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The TextWord Story

TextWord Press was created in response to a critical need expressed for many years by private and parochial high school principals across America. "Literature isn't neutral," a principal told us. "We are what we read. Give us an academically superior high school literature series that is free of material that conflicts with our values."

TextWord Press recognizes the need, and sees as its mandate the production of literature textbooks that can serve as tools to sharpen and shape language-arts proficiency while simultaneously promoting recognition of the impact of the values of the past on the present and the future. In short, many schools feel the need to provide their students with a classic, traditional, values-oriented language-arts curriculum that is academically uncompromising. TextWord Press has accepted the challenge and is proceeding to fill the gap left by textbook publishers who feel that nowadays they must accommodate the tone and content of their publications to the changing mores of society.

The following mandates are the basis of our publishing philosophy:

- All textbooks must be academically challenging and must build character and mold young minds in a positive manner without resorting to didacticism. At a time when the teaching of solidly-based comprehensive language-arts skills has become a nationwide priority, the acquisition of sophisticated, values-driven language-arts skills in an enjoyable and challenging manner is an important goal.
- All texts must be student-friendly, geared to the building of comprehension techniques and to the development of critical and analytical skills. The acquisition of competency in the all-important areas of oral and written communication must be seriously addressed.
- All publications must meet the educational and curricular requirements of the State of New York, thus becoming eligible for purchase by schools using state funding.
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Short Story

His Excellency
Indro Montanelli

FOCUS: CHARACTERIZATION; IRONY

There it is, lined up with the other sixty-four coffins from the Fossoli concentration camp,* and the crowd has sprinkled it, like the others, with flowers. Among all these people gathered here in the silence of the Milan* cathedral, surely I am not the only one to know. Yet there has been no protest. Truly, men are as lenient to the dead as they are harsh with the living. The coffin will now pass like the others between the reventent throngs, like the others it will be buried and, on June 22 of each year, will receive its quota of rhetoric* spilled over the common grave. Fair enough ... Who are we to judge?  

His Excellency, General Della Rovere, army corps commander, intimate friend of Badoglio's and "technical adviser" to General Alexander,* was locked up by the Germans in the San Vittore prison of Milan in the spring of 1944 when the Allied armies were still fighting their slow way up the Italian peninsula. He had been captured near Genoa* while trying to land at night from an Allied submarine to take command of the resistance movement in the north. A soldier to his finger tips, he had impressed even Franz, the German warder,* who would stand at attention when addressing him and had gone so far as to have a cot placed in his cell. So the Italian guard, Ceraso, informed me as he passed my spy hole with a rose in a glass, picked expressly for His Excellency. Later Ceraso returned to say that the General wished to see me, and, letting me out, escorted me to his cell.

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

Fossoli concentration camp — a Nazi-run concentration camp near the town of Carpi in northern Italy, which housed military prisoners of war, as well as many Jews who were subsequently deported to death camps such as Auschwitz.

Milan — a city in northern Italy.

rhetoric — here, flowery eulogies, using exaggerated, affected language.

General Alexander — Harold Alexander (1893-1969), British field marshal who was commander in chief of the Mediterranean Theater of war during World War II. He directed the campaign in Italy against the Nazis.

Genoa — a city on the northwest coast of Italy.

warder — an official in charge of prisoners.

The opening paragraph creates a strong sense of immediacy and introduces a number of mysteries. It is a prelude to a flashback. Its first words, "There it is," create a dramatic sense of focus on a coffin whose occupant commands attention even in death, but who is not the person everyone assumes him to be: "... surely I am not the only one to know. Yet there has been no protest." He suggests that the dead man may not deserve the honors accorded him. The statement "Truly, men are as lenient to the dead as they are harsh with the living" should be a springboard for class discussion.

It is a reasonable assumption that General Della Rovere is the man in the coffin, whose story will now be told.

Students should be aware that the resistance movement was comprised of those loyal to the Allies during the Nazi and Mussolini regimes. They fought guerrilla campaigns featuring lightning strikes against German and Italian forces in Italy.
"Cavalry officer" was written all over those arched legs, that slight build, and aristocratic profile. "Right-socketed, he wore a monocle* and false teeth, and the thought struck me of how convincing, after all, is our racial destiny. What else could a man like that become if not a general? With steady grace he could give an order and make it sound like a plea, and even now, weeks after his capture, his cheeks were clean-shaven, his trousers miraculously pressed, while one could almost detect on his polished shoes a pair of invisible spurs.*

"Montanelli, I presume?" he said with a slight drawl, polishing his monocle without giving me his hand. "I already knew of your presence here before landing. Badoglio in person had informed me. His Majesty's Government is following your case with the utmost sympathy. Let it be understood, however, that the day you face the firing squad you will have done no more than your duty. Please stand at ease." Only at these last words did I realize that I was standing heels joined, thumbs touching the seams of my trousers just as the drill book* says. "We are all on temporary duty here, right?" he continued, clearing the nap of one little finger with the nail of the other. "An officer is at all times merely on temporary duty, he is a natio del la morte, as the Spaniards say, a bridegroom of death." He smiled at me, paced leisurely up and down the cell flexing his slim, arched legs, then, stopping again before me, cleared and replaced his monocle. "We two are very near our wedding day," he continued. "My sentence has already been pronounced. And yours?"

"Not yet, sir," I answered almost mortified.

"It will be," he went on. "You will have the honor of being shot in the chest, I hear. Splendid. There is no better proof of your conduct under interrogation. The Germans are rough in obtaining confessions but chivalrous toward those who abstain. Good. Your orders are to continue. In case of torture, if you feel you must utter a name — I cast no doubt on your spiritual endurance, but there is a limit to the physical — utter mine. I have nothing to lose. Actually, I had nothing to hide even from my old friend, Marshal Kesselring,* when he questioned me. I did, however, explain that I hardly expected the British submarine captain to be such a fool as to answer the decoy signals* of a German patrol boat. 'You trust the English?' Kesselring smiled. 'Why not? We even trusted the Germans once,' I smiled back. 'Sorry!' he said, 'I have no choice but to shoot you.' No hard feelings," I concluded. "But to come back to your case: when you are up for questioning again, stick to your line. After all, we have such a simple duty left: to die like gentlemen. What is your indictment?"

I explained my case fully. His Excellency listened with his eyes to the ground like a confessor, nodding approval from time to time. "A clear case," he concluded. "Captive in the performance of duty. It's a different story."

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HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

Cavalry officer — an officer of a division of troops who fight on horseback.
Monocle — an eyeglass for one eye.
Spurs — spiked metallic wheels attached to a rider's boots, used to urge the horse forward.
Marshall Kesselring — Albert Kesselring (1887-1960), German general during World War II.
Decoy signals — signals used to entice or mislead.

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6 The statement implies that some people, by virtue of their physical and constitutional endowments, seem to be destined for their positions in life. Responses will vary. This issue will be of particular relevance at the end of the story.

6 The general increases his prestige in the eyes of both the narrator and the reader through his extensive knowledge of war-related information.

7 The general refers to his "old friend," Marshal Kesselring, whom he apparently knew from the early days of the war, when Italy was allied with Germany. He implies that he makes friends in high places wherever he goes.

8 Students should understand the complicated political/military situation of the time. Part of Italy was still in the hands of Germany at the time of this story, even as the Allies were invading from the South. Thus, while the official government of Italy had surrendered, its military had control of part of the country.
What is the mood of the first stanza? What symbolic meaning can be ascribed to the guttering of the cressets?

A. The mood of the stanza is chaotic; wild weather creates an atmosphere that is tempestuous, ominous, and foreboding. The guttering of the cressets symbolizes the imminent extinguishing of Caesar's life.

What sensory image is created in the second stanza? How does this stanza contribute to the mood of the poem?

