

Name: _____

Class: _____

How Santa Claus Found the Poor-House

By Sophie Swett 1885

Sophia Miriam Swett (1858–1912) was an American writer from Maine who wrote over 20 children’s books. This story is about two young boys living in a “poor-house” during the late 1800s. Poorhouses and poorfarms were places that provided housing and support for people in need. As you read the story, take notes on how the author characterizes Gobaly and Methusaleh.

Heliogabalus[1] was shoveling snow. The snow was very deep, and the path from the front door to the road was a long one, and the shovel was almost as big as Heliogabalus.

But Gobaly — as everybody called him, for short — didn’t give up easily. You might have known that he wouldn’t give up easily by one glance at his sturdy little figure, at his bright, wide-open eyes, his firm mouth, and his square, prominent[2] chin; even the little, turned-up end of his nose looked resolute.[3]

Besides, Mrs. Pynchum had told him to shovel out the path; and she had a switch[4] behind the wood-shed door, to say nothing of her slipper.

Mrs. Pynchum kept the poor-farm, and Gobaly was “town’s poor.” The boys sometimes called him that, when he went to coast on Three-Pine Hill or to see the skating on the mill-pond; and sometimes, too, they made fun of his clothes. But it was only the boys who were a great deal bigger than he who dared to make fun of Gobaly, and some of them even ran when he doubled up his [“Merry Old Santa”](#) by Thomas Nast is in the public domain.

fists. But Methuselah![5] I don’t know what would have become of Methuselah if he had not had Gobaly to defend him. For he was a delicate little fellow; “spindlin’ and good for nothin’,” Mrs. Pynchum called him; and he had come to her in a basket — in other words, Methuselah was a foundling. Mrs. Pynchum “didn’t think much of children who came from nobody knew where. It didn’t seem to belong to Poplarville to support him, since he didn’t belong to anybody that ever lived there, and his keep and his medicine cost more than he would ever be worth, to anybody.”

Gobaly’s mother died in the poor-house, and left him there, a baby; she had always lived in the town, and so had his father, so of course Gobaly had a perfect right there; and old Dr. Barnacle, who was very learned,[6] had said of him that he was an uncommonly fine baby, and had named him Heliogabalus.



Besides, he was strong and willing, and did a great deal of work. Mrs. Pynchum “could put up with Gobaly.” But Methuselah, she said, was “a thorn in her side.” And now, after being a trial all his life, he had a hip disease, which the doctor feared was incurable, and which made him more troublesome still!

But, after all, Mrs. Pynchum wasn’t quite so bad as one would have thought, from her talk. She must have had a soft spot somewhere in her heart, for she put plums in Methuselah’s porridge, now that he was ill, and once she had let Gobaly leave his wood-chopping to draw him out on his sled.

I suppose there is a soft spot in everybody’s heart, only sometimes it isn’t very easy to find it; and Mrs. Pynchum might not have been so cross if she had led an easier life. There were a good many queer[7] people in the poor-house, “flighty in their heads and wearin’ in their ways,” she said, and sometimes they must have been trying to the patience.

Once in a great while, indeed, Mrs. Pynchum was good-natured, and then, sometimes for a whole evening, the poor-house would seem like home. All those who lived there would then sit around the fire and roast apples; and Mrs. Pynchum would even unlock the closet under the back stairs, where there was a great bag full of nuts that Sandy Gooding and Gobaly had gathered; and Uncle Sim Perkins would tell stories.

But it happened very unfortunately that Mrs. Pynchum never had one of her good-natured days on Thanksgiving, or Christmas, or any holiday. She was sure to say on those days that she was “all tried to pieces.”

And everybody was frightened and unhappy when Mrs. Pynchum was “all tried to pieces,” and so that was the reason why Gobaly’s heart sank as he remembered, while he was shoveling the path through the snow, that the next day was Christmas.

Some people from the village went by with a Christmas-tree, which they had cut down in the woods just beyond the poor-house; there were children in the party, and they called to Gobaly and wished him a merry Christmas, and asked him if they were going to have a Christmas-tree at his house, and expressed great surprise that he wasn’t going to hang up his stocking. Then one of the children suddenly exclaimed:

“Why, that’s the poor-house! It’s never Christmas there!” Poor Gobaly’s heart sank still more as he caught these words, and somehow he felt very tired, and minded the cold, as he had not thought of minding it a moment before, and the snow-bank looked as if he never could shovel through it. For though Gobaly was stout-hearted, he didn’t like to be reminded that he was “town’s poor,” and that Christmas was nothing to him.

Just then he caught sight of Methuselah’s little pinched face pressed against the window-pane. Methuselah always had, even when he was a baby, a worn and pallid[8] face, like a little old man, and that was why they called him Methuselah. It was cold in the front room but Methuselah had wrapped himself in a piece of an old quilt and stolen into the back room and to the window, where he could see Gobaly shoveling the snow.

Methuselah never was quite happy when Gobaly was out of his sight.

Gobaly went up to the window.

“Tomorrow’s Christmas, ‘Thusey!” he said.

“Is it? Do you s’pose she knows it? She’ll be all tried to pieces,’ won’t she?”

("She" always meant Mrs. Pynchum in the poor-house; nobody there ever spoke of her in any other way.)

Gobaly was sadly afraid that she would, but he said, cheerfully:

"Maybe she won't. May be she'll let me take you out on my sled; and one Christmas there was turkey and plum-pudding."

"Must have been a good many Christmases ago; I can't remember it!" said Methuselah. "Some folks have 'em every Christmas, Uncle Sim says, but perhaps it isn't true. Gobaly, do you believe there really is any Santa Claus, such as Uncle Sim tells about, or did he make it all up? To be sure, he showed me a picture of him."

"I know there is," said Gobaly firmly, "because I've seen presents that he brought to boys and girls in the village."

Then why don't he ever come here and bring us some?" said Methuselah, as if a new idea had suddenly struck him. "Do you s'pose it's because we're worse than any other boys in the world? She says we are, sometimes. Or maybe he's too proud to stop at the poor-house."

"Perhaps he can't find the way," said Gobaly. "'Cause it's a pretty crooked road, you know. Or maybe he wouldn't think it was worth the while to come so far out of the village just for us; he wouldn't be going to Squire Thorndike's, because there aren't any children there, and there aren't any other houses on this road."

"I wish we lived where there was a truly Christmas, like places where Uncle Sim has been; don't you, Gobaly? Maybe he makes them all up, though; it seems if they must be too good to be true."

"I shouldn't wonder if you got lots of plums in your porridge tomorrow and perhaps a piece of mincepie. And I'll ask her to let me take you up to Three Pine Hill on the sled."

Gobaly always showed the bright side of things to Methuselah and he had become so accustomed to looking for a bright side that he could find one when you wouldn't have thought there was any there.

And whenever he found a very big lump in his throat he swallowed it for Methuselah's sake, and pretended that he didn't see anything in the world to cry about.

He had to go back to his shoveling then, but after he had started he turned back to say:

"When I'm a man, you shall have Christmases, 'Thusely!"

It was in that way that Gobaly often comforted Methuselah. It never seemed to occur to either of them that 'Thusely might possibly grow to be a man too.

Gobaly went to work at the snow again as if it were not a bit bigger than he was, and he soon had a rampart^[9] piled up on each side of the path so high that he thought it must look like the Chinese Wall^[10] which Uncle Sim was always telling of.

As he was digging the very last shovelful of snow out of the path, he heard the jingle of sleighbells, and saw the butcher's wagon, set upon runners and drawn by a very frisky horse, going in the direction of the village. The butcher's boy and three of his comrades^[11] occupied the seat, and as many more boys were wedged in among

the joints of meat and heaps of poultry in the back of the wagon. They were evidently combining pleasure with business in the liveliest manner.

Coming in the other direction, from the village, was a large Newfoundland dog[12] with a basket in his mouth. Gobaly liked dogs, and he was sure that he was acquainted[13] with every one in the village. As he was on intimate[14] terms with every big one, he knew that this must be a stranger.

The butcher's boy was driving recklessly, and seemed to think it would be fun to make a sudden turn into the drifts through which the dog was bounding. The horse, taken by surprise and somewhat frightened, made a sudden plunge; and though Gobaly could not quite see how it happened, it seemed that before the dog had time to get out of the way, the sled had gone over him, and he lay helpless and howling upon the snow!

The boys either found it impossible to stop their horse, or were too frightened to investigate the extent of the mischief's they had done, for they went careening[15] on, and left the poor dog to his fate.

Gobaly was at his side in a moment, patting his shaggy black head, calling him "poor doggie" and "good doggie," and trying to discover how badly he was hurt. He came to the conclusion, after a thorough examination, that his leg was either broken or badly sprained — and Gobaly was a judge of such things. He had once doctored a rooster's lame[16] leg, and though the rooster was never again able to mount a fence, and crowed with diminished energy, he was still able to cheer his heart by fighting the three other roosters all at once, and was likely to escape the dinner-pot for a long time to come, though his gait[17] was no longer lordly. Gobaly had also successfully treated a kitten with a sprained ankle — to say nothing of one whose tail the gobbler had nipped off. And he had seen the doctor in the village set a puppy's leg, and had carefully watched the operation.

