

THE YEAR WAS 2081, and everybody was finally equal. They weren't only equal before God and the law. They were equal every which way. Nobody was smarter than anybody else. Nobody was better looking than anybody else. Nobody was stronger or quicker than anybody else. All this equality was due to the 211th, 212th, and 213th Amendments to the Constitution, and to the unceasing vigilance of agents of the United States Handicapper General.

Some things about living still weren't quite right, though. April for instance, still drove people crazy by not being springtime. And it was in that clammy month that the H-G men took George and Hazel Bergeron's fourteen-year-old son, Harrison, away.

It was tragic, all right, but George and Hazel couldn't think about it very hard. Hazel had a perfectly average intelligence, which meant she couldn't think about anything except in short bursts. And George, while his intelligence was way above normal, had a little mental handicap radio in his ear. He was required by law to wear it at all times. It was tuned to a government transmitter. Every twenty seconds or so, the transmitter would send out some sharp noise to keep people like George from taking unfair advantage of their brains.

George and Hazel were watching television. There were tears on Hazel's cheeks, but she'd forgotten for the moment what they were about.

On the television screen were ballerinas.

A buzzer sounded in George's head. His thoughts fled in panic, like bandits from a burglar alarm.

"That was a real pretty dance, that dance they just did," said Hazel.

"Huh" said George.

"That dance-it was nice," said Hazel.

"Yup," said George. He tried to think a little about the ballerinas. They weren't really very good-no better than anybody else would have been, anyway. They were burdened with sashweights and bags of birdshot, and their faces were masked, so that no one, seeing a free and graceful gesture or a pretty face, would feel like something the cat drug in. George was toying with the vague notion that maybe dancers shouldn't be handicapped. But he didn't get very far with it before another noise in his ear radio scattered his thoughts.

George winced. So did two out of the eight ballerinas.

Hazel saw him wince. Having no mental handicap herself, she had to ask George what the latest sound had been.

"Sounded like somebody hitting a milk bottle with a ball peen hammer," said George.

"I'd think it would be real interesting, hearing all the different sounds," said Hazel a little envious. "All the things they think up."

"Um," said George.

"Only, if I was Handicapper General, you know what I would do?" said Hazel. Hazel, as a matter of fact, bore a strong resemblance to the Handicapper General, a woman named Diana Moon Glampers. "If I was Diana Moon Glampers," said Hazel, "I'd have chimes on Sunday-just chimes. Kind of in honor of religion."

"Harrison Bergeron" by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

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"I could think, if it was just chimes," said George.

"Well-maybe make 'em real loud," said Hazel. "I think I'd make a good Handicapper General."

"Good as anybody else," said George.

"Who knows better than I do what normal is?" said Hazel.

"Right," said George. He began to think glimmeringly about his abnormal son who was now in jail, about Harrison, but a twenty-one-gun salute in his head stopped that.

"Boy!" said Hazel, "that was a doozy, wasn't it?"

It was such a doozy that George was white and trembling, and tears stood on the rims of his red eyes. Two of the eight ballerinas had collapsed to the studio floor, were holding their temples.

"All of a sudden you look so tired," said Hazel. "Why don't you stretch out on the sofa, so's you can rest your handicap bag on the pillows, honeybunch." She was referring to the forty-seven pounds of birdshot in a canvas bag, which was padlocked around George's neck. "Go on and rest the bag for a little while," she said. "I don't care if you're not equal to me for a while."

George weighed the bag with his hands. "I don't mind it," he said. "I don't notice it any more. It's just a part of me."

"You been so tired lately-kind of wore out," said Hazel. "If there was just some way we could make a little hole in the bottom of the bag, and just take out a few of them lead balls. Just a few."

"Two years in prison and two thousand dollars fine for every ball I took out," said George. "I don't call that a bargain."

"If you could just take a few out when you came home from work," said Hazel. "I mean-you don't compete with anybody around here. You just sit around."

"If I tried to get away with it," said George, "then other people'd get away with it-and pretty soon we'd be right back to the dark ages again, with everybody competing against everybody else. You wouldn't like that, would you?"

"I'd hate it," said Hazel.

"There you are," said George. The minute people start cheating on laws, what do you think happens to society?"

If Hazel hadn't been able to come up with an answer to this question, George couldn't have supplied one. A siren was going off in his head.

"Reckon it'd fall all apart," said Hazel.

"What would?" said George blankly.

"Society," said Hazel uncertainly. "Wasn't that what you just said?"

"Who knows?" said George.

The television program was suddenly interrupted for a news bulletin. It wasn't clear at first as to what the bulletin was about, since the announcer, like all announcers, had a serious speech impediment. For about half a minute, and in a state of high excitement, the announcer tried to say, "Ladies and Gentlemen."

"Harrison Bergeron" by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

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He finally gave up, handed the bulletin to a ballerina to read.

"That's all right-" Hazel said of the announcer, "he tried. That's the big thing. He tried to do the best he could with what God gave him. He should get a nice raise for trying so hard."

"Ladies and Gentlemen," said the ballerina, reading the bulletin. She must have been extraordinarily beautiful, because the mask she wore was hideous. And it was easy to see that she was the strongest and most graceful of all the dancers, for her handicap bags were as big as those worn by two-hundred pound men.

And she had to apologize at once for her voice, which was a very unfair voice for a woman to use. Her voice was a warm, luminous, timeless melody. "Excuse me-" she said, and she began again, making her voice absolutely uncompetitive.

"Harrison Bergeron, age fourteen," she said in a grackle squawk, "has just escaped from jail, where he was held on suspicion of plotting to overthrow the government. He is a genius and an athlete, is under-handicapped, and should be regarded as extremely dangerous."

A police photograph of Harrison Bergeron was flashed on the screen-upside down, then sideways, upside down again, then right side up. The picture showed the full length of Harrison against a background calibrated in feet and inches. He was exactly seven feet tall.

The rest of Harrison's appearance was Halloween and hardware. Nobody had ever born heavier handicaps. He had outgrown hindrances faster than the H-G men could think them up. Instead of a little ear radio for

a mental handicap, he wore a tremendous pair of earphones, and spectacles with thick wavy lenses. The spectacles were intended to make him not only half blind, but to give him whanging headaches besides.

Scrap metal was hung all over him. Ordinarily, there was a certain symmetry, a military neatness to the handicaps issued to strong people, but Harrison looked like a walking junkyard. In the race of life, Harrison carried three hundred pounds.

And to offset his good looks, the H-G men required that he wear at all times a red rubber ball for a nose, keep his eyebrows shaved off, and cover his even white teeth with black caps at snaggle-tooth random.

"If you see this boy," said the ballerina, "do not - I repeat, do not - try to reason with him."

There was the shriek of a door being torn from its hinges.

Screams and barking cries of consternation came from the television set. The photograph of Harrison Bergeron on the screen jumped again and again, as though dancing to the tune of an earthquake.

George Bergeron correctly identified the earthquake, and well he might have - for many was the time his own home had danced to the same crashing tune. "My God-" said George, "that must be Harrison!"

The realization was blasted from his mind instantly by the sound of an automobile collision in his head.

When George could open his eyes again, the photograph of Harrison was gone. A living, breathing Harrison filled the screen.

"Harrison Bergeron" by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

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Clanking, clownish, and huge, Harrison stood - in the center of the studio. The knob of the uprooted studio door was still in his hand. Ballerinas, technicians, musicians, and announcers cowered on their knees before him, expecting to die.

"I am the Emperor!" cried Harrison. "Do you hear? I am the Emperor! Everybody must do what I say at once!" He stamped his foot and the studio shook.

"Even as I stand here" he bellowed, "crippled, hobbled, sickened - I am a greater ruler than any man who ever lived! Now watch me become what I can become!"

Harrison tore the straps of his handicap harness like wet tissue paper, tore straps guaranteed to support five thousand pounds.

Harrison's scrap-iron handicaps crashed to the floor.

Harrison thrust his thumbs under the bar of the padlock that secured his head harness. The bar snapped like celery. Harrison smashed his headphones and spectacles against the wall.

He flung away his rubber-ball nose, revealed a man that would have awed Thor, the god of thunder.

"I shall now select my Empress!" he said, looking down on the cowering people. "Let the first woman who dares rise to her feet claim her mate and her throne!"

A moment passed, and then a ballerina arose, swaying like a willow.

Harrison plucked the mental handicap from her ear, snapped off her physical handicaps with marvelous delicacy. Last of all he removed her mask.

She was blindingly beautiful.

"Now-" said Harrison, taking her hand, "shall we show the people the meaning of the word dance? Music!" he commanded.

The musicians scrambled back into their chairs, and Harrison stripped them of their handicaps, too. "Play your best," he told them, "and I'll make you barons and dukes and earls."

The music began. It was normal at first-cheap, silly, false. But Harrison snatched two musicians from their chairs, waved them like batons as he sang the music as he wanted it played. He slammed them back into their chairs.

The music began again and was much improved.

Harrison and his Empress merely listened to the music for a while-listened gravely, as though synchronizing their heartbeats with it.

They shifted their weights to their toes.

Harrison placed his big hands on the girls tiny waist, letting her sense the weightlessness that would soon be hers.

And then, in an explosion of joy and grace, into the air they sprang!

Not only were the laws of the land abandoned, but the law of gravity and the laws of motion as well.

They reeled, whirled, swiveled, flounced, capered, gamboled, and spun.

They leaped like deer on the moon.

"Harrison Bergeron" by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

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The studio ceiling was thirty feet high, but each leap brought the dancers nearer to it.

It became their obvious intention to kiss the ceiling. They kissed it.

And then, neutraling gravity with love and pure will, they remained suspended in air inches below the ceiling, and they kissed each other for a long, long time.

It was then that Diana Moon Glampers, the Handicapper General, came into the studio with a double-barreled ten-gauge shotgun. She fired twice, and the Emperor and the Empress were dead before they hit the floor.

Diana Moon Glampers loaded the gun again. She aimed it at the musicians and told them they had ten seconds to get their handicaps back on.

It was then that the Bergerons' television tube burned out.

Hazel turned to comment about the blackout to George. But George had gone out into the kitchen for a can of beer.

George came back in with the beer, paused while a handicap signal shook him up. And then he sat down again. "You been crying" he said to Hazel.

"Yup," she said.

"What about?" he said.

"I forget," she said. "Something real sad on television."

"What was it?" he said.

"It's all kind of mixed up in my mind," said Hazel.

"Forget sad things," said George.

"I always do," said Hazel.

"That's my girl," said George. He winced. There was the sound of a rivetting gun in his head.

"Gee - I could tell that one was a doozy," said Hazel.

"You can say that again," said George.

"Gee-" said Hazel, "I could tell that one was a doozy."

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*"Harrison Bergeron" is copyrighted by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., 1961.*

### **Activity 1: Examining Perspectives**

In Vonnegut's story, the government decides that competition leads to an unfair and unstable society, so it tries to make everyone the same. Harrison Bergeron, on the other hand, wants to be the best that he can be. Is competition necessary for high achievement?

