

**МИНИСТЕРСТВО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И НАУКИ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ  
Федеральное государственное бюджетное образовательное учреждение  
высшего профессионального образования**

**«Нижегородский государственный  
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# **СМЫСЛОВАЯ ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИЯ ТЕКСТА**

**Учебно-методические материалы  
для студентов IV курса дневного и заочного отделений  
факультета английского языка**

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Предлагаемые материалы предназначены для студентов IV курса факультета английского языка. Их основная цель – обучение смысловой интерпретации текста. Материалы могут быть использованы студентами других факультетов и вузов.

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## ВВЕДЕНИЕ

Настоящая учебно-методическая разработка имеет целью совершенствование коммуникативной и профессионально-коммуникативной компетенции будущего учителя иностранного языка на основе использования межпредметных и внутрипредметных связей.

Разработка включает: 1) краткие сведения по смысловой интерпретации текста с вопросами для самоконтроля; 2) задания к рассказам. Тексты представляют собой короткие рассказы современных английских и американских авторов. Предлагаемые задания направлены на дальнейшее развитие чтения и говорения, развитие умений смыслового анализа читаемого произведения, развитие лингво-страноведческих умений.

Учебно-методическая разработка также предусматривает задания, направленные на дальнейшее совершенствование фонетической, лексической и грамматической сторон речи. Задания к каждому рассказу сгруппированы в 5 разделов, каждый из которых имеет свою методическую функцию.

Методическая функция I раздела (**PRELIMINARIES**) состоит в снятии фонетических, лексико-грамматических и лингвострановедческих трудностей. Задания этого раздела выполняются перед чтением рассказа.

Методическая функция II раздела (**COMPREHENSION**) заключается в формировании у студентов умений углубленного понимания прочитанного и умений аргументировать выдвигаемое положение фактами текста.

Методическая функция III раздела (**TEXT INTERPRETATION**) предусматривает формирование у студентов умений анализировать читаемый текст в соответствии с заданными параметрами (сюжет, композиция, характеры, проблемы и идея произведения) и умений выразить собственное отношение к содержанию и художественным достоинствам произведения.

Методической функцией IV раздела (**DISCUSSION**) является совершенствование умений неподготовленной речи в условиях групповой дискуссии.

Методическая функция V раздела (**PRACTICE IN TEACHING SKILLS**) заключается в формировании лингвометодических умений.

Рассказы для смысловой интерпретации напечатаны в пособии "School Stories", обработка и комментарий Н.В. Конон (Москва: Просвещение, 1983).

## INTRODUCTION

Reading a piece of fiction we participate in the adventures and imaginary experiences of imaginary people. There are two main types of literature: literature of escape and literature of interpretation. Escape literature has its only object – pleasure. It is created to entertain readers. A story becomes interpretative as it illuminates some aspect of human life or behaviour. An interpretative story presents an insight into the nature and conditions of our existence. It gives us a keener awareness of what it is to be a human being in a universe. It helps us to understand our neighbours and ourselves.

In the text interpretation the reader gets an insight into the plot, the composition, the ideas and themes, the problems and facts of life and the characters.

Analysis falls into several sections, each offering the explanation of the **WHO**, the **WHY**, the **WHERE** and the **WHEN**.

The plot is a sequence of events of which a story is composed. It is the easiest element in fiction to comprehend and put into words, “The plot in the story is as a map in a journey. Just as a map may be drawn on a smaller or larger scale, so the plot may be reproduced with lesser or greater detail.” The plot may include what a character says or thinks as well as what he does. But it leaves out description and analysis concentrating on major happenings. The plot may include one or many episodes.

The development of the plot depends on the **CONFLICT**. The conflict may be physical, mental and emotional. It may be of 3 main types: 1) **MAN** against **MAN** (the main character is in conflict with some other person or group of persons); 2) **MAN** against **ENVIRONMENT** (the main character is in conflict with external force, eg. Nature, fate, society, etc.); 3) **MAN** against **HIMSELF** (the main character is in conflict with his qualities of character). In some stories the conflict is single, clear-cut and easily identified. In others it is multiple, various and subtle.

The central character in the conflict whether he be a sympathetic or an unsympathetic person, is referred to as the **PROTAGONIST**. The forces arrayed against the protagonist whether persons, things, conventions of society or traits of his own character are the **ANTAGONISTS**.

Reading for **CHARACTER** is more difficult than reading for the plot: anyone can repeat what a person has done in a story but considerable skill may be needed to describe what a person is like. An author may present his character directly and indirectly. In direct presentation he tells us straight out what a character is like or someone in the story tells us about it. In indirect presentation the author shows us the character in action. We conclude what a character is like from what he thinks or says or does. The characters are flat if they are characterized by one or two traits and round when they are many-sided. All fictional characters may be classified as static (who are the same sort of people at the beginning and at the end of the story) and developing or dynamic (if they undergo a permanent change for the better or for the worse). **STOCK-CHARACTER** is the stereotyped figure who has occurred so often in fiction that his nature is immediately known, eg.: the cruel stepmother, the beautiful modest girl or the brilliant detective with eccentric manners, etc.

Every kind of fiction has a basic structural design which is called the **COMPOSITION**. There are three main elements in the composition: the exposition (the necessary preliminaries to the action in which the time or subject is presented which may be detailed and concentrated in one place or scattered all through the story); the climax (the highest point in the story); the outcome (the unwinding of the action, the events immediately following the climax and bringing the action to the end).

The **THEME** of a piece of fiction is its controlling idea or its central insight, its central purpose. It is the unifying generalization about life stated or implied in

the story. In getting at the theme it's better to ask not "What does the story teach?" but "What does it reveal?" There are no prescribed methods for discovering the theme. Sometimes the best approach is to explore the nature of the central conflict and its outcome. Sometimes the title will provide an important clue. Sometimes it may be the revelation of a human character. Sometimes the theme is explicitly stated either by the author or by one of the characters. More often it is implied.

The theme must be expressed in the form of a statement, eg. "Motherhood sometimes has more frustration than rewards", or in the form of a text. The theme must account for all major details of the story; it must not be contradicted by any detail; it is what gives a story its unity. Some readers consider the words "moral" and "theme" to be interchangeable. Sometimes they really are and the theme of the story may be expressed as a moral principle without doing violence to the story. More frequently the word "moral" is too narrow to fit the kind of illumination provided by a first-rate story. In stating the theme terms like "every", "all", "always" should be used cautiously. Terms like "sometimes", "some", "may" are often more accurate.

### **QUESTIONS FOR SELF-CONTROL**

1. What are the main elements to interpret and analyse a text?
2. What is a plot? What may a plot include? What does it leave out?
3. What types of conflicts do you know?
4. What is the protagonist? What are the antagonists?
5. How can the author present his characters? What types of characters do you know?
6. What are the elements of the composition?
7. What is the theme of a piece of fiction? Are the words "moral" and "theme" interchangeable? What may the theme be equivalent to?

William Carlos Williams

## THE USE OF FORCE

### *Preliminaries*

1. Watch and practise the pronunciation of the following words.

1. Mathilda [mə'tildə]

2. photogravure [ˌfotəgrə'vjuə]

apologetic [əˌpɒlə'dʒetɪk]

diphtheria [dɪf'tɪrɪə]

heifer ['heɪfə]

abject ['æbdʒekt]

assault [ə'sɔ:lt]

contemptible

2. Guess the meaning of the words under point 2.

3. Read out the sentences and watch the pronunciation of the underlined words.

1. He is always making excuses for being late. 2. Please, excuse my coming late. 3. Those who are absent without excuse will be dismissed. 4. Excuse me, but I don't think that the statement is quite true. 5. Nothing can excuse such rudeness.

4. Consult the notes on p.155.

### *Comprehension*

5. Choose the right answer

1. Why do you think the girl's parents met the doctor distrustfully?

a) They were reticent and unsociable people.

b) They thought the doctor (to be) an inexperienced and non-qualified specialist.

- c) They were simply nervous and frightened by their daughter's disease and felt ill at ease in the presence of the doctor. It was the doctor who took their awkwardness for distrust.
2. Why do you think the girl offered strong resistance to the doctor?
- a) She was afraid of the doctor's hurting her.
  - b) She was an ill-bred girl and could not behave properly.
  - c) Her parents must have set her against the doctor.
3. What do you think made the doctor use force?
- a) He did it out of spite because the girl and her parents were getting on his nerves.
  - b) He did it to protect the girl against a very serious disease.
  - c) He was beyond himself with fury and was unconscious of what he was doing.
6. Make up a list of words and word-combinations
- 1) conveying the doctor's gradually losing his temper;
  - 2) emphasizing the idea of the "fight".
7. Find and read out the sentences proving that
- 1) the doctor's behaviour was motivated by a very strong desire to diagnose the girl's case;
  - 2) the girl's parents acted in the situation helplessly thus causing the doctor's irritation;
  - 3) the doctor felt a bit ashamed at the thought that he had failed to manage the case without using force;
  - 4) Mathilda is presented by the author as being a strong personality.
8. Paraphrase and comment on the following.
- 1) In the ensuing struggle they grew more and more abject, crushed, exhausted while she surely rose to magnificent heights of insane fury of effort bred of her terror of me (p.80)
  - 2) I tried to hold myself down but I couldn't (p.81)



3) But the worst of it was I too had got beyond reason (p.81)

4) The damned little brat must be protected against her own idiocy one says to one's self at such times. Others must be protected against her. It is a social necessity. And all these things are true. But in a blind fury, a feeling of adult shame bred of a longing for muscular release are the operatives. One goes on to the end. (p.81)

### ***Text Interpretation***

#### **Introduction**

The theme of the story "The Use of Force" may be defined in the following way. Sometimes it is very difficult to treat children because they are (more often than not) afraid that doctors may hurt them. A doctor should be a good psychologist to approach sick children, to win their confidence and to get over their aggressiveness.

