

Materials may be picked up at the school's office either on or prior to Friday March 20th. Tasks are to be handed in once school resumes, please do not wait to the last minute. I will be choosing three tasks to be included in your final grade. You will find out which ones once school resumes ☺ Feel free to email me if you wish to discuss any of the readings or tasks. -Mme Rozehnal

Monday, March 23rd	Tuesday, March 24th	Wednesday, March 25th	Thursday, March 26th	Friday, March 27th
<p>Choose a news article from a reputable source, a news magazine, an online source (https://theconversation.com/ca) or our local newspaper.</p> <p>I would like you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Read the article and complete the grid organizer: <p>What's Up in the World?</p> <p>➤ Be ready to hand in the task once school resumes.</p>	<p>Go to our class website at www.egrela30s.weebly.com on our Additional Notes page and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the three different types of Irony we have studied, 2. Accompany your reading with the audio version of our story today, "The Storyteller" by Saki. <p>Then I would like you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Complete the "Oh, the Irony!" worksheet. □ After reading "The Storyteller" by Saki, complete the accompanying question set. <p>➤ Be ready to discuss the story and be able to identify the three types of irony when school resumes.</p>	<p>Choose a TED Talk of your choice https://www.ted.com/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Listen and view with intention □ Respond to your chosen TED Talk using the grid organizer <p style="text-align: center;">TED TALK</p> <p>➤ Be ready to hand in the Grid Organizer once school resumes.</p>	<p>SSR Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Continue reading/viewing your chosen texts □ After you've finished reading / viewing and/or listening, complete the: <p style="text-align: center;">Choose 3</p> <p>➤ Be ready to hand in the tasks (in your ELA Notebook or separate papers) once school resumes.</p>	<p>Choose a news article from a reputable source, a news magazine, an online source (https://theconversation.com/ca) or our local newspaper.</p> <p>I would like you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Read the article and complete the grid organizer: <p>What's Up in the World?</p> <p>➤ Be ready to hand in the task once school resumes.</p>

Directions

After you've read the article, complete the following grid. If you run out of space on the grid for any of your answers, feel free to continue writing on the back of this sheet.

1 Name of publication/news organization:

2 Headline:

3 Name of author and date of publication:

4 Is this article a news or opinion piece? How do you know?

6 In **precisely three sentences**, summarize the following: Who was involved? What happened? Where? When? Why did this event/issue happen? How were people impacted? (Yes, you'll need to use sentence combining structures to fit all of this information into just three sentences.)

5 Circle one of the following that applies to the event/issue in this article:

- Local
- ~~Prov/Regional~~
- National
- International
- Universal

7 What group or groups of people would care the most about this information? Why?

8 What is your opinion about this event/issue? Defend your position with details from the article and logical reasoning.

9 Why is this event/issue newsworthy?

10 If you could ask the article's author a question about his/her information, what would you ask?

11 Choose a word from the article that is new to you. First, write the sentence in which the word appears and circle the word:

Second, write the word's dictionary definition:

WHAT'S IN THE WORLD?

The Storyteller

By Saki

It was a hot afternoon, and the railway carriage was correspondingly sultry, and the next stop was at Templecombe¹, nearly an hour ahead. The occupants of the carriage were a small girl, and a smaller girl, and a small boy. An aunt belonging to the children occupied one corner seat, and the further corner seat on the opposite side was occupied by a bachelor who was a stranger to their party, but the small girls and the small boy emphatically occupied the compartment. Both the aunt and the children were conversational in a limited, persistent way, reminding one of the attentions of a housefly that refuses to be discouraged. Most of the aunt's remarks seemed to begin with "Don't," and nearly all of the children's remarks began with "Why?" The bachelor said nothing out loud. "Don't, Cyril, don't," exclaimed the aunt, as the small boy began smacking the cushions of the seat, producing a cloud of dust at each blow.

"Come and look out of the window," she added.

The child moved reluctantly to the window. "Why are those sheep being driven out of that field?" he asked.

"I expect they are being driven to another field where there is more grass," said the aunt weakly.

"But there is lots of grass in that field," protested the boy. "There's nothing else but grass there. Aunt, there's lots of grass in that field."

"Perhaps the grass in the other field is better," suggested the aunt fatuously.

"Why is it better?" came the swift, inevitable question.

"Oh, look at those cows!" exclaimed the aunt. Nearly every field along the line had contained cows or bullocks, but she spoke as though she were drawing attention to a rarity.

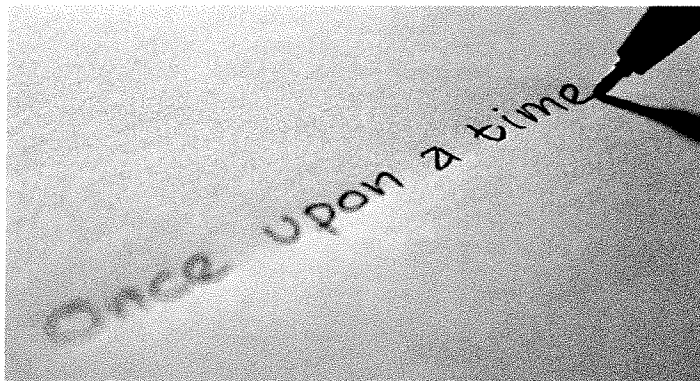
"Why is the grass in the other field better?" persisted Cyril.

The frown on the bachelor's face was deepening to a scowl. He was a hard, unsympathetic man, the aunt decided in her mind. She was utterly unable to come to any satisfactory decision about the grass in the other field.

