

A Reading Comprehension Course for Moroccan University Students



ALL-ONE COM S.N.C.

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Introduction:

Many Moroccan university students believe that reading comprehension is an easy subject or even an unimportant one. The idea prevails because reading comprehension exams usually introduce students to texts and questions that they have never seen before. Instructors too can be misled to expecting the students to know the basic skills of reading comprehension, as they had been reading, in English, for four years before college. As a result, many students become less motivated to invest time and effort in preparing for its exams.

In reality, reading comprehension is both difficult and important for many reasons. While some university students can read and comprehend different types of texts, the majority of students face serious problems. Reading comprehension can be one of the most difficult subjects for the student, as its exam is the only one for which no student can be fully prepared. In almost all the other subjects, the student can memorize, understand and prepare answers to every exam question, while in reading comprehension the student can only develop the skill and try to use it effectively during the exam. Another difficulty in reading comprehension is that, without enough collective practice, the student may understand the text and misunderstand the exam questions, which makes him fail without even understanding what went wrong during the exam. Finally, as reading texts, books, novels and articles is how most university studies are conducted, developing strong reading capabilities is undeniably vital for college students.

The current compilation contains lessons and practical sections that aim at helping the students look at the reading skill differently. For many students, reading is nothing more than understanding the vocabulary of texts. In reality, reading is a process in which the student and the text construct meaning interactively. In this interactive process, the text provides clues and obstacles while the reader has to be skilled enough to use the provided clues in the process of overcoming the encountered understanding obstacles. In this sense, the student should learn how to read actively and how to be aware of the specific strategies that he can use to retain different types of information from a given text.

To raise the student's metacognitive awareness about the basics of the reading skill, the current course proceeds through four main parts. The first one introduces them to five different units that combine theory and practice. In each unit, the students learn the basics of the skill that

they have to hone, practice their understanding of the skill, and then review samples of simplified answers that show them the best way in which they could have proceeded. The second part is mainly practical. It contains two practice units in which the students read short passages and try to answer questions that target the previously learned skills randomly. This part is mainly about learning how to answer different questions effectively. The third part introduces the students to texts that do not contain questions. The main objective of this part is to familiarize the students with different types of texts that differ in genre and in the level of difficulty. In this part the students should understand that the subject reading comprehension is not just about answering questions and that its main purpose is to help them read, understand and assess any given passage effectively. Finally, the students are introduced to five samples of reading comprehension exams in which they would receive no help or guidance from their instructor with the purpose of preparing them for exams.

As the targeted skill is reading comprehension and not writing or grammar, this course rarely asks the students to write their own answers. The main goal is to check their ability to read, understand and retain information from a given text. For this reason, more than two hundred questions that the practical parts of the course introduce are multiple-choice questions. This technique of questioning is vital in teaching reading comprehension as it provides the students with one correct answer, a misleading answer, that usually reflects the understanding of a large number of students, and two other answers that are misleading but less likely to be chosen by the majority. This technique is beneficial as it helps both the students and the instructor to understand what misleads students and what they should do to avoid being misled by similar questions.

How to use this book:

The first five lessons introduce the students to some basic reading comprehension techniques like: getting the essential information, finding the main idea, defining vocabulary in context, finding an implied main idea and understanding the writers' perspective. To convince the students of the feasibility of every strategy, lesson or approach to reading, the course provides the students with short examples and even explanations of the way in which some questions should be thought about. Most students read randomly and lack knowledge of specific approaches that may help them overcome different reading difficulties or obstacles. Therefore, the introduced

lessons mainly help them perceive reading comprehension as a series of problems that can only be solved if reading proceeds systematically.

These lessons also teach the students how to answer questions systematically. Instead of just looking for the correct answer directly, the students should learn to know why the other options are incorrect. In this sense, these chapters teach the students how to think about each of the given options before deciding the correct one. During classes, the students can practice this strategy either by answering, when they can, or by listening to the reasoning through which other students reach the correct answer. As some students' reasoning can be flawed sometimes the instructor interferes to clarify misunderstandings and specifically to explain to the students how they were misled by some false or even tricky indicators.

The practice part is simply about practice. The students who have acquired the necessary skills to generate explicit and implied main ideas, to define vocabulary through context, get the essential information and understand the writers' perspective should practice more to hone their skills. The students' mistakes can always be seen as opportunities for the instructor to interfere and to remind the students' of the best way in which they can use skills that they already know. It should also be mentioned that the reading passages in the practice part are random and do not have a specific theme because the main purpose at this stage is to make students learn how to answer questions effectively. Therefore, this part is mainly about preparing the students for exams in which they have to use the acquired skills regardless of the genre of the text or its level of difficulty.

The third part is basically the opposite. Students should not see reading comprehension as a text and some questions that should be answered correctly. They should see it as a course that enables them to read effectively and actively. For this reason, this part contains thematically organized texts that may trigger the students' interest and make them try to understand to learn more about things they may already know. The first theme is education, which is essentially something that the student care to know about. It introduces the students to a different conception of education and a global view of their careers as students at the English department. The second theme simply reviews some basic daily activities from a psychological perspective that may appeal to the students who want to understand why they do what they do every day (selfies, lies and daily conversation). Afterwards, the students are introduced to some regional issues that they

certainly hear a lot about, but probably not enough, to western feminism, literature and culture because the west is where the language they are learning is spoken. These themes and texts are mainly supposed to remind the students that the simple activity of reading can make them see the world differently and that understand a text usually equals understanding the world around them. It should also be mentioned that while reading just to comprehend and learn more the students should be reminded that reading still has to proceed systematically and that each text may require the implementation of a different skill.

Finally, the students should be reminded of the importance of using their acquire skills individually and in the context of exams in which time is limited, dictionaries are not available and no one can help them understand.

Part One

The basics of Reading
Comprehension



GETTING THE ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Caress the detail, the divine detail.

—VLADIMIR NABOKOV, Russian-American novelist (1899–1977)

LESSON SUMMARY

The first step in increasing your reading comprehension is to learn how to get the basic information. Like a good detective, start with the basic facts. To get the facts, be an active reader and look for clues as you read.

Imagine, for a moment, that you are a detective. You have just been called to the scene of a crime; a house has been robbed. What's the first thing you should do when you arrive?

- a. See what's on the TV.
- b. Check what's in the fridge.
- c. Get the basic facts of the case.

The answer, of course, is **c**, get the basic facts of the case: the who, what, when, where, and how. What happened? To whom? When? Where? How did it happen?

As a reader faced with a text, you go through a similar process. The first thing you should do is establish the facts. What does this piece of writing tell you? What happens? To whom? When, where, and how? If you can answer these basic questions, you're on your way to really comprehending what you read. (You'll work on answering the more difficult question—“*Why* did it happen?”—in Lesson 2.)

- *LearningExpress, Reading comprehension success in 20 minutes a day. —4th ed. New York: LearningExpress, LLC. 2009*

What Are the Facts?

Let's start with a definition. A **fact** is

- something that we know for certain to have happened.
- something that we know for certain to be true.
- something that we know for certain to exist.

Much of what you read, especially today in this "Information Age," is designed to provide you with facts. You may read, for example, about a new office procedure that you must follow; about how the new computer system works; or about what happened at the staff meeting. If you're taking a standardized test, you'll probably have to answer reading comprehension

questions that ask about the facts in a reading passage. These facts are not always easy to determine, especially if the writing is dense or complicated. To make it simpler, ask yourself these questions as you read: What facts am I expected to know? What am I to learn or be aware of? What happened? What is true? What exists?

Practice Passage 1

Jump right into the task of finding facts. The following brief passage is similar to something you might see in a newspaper. Read the passage carefully, and then answer the questions that follow. Remember, careful reading is active reading (see the Introduction), so mark up the text as you go. Underline key words and ideas; circle and define any unfamiliar words or phrases; and record your reactions and questions in the margins.

On Friday, October 21, at approximately 8:30 A.M., Judith Reynolds, owner of The Cupcake Factory, arrived at her establishment to find that it had been robbed and vandalized overnight. The front window of the shop at 128 Broad Street was broken, and chairs and tables were overturned throughout the café area. Additionally, the cash register had been pried open and emptied of money. The thieves attempted to open the safe as well, but were unsuccessful. Ms. Reynolds used her cell phone to report the crime to the police. She also phoned the proprietor of Primo Pizza, located at 130 Broad Street, as she noticed that the door of that restaurant showed signs of forced entry. The police department is asking anyone with information to call 555-2323.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What happened to The Cupcake Factory? 2. When was the crime discovered? 3. Where did it happen? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. What was stolen? 5. Who called the police? 6. What other businesses were affected? |
|--|---|

———— GETTING THE ESSENTIAL INFORMATION ————

Remember, good reading is active reading. Did you mark up the passage? If so, it may have looked something like this:

what happened—
robbery and
vandalization
when
who
where
interesting
detail
money was
stolen
another
business
was affected
unclear from this report
if anything was taken
from Primo Pizza

On Friday, October 21, at approximately 8:30 A.M., Judith Reynolds, owner of The Cupcake Factory, arrived at her establishment to find that it had been robbed and vandalized overnight. The front window of the shop at 128 Broad Street was broken, and chairs and tables were overturned throughout the café area. Additionally, the cash register had been pried open and emptied of money. The thieves attempted to open the safe as well, but were unsuccessful. Ms. Reynolds used her cell phone to report the crime to the police. She also phoned the proprietor of Primo Pizza, located at 130 Broad Street, as she noticed that the door of that restaurant showed signs of forced entry. The police department is asking anyone with information to call 555-2323.

You'll notice that the answers to the questions have all been underlined, because these are the key words and ideas in this passage. But here are the answers in a more conventional form.

1. What happened to The Cupcake Factory? *It was robbed and vandalized.*
2. When was the crime discovered? *At 8:30 A.M. on Friday, October 21.*
3. Where did it happen? *128 Broad Street.*
4. What was stolen? *Money from the cash register.*

5. Who called the police? *Judith Reynolds, owner of The Cupcake Factory.*
6. What other businesses were affected? *Possibly Primo Pizza.*

Notice that these questions went beyond the basic who, what, when, and where to include some of the details, like why the proprietor of the restaurant next door was called. This is because details in reading comprehension, as well as in detective work, can be very important clues that may help answer the remaining questions: Who did it, how, and why?

Practice Passage 2

This passage provides instructions for renewing a driver’s license. Read it carefully and answer the questions that follow.

Instructions for License Renewal

A driver’s license must be renewed every four years. A renewal application is sent approximately five to seven weeks before the expiration date listed on the license. Individuals who fail to renew within three years of the license expiration date are not eligible for a renewal and must repeat the initial licensing process. To renew a license, you must visit a Motor Vehicles Agency. You must present a completed renewal application; your current driver’s license; acceptable proof of age, identification, and address; and proof of social security in the form of a social security card, a state or federal income tax return, a current pay stub, or a W-2 form. You must also pay the required fee. If all the documents and payment are in order, your photo will be taken and a new license will be issued.

7. What documents does one need to renew a driver’s license?

8. What documents represent proof of social security?

9. How often must one renew a driver’s license?

10. How does one obtain the renewal form?

11. True or False: You can renew your driver’s license by mail.

Before you look at the answers, look at the next page to see how you might have marked up the passage to highlight the important information.

Instructions for License Renewal

^{how often I need to renew}
A driver's license must be renewed every four years. A renewal application is sent ^{application will be mailed}
approximately five to seven weeks before the expiration date listed on the license.
 Individuals who fail to renew within three years of the license expiration date
 are not eligible for a renewal and must repeat the initial licensing process. To
^{must go in person. find out nearest location} renew a license, you must visit a Motor Vehicles Agency. ^{documents needed for renewal} You must present a
completed renewal application; your current driver's license; acceptable proof
of age, identification, and address; and proof of social security in the form of a
social security card, a state or federal income tax return, a current pay stub, or
a W-2 form. ^{bring checkbook!} You must also pay the required fee. If all the documents and pay-
 ment are in order, your photo will be taken and a new license will be issued.

With a marked-up text like this, it's very easy to find the answers.

- 7.** What documents does one need to renew a driver's license?
- Completed renewal application*
 - Current driver's license*
 - Acceptable proof of age, identification, and address*
 - Proof of social security*
 - Money to pay required fee*

- 8.** What documents represent proof of social security?
- Social security card*
 - State or federal income tax return*
 - Current pay stub*
 - W-2 form*

- 9.** How often must one renew a driver's license?
- Every four years.*

- 10.** How does one obtain the renewal form? *It is sent five to seven weeks before current license expires.*

- 11.** True or False: You can renew your driver's license by mail. *False: You can renew only by visiting a Motor Vehicles Agency.*

TIP

Set out to read with an explorer's eye and sense of curiosity by probing into details behind key actions and events. If you are unfamiliar with a specific factual detail in a passage, consider asking a friend or family member for help, or check a reference source such as a dictionary, atlas, encyclopedia, or Internet database. There are print and Internet archive collections and specialized libraries covering almost every imaginable subject—from space missions and history to the performing arts.

- Example: Louis B. Mayer Library—Library of the American Film Institute
- Example: Margaret Herrick Library—Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

Practice Passage 3

Now look at one more short passage. Again, read carefully and answer the questions that follow.

Today’s postal service is more efficient and reliable than ever before. Mail that used to take months to move by horse and foot now moves around the country in days or hours by truck, train, and plane. First-class mail usually moves from New York City to Los Angeles in three days or less. If your letter or package is urgent, the U.S. Postal Service offers Priority Mail and Express Mail services. Priority Mail is guaranteed to go anywhere in the United States in two to three days or less. Express Mail will get your package there overnight.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>12. Who or what is this passage about?</p> <p>13. How was mail transported in the past?</p> <p>14. How is mail transported now?</p> | <p>16. How long does Priority Mail take?</p> <p>17. How long does Express Mail take?</p> |
|---|--|

15. How long does first-class mail take?

Once again, here’s how you might have marked up this passage:

Today’s postal service is more efficient and reliable than ever before. Mail that

then →
← now

What a long time!
3 services listed—
First class—3 days
Priority—2–3 days
Express—Overnight
Fastest

Are there other services?

used to take months to move by horse and foot now moves around the country in days or hours by truck, train, and plane. First-class mail usually moves from New York City to Los Angeles in three days or less. If your letter or package is urgent, the U.S. Postal Service offers Priority Mail and Express Mail services. Priority Mail is guaranteed to go anywhere in the United States in two to three days or less. Express Mail will get your package there overnight.

You can see how marking up a text helps make it easier to understand the information a passage conveys.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>12. Who or what is this passage about? <i>The U.S. Postal Service.</i></p> <p>13. How was mail transported in the past? <i>By horse and foot.</i></p> | <p>14. How is mail transported now? <i>By truck, train, and plane.</i></p> <p>15. How long does first-class mail take? <i>Usually three days or less.</i></p> <p>16. How long does Priority Mail take? <i>Two to three days or less.</i></p> <p>17. How long does Express Mail take? <i>Overnight.</i></p> |
|--|--|

Summary

Active reading is the first essential step to comprehension. Why? Because active reading forces you to really *see* what you're reading, to look closely at what's there. Like a detective who arrives at the scene of a crime, if you look carefully and ask the right questions (who, what, when, where, how, and why), you're on your way to really comprehending what you read.

TIP

Hone your reading comprehension skills by answering these six essential questions after reading articles in the daily newspaper:

- Who?
- What?
- When?
- Where?
- Why?
- How?

FINDING THE MAIN IDEA

LESSON SUMMARY

Finding and understanding the main idea of a text is an essential reading skill. When you look past the facts and information and get to the heart of what the writer is trying to say, that's the main idea. This lesson will show you how to find the main idea of a passage. Then you'll learn how to distinguish the main idea from its supporting statements.

Imagine that you're at a friend's home for the evening. "Here," he says, "Let's watch this movie."

"Sure," you reply. "What's it about?" You'd like to know a little about what you'll be watching, but your question may not get you the answer you're looking for. That's because you've only asked about the *subject* of the film. The subject—what the movie is *about*—is only half the story. Think, for example, about all the alien invaders films that have been made. While these films may share the same general subject, what they have to say *about* the aliens (and about our response to invasion) may be very different. Each film has different ideas it wants to convey *about* the subject.

Similarly, writers write because they have something they want to write *about*, and they have something they want to say *about* that subject. When you look beyond the facts and information to what the writer really wants to say *about* his or her subject, you're looking for the **main idea**.

JUST WHAT IS A MAIN IDEA, ANYWAY?

One of the most common questions on reading comprehension exams is, “What is the main idea of this passage?” How would you answer this question for the paragraph below?

Wilma Rudolph, the crippled child who became an Olympic running champion, is an inspiration for us all. Born prematurely in 1940, Wilma spent her childhood battling illness, including measles, scarlet fever, chicken pox, pneumonia, and polio, a crippling disease which at that time had no cure. At the age of four, she was told she would never walk again. But Wilma and her family refused to give up. After years of special treatment and physical therapy, 12-year-old Wilma was able to walk normally again. But walking wasn’t enough for Wilma, who was determined to be an athlete. Before long, her talent earned her a spot in the 1956 Olympics, where she earned a bronze medal. In the 1960 Olympics, the height of her career, she won three gold medals.

What is the main idea of this paragraph? You might be tempted to answer, “Wilma Rudolph” or “Wilma Rudolph’s life.” Yes, Wilma Rudolph’s life is the **subject** of the passage—*who or what the passage is about*. But that’s not the main idea. The **main idea** is what the writer wants to say *about* this subject. What is the main thing the writer says *about* Wilma’s life?

Before we answer that question, let’s review the definition of *main idea*:

Main idea: The overall fact, feeling, or thought a writer wants to convey about his or her subject.

We call this the main idea because it is the idea that the passage *adds up to*; it’s what holds all of the ideas in the passage together. Now, reread the paragraph about Wilma Rudolph carefully. Which idea holds the paragraph together?

- a. Wilma Rudolph was very sick as a child.
- b. Wilma Rudolph was an Olympic champion.
- c. Wilma Rudolph is someone to admire.

The best answer is c: Wilma Rudolph is someone to admire. This is the idea the paragraph adds up to; it’s what holds all of the information in the paragraph together.

This example also shows us two important characteristics of a main idea:

1. It is **general** enough to encompass all of the ideas in the passage.
2. It is an **assertion**. An assertion is a statement made by the writer.

MAIN IDEAS ARE GENERAL

The main idea of a passage must be general enough to encompass all of the ideas in the passage. That is, it should be broad enough for all of the other sentences in that passage to fit underneath it, like people under an umbrella. Notice that the first two options, “Wilma Rudolph was very sick as a child” and “Wilma Rudolph was an Olympic champion” are too specific to be the main idea. They aren’t broad enough to cover all of the ideas in the passage, because the passage talks about *both* her illnesses and her Olympic achievements. Only the third answer is general enough to be the main idea of the paragraph.

EXERCISE 1

Questions

In the group of sentences below, circle the sentence that is general enough to be a main idea.

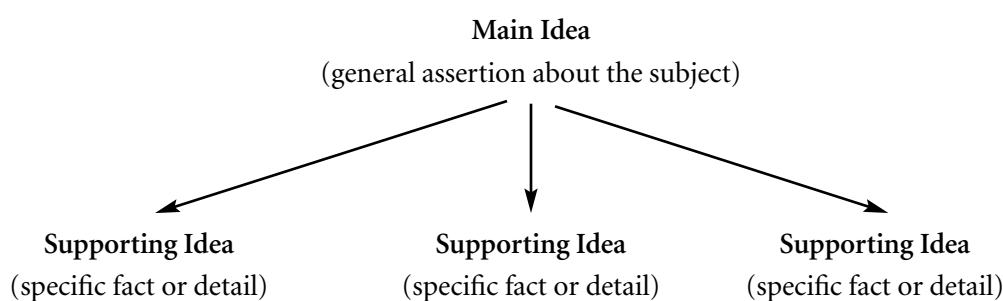
- a. The Gold Rush began in 1849.
- b. Many people moved to California after gold was discovered.
- c. The history and population of California were shaped by the Gold Rush.
- d. The life of a gold miner was not an easy one.

MAIN IDEAS ARE ASSERTIONS

A main idea is also some kind of **assertion** about the subject. An assertion is a claim that something is true. An assertion, therefore, needs to be supported with specific

details or evidence. Assertions can be facts (such as “Wind chills can be dangerous.”) or opinions (such as “School uniforms for public school students are a bad idea.”). In either case, an assertion should be supported by specific ideas, facts, and details. In other words, the main idea makes a general assertion that *tells* readers that something is true. The supporting sentences, on the other hand, *show* readers that it’s true by providing specific facts and details.

For example, in the Wilma Rudolph paragraph, the writer makes a general assertion: “Wilma Rudolph, the crippled child who became an Olympic running champion, is an inspiration for us all.” The rest of the sentences offer specific facts and details that *prove* that Wilma Rudolph is an inspirational person.



EXERCISE 2

Questions

Which of the following sentences are assertions that require specific evidence or support?

- a. Blue is a color.
- b. Blue is a calming color.
- c. Ray Bradbury is a fabulous science fiction writer.
- d. Ray Bradbury published *The Illustrated Man* in 1951.
- e. Ray Bradbury’s best book is *The Illustrated Man*.

TOPIC SENTENCES

Writers often state their main ideas in one or two sentences so that readers can be very clear about the main point of the passage. A sentence that expresses the main idea of a paragraph is called a **topic sentence**. Notice, for example, how the first sentence in the Wilma Rudolph paragraph states the main idea:

Wilma Rudolph, the crippled child who became an Olympic running champion, *is an inspiration for us all.*

This sentence is therefore the topic sentence for the paragraph.

Topic sentences are often found at the beginning of paragraphs. But not all paragraphs begin with a clear topic sentence. Sometimes writers begin with specific supporting ideas and lead up to the main idea. In this case, the topic sentence is often found at the end of the paragraph. Here's an example:

School is tough enough without having to worry about looking cool every single day. The less I have to decide first thing in the morning, the better. I can't tell you how many mornings I look into my closet and just stare, unable to decide what to wear. I also wouldn't mind not having to see guys wearing oversized jeans and shirts so huge they'd fit a sumo wrestler. And I certainly would welcome not seeing kids showing off designer-labeled clothes. To me, a dress code makes a lot of sense.

