**“The Gift of the Magi” Notebook Check**

**Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Block \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ #\_\_\_\_\_**

 **1.**

 **2.**

 **3.**

 **4.**

 **5.**

**Notebook Check #1: Anticipation Guide and Vocabulary**

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR (*p. 121)***

* O. Henry published a few stories in local magazines and the editors at the *New Your World* newspaper sent a reporter to track him down. He agreed to write one story a week and he established his reputation as a gifted story teller and master of surprise endings.
* His pen name was William Sydney Porter.
* He married, and then he became a reporter and columnist for the *Houston Post*.
* His wife was diagnosed with tuberculosis; he was accused of embezzling from the bank that he worked at to pay medical bills. He fled to Central America, but when he came back to check on his wife, he turned himself into the police. His wife dies and he spent 3 years in prison.
* It was in prison that he began writing the stories that made him famous. W.S. PORTER emerged as O. Henry.
* He moved back to New York, published 100 stories and gained worldwide acclaim.

**ANTICIPATION GUIDE**

![MC900187587[1]]()**DIRECTIONS: Put an “X” in the space to indicate whether or not you agree or disagree with the corresponding statement.**

**Agree Disagree Statement**

BUILDING BACKGROUND

This story takes place in New York City around 1900. Most of the action occurs in the main characters’ dingy, inexpensive flat, or apartment. The story begins on the afternoon of Christmas Eve and ends shortly after 7pm the same day.

According to the Gospel of Mathew in the New Testament, the Magi were the three wise men who came from the East to visit the newborn baby Jesus. The Magi brought precious gifts of gold, frankincense and mirth for the child. Over time, the Magi have come to be associated with the practice of giving gifts.

 1) It is better to give than to receive.

 2) A penny saved is a penny earned.

 3) Deceiving people is OK sometimes.

 4) Crying makes everything better.

 5) Pleasing others is not always easy.

 6) There are rewards to sacrificing.

 7) Women are more verbal than men.

 8) Beauty as well as ugliness is only skin deep.

 9) A practical gift is always more appreciated than

 a frivolous one.

 10) The wise man is always right.

**CONNECT TO THE STORY**

* What kinds of sacrifices have you made in order to solve a problem?
* What personal items would you have a hard time giving up and why?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **VOCABULARY WORD** | **+** | **?** | **-** | **Used in context** | **Definition** | **Hints/Clues** |
| **Imputation (p. 123)** |  |  |  | Pennies saved one and two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and the butcher until one's cheeks burned with the silent **imputation** of parsimony that such close dealing implied. |  |  |
| **Parsimony (p. 123)** |  |  |  | Pennies saved one and two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and the butcher until one's cheeks burned with the silent imputation of **parsimony** that such close dealing implied. |  |  |
| **Instigate (p. 123)** |  |  |  | Which instigates the moral reflection that life is made up of sobs, sniffles, and smiles, with sniffles predominating. |  |  |
| **Depreciate (p.125)** |  |  |  | Della would have let her hair hang out the window some day to dry just to **depreciate** Her Majesty's jewels and gifts.  |  |  |
| **Prudence (p. 126)** |  |  |  | When Della reached home her intoxication gave way a little to **prudence** and reason. |  |  |
| **Scrutiny (p.127)** |  |  |  | For ten seconds let us regard with discreet **scrutiny** some inconsequential object in the other direction.  |  |  |
| **Coveted (p.128)** |  |  |  | And now, they were hers, but the tresses that should have adorned the **coveted** adornments were gone. |  |  |

Make a prediction about what the story will be about based on the anticipation guide activities.

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**Notebook Check #2: SYMBOLISM and IRONY**

**Symbol/Symbolism:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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After reading a story, you can identify symbols by determining which objects or elements play an important role in the story. For example, a dove is often considered to be a symbol of peace. If a dove lands on the windowsill of a family in conflict, it might symbolize an end to the conflict and a fresh start for the family.