Choose an activity that you are involved in, such as painting, playing football, or acting. Should this activity be competitive always, sometimes, or never?

- Make a two-column chart in which you list the advantages and disadvantages of competition in your chosen activity.
- Evaluate the pros and cons and form an opinion about the role of competition in this activity.
- Write a short persuasive essay arguing for your position. Be sure to include support from your chart.

### **Activity 2: Investigation**

In "Harrison Bergeron," the job of the Handicapper General is to make sure that no one in the country has any physical, mental, or creative advantage over anyone else. You probably know that government efforts to squash individuality have taken place in real life. One such movement, the Cultural Revolution, was led by the communist Mao-Tse-Tung in China from 1966 through 1976. What were its effects on Chinese society?

Use the Internet and other resources to investigate the Chinese Cultural Revolution and the Red Guards who carried it out.

- Who was the target of this program? How widespread was it?
- What did the Red Guards do to carry out the Cultural Revolution?
- What suffering did families experience?
- How did Mao's plan ultimately affect individuals and society as a whole?

Write a report in which you explain the aims of the Cultural Revolution and compare them to those of the Handicapper General.

## "Harrison Bergeron" Vocabulary

**Directions:** Use context clues and inferences to guess at the definition of each bolded vocabulary word. Then, write down the denotative definition of each word.

1. Citizens were well aware of the government's constant **vigilance**, so they seldom broke laws. They knew that the government was watching.

I: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. George would **wince** when a loud noise blasted into his ears.

I: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Loud shrieks and shouts of **consternation** are signs that people may be frightened and panicky.

I: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Some people become so terrified that they **cowered** under a desk.

I: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. The dancers slowed down and listened to the music, **synchronizing** their breathing to the beat of the music.

I: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. The dancers smiled at one another, **neutralizing** the tense atmosphere and allowing everyone to relax.

I: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**"Harrison Bergeron" Vocabulary**

consternation	neutralizing	vigilance
cower	synchronizing	wince

**A. Directions:** Fill in each blank with the correct word from the list above.

1. If you were cornered by a wild beast, you might \_\_\_\_\_
2. If you burned your finger on a hot stove, you might \_\_\_\_\_
3. If a series of burglaries occurred in your neighborhood, you might increase your \_\_\_\_\_
4. If you never found time to eat dinner with your family, you might suggest that your schedules needed \_\_\_\_\_
5. If you found your mother reading your diary, you might feel \_\_\_\_\_
6. If you had a rash from poison ivy, your doctor might suggest \_\_\_\_\_ the effect with a special cream.

**B. Directions:** Think about the meaning of each phrase in the first column. Then find the phrase in the second column that is closest in meaning. Write the letter of that phrase on the blank line.

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Yelps of confused amazement

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. Cringe and conceal

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. Unending alertness

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. Flinch from soreness

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. Coordinating timepieces

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. Deactivating the foe

A. unceasing vigilance

B. cries of consternation

C. synchronizing watches

D. cower and hide

E. neutralizing the enemy

F. wince in pain



### "Harrison Bergeron" Reading Questions

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1. What is the purpose of the handicaps?

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2. How are George and Hazel related to Harrison?

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3. What keeps happening to George that prevents him from finishing his thoughts?

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4. Why is Harrison in jail?

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5. What happens to Harrison at the end of the story?

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**Constructed Response:** In complete sentences, thoroughly answer the question related to the story using examples/supporting evidence.

6. Give several reasons why the Handicapper General considers Harrison a threat to society.
7. Analyze how Harrison's feelings toward government-imposed handicaps conflict with his father's. Give several examples from the story that show how each one feels about this government practice.

### **"Harrison Bergeron" Reading Questions**

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8. In what way is the mood at the Bergeron house different from the mood at the TV station?
9. Defend the statement that Harrison's actions would be in conflict with his parents' beliefs.

## **'Hunger Games,' reality and dystopia**

*By Anne Michaud*

"Kids killing kids." That's how the trilogy "The Hunger Games" is summed up by critics of the forthcoming film, premiering March 23. And it's not an untrue or inaccurate description. That arrow absolutely hits its mark.

As much as I'm a values-enforcing mother of two teenage girls, I have to admit, I love "The Hunger Games." I've read 2 1/2 of the three books, partly in an effort to have conversations with my 14-year-old. But it may be easier to accept the violent story line on the page than it will be to see it come to life on the big screen.

In an age when Columbine is still much more than a Colorado high school and, just three weeks ago, a student emptied his handgun in a school in Ohio, killing three students, should we ever be sanguine about kids killing kids? The idea makes you want to pop in an escapist Disney DVD—you know, the one with the happy ending. Oh, right, that's every Disney film.

In fact, we've spent generations feeding kids happy endings. Fairy tale characters may face grim obstacles, but they almost always prevail in the end. More recently, our culture has been walking up to darker themes. Voldemort tried to kill the hero in the "Harry Potter" series. The birth scene toward the end of "Twilight" was gruesome.

Are kids ready for all this?

The "Hunger Games" series is set in a post-apocalyptic future, in which the country of Panem is divided into 12, fenced-in manufacturing or agricultural districts, ruled by a hyper-powerful Capitol. Capitol residents obsess about their attractive bright pink hair or sequined skin, while district dwellers are often desperate for medical care or enough to eat.

Each year, two district representatives—a teenage boy and girl—are chosen by lottery to fight in the Hunger Games, a futuristic "American Idol" in which the 24 "tributes" fight to the death. Kids killing kids. Capitol and district residents alike watch the Hunger Games televised. It is their chief entertainment—like the brutal Roman games of history.

The series is imaginative and well-written, and the protagonist is a cunning and brave teenage girl, Katniss Everdeen. Clearly adults everywhere are impressed by the books: The series is assigned reading in eighth grade in my school district.

Katniss wrestles with all the moral questions the plot implies. Why is there an exempt class of Capitol residents who are never required to compete in the games? How can tributes be allies and friends, and then be required to turn on one another? Katniss' love triangle raises further questions of loyalty.

Loyalty is an overarching issue for middle-schoolers, who are often breaking old elementary school bonds and discovering new packs. So it's easy to see why the books were chosen for an eighth-grade audience. If the film portrays these issues well, it will be worth watching.

But morality is harder to convey on screen than gore. If filmmakers go the blood-and-guts route, emphasizing the considerable violence, "Hunger Games" will have failed its fans. Movies with PG-13 ratings, like this one, often push up against the envelope of R—and no ratings system seems adequate to prevent plain bad taste. Will Ferrell has convinced me of that.

At some point we have to trust our kids to understand the difference between reality and dystopian fantasy, and I believe most of them can.

## **'Hunger Games,' reality and dysstopia**

*By Anne Michaud*

*(continued)*

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In some parts of the world, in the Lord's Resistance Army in northern Uganda, for example, leader Joseph Kony forces children to murder—a real-life “kids killing kids.”

It's not as though this idea has never entered the human imagination.

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To enter out into that silence that was the city at eight o'clock of a misty evening in November, to put your feet upon that buckling concrete walk, to step over grassy seams and make your way, hands in pockets, through the silences, that was what Mr. Leonard Mead most dearly loved to do. He would stand upon the corner of an intersection and peer down long moonlit avenues of sidewalk in four directions, deciding which way to go, but it really made no difference; he was alone in this world of 2053 A.D., or as good as alone, and with a final decision made, a path selected, he would stride off, sending patterns of frosty air before him like the smoke of a cigar.

Sometimes he would walk for hours and miles and return only at midnight to his house. And on his way he would see the cottages and homes with their dark windows, and it was not unequal to walking through a graveyard where only the faintest glimmers of firefly light appeared in flickers behind the windows. Sudden gray phantoms seemed to manifest upon inner room walls where a curtain was still undrawn against the night, or there were whisperings and murmurs where a window in a tomb-like building was still open.

Mr. Leonard Mead would pause, cock his head, listen, look, and march on, his feet making no noise on the lumpy walk. For long ago he had wisely changed to sneakers when strolling at night, because the dogs in intermittent squads would parallel his journey with barkings if he wore hard heels, and lights might click on and faces appear and an entire street be startled by the passing of a lone figure, himself, in the early November evening.

On this particular evening he began his journey in a westerly direction, toward the hidden sea. There was a good crystal frost in

the air; it cut the nose and made the lungs blaze like a Christmas tree inside; you could feel the cold light going on and off, all the branches filled with invisible snow. He listened to the faint push of his soft shoes through autumn leaves with satisfaction, and whistled a cold quiet whistle between his teeth, occasionally picking up a leaf as he passed, examining its skeletal pattern in the infrequent lamplights as he went on, smelling its rusty smell.

"Hello, in there," he whispered to every house on every side as he moved. "What's up tonight on Channel 4, Channel 7, Channel 9? Where are the cowboys rushing, and do I see the United States Cavalry over the next hill to the rescue?"

The street was silent and long and empty, with only his shadow moving like the shadow of a hawk in mid-country. If he closed his eyes and stood very still, frozen, he could imagine himself upon the center of a plain, a wintry, windless Arizona desert with no house in a thousand miles, and only dry river beds, the street, for company.

"What is it now?" he asked the houses, noticing his wrist watch. Eight-thirty P.M.? Time for a dozen assorted murders? A quiz? A revue? A comedian falling off the stage?"

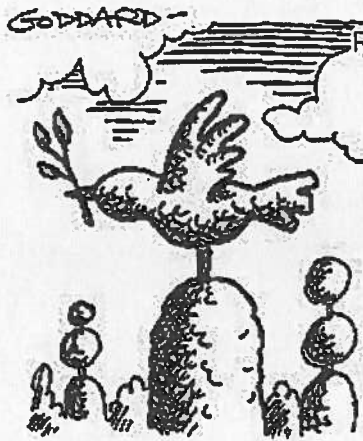
Was that a murmur of laughter from within a moon-white house? He hesitated, but went on when nothing more happened. He stumbled over a particularly uneven section of sidewalk. The cement was vanishing under flowers and grass. In ten years of walking by night or day, for thousands of miles, he had never met another person walking, not one in all that time.

He came to a cloverleaf intersection which stood silent where two main highways crossed the town. During the day it was a

# "Harrison Bergeron"

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**UTOPIARY**



**DYSTOPIARY**

search ID: cg01114

BCR-"Harrison Bergeron"-Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

1. Compare the imagery between the fictional story "Harrison Bergeron" to one of the visual pieces. Make sure to cite specific evidence as support.
2. Using the article " 'Hunger Games,' reality and dystopia" and the visual piece by Goddard, argue for the thematic link between the two differing sources. Make sure to use specific evidence from both sources to support your argument.



### BCR Rubric

4	<u>All</u> parts of the prompt are addressed in the response. Students make a <u>valid argument</u> supported by <u>multiple pieces</u> of evidence from the text.
3	<u>Most</u> parts of the prompt are addressed in the response. Students make <u>an argument</u> supported by few examples of evidence from the text.
2	<u>Some</u> parts of the prompt are addressed in the response. Students make an argument that may <u>not be valid</u> or <u>supported by textual evidence</u> .
1	<u>Some</u> parts of the prompt are addressed in the response. Students make an argument that is <u>not valid</u> and/or not <u>supported by text</u> .
0	No attempt to answer the text or off topic.

