

# Open Education Resources Book

# High School Equivalency

## Language Arts – Reading



# HEP

## WEST HILLS

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY PROGRAM



### Authors and Contributors:

Cecilio Mora, Andres Enriquez, Beatriz Torres, Iris Torres, Yanet Aguilar, Maria Jauregui, Vanesa Saraza, Rocio Nanez Barrios, Osvaldo Rodriguez, and Graciela Salcido.

JULY 2022

## High School Equivalency Program



BY SA

## Contents

Language Arts - Reading .....	4
Information on what is on the HiSET Exam: .....	4
Chapter 1: Understanding Reading Comprehension .....	4
Before you read, ask these questions:.....	4
Main Idea .....	4
Informative Text.....	4
Persuasive Text .....	5
Entertain Text.....	5
Audience .....	5
Purpose .....	5
Scientists confirm ‘greenhouse’ effect of human’s CO <sub>2</sub> .....	5
Answers:.....	7
Attributions: .....	7
Chapter 2: Text Structure.....	8
Sequence:.....	8
Description:.....	8
Cause and Effect: .....	8
Comparison and Contrast: .....	8
Problem and Solution: .....	9
Extreme Weather around the World.....	9
Attributions: .....	11
Chapter 3: Interpreting Nonfiction .....	11
Point of View .....	11
Summarize a Text.....	12
Synthesizing .....	12
Style and Tone.....	12
How can we identify a writer's tone? .....	13
Word Meanings.....	13
Predictions .....	13
Multiple-Meaning Words.....	14
Mexican Migrant Workers in the 20th Century by Jessica McBirney.....	14

Attributions: .....	17
Chapter 4: Understanding Fiction.....	17
Making Inferences.....	17
Understanding Theme .....	18
The Little Girl Who Would Not Work.....	18
Comparing and Contrasting Ideas.....	20
Cause and Effect .....	20
The Power of the North .....	20
Attributions: .....	22
Chapter 5: Interpreting and Understanding Poetry .....	23
Fog By Carl Sandburg 1916 .....	23
Stanza & Verse .....	24
Analyzing Poetry .....	25
The Clock Man by Shel Silverstein .....	25
Sound and Rhythm in Poetry .....	26
The Lamb Author: William Blake ©1789.....	26
Figurative Language .....	27
Imagery Level of a Poem.....	29
Attributions: .....	31
Chapter 6: Understanding Drama.....	31
Structuring the Plot.....	31
Introducing the Main Characters:.....	31
Establish the Setting .....	31
Midpoint.....	32
Climax.....	32
Attributions: .....	35
Practice Exams .....	35
HSE Open Education OER Team:.....	35

# Language Arts - Reading

## Information on what is on the HiSET Exam:

For information on what is on the HiSET exam, refer to the website link below:

<https://hiset.ets.org/about/content>

## Chapter 1: Understanding Reading Comprehension

### Before you read, ask these questions:

What kind of text are you reading? (Informative, Persuasive or Entertain text)

What is the purpose of this text?

Who is the audience?

Are there any key terms the author defines?



### Main Idea

The main idea is the most important information in the text. To find the main idea you look for the main topic of the story. The main topic is the who or what the story is about. The main idea is the most important detail the main topic does. The story will have big details that give you an idea of what the story is about.

### Informative Text

The style of writing is non-fiction. The purpose is to provide information to the reader about a specific topic or event. Ex.

- Newspaper
- Encyclopedia
- Textbooks
- Magazine

### **Persuasive Text**

The purpose of this writing style is to convince the reader to accept or believe the author's point. Ex.

- Electoral Campaigns
- Companies Advertisement
- Essay

### **Entertain Text**

The objective of this text is to entertain the audience with fiction information. (Remember fiction means is not real) Ex.

- Comic book
- Romantic Novel
- Stories/Poems

### **Audience**

The audience is any person or group who is the intended recipient of the text, and also the person/ people the text is trying to influence. An audiences' assumptions about the author, the context in which they are receiving the text, their own demographic information (age, gender, etc.) can all effect how the text is seeking to engage with them.

### **Purpose**

What is the author hoping to achieve with the communication of this text? What do they want from their audience? What does the audience want from the text and what may they do once the text is communicated? Both author and audience can have purpose and it's important to understand what those might be in the rhetorical situation of the text you are examining. An author may be trying to inform, to convince, to define, to announce, or to activate, while an audience's purpose may be to receive notice, to quantify, to feel a sense of unity, to disprove, to understand, or to criticize.

### **Practice Activity**

#### **Scientists confirm 'greenhouse' effect of human's CO<sub>2</sub>**

<sup>1</sup> For the first time, scientists have shown a direct link between rising levels of carbon dioxide — or CO<sub>2</sub> — in Earth's atmosphere and an increase in how much solar energy warms the ground. The finding supports a key theory about what's behind the recent worldwide warming of Earth's climate. It links a measurable share of that warming to human activities that release

CO<sub>2</sub>. These include the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil, and gas) for heating, power, and transportation.

<sup>2</sup>CO<sub>2</sub> is known as a greenhouse gas. By that, scientists mean that this gas allows the sun's visible light to pass through. But when that light hits Earth's surface, it can be transformed to heat (infrared light). CO<sub>2</sub> now traps that heat (like a greenhouse window) and holds much of it within the lower atmosphere — right down to Earth's surface.

<sup>3</sup>Daniel Feldman is a climate scientist at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. It's a Department of Energy research center in Berkeley, Calif. He and his colleagues sought to uncover how large the effect of recent increases in CO<sub>2</sub> have been on Earth's near-surface warming. To do that, they monitored the sunlight hitting two sites on cloudless days. One was in Alaska, the other in Oklahoma.

<sup>4</sup>CO<sub>2</sub> absorbs some wavelengths of the infrared light now being radiated from Earth's surface. Then it releases very specific wavelengths of this infrared light. This infrared radiation goes in all directions — including back to Earth's surface.

<sup>5</sup> Knowing this, the researchers could look at the wavelengths of infrared light and, like a fingerprint, link it to what share was from a CO<sub>2</sub> buildup in the air, and what share was due to other things, such as water vapor.

<sup>6</sup>Feldman's group reviewed more than 10 years of near-daily observations of sunlight and temperature for the two locations. After sifting through these data, the team showed that a rise in CO<sub>2</sub> levels of 22 parts per million in air boosted the amount of the sun's heat on the ground by 0.2 watts per square meter. That's an increase of about 10 percent. The researchers say their results agree with predictions of CO<sub>2</sub>-driven warming created by computer models. Those models have been used to forecast future climate conditions. Feldman's team reported its findings online February 25. They appear in the journal *Nature*.

1. PART A: Which statement identifies the central idea of the text?
  - a. Scientists have confirmed that humans release CO<sub>2</sub>, which warms the Earth's surface and contributes to global warming.
  - b. CO<sub>2</sub> is only one of the many gases that is trapped in our atmosphere and contributes to global warming.
  - c. Scientists have only been able to confirm significant increases in CO<sub>2</sub> and temperatures in two locations on Earth.
  - d. The greenhouse effect is a natural process on Earth, in which heat is trapped by our atmosphere to keep it warm enough for life.
  
2. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
  - a. "It links a measurable share of that warming to human activities that release CO<sub>2</sub>. These include the burning of fossil fuels... for heating, power and transportation."  
(Paragraph 1)

- b. "CO<sub>2</sub> is known as a greenhouse gas. By that, scientists mean that this gas allows the sun's visible light to pass through." ( **Paragraph 2**)
  - c. "To do that, they monitored the sunlight hitting two sites on cloudless days. One was in Alaska, the other in Oklahoma." ( **Paragraph 3**)
  - d. "CO<sub>2</sub> absorbs some wavelengths of the infrared light now being radiated from Earth's surface. Then it releases very specific wavelengths of this infrared light." ( **Paragraph 4**)
3. Which of the following describes the author's main purpose in the text?
    - a. to provide information about how humans can cut down on their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
    - b. to suggest that some people are still skeptical about the effect of CO<sub>2</sub> on global warming
    - c. to explain how scientists were able to prove the link between CO<sub>2</sub> and global warming
    - d. to prove that CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are the biggest contributors to global warming
  4. How does **paragraph 6** contribute to the development of ideas in the text?
    - a. It suggests that this information has been available for a while.
    - b. It further supports the finding made by Feldman and his team.
    - c. It reveals that computers programs are capable of predicting climate change.
    - d. It suggests that that the scientific community is dismissive of Feldman's findings.
  5. How are human activities contributing to the rise in Earth's temperatures?

**Answers:**

1. A
2. A
3. C
4. B
5. Answers will vary; students should discuss how humans are responsible for releasing additional CO<sub>2</sub> into the environment, which is responsible for warming the Earth's surface. In the text, the author explains that CO<sub>2</sub> is produced by "the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas) for heating, power and transportation" (Paragraph 1). Through Feldman's study, he was able to confirm that CO<sub>2</sub> contributed to rising temperatures, as data showed, "that rise in CO<sub>2</sub> levels of 22 parts per million in air boosted the amount of the sun's heat on the ground by 0.2 watts per square meter (Paragraph 6). In all, human activity is responsible for emitting the CO<sub>2</sub> that is contributing to rising temperatures on Earth.

**Attributions:**

- "[Writing Basics](#)" by [Kenai Peninsula College University of Alaska Anchorage](#) is licensed under [CC BY 3.0](#)

- ["Remote Learning Plan: Main Idea Grade 1"](#) by Michelle Ulrich is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)
- ["About Writing: A guide"](#) by Robin Jeffrey is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)
- ["Scientists Confirm 'Greenhouse' Effect of Human's Co2"](#) by Thomas Sumner is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)

## Chapter 2: Text Structure

The organization of the middle of a piece of writing depends on the genre. Researchers have identified five basic organizational structures: **sequence, description, cause and effect, compare and contrast, and problem and solution.**

### Sequence:

Sequence uses time, numerical, or spatial order as the organizing structure. Some narrative genres that use a chronological sequence structure are personal narrative genres (memoir, autobiographical incident, autobiography), imaginative story genres (fairytales, folktales, fantasy, science fiction), and realistic fiction genres. Narrative story structures include an initiating event, complicating actions that build to a high point, and a resolution. Many narratives also include the protagonist's goals and obstacles that must be overcome to achieve those goals.

### Description:

Description is used to describe the characteristic features and events of a specific subject ("My Cat") or a general category ("Cats"). Descriptive reports may be arranged according to categories of related attributes, moving from general categories of features to specific attributes.

### Cause and Effect:

Cause and Effect structure is used to show causal relationships between events. Essays demonstrate cause and effect by giving reasons to support relationships, using the word "because." Signal words for cause-and-effect structures also include if/then statements, "as a result," and "therefore."

### Comparison and Contrast:

Comparison and Contrast structure is used to explain how two or more objects, events, or positions in an argument are similar or different. Graphic organizers such as Venn diagrams, compare/contrast organizers, and tables can be used to compare features across different categories. Words used to signal comparison and contrast organizational structures include "same," "alike," "in contrast," "similarities," "differences," and "on the other hand."

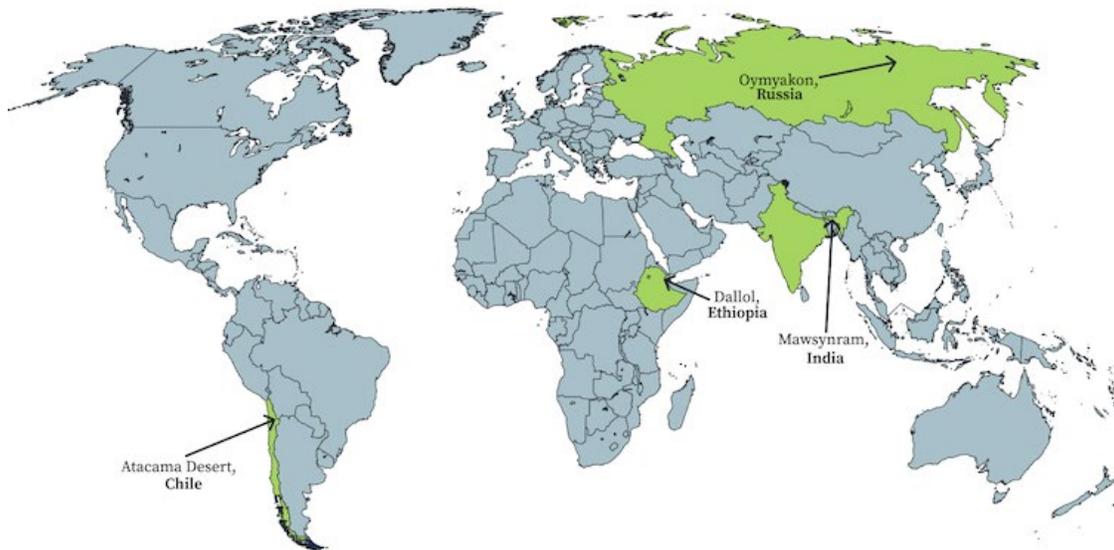
## Problem and Solution:

Problem and Solution requires writers to state a problem and come up with a solution. Although problem/solution structures are typically found in informational writing, realistic fiction also often uses a problem/solution structure.

### Practice Activity

#### Extreme Weather around the World

1. Have you ever heard someone complain about the weather? It's always either too hot, too cold, too wet, too dry, and so on. It seems that we only get a few days a year when the weather is "just right". But really, all of these complaints seem silly when thinking about the world's extreme climates.



#### Extremely Hot

2. Is the harsh, scorching heat making your sandals sweaty? Well, in Dallol, Ethiopia, your shoes could melt if you stand still for a few minutes. Dallol is officially the hottest inhabited place on Earth. It's part of a desert region that is below sea level. In addition, Dallol sits on top of a volcano. The intense heat evaporates most of the water that flows into the area, leaving large salt slabs behind. The Afar **people of Dallol harvest this salt to sell at local markets.**

#### Extremely Cold

3. You don't know cold unless you've been to Oymyakon, Russia. This village is located far to the north in an area called the Sakha Republic. It has the honor of being one of the coldest places in the world where people live year-round. Yet, the word "cold" barely describes it. Try "freeze your eyeballs frigid". Oymyakon's temperatures dip far below freezing. Its dwellers have to wear goggles to protect their eyes from very strong winds and severely cold temperatures. The land is mostly inhospitable to farming crops. So the locals eat mainly meat and canned foods brought in from other towns.

### Extremely Dry

4. Make sure to hug your umbrella the next time you see it. Some areas of Chile's Atacama desert in South America haven't seen rain in 400 years. People get water for crops and for drinking by "harvesting" clouds, instead of depending on precipitation. When the fog rolls in from the Pacific Ocean, they collect moisture with plastic sheets that drip into pans underneath.

### Extremely Wet

5. Your picnic got rained out? Absorb this: in Masinda, India, it basically *always* rains. The jungle village gets enough yearly rain to cover a three-story building. To cope with the steady rainfall, villagers have come up with some clever solutions. They use grass to soundproof their roofs from the constant noise of heavy rain. Outdoor workers rely on traditional *knups* to keep them dry. Woven with bamboo, grasses, and banana leaves, and worn over the head and back, these coverings look like turtle shells.
6. No matter what your personal weather peeve is, there's always a way to make the best of it. As the saying goes, "there's no such thing as bad weather, only the wrong clothes." People who live in the world's most intense environments realize that you've got to adapt to the climate you've got.

