“The ‘control of nature’ is a phrase conceived in arrogance, born of the Neanderthal age of biology and the convenience of man.”

—Rachel Carson, Silent Spring
MEET ELIZABETH BISHOP

The poet Elizabeth Bishop once told her writing class at Harvard University, “Use the dictionary. It’s better than the critics.” Bishop’s wit and devotion to careful, precise language came through in her own writing, which earned her nearly every major poetry prize in the United States.

For Bishop, writing poetry was an act of “self-forgetfulness,” in which she focused on shaping and sharing her impressions of the physical world rather than on giving the details of her personal life. Her childhood in Worcester, Massachusetts, was difficult. When she was very young, her father died and her mother was permanently hospitalized, so Bishop was raised by relatives, first in Canada and later in Worcester. After graduation from Vassar College in 1934, Bishop traveled frequently and lived in many places, including Florida, New York, and Europe. For sixteen years, she made her home in Brazil. She kept in touch with people she met in her travels through thousands of letters, some of which were collected and published in her book One Art.

“[It is] far more important to just keep writing poetry than to think of yourself as a poet whose job it is to write poetry all the time.”

—Elizabeth Bishop

A formative experience for Bishop was her 1934 introduction to the poet Marianne Moore, who became Bishop’s valued friend and mentor. Bishop also became close to poet Robert Lowell, who provided unstinting moral support and helped Bishop obtain grants, fellowships, and awards. Bishop and Lowell critiqued each other’s poetry and remained staunch allies throughout their lives.

Described by many friends as generous and wise, Bishop was also complicated and intensely private. Though she suffered from bouts of depression, people who knew her were struck by her warmth and self-deprecating sense of humor. Bishop deeply appreciated friends and relatives who made her laugh. In a letter, she wrote, “I have been very lucky in having had, most of my life, some witty friends,—and I mean real wit, quickness, wild fancies, remarks that make one cry with laughing.”

In her work, Bishop often captured subtle moments of engagement with nature. Her voice is one of the most distinctive in American poetry, conveying not only the sights and sounds of nature but also the thoughts and feelings of a speaker groping toward an understanding of nature. Bishop was preoccupied with questions of guilt, loss, and artistic vision, and these issues appear in her poetry.

Over her fifty-year writing career, Bishop published five slim volumes of poetry with a total of 101 poems. Of her final poetry collection, critic Alfred Corn wrote that Bishop achieved “a perfected transparency of expression, warmth of tone, and a singular blend of sadness and good humor, of pain and acceptance—a radiant patience few people ever achieve and few writers ever successfully render.” Besides writing, Bishop taught at Harvard for seven years and served as a poetry consultant to the Library of Congress.

Elizabeth Bishop was born in 1911 and died in 1979.
Connecting to the Poems
In these poems, the close examination of everyday objects leads to moments of intense clarity. As you read, think about these questions:

- When have you discovered something unexpected about a familiar person or place?
- How can appearances deceive us? How can they give us insight?

Building Background
A lover of animals and the physical world, Bishop wrote careful descriptions of scenes she witnessed or experienced outdoors. The following passage from a letter Bishop wrote to Marianne Moore may have developed into her poem “The Fish.”

The other day I caught a parrot fish, almost by accident. They are ravishing fish—all iridescent, with a silver edge to each scale, and a real bull-like mouth just like turquoise; the eye is very big and wild, and the eyeball is turquoise too—they are very humorous-looking fish. A man on the dock immediately scraped off three scales, then threw him back; he was sure it wouldn’t hurt him. I’m enclosing one [scale], if I can find it.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea  Nature and Technology
In these poems, carefully examine the observations about the fish and the filling (or gas) station. Think about what Bishop’s patient reflections tell you about modern life and nature’s role in it.

Literary Element  Tone
Tone is the attitude that an author expresses toward his or her subject matter. When we speak, we choose a tone of voice to give clues to underlying attitudes such as humor, formality, anger, or sadness. Similarly, authors carefully choose words and sentence structure in order to set the tone.


Reading Strategy  Evaluating Sensory Details
Sensory details are evocative words or phrases that appeal to one or more of the five senses. Poets use sensory details to help the reader imagine or experience more deeply the content of poems. As you read, carefully examine the sensory details and think about what feeling or meaning they convey to you.

Reading Tip: Chart Sensory Details  Record sensory details in a chart like the one shown. List the sense that the detail appeals to. Then jot down notes on what feeling or meaning the detail conveys to you.

Vocabulary

- tarnish (tärˈnish) v. to dull, soil, or stain; p. 1210  The cabinet was tarnished by the fire.
- permeate (purˈme atˈ) v. to penetrate, spread through, or diffuse; p. 1212  Water may permeate the bag if it is not sealed shut before the storm.
- extraneous (ek strəˈnē as) adj. not intrinsically belonging; not forming a vital part; coming from outside; p. 1213  The music seemed extraneous to the scientific presentation.

Vocabulary Tip: Context Clues  If, during your reading, you come across a word with which you are unfamiliar, the words and sentences surrounding the word may provide clues to its meaning. Such clues are known as context clues.

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

- delivering a multimedia presentation
- analyzing the way in which tone achieves specific rhetorical or aesthetic purposes
I caught a tremendous fish and held him beside the boat half out of water, with my hook fast in a corner of his mouth.

5 He didn’t fight. He hadn’t fought at all. He hung a grunting weight, battered and venerable¹ and homely. Here and there his brown skin hung in strips like ancient wall-paper, and its pattern of darker brown was like wall-paper: shapes like full-blown roses stained and lost through age.

10 He was speckled with barnacles, fine rosettes of lime, and infested with tiny white sea-lice, and underneath two or three rags of green weed hung down. While his gills were breathing in the terrible oxygen—the frightening gills, fresh and crisp with blood, that can cut so badly— I thought of the coarse white flesh packed in like feathers, the big bones and the little bones, the dramatic reds and blacks of his shiny entrails,² and the pink swim-bladder³ like a big peony.

15 I looked into his eyes which were far larger than mine but shallower, and yellowed, the irises backed and packed with tarnished tinfoil.

1. Venerable means “deserving respect because of age.”
2. Entrails are internal organs.
3. A swim-bladder, or air bladder, is an air sac that enables some fish to maintain buoyancy and equilibrium.
seen through the lenses
of old scratched isinglass.\footnote{Isinglass \( (\text{'zin glas'}) \) was used in windows before glass panes became common.}
They shifted a little, but not
to return my stare.
—It was more like the tipping
of an object toward the light.
I admired his sullen face,
the mechanism of his jaw,
and then I saw
that from his lower lip
—if you could call it a lip—
grim, wet, and weapon-like,
hung five old pieces of fish-line,
or four and a wire leader
with the swivel still attached,
with all their five big hooks
grown firmly in his mouth.
A green line, frayed at the end
where he broke it, two heavier lines,
and a fine black thread
still crimped from the strain and snap
when it broke and he got away.
Like medals with their ribbons
frayed and wavering,
a five-haired beard of wisdom
trailing from his aching jaw.
I stared and stared
and victory filled up
the little rented boat,
from the pool of bilge\footnote{Bilge \( (\text{bilj}) \) is stagnant water in the bottom of a boat.}
where oil had spread a rainbow
around the rusted engine
to the bailer rusted orange,
the sun-cracked thwarts,\footnote{Thwarts \( (\text{thworts}) \) are seats going across a small boat.}
the oarlocks on their strings,
the gunnels\footnote{Gunnels \( (\text{ga' nalz}) \) are the upper edges of the sides of a boat.}—until everything
was rainbow, rainbow, rainbow!
And I let the fish go.

\footnote{4. \textit{Isinglass} \( (\text{'zin glas'}) \) was used in windows before glass panes became common.}

\footnote{5. \textit{Bilge} \( (\text{bilj}) \) is stagnant water in the bottom of a boat.}

\footnote{6. \textit{Thwarts} \( (\text{thworts}) \) are seats going across a small boat.}

\footnote{7. \textit{Gunnels} \( (\text{ga' nalz}) \) are the upper edges of the sides of a boat.}
Oh, but it is dirty!
—this little filling station,
oil-soaked, oil-permeated
to a disturbing, over-all
black translucency.
Be careful with that match!

Father wears a dirty,
oil-soaked monkey suit
that cuts him under the arms,
and several quick and saucy
and greasy sons assist him
(it's a family filling station),
all quite thoroughly dirty.

Literary Element
Tone What does this
line suggest about the speaker's attitude
toward the gas station?

Vocabulary
permeate (pur´ mē´ āt´) v. to penetrate,
spread through, or diffuse
Do they live in the station?

It has a cement porch
behind the pumps, and on it
a set of crushed and grease-
impregnated wickerwork;
on the wicker sofa
a dirty dog, quite comfy.

Some comic books provide
the only note of color—
of certain color. They lie
upon a big dim doily
(draping a taboret
(part of the set), beside
a big hirsute begonia.

Why the extraneous plant?
Why the taboret?
Why, oh why, the doily?
(Embroidered in daisy stitch
with marguerites, I think,
and heavy with gray crochet.)

Somebody embroidered the doily.
Somebody waters the plant,
or oils it, maybe. Somebody
arranges the rows of cans
so that they softly say:
esso—so—so—so
to high-strung automobiles.
Somebody loves us all.

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1. A doily is a small, often decorative, napkin.
2. A taboret is a seat or stool without arms or back.
3. Hirsute means “hairy.”

**Reading Strategy**  Evaluating Sensory Details

*What is significant about the doily’s presence?*

**Vocabulary**

extraneous (ek strəˈne əs) adj. not intrinsically belonging; not forming a vital part; coming from outside
Respond
1. What was your initial reaction to the fish in the first poem and the filling station in the second? Did your reactions change as you read? Explain.

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) In “The Fish,” what details about the fish are provided in lines 1–21? (b) How would you characterize the fish based on these details? Cite words and phrases from the poem to support your conclusion.
3. (a) To what does the speaker compare the fish-lines hanging from the fish’s mouth? (b) What does this comparison tell you about how the speaker sees the fish? Explain.
4. (a) In line 66, what does the speaker say fills the boat? (b) What, in your opinion, motivates the speaker to let the fish go? Explain.
5. (a) In “Filling Station,” who runs the filling station? (b) In what terms does the speaker describe the station and the people who run it?
6. (a) What details in the poem may provide clues about the lives of the people who run the station? (b) To the speaker, what do these details suggest about people in general? Explain.

Analyze and Evaluate
7. One critic wrote that Bishop focused less on an event than on what she “saw and felt and shared with others.” In what ways do these two poems support and contradict this statement? Explain your answer citing details from the poem.
8. (a) In “The Fish,” how do the speaker’s feelings and ideas about the fish develop over the course of the poem? (b) If you had been in the boat, would you have drawn the same conclusions about the fish that the speaker does? Explain.
9. Why do you think Bishop chose to end “Filling Station” with the sentence in line 41? Explain how this sentence influences the meaning of the poem as a whole.

Connect

**Literary Analysis**

**Literary Element** Tone

Tone is the author’s attitude toward his or her subject matter. Some tones are clearly defined. Other tones are more complicated, reflecting a combination of emotions in the author.

1. How would you describe the tone in the first half of “The Fish”? Cite examples of words or sentences that you feel indicate the tone.
2. How does the tone of “The Fish” change in the second half of the poem? What does the change in tone reveal about the speaker’s perceptions of the fish? Give examples of words or sentences that demonstrate the changed tone. Then explain how the tone works with other elements of the poem to create an overall meaning, or theme. Include a summary of the theme in your answer.

**Review: Setting**

As you learned in unit 4, setting is the time and place in which the events of a literary work occur. Setting includes not only physical surroundings, but also the ideas and customs of a time and place. In “Filling Station,” much energy is devoted to investigating and detailing the setting.

**Partner Activity** Meet with another classmate to discuss the setting of “Filling Station.” Create a web like the one below and use it to list the different elements of the poem’s setting. Then discuss what atmosphere, or mood, these details of setting help to create. Share your thoughts with the class.
Reading Strategy  Evaluating Sensory Details

Sensory details are images that appeal to the reader’s senses of hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch. These images help readers to more closely experience the content of a poem.

1. Identify an image from each poem that appeals to your sense of sight. For each image, tell what you see in your mind’s eye.