The smaller girl created a diversion by beginning to recite "On the Road to Mandalay." She only knew the first line, but she put her limited knowledge to the fullest possible use. She repeated the line over and over again in a dreamy but resolute and very audible voice; it seemed to the bachelor as though someone had had a bet with her that she could not repeat the line aloud two thousand times without stopping. Whoever it was who had made the wager was likely to lose his bet.

"Come over here and listen to a story," said the aunt, when the bachelor had looked twice at her and once at the communication cord.

The children moved listlessly toward the aunt's end of the carriage. Evidently, her reputation as a storyteller did not rank high in their estimation.



In a low, confidential voice, interrupted at frequent intervals by loud, petulant² questionings from her listeners, she began an unenterprising and deplorably uninteresting story about a little girl who was good, and made friends with everyone on account of her goodness, and was finally saved from a mad bull by a number of rescuers who admired her

moral character.

"Wouldn't they have saved her if she hadn't been good?" demanded the bigger of the small girls. It was exactly the question that the bachelor had wanted to ask.

"Well, yes," admitted the aunt lamely, "but I don't think they would have run quite so fast to her help if they had not liked her so much."

"It's the stupidest story I've ever heard," said the bigger of the small girls, with immense

1. **Templecombe** – a village in Somerset, England
2. **petulant** – childishly sulky or bad-tempered

conviction.

“I didn’t listen after the first bit, it was so stupid,” said Cyril.

The smaller girl made no actual comment on the story, but she had long ago recommenced a murmured repetition of her favorite line.

“You don’t seem to be a success as a storyteller,” said the bachelor suddenly from his corner. The aunt bristled in instant defense at this unexpected attack.

“It’s a very difficult thing to tell stories that children can both understand and appreciate,” she said stiffly.

“I don’t agree with you,” said the bachelor.



Image credit: Pixabay, Public domain

“Perhaps you would like to tell them a story,” was the aunt’s retort.

“Tell us a story,” demanded the bigger of the small girls.

“Once upon a time,” began the bachelor, “there was a little girl called Bertha, who was extraordinarily good.”

The children’s momentarily aroused interest began at once to flicker; all stories seemed dreadfully alike, no matter who told them.

“She did all that she was told, she was always truthful, she kept her clothes clean, ate milk puddings as though they were jam tarts, learned her lessons perfectly, and was polite in her manners.”

“Was she pretty?” asked the bigger of the small girls.

“Not as pretty as any of you,” said the bachelor, “but she was horribly good.”

There was a wave of reaction in favor of the story; the word “horrible” in connection with goodness was a novelty that commended itself. It seemed to introduce a ring of truth that was absent from the aunt’s tales of infant life.

“She was so good,” continued the bachelor, “that she won several medals for goodness, which she always wore, pinned onto her dress. There was a medal for obedience, another medal for punctuality, and a third for good behavior. They were large metal medals and they clicked against one another as she walked. No other child in the town where she lived had as many as three medals, so everybody knew that she must be an extra good child.”

“Horribly good,” quoted Cyril.

“Everybody talked about her goodness, and the Prince of the country got to hear about it, and he said that as she was so very good she might be allowed once a week to walk in his park, which was just outside the town. It was a beautiful park, and no children were ever allowed in it, so it was a great honor for Bertha to be allowed to go there.”

“Were there any sheep in the park?” demanded Cyril.

“No,” said the bachelor, “there were no sheep.”

“Why weren’t there any sheep?” came the inevitable question arising out of that answer.

The aunt permitted herself a smile, which might almost have been described as a grin.

“There were no sheep in the park,” said the bachelor, “because the Prince’s mother had once had a dream that her son would either be killed by a sheep or else by a clock falling on him. For that reason, the Prince never kept a sheep in his park or a clock in his palace.”

The aunt suppressed a gasp of admiration.

“Was the Prince killed by a sheep or by a clock?” asked Cyril.

“He is still alive, so we can’t tell whether the dream will come true,” said the bachelor unconcernedly. “Anyway, there were no sheep in the park, but there were lots of little pigs running all over the place.”

“What color were they?”

“Black with white faces, white with black spots, black all over, gray with white

patches, and some were white all over.”

The storyteller paused to let a full idea of the park’s treasures sink into the children’s imaginations; then, he resumed. “Bertha was rather sorry to find that there were no flowers in the park. She had promised her aunts, with tears in her eyes, that she would not pick any of the kind Prince’s flowers, and she had meant to keep her promise, so of course it made her feel silly to find there were no flowers to pick.”

“Why weren’t there any flowers?”

“Because the pigs had eaten them all,” said the bachelor promptly. “The gardeners had told the Prince that you couldn’t have pigs and flowers, so he decided to have pigs and no flowers.”

There was a murmur of approval at the excellence of the Prince’s decision; so many people would have decided the other way.

“There were lots of other delightful things in the park. There were ponds with gold and blue and green fish in them, and trees with beautiful parrots that said clever things at a moment’s notice, and hummingbirds that hummed all the popular tunes of the day. Bertha walked up and down and enjoyed herself immensely, and thought to herself, *If I were not so extraordinarily good, I should not have been allowed to come into this beautiful park and enjoy all that there is to be seen in it*, and her three medals clinked against one another as she walked and helped to remind her how very good she really was. Just then, an enormous wolf came prowling into the park to see if it could catch a fat little pig for its supper.”

“What color was it?” asked the children, amid an immediate quickening of interest.

