

# Middle School English Language Arts Enrichment

**1 of 2**





# Supporting Material

Spring 2020

## Reading & Writing

- In this section, you will have a chance to explore a variety of writers and genres. Following the reading selections, there are activities to strengthen your skills in vocabulary, writing, grammar, and more!
  - To Build a Fire
  - The Treasure of Lemon Brown
  - There Will Come Soft Rains
  - The Highwayman
  - The Ant and the Grasshopper
  - Raymond's Run
  - One Friday Morning
  - Harrison Bergeron
  - Flowers for Algernon
  
- Additional Writing Support: Writing and Journal Ideas & Writing Poetry
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# TO BUILD A FIRE

Based on the short story by Jack London

## A HERE'S HOW

### Reading Focus

The description in lines 1–2 makes me nervous. It is very cold, and the man is taking a trail that not many people use. I think this decision may **cause** some dangerous effects.

## B YOUR TURN

### Reading Focus

According to the narrator, the man's problem is that he "lacked imagination." How might this lack of imagination **cause** problems for the man?

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Day had broken gray and very cold when the man turned off the Yukon trail onto a little-traveled trail. **A** He climbed the high earth bank, and at the top he stopped to catch his breath and look at his watch. It was nine in the morning on a clear day, but he could not see the sun. He had not seen the sun in several days.

The man looked back the way he had come. The Yukon River lay a mile wide and hidden under three feet of ice. On top of this ice were as many feet of snow. North and south, as far as his eye could see, was unbroken white, except for a dark line that was the trail.

10 The absence of the sun, the tremendous cold, the strangeness of it all had no effect on the man. He was a newcomer to this land, and this was his first winter. The trouble with him was that he lacked imagination. **B** He noticed things without understanding their significance.<sup>1</sup> He knew that 50 degrees below zero was very cold, but that fact did not lead him to think about man's frailty<sup>2</sup> or his place in the universe. In such weather a man must dress

1. **Significance** (SIHG NIH FIH KUHNS) means "importance."

2. **Frailty** (FRAY UHL TEE) is weakness.

warmly, but that there should be more to it than that did not enter his head.

As he turned to go on, he spat and was startled by a sharp, explosive crackle. He spat again, and the spittle crackled in the air. **C** Undoubtedly it was colder than 50 below, but that did not matter. He was headed to a camp where he knew his friends were waiting. He would be there by six, a bit after dark, but they would have a fire going and supper would be ready. Under his shirt he had biscuits and bacon for his lunch.

The trail he followed was faint because a foot of snow had fallen since the last sled had passed over the trail. A dog, a big native husky, trotted at the man's side. Although it knew nothing about temperatures, its instinct<sup>3</sup> told the dog how cold it really was—not 50, or even 60 below zero, but 75. The cold depressed the dog. It wanted the man to stop and make camp or build a fire. **D**

Frozen moisture from their breathing settled on the man's beard and the dog's muzzle. Once in a while the man thought about how very cold it was. He had never experienced such cold.

The man held on through several miles of woods. He crossed a wide, flat area and dropped down to a small stream, Henderson Creek. He saw by his watch that it was ten o'clock, and he knew that he was ten miles from the forks.<sup>4</sup> **E** He was making four miles an hour, and he figured that he would arrive at the forks at half-past noon.

He kept rubbing his cheeks and his nose with his mittens, and as soon as he stopped rubbing, they were numb<sup>5</sup> again. He knew frosted cheeks were a bit painful, but never serious.

The man was still very observant.<sup>6</sup> He knew that in some places springs bubbled up from the ground and, under the snow, there would be icy water where a man could sink up to his waist. He came across several such traps, which had a sunken appearance. Once he had a very close call. Suspecting danger, he

3. **Instinct** (IHN STIHNGT) means "natural ability; inherited, not learned behavior."

4. A **Fork** is the place where a road, path, or river divides or branches.

5. **Numb** (NUHM) means "without any physical feeling."

6. **Observant** (UHB ZUHR VUHNT) means "noticing."

## **C** HERE'S HOW

### **Literary Focus**

In lines 19–21, I think **nature** is warning this guy to be careful. His spit freezes in midair!

## **D** YOUR TURN

### **Literary Focus**

In lines 26–31, underline the words that show that the dog understands nature's message better than the man does. Then, explain how this description fits in with what you know about **naturalism**.

## **E** HERE'S HOW

### **Language Coach**

I know that the word *watch* can have different **parts of speech**. As a noun, it is a device for telling time, but as a verb, it means "look at." Here, I think *watch* is being used as noun.



**A** HERE'S HOW

**Literary Focus**

I am going to pay attention to the dog. Its instincts are closer to **nature** than the man's. Lines 50–55 show that the dog knows the natural world better than the man does.

**B** HERE'S HOW

**Reading Focus**

In lines 60–61, forgetting to build a fire **causes** the man's hands and feet to become very cold.

**C** HERE'S HOW

**Vocabulary**

The word *outwitted* in line 67 is made up of two smaller words, *out* and *wit*. Still, I am not sure know what *outwitted* means. My dictionary says it means "tricked cleverly." I think a synonym, or word with the same meaning, as *outwitted* is *outsmarted*.

**D** QUICK CHECK

Why does the dog want to stay at the fire?

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© Mark Seelan/zefa/Corbis

ordered the dog to go in front, but the dog did not want to go.  
50 It hung back until the man shoved it forward, and then it went quickly across the unbroken, white surface. Suddenly it broke through, struggled to one side, and escaped to firmer footing. It had wet its forefeet and legs, and almost immediately the water that clung to the dog turned to ice. Acting on instinct, the dog bit the ice away from between his toes. **A** The man took off a mitten and helped the dog free his paws of the ice. In less than a minute the man's exposed fingers grew numb.

At half past twelve the man arrived at the forks in the creek. He took his lunch from under his shirt and sat on a log to eat.  
60 Immediately he felt the numbness creeping into his hands and feet. He had forgotten to build a fire. **B** A bit frightened, he stood and stamped his feet until the feeling returned. It certainly was cold, he thought.

To warm himself, he walked up and down, stamping his feet and swinging his arms. Then he got out his matches and started to make a fire, finding twigs and firewood, and soon he had a roaring blaze. He ate his biscuits. For the moment he had outwitted the cold. **C** The dog stretched out in front of the fire, close enough to enjoy the warmth but far enough away not to burn his fur.

70 After eating, the man started walking again up the trail. The dog wanted desperately to go back to the fire. It knew about cold in a way the man did not, and it understood that it was not good to walk in such fearful cold. It was best to lie snug in a hole in the snow. But the man whistled, and the dog swung in at the man's heels and followed after. **D**

And then it happened. Suddenly the man crashed through a crust of snow into icy water halfway to his knees. He cursed his luck, for he would have to stop again and build a fire to dry his feet and his shoes and socks.

80 He found dry twigs and sticks and some dry grass, and he worked slowly and carefully. Gradually the fire grew as he put larger pieces of wood onto it. He knew there must be no failure. When it is 75 below zero, a man must not fail in his first attempt to build a fire, especially when his feet are wet. The old-timer on Sulfur Creek had warned him, and now he appreciated the advice. **E** His hands were numb, and his face and his feet were numb also. Now that he was not walking, he felt cold all over.

But he was safe, for the fire was a success. Remembering the old-timer's advice, never to travel alone on a day this cold, he  
90 smiled. Well, here he was; he had had the accident; he was alone; and he had saved himself. Any man who was a man could travel alone. As long as he kept his head, he would be all right. The fire snapped and crackled, but before he could take off his shoes to dry them, it happened. He had built his roaring fire under a tree and now, from the branches above, an avalanche<sup>7</sup> of heavy snow fell. The fire was no more. The man was shocked. **F** He feared he had just heard his own death sentence. For a moment he stared at the spot where the fire had been, and then he grew very calm. He would make a new fire, but he realized that even if he  
100 succeeded he would most likely lose some toes.

He gathered more dry grass and twigs, but his fingers could not grip them, and he had to grab whole handfuls. He grabbed some rotten twigs and green moss along with the dry twigs. All the while the dog watched, yearning for a new fire.

When the twigs and grass were ready, the man reached into his pocket, but now his fingers were completely numb. He fought back panic as he beat his hands on his body to try to get back some feeling. He got his matches from his pocket, but he dropped them all in the snow. He tried to pick them up, but he

**E****YOUR TURN****Vocabulary**

The term *old-timer* in line 84 is made up of two smaller words. Without the hyphen, an *old timer* might mean an "old clock." Add the hyphen, and the words together have another meaning. Write that meaning on the lines below. Use context clues or a dictionary for help.

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**F****YOUR TURN****Reading Focus**

What **causes** the man's fire to go out?

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7. An **avalanche** (A VUH LANCH) is a moving mass; a sudden great rush.

**A** HERE'S HOW

**Reading Focus**

Every time the man does anything, he messes it up. Dropping the matches is going to **cause** big problems.

**B** LITERARY ANALYSIS

Why does the man continue holding the matches, even when they are burning his hands? How does this relate to his current predicament?

**C** YOUR TURN

**Literary Focus**

In lines 125–131, the dog shows again that its instincts are closer to **nature** than man's. What does the dog do that proves this?

110 couldn't. He scooped some matches, along with a large quantity of snow, into his lap. **A** He could not pick them up with his useless hands, but he managed to take one match between his teeth and, after trying twenty times to strike it against his pant leg, he succeeded, but the match fell into the snow and went out. In a moment of despair, he knew that the old-timer was right; after fifty below a man should travel with a partner.

He took a whole bunch of matches between the heels of both hands and managed to light them all at once, seventy wooden matches all at once! He held the blaze to a piece of birch bark, but he could smell the flesh of his hands burning. In spite of the pain, he did not drop the matches. **B** He was shivering now, as he awkwardly put pieces of twig onto the flames. A piece of green moss fell on the feeble<sup>8</sup> fire, and when he awkwardly tried to poke it away, the flames died.

He looked over at the dog, sitting across the ruins of the fire from him, and a wild idea came into his head. He remembered the tale of the man, caught in a blizzard, who killed a steer and crawled inside the carcass<sup>9</sup> to stay warm. He would kill the dog and bury his hands in the warm body. Then he could build another fire. He spoke to the dog, calling it towards him, but something in his voice frightened the animal, and it stayed where it was. **C**

Struggling to stay calm, he got up onto his feet and looked down to be sure he was standing, for he could not feel his feet. He lunged<sup>10</sup> for the dog and caught hold of it. He wanted to kill the animal, but his numb hands could not strangle it, nor could he draw his knife. He let it go, and it ran off snarling with its tail between its legs, to watch him from forty feet away. The man beat his hands against his body but had no feeling in them.

He quickly realized that this was no longer a matter of freezing his fingers and toes; it was a matter of life and death, with the chances against him. He panicked, and he began to run up the trail, but he soon grew weak and stumbled. He tried to get up, but

8. **Feeble** (FEE buhl) means "weak."

9. A **carcass** (KAHR kuhs) is a dead body.

10. **Lunged** (LUHNJD) means "moved forward suddenly."

he failed. He decided to sit and rest before he tried to walk some more. As he sat and got his breath back, he noticed that he had stopped shivering. He now felt warm and comfortable. Before long, however, he thought of freezing totally, and so he got up to run again, with the dog at his heels. It angered him that the dog seemed so warm and safe in this frozen world.

150 He was losing this battle with the frost. It was creeping into his body from all sides. He ran another hundred feet and then fell face down in the snow. It was his last panic. He finally sat up and now thought only of meeting death with dignity. He felt drowsy, and sleep seemed a good idea; he could die in his sleep. Freezing was not so bad as people thought. There were lots worse ways to die.

He pictured the boys finding his body the next day. It certainly was cold, he thought. When he got back to the States, he could tell the folks what real cold was. He thought of the old man at Sulfur Creek and said, "You were right, old-timer." **D**

160 Then the man drifted off into the most comfortable and satisfying sleep he had ever known. **E** The dog sat facing him and waiting. The brief day drew to a close in a long, slow twilight. The dog whined, but the man remained silent. Later, the dog whined loudly. Still later, it crept close to the man and caught the smell of death. This made the animal bristle and back away. It waited a little longer, howling under a cold sky full of bright stars. Then it turned and trotted up the trail in the direction of the camp it knew, where it would find the other food providers and fire providers.

### **D** LITERARY ANALYSIS

How does the man's acceptance of death affect his behavior?

### **E** YOUR TURN

#### **Vocabulary**

By examining its context, write a definition for the word *satisfying*. Use a dictionary to check your answer.

SHORT STORY

# Preparing to Read

## THE TREASURE OF LEMON BROWN

by **Walter Dean Myers**



*Music Lesson #2* (2000) by Colin Bootman. Oil on board.

What Do  
**You**  
Think

What things in life  
are really important?



**QuickWrite**

Think about something important you would like to teach or tell someone younger than you. What would it be? How would you do it?





# Reader/Writer Notebook

Use your **RWN** to complete the activities for this selection.

**SKILLS FOCUS** **Literary Skills** Understand conflict.  
**Reading Skills** Summarize a text.

## Literary Focus

**Conflict** The plot of a story almost always involves **conflict**. Usually a conflict arises when a character wants something very badly but is prevented from getting it. A story can have **external conflicts**—struggles with outside forces, such as a blizzard—or **internal conflicts**—struggles within a character’s heart or mind, such as fighting shyness. In “The Treasure of Lemon Brown,” the main character has many conflicts, both external and internal.

**TechFocus** As you read the story, pay attention to how one character describes music called the “blues.” Make a list of details to research for a short presentation.

## Reading Focus

**Summarizing** A **summary** is a brief restatement of important plot events. Unlike a retelling, which is a paraphrase of an entire story, a summary touches on only the key plot events.

**Into Action** Use a Somebody Wanted But So chart to record the major conflicts in the story. Once you have filled in the chart, review the conflicts you’ve listed to help you summarize the story.

Somebody (character)	Wanted (goal or desire)	But (conflict)	So (resolution)
Greg	wants to play basketball	but his dad wants him to study	

## Writing Focus

### Think as a Reader/Writer

**Find It in Your Reading** Walter Dean Myers uses precise details to portray New York City’s Harlem. As you read, jot down in your *Reader/Writer Notebook* some of the details that help you imagine this urban neighborhood.

## Vocabulary

**impromptu** (ihm PRAHMP too) *adj.*: unplanned. *Greg’s friends had an impromptu checkers tournament.*

**tentatively** (TEHN tuh tihv lee) *adv.*: in an uncertain or hesitant way. *Greg pushed tentatively on the apartment door.*

**intently** (ihn TEHNT lee) *adv.*: with close attention. *Greg listened intently to the sounds in the room.*

**probing** (PROHB ihng) *v.* used as *adj.*: searching or investigating. *Greg, probing his leg, did not find any injuries.*

**ominous** (AHM uh nuhs) *adj.*: threatening. *After the crash, Greg heard only an ominous silence.*

## Language Coach

**Related Words** An *omen* is an event that hints at a future event. Although an omen could indicate a happy event to come, omens are usually associated with upcoming danger. Which of the words on the list above is formed from the word *omen*?



### Learn It Online

Listen to a professional actor read this story at:

[go.hrw.com](http://go.hrw.com)

L8-15

Go



## MEET THE WRITER

# Walter Dean Myers

(1937– )

•  
Michael  
L. Printz  
AWARD

### Fostering a Talent

Walter Dean Myers was born in Martinsburg, West Virginia; he was one of eight children. Myers's mother died when he was two, and when he was three, his father sent him and two of his sisters to New York City to be raised by foster parents. The Deans guided him through the rough times of his youth and taught him to appreciate both storytelling and education. When he became a published writer, Myers added their name to his to show how important they were to him.

“My foster father was a wonderful man. He gave me the most precious gift any father could give to a son: He loved me. . . . My foster mother understood the value of education. . . . She also understood the value of a story, how it could serve as a refuge for people like us.”

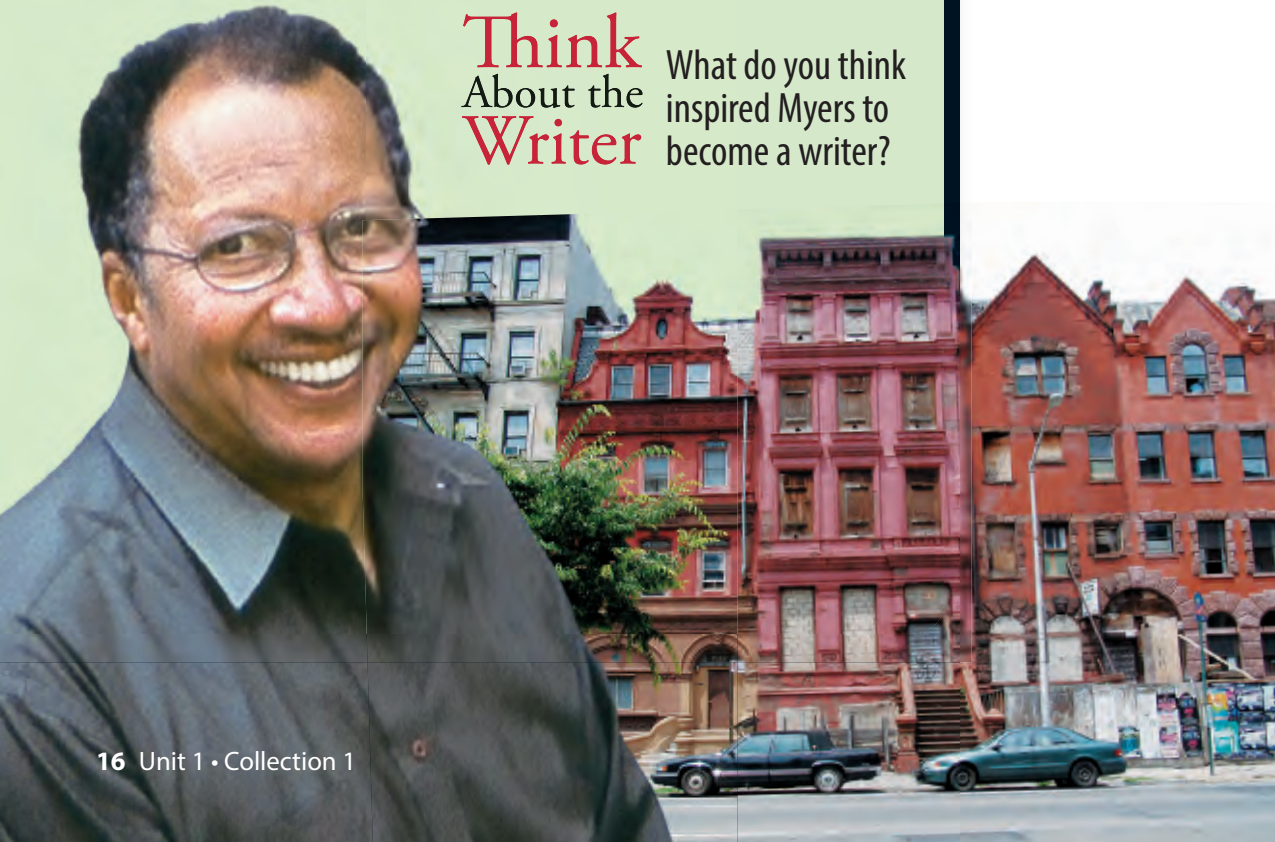
**Think**  
About the  
**Writer** What do you think  
inspired Myers to  
become a writer?

