PART 1

Regionalism and Local Color

“Elsewhere the sky is the roof of the world; but here the earth is the floor of the sky.”

—Willa Cather, *Death Comes for the Archbishop*
The Rise of Local Color Fiction

In 1871, Bret Harte signed a $10,000 contract with The Atlantic Monthly magazine, the highest sum ever paid to an author at the time. The impressive sale of Harte’s stories marked the beginning of the local color fiction boom. Still recovering from the devastation of the Civil War, readers welcomed the relief that Harte’s light-hearted tales of the California Gold Rush provided.

Writers culturally reunited the country by crafting stories about real people, small towns, and regional lifestyles.

The Importance of Setting
Setting was the most distinct feature of local color stories, which most often took place in rural towns. Authors depicted in meticulous detail the time, place, and historical background in which events in their fiction occurred. The setting of local color fiction spanned the continent, from Harte’s tales of California miners to Sarah Orne Jewett’s stories of country dwellers in New England. Jewett, a prominent local colorist, wrote about common people living in coastal towns: doctors, sailors, mothers, and wives. Her most famous book, The Country of the Pointed Firs, was well received all over the nation. Local color writing appealed to a wide audience, regardless of its setting.

The Role of Character
While Harte and Jewett may have been among the first local colorists, the best known is Mark Twain. Twain’s “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” (page 484) continues to be one of the most popular works of local color fiction. Smiley, the story’s protagonist, is typical of characters portrayed in local color writing. Characters are usually small-town residents, shown in their everyday lives performing everyday tasks.
Smiley speaks with a regional dialect, another important trait of local color fiction. Twain, like many local colorists, peppered Smiley’s dialogue with words and abbreviations unique to the area where the story takes place. For example, near the end of the story, Smiley exclaims, “Why, blame my cats, if he don’t weigh five pound!” The realistic dialogue helps shape the reader’s impression of both the character and what the town might be like.

The Lives of Women

Women writers had a strong presence in the local color movement. Willa Cather’s “A Wagner Matinée” (page 520) relates the experience of a woman who gives up her passion for music in order to raise a family. Much local color fiction, especially from women authors, deals with the contrast between traditional values and changing perspectives. One of Cather’s contemporaries, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, wrote about women’s social roles in her short story “A Church Mouse.” Freeman’s characters struggle with the desire for independence as opposed to the safety of marriage. Her work was widely published in women’s magazines, which flourished in the late 1800s. The emergence of women’s local color fiction was also influenced by the woman suffrage movement, which had become active again after being halted by the Civil War.

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

1. Explain why you think local color fiction became so popular in the United States in the late nineteenth century.
2. Why did women writers have a strong presence in the local color movement?
3. How would you compare and contrast local color fiction with its predecessor, Romantic literature?
4. What are some examples of local color fiction that you know from books, movies, or television?

OBJECTIVES

- Interpret the influence of historical context on a literary work.
- Analyze the relevance of setting to a text’s meaning.
- Recognize how writers represent their cultures and traditions in a text.
When I was born I was a member of a firm of twins,” Twain told an audience in 1901. “And one of them disappeared.” Although he was not actually a twin, Twain did have two sides to his personality. Born Samuel Langhorne Clemens, he took as his pen name a term used by riverboat pilots in navigation: Mark Twain.

Missouri Boyhood  Samuel Clemens spent his early life in Missouri, chiefly in Hannibal, a city on the west bank of the Mississippi River. Life in this river town was full of adventure, but the death of Clemens’s father when the boy was just eleven forced him to curtail his childhood escapades and his schooling in order to work as a printer’s apprentice. At twenty-one, Clemens fulfilled his lifelong dream of becoming a riverboat pilot on the Mississippi River. He loved this profession better than any other because, as he declared, “a pilot was the only unfettered and entirely independent being that lived on the earth.”

Literary Success  In 1870 Twain married Olivia Langdon, a wealthy easterner. They settled in Hartford, Connecticut, where Twain met William Dean Howells, the most influential literary critic of the day. In Howells’s Atlantic Monthly, Twain recounted his experiences as a riverboat pilot in a series called “Old Times on the Mississippi,” which he embellished and published eight years later as Life on the Mississippi (1883). The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1876) established Twain as a master of fiction, and its sequel, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1884), cemented Twain’s place as one of the greatest novelists the United States has ever produced. His use of realism and detail influenced many later writers of American fiction, including Ernest Hemingway, who stated that “all modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called Huckleberry Finn.”

Plagued by financial misfortunes and the deaths of loved ones, Twain’s later years found him frequently embittered. In some of his later works, such as “The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg,” Twain brooded over the dark side of human nature. He is chiefly remembered today, however, for capturing the brash, optimistic spirit and youthful vitality of his fellow Americans.

Mark Twain was born in 1835 and died in 1910.

“My books are water; those of the great geniuses are wine. Everybody drinks water.”
—Mark Twain

Travels  When the Civil War closed the Mississippi River to commercial traffic, Samuel Clemens headed for Nevada in hopes of striking it rich. He prospected unsuccessfully there and in California, and eventually settled in San Francisco, where he met author Bret Harte. There he lectured and worked as a journalist, specializing in humorous feature stories. During this time, Twain wrote the story that brought him his first taste of fame: “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County.” In 1867, as a traveling correspondent for the Alta California, Twain set out for Europe and the Middle East. This journey provided the material for The Innocents Abroad; or, The New Pilgrim’s Progress (1869), which poked fun at inexperienced American travelers and quickly became a best seller.

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MY BOOKS ARE WATER; THOSE OF THE GREAT GENIUSES ARE WINE. EVERYBODY DRINKS WATER.”
—MARK TWAIN
Connecting to the Story

Mark Twain did not write a story; he told it. His mastery of American speech—the native vernacular—and his ability to “spin a yarn” are unrivaled. As you read, think about the following questions:

- Why do people love to spin yarns or tell tall tales—and to listen to them?
- What is the best way to tell a tall tale?

Building Background

This story takes place in the early 1860s in a small mining town called Angel’s Camp, which still exists today in California. In 1848 James W. Marshall discovered rich deposits of gold at Sutter’s Mill, near the Calaveras County town of Coloma. This discovery led to the California Gold Rush, during which many adventurous people thronged to California to prospect for gold, hoping to “strike it rich.” In the remote mining camps and frontier towns, life was hard and entertainment was scarce. To create some fun, people invented tall tales—stories filled with humorous exaggerations. At Angel’s Camp, Twain first heard someone tell the story that he later developed into “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County,” his most famous western tale.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea  Regionalism

As you read, notice the techniques Twain uses to give you the flavor of the Old West during the Gold Rush.

Literary Element  Dialect

Dialect is a variation of a language spoken by a particular group, often within a specific region and time. Dialects may differ from the standard form of a language in vocabulary, pronunciation, or grammatical form. As you read, look for examples of dialect in this story.


Interactive Literary Elements Handbook  To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.

OBJECTIVES

In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:

- understanding dialect
- analyzing comic devices

Reading Strategy  Analyzing Comic Devices

In addition to dialect, Twain uses several other devices to create humor, including absurd situations, comic characters, and exaggerations.

Reading Tip: Taking Notes  Use a web diagram to help you record details about each comic device listed.

Vocabulary

garrulous (gar′ o la) adj. talkative; p. 484

Our garrulous neighbor went on with his story, never pausing for breath.

conjecture (kan jek′ char) v. to form an opinion without definite evidence; to guess; p. 484

Not really sure, I conjectured that she meant more than she said.

dilapidated (di lap′ a da′ tid) adj. fallen into ruin or decay; shabby; p. 484

Pigeons flew through the holes in the dilapidated roof.

interminable (in tur′ mi na bal) adj. seemingly endless; p. 485

Though the dull speech lasted only fifteen minutes, it seemed interminable.

enterprising (en′ tar pri′ zing) adj. showing energy and initiative, especially in beginning new projects; p. 488

The enterprising class planned to raise money in a new way—by having a silent auction.

Vocabulary Tip: Word Roots  When you are trying to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word, think of words that share a root with it. The words interminable and terminal share a root: the Latin word terminus, meaning “end” or “boundary.”
In compliance with the request of a friend of mine, who wrote me from the East, I called on good-natured, garrulous old Simon Wheeler, and inquired after my friend’s friend, Leonidas W. Smiley, as requested to do, and I hereunto append\(^1\) the result. I have a lurking suspicion that Leonidas W. Smiley is a myth; that my friend never knew such a personage; and that he only conjectured that, if I asked old Wheeler about him, it would remind him of his infamous Jim Smiley, and he would go to work and bore me nearly to death with some infernal\(^2\) reminiscence of him as long and tedious as it should be useless to me. If that was the design, it certainly succeeded.

I found Simon Wheeler dozing comfortably by the bar-room stove of the old dilapidated tavern in the ancient mining camp of Angel’s,\(^3\) and I noticed that he was fat and bald-headed, and

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\(^1\) Append means “to add as a supplement” or “to attach.”

\(^2\) Infernal means “awful” or “thoroughly unpleasant.”

\(^3\) Angel’s refers to Angel’s Camp.

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Big Idea | Regionalism  What sort of atmosphere would you expect to find in a mining camp?

Vocabulary

- garrulous (gar’ə ləs) adj. talkative
- conjecture (kan jek’ char) v. to form an opinion without definite evidence; to guess
- dilapidated (di lap’ə dā’tid) adj. fallen into ruin or decay; shabby
had an expression of winning gentleness and simplicity upon his tranquil countenance.\(^4\) He roused up and gave me good-day. I told him a friend of mine had commissioned me to make some inquiries about a cherished companion of his boyhood named Leonidas W. Smiley—Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley—a young minister of the Gospel, who he had heard was at one time a resident of Angel’s Camp. I added that, if Mr. Wheeler could tell me any thing about this Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, I would feel under many obligations to him.

Simon Wheeler backed me into a corner and blockaded me there with his chair, and then sat me down and reeled off the monotonous narrative which follows this paragraph. He never smiled, he never frowned, he never changed his voice from the gentle-flowing key to which he tuned the initial sentence, he never betrayed the slightest suspicion of enthusiasm; but all through the interminable narrative there ran a vein of impressive earnestness and sincerity, which showed me plainly that, so far from his imagining that there was any thing ridiculous or funny about his story, he regarded it as a really important matter, and admired its two heroes as men of transcendent genius in finesse.\(^5\)

To me, the spectacle of a man drifting serenely along through such a queer yarn without ever smiling, was exquisitely absurd. As I said before, I asked him to tell me what he knew of Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, and he replied as follows. I let him go on in his own way, and never interrupted him once:

There was a feller here once by the name of Jim Smiley, in the winter of ’49—or may be it was the spring of ’50—I don’t recollect exactly, somehow, though what makes me think it was one or the other is because I remember the big flume wasn’t finished when he first came to the camp; but any way, he was the curiosest man about always betting on any thing that turned up you ever see, if he could get any body to bet on the other side; and if he couldn’t he’d change sides. Any way that suited the other man would suit him—any way just so’s he got a bet, he was satisfied. But still he was lucky, uncommon lucky; he most always come out winner. He was always ready and laying for a chance; there couldn’t be no solity thing mentioned but that feller’d offer to bet on it, and take any side you please, as I was just telling you. If there was a horse race, you’d find him flush,\(^7\) or you’d find him busted at the end of it; if there was a dog-fight, he’d bet on it; if there was a cat-fight, he’d bet on it; if there was a chicken-fight, he’d bet on it; why, if there was two birds setting on a fence, he would bet you which one would fly first; or if there was a camp-meeting,\(^8\) he would be there reg’lar, to bet on Parson Walker, which he judged to be the best exhorter\(^9\) about here, and so he was, too, and a good man. If he even seen a straddle-bug\(^10\) start to go anywheres, he would bet you how long it would take him to get wherever he was going to, and if you took him up, he would foller that straddle-bug to Mexico but what he would find out where he was bound for and how long he was on the road. Lots of the boys here has seen that Smiley, and can tell you about him. Why, it never made no difference to him—he would bet on any thing—the dangdest feller. Parson Walker’s wife laid very sick once, for a good while, and it seemed as if they warn’t going to save her; but one morning he come in, and Smiley asked how she was, and he said she was considerable better—thank the Lord for his inf’nit mercy—and coming on so smart that, with the blessing of Prov’dence,\(^11\) she’d get well.

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4. A tranquil countenance is a calm face.
5. Transcendent means “surpassing others” or “superior.”
6. Finesse is the smooth or artful handling of a situation.

**Visual Vocabulary**

*flume* is a trough or chute, often inclined, that carries water.

**Literary Element** Dialect

**Wheeler’s use of language?**

**Big Idea** Regionalism

**How does Twain evoke the region in this passage?**

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7. Here, flush means “having a large amount of money” or “rich.”
8. A camp-meeting is an outdoor religious gathering, sometimes held in a tent.
9. An exhorter is someone who urges by giving strong advice or warnings; here, a preacher.
10. A straddle-bug is a long-legged beetle.
11. Prov’dence (Providence) is God.
yet; and Smiley, before he thought, says, “Well, I’ll risk two-and-a-half that she don’t, any way.”

Thish-yer 13 Smiley had a mare—the boys called her the fifteen-minute nag, but that was only in fun, you know, because, of course, she was faster than that—and he used to win money on that horse, for all she was so slow and always had the asthma, or the distemper, or the consumption, 14 or something of that kind. They used to give her two or three hundred yards start, and then pass her under way; but always at the fag-end 15 of the race she’d get excited and desperate-like, and come cavorting 16 and straddling up, and scattering her legs around limber, sometimes in the air, and sometimes out to one side amongst the fences, and licking up m-o-r-e dust, and raising m-o-r-e racket with her coughing and sneezing and blowing her nose—and always fetch up at the stand 17 just about a neck ahead, as near as you could cipher it down. 18

And he had a little small bull pup, that to look at him you’d think he wasn’t worth a cent, but to set around and look ornery, and lay for a chance to steal something. But as soon as money was up on him, he was a different dog; his under-jaw’d begin to stick out like the fo’castle of a steamboat, and his teeth would uncover, and shine savage like the furnaces. And a dog might tackle him, and bully-rag 19 him, and bite him, and throw him over his shoulder two or three times, and Andrew Jackson—which was the name of the pup—Andrew Jackson would never let on but what he was satisfied, and hadn’t expected nothing else—and the bets being doubled and doubled on the other side all the time, till the money was all up; and then all of a sudden he would grab that other dog jest by the j’int of his hind leg and freeze to it—not chaw, you understand, but only jest grip and hang on till they threwed up the sponge. 20 if it was a year. Smiley always come out winner on that pup, till he harnessed 21 a dog once that didn’t have no hind legs, because they’d been sawed off by a circular saw, and when the thing had gone along far enough, and the money was all up, and he come to make a snatch for his pet holt; 22 he saw in a minute how he’d been imposed on, and how the other dog had him in the door, 23 so to speak, and he ’peared surprised, and then he looked sorter discouraged-like, and didn’t try no more to win the fight, and so he got shucked out 24 bad. He give Smiley a look, as much as to say his heart was broke, and it was his fault, for putting up a dog that hadn’t no hind legs for him to take holt of, which was his main dependence in a fight, and then he limped off a piece and laid down and died. It was a good pup, that Andrew Jackson, and would have made a name for hiself if he’d lived, for the stuff was in him, and he had genius—I know it, because he hadn’t had no opportunities to speak of, and it don’t stand to reason that a dog could make such a fight as he could under them circumstances, if he hadn’t no talent. It always makes me feel sorry when I think of that last fight of his’n, and the way it turned out.