**Ironic situation \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| --- | --- |
| **Type of Irony &** **What it Means** | **EXAMPLES** |
| Dramatic Irony | 1. |
| 2. |
| 3. |
| Situational Irony | 1. |
| 2. |
| 3. |
| Verbal Irony | 1. |
| 2. |
| 3. |

**Notebook Check #3: READING GUIDE**

**Identifying Problem and Solution** *(p. 123)* What problem does O. Henry present in the opening paragraph?

**Expressing an Opinion** *(p. 123)* Do you agree with the “moral reflection” in the second paragraph? Why or why not?

**Making Inferences** *(p. 123-124)* What do the details in paragraphs 3-5 tell you about the couple and the setting of the story?

**Symbolism** *(p. 124 and 125)*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Significance to Jim | Significance to Della |
| Della’s Hair |  |  |
| Jim’s Watch |  |  |
|  | Literal Meaning | Symbolic Meaning |
| Magi |  |  |
| Symbol | Meaning |
| Jim’s middle name, Dillingham, on the mailbox |  |
| A gray cat walking a gray fence in a gray backyard. |  |
| Della selling her hair |  |
| The watch chain that Della buys Jim |  |

**Identifying Problem and Solution** *(p. 125)* When the narrator says “Once she faltered for a minute and stood still while a tear or two splashed on the worn red carpet,” what do you think Della is going to do?

**Rewards and Sacrifices** *(p. 126)* How do you think Della feels about her sacrifice when she “knew it must be Jim’s”?

**Point of View** *(p. 126)* What point of view is the story told in?

**Identifying Problem and Solution** *(p. 126)* Della cut her hair to buy a gift for Jim. What new problem is caused by this solution?

**Breaking Down Text** *(p. 127)*  “Out of his trance Jim seemed quickly to wake. He enfolded his Della. For ten seconds let us regard with discreet scrutiny some inconsequential object in the other direction. Eight dollars a week or a million a year—what is the difference? A mathematician or a wit would give you the wrong answer. The magi brought valuable gifts, but that was not among them. This dark assertion will be illuminated later on.”

What is the author suggesting in this passage? Della compares the watch chain to Jim: Quietness and value- the description applied to both. Does this description apply to Jim when he enters the flat? Explain.

**Ironic Situation** *(p. 128)* How do the combs create an ironic situation? How does this “snapper” or surprise twist, make the situation in the story even more ironic? What lesson about life and love do you think it teaches Della and Jim?

* What is the real “gift” referred to in the title? (Notice that O. Henry says “gift,” not “gifts.”) Even though neither Jim nor Della can use their gifts, how are they rewarded for their sacrifices?
* **A paradox is an apparent contradiction that is actually true. It may be a statement or situation.** Explain why the following statement is a paradox: Jim and Della were one of the richest couples on earth.
* What do you think this story, written almost a century ago, has to say about our consumer society today? Do you think that we often equate love with money? Is this a problem? Consider advertising, the amount of money we spend on gifts, the value placed on having many possessions.

**Big idea: How do the characters in this story face adversity or potential adversity? Do they overcome their adversity? What factors contributed to their success or failure? What is the most important factor in overcoming adversity?**

**Notebook Check #4: ALLUSIONS AND THEMES**

**Allusion** is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Now, there were two possessions of the James Dillingham Youngs in which they both took a mighty pride. One was Jim's gold watch that had been his father's and his grandfather's. The other was Della's hair. Had the queen of Sheba lived in the flat across the airshaft, Della would have let her hair hang out the window some day to dry just to depreciate Her Majesty's jewels and gifts. Had King Solomon been the janitor, with all his treasures piled up in the basement, Jim would have pulled out his watch every time he passed, just to see him pluck at his beard from envy.

**The above paragraph uses several different allusions. What do we learn from the paragraph? How do the allusions contribute to the overall message?**

The magi, as you know, were wise men—wonderfully wise men—who brought gifts to the Babe in the manger. They invented the art of giving Christmas presents. Being wise, their gifts were no doubt wise ones, possibly bearing the privilege of exchange in case of duplication. And here I have lamely related to you the uneventful chronicle of two foolish children in a flat who most unwisely sacrificed for each other the greatest treasures of their house. But in a last word to the wise of these days let it be said that of all who give gifts these two were the wisest. O all who give and receive gifts, such as they are wisest. Everywhere they are wisest. They are the magi.