He helped the dog along toward the house — and it was well that he was a strong and sturdy little fellow or he could not have done it — and managed at last to get the poor creature, unobserved, into the woodshed. He was very much afraid that Mrs. Pynchum, if she should see him, would order him to leave the dog in the road, and he knew it would not do to carry him in beside the kitchen fire, as he wanted to, for Mrs. Pynchum never wanted "a dirty dog in her clean house."

Gobaly found it hard to decide whether the bone was broken or only out of place, but he made a sort of a splint, such as he had seen the doctor use upon the puppy's leg, and then wound soft cloths, wet with liniment, about it, and the dog certainly seemed relieved, and licked Gobaly's hand, and looked at him with grateful eyes.

He ventured into the house after a while, and beckoned to Methuselah to come out to the woodshed.

Methuselah was convinced that Santa Claus had sent the dog to them as a Christmas present, and his delight was unbounded.[18]

"Of course, Santa Claus must have sent him, or why would he have come down this lonely road all by himself? And you will cure him," (Methuselah thought there was little that Gobaly couldn't do if he tried) "and perhaps she will let us keep him!"

But a sudden recollection[19] had struck Gobaly. The dog had been carrying a basket in his mouth; there might be something in it that would tell where he came from.

Though the dog's appearance was mysterious, Gobaly was not so ready as Methuselah to accept the Santa Claus theory.

He ran out and found the basket, half buried in the snow, where it had fallen from the dog's mouth. There were several letters and papers in it addressed to "Dr. Carruthers, care of Richard Thorndike, Esq."

Dr. Carruthers was the famous New York physician who was visiting Squire Thorndike! Gobaly had heard the people in the village talking about him. The dog probably belonged to him, and had been sent to the post-office for his letters.

Although he had not really believed that Santa Claus sent the dog, Gobaly did feel a pang of disappointment that they must part with him so soon. But then Mrs. Pynchum would probably not have allowed them to keep him, anyhow, and she might have had him shot because his leg was hurt. That thought consoled^[20] Gobaly, and having obtained Mrs. Pynchum's permission to carry him to his master — which was readily given, since it was the easiest way to get rid of the dog — he put a very large box, with a bed in it made of straw and soft cloth, upon his sled, and then lifted the dog gently into the box. The dog whined with pain when he was moved, but still licked Gobaly's hand, as if he understood that he was his friend and did not mean to hurt him.

Methuselah stood in the shed door, and looked after them, weeping, sadly making up his mind that Santa Claus was proud and would never come to the poor-house. Gobaly had never been even inside Squire Thorndike's gate before, and he went up to one of the back doors with fear and trembling; the servants at Squire Thorndike's were said to be "stuck-up," and they might not be very civil to "town's poor." But at the sight of the dog they raised a great cry, and at once ushered^[21] Gobaly into the presence of Squire Thorndike and Dr. Carruthers, that he might tell them all he knew about the accident.

Dr. Carruthers was a big, jolly-looking man, with white hair and a long white beard, just like pictures of Santa Claus. Gobaly was sure that Methuselah would think he was Santa Claus if he could see him. He evidently felt very sorry about the dog's accident, and pitied him and petted him as if he were a baby; Gobaly, who had never had so much petting in his whole life, thought the dog ought to forget all about his leg.

And then he suddenly turned to Gobaly and asked him who set the leg. Gobaly answered, modestly, that he "fixed it as well as he could because there wasn't anybody else around."

"How did you know how?" asked the doctor. And Gobaly related his experiences with the rooster and the kitten and the puppy. Dr. Carruthers looked at him steadily out of a pair of eyes that were very sharp, although very kind. Then he turned to Squire Thorndike and said, "an uncommon boy." Squire Thorndike answered, and they talked together in a low tone, casting an occasional glance at Gobaly.

How Gobaly's ears did burn! He wondered what Squire Thorndike knew about him, and he thought of every prank he ever had played in his life. Gobaly was an unusually good boy, but he had played a few pranks; being a boy — and he thought they were a great deal worse than they really were, because Mrs. Pynchum said so. And he imagined that Dr. Carruthers was hearing all about them, and would presently turn round and say that such a bad boy had no right to touch his dog, and that such conduct was just what he should expect of "town's poor." But instead of that, after several minutes' conversation with Squire Thorndike, he turned to Gobaly, and said:

"I want an office-boy, and I think you are just the boy to suit me. Would you like to come and live with me, and perhaps, one of these days, be a doctor yourself?"

Gobaly caught his breath.

To go away from Mrs. Pynchum; not to be “town’s poor” anymore; to learn to be a doctor! He had said once in Mrs. Pynchum’s hearing that he wanted to be a doctor when he grew up, and she had said, sneeringly, that “town’s poor weren’t very likely to get a chance to learn to be doctors.”

And now the chance had come to him! Gobaly thought it seemed too much like heaven to be anything that could happen to a mortal boy!

“Well, would you like to go?” asked the doctor again, as Gobaly could find no words to answer.

“Would I, sir? Wouldn’t I!” said Gobaly, with a radiant face.

“Well, then, I will make an arrangement with the selectmen — which I have no doubt it will be easy to do — and will take you home with me tomorrow night,” said the good doctor.

But the brightness had suddenly faded from Gobaly’s face. He stood with his hands thrust into his trousers pockets, gazing irresolutely at the carpet.

But it was not the carpet that Gobaly saw; it might as well have been the yellow paint of the poorhouse floors for all that he noticed of its luxurious pile and beautiful colors. It was ‘Thusely’s pale, pinched little face that he saw! It had risen before him even while the doctor was speaking. If he went away, who would take care of ‘Thusely? And ‘Thusely’s heart would be broken.

“I can’t go, sir; I forgot. No — no — I can’t go!” said Gobaly.

Oh, what a lump there was in his throat! He had swallowed many a lump for ‘Thusely’s sake, but that was the very biggest one!

And then he turned and ran out of the house, without any ceremony. He knew it was rude, but that lump wouldn’t stay down, and though he might be called “town’s poor,” he wasn’t going to be called a cry-baby!

And home he ran, as fast as his legs would carry him.

That night something very unusual happened. Mrs. Pynchum went to the village to a Christmas festival. She went before dark, and the spirits of everybody in the poor-house rose as soon as she was out of sight. Mr. Pynchum piled great logs upon the fire-place, till there was such a roaring fire as had not been seen there for many a long day; and he told Joe Golightly and Gobaly to go down cellar and bring up as many apples as they wanted to, and he found the key of the closet where the bag of nuts was kept! And Sandy Gooding brought out some fine pop-corn that he had saved up; and Joe Golightly brought out his violin, which, though some of its strings were broken and its voice was a little cracked and wheezy, could yet cheer one up wonderfully with “Bonnie Dundee” and “The Campbells are Coming.” Everybody was merry — although there was no Christmas-tree, and nobody had a present except ‘Thusely, who had a big red peppermint-drop that Gobaly bought him with a penny hoarded for six weeks — and it would have been a very pleasant evening if there had not been one great drawback. Mrs. Pynchum had a way of pouncing upon people when they least expected her. If a window rattled or a mouse stirred in the wall, a hush fell upon the mirth, and everybody shrank with dread. It would be so like Mrs. Pynchum to suspect that they were having a good time, and turn back to put a stop to it before she had fairly reached the festival!

Just as they had poured out a popperful of corn — popped out so big and white that it would do you good to see it — and Uncle Sim was clearing his throat to begin a story, there came a loud knock at the door. Everybody jumped.

Mr. Pynchum and Sandy began to cram the apples into their pockets, and thrust the cornpopper into the closet, and Joe hid his violin under his coat-tails. It took them all fully two minutes to remember that Mrs. Pynchum never knocked.

Mr. Pynchum sat down again, and said, in a tone of surprise, as if he had not been in the least agitated: "What is the matter with you all? Gobaly, open the door."

Gobaly opened the door, and who should be there but Squire Thorndike and the city doctor!

The moment 'Thusely saw Dr. Carruthers he called out "Santa Claus!" And the big doctor laughed, and took a great package of candy out of his pocket and gave it to 'Thusely.

After that it was of no use for Gobaly to whisper, "The dog gentleman!" in 'Thusely's ear; he couldn't think it was anybody but Santa Claus.

"I'm so glad you've come!" Methuselah said, confidentially. "And you look just like your picture. And I don't see why you never came before, for you don't seem proud. And we aren't such very bad boys; anyway, Gobaly isn't. Don't you believe what Mrs. Pynchum tells you! Will you?"

