

UNIT 1: SHORT STORIES

The Big Question: Is conflict necessary?



NAME: _____

HOUR: _____

Unit 1: Short Stories Big Question Vocabulary—1



The Big Question: Is conflict necessary?

When conflicts are discussed in a friendly, constructive way, sometimes we may begin to see the other side and to learn something.

amicably: acting in a friendly or peaceful way

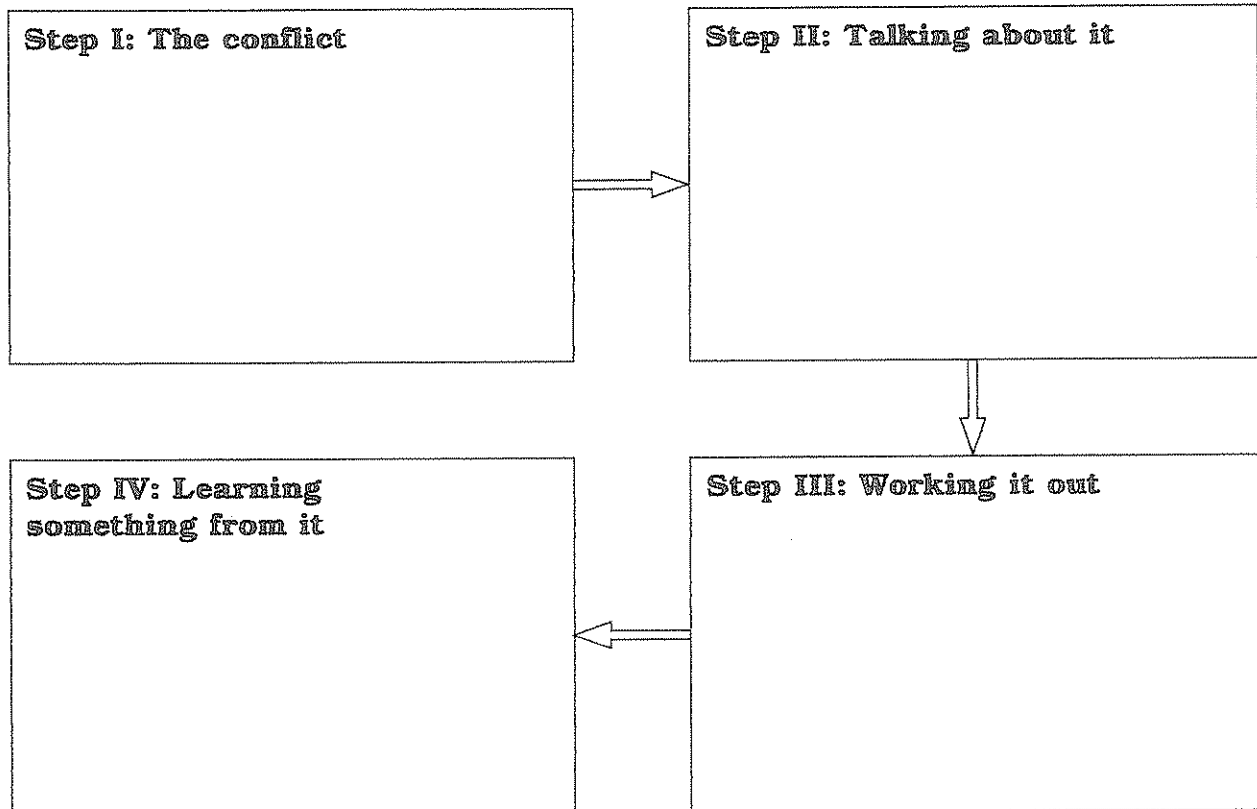
appreciate: to understand how important or valuable something is

argument: a situation in which people disagree, often angrily

articulate: to express what you are thinking or feeling

differences: disagreements or controversies

DIRECTIONS: Think of or invent a conflict that got resolved in a positive way. Write each step of the conflict using the vocabulary words. (For example, Step I could be Jason and I **argued** because he was late and kept me waiting.)



Unit 1: Short Stories

Big Question Vocabulary—2



The Big Question: Is conflict necessary?

Sometimes the actions of others can annoy or upset us. Some people have trouble expressing their displeasure in a constructive way. It is worth practicing this skill—working out differences in a productive way leads to a better atmosphere for everyone.

antagonize: to act in a way that annoys others; to act in opposition

compete: to try to be better or more successful than someone else

cooperate: to work together toward a common goal

grievance: a belief that you have been treated unfairly; a complaint about an unfair situation

mediate: to try to resolve or settle a conflict

DIRECTIONS: Use the space below to write to someone who can help you resolve a complaint that you have. It can be real or imagined. Use all of the vocabulary words in your note.

Unit 1: Short Stories

Big Question Vocabulary—3



The Big Question: Is conflict necessary?

battle: a fight or competition between people or groups in which each side has the goal of winning

controversy: a serious argument about something that continues for a long time

equity: the state or quality of being fair and impartial

issue: a problem or topic that people discuss, especially a topic that affects a lot of people

survival: the state of continuing to exist where there is a risk of death

DIRECTIONS: Use all of the vocabulary words to write a newspaper article describing what happened at Gesco Inc. after this sign was posted for all employees to see.