“Mud-color all over, with a black tongue and pale gray eyes that gleamed with unspeakable ferocity. The first thing that it saw in the park was Bertha; her pinafore³ was so spotlessly white and clean that it could be seen from a great distance. Bertha saw the wolf and saw that it was stealing towards her, and she began to wish that she had never been allowed to come into the park. She ran as hard as she could, and the wolf came after her with huge leaps and

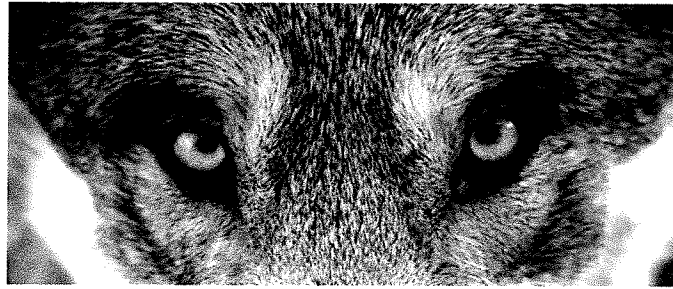


Image credit: Pixabay, Public domain

bounds. She managed to reach a shrubbery of myrtle bushes and she hid herself in one of the thickest of the bushes. The wolf came sniffing among the branches, its black tongue lolling out of its mouth and its pale gray eyes glaring with rage. Bertha was terribly frightened, and thought to herself, *If I had not been so extraordinarily good, I should have been safe in the town at this moment*. However, the scent of the myrtle was so strong that the wolf could not sniff out where Bertha was hiding, and the bushes were so thick that

he might have hunted about in them for a long time without catching sight of her, so he thought he might as well go off and catch a little pig instead. Bertha was trembling very much at having the wolf prowling and sniffing so near her, and as she trembled the medal for obedience clinked against the medals for good conduct and punctuality. The wolf was just moving away when he heard the sound of the medals clinking and stopped to listen; they clinked again in a bush quite near him. He dashed into the bush, his pale gray eyes gleaming with ferocity and triumph, and dragged Bertha out and devoured her to the last morsel. All that was left of her were her shoes, bits of clothing, and the three medals for goodness.”

“Were any of the little pigs killed?”

“No, they all escaped.”

“The story began badly,” said the smaller of the small girls, “but it had a beautiful ending.”

“It is the most beautiful story that I ever heard,” said the bigger of the small girls, with immense decision.

“It is the only beautiful story I have ever heard,” said Cyril.

A dissentient⁴ opinion came from the aunt. “A most improper story to tell to young children! You have undermined the effect of years of careful teaching.”

“At any rate,” said the bachelor, collecting his belongings preparatory to leaving the carriage, “I kept them quiet for ten minutes, which was more than you were able to do.”

“Unhappy woman!” he observed to himself as he walked down the platform of Templecombe station. “For the next six months or so, those children will assail her in public with demands for an improper story!”

3. *pinafore* – a sleeveless apronlike garment worn over a child’s dress
4. *dissentient* – in opposition to

Oh, the Irony!

S 1. Microsoft's new Chief Executive Officer completes all of her work on an Apple computer.

_____ 2. As the teacher handed back our graded exams, the kid next to me muttered, "Great."

_____ 3. In *Star Wars*, the audience knows that Darth Vader is Luke Skywalker's father, but Luke doesn't learn this until *Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back*.

_____ 4. A prisoner spends months digging an underground tunnel leading out of his cell. His plan is flawed, though, and he ends up emerging in the warden's backyard, where he is promptly caught and returned to prison with additional time added to his sentence.

_____ 5. Even though a young couple dreamed of having a wedding amid beautiful flowers and butterflies at a nearby park, they were also worried that rain would ruin the event. Ultimately, they decided to have the wedding at a local banquet hall instead. Sure, the hall wasn't very pretty, but at least they knew their guests would be comfortable, regardless of the weather. Halfway through the reception on the Big Day, the building's ceiling sprinklers malfunctioned, drenching the guests and ruining the food and decorations; outside, it was clear and sunny.

_____ 6. In *The Truman Show*, a 1998 movie starring Jim Carrey, the main character doesn't realize he's living inside a TV show, but everyone else around him, including the audience, knows the truth.

_____ 8. On a TV talk show, viewers are told the real reason why a guest has been brought onto the show. He mistakenly thinks he's there to talk about his job at a coffeeshop, but he's really there to be gifted a full college scholarship.

_____ 9. *Fahrenheit 451*, a novel about the dangers of censorship, is one of the most-often banned books in the U.S.

_____ 10. A police station was robbed.

Directions: For each of the following scenarios, decide whether the event is an example of situational, verbal, or dramatic irony.

Write **S**, **V**, or **D** in the space provided. The first one is completed for you.

Situational irony: When something happens that is the opposite of what was expected

Verbal irony: When someone says one thing but really means the opposite

Dramatic irony: The audience knows more about the events of a story than a character

_____ 7. One of my cousins used to constantly complain on social media about the uselessness of social media, but then she was "friended" on Facebook by a former classmate, a young man who eventually became her husband. They've been happily married for years.

_____ 11. Before their televised debate began, one politician sneered, "Good luck," as her opponent crossed in front of her, walking toward the stage.

_____ 12. It may seem odd, but every box of Q-tips, also known as cotton buds or cotton swabs, comes with this warning: "Do not insert swab into ear canal."

_____ 13.

_____ 14. Brian, the city's building inspector, was hosting a party at his house when his upstairs deck started to wobble. The wood posts, he later discovered, were being eaten away by termites. He ended up rebuilding the entire structure.

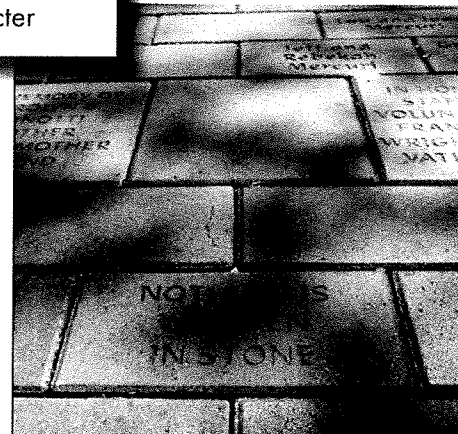


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Saki's "The Storyteller"

On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions. To receive credit, you must write complete, thoughtful sentences.