The doctor laughed, and said he was getting to be an old fellow, and the snow was deep, and it was hard for him to get about; but he was sorry he hadn't come before, for he thought they did look like good boys. Then he asked Methuselah about his lameness and the pain in his side, and said he ought to be sent to a certain hospital in New York, where he might be cured. And then he asked if he had no relatives or friends.

"I've got Gobaly," said 'Thusely.

The doctor turned and looked sharply at Gobaly.

"Is he the reason why you wouldn't go with me?" he asked.

"He's such a little chap, and I'm all he's got," said Gobaly.

The doctor took out his handkerchief and said it was bad weather for colds.

"Suppose I take him, too?" said he.

This time the lump in his throat fairly got the better of Gobaly!

But 'Thusely clapped his hands for joy. He didn't understand what was to happen, only that Santa Claus was to take him somewhere with Gobaly; and one thing that 'Thusely was sure of was that he wanted to go wherever Gobaly went. And he kept saying:

"I told you that Santa Claus sent the dog — now, didn't I, Gobaly?"

Methuselah went to the hospital and was cured, and Gobaly — well, if I should tell you his name, you might say that you had heard of him as a famous surgeon doctor. I think it is probable that he could now make a lame rooster or a kitten with a sprained ankle just as good as new, and I am sure he wouldn't be above trying; for he has a heart big enough to sympathize with any creature that suffers.

There is at least one person in the world who will agree with me, and that is a gentleman who was once a miserable little cripple in a poor-house, and was called Methuselah.

“How Santa Claus Found the Poor-House” by Sophie Swett (1885) is in the public domain.

Text-Dependent Questions

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

1. PART A: Which statement best describes a major theme of the story?
 - A. Helping others is only valuable if a person receives something in return.
 - B. Taking care of animals is the best way to show kindness.
 - C. Growing up poor prevents people from achieving any happiness in life.
 - D. Good things happen to caring and loyal people.

2. PART B: What quote from the story best supports the answer to PART A?
 - A. “And whenever he found a very big lump in his throat he swallowed it for Methuselah’s sake, and pretended that he didn’t see anything in the world to cry about.” (Paragraph 30)
 - B. “The dog whined with pain when he was moved, but still licked Gobaly’s hand, as if he understood that he was his friend and did not mean to hurt him.” (Paragraph 49)
 - C. “The doctor laughed, and said he was getting to be an old fellow, and the snow was deep, and it was hard for him to get about; but he was sorry he hadn’t come before” (Paragraph 74)
 - D. “Methuselah went to the hospital and was cured, and Gobaly—well, if I should tell you his name, you might say that you had heard of him as a famous surgeon doctor.” (Paragraph 84)

3. How does paragraph 4 contribute to the development of the theme of the story?

4. PART A: How does Gobaly's attitude toward Christmas change while he is shoveling snow? A. At first he is sad that Methusaleh will not have a happy Christmas, and he becomes even more upset when he remembers that Mrs. Pynchum will be grumpy.
- B. At first he is excited that it is Christmas, but he becomes upset when he realizes that the children will not receive gifts.
 - C. At first he is happy that Christmas is coming, but he becomes even more excited after hearing the sounds of Christmas around him.
 - D. At first he is upset that it will not be a happy Christmas, but his conversation with Methuselah reminds him to be positive.
5. PART B: What quotation gives evidence for your answer in PART A?
- A. "Then why don't he ever come here and bring us some?" said Methuselah" (Paragraph 24)
 - B. "I wish we lived where there was a truly Christmas, like places where Uncle Sim has been" (Paragraph 26)
 - C. "he had become so accustomed to looking for a bright side that he could find one when you wouldn't have thought there was any there." (Paragraph 28)
 - D. "As he was digging the very last shovelful of snow out of the path, he heard the jingle of sleighbells" (Paragraph 34)
6. PART A: In paragraph 52, Dr. Carruthers calls Gobaly "an uncommon boy." What does the word "uncommon" mean in this context?
- A. caring
 - B. clever C. different
 - D. disobedient
7. PART B: Which quotation offers the best evidence for your answer in PART A?
- A. "Gobaly answered, modestly, that he 'fixed it as well as he could because there wasn't anybody else around.'" (Paragraph 52)
 - B. "He wondered what Squire Thorndike knew about him, and he thought of every prank he ever had played in his life." (Paragraph 54)
 - C. "He had said once in Mrs. Pynchum's hearing that he wanted to be a doctor when he grew up" (Paragraph 57)
 - D. "If he went away, who would take care of 'Thusely? And 'Thusely's heart would be broken." (Paragraph 64)
8. How does the scene with the injured dog contribute to the development of the theme of the story?

Discussion Questions

Directions: *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. “I wish we lived where there was a truly Christmas, like places where Uncle Sim has been; don’t you, Gobaly? Maybe he makes them all up, though; it seems if they must be too good to be true.” What does this quote from the story help us to understand about Christmas (or other holiday traditions)? Is it a tradition that all kids get to take part in? What holiday tradition do you celebrate at home?
2. “The dog whined with pain when he was moved, but still licked Gobaly’s hand, as if he understood that he was his friend and did not mean to hurt him.” What does it mean that the dog “understood” that Gobaly was his friend? What is it about Gobaly that makes him such a good friend? Do you look for those same qualities in your friends?
3. What does it mean to be loyal? Why is it so important to being a good friend?
4. At the end of the story we learn that Gobaly becomes a famous surgeon. Why do you think he is able to succeed in life? What evidence from the story foreshadows his ability to succeed?

5. In the context of this story, why do some people succeed? What helped Gobaly become successful? Is this true of life in general? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.

Name: _____

Class: _____

The Fisherman and His Wife

By The Brothers Grimm 1812

Jacob (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Grimm (1786-1859), also known as the Brothers Grimm, were German academics and authors who specialized in the collection and publication of folklore. They are best known for fairytales like "Cinderella" and "Hansel and Gretel." In the following story, a fisherman catches a fish who grants wishes — perhaps too many. As you read, take notes on the repetition in the story and its overall message.

- [1] There was once a fisherman and his wife who lived together in a hovel by the sea-shore, and the fisherman went out every day with his hook and line to catch fish, and he angled and angled.¹

One day he was sitting with his rod and looking into the clear water, and he sat and sat.

At last down went the line to the bottom of the water, and when he drew it up he found a great flounder on the hook.

And the flounder said to him, "Fisherman, listen to me; let me go, I am not a real fish but an ["flounder eyes"](#) by Stanley Sagov is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0 enchanted prince. What good shall I be to you if you land me? I shall not taste well; so put me back into the water again, and let me swim away."

- [5] "Well," said the fisherman, "no need of so many words about the matter, as you can speak I had much rather let you swim away."

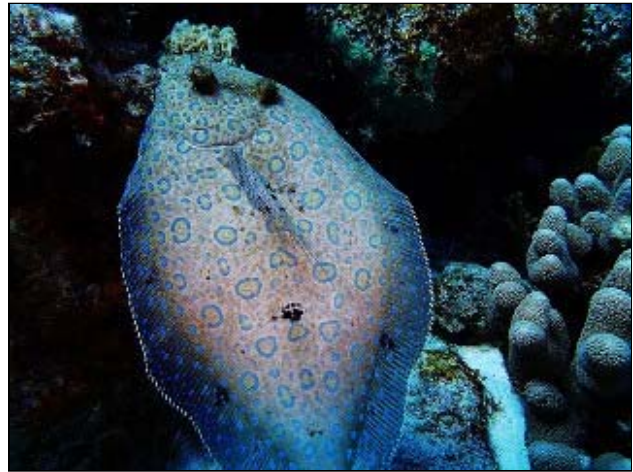
Then he put him back into the clear water, and the flounder sank to the bottom, leaving a long streak of blood behind him. Then the fisherman got up and went home to his wife in their hovel.

"Well, husband," said the wife, "have you caught nothing to-day?"

"No," said the man — "that is, I did catch a flounder, but as he said he was an enchanted prince, I let him go again."

"Then, did you wish for nothing?" said the wife.

- [10] "No," said the man; "what should I wish for?"



¹ 1. "Angling" is a typical method for fishing. The person uses a fishing rod and an attached line and hook to catch fish.

“Oh dear!” said the wife; “and it is so dreadful always to live in this evil-smelling hovel; you might as well have wished for a little cottage; go again and call him; tell him we want a little cottage, I daresay he will give it us; go, and be quick.”

And when he went back, the sea was green and yellow, and not nearly so clear. So he stood and said,

“O man, O man! — if man you be,

Or flounder, flounder, in the sea —

Such a tiresome wife I’ve got,

For she wants what I do not.”

Then the flounder came swimming up, and said, “Now then, what does she want?”

“Oh,” said the man, “you know when I caught you my wife says I ought to have wished for something. She does not want to live any longer in the hovel, and would rather have a cottage.”

[15] “Go home with you,” said the flounder, “she has it already.”

So the man went home, and found, instead of the hovel, a little cottage, and his wife was sitting on a bench before the door. And she took him by the hand, and said to him,

“Come in and see if this is not a great improvement.”

