

## Supplemental Studies Available for High School



# *Implications of the Short Story*

VANGUARD  
EDITION

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### CONSCIENCE — HOW DOES IT ENERGIZE US?

Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity.

— Horace Mann (1796–1859)

|                   |                         |    |
|-------------------|-------------------------|----|
| Sarah Orne Jewett | <b>The White Heron</b>  | ?  |
| Fyodor Dostoevsky | <b>The Honest Thief</b> | ?? |

### EGOISM — HOW DOES IT DIMINISH US?

Egotism is usually subversive of sagacity.

— Marianne Moore (1887–1972)

|                  |                              |    |
|------------------|------------------------------|----|
| Saki             | <b>The Cobweb</b>            | ?? |
| Luigi Pirandello | <b>A Character's Tragedy</b> | ?? |

### PREJUDICE — HOW DOES IT INJURE US?

Justice is conscience, not a personal conscience but the conscience of the whole of humanity. Those who clearly recognize the voice of their own conscience usually recognize also the voice of justice.

— Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1918–)

|                          |                       |    |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|----|
| William Somerset Maugham | <b>The Outstation</b> | ?? |
| Alan Paton               | <b>Ha'penny</b>       | ?? |

## PREFACE TO THE TEACHER

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The fifteen short stories found in this volume provide enjoyable reading experiences, foster critical and analytical thinking skills, and assist students in the acquisition of expertise in language arts. In its own inimitable fashion, each story meets every one of these often-elusive requirements.

The unique TextWord format, used throughout this and all TextWord textbooks, meticulously guides students through each selection from the first sentence to the last, cultivating high-level reading comprehension, honing the thinking process, and developing maximum language arts proficiency. The in-depth questioning techniques, challenging writing assignments, and extensive vocabulary exercises following each selection reinforce all these essential skills.

The selections themselves have been chosen because most of them have universal messages. Without exception, each story deals with a significant aspect of the human experience. Of one thing we are sure — all of them can, and should, serve as springboards for insightful and stimulating classroom discussions.

The ability to read cogently is an invaluable skill that, nurtured and cultivated, can serve as a passport to a lifetime of rich analytical thought. Understanding the implications of what we read enables us to recognize life's challenges and issues, which, in turn, gives rise to the healthy development of varied opinions, viewpoints, and perspectives. The thinking individual needs mental challenge. The Pathfinder Edition of *Implications of the Short Story* fulfills that need.

short-story writers such as Washington Irving, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Edgar Allan Poe are considered innovators of the genre. They in turn were followed by Russian, British, and French authors such as Anton Chekhov, Nikolai Gogol, Leo Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Thomas Hardy, H. G. Wells, Charles Dickens, Honore de Balzac, and Guy du Maupassant, to name just a representative sampling of writers who are still recognized today for their outstanding contributions to the world of letters. They and other famous 19th-century American short-story authors such as Herman Melville, O. Henry, Mark Twain, Kate Chopin, Mary Wilkes Freeman, Willa Cather, Edith Wharton, Hamlin Garland, W.W. Jacobs, and Frank Stockton produced literature in which plot and setting play a greater role than character development or psychological evaluation. On the other hand, we should not forget that many of these same 19th-century authors, such as Wharton, Chopin, and Freeman, can also be viewed as forerunners of the 20th-century world, a world marked by the innovative intersection of the fields of psychology and literature, as represented by later writers such as James Joyce, Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf, Shirley Jackson, and others.

### ELEMENTS OF THE SHORT STORY

What distinguishes a short story from a novella, a novel, or an essay? According to Edgar Allan Poe, if a work of fiction *cannot* be read in one sitting, then it no longer can be called a short story. In addition, a short story usually focuses on one incident, contains a single unified plot and setting, features a limited number of characters, and takes place over a short period of time. Thus, an authentically constructed short story — the result of conscious craftsmanship — tends to have a distinct beginning, middle, and end.

A good short story synthesizes conflict, plot, setting, theme, and characterization. Each of these elements is important in itself. Combined, they unite to form a vibrant whole that entertains and edifies at the same time.

Listed below are terms that are frequently used when the short-story genre is discussed. It is important to remember, though, that these literary characteristics and devices comprise the necessary components of many other literary genres and can serve to enhance the reading experience offered by novels, plays, some forms of nonfiction, as well as short stories.

- ▶ **CONFLICT** — the struggle between two opposing forces. Conflict may arise externally — between two (or more) characters, between a character and society, or between a character (or characters) and the natural world — or internally, within a character as he or she attempts to make a decision, carries out an action, or comes to grips with a personal, moral, or emotional conflict.