Well, thish-yer Smiley had rat-tarriers, 25 and chicken cocks, 26 and tom-cats, and all them kind of things, till you couldn’t rest, and you couldn’t fetch nothing for him to bet on but he’d match you. He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he cal’klated 27 to edercate him; and so he never done nothing for three months but set in his back yard and learn 28 that frog to jump. And you bet you he

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12. Risk two-and-a-half means “risk, or bet, $2.50.”
13. Thish-yer is dialect for “this here.”
14. Consumption is another name for tuberculosis.
15. The fag-end is the last part.
16. Cavorting means “running and jumping around playfully.”
17. Fetch up at the stand means “arrive at the grandstand,” which was placed at the finish line.
18. Cipher it down means “calculate it.”
19. Bully-rag means “to intimidate” or “to abuse.”
20. Throwed up the sponge means “gave up the contest.”
21. Here, harnessed means “set up a fight with.”
22. A pet holt is a favorite hold.
23. Had him in the door means “had him at a disadvantage or in a tight place.”
24. Shucked out means “beaten” or “defeated.”
25. Rat-tarriers are dogs (terriers) once used for catching rats.
26. Chicken cocks are adult male chickens (roosters) that are trained to fight.
27. Cal’klated is dialect for calculated, meaning “planned.”
28. Here, learn means “teach.”

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Reading Strategy Analyzing Comic Devices What makes this situation humorous?
did learn him, too. He'd give him a little punch behind, and the next minute you'd see that frog whirling in the air like a doughnut—see him turn one summerset, or may be a couple, if he got a good start, and come down flat-footed and all right, like a cat. He got him up so in the matter of catching flies, and kept him in practice so constant, that he'd nail a fly every time as far as he could see him. Smiley said all a frog wanted was education, and he could do most any thing—and I believe him. Why, I've seen him set Dan'l Webster down here on this floor—Dan'l Webster was the name of the frog—and sing out, “Flies, Dan'l, flies!” and quicker'n you could wink, he'd spring straight up, and snake a fly off'n the counter there, and flop down on the floor again as solid as a gob of mud, and fall to scratching the side of his head with his hind foot as indifferent as if he hadn't no idea he'd been doin' any more'n any frog might do. You never see a frog so modest and straightfor'ard as he was, for all he was so gifted. And when it come to fair and square jumping on a dead level, he could get over more ground at one straddle than any animal of his breed you ever see. Jumping on a dead level was his strong suit, you understand; and when it come to that, Smiley would ante up money on him as long as he had a red. Smiley was monstrous proud of his frog, and well he might be, for fellers that had traveled and been everywheres, all said he laid over any frog that ever they see.

Well, Smiley kept the beast in a little lattice box, and he used to fetch him down town sometimes and lay for a bet. One day a feller—a stranger in the camp, he was—come across him with his box, and says:

“What might it be that you've got in the box?”

And Smiley says, sorter indifferent like, “It might be a parrot, or it might be a canary, may be, but it an’t—it's only just a frog.”

And the feller took it again, and looked at it careful, and turned it round this way and that, and says, “H’m—so 'tis. Well, what’s he good for?”

“Well,” Smiley says, easy and careless, “He's good enough for one thing, I should judge—he can outjump any frog in Calaveras county.”

The feller took the box again, and took another long, particular look, and give it back to

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29. Dan'l Webster refers to Daniel Webster (1782–1852), a famous orator who served as a U.S. senator and a U.S. secretary of state.

30. Here, straddle means “to jump.”

31. Ante up means “to put into the pool” or “to bet.”

32. A red refers to a red cent, meaning “any money at all.”
Smiley, and says, very deliberate, “Well, I don’t see no p’ints about that frog that’s any better’n any other frog.”

“May be you don’t,” Smiley says, “May be you understand frogs, and may be you don’t understand ’em; may be you’ve had experience, and may be you ain’t only a amateur, as it were. Anyways, I’ve got my opinion, and I’ll risk forty dollars that he can outjump any frog in Calaveras county.”

And the feller studied a minute, and then says, kinder sad like, “Well, I’m only a stranger here, and I ain’t got no frog; but if I had a frog, I’d bet you.”

And then Smiley says, “That’s all right—that’s all right—if you’ll hold my box a minute, I’ll go and get you a frog.” And so the feller took the box, and put up his forty dollars along with Smiley’s, and set down to wait.

So he set there a good while thinking and thinking to hisself, and then he got the frog out and prized his mouth open and took a teaspoon and filled him full of quail shot—filled him pretty near up to his chin—and set him on the floor. Smiley he went to the swamp and slopped around in the mud for a long time, and finally he ketchet a frog, and fetched him in, and give him to this feller, and says:

“Now, if you’re ready, set him alongside of Dan’l, with his fore-paws just even with Dan’l, and I’ll give the word.” Then he says, “One—two—three—jump!” and him and the feller touched up the frogs from behind, and the new frog hopped off, but Dan’l give a heave, and hysted up his shoulders—so—like a Frenchman, but it wan’t no use—he couldn’t budge; he was planted as solid as an anvil, and he couldn’t no more stir than if he was anchored out. Smiley was a good deal surprised, and he was disgusted too, but he didn’t have no idea what the matter was, of course.

The feller took the money and started away; and when he was going out at the door, he sorter jerked his thumb over his shoulders—this way— at Dan’l, and says again, very deliberate, “Well, I don’t see no p’ints about that frog that’s any better’n any other frog.”

Smiley he stood scratching his head and looking down at Dan’l a long time, and at last he says, “I do wonder what in the nation that frog throw’d off for—I wonder if there an’t something the matter with him—he ’pears to look mighty baggy, somehow.” And he ketchet Dan’l by the nap of the neck, and lifted him up and says, “Why, blame my cats, if he don’t weigh five pound!” and turned him upside down, and he belched out a double handful of shot. And then he see how it was, and he was the maddest man—he set the frog down and took out after that feller, but he never ketchet him. And—

[Here Simon Wheeler heard his name called from the front yard, and got up to see what was wanted.] And turning to me as he moved away, he said: “Just set where you are, stranger, and rest easy—I an’t going to be gone a second.”

But, by your leave, I did not think that a continuation of the history of the enterprising vagabond Jim Smiley would be likely to afford me much information concerning the Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, and so I started away.

At the door I met the sociable Wheeler returning, and he buttonholed me and recommenced:

“Well, thish-yr Smiley had a yaller one-eyed cow that didn’t have no tail, only jest a short stump like a bannanner, and—"

“Oh! hang Smiley and his afflicted cow!” I muttered, good-naturedly, and bidding the old gentleman good-day, I departed.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. What questions would you like to ask Simon Wheeler?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) How does the narrator come to meet Simon Wheeler and to hear his story? (b) What can you infer about the narrator’s attitude toward Wheeler?
3. (a) Why does Wheeler call Smiley “the curiosest man”? (b) What conclusions can you draw about Smiley’s character, based on the tale Wheeler tells?
4. (a) What does Smiley entice the stranger to do? (b) What event or events determine the outcome of the encounter with the stranger? Explain your answer.

Analyze and Evaluate
5. Why do you think Wheeler tells his listener about the mare and bull pup first, before focusing on the frog?
6. Who is the main character in this story? Explain.
7. (a) In this selection, one story serves as a frame for another story. Which story is the frame? (b) Why might Twain have chosen this structure?

Connect
8. Big Idea Regionalism How does Twain capture the flavor of the Old West in this story?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Dialect
Twain uses dialect to evoke the region and the people he is writing about, as in this example: "He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he cal’klated to edercate him. . . ."

1. What words in the example above does Wheeler pronounce differently from Standard English?
2. What is the difference between Wheeler’s language and the narrator’s? What does this difference suggest about them?

Writing About Literature
Analyze Setting Write a brief essay to analyze the setting of this story. In your essay, explore the following questions:
- Why might Twain have selected this setting?
- How would the story have been different if the narrator had met Wheeler in a city?

Support your position with details from the story.

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Analyzing Comic Devices
Mark Twain first achieved fame as a western humorist, and his humor is irresistible. He once wrote, “The humorous story may be spun out to great length and may wander around as much as it pleases, and arrive nowhere in particular.”

1. Does this story fit Twain’s description of a comic story?
2. What elements of humor in this story do you find most effective?

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Word Roots Match each of the root words listed below to a vocabulary word from the selection. Use a dictionary if you need help.
1. dilapidare, meaning “to pelt with stones” in Latin
2. garrire, meaning “to chatter” in Latin
3. conjectura, meaning “guess” in Latin
   a. garrulous   b. conjecture   c. dilapidated

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Now when I had mastered the language of this water and had come to know every trifling feature that bordered the great river as familiarly as I knew the letters of the alphabet, I had made a valuable acquisition. But I had lost something, too. I had lost something which could never be restored to me while I lived. All the grace, the beauty, the poetry had gone out of the majestic river! I still keep in mind a certain wonderful sunset which I witnessed when steamboating was new to me. A broad expanse of the river was turned to blood; in the middle distance the red hue brightened into gold, through which a solitary log came floating, black and conspicuous; in one place a long, slanting mark lay sparkling upon the water; in another the surface was broken by boiling, tumbling rings, that were as many-tinted as an opal; where the ruddy flush was faintest, was a smooth spot that was covered with graceful circles.
and radiating lines, ever so delicately traced; the shore on our left was densely wooded, and the som-
ber shadow that fell from this forest was broken in one place by a long, ruffled trail that shone like sil-
ver; and high above the forest wall a clean-stemmed dead tree waved a single leafy bough that glowed like a flame in the unobstructed splendor that was flowing from the sun. There were graceful curves, reflected images, woody heights, soft distances; and over the whole scene, far and near, the dissolving lights drifted steadily, enriching it, every passing moment, with new marvels of coloring.

I stood like one bewitched.¹ I drank it in, in a speechless rapture. The world was new to me, and I had never seen anything like this at home. But as I have said, a day came when I began to cease from noting the glories and the charms which the moon and the sun and the twilight wrought² upon the river’s face; another day came when I ceased altogether to note them. Then, if that sunset scene had been repeated, I should have looked upon it without rapture, and should have commented upon it, inwardly, after this fashion: This sun means that we are going to have wind tomorrow; that floating log means that the river is rising, small thanks to it; that slanting mark on the water refers to a bluff reef which is going to kill somebody’s steamboat one of these nights, if it keeps on stretching out like that; those tumbling “boils” show a dissolving bar and a changing channel there; the lines and circles in the slick water over yonder are a warning that that troublesome place is shoaling up³ dangerously; that silver streak in the shadow of the forest is the “break” from a new snag, and he has located himself in the very best place he could have found to fish for steamboats; that tall dead tree, with a single living branch, is not going to last long, and then how is a body ever going to get through this blind place at night without the friendly old landmark?

No, the romance and the beauty were all gone from the river. All the value any feature of it had for me now was the amount of usefulness it could furnish toward compassing the safe piloting of a steamboat. Since those days, I have pitied doctors from my heart. What does the lovely flush in a beauty’s cheek mean to a doctor but a “break” that ripples above some deadly disease? Are not all her visible charms sown thick with what are to him the signs and symbols of hidden decay? Does he ever see her beauty at all, or doesn’t he simply view her professionally, and comment upon her unwholesome condition all to himself? And doesn’t he sometimes wonder whether he has gained most or lost most by learning his trade? ²

¹ Bewitched means “captivated” or “entranced.”
² Wrought means “created.”
³ A shoal is a shallow place in the water. To shoal up means “to become shallow.”

Reading Strategy  Comparing and Contrasting

Language  How has Twain’s perspective of the tree changed?

Literary Element  Analogy  What do doctors and riverboat pilots have in common?
AFTER YOU READ

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. What are your impressions of Mark Twain’s personality?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What is “the language of this water” that Twain masters? (b) Why does he suggest that learning how to navigate the river is like mastering a foreign language?

3. (a) What does Twain mean by “the romance and the beauty” of the river? (b) Why does he lose the ability to see these special qualities forever?

4. (a) What terms does Twain use that would be familiar mainly to riverboat pilots or people living along the river? (b) Why does Twain include these terms in this memoir?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. Do you think that Twain gained more or lost more by learning the trade of a riverboat pilot?

6. What do you think was Twain’s main purpose for writing this memoir?

7. Does Twain make the job of riverboat pilot sound appealing?

Connect
8. **Big Idea** Regionalism Regionalist writers portrayed the distinctive traits of particular areas of the United States. From reading Twain’s memoir, what did you learn about the challenges of life on the Mississippi River?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

**Literary Element** Analogy

In this memoir, Twain draws an analogy between a riverboat pilot and a medical doctor. Twain’s audience knew much about doctors but knew little about riverboat pilots.

1. What does Twain achieve by concluding this section with an analogy?

2. Which of the following trades or professions might have been the best substitute for the profession of doctor in Twain’s analogy?
   - stagecoach driver
   - train engineer
   - factory worker
   - musician
   - farmer

3. Rewrite the end of the selection using the new analogy you chose.

**Review: Tone**

As you learned in Unit One, tone is the attitude that a writer expresses toward his or her subject matter. Tone is conveyed through elements such as word choice, punctuation, sentence structure, and figures of speech. A writer’s tone may convey a variety of attitudes, such as sympathy, objectivity, or humor.

**Partner Activity** Meet with a classmate and discuss the tone of Twain’s memoir. Fill in a chart like the one below with elements from the story that convey tone. Based on these elements, list the tone of the memoir at the top.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Choice</th>
<th>Sentence Structure</th>
<th>Figures of Speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tone:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

492 UNIT 4 REGIONALISM AND REALISM
**Reading Strategy** Comparing and Contrasting Language

In this section of *Life on the Mississippi*, Twain describes how his perspective of the river shifted from the poetic to the practical as he learned the trade of a riverboat pilot.

1. What words in the first paragraph capture “the romance and the beauty” of the river?
2. What words in the second paragraph convey a practical view of the river?

**Vocabulary** Practice

The word *conjecture* is made up of the Latin prefix *con-*, meaning “together,” and the root *-ject*, meaning “to throw.” When you conjecture, you do not have enough evidence to draw a logical conclusion, so you throw thoughts together; you guess.

**Practice** Use your knowledge of the root *-ject* and familiar prefixes to answer the following questions.

1. Does a person with *dejected* spirits feel hopeful, sad, or outraged?
2. What might a person giving a speech do to *inject* some humor?
3. Which of the following is used as a *projectile*—a cannonball, a life raft, or a rocking chair?

**Academic Vocabulary**

Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R86. These words will help you think, write, and talk about the selection.