Notice how the last sentence in this paragraph is the only one that is general enough to cover the entire paragraph. Each sentence in the paragraph provides specific support for the final assertion: A dress code is a good idea.

Sometimes the topic sentence is not found at the beginning or end of a paragraph but rather somewhere in the middle. Other times there isn't a clear topic sentence at all. But that doesn't mean there isn't a main idea. It's there, but the author has chosen not to express it in a clear topic sentence. In that case, you'll have to look carefully at the paragraph for clues about the main idea. You'll learn more about this in Section 4.

MAIN IDEAS IN PARAGRAPHS AND ESSAYS

We often talk about a text as having *one* main idea. But if the text has more than one paragraph, shouldn't it have as many main ideas as it has paragraphs? Yes and no. Each *paragraph* should have its own main idea. In fact, that's the definition of a paragraph: a group of sentences about the same idea. At the same time, however, each paragraph does something more: It works to support the main idea of the *entire passage*. Thus, there is an **overall main idea** (often called a **theme** or **thesis**) for the text. The main idea of *each paragraph* should work to support the overall main idea of the entire text.

Here's another way to look at it. Think of a piece of writing as a table. The top of the table is the overall main idea—what the writer thinks, believes, or knows about the subject. But the table won't stand without legs to support it. In writing, those legs are the specific facts and ideas that support the overall main idea. If the text is just one paragraph, then we can think of the topic sentence as the table top and the supporting sentences as the table legs. If the text is several paragraphs (or pages) long, then we have a series of tables on top of tables. Each leg is actually its own paragraph. It has its own main idea and therefore needs supporting sentences of its own. Indeed, depending upon the length of the text, there may be tables on top of tables on top of tables—layers of main ideas and their support. But there will still be that one table on the very top. This is the overall main idea that encompasses all of the ideas in the essay.

DISTINGUISHING MAIN IDEAS FROM SUPPORTING IDEAS

If you're not sure whether something is a main idea or a supporting idea, ask yourself the following question: Is the sentence making a *general statement*, or is it providing *specific information*? In the school uniform paragraph, for example, all of the sentences except the last, make specific statements. They are not general enough to serve as an umbrella or net for the whole paragraph.

Writers often provide clues that can help you distinguish between main ideas and their support. Here are some of the most common words and phrases used to introduce specific examples:

for example	in addition	some
for instance	in particular	specifically
furthermore	others	

These signal words tell you that a supporting fact or idea will follow. If you're having trouble finding the main idea of a paragraph, try eliminating sentences that begin with these phrases.

EXERCISE 3

Read the passage below carefully using the skills taught in this lesson. After you read, answer the questions that follow. Keep in mind that you'll be asked to identify not only the overall main idea, but also the main idea of individual paragraphs.

At the age of six, Goran Kropp climbed his first mountain. Twenty-three years later, he tackled one of the highest mountains in the world, Mount Everest. His journey to the top shows just how independent, persistent, and determined this remarkable man is.

While most people arrive at the foothills of Mount Everest by some sort of modern vehicle, Kropp bicycled 7,000 miles from his home in Sweden. Traveling by bike was not easy. Bumpy, rough roads caused mechanical problems for Kropp, and he stopped many times to repair his bike. In addition, he was chased by dogs, stung by hornets, and drenched by rain several times before he arrived at the base of the mountain.

Kropp chose to climb Mount Everest the same way he traveled to the mountain: without the help of others and without modern conveniences. Unlike others, Kropp climbed the mountain without a guide or helper. He did not bring bottled oxygen to help him breathe at high altitudes, and he carried all of his gear himself in a pack that weighed about 140 pounds.

It took Kropp two tries to reach the summit. The first time, he had to turn back only 350 feet from the top because the weather was too dangerous. Just a few days earlier, at that same level, eight climbers had died when a sudden snowstorm had hit the mountain. Kropp waited out the storm, rested, and tried again a few days later. This time, he was successful. When he had finished descending the mountain, he got back on his bike and rode the 7,000 miles back to Sweden.

Questions

Read and answer the following questions.

1. What is the *subject* of this passage? _____

2. What is the *main idea* of paragraph 2? _____

3. What is the *main idea* of paragraph 3? _____

4. What is the *overall main idea* of the passage?

SUMMARY

The **main idea** of a passage is the overall fact, feeling, or idea the author wants to convey *about* the subject. Main ideas are general enough to encompass all of the ideas in the passage. They also make an assertion about the subject that the rest of the passage develops and supports. Main ideas are often stated in *topic sentences*. In longer texts, each paragraph has a main idea (though it may not be explicitly stated), and each main idea works to support the overall main idea of the passage.

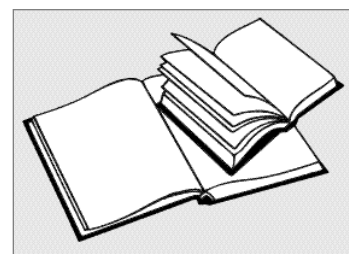
Skill Building until Next Time

1. As you read today and throughout the week, notice how texts are divided into paragraphs. Choose one paragraph from your social studies textbook and identify the topic sentence. What idea holds all of the sentences in that paragraph together?
2. Create topic sentences about things that you come across in your day. Make general assertions about people, places, and things. For example, you might say, "Mrs. Elmore is a great teacher." Then, support your assertion. What does she do that makes her a great teacher? Provide several specific examples.

DEFINING VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

LESSON SUMMARY

Active readers look up unfamiliar words. But what if you don't have a dictionary? In a testing situation, for example, you almost certainly won't be able to look up words you don't know. But you can use context to help you determine meaning. This lesson will show you how.



Often in your reading you will come across words or phrases that are unfamiliar to you. You might be lucky enough to have a dictionary handy to look up that word or phrase. But what if you don't? How can you understand what you're reading if you don't know what all the words mean? Fortunately, you can often use **context** to determine meaning. That is, by looking carefully at the sentences and ideas surrounding an unfamiliar word, you can often figure out exactly what that word means.

HOW TO DETERMINE MEANING FROM CONTEXT

To demonstrate how you can use context to determine what a word means, let's begin with an example. Read the paragraph below carefully and actively.

- Chesla, Elizabeth; *8th Grade Reading Comprehension Success*, New York: LearningExpress, LLC. 2001.

Andy is the most unreasonable, pigheaded, subhuman life-form in the entire galaxy, and he makes me so angry I could scream! Of course, I love him like a brother. I sort of have to, because he *is* my brother. More than that, he’s my twin! That’s right. Andy and Amy (that’s me) have the same curly hair and dark eyes. Yet though we look alike, we have very different dispositions. You could say that we’re opposites. While I’m often quiet and pensive, Andy is loud and doesn’t seem to stop to think about anything. Oh, and did I mention that he’s the most stubborn person on the planet?

As you read this passage, you probably came across at least two unfamiliar words: *dispositions* and *pensive*. While a dictionary would be helpful, you don’t need to look up these words. The paragraph provides enough clues to help you figure out what these words mean.

Let’s begin with *dispositions*. In what context is this word used? Let’s take another look at the sentence in which it’s used and the two sentences that follow:

Yet though we look alike, we have very different *dispositions*. You could say that we’re opposites. While I’m often quiet and *pensive*, Andy is loud and doesn’t seem to stop to think about anything.

The context here offers several important clues. First, the sentence in which *dispositions* is used tells us something about what dispositions *are not*. The sentence sets up a contrast between the way that Amy and Andy look and their dispositions. This means that dispositions are *not* something physical.

Another clue is the general content of the paragraph. We can tell from the paragraph that *dispositions* have something to do with *who* Andy and Amy are, since the paragraph describes their personalities.

Yet another clue is what follows the sentence in which *dispositions* is used. Amy offers two specific examples of their dispositions: She’s quiet and pensive; he’s loud and doesn’t seem to think much. These are specific examples of personality traits.

By now you should have a pretty good idea of what *dispositions* means. A *disposition* is

- a. a person’s physical characteristics.
- b. a person’s preferences.
- c. a person’s natural qualities or tendencies.

The best answer, of course, is (c), a person’s natural qualities or tendencies. While a person’s disposition often helps determine his or her preferences, this passage doesn’t say anything about what Amy and Andy like to do (or not do). Nor are these characteristics physical. Amy is talking about their personalities.

Now, let’s look at the second vocabulary word, *pensive*. Again, the context provides us with strong clues. Amy states that she and Andy “are opposites”—that though they look alike, they have opposite dispositions. She is quiet, and he is loud. Thus, we can expect that the next pair of descriptions will be opposites, too. So we simply have to look at her description of Andy and come up with its opposite. If Andy “doesn’t seem to stop to think about anything,” then we can assume that Amy spends a lot of time thinking. We can therefore conclude that *pensive* means

- a. intelligent, wise.
- b. deep in thought.
- c. considerate of others.

The best answer is (b), deep in thought. If you spend a lot of time thinking, that may make you wise. But remember, we’re looking for the *opposite* of Andy’s characteristic, so (a) and (c) can’t be the correct answer.

Exam Tip: When you're trying to determine meaning from context on an exam, two strategies can help you find the best answer.

1. First, determine whether the vocabulary word is something positive or negative. If the word is something positive, then eliminate the answers that are negative, and vice versa.
2. Replace the vocabulary word with the remaining answers, one at a time. Does the answer make sense when you read the sentence? If not, you can eliminate that answer.

EXERCISE 1

Questions

Use context to determine the meaning of the italicized words in the sentences below. Circle the letter of the answer you think is correct.

1. He was so nervous that his voice was *quavering*.
 - a. thundering, booming confidently
 - b. trembling, shaking noticeably
 - c. quiet, whispering softly
 - d. undecided, unsure
2. By the end of eighth period, I was *famished*. I'd skipped breakfast and had eaten only a pear for lunch.
 - a. famous
 - b. exhausted
 - c. starving
 - d. impatient
3. The autographed picture of Roger Clemens turned out to be *bogus*. The man who sold it to me had signed it himself!
 - a. fake, false
 - b. believable
 - c. interesting
 - d. overpriced

HOW MUCH CONTEXT DO YOU NEED?

In the passage about Amy and Andy, you would probably have been able to understand the main message even if you hadn't figured out what *dispositions* and *pensive* mean. But sometimes your understanding of a passage depends upon your understanding of a particular word or phrase. Can you understand the following sentence, for example, without understanding what *elated* means?

He was *elated* when he saw his report card.

The trouble with adjectives like *elated* is that it can be hard to figure out what they mean without sufficient context. From this sentence, we can't even tell whether *elated* is something positive or negative. Was he happy or sad? Shocked or unmoved? No matter how good a detective you are, there simply aren't enough clues in this sentence to tell you what this word means, or even whether *elated* is something good or bad. You simply need more context.

Here's the sentence again, this time with more context. Now can you figure out what *elated* means?

He was *elated* when he saw his report card, and he smiled all the way home. He couldn't wait to tell his parents that he'd improved his grade in every class.

From the context, you can tell that *elated* most nearly means

- a. deeply disappointed.
- b. extremely pleased and proud.
- c. indifferent or uncaring.
- d. mildly happy or content.

The best answer is (b), extremely pleased and proud. The context of the sentence makes it clear that *elated* is something good—in fact, something very good. Therefore, answers (a) and (c) are simply not correct, and (d) isn't strong enough. If he can't wait to tell his parents, his emotion is more than just "content." He is clearly very pleased with his improvement.

EXERCISE 2

Questions

Here are a few more passages with italicized vocabulary words. Use the context to determine their meanings. Circle the letter of the answer you think is correct.

1. I accidentally told Nell about her surprise birthday party. What a *blunder*!

A *blunder* is

- a. a person who can't keep secrets.
- b. an idea.
- c. a mistake.
- d. a get-together.

2. The aquarium was absolutely *teeming* with fish. I don't know how they had room to move.

Teeming means

- a. full of or present in large numbers.
- b. working together as a group, cooperating.
- c. cloudy or unclear.
- d. gross or disgustingly dirty.

3. Though I do the same thing every day, my volunteer job is anything but *mundane*. The patients really keep me on my toes, and no two days are ever alike!

Mundane means

- a. exciting and interesting.
- b. dull and boring.
- c. important and meaningful.
- d. unpleasant and distasteful.

EXERCISE 3

We can't emphasize enough the importance of being able to determine word meaning from context. In reading comprehension, everything rests on your ability to understand the ideas in each sentence. If you don't know what a word means, you may completely misunderstand an important sentence—and that means you could misunderstand the whole passage.

So, here's another practice. This one may be more challenging, since these vocabulary words aren't exactly real words!

Take a careful look at one of the most famous poems in the English language, Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky" (Lewis Carroll is the author of the classic *Alice in Wonderland*.) Though you won't be able to determine *exactly* what the nonsense words in the poem mean, you should be able to make an educated guess based on their context.

Questions

Here are the first two stanzas of the poem. Read them carefully and then answer the questions that follow. Read the poem twice, at least one of those times out loud. (The lines of the poem are numbered to make the questions easier to follow.)

Jabberwocky

- 1 'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
- 2 Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
- 3 All mimsy were the borogoves,
- 4 And the mome raths outgrabe.
- 5 "Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
- 6 The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
- 7 Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
- 8 The frumious Bandersnatch!"

3. What does *shun* (line 7) mean?
 - a. to avoid, keep away from
 - b. to capture
 - c. to make friends with
 - d. to take care of
4. What does *frumious* (line 8) probably mean?
 - a. friendly
 - b. ugly
 - c. dangerous
 - d. poor

Questions

Circle the letter of the answer you think is correct.

1. What could *slithy toves* (line 1) be?
 - a. some sort of food
 - b. some sort of place
 - c. some sort of animal
 - d. some sort of vehicle
2. The *Jabberwock* (line 5) is probably
 - a. a mean person.
 - b. a dangerous creature.
 - c. a harmless bird.
 - d. a magical animal.

SUMMARY

Often, you can figure out what unfamiliar words mean from their **context**—the way they are used in a passage. Look carefully at the words and sentences surrounding the unfamiliar word. You'll often find clues that will tell you what the word means. Even if you can't figure out the exact meaning of a word, you can usually tell whether the word means something positive or negative.

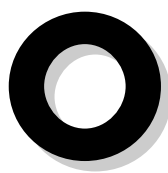
Skill Building until Next Time

1. Before you look up any unfamiliar words this week, try to figure out what they mean from their context. For example, if you come across an unfamiliar word while you're surfing the Web, use the context around that word to determine its meaning. After you've made an educated guess based on the context, look each word up in a dictionary. Did you guess correctly?
2. Begin a vocabulary list of the words you look up as you work your way through this book. Many people feel insecure about their reading and writing skills because they have a limited vocabulary. The more words you know, the easier it will be to understand what others are saying and to express what you have to say.

FINDING AN IMPLIED MAIN IDEA

LESSON SUMMARY

This lesson shows you how to find the main idea when there's no topic sentence or thesis statement to guide you.



Oh, the power of suggestion! Advertisers know it well—and so do writers. They know they can get an idea across without directly saying it. They know that they don't always need a topic sentence because they can use structure and language to *suggest* their ideas.

Think back to Lesson 2 for a moment. What is a **main idea**? It is a claim (**an assertion**) *about* the subject of the passage. It's also the thought that holds the whole passage together. Thus, it must be general enough to include all of the ideas in the passage. Like a net, it holds everything together. Main ideas are often stated in topic sentences.

So far, most of the passages in this book have topic sentences. But you'll often come across passages (like the story "The Tryout") that *don't* have topic sentences. Writers often imply ideas instead of stating them directly. To *imply* means to hint or suggest. You'll need to use your powers of observation to determine their message.

- Chesla, Elizabeth; *8th Grade Reading Comprehension Success*, New York: LearningExpress, LLC. 2001.

HOW TO FIND AN IMPLIED MAIN IDEA

When the main idea is implied, there's no topic sentence, so finding the main idea requires some good detective work. But you already know the importance of structure, word choice, style, and tone. You know how to read carefully and find clues, and you know that these clues will help you figure out the main idea.

For example, take a look at the following paragraph:

One of my summer reading books was *The Windows of Time*. Though it's more than 100 pages long, I read it in one afternoon. I couldn't wait to see what happened to Evelyn, the main character. But by the time I got to the end, I wondered if I should have spent my afternoon doing something else. The ending was so awful that I completely forgot I'd enjoyed most of the book.

There's no topic sentence here, but you should still be able to find the main idea. Look carefully at what the writer says and how she says it. What is she suggesting?

- a. *The Windows of Time* is a terrific novel.
- b. *The Windows of Time* is disappointing.
- c. *The Windows of Time* is full of suspense.
- d. *The Windows of Time* is a lousy novel.

The correct answer is (b)—the novel is disappointing. How can you tell that this is the main idea? First, we can eliminate choice (c), because it's too specific to be a main idea. It deals only with one specific aspect of the novel (its suspense).

Sentences (a), (b), and (d), on the other hand, all express a larger idea—a general assertion about the quality of the novel. But only one of these statements can actually serve as a “net” for the whole paragraph. Notice

that while the first few sentences *praise* the novel, the last two *criticize* it. (The word “but” at the beginning of the third sentence signals that the positive review is going to turn negative.) Clearly, this is a mixed review. Therefore, the best answer is (b). Sentence (a) is too positive and doesn't account for the “awful” ending. Sentence (d), on the other hand, is too negative and doesn't account for the suspense and interest in the main character. But Sentence (b) allows for both positive and negative—when a good thing turns bad, we often feel disappointed.

Now let's look at another example. Here, the word choice will be more important, so read carefully.

Fortunately, none of Toby's friends had ever seen the apartment where Toby lived with his mother and sister. Sandwiched between two burnt-out buildings, his two-story apartment building was by far the ugliest one on the block. It was a real eyesore: peeling orange paint (orange!), broken windows, crooked steps, crooked everything. He could just imagine what his friends would say if they ever saw this poor excuse for a building.

Which of the following expresses the main idea of this paragraph?

- a. Toby wishes he could move to a nicer building.
- b. Toby wishes his dad still lived with them.
- c. Toby is glad none of his friends know where he lives.
- d. Toby is sad because he doesn't have any friends.

From the description, we can safely assume that Toby doesn't like his apartment building and wishes he could move to a nicer building (a). But that idea isn't general enough to cover the whole paragraph, because it doesn't say anything about his friends. Sentence (d)

is about his building, so it's not broad enough either. Besides, the first sentence states that Toby *has* friends. We know that Toby lives only with his mother and little sister, so we might *assume* that he wishes his dad still lived with them (b). But there's nothing in the paragraph to support that assumption, and this idea doesn't include the two main topics of the paragraph—Toby's building and Toby's friends.

What the paragraph adds up to is that Toby is terribly embarrassed about his building, and he's glad none of his friends have seen it (c). This is the main idea. The paragraph opens with the word "fortunately," so we know that he thinks it's a good thing none of them have been there. Plus, look at the word choice. Notice how the building is described. It's "by far the ugliest on the block," which is saying a lot since it's stuck between two burnt-out buildings. The writer calls it an "eyesore," and repeats "orange" with an exclamation point to emphasize how ugly the color is. Everything's "crooked" in this "poor excuse for a building." He's ashamed of where he lives and worries about what his friends would think if they saw it.

EXERCISE 1

Questions

Read the paragraphs below and circle the letter of the answer you think is correct.

1. Day after day, Johnny chooses to sit at his computer instead of going outside with his friends. A few months ago, he'd get half a dozen phone calls from his friends every night. Now, he might get one or two a week. Used to be his friends would come over two, three days a week after school. Now, he spends his afternoons alone with his computer.

The main idea is:

- a. Johnny and his friends are all spending time with their computers instead of one another.
- b. Johnny's friends aren't very good friends.
- c. Johnny has alienated his friends by spending so much time on the computer.
- d. Johnny and his friends prefer to communicate by computer.

2. We've had Ginger since I was two years old. Every morning, she wakes me up by licking my cheek. That's her way of telling me she's hungry. When she wants attention, she'll weave in and out of my legs and meow until I pick her up and hold her. And I can always tell when Ginger wants to play. She'll bring me her toys and will keep dropping them (usually right on my homework!) until I stop what I'm doing and play with her for a while.

A good topic sentence for this paragraph would be:

- a. I take excellent care of Ginger.
- b. Ginger is a demanding pet.
- c. Ginger and I have grown up together.
- d. Ginger is good at telling me what she wants.

CASTING A NET

When you're looking for an implied main idea, what you're really doing is searching for the right "net" to cast over the passage. What is the idea that encompasses all of the other ideas in the passage? What holds it together? (Remember, a paragraph, by definition, is a group of sentences about the same idea.)

What if you're looking for the main idea of *several* paragraphs? Well, it's really the same thing. Instead of determining the main idea of an individual paragraph, you're determining the overall main idea. Remember the

comparison between a table and an essay? In an essay, the overall main idea is the tabletop while the supporting ideas are the legs that hold up (support) the table. Each of those legs, though, might be paragraphs of their own with their own main idea and supporting sentences.

Here's a very short essay with an implied main idea. Read it carefully. Can you see what the whole passage adds up to?

It has been more than 25 years since the National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA) last sent a craft to land on the moon. A lunar prospector took off in January 1998, in the first moon shot since astronauts last walked on the moon in 1972. This time, the moon-traveler is only a low-cost robot that will spend a year on the surface of the moon, collecting minerals and ice.

Unlike the moon shots of the 1960s and 1970s, the lunar prospector does not carry a camera, so the American public will not get to see new pictures of the moon's surface. Instead, the prospector carries instruments that will map the makeup of the entire surface of the moon.

Scientists are anxious for the results of the entire mission and of one exploration in particular—that done by the neutron spectrometer. Using this instrument, the prospector will examine the moon's poles, searching for signs of water ice. There has long been speculation that frozen water from comets may have accumulated in craters at one of the moon's poles and may still be there, as this pole is permanently shielded from the sun.

Which of the following seems to best express the overall main idea of this passage?

- a. There is a great deal we can learn from studying the moon.
- b. The prospector will collect surface data rather than take pictures.
- c. NASA's newest moon-traveler is on an important mission.
- d. Scientists hope the prospector will return with evidence of water on the moon.