### Practice Activity

1. How does the map help you understand the passage?
  - a. It helps readers see where the countries in the passage are located.
  - b. It shows the locations of the world's oceans.
  - c. It helps readers understand different weather patterns around the world.
  - d. It highlights the effects of climate change.

Read the sentence from paragraph 6.

"As the saying goes, 'there's no such thing as bad weather, only the wrong clothes.'"

2. How does the sentence connect to the ideas in the text?
  - a. It shows that umbrellas are not the only way to protect yourself from heavy rainfall.
  - b. It shows how a weather forecaster's outfit should be carefully chosen each day.
  - c. It shows that clothing choices are less important in certain places.
  - d. It shows how people can deal with extreme climates.
3. Which sentence best summarizes the passage?
  - a. Around the world, people have found various ways to adapt to extreme weather conditions.
  - b. Every part of the world has its own, special climate, with its own average rainfall and temperature.
  - c. An area's climate is a big factor in the health and happiness of the people who live there.

- d. People from desert areas have to be creative to find sources of water to drink and farm with.

**This question has two parts. Answer Part A, then Part B.**

**Part A**

4. Why do people in the Atacama desert “harvest” clouds?
  - a. It rains there almost every day, so they study ways to slow precipitation.
  - b. They want to find a way to stop pollution in their community.
  - c. It rarely rains there, so they collect water from the fog in the air.
  - d. They want to shade themselves from the harsh sun.

**Part B**

5. Which sentence from the article supports the answer to Part A?
  - a. “Make sure to hug your umbrella the next time you see it.” (paragraph 4)
  - b. “The intense heat evaporates most of the water that flows into the area, leaving large salt slabs behind.” (paragraph 2)
  - c. “When the fog rolls in from the Pacific Ocean, they collect moisture with plastic sheets that drip into pans underneath.” (paragraph 4)
  - d. “They use grass to soundproof their roofs from the constant noise of heavy rain.” (paragraph 5)

**Answers:**

1. A
2. D
3. A
4. C
5. C

**Attributions:**

- ["Basic Reading and Writing"](#) by Lumen is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)
- ["Extreme Environments"](#) by [Khan Academy](#) is in the [Public Domain](#)

## **Chapter 3: Interpreting Nonfiction**

Nonfiction writing contains information about facts and true historical events. It may be told from someone's unique point of view, but it is based on factual occurrences. Some forms of nonfiction writing include biographies, autobiographies, essays, memoirs, travel writing, and newspapers or journal articles. Nonfiction writing can contain anything from statistics to stories about travel, hunting, or family history. However, fiction is something that is not real.

### **Point of View**

Point of view refers to the writer’s perspective as they explain what’s happening around them or tell a story. We describe writing as being in the first, second, or third person.

First person uses pronouns like, **I, me, us, our,** and **we.**

Second person uses pronouns like, **you, your,** and **yourself.**

Third person uses pronouns like, **she, he, it, them,** and **their** and omits “I.”

## Summarize a Text

When you finish reading a text, it's a great idea to stop for a moment and write a summary of what you just read. Most important of all, when you create a summary of a text, it helps you review what you read and helps your brain capture the main ideas. Writing these down cements the memories; this will help you recall them more easily later on.

A good summary accomplishes the following:

1. It identifies or names the piece and its author(s) and states the main purpose of the text.
2. It captures the text's main points.
3. It does *not* include the reader's opinions, feelings, beliefs, counterarguments, etc.
4. It is short. The idea of a summary is to “boil down” or condense a text to just a few sentences.

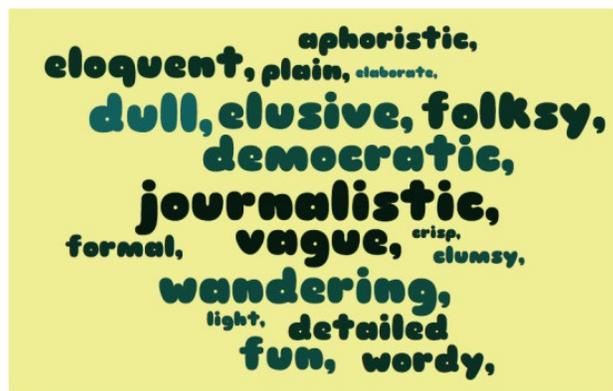
## Synthesizing

To **synthesize** is to combine ideas and create a completely *new* idea. **That new idea becomes the conclusion you have drawn from your reading.** This is the true beauty of reading: it causes us to weigh ideas, to compare, judge, think, and explore—and then to arrive at a moment that we hadn't known before. We begin with simple **summary**, work through **analysis**, evaluate using **critique**, and then move on to **synthesis**.

## Style and Tone

The content of your mind is *what* you are telling. Style is *how* you tell it. In other words, style is the *way* you tell what is in your mind. Style has to do with things like sound and rhythm, word choice, where you place words and phrases in sentences, and sentence length and structure. You want to have a style that is going to get and keep your audience. Style and tone are closely related.

**Graphic:** Words to describe style



Tone refers to the overall emotional attitude of the argument. We know intuitively what “tone of voice” means when we’re describing a conversation. If we hear a person speaking and ask ourselves the following questions, we will usually be able to describe the tone:

- What emotions do the sound of the voice convey?
- What expression do we see or imagine on the speaker's face as they make the argument?

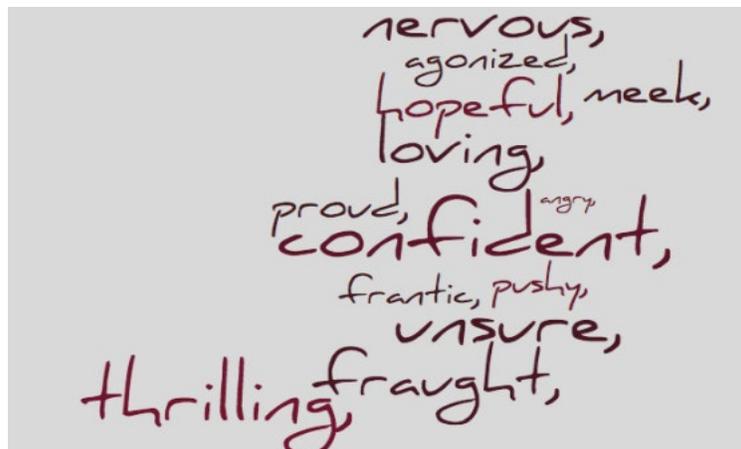
### How can we identify a writer's tone?

If we want to describe the tone of an argument, we can ask ourselves these general questions:

- How does the writer feel about the topic of the argument?
- How does the writer feel about their own knowledge of the topic?
- What is the writer's attitude toward the reader?

If we are not sure how to answer or want more insight, we can consider specific aspects of the writer's attitude, such as the degree of respect, seriousness, or certainty they feel. To describe the tone very precisely, we will need to use multiple words.

**Graphic:** Words to describe tone



### Word Meanings

Every passage has some unfamiliar words that you may not be familiar with it. In this case, you can read one sentence before of the unknowing word and one sentence after. This can help you to figure out the meaning of the unfamiliar word, because you will get the clues from the context.

### Predictions

When you are reading a text, you must be an active reader to make a prediction. A prediction is an idea about what do you think is going to happen in the future. To make a prediction you can support by the events that happen in the text.

## Multiple-Meaning Words

In our language one word can have different meaning. However, you must have to use your ability to understand the sentence about what the author is trying to say. Pay attention in the surrounding sentences that may can offer hints about the word.

Example:

1. Write your name on the first *line*
2. There is a big *line* at the store.

### Practice Activity

#### Mexican Migrant Workers in the 20th Century by Jessica McBirney

The United States is a nation made up of people with many different backgrounds. Since Mexico is a neighboring country, many of these people are Mexican or Mexican-American. This informational text describes how many immigrants and Mexican-Americans worked on farms for low pay and little respect throughout the 20th century, and even today.