*region* (rē′jən) a broad geographic area distinguished by similar features

*impact* (im′pakt) a significant or major effect

**Practice and Apply**

1. Which *regions* of the United States do Twain’s writings depict?
2. What *impact* did Twain’s training as a riverboat pilot have on his descriptions of the Mississippi

**Writing About Literature**

**Evaluate Contemporary Relevance** Mark Twain expresses two views of the Mississippi River—one poetic and one technical. Write an essay in which you use the same technique. Start by choosing an aspect of nature, such as a storm, as a writing topic. You might begin with your admiration for the storm, followed by the technical details about the storm’s effects that influence your perspective. Follow the steps shown below.

| Paragraph one | Introduce your topic. |
| Paragraph two | Tell what you admired or enjoyed about this topic. |
| Paragraph three | Describe some technical aspects of this topic. |
| Paragraph four | Tell what caused the difference between your two views. |
| Paragraph five | Draw conclusions about the tendency of people to be fooled by nature. |

After you complete your draft, meet with a peer reviewer to evaluate each other’s work and to suggest revisions. Then proofread and edit your draft for errors.

**Interdisciplinary Activity: Science**

**Investigating a Local River** With a group of classmates, create a report on an important river or other body of water in the region in which you live. Use a double entry journal to record your data.

**Questions**

1. What is the name of the river, and what is the origin of that name?
2. 
3. 

**Literature Online** Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
MEDIA LINK TO 19TH-CENTURY REGIONALISM AND LOCAL COLOR

PREVIEW THE ARTICLE

“Life Along the Mississippi” documents the Mississippi River region’s current struggle to prosper in a changing economy.

1. What have you already learned about life on the Mississippi from reading Twain’s work? What else would you like to know?

2. Read the section headings throughout the article. What clues do these provide about the article’s content?

SET A PURPOSE FOR READING

Read to learn about the communities along the Mississippi, depicted in literature by Mark Twain, and how this region has changed over time.

READING STRATEGY

Clarifying Meaning

When you clarify the meaning of a text, you work to unlock the meaning of each section or paragraph. Create a chart similar to the one below and answer the questions to help you clarify meaning as you read.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does this section mean?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does this relate to the main idea?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OBJECTIVES

- Clarify understanding of informational texts by creating graphic organizers.
- Explore life experiences related to subject area content.
- Use background knowledge and experience to connect to text.

By NANCY GIBBS

UNLESS YOU ARE DRIVING ACROSS IT OR FLYING OVER it or floating down it, it is hard to see the actual Mississippi. Anyone who had anything to do with the river discovered long ago that this huge continental drainpipe was too powerful to leave alone. So the great engineers designed the levees and locks and dams that reduced the number of ships that sank and towns that vanished. But their work also hid the river behind its walls and left the rest to the imagination.

Aside from Mark Twain’s Huckleberry Finn, the imagination may be the best guide for exploring the Mississippi River. Otherwise you need both a boat and a car, maybe a canoe and a bicycle too, for the skinny inlets and alleys along the way, and a lot of time and patience. We could at best splash in it a little, to see what it felt like and what we might learn—and unlearn—by stopping along the way. It was worth remembering Huck Finn’s lesson: The river is the sanctuary; the shore is where you get into trouble.

In a country where travelers lament that every town looks the same—Where’s Taco Bell? Where’s Home Depot?—it’s easy to assume that no region is really distinct anymore. We’re all online now, and even in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, a local observes, the kids don’t say “y’all” anymore. They say, “you guys,” just like on TV.

HEADING SOUTH

So we were surprised, everywhere we went. The more you explore the communities along the river, and the farther south you travel down into the Mississippi Delta, more than one thing becomes clear: This is still a land unto itself, defined by its colorful, bloody past. It is a land
apart from the region that cradles the early stretches of the river itself, the Midwestern states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa. While these states have reinvented themselves three times in a half century, moving from agriculture to industry to high technology, many communities in the Mississippi Delta have wrestled with the explosion of progress and prosperity.

The South is where the country’s two wars were fought: the Civil War and, a century later, the battle for civil rights. “Of course the war is not over,” says our 87-year-old guide in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Now there is a quieter conflict raging, not on the broad political stage but in the particulars of individual lives. Along the river, people hear about the new economy, but they don’t have a ticket to get there. Information superhighway? Progress here is a back road, winding, scenic, and personal, but slow by the standards of a country that hurries into the future.

Even progress on race comes in the most intimate gestures: Last December, as Elnora Littleton in Rosedale, Mississippi, tells it, she became the first African American woman in those parts ever to preach at a white man’s funeral. In this part of the country, she says, it is a milestone worth noting. “I made history,” she says.
A Terrible Beauty
In the South, the river is the color of café au lait (coffee with milk). Down toward the mouth of the Mississippi, the land was formed of sedimentary deposits from farther upriver, including the rich topsoil blown from the hills of Wyoming into the Missouri and acres of Kansas prairie swallowed by flooding and swept downstream. Mark Twain’s characters claimed that a man who drank the water could grow corn in his stomach. You know all this, and yet you are unprepared for the Delta, otherworldly and flat, the best place to grow cotton on this earth. It was once a hellish jungle, cleared by the backbreaking labor of enslaved persons and sharecroppers. It’s like a wet western Kansas—beautiful, flat, and fertile.

The difference, of course, is that when faced with the shrinking labor needs of modern farming, the good people of western Kansas simply moved away in search of better lives elsewhere. While this happened in the Delta as well, a large number of people chose to stay in one of the poorest regions in the U.S. The average family of four here has an income of $16,538, slightly more than half the national average. In Mississippi County, Arkansas, 35% of kids live in poverty, and 40% of adults don’t have a high school diploma.

If the new economy has not yet flowed downstream, there are lots of people who will tell you no one is even looking for it here. Whether or not a town stays afloat has a lot to do with whether the local factory is still open—the fate of the town rests in the hands of Continental Concrete, Sparta Printing, the Mississippi Lime Co., Tower Rock Quarry, Ralston Purina, and Pillsbury. When one of these leaves, and the farms start to fail, an entire town can shrivel and die. Laid-off workers lose their livelihood. Retired workers lose their health insurance.

Town and Out?
We were left asking the same question all these towns face as the ground shifts beneath their feet: What’s it going to be? Change? Or die? Is there maybe another choice? The towns individually try to reinvent themselves, and the region as a whole tries to reinvent itself. As you move farther south, many towns don’t have the roads or infrastructure to recruit some big new car plant or distribution center.

The idea of luring a nice little software company is years away. Suppose you have lost your brickyard, and the tugs no longer stop at your town, and the interstate has drawn the megastores, and even the schools and churches move away, and the young people leave, and Main Street is on life support. The Chamber of Commerce gets together and daydreams: What would it take to bring life back to
Informational Text

For many towns, the answer is to attract tourists. They say, if we can't find some big new employer to bring the new economy to town, how about reverting to the old economy—the very old one? In this polished and pasteurized vision, Main Street becomes a theme park of 19th–century life, with women wearing petticoats and shops selling candlesticks and lemon drops. Kimmswick, Missouri, was almost dead after the lumberyard and the brickyard closed—until 7-Up heiress Luci Anna Ross began buying up collapsing buildings and renting them out as gift shops and bed-and-breakfasts. Now there is the Kimmswick Korner gift shop and lots of places to buy apple butter or have your horse reshoed. The annual Apple Butter Festival gets 40,000 people. More than 100,000 come to Hannibal, Missouri, for Tom Sawyer Days on the Fourth of July weekend. Disney even sent a representative to Hannibal to learn how to re-create Tom Sawyer for its theme parks. Having developed everyplace else, Americans are homesteading the past.

Inventing History/Prettifying the Past

But because this re-creation of the past is for tourists, it's an airbrushed souvenir postcard. You see only the good side of a town's history—or a distorted version of that history. In Nauvoo, Illinois, the Mormons celebrate their 19th–century village life as they rebuild the town and its temple as a pilgrimage spot. Glossed over are the bloody religious battles that led to their being pillaged and expelled in the first place. The hotel owner in Kimmswick says the town’s latest scheme is reenactments of the Civil War battle there. Was there ever really a Battle of Kimmswick? He concedes that it was, in his words, “just a skirmish that involved three Confederate soldiers hiding in a cave.” Whatever.

This sort of thing is what social critics denounce as the strip-mining of history to market a version of the past that has a special appeal. This is not re-creating the past, they say, so much as distorting it. Back when life in these towns was real, it wasn’t always quaint—yet quaint is what sells now. Create a time that feels sweet and simple, and you don’t have to smell the horses or die of cholera.

Cairo’s “Main” Dilemma

If you want to visit the most unusual theme park in America, try the Main Street in Cairo, Illinois. It is a water slide of desolation, one abandoned building after another, with 90% of the storefronts dark and boarded over.

If Cairo is a ghost town, it was the fight for justice that killed it. “It used to be called Little Chicago,” says Deputy Mayor Judson Childs, walking a couple of visitors to the town center, where civil rights battles flared in the 1960s. African Americans boycotted stores that discriminated; whites retaliated with violence; federal authorities intervened. But most whites chose to shut down their stores and leave Cairo rather than integrate. Over time the streets of Cairo became empty. Now if you want gas, you have to get it before 8 at night. To shop or go to a movie means driving 30 or 40 miles into Kentucky or Missouri. A woman in her late 20s sadly remarks, “This town is trapped in the past.”

Maybe it’s natural to try to market Cairo. Just turn the 1872 customhouse into a museum, get a big grant to repave the center of town with cobblestones and fake streetcar lines, peddle the old glory days of the big river town, and hope no one asks how it died. There is lots of history here, all fascinating but not pretty. So some residents aren’t sure that the buses will ever come rolling in or the hotels ever reopen. “You ask the average person on the street what Cairo needs,” says Mayor James Wilson, “and they’ll say a McDonald’s and a Wal-Mart.”

Home of the Blues

The future of Clarksdale, Mississippi, is also tied to its past. This Delta town is trying to find its way by reengineering its cash crop, the blues.
There is the newly reopened Delta Blues Museum, which honors such hometown heroes as Charley Patton, Son House, Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, and John Lee Hooker. The history of the music is the story of the people who invented it and the suffering that created it. Without African American workers to clear the thickly wooded Delta plain and sharecroppers to pick the cotton, there would have been no plantation economy; without African Americans to sing the work songs and field chants and play diddley bows and mail-order guitars, there would be no Delta blues. Without the blues, there would be no rock 'n' roll to conquer the world and help sell all those burgers and jeans. The poorest, most oppressed people in America created its richest cultural legacy, and that, of course, yields all kinds of lessons for anyone willing to listen closely.

“Are you going to find anything good to write about?” people ask again and again. They are aware of how things must look to a bunch of outsiders. The natives know that much of what is great and sweet and honorable in these places never makes headlines. The Cairo deputy fire chief will tell you how many people appear in an instant when a windstorm sweeps through town and smashes a block of homes. Anyplace you have good friends is a place worth staying. Here and elsewhere, there are big groups of people—ministers and teachers and store owners and bureaucrats—who are prepared to give all their time and muscle to putting things right, making a place better. To the outsider, it would seem so much easier just to pick up and move on. Trying to stay, and to change, is an act of faith.

—Updated 2005, from TIME, July 10, 2000

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. How did this article make you feel about the situation that many of the small towns along the Mississippi face?

Recall and Interpret

2. (a) What is the “new economy” the author refers to? (b) Why are the communities along the Mississippi not yet a part of this?

3. (a) What kinds of businesses have found success in many of the small towns along the Mississippi River? (b) Why might the towns want to “prettify” their past?

Analyze and Evaluate

4. (a) Return to the graphic organizer you created to clarify meaning. What ideas does the author express in the subsection “Home of the Blues”? (b) Why does the author claim that the past is connected to the future of the Mississippi Delta?

5. (a) How would you describe Gibbs’s tone, or attitude toward her subject, in this article? Support your response with details from the text. (b) How might this tone contribute to an overall bias, or inclination toward a certain opinion?

Connect

6. Compare and contrast Mark Twain’s and Nancy Gibbs’s portrayals of the Mississippi Delta region. What are their similarities and differences?
Lucinda Matlock and Fiddler Jones

MEET EDGAR LEE MASTERS

Edgar Lee Masters’s Spoon River Anthology took early twentieth-century readers by surprise. Published in 1915, the anthology is a collection of free-verse first-person monologues spoken by the people of a small Midwestern town, who are now “sleeping on the hill.” Masters called the poems epitaphs.

The realism and irony expressed in Spoon River Anthology were at odds with the romantic and sentimental poetry popular at the time. Though some critics questioned this new type of poetry, the book sold thousands of copies, is still in print, and has even been adapted for the stage. After the anthology’s publication, Ezra Pound wrote of Masters, “At last! America has discovered a poet.”

“It is all very well, but for myself I know
I stirred certain vibrations in Spoon River
Which are my true epitaph,
more lasting than stone.”

—Edgar Lee Masters
“Percival Sharp”

From Small Town to Supreme Court  Born in Kansas, Masters grew up in the small Illinois towns of Petersburg and Lewistown. As a boy, he spent long periods of time at his grandfather’s farm, where he fished, rode horses, and read Charles Dickens and Ralph Waldo Emerson. After graduating high school, he worked as an apprentice for a local printer and attended Knox College for one year.

Although Masters wanted to study literature and be a writer, his father pushed him toward a career in law. Masters eventually took up both pursuits and established his first law office in Chicago in 1893. He married Helen M. Jenkins, the daughter of another Chicago lawyer, in 1898, and they had three children. Masters was a successful attorney and argued some cases before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Literary Success  Masters’s first book, A Book of Verses, was published in 1898, and he published a number of other poetry books, a collection of essays, and several plays over the next sixteen years. Through his writing, he became friends with Carl Sandburg and Harriet Monroe, the editor of Poetry magazine. Despite Masters’s ties to the Chicago community, he later separated from his family and moved to New York City. He married Elaine Coyne, a teacher, in 1926.

Spoon River Anthology was well received both critically and commercially. Masters was later awarded the Poetry Society of America Award, the Mark Twain silver medal, and the Shelley Memorial Award. By the end of his life, Masters had published more than fifty volumes, including poetry collections, plays, novels and biographies. Spoon River, however, remained his only literary success.

Edgar Lee Masters was born in 1868 and died in 1950.
LITERATURE PREVIEW

Connecting to the Poems
As you read “Lucinda Matlock” and “Fiddler Jones,” note what experiences matter to the speakers of the poems. Think about these questions:

- If you were to sum up your life so far, what experiences would you focus on?
- What meaning would you find in those experiences?

Building Background
When Edgar Lee Masters read the epigrams from the Greek Anthology—an ancient collection of about 3,700 short poems—he was struck by their brevity, wit, and irony. He decided to write a similar collection comprising free-verse epitaphs in the form of monologues. The result was Spoon River Anthology. Masters’s characters were inspired by people he knew; Lucinda Matlock, for example, is based on his grandmother, Lucinda Masters. Many of the monologues in Spoon River Anthology are related, so a complex history of numerous families unfolds.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea  Regionalism
As you read these two poems, consider what they reveal about the customs and lifestyle of the people of Masters’s fictional Midwestern town.