Sometimes to diagnose a case correctly, to cure a child of a serious disease or to save a child's life a doctor is compelled to use force which may seem on the surface of things cruel and repulsive.

The theme is derived from life and well pronounced in the story.

The author creates a very convincing type of the doctor who was to fight his little patient who "must be protected against her own idiocy". Realizing that breaking down the girl's obstinate resistance is a "social necessity" the doctor "gets beyond reason", letting fury get the better of him. His fury is also provoked by the parents' undue interference into the process of examining the girl. This is how he attempts to justify his cruelty, deep inside feeling ashamed of it.

#### **Vocabulary for Text Interpretation**

A. Consult the dictionary for adjectives to characterize Mathilda, the doctor and the girl's parents. Write them out.

B. Practise the adjectives in the patterns:

a) N is described as being Adj (quality)

shown

portrayed

depicted

b) If N had (not) been Adj (quality) N (he, she) would (not) have done smth.

c) I wish N had been less (more) Adj (quality)

could have been

### **Interpretation**

9. Answer the questions

1. What do we come to know from the exposition of the story about the place where the scene is laid and about the characters?
2. What makes the climax and the outcome of the story?
3. Who is the protagonist of the story?
4. What are the conflicts in the story?

### **Discussion**

10. Answer the questions

1. What would you do if you were the girl's parents?
2. Is the girl's behaviour typical of children?
3. Could you find a suitable approach to the girl?
4. Can you justify the doctor's cruelty?
5. Have you ever observed children's conduct in the presence of doctors?

11. Talking points

1. The best way to cultivate courage in children
2. Should parents indulge children's obstinacy?
3. Humanity of a doctor's profession

### Practice in Teaching Skills

12. Make the students get through the plot of the story with the help of indirect questions of alternative type.

*Model:* I'm interested to know if the doctor was cordially welcomed by the girl and her parents or if he was met distrustfully

Use the following words and word-combinations:

to go on one's round/to be called in urgently

to be welcomed cordially/to be met distrustfully

to examine smb with scrupulous care/to examine smb in a rush

to coax smb to do smth/to make smb do smth in a cold-blooded manner

to resent smb's interfering/to like smb's interference

to take oneself in hand/ to give way to a feeling of

to succeed in diagnosing a case/to fail to diagnose a case

to feel ashamed of one's behaviour/to feel as if one were a failure

13. Make the students read a few lines from the text

1. Choose a passage to your liking.

2. Practise reading it at home.

3. Arrest the students' attention before making them read it.

4. Give all necessary instructions in reading.

5. Make them read the passage in turn.

6. Correct their mistakes if any.

(See: Classroom English, Unit IV)

**Saki (Hector Hugh Munro)**

## THE STORY-TELLER

### *Preliminaries*

1. Watch and practise the pronunciation of the following words.

- |                                    |                                  |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Templecombe ['templkəʊmr]       | 2. punctuality [ˌpʌŋktju'æliiti] |
| Mandalay [ˌmændə'leɪ]              | triumph ['traɪəmf]               |
| Cyril ['sɪrɪl]                     | rescuers ['reskjʊəz]             |
| Bertha ['bɜːθə]                    | prowling [praʊlɪŋ]               |
| reluctantly [rɪ'lʌktəntli]         | myrtle ['mɜːtl]                  |
| correspondingly [ˌkɔːrɪs'pɒndɪŋli] | devour [di'vaʊə]                 |
| audible ['ɔːdəbl]                  | unsympathetic [ˌʌnsɪmpə'θetɪk]   |
| petulant ['petjʊlənt]              |                                  |

### *Comprehension*

2. Choose the right answer

1. Why do you think the bachelor interfered into the conversation?
  - a) He was an irritable and nagging man by nature. Moreover, he was an interfering type.
  - b) When he realized that the aunt was not a success as a story-teller he felt sorry for her. He was a very sympathetic man by nature and made up his mind to help the aunt.
  - c) He took to the children at first sight and had been seeking a chance to come into contact with them.
  - d) It was the aunt who provoked him to tell the children the story for she wanted to teach him a lesson.

2. What do you think the story told by the bachelor was like?
  - a) It was of great educational value.
  - b) It was banal and deplorably uninteresting.
  - c) It was imaginative and unusual. It aroused a feeling of curiosity in the children, because it introduced a ring of truth that was absent in the aunt's tales.
3. What do you think the aunt's reaction to the story was like?
  - a) She was indignant beyond endurance.
  - b) She took the story for granted.
  - c) She thought that it was an improper story to tell the young children but against her will and desire she got involved in it.
3. Make up a list of words and word-combinations:
  - 1) conveying the children's restless behaviour;
  - 2) rending the children's interest in the story;
  - 3) emphasizing Bertha's irreproachable behaviour.
4. Find and read out the sentences proving that:
  - 1) there was a feeling of hostility between the aunt and the bachelor from the very beginning;
  - 2) the aunt felt offended at the bachelor's remark concerning her ability to tell stories;
  - 3) the aunt was carried away by the story;
  - 4) the bachelor felt sorry for the aunt;
  - 5) the bachelor possessed all the makings of a story-teller.
5. Comment on the following.
  - 1) There was a wave of reaction in favour of the story; the word horrible in connection with goodness was a novelty that commended itself. (p.99)
  - 2) The story-teller paused to let a full idea of the park's treasures sink into the children's imaginations; then he resumed... (p.100)

- 3) “The most improper story to tell to young children. You have undermined the effect of years of careful teaching.” (p.102)

### ***Text Interpretation***

#### **Introduction**

Though this piece of fiction may be referred to the literature of escape (the aim of which is to entertain the reader) it still offers food for thought for it gives us some knowledge of life. From the story we learn that banal, trivial things are no longer interesting for boys and girls, that children are clever enough to understand life as it is. Children’s imagination may get exhausted if it is not fed by adults.

#### **Interpretation**

##### 6. Answer the questions

1. What do we come to know from the exposition of the story about the place where the scene is laid and about the characters?
2. What is the climax of the story?
3. What makes its outcome?

##### 7. Identify the conflicts in the story and comment on them using the facts of the text.

*Model:* N comes into conflict with

To prove it I’ll remind you about the following fact...

*or:* Here are my arguments...

*or:* I’ll give you the evidence...

##### 8. Say if the plot unfolds slowly or dynamically.

##### 9. Speak about the composition of the story.

##### 10. Catalogue the characters and rank them on a scale of human worth.

## **Discussion**

### 11. Answer the questions

1. What would you do if once you happened to find yourself in the situation the bachelor found himself in?
2. Should grown-ups disregard children's being noisy in public places or should they bring them to order?
3. Should grown-up people shield children from some negative influences?
4. Does it work to be patient, understanding and tolerant when dealing with restless children?
5. Do you know any remarkable story-tellers? Speak on them.

### 12. Talking points

1. The ways to develop imagination.
2. Qualities which a good story-teller should possess.
3. Treating children as individuals.

### **Practice in Teaching Skills**

13. Make the students get over the plot of the story with the help of true and untrue statements.
14. Make the students give the summary of the text.
15. Make the students discuss the characters in groups of 2.
16. Comment on the students' answers.

(See: Classroom English, Units I – II)

Dylan Thomas

**THE FIGHT*****Preliminaries***

1. Watch and practise the pronunciation of these words.

1. wrestle [resl]

2. panama [ˌpænə'ma:]

flourish [flʌrɪʃ]

hooligan ['hu:lɪgən]

quill [kwɪl]

rescuers ['reskjʊəz]

chandelier [ˈʃændi'liə]

manipulation [mæ'nɪpjʊ'leɪʃn]

2. Guess the meaning of the words under point 2.

3. Consult the dictionary for the pronunciation of the proper names. Pronounce the names carefully.

4. Consult the notes of the story on p.157 and the notes below

dollop (slang) – 1) a lot 2) a lump

***Comprehension***

5. Make up a list of words and expressions describing:

1) the fight; 2) the boys' room; 3) the boys' gifts.

6. Expand on the sentences below using the verbs in brackets in the Past Perfect Tense.

*Model:* His nose was bleeding. Thomas had hit him very hard.

1) The boys felt annoyed (to complain several times).

2) Thomas was extremely proud (not to lose the fight).

3) Dan rabbit-punched Thomas twice (to turn round, to miss the attack).

4) Thomas longed for companionship (to come to his room, yet).

5) The boys felt very much at ease in Dan's room (to take a liking to each other at once).



7. Paraphrase and comment on the following.

- 1) On the road, a boy from an inferior school where the parents didn't have to pay anything, called me "One eye". (p.105)
- 2) Across the poem I had written with stolen quill and in flourishes: "Homer Nods". (p.104)
- 3) The school had vanished, leaving on Mount Pleasant Hill a deep hole that smelt of cloak-rooms and locker mice... (p.106)

8. Choose the right answer.

Why do you think the boys had a fight?