1. Based only on the first paragraph of the story, the mood could be described as oppressive because of the heat, the close quarters of the train car, and the aunt's repeated use of the word "Don't." Look at that same paragraph and determine the narrator's tone or attitude toward the characters and events of the story. What is the tone of the opening paragraph? Give evidence to support your stance.
2. The only character who is named is Cyril, the small boy. In Greek, the name "Cyril" can be translated to mean "lord." Given this information, what point do you suppose Saki was trying to make in choosing this name for this character?
3. What does the aunt do when Cyril presses her about why the sheep would think the grass in the other field is better? Think about the idiom, "The grass is always greener on the other side of fence," and explain what point Saki, the author, might be making here.
4. In the bachelor's story, what has Bertha done to win her three medals? Do you agree that these are the qualities that should be used to determine whether a child is good? Explain your answer.
5. Also in his story, Bertha is disappointed to discover there are no flowers in the park. Why was she disappointed? What does this say about the nature of goodness?
6. Why, do you suppose, the children used the word "beautiful" to describe the grisly ending of the bachelor's story?
7. Satire is a device employed by writers to criticize the foolishness of others and make a larger point about society by using humor, exaggeration, or mockery. What part of this story do you find to be satirical?
8. Situational irony occurs when actions have an effect that is opposite from what was intended. What part of this story is an example of situational irony?
9. Early in the story, one of the girls repeats the first line of "On the Road to Mandalay," a Rudyard Kipling poem about a British soldier who formerly served in Burma (today known as Myanmar) and longs to return to the exotic land and a girl there that he loved. He says Southeast Asia is "where the best is like the worst, where there aren't no Ten Commandments an' a man can raise a thirst..." Explain the irony of having the smaller girl on the train recite a line from this particular poem.
10. What colors are used to describe the pigs and the wolf? Symbolically, what message can be drawn from this?
11. Is the bachelor the protagonist or antagonist of this story? Explain your answer.
12. Is it possible for a person to be too good? Explain your answer.
13. Based on this story, what do you think was Saki's opinion of the British school system? Give two pieces of evidence from the text to support your answer.
14. Thinking beyond the story, what responsibility do adults have toward children? What responsibilities, if any, do you have when interacting with little kids? Explain your thoughts.

Directions

View the T.E.D. Talk and complete the following grid. If you run out of space on the grid for any of your answers, feel free to continue writing on the back of this sheet.

Title of T.E.D. Talk:

1

Name of Speaker:

2

Date of T.E.D. Talk and Number of Views:

3

4 What was the speaker's thesis (main point) of this speech?

6 **Ethos** is a speaker's ability to build credibility, establish himself/herself as an expert, and/or convince the audience members that the speaker has their best interests at heart. How does this speaker build ethos? Feel free to also refer to the speaker's profile information from the ted.com webpage as you build your answer.

5 Circle any of the following adjectives that describe this T.E.D. talk:

Humorous
Inspiring
Dull
Persuasive
Intellectual
Repetitive
Confusing

7 **Pathos** is an appeal to emotions (everything from humor to horror) in order to sway an audience, while **logos** is the use of data/evidence to prove one's case. Did this speaker rely more on pathos or logos in his/her presentation? What argument/point in this presentation did you find the most compelling? Why?

8 T.E.D. Talk presenters are known as effective public speakers. Describe two things this speaker does well in terms of engaging the audience. Be sure to include the minute:second mark (ex: 8:49) to denote the two specific moments you discuss here.

1.

2.

9 Write two specific things you learned from this presentation.

1.

2.

10 If you could ask this speaker a question about his/her information or presentation, what would you ask?


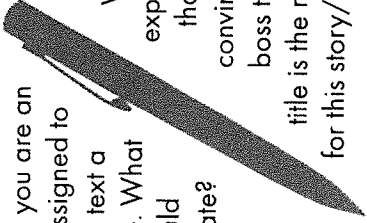
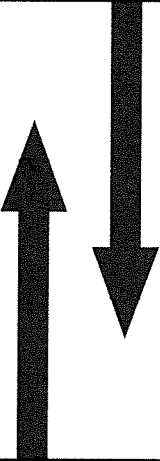
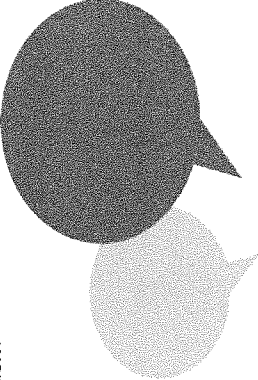
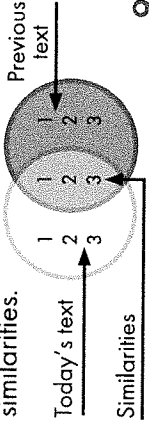
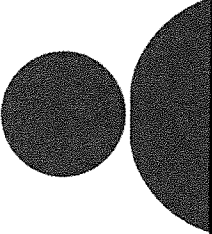
11 Give one piece of constructive criticism that would improve the presentation.

