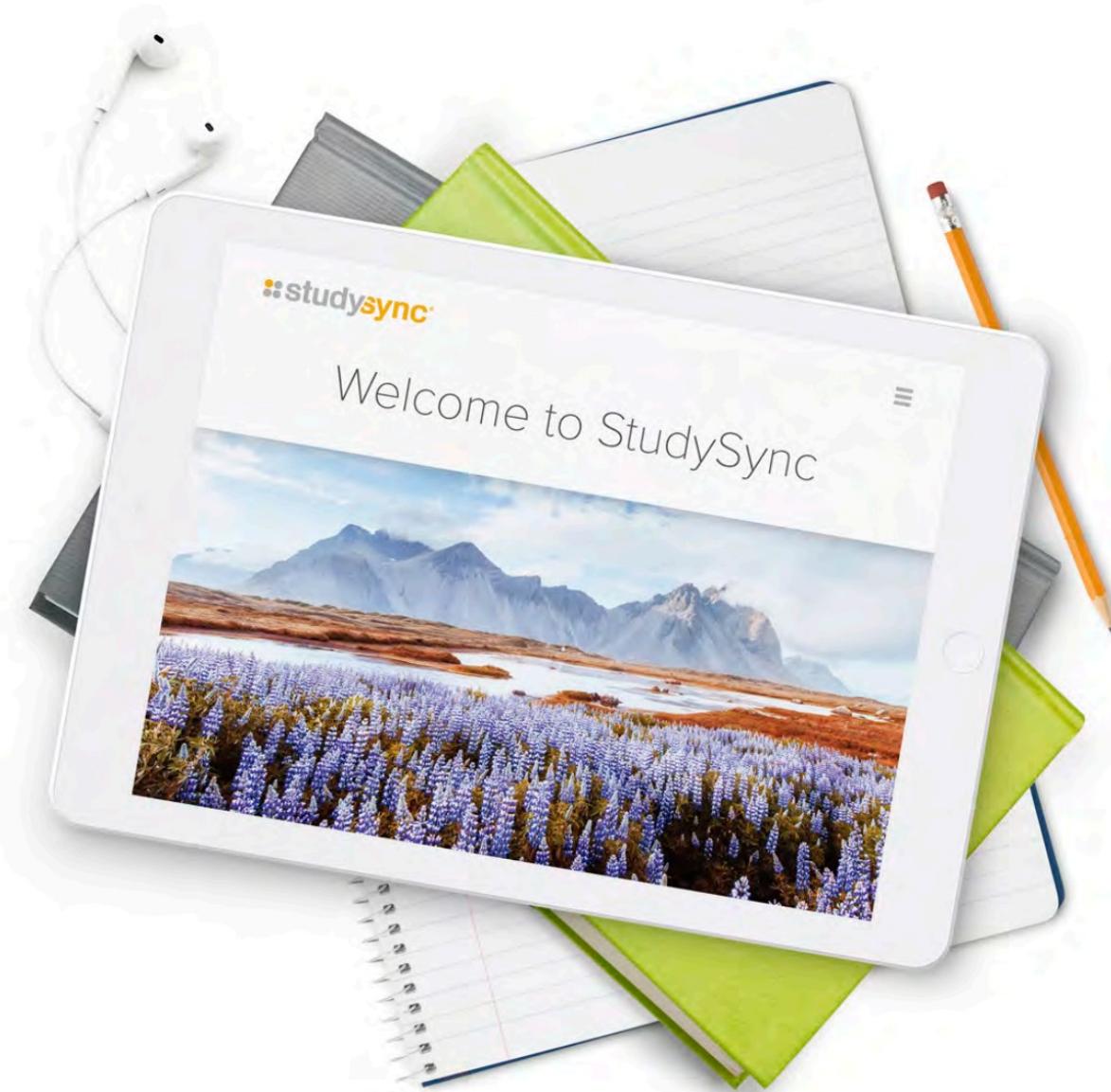


GLOBAL
studysync****[®] STUDENT EDITION



Grade 8 | Unit 1



Student Edition

Grade 8

UNITS 1–6



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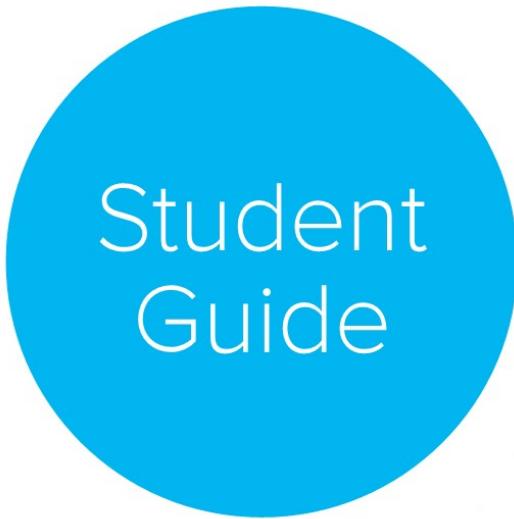
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Reading & Writing Companion



iii

SAMPLE



Getting Started

Welcome to the StudySync Reading & Writing Companion! In this book, you will find a collection of readings based on the theme of the unit you are studying. As you work through the readings, you will be asked to answer questions and perform a variety of tasks designed to help you closely analyze and understand each text selection. Read on for an explanation of each section of this book.

Close Reading and Writing Routine

In each unit, you will read texts that share a common theme, despite their different genres, time periods, and authors. Each reading encourages a closer look through questions and includes a short writing assignment.

The cover of the short story 'The Tell-Tale Heart' by Edgar Allan Poe. It features a close-up of a weathered wooden door with a large, round metal doorknob. A blue circular graphic on the left contains the title 'The Tell-Tale Heart' and the subtitle 'SHORT STORY Edgar Allan Poe 1843'.

1

Introduction

The works of Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849) set the standard for Gothic fiction. "The Tell-Tale Heart" is one of his most famous and widely read stories. Convinced that officers at his house can hear the dead man's heart beating through the floorboard, Poe's narrator confesses to killing an old man in his care, despite the fact he bore the man no grudge. In a dramatic monologue of increasing volume and intensity—as well as mental disintegration—the "perfectly sane" murderer painstakingly describes how the "vulture eye" of his victim drove him to commit the horrible act.

UNIT 1 The Tell-Tale Heart

"You fancy me mad.
Madmen know nothing.
But you should have seen me."

2

SAMPLE ANNOTATION
Textual Evidence
This line doesn't make sense since he said before that he liked the old man. How can the narrator actually be sane and kind? If a person kills someone that they like, it usually means the person is neither kind nor sane.

SAMPLE ANNOTATION
Textual Evidence
If a person spends this long trying to spy and plan a murder, this person must be unkind and not mentally stable. Maybe the author is implying that the narrator is actually insane even though he thinks he is sane.

1. Told—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been; and arm, but why will you say that I am mad? That disease had tormented my襟s—oh! destroyed—not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily—how calmly I can tell you the whole story.

2. It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold! no desire. I think it was his eye yes, it was that! He had the eye of a vulture—a pale yellow eye, with thin black lines above it, and so deep—so deep—so deep—so deep—

A detailed illustration of a vulture, showing its dark feathers, hooked beak, and prominent talons. The image is used to represent the 'vulture eye' mentioned in the text.

Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded—with what caution—with what foresight—with what dissimulation I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. And he would not go to bed without—and he would not sleep without—until I put a dark lantern, all closed, closed, that no light shone out, and then I thrust my head in. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly—very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Had a madman have been so wise as this? And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern curtains—your curtains, which have made an excellent—indeed, a perfect—screen for me. And then I waited—until the moon gave so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights—every night just at midnight—but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work; for it was not the old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye. And every morning, when the day broke, I went boldly into

8 Reading & Writing Companion

1 Introduction

An Introduction to each text provides historical context for your reading as well as information about the author. You will also learn about the genre of the selection and the year it was written.

2 Notes

Many times, while working through the activities after each text, you will be asked to annotate, or make notes about, what you are reading. This means that you should highlight or underline words in the text and use the Notes column to make comments or jot down any questions you have. You may also want to note any unfamiliar vocabulary words here.

You will also see sample student annotations to go along with the Skill lesson for that text.



3 First Read

During your first reading of each text, you should try to get just a general idea of the content and message of the reading. Don't worry if there are parts you don't understand or words that are unfamiliar to you. You'll have an opportunity later to dive deeper into the text.

4 Think Questions

These questions will ask you to start thinking critically about the text. To answer these questions, you should go back to the text and draw upon specific evidence to support your responses. You will also begin to explore some of the more challenging vocabulary words in the selection.

5 Skill Checklist

Each Skill includes two parts: Checklist and Your Turn. From the Skill Checklist you will learn the process for analyzing the text. The sample student annotations in the text provide examples of how to follow the instructions in the Skill Checklist to make your own notes.

3

First Read
CCSS: RL.8.1, L.8.4.A, L.8.4.C

Read "The Tell-Tale Heart." After you read, complete the Think Questions below.

THINK QUESTIONS

1. Write two or three sentences explaining how the narrator feels about the old man and why he decides to murder him.
2. Does the narrator seem trustworthy as he gives his account of the events in the story? Cite evidence from the text to explain your opinions.
3. What sound does the narrator hear at the end of the story that causes him to confess to the murder? Provide evidence to support your inference.
4. Find the word **sufficient** in paragraph 3 of "The Tell-Tale Heart." Use context clues in the surrounding sentences, as well as the sentence in which the word appears, to determine the word's meaning. Write your definition here, and identify clues that helped you figure out its meaning.
5. Use context clues to determine the meaning of **sagacity** as it is used in paragraph 4 of "The Tell-Tale Heart." Write your definition here, and identify clues that helped you figure out its meaning. Then check the meaning in a dictionary.

2017 Massachusetts Department of Education

5

Skill: Textual Evidence
The Tell-Tale Heart

CHECKLIST

Textual evidence is specific words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs, while inferences are how readers interpret details and ideas shown but not stated. You should always use textual evidence to support your inferences about a text.

To use textual evidence effectively, ask yourself the following questions:

- ✓ What information or details are directly stated in the text?
- ✓ What inferences can I make about the text? Which words or phrases can I use to support these inferences? Does this evidence make sense?
- ✓ Am I quoting and citing the evidence from the text correctly in my analysis?
- ✓ Which textual evidence most strongly supports my analysis? Why?

DISCUSS AND ANNOTATE

Read and discuss the checklist. Then, use the checklist to read and annotate the text. Refer to the sample student annotations within the text.

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CCSS: RI.8.1

Reading & Writing Companion  13

6

Reread paragraph 9 of "The Tell-Tale Heart." Then, using the checklist on the previous page, answer the multiple-choice questions below.

