



**HS English III & IV**

**Distance Learning Activities**



Dear families,

These learning packets are filled with grade level activities to keep students engaged in learning at home. We are following the learning routines with language of instruction that students would be engaged in within the classroom setting. We have an amazing diverse language community with over 65 different languages represented across our students and families.

If you need assistance in understanding the learning activities or instructions, we recommend using these phone and computer apps listed below.



## Google Translate

- Free language translation app for Android and iPhone
- Supports text translations in 103 languages and speech translation (or conversation translations) in 32 languages
- Capable of doing camera translation in 38 languages and photo/image translations in 50 languages
- Performs translations across apps



## Microsoft Translator

- Free language translation app for iPhone and Android
- Supports text translations in 64 languages and speech translation in 21 languages
- Supports camera and image translation
- Allows translation sharing between apps



Queridas familias:

Estos paquetes de aprendizaje tienen actividades a nivel de grado para mantener a los estudiantes comprometidos con la educación en casa. Estamos siguiendo las rutinas de aprendizaje con las palabras que se utilizan en el salón de clases.

Tenemos una increíble y diversa comunidad de idiomas con más de 65 idiomas diferentes representados en nuestros estudiantes y familias.

Si necesita ayuda para entender las actividades o instrucciones de aprendizaje, le recomendamos que utilice estas aplicaciones de teléfono y computadora que se enlistan a continuación:



## Google Translate

- Aplicación de traducción de idiomas para Android y iPhone (gratis)
- Traducciones de texto en 103 idiomas y traducción de voz (o traducciones de conversación) en 32 idiomas
- Traducción a través de cámara en 38 idiomas y traducciones de fotos / imágenes en 50 idiomas
- Realiza traducciones entre aplicaciones



## Microsoft Translator

- Aplicación de traducción para iPhone y Android (gratis)
- Traducciones de texto en 64 idiomas y traducción de voz en 21 idiomas
- Traducción a través de la cámara y traducción de imágenes
- Permite compartir la traducción entre aplicaciones

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# English III

## Week of April 20

Choose one text of the two below.

Read, annotate, and answer questions as directed in the document.

Option 1	"Why are we obsessed with superheroes?"
Option 2	"A Dead Woman's Secret"

After you've read one of the pieces above, imagine a class discussion about the text. Think about how you would answer the following questions and what evidence you would use from the text to support your answers.

- a. Think about the ways the character or speaker is coping with harsh realities. Does a coping mechanism really help or just put off inevitable pain? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
- b. How does this text help you explore the idea of resilience?

## Week of April 27

Choose one text of the two below.

Read, annotate, and answer questions as directed in the document.

Option 1	The Fugitive Slave Act of 1793
Option 2	Margaret Garner: Defying the Fugitive Slave Act

After you've read one of the pieces above, imagine a class discussion about the text. Think about how you would answer the following questions and what evidence you would use from the text to support your answers.

- a. What can we learn from enduring prejudice or from surviving tragedy?
- b. How does this text help you explore the idea of resilience?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

# Why Are We Obsessed With Superheroes?

By ABC News  
January 6, 2013

*Superheroes have long been a part of popular culture – whether beloved by comic nerds in the 1930s or bringing millions in to mainstream box offices today. What makes these characters so riveting? As you read the article, take note of the ways superheroes have changed throughout the years, and what these changes reveal about American society.*

- [1] For decades, we have found comfort, even hope, in superheroes. Now they are the kings (and queens) of the box office. What explains their enduring appeal?

Over the years, superheroes have morphed to fit our social needs of the time. Whether it's *Iron Man*, the biggest superhero star at the moment, or Superman, about to renew his brand with *Man of Steel* or *The Dark Knight*, struggling to keep it together in Gotham City, we need superheroes to tackle problems that are too tough for mere mortals to handle.



*"Untitled" by Ben White is licensed under CC0*

"We look at Batman as being the ultimate policeman and Superman as the ultimate fireman," said Dan DiDio, the co-publisher for DC Entertainment, the comic book company that owns both franchises. "Superman is there to help people and save people. He is not passing judgment. He is not trying to push an agenda. When there are people in need, he is going to be there to help, no matter who they are."

Superheroes are the Greek gods of secular<sup>1</sup> modern life – otherworldly figures able to tackle the problems of this human world. Like the gods of Greek mythology, they can be flawed. In fact, some argue that we need them to be flawed. Part of their appeal is that we can relate to them, despite their being superhuman.

- [5] Hans Zimmer, who scored the music for *The Dark Knight* trilogy and the new Superman movie, *Man of Steel*, said that while working on the Wagnerian<sup>2</sup> theme music for Batman, the variation of a single note could signal hope, fear or vulnerability."

"I'm playing some sort of musical chess," Zimmer said, noting that as the final installment of the Christopher Nolan trilogy began when Batman was wounded.

The superheroes themselves have changed their metaphorical tunes ever so slightly over the years in response to the challenges we need them to tackle throughout history.

1. **Secular (adjective):** having no religious or spiritual basis  
2. Of, relating to, or characteristic of the operas of Richard Wagner

Superman first arrived from the planet Krypton in the 1930s during the gathering storm before World War II. In the cartoons of those early days, he fought Nazis and avenged the attack on Pearl Harbor.

In some ways, Superman was a Jewish superhero. Jerry Siegel and Joe Schuster, the two men who created Superman, were Jews, according to former DC Comics editor and comics teacher Jim Higgins, who teaches the Creating Comics class at the Los Angeles-based Meltdown Comics shop.

[10] He called Superman “a metaphor for the Jewish immigrant experience.”

“He’s a strange visitor from another place,” Higgins said. “He’s a stranger in a strange land. He has to adapt to being there. He has to learn all the ways to be an American, the same way they did. You come to America, it’s the land of opportunity, so you can become anything, even Superman.”

Later, Vietnam and Watergate made us more cynical. Straight-arrow do-gooders suddenly seemed dated. That may explain why the Batman of the 1960s wouldn’t dare take this superhero stuff too seriously. The ‘60s TV show was pure camp,<sup>3</sup> an ironic take on the genre.

For die-hard fans in those years, admitting you like men in tights became about as cool as attending a *Star Trek* convention.

“For a long time, comics had this air of disrespectability,” Higgins said.

[15] That changed on Sept. 11, 2001, with the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The world was once again divided into good and evil, but was still morally complicated, flawed and vulnerable.

Suddenly, superheroes came back in a big way.

Captain America, a Marvel Comics character that originally debuted in the 1940s shortly after Superman, made a reemergence in the 2000s and the 2011 film, *Captain America: The First Avenger*, took on the 9/11 attacks.

“To see Captain America standing at Ground Zero, sort of being, not like Batman – ‘Rah, we’ll get ‘em’ – no,” Higgins said. “It was like he was there helping get people out of the debris and all that stuff, and then it was sort of the mourning period with Captain America, and Captain America was sort of like, ‘Let’s hold it all together.’”

The 2008 economic collapse doubled down on the chaos and uncertainty so that by the time *The Dark Knight Rises* was released in 2012, the story told of a troubled billionaire in a bat costume battling a villain who might as well be from Occupy Wall Street.<sup>4</sup>

[20] Who do you root for in that scenario?

Times have changed not only in terms of the challenges the new Superman faces in *Man of Steel*, set to premiere on June 14, but also his day job.

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3. **Camp (adjective):** deliberately exaggerated and theatrical in style

4. Occupy Wall Street is the name given to a protest movement that began in 2011, in Zuccotti Park, located in New York City’s Wall Street financial district, receiving global attention and spawning the Occupy movement against social and economic inequality

"Clark Kent is actually a blogger at this moment in time," DC's DiDio said. "He left the Daily Planet and is really going to establish himself in a way that makes him feel like he's in touch with the world today. He's a digital journalist."

