

Unit 1 Trust and Character

Text A Do You Like It Here? (The story was published in 1939)

Words and phrases expected of students to understand

phooey: int. (informal): used to express disgust or contempt

eyeshade: a visor worn on head for protection against glare

en suite: adj. adv. in or as a part of a set

make rounds of: to go from place to place (for inspection)

bawl out (at sb)

swing around: turn around (as if on a hinge or pivot)

torture tactics:

proceed: go on

halt: stop or pause

throw in: to insert or introduce into the course of something

gratuitously: free of charge; (unnecessarily, without apparent reason)

certified public accountant (CPA)

peripatetic: walking or travelling about

on account of: because of, for the sake of

imposing: very impressive

in some small measure

abiding: lasting for a long time, enduring

institute (a search)

(turn)yellow: (slang) cowardly

givesb one' s word of honor: solemn promise, a verbal commitment

agreeing to do or not to do sth. in the future

Preparatory Work

1. John O' Hara (1905-1970), a keen observer of social status and class differences, and wrote frequently about the socially ambitious. His father died at that time, leaving him unable to afford Yale, the college of his choice. By all accounts, this disappointment affected O'Hara deeply for the rest of his life and served to hone the keen sense of social awareness that characterizes his work. He worked as a reporter for various newspapers. He garnered much critical acclaim for his short stories, more than 200 of which, beginning in 1928, appeared in *The New Yorker*.

In 1934, O'Hara published his first novel, *Appointment in Samarra*, which was acclaimed on publication. This is the O'Hara novel that is most consistently praised by critics. Ernest Hemingway wrote: "If you want to read a book by a man who knows exactly what he is writing about and has written it marvelously well, read *Appointment in Samarra*." Harold Bloom named it to the Western canon. On the other hand, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* of March 2000, critic Benjamin Schwarz and writer Christina Schwarz claimed: "So widespread is the literary world's scorn for John O'Hara that the inclusion ... of *Appointment in Samarra* on the Modern Library's list of the 100 best [English-language] novels of the twentieth century was used to ridicule the entire project."

The epitaph on his tombstone, which he wrote himself, reads: "Better than anyone else, he told the truth about his time. He was a professional. He wrote honestly and well." Of this, Gill commented: "From the far side of the grave, he remains self-defensive and overbearing. Better than anyone else? Not merely better than any other writer of fiction but better than any dramatist, any poet, any biographer, any historian? It is an astonishing claim." (extracted from Wikipedia)

John O'Hara



2.A conversational style and dispassionate voice.

3.Psychological bullying is often difficult to ignore. Bullies torment their victims in many ways. Tormenting them is not enough, they have to humiliate them and ridicule their victims as well. Bullies use words to destroy their victims, and these words can hurt worse than a physical blow. People often say, "Sticks and stones may hurt my bones, but words will never hurt". In today's society, this phrase is simply not true. Words do hurt, and they do destroy lives. Psychological bullying destroys the character of their victim. The bully makes the victim the center of his abuse. In other words, the bully takes his or her anger and frustration out on the victim.

4. [The Phi Beta Kappa key](#) is one of this nation's most distinctive symbols and, in fact, traces its origins to the era of the American Revolution. Conceived in 1776 by a group of talented undergraduates at the College of William and Mary as an emblem of their secret "philosophical society," the key proclaims Phi Beta Kappa's centuries-old conviction that "The love of wisdom (is) the guide of Life." As the Society they created encompassed more of the nation's finest colleges and universities, its key became a universally recognized mark of academic achievement in the liberal arts and sciences.



the third degree: a situation in which someone tries to find out information by asking you a lot of questions
eg. If I'm even half an hour late she gives me the third degree.
I got the third degree from my dad when I got in last night.

give(someone) the lowdown on (something): To provide someone with specific or comprehensive details about someone, something, or some situation.

eg. Give me the lowdown on what the boss is planning to do about the company's falling profits.

I'm waiting for my brother to give me the lowdown on Geoffrey before I go on a date with him.

There's been a shakeup in the company's upper management, but we won't know how we're affected until the boss gives us the lowdown.

West Point: A US military installation in southeast New York on the western bank of the Hudson River north of New York City. It has been a military post since 1778 and the seat of the US Military Academy since 1802.

Second Form: an English term for an equivalent of the 7th or 8th grade in American schools. (also see sixth form: the term refers to the final two years of secondary education in the education system of England and other

commonwealth countries)

day school: as opposed to a boarding school, it is an institution where children (or high-school age adolescents) are given educational instruction during the day, after which children return to their homes.

boarding school: a school where some or all people study and live during the school year with their fellow students and possibly teachers and/or administrators. The word 'boarding' is used in the sense of "bed and board," i.e., lodging and meals. Many independent (private) schools in the Commonwealth of Nations are boarding schools. Boarding school pupils (a.k.a. "boarders") normally return home during the school holidays and, often, weekends, but in some cultures may spend the majority of their childhood and adolescent life away from their families. In the United States, boarding schools comprise various grades, most commonly grades seven or nine through grade twelve - the high school years.