So they went in, and there was a little house-place and a beautiful little bedroom, a kitchen and larder,² with all sorts of furniture, and iron and brass ware of the very best. And at the back was a little yard with fowls³ and ducks, and a little garden full of green vegetables and fruit.

“Look,” said the wife, “is not that nice?”

[20] “Yes,” said the man, “if this can only last we shall be very well contented.”⁴

“We will see about that,” said the wife. And after a meal they went to bed.

So all went well for a week or fortnight, when the wife said,

“Look here, husband, the cottage is really too confined,⁵ and the yard and garden are so small; I think the flounder had better get us a larger house; I should like very much to live in a large stone castle; so go to your fish and he will send us a castle.”

² 2.a place where food is stored; a pantry

³ 3.a bird of any kind

⁴ 4.**Content (adjective):** in a state of peace, happiness, or satisfaction

⁵ 5.**Confined (adjective):** small and cramped

“O my dear wife,” said the man, “the cottage is good enough; what do we want a castle for?”

[25] “We want one,” said the wife; “go along with you; the flounder can give us one.”

“Now, wife,” said the man, “the flounder gave us the cottage; I do not like to go to him again, he may be angry.”

“Go along,” said the wife, “he might just as well give us it as not; do as I say!”

The man felt very reluctant⁶ and unwilling; and he said to himself, “It is not the right thing to do;” nevertheless he went.

So when he came to the seaside, the water was purple and dark blue and grey and thick, and not green and yellow as before. And he stood and said,

“O man, O man! — if man you be,

Or flounder, flounder, in the sea —

Such a tiresome wife I’ve got,

For she wants what I do not.”

[30] “Now then, what does she want?” said the flounder.

“Oh,” said the man, half frightened, “she wants to live in a large stone castle.”

“Go home with you, she is already standing before the door,” said the flounder.

Then the man went home, as he supposed, but when he got there, there stood in the place of the cottage a great castle of stone, and his wife was standing on the steps, about to go in; so she took him by the hand, and said, “Let us enter.”

With that he went in with her, and in the castle was a great hall with a marble pavement, and there were a great many servants, who led them through large doors, and the passages were decked with tapestry, and the rooms with golden chairs and tables, and crystal chandeliers hanging from the ceiling; and all the rooms had carpets. And the tables were covered with eatables and the best wine for anyone who wanted them. And at the back of the house was a great stable-yard for horses and cattle, and carriages of the finest; besides, there was a splendid large garden, with the most beautiful flowers and fine fruit trees, and a pleasure⁷ full half a mile long, with deer and oxen and sheep, and everything that heart could wish for.

[35] “There!” said the wife, “is not this beautiful?”

“Oh yes,” said the man, “if it will only last we can live in this fine castle and be very well contented.”

⁶ 6. **Reluctant (adjective):** unwilling and hesitant to do something

⁷ 7.a secluded or private garden, especially one attached to a mansion

“We will see about that,” said the wife, “in the meanwhile we will sleep upon it.” With that they went to bed.

The next morning the wife was awake first, just at the break of day, and she looked out and saw from her bed the beautiful country lying all round. The man took no notice of it, so she poked him in the side with her elbow, and said,

“Husband, get up and just look out of the window. Look, just think if we could be king over all this country. Just go to your fish and tell him we should like to be king.”

[40] “Now, wife,” said the man, “what should we be kings for? I don’t want to be king.”

“Well,” said the wife, “if you don’t want to be king, I will be king.”

“Now, wife,” said the man, “what do you want to be king for? I could not ask him such a thing.”

“Why not?” said the wife, “you must go directly all the same; I must be king.”

So the man went, very much put out that his wife should want to be king.

[45] “It is not the right thing to do — not at all the right thing,” thought the man. He did not at all want to go, and yet he went all the same.

And when he came to the sea the water was quite dark grey, and rushed far inland, and had an ill smell. And he stood and said,

“O man, O man! — if man you be,

Or flounder, flounder, in the sea —

Such a tiresome wife I’ve got,

For she wants what I do not.”

“Now then, what does she want?” said the fish.

“Oh dear!” said the man, “she wants to be king.”

“Go home with you, she is so already,” said the fish.

[50] So the man went back, and as he came to the palace he saw it was very much larger, and had great towers and splendid gateways; the herald⁸ stood before the door, and a number of soldiers with kettledrums and trumpets. And when he came inside everything was of marble and gold, and there were many curtains with great golden tassels. Then he went through the doors of the salon⁹ to where the great throne-room was, and there was his wife sitting upon a throne of gold and diamonds, and she had a great golden crown on, and the sceptre¹⁰ in her hand

⁸ 8.an official messenger

⁹ 9.a reception room, such as a parlor, used mainly for social gatherings

¹⁰ 10.a staff or wand held by a ruler as an symbol of royalty

was of pure gold and jewels, and on each side stood six pages¹¹ in a row, each one a head shorter than the other. So the man went up to her and said,

“Well, wife, so now you are king!”

“Yes,” said the wife, “now I am king.”

So then he stood and looked at her, and when he had gazed at her for some time he said,

“Well, wife, this is fine for you to be king! now there is nothing more to wish for.”

[55] “O husband!” said the wife, seeming quite restless, “I am tired of this already. Go to your fish and tell him that now I am king I must be emperor.”¹²

“Now, wife,” said the man, “what do you want to be emperor for?”

“Husband,” said she, “go and tell the fish I want to be emperor.”

“Oh dear!” said the man, “he could not do it — I cannot ask him such a thing. There is but one emperor at a time; the fish can’t possibly make any one emperor — indeed he can’t.”

“Now, look here,” said the wife, “I am king, and you are only my husband, so will you go at once? Go along! for if he was able to make me king he is able to make me emperor; and I will and must be emperor, so go along!”

[60] So he was obliged¹³ to go; and as he went he felt very uncomfortable about it, and he thought to himself, “It is not at all the right thing to do; to want to be emperor is really going too far; the flounder will soon be beginning to get tired of this.”

With that he came to the sea, and the water was quite black and thick, and the foam flew, and the wind blew, and the man was terrified. But he stood and said,

“O man, O man! — if man you be,

Or flounder, flounder, in the sea —

Such a tiresome wife I’ve got, For

she wants what I do not.”

“What is it now?” said the fish.

“Oh dear!” said the man, “my wife wants to be emperor.”

“Go home with you,” said the fish, “she is emperor already.”

11. a young boy who ran errands for nobility or royalty
12. someone who rules an empire, which is a collection of nations or states under one supreme rule
13. **Obliged** (*adjective*): feeling bound or required to do something

[65] So the man went home, and found the castle adorned with polished marble and alabaster¹¹ figures, and golden gates. The troops were being marshalled¹² before the door, and they were blowing trumpets and beating drums and cymbals; and when he entered he saw barons and earls and dukes waiting about like servants; and the doors were of bright gold. And he saw his wife sitting upon a throne made of one entire piece of gold, and it was about two miles high; and she had a great golden crown on, which was about three yards high, set with brilliants and carbuncles;¹³ and in one hand she held the sceptre, and in the other the globe; and on both sides of her stood pages in two rows, all arranged according to their size, from the most enormous giant of two miles high to the tiniest dwarf of the size of my little finger; and before her stood earls and dukes in crowds.

So the man went up to her and said, "Well, wife, so now you are emperor."

"Yes," said she, "now I am emperor."

Then he went and sat down and had a good look at her, and then he said, "Well now, wife, there is nothing left to be, now you are emperor."

"What are you talking about, husband?" said she; "I am emperor, and next I will be pope!¹⁴ so go and tell the fish so."

[70] "Oh dear!" said the man, "what is it that you don't want? You can never become pope; there is but one pope in Christendom, and the fish can't possibly do it."

"Husband," said she, "no more words about it; I must and will be pope; so go along to the fish."

"Now, wife," said the man, "how can I ask him such a thing? it is too bad — it is asking a little too much; and, besides, he could not do it."

"What rubbish!" said the wife; "if he could make me emperor he can make me pope. Go along and ask him; I am emperor, and you are only my husband, so go you must."

So he went, feeling very frightened, and he shivered and shook, and his knees trembled; and there arose a great wind, and the clouds flew by, and it grew very dark, and the sea rose mountains high, and the ships were tossed about, and the sky was partly blue in the middle, but at the sides very dark and red, as in a great tempest. And he felt very desponding,¹⁵ and stood trembling and said,

"O man, O man! — if man you be,

Or flounder, flounder, in the sea —

¹¹ 4. Alabaster is a type of mineral often used in sculpture art.

¹² 5. **Marshal** (*verb*): to assemble or organize

¹³ 6. types of precious stones

¹⁴ . The Pope is the head of the Roman Catholic Church. Historically, the pope held great power, especially in Christian European countries during the Middle Ages.