YOUR TURN

PRACTICE

This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A: Which of the following inferences best explains why the narrator admits what he has done?

A. The narrator realizes that the police officers know what he has done.
 B. The narrator's anxiety and guilt make him feel bad enough to admit that he killed the old man.
 C. The narrator's insanity makes him believe he can hear a beating heart beneath the floorboards.
 D. The narrator is so afraid of the old man's eye that he explains to the police officers the situation that made him kill the old man.

Part B: Which of the following sentences or phrases from the text best supports the answer to Part A?

A. "They heard!—they suspected!—they knew!—they were making a mockery of my horror!—this I thought, and this I think."
 B. "The ringing became more distinct—it continued and became more distinct; I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling, but it continued and gained definiteness—until, at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears."
 C. "The officers were satisfied. My manner had convinced them. I was singularly at ease."
 D. "... tear up the planks! here, here!—it is the beating of his hideous heart!"

CCSS.RL.8.1

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6 Your Turn

For the Your Turn, you will reread a passage from the selection. Then you will use the process for analyzing text that you learned from the Skill Checklist to answer questions about the passage.

7

Close Read

CCSS.RL.8.1 W8.1 W8.1B. W8.4

Reread "The Tell-Tale Heart." As you reread, use the Checklist for Textual Evidence on page 13 to analyze the text and make annotations. Then use your annotations, your own ideas and reactions to the text, and any other notes you have to complete the Write activity.

ARGUMENTATIVE

WRITE

Can the narrator of "The Tell-Tale Heart" be trusted? Take a position and be prepared to support your claim with textual evidence. Consider the narrator's internal dialogue and actions, as well as the author's use of language, noting specific words and phrases that seem significant as you make inferences and draw conclusions about the narrator's state of mind.

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8 Write

Your study of each selection will end with a writing assignment. For this assignment, you should craft a response using evidence from the text as well as your annotations, your own ideas and reactions to the text, and any other notes you have. Be sure to read the prompt carefully and address each part of it in your writing.



UNIT 1

Everyone Loves a Mystery

What attracts us to the mysterious?

Genre Focus: **FICTION**

Texts

xii



The Lucky Coin

StudySync **SHORT STORY**

7



The Tell-Tale Heart

Edgar Allan Poe **SHORT STORY**

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The Lottery

Shirley Jackson **SHORT STORY**

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The Monkey's Paw

W. W. Jacobs **SHORT STORY**

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Ten Days in a Mad-House

Nellie Bly **INFORMATIONAL TEXT**

50



Sympathy

Paul Laurence Dunbar **POEM**

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Authors



Nellie Bly

Reporter Nellie Bly (1864–1922) feigned insanity to gain admittance to the Blackwell's Island Insane Asylum in New York City, the subject of her 1886 exposé, which began as a series of newspaper articles and was eventually published as a book, *Ten Days in a Mad-House* (1887). Her report on the inhuman conditions she encountered there—from mandatory ice baths to confinement in small, damp, vermin-infested rooms—resulted in increased government oversight and improved overall conditions. Bly's pioneering tactic developed into modern investigative journalism.



Paul Laurence Dunbar

In his lifetime, Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906) achieved national recognition for his writing that reflected Black life in turn-of-the-century America. Known for his innovative use of dialect in his poems, his first collection of poems, *Oak and Ivy* (1893), was written in dialect and in standard English. It includes "Sympathy," one of his most popular poems addressing the plight of Black people in American society. It contains the famous line "I know why the caged bird sings," the inspiration for the title of Maya Angelou's autobiography.



Shirley Jackson

Called the master of the creepy story, Shirley Jackson (1916–1965) was interested in witchcraft, she writes, as "a way of embracing and channeling female power at a time when women in America often had little control over their lives." Her stories and novels of the supernatural included the well-known short story "The Lottery" and the best-selling novel *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959). When the former was first published in *The New Yorker* in 1948, it generated the largest volume of mail ever received by the magazine, most of it hateful.



W. W. Jacobs

English short-story writer and novelist W. W. Jacobs (1863–1943) grew up in a house on a River Thames wharf. He is best known for his horror story "The Monkey's Paw" published in his 1902 collection, *The Lady of the Barge*. In the story, a couple is presented with a magical monkey's paw from India. Set in Victorian England, the ensuing tale of superstition and terror unfolds in a domestic setting. Jacobs's first collection had immediate success, and he published more than a dozen volumes in his lifetime.



Edgar Allan Poe

Widely regarded as one of the foremost progenitors of modern Gothic literature, Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849) was born the son of two actors in Boston, but he grew up in foster care in Richmond, Virginia. Much of his work, especially his best-known horror tales, achieve a psychological intensity through the use of a first-person narrator. Poe had written numerous short stories, poems, and works of criticism by the time he died at the age of forty.

The Lucky Coin

SHORT STORY

StudySync
2017



Introduction

Maggie is a hard-working teen who doesn't believe in magic. At least, she doesn't until her grandfather gives her a lucky coin that makes her every wish come true. But when she loses the coin on accident, Maggie also loses her confidence in herself. "A Lucky Coin" tells the story of Maggie's journey from skeptic to believer and back again.

“Maggie pocketed the coin,
rolled her eyes, and thought,
A lucky coin. How ridiculous!”

- 1 Maggie did not believe in magic. She did not make wishes on shooting stars or search for four-leaf clovers. Whenever she had a dream, she worked hard to make it come true. When she wanted to make the basketball team, she practiced for two hours every day for a month. So when Maggie’s grandpa brought back a lucky coin from a trip to Ireland, Maggie thought it was a joke.
- 2 “I have no doubt that your future will be bright,” Grandpa said with a grin. “But if you ever find yourself in need of luck, this coin will do the trick. Wrap your hand around it tightly and make a wish. The coin will do the rest.”
- 3 Maggie snorted, “Grandpa, you know I don’t believe in stuff like that.”
- 4 Grandpa just winked and insisted, “The coin is very powerful, so you have to promise me you will use it responsibly.”
- 5 Maggie pocketed the coin, rolled her eyes, and thought, A lucky coin. How ridiculous!
- 6 The next day Maggie’s heart stopped when her teacher surprised the class with a quiz; she forgot to do the reading assignment. I’ve never missed an assignment before. What am I going to do? Maggie suddenly realized that the lucky coin was still in her pocket, so she pulled it out and held it close. This is so silly, but what have I got to lose? I wish for a miracle.
- 7 Maggie took a deep breath and looked down at the quiz. The questions were not for last night’s reading assignment at all! The quiz was about a story she read last week. It’s a miracle! The coin worked!
- 8 The bell rang for lunch, and Maggie’s stomach grumbled. I know exactly what to wish for next: pizza. She held the coin tightly and made her wish. When she saw the menu in the cafeteria, she cheered. As she bit into her second slice of pepperoni pizza she thought, I could get used to this.
- 9 Maggie wished to be chosen as captain of the basketball team, and then she wished that the team would win the next game. She repeated the wish before every game, and soon she was leading the undefeated team into the championship.

NOTES

SAMPLE ANNOTATION

Story Elements

Maggie doesn’t believe the coin is lucky. She snorts and rolls her eyes. However, she does take the coin. Maybe she will change her mind. She ignores her grandpa’s warning to use it responsibly, though. This might cause trouble.

SAMPLE ANNOTATION

Story Elements

Maggie panics and uses the coin for the quiz. She is amazed—the coin seems to work! Her wish for pizza also comes true, and she thinks “I could get used to this.” I think she will start using the lucky coin for everything.

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UNIT 1 The Lucky Coin

- 10 Then one day, Maggie led the team on an outdoor run, and the coin bounced out of her pocket somewhere along the trail. She tried to retrace her steps, but it was too late. The coin was gone.
- 11 On the morning of the championship game, Maggie couldn't seem to do anything right. She didn't sink a single basket during the first half of the game. Her teammates were also struggling without Maggie's usual **confidence** to guide them. It looked like the team was going to lose. The referee blew his whistle, announcing a timeout. Maggie slumped on the bench, ignoring her coach's pep talk. *I didn't used to believe in magic, and now I can't do anything without it. I wish I'd never heard of that lucky coin!*
- 12 "Hey, Maggie! Are you listening?"
- 13 Maggie snapped to attention and saw her coach waving his hand in front of her face.
- 14 "We need some of your usual magic, or we don't have a chance. Can we count on you?"
- 15 A second whistle called the team back to the basketball court. Within seconds, the ball was in Maggie's hands. She took a deep breath, dribbled skillfully toward the basket, and took a shot.

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First Read

CCSS: RL.8.1; L.8.4.A

Read "The Lucky Coin." After you read, complete the Think Questions below.

THINK QUESTIONS

WRITE

1. Who are the main characters in the story? What is their relationship?
2. What happens at the beginning of the story?
3. At the end of the story, why is Maggie upset?
4. Use context to confirm the meaning of the word **miracle** as it is used in "The Lucky Coin." Write your definition of *miracle* here.
5. What is another way to say that a lucky coin is **ridiculous**?

Skill: Story Elements

The Lucky Coin

CHECKLIST

DISCUSS AND ANNOTATE

All of the major elements of the story interact with one other, but certain parts of a story might be more important than others. As you read, be sure to pay attention to specific events and to characters' dialogue. These story elements can move the action forward. They also can reveal what characters are like and why they make certain decisions.

To analyze how particular elements of a story interact, consider the following questions:

- ✓ How do lines of dialogue or events in the plot reveal details about characters?
- ✓ How do interactions between characters affect the plot?
- ✓ How do plot events affect characters' decisions?
- ✓ How do events in the plot move from one to the next?

Read and discuss the checklist. Then, use the checklist to read and annotate the text. Refer to the sample student annotations within the text.

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CCSS: RL.8.3

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STORY ELEMENTS

Reread paragraphs 11–15 of “The Lucky Coin.” Then, using the checklist on the previous page, answer the multiple-choice questions below.

YOUR TURN

PRACTICE

This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A: Which of the following best explains why Maggie takes a shot at the end?

- A. Maggie is starting to think that the coin has given her permanent “luck.”
- B. Maggie understands that the coin is lost forever, so she might as well give up.
- C. Maggie realizes that she doesn’t need the “lucky” coin in order to play well.
- D. Maggie is pressured by her teammates to take the ball and make the shot.

Part B: Which of the following sentences or phrases from the text best supports the answer to Part A?

- A. “On the morning of the championship game, Maggie couldn’t seem to do anything right. She didn’t sink a single basket during the first half of the game.”
- B. “*I didn’t used to believe in magic, and now I can’t do anything without it.*”
- C. “Within seconds, the ball was in Maggie’s hands. She took a deep breath, dribbled skillfully toward the basket, and took a shot.”
- D. “We need some of your usual magic. . . .”

