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Unit One: Courage • Exploring Elements of a Story

Elements of a Story—plot, character, setting, and theme—are introduced in this unit. The first selection introduces students to the basic structer of a story. In each of the four prose works that follow, the elements of plot, character, setting, and theme are explored.

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SELECTION	Genre • Unit Theme	Literary Element	Eyes On	WORKBOOK
Samuel's Choice Richard Berleth p. 16 Lesson in Literature What is a Story? p. 14	Historical Fiction Unit Theme—Courage: This work of Revolutionary War fiction explores the courageous choices Samuel, a black slave, makes. Readers realize that choice is equated with freedom.	Asking the question "What is a story?" For students to understand the literary elements of a piece of literature, they must first be introduced to the basic concept of what makes a story a story.	Eyes OnHistorical Fiction and the Elements of a Story: Explanation of exposition, setting, rising action, turning point, climax, falling action, resolution	Pp. 1-6 • Vocabulary, I: p. 1 • Vocabulary, II: p. 2 • Comp. Questions: pp. 3-4 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 5-6
Slower Than the Rest Cynthia Rylant p. 34 Lesson inLiterature What is Plot? p. 32	Contemporary Fiction Unit Theme—Courage: The need to respect the unique abilities of each and every individual is explored in this story. The courage of a young boy shines as his best is recognized.	Exploring plot In this simple but realistic story, students will easily identify the literary elements of plot. Language Alert: Discussion of "then" and "than"	Eyes OnPlot Exposition Characters: internal/external conflict Setting Rising action Climax Falling action Resolution	Pp. 7-12 • Vocabulary, I: p. 7 • Vocabulary, II: p. 8 • Comp. Questions: pp. 9-10 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 11-12
Rate Shelley Robert D. San Souci p. 44 Lesson in Literature What is Character? p. 42	Historical Nonfiction Unit Theme—Courage: In this work of historical nonfiction, Kate Shelley shows us the courage it takes to be responsible for the welfare of many.	Exploring character In this character-driven piece, students will identify the literary elements an author uses to develop a story's character. Language Alert: Word etymology	Eyes Onthe Character	Pp. 13-18 • Vocabulary, I: p. 13 • Vocabulary, II: p. 14 • Comp. Questions: pp. 15-16 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 17-18
New Providence The Townscape Institute p. 64 Lesson in Literature Setting p. 62	A Graphic Story Unit Theme—Courage: This graphic story demonstrates the courage and resiliency a town has to recognize its past and build on it for its future survival.	Exploring setting (place, time, mood) The literary elements of setting are essential to understanding the theme of a piece. Students will understand how critical setting is, as they read this unique graphic story.	Eyes OnSetting Recognizing the recorded details of the physical features of setting	Pp. 19-24 • Vocabulary, I: p. 19 • Vocabulary, II: p. 20 • Comp. Questions: pp. 21-22 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 23-24
The Silent Lobby Mildred Pitts Walter p. 82 Lesson in Literature Theme p. 80	Realistic Fiction Unit Theme—Courage: This work of realistic fiction embraces the determination and courage of the human spirit, as a group of black citizens lobby for their civil right to vote.	Exploring theme How one feels after reading a strong work of realistic fiction is how we get to theme. This piece will help students begin to define the literary elements of theme.	• Eyes OnTheme (Review elements of theme: TE, page 15)	Pp. 25-30 • Vocabulary, I: p. 25 • Vocabulary, II: p. 26 • Comp. Questions: pp. 27-28 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 29-30
To a Daughter Leaving Home Linda Pastan, p. 96 Whatif Shel Silverstein, p. 97 The Whippoorwill Calls Beverly McLoughland, p. 98 Figures in the Field Against the Sky AntonioMachado, p. 99	Poetry Style: Free Verse Poetry Style: Rhyming Verse Biographical Poem Style: Free Verse Poetry Style: Free Verse	Extended metaphor Personification Onomatopoeia; stanza; repetition of rhythm Repetition of consonant and vowel sounds	Eyes OnFirst-Person Voice Eyes OnRhyming Verse with a Semi-Regular Rhythm Eyes OnBiographical Poem, Third-Person Voice, and Stanzas Eyes OnRepetition in Free Verse	

Unit Two: Growing • Exploring Elements of Plot

Elements of Plot—conflict, sequence, cause and effect, and predicting outcome—are taught in this unit. As students explore a variety of genre, they will be guided toward understanding how the attributes of plot are the foundation to understanding literature.

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SELECTION	Genre • Unit Theme	Literary Element	Eyes On	WORKBOOK
Gold-Mounted Guns F. R. Buckley p. 110 Lesson inLiterature Conflict p. 108	Wild West Fiction Unit Theme—Growing: An encounter with a stranger changes the course of a young man's life. He grows to understand the results of his actions, and the pain he can cause others.	Exploring conflict in plot Conflict is the essence of theme. Students are introduced to the most basic literary elements of plot—conflict. Identifying and understanding conflict will ultimately help students recognize theme.	Eyes OnExternal Conflict Internal conflict as it leads to revelatory ending	Pp. 31-36 • Vocabulary, I: p. 31 • Vocabulary, II: p. 32 • Comp. Questions: pp. 33-34 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 35-36
The Disappearing Man Isaac Asimov p. 128 Lesson in Literature Sequence p. 126	Contemporary Mystery Unit Theme—Growing: In this contemporary mystery, growth is attained through deductive reasoning and careful thought.	Understanding plot Students will be taught how to sequence the events in a plot. Plotting sequence will lead to recognizing the literary elements of exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.	Eyes OnSequence Understanding the most important points to include when trying to outline the sequence of events in a story	Pp. 37-42 • Vocabulary, I: p. 37 • Vocabulary, II: p. 38 • Comp. Questions: pp. 39-40 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 41-42
The Speckled Hen's Egg Natalie Savage Carlson p. 140 Lesson in Literature Cause and Effect p. 138	Fable Unit Theme—Growing: In this fable, a silly woman's self-centered vanity leads her on an adventure that ultimately reveals her weaknesses, and helps her grow and improve.	Understanding cause and effect as it aids analyzing plot Understanding the characteristic components of folktales Defining types of folktales What is a legend?	Eyes OnCause and Effect Learning to recognize cause and effect in literature	Pp. 43-48 • Vocabulary, I: p. 43 • Vocabulary, II: p. 44 • Comp. Questions: pp. 45-46 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 47-48
The Black Stallion Walter Farley p. 156 Lesson in Literature Predicting p. 154	Adventure Fiction Unit Theme—Growing: A boy's kindness and his selfless actions in saving a black stallion reveals the theme of growth.	Understanding and recognizing foreshadowing Students are taught to recognize the clues that lead to an author's intention.	Eyes OnPredicting Teaching students the best way to predict outcome by searching for clues in a work of fiction	Pp. 49-54 • Vocabulary, I: p. 49 • Vocabulary, II: p. 50 • Comp. Questions: pp. 51-52 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 53-54
By the Shores of Silver Lake Laura Ingalls Wilder p. 180 Lesson in Literature Unit Review p. 178	Memoir Unit Theme—Growing: In this childhood memoir, Laura overcomes her fears. We see a family grow through honest communication, and they ultimately find their homestead.	Reviewing literary components in Unit 2 This important review lays the groundwork for the next unit's exploration of the literary element of character. Students will understand that a story's character develops within the framework of plot.	Eyes OnPulling It All Together Helping students see how the literary elements of conflict, sequence, cause and effect, and predicting work together to understand plot	Pp. 55-60 • Vocabulary, I: p. 55 • Vocabulary, II: p. 56 • Comp. Questions: pp. 57-58 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 59-60
A Niche in the Kitchen Ouida Sebestyen p. 194	Narrative Poetry Style: Free Verse	The components of plot, character, setting, and theme are introduced in the first seven lines of this free verse poem.	Eyes OnFree Verse, First Person, Narrative Poetry	

Unit three: Aiming High • Exploring Elements of Character

Elements of Character—conflict, a character's dialogue, and point of view—are taught in this unit. As students explore how we get to know a character in a work of literature, they will understand how an author uses a character's actions and reactions to tell the ster

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SELECTION	Genre • Unit Theme	Literary Element	Eyes On	WORKBOOK
Gramp Joan Tate p. 208 Lesson inLiterature Character p. 206	Contemporary Fiction Unit Theme—Aiming High: In spite of obstacles, a young boy keeps trying to help his beloved grandfather. Simon does not accept defeat as he aims high towards a solution.	How do we get to know a character? This selection will help students understand how an author uses the interaction between characters, characters' moods, and dialogue to tell the story.	Eyes OnCharacter Helping students understand how they get to know a character through adjectives used in the narrative, dialogue, character's thoughts (internal dialogue), and character's actions	Pp. 61-66 • Vocabulary, I: p. 61 • Vocabulary, II: p. 62 • Comp. Questions: pp. 63-64 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 65-66
After School V. Zheleznikov p. 236 Lesson inLiterature Conflict p. 234	Russian Fiction Unit Theme—Aiming High: As a young boy helps a little girl in this story, the reader will see that compassion and understanding can be attributes of aiming high.	Categorizing conflict in fiction Students will identify the conflict in a work of literature, and in doing so, will be able to discuss the theme the writer is revealing.	Eyes OnInternal and External Conflict Categorizing external/ internal conflict to help isolate single qualities, ideas, and events Understanding a character's conflict helps the reader understand the author's intent	Pp. 67-72 • Vocabulary, I: p. 67 • Vocabulary, II: p. 68 • Comp. Questions: pp. 69-70 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 71-72
One Throw W. C. Heinz p. 248 Lesson in Literature Dialogue p. 246	Sports Fiction Unit Theme—Aiming High: Refusing to compromise his personal ethics, the main character in this story shows us to aim high for professional success, one must have integrity.	Recognizing revelatory ending Students will learn to use varied verbs associated with vocal expression—for example, gasped, uttered, and declared—in their own writing.	Eyes OnDialogue Students will recognize how dialogue introduces the reader to characters and their basic conflicts.	Pp. 73-78 • Vocabulary, I: p. 73 • Vocabulary, II: p. 74 • Comp. Questions: pp. 75-76 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 77-78
The Birds' Peace Jean Craighead George p. 262 Lesson in Literature A Character's Inner Thoughts p. 260	Contemporary Fiction Unit Theme—Aiming High: Aiming to accept her situation, a young girl matures as she calls upon her personal strength and finds peace.	Understanding the device of "the one-person dialogue" Students will recognize that a conversation with a non-verbal listener is a technique an author uses to tell the story.	Eyes OnWhen a Character Speaks to Someone Who Can't Answer Helping students understand that verbalizing emotions and anxiety can lead to a problem's solution	Pp. 79-84 • Vocabulary, I: p. 79 • Vocabulary, II: p. 80 • Comp. Questions: pp. 81-82 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 83-84
Hattie's Birthday Box Pam Conrad p. 270 Lesson inLiterature Point of View and Narration p. 268	Fiction as Memoir Unit Theme—Aiming High: In this uplifting story of the strength of the human spirit and enduring love of two siblings, aiming high for a productive life takes on several meanings.	Students learn the concept of a story within a story, a technique authors use to bring greater detail and background to a work of fiction.	Eyes OnChanging Point of View Understanding the use of past tense and the changing voice of the narrator in a story	Pp. 85-90 • Vocabulary, I: p. 85 • Vocabulary, II: p. 86 • Comp. Questions: pp. 87-88 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 89-90
The Whimbrel Colin Thiele p. 284 Lesson in Literature Pulling It All Together p. 282	Fiction Unit Theme—Aiming High: Aiming to care for the creatures of the world, two people take practical steps to assist an injured animal.	This review of the literary components primary to character development is an important stepping stone to identifying conflict and defining theme.	Eyes OnPulling It All Together Recognizing the techniques an author uses to help the reader get to know a character	Pp. 91-96 • Vocabulary, I: p. 91 • Vocabulary, II: p. 92 • Comp. Questions: pp. 93-94 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 95-96

I Am Winding Through a Maze	Concrete Poem	 Eyes OnConcrete or Form 	
Jack Prelutsky, p. 302	Style: Form Poem	Poems. Concrete poetry	
A Tooter Tutor Carolyn Wells, p. 302	• Limerick	looks like what it is.	
A Bear in Reverse Anonymous, p. 303	• Limerick	Eyes OnLimerick	
74th Street Myra CohnLivingston, p. 304	Poem Style: Free Verse		
This Is the Day June Crebbin, p. 305	• Poetry	• Eyes OnMetaphor, Rhythm	
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Unit four: The World Around Us • Exploring Elements of Setting

Elements of Setting—mood, imagery, language, conflict, dialogue, and reading drama—are taught in this unit. As students explore the many elements of setting, they will understand how an author uses setting and how characters interact to tell the styr

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SELECTION	Genre • Unit Theme	Literary Element	Eyes On	WORKBOOK
The Day of the Turtle Michael Morpurgo p. 316 Lesson in Literature Mood p. 314	Fiction as Told Through a Diary Unit Theme—The World Around Us: The mood of this story takes all the forms of human emotion as a girl and her elderly friend help a beached turtle back to sea.	Students are taught how setting and a character's external conflict creates tension and suspense in fiction. Language Alert: Exploring the use of lie, lay, and lain	Eyes OnMood Teaching that mood is established by setting, characterization, conflict, dialogue, events, and plot The mood of a story takes all the forms of human emotion	Pp. 97-102 • Vocabulary, I: p. 97 • Vocabulary, II: p. 98 • Comp. Questions: pp. 99-100 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 101-102
Prairie Fire Laura Ingalls Wilder p. 332 Lesson in Literature Imagery p. 330	Memoir Unit Theme—The World Around Us: In this story of strong family values at work, we see a family whose lives are filled with hard labor and basic pleasures as they strive to settle their land.	Understanding how vividly drawn images enable us to see the setting and the characters, as well as enable us to visualize external conflict. Students recognize that vivid images can convey strong emotions.	Eyes OnVivid Images Teaching how nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs work together to create the language of vivid images Understanding repetition of ideas and onomatopoeia	Pp. 103-108 • Vocabulary, I: p. 103 • Vocabulary, II: p. 104 • Comp. Questions: pp. 105-106 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 107-108
How to Bring Up a Lion Rudyard Kipling p. 346 Lesson in Literature Paraphrasing p. 344	 Fiction Genre Alert: Review of folktales, fables, parables, and legends Unit Theme—The World Around Us: Can a wild animal be a pet? The children in this story learn to understand their world as they raise a baby lion. 	Students practice restating and rewriting in their own words by using this simple fable-like tale.	Eyes OnParaphrasing Teaching students the essential tool of paraphrasing to enable them to use the writings of others without direct quotes	Pp. 109-114 • Vocabulary, I: p. 109 • Vocabulary, II: p. 110 • Comp. Questions: pp. 111-112 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 113-114
The Streets are Free Kurusa p. 364 Lesson inLiterature Establishing Setting p. 362	 Play Based on Real Events Unit Theme—The World Around Us: With the help of a respected librarian, children bring about change in their world, as they campaign for a new park. 	Reviewing drama format Language Alert: Learning the Spanish words, their pronunciation, and English translation present in the play's dialogue	• Eyes OnDrama	Pp. 115-120 • Vocabulary, I: p. 115 • Vocabulary, II: p. 116 • Comp. Questions: pp. 117-118 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 119-120
One Day in the Desert Jean Craighead George p. 384 Lesson in Literature Pulling It All Together p. 384	Nonfiction Science/Environmental Unit Theme—The World Around Us: This piece about the natural world shows us a working ecosystem. We learn to understand the inter- dependence of all species.	Helping students understand the balance between a story and scientific information Students learn how all the elements of setting work together in this environmental narrative.	Eyes OnPulling It All Together Recognizing all of the elements of storytelling that have been previously discussed, particularly the elements of setting	Pp. 121-126 • Vocabulary, I: p. 121 • Vocabulary, II: p. 122 • Comp. Questions: pp. 123-124 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 125-126

Choose a Color Jacqueline Sweeney, p. 408 For Crows and Jays/ One Day BeverlyMcLoughland, p. 409 A City Dritty Eve Merriam, p. 410	Ode Style: Free Verse Poetry Poetry Poetry	Personification; metaphor; repetition Rhyme; alliteration; onomatopoeia Rhyme Repetition; punctuation; mood	 Eyes OnConsonant and Vowel Repetition Eyes OnSwitching Course at Midstream Eyes OnRegular Alternate Line Rhyme Eyes OnTraditional Poetry 	
Afternoon on a Hill Edna St. Vincent Millay, p. 411	• Poetry	mood	Eyes OnTraditional Poetry	

Unit five: Finding Out What's Inside • Exploring Elements of Theme

Elements of Theme—the joys and sorrows of the human conditions—are explored in this unit. As children learn to discuss how a work of literature makes us feel after we read it, they will begin to understand how one comprehends theme.

SELECTION	FOCUS			WORKBOOK
SELECTION	Genre • Unit Theme	Literary Element	Eyes On	WORKBOOK
The Memory Box Mary Bahr p. 422 Lesson in Literature Symbol p. 420	Contemporary Fiction Coming of Age Story <i>Unit Theme—What's Inside:</i> In this coming of age story, a young boy learns ways to honor his beloved grandfather.	Understanding how theme is revealed in a <i>poignant</i> story Literature grapples with both the joys and sorrows of the human condition. Students are helped to understand that theme is how a piece of literature makes us feel.	Eyes OnRite of Passage Understanding that a rite of passage is a series of actions that we perform with life-changing events	Pp. 127-132 • Vocabulary, I: p. 127 • Vocabulary, II: p. 128 • Comp. Questions: pp. 129-130 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 131-132
The Greatest Snowball Fight in History William Graves p. 436 Lesson in Literature Author's Viewpoint p. 434	Historical Fiction Unit Theme—What's Inside: This humorous piece subtly condemns war. We watch soldiers reach inside and demonstrate a humanity that is heartwarming.	Understanding how history is written In identifying the historical setting in this work of fiction, students will be helped to comprehend its theme.	Eyes OnHistorical Fiction Helping students understand the historical accuracy of a work of historical fiction, by examining different sources Learning to identify where historical records diverge	Pp. 133-138 • Vocabulary, I: p. 133 • Vocabulary, II: p. 134 • Comp. Questions: pp. 135-136 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 137-138
Founders of the Children's Rain Forest Phillip Hoose p. 446 Lesson in Literature Theme in Nonfiction p. 444	Nonfiction Narrative Unit Theme—What's Inside: In this nonfiction piece, we see that a group of highly motivated children can make a difference.	Nonfiction as journalism Nonfiction literature can include any sort of account that is supposed to be factual. In understanding the message of this story, students will be helped to recognize theme.	Eyes OnNonfiction and Theme	Pp. 139-144 • Vocabulary, I: p. 139 • Vocabulary, II: p. 140 • Comp. Questions: pp. 141-142 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 143-144
Jessica Govea Phillip Hoose p. 464 Lesson inLiterature Biography p. 462	Biographical Nonfiction Unit Theme—What's Inside: This short biography about personal courage and dedication to a cause demonstrates the power of one person who works for the good of many.	A short biography about personal courage and dedication to a cause becomes an excellent vehicle for understanding theme.	Eyes OnBiography Created from Interview Students learn the author's technique of using the language of the interviewee to best represent her	Pp. 145-150 • Vocabulary, I: p. 145 • Vocabulary, II: p. 146 • Comp. Questions: pp. 147-148 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 149-150
The Street Boy Silverman p. 478 Lesson in Literature Pulling It All Together p. 476	Fantasy Unit Theme—What's Inside: Do we feel greater compassion for others when we actually experience their lives? This story of switched identities explores this intriguing question.	Students recognize what makes a story a fantasy. Students learn how realism can make a story of fantasy work, telling a legitimate tale with characters that are believable.	Eyes OnFantasy and Pulling It All Together All the elements of theme work together in this selection as students identify a realistic theme.	Pp. 151-156 • Vocabulary, I: p. 151 • Vocabulary, II: p. 152 • Comp. Questions: pp. 153-154 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 155-156

Yuka Igarashi, p. 501 Truth Barrie Wade, p. 502 My House Annette M'Baye D'Erneville, p. 503 Style: Free Verse Alliteration; metaphor Metaphor; repetition Alliteration; metaphor Metaphor; repetition Feeling Eyes OnSlant Rhyme Eyes OnChant and Repetition
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Unit Six: The Grand Finalé

Students will read a poignant memoir, a humorous narrative, a suspenseful play, a nonsense poem, and a powerful true story in this unit. They will recognize how all the literary elements of plot, character, setting, and theme work together in excellent literature.

