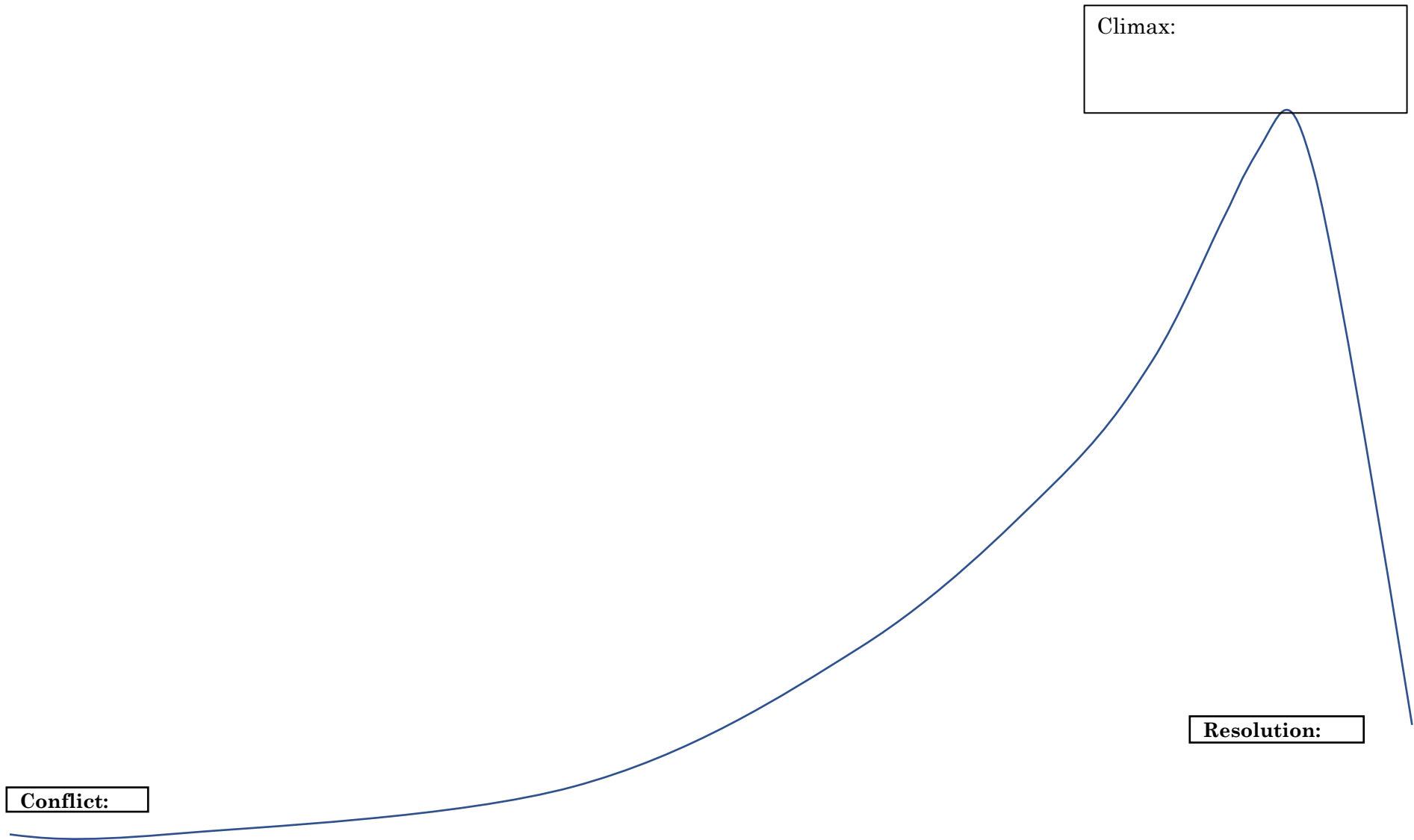
3. “Just like a man,” she said. “You love money and power more than you love me.”  
“It’s true,” I said. “And I’m sorry it’s true.”
  