Literary Element  Dramatic Monologue
Each of these poems is a dramatic monologue, a form of dramatic poetry in which the speaker addresses a silent listener. The speaker in these poems is not Masters but a character he created. As you read the poems, think about the philosophy of life each character expresses.


READING PREVIEW

Reading Strategy  Drawing Conclusions About Characters
When you draw a conclusion, you use various pieces of information to make a general statement about people, places, events, and ideas. As you read the poems, look for specific details about each speaker. These details can be the basis for a general statement about each speaker. You can use a chart like the one below to keep track of these details.

Vocabulary
repose  (ri pōz’) n. relaxation; tranquility; eternal rest; p. 501  The elderly woman was not afraid of death; instead, she welcomed the idea of her repose.

degenerate  (di jen’ ar it) adj. having declined in condition or character; deteriorated; p. 501  Despite spending time in jail, the thief continued to live a degenerate lifestyle.

ruinous  (rū’ on as) adj. causing ruin; destructive; p. 502  The extreme weather in Alaska can have a ruinous effect on highways there.

Vocabulary Tip: Antonyms  Words that have opposite or nearly opposite meanings are called antonyms. For instance, ruinous and beneficial are antonyms. Note that antonyms are always the same part of speech.

Interactive Literary Elements Handbook  To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.

OBJECTIVES
In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:

- analyzing characteristics of regionalism
- drawing conclusions about characters
- analyzing a dramatic monologue
EDGAR LEE MASTERS 501

Mary Evans Picture Library

I went to the dances at Chandlerville,
And played snap-out\(^1\) at Winchester.
One time we changed partners,
Driving home in the moonlight of middle June,
And then I found Davis.
We were married and lived together for
seventy years,
Enjoying, working, raising the twelve
children,
Eight of whom we lost.
Ere I had reached the age of sixty.  
I spun, I wove, I kept the house, I nursed
the sick,
I made the garden, and for holiday
Rambled over the fields where sang the larks,
And by Spoon River gathering many a shell,
And many a flower and medicinal weed—
Shouting to the wooded hills, singing to the
green valleys.
At ninety-six I had lived enough, that is all,
And passed to a sweet repose.
What is this I hear of sorrow and weariness,
Anger, discontent and drooping hopes?
Degenerate sons and daughters,
Life is too strong for you—
It takes life to love Life.

---

1. **Snap-out** (also known as crack-the-whip) is a game in which players link hands in a line and then run or skate so as to shake off those at the end of the line.

---

**Vocabulary**

- **repose** (ri pöz’) n. relaxation; tranquility; eternal rest
- **degenerate** (di jen’ ar it) adj. having declined in condition or character; deteriorated
The earth keeps some vibration going
There in your heart, and that is you.
And if the people find you can fiddle,
Why, fiddle you must, for all your life.

5 What do you see, a harvest of clover?
Or a meadow to walk through to the river?
The wind’s in the corn; you rub your hands
For beeves hereafter ready for market;
Or else you hear the rustle of skirts

10 Like the girls when dancing at Little Grove.
To Cooney Potter a pillar of dust
Or whirling leaves meant ruinous drouth;
They looked to me like Red-Head Sammy
Stepping it off, to “Toor-a-Loor.”

15 How could I till my forty acres
Not to speak of getting more,
With a medley of horns, bassoons and piccolos
Stirred in my brain by crows and robins
And the creak of a wind-mill—only these?

20 And I never started to plow in my life
That some one did not stop in the road
And take me away to a dance or picnic.
I ended up with forty acres;
I ended up with a broken fiddle—

25 And a broken laugh, and a thousand memories,
And not a single regret.

---

1. Beeves is the plural form of beef; here, it refers to beef cattle.
2. A drouth (also drought) is a long period of dry weather.
3. Toor-a-Loor refers to a phrase in an Irish folk song.

**Reading Strategy**

**Drawing Conclusions About Characters**

What do these details suggest about the speaker’s character?

**Vocabulary**

ruinous (rū’i nas) adj. causing ruin; destructive

---

*Pop and the Boys*, 1963. Thomas Hart Benton. Oil on canvas, 67.7 x 47.7 cm. Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Spain.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. Have you ever known anyone whose outlook on life resembles that of Lucinda Matlock or Fiddler Jones? Explain.

Recall and Interpret

2. (a) Describe how Lucinda Matlock spent her life. (b) What were her joys and her sorrows?

3. (a) Describe Lucinda’s tone, or attitude toward her subject and audience, in lines 1–17. (b) How does her tone change in lines 18–22? What might you infer about her character from this change?

4. In lines 5–14 of “Fiddler Jones,” Fiddler describes different ways of perceiving the same things. (a) Summarize these descriptions. (b) What point do you think he is trying to make?

5. (a) What reasons does Fiddler give for having neglected his farm? (b) How does he seem to feel about his work habits?

Analyze and Evaluate

6. (a) If you were to interview Lucinda Matlock, what questions might you ask her about facing life’s ups and downs? (b) From your reading of the poem, what do you think her answers would be?

7. (a) What is Fiddler’s philosophy of life? (b) What do you think of Fiddler’s philosophy? Explain.

Connect

8. Big Idea Regionalism Both Lucinda Matlock and Fiddler Jones are from the same small Midwestern farming community. In your opinion, how might their philosophies be different if they had spent their lives in a busy city instead?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Dramatic Monologue

“Lucinda Matlock” and “Fiddler Jones” appear among a group of related dramatic monologues in Spoon River Anthology. The speakers all have something to say about their lives, and they want their audience—the living—to heed the lessons they have learned.

1. What general statement sums up the philosophy of life these two monologues share?

2. Paraphrase one of the dramatic monologues you have just read. Do you think this work would be as effective in prose as it is in poetry? Explain your response.

Writing About Literature

Compare and Contrast Characters Write a brief essay in which you compare and contrast Lucinda Matlock and Fiddler Jones. How did they spend their lives, and what was important to them? Do you think they would agree about what constitutes a good life? Use evidence from the poems to support your points.

Literature Online Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Drawing Conclusions About Characters

As you answer the following questions, review the details about the speakers in “Lucinda Matlock” and “Fiddler Jones” that you noted in your charts.

1. Why does Lucinda Matlock disapprove of the younger generation?

2. What do you think was Fiddler Jones’s greatest joy?

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Antonyms Find the antonym for each vocabulary word listed in the first column.

1. repose a. shift
2. degenerate a. improved
3. ruinous a. redeeming
   b. agitation
   b. fabricated
   b. advantage

CONTENTS
The Outcasts of Poker Flat

MEET BRET HARSE

If U.S. newspapers of the early 1870s had featured bestseller lists, one name would have appeared regularly at the top: Bret Harte. Not only was he one of the most widely read writers in the United States at the time, but he was also the best paid. The $10,000 the Atlantic Monthly awarded him in 1871 for 12 stories per year was the highest figure ever paid to an American writer at that time. Harte wrote colorful, romantic stories about the American West. In many of his stories, he conjured the flavor and characters of the California Gold Rush long after it had ended.

Born in Albany, New York, Harte ventured west when he was eighteen years old. He worked as a drugstore clerk and a Wells Fargo guard, and, according to some accounts, he may have also tried teaching school and prospecting before he found lasting work in journalism. However, when he wrote an editorial condemning the massacre of sixty Native Americans by local white men, he so outraged readers that he had to quit his job as editor of the Northern Californian and leave town.

“The secret of the American short story was the treatment of characteristic American life, with absolute knowledge of its peculiarities.”
—Bret Harte
“The Rise of the Short Story”

Literary Success While serving as editor of the Overland Monthly, a literary magazine, Harte wrote the story that made him famous, “The Luck of Roaring Camp.” He followed that success with “The Outcasts of Poker Flat.” Readers in the United States and England were eager for descriptions of California and the Wild West, and Harte gave them the stories they wanted. However, when the prestigious Boston literary magazine the Atlantic Monthly offered Harte a contract, the writer accepted the offer and left California for the East. He never returned west.

Personal and family problems prevented Harte from maintaining his early literary success. He served as a diplomat in Prussia and Scotland before returning to writing as his sole profession. In England, Harte found an enthusiastic audience for his work long after readers in the United States had grown tired of his literary formula. However, his health failed rapidly, and he died in 1902 of throat cancer.

Harte and the Wild West Harte was one of the principal shapers of the fictional Wild West that has had a wide influence in U.S. popular culture. In the 20th century, the makers of film and television “Westerns” found in Harte’s stories the prototypes for many of their familiar stock characters. Such stereotypes as the grizzled prospector, the dance-hall girl with a heart of gold, and the smooth gambler all originated in Harte’s fiction. Because these characters have become a fundamental part of U.S. popular culture, Harte’s portrait of the West has endured.

Bret Harte was born in 1836 and died in 1902.
LITERATURE PREVIEW

Connecting to the Story
To be outcast is to be driven out or rejected. In this story, the outcast characters are forced out of town with the threat of death should they return. As you read, think about the following questions:

- Why might a person be outcast from society?
- Can a person be an outcast without physically going somewhere else? Explain.

Building Background
Bret Harte’s "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" is set in frontier California during the Gold Rush. The transformation of the West during the Gold Rush was rapid and spectacular. By the end of 1849, over 80,000 gold-seekers had come to California. Mining towns sprang up almost overnight. Drawn from all walks of life, the "Forty-Niners" created a rough, lawless, and sometimes violent world. Justice was spotty at best in these communities; the inhabitants themselves might take on the roles of judge, jury, and occasionally, executioner. Harte saw for himself the many types of people who were drawn to these communities. In his writing, he tried to look at these people with unblinking realism and to capture their peculiarities of speech and behavior.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea  Regionalism
As you read "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," notice how Harte introduces regional details into the setting.

Literary Element  Characterization
The methods a writer uses to reveal the personality of a character are called characterization. The writer may describe a character directly, or reveal a character’s personality through his or her words, thoughts, and actions, and through the actions and reactions of other characters. As you read, look for direct statements about each character as well as action and dialogue that broaden your understanding of the characters’ personalities.


Interactive Literary Elements Handbook  To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.

OBJECTIVES
In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:

- making generalizations about story elements
- analyzing methods of characterization

READING PREVIEW

Reading Strategy  Making Generalizations
A generalization is a broad statement based on a few facts, descriptions, or examples. Readers can use the details in a literary work to make generalizations about story elements such as plot, character, setting, or theme.

Reading Tip: Taking Notes  As you read, use a chart like the one below to record details that you might use to make generalizations about the characters and setting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details of Setting or Character</th>
<th>Generalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uncle Billy: sluice-robber, confirmed drunkard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulary

impropriety (im’ prə prī’ ə tē) n. the quality of being improper; inappropriate behavior; p. 507 Newspapers accused the mayor of impropriety when he hired his relatives for city jobs.

malevolence (mə lv’ə lans) n. a disposition to wish harm to others; ill will; p. 508 The bully’s malevolence caused the other children to fear him.

equanimité (ek’ wə nət’ a tək’ ət’ –) n. evenness of temper; calmness; p. 508 The teacher became known for her equanimité during disruptions.

hypothesis (hī poth’ə sis) n. an unproved explanation or assumption; p. 511 Sharon’s hypothesis was that a tree branch was causing the strange tapping sounds.

seclusion (si kloo’ zhan) n. separation from others; isolation; p. 511 Seeking seclusion, the famous movie star shunned fans and reporters.

Vocabulary Tip: Denotation and Connotation
A word’s denotation is its literal, or dictionary, meaning. A word’s connotation, however, is the feeling or association the word suggests.
The Outcasts of Poker Flat

Bret Harte
As Mr. John Oakhurst, gambler, stepped into the main street of Poker Flat on the morning of the 23d of November, 1850, he was conscious of a change in its moral atmosphere since the preceding night. Two or three men, conversing earnestly together, ceased as he approached, and exchanged significant glances. There was a Sabbath lull in the air, which, in a settlement unused to Sabbath influences, looked ominous.

Mr. Oakhurst’s calm, handsome face betrayed small concern in these indications. Whether he was conscious of any predisposing cause was another question. “I reckon they’re after somebody,” he reflected; “likely it’s me.” He returned to his pocket the handkerchief with which he had been whipping away the red dust of Poker Flat from his neat boots, and quietly discharged his mind of any further conjecture.

In point of fact, Poker Flat was “after somebody.” It had lately suffered the loss of several thousand dollars, two valuable horses, and a prominent citizen. It was experiencing a spasm of virtuous reaction, quite as lawless and ungovernable as any of the acts that had provoked it. A secret committee had determined to rid the town of all improper persons. This was done permanently in regard of two men who were then hanging from the boughs of a sycamore in the gulch, and temporarily in the banishment of certain other objectionable characters. I regret to say that some of these were ladies. It is but due to the sex, however, to state that their impropriety was professional, and it was only in such easily established standards of evil that Poker Flat ventured to sit in judgment.

Mr. Oakhurst was right in supposing that he was included in this category. A few of the committee had urged hanging him as a possible example and a sure method of reimbursing themselves from his pockets of the sums he had won from them. “It’s agin justice,” said Jim Wheeler, “to let this yer young man from Roaring Camp—an entire stranger—carry away our money.” But a crude sentiment of equity residing in the breasts of those who had been fortunate enough to win from Mr. Oakhurst overruled this narrower local prejudice.

Mr. Oakhurst received his sentence with philosophic calmness, none the less coolly that he was aware of the hesitation of his judges. He was too much of a gambler not to accept fate. With him life was at best an uncertain game, and he recognized the usual percentage in favor of the dealer.

A body of armed men accompanied the deported wickedness of Poker Flat to the outskirts of the settlement. Besides Mr. Oakhurst, who was known to be a coolly desperate man, and for whose intimidation the armed escort was intended, the expatriated party consisted of a young woman familiarly known as “The Duchess,” another who had won the title of “Mother Shipton,” and “Uncle Billy,” a suspected sluice-robber and confirmed drunkard. The cavalcade provoked no comments from the spectators, nor was any word uttered by the escort. Only when the gulch which marked the uttermost limit of Poker Flat was reached, the leader spoke briefly and to the point. The exiles were forbidden to return at the peril of their lives.

As the escort disappeared, their pent-up feelings found vent in a few hysterical tears from the Duchess, some bad language from Mother Shipton, and a Parthian volley of expletives from Uncle Billy. The philosophic Oakhurst alone remained silent. He listened calmly to Mother Shipton’s desire to cut somebody’s heart out, to the repeated statements of the

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1. A gulch is a small, narrow valley, especially one eroded by running water.

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Reading Strategy Making Generalizations Is Poker Flat ordinarily a very religious town? How can you tell?

Vocabulary

impropriety (im´pro pr´ët´a tê) n. the quality of being improper; inappropriate behavior

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Literary Element Characterization Based on this description, how would you describe Oakhurst’s view of life?

2. Agin is dialect for against.

3. Expatriated means “banished” or “exiled.”

4. The original Mother Shipton (1488–1560) was an English woman accused of witchcraft.

5. A sluice-robber is someone who steals gold from sluices, long water troughs used by miners to separate gold ore from other materials.