If you remember that a main idea must be general enough to hold the whole passage together *and* that a main idea must also be an assertion about the subject, then it should be pretty easy to tell which is the correct answer. First, answers (b) and (d) are too specific to be the main idea; they deal only with information in the second and third paragraphs, respectively. Second, they state only facts; they don't make an assertion about the subject. They can't be the overall main idea for this passage.

Answers (a) and (c), on the other hand, both make assertions about the subject and are general. Notice how they both allow room for detailed support. But while (a) casts a wide enough net, it's not the right net for this passage. The passage is about what NASA hopes to learn from *this* specific mission. So while (b) and (d) are too specific, (a) is too general to be the main idea of this passage. "NASA's newest moon-traveler is on an important mission," however, casts a net that's just the right size.

EXERCISE 2

Read the following passage carefully and actively. Then circle the answers of the questions that follow.

A healthy diet with proper nutrition is essential for maintaining good overall health. Since vitamins were discovered early in the twentieth century, people have routinely been taking vitamin supplements for this purpose. The Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) is a fre-

quently used nutritional standard for maintaining optimal health.

The RDA specifies the recommended amount of a number of nutrients for people in many different age and gender groups. With RDA, consumers can see how much of those nutrients are offered in the products they buy and can better plan for a nutritious meal. But RDA values are based on the assumption that it is possible to accurately define nutritional requirements for a given group. In reality, individual nutritional requirements can vary widely within each group.

The efficiency with which a person converts food into nutrients can also vary widely. Certain foods when eaten in combination actually prevent the absorption of nutrients. For example, spinach combined with milk reduces the amount of calcium available to the body from the milk, but this is not reflected in RDA values.

The RDA approach also specifies a different dietary requirement for each age and gender. However, it is clearly unrealistic to expect a homemaker to prepare a different menu for each family member.

Questions

1. Which of the following sentences best expresses the overall main idea of this passage?
 - a. Still, although we cannot rely solely upon RDA to ensure our overall long-term health, it can be a useful guide.
 - b. The RDA approach is problematic and should be avoided.
 - c. It's important for consumers to monitor RDA levels carefully.
 - d. After all, vitamins are the most important part of a healthy diet.

2. Where would this overall main idea make the most sense in the passage?
 - a. at the beginning of the first paragraph
 - b. at the end of the first paragraph
 - c. at the beginning of the last paragraph
 - d. at the end of the last paragraph

SUMMARY

Writers often *suggest* their main idea without actually *saying* it. (This is especially true in literature, as you'll see in Lesson 19.) Finding an implied main idea takes extra careful detective work. Look for clues in what the writer says and how he or she says it. Consider the structure, the point of view, word choice, style, and tone. What does the passage add up to? What assertion can you make that holds together all of the ideas in that passage?

Skill Building until Next Time

1. Listen carefully to people today. Do they sometimes suggest things without actually saying them? Are there times when you use suggestion to express your ideas? How do you do this?
2. Write a paragraph that does not have a topic sentence. Start with a clear main idea, but don't write that main idea down. Then, put in clues that will help readers figure out your main idea. For example, make a claim about yourself. What kind of person are you? Keep that main idea in your head. Next, write several sentences that support your assertion. Make sure those sentences lead your reader to your main idea. Then show your paragraph to others. Can they determine the main idea from what you've written?



A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE: POINT OF VIEW

*Reading is a means of thinking with another person's mind;
it forces you to stretch your own.*

—CHARLES SCRIBNER JR., American publisher (1921–1995)

LESSON SUMMARY

This lesson introduces you to the concept of *point of view*, one strategy writers use to convey their meaning to readers. Aspects such as whether writers use the more subjective *I* or the more objective *one*, whether they address readers as *you* or merely refer to an anonymous *they*, influence how readers understand what the writer has written.

Picture this: You are walking along a tree-lined street late in the afternoon. Just ahead of you, a woman is sitting on a bench; a dog lies in the shade at her feet. You watch them and nod hello as you walk by.

Now, picture this: You are that dog. You're sitting in the shade under a bench next to your owner's feet. Suddenly, someone walks down the street in front of you. If you look up, you can see that person nod as he or she walks by.

Although you've just pictured the same thing—a person walking by a woman with a dog—you've really pictured two very different scenes, haven't you? The scenario looks quite different from the dog's point of view than from the walker's.

This shift in perspective happens in writing by changing the point of view. *Point of view* is one of the first choices writers make when they begin to write, because it is the point of view that determines who is speaking to the reader.

Point of view is the person or perspective through which the writer channels his or her information and ideas. Just as we may look at a physical object from a number of different perspectives (from above it, below it,

behind it, beside it, and so on), we can look at information and ideas from different perspectives as well (mine, yours, his or hers, the professor's, the country's, and so on).

Three Kinds of Point of View

When it comes to expressing point of view, writers can use three distinct approaches:

- **First-person point of view** is a highly individualized, personal point of view in which the writer or narrator speaks about his or her own feelings and experiences directly to the reader using these pronouns: *I, me, mine; we, our, us*.
- **Second-person point of view** is another personal point of view in which the writer speaks directly to the reader, addressing the reader as *you*.
- **Third-person point of view** is an impersonal, objective point of view in which the perspective is that of an outsider (a “third person”) who is not directly involved in the action. There is no direct reference to either the reader (second person) or the writer (first person). The writer chooses from these pronouns: *he, him, his; she, her, hers; it, its; and they, them, theirs*.

All these points of view are available to writers, but not all of them may be appropriate for what they're writing, and only one will create the exact effect a writer desires. That's because each approach establishes a particular relationship between the reader and the writer.

When Writers Use First Person

Imagine you get one of the following messages from your company's head office:

- A. The company congratulates you on the birth of your child.
- B. We congratulate you on the birth of your child.

Which message would you rather receive?

Most of us would probably prefer to receive message B over message A. Why? What is the difference between these two messages? Both messages use the second-person pronoun, right? They both address the reader as *you*. But you probably noticed that the writers chose different points of view to refer to themselves. Message A uses the third-person point of view (*the company*) whereas message B uses the first person pronoun *we*. As a result, message B seems more sincere because it comes *from* a person *to* a person rather than from *the company* (a thing) to a person (*you*).

But those messages do more than just express congratulations to the reader. They also seem to indicate something about how the people in the head office want to be perceived. In fact, their choice of point of view shows whether they want to be seen as people (*we*) or as an entity (*the company*). Read the messages again and then decide how you think each writer wants to be perceived.

Which message seems to tell the reader, “We can speak directly to you because we are real people behind this company”?

Message _____

Which message seems to tell the reader, “We have a very formal relationship; let's not get too personal”?

Message _____

The company that sends message A suggests to the reader, “We have a very formal relationship; let's not get too close or too personal.” Message B, on the other hand, tells the reader something more like this:

“We can speak directly to *you* because we are real people behind this company.” Thus, the point of view reflects the way the senders of the message wish to be perceived—as a distant entity (message A) or as friendly colleagues (message B).

TIP

In poetry, the pronoun *I* is not always meant to reflect the poet’s personal perspective or narrative. Although every poem has an author, it’s important to understand the distinction between the author and what’s known as the “speaker” of the poem. Sometimes the pronoun *I* is used to represent the perspective of another person, a place, or a thing such as a forest or the sun. For example, an inanimate object such as a pen could be the speaker in a haiku poem called “Always Writing.”

Distance vs. Intimacy

Whether writers intend it or not (though they almost always do), the third-person point of view establishes a certain distance between the writer and the reader. There’s no direct person-to-person contact that way (*me* to *you*). Rather, with the third-person point of view, someone (or something) else is speaking to the reader.

The first-person point of view, on the other hand, establishes a certain intimacy between the writer and the reader. The writer uses *I*, *my*, *mine*, *we*, *our*, or *us* as if expressing his or her own personal feelings and ideas directly to the reader. “We congratulate you” makes message B much more personal than message A, where *the company* congratulates you.

- First-person point of view establishes intimacy. The writer wants to be close to the reader.
- Third-person point of view establishes distance. The writer wants to distance him- or herself from the reader.

When Writers Use Third Person

In a business environment, it’s not always practical to be personal. Though the first-person point of view may make the reader feel close to the writer, the first-person point of view also implies a certain *subjectivity*. That is, the writer is expressing a very personal view from a very personal perspective.

Subjectivity vs. Objectivity

There’s nothing wrong with expressing personal views, but in the business world, writers may not always be at an advantage using the first-person point of view. They’re more likely to be taken seriously when they’re *objective*, presenting things from an outsider’s point of view, than when they’re *subjective*, presenting things from their own possibly selfish or biased point of view.

- **Subjective:** based on the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the speaker or writer (first-person point of view)
- **Objective:** unaffected by the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the speaker or writer (third-person point of view)

Thus, if you wanted to complain about a new office policy, which of the following points of view do you think would be more effective?

- A. I think our new office policy is a failure.
- B. The new office policy appears to be a failure.

Most people would agree that sentence B is more effective. The question is, *why*?

1. The point of view of sentence B is more effective than that of sentence A because

- a. sentence A is too subjective.
- b. sentence B is too subjective.
- c. sentence A is too objective.
- d. all of the above.

The answer is choice **a**. Sentence A uses the first-person point of view, and because *I* is so subjective and personal, it doesn't carry as much weight as the objective sentence B. In sentence B, there is no personal perspective; someone from the outside (a third person, not the reader or the writer) is looking at the policy and evaluating it. The third-person point of view is almost always considered to be more objective because the third person is not directly involved in the action. *I*, however, is directly involved in the action (the policy) and therefore cannot have an objective opinion about the policy's success or failure. *I*'s opinion may be prejudiced by the writer's personal experience.

Of course, even when a writer uses third person, he or she can still express his or her own opinion. When that opinion is expressed in the third person, however, it *appears* much more objective.

When Writers Use Second Person

When is *you* an appropriate pronoun? What effect does it create for you, the reader? *You* generally is used to address the reader directly, particularly when the writer is giving directions. Imagine, for example, that you have registered for a financial planning class at the local community college. Prior to the first class, you receive the following note:

Note A

As a student in our financial planning class, you will need several items. First, you must purchase the book *Financial Planning: The Basics* by Robin Wexel. Second, you must outline your current financial situation by making a list of your income sources as well as your bank accounts, investments, and retire-

ment plans. Finally, you should prepare a financial wish list that documents where you would like to see yourself financially ten years from now. You should be as specific as possible when putting this list together.

Now, imagine you receive this note instead:

Note B

Students in our financial planning class will need several items. First, they must purchase the book *Financial Planning: The Basics* by Robin Wexel. Second, they must outline their current financial situation by making a list of income sources as well as bank accounts, investments, and retirement plans. Finally, they should prepare a financial wish list that documents where they would like to see themselves financially ten years from now. They should be as specific as possible when putting this list together.

Which note would you rather receive? _____

Most likely you'd rather receive note A. Now, here's the tougher question:

2. The point of view of note A is more effective than the point of view of note B because
 - a. note A feels less formal.
 - b. note A speaks personally to the reader.
 - c. note A addresses the reader as an individual.
 - d. all of the above.

Many people would prefer note A for all of these reasons, so the answer is **d**. First of all, in note A, the writer speaks directly to the reader (*you*). In note B, the writer speaks in the third person ("students"); the note never acknowledges that *you* are a student. As a result, note B sounds more formal or official. The second-person point of view, however, addresses you personally. It singles you out as an individual, not as a category (student). It is almost like note A was written just for you.

Second Person and Audience

In fact, because note A uses the second-person point of view, you can make certain assumptions about the audience for this note. Reread note A and then answer this question:

3. Note A was most likely written for
 - a. students considering the financial planning class for next year.
 - b. instructors at the school.
 - c. students enrolled in the financial planning class only.
 - d. all students at the community college.

Because note A uses the second-person pronoun *you*, you can assume that it is written for **c**, *only* students enrolled in the financial planning class. It must be; it can't work for any other audience because of its pronoun.

Note B, on the other hand, could be used for a much larger audience. In fact, the note could be a description in a course catalogue designed for all students at the college as well as the general public. So, the third-person point of view may have been used in note B not to create a distance between the reader and the writer, but to allow for a wider audience.

Writers may also use *you* to make readers feel as if they are taking part in the action or ideas being expressed in the text. For example, let's imagine that a writer wants to convince readers in a particular town that a community garden is a good idea. The writer could use the third-person point of view, as in the following paragraph:

Paragraph A

Imagine how wonderful it would be if local residents had access to a community garden. Rather than gardening in isolation, residents would come together in an appealing designated spot to plant a bountiful garden. They would be given a plot of land within the large garden to plant as they see fit. They could plant flowers, vegetables, herbs, or any other

greenery they desire. The requirement would be that they spend at least one hour in the garden every week and that they bring a few gardening implements to share, such as watering cans, gardening gloves, fertilizer, and shovels. The benefits of a community garden would be numerous. Residents would have access to land to garden they might not otherwise have. They would be part of a worthwhile and rewarding community activity that would allow them to meet other residents who love gardening and who might have excellent gardening skills and hints to share. Additionally, a community garden would be a wonderful oasis in the middle of our busy town where residents can come to walk, sit, or just enjoy the company of neighbors in a lush and friendly setting.

Or, the writer could use the second-person point of view to express the same ideas:

Paragraph B

Imagine how wonderful it would be if you had access to a community garden. Rather than gardening in isolation, you would come together in an appealing designated spot to plant a bountiful garden. You would be given a plot of land within the large garden to plant as you see fit. You could plant flowers, vegetables, herbs, or any other greenery you desire. The requirement would be that you spend at least one hour in the garden every week and that you bring a few gardening implements to share, such as watering cans, gardening gloves, fertilizer, and shovels. The benefits of a community garden would be numerous. You would have access to land to garden you might not otherwise have. You would be part of a worthwhile and rewarding community activity that would allow you to meet other residents who love gardening and who might have excellent gardening skills and hints to share. Additionally, a community garden would be a wonderful oasis in the middle of our busy town where you can come to walk, sit, or just enjoy the company of neighbors in a lush and friendly setting.

Did you notice the differences between the paragraphs? What pronouns does each paragraph use?

4. Paragraph A uses
- first-person pronouns (*I, we*).
 - second-person pronouns (*you*).
 - third-person pronouns (*he, she, they*).
5. Paragraph B uses
- first-person pronouns (*I, we*).
 - second-person pronouns (*you*).
 - third-person pronouns (*he, she, they*).

Paragraph A uses the third person (c), while paragraph B uses the second person (b). Now, which paragraph do you find more convincing? Most people would be more convinced by paragraph B. Why?

6. Paragraph B seems more convincing because
- you* puts the readers into the action of the paragraph.
 - you* makes readers pay more attention.
 - you* makes readers imagine themselves in that situation.
 - all of the above.

The second-person point of view does all of these things (d), and that's why it is often more convincing than the other points of view. The second-person point of view puts you, the reader, directly into the situation. As soon as you read the word *you*, you start to pay extra attention because the writer is addressing you directly. And you can't help but imagine yourself enjoying the benefits of a community garden because the writer puts you in each scenario. The writer of this paragraph knows that if you imagine yourself in these situations, you are much more likely to see the benefits of a community garden.

Summary

You can see by now how important point of view is in writing, for each point of view creates a certain effect. Sometimes, it brings the reader and the writer closer together; sometimes, it pushes them apart. Sometimes, it makes an argument more convincing through third-person objectivity; sometimes, an argument is more convincing through second-person involvement; and sometimes, it's more convincing through first-person intimacy. Writers choose their points of view carefully in order to create a certain relationship both with their ideas and with the reader.

TIP

Vocabulary You Can Use—**Omniscient point of view** occurs when an outside narrator discusses the thoughts of the characters in the story. **Limited point of view** is when one character tells the story, thereby limiting the retelling and interpretation of events to his or her perspective and personal bias.

One way to experiment with point of view is to select a newspaper article in which a crime occurred and then retell the article from different perspectives: the police officer's perspective, the crime victim's perspective, the witnesses' perspectives, and the perspectives of other participants, such as the jury members.

Part Two

Practice the Acquired Skills

Practice 1

The pretest consists of a series of reading passages with questions that follow to test your comprehension.

Cultural Center Adds Classes for Young Adults

The Allendale Cultural Center has expanded its arts program to include classes for young adults. Director Leah Martin announced Monday that beginning in September, three new classes will be offered to the Allendale community. The course titles will be Yoga for Teenagers; Hip-Hop Dance: Learning the Latest Moves; and Creative Journaling for Teens: Discovering the Writer Within. The latter course will not be held at the Allendale Cultural Center but instead will meet at the Allendale Public Library.

Staff member Tricia Cousins will teach the yoga and hip-hop classes. Ms. Cousins is an accomplished choreographer as well as an experienced dance educator. She has an MA in dance education from Teachers College, Columbia University, where she wrote a thesis on the pedagogical effectiveness of dance education. The journaling class will be taught by Betsy Milford. Ms. Milford is the head librarian at the Allendale Public Library as well as a columnist for the professional journal *Library Focus*.

The courses are part of the Allendale Cultural Center's Project Teen, which was initiated by Leah Martin, director of the Cultural Center. According to Martin, this project is a direct result of her efforts to make the center a more integral part of the Allendale community. Over the last several years, the number of people who have visited the cultural center for classes or events has steadily declined. Project Teen is primarily funded by a munificent grant from The McGee Arts Foundation, an organization devoted to bringing arts programs to young adults. Martin oversees the Project Teen board, which consists of five board members. Two board members are students at Allendale's Brookdale High School; the other three are adults with backgrounds in education and the arts.

The creative journaling class will be cosponsored by Brookdale High School, and students who complete the class will be given the opportunity to publish one of their journal entries in *Pulse*, Brookdale's student literary magazine. Students who complete the hip-hop class will be eligible to participate in the Allendale Review, an annual concert sponsored by the cultural center that features local actors, musicians, and dancers.

All classes are scheduled to begin immediately following school dismissal, and transportation will be available from Brookdale High School to the Allendale Cultural Center and the Allendale Public Library. For more information about Project Teen, contact the cultural center's programming office at 988-0099 or drop by the office after June 1 to pick up a fall course catalog. The office is located on the third floor of the Allendale Town Hall.

1. The Creative Journaling for Teens class will be cosponsored by
 - a. The Allendale Public Library.
 - b. The McGee Arts Foundation.
 - c. Brookdale High School.
 - d. Betsy Milford.
2. The writing in this article is
 - a. emotionally charged.
 - b. literary.
 - c. opinionated.
 - d. nonfiction.

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- 3.** According to Leah Martin, what was the direct cause of Project Teen?
- Tricia Cousins, the talented choreographer and dance educator, was available to teach courses in the fall.
 - Community organizations were ignoring local teenagers.
 - The McGee Arts Foundation wanted to be more involved in Allendale’s arts programming.
 - She wanted to make the cultural center a more important part of the Allendale community.
- 4.** Which of the following factors is implied as another reason for Project Teen?
- The number of people who have visited the cultural center has declined over the last several years.
 - The cultural center wanted a grant from The McGee Arts Foundation.
 - The young people of Allendale have complained about the cultural center’s offerings.
 - Leah Martin thinks classes for teenagers are more important than classes for adults.
- 5.** From the context of the passage, it can be determined that the word *munificent* most nearly means
- complicated.
 - generous.
 - curious.
 - unusual.
- 6.** The title of the course “Creative Journaling for Teens: Discovering the Writer Within” implies that
- all young people should write in a journal daily.
 - teenagers do not have enough hobbies.
 - writing in a journal can help teenagers become better and more creative writers.
 - teenagers are in need of guidance and direction.
- 7.** Which of the following correctly states the primary subject of this article?
- Leah Martin’s personal ideas about young adults
 - The McGee Foundation’s grant to the Allendale Cultural Center
 - three new classes for young adults added to the cultural center’s arts program
 - the needs of young adults in Allendale
- 8.** This article is organized in which of the following ways?
- in chronological order, from the past to the future
 - most important information first, followed by background and details.
 - background first, followed by the most important information and details.
 - as sensational news, with the most controversial topic first

(excerpt from the opening of an untitled essay)

John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, published in 1939, was followed ten years later by A.B. Guthrie's *The Way West*. Both books chronicle a migration, though that of Guthrie's pioneers is considerably less bleak in origin. What strikes one at first glance, however, are the commonalities. Both Steinbeck's and Guthrie's characters are primarily farmers. They look to their destinations with nearly religious enthusiasm, imagining their "promised" land the way the Biblical Israelites envisioned Canaan. Both undergo great hardship to make the trek. But the two sagas differ distinctly in origin. Steinbeck's Oklahomans are forced off their land by the banks that own their mortgages, and they follow a false promise—that jobs as seasonal laborers await them in California. Guthrie's farmers willingly remove themselves, selling their land and trading their old dreams for their new hope in Oregon. The pioneers' decision to leave their farms in Missouri and the East is frivolous and ill-founded in comparison with the Oklahomans' unwilling response to displacement. Yet it is they, the pioneers, whom our history books declare the heroes.

9. From the context of the passage, it can be determined that the word *frivolous* most nearly means
- silly.
 - high-minded.
 - difficult.
 - calculated.
10. Suppose that the author is considering following this sentence with supportive detail: "Both undergo great hardship to make the trek." Which of the following sentences would be in keeping with the comparison and contrast structure of the paragraph?
- The migrants in *The Way West* cross the Missouri, then the Kaw, and make their way overland to the Platte.
 - The Oklahomans' jalopies break down repeatedly, while the pioneers' wagons need frequent repairs.
 - Today's travelers would consider it a hardship to spend several days, let alone several months, getting anywhere.
 - The Joad family in *The Grapes of Wrath* loses both grandmother and grandfather before the journey is complete.
11. Which of the following sentences illustrates an important difference between Steinbeck's and Guthrie's characters?
- Steinbeck's and Guthrie's characters are primarily farmers.
 - Steinbeck's migration was forced, while the Guthrie farmers chose to leave their land.
 - They look to their destinations with nearly religious enthusiasm, imagining their "promised" land the way the Biblical Israelites envisioned Canaan.
 - none of these
12. The language in the paragraph implies that which of the following will happen to the Oklahomans when they arrive in California?
- They will find a means to practice their religion freely.
 - They will be declared national heroes.
 - They will not find the jobs they were promised.
 - They will make their livings as mechanics rather than as farm laborers.