2. One critic says that “the more we examine the description of contrast, the more we understand the poetry of Elizabeth Bishop.” How does this statement apply to “The Fish” and “Filling Station”? In your answer, include examples of sensory details.

Vocabulary  Practice

Practice with Context Clues  For each sentence, use context clues to determine the meaning of the word in boldface.

1. If you incorrectly apply the cleanser, you may tarnish the candlestick.
   a. illuminate  b. warm  c. stain
2. Acid is strong; it can permeate almost any container.
   a. penetrate b. isolate c. distill
3. If you add extraneous elements to the recipe, the food will taste wrong.
   a. excellent b. outside c. characteristic

Writing About Literature

Evaluate Author’s Craft  Poetry often creates strong responses and opinions in its readers. According to critic Ronald E. McFarland, readers of Elizabeth Bishop’s “The Fish” commonly pose objections which concern opposite ends of the critical spectrum. One objection is to the integrity of Bishop’s fish: it does not seem realistic; it is too ugly; what kind of fish is it supposed to be anyway? Another is to the conceptual limitations of the poem: the imagery is admirable, but that is not enough . . . ; after close examination of [the] ugly old fish, [the] fisherman releases it—so what?

What is your opinion of the Bishop poems you have read? Do you agree with either of the opinions noted by McFarland? Write a review of either “The Fish” or “The Filling Station.” Discuss what you liked or disliked about either of the poems in your review. You may choose to respond to critical reactions to the poems in your review. Support your opinions with examples from the text. In your review, you should also discuss the poem’s theme as well as the tone, mood, and setting.

Performing

Create a Multimedia Presentation  With a group, do research to create a multimedia presentation on “The Fish.”

• Begin your presentation by giving a brief overview of Bishop’s life and work. You may include photographs, slides, and/or recordings of Bishop reading her poems.

• Next, present an analysis of “The Fish.” You may wish to begin your group’s analysis by reading the poem out loud. During the reading, you may play music to help reinforce the mood of the poem.

• Accompany your discussion with photographs, works of fine art, or any other visual or auditory elements that you think will enhance your discussion.

• End the presentation by giving a conclusion about “The Fish” and presenting two or three questions for further research.

Web Activities  For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
MEET THEODORE ROETHKE

A much loved and acclaimed poet during his lifetime, Theodore Roethke won many prestigious awards, including the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, and the Bollingen Prize. However, many of his poems have received higher honors than official prizes can bestow: They have become personal favorites for many readers, touching their lives deeply.

Roethke fashioned many of his poems from intense memories of his childhood in Saginaw, Michigan. His father and grandfather were florists, and Roethke grew up in a world of flowers, plants, and large commercial greenhouses. From these early experiences, he acquired a passionate love for nature and a deep understanding of natural processes. Like Emerson and Whitman, he almost mystically identified with nature: “In my veins, in my bones I feel it.” Images of growth and decay recur in all of his volumes of poetry, including *Open House* (1941), *The Lost Son and Other Poems* (1948), *The Waking* (1953), and *Words for the Wind* (1958).

“For Roethke, boundaries between outer and inner dissolve; the natural world seems a vast landscape of the psyche, just as the voyage inward leads to natural things—roots, leaves, and flowers—as emblems of the recesses of the self.”

—Mark Doty, from *A Profile of Twentieth-Century American Poetry*

Finding His Calling  During Roethke’s sophomore year of high school, his father died from lung cancer. This loss devastated Roethke. At seventeen, he entered the University of Michigan, the first in his family to attend college. He graduated magna cum laude and after a semester in law school, enrolled as a graduate student in literature, first at the University of Michigan and one year later at Harvard University.

At Harvard, Roethke handed three of his poems to Robert Hillyer, a poet and professor. After reading them, Hillyer said, “Any editor who wouldn’t buy these is a fool!” Encouraged by Hillyer, Roethke submitted the poems to different journals and dedicated his life to writing poetry.

Poet and Teacher  Despite his success in getting his poems published, Roethke could not afford to continue graduate school in 1931, when the United States was mired in the Great Depression. He took a position teaching English at Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, and later taught at Michigan State College, Pennsylvania State University, Bennington College, and the University of Washington.

Roethke brought the same passion to teaching as he did to writing poetry. Throughout his adult life, however, he struggled with psychological problems. He died of a heart attack when he was only fifty-five.

Theodore Roethke was born in 1908 and died in 1963.

**Author Search**  For more about Theodore Roethke, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poem

In “Root Cellar,” the speaker recalls a sensory-rich place in nature. As you read the poem, think about the following questions:

- Which places in nature can you recall in great detail?
- What did these places teach you about life?

Building Background

A root cellar is a dark, moist place where root vegetables, including carrots, beets, and potatoes, are stored for the winter along with potting soil and fertilizers. Root cellars are commonly built into the sides of hills, where the surrounding earth and the dirt floors help keep the temperature inside cool and the humidity high. Even in root cellars, however, produce can spoil. Sometimes, mold forms on the surfaces of plants, causing them to decay. Other times, vegetables stored too long begin to sprout, causing the roots or bulbs to rot.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea  Nature and Technology

As you read “Root Cellar,” consider what the speaker suggests about the relationship between humans and nature.

Literary Element  Simile

A simile is a figure of speech using a word or phrase such as like or as to compare seemingly unlike things. As you read this poem, look for examples of similes and notice what is compared.


Reading Strategy  Interpreting Imagery

Interpreting imagery can help you better understand the meaning of a poem and the poet’s intention. Imagery refers to any “word pictures” that writers create to evoke emotional responses. Imagery includes sensory details, or descriptions that appeal to one or more of the five senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell.

Reading Tip: Taking Notes  Use a chart to record the images in this poem and their sensory appeal.

Vocabulary

mildewed (mil’dyud) adj. coated or partially coated with a fungus that causes spoilage; p. 1218 We threw out the books stored in the basement because they were mildewed and damaged.

congress (kon’gris) n. a formal meeting; p. 1218 There was a congress of physicists at the convention center.

rank (rangk) adj. having a strong, offensive odor; p. 1218 The clothing left in the gym lockers was dirty and rank.

Vocabulary Tip: Synonyms  Words that have the same or nearly the same meaning are called synonyms. For example, the words dank and moist are synonyms. Synonyms are always the same part of speech.
Nothing would sleep in that cellar, dank as a ditch,
Bulbs\(^1\) broke out of boxes hunting for chinks\(^2\) in the dark,
Shoots dangled and drooped,
Lolling obscenely from mildewed crates,
Hung down long yellow evil necks, like tropical snakes.
And what a congress of stinks!—
Roots ripe\(^3\) as old bait,
Pulpy stems, rank, silo-rich,\(^4\)
Leaf-mold, manure, lime,\(^5\) piled against slippery planks.
Nothing would give up life:
Even the dirt kept breathing a small breath.

1. Bulbs, here, refer to modified, underground stems surrounded by fleshy leaves that serve as the food supply for the growing plant.
2. Chinks are narrow openings.
3. Ripe, here, means "giving off a very foul odor."
4. A silo is a tall, cylindrical structure in which plant materials are stored. The adjective silo-rich refers to an odor similar to that emitted by partially fermented plant materials stored in a silo.
5. Lime, here, refers to a chemical used as a fertilizer for plants.

Big Idea  Nature and Technology  Why does the speaker describe the necks of the shoots as evil?

Reading Strategy  Interpreting Imagery  How do the sensory details change with line 6 of the poem?

Vocabulary

mildewed  (mil′ dyūd) adj. coated or partially coated with a fungus that causes spoilage
congress  (kong′ gris) n. a formal meeting
rank  (rangk) adj. having a strong, offensive odor
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Which details from this poem surprised you the most? Explain.

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) Which word does the speaker use to describe the root cellar? (b) What does this word usually suggest?
3. (a) What does the speaker observe happening in the root cellar? (b) What do the last two lines of the poem suggest about the speaker’s attitude toward what he observes? Explain.
4. What might the root cellar symbolize in this poem?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) What examples of alliteration, or the repetition of initial consonant sounds, can you find in this poem? (b) What effects does this technique help to create?
6. In this poem Roethke uses free verse, with the line length and the meter expanding and contracting as needed. How is the form of the poem appropriate to the subject?
7. Roethke claimed that in some of his early poems, he began “with small things and had tried to make plain words do the trick.” To what extent does Roethke’s statement apply to the subject and the diction of this poem? Explain.

Connect
8. Big Idea Nature and Technology What does Roethke suggest about the relationship between humans and nature in this poem?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Simile
Writers use similes to make descriptions more vivid or to explain something unfamiliar by comparing it to something familiar.
1. Identify three similes in the poem.
2. Which simile did you find most vivid and original?

Writing About Literature
Respond to Theme Using the poem “Root Cellar” as a model, write your own poem about a sensory-rich place in nature. Include similes that are natural, yet original, and diction that is clear, direct, and striking.

READING AND VOCABULARY

Reading Strategy Interpreting Imagery
“Root Cellar” is remarkable for the number and variety of its sensory details. Review the chart you made on page 1217 that lists examples of these details in the poem.
1. Which sensory details do you think create the most vivid images?
2. What do the sensory details suggest about the root cellar?

Vocabulary Practice
Practice with Synonyms Find the synonym for each vocabulary word from “Root Cellar” listed in the first column. Use a dictionary or a thesaurus if you need help.
1. congress a. announcement b. caucus
2. mildewed a. parched b. moldy
3. rank a. fragrant b. putrid
MEET SYLVIA PLATH

It seemed that Sylvia Plath was born to be a poet. She was only eight years old when a Boston newspaper published her first poem. In high school, Plath won numerous literary prizes and excelled academically, earning a scholarship to Smith College. During her time in college, her poetry and prose were published in prestigious national magazines, and she continued to win awards for her work. Sadly, however, her creative journey was shadowed by bouts of severe depression, during which she struggled with thoughts of death. These struggles ended when Plath took her own life at the age of thirty, a month after her critically acclaimed novel, The Bell Jar, was first published. Because much of her writing was so starkly personal, Plath’s struggles and death have been closely tied to her image as a poet. However, Plath’s dark, beautiful poems speak on their own, fulfilling her ambition to create profound and lasting works.

“I think my poems immediately come out of the sensuous and emotional experiences I have, but . . . I believe that one should be able to control and manipulate experiences, even the most terrific.”

—Sylvia Plath
from a 1962 interview with Peter Orr

Confessions of a Poet Plath was born in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. Her father, Otto Plath, was a German immigrant and respected college professor who wrote a renowned study on bees. Her mother, Aurelia, had been one of her father’s students at Boston University, where she graduated as valedictorian. Plath’s father died when she was just eight, and the loss deeply affected her.

After graduating from Smith College, Plath was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship and went on to Cambridge, England, for her graduate studies in poetry. It was there, in February 1956, that she met an ambitious young British poet, the soon-to-be-famous Ted Hughes. By June they were married, beginning a passionate but turbulent relationship that heavily influenced the poetry of both Plath and Hughes. They were exploring an emerging type of literature—confessional poetry, which draws heavily on intimate details from the writer’s life. After Cambridge, Plath returned to Massachusetts with Hughes and took a writing class with Robert Lowell, a highly regarded poet of the confessional school.

After a short time teaching and writing in the United States, Plath and Hughes moved back to England, where Plath published her first book of poems, Colossus, in 1960. During the last years of her life, she wrote at an often feverish pace. Many of these final poems were included in Plath’s landmark collection Ariel, which was published two years after her death in February 1963. Over the next twenty years, more of Plath’s poems would be collected and published by Hughes. Her final book, The Collected Poems, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1982, the final step of her long journey into literary greatness.

Sylvia Plath was born in 1932 and died in 1963.

For more about Sylvia Plath, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poem

In the poems you are about to read, the speaker is isolated in nature, and the landscapes take on the qualities of a dream. As you read the poems, think about these questions:

- Have you ever been in a place that you thought reflected how you felt?
- Do your dreams ever symbolize what is going on in your life?

Building Background

The poems “Crossing the Water” and “Sleep in the Mojave Desert,” written in the early 1960s, appeared in collections that were published posthumously, or after her death. Her final years in England were the most productive period of her creative life. These poems were among the dozens that Plath wrote as she struggled with her deepening depression. Dark feelings pervade these startlingly original poems, which address loneliness, human suffering, and death. Although they do not include specific personal details, these are considered confessional poems because they explore Plath’s emotions.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea Nature and Technology

As you read, notice how the speaker in these poems is an outsider within the natural setting.