6. A cavalcade (kav´ al käd´) is a procession, especially of people on horseback.

7. Here, Parthian means “delivered when parting or retreating.” The cavalry of the ancient country of Parthia (now part of Iran) was known for shooting arrows while retreating or pretending to retreat.
Duchess that she would die in the road, and to the alarming oaths that seemed to be bumped out of Uncle Billy as he rode forward. With the easy good humor characteristic of his class, he insisted upon exchanging his own riding-horse, "Five-Spot," for the sorry mule which the Duchess rode. But even this act did not draw the party into any closer sympathy. The young woman readjusted her somewhat draggled plumes with a feeble, faded coquetry; Mother Shipton eyed the possessor of "Five-Spot" with malevolence, and Uncle Billy included the whole party in one sweeping anathema.9

The road to Sandy Bar—a camp that, not having as yet experienced the regenerating influences of Poker Flat, consequently seemed to offer some invitation to the emigrants—lay over a steep mountain range. It was distant a day's severe travel. In that advanced season the party soon passed out of the moist, temperate regions of the foothills into the dry, cold bracing air of the Sierras. The trail was narrow and difficult. At noon the Duchess, rolling out of her saddle upon the ground, declared her intention of going no farther. The spot was singularly wild and impressive. A wooded amphitheatre, surrounded on three sides by precipitous cliffs of naked granite, sloped gently toward the crest of another precipice that overlooked the valley. It was, undoubtedly, the most suitable spot for a camp, had camping been advisable. But Mr. Oakhurst knew that scarcely half the journey to Sandy Bar was accomplished, and the party were not equipped or provisioned for delay. This fact he pointed out to his companions curtly, with a philosophic commentary on the folly of "throwing up their hand before the game was played out." But they were furnished with liquor, which in this emergency stood them in place of food, fuel, rest, and prescience.10 In spite of his remonstrances, it was not long before they were more or less under its influence. Uncle Billy passed rapidly from a bellicose state into one of stupor, the Duchess became maudlin,12 and Mother Shipton snored. Mr. Oakhurst alone remained erect, leaning against a rock, calmly surveying them.

Mr. Oakhurst did not drink. It interfered with a profession which required coolness, impassiveness, and presence of mind, and, in his own language, he "couldn't afford it." As he gazed at his recumbent fellow exiles, the loneliness begotten of his pariah trade,14 his habits of life, his very vices, for the first time seriously oppressed him. He bestirred himself in dusting his black clothes, washing his hands and face, and other acts characteristic of his studiously neat habits, and for a moment forgot his annoyance. The thought of deserting his weaker and more pitiable companions never perhaps occurred to him. Yet he could not help feeling the want of that excitement which, singularly enough, was most conducive to that calm equanimity for which he was notorious. He looked at the gloomy walls that rose a thousand feet sheer above the circling pines around him, at the sky ominously clouded, at the valley below, already deepening into shadow; and, doing so, suddenly he heard his own name called.

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8. *Coquetry* (kö’ kə trē) means "flirtation."
9. *An anathema* (a nath’ə ma) is a strong denunciation or a curse.
10. *Prescience* (pré’shē ans) is foresight.
11. *Bellicose* (bel’ə kōs) means "showing an eagerness to fight" or "quarrelsome."
12. *Maudlin* (mó’d lin) means "excessively sentimental."
13. *Recumbent* (ri kum’ bant) means "lying down" or "resting."
14. *A pariah* (pə rī’ a) is an outcast, someone who is despised by others. A *pariah trade* is an occupation that is socially unacceptable.

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**Vocabulary**

*Malevolence* (ma lev’ə lans) n. a disposition to wish harm to others; ill will

*Equanimity* (ek’ wə nim’ ə tē) n. evenness of temper; calmness
A horseman slowly ascended the trail. In the fresh, open face of the newcomer Mr. Oakhurst recognized Tom Simson, otherwise known as “The Innocent,” of Sandy Bar. He had met him some months before over a “little game,” and had, with perfect equanimity, won the entire fortune—amounting to some forty dollars—of that guileless youth. After the game was finished, Mr. Oakhurst drew the youthful speculator behind the door and thus addressed him: “Tommy, you’re a good little man, but you can’t gamble worth a cent. Don’t try it over again.” He then handed him his money back, pushed him gently from the room, and so made a devoted slave of Tom Simson.

There was a remembrance of this in his boyish and enthusiastic greeting of Mr. Oakhurst. He had started, he said, to go to Poker Flat to seek his fortune. “Alone?” No, not exactly alone; in fact (a giggle), he had run away with Piney Woods. Didn’t Mr. Oakhurst remember Piney? She that used to wait on the table at the Temperance House? They had been engaged a long time, but old Jake Woods had objected, and so they had run away, and were going to Poker Flat to be married, and here they were. And they were tired out, and how lucky it was they had found a place to camp, and company. All this the Innocent delivered rapidly, while Piney, a stout, comely damsel of fifteen, emerged from behind the pine-tree, where she had been blushing unseen, and rode to the side of her lover.

Mr. Oakhurst seldom troubled himself with sentiment, still less with propriety; but he had a vague idea that the situation was not fortunate. He retained, however, his presence of mind sufficiently to kick Uncle Billy, who was about to say something, and Uncle Billy was sober enough to recognize in Mr. Oakhurst’s kick a superior power that would not bear trifling. He then endeavored to dissuade Tom Simson from delaying further, but in vain. He even pointed out the fact that there was no provision, nor means of making a camp. But, unluckily, the Innocent met this objection by assuring the party that he was provided with an extra mule loaded with provisions, and by the discovery of a rude attempt at a log house near the trail. “Piney can stay with Mrs. Oakhurst,” said the Innocent, pointing to the Duchess, “and I can shift for myself.”

Nothing but Mr. Oakhurst’s admonishing foot saved Uncle Billy from bursting into a roar of laughter. As it was, he felt compelled

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**Characterization**

What does this sentence reveal about Oakhurst’s character? What does it reveal about Tom’s character?

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15. Here, *trifling* means “joking” or “mocking.”
to retire up the cañon until he could recover his gravity. There he confided the joke to the tall pine-trees, with many slaps of his leg, contortions of his face, and the usual profanity. But when he returned to the party, he found them seated by a fire—for the air had grown strangely chill and the sky overcast—in apparently amicable conversation. Piney was actually talking in an impulsive girlish fashion to the Duchess, who was listening with an interest and animation she had not shown for many days. The Innocent was holding forth, apparently with equal effect, to Mr. Oakhurst and Mother Shipton, who was actually relaxing into amiability. "Is this yer a d—d picnic?" said Uncle Billy, with inward scorn, as he surveyed the sylvan group, the glancing firelight, and the tethered animals in the foreground. Suddenly an idea mingled with the alcoholic fumes that disturbed his brain. It was apparently of a jocular nature, for he felt impelled to slap his leg again and cram his fist into his mouth.

As the shadows crept slowly up the mountain, a slight breeze rocked the tops of the pine-trees and moaned through their long and gloomy aisles. The ruined cabin, patched and covered with pine boughs, was set apart for the ladies. As the lovers parted, they unaffectionately exchanged a kiss, so honest and sincere that it might have been heard above the swaying pines. The frail Duchess and the malevolent Mother Shipton were probably too stunned to remark upon this last evidence of simplicity, and so turned without a word to the hut. The fire was replenished, the men lay down before the door, and in a few minutes were asleep.

Mr. Oakhurst was a light sleeper. Toward morning he awoke benumbed and cold. As he stirred the dying fire, the wind, which was now blowing strongly, brought to his cheek that which caused the blood to leave it,—snow!

He started to his feet with the intention of awakening the sleepers, for there was no time to lose. But turning to where Uncle Billy had been lying, he found him gone. A suspicion leaped to his brain, and a curse to his lips. He ran to the spot where the mules had been tethered—they were no longer there. The tracks were already rapidly disappearing in the snow.

The momentary excitement brought Mr. Oakhurst back to the fire with his usual calm. He did not waken the sleepers. The Innocent slumbered peacefully, with a smile on his good-humored, freckled face; the virgin Piney slept beside her frailer sisters as sweetly as though attended by celestial guardians; and Mr. Oakhurst, drawing his blanket over his shoulders, stroked his mustaches and waited for the dawn. It came slowly in a whirling mist of snowflakes that dazzled and confused the eye. What could be seen of the landscape appeared magically changed. He looked over the valley, and summed up the present and future in two words, "Snowed in!"

A careful inventory of the provisions, which, fortunately for the party, had been stored within the hut, and so escaped the felonious fingers of Uncle Billy, disclosed the fact that with care and prudence they might last ten days longer. "That is," said Mr. Oakhurst sotto voce to the Innocent, "if you’re willing to board us. If you ain’t—and perhaps you’d better not—you can wait till Uncle Billy gets back with provisions."

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16. *Cañon* (kä nyön”) is Spanish for canyon.
17. *Sylvan* means "situated in the woods."
18. *Jocular* means “humorous.”
19. *Felonious* means “evil” or “villainous.”
20. *Sotto voce* (sot’ ö’ vò’ che) means “in a low tone of voice.” The Italian words literally mean “under the voice.”

**Big Idea** Regionalism In Uncle Billy’s behavior, what might Harte be suggesting about the regional characteristics of the West?
For some occult reason, Mr. Oakhurst could not bring himself to disclose Uncle Billy's rascality, and so offered the hypothesis that he had wandered from the camp and had accidentally stampeded the animals. He dropped a warning to the Duchess and Mother Shipton, who of course knew the facts of their associate's defection. “They'll find out the truth about us all when they find out anything,” he added significantly, “and there's no good frightening them now.”

Tom Simson not only put all his worldly store at the disposal of Mr. Oakhurst, but seemed to enjoy the prospect of their enforced seclusion. “We'll have a good camp for a week, and then the snow'll melt, and we'll all go back together.” The cheerful gayety of the young man and Mr. Oakhurst's calm infected the others. The Innocent, with the aid of pine boughs, extemporized a thatch for the roofless cabin, and the Duchess directed Piney in the rearrangement of the interior with a taste and tact that opened the blue eyes of that provincial maiden to their fullest extent. “I reckon now you're used to fine things at Poker Flat,” said Piney. The Duchess turned away sharply to conceal something that reddened her cheeks through their professional tint, and Mother Shipton requested Piney not to “chatter.” But when Mr. Oakhurst returned from a weary search for the trail, he heard the sound of happy laughter echoed from the rocks. He

21. Occult means “mysterious.”

Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hypothesis</td>
<td>an unproved explanation or assumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seclusion</td>
<td>separation from others; isolation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. Extemporized means “made without preparation” or “improvised.”

Literary Element

Characterization

On what evidence does Piney likely base this statement? What does it reveal about her character?
stopped in some alarm, and his thoughts first naturally reverted to the whiskey, which he had prudently cachéd. “And yet it don’t somehow sound like whiskey,” said the gambler. It was not until he caught sight of the blazing fire through the still blinding storm, and the group around it, that he settled to the conviction that it was “square fun.”

Whether Mr. Oakhurst had cachéd his cards with the whiskey as something debarred the free access of the community, I cannot say. It was certain that, in Mother Shipton’s words, he “didn’t say ‘cards’ once” during that evening.

Haply the time was beguiled by an accordion, produced somewhat ostentatiously by Tom Simson from his pack. Notwithstanding some difficulties attending the manipulation of this instrument, Piney Woods managed to pluck several reluctant melodies from its keys, to an accompaniment by the Innocent on a pair of bone castanets. But the crowning festivity of the evening was reached in a rude camp-meeting hymn, which the lovers, joining hands, sang with great earnestness and vociferation. I fear that a certain defiant tone and Covenanter’s swing to its chorus, rather than any devotional quality, caused it speedily to infect the others, who at last joined in the refrain:

“I’m proud to live in the service of the Lord,
And I’m bound to die in His army.”

The pines rocked, the storm eddied and whirled above the miserable group, and the flames of their altar leaped heavenward, as if in token of the vow.

At midnight the storm abated, the rolling clouds parted, and the stars glittered keenly above the sleeping camp. Mr. Oakhurst, whose professional habits had enabled him to live on the smallest possible amount of sleep, in dividing the watch with Tom Simson somehow managed to take upon himself the greater part of that duty. He excused himself to the Innocent by saying that he had “often been a week without sleep.” “Doing what?” asked Tom. “Poker!” replied Oakhurst sententiously. “When a man gets a streak of luck, he don’t get tired. The luck gives in first. Luck,” continued the gambler reflectively, “is a mighty queer thing. All you know about it for certain is that it’s bound to change. And it’s finding out when it’s going to change that makes you. We’ve had a streak of bad luck since we left Poker Flat,—you came along, and slap you get into it, too. If you can hold your cards right along you’re all right. For,” added the gambler, with cheerful irrelevance—

“I’m proud to live in the service of the Lord,
And I’m bound to die in His army.”

The third day came, and the sun, looking through the white-curtained valley, saw the outcasts divide their slowly decreasing store of provisions for the morning meal. It was one of the peculiarities of that mountain climate that its rays diffused a kindly warmth over the wintry landscape, as if in regretful commiseration of the past. But it revealed drift on drift of snow piled high around the hut,—a hopeless, uncharted, trackless sea of white lying below the rocky shores to which the castaways still clung. Through the marvelously clear air the smoke of the pastoral village of Poker Flat rose miles away. Mother Shipton saw it, and from a remote pinnacle of her rocky fastness hurled in that direction a final malediction.

“Sententiously (sen ten’ shəs l¯e) means “in a concise, energetic manner.”

“Pastoral means “of, or relating to, rural life.”

“A malediction (mal´ a dik’ shan) is a curse.

“Vituperative (vi t¯oo pə r¯a´ tiv) means “characterized by abusive language and harsh criticism.”

Big Idea Regionalism Does this paragraph describe a region that is truly “kindly” toward the outcasts? Explain.
of sublimity. It did her good, she privately informed the Duchess. “Just you go out there and cuss, and see.” She then set herself to the task of amusing “the child,” as she and the Duchess were pleased to call Piney. Piney was no chicken, but it was a soothing and original theory of the pair thus to account for the fact that she didn’t swear and wasn’t improper.

When night crept up again through the gorges, the reedy notes of the accordion rose and fell in fitful spasms and long-drawn gasps by the flickering campfire. But music failed to fill entirely the aching void left by insufficient food, and a new diversion was proposed by Piney,—story-telling. Neither Mr. Oakhurst nor his female companions caring to relate their personal experiences, this plan would have failed too, but for the Innocent. Some months before he had chanced upon a stray copy of Mr. Pope’s ingenious translation of the *Iliad*. He now proposed to narrate the principal incidents of that poem—having thoroughly mastered the argument and fairly forgotten the words—in the current vernacular of Sandy Bar. And so for the rest of that night the Homeric demi-gods again walked the earth. Trojan bully and wily Greek wrestled in the winds, and the great pines in the cañon seemed to bow to the wrath of the son of Peleus. Mr. Oakhurst listened with quiet satisfaction. Most especially was he interested in the fate of “Ashheels,” as the Innocent persisted in denominating the “swift-footed Achilles.”

