***Anne of Green Gables***

***Chapter 24***

### ***Miss Stacy and Her Pupils Get Up a Concert***

***Summary:***

* Miss Stacy's teaching methods are kind of revolutionary in unchanging Avonlea. In addition to classes, students have field afternoons where they study nature and "physical culture" exercises.
* Anne loves it. Marilla thinks it's nonsense.
* Miss Stacy organizes a concert for the kids to perform in on Christmas night. Anne will speak in two scenes and has two solo recitations.
* Remember how anti-concert Marilla is? She rolls her eyes about the whole thing, especially since Anne's anticipation makes her excitable and not useful in the kitchen.
* But you can count on Matthew, who reassures Anne that she'll be great.

***Synopsis:***

In October, Anne’s ankle is fully healed, and she goes back to school. Anne loves the new teacher, Miss Stacy, who has the students learn recitations, write compositions, do “physical culture exercises” (p. 241) daily, and learn about nature outdoors on some afternoons. As fall turns to winter, Miss Stacy announces that the students at the Avonlea school will give a concert on Christmas Night. Anne is excited about her roles in the concert, which include giving two recitations and playing the character of Hope in a tableau. Anne gushes about the concert to Marilla and, after finding Marilla less than enthusiastic, goes outside to tell Matthew who is always loving and enthusiastic about Anne’s life. (and in her affection for Anne).

***Significance:***In October Anne is able to return to school. The new teacher, Miss Stacy, is everything Anne could have hoped for: "a bright, sympathetic young woman with the happy gift of winning and holding the affections of her pupils and bringing out the best that was in them mentally and morally." No wonder Anne is enthralled! Miss Stacy adds recitations, nature study, compositions, and "physical culture exercises" to the curriculum.

In November Miss Stacy suggests the school hold a fundraising concert on Christmas night with the goal of making enough to buy a schoolhouse flag. Though Marilla scoffs at the idea, Anne is tremendously excited by it. She'll be taking part in two "dialogues," give two recitations, and join the "Faith, Hope, and Charity" tableau at the end of the evening. The students will march in two by two. Anne knows Marilla thinks the concert is silly. Still, she asks, "Don't you hope your little Anne will distinguish herself?" Marilla answers tartly, "All I hope is that you'll behave yourself." But Anne finds a sympathetic listener in Matthew, who encourages her: "I reckon it's going to be a pretty good concert. And I expect you'll do your part fine."

In a society without movies, television, and computers, people needed to provide their own entertainment. To modern readers a school concert may not seem entertaining, but in the 19th century these semiannual affairs could attract the entire town. School concerts were also good public relations; when students performed well, it meant they were being taught well.

The "dialogues" Anne mentions are two brief plays. "The Society for the Suppression of Gossip" first appeared in an 1879 book called *Friday Afternoon Series of Dialogues: A Collection of Original Dialogues Suitable for Boys and Girls in School Entertainments*. It's a mildly entertaining sketch about a women's club that vows to stamp out gossip in the community. The title parodies the name of an actual British group called the Society for the Prevention of Vice, founded in 1802 to stamp out swearing, failure to keep the Sabbath, publication of obscene books, use of false weights and measures, disorderly public houses, brothels, prostitution, lotteries, and cruelty to animals. The broad scope of the Society brought it in for a certain amount of mockery.

The idea of the concert seems mock worthy to Marilla. Anne points out "a flag will cultivate a spirit of patriotism," adding, "When you can combine patriotism and fun, isn't it all right?" That's the last reference to patriotism in the chapter; [Montgomery](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Anne-of-Green-Gables/author/) never follows up on the purchase of the flag. What's really important about the concert is it will give Anne a chance to shine.

***Critical Study:***

Anne enjoys her return to school in October. She especially adores her new teacher, and flourishes academically and personally in Miss Stacy’s innovative schoolhouse. Both Mrs. Rachel and Marilla disapprove of Miss Stacy’s novel teaching methods, which include sending boys to retrieve birds’ nests from the tops of trees to use as teaching tools and leading the children in daily exercises. In November, Miss Stacy announces that the school will put on a Christmas concert to raise money to buy a Canadian flag for the schoolhouse. Anne is even more excited than the rest of the students and anxiously awaits the performance of her two recitations. Marilla declares the concert “foolishness,” so Anne talks to Matthew about the concert. He reflects that he is glad that he has no part in bringing up Anne, since his lack of involvement allows him to spoil her.

***Critical Analysis:***

Returning to school in the fall, Anne develops a sure and fast fondness for the new school mistress, Miss Stacy, who she is quite sure pronounces her name properly, with an 'e.' Anne thrives under Miss Stacy, who allows the boys and girls to climb the big trees to retrieve crows' nests, promotes physical exercise, requires composition, and even gives light to geometry, at which Anne until now has been such a "dunce." In November, Miss Stacy proposes a concert for the scholars of Avonlea. Marilla scoffs at the notion, thinking all the fuss over recitations and tableaus to be "rank foolishness," but receives welcome encouragement from Matthew, who reasons that "a little 'appreciation' does quite as much good as all the conscientious 'bringing up' in the world."