"The Pedestrian" by Ray Bradbury

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thunderous surge of cars, the gas stations open, a great insect rustling and a ceaseless jockeying for position as the scarab-beetles, a faint incense pattering from their exhausts, skimmed homeward to the far directions. But now these highways, too, were like streams in a dry season, all stone and bed and moon radiance.

He turned back on a side street, circling around toward his home. He was within a block of his destination when the lone car turned a corner quite suddenly and flashed a fierce white cone of light upon him. He stood entranced, not unlike a night moth, stunned by the illumination, and then drawn toward it.

A metallic voice called to him:

"Stand still. Stay where you are! Don't move!"

He halted.

"Put up your hands!"

"But--" he said.

"Your hands up! Or we'll shoot!"

The police, of course, but what a rare, incredible thing; in a city of three million, there was only one police car left, wasn't that correct? Ever since a year ago, 2052, the election year, the force had been cut down from three cars to one. Crime was ebbing; there was no need now for the police, save for this one lone car wandering and wandering the empty streets.

"Your name?" said the police car in a metallic whisper. He couldn't see the men in it for the bright light in his eyes.

"Leonard Mead," he said.

"Speak up!"

"Leonard Mead!"

"Business or profession?"

"I guess you'd call me a writer."

"No profession," said the police car, as if talking to itself. The light held him fixed, like a museum specimen, needle thrust through chest.

"You might say that," said Mr. Mead. He hadn't written in years. Magazines and books didn't sell anymore. Everything went on in the tomb-like houses at night now, he thought, continuing his fancy. The tombs, ill-lit by television light, where the people sat like the dead, the gray or multi-colored lights touching their faces, but never really touching them.

"No profession," said the phonograph voice, hissing. "What are you doing out?"

"Walking," said Leonard Mead.

"Walking!"

"Just walking," he said simply, but his face felt cold.

"Walking, just walking, walking?"

"Yes, sir."

"Walking where? For what?"

"Walking for air. Walking to see."

"Your address!"

"The Pedestrian" by Ray Bradbury

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"Eleven South Saint James Street."

"And there is air in your house, you have an air conditioner, Mr. Mead?"

"Yes."

"And you have a viewing screen in your house to see with?"

"No."

"No?" There was a crackling quiet that in itself was an accusation.

"Are you married, Mr. Mead?"

"No."

"Not married," said the police voice behind the fiery beam. The moon was high and dear among the stars and the houses were gray and silent.

"Nobody wanted me," said Leonard Mead with a smile.

"Don't speak unless you're spoken to!"

Leonard Mead waited in the cold night.

"Just walking; Mr Mead?"

"Yes."

"But you haven't explained for what purpose."

"I explained; for air, and to see, and just to walk."

"Have you done this often?"

"Every night for years."

The police car sat in the center of the street with its radio throat faintly humming.

"Well, Mr. Mead," it said.

"Is that all?" he asked politely.

"Yes," said the voice. 'Here.' There was a sigh, a pop. The back door of the police car sprang wide.

"Get in."

"Wait a minute, I haven't done anything!"

"Get in."

"I protest!"

"Mr. Mead."

He walked like a man suddenly drunk. As he passed the front window of the car he looked in. As he had expected, there was no one in the front seat, no one in the car at all.

"Get in."

He put his hand to the door and peered into the back seat, which was a little cell, a little black jail with bars. It smelled of riveted steel. It smelled of harsh antiseptic; it smelled too clean and hard and metallic. There was nothing soft there.

"Now if you had a wife to give you an alibi," said the iron voice. "But—"

"Where are you taking me?"

The car hesitated, or rather gave a faint whirring click, as if information, somewhere, was dropping card by punch-slotted card under electric eyes. "To the Psychiatric Center for Research on

"The Pedestrian" by Ray Bradbury

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Regressive Tendencies."

He got in. The door shut with a soft thud.  
The police car rolled through the night  
avenues, flashing its dim lights ahead.

They passed one house on one street a  
moment later, one house in an entire city of  
houses that were dark, but this one particular  
house had all of its electric lights brightly lit,  
every window a loud yellow illumination,  
square and warm in the cool darkness.

"That's my house," said Leonard Mead.

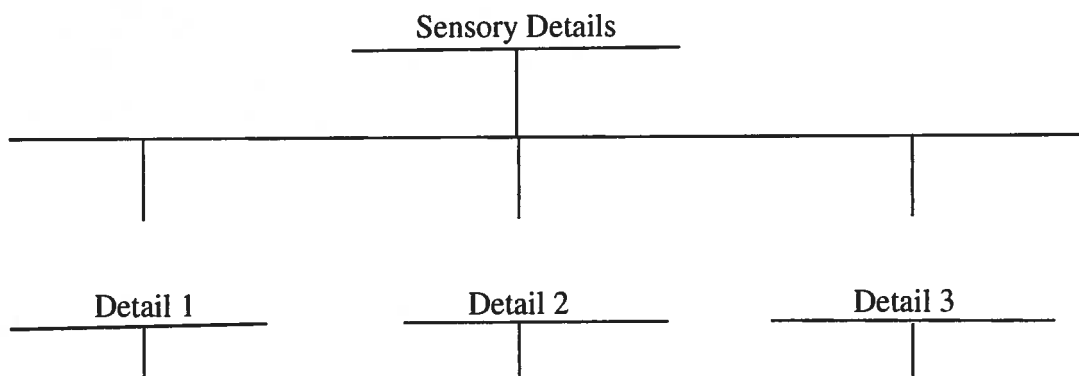
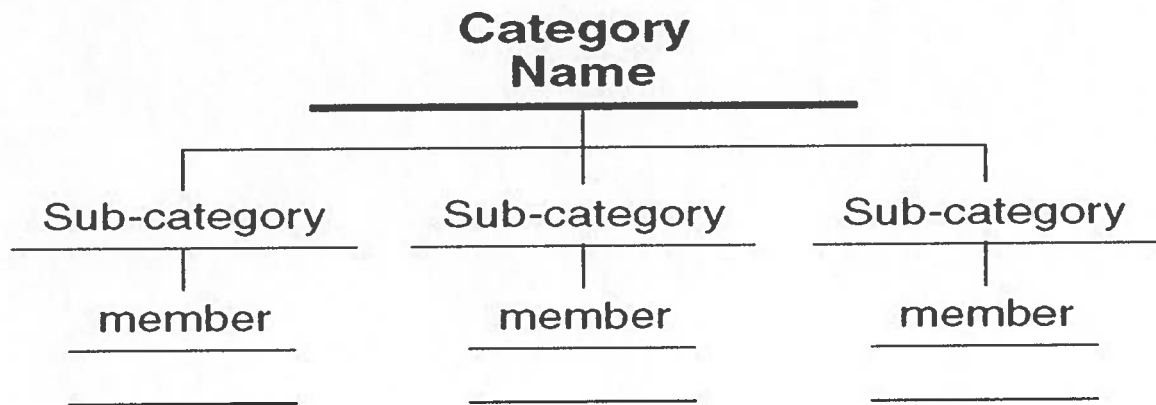
No one answered him.

The car moved down the empty riverbed  
streets and off away, leaving the empty  
streets with the empty sidewalks, and no  
sound and no motion all the rest of the chill  
November night.

## "The Pedestrian"-Thinking Map Activity

### *Recognizing Sensory Details*

Sensory details are references to sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch. In appealing to the five senses, sensory details help readers to experience more fully what is happening in a story. Bradbury uses rich and descriptive sensory details to describe characters, scenes, and action in "The Pedestrian." Find examples of sensory details in the selection and write them in the thinking map below.



Examples from text

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BCR – “The Pedestrian” by Ray Bradbury

1. Carefully examine how Bradbury uses sensory details in the story. Give at least 3 examples and explain which sense each one appeals to.
2. Explain how Bradbury uses these sensory details effectively in order to make the story appeal to the reader.

## A Nation Outnumbered by Gadgets

By Cecilia Kang

The machines ARE taking over.

At least that's the case with cellphones and other mobile devices, which for the first time outnumber human beings in the United States, the wireless trade group CTIA said Tuesday.

Precisely, there are 327.6 million active phones, tablets and laptops on cellular networks, up 9 percent from January. That compares with 315 million women, men, girls, boys and infants populating the country, including Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands, CTIA said in its semiannual survey.

How is that possible? Are we double-fisting phones?

In many cases, yes.

Sylvia Aguilera has an iPhone for personal use and a BlackBerry as well as a Verizon Wireless laptop for work.

"I believe in a separation of church and state," said the Round Hill, Va. resident. "My work doesn't need to know who I am calling on my personal time."

Bolstering the mobile mania: Children are getting cellphones at ever younger ages while seniors have begun to embrace the simplicity of tablets and smartphones, analysts say.

We have become a multigadget-toting society that is always connected to each other and to the Internet.

"It's now an expectation to be mobile and connected to the Internet, and that expectation will only be stronger in the future," said David Farber, a professor of computer science at Carnegie Mellon University and an early engineer of the Internet.

That attitude has prompted consumers to buy up the latest mobile gizmos despite an economic slump that is crimping spending in just about every other retail category.

Despite stubbornly high unemployment, Apple said this week that it took a record 1 million pre-orders in a single day for its latest iPhone. Revenues for the wireless industry grew 6 percent to \$164.6 billion in the 12 months ended June 2011, according to CTIA. Tablets became the fastest-selling hardware device in history, smack in the middle of an economic slump.

It helps that gadgets are getting cheaper. Amazon unveiled a Kindle Fire tablet for \$200, less than half that of the iPad, the original tablet. Cheaper devices are also hitting the market, including low-priced or free smartphones.

Indeed, in past periods of economic hardship, consumers said they would give up many things such as eating out, movies and new clothes. But they weren't willing to give up television. Now, consumers view paid television services as expendable, analysts say. Time Warner Cable lost 130,000 television subscribers nationwide in the second quarter and Comcast lost 238,000.

But consumers won't give up their mobile-phone contracts.

"The standard line was that people would rather shut off their refrigerator than their television set," said Craig Moffett, an analyst at Sanford C. Bernstein. "Now, wireless is probably the service at the top of every list."

Smartphones and basic feature phones make up the majority of mobile devices, while tablets make up less than 5 percent. But tablets are also fast-growing (sales are up 17 percent from last year) and the devices are expected to supplant laptops in the future.

These days, homes are now littered with all sorts of devices that have short life spans and are constantly being replaced, analysts say.

## **A Nation Outnumbered by Gadgets**

*By Cecilia Kang  
(continued)*

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It's now common to watch a sports event on TV while surfing the Web on a laptop or smartphone to check on Fantasy Football scores, according to Genevieve Bell, an anthropologist at Intel. That user may also be texting an order for pizza during the game while others in the room are tapping away at their phones or watching Netflix on a tablet.