- a) They disliked each other.
- b) They wanted to make a performance for Mr. Samuels.
- c) They wanted to test their strength.
- d) They wanted to make friends.
- e) They wanted to assert themselves.

### ***Text Interpretation***

#### **Introduction**

In the story the author manages to get a deep insight into children's nature. The main character of the story is the author himself. It gives the events a very personal touch making them very convincing.

#### **Interpretation**

9. Answer the following questions

- A 1. Why was Mr. Samuels annoyed?
2. Did he complain only once?
3. Did the children think he was a nuisance?
4. Were they right?
5. What did Thomas do to annoy Mr. Samuels one day? And why?

6. Tell us how the man reacted to it.
7. Don't you think the boy's behaviour was rather impudent?
8. Describe that scene, please.

**B** 1. How did the fight start?

2. Did Thomas begin it?
3. Did Mr. Samuels take an interest in it?
4. Why did the boys throw gravel at him?
5. Tell us what they looked like after the fight.
6. Both of them felt proud, didn't they? Why?
7. Why do you think they wanted everyone, especially the girls, to see the black eye and the bloodstains?
8. And Thomas wouldn't even mind having a black silk sling over his eye, would he? Why?
9. Do boys often fight? Is it a means of self-assertion? Do you think that's a good means?

**C** 1. What kind was Thomas' school? Was it fee-paying?

2. How did the mathematics master react to Thomas' black eye? Did he joke?
3. Do you think that the reaction of the other teachers would be similar?
4. Why did Thomas promise he would break Gilbert's leg after school? Would he really?
5. What picture did he conjure up in his mind's eye?
6. What was his natural gift?
7. Did he write good poems?
8. What was there on the walls of his bedroom? Were his tastes good?

**D** 1. Were Dan's gifts of the same character? What could he do?

2. Common interests bring people together, don't they?
3. What was Dan's room like?

4. What did Thomas call his own room? Was it as untidy as Dan's?
  5. It's typical of boys to be untidy, isn't it?
  6. Did they both feel comfortable? What did they do?
  7. Did they forget about the school and the town?
  8. They were day-dreaming, weren't they?
  9. Do you think they would make good friends?
- E**
1. The story is about children, isn't it?
  2. What is the basic problem of the story?
  3. Boys all seek self-assertion, don't they?
  4. Do they also want to express themselves as best as they can?
  5. What are the possible ways of self-expression and self-assertion?
  6. Why do you think they fight sometimes? Do they mean to look manly?
  7. Are they eager to test their strength and stamina, their will power?
  8. What about grown-ups? Do they always understand boys? What happens if they don't?
10. Analyse Mr. Samuels' character.
  11. Compare the two boys.

### **Discussion**

12. Talking points
  1. Have you ever fought? Is fighting commendable?
  2. How friendship is born.
  3. Children strive for self-expression and self-assertion.

### **Practice in Teaching Skills**

13. Ask and answer the questions (ex.9), make your classmates answer these questions. Comment on their answers. Give your own ideas. (Classroom English, Unit 3)
14. Make up a set of key questions for the discussion (ex.12). arrange the discussion in class. Make up the summary. (Classroom English, Unit 3).

## VILLAGE SCHOOL

### *Preliminaries*

1. Watch and practise the pronunciation of the following words.

- |                                    |                        |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Pre-Raphaelite ['pri:'ræfələit] | Birmingham ['bɜ:mɪŋəm] |
| Cotswold ['kɒtswɔld]               | Squire [skwaɪə]        |
| Stroud [straud]                    | Vera ['viərə]          |
| Georgian ['dʒɔ:dʒən]               | Tony ['təʊni]          |
| 2. Echo ['ekəʊ]                    | veteran ['vetərən]     |
| veil [veil]                        | anarchy ['ænəkɪ]       |
| facade [fə'sa:d]                   | intrigued [ɪn'tri:gd]  |
| dame [deɪm]                        | caste [ka:st]          |
| mnemonics [ni:'mɒnɪks]             | techniques [tek'ni:ks] |
| rodeo [rou'deɪəʊ]                  | sovereign ['sɒvrɪn]    |
| shrapnel ['ʃræpnəl]                | nostalgia [nəs'tældʒə] |
|                                    | censure ['senʃə]       |

2. Guess the meaning of the words under point 2.

3. Study the notes on the story on pp.157–158 and the notes below.

1. a) limpet chums – inseparables, close friends

b) to be impervious [ɪm'pɜ:viəs] to smth – (fig) to be not moved or influenced by smth

2. gouge [gaʊdʒ] – выдалбливать

to scowl [skaʊl] – хмуриться

funnel ['fʌnəl] – воронка

rabble – толпа

crest – вершина гребня	goitre [gɔɪtə] – зоб
limestone – известь	snail – улитка
eaves [i:vz] – карнизы	steep – крутой
tiles – черепица	bean-pod – бобовый стручок
sump – дно	tuft – пучок травы
manour ['mænə] – поместье	pidgeon-loft – голубятня
mance [mæns] – дом шотландского пастора	wallow ['wɔləu] – погрязнуть
hovel ['hɔvəl] – лачуга	vicarage ['vɪkərɪdʒ] – дом священника
a top – волчок	to prod – толкать
cleave [kli:v] – прокладывать путь	opulent ['ɒpjulənt] – пышный
nudge – толчок	stocks – колодки
solar plexus ['soulə 'pleksəs] – солнечное сплетение	retribution – возмездие
hilarity [hi'lærɪti] – радость	otter – выдра
indefatigable [ˈɪndɪ'fætɪɡəbl] – неутомимый	beehive ['bi:haɪv] – улей
insoluble [ɪn'sɔljubl] – неразрешимый	to wack [wæk] – ударить

### *Comprehension*

#### 4. Choose the right answer

- Why was there a conflict between Spadge Hopkins and Miss B.?
  - Spadge was an unmanageable boy.
  - Miss B. screamed and shouted at him.
  - Miss B. humiliated Spadge and other pupils.
  - Spadge had nothing to busy himself with.
- Why did the children have no desire to come back to school?

- a) They were wild and ungrateful people.
  - b) They did not like the teachers.
  - c) The teachers did not ask them to come.
  - d) The school on the whole was a terror.
5. Find and read out the sentences providing that
- 1) the school conditions were frustrating;
  - 2) the level of instruction was very low.
5. Paraphrase and comment on the following sentences:
- 1) They were my first amazed vision of any world outside the womanly warmth of my family. (p.109)
  - 2) ...he was an Infant Freak from the start. So he was promoted to the Big Room with unprecedented promptness, given a desk and a dozen atlases to sit on, from which he continued to bully the teachers (p.112)
  - 3) Many a punch-drunk boy in a playground battle, outnumbered and beaten to his knees, would be heard to cry. "I will not have it."... It was an appeal to the code of our common suffering, and called for immediate mercy. (p.113)
  - 4) ...she was responsible for our excellent reflexes. (p.113)
  - 5) She was more sober than Grabby, her reins looser but stronger. (p.115)
  - 6) Unhearing, unquestioning, we rocked to our chanting, hammering the gold nails home. (p.116)

### ***Text Interpretation***

#### **Introduction**

The author of the story is Laurie Lee, an English writer. The story is written in the first person; the events are related in retrospect. The action develops rather slowly because the writer is mostly concerned with various descriptions: those of

his native village, school, teachers and pupils. The general tone of the story is sometimes matter-of-fact, very often bitterly ironic and rather often humorous.

### **Vocabulary for Text Interpretation**

1. To describe/portray a character.
2. To criticize/expose/reveal/lay bare/accuse/blame/condemn [kən'dem]/ridicule ['ridikju:l]/mock at smb; smth
3. To give one's opinion of/account of smth
4. To make some critical remarks on smth
5. To analyze/enumerate/recall/point out/generalize/comment on/explain/mention smth
6. Vivid/life-like/realistic characters/personages
7. A subtle/profound/deep analysis

### **Interpretation**

7. Prove by the choice of words that the remote and entirely cut off village described in the opening passages was a very limited world in itself. What is the relation of such an exposition to the main plot?
8. What methods were applied at school? Do you approve of them?
9. Give character sketches of the teachers:
 

a) the junior teacher	c) Miss Wardley
b) the opulent widow	d) Miss B.
10. Point out sentences and phrases that describe the children's wrong behaviour:
  - a) give reasons for their misbehaviour
  - b) enumerate the children's negative qualities that set in as a sad consequence of the teachers' unbecoming conduct and their inadequate methods
  - c) characterize Laurie Lee: pay special attention to his actions that serve as indirect means of character drawing.

11. What do you think should have been done to avoid the conflict between Miss B. And Spadge Hopkins?
12. What problems are raised by the author?
13. Point out sentences and episodes that give the story a humorous touch and comment on them.

### **Discussion**

14. Enlarge on the following.
  1. When children are neglected and left to their own devices they run wild and get out of control.
  2. The teacher must be very careful about his own conduct not to set a bad example to his pupils.
  3. Corporal punishment has a harmful effect on children.
  4. Like teacher, like pupil.
  5. The best gift you can give another is a good example.
  6. It is necessary to combine the most exacting demands on the pupil with the utmost respect for his personality.

