

Week 4

Reading

● Nonfiction

- “The Keys to Happiness: Partly Genetic, But You Control the Rest” (2012) ABC News
 - Read the article, pay special attention to how heading and subheadings can help you navigate a nonfiction article.
 - Answer the ACT style multiple choice questions and practice answering questions in multiple sentences.

● Fiction

- “Dr. Heidegger’s Experiment” (1837) Nathaniel Hawthorne
 - Read the story and think about the differences in how the people are reacting to being young again contrasted to the Doctor’s refusal to drink the water.
 - Answer the ACT style multiple choice questions and practice answering questions in multiple sentences.

● Poetry

- “Truth” (2017) Nikki Grimes
 - Read the poem and pay special attention to the word choices that are being used to evoke a feeling in the reader and the form that is unfamiliar to most.
 - Answer the ACT style multiple choice questions and practice answering questions in multiple sentences.

Writing

NOTE: Write these down in a journal, a note on your phone, or a google doc. Don't stress about getting every detail right or grammar rule right the first time, just tell your story. If you like it, tweek it, make it better, and tell it to a friend or family member. One day your children and grandchildren will study Covid-19 in history class and will want to hear your stories.

- **Writings 1 & 2**

- Write a narrative about your life or experiences.
- Don't like the prompt?
That's okay, write about whatever you want to write about.
- The important part is that you write, and then read that writing.
The best way to become a better writer is to READ and to WRITE.



FIRST LINES PROMPT

Tell us about a time your
family had your back.

#MothFirstLines

Name: _____ Class: _____

The Keys to Happiness: Partly Genetic, But You Control the Rest

By ABC News
May 10, 2012

Happiness and how it is achieved is a popular area of study for psychologists. This ABC news article addresses how genetic inheritance influences happiness. As you read, take notes on what contributes to a person's happiness.

- [1] Is there a "set point" that determines your level of happiness, regardless of your status in life? Is it something you have little power to change?

For several decades psychologists have wrestled with that question, and in recent years many, if not most, have embraced the idea that we are born with a tendency to be happy, or sour, and it doesn't have much to do with our surroundings or lifestyle. One researcher compared it to height. Try as you may, you probably aren't going to get any taller.



"Happy to have a twin brother" by Colleen Proppe is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

But a new study contends that happiness is very different from height or other genetically-determined characteristics. The study concludes that the "set point" is really a range, and we can move up and down on the happiness scale within that range.

All we have to do is keep our lives interesting, and be satisfied with what we already have.

- [5] Sounds easy, and psychologist Kennon Sheldon of the University of Missouri, Columbia, argues that it is — although most of us may not succeed.

"We all have good things happen to us, and they lift us for a while and then we kind of fall back where we started," Sheldon, lead author of a study published in the Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, said in a telephone interview. "We're trying to figure out how people can get more out of the good things that happen to them."

Sheldon and his coauthor, psychologist Sonja Lyubomirsky of the University of California, Riverside, have collaborated on several research projects over the last couple of decades. They have come up with a program that they think could help us inch our way up the happiness scale, and stay there longer, although there will always be a tendency to drop back to our personal "set points."

Their effort is an attempt to deal with an idea that has been kicking around for four decades, called "Hedonic Adaptation," or the "Hedonic Treadmill." That theory suggests that good things may move us up on the happiness scale, but in time the glow dims and we return to a point established chiefly by genetics. Bad things may move us down on the scale, but the impact of even traumatic¹ experiences also diminishes over time, although some research suggests it's harder to forget the bad than remember the good.

We deal as best as we can with bad things as a way of avoiding depression, and that forces us back up the happiness scale. And as for the good things, as soon as we get them, we want more, thus pushing us back down toward the median.

- [10] Sheldon and Lyubomirsky argue that simple lifestyle changes can help keep us a bit happier, "despite pessimism² from the current literature that the pursuit of happiness may be largely futile,"³ as Lyubomirsky puts it.

It all comes down to two words: variety and appreciation.

