

May & June

Vocabulary:

Part 1:

The *synonym* of a word is another word that has the same or nearly the same meaning as the original word. Read the sentences below paying attention to how the underlined words are used in each sentence. Write down a *synonym* for each of the underlined words. You may need to use a dictionary or thesaurus.

1. A steady stream of water was spewing from the crack in the pipe.

2. With a pocketknife, she etched her name into the side of the tree.

3. The painter tried to capture the bright pink hue of the clouds at sunset.

4. On snowy winter evenings, Grandfather would regale the children with stories of his childhood. _____
5. Ever since her little brother scribbled on her favorite book with a crayon, Rachel felt nothing but hostility toward him. _____
6. John wrote a very reverent essay about the president. _____
7. Wanda's complaints about assignment were futile. She still had to complete it on time. _____

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Part 2:

Match the words on the left with their definitions on the right. Not all definitions will be used. You may need to use a dictionary.

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| 1. ____ inconstant | a. To kneel and touch one's forehead to the ground in an expression of respect |
| 2. ____ timbre | b. Large or imposing; causing fear or dread |
| 3. ____ injustice | c. Changing or varying, often without reason; fickle |
| 4. ____ kow-tow | d. Giving a positive impression |
| 5. ____ pauper | e. To make excuses |
| 6. ____ excel | f. The distinctive tone of an instrument or singing voice |
| 7. ____ disarming | g. One who is extremely poor |
| 8. ____ formidable | h. Knotted and tangled |
| | i. The measure of one's intelligence |
| | j. To show skill in a particular area |
| | k. An especially tricky examination |
| | l. A violation of what is right, or of a person's rights |

Questions:

1. At the beginning of this section of reading, Shirley looks down from the window of the schoolroom and watches the children playing stickball. What is her attitude toward them? Why do you think she has this attitude?

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2. What happens when Shirley crosses the schoolyard “like an emperor” right where the other children are playing stickball?

3. How do Mabel and Shirley become friends?

4. How do the other children react when Mabel invites Shirley to play stickball? How does Mabel convince them to let Shirley play?

5. Why does Shirley ask Mrs. Rappaport about Jackie Robinson?

Thinking About the Story

6. Shirley cannot get used to the American way of receiving compliments with a simple “thank you,” but the Chinese way only confused people. What happens when the widow downstairs compliments Shirley’s mother?

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7. How does Shirley's attitude toward stickball change once she is invited to play? Why do you think her attitude changes so quickly?

8. Shirley remembers a story her grandfather told her about a man named "Wispy Whiskers." What was the lesson of this story? How does Shirley see this lesson in her friendship with Mabel?

9. Mrs. Rappaport asks her class:

"Is there something special about baseball that fits the special kind of people we are and the special kind of country America is?"

When no one responds, Mrs. Rappaport explains to the class how baseball is ideally suited to Americans. How does she compare baseball and America?

10. According to Mrs. Rappaport, how did Jackie Robinson make a better America by making a difference?

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11. After Mrs. Rappaport tells her class how Jackie Robinson helped make a difference, she charges her class: “And so can you! And so must you!” List three things Shirley realizes when she hears this.

Dig Deeper:

12. Angry at Shirley, Mabel uses some coarse language; words that Shirley “was sure would never appear on Mrs. Rappaport’s English list.” Read Proverbs 4:24, Ephesians 4:29, and Ephesians 5:4. What do these verses tell us about the words we use?

13. When Shirley arrives home with two black eyes, she will not tell her parents what happened. “To tell would be to tattle, and Shirley refused to tattle even on that giant of a no-friend of hers.”

Do you think this would be “tattling”? What things do you think you should tell, and what things are tattling? In other words, how do you tell the difference?

14. Read Proverbs 17:9. How does this verse apply to Shirley’s actions in this section of reading?