CCSS: RL.8.3

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Reading & Writing Companion



THE LUCKY COIN

Close Read

CCSS: RL.8.1, RL.8.3; W.8.1.A, W.8.1.B, W.8.4

Reread “The Lucky Coin.” As you reread, use the Checklist for Story Elements on page 4 to analyze the text and make annotations. Then use your annotations, your own ideas and reactions to the text, and any other notes you have to complete the Write activity.

LITERARY ANALYSIS

WRITE

How do the interactions among dialogue, descriptions, and events help readers understand why Maggie makes the choices she does in “The Lucky Coin”? Write a response to this question. Support your writing with evidence from the text.

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Reading & Writing
Companion

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The Tell-Tale Heart

SHORT STORY

Edgar Allan Poe

1843

Introduction

The works of Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849) set the standard for Gothic fiction. “The Tell-Tale Heart” is one of his most famous and widely read stories. Convinced that officers at his house can hear the dead man’s heart beating through the floorboard, Poe’s narrator confesses to killing an old man in his care, despite the fact he bore the man no grudge. In a dramatic monologue of increasing volume and intensity—as well as mental disintegration—the “perfectly sane” murderer painstakingly describes how the “vulture eye” of his victim drove him to commit the horrible act.

UNIT 1 The Tell-Tale Heart

“You fancy me mad.
Madmen know nothing.
But you should have seen me.”

NOTES**SAMPLE ANNOTATION****Textual Evidence**

This line doesn't make sense since he said before that he liked the old man. How can the narrator actually be sane and kind? If a person kills someone that they like, it usually means the person is neither kind nor sane.

SAMPLE ANNOTATION**Textual Evidence**

If a person spends this long trying to spy and plan a murder, this person must be unkind and not mentally stable. Maybe the author is implying that the narrator is actually insane even though he thinks he is sane.

- 1 True!—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses—not destroyed—not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing **acute**. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily—how calmly I can tell you the whole story.
- 2 It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! yes, it was this! He had the eye of a vulture—a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees—very gradually—I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.
- 3 Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded—with what caution—with what foresight—with what dissimulation I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it—oh so gently! And then, when I had made an opening **sufficient** for my head, I put in a dark lantern, all closed, closed, that no light shone out, and then I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly—very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Ha! would a madman have been so wise as this, And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously—oh, so cautiously—cautiously (for the hinges creaked)—I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights—every night just at midnight—but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work, for it was not the old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye. And every morning, when the day broke, I went boldly into



Hooded vulture

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UNIT 1 The Tell-Tale Heart



the chamber, and spoke courageously to him, calling him by name in a hearty tone, and inquiring how he has passed the night. So you see he would have been a very **profound** old man, indeed, to suspect that every night, just at twelve, I looked in upon him while he slept.

- 4 Upon the eighth night I was more than usually cautious in opening the door. A watch's minute hand moves more quickly than did mine. Never before that night had I felt the extent of my own powers—of my **sagacity**. I could scarcely contain my feelings of triumph. To think that there I was, opening the door, little by little, and he not even to dream of my secret deeds or thoughts. I fairly chuckled at the idea; and perhaps he heard me; for he moved on the bed suddenly, as if startled. Now you may think that I drew back—but no. His room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness, (for the shutters were close fastened, through fear of robbers,) and so I knew that he could not see the opening of the door, and I kept pushing it on steadily, steadily. I had my head in, and was about to open the lantern, when my thumb slipped upon the tin fastening, and the old man sprang up in bed, crying out—“Who’s there?” I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle, and in the meantime I did not hear him lie down. He was still sitting up in the bed listening;—just as I have done, night after night, hearkening to the death watches in the wall.
- 5 Presently I heard a slight groan, and I knew it was the groan of mortal terror. It was not a groan of pain or of grief—oh, no!—it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. I say I knew it well. I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart. I knew that he had been lying awake ever since the first slight noise, when he had turned in the bed. His fears had been ever since growing upon him. He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself—“It is nothing but the wind in the chimney—it is only a mouse crossing the floor,” or “It is merely a cricket which has made a single chirp.” Yes, he had been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions: but he had found all in vain. All in vain; because Death, in approaching him had stalked with his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim. And it was the mournful influence of the unperceived shadow that caused him to feel—although he neither saw nor heard—to feel the presence of my head within the room.
- 6 When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little—a very, very little crevice in the lantern. So I opened it—you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily—until, at length a simple dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and fell full upon the vulture eye. It was open—wide, wide open—and I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw it with perfect distinctness—all a dull blue, with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow in my bones; but I could see nothing else of the old man’s face or person: for I had directed the ray as if by instinct, precisely upon



UNIT 1 The Tell-Tale HeartNOTES

the damned spot. And have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over-acuteness of the sense?—now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I knew that sound well, too. It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage.

- 7 But even yet I refrained and kept still. I scarcely breathed. I held the lantern motionless. I tried how steadily I could maintain the ray upon the eve. Meantime the hellish tattoo of the heart increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder every instant. The old man's terror must have been extreme! It grew louder, I say, louder every moment!—do you mark me well I have told you that I am nervous: so I am. And now at the dead hour of the night, amid the dreadful silence of that old house, so strange a noise as this excited me to uncontrollable terror. Yet, for some minutes longer I refrained and stood still. But the beating grew louder, louder! I thought the heart must burst. And now a new anxiety seized me—the sound would be heard by a neighbour! The old man's hour had come! With a loud yell, I threw open the lantern and leaped into the room. He shrieked once—once only. In an instant I dragged him to the floor, and pulled the heavy bed over him. I then smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done. But, for many minutes, the heart beat on with a muffled sound. This, however, did not vex me; it would not be heard through the wall. At length it ceased. The old man was dead. I removed the bed and examined the corpse. Yes, he was stone, stone dead. I placed my hand upon the heart and held it there many minutes. There was no pulsation. He was stone dead. His eye would trouble me no more.
- 8 If still you think me mad, you will think so no longer when I describe the wise precautions I took for the concealment of the body. The night waned, and I worked hastily, but in silence. First of all I dismembered the corpse. I cut off the head and the arms and the legs. I then took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber, and deposited all between the scantlings. I then replaced the boards so cleverly, so cunningly, that no human eye—not even his—could have detected any thing wrong. There was nothing to wash out—no stain of any kind—no blood-spot whatever. I had been too wary for that. A tub had caught all—ha! ha! When I had made an end of these labors, it was four o'clock—still dark as midnight. As the bell sounded the hour, there came a knocking at the street door. I went down to open it with a light heart,—for what had I now to fear? There entered three men, who introduced themselves, with perfect suavity, as officers of the police. A shriek had been heard by a neighbour during the night; suspicion of foul play had been aroused; information had been lodged at the police office, and they (the officers) had been deputed to search the premises. I smiled,—for what had I to fear? I bade the gentlemen welcome. The shriek, I said, was my own in a dream. The old man, I mentioned, was absent in the country. I took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search—search well. I led them, at length, to his chamber. I showed them his treasures, secure, undisturbed. In the enthusiasm of my confidence, I brought chairs into the room, and desired them here to rest from their fatigues, while I myself, in the

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UNIT 1 The Tell-Tale Heart

 NOTES

wild **audacity** of my perfect triumph, placed my own seat upon the very spot beneath which reposed the corpse of the victim.

- 9 The officers were satisfied. My manner had convinced them. I was singularly at ease. They sat, and while I answered cheerily, they chatted of familiar things. But, ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears: but still they sat and still chatted. The ringing became more distinct:—It continued and became more distinct: I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling: but it continued and gained definiteness—until, at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears. No doubt I now grew very pale;—but I talked more fluently, and with a heightened voice. Yet the sound increased—and what could I do? It was a low, dull, quick sound—much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I gasped for breath—and yet the officers heard it not. I talked more quickly—more **vehemently**; but the noise steadily increased. I arose and argued about trifles, in a high key and with violent gesticulations; but the noise steadily increased. Why would they not be gone? I paced the floor to and fro with heavy strides, as if excited to fury by the observations of the men—but the noise steadily increased. Oh God! what could I do? I foamed—I raved—I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise arose over all and continually increased. It grew louder—louder—louder! And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. Was it possible they heard not? Almighty God!—no, no! They heard!—they suspected!—they knew!—they were making a mockery of my horror!—this I thought, and this I think. But anything was better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision! I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die! and now—again!—hark! louder! louder! louder! louder!
- 10 “Villains!” I shrieked, “dissemble no more! I admit the deed!—tear up the planks! here, here!—It is the beating of his hideous heart!”



First Read

CCSS: RL.8.1; L.8.4.A, L.8.4.C

Read "The Tell-Tale Heart." After you read, complete the Think Questions below.

THINK QUESTIONS

WRITE

1. Write two or three sentences explaining how the narrator feels about the old man and why he decides to murder him.
2. Does the narrator seem trustworthy as he gives his account of the events in the story? Cite evidence from the text to explain your opinions.
3. What sound does the narrator hear at the end of the story that causes him to confess to the murder? Provide evidence to support your inference.
4. Find the word **sufficient** in paragraph 3 of "The Tell-Tale Heart." Use context clues in the surrounding sentences, as well as the sentence in which the word appears, to determine the word's meaning. Write your definition here, and identify clues that helped you figure out its meaning.
5. Use context clues to determine the meaning of **sagacity** as it is used in paragraph 4 of "The Tell-Tale Heart." Write your definition here, and identify clues that helped you figure out its meaning. Then check the meaning in a dictionary.

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Skill: Textual Evidence

The Tell-Tale Heart

CHECKLIST

Textual evidence is specific words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs, while inferences are how readers interpret details and ideas shown but not stated. You should always use textual evidence to support your inferences about a text.

To use textual evidence effectively, ask yourself the following questions:

- ✓ What information or details are directly stated in the text?
- ✓ What inferences can I make about the text? Which words or phrases can I use to support these inferences? Does this evidence make sense?
- ✓ Am I quoting and citing the evidence from the text correctly in my analysis?
- ✓ Which textual evidence most strongly supports my analysis? Why?

DISCUSS AND ANNOTATE

Read and discuss the checklist. Then, use the checklist to read and annotate the text. Refer to the sample student annotations within the text.

TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

Reread paragraph 9 of "The Tell-Tale Heart." Then, using the checklist on the previous page, answer the multiple-choice questions below.

YOUR TURN

PRACTICE

This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A: Which of the following inferences best explains why the narrator admits what he has done?

- A. The narrator realizes that the police officers know what he has done.
- B. The narrator's anxiety and guilt make him feel bad enough to admit that he killed the old man.
- C. The narrator's insanity makes him believe he can hear a beating heart beneath the floorboards.
- D. The narrator is so afraid of the old man's eye that he explains to the police officers the situation that made him kill the old man.