There's a new love in your life? Keep it alive by introducing new experiences and variety. That will keep the relationship fresh and rewarding, and, well, happy. Appreciate what you've got.

"To appreciate something is to savor it, to feel grateful for it, to recognize that one might never have gotten it, or might lose it," the study says.

Without that, you're likely going to lose interest and cast about for something better, whether it's a new mate or a new car. It seems we are never satisfied, and that brings the happiness barometer⁴ down.

- [15] The researchers tested 481 students over two semesters to measure their level of happiness and determine if savoring a good thing could last even a few weeks. In most cases, it didn't. The participants quickly returned to their regular levels of happiness.

But some participants were able to maintain that elevated level of happiness by keeping the memory alive and appreciating what they already had.

How to Find Happiness. Is It Genetic?

Case closed? Not exactly.

There's still the question of how much our happiness depends on genetics, and how much it is affected by our lifestyles and possessions.

The researchers have come up with a formula that they have used in a number of publications. It's 50 percent genetics. The circumstances we find ourselves in — like where we live, the quality of our love lives, whether we have a few bucks in the bank — account for only about 10 percent. The remaining 40 percent is "within our control, how we think and behave."

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1. **Traumatic** (*adjective*): emotionally disturbing or distressing
 2. **Pessimism** (*noun*): a lack of hope or confidence in the future
 3. **Futile** (*adjective*): pointless
 4. something that reflects changes in circumstances or opinions

[20] But where did those numbers come from?

"Basically, we kind of made them up," Sheldon said, adding quickly, "but not entirely."

The 50 percent genetics is based on other research of identical twins who were separated at birth and had no contact with each other. A huge study in Germany found that separated twins ranked almost exactly the same on the happiness scale, regardless of their personal experiences.

"And if you look at studies of various superficial circumstances, like income, where you live, how many cars you have, those are pretty small," Sheldon said. "They don't seem to account for more than about 10 percent."

"So that left 40 percent that we conclude, although not everybody would agree with this conclusion, is the percent that is affected by what you do."

[25] That certainly indicates that our happiness can be greatly influenced by what we do, and if the number is anywhere near correct, simple changes, like appreciating what we already have, can make a significant difference in our level of happiness.

But if that number is way off, as many psychologists would contend, then there isn't a lot we can do to make us keep smiling. Still, it may be worth a try.

["The Keys to Happiness: Partly Genetic, But You Control the Rest"](#) from abcnews.com, © ABC News. 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 of the following identifies the main claim of the text?
 - A. Genetics do not have any detectable impact on a person's individual happiness, as scientists previously believed.
 - B. By actively attempting to be happier more often, people can improve their set point of happiness.
 - C. While genetics may determine a person's range of happiness, individual choices have a significant impact on happiness levels.
 - D. Individual choices can influence a person's happiness levels, but the effects they have on overall happiness are insignificant in comparison to the effects of genetics.

2. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "For several decades psychologists have wrestled with that question, and in recent years many, if not most, have embraced the idea that we are born with a tendency to be happy, or sour" (Paragraph 2)
 - B. "But some participants were able to maintain that elevated level of happiness by keeping the memory alive and appreciating what they already had." (Paragraph 16)
 - C. "And if you look at studies of various superficial circumstances, like income, where you live, how many cars you have, those are pretty small" (Paragraph 23)
 - D. "So that left 40 percent that we conclude, although not everybody would agree with this conclusion, is the percent that is affected by what you do." (Paragraph 24)

3. How does the detail about the study of twins contribute to the text (Paragraph 22)?
 - A. It proves that environment has a significant impact on a person's happiness, as twins do not the same level of happiness after being separated.
 - B. It shows that happiness is greatly determined by genetics, so even separated twins are likely to have the same level of happiness.
 - C. It shows how twins' happiness levels are affected when separated at birth.
 - D. It proves that there is no accurate way to determine what impacts a person's level of happiness.