Literary Element Mood

Mood refers to the emotional quality, or atmosphere, of a literary work. The language, pace, and imagery combine to convey the mood of a poem. The mood conveys the poet’s view of the world and influences the expression of the poem itself. Particularly in writing that deals with intense emotion, mood can be a powerful element.


Reading Strategy Analyzing Voice

Voice is the personality that a writer conveys in a piece of writing. The reader can analyze voice by examining a poet’s choice of words and the tone, or attitude toward the subject matter, that a poem expresses. As you analyze voice, pay close attention to the kind of language the poet uses.

Reading Tip: Describing Voice Describe each element of voice in a chart like the one below. Consider what these elements contribute to the poem’s overall voice and write a description of that voice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulary

récédé (ri sē’d) v. to move back or away from a limit, point, or mark; p. 1222 After the storm passed, we could see the floodwater recede.

swelter (swel’ tar) v. to suffer from oppressive heat; p. 1222 The crowd will swelter under the sun.

congregate (kon’ gri gæt’) v. to bring or come together in a group, a crowd, or an assembly; p. 1222 The team will congregate in the dugout.

valedictory (val’ a dik’ ta’ ré) adj. of or relating to an occasion or expression of farewell; p. 1223 In his valedictory address, he bade farewell.

Vocabulary Tip: Synonyms Two words that have the same or nearly the same meaning are called synonyms. Note that synonyms are always the same part of speech.

OBJECTIVES

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

- analyzing setting
- comparing and contrasting setting
Out here there are no hearthstones,\(^2\)  
Hot grains, simply. It is dry, dry.  
And the air dangerous. Noonday acts queerly  
On the mind's eye, erecting a line  
5 Of poplars\(^3\) in the middle distance, the only  
Object beside the mad, straight road  
One can remember men and houses by.  
A cool wind should inhabit those leaves  
And a dew collect on them, dearer than money,  
10 In the blue hour before sunup.  
Yet they recede, untouchable as tomorrow,  
Or those glittery fictions of spilt water  
That glide ahead of the very thirsty.

I think of the lizards airing their tongues  
15 In the crevice of an extremely small shadow  
And the toad guarding his heart's droplet.  
The desert is white as a blind man's eye,  
Comfortless as salt. Snake and bird  
Doze behind the old masks of fury.  
20 We swelter like firedogs\(^4\) in the wind.  
The sun puts its cinder out. Where we lie  
The heat-cracked crickets congregate  
In their black armorplate and cry.  
The day-moon lights up like a sorry mother,  
25 And the crickets come creeping into our hair  
To fiddle the short night away.

1. The Mojave Desert is an arid region of southeastern California and parts of Arizona, Nevada, and Utah. Once part of an ancient inland sea, the desert was formed by volcanic action and materials deposited by the Colorado River.

2. Hearthstones are the stones used to create the floor of a fireplace; the word also conveys the sense of family life or home.

3. Poplars are fast-growing deciduous trees (trees that lose their leaves seasonally).

4. Firedogs, or andirons, are a pair of metal supports that hold logs in a fireplace.
Black lake, black boat, two black, cut-paper people.
Where do the black trees go that drink here?
Their shadows must cover Canada.

A little light is filtering from the water flowers.
Their leaves do not wish us to hurry:
They are round and flat and full of dark advice.

Cold worlds shake from the oar.
The spirit of blackness is in us, it is in the fishes.
A snag is lifting a valedictory, pale hand;

Stars open among the lilies.
Are you not blinded by such expressionless sirens?
This is the silence of astounded souls.

---

1. A snag is a tree or tree branch embedded in water that prevents navigation.
2. In Greek mythology, Sirens were half-bird, half-woman sea creatures whose sweet singing lured mariners to destruction on the rocks that surrounded their island.

**Literary Element**  Mood  What technique does Plath use in the opening lines to create mood?

**Vocabulary**

valedictory (val′ a dik′ ta′ rē) adj. of or relating to an occasion or expression of farewell
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond

1. Which images did you find most interesting or intriguing?

Recall and Interpret

2. (a) In “Sleep in the Mojave Desert,” to what common desert illusion do the lines “Or those glittery fictions of spilt water / That glide ahead of the very thirsty” refer? (b) What does the image represent in the poem?

3. (a) In “Crossing the Water,” what does the speaker say the water flowers’ leaves do not want her to do? (b) Why does she say this?

4. (a) In “Crossing the Water,” what concrete image does the line “Cold worlds shake from the oar” conjure up? (b) What does the line convey about the speaker’s emotions?

Analyze and Evaluate

5. In lines 14–16 of “Sleep in the Mojave Desert,” the poem seems to “zoom in” to provide close-up views of images. How does the poet achieve this effect, and what images does she use to suggest it?

6. In the last six lines of “Sleep in the Mojave Desert,” how does the poet create the effect of darkness that is closing in?

7. The first and last stanzas in “Crossing the Water” connect the beginning and the end of the poem by sharing the same structure. Why do you think the poet chose to do this?

Connect

8. Big Idea Nature and Technology The speaker relates to nature differently in each of these poems. Compare the relationship between the speaker and nature in these poems.

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Mood

Mood is a broad term that encompasses the overall impression created by a poem. Specific elements—such as language, subject matter, tone, setting, rhyme and rhythm—can all contribute to the mood. Because mood influences the poem as a whole, it can affect the way that images and events are portrayed or perceived. Mood is like a filter through which the poem is seen.

1. Identify the language, in the first three lines of “Sleep in the Mojave Desert,” that helps establish the mood. What mood does this language create?

2. How does the setting in “Sleep in the Mojave Desert” contribute to the mood of the poem?

3. What is the overall mood of “Crossing the Water”? How does it affect the way you interpret the last line?

Review: Figurative Language

Figurative Language is language used for descriptive effect, in order to convey ideas or emotions. Figurative expressions are not literally true but express some truth beyond the literal level.

Partner Activity With a partner, identify three or more examples of strong figurative language in the poems. Discuss how the language is used and analyze it together by determining (a) what it is describing within the poem and (b) what idea or emotion it is conveying. Record your analysis in a chart like the one below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figurative Language</th>
<th>What It Describes</th>
<th>Idea or Emotion That It Conveys</th>
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Reading Strategy  Analyzing Voice

Poets create voice through the distinctive use of language. Voice in a poem is embodied by the speaker and defined by the speaker’s attitude. In some poems, the voice is simply an extension of the writer as represented in the work. In other poems, the voice takes on its own character or persona—a mask or voice through which the writer speaks. Analyzing voice requires close examination of the speaker in the poem.

Although Plath’s poems often explore her own life and emotions, the voice she creates is usually a persona represented by the speaker. Confessional poetry carefully uses voice to blur the distinction between personal truth and poetic fiction.

1. These poems share a similar voice. What do the voices have in common?
2. How does the voice in these poems contribute to the effect they have? Support your answer with an example from the text.

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Synonyms  Read the following sentences. Choose the best synonym for the underlined word. Consult a dictionary if you need help.

1. His valedictory speech brought tears to the eyes of all who were present.
   (a) sad  (b) funeral  (c) farewell
2. The crowd receded as the funeral procession approached.
   (a) cooled  (b) returned  (c) retreated
3. With no trees for shade, the horses sweltered in the sun.
   (a) thirsted  (b) overheated  (c) died
4. The townspeople congregated for the controversial town council meeting.
   (a) froze  (b) contemplated  (c) gathered

Writing About Literature

Compare and Contrast Setting  The setting, or the time and place in which a poem occurs, often helps create an atmosphere or mood. In both “Crossing the Water” and “Sleep in the Mojave Desert,” the setting plays an important role. Write a brief essay comparing and contrasting the setting in these two poems. Discuss the various elements that make up the setting of each poem and cite examples from the text. In addition, make sure to compare and contrast the ways in which the setting is used. For example, you should show how the setting contributes to the atmosphere or mood of each poem.

Before you begin writing, you can organize your ideas by means of a Venn Diagram. In the overlapping area list elements that the two settings have in common. In the outer section of each circle, list elements that are unique to each setting.

"Crossing the Water"  Both Poems  "Sleep in the Mojave Desert"

After you complete your draft, meet with a partner to review each other’s work and to suggest revisions that might strengthen each essay. Then proofread your draft for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Literary Criticism

Group Activity  The critic M.D. Uroff asserts that Plath’s confessional poems do not utter “uninformed cries from the heart . . .”; rather, she “deal[s] with her experience by creating characters who could not deal with theirs.” In what ways do you think this claim is true or untrue for the two Plath poems you have just read? Discuss this question with a small group of classmates.

Web Activities  For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
MEET STANLEY KUNITZ

Stanley Kunitz wrote many books of poetry and received numerous awards. His earlier work displays great wit and defiance; his later poems often express a passionate search for meaning and identity. One of the finest expressions of that quest is found in his poem “The Layers”:

I have walked through many lives, of them my own, 
and I am not who I was, though some principle of being abides, from which I struggle not to stray.

Kunitz, who twice served as U.S. Poet Laureate, has won several literary awards, including a Pulitzer Prize for his Selected Poems: 1928–1958 and a National Book Award for Passing Through: The Later Poems, New and Selected. In 1993, President Clinton awarded Kunitz the National Medal of the Arts.

Early Years Born in Worcester, Massachusetts, Stanley Kunitz studied at Harvard, where he graduated summa cum laude in 1926 and earned a master's degree in 1927. “I felt very isolated as a young person,” he stated. “I didn't know another soul with whom I could share my interests. Eventually, after my Harvard years, I gravitated to New York, the magnet city of the arts, where I found an editorial job and began to send out my poems [for publication in literary magazines] ... but I was too busy and too shy to make friends easily, so I still felt like an outsider.” In poetry, Kunitz found an outlet for his loneliness and a vehicle for exploring his “hidden self.”

Poet and Teacher Intellectual Things, his first volume of poetry, was published in 1930, when he was only twenty-five years old. Fourteen years later, Passport to War was published. Then, after serving in World War II, Kunitz accepted a teaching position at Bennington College, where he joined fellow poet Theodore Roethke. Eventually, Kunitz taught at several other esteemed colleges and universities, including Yale, Princeton, Rutgers, and the New School for Social Research. He also served as poet-in-residence at the University of Washington, Queens College, Brandeis University, and Princeton and for many years taught in the graduate writing program at Columbia University, which he helped found. To further encourage and develop young writers, Kunitz founded the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, Massachusetts, and Poets House in New York City.

Kunitz, indeed, always enjoyed mentoring and encouraging young people interested in the arts. In 1984 the National Endowment for the Arts awarded him a Senior Fellowship “for his inordinate generosity in working with younger writers.” Kunitz often responded to such accolades with characteristic wit. During an interview he said, “As for my companionship with younger poets, I feel that I'm the one who's blessed in that relationship.”

In addition to his poetry and literary criticism, Kunitz translated Russian poems by Yevtushenko, Stolzenberg, Akhmatova, and others into English and edited volumes of poetry by the British poets William Blake and John Keats. Kunitz was considered one of the most gifted and influential writers of the modern era.

Stanley Kunitz was born in 1905 and died in 2006.

Author Search For more about Stanley Kunitz, go to www.glencoe.com.
Connecting to the Poem
Like the Romantic poets, Stanley Kunitz cherishes his relationship with nature. “I’ve found that I am more at peace with myself when I’m in daily contact with the natural world,” he has said. “The War Against the Trees” reflects his respect for nature and the value of unspoiled land. As you read, think about the following questions:
• Which is more important to you: natural landscape or new development?
• What happens when a natural landscape is destroyed?

Building Background
After World War II, the United States enjoyed a booming economy. Many soldiers and sailors returning home from the war attended college on the G.I. Bill, married, and started families. Cities spread out, and suburbs sprang up. In many parts of the country, land was cleared to make way for factories, housing developments, shopping malls, and schools. The national mood was optimistic, and growth and development were regarded as sure signs of the triumph of technology. Swept along in the march of progress, the public often condoned the destruction of natural landscapes.

Setting Purposes for Reading
Big Idea | Nature and Technology
As you read this poem, notice how Kunitz depicts the conflict between nature and technology.