A. The descriptions create vivid auditory images; the cressets contribute to the mood of urgent foreboding with its detailed evocation of the windy night, the hurried arrival of a horse, and the image of the guard's spear hitting the ground abruptly as he awakens.

Why is the rider out "so late" (line 10)?

A. The rider states that he rides late because he has urgent news that must be heard only by Caesar, as quickly as possible.

What does the guard wish to know? Why?

A. The guard asks the rider for some proof that the news is vital and that it warrants waking Caesar; the guard would not dare to wake him for a trivial matter. He also asks the rider "whence" he has come.

What can we infer about the rider?

A. The rider has come from the "dark of death," the realm of the dead. He is a ghost.

The Rider at the Gate

John Masefield

FOCUS: FOreshadowing

A windy night was blowing on Rome.
The cressets* guttered* on Caesar's home.
The fish-boats, moored at the bridge, were breaking
The rush of the river to yellow foam.

The hinged windowed the shutters shaking,
When clip-clop-clop came a horse-hoofs raking
The stones of the road at Caesar's gate;
The spear-huts jarred at the guard's awakening.

"Who goes there?" said the guard at the gate.
"What is the news, that you ride so late?"
"News most pressing, that must be spoken
To Caesar alone, and that cannot wait."

"The Caesar sleeps; you must show a token
That the news suffice that he be awoken.
What is the news, and whence? do you come?"
"For no light cause may his sleep be broken."

"Out of the dark of the sands I come,
From the dark of death, with news from Rome.
A word so tell that it must be uttered
Though it strike the soul of the Caesar dumb."

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

cressets — torches.
guttered — became gradually weaker, flickered, and were nearly extincted.
whence — from where.
dumb — here, mute, speechless.

At this point, much of the poem takes the form of dialogue between the rider and the guard. Alert students to the swift shifts from speaker to speaker, as indicated by the use of quotation marks.

Note that the guard refers to Julius Caesar as "The Caesar," indicating that Caesar is a title as well as a name, similar to Czar or Kaiser. Caesar was the dictator of ancient Rome and his name became synonymous with ruler.

The rider answers the guard's questions in reverse order; he answers that he comes from the land of the dead, and he brings terrible news from Rome that will leave Caesar speechless. The ghost states that he has come from "the sands," alluding to the fact that Pompey was assassinad in Egypt.
Leeuwenhoek: First of the Microbe Hunters

excerpt from *The Microbe Hunters*

Paul De Kruif

**FOCUS: CHARACTERIZATION**

I

Two hundred and fifty years ago an obscure man named Leeuwenhoek looked for the first time into a mysterious new world peopled with a thousand different kinds of tiny beings, some jocose and deadly, others friendly and useful, many of them more important to mankind than any continent or archipelago.

Leeuwenhoek, unsung and scarce remembered, is now almost as unknown as his strange little animals and plants were at the time he discovered them. This is the story of Leeuwenhoek, the first of the microbe hunters. Take yourself back to Leeuwenhoek's day, two hundred and fifty years ago, and imagine yourself just through high school, getting ready to choose a career, wanting to know —

You have lately recovered from an attack of mumps, you ask your father what is the cause of mumps, and he tells you a mumpsish evil spirit has got into you. His theory may not impress you much, but you decide to make believe he believe him and not to wonder any more about what is mumps — because if you publicly don't believe him you are in for a beating and may even be turned out of the house. Your father is Authority.

That was the world about three hundred years ago, when Leeuwenhoek was born. It had hardly begun to shake itself free from superstitions. It was barely beginning to blush for its ignorance. It was a world where science
Antony Leeuwenhoek was born in 1632 amid the blue windmills and low streets and high canals of Delft, in Holland. His family were burghers of an intensely respectable kind and I say intensely respectable because they were basket-makers and brewers, and brewers are respectable and highly honored in Holland. Leeuwenhoek's father died early and his mother sent him to school to learn to be a government official, but he left school at sixteen to be an apprentice in a dry-goods store in Amsterdam. That was his university...