Not that anyone seems to mind the digital deluge.

Happily, Art Upton of Northwood, Ohio, always has at least two devices strapped on his belt. His Android smartphone for "fun" and a BlackBerry for his job.

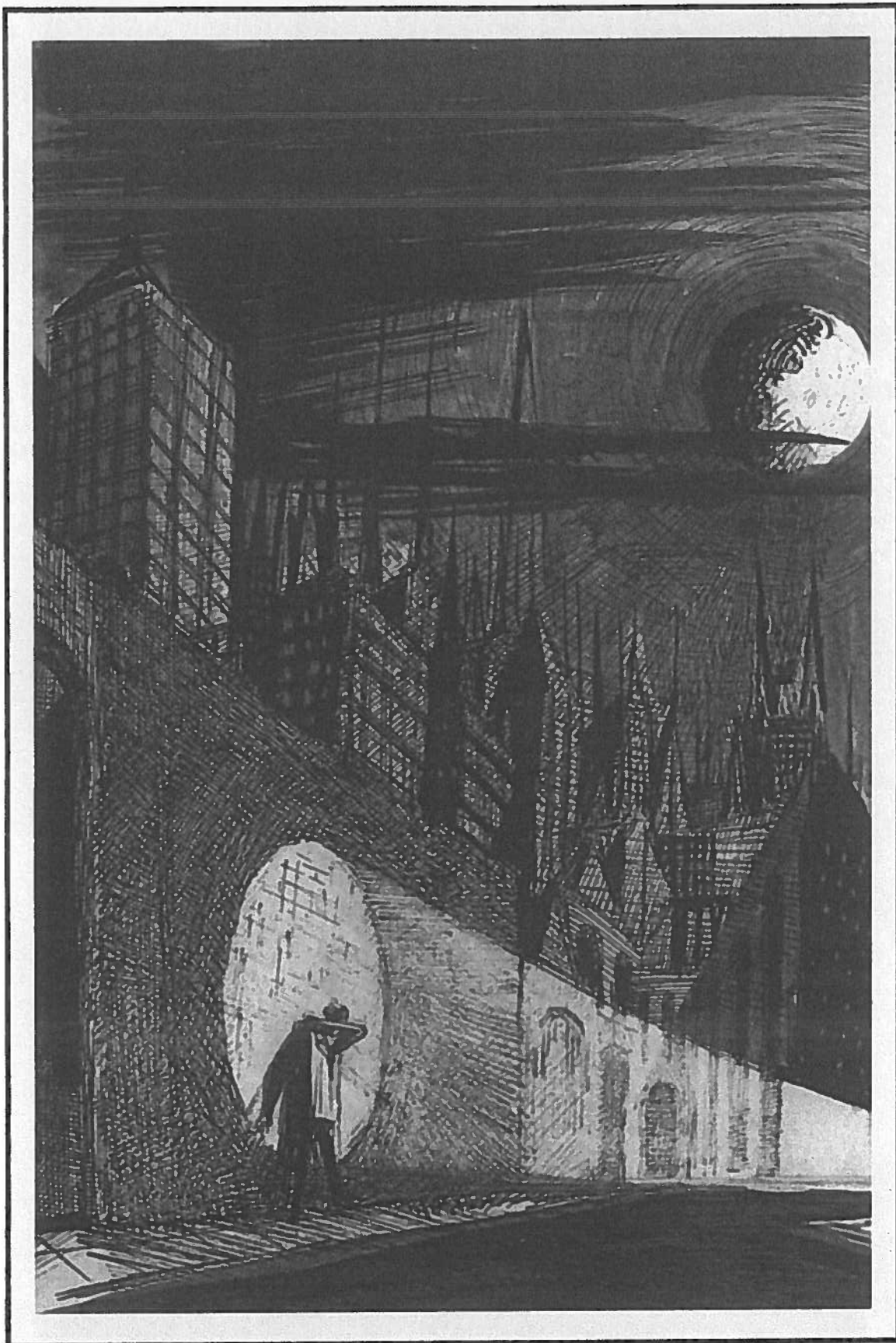
"Double-holstered, like the Old West," he said.

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*Cecilia Kang is a national technology reporter for The Washington Post, writing about tech and Internet policies at the Federal Communications Commission and Federal Trade Commission and how regulations affect businesses and consumers. Previously she was a reporter for the San Jose Mercury News, where she wrote about technology, race and demographics and economics. Cecilia started her career at AP-Dow Jones in New York City and Seoul, South Korea, where she was bureau chief during the Asian economic crisis of 1998.*



## "The Pedestrian" Visual



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**"I shall now hand over to our guest  
speaker, management unit XT-56."**

BCR – “The Pedestrian” by Ray Bradbury

1. Carefully examine how Bradbury uses sensory details in the story. Give at least 3 examples and explain which sense each one appeals to.
2. Explain how Bradbury uses these sensory details effectively in order to make the story appeal to the reader.

*Miss Strangeworth is a familiar fixture in a small town where everyone knows everyone else. Little do the townsfolk suspect, though, that the dignified old woman leads another, secret life...*

Miss Adela Strangeworth came daintily along Main Street on her way to the grocery. The sun was shining, the air was fresh and clear after the night's heavy rain, and everything in Miss Strangeworth's little town looked washed and bright. Miss Strangeworth took deep breaths and thought that there was nothing in the world like a fragrant summer day.

She knew everyone in town, of course; she was fond of telling strangers—tourists who sometimes passed through the town and stopped to admire Miss Strangeworth's roses—that she had never spent more than a day outside this town in all her long life. She was seventy-one, Miss Strangeworth told the tourists, with a pretty little dimple showing by her lip, and she sometimes found herself thinking that the town belonged to her. "My grandfather built the first house on Pleasant Street," she would say, opening her blue eyes wide with the wonder of it. "This house, right here." "My family has lived here for better than a hundred years. My grandmother planted these roses, and my mother tended them, just as I do. I've watched my town grow; I can remember when Mr. Lewis, Senior, opened the grocery store, and the year the river flooded out the shanties on the low road, and the excitement when some young folks wanted to move the park over to the space in front of where the new post office is today. They wanted to put up a statue of Ethan Allen"—Miss Strangeworth would frown a little and sound stern—"but it should have been a statue of my grandfather. There wouldn't have been a town here at all

if it hadn't been for my grandfather and the lumber mill."

Miss Strangeworth never gave away any of her roses, although the tourists often asked her. The roses belonged on Pleasant Street, and it bothered Miss Strangeworth to think of people wanting to carry them away, to take them into strange towns and down strange streets. When the new minister came, and the ladies were gathering flowers to decorate the church, Miss Strangeworth sent over a great basket of gladioli; when she picked the roses at all, she set them in bowls and vases around the inside of the house her grandfather had built.

Walking down Main Street on a summer morning, Miss Strangeworth had to stop every minute or so to say good morning to someone or to ask after someone's health. When she came into the grocery, half a dozen people turned away from the shelves and the counters to wave at her or call out good morning.

"And good morning to you, too, Mr. Lewis," Miss Strangeworth said at last. The Lewis family had been in the town almost as long as the Strangeworths; but the day young Lewis left high school and went to work in the grocery, Miss Strangeworth had stopped calling him Tommy and started calling him Mr. Lewis, and he had stopped calling her Addie and started calling her Miss Strangeworth. They had been in high school together, and had gone to picnics together, and to high-school dances and basketball games; but now Mr. Lewis was behind the counter in the grocery, and Miss Strangeworth was living alone in the Strangeworth house on Pleasant Street.

"Good morning," Mr. Lewis said, and added politely, "Lovely day."

"It is a very nice day," Miss Strangeworth said, as though she had only just decided that it would do after all. "I would like a chop, please, Mr. Lewis, a small, lean veal chop. Are those strawberries from Arthur Parker's garden? They're early this year."

"He brought them in this morning," Mr. Lewis said.

"I shall have a box," Miss Strangeworth said. Mr. Lewis looked worried, she thought, and for a minute she hesitated, but then she decided that he surely could not be worried over the strawberries. He looked very tired indeed. He was usually so chipper, Miss Strangeworth thought, and almost commented, but it was far too personal a subject to be introduced to Mr. Lewis, the grocer, so she only said, "and a can of cat food and, I think, a tomato."

Silently, Mr. Lewis assembled her order on the counter, and waited. Miss Strangeworth looked at him curiously and then said, "It's Tuesday, Mr. Lewis. You forgot to remind me."

"Did I? Sorry."

"Imagine your forgetting that I always buy my tea on Tuesday," Miss Strangeworth said gently. "A quarter pound of tea, please, Mr. Lewis."

"Is that all, Miss Strangeworth?"

"Yes, thank you, Mr. Lewis. Such a lovely day, isn't it?" "Lovely," Mr. Lewis said.

Miss Strangeworth moved slightly to make room for Mrs. Harper at the counter. "Morning, Adela," Mrs. Harper said, and

Miss Strangeworth said, "Good morning, Martha."

"Lovely day," Mrs. Harper said, and Miss Strangeworth said, "Yes, lovely," and Mr. Lewis, under Mrs. Harper's glance, nodded.

"Ran out of sugar for my cake frosting," Mrs. Harper explained. Her hand shook slightly as she opened her pocketbook. Miss Strangeworth wondered, glancing at her quickly, if she had been taking proper care of herself. Martha Harper was not as young as she used to be, Miss Strangeworth thought. She probably could use a good strong tonic.

"Martha," she said, "you don't look well."

"I'm perfectly all right," Mrs. Harper said shortly. She handed her money to Mr. Lewis, took her change and her sugar, and went out without speaking again. Looking after her, Miss Strangeworth shook her head slightly. Martha definitely did not look well.

Carrying her little bag of groceries, Miss Strangeworth came out of the store into the bright sunlight and stopped to smile down on the Crane baby. Don and Helen Crane were really the two most infatuated young parents she had ever known, she thought indulgently, looking at the delicately embroidered baby cap and the lace edged carriage cover.

"That little girl is going to grow up expecting luxury all her life," she said to Helen Crane.

Helen laughed. "That's the way we want her to feel," she said. "Like a princess."

"A princess can see a lot of trouble sometimes," Miss Strangeworth said dryly. "How old is Her Highness now?"

"Six months next Tuesday," Helen Crane said, looking down with rapt wonder at her child. "I've been worrying, though, about her. Don't you think she ought to move around more? Try to sit up, for instance?"

"For plain and fancy worrying," Miss Strangeworth said, amused, "give me a new mother every time."

"She just seems-slow," Helen Crane said.

"Nonsense. All babies are different. Some of them develop much more quickly than others."

"That's what my mother says." Helen Crane laughed, looking a little bit ashamed.

"I suppose you've got young Don all upset about the fact that his daughter is already six months old and hasn't yet begun to learn to dance?"

"I haven't mentioned it to him. I suppose she's just so precious that I worry about her all the time."