Literary Element | Personification
Personification is a figure of speech in which an animal, an object, a force of nature, or an idea is given human characteristics. For example, in the poem “Because I could not stop for Death,” Emily Dickinson personifies death as a courtly gentleman. As you read “The War Against the Trees,” look for examples of personification.

Reading Strategy | Evaluating Figures of Speech
A figure of speech is a specific device or kind of figurative language. Poets use figures of speech to create descriptive effects and to convey ideas or emotions. In this poem, Kunitz often uses metaphor, a figure of speech that equates two unlike things. As you read, note and evaluate examples of metaphor.

Reading Tip: Charting Figurative Language Use a chart to list metaphors and the effect of the comparison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metaphor</th>
<th>Things Compared</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“the bulldozers . . . overthrowing first the privet-row”</td>
<td>the bulldozers and an attacking army</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulary
lopped (lopt) v. trimmed or chopped off, as the branches of a tree; p. 1228 With its branches lopped off, the tree looked stubby and bare.
subverting (sub vurity ing) v. overthrowing and destroying; p. 1228 The people were intent on subverting the dictator and replacing him with a merciful ruler.
rampages (ram’ paj´ iz) v. rushes wildly about; scurries; p. 1228 The hungry squirrel rampages from tree to tree, searching for acorns.
grievous (gré vus) adj. causing or characterized by grief; extremely sad; p. 1228 The memorial service was a grievous occasion for both family and friends.
The man who sold his lawn to standard oil
Joked with his neighbors come to watch the show
While the bulldozers, drunk with gasoline,
Tested the virtue of the soil
Under the branchy sky
By overthrowing first the privet-row.

Forsythia-forays and hydrangea-raids
Were but preliminaries to a war
Against the great-grandfathers of the town,
So freshly lopped and maimed.
They struck and struck again,
And with each elm a century went down.

All day the hireling engines charged the trees,
Subverting them by hacking underground
In grub-dominions, where dark summer’s mole
Rampages through his halls,
Till a northern seizure shook
Those crowns, forcing the giants to their knees.

I saw the ghosts of children at their games
Racing beyond their childhood in the shade,
And while the green world turned its death-foxed page
And a red wagon wheeled,
I watched them disappear
Into the suburbs of their grievous age.

Ripped from the craters much too big for hearts
The club-roots bared their amputated coils,
Raw gorgons matted blind, whose pocks and scars
Cried Moon! on a corner lot
One witness-moment, caught
In the rear-view mirrors of the passing cars.

1. An oil company has bought the land.
2. A privet-row is a row of bushes.
3. Elm trees grow very tall and, if they survive such onslaughts as Dutch Elm Disease, can live for more than a hundred years.
4. Both grubs and moles live underground. Grubs are the wormlike larvae of beetles, and moles are burrowing rodents.
5. Crowns refers to the top branches of the trees.
6. In Greek mythology, the Gorgons were three monstrous sisters with coiled snakes for hair.
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. What are your thoughts or feelings after reading this poem?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) Why is the land being cleared of trees? (b) Why have the neighbors “come to watch the show”?
3. (a) What are the “preliminaries” to the “war against the trees”? (b) Why does the speaker describe the bulldozers as “drunk with gasoline”?
4. (a) How do the bulldozers attack the trees? (b) Why does this action eventually topple them?
5. (a) What scene does the speaker imagine as the trees are coming down? (b) What message does the speaker convey through this scene? Explain.

Analyze and Evaluate
6. (a) After the trees have fallen, why does the speaker compare the land to the moon’s surface? (b) Is this comparison effective or not? Explain.
7. (a) In the last two lines of the poem, what does the speaker suggest about the motorists driving by? (b) Does this image provide an effective ending to the poem? Explain why or why not.

Connect
8. Big Idea Nature and Technology Which people might conclude that they have won this “war”? Which people might conclude that they have lost it?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Personification
Poets often use personification to give ordinary, life-less objects human characteristics such as personality, dignity, motive, and force.
1. How does the speaker personify the trees and the bulldozers? What do these personifications suggest?
2. With coiled snakes for hair, the gorgons of Greek mythology were hideous creatures. Anyone who had the misfortune to behold them was immediately turned into stone. In the final stanza, the speaker personifies the exposed roots of the trees as gorgons. What physical characteristics of the roots might prompt the speaker to personify them in this way?

Writing About Literature
Evaluate Contemporary Relevance Is the theme, or message about life, that Kunitz conveys in “The War Against the Trees” still relevant today? Write a few paragraphs explaining your views. Support them with details from the poem and your personal experiences.

Reading and Vocabulary

Reading Strategy Evaluating Figures of Speech
Occasionally, writers use an extended metaphor, or one that develops beyond a single line. What extended metaphor is used in “The War Against the Trees”? How effective do you think it is?

Vocabulary Practice

Practice with Analogies Choose the word pair that best completes each analogy.
1. grievous : loss ::
   a. slight : prediction
   b. glorious : victory
   c. humble : award
   d. shameful : honor
2. lopped : cut ::
   a. ignite : extinguish
   b. gaze : look
   c. climb : descend
   d. succeed : fail

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
In 1962, scientist and author Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring* in an effort to warn the public about the serious environmental risks of such pesticides as DDT. Carson argued that chemicals, widely used to increase agricultural productivity, were polluting U.S. rivers and streams, killing birds and fish, and greatly increasing the risks for many forms of cancer. Immediately, the chemical industry, agricultural organizations, and many government officials questioned the validity of the book’s findings. However, scientific studies ordered by President John F. Kennedy found evidence to support Carson’s research. These studies led to new legislation that banned or limited pesticide use.

Set a Purpose for Reading

Read to discover Carson’s persuasive dramatization of the dangers that chemicals pose to the environment.

Reading Strategy

Recognizing Author’s Purpose

To determine an author’s purpose, carefully analyze such elements as the tone, structure, and content. As you read, jot down clues that will help you identify Carson’s purpose for beginning *Silent Spring* with a tale about a town destroyed by chemicals.

There was once a town in the heart of America where all life seemed to live in harmony with its surroundings. The town lay in the midst of a checkerboard of prosperous farms, with fields of grain and hillsides of orchards where, in spring, white clouds of bloom drifted above the green fields. In autumn, oak and maple and birch set up a blaze of color that flamed and flickered across a backdrop of pines. Then foxes barked in the hills and deer silently crossed the fields, half hidden in the mists of the fall mornings.

Along the roads, laurel, viburnum and alder, great ferns and wildflowers delighted the traveler’s eye through much of the year. Even in winter the roadsides were places of beauty, where countless birds came to feed on the berries and on the seed heads of the dried weeds rising above the snow. The countryside was, in fact, famous for the abundance and variety of

1. The farmland looks somewhat like a checkerboard because each square field, planted with different crops, is slightly different in color and texture.

2. Laurel refers to the flowering shrub mountain laurel; viburnum is the scientific name for the fragrant honeysuckle bush; alder is the name of trees in the birch family.
its bird life, and when the flood of migrants\(^3\) was pouring through in spring and fall people traveled from great distances to observe them. Others came to fish the streams, which flowed clear and cold out of the hills and contained shady pools where trout lay. So it had been from the days many years ago when the first settlers raised their houses, sank their wells, and built their barns.

Then a strange blight\(^4\) crept over the area and everything began to change. Some evil spell had settled on the community: mysterious maladies\(^5\) swept the flocks of chickens; the cattle and sheep sickened and died. Everywhere was a shadow of death. The farmers spoke of much illness among their families. In the town the doctors had become more and more puzzled by new kinds of sickness appearing among their patients. There had been several sudden and unexplained deaths, not only among adults but even among children, who would be stricken suddenly while at play and die within a few hours.

There was a strange stillness. The birds, for example—where had they gone? Many people spoke of them, puzzled and disturbed. The feeding stations in the backyards were deserted. The few birds seen anywhere were moribund\(^6\); they trembled violently and could not fly. It was a spring without voices. On the mornings that had once throbbed with the dawn chorus of robins, catbirds, doves, jays, wrens, and scores of other bird voices there was now no sound; only silence lay over the fields and woods and marsh.

On the farms the hens brooded, but no chicks hatched. The farmers complained that they were unable to raise any pigs—the litters were small and the young survived only a few days. The apple trees were coming into bloom but no bees droned among the blossoms, so there was no pollination and there would be no fruit.

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3. Here, *migrants* refers to migrating birds.
4. A *blight* is a widespread withering or illness caused by such negative forces as pollution, bacteria, insects, or parasites.
5. *Maladies* are illnesses.
6. *Moribund* means "having very little strength left." The remaining birds are weakening and dying.
The roadsides, once so attractive, were now lined with browned and withered vegetation as though swept by fire. These, too, were silent, deserted by all living things. Even the streams were now lifeless. Anglers no longer visited them, for all the fish had died. In the gutters under the eaves and between the shingles of the roofs, a white granular powder still showed a few patches; some weeks before it had fallen like snow upon the roofs and the lawns, the fields and streams.

No witchcraft, no enemy action had silenced the rebirth of new life in this stricken world. The people had done it themselves.

This town does not actually exist, but it might easily have a thousand counterparts in America or elsewhere in the world. I know of no community that has experienced all the misfortunes I describe. Yet every one of these disasters has actually happened somewhere, and many real communities have already suffered a substantial number of them. A grim specter has crept upon us almost unnoticed, and this imagined tragedy may easily become a stark reality we all shall know.

7. An angler is a person who fishes with a rod and reel.

**RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY**

**Respond**

1. What most shocked or surprised you about the possible effects of environmental pollution that Carson suggests? Explain.

**Recall and Interpret**

2. (a) Describe the change that occurs in the town. (b) What might the “white granular powder” have been? Explain your interpretation.

3. (a) What shift occurs in the final paragraph? (b) What effect do you think Carson is trying to achieve with this shift?

**Analyze and Evaluate**

4. Though Carson’s book makes scientific claims about the power of pesticides, she chose to begin the work with a simple tale rather than with dramatic examples of the misuse of dangerous chemicals. Why do you think she made that choice? Explain whether you think it was a wise choice.

5. This fable is set in a perfect, rural setting. Do you think it would have been more effective if Carson had chosen some other setting, such as a large city or suburb? Explain.

**Connect**

6. What thoughts about the environmental health of your community did this selection inspire in you? Explain.
MEET URSULA K. LE GUIN

Ursula Le Guin revolutionized science fiction writing. Before she began publishing her work in the 1960s, the genre of science fiction was dominated by male writers. Le Guin’s stories, in which women and people from different cultures began to appear as main characters, broadened the genre.

A Rich Background
Le Guin grew up in Berkeley, California, where her father, an internationally respected anthropology professor, taught at the university. Her mother, a writer with a background in psychology, wrote mainly children’s books but was famous for her nonfiction work about the lone survivor of the Yahi tribe of California. This book, *Ishi in Two Worlds*, is still read and admired today.

Scholar, Writer, and Mother
Le Guin always considered herself to be a writer. She wrote her first fantasy story at age nine. By age twelve, she had submitted a science fiction story for publication in a magazine. Although the story was not accepted, Le Guin took pride in receiving a “real rejection slip.” Unfazed, she continued writing. Her father, however, encouraged Le Guin to be practical when it was time to choose a career. A talented scholar of languages, Le Guin graduated from Radcliffe College (the women’s college associated with Harvard) in 1951 with a degree in French. By the next year, she had completed her master’s degree in the same subject. She planned to write a dissertation, receive her doctorate, and make a career of teaching at the university level.

That plan soon changed. In 1953 Le Guin was on her way to Europe on a Fulbright scholarship to study Italian and French Renaissance literature. Traveling on the ocean liner the *Queen Mary*, Le Guin met another Fulbright scholar, Charles Le Guin, who was also going to study in Europe. The two fell in love and were married by the end of the year.

“My father studied real cultures and I make them up—in a way, it’s the same thing.”
—Ursula K. Le Guin

When the Le Guins returned to the United States, Ursula decided to stop her program of study to pursue writing and to raise a family. She sold her first science fiction story in 1962. Four years later, her first novel was published.

A Prolific Career
Le Guin has published more than thirty novels, including numerous works for children and young adult readers. Her short stories number over one hundred. Le Guin has received dozens of awards for her work, among them the prestigious Hugo and Nebula awards for her science fiction and the National Book Award. She has written poetry, essays, and literary criticism; collaborated on screenplays and an opera; and taught classes and workshops for many aspiring science fiction and fantasy writers. Le Guin believes strongly in the importance of the imagination, asserting that “It is above all by the imagination that we achieve perception, compassion, and hope.”

