Name _____ Class _____

8th Grade
Deep Reading Guide & Practice Packet

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Sample of Deep Reading texts used after this unit attached to back

Practice with *The Lion King*

Characters		
Simba: Main Character	**Scar:** Simba's Uncle	**Rafiki:** Baboon/Priest
Mufasa: Simba's Father	**Nala:** Simba's Childhood Friend:	**Timon/Pumba:** Meercat/Warthog

Two Potential Themes You See
1. 2.

Mood During the Stampede
Mood _____ Two examples of action/sensory description that create mood (not music): 1. 2.
Mood at End of Film
Mood _____ Two examples of action/sensory description that create that mood (not music): 1. 2.

Symbol	What you think it symbolizes	Why do you think that?
Fire	Renewal/pain of confronting one's past	Fire is obviously painful, and it happens after Simba confronts his past via Scar; yet after the pain of that/the fire, a lush landscape comes back
Wildebeest Skull		

Advice Scar Gives Simba	Advice Mufasa Gives Simba
Why You Trust / Don't Trust Him *(circle one)*	**Why You Trust / Don't Trust Him** *(circle one)*
Advice Rafiki Gives Simba	**Advice Timon Gives Simba**
Why You Trust / Don't Trust Him *(circle one)*	**Why You Trust / Don't Trust Him** *(circle one)*

Message (based on advice, symbols, what Simba learned, and/or themes)

Short Stories

The Traveler & The Tigers
(Attributed to Buddha)

A traveler, fleeing a tiger who was chasing him, ran till he came to the edge of a cliff. There he caught hold of a thick vine, and swung himself over the edge. Above him the tiger snarled.

Below him he heard another snarl, and behold, there was another tiger, peering up at him. The vine suspended him midway between two tigers.

Two mice, a white mouse and a black mouse, began to gnaw at the vine. He could see they were quickly eating it through.

Then in front of him on the cliff-side he saw a luscious bunch of grapes. Holding onto the vine with one hand, he reached and picked a grape with the other.

"How delicious!"

Directions: Please *completely* answer the questions below. You don't need complete sentences, but you *do* need the *why*.

1) **Theme:** What is one or more of the themes in this story? Why do you say that?

2) **Mood:** What is *one* of the moods you detect in the story? What are two images/phrases that make you say that? (You can draw arrows too so you don't have to rewrite them.)

Mood: _____

i.

ii.

3) **Symbol:** What do you think the tigers or the grapes might symbolize? Why do you think that? (Hint: think about what their role is in the story.)

4) **Message:** What do you think the message is? Why do you think that?

Papa's Parrot
by Cynthia Rylant

Though his father was fat and merely owned a candy and nut shop, Harry Tillian liked his papa. Harry stopped liking candy and nuts when he was around seven, but, in spite of this, he and Mr. Tillian had remained friends and were still friends the year Harry turned twelve.

For years, after school, Harry had always stopped in to see his father at work. Many of Harry's friends stopped there, too, to spend a few cents choosing penny candy from the giant bins or to sample Mr. Tillian's latest batch of roasted peanuts. Mr. Tillian looked forward to seeing his son and his son's friends every day. He liked the company.

When Harry entered junior high school, though, he didn't come by the candy and nut shop as often. Nor did his friends. They were older and they had more spending money. They went to a burger place. They played video games. They shopped for records. None of them were much interested in candy and nuts anymore.

A new group of children came to Mr. Tillian's shop now. But not Harry Tillian and his friends.

The year Harry turned twelve was also the year Mr. Tillian got a parrot. He went to a pet store one day and bought one for more money than he could really afford. He brought the parrot to his shop, set its cage near the sign for maple clusters and named it Rocky.

Harry thought this was the strangest thing his father had ever done, and he told him so, but Mr. Tillian just ignored him.

Rocky was good company for Mr. Tillian. When business was slow, Mr. Tillian would turn on a small color television he had sitting in a corner, and he and Rocky would watch the soap operas. Rocky liked to scream when the romantic music came on, and Mr. Tillian would yell at him to shut up, but they seemed to enjoy themselves.

The more Mr. Tillian grew to like his parrot, and the more he talked to it instead of to people, the more embarrassed Harry became. Harry would stroll past the shop, on his way somewhere else, and he'd take a quick look inside to see what his dad was doing. Mr. Tillian was always talking to the bird. So Harry kept walking.

At home things were different. Harry and his father joked with each other at the dinner table as they always had—Mr. Tillian teasing Harry about his smelly socks; Harry teasing Mr. Tillian about his blubbery stomach. At home things seemed all right.

But one day, Mr. Tillian became ill. He had been at work, unpacking boxes of caramels, when he had grabbed his chest and fallen over on top of the candy. A customer had found him, and he was taken to the hospital in an ambulance.

Mr. Tillian couldn't leave the hospital. He lay in bed, tubes in his arms, and he worried about his shop. New shipments of candy and nuts would be arriving. Rocky would be hungry. Who would take care of things?

Harry said he would. Harry told his father that he would go to the store every day after school and unpack boxes. He would sort out all the candy and nuts. He would even feed Rocky.

So, the next morning, while Mr. Tillian lay in his hospital bed, Harry took the shop key to school with him. After school he left his friends and walked to the empty shop alone. In all the days of his life, Harry had never seen the shop closed after school. Harry didn't even remember what the CLOSED sign looked like. The key stuck in the lock three times, and inside he had to search all the walls for the light switch.

The shop was as his father had left it. Even the caramels were still spilled on the floor. Harry bent down and picked them up one by one, dropping them back in the boxes. The bird in its cage watched him silently.

Harry opened the new boxes his father hadn't gotten to. Peppermints. Jawbreakers. Toffee creams. Strawberry kisses. Harry traveled from bin to bin, putting the candies where they belonged.

"Hello!"

Harry jumped, spilling a box of jawbreakers.

"Hello, Rocky!"

Harry stared at the parrot. He had forgotten it was there. The bird had been so quiet, and Harry had been thinking only of the candy.

"Hello," Harry said.

"Hello, Rocky!" answered the parrot.

Harry walked slowly over to the cage. The parrot's food cup was empty. Its water was dirty. The bottom of the cage was a mess.

Harry carried the cage into the back room.

"Hello, Rocky!"

"Is that all you can say, you dumb bird?" Harry mumbled. The bird said nothing else.

Harry cleaned the bottom of the cage, refilled the food and water cups, then put the cage back in its place and resumed sorting the candy.

"Where's Harry?"

Harry looked up.

"Where's Harry?"

Harry stared at the parrot.

"Where's Harry?"

Chills ran down Harry's back. What could the bird mean? It was like something from "The Twilight Zone."

"Where's Harry?"

Harry swallowed and said, "I'm here. I'm here, you stupid bird."

"You stupid bird!" said the parrot.

Well, at least he's got one thing straight, thought Harry.

"Miss him! Miss him! Where's Harry? You stupid bird!"

Harry stood with a handful of peppermints.

"What?" he asked.

"Where's Harry?" said the parrot.

"I'm here, you stupid bird! I'm here!" Harry yelled. He threw the peppermints at the cage, and the bird screamed and clung to its perch.

Harry sobbed, "I'm here." The tears were coming.

Harry leaned over the glass counter.

"Papa." Harry buried his face in his arms.

"Where's Harry?" repeated the bird.

Harry sighed and wiped his face on his sleeve. He watched the parrot. He understood now: someone had been saying, for a long time, "Where's Harry? Miss him."

Harry finished his unpacking, then swept the floor of the shop. He checked the furnace so the bird wouldn't get cold. Then he left to go visit his papa.

Directions: Please *completely* answer the questions below. You don't need complete sentences, but you *do* need the *why*.

1) **Comprehension:** Why is Rocky saying, "Where's Harry?" at the end?

2) **Inference:** What is <u>one</u> *personality* trait you can infer about Harry? What are <u>two</u> pieces of evidence that support your inference?

   Personality Trait: _____

   i.

   ii.

3) **Theme:** What is one or more of the themes in this story? Why do you say that?

4) **Mood:** What is *one* of the moods you detect in the story? What are two images/phrases that make you say that?