So, with small food and much of Homer and the accordion, a week passed over the heads of the outcasts. The sun again forsook them, and again from leaden skies the snow-flakes were sifted over the land. Day by day closer around them drew the snowy circle, until at last they looked from their prison over drifted walls of dazzling white, that towered twenty feet above their heads. It became more and more difficult to replenish their fires, even from the fallen trees beside them, now half hidden in the drifts. And yet no one complained. The lovers turned from the dreary prospect and looked into each other’s eyes, and were happy. Mr. Oakhurst settled himself coolly to the losing game before him. The Duchess, more cheerful than she had been, assumed the care of Piney. Only Mother Shipton—one of the strongest of the party—seemed to sicken and fade. At midnight on the tenth day she called Oakhurst to her side. “I’m going,” she said, in a voice of querulous weakness, “but don’t say anything about it. Don’t waken the kids. Take the bundle from under my head, and open it.” Mr. Oakhurst did so. It contained Mother Shipton’s rations for the last week, untouched. “Give ’em to the child,” she said, pointing to the sleeping Piney. “You’ve starved yourself,” said the gambler. “That’s what they call it,” said the woman querulously, as she lay down again, and turning her face to the wall, passed quietly away.

The accordion and the bones were put aside that day, and Homer was forgotten. When the body of Mother Shipton had been committed to the snow, Mr. Oakhurst took the Innocent aside, and showed him a pair of snowshoes, which he had fashioned from the old packsaddle. “There’s one chance in a hundred to save her yet,” he said, pointing to Piney; “but it’s there,” he added, pointing toward Poker Flat. “If you can reach there in two days she’s safe.” “And you?” asked Tom Simson. “I’ll stay here,” was the curt reply.

The lovers parted with a long embrace. “You are not going, too?” said the Duchess, as she saw Mr. Oakhurst apparently waiting to accompany him. “As far as the cañon,” he replied. He turned suddenly and kissed the Duchess, leaving her pallid face aflame, and her trembling limbs rigid with amazement.

Night came, but not Mr. Oakhurst. It brought the storm again and the whirling snow. Then the Duchess, feeding the fire,

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31. Mr. Pope’s refers to the English poet Alexander Pope (1688–1744).
32. Homer’s Greek epic poem the *Iliad* (*i*l̩e*ad*) describes the war between the Trojans, natives of ancient Troy, and the Greeks.
33. The son of Peleus (*pêl’ yûs’*) is Achilles, Greek warrior and a hero in the *Iliad*.
34. Querulous means “whining” or “complaining.”
35. Pallid means “pale.”

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**Reading Strategy**  
**Making Generalizations** *Earlier in the story, several characters made complaints. Why do you think none of the characters complain at this point in the story?*
found that some one had quietly piled beside the hut enough fuel to last a few days longer. The tears rose to her eyes, but she hid them from Piney.

The women slept but little. In the morning, looking into each other’s faces, they read their fate. Neither spoke, but Piney, accepting the position of the stronger, drew near and placed her arm around the Duchess’s waist. They kept this attitude for the rest of the day. That night the storm reached its greatest fury, and, rendering asunder the protecting vines, invaded the very hut.

Toward morning they found themselves unable to feed the fire, which gradually died away. As the embers slowly blackened, the Duchess crept closer to Piney, and broke the silence of many hours: “Piney, can you pray?” “No, dear,” said Piney simply. The Duchess, without knowing exactly why, felt relieved, and, putting her head upon Piney’s shoulder, spoke no more. And so reclining, the younger and purer pillowing the head of her soiled sister upon her virgin breast, they fell asleep.

The wind lulled as if it feared to waken them. Feathery drifts of snow, shaken from the long pine boughs, flew like white winged birds, and settled about them as they slept. The moon through the rifted clouds looked down upon what had been the camp. But all human stain, all trace of earthly travail, was hidden beneath the spotless mantle mercifully flung from above.

They slept all that day and the next, nor did they waken when voices and footsteps broke the silence of the camp. And when pitying fingers brushed the snow from their wan faces, you could scarcely have told from the equal peace that dwelt upon them which was she that had sinned. Even the law of Poker Flat recognized this, and turned away, leaving them still locked in each other’s arms.

But at the head of the gulch, on one of the largest pine-trees, they found the deuce of clubs pinned to the bark with a bowie-knife. It bore the following, written in pencil in a firm hand:

†

BENEATH THIS TREE
LIES THE BODY
OF
JOHN OAKHURST,
WHO STRUCK A STREAK OF BAD LUCK
ON THE 23RD OF NOVEMBER 1850,
AND
HANDED IN HIS CHECKS
ON THE 7TH DECEMBER, 1850.
†

And pulseless and cold, with a derringer by his side and a bullet in his heart, though still calm as in life, beneath the snow lay he who was at once the strongest and yet the weakest of the outcasts of Poker Flat.

Characterization

Why does the narrator describe Oakhurst as “at once the strongest and yet the weakest of the outcasts of Poker Flat”?

Literary Element

Characterization  Why does the narrator describe Oakhurst as “at once the strongest and yet the weakest of the outcasts of Poker Flat”?

36. The deuce of clubs is the two of clubs. In a deck of cards, it has the lowest value.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. (a) Did the ending of the story surprise you? Why or why not? (b) Did the ending seem appropriate? Support your answer.

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What has the secret committee of Poker Flat decided to do? Why? (b) What can you infer about the outcasts based on the committee’s decision?
3. (a) Summarize what happens during the outcasts’ second day in camp. (b) What do you learn about each of the characters, based on their behavior?
4. (a) When the searchers from Poker Flat arrive at the camp, what do they find? (b) How would you compare their treatment of the outcasts at the end of the story to their treatment at the beginning?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) What is the narrator’s tone, or attitude, toward the outcasts? (b) What words or phrases convey this tone?
6. (a) Which character from the story do you admire the most? Support your answer with examples from the text. (b) Which do you admire the least? Why?
7. (a) In your opinion, what message, or lesson, does this story convey? (b) How effectively does Harte convey this message?

Connect
8. **Big Idea** Regionalism Setting is considered integral when a story could not take place in another time and place. How does the setting—both time and place—influence the actions of the characters in this story?

**LITERARY ANALYSIS**

**Literary Element** Characterization
A character’s personality can be revealed in many ways. The simplest method is direct characterization. Using this method, the writer makes explicit statements about a character. “Mr. Oakhurst was a coolly desperate man” is an example of direct characterization. The writer may prefer, however, for the reader to infer certain aspects of a character’s personality. This method is called indirect characterization. There are many ways a writer can use indirect characterization. Physical descriptions, the character’s words and actions, reactions from other characters, and even a character’s name can reveal something about his or her personality.

1. How would you describe Tom Simson’s character? Give two examples from the story of how his character is revealed.
2. Give an example of Mother Shipton’s character from the beginning of the story. How does her final action reveal a change in her character? Explain.

**Review: Motivation**
Motivation is the stated or implied reason or cause for a character’s actions.

**Partner Activity** Meet with another classmate and discuss John Oakhurst’s motivations throughout the story. Working with your partner, create a chart listing Oakhurst’s most important actions in the left column. In the right column, fill in what you think his motivations are for these actions. When you have completed this chart, examine it to see whether you can make a generalization about the motivations for his actions.
Reading Strategy  Making Generalizations

Readers make generalizations by looking at details and noticing what they have in common. Review the chart you created on page 505 for details and generalizations about characters and setting.

1. Based on this story, what overall generalization can you make about Harte’s characters?
2. What overall generalization can you make about Harte’s use of setting?

Vocabulary  Practice

Practice with Denotation and Connotation

Mr. Oakhurst, one of the “outcasts,” is also described as a member of a “pariah trade.” The words outcast and pariah have similar denotations, or literal meanings. However, pariah has much stronger negative connotations than outcast, suggesting a person who is not only rejected but despised. Each of the following pairs of words has similar denotations. In each pair, decide which word has stronger negative connotations.

1. a. impropriety  b. misstep
2. a. malevolence  b. grudge
3. a. equanimity  b. callousness
4. a. hypothesis  b. guess
5. a. seclusion  b. isolation

Academic Vocabulary

Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R86. These words will help you think, write, and talk about the selection.

aggregate (agˈrəɡət) n. a whole composed of individual parts; sum total

external (ikˈstrənəl) adj. related to, of, or situated on the outside; superficial

Practice and Apply

1. What circumstance had been experienced by each individual in the aggregate of outcasts?
2. What external causes contributed to the outcasts’ demise?

Writing About Literature

Apply Form  In the story, Poker Flat does not have a town sheriff. If it did, however, imagine what the sheriff would have thought when Tom Simson, looking half-frozen and utterly exhausted, stumbled into town on a December afternoon in 1850 and asked for help.

Write an incident report based on the information Tom would have given the sheriff. To get started, remember that an incident report is a type of summary. When you summarize, you state the main ideas or events in your own words. To summarize an incident, you need to answer the questions who, what, when, where, why, and how. In answering the question why, include what is known about the outcasts’ departure from Poker Flat.

Use a chart to jot down your responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who was involved?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What happened?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When did it happen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where did it happen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why did it happen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did it happen?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you revise your report, make sure it starts with a strong introductory sentence that presents the most important information. Organize the details in decreasing order of importance. And remember to present only the facts and to avoid expressing personal opinions.

Literary Criticism

Group Discussion  Critic Arthur Inkersley noted in his 1897 article “Californian Literature” that Bret Harte “grew too big for his environment, and left California. . . . Though his present address is . . . London, his inspiration is still drawn from the . . . Pacific Coast.” With a small group, discuss whether you think that an author needs to be in a specific setting in order to portray it. What benefits are there to writing about the place you are physically in? What are some benefits of writing about a place in your memory?

Web Activities  For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Punctuating Appositives

“As Mr. John Oakhurst, gambler, stepped into the main street of Poker Flat on the morning of the 23d of November, 1850, he was conscious of a change in its moral atmosphere since the preceding night.”

—Bret Harte, from “The Outcasts of Poker Flat”

**Connecting to Literature** In the quotation, *gambler* is an appositive—a noun or a pronoun that further identifies another noun or pronoun. The appositive is set off with commas because it is not essential to the meaning of a sentence. The reader knows that Oakhurst is a particular person; the nonessential (or nonrestrictive) appositive tells something more about him. If Harte had begun the sentence “As the gambler John Oakhurst stepped into the main street,” *John Oakhurst* would be an essential (or restrictive) appositive—it would give necessary information about the noun by telling which gambler.

**Examples**

- **Tom Simson told stories from the *Iliad* by the poet Homer.**
  “The poet” could be any writer of verse. The appositive, *Homer*, tells which poet—it is essential to the meaning of the sentence.

- **Uncle Billy, a suspected thief, was one of the outcasts.**
  The appositive phrase *a suspected thief* gives extra information about Uncle Billy, so it is a nonessential appositive. An appositive phrase is an appositive and all its modifiers.

- **The snow, beautiful and deadly, fell all night.**
  There is no appositive in this sentence. *Beautiful* and *deadly* are adjectives that modify *snow*. Only a noun or a pronoun can be an appositive.

**Exercise**

**Revise for Clarity** Rewrite five of the sentences below, adding commas as necessary. One sentence needs no commas.

1. Bret Harte the most famous Western writer in the 1860s wrote about small mining towns.
2. “The Outcasts of Poker Flat” a well-known story contains a colorful cast of characters.
3. The town Poker Flat decides to get rid of its undesirables.
4. Oakhurst, the Duchess, Mother Shipton, and Uncle Billy a confirmed drunkard are escorted out of town.
5. Tom Simson a guileless youth was seen ascending the trail.
6. Oakhurst was found with a pistol a derringer by his side.

**Appositives**

An appositive is a single noun, pronoun, or phrase that further identifies another noun or pronoun.

**Restrictive (essential)** appositives are not set off with commas. (My brother Alfred is a poet.)

**Nonrestrictive (nonessential)** appositives are set off with commas. (Alfred, *our* family poet, has never been published.)

**Test-Taking Tip**

To determine whether to put commas around an appositive, try reading the sentence without it. If the appositive is not needed to identify a noun, add commas.

**Language Handbook**

For more on Appositives, see Language Handbook, p. R46.

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**OBJECTIVES**

- Learn about essential and nonessential appositives.
- Learn when to use commas with appositives.
A Wagner Matinée

MEET WILLA CATHER

Although she spent fewer than thirteen years living on the Nebraskan prairie, readers best remember Willa Cather for her portrayal of the pioneer life and landscape. During the mid-twentieth century, the connection between Cather's writing and the prairie that inspired her began to undermine her literary status. Critics labeled her a regional writer, criticizing her for "escapism" and for romanticizing the American past. Nonetheless, Cather's books have never gone out of print, and there has been a renewed interest in her work over the past two decades. Cather is now recognized as a writer who explored the complexities of American life and showed how the tendency to link one's life to the past adds meaning—though not always happiness—to life in the present.

“So the country and I had it out together and by the end of the first autumn the shaggy grass country had gripped me with a passion that I have never been able to shake. It has been the happiness and curse of my life.”

—Willa Cather

The Vast Frontier Cather’s family moved from the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia to rural Red Cloud, Nebraska, when she was nine years old. Cather remarked that she felt "a kind of erasure of personality" as she first encountered the Nebraskan prairie, a feeling that would later permeate the characters in her fiction. In Red Cloud, Cather’s initial homesickness gave way to curiosity about the ethnically diverse frontier town. She gained insight into the hardships of pioneer life and the intricate histories of her European immigrant neighbors. She learned French, German, Latin, and Greek, participated in plays, and attended local opera performances. In high school, Cather gained a reputation as both a remarkable student and a nonconformist. She enrolled at the University of Nebraska in 1891 and supported herself by writing bold literary reviews that earned her statewide recognition.

Returning East After graduating in 1895, Cather moved to Pittsburgh to begin editing for a woman's magazine, Home Monthly. She published her first poetry collection, April Twilights, in 1903 and a collection of stories, The Troll Garden, which includes “A Wagner Matinée,” in 1905. The head of the progressive magazine McClure’s was so impressed by The Troll Garden that he offered Cather a job in New York City. She became the magazine's managing editor by 1908 but felt unfulfilled because her position left little time to work on her own writing. In 1911, at the urging of her friend and mentor Sarah Orne Jewett, Cather left journalism to write fiction exclusively.

Although she never moved back to the prairie, Cather's memories of that vast landscape and the endurance of its people inspired several works, including O Pioneers! (1913), Song of the Lark (1915), and My Ántonia (1918). In her earlier stories, Cather focused on the desolation of pioneer life, including the lack of access to art and music. In later works, however, she celebrated the prairie landscape and the powerful dreams and illusions of those who attempted to cultivate it. Cather is recognized for her complex treatment of human emotion, her understanding of darker American themes, and her carefully crafted writing style.

Willa Cather was born in 1873 and died in 1947.

Author Search For more about Willa Cather, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Story

Have you ever moved away from or left a place and returned to it much later? How can music affect memory? As you read, think about the following questions:

- Why might revisiting a place one has chosen to leave be painful?
- How might hearing music affect memory in unique ways?