Notice to All Employees

It is everyone's responsibility to help the homeless. Therefore, Gesco Inc. will be deducting 10% of the pay of each employee to donate to the homeless.
Thank you.

Trouble at Gesco Inc.

NAMES: _____

Group Discussion: Attitudes about Hunting

Directions: Talk amongst your group about your different attitudes toward hunting. Discuss how Rainsford's attitude about hunting differs from Whitney's. Write some final thoughts about the pros and cons of hunting.

Group members' attitudes about hunting:

Rainsford's attitude about hunting:

Whitney's attitude about hunting:

Final thoughts: the big question: Is conflict necessary?

“The Most Dangerous Game” by Richard Connell

Literary Analysis: Conflict

Conflict is a struggle between opposing forces. There are two types of conflict: internal and external.

- In **internal conflict**, a character struggles with his or her own opposing feelings, beliefs, needs, or desires.
- In **external conflict**, a character struggles against an outside force, such as another character, society, or nature.

Conflict and the search for a solution are the mainspring of a story’s plot. The solution, which usually occurs near the end of a story, is called the **resolution**. In some stories, the conflict is not truly resolved. Instead, the main character experiences an **epiphany**, or sudden flash of insight. Although the conflict is not resolved, the character’s thoughts about it change.

A. DIRECTIONS: “The Most Dangerous Game” contains a number of conflicts. On the following lines, briefly describe the story situations surrounding each conflict.

1. Rainsford vs. nature _____

2. General Zaroff vs. the “visitors” to his island _____

3. Rainsford vs. General Zaroff _____

4. Rainsford within himself _____

B. DIRECTIONS: On the following lines, briefly discuss the story’s ending. Does the ending contain a resolution that solves the story’s main conflict? Have Rainsford’s experiences changed his views about hunting? Explain your answer by citing details from the story.

"The Most Dangerous Game" pages 24-46

NAMES: _____

Final Group Discussion

Directions

The Big Question: Is conflict necessary? Twice in "The Most Dangerous Game," Rainsford faces life-threatening conflicts. His first conflict is with the sea, and his second conflict is with Zaroff. In your group, compare and contrast these two conflicts, explaining how they are similar and different. Consider the following questions and provide details and facts from the story to support your answers:

Are the two conflicts equally unavoidable for Rainsford?
What are Rainsford's choices when faced with each conflict?
What, if anything, does Rainsford learn from each conflict?
Is either conflict in some way necessary? Are both necessary? If so, how?

“My English” by Julia Alvarez
Take Notes for Discussion

Before the Partner Discussion: Read the following passage from the story.

I would bow my head, humiliated by the smiles and snickers of the American children around me. I grew insecure about Spanish. My native tongue was not quite so good as English, as if words like *columpio* were illegal immigrants trying to cross a border into another language. But Teacher’s discerning grammar and vocabulary-patrol ears could tell and send them back.

During the Discussion: As you discuss each question, take notes on how your partner’s ideas either differ from or build upon your own.

Discussion Questions	Other Ideas Expressed	Comparison to My Own Ideas
<p>1. Why do you think Alvarez uses law-enforcement terms (“patrol”; “illegal”) in this passage?</p>		
<p>2. What does this passage say about the power of language to bring people together or to separate them?</p>		

“The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe
Writing About the Big Question



Is conflict necessary?

Big Question Vocabulary

amicably	antagonize	appreciate	argument	articulate
compete/competition	controversy	cooperate	differences	equity
grievance	issue	mediate	survival	war/battle

A. Use one or more words from the list above to complete each sentence.

1. Alice and Cyrus argued about a topic for their history project, but they resolved their conflict _____.
2. When Ana and Jay disagreed over a Student Council _____, they realized they had big _____ of opinion.
3. Lana and Jen both harbored a wish to _____ in the district track meet.

B. Follow the directions in responding to each item below.

1. Write two sentences describing a grievance you have had.

2. Write two sentences explaining how you dealt with the grievance. Use at least two of the Big Question vocabulary words.

C. In “The Cask of Amontillado,” the narrator has a grievance against Fortunato. Complete the sentence below. Then, write a short paragraph in which you connect this experience to the Big Question.

To settle an old grievance against someone, a person needs to _____

“The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe
Literary Analysis: Plot, Foreshadowing, and Suspense

Plot is the sequence of events in a narrative. It is structured around a **conflict**, or problem, and it can be divided into the following parts:

- **Exposition**—the characters and setting are introduced
- **Rising action**—the central conflict is introduced
- **Climax**—the high point of intensity in the conflict
- **Falling action**—the conflict’s intensity lessens
- **Resolution**—the conflict concludes and loose ends are tied up

Writers use a variety of techniques to keep readers interested in the plot. One of these, **foreshadowing**, is the use of clues to hint at events that will happen later in a story. Authors use this technique to create **suspense**, a feeling of tension that keeps readers wondering what will happen next.