## Build Background

This story is set in Harlem, a neighborhood in New York City. After World War I, Harlem was the center of an African American literary explosion called the Harlem Renaissance. Important writers, such as Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston, lived in Harlem during this time. Though Harlem has always been a vibrant place, full of life, many of the buildings were not maintained for many years and were abandoned. Recently, however, Harlem has enjoyed a new wave of development and restoration.

## Preview the Selection

In this story, you'll meet a boy named **Greg**, who learns some life lessons from an unlikely person he meets in an unlikely place.



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**Read with a Purpose** Read this story to find out what Lemon Brown treasures most of all.

# THE TREASURE OF LEMON BROWN

by **Walter Dean Myers**

**T**he dark sky, filled with angry, swirling clouds, reflected Greg Ridley's mood as he sat on the stoop of his building. His father's voice came to him again, first reading the letter the principal had sent to the house, then lecturing endlessly about his poor efforts in math.

"I had to leave school when I was thirteen," his father had said; "that's a year younger than you are now. If I'd had half the chances that you have, I'd . . ."

Greg had sat in the small, pale-green kitchen listening, knowing the lecture would end with his father saying he couldn't play ball with the Scorpions. He had asked his father the week before, and his father had said it depended on his next report card. It wasn't often the Scorpions took on new players, especially fourteen-year-olds,

and this was a chance of a lifetime for Greg. He hadn't been allowed to play high school ball, which he had really wanted to do, but playing for the Community Center team was the next best thing. Report cards were due in a week, and Greg had been hoping for the best. But the principal had ended the suspense early when she sent that letter saying Greg would probably fail math if he didn't spend more time studying.

"And you want to play *basketball*?" His father's brows knitted over deep-brown eyes. "That must be some kind of a joke. Now you just get into your room and hit those books." **A**

That had been two nights before. His father's words, like the distant thunder that now echoed through the streets of Harlem, still rumbled softly in his ears.

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**A Reading Focus Summarizing** What does Greg want? What keeps him from getting it?

It was beginning to cool. Gusts of wind made bits of paper dance between the parked cars. There was a flash of nearby lightning, and soon large drops of rain splashed onto his jeans. He stood to go upstairs, thought of the lecture that probably awaited him if he did anything except shut himself in his room with his math book, and started walking down the street instead. Down the block there was an old tenement that had been abandoned for some months. Some of the guys had held an **impromptu** checkers tournament there the week before, and Greg had noticed that the door, once boarded over, had been slightly ajar. **B**

Pulling his collar up as high as he could, he checked for traffic and made a dash across the street. He reached the house just as another flash of lightning changed the night to day for an instant, then returned the graffiti-scarred building to the grim shadows. He vaulted over the outer stairs and pushed **tentatively** on the door. It was open, and he let himself in. **C**

The inside of the building was dark except for the dim light that filtered through the dirty windows from the street lamps. There was a room a few feet from the door, and from where he stood at the entrance, Greg could see a squarish patch of light on the floor. He entered the room, frowning at the musty smell. It was a large room that might have been someone's

parlor at one time. Squinting, Greg could see an old table on its side against one wall, what looked like a pile of rags or a torn mattress in the corner, and a couch, with one side broken, in front of the window.

He went to the couch. The side that wasn't broken was comfortable enough, though a little creaky. From this spot he could see the blinking neon sign over the bodega<sup>1</sup> on the corner. He sat awhile, watching the sign blink first green, then red, allowing his mind to drift to the Scorpions, then to his father. His father had been a postal worker for all Greg's life and was proud of it, often telling Greg how hard he had worked to pass the test. Greg had heard the story too many times to be interested now.

For a moment Greg thought he heard something that sounded like a scraping against the wall. He listened carefully, but it was gone.

Outside, the wind had picked up, sending the rain against the window with a force that shook the glass in its frame. A car passed, its tires hissing over the wet street and its red taillights glowing in the darkness.

Greg thought he heard the noise again. His stomach tightened as he held himself still and listened **intently**. There weren't any more scraping noises, but he was sure

1. **bodega** (boh DAY guh): small grocery store.

**B Literary Focus Conflict** What internal conflict does Greg have when it starts to rain?

**C Read and Discuss** What is Greg doing?

**Vocabulary** **impromptu** (ihm PRAHMP too) *adj.*: unplanned.

**tentatively** (TEHN tuh tihv lee) *adv.*: in an uncertain or hesitant way.

**intently** (ihn TEHNT lee) *adv.*: with close attention.





**Analyzing Visuals** **Viewing and Interpreting** Does the boy in this portrait remind you of Greg? Why or why not?

*Jim* (1930) by William H. Johnson.  
Oil on canvas, (21 5/8" x 21 1/4").

he had heard something in the darkness—something breathing!

He tried to figure out just where the breathing was coming from; he knew it was in the room with him. Slowly he stood, tensing. As he turned, a flash of lightning lit up the room, frightening him with its sudden brilliance. He saw nothing, just the overturned table, the pile of rags, and an old newspaper on the floor. Could he have been imagining the sounds? He continued listening, but heard nothing and thought that it might have just been rats. Still, he thought, as soon as the rain let up he would leave. He went to the window and was about to look out when he heard a voice behind him.

“Don’t try nothin’, ’cause I got a razor here sharp enough to cut a week into nine days!”

Greg, except for an involuntary tremor in his knees, stood stock-still. The voice was high and brittle, like dry twigs being broken, surely not one he had ever heard before. There was a shuffling sound as the person who had been speaking moved a step closer. Greg turned, holding his breath, his eyes straining to see in the dark room. **D**

The upper part of the figure before him was still in darkness. The lower half was in the dim rectangle of light that fell unevenly from the window. There were two feet, in cracked, dirty shoes from which rose legs that were wrapped in rags.

“Who are you?” Greg hardly recognized his own voice.

“I’m Lemon Brown,” came the answer. “Who’re you?”

“Greg Ridley.”

“What you doing here?” The figure shuffled forward again, and Greg took a small step backward.

“It’s raining,” Greg said.

“I can see that,” the figure said.

The person who called himself Lemon Brown peered forward, and Greg could see him clearly. He was an old man. His black, heavily wrinkled face was surrounded by a halo of crinkly white hair and whiskers that seemed to separate his head from the layers of dirty coats piled on his smallish frame. His pants were bagged to the knee, where they were met with rags that went down to the old shoes. The rags were held on with strings, and there was a rope around his middle. Greg relaxed. He had seen the man before, picking through the trash on the corner and pulling clothes out of a Salvation Army box. There was no sign of the razor that could “cut a week into nine days.” **E**

“What are you doing here?” Greg asked.

“This is where I’m staying,” Lemon Brown said. “What you here for?”

“Told you it was raining out,” Greg said, leaning against the back of the couch until he felt it give slightly.

“Ain’t you got no home?”

“I got a home,” Greg answered.

“You ain’t one of them bad boys looking for my treasure, is you?” Lemon Brown cocked his head to one side and squinted one eye. “Because I told you I got me a razor.”

“I’m not looking for your treasure,” Greg answered, smiling. “If you have one.”

“What you mean, if I have one,” Lemon Brown said. “Every man got a treasure. You

**D Literary Focus Conflict** What new conflict is Greg facing?

**E Read and Discuss** What does this information suggest about Lemon Brown?

don't know that, you must be a fool!"

"Sure," Greg said as he sat on the sofa and put one leg over the back. "What do you have, gold coins?"

"Don't worry none about what I got," Lemon Brown said. "You know who I am?"

"You told me your name was orange or lemon or something like that."

"Lemon Brown," the old man said, pulling back his shoulders as he did so, "they used to call me Sweet Lemon Brown."

"Sweet Lemon?" Greg asked.

"Yessir. Sweet Lemon Brown. They used to say I sung the blues so sweet that if I sang at a funeral, the dead would commence to rocking with the beat. Used to travel all over Mississippi and as far as Monroe, Louisiana, and east on over to Macon, Georgia. You mean you ain't never heard of Sweet Lemon Brown?"

"Afraid not," Greg said. "What . . . what happened to you?"

"Hard times, boy. Hard times always after a poor man. One day I got tired, sat down to rest a spell and felt a tap on my shoulder. Hard times caught up with me." **F**

"Sorry about that."

"What you doing here? How come you didn't go on home when the rain come? Rain don't bother you young folks none."

"Just didn't." Greg looked away.

"I used to have a knotty-headed boy just like you." Lemon Brown had half walked, half shuffled back to the corner and sat down against the wall. "Had them big eyes

like you got. I used to call them moon eyes. Look into them moon eyes and see anything you want."

"How come you gave up singing the blues?" Greg asked.

"Didn't give it up," Lemon Brown said. "You don't give up the blues; they give you up. After a while you do

good for yourself, and it ain't nothing but foolishness singing about how hard you got it. Ain't that right?"

"I guess so." **G**

"What's that noise?" Lemon Brown asked, suddenly sitting upright.

Greg listened, and he heard a noise outside. He looked at Lemon Brown and saw the old man was pointing toward the window.

Greg went to the window and saw three men, neighborhood thugs, on the stoop. One was carrying a length of pipe. Greg looked back toward Lemon Brown, who moved quietly across the room to the window. The old man looked out, then beckoned frantically for Greg to follow

**GREG TURNED,  
HOLDING HIS  
BREATH, HIS EYES  
STRAINING TO SEE IN  
THE DARK ROOM.**

**F Literary Focus Conflict** What do you think Lemon Brown means by "hard times"? What kinds of conflict might he have faced? Explain your answer.

**G Reading Focus Summarizing** What kept Lemon Brown from continuing his career as a blues singer?





**Analyzing Visuals** **Viewing and Interpreting** How is the view of Harlem seen in this photograph similar to Walter Dean Myers's description? How is it different?

him. For a moment Greg couldn't move. Then he found himself following Lemon Brown into the hallway and up darkened stairs. Greg followed as closely as he could. They reached the top of the stairs, and Greg felt Lemon Brown's hand first lying on his shoulder, then **probing** down his arm until he finally took Greg's hand into his own as they crouched in the darkness.

"They's bad men," Lemon Brown whispered. His breath was warm against Greg's skin.

"Hey! Ragman!" a voice called. "We know you in here. What you got up under them rags? You got any money?"

Silence.

"We don't want to have to come in and hurt you, old man, but we don't mind if we have to."

Lemon Brown squeezed Greg's hand in his own hard, gnarled fist.

There was a banging downstairs and a light as the men entered. They banged around noisily, calling for the ragman.

"We heard you talking about your treasure." The voice was slurred. "We just want to see it, that's all."

"You sure he's here?" One voice seemed to come from the room with the sofa.

"Yeah, he stays here every night."

"There's another room over there; I'm going to take a look. You got that flashlight?"

"Yeah, here, take the pipe too."

Greg opened his mouth to quiet the sound of his breath as he sucked it in uneasily. A beam of light hit the wall a few feet

opposite him, then went out.

"Ain't nobody in that room," a voice said. "You think he gone or something?"

"I don't know," came the answer. "All I know is that I heard him talking about some kind of treasure. You know they found that shopping-bag lady with that money in her bags."

"Yeah. You think he's upstairs?"

"HEY, OLD MAN, ARE YOU UP THERE?"

Silence.

"Watch my back, I'm going up."

H

There was a footstep on the stairs, and the beam from the flashlight danced crazily along the peeling wallpaper. Greg held his breath. There was another step and a loud crashing noise as the man banged the pipe against the wooden banister. Greg could feel his temples throb as the man slowly neared them. Greg thought about the pipe, wondering what he would do when the man reached them—what he *could* do.

Then Lemon Brown released his hand and moved toward the top of the stairs. Greg looked around and saw stairs going up to the next floor. He tried waving to Lemon Brown, hoping the old man would see him in the dim light and follow him to the next floor. Maybe, Greg thought, the man wouldn't follow them up there. Suddenly, though, Lemon Brown stood at the top of the stairs, both arms raised high above his head.

"There he is!" a voice cried from below.

"Throw down your money, old man, so I won't have to bash your head in!"

**Vocabulary** **probing** (PROHB ihng) *v.* used as *adj.*: searching or investigating.

**H Reading Focus Summarizing** What has happened to put Greg and Lemon Brown in danger?

Lemon Brown didn't move. Greg felt himself near panic. The steps came closer, and still Lemon Brown didn't move. He was an eerie sight, a bundle of rags standing at the top of the stairs, his shadow on the wall looming over him. Maybe, the thought came to Greg, the scene could be even eerier.

Greg wet his lips, put his hands to his mouth, and tried to make a sound. Nothing came out. He swallowed hard, wet his lips once more, and howled as evenly as he could.

"What's that?"

As Greg howled, the light moved away from Lemon Brown, but not before Greg saw him hurl his body down the stairs at the men who had come to take his treasure. There was a crashing noise, and then footsteps. A rush of warm air came in as the downstairs door opened; then there was only an **ominous** silence.

Greg stood on the landing. He listened, and after a while there was another sound on the staircase.

"Mr. Brown?" he called.

"Yeah, it's me," came the answer. "I got their flashlight." **I**

Greg exhaled in relief as Lemon Brown made his way slowly back up the stairs.

"You OK?"

"Few bumps and bruises," Lemon Brown said.

"I think I'd better be going," Greg said, his breath returning to normal. "You'd better leave, too, before they come back."

"They may hang around outside for a while," Lemon Brown said, "but they ain't

getting their nerve up to come in here again. Not with crazy old ragmen and howling spooks. Best you stay awhile till the coast is clear. I'm heading out west tomorrow, out to East St. Louis."

"They were talking about treasures," Greg said. "You *really* have a treasure?"

"What I tell you? Didn't I tell you every man got a treasure?" Lemon Brown said.

"You want to see mine?"

"If you want to show it to me," Greg shrugged.

"Let's look out the window first, see what them scoundrels be doing," Lemon Brown said.

They followed the oval beam of the flashlight into one of the rooms and looked out the window. They saw the men who had tried to take the treasure sitting on the curb near the corner. One of them had his pants leg up, looking at his knee.

"You sure you're not hurt?" Greg asked Lemon Brown.

"Nothing that ain't been hurt before," Lemon Brown said. "When you get as old as me, all you say when something hurts is, 'Howdy, Mr. Pain, sees you back again.' Then when Mr. Pain see he can't worry you none, he go on mess with somebody else."

Greg smiled.

"Here, you hold this." Lemon Brown gave Greg the flashlight.

He sat on the floor near Greg and carefully untied the strings that held the rags on his right leg. When he took the rags away, Greg saw a piece of plastic. The old man

**Vocabulary** **ominous** (AHM uh nuhs) *adj.*: threatening.

**I Reading Focus Summarizing** How do Lemon Brown and Greg scare off the thugs?



carefully took off the plastic and unfolded it. He revealed some yellowed newspaper clippings and a battered harmonica.

"There it be," he said, nodding his head. "There it be."

Greg looked at the old man, saw the distant look in his eye, then turned to the clippings. They told of Sweet Lemon Brown, a blues singer and harmonica player who was appearing at different theaters in the South. One of the clippings said he had been the hit of the show, although not the headliner. All of the clippings were reviews of shows Lemon Brown had been in more than fifty years ago. Greg looked at the harmonica. It was dented badly on one side, with the reed holes on one end nearly closed.

"I used to travel around and make money for to feed my wife and Jesse—that's my boy's name. Used to feed them good, too. Then his mama died, and he stayed with his mama's sister. He grewed up to be a man, and when the war come, he saw fit to go off and fight in it. I didn't have nothing to give him except these things that told him who I was, and what he come from. If you know your pappy did something, you know you can do something too.

"Anyway, he went off to war, and I went off still playing and singing. 'Course by then I wasn't as much as I used to be, not without

somebody to make it worth the while. You know what I mean?"

"Yeah," Greg nodded, not quite really knowing.

"I traveled around, and one time I come

home, and there was this letter saying Jesse got killed in the war. Broke my heart, it truly did. **J**

"They sent back what he had with him over there, and what it was is this old mouth fiddle and these clippings. Him carrying it around with him like that told me it meant something to him. That was my treasure, and when I give it to him, he treated it just like that, a treasure.

Ain't that something?" **K**

"Yeah, I guess so," Greg said.

"You *guess* so?" Lemon Brown's voice rose an octave<sup>2</sup> as he started to put his treasure back into the plastic. "Well, you got to guess, 'cause you sure don't know nothing. Don't know enough to get home when it's raining."

"I guess . . . I mean, you're right."

"You OK for a youngster," the old man said as he tied the strings around his leg, "better than those scalawags what come here looking for my treasure. That's for sure."