- ▶ **VERBAL IRONY** — the character says one thing and means another.
- ▶ **SITUATIONAL IRONY** — the turn of events is exactly the opposite of what is expected.
- ▶ **DRAMATIC IRONY** — the reader knows more about the actual situation than the character does, as occurs in many dramas.
- ▶ **STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS** — allows the literary characters being depicted to express an uninterrupted stream of thoughts. Thus, the reader is treated to an inside view of the evolving mental processes of the characters. This shifting sequence of thoughts and feelings highlights conflicts, issues, and emotions in a realistic fashion. In many ways this technique invites the reader to step into the minds of the characters through doors that have been left wide open!
- ▶ **FIGURES OF SPEECH** — useful literary devices such as simile, metaphor, personification, synecdoche, paradox, and oxymoron promote appreciation of rich, vivid linguistic imagery. Figures of speech include:
  - ▶ **SIMILE** — an expression of similarity between two items, achieved by using the words *like* or *as*.
  - ▶ **METAPHOR** — an analogy that hints at a comparison rather than openly stating it.
  - ▶ **PERSONIFICATION** — human characteristics such as emotions and personalities that are ascribed to animals and inanimate objects.
  - ▶ **SYNECHDOCHE** — in which the part stands for the whole — as in the use of the word *hand* to represent *worker* — or the whole for the part — as in the use of the word *cannon* to represent *artillery*.
  - ▶ **PARADOX** — a statement that effectively transmits an important thesis using an unexpected blend of contradictory concepts for emphasis or to draw attention to a specific situation.
  - ▶ **OXYMORON** — a brief paradox, usually expressed in one or two words, combining apparently contradictory terms, as in *bittersweet*.

What is Twain satirizing in the first sentence?

A. He is satirizing the red tape and bureaucracy that usually accompany the appointment of commissions and their representatives.

## Some Learned Fables, for Good Old Boys and Girls

Mark Twain

FOCUS: SATIRE

### Part I

#### HOW THE ARMIES OF THE WOOD SENT OUT A SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION

Once the creatures of the forest held a great convention and appointed a commission consisting of the most *illustrious* scientists among them to go forth, clear beyond the forest and out into the unknown and unexplored world, to verify the truth of the matters already taught in their schools and colleges and also to make discoveries. It was the most imposing enterprise of the kind the nation had ever embarked in. True, the government had once sent Dr. Bull Frog, with a picked crew, to hunt for a northwesterly passage through the swamp to the right-hand corner of the wood, and had since sent out many expeditions to hunt for Dr. Bull Frog, but they never could find him, and so government finally gave him up and *croaked* his mother to show its gratitude for the services her son had rendered to science. And once government sent Sir Grass Hopper to hunt for the sources\* of the rill\*

What is Twain satirizing in the first sentence?

*ILLUSTRIOUS*  
ILLUSTRIATIONS

*SOURCES* — here, carrying pipes.  
*rill* — a very small brook.

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that emptied into the swamp, and afterward sent out many expeditions to hunt for Sir Grass, and at last they were successful — they found his body, but if he had discovered the sources meantime, he did not let on. So government acted handsomely by deceased, and many envied his funeral.



13 In what way is Twain satirical in this passage?

14 Why does Twain state that the hunt for Sir Grass was finally successful?

15 Why do others envy Sir Grass Hopper's funeral? Why is this ironic?

## A CLOSER LOOK

Between 1750 and 1900, European and North American governments, and wealthy individuals, sponsored scientific **expeditions** all over the world. Acclaimed naturalists, academics, cartographers, and geographers visited sparsely inhabited regions, such as Tanzania, the Arctic, Africa, and the Amazon River, and brought back countless specimens of plants, animals, and cultural artifacts. Many of them wrote of their adventures and discoveries, much to the delight of 19th-century arm-chair readers. One famous account was written by journalist Henry Stanley, who published details of his search for Dr. David Livingstone in the heart of Africa.

Dr. Bull Frog's tragic expedition to find a **northwesterly passage** through the swamp satirizes actual events. In 1846, a 120-man British crew sailed two well-stocked ships into the Atlantic Ocean, searching for a viable northwest passage to the Pacific Ocean through the Arctic Sea. The men never returned, and later search parties discovered only their bones. In 1850, another British team of explorers set out to locate a northwestern passage, but they, too, failed. Rescue missions discovered them trapped by the ice and dangerously close to starvation.

But these expeditions were *trifles* compared with the present one: for this one *comprised* among its servants the very greatest among the learned, and besides it was to go to the utterly unvisited regions believed to lie

SOME LEARNED FABLES, FOR GOOD OLD BOYS AND GIRLS 139

In what way is Twain satirical in this passage?

A. Twain mocks a government that not only finances an exploratory expedition, but is also later compelled to mount an expedition in search of the lost explorers!

Why does Twain state that the hunt for Sir Grass was finally successful?

A. It seems as if what Sir Grass discovers is less important than the fact that his body is finally found.

Why do others envy Sir Grass Hopper's funeral? Why is this ironic?

A. The government gives him an extravagant hero's burial. Envying the dead for the posthumous recognition of their deeds is ridiculous. How ironic to be given an elaborate funeral if the recipient cannot enjoy the "handsome" actions of the government. As far as the "many" who envied his funeral, would it not have been better had they appreciated him and his achievements while he was still alive?

- 13 Dr. David Livingstone (1813–1873) was among the first Westerners to explore Africa. He wished to bring Western-style culture and trade to the natives, and spent much of his life trekking through the continent. He wished to abolish the slave trade and introduce Christianity. In 1866, he began his search for the source of the Nile River. Search parties were sent out after several years had passed without word from him. Henry Stanley, a noted journalist, found Livingstone and greeted him with the now-famous words, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume." Livingstone died in Africa; his embalmed body was returned to England and he was buried in Westminster Abbey.



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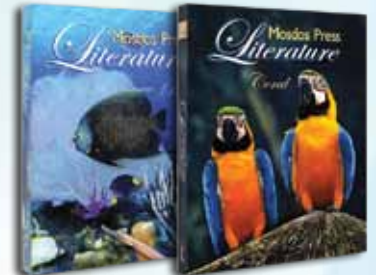
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