*Ursula K. Le Guin was born in 1929.*
Connecting to the Story
Everyone has moments in which they act “crazy,” meaning that they do things that they know they should not do, or that are extravagant, unwise, or simply silly. But what does it mean to label people as “crazy” or “insane”? “SQ” explores this question. As you read the story, think about the following questions:

- Is there an objective way to define insanity? Can a test measure someone’s mental health?
- What would be the benefits and drawbacks of checking mental health on a regular basis?

Building Background
“SQ” is set in an unspecified time in the future when one government rules the entire world. Over time, one department of the government gains more and more power. The head of this department, Dr. Speakie, advocates regular and frequent testing of the mental health of everyone in the world. Dr. Speakie uses a standardized test for this purpose.

Standardized tests are often used to test people’s mastery of academic subjects or their aptitude for different professions. In addition, standardized tests have been devised to measure intelligence. Such tests are called intelligence quotient, or IQ, tests. Although widely used, these tests remain controversial in terms of what exactly they can measure.

Setting Purposes for Reading

Big Idea  Nature and Technology
As you read, assess the importance of technology in Dr. Speakie’s plan.

Literary Element  Satire
Satire is writing that uses humor to comment on philosophical ideas, social customs, political institutions, and even general human tendencies. As you read “SQ,” identify the different things that Le Guin satirizes.


Vocabulary
implementation  (im’ plə man tä’ sham) n. putting into effect; putting into use; p. 1236  The implementation of a test involves several steps.
infrastructure  (in’ fra struk’ char) n. the underlying base for an organization or a system; p. 1237  Without the infrastructure of teachers, administrators, and building support staff, it would be difficult to educate the youth of our nation.
stigma  (stig’ ma) n. mark or characteristic of disgrace; p. 1239  Ripped jeans have changed from stigma to fashion statement.
hysterical  (his ter’ i kəl) adj. characterized by panic or other uncontrolled emotion; p. 1241  A person who is hysterical might not make sense.
uncanny  (un kan’ é) adj. peculiarly unsettling in an eerie way; p. 1243  Bob’s knowledge of my unspoken thoughts was uncanny.

Vocabulary Tip: Word Analogies  An analogy is a way of showing that two relationships are the same.
I think what Dr. Speakie has done is wonderful. He is a wonderful man. I believe that. I believe that people need beliefs. If I didn’t have my belief, I really don’t know what would happen.

And if Dr. Speakie hadn’t truly believed in his work, he couldn’t possibly have done what he did. Where would he have found the courage? What he did proves his genuine sincerity.

There was a time when a lot of people tried to cast doubts on him. They said he was seeking power. That was never true. From the very beginning all he wanted was to help people and make a better world. The people who called him a power seeker and a dictator were just the same ones who used to say that Hitler was insane and Nixon was insane and our misuse of natural resources was insane and the whole world civilization was insane and suicidal. They were always saying that. And they said it about Dr. Speakie. But he stopped all that insanity, didn’t he? So he was right all along, and he was right to believe in his beliefs.

1. Nixon refers to Richard M. Nixon, who was U.S. president from 1969 to 1974. As president, Nixon was involved in a political scandal known as Watergate. In 1974 he opted to resign from office rather than face an impeachment trial.
I came to work for him when he was named the Chief of the Psychometric Bureau. I used to work at the U.N., and when the World Government took over the New York U.N. Building, they transferred me up to the thirty-fifth floor to be the head secretary in Dr. Speakie's office. I knew already that it was a position of great responsibility, and I was quite excited the whole week before my new job began. I was so curious to meet Dr. Speakie, because of course he was already famous. I was there right at the dot of nine on Monday morning, and when he came in, it was so wonderful. He looked so kind. You could tell that the weight of his responsibilities was always on his mind, but he looked so healthy and positive, and there was a bounce in his step—I used to think it was as if he had rubber balls in the toes of his shoes. He smiled and shook my hand and said in such a friendly, confident voice, “And you must be Mrs. Smith! I’ve heard wonderful things about you. We’re going to have a wonderful team here, Mrs. Smith!”

Later on he called me by my first name, of course.

That first year we were mostly busy with Information. The World Government Presidium and all the Member States had to be fully informed about the nature and purpose of the SQ Test, before the actual implementation of its application could be eventualized. That was good for me too, because in preparing all that information I learned all about it myself. Often, taking dictation, I learned about it from Dr. Speakie’s very lips. By May I was enough of an “expert” that I was able to prepare the Basic SQ Information Pamphlet for publication just from Dr. Speakie’s notes. It was such fascinating work. As soon as I began to understand the SQ Test Plan, I began to believe in it. That was true of everybody else in the office and in the Bureau. Dr. Speakie’s sincerity and scientific enthusiasm were infectious. Right from the beginning we had to take the Test every quarter, of course, and some of the secretaries used to be nervous before they took it, but I never was. It was so obvious that the Test was right. If you scored under 50 it was nice to know that you were sane, but even if you scored over 50 that was fine too, because then you could be helped. And anyway it is always best to know the truth about yourself.

As soon as the Information service was functioning smoothly, Dr. Speakie transferred the main thrust of his attention to the implementation of Evaluator training, and planning for the structurization of the Cure Centers, only he changed the name to SQ Achievement Centers. It seemed a very big job even then. We certainly had no idea how big the job would finally turn out to be!

As he said at the beginning, we were a very good team. We all worked hard, but there were always rewards.

I remember one wonderful day. I had accompanied Dr. Speakie to the Meeting of the Board of the Psychometric Bureau. The emissary from the State of Brazil announced that his State had adopted the Bureau Recommendations for Universal Testing—we had known that that was going to be announced. But then the delegate from Libya and the delegate from China announced that their States had adopted the Test too! Oh, Dr. Speakie’s face was just like the sun for a minute,

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**Vocabulary**

2. Psychometric (si’ ka met’ rik) relates to a branch of psychology that deals with tests designed to measure any psychological variable, such as intelligence, aptitude, or personality type.


4. Taking dictation is the act of writing down what someone else is saying. It used to be common for secretaries to take dictation from their bosses. They would type up the information as a letter, a memo, or in another written format.

5. An emissary is a person sent on a mission to represent or advance the interests of another person, especially those of a leader of a nation.

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**Reading Strategy**

**Identifying Genre** What detail of the setting helps you identify this story as science fiction?

**Big Idea** Nature and Technology What does this sentence suggest about the author’s attitude toward technology?

**Vocabulary**

implementation (im’ pla man tâ’ shan) n. putting into effect; putting into use
just shining. I wish I could remember exactly what he said, especially to the Chinese delegate, because of course China was a very big State and its decision was very influential. Unfortunately I do not have his exact words because I was changing the tape in the recorder. He said something like, “Gentlemen, this is a historic day for humanity.” Then he began to talk at once about the effective implementation of the Application Centers, where people would take the Test, and the Achievement Centers, where they would go if they scored over 50, and how to establish the Test Administrations and Evaluations infrastructure on such a large scale, and so on. He was always modest and practical. He would rather talk about doing the job than talk about what an important job it was. He used to say, “Once you know what you’re doing, the only thing you need to think about is how to do it.” I believed that that is deeply true.

From then on, we could hand over the Information program to a subdepartment and concentrate on How to Do It. Those were exciting times! So many States joined the Plan, one after another. When I think of all we had to do, I wonder that we didn’t all go crazy! Some of the staff did fail their quarterly Test, in fact. But most of us working in the Executive Office with Dr. Speakie remained quite stable, even when we were on the job all day and half the night. I think his presence was an inspiration. He was always calm and positive, even when we had to arrange things like training 113,000 Chinese Evaluators in three months. “You can...
always find out ‘how’ if you just know the ‘why’!” he would say. And we always did.

When you think back over it, it really is quite amazing what a big job it was—so much bigger than anybody, even Dr. Speakie, had realized it would be. It just changed everything. You only realize that when you think back to what things used to be like. Can you imagine when we began planning Universal Testing for the State of China, we only allowed for eleven hundred Achievement Centers, with sixty-eight hundred Staff? It really seems like a joke. But it is not. I was going through some of the old files yesterday, making sure everything is in order, and I found the first China Implementation Plan, with those figures written down in black and white.

I believe the reason why even Dr. Speakie was slow to realize the magnitude of the operation was that even though he was a great scientist, he was also an optimist. He just kept hoping against hope that the average scores would begin to go down, and this prevented him from seeing that universal application of the SQ Test was eventually going to involve everybody either as Inmates or Staff.

When most of the Russias and all the African States had adopted the Recommendations and were busy implementing them, the debates in the General Assembly of the World Government got very excited. That was the period when so many bad things were said about the Test and about Dr. Speakie. I used to get quite angry, reading the World Times reports of debates. When I went as his secretary with Dr. Speakie to General Assembly meetings, I had to sit and listen in person to people insulting him personally, casting aspersions on his motives, and questioning his scientific integrity and even his sincerity. Many of those people were very disagreeable and obviously

6. Casting aspersions on something means saying uncomplimentary things about it.
unbalanced. But he never lost his temper. He would just stand up and prove to them, again, that the SQ Test did actually literally scientifically show whether the testee was sane or insane, and the results could be proved, and all psychometrists accepted them. So the Test Ban people couldn’t do anything but shout about freedom and accuse Dr. Speakie and the Psychometric Bureau of trying to “turn the world into a huge insane asylum.” He would always answer quietly and firmly, asking them how they thought a person could be “free” if they lacked mental health. What they called freedom might well be a delusional system with no contact with reality. In order to find out, all they had to do was to become testees. “Mental health is freedom,” he said. “‘Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty,’ they say, and now we have an eternally vigilant watchdog: the SQ Test. Only the testees can be truly free!”

There really was no answer they could make to that. Sooner or later the delegates even from Member States where the Test Ban movement was strong would volunteer to take the SQ Test to prove that their mental health was adequate to their responsibilities. Then the ones that passed the test and remained in office would begin working for Universal Application in their home State. The riots and demonstrations, and things like the burning of the Houses of Parliament in London in the State of England (where the Nor-Eurp SQ Center was housed), and the Vatican Rebellion, and the Chilean H-Bomb, were the work of insane fanatics appealing to the most unstable elements of the populace. Such fanatics, as Dr. Speakie and Dr. Waltraute pointed out in their Memorandum to the Presidium, deliberately aroused and used the proven instability of the crowd, “mob psychosis.” The only response to mass delusion of that kind was immediate implementation of the Testing Program in the disturbed States, and immediate amplification of the Asylum Program.

That was Dr. Speakie’s own decision, by the way, to rename the SQ Achievement Centers “Asylums.” He took the word right out of his enemies’ mouths. He said: “An asylum means a place of shelter, a place of cure. Let there be no stigma attached to the word ‘insane,’ to the word ‘asylum,’ to the words ‘insane asylum!’ No! For the asylum is the haven of mental health—the place of cure, where the anxious gain peace, where the weak gain strength, where the prisoners of inadequate reality assessment win their way to freedom! Proudly let us use the word ‘asylum.’ Proudly let us go to the asylum, to work to regain our own God-given mental health, or to work with others less fortunate to help them win back their own inalienable right to mental health. And let one word be written large over the door of every asylum in the world—‘WELCOME!’”

Those words are from his great speech at the General Assembly on the day World Universal Application was decreed by the Presidium. Once or twice a year I listen to my tape of that speech. Although I am too busy ever to get really depressed, now and then I feel the need of a tiny “pick-me-up,” and so I play that tape. It never fails to send me back to my duties inspired and refreshed.

7. The use of the term Test Ban alludes to nuclear weapons and the popular movements in the 1960s and 1970s to try to limit them. The Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty was signed in 1963 between the United States, the Soviet Union, and more than one hundred other nations to ban the testing of nuclear weapons anywhere on or near Earth except underground.

8. The quote “Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty” means that people must always be aware if they want to hold on to their freedoms. This quote is based on a sentence in a speech made by Irish statesman John Philpot Curran in 1790.