Batman has moved on, too. Adam West, who starred as the classic Batman of the '60s, is now the voice of Mayor West on TV's *Family Guy*. To most folks, however, he will always be the Caped Crusader.

In fact, he said he spent years trying to escape being a superhero.

- [25] "Because I was typecast extraordinarily," West said. "It was difficult, but after five years of doing dumb films, I decided that people love Batman, so why the hell shouldn't I love Batman? Why be an ingrate? So I became rather fascinated by it and how to keep that particular culture thing going."

West has found that superheroes never grow old. They just change with the times.

*"Why Are We Obsessed With Superheroes?" from [www.abcnews.com](http://www.abcnews.com), © ABC News. Reprinted with permission, all rights reserved.*

## Text-Dependent Questions

**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following best states one of the central ideas of the article?
  - A. Superheroes are constantly evolving to fit in with the culture and politics of the time.
  - B. It is the flaws behind each superhero that makes him or her so popular and relatable to the average American
  - C. As technology advances, superheroes are becoming more in-tune with the digital age.
  - D. Comic creators, like those behind Superman, will often use their own life experiences to inform their superhero's characters.
2. PART B: Which of the following paragraphs provides support for the answer to Part A?
  - A. Paragraph 4
  - B. Paragraph 11
  - C. Paragraph 18
  - D. Paragraph 22

3. According to the article, how did Vietnam and Watergate shape American perception?

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4. PART A: What does the word “ingrate” mean as it is used in paragraph 25?
  - A. One who is looked up to; a hero
  - B. A scoundrel or minor criminal
  - C. A person whose cynicism makes them disliked by others
  - D. One who does not show sufficient appreciation for something
5. PART B: Which phrase provides the best evidence for the answer to Part A?
  - A. “spent years trying to escape being a superhero” (Paragraph 24)
  - B. “after five years of doing dumb films” (Paragraph 25)
  - C. “people love Batman, so why the hell shouldn’t I” (Paragraph 25)
  - D. “I became rather fascinated by it” (Paragraph 25)



## Discussion Questions

**Directions:** Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. According to the article, why do we find comfort in superheroes? Use evidence from this text and your own experience in your answer.
2. The author suggests that we invent superheroes in order to help us cope with the realities of the time. What are other ways we use coping mechanisms? How does art play a role?
3. In the context of this article, how has America changed over time?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## A Dead Woman's Secret

By Guy de Maupassant  
1880

*Guy de Maupassant (1850-1893) was a popular French writer during the 19th century and is considered one of the fathers of the modern short story in Western literature. In the following story, a brother and sister mourn the passing of their beloved mother. As you read, take notes on how de Maupassant's use of irony contributes to the plot of the story.*

- [1] She had died painlessly, tranquilly, like a woman whose life was irreproachable,<sup>1</sup> and she now lay on her back in bed, with closed eyes, calm features, her long white hair carefully arranged, as if she had again made her toilet<sup>2</sup> ten minutes before her death. Her pale physiognomy<sup>3</sup> was so composed now that she had passed away, so resigned, that one felt sure a sweet soul had dwelt in that body, that this serene grandmother had spent an untroubled existence, that this virtuous woman had ended her life without any shock, without any remorse.



["letters"](#) by Liz West is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

On his knees beside the bed, her son, a magistrate<sup>4</sup> of inflexible principles, and her daughter Marguerite — in religion, Sister Eulalie — were weeping distractedly. She had from the time of their infancy armed them with an inflexible code of morality, teaching them a religion without weakness and a sense of duty without any compromise. He, the son, had become a magistrate and, wielding the weapon of the law, struck down without pity the feeble and the erring. She, the daughter, quite penetrated with the virtue that had bathed her in this austere family, had become the spouse of God through disgust with men.

1. **Irreproachable (adjective):** faultless; beyond criticism
2. "To make one's toilet" is an old phrase that refers to the act or process of grooming oneself.
3. Physiognomy refers to a character's facial expression or to an inner quality that is revealed through their facial expressions.
4. A magistrate is a civil officer or judge who administers the law, especially when dealing with minor offenses.

They had scarcely known their father; all they knew was that he had made their mother unhappy without learning any further details. The nun passionately kissed one hand of her dead mother, which hung down, a hand of ivory like that of Christ in the large crucifix which lay on the bed. At the opposite side of the prostrate body the other hand seemed still to grasp the rumpled sheet with that wondering movement which is called the fold of the dying, and the lines had retained little creases as a memento of those last motions which precede the eternal motionlessness. A few light taps at the door caused the two sobbing heads to look up, and the priest, who had just dined, entered the apartment. He was flushed, a little puffed from the effects of the process of digestion which had just commenced, for he had put a good dash of brandy into his coffee in order to counteract the fatigue caused by the last nights he had remained up and that which he anticipated from the night that was still in store for him. He had put on a look of sadness, that simulated sadness of the priest to whom death is a means of livelihood. He made the sign of the cross and, coming over to them with his professional gesture, said:

"Well, my poor children, I have come to help you to pass these mournful hours."

[5] But Sister Eulalie suddenly rose up.

"Thanks, Father, but my brother and I would like to be left alone with her. These are the last moments that we now have for seeing her, so we want to feel ourselves once more, the three of us, just as we were years ago when we — we — we were only children and our poor — poor mother — " She was unable to finish with the flood of tears that gushed from her eyes and the sobs that were choking her.

But the priest bowed with a more serene look on his face, for he was thinking of his bed. "Just as you please, my children."

Then he knelt down, again crossed himself, prayed, rose and softly stole away, murmuring as he went: "She was a saint."

They were left alone, the dead woman and her children. A hidden timepiece kept regularly ticking in its dark corner, and through the open window the soft odors of hay and of woods penetrated with faint gleams of moonlight. No sound in the fields outside, save the wandering croak of toads and now and then the humming of some nocturnal insect darting in like a ball and knocking itself against the wall.

[10] An infinite peace, a divine melancholy, a silent serenity surrounded this dead woman, seemed to emanate from her, to evaporate from her into the atmosphere outside and to calm Nature herself.

Then the magistrate, still on his knees, his head pressed against the bedclothes, in a far-off, heartbroken voice that pierced through the sheets and the coverlet, exclaimed:

"Mamma, Mamma, Mamma!" And the sister, sinking down on the floor, striking the wood with her forehead fanatically, twisting herself about and quivering like a person in an epileptic fit, groaned: "Jesus, Jesus — Mamma — Jesus!"

And both of them, shaken by a hurricane of grief, panted with a rattling in their throats.

Then the fit gradually subsided, and they now wept in a less violent fashion, like the rainy calm that follows a squall<sup>5</sup> on a storm-beaten sea. Then after some time they rose and fixed their glances on the beloved corpse. And memories, those memories of the past, so sweet, so torturing today, came back to their minds with all those little forgotten details, those little details so intimate and familiar, which made the being who is no more live over again. They recalled circumstances, words, smiles, certain intonations of voice which belonged to one whom they should never hear speaking to them again. They saw her once more happy and calm, and phrases she used in ordinary conversation rose to their lips. They even remembered a little movement of the hand, peculiar to her, as if she were keeping time when she was saying something of importance.

- [15] And they loved her as they had never before loved her. And by the depth of their despair they realized how strongly they had been attached to her and how desolate they would find themselves now.

She had been their mainstay, their guide, the best part of their youth, of that happy portion of their lives which had vanished; she had been the bond that united them to existence, the mother, the mamma, the creative flesh, the tie that bound them to their ancestors. They would henceforth be solitary, isolated; they would have nothing on earth to look back upon.

The nun said to her brother:

"You know how Mamma used always to read over her old letters. They are all there in her desk. Suppose we read them in our turn and so revive all her life this night by her side. It would be like a kind of road of the cross, like making the acquaintance of her mother, of grandparents whom we never knew, whose letters are there and of whom she has so often talked to us; you remember?"