<sup>1</sup>Have you ever had to move to a different town before? Maybe you just moved somewhere new, or maybe you have always lived in the same place. But can you imagine having to move to a new place every few months? This is what Mexican migrant farm workers had to do in California in the 1900s. Because they worked in fields and farms, they had to move several times a year, every time there was a new crop to harvest.

#### Who worked in the fields?

<sup>2</sup>Many people of Mexican descent had lived in California for a long time before it first became an American state in 1850. The territory used to belong to Mexico, and many residents did not leave when the United States bought the land.

<sup>3</sup>However, even more Mexican immigrants crossed the border when Mexico experienced a revolution in 1910. The revolution put some in danger and they fled for safety. The revolution also caused an economic downturn in Mexico, and many workers realized they could earn more money in the United States than they could in their home country.

<sup>4</sup>Workers continued to move to California and other southwest states throughout the 1920s. The U.S. government set up a program to give immigrants short-term work visas. The program was designed for workers to come to the U.S. for a short time, just long enough to earn money to send back to their families. Most workers relied on these visas to stay in the country, but some stayed long enough to earn their citizenship and have children.

<sup>5</sup>When the Great Depression hit the U.S. in the 1930s, unemployment across the country rose to 25%. Many white Americans grew upset, believing that immigrants were “taking” their jobs. They blamed the Mexican workers for the fact that so many other people did not have jobs. Local and even state governments began to deport anyone who looked Mexican. Police did not bother to check if the people they removed were citizens.



"Rural rehabilitation camps for migrants in California" by Dorothea Lange is in the public domain.

### **Life as a migratory worker**

<sup>6</sup>The workers who remained in the states often became migratory workers. They had to move around as different crops came into season, so they could be employed all year round. Life as a migratory worker in the 1930s was hard. Even though agriculture in California depended on migratory workers, they made the lowest wages in the country. Farm owners did not treat their laborers with respect. Most farms did not have bathroom facilities or water for the workers to drink, and there was no place to wash dangerous pesticide chemicals off their hands.

<sup>7</sup>Families moved too much and did not make enough money to own a house, so they usually stayed in makeshift homes right next to the fields. They built these houses out of whatever they could find, including scrap wood, cardboard, canvas, or tin cans. Although it was technically illegal, some children had to work in the fields alongside their parents for long hours. Even when children could go to school during the days, they had to change schools so often that it was very difficult to learn.

### **Government intervention**

<sup>8</sup>The U.S. government started programs to help families hurt by the Great Depression, but few of these programs applied to agricultural workers. The one program that brought some assistance was the Farm Security Administration, which set up living camps and provided food and medicine to migratory workers. They separated Mexican and Mexican-American workers from whites because they did not want racial tensions to cause problems in the camps.

<sup>9</sup>A few Mexican workers tried to organize strikes and protests during the Depression, but they did not succeed in improving working or living conditions. After the Depression ended, life did not get much easier for the migratory laborers. However, change began when Cesar Chavez first created a union for farm workers in 1965: the National Farm Workers Association. Chavez and the NFWA wanted higher wages and better working conditions for all laborers, Mexican and white alike.

### **Reform at last**

<sup>10</sup>One of Chavez’s most famous campaigns was his strike and boycott against grape growers in California. It began in 1965 when fruit companies refused to meet the demands of their workers. The workers went on strike and would not agree to keep working until they were paid better. To raise awareness and pressure the fruit companies, Chavez organized a 300-mile march to Sacramento, the capital of California. He also encouraged consumers around the country not to buy grapes. Finally, in 1970, the grape growers agreed to give their workers better wages.

<sup>11</sup>Today, Mexican immigrants or people of Mexican descent still make up a large majority of farm workers. In 2005, a survey found that 53% of these workers were undocumented workers, 21% were permanent residents, and 25% were full U.S. citizens. Most farm workers still make less than \$10,000 per year, especially since many are paid per bucket of fruit they pick, rather than per hour. Despite some improvements from the 1930s, being a farm worker is still a dangerous and difficult job. Many organizations and politicians are still working to improve the lives of migrant laborers across the country.

For the following questions, choose the best answer.

### Practice Activity

1. PART A: Which of the following statements best identifies a central idea of this text?
  - a. America has always welcomed immigrants who built the country and made it more productive through history.
  - b. During the Great Depression, jobs were scarce, but there was always a place for laborers working American soil to become wealthy and live out the American dream.
  - c. Mexicans invaded America in the 1930s because there were no jobs in Mexico and they wanted to steal American wealth.
  - d. Life as a migrant worker was difficult because of poverty and prejudice, and because it was hard to constantly adapt to life on the move.
  
2. PART B: Which phrase from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
  - a. “and many workers realized they could earn more money in the United States than they could in their home country” (Paragraph 3)
  - b. “Most workers relied on these visas to stay in the country, but some stayed long enough to earn their citizenship and have children” (Paragraph 4)
  - c. “they made the lowest wages in the country. Farm owners did not treat their laborers with respect” (Paragraph 6)
  - d. “The U.S. government started programs to help families hurt by the Great Depression,” (Paragraph 8)
  
3. PART A: What does the term “migratory workers” most closely mean as it is used in paragraph 6?
  - a. People who remain in one country
  - b. People who leave their country permanently
  - c. Agricultural workers or farmers

- d. Workers who move from place to place
4. PART B: Which phrase from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
- “The workers who remained in the states often became migratory workers” (Paragraph 6)
  - “They had to move around the state as different crops came into season,” (Paragraph 6)
  - “so they could be employed all year round” (Paragraph 6)
  - “Even though agriculture in California depended on migratory workers,” (Paragraph 6)

**Answers:**

1. D
2. C
3. D
4. B

**Attributions:**

- ["The Word on College Reading and Writing"](#) by Carol Burnell, Jaime Wood, Monique Babin, Susan Pesznecker, and Nicole Rosevear is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)
- ["Intermediate Reading and Writing"](#) by Rebecca Alhaider is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)
- ["How Arguments Work - A Guide to Writing and Analyzing Texts in College"](#) by [Anna Mills](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#)
- ["Mexican Migrant Workers in the 20th Century"](#) by Jessica McBirney is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
- ["You, Writing! A Guide to College Composition"](#) by Alexandra Glynn, Kelli Hallsten-Erickson & Amy Jo Swing is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)

## Chapter 4: Understanding Fiction

### Making Inferences

Making inferences is a comprehension strategy used by proficient readers to “read between the lines,” make connections, and draw conclusions about the text’s meaning and purpose.

You already make inferences all of the time. For example, imagine you go over to a friend’s house and they point at the sofa and say, “Don’t sit there, Cindy came over with her baby again.” What could you logically conclude?

First, you know there must be a reason not to sit where your friend is pointing. Next, the reason not to sit there is related to the fact that Cindy just visited with her baby. You don’t know what exactly happened, but you can make an inference and don’t need to ask any more questions to know that you do not want to sit there.

## Understanding Theme

A theme is an idea, a simple, clear, and powerful idea. Every story you have ever been told was created to teach you something. The more powerful and life changing the lesson, the more sacred the story. Human beings are incredible entities that extract meaning from stories that are not true. It is this ability that has allowed the arts and creativity to thrive. If your story has no theme then it has no lesson and will leave your audience's minds faster than it entered.

The theme is the heartbeat/ soul/ central message of the story. The theme is power statement in which the entire imaginary world of the play was created in order to deliver. The theme is vital because it will help guide how you develop the characters and their objectives and will also guide how the production is presented. Each character will have a relationship to this theme and this will determine his/her actions.

### Practice Activity

#### The Little Girl Who Would Not Work

By Carolyn Sherwin Bailey 1906

<sup>1</sup> There was once a little girl who loved to play all day out of doors among the flowers and the bees.