12 What group of people would benefit the most from hearing this lecture?



CHOOSE 3

After you've finished reading the short story or novel chapter, complete **three** of the following tasks on a separate sheet of paper:

<p>Write the one sentence that you think is the most meaningful in the entire story/chapter. Defend your choice.</p> 	<p>Write a sentence of 25 words or fewer that clearly and boldly states the theme of this story/chapter. Then, describe three specific elements from the text that support your theme.</p>	<p>Imagine you are an editor assigned to give this text a new title. What title would you create?</p>  <p>Write an explanation that would convince your boss that your title is the right one for this story/chapter.</p>	1	2	3
<p>In the voice of the narrator, write a diary entry from the day after the last event of this story/chapter occurred.</p>	<p>What is one choice a character made in this text that you would change? How would this different choice alter the path of the story?</p> 	<p>If something in this story reminds you of a song, poem, film, or other piece of media, describe the connection. Include as much detail about the related work as you can to help your reader understand the connection.</p>	4	5	6
<p>If you could interview the author, what three questions you would ask?</p> 	<p>Write a paragraph of at least five sentences that could be seamlessly inserted into the story/chapter. Be sure to include a paragraph number and/or explanation to show where your passage could be stitched into the text.</p>	<p>Create a Venn diagram to compare/contrast this text with a different story we've read this year. Your diagram needs nine distinct entries. Explain the significance of the three similarities.</p> 	7	8	9
<p>If you could interview one of the characters, which one would you choose? Write three questions related to the events of the story/chapter that you would ask that character.</p>	<p>Which character changes the most over the course of the short story or the novel so far? Defend your choice with specific details from the text.</p> 	<p>Choose three high-level vocabulary words from the text and write them on your paper. Based on their usage, write a guess as to their meaning. Look up the words in a dictionary and write the actual definition. Was your guess correct? Finally, write a new sentence correctly using each of the words.</p>	10	11	12

Directions

After you've read the article, complete the following grid. If you run out of space on the grid for any of your answers, feel free to continue writing on the back of this sheet.

Name of publication/news organization:

Headline:

Name of author and date of publication:

1

2

3

- 4** Is this article a news or opinion piece? How do you know?
- 6** In **precisely three sentences**, summarize the following: Who was involved? What happened? Where? When? Why did this event/issue happen? How were people impacted? (Yes, you'll need to use sentence combining structures to fit all of this information into just three sentences.)



7 What group or groups of people would care the most about this information? Why?

8 What is your opinion about this event/issue? Defend your position with details from the article and logical reasoning.

9 Why is this event/issue newsworthy?

10 If you could ask the article's author a question about his/her information, what would you ask?

11 Choose a word from the article that is new to you. First, write the sentence in which the word appears and circle the word:

Second, write the word's dictionary definition:

WHAT'S IN THE WORLD?

Monday, April 6th	Tuesday, April 7th	Wednesday, April 8th	Thursday, April 9th	Friday, April 10th
<p>Choose a news article from a reputable source, a news magazine, an online source (https://theconversation.com/ca) or our local newspaper.</p> <p>I would like you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Read the article and complete the grid organizer: <p>What's Up in the World?</p> <p>➤ Be ready to hand in the task once school resumes.</p>	<p>Go to our class website at www.egrela30s.weebly.com and review the video on foreshadowing on our <i>Additional Notes</i> page</p> <p>I would like you to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Read "The Feather Pillow" by Horatio Quiroga. □ Complete the accompanying question set either in your notebook or on separate sheets of paper. <p>➤ Be ready to make a connection between this text and tomorrow's, "Understanding Sleep Paralysis"</p>	<p>Have "The Feather Pillow" close by.</p> <p>I would like you to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Read the "Understanding sleep paralysis" article □ Complete the accompanying question set either in your notebook or on separate sheets of paper. <p>➤ Be ready to discuss the story and complete the questions.</p>	<p>SSR Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Continue reading/viewing your chosen texts □ After you've finished reading / viewing and/or listening, complete the task sheet: <p>Direct and Indirect Characterization</p> <p>➤ Be ready to hand in the task sheet once school resumes.</p>	<p>Choose a TED Talk of your choice:</p> <p>https://www.ted.com/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Listen and view with intention □ Respond to your chosen TED Talk using the grid organizer for TED Talks <p>➤ Be ready to hand in the Grid Organizer once school resumes.</p>

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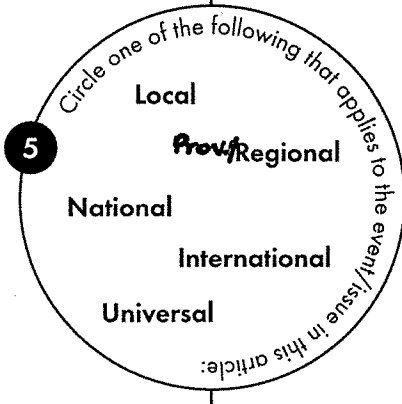
1

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WHAT'S IN THE WORLD?

The Feather Pillow

By Horatio Quiroga
Translated from the original Spanish

Her entire honeymoon gave her hot and cold shivers. A blond, angelic, and timid young girl, the childhood fancies she had dreamed about being a bride had been chilled by her husband's rough character. She loved him very much, nonetheless, although sometimes she gave a light shudder when, as they returned home through the streets together at night, she cast furtive glances at the impressive stature of her Jordan, who had been silent for an hour. He, for his part, loved her profoundly but never let it be seen.

For three months – they had been married in April – they lived in a special kind of bliss. Doubtless she would have wished less severity in the rigorous sky of love, more expansive and less cautious tenderness, but her husband's impassive manner always restrained her.

The house in which they lived influenced her chills and shuddering to no small degree. The whiteness of the silent patio – friezes, columns, and marble statues – produced the wintry impression of an enchanted palace. Inside, the glacial brilliance of stucco, the completely bare walls, affirmed the sensation of unpleasant coldness. As one crossed from one room to another, the echo of his steps reverberated throughout the house, as if long abandonment had sensitized its resonance.

