

Chapters 15–21

*Maniac loved almost everything about his new life.
But everything did not love him back.*

Vocabulary:

Define the underlined words in each of the following sentences. Then write a sentence of your own demonstrating your understanding of the word.

1. And the man was croaking, ranting, not to Maniac now but to the people.

Definition:

Your Sentence:

2. He was acting so different, all glum, and wiseacre answers. As if he didn't care, not about anything.

Definition:

Your Sentence:

3. "What are you doing up so late?" he said. "I'm incubating an egg," she snarled.

Definition:

Your Sentence:

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4. . . . if business didn't exactly boom, it must have at least peeped a little, because eons later, when Maniac Magee came to town, Cobble's Corner was still there.

Definition:

Your Sentence:

5. It was made of string, but it had more contortions, ins and outs, twists and turns and dips and doodles than the brain of Albert Einstein.

Definition:

Your Sentence:

6. Besides the tangle itself, there was the weathering of that first year, when the Knot hung outside and became as hard as a rock.

Definition:

Your Sentence:

7. . . . his mouth was more grim than grin, that his eyes lit up like flashbulbs, because he knew he was finally facing a knot that would stand up and fight, a worthy opponent.

Definition:

Your Sentence:

Hyperbole:

Hyperbole is a figure of speech in which the facts are exaggerated for emphasis or for a humorous effect. Consider the exaggeration in the following sentence: “By the end of harvest time the farmer was up to his ears in apples.” While it’s doubtful that the farmer was actually surrounded with apples as high as his ears, the hyperbole in the sentence does communicate that the harvest of apples was bountiful.

Read each of the sentences below. If the information in the sentence is factual, indicate this with an “F”. If the information is hyperbole, use an “H”.

1. . . . it was said he could back up traffic all the way to Bridgeport while he took ten minutes to cross the street. _____
2. The scene in the kitchen stopped them cold: one little girl, eyes wide, standing on a countertop; one little boy, eyes wide, standing just below her on a chair; one shattered glass jar and some stringy pale-colored glop on the floor; one growing cloud of sauerkraut fumes. _____
3. Most of the time during the day the little ones drove her crazy; she couldn’t stand to be in the same hemisphere with them. _____
4. . . . if their mother wanted to wash their armpits, she would have to get a crowbar and pry their arms up, because they sure as heck were not going to move.

5. He loved the early morning. The “before-the-workingpeople time,” he called it. When even those who went to work the earliest were still sleeping behind their second-story shades. _____
6. Maniac kept trying, but he still couldn’t see it, this color business. He didn’t figure he was white any more than the East Enders were black. _____
7. [It was] so hot the dogs were tripping on their own tongues. _____

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8. The man was close enough to be catching some water around his shoes, which, Maniac noticed, were actually slippers. _____
9. If the Wonders of the World hadn't stopped at seven, Cobble's Knot would have been number eight. _____
10. . . . if business didn't exactly boom, it must have at least peeped a little, because eons later, when Maniac Magee came to town, Cobble's Corner was still there. _____
11. After polishing off the Krimpets, Maniac did the last thing anybody expected: he lay down and took a nap right there on the table, . . . _____

Questions:

1. Why did Hester, Lester, and Amanda intercept Maniac one morning during his run and try to keep him from going back home?
2. What was Amanda's plan for making sure Maniac would be welcome in the East End?
3. What was the prize for untying Cobble's Knot?

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4. Someone at Cobble's Corner was throwing confetti. Where had the confetti come from?

5. What did Maniac decide to do at the end of Chapter 21? Why?

Thinking About the Story:

6. How did Maniac respond when Mrs. Beale put a stop to his trash-talking? Why do you think he responded this way? Do you think it is okay for Maniac to "talk trash" while playing but not at home?

7. In what way was Maniac "blind"? Do you think it's good to be "blind" in this way? Why or why not?

8. How did Maniac react to the "old ragpicker's" ranting? To the message on the wall? To the destruction of Amanda's book? Who did he blame? Do you think he was justified?

Dig Deeper:

9. What do each of the following verses tell us about the speech we use?
 - Proverbs 4:24—
 - Ephesians 4:29—
 - Ephesians 5:4—

10. Read Hebrews 12:7–11. What do these verses tell us about the benefits of discipline?

11. The “old ragpicker” told Maniac to get back on the “white” side of town. He didn’t like white people crossing over to where the black people lived and believed the two races should keep separate from each other. Read Acts 10:1–35. Why would it have been scandalous for the apostle Peter to go to the house of Cornelius? How was Peter’s mind changed? What does this passage reveal to us about God?

Descriptive Writing:

- At the beginning of Chapter 17, the author describes the weather in four sentences with each sentence beginning with a variation on the phrase “it was so hot . . .”. Each sentence describes the weather by using a different descriptive image.

Try writing some of your own descriptions in this manner. For each of the following conditions, write three creative descriptions like the ones from the story.

It was so cold . . .

It rained so hard . . .

It was so windy . . .