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SELECTION	Genre • Unit Theme	Literary Element	Eyes On	WORKBOOK
Small Steps—Part I Peg Kehret p. 514 Lesson in Literature Autobiography p. 512	Autobiographical Memoir Unit Theme—The Grand Finalé: We experience the resilience of the human spirit in this well-written autobiography. All the elements of a well-told story work together in this suspenseful piece.	Students will understand how an autobiography can have all the elements of a good story— suspenseful plot, dynamic characters, interesting setting, and a powerful theme.	Eyes OnAutobiography/ Author's Purpose Students recognize the choices an author has when including incidents from the past in a memoir. Identifying the author's purpose will aid students in their own writing.	Pp. 157-162 • Vocabulary, I: p. 157 • Vocabulary, II: p. 158 • Comp. Questions: pp. 159-160 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 161-162
Small Steps—Part II Peg Kehret p. 538	Autobiographical Memoir	Students are helped to recognize all of the elements of plot and character development.	Eyes OnAutobiography/ Author's Purpose	Pp. 163-168 • Vocabulary, I: p. 163 • Vocabulary, II: p. 164 • Comp. Questions: pp. 165-166 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 167-168
Small Steps—Part III Peg Kehret p. 552	Autobiographical Memoir	Students will recognize the turning point in a suspenseful story, and will learn how an author uses the tools of reconstructing past events to explain important scenes that they remember.	Eyes OnAutobiography/ Author's Purpose	Pp. 169-172 • Vocabulary, I: p. 169 • Vocabulary, II: p. 170 • Comp. Questions: pp. 171-172
What a Wild Idea Louis Sabin p. 566 Lesson in Literature Nonfiction p. 564	Humorous Narrative Unit Theme—The Grand Finalé: In this funny, factual piece, we see that human beings constantly strive to beat the odds against making things easier.	Students will explore theme in this funny, factual piece.	• Eyes OnHumorous Fiction	Pp. 173-178 • Vocabulary, I: p. 173 • Vocabulary, II: p. 174 • Comp. Questions: pp. 175-176 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 177-178
Flight Into Danger Arthur Hailey p. 580 Lesson in Literature Drama p. 578	Drama Unit Theme—The Grand Finalé: This is a classic drama of suspense. Its exciting plot and easy to understand characters, will make this a fun play to read and perform.	Students will learn to recognize the power of dialogue and plot in suspenseful drama.	Eyes OnTheater This is a good play in which to compare the relative importance of scenery, lighting, sound effects, costumes, and props to plot.	Pp. 179-184 • Vocabulary, I: p. 179 • Vocabulary, II: p. 180 • Comp. Questions: pp. 181-182 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 183-184

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The Quangle Wangle's Hat Edward Lear p. 638 Lesson in Literature A Nonsense Poem p. 636	Nonsense Poetry Unit Theme—The Grand Finalé: When we explore the language of nonsense, we learn more about the language of literature and the tools of writing.	Do nonsense rhymes have a hidden meaning? Students will explore this in Edward Lear's wonderful poem.	Eyes OnNonsense Students learn to recognize the elements of nonsense. Is it silly words, silly ideas and situations, or talking animals?	Pp. 185-186 • Comp. Questions: pp. 185-186
Passage to Freedom Ken Mochizuki p. 646 Lesson in Literature Author's Viewpoint p. 644	Fictionalized Nonfiction Unit Theme—The Grand Finalé: In this powerful finale, we read about true altruism. This is a story about a fearlessness engendered by a strong moral conscience.	• Recognizing the powerful theme—pure altruism, the unselfish regard for the welfare of others—is discussed in this piece. Using the skills previously learned to recognize theme, students will gain a great deal from this story.	Eyes OnFictionalized Nonfiction Students learn the unique first-person narration device the author uses in this piece. Though the author is not actually the main character's son, he assumes the narrator's voice as if he is.	Pp. 187-192 • Vocabulary, I: p. 187 • Vocabulary, II: p. 188 • Comp. Questions: pp. 189-190 • Graphic Organizer: pp. 191-192
The Butterfly and the Caterpillar Joseph Lauren p. 658 The Eagle Alfred Lord Tennyson p. 660	Poetry Poetry Narrative Poetry Style: Free Verse	Rhyming couplets Rhyme scheme; alliteration; consonance; assonance Repetition; alliteration	Eyes OnFable and Traditional Poetic Form Eyes OnGreatness in Verse Eyes OnNarrative Poem	
Traveling in a Comfortable Car Bertolt Brecht p. 661				

LESSON IN LITERATURE . . To Know Freedom Robert stood on what looked like a narrow stone path, only the path didn't WHAT IS A STORY? go anywhere. Instead, it made a hexagon on the ground. · A story has four elements: plot, character, setting, and theme Robert reread the directions Grandpa had scrawled from memory. Follow picket fence out back to white gazebo with wrought iron trim. . The plot is the action of the story. It is what happens to the "Gazebo." That was a word he'd had to look up. "A free-standing, roofed, characters from the beginning to the end of the story. usually open-sided structure providing a shady resting place."* . The characters are the people, animals, or even objects (for Where was that gazebo? Except for the abandoned farmhou example, robots) that the story is about. The action happens rickety picket fence, Robert didn't see any structure of any sort. to, or is caused by, the characters in the story, Not being certain where he was made Robert uneasy. How much more * The setting is the time and place in which the story's events frightening his great-great grandfather's journey must have been to this same occur. The setting may be described in great detail or hardly spot, heading north from Virginia to this Pennsylvania town. at all. When you remember a story, you almost always Frustrated and hot from the late afternoon sun, Robert plopped down on remember its setting. he grass in the center of the hexagon. No shade here. * The theme is the main idea presented in the story. It is the Shade! That was it! Suddenly Robert realized that he was in the exact right spot. He had found idea that the author wishes to present through the plot, the gazebo-or where it used to be. Someone must've torn down the gazebo's characters, and setting. structure. The stone hexagon was the foundation. He leaped to his feet. From the center of the gazebo, head due north 150 paces. Grandpa had told him countless times the way his own grandfather had used the moss on the trees, the wind, and the North Star to keep his course on his journey to freedom Robert looked up at the sun. At 4 p.m. the sun would be to the west Robert turned north and started counting steps THINK ABOUT IT! At 120 Robert noticed a small cluster of simple stone grave markers peeking 1. Can you summarize the story's plot in one sentence? Try it! out amid tall weeds up ahead. He broke into a trot. 2. The story is really about three characters. Who are they? Pushing aside the weeds. Robert found the headstone he was looking for Fearing a sheet of paper from his notebook, he held the paper up to the stone and 3. Where does the main character live? What time of day is it? began rubbing with the edge of his pencil. Slowly, the inscription came into view: What is the weather like? Does the action take place indoors "Here lies Nathan R. Smith, or outside? Together, these details make up the setting of Who by the Grace of the Almighty the story Lived to Know Freedom. 4. In your opinion, who is the most important person in this Grandpa was going to be very proud! story? What is his connection to the main idea, or theme, of tion from The American Heritage Dictionary, Second College Edition, Boston: Houghton the story? 14 - Unit I

LESSON IN LITERATURE



- A young boy searches for, and finds, the grave of his greatgreat grandfather, who was an escaped slave.
- 2. Robert, his grandfather, and his great-great grandfather.
- Robert lives in a Pennsylvania town. It is late afternoon. It is hot. The action takes place out of doors.
- The great-great grandfather is the main character. The theme of the story is freedom and how some must struggle to achieve it.

SELECTION VOCABULARY

barges: flat-bottomed vessels, usually pushed or towed through the water, for carrying freight or passengers

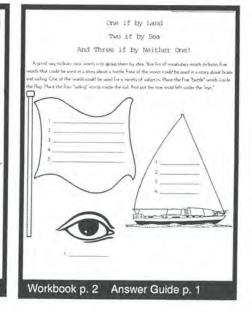
bayonet: a long-pointed steel weapon attached to the open end of a gun

buoys: a floating object, fastened or anchored so that it remains in one place

gale: a strong wind

glimpsed: saw for a brief moment musket: an old-fashioned gun used by foot soldiers

recruits: new members of the army
retreat: move back, away from the enemy
wharf: a pier; a wooden walkway built next
to or jutting ino the water so that boats
can come alongside it to load or unload
wounded: injured



BACKGROUND BYTES

Samuel's Choice affords rich possibilities for discussion. Literature offers us broad possibilities for educating our children. Moreover, it is important that students learn that we do not just pass over clues and data that we do not understand. In order for students to be steeped in what they read, and in order for them to learn how to create their own literature, they must understand the need to familiarize themselves with the "current events" of historical fiction. Moreover, they need to see that writers of any kind of fiction ought to be sticklers for the truth—historical fact, contemporary culture, and emotional truth.

Among other things, the events of Samuel's Choice commemorate the Battle of the Maryland 400, the first major battle of the American Revolution. In fact, there is today a monument in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, that commemorates the Maryland 400, their contribution and sacrifice.

As Samuel's Choice repeatedly attests, Washington's Continental Army was "outnumbered, outgunned, and outsupplied." On August 27, 1776, four hundred Maryland troops "led a rear-guard action to check the British advance and allow the retreat of Washington's greatly outnumbered army." The American Army was surrounded by the British, when Mordechai Gist lead "a desperate movement to cover the retreating American troops." The men from Maryland launched six counter attacks to meet the British in and around the two-story Cortelyou House, which commanded the only escape route for the Americans.

History tells us that the lands surrounding the stone house were soaked with blood. The sixth attack of Gist and his Marylanders was shattered by British reinforcements. With the British in control of the Cortelyou House, the surviving Marylanders were unable to cross the creek at Dam Road. They stumbled across the marsh into the swamp. When the fight was over, only ten of the 250 heroic Marylanders had returned. Major Mordecai Gist was one of the ten survivors.

Another subject for discussion—given the thematic importance of freedom and liberty in the piece—is the circumstances of slaves during the Revolutionary War period.

In Samuel's Choice, the character Sana identifies wholeheartedly with the war effort. She believes that freedom for America will mean freedom for her, personally. As the story unfolds, the author portrays an environment in which the norms and restraints of the old order are shattered, where liberty and freedom are the bywords. In this environment, Sana believes, even a former slave will find freedom.

At the outset of the story, Samuel attributes his slavery to "the laws of the Crown Colony." The implication seems to be that, once free of those laws, the Americans will choose freedom for all. Historically, this may or may not be an accurate picture of the environment in which an escaped slave found himself when he joined Washington's army. As the Revolutionary War progressed and moved into every region of the colonies, slaves, in fact, sided with whichever army promised them their personal freedom. Since the British actively attempted to recruit slaves, more African

Americans fought for the Crown of England. At the same time, other African Americans fought side by side with white soldiers during the battles of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill, and the first man to die in the war was Crispus Attucks, a black man. At one point, George Washington barred recruitment of black soldiers. However, towards the end of the war, a black regiment was established.

Although the hero and heroine of the story are slaves under *British* law, the author makes no reference to the complex issue of racial prejudice in colonial America. Nor is the status of escaped or freed slaves under the Revolution made clear. It is obvious that the author does not wish to enter these murky waters. He limits himself to inspiring his young reader with a tale of courage and patriotism.

Language Alert

What explains the repeated mention of buttermilk in the story? Have any of your students ever drunk buttermilk? In times gone by (and this is probably still true in countries where people have less money and fewer refrigerators) nothing was wasted in the kitchen—even the liquid that remained after butter was churned. A churn was a vessel for making butter in which milk or cream was agitated in order to separate the oily globules from the watery medium. The liquid was set aside and allowed to combine with airborne bacteria. It became thicker and developed a delicious, tangy flavor. Buttermilk is not only good to drink, but also is a useful ingredient in waffles, pancakes, cakes, and biscuits.

INTO "SAMUEL'S CHOICE"

For many people, both children and adults, theme is (a) a difficult concept to grasp in the abstract, and (b) difficult to articulate in words for specific works. Tell your students that the theme is usually what we react to most powerfully when we read a story. It is the source of the feelings we are left with when we are done reading. But feelings can be very hard to put in words. Looking for the theme, trying to find the words to express it, is a delicate undertaking. Students should know that you, yourself, may have difficulty with theme at times—and that not only is there often more than one theme, people sometimes do not even agree about the theme.

So, what is theme, after all? The theme is the meaning of a story. The theme is the message of a story.

The theme stands above the facts and setting of the story. It is what the author wants to tell us about what it is like to be human, or what it is like to be a creature with feelings. The theme is what gives us the feelings we are left with when the story ends. The theme of the story is what the author believes to be true not just for that story or poem, but for human beings in every time and in every land. Themes speak to such issues of the human condition as struggle for freedom, bravery, courage, personal responsibility, fairness, the individual versus government, the occasional need to put principles over laws, and a host of other truths and conflicts.

What does it mean to be free?

How does a person change his or her life, and thereby gain greater freedom?

How can one group of people be kept slaves, when they live among another group fighting for selfgovernment and liberty?

How does a person make a decision, when they have no experience making decisions or choices?

Can a person be sympathetic, when no one has ever sympathized with him or her?

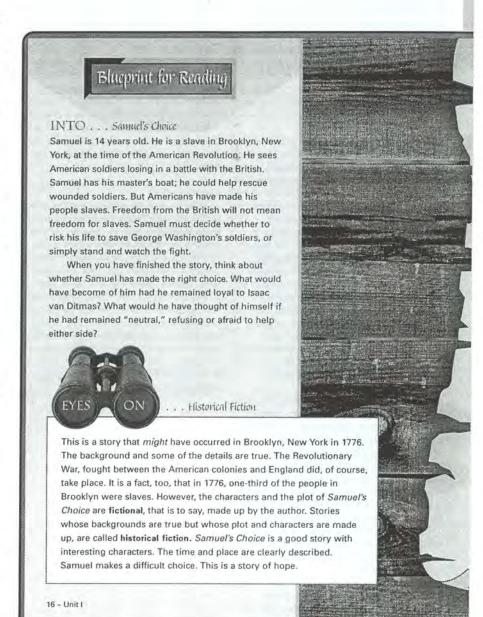
Why may it be important to be alone at times?

EYES ON...HISTORICAL FICTION

Historical fiction is based on, or set within, actual historical events. Historical fiction is peopled by important historical figures, whose behavior within the story should make sense given what evidence exists in the historical record. Most writers of historical fiction do meticulous research. An error would make their story absurd.

The great pleasure and puzzle of historical fiction always comes from the clever mixing of fact with fiction—that could have been fact. After reading historical fiction, it is fun to do research to determine what the historical records show and what is the author's invention. History does not occur without people: people being good, people being bad, and people trying to figure out how to gain the advantage or avoid suffering. Remind your students that dialogue in historical fiction is virtually always invented—unless the author has quoted from actual letters, diary entries, newspaper articles, and speeches written at the time.

The Elements of a Story are discussed above in



Getting Started. As this is just the beginning of the book, work with your students to understand and find the **exposition**, and to express it in words.

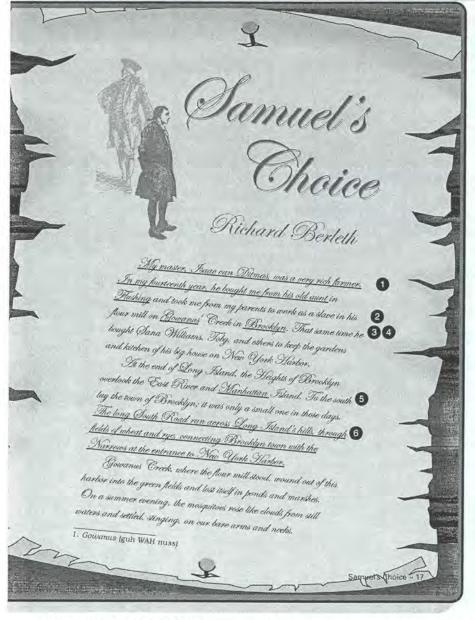
Have your students name the **characters**, and help them determine which of the characters are most important and which are secondary. Samuel is both the main character and the narrator. The story is told through his eyes. Calling all of the rest of the characters **secondary characters** hardly seems fair or accurate, since they are of varying importance. In historical fiction, it is often the secondary characters

that were famous in history. They may or may not directly participate in the action of the story. Here, George Washington is only mentioned, but Major Mordecai Gist talks with Samuel and engages him.

In historical fiction, **setting** must be very specific, and true to the time.

As you move with your students through the story, point out the rising action, the turning point for Samuel, and the situational climax. As the story winds down, point to the falling action, and the resolution or conclusion.

- A young slave writes that when he was 14, Isaac van Ditmas, a rich farmer, bought him.
- The slave was taken from his parents to work in the Ditmas flour mill in Brooklyn.
- Van Ditmas bought other slaves at the same time, including Sana and Toby, to care for the kitchen and gardens of his big house on New York Harbor.
- The Heights of Brooklyn overlook the East River and Manhattan Island; in those days the town of Brooklyn was small.
- The flour mill stands on Gowanus Creek, and winds out of the harbor into green fields, ponds, and marshes.



LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 1. Exposition; Characters; Source of Modern Name: The first two sentences establish the master/slave relationship between Isaac van Ditmas and the unnamed narrator. We see the Dutch name van Ditmas today in Brooklyn's Ditmas Avenue.
- ▶ 2. Geographical Reference: Flushing, New York is an actual city. The English called the town Flushing, because they were anglicizing the Dutch city name Vlissingen. In Vlissingen, the Dutch had harbored English refugees before they embarked for the New World.
- ▶ 3. Geographical Reference: The Gowanus Creek is likely today's polluted Gowanus Canal. The name is also used in the Gowanus Expressway, a 6.1 mile elevated highway built in 1941 that connects Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Long Island. The highway is one of the most congested in the nation.
- ▶ 4. Origin of City Name; History in Historical Fiction: The name *Brooklyn* is an adaptation of the Dutch name *Breukelen*, which means broken land. The Dutch established the village with the help of the Dutch West India Company in 1646, and named it after a town in the Netherlands. During the 1770s, one-third of the population of Brooklyn was slave.
- ▶ 5. Origin of City Name: Manhattan Island was originally named *Man-a-hat-a* by the Algonquin Indians.
- ▶ 6. Setting; Geographical Reference: Setting is gently and clearly established in paragraphs 2 and 3. The Narrows refers to a strait (a narrow passage of water connecting to larger bodies of water) between Staten Island and Long Island in New York Bay.

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: Who is telling the story?
A: The young slave.

Q: How old is the slave, when Isaac van Ditmas purchases him?

A: He is fourteen years old.

Q: Where does the slave work?

A: The slave works in a flour mill on Gowanus Creek in Brooklyn.

Q: Where does the slave live?
A: The slave lives in Brooklyn.

Q: What connects Brooklyn town with the Narrows?

A: The long South Road that runs across Long Island's hills, through fields of wheat and rye.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Why doesn't the slave who narrates the story live with his parents?

A: When Isaac van Ditmas buys the slave from Ditmas's aunt, he does not buy his parents. So the slave can no longer live with his mother and father.

Q: What kind of land does Gowanus Creek wind out into?

A: Green fields, ponds, and marshes.

- Farmer Isaac is strict: The slaves work from sunrise to sunset
- The stone wheel of the mill is driven by the water flowing in and out of the creek. They grind wheat to make bread.
- Van Ditmas is stingy, and the slave goes to sleep hungry.
- When van Ditmas sees that the slave has grown strong, he teaches him about the currents between Brooklyn and Manhattan, so that he can row Mrs.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 7. Characterization: We learn about Farmer Isaac when the slave writes, "Our day began at sunrise and ended when the light faded."
- ▶ 8. Characterization of Farmer Isaac and of the Narrator; Onomatopoeia: The farmer does not feed his slaves. The boy is so hungry that when he goes to bed, his stomach is *growling*.
- 9. Idioms: Setting a sail means putting the sail in position to catch the wind; holding a course means not veering from the right path or direction the boat or ship is traveling.
- ▶ 10. Understanding the Character and the Nature of the Conflict; Theme: I was his property . . . and he could do what he wanted with me. What the slave says here goes to the heart of his difficulty making a decision further along in the story. Here is a person who experiences himself as having no rights and no autonomy. He is not a person. He is owned, like a thing.
- ▶ 11. Historical Reference: According to the laws of the Crown Colony. Crown colonies were part of the British system of colonial administration. Crown colonies were governed internally by a British-appointed governor and a locally elected assembly. A modern example of a crown colony was Hong Kong until 1997. The motto of the British Commonwealth of Nations was, "May the sun never set on the British Empire."
- ▶ 12. Powerful Characterization: Work you do not choose to do is always tiring.

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: Which two words does the narrator use to describe Farmer Isaac?

A: The narrator uses the words strict and stingy.

Q: Is the bread made at the mill?

A: No. The flour is brought to bakers in Manhattan.

Q: What does Farmer Isaac do when he sees that his young slave has grown strong and can row a boat?

A: He teaches him about the currents that flow between Brooklyn and Manhattan, about how to set a sail, and how to hold a course. In other words, he teaches him how to sail the boat.

Q: Why does Farmer Isaac want the slave to know how to use the boat?

A: He wants the slave to row Mrs. van Ditmas and her daughters over to Manhattan or down the Brooklyn shore to Staten Island.

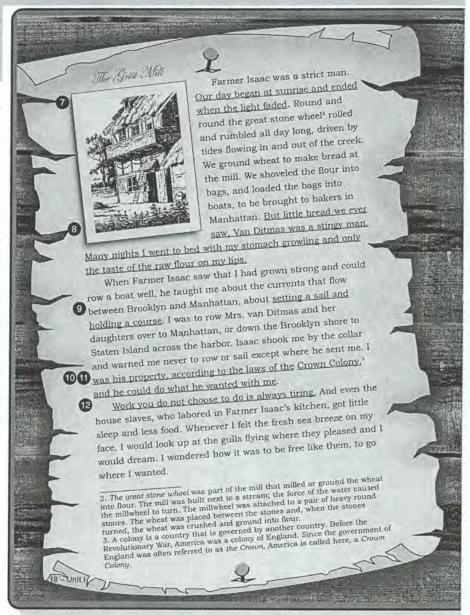
Q: After Isaac van Ditmas teaches the slave how to use the boat, what does he do to him?

A: Van Ditmas shakes him by the collar and warns him never to use the boat unless he is told to do so.

- van Ditmas and her daughters over to Manhattan and Staten Island.
- After leaching him to use the boat, Isaac shakes Samuel and warns him never to row anywhere except where his master sends him.
- · Samuel says that he is Isaac's property, to

do with as he pleased.

- Work you do not choose to do is always tiring, he says.
- Whenever Samuel feels the breeze on his face, he looks up at the gulls and imagines what it would be like to be free.



Q: Which kind of grain is ground at the mill to make flour for bread?

A: Wheat is ground into flour to be made into bread.

Q: According to which laws does Isaac say the slave is his property?

A: According to the laws of the Crown Colony.

Q: What does Samuel do, whenever he feels a fresh sea breeze on his face?

A: He looks up at the gulls flying and dreams, wondering what it would be like to be as free as they are.

ANALYTICAL

Q: The slave describes Farmer Isaac as strict. Strict usually means that a person insists that others follow the rules exactly. How is Farmer Isaac worse than strict?

A: Farmer Isaac makes his slaves work from morning to night. He does not feed them. This has nothing to do with rules. Rather, Isaac is inhumane, irresponsible, and cruel.

Q: When Samuel looks at the gulls, what does freedom mean to him?

A: When he looks at the gulls, being free means to go wherever he would want.

- · America is ruled by the King of England, and · There is the sound of drums and fifes, these are troubled times.
- · A night comes when Manhattan Island is lit up with a hundred bonfires.
- · The slaves gather and hear cheers and shouts from Manhattan Island.
- songs, and cannon firing.
- · Old Toby says that that is the sound of people going free.
- . The narrator wonders, What is it, that makes people think they can change their lives?
- · When the Sons of Liberty come by, van Ditmas locks the slaves in the house.
- The slaves argue. Liberty has nothing to do with
- · Sana maintains that none of them will be free unless they take the risk.



- 13. Setting Expanded; Rising Action: America, being ruled by the king of England, was not a separate country. And these were troubled times in all the colonies.
- 14. Characters; Characterization; Rising Action; Theme: The reader is introduced to Sana and old Toby through their dialogue. Toby compares King George III with van Ditmas. Sana asks Toby how people become free. We see from their discussion that Toby is aware of events occurring in the colonies, and that the slaves think seriously about their lives. What is not discussed is the possibility of the slaves joining up with the British. In fact, many more slaves joined the British than fought on the side of the colonists.
- ▶ 15. Historical Reference: When Toby says that the people became free by writing the words down on paper, he is referring to the writing and signing of the Declaration of Independence.
- ▶ 16. Theme; Characterization; Inner Dialogue: It is clear the events and the discussion lead the vetunnamed narrator to think about personal freedom-and the notion that some people feel they can change their lives. Stated as the question, What was it...that made people think they could change their lives?, underscores the novelty of such an idea and its poignancy.
- 17. Historical Reference: The first Sons of Liberty organizations were in New York City and Boston. They corresponded and communicated with other Sons of Liberty groups that grew up in New England, the Carolinas, Virginia, and Georgia. Sons of Liberty were members of the upper and middle classes.
- 18. Characterization: We learn more about Sana and that she can write her name and she can read
- 19. Foreshadowing; Theme; Samuel's Fundamental Conflict: Sana says that, "Nobody here's gonna be free unless they take the risk."