   Mood: _____

   i.

   ii.

5) **Symbol:** What do you think the parrot or the candy shop might symbolize? Why do you think that? (Hint: think about how Harry feels about both, at the beginning and the end.)

6) **Message:** What do you think the message is? Why do you think that?

Father

by Gary Soto

My father was showing me how to water. Earlier in the day he and a friend had leveled the backyard with a roller, then with a two-by-four they dragged on a rope to fill in the depressed areas, after which they watered the ground and combed it slowly with a steel rake. They were preparing the ground for a new lawn. They worked shirtless in the late summer heat, and talked only so often, stopping now and then to point and say things I did not understand— how fruit trees would do better near the alley and how the vegetable garden would do well on the east side of the house.

"Put your thumb like this," he said. Standing over me, he took the hose and placed his thumb over the opening so that the water streamed out hissing and showed silver in that dusk. I tried it and the water hissed and went silver as I pointed the hose to a square patch of dirt that I soaked but was careful not to puddle.

Father returned to sit down with an iced tea. His knees were water-stained and his chest was flecked with mud. Mom sat next to him, garden gloves resting on her lap. She was wearing checkered shorts and her hair was tied up in a bandana. He patted his lap, and she jumped into it girlishly, arms around his neck. They raised their heads to watch me— or look through me, as if something were on the other side of me— and talked about our new house— the neighbors, trees they would plant, the playground down the block. They were tired from the day's work but were happy. When Father pinched her legs, as if to imply they were fat, she punched him gently and played with his hair.

The water streamed, nickel-colored, as I slowly worked from one end to the next. When I raised my face to Father's to ask if I could stop, he pointed to an area that I had missed. Although it was summer I was cold from the water and my thumb hurt from pressing the hose, trigger-like, to reach the far places. But I wanted to please him, to work hard as he had, so I watered the patch until he told me to stop. I turned off the water, coiled the hose as best I could, and sat with them as they talked about the house and stared at where I had been standing.

The next day Father was hurt at work. A neck injury. Two days later he was dead. I remember the hour— two in the afternoon. An uncle slammed open the back door at Grandma's and the three of us— cousin Isaac, Debbie, and I who were playing in the yard— grew stiff because we thought we were in trouble for doing something wrong. He looked at us, face lined with worry and shouting to hurry to the car. At the hospital I recall Mother holding her hand over her eyes as if she was looking into a light. She was leaning into someone's shoulder and was being led away from the room in which Father lay.

I remember looking up but saying nothing, though I sensed what had happened— that Father was dead. I did not feel sorrow nor did I cry, but I felt conspicuous because relatives were pressing me against their legs or holding my hand or touching my head, tenderly. I stood among them, some of whom were crying while others had their heads bowed and mouths moving. The three of us were led away down the hall to a cafeteria where an uncle bought us candies that we ate standing up and looking around, after which

we left the hospital and walked into a harsh afternoon light. We got into a blue car I had never seen before.

At the funeral there was crying. I knelt with my brother and sister, hands folded and trying to be patient, though I was itchy from the tiny coat whose shoulders worked into my armpits and from the heat of a stuffy car on our long and slow drive from the church in town. Prayers were said and a eulogy was given by a man we did not know. We were asked to view the casket, with our mother and the three of us to lead the procession. An uncle helped my mother while we walked shyly to view our father for the last time. When I stood at the casket, I was surprised to see him, eyes closed and moist-looking and wearing a cap the color of skin. (Years later I would realize that it hid the wound from which he had died.) I looked quickly and returned to my seat, head bowed because my relatives were watching me and I felt scared.

We buried our father. Later that day at the house, Grandma could not stop shaking from her nerves, so a doctor was called. I was in the room when he opened his bag and shiny things gleamed from inside it. Scared, I left the room and sat in the living room with my sister, who had a doughnut in her hand, with one bite gone. An aunt whose face was twisted from crying looked at me and, feeling embarrassed, I lowered my head to play with my fingers.

A week later relatives came to help build the fence Father had planned for the new house. A week after that Rick, Debra, and I were playing in an unfurnished bedroom with a can of marbles Mother had given us. Behind the closed door we rolled the marbles so that they banged against the baseboard and jumped into the air. We separated, each to a corner, where we swept them viciously with our arms— the clatter of the marbles hitting the walls so loud I could not hear the things in my heart.

Directions: Please *completely* answer the questions below. You don't need complete sentences, but you *do* need the *why*.

1) **Inference:** What is <u>one</u> *personality* trait you can infer about Gary's father? What are <u>two</u> pieces of evidence that support your inference?

   Personality Trait: _____

   i.

   ii.

2) **Theme:** What is one or more of the themes in this story? Why do you say that?

3) **Mood:** What is the mood of the piece when the family's in the garden? What are two images/phrases that make you say that?

   Mood: _____

   iii.

   iv.

4) **Changing Mood:** What is the mood of the piece after Gary's father has died? What are two images/phrases that make you say that?

   Mood: _____

   i.

   ii.

5) **Symbol:** What do you think the marbles might symbolize? Why do you think that? (Hint: think about what Gary is using them for.)

6) **Message:** What do you think the message is? Why do you think that? (Hint: think about what Gary learned from this experience.)

Poetry

The Race

The runners flew past in unison
Each lifting right leg then left
The race was on
Above us the sky wore a brilliant,
sparkling blue sheen.
There was no room for clouds on such a day.
The multitude encouraged the runners
from both sides of the road.
A salad of applause, hoots and hollers.
It was a wonderful day for a race
The most temperate of afternoons.
Energy exchanged between spectator and runner
adding electricity to an already charged atmosphere
Indeed, it was a wonderful day for a race
-Anonymous

1) **Mood:** What is the mood of "The Race"? What are two images/phrases that make you say that?

Mood: _____

i.

ii.

Fifth Grade Autobiography

I was four in this photograph fishing
with my grandparents at a lake in Michigan.
My brother squats in poison ivy.
His Davy Crockett cap
sits squared on his head so the raccoon tail
flounces down the back of his sailor suit.

My grandfather sits to the far right
in a folding chair,
and I know his left hand is on
the tobacco in his pants pocket
because I used to wrap it for him
every Christmas. Grandmother's hips
bulge from the brush, she's leaning
into the ice chest, sun through the trees
printing her dress with soft
luminous paws.

I am staring jealously at my brother;
the day before he rode his first horse, alone.
I was strapped in a basket
behind my grandfather.
He smelled of lemons. He's died—

but I remember his hands.

2) **Theme:** What is one of the themes in this poem? Why do you say that?

3) **Mood:** What is one of the moods of "5th Grade Biography"? What are two images/phrases that make you say that?

Mood: _____

i.

ii.

4) **Symbol:** What do you think the photograph symbolizes? Why do you say that?

MTSM "Cheat Sheet"

Mood

Definition: The mood is what _____ is feeling as they're reading, the emotions that are coming up.

Way(s) to find what it is: For the mood, pay special attention to the _____ that the author uses.

Examples: *(Underline or circle the words that reveal the mood)*

1) It was a dark and stormy night. The rain smashed against the old shingles of the creaky house.
   - Mood:_____
2) He remembered his father's look of delight, and that his father had whispered, "She's one of my favorites. I was hoping for her to be the one." The crowd had clapped, and Jonas had grinned. He liked his sister's name. Lily, barely awake, had waved her small fist.
   - Mood:_____

Some Common Mood Words:

cheerful	light-hearted	apprehensive	infuriated
content	optimistic	cold	melancholic
ecstatic	peaceful	dark	pensive
hopeful	relaxed	haunting	pessimistic
joyous	silly	hopeless	suspenseful

Theme

Definition: The theme is the _____ of the text; it's what the story is about.

Way(s) to find what it is: For theme, consider what _____ the characters have to face or the _____ they have to make.

Examples:

1) In *Holes*, Stanley has to deal with his family's poverty, his family's curse, an unfair prison system, surviving bullies in and outside of prison, and his weight. Some potential themes are:
   - Social/Criminal Justice
   - _____
   - _____
   - _____
   - _____
2) In *The Giver*, Jonas faces a number of conflicts & doubts, even just in his mind. Those are all potential themes:
   - Personal desires vs. social pressure/control (Individual vs society)
   - _____
   - _____
   - _____
   - _____

Symbol

Definition: A symbol is a living or non-living object that is _____ something else.

Way(s) to find it: For a symbol, consider:

- what that object/person has symbolized in history, other texts (_____), or current society
- what that symbol is used for in the text and/or
- how that symbol has changed the character(s)

Examples:

- A skeleton is a clear symbol of *death* both because it's what we turn into when we die but more so because it's symbolized death in art and stories for thousands of years
- Elsa's gloves in *Frozen* can symbolize *hiding who we are from society* because they were given to her by her parents to stop/cover up her magic
- Buzz Lightyear changes Woody's outlook on life in *Toy Story*, so could symbolize change & growing
- _____ symbolizes _____ _____ because _____ _____

Message

Definition: The message is what the author is trying to _____ through the text. You don't need to agree with the author's message: it's not about what *you* believe; it's what the _____ believes.

Way(s) to find it: For the message, consider either:

- the theme, and what the author thinks about it
- _____ in the story, and what happens to them
- what the characters _____
  i. Depending on who we trust & who we don't
- what the main character(s) learn(s)

Example:

- If one of the themes of *Beauty & the Beast* is external vs. internal beauty, what does the writer believe about it?
  - Author's Message: _____ _____ _____ (because Gaston is handsome but horrible, and dies in the end…while the Beast is "ugly" outside, but shows his true heart and ends up living happily ever after with Belle.)

“The Lottery” (1948)
By Shirley Jackson

Directions: As you read, notice the five **bolded** vocabulary words in the text. Write the letter of the appropriate definition—or the definition itself—in the boxes on the side of the story.

Definitions:
a) without effort, thought, and/or interest
b) noisy; energetic
c) items, often random
d) in large amount(s)
e) bad-tempered

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

Profusely:

Deep Reading: What is the mood you sense in the first paragraph?

Underline the imagery that makes you think that. One image is already underlined for you.

The children assembled first, of course. School was recently over for the summer, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them; they tended to gather together quietly for a while before they broke into **boisterous** play, and their talk was still of the classroom and the teacher, of books and reprimands. Bobby Martin had already stuffed his pockets full of stones, and the other boys soon followed his example, selecting the smoothest and roundest stones; Bobby and Harry Jones and Dickie Delacroix-- the villagers pronounced this name "Dellacroy"--eventually made a great pile of stones in one corner of the square and guarded it against the raids of the other boys. The girls stood aside, talking among themselves, looking over their shoulders at the boys, and the very small children rolled in the dust or clung to the hands of their older brothers or sisters.

Boisterous:

Delacroix: the name literally means “Of the cross”

Soon the men began to gather, surveying their own children, speaking of planting and rain, tractors and taxes. They stood together, away from the pile of stones in the corner, and their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed. The women, wearing faded house dresses and sweaters, came shortly after their menfolk. They greeted one another and exchanged bits of gossip as they went to join their husbands. Soon the women, standing by their husbands, began to call to their children, and the children came reluctantly, having to be called four or five times. Bobby Martin ducked under his mother's grasping hand and ran, laughing, back to the pile of stones. His father spoke up sharply, and Bobby came quickly and took his place between his father and his oldest brother.

Comprehension: Bobby runs away from his mother. What makes him “quickly” come back?

The lottery was conducted--as were the square dances, the teen club, the

Halloween program--by Mr. Summers, who had time and energy to devote to civic activities. He was a round-faced, jovial man and he ran the coal business, and people were sorry for him, because he had no children and his wife was a scold. When he arrived in the square, carrying the black wooden box, there was a murmur of conversation among the villagers, and he waved and called, "Little late today, folks." The postmaster, Mr. Graves, followed him, carrying a three- legged stool, and the stool was put in the center of the square and Mr. Summers set the black box down on it. The villagers kept their distance, leaving a space between themselves and the stool, and when Mr. Summers said, "Some of you fellows want to give me a hand?" there was a hesitation before two men, Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, came forward to hold the box steady on the stool while Mr. Summers stirred up the papers inside it.

Deep Reading: What's ironic about the names of the two people on stage, Mr. Graves and Mr. Summers?

The original **paraphernalia** for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Old Man Warner, the oldest man in town, was born. Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. There was a story that the present box had been made with some pieces of the box that had preceded it, the one that had been constructed when the first people settled down to make a village here. Every year, after the lottery, Mr. Summers began talking again about a new box, but every year the subject was allowed to fade off without anything's being done. The black box grew shabbier each year: by now it was no longer completely black but splintered badly along one side to show the original wood color, and in some places faded or stained.

Paraphernalia:

Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, held the black box securely on the stool until Mr. Summers had stirred the papers thoroughly with his hand. Because so much of the ritual had been forgotten or discarded, Mr. Summers had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for the chips of wood that had been used for generations. Chips of wood, Mr. Summers had argued, had been all very well when the village was tiny, but now that the population was more than three hundred and likely to keep on growing, it was necessary to use something that would fit more easily into the black box. The night before the lottery, Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves made up the slips of paper and put them in the box, and it was then taken to the safe of Mr. Summers' coal company and locked up until Mr. Summers was ready to take it to the square next morning. The rest of the year, the box was put way, sometimes one place, sometimes another; it had spent one year in Mr. Graves's barn and another year underfoot in the post office, and sometimes it was set on a shelf in the Martin grocery and left there.

Comprehension: Why did they stop using wood chips years before and switch to paper?

There was a great deal of fussing to be done before Mr. Summers declared the lottery open. There were the lists to make up--of heads of families, heads of households in each family, members of each household in each

family. There was the proper swearing-in of Mr. Summers by the postmaster, as the official of the lottery; at one time, some people remembered, there had been a recital of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery, a **perfunctory**, tuneless chant that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse. There had been, also, a ritual salute, which the official of the lottery had had to use in addressing each person who came up to draw from the box, but this also had changed with time, until now it was felt necessary only for the official to speak to each person approaching. Mr. Summers was very good at all this; in his clean white shirt and blue jeans, with one hand resting carelessly on the black box, he seemed very proper and important as he talked interminably to Mr. Graves and the Martins.

Perfunctory:

Just as Mr. Summers finally left off talking and turned to the assembled villagers, Mrs. Hutchinson came hurriedly along the path to the square, her sweater thrown over her shoulders, and slid into place in the back of the crowd. "Clean forgot what day it was," she said to Mrs. Delacroix, who stood next to her, and they both laughed softly. "Thought my old man was out back stacking wood," Mrs. Hutchinson went on. "And then I looked out the window and the kids was gone, and then I remembered it was the twenty-seventh and came a-running." She dried her hands on her apron, and Mrs. Delacroix said, "You're in time, though. They're still talking away up there."

Mrs. Hutchinson craned her neck to see through the crowd and found her husband and children standing near the front. She tapped Mrs. Delacroix on the arm as a farewell and began to make her way through the crowd. The people separated good-humoredly to let her through: two or three people said, in voices just loud enough to be heard across the crowd, "Here comes your Missus, Hutchinson," and "Bill, she made it after all." Mrs. Hutchinson reached her husband, and Mr. Summers, who had been waiting, said cheerfully. "Thought we were going to have to get on without you, Tessie." Mrs. Hutchinson said, grinning, "Wouldn't have me leave m'dishes in the sink, now, would you, Joe?" and soft laughter ran through the crowd as the people stirred back into position after Mrs. Hutchinson's arrival.

Note how the Hutchinson family acts at the end of the story, starting with the highlighted section above.

"Well, no," Mr. Summers said soberly, "guess we better get started, get this over with, so's we can go back to work. Anybody ain't here?"

Deep Reading: How would you describe the community so far? Like what kind of village/ town/city is it?

"Dunbar," several people said. "Dunbar. Dunbar."

Mr. Summers consulted his list. "Clyde Dunbar," he said. "That's right. He's broke his leg, hasn't he? Who's drawing for him?"

"Me, I guess," a woman said, and Mr. Summers turned to look at her. "Wife draws for her husband," Mr. Summers said. "Don't you have a grown boy to

do it for you, Janey?" Although Mr. Summers and everyone else in the village knew the answer perfectly well, it was the business of the official of the lottery to ask such questions formally. Mr. Summers waited with an expression of polite interest while Mrs. Dunbar answered.

"Horace's not but sixteen yet," Mrs. Dunbar said regretfully. "Guess I gotta fill in for the old man this year."

"Right," Sr. Summers said. He made a note on the list he was holding. Then he asked, "Watson boy drawing this year?"

A tall boy in the crowd raised his hand. "Here," he said. "I'm drawing for my mother and me." He blinked his eyes nervously and ducked his head as several voices in the crowd said thinks like "Good fellow, lack," and "Glad to see your mother's got a man to do it."

"Well," Mr. Summers said, "guess that's everyone. Old Man Warner make it?"

"Here," a voice said. and Mr. Summers nodded.

A sudden hush fell on the crowd as Mr. Summers cleared his throat and looked at the list. "All ready?" he called. "Now, I'll read the names--heads of families first--and the men come up and take a paper out of the box. Keep the paper folded in your hand without looking at it until everyone has had a turn. Everything clear?"

The people had done it so many times that they only half listened to the directions: most of them were quiet, wetting their lips, not looking around. Then Mr. Summers raised one hand high and said, "Adams." A man disengaged himself from the crowd and came forward. "Hi. Steve." Mr. Summers said, and Mr. Adams said, "Hi. Joe." They grinned at one another humorlessly and nervously. Then Mr. Adams reached into the black box and took out a folded paper. He held it firmly by one corner as he turned and went hastily back to his place in the crowd, where he stood a little apart from his family, not looking down at his hand.

"Allen," Mr. Summers said. "Anderson.... Bentham."

"Seems like there's no time at all between lotteries anymore," Mrs. Delacroix said to Mrs. Graves in the back row.

"Seems like we got through with the last one only last week."

"Time sure goes fast," Mrs. Graves said.

"Clark.... Delacroix."

Deep Reading: What's the role of women in this town compared to men? In other words, who has the power?

Deep Reading: As you read this page, ask yourself, "What's the mood *now*?"

Underline the imagery that makes you think that. One image is already underlined for you.

"There goes my old man," Mrs. Delacroix said. She held her breath while her husband went forward.

"Dunbar," Mr. Summers said, and Mrs. Dunbar went steadily to the box while one of the women said. "Go on, Janey," and another said, "There she goes."

"We're next." Mrs. Graves said. She watched while Mr. Graves came around from the side of the box, greeted Mr. Summers gravely and selected a slip of paper from the box. By now, all through the crowd there were men holding the small folded papers in their large hand, turning them over and over nervously Mrs. Dunbar and her two sons stood together, Mrs. Dunbar holding the slip of paper.

"Harburt.... Hutchinson."

"Get up there, Bill," Mrs. Hutchinson said, and the people near her laughed.

"Jones."

"They do say," Mr. Adams said to Old Man Warner, who stood next to him, "that over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery."

Old Man Warner snorted. "Pack of crazy fools," he said. "Listening to the young folks, nothing's good enough for them. Next thing you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves, nobody work anymore, live that way for a while. Used to be a saying about 'Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon.' First thing you know, we'd all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns. There's always been a lottery," he added **petulantly**. "Bad enough to see young Joe Summers up there joking with everybody."

Petulantly:

"Some places have already quit lotteries," Mrs. Adams said.

"Nothing but trouble in that," Old Man Warner said stoutly. "Pack of young fools."

"Martin." And Bobby Martin watched his father go forward. "Overdyke.... Percy."

"I wish they'd hurry," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son. "I wish they'd hurry."

Comprehension: Why isn't the dad there?

"They're almost through," her son said.

"You get ready to run tell Dad," Mrs. Dunbar said.

Mr. Summers called his own name and then stepped forward precisely and selected a slip from the box. Then he called, "Warner."

"Seventy-seventh year I been in the lottery," Old Man Warner said as he went through the crowd. "Seventy-seventh time."

"Watson" The tall boy came awkwardly through the crowd. Someone said, "Don't be nervous, Jack," and Mr. Summers said, "Take your time, son."

"Zanini."

After that, there was a long pause, a breathless pause, until Mr. Summers. holding his slip of paper in the air, said, "All right, fellows." For a minute, no one moved, and then all the slips of paper were opened. Suddenly, all the women began to speak at once, saving, "Who is it?," "Who's got it?," "Is it the Dunbars?," "Is it the Watsons?" Then the voices began to say, "It's Hutchinson. It's Bill," "Bill Hutchinson's got it."

"Go tell your father," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son.

People began to look around to see the Hutchinsons. Bill Hutchinson was standing quiet, staring down at the paper in his hand. Suddenly. Tessie Hutchinson shouted to Mr. Summers, "You didn't give him time enough to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn't fair!"

"Be a good sport, Tessie." Mrs. Delacroix called, and Mrs. Graves said, "All of us took the same chance."

"Shut up, Tessie," Bill Hutchinson said.

"Well, everyone," Mr. Summers said, "that was done pretty fast, and now we've got to be hurrying a little more to get done in time." He consulted his next list. "Bill," he said, "you draw for the Hutchinson family. You got any other households in the Hutchinsons?"

"There's Don and Eva," Mrs. Hutchinson yelled. "Make them take their chance!"

Note this for later, what Mrs. Hutchinson is trying to do.

"Daughters draw with their husbands' families, Tessie," Mr. Summers said gently. "You know that as well as anyone else."

Deep Reading: How is Mrs. Hutchinson's demeanor different now than when we first see her?

"It wasn't fair," Tessie said.

"I guess not, Joe," Bill Hutchinson said regretfully. "My daughter draws with her husband's family; that's only fair. And I've got no other family except the kids."

"Then, as far as drawing for families is concerned, it's you," Mr. Summers said in explanation, "and as far as drawing for households is concerned, that's you, too. Right?"

"Right," Bill Hutchinson said.

"How many kids, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked formally.

"Three," Bill Hutchinson said.

"There's Bill, Jr., and Nancy, and little Dave. And Tessie and me."

"All right, then," Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you got their tickets back?"

Mr. Graves nodded and held up the slips of paper. "Put them in the box, then," Mr. Summers directed. "Take Bill's and put it in."

"I think we ought to start over," Mrs. Hutchinson said, as quietly as she could. "I tell you it wasn't fair. You didn't give him time enough to choose. Everybody saw that."

Mr. Graves had selected the five slips and put them in the box. and he dropped all the papers but those onto the ground, where the breeze caught them and lifted them off.

"Listen, everybody," Mrs. Hutchinson was saying to the people around her.

Comprehension: Bill Hutchinson already picked the black dot. Why are they drawing again?

"Ready, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked, and Bill Hutchinson, with one quick glance around at his wife and children, nodded.

"Remember," Mr. Summers said, "take the slips and keep them folded until each person has taken one. Harry, you help little Dave." Mr. Graves took the hand of the little boy, who came willingly with him up to the box. "Take a paper out of the box, Davy," Mr. Summers said. Davy put his hand into the box and laughed. "Take just one paper," Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you hold it for him." Mr. Graves took the child's hand and removed the folded paper from the tight fist and held it while little Dave stood next to him and looked up at him wonderingly.

"Nancy next," Mr. Summers said. Nancy was twelve, and her school friends breathed heavily as she went forward switching her skirt, and took a slip daintily from the box "Bill, Jr.," Mr. Summers said, and Billy, his face red and his feet overlarge, near knocked the box over as he got a paper out. "Tessie," Mr. Summers said. She hesitated for a minute, looking around defiantly, and then set her lips and went up to the box. She snatched a paper out and held it behind her.

"Bill," Mr. Summers said, and Bill Hutchinson reached into the box and felt around, bringing his hand out at last with the slip of paper in it.

The crowd was quiet. A girl whispered, "I hope it's not Nancy," and the sound of the whisper reached the edges of the crowd.

"It's not the way it used to be," Old Man Warner said clearly. "People ain't the way they used to be."

"All right," Mr. Summers said. "Open the papers. Harry, you open little Dave's."

Mr. Graves opened the slip of paper and there was a general sigh through the crowd as he held it up and everyone could see that it was blank. Nancy and Bill. Jr. opened theirs at the same time, and both beamed and laughed, turning around to the crowd and holding their slips of paper above their heads.

Comprehension: Why is everyone relieved when Mr. Graves opens up the blank paper?

"Tessie," Mr. Summers said. There was a pause, and then Mr. Summers looked at Bill Hutchinson, and Bill unfolded his paper and showed it. It was blank.

"It's Tessie," Mr. Summers said, and his voice was hushed. "Show us her paper, Bill."

Note how the Hutchinson family acts at the end of the story, starting with the highlighted section above.

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

"All right, folks." Mr. Summers said. "Let's finish quickly."

Although the villagers had forgotten the ritual and lost the original black box, they still remembered to use stones. The pile of stones the boys had made earlier was ready; there were stones on the ground with the blowing scraps of paper that had come out of the box Delacroix selected a stone so large she had to pick it up with both hands and turned to Mrs. Dunbar. "Come on," she said. "Hurry up."

Deep Reading: How did Jackson *foreshadow* on the first page the violence that's happening now?

Mr. Dunbar had small stones in both hands, and she said, gasping for breath. "I can't run at all. You'll have to go ahead and I'll catch up with you."

The children had stones already. And someone gave little Davy Hutchinson few pebbles.

Tessie Hutchinson was in the center of a cleared space by now, and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her. "It isn't fair," she

“The Lottery” (1948)
By Shirley Jackson

Directions: As you read, notice the five **bolded** vocabulary words in the text. Write the letter of the appropriate definition—or the definition itself—in the boxes on the side of the story.

Definitions:
a) without effort, thought, and/or interest
b) noisy; energetic
c) items, often random
d) in large amount(s)
e) bad-tempered

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

Profusely:

Deep Reading: What is the mood you sense in the first paragraph?

Underline the imagery that makes you think that. One image is already underlined for you.

The children assembled first, of course. School was recently over for the summer, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them; they tended to gather together quietly for a while before they broke into **boisterous** play, and their talk was still of the classroom and the teacher, of books and reprimands. Bobby Martin had already stuffed his pockets full of stones, and the other boys soon followed his example, selecting the smoothest and roundest stones; Bobby and Harry Jones and Dickie Delacroix-- the villagers pronounced this name "Dellacroy"--eventually made a great pile of stones in one corner of the square and guarded it against the raids of the other boys. The girls stood aside, talking among themselves, looking over their shoulders at the boys, and the very small children rolled in the dust or clung to the hands of their older brothers or sisters.

Boisterous:

Delacroix: the name literally means “Of the cross”

Soon the men began to gather, surveying their own children, speaking of planting and rain, tractors and taxes. They stood together, away from the pile of stones in the corner, and their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed. The women, wearing faded house dresses and sweaters, came shortly after their menfolk. They greeted one another and exchanged bits of gossip as they went to join their husbands. Soon the women, standing by their husbands, began to call to their children, and the children came reluctantly, having to be called four or five times. Bobby Martin ducked under his mother's grasping hand and ran, laughing, back to the pile of stones. His father spoke up sharply, and Bobby came quickly and took his place between his father and his oldest brother.

Comprehension: Bobby runs away from his mother. What makes him “quickly” come back?

The lottery was conducted--as were the square dances, the teen club, the

Halloween program--by Mr. Summers, who had time and energy to devote to civic activities. He was a round-faced, jovial man and he ran the coal business, and people were sorry for him, because he had no children and his wife was a scold. When he arrived in the square, carrying the black wooden box, there was a murmur of conversation among the villagers, and he waved and called, "Little late today, folks." The postmaster, Mr. Graves, followed him, carrying a three- legged stool, and the stool was put in the center of the square and Mr. Summers set the black box down on it. The villagers kept their distance, leaving a space between themselves and the stool, and when Mr. Summers said, "Some of you fellows want to give me a hand?" there was a hesitation before two men, Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, came forward to hold the box steady on the stool while Mr. Summers stirred up the papers inside it.

Deep Reading: What's ironic about the names of the two people on stage, Mr. Graves and Mr. Summers?

The original **paraphernalia** for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Old Man Warner, the oldest man in town, was born. Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. There was a story that the present box had been made with some pieces of the box that had preceded it, the one that had been constructed when the first people settled down to make a village here. Every year, after the lottery, Mr. Summers began talking again about a new box, but every year the subject was allowed to fade off without anything's being done. The black box grew shabbier each year: by now it was no longer completely black but splintered badly along one side to show the original wood color, and in some places faded or stained.

Paraphernalia:

Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, held the black box securely on the stool until Mr. Summers had stirred the papers thoroughly with his hand. Because so much of the ritual had been forgotten or discarded, Mr. Summers had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for the chips of wood that had been used for generations. Chips of wood, Mr. Summers had argued, had been all very well when the village was tiny, but now that the population was more than three hundred and likely to keep on growing, it was necessary to use something that would fit more easily into the black box. The night before the lottery, Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves made up the slips of paper and put them in the box, and it was then taken to the safe of Mr. Summers' coal company and locked up until Mr. Summers was ready to take it to the square next morning. The rest of the year, the box was put way, sometimes one place, sometimes another; it had spent one year in Mr. Graves's barn and another year underfoot in the post office, and sometimes it was set on a shelf in the Martin grocery and left there.

Comprehension: Why did they stop using wood chips years before and switch to paper?

There was a great deal of fussing to be done before Mr. Summers declared the lottery open. There were the lists to make up--of heads of families, heads of households in each family, members of each household in each

family. There was the proper swearing-in of Mr. Summers by the postmaster, as the official of the lottery; at one time, some people remembered, there had been a recital of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery, a **perfunctory**, tuneless chant that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse. There had been, also, a ritual salute, which the official of the lottery had had to use in addressing each person who came up to draw from the box, but this also had changed with time, until now it was felt necessary only for the official to speak to each person approaching. Mr. Summers was very good at all this; in his clean white shirt and blue jeans, with one hand resting carelessly on the black box, he seemed very proper and important as he talked interminably to Mr. Graves and the Martins.

Perfunctory:

Just as Mr. Summers finally left off talking and turned to the assembled villagers, Mrs. Hutchinson came hurriedly along the path to the square, her sweater thrown over her shoulders, and slid into place in the back of the crowd. "Clean forgot what day it was," she said to Mrs. Delacroix, who stood next to her, and they both laughed softly. "Thought my old man was out back stacking wood," Mrs. Hutchinson went on. "And then I looked out the window and the kids was gone, and then I remembered it was the twenty-seventh and came a-running." She dried her hands on her apron, and Mrs. Delacroix said, "You're in time, though. They're still talking away up there."

Mrs. Hutchinson craned her neck to see through the crowd and found her husband and children standing near the front. She tapped Mrs. Delacroix on the arm as a farewell and began to make her way through the crowd. The people separated good-humoredly to let her through: two or three people said, in voices just loud enough to be heard across the crowd, "Here comes your Missus, Hutchinson," and "Bill, she made it after all." Mrs. Hutchinson reached her husband, and Mr. Summers, who had been waiting, said cheerfully. "Thought we were going to have to get on without you, Tessie." Mrs. Hutchinson said, grinning, "Wouldn't have me leave m'dishes in the sink, now, would you, Joe?" and soft laughter ran through the crowd as the people stirred back into position after Mrs. Hutchinson's arrival.

Note how the Hutchinson family acts at the end of the story, starting with the highlighted section above.

"Well, no," Mr. Summers said soberly, "guess we better get started, get this over with, so's we can go back to work. Anybody ain't here?"

Deep Reading: How would you describe the community so far? Like what kind of village/ town/city is it?

"Dunbar," several people said. "Dunbar. Dunbar."

Mr. Summers consulted his list. "Clyde Dunbar," he said. "That's right. He's broke his leg, hasn't he? Who's drawing for him?"