Bill Clinton's Inaugural Address

(excerpt from the opening)

When George Washington first took the oath I have just sworn to uphold, news traveled slowly across the land by horseback and across the ocean by boat. Now the sights and sounds of this ceremony are broadcast instantaneously to billions around the world. Communications and commerce are global. Investment is mobile. Technology is almost magical, and ambition for a better life is now universal.

We earn our livelihood in America today in peaceful competition with people all across the Earth. Profound and powerful forces are shaking and remaking our world, and the urgent question of our time is whether we can make change our friend and not our enemy. This new world has already enriched the lives of millions of Americans who are able to compete and win in it. But when most people are working harder for less; when others cannot work at all; when the cost of healthcare devastates families and threatens to bankrupt our enterprises, great and small; when the fear of crime robs law-abiding citizens of their freedom; and when millions of poor children cannot even imagine the lives we are calling them to lead, we have not made change our friend.

- 13.** What is the central topic of the speech so far?
- how Americans can keep up with global competition
 - ways in which technology has undermined our economy
 - ways in which technology has improved our lives
 - how change has affected America and our need to adapt
- 14.** By comparing our times with those of George Washington, Bill Clinton demonstrates
- how apparently different, but actually similar, the two eras are.
 - how technology has drastically speeded up communications.
 - that presidential inaugurations receive huge media attention.
 - that television is a much more convincing communications tool than print.
- 15.** Bill Clinton's inaugural address expresses which point of view?
- first-person perspective
 - second-person perspective
 - corporate America's perspective
 - third-person perspective
- 16.** Assuming that Clinton wants to add something about crime being a more serious threat in our time than in George Washington's, which of the following sentences would be most consistent with the tone of the presidential speech?
- If I'd been alive in George's day, I would have enjoyed knowing that my wife and child could walk city streets without being mugged.
 - In George Washington's time, Americans may not have enjoyed as many luxuries, but they could rest in the awareness that their neighborhoods were safe.
 - George could at least count on one thing. He knew that his family was safe from crime.
 - A statistical analysis of the overall growth in crime rates since 1789 would reveal that a significant increase has occurred.

The Crossing
Chapter I: The Blue Wall

(excerpt from the opening of a novel by Winston Churchill)

I was born under the Blue Ridge, and under that side which is blue in the evening light, in a wild land of game and forest and rushing waters. There, on the borders of a creek that runs into the Yadkin River, in a cabin that was chinked with red mud, I came into the world a subject of King George the Third, in that part of his realm known as the province of North Carolina.

The cabin reeked of corn-pone and bacon, and the odor of pelts. It had two shakedown, on one of which I slept under a bearskin. A rough stone chimney was reared outside, and the fireplace was as long as my father was tall. There was a crane in it, and a bake kettle; and over it great buckhorns held my father's rifle when it was not in use. On other horns hung jerked bear's meat and venison hams, and gourds for drinking cups, and bags of seed, and my father's best hunting shirt; also, in a neglected corner, several articles of woman's attire from pegs. These once belonged to my mother. Among them was a gown of silk, of a fine, faded pattern, over which I was wont to speculate. The women at the Cross-Roads, twelve miles away, were dressed in coarse butternut wool and huge sunbonnets. But when I questioned my father on these matters he would give me no answers.

My father was—how shall I say what he was? To this day I can only surmise many things of him. He was a Scotchman born, and I know now that he had a slight Scotch accent. At the time of which I write, my early childhood, he was a frontiersman and hunter. I can see him now, with his hunting shirt and leggins and moccasins; his powder horn, engraved with wondrous scenes; his bullet pouch and tomahawk and hunting knife. He was a tall, lean man with a strange, sad face. And he talked little save when he drank too many "horns," as they were called in that country. These lapses of my father's were a perpetual source of wonder to me—and, I must say, of delight. They occurred only when a passing traveler who hit his fancy chanced that way, or, what was almost as rare, a neighbor. Many a winter night I have lain awake under the skins, listening to a flow of language that held me spellbound, though I understood scarce a word of it.

"Virtuous and vicious every man must be,
Few in the extreme, but all in a degree."

The chance neighbor or traveler was no less struck with wonder. And many the time have I heard the query, at the Cross-Roads and elsewhere, "Whar Alec Trimble got his larnin'?"

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|--|---|
| <p>17. Why did the narrator enjoy it when his father drank too many "horns," or drafts of liquor?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The father spoke brilliantly at those times.b. The boy was then allowed to do as he pleased.c. These were the only times when the father was kind.d. The boy was allowed to ask about his mother. | <p>18. Judging by the sentences surrounding it, the word <i>surmise</i> in the third paragraph most nearly means</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. to form a negative opinion.b. to praise.c. to desire.d. to guess. |
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- 19.** The mention of the dress in the second paragraph is most likely meant to
- show the similarity between its owner and other members of the community.
 - show how warm the climate was.
 - show the dissimilarity between its owner and other members of the community.
 - give us insight into the way most of the women of the region dressed.
- 20.** It can be inferred from the passage that Alec Trimble is
- a traveler.
 - a neighbor.
 - the narrator's father.
 - the narrator.
- 21.** What is the meaning of the lines of verse quoted in the passage?
- People who pretend to be virtuous are actually vicious.
 - Moderate amounts of virtuousness and viciousness are present in all people.
 - Virtuous people cannot also be vicious.
 - Whether people are virtuous or vicious depends on the difficulty of their circumstances.
- 22.** Which of the following adjectives best describes the region in which the cabin is located?
- remote
 - urban
 - agricultural
 - flat
- 23.** The author most likely uses dialect when quoting the question, "Whar Alec Trimble got his larnin'?" in order to
- show disapproval of the father's behavior.
 - show how people talked down to the narrator.
 - show the speakers' lack of education.
 - mimic the way the father talked.

(excerpt from a letter to a pet-sitter)

Dear Lee,

As I told you, I'll be gone until Wednesday morning. Thank you so much for taking on my "children" while I'm away. Like real children, they can be kind of irritating sometimes, but I'm going to enjoy myself so much more knowing they're getting some kind human attention. Remember that Regina (the "queen" in Latin, and she acts like one) is teething. If you don't watch her, she'll chew anything, including her sister, the cat. There are plenty of chew toys around the house. Whenever she starts gnawing on anything illegal, just divert her with one of those. She generally settles right down to a good hour-long chew. Then you'll see her wandering around whimpering with the remains of the toy in her mouth. She gets really frustrated because what she wants is to bury the thing. She'll try to dig a hole between the cushions of the couch. Finding that unsatisfactory, she'll wander some more, discontent, until you solve her problem for her. I usually show her the laundry basket, moving a few clothes so she can bury her toy beneath them. I do sound like a parent, don't I? You have to understand, my own son is practically grown up.

Regina's food is the Puppy Chow in the utility room, where the other pet food is stored. Give her a bowl once in the morning and once in the evening. No more than that, no matter how much she begs. Beagles are notorious overeaters, according to her breeder, and I don't want her to lose her girlish figure. She can share water with Rex (the King), but be sure it's changed daily. She needs to go out several times a day, especially last thing at night and first thing in the morning. Let her stay out for about ten minutes each time, so she can do *all* her business. She also needs a walk in the afternoon, after which it's important to romp with her for awhile in the yard. The game she loves most is fetch, but be sure to make her drop the ball. She'd rather play tug of war with it. Tell her, "Sit!" Then, when she does, say, "Drop it!" Be sure to tell her "good girl," and then throw the ball for her. I hope you'll enjoy these sessions as much as I do.

Now, for the other two, Rex and Paws... (*letter continues*)

- 24.** Which effect is most likely to occur if the pet sitter does not supervise Regina and encourage her to play with her chew toys?
- a. Regina will get frustrated or damage her owner's personal property.
 - b. Regina will overeat and gain weight.
 - c. Regina will fight with her sister.
 - d. Regina will find something else to do.
- 25.** If the pet-sitter is a businesslike professional who watches people's pets for a living, she or he would likely prefer
- a. more first-person revelations about the owner.
 - b. fewer first-person revelations about the owner.
 - c. more praise for agreeing to watch the animals.
 - d. greater detail on the animals' cute behavior.
- 26.** The author uses the word *children* to describe his or her pets because
- a. the author believes her pets possess childlike qualities.
 - b. the author has never had children and the pets are substitutes for the children she never had.
 - c. she dresses them in clothing and indulges them with special foods.
 - d. her beagle has a girlish figure and the author calls her a "good girl."
- 27.** The information in the note is sufficient to determine that there are three animals. They are
- a. two cats and a dog.
 - b. three dogs.
 - c. a dog, a cat, and an unspecified animal.
 - d. a cat, a dog, and a parrot.

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- 28.** Given that there are three animals to feed, which of the following arrangements of the feeding instructions would be most efficient and easiest to follow?
- all given in one list, chronologically from morning to night
 - provided separately as they are for Regina, within separate passages on each animal
 - given in the order of quantities needed, the most to the least
 - placed in the middle of the letter, where they would be least likely to be overlooked

- 29.** From the context of the note, it is most likely that the name Rex is
- Spanish.
 - English.
 - French.
 - Latin.
- 30.** If the sitter is to follow the owner's directions in playing fetch with Regina, at what point will he or she will tell Regina "good girl"?
- every time Regina goes after the ball
 - after Regina finds the ball
 - when Regina brings the ball back
 - after Regina drops the ball

(excerpt from a pro-voting essay)

Voting is the privilege for which wars have been fought, protests have been organized, and editorials have been written. "No taxation without representation" was a battle cry of the American Revolution. Women struggled for suffrage, as did all minorities. Eighteen-year-olds clamored for the right to vote, saying that if they were old enough to go to war, they should be allowed to vote. Yet Americans have a deplorable voting history.

Interviewing people about their voting habits is revealing. There are individuals who state that they have never voted. Often, they claim that their individual vote doesn't matter. Some people blame their absence from the voting booth on the fact that they do not know enough about the issues. In a democracy, we can express our opinions to our elected leaders, but more than half of us sometimes avoid choosing the people who make the policies that affect our lives.

- 31.** This argument relies primarily on which of the following techniques to make its points?
- emotional assertions
 - researched facts in support of an assertion
 - emotional appeals to voters
 - emotional appeals to nonvoters
- 32.** Which of the following sentences best summarizes the main idea of the passage?
- Americans are too lazy to vote.
 - Women and minorities fought for their right to vote.
 - Americans do not take voting seriously enough.
 - Americans do not think that elected officials take their opinions seriously.
- 33.** By choosing the word *clamored*, the author implies that
- 18-year-olds are generally enthusiastic.
 - voting was not a serious concern to 18-year-olds.
 - 18-year-olds felt strongly that they should be allowed to vote.
 - 18-year-olds do not handle themselves in a mature manner.

The Unconventional Lives of Famous Writers

Throughout the centuries, various writers have contributed greatly to the literary treasure trove of books lining the shelves of today's libraries. In addition to writing interesting material, many famous writers, such as Edgar Allan Poe, were larger-than-life characters with personal histories that are as interesting to read as the stories they wrote. Poe's rocky life included expulsion from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1831 and an ongoing battle with alcohol. Yet, despite heavy gambling debts, poor health, and chronic unemployment, Poe managed to produce a body of popular works, including "The Raven" and "The Murders in the Rue Morgue."

Herman Melville, author of *Moby Dick*, once lived among the cannibals in the Marquesas Islands and wrote exotic tales inspired by his years of service in the U.S. Navy. Dublin-born Oscar Wilde was noted for his charismatic personality, his outrageous lifestyle, and creating witty catchphrases such as, "Nothing succeeds like excess." D. H. Lawrence wrote scandalous novels that were often censored, and Anne Rice led a double life writing bestselling vampire novels under her real name and using the nom de plume "A. N. Roquelaure" for the lowbrow erotica novels she penned on the side. Nonconformist author and naturalist Henry David Thoreau once fled to the woods and generated enough interesting material to fill his noted book *Walden*.

Thoreau wrote on the issue of passive resistance protest in his essay "Civil Disobedience" and served time in jail for withholding tax payments in protest of the United States government's policy towards slavery. American short story writer O. Henry's colorful life was marred by tragic events, such as being accused and sentenced for allegedly stealing money from an Austin, Texas bank. Despite his success selling his short stories, O. Henry struggled financially and was nearly bankrupt when he died.

As diverse as these famous authors' backgrounds were, they all led unconventional lives while writing great literary works that will endure throughout the ages. The next time you read an interesting book, consider learning more about the author by reading his or her biography so you can learn about the unique life experiences that shaped his or her writing.

34. Select the word that best defines *expulsion*.

- a. admittance
- b. entry
- c. ejection
- d. inclusion

35. Based on the passage, select the best choice regarding the statement: "Edgar Allan Poe was a commercially popular author."

- a. The statement is false.
- b. The statement is an opinion.
- c. The statement is factual.
- d. The statement is fictional.

36. What can you infer from the following sentence?

"D. H. Lawrence wrote scandalous novels that were often censored, and Anne Rice led a double life writing bestselling novels under her real name and using the nom de plume 'A. N. Roquelaure' for the lowbrow erotica novels she penned on the side."

- a. D. H. Lawrence and Anne Rice had similar writing styles.
- b. Anne Rice used a pen name because her novels were more scandalous than D. H. Lawrence's novels.
- c. Anne Rice used different names when she wrote in different genres.
- d. none of the above

- 37.** Which statement is false?
- a. Henry David Thoreau was passionately opposed to slavery.
 - b. Anne Rice used a pen name to disguise her true identity.
 - c. Herman Melville experimented with cannibalism during his naval service.
 - d. Edgar Allan Poe was an alcoholic.

- 38.** Select the word that best defines *marred*.
- a. improved
 - b. soaked
 - c. tarnished
 - d. ended
- 39.** The main idea of this story is
- a. Many famous writers lived nontraditional lives.
 - b. Writers are troublemakers.
 - c. All writers lead interesting lives.
 - d. Writers' biographies are inspirational.

(excerpt from "First," a short story)

First, you ought to know that I'm "only" 14. My mother points this out frequently. I can make decisions for myself when I'm old enough to vote, she says. Second, I should tell you that she's right—I'm not always responsible. I sometimes take the prize for a grade-A dork. Last weekend, for instance, when I was staying at Dad's, I decided it was time I learned to drive. It was Sunday morning, 7 A.M. to be exact, and I hadn't slept well, thinking about this argument I'll be telling you about in a minute. Nobody was up yet in the neighborhood, and I thought there would be no harm in backing the car out of the garage and cruising around the block. But Dad has a clutch car, and the "R" on the shift handle was up on the left side, awful close to first gear, and I guess you can guess the rest.

Dad's always been understanding. He didn't say, like Mom would, "Okay, little Miss Know-It-All, you can just spend the rest of the year paying this off." He worried about what might have happened to *me*—to *me*, you see, and that made me feel more guilty than anything. Overall, I just think he'd be a better number-one caregiver, if you get my drift. Of course I can't say things like that to Mom.

To her, I have to say, "But Mom, Dad's place is closer to school. I could ride my bike."

She replies, "Jennifer Lynn, you don't own a bike, because you left it in the yard and it was stolen, and you haven't got the perseverance it takes to do a little work and earn the money to replace it."

- 40.** Which description best explains the structure of the story so far?
- a. chronological, according to what happens first, second, and so on
 - b. reverse chronological order, with the most recent events recorded first
 - c. intentionally confused order, incorporating flashbacks to previous events
 - d. according to importance, with the most significant details related first
- 41.** What device does the author use to illustrate the narrator's feelings about her mother and father?
- a. vivid and specific visual detail
 - b. rhetorical questions, which make a point but don't invite a direct answer
 - c. metaphors and other figurative language
 - d. contrast between the parents' typical reactions

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- 42.** The narrator attributes her inability to sleep when staying at her father's house to
- thinking about a disagreement with someone.
 - the uncomfortable quiet of an early Sunday morning.
 - the sore throat she had from shouting so much.
 - her accident with the car.
- 43.** The first-person point of view in this story
- obscures how the narrator's mind works.
 - illustrates the thoughts and personality of the narrator.
 - makes the narrator seem distant and rigid.
 - gives us direct access to the minds of all the characters.
- 44.** When the narrator says she sometimes "take[s] the prize for a grade-A dork," the word choice is intended to indicate
- that she doesn't know proper English.
 - her age and culture.
 - that she is unable to judge her own actions.
 - that she thinks she's better than most others who might be termed "dorks."
- 45.** Jennifer Lynn's mother and father differ because
- they have very different temperaments.
 - her mother doesn't care about Jennifer Lynn as much as her father does.
 - she dislikes her mother and thinks her father is a better parent.
 - none of the above
- 46.** Overall, this narrator's tone is best described as
- emotional and familiar.
 - stuck up and superior.
 - argumentative and tactless.
 - pleasant and reassuring.
- 47.** In choosing to use the bike argument with her mother, the narrator is trying to appeal to her mother's
- compassion over her lost bike.
 - disregard for material objects.
 - laziness.
 - reason.
- 48.** The main argument the narrator has been having with her mother is over whether she should
- be allowed to date.
 - live with her mother or father.
 - be allowed to drive a car.
 - pay for things she breaks.
- 49.** It appears that the mother has alienated her daughter by
- being too busy to give her the attention she needs.
 - having divorced her father.
 - insisting too much on reasonableness.
 - valuing things over people and feelings.
- 50.** What most likely happened with the car?
- The narrator mistook first gear for reverse and ran into the garage wall.
 - The narrator stole it from her father and drove it over to her mother's.
 - The father left it in gear, and when the narrator started it, it leapt forward into the wall.
 - The narrator taught herself to drive in order to prove her mother wrong.

Practice 2

The posttest consists of a series of reading passages with questions that follow to test your comprehension.

Grunge Music and American Popular Culture

The late 1980s found the landscape of popular music in America dominated by a distinctive style of rock and roll known as *glam rock* or *hair metal*—so called because of the over-styled hair, makeup, and wardrobe worn by the genre’s ostentatious rockers. Bands like Poison, Whitesnake, and Mötley Crüe popularized glam rock with their power ballads and flashy style, but the product had worn thin by the early 1990s. Just as superficial as the 80s, glam rockers were shallow, short on substance, and musically inferior.

In 1991, a Seattle-based band called Nirvana shocked the corporate music industry with the release of its debut single, “Smells Like Teen Spirit,” which quickly became a huge hit all over the world. Nirvana’s distorted, guitar-laden sound and thought-provoking lyrics were the antithesis of glam rock, and the youth of America were quick to pledge their allegiance to the brand-new movement known as *grunge*.

Grunge actually got its start in the Pacific Northwest during the mid-1980s. Nirvana had simply mainstreamed a sound and culture that got its start years before with bands like Mudhoney, Soundgarden, and Green River. Grunge rockers derived their fashion sense from the youth culture of the Pacific Northwest: a melding of punk rock style and outdoors clothing like flannels, heavy boots, worn out jeans, and corduroys. At the height of the movement’s popularity, when other Seattle bands like Pearl Jam and Alice in Chains were all the rage, the trappings of grunge were working their way to the height of American fashion. Like the music, the teenagers were fast to embrace the grunge fashion because it represented defiance against corporate America and shallow pop culture.

The popularity of grunge music was ephemeral; by the mid- to late-1990s, its influence upon American culture had all but disappeared, and most of its recognizable bands were nowhere to be seen on the charts. The heavy sound and themes of grunge were replaced on the radio waves by boy bands like the Backstreet Boys, and the bubblegum pop of Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera.

There are many reasons why the Seattle sound faded out of the mainstream as quickly as it rocketed to prominence, but the most glaring reason lies at the defiant, anti-establishment heart of the grunge movement itself. It is very hard to buck the trend when you are the one setting it, and many of the grunge bands were never comfortable with the fame that was thrust upon them. Ultimately, the simple fact that many grunge bands were so against mainstream rock stardom eventually took the movement back to where it started: underground. The fickle American mainstream public, as quick as they were to hop on to the grunge bandwagon, were just as quick to hop off and move on to something else.

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1. The best word to describe grunge music is
 - a. flashy.
 - b. rebellious.
 - c. fickle.
 - d. antithetical.
 2. Teenagers embraced grunge fashion because
 - a. they were tired of Glam Rock fashion.
 - b. it defied corporate America and the shallowness of pop culture.
 - c. grunge rockers told them to embrace it.
 - d. it outraged their parents.
 3. By stating that “glam rockers were shallow, short on substance, and musically inferior,” this author is
 - a. using a time-honored form of reporting that dignifies his or her position.
 - b. resorting to a subjective, emotional assertion that is not an effective way to build an argument.
 - c. making an objective, logical assertion based on facts.
 - d. merely quoting what others say about glam rock and detaching herself or himself from the opinion.
 4. This writer is trying to document
 - a. the popularity of glam rock.
 - b. Nirvana’s role in popularizing grunge music.
 - c. the rise and fall of grunge music.
 - d. the reasons young people responded so enthusiastically to grunge music.
 5. According to this passage, what is the difference between glam rock and grunge?
 - a. Glam rock is flashier and superficial, while grunge is thought-provoking and anti-establishment.
 - b. Glam rock appeals to teenagers, while grunge appeals to adults.
 - c. Glam rock faded quickly, while grunge is still prominent.
 - d. Glam rock was more commercially successful than grunge.
 6. The tone of the sentence, “The fickle American mainstream public, as quick as they were to hop on to the grunge bandwagon, were just as quick to hop off and move on to something else” can be best described as
 - a. authoritative.
 - b. gloomy.
 - c. cynical.
 - d. ironic.
 7. Which of the following bands is not associated with grunge?
 - a. Nirvana
 - b. Mudhoney
 - c. Pearl Jam
 - d. Poison

Big Apple Jewish Cuisine

No trip to New York City is complete until you've visited one of New York's famed Jewish food stores or delicatessens to nosh on treats of European and Central European Jewish origin: bagels and lox, Romanian pastrami on rye, chopped liver, cheesecake, or matzoh ball soup. Many classic Jewish delis, such as Reuben's, have now closed their doors, but the famous Katz's Delicatessen and the Second Avenue Deli still offer traditional Jewish deli specialty foods to a grateful clientele of native New Yorkers and international tourists.