"You really think that treasure of yours was worth fighting for?" Greg asked.

2. **octave** (AHK tihv): musical term for the span of eight whole notes.

**"WHAT I TELL YOU?  
DIDN'T I TELL YOU  
EVERY MAN GOT A  
TREASURE?"  
LEMON BROWN SAID.**

**J Literary Focus Conflict** What type of conflict does Lemon Brown face?

**K Read and Discuss** What do we learn about Lemon Brown's treasure?



Harmonica.

“Against a pipe?”

“What else a man got ’cepting what he can pass on to his son, or his daughter, if she be his oldest?” Lemon Brown said. “For a big-headed boy, you sure do ask the foolish questions.”

Lemon Brown got up after patting his rags in place and looked out the window again.

“Looks like they’re gone. You get on out of here and get yourself home. I’ll be watching from the window, so you’ll be all right.”

Lemon Brown went down the stairs behind Greg. When they reached the front door, the old man looked out first, saw the street was clear, and told Greg to scoot on home.

“You sure you’ll be OK?” Greg asked.

“Now, didn’t I tell you I was going to East St. Louis in the morning?” Lemon Brown

asked. “Don’t that sound OK to you?”

“Sure it does,” Greg said. “Sure it does. And you take care of that treasure of yours.”

“That I’ll do,” Lemon said, the wrinkles about his eyes suggesting a smile. “That I’ll do.”

**L**

The night had warmed and the rain had stopped, leaving puddles at the curbs. Greg didn’t even want to think how late it was. He thought ahead of what his father would say and wondered if he should tell him about Lemon Brown. He thought about it until he reached his stoop, and decided against it. Lemon Brown would be OK, Greg thought, with his memories and his treasure.

Greg pushed the button over the bell marked “Ridley,” thought of the lecture he knew his father would give him, and smiled.

**M**

**L Read and Discuss** What has happened between the boy and the old man?

**M Literary Focus Conflict** Is Greg’s conflict with his father over playing basketball resolved? Explain.

# Applying Your Skills

**SKILLS FOCUS** **Literary Skills** Analyze conflict; analyze resolution. **Reading Skills** Summarize a text. **Writing Skills** Write to describe.

## The Treasure of Lemon Brown

### Respond and Think Critically

#### Reading Focus

##### Quick Check

1. Why does Greg go to the abandoned building?
2. What does Lemon Brown reveal to Greg about his past?

##### Read with a Purpose

3. What is Lemon Brown's treasure? Why does it mean so much to him?

##### Reading Skills: Summarizing

4. Review the chart that you made as you read the story. Then, add a row to your chart and write a brief summary of the story.

Somebody	Wanted	But	So
Greg	wants to play basketball	but his dad wants him to study	Greg avoids going home.

*My summary:*

#### Literary Focus

##### Literary Analysis

5. **Interpret** What does Lemon Brown mean when he says that everyone's got a treasure?
6. **Infer** What does Greg's encounter with Lemon Brown reveal to him about his own treasures?
7. **Infer** Why do you think Greg decides not to tell his father about Lemon Brown?

8. **Evaluate** Myers has said that in his writing he has to "counter" values conveyed by TV. Is that a worthwhile goal? If Myers asked you whether his story is effective at challenging the values on TV, what would you say?

##### Literary Skills: Conflict

9. **Analyze** Think about the various conflicts that Greg faces during the story. How does his handling of them change during the course of the story? Use story details to support your ideas.
10. **Interpret** What internal conflict has Greg resolved at the end of the story?

##### Literary Skills Review: Resolution

11. **Analyze** In the **resolution** of a story, conflicts are resolved. Identify three important external conflicts in the story. How is each one resolved?

#### Writing Focus

##### Think as a Reader/Writer

**Use It in Your Writing** Myers based his description of Harlem on his memories of growing up there. Look back at the details of the setting you jotted down in your *Reader/Writer Notebook*. Then, write a description of your own neighborhood. Like Myers, use precise details to make your description true to life.

What Do  
**You**  
Think  
**Now**

What does Greg learn is important in life? Is what he learns also important to you? Why or why not?



# Applying Your Skills

## The Treasure of Lemon Brown

### Vocabulary Development

#### History of the English Language

Now you know what Lemon Brown's treasure is. But where does the word *treasure* come from? About 60 percent of English words, including *treasure*, come from the Latin language.

Latin was spoken by the Romans. The Roman Empire reached its height in the A.D. 100s and 200s. At that time, the Roman army conquered much of the Western world, including most of Europe and the Middle East as well as northern Africa. The Roman soldiers spoke Latin and spread their language around the world. In fact, Latin is the basis for all the Romance languages (French, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, and Romanian).

Eventually, in A.D. 1066, William the Conqueror, a Norman (from Normandy, in France) invaded England and became king. He spoke French—a Latin-based language—which influenced the English language. When the English pilgrims came to America in 1620, they brought the English language with them.

#### Your Turn

Study the following Latin words and meanings. Then, write each matching Vocabulary word in the third column.

impromptu  
tentatively  
intently  
probing  
ominous

Latin Word	Meaning	Vocabulary Word
<i>probare</i>	test or examine	
<i>tentare</i>	feel; try	
<i>ominous</i>	full of foreboding	
<i>promere</i>	bring out	
<i>intendere</i>	strain	

#### Language Coach

**Related Words** Related words share the same base word but have different beginnings or endings. Challenge yourself to list two related words for each of the following words: *tentatively*, *intently*, *probing*, and *ominous*.

#### Academic Vocabulary

##### Talk About . . .

What are some effective ways to gain trust? In a group, discuss the reasons that Greg and Lemon Brown come to trust one another. What does this trust reveal about them? How does this new friendship affect the story's outcome? Try to use some examples from the text as well as the underlined Academic Vocabulary words in your discussion.

## Grammar Link

### Nouns and Pronouns

Nouns are one of the basic building blocks of the English language. A noun is a word that is used to name a person, a place, a thing, or an idea.

<b>Persons</b>	Greg, Lemon Brown, street thugs
<b>Places</b>	Greg's front stoop, abandoned building
<b>Things</b>	couch, pipe, harmonica, flashlight
<b>Ideas</b>	fear, danger, love, sadness

Sometimes you can use a short word—a **pronoun**—in place of one or more nouns to avoid repetition.

Here is a sentence without pronouns:

When Lemon Brown crashed into the thugs,  
Lemon Brown scared the thugs away.

Here is the same sentence with pronouns:

When Lemon Brown crashed into the thugs,  
**he** scared **them** away.

The word that a pronoun stands for is called its antecedent. In the above sentences, *Lemon Brown* and *thugs* are the antecedents for the pronouns.

### Your Turn

Rewrite the following sentences by replacing the repeated nouns with pronouns.

1. Greg wanted to play basketball because basketball was Greg's favorite sport.
2. Because Greg's father valued education, Greg's father wanted Greg to study harder.
3. The thugs attacked Lemon Brown to get Lemon Brown's treasure.

## CHOICES

As you respond to the Choices, use these **Academic Vocabulary** words as appropriate: effective, outcome, reveal, structure.

### REVIEW

#### Write a Scene

With a classmate, write a scene with dialogue between Greg and his father that reveals their main conflict. Consider the following:

- What does Greg's father say in his lecture?
- How does Greg respond?
- Is there an effective outcome to the disagreement that will satisfy them both?

Perform the dialogue for your class.

### CONNECT

#### Research the Blues

**TechFocus** In the course of the story, we learn that Lemon Brown was a blues musician. Learn more about blues music by using the Internet to perform research. You might, for example, find out about the life of a musician such as B. B. King or trace the evolution of the guitar in blues music. Use presentation software to share your findings with the class.

### EXTEND


#### Describe a Keepsake

**Timed Writing** Lemon Brown's treasure is a keepsake, an object that has value as a remembrance. Write an essay describing a keepsake of your own. Imagine what it would reveal to someone who found it. Structure your essay with a short introduction, body, and conclusion. Use precise details to help readers visualize the object.



# THERE WILL COME SOFT RAINS

Ray Bradbury



**7:00** In the living room the voice-clock sang, *Ticktock, seven o'clock, time to get up, time to get up, seven o'clock!* 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. *Seven-nine, breakfast time, seven-nine!*

In the kitchen the breakfast stove gave a hissing sigh and ejected from its warm interior eight pieces of perfectly browned toast, eight eggs sunny side up, sixteen slices of bacon, and two coffees.

"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. In-

*The rain  
tapped on  
the empty  
house,  
echoing.*



surance is payable, as are the water, gas, and light bills."

Somewhere in the walls, relays clicked, memory tapes glided under electric eyes.

8:01

*Eight-one, tick-tock, eight-one o'clock, off to school, off to work, run, run, eight-one!*

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.

Outside, the garage chimed and lifted its door to reveal the waiting car. After a long wait the door swung down again.

At eight-thirty the eggs were shriveled and the toast was like stone. An aluminum wedge scraped them into the sink, where hot water whirled them down a metal throat which digested and flushed them away to the distant sea. The dirty dishes were dropped into a hot washer and emerged twinkling dry.

*Nine-fifteen, sang the clock, time to clean.*

Out of warrens<sup>1</sup> in the wall, tiny robot mice darted. The rooms were acrawl with the small cleaning animals, all rubber and metal. They thudded against chairs, whirling their mous-tached runners, kneading the rug nap, sucking gently at hidden dust. Then, like mysterious invaders, they popped into their burrows. Their pink electric eyes faded. The house was clean.

10:00

*Ten o'clock. The sun came out from behind the rain.*

The house stood alone in a city of rubble and ashes. This was the one house left standing. At night the ruined city gave off a radioactive glow which could be seen for miles.

*Ten-fifteen. The garden sprinklers whirled up in golden founts, filling the soft morning air with scatterings of brightness. The water*

pelted windowpanes, running down the charred west side where the house had been burned evenly free of its white paint. The entire west face of the house was black, save for five places. Here the silhouette in paint of a man mowing a lawn. Here, as in a photograph, a woman bent to pick flowers. Still farther over, their images burned on wood in one titanic instant, a small boy, hands flung into the air; higher up, the image of a thrown ball, and opposite him a girl, hands raised to catch a ball which never came down.

The five spots of paint—the man, the woman, the children, the ball—remained. The rest was a thin charcoaled layer.

The gentle sprinkler rain filled the garden with falling light.

Until this day, how well the house had kept its peace. How carefully it had inquired, "Who goes there? What's the password?" and, getting no answer from lonely foxes and whining cats, it had shut up its windows and drawn shades in an old-maidenly preoccupation with self-protection which bordered on a mechanical paranoia.

It quivered at each sound, the house did. If a sparrow brushed a window, the shade snapped up. The bird, startled, flew off! No, not even a bird must touch the house!

The house was an altar with ten thousand attendants, big, small, servicing, attending, in choirs. But the gods had gone away, and the ritual of the religion continued senselessly, uselessly.

*Twelve noon.*

12:00

A dog whined, shivering, on the front porch.

The front door recognized the dog voice and opened. The dog, once huge and fleshy, but

#### WORDS TO OWN

**paranoia** (par'ə-nōi'ə) *n.*: mental disorder that often causes people to believe they are being persecuted; false suspicions.

1. **warrens**: small, crowded spaces.



now gone to bone and covered with sores, moved in and through the house, tracking mud. Behind it whirred angry mice, angry at having to pick up mud, angry at inconvenience.

For not a leaf fragment blew under the door but what the wall panels flipped open and the copper scrap rats flashed swiftly out. The offending dust, hair, or paper, seized in miniature steel jaws, was raced back to the burrows. There, down tubes which fed into the cellar, it was dropped into the sighing vent of an incinerator which sat like evil Baal<sup>2</sup> in a dark corner.

The dog ran upstairs, hysterically yelping to each door, at last realizing, as the house realized, that only silence was here.

It sniffed the air and scratched the kitchen door. Behind the door, the stove was making pancakes which filled the house with a rich baked odor and the scent of maple syrup.

The dog frothed at the mouth, lying at the door, sniffing, its eyes turned to fire. It ran wildly in circles, biting at its tail, spun in a frenzy, and died. It lay in the parlor for an hour.

*Two o'clock, sang a voice.*

Delicately sensing decay at last, the regiments of mice hummed out as softly as blown gray leaves in an electrical wind.

*Two-fifteen.*

The dog was gone.

In the cellar, the incinerator glowed suddenly and a whirl of sparks leaped up the chimney.

*Two thirty-five.*

Bridge tables sprouted from patio walls. Playing cards fluttered onto pads in a shower of pips.<sup>3</sup> Martinis manifested on an oaken bench with egg-salad sandwiches. Music played.

But the tables were silent and the cards untouched.

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

2. Baal (bā'āl): in the Bible, the god of Canaan, whom the Israelites came to regard as a false god.

3. pips: figures on cards

## LITERATURE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Home Improvement

Is the day near when housework will mean "work done by a house"? In 1950, when Bradbury published "There Will Come Soft Rains," many people believed that automated houses would become a reality within twenty or thirty years.

Today homes controlled by computer networks are becoming available at last. If you live in one of these homes, you can program it to turn on the lights when you come in or to lower the TV's volume when the phone rings.

Convenience isn't the only benefit offered by home automation. By turning off lights and appliances when they're not needed, automation can conserve energy and save money. It can also make phone calls in response to a spoken command. This feature, which is of particular value to people who can't get around easily, can actually save lives in an emergency.



4:30

Four-thirty.

The nursery walls glowed. Animals took shape: yellow giraffes, blue lions, pink antelopes, lilac panthers cavorting in crystal substance. The walls were glass. They looked out upon color and fantasy. Hidden films clocked through well-oiled sprockets,<sup>4</sup> and the walls lived. The nursery floor was woven to resemble a crisp cereal<sup>5</sup> meadow. Over this ran aluminum roaches and iron crickets, and in the hot, still air butterflies of delicate red tissue waved among the sharp aromas of animal spoors!<sup>6</sup> There was the sound like a great matted yellow hive of bees within a dark bellows, the lazy bumble of a purring lion. And there was the patter of okapi<sup>7</sup> feet and the murmur of a fresh jungle rain, like other hoofs, falling upon the summer-starched grass. Now the walls dissolved into distances of parched weed, mile on mile, and warm endless sky. The animals drew away into thorn brakes<sup>8</sup> and water holes.

It was the children's hour.

5:00

Five o'clock. The bath filled with clear hot water.

Six, seven, eight o'clock.

The dinner dishes manipulated like magic tricks, and in the study a *click*. In the metal stand opposite the hearth where a fire now blazed up warmly, a cigar popped out, half an inch of soft gray ash on it, smoking, waiting.

Nine o'clock. The beds warmed their hidden circuits, for nights were cool here.

Nine-five. A voice spoke from the study ceiling:

"Mrs. McClellan, which poem would you like this evening?"

The house was silent.

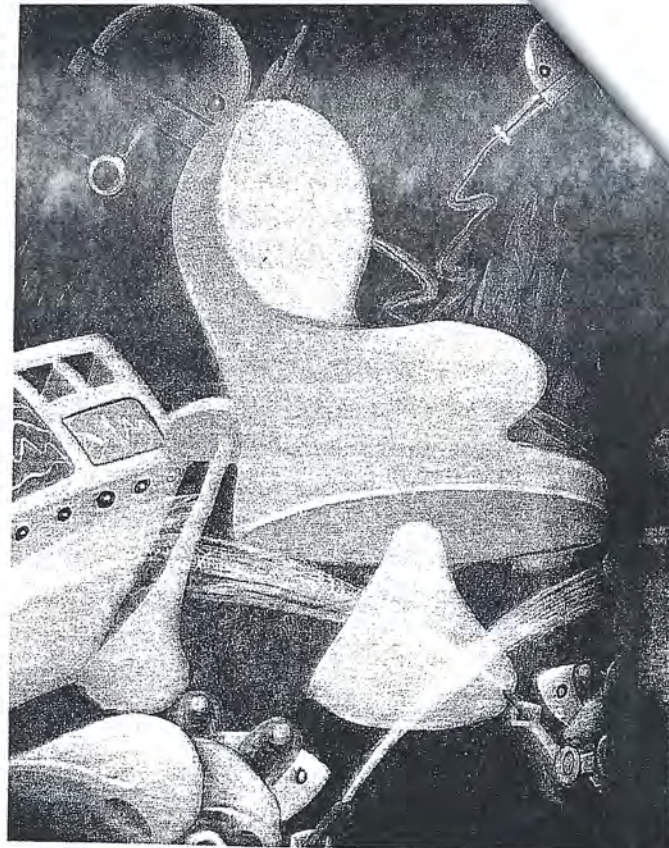
4. **sprockets**: wheels with points designed to fit into the holes along the edges of a filmstrip.

5. **cereal**: of grasses that produce grain.

6. **spoors**: tracks.

7. **okapi** (ō-kä'pē): African animal related to the giraffe but with a much shorter neck.

8. **thorn brakes**: clumps of thorns; thickets.



The voice said at last, "Since you express no preference, I shall select a poem at random." Quiet music rose to back the voice. "Sara Teasdale. As I recall, your favorite. . . .