"Well, apologize to her right now," Miss Strangeworth said. "She is probably worrying about why you keep jumping around all the time." Smiling to herself and shaking her old head, she went on down the sunny street, stopping once to ask little Billy Moore why he wasn't out riding in his daddy's shiny new car, and talking for a few minutes outside the library with Miss Chandler, the librarian, about the new novels to be ordered and paid for by the annual library appropriation. Miss Chandler seemed

absentminded and very much as though she were thinking about something else. Miss Strangeworth noticed that Miss Chandler had not taken much trouble with her hair that morning, and sighed. Miss Strangeworth hated sloppiness.

Many people seemed disturbed recently, Miss Strangeworth thought. Only yesterday the Stewarts' fifteen-year-old Linda had run crying down her own front walk and all the way to school, not caring who saw her. People around town thought she might have had a fight with the Harris boy, but they showed up together, at the soda shop after school as usual, both of them looking grim and bleak. Trouble at home, people concluded, and sighed over the problems of trying to raise kids right these days.

From halfway down the block Miss Strangeworth could catch the heavy scent of her roses, and she moved a little more quickly. The perfume of roses meant home, and home meant the Strangeworth House on Pleasant Street. Miss Strangeworth stopped at her own front gate, as she always did, and looked with deep pleasure at her house, with the red and pink and white roses massed along the narrow lawn, and the rambler going up along the porch; and the neat, the unbelievably trim lines of the house itself, with its slimness and its washed white look. Every window sparkled, every curtain hung stiff and straight, and even the stones of the front walk were swept and clear. People around town wondered how old Miss Strangeworth managed to keep the house looking the way it did, and there was a legend about a tourist once mistaking it for the local museum and going all through the place without finding out about his mistake. But the town was proud of Miss Strangeworth and her roses and her house. They had all grown together.

Miss Strangeworth went up her front steps, unlocked her front door with her key, and went into the kitchen to put away her groceries. She debated about having a cup of tea and then decided that it was too close to midday dinnertime; she would not have the appetite for her little chop if she had tea now. Instead she went into the light, lovely sitting room, which still glowed from the hands of her mother and her grandmother, who had covered the chairs with bright chintz and hung the curtains. All the furniture was spare and shining, and the round hooked rugs on the floor had been the work of Miss Strangeworth's grandmother and her mother. Miss Strangeworth had put a bowl of her red roses on the low table before the window, and the room was full of their scent.

Miss Strangeworth went to the narrow desk in the corner and unlocked it with her key. She never knew when she might feel like writing letters, so she kept her notepaper inside and the desk locked. Miss Strangeworth's usual stationery was heavy and creamcolored, with STRANGEWORTH HOUSE engraved across the top, but, when she felt like writing her other letters, Miss Strangeworth used a pad of various-colored paper bought from the local newspaper shop. It was almost a town joke, that colored paper, layered in pink and green and blue and yellow; everyone in town bought it and used it for odd, informal notes and shopping lists. It was usual to remark, upon receiving a note written on a blue page, that so-and-so would be needing a new pad soon—here she was, down to the blue already. Everyone used the matching envelopes for tucking away recipes, or keeping odd little things in, or even to hold cookies in the school lunchboxes. Mr. Lewis sometimes gave

them to the children for carrying home penny candy.

Although Miss Strangeworth's desk held a trimmed quill pen which had belonged to her grandfather, and a gold-frosted fountain pen which had belonged to her father, Miss Strangeworth always used a dull stub of pencil when she wrote her letters, and she printed them in a childish block print. After thinking for a minute, although she had been phrasing the letter in the back of her mind all the way home, she wrote on a pink sheet: DIDN'T YOU EVER SEE AN IDIOT CHILD BEFORE? SOME PEOPLE JUST SHOULDN'T HAVE CHILDREN SHOULD THEY?

She was pleased with the letter. She was fond of doing things exactly right. When she made a mistake, as she sometimes did, or when the letters were not spaced nicely on the page, she had to take the discarded page to the kitchen stove and burn it at once. Miss Strangeworth never delayed when things had to be done.

After thinking for a minute, she decided that she would like to write another letter, perhaps to go to Mrs. Harper, to follow up the ones she had already mailed. She selected a green sheet this time and wrote quickly: HAVE YOU FOUND OUT YET WHAT THEY WERE ALL LAUGHING ABOUT AFTER YOU LEFT THE BRIDGE CLUB ON THURSDAY? OR IS THE WIFE REALLY ALWAYS THE LAST ONE TO KNOW?

Miss Strangeworth never concerned herself with facts; her letters all dealt with the more negotiable stuff of suspicion. Mr. Lewis would never have imagined for a minute that his grandson might be lifting petty cash from the store register if he had not had one of Miss Strangeworth's letters.



Miss Chandler, the librarian, and Linda Stewart's parents would have gone unsuspectingly ahead with their lives, never aware of possible evil lurking nearby, if Miss Strangeworth had not sent letters opening their eyes. Miss Strangeworth would have been genuinely shocked if there had been anything between Linda Stewart and the Harris boy, but, as long as evil existed unchecked in the world, it was Miss Strangeworth's duty to keep her town alert to it. It was far more sensible for Miss Chandler to wonder what Mr. Shelley's first wife had really died of than to take a chance on not knowing. There were so many wicked people in the world and only one Strangeworth left in the town. Besides, Miss Strangeworth liked writing her letters.

She addressed an envelope to Don Crane after a moment's thought, wondering curiously if he would show the letter to his wife, and using a pink envelope to match the pink paper. Then she addressed a second envelope, green, to Mrs. Harper. Then an idea came to her and she selected a blue sheet and wrote: YOU NEVER KNOW ABOUT DOCTORS. REMEMBER THEY'RE ONLY HUMAN AND NEED MONEY LIKE THE REST OF US. SUPPOSE THE KNIFE SLIPPED ACCIDENTALLY. WOULD DR. BURNS GET HIS FEE AND A LITTLE EXTRA FROM THAT NEPHEW OF YOURS?

She addressed the blue envelope to old Mrs. Foster, who was having an operation next month. She had thought of writing one more letter, to the head of the school board, asking how a chemistry teacher like Billy Moore's father could afford a new convertible, but, all at once, she was tired of writing letters. The three she had done would do for one day. She

could write more tomorrow; it was not as though they all had to be done at once.

She had been writing her letters—sometimes two or three every day for a week, sometimes no more than one in a month—for the past year. She never got any answers, of course, because she never signed her name. If she had been asked, she would have said that her name, Adela Strangeworth, a name honored in the town for so many years, did not belong on such trash. The town where she lived had to be kept clean and sweet, but people everywhere were lustful and evil and degraded, and needed to be watched; the world was so large, and there was only one Strangeworth left in it. Miss Strangeworth sighed, locked her desk, and put the letters into her big black leather pocketbook, to be mailed when she took her evening walk.

She broiled her little chop nicely, and had a sliced tomato and a good cup of tea ready when she sat down to her midday dinner at the table in her dining room, which could be opened to seat twenty-two, with a second table, if necessary, in the hall. Sitting in the warm sunlight that came through the tall windows of the dining room, seeing her roses massed outside, handling the heavy, old silverware and the fine, translucent china, Miss Strangeworth was pleased; she would not have cared to be doing anything else. People must live graciously, after all, she thought, and sipped her tea. Afterward, when her plate and cup and saucer were washed and dried and put back onto the shelves where they belonged, and her silverware was back in the mahogany silver chest, Miss Strangeworth went up the graceful staircase and into her bedroom, which was the front room overlooking the roses, and had been her mother's and her grandmother's. Their Crown Derby



dresser set and furs had been kept here, their fans and silver-backed brushes and their own bowls of roses; Miss Strangeworth kept a bowl of white roses on the bed table.

She drew the shades, took the rose satin spread from the bed, slipped out of her dress and her shoes, and lay down tiredly. She knew that no doorbell or phone would ring; no one in town would dare to disturb Miss Strangeworth during her afternoon nap. She slept, deep in the rich smell of roses.

After her nap she worked in her garden for a little while, sparing herself because of the heat; then she came in to her supper. She ate asparagus from her own garden, with sweet-butter sauce and a soft boiled egg, and, while she had her supper, she listened to a late evening news broadcast and then to a program of classical music on her small radio. After her dishes were done and her kitchen set in order, she took up her hat—Miss Strangeworth's hats were proverbial in the town; people believed that she had inherited them from her mother and her grandmother—and, locking the front door of her house behind her, set off on her evening walk, pocketbook under her arm. She nodded to Linda Stewart's father, who was washing his car in the pleasantly cool evening. She thought that he looked troubled.

There was only one place in town where she could mail her letters, and that was the new post office, shiny with red brick and silver letters. Although Miss Strangeworth had never given the matter any particular thought, she had always made a point of mailing her letters very secretly; it would, of course, not have been wise to let anyone see her mail

them. Consequently, she timed her walk so she could reach the post office just as darkness was starting to dim the outlines of the trees and the shapes of people's faces, although no one could ever mistake Miss Strangeworth, with her dainty walk and her rustling skirts. There was always a group of young people around the post office, the very youngest roller-skating upon its driveway, which went all the way around the building and was the only smooth road in town; and the slightly older ones already knowing how to gather in small groups and chatter and laugh and make great, excited plans for going across the street to the soda shop in a minute or two. Miss Strangeworth had never had any self-consciousness before the children. She did not feel that any of them were staring at her unduly or longing to laugh at her, it would have been most reprehensible for their parents to permit their children to mock Miss Strangeworth of Pleasant Street. Most of the children stood back respectfully as Miss Strangeworth passed, silenced briefly in her presence, and some of the older children greeted her; saying soberly, "Hello, Miss Strangeworth."

Miss Strangeworth smiled at them and quickly went on. It had been a long time since she had known the name of every child in town. The mail slot was in the door of the post office. The children stood away as Miss Strangeworth approached it, seemingly surprised that anyone should want to use the post office after it had been officially closed up for the night and turned over to the children. Miss Strangeworth stood by the door, opening her black pocketbook to take out the letters, and heard a voice which she knew at once to be Linda Stewart's. Poor little Linda was crying again, and Miss Strangeworth listened carefully. This was, after all, her town, and these were her people; if one of them was in trouble she ought to know about it.

"I can't tell you, Dave," Linda was saying—so she was talking to the Harris boy, as Miss Strangeworth had supposed—"I just can't. It's just nasty."

"But why won't your father let me come around anymore? What on earth did I do?"

"I can't tell you. I just wouldn't tell you for anything. You've got to have a dirty, dirty mind for things like that."

"But something's happened. You've been crying and crying, and your father is all upset. Why can't I know about it, too? Aren't I like one of the family?"

"Not anymore, Dave, not anymore. You're not to come near our house again; my father said so. He said he'd horsewhip you. That's all I can tell you: You're not to come near our house anymore." "But I didn't do anything."

"Just the same, my father said . . ."

Miss Strangeworth sighed and turned away. There was so much evil in people. Even in a charming little town like this one, there was still so much evil in people.