¹⁵ 8. **Despondent** (*adjective*): feeling great discouragement, dejection, or sadness

Such a tiresome wife I've got,

For she wants what I do not."

[75] "Well, what now?" said the fish.

"Oh dear!" said the man, "she wants to be pope."

"Go home with you, she is pope already," said the fish.

So he went home, and he found himself before a great church, with palaces all round. He had to make his way through a crowd of people; and when he got inside he found the place lighted up with thousands and thousands of lights; and his wife was clothed in a golden garment, and sat upon a very high throne, and had three golden crowns on, all in the greatest priestly pomp;¹⁶ and on both sides of her there stood two rows of lights of all sizes — from the size of the longest tower to the smallest rushlight,¹⁷ and all the emperors and kings were kneeling before her and kissing her foot.

"Well, wife," said the man, and sat and stared at her, "so you are pope."

[80] "Yes," said she, "now I am pope!"

And he went on gazing at her till he felt dazzled, as if he were sitting in the sun. And after a little time he said, "Well, now, wife, what is there left to be, now you are pope?"

And she sat up very stiff and straight, and said nothing.

And he said again, "Well, wife, I hope you are contented at last with being pope; you can be nothing more."

"We will see about that," said the wife. With that they both went to bed; but she was as far as ever from being contented, and she could not get to sleep for thinking of what she should like to be next.

[85] The husband, however, slept as fast as a top after his busy day; but the wife tossed and turned from side to side the whole night through, thinking all the while what she could be next, but nothing would occur to her; and when she saw the red dawn she slipped off the bed, and sat before the window to see the sun rise, and as it came up she said, "Ah, I have it! what if I should make the sun and moon to rise — husband!" she cried, and stuck her elbow in his ribs, "wake up, and go to your fish, and tell him I want power over the sun and moon."

The man was so fast asleep that when he started up he fell out of bed. Then he shook himself together, and opened his eyes and said, "Oh, — wife, what did you say?"

"Husband," said she, "if I cannot get the power of making the sun and moon rise when I want them, I shall never have another quiet hour. Go to the fish and tell him so."

¹⁶ 9. **Pomp (noun)**: complicated or magnificent display; pageantry

¹⁷ 0. a type of candle or miniature torch

“O wife!” said the man, and fell on his knees to her, “the fish can really not do that for you. I grant you he could make you emperor and pope; do be contented with that, I beg of you.”

And she became wild with impatience, and screamed out, “I can wait no longer, go at once!”

[90] And so off he went as well as he could for fright. And a dreadful storm arose, so that he could hardly keep his feet; and the houses and trees were blown down, and the mountains trembled, and rocks fell in the sea; the sky was quite black, and it thundered and lightened; and the waves, crowned with foam, ran mountains high. So he cried out, without being able to hear his own words,

“O man, O man! — if man you be,

Or flounder, flounder, in the sea —

Such a tiresome wife I’ve got, For

she wants what I do not.”

“Well, what now?” said the flounder.

“Oh dear!” said the man, “she wants to order about the sun and moon.” “Go home

with you!” said the flounder, “you will find her in the old hovel.” And there they

are sitting to this very day.

“The Fisherman and His Wife” by The Brothers Grimm (1812) is in the public domain.

Text-Dependent Questions

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

1. PART A: What does the word “hovel” mean, as used in paragraph 1? A. An old and run-down castle
B. A large, cozy log cabin, often with a warm fireplace
C. A small but comfortable home, often surrounded by a garden D. A small dwelling, often dirty or wretched

2. PART B: Which phrase from the passage best supports the answer to Part A? A. “...lived together in a hovel by the sea-shore” (Paragraph 1)
B. “...so dreadful always to live in this evil-smelling hovel” (Paragraph 11) C. “...you might as well have wished for a little cottage” (Paragraph 11)
D. “Come in and see if this is not a great improvement” (Paragraph 17)

3. Many sections of the story have similar structures. How does the author utilize repetition to emphasize a theme of the text?
A. The repeated images stress that the wife’s greed may have been stopped if only the man had been stronger and more willing to stand up to her bullying and demands.
B. The repeated phrasing emphasizes the inner sadness that comes from material gain.
C. The repeated scenes throughout the story show how uncontrolled greed and selfishness can never be satisfied.
D. The repeated words throughout the story highlight the amusing, humorous nature of the fisherman’s problem: that an unequal marriage is an unhappy one.

4. Compare and contrast the imagery of the sea every time the fisherman speaks to the fish.
How do these setting descriptions contribute to the theme of the story?

5. PART A: What does the word “tempest” mean, as used in paragraph 74? A. A windy storm
B. A short period of beautiful weather
C. A moment of brief sadness D. An act of violence
6. PART B: Which phrase from the passage best supports the answer to Part A? A. “he shivered and shook, and his knees trembled”
B. “there arose a great wind, and the clouds flew by, and it grew very dark” C. “the sky was partly blue in the middle”
D. “he felt very desponding”
7. PART A: What point in the story reflects the climax of the wife’s greed? A. When she asks to become king
B. When she asks to become emperor C. When she asks to become pope
D. When she asks to have power over the moon and sun
8. PART B: Which paragraph best supports the answer to Part A? A. Paragraph 55
B. Paragraph 73
C. Paragraph 85
D. Paragraph 88
9. PART A: Which of the following statements best expresses the theme of the text? A. Greed does not satisfy greed.
B. Never ask anyone for anything; rely on yourself instead.
C. Happiness cannot be bought.
D. Good deeds lead to good fortune.
10. PART B: Which quotation from the story best supports the answer to Part A?
A. “‘Oh yes,’ said the man, ‘if it will only last we can live in this fine castle and be very well contented.’” (Paragraph 36)
B. “‘Well, wife, this is fine for you to be king! now there is nothing more to wish for.’” (Paragraph 54)
C. “‘It is not at all the right thing to do; to want to be emperor is really going too far; the flounder will soon be beginning to get tired of this.’” (Paragraph 60)
D. “‘Oh dear!’ said the man, ‘she wants to order about the sun and moon.’” (Paragraph 92)

Discussion Questions

Directions: *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. Is it easier to control greed when a person has access to anything they could want? Why or why not? Cite evidence from your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.

2. Can money (or luxury, or power) buy happiness? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.

Name: _____

Class: _____

The Life of a U.S. Industrial Worker

By BirdBrain History 2016

This text asks students to imagine what it would be like to live as a worker, specifically as a child worker, in the U.S. Industrial Revolution—a time of great technological progress though often at the cost of workers’ rights. As you read, take notes on the way the text is written—such as point of view, tone, and word choice—and how this narration affects the overall meaning.

- [1] Imagine you’re ten years old. How do you spend your day? Playing? Watching TV? Going to school? Now imagine you’re ten years old after the Industrial Revolution¹⁸ in the late 1800’s with factories booming all around you. Now how do you spend your day? A LOT differently. You probably have a job. You work in a factory between ten and fourteen hours a day. The air



is ["The Life of a U.S. Industrial Worker"](#) by BirdBrain History is used filled with dust and smoke. Your fingers bleed *with permission.* from working so much. What do you get for all of this hard work? About fifty cents a day.

The Industrial Revolution was really good for some people. Poor children were not some of them. A factory-owner’s job was to make as much stuff as quickly and cheaply as possible and then sell it as quickly and for as much money as possible. Even though you’re ten, it’s your job to make things go quickly. Here. Stand in this same place for twelve hours and screw tops onto as many bottles as you can. Yes, it’s cold. Yes, the bottle caps hurt your hands. Yes, you’re standing in a puddle with holes in your shoes. Also, you need to crawl into this giant machine when it breaks. Your boss doesn’t want to hear any complaining, and if you do you might get whipped. **Child labor** is when young children work in places that are unsafe and are paid less than adults. This was a way for businesses to find small workers with lots of energy and quick fingers without paying them much... if at all. This was legal for over a hundred years, until people decided it was not right to let young children work until they were older.¹⁹

After a long, tiring day, your fingers are sore and you can barely feel your feet. You walk home. It’s very close, but it isn’t much more comfortable than your work. In fact, it’s so close that you can still taste the smoke that comes out of the factory. This is because the person who owns the factory also owns your home. **Company towns** were small, towns built by factory owners for families who worked at the factories to live in. It may seem nice of your boss to build a place for you and your family, but he isn’t doing it for you. The houses are dirty, cold, and filled with many other families and you pay rent to your boss to live there. Also, you have no choice. You must live there if you work at the factory. You sleep in a room with your mom, older brother, and younger sister. This means you and your family are stuck in tough, low-paying jobs.

A few minutes after you get home, your mom walks through the door. She works in the laundry down the street, burning her hands with soap and breathing in bad chemicals all day. She is paid less than half of what the men earn... just because she’s a woman.²⁰ She works even longer hours than you because your dad has been gone so

¹⁸ . The Industrial Revolution was a period of technological change from about 1760 until 1840, when new machines were being invented and introduced into factories.