Her mother thought she would grow to be an idle little girl if she played so much. "You are old enough to do some work, little daughter," she said. "Even when you are a tiny girl you can learn to be busy."

But the little girl said: "Oh, mother, I do not like to work. Please let me go to the woods and play just a little while before I do my tasks."

So her mother said she might play, but only for a little while.

<sup>5</sup> The child ran out of the house, and across the garden, and down to the woods as fast as her feet could carry her. As she hurried on, a Red Squirrel jumped across her path and the little girl said to him: "Red Squirrel, you don't have to work, do you? You may just play, and eat nuts from morning till night. Isn't that all?"

"Not work!" chattered the Red Squirrel. "Why, I am working now, and I worked all day yesterday, and all of the day before. I have a family living in the old oak tree, and I must store away nuts for the winter. I have no time to stop and play."

Just then a Bee came buzzing by and the little girl said: "Little Bee, do you have any work to do?"

"Work!" buzzed the Bee. "Why, I am always working, gathering sweets and making the honeycomb for you. I have not time for play."

The little girl walked along very slowly, for she was thinking, and she saw an Ant, down in the path, carrying a very large crumb of bread.

<sup>10</sup> "That crumb of bread is too heavy for you, Ant," said the little girl. "Drop it, and come and play with me!"

"I don't care how heavy it is," said the Ant. "I was so glad to find it that I am willing to carry it. Oh, no, I couldn't stop to play. Once some one stepped upon our house and crushed it. We Ants thought we would go and hunt for a ready-made house, but we traveled a very long way, and

we were not able to find a house ready made, and we were obliged to come home and build. Oh, we have no time to play," said the Ant, as he started on with his crumb of bread.

So the little girl sat down upon a stone, that she might think better, and she said to herself: "The creatures all have their tasks to do, but I don't believe the flowers work. Do you work, Pink Clover?" she asked of a little flower growing at her feet.

"Oh, yes, I am very busy," said the Pink Clover. "I gather the sunbeams every morning and keep them shut in my petals quite carefully all day long. I drink up all the moisture I can find with my roots, and I grow, and grow, to get ready for the seed time. The flowers must all work," said the Pink Clover.

Then the little girl decided to go home to her mother, and she said: "Mother, the Squirrels and the Bees and the Ants and the Flowers all work. I am the only idle one. I want some work to do."

<sup>15</sup> So her mother brought out a little apron which the child had begun to hem so long ago that she had forgotten all about it; and the little girl worked so faithfully and well that she was not idle any more, but very industrious.

### Practice Activity

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

1. What is the lesson of the short story?
  - a. Playing is always more fun than work.
  - b. Hard work is necessary and important.
  - c. Animals tend to work harder than humans.
  - d. Hard work is often rewarded.
  
2. Which detail from the story best supports the answer to Part A?
  - a. "Oh, mother, I do not like to work. Please let me go to the woods and play just a little while before I do my tasks". (Paragraph 3)
  - b. "Red Squirrel, you don't have to work, do you? You may just play, and eat nuts from morning till night. Isn't that all"? (Paragraph 5)
  - c. "The creatures all have their tasks to do, but I don't believe the flowers work. Do you work, Pink Clover"? (Paragraph 12)
  - d. "Mother, the Squirrels and the Bees and the Ants and the Flowers all work. I am the only idle one. I want some work to do". (Paragraph 14)
  
3. Which of the following describes what the little girl first thinks about the animals?
  - a. She doesn't realize that they work.
  - b. She knows how hard they work.
  - c. She is jealous that their work is fun.
  - d. She believes that they are lazy.
  
4. How does talking to the animals and the flower affect the little girl?

**Answers:**

1. B
2. D
3. A
4. Answers will vary; students should discuss how after talking to the animals and the flower, the little girl realizes that everybody must work. For instance, when the little girl talks to the squirrel, it states, “I have a family living in the old oak tree, and I must store away nuts for the winter. I have no time to stop and play” (paragraph 5). The little girl goes on to have similar conversations with the other animals and the flower in which she realizes that everyone but her is busy and doesn’t have time to play. After this, the little girl tells her mother, “I am the only idle one. I want some work to do” (Paragraph 14). In all, it is the little girl's conversation with the other creatures in nature that makes her realize that everyone and everything must work, including her.

**Comparing and Contrasting Ideas**

The comparison-and-contrast method of development is particularly useful in extending a definition, or anywhere you need to show how a subject is like or unlike another subject. For example, the statement is often made that drug abuse is a medical problem instead of a criminal justice issue. An author might attempt to prove this point by comparing drug addiction to AIDS, cancer, or heart disease to redefine the term “addiction” as a medical problem. A statement in opposition to this idea could just as easily establish contrast by explaining all the ways that addiction is different from what we traditionally understand as an illness. In seeking to establish comparison or contrast in your writing, some words or terms that might be useful are by contrast, in comparison, while some, and others.

**Cause and Effect**

The cause-and-effect pattern may be used to identify one or more causes followed by one or more effects or results. Or you may reverse this sequence and describe effects first and then the cause or causes. For example, the causes of water pollution might be followed by its effects on both humans and animals. You may use obvious transitions to clarify cause and effect, such as “What are the results? Here are some of them...” or you might simply use the words cause, effect, and result, to cue the reader about your about the relationships that you’re establishing.

**Practice Activity****The Power of the North**

Within days of the fall of Fort Sumter,<sup>1</sup> four more states joined the Confederacy: Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas. <sup>2</sup> The battle lines were now drawn. On paper, the Union outweighed the Confederacy in almost every way. Nearly 21 million people lived in 23 Northern states. The South claimed just 9 million people — including 3.5 million slaves — in Confederate states. Despite the North’s greater population, however, the South had an army almost equal in size during the first year of the war. The North had an enormous industrial advantage as well. At the beginning of the war, the Confederacy had only one-ninth the industrial capacity of the Union. But that statistic was misleading. In 1860, the North manufactured 97 percent of the

country's firearms, 96 percent of its railroad locomotives, 94 percent of its cloth, 93 percent of its pig iron, and over 90 percent of its boots and shoes. The North had twice the density of railroads per square mile. There was not even one rifleworks<sup>3</sup> in the entire South. All of the principal ingredients of gunpowder were imported.<sup>4</sup> Since the North controlled the navy, the seas were in the hands of the Union. A blockade<sup>5</sup> could suffocate the South. Still, the Confederacy was not without resources and willpower.

### **The Subtle Strength of the South**

The South could produce all the food it needed, though transporting it to soldiers and civilians was a major problem. The South also had a great nucleus<sup>6</sup> of trained officers. Seven of the eight military colleges in the country were in the South. The South also proved to be very resourceful. By the end of the war, it had established armories<sup>7</sup> and foundries in several states. They built huge gunpowder mills and melted down thousands of church and plantation bells for bronze to build cannons. The South's greatest strength lay in the fact that it was fighting on the defensive in its own territory. Familiar with the landscape, Southerners could harass Northern invaders.

### **The Uncertainties of War**

The military and political objectives of the Union were much more difficult to accomplish. The Union had to invade, conquer, and occupy<sup>8</sup> the South. It had to destroy the South's capacity and will to resist — a formidable<sup>9</sup> challenge in any war. Southerners enjoyed the initial advantage of morale:<sup>10</sup> The South was fighting to maintain its way of life, whereas the North was fighting to maintain a union. Slavery did not become a moral cause of the Union effort until Lincoln announced the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.<sup>11</sup> When the war began, many key questions were still unanswered. What if the slave states of Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, and Delaware had joined the Confederacy? What if Britain or France had come to the aid of the South? What if a few decisive early Confederate victories had turned Northern public opinion against the war? Indeed, the North looked much better on paper. But many factors undetermined at the outbreak of war could have tilted the balance sheet toward a different outcome.