America, being ruled by the king of England, was not a separate colony. And these were troubled times in all the B colonies. The night came when Manhattan Island* was lit up like daytime with a hundred bonfires. We gathered on the steps of the great house and heard the cheers and shouts echo over the water. Then came the sound of drums and fifes,5 songs and "What's all that racket over there?" Sana asked. "That's the sound of people going free," old Toby answered. "Free from the king of England, Free from the likes of van Ditmas." "Why they up and said they was free, girl, and wrote those words down on paper." Sana laughed. "You gotta do more than say you're free. That king and Isaac, do they care what anybody say?" What was it. I wondered, that made people think they could 16 change their lives? They called their freedom "liberty," and they marched through Brooklyn town cheering for that liberty. When the Sons of Liberty's finally came, waving their flags, Isaac locked us in the house. In the kitchen, the servants argued. "Liberty ain't for Africans," one said. "And it got nothin' to do with us," another said. But Sana just shook her head. She was fifteen and had been 13 to school. She could write her name and could read. "Nobody here's gonna be free unless they take the risk. Open your eyes! War is coming to Brooklyn 'tween that English king and those Sons of Liberty. We can't say who'll win. We can't say how many black slaves are ever gonna get free. But one thing is sure—it's never gonna happen under Isaac van Ditmas." 4. Although most people think of Manhattan as simply one section (or borough) of New York City, actually, Manhattan is cut off from the rest of New York City by water. That is why it is referred to here as Manhattan Island. The York City by mater that is such as the same and a small band that played lively of music for the soldiers as they marched into battle. The two instruments most of the Sons of Liberty were the American patriots who fought the British the Revolutionary War.

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

- Q: Who rules America at the time of this story? A: The King of England rules America (which is why it is a Crown Colony).
- Q: What do the slaves hear from across the water?
- A: They hear the echo of cheers and shouts. and the sound of drums and fifes, songs, and cannon firing
- Q: According to old Toby, what is making all that racket?
- A: He says that it is the sound of people going free

- Q: What does Toby answer, when Sana asks how the people could become free?
- A: Toby says that they just said they were free, and wrote the words down on paper.
- Q: What is Sana's response to this?
 - A: She laughs and says that to be free you've got to do more than say so-such people as the King of England and Isaac van Ditmas don't care what people say.
- Q: What does Isaac van Ditmas do when the Sons of Liberty come waving flags?
- A: He locks the slaves in the house.
- Q: What does Sana claim it takes to be free? A: She says that none of them will be free unless they take a risk.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Why does Samuel say that "these . . . [are] troubled times"?

A: Answers will depend on students' knowledge of American history. But this is the time when the colonies are trying to break from British rule.

Q: Do you know what the paper is called, on which the colonists wrote down the words saying they were free?

A: The very famous paper is called the Declaration of Independence.

Q: Why does the narrator wonder what makes people think they can change their lives?

A: He wonders, because he is a slave and he would like to know what it is to be free.

Q: Isaac, however, does not want his slaves to see the Sons of Liberty or the Proclamation. Why?

A: Perhaps Isaac realizes that words about freedom will fire the imaginations of his slaves.

- . The talk among the slaves makes the narrator's head spin.
- · When the Declaration of Independence is nailed to a tree, Isaac van Ditmas tears it down and stamps
- · Sana promises she will teach Samuel, the narrator, to read.
- · Sana brings Samuel jars of buttermilk for him to drink and then fill with flour.
- · She says the flour will be bread for their freedom

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- 20. Characterization; Idiom: The narrator is not used to standing firm on one side of an issue or the other. He just doesn't know what to make of things. The talk among the slaves just makes his head spin.
- 21. Characterization: The narrator is finally identified by name, as Samuel. He is no longer just a generic slave.
- 22. Setting; History in Historical Fiction; Rising Action: So the summer of 1776 ... passed on. This will be an important summer. The final draft of the Declaration of Independence will be ratified on July 9. 1776. On August 22, the British will land 20,000 troops on Long Island. On August 27, the Continental Army will fight its first battle of the Revolutionary War. Defending Gowanus road will be a major elementand a major disaster-for the Americans.
- 23. Sensory Image, Appeal to Sense of Taste: ...a cool jar of buttermilk ...
- 24. Symbolism; Theme: A loaf of bread and the flour used to make it are going to be a symbol of freedom. This harkens back to earlier in the story, when Samuel goes to bed hungry with just the taste of raw flour on his lips. As a slave, he is not given bread to eat.
- 25. Rising Action: The war is moving towards Brooklyn. The slaves awaken one morning in the slave quarters to the sound of thunder from great guns.
- 26. Historical (and Contemporary) Reference: Governors Island is a 172-acre island located a halfmile from the southern tip of Manhattan in New York harbor. Its name comes from the time when New York was a British colony and the colonial assembly reserved the island for the exclusive use of New York's royal governors.
- > 27. Rising Action: Samuel hoists sail and carries Mrs. van Ditmas and their daughters to Staten Island. On Staten Island, Samuel sees the king's army.

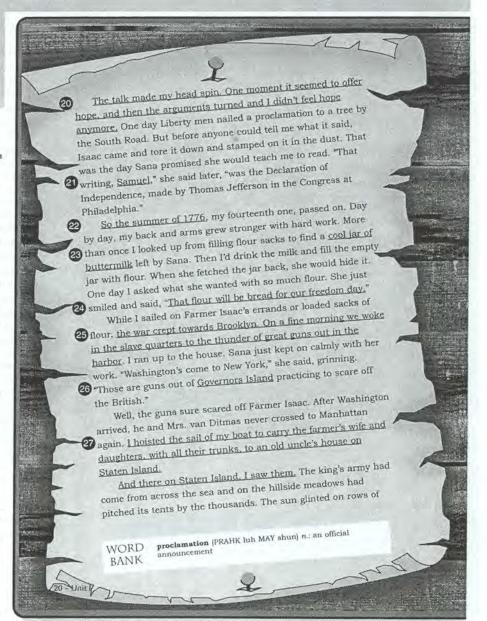
GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: Samuel sends back the buttermilk jar filled with flour. What is the flour for?

A: Sana is going to use the flour to make bread for their freedom day.

- · One morning they awake in the slave guarters to the thunder of great guns in the harbor.
- Sana grins and says Washington's come to Samuel sees the British army in Staten New York. The Americans are practicing with their guns on Governors Island, to scare off the British.
- . Isaac van Ditmas sends his wife and daughters to live with an old uncle in Staten Island.
 - Island, where they have pitched their tents by the thousands.



Q: What does Isaac van Ditmas do when he is frightened by the gunfire on Governors Island?

A: He sends his wife and daughters off to Staten Island, with all of their trunks, to live with an old uncle.

Q: How do we know from Samuel's account that the king's army has many soldiers?

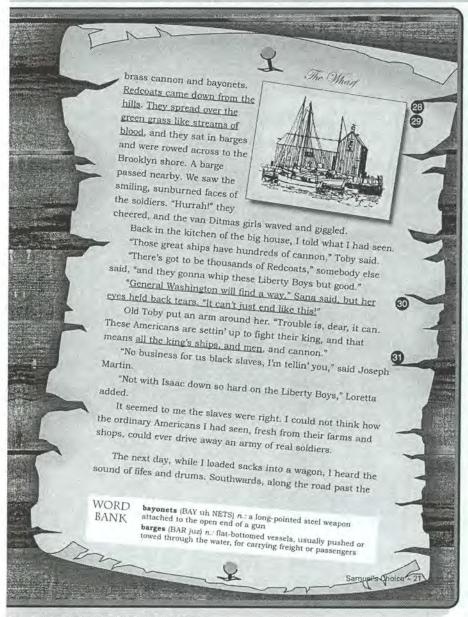
A: He says that they had pitched their tents on the hillside meadows by the thousands.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Why does the talk among the slaves make Samuel's head spin?

A: At one moment the talk makes him hope to be free, and then the talk turns and he feels discouraged. He doesn't know how to think about this by himself-he is just a boy and has never been allowed to think for himself-and so his hopes and fears ride on the words of the others.

- Back at the big house, Samuel tells what he's seen. The slaves predict that the thousands of Redcoats will whip the Liberty Boys but good.
- Sana insists that General Washington will find a way.
- Joseph Martin comments that it is no business for them, black slaves.
- Samuel thinks the slaves are right. How can American farmers and merchants defeat an army of real soldiers?



LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 28. Historical Referent: The term Redcoat comes from their uniform, and denotes a member of the British armed forces in America during the Revolutionary War.
- ▶ 29. Simile; Foreshadowing: They spread over the green grass *like streams of blood*. Samuel's vision is appropriate for the fate of the Continental Army, which suffered a devastating loss at the Battle of Brooklyn.
- ▶ 30. Characterization; Question Historical Accuracy: Sana clearly identifies with the colonial cause. Did slaves always support the colonists? Would they have been better off siding with the British? Or would it make no difference to them, personally, either way?
- ▶ 31. Echoic of Nursery Rhyme: When Toby says "that means all the king's ships, and men...," it echoes the line from Humpty Dumpty: "All the king's horses and all the king's men..."

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: With what does Samuel compare the Redcoats coming down the hills?

A: He says that they spread over the green grass "like streams of blood."

Q: Why do the slaves think the British will defeat the "Liberty Boys"?

A: The British have thousands of men and

hundreds of cannon.

Q: Samuel says that he agrees with the other slaves—that they are right. What does he think they are right about?

A: He also does not see how ordinary Americans, fresh from their farms and shops, can drive away an army of real soldiers.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Why is Samuel's saying that the Redcoats were spread over the green grass "like streams of blood" appropriate for this story?

A: This is a story that occurs at the beginning of the Revolutionary War, and during wars there is bloodshed.

Q: Why do you think Sana becomes so

upset by the thought that Washington might be defeated?

A: There is no single answer to this question—nor is any answer clear from the text. This is a chance for students to try to empathize with Sana and what she may be feeling. One answer is that Sana identifies her own freedom with the freedom of the colonists from British rule. She may feel friendship towards the colonists' cause, because van Ditmas is clearly a royalist and sympathizes neither with the "Americans" nor with his own slaves.

Q: How does Samuel compare the Continental Army and the Redcoats?

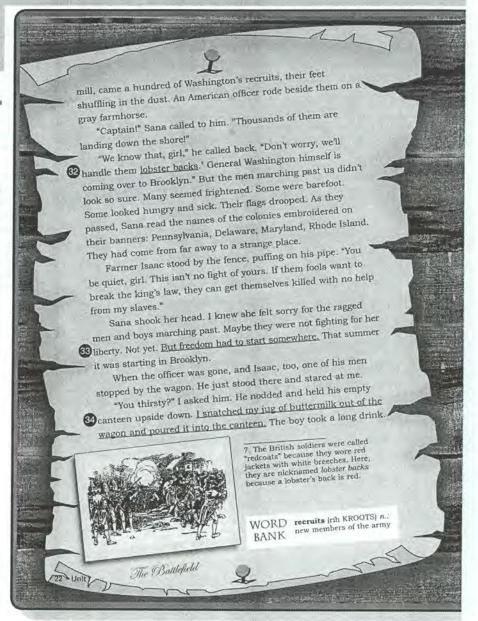
A: If students are confused by the question, point them to the [last] paragraph. Samuel describes the Americans as having just come from their farms and their shops—as farmers and merchants. But the British are "an army of real soldiers."

- The next day, Samuel sees a hundred of Washington's "soldiers" shuffling past him in the dust.
- Sana cries out to their captain that thousands of British are landing on the shore.
- He tells her that George Washington himself is coming to Brooklyn.
- The men walking past Sana and Samuel look frightened, sick, and hungry. Some are barefoot.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 32. Metaphor: British soldiers wore red uniforms in those days. In addition to calling them the literal "Redcoats," Americans also labeled them "lobster backs," because lobsters (especially when they are dead) are red.
- ▶ 33. Characterization; Theme: Samuel's observation of Sana shows us that he is growing up, relating more to the people around him. Also, his understanding of her reasons, and saying that "freedom had to start somewhere," shows that he has become more astute and wiser.
- ▶ 34. Characterization; Theme: Samuel gives freely of his buttermilk, when he himself has so little food.

- Farmer Isaac tells Sana to be quiet; if fools want to break the king's law, they can do it without the help of his slaves.
- Samuel knows Sana feels sorry for the men and boys marching past. They aren't fighting
- for her freedom—but freedom has to start somewhere.
- Samuel offers his jug of buttermilk to a colonial soldier who has stopped and is staring at him.



GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: What does Samuel see as he is loading sacks onto a wagon?

A: He sees a hundred of Washington's recruits, with their feet shuffling in the dust.

Q: What does Sana shout to their Captain?

A: She tells him that thousands of British soldiers are landing on the shore.

Q: How do the Americans look?

A: Samuel says many seem frightened, some look sick and hungry, some are barefoot, and their flags droop.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Why do the Americans call the British soldiers lobster backs?

A: The British soldiers wear red uniforms (as in Redcoat). When lobsters die they are red.

Q: Why do you think the American soldiers are in such poor condition?

A: Answers will vary. But it is clear that the American forces do not have money to feed or dress their soldiers. They do not have money for shoes, or adequate weapons. Remind students that armies are paid for with taxes levied on the population. But the Americans did not yet even have a government that could legislate taxes. Also, farmers and merchants

aren't soldiers. They have not been trained to fight and kill. The British force based on Staten Island had 27,000 men, including 7,000 Hessian mercenaries, and 400 ships of war manned by 10,000 seamen.

Q: What do you think Samuel means when he says that freedom has to start somewhere?

A: Answers will vary.

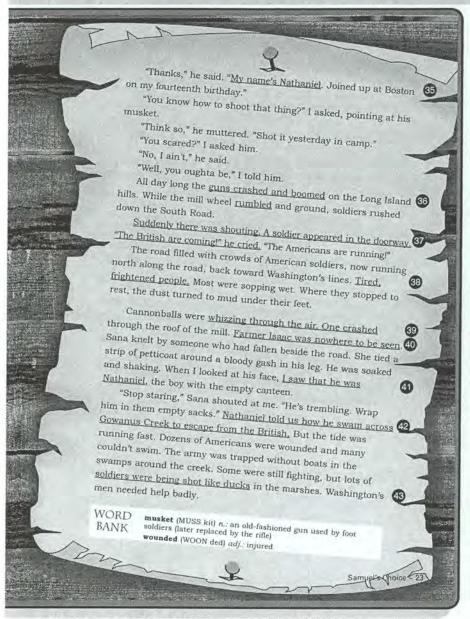
Q: Why does Samuel offer the recruit his own buttermilk?

A: Answers will vary

- Samuel asks the young soldier, Nathaniel, if he's scared, and adds that he ought to be.
- All day long Samuel hears the crash and boom of guns in the Long Island hills.
- American soldiers rush down the South Road and suddenly one cries, "The British are coming!"
- Cannonballs whiz through the air and one crashes through the roof of the mill.
- · Farmer Isaac has disappeared.
- Sana bandages the wounded soldier, Nathaniel, and orders Samuel to wrap him in empty sacks.
- Nathaniel has swum across Gowanus Creek to escape the British.
- The Continental Army is trapped without boats in the swamps around the creek.
- Washington's men need help badly.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 35. Introduction of Secondary Character: Nathaniel is the first American recruit we meet.
- ▶ 36. Onomatopoeia: crashed, boomed, and tumbled are all onomatopoeic words.
- ▶ 37. Rising Action; Suspense: A soldiers shouts, "The British are coming!"
- ▶ 38. Simple Language Is Powerful: Samuel sees the soldiers for what they are: Tired, frightened people.
- ▶ 39. Onomatopoeia: Whizzing and crashed are examples of onomatopoeia.
- ▶ 40. Plot; Character; Symbol: Van Ditmas has disappeared. He will not appear in the story again. This makes it possible for these slaves—Sana, Samuel, old Toby, et alia—to consider themselves free. This makes the story an easier one to write, since most slaves were re-enslaved at the war's conclusion no matter how important their service had been to the winning of the war.
- ▶ 41. Rising Action; Characters: Nathaniel is injured; Sana is bandaging his wound.
- 42. Historical Authenticity: Indeed, this is the only way soldiers were able to escape.
- ▶ 43. Simile: The "soldiers were being shot like ducks in the marsh."



GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: How old was Nathaniel when he joined the Continental Army?

A: Nathaniel was fourteen years old.

Q: In this scene, who disappears from the story?

A: Isaac van Ditmas is gone.

Q: Give two reasons why it is that the American soldiers cannot get across the creek.

A: The tide is rising, many of them cannot swim, many are wounded—and as we know from the discussion in Background Bytes, the British have taken Cortelyou House, which commands Dam Road, the only escape route.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Samuel is now the age that Nathaniel was when he joined the Continental Army. They are both young for the burdens they bear. Who is in the worse position?

A: Answers will vary. Nathaniel may be killed. But Samuel is a slave for life. Ask students if they know anyone who is fourteen. Can they imagine that person a slave? Can they imagine that person fighting in a war?

Q: When Nathaniel says that he isn't scared, do you think he is telling the truth?

A: Answers will vary. Ask students to explain their answers.

Q: What do you think has happened to Farmer Isaac?

A: Again, answers will vary. See how imaginative your students are!

Q: Sana shouts at Samuel, "Stop staring!" What does this tell us about Samuel's frame of mind?

A: It sounds like Samuel is immobilized, shocked, stunned—and who wouldn't be?

- Sana knows that Samuel always ties up "his" boat in the reeds along the creek. She tells him, "It's up to you, Samuel."
- Toby repeat Sana's words. "You got the boat, Samuel. It's your choice."
- Sana and Toby leave the scene carrying the wounded Nathaniel up the road.
- Sana is carrying her freedom flour in a sack hanging from her shoulder.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 44. Pivotal Moment: Sana tells Samuel that it is up to him.
- ▶ 45. Source of Title: Toby says to Samuel, "You got the boat, Samuel. It's your choice."
- 46. Symbol; Theme: Sana is taking her freedom flour to a place where she can bake her freedom loaf.
- ▶ 47. Moment Preceding Turning Point: I was alone. This may be the first time in his life Samuel is truly alone. His aloneness comes primarily from the disappearance of his master, his "owner," and from an abrupt and complete change of circumstances.
- ▶ 48. Theme; Internal Monologue: Samuel asks, Was this freedom? Is fighting and dying freedom? Is freedom being in a position to save other people?
- ▶ 49. Characterization: Indeed, many slaves decided to help the enemies of their masters.
- ▶ 50. Turning Point/Emotional Climax: Samuel says, "Then I knew my choice. These hands now were going to pull people to freedom."
- ▶ 51. Powerful Visual Image: It is like a magician's act, when Samuel says, "Great clouds of gunsmoke rolled over these brave soldiers. When the air cleared, I could see fewer and fewer of them."

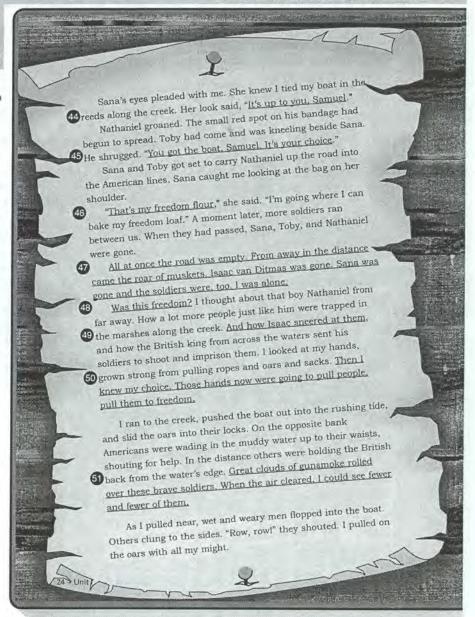
GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

- Q: Why does Sana tell Samuel that it is up to him? A: Samuel has been trained to use the boat. In some sense it is "his." Presumably no one else knows how to row a boat.
- Q: Why do Toby and Sana carry Nathaniel?
 A: Nathaniel is wounded and cannot walk.
- Q: What is in the bag on Sana's shoulder?
 A: The flour that she has accumulated over time from Samuel.
- Q: What can Samuel hear in the distance as he stands alone on the road?
- A: He hears the roar of muskets.
- Q: What does Samuel think about as he stands alone in the road?
- A: He thinks about the boy Nathaniel from far away, about how a lot more people just like him are trapped in the marshes, and how Isaac sneered.
- Q: How have Samuel's hands grown strong?
 A: His hands have grown strong from pulling ropes and oars and sacks.
- Q: Where are the Americans and what are they doing?

A: The Americans are on the opposite shore wading in muddy water up to their waists.

- Samuel realizes that everyone is gone and that he is alone. He asks, is this freedom?
- He looks at his hands that have grown strong from work, and he knows his choice.
- Samuel runs to the creek and pushes the boat out into the rushing tide.
- On the opposite bank, Americans are wading in the muddy water and shouting for help.
- Gun smoke rolls over those brave soldiers and when it clears, Samuel sees fewer of them.
- · Samuel pulls wet and weary men into the boat.



ANALYTICAL

Q: Why is the boat, which belongs to Isaac van Ditmas, considered Samuel's?

A: Answers will vary. Presumably he is identified with the boat because he uses it. If no one else knows how to row a boat, that would surely contribute to the impression that Samuel owns the boat.

Q: What do you think it means that Samuel is finally alone? Why is it such a powerful moment?

A: Samuel cannot fall back on anyone. He cannot get advice from anyone. He has no

parents. He has no teachers. He has no siblings. Now Samuel has to grow up fast, without any assistance.

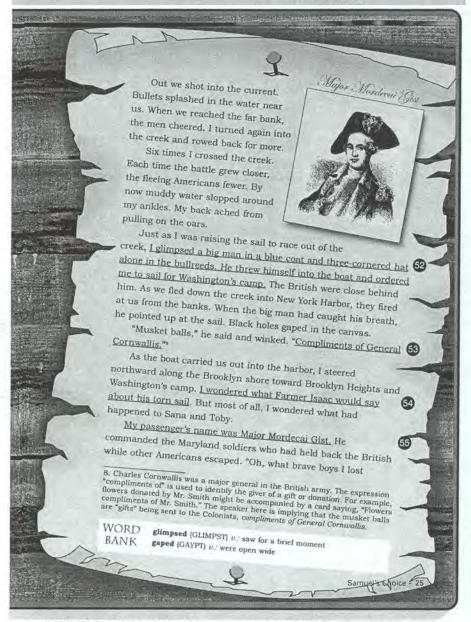
Q: Why is the American artillery in the distance trying to hold the British back from the water?

A: If the British get near or in the water, they will kill the Americans.

Q: When the gunsmoke clears, why are there fewer and fewer Americans?

A: The Americans are drowning or being shot and killed.

- As Samuel rows into the current, bullets splash the water.
- · He crosses the creek six times.
- A big man in a blue coat and a three-cor-
- nered hat throws himself into the boat and orders Samuel to sail for Washington's camp.
- His passenger is Major Mordecal Gist, the commander of the Maryland soldiers who held the British back while the other Americans escaped.



LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 52. New Character: A military man of obvious authority emerges from the bullreeds and gets into the boat. His name is withheld for two paragraphs.
- ▶ 53. Historical Reference: General Charles
 Cornwallis (1738-1805). History shows that he was
 politically opposed to Britain's policies toward the
 American colonies, but when the war began he volunteered to fight. He started as a major general under
 Generals Howe and Clinton. After the 1780 American
 surrender of Charles Town, South Carolina, Cornwallis
 was put in charge of the British soldiers in the South.
 Cornwallis was unable to adapt his strategies to the
 guerilla techniques Continental Army troops had
 learned from Native Americans. He eventually surrendered at Yorktown.
- ▶ 54. Internal Monologue: Here, Samuel is thinking in terms of a reality that appears to no longer exist. It is an interesting juxtaposition of Samuel's slave self and his heroic actions in the boat.
- > 55. Historical Reference: Major Mordecai Gist (1742-1792) was a merchant who joined the Maryland Line. During the Battle of Long Island, he led the Maryland regiment that became known as the Maryland 400. Gist was one of only ten men to survive the battle. Gist's force was the final stand of the devastated American line, allowing Washington and much of the remaining Continental Army to escape capture. Gist stayed the course during the war and was promoted to Brigadier General. He retired to his plantation near Charleston, South Carolina. The Mordecal Gist Papers at the Maryland Historical Society make Gist's personal life easily accessible and are a fascinating look at the man and the period. His family tree reveals that his first two wives died in childbirth and that two of his four children died in infancy.

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: How many trips does Samuel make back and forth to rescue the American soldiers? A: He crosses the creek six times.

Q: Why is it so dangerous for him to be going back and forth?

A: The British are shooting at him and bullets are splashing in the water around him.

Q: What happens just as Samuel is raising the sail to race out of the creek?

A: A big man in a blue coat and a three-cornered hat steps out of the bullreeds and throws himself into the boat.

Q: What does the man order Samuel to do?
A: He orders Samuel to sail for Washington's camp.

Q: Who is this man?

A: His name is Mordecai Gist and he is a Major who has led those Maryland soldiers that held back the British while the other Americans escaped.

ANALYTICAL

Q: How is Samuel able to bring out so many men?

A: The soldiers ride both in the boat and hanging from the sides.

Q: What suggests that the man in the bullreeds is a person of authority?

A: The author describes him as a "big man." He seems to be wearing a Patriot uniform with his "blue coat" and "three-cornered hat." This certainly is in contrast to the barefoot recruits. He orders Samuel to sail for Washington's camp—which makes it sound as though he has the rank to talk with Washington.

Q: When the stranger says that the musket balls are "compliments of General Cornwallis," what does he mean?

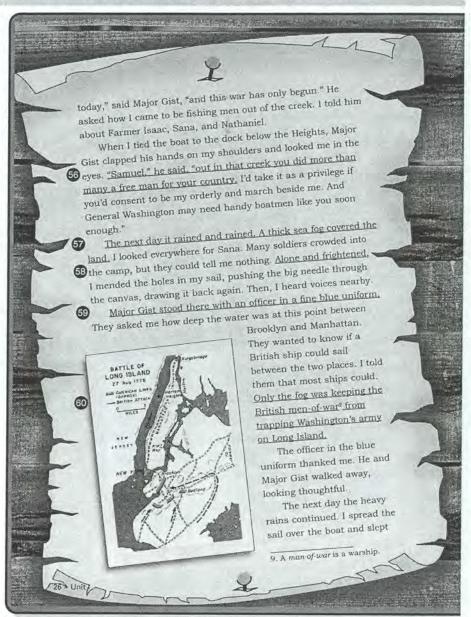
A: He means that the musket balls have been shot by the British, who are led by General Cornwallis.

- Major Gist tells Samuel that out in the creek Samuel did more than many a free man has done for his country.
- Major Mordecai Gist asks Samuel to be his orderly and march beside him.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 56. Theme; Characterization: We learn about both Samuel and Gist, when Gist says he has done more for his country than many free men.
- ▶ 57. Setting: The next day it rained and rained. A thick sea fog covered the land. This is a good example of setting establishing mood.
- ▶ 58. Characterization: Samuel's setting and role have changed radically. This is frightening for him. Where are his friends?
- ▶ 59. New Character: Another character is introduced without a name. But he is wearing "a fine blue uniform." Students may guess that this is none other than George Washington.
- ▶ 60. Rising Action; Suspense: If only the fog is keeping the British from attacking, what will happen when the fog lifts?

- Samuel says that the next day he looks everywhere for Sana.
- He is alone and frightened in Washington's camp, which is crowded with soldiers.
- Major Gist and an officer in a fine blue uniform ask Samuel how deep the water is
- between Brooklyn and Manhattan. Can British ships sail between the two points?
- Only the fog is keeping the British men-ofwar from trapping Washington's army on Long Island.
- The next day the rains continue.



GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: What does Major Mordecai Gist want Samuel to do?

A: He asks him to be his orderly and to march by his side.

Q: How does Samuel feel in Washington's camp?
A: He feels alone and frightened.

Q: What do Major Gist and the other officer ask Samuel?

A: They ask him how deep the water is between Brooklyn and Manhattan.

ANALYTICAL

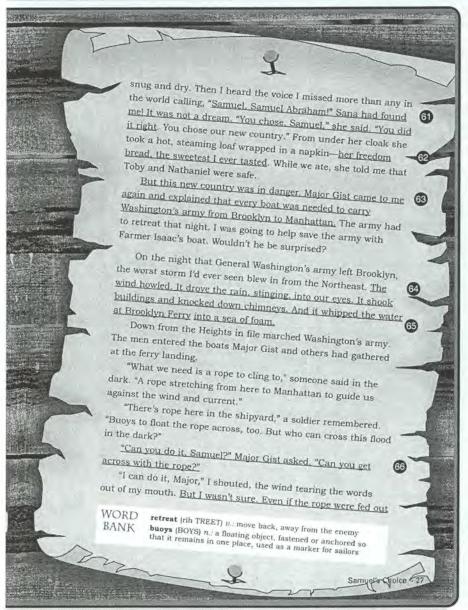
Q: Why do you think Samuel feels alone and frightened?

A: Answers may vary.

Q: Why does the author say that only the fog is keeping the British from trapping Washington on Long Island?

A: Since the water is deep enough for the British men-of-war to navigate, the only explanation for their not having come is that the fog keeps them from sailing and from seeing Washington's camp.

- · Samuel is awakened by Sana-the voice he misses more than anything in the world.
- shares her freedom bread with Samuel
- · Major Gist tells him that every boat is needed to carry Washington's army to Manhattan.
- . That night the worst storm Samuel has ever seen blows up.
- Sana says he has made the right choice and
 The boats that are going to Manhattan need a rope to guide them against the wind and
- · Major Gist asks Samuel if he can get the boat across to Manhattan.
- · Samuel tells Major Gist that he can take the rope across.



LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 61. Rising Action; Characters Reunited; Theme: Sana finds Samuel and tells him he has made the right choice
- 62. Symbol; Theme; Metaphor: Sana shares her freedom bread with Samuel. It is the sweetest he has ever tasted. Of course, what could be sweeter than freedom?
- 63. Rising Action; Suspense: Every boat will be needed for Washington's retreat!
- 64. Setting; Onomatopoeia: The wind howls. The storm is vividly described so that the reader can feel it.
- ▶ 65. Historical Reference: Brooklyn Ferry (or as the actual ferry was later called, the Fulton Ferry) was a hamlet on the waterfront in early Brooklyn. It is now a small sector of musty, decaying buildings in the shadow of the Brooklyn Bridge. The settlement grew up around the ferry landing. Eventually, several boat lines fanned from both sides of the river. In 1839, all of the lines merged as the New York and Brooklyn Ferry Company. Before Robert Fulton presented a steam ferry in Nassau in 1814, all of the crossings were made by "row boats, flat scows with sprit sails, piraguas, and boats propelled by horses walking on treadmills." The last ferry stopped running in 1924.
- ▶ 66. Rising Action; Suspense: Can Samuel save the day?

GUIDING THE READING

Q: Who awakens Samuel from his dream? A: Samuel awakens to Sana's voice.

Q: What does Samuel say about Sana's freedom bread?

A: He says it is the sweetest bread he has ever tasted.

Q: What is the weather like the night the boats are to take Washington's army to Manhattan?

A: The wind is howling, there is driving rain,

the water at Brooklyn Ferry is being whipped into a sea of foam. Students may add other details.

ANALYTICAL

Q: How will the boats help Washington's

A: The boats are going to carry Washington's army across the river so that they can retreat to Manhattan instead of being trapped by the

Q: What are they going to do with the rope?

A: (This must be a very long and heavy rope.) The rope is going to run from Long Island to Manhattan over the water. It will apparently be secured at both ends, and the boats will use it as a guide-such as a banister is on a staircase-in the storm.

- Samuel ties the rope to the mast of his boat.
- Sana jumps into the boat as Samuel shoves off into the swirling current.
- Samuel struggles with the rudder. Water crashes over the side. Sana bails.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

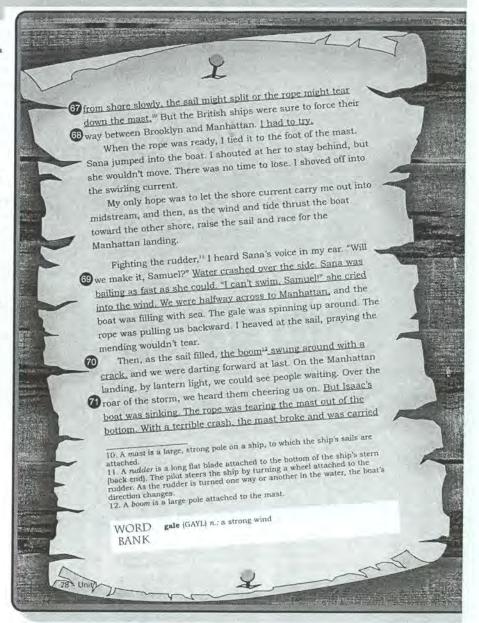
- ▶ 67. Rising Action; Suspense; Internal Dialogue: Samuel is not sure he can make it. The rope may tear down the mast.
- ▶ 68. Characterization; Transformation; Theme: Is this the same Samuel we met at the beginning of the story? Is this the Samuel who could not decide? This Samuel who is a free person is full of courage.
- ▶ 69. Conflict; Rising Suspense: The storm and the struggle with the sea are good examples of an external conflict, one in which man struggles with forces of nature. Now they are halfway across to Manhattan and Sana cries out that she cannot swim,
- ▶ 70. Onomatopoeia: The boom swings around with a crack.
- 71. Plot; Tension Building to Climax;

Onomatopoeia: This is the crisis that must lead up to a climax. The boat is sinking. The rope tears the mast out of the bottom, and breaks with a terrible *crash*. The bow *smashes*.

- They are halfway across and the rope pulls them backward.
- Samuel heaves at the sail, the boom swings around, and they shoot forward at last.
- Over the roar of the storm, Samuel and

Sana can hear the people on the far shore cheering them on.

- The boat is sinking.
- The mast breaks and is carried over the side.



GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: Why does Samuel think he may not make it across with the rope?

A: He worries that the sail may split or the rope may tear down the mast.

Q: To what part of the boat is the rope tied?

A: The rope is tied to the mast. The mast is a long pole rising vertically from the deck of a ship that supports the boom. The boom is a long, rounded, solid piece of wood that is used to extend the bottom of the sail.

Q: What does Sana cry to Samuel, as the boat starts filling with water?

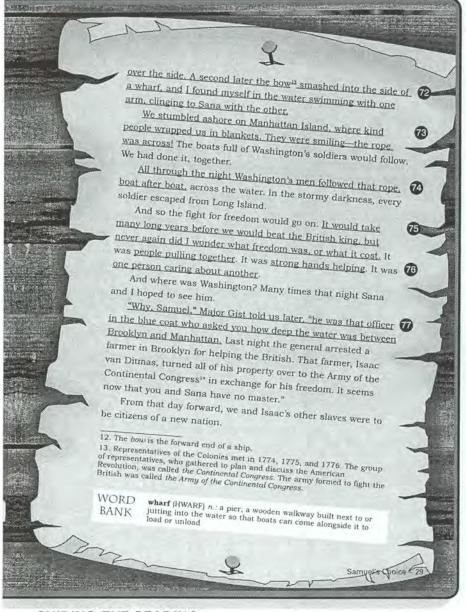
A: She tells him she cannot swim.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Why does Samuel feel he must try to get the rope across, even though he may not succeed?

A: He knows that the British will come. Washington's army will be trapped. He has to at least see if he can do it. He is a brave young man who cares about what happens to others.

- . The bow smashes into a wharf.
- · Samuel swims with one arm and clings to Sana with the other.
- · They stumble ashore on Manhattan Island.
- The rope is across!
- · All through the night, Washington's men follow the rope in boat after boat.
- · Samuel writes that it would take many long years before they would beat the British king, but never again would he wonder what freedom is.



LITERARY COMPONENTS

- 72. Characterization: Samuel is swimming in the water with one arm and holding Sana with the other.
- 73. Climax: Samuel and Sana stumble ashore on Manhattan Island. The rope is across!
- 74. Falling Action: All night long Washington's men follow the rope in boat after boat.
- 75. Conclusion; Theme: It would take many long years before we would beat the British king, but never again did I wonder what freedom was, or what it cost.
- ▶ 76. Theme: Samuel says that freedom is "people pulling together"; "strong hands helping"; "one person caring about another."
- 77. Epilogue; Revelatory Ending: This story has a revelatory ending-a surprise, like the punch line of a joke-that is appended as an epilogue. (An epilogue is the final part that rounds out or completes the design of a nondramatic literary work.)

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

on Manhattan Island?

A: People wrap them in blankets.

Q: Did the war end that night?

A: The war would not end for many long years.

Q: Did George Washington ever appear in the story?

A: Washington was the officer in the fine blue uniform who asked about the depth of the

ANALYTICAL

Q: What happens when they stumble ashore Q: When the boat finally smashes, how do they make it?

A: Samuel says that the bow smashed into the side of a wharf, which means they are almost there. (A wharf is any structure projecting from the shore that permits boats or ships to lie alongside for loading or unloading.) Samuel swims with one arm and holds Sana with the other.

FOCUS

5. Suggest that students reread the paragraphs below before trying to answer the question:

Cannonballs were whizzing through the air. One crashed though the roof of the mill. Farmer Isaac was nowhere to be seen. Sana knelt by someone who had fallen beside the road. She tied a strip of petticoat around a bloody gash in his leg. He was soaked and shaking. When I looked at his face, I saw that he was Nathaniel, the boy with the empty canteen.

"Stop staring," Sana shouted at me. "He's trembling. Wrap him in them empty sacks." Nathaniel told us how he swam across Gowanus Creek to escape from the British. But the tide was rising fast. Dozens of Americans were wounded and many couldn't swim. The army was trapped without boats in the swamps around the creek. Some were still fighting, but lots of soldiers were being shot like ducks in the marshes. Washington's men needed help badly.

Sana's eyes pleaded with me. She knew I tied my boat in the reeds along the creek. Her look said, "It's up to you, Samuel."

Nathaniel groaned. The small red spot on his bandage had begun to spread. Toby had come and was kneeling beside Sana. He shrugged. "You got the boat, Samuel. It's your choice." Sana and Toby got set to carry Nathaniel up the road into the American lines. Sana caught me looking at the bag on her shoulder.

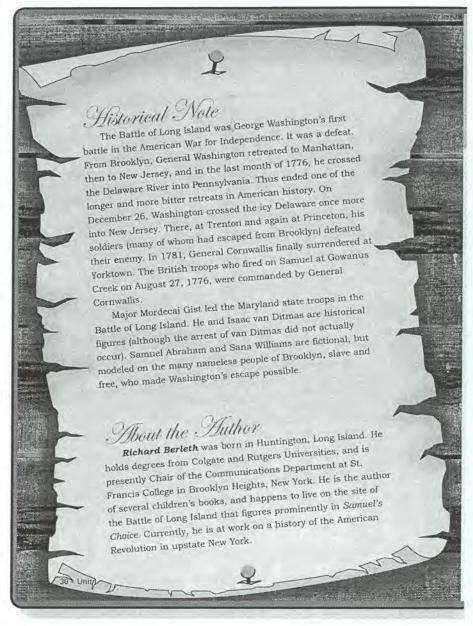
That's my freedom flour," she said. "I'm going where I can bake my freedom loaf." A moment later, more soldiers ran between us. When they had passed, Sana, Toby, and Nathaniel were gone.

All at once the road was empty. From away in the distance came the roar of muskets. Isaac van Ditmas was gone. Sana was gone and the soldiers were, too. I was alone.

Was this freedom? I thought about that boy Nathaniel from far away. How a lot more people just like him were trapped in the marshes along the creek.

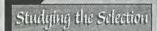
From these paragraphs, it seems reasonable to suggest that freedom to Samuel represents all of the following: the whizzing of cannonballs and people being injured, even young people that he knew; seeing soldiers being either injured or killed in battle; being asked to do things by friends; being asked to take risks; being asked to think for himself, instead of always taking orders; being in a position to make a decision; seeing oneself as a person who could make a difference; feeling trapped; being alone. Students' answers are sure to vary.

6. Students will likely write several different answers. The story is exciting. It's about someone's making a difficult decision. It's about someone's learning the meaning of liberty. It's about the Revolutionary War. It's about a young slave's becoming free. It shows that American blacks fought in the war on the side of America—even though there was no guarantee they would find themselves free at its conclusion.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Remind students that being free means being free to choose to act, to make a decision, to follow your own religious beliefs. Sometimes, we do what we believe is right and are faced with the disapproval of our friends or neighbors.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

In the story, Sana says that "Nobody here's gonna be free unless they take the risk." Why does being free require taking a risk? Do you think this is still true today?

QUICK REVIEW

- 1. Write down two words or phrases that describe Isaac van Ditmas.
- 2. Why was Samuel hungry all of the time?
- 3. Why did Isaac teach Samuel about "the currents that flow between Brooklyn and Manhattan" and "setting a sail and holding a course"?
- 4. What does Samuel say about doing work you "do not choose to do"?

FOCUS

- 5. On page 24, Samuel finds himself alone. Everyone has gone. He asks himself, Is this freedom? Reread several paragraphs before this line in the story, and the paragraph that follows it. What do you think Samuel's question means?
- In a short paragraph, explain why you think that Samuel's Choice is a good story.

CREATING & WRITING

- 7. Imagine that you are Samuel. Why do you decide to help the wounded soldiers?
- 8. You are Samuel. You have just met a soldier who wants to give up. He is tired, hungry, and discouraged. He does not believe the Colonists can win against the mighty British. How do you persuade him to stay and fight?
- You are a slave. You are going to join a group of slaves in the center of Brooklyn to protest being kept in slavery. Each of you has made a sign with a message on it. Make your sign for the gathering.

Samuel's Choice ~ 31

CREATING & WRITING

- Presumably students will say that Samuel was a good person. He knew what it was like to suffer. He sympathized with the soldier. And so forth.
- 8. The students may draw their answers from the story, from their general knowledge, and from their imaginations. Some possible answers are: the Colonists are fighting on and for their own land; freedom is worth
- fighting for; the British are not as invincible as they appear; we've learned a new way to fight from the Indians; when right is on your side you will win, etc.
- Make certain students have poster board.
 After they have made their signs, allow them to hold "demonstrations" or protests for freedom in small groups (in the classroom).

QUICK REVIEW

- 1. We know from the story that Isaac van Ditmas is a slave holder. He believes that people can be purchased as property (inhumane). Isaac van Ditmas is also described as strict and stingy (page 18). Although he does teach Samuel how to use the boat (willing to teach), Samuel may only use it to transport Farmer Isaac's wife and daughters (willing to teach only if it serves his own interest). We learn that in spite of his owning a flour mill, his slaves are not even given bread to eat (selfish, unfeeling, irresponsible). We learn that his slaves don't get enough sleep (thoughtless, uncaring). On page 22, we see that van Ditmas does not agree with the revolution and is loyal to the King of England (some might say his is a traitor; a royalist; wanting things to stay the same). When the war comes closer to the farm, van Ditmas appears to have run away (page 23) (cowardly). On page 24, Samuel says that Isaac had sneered at soldiers who were trapped in the marshes (arrogant; unfeeling). At the end of the story, van Ditmas shows that he values his own freedom, by having turned all of his property over to the Army of the Continental Congress so that he does not become a prisoner of war (smart; clever; knows how to look out for his own interest).
- Samuel was hungry all the time because his "owner" did not give him food. As a slave, he would have no access to food unless he stole it from the kitchen.
- 3. Farmer Isaac wanted Samuel to be able to take Mrs, van Ditmas and her daughters "over to Manhattan, or down the Brooklyn shore to Staten Island" (page 18)—and there were no bridges. He would not be able to navigate if he did not know about "the currents that flow between Brooklyn and Manhattan" or "setting a sail and holding a course."
- 4. Samuel says that work you do not choose to do is always tiring (page 18).



"Sarah, you can't swim across. You'll freeze."

The fear on Aunty's face didn't stop Sarah from taking the next step into the cold water of the river. "I can't spend one more day of my life as

"We can try again tomorrow night," Aunty said.

Sarah turned her head around to face Aunty, but she kept her feet planted firmly in the direction of freedom. "Aunty, what is it you been saying to me these last two weeks when I get scared? When we hidin' in a swamp and feel the snakes swimmin' by our feet? When we hear those hounds baying in the distance?"

Aunty looked down. "G-d will provide."

"'G-d will provide.' All my whole life, Aunty. When they sold Mama down to Alabama, you tell me G-d gonna provide. G-d got us this far. Why ain't He gonna provide right now?"

Aaaaaaaooooooo/The baying of the dogs was getting closer.

"No turning back now, Aunty," Sarah whispered fiercely. "C'mon." Suddenly Aunty pointed downriver. A flat boat was being poled upriver by a white man in dark clothing. He was struggling against the current of the river, but he was headed straight for them.

"Tracker didn't say it was going to be a white man," said Aunty. Sarah stood tall and proud. These weeks in the woods-this taste of freedom-had changed her. Either this white man was their ride to

About twenty feet from Sarah the man cupped a hand over his

"You folks sure ain't quiet," he shouted. "I heard you half a mile away."

The man drew to within fifteen feet. "Good thing, I guess. Rucker said you was supposed to cross down that way."

Sarah breathed a huge sigh of relief. "You Mr. Rucker's man?" The man nodded. "Rucker will meet you at the barn," he said.

"C'mon, get on before you freeze."