And they drew forth from the drawer a dozen little packets of yellow paper, carefully tied up and placed close to one another. They flung these relics on the bed and, selecting one of them on which the word "Father" was written, they opened and read what was in it.

- [20] It consisted of those very old letters which are to be found in old family writing desks, those letters which have the flavor of another century. The first said, "My darling"; another, "My beautiful little girl"; then others, "My dear child"; and then again, "My dear daughter." And suddenly the nun began reading aloud, reading for the dead her own history, all her tender souvenirs.<sup>6</sup> And the magistrate listened, while he leaned on the bed with his eyes on his mother's face. And the motionless corpse seemed happy.

Sister Eulalie, interrupting herself, said: "We ought to put them into the grave with her, to make a winding sheet of them and bury them with her."

And then she took up another packet on which the descriptive word did not appear.

And in a loud tone she began:

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5. **Squall** (*adjective*): a violent gust of wind, often in a storm bringing sleet, rain, or snow

6. "Souvenirs" is from the French word that means "memories."

"My adored one, I love you to distraction. Since yesterday I have been suffering like a damned soul burned by the recollection of you. I feel your lips on mine, your eyes under my eyes, your flesh under my flesh. I love you! I love you! You have made me mad! My arms open! I pant with an immense desire to possess you again. My whole body calls out to you, wants you. I have kept in my mouth the taste of your kisses."

- [25] The magistrate rose up; the nun stopped reading. He snatched the letter from her and sought for the signature. There was none, save under the words, "He who adores you," the name "Henry." Their father's name was René. So then he was not the man.

Then the son, with rapid fingers, fumbled in the packet of letters, took another of them and read:

"I can do without your caresses no longer."

And standing up with the severity of a judge passing sentence, he gazed at the impassive face of the dead woman.

The nun, straight as a statue, with teardrops standing at each corner of her eyes, looked at her brother, waiting to see what he meant to do. Then he crossed the room, slowly reached the window and looked out thoughtfully into the night.

- [30] When he turned back sister Eulalie, her eyes quite dry, still remained standing near the bed with a downcast look.

He went over to the drawer and flung in the letters which he had picked up from the floor. Then he drew the curtain round the bed.

And when the dawn made the candles on the table look pale the son rose from his armchair and, without even a parting glance at the mother whom he had separated from them and condemned, he said slowly:

"Now, my sister, let us leave the room."

*"A Dead Woman's Secret" by Guy de Maupassant (1880) is in the public domain.*

## Text-Dependent Questions

**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: How does the author develop the priest's point of view? [RL.6]
  - A. The priest is genuinely affected by the woman's death, which is shown by contrasting the priest's grief with the siblings' melodramatic mourning.
  - B. The priest views death as an opportunity to make the magistrate his ally, which is indicated by the priest's false praise of the mother.
  - C. The priest views death as a job, which is revealed by contrasting his actions with the siblings' genuine grief.
  - D. The priest is not actually a member of the clergy, which is revealed through the descriptions of his boredom and rich meals.
  
2. PART B: Which of the following quotes best support the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
  - A. "The nun passionately kissed one hand of her dead mother, which hung down, a hand of ivory like that of Christ in the large crucifix which lay on the bed." (Paragraph 3)
  - B. "He had put on a look of sadness, that simulated sadness of the priest to whom death is a means of livelihood." (Paragraph 3)
  - C. "'Thanks, Father, but my brother and I would like to be left alone with her. These are the last moments that we now have for seeing her'" (Paragraph 6)
  - D. "Then he kneeled down, again crossed himself, prayed, rose and softly stole away, murmuring as he went: 'She was a saint.'" (Paragraph 8)
  
3. How do the details from paragraph 2 about characters in the story develop the plot? [RL.3]  

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4. PART A: What does the word "desolate" mean as used in paragraph 15? [RL.4]
  - A. united and stronger
  - B. confused and helpless
  - C. depressed and lonely
  - D. cold and unemotional

5. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
- A. "And they loved her as they had never before loved her." (Paragraph 15)
  - B. "how strongly they had been attached to her" (Paragraph 15)
  - C. "She had been their mainstay, their guide" (Paragraph 16)
  - D. "They would henceforth be solitary, isolated" (Paragraph 16)
6. PART A: How do the siblings' reactions to their mother's letters contribute to the theme of the text? [RL.3]
- A. The siblings are shocked, contributing to the theme that people are not always as they seem.
  - B. The siblings are angered after learning about their real father, contributing to the theme that it is best to be honest with others.
  - C. The brother condemns their mother but the sister sympathizes with her, contributing to the theme of forgiving loved ones.
  - D. The siblings are shocked but still watch over their mother, contributing to the theme that it is best to be loyal to family.
7. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
- A. "Then the son, with rapid fingers, fumbled in the packet of letters, took another of them and read" (Paragraph 26)
  - B. "The nun, straight as a statue, with teardrops standing at each corner of her eyes, looked at her brother, waiting to see what he meant to do." (Paragraph 29)
  - C. "He went over to the drawer and flung in the letters which he had picked up from the floor." (Paragraph 31)
  - D. "without even a parting glance at the mother whom he had separated from them and condemned, he said slowly: 'Now, my sister, let us leave the room.'" (Paragraphs 32-33)
8. How does the narrator's description of the mother create surprise in the story? [RL.5]

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## Discussion Questions

**Directions:** Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. In the context of this passage, how do people face death? How do we remember those who have died? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
2. In the context of this passage, how is identity created? Can a person's identity be changed? What defines us? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

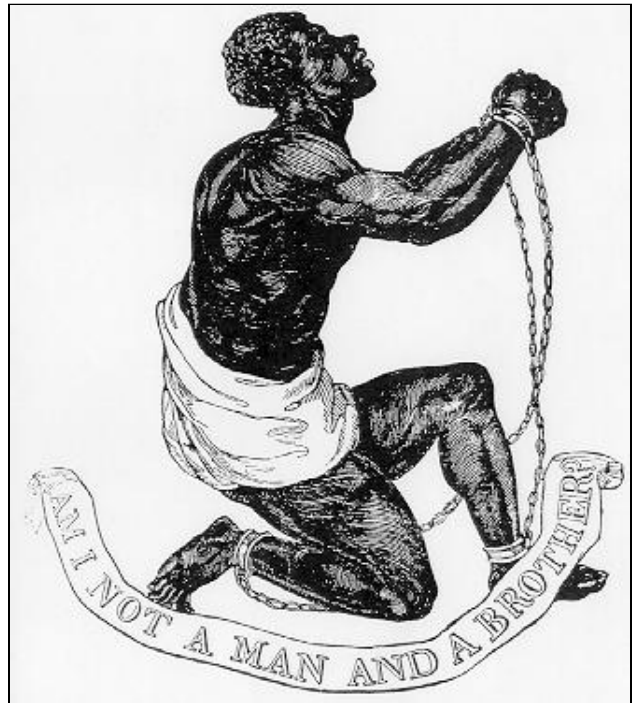
## Fugitive Slave Act of 1793

*An Act respecting fugitives from justice, and persons escaping from the service of their masters*

By The United States Congress  
1793

*The Fugitive Slave Act was enacted by the United States Congress in 1793. The act guaranteed slave owners the right to recover run-away slaves. The House of Representatives passed the act in 1793 by a 48-7 vote with 14 abstaining. When the Thirteenth Amendment was passed, abolishing slavery, the Fugitive Slave Act lost its power. As you read, take notes on the nature of freedom, especially in American history.*

- [1] *Be it enacted, &c.,* That, whenever the Executive authority of any State in the Union, or of either of the Territories Northwest or South of the river Ohio, shall demand any person as a fugitive<sup>1</sup> from justice, of the Executive authority of any such State or Territory to which such person shall have fled, and shall moreover produce the copy of an indictment<sup>2</sup> found, or an affidavit<sup>3</sup> made before a magistrate of any State or Territory as aforesaid, charging the person so demanded with having committed treason, felony, or other crime, certified as authentic by the Governor or Chief Magistrate of the State or Territory from whence the person so charged fled, it shall be the duty of the executive authority of the State or Territory to which such person shall have fled, to cause him or her arrest to be given to the Executive authority making such demand, or to the agent when he shall appear; but, if no such agent shall appear within six months from the time of the arrest, the prisoner may be discharged: and all costs or expenses incurred in the apprehending, securing, and transmitting such fugitive to the State or Territory making such demand, shall be paid by such State or Territory.



