

He was a big, beefy man with hardly any neck, although he did have a very large mustache. Mrs. Dursley was thin and blonde and had nearly twice the usual amount of neck, which came in very useful as she spent so much of her time craning over garden fences, spying on the neighbors. (p. 1)

- 1) How were Mr and Mrs Dursley physically different?
- 2) What did Mrs Dursley use her long neck for?

From *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou (Bantam, 1993)

• Where I was big, elbowy and grating, he was small, graceful and smooth. ...he was lauded for his velvet-black skin. His hair fell down in black curls, and my head was covered with black steel wool. And yet he loved me.

- 1) "And yet he loved me" What does this line suggest about how the character feels about their love? Use evidence from the text to support your explanation.

Her skin was a rich black that would have peeled like a plum if snagged, but then no one would have thought of getting close enough to Mrs. Flowers to ruffle her dress, let alone snag her skin. She didn't encourage familiarity. She wore gloves too.

- 2) "She didn't encourage familiarity. She wore gloves too." What impression does this description give you of Mrs Flowers?
- 3) How did other people feel towards Mrs Flowers? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

From *Holes* by Louis Sachar (Scholastic, 2000)

• They were dripping with sweat, and their faces were so dirty that it took Stanley a moment to notice that one kid was white and the other black.

- 4) What does this description suggest about the two kids Stanley saw?

From *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver (HarperCollins, 1998)

• We wore our best dresses on the outside to make a good impression. Rachel wore her green linen Easter suit she was so vain of, and her long whitish hair pulled off her forehead with a wide pink elastic hairband.... Sitting next to me on the plane, she kept batting her white-rabbit eyelashes and adjusting her bright pink hairband, trying to get me to notice she had secretly painted her fingernails bubble-gum pink to match. (p. 15)

- 1) Why did the girls wear their best clothes?
- 2) What impression does the author give of Rachel? Use evidence from the text to support your explanation.

From *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain (Hayes Barton Press, 2005, originally published 1885)

He was most fifty, and he looked it. His hair was long and tangled and greasy, and hung down, and you could see his eyes shining through like he was behind vines. It was all black, no gray; so was his long, mixed-up whiskers. **There warn't no color in his face, where his face showed; it was white; not like another man's white, but a white to make a body sick, a white to make a body's flesh crawl - a tree-toad white, a fish-belly white.** As for his clothes - just rags, that was all. He had one ankle resting on t'other knee; the boot on that foot was busted, and two of his toes stuck through, and he worked them now and then. His hat was laying on the floor - an old black slouch with the top caved in, like a lid. (p. 11)

- 3) What effect does repeating the description of the word white have on our impression of the character? Explain fully referring to the text in your answer.
- 4) What evidence is there that the character was poor?

From *The Black Cauldron* by Lloyd Alexander (Henry Holt, 1965)

A bellow of laughter resounded beyond the chamber, and in another moment a giant, red-headed warrior rolled in at the side of Adaon. He towered above all in the chamber and his beard flamed around a face so scarred with old wounds it was impossible to tell where one began and another ended. His nose had been battered to his cheekbones; his heavy forehead was nearly lost in a fierce tangle of eyebrows; and his neck seemed as thick as Taran's waist. (p. 25)

- 5) What evidence is there that the warrior had been involved in many battles?
- 6) Explain the phrase: "He **towered** above all in the chamber..."
- 7) 'A bellow of laughter **resounded** beyond the chamber' What does the word resounded mean in this sentence?

From *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles (Simon & Schuster, 2003, originally published 1959)

For such an extraordinary athlete—even as a Lower Middledler Phineas had been the best athlete in the school—he was not spectacularly built. He was my height—five feet eight and a half inches...He weighed a hundred and fifty pounds, a galling ten pounds more than I did, which flowed from his legs to torso around shoulders to arms and full strong neck in an uninterrupted, unemphatic unity of strength.

- 8) 'he was not spectacularly built' Why is this a surprising description of Phineas?
- 9) 'He weighed a hundred and fifty pounds, a **galling** ten pounds more than I did' Explain the word galling in this sentence.