At the age of twenty-one he left the dry-goods store, went back to Delft, married, set up a dry-goods store of his own there. For twenty years after that very little is known about him, except that he had two wives (in succession) and several children, most of whom died, but there is no doubt that during this time he was appointed janitor of the city hall of Delft, and that he developed a most idiotic love for grinding lenses. He had heard that if you very carefully ground very little lenses out of clear glass, you would see things look much bigger than they appeared to the naked eye.

It would be great fun to look through a lens and see things bigger than your naked eye showed them to you! But why lenses? Not Leeuwenhoek! There never was a more suspicious man. Buy lenses! He would make them himself! During these twenty years of his obscurity he went to spectacle-makers and got* the rudiments of lens-grinding. He visited alchemists and apothecaries and put his nose into their secret ways of getting metals from ores, he began frantically to learn the craft of the gold and silversmiths. He was a most pernickety* man and was not satisfied with grinding lenses as good as those of the best lens-grinder in Holland, they had to be better than the best, and then he still fused them over for long hours. Next he mounted these lenses in little oblongs of copper or silver or gold, which he had extracted himself, over hot fires, among strange smells and fumes....

Of course his neighbors thought he was a bit cracked but Leeuwenhoek went on burning and blistering his hands. Working forgetful of his family and regardless of his friends, he bent solitary to subtle tasks in still nights. The good neighbors sniggered, while that man found a way to make a tiny lens, less than one-eighth of an inch across, so symmetrical, so perfect, that it showed little things to him with a fantastic clear enormousness....

Now this self-satisfied dry-goods dealer began to turn his lenses onto everything he could get hold of. He

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**HELPFUL DEFINITIONS**

- *burgers* — here, middle-class merchants.
- *brewers* — makers of ale and beer.
- *spectacle makers* — people who made eyeglasses.
- *got* — here, learned.
- *alchemists* — practitioners of a pseudoscience, who tried to turn base metals into gold and attempted to find magical substances.
- *apothecaries* — pharmacists.
- *pernickety* — fastidious about small details.

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*What metaphor does de Kruif use to describe scientific study?*
- A. He uses the metaphor of a baby learning to walk; he implies that scientific study was in its infancy.

*What do the details of lens-grinding tell us about Leeuwenhoek?*
- A. He was a perfectionist and felt that he could do something better than others could. As the passage continues, we see that he spent an enormous amount of time and energy to accomplish this self-imposed goal.

*What seems to have been Leeuwenhoek's primary motivator?*
- A. The primary motivator seems to have been curiosity.
Chapter 1

The Period

A Tale of Two Cities begins with an expository chapter that establishes both setting and context. Dickens describes the period of the French Revolution in terms of a series of paradoxes, cleverly highlighting the dichotomies, contrasting elements in French and English society of that period. In addition, Dickens is actually using these same paradoxes to sensitive England to the problems of his own era. Void description evokes a real sense of the evils and injustices of the day, as the reader prepares for a complex tale that is intricately tied to its backdrop.

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us — in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison* only.

There were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a plain face, on the throne of England, there were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a fair face, on the throne of France. In both countries it was clearer than crystal to the lords of the State that things in general were settled forever.

It was the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five. France rolled with exceeding smoothness down hill, making paper money and spending it.

She entertained herself, besides, with such humane achievements as sentencing a youth to have his body burned alive.

It is likely enough that, rooted in the woods of France and Norway, there were growing trees, when that sufferer was put to death, already marked by the Woodman, Fate, to come down and be sawn into boards, to make a certain movable framework* with a sack and a knife in it, terrible in history.

It is likely enough that in the rough outhouses* of some tilters of the heavy

---

2 Ironically, government officials in both France and England are overly confident that the status quo will be preserved, the French government has no inkling that rebellion is brewing. Dickens is clearly warning his own country, England, not to make the same tragic mistake.