Building Background

The title “A Wagner Matinée” refers to the German composer Wilhelm Richard Wagner (1813–1883). A brilliant composer, Wagner revolutionized opera by creating works with uninterrupted musical scores and passionate, crashing sounds. Willa Cather based “A Wagner Matinée” on her Aunt Franc’s and Uncle George’s experience of moving to Nebraska after the passage of the Homestead Act in 1862. The act allowed settlers and immigrants who were at least twenty-one years old to claim 160 acres of public land. They would fully own the land once they farmed it and lived there for five years.

Setting Purposes for Reading

**Big Idea** Regionalism

As you read “A Wagner Matinée,” note how the story’s conflict centers on where the characters live and the opportunities opened or closed to them as a result.

**Literary Element** Point of View

Point of view refers to the relationship of the narrator to the story. In first-person point of view, the story is told by one of the characters, referred to as “I,” and the reader sees everything through that character’s eyes. In third-person limited point of view, the narrator reveals the thoughts and feelings of only one character, referred to as “he” or “she.” In an omniscient point of view, the narrator knows everything about the characters and events. As you read the story, examine how point of view influences your understanding.


READING PREVIEW

**Reading Strategy** Identifying Sequence

To identify sequence means to find the logical order of ideas or events. Main events are often told in chronological order, but authors sometimes reveal important events and details through flashbacks. Be sure to identify the chronological order of events to better understand the themes, relationships, and events crucial to the story.

**Reading Tip: Charting Story Sequence** Make a diagram like the one shown to organize the events of the story into chronological order.

**Vocabulary**

legacy (leg’ə se) n. an inheritance; p. 520 Paul’s generous grandfather left him a legacy when he died.

reproach (ri prōch’) n. an expression of disapproval; a reprimand; p. 521 Kim missed curfew and suffered her mother’s reproach.

doggedly (dōg’di le) adv. in a stubbornly persistent manner; obstinately; p. 521 The salesman doggedly pursued customers, even when they rebuffed him.

trepidation (trep’ə də’sha n) n. nervous anticipation; anxiety; p. 522 Dana could not shake her feeling of trepidation about the next day’s exam.

obliquely (ə blēk’le) adv. in a slanting or sloping direction; p. 523 Her hair hung obliquely across her face, hiding her left eye.

**Vocabulary Tip: Analogies** An analogy is a comparison to show similarities between things that are otherwise dissimilar.

OBJECTIVES

In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:

- analyzing setting and time frame
- analyzing point of view
- identifying sequence

WILLA CATHER 519
I received one morning a letter, written in pale ink on glassy, blue-lined note-paper, and bearing the postmark of a little Nebraska village. This communication, worn and rubbed, looking as if it has been carried for some days in a coat pocket that was none too clean, was from my uncle Howard, and informed me that his wife had been left a small legacy by a bachelor relative, and that it would be necessary for her to go to Boston to attend to the settling of the estate. He requested me to meet her at the station and render\(^1\) her whatever services might be necessary. On examining the date indicated as that of her arrival, I found it to be no later than tomorrow. He had characteristically delayed writing until, had I been away from home for a day, I must have missed my aunt altogether.

The name of my Aunt Georgiana opened before me a gulf of recollection so wide and deep that, as the letter dropped from my hand, I felt suddenly a stranger to all the present conditions of my existence, wholly ill at ease and out of place amid the familiar surroundings of my study. I became, in short, the gangling farmer-boy my aunt had known, scourged\(^2\) with chilblains\(^3\) and bashfulness, my hands cracked and sore from the corn husking. I sat again before her parlour organ, fumbling the scales with my stiff, red fingers, while she, beside me, made canvas mittens for the huskers.

The next morning, after preparing my landlady for a visitor, I set out for the station. When the train arrived I had some difficulty in finding my aunt. She was the last of the passengers to alight, and it was not until I got her into the carriage that she seemed really to recognize me. She had come all the way in a day coach; her linen duster\(^4\) had become black with soot and her black bonnet grey with dust during the journey. When we arrived at my boarding-house the landlady put her to bed at once and I did not see her again until the next morning.

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1. **Render** means “to make available” or “to provide.”

2. **Scourged** means “afflicted.”

3. **Chilblains** are red, swollen sores on the skin caused by exposure to the cold.

4. **A duster** is a long, lightweight coat worn to protect one’s clothing from dust.

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### Reading Strategy

**Identifying Sequence** How does the narration shift after Clark sees Aunt Georgiana’s name in the letter?
Whatever shock Mrs. Springer experienced at my aunt’s appearance, she considerately concealed. As for myself, I saw my aunt’s battered figure with that feeling of awe and respect with which we behold explorers who have left their ears and fingers north of Franz-Joseph-Land, or their health somewhere along the Upper Congo. My Aunt Georgiana had been a music teacher at the Boston Conservatory, somewhere back in the latter sixties. One summer, while visiting in the little village among the Green Mountains, where her ancestors had dwelt for generations, she had kindled the callow fancy of my uncle, Howard Carpenter, then an idle, shiftless boy of twenty-one. When she returned to her duties in Boston, Howard followed her, and the upshot of this infatuation was that she eloped with him, eluding the reproaches of her family and the criticism of her friends by going with him to the Nebraska frontier. Carpenter, who, of course, had no money, took up a homestead in Red Willow County, fifty miles from the railroad. There they had measured off their land, built a dug-out in the red hillside, one of those cave dwellings whose inmates so often reverted to primitive conditions. Their water they got from the lagoons where the buffalo drank, and their slender stock of provisions was always at the mercy of bands of roving Indians. For thirty years my aunt had not been farther than fifty miles from the homestead.

I owed to this woman most of the good that ever came my way in my boyhood, and had a reverential affection for her. During the years when I was riding herd for my uncle, my aunt, after cooking the three meals—the first of which was ready at six o’clock in the morning—and putting the six children to bed, would often stand until midnight at her ironing-board, with me at the kitchen table beside her, hearing me recite Latin declensions and conjugations, gently shaking me when my drowsy head sank down over a page of irregular verbs. It was to her, at her ironing or mending, that I read my first Shakspere, and her old text-book on mythology was the first that ever came into my empty hands. She taught me my scales and exercises on the little parlor organ which her husband had bought her after fifteen years, during which she had not so much as seen a musical instrument. She would sit beside me by the hour, darning and counting, while I struggled with the “Joyous Farmer.” She seldom talked to me about music, and I understood why. Once when I had been doggedly beating out some easy passages from an old score of Euryanthe I had found among her music books, she came up to me and, putting her hands over my eyes, gently drew my head back upon her shoulder, saying tremulously, “Don’t love it so well, Clark, or it may be taken from you.”

When my aunt appeared on the morning after her arrival in Boston, she was still in a semi-somnambulant state. She seemed not to realize that she was in the city where she had spent her youth, the place longed for hungrily half a lifetime. She had been so wretchedly train-sick throughout the journey that she had no recollection of anything but her discomfort, and, to all intents and purposes, there were but a few hours of nightmare between the farm in Red Willow County and my study on Newbury Street. I had planned a little pleasure for her that afternoon, to repay her for some of the gloomy moments she had given me when we used to milk together in the straw-thatched cowshed and she, because I was more than usually tired, or

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5. Franz-Joseph-Land is a group of islands in the Arctic Ocean.
6. The Congo River in central Africa is also called the Zaire River.
7. The Green Mountains extend from western Massachusetts through Vermont and into Canada.
8. Callow means “inexperienced” or “immature.”
9. Reverential means “with a feeling of deep respect and awe.”
10. Declensions are different forms of nouns, pronouns, and adjectives. Conjugations are different forms of verbs. Students often memorize these forms when learning a new language.
12. Euryanthe (ä úr i án tá) is an opera by the German composer Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826).
13. Tremulously means “in a trembling or shaking manner.”
14. Semi-somnambulant (sem’ é som n’am bant) means “bewildered or dazed, as if sleepwalking.”
because her husband had spoken sharply to me, would tell me of the splendid performance of the Huguenots\(^\text{15}\) she had seen in Paris, in her youth.

At two o’clock the Symphony Orchestra was to give a Wagner program, and I intended to take my aunt; though, as I conversed with her, I grew doubtful about her enjoyment of it. I suggested our visiting the Conservatory and the Common\(^\text{16}\) before lunch, but she seemed altogether too timid to wish to venture out. She questioned me absently about various changes in the city, but she was chiefly concerned that she had forgotten to leave instructions about feeding half-skimmed milk to a certain weakling calf, “old Maggie’s calf, you know, Clark,” she explained, evidently having forgotten how long I had been away. She was further troubled because she had neglected to tell her daughter about the freshly-opened kit of mackerel in the cellar, which would spoil if it were not used directly.

I asked her whether she had ever heard any of the Wagnerian operas, and found that she had not, though she was perfectly familiar with their respective situations, and had once possessed the piano score of *The Flying Dutchman*. I began to think it would be best to get her back to Red Willow County without waking her, and regretted having suggested the concert.

From the time we entered the concert hall, however, she was a trifle less passive and inert, and for the first time seemed to perceive her surroundings. I had felt some *trepidation* lest she might become aware of her queer, country clothes, or might experience some painful embarrassment at stepping suddenly into the world to which she had been dead for a quarter of a century. But, again, I found how superficially I had judged her. She sat looking about her with eyes as impersonal, almost as stony, as those with which the granite Rameses\(^\text{17}\) in a museum watches the froth and fret that ebbs and flows\(^\text{18}\) about his pedestal. I have seen this same aloofness in old miners who drift into the Brown hotel at Denver, their pockets full of bullion,\(^\text{19}\) their linen soiled, their haggard faces unshaven; standing in the thronged corridors as solitary as though they were still in a frozen camp on the Yukon.\(^\text{20}\)

The matinée audience was made up chiefly of women. One lost the contour of faces and figures, indeed any effect of line whatever, and there was only the color of bodices past counting, the shimmer of fabrics soft and firm, silky and sheer; red, mauve, pink, blue, lilac, purple, écru,\(^\text{21}\) rose, yellow, cream, and white, all the colors that an impressionist\(^\text{22}\) finds in a sunlit landscape, with here and there the dead shadow of a frock coat. My Aunt

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15. *Huguenots* (hů’ ɡə ˈnorts’) is a French opera by the German composer Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791–1864).


17. *Rameses* (ˈrā mēz) is the name shared by several kings of ancient Egypt.

18. *[froth and fret . . . flows]* This phrase refers to the general busy activity that would come and go past a museum statue.

19. *Here, bullion* (ˈbū ˈlē ən) is gold.

20. *Yukon* refers to the Yukon River, a major route to the Klondike gold fields in Canada.

21. *Écru* (ə’ krō) is beige.

22. An *impressionist* is a member of a movement in French painting that emphasized the play of light and color.

**Big Idea**  
Regionalism How does the concert hall draw Georgiana’s attention away from the farm in a way the city could not?

**Vocabulary**

- *trepidation* (trep’ ə dä’ shən) n. nervous anticipation; anxiety
Georgiana regarded them as though they had been so many daubs of tube-paint on a palette.

When the musicians came out and took their places, she gave a little stir of anticipation, and looked with quickening interest down over the rail at that invariable grouping, perhaps the first wholly familiar thing that had greeted her eye since she had left old Maggie and her weakling calf. I could feel how all those details sank into her soul, for I had not forgotten how they had sunk into mine when I came fresh from ploughing forever and forever between green aisles of corn, where, as in a treadmill, one might walk from daybreak to dusk without perceiving a shadow of change. The clean profiles of the musicians, the gloss of their linen, the dull black of their coats, the beloved shapes of the instruments, the patches of yellow light on the smooth, varnished bellies of the ’cellos and the bass viol in the rear, the restless, wind-tossed forest of fiddle necks and bows—I recalled how, in the first orchestra I ever heard, those long bow-strokes seemed to draw the heart out of me, as a conjurer’s stick reels out yards of paper ribbon from a hat.

The first number was the Tannhauser overture. When the horns drew out the first strain of the Pilgrim’s chorus, Aunt Georgiana clutched my coat sleeve. Then it was I first realized that for her this broke a silence of thirty years. I saw again the tall, naked house on the prairie, black and grim as a wooden fortress; the black pond where I had learned to swim, its margin pitted with sun-dried cattle tracks; the rain gullied clay banks about the naked house, the four dwarf ash seedlings where the dishcloths were always hung to dry before the kitchen door. The world there was the flat world of the ancients; to the east, a cornfield that stretched to daybreak; to the west, a corral that reached to sunset; between, the conquests of peace, dearer-bought than those of war.

The overture closed, my aunt released my coat sleeve. Then I was in a fever of curiosity, but Aunt Georgiana sat silent as if, of themselves, they were recalling the piano score they had once played. Poor hands! They had been stretched and twisted into mere tentacles to hold and lift and knead with; on one of them a thin, worn band that had once been a wedding ring.

The phrase “peak in Darien” (där’ è en’) alludes to the poem “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer” by John Keats. The poem describes Spanish explorers on a mountain in Darien, now Panama, who stand silently and in awe, as the first Europeans to view the Pacific Ocean.

24. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (wool’g’ má dà’ as mô’t sârt) (1756–1791) was an Austrian composer. Giuseppe Verdi (jôó zep’ pe ver’ dë) (1813–1901) was an Italian composer of opera.

25. The phrase “peak in Darien” (där’ è en’) alludes to the poem “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer” by John Keats. The poem describes Spanish explorers on a mountain in Darien, now Panama, who stand silently and in awe, as the first Europeans to view the Pacific Ocean.

### Reading Strategy
**Identifying Sequence**
How do the flashbacks contribute to the effect of Clark’s realizations about his aunt?

### Big Idea
**Regionalism**
What does the description of Georgiana’s hands reveal about the difference between Boston and the Nebraska farm, according to Clark?

### Vocabulary
**obliquely** (ô blék’ le) adv. in a slanting or sloping direction
As I pressed and gently quieted one of those groping hands, I remembered with quivering eyelids their services for me in other days.

Soon after the tenor began the “Prize Song,” I heard a quick drawn breath and turned to my aunt. Her eyes were closed, but the tears were glistening on her cheeks, and I think, in a moment more, they were in my eyes as well. It never really died, then—the soul which can suffer so excruciatingly and so interminably; it withers to the outward eye only; like that strange moss which can lie on a dusty shelf half a century and yet, if placed in water, grows green again. She wept so throughout the development and elaboration of the melody.

During the intermission before the second half, I questioned my aunt and found that the “Prize Song” was not new to her. Some years before there had drifted to the farm in Red Willow County a young German, a tramp cowpuncher, who had sung in the chorus at Bayreuth when he was a boy, along with the other peasant boys and girls. Of a Sunday morning he used to sit on his gingham-sheeted bed in the hands’ bedroom which opened off the kitchen, cleaning the leather of his boots and saddle, singing the “Prize Song,” while my aunt went about her work in the kitchen. She had hovered over him until she had prevailed upon him to join the country church, though his sole fitness for this step, in so far as I could gather, lay in his boyish face and his possession of this divine melody. Shortly afterward, he had gone to town on the Fourth of July, been drunk for several days, lost his money at a faro table, ridden a saddled Texas steer on a bet, and disappeared with a fractured collarbone. All this my aunt told me huskily, wonderingly, as though she were talking in the weak lapses of illness.

“Well, we have come to better things than the old Trovatore at any rate, Aunt Georgie?” I quiered, with a well meant effort at jocularity.