She slipped her letters into the slot, and two of them fell inside. The third caught on the edge and fell outside, onto the ground at Miss Strangeworth's feet. She did not notice it because she was wondering whether a letter to the Harris boy's father might not be of some service in wiping out this potential badness. Wearily Miss Strangeworth turned to go home to her quiet bed in her lovely house, and never heard the Harris boy calling to her to say that she had dropped something.

"Old lady Strangeworth's getting deaf," he said, looking after her and holding in his hand the letter he had picked up.

"Well, who cares?" Linda said. "Who cares anymore, anyway?" "It's for Don Crane," the Harris boy said, "this letter. She dropped a letter addressed to Don Crane. Might as well take it on over. We pass his house anyway." He laughed. "Maybe it's got a cheque or something in it and he'd be just as glad to get it tonight instead of tomorrow."

"Catch old lady Strangeworth sending anybody a cheque," Linda said. "Throw it in the post office. Why do anyone a favor?" She sniffled. "Doesn't seem to me anybody around here cares about us," she said. "Why should we care about them?"

"I'll take it over anyway," the Harris boy said. "Maybe it's good news for them. Maybe they need something happy tonight, too. Like us."

Sadly, holding hands, they wandered off down the dark street, the Harris boy carrying Miss Strangeworth's pink envelope in his hand.

Miss Strangeworth awakened the next morning with a feeling of intense happiness, and for a minute wondered why, and then remembered that this morning three people would open her letters. Harsh, perhaps, at first, but wickedness was never easily banished, and a clean heart was a scoured heart. She washed her soft old face and brushed her teeth, still sound in spite of her seventy-one years, and dressed herself carefully in her sweet, soft clothes and buttoned shoes. Then, coming downstairs and reflecting that perhaps a little waffle would be agreeable for breakfast in the sunny dining room, she

“The Possibility of Evil”- Shirley Jackson

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found the mail on the hall floor and bent to pick it up. A bill, the morning paper, a letter in a green envelope that looked oddly familiar. Miss Strangeworth stood perfectly still for a minute, looking down at the green envelope with the pencilled printing, and thought: It looks like one of my letters. Was one of my letters sent back? No, because no one would know where to send it. How did this get here?

Miss Strangeworth was a Strangeworth of Pleasant Street. Her hand did not shake as she opened the envelope and unfolded the sheet of green paper inside. She began to cry silently for the wickedness of the world when she read the words: LOOK OUT AT WHAT USED TO BE YOUR ROSES.

## **School Cyberbullying Victims Fight Back In Lawsuits**

### **By GREG BLUESTEIN and DORIE TURNER**

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June 26, 2012

Chris Boston looks over a screen shot on his computer of the phony Facebook account that was set up in his daughter Alex's name Thursday, April 26, 2012, at their home in Acworth, Ga. The Boston family this month filed a libel lawsuit claiming two classmates humiliated her by using a doctored photo to set up the phony Facebook account in her name, and then stacking the page with phony comments claiming Boston was sexually active, racist and involved in drugs.

When a Georgia middle school student reported to police and school officials that she had been bullied on Facebook, they told her there was not much they could do because the harassment occurred off campus.

So the 14-year-old girl, Alex Boston, is using a somewhat novel strategy to fight back: She's slapping her two classmates with a libel lawsuit.

As states consider or pass cyberbullying laws in reaction to high-profile cases around the country, attorneys and experts say many of the laws aren't strong enough, and lawsuits such as this one are bound to become more commonplace.

"A lot of prosecutors just don't have the energy to prosecute 13-year-olds for being mean," said Parry Aftab, an attorney and child advocate who runs stopcyberbullying.org. "Parents are all feeling very frustrated, and they just don't know what to do."

Almost every state has a law or other policy prohibiting cyberbullying, but very few cover intimidation outside of school property.

Alex, who agreed to be identified to raise awareness about cyberbullying, remembers the mean glances and harsh words from students when she arrived at her suburban Atlanta middle school. She didn't know why she was being badgered until she discovered the phony Facebook page. It was her name and information, though her profile picture was doctored to make her face appear bloated.

The page suggested Alex smoked marijuana and spoke a made-up language called "Retardish." It was also set up to appear that Alex had left obscene comments on other friends' pages, made frequent sexual references and posted a racist video. The creators also are accused of posting derogatory messages about Alex.

"I was upset that my friends would turn on me like that," she told The Associated Press. "I was crying. It was hard to go to school the next day."

Alex learned of the phony page a year ago and told her parents, who soon contacted administrators at Palmer Middle School and filed a report with Cobb County Police.

"At the time this report was taken in May 2011, we were not aware of any cyberbullying law on the books that would take her specific situation and apply it to

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Georgia law," said Cobb County police spokesman Sgt. Dana Pierce.

Police encouraged the Boston family to report the fake account to Facebook. Alex's family said despite requests to Facebook to take the page down, the company did not do so. The website was taken down around the time the lawsuit was filed a week ago.

Facebook spokesman Andrew Noyes and Cobb County school officials declined comment on the case. The two students named in the lawsuit haven't hired an attorney and their parents couldn't be reached for comment.

The thorny issue of whether schools may censor students who are off campus when they attack online has led to split decisions in federal courts. Administrators and judges have wrestled over whether free speech rights allow students to say what they want when they're not at school.

Justin Layshock of western Pennsylvania was suspended after he created a MySpace parody in 2005 that said his principal smoked marijuana and hid beer behind his desk. The suspension was overturned by a federal judge, who found that school officials failed to show the student's profile disrupted school operations. The judge's decision was later upheld by an appeals court.

In West Virginia, Kara Kowalski sued school officials after she was suspended from her high school for five days in 2005 for creating a web page suggesting another

student had a sexually transmitted disease. A federal appeals court upheld the suspension, dismissing Kowalski's argument that the school shouldn't punish her because she created the site at home.

The U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear either case.

Jason Medley, of Houston, filed a defamation lawsuit in June against three of his daughter's classmates. The classmates were accused of filming themselves making false sexual remarks about his daughter and posting the video to Facebook.

The complaint was settled months later with apologies from the girls and a small donation to charity, Medley's attorney Robert Naudin said.

"The girls involved likely now understand the wrongful nature of what they did and the harm that can come of such conduct," he said. "They made a donation out of their allowances to a charitable organization that fights against cyberbullying."

In Georgia, lawmakers have given school administrators new powers to punish students if they bully others at school, but legislation that would expand the laws to include text messages and social media sites never reached a vote this year.

Seven states have added off-campus harassment to their bullying laws in recent years, though Georgia is not one of them.

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**By GREG BLUESTEIN and DORIE TURNER**

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"Cyberbullying really goes beyond the four walls of the school or the four corners of the campus, because if you use a cellphone, PDA or social media site, then those activities follow the child both into the school and out of the school," said House Minority Leader Stacey Abrams, a Democrat from Atlanta who co-sponsored the legislation that would have expanded Georgia's bullying law. "It's important for the state to really get ahead of this. It's already happening, but it's going to be more exacerbated and more difficult the longer we go."

Alex and her family have started a petition to encourage lawmakers to strengthen Georgia's law. Her lawsuit seeks a jury trial and unspecified damages.

"At first blush, you wouldn't think it's a big deal," said Alex's attorney, Natalie Woodward. "Once you actually see the stuff that's on there, it's shocking."

*Portrait of Dora Maar Seated, Pablo Picasso (1937)*

Dora Maar grew up in Argentina and was a lover of Pablo Picasso's (1881-1973), the famous Cubist painter. Cubism focuses on how light changes over form, which is then simplified into various shapes, angles, and colors. As a result, recognizable forms appear distorted. At the same time, the goal was to portray more than one thing at once about the subject matter. Dora Maar was a feminist photographer. Picasso painted this portrait during the year he denounced the rebellion of General Franco against the Spanish Republic as "a war of reaction: against the people, against liberty."



The "Possibility of Evil" images...







I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS...  
THERE'S JUST SOMETHING I DON'T TRUST ABOUT HIM!



BCR- "The Possibility of Evil" by Shirley Jackson

1. Connect one of the visual representations to the story using textual evidence from "The Possibility of Evil" and direct observations from the image.
2. Using evidence from "The Possibility of Evil" and "School Cyberbullying Victims Fight Back in Lawsuits," argue why the article is included with the story.

### BCR Rubric

4	<u>All</u> parts of the prompt are addressed in the response. Students make a <u>valid argument</u> supported by <u>multiple pieces</u> of evidence from the text.
3	<u>Most</u> parts of the prompt are addressed in the response. Students make <u>an argument</u> supported by few examples of evidence from the text.
2	<u>Some</u> parts of the prompt are addressed in the response. Students make an argument that may <u>not be valid</u> or <u>supported by textual evidence</u> .
1	<u>Some</u> parts of the prompt are addressed in the response. Students make an argument that is <u>not valid</u> and/or not <u>supported by text</u> .
0	No attempt to answer the text or off topic.

### "Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl

The room was warm and clean, the curtains drawn, the two table lamps alight—hers and the one by the empty chair opposite. On the sideboard behind her, two tall glasses, soda water, whiskey. Fresh ice cubes in the Thermos bucket.

Mary Maloney was waiting for her husband to come home from work.

Now and again she would glance up at the clock, but without anxiety, merely to please herself with the thought that each minute gone by made it nearer the time when he would come. There was a slow smiling air about her, and about everything she did. The drop of a head as she bent over her sewing was curiously tranquil. Her skin—for this was her sixth month with child—had acquired a wonderful translucent quality, the mouth was soft, and the eyes, with their new placid look, seemed larger darker than before. When the clock said ten minutes to five, she began to listen, and a few moments later, punctually as always, she heard the tires on the gravel outside, and the car door slamming, the footsteps passing the window, the key turning in the lock. She laid aside her sewing, stood up, and went forward to kiss him as he came in.

"Hullo darling," she said.

"Hullo darling," he answered.

She took his coat and hung it in the closer. Then she walked over and made the drinks, a strongish one for him, a weak one for herself; and soon she was back again in her chair with the sewing, and he in the other, opposite, holding the tall glass with both hands, rocking it so the ice cubes tinkled against the side.

For her, this was always a blissful time of day. She knew he didn't want to speak much until the first drink was finished, and she, on her side, was content to sit quietly, enjoying his company after the long hours alone in the house. She loved to luxuriate in the presence of this man, and to feel—almost as a sunbather feels the sun—that warm male glow that came out of him to her when they were alone together. She loved him for the way he sat loosely in a chair, for the way he came in a door, or moved slowly across the room with long strides. She loved intent, far look in his eyes when they rested in her, the funny shape of the mouth, and especially the way he remained silent about his tiredness, sitting still with himself until the whiskey had taken some of it away.

"Tired darling?"

"Yes," he said. "I'm tired." And as he spoke, he did an unusual thing. He lifted his glass and drained it in one swallow although there was still half of it, at least half of it left. She wasn't really watching him, but she knew what he had done because she heard the ice cubes falling back against the bottom of the empty glass when he lowered his arm. He paused a moment, leaning forward in the chair, then he got up and went slowly over to fetch himself another.