If you're in the mood for an appetizing Jewish treat, visit Barney Greengrass's The Sturgeon King, or Russ & Daughters for smoked or pickled fish, kippered salmon, whitefish, lox, and herring in sour cream sauce. If you're in the mood for a frothy, thirst-quenching beverage, visit the East Village's Chocolate Bar for a delicious chocolate egg cream. The egg cream is a classic New York treat that was concocted by Jewish candy store owner Louis Auster in Brooklyn, New York, in 1890.

Regardless of your personal taste, there's a Jewish specialty food that is perfect for you. The next time you visit New York City, be sure to indulge in a puffy, hot knish or a warm and tasty brisket sandwich for lunch. If you're really hungry, go for the gold! Sink your teeth into a towering, overstuffed corned beef, chopped liver, and coleslaw sandwich at Katz's Deli. Are you hungry yet?

- 8.** What is the main topic of this article?
- a. ethnic sandwiches
 - b. Jewish specialty food in New York
 - c. food in the Big Apple
 - d. New York taste sensations
- 9.** This article can best be described as
- a. nonfiction.
 - b. personal.
 - c. fictional.
 - d. historical.
- 10.** What is the tone of this article?
- a. humorous
 - b. sophisticated
 - c. cold
 - d. enticing
- 11.** What conclusion can you draw from this article?
- a. Certain food establishments in New York serve a variety of delicious Jewish deli treats.
 - b. New Yorkers eat only Jewish deli food.
 - c. New York offers different ethnic foods.
 - d. The egg cream is making a major comeback.
- 12.** The Chocolate Bar is a classic New York Jewish deli.
- a. true
 - b. false
- 13.** Egg creams are a European delicacy.
- a. true
 - b. false
- 14.** A *knish* is
- a. a meatball.
 - b. a type of beverage.
 - c. European fish.
 - d. a filled and fried ball of dough.
- 15.** "New York has the best Jewish cuisine." This statement is
- a. a fact.
 - b. an opinion.

“The Weekly Visit”
(short story excerpt)

The requisite visit happened typically on sunny Saturdays, when my child spirits were at their highest and could be most diminished by the cramped interior of her house. My mother, accustomed to the bright, spacious farmhouse that was once Grandma’s, seemed no less susceptible to the gloom. She would set her jaw as Grandma described the many ailments attendant on age and would check her watch—an hour being the minimum she expected herself to withstand. Her barely contained impatience and my grandmother’s crippling age radiated out around me. We were the women of the Carlson clan, each throbbing with agitation, like concentric, blinking circles on a radar screen.

I would sit at the white and red metal table with the pull-out leaves and built-in silverware drawer, cracking almonds. This was the one good thing at Grandma’s house, the almonds, which she kept in a green Depression glass bowl. I would lift the lid carefully and try to set it down on the metal table quietly, then attempt to crack the nuts without scattering the shell crumbs. It was not good to draw attention to myself at Grandma Carlson’s. Sounding angry, she would call to me in her croupy drawl. When I failed to understand her, she would reach out to me with her palsied, slick, wrinkled hand and shout, “Here!” She would be offering some of her horehound candy, which tasted like a cross between butterscotch and bitter sticks.

There was this lamentable air in the dim house with its itchy mohair furniture and its dark colors, an awareness—Grandma’s—underlying the mentholatum, that her age scared her grandkids. I would yearn during the dutiful visit to get outside into the yard, where Grandma had transplanted a few flowers when she moved from the farm. But even the yard, with its overgrown hedges and rusted metal lawn chairs, seemed dreary. When I came back inside, light and air bursting in with me, Grandma, her hair up in a gray bun, would rock a little and smile. I would lean then against my mother’s chair, Grandma’s fond eyes peering at me, and whisper out of the corner of my mouth, “Mom, can we go?”

- 16.** From the overall context of the passage, it is most likely that the word *requisite* means
- a. essential.
 - b. recreational.
 - c. happy.
 - d. weekly.

- 17.** Which of the following does the radar screen image underscore?
- a. the narrator’s absorption in gadgets and the modern world
 - b. the narrator’s daydreaming nature
 - c. the narrator’s uneasy sense of her place in the same lineage as her mother and grandmother
 - d. all of the above

- 18.** In revising this story, the author is considering taking out the reference to “butterscotch and bitter sticks” and instead describing the candy as “bitter with a sweet under-taste.” Which is better—the original or this alternative description—and why?
- a. the original, because it leaves the actual taste up to the reader’s imagination
 - b. the original, because it is more vivid and exact
 - c. the alternative, because it is more brief and to the point
 - d. the alternative, because it is more vivid and exact

19. Assume this piece is fiction and could have been written from any point of view. What would a switch to third person achieve?

- a. Readers would be somewhat distanced from the narrator’s feelings.
- b. The author would have more latitude to express the narrator’s feelings.
- c. Readers would be more likely to identify with the feelings expressed.
- d. The grandmother’s feelings would become more apparent.

20. In a previous version of this story, the author described the garden as having “lush hedges and quaint metal chairs.” Why is it more effective to describe the hedges as “overgrown” and the chairs as “rusted”?

- a. These words add to the sense of age lingering over the place.
- b. These words have a negative connotation, which mirrors the girl’s feelings about the visits.
- c. These words make the garden seem like less of an escape than the girl had hoped for.
- d. all of the above

21. Which of the following accurately reflects the comparative attitudes of the characters in this excerpt?

- a. The attitudes of the mother and the daughter are similar.
- b. The attitudes of the grandmother and the mother are similar.
- c. The attitudes of the grandmother and the granddaughter are similar.
- d. The attitudes of the mother and the daughter are dissimilar.

“The Wolf and the Crane”

A wolf who had a bone stuck in his throat hired a crane, for a large sum, to put her head into his mouth and draw out the bone. When the crane had extracted the bone and demanded the promised payment, the wolf, grinning and grinding his teeth, exclaimed, “Why, you have surely already had a sufficient recompense, in having been permitted to draw out your head in safety from the mouth and jaws of a wolf.”

22. Following is a list of morals from this and other Aesop’s fables. Which one is the most likely companion to this fable?

- a. Self-help is the best help.
- b. The loiterer often blames delay on his more active friend.
- c. The greatest kindness will not bind the ungrateful.
- d. In serving the wicked, expect no reward.

Fly-Rights—A Consumer Guide to Air Travel

(excerpt)

If your reservations are booked far enough ahead of time, the airline may offer to mail your tickets to you. However, if you don't receive the tickets and the airline's records show that they mailed them, you may have to go through cumbersome lost-ticket procedures. It is safer to check the telephone directory for a conveniently located travel agency or airline ticket office and buy your tickets there.

As soon as you receive your ticket, make sure all the information on it is correct, especially the airports (if any of the cities have more than one) and the flight dates. Have any necessary corrections made immediately.

It's a good idea to reconfirm your reservations before you start your trip; flight schedules sometimes change. On international trips, most airlines require that you reconfirm your onward or return reservations at least 72 hours before each flight. If you don't, your reservations may be canceled.

Check your tickets as you board each flight to ensure that only the correct coupon has been removed by the airline agent.

- 23.** Numbering the paragraphs 1 through 4 as they now appear, choose the option that places them in chronological order.
- 2, 3, 4, 1
 - 3, 1, 2, 4
 - 3, 2, 1, 4
 - 1, 2, 3, 4
- 24.** Which type of reader would benefit the most from reading this article?
- an experienced business traveler
 - a travel agent
 - a first-time airline passenger
 - a person who is trying to overcome a fear of flying
- 25.** As the passage appears in paragraph 1, why is it suggested that you buy your tickets from a “conveniently located” agency or office?
- because you can stop on your way to the airport to pick up your tickets
 - because you can pick your tickets up rather than relying on the mail
 - because the airlines themselves often make mistakes in issuing tickets
 - because it is good to support local businesses
- 26.** Which is a possible result of not following the advice offered in the first sentence of paragraph 2?
- You might fly into the right city, but the wrong airport.
 - You might miss your flight, because the date was improperly recorded.
 - You might not be allowed to board your flight because the name on the ticket doesn't match that on your ID.
 - Any of the above could happen as a result of not following the advice.

Bear Story

Campers Gene and Marie Marsden took pride in being good citizens when in the wild. While driving the 300 miles from their home in Colorado to the Green River Lakes area of the Wind River Mountains in Wyoming, they instructed their children in the protocol they'd learned in the bear safety pamphlet put out by the Bridger-Teton Forest Service. The number-one rule was "Don't feed the bears!"—whether intentionally or not. Warning the kids not to go anywhere near a bear, the Marsdens had no problem with the intentional part, but the unintentional part was not as easy to avoid as they thought.

Mr. and Mrs. Marsden did their best to keep a tidy camp. While the bear manual had said to hang all food at least ten feet off the ground and four feet out from the trunk of a tree, they did what all the other people in the nearby public campground were doing and locked their food in their little utility trailer at night. Afraid that the scent of the bait might attract a bear, they even locked up Marie's fishing pole. It was always dark when they went to bed, but they perused the campsite with flashlights, making sure nothing was left out. Taking the recommended precaution of sleeping a hundred yards from where they cooked their food, they kept the car near their tents, unhitched from the trailer, which they left up at the other camp. Before going to bed each night, all of the Marsdens took off the clothes they had worn during the day while eating, replacing them with pajamas that they used only for sleeping. They were also careful to lock the dirty laundry in the trailer. As the pamphlet advised, they took no snacks into their tents.

Gene says he now regrets not having taken their dog into the tent at night, but they liked having him on guard. Small animals would often come sniffing around, and the dog would chase them back into the thickets, then return to the hollow he'd dug for himself in front of the children's tent. But on the night of the encounter, Spike would not stop barking, and Marie Marsden knew he must be sounding the alarm on something more dangerous and dauntless than a raccoon or squirrel. When she unzipped the tent and shined her flashlight in the direction of the cooking area, she saw Spike attempting to hold a young grizzly bear at bay.

They all managed to pile into the car, and with the kids sitting atop stuffed sacks full of clothes and gear, they drove quickly down the trail, calling out the window to Spike and abandoning the cargo trailer to whatever fate the bear might have in store for it. Uncertain whether the bear was following, one of the children opened a door and loaded Spike up on the run. They drove to a pay phone 20 miles away and called a Fish and Game Department ranger, who identified the bear by the white ruff the Marsdens had seen around his neck. The authorities informed the Marsdens that the bear was a young, recently weaned male that they'd been keeping an eye on.

The next morning, the Marsdens heard helicopters circling over the mountain above them and wondered if it might have something to do with the bear. After spending the night in the public campground, they drove back to their site. Wandering the area in search of clues, Marie came to a halt below the tallest spruce. She slapped her head and shouted, "Oh no!"

"What is it?" Gene asked.

Marie pointed at the ground where Spike's dog food bowl lay upside down.

A week after their return home, the Marsdens read the headline in their local paper. "Bear Euthanized in Wind Rivers." According to the article, the Fish and Game Department had shot the young bear because, having been rewarded for invading a human campsite, it would likely do so again.

The Marsdens knew they had been lucky in the encounter, yet much to their shame and sadness, they also knew that the bear had not.

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- 27.** Which of the following statements is false?
- The Marsdens like to camp.
 - The Marsdens' dog chases squirrels and barks too much.
 - The Marsdens are a considerate and compassionate married couple.
 - The Marsdens' dog cornered a young grizzly.
- 28.** Who does the author imply is mostly to blame in the bear's death?
- the Marsdens, because they were not careful enough
 - the bear, because he invaded a human camp
 - the Fish and Game authorities, because of poor communication with campers
 - the Forest Service, for putting out incomplete information
- 29.** In paragraph 2, it can be determined from the context that the word *perused* means
- neglected.
 - cleaned.
 - studied.
 - hid.
- 30.** In paragraph 3, it can be determined from the context that the word *dauntless* means
- stupid.
 - fearless.
 - clumsy.
 - spineless.
- 31.** This story is arranged
- like a news story, with the most important event told first.
 - in reverse chronological order, with the last event first.
 - in standard chronological order, with events told in the order they occurred.
 - in mixed, random order.
- 32.** What was the "reward" referred to in the next to last paragraph?
- the bear seeing the Marsdens run from him
 - the bear receiving no punishment for disturbing humans
 - the bear being able to stand off Spike
 - the bear getting the dog food
- 33.** The tone and style of this piece make it appropriate for which of the following types of publications?
- a scientific report on human-bear interaction
 - a pamphlet on bear safety such as the one the Marsdens read
 - a statistical study on bear fatalities in the Western mountains
 - a human interest article in the Sunday magazine of a newspaper

A Plains Childhood

When I think of my family's history on the land, I experience a pang of regret. Unlike much of the arid West, where the land has gone virtually unchanged for centuries, my place of origin, western Kansas, has been torn up by agriculture. The flat plains, excellent soil, and sparse but just adequate rainfall permitted farming; therefore farming prevailed, and a good 90% of the original sod prairie is gone. The consequence, in human terms, is that our relationship to our place has always felt primarily mercantile. We used the land and denied, or held at bay, its effect on us. Yet from my earliest childhood, when most of the Kansas prairie was still intact, I've known that the land also had a romantic quality. I've felt moved by the expanse of it, enthralled by its size. I take pride in my identity as a plains daughter.

- 34.** Which of the following is the most accurate restatement of the author's position?
- a. The presence of people has enriched the plains habitat.
 - b. Farming has improved the soil of the plains.
 - c. Farming has eroded the natural beauty of the plains.
 - d. Farming has chemically polluted the plains.
- 35.** The argument in this paragraph is based primarily on
- a. facts of history and statistical studies.
 - b. facts derived from the author's research.
 - c. feelings the author has picked up from personal experience.
 - d. ideas passed down to the author by ancestors.
- 36.** From context, it can be determined that the word *mercantile* has something to do with
- a. practicality.
 - b. danger.
 - c. America.
 - d. spirituality.

Maine's Glacial Past

The coast of the State of Maine is one of the most irregular in the world. A straight line running from the southernmost coastal city to the northernmost coastal city would measure about 225 miles. If you followed the coastline between these points, you would travel more than ten times as far. This irregularity is the result of what is called a drowned coastline. The term comes from the glacial activity of the Ice Age. At that time, the whole area that is now Maine was part of a mountain range that towered above the sea. As the glacier descended, however, it expended enormous force on those mountains, and they sank into the sea.

As the mountains sank, ocean water charged over the lowest parts of the remaining land, forming a series of twisting inlets and lagoons of contorted grottos and nooks. The highest parts of the former mountain range, nearest the shore, remained as islands. Mt. Desert Island was one of the most famous of all the islands left behind by the glacier. Marine fossils found here were 225 feet above sea level indicating the level of the shoreline prior to the glacier.

The 2,500-mile-long rocky and jagged coastline of Maine keeps watch over nearly 2,000 islands. Many of these islands are tiny and uninhabited, but many are home to thriving communities. Mt. Desert Island is one of the largest, most beautiful of the Maine coast islands. Measuring 16 miles by 12 miles, Mt. Desert was very nearly formed as two distinct islands. It is split almost in half by Somes Sound, a very deep and very narrow stretch of water seven miles long.

For years, Mt. Desert Island, particularly its major settlement, Bar Harbor, afforded summer homes for the wealthy. Recently, though, Bar Harbor has become a burgeoning arts community as well. But the best part of the island is the unspoiled forest land known as Acadia National Park. Since the island sits on the boundary line between the temperate and subarctic zones, the island supports the flora and fauna of both zones as well as beach, inland, and alpine plants. It also lies in a major bird migration lane and is a resting spot for many birds.

The establishment of Acadia National Park in 1916 means that this natural monument will be preserved and that it will be available to all people, not just the wealthy. Visitors to Acadia may receive nature instruction from the park naturalists as well as enjoy camping, hiking, cycling, and boating. Or they may choose to spend time at the archeological museum learning about the Stone Age inhabitants of the island.

The best view on Mt. Desert Island is from the top of Cadillac Mountain. This mountain rises 1,532 feet, making it the highest mountain on the Atlantic seaboard. From the summit, you can gaze back toward the mainland or out over the Atlantic Ocean and contemplate the beauty created by a retreating glacier.

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- 37.** Which of the following lists of topics best outlines the information in the selection?
- a.** — Ice-Age glacial activity
 - The Islands of Casco Bay
 - Formation of Cadillac Mountain
 - Summer residents of Mt. Desert Island
 - b.** — Formation of a drowned coastline
 - The topography of Mt. Desert Island
 - The environment of Mt. Desert Island
 - Tourist attractions on Mt. Desert Island
 - c.** — Mapping the Maine coastline
 - The arts community at Bar Harbor
 - History of the National Park system
 - Climbing Cadillac Mountain
 - d.** — The effect of glaciers on small islands
 - Stone-Age dwellers on Mt. Desert Island
 - The importance of biodiversity
 - Hiking in Acadia National Park
- 38.** Which of the following statements best expresses the main idea of paragraph 4 of the selection?
- a.** The wealthy residents of Mt. Desert Island selfishly kept it to themselves.
 - b.** Acadia National Park is one of the smallest of the national parks.
 - c.** On Mt. Desert Island, there is great tension between the year-round residents and the summer tourists.
 - d.** Due to its location and environment, Mt. Desert Island supports an incredibly diverse animal and plant life.
- 39.** According to the selection, the large number of small islands along the coast of Maine are the result of
- a.** glaciers forcing a mountain range into the sea.
 - b.** Maine’s location between the temperate and subarctic zones.
 - c.** the irregularity of the Maine coast.
 - d.** the need for summer communities for wealthy tourists and artists.
- 40.** The content of paragraph 5 indicates that the writer believes that
- a.** the continued existence of national parks is threatened by budget cuts.
 - b.** the best way to preserve the environment on Mt. Desert Island is to limit the number of visitors.
 - c.** national parks allow large numbers of people to visit and learn about interesting wilderness areas.
 - d.** Mt. Desert Island is the most interesting tourist attraction in Maine.
- 41.** According to the selection, the coast of Maine is
- a.** 2,500 miles long.
 - b.** 3,500 miles long.
 - c.** 225 miles long.
 - d.** 235 miles long.
- 42.** What is the meaning of the underlined phrase flora and fauna in paragraph 4 of this passage?
- a.** insects and plants
 - b.** plants and animals
 - c.** deer and coyote
 - d.** birds and beaches

Immune Functions

The immune system is equal in complexity to the combined intricacies of the brain and nervous system. The success of the immune system in defending the body relies on a dynamic regulatory communications network consisting of millions and millions of cells. Organized into sets and subsets, these cells pass information back and forth like clouds of bees swarming around a hive. The result is a sensitive system of checks and balances that produces an immune response that is prompt, appropriate, effective, and self-limiting.

At the heart of the immune system is the ability to distinguish between self and nonself. When immune defenders encounter cells or organisms carrying foreign or nonself molecules, the immune troops move quickly to eliminate the intruders. Virtually every body cell carries distinctive molecules that identify it as self. The body's immune defenses do not normally attack tissues that carry a self-marker. Rather, immune cells and other body cells coexist peaceably in a state known as self-tolerance. When a normally functioning immune system attacks a nonself molecule, the system has the ability to “remember” the specifics of the foreign body. Upon subsequent encounters with the same species of molecules, the immune system reacts accordingly. With the possible exception of antibodies passed during lactation, this so called immune system memory is not inherited. Despite the occurrence of a virus in your family, your immune system must “learn” from experience with the many millions of distinctive nonself molecules in the sea of microbes in which we live. Learning entails producing the appropriate molecules and cells to match up with and counteract each nonself invader.

Any substance capable of triggering an immune response is called an antigen. Antigens are not to be confused with allergens, which are most often harmless substances (such as ragweed pollen or cat hair) that provoke the immune system to set off the inappropriate and harmful response known as allergy. An antigen can be a virus, a bacterium, a fungus, a parasite, or even a portion or product of one of these organisms. Tissues or cells from another individual (except an identical twin, whose cells carry identical self-markers) also act as antigens; because the immune system recognizes transplanted tissues as foreign, it rejects them. The body will even reject nourishing proteins unless they are first broken down by the digestive system into their primary, nonantigenic building blocks. An antigen announces its foreignness by means of intricate and characteristic shapes called epitopes, which protrude from its surface. Most antigens, even the simplest microbes, carry several different kinds of epitopes on their surface; some may even carry several hundred. Some epitopes will be more effective than others at stimulating an immune response. Only in abnormal situations does the immune system wrongly identify self as nonself and execute a misdirected immune attack. The result can be a so-called autoimmune disease such as rheumatoid arthritis or systemic lupus erythematosus. The painful side effects of these diseases are caused by a person's immune system actually attacking itself.

- 43.** What is the analogy used to describe the communications network among the cells in the immune system?
- the immune system's memory
 - immune troops eliminating intruders
 - bees swarming around a hive
 - a sea of microbes

- 44.** The immune cells and other cells in the body coexist peaceably in a state known as
- equilibrium.
 - self-tolerance.
 - harmony.
 - tolerance.

-
- 45.** What is the specific term for the substance capable of triggering an inappropriate or harmful immune response to a harmless substance such as ragweed pollen?
- antigen
 - microbe
 - allergen
 - autoimmune disease
- 46.** How do the cells in the immune system recognize an antigen as “foreign” or “nonself?”
- through an allergic response
 - through blood type
 - through fine hairs protruding from the antigen surface
 - through characteristic shapes on the antigen surface
- 47.** After you have had the chicken pox, your immune system will be able to do all of the following EXCEPT
- prevent your offspring from infection by the chicken pox virus.
 - distinguish between your body cells and that of the chicken pox virus.
 - “remember” previous experiences with the chicken pox virus.
 - match up and counteract nonself molecules in the form of the chicken pox virus.
- 48.** Which of the following best expresses the main idea of this passage?
- An antigen is any substance that triggers an immune response.
 - The basic function of the immune system is to distinguish between self and nonself.
 - One of the immune system’s primary functions is the allergic response.
 - The human body presents an opportune habitat for microbes.
- 49.** Why would tissue transplanted from father to daughter have a greater risk of being detected as foreign than a tissue transplanted between identical twins?
- The age of the twins’ tissue would be the same and therefore less likely to be rejected.
 - The identical twin’s tissue would carry the same self-markers and would therefore be less likely to be rejected.
 - The difference in the sex of the father and daughter would cause the tissue to be rejected by the daughter’s immune system.
 - The twins’ immune systems would “remember” the same encounters with childhood illnesses.
- 50.** Antigens differ from allergens because
- allergens are usually harmless substances, while antigens can be harmful viruses, fungus or parasites.
 - antigens trigger an immune system response and allergens do not.
 - people sensitive to allergens experience visible physical symptoms while people with antigens do not suffer from obvious responses or symptoms.
 - There is no difference between an antigen and an allergen.