Alicia passed the autumn in this strange love nest. She had determined, however, to cast a veil over her former dreams and live like a sleeping beauty in the hostile house, trying not to think about anything till her husband arrived each evening.

It is not strange that she grew thin. She had a light attack of influenza that

dragged on insidiously for days and days; after that, Alicia's health never returned. Finally one afternoon, she was able to go into the garden, supported on her husband's arm. She looked around listlessly. Suddenly Jordan, with deep tenderness, ran his hand very slowly over her head, and Alicia instantly burst into sobs, throwing her arms around his neck. For a long time, she cried out all the fears she had kept silent, redoubling her weeping at Jordan's slightest caress. Then her sobs subsided, and she stood a long while, her face hidden in the hollow of his neck, not moving or speaking a word.

This was the last day Alicia was well enough to be up. The following day she awakened feeling faint. Jordan's doctor examined her with minute attention, prescribing calm and absolute rest.

"I don't know," he said to Jordan at the street door. "She has a great weakness that I am unable to explain. And with no vomiting, nothing...if she wakes tomorrow as she did today, call me at once."

When she awakened the following day, Alicia was worse. There was a consultation. It was agreed there was an anemia¹ of incredible progression, completely inexplicable. Alicia had no more fainting spells but she was visibly moving toward death. The lights were lighted all day long in her bedroom, and there was complete silence. Hours went by without the slightest sound. Alicia dozed. Jordan virtually lived in the drawing room, which was also always lighted. With tireless persistence, he paced ceaselessly from one end of the room to the other. The carpet swallowed his steps. Occasionally, he entered the bedroom and continued his silent pacing back and forth alongside the bed, stopping for an instant at each end to regard his wife.

Suddenly, Alicia began to have hallucinations, vague images, at first seeming to float in the air, then descending to floor level. Her eyes excessively wide, she stared continuously at the carpet on either side of the head of her bed. One night she suddenly focused on one spot. Then she opened her mouth to scream, and pearls of sweat suddenly beaded her nose and lips.

"Jordan! Jordan!" she clamored, rigid with fright, still staring at the carpet; she looked at him once again; and after a long moment of stupefied confrontation, she regained her senses. She smiled and took her husband's hand in hers, caressing it, trembling, for half an hour.

1. *anemia* – a condition marked by a lack of red blood cells, resulting in weakness

Among her most persistent hallucinations was that of an anthropoid² poised on his fingertips on the carpet, staring at her.

The doctors returned, but to no avail. They saw before them a diminishing life, a life bleeding away day by day, hour by hour, absolutely without their knowing why. During the last consultation, Alicia lay in a stupor while they took her pulse, passing her inert wrist from one to another. They observed her a long time in silence and then moved into the dining room.

“Phew...” The discouraged chief physician shrugged his shoulders. “It’s an inexplicable case. There is little we can do...”

“That’s my last hope,” Jordan groaned. And he staggered blindly against the table.

Alicia’s life was fading away in the sub-delirium of anemia, a delirium which grew worse throughout the evening hours but which let up somewhat after dawn. The illness never worsened during the daytime, but each morning she awakened pale as death, almost in a swoon. It seemed only at night that her life drained out of her in new waves of blood. Always when she awakened she had the sensation of lying collapsed in the bed with a million pound weight on top of her. Following the third day of this relapse she left her bed again. She could scarcely move her head. She did not want her bed to be touched, not even to have her bed-covers arranged. Her crepuscular³ terrors advanced now in the form of monsters that dragged themselves toward the bed and laboriously climbed upon the bedspread.

Then she lost consciousness. The final two days she raved ceaselessly in a weak voice. The lights funereally illuminated the bedroom and drawing room. In the deathly silence of the house, the only sound was the monotonous delirium from the bedroom and the dull echoes of Jordan’s eternal pacing. Finally, Alicia died. The servant, when she came in afterward to strip the now empty bed, stared wonderingly for a moment at the pillow.

“Sir!” she called to Jordan in a low voice. “There are stains on the pillow that look like blood.”

Jordan approached rapidly and bent over the pillow. Truly, on the case, on both

sides of the hollow left by Alicia’s head, were two small dark spots. “They look like punctures,” the servant murmured after a moment of motionless observation.

“Hold it up to the light,” Jordan told her.

The servant raised the pillow but immediately dropped it and stood staring at it, livid and trembling. Without knowing why, Jordan felt the hair rise on the back of his neck.

“What is it?” he murmured in a hoarse voice.

“It’s very heavy,” the servant whispered, still trembling

Jordan picked it up; it was extraordinarily heavy. He carried it out of the room, and on the dining room table he ripped open the case and the ticking with a slash. The top feathers floated away, and the servant, her mouth opened wide, gave a scream of horror and covered her face with clenched fists – in the bottom of the pillow case, among the feathers, slowly moving its hairy legs, was a monstrous animal, a living, viscous ball. It was so swollen one could barely make out its mouth.

Night after night, since Alicia had taken to her bed, this abomination⁴ had stealthily applied its mouth – its proboscis⁵ one might better say – to the girl’s temples, sucking her blood. The puncture was scarcely perceptible. The daily plumping of the pillow had doubtlessly at first impeded its progress, but as soon as the girl could no longer move, the suction became vertiginous⁶. In five days, in five nights, the monster had drained Alicia’s life away.

These parasites of feathered creatures, diminutive in their habitual environment, reach enormous proportions under certain conditions. Human blood seems particularly favorable to them, and it is not rare to encounter them in feather pillows.

