

OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/ENGLISH IB/TOPS/MACS/CLASS 5 HANDOUT

NAME: _____

So far, we have read Chapter 1 and also the first half of Chapter 2 about the adventures of Bridget, Barnaby, and Babette, and their feline friend Beauregard. The following selection is the second half of Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2 cont'd: THE END OF THE ELEPHANT EMPIRE

"Boy, I'm so hungry," said Bridget, who was resting comfortably on some cushions in the guest tent. "I hope dinner's ready soon. I plan to **gorge** myself until I can't eat another bite."

"I wouldn't go planning an eating **binge** so soon," warned Barnaby. "After all, we have no idea what jackals eat. And whatever it is, it's likely to be raw."

"Yikes, I hadn't thought of that," said Bridget, springing upright. "What are we going to do? Are we going to starve, or what?"

"Hmmm," replied Barnaby, scratching his bushy head. "We'll just have to put our minds to it and see what we can come up with. Well, what do you know?"

"What?" asked Bridget.

"Look what I found! These must have gotten lodged in my hair that time I blew up the vending machine in the library!"

Sure enough, Barnaby had somehow managed to pull four candy bars, a bag of potato chips, and some bright orange crackers out of his hair. Ordinarily, Bridget would have been surprised at such an event, but with everything that had happened in the past couple of days, she hardly batted an eyelash.

"Wow! Can I have some?" she asked.

"Sure. Help yourself."

As Bridget began to **devour** the candy bars greedily, Babette spoke from the other side of the tent.

"That is an amazing head of hair you have, Barnaby," she said.

"It suits me, I think," he agreed. "You sure have been awfully quiet and **pensive**. What have you been thinking about?"

"I have been thinking about these poor jackals. You see, the French people know what it is to live under the rule of emperors and dictators. It is something you Americans, thankfully, have not had to bear," she said, munching thoughtfully on a potato chip.

"What's your point?" asked Bridget, her mouth full of candy.

"My point is, I feel **sympathy** for them. I think we should help them."

Barnaby and Bridget sat quietly for a few seconds, and were about to reply when Lassie came in through the tent flap.

"Thanks, but no thanks," he said "I hope you don't think I was **eavesdropping**, but I couldn't help hearing what you said about helping us. We don't need anything from you. Colonel Cano has it all figured out."

"I was only...", started Babette.

"I know, I know. Look, I didn't come to argue. I came to tell you the feast is on. Come on out!"

Babette, Bridget, and Barnaby emerged from the tent to find the camp lit up like a carnival. Torches glowed all around. Seven female jackals were doing the dance of the seven wails – they **gyrated** until they were too dizzy to stand up, then let out seven heartbreakingly **plaintive** howls. And Cano, in his finest cape, sat at the head of a long, low table, a gigantic, wrinkled-up old lizard on one side and a gigantic cat on the other.

"My friends!" he called when the three humans appeared. "Come join us!"

The three travelers joined their host, and introductions were made.

"This is Ambassador Sangfroid, a respected and **venerable** statesman from the Reptile Republic," said Cano. "He has traveled all the way from the Chateau Guecot to be with us tonight."

"Actually, it's not really a chateau. More like a large dungeon than a small castle. But I suppose it will have to serve as the reptile **embassy** for the time being, until the jackals can come up with more suitable office space," said the lizard.

Babette and Bridget squirmed uncomfortably at his rudeness. Barnaby was too busy examining the food to notice what was going on.

"Of course," said Cano, good-naturedly. "Please, help yourself to some food."

"You must be mad, Colonel," replied the lizard with complete **disdain**. "I can't stand to smell this boot camp slop, much less eat it."

"Hey!" cried Bridget. "The colonel doesn't have to sit here and have his food **scoffed** at by some stuck-up, **haughty** Gila monster!"

"Foolish child, I am an iguana."

"A pretty **obese** iguana, if you ask me," snapped Bridget. "Maybe it's best if you don't eat anything. Looks like you could afford to skip a few meals."

"Well, I never!" huffed the ambassador, who got up to leave.

"Actually, I think Ambassador Sangfroid looks very strong and distinguished at his current size," said Babette, trying to **appease** the offended lizard.

It seemed to work, because he sat back down and **resumed** the conversation he had been having with Colonel Cano before the three humans arrived. He completely ignored Bridget. Bridget, in turn, ignored him. She turned toward the female jackals and **feigned** great interest in their weird dance steps.

"As I was saying, Colonel, the Reptile Republic is completely **autonomous** – totally independent. We are free to make alliances as we choose. But of course we must choose wisely."

"Surely you can't think that siding with Horace is wise. And your reptiles hate the Emperor as much as we do," argued Cano.