4. What does the phrase “level of happiness” reveal about how researchers consider happiness to work (Paragraph 15)?

5. How does the author’s claim regarding happiness compare to previous understandings of happiness?

Name: _____ Class: _____

Dr. Heidegger's Experiment

By Nathaniel Hawthorne
1837

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) was an American short story writer and novelist who was born and raised in Salem, Massachusetts. Much of Hawthorne's writing is set in New England and focuses on the lives of Puritans, a group of English Protestants who sought to reform the Church of England. "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" is a short story about a doctor who claims to have found the Fountain of Youth. As you read, consider how the narrator's tone contribute to the theme.

[1] That very singular¹ man, old Dr. Heidegger, once invited four venerable² friends to meet him in his study. There were three white-bearded gentlemen, Mr. Medbourne, Colonel Killigrew, and Mr. Gascoigne, and a withered gentlewoman, whose name was the Widow Wycherly. They were all melancholy old creatures, who had been unfortunate in life, and whose greatest misfortune it was that they were not long ago in their graves. Mr. Medbourne, in the vigor of his age, had been a prosperous merchant, but had lost his all by a frantic speculation, and was now little better than a mendicant.³ Colonel Killigrew had wasted his best years, and his health and substance, in the pursuit of sinful pleasures, which had given birth to a brood of pains, such as the gout,⁴ and divers⁵ other torments of soul and body. Mr. Gascoigne was a ruined politician, a man of evil fame, or at least had been so till time had buried him from the knowledge of the present generation, and made him obscure instead of infamous. As for the Widow Wycherly, tradition tells us that she was a great beauty in her day; but, for a long while past, she had lived in deep seclusion, on account of certain scandalous stories which had prejudiced the gentry⁶ of the town against her. It is a circumstance worth mentioning that each of these three old gentlemen, Mr. Medbourne, Colonel Killigrew, and Mr. Gascoigne, were early lovers of the Widow Wycherly, and had once been on the point of cutting each other's throats for her sake. And, before proceeding further, I will merely hint that Dr. Heidegger and all his foul guests were sometimes thought to be a little beside themselves, — as is not unfrequently the case with old people, when worried either by present troubles or woful⁷ recollections.



"Soane Breakfast Room" by Illustrated London News is in the public domain.

"My dear old friends," said Dr. Heidegger, motioning them to be seated, "I am desirous of your assistance in one of those little experiments with which I amuse myself here in my study."

1. exceptionally good or great; remarkable
2. **Venerable (adjective):** worthy of a great deal of respect, especially because of age, wisdom, or character
3. a beggar
4. a form of arthritis and swelling of the joints, often brought on by an overly rich diet
5. an archaic spelling of "diverse"
6. people of good social position
7. an archaic spelling of "woeful," which means sorrowful or mournful

If all stories were true, Dr. Heidegger's study must have been a very curious place. It was a dim, old-fashioned chamber, festooned with cobwebs, and besprinkled with antique dust. Around the walls stood several oaken bookcases, the lower shelves of which were filled with rows of gigantic folios and black-letter quartos,⁸ and the upper with little parchment-covered duodecimos.⁹ Over the central bookcase was a bronze bust of Hippocrates,¹⁰ with which, according to some authorities, Dr. Heidegger was accustomed to hold consultations in all difficult cases of his practice. In the obscurest corner of the room stood a tall and narrow oaken closet, with its door ajar, within which doubtfully appeared a skeleton. Between two of the bookcases hung a looking-glass, presenting its high and dusty plate within a tarnished gilt frame. Among many wonderful stories related of this mirror, it was fabled that the spirits of all the doctor's deceased patients dwelt within its verge, and would stare him in the face whenever he looked thitherward. The opposite side of the chamber was ornamented with the full-length portrait of a young lady, arrayed in the faded magnificence of silk, satin, and brocade, and with a visage¹¹ as faded as her dress. Above half a century ago, Dr. Heidegger had been on the point of marriage with this young lady; but, being affected with some slight disorder, she had swallowed one of her lover's prescriptions, and died on the bridal evening. The greatest curiosity of the study remains to be mentioned; it was a ponderous folio volume, bound in black leather, with massive silver clasps. There were no letters on the back, and nobody could tell the title of the book. But it was well known to be a book of magic; and once, when a chambermaid had lifted it, merely to brush away the dust, the skeleton had rattled in its closet, the picture of the young lady had stepped one foot upon the floor, and several ghastly faces had peeped forth from the mirror; while the brazen head of Hippocrates frowned, and said, — "Forbear!"¹²