"Official Medallion of the British Anti-Slavery Society" is licensed under .

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That any agent appointed as aforesaid, who shall receive the fugitive into his custody, shall be empowered to transport him or her to the State or Territory from which he or she shall have fled. And if any person or persons shall, by force, set at liberty, or rescue the fugitive from such agent while transporting, as aforesaid, the person or persons so offending shall, on conviction, be fined not exceeding five hundred dollars, and be imprisoned not exceeding one year.

1. **Fugitive (noun):** a person who has escaped from a place or is in hiding, especially to avoid arrest or persecution
2. **Indictment (noun):** a formal charge or accusation of a crime
3. **Affidavit (noun):** a written statement confirmed by oath or affirmation, for use as evidence in court

SEC. 3. *And be it also enacted*, That when a person held to labor in any of the United States, or in either of the Territories on the Northwest or South of the river Ohio, under the laws thereof, shall escape into any other part of the said States or Territory, the person to whom such labor or service may be due, his agent or attorney, is hereby empowered to seize or arrest such fugitive from labor, and to take him or her before any Judge of the Circuit or District Courts of the United States, residing or being within the State, or before any magistrate of a county, city, or town corporate, wherein such seizure or arrest shall be made, and upon proof to the satisfaction of such Judge or magistrate, either by oral testimony or affidavit taken before and certified by a magistrate of any such State or Territory, that the person so seized or arrested, doth, under the laws of the State or Territory from which he or she fled, owe service or labor to the person claiming him or her, it shall be the duty of such Judge or magistrate to give a certificate thereof to such claimant,<sup>4</sup> his agent, or attorney, which shall be sufficient warrant for removing the said fugitive from labor to the State or Territory from which he or she fled.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That any person who shall knowingly and willingly obstruct or hinder such claimant, his agent, or attorney, in so seizing or arresting such fugitive from labor, or shall rescue such fugitive from such claimant, his agent or attorney, when so arrested pursuant to the authority herein given and declared; or shall harbor or conceal such person after notice that he or she was a fugitive from labor, as aforesaid, shall, for either of the said offences, forfeit and pay the sum of five hundred dollars. Which penalty may be recovered by and for the benefit of such claimant, by action of debt, in any Court proper to try the same, saving moreover to the person claiming such labor or service his right of action for or on account of the said injuries, or either of them.

*Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 by The United States Congress is in the public domain.*

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4. **Claimant** (*noun*): a person making a claim, such as in a court case

## Text-Dependent Questions

**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following best summarizes a central idea of the text? [RI.2]
  - A. Slavery has always been a controversial and divided issue in the United States.
  - B. Southern states, which were the majority slave-holding states, held great influence in Congress and their legislation.
  - C. Runaway slaves were considered fugitives and could then be hunted down, arrested, and retrieved.
  - D. America allowed slaveholders to run wild all over the country and the free states in search of their missing slaves.
  
2. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A? [RI.1]
  - A. "That, whenever the Executive authority of any State in the Union, or of either of the Territories Northwest or South of the river Ohio, shall demand any person as a fugitive from justice..." (Paragraph 1)
  - B. "...it shall be the duty of the executive authority of the State or Territory to which such person shall have fled, to cause him or her arrest." (Paragraph 1)
  - C. "...all costs or expenses incurred in the apprehending, securing, and transmitting such fugitive to the State or Territory making such demand, shall be paid by such State or Territory." (Paragraph 1)
  - D. "the person or persons so offending shall, on conviction, be fined not exceeding five hundred dollars, and be imprisoned not exceeding one year." (Paragraph 2)
  
3. According to the text, which of the following situations could render a captured fugitive slave discharged? [RI.3]
  - A. If a slave manages to break out of jail by him or herself
  - B. If a slave flees into the free territories out west
  - C. If the slaveholder cannot prove a claim over the fugitive after the arrest
  - D. If the agent sent to collect the fugitive does not show within six months
  
4. PART A: What consequences does one trying to hide or rescue a fugitive slave face? [RI.3]
  - A. The person attempting to hide an escaped slave or rescue a captured slave faces arrest and potentially life in prison themselves.
  - B. The person attempting to hide an escaped slave or rescue a captured slave face possible enslavement if the slaveholder does not recapture his runaway.
  - C. The person attempting to hide an escaped slave or rescue a captured slave must pay a fine of 500 dollars, an incredible amount of money at the time, and face jail-time.
  - D. The person attempting to hide an escaped slave or rescue a captured slave will face whatever retribution the slaveholder sees fit.

5. PART B: How does this compare to the penalties an escaped slave faces? [RI.3] [RI.1]
- A. This fine, while considerable, dwindles in comparison to the life of enslavement the fugitive must return to.
  - B. This fine is the equivalent of a man working towards his freedom, and thus is equivalent to the fugitive's return to slavery.
  - C. The arrest and life in prison one would face for helping an escaped slave is comparable to the lifetime of slavery the fugitive slave faces upon return.
  - D. Both the fugitive and those trying to aid him or her would be subject to the slaveholder's control and whatever he asked for in recompense.
6. Why might the label of "fugitive" be disputed or controversial? Consider the word's connotations in your answer. [RI.4]

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## Discussion Questions

**Directions:** Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. How did prejudice influence the creation and enactment of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793?
2. How do people decide who has access to this right of freedom? How do they justify restrictions upon freedom?
3. In the context of the text, what are the effects of prejudice? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other art, literature, or history in your answer.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

# Margaret Garner: Defying the Fugitive Slave Act

By Levi Coffin  
1880

*Levi Coffin (1798-1877) was an American abolitionist who was an active leader in the Underground Railroad in Indiana and Ohio. In this text, Coffin tells the story of the fugitive slave Margaret Garner. Her story inspired the novel *Beloved* by Nobel Prize winner Toni Morrison. As you read, take notes on how Coffin describes the events that unfold in the text and how he characterizes Margaret Garner.*

- [1] Perhaps no case that came under my notice, while engaged in aiding fugitive slaves, attracted more attention and aroused deeper interest and sympathy than the case of Margaret Garner, the slave mother, who killed her child rather than see it taken back to slavery. This happened in the latter part of January, 1856. The Ohio River was frozen over at the time, and the opportunity thus offered for escaping to a free State was embraced by a number of slaves living in Kentucky, several miles back from the river. A party of 17, belonging to different masters in the same neighborhood, made arrangements to escape together. There was snow on the ground and the roads were smooth, so the plan of going to the river on a sled naturally suggested itself. The time fixed for their flight was Sabbath night,<sup>1</sup> and having managed to get a large sled and two good horses, belonging to one of their masters, the party of 17 crowded into the sled and started on their hazardous journey in the latter part of the night. They drove the horses at full speed, and at daylight reached the river below Covington, opposite Western Row. They left the sled and horses here, and as quickly as possible crossed the river on foot. It was now broad daylight, and people were beginning to pass about the streets, and the fugitives divided their company that they might not attract so much notice.



["Family of African American slaves on Smith's Plantation Beaufort South Carolina"](#) by Timothy H. O'Sullivan is in the public domain.

1. a day of religious observance and abstinence from work

An old slave man named Simon, and his wife Mary, together with their son Robert and his wife Margaret Garner and four children, made their way to the house of a colored<sup>2</sup> man named Kite, who had formerly lived in their neighborhood and had been purchased from slavery by his father, Joe Kite. They had to make several inquiries in order to find Kite's house, which was below Mill Creek, in the lower part of the city. This afterward led to their discovery; they had been seen by a number of persons on their way to Kite's, and were easily traced by pursuers. The other nine fugitives were more fortunate. They made their way up town and found friends who conducted them to safe hiding-places, where they remained until night. They were then put on the Underground Railroad,<sup>3</sup> and went safely through to Canada.

Kite felt alarmed for the safety of the party that had arrived at his house, and as soon as breakfast was over, he came to my store, at the corner of Sixth and Elm Streets, to ask counsel regarding them. I told him that they were in a very unsafe place and must be removed at once. I directed him how to conduct them from his house to the outskirts of the city, up Mill Creek, to a settlement of colored people in the western part of the city, where fugitives were often harbored.<sup>4</sup> I would make arrangements to forward them northward, that night, on the Underground Railroad. Kite returned to his house at once, according to my directions, but he was too late; in a few minutes after his return, the house was surrounded by pursuers — the masters of the fugitives, with officers and a posse<sup>5</sup> of men. The door and windows were barred, and those inside refused to give admittance. The fugitives were determined to fight, and to die, rather than to be taken back to slavery. Margaret, the mother of the four children, declared that she would kill herself and her children before she would return to bondage. The slave men were armed and fought bravely. The window was first battered down with a stick of wood, and one of the deputy marshals attempted to enter, but a pistol shot from within made a flesh wound on his arm and caused him to abandon the attempt. The pursuers then battered down the door with some timber and rushed in. The husband of Margaret fired several shots, and wounded one of the officers, but was soon overpowered and dragged out of the house. At this moment, Margaret Garner, seeing that their hopes of freedom were vain seized a butcher knife that lay on the table, and with one stroke cut the throat of her little daughter, whom she probably loved the best. She then attempted to take the life of the other children and to kill herself, but she was overpowered and hampered<sup>6</sup> before she could complete her desperate work. The whole party was then arrested and lodged in jail.

The trial lasted two weeks, drawing crowds to the court-room every day. Colonel Chambers, of this city, and two lawyers from Covington — Wall and Tinnell — appeared for the claimants,<sup>7</sup> and Messrs.<sup>8</sup> Jolliffe and Getchell for the slaves. The counsel for the defense brought witnesses to prove that the fugitives had been permitted to visit the city at various times previously. It was claimed that Margaret Garner had been brought here by her owners a number of years before, to act as nurse girl, and according to the law which liberated slaves who were brought into free States by the consent of their masters, she had been free from that time, and her children, all of whom had been born since then — following the condition of the mother — were likewise free.

[5] The Commissioner decided that a voluntary return to slavery, after a visit to a free State, re-attached the conditions of slavery, and that the fugitives were legally slaves at the time of their escape.

2. "Colored" is an outdated and offensive term used to describe people of color. In the context of this text, it is not used offensively, rather to distinguish that the man was not white.
3. a network of houses and other places that abolitionists used to help slaves escape to freedom
4. **Harbor (verb):** to give a home or shelter to
5. a body of men, typically armed, summoned by a sheriff to enforce the law
6. **Hamper (verb):** to hinder or prevent the movement or progress of something
7. a person making a claim, especially in a lawsuit
8. used as a title to refer formally to more than one man simultaneously

[...]

Jolliffe said that in the final argument of the case he intended not only to allege,<sup>9</sup> but to demonstrate, conclusively, to the Court, that the Fugitive Slave law was unconstitutional, and as part and parcel<sup>10</sup> of that argument he wished to show the effects of carrying it out. It had driven a frantic mother to murder her own child rather than see it carried back to the seething hell of American slavery. This law was of such an order that its execution required human hearts to be wrung and human blood to be spilt.

"The Constitution," said he, "expressly declared that Congress should pass no law prescribing any form of religion or preventing the free exercise thereof. If Congress could not pass any law requiring you to worship God, still less could they pass one requiring you to carry fuel to hell." These ringing words called forth applause from all parts of the court-room. Jolliffe said: "It is for the Court to decide whether the Fugitive Slave law overrides the law of Ohio to such an extent that it cannot arrest a fugitive slave even for a crime of murder."

The fugitives were finally indicted<sup>11</sup> for murder, but we will see that this amounted to nothing.

[...]

The case seemed to stir every heart that was alive to the emotions of humanity. The interest manifested by all classes was not so much for the legal principles involved, as for the mute instincts that mold every human heart — the undying love of freedom that is planted in every breast — the resolve to die rather than submit to a life of degradation<sup>12</sup> and bondage.

- [10] A number of people, who were deeply interested in the fugitives, visited them in prison and conversed with them. Old Simon, his wife Mary, and their son Robert, while expressing their longing for freedom, said that they should not attempt to kill themselves if they were returned to slavery. Their trust in God seemed to have survived all the wrong and cruelty inflicted upon them by man, and though they felt often like crying bitterly, "How long, O Lord, how long?" they still trusted and endured. But Margaret seemed to have a different nature; she could see nothing but woe for herself and her children. Who can fathom the depths of her heart as she brooded over the wrongs and insults that had been heaped upon her all her life? Who can wonder if her faith staggered when she saw her efforts to gain freedom frustrated, when she saw the gloom of her old life close around her again, without any hope of deliverance? Those who came to speak words of comfort and cheer felt them die upon their lips, when they looked into her face, and marked its expression of settled despair. Her sorrow was beyond the reach of any words of encouragement and consolation, and can be realized in all its fullness only by those who have tasted of a cup equally bitter.

[...]

But in spite of touching appeals, of eloquent pleadings, the Commissioner remanded<sup>13</sup> the fugitives back to slavery. He said that it was not a question of feeling to be decided by the chance current of his sympathies; the law of Kentucky and of the United States made it a question of property.

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9. **Allege (verb):** to claim or assert that someone has done something illegal or wrong  
10. a fragment or portion  
11. to charge with a crime  
12. **Degradation (noun):** the act of treating someone or something poorly and without respect  
13. to send back



[...]

Margaret was lost, in what Jolliffe called, “the seething hell of American slavery.” It was reported that on her way down the river she sprang from the boat into the water with her babe in her arms; that when she rose she was seized by some of the boat hands and rescued, but that her child was drowned.

*“[Margaret Garner](#)” from *Reminiscences of Levi Coffin, the Reputed President of the Underground Railroad* by Levi Coffin (1880) is in the public domain.*

## Text-Dependent Questions

**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following identifies the central idea of the text? [RI.2]
  - A. Garner killed her child due to a momentary lapse in judgement driven by the stress of the standoff at Kite's house.
  - B. Few people were sympathetic for Garner's situation and horrified by her decision to kill her own child.
  - C. Garner's anguish and desperation exemplified the inhumanity of slavery, but her suffering did not sway the outcome of her court case.
  - D. Garner's situation and decision to kill her own child were used as evidence to argue that slaves were less rational than their white owners.
  
2. PART B: Which section from the text best supports the answer to Part A? [RI.1]
  - A. "She then attempted to take the life of the other children and to kill herself, but she was overpowered and hampered before she could complete her desperate work." (Paragraph 3)
  - B. "The interest manifested by all classes was not so much for the legal principles involved, as for the mute instincts that mold every human heart" (Paragraph 9)
  - C. "Those who came to speak words of comfort and cheer felt them die upon their lips, when they looked into her face, and marked its expression of settled despair." (Paragraph 10)
  - D. "He said that it was not a question of feeling to be decided by the chance current of his sympathies; the law of Kentucky and of the United States made it a question of property." (Paragraph 11)
  
3. PART A: How does Coffin portray Garner's decision to kill her daughter? [RI.3]
  - A. Coffin depicts Garner as unable to make a clear choice as a result of distress.
  - B. Coffin demonstrates that Garner should not be held accountable for her actions.
  - C. Coffin emphasizes Garner's actions come from love for her daughter
  - D. Coffin affirms that death is a worse fate than slavery for Garner's children.
  