3 The narrator's sharp criticism grows out of his real-life preoccupation (as a result of his father's incarceration in Marshalsea prison when Dickens was a boy) with the English penal system and the sufferings and punishments of prisoners. Most of Dickens' novels contain at least one convict or a prison scene.
Why do the Woodman and Farmer work silently? A. The masses, whose misery was daily moving them to the point of revolution, knew that they must plan silently, for fear of being accused of sacrilege and treason, for the noble classes believed in the Divine Right of Kings. Consequently, the nobles ignored all evidence of unrest, allowing Fate and Death to prepare quietly for the revolution.

What are the general conditions in England at this time? A. Brazen lawlessness was prevalent in England; armed robbery was frequent, and robbers commonly broke into people's homes and stole even the furniture.

Why is the hangman always busy, but worse than useless? A. Crime was so rampant that the hangman was continually carrying out executions. Yet, despite the fact that capital punishment was commonplace, fear of execution failed to deter would-be criminals and crime continued unabated.

In England, there was scarcely an amount of order and protection to justify much national boasting. Daring burglaries by armed men, and highway robberies, took place in the capital itself every night. Families were publicly cautioned to go out of town without removing their furniture to upholsterers' warehouses for security, the highwayman in the dark was a City tradesman in the light, and, being recognized and challenged by his fellow-tradesman whom he stopped in his character of the "Captain," gallantly shot him through the head and rode away, prisoners in London gaols fought battles with their turnkeys, and the majesty of the law fired blunderbusses in among them, loaded with rounds of shot and ball; thieves snipped diamonds from the necks of noble lords at Court drawing-rooms; musketeers* went into St. Giles's, to search for contraband* goods, and the mob fired on the musketeers, and the musketeers fired on the mob, and nobody thought any of these occurrences much out of the common way. In the midst of them, the hangman, ever busy and ever worse than useless, was in constant requisition now, stringing up long rows of miscellaneous criminals now, hanging a housebreaker on Saturday who had been taken on Tuesday, now, burning people in the hand at Newgate by the dozen, and now burning pamphlets at the door of...

Helpful Definitions:
- tumbrils — (also tumbrils) carts, here, those that transported victims to their death at the guillotine during the Reign of Terror
- turnkeys — prison wardens; so called because they turn the keys in the locks of the cells
- blunderbusses — muzzle-loading firearms
- musketeers — here, police officers armed with muskets, old-fashioned rifles
- St. Giles — a poor neighborhood in London, notorious for the large numbers of thieves who lived there
- contraband — illegal merchandise, often smuggled goods

Death is referred to as the Farmer, for the seeds of the violence of a revolution are being nurtured and cultivated in the countryside, where feudalism is still practiced and where nobles live luxuriously in grand manor houses while the masses starve. In addition, the rustic carts evoke the image of the tumbrils that will transport victims of the Reign of Terror to their death. Together, the Woodman and Farmer work toward their, as yet, hidden goals, silently and implicitly plotting the end of an era of extravagance and excess. Dickens capitalizes Fate and Death because he has personified these concepts. Once again, Dickens alerts his generation that the silence of the masses should be taken as an ominous sign. He warns against mistaking silence for complacency.
Westminster Hall, to-day, taking the life of an atrocious murderer, and tomorrow of a wretched pauper who had robbed a farmer's boy of sixpence.

All these things, and a thousand like them, came to pass in and close upon the dear old year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five. Environed by them, while the Woodman and the Farmer worked unheeded, these two of the large jaws, and those other two of the plain and the flat faces, and with stir enough, and carried their divine rights with a high hand. Thus did the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five conduct their Greatnesses, and myriads of small creatures — the creatures of this chronicle among the rest — along the roads that lay before them.

Chapter II
The Mail

It was the Dover road that lay, on a Friday night late in November, before the first of the persons with whom this history has business. The Dover road lay, as to him, "beyond the Dover mail," as it lumbered up Shooter's Hill. He walked up hill in the mire by the side of the mail, as the rest of the passengers did, not because they had the least relish for walking exercise, under the circumstances, but because the hill, and the harness, and the mud, and the mail, were all so heavy, that the horses had three times already come to a stop, besides once drawing the coach across the road, with the mutinous intent of taking it back to Blackheath.