Such was Dr. Heidegger's study. On the summer afternoon of our tale a small round table, as black as ebony, stood in the centre of the room, sustaining a cut-glass vase of beautiful form and elaborate workmanship. The sunshine came through the window, between the heavy festoons of two faded damask curtains, and fell directly across this vase; so that a mild splendor was reflected from it on the ashen visages of the five old people who sat around. Four champagne glasses were also on the table.

[5] "My dear old friends," repeated Dr. Heidegger, "may I reckon on your aid in performing an exceedingly curious experiment?"

Now Dr. Heidegger was a very strange old gentleman, whose eccentricity¹³ had become the nucleus for a thousand fantastic stories. Some of these fables, to my shame be it spoken, might possibly be traced back to my own veracious¹⁴ self; and if any passages of the present tale should startle the reader's faith, I must be content to bear the stigma of a fiction monger.¹⁵

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8. Folios and quartos are types of books or pamphlets.
 9. the size of a book
 10. Hippocrates was a Greek physician considered to be one of the most outstanding figures in the history of medicine. He is referred to as the "Father of Western Medicine" and is credited for coining the Hippocratic Oath – a code of ethics for doctors.
 11. **Visage (noun):** a person's face or facial expression
 12. to politely restrain an impulse to do something
 13. **Eccentric (adjective):** strange and unconventional
 14. **Veracious (adjective):** truthful and honest
 15. a seller or dealer

When the doctor's four guests heard him talk of his proposed experiment, they anticipated nothing more wonderful than the murder of a mouse in an air pump, or the examination of a cobweb by the microscope, or some similar nonsense, with which he was constantly in the habit of pestering his intimates. But without waiting for a reply, Dr. Heidegger hobbled across the chamber, and returned with the same ponderous folio, bound in black leather, which common report affirmed to be a book of magic. Undoing the silver clasps, he opened the volume, and took from among its black-letter pages a rose, or what was once a rose, though now the green leaves and crimson petals had assumed one brownish hue, and the ancient flower seemed ready to crumble to dust in the doctor's hands.

"This rose," said Dr. Heidegger, with a sigh, "this same withered and crumbling flower, blossomed five and fifty years ago. It was given me by Sylvia Ward, whose portrait hangs yonder; and I meant to wear it in my bosom¹⁶ at our wedding. Five and fifty years it has been treasured between the leaves of this old volume. Now, would you deem it possible that this rose of half a century could ever bloom again?"

"Nonsense!" said the Widow Wycherly, with a peevish toss of her head. "You might as well ask whether an old woman's wrinkled face could ever bloom again."

[10] "See!" answered Dr. Heidegger.

He uncovered the vase, and threw the faded rose into the water which it contained. At first, it lay lightly on the surface of the fluid, appearing to imbibe¹⁷ none of its moisture. Soon, however, a singular change began to be visible. The crushed and dried petals stirred, and assumed a deepening tinge of crimson, as if the flower were reviving from a deathlike slumber; the slender stalk and twigs of foliage became green; and there was the rose of half a century, looking as fresh as when Sylvia Ward had first given it to her lover. It was scarcely full blown; for some of its delicate red leaves curled modestly around its moist bosom, within which two or three dewdrops were sparkling.

"That is certainly a very pretty deception," said the doctor's friends; carelessly, however, for they had witnessed greater miracles at a conjurer's¹⁸ show; "pray how was it effected?"