*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;*

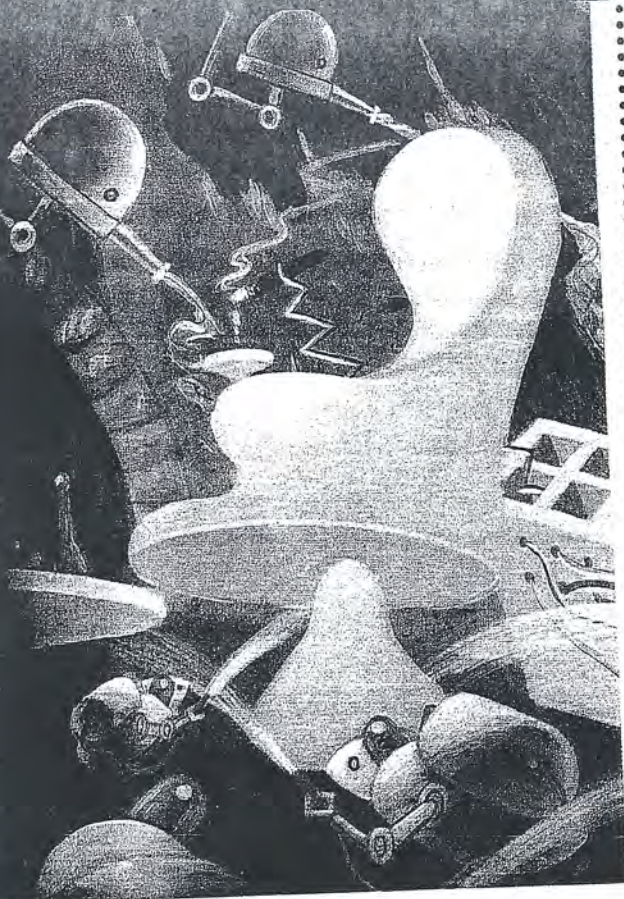
*And not one will know of the war, not  
one*

*Will care at last when it is done.*

#### WORDS TO OWN

**tremulous** (trem'yōō-ləs) *adj.*: trembling. Tremulous also means "fearful" or "timid."





*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."*

The fire burned on the stone hearth, and the cigar fell away into a mound of quiet ash on its tray. The empty chairs faced each other between the silent walls, and the music played.



At ten o'clock the house began to die.

The wind blew. A falling tree bough crashed through the kitchen window. Cleaning solvent,<sup>9</sup> bottled, shattered over the stove. The room was ablaze in an instant!

"Fire!" screamed a voice. The house lights

9. **solvent:** something that can dissolve something else (here, something that dissolves dirt). *Solvent, dissolve, and solution* have the same Latin root. *solvere*, which means "to loosen."

flashed, water pumps shot water from the ceilings. But the solvent spread on the linoleum, licking, eating, under the kitchen door, while the voices took it up in chorus: "Fire, fire, fire!"

The house tried to save itself. Doors sprang tightly shut, but the windows were broken by the heat and the wind blew and sucked upon the fire.

The house gave ground as the fire in ten billion angry sparks moved with flaming ease from room to room and then up the stairs. While scurrying water rats squeaked from the walls, pistoled their water, and ran for more. And the wall sprays let down showers of mechanical rain.

But too late. Somewhere, sighing, a pump shrugged to a stop. The quenching rain ceased. The reserve water supply which had filled baths and washed dishes for many quiet days was gone.

The fire crackled up the stairs. It fed upon Picassos and Matisse<sup>10</sup> in the upper halls, like delicacies, baking off the oily flesh, tenderly crisping the canvases into black shavings.

Now the fire lay in beds, stood in windows, changed the colors of drapes!

And then, reinforcements.

From attic trapdoors, blind robot faces peered down with faucet mouths gushing green chemical.

The fire backed off, as even an elephant must at the sight of a dead snake. Now there were twenty snakes whipping over the floor, killing the fire with a clear cold venom of green froth.

But the fire was clever. It had sent flame outside the house, up through the attic to the pumps there. An explosion! The attic brain which directed the pumps was shattered into bronze shrapnel on the beams.

The fire rushed back into every closet and felt of the clothes hung there.

10. **Picassos and Matisse:** paintings by Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), a famous Spanish painter and sculptor who worked in France, and by Henri Matisse (ân·rê' má·tēs') (1869-1954), a famous French painter.





The house shuddered, oak bone on bone, its bared skeleton cringing from the heat, its wire, its nerves revealed as if a surgeon had torn the skin off to let the red veins and capillaries quiver in the scalded air. Help, help! Fire! Run, run! Heat snapped mirrors like the first brittle winter ice. And the voices wailed, Fire, fire, run, run, like a tragic nursery rhyme, a dozen voices, high, low, like children dying in a forest, alone, alone. And the voices fading as the wires popped their sheathings<sup>11</sup> like hot chestnuts. One, two, three, four, five voices died.

In the nursery the jungle burned. Blue lions roared, purple giraffes bounded off. The panthers ran in circles, changing color, and ten million animals, running before the fire, vanished off toward a distant steaming river. . . .

11. sheathings: protective coverings.

Ten more voices died. In the last in under the fire avalanche, other chorus, oblivious, could be heard announcing the time, playing music, cutting the lawn by remote-control mower, or setting an umbrella frantically out and in, the slamming and opening front door, a thousand things happening, like a clock shop when each clock strikes the hour insanely before or after the other, a scene of maniac confusion, yet unity; singing, screaming, a few last cleaning mice darting bravely out to carry the horrid ashes away! And one voice, with sublime disregard for the situation, read poetry aloud in the fiery study, until all the film spools burned, until all the wires withered and the circuits cracked.

The fire burst the house and let it slam flat down, puffing out skirts of spark and smoke.

In the kitchen, an instant before the rain of fire and timber, the stove could be seen making breakfasts at a psychopathic<sup>12</sup> rate, ten dozen eggs, six loaves of toast, twenty dozen bacon strips, which, eaten by fire, started the stove working again, hysterically hissing!

The crash. The attic smashing into kitchen and parlor. The parlor into cellar, cellar into subcellar. Deep freeze, armchair, film tapes, circuits, beds, and all like skeletons thrown in a cluttered mound deep under.

Smoke and silence. A great quantity of smoke.

Dawn showed faintly in the east. Among the ruins, one wall stood alone. Within the wall, a last voice said, over and over again and again, even as the sun rose to shine upon the heaped rubble and steam:

"Today is August 5, 2026, today is August 5, 2026, today is . . ."

12. psychopathic (sī'kō·path'ik): insane.

#### WORDS TO OWN

oblivious (ə·bliv'ē·əs) *adj.*: unaware.

sublime (sə·blīm') *adj.*: majestic; grand.



## MAKING MEANINGS

### First Thoughts

1. Complete any two of these statements:
  - As I read “There Will Come Soft Rains,” I thought of . . .
  - This story interested/did not interest me because . . .
  - One question I have about the story is . . .

### Shaping Interpretations



2. Review the story by listing, in **chronological order**, the main events that took place in the house on August 4, 2026. Now, look at the little digital clocks that indicate the hours. How long did it take for the house to be destroyed?
3. Go back to the text, and find three places in the story where the house, the fire, and the appliances are **personified**—that is, described as if they were living beings, even human.
4. Bradbury describes the house as “an altar with ten thousand attendants” (page 216). Who are the “gods” who are worshiped? What has happened to these “gods”?
5. What similarities and differences do you see between the visions of the future offered in Bradbury’s story and those in Sara Teasdale’s poem (pages 218–219)?

### Connecting with the Text

6. Do you think there will ever be automated houses like the one in the story? Explain why or why not. How would you feel about living in one?



7. Turn back to your Quickwrite on the benefits and drawbacks of technology. What would you add to your list now that you have read “There Will Come Soft Rains”?
8. How old will you be and what do you think you’ll be doing in the year 2026? How do you expect the world of 2026 to compare with the one Bradbury envisions?

### Extending the Text

9. What warnings are Bradbury and Peter Leary (see page 222) trying to deliver through their stories? What do you think should be done to ensure that your generation’s future is different from what is described in the stories?

### Reading Check

- a. As the story opens, what clues suggest that all is not well in the McClellan household?
- b. What has happened to the family?
- c. Explain why there is still activity in the house. Who or what controls the house?
- d. Describe how the house is finally destroyed.

# Before You Read

## *The Highwayman*

### MEET ALFRED NOYES



**A**lfred Noyes was one of the most popular British poets of the early twentieth century. Because he became a successful poet while still in his twenties, Noyes was able to continue a career as a full-time poet. While many other British poets writing at that time were thoroughly modern in their writing styles, Noyes chose to write traditional poetry in the manner of the great nineteenth-century Romantic poets.

*Alfred Noyes was born in England in 1880 and died in 1958.*

### READING FOCUS

Do you enjoy dramatic adventure stories?

#### Sharing Ideas

Think about adventure stories you have enjoyed reading or seeing as movies. Jot down the titles of a few favorites to share with your classmates.

#### Setting a Purpose

Read this poem to enjoy its story.

### BUILDING BACKGROUND

By the eighteenth century, horse-drawn coaches traveled regularly on English roads. They were preyed upon by armed thieves on horseback called highwaymen, who would stop coaches at gunpoint and demand that the passengers surrender their money and other valuables. A few highwaymen, such as Dick Turpin, became legends in their time, inspiring songs, poems, and stories in the popular newspapers of the time—at least until they were caught and hanged for their crimes.





# The Highwayman

Alfred Noyes ~

## PART 1

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees.  
The moon was a ghostly galleon° tossed upon cloudy seas.  
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,°  
And the highwayman came riding—

5                      Riding—riding—  
The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn door.

He'd a French cocked hat on his forehead, a bunch of lace at his  
chin,

A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown doeskin.  
They fitted with never a wrinkle. His boots were up to the  
thigh.

10 And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,  
                    His pistol butts a-twinkle,  
His rapier° hilt° a-twinkle, under the jewelled sky.

2 A *galleon* (gal' yən) is a large sailing ship of the 1400s–1600s.

3 A *moor* is an area of open, rolling, wild land, usually a grassy wetland.

12 A *rapier* is a long, lightweight sword, and the *hilt* is its handle.

ACTIVE  
READING  
MODEL

### PREVIEW

Take a minute to think about the shape of this poem. How are the lines of the poem grouped? How many parts does it have?

### VISUALIZE

How does this description help you “see” the highwayman?

## The Highwayman

### ACTIVE READING MODEL

#### QUESTION

What do these  
images tell us  
about Tim?

#### QUESTION

What is happening  
here?

- Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark inn yard.  
He tapped with his whip on the shutters, but all was locked and  
barred.
- 15 He whistled a tune to the window, and who should be waiting  
there  
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,  
Bess, the landlord's daughter,  
Plaiting° a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.
- 20 And dark in the dark old inn yard a stable wicket° creaked  
Where Tim the ostler° listened. His face was white and peaked.°  
His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like mouldy hay,  
But he loved the landlord's daughter,  
The landlord's red-lipped daughter.  
Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber say—
- 25 "One kiss, my bonny° sweetheart, I'm after a prize tonight,  
But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the morning  
light;  
Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry° me through the day,  
Then look for me by moonlight,  
Watch for me by moonlight,
- 30 I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way."
- He rose upright in the stirrups. He scarce could reach her hand,  
But she loosened her hair in the casement.° His face burnt like a  
brand°  
As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling over his breast;  
And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,
- 35 (O, sweet black waves in the moonlight!)  
Then he tugged at his rein in the moonlight, and galloped away  
to the west.

18 Bess is braiding (*plaiting*) a red ribbon into her hair.

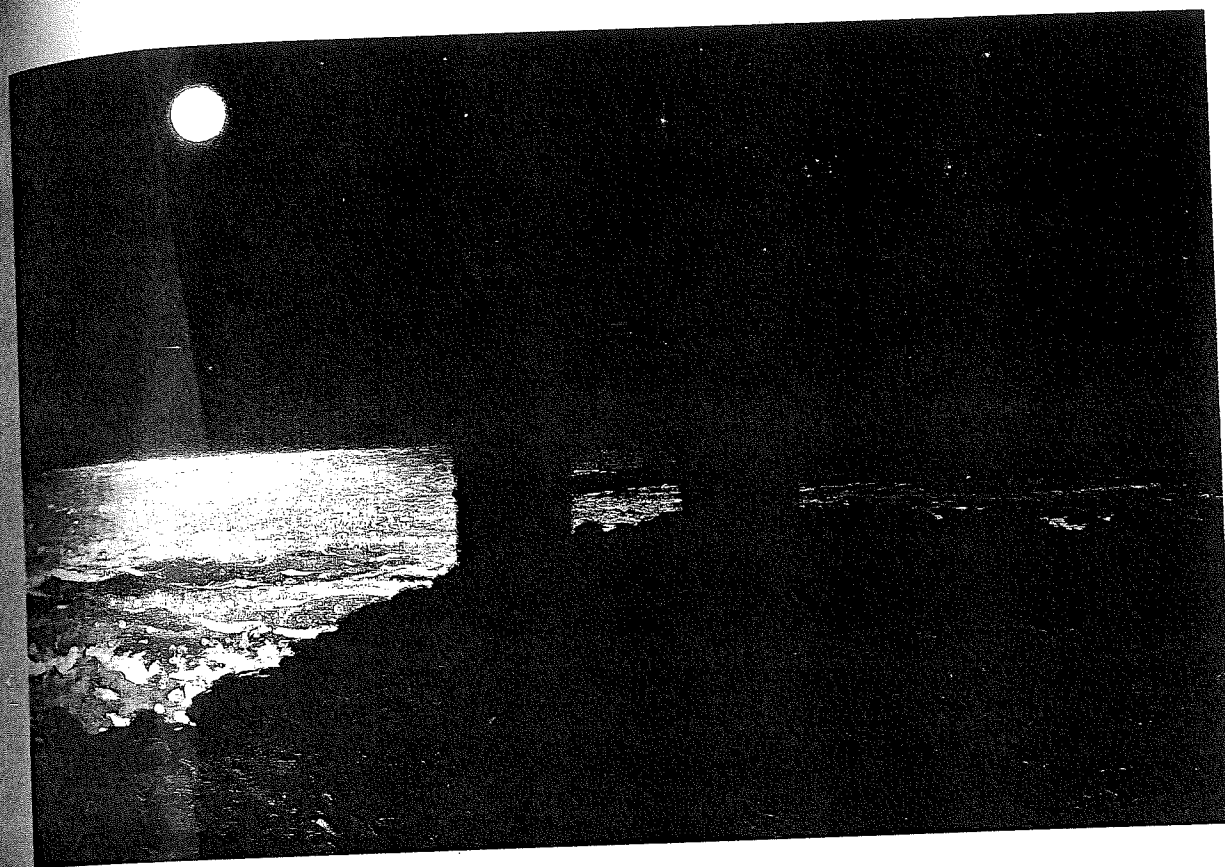
19 A *wicket* is a small door or gate; this one leads into the stable.

20 As the *ostler* (a shorter form of *hostler*), it's Tim's job to take care of the horses at the inn. A *peaked* face looks pale and sickly.

25 *Bonny* (a Scottish word) means "good-looking, fine, or admirable."

27 To *harry* is to trouble, bother, or worry.

32 The *casement* is the window frame, and the *brand* is a burning torch.



*Moon Landing*, 1977. Jamie Wyeth. Oil on canvas, 29 x 43 in. Private collection.

**Viewing the painting:** What lines of the poem might this painting illustrate?

## PART 2

He did not come in the dawning. He did not come at noon;  
 And out of the tawny° sunset, before the rise of the moon,  
 When the road was a gypsy's ribbon, looping the purple moor,  
 40 A red coat troop° came marching—  
     Marching—marching—  
 King George's men came marching, up to the old inn door.

They said no word to the landlord. They drank his ale instead,  
 But they gagged his daughter, and bound her, to the foot of her  
     narrow bed.  
 45 Two of them knelt at her casement, with muskets at their side!  
 There was death at every window;  
     And hell at one dark window;  
 For Bess could see, through her casement, the road that he  
     would ride.

### QUESTION

Why have the red-coats appeared?

### LISTEN

Why does the poet repeat the word *marching*? Where else does he use repetition?

38 *Tawny* is a brownish-gold color.

40 The *red coat troop* is a group of soldiers wearing bright red coats.

## The Highwayman

### ACTIVE READING MODEL

50 They had tied her up to attention, with many a sniggering jest.<sup>49</sup>  
They had bound a musket beside her, with the muzzle beneath  
her breast!  
“Now, keep good watch!” and they kissed her. She heard the  
doomed man say—  
*Look for me by moonlight;  
Watch for me by moonlight;  
I’ll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way!*

55 She twisted her hands behind her; but all the knots held good!  
She writhed<sup>50</sup> her hands till her fingers were wet with sweat or  
blood!

They stretched and strained in the darkness, and the hours  
crawled by like years,

Till, now, on the stroke of midnight,  
Cold, on the stroke of midnight,

60 The tip of one finger touched it! The trigger at last was hers!

The tip of one finger touched it. She strove no more for the rest.  
Up, she stood up to attention, with the muzzle beneath her  
breast.

She would not risk their hearing; she would not strive again;  
For the road lay bare in the moonlight;

65 Blank and bare in the moonlight;

And the blood of her veins, in the moonlight, throbbed to her  
love’s refrain.<sup>51</sup>

### LISTEN

How does the poet  
create the sound of  
the highwayman on  
horseback?

*Flot-flot; flot-flot!* Had they heard it: The horsehoofs ringing  
clear;

*Flot-flot, flot-flot,* in the distance? Were they deaf that they did  
not hear?

Down the ribbon of moonlight, over the brow of the hill,

70 The highwayman came riding—

Riding—riding—

The red-coats looked to their priming!<sup>52</sup> She stood up, straight  
and still!

49 Bess is tied to a pole, arms at her sides in what a soldier would call “at attention,” while the soldiers laugh disrespectfully (*many a sniggering jest*).

50 To *writhe* is to twist and turn.

66 In a song or poem, the *refrain* is a phrase or verse that is repeated regularly.

72 The soldiers are *priming* their weapons, or loading their muskets with ammunition.



Alfred Noyes

ACTIVE  
READING  
MODEL

RESPOND

What mood does the poet create in this stanza?

QUESTION

What do you learn about the highwayman's character in this stanza?

RESPOND

What do these final stanzas mean to you?

*Tlot-tlot*, in the frosty silence! *Tlot-tlot*, in the echoing night!  
Nearer he came and nearer. Her face was like a light.

75 Her eyes grew wide for a moment; she drew one last deep breath,  
Then her finger moved in the moonlight,

Her musket shattered the moonlight,  
Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned him—with  
her death.

He turned. He spurred to the westward; he did not know who  
stood

80 Bowed, with her head o'er the musket, drenched with her own  
red blood!

Not till the dawn he heard it, and his face grew grey to hear  
How Bess, the landlord's daughter,

The landlord's black-eyed daughter,  
Had watched for her love in the moonlight, and died in the  
darkness there.