1. PART A: Which statement identifies the central idea of the text?
  - a. The North was more powerful than the South and was always going to be the victor of the Civil War.
  - b. Despite the obvious strength of the North, the outcome of the war was unpredictable at the time.
  - c. The United States underestimated the strength of the South, giving it the upper hand.
  - d. The sole cause of the Civil War was the South's desire to preserve slavery in the United States.
  
2. PART B: Which quote from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
  - a. "The North had an enormous industrial advantage as well." ( **Paragraph 3** )
  - b. "The South's greatest strength lay in the fact that it was fighting on the defensive in its own territory." ( **Paragraph 7** )

- c. "The South was fighting to maintain its way of life, whereas the North was fighting to maintain a union." ( **Paragraph 9**)
  - d. "When the war began, many key questions were still unanswered." ( **Paragraph 10**)
3. PART A: What is a "foundry," as discussed in **paragraph 6**?
  - a. Fortress
  - b. Metal factory
  - c. Weaponry workshop
  - d. Military workshop
4. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
  - a. "Seven of the eight military colleges in the country were in the South." ( **Paragraph 5**)
  - b. "By the end of the war, it had established armories" ( **Paragraph 6**)
  - c. "Melted down thousands of church and plantation bells for bronze to build cannon." ( **Paragraph 6**)
  - d. "The South's greatest strength lay in the fact that it was fighting on the defensive in its own territory." ( **Paragraph 7**)
5. How does paragraph 5 contribute to the development of ideas in the text?

**Answers:**

1. B
2. D
3. B
4. C
5. Answers will vary, students should discuss the strengths and weakness of the South during the war described in this paragraph. For instances, why the South had access to plenty of food , it struggle with transportation (Paragraph 4). This paragraph reflects the uncertain nature of the war. While the North appeared to have the advantage, the South had resources of their own. By discussing this, the paragraph reinforces the unpredicted nature of the war.

**Attributions:**

- "[Inference \(Robbie Pock, Portland Community College\)](#)" by Robbie Pock is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)
- "[Advanced English](#)" by Allison Kilgannon is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)
- "[A Nation Divided: North Vs. South](#)" by USHistory.org is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
- "[THE LITTLE GIRL WHO WOULD NOT WORK](#)" by Carolyn Sherwin Bailey is licensed under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#)

## Chapter 5: Interpreting and Understanding Poetry

We can possibly best define what poetry is by saying what it isn't. For one thing, poetry, unlike prose, cannot be paraphrased. If you could sum it up succinctly in any other fashion, you wouldn't write the poem. One can talk about the theme of a poem, for instance, but it's the poem itself which conveys the ultimate effect. *A poem is the best possible expression of what the poet wants to say.* Some might say that the form and content of art, in this case poetry, is untranslatable.

A poet makes the invisible visible. The invisible includes our deepest feelings and angsts, and also our joys, sorrows and unanswered questions of being human. How is a poet able to do this? A poet uses **fresh** and **original language** and is more interested in how the arrangement of words affects the reader rather than solely grammatical construction. The poet thinks about how words **sound**, the musicality within each word and how the words come together.

Like fiction writers, poets mostly **show rather than tell**. They describe the scene vividly using as few words as possible and prefer to describe rather analyze, leaving the latter to the people who read and write about poetry as you are doing in this class.

### Practice Activity

#### Fog By Carl Sandburg 1916

<sup>1</sup> The fog comes  
on little cat feet.

It sits looking over harbor and city  
<sup>5</sup> on silent haunches  
and then moves on.

1. PART A: Which statement best explains the meaning of lines 1-2? "The fog comes / on little cat feet."
  - a. The fog arrives quietly.
  - b. The fog arrives angrily.
  - c. The fog arrives happily.
  - d. The fog arrives noisily.
2. PART B: Which detail from the poem best supports the answer to Part A?
  - a. "sits looking" (Line 3)
  - b. "harbor and city" (Line 4)
  - c. "silent haunches" (Line 5)
  - d. "moves on" (Line 6)
3. Which of the following best describes the speaker's opinion toward the fog?
  - a. reflective because the speaker analyzes the fog as it rolls over the city
  - b. anxious because the speaker cannot control the fog
  - c. excited because fog is an unusual sight for the speaker's city

- d. depressed because the fog has had a gloomy impact on the city
4. Which of the following statements best describes a theme in the poem?
- a. There is always conflict between humans and nature.
  - b. Natural events will happen without human interference.
  - c. Nature's control can be dangerous for humans.
  - d. Humans must learn to either tame nature or live with it

**Answers:**

- 1. A
- 2. C
- 3. A
- 4. B

**Stanza & Verse**

Stanzas or verses are the poetic equivalent of paragraphs, but with more shape, weight and focus than the prose equivalent. A stanza concentrates attention on a particular area of thought or image. The reasons for dividing a poem into stanzas or verses may vary from poem to poem and might develop from the reasons for the line-breaks that we introduce, with the stanzas or rooms constituting the macro-structure of the poem and its larger purpose.

“Sonnet 130” by William Shakespeare

My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun;  
Coral is far more red than her lips’ red:  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.

I have seen roses damasked, red and white,  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;  
And in some perfumes is there more delight  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.

I love to hear her speak, yet well I know  
That music hath a far more pleasing sound:  
I grant I never saw a goddess go,  
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground.

And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare  
As any she belied with false compare.

→

Line

→

Stanza (Group of lines)

## Analyzing Poetry

### The Clock Man by Shel Silverstein

<sup>1</sup>“How much will you pay for an extra day?”

The clock man asked the child.

“Not one penny,” the answer came,

“For my days are as many as smiles.”

<sup>5</sup> “How much will you pay for an extra day?”

He asked when the child was grown.

“Maybe a dollar or maybe less,

For I’ve plenty of days of my own.”

“How much will you pay for an extra day?”

<sup>10</sup> He asked when the time came to die.

“All of the pearls in all of the seas,

And all of the stars in the sky.

1. Part A: Which of the following best describes the theme of the poem?
  - a. People care about time more as they get older.
  - b. Children often feel like they will never get old.
  - c. There's nothing more important to people than staying young.
  - d. People are afraid of death their entire lives.
2. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
  - a. "For my days are as many as smiles." ( **Line 4** )
  - b. "How much will you pay for an extra day?" ( **Line 5** )
  - c. "He asked when the time came to die." ( **Line 10** )
  - d. "All of the pearls in all of the seas" ( **Line 11** )
3. What does the clock man represent in the poem?
  - a. Death
  - b. Living forever
  - c. Time
  - d. Money
4. How do the person's feelings about time change throughout the poem?
  - a. He values time more than he did as a child.
  - b. He grows more negative about time as he ages.
  - c. He is satisfied with the time he has left.
  - d. He feels angry that he cannot buy any more time.

**Answers:**

1. A
2. D
3. C
4. A

**Sound and Rhythm in Poetry**

Poems have a musicality to them. They are meant to be read aloud to hear the sound, the rhythm, and sometimes the rhyme. How do poets create sound and rhythm in their poems? Through several literary devices.

**Assonance:**

Assonance is the repetition of the same vowel sound in words near each other.

**Consonance:**

Consonance is the repetition of the same consonant sounds in words near each other

**Alliteration:**

Alliteration is the repetition of the same consonant sounds at the beginning of words near each other.

**Onomatopoeia:**

Onomatopoeia means a word resembles the meaning sound it represents.

**Rhyme:**

Rhyme requires two or more words that repeat the same sounds. They are often spelled in a similar way, but they don't have to be spelled in similar ways. Rhyme can occur at the end of a line, called end rhyme, or it can occur in the middle of the line, called internal rhyme.

**Rhythm:**

Rhythm, of course, is the beat—the stressed syllables in a poem. Poets have a variety of possibilities for building that rhythm and ending lines.