2. *anthropoid* – a creature resembling a human in form

3. *crepuscular* – of, resembling, or relating to twilight

4. *abomination* – a thing that causes disgust or hatred

5. *proboscis* – an elongated sucking mouthpart that is typically tubular and flexible

6. *vertiginous* – causing vertigo or dizziness, especially due to being extremely high or steep

The Feather Pillow - Questions

On a separate sheet of paper, completely and thoughtfully answer the following questions.

1. Take a look at the very first line of the story and explain how it can be seen as an example of foreshadowing.
2. In the third paragraph, find and write four adjectives that help set the mood of this story. Then, choose a different adjective not in that paragraph to accurately describe the story's mood.
3. There is a definite point where the third-person narrator turns the story to its horrific path. Find and write the sentence that you think marks this turn and explain your choice.
4. Personification is a technique where a writer gives human traits to an inanimate object, such as a house. Find and write down two phrases where personification is used to describe Jordan and Alicia's home.
5. When they don't have a human to feed on, these creatures are usually quite small. What is their usual food source? How do you know?
6. At what point in the story did you realize what specifically was harming Alicia? Looking back over the story, find a line before that point that could be seen as foreshadowing.
7. What responsibility, if any, does Jordan hold in regards to his wife's death? Could he have prevented this tragedy?
8. Look at the very last line of the story. What is Quiroga's intended effect here on the reader?
9. How likely is it that you'll think about this story as you fall asleep tonight? Describe any other horror tale, either classic or modern, that uses a similar parasite element.

Understanding sleep paralysis: A terrifying but unique state of consciousness

by Dan Denis

PhD Student in Psychology, Univ. of Sheffield

"I awake in bed... In the corner of the room, there are two men. I cannot see them, but I know that they are there and what they look like. I can hear them talking. They are talking about murder. I cannot move. One of the men comes and stands directly above me... He spits, and his spit lands in the socket of my closed eye. I can feel the impact, the wetness, the trail of slime."

This may sound like a scene from the X-Files, but it is actually a personal account of a real experience – told as part of a project on sleep paralysis. This is an unusual condition where one wakes up in the night, unable to move, and often experiences a wide range of bizarre and terrifying hallucinations.

A new documentary, *The Nightmare* directed by Rodney Ascher, was recently released in the UK. The film tracks eight people's experiences of sleep paralysis, brilliantly recreating their terrifying visions on screen. However, it does not touch on the increasing amount of scientific study into the condition. This is a shame, as researchers are slowly getting closer to unravelling its mystery.

Hallucinations and risk factors

Sleep paralysis episodes typically occur either early in the night, as someone is falling asleep, or towards the end of the night, as someone is waking up.

There are three categories of hallucinations. Intruder hallucinations consist of a sense of evil presence in the room, which can also manifest into hyper realistic

multisensory hallucinations of an actual intruder. Incubus hallucinations often co-occur with intruder hallucinations, and describe a sensation of pressure on the chest and feelings of being suffocated.

The third category include so-called vestibular-motor hallucinations, which typically don't occur with the other two, and consist of "illusory movement experiences" such as floating above the bed.

Sleep paralysis is more common than you may think. In a recent UK study, nearly 30% of respondents said that they had experienced at least one episode of sleep paralysis in their lifetime. A smaller percentage, around 8% of the 862 participants, reported more frequent episodes. A systematic review of over 30 studies from a variety of countries reported a more conservative estimate, of around 10%.

Sleep paralysis is a common symptom of narcolepsy, a sleep disorder where the brain's ability to regulate a normal sleep-wake cycle becomes disrupted. It also appears to be more common in a number of psychiatric conditions, particular post-traumatic stress disorder, and patients with panic disorder.

But many individuals suffer from sleep paralysis without any apparent psychiatric or neurological condition. In a recent study, we looked at potential risk factors and found that stressful life events, anxiety, and sleep quality all had an impact. This is supported by other studies showing that groups of people who experience disrupted and irregular sleep, such as shift workers, are at a higher risk of sleep paralysis.



We also looked at the role of genetics, by comparing the frequency of sleep paralysis in identical twins, who share almost 100% of their genes, with the occurrence in non-identical twins, who on average share about 50% of their genes. We found that there was indeed a genetic link. Our research even suggested that a particular variation in a gene involved in the regulation of

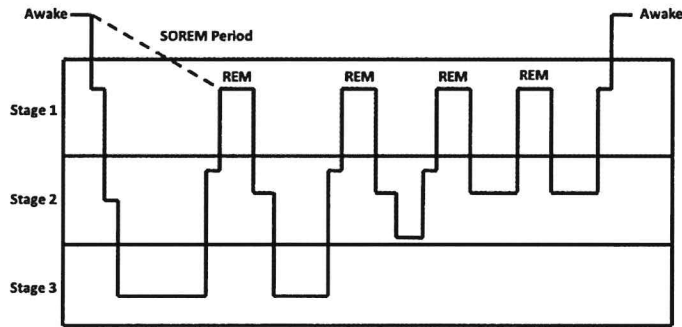
Image credit: Pixabay, Public domain

our sleep wake cycle may be associated with sleep paralysis. But more studies are needed to confirm this.

Laboratory studies

Every night, we pass through a number of different sleep stages (see figure below). After falling asleep, we pass through stages one to three, reflecting a deepening level of unconsciousness, known collectively as non-REM (rapid eye movement) sleep. After coming back to stage one sleep we enter a period of rapid eye movement sleep, which is unique for a number of reasons.

REM sleep is a period of heightened brain activity, associated with vivid dreaming. During REM sleep our muscles are completely paralysed (apart from the eyes and respiratory system). It is assumed that this paralysis mechanism is in place to stop us acting out our dreams, based on rare cases where the paralysis fails – and patients physically act out the contents of their dreams.