4. PART B: which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A? [RI.1]
  - A. "Margaret Garner, seeing that their hopes of freedom were vain seized a butcher knife that lay on the table, and with one stroke cut the throat of her little daughter, whom she probably loved the best." (Paragraph 3)
  - B. "She then attempted to take the life of the other children and to kill herself, but she was overpowered and hampered before she could complete her desperate work." (Paragraph 3)
  - C. "Margaret seemed to have a different nature; she could see nothing but woe for herself and her children." (Paragraph 10)
  - D. "Her sorrow was beyond the reach of any words of encouragement and consolation, and can be realized in all its fullness only by those who have tasted of a cup equally bitter." (Paragraph 10)

5. How does Coffin's status as an abolitionist affect his portrayal of Garner's story and his overall purpose in the text? [RI.6]

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## Discussion Questions

**Directions:** Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. In the context of the text, what can we learn from tragedy? What does Garner's story teach us about the horrors of slavery? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
2. In the context of the text, how does fear drive action? What role did fear play in Garner's decision to kill herself and her children? Who else's fears might have been at play or might have shaped the outcome of her story? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
3. In the context of the text, why do people do bad things? Consider Garner's actions as well as the actions of other individuals described in the text in your answer, in addition to your own experience, other literature, art, or history in your answer.

# English IV

## Week of April 20

Choose one text of the two below.

Read, annotate, and answer questions as directed in the document.

Option 1	Learning to Read
Option 2	I Am Very Real

After you've read one of the pieces above, imagine a class discussion about the text. Think about how you would answer the following questions and what evidence you would use from the text to support your answers.

- a. Think about how the right to read is restricted in this text. Do we have the right to read? Using evidence from the text and your experience to explain the impact of restrictions against reading.
- b. How does this text help you explore the idea of resilience?

## Week of April 27

Choose one text of the two below.

Read, annotate, and answer questions as directed in the document.

Option 1	Sleeping
Option 2	Accidents

After you've read one of the pieces above, imagine a class discussion about the text. Think about how you would answer the following questions and what evidence you would use from the text to support your answers.

- a. Different people deal with loss in different ways. In the context of the text, why does the mother react as she does? Explain how one coping mechanism might work better than others, using evidence from this text or others you have read.
- b. How does this text help you explore the idea of resilience?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## Learning to Read

By Francis Ellen Watkins Harper  
1872

*Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911) was the child of free African-American parents. She attended the Academy for Negro Youth until she was 13 years old. In her adult life, Harper helped slaves escape through the Underground Railroad (a network of routes and safe houses used by slaves in the 19th century) and wrote for anti-slavery newspapers. As you read, take notes on the obstacles the students face while learning to read.*

[1] Very soon the Yankee<sup>1</sup> teachers  
Came down and set up school;  
But, oh! how the Rebs<sup>2</sup> did hate it,—  
It was agin' their rule.

[5] Our masters always tried to hide  
Book learning from our eyes;  
Knowledge didn't agree with slavery—  
'Twould make us all too wise.

But some of us would try to steal  
[10] A little from the book,  
And put the words together,  
And learn by hook or crook.

I remember Uncle Caldwell,  
Who took pot-liquor fat  
[15] And greased the pages of his book,  
And hid it in his hat.

And had his master ever seen  
The leaves up on his head,  
He'd have thought them greasy papers,  
[20] But nothing to be read.

And there was Mr. Turner's Ben,  
Who heard the children spell,  
And picked the words right up by heart,  
And learned to read 'em well.



*"Slaves" by elycefeliz is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0*

1. "Yankees" are people from the northern Union states. During the Civil War, Union states fought against Confederate states.  
2. "Rebs" is short for "rebels." The term refers to Confederate sympathizers, who, during the Civil War, fought to maintain Southern society (including slavery).

[25] Well, the Northern folks kept sending  
The Yankee teachers down;  
And they stood right up and helped us,  
Though Rebs did sneer and frown.

And, I longed to read my Bible,  
[30] For precious words it said;  
But when I begun to learn it,  
Folks just shook their heads,

And said there is no use trying,  
Oh! Chloe, you're too late;  
[35] But as I was rising sixty,  
I had no time to wait.

So I got a pair of glasses,  
And straight to work I went,  
And never stopped till I could read  
[40] The hymns and Testament.<sup>3</sup>

Then I got a little cabin—  
A place to call my own—  
And I felt as independent  
As the queen upon her throne.

*Learning to Read by Francis Ellen Watkins Harper is in the public domain.*

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3. The Christian Bible is divided into two sections, the New and Old Testament.

## Text-Dependent Questions

**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. Which of the following best summarizes the action of this poem?
  - A. A woman reflects on her childhood when she was denied the right to an education. She describes the great risks that she and other slaves took in order to learn.
  - B. A speaker, who was once a slave, describes how she managed to escape so that she could attend school in the North.
  - C. The narrator, a slave holder, describes her childhood growing up on a plantation in the South.
  - D. The speaker, a former slave, describes the extreme brutality she experienced under the hand of Mr. Turner, the slave master.
2. PART A: Which of the following best describes the author's most likely purpose for writing this poem?
  - A. To warn other slaves about certain dangerous escape routes
  - B. To teach other slaves how to avoid getting caught with papers and books
  - C. To spread awareness about the injustices of slavery and the benefits of education
  - D. To incite a rebellion against Mr. Turner and other slave holders
3. PART B: Choose a quote from the passage that best supports your answer to Part A.
  - A. "And put the words together, and learn by hook or crook."
  - B. "He'd have thought them greasy papers, but nothing to be read."
  - C. "Then I got a little cabin, a place to call my own."
  - D. "Knowledge didn't agree with slavery - T'would make us all too wise."
4. In line 9, what is the effect of the word "steal" on the overall message of the poem? Why did the poet choose to use this word? Explain your answer.

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5. Who is Mr. Turner's Ben, and how did he learn how to read? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

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6. PART A: Which of the following best describes the speaker's feeling about eventually learning how to read?
- A. The speaker feels scared that the slave masters will find out and hurt her.
  - B. The speaker feels powerful because she can access knowledge on her own.
  - C. The speaker feels unsure about how education will affect her future.
  - D. The speaker feels resentful toward the Yankees that set up schools.
7. PART B: Which of the following quotes from the poem best supports your answer to Part A?
- A. "Our masters always tried to hide / Book learning from our eyes" (line 5-6)
  - B. "They stood right up and helped us / Though the Rebs did sneer and frown." (line 26-27)
  - C. "But when I began to learn it/ Folks just shook their head." (line 31-32)
  - D. "The queen upon her throne." (line 44)
8. PART A: Which of the following best describes the poem's rhyme scheme?
- A. The poem is written in free verse. It does not follow a pattern.
  - B. The poem follows a pattern in the first half, then breaks the pattern in the second half.
  - C. The poem has an ABCB rhyme scheme. This pattern exists through the whole poem.
  - D. The poem has an ABAC ACBA rhyme scheme.
9. PART B: Which of the following best describes the effect of the rhythm and rhyme on the poem's overall meaning?
- A. The rhythm and rhyme give the poem a sing-songy tone, which matches the poem's not-so-serious message.
  - B. The rhythm and rhyme scheme contribute to the poem's serious, scary tone, which emphasizes the fear that the slaves felt when they were trying to hide books from their slave masters.
  - C. The rhythm and rhyme scheme is upbeat and contributes to the poem's positive message about self-empowerment, ingenuity, and independence.
  - D. Both B and C

## Discussion Questions

**Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.**

1. Why didn't the masters want slaves to have knowledge? Explain your answer. Cite evidence from the text to support your answer.
2. What is the relationship between literacy (knowing how to read) and power?
3. What does this text teach us about prejudice and discrimination, education, and social mobility? Explain your answer.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

# I Am Very Real

By Kurt Vonnegut  
1973

*Kurt Vonnegut (1922-2007) was an American author and humorist. One month after an English teacher at Drake High School in North Dakota decided to teach Kurt Vonnegut's novel Slaughterhouse-Five in his classroom, Charles McCarthy, the head of the school board, decided that the novel's "obscene language" was not appropriate. Every copy of Slaughterhouse-Five at Drake High School was burned in the school's furnace. In response, Vonnegut wrote the following letter to McCarthy. As you read, take notes on the author's main arguments throughout the letter.*

[1] Dear Mr. McCarthy:

I am writing to you in your capacity as chairman of the Drake School Board. I am among those American writers whose books have been destroyed in the now famous furnace of your school.