I understood. For her, just outside the concert hall, lay the black pond with the cattle-tracked bluffs; the tall, unpainted house, with weather-curl’d boards, naked as a tower; the crook-backed ash seedlings where the dish-cloths hung to dry; the gaunt, moulting turkeys picking up refuse about the kitchen door.

Her lip quivered and she hastily put her handkerchief up to her mouth. From behind it she murmured, “And you have been hearing this ever since you left me, Clark?” Her question was the gentlest and saddest of reproaches.

The second half of the program consisted of four numbers from the Ring, and closed with Siegfried’s funeral march. My aunt wept quietly, but almost continuously, as a shallow vessel overflows in a rain-storm. From time to time her dim eyes looked up at the lights, burning softly under their dull glass globes.

The deluge of sound poured on and on; I never knew what she found in the shining current of it; I never knew how far it bore her, or past what happy islands. From the trembling of her face I could well believe that before the last number she had been carried out where the myriad graves are, into the grey, nameless burying grounds of the sea; or into some world of death vaster yet, where, from the beginning of the world, hope has lain down with hope and dream with dream and, renouncing, slept.

The concert was over; the people filed out of the hall chattering and laughing, glad to relax and find the living level again, but my kinswoman made no effort to rise. The harpist slipped the green felt cover over his instrument; the flute-players shook the water from their mouthpieces; the men of the orchestra went out one by one, leaving the stage to the chairs and music stands, empty as a winter cornfield.

I spoke to my aunt. She burst into tears and sobbed pleadingly. “I don’t want to go, Clark, I don’t want to go!”

I understood. For her, just outside the concert hall, lay the black pond with the cattle-tracked bluffs; the tall, unpainted house, with weather-curl’d boards, naked as a tower; the crook-backed ash seedlings where the dish-cloths hung to dry; the gaunt, moulting turkeys picking up refuse about the kitchen door.

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27. Bayreuth (bə rō’t) is a German city famous for its annual Wagnerian music festival.
28. Faro (fär’ō) is a gambling game played with a deck of cards.
29. Trovatore (trō vā tör’e) refers to Il Trovatore, an opera by Giuseppe Verdi.
30. Jocularity means “joking” or “humor.”
31. Myriad means “countless” or “innumerable.”
32. Renouncing means “giving up.”
33. Gaunt means “extremely thin.”

**Literary Element** Point of View How does Clark know what his aunt is feeling?
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

**Respond**

1. How did the story affect your impressions of nineteenth-century frontier life?

**Recall and Interpret**

2. (a) How does Clark react to the letter from his uncle? (b) Why does he react so strongly to the letter?

3. The narrator says that he owed to his aunt “most of the good that ever came my way in my boyhood.” How is her influence apparent in his adult life?

4. (a) How does Georgiana behave after the concert ends? (b) What might the concert hall symbolize for her?

**Analyze and Evaluate**

5. (a) Georgiana seldom talks to Clark about music. Why then does she tell Clark about the Huguenots performance she saw in Paris? (b) Given Georgiana’s reaction to the Wagner concert, how do concerts probably affect her in general?

6. Clark says of scenery on the farm: “one might walk from daybreak to dusk without perceiving a shadow of change.” To whom might this statement be considered false and why?

7. After his experience with Georgiana, how might Clark perceive his access to concerts in Boston differently?

**Connect**

8. **Big Idea** Regionalism The story contrasts the limits of one region with the opportunities of another. What might these two “regions” be in Georgiana’s view, specifically? Support your claim with evidence from the story.

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**LITERARY ANALYSIS**

**Literary Element** Point of View

It is clear that “A Wagner Matinée” is written with a **first-person point of view** because the story is filtered through the sensations, thoughts, and memories of Clark, the narrator. The use of pronouns such as **I**, **you**, and **me** also indicates first-person point of view.

In stories told in first-person point of view, the narrator is always a character in the story. As you read stories told in first person, note that any story told from one perspective is limited to that character’s knowledge, experience, and biases. The narrator may not be reliable, so judge whether you can trust that his or her interpretation of events is accurate. Pay attention to details in the story to help evaluate narrator reliability and to figure out parts of the story the narrator may not know or share.

1. Why might the reader trust Clark’s interpretation of Georgiana?

2. Although Georgiana rarely speaks directly in the story, what details about her confirm Clark’s interpretations?

**Review: Voice**

**Voice** refers to the distinctive language that conveys the author or narrator’s personality to the reader. Voice is determined by elements of style such as word choice, sentence structure, and tone.

**Partner Activity** Meet with a partner to discuss how Clark’s voice is revealed in the following passage. Then answer the questions that follow.

“Had this music any message for her? Had she enough left to at all comprehend this power which had kindled the world since she had left it? I was in a fever of curiosity, but Aunt Georgiana sat silent upon her peak in Darien.”

1. What does Clark’s use of questions reveal?

2. What do words such as **power**, **kindled**, and **fever** and the Darien allusion reveal about Clark?

3. How does Clark’s voice convey his personality?
**Reading Strategy**  Identifying Sequence

A **flashback** is an interruption in the chronological order of a story that depicts an earlier event. Flashback can be used to give readers background about the main events of the story.

1. How does the flashback about Clark as a boy playing “Joyous Farmer” help the reader?
2. What provokes most of the flashbacks in the story?
3. Why might Cather have chosen to use flashback instead of organizing the events chronologically?

**Vocabulary**  Practice

**Practice with Analogies**  Choose the word that best completes the analogy.

1. grandparent : legacy :: groom :
   a. house  
   b. ring  
   c. bride  
   d. husband

2. quickly : fast :: doggedly :
   a. stubborn  
   b. proud  
   c. obediently  
   d. docile

3. reproach : disapproval :: compliment :
   a. criticism  
   b. approval  
   c. affection  
   d. attention

4. sweat : trepidation :: wink :
   a. anxiety  
   b. blink  
   c. mischief  
   d. eye

5. obliquely : direction :: passionately :
   a. reason  
   b. instinct  
   c. spontaneous  
   d. feeling

**Writing About Literature**

**Evaluate Author’s Craft**  In fiction, **author’s craft** refers to how an author uses various techniques, including word choice, sensory details, figurative language, and dialogue, to tell a story. In “A Wagner Matinée,” Willa Cather uses comparisons as a technique to explore the relationship between Clark and Aunt Georgiana and the effects of the concert on both characters.

“As for myself, I saw my aunt’s battered figure with that feeling of awe and respect…”

**Comparison**  Aunt Georgiana’s aged figure is compared to Clark’s memory of her.

**Evaluation**  Clark’s comment on his aunt’s figure allows the reader to see that she has changed much since he last saw her and that she looks different from the women in Boston. The comparison alludes to the amount of time they have spent apart and to the differences between frontier and city life.

Write an essay evaluating how the use of comparisons in “A Wagner Matinée” contributes to the meaning of the story. As you draft, follow the plan below to help organize your essay.

- **Introduction**
  - Present your evaluation.

- **First Comparison**
  - Cite the comparisons and evaluate how they contribute to the story.

- **Second Comparison**

- **Third Comparison**

- **Conclusion**
  - Summarize your evaluation and add insight.

When you are done writing, proofread and edit your draft for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Then meet with a partner and exchange drafts. Check to make sure your partner’s evaluation is clear and well supported with examples from the story.
I Will Fight
No More Forever

MEET CHIEF JOSEPH

Chief Joseph—whose given name was Hinmaton Yalaktit (hin ma tō’ yā lākh’\textsuperscript{t}et) or “Thunder Rolling Down the Mountain”—was born in the Wallowa Valley in what is now northeastern Oregon. When his father died in 1871, Joseph was elected to succeed him as a chief of the Nez Percé (nez’ purs’), the largest and most powerful of the Sahaptin-speaking tribes that lived in present-day central Idaho and contiguous areas in Oregon and Washington. Other Sahaptin-speaking tribes include the Cayuse, Tenino, Wallawalla, and Yakima.

The Nez Percé were more warlike than neighboring tribes, especially after acquiring the horse from the Plains Indians in the early eighteenth century. However, they had maintained peace with the whites for decades, ever since the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1805, which was their first significant contact with whites. Nevertheless, Joseph inherited a volatile situation. In 1863, following a gold rush into Nez Percé territory, the U.S. government had reclaimed three quarters of the land it had ceded to the tribe in an 1855 treaty. Chief Joseph successfully resisted efforts to remove his band from the Wallowa Valley until 1877, when the government threatened removal by force.

“Hear me, my chiefs. I am tired; my heart is sick and sad.”

—Chief Joseph

Cooperator and Leader To avoid bloodshed, Chief Joseph decided to cooperate, but as he led his band toward a reservation in Idaho, he learned that three of his braves, enraged at the government’s action, had killed a group of white settlers and prospectors. To escape retaliation by the U.S. Army, Chief Joseph led his people—some 200 to 300 warriors and their families—on a long, grueling march toward the Canadian border. They trekked through Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana for nearly three months, covering 1,000 miles as the warriors successfully fought off U.S. troops. Within forty miles of their destination, in the Bear Paw mountains of Montana, the Nez Percé were surrounded and forced to surrender. The chase and intermittent skirmishes had claimed the lives of 239 Nez Percé, many of them women and children, as well as the lives of 266 U.S. Army personnel.

Lasting Legacy Although Chief Joseph had thought his people would be able to return home, they were removed to Indian Territory, or present-day Oklahoma, where many fell ill and died. In 1885 some of the survivors were returned to the Pacific Northwest, but about half, including Chief Joseph, were taken to Colville reservation, a non-Nez Percé reservation in Washington State. There Chief Joseph died, according to his doctor, “of a broken heart.” At a ceremony honoring him, a Nez Percé chief named Yellow Bull said, “Joseph is dead, but his words will live forever.”

Chief Joseph was born around 1840 and died in 1904.
Connecting to the Speech

What does it mean to lose with dignity? In this speech, Joseph explains the decision he has made to surrender. As you read, think about the following questions:

- What was Joseph’s primary reason for surrendering?
- Have you ever been in a situation where surrender was the best or most noble option?

Building Background

The Nez Percé was the southeasternmost tribe in the Plateau culture, which developed on the high plateaus between the coastal mountain ranges and the Rocky Mountains. Each Plateau tribe spoke a language from one of three linguistic groups: Sahaptin, Salish, or Kutenai. Plateau tribes shared many cultural components. In the winter, they lived by rivers where fish were abundant. In the summer, they moved to mountain valleys to hunt and gather roots. By the time Chief Joseph came to power, the Nez Percé had strayed away from the Plateau culture and adopted many cultural components of the Plains Indians, including the war bonnet, the horse, and the teepee.

Setting Purposes for Reading

**Big Idea  Regionalism**

As you read Chief Joseph’s speech, consider the tragic consequences for Native Americans brought about by the westward expansion.

**Literary Element  Tone**

Tone is the writer’s attitude toward the subject of a work. Writers create the tone of a work primarily through diction, or word choice. As you read, notice Chief Joseph’s diction and the tone it creates.


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**Reading Strategy  Evaluating Style**

Tone is just one element of style, or the way that a writer or an orator uses language. Some other elements are diction, syntax, sentence length, and use of figurative language. When you evaluate style, you make a judgment about it based on the application of appropriate criteria, or standards. As you read Chief Joseph’s speech, evaluate how the individual elements such as tone contribute to his style.

**Reading Tip: Taking Notes** Use a chart to record examples of different elements of Chief Joseph’s style. In the right-hand column, explain briefly how the elements work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>“Maybe I shall find [the children] among the dead.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syntax</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Length</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurative Language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Interactive Literary Elements Handbook** To review or learn more about the literary elements, go to www.glencoe.com.

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**OBJECTIVES**

In studying this selection, you will focus on the following:

- analyzing tone
- evaluating style
“Tell General Howard! I know his heart. What he told me before, I have in my heart. I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed. Looking Glass is dead. Too Hul Hul Suit is dead. The old men are all dead. It is the young men who say yes and no. He who led on the young men is dead. It is cold and we have no blankets. The little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them, have run away to the hills and have no blankets, no food; no one knows where they are—perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children and see how many I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me, my chiefs. I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever.”

1. General (Oliver Otis) Howard (1830–1909) had been a Union general in the Civil War. He sent troops to fight the Nez Percé in the Battle of White Bird Canyon.
2. Looking Glass was a respected leader of the Nez Percé. He took part in the 1877 retreat.
3. Too Hul Hul Suit, or Tu Ku Lxu C’ut (tə kəl’ hu sət’), leader of the White Bird tribe, was a member of the negotiating team that met with General Howard. He favored fighting for the Nez Percé land rather than moving to a reservation.
4. [He who led . . . dead.] refers to Chief Joseph’s younger brother, Ollikut (ōl okh’ ut).

Evaluating Style  What do the form and content of these two sentences emphasize? How do you think they affect the listener or reader?
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. If you could speak to Chief Joseph, what would you say?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What has happened to the chiefs and the old men of the tribe? (b) How might these developments have affected Chief Joseph’s decision to surrender?
3. (a) What words does Chief Joseph use to describe his heart? (b) How do the feelings he describes help you better understand the decision he has made?

Analyze and Evaluate
4. (a) What does Chief Joseph say about his children? (b) Why does he want to look for them?

5. (a) What words or phrases does Chief Joseph repeat? (b) What effect does this repetition create?
6. In this short speech, Chief Joseph explains a decision that will have an enormous impact on the lives of his people. Would a longer, more detailed speech have been more effective? Explain.

Connect
7. Big Idea Regionalism According to one critic, “I Will Fight No More Forever” . . . is a classic statement of Native American pride and resolve in the midst of terrible suffering.” (a) How does Chief Joseph display pride and resolve in this speech? (b) Which values of the Nez Percé does this speech reveal?

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITY

American History: Great Speeches Research speeches by other Native American orators such as Chief Tecumseh and Chief Red Eagle.
1. How are the other Native American speeches you found similar to and different from Chief Joseph’s speech?
2. What is the style of each speech?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Tone
The tone of a piece of writing conveys the author’s attitude toward the subject matter. In “I Will Fight No More Forever,” the tone conveys feelings of weariness, resignation, sadness, and dignity. Chief Joseph’s use of simple, direct language and brief sentences reinforces this sense of overwhelming loss.

1. What phrases help create a tone that is weary, resigned, and sad, yet dignified?
2. Find examples of simple, direct language and brief sentences. How do they affect the tone of the speech?

Reading Strategy Evaluating Style
Style refers to a writer’s individual, characteristic way of using language. Elements such as diction, phrasing, sentence length, tone, imagery, and figurative language contribute to style. Because writers use these elements in personal, distinctive ways, no two styles are exactly alike. To evaluate Chief Joseph’s style, answer these questions:
1. Is the style appropriate for the message?
2. Does the style reveal the writer’s personality?

Academic Vocabulary
Here are two words from the vocabulary list on page R86.

principle (prin’sə pal) n. a law or rule, usually regarding morals
impose (im pöz’) v. to force upon

Practice and Apply
1. What principles did Chief Joseph value?
2. How did the U.S. Army impose the government’s policies on Native Americans?