I Understanding the text

1. Questions

(1) a boarding school/prep (dormitory, a stepping stone to higher education)

(2) Mentioned four times. First at the beginning. The dorm door had to be kept open during study period so that there was no knock (apparent reason and a convenient excuse. But in another sense, a suggestion of no privacy, convenient for Van Ness to look in (introduce the idea of "panopticon"). Then there's the mention of Van Ness's half-open door. His privilege, authority (needs to knock before being permitted to go in). After Roberts went in, he was ordered to close the door, an indication of Van Ness's authority. Also a closed space might have some psychological impact on Roberts—getting him trapped. Finally at the end of the story. Roberts not sure whether to leave it open or to close it but decided to leave it open. The door symbolizes Van Ness's power or authority. The act of Roberts's leaving it open might be an indication of his attempt to challenge the authority, even though feebly.

(3) Not really. He hated Hughes. Wearing eye-shade during study time. Van Ness making rounds of the rooms, meting out punishments.

(4)manipulative, sadistic, self-important, pompous, sarcastic

2. True or false

(1)F(2)T(3)T(4)F(5)T

3. Multiple choices

(1) B (2) D(3) B(4) D

II Critiquing the text

(1)Roberts's parents divorced when he was ten, moved a lot,had to go to many schools, unpleasant experiences, lonely and without a sense of belonging

Van Ness saw the boy as susceptible to moral corruption (dishonest, sneaky, unruly)

(2) Self-important/smug, overbearing/sadistic, ,
show-rather-than-telltechnique

(3)Not easy for Roberts to detect Van Ness's intentions,
Van Ness using torture tactics, effective to some extent, making Roberts upset, baffled, and frustrated

(4) By this time he had guessed what it was all about. Hewas
relieved because he had a clear conscience. He didn't have to lie
when confronted with the question about the watch. Previously
he probably did have to lie when saying he liked it here.

(5)Van Ness was convinced that Roberts was the thief and expected
that he would certainly deny his stealing the watch. He would
think Roberts would be devastated by his interrogation and that
was exactly what he wanted. He had everything under control.

(6) The "bastard" could refer to Van Ness or Hughes. Roberts was
angry at first, then he knew it was no use fighting back as he had
learned it from his previous experiences. Things always ended
like this.

(7) The title: colloquial, dramatic. Turns out to be a malicious question.

(8) Roberts' point of view. If it were the first-person narration, the tone would be angry, it would be more about clearing the name, a case of being wronged.
From Van Ness's point of view, it would be about how he ran the school and how he would teach Roberts a moral lesson.

Language Enhancement

I Words and phrases

1. (1) occupation(2) occupant (3) preoccupy
(4) contempt(5) contemptible(6) contempt
2. "peri-" :enclosing, encircling, or around
peripheral; perinatal(relating to the period around childbirth); perimeter,periodic; periphrastic

"-tic": pertaining to
therapeutic; static; paralytic; dramatic; pathetic

3. (1) institute(2) urge(3)transfer
(4) institute(5)transferred (6) urging
4. (1) innate(2) intrinsic(3) inherent
(4) scheme(5) tactic (6) strategy
5. (1) in some measure(2) on account of
(3) at any rate(4) all right (adv. meaning without doubt)

(5) thrown in(6) go with
(7) bawl out (8) throw in

II Sentences and rhetoric

1. Paraphrase

- (1) Well, tell me about your life before you decided to do us the honor of having you as a student here.
- (2) Don't be too modest to suppress your desire to tell the good stuff about yourself.

(3) Chicago, Illinois! Well, a bit of geographical knowledge for my benefit, right, Roberts? And free of charge.

(4) But I swear, however difficult it is I'm going to find out who the thief is.

2. Translation

(1)如果他在什么事情上要训斥你，无关紧要的事情，他会查看他带在身边的一张单子，然后他会到你房间里把你训斥一通，并告诉你会有什么相应的惩罚。

(2)既然你这么见多识广，在教育问题上你自然也是权威了。我想对于现代教育体制中固有的利弊，你一定是有很多理论的。

(3)转椅随着范·内斯的身体前倾而回落，他的肚子紧紧地抵着办公桌，一条胳膊在桌上伸直了杵过来，手上握成个拳头。

(4) Things got so bad that the boss bawled him out.

(5) Only black can go with Mrs. Smith's elegant style.

(6)He claimed to be an authority on international law, but failed to figure out even the basic facts of this case.

(7)The door swung open and there appeared a familiar figure.

(8)It must be acknowledged that their success is in a great measure due to their unwearied/unyielding/persevering efforts.

3. Rhetoric

(1)Van Ness: **condescending/arrogant and intimidating** (You can sit down; Proceed; Answer me!; There is no room for a thief; I said you may go!), **ironic**(honor us autobiographical urge; a very imposing list; With your vast experience, naturally you would be quite an

authority on matters educational. I suppose you have many theories as to the strength and weaknesses inherent in the modern educational system), [playing cat and mouse](#) (torture tactics, asking questions that leave Roberts baffled and upset), [smug](#)(the speech about his commitment)

Roberts: [upset, trying to figure out what it is all about, reticent and cautious](#)

(2) Verbal irony (examples as above), dramatic irony (the speech about his commitment)

Intercultural Reflection

Open questions for discussion.