Barely aware of the chilly air, Sarah turned her eyes heavenward and

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SELECTION VOCABULARY

affidavit: a written statement made with the promise to tell the truth

alarmed: suddenly frightened or worried credentials: documents showing that a person has privileges

legislators: lawmakers

lobby: to work at influencing lawmakers to vote a certain way

optimist: one who generally expects things to turn out well; a person with a positive, upbeat attitude

persistence: firmly keeping to a particular course of action in spite of opposition

petition: a written request signed by a large number of people

prejudice: an already formed opinion not pased on actual experience; an unreasoning like or dislike

struggle: a fight

redentials tobby apliano many people) requesting that they be given one no homework night a week is new only how to deli? What if he wasn't enably a destrict at all? "I should have checked his cendence that he is anothing to the passeon he holds) before I got in this chair," I thought, as I graped the sens in her _ (work at influencing fearmakers) maintens of Congres call studies teacher arranged a trip to the statu capital for our class, so

Workbook p. 25 Answer Guide p. 3



W Inters writer on the off idevit?

s. Mrs. Hunter's quandmother's recipe for pumpling pie 5 Mrs. Hunter's grandmother's claim of invited hip of the bour W trydd they write a pet kibn?

s. To impress appreciation b. To demand a pay same

W beamed the group holys?

a in Washington, D.C. or the capital holding.
Is in the large frost recen of the hotel, where the desk and elevation were located. W hatdo byjaktomovite?

When might are need to show orah credeniuls? a when applying for a position as chief nageon to when purchising hieshrolfs as a bakery.

How can we ensure that our children be free of purjuice? s. We receive them before they enter kindergaten.

We can teach them about equality. Who do you wish had less pensistence?

W Intwoold as optiment be more likely to say upo

Workbook p. 26 Answer Guide p. 3

LESSON IN LITERATURE



- The theme of the story is easiest expressed by quoting Patrick Henry: Give me liberty or give me death!
- The river separates Sarah and her aunt from freedom. It is a tangible representation of the prison in which the slaves lived. The risk Sarah is willing to take to swim across it,
- dramatizes just how strong her yearning for freedom is.
- Some examples are: freedom, kindness, crime and punishment, humility, goodness is rewarded in the end, and so on.
- 4. Answers will vary.

BACKGROUND BYTES

Jim Crow is not the name of a person. Jim Crow refers to a system of laws and customs that separated whites and blacks in the American South. Jim Crow laws and customs made it possible for white people to treat blacks as if they were inferior.

From the 1880s to the 1950s, the federal government did nothing to stop Jim Crow. The Southern states enacted a series of laws that guaranteed racial segregation and racial oppression. What is segregation? Segregation is the separation of an individual or a group of individuals from a larger group or from society. What is oppression? When people are oppressed, they are "crushed, burdened, or trampled down" by other people who have power or authority.

The name, *Jim Crow*, came from a popular 19th-century song that was performed by an actor wearing blackface in a traveling show. What is **blackface**? In order to appear as "Negroes," white men would smear their faces with soot from burned cork. This was called appearing in blackface. This was a form of "theatre" that was based on prejudice.

The Encyclopedia of New York City tells us that from the 1790s, blackface acts were common in traveling shows and circuses. The actors would walk and dance the way they imagined black people walked and danced. They told jokes in so-called "Negro" dialect.

In the 1820s, a white man named Thomas Rice "caused a nationwide sensation," when he wore blackface and danced and sang a song called "Jump Jim Crow." The title came from an old street singer from whom he learned the song.

Blacks were thought not smart enough to speak proper English. But when Africans were brought here as slaves, they were never taught English. It was illegal for slaves to learn to read and write, illegal for them to go to school, and they were punished if they spoke their own languages with each other.

Thus, in 1828, Jim Crow was born. Jim Crow was an "amusing" character and comedy act used over and over again in minstrel shows. Everyone knew the character Jim Crow. And Jim Crow also became the name for a system of legalized racism.

By the end of the Reconstruction period that followed the Civil War, the term Jim Crow became the name for the very complicated system of racial rules in the American South. These rules made it possible for whites to have power over blacks in their everyday lives, in their jobs or trades, in the amount of money they earned, with the police and in the courts, in the government, and in the laws.

Beginning in the late 1870s, Southern legislatures passed laws that required the separation of persons of color from white people on any type of public transportation. Anyone who was suspected of having any black ancestors, no matter how far back, was considered a person of color. The rules of segregation came to include public parks, cemeteries, restaurants, theatres, and blood banks—to make sure that blacks never appeared to be the same as white people.

Although black men had been given the vote during the Reconstruction era, Jim Crow practices made it nearly impossible for blacks to vote in the South for more than a century after the Civil War ended. On April 26, 1865, Union General William T. Sherman received the surrender of Confederate General Joseph Johnston, thereby ending the war. On August 6, 1965, President Lyndon Baynes Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act, which guaranteed the right to vote without penalties or poll taxes.

Finally, regarding the racial separation of blood in blood banks, an interesting and terrible story is told. Charles Drew (1904-1950) was black. Charles Drew discovered how blood could be preserved as blood plasma and reconstituted, which made possible the creation of blood banks. Dr. Drew was named director of the Red Cross Blood Bank and assistant director of the National Research Council. He was in charge of blood collection for the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II.

The Armed Forces had issued an order that blood was to be separated according to race. Dr. Drew spoke out against this policy, since there is no difference between the blood of whites and blacks. He knew soldiers and sailors might die waiting for the "right" blood.

On April 1, 1950, Dr. Drew was driving to give a lecture in Tuskegee, Alabama. His car ran off the road and turned over. Newspaper accounts said that the hospital closest to the accident refused to admit him because he was black. He had to be taken farther away to a black hospital. By the time he arrived there, he had lost too much blood to survive. The man who had made blood available for transfusions in medical emergencies did not have access to a transfusion when he needed one. He was 46.

Language Alert

Do your students know where Mississippi is? You will want to show them on a map of the United States. Mississippi is bordered by the Gulf of Mexico and Louisiana to its south, Louisiana and Arkansas to the west, Tennessee to the north, and Alabama to the East. The capital of Mississippi is Jackson.

Mississippi was first inhabited by three major tribes of indigenous (native) people: Chickasaws in the north, Choctaws in the central region and south, and Natchez in the southwest along the Mississippi River. Other tribes included the Biloxi, Houma, Pascagoula, Tunica, Chakchiuma/Chocchuma, and Yazoo.

The word, Mississippi, is a native word of Algonquian origin; akin to Ojibwa Misisipi, from misi big + sipi river. The Ojibwas were a tribe from the region around Lake Superior and westward. (Ojibwa, or ojib-ubway, referred to a moccasin with a puckered seam, which the Ojibwa traditionally wore. Literally the word meant to roast until puckered up.)

INTO "THE SILENT LOBBY"

It has been said, Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world. It's the only thing that ever has.

The Silent Lobby shows us that theme is not always clear-cut. Here we see the theme as the quote states; but we also see the theme of nonviolent struggle (as Papa says, without guns or bombs). Nonviolent struggle was one of the hallmarks of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

Perhaps more than any other single individual, Martin Luther King, Jr. was responsible for creating the events that led to social change and for sustaining their momentum. Dr. King (1929-1968) advocated nonviolent protest. His challenge to Jim Crow convinced many white Americans to support the cause. Others feared him, and he was assassinated in 1968.

These words of Martin Luther King are very famous, and come from the speech he gave at the 1963 March on Washington. On August 28, 1963, more than 200,000 ordinary white and black Americans gathered in Washington and listened to *I Have a Dream*—a speech that has entered into the annals of American history.

The excerpts below encapsulate—and even go beyond—the theme of *The Silent Lobby*. Have each student practice reading one or two "stanzas" and recite them before the class for the final exercise in the post-curriculum.

Excerpts from I Have a Dream

Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabarna, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair. I say to you today my friends—so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up

and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight....

This is our hope...to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope...

to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood...to work together...to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day, this will be the day when all...will be able to sing with new meaning "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!"

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.

Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the ...slopes of California.

But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia.

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee.

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi—from every mountainside.

Let freedom ring. And when this happens, and when we allow freedom to ring—when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of our children...will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: "Free at last! Free at last! Thank G-d Almighty, we are free at last!"

EYES ON...THEME

You may want to review or expand upon the discussion of theme in the Into section of Samuel's Choice (Teacher's Edition, page 15.)



GUIDING THE READING (P. 83)

LITERAL

Q: In which state is the bus traveling?

A: We know that the bus is in Mississippi, because the bus is traveling "along the Mississippi highway."

Q: Is the narrator traveling with both his parents?
A: No, he is traveling with his father ("just before me and Papa left . . .").

Q: How many other people are traveling with them?

A: Twenty other people. It is not clear whether this number includes a driver.

Q: What sound does the bus make?

A: The bus is chug-chug-chugging.

and that the bus might be bombed.

Q: Why didn't his mother want them to go?

A: She was afraid that it would be dangerous

Q: What does Papa say people must have, if they are to have peace?

A: Papa says people must have freedom to have peace.

ANALYTICAL

Q: The narrator is both excited and fearful.

A: He is excited to be going to Washington, D.C. He is afraid that the bus is going to stall again and they will never make it.

- An old bus chugs along, traveling from Mississippi to Washington, D.C.
- The narrator shivers from the wind and from excitement and fear.
- The narrator is excited about going to Washington, but afraid that the old bus will stall again and they won't make it.
- He cannot forget his parents' words just before he and his father left to pick up other
- people who are riding on the bus.
- He drifts back in his mind to events that occurred before the bus ride.
- His mother had sald it was too dangerous for him to go with his father—the bus could be bombed.
- His father had said that their house could be bombed, for that matter.
- His mother responded by saying she doesn't want her husband to go. Why couldn't he just forget about voting and let them live in peace?
- Papa said there could be no peace without freedom.



- ▶ 1. Setting; Exposition: The narrator is on an old bus that is chugging its way along a Mississippi highway. They are traveling to Washington, D.C. This should be established clearly in students' minds as the Present Time of the story. This will enable them to see the subplots, and to see how a writer can smoothly move back in time to events that occurred before the story began.
- ▶ 2. Setting; Motivation; Characterization of Narrator; Suspense; Clues: The bus is cold—the narrator shivers from icy winds on the bus. He also shivers from excitement about going to Washington, and from fear that the bus will break down and they will never make it. Will they make it? Why are they using an old bus for something important?
- ▶ 3. Setting; Onomatopoeia: The motor is old and makes *chug-chug-chugging* sounds that keep him from sleeping.
- ▶ 4. Exposition; Conflict; Narrator Begins Thinking About Past Events: He cannot forget his parents' discussion before he and his dad departed. He says "just before me and Papa left..."
- ▶ 5. Dialogue; Suspense; Characterization of Narrator's Parents; Theme: His mother said it was too dangerous to go. His father said, essentially, that life is always dangerous for them.
- ▶ 6. Characterization; Elaboration of Conflict; Theme: The mother is afraid, protective of her family. She cares less about voting and more about her husband and son.
- ▶ 7. Theme; Emotional Setting: The father cannot have peace if he doesn't have rights like other people. Here, freedom means the exercise of rights.

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4. 1776. The manimous Sectoration of States of America. THE SILENT LOBBY MILDRED PITTS WALTER 0 THE OLD BUS CHUGGED ALONG the Mississippi highway toward Washington, D.C. I shivered from icy winds and from excitement and fear. Excitement about going to Washington and fear that the old bus would stall again on the dark, lonely, icy road and we'd never make it. 3 Oh, just to sleep. The chug-chugchugging of the old motor was not smooth enough to make soothing sounds, and I could not forget the words Mama and Papa had said just before me and Papa left to pick up twenty other people who filled the bus. 6 "It's too dangerous," Mama had said. "They just might bomb that bus." "They could bomb this house for that matter," Papa said. 6 "I know," Mama went on, "That's why I don't want you to go. Why can't you just forget about this voting business and let us live in peace?" 0 "There can be no peace without freedom," Papa said.

Q: Why can't he fall asleep?

A: He says that the chug-chug-chugging of the motor is not a soothing sound. Also, he cannot forget the conversation his parents had before he and his father left on the bus.

Q: Why do you think their discussion disturbed him?

A: Answers will vary. The most likely, however, are (1) their talking about the trip's potentially being dangerous; and (2) they do not agree on what is right to do.

Q: The narrator's father says, "They could bomb this house for that matter." What do you think he means by that? A: Answers will vary, and students may need help with this. His response is like the proverbial, "Life is dangerous, for that matter." But since many people were killed during the struggle for black civil rights, he is not being flip. He really means that their life is dangerous. And their life has got to be dangerous, if they fight for their rights, because many whites in the South went to terrible lengths to maintain Jim Crow.

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Q: Is the parents' discussion taking place during the present time of the story?

A: No. The narrator is remembering what

had occurred, as he travels on the bus. From the first paragraph of the story, we know that the present time is the bus ride—and whatever happens after the bus ride.

Q: What do you think Papa means by freedom?

A: Answers will vary. Certainly he means being able

A: Answers will vary. Certainly he means being able to exercise the right to vote. Given the violence towards blacks in the American South, he may also mean freedom from being hurt or threatened.

GUIDING THE READING (P. 85)

LITERAL

Q: What does Mama say Papa should do, instead of going to Washington?

A: She says that he should get a gun and protect them, instead of going to Washington.

Q: How old is the narrator of the story and what is his name?

A: Craig is eleven years old.

Q: How many years before does the narrator say "It had all started . . ."? What year was it?

A: He says it had all started two years earlier, in

Q: What had started?

A: His father had decided to go to register to vote as had many other African Americans living in the south.

Q: What does Mr. Clem, Papa's boss, say?

A: He warns Papa not to try to register. He says that if he does, he will fire him from his job.

Q: Why doesn't his mother want his father to try to register to vote?

A: She says that "people have been arrested and beaten for going down there."

Q: Craig wants to go with his father, when he registers to vote. What does his father tell him to do?

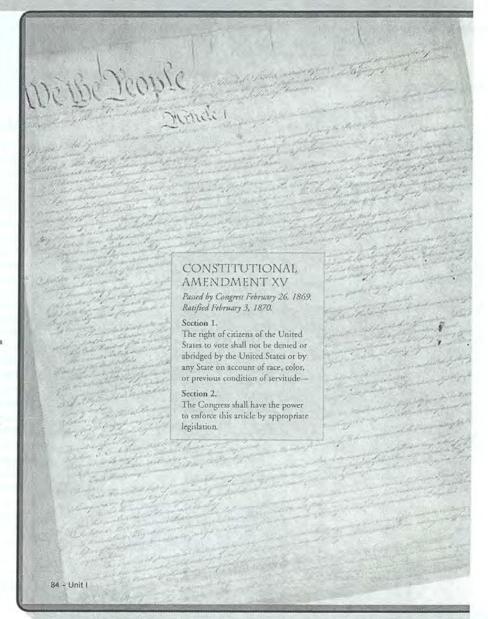
A: Papa says that Craig should stay and look after his mother and the house until he returns.

Q: What is Papa's first name?
A: His name is Sylvester.

Q: Why wasn't Papa able to register?

A: He couldn't interpret the state constitution the way they wanted.

Q: Did this mean Papa wouldn't lose his job?
 A: No. Papa would lose his job just for trying to register to vote.



ANALYTICAL

Q: When Mama asks Papa if he thinks someone is going to give him freedom, does she really expect an answer? What is she really saying?

A: This is what is called a rhetorical question. It is also a statement made in anger. She does not expect an answer. Also, she is saying that no matter what he does, it is not going to get them the vote or real equality.

Q: If Papa says you can win a struggle without bombs and guns, what kind of struggle does he believe in? A: Papa believes in a nonviolent struggle—a struggle in which no one is physically harmed or threatened with physical harm.

Q: What does the narrator mean when he says "I knew"?

A: Answers may vary. His statement refers to his parents' discussion. He has lived there and has seen violence. He also knows what this struggle is about. He has witnessed the repercussions of his father's trying to register to vote. He may also be saying that he knows why it is important.

Q: Why does Mr. Clem say he will fire Papa

- Craig's mother asked, rhetorically, "You think someone is going to give you freedom?" She did not believe his going to Washington was going to make one whit of difference in their lives.
- She said her husband should get a gun to protect them, instead of going to Washington.
- Papa commented that a struggle can be won without bombs or guns.

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· He said he was taking their son Craig with

him. Craig "is old enough to know what this is all about."

- The narrator says that he knew (what this was all about).
- Two years earlier, in 1963, his father's boss had said that if he registered to vote, he would be fired from his job.
- His mother had said his father shouldn't go to register—he could be arrested and beaten.
- The narrator had said to his father, "Let me go with you, Papa."
- His father had told him to stay and look after his mother and the house, until he returned.
- Day had turned to night and his father had not returned.
- Mama and Craig waited, afraid, for Papa to return.
- When Papa got home, he told them that he had paid the poll tax and passed the literacy test, but that he hadn't interpreted the state constitution the way they had wanted. So they would not register

"And you think someone is going to give you freedom?" Mama asked with heat in her voice. "Instead of going to Washington, you should be getting a gun to protect us."

"There are ways to win a struggle without bombs and guns. I'm going to Washington and Craig is going with me."

"Craig is too young."

"He's eleven. That's old enough to know what this is all about," Papa insisted.

I KNEW, IT HAD ALL STARTED TWO YEARS AGO, IN 1963.

Papa was getting ready to go into town to register to vote. Just as he was leaving, Mr. Clem, Papa's boss, came and warned Papa that he should not try to register.

"I intend to register," Papa said.

"If you do, I'll have to fire you," Mr. Clem drove away in a cloud of dust,

"You ought not go." Mama said, alarmed, "You know that people have been arrested and beaten for going down there,"

"I'm going," Papa insisted.

"Let me go with you, Papa," I was scared, too, and wanted to be with him if the needed help.

"No, you stay and look after your mama and the house till I get back."

Day turned to night, and Papa had not returned. Mama paced the floor.

Was Papa in jail? Had he been beaten? We waited, afraid. Finally, I said.

"Mama, I'll go find him,"

"Oh, no!" she cried. Her fear scared me more, and I felt angry because I couldn't do anything.

At last we heard Papa's footsteps. The look on his face let us know right away that something was mighty wrong.

"What happened, Sylvester?" Mama asked.

"I paid the poll tax, passed the literacy test, but I didn't interpret the state constitution the way they wanted. So they wouldn't register me."

Feeling a sense of sad relief, I said, "Now you won't lose your job."

"Oh, but I will. I tried to register."

1. Before someone can vote in an election for the first time, the person must complete a form and send it into the local board of elections. The person's name will then be placed on the list of registered voters and, on election day, that person can vote.

WORD

struggle (STRUH gul) n.: a fight

BANK ala

alarmed (uh LARMD) adj.: suddenly frightened or worried

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for registering, when it is Papa's right to vote?

A: Answers will vary, and you may need to help students repeatedly with this kind of question. People in the American South did not want blacks to be able to vote, because they did not want them to feel equal and did not want them to have any power. They needed to feel that they were superior to the blacks and that they could control them. If blacks continued to be powerless, they would continue to provide cheap labor to the whites.

Q: Why didn't Mama want Craig to go look for his father?

A: She was afraid he would be hurt.

Q: Why did Craig feel angry, when Mama told him not to go looking for Papa?

A: He was angry, because he couldn't do anything to help his father or to find out what had happened.

Q: What would Papa have had to do, in order to register to vote?

A: Papa had to pay a poll tax, pass a literacy test, and explain the Mississippi constitution in a way that satisfied the person who was handling his registration.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 8. Characterization: The mother does not share the father's idealism. She is more grounded in the every-day realities. She wants to be protected and not to take chances given the history of violence towards blacks in the American South.
- ▶ 9. Characterization; Theme: The father is committed to the struggle and to a nonviolent struggle. He is going to go to Washington and take his son with him.
- ▶ 10. Characterization; Emotional Setting: Of course the narrator knows—whatever his parents are referring to. He has lived with this all of his life. When people are harmed for acting like equals, they always live with fear and anger: fear of reprisal and anger at the people who make them act in an unnatural way, who do not allow them to be true to themselves, and who mistreat them.
- ▶ 11. Background; Setting; Subplot: The narrator describes what happened in 1963, when his father was going to register to vote.
- ▶ 12. Rising Action in Subplot: His father's boss says he will fire him from his job. His mother is frightened, because of violence that has been done to others.
- ▶ 13. Characterization; Theme: We learn that because the narrator is afraid, he wants to go with his father, in case he needs help. He is a courageous boy.
- ▶ 14. Rising Action; Suspense in Subplot: Day turns to night and his father has not yet returned. What has happened to him?
- ▶ 15. Characterization; Theme: Once again, Craig shows what a brave boy he is. He also demonstrates that he would rather risk danger to himself than remain in the dark about a situation.
- ▶ 16. Resolution of First Subplot: Papa returns home (but doesn't explain why he is so late).

- · Papa still lost his job, but continued to want to vote.
- One day Papa heard about Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.
- The Freedom Party registered people without charging a poll tax, or other restrictions.
- On Election Day in 1964, Papa voted for Mrs. Hamer and her colleagues.
- They were elected but Paul B. Johnson, Governor of Mississippi, declared all the votes illegal and gave certificates of election to three white men.
- The Freedom Party didn't give up, and lawyers came from all over the country to help them.
- People signed affidavits saying that when they tried to register to vote, they had lost their jobs, been beaten, had their homes burned, and had their businesses bombed.
- Craig returns to the present: He hears the old bus slowly grinding along.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 17. Historical Reference; Beginning of Second Subplot: Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer (October 6, 1917 to March 14, 1977) grew up in rural Montgomery County Mississippi, the twentieth child born to her parents, who were sharecroppers. In 1962, when she tried to register to vote, she was fired from her job—where she had worked and lived for eighteen years. She helped found and became vice chairperson of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.
- ▶ 18. Historical Fiction: Although "Papa" is not a specific real person as far as we know, this paragraph is replete with facts that come from history.
- ▶ 19. Theme: Never give up!
- ▶ 20. Setting; Return to Plot: We are returned to the present time of the story. Craig is riding the bus to Washington, which breaks down once again in the cold wind and icy drizzling rain.
- ▶ 21. Rising Action; Onomatopoeia: A policeman demands they move the bus, which has broken down—seemingly permanently—once again. The use of the word barked to describe the policeman's tone is an example of onomatopoeia.

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: Who was the person that Papa heard about one day?

A: Papa heard about Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer.

Q: Which party made it possible for black people to register to vote in Mississippi?

A: The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party registered black people.

Q: What was the name of the Governor of Mississippi who declared all of the black votes illegal?

A: The governor's name was Paul B. Johnson.

Q: What did the governor of Mississippi do after he declared the 83,000 votes illegal?

A: He gave certificates of election to three white men: William Colmer, John Williams, and a Mr. Whittier.

Q: What did the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party do?