Read the following passage, which is the opening paragraph of “The Cask of Amontillado.”

The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could, but when he ventured upon insult I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. At length I would be avenged; this was a point definitely settled—but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish but punish with impunity.

In the opening paragraph, what details does Poe include that suggest something about the narrator’s personality and his plans? The paragraph arouses our curiosity: What does the narrator plan to do, and how can he possibly get away without being punished?

A. DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage, and watch for details the author uses to create suspense. Underline the words and phrases in the passage that make you curious about the outcome.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Médoc. We had passed through long walls of piled skeletons, with casks and puncheons intermingling, into the inmost recesses of the catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

“The niter!” I said; “see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river’s bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough—”

“It is nothing,” he said; “let us go on. But first, another draft of the Médoc.”

B. DIRECTIONS: Identify two clues the author gives that foreshadow the story’s ending. Did you expect the story’s ending, or were you surprised? Describe your response, and tell why you reacted that way.

Clue 1: _____

Clue 2: _____

My response to story’s ending: _____

“The Scarlet Ibis” by James Hurst
Take Notes for Discussion

Before the Group Discussion: Read the following passage from the story.

Once he could go no further, so he collapsed on the ground and began to cry.

“Aw, come on, Doodle,” I urged. “You can do it. Do you want to be different from everybody else when you start school?”

“Does it make any difference?”

“It certainly does,” I said.

During the Discussion: As your group discusses each question, take notes on how other students’ ideas either differ from or build upon your own.

Discussion Questions	Other Ideas Expressed	Comparison to My Own Ideas
<p>1. Why do you think the narrator wants to change Doodle?</p>		
<p>2. Should Doodle try to be the same as other children? Why or why not?</p>		
<p>3. What motivates Doodle to try to change?</p>		

Anticipation Guide for "The Necklace"
By Guy de Maupassant

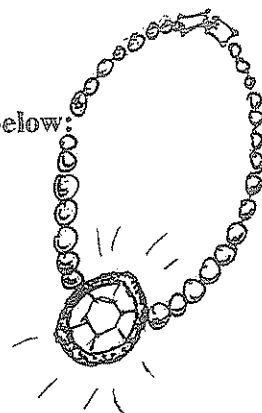
Circle your response to each of the following statements. Use the key below:

1 = I STRONGLY disagree

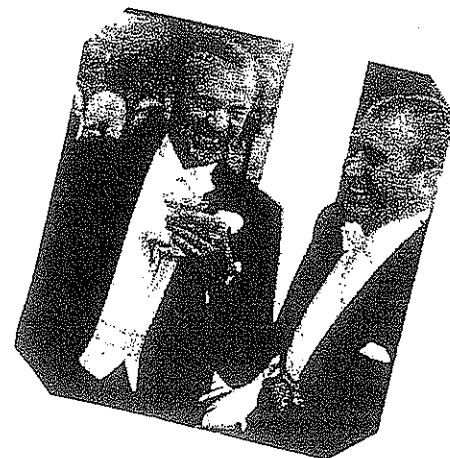
2 = I mildly disagree

3 = I mildly agree

4 = I STRONGLY agree



1. One good experience overshadows many bad ones. 1 2 3 4
2. Flattery (complimenting me) boosts my spirits. 1 2 3 4
3. The more a person has, the more a person wants. 1 2 3 4
4. Fancy parties are for the rich and famous. 1 2 3 4
5. Borrowing expensive items from friends is ok. 1 2 3 4
6. Lending items to others is risky. 1 2 3 4
7. If you don't have it, "fake" it. 1 2 3 4
8. Clothes leave distinct impressions about individuals. 1 2 3 4
9. Money talks (as in, money influences others). 1 2 3 4
10. Old friends should keep in touch. 1 2 3 4
11. Good fortune follows attractive people. 1 2 3 4
12. Hard work wears people down. 1 2 3 4
13. Honesty is the best policy. 1 2 3 4
14. Money is more important than friendship. 1 2 3 4
15. Popularity IS a contest. 1 2 3 4



“The Necklace” by Guy de Maupassant
Take Notes for Discussion

Before the Partner Discussion: Read the following passage from the story.

Madame Loisel looked old now. She had become the sort of strong woman, hard and coarse, that one finds in poor families. Disheveled, her skirts askew, with reddened hands, she spoke in a loud voice, slopping water over the floors as she washed them. But sometimes, when her husband was at the office, she would sit down by the window and muse over that party long ago when she had been so beautiful, the belle of the ball.

During the Discussion: As you discuss each question, take notes on how your partner’s ideas either differ from or build upon your own.

Discussion Questions	Other Ideas Expressed	Comparison to My Own Ideas
2. How does the life Mathilde aspired to compare with the one she creates?		
3. When she muses about the party, do you think her memories are happy?		
3. Does this story teach a lesson? If so, what is that lesson?		