"Me, I guess," a woman said, and Mr. Summers turned to look at her. "Wife draws for her husband," Mr. Summers said. "Don't you have a grown boy to

do it for you, Janey?" Although Mr. Summers and everyone else in the village knew the answer perfectly well, it was the business of the official of the lottery to ask such questions formally. Mr. Summers waited with an expression of polite interest while Mrs. Dunbar answered.

"Horace's not but sixteen yet," Mrs. Dunbar said regretfully. "Guess I gotta fill in for the old man this year."

"Right," Sr. Summers said. He made a note on the list he was holding. Then he asked, "Watson boy drawing this year?"

A tall boy in the crowd raised his hand. "Here," he said. "I'm drawing for my mother and me." He blinked his eyes nervously and ducked his head as several voices in the crowd said thinks like "Good fellow, lack," and "Glad to see your mother's got a man to do it."

"Well," Mr. Summers said, "guess that's everyone. Old Man Warner make it?"

"Here," a voice said. and Mr. Summers nodded.

A sudden hush fell on the crowd as Mr. Summers cleared his throat and looked at the list. "All ready?" he called. "Now, I'll read the names--heads of families first--and the men come up and take a paper out of the box. Keep the paper folded in your hand without looking at it until everyone has had a turn. Everything clear?"

The people had done it so many times that they only half listened to the directions: most of them were quiet, wetting their lips, not looking around. Then Mr. Summers raised one hand high and said, "Adams." A man disengaged himself from the crowd and came forward. "Hi. Steve." Mr. Summers said, and Mr. Adams said, "Hi. Joe." They grinned at one another humorlessly and nervously. Then Mr. Adams reached into the black box and took out a folded paper. He held it firmly by one corner as he turned and went hastily back to his place in the crowd, where he stood a little apart from his family, not looking down at his hand.

"Allen," Mr. Summers said. "Anderson.... Bentham."

"Seems like there's no time at all between lotteries anymore," Mrs. Delacroix said to Mrs. Graves in the back row.

"Seems like we got through with the last one only last week."

"Time sure goes fast," Mrs. Graves said.

"Clark.... Delacroix."

Deep Reading: What's the role of women in this town compared to men? In other words, who has the power?

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"I wish they'd hurry," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son. "I wish they'd hurry."

Comprehension: Why isn't the dad there?

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Mr. Summers called his own name and then stepped forward precisely and selected a slip from the box. Then he called, "Warner."

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"Watson" The tall boy came awkwardly through the crowd. Someone said, "Don't be nervous, Jack," and Mr. Summers said, "Take your time, son."

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"Be a good sport, Tessie." Mrs. Delacroix called, and Mrs. Graves said, "All of us took the same chance."

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"It wasn't fair," Tessie said.

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"Three," Bill Hutchinson said.

"There's Bill, Jr., and Nancy, and little Dave. And Tessie and me."

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The children had stones already. And someone gave little Davy Hutchinson few pebbles.

Tessie Hutchinson was in the center of a cleared space by now, and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her. "It isn't fair," she

said. A stone hit her on the side of the head. Old Man Warner was saying, "Come on, come on, everyone." Steve Adams was in the front of the crowd of villagers, with Mrs. Graves beside him.

"It isn't fair, it isn't right," Mrs. Hutchinson screamed, and then they were upon her.

Monday Discussion & Deep Reading Questions (you only need to complete what your teacher tells you to)

1) What are your first thoughts after reading the ending?

2) Were you surprised by it? When did you first have an inkling (a feeling) that something was going wrong? Why?

3) After this was published in 1948, *The New Yorker* and Shirley Jackson received tons of complaints and hate mail, and hundreds of people canceled their subscriptions to the magazine. Why do you think that was?

4) A mob mentality means that people do something because of social pressure, often without even thinking, like the people in the story. How does mob mentality affect us today? In other words, where do you see mob mentality today? What are some *traditions* we do without even knowing what they're from?

5) Ask yourself, when have you gone against your personal moral code because of (said or unsaid) social pressure? Why did you make that choice?

Deep Reading: How would you describe this society? Consider what does Tessie does when her family is first chosen, and how her family reacts to her during the second drawing/when she is chosen. What does that say about her and about this society?

Deep Reading: Why do you think Shirley Jackson specifically didn't give a name to this town?

Wednesday Deep Reading Questions

Deep Reading: What are some of the themes that come up in the story?

Deep Reading (text-to-text connections): How are some of these themes connected to anything else we've read this year? (Stories, novels, or plays)

Deep Reading (text-to-world connections): How are some of these themes applicable to the world today? In other words, where do you see these themes in what's going on in the world?

Deep Reading: What do you think the stones could symbolize? Why do you say that? (Consider what they're used for, why they're used, and who uses them.)

Challenge: What do you think the wood chips they *used* to use might symbolize? Why do you say that?

Deep Reading: What do you the message of the story is? (If you're stuck, consider what Shirley Jackson is saying about human nature and/or trying to warn us against. Also think about some of the names.)

said. A stone hit her on the side of the head. Old Man Warner was saying, "Come on, come on, everyone." Steve Adams was in the front of the crowd of villagers, with Mrs. Graves beside him.

"It isn't fair, it isn't right," Mrs. Hutchinson screamed, and then they were upon her.

Monday Discussion & Deep Reading Questions (you only need to complete what your teacher tells you to)

1) What are your first thoughts after reading the ending?

2) Were you surprised by it? When did you first have an inkling (a feeling) that something was going wrong? Why?

3) After this was published in 1948, *The New Yorker* and Shirley Jackson received tons of complaints and hate mail, and hundreds of people canceled their subscriptions to the magazine. Why do you think that was?

4) A mob mentality means that people do something because of social pressure, often without even thinking, like the people in the story. How does mob mentality affect us today? In other words, where do you see mob mentality today? What are some *traditions* we do without even knowing what they're from?

5) Ask yourself, when have you gone against your personal moral code because of (said or unsaid) social pressure? Why did you make that choice?

Deep Reading: How would you describe this society? Consider what does Tessie does when her family is first chosen, and how her family reacts to her during the second drawing/when she is chosen. What does that say about her and about this society?

Deep Reading: Why do you think Shirley Jackson specifically didn't give a name to this town?

Wednesday Deep Reading Questions

Deep Reading: What are some of the themes that come up in the story?

Deep Reading (text-to-text connections): How are some of these themes connected to anything else we've read this year? (Stories, novels, or plays)

Deep Reading (text-to-world connections): How are some of these themes applicable to the world today? In other words, where do you see these themes in what's going on in the world?

Deep Reading: What do you think the stones could symbolize? Why do you say that? (Consider what they're used for, why they're used, and who uses them.)

Challenge: What do you think the wood chips they *used* to use might symbolize? Why do you say that?

Deep Reading: What do you the message of the story is? (If you're stuck, consider what Shirley Jackson is saying about human nature and/or trying to warn us against. Also think about some of the names.)

"The Bet" *by Anton Chekhov* (1860-1904)

It was a dark autumn night. The old banker was walking up and down his study and remembering how, fifteen years before, he had given a party one autumn evening.

There had been many clever men there, and there had been interesting conversations. Among other things they had talked of **capital punishment**. The majority of the guests disapproved of the death penalty. They considered that form of punishment out of date, immoral, and unsuitable for Christian countries. In the opinion of some of them the death penalty ought to be replaced everywhere by imprisonment for life. "I don't agree with you," said their host the banker. "In my opinion, the death penalty is more moral and more humane than imprisonment for life. Capital punishment kills a man at once, but lifelong imprisonment kills him slowly."

Capital Punishment: the death penalty

Comprehension: What does the banker believe?

Among the guests was a young lawyer, a young man of five-and-twenty. When he was asked his opinion, he said:

"The death sentence and the life sentence are equally immoral, but if I had to choose between the death penalty and imprisonment for life, I would certainly choose the second. To live anyhow is better than not at all."

A lively discussion arose. The banker, who was younger and more nervous in those days, was suddenly carried away by excitement; he struck the table with his fist and shouted at the young man:

"It's not true! I'll bet you **two million** you wouldn't stay in solitary confinement for five years."