- The bus breaks down, and his father gets out in the cold wind and icy rain to look under the hood.
- · People on the bus sing and pray.
- Soon they are moving along again.
- Craig wakes to hear a policeman shouting that they cannot stop the bus near the Capitol.
- · Papa says the bus won't go.
- The policeman says that if they came all the way from Mississippi, they can go a little bit farther.
- Even losing his job didn't stop Papa from wanting to vote. One day he heard about Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. The Freedom Party registered people without charging a poll tax, without a literacy test, and without people having to tell what the Mississippi Constitution was about.
- On election day in 1964, Papa proudly voted for Mrs. Hamer, Mrs. Victoria Grey, and Mrs. Annie Devine to represent the people of the Second Congressional District of Mississippi. Eighty-three thousand other black men and women voted that day, too. Great victory celebrations were held in homes and community centers. But the Governor of Mississippi, Paul B. Johnson, declared all of those eighty-three thousand votes of black people illegal. He gave certificates of election to three white men—William Colmer, John Williams, and a Mr. Whittier—to represent the mostly black Second Congressional District.
- Members of the Freedom Party were like Papa—they didn't give up. They got busy when the governor threw out their votes. Lawyers from all over the country came to help. People signed affidavits saying that when they tried to register they lost their jobs, they were beaten, and their homes were burned and businesses bombed. More than ten thousand people signed petitions to the governor asking him to count their votes. There was never a word from the governor.
- MY MIND RETURNED TO THE SOUND OF THE OLD BUS slowly grinding along. Suddenly the bus stopped. Not again! We'd never make it now. Papa got out in the cold wind and icy drizzling rain and raised the hood. While he worked, we sang and clapped our hands to keep warm. I could hear Sister Phyllis praying with all her might for our safety. After a while we were moving along again.

I must have finally fallen asleep, for a policeman's voice woke me. "You can't stop here near the Capitol," he shouted.

"Our bus won't go," Papa said,

"If you made it from Mississippi all the way to D.C., you'll make it from here," the policeman barked,

WORD BANK **affidavit** (AH fih DAY vit) n: a written statement made with the promise to tell the truth **petition** (puh TIH shun) n: a written request signed by a large number of people

86 - Unit I

A: It registered black people without having them pay a poll tax, take a literacy test, or explain the Mississippi constitution.

Q: When the bus breaks down again, how does the policeman help?

A: The policeman does not help.

ANALYTICAL

Q: What was wrong with declaring the votes illegal?

A: The three men were not elected by the people of the congressional district.

Q: What did the members of the Freedom Party do after the election?

A: They didn't give up. Lawyers came to help them and they signed affidavits about their experiences trying to register to vote.

Q: Did Papa's attempt to register to vote happen during the time of the story?

A: No. Craig is telling about an event that had occurred two years earlier.

Q: Did the registration by the Freedom Party, and the election of Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, Mrs. Victoria Grey, and Mrs. Annie Devine occur during the present time of the story?

A: No. Craig is thinking about these events, which had occurred in the past, while riding on the bus to Washington.

- Craig wonders why his father doesn't tell the policeman that they will go as soon as the bus starts.
- · He tries to start the bus and the engine dies.
- . The policeman shouts, "I said get out of here."
- · Papa says they will have to push the bus.
- · Everyone gets off the bus and pushes.
- Passersby stop and stare, and form a crowd around them.

22

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- Someone in the crowd says, "You mean they came all the way from Mississippi in that?"
- Suddenly the bus looks shabby to Craig.
- He lowers his head and becomes aware of how old his clothes are. He feels ashamed.
- A man asks what they've come to D.C. for.
- Papa explains that they want to see about seating the people they elected to Congress.
- A woman says, "So you've come to lobby," and the crowd laughs.
- Craig wonders why they are laughing. He knows that lobby means to try to get someone to decide for or against something.

At first the loud voice frightened me. Then, wide awake, sensing the policeman's impatience, I wondered why Papa didn't let him know that we would go as soon as the motor started. But Papa, knowing that old bus, said nothing. He stepped on the starter. The old motor growled and died. Again the policeman shouted. "I said get out of here."

"We'll have to push it," Papa said.

Everyone got off the bus and pushed. Passersby stopped and stared. Finally we were safe on a side street, away from the Capitol with a crowd gathered around us.

"You mean they came all the way from Mississippi in that?" someone in the crowd asked.

Suddenly the old bus looked shabby. I lowered my head and became aware of my clothes: my faded coat too small; my cotton pants too thin. With a feeling of shame, I wished those people would go away.

"What brings you all to the District?" a man called to us.

"We've come to see about seating the people we voted for and elected." Papa answered. "Down home they say our votes don't count. and up here they've gone ahead and seated men who don't represent us. We've come to talk about that."

"So you've come to lobby," a woman shouted. The crowd laughed.

Why were they laughing? I knew that to lobby meant to try to get someone to decide for or against something. Yes, that was why we had

Trick II WORD BANK

lobby (LAH bee) v.: to work at influencing lawmakers to vote a certain way

The Silent Lobby - 87

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: What happens when Papa steps on the starter?

A: The old motor growls and dies.

Q: What does Papa say to everyone on the bus, after the engine dies and the policeman says, once again, to move the bus?

A: He says they will have to push the bus.

Q: What do the passersby do?

A: They stop and stare and crowd around them.

Q: What does someone in the crowd say?

A: Someone in the crowd says, "You mean they came all the way from Mississippi in that?"

Q: What does Craig notice about his clothing?

A: He says that his coat is faded and too small; his cotton pants are too thin.

Q: Someone asks what brings them to the District of Columbia. What does Papa tell him?

A: Papa says that they have come to see about seating the people they voted for. (Students may well add more to this answer.)

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 22. Characterization of Papa; Contrast with His Son: Papa has grown up black in America. He has spent his life in the South. He is surely not going to challenge a policeman. Craig thinks about it logically. If the bus won't start, how can the policeman tell them to move it? And why can't his father say this?
- ▶ 23. Rising Action; Suspense; Onomatopoeia: The bus motor dies with a *growl*. The policeman repeats his demand that they get out of there.
- ▶ 24. Theme: This is what the hardest parts of struggle are about: Facing up to people who, intentionally or unintentionally, are going to make you feel like a fool for trying.
- ▶ 25. Contrasting Settings and People; Characterization: Now Craig sees himself and his friends through the eyes of people from a different world. He experiences shame based on one thing: material wealth. He is ashamed because he has less money—poor clothes and an old bus.
- ▶ 26. Summing Up the Conflict; Theme: Papa makes a concise, public statement about what it is they are trying to do.

Q: What does the woman shout?

A: She says, "So you've come to lobby."

Q: What does Craig know about the word lobby?
A: He knows it means "to try to get someone to decide for or against something."

ANALYTICAL

Q: Why do you think Papa says so little to the policeman?

A: Answers will vary. Papa has been trained since early childhood not to talk back.

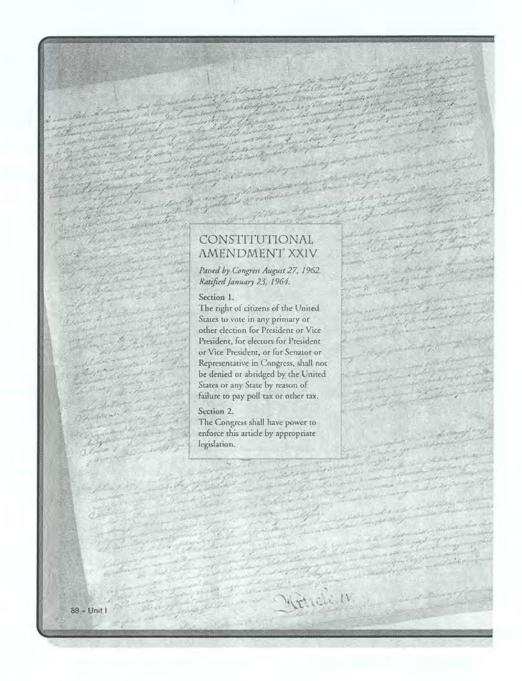
Q: Why do you think the policeman isn't more helpful?

A: Answers will vary.

Q: Someone in the crowd says, "You mean they came all the way from Mississippi in that?" Why do you think the person says that? Is it really a question? Do you think it is a mean thing to say? A: Answers will vary.

Q: Craig says he feels ashamed. Does Craig have anything to be ashamed of?

A: Answers will vary.



- · Craig wishes that he could have told the people that the suffering that brought them there was nothing to laugh about.

too late to lobby on the issue. "The House of Representatives is going to vote on the issue this morning."

- · Craig thinks, "too late." Had they come so far in the cold for nothing?
- Someone from the crowd says that they are
 Would the men chosen by the governor,

rather than the representatives they had elected, be seated in the House of Representatives?

- · The rain begins to fall again.
- Papa says that they cannot turn back. They have come too lar.
- . They rush against the cold wind back to the Capitol.
- · A doorman stops them on the steps and asks for their passes.
- They have no passes. They doorman says they must have passes to be seated in the gallery.
- Papa says they must stay, even if they do no more than let the legislators see that they have come all of this way. He pleads with the doorman to let them in out of the cold.

come. I wished I could have said to those people who stood gawking at us that the suffering that brought us here was surely nothing to laugh about,

The laughter from the crowd quieted when another woman shouted, "You're 28 too late to lobby. The House of Representatives will vote on that issue this morning."

Too late. That's what had worried me when the old bus kept breaking down. Had we come so far in this cold for nothing? Was it really too late to talk to members of the House of Representatives to persuade them to seat our representatives elected by the Freedom Party, not the ones chosen by the

JUST THEN RAIN BEGAN TO FALL. THE CROWD QUICKLY LEFT. and we climbed onto our bus. Papa and the others started to talk. What would we do now? Finally, Papa said, "We can't turn back now, We've done too much and come too far."

After more talk we all agreed that we must try to do what we had come to do. Icy rain pelted us as we rushed against cold wind back to the Capitol. **a**

A doorman stopped us on the steps. "May I have your passes?"

"We don't have any," Papa replied, "Sorry, you have to have passes for seats in the gallery." The doorman

blocked the way.

"We're cold in this rain. Let us in," Sister Phyllis cried.

"Maybe we should just go on back home," someone suggested.

"Yes. We can't talk to the legislators now, anyway," another woman said

"No," Papa said. "We must stay if we do no more than let them see that we have come all this way."

"But we're getting soaking wet. We can't stand out here much longer." another protested.

"Can't you just let us in out of this cold?" Papa pleaded with the doorman. "Not without passes." The doorman still blocked the way. Then he said,

"There's a tunnel underneath this building. You can go there to get out of the rain."

WORD legislators (LEH jiss LAY torz) n.: lawmakers BANK

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3

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- > 27. Characterization; Theme: Craig wishes he could tell the gawkers that the suffering that brought them there is nothing to laugh at.
- 28. Rising Action; Suspense: A woman in the crowd tells them they are too late to lobby. What will they do now?
- 29. Theme: Had they come for nothing?
- 30. Characterization; Theme: Papa says they must continue.
- 31. Rising Action; Suspense: The doorman says they need passes and they don't have passes.
- 32. Papa Speaks to the Essence of Lobbying; Foreshadowing: "We must stay if we do no more than let them see that we have come all this way."
- 33. Theme; Characterization: People are discouraged. They don't know what to do. They don't know whether to give up and go home. Papa pushes one more time. "Can't you just let us in...?"
- 34. Rising Action: Turning Point: The doorman relents. He tells them there is a tunnel underneath the building where they can go to get out of the rain. We see here that, as in life, a minor character can have a powerful impact.

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: What have they come too late for? A: They have come too late to lobby.

Q: Have the legislators already voted on the issue?

A: No. They are going to vote on the issue that very morning.

Q: Papa says that they must stay, even if they do no more than . . . what?

A: Papa says they must stay, even if they do no more than let the legislators see that they have come all this way.

ANALYTICAL

Q: If Craig could have told the people who stood gawking about the suffering that brought them there, what would he have said?

A: There are many possible answers: Students can talk about the problems with registering to vote, the racial abuse at home, the losing of jobs, the governor's declaring the election illegal and appointing his own people, the difficult bus trip, and so forth.

Q: How do you think the doorman feels about these people?

A: Answers will vary.

Q: Do you think the people who wanted to go back home after Sister Phyllis cried, "Let us in," were giving up too easily?

A: Answers will vary. Some students may say they were giving up too easily, because they finally did get in from Papa's persistence and the doorman's partially relenting. But given what they had already been through—registering to vote at home; possibly losing jobs or being arrested; leaving home to come to a strange place on a bus that kept breaking down; standing in the icy rain; perhaps feeling ashamed as Craig felt ashamed-they had already done more than most of us would have done.

Q: Why does Papa continue to plead with the doorman?

A: Answers will vary. This matters so much and this is a man who does not give up easily.

- The doorman tells them there is a tunnel under the building where they can get in out of the rain.
- They crowd into the tunnel and line up along the sides.
- They hear footsteps and voices. Craig fears it's a trap.
- The voices cease when the people come upon them and walk by.
- His father says that they are congressmen and congresswomen.
- They are dressed finely in warm coats and gleaming shoes.
- The passing legislators react in various ways to the people gathered there from Mississippi: Some frown; some glare; some sigh; some are scared; some surprised; and there are a few friendly smiles.
- Craig sees how poor his father and their friends look beside these well-dressed people. But they all stand straight and tall.
- Craig wants to shout, "Count my papa's vote! Let my people help make the laws!"
- · Craig prays, "L-rd, let them hear us in this silence."

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 35. Strong Sensory Images; Setting: Throughout this and the next several paragraphs, when they are in the tunnel, the visual images are very strong. We can also feel Craig's being so chilled and then being warmed by the walls. Here, the author appeals to our physical senses.
- ▶ 36. Rising Action; Suspense; Characterization: Some may think that Craig is overreacting, but this speaks to his experience living in Mississippi.
- ▶ 37. Minor Climax: This is one of the most important moments in the story. This is the fulfillment of Papa's deep desire: that they just be seen!
- ▶ 38. Contrast: The contrast between the affluence of the legislators and the poverty of these petitioners is very effective.
- ▶ 39. Characterization; Theme: Craig sees how they look in comparison to the legislators—but he also sees that "they all stood straight and tall."
- ▶ 40. Characterization; Theme: Craig wants to shout, "Count my papa's vote! Let my people help make laws, too." This is a child's plea, and very moving. It resounds in a way similar to the excerpt from Martin Luther King's I Have a Dream speech.
- ▶ 41. Characterization; Culture: These are deeply religious people. The role of religion in the civil rights movement should not be underestimated.
- 42. Rising Action; New Characters: Two congressmen stop in front of Papa and introduce themselves. One of the congressmen is black!
- ▶ 43. Rising Action: They say they had little luck lobbying themselves and only expect fifty votes.

- Two congressmen stop in front of Papa and introduce themselves.
- Papa introduces himself and says that they are from Mississippi.
- Congressman Ryan from New York says they expected them much earlier.
- · Papa explains their difficulties.
- The congressmen say that they lobbied late into the night, and didn't do very well.
- **85** WE CROWDED INTO THE TUNNEL AND LINED UP ALONG
- the sides. My chilled body and hands came to life pressed against the warm walls. Then footsteps and voices echoed through the tunnel. Police. This tunnel...a trap! Would they do something to us for trying to get in without passes? I wanted to cry out to Papa, but I could not speak.

The footsteps came closer. Then many people began to walk by. When they came upon us, they suddenly stopped talking. Only the sound of their feet echoed in the tunnel. Where had they come from? What did they do? "Who are they, Papa?" I whispered.

- "Congressmen and women." Papa spoke so softly. I hardly heard him, even in the silence.
- They wore warm coats, some trimmed with fur. Their shoes gleamed, Some of them frowned at us. Others glared. Some sighed quickly as they walked by. Others looked at us, then turned their eyes to their shoes. I could tell by a sudden lift of the head and a certain look that some were surprised and scared. And there were a few whose friendly smiles seemed to say, Right on!
- 1 glanced at Papa. How poor he and our friends looked beside those well-dressed people. Their clothes were damp, threadbare, and wrinkled; their shoes were worn and mud stained. But they all stood straight and tall.
- My heart pounded. I wanted to call out to those men and women, "Count my Papa's vote! Let my people help make laws, too," But I didn't dare speak in that silence.
- Could they hear my heart beating? Did they know what was on my mind?

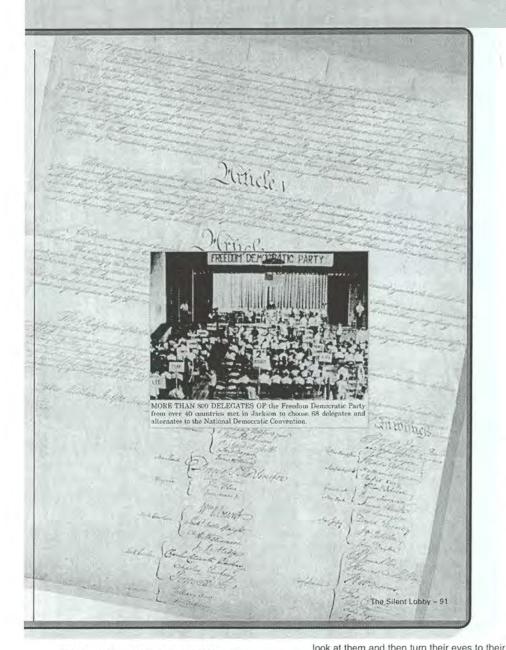
 "L-rd," I prayed, "let them hear us in this silence."

Then two congressmen stopped in front of Papa. I was frightened until I saw smiles on their faces.

- "I'm Congressman Ryan from New York," one of them said. Then he introduced a black man: "This is Congressman Hawkins from California."
 - "I'm Sylvester Saunders. We are here from Mississippi," Papa said.
 - "We expected you much earlier," Congressman Ryan said.
 - "Our old bus and bad weather delayed us," Papa explained.
- "That's unfortunate. You could've helped us a lot. We worked late into the night lobbying to get votes on your side. But maybe I should say on our side." Mr. Ryan smiled.

"And we didn't do very well," Congressman Hawkins said.

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GUIDING THE READING (P. 90)

LITERAL

Q: Where does the doorman finally let them go?
A: He tells them that there is a tunnel underneath the building.

Q: Who are the people who pass them in the tunnel?

A: The people are congressmen and congress-

Q: What are the different reactions the legislators have to these poor, wet brave people from Mississippi?

A: Some frown; some glare; and some sigh. Some

shoes. Some seem surprised and others seem scared. There are also a few friendly smiles.

Q: What does Craig want to call out to these men and women?

A: He wants to say, "Count my papa's vote! Let my people help make laws, too."

Q: Who are the two congressmen and where are they from?

A: Congressman Ryan is from New York and Congressman Hawkins is from California.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Why do you think the doorman tells them about the tunnel?

A: Answers will vary.

Q: Why does Craig think the tunnel is a trap when he hears footsteps and voices?

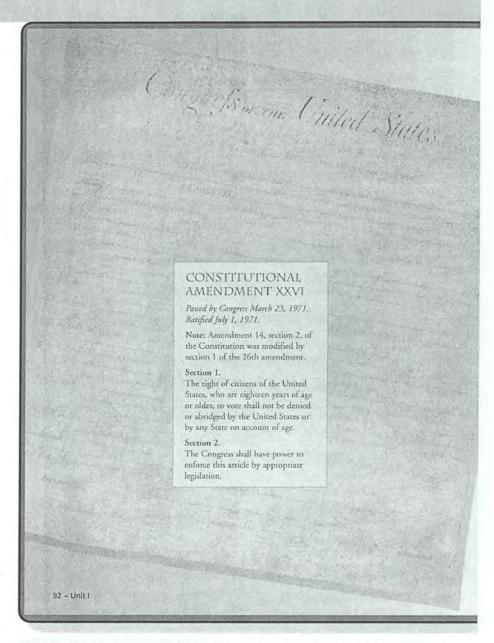
A: Answers will vary. Certainly he has heard about people's terrible experiences where he lives in Mississippi.

Q: Why do you think the legislators stop speaking when they see the people from Mississippi?

A: Answers will vary. They are probably shocked. They are seeing the real people who are deeply affected by their actions. They are seeing people who are poorer than many of them can imagine. Certainly, they don't expect to see these people at the House of Representatives in Washington, D.C. (If students have trouble with this one, encourage them to close their eyes and see the picture in the tunnel in their own minds.)

Q: What does Craig pray? What does he mean by this?

A: He says, "L-rd, let them hear us in this silence." Each group is shocked to see the other. The legislators are just walking through on the way to the House of Representatives session. Social protocol and lack of time keep the people from one group from speaking to people from the other group. But Craig hopes that the legislators will hear their inner voices speaking.



GUIDING THE READING (P. 93)

LITERAL

Q: Which Congressman is speaking, who does not want Mrs. Hamer seated in the House?

A: The Congressman from Michigan, Gerald Ford.

Q: Which Congressman argues that sticking to the rules denies blacks the right to vote in the state of Mississippi?

A: Congressman Ryan.

Q: How many votes did Congressman Ryan think they would be lucky to get?

A: He thought they would be lucky to get fifty votes.

Q: How many Representatives are voting in the House?

A: 435.

Q: How does Craig feel with every yes vote?
A: He feels as though he can hardly keep from clapping his hands and shouting.

Q: What is the strange thing that happens?
A: Congressmen and congresswomen keep saying, "Yes. Yes. Yes."

ANALYTICAL

Q: What does Congressman Ford think is important?

A: He thinks that it is important to follow the rule that says that the only people who will be seated in Congress are people with credentials from their own states.

Q: What does he think will, in time, undo the wrongs done to black Americans?

A: He believes that the new civil rights act will undo the wrongs done to black Americans.

Q: Why do you think that he wants to seat the men chosen by Governor Johnson? A: Answers will vary.

Q: Why can't the rules from segregated states justly apply in the United States Congress?

A: Answers will vary.

Q: Which petitions is Craig thinking of?
A: The petitions signed by more than 10,000 people and sent to Governor Paul Johnson of Mississippi, asking that he count their votes.

- Congressman Ryan invites them to come in and watch the session.
- A little later, as they find seats in the gallery, they watch Congressman Gerald Ford speak
- against sealing the elected members of the Freedom Party.
- He says that, for now, the only "representatives" that should be seated are those who have credentials from their states.
- Congressman Ryan asks, How can

Congress abide by the rules of Mississippi, a state that denies blacks the right to vote?

- Craig wonders if the men and women of the House of Representatives are listening to Congressman Ryan.
- He recalls that Congressman Ryan has said that they will be lucky to get fifty votes for seating Mrs. Hamer, Mrs. Victoria Grey, and Mrs. Annie Devine.
- At every yes vote, Craig can hardly keep from clapping his hands and shouting.

"We'll be lucky if we get fifty votes on our side today," Congressman Ryan informed us. "Maybe you would like to come in and see us at work."

"We don't have passes," I said, surprised at my voice.

"We'll see about getting all of you in," Congressman Hawkins promised.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

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600

- ▶ 44. Rising Action: They invite the group in to watch the vote.
- ▶ 45. Setting: They are now sitting in the gallery of the Congress.
- ▶ 46. Historical Reference: Congressman Gerald Ford of Michigan was elected to the House of Representatives in 1948 for the first of thirteen terms. From 1965 to 1973, he was House Minority Leader. He became the 38th President of the United States in 1974 through a very unusual set of circumstances. In 1972, Richard Nixon was reelected President. Spiro Agnew was his Vice President. Spiro Agnew was charged by the U.S. Dept. of Justice with having accepted bribes as Governor of Maryland. It was believed he continued to accept bribes as Vice President. Consequently, he resigned from office. President Nixon appointed Mr. Ford Vice President on December 6, 1973. This was the first time in U.S. history that procedures for filling such vacancies were used. (These procedures are outlined in the 25th Amendment to the Constitution.) When President Nixon, himself, was forced to resign on August 9, 1974-following the Watergate scandal—Gerald Ford became President.
- 47. Rising Action; Increased Tension: Likely in his role as House Minority Leader, Congressman Ford is asking his fellow congressmen to follow a rule that will not allow the seating of the Freedom Party representatives. The rule stipulates that representatives to Congress must be elected according to the legal procedures of the state from which they come. (Of course, it is very important to have rules so that a country can be governed properly. But Jim Crow meant that blacks in the South were kept from voting and had no representation in Congress.) Congressman Ford says that in time, the new civil rights act will right these wrongs. (On June 29, 1964, President Lyndon Baines Johnson had signed the Omnibus Civil Rights Act. However another piece of legislation, the Voting Rights Act, needed to be passed on August 6, 1965, in order to guarantee the right to vote without penalties or poll taxes.)
- ▶ 48. Rising Action; Theme: Congressman Ryan rises to speak. How can Congress obey rules that make it impossible for blacks to vote? Rules from a state that practices segregation cannot justly apply here.
- ▶ 49. Rising Action; Suspense; Important Data: Congressman Ryan has said they will be lucky to get lifty votes. We learn that the total votes will be 435—from 435 elected representatives to the House. Fifty votes would be 11% of the total vote.

A LITTLE LATER, AS WE FOUND SEATS IN THE GALLERY.

Congressman Gerald Ford² from the state of Michigan was speaking. He did not want Mrs. Hamer and other fairly elected members of the Freedom Party seated in the House. He asked his fellow congressmen to stick to the rule of letting only those with credentials from their states be seated in Congress. The new civil rights act would, in time, undo wrongs done to black Americans. But for now, Congress should let the men chosen by Governor Johnson keep their seats and get on with other business.

Then Congressman Ryan rose to speak. How could Congress stick to rules that denied blacks their right to vote in the state of Mississippi? The rule of letting only those with credentials from a segregated state have seats in the House could not justly apply here.

I looked down on those men and few women and wondered if they were listening. Did they know about the petitions? I remembered what <u>Congressman</u>

Ryan had said: "We'll be lucky if we get fifty..." Only 50 out of 435 elected to the House.

Finally the time came for Congress to vote. Those who wanted to seat Mrs. Hamer and members of the Freedom Democratic Party were to say, yes. Those who didn't want to seat Mrs. Hamer were to say, no.

At every yes vote I could hardly keep from clapping my hands and shouting. "Yea! Yea!" But I kept quiet, counting: thirty, then forty, forty-eight...only two more. We would lose badly.

Then something strange happened. Congressmen and congresswomen kept 51 saying "Yes. Yes." On and on, "Yes." My heart pounded. Could we win? I sat

2. Congressman Gerald Ford later became the 38th president of the United States.
3. Prior to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, in some states, black Americans were kept separate from white Americans in many situations. For example, white children and black children were sent to separate schools. States where blacks and whites were kept separate by law were called segregated (SEG rib GAY tid) states.

WORD BANK credentials (kruh DENN shulz) n.: documents showing that a person has privileges

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- ▶ 50. Characterization; Rising Action; Suspense: At every yes vote, Craig can hardly keep from clapping his hands and shouting.
- ▶ 51. Rising Action: Then something strange happens. Congressmen and congresswomen keep saying, "Yes. Yes. Yes."

- · Everyone in their group is sitting on the edge of their seats.
- . When the voting is over, 148 votes have been cast in their favor.
- · Why have so many Representatives changed their minds?
- Papa introduces Craig to Congressman Hawkins.
- · Congressman Hawkins asks Craig how they had known that some of the representatives would walk through the tunnel.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 52. Building to a Climax: They look as if they can hardly keep from shouting as more yes votes ring from the floor.
- 53. Climax: When the voting is over, 148 votes have been cast in their favor. Why have so many changed their minds?
- 54. Falling Action; Setting: Later, presumably when they are no longer in the gallery (although their location is uncertain), Papa introduces Craig to Congressman Hawkins.
- 55. Falling Action: The congressman remarks on the strange coincidence of their being in the tunneland the repercussions of that.
- > 56. Characterization; Theme: Craig feels proud. His father was right: A struggle can be won without violence
- > 57. Resolution; Moral of the Story; Title: They have lobbied in silence and they have been heard.

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: How are Papa and the others sitting?

A: They are all sitting on the edge of their seats.

Q: When the voting is over, how many congresspersons have voted to seat the representatives from the Freedom Party?

A: 148.

Q: To whom does Papa introduce Craig after the vote?

A: He introduces him to Congressman Hawkins, the black representative from California.

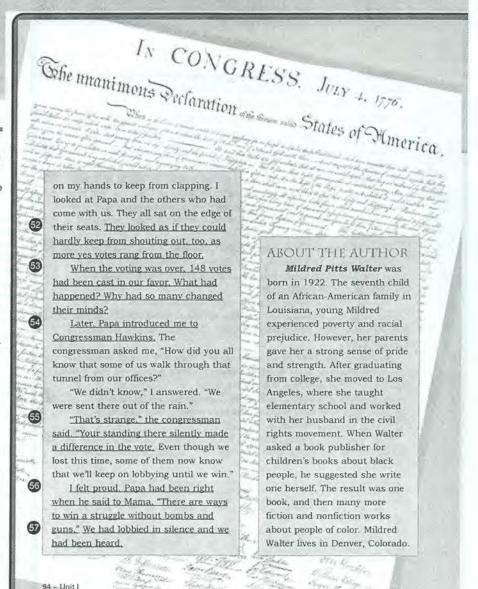
ANALYTICAL

Q: Why do so many congressmen and congresswomen chang their minds?

A: Answers will vary. Certainly actually seeing the people to whom this mattered so deeply, and perhaps seeing their poverty, would have been a very powerful experience.

- . Craig says that they had just been sent there . He thinks to himself that Papa was right to get out of the rain.
- · The congressman says that their standing there silently made a difference in the vote.
- · Craig feels proud.

- when he told Mama that a struggle can be won without bombs and guns.
- They had lobbied in silence and they had been heard.



Q: Do you know what percentage of the House voted in favor of seating the Freedom Party members?

A: To figure the percentage, students will need to divide 148 by 435. Thirty-four percent, or slightly more than one-third.

Q: What does Congressman Hawkins think is strange?

A: He thinks it is strange that the people from Mississippi were standing in the tunnel without even knowing that some of the representatives came through that way. And that is what made the difference in the vote.

Q: Why does Craig feel proud?

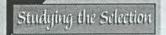
A: Answers will vary. But their presence had surely accomplished something, and he had been there.

Q: What kind of struggle does Papa believe

A: Papa believes in a nonviolent struggle, a struggle in which no one is hurt.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

If students have difficulty with the question, ask them if they have ever been in a situation in which they felt unsure of themselves.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

How would you have felt, standing in the tunnel, as the congressmen and women walked by?

QUICK REVIEW

- 1. Where is the old bus coming from and where is it going?
- 2. Who were the three people who had been elected by the people of the Second Congressional District?
- 3. What organization registered people without charging a poll tax, without a literacy test, and without people having to tell what the Mississippi Constitution was about?
- 4. What had Papa's boss said he would do, if Papa registered to vote?

FOCUS

- 5. Why does Papa insist that Craig go on the bus ride to Washington?
- 6. One of the themes of *The Silent Lobby* is the struggle for equality—black Americans are supposed to have the same rights as white Americans and they are struggling to get those rights. Why don't people want them to vote?

CREATING & WRITING

- 7. You are a member of Congress. You changed your vote, after seeing the people from Mississippi standing in the tunnel. Write a letter home to one of your grandparents, explaining why you did so.
- Read through the story once again, and list some examples of actions that show that people from Mississippi don't give up. Make sure you give the page numbers in parentheses.
- Study the stanza from the I Have a Dream speech that your teacher has
 provided. You and the rest of your classmates will recite the part assigned to
 you. Notice how some of the lines are repeated, making the speech almost like
 a song or a poem.

The Silent Lobby ~ 95

QUICK REVIEW

- The bus is coming from Mississippi and going to Washington, D.C.
- The people of the Second Congressional District of Mississippi had elected Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, Mrs. Victoria Grey, and Mrs. Annie Devine to represent them.
- The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party registered people without their paying poll tax, taking a literacy test, or giving an explanation of the Mississippi Constitution.
- Papa's boss said he would fire Papa, if he registered to vote.

FOCUS

- 5. Papa believes that Craig is old enough to understand that blacks in Mississippi are being denied the right to vote, and that he is old enough to take responsibility for making change.
- 6. Answers will vary, and it will be interesting to see what students have to say. Partly, their ability to respond to the question will come out of your presenting the material in Background Bytes, and your talking about the social function of an underclass. Blacks provided a source of cheap house and field labor. By looking down on black people, white people—no matter how uneducated or poor themselves—could feel that they were superior to someone. Racial discrimination also meant that people didn't have to think about how horrible the enslavement of blacks had been.

CREATING & WRITING

- 7. Answers will vary.
- 8. Examples of the steadfastness of the blacks from Mississippi:

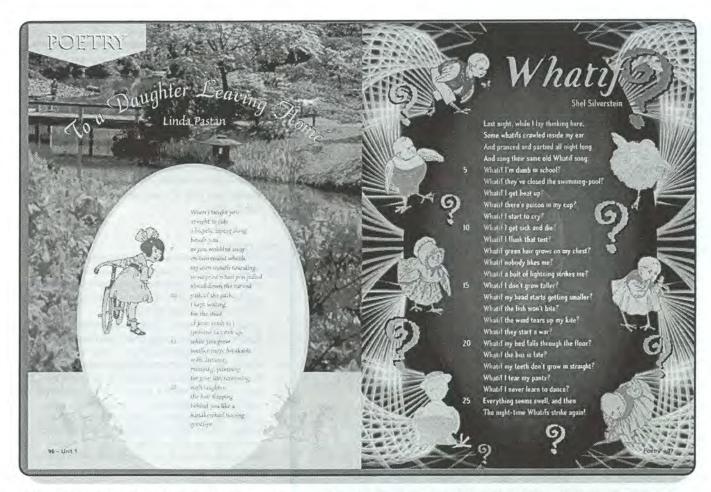
They go on the bus, even though it is old. (p. 83)

People consider it dangerous, but they go anyway. (p. 83)

Papa says there is no peace without freedom. (p. 83)

Papa insists Craig is old enough to know what the trip to Washington is all about. (p. 85)

Papa tries to register to vote even though his boss threatens to fire him. (p. 85)
Papa is turned down at the polls and loses his job, but he still wants to register with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. (p. 86)
After the Governor of Mississippi, Paul B.
Johnson, declares 83,000 votes illegal, people don't give up: People sign affidavits describing what had happened to them. Ten thousand people sign petitions to the governor asking him to count their votes. (p. 86)
And so forth.



Talking About Poetry and To a Daughter Leaving Home

Lots of people are afraid of poetry. Some people have complaints about poetry: They don't understand it. It's too hard. They don't *get* it. (And, certainly, if a teacher is uncomfortable with poetry, it will be difficult *not* to communicate the feeling to the students!)

Oddly enough, poetry is closest to literary forms we love and to experiences we have that are comforting and entertaining: songs, lullables, nursery rhymes, and tongue twisters. People ought to get a kick out of poetry.

One of the ways we begin to teach very little children to talk—without even being aware of it—is through the use of nursery rhymes and funny songs with funny sounds and animal noises. If older children learn to love poetry, to be unafraid of it, they will have a lifetime of pleasurable reading awaiting them. This is because like music, poetry is about sound. Poetry is also often about rhythm.

Poetry must be read out loud. Some poems just cry out to be memorized and performed! Human beings like to hear nice sounds. Human beings like dramatic performance.

Poetry is also a short way of expressing a feeling, relating an observation, or recounting a story. How does poetry do this with such brevity? One way is through the skillful use of *figures* of *speech*. A figure of speech is any language that is not meant to be taken literally. A telephone book contains no figures of speech because it is purely informational. A story, a poem, a speech—any language which speaks not only to our conscious minds but also to our senses, our emotions, our intuitions—may con-

tain figures of speech. Figures of speech help us see in our mind's eye the story or event the poet is recounting. Some figures of speech help us *hear* the sounds of the story. And some figures of speech drive home the theme of the poem.

A figure of speech appears in the last four lines of *To a Daughter Leaving Home*. In the poem we read,

the hair flapping behind you like a handkerchief waving goodbye.

(You may need to familiarize your students with the notion that women used to wave goodbye with their handkerchiefs. Since few people carry handkerchiefs, this social ritual may be unfamiliar to young readers—and even to young teachers.)

What specific type of figure of speech appears in the last four lines? A simile (SIM uh lee). A simile is a comparison between two things—two things that presumably are not alike. The comparison evokes in us the sense that they are alike in some (but not all) ways, after all. This is also the definition of a metaphor (MEHT uh fore). But a simile has one other condition: The comparison must use the words like or as or as if or as though.

Does the poet or the speaker of the poem really believe that the daughter's hair is a handkerchief? No, of course not. But what a wonderful picture this creates, a girl riding off on her bike, with her hair waving goodbye! More than that, the simile that closes the

poem shows us that the whole poem, the whole story of the poem—a daughter riding off on her two-wheeler alone for the first time—is an anecdote taken from the past that in the mother's mind is a metaphor for the daughter's actually leaving home in the present time. Interestingly, the present time is established only by the title.

Does the poet or mother think that her daughter's actual leaving home is just the same as her bicycling off by herself when she was a little girl? Yes and no. She surely knows that her daughter won't be coming back right away. She surely knows that her daughter is older now and is (probably) not riding a bike to take her wherever she is going. But some of her feelings, some of the feelings she had when her daughter went biking off, are the same as today, when her daughter is moving out

What about these two experiences is the same? That is a good question for your students. How are (1) a daughter's riding on a two-wheeler by herself for the first time and (2) a daughter's moving away from home as a young adult alike for a mom? Do these experiences also have similarities for the daughter?

More About Figures of Speech

Figures of speech have been called *dream* language. In dreams, events occur that represent events or feelings from our waking life. The dream is a kind of shorthand for a way we feel or a situation we have experienced.

Figures of speech are also a kind of shorthand.

A figure of speech is a word or phrase that describes an object, idea, event, person, creature, or phenomenon in terms of another object, idea, event, person, creature, or phenomenon. The description or comparison is not meant to be taken as literally true. That means, it is not to be understood as a factual description or comparison nor to be interpreted as actually so.

Below, we shall briefly discuss five types of figures of speech. The first, **simile**, has been mentioned above. Its fraternal—but not identical—twin is **metaphor**, in which, like the simile, two unlike things are shown to share one or many traits.

A metaphor, however, is an equation, whereas a simile is an approximation. A simile—to be like something—retains the difference between the two things being compared. One can never be fully substituted for the other. But a metaphor is a substitution, an equation in principle.

Compare metaphor:

I fall upon the thorns of life,/ I bleed.(Shelley) Her life was a bed of roses, until—

Thomas Edison was "the wizard of Menlo Park."

to simile:

A good book is like a good meal.

O lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud, (Shelley) She walks in beauty like the night (Byron)

In addition to **metaphor** and **simile**, common figures of speech include

Hyperbole (hi PURR boh lee): an extravagant exaggeration that is often funny, because a reality is conveyed that is impossible. When a writer or speaker uses hyperbole, they express more than the truth, in order to make a vivid impression. Hyperbole is often used meanly to make fun of others—so we need to be careful with our examples.

I must have walked a thousand miles.

When I saw Roger's dog I was shocked: He was as big as a house!

Idiom (IHD ee ohm): a set and commonly understood phrase of two or more words that means something other than the literal definition of its words. A rule of thumb is that, although one can translate a simile or metaphor into another language and retain its sense, one cannot translate an idiom word for word. In another language, the words of the idiom will make no sense at all. One can only translate the *idea* that the idiom conveys. English has thousands of idioms.

I didn't want to be the one to break the news to her.

Done is done; Jim will have to face the music. He's not very bright.

Personification (purr SAHN if ick AY shun): A metaphor in which human qualities, feelings, action, or characteristics are given to inanimate (non-living) objects. Giving animals human qualities is **not** personification.

Kurt shivered as an angry wind blew across the field.

Jane had been working with the shovel for an hour, but the **rock refused** to budge. The sun **smiled** down on us as we embarked upon our journey.

Literary Devices Using Sound

Poets use sound to bring the reader into their poem. Some of these literary devices are just the repetition of letters. In fact there are three ways that poets repeat letters. (1) Repetition of the *initial* consonant sound of words; (2) Repetition of consonant sounds and consonant combinations within words; and (3) Repetition of the vowel sounds within words in a line or stanza.

Here are examples of each type:

(1) between the black heads / bent below the heavy yoke (see Figures in the Field Against the Sky, page 99)

(2) A Niche in the Kitchen (see page 199)

(3) And the warm air / Carries the haunting sound (see The Whippoorwill Calls, page 98)

The repetition of the same initial consonant sound within a poem or a passage of prose is called **alliteration**. Of course, tongue twisters use lots of alliteration. (Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.)

Another form of poetic repetition is the simple repetition of the same words. To a Daughter Leaving Home does this nicely with pumping, pumping. In The Whippoorwill Calls, Lines 1-6 of Stanza 2 mimic the words and construction of the same lines in Stanza 1.

Rhyme is the repetition of accented vowel sounds and all the sounds following them in words that are close together in a poem. Rhyme is the correspondence of the terminal sounds of two or more words or lines of verse. The poem, Whatif, is written in rhyming pairs of lines.

Another sound-based figure of speech is onomatopoeia. This is the use of a word whose sound imitates or suggests its meaning: the clanging of the bell; the bubbling brook; the sizzling hamburgers; the slow hiss of the air from a balloon.

What Else Makes Poetry Hard to Understand?

Poetry may be hard to understand, because it is not usually punctuated the way that prose is punctuated. Notice, in fact, that To a Daughter Leaving Home is only one sentence! When poetry does this, it may leave us breathless, amazed. Our first reaction to all of those words in one sustained breath—although we do get a break with some of the commas—is What?!

In fact, most poems are not just one sentence. This is a device the author uses deliberately in *To a Daughter Leaving Home,* You may wish to discuss this with your students. What effect does the single sentence format of

the poem have on its impact? How does the experience of reading this, especially reading it aloud, mirror the feelings of the writer, talking about her daughter bicycling away?

All of the words, without letup, from Line 7 (my own mouth rounding) to the poem's close, give a sense of propulsion, of the mother's waiting for the thud of [her] crash, of pumping, pumping.

Poetry can be difficult because thoughts are not completed on a single line-or two or three. The interruption of ideas, the splitting apart of events, ideas, or images by separating them, is a literary construction to which a reader must become accustomed and through which students may need to be guided. This sort of visual and mental training that poetry necessitates is worth the effort, because it makes it possible for the poet to give great emphasis to some words or pictures. It allows us to see and hear wonderful things. For example, my own mouth rounding is an image that lasts because it stands there by itself (and both words have the same internal vowel sound), not completed with in surprise until the next line. What is the effect of pumping, pumping on its own line? Or, for your life, screaming? Or the final word of the poem, goodbye, on its final line alone?

An Excellent Exercise for You and Your Students: Translating a Poem into Prose

Most people like puzzles. Poetry can be a puzzle that is fascinating to unravel. A good exercise, even with young students, is translating a poem into prose sentences. Here is our version of *To a Daughter Leaving Home*:

When you were eight, I taught you to ride a bicycle.

I loped along beside you, as you wobbled away on two round wheels.

My own mouth rounded in surprise, when you pulled ahead down the curved path of the park

I kept waiting for the thud of your crash. As I sprinted to catch up, you grew smaller, more breakable with distance.

There you were, pumping, pumping for your life.

You screamed with laughter, and your hair flapped behind you—like a handkerchief waving goodbye.

Some of these sentences may be too long for fifth graders. But you can break them down even more, into smaller pieces, as long as you have complete sentences, and as long as you don't change the meaning of the poem. Doing this enables students to understand the meaning of the poem, and also shows, by contrast, how much more vivid and powerful the poem is, as it has been written.

INTO "TO A DAUGHTER LEAVING HOME

The poem is about the excitement and terror the parent feels when the child embarks on a new experience and develops new skills. New experi-

ences enable children to grow and mature.

Ultimately, most children will grow up and leave home. Parents know this but are not always thinking about it. Often, when children do something new it is, for their parents, a little bit like they are leaving. The more inde-

pendent the child becomes, the less it seems they need the parent. When the time comes for the child to leave, events of the past may suddenly be remembered. What is the theme? It is both very difficult and a source of pride when children leave home.

EYES ON...FREE VERSE AND THE FIRST-PERSON VOICE

We usually think of poetry as having a pattern of rhyme and rhythm. Poetry without meter, without a beat, without a regular pattern of end rhymes is called *free verse*. Free verse, however, may have cadence, which is the rhythmic recurrence of a sound, its rising and falling inflection. Free verse usually relies more heavily than traditional poetry on the repetition of words, phrases, sentence structure, images, and even—especially—the repetition of consonant and vowel sounds. Free verse may also pay special attention to the number of syllables in

each word and the number of words per line. These are important guidelines to help you and your students appreciate and think about poetry.

The I of the poem is the mother of the daughter-leaving-home. The use of I by the speaker of the poem tells us that the poem is written in the first person.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 1.Title Establishes Extended Metaphor: The title establishes the time of the telling of the story. The title is also essential to our understanding that the incident recounted in the poem resembles the event in the title for the mother, who is the speaker of the poem.
- ▶ 2. Syntactical Structure: The poem is just one sentence.
- ▶ 3. Syllabification: You may want to think about whether the following lines are more effective because they only use words of one syllable.

Line 1: When I taught you
Line 2: at eight to ride
Line 6: on two round wheels
Line 10: path of the park
Line 12: for the thud
Line 13: of your crash as I etc.

▶ 4. Repetition of Letters: In Lines 3-6, the b's and the w's are repeated at the beginning of and within words. a bicycle, loping along

beside you as you wobbled away on two round wheels

- ▶ 5. Repetition of Words: In Lines 6 and 7, round is repeated.
- ▶ 6. Repetition of the —ing Ending: Lines 3, 7, 11, 18, 19, 21, and 23 create a cadence with the repetition of —ing in loping, rounding, waiting, pumping, screaming, flapping, and waving.
- ▶ 7. Vivid Imagery; Appeals to Sense of Physical Experience; Repetition of Word: Line 7: My own mouth rounding... is a very strong image. We see her mouth, shaped like an O. The image is all the stronger because of the carryover of the word round from the previous line (round wheels).
- ▶ 8. Repetition of Letters: Look for the p's in Lines 8 and 10 (and again in Line 18). in surprise when you pulled...path of the park...pumping, pumping.
- 9. Onomatopoeia: Line 12, thud; Line 13, crash.
- ▶ 10. Emotional Climax of the Poem; Repetition of Words: In Line 18, the poem peaks with pumping, pumping. The peak is created by the buildup of —ing words
- ▶ 11. Ambiguous Meaning: In Line 19, the for your life, screaming suggests excitement, but danger too.
- ▶ 12. Simile: Lines 21-24 hold the crucial simile the hair flapping behind you like a handkerchief waving goodbye.
- ▶ 13. Poignant Conclusion: Line 24, the last line of the poem, has only one word: goodbye. The daughter's hair waves goodbye blithely, her face turned towards the path that lies ahead. The mother, left behind, says the single word—perhaps unheard—goodbye.