### **Practice in Teaching Skills**

15. Ask your fellow students a series of indirect questions to find out their attitude to the events and characters described in the story.

*Model:* Tell me, please            why you dislike N.

I'd like to know if    you consider N. A sympathetic character, etc.

I wonder

16. Write a plan and use it as "props" to speak on the following:
  - a) reasons for and causes of hostility and alienation between teachers and pupils;
  - b) the role of punishment and encouragement in upbringing.



## A BUSHEL OF LEARNING

*Preliminaries*

1. Watch and practise the pronunciation of the following words.

1. Margo ['ma:gou]

Gerry ['dʒeri]

Achilles [ə'kili:z]

Quasimodo [kweisi'moudou]

2. flora ['flɔ:rə]

fauna ['fɔ:nə]

Zoology [zo(u)'ɔ:lədʒi]

natural history

focus ['foukəs]

ciga'rette

in'adequate

'rudiments

'vandalism

'vandal

volcano [vəl'keinou]

3. Zoological names:

bumble bee – шмель

wasp [wɔsp] – оса

caterpillar ['kætəpɪlə] – гусеница

lizard ['lɪzəd] – ящерица

cicada [si'ka:də] – цикада

parrot ['pærət] – попугай

crane – журавль

goldfinch – щегол

gull – чайка

'camel – верблюд

elephant ['elifənt] – слон

tortoise ['tɔ:təs] – черепаха

penguin ['peŋgwin] – пингвин

walrus ['wɔ:lrəs] – морж

whale [weɪl] – кит

octopus (pl. octopi) – осьминог, спрут

2. Guess the meaning of the words under point 2.

3. Consult the notes on the story on p.159 and the notes below:

p.140 bushel ['buʃl] – бушель, мера объема сыпучих веществ и жидкостей в странах с английской системой мер. В Великобритании бушель 36,37 л. Здесь в значении “большое количество”.

learning – wide knowledge gained by careful study

p.141 to grow up into a hobbledehoy ['hɒblɪhɔɪ] – to become an awkward overgrown youth

supercilious ['su:pəsiliəs] – showing contemptuous indifference

p.142 That's brain wave (col.) – That's a good idea

gravely – seriously, giving careful consideration

eulogistic [ju:lə'dʒɪstɪk] – giving or containing high praise

undeterred – not discouraged

p.143 The disciple awaits the master agog with anticipation (bookish) – the pupil awaits the teacher with eagerness and excitement

p.144 to disconcert ['diskən'sɜ:t] – to upset the calmness or self-possession of smb.

### ***Comprehension***

4. Make up a list of words and phrases

- 1) to describe the lessons of geography and the maps George and Gerry drew;
- 2) to emphasize the author's love of nature.

7. Find and read out the sentences proving that

- 1) George was an all-rounder;
- 2) George encouraged Gerry's interest in zoology;
- 3) Gerry's pets were his greatest friends;
- 4) The mother has an insight into Gerry's nature.

8. Paraphrase and comment on the following.

- 1) I had listened with interest, not unmixed with imagination, to the following discussion on my fate. (p.141)
- 2) ... “and that’s his awful urge to fill things with animal life”. (p.141)
- 3) “I suppose George will have a shot at teaching him”. (p.142)
- 4) Mathematics was not one of our more successful subjects. (p.144)
- 5) In geography we made better progress, for George was able to give a more zoological tinge to the lessons. (p.144)
- 6) So, George, hampered by inadequate books and a reluctant pupil, would strive to make his teaching interesting, so that the lessons didn’t drag. (p.145)

### ***Text Interpretation***

#### **Introduction**

“A Bushel of Learning” is a chapter from the book “My Family and Other Animals”, written by the famous English naturalist and traveller Gerald Durrell. This is the first book of the trilogy which the author wrote about the life of his family on the island of Corfu before the last world war. It portrays a very important part of his life which is a truly happy and sunlit childhood. The other two books of the trilogy are “Birds, Beasts and Relatives” and “The Garden of Gods”.

All Durrell’s books are permeated with humanism and optimism, a sense of beauty and subtle humour. They imbue the reader with love of nature.

#### **Vocabulary for Text Interpretation**

autobiographic(al) [ˌɔːtobaɪo(u)ˈgræfɪk]

'humanism

subtle [sʌtl] – here fine, delicate

to imbue with – to fill, inspire

a figure of speech – a word, word-combinations or a sentence used not in its literal sense but in its figurative meaning: e.g. a simile, a metaphor and others.

a simile ['simili] – a figure of speech, based on a vivid comparison of 2 different objects; e.g. *He is as brave as a lion.*

an epithet ['epiθet] – an adjective or a descriptive phrase used to give a vivid characterization of the thing described; e.g. *a fiery man* (a man who is easily made angry).

to connote – to suggest in addition to the fundamental meaning.

7. Dwell on the opening scene (the exposition) of the story.

What does the opening scene deal with? Who is involved in it? How did the Durrells discuss Gerry's education? In what way did they regard his interest in animal life? What can you say about the family atmosphere? What qualities of the members of the family did the discussion reveal? Is the opening scene significant for the purpose of the story?

8. Give the plot of the story from the point of view of

1) Gerry; 2) George; 3) Gerry's mother.

9. Speak about Gerry's attitude to animals taking into consideration the description of his pets. (p.146) What is it permeated with?

10. Dwell on the lessons of geography and the maps George and Gerry drew.

Analyse the vocabulary and phrases that make this passage brilliantly humorous.

11. Describe the nature of the island of Corfu. How did George make use of nature in his teaching?

## 12. Characterize George

1) Describe his appearance. Pay attention to the wonderful epithets and similes the author makes use of:

p.142 the odd disjoined grace of a puppet

a skull – like face

p.143 a saturnine smile

p.144 ... like a dismal crane, a steely look

2) What do these figures of speech connote? Was George peculiar-looking?

How did Gerry see him? (what was Gerry's perception of him?) Did he leave a lasting impression with Gerald Durrell?

## 13. Speak of George as a teacher. Support his characteristics with instances of the text. Make use of the following vocabulary:

to have a versatile mind, to be an all-rounder, to make the best of a bad job, to be not devoid of humour, to teach carefully and meticulously, to get smb interested in smth, to encourage smb in smth, to involve in, to cultivate, to share smb's interests, shrewd and understanding, to work magic, to capture smb's attention, to broaden smb's knowledge, teaching is an art.

## 14. George thought that "all that could hardly be described as education in the strictest sense of the word" (p.146). Are you of the same opinion? What do you think of Gerry's preliminary education?

## 15. State the theme the story.

### Discussion

## 16. Talking Points

1. Gerald Durrell as a naturalist and traveller.
2. Teaching is an art. (Teachers are born, not made)

3. What do you know about the beautiful spots on our planet that have been destroyed by civilization?
4. The problems of environment are vital nowadays.
5. Is vandalism inevitable in the area of technological progress?

### **Practice in Teaching Skills**

17. Get through the plot of the story with the help of true and untrue statements.
18. Look up the word “vandal” in the dictionary and explain its meaning to the students. Suggest some statements with the words “vandal” and “vandalism” and ask the students to respond to them.
19. Go over ex.16 acting as teacher. Stimulate the discussion of the problems.
20. Make the students act out the family discussion of Gerry’s education.  
(Classroom English, Unit 4)
21. Go over ex.5 acting as teacher. Comment on the students’ reading.  
(Classroom English, Unit 4)
22. Practise the spelling of some zoological names. (Classroom English, Unit 5)
23. Make up a series of questions on the story to practise the Suppositional Mood and Complex Object.

*Model:* Who wanted Gerry to give up his hobby? Did Leslie suggest that Gerry should go in for sports?

Frank O'Connor (Michael O'Donovan)

THE IDEALIST

*Preliminaries*

1. Watch and practise the pronunciation of the following words.

- |                          |                                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. ordeal [ɔ:'di:l]      | alternate (v) ['ɔ:lteneit]     |
| 2. idealist [ai'diəlɪst] | alternative (n) [ɔ:l'tɜ:nətɪv] |
| barrack ['bærək]         | model [mɒdl]                   |
| hysteria [his'tiəriə]    | exultation [ˌegzʌl'teɪʃn]      |

2. Guess the meaning of the words under point 2.

3. Read out the sentences. Watch the pronunciation of the underlined words.

1. You have the alternative of working hard and be a success or of not working hard and be a failure.
2. She alternated kindness with strictness.
3. Is there no alternative to your question?
4. There are no alternative answers to it.
5. He alternated between laughter and tears.
6. Delaney alternated between fits of exultation at his defiance of the Murderer and panic at the prospect of his revenge.