**O. Henry is comparing the gifts that Jim and Della exchanged with the Magi’s gifts. What does this comparison suggest about Jim’s and Della’s gifts?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The person, place, or event from literature, history, religion, or culture.** | **Significance of Reference** |
| The Magi |  |
| King Solomon |  |
| Queen of Sheba |  |
| Allusions to these figures underscore the story’s **theme**, which is: |

**Notebook Check #5: ADVERSITY JOURNAL ENTRIES**

1.

2.

3.

**Notebook Check #5: ADVERSITY JOURNAL ENTRIES**

1. Watch the following clip of Amy Purdy and her experience with adversity. Respond to this: If her life is full of success despite her adversity , how can my life become better despite my own adversity?

2. Sometimes in life we feel like things can't get any better. Describe this situation and how he can get out of it in a literal way, and then connect this picture in a figurative way. What does the person represent in your life , and what does the tall rock represent in your life? This is symbolism.

3. After viewing the clip, discuss the hardships Bethany faced and how she overcame them.

“The Gift of the Magi” Tea Party Vocabulary

Pennies saved one and two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and the butcher until one's cheeks burned with the silent **imputation** of parsimony that such close dealing implied.

Pennies saved one and two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and the butcher until one's cheeks burned with the silent imputation of **parsimony** that such close dealing implied.

Which **instigates** the moral reflection that life is made up of sobs, sniffles, and smiles, with sniffles predominating.

Della would have let her hair hang out the window some day to dry just to **depreciate** Her Majesty's jewels and gifts.

When Della reached home her intoxication gave way a little to **prudence** and reason.

For ten seconds let us regard with discreet **scrutiny** some inconsequential object in the other direction.

And now, they were hers, but the tresses that should have adorned the **coveted** adornments were gone.

**Irony Examples**

When watching a horror movie, you know there’s a killer on the loose and that the teens shouldn’t go in the woods; they end up getting killed.

Little Red Riding Hood knocks on Grandma’s door, and the reader knows that it’s really the wolf dressed as Grandma, but Little Red Riding Hood doesn’t know this.

In How the Grinch Stole Christmas, views know that the Grinch wants to ruin Christmas in Whoville, but the residents of Whoville don’t know that.

A police chief’s son turns out to be a criminal.

The mighty, terrible wizard of Oz turns out to be a con man (a fake)

A fire station catches on fire and burns to the ground

As you stand next to a polluted river, you say, “Nice, clean water you’ve got here.”

Your boyfriend shows up in ripped jeans and a stained t-shirt. You reply, “I see you’ve dressed up for our date.”

Someone who has just been seriously hurt in an accident is asked how he feels, and he responds, “I’ve been better.”

A championship swimmer drowns in his backyard pool

You are arguing with your mother, who reprimands you for being "smart." Your reply is a sarcastic, "If you think I am smart, then why won't you let me make some smart decisions?"

"What a beautiful day," Maxine said, opening her umbrella.

Your little brother is sitting on the couch scowling because he doesn't want to go out to dinner. You say, with a smirk, "I'm glad to see you're so happy about going to dinner."

When watching a talk show, the audience knows why a person has been brought on the show. However, the person sitting in a chair does not know that he is going to be reunited with a former lover. This adds to the suspense and humor of the show.

You break a date with your girlfriend so you can go to the ball game with the guys. When you go to the concession stand, you run into your date who is with another guy.

Mother comes into the TV room and discovers her 11-year-old watching South Park instead of doing his homework, as he was set to a dozen minutes ago. Pointing to the screen she says, "Don't let me tempt you from your duties, kiddo, but when you're finished with your serious studies there, maybe we could take some time out for recreation and do a little math."

Dad is finally out of patience with picking up after his son, who can't seem to be trained to put his dirty clothes in the hamper instead of letting them drop wherever he happens to be when he takes them off. "Would Milord please let me know when it pleases him to have his humble servant pick up after him?"

You stay up all night studying for a test. When you go to class, you discover the test is not until the next day.