With drooping heads and tremulous tails, they dashed their way through the thick mud, floundering and stumbling between whiles, as if they were falling to pieces at the larger joints. As often as the driver rested them and brought them to a stand, with a wary "Wo-hi! so-ho-them!" the near leader, violently shook his head and everything upon it — like an unusually emphatic horse, denying that the coach could be got up the hill. Whenever the leader made this battle, the passenger started, as a nervous passenger might, and was disturbed in mind.

Two other passengers, besides the one, were plodding up the hill by the side of the mail.

Richard Peckham, a man of no great property, and a native of London, was going in the mail to the Free Church, to see the meeting — a meeting of the Free Church, to see the proceedings of the Free Church.

Henry Gowan, a man of no great property, and a native of the Free Church, was going in the mail to the Free Church, to see the meeting — a meeting of the Free Church, to see the proceedings of the Free Church.

Dickens again contrasts the growing unrest and stirrings of revolution with the self-centered ignorance of the monarchy and nobility.
Non-Fiction

Great Possessions
David Grayson

FOCUS: CHARACTERIZATION

"I am made immoral by apprehending my possession of incommutable goods." I have just had one of the pleasant experiences of life. From time to time, these brisk winter days, I like to walk across the fields to Horace's farm. I take a new way each time and make nothing of the snow in the fields or the drifts along the fences.

"Why," asks Harriet, "do you insist on struggling through the snow when there's a good beaten road around?"

"Harriet," I said, "Why should anyone take a beaten road when there are new and adventurous ways to travel?"

When I cross the fields I never know at what moment I may come upon some strange or surprising experience, what new sights I may see, what new sounds I may hear, and I have the further great advantage of appearing unexpectedly at Horace's farm. Sometimes I enter by the cow lane, sometimes by way of the old road through the wood lot, or I appear casually, like a gust of wind, around the corner of the barn, or I let Horace discover me leaning with folded arms upon his cattle fence. I have come to love doing this, for unexpectedness in visitors, as in religion and politics, is disturbing to Horace and, as sand grits in oysters produce pearls, my unexpected appearances have more than once astonished new thoughts in Horace, or yielded pearly bits of native humor.

Ever since I have known him, Horace has been rather high-and-mighty with me; but I know he enjoys my visits, for I give him always, I think, a pleasantly renewed sense of his own superiority. When he sees me his eye lights up with the comfortable knowledge that he can plow so much better than I can, that his corn grows taller than mine, and his hens lay more eggs. He is a wonderfully practical man, is Horace; hard-headed, they call it here. And he never feels so superior; I think, as when he finds me sometimes of a Sunday or an evening walking across the fields where my land joins his.

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

- apprehending: aware of and appreciate.
- native: rustic.

Students may recognize this sentiment echoed in Robert Frost's poem "The Road Not Taken." Grayson, too, chooses the distinctly different life of a writer, a fact that is significant to the story, and will emerge as the narrative unfolds.

Point out to students how Grayson extends his comparison "as sand grits in oysters..." with the phrase "pearly bits of native humor."
or sitting on a stone fence, or lying on my back in the pasture under a certain friendly thorn-apple tree. This he finds it difficult to understand, and thinks it highly undisciplined, impractical, no doubt reprehensible.

One incident of the sort I shall never forget. It was on a June day only a year or so after I came here, and before Horace knew me as well as he does now. I had climbed the hill to look off across his own high-field pasture, where the white daisies, the purple fleabane, and the buttercups made a wild tangle of beauty among the tall herd’s-grass. Light airs moved billowing across the field, bobolinks and meadow larks were singing, and all about were the old fences, each with its wild heather of choke cherry, young elms, and black raspberry bushes. And beyond, across miles and miles of sunny green countryside, the mysterious blue of the ever-changing hills. It was a spot I loved then, and have loved more deeply every year since.

Horace found me sitting on the stone fence where there divides our possessions; I think he had been observing me with amusement for some time before I saw him, for when I looked around, his face wore a comfortably superior, half-disdainful smile.