"That's true, but at least the Emperor keeps order. If and when you topple his government, what happens then? We reptiles don't want to live next to a country in a state of **anarchy**. Without an organized system of government, you'll have **chaos** on your hands – complete disorder. Bedlam!" cried the lizard.

"Surely, Sangfroid, you don't think we went into this without a plan," Cano replied. "We have a well-thought-out **agenda**. We have already sent a letter to the Emperor asking him to abdicate the throne and set up free and democratic elections. He refused to **relinquish** control, as we thought he would, so we wrote a declaration stating that all animals should have equal say in the government and that we refused to recognize the Emperor as our ruler. Naturally, he **denounced** us as traitors and immediately began releasing false reports about us to the media. Of course, these reports were nothing but **propaganda** designed to frighten the other animals into thinking we were dangerous. But, as you surely understand, we have no choice but to fight for our rights!"

"Please forgive my **skepticism**, Colonel, but so many revolutions fail that I think we have a right to be doubtful," said the lizard. "That is why we are prepared to offer you limited support. We can give you a unit of light lizards trained in electronic **sabotage** to damage the elephant computer networks and telephone lines. These lizards have the natural ability to **camouflage** themselves. Their skins change colour to match their surroundings, so they are rarely detected."

"I am grateful for your help, Ambassador," said Cano.

Just then, some awful racket – yowling crashing – started on the edge of the camp.

"What on earth is that?" yelled the colonel.

"Lassie, can you see what's going on?"

"It seems to be some sort of brawl, sir," replied the lieutenant. "Probably a fight over one of those wail dancers. I'll go check it out."

It was a brawl. And soon the brawl turned into a **skirmish**. Then the skirmish turned into a **melee**. And before Cano's men realized what was happening, they were under full-scale attack by the forces of General Horace and his jackals!

"To arms, to arms!" ordered Cano. "Fight for your lives!"

"Much as I'd like to help, I'm afraid I have to be going," said Sangfroid sheepishly. "The **gout** in my leg has been acting up, swelling something awful, so I wouldn't be much good anyway. Ta ta!"

With that, the ambassador scurried off as quickly as a fat lizard with gout can scurry.

"Don't worry, Colonel," yelled Bridget over the battle noise. "We'll help you!"

In fact, Babette and Barnaby were busy doing just that. Babette, it appeared, had a few more tricks up her sleeve than speaking fluent Jackal. She was running around, karate-chopping dogs like some kind of crazed ninja. And Barnaby kept pulling stink bombs, firecrackers, and other explosives out of his hair and hurling them at the enemy. Bridget pulled out her bubble gum and began stretching it into a huge lasso, with which she captured several of Horace's soldiers and yanked them to the ground.

But the enemy jackals were **relentless**. They fought on and on, refusing to give up. But Cano's soldiers wouldn't **yield** either, and finally, after several hours of battle, they got the upper hand. Beauregard even managed to capture General Horace himself.

Then they heard the footsteps. Heavy, loud footsteps.

"Oh, no, the elephants are coming in from the north!" cried Cano, more with exhaustion than fear. "Judging from the sound of their footsteps, they're about a mile from camp! That means they'll be here in **approximately** ten minutes."

"At least **stealth** isn't one of their advantages," Bridget commented. "You can't exactly sneak up on someone with footsteps as loud as that."

"That's no help right now, Bridget," said Babette. "We have just **subdued** Horace's soldiers, and already we are under attack again. Cano's jackals are tired, many are wounded. We are at our most **vulnerable**. We can no longer defend ourselves!"

Bridget was shocked to see how upset Babette was getting. She had been so cool until now.

"Hey, don't give up yet! We've still got ten minutes!"

"Nine," said Cano.

"Okay, nine," said Bridget. "Anything could happen. There was a **similar** situation in New York during the '86 World Series. It looked like the Mets were going to lose for sure, but the Red Sox's first baseman totally choked, made an error, and we were saved."

"What *is* she talking about?" groaned Cano.

"Well, maybe that's not the greatest example," said Bridget. "All I'm saying is, it ain't over 'til it's over."

"So what do you suggest we do, oh, perky one?" asked Barnaby, his eyebrows raised into high, confronting arches.

"Well, first of all I think we should get a bunch of green paint, a can of root beer, a few bushels of cotton, and some dry toast. Then..."

But Bridget didn't get a chance to finish outlining her plan. From the east came the sound of two-footed galloping and what seemed like the throaty quacking of enormous ducks. From the west, came a rumbling sea of black and white.

And from the south, a really revolting snorting noise and a **repulsive** piggish odour.

Bridget, Barnaby, and Babette looked around wildly, fearing for their lives, but Cano leaped with excitement.

"It's the ostriches! And the warhogs! And even the pacifist pandas!" he cried. "We're saved!"