85 Back, he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse to the sky,  
With the white road smoking behind him and his rapier  
brandished<sup>o</sup> high.

Blood-red were his spurs in the golden noon, wine-red was his  
velvet coat;

When they shot him down on the highway,

Down like a dog on the highway,

90 And he lay in his blood on the highway, with a bunch of lace at  
his throat.

*And still of a winter's night, they say, when the wind is in the trees,*

*When the moon is a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,*

*When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,*

*A highwayman comes riding—*

95 *Riding—riding—*

*A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn door.*

*Over the cobbles he clatters and clangs in the dark inn yard.*

*He taps with his whip on the shutters, but all is locked and barred.*

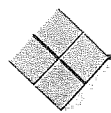
*He whistles a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there*

100 *But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,*

*Bess, the landlord's daughter,*

*Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.*

<sup>86</sup> The highwayman waved his sword threateningly (*brandished*).



# Responding to Literature

## PERSONAL RESPONSE

- ◆ Take a look at your list from the **Reading Focus** on page 620. How does "The Highwayman" compare with your favorite adventure stories? Could it be made into a good action movie? Explain why or why not.

### Active Reading Response

Review the strategies described in the **Active Reading Model** notes on pages 618–619. Choose one strategy and find three places in the poem where you could apply it.

## Analyzing Literature

### RECALL

1. What is the setting of this poem? Who are the main characters?
2. Summarize what happens in "The Highwayman."

### INTERPRET

3. How does the poet create a mysterious mood in the opening stanza? How do the closing stanzas echo that same mood?
4. What is the central conflict in the plot of this poem? Use words and images from the poem to support your ideas.

### EVALUATE AND CONNECT

5. What sacrifice does Bess make? Do you think her act is foolish or heroic? Why?
6. Why do you think the highwayman reacts as he does when he finds out what has happened to Bess? What does his action reveal about him?
7. How did the redcoats know that the highwayman would return to the inn? On what do you base your opinion?
8. How would the poem be different if it ended just before the final two stanzas?
9. Identify two examples of simile or metaphor the poet uses.
10. What effect does the poet's repetition of words create?

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

### Onomatopoeia

**Onomatopoeia** (on' ə mat' ə pē' ə) is the use of words or phrases whose sounds suggest their meanings. The sound of the word *boom*, for example, suggests an explosion. The use of onomatopoeia begins as early as infancy. Often, some of the first words children learn are words such as *woof* or *meow*.

Onomatopoeia plays an important role in the sounds of poetry. In "The Highwayman," for example, *tlot-tlot* represents the sound of a horse's hooves.

1. What other examples of onomatopoeia can you find in "The Highwayman"?
2. Reread another poem from this book and pick out an example of onomatopoeia. Explain what you think the word or phrase adds to the meaning of the poem.

● See **Literary Terms Handbook**, p. R7.

## Extending Your Response

### Writing About Literature



**Narrative Poetry** A narrative poem tells a story. In "The Highwayman," the poet creates a vivid story with a mysterious setting, strong characters, and a plot with twists and turns. Write a paragraph describing one of the narrative elements used in this poem—setting, character, or plot—as you picture the place, the person, or the series of actions.

### Performing



**Choral Reading** With a small group, plan a choral reading of "The Highwayman." Group members can take turns reading parts of the poem. They can read other parts together as a chorus. Begin by planning how you will divide the parts. Then practice reading the poem a few times before presenting it to the class.

### Creative Writing



**Character Interview** Imagine that you are to interview one of the characters in this poem. Write a series of questions to ask that character. With a partner, dramatize the interview for your classmates.

### Reading Further




If you would like to read more narrative poems, here are a few suggestions. You can find these and other poems in poetry books or on the Internet.

"The Walrus and the Carpenter" by Lewis Carroll

"The Shooting of Dan McGrew" by Robert W. Service

"The Charge of the Light Brigade" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

"Casey at the Bat" by Ernest Lawrence Thayer

 Save your work for your portfolio.

### Literature Groups



**Prose or Poetry?** The plot of this poem could have been written in **prose**, the language of ordinary writing and speech. Which version would you prefer? Why? Discuss what the poem's story would lose or gain if it were written in prose.

## Skill Minilesson

### GRAMMAR AND LANGUAGE • COLORFUL ADJECTIVES

"The Highwayman" is filled with adjectives that help readers visualize the nouns described. For example, think about the opening lines:

*The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees.*

*The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas.*

*The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,*

You can "see" the wind-blown trees, the fierce sea, and the dimly lit road winding through the dark moor because the poet has chosen adjectives to create vivid images.

**PRACTICE** Reread the poem. As you do, list the adjectives that help you to visualize the images in the poem. In your journal, keep an ongoing list of colorful adjectives you find in your reading.

- For more about adjectives, see **Language Handbook**, p. R27.

## Comparing Fables

### Ant and Grasshopper

Classical Fable by Aesop

Retold by James Reeves

### The Richer, the Poorer

Modern Fable by Dorothy West

# Should you **LIVE** for the present or the future?

#### COMMON CORE

**RL 1** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**RL 2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details.

Throughout the world and over the centuries, people have had different ideas about saving and spending. Some people prefer to save as much as possible, so the money will be there when they really need it. Others prefer to spend what they have right away, so that they can enjoy it. In the fables you are about to read, four characters—two from a story told more than 2,500 years ago and two from a story published in 1995—struggle with their decisions to save or spend.

**DISCUSS** Is it better to save for the future or enjoy yourself in the present? Discuss your opinion with a partner. Provide reasons to support your response.





## Meet the Authors

### ● TEXT ANALYSIS: FABLE

Fables teach us lessons about life. A **classical fable** like “Ant and Grasshopper” often features animals who act like human beings and ends with a clear **moral**, or message about life. Aesop’s fable is an example of classical literature and comes from the classical civilization of ancient Greece.

A **modern fable** like “The Richer, the Poorer” is more likely to use human characters. It has a lesson that readers have to interpret on their own.

### ● READING STRATEGY: SET A PURPOSE FOR READING

When you read a fable, you gain insight into the **cultural and historical setting** it comes from. Fables often reflect the concerns of the people who lived at the time the fables were written. Your purpose for reading is to compare and contrast the historical and cultural settings of two fables. As you read, think about the choices characters make and the consequences of those choices. Then think about how the fables speak to the **cultural values**—the ideas and beliefs—of the people at that time.

	“Ant and Grasshopper”		“The Richer, the Poorer”	
	Ant	Grasshopper	Lottie	Bess
Actions	worked hard			
Consequences				

### ▲ VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

West uses the words below to tell her fable. To see how many you know, match each word with the term closest in meaning.

<b>WORD LIST</b>	clarity	frugal	intolerable
	enhance	inefficient	lean

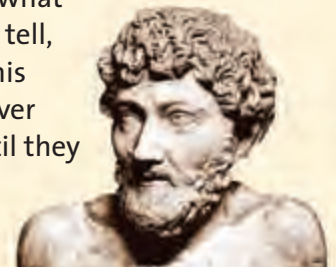
- |             |              |               |
|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. thin     | 3. clearness | 5. unbearable |
| 2. wasteful | 4. improve   | 6. thrifty    |

## Aesop

620?–560 B.C.

### Ancient Storyteller

Aesop, who became known as one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece, was famous for his clever fables. Little is known about who Aesop was. Early writers of history agree that he came from Africa and was held in slavery in Greece, but was eventually given his freedom. Aesop told his fables aloud. Others repeated what they’d heard him tell, and in that way his fables survived over the centuries until they were published around 300 B.C.



## Dorothy West

1907–1998

### Writer from the Start

The daughter of a freed slave, Dorothy West was just 16 years old when she first received recognition as a writer. She won second prize in a contest put on by a literary magazine. As an adult, West moved to New York City, where she became a key literary figure. West wrote two novels and numerous short stories.



Complete the activities in your **Reader/Writer Notebook**.

Authors Online



Go to [thinkcentral.com](http://thinkcentral.com). KEYWORD: HML6-383

# Ant and Grasshopper

Aesop  
Retold by James Reeves

All summer the ant had been working hard, gathering a store of corn for the winter. Grain by grain she had taken it from the fields and stowed it away in a hole in the bank, under a hawthorn bush.

One bright, frosty day in winter Grasshopper saw her. She was dragging out a grain of corn to dry it in the sun. The wind was keen, and poor Grasshopper was cold. **A**

“Good morning, Ant,” said he. “What a terrible winter it is! I’m half dead with hunger. Please give me just one of your corn grains to eat. I can find nothing, although I’ve hopped all over the farmyard. There isn’t a  
10 seed to be found. Spare me a grain, I beg.”

“Why haven’t you saved anything up?” asked Ant. “I worked hard all through the summer, storing food for the winter. Very glad I am too, for as you say, it’s bitterly cold.”

“I wasn’t idle last summer, either,” said Grasshopper.

“And what did you do, pray?”

“Why, I spent the time singing,” answered Grasshopper. “Every day from dawn till sunset I jumped about or sat in the sun, chirruping to my heart’s content.”

“Oh you did, did you?” replied Ant. “Well, since you’ve sung all  
20 summer to keep yourself cheerful, you may dance all winter to keep yourself warm. Not a grain will I give you!”

And she scuttled off into her hole in the bank, while Grasshopper was left cold and hungry.

## Analyze Visuals ►

What can you **infer** about these two illustrations by viewing them next to each other?

### **A FABLE**

Reread lines 1–6. What clues tell you that this is a fable?

### **B FABLE**

The **moral**, or lesson, is a stylistic element of a classical fable. Restate the moral in your own words. Which character’s behavior does the moral support?

IN GOOD TIMES PREPARE FOR WHEN THE BAD TIMES COME.  **B**







# The Richer, the Poorer

Dorothy West

Over the years Lottie had urged Bess to prepare for her old age. Over the years Bess had lived each day as if there were no other. Now they were both past sixty, the time for summing up. Lottie had a bank account that had never grown **lean**. Bess had the clothes on her back, and the rest of her worldly possessions in a battered suitcase. **C**

Lottie had hated being a child, hearing her parents' skimping and scraping. Bess had never seemed to notice. All she ever wanted was to go outside and play. She learned to skate on borrowed skates. She rode a borrowed bicycle. Lottie couldn't wait to grow up and buy herself the best  
10 of everything.

As soon as anyone would hire her, Lottie put herself to work. She minded babies; she ran errands for the old.

She never touched a penny of her money, though her child's mouth watered for ice cream and candy. But she could not bear to share with Bess, who never had anything to share with her. When the dimes began to add up to dollars, she lost her taste for sweets.

By the time she was twelve, she was clerking after school in a small variety store. Saturdays she worked as long as she was wanted. She decided to keep her money for clothes. When she entered high school, she would  
20 wear a wardrobe that neither she nor anyone else would be able to match.

But her freshman year found her unable to indulge so frivolous a whim, particularly when her admiring instructors advised her to think seriously of college. No one in her family had ever gone to college, and certainly Bess would never get there. She would show them all what she could do, if she put her mind to it.

She began to bank her money, and her bankbook became her most private and precious possession.

**lean** (lēn) *adj.* having little to spare; thin

## **C** COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Reread lines 1–5.

Consider the ways this passage is similar to the first two paragraphs of “Ant and Grasshopper.” What do you think will happen in the rest of the story?

## LanguageCoach

**Word Forms** To create an adverb from an adjective form, you can add the ending *-ly* to the adjective. In line 22, adding *-ly* to the adjective *serious* creates the adverb *seriously*. What other adverb in this paragraph is created by adding *-ly* to an adjective form?

In her third year in high school she found a job in a small but expanding restaurant, where she cashiered from the busy hour until closing. In her  
 30 last year in high school the business increased so rapidly that Lottie was faced with the choice of staying in school or working full time.

She made her choice easily. A job in hand was worth two in the future. **D**

Bess had a beau<sup>1</sup> in the school band, who had no other ambition except to play a horn. Lottie expected to be settled with a home and family while Bess was still waiting for Harry to earn enough to buy a marriage license.

That Bess married Harry straight out of high school was not surprising. That Lottie never married at all was not really surprising either. Two or three times she was halfway persuaded, but to give up a job that paid well for a homemaking job that paid nothing was a risk she was incapable of taking.

40 Bess's married life was nothing for Lottie to envy. She and Harry lived like gypsies,<sup>2</sup> Harry playing in second-rate bands all over the country, even getting himself and Bess stranded in Europe. They were often in rags and never in riches.

### **D COMPARE AND CONTRAST**

Reread lines 26–32. In what ways is Lottie similar to Ant in “Ant and Grasshopper”?

### **▼ Analyze Visuals**

Describe the **mood**, or feeling, that each of these paintings conveys.

1. **beau**: boyfriend.

2. **gypsies**: people who move from place to place.



*Woman in Calico* (1944), William H. Johnson. © Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C./Art Resource, New York.



*Mom and Dad* (1944), William H. Johnson. Oil on paperboard, 31" × 25<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>". Gift of the Harmon Foundation. © Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C./Art Resource, New York.



*Street Life, Harlem* (1940), William H. Johnson. © Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C./Art Resource, New York.

### ◀ Analyze Visuals

Which of the sisters would you be more likely to **connect** to the woman in this painting?

Bess grieved because she had no child, not having sense enough to know she was better off without one. Lottie was certainly better off without nieces and nephews to feel sorry for. Very likely Bess would have dumped them on her doorstep.

That Lottie had a doorstep they might have been left on was only because her boss, having bought a second house, offered Lottie his first  
50 house at a price so low and terms so reasonable that it would have been like losing money to refuse.

She shut off the rooms she didn't use, letting them go to rack and ruin.<sup>3</sup> Since she ate her meals out, she had no food at home, and did not encourage callers, who always expected a cup of tea. **E**

Her way of life was mean and miserly, but she did not know it. She thought she lived **frugally** in her middle years so that she could live in comfort and ease when she most needed peace of mind.

### **E FABLE**

Reread lines 48–54. What do you think of Lottie's behavior?

**frugal** (frōō'gəl) *adj.*  
avoiding waste; thrifty

3. **go to rack and ruin**: become shabby or wrecked.



The years, after forty, began to race. Suddenly Lottie was sixty, and retired from her job by her boss's son, who had no sentimental feeling  
60 about keeping her on until she was ready to quit.

She made several attempts to find other employment, but her dowdy appearance made her look old and **inefficient**. For the first time in her life Lottie would gladly have worked for nothing, to have some place to go, something to do with her day.

Harry died abroad, in a third-rate hotel,<sup>4</sup> with Bess weeping as hard as if he had left her a fortune. He had left her nothing but his horn. There wasn't even money for her passage home.

Lottie, trapped by the blood tie, knew she would not only have to send for her sister, but take her in when she returned. It didn't seem fair that  
70 Bess should reap the harvest of Lottie's lifetime of self-denial. **F**

It took Lottie a week to get a bedroom ready, a week of hard work and hard cash. There was everything to do, everything to replace or paint. When she was through the room looked so fresh and new that Lottie felt she deserved it more than Bess.

She would let Bess have her room, but the mattress was so lumpy, the carpet so worn, the curtains so threadbare that Lottie's conscience pricked her. She supposed she would have to redo that room, too, and went about doing it with an eagerness that she mistook for haste.

When she was through upstairs, she was shocked to see how dismal  
80 downstairs looked by comparison. She tried to ignore it, but with nowhere to go to escape it, the contrast grew more **intolerable**.

She worked her way from kitchen to parlor, persuading herself she was only putting the rooms to rights to give herself something to do. At night she slept like a child after a long and happy day of playing house. She was having more fun than she had ever had in her life. She was living each hour for itself.

There was only a day now before Bess would arrive. Passing her gleaming mirrors, at first with vague awareness, then with painful **clarity**, Lottie saw herself as others saw her, and could not stand the  
90 sight.

She went on a spending spree from specialty shops to beauty salon, emerging transformed into a woman who believed in miracles. **G**

**inefficient** (in'ĭ-fĭsh'ənt)  
*adj.* not able to produce without wasting time or energy

#### **F COMPARE AND CONTRAST**

Note Lottie's reaction to sharing her home with Bess. How is this similar to or different from what happens in "Ant and Grasshopper"?

**intolerable**  
(in-tŏl'ər-ə-bəl) *adj.*  
unbearable; too much to be endured

**clarity** (klär'ĭ-tē) *n.* the quality of being clear

#### **G FABLE**

Reread lines 75–92. What has Lottie learned about herself? How is this lesson affecting her behavior?

4. **third-rate hotel**: a hotel of poor quality.

She was in the kitchen basting a turkey when Bess rang the bell. Her heart raced, and she wondered if the heat from the oven was responsible.

She went to the door, and Bess stood before her. Stiffly she suffered Bess's embrace, her heart racing harder, her eyes suddenly smarting from the onrush of cold air.

“Oh, Lottie, it's good to see you,” Bess said, but saying nothing about Lottie's splendid appearance. Upstairs Bess, putting down her shabby suitcase, said, “I'll sleep like a rock tonight,” without a word of praise for her lovely room. At the lavish table, top-heavy with turkey, Bess said, “I'll take light and dark, both,” with no marveling at the size of the bird, or that there was turkey for two elderly women, one of them too poor to buy her own bread.

With the glow of good food in her stomach, Bess began to spin stories. They were rich with places and people, most of them lowly, all of them magnificent. Her face reflected her telling, the joys and sorrows of her remembering, and above all, the love she lived by that **enhanced** the poorest place, the humblest person.

Then it was that Lottie knew why Bess had made no mention of her finery, or the shining room, or the twelve-pound turkey. She had not even seen them. Tomorrow she would see the room as it really looked, and Lottie as she really looked, and the warmed-over turkey in its second-day glory. Tonight she saw only what she had come seeking, a place in her sister's home and heart. **H**

She said, “That's enough about me. How have the years used you?”