4. “Wow,” I said. “I’m flattered, Honey Boy, but I don’t play on your team.”
  
5. Indian alcoholics are either sprinters or marathoners.
  
6. He’d given me hundreds of candy bars over the years. I wonder if he knew I was diabetic.
  
7. “The two funniest tribes I’ve ever been around are Indians and Jews, so I guess that says something about the inherent humor of genocide.”
  
8. I understood. We Indians have to keep our secrets. And these Aleuts were so secretive they didn’t refer to themselves as Indians.
  
9. And just when I’d given up, when I turned one last corner and thought I might die if I didn’t find that pawnshop, there it was, in a space I swear it hadn’t occupied a few minutes ago.

Extenders: Alexie

Consider what people need to know about Native Americans today to understand the story more. Consider learning about these issues. Add other issues you feel are important as well.

<b>Rates of alcoholism for Native Americans:</b>	<b>How does the story explore this theme?</b>
<b>Rates of homelessness for Native Americans:</b>	<b>How does the story explore this theme?</b>
<b>Numbers of Jews killed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century:</b>  <b>Number of Native Americans killed since 1492:</b>	<b>How does the story explore this theme?</b>

**Summarizers: Narrative Arc.** Identify: Major conflict; development; the climax; the resolution ... if there is one.



## Summarizers

**Timeline.** Create a *timeline* of the major events in the story; include the important things that happened BEFORE THE STORY STARTS as well as during the story. Try to include: When did the Aleuts leave their home? When did Jackson Jackson become homeless? When did he first live in Seattle? When did his grandmother die? When did his grandfather get shot? ...and anything else you think is important.





## Chapter 11 - Study Guide: “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas”

### Before You Read: Preview the Story

Watch the video lecture for this chapter. Give brief answers to these questions.

1. Write some facts about LeGuin's life:
2. Write some facts about the history of this story:
3. Tone: What type of tone can we expect in this story?
4. What is important to know about the point of view used in the story?
5. Explain the words *clergy*, *guilt*, *military*:
6. Explain the words *feeble-minded*, *defective*, *imbecile*:
7. Explain the word *philosophical*:

## Vocabulary

Answer before you read the story. Write your best guess about the meaning under the underlined word, based on context.

1. I don't know, but I incline to think that Donald Trump would be a terrible husband.
2. For graduation day, we ask that your clothing stay decorous. Don't put on your party dresses until after the ceremony!
3. It's a very old book, so the words in it are archaic.
4. People believe that Native Americans were barbarians, but it's not true; their civilizations were highly developed and they did not solve problems with violence.
5. I don't trust Dolores. She treats us like small children instead of adults. Her voice is so sweet and dulcet it makes me crazy.
6. I need some peppers and vinegar! This dish is too bland – I don't like boring food.
7. I love science fiction. I enjoy imagining the future: will it be a nightmare or a utopia?
8. When the school bell rings, the children run out of school filled with energy and exuberance.
9. I know you don't drink or smoke, but don't act like such a goody-goody when I have a beer. It makes me uncomfortable when you talk so loudly about how disgusting alcohol is.
10. I'm single but I don't date very often. My sex life is very boring ... there are no orgies.
11. There are some provisioners selling food at the music festival.
12. I just bought these headphones and they don't work! They must be defective. I need a refund!
13. I watched a movie about WW II. The Nazis did some truly abominable things to their prisoners.
14. I hate "reality TV" – the people they show are so stupid, so shallow, so vapid!
15. The moment when your child walks away to school alone for the first time is poignant.
16. Looking into the night sky gives me profound thoughts, like "Why are we born?"

