

The Finish of Patsy Barnes
The Drummer Boy of Shiloh

Name _____

Reading to Compare Characters of Different Eras

In these two stories, authors Paul Laurence Dunbar and Ray Bradbury explore past eras. As you read each story, consider how the characters are affected by their historical and cultural worlds. After reading these stories, we will compare how the settings and events have led to changes in the characters.

The Finish of Patsy Barnes chronicles a few weeks in the life of a young boy with a sick mother who needs medical care she cannot afford. To solve this problem, the boy uses his skill with horses to earn the needed money. In doing so, he courageously confronts his past and takes a large risk. Fortunately, the risk pays off.

The Drummer Boy of Shiloh is set in a Tennessee peach orchard on the night before the Civil War battle of Shiloh. The young drummer boy can't sleep because he's thinking about what will happen the next morning. He briefly considers staying behind when the fighting begins. Then, a man walks by and stops to talk, and the boy discovers that this man is his general. From their discussion, the boy arrives at a new understanding about his role in the battle to come.

Comparing Characters of Different Eras

A _____ is someone who takes part in the action of a story.

- A _____ character develops and learns through story events.
- A _____ character does not change.

The _____ character of a story is usually a dynamic character. The way in which this character changes is central to the story and its meaning, or *theme*.

Just as in life, characters in fiction are affected by the historical and cultural settings in which they live. These settings include forces that shape characters such as their jobs, living conditions, social status, and family customs, as well as the historical events that define their world.

History and Character When a major historical event is part of a story, that event is likely to help define characters. The way in which a character responds to such an event reveals aspects of his or her personality, as well as his or her culture's values. In addition, basic facts about the character's time period, such as the type of transportation available, can define and limit their choices.

Both of these stories present boys who live through challenging times. In "The Finish of Patsy Barnes," a recent move north and a sudden illness have a devastating impact on a poor family. In "The Drummer Boy of Shiloh," a battle threatens to change the life of a young soldier forever.

Comparing Characters As you read, identify specific lines of dialogue (the words characters say) and specific events that reveal character. In addition, compare characters by asking questions, such as those in the chart, about the forces that shape their lives. In your comparison, consider how each writer uses the characters and the setting to convey a theme.

Questions for Comparing Main Characters	Responses
Where does he or she live?	
What does he or she do?	
What hardships does he or she face?	
How do his or her motivations and reactions reflect the cultural and historical setting?	
Self Generated:	

Guiding Questions

Page/Section	Question	Response with Text Support
Predict	From the title, predict what you think this story is about.	
104	What kinds of risks would you take to help some whom you cared about?	
104	Self Generated:	
105	What does the boy in the painting seem to have in common with Patsy Barnes?	
105	If you were to paint Patsy's portrait, how would it differ from the picture of the boy in this painting?	
105	How might growing up on a farm leave a boy like the on in this painting unprepared for city life?	
105	Where does Patsy spend his time?	
	Self Generated Question:	
106	What is unusual about Patsy's reaction to his father's death?	
106	How did Patsy's father die?	
106	How is Patsy similar to his father?	
	Self Generated Question:	
107	How does the doctor's attitude toward the poor affect the mood of this scene?	
107	How does the doctor make Patsy angry?	
	Self Generated Question:	
108	What opinion does Patsy have in relation to his mother's condition?	
108	Based on what you've learned about his character, which option do you think Patsy will choose?	
108	What challenge does Patsy face as he watches his mother's condition worsen?	
108	What qualities would someone need to be able to ride a stallion like this one?	
	Self Generated Question:	
109	What detail in this paragraph hints at the theme of "overcoming obstacles?"	
109	How do the other jockey's view Patsy?	
109	What potential conflict might arise in this passage? How could this conflict be resolved?	
109	What unexpected job does Patsy take on?	
	Self Generated Question:	
110	What details in this photo tell you the horses are moving very rapidly?	
110	Do you think the author considers the horse Black Boy a character in the story? If so, how would they describe the horse's personality?	
110	In what ways are Black Boy and Patsy well suited for each other as horse and jockey?	
110	What circumstances give Patsy extra motivation to win?	

111	How have events in the story changed?	
	Self Generated Question:	

Independent Extended Responses: Answer on loose leaf paper

Monday: Summarize the conversation between Eliza and the doctor. What does this exchange between Eliza and the doctor reveal about the difficulties Patsy and his mother face?

Monday Night Homework Questions:

1. Key Ideas and Details: What motivates Patsy to ride Black Boy? How is Patsy's win a victory for both his mother and his father?
2. Integration of knowledge and ideas: Identify two conflicts that Patsy faces. What do these conflicts reveal about American society in the nineteenth century? Explain whether these conflicts are resolved in the story?

The Drummer Boy of Shiloh

Guiding Questions

Page/Section	Question	Response with Text Support
Predict	From the title, predict what you think this story is about.	
113	Which aspects of this drummer boy reflect the information in the background note above the story?	
113	What historical situation affects the boy's mood?	
113	What does the boy imagine the soldiers are thinking on this night before the battle?	
114	How do the drummer boy's age and job give him a different perspective from those of soldiers in modern wars?	
114	Why do the soldiers sleep uneasily?	
114	How does the boy's historical situation affect his mood and that of the story?	
	Self Generated Question	
Picture	Based on his expression, what emotions might this young drummer boy be feeling?	
115	Why might the boy wish to hide inside himself?	
115	Why is the general's reaction to the boy's tears surprising?	
115	Why is Joby crying?	

Connect to literature 116	What details of the historical setting are included in Bradbury's story?	
116	What do the general's words reveal about his character?	
116	What type of man is the general?	
	Self Generated Question	
Critical Viewing 117	Why might the drummer boy's role be important in the confusion of a Civil War battle such as this one?	
117	As the general describes the role of the drummer boy, are there any hints that he is exaggerating? Explain.	
117	What imagery does the general use to give the boy courage for his role on battle?	
117	According to the general, what is Joby's role in the war?	
118	Why might the general's words appeal to a young boy in the middle of the Civil War?	
	Self Generated Question	

Independent Extended Responses: Answer on loose leaf paper

Thursday: What frightens Joby most about his upcoming battle? How are his fears similar and different of the other soldiers? In what other ways are Joby and the other soldier alike and different? Explain.

Friday: In an extended response, answer the following by citing evidence from the text to support.

Informative/Explanatory In "The Finish of Patsy Barnes," Patsy decides not to tell his mother the name of the horse he has ridden to victory, and in "The Drummer Boy of Shiloh," Joby decides not to say more than a few words to the general. Write an essay in which you explain why each boy makes the decision to remain silent. Cite details from both stories to support your explanation, and use transition words and phrases to connect your ideas.

Thursday Night Homework Questions:

1. Key Ideas and Details: What do you think motivates the general to talk to Joby? How do you think Joby feels after his talk with the general? Explain.
2. Integration of knowledge and ideas: What does Joby promise to do? Do you think the general has motivated Joby to keep his promise? Why or why not? Is the general's request fair or unfair to Joby? Explain.