"David," said he, "what ye doin’ here?" "Harvesting my crops," I said. He looked at me sharply to see if I was joking, but I was perfectly sober.

"Harvestin’ yer crops?"

"Yes," I said, "the fancy" growing suddenly upon me, "and just now I’ve been taking a crop from the field you think you own."

I waved my hand to indicate his high-field pasture.

"Don’t I own it?"

"No, Horace. I’m sorry to say, not all of it. To be frank with you, since I came here, I’ve quietly acquired an undivided interest in that land. I may as well tell you first as last. I’m like you, Horace, I’m reaching out in all directions."

I spoke in as serious a voice as I could command; the tone I use when I sell potatoes. Horace’s smile wholly disappeared. A city titter like me was capable of anything.

"How’s that?" he exclaimed sharply.

"What do you mean? That field came down to me from my Grandfather Jamieson."

I continued to look at Horace with great calmness and gravity. "Judging from what I now know of your title," Horace said, "neither your Grandfather Jamieson nor your father ever owned all of that field. And I’ve now acquired that part of it, in fee simple, that neither they nor you ever really had."

At this, Horace began to look seriously worried. The idea that anyone could get away from him anything that he possessed, especially without his knowledge, was terrible to him.

"What do you mean, Mr. Grayson?" He had been calling me "David," but he now resumed sharply to "Mister." In our country when we "Mister" a friend some-

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HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

fleabane — a thick-stemmed flower whose scent is reputed to repel fleas and other insects.
herd’s-grass — grass used for hay or pasture.
bobolinks — songbirds, members of the blackbird family.
disdainful — scornful.
fancy — here, a whimsical idea.
title — legal right of ownership.
fee simple — absolute ownership.

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3 Be sure that students understand that Horace will take Grayson’s statement literally, and will think that David has become ambitious and is after Horace’s field. It should be noted that Grayson means something else, evident from the phrase "the fancy growing suddenly upon me."

4 Horace is preparing for conflict.
Sample from the Test Bank CD
THEY GRIND EXCEEDING SMALL
BEN AMES WILLIAMS

Based on your knowledge of the selection, briefly answer each question in the space provided.

1. Why does the speaker in the story call Hazen Kinch? What is unique about his relationship to Hazen?

2. What does the narrator notice about the landscape as he heads toward Hazen's home? What question does the view inspire?

3. What disturbs the narrator about Hazen Kinch?

4. How is Hazen's relationship with his son described? What is the narrator's reaction to this relationship?

5. What is Hazen's opinion of the Rayboms? Does the speaker share this opinion? What transpired between Hazen and the widow Rayborn?

6. Why does Hazen punish his mare? What form does this punishment take?

(Continue to next page)
7. What brings about the decision not to return home that evening?

8. Describe Doan Marshey. Why has he come to Hazen?

9. How does Hazen respond to Doan’s problems? Why does he allow him extra time to pay off his loan rather than appropriating Doan’s land?

10. How does Hazen rationalize keeping the money that drops from Doan’s pouch?

11. Why does the druggist refuse Doan’s request?

12. What happens to Kinch’s son? How does this happen?
LITERARY CRITIQUE

THEY GRIND EXCEEDING SMALL
BEN AMES WILLIAMS

Based on your understanding of the selection, briefly answer each question in the space provided.

1. How does the reader become aware that Hazen is an immoral, selfish man? Support your answer with references to the text. Discuss the development of Hazen Kinch’s character throughout the story. Does the narrator ever state directly that Hazen is evil?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

2. What role does nature play in this selection? How does the weather, specifically, affect the outcome of the story?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

3. Cite specific examples of foreshadowing from the text.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

4. Why does the author mention the Rayborn family?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

(Continue to next page)
5. Mention two occasions when the narrator wishes to intervene, but stops himself.

6. Why does the author create an unsympathetic portrayal of the boy?

7. How does Hazen rationalize taking the money that Doan dropped? Are his actions justified? What light does his rationalization shed on the man’s personal moral code?