Certain members of your community have suggested that my work is evil. This is extraordinarily insulting to me. The news from Drake indicates to me that books and writers are very unreal to you people. I am writing this letter to let you know how real I am.



*"Burning Books Page1" by Jason Verwey is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.*

I want you to know, too, that my publisher and I have done absolutely nothing to exploit the disgusting news from Drake. We are not clapping each other on the back, crowing about all the books we will sell because of the news. We have declined to go on television, have written no fiery letters to editorial pages, have granted no lengthy interviews. We are angered and sickened and saddened. And no copies of this letter have been sent to anybody else. You now hold the only copy in your hands. It is a strictly private letter from me to the people of Drake, who have done so much to damage my reputation in the eyes of their children and then in the eyes of the world. Do you have the courage and ordinary decency to show this letter to the people, or will it, too, be consigned<sup>1</sup> to the fires of your furnace?

[5] I gather from what I read in the papers and hear on television that you imagine me, and some other writers, too, as being sort of rat-like people who enjoy making money from poisoning the minds of young people. I am in fact a large, strong person, fifty-one years old, who did a lot of farm work as a boy, who is good with tools. I have raised six children, three my own and three adopted. They have all turned out well. Two of them are farmers. I am a combat infantry veteran from World War II, and hold a Purple Heart. I have earned whatever I own by hard work. I have never been arrested or sued for anything. I am so much trusted with young people and by young people that I have served on the faculties of the University of Iowa, Harvard, and the City College of New York. Every year I receive at least a dozen invitations to be commencement speaker at colleges and high schools. My books are probably more widely used in schools than those of any other living American fiction writer.

1. **Consign (verb):** to send or give

If you were to bother to read my books, to behave as educated persons would, you would learn that they are not sexy, and do not argue in favor of wildness of any kind. They beg that people be kinder and more responsible than they often are. It is true that some of the characters speak coarsely.<sup>2</sup> That is because people speak coarsely in real life. Especially soldiers and hardworking men speak coarsely, and even our most sheltered children know that. And we all know, too, that those words really don't damage children much. They didn't damage us when we were young. It was evil deeds and lying that hurt us.

After I have said all this, I am sure you are still ready to respond, in effect, "Yes, yes – but it still remains our right and our responsibility to decide what books our children are going to be made to read in our community." This is surely so. But it is also true that if you exercise that right and fulfill that responsibility in an ignorant, harsh, un-American manner, then people are entitled to call you bad citizens and fools. Even your own children are entitled to call you that.

I read in the newspaper that your community is mystified by the outcry from all over the country about what you have done. Well, you have discovered that Drake is a part of American civilization, and your fellow Americans can't stand it that you have behaved in such an uncivilized way. Perhaps you will learn from this that books are sacred to free men for very good reasons, and that wars have been fought against nations which hate books and burn them. If you are an American, you must allow all ideas to circulate freely in your community, not merely your own.

If you and your board are now determined to show that you in fact have wisdom and maturity when you exercise your powers over the education of your young, then you should acknowledge that it was a rotten lesson you taught young people in a free society when you denounced and then burned books – books you hadn't even read. You should also resolve to expose your children to all sorts of opinions and information, in order that they will be better equipped to make decisions and to survive.

[10] Again: you have insulted me, and I am a good citizen, and I am very real.

Kurt Vonnegut

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2. refers to crude or offensive language

## Text-Dependent Questions

**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following statements expresses a central idea of the text?
  - A. School boards should not have the power to ban books from classrooms.
  - B. It is immoral to claim that controversial books may poison students' minds.
  - C. Burning books goes against the freedoms that Americans hold dear.
  - D. Like all good citizens, Kurt Vonnegut has not lied or produced evil work.
  
2. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A?
  - A. "I am a combat infantry veteran from World War II, and hold a Purple Heart... I am so much trusted with young people and by young people that I have served on the faculties of the University of Iowa, Harvard, and the City College of New York." (Paragraph 5)
  - B. "And we all know, too, that those words really don't damage children much. They didn't damage us when we were young. It was evil deeds and lying that hurt us." (Paragraph 6)
  - C. "books are sacred to free men for very good reasons, and that wars have been fought against nations which hate books and burn them. If you are an American, you must allow all ideas to circulate freely" (Paragraph 8)
  - D. "If you and your board are now determined to show... maturity when you exercise your powers over the education of your young, then you should acknowledge that it was a rotten lesson you taught young people" (Paragraph 9)
  
3. PART A: What does the word "exploit" most closely mean as it is used in paragraph 4?
  - A. to produce
  - B. to abuse
  - C. to benefit from
  - D. to criticize or disagree with
  
4. PART B: Which phrase from paragraph 4 best supports the answer to Part A?
  - A. "the disgusting news from Drake"
  - B. "crowing about all the books we will sell because of the news"
  - C. "to damage my reputation in the eyes of their children and then in the eyes of the world"
  - D. "the courage and ordinary decency"
  
5. Which statement best describes how the author uses rhetoric in paragraphs 4-5 to advance his argument?
  - A. The author presents the contributions he has made to the country in order to prove that he is a real American.
  - B. The author describes his background in order to explain why coarse language is simply part of how he speaks.
  - C. The author portrays himself as a father and a veteran as further proof of his desire to shield the nation's youth from harmful books.
  - D. The author explains that he is a man of integrity in order to show why the school's reactions were excessive and wrong.

6. How does the author expand his argument in paragraphs 7-8?

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## Discussion Questions

**Directions:** Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. What do you think Vonnegut means when he says that he is a “real person”? Why does he work so hard to convey this point? Explain your answer.
2. According to Vonnegut, what does being American mean? Do you agree with Vonnegut when he says the burning of books is un-American? Why or why not?
3. In the context of this letter, which is more important: freedom of speech, or the protection of young people from what some may see as harmful ideas? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
4. In the context of this letter, what makes America unique? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sleeping

By Katharine Weber  
2003

*Katharine Weber (b. 1955) is a contemporary American non-fiction writer and novelist. In this story, a young girl is asked to babysit--but the job turns out to be different than she expected. As you read, take notes on the unusual details the main character notices and how these details contribute to the story's final realization.*

- [1] She would not have to change a diaper, they said. In fact, she would not have to do anything at all. Mrs. Winter said that Charles would not wake while she and Mr. Winter were out at the movies. He was a very sound sleeper, she said. No need to have a bottle for him or anything. Before the Winters left they said absolutely please not to look in on the sleeping baby because the door squeaked too loudly.



"Relax Baby" is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

Harriet had never held a baby, except for one brief moment, when she was about six, when Mrs. Antler next door had surprisingly bestowed<sup>1</sup> on her the tight little bundle that was their new baby, Andrea. Harriet had sat very still and her arms had begun to ache from the tension by the time Mrs. Antler took back her baby. Andy was now a plump seven-year-old, older than Harriet had been when she held her that day.