9. An H-bomb is an abbreviation for a hydrogen bomb, a powerful nuclear weapon.

10. Here, amplification means “enlargement.”
Considering all the work there was to do, as the Test scores continued to come in always a little higher than the Psychometric Bureau analysts estimated, the World Government Presidium did a wonderful job for the two years that it administered Universal Testing. There was a long period, six months, when the scores seemed to have stabilized, with just about half of the testees scoring over 50 and half under 50. At that time it was thought that if 40 percent of the mentally healthy were assigned to Asylum Staff work, the other 60 percent could keep up routine basic world functions such as farming, power supply, transportation, etc. This proportion had to be reversed when they found that over 60 percent of the mentally healthy were volunteering for Staff work, in order to be with their loved ones in the Asylums. There was some trouble then with the routine basic world functions functioning. However, even then contingency plans were being made for the inclusion of farmlands, factories, power plants, etc., in the Asylum Territories, and the assignment of routine basic world functions work as Rehabilitation Therapy, so that the Asylums could become totally self-supporting if it became advisable. This was President Kim’s special care, and he worked for it all through his term of office. Events proved the wisdom of his planning. He seemed such a nice, wise little man. I still remember the day when Dr. Speakie came into the office and I knew at once that something was wrong. Not that he ever got really depressed or reacted with inopportune emotion, but it was as if the rubber balls in his shoes had gone just a little bit flat. There was the slightest tremor of true sorrow in his voice when he said, “Mary Ann, we’ve had a bit of bad news I’m afraid.” Then he smiled to reassure me, because he knew what a strain we were all working under, and certainly didn’t want to give anybody a shock that might push their score up higher on the next quarterly Test! “It’s President Kim,” he said, and I knew at once—I knew he didn’t mean the President was ill or dead.

“Over 50?” I asked, and he just said quietly and sadly, “55.”

Poor little President Kim, working so efficiently all that three months while mental ill health was growing in him! It was very sad and also a useful warning. High-level consultations were begun at once, as soon as President Kim was committed, and the decision was made to administer the Test monthly, instead of quarterly, to anyone in an executive position.

Even before this decision, the Universal scores had begun rising again. Dr. Speakie was not distressed. He had already predicted that this rise was highly probable during the transition period to World Sanity. As the number of...
the mentally healthy living outside the Asylums grew fewer, the strain on them kept growing greater, and they became more liable to break down under it—just as poor President Kim had done. Later, he predicted, when the Rehabs began coming out of the Asylums in ever increasing numbers, this stress would decrease. Also, the crowding in the Asylums would decrease, so that the Staff would have more time to work on individually orientated therapy, and this would lead to a still more dramatic increase in the number of Rehabs released. Finally, when the therapy process was completely perfected, there would be no Asylums left in the world at all. Everybody would be either mentally healthy or a Rehab, or “neornormal,” as Dr. Speakie liked to call it.

It was the trouble in the State of Australia that precipitated the Government crisis. Some Psychometric Bureau officials accused the Australian Evaluators of actually falsifying Test returns, but that is impossible since all the computers are linked to the World Government Central Computer Bank in Keokuk. Dr. Speakie suspected the Australian Evaluators had been falsifying the Test itself, and insisted that they themselves all be tested immediately. Of course he was right. It had been a conspiracy, and the suspiciously low Australian Test scores had resulted from the use of a false Test. Many of the conspirators tested higher than 80 when forced to take the genuine Test! The State Government in Canberra had been unforgivably lax. If they had just admitted it, everything would have been all right. But they got hysterical, and moved the State Government to a sheep station in Queensland, and tried to withdraw from the World Government. (Dr. Speakie said that was a typical mass psychosis: reality evasion, followed by fugue and autistic withdrawal.) Unfortunately, the Presidium seemed to be paralyzed. Australia seceded on the day before the President and Presidium were due to take their monthly Test, and probably they were afraid of overstraining their SQ with agonizing decisions. So the Psychometric Bureau volunteered to handle the episode. Dr. Speakie himself flew on the plane with the H-bombs, and helped to drop the information leaflets. He never lacked personal courage.

When the Australian incident was over, it turned out that most of the Presidium, including President Singh, had scored over 50. So the Psychometric Bureau took over their functions temporarily. Even on a long-term basis this made good sense, since all the problems now facing the World Government had to do with administering and evaluating the Test, training the Staff, and providing full self-sufficiency structuration to all Asylums.

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13. Here, *precipitated* means “brought about suddenly.”
14. *Keokuk* is a small town in Iowa on the western banks of the Mississippi River.
15. *Canberra* is the capital of Australia.
16. *Queensland* is one of the states that make up Australia; raising sheep is an important industry there.

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**Reading Strategy**

**Identifying Genre**

How do you think the idea that people can manipulate the Test relates to the theme of the story?

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**Vocabulary**

**hysterical** (his ter’ ik o l) adj. characterized by panic or other uncontrolled emotion

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**Literary Element**

**Satire** Why is this statement funny?

**Big Idea** Nature and Technology What does this use of technology tell you about Dr. Speakie and the government he is a part of?
What this meant in personal terms was that Dr. Speakie, as Chief of the Psychometric Bureau, was now Interim President of the United States of the World. As his personal secretary, I was, I will admit it, just terribly proud of him. But he never let it go to his head.

He was so modest. Sometimes he used to say to people, when he introduced me, “This is Mary Ann, my secretary,” he’d say with a little twinkle, “and if it wasn’t for her I’d have been scoring over 50 long ago!”

There were times, as the World SQ scores rose and rose, that I would become a little discouraged. Once the week’s Test figures came in on the readout, and the average score was 71. I said, “Doctor, there are moments I believe the whole world is going insane!”

But he said, “Look at it this way, Mary Ann. Look at those people in the Asylums—3.1 billion inmates now, and 1.8 billion staff—but look at them. What are they doing? They’re pursuing their therapy, doing rehabilitation work on the farms and in the factories, and striving all the time, too, to help each other toward mental health. The preponderant inverse sanity quotient is certainly very high at the moment; they’re mostly insane, yes. But you have to admire them. They are fighting for mental health. They will—they will win through!” And then he dropped his voice and said as if to himself, gazing out the window and bouncing just a little on the balls of his feet, “If I didn’t believe that, I couldn’t go on.”

And I knew he was thinking of his wife. Mrs. Speakie had scored 88 on the very first American Universal Test. She had been in the Greater Los Angeles Territory Asylum for years now.

Anybody who still thinks Dr. Speakie wasn’t sincere should think about that for a minute! He gave up everything for his belief.

And even when the Asylums were all running quite well, and the epidemics in South Africa and the famines in Texas and the Ukraine were under control, still the workload on Dr. Speakie never got any lighter, because every month the personnel of the Psychometric Bureau got smaller, since some of them always flunked their monthly Test and were committed to Bethesda. I never could keep any of my secretarial staff any more for longer than a month or two. It was harder and harder to find replacements, too, because most sane young people volunteered for Staff work in the Asylums, since life was much easier and more sociable inside the Asylums than outside. Everything so convenient, and lots of friends and acquaintances! I used to positively envy those girls! But I knew where my job was.

At least it was much less hectic here in the U.N. Building, or the Psychometry Tower as it had been renamed a long time ago. Often there wouldn’t be anybody around the whole
building all day long but Dr. Speakie and myself, and maybe Bill the janitor (Bill scored 32 regular as clockwork every quarter). All the restaurants were closed, in fact most of Manhattan was closed, but we had fun picnicking in the old General Assembly Hall. And there was always the odd call from Buenos Aires\textsuperscript{21} or Reykjavik\textsuperscript{22}, asking Dr. Speakie’s advice as Interim President about some problem, to break the silence.

But last November 8, I will never forget the date, when Dr. Speakie was dictating the Referendum for World Economic Growth for the next five-year period, he suddenly interrupted himself. “By the way, Mary Ann,” he said, “how was your last score?”

We had taken the Test two days before, on the sixth. We always took the Test every first Monday. Dr. Speakie never would have dreamed of excepting himself from Universal Testing regulations.

“I scored 12,” I said, before I thought how strange it was of him to ask. Or, not just to ask, because we often mentioned our scores to each other; but to ask then, in the middle of executing important world government business.

“Wonderful,” he said, shaking his head. “You’re wonderful, Mary Ann! Down two from last month’s Test, aren’t you?”

“I’m always between 10 and 14,” I said. “Nothing new about that, Doctor.”

“Some day,” he said, and his face took on the expression it had when he gave his great speech about the Asylums, “some day, this world of ours will be governed by men fit to govern it. Men whose SQ score is Zero. Zero, Mary Ann!”

“Well, my goodness, Doctor,” I said jokingly—his intensity almost alarmed me a little—“even you never scored lower than 3, and you haven’t done that for a year or more now!”

He stared at me almost as if he didn’t see me. It was quite uncanny. “Some day,” he said in just the same way, “nobody in the world will have a Quotient higher than 50. Some day, nobody in the world will have a Quotient higher than 30! Higher than 10! The therapy will be perfected. I was only the diagnostician.\textsuperscript{23} But the Therapy will be perfected! The cure will be found! Some day!” And he went on staring at me, and then he said, “Do you know what my score was on Monday?”

“7,” I guessed promptly. The last time he had told me his score it had been 7.

“92,” he said.

I laughed, because he seemed to be laughing. He had always had a puckish\textsuperscript{24} sense of humor. But I thought we really should get back to the World Economic Growth Plan, so I said laughingly, “That really is a very bad joke, Doctor!”

“I said, “What cantaloupe, Doctor? and that was when he jumped across his desk and began to try to bite through my jugular vein.

I used a judo hold and shouted to Bill the janitor, and when he came, I called a robo-ambulance to take Dr. Speakie to Bethesda Asylum.

That was six months ago. I visit Dr. Speakie every Saturday. It is very sad. He is in the McLean area, which is the Violent Ward, and every time he sees me he screams and foams. But I do not take it personally. One should never take mental ill health personally. When the Therapy is perfected, he will be completely rehabilitated. Meanwhile, I just hold on here. Bill keeps the floors clean, and I run the World Government. It really isn’t as difficult as you might think.

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\textsuperscript{21} Buenos Aires is the capital and largest city of Argentina.

\textsuperscript{22} Reykjavik (\textipa{/ˈrɛɪkˌjɑːvik/}) is the capital and largest city of Iceland.

\textsuperscript{23} A diagnostician is someone who figures out the nature of a problem, especially by identifying an illness.

\textsuperscript{24} Puckish means “mischievous.”
AFTER YOU READ

RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Were you surprised by what happened to Dr. Speakie at the end of the story? Why or why not?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What does the SQ Test measure? (b) How does the story present the use of such a test?
3. (a) How does SQ testing come to be universal? (b) What does this imply about the government that controls the world in this story?
4. (a) What happens when the testing program is applied to everyone in the world? (b) Given this information, what is Le Guin’s attitude toward the test?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) What point of view does the writer use in this story? (b) How does this point of view help reinforce the story’s irony?

6. Jargon is specialized language used by a particular group of people, such as government bureaucracies. Bureaucratic jargon can include complex wording and specialized titles for things. (a) What are some examples of jargon in this story? (b) How does Le Guin’s use of jargon strengthen the story’s satire?

7. Irony involves a deliberate contrast, in which what is written is the opposite of what is really meant. In this story, Le Guin sometimes uses irony to highlight her main message. Identify one or more such examples of irony, and explain how each relates to the story’s main message.

Connect
8. How do you think this story comments on or relates to contemporary society?

9. **Big Idea** Nature and Technology (a) How important is technology in this story? (b) Why do you think Le Guin avoids giving explicit details about the technology involved in SQ testing?

LITERARY ANALYSIS

**Literary Element** Satire
The story “SQ” is a satire because Le Guin uses humor to comment on society and its foibles. In the questions above, you explored how Le Guin uses jargon and irony for comic effect. She also uses parody and understatement as part of her satire. Parody is humorous imitation. Understatement is language that makes something seem less important than it really is.

1. How is the title of this short story a parody? If necessary, reread the Building Background information on page 1234 and then think about what the initials in the title most likely stand for.

2. Find an example of understatement in this short story. How does the understatement contribute to the humor of the story?

**Group Activity** A first-person narrator tends to have a limited perspective that presents a particular viewpoint. In a small group, discuss the narrator’s perspective and opinions in “SQ.” What makes the narrator a good source of information for this story? What makes her an unreliable source of information? Use the scale below to rate the narrator’s reliability. Discuss your rating with the class.

**Narrator’s Reliability**

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**Reliability Rating**

1. 
2. 
3. 