4. Consult the notes on the story on pp.154–155 and the notes below:

p.68 a 'venerable pile – a large ancient building or a group of buildings

lunatic asylum ['lunətɪk ə'saɪləm] – “mental home” or “mental hospital”  
are the names in present-day use.

p.69 to be flogged – to be caned

...their fathers were on the booze (col.) – their fathers were drunkards

Purgatory – *Russ.* (рел.) чистилище

to suck up to a master (sl.) – try to please a teacher by flattery, offers of service, etc.

p.70 invisible presences – *Russ.* незримые свидетели

This was a new line entirely for him – this was a new way of behaviour

p.71 guile [gail] – deceit; cunning

p.73 disdainfully – contemptuously, scornfully

to coddle – treat with great care and tenderness

p.74 I wouldn't put it past you (col.) – *Russ.* Я подумал на тебя

to send to Coventry – *Russ.* бойкотировать

### ***Comprehension***

5. Make up a list of words and phrases to describe the boys' behaviour at school.

6. Find and read out the sentences proving that

1. Larry Delaney was favourably impressed by the characters of school stories.
2. Moloney's "teaching methods" were oppressive.
3. Delaney kept a stiff upper lip and went through the ordeal with dignity.
4. The boys considered Delaney's behaviour abnormal.

7. Choose the right answer.

Why do you think Delaney told a lie about the reason for his being late for school at the end of the story?

1. He was afraid of the Murderer.
2. The boy had a lame excuse and didn't want to get into trouble.
3. Delaney didn't want the boys to laugh at him.



4. The boy was defeated and gave up his new principles.
5. Delaney knew it was no good and felt guilty.
8. Paraphrase and comment on the following:
  - p.69 I couldn't help being disgusted at the bad way things were run in our school.
  - p.70 Even as kids we knew who the real boss of the school was.
  - p.71 They couldn't believe but that I was deliberately trailing my coat.  
I knew this was a testing-point for me and if only I could keep my head I should provide a model for the whole class.
  - p.72 I realized that if I was to keep on terms with the invisible presences I should have to watch my step at school.
  - p.74 "Dirty, filthy English rubbish."

### ***Text Interpretation***

#### **Introduction**

The story under consideration provides a deep insight into the educational system of Ireland before the first world war. It is told in the name of the main personage. By using this form the author gives a more effective depiction of the protagonist and theme and creates a sincere and trustful tone of the narration. At the same time he offers an indirect interpretation of his material. It is up to the reader to judge the characters from what they think, say or do.

#### **Vocabulary for Text Interpretation**

'insight (into smth) – understanding; power of seeing into smth with the mind; to gain an insight into a person's psychology, mind, character, etc.

the protagonist – the main character

narration – story-telling; account of events

conflict – a clash of actions, desires, ideas or wills; to be involved in conflict  
 (with) – to be in opposition or disagreement (with); to give rise to a conflict –  
 to cause a conflict

climax ['klaɪmæks] – event, point of greatest interest or intensity; to bring or  
 come to a climax

emotional reversal – Russ. “переворот в душе”

to refer to – to speak of

to imply – to mean without saying directly, hint at or suggest.

9. Dwell on the atmosphere that reigned at the school considering

- a) the conditions in which the children studied;
- b) the role of religion;
- c) the relations between the pupils;
- d) corporal punishment.

Make use of the following vocabulary:

frustrating, discouraging, to encourage smb to do smth, wrong-doing, to spy on,  
 to cultivate, sneaks, cowards (cowardly, cowardice), to forbid smb to do smth,  
 to use corporal punishment (caning), wicked, distrustful, hostile, to provoke  
 smb to do smth/into doing smth, to put the blame on someone else, to hurt, to  
 do smb harm, not to be concerned with.

10. Speak on the way Delaney took the punishment. What did he suffer more  
 from: physical pain or humiliation?

11. The main character (the protagonist) is involved in conflict with

- a) Murderer Moloney;   b) the class;   c) his own nature.

Analyse Delaney's conflict with Murderer Moloney as suggested by the following questions:

Is it the central conflict of the story? What gave rise to the conflict between the boy and the Murderer? Why was the Murderer's professional pride wounded? Did the Murderer take it out on the boy? Did the boy give in? What sustained Delaney in his conflict with Moloney? What episode intensified the conflict and brought it to a climax? What emotional reversal took place at this point? What made Delaney the hero of the school for the whole afternoon? Was the Murderer defeated?

12. Is Delaney a static or developing character? If the latter, how does he change in the course of the story and why?
13. Interpret the last sentence of the story.
14. What's your impression of Larry Delaney?
15. Characterize Moloney. He is never referred to as a teacher, but as a murderer. Why?
16. Is Gorman an unsympathetic character? His direct characteristics are: handsome, sulky, spoiled and sneering. What does his indirect characterization imply?
17. State the theme of the story.

### **Discussion**

18. Talking points
  - I. Corporal punishment at school.
  - II. The teacher-pupil relationship.
  - III. What personal qualities may prevent one from making a teacher?
  - IV. It is necessary to cultivate in our children such qualities as trustfulness, honesty, a sense of justice. How can a school teacher do it?

### **Practice in Teaching Skills**

19. Make up 10 – 15 comprehension questions on the story.
20. Ask a series of indirect questions to find out the students' attitude to Larry Delaney.
21. Make the students discuss the boys' behaviour at school in groups of 2 or 3. See that they use the words and phrases they've written down for this point at home. Comment on the dialogues. (Classroom English, Unit 3).
22. Go over Ex.6, acting as teacher. Comment on the students' reading. (Classroom English, Unit 4).
23. Practise the spelling of the words (Ex.1) (Classroom English, Unit 5).

**David Ely**

## **THE ACADEMY**

### *Preliminaries*

1. Watch and practise the pronunciation of the following words.
 

hasten (v) ['heɪsn]	orient (v) ['ɔ:riənt]
orientate (v) ['ɔ:riənteɪt]	cadet [kə'det]
2. Look up the pronunciation of the proper names. Pronounce the names carefully.
3. Make up a list of words and expressions from the story stressing the atmosphere of regularity and discipline at the Academy. Read them out carefully.
4. Consult the notes on p.149.

### *Comprehension*

5. Find and read out the sentences proving:
  1. The Academy world was organized along military lines.
  2. The cadets would hardly ever leave the Academy.
  3. The Director was interested in accepting Mr. Holston's son.

4. Mr. Holston felt dubious and a bit ashamed.
6. Describe 1) the rules and traditions of the Academy  
2) the top cadet of the Academy.
7. Comment on the following phrases:
  1. ...the figures were facing so that the stone commander was pointing toward the school, rather than in the direction of the outside world... p.6
  2. “What we are looking for... is to motivate them – motivate them to achieve success, which means success in becoming a fully oriented member of this community”... p.7
  3. “We’ve found that home visits just don’t fit into the picture...” p.7
  4. “We don’t go by the usual class designations... Each cadet is paced according to his needs and capacities”... p.7
  5. “Drill,” he declared finally. “Sometimes I think it’s the greatest lesson of all.”
8. Choose the right answer
  1. Why do you think Mr. Holston wanted his son to become a cadet of the Academy?
    - a) He wanted his son to become a military man.
    - b) He wanted his son to receive a good education.
    - c) Mr. Holston wanted him to be cured.
    - d) He wanted to get rid of his son.
  2. What kind of establishment do you think the Academy was?
    - a) It was a military establishment.
    - b) It was an institution for problem young people.
    - c) It was a reform school.
  3. Why do you think there was so much drill in everyday life of the cadets?
    - a) It must have helped to keep up discipline at the Academy.

- b) Drill must have played a great role in keeping the cadets always busy.
  - c) It must have diverted their attention from their emotional and psychiatric problems.
  - d) It must have been very important for their future military career.
4. What do you think made Mr. Holston leave the Academy rather rapidly?
- a) He must have had an important date.
  - b) He must have felt miserable.
  - c) He must have had pricks of conscience.

### ***Text interpretation***

#### **Introduction**

In the story “The Academy” the author brings to light some specific points of dealing with young people who have emotional problems. The main character of the story Mr. Holston is never characterized by the author directly. The reader makes up his opinion from what he feels, thinks, says or does. It is through his perception that the reader gets to know the atmosphere at the Academy and the fate of the cadets.

9. Answer the following questions.

1. Why did Mr. Holston come to the Academy?
2. What impression did the exterior of the Academy produce on him?
3. What was unusual about the statue?
4. What do you think the symbolism of the statue was?
5. Could you describe the military spirit at the Academy?
6. What was the Director proud of?
7. Was he interested in enrolling Mr. Holston’s son? Why?
8. Running the Academy was a family matter, wasn’t it?

9. Can you prove the discipline there was very good? The author's choice of words is very illustrative, isn't it? Use some of them.
  10. Who taught the cadets? What did they mostly do?
  11. How did Mr. Holston feel about it all? Was he dubious and retreating up to the last moment?
  12. Do you think his signing the letter was the most important event in the story? It is the climax of the story, isn't it?
  13. He was involved in conflict with his own conscience, wasn't he? How did he feel about it? Speak on the conflict.
  14. How long did the cadets stay at the Academy?
  15. The terms used in the catalogue, the name of the establishment, etc., were a good cover up for that institution, weren't they?
  16. Do you agree that was a private institution?
10. Describe the military spirit at the Academy. Make use of the list of words (Ex.3)
  11. Characterize 1) the Director  
2) Cadet Sloan.  
What helps you (to) understand their nature?
  12. Give the plot of the story in brief.
  13. Speak on the problems of the story (Pair work)

### **Discussion**

14. Talking Points
  - I. The relations between parents and children.
  - II. The value of learning by teaching.
  - III. Drill is the greatest lesson.