Part Three

Reading for Comprehension

Making Predictions and Inferences

As they read and pose questions, readers often find themselves answering their own questions with predictions about what will happen next or with inferences drawn from the author's or illustrator's creations. The "on the line" strategy of predicting and the "between the lines" strategy of inferring prompt readers to turn the page to find out if their hypotheses are correct.

Predictions are educated guesses about what will happen next based on what is known from reading the text; prediction can also involve readers' background knowledge. Inferences require that readers go beyond literal meaning; they use the print and illustrations plus their prior knowledge and experience to interpret the text. Through these processes, readers find clues or connecting points, make predictions or inferences, and draw conclusions. These conclusions or Interpretations are a critical part of reading comprehension. Readers who make predictions and inferences before, during, and after they read are actively engaged in the meaning-making process.

Accomplished authors and illustrators of well-constructed picture books, chapter books, and novels have respect for the knowledge readers bring to the literary experience. They leave clues for readers to lead them on throughout the reading journey. They rely on readers to flesh out their texts by making connections between clues and readers' own background knowledge, values, and beliefs. The importance of prediction and inference in reading comprehension stems from the transactional nature of the reading event. If we understand reading as a transaction between a text, a reader, and the context in which the work is experienced, then the literal denotation of the words on the page and the content of the illustrations are only part of the story. For the transaction to occur, the reader must interpret the text. The unique interpretation of each reader is then an essential component of comprehension. As Meek suggests, "What is happening to the reader is as important as the text itself" (1988, 37).

This perspective honors the role of the reader in making meaning. It suggests that unique interpretations are valued and invaluable. When designing literature engagements, educators foster personalized interpretations by using a reading transaction framework that

allows for multiple interpretations. As students immerse themselves in the deeper “between the lines” meanings of texts, they come to think of reading as a “lived-through” experience (Rosenblatt 1995). Just like a trip to the park or to a museum, reading a book is an event to be experienced, an event on which one can reflect and from which one can learn.

By sharing their unique responses to what they read, students who discuss their reading with partners or within literature circles learn that there are multiple perspectives that can mirror and enrich, or contradict or contrast with, their own interpretations of a work. A collaborative social context for talking about books gives readers a place for engaging in discussions and sharing interpretations. Book discussions can become a central part of life in the classroom and in the library (on facilitating literature circles, see Short and Pierce 1990).

Adapted from: Collaborative Strategies for Teaching
Reading Comprehension
JUDI MOREILLON
American Library Association
Chicago 2007
(pp: 76-77)

Supply and Demand for English Teachers Worldwide

The number of people taking up English teaching as a foreign language in recent years has risen dramatically. This could be due to the worsening job market in the UK, US and other English speaking countries, or perhaps it reflects a natural process in a maturing industry. For those who are interested in TEFL, this is the key question: Is now a good time to teach English?

The increase in the supply of teachers raises some inevitable questions. Is the demand for English teachers sufficient? Where is the demand coming from? Is it sustainable? What other issues are at play, and where is the industry heading? These themes will be discussed in this article, as well as an analysis of where the supply is coming from and some ideas on how to find a job as an English teacher in this crowded market.

Where is the demand coming from?

At first glance, it might seem like an ideal time to begin a career as an English teacher in another country. One source states that '[over 20,000 ESL jobs are listed each month](#)'. That is an incredible amount of jobs. Indeed, finding adverts for TEFL jobs in almost any country seems to be effortless, particularly if you are looking in hotspots such as Korea, China and other Asian countries. Focusing on Asia, some cite globalization as the cause of '[the surge in demand for English language schooling](#) [in Korea], not just for students but also for everyone from toddlers to taxi drivers'. The demand comes from community and private schools, dedicated English schools, universities and businesses. In Korea, though, the largest demand is from 'Hagwons', English schools catering for young students. In Japan, 'Eikaiwas', English communication schools, are commonplace.

Universities across Asia and the world still demand English teachers for degree programmes and extra-curricular English courses. [TEFL.net](#) perhaps stated it most brazenly: "Rightly or wrongly, the whole world wants to learn English." Furthermore, [Ajarn.com](#), the authority on teaching English in Thailand, states that 'the demand... has never been greater'. The need for qualified English teachers seems to be coming from all corners. Can the supply keep up with it?

Where is the supply coming from?

At the outset of this article, it was stated that TEFL job applicants are increasing. In fact, there has been a '[record number of applicants](#)' for English teaching jobs abroad recently. [An article in the Globe and Mail](#) reports that one English teacher recruitment firm saw applications for jobs quadruple in the six months following December 2008. This makes the '20,000 jobs a month' figure seem much smaller. Moreover, Internet forums are littered with stories of people who haven't been able to find teaching jobs, despite being willing and qualified. Many companies are reporting that vacancies are being filled almost before they have been advertised, while placement programmes are finding themselves overwhelmed with applicants.

Who are the teachers?

Reportedly, the type of candidate is changing. Whereas TEFL applicants were once largely new graduates looking for experience and adventure for a year, applications from people with experience in various sectors of the job market are now turning to TEFL. Teacher recruitment companies state that applications to teach English abroad are coming from those with experience in the financial sector and even the education sector within the UK, among other industries. For example, Scott Daley graduated with an Honours Degree in History. He worked within a few roles at his local city council, gaining experience in public administration and immigration law. Despite being promoted a few times, he found things weren't really going as planned. The opportunity to live in a new country, learn a new language and take on a fresh challenge as an English teacher was all too appealing. Scott put in his application to teach English in Japan, and has been enjoying his role for over a year. Beyond the variety in applicants, another hindrance to newcomers is that the demand is being met by those who already in positions. It seems more teachers are renewing their contracts and staying for longer periods of time. Those who are already living and teaching in the country are also in a prime place to snap up any new vacancies, something that happens a lot in TEFL.

How things are changing?

The effect of the increasing supply of teachers is higher and stricter standards on newcomers. Many are finding that jobs that could once be attained with basic qualifications now require more advanced training and vast experience. This is particularly true when it comes to teaching at HE level. Universities in Asia and across the non-English speaking world generally require their English teachers, lecturers and senior staff to be qualified with either a DELTA (Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults) or an MA in TESOL . Even entry-level teaching positions have become more demanding. Thailand and Korea have famously tightened their standards in recent years, demanding that teachers meet certain legal requirements in order to be qualified. Countries such as Thailand and Korea were once known for being havens for unqualified English teachers, but new laws have put an end to that.

Things have changed dramatically for English teachers in the last few years. The successful applicant today is the one who ticks the right boxes: the most qualified, most experienced, most readily available and flexible job hunters get the roles. Abandon the image of TEFL as a failsafe if you can't find your dream job in the UK. TEFL now requires a lot from you.

Supply vs. Demand: The result

In an attempt to make sense of the conflicting stories that have been circulated, this article has tried to summarise what is happening in terms of supply and demand. It seems Asia, in particular, still has a large demand for English teachers. Conversely, the supply is growing thanks to a disappointing job market in English speaking countries, graduates keen to travel and work at the same time, as well as an increasing number of teachers who are renewing their contracts. However, reports from the front line paint a positive picture still. First hand reports from Japan show that [teaching jobs are still easy to come by](#) . Thailand and China are also seemingly unable to meet the demand for English teachers. Teaching vacancies, then, are

definitely still out there in plentiful number. Getting accepted as a teacher in a crowded market means things are somewhere more taxing on potential English instructors, though.

What does this mean for you?

Many recruiters and TEFL experts recommend being more flexible with your job hunt, particularly for new jobseekers. See what there is on offer and put in your application. Make sure you are qualified for the position, at least with a teaching certificate such as TESOL or CELTA, but preferably also with a Bachelor's or Master's degree. Thoroughly research the country in which you want to teach, including living costs and recruitment laws. Comparing the average living expenses with salaries on offer will give you a good idea of what standard of life you will have.

As it has been said, the supply of teachers is currently greater than it has ever been before. Don't let that put you off. The demand is still there, and continues to grow.

Adapted from:

Davies Ben, Supply and Demand for English Teachers Worldwide. Jobs.ac.uk. August 2009
<https://www.jobs.ac.uk/careers-advice/working-overseas/1324/supply-and-demand-for-english-teachers-worldwide>

The Organisation of Education and of Culture

It may be observed in general that in modern civilisation all practical activities have become so complex, and the sciences so interwoven with everyday life, that each practical activity tends to create a new type of school for its own executives and specialists and hence to create a body of specialist intellectuals at a higher level to teach in these schools. Thus, side by side with the type of school which may be called “humanistic”—the oldest form of traditional school, designed to develop in each individual human being an as yet undifferentiated general culture, the fundamental power to think and ability to find one’s way in life—a whole system of specialised schools, at varying levels, has been being created to serve entire professional sectors, or professions which are already specialised and defined within precise boundaries.

It may be said, indeed, that the educational crisis raging today is precisely linked to the fact that this process of differentiation and particularisation is taking place chaotically, without clear and precise principles, without a well-studied and consciously established plan. The crisis of the curriculum and organisation of the schools, i.e. of the overall framework of a policy for forming modern intellectual cadres, is to a great extent an aspect and a ramification of the more comprehensive and general organic crisis.

The fundamental division into classical and vocational (professional) schools was a rational formula: the vocational school for the instrumental classes, the classical school for the dominant classes and the intellectuals. The development of an industrial base both in the cities and in the countryside meant a growing need for the new type of urban intellectual. Side by side with the classical school, there developed the technical school (vocational, but not manual), and this placed a question-mark over the very principle of a concrete programme of general culture, a humanistic programme of general culture based on the Græco-Roman tradition. This programme, once questioned, can be said to be doomed, since its formative capacity was to a great extent based on the general and traditionally unquestioned prestige of a particular form of civilisation.

The tendency today is to abolish every type of schooling that is “disinterested” (not serving immediate interests) or “formative”—keeping at most only a small-scale version to serve a tiny elite of ladies and gentlemen who do not have to worry about assuring themselves of a

future career. Instead, there is a steady growth of specialised vocational schools, in which the pupil's destiny and future activity are determined in advance.

A rational solution to the crisis ought to adopt the following lines. First, a common basic education, imparting a general, humanistic, formative culture; this would strike the right balance between development of the capacity for working manually (technically, industrially) and development of the capacities required for intellectual work. From this type of common schooling, via repeated experiments in vocational orientation, pupils would pass on to one of the specialized schools or to productive work.

Adapted from: **Classics in Politics: Antonio Gramsci**

Selections from Prison Notebooks: On Education

Top Ten Secrets of Effective Liars

How to lie and get away with it

Jeff Wise

Posted May 03, 2010

As I've written earlier, human beings have an innate skill at dishonesty. And with good reason: being able to manipulate the expectations of those around us is a key survival trait for social animals like ourselves. Indeed, a 1999 study by psychologist Robert Feldman at the University of Massachusetts showed that the most popular kids were also the most effective liars. Just because our aptitude is hardwired doesn't mean it can't improve with practice and skill. Here are ten techniques that top-notch liars use to maximize their effectiveness. (By the way, this information is offered as a way to help detect deceit in others, not to practice it yourself. Honestly!)

#1 Have a reason. "Prisons are filled with bad liars," says psychologist Charles Ford, author of the book *Lies! Lies! Lies!*. "The good liars are out running HMOs." So what's the big difference? Basically, says Ford, the trick is to lie as little as possible - only when you actually have something to gain. "Pathological liars can't stop themselves from lying, so they tell a lot of little lies and wind up getting caught," he says. Truly expert fabricators, on the other hand, save their ammunition - they don't bother to lie unless it's going to get them something they really want.

#2 Lay your groundwork. Don't wait until you're under the interrogation lamp to start putting your story together. A 1990 study by psychologist Bill Flanagan showed that liars who had worked out the details of their stories beforehand had significantly more success than those who hadn't. As in everything, practice makes perfect. "It's easier to catch someone in a lie the first time they tell it," says psychologist Dr. Cynthia Cohen

#3 Tell the truth, misleadingly. The hardest lies to catch are those which aren't actually lies. You're telling the truth, but in a way that leaves a false impression. Technically, it's only a prevarication - about half a sin. A 1990 study of pathological liars in New York City found that those who could avoid follow-up questions were significantly more successful at their deceptions.

#4 Know your target. Good liars have the same gift as good communicators: the ability to get inside the listener's head. Empathy not only clues you in to what your subject wants to hear, it will help you avoid stepping onto trip wires that will trigger their suspicions. "To make a credible lie, you need to take into account the perspective of your target," says Carolyn Saarni, co-editor of the book *Lying and Deception in Everyday Life*. "Know what they know. Be aware of their interests and activities so you can cover your tracks."

#5 Keep your facts straight. "One of the problems of successful lying is that it's hard work," says psychologist Michael Lewis. "You have to be very consistent in doing it." That means

nauling down the details. Write down notes if you have to. "One of the things that trips people up is that they give different information to different people, who then start talking about it and comparing notes," says Dr. Gini Graham Scott, author of *The Truth About Lying*.

#6 Stay focused. "When I'm trying to catch a liar, I watch to see how committed they are to what they're telling me," says Sgt. John Yarbrough, interrogation expert with the LA Sheriff Department's homicide bureau. "If I accuse someone of lying, and they're not very committed to the statement they just made, a red flag goes up." One of the reasons most people make bad liars is that they find lying a deeply unpleasant activity. Fear and guilt are evident in their facial expressions. They want to get the process over as quickly as possible, so they show relief when their interrogator changes the topic. That's a dead giveaway. Really good liars, on the other hand, actually enjoy the process of deceiving other people. "The best liars don't show any shame or remorse because they don't feel it," says Cohen. "They get a thrill out of actively misleading others. They're good at it, and they enjoy the challenge."

#7: Watch your signals. It's folk wisdom that people fidget, touch their noses, stutter, and break eye contact when they lie - the proverbial "shifty-eyed" look. But research has shown that just isn't so. In his 1999 study of high school students, Feldman found that nonverbal signals were crucial in determining who got away with telling lies. "The successful kinds were better at controlling their nonverbal signals, things like the the amount of eye contact and how much they gestured," he says.

#8: Turn up the pressure. If your target has clearly become suspicious, it's time to raise the emotional stakes. "The best liars are natural manipulators," says Sgt. Yarbrough. He cites as a perfect example the scene in *Basic Instinct* where Sharon Stone is brought to the cop station for questioning and winds up flashing everyone a glimpse of her Lesser Antilles. "She was turning them on," Yarbrough explains, "and that's a form of manipulation - using sexual or emotional arousal to distract the interviewer."

#9: Counterattack. The fact is, just as most of us are uncomfortable telling lies, most are uncomfortable accusing others. This discomfort can be used in the liar's favor. "You'll often see politicians respond to accusations with aggression," says Stan Walters, author of *The Truth About Lying: Everyday Techniques for Dealing with Deception*. "What they'll do is drive critics away from the issue, so they're forced to gather up their resources to fight another scrimmage."

#10: Bargain. Even when the jig is up, liars can often escape the worst by using a process psychologists call bargaining. "You want to soften, alleviate, or totally eliminate feelings of responsibility for the lie," explains researcher Mary DePalma. "If you can decrease responsibility for blame and the anger that goes with it, you're really looking at a much better outcome."

Adapted from: Wise, Jeff. Top Ten Secrets of Effective Liars: How to lie and get away with it. Psychology Today. May 03, 2010
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/extreme-fear/201005/top-ten-secrets-effective-liars>

The ... cognitive biases that prevent you from being rational

George Dvorsky
1/09/13

The human brain is capable of thousands of processes per second, which makes it far more powerful than any computer currently in existence. But that doesn't mean our brains don't have major limitations. The lowly calculator can do math thousands of times better than we can, and our memories are often less than useless — plus, we're subject to cognitive biases, those annoying glitches in our thinking that cause us to make questionable decisions and reach erroneous conclusions. Some social psychologists believe our cognitive biases help us process information more efficiently, especially in dangerous situations. Still, they lead us to make grave mistakes. We may be prone to such errors in judgment, but at least we can be aware of them. Here are some important ones to keep in mind.

Confirmation Bias: We love to agree with people who agree with us. It's why we only visit websites that express our political opinions, and why we mostly hang around people who hold similar views and tastes. We tend to be put off by individuals, groups, and news sources that make us feel uncomfortable or insecure about our views — what the behavioral psychologist B. F. Skinner called cognitive dissonance. It's this preferential mode of behavior that leads to the confirmation bias — the often unconscious act of referencing only those perspectives that fuel our pre-existing views, while at the same time ignoring or dismissing opinions — no matter how valid — that threaten our world view. And paradoxically, the internet has only made this tendency even worse.

Somewhat similar to the confirmation bias is **the ingroup bias**, a manifestation of our innate tribalistic tendencies. And strangely, much of this effect may have to do with oxytocin — the so-called "love molecule." This neurotransmitter, while helping us to forge tighter bonds with people in our ingroup, performs the exact opposite function for those on the outside — it makes us suspicious, fearful, and even disdainful of others. Ultimately, the ingroup bias causes us to overestimate the abilities and value of our immediate group at the expense of people we don't really know.

Gambler's Fallacy: It's called a fallacy, but it's more a glitch in our thinking. We tend to put a tremendous amount of weight on previous events, believing that they'll somehow influence future outcomes. The classic example is coin-tossing. After flipping heads, say, five consecutive times, our inclination is to predict an increase in likelihood that the next coin toss will be tails — that the odds must certainly be in the favor of heads. But in reality, the odds are still 50/50. As statisticians say, the outcomes in different tosses are *statistically independent* and the probability of any outcome is still 50%.

Relatedly, there's also **the positive expectation bias** — which often fuels gambling addictions. It's the sense that our luck *has* to eventually change and that good fortune is on the way. It also contributes to the "hot hand" misconception. Similarly, it's the same feeling we get when we start a new relationship that leads us to believe it will be better than the last one.

Post-Purchase Rationalization: Remember that time you bought something totally unnecessary, faulty, or overly expensive, and then you rationalized the purchase to such an extent that you convinced yourself it was a great idea all along? Yeah, that's post-purchase rationalization in action — a kind of built-in mechanism that makes us feel better after we make crappy decisions, especially at the cash register. Also known as Buyer's Stockholm Syndrome, it's a way of subconsciously justifying our purchases — especially expensive ones. Social psychologists say it stems from the principle of commitment, our psychological desire to stay consistent and avoid a state of cognitive dissonance.

Observational Selection Bias: This is that effect of suddenly noticing things we didn't notice that much before — but we wrongly assume that the frequency has increased. A perfect example is what happens after we buy a new car and we inexplicably start to see the *same car* virtually everywhere. A similar effect happens to pregnant women who suddenly notice a lot of other pregnant women around them. Or it could be a unique number or song. It's not that these things are appearing more frequently, it's that we've (for whatever reason) selected the item in our mind, and in turn, are noticing it more often. Trouble is, most people don't recognize this as a selectional bias, and actually believe these items or events are happening with increased frequency — which can be a very disconcerting feeling. It's also a cognitive bias that contributes to the feeling that the appearance of certain things or events couldn't possibly be a coincidence (even though it is).

Status-Quo Bias: We humans tend to be apprehensive of change, which often leads us to make choices that guarantee that things remain the same, or change as little as possible. Needless to say, this has ramifications in everything from politics to economics. We like to stick to our routines, political parties, and our favorite meals at restaurants. Part of the perniciousness of this bias is the unwarranted assumption that another choice will be inferior or make things worse. The status-quo bias can be summed with the saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" — an adage that fuels our conservative tendencies. And in fact, some commentators say this is why the U.S. hasn't been able to enact universal health care, despite the fact that most individuals support the idea of reform.

Projection Bias: As individuals trapped inside our own minds 24/7, it's often difficult for us to project outside the bounds of our own consciousness and preferences. We tend to assume that most people think just like us — though there may be no justification for it. This cognitive shortcoming often leads to a related effect known as the false consensus bias where we tend to believe that people not only think like us, but that they also agree with us. It's a bias where we overestimate how typical and normal we are, and assume that a consensus exists on matters when there may be none. Moreover, it can also create the effect where the members of a radical or fringe group assume that more people on the outside agree with them than is the case. Or the exaggerated confidence one has when predicting the winner of an election or sports match.

Adapted from:

Dvorsky, George, The 12 cognitive biases that prevent you from being rational. Io9. September 01, 2013
<https://io9.gizmodo.com/5974468/the-most-common-cognitive-biases-that-prevent-you-from-being-rational>

The Selfie

The 'selfie,' defined by Oxford English Dictionary (2014) as 'a photograph that one takes of oneself, typically with a smartphone or webcam and uploaded to a social media website,' is a viral networking trend that has exploded in recent years with the expansion of digital technologies. Conceptually, the practice of selfie-taking is invariably tied up with the strategic activities of self-presentation, identity construction, and impression management (Goffman, 1959: 14; Mehdizadeh, 2010: 360; Ellison, et al., 2006: 417). As a visual artifact of an individual's 'self-concept,' or the 'totality of a person's thoughts and feelings in reference to oneself as an object' (Zhao, et al., 2008: 1817), selfies enable individuals to assert an 'identity statement' (Zhao, et al., 2008: 1820) about how they reflexively claim to perceive themselves.