It doesn't specify the currency, but 2 million pounds in 1889 when the story was published would be worth £260 million today (2.25 billion lira)

"If you mean that **in earnest**," said the young man, "I'll take the bet, but I would stay not five but fifteen years."

In earnest: genuinely, honestly, sincerely

"Fifteen? Done!" cried the banker. "Gentlemen, I stake two million!"

"Agreed! You stake your millions and I stake my freedom!" said the young man.

Deep Reading: Make a prediction. How long of the 15 years do you think the young man/lawyer is going to stay?

And this wild, senseless bet was carried out!

It was decided that the young man should spend the years of his captivity under the strictest supervision in one of the lodges in the banker's garden. It was agreed that for fifteen years he should not be free to leave the lodge, to see human beings, to hear the human voice, or to receive letters and newspapers. He was allowed to have a musical instrument and books, and was allowed to write letters. By the terms of the agreement, the only relations he could have with the outer world were by a little window made purposely for that object. He might have anything he wanted - books, music, and so on -

in any quantity he desired by writing an order, but could only receive them through the window. The slightest attempt on his part to break the conditions, even two minutes before the end, released the banker from the obligation to pay him the two million.

For the first year of his confinement, as far as one could judge from his brief notes, the prisoner suffered severely from loneliness and depression. The sounds of the piano could be heard continually day and night from his lodge. In the first year the books he sent for were principally of a light character; novels with a complicated love plot, sensational and fantastic stories, and so on.

Comprehension: Why does the prisoner ask for light-hearted novels his first year of confinement?

In the second year the piano was silent in the lodge, and the prisoner asked only for **the classics**. In the fifth year, music was audible again. Those who watched him through the window said that all that year he spent doing nothing but eating and drinking and lying on his bed, frequently yawning and angrily talking to himself. He did not read books. Sometimes at night he would sit down to write; he would spend hours writing, and in the morning tear up all that he had written. More than once he could be heard crying.

"the classics": famous, usually old literature. Shakespeare's plays, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Huckleberry Finn, and *Frankenstein* are among works that are considered classics today. What are classics of Turkish literature?

In the second half of the sixth year the prisoner began zealously studying languages, philosophy, and history. He threw himself eagerly into these studies - so much so that in the course of four years some six hundred volumes were procured at his request.

Then after the tenth year, the prisoner sat immovably at the table and read nothing but the Gospel. Theology and histories of religion followed the Gospels.

In the last two years of his confinement the prisoner read an immense quantity of books quite **indiscriminately**. At one time he was busy with the natural sciences, then he would ask for Shakespeare. He demanded books on chemistry, and a manual of medicine, and a novel, and some treatise on philosophy or theology. His reading suggested a man swimming in the sea among the wreckage of his ship, and trying to save his life by greedily clutching first at one [piece of wood] and then at another.

Indiscriminately: randomly

Comprehension: The author compares the prisoner's reading with a sailor trying to cling to whatever will help him survive. Why is the prisoner suddenly so desperate to read as much as he can?

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[Fifteen years later] The old banker remembered all this, and thought:

"Tomorrow at twelve o'clock he will regain his freedom. By our agreement I ought to pay him two million. If I do pay him, it is all over with me: I shall be utterly ruined."

Fifteen years before, his millions had been beyond his reckoning; now, desperate gambling and wild speculation had by degrees led to the decline of his fortune. "Cursed bet!" muttered the old man, clutching his head in despair. "Why didn't the man die? He is only forty now. He will take my last

penny from me, he will marry, will enjoy life, while I shall look at him with envy like a beggar. The one means of being saved from bankruptcy and disgrace is the death of that man!"

[The banker sneaks out into the night to the lodge, finds the prisoner asleep at his table, and sneaks in.]

At the table a man unlike ordinary people was sitting motionless. He was a skeleton with the skin drawn tight over his bones, with long curls like a woman's and a shaggy beard. His face was yellow with an earthy tint in it, his cheeks were hollow, his back long and narrow, and the hand on which his shaggy head was propped was so thin and delicate that it was dreadful to look at it. He was asleep ... In front of his bowed head there lay on the table a sheet of paper on which there was something written in fine handwriting.

"Poor creature!" thought the banker, "he is asleep and most likely dreaming of the millions. And I have only to take this half-dead man, throw him on the bed, stifle him a little with the pillow, and the most **conscientious** expert would find no sign of a violent death. But let us first read what he has written here ... "

The banker took the page from the table and read as follows:

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock I regain my freedom and the right to associate with other men, but before I leave this room and see the sunshine, I think it necessary to say a few words to you. With a clear conscience I tell you, as before God, who beholds me, that I despise freedom and life and health, and all that in your books is called the good things of the world.

"For fifteen years I have been intently studying earthly life. It is true I have not seen the earth nor men, but in your books I have sung songs, I have hunted stags and wild boars in the forests, have loved women ... Beauties as **ethereal** as clouds, created by the magic of your poets and geniuses, have visited me at night, and have whispered in my ears wonderful tales that have set my brain in a whirl. In your books I have climbed to the peaks of Elburz and Mont Blanc, and from there I have seen the sun rise and have watched it at evening flood the sky, the ocean, and the mountain-tops with gold and crimson. I have watched from there the lightning flashing over my head and cleaving the storm-clouds. I have seen green forests, fields, rivers, lakes, towns. I have heard the singing of the sirens, and the strains of the shepherds' pipes; I have touched the wings of comely devils who flew down to converse with me of God ... In your books I have flung myself into the bottomless pit, performed miracles, slain, burned towns, preached new religions, conquered whole kingdoms ...

"Your books have given me wisdom. And I know that I am wiser than all of you.

Comprehension: What is the old banker saying is the only solution to *not* paying the man the 2 million?

Deep Reading: What is the mood you sense in this paragraph?

Underline or bold the imagery that makes you think that.

Conscientious: diligent, meticulous

Ethereal: so beautiful and/or amazing that it doesn't seem to be from this world (heavenly)

Comprehension: What does the prisoner mean? In other words, how has he been able to see all these things while locked up?

"And I despise the blessings of this world. They are all worthless, fleeting, illusory, and deceptive, like a mirage. You may be proud, wise, and fine, but death will wipe you off the face of the earth as though you were no more than mice burrowing under the floor, and your posterity, your history, your immortal geniuses will burn or freeze together with the earthly globe.

"You have lost your reason and taken the wrong path. You have taken lies for truth, and hideousness for beauty. I don't want to understand you.

"To prove to you in action how I despise all that you live by, I renounce the two million of which I once dreamed as of paradise and which now I despise. To deprive myself of the right to the money I shall go out from here five hours before the time fixed, and so break the compact ..."

When the banker had read this, he laid the page on the table, kissed the strange man on the head, and went out of the lodge, weeping. At no other time, even when he had lost most of his money, had he felt so great a **contempt** for himself. When he got home he lay on his bed, but his tears and emotion kept him for hours from sleeping.

Next morning the watchmen ran in with pale faces, and told the banker they had seen the man who lived in the lodge climb out of the window into the garden, go to the gate, and disappear. The banker went at once with the servants to the lodge and made sure of the flight of his prisoner. To avoid arousing unnecessary talk, he took from the table the writing in which the millions were renounced, and when he got home locked it up in the fireproof safe.

Deep Reading: What two types of figurative language are used here?

Comprehension: What is the prisoner saying he will do? Why?

contempt: hatred

Deep Reading: Make a prediction. Based on his letter, what do you the prisoner will do now? Do you think he'll go back to society?

Deep Reading: What are some of the themes that come up in the story?

Deep Reading (text-to-world connections): How are some of these themes applicable to the world today? In other words, where do you see these themes in what's going on in the world?

Deep Reading: What do you think the 2 million symbolizes? Why do you say that?

Deep Reading: What do you the message of the story is? (If you're stuck, consider what both the prisoner and the banker learn by the end.)

Context: After Ireland won its independence from the United Kingdom in 1921, there was a year-long civil war. The soldiers who fought against the United Kingdom were now divided into two opposing sides—the Free Staters, who supported the treaty with the UK, and the Republicans, those who didn't.