¹⁹ . In the United States, it is illegal for anyone under 14 to work a paying job. It took many years of protest and reform before this became a law.

²⁰ . Today, in the United States, there still exists what is called “the wage gap” between men and women. Typically, a white female will earn 75% of what a white man does for the same job. Women of color are likely to earn even less to the same white male workers.

long you don't remember what he looks like. At least your family gets to eat a little. **Minimum wage** is the lowest amount of money a boss can legally pay each employee, but this wasn't a law until over a hundred years after the first factories.²¹ Too bad it hasn't come along yet to help you and your family. Before minimum wage, when you live, factory owners could pay what they wanted. And they want to pay you and your mom just enough to keep you alive. The little money you have goes to food and rent. Even though your jobs are awful, it's better than nothing. So you and your family hold on to your jobs... and you struggle to stay healthy and alive.

- [5] Just as you and your mother are sitting down to stale bread and thin soup, your brother BURSTS through the door! "We're going on strike!"²² he cries. He holds up his hand in a fist and you can see he's missing three fingers from the work accident a few months ago. There's a light in his eyes you've never seen before. "We're going to start a union!" he says. Your mom tells you that a **union** is a collection of workers who get together to protect their rights and demand better pay or better ways to work. "Until they give us higher pay, all of the workers are going to walk out of their factories tomorrow! We will not go back to work until they give us better pay!" At the thought of not working, your fingers start to tingle...

If you were a child in the Industrial Revolution, you could have worked eighteen hour days in a very hard job. Business owners used child labor because they didn't have to pay them much and kids had quick fingers. Women were not much better off, being paid much less than men. Before minimum wage came along, giving families enough to feed and house themselves, people often lived in communal²³ homes, which were dirty and cold and might have many families living in them. The only thing workers could do was strike and make unions, working as a group for better pay and better treatment. Tomorrow you get to walk out of your job with everyone else in order to ask your boss for better pay... What will your boss do?

"The Life of a U.S. Industrial Worker", © 2016, . Reprinted with permission, all rights reserved.

Text-Dependent Questions

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

1. Which of the following best describes the relationship between the employers and the workers in the text?
 - A. Their relationship became more equal and fair with the introduction of better technology.
 - B. Employers often took advantage of workers' labor, pay, and living conditions to benefit their business.
 - C. Some, though not all employers provided their employees with nearby housing at affordable rates.
 - D. Workers often formed unions to force their bosses to make changes, accidentally sending factory progress into decline.
2. PART A: Which of the following best explains how the narrator's use of imagery contributes to the tone of the passage?
 - A. The narrator describes the poor living/working conditions in their use of imagery, and it creates a very bleak or depressing mood.
 - B. The narrator describes the pollution in the environment due to the factories, contributing to the narrator's judgmental or scolding tone.

²¹ . Minimum wage in the United States was first established in 1938. The current national minimum wage in the U.S. is .25, but it is higher in some cities and states around the country.

²² 5. **Strike (noun)**: a period of time when workers stop work in order to force an employer to agree to their demands

²³ 6. **Communal (adjective)**: shared by all members of a community; for common use

- C. The narrator describes the cold and cramped living quarters of the communal housing, contributing to the passage’s meek, or shy, tone.
 - D. The narrator describes the terror of the factories and their looming, dangerous machines, thus contributing to the scared tone of the passage.
3. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A?
- A. “The air is filled with dust and smoke. Your fingers bleed from working so much.” (Paragraph 1)
 - B. “In fact, it’s so close that you can still taste the smoke that comes out of the factory.” (Paragraph 3)
 - C. “The houses are dirty, cold, and filled with many other families and you pay rent to your boss to live there. Also, you have no choice.” (Paragraph 3)
 - D. “Just as you and your mother are sitting down to stale bread and thin soup, your brother BURSTS through the door!” (Paragraph 5)
4. What is the overall effect of the last sentence of the passage?
- A. The final sentence of the passage ends the last day before the strike, suggesting that the worker will definitely be fired after the strike.
 - B. The final sentence of the passage sets the reader up for a change, just as workers were facing change in a new technical age.
 - C. The question at the end of the text shows that the worker was uncertain when taking risks with unions and strikes.
 - D. The question at the end of the text emphasizes the workers’ confusion as to what a union is and will accomplish.
5. What is the author’s likely purpose for writing the text from the point of view of the narrator?

Discussion Questions

Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. Do you think child labor is still an issue today in the United States? In other countries?
2. What else can be done to improve workers' lives and working conditions?
3. In the context of this informational text, how has America changed over time? How have the conditions of American workers changed over time? Are there any ways or examples in which these conditions have not changed or improved? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
4. The Industrial Revolution was one of the most important periods of technological advancement in history. What were the costs and benefits of this technological change? Is it accurate to call this "progress"? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.

Name: _____

Class: _____

Women Who Spoke Up

By Andrew Matthews 2018

In this informational text, Andrew Matthews discusses women throughout American history who fought to be a part of change. As you read, take notes on the different women discussed in the text and the movements to which they contributed.

[1] Women have had to fight to be heard. For most of history, women were expected to keep silent. In their traditional roles as wives and mothers, their sphere of influence was home and family. That sphere kept them out of the public eye. Some determined women refused to be prevented from participating in public life. Even when they risked being accused of unacceptable female behavior, women began to speak up. In the 19th century, women were the moving force behind a number of reform issues. Many of those issues related to their sphere of influence: the home and what was in the best interest of families. Women worked to end slavery and child labor. They supported women’s rights and temperance.²⁴ In the 20th century, women’s roles in society changed more dramatically. More women spoke up. They addressed larger and broader audiences. Here are a few women whose public words are remembered today as particularly inspiring and courageous.



"Women! Free our sisters" by N.E. Women's Liberation and Black Panther Party of Connecticut has no known restrictions on copyright.

Sojourner Truth — whose slave name was Isabella Baumfree — was born into slavery in 1797. She escaped to freedom in 1826. She lived at a time when neither African Americans nor women were viewed as full citizens. She was both. She was deeply religious, and her faith called her to travel across the free states preaching the gospel. Contemporaries²⁵ noted that she had “a heart of love” and “a tongue of fire.” She used her voice to fight slavery and to support women’s rights and temperance. After several lectures in New York City, one abolitionist²⁶ wrote that, she “poured forth a torrent of natural eloquence, which swept everything before it.” She gave her most famous — and unprepared — speech in Ohio in 1851. It is known today as her “Ain’t I a Woman” speech, but historians now question whether she ever used those exact words. She pointed out the inequality that existed between the races and the genders.

“I am a woman’s rights. I have as much muscle as any man, and can do as much work as any man. I have plowed and reaped and husked and chopped and mowed, and can any man do more than that? I have heard much about the sexes being equal; I can carry as much as any man, and can eat as much too if I can get it. I am as strong as any man that is now. As for intellect, all I can say is, if woman have a pint and man

²⁴ 1.the movement against drinking alcohol

²⁵ 2.people living during the same time

²⁶ 3.a person who supported the end of slavery

a quart — why can't she have her little pint full? You need not be afraid to give us our rights for fear we will take too much — for we can't take more than our pint'll hold."

As an African-American woman journalist living in the South, **Ida B. Wells-Barnett** had her life threatened for the work she did. She led a one-person campaign against lynching. She did that by gathering stories. She studied the information. She produced facts and statistics. And she spoke about it. In 1909, she gave a speech to the newly created National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). "This Awful Slaughter" presented hard facts about a subject that others refused to address publicly. Wells-Barnett forced people to face the reality of the horrors of lynching. She called on her listeners and the NAACP to do more to end it.

- [5] *"[Lynching] is national — a blight²⁷ upon our nation, mocking our laws and disgracing our Christianity. 'With malice²⁸ toward none but with charity for all' let us undertake the work of making the 'law of the land' effective and supreme upon every foot of American soil — a shield to the innocent; and to the guilty, punishment swift and sure."*

When **Clara Lemlich** was a teenager, her Jewish family fled from the Ukraine to escape religious persecution.²⁹ The family settled in New York City. Lemlich found work in a textile factory.³⁰ Factory employees worked long days — more than 10 hours — and six days a week. They earned only a few dollars. The terrible conditions motivated Lemlich to join the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. She became a leader in the effort to fight for workers' rights. She organized several strikes. On November 22, 1909, she was part of a crowd listening to male organizers offer advice to workers. She insisted on speaking to the crowd. Her words sparked a massive strike known as the Uprising of the 20,000.³¹ Striking factory workers refused to work and protested in the streets. After more than two months, owners agreed to better pay and shorter workdays.

"I am a working girl, one of those who are on strike against intolerable conditions. I am tired of listening to speakers who talk in general terms. What we are here to decide is whether we shall or shall not strike. I offer a resolution that a general strike be declared — now."