“It was me who didn't use them,” said Lottie wistfully. “I saved for them. I saved for them. I forgot the best of them would go without my ever spending a day or a dollar enjoying them. That's my life story in those few words, a life never lived.”

“Now it's too near the end to try.”

Bess said, “To know how much there is to know is the beginning of learning to live. Don't count the years that are left us. At our time of life it's the days that count. You've too much catching up to do to waste a minute of a waking hour feeling sorry for yourself.”

Lottie grinned, a real wide-open grin, “Well, to tell the truth I felt sorry for you. Maybe, if I had any sense, I'd feel sorry for myself, after all. I know I'm too old to kick up my heels, but I'm going to let you show me how. If I land on my head, I guess it won't matter. I feel giddy already, and I like it.” **☞ 1**

**enhance** (ĕn-hăns') v.  
to increase in value or  
quality

**H FABLE**

What do you learn about Bess from these lines? Based on the description, what type of behavior is the author recommending?

**1 FABLE**

Reread lines 127–130. Consider Lottie's attitude in this passage with her attitude at the beginning of the fable. What lesson does this change in attitude hint at?

## Comprehension

1. **Recall** Why does Grasshopper need to ask Ant for food?
2. **Recall** Why does Bess come to live with her sister Lottie?
3. **Summarize** What does Lottie do to prepare for Bess's arrival?

## Text Analysis

4. **Analyze Fables** In "Ant and Grasshopper," the characters are animals who talk and act like people. What do these animal characters tell you about human nature?
5. **Analyze Fables** Think about which of the characters in the two fables changed and which ones did not. Identify who changed and explain in what ways he or she changed.
6. **Compare and Contrast** In what way is Grasshopper's situation similar to Bess's? In what way is it different?
7. **Examine Cultural and Historical Settings** Fables often reflect the concerns of a particular culture. What details from "Ant and Grasshopper" tell you that self-reliance was an important value to ancient Greeks?

### COMMON CORE

**RL 1** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.  
**RL 2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details.

## Compare and Contrast Fables

Now that you've read both fables, add a new row to the chart you filled out as you read. Use the answers to the questions in the selection to help you identify the moral of "The Richer, the Poorer." How does this moral reflect a different attitude toward saving and spending than the attitude in "Ant and Grasshopper"?

	"Ant and Grasshopper"		"The Richer, the Poorer"	
	Ant	Grasshopper	Lottie	Bess
<b>Actions</b>	worked hard during the summer			
<b>Consequences</b>				

*Moral: In good times prepare for when the bad times come.*

*Moral:*

### Should you LIVE for the present or the future?

Has either fable changed the way you think about living for the present or the future? Support your response with details from the text.

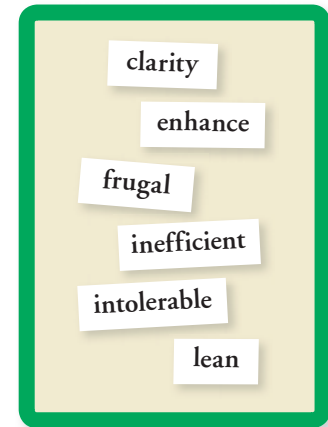


## Vocabulary in Context

### ▲ VOCABULARY PRACTICE

In each item below, choose the letter of the word that has a different meaning from the other words.

1. (a) enable, (b) enhance, (c) improve, (d) increase
2. (a) wasteful, (b) disorganized, (c) unfair, (d) inefficient
3. (a) quick, (b) sparing, (c) frugal, (d) thrifty
4. (a) lean, (b) sparse, (c) little, (d) lengthy
5. (a) generosity, (b) kindness, (c) charity, (d) clarity
6. (a) impractical, (b) unenjoyable, (c) intolerable, (d) terrible



### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN SPEAKING

• attitude • communicate • context • illustrate • implicit

With a partner, discuss the moral of each fable. Do you find a direct statement of a moral to be effective? Or is it more convincing if a moral is **implicit**? Use at least two Academic Vocabulary words in your discussion.

### VOCABULARY STRATEGY: MULTIPLE MEANING WORDS

Many English words have more than one meaning. You may have known, for example, that *lean* can mean “rest the body against something for support.” But you may not have been familiar with its use in “The Richer, the Poorer,” where the word means “having little to spare; thin.”

If a word does not seem to make sense in context, look at the rest of the sentence to figure out what other meaning the word might have. If you are still not sure of the meaning, check a dictionary.

**PRACTICE** Use context clues or a dictionary to define the boldfaced words.

1. She **cast** her hat and scarf aside when she got home.
2. The golfer used an **iron** to make the shot.
3. Instead of making a decision, she chose to **hedge** for a while longer.
4. To swing the bat better, **plant** your feet solidly yet comfortably.

### COMMON CORE

**L 4a** Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

Interactive Vocabulary **THINK** central

Go to [thinkcentral.com](http://thinkcentral.com).  
KEYWORD: HML6-392

## Writing for Assessment

### 1. READ THE PROMPT

The two fables you've just read present a similar idea in very different ways. In writing assessments, you will often be asked to compare and contrast similar characters or themes in two stories, poems, or fables.

In three paragraphs, compare and contrast the traditional fable "Ant and Grasshopper" with the modern fable "The Richer, the Poorer." Consider the moral of each fable and the actions of each character. Support your ideas using details from the fables.

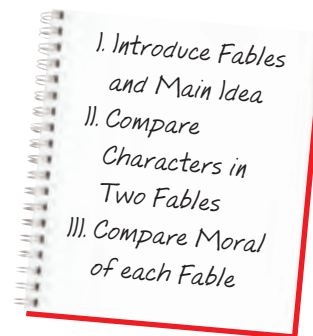
#### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

1. I have to identify the *similarities and differences* between the fables.
2. I need to describe how the *characters* behave, and any *lessons* they learn.
3. I need to include *details and examples* from the fables to support my ideas.

### 2. PLAN YOUR WRITING

Using the chart you filled in as you read, identify the ways in which the fables are alike and different. Then think about how to present these similarities and differences.

- Decide on a main idea, or position statement, for your response.
- Review the fables to find examples and details that support your position.
- Create an outline to organize your response. This sample outline shows one way to organize your paragraphs.



### 3. DRAFT YOUR RESPONSE

**Paragraph 1** Provide the titles and authors of both fables, as well as a sentence telling what each fable is about. Also include your main idea.

**Paragraph 2** Explain how the four characters are similar or different. Support your position with examples of what they say, do, or think.

**Paragraph 3** Provide the moral of each fable. Explain how the messages are similar or different. Use supporting details from the fables.

**Revision** Make sure you've used transition words such as *similarly*, *also*, *however*, *instead*, or *unlike* to show similarities and differences.



## Raymond's Run

Short Story by Toni Cade Bambara

VIDEO TRAILER



KEYWORD: HML8-37

# What's worth the EFFORT?

### COMMON CORE

**RL 1** Cite the evidence that supports inferences drawn from the text. **RL 3** Analyze how incidents in a story propel the action or provoke a decision.

Have you ever wanted something so badly you'd do anything to achieve it? If so, you've felt motivation, the drive that causes people to strive toward a goal. In the story you are about to read, a spunky young girl does what it takes to be the fastest runner in her neighborhood.

**QUICKWRITE** Jot down a list of things you've been willing to work for. Choose a favorite and write a short paragraph telling what motivates you.

- 
1. Hold record for most chin-ups
  2. Learn new dance



## Meet the Author

### Toni Cade Bambara

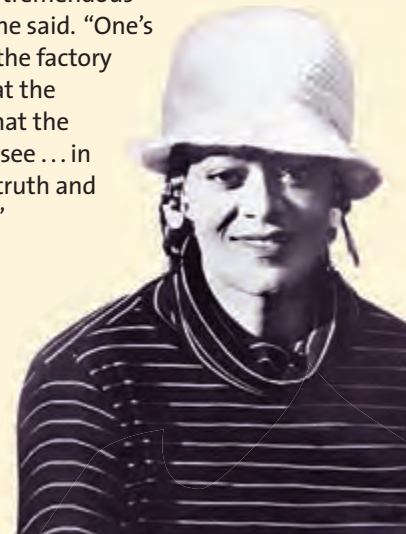
1939–1995

#### Creativity and Concern

Raised in urban neighborhoods of New York and New Jersey in the 1940s and 1950s, Toni Cade spent much time daydreaming and exploring her world. Her mother encouraged her to do so. In the dedication of her award-winning novel *The Salt Eaters*, Bambara thanks her “mama . . . who in 1948, having come upon me daydreaming in the middle of the kitchen floor, mopped around me.” One day, while looking through an old trunk, Toni found her great-grandmother’s sketchbook. The name inscribed there was “Bambara.” Impressed with her ancestor’s creative drive, she decided to add that name to her own.

#### “A Tremendous Responsibility”

Toni Cade Bambara went on to careers as a teacher, community activist, and documentary filmmaker. She continued to write, sharing her personal concern for and understanding of the lives of African-American families and communities. She was always aware of the influence that writers, artists, and cultural workers have on others. “It’s a tremendous responsibility,” she said. “One’s got to see what the factory worker sees, what the prisoner sees, what the welfare children see . . . in order to tell the truth and not get trapped.”



### ● TEXT ANALYSIS: PLOT

A **plot** is the series of events that happen in a story. When a story develops in a linear way, it progresses through the following plot stages in the order in which they are listed:

- **Exposition**—introduces the main characters, the setting, and sometimes the conflict
- **Rising action**—increases tension and builds the conflict
- **Climax**—the point of greatest interest, or the turning point in the story where the conflict begins to be resolved
- **Falling action**—shows the result of the climax and brings the story to a close
- **Resolution**—reveals the final outcome of the conflict and ties up loose ends

As you read “Raymond’s Run,” notice the incidents that occur at each stage of the plot.

### ● READING SKILL: MAKE INFERENCES

When you make an **inference** while reading, you use clues from the story and your own knowledge to guess about things the author doesn’t say directly. As you read “Raymond’s Run,” make inferences to better understand the main character’s feelings, thoughts, and ideas. Record your inferences in equations.

*Squeaky says her dad is the only one faster than she is.*

+

*Kids like when their parents are talented.*

=

*Squeaky is proud of her father.*

### ▲ VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

The boldfaced words help Toni Cade Bambara tell a story about a race that’s important in more ways than one. Use context clues to figure out what each word means.

1. Teams of three or four usually compete in **relay** races.
2. The talented young sprinter was considered a track **prodigy**.
3. Mai’s teammate is also her good friend, or **sidekick**.
4. Ben is **liable** to get injured if he doesn’t warm up before the race.
5. At the start of a race, runners **crouch** close to the ground.
6. The winner might **clutch** the blue ribbon to her chest.



Complete the activities in your **Reader/Writer Notebook**.

Authors Online

Go to [thinkcentral.com](http://thinkcentral.com). KEYWORD: HML8-37





# RAYMOND'S RUN

Toni Cade Bambara

## Analyze Visuals ►

From her posture and her expression, what can you **infer** about the girl in this photograph?

I don't have much work to do around the house like some girls. My mother does that. And I don't have to earn my pocket money by hustling; George runs errands for the big boys and sells Christmas cards. And anything else that's got to get done, my father does. All I have to do in life is mind my brother Raymond, which is enough.

Sometimes I slip and say my little brother Raymond. But as any fool can see he's much bigger and he's older too. But a lot of people call him my little brother cause he needs looking after cause he's not quite right. And a lot of smart mouths got lots to say about that too, especially when George was  
10 minding him. But now, if anybody has anything to say to Raymond, anything to say about his big head,<sup>1</sup> they have to come by me. And I don't play the dozens<sup>2</sup> or believe in standing around with somebody in my face doing a lot of talking. I much rather just knock you down and take my chances even if I am a little girl with skinny arms and a squeaky voice, which is how I got the name Squeaky. And if things get too rough, I run. And as anybody can tell you, I'm the fastest thing on two feet. **A**

There is no track meet that I don't win the first place medal. I used to win the twenty-yard dash when I was a little kid in kindergarten. Nowadays, it's the fifty-yard dash. And tomorrow I'm subject to run the quarter-meter  
20 **relay** all by myself and come in first, second, and third. The big kids call me Mercury<sup>3</sup> cause I'm the swiftest thing in the neighborhood. Everybody knows that—except two people who know better, my father and me. He can beat me to Amsterdam Avenue with me having a two fire hydrant headstart and him running with his hands in his pockets and whistling. But that's private information. Cause can you imagine some thirty-five-year-old man stuffing himself into PAL shorts to race little kids? So as far as everyone's concerned, I'm

## **A** PLOT: EXPOSITION

What have you learned about Squeaky so far?

**relay** (rē'lā) *n.* a race in which several team members take turns running to complete the race

1. **big head:** a result of hydrocephalus, or fluid in parts of the brain, that causes enlargement of the skull.

2. **play the dozens:** exchange rhyming insults.

3. **Mercury:** in Roman mythology, the swift messenger of the gods.







the fastest and that goes for Gretchen, too, who has put out the tale that she is going to win the first-place medal this year. Ridiculous. In the second place, she's got short legs. In the third place, she's got freckles. In the first place, no one can  
30 beat me and that's all there is to it.

I'm standing on the corner admiring the weather and about to take a stroll down Broadway so I can practice my breathing exercises, and I've got Raymond walking on the inside close to the buildings, cause he's subject to fits of fantasy and starts thinking he's a circus performer and that the curb is a tightrope strung high in the air. And sometimes after a rain he likes to step down off his tightrope right into the gutter and slosh around getting his shoes and cuffs wet. Then I get hit when I get home. Or sometimes if you don't watch him he'll dash across traffic to the island in the middle of Broadway and give the pigeons a fit. Then I have to go behind him apologizing to all  
40 the old people sitting around trying to get some sun and getting all upset with the pigeons fluttering around them, scattering their newspapers and upsetting the waxpaper lunches<sup>4</sup> in their laps. So I keep Raymond on the inside of me, and he plays like he's driving a stage coach which is O.K. by me so long as he doesn't run me over or interrupt my breathing exercises, which I have to do on account of I'm serious about my running, and I don't care who knows it. **B**

Now some people like to act like things come easy to them, won't let on that they practice. Not me. I'll high-prance down 34th Street like a rodeo pony to keep my knees strong even if it does get my mother uptight so that she walks ahead like she's not with me, don't know me, is all by herself on a  
50 shopping trip, and I am somebody else's crazy child. Now you take Cynthia Procter for instance. She's just the opposite. If there's a test tomorrow, she'll say something like, "Oh, I guess I'll play handball this afternoon and watch television tonight," just to let you know she ain't thinking about the test. Or like last week when she won the spelling bee for the millionth time, "A good thing you got 'receive,' Squeaky, cause I would have got it wrong. I completely forgot about the spelling bee." And she'll **clutch** the lace on her blouse like it was a narrow escape. Oh, brother. But of course when I pass her house on my early morning trots around the block, she is practicing the scales on the piano over and over and over and over. Then in music class she always lets herself get  
60 bumped around so she falls accidentally on purpose onto the piano stool and is so surprised to find herself sitting there that she decides just for fun to try out the ole keys. And what do you know—Chopin's waltzes<sup>5</sup> just spring out of her fingertips and she's the most surprised thing in the world. A regular **prodigy**. I could kill people like that. I stay up all night studying the words for the spelling bee. And you can see me any time of day practicing running. I never walk if I can trot, and shame on Raymond if he can't keep up. But of course he does, cause if he hangs back someone's **liable** to walk up to him and get

## **B MAKE INFERENCES**

Reread lines 31–45. How do you think Squeaky feels about taking care of her brother? Use an equation to note your inference.

**clutch** (klŭch) *v.* to grasp and hold tightly

**prodigy** (prŏd'ə-jē) *n.* a person with an exceptional talent

**liable** (lī'ə-bəl) *adj.* likely to

4. **waxpaper lunches:** sandwiches wrapped in wax paper.

5. **Chopin's** (shŏ'pănz') **waltzes:** music by composer Frédéric Chopin.

smart, or take his allowance from him, or ask him where he got that great big pumpkin head. People are so stupid sometimes.

70 So I'm strolling down Broadway breathing out and breathing in on counts of seven, which is my lucky number, and here comes Gretchen and her **sidekicks**: Mary Louise, who used to be a friend of mine when she first moved to Harlem from Baltimore and got beat up by everybody till I took up for her on account of her mother and my mother used to sing in the same choir when they were young girls, but people ain't grateful, so now she hangs out with the new girl Gretchen and talks about me like a dog; and Rosie, who is as fat as I am skinny and has a big mouth where Raymond is concerned and is too stupid to know that there is not a big deal of difference between herself and Raymond and that she can't afford to throw stones. So they are steady coming up  
80 Broadway and I see right away that it's going to be one of those Dodge City<sup>6</sup> scenes cause the street ain't that big and they're close to the buildings just as we are. First I think I'll step into the candy store and look over the new comics and let them pass. But that's chicken and I've got a reputation to consider. So then I think I'll just walk straight on through them or even over them if necessary. But as they get to me, they slow down. I'm ready to fight, cause like I said I don't feature a whole lot of chit-chat, I much prefer to just knock you down right from the jump and save everybody a lotta precious time. ©

"You signing up for the May Day races?" smiles Mary Louise, only it's not a smile at all. A dumb question like that doesn't deserve an answer. Besides,  
90 there's just me and Gretchen standing there really, so no use wasting my breath talking to shadows.

"I don't think you're going to win this time," says Rosie, trying to signify with her hands on her hips all salty, completely forgetting that I have whipped her behind many times for less salt than that.

"I always win cause I'm the best," I say straight at Gretchen who is, as far as I'm concerned, the only one talking in this ventriloquist-dummy routine. Gretchen smiles, but it's not a smile, and I'm thinking that girls never really smile at each other because they don't know how and don't want to know how and there's probably no one to teach us how, cause grown-up girls don't know  
100 either. Then they all look at Raymond who has just brought his mule team to a standstill. And they're about to see what trouble they can get into through him.

"What grade you in now, Raymond?"