Part B: Which of the following sentences or phrases from the text best supports the answer to Part A?

- A. "They heard!—they suspected!—they knew!—they were making a mockery of my horror!—this I thought, and this I think."
- B. "The ringing became more distinct:—It continued and became more distinct: I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling: but it continued and gained definiteness—until, at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears."
- C. "The officers were satisfied. My manner had convinced them. I was singularly at ease."
- D. ". . . tear up the planks! here, here!—It is the beating of his hideous heart!"

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CCSS: RL.8.1

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Reading & Writing Companion

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Close Read

CCSS: RL.8.1; W.8.1.A, W.8.1.B, W.8.4

Reread “The Tell-Tale Heart.” As you reread, use the Checklist for Textual Evidence on page 13 to analyze the text and make annotations. Then use your annotations, your own ideas and reactions to the text, and any other notes you have to complete the Write activity.

ARGUMENTATIVE

WRITE

Can the narrator of “The Tell-Tale Heart” be trusted? Take a position and be prepared to support your claim with textual evidence. Consider the narrator’s internal dialogue and actions, as well as the author’s use of language, noting specific words and phrases that seem significant as you make inferences and draw conclusions about the narrator’s state of mind.

The Lottery

SHORT STORY
Shirley Jackson
1948

Introduction

When this story appeared in *The New Yorker* in 1948, the response was loud but divided: many distressed readers wrote in to cancel their subscriptions. Others asked after which town it was modeled so they could be spectators of such an event. Called “an icon in the history of the American short story,” Shirley Jackson’s piece may be controversial, but once read, it engraves itself in readers’ psyches forever.

“I tell you it wasn’t fair. You didn’t give him time enough to choose.”

NOTES

- 1 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.
- 2 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.
- 3 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.

UNIT 1 The LotteryNOTES

- 4 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.
- 5 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.
- 6 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 away, 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.
- 7 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

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UNIT 1 The Lottery



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.

- 8 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."
- 9 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.
- 10 "Well, now," 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?"
- 11 "Dunbar," several people said. "Dunbar, Dunbar."
- 12 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?"
- 13 "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

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UNIT 1 The Lottery**NOTES**

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.

- 14 "Horace's not but sixteen yet," Mrs. Dunbar said regretfully. "Guess I gotta fill in for the old man this year."
- 15 "Right," Mr. Summers said. He made a note on the list he was holding. Then he asked, "Watson boy drawing this year?"
- 16 A tall boy in the crowd raised his hand. "Here," he said. "I'm drawing for m'mother and me." He blinked his eyes nervously and ducked his head as several voices in the crowd said things like "Good fellow, Jack," and "Glad to see your mother's got a man to do it."
- 17 "Well," Mr. Summers said, "guess that's everyone. Old Man Warner make it?"
- 18 "Here," a voice said, and Mr. Summers nodded.
- 19 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?"
- 20 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.
- 21 "Allen," Mr. Summers said. "Anderson. . . . Bentham."
- 22 "Seems like there's no time at all between lotteries any more," Mrs. Delacroix said to Mrs. Graves in the back row. "Seems like we got through with the last one only last week."
- 23 "Time sure goes fast," Mrs. Graves said.
- 24 "Clark. . . . Delacroix."
- 25 "There goes my old man," Mrs. Delacroix said. She held her breath while her husband went forward.
- 26 "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."

UNIT 1 The Lottery



- 27 "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 hands, turning them over and over nervously Mrs. Dunbar and her two sons stood together, Mrs. Dunbar holding the slip of paper.
- 28 "Harburt. . . . Hutchinson."
- 29 "Get up there, Bill," Mrs. Hutchinson said, and the people near her laughed.
- 30 "Jones."
- 31 "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."
- 32 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 any more, 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."
- 33 "Some places have already quit lotteries," Mrs. Adams said.
- 34 "Nothing but trouble in that," Old Man Warner said stoutly. "Pack of young fools."
- 35 "Martin." And Bobby Martin watched his father go forward. "Overdyke. . . . Percy."
- 36 "I wish they'd hurry," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son. "I wish they'd hurry."
- 37 "They're almost through," her son said.
- 38 "You get ready to run tell Dad," Mrs. Dunbar said.
- 39 Mr. Summers called his own name and then stepped forward precisely and selected a slip from the box. Then he called, "Warner."
- 40 "Seventy-seventh year I been in the lottery," Old Man Warner said as he went through the crowd. "Seventy-seventh time."
- 41 "Watson." The tall boy came awkwardly through the crowd. Someone said, "Don't be nervous, Jack," and Mr. Summers said, "Take your time, son."
- 42 "Zanini."
- 43 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, saying, "Who is it?" "Who's got it?" "Is it the Dunbars?"

UNIT 1 The Lottery**NOTES**

- "Is it the Watsons?" Then the voices began to say, "It's Hutchinson. It's Bill," "Bill Hutchinson's got it."
- 44 "Go tell your father," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son.
- 45 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!"
- 46 "Be a good sport, Tessie," Mrs. Delacroix called, and Mrs. Graves said, "All of us took the same chance."
- 47 "Shut up, Tessie," Bill Hutchinson said.
- 48 "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?"
- 49 "There's Don and Eva," Mrs. Hutchinson yelled. "Make them take their chance!"
- 50 "Daughters draw with their husbands' families, Tessie," Mr. Summers said gently. "You know that as well as anyone else."
- 51 "It wasn't fair," Tessie said.
- 52 "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."
- 53 "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?"
- 54 "Right," Bill Hutchinson said.
- 55 "How many kids, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked formally.
- 56 "Three," Bill Hutchinson said. "There's Bill, Jr., and Nancy, and little Dave. And Tessie and me."
- 57 "All right, then," Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you got their tickets back?"
- 58 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."
- 59 "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."

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UNIT 1 The Lottery



- 60 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.
- 61 "Listen, everybody," Mrs. Hutchinson was saying to the people around her.
- 62 "Ready, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked, and Bill Hutchinson, with one quick glance around at his wife and children, nodded.
- 63 "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.
- 64 "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, nearly 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.
- 65 "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.
- 66 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.
- 67 "It's not the way it used to be," Old Man Warner said clearly. "People ain't the way they used to be."
- 68 "All right," Mr. Summers said. "Open the papers. Harry, you open little Dave's."
- 69 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.
- 70 "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.
- 71 "It's Tessie," Mr. Summers said, and his voice was hushed. "Show us her paper. Bill."
- 72 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.

UNIT 1 The Lottery**NOTES**

- 73 "All right, folks," Mr. Summers said. "Let's finish quickly."
- 74 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. Mrs. 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."
- 75 Mrs. 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."
- 76 The children had stones already, and someone gave little Davy Hutchinson a few pebbles.
- 77 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.
- 78 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.
- 79 "It isn't fair, it isn't right," Mrs. Hutchinson screamed and then they were upon her.

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NARRATIVE**WRITE**

In "The Lottery," Mr. and Mrs. Adams note during the drawing that other villages have given up the tradition of holding the lottery. However, Old Man Warner insists that the lottery should continue and is irritated that some aspects of this tradition have already begun to lapse. Imagine you are a character of this village and part of this conversation. Based on what you know about the villagers and how events play out in the rest of the story, how would you have reacted to Old Man Warner? Would you agree or speak against him? Why? Do you think anything you could say could modify the outcome of the lottery? Rewrite this scene including yourself as a character and with additional details and dialogue. Also include an explanation of whether you think this altered scene could change future events.

CCSS: W.8.3.B, W.8.3.D

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The Monkey's Paw

SHORT STORY

W. W. Jacobs

1902

Introduction

W. W. Jacobs (1863–1943) wrote numerous humorous short stories, but it is for his works of horror that he is mainly remembered. In “The Monkey’s Paw,” his cautionary tale from 1902, a well-to-do family in Victorian England is presented with a dubious opportunity to increase their fortunes. A magical monkey’s paw from India has the power to make three wishes come true—but what will be the price?

UNIT 1 The Monkey's Paw

“Hold it up in your right hand and wish aloud,” said the sergeant-major, “but I warn you of the consequences.”

NOTES

I.

- 1 Without, the night was cold and wet, but in the small parlour of Laburnam Villa the blinds were drawn and the fire burned brightly. Father and son were at chess, the former, who possessed ideas about the game involving **radical** changes, putting his king into such sharp and unnecessary perils that it even provoked comment from the white-haired old lady knitting placidly by the fire.
- 2 “Hark at the wind,” said Mr. White, who, having seen a fatal mistake after it was too late, was amiably desirous of preventing his son from seeing it.
- 3 “I’m listening,” said the latter, grimly surveying the board as he stretched out his hand. “Check.”
- 4 “I should hardly think that he’d come to-night,” said his father, with his hand poised over the board.
- 5 “Mate,” replied the son.
- 6 “That’s the worst of living so far out,” bawled Mr. White, with sudden and unlooked-for violence; “of all the beastly, slushy, out-of-the-way places to live in, this is the worst. Pathway’s a bog, and the road’s a torrent. I don’t know what people are thinking about. I suppose because only two houses in the road are let, they think it doesn’t matter.”
- 7 “Never mind, dear,” said his wife, soothingly; “perhaps you’ll win the next one.”
- 8 Mr. White looked up sharply, just in time to intercept a knowing glance between mother and son. The words died away on his lips, and he hid a guilty grin in his thin grey beard.
- 9 “There he is,” said Herbert White, as the gate banged to loudly and heavy footsteps came toward the door.
- 10 The old man rose with hospitable haste, and opening the door, was heard condoling with the new arrival. The new arrival also condoled with himself, so that Mrs. White said, “Tut, tut!” and coughed gently as her husband entered the room, followed by a tall, burly man, beady of eye and rubicund of visage.