"Did you never hear of the 'Fountain of Youth?'" asked Dr. Heidegger, "which Ponce De Leon, the Spanish adventurer, went in search of two or three centuries ago?"

"But did Ponce De Leon ever find it?" said the Widow Wycherly.

[15] "No," answered Dr. Heidegger, "for he never sought it in the right place. The famous Fountain of Youth, if I am rightly informed, is situated in the southern part of the Floridian peninsula, not far from Lake Macaco. Its source is overshadowed by several gigantic magnolias, which, though numberless centuries old, have been kept as fresh as violets by the virtues of this wonderful water. An acquaintance of mine, knowing my curiosity in such matters, has sent me what you see in the vase."

"Ahem!" said Colonel Killigrew, who believed not a word of the doctor's story; "and what may be the effect of this fluid on the human frame?"

16. chest

17. to drink

18. a magician or illusionist

"You shall judge for yourself, my dear colonel," replied Dr. Heidegger; "and all of you, my respected friends, are welcome to so much of this admirable fluid as may restore to you the bloom of youth. For my own part, having had much trouble in growing old, I am in no hurry to grow young again. With your permission, therefore, I will merely watch the progress of the experiment."

While he spoke, Dr. Heidegger had been filling the four champagne glasses with the water of the Fountain of Youth. It was apparently impregnated with an effervescent gas, for little bubbles were continually ascending from the depths of the glasses, and bursting in silvery spray at the surface. As the liquor diffused a pleasant perfume, the old people doubted not that it possessed cordial and comfortable properties; and though utter sceptics as to its rejuvenescent power, they were inclined to swallow it at once. But Dr. Heidegger besought them to stay a moment.

"Before you drink, my respectable old friends," said he, "it would be well that, with the experience of a lifetime to direct you, you should draw up a few general rules for your guidance, in passing a second time through the perils of youth. Think what a sin and shame it would be, if, with your peculiar advantages, you should not become patterns of virtue and wisdom to all the young people of the age!"

- [20] The doctor's four venerable friends made him no answer, except by a feeble and tremulous¹⁹ laugh; so very ridiculous was the idea that, knowing how closely repentance treads behind the steps of error, they should ever go astray again.

"Drink, then," said the doctor, bowing: "I rejoice that I have so well selected the subjects of my experiment."

With palsied²⁰ hands, they raised the glasses to their lips. The liquor, if it really possessed such virtues as Dr. Heidegger imputed to it, could not have been bestowed on four human beings who needed it more wofully. They looked as if they had never known what youth or pleasure was, but had been the offspring of Nature's dotage,²¹ and always the gray, decrepit, sapless, miserable creatures, who now sat stooping round the doctor's table, without life enough in their souls or bodies to be animated even by the prospect of growing young again. They drank off the water, and replaced their glasses on the table.

Assuredly there was an almost immediate improvement in the aspect of the party, not unlike what might have been produced by a glass of generous wine, together with a sudden glow of cheerful sunshine brightening over all their visages at once. There was a healthful suffusion on their cheeks, instead of the ashen hue that had made them look so corpse-like. They gazed at one another, and fancied that some magic power had really begun to smooth away the deep and sad inscriptions which Father Time had been so long engraving on their brows. The Widow Wycherly adjusted her cap, for she felt almost like a woman again.

"Give us more of this wondrous water!" cried they, eagerly. "We are younger — but we are still too old! Quick — give us more!"

- [25] "Patience, patience!" quoth Dr. Heidegger, who sat watching the experiment with philosophic coolness. "You have been a long time growing old. Surely, you might be content to grow young in half an hour! But the water is at your service."

19. **Tremulous** (*adjective*): trembling, typically out of fear
20. shaking from involuntary tremors, often caused by age
21. the period of life in which a person is old and weak

Again he filled their glasses with the liquor of youth, enough of which still remained in the vase to turn half the old people in the city to the age of their own grandchildren. While the bubbles were yet sparkling on the brim, the doctor's four guests snatched their glasses from the table, and swallowed the contents at a single gulp. Was it delusion? even while the draught was passing down their throats, it seemed to have wrought a change on their whole systems. Their eyes grew clear and bright; a dark shade deepened among their silvery locks, they sat around the table, three gentlemen of middle age, and a woman, hardly beyond her buxom²² prime.