"You got anything to say to my brother, you say it to me, Mary Louise Williams of Raggedy Town, Baltimore."

"What are you, his mother?" sasses Rosie.

"That's right, Fatso. And the next word out of anybody and I'll be *their* mother too." So they just stand there and Gretchen shifts from one leg to the other and so do they. Then Gretchen puts her hands on her hips and is about to say something with her freckle-face self but doesn't. Then she walks

**sidekick** (sīd'kīk') *n.*  
a close friend

### © PLOT: RISING ACTION

What is the conflict between Gretchen and Squeaky?

### VISUAL VOCABULARY



**ventriloquist-dummy** *n.*  
A ventriloquist controls his or her voice and moves the mouth of a puppet, or dummy, to make it appear to be talking.

6. **Dodge City**: an Old West town, famous for showdowns between outlaws and lawmen.



110 around me looking me up and down but keeps walking up Broadway, and her sidekicks follow her. So me and Raymond smile at each other and he says, “Gidyap” to his team and I continue with my breathing exercises, strolling down Broadway toward the ice man on 145th with not a care in the world cause I am Miss Quicksilver<sup>7</sup> herself.

I take my time getting to the park on May Day because the track meet is the last thing on the program. The biggest thing on the program is the May Pole dancing, which I can do without, thank you, even if my mother thinks it’s a shame I don’t take part and act like a girl for a change. You’d think my mother’d be grateful not to have to make me a white organdy dress with a big  
120 satin sash and buy me new white baby-doll shoes that can’t be taken out of the box till the big day. You’d think she’d be glad her daughter ain’t out there prancing around a May Pole getting the new clothes all dirty and sweaty and trying to act like a fairy or a flower or whatever you’re supposed to be when you should be trying to be yourself, whatever that is, which is, as far as I am concerned, a poor Black girl who really can’t afford to buy shoes and a new dress you only wear once a lifetime cause it won’t fit next year. **D**

I was once a strawberry in a Hansel and Gretel pageant when I was in nursery school and didn’t have no better sense than to dance on tiptoe with my arms in a circle over my head doing umbrella steps and being a perfect fool just  
130 so my mother and father could come dressed up and clap. You’d think they’d know better than to encourage that kind of nonsense. I am not a strawberry. I do not dance on my toes. I run. That is what I am all about. So I always come late to the May Day program, just in time to get my number pinned on and lay in the grass till they announce the fifty-yard dash.

I put Raymond in the little swings, which is a tight squeeze this year and will be impossible next year. Then I look around for Mr. Pearson, who pins the numbers on. I’m really looking for Gretchen, if you want to know the truth, but she’s not around. The park is jam-packed. Parents in hats and corsages and breast-pocket handkerchiefs peeking up. Kids in white dresses  
140 and light-blue suits. The parkees<sup>8</sup> unfolding chairs and chasing the rowdy kids from Lenox<sup>9</sup> as if they had no right to be there. The big guys with their caps on backwards, leaning against the fence swirling the basketballs on the tips of their fingers, waiting for all these crazy people to clear out the park so they can play. Most of the kids in my class are carrying bass drums and glockenspiels<sup>10</sup> and flutes. You’d think they’d put in a few bongos or something for real like that. **E**

Then here comes Mr. Pearson with his clipboard and his cards and pencils and whistles and safety pins and 50 million other things he’s always dropping all over the place with his clumsy self. He sticks out in a crowd because he’s

#### **D MAKE INFERENCES**

Reread lines 115–126.

What do you think Squeaky’s relationship with her mother is like?

#### **E MAKE INFERENCES**

Reread lines 135–136.

How is Squeaky’s life affected by having to take care of Raymond? Think about how she might deal with Raymond next year.

7. **Miss Quicksilver**: a reference to how fast quicksilver (mercury) flows.

8. **parkees**: people who regularly gather in the park.

9. **Lenox**: street in Harlem in New York City.

10. **glockenspiels** (glɒkˈən-spēlz): musical instruments with tuned metal bars played with light hammers.

150 on stilts. We used to call him Jack and the Beanstalk to get him mad. But I'm the only one that can outrun him and get away, and I'm too grown for that silliness now.

"Well, Squeaky," he says, checking my name off the list and handing me number seven and two pins. And I'm thinking he's got no right to call me Squeaky, if I can't call him Beanstalk.

"Hazel Elizabeth Deborah Parker," I correct him and tell him to write it down on his board.

"Well, Hazel Elizabeth Deborah Parker, going to give someone else a break this year?" I squint at him real hard to see if he is seriously thinking I should  
160 lose the race on purpose just to give someone else a break. "Only six girls running this time," he continues, shaking his head sadly like it's my fault all

### ▼ Analyze Visuals

How does the boy in this picture **compare** with the way you imagine Raymond?



of New York didn't turn out in sneakers. "That new girl should give you a run for your money." He looks around the park for Gretchen like a periscope<sup>11</sup> in a submarine movie. "Wouldn't it be a nice gesture if you were . . . to ahhh . . ."

I give him such a look he couldn't finish putting that idea into words. Grownups got a lot of nerve sometimes. I pin number seven to myself and stomp away, I'm so burnt. And I go straight for the track and stretch out on the grass while the band winds up with "Oh, the Monkey Wrapped His Tail Around the Flag Pole," which my teacher calls by some other name. The man  
170 on the loudspeaker is calling everyone over to the track and I'm on my back looking at the sky, trying to pretend I'm in the country, but I can't, because even grass in the city feels hard as sidewalk, and there's just no pretending you are anywhere but in a "concrete jungle" as my grandfather says. ♦

**T**he twenty-yard dash takes all of two minutes cause most of the little kids don't know no better than to run off the track or run the wrong way or run smack into the fence and fall down and cry. One little kid, though, has got the good sense to run straight for the white ribbon up ahead so he wins. Then the second-graders line up for the thirty-yard dash and I don't even bother to turn my head to watch cause Raphael Perez always wins. He wins before he  
180 even begins by psyching the runners, telling them they're going to trip on their shoelaces and fall on their faces or lose their shorts or something, which he doesn't really have to do since he is very fast, almost as fast as I am. After that is the forty-yard dash which I used to run when I was in first grade. Raymond is hollering from the swings cause he knows I'm about to do my thing cause the man on the loudspeaker has just announced the fifty-yard dash, although he might just as well be giving a recipe for angel food cake cause you can hardly make out what he's sayin for the static. I get up and slip off my sweat pants and then I see Gretchen standing at the starting line, kicking her legs out like a pro. Then as I get into place I see that ole Raymond is on line on  
190 the other side of the fence, bending down with his fingers on the ground just like he knew what he was doing. I was going to yell at him but then I didn't. It burns up your energy to holler. **F**

Every time, just before I take off in a race, I always feel like I'm in a dream, the kind of dream you have when you're sick with fever and feel all hot and weightless. I dream I'm flying over a sandy beach in the early morning sun, kissing the leaves of the trees as I fly by. And there's always the smell of apples, just like in the country when I was little and used to think I was a choo-choo train, running through the fields of corn and chugging up the hill to the orchard. And all the time I'm dreaming this, I get lighter and lighter until I'm  
200 flying over the beach again, getting blown through the sky like a feather that weighs nothing at all. But once I spread my fingers in the dirt and **crouch** over the Get on Your Mark, the dream goes and I am solid again and am telling

#### ♦ GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT

Line 165 is a complete sentence because it contains both a subject and a predicate. A **sentence fragment** would be missing one of these two elements.

#### **F** PLOT: RISING ACTION

What details in this paragraph increase the excitement and tension?

**crouch** v. to stoop with bent knees

11. **periscope**: a tube with mirrors or prisms inside through which a person can see the reflection of an object at the other end.



myself, Squeaky you must win, you must win, you are the fastest thing in the world, you can even beat your father up Amsterdam if you really try. **G** And then I feel my weight coming back just behind my knees then down to my feet then into the earth and the pistol shot explodes in my blood and I am off and weightless again, flying past the other runners, my arms pumping up and down and the whole world is quiet except for the crunch as I zoom over the gravel in the track. I glance to my left and there is no one. To the right, a blurred Gretchen, who's got her chin jutting out as if it would win the race all by itself. And on the other side of the fence is Raymond with his arms down to his side and the palms tucked up behind him, running in his very own style, and it's the first time I ever saw that and I almost stop to watch my brother Raymond on his first run. But the white ribbon is bouncing toward me and I tear past it, racing into the distance till my feet with a mind of their own start digging up footfuls of dirt and brake me short. Then all the kids standing on the side pile on me, banging me on the back and slapping my head with their May Day programs, for I have won again and everybody on 151st Street can walk tall for another year.

210 "In first place . . ." the man on the loudspeaker is clear as a bell now. But then he pauses and the loudspeaker starts to whine. Then static. And I lean down to catch my breath and here comes Gretchen walking back, for she's overshot the finish line too, huffing and puffing with her hands on her hips taking it slow, breathing in steady time like a real pro and I sort of like her a little for the first time. "In first place . . ." and then three or four voices get all mixed up on the loudspeaker and I dig my sneaker into the grass and stare at Gretchen who's staring back, we both wondering just who did win. I can hear old Beanstalk arguing with the man on the loudspeaker and then a few others running their mouths about what the stopwatches say. Then I hear Raymond

230 yanking at the fence to call me and I wave to shush him, but he keeps rattling the fence like a gorilla in a cage like in them gorilla movies, but then like a dancer or something he starts climbing up nice and easy but very fast. And it occurs to me, watching how smoothly he climbs hand over hand and remembering how he looked running with his arms down to his side and with the wind pulling his mouth back and his teeth showing and all, it occurred to me that Raymond would make a very fine runner. Doesn't he always keep up with me on my trots? And he surely knows how to breathe in counts of seven cause he's always doing it at the dinner table, which drives my brother George up the wall. And I'm smiling to beat the band cause if I've lost this race, or if

240 me and Gretchen tied, or even if I've won, I can always retire as a runner and begin a whole new career as a coach with Raymond as my champion. After all, with a little more study I can beat Cynthia and her phony self at the spelling bee. And if I bugged my mother, I could get piano lessons and become a star. And I have a big rep as the baddest thing around. And I've got a roomful of ribbons and medals and awards. But what has Raymond got to call his own? **H**

## **G MAKE INFERENCES**

Why do you think Squeaky always feels this way before a race?

## **LanguageCoach**

**Similes** A simile is a comparison using the words *like* or *as*. Reread line 220. A simile compares the voice on the loudspeaker to the sound of a bell. Would it be easy or hard to hear a voice that is "clear as a bell"?

## **H PLOT: CLIMAX**

What decision does Squeaky make as she waits for the announcement? Note what incidents influence this decision.



## ◀ Analyze Visuals

What can you **infer** about how the girl in red feels about herself? Tell what clues you used to make your inference.

So I stand there with my new plans, laughing out loud by this time as Raymond jumps down from the fence and runs over with his teeth showing and his arms down to the side, which no one before him has quite mastered as a running style. And by the time he comes over I'm jumping up and down so  
 250 glad to see him—my brother Raymond, a great runner in the family tradition. But of course everyone thinks I'm jumping up and down because the men on the loudspeaker have finally gotten themselves together and compared notes and are announcing, "In first place—Miss Hazel Elizabeth Deborah Parker." (Dig that.) "In second place—Miss Gretchen P. Lewis." And I look over at Gretchen wondering what the "P" stands for. And I smile. Cause she's good, no doubt about it. Maybe she'd like to help me coach Raymond; she obviously is serious about running, as any fool can see. And she nods to congratulate me and then she smiles. And I smile. We stand there with this big smile of respect between us. It's about as real a smile as girls can do for each other, considering  
 260 we don't practice real smiling every day, you know, cause maybe we too busy being flowers or fairies or strawberries instead of something honest and worthy of respect . . . you know . . . like being people. ☹️ ❶

## ❶ PLOT: FALLING ACTION AND RESOLUTION

How does Squeaky react to the announcement that she won the race?

## Comprehension

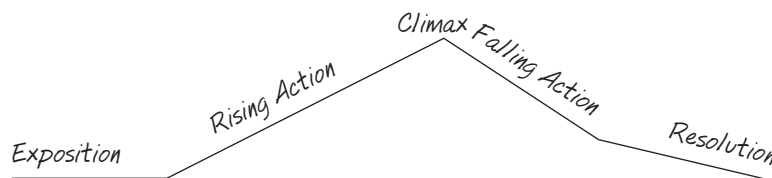
1. **Recall** What nickname have the big kids given Squeaky, and why?
2. **Clarify** Why does Squeaky feel the May Pole dance is a waste of time?
3. **Clarify** Describe Squeaky's reaction when she sees Raymond running parallel to her in the race.

### COMMON CORE

**RL 1** Cite the evidence that supports inferences drawn from the text.  
**RL 3** Analyze how incidents in a story propel the action or provoke a decision.

## Text Analysis

4. **Make Inferences** Review the inference equations you created as you read the story. Use these **inferences** to answer this question: Why might Squeaky react to other people the way she does? Support your answer.
5. **Compare and Contrast** What are some differences between Squeaky and Gretchen? What are some similarities?
6. **Analyze Plot** The plot of "Raymond's Run" revolves around Squeaky's desire to win the May Day race. Using a diagram like the one shown, note the events that happen at each stage of the **plot**. How is the conflict resolved?



7. **Draw Conclusions** How do the events in the story change the way Squeaky views competition?
8. **Evaluate Plot** A plot should be suspenseful, coherent, well-paced, and satisfying. What is your evaluation of the plot of "Raymond's Run"? Be sure to assess the climax and resolution of the story as well as the other structural elements of the plot.

## Extension and Challenge

9. **Inquiry and Research** According to Squeaky, Raymond has a "big head." Find out more about hydrocephalus, the condition he has. With the medical advances of today, is there a treatment or cure for hydrocephalus? What is known about the causes of it? Present your findings to the class.

### What's worth the **EFFORT**?

Review the Quickwrite activity on page 36. If Squeaky were in your class, what do you think her response to this activity would be? Make sure you explain her motivation.

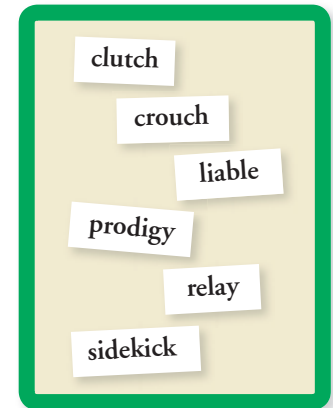


## Vocabulary in Context

### ▲ VOCABULARY PRACTICE

Answer each question to show your understanding of the vocabulary words.

1. Is a **sidekick** likely to be a friend or someone you just met?
2. If you were to **clutch** something, would you be tossing it away or holding it close?
3. Which would you expect a sports **prodigy** to be—clumsy or talented?
4. When are you more likely to **crouch**—picking a flower from the garden or reaching for a glass in the cabinet?
5. If a person is **liable** to do something, does that mean it's likely or unlikely to happen?
6. What's more important in a **relay** race—one good runner or a team effort?



### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN WRITING

• affect • conclude • evident • imply • initial

How does Squeaky's attitude toward Gretchen change over the course of the story? Using at least one Academic Vocabulary word, compare Squeaky's **initial** reaction to Gretchen to her feelings toward her rival at the end of the story.

### VOCABULARY STRATEGY: FOREIGN WORDS IN ENGLISH

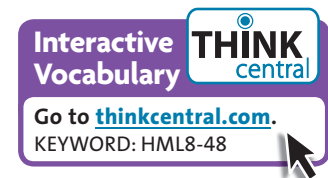
The English language includes words from diverse languages, including French, German, Spanish, Japanese, and many others. In "Raymond's Run," Squeaky uses a foreign word when she says, "I used to win the twenty-yard dash when I was in kindergarten." *Kindergarten* is borrowed from German. Dictionary entries include a word's origin.

**PRACTICE** For each sentence, identify the word that comes from a foreign language. Use a dictionary to find the word's origin, and write it next to the word.

1. His directions were vague, and we got lost trying to follow them.
2. She liked to sing karaoke, but she didn't like to sing with a band.
3. When skateboarding becomes passé, he'll move on to another sport.
4. They went to see their sister perform at the rodeo.
5. He liked sauerkraut on his hotdog.

### COMMON CORE

**L6** Use accurately grade-appropriate words.



# Language

## GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT: Avoid Sentence Fragments

Review the **Grammar in Context** anno on page 44. A **sentence fragment** is an incomplete sentence. It is missing a subject (whom or what the sentence is about), a predicate (what the subject is or does), or both. The missing part(s) must be added in order to fix, or complete, the sentence.

*Original:* My brother. (*This is a sentence fragment because it is missing a predicate.*) He likes movies with a lot of action.

*Revised:* My brother likes movies with a lot of action. (*This is now a complete sentence because it contains the subject “My brother” and the predicate “likes movies with a lot of action.”*)

**PRACTICE** Decide whether the following sentence fragments in bold are missing a subject, a predicate, or both. Then combine each fragment with the sentence before it, inserting any additional words as needed.

1. The crowd gathered in the park. **For the May Day festivities.**
2. They gathered, as usual. **The regulars, or parkees.**
3. For many, the May Pole dance is the highlight. **For others, the races.**
4. I’m sure I’ll win again. **Always do.**
5. He was the surprise of the day. **Squeaky’s brother Raymond.**

For more help with fragments, see page R64 in the **Grammar Handbook**.

## READING-WRITING CONNECTION



Increase your understanding of “Raymond’s Run” by responding to this prompt. Then use the **revising tip** to improve your writing.

### WRITING PROMPT

#### Extended Constructed Response: Article

Imagine you are a newspaper writer covering the May Day events at the park. Write a **two- or three-paragraph** article that will appear in the next day’s paper. Be sure to tell where and when events took place, who participated, and what happened.

### REVISING TIP

Review your article. If you have used any sentence fragments, add the missing parts to make your sentences complete.



**L1** Demonstrate command of standard English grammar when writing. **L3** Use knowledge of language when writing. **W2** Write informative texts.