**Repetition:**

Repetition is the reoccurrence of the same words, lines, or stanzas to create a particular mood.

**Meter:**

Meter is the countable beat that a poet or reader can count. The rhythm will have equal intervals. Count the beat in William Blake's poem "The Lamb."

**The Lamb**

Author: **William Blake ©1789**

Little Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?  
Gave thee life & bid thee feed  
By the stream & o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice?

Little Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?  
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,  
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:  
He is called by thy name,  
For he calls himself a Lamb.  
He is meek, & he is mild;  
He became a little child.  
I a child, & thou a lamb,  
We are called by his name.  
Little Lamb, God bless thee!  
Little Lamb, God bless thee!

### **Figurative Language**

At its most basic, figurative language is simply the use of words and phrases to mean something other than their literal denotation to create a specific effect. Keep in mind that language is *naturally* symbolic in origin, in its fabric. And an art that uses words cannot help but also have more meanings than just the literal.

We do this all. For example, if someone says "Time flies when you're having fun." That is figurative language.

It is both:

- Personification because time can't actually fly - it's just an abstract idea. Yes, if you threw the time turner at your computer, then the time turner would be flying - but not actually time.
- A metaphor because it's comparing time flying to the natural human response to be unaware of the passage of time.

The following types of figurative language are used most often in poetry:

- **Symbolism**  
Symbols are often used to make a connection between something concrete and abstract. A symbol or symbolism occurs when an object represents an abstract idea. This could include other people, places, time periods, or events.
- **Onomatopoeia**  
Onomatopoeia refers to words that imitate sounds associated with objects or actions they refer to. Example: rain- drip drop, plop, splash  
Other Examples: Bam, Boom, Oink, Ups, Ouch, Shhhh, Splash, Bang, Oh, and Woah.
- **Simile**  
A figure of speech that makes a comparison and shows similarities between two different things by using "like" or "as".
- **Metaphor**

A figure of speech that makes a direct comparison and shows similarities between two different things without using "like" or "as".

- **Personification**

Personification is when an author gives human qualities or actions to an inanimate or non-human object.

- **Hyperbole**

Poets can also use hyperbole to make an exaggeration, or an allusion to make a reference to something else.

### **Practice Activity**

#### **Invictus**

By William Ernest Henley 1875

<sup>1</sup> Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

<sup>5</sup> In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

<sup>9</sup> Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

<sup>13</sup> It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,

<sup>15</sup> I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul.

### **Practice Activity**

1. **Which of the following best describes a central theme of the text?**

- a. Identity is important to building self-confidence.
- b. Independence means refusing to follow anyone else's rules or laws.
- c. Resilience is the ability to keep going and to refuse to give up.
- d. Sacrifice is necessary to make someone a hero.

2. **How does the poem's use of darkness in its imagery contribute to the text's overall meaning?**

- a. The poem describes night covering the earth from "pole to pole" ( **line 2**), suggesting that the speaker's outlook on the world is very bleak and hopeless.

- b. The poem describes "night" ( **line 1**) covering the speaker, symbolic of the adversity and/or suffering he faces.
  - c. The poem describes "the Horror of the shade" ( **line 10**), suggesting that the speaker's hard times are only temporary.
  - d. The poem describes a dark "place of wrath and tears" ( **line 9**), implying that the speaker is overcome by his depression.
3. **PART A: Given the context of the poem, what does the title word "Invictus" most likely mean?**
- a. Careless
  - b. Lucky
  - c. Unfortunate
  - d. Undefeated
4. **PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A?**
- a. "I thank whatever gods may be / For my unconquerable soul." ( **Lines 3-4**)
  - b. "In the fell clutch of circumstance / ...Under the bludgeonings of chance" ( **Lines 5-7**)
  - c. "Beyond this place of wrath and tears / Looms but the Horror of the shade" ( **Lines 9-10**)
  - d. "It matters not how strait the gate, / How charged with punishments the scroll" ( **Lines 13-14**)

**Answers:**

- 1. C
- 2. B
- 3. D
- 4. A

**Imagery Level of a Poem**

Poets create snapshots of life through word pictures. That imagery can be a description using the five senses: sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell. Like fiction, it will focus on specific nouns and action verbs. Imagery can also be achieved through figures of speech: similes, metaphors, personification, hyperbole, etc. In the early 20th Century, William Carlos Williams was part of the Imagism Movement. Read his poem "The Red Wheelbarrow":

**The Red Wheelbarrow**  
Author: William Carlos Williams  
©1923

so much depends  
upon

a red wheel

barrow  
glazed with rain  
water  
beside the white  
chickens.

Notice the isolation of a single image—the red wheelbarrow. Notice the use of specific nouns—wheelbarrow, rain, chickens. Notice the strong action verb—glazed. Notice how the poem is a snapshot of a particular moment in life.

**Language is the personal or private choice of words the speaker uses to express himself.**

Poetry makes pictures with words.

Are there any words that are repeated or that stand out? Are the sentences long or short?

**Imagery** - the words used in a way to create pictures in our minds. These words in turn appeal to our senses: hear, see, taste, and feel. A poet may evoke pictures through:

**Symbols** - when a word stands not only for itself (a literal meaning), but also stands for something else (a figurative meaning).

**Similes** - a direct comparison between two things using the words "as" or "like".

See an example of a simile in the following poem by William Wordsworth,

### **I Wandered Lonely As a Cloud**

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

**Metaphors** – an indirect comparison between two things without the use of “as” or “like”.

See an example of a metaphor in the poem “There Will Come Soft Rains” by Sarah Teasdale:

“Robins will wear their feathery fire, Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire; ...” (The metaphor of robins that are personified as humans wearing their feathers as coats which keep them warm).

### **Practice Activity**

1. What sense/senses are evoked in the poem?

2. Can you find any symbols in the poem?
3. What similes or metaphors are used in the poem?

### **Attributions:**

- ["What is poetry?"](#) by The Open University is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)
- ["Introduction to Creative Writing"](#) by Linda Frances Lein is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)
- ["The Clock Man"](#) by Shel Silverstein is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
- ["Writing and Critical Thinking Through Literature"](#) by Heather Ringo & Athena Kashya is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#)
- ["Fog"](#) by Carl Sandburg is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)
- ["Figurative Language Review"](#) by SoftChalk is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)
- ["Onomatopoeia"](#) by ISKME is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#)
- ["Invictus"](#) by William Ernest Henley is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)

## **Chapter 6: Understanding Drama**

### **Structuring the Plot**

Plot is just another name for Story. Plot is the series of events that are structured to take the hero on a transformative journey throughout the story. Stories have been around for centuries and throughout that time the structure of storytelling has become solidified and with that there are essential components or rules you must follow.

### **Introducing the Main Characters:**

Within the first few pages of the story the audience needs to be introduced to the main characters they will be following for the journey of the play. The audience needs to know who to care about and identify with. If you want the audience to bond with your character, it helps to have the protagonist do a small act of kindness to allow us to see the characters potential as a hero. The audience does not need backstory, but they do need to be aware of the principal players in the world of the story.

If this is a love story, the audience needs to see a selfish and childish hero who avoids responsibility and only strives to have fun. We then need to see the over responsible counterpart that is overstressed, overworked, and avoids fun and risk at all cost. These characters behavior, flaws, and routines need to be established so that when they meet in the inciting incident, the audience understands the journey each character needs to undertake.

### **Establish the Setting**

The audience needs to understand where and when the play is taking place. Remember that in a play the action and story is being conveyed through dialogue and will need to be clearly established up front. You even do this when telling a quick story to your friend: "Last I was walking into Wal-Mart and \_\_\_\_\_"  
or in a joke: "2 guys walk into a bar."

or in a Fairy Tale: "Once upon a time in a land far far away..."

In each instance, the Setting is established up front so the audience has a location in which to stage the rest of the story.