"My dear widow, you are charming!" cried Colonel Killigrew, whose eyes had been fixed upon her face, while the shadows of age were flitting from it like darkness from the crimson daybreak.

The fair widow knew, of old, that Colonel Killigrew's compliments were not always measured by sober truth; so she started up and ran to the mirror, still dreading that the ugly visage of an old woman would meet her gaze. Meanwhile, the three gentlemen behaved in such a manner as proved that the water of the Fountain of Youth possessed some intoxicating qualities; unless, indeed, their exhilaration of spirits were merely a lightsome dizziness caused by the sudden removal of the weight of years. Mr. Gascoigne's mind seemed to run on political topics, but whether relating to the past, present, or future, could not easily be determined, since the same ideas and phrases have been in vogue²³ these fifty years. Now he rattled forth full-throated sentences about patriotism, national glory, and the people's right; now he muttered some perilous stuff or other, in a sly and doubtful whisper, so cautiously that even his own conscience could scarcely catch the secret; and now, again, he spoke in measured accents, and a deeply deferential²⁴ tone, as if a royal ear were listening to his wellturned periods. Colonel Killigrew all this time had been trolling forth a jolly bottle song, and ringing his glass in symphony with the chorus, while his eyes wandered toward the buxom figure of the Widow Wycherly. On the other side of the table, Mr. Medbourne was involved in a calculation of dollars and cents, with which was strangely intermingled a project for supplying the East Indies with ice, by harnessing a team of whales to the polar icebergs.

As for the Widow Wycherly, she stood before the mirror courtesying and simpering to her own image, and greeting it as the friend whom she loved better than all the world beside. She thrust her face close to the glass, to see whether some long-remembered wrinkle or crow's foot had indeed vanished. She examined whether the snow had so entirely melted from her hair that the venerable cap could be safely thrown aside. At last, turning briskly away, she came with a sort of dancing step to the table.

[30] "My dear old doctor," cried she, "pray favor me with another glass!"

"Certainly, my dear madam, certainly!" replied the complaisant doctor; "see! I have already filled the glasses."

22. plump, shapely, and youthful

23. popular

24. **Deferential** (*adjective*): showing respect to a superior authority

There, in fact, stood the four glasses, brimful of this wonderful water, the delicate spray of which, as it effervesced²⁵ from the surface, resembled the tremulous glitter of diamonds. It was now so nearly sunset that the chamber had grown dusker than ever; but a mild and moonlike splendor gleamed from within the vase, and rested alike on the four guests and on the doctor's venerable figure. He sat in a high-backed, elaborately-carved, oaken arm-chair, with a gray dignity of aspect that might have well befitted that very Father Time, whose power had never been disputed, save by this fortunate company. Even while quaffing the third draught of the Fountain of Youth, they were almost awed by the expression of his mysterious visage.

But, the next moment, the exhilarating gush of young life shot through their veins. They were now in the happy prime of youth. Age, with its miserable train of cares and sorrows and diseases, was remembered only as the trouble of a dream, from which they had joyously awoke. The fresh gloss of the soul, so early lost, and without which the world's successive scenes had been but a gallery of faded pictures, again threw its enchantment over all their prospects. They felt like new-created beings in a new-created universe.

"We are young! We are young!" they cried exultingly.