ANALYZING THE POEM

To a Daughter Leaving Home is a onesentence, free verse poem. A mother describes a past event—her eight-year-old daughter's going off on her two-wheeler alone for the first time. She thinks of that time, because her daughter is about to leave home. Interestingly, it is only the title that establishes the point of reference of the present time. The simile of the last four lines is the clincher for extended metaphor that is the entire poem.

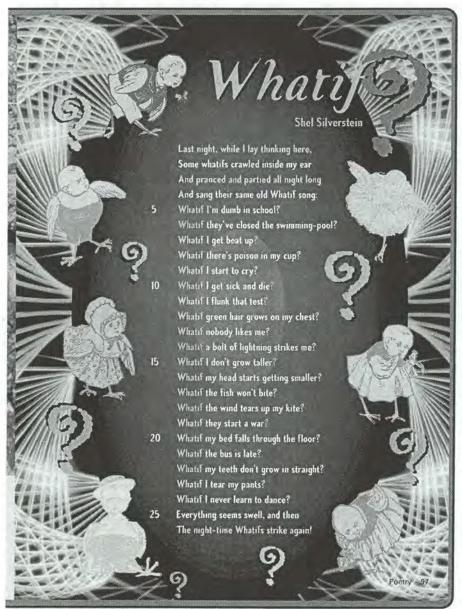
The poem has poignancy. As her daughter rides away on her bike, the mother awaits the thud of her crash and sees her as smaller, increasingly fragile with distance; the daughter is screaming with laughter. The mother's recollection of that time is very tender.

INTO "WHATIF"

This is a poem about worries. The poet has even coined a new word, a *whatif*, a noun that means things that we worry will go wrong. The Whatifs come from our living in the future in our minds and our inability to just relax at night

and go to sleep.

Ask your students what they think about when they go to sleep at night. Do any of them have the Whatifs? What are their Whatifs?



EYES ON...RHYMING VERSE WITH A SEMI-REGULAR RHYTHM

Shel Silverstein is a poet who can be relied upon for odd rhythms, odd words, and sometimes, odd poems. Largely because of the irregular rhythm, and certainly because of the very human subject, this is a good poem to have students recite in teams, a couplet per team. The lines are funny enough, with their woe-is-me-quality to get students started with dramatic and fun recitation. Have them use large arm and hand gestures. Try to get them over their public-speaking shyness with this funny poem that comes early in the book.

Student recitations need to be practiced a lot, precisely enunciated, and loudly declaimed. Make sure that each team knows exactly how many beats each of their lines has, and where the emphasis is.

This poem is also in the *I* or first-person voice. In contrast to *To a Daughter Leaving Home,* who is speaking in this poem?

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 1. Personification: The Whatifs crawled, pranced, partied, and sang (Lines 2, 3, and 4). The Whatifs even have their own song.
- ▶ 2. Repetition of Initial Consonants: In Line 3 the Whatifs pranced and partied; in Line 4 they sang their same old...song.
- ▶ 3. Repetition of Word and Phrasing; Punctuation: Lines 5 through 24 begin a question with the world Whatif. Make sure your students see that all of these lines are questions and end in question marks.
- ▶ 4. Change in Rhythmic Formulation: Lines 25 begins with a metric foot that has emphasis on the first syllable (EV ree thing seems swell and then). The line ends with a pause—and then what? This creates a wonderful waiting effect before the last line, which goes back to the original rhythm.

ANALYZING THE POEM

Whatif is a twenty-six line poem in near couplets. The couplets rhyme, but the rhythm—especially the number of feet—varies. Most of the lines are tetrameter or trimeter. Most of the feet have two syllables, with the emphasis on the second syllable (lambic tetrameter or lambic trimeter). Most

of the lines are written as questions. A child lies in bed at night beleaguered by the Whatifs. The Whatifs are worries about what could go wrong. The poem is funny and a little sad. Like many of us, this child has an extensive list of Whatifs, Lines 5 through 24 begin with the word *Whatif* to give us a sense of just how repetitive and unrelenting this child's worries are.

INTO "THE WHIPPOORWILL CALLS"

Harriet Tubman moved silently and solitarily through the woods at night, like the whippoorwill. She called to her people and rescued them.

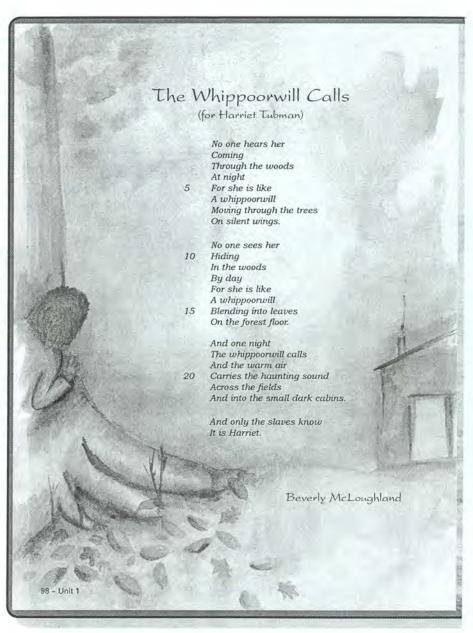
EYES ON...THE BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL POEM, THE THIRD-PERSON VOICE, AND STANZAS

The Whippoorwill Calls is a free-verse biographical poem. However, this is not the story of a person's life. Rather, it is intended to convey the sense of a person, her character, her actions. We can tell it is in the third person, because there is no I. The poet speaks of a haunting sound. This poem, which is strongly evocative of the woods at night, is itself haunting. Harriet Tubman moved like a spirit through the night woods—the bounty hunters could never catch her.

Notice that unlike *To a Daughter Leaving Home* and *Whatif, The Whippoorwill Calls* has stanzas. Stanzas are like paragraphs in prose, separated by a blank line.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ 1. Onomatopoeia: The word, whippoorwill, comes from the sound of the bird's call.
- ▶ 2. Setting: Setting is essential here to both the story and the mood of the poem.
- ▶ 3. Repetition of Rhythm, Cadence: Notice the similarity of the structure, cadence, and rhythm of Stanza 1 and Stanza 2. Each stanza has eight lines. The first lines have 4 beats; the second lines, 2; the third, 3; the fourth, 2; the fifth, 4; the sixth, 4; and the seventh, 5. Only the eighth lines differ. Similarity is a form of repetition
- 4. Repetition of Consonant: In Stanza 1, the repetition of w in woods, whippoorwill, and wings.
- ▶ 5. Repetition of Wording: Both Stanza 1 and Stanza 2 begin *No one...her*. Their second lines each have one word, a verb, ending —ing. Their third lines are the same: *Through the woods*. Their fifth and sixth lines read *For she is like / A whippoorwill*.
- ▶ 6. Echo and Mood: When Stanza 2 echoes Stanza 1, it lends the poem a haunting quality.
- ▶ 7. Repetition of Vowel Sounds: In Lines 5, 7, 9, 13, and 15, the long —ee-sound in she, trees, sees, she, and leaves.
- ▶ 8. Repetition of Vowel Sounds: In Lines 19 and 20, the internal -aw-sound of warm and haunting.



ANALYZING THE POEM

The Whippoorwill Calls is a free verse poem in four stanzas. The poem itself has a haunting quality. In fact, the whippoorwill, here, is Harriet. This is a very simple sort of symbology. This is a good poem with which students can be introduced to the idea of symbols, the idea of one thing representing another.

The first and second stanzas of the poem mirror each other, both in terms of their content and their cadence. Line for line the second stanza replicates the first in terms of the number of beats. This sort of structural repetition has a hypnotic quality. This is a poem in which setting is essential.

INTO "FIGURES IN...SKY!"

The imperative case in grammar is accompanied by an exclamation point. What is the imperative case? It is expressive of a command, an entreaty, or an exhortation. Thus, both the title and the first line exhort the reader, is the theme here? The stark appearance of

the person who is seeing this, to behold. Behold a woman and a man with their baby, cultivating the land in autumn, in the sunset.

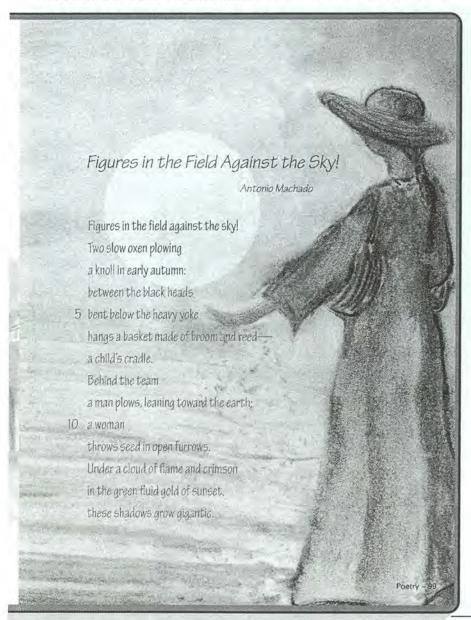
This is literature that makes us feel, that resonates with power. But what does it make us feel? What is the poet writing about? What two lone people against the vastness of the sky: the terrible toil of planting the land; a man and a woman, their oxen, and their baby, small against the hugeness of nature; the sun setting in a brilliant sky, as their shadow over the land grows huge

What does the writer tell us? This is big, these two people trying to make their way. The oxen's heads are bent with the work. They are slow and the work is hard. The man plods. Nature has magnificence: clouds of flame, green fluid gold in the sunset. But man's shadow grows gigantic over the land.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

Recall the earlier statement that free verse may rely very heavily on the repetition of consonant and vowel sounds. This not only binds the poem through the cadence of the words-it creates verse of consummate beauty.

- 1. Punctuation; Mood: Exclamation point in title and first line makes these imperative statements with an implied verb. This establishes a mood of power: What the reader, viewer is being shown is important.
- 2. Setting: Here is another poem (The Whippoorwill Calls is the other of the four in this unit) in which setting is crucial to the sweep and theme of the poem.
- 3. Repetition of Initial Consonants: In the title and line one, we read, Figures in the field...
- 4. Repetition of Entire Sentence; Contrasting Cadence: The repetition of the title in the first line makes this a definitive statement and establishes a rhythm. By contrast, the second line, Two slow oxen plowing, sounds plodding and slow.
- ▶ 5. Repetition of Internal Consonant: We can almost taste the I in, a knoll in early autumn.
- 6. Repetition of Consonants: In Lines 3-5, there is repetition of b, l, h, y, and r: between the black heads / bent below the heavy yoke / hangs a basket made of broom and reed.
- 7. Repetition of Vowel Sounds: In Lines 4 and 5. head and heavy, in Lines 6, 8, 9, and 13, reed, team, leaning, and green.
- 8. Double Meaning: The word plod (Line 9) means walks heavily or slowly, but also means works laboriously and monotonously.
- 9. Emphasis Through Placement: The words, a woman, stand alone on Line 10 for heightened effect.
- 10. Repetition of Vowel Sound: This repetition is noticeable both to the eyes and the ears: Lines 11 and 14, the long O sound of -ow- in throws, furrows, shadows, and grow. Also, the long O sound of open (Line 11) and gold (Line 13) adds to the vowel repetitiveness.
- 11. Repetition of Consonant: In Lines 11-13, look for furrows, flame, and fluid; in Line 12, cloud and crimson; in Lines 13-14, green, gold, grow gigantic.



EYES ON...REPETITION IN FREE VERSE

Free verse works without regular rhyme or rhythm. One of the "threads" that may bind a free-verse poem is the repetition of consonant and vowel sounds. Your students will learn a lot about how poetry works, if you review this literary device with them. Remind your students that this poem has been translated from Spanish to English.

Look for the repetition of initial consonants: Figures in the field

between the black heads / bent below...

1939). Both the title of the poem and the first line finish with an exclamation point, as if to emphasize the importance of the picture Machado has shown us-as if he has commanded, Behold! Look at this.

The poet draws a picture of a man and a woman, their oxen, their suspended baby's cra-

Look for the repetition of initial and internal consonants: ...heavy yoke

hangs a basket of broom and reed Look for the repetition of vowel sounds:

throws seed in open furrows

Students will be intrigued by the way that poetry is like a puzzle that can be deciphered.

die, as they plow the land upon a knoll and plant

ANALYZING THE POEM Figures in the Field Against the Skyl is a

free-verse poem translated from the original Spanish to English. The poem was written by the Spanish poet, Antonio Machado (1875 to

seed. They seem small against the vastness of sky and land. The sun is setting. The sunset is flame and fluid gold. The figures throw gigantic shadows. Setting is the foundation, here, of both the theme and the magnificence of the language.

STUDYING THE SELECTION

To a Daughter Leaving Home

- 1. Answers may vary. They should include the idea that the daughter is leaving now, which we learn from the title. The rest is the memory of a time when the mother experienced similar feelings. The mother remembers the time when the daughter first rode away alone on her two-wheel bicycle. At that time, mom was both excited and scared. In fact, the pumping, pumping / for your life screaming suggests that both of them were excited and scared.
- To a Daughter Leaving Home is written in one sentence.
- Refer to the introductory material above. Some categories include, letter repetition (b, w, p, for example), repetition of the -ing ending, and repetition of single-syllable words.
- Thud, crash, and screaming are examples of onomatopoeia.
- Students' answers will vary. Our own favorites are wobbled away; my own mouth rounding; you grew smaller, more breakable; pumping, pumping; for your life, screaming; hair flapping...

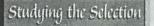
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Linda Pastan, born in New York City in 1932, was already on her way to a promising career as a poet, when she dropped everything to marry and start a family. Once her children were in school, however, she resumed writing poetry. As we see in To a Daughter Leaving Home, she often drew upon her life as a wife and mother for subject matter. Pastan has written more than fifteen volumes of poetry. The Pastans live in Potomac, Maryland.

Shel Silverstein, born in 1930 in Chicago, Illinois, started drawing and writing in his early teens. After his service with the U.S. armed forces, he worked as a cartoonist until a well-known editor convinced him to write for children. He wrote and illustrated sixteen books for children, among them A Light in the Attic. He also wrote numerous songs. Shel Silverstein died in 1999 in Key West, Florida.

Beverly McLoughland, born in 1946 in New Jersey, was an elementary school teacher before deciding to pursue a career as a writer. Her poems have appeared in magazines and anthologies for young people. She has also published a collection of her own poems. Her wonder at human creativity and the natural world are the inspiration for many of her poems. She currently lives in Virginia.

Antonio Machado, born in 1875, was one of Spain's greatest 20th century poets. By the early 1900s he had begun writing poetry, taken a teaching position, and married. In 1912, one year following his wife's death, Machado published a volume of poems in her memory. After graduating from a Madrid university, he and his brother wrote several plays together. During his lifetime, Machado wrote more than twenty volumes of poetry, and nine plays.



POETRY



To a Daughter Leaving Home

- What is this poem about? Give a short, simple answer in two or three sentences.
- 2. In how many sentences is the poem written?
- Describe one kind of repetition the poet uses. Give examples from the poem.
- 4. Give an example of onomatopoeia from the poem.
- What is the strongest picture you have in your mind from the poem? (There is no single correct answer to this question.)

100 ~ Unit 1

Whatif

- 1. What is a "whatif"?
- This poem is different from the other three in several ways. In two sentences, describe two of the ways Whatif is different from To a Daughter Leaving Home, The Whippoorwill Calls, and Figures in the Field Against the Sky!
- 3. Pick one of the Whatifs and think about how a person could deal with such an event if it actually happened. After all, difficult events occur in all of our lives. Most of us, at some time, don't feel smart enough, brave enough, or liked enough by other children in school. How do we find courage? How do we get through embarrassing situations? Write one or two paragraphs. You may write something humorous if you wish.



The Whippoorwill Calls

- 1. How is the second stanza like the first stanza?
- 2. In this poem, Harriet Tubman is compared to a whippoorwill. Write a three stanza poem, similar to this one, about another hero you know of. In the first two stanzas of your poem, compare the hero to a bird, animal, or insect. In the third stanza, let the reader know who the hero really is.
- 3. Choose one of the stanzas to memorize. Your teacher will organize groups for performance before the class.



Figures in a Field Against the Sky!

- 1. Why does the poet use an exclamation point?
- 2. Where does the poet repeat the letter f? Where does the poet repeat the letters b, h, and k? Where does the poet repeat the long o sound (don't forget to include -ow—where it sounds like oh)? Where does the poet repeat the letter g?
- This poem has three sentences. Pick one and rewrite it in prose (regular sentences, not poetry). Use a dictionary if there are any words you don't understand.

Poetry - 101

STUDYING THE SELECTION

Whatif

- A Whatif is a worry about something bad that might happen in the future.
- 2. Whatif is different from the other three poems in that (1) it consists of rhyming couplets; (2) it has a rhythmic pattern of sorts; therefore it is not (3) free verse. Moreover (4) it certainly has more lines; (5) most of these lines are questions and end in question marks; (6) it seems to be written from the point of view of a child; (7) it is a little funny; and (8) it is written more informally. Students may find other differences.
- Students may need some kindly guidance with this assignment. A Whatif is a worry about something bad that might happen in the future.

The Whippoorwill Calls

- 1. Both Stanza 1 and Stanza 2 begin No one . . . her. Their second lines each have one word, a verb, ending -ing. Their third lines are the same: Through the woods. Their fifth and sixth lines read For she is like / A whippoorwill. The number of beats for the respective lines of the stanzas are the same, except for the last.
- 2. In simple language, explain how metaphors are used. Encourage the students to write their poems using metaphors rather than similes. For example, the student could write a poem about how a fearless lion runs between the tall trees of the jungle. In the third stanza, the writer would explain that the lion is a brave fireman running between burning objects to rescue someone from the Twin Towers.
- 3. Stanza four should be said in unison, by all the members of each group.

Figures in a Field Against the Sky!

- See your notes above regarding the imperative case, which is used to exhort or command.
- 2. See your Literary Components for Figures in a Field Against the Sky!
- Please give individual students the help they need to do this, so that they will feel good about this sort of exercise. It is the basis for understanding poetry.

UNIT ONE WRAP-UP

Samuel's Choice • Slower Than the Rest • Kate Shelley
New Providence • The Silent Lobby

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

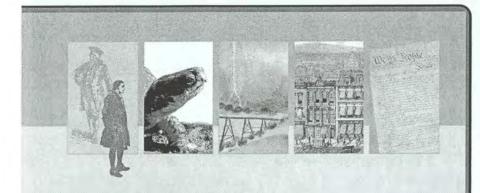
Creete a Newspaper

 You have read five selections in this unit: Samuel's Choice, Slower Than the Rest, Kate Shelley, New Providence, and The Silent Lobby. Pick one of the selections and make a table for your selection, using the column categories below. For New Providence, your Who will be The City. For Slower Than the Rest, you will have to make up your When—but it could just be the day before the date the newspaper is published.

Selection	Who	What	When	Where
Samuel's				
Choice				

- Now, on a large sheet of paper, create your newspaper: its name, its
 motto, the date of publication. If you are not familiar with newspaper
 formats, ask your parents or teacher for a newspaper, so that you have
 an example to follow. A newspaper motto is something like, "All the
 News That's Fit to Print," "The Journal That Helps You Judge," or
 "More News Than You Need."
- Now you are ready to create the headlines and write the copy (words)
 for your news story—the big story of the day, for example, Samuel
 Makes Big Decision or Boy Brings Turtle to School or New Providence:
 Down in the Dumps.
- Make sure your news article includes the who, what, when, and where.
 Try to conclude your article with Why—why did the event occur.

102 ~ Unit I



THE MYSTERIOUS STORYTELLER

You are a Strugger Who Has Come to Tolon to Tell a Stone

- 1. Once more, pick one of the selections. Now, you are going to be one of the characters in the story you have selected. You may be a major character or one of the minor characters. You can even be one of the buildings in New Providence. Make or find some piece of clothing or a prop (such as a cane if you were an old person or a chimney if you were a building that had a chimney) that helps you look like the character. You can also—with help from a grownup or a sibling—put on makeup to help you get into character, when the time comes for your presentation.
- 2. Your presentation will be very simple. You will give your audience some biographical information about yourself. You will conclude by asking your class, "Who am I?" Biographical information could be something like, "I am a woman. I was born in Brooklyn, New York and lived from 1725 to 1810. During my life I have made a lot of buttermilk." And so forth. Give several facts about your life, so that your class can make a good guess. Don't be afraid to be funny.
- Make notes on index cards for that moment when you are to be the mysterious stranger. Practice your presentation in front of your family to make sure it works smoothly. Good luck!

Wrap-Up ~ 103

THE PLAY'S THE THING!

Action and Teamacorle

- 1. Your teacher will help you and your class form small groups.
- 2. You and your group are going to act out a scene from one of the five stories in which a small group of people is involved in the action. Will you be American soldiers fighting the British in a creek? Will you be the students listening to the turtle presentation? Will you be a group of homeless men standing over trash can fires during the Great Depression in New Providence? There are many possibilities.
- You and your team will get together to work out a short script and rehearse your big scene.
- 4. Good luck with your presentation!

104 ~ Unit I

IT TAKES COURAGE TO WRITE

Note: Enverite Coursideous Character

- What is courage? Look up the word in the dictionary and write down the definition(s). Now look up the word in a good thesaurus and write down some of the synonyms given for courage.
- 2. Think about the characters in each of the selections, including those in the poems. All of them have courage. But which one impressed you the most? Who did you think was most brave?
- 3. Now it's time to write several paragraphs. In your first paragraph, you are going to say what courage is. You are going to tell your reader what some of the synonyms are for courage, too. For the final sentence of your first paragraph you will write something like, "These words remind me of ______ the hero or heroine ______ in ____ the name of the story or poem ______, and I am going to write about (him or her)." Use your second paragraph to give examples of your hero's good qualities and actions. Use your third paragraph to conclude. Here is an example of a conclusion: "For all of these reasons, I picked this character as my favorite. I hope that I can be as brave if I ever have to face the situation my character faced."

Wrap-Up ~ 105

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Bible (Preschool-Grade 6)



Mathematics (Grades K-8)



Health

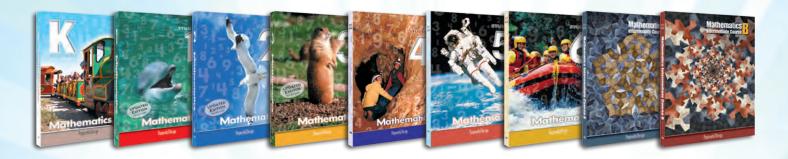
(Middle and High School)



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