The allied armies arrived at the camp, gathered around Cano, and pledged their support to him just as the elephants began to arrive. A huge wall of gray legs, like granite columns, thundered into view, stopped, then broke into neat formation to make way for the chief, the father of their clan, the **patriarch** of the pachyderms – the Elephant Emperor himself.

The two forces, a hodgepodge of birds, dogs, hogs, and bears on one side and the giant elephants on the other, faced each other uncomfortably. Finally, the emperor spoke.

"Cano," he boomed "Are you the one responsible for stirring this whole thing up? Did you instigate this rebellion?"

"Yes, but as you can see, I'm not the only one who's tired of your rigid, **dogmatic** rule," yelled Cano.

"I've had about enough of all this," replied the emperor. "All of you, go on home. Cano, if you and your soldiers turn yourselves in, you will not be harshly punished. I am prepared to be **lenient**."

"You just don't get it, do you?" said the colonel. "This isn't a childish prank. We don't want an emperor anymore. We want democracy! We want democracy!"

The crowd behind Cano began cheering and chanting in their assorted languages.

"Hmmp," said the elephant, frowning. "I have my doubts about this whole thing, but just because I am **dubious** doesn't mean you are wrong."

"You mean, you will step down?" asked Cano, both shocked and hopeful.

"Well, I should warn you, a dictatorship such as ours has certain advantages over democracy," said the elephant. "For one thing, we have no **bureaucracy**—no confusing lines of authority, no piles of paperwork, no useless officials to bog things down. What I say goes, and that's that. It's very efficient."

"But it's not fair!" argued the colonel. "We must have a say in our own government!"

The crowd mumbled agreement. The emperor stood for a moment in deep thought. Not a sound was heard throughout the camp. Several minutes passed before he spoke again.

“Okay, then, you shall have your elections. I certainly don't want a bunch of ungrateful, unhappy subjects. We might as well get the ball rolling immediately. Cano, I guess you and your army are in charge. The country will have to be under **martial law** until an election can be arranged,” he said.

The animals, realizing that they had won without fighting a single battle, cheered with joy. The emperor, recognizing that it was useless to stand in the way of democracy, let out a sigh of **resignation**. Then some serious praying began.

Babette pointed out to Barnaby, Bridget, and Beauregard that touring a country immediately after a revolution, however bloodless, is usually not wise. Everything is in a state of **upheaval** and confusion, and it's impossible to find a hotel room. It was agreed that they should take this opportunity to thank their hosts and be on their way.

They began walking back to the clearing they had landed in. But as soon as they reached the open field, a blinding flash of rainbow-coloured light and a great whooshing of air engulfed them, and they promptly disappeared from the face of the planet.

VOCABULARY

A) Fill in the blanks by matching the words in the box below with their definitions.

servile	revere	omnipotent	gorge	binge
pensive	gyrate	plaintive	scoff	disdain

- _____ : Eat a large amount greedily.
- _____ : Sounding sad or mournful.
- _____ : (Of a deity) having unlimited power.
- _____ : Excessive indulgence in an activity, especially eating or drinking.
- _____ : The feeling that someone is unworthy of respect.
- _____ : Speak to someone in a scornful and derisive way.
- _____ : Dance in a wild manner.
- _____ : Showing excessive willingness to serve or please others.
- _____ : Feel deep respect and admiration for someone.
- _____ : In deep thought.

B) Write down the definitions of the following words.

1. Sympathy: _____
2. Eavesdrop: _____
3. Embassy: _____
4. Obese: _____
5. Denounce: _____
6. Sabotage: _____
7. Camouflage: _____
8. Skirmish: _____
9. Approximate: _____
10. Vulnerable: _____

C) WORD SORTING

Pay attention to the words in bold print in the handout's reading selection (page 1 to 6). Group at least 10 words into 4 or more categories in the boxes provided. Give each group a label. In addition, explain how you have grouped the word.

Here are two examples of a group.

Group 1: <i>Negative feelings</i> <i>plaintive vulnerable resignation</i>	Group 2: <i>Movement</i> <i>gyrate skirmish upheaval</i>
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Explanation for group 1: "Plaintive," "vulnerable," and "resignation" can be used to describe sadness.

Explanation for group 2: When some is gyrating, he or she is obviously moving. Skirmishes often involve movement. An upheaval, which happens when the earth's crust lifts up, is also a movement.

Now it's your turn! Make sure you come up with at least 4 groups of words. In addition, make sure that you have grouped at least 10 words.

Group 1:	Group 2:
Group 3:	Group 4:
Group 5:	Group 6:

Explanation for group 1: _____

Explanation for group 2: _____

Explanation for group 3: _____

Explanation for group 4: _____

Explanation for group 5: _____

Explanation for group 6: _____

THE END