**Review: Narrator**
As you learned in Unit Six, a narrator is the person telling a story in a work of fiction. In a story with a first-person point of view, the narrator is a character in the story. In “SQ,” the narrator is a woman named Mary Ann Smith.
**Reading Strategy**  Identifying Genre

Science fiction uses an imaginary setting to explore the impact of science and technology on society. Although the setting may be futuristic or otherwise different from the world we know, it has to be believable, or readers are unlikely to take seriously the issues raised by the writer.

1. What makes “SQ” seem realistic? What elements of the story are not true to life?

2. On the whole, do you think this science fiction story is believable? Why or why not?

**Vocabulary**  Practice

**Practice with Analogies**  To solve a word analogy, identify the relationship between the first pair of words. As you read the answer choices, look for a pair of words that has the same relationship as the first pair. Choose the word pair that best completes each analogy below.

1. **hysterical : calm ::**
   a. reluctant : forgiving
   b. exemplary : outstanding
   c. miserable : happy

2. **shame : stigma ::**
   a. erasure : marking
   b. recreation : work
   c. pride : badge

3. **power supply : infrastructure ::**
   a. doctor : health care system
   b. bridge : river
   c. teacher : student

4. **implementation : application ::**
   a. wheel : axle
   b. flower : petal
   c. agenda : schedule

5. **eerie : uncanny ::**
   a. probable : unlikely
   b. durable : long-lasting
   c. realistic : imaginary

**Writing About Literature**

**Apply Craft**  Until the very end of “SQ”, the narrator’s perspective and Dr. Speakie’s perspective are very similar. However, their perspectives at the end of the story most likely diverge. Rewrite the ending of “SQ,” making Dr. Speakie the narrator. Start from Dr. Speakie’s question on page 1243, “By the way, Mary Ann, how was your last score?” Write a new, five-paragraph ending to the story. Incorporate the answers to these questions in your new ending:

- How does Dr. Speakie feel about Mary Ann’s test score?
- How does Dr. Speakie feel about his own test score?
- How does Dr. Speakie feel about what has happened to the world as a result of universal SQ testing?
- How does Dr. Speakie feel about being committed to Bethesda Asylum?

As you work on your draft, try to indicate the answers to these questions through the characters’ actions and thoughts rather than by stating them outright.

After you complete your draft, exchange story endings with a peer reviewer. Suggest ways to emphasize the perspective of Dr. Speakie. When you have revised your story, proofread and edit it to correct any errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

**Learning for Life**

**Interviewing Mary Ann Smith**  Working with a partner, create a mock interview with Mary Ann Smith. One person should take the role of Mrs. Smith; the other person should take the role of a television news reporter doing a story on the state of the world. The reporter should compose a list of eight to twelve questions on this topic to ask Mrs. Smith. After Mrs. Smith has had a chance to formulate her answers, rehearse the interview, changing or rephrasing questions to improve the interview. Then conduct the interview in front of the class.

**Web Activities**  For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Grammar Workshop

Sentence Structure

Avoiding Misplaced Modifiers

“Often, taking dictation, I learned about it from Dr. Speakie’s very lips.”
—Ursula Le Guin, “SQ”

Connecting to Literature

By putting the words “taking dictation” just before “I,” Ursula Le Guin makes sure we understand that the words refer to the narrator—that it was Mary Ann Smith who was taking dictation. Imagine, however, that the sentence had been written like this:

“Often I learned about it from Dr. Speakie’s very lips, taking dictation.”

The result would be the amusing but incorrect picture of Dr. Speakie’s lips writing notes on a notepad. In this case, the phrase “taking dictation” would be a misplaced modifier. A misplaced modifier seems to modify the wrong word or more than one word in a sentence.

To correct misplaced modifiers, think about what you want to say.

Problem 1

A misplaced modifier

Growing from his experience, the writer created stories.

Solution

Move the misplaced word or phrase as close as possible to the word it modifies. This may require creating a subordinate clause and changing the form of some words, as in this example.

The writer created stories that grew from his experience.

Problem 2

The adverb only is misplaced.

Molly only buys groceries at Cost-Cutters.

Solution

Place only immediately before the word or group of words it modifies. The sentence above indicates that buying groceries is the only thing that Molly does. Options for revising are below; the correct choice is the one that reflects the writer’s intended meaning.

Molly buys only groceries at Cost-Cutters. (Molly does not buy hardware or any other products at this store.)

Molly buys groceries only at Cost-Cutters. (Molly does not buy groceries at any other store.)

Exercise

Rewrite the following sentences, correcting any misplaced modifiers. If the sentence is already correct, write Correct.

1. I have nearly read every story ever written by Tomás Rivera.
2. We read a novel called The Grapes of Wrath in Mr. Hooper’s class that was very enjoyable.
3. A copy of “The Rockpile” lay on the table that Colin had read.
4. And the Earth Did Not Devour Him tells about poor migrant farm workers who struggle to make a living.
5. I have only read the first chapter of Rivera’s novel and not any further.
At the age of ten, Julia Alvarez found herself thrust into a culture that was unfamiliar to her. Although she was born in New York City, she had grown up in the Dominican Republic during the brutal regime of General Rafael Trujillo, a military dictator who terrorized the nation for thirty-one years. Fleeing their country in the last few months of Trujillo’s rule, Alvarez and her family settled in New York City.

Moving from her mother’s family compound in the Dominican Republic to the Bronx was not easy for Alvarez. Unable to feel at home in cold and crowded New York City, she turned to the world of books and took comfort in reading and writing. “I consider this radical uprooting from my culture, my native language, my country, the reason I began writing,” the award-winning poet and novelist has stated. “English, not the United States, was where I landed and sank deep roots.”

Alvarez learned her new language quickly. During high school, she enjoyed writing and even began to think of it as a possible career. By the time she entered college, Alvarez was devoting serious attention to her writing. “I was raised in a very traditional, Old World family,” she said, “so I never had thoughts about having a career. Moving to a new country, having to learn a new language, I got interested in words, and suddenly being in a world where there were books and encouragement of women to discover their talents contributed to my becoming a writer.”

Alvarez graduated from Middlebury College and later received a graduate degree from Syracuse University. Then she began her career as what she calls “a migrant poet,” in which she taught writing in prisons and senior-citizen centers as well as in several schools and colleges. “I would go anywhere,” she told one interviewer. Finally she returned to Middlebury College, where she earned tenure as a member of the English Department. She has won several awards for her poetry and prose.

Her first novel, How the García Girls Lost Their Accents, was an immediate success. Published in 1991, it tells the story of four Dominican sisters and their struggle to make a new home in the United States. Alvarez’s own three sisters saw many similarities between their experiences and those of the young women in the novel. “My sisters were a little taken aback,” Alvarez admitted, “but they’re also very proud of me.”

Alvarez’s other novels include In the Time of the Butterflies and ¡Yo! (or, in the English translation, I!), which describes the García girls as adults. Her poetry collections include Homecoming and The Other Side/El Otro Lado.

Julia Alvarez was born in 1950.

“I feel like one of the blessings in life is to be doing the work you think you were put here to do. You have to keep writing and achieving it day by day. The one thing I would want for myself is to keep writing and growing.”

—Julia Alvarez
Connecting to the Story
Reading about something, or watching it on television, is never the same as experiencing it for oneself. In “Snow” a little girl from the Dominican Republic is astonished by something that many people in the United States take for granted. As you read Alvarez’s story, think about the following questions:

- What amazed you as a child when you experienced it for the first time?
- Did you react more strongly to new sights and sounds when you were younger?

Building Background
This selection is set about the time of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, when President John F. Kennedy ordered a naval blockade to prevent shipment of missiles from the Soviet Union to Cuba. The world waited for the Soviets to respond, deeply fearful of a nuclear war.

All over the United States, schools established air-raid drills in an attempt to prepare and protect the nation’s children against injury from nuclear attack. At the sound of a siren, students were to file quickly to a hallway away from windows or doors or to crouch under their desks. They were to remain in this position until an all-clear signal sounded. Fortunately, the crisis ended peacefully, and these inadequate safety measures were never taken.

Big Idea  Nature and Technology
As you read the story, notice how nature and technology become confused in the mind of a young girl.

Literary Element  Indirect Characterization
A writer uses indirect characterization to reveal the personality of a character through that character’s words and actions or through what others think and say about that character.


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

- connecting to contemporary issues
- identifying indirect characterization
- practicing with word parts
- making interdisciplinary connections
Our first year in New York we rented a small apartment with a Catholic school nearby, taught by the Sisters of Charity, hefty women in long black gowns and bonnets that made them look peculiar, like dolls in mourning. I liked them a lot, especially my grandmotherly fourth grade teacher, Sister Zoe. I had a lovely name, she said, and she had me teach the whole class how to pronounce it: Yo-lan-da. As the only immigrant in my class, I was put in a special seat in the first row by the window, apart from the other children so that Sister Zoe could tutor me without disturbing them. Slowly, she enunciated the new words I was to repeat: laundromat, cornflakes, subway, snow.

Soon I picked up enough English to understand Holocaust was in the air. Sister Zoe explained to a wide-eyed classroom what was happening in Cuba. Russian missiles were being assembled, trained supposedly on New York City. President Kennedy, looking worried too, was on the television at home, explaining we might have to go to war against the Communists. At school, we had air-raid drills: an ominous bell would go off and we’d file into the hall, fall to the floor, cover our heads with our coats, and imagine our hair falling out, the bones in our arms going soft. At home, Mami and my sisters and I said a rosary for world peace. I heard new vocabulary: nuclear bomb, radioactive fallout, bomb shelter. Sister Zoe explained how it would happen. She drew a picture of a mushroom on the blackboard and dotted a flurry of chalkmarks for the dusty fallout that would kill us all.

The months grew cold, November, December. It was dark when I got up in the morning, frosty when I followed my breath to school. One morning as I sat at my desk daydreaming out the window, I saw dots in the air like the ones Sister Zoe had drawn—at first, then lots and lots. I shrieked, “Bomb! Bomb!” Sister Zoe jerked around, her full black skirt ballooning as she hurried to my side. A few girls began to cry.

But then Sister Zoe’s shocked look faded. “Why, Yolanda dear, that’s snow!” She laughed. “Snow.” “Snow,” I repeated. I looked out the window warily. All my life I had heard about the white crystals that fell out of American skies in the winter. From my desk I watched the fine powder dust the sidewalk and parked cars below. Each flake was different, Sister Zoe said, like a person, irreplaceable and beautiful.

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**Vocabulary**

**enunciate** (i nun’st a t’) v. to pronounce distinctly  
**holocaust** (hol’ a kòst’) n. great or complete destruction, especially by fire  

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1. For Roman Catholics, a rosary is a circle of beads and also the prayers said as one holds these beads.  
2. Fallout, made of tiny radioactive particles, is released into the atmosphere after a nuclear explosion.

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**Reading Strategy** Connecting to Contemporary Issues  
What are some examples of new vocabulary that current events have introduced into the lexicon today?

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**Big Idea** Nature and Technology  
Why does the narrator contrast the comparison of snowflakes to bombs with the comparison of snowflakes to people?
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Which of Yolanda’s thoughts or experiences do you find most memorable?

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What words does Sister Zoe teach Yolanda? (b) Why might those words have been particularly useful for her to understand?
3. (a) What causes Yolanda to shriek suddenly? (b) Why does she react in this way?
4. (a) At the end of the selection, how does Sister Zoe describe snow? (b) Why does she say the same applies to people?

Analyze and Evaluate
5. (a) How does Alvarez convey the tense mood—or emotional atmosphere—of the 1950s and 1960s in U.S. history? (b) What detail do you find most effective?
6. How might the fact that Yolanda is an immigrant affect her state of mind?
7. If you were Sister Zoe, what might you write in an assessment of Yolanda?

Connect
8. **Big Idea** Nature and Technology (a) What is ironic about the ending of this story? (b) Does Alvarez see nature and technology as working with or against each other? Explain your answer.

LITERARY ANALYSIS

**Literary Element** Indirect Characterization
Alvarez uses indirect characterization to develop the character of Sister Zoe. That is, she reveals Sister Zoe’s personality through her words and actions and through what the narrator, a character in the story, says about her.

1. Give two examples of Sister Zoe’s actions or words that reveal a particular character trait. Then name and explain that trait.
2. Describe the age and physical appearance of Sister Zoe according to details supplied by the narrator.