### Practice in Teaching Skills

15. Make your classmates read the list of words and expressions (Ex.3). Comment on their reading. (Classroom English, Unit 4)
16. Make your classmates describe the rules and traditions of the Academy. Comment on their descriptions. Give your own ideas.
17. Make your classmates answer the questions (Ex.9). Comment on the answers. Give your own suggestions. Summarize all the ideas. (Classroom English, Unit 3)

**Virginia Moriconi**

## SIMPLE ARITHMETIC

### *Preliminaries*

1. Watch and practise the pronunciation of the following words.

1. Geneva ['dʒini:və]	stereo ['steriə]
2. arithmetic(s) [ə'riθmətik(s)]	assembly [ə'sembli]
arithmetic, adj [,æriθ'metik]	tragic ['trædʒik]
photogenic [,fəʊtə'dʒenik]	defective [di'fektiv]
punctual ['pʌŋktjuəl], ['pʌŋkfəl]	athletic [æθ'letik]
tariff ['tærif]	yoghurt ['jəʊgət]
cruise [kru:z]	

2. Guess the meaning of the words under point 2.
3. Read out the sentences and watch the pronunciation of the underlined words.
  1. The story “Simple Arithmetic” is told by means of letters.
  2. Stephan’s second letter to his mother includes a whole page of arithmetic calculations.
  3. It seems that Stephan’s father is mainly concerned with the arithmetic



aspect of his son's upbringing. 4. A child's upbringing can't be reduced to mere arithmetic.

4. Consult the notes on the story on pp.155 – 157 and the notes below.

fallen arches – плоскостопие

Assembly Hall – hall in which meeting, balls, etc. take place; hall where a school meets for prayers, etc.

### *Comprehension*

5. Choose the right answer

1. What was Stephan's impression of the flight?

- a) He had enjoyed it immensely.
- b) It had been a nice flight, on the whole, but the impression was spoiled by the incident with the taxi-driver.
- c) The flight had been extremely unpleasant.

2. What was Martha's attitude to Stephan?

- a) Stephan was a real burden to Martha but she was careful to keep up appearances.
- b) Martha was very fond of Stephan and very understanding about his problems.
- c) Martha hated him and did not even try to conceal it.

3. How did Stephan's father respond to Stephan's information about his schoolmate's suicide?

- a) He was very understanding and gave Stephan the moral support he needed.
- b) He treated the whole situation superficially and hypocritically.
- c) He did not pay any attention to it.

4. What did Stephan feel about the news of the new apartment his Father and Martha had taken?
  - a) He was indifferent to it.
  - b) He was very happy about it.
  - c) He felt uneasy and unwanted.
5. What did Stephan think of his academic achievement?
  - a) He was very proud of it.
  - b) He was ashamed of it because it was extremely low.
  - c) Though he got on well in all the subjects but English, it did not make him happy.
6. Where do you think Stephan will spend his Easter vacation?
  - a) He will stay in Geneva.
  - b) He will go to his mother's place in Majorca.
  - c) He will stay with his father and stepmother in America.
6. Paraphrase and comment on the following.
  1. They took two weekend privileges away from me... (p.84)
  2. New friends and new stepmothers take a little getting used to, of course. (p.86)
  3. ...I had gone way over my allowance... (p.86)
  4. ...I'm pretty much confused myself... (p.89)
  5. Shortly you will be up against the stiffest competition of your life... (p.91)
  6. I think it would have been better to have left me in some place where I belonged... (p.94)
7. Find and read out the sentences proving that Stephan was unhappy at his boarding school.

## *Text Interpretation*

### **Introduction**

The story “Simple Arithmetic” is told by means of letters which makes it an epistolary story. The author deliberately chooses this form in which she cannot offer any direct characterization. She makes her characters speak and lets the reader judge for himself. A discerning reader will appreciate the subtle treatment of personal relationships, the deep concern with the child’s inner nature. This is achieved by countless little touches, superficially insignificant, but full of meaning.

### **Vocabulary for Text Interpretation**

epistolary, adj [ə'pɪstələri] – carried on by means of letters: an epistolary novel,  
story, genre

to judge for oneself – to form one’s own opinion

discerning, adj – able to see and understand well, having quick or true insight,  
penetrating

subtle, adj [sʌtl] – here: skilful, penetrating; subtle treatment – skilful presentation  
touch – here: detail

superficial, adj [su:pə'fɪʃl] – here: on the surface only, outward;

superficially – adv (see how the word is used on p.88)

infer, v [ɪn'fɜ:] – deduce, conclude, reach an opinion from facts or reasoning (see  
how the word is used on p.85)

inference, n ['ɪnfərəns] – conclusion

8. Summarize the events that had taken place in Stephan’s life before he was sent to a boarding school in Switzerland ['swɪtsələnd], the events of his vacation and his second term at school (January – March). Narrate the events of the outlined period of his life from different points of view:

1) Stephan's; 2) his Father's; 3) his mother's; 4) Martha's.

Make use of the following words:

a) used in the book:

divorce (v, n) – pp.87, 88, 89

allowance, n – pp.85, 86

to go over (to exceed) one's allowance

adequate, adj – p.85; syn.: sufficient

to be back in/at school – p.83

assembly hall – p.97

to keep accounts – p.95

b) supplementary:

separate, v

separation, n

to make both ends meet

to turn over a new leaf

9. Analyse Stephan's first letter as suggested by the following questions.

- a) What does the reader come to know about Stephan from the opening paragraph of his first letter? Is he happy at school? Why does he say he was surprised to learn about the plans of his friend's mother? He is an observant child, isn't he?
- b) In his first letter Stephan turns to the problem of money four times. What are the four references to money? Why is Stephan so anxious about it? How does it characterise his father? What are their relations?
- c) What else does the reader learn about Stephan's family? What's Martha? Does she love Stephan? Did he enjoy his vacation?
- d) Don't you think Stephan could possibly suffer from a severe inferiority complex? Is he fond of skiing? Why does he mention "the terrible pain" in connection with it? What does he promise his father to do? What do the "exercises" imply?
- e) Sum up your inference and your first impressions of the story and the writer.

10. Analyse one – two pages of the story on your own (the whole story is divided for individual work).

1. New York, January 19 – Geneva, January 22
2. Geneva, January 29 – New York, February 2
3. Geneva, February 5 – New York, February 8
4. Geneva, February 12 – New York, February 15
5. Geneva, February 19 – New York, March 16
6. Geneva, March 19, 26.

11. Discuss the author's way of character drawing.

1. Give Stephan's character sketch: speak about his state of mind and the traits of his character that can be inferred from his letters.

For example, the following instances of Stephan's letters testify to his being a very polite, considerate and discreet child:

- p.84 I want to say I had a very nice Christmas.
- p.86 Father was wonderful to me and Martha was too...
- p.87 ...they were very affectionate to me.
- p.88 ...then I was afraid it might be disloyal...
- p.93 ...or shall I stay here and get a rest which I could use?

What else can you say about Stephan's nature and feelings? Prove your points by instances of the text. Use the questions following the story as helpers.

2. What is your impression of the boy's father and mother?

12. What are the conflicts which make the story a specimen of excellent interpretive fiction?

13. Formulate the theme of the story (the name of the story and question 9 may be rather suggestive).

### **Discussion**

#### 14. Talking points

- I. Boarding schools: pros and cons
- II. Children of divorced parents
- III. Stepmothers and stepfathers.

### **Practice in Teaching Skills**

- 15. Go over Ex-s 1,3 acting as teacher. Make your classmates read the words and the sentences. Correct the mistakes. Assess the efforts. Do the same with Ex.7 (Classroom English, Units 1, 4, 6).
- 16. Make one student write the international words from Ex.1 on the board. (Classroom English, Units 1, 5).
- 17. Make the questions of Ex.5 indirect and ask them acting as teacher. (Classroom English, Units 2, 3, 6).
- 18. Compile a list of words and phrases for one of the topics suggested in “DISCUSSION”. Stimulate your classmates to use them by asking questions, giving true and false statements, etc. (Classroom English, Units 2, 3).

Ray Bradbury

**THE ROCKET***Preliminaries*

1. Watch and practise the pronunciation of the following words.

1. Mars [ma:z]

Saturn ['sætən]

Venus ['vi:nəs]

Neptune ['neptju:n]

Swiss [swis]

Switzerland ['switsələnd]

Bodoni [bə'dəʊni]

Bramante [brə'ma:nt]

Lorentzo [lou'rentsəʊ]

Maria [mə'riə]

Paolo [pə'əʊlə]

Antonello [æntə'neləʊ]

Mathews ['mæθju:z]

2. mannequin ['mænikin]

meteor ['mi:tiə]

aluminium [æljʊ'miniəm]

model ['mɒdl]

volcanic [vəl'kænik]

mummy ['mʌmi]

serpentine ['sɜ:pəntain]

gaseous ['gæsiəs]

illusion [i'lu:ʒn]

2. Guess the meaning of the words under point 2.

3. Study the notes on the story on p.158 and the notes below.

to soar [sɔ:] into space – to fly/go up high into space

to gnaw [nɔ:] at smb – to torment smb

to subside – to become quieter

to edge away – to move away slowly

to outbid smb – to bid higher than another person at an auction; to offer a higher price.