Importantly, the opportunities selfies offer for role-play with 'unexplored aspects of the self' (Turkle, 1995: 12) make the medium an ideal site for the expression of a 'hoped-for possible self,' or a self possessing 'highly socially desirable qualities that an individual would like to establish given the right conditions' (Skoric, 2012: 81). The hoped-for possible self departs from what Higgins (1987: 320) refers to as the 'actual self,' or the identity an individual actually is, and resides in the domain of the 'ideal self,' or the identity an individual wants to embody.

According to the BBC (2013: para. 1-2), the Oxford English Dictionary honoured the selfie with its award for 'Word of the Year' in 2013, noting how the word 'has evolved from a niche social media tag into a mainstream term for a self-portrait photograph' and citing research that suggests 'its frequency in the English language had increased by 17,000% in the last year.' Overall, the response to OED's recognition of the selfie has been mixed, with reactions ranging from what The Paris Review (2014: para. 1) describes as 'apocalyptic to cautiously optimistic.' From the perspective of those opposed to the rise of selfie culture, selfies are viewed as a superficial act of online hedonism that degrade and trivialize the nature of social interaction in cyberspace. Jonathan Freedland from The Guardian (2013: para.1), for example, castigates the selfie as 'the ultimate emblem of the age of narcissism,' while Geoff Nunberg from NPR (2013: para.8) denounces the selfie as 'a proxy for all the deleterious effects of social media' and cautions against the rise of a 'selfie society where people will stoop to anything to get attention.'

For those more optimistic about selfie craze, however, selfie-taking represents a creative advance in the online social experience. Jenna Wortham from The New York Times (2013: para. 7) argues that the selfie 'signals a new frontier in the evolution in social media' and describes the practice as 'the perfect preoccupation for our Internet-saturated time, a ready-made platform to record and post our lives where others can see and experience them in tandem with us.' In Wortham's (2013: para.10) view, the manifestation of selfie culture symbolizes the way human beings are 'swiftly becoming accustomed to –and perhaps even starting to prefer– online conversations and interactions that revolve around images and photos' over conversations and interactions in person or through the written word. Times columnist James Franco (2013: para.12) also echoes Wortham's pro-selfie stance, arguing that selfies function as 'mini-me' avatars that offer a new way of giving others 'a sense of who we are.' 'A texting conversation might fall short of communicating how you are feeling,' Franco (2013: para.10) writes, 'but a selfie might make everything clear in an instant. Selfies are tools of communication more than marks of vanity.'

Adapted from: Sheehan, Clare; (August 2014) The Selfie Protest: A Visual Analysis of Activism in the Digital Age MSc in Politics and Communication. MEDIA@LSE MSc Dissertation Series.

Daily Conversation

Meetings among friends, relatives, colleagues, and even strangers – is based on simple interactions, and gives birth to argumentative exchanges that might be ephemeral or short-ranged. In such arenas, argumentative exchanges are generally not so dense, involve few participants, encompass few viewpoints, and are usually characterized as “naïve communications”, to use Habermas’ words. ... It is important to underline that such environments, by escaping both political and administrative controls, open up the path for the thematization of experiences, and personal and social problems, from the viewpoint of those who have been affected by them. It is from their experience in the lifeworld that citizens form the values and perspectives they use to criticize operations of power, prejudice, exploitation, and authority, as well as to discuss government agenda and public policies

Several scholars have stressed the importance of daily conversation –which is not always reflexive, self-conscious, or directed at decision-making – to the interpretation of interests and necessities (**Conover, Searing and Crewe, 2002; Kim, Wyatt, Katz, 1999; Fishkin, 1991, 1997; Gamson, 1993; Mansbrige, 1999; Scheufele, 2000**). The word “interest” should not be narrowed down to material interest, i.e., values or objectives of “material” nature; rather, it shall encompass all resources and aptitudes that allow “self-affirmation” (**Cooke, 2000; Habermas, 1997**). Daily conversations are fundamental for the processing of the matters which the public “should discuss” – such as government agenda, and the virtues and shortcomings of public policies. A democratic political community, in **Barber’s** words “will leave room for the expression of distrust, dissent, or just plain opposition, even in lost causes where dissenters are obviously very much in the minority” (**Barber, 2003: 192**). In speaking and hearing one another, people produce a constant re-conceptualization of public issues and of the idea of public itself. They decide which policy they want, in conformity with their interests and basic values.

Moreover, daily conversation is fundamental for the processing of personal and social problems that emerge in highly informal, unplanned, or unintentional ways. It is through dialogue – speaking, answering questions, and considering the viewpoints of others – that people frequently give meaning to their own condition. They are able to connect their personal experiences, or the experiences of a group or category, to a more general principle (**Dalhberg, 2005, p. 119; Dryzek, 2004: 51**). In this way, a thematization or narrativization of common situations is constructed – not as accidental or contingent experiences in the lives

of each person, but rather as situations that derive from conditioning forces of the social structure. Daily conversation opens up the path for people to change their preferences, appraise general issues with reference to practical experiences, or arrange, more or less coherently, their preferences (Benhabib, 1996: 71-72). Through everyday talk, “people come to understand better what they want and need, individually as well as collectively” (Mansbridge, 1999: 211).

In environments impervious to publicity, such as in small groups of friends, work colleagues, or relatives, people may feel more comfortable to reveal their opinions, express their anxieties, fears, feelings, and disappointments, without inhibition or fear from being ridiculed. In these situations, however, conversation is more subject to the open expression of hate, and the prejudices and hostilities that people or groups may nurture against one another.

Adapted from: **Deliberative Democracy and Public Sphere Typology**
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Henry Kissinger, US Intelligence Community Endorse “A World Without Israel”

Kissinger’s statement is flat and unqualified. He is not saying that Israel is in danger, but could be saved if we just gave it additional trillions of dollars and smashed enough of its enemies with our military. He is not saying that if we elect Netanyahu’s old friend Mitt Romney Israel could somehow be salvaged. He is not saying that if we bomb Iran, Israel might survive. He is not offering a way out. He is simply stating a fact: In 2022, Israel will no longer exist.

The US intelligence report observes that the 700,000 Israeli settlers illegally squatting on land stolen in 1967 – land that the entire world agrees belongs to Palestine, not Israel – are not going to pack up and leave peacefully. Since the world will never accept their ongoing presence on stolen land, Israel is like South Africa in the late 1980s: An unsustainable pariah state.

The extremist Likud coalition governing Israel, according to the US intelligence report, is increasingly condoning and supporting rampant violence and lawlessness by the illegal settlers. The Report states that the brutality and criminality of the settlers, and the growing apartheid-style infrastructure including the apartheid wall and the ever-more-draconian system of checkpoints, are indefensible, unsustainable, and out of synch with American values.

The sixteen US intelligence agencies agree that Israel cannot withstand the coming pro-Palestinian juggernaut consisting of the Arab Spring, the Islamic Awakening, and the rise of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In the past, dictatorships in the region kept a lid on the pro-Palestinian aspirations of their people. But those dictatorships began to topple with the fall of the pro-Israel Shah of Iran in 1979 and the establishment of a democratic Islamic Republic, whose government had little choice but to reflect its people’s opposition to Israel. The same process – the overthrow of dictators who worked with, or at least tolerated, Israel – is now accelerating throughout the region. The result will be governments that are more democratic, more Islamic, and far less friendly to Israel.

The US intelligence community report says that in light of these realities, the US government simply no longer has the military and financial resources to continue propping up Israel against the wishes of more than a billion of its neighbors. In order to normalize relations with 57 Islamic countries, the report suggests, the US will have to follow its own national interests and pull the plug on Israel.

Interestingly, neither Henry Kissinger nor the authors of the US Intelligence Report give any sign that they are going to mourn the demise of Israel. This is remarkable, given that Kissinger is Jewish and has always been viewed as a friend (if occasionally a tough friend) of Israel, and that all Americans, including those who work for intelligence agencies, have been influenced by the strongly pro-Israel media.

What explains such complacency?

Americans who pay attention to international affairs – a category that surely includes Kissinger and the authors of the Intelligence Report – are growing fed up with Israeli intransigence and fanaticism. Netanyahu’s bizarre, widely-ridiculed performance at the United Nations, where he brandished a

cartoonish caricature of a bomb in such a way that he himself came across as a caricature of a “mad Zionist,” was the latest in a series of gaffes by Israeli leaders who seem prone to overplaying their hand.

A second factor is the festering resentment many Americans feel over the Israel Lobby’s imperious domination of public discourse. Every time a well-known American journalist is fired for going “off-script” about Israel, as happened to Helen Thomas and Rick Sanchez, a mostly-invisible backlash, like a tidal wave rippling beneath the surface of the ocean, grows in power. And every time the Israel lobby slaps down someone like Maureen Dowd, who recently observed that the same Israel-fanatics who dragged the US into the Iraq war are now trying to do the same thing with Iran, the more people begin to wake up and realize that people like Dowd, Thomas, and Sanchez are speaking the truth.

A third reason for complacency in the face of Israel’s impending demise: The American Jewish community is no longer united in support of Israel, much less its Likudnik leadership. Sophisticated Jewish journalists and analysts like Philip Weiss are recognizing the insanity of Israel’s current leadership and the hopelessness of its predicament. According to recent reports, it is no longer fashionable among young American Jews to care about Israel. And despite Netanyahu’s frantic attempts to sway Jewish voters toward the Mormon Likudnik Mitt Romney, polls show that Obama, who is on record saying he “hates” the “liar” Netanyahu, will easily win the majority of Jewish votes.

Finally, we come to the least obvious – but most powerful – reason for Kissinger’s and the CIA’s complacency in the face of Israel’s implosion: The inexorable trickle-down of knowledge that Israel and its supporters, not radical Muslims, carried out the 9/11 false-flag attacks.

Increasingly, it is not fringe anti-Semitic groups, but high-level responsible observers, who are saying this. Alan Sabrosky, the half-Jewish former Director of Strategic Studies at the US Army War College, has come on [a] radio show to say that he has discussed with his colleagues the “100% certainty” that Israel and its supporters did 9/11. And Alan Hart, the former lead BBC correspondent for the Middle East (and personal friend of Golda Meir and Yasser Arafat) has also come on [a] radio show to break the story that he, too, knows that Israel and company orchestrated 9/11. Today, we even have a presidential candidate, Merlin Miller, who is on the record stating that Israel, not al-Qaeda, carried out the 9/11 attacks.

The chief purpose of 9/11 was to “seal in blood” an intense, unbreakable emotional bond between the US and Israel, in a desperate bid to assure Israel’s survival by launching a long-term US war against Israel’s enemies. As the “dancing Israelis” arrested for celebrating the 9/11 operation tried to convince the police: “Our enemies are your enemies. The Palestinians are your enemies.”

But more and more Americans, including the US intelligence community as a whole, now recognize that the enemies of Israel (the entire Muslim world of over 1.5 billion people, along with most of the non-European world) do not have to be the enemies of the United States. In fact, the US is going broke and sacrificing thousands of lives in wars for Israel – wars that damage, rather than aid, US strategic interests. (One of those interests, of course, is buying oil and gas from stable, cooperative governments.)

Adapted from:

*Barrett, Kevin. Henry Kissinger, US Intelligence Community Endorse “A World Without Israel” .
Veterans Today. October 3, 2012*

<https://www.veteranstodayarchives.com/2012/10/03/henry-kissinger-us-intelligence-community-endorse-a-world-without-israel/>

Failed Coup in Turkey, Escalating War in Ukraine, The Battle For Aleppo, Freedom for Saif al-Gaddafi in Libya By [Hugo Turner](#)

Sometimes events speed up and begin to spiral out of control. This is definitely one of those times... The Battle for Aleppo continues of course a brutal struggle for the future of Syria and the world. There was the failed coup in Turkey. There was good news from Libya where Saif Gaddafi was finally released raising hopes that Libya may someday regain its independence. In Crimea there was a failed terror plot that was narrowly foiled.

Last year Saif al-Gaddafi was sentenced to death by the Libyan Dawn faction of Libya's then two competing governments locked in civil war. This provoked protests by supporters of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya the government overthrown by NATO's criminal 2011 war that installed Al Qaeda death squads as the new de facto government. Thousands of loyal Libyan's were killed thousands more rounded up imprisoned and tortured in the wake of NATO's victory. There are still over 7000 people being held at the mercy of the death squads. But since 2011 the forces loyal to the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya known as the Green Resistance have only grown in strength. Thus, last year's attempt in July 2015 to sentence Saif to death resulted in massive protests by supporters of the Green Resistance. They risked death and a more than a dozen were killed protesting the unjust sentence against Saif whose only crimes were his refusal to betray his family and nation during NATO's war on Libya. Now a year later not only has Saif not been sentenced to death he has been freed, a victory greeted by thousands of green resistance supporters with protests in celebration.

While Saif's release was met by a deafening media silence, the whole world has by now heard of the failed coup in Turkey. NATO and the CIA foolishly tried to overthrow their unpredictable ally Erdogan. Unfortunately, for them, the wily and paranoid Erdogan was expecting something like this after attempting to entice Russia into re-establishing the economic ties they broke after Turkey shot down the Russian fighter last fall and turkish grey wolves killed the pilot and blew up the rescue copter killing another.

Rumor has it that Russian intelligence warned him of the impending coup worried that the CIA had an even worse candidate in mind. In any case, there was a brief hope that Erdogan would reduce his support for the war on Syria but that seems unlikely. Instead, yet again Erdogan has managed to play his unpredictable balancing act between Russia and the West. Turkey is a sort of swinging pendulum first swinging towards Russia over the turkish stream pipeline, then towards the west by shooting down the fighter and now back to Russia. Meanwhile the war on Syria remains as intense as ever. At most there will be increased trade between the two countries, Erdogan seems as unwilling as the US to end the war on Syria. Thus, his recent visit to Russia failed to produce any agreement on Syria. Back in Turkey Erdogan is busy purging all his opposition in a massive crackdown. The one consolation is that in crushing the coup Erdogan also killed some of those responsible for planning the dirty war on Syria.

Crimea is now reunited with Russia due to the votes of the vast majority of its citizens and the heroic actions of the spetsnaz “polite men in green” back in 2014 in the wake of the fascist coup in Ukraine. Officially a part of the Russian federation, its citizens have been largely spared the fascist terror campaign that Novorossia (Donbass) has been subjected to in the east. The main exception was last winter when Ukrainian fascists and their Tartar allies blew up the electricity pylons to the island plunging the people of Crimea into darkness and cold. Now with the empire of chaos upset over the recently intensifying Russian support for Syria they gave their fascist allies in Ukraine the green light to launch more terror attacks on Crimea.

Meanwhile in Syria the epic battle for Aleppo continues. For a while things were going well for the Syrian forces they achieved their goal of capturing the Castillo highway cutting off the terrorists supply route after weeks of hard fighting. The terrorists laying siege to the city in Eastern Aleppo had their supplies cut off. The terrorist’s desperate attempts to recapture the road failed. However the terrorists were able to launch a massive counter-attack with 7,000 men in south west Aleppo breaking through Syrian defenses seizing the Ramoosa artillery base, an air force technical base and the 1070 apartment blocks. Now Southwest Aleppo is the scene of brutal fighting as the **SAA** have slowly been recapturing these sites from the terrorists.

Thus, the terrorist victory may lead to a disastrous defeat as they are being heavily bombed by the Russian and Syrian air forces losing 1000 men according to the Russians. The death squads and their NATO advisers staked a lot on this counteroffensive opening a narrow path into the city. Now they will hopefully be cut off, surrounded and destroyed. However, the battle for Aleppo is far from over, all we can do is wish the SAA another Victory in Aleppo. Russia has thankfully continued to increase its support, bombing the terrorists, besieging the heroic defenders of Deir Ezzor from bases in Iran, and moving its naval forces in position for an attack on the NATO death squads. In fact, Lavrov even publicly admitted that the ceasefire was a mistake that allowed the terrorists to rearm.

With the provocations in Crimea and treachery in Syria hopefully Russia will get its revenge by helping Syria crush this NATO terrorist invasion. Syria is on the offensive seizing back the most of the 1070 apartments and the air force technical college. They made other important gains in Damascus, Latakia, and Deir Ezzor but, of course, the war continues. In Libya, the power of the green resistance continues to grow despite the dirty war being waged on the country by NATO. In Turkey, Erdogan is on the rampage purging his opponents. In Crimea, the situation is tense but thankfully the people have been spared a wave of terror bombings and assassinations thanks to the quick response of the FSB and the Russian military. Donbass remains under fire, its plight forgotten by the outside world, which continues to ignore the menace of fascism in Ukraine. America continues its war on the planet spanning at least four continents not counting the low intensity counter-insurgency it has waged on its own territory for hundreds of years. For now though, its schemes in Libya, Turkey, Ukraine, and Syria have all met humiliating setbacks.

Adapted from:

*Turner, Hugo. Failed Coup in Turkey, Escalating War in Ukraine, The Battle For Aleppo, Freedom for Saif al-Gaddafi in Libya. mondialisation.ca. 18 August 2016
<https://www.mondialisation.ca/failed-coup-in-turkey-escalating-war-in-ukraine-the-battle-for-aleppo-freedom-for-saif-al-gaddafi-in-libya/5541572>*

American feminism: a discontinuous continuity

American feminism has a long history in a country with a short history. From the official birth of organized feminism in 1848 at a village chapel in Seneca Falls, New York, American feminists undertook a protracted struggle in defense of women's rights to education, work, and political power, culminating in the conquest of their right to vote in 1920. Then, afterwards, for almost half a century, feminism was kept in the backstage of the American scene. Not that women ceased to fight. In one of the most noted expressions of women's struggles, the 1955 bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, which arguably ushered in the civil rights movement in the South, and changed American history for ever, was enacted predominantly by African American women organizing their communities.

Yet, an explicitly feminist mass movement surged only in and from the 1960s' social movements, both from their human rights component, and from their counter-cultural, revolutionary tendencies. On the one hand, in the wake of the work of John F. Kennedy's Presidential Commission on the Status of Women, in 1963, and of the approval of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act concerning women's rights, a group of influential women, headed by writer Betty Friedan, created the National Organization of Women (NOW) on October 29, 1966.

NOW would become the most comprehensive national organization in defense of women's rights, and over the following three decades it demonstrated extraordinary political skill and perdurability, in spite of recurrent ideological and organizational crises. It came to epitomize the so-called liberal feminism, focusing on equal rights for women in all spheres of social, economic, and institutional life.

Around the same time, women participating in various radical social movements, and particularly in SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), started to organize separately as a reaction against pervasive sexism and male domination in revolutionary organizations that led not only to the personal abuse of women, but to the ridiculing of feminist positions as bourgeois and counter-revolutionary. What started in December 1965 as a workshop on "Women in the Movement" in the SDS Convention, and became articulated as Women's Liberation in a 1967 convention at Ann Arbor, Michigan, generated a flurry of autonomous women's groups, most of which split from male-dominated revolutionary politics, giving birth to radical feminism. In these founding moments it is fair to say that the feminist movement was ideologically split between its liberal and radical components.

Whereas NOW's first statement of purpose started by saying "We, MEN AND WOMEN [capitals in the original] who hereby constitute ourselves as the National Organization for Women, believe that the time has come for a new movement toward a fully equal partnership of the sexes, as part of the world-wide revolution of human rights now taking place within and beyond our national borders," the 1969 Redstockings Manifesto, which propelled radical feminism in New York, asserted: "We identify the agents of our oppression as men. Male supremacy is the oldest, most basic form of domination. All other forms of exploitation and oppression (racism, capitalism, imperialism etc.) are extensions of male supremacy; men dominate women, a few men dominate the rest."

Adapted from:

Castells, Manuel. The power of identity, 2nd ed. Blackwell Publishing Ltd.: West Sussex, 2010. (235-237)

Anne Frank captured

04 AUGUST 1944

Acting on tip from a Dutch informer, the Nazi Gestapo captures 15-year-old Jewish diarist Anne Frank and her family in a sealed-off area of an Amsterdam warehouse. The Franks had taken shelter there in 1942 out of fear of deportation to a Nazi concentration camp. They occupied the small space with another Jewish family and a single Jewish man, and were aided by Christian friends, who brought them food and supplies. Anne spent much of her time in the “secret annex” working on her diary. The diary survived the war, overlooked by the Gestapo that discovered the hiding place, but Anne and nearly all of the others perished in the Nazi death camps.

Annelies Marie Frank was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, on June 12, 1929. She was the second daughter of Otto Frank and Edith Frank-Hollander, both of Jewish families that had lived in Germany for centuries. With the rise of Nazi leader Adolf Hitler in 1933, Otto moved his family to Amsterdam to escape the escalating Nazi persecution of Jews. In Holland, he ran a successful spice and jam business. Anne attended a Montessori school with other middle-class Dutch children, but with the German invasion of the Netherlands in 1940 she was forced to transfer to a Jewish school. In 1942, Otto began arranging a hiding place in an annex of his warehouse on the Prinsengracht Canal in Amsterdam.

On her 13th birthday in 1942, Anne began a diary relating her everyday experiences, her relationship with her family and friends, and observations about the increasingly dangerous world around her. Less than a month later, Anne’s older sister, Margot, received a call-up notice to report to a Nazi “work camp.” Fearing deportation to a Nazi concentration camp, the Frank family took shelter in the secret annex the next day. One week later, they were joined by Otto Frank’s business partner and his family. In November, a Jewish dentist—the eighth occupant of the hiding place—joined the group.

For two years, Anne kept a diary about her life in hiding that is marked with poignancy, humor, and insight. The entrance to the secret annex was hidden by a hinged bookcase, and former employees of Otto and other Dutch friends delivered them food and supplies procured at high risk. Anne and the others lived in rooms with blacked-out windows, and never flushed the toilet during the day out of fear that their presence would be detected. In June 1944, Anne’s spirits

were raised by the Allied landing at Normandy, and she was hopeful that the long-awaited liberation of Holland would soon begin.

On August 1, 1944, Anne made her last entry in her diary. Three days later, 25 months of seclusion ended with the arrival of the Nazi Gestapo. Anne and the others had been given away by an unknown informer, and they were arrested along with two of the Christians who had helped shelter them. They were sent to a concentration camp in Holland, and in September Anne and most of the others were shipped to the Auschwitz death camp in Poland. In the fall of 1944, with the Soviet liberation of Poland underway, Anne was moved with her sister Margot to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany. Suffering under the deplorable conditions of the camp, the two sisters caught typhus and died in early March 1945. The camp was liberated by the British less than two months later.