Interdisciplinary Activity: Art
Good writers often describe a scene so vividly that readers can picture it clearly in their minds. Imagine that you are an artist who has been commissioned to draw pictures for Julia Alvarez’s story “Snow.” Choose at least two incidents from the story and illustrate them. You might even consider creating a whole comic strip with a series of pictures.

READING AND VOCABULARY

**Reading Strategy** Connecting to Contemporary Issues
Understanding how the world in which a novel or story takes place resembles the world of today will support your appreciation of why characters behave as they do.

1. What similarities between the world in which Yolanda was living and your world add to your appreciation of the story?
2. If this story were set in today’s world, what issues might affect Yolanda?

**Vocabulary** Practice
**Practice with Word Parts** Use a dictionary or a thesaurus to help you match the words in the second column of the two columns below with their meanings.

1. a type of medicine that treats the whole body
2. a three-dimensional image created by lasers
3. capable of burning away flesh

a. caustic
b. hologram
c. holistic

Web Activities For eFlashcards, Selection Quick Checks, and other Web activities, go to www.glencoe.com.
Cottonmouth Country and Daisies

MEET LOUISE GLÜCK

When Louise Glück was a young girl, she had an experience that helped define her feelings about poetry. While driving Glück and her classmates to school, a classmate’s mother asked Glück to recite the poem that she had written for a school assignment. The burgeoning poet was happy to share her work and was particularly excited about the experimental ending of her new poem. For effect, she had purposefully omitted the rhyme in the final line. To her developing ear, Glück says the result “was exhilarating, a kind of explosion of form.” After she recited the poem, her classmate’s mother said it was very good, but then corrected the final line, explaining that all it was missing was the last rhyme. The young poet was furious. She hadn’t even reached middle school yet, but Glück had already developed a passion to write and be heard in her own precise, original voice. Fifty years after her back-seat recital, the talented Glück was named Poet Laureate of the United States.

“It seems to me that the desire to make art produces an ongoing experience of longing. . . . It’s like a lighthouse, except that, as one swims toward it, it backs away.”

—Louise Glück

Born Poet Glück was born in New York City and raised on Long Island. Her father ran a successful business with her uncle, but while growing up, he had wanted to be a writer. He shared with his daughter a love of stories. However, it was Glück’s mother—a well-educated woman who had fought to go to college and revered creative gifts—who became the first reader of her poems and who gave the young writer her earliest critiques. Glück began devouring poetry and stories at an early age, and her reading of Greek myths provided figures and images that she frequently references in her own poems.

Poetic Influence While studying at Columbia University, Glück met her greatest influence, poet Stanley Kunitz. Glück began to blossom as a writer. She published her first collection of poems, Firstborn, when she was twenty-five. Since that debut, Glück’s work has been recognized with a National Book Critics Circle Award and a Pulitzer Prize. Glück’s poems express mythical, mystic perceptions of everyday objects and experiences. Her exacting language and unexpected line breaks create distinct, often haunting, verses.

In addition to writing poetry, Glück frequently teaches and provides young poets with the kind of support and encouragement that Kunitz offered her.

Louise Glück was born in 1943.
Connecting to the Poems
The poems you’re about to read invite the reader into a personal, private encounter with the natural world. As you read the poems, think about these questions:

• Where do you go to think or to be alone?
• Have you ever felt as though you could communicate with nature?

Building Background
The poem “Cottonmouth Country” was first published in 1968, in Glück’s book Firstborn. “Daisies” appeared in her 1992 book The Wild Iris. Despite the twenty-four-year gap between these poems, both works demonstrate the important role of setting, or time and place, in Glück’s work. In some of Glück’s poems, setting is so important that it becomes a distinct character.

Setting Purposes for Reading
Big Idea Nature and Technology
As you read, pay attention to the way the poems juxtapose elements from the natural world with man-made elements. Think about what Glück suggests about humanity’s relationship with nature.

Literary Element Free Verse
Many contemporary poems are written in free verse, which means that they do not adhere to a fixed rhyme, meter, line, or stanza structure. Working in free verse allows poets to create their own patterns and to depart from those patterns. Some works of free verse contain lines that flow in the same unfettered way that conversation or private thoughts might flow. Unusual changes in rhythm or startling line breaks (the endings of lines) may be used to create drama or tension. As you read these poems, notice what words or ideas the line breaks help to emphasize. Also notice how they contribute to the ebb and flow of the rhythm.

• See Literary Terms Handbook, p. R8.

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

Reading Strategy Making Inferences About Theme
In poetry, images, events, and observations frequently convey an underlying message, or theme. In the poems you’re about to read, nature imagery and other details help to express one or more themes about nature, life, and humanity. By considering each poem’s imagery and language, you can make inferences, or conclusions based on reason and evidence, about the themes in the poems.

Reading Tip: Making Inferences As you read, note your reactions to specific images or ideas in a chart like the one below. Then note your inferences about the poem’s themes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Images or Ideas</th>
<th>Inference about Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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Vocabulary

woo (wōō) v. to tempt or invite; p. 1253 The candidate tried to woo voters with big promises.

rear (rēr) v. to lift upright; raise; p. 1253 The bull reared his head before he charged.

nostalgia (nə stā’ jə) n. a bittersweet longing for things, persons, or situations of the past; p. 1254 As she grew older, she felt nostalgia for her youth.

scorn (skorn) n. contempt or disdain felt toward a person or object considered despicable or unworthy; p. 1254 She felt scorn for the thief.

Vocabulary Tip: Analogies In analogy exercises on a test, you will frequently be asked to determine the relationship between one pair of words and then demonstrate that relationship in a second pair of words.

OBJECTIVES
In studying these selections, you will focus on the following:
• analyzing free verse
• making inferences about theme
• incorporating research into literary analysis

1 Fish bones walked the wave off Hatteras.
And there were other signs
That Death wooed us, by water, wooed us
By land: among the pines
5 An uncurled cottonmouth\(^1\) that rolled on moss
Reared in the polluted air.
Birth, not death, is the hard loss.
I know. I also left a skin there.

1. Also known as a water moccasin, this snake is a semiaquatic pit viper of lowlands and swampy regions of the southern United States.

**Reading Strategy** Making Inferences About Theme Why does the image of “polluted air” reinforce Death’s presence?

**Vocabulary**

woo (wō) v. to tempt or invite
rear (rër) v. to lift upright; raise
Go ahead: say what you’re thinking. The garden is not the real world. Machines are the real world. Say frankly what any fool could read in your face: it makes sense to avoid us, to resist

nostalgia. It is not modern enough, the sound the wind makes stirring a meadow of daisies: the mind cannot shine following it. And the mind wants to shine, plainly, as machines shine, and not grow deep, as, for example, roots. It is very touching, all the same, to see you cautiously approaching the meadow’s border in early morning, when no one could possibly be watching you. The longer you stand at the edge, the more nervous you seem. No one wants to hear impressions of the natural world: you will be laughed at again; scorn will be piled on you.

As for what you’re actually hearing this morning: think twice before you tell anyone what was said in this field and by whom.

**Big Idea**  Nature and Technology  Why does the speaker say that it makes sense to avoid the daisies (lines 4–5)?

**Literary Element**  Free Verse  What dramatic effect is created by the varying line lengths in the last four lines?

**Vocabulary**

nostalgia (nə stal’ ‚ja) n. a bittersweet longing for things, persons, or situations of the past

scorn (skorn) n. contempt or disdain felt toward a person or object considered despicable or unworthy
RESPONDING AND THINKING CRITICALLY

Respond
1. Which one of these poems did you connect with more? Explain.

Recall and Interpret
2. (a) What words and images in “Cottonmouth Country” suggest death? (b) Why do you think the speaker says that “birth, not death, is the hard loss”?
3. (a) Who or what are the speakers in “Daisies”? (b) What do the speakers say is not “modern enough” for the listener? (c) Explain who you think the listener, or person the poem is addressed to, might be.
4. (a) What do lines 6–12 of “Daisies” suggest about human habits or inclinations? (b) What attitude do you think the poem expresses toward these inclinations? Explain.
5. (a) Why do you think the listener in “Daisies” “cautiously” approaches the meadow’s border, when no one could possibly be watching? (b) Why does gazing at the meadow make the listener nervous?

Analyze and Evaluate
6. (a) In “Cottonmouth Country,” how does the image in the last line of the poem echo the images in the first and fifth lines? (b) Given what comes before, was the image in the last line an effective way to end the poem? Explain.
7. Why do the daisies in “Daisies” seem to be all-knowing about the listener’s thoughts? Explain what this might suggest about nature.
8. (a) Which lines in “Daisies” suggest that people are reluctant to engage with nature? (b) Did the perceptions expressed in these lines ring true to you? Explain your answer.

Connect
9. Big Idea Nature and Technology (a) In these poems, how does the modern world intrude on nature? (b) Explain the conflict that you think Glück’s poems may be intended to illuminate. Tell who or what the conflict is between and what opinion of this conflict the poems convey.

LITERARY ANALYSIS

Literary Element Free Verse
On the first reading, a free verse poem may appear to have no regular form at all. However, analysis usually reveals one or more poetic techniques that help to make the poem memorable and give it meaning. One verse may follow a strict form, while the next verse may depart completely from that form.
Neither of these poems contains fixed meter, fixed line lengths, or formal stanza structures. “Daisies” makes use of rhyme, and “Cottonmouth Country” employs techniques such as slant rhyme and repetition, the use of recurring sounds, words, or phrases.
1. (a) List one or two examples of slant rhyme or repetition in “Cottonmouth Country.” (b) What is the effect of these techniques on the poem’s meaning, musicality, or overall unity?
2. Do you think free verse is an especially good way to convey the words of the speaker in “Daisies”? Support your answer with details from the poem.

Review: Voice
As you learned in Unit 3, voice is the personality that a writer conveys in a piece of writing. By examining a poet’s choice of words and the tone, or attitude toward the subject matter, that a poem expresses, you can arrive at a clearer understanding of the poet’s voice.

Partner Activity With a partner, discuss the voice in each of the poems. How would you describe the voice? Which words or phrases in each poem are especially good examples of the distinctive use of voice? For each poem, use a graphic organizer like the one shown to record your examples, give your characterization of the voice, and tell what the voice adds to the poem.
**Reading Strategy**  
**Making Inferences About Theme**

The theme of a poem is its underlying message about life. In some works, the theme is stated directly. In other works, the theme is implied, or stated indirectly, through imagery, events, or observations. One must read carefully to infer the theme from the details in the work.

1. What is the theme of “Cottonmouth Country”? Is there a line that best embodies that theme?
2. What is the poem “Daisies” saying about the relationship between people and nature? Support your answer with details from the poem.
3. What is the theme of “Daisies”? Is this theme stated or implied? Explain.

**Vocabulary Practice**

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

1. woo : courtship :: study :
   - a. hardship
   - b. apprenticeship
   - c. relationship
2. rear : raise :: ascend :
   - a. descend
   - b. envelop
   - c. climb
3. nostalgia : reminisce :: grief :
   - a. mourn
   - b. celebrate
   - c. withdraw
4. scorn : admire :: praise :
   - a. explore
   - b. debate
   - c. criticize

**Writing About Literature**

**Evaluate Author’s Craft**  
The role of the Poet Laureate of the United States is to help foster a greater appreciation for reading and writing poetry. Louise Glück was U.S. Poet Laureate from 2003 to 2004. Consider how the craft displayed in these two poems proves that Glück was a good choice for poet laureate. Then use what you know about Glück to write a brief essay evaluating the selection of Glück as poet laureate. Discuss specific examples of Glück’s artistry, such as her poetic language, imagery, and choice of subject matter.

Use a flow chart like the one below to begin organizing your essay. In the three boxes, jot down notes as you construct the essay’s introduction, body, and conclusion.

**Reading Further**

If you enjoyed these poems, you may enjoy these other works by Louise Glück.

**Poetry**

*Ararat*, Glück’s sixth book of poetry, deals primarily with her relationship with her parents.

*The Wild Iris* is Glück’s Pulitzer Prize-winning book of poems that portrays the poet’s attempt to make sense of her role in the universe.

**Essays**

*Proofs & Theories: Essays on Poetry* is Glück’s book of sixteen essays in which she comments on topics such as the future, education, and the work of other poets.

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