### *Comprehension*

4. Choose the right answer

1. Why did none of the family fly to Mars?

- a) They had not enough money for that.
- b) They did not want to.
- c) They envied each other.
- d) They loved each other and were generous.

2. What do you think Bodoni felt after the flight?

- a) He was bitterly disappointed.
- b) He felt extremely happy because he had realized his dream.
- c) He felt happy for his children.
- d) He was irritated with his wife.

5. Make up a list of words and phrases emphasizing the tense atmosphere of the straws-drawing.

6. Paraphrase and comment on the following.

1. Why save it when only one of the family could ride the rocket while the others remained to melt in frustration.

2. Someone should go who could tell it well on returning. You have a way with words.

3. It's only a mock-up.

4. He readied his trembling hands to plunge the weights, to smash, to rip apart this insolently false dream, this silly thing for which he had paid his money, which would not move, which would not do his bidding.



## ***Text Interpretation***

### **Introduction**

Ray Bradbury is a famous American science fiction writer. The story under analysis belongs to the genre ['ʒa:nr] of science fiction. On the face of it all it may seem that the story has no connection with real life. The author draws some fantastic pictures of travelling in space using technical terms of rocket-building and cosmic flights. But if we go deep into the matter we shall see that the world of fantasy holds an unmistakable generalization of social realities. The author tackles very important social and psychological problems.

### **Vocabulary for Text Interpretation**

Science fiction; a science fiction writer;

a fantastic novel/story; a fantastic dream/idea/plan/project;

a pessimist, pessimism, pessimistic;

an optimist; a down-to-earth person; a dreamer;

a failure; ambition; to fly/to ride a rocket;

to travel through space to other planets;

to travel in a spacecraft/spaceship/(space)rocket;

cosmonaut ['kɔzmənɔ:t]; astronaut ['æstrənɔ:t]

7. By what means does the author create the image of a quiet night? What role does such an exposition play in the story?

8. What is the time and place of action?

9. What type of society does the author describe?

10. Characterize Bramante:

a) tell us what sort of man he was (an optimist or a pessimist; a dreamer or a practical, down-to-earth man; a strong-willed and persistent person or a weakling);

- b) say what Bramante thought of life, people and their nature;
  - c) speak about your attitude to the man and to such kind of people.
11. Characterize Bodoni:
- a) his social standing;
  - b) his traits of character;
  - c) his parental qualities;
  - d) his attitude to his wife;
  - e) comment on the sentence: “But I’m a great fool.” (p.125) Was Bodoni really a fool?
  - f) tell us if Bodoni realized his dream and if he felt miserable or happy;
  - g) do you consider Bodoni a sympathetic character? Why do you like him (dislike him) and such type of people in general?
12. Describe Bodoni’s wife, her typical feminine qualities, motherly feelings and peculiarities, if any. How does the author show Maria’s disapproval of her husband’s actions? How do the mother’s and father’s senses of value differ?
13. What were their family relations based on? What lesson did the parents teach the children when casting lots?
14. Comment on the sentence: “Bramante was right.” (p.124) Was Bramante wholly or partially right? What did Bramante consider human relations to be based on? What were the relations in Bodoni’s family based on?
15. Did the children guess that the flight was a mere imitation? If they did, why didn’t they say anything about it? (To answer the question use the patterns:
- a) They must have wanted/tried/done it to + Inf.
  - b) They must have been + adj.)
16. What is the theme of the story?
17. Account for the title of the story.

18. Enumerate and dwell on the social and psychological problems the author tackles in the story.

### **Discussion**

19. Read the sentences and say which of the characters might have said so and why.

1. If one doesn't have what one wants one must want what one has.
2. Born to crouch will never fly.

20. Elaborate the following statements.

1. People must dream and strive to realize their dreams.
2. Children (and grown-ups) believe in wonders; it is the fundamental drive to learning and a great stimulus of progress.
3. Parents are to set their children a good and proper example to follow.
4. It's not only women but also men that should be involved in the upbringing of children, especially boys.

### **Practice in Teaching Skills**

21. What has the story taught you?

22. Ask a series of questions that may serve as "props" to characterize Bodoni.

*Model:* a) Do you think he was a sensible man?

b) Why/how/when/do you think he did.../said... etc.

23. Make up a list of key-words (adjectives and nouns) that may be used as "props" to portray Bodoni.

## THE TWINS

### *Preliminaries*

1. Watch and practise the pronunciation of the following words.

prowess ['prauis]

scrupulous ['skru:pjuləs]

Simon ['saimən]

aerodrome ['ɛərədroum]

Reeves ['ri:vz]

comment, n,v ['kɒmənt]

Reeveses ['ri:vzi:z]

howl [haul]

bustle ['bʌsl]

perennial [pə'renjəl]

2. Consult the dictionary for the meanings of these international words:

intelligent, speciality (specialty), provision(s), biscuit, positive, phraseology.

3. Consult the notes on the story on pp.153–154 and the notes below:

Scottish, adj – is the preferred term, when speaking about nationality, as compared to “Scotch”. “Scotch” is slightly derogative in modern use.

the works – the mechanism

perennial – lasting for ever or for a very long time: perennial merits, youth

### *Comprehension*

4. Choose the right answer

1. Why was Marjie’s manner furtive when she was asking the narrator to give her half a crown?

- a) She might be asking for the money without her mother’s knowledge of it.
- b) She could be putting on an act (pretending to be furtive without any need).
- c) Jennie might have asked her not to tell their guest that it was she, Jennie, who wanted the money.

2. What actually happened to the red spinning top?
  - a) Simon must have failed to put it together and concealed it from Jennie.
  - b) Marjie could have broken it and concealed it from her brother.
  - c) Jeff must have broken the top himself and told a lie.
3. Why did Jennie apologize for Simon's compliment?
  - a) She might have felt jealous and her apology could have been a sort of revenge on her friend.
  - b) She must have got it all wrong (must have misunderstood her husband) and was genuinely sorry.
  - c) She wanted to make a good impression.
4. Why did Jennie provide her guest with a box of biscuits?
  - a) The narrator might have asked her for something to eat before going to bed.
  - b) Jennie was very particular about the superficial signs of hospitality and wanted to make a good impression.
  - c) She must have been very thoughtful (considerate) by nature and wanted to make her guest really comfortable.
5. Why did the narrator say that Mollie was in the kitchen?
  - a) She answered Jennie's question in a matter-of-fact way, directly, without any implication.
  - b) She wanted to hurt Jennie's feelings and to make her jealous of her husband.
  - c) She did not really know where Mollie was and said it as a joke.
6. Jennie and Simon looked jaded after the party. What could they have quarrelled about?

- a) They could have quarrelled about the Loopamp. Simon must have drunk a great deal of it.
- b) They must have quarrelled about the petrol: Jennie probably reproached her husband for not paying for the petrol.
- c) Jenny must have been furious with Simon because the narrator had noticed his frequent trips to the kitchen with Molli Morgan.

5. Paraphrase and comment on the following.

- 1. I noticed that Jennie assumed that everyone else was ... as little prone to be perturbed as herself. (p.59)
  - 2. ...Jennie derived from Simon a knowledge of the world without actually weathering the world. (p.59)
  - 3. ...I did not use them much on the Sunday. (p.59)
  - 4. ...but by the afternoon they had ... gone on to something more in the romping line. (p.61)
  - 5. Jennie ... did not believe in shielding her children from possible disappointment. (p.62)
  - 6. I put it down to the Loopamp. (p.66)
  - 7. We all drank obligingly. (p.66)
  - 8. I sent myself a wire that morning summoning myself back to London. (p.66)
6. Find in the story and write out the words indicating the goodness of the Reeveses: Jennie's, her husband's, the children's.
7. Read out the sentences with the words you have found.
8. Write an outline for the composition of the story.
9. Write 15 – 20 questions to cover the plot.

## *Text Interpretation*

### **Introduction**

At first sight it seems that the story is a specimen of direct characterization. The narrator enumerates Jennie's, her husband's, her children's attractive qualities meticulously and at length. She makes a point of repeating the same idea, e.g. about the success of Jennie's marriage and the beauty of the children. Consequently, the repetitions and the very abundance of adjectives of pleasant connotations make the discerning reader wonder they should be taken at their face value. The denouement – the narrator's hurried departure – proves the reader's misgivings right. The very heart of the story lies in the difference between what the narrator says and what she actually knows about the Reeves family. The presentation of the characters is done indirectly through the use of irony.

### **Vocabulary for Text Interpretation**

meticulous, adj [mi'tikjuləs] – careful and exact;

meticulously, adv;

denouement, n [dei'nu:ma]; US ['deinu:ma] – final stage, where everything is made clear, in the development of the plot of a story, play, etc. = развязка  
at length – in detail

irony, ['aiərəni]; ironic(al), adj [ai'rɒnikəl]; ironically, adv

to impress smth upon the reader

to add, contribute [kən'tribjut] – to character drawing, smb's characterization

to advantage the central purpose (theme) of the story

abundance, n [ə'bʌndəns] – great plenty; more than enough

connotation, n – meaning, conveying emotion or stylistic reference:

to take smth at its face value.

10. Outline the composition of the story.
11. Answer the questions covering the plot. (Ex.9)
12. Prove that the author makes a point of impressing upon the reader how exceptionally good the Reeveses were.
13. Comment on the significance of the episodes listed in Ex.4 and below.