**Comment [J1]:** IDENTIFY. Reread the first three paragraphs of the story. What is Mary doing? How would you describe her mood?

**Comment [J2]:** PAUSE. Based on Mary's actions, do you think this is an ordinary day for her? Explain.

**Comment [J3]:** PAUSE. Underline the "unusual thing" that Mary's husband does. Make a prediction about the change in his behavior—how might this change affect Mary?

“Lamb to the Slaughter” by Roald Dahl

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“I’ll get it!” she cried, jumping up.

“Sit down,” he said.

When he came back, she noticed that the new drink was dark amber with the quantity of whiskey in it.

“Darling, shall I get your slippers?”

“No.”

She watched him as he began to sip the dark yellow drink, and she could see little oily swirls in the liquid because it was so strong.

“I think it’s a shame,” she said, “that when a policeman gets to be as senior as you, they keep him walking about on his feet all day long.”

He didn’t answer, so she bent her head again and went on with her sewing; but each time he lifted the drink to his lips, she heard the ice cubes clinking against the side of the glass.

“Darling,” she said. “Would you like me to get you some cheese? I haven’t made any supper because it’s Thursday.”

“No,” he said.

“If you’re too tired to eat out,” she went on, “it’s still not too late. There’s plenty of meat and stuff in the freezer, and you can have it right here and not even move out of the chair.”

Her eyes waited on him for an answer, a smile, a little nod, but he made no sign.

“Anyway,” she went on, “I’ll get you some cheese and crackers first.”

“I don’t want it,” he said.

She moved uneasily in her chair, the large eyes still watching his face. “But you must eat! I’ll fix it anyway, and then you can have it or not, as you like.”

She stood up and placed her sewing on the table by the lamp.

“Sit down,” he said. “Just for a minute, sit down.”

It wasn’t till then that she began to get frightened.

“Go on,” he said. “Sit down.”

**Comment [14]:** IRONY. Underline each of the husband’s responses to Mary. In what way is this situation ironic?

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"Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl

She lowered herself back slowly into the chair, watching him all the time with those large, bewildered eyes. He had finished the second drink and was staring down into the glass, frowning.

"Listen," he said. "I've got something to tell you."

"What is it, darling? What's the matter?"

He had now become absolutely motionless, and he kept his head down so that the light from the lamp beside him fell across the upper part of his face, leaving the chin and mouth in shadow. She noticed there was a little muscle moving near the corner of his left eye.

"This is going to be a bit of a shock to you, I'm afraid," he said. "But I've thought about it a good deal and I've decided the only thing to do is tell you right away. I hope you won't blame me too much."

And he told her. It didn't take long, four or five minutes at most, and she sat very still through it all, watching him with a kind of dazed horror as he went further and further away from her with each word.

"So there it is," he added. "And I know it's kind of a bad time to be telling you, but there simply wasn't any other way. Of course I'll give you money and see you're looked after. But there needn't really be any fuss. I hope not anyway. It wouldn't be very good for my job."

Her first instinct was not to believe any of it, to reject it all. It occurred to her that perhaps he hadn't even spoken, that she herself had imagined the whole thing. Maybe, if she went about her business and acted as though she hadn't been listening, then later, when she sort of woke up again, she might find none of it had ever happened.

"I'll get the supper," she managed to whisper, and this time he didn't stop her.

When she walked across the room she couldn't feel her feet touching the floor. She couldn't feel anything at all - except a slight nausea and a desire to vomit. Everything was automatic now - down the steps to the cellar, the light switch, the deep freeze, the hand inside the cabinet taking hold of the first object it met. She lifted it out, and looked at it. It was wrapped in paper, so she took off the paper and looked at it again.

A leg of lamb.

All right then, they would have lamb for supper. She carried it upstairs, holding the thin bone-end of it with both her hands, and as she went through the living-room, she saw him standing over by the window with his back to her, and she stopped.

**Comment [J5]: PAUSE.** What do you predict the husband will tell Mary?

**Comment [J6]: PREDICT.** Do you still think that your prediction is correct? If not, how would you change your prediction?

**Comment [J7]: IDENTIFY.** Why does the husband say that this is a "bad time" to tell Mary the news? Why does he not want her to cause a "fuss"?

**Comment [J8]: INTERPRET.** Underline how the husband's news affects Mary. Has her day remained ordinary?

**Comment [J9]: PREDICT.** Where else in the story have you seen the word *lamb*? What does the repetition suggest about "lamb" in the story?

“Lamb to the Slaughter” by Roald Dahl

“For God’s sake,” he said, hearing her, but not turning round. “Don’t make supper for me. I’m going out.”

At that point, Mary Maloney simply walked up behind him and without any pause she swung the big frozen leg of lamb high in the air and brought it down as hard as she could on the back of his head.

She might just as well have hit him with a steel club.

She stepped back a pace, waiting, and the funny thing was that he remained standing there for at least four or five seconds, gently swaying. Then he crashed to the carpet.

The violence of the crash, the noise, the small table overturning, helped bring her out of the shock. She came out slowly, feeling cold and surprised, and she stood for a while blinking at the body, still holding the ridiculous piece of meat tight with both hands.

All right, she told herself. So I’ve killed him.

It was extraordinary, now, how clear her mind became all of a sudden. She began thinking very fast. As the wife of a detective, she knew quite well what the penalty would be. That was fine. It made no difference to her. In fact, it would be a relief. On the other hand, what about the child? What were the laws about murderers with unborn children? Did they kill then both-mother and child? Or did they wait until the tenth month? What did they do?

Mary Maloney didn’t know. And she certainly wasn’t prepared to take a chance.

She carried the meat into the kitchen, placed it in a pan, turned the oven on high, and shoved it inside. Then she washed her hands and ran upstairs to the bedroom. She sat down before the mirror, tidied her hair, touched up her lips and face. She tried a smile. It came out rather peculiar. She tried again.

“Hullo Sam,” she said brightly, aloud.

The voice sounded peculiar too.

“I want some potatoes please, Sam. Yes, and I think a can of peas.”

That was better. Both the smile and the voice were coming out better now. She rehearsed it several times more. Then she ran downstairs, took her coat, went out the back door, down the garden, into the street.

It wasn’t six o’clock yet and the lights were still on in the grocery shop.

“Hullo Sam,” she said brightly, smiling at the man behind the counter.

**Comment [J10]:** IRONY. How does her behavior create situational irony?

**Comment [J11]:** PREDICT. What do you think Mary will do next now that she’s come out of her state of shock?

**Comment [J12]:** IRONY. Underline the words that tell you what Mary does with the lamb after using it as a weapon. In what way does her behavior create situational irony?

"Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl

"Why, good evening, Mrs. Maloney. How're you?"

"I want some potatoes please, Sam. Yes, and I think a can of peas."

The man turned and reached up behind him on the shelf for the peas.

"Patrick's decided he's tired and doesn't want to eat out tonight," she told him. "We usually go out Thursdays, you know, and now he's caught me without any vegetables in the house."

"Then how about meat, Mrs. Maloney?"

"No, I've got meat, thanks. I got a nice leg of lamb from the freezer."

"Oh."

"I don't know much like cooking it frozen, Sam, but I'm taking a chance on it this time. You think it'll be all right?"

"Personally," the grocer said, "I don't believe it makes any difference. You want these Idaho potatoes?"

"Oh yes, that'll be fine. Two of those."

"Anything else?" The grocer cocked his head on one side, looking at her pleasantly. "How about afterwards? What you going to give him for afterwards?"

"Well-what would you suggest, Sam?"

The man glanced around his shop. "How about a nice big slice of cheesecake? I know he likes that."

"Perfect," she said. "He loves it."

And when it was all wrapped and she had paid, she put on her brightest smile and said, "Thank you, Sam. Goodnight."

"Goodnight, Mrs. Maloney. And thank you."

And now, she told herself as she hurried back, all she was doing now, she was returning home to her husband and he was waiting for his supper; and she must cook it good, and make it as tasty as possible because the poor man was tired; and if, when she entered the house, she happened to find anything unusual, or tragic, or terrible, then naturally it would be a shock and she'd become frantic with grief and horror. Mind you, she wasn't expecting to find anything. She was just going home with the vegetables. Mrs. Patrick Maloney going home with the vegetables on Thursday evening to cook supper for her husband.

**Comment [J13]: CLARIFY.** Why does Mary go to the grocery store before calling the police?

**Comment [J14]: IRONY.** Underline the question Sam asks that creates dramatic irony. What important information does Sam not know?

**Comment [J15]: IRONY.** What is ironic about the "thank-yous" that Sam and Mary exchange?



**"Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl**

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That's the way, she told herself. Do everything right and natural. Keep things absolutely natural and there'll be no need for any acting at all.

Therefore, when she entered the kitchen by the back door, she was humming a little tune to herself and smiling.

"Patrick!" she called. "How are you, darling?"

She put the parcel down on the table and went through into the living room; and when she saw him lying there on the floor with his legs doubled up and one arm twisted back underneath his body, it really was rather a shock. All the old love and longing for him welled up inside her, and she ran over to him, knelt down beside him, and began to cry her heart out. It was easy. No acting was necessary.

A few minutes later she got up and went to the phone. She knew the number of the police station, and when the man at the other end answered, she cried to him, "Quick! Come quick! Patrick's dead!"

"Who's speaking?"

"Mrs. Maloney. Mrs. Patrick Maloney."

"You mean Patrick Maloney's dead?"

"I think so," she sobbed. "He's lying on the floor and I think he's dead."

"Be right over," the man said.

The car came very quickly, and when she opened the front door, two policemen walked in. She knew them both—she knew nearly all the men at that precinct—and she fell right into a chair, then went over to join the other one, who was called O'Malley, kneeling by the body.

"Is he dead?" she cried.

"I'm afraid he is. What happened?"

Briefly, she told her story about going out to the grocer and coming back to find him on the floor. While she was talking, crying and talking, Noonan discovered a small patch of congealed blood on the dead man's head. He showed it to O'Malley who got up at once and hurried to the phone.

Soon, other men began to come into the house. First a doctor, then two detectives, one of whom she knew by name. Later, a police photographer arrived and took pictures, and a man who knew about fingerprints. There was a great deal of whispering and muttering beside the corpse, and the detectives kept asking her a lot of questions. But they always treated her kindly. She told her story again, this time right from the beginning, when Patrick had come in, and she was

**Comment [J16]:** PREDICT. It becomes clear that Mary really did love her husband. What do you predict she will do now?

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### "Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl

sewing, and he was tired, so tired he hadn't wanted to go out for supper. She told how she'd put the meat in the oven-"it's there now, cooking"- and how she'd slopped out to the grocer for vegetables, and come back to find him lying on the floor.

Which grocer?" one of the detectives asked.

She told him, and he turned and whispered something to the other detective who immediately went outside into the street.

In fifteen minutes he was back with a page of notes, and there was more whispering, and through her sobbing she heard a few of the whispered phrases-"...acted quite normal...very cheerful...wanted to give him a good supper...peas...cheesecake...impossible that she..."