Drawn to women of good spirit and energy, Anne comes into her own as a student under the encouragement of Miss Stacy. Marilla and Matthew, fulfilling different parenting roles, create a balance of structure and affection in Anne's life.

***Review(Ch 21-24):***

Anne benefits from the teaching methods of Mrs. Allan and Miss Stacy. Education under Mr. Phillips, Marilla, and Mr. Bell, Anne’s former Sunday school teacher, consists of memorizing and reciting facts and moral lessons, which grates on Anne’s imaginative spirit. The more interesting, innovative methods of Mrs. Allan and Miss Stacy fit better with Anne’s learning style. In addition to learning schoolwork more readily, Anne begins to learn the nature of adulthood from her new teachers. When Mrs. Allan comforts her after the cake mishap, Anne begins to think more forgivingly of her own mistakes, telling Marilla that at least she learns from her errors.

Anne’s views about religion and school change because of her friendships with Mrs. Allan and Miss Stacy. Previously, Anne says her prayers to oblige Marilla, but the pretty and kind Mrs. Allen helps Anne see that organized religion need not be painful or boring. For Anne, religion no longer means foreign, dull speeches and rules; under Mrs. Allan’s tutelage, religion becomes interesting, especially because Mrs. Allan allows her pupils to ask questions about it. Similarly, Miss Stacy’s new, liberal form of education allows Anne to enjoy learning for its own sake. When Anne first comes to Avonlea, she advances quickly in her studies in order to irk her rival, Gilbert, but this model of academic success depends largely on the presence of an enemy. Now, Anne can rely on herself alone. She sees that learning can be an exercise of imagination rather than a chore of rote memorization.

Marilla’s affection for Anne continues to grow. When she sees Mr. Barry carrying Anne across the field, she realizes in a flash that she loves Anne more than she loves anything else in the world. Even what seems like unnecessary sternness is simply Marilla’s affection for Anne. For example, when Marilla tries to dampen Anne’s enthusiasm for the tea party, she does it not out of mean-spiritedness, but because she hates to think of Anne’s hopes dashed, and wants to save her from disappointment.

Avonlea is a community caught between tradition and modernity, especially in its views on women. Characters such as Mrs. Rachel hold beliefs that seem to be in tension with one another. On the one hand, Mrs. Rachel feels that women should be given the right to vote—a liberal and progressive view. The Cuthberts, true to their generally conservative characters, oppose Mrs. Rachel in this belief. At the same time, however, Mrs. Rachel believes it “a dangerous innovation” for the Avonlea trustees to hire a female teacher. As women’s roles change, Mrs. Rachel’s contradictory views on women represent the Avonlea community as a whole. She does not wholly support independence and power for women, but she supports it in part. She believes simultaneously in tradition and in progress.

***Summary and Analysis Part by Part:***

***Summary Part 1:***

In October, [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) returns to school and happily rejoins [Diana](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/diana-barry) at their shared desk. [Miss Stacy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/miss-muriel-stacy) is a young woman with a knack for connecting with her students and encouraging them; Anne blossoms especially. She tells [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) and [Matthew](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/matthew-cuthbert) that she can just feel that Miss Stacy is calling her “Anne with an E.” Miss Stacy has also told Anne that she writes the best compositions in class, and she even makes geometry easier to grasp.

***Analysis Part 1:***

If Anne blossomed even under a mean and uninterested teacher like Mr. Phillips who acted unjustly towards her, she thrives all the more under Miss Stacy, who genuinely understands her and encourages her in her strengths and helps her in her weaknesses.

***Summary Part 2:***

In November, [Miss Stacy](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/miss-muriel-stacy) and her students begin planning a fundraising concert to be held on Christmas night, with the goal of purchasing a flag for the schoolhouse. [Marilla](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/marilla-cuthbert) finds it all foolish and needlessly distracting, but [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/anne-shirley) is committed to the belief that patriotism and fun go together. She will participate in two dialogues, a tableau, and will give two recitations. Marilla quickly tires of hearing Anne talk about nothing but the recital, but [Matthew](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/anne-of-green-gables/characters/matthew-cuthbert) warmly encourages her. He’s thankful that Marilla is in charge of Anne’s upbringing, leaving him free to “spoil” her to his heart’s content. His encouragement of Anne is just as beneficial as discipline.

***Analysis Part 2:***

The concert is another occasion on which Marilla’s and Matthew’s approaches to raising Anne contrast. Marilla has a low tolerance for anything she considers to be foolish or time-wasting, whereas Matthew looks for any chance to encourage Anne in the areas where she’s enthusiastic and gifted. Montgomery suggests that both methods are effective in Anne’s case—with Matthew often becoming useful where Marilla is lacking.