1. Marjie asking the narrator for money and Jennie's reaction to the situation. What could have taken place while Jennie was paying the baker's man? To whom did Marjie address her words "She'd rather not"? What could Jennie have thought and done before entering the room? What do you make out of her conversation with the narrator? How does the whole situation characterize the children, Jennie and the narrator?

2. The broken red spinning-top. What actually happened? How does it contribute to the character-drawing?

3. Simon's compliment and Jennie's apology. What does it add to Jennie's characterization?

4. The biscuit box. Why did Jennie take the box to the guest's room? How did Simon make the narrator feel in the wrong? How does this development of the plot advantage the central purpose of the story?

5. Mollie Thomas, the petrol and Simon's letter. Why did Jennie and Simon look jaded the morning after the party? Could they have quarrelled? About what? What might they have said to each other? What was the narrator supposed to be hurt about? What is the denouement?

6. Why did the children look with wonder, pride and bewilderment at their parents?
14. The episodes listed above imply that all the parties, except the narrator, must have had some conversations not given in the story. Act out the scenes that might have taken place.



15. What is the author's message: a) about human character; b) about upbringing?

To answer this question, compile a list of words (topics: upbringing, family relations).

### **Discussion**

16. Talking Points

1. Appearances are deceptive. It is not all gold that glitters.
2. As the tree, so the fruit. Like father, like son.
3. The qualities that make schoolchildren popular with their schoolmates and teachers. Do children and teachers regard the same qualities as virtues?
4. What is the etiquette of hospitality? Have you the same idea of hospitality that the British etiquette suggests?

### **Practice in Teaching Skills**

17. Go over Ex-s 1, 2, 6, 7 acting as teacher. Make your classmates read the words and the sentences. Correct the mistakes, if any; assess the efforts. (Classroom English, Units 1, 4, 6)

18. Ask questions outlining the plot (Ex.9) (Classroom English, Units 1, 2, 3, 6).

19. Change the questions of Ex.4 by introducing "Why do you think...?" Ask them acting as teacher. (Classroom English, Units 1, 4, 6)

*Model:* Why do you think Marjie's manner was furtive?

20. Prepare a short talk (monologue of 6-8 sentences) on one of the topics suggested in Ex.16. Stimulate your classmates to take part in the discussion of your topic. (Classroom English, Units 2, 3)

**Aldous Huxley (1894 – 1963)**

## THE CLAXTONS

### *Preliminaries*

1. Watch and practise the pronunciation of the following words.

vegetarian	morsel	malicious – malice
surreptitious	irresistible	avaricious – avarice
inexcusable	assent	palatable – palate
scarifying	martyrdom	austere – austerity
irreverence	malleable	reluctant – reluctance
to consummate	gluttony	contemptuous – contempt
two-pence	hierarchy	meritorious – merit

2. Guess the right meaning of the following words:

incident; cabinet; imperative; mystery; to appeal; lecture; echo; illumination; chronic; convention; implicitly – explicitly; economy; to relax; orgy; ration; mode (of life); service; inflation; sculpture; moral; plastic; sanatorium.

3. Insert prepositions correctly, in case of necessity consult the text:

to refrain ... doing smth	to do ... servants
to be jealous ... smb/smth	to set ... work
to be witness ... the crime	to appeal ... one's better feelings
to be rough ... a child	to reason ... a child
to fall in ... smb/smth	to be content ... smb/smth
to economize ... smth	to be incompatible ... smth

4. Express the same idea in another way:

on the spot; in person; in the end; surreptitious; Herbert's art is too inward; for hours together; scarifying irreverence; to harp on the family's poverty; to

become worldly; to detach oneself from all contacts; some artists worked with an eye to profit and applause; pots of money;

5. Build up the following list of words and phrases having smth to do with upbringing and education with the units of your own choice.

inexcusable behaviour; to give a child a smacking; to be rough with a child; to reason with smb; to appeal to one's better feelings; a difficult child; to take one's colours from the environment; an easy child; stubbornness and determination, to direct smb's will; hostile; resistant; to smack; to talk to smb very seriously; to choose one's own punishment; a thoughtless child; a problem child.

Recall the situations where some of them were used.

### ***Comprehension***

6. Make up a list of words and phrases proving that
- a) Martha was not that pious and righteous as she sounded;
  - b) Herbert was a weak and humble man;
  - c) Paul was an easy child taking his colours from the environment;
  - d) Sylvia was a difficult child in Martha's understanding.
7. Paraphrase and comment on the following:
1. She resented Jack Bamborough's success, it was too complete.
  2. Conventions are stupid things; but even the Children of the Spirit must make some compromise with the World.
  3. ...the art of education was persuading children to mould themselves in the most ideal forms.
  4. It would have been so much simpler if they had insisted from the first, had compelled her to obey at once, and so spared her all her spiritual effort and pain.

5. Contact with children of her own age had warmed and softened and sensitized her, had mitigated her savage egoism and opened her up towards external influences.
6. It's really rather a blessing not to be rich.
7. Genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains.
8. Choose the right answer
  1. Martha resented Jack Bamborough's success because
    - a) it was complete; b) she was jealous of it; c) Jack was not talented.
  2. Martha did not give Sylvia a good smacking because
    - a) it was against her principles; b) she loved Sylvia too much to pain her; c) it was too troublesome (causing too much trouble).
  3. Sylvia refused to learn to read because
    - a) she was stupider than Paul by birth;
    - b) of sheer stubbornness; c) she was lazy.

### ***Text Interpretation***

#### **Introduction**

The content of the story under discussion is a true reflection of Aldous Huxley's philosophy and idea of life. The story reveals the writer's detached ironical manner of writing. His main object of bitter ridicule and sharp criticism is the hypocrisy and moral corruption, self-conceit and complacency of the upper classes and intellectual elite. On the example of Martha and Herbert the writer shows the futility of their life, they do nothing themselves and ruin other people's life.

9. Analyse the system of upbringing at the Claxton. Doing it make use of the list of words and phrases you found for Ex.5.

- “One must never be rough with a child.” What’s the co-relation between roughness, all-permissiveness and unreasonable exactingness in upbringing?
  - “Children would be spoilt and turned into worldlings if they are sent to an expensive boarding school.” Is it true? What made Martha say such an exaggeration? What explanations for it can you offer?
  - “One must never let it (a child) see that one is annoyed.” Must we always show only positive emotions when dealing with children? Must we shield children from realities of life?
10. Look through the story attentively one more time and make a character sketch of:
1. Martha as a human being, wife and mother.
  2. Herbert as a human being, husband and father.
  3. Judith as a human being and educator.
  4. Sylvia: the dynamics of her emotional development.
  5. Paul and Sylvia: their comparison.
11. What is the subject-matter of the story?
12. Into what logical parts can you divide the story? Supply each part with a heading.
13. Is the plot of the story complicated? Mysterious? Is it directed at amusement or does it make one seriously reflect upon important problems?
14. Who are the main personages? Is it easy to delineate them into positive and negative? Are they shown in development? Is it slow or rapid?
15. What is the main conflict? What is the starting point of it? Where is the climax? Could we talk of the denouement of the story?

16. Which of the personages do you sympathise with? What makes this or that personage stir your sympathy for him: his ideas, actions or the way he is depicted?
17. What is the importance of such critical circumstances as war, illness for characterisation of the personages? Do they help us to get a keener insight into their nature?
18. Formulate the theme of the story.
19. Characterize the language of the story:
  1. What can you say about the vocabulary of the text? Is it colloquial, neutral, learned?
  2. What are the syntactic (characteristic) features of the text (length of sentences, use of stylistic syntax)? Find examples of antithesis\*, parallelism\*.
  3. Why does the writer resort to polysyndeton\* in the passage at the bottom of p.24? What is its expressive load? In what accord is the device with Judith's emotional state?
  4. What are the following cases of antithesis built on:
    1. – "I've never seen such a little cannibal as Sylvia."  
– "It's what comes of having vegetarian parents, I suppose."
    2. – "Can't she see that the best way of turning a child into a devil is to try to bring it up as an angel?"
20. Do you have the feeling that the story is not finished? What's your own ending of the story?

## Notes

\**Antithesis* – an opposition or contrast of ideas expressed by parallelism of strongly contrasted words placed at the beginning and at the end of a single sentence or clause, or in the corresponding position in two or more sentences or clauses.

Antithesis is usually based on the use of antonyms and is aimed at emphasising contrasting features.

\**Parallelism* – a specific similarity of construction of adjacent word-groups equivalent, complementary or antithetic in sense, esp. for rhetorical effect or rhythm.

\**Polysyndeton* – repetition of conjunction in close succession, as of one, connecting homogeneous parts, or clauses, or sentences, opposed to asyndeton.

*Asyndeton* – deliberate avoidance of conjunctions

*Gradation* – a syntactic figure of speech in which a number of ideas is so arranged that each succeeding one rises above its predecessor in impressiveness or force.

*Anticlimax* – a slackening of tension in a sentence or longer piece of writing wherein the ideas fall off in dignity, or become less important at the close.

**СМЫСЛОВАЯ ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИЯ ТЕКСТА**

Учебно-методические материалы  
для студентов IV курса дневного и заочного отделений  
факультета английского языка

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