After a while, the photographer and the doctor departed and two other men came in and took the corpse away on a stretcher. Then the fingerprint man went away. The two detectives remained, and so did the two policemen. They were exceptionally nice to her, and Jack Noonan asked if she wouldn't rather go somewhere else, to her sister's house perhaps, or to his own wife who would take care of her and put her up for the night.

No, she said. She didn't feel she could move even a yard at the moment. Would they mind awfully of she stayed just where she was until she felt better. She didn't feel too good at the moment, she really didn't.

Then hadn't she better lie down on the bed? Jack Noonan asked.

No, she said. She'd like to stay right where she was, in this chair. A little later, perhaps, when she felt better, she would move.

So they left her there while they went about their business, searching the house. Occasionally one of the detectives asked her another question. Sometimes Jack Noonan spoke at her gently as he passed by. Her husband, he told her, had been killed by a blow on the back of the head administered with a heavy blunt instrument, almost certainly a large piece of metal. They were looking for the weapon. The murderer may have taken it with him, but on the other hand he may have thrown it away or hidden it somewhere on the premises.

"It's the old story," he said. "Get the weapon, and you've got the man."

Later, one of the detectives came up and sat beside her. Did she know, he asked, of anything in the house that could've been used as the weapon? Would she mind having a look around to see if anything was missing-a very big spanner, for example, or a heavy metal vase.

They didn't have any heavy metal vases, she said.

**Comment [J17]:** INFER. Where did the detectives go?

**Comment [J18]:** INFER. Mary tells the officers she doesn't feel well enough to go anywhere. What might be the *real* reason she wants to stay?

**"Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl**

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**"Or a big spanner?"**

**She didn't think they had a big spanner. But there might be some things like that in the garage.**

The search went on. She knew that there were other policemen in the garden all around the house. She could hear their footsteps on the gravel outside, and sometimes she saw a flash of a torch through a chink in the curtains. It began to get late, nearly nine she noticed by the clock on the mantle. The four men searching the rooms seemed to be growing weary, a trifle exasperated.

"Jack," she said, the next time Sergeant Noonan went by. "Would you mind giving me a drink?"

"Sure I'll give you a drink. You mean this whiskey?"

"Yes please. But just a small one. It might make me feel better."

He handed her the glass.

"Why don't you have one yourself," she said. "You must be awfully tired. Please do. You've been very good to me."

"Well," he answered. "It's not strictly allowed, but I might take just a drop to keep me going."

One by one the others came in and were persuaded to take a little nip of whiskey. They stood around rather awkwardly with the drinks in their hands, uncomfortable in her presence, trying to say consoling things to her. Sergeant Noonan wandered into the kitchen, come out quickly and said, "Look, Mrs. Maloney. You know that oven of yours is still on, and the meat still inside."

**"Oh dear me!" she cried. "So it is!"**

"I better turn it off for you, hadn't I?"

"Will you do that, Jack. Thank you so much."

When the sergeant returned the second time, she looked at him with her large, dark tearful eyes. "Jack Noonan," she said.

"Yes?"

"Would you do me a small favor-you and these others?"

"We can try, Mrs. Maloney."

"Well," she said. "Here you all are, and good friends of dear Patrick's too, and helping to catch the man who killed him. You must be terrible hungry by now because it's long past your suppertime, and I know Patrick would never forgive me, God bless his soul, if I allowed you to

**Comment [J19]: IRONY.** What information about the weapon does Noonan *not* know?

**Comment [J20]: INFER.** Has Mary *really* forgotten that the meat is in the oven? Explain.



### "Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl

remain in his house without offering you decent hospitality. Why don't you eat up that lamb that's in the oven. It'll be cooked just right by now."

"Wouldn't dream of it," Sergeant Noonan said.

"Please," she begged. "Please eat it. Personally I couldn't tough a thing, certainly not what's been in the house when he was here. But it's all right for you. It'd be a favor to me if you'd eat it up. Then you can go on with your work again afterwards."

There was a good deal of hesitating among the four policemen, but they were clearly hungry, and in the end they were persuaded to go into the kitchen and help themselves. The woman stayed where she was, listening to them speaking among themselves, their voices thick and sloppy because their mouths were full of meat.

"Have some more, Charlie?"

"No. Better not finish it."

"She wants us to finish it. She said so. Be doing her a favor."

"Okay then. Give me some more."

"That's the hell of a big club the gut must've used to hit poor Patrick," one of them was saying.

"The doc says his skull was smashed all to pieces just like from a sledgehammer."

"That's why it ought to be easy to find."

"Exactly what I say."

"Whoever done it, they're not going to be carrying a thing like that around with them longer than they need."

One of them belched.

"Personally, I think it's right here on the premises."

"Probably right under our very noses. What you think, Jack?"

And in the other room, Mary Maloney began to giggle.

**Comment [J21]:** IRONY. Mary says the police would do her "a favor" by eating the lamb. Why is this an example of dramatic irony?

**Comment [J22]:** IRONY. Underline the comments the officers make that are examples of dramatic irony and verbal irony. Why are these comments ironic?

"Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl

**IRONY REVIEW**

**Verbal Irony** occurs when someone says one thing but means the opposite.

**Situational Irony** occurs when events are the opposite of what we expected.

**Dramatic Irony** occurs when readers know something important that a character doesn't know.

**DIRECTIONS:** To help you appreciate the irony in "Lamb to the Slaughter," fill in the blanks in this chart.

Story Passage	How Passage Creates Irony
"At that point, Mary Maloney simply walked up behind him and without any pause she swung the big frozen leg of lamb high in the air and brought it down as hard as she could on the back of his head."	Mary's actions before this point in the story:
	Mary's actions now:
	What actions you expected:
	What Mary actually does:
"Have some more, Charlie?" "No. Better not finish it." "She wants us to finish it. She said so. Be doing her a favor."	Why the police think Mary wants them to finish the lamb:
	Why she really wants the police to finish the lamb:
	What is ironic about the police eating the lamb:

## TEST PRACTICE

Improve your test-taking skills by completing the sample test item below. Then, read the explanation that appears in the right-hand column.

Sample Test Item	Explanation of the Correct Answer
<p>From your knowledge of the events in "Lamb to the Slaughter," which of the following is an example of irony?</p> <p>A. Mary is a devoted wife. B. Patrick is a police officer. C. The grocer asks Mary whether she needs meat. D. The investigators know both Mary and Patrick.</p>	<p>The correct answer is C.</p> <p>Irony takes place when there is a difference between what we expect to happen and what actually happens. The grocer thinks that Mary is shopping for dinner and may need meat. The truth is that Mary has just killed her husband with meat from her freezer. A, B, and D are statements of fact that do not suggest a difference between an expectation and a reality.</p>

**DIRECTIONS:** Circle the letter of each correct response.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Which of the following shows <b>situational irony</b>?</p> <p>A Calm, loving Mary violently kills her husband.<br/>B The police officer goes to the grocer's.<br/>C Patrick is a police officer.<br/>D The doctor says that Patrick's skull was smashed.</p> <p>2. Why does Mary go shopping for groceries?</p> <p>A Her husband wants dinner at home.<br/>B She needs fresh air.<br/>C She needs an alibi, or excuse.<br/>D She wants to confess to Sam.</p> | <p>3. It is <b>ironic</b> that the grieving widow is also the—</p> <p>A murder.<br/>B victim.<br/>C grocer.<br/>D investigating officer.</p> <p>4. <b>Dramatic irony</b> takes place when Mary tells the police that—</p> <p>A she would like a drink.<br/>B they would do her a favor by eating the lamb.<br/>C she feels too ill to leave.<br/>D she went grocery shopping.</p> |
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## Amber Hilberling Accused of Pushing Husband out 25th-Floor Window

By David Lohr

First Posted: 06/09/11 07:42 PM

ET Updated: 08/09/11 06:12 AM ET

An Oklahoma woman accused of pushing her husband out their 25th-floor-apartment window to his death remains free on a \$250,000 bond as police continue to investigate the case.

Joshua Hilberling, 23, of Tulsa, died Tuesday afternoon after falling from the 25th floor of the University Club Tower high-rise apartment building in the 1700 block of South Carson Avenue. Hilberling died instantly when he landed on the top level of an eight-story parking garage, police said.

After questioning Hilberling's wife, Amber Hilberling, 19, police charged her with first-degree murder and transported her to Tulsa County Jail.

"They were involved in a disagreement and argument," [Tulsa police officer Leland Ashley](#) told The Huffington Post. "During the course of this argument, she pushed him out of the window."

Ashley, citing the "ongoing investigation," declined to comment on what, if anything, Hilberling told police. But according to Hilberling's arrest report, she "made statements to witnesses that she pushed the victim and that caused him to fall through the window," the report states.



Hilberling, who according to her Facebook page is more than seven months pregnant, was released from jail Wednesday afternoon after posting bail.

[In a statement to Tulsa World](#), the murder suspect's attorney, Jasen Corns, called her husband's fatal fall a "tragedy for everyone involved."

"We will give her a full and fair defense," Corns said.

[According to Tulsa's KOTV](#), court documents show Joshua Hilberling filed an emergency protective order in a Tulsa courtroom against his wife in May, claiming she had grabbed a floor lamp and "pushed/threw the lamp at me and busted me in the head." He said he was transported to the hospital, where he received 10 staples and 11 stitches. According to the documents, he also allegedly said his wife had been violent toward him on several other occasions.

The protective order was dismissed roughly two weeks later when the couple failed to show up for a court hearing, KOTV reported.

On Wednesday, Joshua Hilberling's parents, [Patrick and Jeanne Hilberling](#), told FOX23 that their son and his wife had recently

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moved to Tulsa from Texas after Joshua was discharged from the U.S. Air Force. Joshua, the distraught couple said, wanted to become a registered nurse.

"He was a good son; I just can't say enough," Jeanne Hilberling said. "This sort of thing shouldn't happen to anybody."

According to his mother, Joshua was planning to leave his wife but never had the chance.

"[We] hope it's made people aware [that] spousal abuse [happens to] men too," Jeanne Hilberling told FOX23.



## "Lamb to the Slaughter" Visual



# Vandalism SUCKS



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BCR "Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl

1. Compare the usage of irony in at least three of the provided sources. Identify the type of irony, and explain how it affects the reader's perspective. Please cite specific evidence to support your argument.
2. Compare and contrast visual irony versus written irony between the provided sources. Is one example more affective in conveying meaning than the other, or is each example equally compelling? Please cite specific evidence to support your argument from at least three sources.

### BCR Rubric

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3	<u>Most</u> parts of the prompt are addressed in the response. Students make <u>an argument</u> supported by few examples of evidence from the text.
2	<u>Some</u> parts of the prompt are addressed in the response. Students make an argument that may <u>not be valid</u> or <u>supported by textual evidence</u> .
1	<u>Some</u> parts of the prompt are addressed in the response. Students make an argument that is <u>not valid</u> and/or not <u>supported by text</u> .
0	No attempt to answer the text or off topic.