A team of Japanese researchers were recently able to induce episodes of sleep paralysis by systematically depriving participants of REM sleep. They found that if they interrupted enough periods of REM, the sleepers would eventually enter sudden-onset REM (SOREM), which is where one falls straight into REM sleep from waking, bypassing the other sleep stages (this is indicated by the dotted line in the figure). It was found that following these SOREM periods, participants were more likely to have an episode of sleep paralysis – backing up previous studies showing that disrupted sleep increases the risk.

These studies also tell us that sleep paralysis is closely tied to REM sleep. What appears to be happening in sleep paralysis is you wake up and become consciously aware of your surroundings while still in a state of REM

sleep, meaning your muscles are paralyzed. It could be said that your mind wakes up but your body doesn't. Recordings of brain activity during sleep paralysis show it to be a unique state of consciousness. A recent study showed that a participant's brain activity during sleep paralysis was indistinguishable from a brain recording created by combining a recording from when they were awake, and when they were in REM sleep.

Image credit: The Nightmare, 1781, oil painting by Henry Fuseli, Detroit Institute of Arts, Wikimedia Commons, Public domain



Unfortunately, to date there have been no systematic trials investigating possible medical treatments for sleep paralysis though antidepressants may be prescribed in some severe cases. However, research certainly suggests that trying to maintain a healthy, regular sleep pattern would be a good strategy for trying to reduce the frequency of episodes.

Anecdotal evidence also hints at a number of possible prevention strategies – including changing sleeping position, adjusting sleeping patterns and improving diet and exercise. In a study that asked people who were using such a strategy how successful it was, 79% believed it worked. Another approach is to try to disrupt episodes rather than prevent them by attempting to move body parts such as a finger or trying to relax. Of people who try to disrupt episodes, 54% believed them to be effective.

While sleep paralysis can be a terrifying ordeal to go through, those who do experience it should try to remember that it is a temporary and harmless event. What's more, help may be on the way. As researchers are slowing learning more about what causes the condition, chances are that effective treatment may one day be possible.

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Understanding Sleep Paralysis

On a separate sheet of paper, completely and thoughtfully answer the following questions.

1. Ethos is a writer's ability to build credibility, establish himself as an expert, and/or convince the readers that he has their best interests at heart. Does Dan Denis, the author of this article, have a reasonable amount of ethos when it come to discussing this topic?
2. While Denis says *The Nightmare* documentary is well made, what is his main criticism of the film?
3. In your own words, explain the three categories of hallucinations in a way that someone two years younger than you would understand.
4. Looking at a wide range of studies from more than 30 countries, how common is sleep paralysis? Does this seem like a significant number of people to you? Explain your thoughts.
5. Why would shift workers, adults whose job schedule varies between day and night shifts, have higher rates of sleep paralysis?
6. Does sleep paralysis have a genetic connection? How do we know?
7. Every night while we sleep, our brains naturally send our bodies into a paralyzed state. Why?
8. Explain what happened in the Japanese sleep study. Would you agree to participate in such a study? What if you were paid by the researchers? (You can decide an amount that seems reasonable.)
9. If Dan Denis had evaluated Alicia, the wife in the short story "The Feather Pillow," what do you suppose would have been his diagnosis and treatment suggestion? Would his treatment plan have helped her? Why or why not?

Direct and Indirect Characterization

Direct characterization is a trait (physical or personality) that the narrator directly tells us about a character. **Indirect characterization** includes a variety of things we can infer about a character based on his/her actions, thoughts, and interactions with other characters in the story.

Directions: Choose one of the characters from our current piece of literature and complete the following tasks. For tasks #1–4, you need to find and write down a line from the text (with page number) and then explain what can be inferred about the character based on this bit of text. If you need more space to write, continue answers on the back of this sheet. For task #5, use colored pencils to sketch what the character physically looks like.

Name of character:

1. Something we're directly told about the character by the narrator:

What does this show us about the character?

3. Something the character does (an action he/she takes):

What does this show us about the character?

5. Sketch me

2. Something the character says:

What does this show us about the character?

4. Something another character says/feels about the character:

What does this show us about the character?

Directions

View the T.E.D. Talk and complete the following grid. If you run out of space on the grid for any of your answers, feel free to continue writing on the back of this sheet.

Title of T.E.D. Talk:

1

Name of Speaker:

2

Date of T.E.D. Talk and Number of Views:

3

4 What was the speaker's thesis (main point) of this speech?

6 **Ethos** is a speaker's ability to build credibility, establish himself/herself as an expert, and/or convince the audience members that the speaker has their best interests at heart. How does this speaker build ethos? Feel free to also refer to the speaker's profile information from the ted.com webpage as you build your answer.

5 Circle any of the following adjectives that describe this T.E.D. talk:

Humorous
Inspiring
Persuasive
Repetitive
Confusing

Dull
Intellectual

7 **Pathos** is an appeal to emotions (everything from humor to horror) in order to sway an audience, while **logos** is the use of data/evidence to prove one's case. Did this speaker rely more on pathos or logos in his/her presentation? What argument/point in this presentation did you find the most compelling? Why?

8 T.E.D. Talk presenters are known as effective public speakers. Describe two things this speaker does well in terms of engaging the audience. Be sure to include the minute:second mark (ex: 8:49) to denote the two specific moments you discuss here.

1.

2.

9 Write two specific things you learned from this presentation.

1.

2.

10 If you could ask this speaker a question about his/her information or presentation, what would you ask?

11 Give one piece of constructive criticism that would improve the presentation.

12 What group of people would benefit the most from hearing this lecture?