UNIT 1 The Monkey's Paw

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- 11 "Sergeant-Major Morris," he said, introducing him.
- 12 The sergeant-major shook hands, and taking the proffered seat by the fire, watched contentedly while his host got out whiskey and tumblers and stood a small copper kettle on the fire.
- 13 At the third glass his eyes got brighter, and he began to talk, the little family circle regarding with eager interest this visitor from distant parts, as he squared his broad shoulders in the chair and spoke of wild scenes and doughty deeds; of wars and plagues and strange peoples.
- 14 "Twenty-one years of it," said Mr. White, nodding at his wife and son. "When he went away he was a slip of a youth in the warehouse. Now look at him."
- 15 "He don't look to have taken much harm," said Mrs. White, politely.
- 16 "I'd like to go to India myself," said the old man, "just to look round a bit, you know."
- 17 "Better where you are," said the sergeant-major, shaking his head. He put down the empty glass, and sighing softly, shook it again.
- 18 "I should like to see those old temples and fakirs and jugglers," said the old man. "What was that you started telling me the other day about a monkey's paw or something, Morris?"
- 19 "Nothing," said the soldier, hastily. "Leastways nothing worth hearing."
- 20 "Monkey's paw?" said Mrs. White, curiously.
- 21 "Well, it's just a bit of what you might call magic, perhaps," said the sergeant-major, offhandedly.
- 22 His three listeners leaned forward eagerly. The visitor absent-mindedly put his empty glass to his lips and then set it down again. His host filled it for him.
- 23 "To look at," said the sergeant-major, fumbling in his pocket, "it's just an ordinary little paw, dried to a mummy."
- 24 He took something out of his pocket and proffered it. Mrs. White drew back with a grimace, but her son, taking it, examined it curiously.
- 25 "And what is there special about it?" inquired Mr. White as he took it from his son, and having examined it, placed it upon the table.
- 26 "It had a spell put on it by an old fakir," said the sergeant-major, "a very holy man. He wanted to show that fate ruled people's lives, and that those who



A fakir rests on a bed of nails in a display of public penance in Calcutta, India, c. 1930

UNIT 1 The Monkey's Paw

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interfered with it did so to their sorrow. He put a spell on it so that three separate men could each have three wishes from it."

- 27 His manner was so impressive that his hearers were conscious that their light laughter jarred somewhat.
- 28 "Well, why don't you have three, sir?" said Herbert White, cleverly.
- 29 The soldier regarded him in the way that middle age is wont to regard **presumptuous** youth. "I have," he said, quietly, and his blotchy face whitened.
- 30 "And did you really have the three wishes granted?" asked Mrs. White.
- 31 "I did," said the sergeant-major, and his glass tapped against his strong teeth.
- 32 "And has anybody else wished?" persisted the old lady.

SAMPLE ANNOTATION**Theme**

The conflict is between the paw and those who wish on it. The paw is dangerous—the last man wished "for death." I think the soldier speaks "slowly" because he doesn't want to cause harm. But Mr. White seems excited and unworried.

- 33 "The first man had his three wishes. Yes," was the reply; "I don't know what the first two were, but the third was for death. That's how I got the paw."
- 34 His tones were so grave that a hush fell upon the group.
- 35 "If you've had your three wishes, it's no good to you now, then, Morris," said the old man at last. "What do you keep it for?"
- 36 The soldier shook his head. "Fancy, I suppose," he said, slowly. "I did have some idea of selling it, but I don't think I will. It has caused enough mischief already. Besides, people won't buy. They think it's a fairy tale; some of them, and those who do think anything of it want to try it first and pay me afterward."
- 37 "If you could have another three wishes," said the old man, eyeing him keenly, "would you have them?"
- 38 "I don't know," said the other. "I don't know."
- 39 He took the paw, and dangling it between his forefinger and thumb, suddenly threw it upon the fire. White, with a slight cry, stooped down and snatched it off.
- 40 "Better let it burn," said the soldier, solemnly.
- 41 "If you don't want it, Morris," said the other, "give it to me."
- 42 "I won't," said his friend, doggedly. "I threw it on the fire. If you keep it, don't blame me for what happens. Pitch it on the fire again like a sensible man."
- 43 The other shook his head and examined his new possession closely. "How do you do it?" he inquired.
- 44 "Hold it up in your right hand and wish aloud," said the sergeant-major, "but I warn you of the **consequences**."

UNIT 1 The Monkey's Paw

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- 45 "Sounds like the Arabian Nights,"¹ said Mrs. White, as she rose and began to set the supper. "Don't you think you might wish for four pairs of hands for me?"
- 46 Her husband drew the talisman from pocket, and then all three burst into laughter as the sergeant-major, with a look of alarm on his face, caught him by the arm.
- 47 "If you must wish," he said, gruffly, "wish for something sensible."
- 48 Mr. White dropped it back in his pocket, and placing chairs, motioned his friend to the table. In the business of supper the talisman was partly forgotten, and afterward the three sat listening in an enthralled fashion to a second installment of the soldier's adventures in India.
- 49 "If the tale about the monkey's paw is not more truthful than those he has been telling us," said Herbert, as the door closed behind their guest, just in time for him to catch the last train, "we sha'n't make much out of it."
- 50 "Did you give him anything for it, father?" inquired Mrs. White, regarding her husband closely.
- 51 "A trifle," said he, colouring slightly. "He didn't want it, but I made him take it. And he pressed me again to throw it away."
- 52 "Likely," said Herbert, with pretended horror. "Why, we're going to be rich, and famous and happy. Wish to be an emperor, father, to begin with; then you can't be henpecked."
- 53 He darted round the table, pursued by the maligned Mrs. White armed with an antimacassar.²
- 54 Mr. White took the paw from his pocket and eyed it dubiously. "I don't know what to wish for, and that's a fact," he said, slowly. "It seems to me I've got all I want."
- 55 "If you only cleared the house, you'd be quite happy, wouldn't you?" said Herbert, with his hand on his shoulder. "Well, wish for two hundred pounds,³ then; that 'll just do it."
- 56 His father, smiling shamefacedly at his own **credulity**, held up the talisman, as his son, with a solemn face, somewhat marred by a wink at his mother, sat down at the piano and struck a few impressive chords.
- 57 "I wish for two hundred pounds," said the old man distinctly.

1. **Arabian Nights** a collection of Middle Eastern folktales told by the legendary Scheherazade, also frequently called *One Thousand and One Nights*
 2. **antimacassar** an ornamental cloth placed over the back of a chair to protect it
 3. **pound** the basic unit of currency in the United Kingdom

UNIT 1 The Monkey's Paw

- 58 A fine crash from the piano greeted the words, interrupted by a shuddering cry from the old man. His wife and son ran toward him.
- 59 "It moved," he cried, with a glance of disgust at the object as it lay on the floor.
- 60 "As I wished, it twisted in my hand like a snake."
- 61 "Well, I don't see the money," said his son as he picked it up and placed it on the table, "and I bet I never shall."
- 62 "It must have been your fancy, father," said his wife, regarding him anxiously.
- 63 He shook his head. "Never mind, though; there's no harm done, but it gave me a shock all the same."
- 64 They sat down by the fire again while the two men finished their pipes. Outside, the wind was higher than ever, and the old man started nervously at the sound of a door banging upstairs. A silence unusual and depressing settled upon all three, which lasted until the old couple rose to retire for the night.
- 65 "I expect you'll find the cash tied up in a big bag in the middle of your bed," said Herbert, as he bade them good-night, "and something horrible squatting up on top of the wardrobe watching you as you pocket your ill-gotten gains."
- 66 He sat alone in the darkness, gazing at the dying fire, and seeing faces in it. The last face was so horrible and so simian that he gazed at it in amazement. It got so vivid that, with a little uneasy laugh, he felt on the table for a glass containing a little water to throw over it. His hand grasped the monkey's paw, and with a little shiver he wiped his hand on his coat and went up to bed.
- II.
- 67 In the brightness of the wintry sun next morning as it streamed over the breakfast table he laughed at his fears. There was an air of prosaic wholesomeness about the room which it had lacked on the previous night, and the dirty, shrivelled little paw was pitched on the sideboard with a carelessness which betokened no great belief in its virtues.
- 68 "I suppose all old soldiers are the same," said Mrs. White. "The idea of our listening to such nonsense! How could wishes be granted in these days? And if they could, how could two hundred pounds hurt you, father?"
- 69 "Might drop on his head from the sky," said the frivolous Herbert.
- 70 "Morris said the things happened so naturally," said his father, "that you might if you so wished attribute it to coincidence."
- 71 "Well, don't break into the money before I come back," said Herbert as he rose from the table. "I'm afraid it'll turn you into a mean, avaricious man, and we shall have to disown you."

UNIT 1 The Monkey's Paw

 NOTES

- 72 His mother laughed, and following him to the door, watched him down the road; and returning to the breakfast table, was very happy at the expense of her husband's credulity. All of which did not prevent her from scurrying to the door at the postman's knock, nor prevent her from referring somewhat shortly to retired sergeant-majors of bibulous habits when she found that the post brought a tailor's bill.
- 73 "Herbert will have some more of his funny remarks, I expect, when he comes home," she said, as they sat at dinner.
- 74 "I dare say," said Mr. White, pouring himself out some beer; "but for all that, the thing moved in my hand; that I'll swear to."
- 75 "You thought it did," said the old lady soothingly.
- 76 "I say it did," replied the other. "There was no thought about it; I had just—What's the matter?"
- 77 His wife made no reply. She was watching the mysterious movements of a man outside, who, peering in an undecided fashion at the house, appeared to be trying to make up his mind to enter. In mental connection with the two hundred pounds, she noticed that the stranger was well dressed, and wore a silk hat of glossy newness. Three times he paused at the gate, and then walked on again. The fourth time he stood with his hand upon it, and then with sudden resolution flung it open and walked up the path. Mrs. White at the same moment placed her hands behind her, and hurriedly unfastening the strings of her apron, put that useful article of apparel beneath the cushion of her chair.
- 78 She brought the stranger, who seemed ill at ease, into the room. He gazed at her furtively, and listened in a preoccupied fashion as the old lady apologized for the appearance of the room, and her husband's coat, a garment which he usually reserved for the garden. She then waited as patiently as her sex would permit, for him to broach his business, but he was at first strangely silent.
- 79 "I—was asked to call," he said at last, and stooped and picked a piece of cotton from his trousers. "I come from 'Maw and Meggins.'"
- 80 The old lady started. "Is anything the matter?" she asked, breathlessly. "Has anything happened to Herbert? What is it? What is it?"
- 81 Her husband interposed. "There, there, mother," he said, hastily. "Sit down, and don't jump to conclusions. You've not brought bad news, I'm sure, sir;" and he eyed the other wistfully.
- 82 "I'm sorry—" began the visitor.
- 83 "Is he hurt?" demanded the mother, wildly.