**Interactive Revision**

Go to [thinkcentral.com](http://thinkcentral.com).  
KEYWORD: HML8-49

## One Friday Morning by Langston Hughes

Even in the not-officially-segregated North, there was often a wide gulf between the color-blindness of the American dream and the racial discrimination in daily life, which, early in their lives, crushed the aspirations and dashed the hopes of promising young black Americans. In this story (published in 1941), celebrated poet, novelist, and playwright Langston Hughes (1902–67) describes such an incident in the life of a talented and proud American high school student, Nancy Lee Johnson, whose family had moved from the Deep South to the North so that she might have better opportunities. Describe Nancy Lee. What do we learn about her from her picture, which “had come out of her soul, her own life”? What, to begin with, are her attitudes toward her country and toward her race? Has it changed by the end? What do you think of Miss O’Shay’s speech to Nancy Lee, and can her story about the Irish become Nancy Lee’s? Is Nancy Lee’s hope at the end unrealistic? Has the move North been in vain? Is color-blindness a possible or desirable prospect in America—for blacks? For whites? For everyone? If racial prejudice is at odds with the American Dream, what about racial pride and racial preferences?

The thrilling news did not come directly to Nancy Lee, but it came in little indirections that finally added themselves up to one tremendous fact: she had won the prize! But being a calm and quiet young lady, she did not say anything, although the whole high school buzzed with rumors, guesses, reportedly authentic announcements on the part of students who had no right to be making announcements at all—since no student really knew yet who had won this year’s art scholarship.

But Nancy Lee’s drawing was so good, her lines so sure, her colors so bright and harmonious, that certainly no other student in the senior art class at George Washington High was thought to have very much of a chance. Yet you never could tell. Last year nobody had expected Joe Williams to win the Artist Club scholarship with that funny modernistic water color he had done of the high-level bridge. In fact, it was hard to make out there was a bridge until you had looked at the picture a long time. Still, Joe Williams got the prize, was feted by the community’s leading painters, club women, and society folks at a big banquet at the Park-Rose Hotel, and was now an award student at the Art School—the city’s only art school.

Nancy Lee Johnson was a colored girl, a few years out of the South. But seldom did her high-school classmates think of her as colored. She was smart, pretty and brown, and fitted in well with the life of the school. She stood high in scholarship, played a swell game of basketball, had taken part in the senior musical in a soft,



velvety voice, and had never seemed to intrude or stand out, except in pleasant ways so it was seldom even mentioned—her color.

Nancy Lee sometimes forgot she was colored herself. She liked her classmates and her school. Particularly she like her art teacher, Miss Dietrich, the tall red-haired woman who taught her law and order in doing things; and the beauty of working step by step until a job is done; a picture finished; a design created; or a block print carved out of nothing but an idea and a smooth square of linoleum, inked, proofs made, and finally put down on paper—clean, sharp, beautiful, individual, unlike any other in the world, thus making the paper have a meaning nobody else could give it except Nancy Lee. That was the wonderful thing about true creation. You made something nobody else on earth could make—but you.

Miss Dietrich was the kind of teacher who brought out the best in her students—but their own best, not anybody else's copied best. For anybody else's best, great though it might be, even Michelangelo's, wasn't enough to please Miss Dietrich, dealing with the creative impulses of young men and women living in an American city in the Middle West, and being American.

Nancy Lee was proud of being American, a Negro American with blood out of Africa a long time ago, too many generations back to count. But her parents had taught her the beauties of Africa, its strength, its song, its mighty rivers, its early smelting of iron, its building of the pyramids, and its ancient and important civilizations. And Miss Dietrich had discovered for her the sharp and humorous lines of African sculpture, Benin, Congo, Makonde. Nancy Lee's father was a mail carrier, her mother a social worker in a city settlement house. Both parents had been to Negro colleges in the South. And her mother had gotten a further degree in social work from a Northern university. Her parents were, like most Americans, simple, ordinary people who had worked hard and steadily for their education. Now they were trying to make it easier for Nancy Lee to achieve learning than it had been for them. They would be very happy when they heard of the award to their daughter—yet Nancy did not tell them. To surprise them would be better. Besides, there had been a promise.

Casually one day, Miss Dietrich asked Nancy Lee what color frame she thought would be best on her picture. That had been the first inkling.

“Blue,” Nancy Lee said. Although the picture had been entered in the Artist Club contest a month ago, Nancy Lee did not hesitate in her choice of color for the possible frame, since she could still see her picture clearly in her mind's eye—for that picture waiting for the blue frame had come out of her soul, her own life, and had bloomed into miraculous being with Miss Dietrich's help. It was, she knew, the

best water color she had painted in her four years as a high-school art student, and she was glad she had made something Miss Dietrich liked well enough to permit her to enter in the contest before she graduated.

It was not a modernistic picture in the sense that you had to look at it a long time to understand what it meant. It was just a simple scene in the city park on a spring day with the trees still leaflessly lacy against the sky, the new grass fresh and green, a flag on a tall pole in the center, children playing, and an old Negro woman sitting on a bench with her head turned. A lot for one picture, to be sure, but it was not there in heavy and final detail like a calendar. Its charm was that everything was light and airy, happy like spring, with a lot of blue sky, paper-white clouds, and air showing through. You could tell that the old Negro woman was looking at the flag, and that the flag was proud in the spring breeze, and that the breeze helped to make the children's dresses billow as they played.

Miss Dietrich had taught Nancy Lee how to paint spring, people, and a breeze on what was only a plain white piece of paper from the supply closet. But Miss Dietrich had not said make it like any other spring-people-breeze ever seen before. She let it remain Nancy Lee's own. That is how the old Negro woman happened to be there looking at the flag—for in her mind the flag, the spring, and the woman formed a kind of triangle holding a dream Nancy Lee wanted to express. White stars on a blue field, spring, children, ever-growing life, and an old woman. Would the judges at the Artist Club like it?

One wet, rainy April afternoon Miss O'Shay, the girls' vice principal, sent for Nancy Lee to stop by her office as school closed. Pupils without umbrellas or raincoats were clustered in doorways hoping to make it home between showers. Outside the skies were gray. Nancy Lee's thoughts were suddenly gray, too.

She did not think she had done anything wrong, yet that tight little knot came in her throat just the same as she approached Miss O'Shay's door. Perhaps she had banged her locker too often and too hard. Perhaps the note in French she had written to Sallie halfway across the study hall just for fun had never gotten to Sallie but into Miss O'Shay's hands instead. Or maybe she was failing in some subject and wouldn't be allowed to graduate. Chemistry! A pang went through the pit of her stomach.

She knocked on Miss O'Shay's door. That familiarly solid and competent voice said, "Come in."

Miss O'Shay had a way of making you feel welcome, even if you came to be expelled.

“Sit down, Nancy Lee Johnson,” said Miss O’Shay. “I have something to tell you.” Nancy Lee sat down. “But I must ask you to promise not to tell anyone yet.”

“I won’t, Miss O’Shay,” Nancy Lee said, wondering what on earth the principal had to say to her.

“You are about to graduate,” Miss O’Shay said. “And we shall miss you. You have been an excellent student, Nancy, and you will not be without honors on the senior list, as I am sure you know.”

At that point there was a light knock on the door. Miss O’Shay called out, “Come in,” and Miss Dietrich entered. “May I be part of this, too?” she asked, tall and smiling.

“Of course,” Miss O’Shay said. “I was just telling Nancy Lee what we thought of her. But I hadn’t gotten around to giving her the news. Perhaps, Miss Dietrich, you’d like to tell her yourself.”

Miss Dietrich was always direct. “Nancy Lee,” she said, “your picture has won the Artist Club scholarship.”

The slender brown girl’s eyes widened, her heart jumped, then her throat tightened again. She tried to smile, but instead tears came to her eyes.

“Dear Nancy Lee,” Miss O’Shay said, “we are so happy for you.” The elderly white woman took her hand and shook it warmly while Miss Dietrich beamed with pride.

Nancy Lee must have danced all the way home. She never remembered quite how she got there through the rain. She hoped she had been dignified. But certainly she hadn’t stopped to tell anybody her secret on the way. Raindrops, smiles, and tears mingled on her brown cheeks. She hoped her mother hadn’t yet gotten home and that the house was empty. She wanted to have time to calm down and look natural before she had to see anyone. She didn’t want to be bursting with excitement—having a secret to contain.

Miss O’Shay’s calling her to the office had been in the nature of a preparation and a warning. The kind, elderly vice-principal said she did not believe in catching young ladies unawares, even with honors, so she wished her to know about the coming award. In making acceptance speeches she wanted her to be calm, prepared, not nervous, overcome, and frightened. So Nancy Lee was asked to think what she would say when the scholarship was conferred upon her a few days hence, both at the Friday morning high-school assembly hour, when the announcement would be made, and at the evening banquet of the Artist Club. Nancy Lee promised the vice-



principal to think calmly about what she would say.

Miss Dietrich had then asked for some facts about her parents, her background, and her life, since such material would probably be desired for the papers. Nancy Lee had told her how, six years before, they had come up from the Deep South, her father having been successful in achieving a transfer from one post office to another, a thing he had long sought in order to give Nancy Lee a chance to go to school in the North. Now they lived in a modest Negro neighborhood, went to see the best plays when they came to town, and had been saving to send Nancy Lee to art school, in case she were permitted to enter. But the scholarship would help a great deal, for they were not rich people.

“Now Mother can have a new coat next winter,” Nancy Lee thought, “because my tuition will be covered for the first year. And once in art school, there are other scholarships I can win.”

Dreams began to dance through her head, plans and ambitions, beauties she would create for herself, her parents, and the Negro people—for Nancy Lee possessed a deep and reverent race pride. She could see the old woman in her picture (really her grandmother in the South) lifting her head to the bright stars on the flag in the distance. A Negro in America! Often hurt, discriminated against, sometimes lynched—but always there were the stars on the blue body of the flag. Was there any other flag in the world that had so many stars? Nancy Lee thought deeply but she could remember none in all the encyclopedias or geographies she had ever looked into.

“Hitch your wagon to a star,” Nancy Lee thought, dancing home in the rain. “Who were our flag-makers?”

Friday morning came, the morning when the world would know—her high-school world, the newspaper world, her mother and dad. Dad could not be there at the assembly to hear the announcement, nor see her prize picture displayed on the stage, nor listen to Nancy Lee’s little speech of acceptance, but Mother would be able to come, although Mother was much puzzled as to why Nancy Lee was so insistent she be at school on that particular Friday morning.

When something is happening, something new and fine, something that will change your very life, it is hard to go to sleep at night for thinking about it, and hard to keep your heart from pounding, or a strange little knot of joy from gathering in your throat. Nancy Lee had taken her bath, brushed her hair until it glowed, and had gone to bed thinking about the next day, the big day when, before three thousand students, she would be the one student honored, her painting the one painting to be

acclaimed as the best of the year from all the art classes of the city. Her short speech of gratitude was ready. She went over it in her mind, not word for word (because she didn't want it to sound as if she had learned it by heart) but she let the thoughts flow simply and sincerely through her consciousness many times.

When the president of the Artist Club presented her with the medal and scroll of the scholarship award, she would say:

“Judges and members of the Artist Club. I want to thank you for this award that means so much to me personally and through me to my people, the colored people of this city who, sometimes, are discouraged and bewildered, thinking that color and poverty are against them. I accept this award with gratitude and pride, not for myself alone, but for my race that believes in American opportunity and American fairness—and the bright stars in our flag. I thank Miss Dietrich and the teachers who made it possible for me to have the knowledge and training that lie behind this honor you have conferred upon my painting. When I came here from the South a few years ago, I was not sure how you would receive me. You received me well. You have given me a chance and helped me along the road I wanted to follow. I suppose the judges know that every week here at assembly the students of this school pledge allegiance to the flag. I shall try to be worthy of that pledge, and of the help and friendship and understanding of my fellow citizens of whatever race or creed, and of our American dream of ‘Liberty and justice for all!’”

That would be her response before the students in the morning. How proud and happy the Negro pupils would be, perhaps almost as proud as they were of the one colored star on the football team. Her mother would probably cry with happiness. Thus Nancy Lee went to sleep dreaming of a wonderful tomorrow.

The bright sunlight of an April morning woke her. There was breakfast with her parents—their half-amused and puzzled faces across the table, wondering what could be this secret that made her eyes so bright. The swift walk to school; the clock in the tower almost nine; hundreds of pupils streaming into the long, rambling old building that was the city's largest high school; the sudden quiet of the homeroom after the bell rang; then the teacher opening her record book to call the roll. But just before she began, she looked across the room until her eyes located Nancy Lee.

“Nancy,” she said, “Miss O'Shay would like to see you in her office, please.”

Nancy Lee rose and went out while the names were being called and the word present added its period to each name. Perhaps, Nancy Lee thought, the reporters from the papers had already come. Maybe they wanted to take her picture before assembly, which wasn't until ten o'clock. (Last year they had had the photograph of

the winner of the award in the morning papers as soon as the announcement had been made.)

Nancy Lee knocked at Miss O'Shay's door.

"Come in."

The vice-principal stood at her desk. There was no one else in the room. It was very quiet.

"Sit down, Nancy Lee," she said. Miss O'Shay did not smile. There was a long pause. The seconds went by slowly. "I do not know how to tell you what I have to say," the elderly woman began, her eyes on the papers on her desk. "I am indignant and ashamed for myself and for this city." Then she lifted her eyes and looked at Nancy Lee in the neat blue dress sitting there before her. "You are not to receive the scholarship this morning."

Outside in the hall the electric bells announcing the first period rang, loud and interminably long. Miss O'Shay remained silent. To the brown girl there in the chair, the room grew suddenly smaller, smaller, smaller, and there was no air. She could not speak.

Miss O'Shay said, "When the committee learned that you were colored, they changed their plans."

Still Nancy Lee said nothing, for there was no air to give breath to her lungs.

"Here is the letter from the committee, Nancy Lee." Miss O'Shay picked it up and read the final paragraph to her.

"It seems to us wiser to arbitrarily rotate the award among the various high schools of the city from now on. And especially in this case since the student chosen happens to be colored, a circumstance which unfortunately, had we known, might have prevented this embarrassment. But there have never been any Negro students in the local art school, and the presence of one there might create difficulties for all concerned. We have high regard for the quality for Nancy Lee Johnson's talent, but we do not feel it would be fair to honor it with the Artist Club award." Miss O'Shay paused. She put the letter down.

"Nancy Lee, I am very sorry to have to give you this message."

"But my speech," Nancy Lee said, "was about . . ." The words stuck in her throat. ". . . about America."

Miss O'Shay had risen, she turned her back and stood looking out the window at



the spring tulips in the school yard.

“I thought, since the award would be made at assembly right after our oath of allegiance,” the words tumbled almost hysterically from Nancy Lee’s throat now, “I would put part of the flag salute in my speech. You know, Miss O’Shay, that part of ‘liberty and justice for all.’”

“I know,” said Miss O’Shay slowly facing the room again. “But America is only what we who believe in it make it. I am Irish. You may not know, Nancy Lee, but years ago we were called the dirty Irish, and mobs rioted against us in the big cities, and we were invited to go back where we came from. But we didn’t go. And we didn’t give up, because we believed in the American dream, and in our power to make that dream come true. Difficulties, yes. Mountains to climb, yes.

Discouragements to face, yes. Democracy to make, yes. That is it, Nancy Lee! We still have in this world of ours democracy to make. You and I, Nancy Lee. But the premise and the base are here, the lines of the Declaration of Independence and the words of Lincoln are here, and the stars in our flag. Those who deny you this scholarship do not know the meaning of those stars, but it’s up to us to make them know. As a teacher in the public schools of this city, I myself will go before the school board and ask them to remove from our system the offer of any prizes or awards denied to any student because of race or color.”

Suddenly Miss O’Shay stopped speaking. Her clear, clear blue eyes looked into those of the girl before her. The woman’s eyes were full of strength and courage. “Lift up your head, Nancy Lee, and smile at me.”

Miss O’Shay stood against the open window with the green lawn and the tulips beyond, the sunlight tangled in her gray hair, her voice an electric flow of strength to the hurt spirit of Nancy Lee. The Abolitionists who believed in freedom when there was slavery must have been like that. The first white teachers who went into the Deep South to teach the freed slaves must have been like that. All those who stand against ignorance, narrowness, hate, and mud on stars must be like that.

Nancy Lee lifted her head and smiled. The bell for assembly rang. She went through the long hall filled with students toward the auditorium.

“There will be other awards,” Nancy Lee thought. “There’re schools in other cities. This won’t keep me down. But when I’m a woman, I’ll fight to see that these things don’t happen to other girls as this has happened to me. And men and women like Miss O’Shay will help me.”

She took her seat among the seniors. The doors of the auditorium closed. As the principal came onto the platform, the students rose and turned their eyes to the flag

on the stage.

One hand went to the heart, the other outstretched toward the flag. Three thousand voices spoke. Among them was the voice of a dark girl whose cheeks were suddenly wet with tears, “. . . one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

“That is the land we must make,” she thought.

1. Was Miss Dietrich a good art teacher? What details from the story support your response?
2. What was the dream of being held in the triangle of Nancy Lee’s picture?
3. Do you think Nancy Lee would have preferred never to have known the committee was going to give her the scholarship, or was it better that the situation happened the way it did? Explain.
4. Do you think Nancy Lee will tell her parents the whole story? Why or why not? If so, how will she tell them?
5. Langston Hughes titles this story “One Friday Morning.” What title would you have given it?
6. Discuss the irony of this story. Why do the words of Nancy Lee’s planned speech take on a ironic meaning?
7. You may or may not agree with the way Nancy Lee reacted to the unfortunate news. How else might she have reacted. What would have been the consequences of reacting differently?
8. What if you were Nancy Lee? How would you have reacted upon hearing the Artist Club’s decision to withdraw your award? Why would you have reacted in this way?

9. What issues are addressed in the story? What point of view is Hughes expressing about the issues?

10. How does this story relate to the generalizations about change?