After two hours of reading all of the boring mail piled neatly on a desk in the bedroom and looking through a depressing wedding album filled with photographs of dressed-up people in desperate need of orthodonture<sup>2</sup> (Harriet had just ended two years in braces and was very conscious of malocclusion<sup>3</sup> issues) while flipping channels on their television, Harriet turned the knob on the baby's door very tentatively, but it seemed locked. She didn't dare turn the knob with more pressure because what if she made a noise and woke him and he started to cry?

She stood outside the door and tried to hear the sound of a baby breathing but she couldn't hear anything through the door but the sound of the occasional car that passed by on the street outside. She wondered what Charles looked like. She wasn't even sure how old he was. Why had she agreed to baby-sit when Mr. Winter approached her at the swim club? She had never seen him before, and it was flattering that he took her for being capable, as if just being a girl her age automatically qualified her as a baby-sitter.

1. **Bestow (verb):** to give or present
2. Orthodonture refers to the branch of dentistry dealing with the prevention or correction of irregularities of the teeth.
3. Malocclusion refers to a misalignment of teeth.



- [5] By the time the Winters came home, Harriet had eaten most of the M & M's in the glass bowl on their coffee table: first all the blue ones, then the red ones, then all the green ones, and so on, leaving, in the end, only the yellow.

They gave her too much money and didn't ask her about anything. Mrs. Winter seemed to be waiting for her to leave before checking on the baby. Mr. Winter drove her home in silence. When they reached her house he said, My wife. He hesitated, then he said, You understand, don't you? and Harriet answered Yes without looking at him or being sure what they were talking about although she did really know what he was telling her and then she got out of his car and watched him drive away.

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## Text-Dependent Questions

**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Why is Mr. Winter's and Harriet's interaction at swim club significant to the story's plot? [RL.3]
  - A. Mr. Winter knows Harriet to be mature for her age, so he asks Harriet to take the unusual babysitting job to calm his wife's concerns.
  - B. Mr. Winter asks her to babysit even though she has never seen him before, implying that he doesn't care who babysits Charles and that he is a neglectful father.
  - C. Harriet suspects that Mr. Winter only approached her to babysit because of her age and because she's a girl; this awareness is one of the first steps towards her growing up.
  - D. Mr. Winter asks her to babysit even though she has never seen him before; this unusual approach is a clue that something is off concerning the Winter family.
  
2. PART B: Which TWO other details from the story have a similar effect as the answer to Part A? [RL.5] [RL.1]
  - A. "She would not have to change a diaper, they said. In fact, she would not have to do anything at all" (Paragraph 1)
  - B. "He was a very sound sleeper, she said" (Paragraph 1)
  - C. "Harriet had never held a baby, except for one brief moment" (Paragraph 2)
  - D. "Andy was now a plump seven-year-old, older than Harriet had been when she held her that day" (Paragraph 2)
  - E. "Harriet turned the knob on the baby's door very tentatively, but it seemed locked"
  - F. "She didn't dare turn the knob with more pressure because what if she made a noise and woke him and he started to cry?" (Paragraph 3)
  
3. How is the word choice regarding the parents' surname significant to the story? Cite evidence from the text in your response. [RL.4]

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4. PART A: Which of the following best describes a theme of the story? [RL.2]
- A. People sometimes grieve in mysterious ways.
  - B. Guilt can cause great changes in a person.
  - C. Family supports each other no matter what.
  - D. Death can force a person to grow up more quickly.
5. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
- A. "Harriet had never held a baby, except for one brief moment, when she was about six, when Mrs. Antler next door had surprisingly bestowed on her the tight little bundle that was their new baby, Andrea." (Paragraph 2)
  - B. "two hours of reading all of the boring mail piled neatly on a desk in the bedroom and looking through a depressing wedding album" (Paragraph 3)
  - C. "She wondered what Charles looked like. She wasn't even sure how old he was. Why had she agreed to baby-sit when Mr. Winter approached her at the swim club?" (Paragraph 4)
  - D. "Mrs. Winter seemed to be waiting for her to leave before checking on the baby... When they reached her house he said, My wife. He hesitated, then he said, You understand, don't you?" (Paragraph 6)

## Discussion Questions

**Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.**

1. Some literary critics read this story as a “coming of age” tale and assume that this experience is one of Harriet’s first introductions to the adult world. Based on your critical reading, what does the story reveal about the adult world?
2. In the context of this story, what does it mean to be grown up? Support your answer with evidence from this text, your own experience, and other art, history, or literature.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## Accidents

By Linda Pastan  
1987

*Linda Pastan is an American poet of Jewish Background. Pastan was Poet Laureate of Maryland from 1991 to 1995. Her short poems address a wide range of topics, such as family, motherhood, the fragility of life, and much more. In this poem, the narrator describes the experience of losing a child. As you read, take note of how figurative language is used to describe the experience of losing a child.*

- [1] There is no infant  
this time,  
only my own life swaddled<sup>1</sup>  
in bandages  
[5] and handed back to me  
to hold in my two arms  
like any new thing,  
to hold to my bruised breasts  
and promise  
[10] to cherish.<sup>2</sup>

The smell of cut  
flowers encloses this room,  
insistent as anesthetic.<sup>3</sup>  
It is spring.

- [15] Outside the hospital window  
the first leaves have opened  
their shiny blades,  
and a dozen new accidents  
turn over in their sleep,  
[20] waiting to happen.



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*"Accidents" from Poetry Magazine by Linda Pastan. Copyright © 1977 by Linda Pastan. Reprinted with permission, all rights reserved*

1. "Swaddle" means to wrap someone, especially a baby, in cloths.
2. **Cherish (verb):** to protect and care for lovingly
3. a substance used to control pain during a surgery or procedure

## Text-Dependent Questions

**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which statement best identifies a theme of the poem? [RL.2]
  - A. Small comforts can lessen the pain caused by tragedy.
  - B. A single tragedy can make you sensitive to the possibility of future tragedies.
  - C. While tragedies may occur infrequently, that doesn't lessen the pain.
  - D. It is important to stay strong in the face of tragedy.
  
2. PART B: Which quote best supports the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
  - A. "There is no infant / this time, / only my own life swaddled" (Lines 1-3)
  - B. "to hold to my bruised breasts / and promise / to cherish." (Lines 8-10)
  - C. "The smell of cut / flowers encloses this room, / insistent as anesthetic." (Lines 11-13)
  - D. "and a dozen new accidents / turn over in their sleep, / waiting to happen." (Lines 18-20)
  
3. PART A: What impact does the phrase "insistent as anesthetic" have on the passage's meaning (Line 13)? [RL.4]
  - A. It reveals that the woman has recently come out of surgery.
  - B. It shows how overpowering the smell of the flowers is in the hospital.
  - C. It emphasizes how the mother's loss has numbed and isolated her.
  - D. It portrays the hospital as a cold and unwelcoming place.
  
4. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
  - A. "to hold to my bruised breasts / and promise / to cherish." (Lines 8-10)
  - B. "The smell of cut / flowers encloses this room" (Lines 11-12)
  - C. "Outside the hospital window / the first leaves have opened" (Lines 15-16)
  - D. "and a dozen new accidents / turn over in their sleep" (Lines 18-19)
  
5. How does the poem's focus shift between stanza 1 and stanza 2 to further explore the mother's experience with loss? [RL.5]

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## Discussion Questions

**Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.**

1. Think about a loss you have experienced; how did it affect you? What feelings did it evoke?
2. In the context of the poem, what does it mean to feel alone? What is the impact of loneliness on the mother? What does she focus on and why? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
3. In the context of the poem, what can we learn from tragedy? How can tragedy affect how we view the future? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.