UNIT 1 The Monkey's Paw

- 84 The visitor bowed in assent. "Badly hurt," he said, quietly, "but he is not in any pain."
- 85 "Oh, thank God!" said the old woman, clasping her hands. "Thank God for that! Thank—"
- 86 She broke off suddenly as the sinister meaning of the assurance dawned upon her and she saw the awful confirmation of her fears in the other's averted face. She caught her breath, and turning to her slower-witted husband, laid her trembling old hand upon his. There was a long silence.
- 87 "He was caught in the machinery," said the visitor at length in a low voice.
- 88 "Caught in the machinery," repeated Mr. White, in a dazed fashion, "yes."
- 89 He sat staring blankly out at the window, and taking his wife's hand between his own, pressed it as he had been wont to do in their old courting-days nearly forty years before.
- 90 "He was the only one left to us," he said, turning gently to the visitor. "It is hard."
- 91 The other coughed, and rising, walked slowly to the window. "The firm wished me to convey their sincere sympathy with you in your great loss," he said, without looking round. "I beg that you will understand I am only their servant and merely obeying orders."
- 92 There was no reply; the old woman's face was white, her eyes staring, and her breath inaudible; on the husband's face was a look such as his friend the sergeant might have carried into his first action.
- 93 "I was to say that 'Maw and Meggins' disclaim all responsibility," continued the other. "They admit no liability at all, but in consideration of your son's services, they wish to present you with a certain sum as **compensation**."
- 94 Mr. White dropped his wife's hand, and rising to his feet, gazed with a look of horror at his visitor. His dry lips shaped the words, "How much?"
- 95 "Two hundred pounds," was the answer.
- 96 Unconscious of his wife's shriek, the old man smiled faintly, put out his hands like a sightless man, and dropped, a senseless heap, to the floor.
- III.
- 97 In the huge new cemetery, some two miles distant, the old people buried their dead, and came back to a house steeped in shadow and silence. It was all over so quickly that at first they could hardly realize it, and remained in a state of expectation as though of something else to happen—something else which was to lighten this load, too heavy for old hearts to bear.

UNIT 1 The Monkey's Paw



- 98 But the days passed, and expectation gave place to resignation—the hopeless resignation of the old, sometimes miscalled, **apathy**. Sometimes they hardly exchanged a word, for now they had nothing to talk about, and their days were long to weariness.
- 99 It was about a week after that the old man, waking suddenly in the night, stretched out his hand and found himself alone. The room was in darkness, and the sound of subdued weeping came from the window. He raised himself in bed and listened.
- 100 "Come back," he said, tenderly. "You will be cold."
- 101 "It is colder for my son," said the old woman, and wept afresh.
- 102 The sound of her sobs died away on his ears. The bed was warm, and his eyes heavy with sleep. He dozed fitfully, and then slept until a sudden wild cry from his wife awoke him with a start.
- 103 "The paw!" she cried wildly. "The monkey's paw!"
- 104 He started up in alarm. "Where? Where is it? What's the matter?"
- 105 She came stumbling across the room toward him. "I want it," she said, quietly. "You've not destroyed it?"
- 106 "It's in the parlour, on the bracket," he replied, marvelling. "Why?"
- 107 She cried and laughed together, and bending over, kissed his cheek.
- 108 "I only just thought of it," she said, hysterically. "Why didn't I think of it before? Why didn't you think of it?"
- 109 "Think of what?" he questioned.
- 110 "The other two wishes," she replied, rapidly. "We've only had one."
- 111 "Was not that enough?" he demanded, fiercely.
- 112 "No," she cried, triumphantly; "we'll have one more. Go down and get it quickly, and wish our boy alive again."
- 113 The man sat up in bed and flung the bedclothes from his quaking limbs. "Good God, you are mad!" he cried, aghast.
- 114 "Get it," she panted; "get it quickly, and wish—Oh, my boy, my boy!"
- 115 Her husband struck a match and lit the candle. "Get back to bed," he said, unsteadily. "You don't know what you are saying."

UNIT 1 The Monkey's Paw

- 116 "We had the first wish granted," said the old woman, feverishly; "why not the second?"
- 117 "A coincidence," stammered the old man.
- 118 "Go and get it and wish," cried his wife, quivering with excitement.
- 119 The old man turned and regarded her, and his voice shook. "He has been dead ten days, and besides he—I would not tell you else, but—I could only recognize him by his clothing. If he was too terrible for you to see then, how now?"
- 120 "Bring him back," cried the old woman, and dragged him toward the door. "Do you think I fear the child I have nursed?"
- 121 He went down in the darkness, and felt his way to the parlour, and then to the mantelpiece. The talisman was in its place, and a horrible fear that the unspoken wish might bring his mutilated son before him ere he could escape from the room seized upon him, and he caught his breath as he found that he had lost the direction of the door. His brow cold with sweat, he felt his way round the table, and groped along the wall until he found himself in the small passage with the unwholesome thing in his hand.
- 122 Even his wife's face seemed changed as he entered the room. It was white and expectant, and to his fears seemed to have an unnatural look upon it. He was afraid of her.
- 123 "Wish!" she cried, in a strong voice.
- 124 "It is foolish and wicked," he faltered.
- 125 "Wish!" repeated his wife.
- 126 He raised his hand. "I wish my son alive again."
- 127 The talisman fell to the floor, and he regarded it fearfully. Then he sank trembling into a chair as the old woman, with burning eyes, walked to the window and raised the blind.
- 128 He sat until he was chilled with the cold, glancing occasionally at the figure of the old woman peering through the window. The candle-end, which had burned below the rim of the china candlestick, was throwing pulsating shadows on the ceiling and walls, until, with a flicker larger than the rest, it expired. The old man, with an unspeakable sense of relief at the failure of the talisman, crept back to his bed, and a minute or two afterward the old woman came silently and apathetically beside him.
- 129 Neither spoke, but lay silently listening to the ticking of the clock. A stair creaked, and a squeaky mouse scurried noisily through the wall. The darkness was

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UNIT 1 The Monkey's Paw

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oppressive, and after lying for some time screwing up his courage, he took the box of matches, and striking one, went downstairs for a candle.

- 130 At the foot of the stairs the match went out, and he paused to strike another; and at the same moment a knock, so quiet and stealthy as to be scarcely audible, sounded on the front door.
- 131 The matches fell from his hand and spilled in the passage. He stood motionless, his breath suspended until the knock was repeated. Then he turned and fled swiftly back to his room, and closed the door behind him. A third knock sounded through the house.
- 132 "What's that?" cried the old woman, starting up.
- 133 "A rat," said the old man in shaking tones—"a rat. It passed me on the stairs."
- 134 His wife sat up in bed listening. A loud knock resounded through the house.
- 135 "It's Herbert!" she screamed. "It's Herbert!"
- 136 She ran to the door, but her husband was before her, and catching her by the arm, held her tightly.
- 137 "What are you going to do?" he whispered hoarsely.
- 138 "It's my boy; it's Herbert!" she cried, struggling mechanically. "I forgot it was two miles away. What are you holding me for? Let go. I must open the door."
- 139 "For God's sake don't let it in," cried the old man, trembling.
- 140 "You're afraid of your own son," she cried, struggling. "Let me go. I'm coming, Herbert; I'm coming."
- 141 There was another knock, and another. The old woman with a sudden wrench broke free and ran from the room. Her husband followed to the landing, and called after her appealingly as she hurried downstairs. He heard the chain rattle back and the bottom bolt drawn slowly and stiffly from the socket. Then the old woman's voice, strained and panting.
- 142 "The bolt," she cried, loudly. "Come down. I can't reach it."
- 143 But her husband was on his hands and knees groping wildly on the floor in search of the paw. **If he could only find it before the thing outside got in.** A perfect fusillade of knocks reverberated through the house, and he heard the scraping of a chair as his wife put it down in the passage against the door. He heard the **creaking** of the bolt as it came slowly back, and at the same moment he found the monkey's paw, and frantically breathed his third and last wish.

SAMPLE ANNOTATION

Theme

Mr. White "frantically" searches for the paw which shows he's really worried. These setting details are creepy and dangerous. I think the theme is "beware of dangerous magic" as the characters now realize how dangerous the paw is.

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UNIT 1 The Monkey's Paw

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The knocking ceased suddenly, although the echoes of it were still in the house. He heard the chair drawn back, and the door opened. A cold wind rushed up the staircase, and a long loud wail of disappointment and misery from his wife gave him courage to run down to her side, and then to the gate beyond. The street lamp flickering opposite shone on a quiet and deserted road.

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First Read

CCSS: RL.8.1; L.8.4.A, L.8.4.C

Read "The Monkey's Paw." After you read, complete the Think Questions below.

THINK QUESTIONS

WRITE

1. What is "the monkey's paw"? What is Herbert's attitude toward the monkey's paw? Cite textual evidence from the selection to support your answer.
2. Write two to three sentences describing how Mr. White's feelings change about the monkey's paw after he makes his first wish and second wish.
3. Foreshadowing is a literary device in which a writer gives a subtle hint of what is to come later in the story. Can you identify an example of foreshadowing from the beginning of "The Monkey's Paw" that suggests making wishes on the paw will lead to tragedy? Cite textual evidence from the selection to support your answer.
4. Find the word **consequence** in paragraph 44 of "The Monkey's Paw." Use context clues in the surrounding sentences, as well as the sentence in which the word appears, to determine the word's meaning. Write your definition here, and identify clues that helped you figure out its meaning.
5. Use context clues to determine the meaning of **compensation** as it is used in paragraph 93 of "The Monkey's Paw." Write your definition here, and identify clues that helped you figure out its meaning. Then check the meaning in a dictionary.

Skill: Theme

The Monkey's Paw

CHECKLIST

DISCUSS AND ANNOTATE

Authors of fiction use character, setting, and plot to develop themes. While you are reading, it is helpful to pay attention to these elements of a story and their relationship to the theme. Creating a summary of the text's topic, ideas, and elements can help narrow down the most important aspects of the story, which can then assist in identifying a theme.

To determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot, use the following questions as a guide:

- ✓ What is the central conflict? How is it introduced, developed, and resolved?
- ✓ How do the characters' responses and interactions highlight this conflict?
- ✓ How does the setting impact the characters and their actions?
- ✓ What do the characters learn through the resolution of the conflict?
- ✓ What is a message that the author seems to be trying to communicate through all of these elements?

Read and discuss the checklist. Then, use the checklist to read and annotate the text. Refer to the sample student annotations within the text.

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CCSS: RL.8.2

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THEME

Reread paragraphs 91–96 of “The Monkey’s Paw.” Then, using the checklist on the previous page, answer the multiple-choice questions below.

YOUR TURN

PRACTICE

This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A: Which of the following best describes a theme or central idea that is being developed in this passage?

- A. Nothing bad can happen from using magical talismans.
- B. Be careful what you wish for.
- C. Beware of strange men who come to give compensation.
- D. Family comes before wealth.

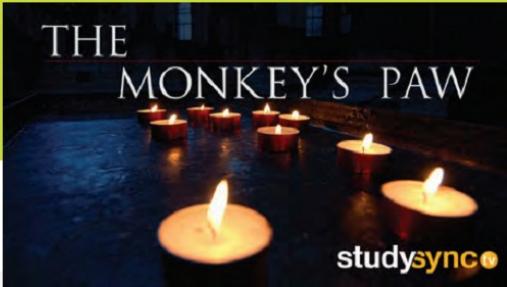
Part B: Which of the following sentences or phrases from the text best supports the answer to Part A?

- A. “There was no reply; the old woman’s face was white, her eyes staring, and her breath inaudible. . . .”
- B. “Unconscious of his wife’s shriek, the old man smiled faintly, put out his hands like a sightless man, and dropped, a senseless heap, to the floor.”
- C. “‘The firm wished me to convey their sincere sympathy with you in your great loss,’ he said, without looking round.”
- D. “‘Two hundred pounds,’ was the answer.”

CCSS: RL.8.2

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Reading & Writing Companion  39



Close Read

CCSS: RL.8.2; SL.8.1.D, SL.8.1.B

Reread “The Monkey’s Paw.” As you reread, use the Checklist for Theme on page 38 to analyze the text and make annotations. Then use your annotations, your own ideas and reactions to the text, and any other notes you have to participate in the discussion.

DISCUSSION

DISCUSS

Do you think the monkey’s paw could ever be used without causing death or despair? Why or why not? We see in “The Monkey’s Paw” that it brings pain and unhappiness, so why hasn’t it been destroyed? Consider the theme “beware of the dangerous unknown,” as well as how the White family discusses their curiosity about how their wish might be granted despite Sergeant-Major Morris’s warnings. How might this theme connect to the paw’s continued existence? Be sure to support your reasoning and ideas with specific evidence from the text as you discuss these questions.

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Ten Days in a Mad-House

INFORMATIONAL TEXT

Nellie Bly
1887

Introduction

In 1887, reporter Nellie Bly (1864–1922) went on an undercover assignment for a New York newspaper, the *World*, for which she feigned insanity in order to get committed to the Blackwell's Island Insane Asylum. Her exposé of the conditions inside the Women's Lunatic Asylum launched a criminal investigation that later led to an \$850,000 budget increase from the Department of Public Charities and Corrections. *Ten Days in a Mad-House* began as a series of newspaper articles and was eventually published as a book.

UNIT 1 Ten Days in a Mad-House

“At last the question of my sanity or insanity was to be decided.”

NOTES**Chapter IV: Judge Duffy and the Police****SAMPLE ANNOTATION****Connotation and Denotation**

Ragged means “messy,” but with stronger negative connotations. *Ragged* works better than a synonym like *unkempt* because I feel sorry that the children aren’t cared for. *Unkempt* would feel more distant, part of the dirty setting.

- 1 “Are you Nellie Brown?” asked the officer. I said I supposed I was. “Where do you come from?” he asked. I told him I did not know, and then Mrs. Stanard gave him a lot of information about me—told him how strangely I had acted at her home; how I had not slept a wink all night, and that in her opinion I was a poor unfortunate who had been driven crazy by inhuman treatment. There was some discussion between Mrs. Stanard and the two officers, and Tom Bockert was told to take us down to the court in a car.
- 2 “Come along,” Bockert said, “I will find your trunk¹ for you.” We all went together, Mrs. Stanard, Tom Bockert, and myself. I said it was very kind of them to go with me, and I should not soon forget them. As we walked along I kept up my refrain about my trunks, injecting occasionally some remark about the **dirty condition of the streets** and the curious character of the people we met on the way. “I don’t think I have ever seen such people before,” I said. “Who are they?” I asked, and my companions looked upon me with expressions of pity, evidently believing I was a foreigner, an emigrant or something of the sort. They told me that the people around me were working people. I remarked once more that I thought there were too many working people in the world for the amount of work to be done, at which remark Policeman P. T. Bockert eyed me closely, evidently thinking that my mind was gone for good. We passed several other policemen, who generally asked my sturdy guardians what was the matter with me. By this time quite a number of **ragged** children were following us too, and they passed remarks about me that were to me original as well as amusing.
- 3 “What’s she up for?” “Say, kop, where did ye get her?” “Where did yer pull ‘er?” “She’s a daisy!”
- 4 Poor Mrs. Stanard was more frightened than I was. The whole situation grew interesting, but I still had fears for my fate before the judge.
- 5 At last we came to a low building, and Tom Bockert kindly volunteered the information: “Here’s the express office. We shall soon find those trunks of yours.”

1. **trunk** (archaic) luggage consisting of a large strong case used when traveling or for storage

UNIT 1 Ten Days in a Mad-House

NOTES

- 6 The entrance to the building was surrounded by a curious crowd and I did not think my case was bad enough to permit me passing them without some remark, so I asked if all those people had lost their trunks.
- 7 "Yes," he said, "nearly all these people are looking for trunks."
- 8 I said, "They all seem to be foreigners, too." "Yes," said Tom, "they are all foreigners just landed. They have all lost their trunks, and it takes most of our time to help find them for them."
- 9 We entered the courtroom. It was the Essex Market Police Courtroom. At last the question of my sanity or insanity was to be decided. Judge Duffy sat behind the high desk, wearing a look which seemed to indicate that he was dealing out the milk of human kindness by wholesale. I rather feared I would not get the fate I sought, because of the kindness I saw on every line of his face, and it was with rather a sinking heart that I followed Mrs. Stanard as she answered the summons to go up to the desk, where Tom Bockert had just given an account of the affair.
- 10 "Come here," said an officer. "What is your name?"
- 11 "Nellie Brown," I replied, with a little accent. "I have lost my trunks, and would like if you could find them."
- 12 "When did you come to New York?" he asked.
- 13 "I did not come to New York," I replied (while I added, mentally, "because I have been here for some time.")
- 14 "But you are in New York now," said the man.
- 15 "No," I said, looking as **incredulous** as I thought a crazy person could, "I did not come to New York."
- 16 "That girl is from the west," he said, in a tone that made me tremble. "She has a western accent."
- 17 Someone else who had been listening to the brief dialogue here asserted that he had lived south and that my accent was southern, while another officer was positive it was eastern. I felt much relieved when the first spokesman turned to the judge and said:
- 18 "Judge, here is a peculiar case of a young woman who doesn't know who she is or where she came from. You had better attend to it at once."



The Essex Market Police Court, Essex Street, Lower East Side, New York City, circa 1857

UNIT 1 Ten Days in a Mad-House

- 19 I **commenced** to shake with more than the cold, and I looked around at the strange crowd about me, composed of poorly dressed men and women with stories printed on their faces of hard lives, abuse and poverty. Some were consulting eagerly with friends, while others sat still with a look of utter hopelessness. Everywhere was a sprinkling of well-dressed, well-fed officers watching the scene passively and almost **indifferently**. It was only an old story with them. One more unfortunate added to a long list which had long since ceased to be of any interest or concern to them.
- 20 "Come here, girl, and lift your veil," called out Judge Duffy, in tones which surprised me by a harshness which I did not think from the kindly face he possessed.
- 21 "Who are you speaking to?" I inquired, in my stateliest manner.
- 22 "Come here, my dear, and lift your veil. You know the Queen of England, if she were here, would have to lift her veil," he said, very kindly.
- 23 "That is much better," I replied. "I am not the Queen of England, but I'll lift my veil."
- 24 As I did so the little judge looked at me, and then, in a very kind and gentle tone, he said: "My dear child, what is wrong?"
- 25 "Nothing is wrong except that I have lost my trunks, and this man," indicating Policeman Bockert, "promised to bring me where they could be found."
- 26 "What do you know about this child?" asked the judge, sternly, of Mrs. Stanard, who stood, pale and trembling, by my side.
- 27 "I know nothing of her except that she came to the home yesterday and asked to remain overnight."
- 28 "The home! What do you mean by the home?" asked Judge Duffy, quickly.
- 29 "It is a temporary home kept for working women at No. 84 Second Avenue."
- 30 "What is your position there?"
- 31 "I am assistant matron."²
- 32 "Well, tell us all you know of the case."
- 33 "When I was going into the home yesterday I noticed her coming down the avenue. She was all alone. I had just got into the house when the bell rang and she came in. When I talked with her she wanted to know if she could stay all night, and I said she could. After awhile she said all the people in the house looked crazy, and she was afraid of them. Then she would not go to bed, but sat up all the night."

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2. **matron** a woman in charge of managing students at a school or residents of a boarding house

UNIT 1 Ten Days in a Mad-House

NOTES

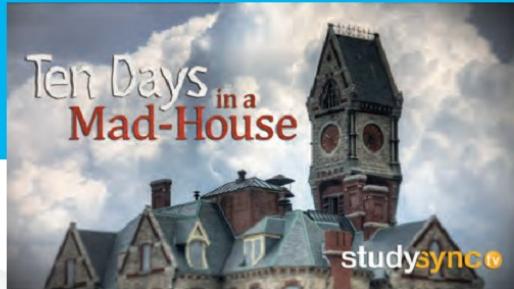
- 34 "Had she any money?"
- 35 "Yes," I replied, answering for her, "I paid her for everything, and the eating was the worst I ever tried."
- 36 There was a general smile at this, and some murmurs of "She's not so crazy on the food question."
- 37 "Poor child," said Judge Duffy, "she is well dressed, and a lady. Her English is perfect, and I would stake everything on her being a good girl. I am positive she is somebody's darling."
- 38 At this announcement everybody laughed, and I put my handkerchief over my face and endeavored to choke the laughter that threatened to spoil my plans, in despite of my **resolutions**.
- 39 "I mean she is some woman's darling," hastily amended the judge. "I am sure someone is searching for her. Poor girl, I will be good to her, for she looks like my sister, who is dead."
- 40 There was a hush for a moment after this announcement, and the officers glanced at me more kindly, while I silently blessed the kind-hearted judge, and hoped that any poor creatures who might be afflicted as I pretended to be should have as kindly a man to deal with as Judge Duffy.
- 41 "I wish the reporters were here," he said at last. "They would be able to find out something about her."
- 42 I got very much frightened at this, for if there is anyone who can ferret out a mystery it is a reporter. I felt that I would rather face a mass of expert doctors, policemen, and detectives than two bright specimens of my craft, so I said:
- 43 "I don't see why all this is needed to help me find my trunks. These men are **impudent**, and I do not want to be stared at. I will go away. I don't want to stay here."
- 44 So saying, I pulled down my veil and secretly hoped the reporters would be detained elsewhere until I was sent to the asylum.
- 45 "I don't know what to do with the poor child," said the worried judge. "She must be taken care of."
- 46 "Send her to the Island," suggested one of the officers.
- 47 "Oh, don't!" said Mrs. Stanard, in evident alarm. "Don't! She is a lady and it would kill her to be put on the Island."
- 48 For once I felt like **shaking the good woman**. To think the Island was just the place I wanted to reach and here she was trying to keep me from going there! It was very kind of her, but rather provoking under the circumstances.

