

Chapters 7–10

*“I don’t want to die, . . . I want to stay alive, right here
in my comfortable manure pile with all my friends.
I want to breathe the beautiful air and lie in the beautiful sun.”*

Vocabulary:

A synonym is a word that means the same or nearly the same as another word. Read each sentence below. For each of the underlined words, write two synonyms that could be used as a replacement for that word in the sentence.

1. “They’re going to *what?*” screamed Wilbur? Fern grew rigid on her stool.

2. “Does he really?” said Mrs. Arable, rather vaguely. She was staring at Fern with a worried expression.

3. He glanced hastily behind to see if a piece of rope was following him to check his fall, . . .

4. “Yes, indeed,” replied Templeton, who saved string. “No trouble at all. Anything to oblige.”

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5. “. . . with men it's rush, rush, rush, every minute. I'm glad I'm a sedentary spider.

6. “In a forest looking for beechnuts and truffles and delectable roots, pushing leaves aside with my wonderful strong nose, . . .

7. “It pays to save things,” he said in his surly voice.

Questions:

1. What bad news does the old sheep tell Wilbur?

2. What does Charlotte promise Wilbur?

3. Why does Mrs. Arable worry about Fern?

4. When Avery spots Charlotte in her web, what does he intend to do?

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5. How is Charlotte saved?

Thinking About the Story:

6. When Wilbur asks Charlotte how he might help her think of a plan to save him, Charlotte gives Wilbur the following advice:

“Well,” replied Charlotte, “you must try to build yourself up. I want you to get plenty of sleep, and stop worrying. Never hurry and never worry! Chew your food thoroughly and eat every bit of it, except you must leave just enough for Templeton. Gain weight and stay well—that’s the way you can help. Keep fit, and don’t lose your nerve.”

Read the advice in each of the passages below. For each passage, write down the advice given in the passage. Then write down the similar piece of advice that Charlotte gives to Wilbur.

- a. Matthew 6:25–27
- b. Joshua 1:9
- c. Proverbs 22:9

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7. Why do you think Charlotte told Wilbur to leave food for Templeton?

8. *Irony* is when there is a distinct (often humorous) difference between what one expects to happen and what actually happens. What is *ironic* about the fate of the goose's unhatched egg?

9. How did Wilbur show that he was grateful to Templeton for having saved the egg.

Dig Deeper:

10. When Wilbur hears the bad news from the sheep, he becomes hysterical with fear. Who calms him down? How?

11. Think of a time when you were very afraid. How were you comforted? What can you do to comfort someone who is afraid?

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12. Psalm 23, Deuteronomy 31:6, and Romans 8:38, 39 are good verses to know why you are afraid or when things look bad. According to these verses, who is with us during dangerous or frightening times? How do these verses make you feel?

13. Wilbur boasts that he can spin a web like Charlotte does. When he realizes that he can't, he admits, "I guess I was just trying to show off." Why do you think people make boasts and try to show off?

14. Read Jeremiah 9:23, 24. What do these verses tell us about boasting?

15. When the lamb insults Wilbur, Charlotte speaks up for him. What does this tell us about Charlotte?

16. Have you ever been present when someone insulted one of your friends? What did you do?

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17. Read James 3:2–10. Words can either hurt others or encourage them. It is important that we learn to watch what we say. Write down what guidance is given in each of the following proverbs.
- a. Proverbs 12:18:

 - b. Proverbs 15:1

 - c. Proverbs 17:27

 - d. Proverbs 21:23

Writing Assignment:

- Mrs. Arable worries about Fern when Fern claims that the animals can talk. While we know that animals do not talk like humans do, they do communicate by other means. If you have pets, you may notice certain behaviors that your pets do to attempt to communicate something. For example, a cat might communicate happiness by holding its tail high or purring. A dog might show submissiveness by keeping its tail or head low.

If you have any pets, try to write a “vocabulary” for them explaining what you think their various sounds or behaviors might mean. (For example, you might note that if the dog stands at the door and barks, it means “let me out!”)