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones was a labor activist at the turn of the 20th century. She traveled around the country and gave speeches that organized laborers. She spoke for children, mill workers, coal miners, steelworkers, and immigrants. Those workers were paid pennies to work long days under harmful conditions. Sometimes her speeches were rough and coarse — she referred to herself as a "hell-raiser." One opponent called her "the most dangerous woman in America." But her words energized workers to fight for better conditions and pay. In 1912, she gave a now-famous speech at a West Virginia coal mine. Workers had struck to fight for a better contract with the mine owners. She spoke without notes and directly to the crowd. Her speech survives today because the mine bosses hired a stenographer to take notes. They hoped to use Jones' words against her for inciting³² violence. *"This meeting tonight indicates a milestone of progress of the miners and workers of the State of West Virginia... You will not be serfs,³³ you will march, march, march on from milestone to milestone of human freedom, you will rise like men in the new day and slavery will get its death blow. It has got to die. Goodnight."*

- [10] **Margaret Chase Smith** was the first woman to serve in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. She won election to the Senate in 1948. Two years later, she bravely spoke up when other public leaders remained

²⁷ 4. a disease

²⁸ 5. **Malice (noun):** the intention or desire to do evil

²⁹ 6. **Persecution (noun)** ill-treatment of someone, especially because of their race, religion, or political beliefs

³⁰ 7. a factory where clothing is made

³¹ 8. a labor strike consisting of mainly Jewish women

³² 9. **Incite (verb):** to stir up or encourage

³³ 0. people who were forced to work on a lord's land during the Medieval period

silent. At that time, Americans feared the spread of communism³⁴ and its ties to the Soviet Union. Senator Joseph R. McCarthy was heading a campaign to identify Communist activity in the United States. McCarthy's hunt ruined the careers and lives of the people accused. Smith delivered her "Declaration of Conscience" on the Senate floor. She did not specifically name McCarthy. But she commented on the state of fear that had crept into U.S. politics. She warned against its dangerous anti-American tone.

"I think that it is high time that we remembered that we have sworn to uphold and defend the Constitution. I think that it is high time that we remembered that the Constitution, as amended, speaks not only of the freedom of speech but also of trial by jury instead of trial by accusation."

African-American civil rights activist **Fannie Lou Hamer** gave an electrifying testimonial in 1964. Hamer was the vice chair of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. The party wanted to challenge Mississippi's all-white state delegation to the Democratic National Convention. Hamer addressed the convention credentials committee. She shared her personal experience of trying to register to vote in the South. She described how she had been jailed and beaten. She testified that she been shot at and verbally abused because she wanted to vote. President Lyndon B. Johnson tried to prevent her testimony from being aired by making a speech of his own at the same time. But Hamer's televised appearance made the news, and it reached a large audience. Her hope to have some of the Mississippi Freedom Democrats seated at the national convention did not succeed. But four years later, she was a delegate at the Democratic National Convention. She was the first woman to represent Mississippi and the first African American to be seated at a national convention since the 1870s.

"And if the Freedom Democratic Party is not seated now, I question America. Is this America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, where we have to sleep with our telephones off the hooks because our lives be threatened daily, because we want to live as decent human beings in America?"

"Women who Spoke Up", originally titled "Speaking Up" by Andrew Matthews, Cobblestone, © by Carus Publishing Company. Reproduced with permission. All Cricket Media material is copyrighted by Carus Publishing Company, d/b/a Cricket Media, and/or various authors and illustrators. Any commercial use or distribution of material without permission is strictly prohibited.

Text-Dependent Questions

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

1. What is the central idea of the text?
 - A. Women were often kept out of social and political movements by the men leading them.
 - B. Women have made important contributions to a variety of social and political movements.
 - C. Women have largely contributed to the social and political movements that directly impact them.
 - D. Women have made many important contributions to the United States, but they have largely been kept quiet.

2. Which of the following describes what "the sphere of influence" most likely refers to? (Paragraph 1)
 - A. areas where women have power

³⁴ 1.a political theory in which all property is publicly owned

- B. areas where women go unseen C. areas where women have no power D. areas where women are kept out
3. What is the meaning of “eloquence” as it is used in paragraph 2? A. angry critiquing
B. weak requesting
C. kind commenting
D. persuasive speaking
4. Which of the following describes how the black women discussed in this text contributed to civil rights?
A. They held violent protests to challenge the unfair treatment of black people.
B. They brought attention to, and challenged, the unfair treatment of black people. C. They supported the black men who were protesting the unfair treatment of black people.
D. They challenged the unfair treatment of black people in secret, to avoid criticism from men.
5. What does the word “electrifying” suggest about Hamer’s testimonial? (Paragraph 12) A. It hurt people.
B. It informed people.
C. It interested people.
D. It frightened people.
6. Why does the author likely include quotes from the women discussed in the text? A. to show how intelligent these women were
B. to highlight how difficult these women’s lives were C. to provide proof of these women’s accomplishments D. to emphasize how inspiring these women’s words were
7. How does the author organize information in the text?
A. He describes different women and their contributions.
B. He compares men’s contributions and women’s contributions.
C. He describes women from most well-known to least well-known.
D. He compares women’s contributions in the past and in the present.
8. How did Lemlich’s and Jones’ contributions to workers’ rights compare? (Paragraphs 6-9)

Name: _____

Class: _____

A Lonely Planet Ponders

By John P. Curtin 2002

John P. Curtin (1967-2012) was a writing professor at DePaul University. He also led bike tours in Seattle, and on one trip he crashed and broke his neck, leaving him paralyzed. He wrote the following poem using a voice-activated computer program when he was asked to show how poetry can communicate information. As you read, takes notes on what scientific concepts the poet writes about in the poem.

[1] I'm unleashed but feel a pull; I'm in orbit. Gravity, my
greatest attraction, Has never let me down.

I am one of several, maybe many;

[5] I'm not sure, I seldom³⁵ see the rest.

I know, though, that there are more like me. A
network, a galaxy; A universe at work.

As I spin, solitary,

[10] As I wend³⁶ my way through space,

There's design; there's order; there is a pattern.

There are causes and their effects,

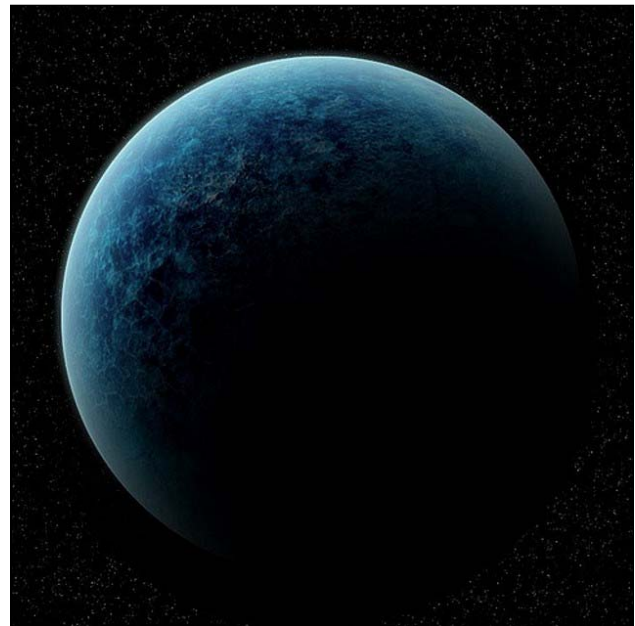
And there are reasons that

Such should happen this way

[15] And this should happen in

such a way. ["My first planet"](#)

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Even unpredictability is governed by principle.

Take comfort.

Chance, too, toes a line.³⁷

"A Lonely Planet Ponders", © 2002, Estate of John P. Curtin. Reprinted with permission, all rights reserved.

Text-Dependent Questions

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

1. PART A: Which of the following best describes a theme of the poem? [RL.2]
 - A. It is difficult to develop an identity in a universe that is controlled by strict laws and rules.
 - B. Everything is controlled and connected by the laws of nature, even when life appears random.

³⁵ 1. **Seldom (adverb):** not often; rarely

³⁶ 2. "Wend" means to go in a specific direction, usually slowly or by a direct route.

³⁷ 3. "Toe a line" is an expression meaning "follow the rules."

- C. The universe is full of opportunities for people to change their courses in life, even if they are not obvious.
- D. Humans know very little about space and how random events are governed by the laws of nature.
- A. It lets the planet have personal connections, revealing how the laws of nature connect everything in the universe.
2. PART B: Which phrase from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
- A. "I'm unleashed but feel a pull; I'm in orbit." (Line 1)
- B. "I know, though, that there are more like me." (Line 6)
- C. "There are causes and their effects" (Line 12)
- D. "Even unpredictability is governed by principle." (Line 16)
- B. It reveals the planet's emotions, showing how a planet can use the laws of the universe to overcome loneliness.
3. Which statement best describes how lines 1-3 introduce the ideas in the poem?
- A. They reveal the lonely planet's unhappiness.
- B. They show that laws of nature are powerful and consistent.
- C. They prove how the laws of nature overly restrict the planet.
- D. They establish the speaker's credibility.
- C. It connects the reader to the planet, making the reader want to help the planet be less confused and alone.
4. What is the effect of the personification of the planet on the ideas of the poem?
- D. It connects the planet to the people that live on it, making the poem focus on what unites the universe.
5. Explain the relationship between the planet that speaks in the poem and other [RL.3] planets, using evidence from the text in your answer.