**Comprehension: Answer after you have read the story once. A short answer or sentence is fine.**

1. On what day does the story take place?
2. What kind of technology does Omelas have?
3. Does Omelas have a king?
4. On page 2, LeGuin writes, “But I wish I could describe it better. I wish I could convince you.” WHAT is she trying to convince us of?
5. Is Omelas a religious place? What kind of religion(s) do the people of Omelas have?
6. On page 4, LeGuin asks, “Do you believe?” What does she want us to believe in?
7. Who is in the tool shed?
8. Do the people of Omelas know about the child?
9. Who feeds the child?
10. On page 6, LeGuin asks again, “Now do you believe them?” Why does she ask again?
11. What types of people walk away from Omelas?
12. What direction do they walk in?

**After reading this short story at least two times, answer the following questions, which explore the story more deeply.**

1. Who is the narrator of the story?
2. Does LeGuin expect the reader to "believe" that Omelas is a real place?
3. Why is it required that everyone in Omelas visit the child at least once?
4. Name two parts of our own society LeGuin seems to think are "good" and two she seems to think are "bad."

**Read the story for the third time; then, think about these quotations.**

1. As they did without monarchy and slavery, so they also got on without the stock exchange, the advertisement, the secret police, and the bomb. (p 2)
2. This is the treason of the artist: a refusal to admit the banality of evil and the terrible boredom of pain. ( p 2)
3. Religion yes, clergy no. (p 3)
4. I don't think many of them need to take *drooz*.(p 3)
5. They feel disgust, which they had thought themselves superior to. (p 5)
6. Those are the terms. To exchange all the goodness and grace of every life in Omelas for that single, small improvement: to throw away the happiness of thousands for the chance of happiness of one: that would be to let guilt within the walls indeed. (p 5)
7. It is too degraded and imbecile to know any real joy. It has been afraid too long ever to be free of fear. Its habits are too uncouth for it to respond to humane treatment. Indeed, after so long it would probably be wretched without walls about it to protect it, and darkness for its eyes, and its own excrement to sit in. (p 5)
8. The place they go towards is a place even less imaginable to most of us than the city of happiness. I cannot describe it at all. (p 5)

**Below are some statements that may be related to the quotes above. These are not paraphrases, but there is a thematic connection between SOME of them. Discuss the meanings and match, if possible.**

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ The people of Omelas have good lives and are psychologically healthy. They don't want to escape from reality.
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ Only in religion can we be free of human suffering.
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ The people of Omelas consider that some emotions are not very healthy or beautiful; they think that when people are psychologically well-developed, they don't have certain emotions.
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ The past has its bad parts that violate human rights. The present also has some bad parts that violate human rights.
- E. \_\_\_\_\_ When someone is psychologically limited and damaged, they can never recover. They will never enjoy life.
- F. \_\_\_\_\_ You need some intelligence to truly enjoy your own life.
- G. \_\_\_\_\_ Writers usually like to write about tragedies. It's a common thought that sad stories are more "serious" and "important" than happy stories.
- H. \_\_\_\_\_ If you decide to leave your own culture and reject its rules of behavior and society, there is no way to tell if you've made the right decision or not; your "new" life might be better or worse.
- I. \_\_\_\_\_ Humans have a deep need for spiritual expression and belief, but the structure of a church, temple or mosque is almost always corrupted.
- J. \_\_\_\_\_ The development of society requires some human suffering. It cannot be escaped.

**Writing:** Write at least one paragraph (200 word minimum) to answer each question.

**1. Review.**

**Visit Amazon.com.** On the webpage for each book it sells, Amazon.com gives its customers an opportunity to give their opinions about the book.

Go to the Amazon.com website at the following address:

<http://www.amazon.com/Ones-Who-Walk-Away-Omelas/dp/0886825016>

(or search Amazon for the title).

Look at the reviews, and skim some of the comments. Which of the comments is closest to your opinion? Which of the comments is the most different from your opinion? Write your OWN “review” for Amazon. Extra points if you publish it!

**Discussion Question.** Choose ONE of these questions and write a full, well-developed paragraph to answer it.

1. **Who is “better:” the ones who walk away or the ones who stay? Who is “better” to LeGuin? Who is “better” to you?**
2. **In our society, do we have something similar to a “child in a tool shed”? What is it?**