The Sniper – By Liam O'Flaherty (1897-1984)

The long June twilight faded into night. Dublin lay enveloped in darkness but for the dim light of the moon that shone through fleecy clouds, casting a pale light as of approaching dawn over the streets and the dark waters of the Liffey. Around the beleaguered Four Courts the heavy guns roared. Here and there through the city, machine guns and rifles broke the silence of the night, spasmodically, like dogs barking on lone farms. Republicans and Free Staters were waging civil war.

On a rooftop near O'Connell Bridge, a Republican sniper lay watching. Beside him lay his rifle and over his shoulders was slung a pair of field glasses. His face was the face of a student, thin and ascetic, but his eyes had the cold gleam of the fanatic. They were deep and thoughtful, the eyes of a man who is used to looking at death.

He was eating a sandwich hungrily. He had eaten nothing since morning. He had been too excited to eat. He finished the sandwich, and, taking a flask of whiskey from his pocket, he took a short [drink]. Then he returned the flask to his pocket. He paused for a moment, considering whether he should risk a smoke. It was dangerous. The flash might be seen in the darkness, and there were enemies watching. He decided to take the risk.

Placing a cigarette between his lips, he struck a match, inhaled the smoke hurriedly and put out the light. Almost immediately, a bullet flattened itself against the parapet [wall] of the roof. The sniper took another whiff and put out the cigarette. Then he swore softly and crawled away to the left.

Cautiously he raised himself and peered over the parapet. There was a flash and a bullet whizzed over his head. He dropped immediately. He had seen the flash. It came from the opposite side of the street.

He rolled over the roof to a chimney in the rear, and slowly drew himself up behind it, until his eyes were level with the top of the parapet. There was nothing to be seen--just the dim outline of the opposite housetop against the blue sky. His enemy was under cover.

Just then an armored car came across the bridge and advanced slowly up the street. It stopped on the opposite side of the street, fifty meters ahead. The sniper could hear the dull panting of the motor. His heart beat faster. It was an enemy car. He wanted to fire, but he knew it was useless. His bullets would never pierce the steel that covered the gray monster.

Deep Reading: As you're listening to the story, highlight or bold any figurative language that you see.

Deep Reading: What is the mood you sense in the first two paragraphs?

Underline the imagery that makes you think that. One image is already underlined for you.

Parapet (the low wall on a roof; the sniper is hiding behind it)

Comprehension: Why was a sniper on another roof suddenly able to see him?

Then round the corner of a side street came an old woman, her head covered by a tattered shawl. She began to talk to the man in the turret [the gun deck] of the car. She was pointing to the roof where the sniper lay. An informer.

The turret door opened. A man's head and shoulders appeared, looking toward the sniper. The sniper raised his rifle and fired. The man's body collapsed. The woman darted toward the side street. The sniper fired again and the woman fell.

Suddenly from the opposite roof a shot rang out and the sniper dropped his rifle with a curse. The rifle clattered to the roof. The sniper thought the noise would wake the dead. He stooped to pick the rifle up. He couldn't lift it. His forearm was dead. "I'm hit," he muttered.

Dropping flat onto the roof, he crawled back to the parapet. With his left hand he felt the injured right forearm. The blood was oozing through the sleeve of his coat. There was no pain--just a deadened sensation, as if the arm had been cut off.

Quickly he drew his knife from his pocket, opened it on the breastwork of the parapet, and ripped open the sleeve. There was a small hole where the bullet had entered. On the other side there was no hole. The bullet had lodged in the bone. It must have fractured it. He bent the arm below the wound. The arm bent back easily. He ground his teeth to overcome the pain.

Then taking out his field dressing, he ripped open the packet with his knife. He broke the neck of the iodine bottle and let the bitter fluid drip into the wound. A paroxysm of pain swept through him. He placed the cotton wadding over the wound and wrapped the dressing over it. He tied the ends with his teeth.

Then he lay still against the parapet, and, closing his eyes, he made an effort of will to overcome the pain.

In the street beneath all was still. The armored car had retired speedily over the bridge.

The sniper lay still for a long time nursing his wounded arm and planning escape, but the enemy on the opposite roof prevented his escape. He must kill that enemy and he could not use his rifle. He had only a revolver to do it. Then he thought of a plan.

Taking off his cap, he placed it over the muzzle [opening] of his rifle. Then he pushed the rifle slowly upward over the parapet, until the cap was visible from the opposite side of the street. Almost immediately there was a report [loud sound], and a bullet pierced the center of the cap. The sniper

Turret (the gun & seat on top of a vehicle or ship)

Deep Reading: What do you think the old woman possibly symbolizes?

Deep Reading: Why do you think the author spends so much time describing how the sniper treats his wound? Consider that the author mentions above that the sniper "has the face of a student".

Comprehension: Why could the sniper "not use his rifle"?

slanted the rifle forward. The cap clipped down into the street. Then catching the rifle in the middle, the sniper dropped his left hand over the roof and let it hang, lifelessly. After a few moments he let the rifle drop to the street. Then he sank to the roof, dragging his hand with him.

Crawling quickly to his feet, he peered up at the corner of the roof. His ruse had succeeded. The other sniper, seeing the cap and rifle fall, thought that he had killed his man. He was now standing before a row of chimney pots, looking across, with his head clearly silhouetted against the western sky.

The Republican sniper smiled and lifted his revolver above the edge of the parapet. The distance was about fifty meters--a hard shot in the dim light, and his right arm was paining him like a thousand devils. He took a steady aim. His hand trembled with eagerness. Pressing his lips together, he took a deep breath through his nostrils and fired. He was almost deafened with the report and his arm shook with the recoil.

Then when the smoke cleared, the sniper peered across and uttered a cry of joy. His enemy had been hit and was reeling over the parapet in his death agony. He struggled to keep his feet, but he was slowly falling forward as if in a dream.

Then the dying man on the roof crumpled up and fell forward. The body turned over and over in space and fell to the street with a dull thud. Then it lay still.

The sniper looked at his enemy falling and he shuddered. The lust of battle died in him. He became bitten by remorse. The sweat stood out in beads on his forehead. Weakened by his wound and the long summer day of fasting and watching on the roof, he revolted from the sight of the shattered mass of his dead enemy. His teeth chattered, he began to gibber to himself, cursing the war, cursing himself, cursing everybody.

He looked at the smoking revolver in his hand, and with an **oath** he hurled it to the roof at his feet. The revolver went off with a concussion and the bullet whizzed past the sniper's head. He was frightened back to his senses by the shock. His nerves steadied. The cloud of fear scattered from his mind and he laughed.

He decided to leave the roof now and look for his company commander, to report. Everywhere around was quiet. There was not much danger in going through the streets. He picked up his revolver and put it in his pocket. Then he crawled down through the skylight to the house underneath.

When the sniper reached the laneway on the street level, he felt a sudden curiosity as to the identity of the enemy sniper whom he had killed. He decided that his enemy had been a good shot, whoever he was. He wondered did he know him. Perhaps he had been in his own training company before the split in the army [from the civil war]. He decided to

Comprehension: What is the sniper doing here, and why does he let his rifle drop off the roof to the street?

Comprehension: Why does the sniper feel remorse here? Why is he cursing “everybody”?

Deep Reading: An oath can mean a swear word or a promise. If he's promising something here, what do you think he's promising?

risk going over to have a look at him. In the upper part of the street there was heavy firing, but around here all was quiet.

The sniper darted across the street. A machine gun tore up the ground around him with a hail of bullets, but he escaped. He threw himself face downward beside the corpse. The machine gun stopped.

Then the sniper turned over the dead body and looked into his brother's face.

Deep Reading: What do you think the dead brother symbolizes here? Literally, he's the sniper's real brother. What does he *symbolize*? Why do you think that?

Deep Reading: What are some of the themes that come up in the story? Why do you say that?

Deep Reading: What do you the message of the story is? Why do you think that? (If you're stuck, based on the brother's death at the end, what can you infer about this civil war, at least from the author's point of view?)

Deep Reading Extra Challenge (Optional): Why do you think the author chose this setting instead of a battlefield? Why do you think he chose a normal street? What makes you say that?