8. What is ironic about the death of the boy?

9. What do Hazen Kinch, his wife, and the boy each symbolize?
After reading the following excerpt from "They Grind Exceeding Small," circle the letter of the response that best completes each of the statements below.

I had given some thought to Hazen in the past. I was interested in the man and in that which should come to him. He was, it seemed to me, a problem in fundamental ethics; he was, as matters stood, a demonstration of the essential uprightness of things as they are. The biologist would have called him a sport, a deviation from type, a violation of all the proper laws of life. That such a man should live and grow great and prosper was not fitting; in a well-regulated world it should not be. Yet Hazen Kinch did live; he had grown — in his small way — great; and, by our lights, he had prospered. Therefore I watched him. There was about the man the fascination which clothes a tight-rope walker above Niagara; an aeronaut in the midst of the nose dive. The spectators stares with half-caught breath, afraid to see and afraid to miss seeing the ultimate catastrophe. Sometimes I wondered whether Hazen Kinch suspected this attitude on my part. It was not impossible. There was a cynical courage in the man; it might have amused him. Certainly I was the only man who had in any degree his confidence.

1. The narrator believes
   a. that Hazen is a good man.
   b. that Hazen is a sportsman.
   c. that Hazen will ultimately meet with misfortune.

4. According to the narrator,
   a. he is the only person whom Hazen trusts to any degree.
   b. Hazen trusts everyone.
   c. Hazen has no confidence in anyone at all.

2. Hazen
   a. is a tightrope walker.
   b. has prospered.
   c. lacks courage.

5. According to the narrator, the spectators he mentions are
   a. people watching a tightrope walker over the Niagara.
   b. people watching an astronaut.
   c. people who know Hazen.

3. The narrator is not sure
   a. whether Hazen knows what he thinks of him.
   b. whether Hazen is wealthy.
   c. whether Hazen is courageous.
Vocabulary Review

They Grind Exceeding Small
Ben Ames Williams

Exercise 1:
Use the words in the word bank to correctly complete each of the following sentences.

brusquely
dumb
essential
fundamental
furtively
grim
groveling
meager
mirthfully
placating

1. The timid traveler was dismayed when her polite request for directions was ________

2. The ________ human rights that we have come to expect are expressed in the American Declaration of Independence.

3. When Barry was infuriated by the impolite salesman, Wendy tried ________ him by offering to shop elsewhere.

4. The toddlers giggled and ________ exchanged nonsense words in the sandbox.

5. The ________ meal of dry bread and spring water sufficed only to keep body and soul together.

6. The ________ task of recovering the bodies of those killed in the 9/11 disaster affected all who were involved.

7. The condemned man fell to his knees, ________ before the lord of the manor and begging for his life.

8. The burglar entered the house ________, after glancing up and down the street to be sure no one had seen him.

9. An ________ ingredient in hot cocoa is the cocoa powder.

10. Stricken ________ with fear, the mountain climber dangled perilously over the crevasse and could not even cry out for help.

(Continue to next page)
Vocabulary Review

They Grind Exceeding Small
Ben Ames Williams

Exercise 2:
Match each vocabulary word in the left-hand column to its definition in the right-hand column. Write the letter of the correct answer in the space provided.

1. countenance  a. a ridge or lump raised on the skin, usually by a blow.
2. elaborated  b. the act or state of submitting to the discretion or decision of another.
3. fumble  c. capable of being wounded, hurt, or damaged
4. impel  d. a rebellion
5. improvident  e. to stretch or strain by force
6. leer  f. the face or facial expression; to permit or tolerate.
7. racking  g. not providing (usually, financially) for the future.
8. reiterate  h. worked out with great care or in great detail
9. revolt  i. to smile in a knowing, malicious way.
10. submission  j. to state or do repeatedly
11. suppress  k. to grope about clumsily
12. vulnerable  l. to urge or drive forward.
13. welt  m. to put down by authority or force; to subdue.
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