Discussion Questions

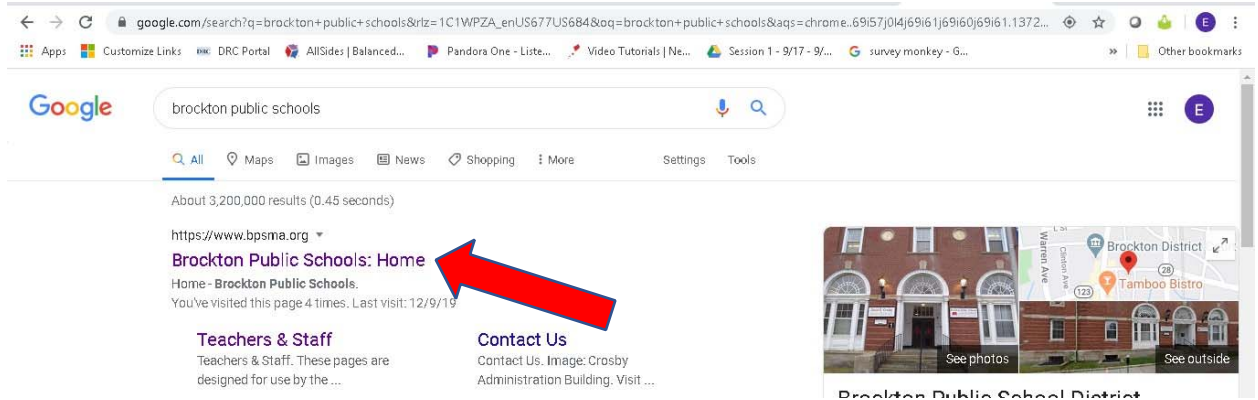
Directions: *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. In your opinion, why do you think John P. Curtin suggests readers “Take comfort. / Chance, too, toes a line (Lines 17-18)?
2. How can poetry better help students understand nonfiction topics? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
3. In the context of the poem, who’s in control: man or nature? John P. Curtin suffered an accident that left him a quadriplegic – how do you think this accident influenced his opinions on the powers of nature and human will? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.

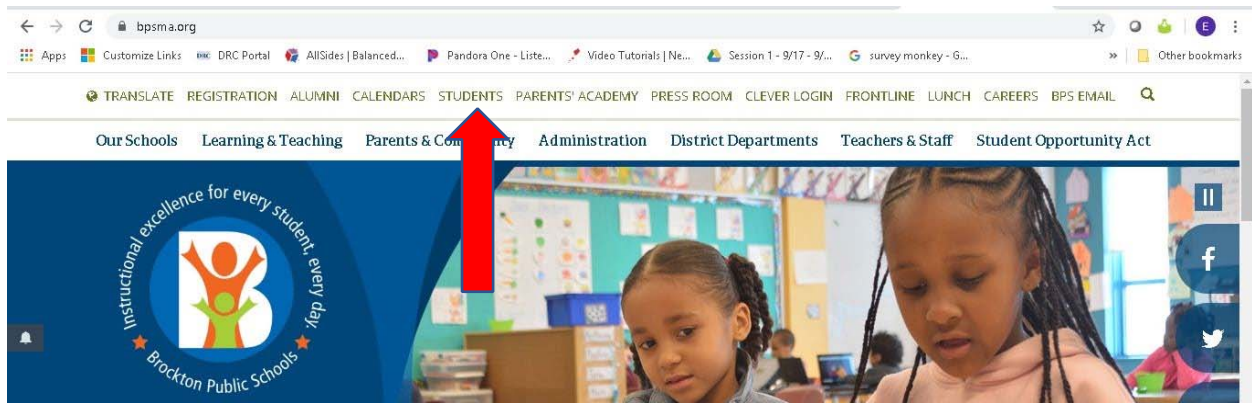
How to Log on to Power Up from Home

(For only Ashfield, South and Davis 6-8 students)

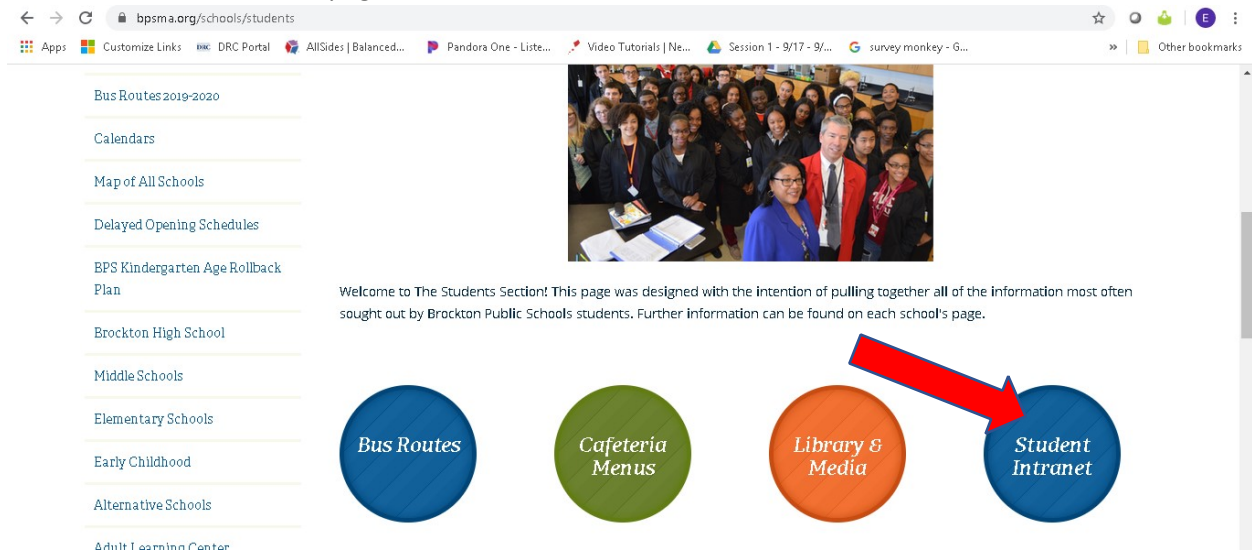
Log on to **Google** and search for **Brockton Public Schools** and go to the **home page**.



Choose the **Students tab**.



Scroll to the bottom of the page and choose **Student Intranet**



Choose ELA

The screenshot shows the BPS Student Intranet Home page. The browser address bar displays 'studentintranet.bpsma.org'. The page features a red header with 'BPS Student Intranet' and links for 'Infinite Campus', 'Email', and 'BPS Website'. A left-hand navigation menu is visible, with 'Home' selected and 'ELA' highlighted by a red arrow. Below the menu, the main content area is titled 'Home' and contains four circular icons: 'Destiny' (a tree), 'Clever' (a blue 'C'), 'Infinite Campus' (a green circle with a white path), and 'Office 365' (an orange circle with a white 'O').

Choose Power Up

The screenshot shows the BPS Student Intranet ELA Resources page. The browser address bar displays 'studentintranet.bpsma.org/ela.html'. The page features a red header with 'BPS Student Intranet' and links for 'Infinite Campus', 'Email', and 'BPS Website'. A left-hand navigation menu is visible, with 'Home' selected and 'ELA' highlighted. Below the menu, the main content area is titled 'ELA Resources' and is divided into two sections: 'Middle School' and 'Elementary School'. The 'Middle School' section contains three circular icons: 'Imagine Learning' (a red and blue figure), 'Lexia PowerUp' (a blue circle with 'LEXIA POWER UP LITERACY' text), and 'Imagine Learning' (a red and blue figure). A red arrow points to the 'Lexia PowerUp' icon. The 'Elementary School' section contains two circular icons: 'Imagine Learning' (a red and blue figure) and 'Read, Write, Think' (a green and white circle with 'read write think' text).

Choose **Student** and log in with their **six-digit lunch number** for both the username and password.

The screenshot shows the Lexia PowerUp Literacy login page for Brockton Public Schools. The page features a blue background with a smiling young man wearing a hat and a plaid shirt. The Lexia PowerUp Literacy logo is prominently displayed. Below the logo, the text 'Brockton Public Schools' is visible. There are two tabs: 'Student' (selected) and 'Educator'. Below the tabs, there are two input fields: 'Username' and 'Password'. The 'Password' field has a 'Show' button next to it. At the bottom, there is a 'Log In' button.

Students are urged to complete their word study minutes on Monday, Grammar minutes on Tuesday, Reading Comprehension on Wednesday and Thursday and the topic of their choice on Friday.