SAMPLE ANNOTATION

Connotation
and Denotation

Provoking has negative connotations. *Bly* knows that Mrs. Stanard is being "kind," but *Bly* conveys how worried she is that Mrs. Stanard will ruin her plan. *Provoking* is a better choice than *annoying* because it shows stronger emotion.

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First Read

CCSS: RI.8.1; L.8.4.A

Read *Ten Days in a Mad-House*. After you read, complete the Think Questions below.

THINK QUESTIONS

WRITE

1. Nellie Bly is a reporter. Who does she pretend to be, and why? Cite textual evidence from the selection to support your answer.
2. How does Bly alter her behavior to convince Mrs. Stanard, Tom Bockert, and the officers that she is mentally ill? Cite textual evidence from the selection to support your answer.
3. Write two to three sentences describing how Bly reacts to the judge's questions and comments.
4. Use context clues to determine the meaning of **indifferently** as it is used in paragraph 19 of the excerpt from *Ten Days in a Mad-House*. Write your definition here, and identify clues that helped you figure out its meaning.
5. Use context clues to determine the meaning of **impudent** as it is used in paragraph 43 of the excerpt from *Ten Days in a Mad-House*. Write your definition here, and identify clues that helped you figure out the word's meaning. Then check the meaning in a dictionary.

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Skill: Connotation and Denotation

Ten Days in a Mad-House

CHECKLIST

DISCUSS AND ANNOTATE

The denotation of a word is its dictionary definition. The connotation of a word is the association, idea, or feeling that a word suggests, as influenced by culture or emotions.

To better understand and determine the meanings of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including connotative meanings, use the following questions:

- ✓ What is the denotative meaning of the word or phrase?
- ✓ What other words or phrases can I use to describe the meaning of the word?
- ✓ Does the word seem positive, negative, or neutral in context?
- ✓ How can I use details within the text to help determine a connotative meaning?
- ✓ Do words with similar denotative meanings have the same connotation, or do the connotations differ?
- ✓ If I substitute a synonym based on denotation, is the meaning the same? How does it change the meaning of the text?

Read and discuss the checklist. Then, use the checklist to read and annotate the text. Refer to the sample student annotations within the text.

CONNOTATION AND DENOTATION

Reread paragraph 38 of *Ten Days in a Mad-House*. Then, using the checklist on the previous page, answer the multiple-choice questions below.

YOUR TURN

PRACTICE

1. Which of the following best explains the connotation of *endeavored* in the context of paragraph 38?
 - A. *Endeavored* has a negative connotation here because it has the same denotation or meaning as *tried*.
 - B. *Endeavored* has a positive connotation here because it conveys the humor of this lighthearted moment in Bly's account.
 - C. *Endeavored* has a negative connotation here because it suggests that Bly is deceiving the people around her.
 - D. *Endeavored* has a positive connotation here because it expresses Bly's effort to stay believable in her role.

2. Which of the following best explains why *resolutions* is a more effective word choice than a synonym such as *wishes* or *intentions*?
 - A. *Resolutions* has a positive connotation that implies commitment to specific choices.
 - B. *Resolutions* has a negative connotation, but *wishes* and *intentions* have positive connotations.
 - C. *Resolutions* has a positive connotation that expresses the author's self-centered nature as a reporter.
 - D. *Resolutions* has a positive connotation that implies a desire to make a good impression on others.

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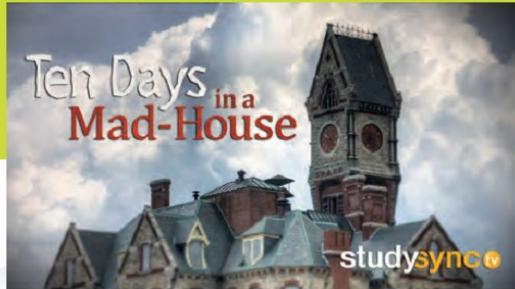
CCSS: RI.8.4; L.8.5.C

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Close Read

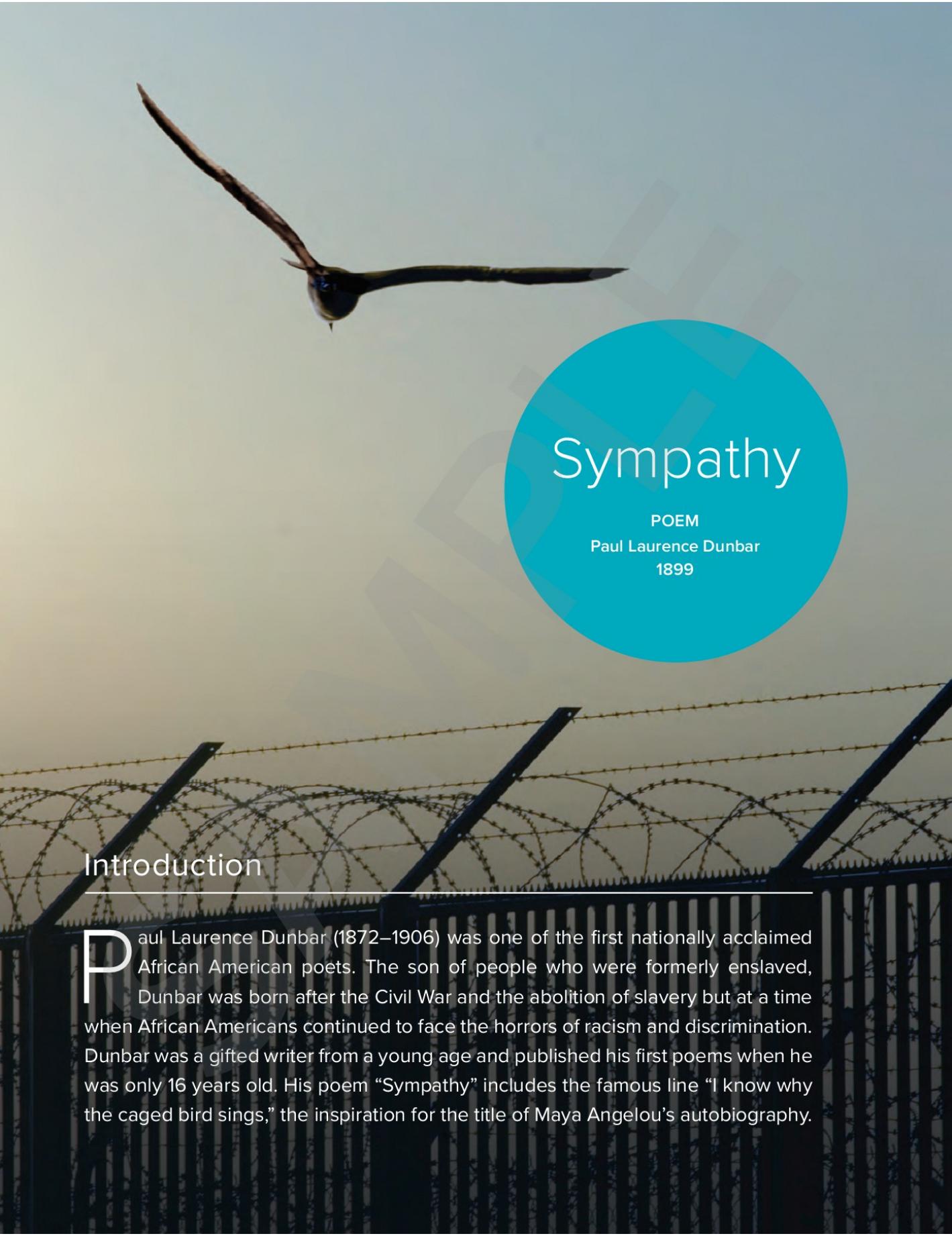
CCSS: RI.8.1, RI.8.4; L.8.5.C; W.8.2.A, W.8.2.B, W.8.4

Reread *Ten Days in a Mad-House*. As you reread, use the Checklist for Connotation and Denotation on page 47 to analyze the text and make annotations. Then use your annotations, your own ideas and reactions to the text, and any other notes you have to complete the Write activity.

INFORMATIVE

WRITE

Nellie Bly wrote *Ten Days in a Mad-House* in order to expose the conditions inside the Women's Lunatic Asylum. From her account, what can you infer about Nellie Bly's work as a journalist? How do her descriptions of her experience help readers empathize with her interest in the assignment? Consider the connotations and denotations of her word choices in describing the experience of acting insane enough to be sent to the asylum for the sake of journalism.

The background of the page features a photograph of a bird in flight against a clear blue sky. Below the sky, there is a dark, silhouetted barbed-wire fence.

Sympathy

POEM

Paul Laurence Dunbar
1899

Introduction

Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906) was one of the first nationally acclaimed African American poets. The son of people who were formerly enslaved, Dunbar was born after the Civil War and the abolition of slavery but at a time when African Americans continued to face the horrors of racism and discrimination. Dunbar was a gifted writer from a young age and published his first poems when he was only 16 years old. His poem “Sympathy” includes the famous line “I know why the caged bird sings,” the inspiration for the title of Maya Angelou’s autobiography.

“I know what the caged bird feels!”



- 1 I know what the caged bird feels, **alas!**
- 2 When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;
- 3 When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,
- 4 And the river flows like a stream of glass;
- 5 When the first bird sings and the first bud opes,¹
- 6 And the faint perfume from its **chalice** steals—
- 7 I know what the caged bird feels!

- 8 I know why the caged bird beats his wing
- 9 Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;
- 10 For he must fly back to his perch and cling
- 11 When he fain² would be on the **bough** a-swing;
- 12 And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars
- 13 And they pulse again with a **keener** sting—
- 14 I know why he beats his wing!

- 15 I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,
- 16 When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore,—
- 17 When he beats his bars and he would be free;
- 18 It is not a carol of joy or glee,
- 19 But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core,
- 20 But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings—
- 21 I know why the caged bird sings!

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From SYMPATHY by Paul Laurence Dunbar, Copyright © 2014 by Poetry Foundation.

1. **opes** an archaic way of saying “opens”
2. **fain** gladly

UNIT 1 Sympathy**COMPARE AND CONTRAST**

WRITE

Nellie Bly wants to access a “mad-house” from which other people would want to escape. The speaker of Paul Laurence Dunbar’s poem “Sympathy” shows support for people who feel trapped or imprisoned. Why did each of these authors write these texts? How does each author convey a struggle through the language they chose to use? Compare and contrast the details as well as connotative and denotative meanings of words in each text that reveal the reasons each author wrote their work. Be sure to include specific evidence from both texts to support your comparison.

CCSS: RL.8.1, RL.8.4; L.8.5.C; W.8.2.A, W.8.2.B

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