[35] Youth, like the extremity of age, had effaced²⁶ the strongly-marked characteristics of middle life, and mutually assimilated²⁷ them all. They were a group of merry youngsters, almost maddened with the exuberant frolicsomeness of their years. The most singular effect of their gayety was an impulse to mock the infirmity²⁸ and decrepitude of which they had so lately been the victims. They laughed loudly at their old-fashioned attire, the wide-skirted coats and flapped waistcoats of the young men, and the ancient cap and gown of the blooming girl. One limped across the floor like a gouty grandfather; one set a pair of spectacles astride of his nose, and pretended to pore over the black-letter pages of the book of magic; a third seated himself in an arm-chair, and strove to imitate the venerable dignity of Dr. Heidegger. Then all shouted mirthfully, and leaped about the room. The Widow Wycherly — if so fresh a damsel could be called a widow — tripped up to the doctor's chair, with a mischievous merriment in her rosy face.

"Doctor, you dear old soul," cried she, "get up and dance with me!" And then the four young people laughed louder than ever, to think what a queer figure the poor old doctor would cut.

"Pray excuse me," answered the doctor quietly. "I am old and rheumatic,²⁹ and my dancing days were over long ago. But either of these gay young gentlemen will be glad of so pretty a partner."

"Dance with me, Clara!" cried Colonel Killigrew

"No, no, I will be her partner!" shouted Mr. Gascoigne.

[40] "She promised me her hand, fifty years ago!" exclaimed Mr. Medbourne.

25. producing tiny gas bubbles

26. **Efface (verb):** to erase

27. **Assimilate (verb):** to conform to the customs, attitudes, and habits of a group or nation

28. a lack of strength, often due to age or illness

29. having stiff joint or muscles

They all gathered round her. One caught both her hands in his passionate grasp another threw his arm about her waist — the third buried his hand among the glossy curls that clustered beneath the widow's cap. Blushing, panting, struggling, chiding, laughing, her warm breath fanning each of their faces by turns, she strove to disengage herself, yet still remained in their triple embrace. Never was there a livelier picture of youthful rivalry, with bewitching beauty for the prize. Yet, by a strange deception, owing to the duskiness of the chamber, and the antique dresses which they still wore, the tall mirror is said to have reflected the figures of the three old, gray, withered grandsires, ridiculously contending for the skinny ugliness of a shrivelled grandam.

But they were young: their burning passions proved them so. Inflamed to madness by the coquetry³⁰ of the girl-widow, who neither granted nor quite withheld her favors, the three rivals began to interchange threatening glances. Still keeping hold of the fair prize, they grappled fiercely at one another's throats. As they struggled to and fro, the table was overturned, and the vase dashed into a thousand fragments. The precious Water of Youth flowed in a bright stream across the floor, moistening the wings of a butterfly, which, grown old in the decline of summer, had alighted there to die. The insect fluttered lightly through the chamber, and settled on the snowy head of Dr. Heidegger.

"Come, come, gentlemen! — come, Madam Wycherly," exclaimed the doctor, "I really must protest against this riot."

They stood still and shivered; for it seemed as if gray Time were calling them back from their sunny youth, far down into the chill and darksome vale³¹ of years. They looked at old Dr. Heidegger, who sat in his carved arm-chair, holding the rose of half a century, which he had rescued from among the fragments of the shattered vase. At the motion of his hand, the four rioters resumed their seats; the more readily, because their violent exertions had wearied them, youthful though they were.

[45] "My poor Sylvia's rose!" ejaculated Dr. Heidegger, holding it in the light of the sunset clouds; "it appears to be fading again."

And so it was. Even while the party were looking at it, the flower continued to shrivel up, till it became as dry and fragile as when the doctor had first thrown it into the vase. He shook off the few drops of moisture which clung to its petals.

"I love it as well thus as in its dewy freshness," observed he, pressing the withered rose to his withered lips. While he spoke, the butterfly fluttered down from the doctor's snowy head, and fell upon the floor.

His guests shivered again. A strange chillness, whether of the body or spirit they could not tell, was creeping gradually over them all. They gazed at one another, and fancied that each fleeting moment snatched away a charm, and left a deepening furrow where none had been before. Was it an illusion? Had the changes of a lifetime been crowded into so brief a space, and were they now four aged people, sitting with their old friend, Dr. Heidegger?