### **Midpoint**

The midpoint of the play is where the main character has adequately explored the new world and has unlocked a piece of hidden potential. This event usually manifests itself into a 'false victory' or 'false defeat.' This means that the character has a minor confrontation with another character and through the confrontation learns a new skill. This confrontation can either be a victory or defeat, but it is labeled as 'false' because there is much more to learn, and the final confrontation is yet to come. Immediately following the midpoint is the intermission.

### **Climax**

The climax is the highest point of tension. Tension is created when we are anticipating an event but it has yet to occur. This is the moment where you extend the anticipation of victory or defeat, because once the event occurs it becomes part of the resolution and the audience will begin the process of disengaging from the performance and reconnecting with their lives.

### **Practice Activity**

Read the drama, then answer the practice questions.

**The Woman and Her Bear**  
*A Play Based on an Inuit Legend*  
By Pat Betteley 2021

*The Inuit are a group of native, or first, people of the arctic areas of northern Alaska, Canada, and Greenland who have lived there for over a thousand years. The word Inuit means "the people." In this play, a lonely woman cares for a polar bear. As you read, take notes on the Old Woman's actions.*

#### **Characters:**

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Narrator 3

Old Woman

Nukilik: Villager

Aput: Villager

Ikiaq: Little Boy.

<sup>1</sup> **Narrator 1:** In the cold, dark north, an old woman lived all alone in a little hut at the edge of an Inuit village. She had no husband or sons to hunt for her, so she sometimes had to depend on her neighbors for food.

**Ikiaq:** My mother sends salmon for your dinner.

**Old Woman:** Thank you. Tell her I am lucky to have such a generous neighbor. And she is lucky, too — to have such a kind, strong son.

**Narrator 1:** The old woman often walked along the shore, staring out at the sea, praying to the gods that she might also have a son. One day, she saw a little white polar bear in the distance. She walked out on the ice to get a closer look.

<sup>5</sup> **Old Woman:** Where is your mother? Has someone killed her? It seems we are both alone in the world, then. Come, little one.

**Narrator 1:** She took him back to her home and shared what little food she had with him. **Old Woman:** I will call you Kunik, my son.

**Narrator 2:** Kunik and the old woman were happy together. He was a round, friendly, little bear. The children of the village loved to play with him, sliding on the ice and tumbling in the snow together. Kunik grew quickly over the spring and summer. During the long, dark winter, the children taught him to hunt and fish. By spring, he was bringing salmon home to his mother every afternoon.

**Old Woman:** Thank the gods for you, Kunik. Now I have plenty of meat and fish to eat, furs to keep me warm, and blubber for cooking. Good neighbors, come and share Kunik's catch with us. There's more than enough.

<sup>10</sup> **Nuklik:** She speaks the truth. That bear brings home the biggest seals and the fattest salmon.

**Aput:** Yes. He makes the rest of us look bad.

**Nuklik:** And he has grown so strong, he is a danger to our families. For the sake of our children, we must kill him.

**Ikiaq:** (overhearing) Oh, no! I must warn the Old Woman.

**Narrator 2:** When she heard of her neighbors' wicked plot, the old woman visited each of them to plead for her son's life.

<sup>15</sup> **Old Woman:** Kunik is my son. Please do not take him. Kill me, instead.

**Nuklik:** That bear is getting too strong and dangerous. Tomorrow, he must die. Then the whole village will have a fine feast — and use his fur to keep us warm.

**Narrator 2:** The old woman hurried home. She called Kunik to sit beside her.

**Old Woman:** My son, you must leave at once. The villagers have become jealous and plan to kill you. Run quickly and do not come back.

**Narrator 3:** With tears in his eyes, the bear did as his mother asked.

<sup>20</sup> **Old Woman:** Do not forget me. . .

**Narrator 3:** From time to time, the broken-hearted old woman felt very lonely and hungry. Then she left her hut early in the morning to walk far out on the ice, calling Kunik's name. Soon, a great polar bear came running to meet her.

**Old Woman:** My son! How are you? Let me check your fur to make sure you have not been injured. No, you look big, strong, and sleek!

**Narrator 3:** When he saw that she was hungry, Kunik ran to get her fresh meat and fish. They ate some together, and she took the rest home.

And so it happened for many years. The villagers realized the love between the old woman and her bear was strong and true. And, to this day, the Inuit tell the tale of the faithful bear Kunik and the old woman who brought him up.

### Practice Activity

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

1. What is a theme of the play?
  - a. Wild animals should not be kept as pets.
  - b. Jealous people never get what they want.
  - c. Learning new skills can save you from loneliness.
  - d. Those who love you will always come back to you.
2. What does the stage direction in paragraph 13 help the reader understand?
  - a. Ikiq cares about the Old Woman.
  - b. Ikiq lets the villagers know he is there.
  - c. The Old Woman is all alone in the world.
  - d. The villagers are telling Ikiq important information.
3. In paragraph 14, the word "plead" most closely means —
  - a. accuse
  - b. beg
  - c. blame
  - d. excuse
4. What do the Old Woman's actions in paragraph 18 show about her character?
5. There is a famous adage that says, "if you love something let it go." How is this true for the Old Woman and Kunik? Have you ever had to let something you loved go? Describe what happened and how you felt afterwards.
6. In the play, the other villagers begin to feel jealous of Kunik. Have you ever felt jealous? How did you respond when you felt jealous? What does the play teach us about jealousy?

### Answers:

1. D
2. A
3. B
4. Answer will vary. Students should explain that by letting Kunik go, the Old Woman shows she is an unselfish person. The Old Woman was all alone before Kunic came along and she learns of her neighbors' plan to kill Kunik, she tells him to leave: "Run quickly and do not come back" (Paragraph 18). She tells Kunic to go to save his life, even though she might not have enough food and will be all alone again. This shows that the

Old Woman is an unselfish person who makes sacrifices for the good of those she cares about.

### **Attributions:**

- "[Devisting](#)" by Nick Garcia is licensed under CC BY 4.
- "[THE WOMAN AND HER BEAR](#)" by Pat Betteley is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](#)

### **Practice Exams**

Complete the two reading practice exams in the websites links listed below:

<https://www.hisetpracticetest.org/hiset-reading-practice-test/>

<https://www.ets-cls.org/hiset/>

### **HSE Open Education OER Team:**

**Cecilio Mora** – Lead OER/Project Director, West Hills Community College District

**Andres Enriquez** – Project Director, California State University, Sacramento

**Beatriz Torres**, Lead Instructor, West Hills Community College District

**Iris Torres**, Reading Instructor, West Hills Community College District

**Yanet Aguilar**, Writing Instructor, California State University, Sacramento

**Maria Jauregui**, Social Studies Instructor, California State University, Bakersfield

**Vanesa Saraza**, Science Instructor, Santa Rosa Junior College.

**Rocio Nanez Barrios**, Math Instructor, Santa Rosa Junior College

**Oswaldo Rodriguez**, Math Instructor, SER Jobs for Progress, Inc

**Graciela Salcido**, Reviewer, West Hills Community College District

**Open Educational Resources (OER)** are teaching, learning, and research materials that are either (a) in the public domain or (b) licensed in a manner that provides everyone with free and perpetual permission to engage in the 5R activities.

- Retain – make, own, and control a copy of the resource
- Reuse – use your original, revised, or remixed copy of the resource publicly
- Revise – edit, adapt, and modify your copy of the resource
- Remix – combine your original or revised copy of the resource with other existing material to create something new
- Redistribute – share copies of your original, revised, or remixed copy of the resource with others

### **Mission of HSE OER Book:**

The mission of the High School Equivalency (HSE) OER Team is to make the HSE OER book accessible to all instructors and students nationwide. **We invite HSE instructors,**

**administrators, and students to contribute to the improvement and expansion of this book by submitting OER materials, contributions, or corrections on this [HSE OER Book Contribution Form](#).**