Otto Frank was the only one of the 10 to survive the Nazi death camps. After the war, he returned to Amsterdam via Russia, and was reunited with Miep Gies, one of his former employees who had helped shelter him. She handed him Anne's diary, which she had found undisturbed after the Nazi raid. In 1947, Anne's diary was published by Otto in its original Dutch as *Diary of a Young Girl*. An instant best-seller and eventually translated into more than 50 languages, *The Diary of Anne Frank* has served as a literary testament to the nearly six million Jews, including Anne herself, who were silenced in the Holocaust.

The Frank family's hideaway at Prinsengracht 263 in Amsterdam opened as a museum in 1960. A new English translation of Anne's diary in 1995 restored material that had been edited out of the original version, making the work nearly a third longer.

Adapted from:

This Day in History. Anne Frank captured
<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/anne-frank-captured>

Cassie Chadwick (1857-1907): The Carnegie Con Woman

Most criminal profilers in America agree that the success of a good con is the perpetrator of the cons ability to think on their feet, adjust to all situations in an instant and be on a constant vigil for the next opportunity. Elizabeth Bigley, a con woman since the age of 11, did not perfect her abilities until she was nearly 40 years old and her biggest con goes down in America's strange history as one of the most elaborate and successful cons ever perpetrated in America.

At the age of 13, Elizabeth Bigley was first arrested for forgery, in Ontario, Canada. She had opened a bank account with very little money and began writing bad checks to businesses in Woodstock, Ontario. The courts determined that the young Elizabeth was mentally troubled and released her to her father. She made her way to Cleveland, Ohio in 1875, to be with her newly married sister. Elizabeth was in need of employment so she set up shop as a fortune teller under the name of Madame Lydia de Vere. Over the next 14 years she was married twice, first to Dr. Wallace Springsteen who quickly discovered her criminal behavior and filed for divorce. She next married a farmer named John Scott, however farm life did not suit Elizabeth and the couple was divorced four years later.

Elizabeth returned to Cleveland under the name of Cassie Hoover. There, in 1897, Elizabeth met and later married a wealthy doctor, Leroy Chadwick. Cassie Chadwick was not well received within Cleveland's elite but that did not stop her from trying to fit in. She was known to spend large amounts of her husband's money on spending sprees and throwing lavish parties to impress the socialites who lived along Euclid Avenue, Cleveland's "Millionaire Row". Shortly after their marriage, Elizabeth began to set the stage for her biggest con when she revealed to her new husband that she was the illegitimate daughter of industrialist and philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie. Dr. Chadwick took his new bride on a buying trip to New York City where Elizabeth, with the help of an Ohio banker who was acquainted with her husband, made her way to the home Carnegie. When she returned to the honeymoon suite in the Holland House hotel, she was in possession of a promissory note for two million dollars, endorsed by Carnegie, which Elizabeth claimed was a payoff to keep his illegitimate daughter quiet and out of the newspapers of the era. She furthermore claimed that she was in possession of ten million dollars worth of promissory notes.

Upon her return to Cleveland, Elizabeth entered the Citizens Bank of Oberlin, Ohio seeking a loan from the unsuspecting bank president. Using the promissory note and the well respected Chadwick name, she secured a loan for \$200,000. Over the next eight years Elizabeth, borrowing from bank after bank, as well as individuals, amassed and spent a fortune estimated to be nearly \$10,000,000 (approximately \$85,000,000 in 21st century dollars). Her newfound wealth shot her to the top of the social scene in Cleveland and she was dubbed, "The Queen of Ohio", by the Cleveland newspapers. The banks and individuals who gave loans to Elizabeth never thought to question the promissory notes that she was providing. In many cases she would ceremoniously place forged promissory notes in safety deposit boxes of the banks that she was bilking out of hundreds of thousands.

The con came to an end in November of 1904 when Boston banker and millionaire, Herbert Newton arrived in Cleveland seeking payment for a \$190,000 loan which he had given her on a \$1,000,000 promissory note. Elizabeth claimed that she could not repay Newton any of the money because her holdings were being held up by a Cleveland bank. Newton, with a police escort, entered the Wade Park bank that she had named however the bank was devoid of records concerning Elizabeth's claims. Elizabeth was arrested in New York in early December, 1904. At the time of her arrest, she had amassed \$5,000,000 worth of debt in several states but because she had defrauded banks that were federally insured, she was charged with seven counts of defrauding the government. Within the charges was one charge levied against her regarding her loans from the Citizens Bank of Oberlin which totaled \$800,000 and, upon the discovery of Elizabeth's con, had driven the institution into bankruptcy.

Elizabeth Bigley, aka Cassie Chadwick was tried and convicted of multiple con related crimes, including theft and defrauding the government, in two different trials. She was sentenced to 14 years in the women's facility at Ohio State Penitentiary in Columbus, Ohio. Her federal trial was a media sensation that filled the courtroom with reporters, curious spectators, victims of Elizabeth's bank and individual cons and Andrew Carnegie, the man whose name was used to bilk a total of \$10,000,000. When Carnegie was asked about Elizabeth's use of his name to con millions of dollars from individuals and banks, he stated that he had not issued a promissory note in twenty years and that the crimes may not have happened if they had asked him.

Elizabeth Bigley died in prison two years into her 14 year sentence, however her time in prison was not as dreary and miserable as most would think. Due to her popularity, Elizabeth was allowed to have some of her personal belongings in her jail cell, including custom tailored dresses, shoes, furs, lavish furniture and steady access to any newspaper writers who wished to talk to her.

Adapted from:

Strange History. Cassie Chadwick (1857-1907): The Carnegie Con Woman
<http://www.strangehistory.org/cms/index.php/popular/25-item-8>

1984

Contextⁱ

Born Eric Blair in India in 1903, George Orwell was educated as a scholarship student at prestigious boarding schools in England. Because of his background—he famously described his family as “lower-upper-middle class”—he never quite fit in, and felt oppressed and outraged by the dictatorial control that the schools he attended exercised over their students’ lives. After graduating from Eton, Orwell decided to forego college in order to work as a British Imperial Policeman in Burma. He hated his duties in Burma, where he was required to enforce the strict laws of a political regime he despised. His failing health, which troubled him throughout his life, caused him to return to England on convalescent leave. Once back in England, he quit the Imperial Police and dedicated himself to becoming a writer.

Inspired by Jack London’s 1903 book *The People of the Abyss*, which detailed London’s experience in the slums of London, Orwell bought ragged clothes from a second-hand store and went to live among the very poor in London. After reemerging, he published a book about this experience, entitled *Down and Out in Paris and London*. He later lived among destitute coal miners in northern England, an experience that caused him to give up on capitalism in favor of democratic socialism. In 1936, he traveled to Spain to report on the Spanish Civil War, where he witnessed firsthand the nightmarish atrocities committed by fascist political regimes. The rise to power of dictators such as Adolf Hitler in Germany and Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union inspired Orwell’s mounting hatred of totalitarianism and political authority. Orwell devoted his energy to writing novels that were politically charged, first with *Animal Farm* in 1945, then with *1984* in 1949.

1984 is one of Orwell’s best-crafted novels, and it remains one of the most powerful warnings ever issued against the dangers of a totalitarian society. In Spain, Germany, and the Soviet Union, Orwell had witnessed the danger of absolute political authority in an age of advanced technology. He illustrated that peril harshly in *1984*. *1984* is one of the most famous novels of the negative utopian, or dystopian, genre. Unlike a utopian novel, in which the writer aims to portray the perfect human society, a novel of negative utopia does the exact opposite: it shows the worst human society imaginable, in an effort to convince readers to avoid any path that might lead toward such societal degradation. In 1949, at the dawn of the nuclear age and before the television had become a fixture in the family home, Orwell’s vision of a post-

atomic dictatorship in which every individual would be monitored ceaselessly by means of the tele-screen seemed terrifyingly possible. That Orwell postulated such a society a mere thirty-five years into the future compounded this fear.

Of course, the world that Orwell envisioned in 1984 did not materialize. Rather than being overwhelmed by totalitarianism, democracy ultimately won out in the Cold War, as seen in the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. Yet 1984 remains an important novel, in part for the alarm it sounds against the abusive nature of authoritarian governments, but even more so for its penetrating analysis of the psychology of power and the ways that manipulations of language and history can be used as mechanisms of control.

Adapted from:

SparkNotes. (2003- 2007). 1984 George Orwell. *SparkNotes*, 01-45.

1984

(George Orwell, 1949, pp: 146-156)

- 'Do you know where you are, Winston?' he said.

- 'I don't know. I can guess. In the Ministry of Love.'

(...) - 'And why do you imagine that we bring people to this place?'

- 'To make them confess.'

- 'No, that is not the reason. Try again.'

- 'To punish them.'

- 'No!' exclaimed O'Brien. ... 'No! Not merely to extract your confession, not to punish you. (...) The Party is not interested in the overt act: the thought is all we care about. We do not merely destroy our enemies, we change them. Do you understand what I mean by that?'

(...) 'The first thing for you to understand is that in this place there are no martyrdoms. You have read of the religious persecutions of the past. In the Middle Ages there was the Inquisition. It was a failure. It set out to eradicate heresy, and ended by perpetuating it. For every heretic it burned at the stake, thousands of others rose up. Why was that? Because the Inquisition killed its enemies in the open, and killed them while they were still unrepentant: in fact, it killed them because they were unrepentant. Men were dying because they would not abandon their true beliefs. Naturally all the glory belonged to the victim and all the shame to the Inquisitor who burned him. Later, in the twentieth century, there were the totalitarians, as they were called. There were the German Nazis and the Russian Communists. The Russians persecuted heresy more cruelly than the Inquisition had done. And they imagined that they had learned from the mistakes of the past; they knew, at any rate, that one must not make martyrs. Before they exposed their victims to public trial, they deliberately set themselves to destroy their dignity. They wore them down by torture and solitude until they were despicable, cringing wretches, confessing whatever was put into their mouths, covering themselves with abuse, accusing and sheltering behind one another, whimpering for mercy. And yet after only a few years the same thing had happened over again. The dead men had become martyrs and their degradation was forgotten. Once again, why was it? In the first place, because the confessions that they had made were obviously extorted and untrue. We do not make mistakes of that kind. All the confessions that are uttered here are true. We make them true.

(...) You understand well enough how the Party maintains itself in power. Now tell me why we cling to power. What is our motive? Why should we want power? Go on, speak,' he added as Winston remained silent.

(...) - 'You are ruling over us for our own good,' he said feebly. 'You believe that human beings are not fit to govern themselves, and therefore-'

(...) - 'That was stupid, Winston, stupid!' he said. 'You should know better than to say a thing like that.'

(...) 'Now I will tell you the answer to my question. It is this. The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or long life or happiness: only power, pure power. What pure power means you will understand presently. We are different from all the oligarchies of the

[1]

past, in that we know what we are doing. All the others, even those who resembled ourselves, were cowards and hypocrites. The German Nazis and the Russian Communists came very close to us in their methods, but they never had the courage to recognize their own motives. They pretended, perhaps they even believed, that they had seized power unwillingly and for a limited time, and that just round the corner there lay a paradise where human beings would be free and equal. We are not like that. We know that no one ever seizes power with the intention of relinquishing it. Power is not a means, it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of torture is torture. The object of power is power. Now do you begin to understand me?’

(...) ’The real power, the power we have to fight for night and day, is not power over things, but over men.’ He paused, and for a moment assumed again his air of a schoolmaster questioning a promising pupil: ’How does one man assert his power over another, Winston?’

- Winston thought. ’By making him suffer,’ he said.

- ’Exactly. By making him suffer. Obedience is not enough. Unless he is suffering, how can you be sure that he is obeying your will and not his own? Power is in inflicting pain and humiliation. Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing. Do you begin to see, then, what kind of world we are creating? It is the exact opposite of the stupid hedonistic Utopias that the old reformers imagined. A world of fear and treachery, a world of trampling and being trampled upon, a world which will grow not less but more merciless as it refines itself. Progress in our world will be progress towards more pain. The old civilizations claimed that they were founded on love or justice. Ours is founded upon hatred. In our world there will be no emotions except fear, rage, triumph, and self-abasement. Everything else we shall destroy everything.

(...)There will be no loyalty, except loyalty towards the Party. There will be no love, except the love of Big Brother. There will be no laughter, except the laugh of triumph over a defeated enemy. There will be no art, no literature, no science. When we are omnipotent we shall have no more need of science. There will be no distinction between beauty and ugliness. There will be no curiosity, no enjoyment of the process of life. All competing pleasures will be destroyed. But always — do not forget this, Winston — always there will be the intoxication of power, constantly increasing and constantly growing subtler. Always, at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory, the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face — for ever.’

(...)’And remember that it is for ever. The face will always be there to be stamped upon. The heretic, the enemy of society, will always be there, so that he can be defeated and humiliated over again. Everything that you have undergone since you have been in our hands — all that will continue, and worse. The espionage, the betrayals, the arrests, the tortures, the executions, the disappearances will never cease. It will be a world of terror as much as a world of triumph. The more the Party is powerful, the less it will be tolerant; the weaker the opposition, the tighter the despotism.

Adapted from:

Orwell, George. 1984. Harvill Secker: London 1949, pp: 146-156

SANTA CLAUS

The man we know as Santa Claus has a history all his own. Today, he is thought of mainly as the jolly man in red, but his story stretches all the way back to the 3rd century.

THE LEGEND OF ST. NICHOLAS

The legend of Santa Claus can be traced back hundreds of years to a monk named St. Nicholas. It is believed that Nicholas was born sometime around 280 A.D. in Patara, near Myra in modern-day Turkey. Much admired for his piety and kindness, St. Nicholas became the subject of many legends. It is said that he gave away all of his inherited wealth and traveled the countryside helping the poor and sick. One of the best known of the St. Nicholas stories is that he saved three poor sisters from being sold into slavery or prostitution by their father by providing them with a dowry so that they could be married. Over the course of many years, Nicholas's popularity spread and he became known as the protector of children and sailors. His feast day is celebrated on the anniversary of his death, December 6. This was traditionally considered a lucky day to make large purchases or to get married. By the Renaissance, St. Nicholas was the most popular saint in Europe. Even after the Protestant Reformation, when the veneration of saints began to be discouraged, St. Nicholas maintained a positive reputation, especially in Holland.

SINTER KLAAS COMES TO NEW YORK

St. Nicholas made his first inroads into American popular culture towards the end of the 18th century. In December 1773, and again in 1774, a [New York](#) newspaper reported that groups of Dutch families had gathered to honor the anniversary of his death.

The name Santa Claus evolved from Nick's Dutch nickname, Sinter Klaas, a shortened form of Sint Nikolaas (Dutch for Saint Nicholas). In 1804, John Pintard, a member of the New York Historical Society, distributed woodcuts of St. Nicholas at the society's annual meeting. The background of the engraving contains now-familiar Santa images including stockings filled with toys and fruit hung over a fireplace. In 1809, [Washington](#) Irving helped to popularize the Sinter Klaas stories when he referred to St. Nicholas as the patron saint of New York in his book, *The History of New York*. As his prominence grew, Sinter Klaas was described as everything from a "rascal" with a blue three-cornered hat, red waistcoat, and yellow stockings to a man wearing a broad-brimmed hat and a "huge pair of Flemish trunk hose."

SHOPPING MALL SANTAS

Gift-giving, mainly centered around children, has been an important part of the [Christmas](#) celebration since the holiday's rejuvenation in the early 19th century. Stores began to advertise Christmas shopping in 1820, and by the 1840s, newspapers were creating separate sections for holiday advertisements, which often featured images of the newly-popular Santa Claus. In 1841, thousands of children visited a Philadelphia shop to see a life-size Santa Claus

model. It was only a matter of time before stores began to attract children, and their parents, with the lure of a peek at a “live” Santa Claus. In the early 1890s, the Salvation Army needed money to pay for the free Christmas meals they provided to needy families. They began dressing up unemployed men in Santa Claus suits and sending them into the streets of New York to solicit donations. Those familiar Salvation Army Santas have been ringing bells on the street corners of American cities ever since.

IT WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

In 1822, Clement Clarke Moore, an Episcopal minister, wrote a long Christmas poem for his three daughters entitled “An Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas.” Moore’s poem, which he was initially hesitant to publish due to the frivolous nature of its subject, is largely responsible for our modern image of Santa Claus as a “right jolly old elf” with a portly figure and the supernatural ability to ascend a chimney with a mere nod of his head! Although some of Moore’s imagery was probably borrowed from other sources, his poem helped popularize the now-familiar image of a Santa Claus who flew from house to house on Christmas Eve—in “a miniature sleigh” led by eight flying reindeer—leaving presents for deserving children. “An Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas” created a new and immediately popular American icon. In 1881, political cartoonist Thomas Nast drew on Moore’s poem to create the first likeness that matches our modern image of Santa Claus. His cartoon, which appeared in Harper’s Weekly, depicted Santa as a rotund, cheerful man with a full, white beard, holding a sack laden with toys for lucky children. It is Nast who gave Santa his bright red suit trimmed with white fur, North Pole workshop, elves, and his wife, Mrs. Claus.

A SANTA BY ANY OTHER NAME

18th-century America’s Santa Claus was not the only St. Nicholas-inspired gift-giver to make an appearance at Christmastime. Similar figures were popular all over the world. Christkind or Kris Kringle was believed to deliver presents to well-behaved Swiss and German children. Meaning “Christ child,” Christkind is an angel-like figure often accompanied by St. Nicholas on his holiday missions. In Scandinavia, a jolly elf named Jultomten was thought to deliver gifts in a sleigh drawn by goats. English legend explains that Father Christmas visits each home on Christmas Eve to fill children’s stockings with holiday treats. Pere Noel is responsible for filling the shoes of French children. In Russia, it is believed that an elderly woman named Babouschka purposely gave the wise men wrong directions to Bethlehem so that they couldn’t find Jesus. Later, she felt remorseful, but could not find the men to undo the damage. To this day, on January 5, Babouschka visits Russian children leaving gifts at their bedsides in the hope that one of them is the baby Jesus and she will be forgiven. In Italy, a similar story exists about a woman called La Befana, a kindly witch who rides a broomstick down the chimneys of Italian homes to deliver toys into the stockings of lucky children.

Adapted from:

History.com. Santa Claus 2010

<https://www.history.com/topics/christmas/santa-claus>

Guy Fawkes

Guy Fawkes was born in April 1570 in York. Although his immediate family were all Protestants, in keeping with the accepted religious practice in England at the time, his maternal grandparents were 'recusant' Catholics, who refused to attend Protestant services. When Guy was eight, his father died and his widowed mother married a Catholic, Dionis Baynbrigge. It was these early influences that were to forge Fawkes' convictions as an adult.

Fawkes and Spain

By the time he was 21 he had sold the estate his father had left him and gone to Europe to fight for Catholic Spain against the Protestant Dutch republic in the Eighty Years War. His military career went well and by 1603 he had been recommended for a captaincy. He had also adopted the Italian variant of his name, becoming known as 'Guido'.

In the same year, he travelled to Spain to petition the king, Philip III, for support in fomenting a rebellion in England against the "heretic" James I. Despite the fact that Spain and Britain were still, technically, at war, Philip refused.

"A man highly skilled in matters of war"

Personally, Fawkes was an imposing man. His former school friend Oswald Tesimond, who had become a Jesuit Catholic priest, described him as "pleasant of approach and cheerful of manner, opposed to quarrels and strife ... loyal to his friends".

Tesimond also claimed Fawkes was "a man highly skilled in matters of war", while the historian Antonia Fraser described him as "a tall, powerfully built man, with thick reddish-brown hair, a flowing moustache in the tradition of the time, and a bushy reddish-brown beard... a man of action ... capable of intelligent argument as well as physical endurance, somewhat to the surprise of his enemies."

Fawkes is drawn into the plot

It was while on campaign fighting for Spain in Flanders that Fawkes was approached by Thomas Wintour, one of the plotters, and asked to join what would become known as the Gunpowder Plot, under the leadership of Robert Catesby.

His expertise with gunpowder gave him a key - and very perilous - role in the conspiracy, to source and ignite the explosive. But 18 months of careful planning was foiled with just hours to go, when he was arrested at midnight on 4 November 1605 beneath the House of Lords. Thirty-six barrels of gunpowder were found stacked in the cellar directly below where the king would have been sitting for the opening of parliament the next day.

The foiling of the plot had been expertly engineered by James I's spymaster, Robert Cecil. Fawkes was subjected to various tortures, including the rack. Torture was technically illegal, and James I was personally required to give a licence for Fawkes to endure its ravages.

While just the threat of torture was enough to break the resolve of many, Fawkes withstood two days of the most terrible pain before he confessed all. Famously, his signature on his confession was that of a shattered and broken man, the ill-formed letters telling the story of a someone who was barely able to hold a quill. His fortitude throughout had impressed James I, who said he admired Fawkes' "Roman resolution".

Fawkes was sentenced to the traditional traitors' death - to be 'hanged, drawn and quartered'. In the event, he jumped from the gallows, breaking his own neck and thereby avoiding the horror of being cut down while still alive, having his testicles cut off and his stomach opened and his guts spilled before his eyes. His lifeless body was hacked into quarters and his remains sent to "the four corners of the kingdom" as a warning to others.

The burning of the 'guy'

Guy Fawkes instantly became a national bogeyman and the embodiment of Catholic extremism. It was a propaganda coup for the Protestant English and served as a pretext for further repression of Catholics that would not be completely lifted for another 200 years.

It is perhaps surprising that Fawkes and not the charismatic ring-leader Robert Catesby is remembered, but it was Fawkes who was caught red-handed under the Houses of Parliament, Fawkes who refused to speak under torture, and Fawkes who was publicly executed. Catesby, by contrast, was killed evading capture and was never tried.

Through the centuries the Guy Fawkes legend has become ever-more entrenched, and by the 19th Century it was his effigy that was being placed on the bonfires that were lit annually to commemorate the failure of the plot.

Adapted from:

bbc.co.uk. Guy Fawkes

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/people/guy_fawkes