

Name _____

Unit 2: Short Stories

Big Question Vocabulary

The Big Question: Is conflict always bad?

It is impossible to have relationships with people without some conflict arising. One kind of conflict is an argument between friends. The following words are used to talk about arguments:

argue: to disagree with someone in words, often in an angry way

conclude: to bring something to an end

convince: to get another person to think the same way as you

issue: a problem or subject that people discuss

resolve: to find an acceptable way to deal with a problem or difficulty

One kind of conflict is games or sports, which are played according to rules. Most people agree that games or sports are “good” conflict.

challenge: *n.* something that tests a person’s strength, skill or ability;

v. to question whether something is fair or right

compete: to try to gain something, or to be better or more successful at something than someone else

game: an activity or sport in which people play against one another according to agreed-upon rules

lose: to not be best or first at something

win: to be best or first at something

Sometimes conflict can lead to violent battles or wars between opposing groups. The following words can help you talk about these kinds of conflict.

battle: encounter in which opposing groups compete, fight, or argue to try to win

defend: to act in support of someone being hurt or criticized

negotiate: to discuss something to reach an agreement

resist: to stop yourself from doing something you would very much like to do

survival: the state of continuing to exist when there is a risk that you might die

“Dragon, Dragon” by John Gardner

Writing About the Big Question

Big Question Vocabulary

argue

battle

challenge

compete

conclude

convince

defend

game

issue

lose

negotiate

oppose

resolve

survival

win

A. Use one or more words from the list above to complete each sentence.

1. In fairy tales, a knight or king often has to _____ his land against an enemy.
2. The hero must _____ the enemy to a fight.
3. The hero and the enemy meet in a terrible _____ that only one can _____.
4. The one to _____ the fight is not usually the hero.

B. Respond to each item with a complete sentence.

5. Describe a time when you had to challenge someone or defend someone.

6. Explain what the outcome of the conflict was and what you learned from it. Use at least two of the Big Question vocabulary words in your response.

C. Complete this sentence. Then, write a brief paragraph in which you connect this sentence to the Big Question.

7. If there was someone terrorizing my neighborhood, I would . . .

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| Additional Unit 2 Vocabulary |
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Use your textbook's glossary, Literary Terms glossary, or a dictionary to define the following terms. ★ denotes a bonus word.

1. plot _____

2. climax _____

3. resolution _____

4. ★denouement _____

5. conflict _____

6. internal conflict _____

7. external conflict _____

8. character _____

9. characterization _____

10. character's trait _____

11. character's motivation _____
12. setting _____
13. theme _____
14. stated theme _____
15. implied theme _____

“Dragon, Dragon” by John Gardner
Vocabulary Warm-up Word Lists

Study these words from “Dragon, Dragon.” Then, complete the activities that follow.

Word List A

labored [LAY berd] *v.* worked hard

Ahmed labored for hours on the decorations; now he needs a rest.

lair [LAIR] *n.* home or resting place for a person or animal

Zoo workers tried to make the bear's cage like its lair in the wild.

maidens [MAY duhnz] *n.* young women

In fairy tales, young unmarried women are often called maidens.

merely [MEER lee] *adv.* only, just

He was merely joking when he said that; he didn't want to hurt anyone's feelings.

novels [NAHV uhlz] *n.* books that tell a story about made-up people and events

The teacher assigned the students novels, which took longer to read than short stories.

poems [POH uhmz] *n.* pieces of writing that often include rhythm and rhyme

I like the way poems sound, but I don't always understand their meanings.

slicing [SLY sing] *v.* cutting

Slicing bread is easy with this new, sharp knife.

strolled [STROHLD] *v.* walked in a slow, relaxed way

June and Jim weren't in a hurry as they strolled through the park.

Word List B

annoyed [uh NOYD] *v.* feeling bothered

Elvin hated to wait and was annoyed that the bus was late.

decent [DEE sent] *adj.* honest and good

He's a very decent boy, and you can trust him.

eldest [EL dist] *adj.* oldest person in a group

My eldest daughter is eleven; my youngest daughter is six.

impression [im PRESH uhn] *n.* effect something has on people, or feeling it gives

The song made a big impression on those who heard it; everyone felt sad.

patience [PAY shens] *n.* the ability to wait calmly without getting upset

Show some patience; wait until we get home to open the present.

prefer [pree FER] *v.* like one thing more than another

I prefer chocolate, but if I really have to, I'll eat the vanilla cone.

slay [SLAY] *v.* kill

In the horror movie, the hero used a special weapon to slay the monsters.

tempted [TEMP tid] *v.* to consider doing something that might not be smart or good.

I was tempted to eat all the cookies myself, instead of bringing them to the party.

“Dragon, Dragon” by John Gardner

Literary Analysis: Characterization

Characterization is the way writers develop and reveal information about characters.

- **Direct characterization:** A writer makes direct statements about a character.
- **Indirect characterization:** A writer suggests information through a character’s thoughts, words, and actions as well as what other characters say and think about the character.

In this passage from “Dragon, Dragon,” the writer uses direct characterization to tell the reader that the cobbler is wise. He uses indirect characterization to tell the reader that the cobbler is humble.

Now it happened that there lived in the kingdom a wise old cobbler who had a wife and three sons. The cobbler and his family came to the king’s meeting and stood way in back by the door, for the cobbler had a feeling that since he was nobody important there had probably been some mistake, . . .

1. **DIRECTIONS:** *In each part of the diagram below, jot down direct statements as well as the eldest son’s and other characters’ words, thoughts, and actions that tell about the cobbler’s eldest son in “Dragon, Dragon.”*

Cobbler’s Eldest Son

| Cobbler’s Eldest Son | | |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| Character’s Words, Thoughts, and Actions | Others’ Words, Thoughts, and Actions | Direct Statements |
| | | |

When you **make inferences**, you make logical assumptions about something that is not directly stated in the text. To make inferences, use the **details** that the author provides.

Details in the text + What you know = Inference

Look at the details, shown in italics, in this sentence:

Irene *dragged her feet* as she *slowly walked* to the bus that would take her home from summer camp.

You can make two inferences from the details and from what you know.

- From *dragged her feet*, you can infer that Irene is reluctant to leave camp.
- Because Irene walked slowly, you can infer that she is not eager to leave camp.

DIRECTIONS: *As you read “Dragon, Dragon,” find details that help you make three inferences. Write two details and your logical inference in each row of boxes below.*

| Detail: | Detail: | Inference: |
|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | |

| Detail: | Detail: | Inference: |
|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | |

| Detail: | Detail: | Inference: |
|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | |