

Name: _____ Class: _____

American Dream Faces Harsh New Reality

By Ari Shapiro
2012

In this article from 2012, three years after the economic recession, Ari Shapiro of NPR's Morning Edition interviews Americans about their feelings about the American Dream. As you read, consider how America has changed over time, and how our ideas about the American Dream have evolved.

- [1] The American Dream is a crucial thread in this country's tapestry, woven through politics, music and culture.

Though the phrase has different meanings to different people, it suggests an underlying belief that hard work pays off and that the next generation will have a better life than the previous generation. But three years after the worst recession in almost a century, the American Dream now feels in jeopardy to many.



"The Family at Attercliffe" by Blue Mountain Library Local Studies is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

The town of Lorain, Ohio, used to embody this dream. It was a place where you could get a good job, raise a family and comfortably retire.

"Now you can see what it is. Nothing," says John Beribak. "The shipyards are gone, the Ford plant is gone, the steel plant is gone." His voice cracks as he describes the town he's lived in his whole life.

- [5] "I mean, I grew up across the street from the steel plant when there was 15,000 people working there," he says. "My dad worked there. I worked there when I got out of the Air Force. It's just sad."

Uniquely American

The American Dream is an implicit contract that says if you play by the rules, you'll move ahead. It's a faith that is almost unique to this country, says Michael Dimock of the Pew Research Center.

"When Germans or French are asked the same questions about whether it's within all of our power to get ahead, or whether our success is really determined by forces outside our control, most German and French respondents say, 'No, success is really beyond our control,'" Dimock says.

In the wake of the recession,¹ that sentiment is now growing in this country.

"I think the American Dream for the average man doesn't exist any more," retiree Linden Strandberg says on a recent visit to the Smithsonian American History museum in Washington, D.C.

1. [Economic] Recession: A period of economic decline in which industry slows and jobs are scarce.

[10] The Strandberg family story has been repeated millions of times in the last century. His parents immigrated from Sweden in the 1920s for economic opportunity. Linden grew up and worked at the phone company in Chicago for 35 years.

“I wasn’t smart enough to go to college, so I wanted to get a steady job with decent pay,” he says. “With my overtime I was able to buy a house, take trips to Europe and visit relatives there. I don’t think a young person — woman or man — coming out of high school now could ever achieve that.”

This sense that the contract is threatened intrigued political scientist John Kenneth White of Catholic University. “We have a lack of confidence by many Americans in the future of the country,” says White, who edited a collection of essays called *The American Dream in the 21st Century*.

This crisis of confidence is not just because the economy is bad. In fact, the American Dream flowered at a time when the economy was at its worst.

“If you go back to the Great Depression where the American Dream originated as a concept, strikingly enough, there was still hope and optimism about the future,” White says.

A Long History of Optimism

[15] In 1931, author James Adam wrote a book with the working title *The American Dream*. Ultimately it was retitled *The Epic of America*. Historians say that text marked the American Dream’s emergence into the spotlight.

Yet the underlying themes had been bubbling up through the American psyche for much longer. In 1925, F. Scott Fitzgerald opened his iconic novel *The Great Gatsby* with these lines: *In my younger and more vulnerable years, my father gave me some advice that I’ve been turning over in my mind ever since. Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone, he told me, just remember that all the people in this world haven’t had the advantages that you’ve had.*

The American motifs of growth and optimism even stretch back as far as the Constitutional Convention. “The chair in which Washington sat had a sun, and the question was asked, is it rising or setting?” White says. “And the framers answered that question by saying it’s a rising sun.”

At that time, the American Dream was not available to everyone in the country. Black people were kept as slaves. Women were not allowed to vote or own property.

The story of the 20th century is one of the American Dream gradually being extended to more of the population.

[20] Composer Aaron Copland, a gay Jewish son of immigrants, captured the expansive optimism of the American Dream in 1942, in his “Fanfare for the Common Man.”

Six years later, the gospel singer Mahalia Jackson expressed her faith that blacks will “Move on Up a Little Higher.” The single became an overnight sensation — the best-selling gospel record to date.

In 2009, President Obama looked back across those decades as he took the oath of office. He described his inauguration as a fulfillment of the American Dream, where “a man whose father less than 60 years ago might not have been served at a local restaurant can now stand before you to take a most sacred oath.”

While Obama embodies the American Dream in a powerful and specific way, this is a theme that every president and would-be president adopts in some fashion.

On the campaign trail, GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney talks about how his father grew up poor. “Only in America could a man like my dad become governor of a state where he once sold paint from the trunk of his car,” he says.

- [25] “Only in America” is a universal phrase in domestic politics. The challenge for politicians today is to convince Americans that the phrase still applies — that hard work and dedication still guarantee success.

Skepticism Grows

That faith is faltering, especially among the poor, says pollster Dimock. “Lower income whites and lower income African-Americans are more skeptical about the American Dream. Higher income blacks are pretty optimistic about the American Dream, as are higher income whites.”

As cynical as this may seem, the numbers suggest that the people most likely to believe in the American Dream today are those who’ve already attained it.

“There’s a certain truth to that,” Dimock says. “There are people struggling. And what you’re seeing especially right now are people who feel like they played the game the right way, like they did what they were supposed to do, and the rules they thought they could play by and be OK have changed on them somehow.”

Economic statistics validate those feelings. According to the Census Bureau, an average man working full time made 10 percent less money last year than he did a decade ago.

- [30] The question for this country is, can the dream be restored? And if it can’t, what does that mean for our identity as Americans? Or, as the poet Langston Hughes put it, “What happens to a dream deferred?”

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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. Based on the information in the article, what is the American Dream?

2. PART A: In paragraph 6, what is the meaning of the word 'implicit'?

- A. Written
- B. Understood
- C. Stated
- D. Hoped for

3. PART B: Which of the following phrases from the passage helps you understand the meaning of the word 'implicit'?

- A. "almost unique"
- B. "play by the rules"
- C. "it's a faith"
- D. "you'll move ahead"

4. Which of the following best summarizes the central idea of the passage?

- A. Americans can no longer afford to buy homes.
- B. Americans are earning less money for full-time employment than they were a decade ago.
- C. The economic recession is forcing many people out of work.
- D. Many Americans are losing confidence in the idea that anyone can make it in America.

5. Re-read John Kenneth White's statement from paragraph 14: "If you go back to the Great Depression where the American Dream originated as a concept, strikingly enough, there was still hope and optimism about the future." Which of the following best summarizes the purpose of this statement?
- A. to illustrate the sharp decline of the American Dream since the 1920s
 - B. to show how Americans overcame adversity during the Great Depression
 - C. to contrast the optimism that existed during the Great Depression with the pessimism of today's economic recession
 - D. to show that the American Dream is unique to America and doesn't exist in other places around the world

6. According to the information article, how does President Obama embody the American Dream?

7. PART A: What can you conclude about the American Dream based on the section titled, "Skepticism Grows"?
- A. Minorities are becoming increasingly skeptical of the American Dream.
 - B. Wealthy Americans fear that they will someday lose their wealth.
 - C. Other countries are becoming wealthier; America is becoming poorer.
 - D. Belief in the American Dream differs primarily by social class and income.

8. PART B: Copy a piece of evidence from the text to support your answer to Part A.

9. Which of the following best summarizes the author's likely purpose for ending the article with a series of questions?
- A. To focus the reader's attention on finding solutions.
 - B. To emphasize the confusion he feels in the face of extreme poverty.
 - C. To show that there are some questions that can't be answered.
 - D. To help the reader understand the importance of the American Dream.

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Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night

By Dylan Thomas
From The Poems Of Dylan Thomas • 1952

Dylan Thomas (1914-1953) was a Welsh poet popular during his own time; his use of imagery and rhythm made his poetry widely accessible. It has been suggested that "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night," one of his more famous poems, was inspired by Thomas's own dying father. As you read, take notes on how the author's use of symbolism, tone, and repetition contribute to the message of this poem.

[1] Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
[5] Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green
bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.



"Dylan Thomas' Boat House" is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

[10] Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieve it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,

[15] Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

"Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night" from The Poems of Dylan Thomas, © 1952, New Directions Publishing Corp.. Reprinted with permission, all rights reserved.

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. Which of the following statements best describes a central theme of the poem? [RL.2]
 - A. Life is precious and should be fought for when facing its end.
 - B. Family is the most valuable thing in life and should be protected at all costs.
 - C. Man is in a constant struggle versus Nature's attempts to kill him.
 - D. Growing up involves learning to let loved ones go.

2. Why does the narrator include descriptions of different types of men? [RL.5]
 - A. He uses them to illustrate how people face death differently.
 - B. He includes these different types of men—who all fight against dying, despite their differences—to support his stance against giving up on living.
 - C. He contrasts how they face or conceptualize death versus how he does (i.e. passing peacefully versus raging against it).
 - D. The speaker includes these different types of men in order to shame his father into living by attacking his masculinity.

3. PART A: Which of the following statements best describes the speaker's point of view? [RL.6]
 - A. The speaker is facing death and is attempting encourage himself to live.
 - B. The speaker is distraught over the idea of dying quietly of old age; he wants his death to be more heroic than that.
 - C. The speaker is at his father's deathbed, trying to encourage his father to be strong in the face of death.
 - D. The speaker is actually omniscient narrator, as he possesses knowledge about others' thoughts (while dying).

4. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
 - A. "Do not go gentle into that good night, / Old age should burn and rave at close of day; / Rage, rage against the dying of the light." (Lines 1-3)
 - B. "Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright / Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay" (Lines 7-8)
 - C. "Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight / Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay" (Lines 13-14)
 - D. "And you, my father, there on the sad height, / Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray. / Do not go gentle into that good night." (Lines 16-18)

5. What does the "light" mentioned in the poem most likely represent? [RL.4]
- A. The light most likely represents death; Thomas uses light in this way by putting a twist on the phrase "light at the end of the tunnel."
 - B. The light most likely represents the afterlife (i.e. heaven); the speaker is attempting to guide his father to a peaceful afterlife.
 - C. The light most likely represents love; the speaker begs his father to remember the love he has for his family in order to fight death.
 - D. The light most likely represents life; the speaker tells his father to "rage, rage against the dying of the light" as he encourages him to be strong in the face of death.

6. What is the effect of repetition in this poem? How does it contribute to its tone and meaning? [RL.5]

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Echo and Narcissus

By Ovid, translated by Brookes More
1 A.D.

Ovid was a Roman poet born in 43 B.C. who is best known for his book of classic mythology, Metamorphoses. In this story, Narcissus, the son of the nymph Liriope, rejects the love of a nymph named Echo. As you read, take notes on the text's figurative language and point of view, and consider how this classic tale informs your understanding of love.

[1] Tiresias¹ fame of prophecy was spread through all the cities of Aonia, for his unerring answers unto all who listened to his words. And first of those that harkened to his fateful prophecies, a lovely Nymph,² named Liriope, came with her dear son, who then fifteen, might seem a man or boy—he who was born to her upon the green merge of Cephissus' stream—that mighty River-God whom she declared the father of her boy—she questioned him. Imploring him to tell her if her son, unequalled for his beauty, whom she called Narcissus, might attain a ripe old age. To which the blind seer answered in these words, “If he but fail to recognize himself, a long life he may have, beneath the sun,”—so, frivolous³ the prophet's words appeared; and yet the event, the manner of his death, the strange delusion of his frenzied love, confirmed it. Three times five years so were passed. Another five-years, and the lad might seem a young man or a boy. And many a youth, and many a damsel sought to gain his love; but such his mood and spirit and his pride, none gained his favor.



"Stream" by Shashank Bhat is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

Once a noisy Nymph, (who never held her tongue when others spoke, who never spoke till others had begun) mocking Echo, spied him as he drove, in his delusive⁴ nets, some timid stags. For Echo was a Nymph, in olden time, and, more than vapid⁵ sound, possessed a form: and she was then deprived the use of speech, except to babble and repeat the words, once spoken, over and over. Juno⁶ confused her silly tongue, because she often held that glorious goddess with her endless tales, till many a hapless Nymph, from Jove's⁷ embrace, had made escape adown a mountain. But for this, the goddess might have caught them. Thus the glorious Juno, when she knew her guile;⁸ “Your tongue, so freely wagged at my expense, shall be of little use; your endless voice, much shorter than your tongue.” At once the Nymph was stricken as the goddess had decreed; and, ever since, she only mocks the sounds of others' voices, or, perchance, returns their final words.

1. Tiresias was a blind oracle of the god Apollo. He makes several appearances in in Greek mythology, including The Odyssey and in the story of Oedipus.
2. The Nymphs (or Nymphai) were minor nature goddesses, ranked below the major gods, that populated the world of mythology.
3. **Frivolous (adjective):** not having any serious meaning or value
4. **Delusive (adjective):** giving a false or misleading impression
5. **Vapid (adjective):** offering nothing stimulating nor challenging
6. Roman goddess, wife of chief god Jupiter (Greek: Zeus)
7. Latin for the chief god, Jupiter (Zeus)

One day, when she observed Narcissus wandering in the pathless woods, she loved him and she followed him, with soft and stealthy tread. The more she followed him the hotter did she burn, as when the flame flares upward from the sulfur on the torch. Oh, how she longed to make her passion known! To plead in soft entreaty! to implore his love! But now, till others have begun, a mute of Nature she must be. She cannot choose but wait the moment when his voice may give to her an answer. Presently the youth, by chance divided from his trusted friends, cries loudly, "Who is here?" and Echo, "Here!" Replies. Amazed, he casts his eyes around, and calls with louder voice, "Come here!" "Come here!" She calls the youth who calls. He turns to see who calls him and, beholding naught exclaims, "Avoid me not!" "Avoid me not!" returns. He tries again, again, and is deceived by this alternate voice, and calls aloud; "Oh let us come together!" Echo cries, "Oh let us come together!" Never sound seemed sweeter to the Nymph, and from the woods she hastens in accordance with her words, and strives to wind her arms around his neck. He flies from her and as he leaves her says, "Take off your hands! you shall not fold your arms around me. Better death than such a one should ever caress me!" Naught she answers save, "Caress me!" Thus rejected she lies hid in the deep woods, hiding her blushing face with the green leaves; and ever after lives concealed in lonely caverns in the hills. But her great love increases with neglect; her miserable body wastes away, wakeful with sorrows; leanness shrivels up her skin, and all her lovely features melt, as if dissolved upon the wafting winds—nothing remains except her bones and voice—her voice continues, in the wilderness; her bones have turned to stone. She lies concealed in the wild woods, nor is she ever seen on lonely mountain range; for, though we hear her calling in the hills, 'tis but a voice, a voice that lives, that lives among the hills.

Thus he deceived the Nymph and many more, sprung from the mountains or the sparkling waves; and thus he slighted many an amorous youth—and therefore, some one whom he once despised, lifting his hands to Heaven, implored the Gods, "If he should love deny him what he loves!" and as the prayer was uttered it was heard by Nemesis,⁹ who granted her assent.

- [5] There was a fountain silver-clear and bright, which neither shepherds nor the wild she-goats, that range the hills, nor any cattle's mouth had touched—its waters were unsullied—birds disturbed it not; nor animals, nor boughs that fall so often from the trees. Around sweet grasses nourished by the stream grew; trees that shaded from the sun let balmy airs temper its waters. Here Narcissus, tired of hunting and the heated noon, lay down, attracted by the peaceful solitudes and by the glassy spring. There as he stooped to quench his thirst another thirst increased. While he is drinking he beholds himself reflected in the mirrored pool—and loves; loves an imagined body which contains no substance, for he deems the mirrored shade a thing of life to love. He cannot move, for so he marvels at himself, and lies with countenance unchanged, as if indeed a statue carved of Parian marble. Long, supine¹⁰ upon the bank, his gaze is fixed on his own eyes, twin stars; his fingers shaped as Bacchus¹¹ might desire, his flowing hair as glorious as Apollo's,¹² and his cheeks youthful and smooth; his ivory neck, his mouth dreaming in sweetness, his complexion fair and blushing as the rose in snow-drift white. All that is lovely in himself he loves, and in his witless way he wants himself: he who approves is equally approved; he seeks, is sought, he burns and he is burnt. And how he kisses the deceitful fount; and how he thrusts his arms to catch the neck that's pictured in the middle of the stream! Yet never may he wreath his arms around that image of himself. He knows not what he there beholds, but what he sees inflames his longing, and the error that deceives allures his eyes. But why, O foolish boy, so vainly catching at this flitting form? The cheat that you are seeking has no place. Avert your gaze and you will lose your love, for this that holds your eyes is nothing save the image of yourself reflected back to you. It comes and waits with you; it has no life; it will depart if you will only go.

8. **Guile** (*noun*): the use of clever and usually dishonest methods to achieve something

9. Nemesis was the spirit of divine retribution, especially against those accused of hubris, or arrogance before the gods.

10. **Supine** (*adjective*): lying down, stretched out

Nor food nor rest can draw him thence—outstretched upon the overshadowed green, his eyes fixed on the mirrored image never may know their longings satisfied, and by their sight he is himself undone. Raising himself a moment, he extends his arms around, and, beckoning to the murmuring forest; “Oh, ye aisled wood was ever man in love more fatally than I? Your silent paths have sheltered many a one whose love was told, and ye have heard their voices. Ages vast have rolled away since your forgotten birth, but who is he through all those weary years that ever pined away as I? Alas, this fatal image wins my love, as I behold it. But I cannot press my arms around the form I see, the form that gives me joy. What strange mistake has intervened betwixt us and our love? It grieves me more that neither lands nor seas nor mountains, no, nor walls with closed gates deny our loves, but only a little water keeps us far asunder.¹³ Surely he desires my love and my embraces, for as oft I strive to kiss him, bending to the limpid stream my lips, so often does he hold his face fondly to me, and vainly struggles up. It seems that I could touch him. 'Tis a strange delusion that is keeping us apart. Whoever thou art, Come up! Deceive me not! Oh, whither when I fain pursue art thou? Ah, surely I am young and fair, the Nymphs have loved me; and when I behold thy smiles I cannot tell thee what sweet hopes arise. When I extend my loving arms to thee thine also are extended me—thy smiles return my own. When I was weeping, I have seen thy tears, and every sign I make thou dost return; and often thy sweet lips have seemed to move, that, peradventure words, which I have never heard, thou hast returned. No more my shade deceives me, I perceive 'Tis I in thee—I love myself—the flame arises in my breast and burns my heart—what shall I do? Shall I at once implore? Or should I linger till my love is sought? What is it I implore? The thing that I desire is mine—abundance makes me poor. Oh, I am tortured by a strange desire unknown to me before, for I would fain put off this mortal form; which only means I wish the object of my love away. Grief saps my strength, the sands of life are run, and in my early youth am I cut off; but death is not my bane—it ends my woe.—I would not death for this that is my love, as two united in a single soul would die as one.”

He spoke; and crazed with love, returned to view the same face in the pool; and as he grieved his tears disturbed the stream, and ripples on the surface, glassy clear, defaced his mirrored form. And thus the youth, when he beheld that lovely shadow go; “Ah whither dost thou fly? Oh, I entreat thee leave me not. Alas, thou cruel boy thus to forsake thy lover. Stay with me that I may see thy lovely form, for though I may not touch thee I shall feed my eyes and soothe my wretched pains.” And while he spoke he rent his garment from the upper edge, and beating on his naked breast, all white as marble, every stroke produced a tint as lovely as the apple streaked with red, or as the glowing grape when purple bloom touches the ripening clusters. When as glass again the rippling waters smoothed, and when such beauty in the stream the youth observed, no more could he endure. As in the flame the yellow wax, or as the hoar-frost melts in early morning 'neath the genial sun; so did he pine away, by love consumed, and slowly wasted by a hidden flame. No vermeil¹⁴ bloom now mingled in the white of his complexion fair; no strength has he, no vigor, nor the comeliness that wrought for love so long: alas, that handsome form by Echo fondly loved may please no more.

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11. Bacchus--or Dionysus, as he was known in Greek mythology--was the god of the grape harvest, winemaking, fertility, and religious ecstasy.
 12. Apollo was the Greek god of the sun, music, healing, poetry, truth, prophecy, and more. In terms of male beauty, he was considered the ideal.
 13. **Asunder** (*adjective*): apart; divided
 14. **Vermeil** (*adjective*): vermilion (or red)

But when she saw him in his hapless plight, though angry at his scorn, she only grieved. As often as the love-lore boy complained, "Alas!" "Alas!" her echoing voice returned; and as he struck his hands against his arms, she ever answered with her echoing sounds. And as he gazed upon the mirrored pool he said at last, "Ah, youth beloved in vain!" "In vain, in vain!" the spot returned his words; and when he breathed a sad "farewell!" "Farewell!" sighed Echo too. He laid his wearied head, and rested on the verdant¹⁵ grass; and those bright eyes, which had so loved to gaze, entranced, on their own master's beauty, sad Night closed. And now although among the nether shades his sad sprite roams, he ever loves to gaze on his reflection in the Stygian¹⁶ wave. His Naiad¹⁷ sisters mourned, and having clipped their shining tresses laid them on his corpse: and all the Dryads¹⁸ mourned: and Echo made lament anew. And these would have upraised his funeral pyre, and waved the flaming torch, and made his bier; but as they turned their eyes where he had been, alas he was not there! And in his body's place a sweet flower grew, golden and white, the white around the gold.

"Echo and Narcissus" by Ovid, translated by Brookes More, is in the public domain.

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15. **Verdant (adjective):** green with grass or luscious vegetation
 16. Of or relating to the Styx River (boundary between the living and the underworld)
 17. Water nymph
 18. Tree nymph

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. Which TWO of the following best describe a central theme of the text?
 - A. Knowing one's self, or identity, can prevent disaster.
 - B. Love can be a powerful - and even treacherous - emotion.
 - C. Ignorance is not always bliss.
 - D. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.
 - E. Pride is not an attractive quality, and neither are its consequences.
 - F. Sacrifice is necessary for love.

2. How does Tiresias's prophecy affect the plot of the story?
 - A. Tiresias predicts that Narcissus will drown so his mother Liriopé kept him from rivers and springs.
 - B. Tiresias predicts that Narcissus shall be beautiful but cursed by a spurned lover, and so his mother Liriopé instructs him to reject all potential lovers.
 - C. Tiresias predicts that Narcissus shall die if he sees his reflection; embittered, Narcissus scorns all lovers because they only talk of his beauty, which he cannot see.
 - D. Tiresias predicts that Narcissus will live a long life as long as he does not see his reflection; when he does, it leads to his tragic end.

3. PART A: What impact does the figurative language used to describe Echo's love for Narcissus in paragraph 3 have on the overall meaning of the text?
 - A. The text describes Echo as burning, being inflamed with her love for Narcissus; this contributes to the myth's meaning about consuming and dangerous love.
 - B. The text describes Echo's love as draining, like water being sucked from the earth; this contributes to the message warning against sudden infatuation.
 - C. The text describes Echo's love as shallow, like the waters of a spring; this contribute to the text's meaning regarding beauty and crushes.
 - D. The text describes Echo's love as painful, even before she is rejected; this contributes to the myth's meaning about tragic love.

4. PART B: Which of the following quotes regarding Narcissus's love for himself supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "But her great love increases with neglect; her miserable body wastes away, wakeful with sorrows; leanness shrivels up her skin, and all her lovely features melt, as if dissolved upon the wafting winds...." (Paragraph 3)
 - B. "He cannot move, for so he marvels at himself, and lies with countenance unchanged, as if indeed a statue carved of Parian marble." (Paragraph 5)
 - C. "Nor food nor rest can draw him thence—outstretched upon the overshadowed green, his eyes fixed on the mirrored image never may know their longings satisfied, and by their sight he is himself undone." (Paragraph 6)
 - D. "No more my shade deceives me, I perceive 'Tis I in thee—I love myself—the flame arises in my breast and burns my heart...." (Paragraph 6)

5. In paragraph 5 the narrative point of view briefly shifts. How does this shift of the text's narrative point of view affect the text as a whole? Cite evidence from the text in your answer.

Discussion Questions

Directions: *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. Is Narcissus truly in love? Why or why not?
2. How are people affected by love in this text? Is it positive or negative?
3. What is the difference between love and infatuation? Explain your answer.
4. In the context of this text, how does love emerge? How does this story inform your understanding of love? Use evidence from this text, your own experience, and other works of art or literature to answer this question.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Hate Speech and the First Amendment

Debating the 'Mighty Constitutional Opposites'

By American Bar Association
2000

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution protects citizens' freedom of speech; the nature and extent of this freedom, however, is often debated. In this text, hate speech, and the degree to which the First Amendment protects those who express hateful language, is discussed. As you read, identify the court cases discussed in the text and how they support the definition of "freedom of speech."

Debating Hate Speech ;

- [1] Hate speech is speech that offends, threatens, or insults groups, based on race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or other traits. Should hate speech be discouraged? The answer is easy — of course! However, developing such policies runs the risk of limiting an individual's ability to exercise free speech. When a conflict arises about which is more important — protecting community interests or safeguarding the rights of the individual — a balance must be found that protects the civil rights of all without limiting the civil liberties of the speaker.

In this country there is no right to speak *fighting words* — those words without social value, directed to a specific individual, that would provoke a reasonable member of the group about whom the words are spoken. For example, a person cannot utter a racial or ethnic epithet¹ to another if those words are likely to cause the listener to react violently. However, under the First Amendment, individuals do have a right to speech that the listener disagrees with and to speech that is offensive and hateful.



"Ku Klux Klan parade in Washington, D.C., September 1926" by National Photo Company Collection is in the public domain.

Think about it. It's always easier to defend someone's right to say something with which you agree. But in a free society, you also have a duty to defend speech to which you may strongly object.

1. An "epithet" is a characterizing word or phrase accompanying or occurring in place of the name of a person or thing.

Acts Speak Louder than Words

One way to deal effectively with hate speech is to create laws and policies that discourage bad behavior but do not punish bad beliefs. Another way of saying this is to create laws and policies that do not attempt to define hate speech as hate crimes, or “acts.” In two recent hate crime cases, the U.S. Supreme Court concluded that acts, but not speech, may be regulated by law.

- [5] *R.A.V. v. City of St. Paul*, 505 U.S. 377 (1992), involved the juvenile court proceeding of a white 14-year-old who burned a cross on the front lawn of the only black family in a St. Paul, Minn., neighborhood. Burning a cross is a very hateful thing to do: it is one of the symbols of the Ku Klux Klan, an organization that has spread hatred and harm throughout this country. The burning cross clearly demonstrated to this family that at least this youth did not welcome them in the neighborhood. The family brought charges, and the boy was prosecuted under a Minnesota criminal law that made it illegal to place, on public or private property, a burning cross, swastika,² or other symbol likely to arouse “anger, alarm, or resentment in others on the basis of race, color, creed,³ religion, or gender.” The case went all the way to the Supreme Court, which ruled that the Minnesota law was unconstitutional because it violated the youth’s First Amendment free speech rights.

Note that the Court did not rule that the act itself — burning a cross on the family’s front lawn — was legal. In fact, the youth could have been held criminally responsible for damaging property or for threatening or intimidating the family. Instead, the law was defective because it improperly focused on the motivation for — the thinking that results in — criminal behavior rather than on criminal behavior itself. It attempted to punish the youth for the content of his message, not for his actions.

In the second case, *Wisconsin v. Mitchell*, 508 U.S. 476 (1993), Mitchell and several black youth were outside a movie theater after viewing *Mississippi Burning*, in which several blacks are beaten. A white youth happened to walk by, and Mitchell yelled, “There goes a white boy; go get him!” Mitchell and the others attacked and beat the boy.

In criminal law, penalties are usually based on factors such as the seriousness of the act, whether it was accidental or intentional, and the harm it caused to the victim. It is also not unusual to have crimes treated more harshly depending upon who the victim is. For example, in most states battery (beating someone) is punished more harshly if the victim is a senior citizen, a young child, a police officer, or a teacher.

Under Wisconsin law, the penalty for battery is increased if the offender intentionally selects the victim “because of the race, religion, color, disability, sexual orientation and national origin or ancestry of that person.” The Supreme Court ruled in *Wisconsin v. Mitchell* that this increased penalty did not violate the free speech rights of the accused. The Court reasoned that the penalty was increased because the act itself was directed at a particular victim, not because of Mitchell’s thoughts.

Libertarian and Communitarian Perspectives

- [10] There is a range of approaches to when hate speech might be regulated. On one end is the libertarian perspective; on the other, the communitarian. In both *R.A.V.* and *Mitchell*, the Supreme Court took the libertarian approach.

2. A symbol used as an emblem of the German Nazi Party.

3. **Creed (noun):** a set of beliefs or aims that guide someone’s actions

Libertarians believe that individuals have the right to free speech and that government should be able to limit it only for the most compelling reasons. Most libertarians recognize fighting words as an example of a sufficiently compelling reason to limit free speech. Notwithstanding the libertarian viewpoint, the courts have been careful to interpret this exception narrowly.

Communitarians take a different approach. They believe that the community's well-being is society's most important goal and that an individual's right to free speech may be limited in the interests of community harmony. They believe that treating people with fairness and dignity justifies at least some free-speech restrictions—that eliminating or reducing hate speech is a sufficiently compelling goal to justify government regulation. Communitarians would expand the fighting words doctrine to allow for increased government regulation.

Can a middle ground be found — a way to accommodate both the communitarian and libertarian perspectives? Perhaps so. Government has the obligation to protect speech by disallowing laws that are too restrictive, yet it can also encourage individuals to respect each other.

Success on Campus

Here's how one community recently approached an incidence of hate speech by calling attention to it rather than attempting to suppress it — by encouraging speech that pointed out how out of place the hate speech was in a community that values the dignity of all.

- [15] Matt Hale, a notorious racist, was recently asked to speak at the University of Illinois at Springfield. Hale is the leader of the World of the Creator, a white supremacist group. His presence on campus was controversial. Several students, faculty, and community members thought that the university should cancel his appearance. Instead, he was allowed to speak. Hale's audience was not impressed. He came across as having a confusing set of beliefs that were out of place in a democratic, multicultural society. Several faculty and students spoke out against his message of hatred.

By allowing Hale to speak, the university recognized free speech rights but also provided a means for community members to respond. Communitarian and libertarian goals were both met.

"Hate Speech and the First Amendment: Debating the 'Mighty Constitutional Opposites'" by the American Bar Association. Copyright © 2000 by the American Bar Association. Reprinted with permission. All rights reserved.

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which statement best identifies the central idea of the text? [RI.2]
 - A. There is a fine line between discouraging hate speech and compromising one's right to freedom of speech.
 - B. Freedom of speech does not protect one's right to incite violence from someone through verbal harassment.
 - C. Hate speech is more damaging than hate acts due to the fact that words often incite action.
 - D. The thoughts that motivate one's action can influence the severity of one's punishment for that action.

2. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A? [RI.1]
 - A. "In this country there is no right to speak fighting words — those words without social value, directed to a specific individual, that would provoke a reasonable member of the group about whom the words are spoken." (Paragraph 2)
 - B. "One way to deal effectively with hate speech is to create laws and policies that discourage bad behavior but do not punish bad beliefs." (Paragraph 4)
 - C. "In criminal law, penalties are usually based on factors such as the seriousness of the act, whether it was accidental or intentional, and the harm it caused to the victim." (Paragraph 8)
 - D. "He came across as having a confusing set of beliefs that were out of place in a democratic, multicultural society. Several faculty and students spoke out against his message of hatred." (Paragraph 15)

3. PART A: How does the section "Success on Campus" contribute to the development of ideas in the text? [RI.5]
 - A. It provides an example in which free speech was defended under controversial circumstances, but not suppressed.
 - B. It shows the extent of damage that hate speech can cause.
 - C. It draws attention to the need for the government to harshly regulate hate speech.
 - D. It outlines the difference between hate speech and hate acts.

4. PART B: Which quote from the text best supports the answer to Part A? [RI.1]
 - A. "Matt Hale, a notorious racist, was recently asked to speak at the University of Illinois at Springfield." (Paragraph 15)
 - B. "Hale is the leader of the World of the Creator, a white supremacist group. His presence on campus was controversial." (Paragraph 15)
 - C. "Several students, faculty, and community members thought that the university should cancel his appearance." (Paragraph 15)
 - D. "By allowing Hale to speak, the university recognized free speech rights but also provided a means for community members to respond." (Paragraph 16)

5. How does the text define the difference between “hate speech” and “fighting words”? [RI.3]

Name: _____ Class: _____

How Small Fibs Lead to Big Lies

By Rebecca Hersher
2016

Most people would agree that small lies can lead to bigger lies. But how true is this theory? In this informational text, Rebecca Hersher discusses a study in which participants are tested to determine whether or not an initial small lie will develop into a larger one. As you read, take notes on how the participants behave during the study and what motivates their behavior.

- [1] New research finds little lies pave the way for big ones.

The study, published Monday in the journal *Nature Neuroscience*, is the latest addition to the catalog of scientific findings that make many people think, “Well yeah, we knew that.” (Other examples include the findings that sugar makes bees hyper, that holiday food makes us fatter and that not many people read online service contracts, all of which led to a collective “Duh.”)



"Untitled" by jackmac34 is licensed under CC0

But testing the truth of what appears obvious is kind of what science is all about, and the latest study, conducted by researchers from University College London and Duke University, set out to test whether telling small lies really did pave the way for telling larger ones.

As they put it in the introduction to their paper:

- [5] “Many dishonest acts are speculatively traced back to a sequence of smaller transgressions¹ that gradually escalated. From financial fraud to plagiarism,² online scams and scientific misconduct, deceivers retrospectively³ describe how minor dishonest decisions snowballed into significant ones over time. Despite the dramatic impact of these acts on economics, policy and education, we do not have a clear understanding of how and why small transgressions may gradually lead to larger ones.”

To test whether little lies led to bigger ones, the researchers had 55 people look at pictures of jars full of pennies, and asked them to tell a partner how much money was in the jar. In some scenarios, they adjusted the incentives such that people would be rewarded for lying about how much money was in the jar — for example, they would get to keep the difference between what they said and what their partner said.

While that was happening, the researchers scanned the brains of about half the participants for activity in the amygdala region, known to process emotion.

1. **Transgression (noun):** an offense
2. the act of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own
3. with consideration of past events or situations

What they found was that when people first started lying — deceiving⁴ their partner in order to benefit themselves — the amygdala showed more activity. But the more the participant lied, the less active the amygdala got.

And the magnitude of self-serving lies grew with repetition. A participant who deceived his partner for a couple pennies many times was more likely to go on to deceive his partner out of more money in later experiments.

- [10] “This experimental result is consistent with anecdotal⁵ observations of small digressions⁶ gradually snowballing into larger ones,” the authors write.

Notably, participants were also willing to lie to benefit their partners, but the magnitude⁷ of those lies did not grow over time.

As for the role of the emotion-processing part of the brain, the authors speculate that it may be related to the idea of moral desensitization.⁸ “People often perceive self-serving dishonesty as morally wrong,” they write. “Physiological and neurological measures of emotional arousal are observed when people deceive.”

Or, as another deception researcher, Sophie van der Zee at the Free University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands, explained it to the *New Scientist*, “When you lie or cheat for your own benefit, it makes you feel bad. But when you keep doing it, that feeling goes away, so you’re more likely to do it again.”

So, if there’s less of an emotional response to lying, they reason, “people may engage in more frequent and severe acts [of self-serving deception].”

- [15] Study author Tali Sharot tells NPR the new findings suggest follow-up work should be done “to examine if similar adaptation causes escalation of other negative behaviors, such as violent acts and excessive risk taking.”

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4. **Deceive (verb):** to cause someone to believe something that is not true
 5. **Anecdotal (adjective):** based on personal accounts rather than facts or research
 6. to stray from the original subject
 7. **Magnitude (noun):** the great size or extent of something
 8. to render insensitive or less sensitive to something

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following best identifies the text's main idea about lying?
 - A. The more often people lie, the more comfortable they become and the more likely they are to tell serious lies.
 - B. People are naturally excited by misleading others, but eventually need to commit more serious misconducts to achieve the same experience.
 - C. People who lie more often are more likely to not only tell bigger lies, but participate in other forms of serious misconduct.
 - D. People who naturally have less activity in their amygdala are more capable of telling lies without understanding the consequences.

2. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "Despite the dramatic impact of these acts on economics, policy and education, we do not have a clear understanding of how and why small transgressions may gradually lead to larger ones." (Paragraph 5)
 - B. "What they found was that when people first started lying — deceiving their partner in order to benefit themselves — the amygdala showed more activity." (Paragraph 8)
 - C. "Notably, participants were also willing to lie to benefit their partners, but the magnitude of those lies did not grow over time." (Paragraph 11)
 - D. "So, if there's less of an emotional response to lying, they reason, 'people may engage in more frequent and severe acts [of self-serving deception].'" (Paragraph 14)

3. Which statement best describes how the author introduces the study conducted about lying?
 - A. The author explains why researchers are studying something people already believe to be true.
 - B. The author provides readers with examples of other successful studies conducted by the researchers.
 - C. The author explains why the study is the first of its kind and has never been attempted before.
 - D. The author acknowledges that readers may be skeptical about the results of the study.

4. What is the author's main purpose in the final paragraph of the text?
 - A. to encourage readers to think about the consequences of even seemingly harmless actions
 - B. to suggest the study's findings could help to understand how other forms of misconduct grow
 - C. to prove that small lies can lead to more serious acts of misconduct and criminal conduct
 - D. to provide readers with the information to look into another ongoing study about how misconduct can escalate

5. How do the results of the study contribute to the author's main claim in the text?

Name: _____ Class: _____

I Am Very Real

By Kurt Vonnegut
1973

Kurt Vonnegut (1922-2007) was an American author and humorist. One month after an English teacher at Drake High School in North Dakota decided to teach Kurt Vonnegut's novel Slaughterhouse-Five in his classroom, Charles McCarthy, the head of the school board, decided that the novel's "obscene language" was not appropriate. Every copy of Slaughterhouse-Five at Drake High School was burned in the school's furnace. In response, Vonnegut wrote the following letter to McCarthy. As you read, take notes on the author's main arguments throughout the letter.

[1] Dear Mr. McCarthy:

I am writing to you in your capacity as chairman of the Drake School Board. I am among those American writers whose books have been destroyed in the now famous furnace of your school.

Certain members of your community have suggested that my work is evil. This is extraordinarily insulting to me. The news from Drake indicates to me that books and writers are very unreal to you people. I am writing this letter to let you know how real I am.



"Burning Books Page1" by Jason Verwey is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

I want you to know, too, that my publisher and I have done absolutely nothing to exploit the disgusting news from Drake. We are not clapping each other on the back, crowing about all the books we will sell because of the news. We have declined to go on television, have written no fiery letters to editorial pages, have granted no lengthy interviews. We are angered and sickened and saddened. And no copies of this letter have been sent to anybody else. You now hold the only copy in your hands. It is a strictly private letter from me to the people of Drake, who have done so much to damage my reputation in the eyes of their children and then in the eyes of the world. Do you have the courage and ordinary decency to show this letter to the people, or will it, too, be consigned¹ to the fires of your furnace?

[5] I gather from what I read in the papers and hear on television that you imagine me, and some other writers, too, as being sort of rat-like people who enjoy making money from poisoning the minds of young people. I am in fact a large, strong person, fifty-one years old, who did a lot of farm work as a boy, who is good with tools. I have raised six children, three my own and three adopted. They have all turned out well. Two of them are farmers. I am a combat infantry veteran from World War II, and hold a Purple Heart. I have earned whatever I own by hard work. I have never been arrested or sued for anything. I am so much trusted with young people and by young people that I have served on the faculties of the University of Iowa, Harvard, and the City College of New York. Every year I receive at least a dozen invitations to be commencement speaker at colleges and high schools. My books are probably more widely used in schools than those of any other living American fiction writer.

1. **Consign (verb):** to send or give

If you were to bother to read my books, to behave as educated persons would, you would learn that they are not sexy, and do not argue in favor of wildness of any kind. They beg that people be kinder and more responsible than they often are. It is true that some of the characters speak coarsely.² That is because people speak coarsely in real life. Especially soldiers and hardworking men speak coarsely, and even our most sheltered children know that. And we all know, too, that those words really don't damage children much. They didn't damage us when we were young. It was evil deeds and lying that hurt us.

After I have said all this, I am sure you are still ready to respond, in effect, "Yes, yes – but it still remains our right and our responsibility to decide what books our children are going to be made to read in our community." This is surely so. But it is also true that if you exercise that right and fulfill that responsibility in an ignorant, harsh, un-American manner, then people are entitled to call you bad citizens and fools. Even your own children are entitled to call you that.

I read in the newspaper that your community is mystified by the outcry from all over the country about what you have done. Well, you have discovered that Drake is a part of American civilization, and your fellow Americans can't stand it that you have behaved in such an uncivilized way. Perhaps you will learn from this that books are sacred to free men for very good reasons, and that wars have been fought against nations which hate books and burn them. If you are an American, you must allow all ideas to circulate freely in your community, not merely your own.

If you and your board are now determined to show that you in fact have wisdom and maturity when you exercise your powers over the education of your young, then you should acknowledge that it was a rotten lesson you taught young people in a free society when you denounced and then burned books – books you hadn't even read. You should also resolve to expose your children to all sorts of opinions and information, in order that they will be better equipped to make decisions and to survive.

[10] Again: you have insulted me, and I am a good citizen, and I am very real.

Kurt Vonnegut

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2. refers to crude or offensive language

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following statements expresses a central idea of the text?
 - A. School boards should not have the power to ban books from classrooms.
 - B. It is immoral to claim that controversial books may poison students' minds.
 - C. Burning books goes against the freedoms that Americans hold dear.
 - D. Like all good citizens, Kurt Vonnegut has not lied or produced evil work.

2. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "I am a combat infantry veteran from World War II, and hold a Purple Heart... I am so much trusted with young people and by young people that I have served on the faculties of the University of Iowa, Harvard, and the City College of New York." (Paragraph 5)
 - B. "And we all know, too, that those words really don't damage children much. They didn't damage us when we were young. It was evil deeds and lying that hurt us." (Paragraph 6)
 - C. "books are sacred to free men for very good reasons, and that wars have been fought against nations which hate books and burn them. If you are an American, you must allow all ideas to circulate freely" (Paragraph 8)
 - D. "If you and your board are now determined to show... maturity when you exercise your powers over the education of your young, then you should acknowledge that it was a rotten lesson you taught young people" (Paragraph 9)

3. PART A: What does the word "exploit" most closely mean as it is used in paragraph 4?
 - A. to produce
 - B. to abuse
 - C. to benefit from
 - D. to criticize or disagree with

4. PART B: Which phrase from paragraph 4 best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "the disgusting news from Drake"
 - B. "crowing about all the books we will sell because of the news"
 - C. "to damage my reputation in the eyes of their children and then in the eyes of the world"
 - D. "the courage and ordinary decency"

5. Which statement best describes how the author uses rhetoric in paragraphs 4-5 to advance his argument?
 - A. The author presents the contributions he has made to the country in order to prove that he is a real American.
 - B. The author describes his background in order to explain why coarse language is simply part of how he speaks.
 - C. The author portrays himself as a father and a veteran as further proof of his desire to shield the nation's youth from harmful books.
 - D. The author explains that he is a man of integrity in order to show why the school's reactions were excessive and wrong.

6. How does the author expand his argument in paragraphs 7-8?

Name: _____ Class: _____

Propaganda: Battling for the Mind

By Shelby Ostergaard
2017

In this informational text, Shelby Ostergaard defines what propaganda is and explains how it influences people's beliefs and actions. She discusses several famous historical examples of propaganda, and examines the impact that new technologies are having on the reach and sources of propaganda. As you read, take notes on the examples of propaganda given in the text, and the effect each one had on its audience.

- [1] Mass media are the methods we use to communicate with large numbers of people at one time. We live in the age of mass media, whether that's social media, the Internet, television or even advertising. Propaganda is misinformation that is intentionally circulated through mass media with a political agenda. In the past, governments in many different parts of the world, often during times of war, have used everything from newspaper articles to movie previews to disperse propaganda. Propaganda has been used to encourage soldiers to fight under the worst conditions, to instruct civilians to ration their food during wartime, and to convince citizens to hate the enemy. This misinformation has taken form in political cartoons that depict a wartime enemy as animal-like, and in ads or posters that exaggerate the success of a war effort. The authors of propaganda try to convey their political agenda through the messages embedded in their slogans, writing, or art. Propaganda is like a political advertisement with a shaky relationship to the truth.



"The Crash of 2016" by wackystuff is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0.

Nazi Germany showcased the unbelievable power of propaganda. Hitler was a huge proponent¹ of the use of propaganda; writing in *Mein Kampf*² in 1926 that, “Propaganda tries to force a doctrine on the whole people... Propaganda works on the general public from the standpoint of an idea and makes them ripe for the victory of this idea.” After the Nazis seized power in 1933, Hitler quickly established a Reich Ministry of Enlightenment and Propaganda, headed by Joseph Goebbels. The Ministry’s mission was to ensure that Nazi ideas of racism, anti-Semitism,³ and anti-Bolshevism⁴ became popular in Germany. The Nazi message was communicated through art, music, theater, films, books, radio, educational materials, and the press. Through every medium of culture, the German people were assaulted by the message that non-Jewish German people represented a better race, that the Germans had suffered unfairly after World War I, and that this suffering was the fault of “inferior” races. Films portrayed Jews as rat-like creatures that infiltrated⁵ societies. Newspapers ran editorials and comics that supported this view. Later, as the Germans began to lose World War II, the Nazis used propaganda to convince ordinary Germans that they were actually still winning and that citizens should continue their support for the war effort.

Nazis used propaganda extensively, but most governments use some form of propaganda. In both World War I and World War II, governments on both sides of the war ran propaganda campaigns to convince citizens to enlist. These campaigns misled citizens by downplaying the horror of war conditions, especially in WWI, and by emphasizing the evils and inhumanity of the enemy. In the decades following World War II, during what was known as the Cold War,⁶ both the Soviet Union and the United States ran extensive propaganda campaigns. Both countries sought to convince its citizens of the evil and hypocrisy⁷ of the other side. Both governments also sought to convince citizens that measures taken during the Cold War, such as the build-up of nuclear weapons, were worth it.

The battle for people’s minds is as old as history itself. Greek writers often complained of the lies told by their political rivals. In the late 1500s, after England defeated the Spanish Armada, Spain spread word of the exact opposite — that they had achieved a decisive victory over England. Propaganda has been a part of war for as long as humans have been able to spread information, but propaganda is not just a part of history books.

- [5] Modern nations like North Korea use propaganda extensively. When the country suffered from extensive famine⁸ in the 1990s, the government produced posters that encouraged people to eat only two meals a day for its health benefits. Still, museums in North Korea teach visitors about American atrocities that never occurred. North Koreans are told that their leaders are revered⁹ around the world, and that they live in the second happiest country in the world. In North Korea, access to the Internet is restricted to ensure it is more difficult for citizens to access non-government media sources. Because of propaganda, a North Korean’s understanding of history and the world today is radically different than a South Korean’s understanding of those same things.

-
1. **Proponent (noun)**: a person who advocates a theory, proposal, or project
 2. an autobiographical book by Adolph Hitler, published in 1925
 3. hostility towards or discrimination against Jews as a religious, ethnic, or racial group
 4. violence and discrimination against followers of the communist form of government adopted in Russia
 5. **Infiltrate (verb)**: to move into secretly or gradually, especially with hostile intent
 6. a time of political and military tension between the United States and the Soviet Union following WWII
 7. **Hypocrisy (noun)**: the act of pretending to have a certain virtue or belief, and then acting in the opposite way
 8. extreme scarcity of food
 9. **Revere (verb)**: to feel deep respect or admiration for something or someone

While governments have historically been responsible for most propaganda, sometimes corporations run campaigns that are similar to propaganda. Non-profit organizations and political campaigns utilize techniques that are similar to propaganda, especially now that mass media has made it possible for them to reach huge numbers of people. This non-governmental propaganda can be anything making a photo go viral to using a blog to spread rumors about opposing political candidates. Anyone who intentionally spreads misinformation for political purposes is disseminating¹⁰ propaganda. New methods of mass communication make it possible for **anyone** to spread propaganda.

The rise of the Internet has made the creation and sharing of propaganda easier than ever. Publishers who want to generate revenue from advertisements placed on their webpages can run “news” articles with provocative¹¹ headlines and misleading or incorrect information. Open internet access and social media sharing can help this information spread quickly. Some of these websites are solely motivated by profit; others are interested in spreading false information for ideological¹² reasons. This phenomenon is often referred to as “fake news.” The placement of “fake news” on the internet can be haphazard or unplanned, while propaganda is typically part of a larger strategy by its creator. It is a planned approach to convince citizens of something specific.

Leaders have always and will always battle for the minds of their citizens, or the minds of other people’s citizens. The difference between propaganda and persuasion is that propaganda often doesn’t fight fair in that battle. Although propaganda has historically been a neutral term, it has become more associated with manipulation in the twentieth century. And while the propaganda of one hundred years ago might have taken the form of cartoons, posters, pamphlets, and radio shows, propaganda messages are now conveyed through an increasingly wide range of media as new technologies have been invented.

“Propaganda: Battling for the Mind ” by Shelby Ostergaard. Copyright © 2017 by CommonLit, Inc. This text is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

10. **Disseminate (verb):** to scatter or spread widely; broadcast; distribute
11. **Provocative (adjective):** likely to draw interest or cause intense debate
12. **Ideological (adjective):** relating to political, cultural, or religious beliefs

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which statement expresses the central idea of the text?
 - A. Propaganda is a form of persuasion that is only used to advance a government's political agenda, and it is most often spread through books and other print media.
 - B. Propaganda often manipulates the truth to influence another person's actions or beliefs and is more easily spread today because of new technologies.
 - C. Propaganda almost always leads to negative consequences for the people who use it, because their audience eventually realizes that they have been intentionally misled.
 - D. Propaganda is a useful way of communicating opinions to others, and is only dangerous when it is used by people who aren't skilled at advertising or using mass media.

2. PART B: Which TWO details from the text best support the answer to Part A?
 - A. "This misinformation has taken the form of political cartoons that depict a wartime enemy as animal-like, and ads or posters that exaggerate the success of a war effort." (Paragraph 1)
 - B. "The Nazi message was communicated through art, music, theater, films, books, radio, educational materials, and the press." (Paragraph 2)
 - C. "Propaganda has been a part of war for as long as humans have been able to spread information, but propaganda is not just a part of history books." (Paragraph 4)
 - D. "In North Korea, access to the Internet is restricted to ensure it is more difficult for citizens to access non-government media sources." (Paragraph 5)
 - E. "The rise of the Internet has made the creation and sharing of propaganda easier than ever." (Paragraph 7)
 - F. "Leaders have always and will always battle for the minds of their citizens, or the minds of other people's citizens." (Paragraph 8)

3. How does the author's use of the word "assaulted" in paragraph 2 contribute to our understanding of Hitler's propaganda?
 - A. It emphasizes that the German government's propaganda campaign was forceful.
 - B. It shows that German citizens would not readily believe propaganda.
 - C. It reveals that German citizens were physically attacked with propaganda.
 - D. It shows readers that German citizens didn't like the propaganda they were exposed to.

4. Which statement best describes how the author develops her ideas about how propaganda was used during wartime?
- A. She argues that some countries used propaganda in more effective ways than others.
 - B. She contrasts the use of propaganda during wartime with the purely positive ways it is used today.
 - C. She gives examples of different countries' propaganda campaigns and their biased or inaccurate messages.
 - D. She gives historical examples of wartime propaganda and offers advice on how a citizen can determine if they are being misled.
5. How does the author's discussion of North Korea's use of propaganda contribute to the development of ideas in the text (Paragraph 5)?

Discussion Questions

Directions: *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. In the context of the text, why do people follow the crowd? Why do you think people readily believe propaganda? How have you been influenced by an advertisement or political campaign?
2. In the context of this text, how does war influence the use and content of propaganda? Why do you think it's important to a government to control the beliefs of its citizens during a time of conflict?
3. In your opinion, when is it valuable to use the media to persuade people? How can we differentiate between persuasion and propaganda? What impact can it have in our lives and on our society if we are not able to do this well?
4. In your experience, how can fear be used to manipulate? How can fear make people vulnerable to messages from influential leaders, or messages that demonize another group of people? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.

Name: _____ Class: _____

The Story of the Bad Little Boy

By Mark Twain
1875

Samuel Clemens (1835-1910), recognized by his pen name Mark Twain, was an American author and humorist, perhaps best known for his novel The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. This story centers around a badly-behaved young boy named Jim, whose life is not at all like a "Sunday-school book." As you read, take notes on Jim's behavior and its origins, as well as Twain's use of irony.

[1] Once there was a bad little boy whose name was Jim—though, if you will notice, you will find that bad little boys are nearly always called James in your Sunday-school books. It was strange, but still it was true that this one was called Jim.



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He didn't have any sick mother either—a sick mother who was pious¹ and had the consumption², and would be glad to lie down in the grave and be at rest but for the strong love she bore her boy, and the anxiety she felt that the world might be harsh and cold towards him when she was gone. Most bad boys in the Sunday-books are named James, and have sick mothers, who teach them to say, "Now, I lay me down,"³ etc. and sing them to sleep with sweet, plaintive⁴ voices, and then kiss them good-night, and kneel down by the bedside and weep. But it was different with this fellow. He was named Jim, and there wasn't anything the matter with his mother—no consumption, nor anything of that kind. She was rather stout than otherwise, and she was not pious; moreover, she was not anxious on Jim's account. She said if he were to break his neck it wouldn't be much loss. She always spanked Jim to sleep, and she never kissed him good-night; on the contrary, she boxed his ears when she was ready to leave him.

1. **Pious (adjective):** religiously faithful
2. a progressive wasting away of the body, especially from a disease called pulmonary tuberculosis that affects the lungs
3. A reference to the classic children's bedtime prayer from the 18th century
4. **Plaintive (adjective):** sounding mournful or sad

Once this little bad boy stole the key of the pantry, and slipped in there and helped himself to some jam, and filled up the vessel with tar, so that his mother would never know the difference; but all at once a terrible feeling didn't come over him, and something didn't seem to whisper to him, "Is it right to disobey my mother? Isn't it sinful to do this? Where do bad little boys go who gobble up their good kind mother's jam?" and then he didn't kneel down all alone and promise never to be wicked any more, and rise up with a light, happy heart, and go and tell his mother all about it, and beg her forgiveness, and be blessed by her with tears of pride and thankfulness in her eyes. No; that is the way with all other bad boys in the books; but it happened otherwise with this Jim, strangely enough. He ate that jam, and said it was bully,⁵ in his sinful, vulgar way; and he put in the tar, and said that was bully also, and laughed, and observed "that the old woman would get up and snort" when she found it out; and when she did find it out, he denied knowing anything about it, and she whipped him severely, and he did the crying himself. Everything about this boy was curious—everything turned out differently with him from the way it does to the bad James in the books.

Once he climbed up in Farmer Acorn's apple-tree to steal apples, and the limb didn't break, and he didn't fall and break his arm, and get torn by the farmer's great dog, and then languish⁶ on a sick bed for weeks, and repent⁷ and become good. Oh! no; he stole as many apples as he wanted and came down all right; and he was all ready for the dog too, and knocked him endways with a brick when he came to tear him. It was very strange—nothing like it ever happened in those mild little books with marbled backs, and with pictures in them of men with swallow-tailed coats and bell-crowned hats, and pantaloons that are short in the legs, and women with the waists of their dresses under their arms, and no hoops on. Nothing like it in any of the Sunday-school books.

- [5] Once he stole the teacher's pen-knife⁸, and, when he was afraid it would be found out and he would get whipped, he slipped it into George Wilson's cap—poor Widow Wilson's son, the moral boy, the good little boy of the village, who always obeyed his mother, and never told an untruth, and was fond of his lessons, and infatuated with Sunday-school. And when the knife dropped from the cap, and poor George hung his head and blushed, as if in conscious guilt, and the grieved teacher charged the theft upon him, and was just in the very act of bringing the switch down upon his trembling shoulders, a white-haired improbable justice of the peace did not suddenly appear in their midst, and strike an attitude and say, "Spare this noble boy—there stands the cowering culprit! I was passing the school-door at recess, and unseen myself, I saw the theft committed!" And then Jim didn't get whaled, and the venerable⁹ justice didn't read the tearful school a homily¹⁰ and take George by the hand and say such a boy deserved to be exalted,¹¹ and then tell him to come and make his home with him, and sweep out the office, and make fires, and run errands, and chop wood, and study law, and help his wife to do household labors, and have all the balance of the time to play, and get forty cents a month, and be happy. No; it would have happened that way in the books, but it didn't happen that way to Jim. No meddling old clam of a justice dropped in to make trouble, and so the model boy George got thrashed, and Jim was glad of it because, you know, Jim hated moral boys. Jim said he was "down on them milk-sops."¹² Such was the coarse language of this bad, neglected boy.

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5. an outdated term meaning "very good; first rate"
 6. **Languish (verb):** to become feeble or weak; to become dispirited
 7. **Repent (verb):** to feel or express regret about a wrongdoing
 8. a small pocketknife with a blade that folds into the handle
 9. **Venerable (adjective):** deserving to be honored or regarded with respect
 10. a religious commentary that follows a reading of scripture
 11. **Exalt (verb):** to raise in rank, power, or character; to elevate by praise or in estimation
 12. A "milk-sop" is an old term for a weak or ineffectual person.

But the strangest thing that ever happened to Jim was the time he went boating on Sunday, and didn't get drowned, and that other time that he got caught out in the storm when he was fishing on Sunday, and didn't get struck by lightning. Why, you might look, and look, all through the Sunday-school books from now till next Christmas, and you would never come across anything like this. Oh no; you would find that all the bad boys who go boating on Sunday invariably get drowned; and all the bad boys who get caught out in storms when they are fishing on Sunday infallibly get struck by lightning. Boats with bad boys in them always upset on Sunday, and it always storms when bad boys go fishing on the Sabbath.¹³ How this Jim ever escaped is a mystery to me.

This Jim bore a charmed life—that must have been the way of it. Nothing could hurt him. He even gave the elephant in the menagerie¹⁴ a plug of tobacco, and the elephant didn't knock the top of his head off with his trunk. He browsed around the cupboard after essence of peppermint, and didn't make a mistake and drink aqua fortis.¹⁵ He stole his father's gun and went hunting on the Sabbath, and didn't shoot three or four of his fingers off. He struck his little sister on the temple with his fist when he was angry, and she didn't linger in pain through long summer days, and die with sweet words of forgiveness upon her lips that redoubled the anguish of his breaking heart. No; she got over it. He ran off and went to sea at last, and didn't come back and find himself sad and alone in the world, his loved ones sleeping in the quiet churchyard, and the vine-embowered home of his boyhood tumbled down and gone to decay. Ah! no; he came home as drunk as a piper, and got into the station-house the first thing.

And he grew up and married, and raised a large family, and brained them all with an axe one night, and got wealthy by all manner of cheating and rascality;¹⁶ and now he is the infernalist wickedest scoundrel in his native village, and is universally respected, and belongs to the Legislature.¹⁷

So you see there never was a bad James in the Sunday-school books that had such a streak of luck as this sinful Jim with the charmed life.

The Story of the Bad Little Boy by Mark Twain is in the public domain.

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13. In the Judea-Christian tradition, the Sabbath is kept as a day of rest – Jim hunting or fishing on the Sabbath would have been considered in poor moral or religious form.
 14. **Menagerie (noun):** a varied collection of animals, people, or objects (especially for display)
 15. also known as nitric acid, a corrosive liquid
 16. the character or actions of a rascal
 17. Government or parliament; Twain was known for his satire of government, especially corrupt officials

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. What is the most distinct difference between the main character Jim and all of the others in the Sunday-school books?
 - A. Jim's mother is neither pious nor loving.
 - B. Jim has a lot of dumb luck.
 - C. Jim doesn't face consequences and never reforms.
 - D. Jim is never harmed.

2. PART A: What does the word "boxed" mean as it is used in paragraph 2?
 - A. Slapped
 - B. Checked
 - C. Caressed
 - D. Whispered

3. PART B: Which TWO phrases from the paragraph best support the answer to Part A?
 - A. "rather stout than otherwise"
 - B. "not pious"
 - C. "anxious on Jim's account"
 - D. "always spanked"
 - E. "never kissed"
 - F. "on the contrary"
 - G. "ready to leave him"

4. PART A: Which answer best describes Jim's mother in comparison to the mothers in the "Sunday-school books"?
 - A. Jim's mother lacks religious faith, whereas the school book mothers are pious.
 - B. She is neither loving nor devoted to her son, whereas the school book mothers are.
 - C. She is healthy, whereas the school book mothers are always dying of consumption.
 - D. She physically hits him, whereas the school book mothers are gentle and affectionate.
 - E. All of the above

5. PART B: Which paragraph from the story best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. Paragraph 1
 - B. Paragraph 2
 - C. Paragraph 3
 - D. Paragraph 6

6. What happens to Jim when he grows up?
- A. He reforms and becomes well-respected.
 - B. He does not reform and is run out of town.
 - C. He marries, has a large family, and becomes a respected government representative.
 - D. He commits many crimes, including murder and theft, and goes to prison.
 - E. He commits murder, cheats, gets rich, and becomes a respected government representative.

7. Paragraph 8 tells us what happens to Jim as an adult. What does this paragraph contribute to the story's overall meaning?

8. Which of the following quotes best sums the author's use of irony in the text?
- A. "No; that is the way with all other bad boys in the books; but it happened otherwise with this Jim, strangely enough." (paragraph 3)
 - B. "Everything about this boy was curious—everything turned out differently with him from the way it does to the bad James in the books." (paragraph 3)
 - C. "...he is the infernalist wickedest scoundrel in his native village, and is universally respected...." (paragraph 8)
 - D. "This Jim bore a charmed life—that must have been the way of it." (paragraph 7)

9. PART A: Summarize the theme or central idea of the text on the lines below.

10. PART B: How does the author utilization of irony contribute to the idea or message identified in Part A? Cite evidence from the text.

Discussion Questions

Directions: *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. Do you believe bad people should always get their comeuppance? Why or why not?
2. In your opinion, do most people who do bad things usually face consequences? How realistic is Jim's story? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
3. In the context of this text, what does it mean to be "good"? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
4. In the context of this text, what is justice? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.