"Are we grown old again, so soon?" cried they, dolefully.³²

30. flirtatious behavior

31. valley

32. **Dolefully** (*adverb*): expressing grief

[50] In truth they had. The Water of Youth possessed merely a virtue more transient³³ than that of wine. The delirium which it created had effervesced away. Yes! they were old again. With a shuddering impulse, that showed her a woman still, the widow clasped her skinny hands before her face, and wished that the coffin lid were over it, since it could be no longer beautiful.

"Yes, friends, ye are old again," said Dr. Heidegger, "and lo! the Water of Youth is all lavished³⁴ on the ground. Well — I bemoan³⁵ it not; for if the fountain gushed at my very doorstep, I would not stoop to bathe my lips in it — no, though its delirium were for years instead of moments. Such is the lesson ye have taught me!"

But the doctor's four friends had taught no such lesson to themselves. They resolved forthwith to make a pilgrimage to Florida, and quaff at morning, noon, and night, from the Fountain of Youth.

"Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" by Nathaniel Hawthorne (1837) is in the public domain.

33. **Transient** (*adjective*): lasting only for a short time
34. to cover in
35. **Bemoan** (*verb*): to express sadness or regret

Text-Dependent Questions

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

1. PART A: Which word best describes the narrator’s tone toward Dr. Heidegger’s visitors in the first paragraph?
 - A. Admiring
 - B. Sentimental
 - C. Compassionate
 - D. Disapproving

2. PART B: Record a quote from paragraph 1 that best supports your answer to Part A.

3. What is revealed about the narrator in paragraph 6? What is the author’s likely purpose for these details?

4. PART A: As it is used in paragraph 9, the word “peevish” most nearly means:
 - A. Bad-tempered
 - B. Amused
 - C. Hopeful
 - D. Nauseous

5. PART B: Which word provides the best clue to the answer to Part A?
- A. "Nonsense!"
 - B. "toss of her head"
 - C. "wrinkled face"
 - D. "bloom again"

6. PART A: What does Heidegger mean by "peculiar advantages" in paragraph 19?

7. PART B: How does this warning contribute to the theme of the story?

8. What is the most likely reason the author refers to the bust of Hippocrates in paragraph 3?

9. PART A: Re-read paragraph 41. What does it suggest about the Water of Youth?
- A. It does more harm to those who take it than good.
 - B. The subjects of the experiment may be imagining its effects.
 - C. Dr. Heidegger already understands its effects and is only administering it because he is cruel and sinister.
 - D. Its miraculous effects will likely bring Dr. Heidegger great wealth.
10. PART B: Which quote best supports your answer to the previous question?
- A. "Blushing, panting, struggling, chiding, laughing, her warm breath fanning each of their faces by turns, she strove to disengage herself, yet still remained in their triple embrace"
 - B. "But they were young: their burning passions proved them so"
 - C. "Yet, by a strange deception, owing to the duskiness of the chamber, and the antique dresses which they still wore, the tall mirror is said to have reflected the figures of the three old, gray, withered grandsires, ridiculously contending for the skinny ugliness of a shrivelled grandam."
 - D. "Never was there a livelier picture of youthful rivalry, with bewitching beauty for the prize."

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. Many have questioned whether Hawthorne meant for the elixir to be a truly miraculous drink from the Fountain of Youth, or a deceptive concoction meant only to convince the drinkers of its miraculous effects. What do you believe? What details from the story support both interpretations? Does this detail even matter?
2. What is the authorial tone of this story? How does Hawthorne likely feel about youth? What message is he trying to send?
3. Would you want to be young forever? Why or why not?
4. In the context of this story, should we value our youth?

Name: _____ Class: _____

Truth

By Nikki Grimes
2017

Nikki Grimes is an African American author, poet, and journalist. Grimes is well known for her award-winning books written for children and young adults. This poem appeared in her book One Last Word, a collection inspired by poems from The Harlem Renaissance that follow the "Golden Shovel" form. In this poetic form, the poet takes a "striking line" from an inspirational poem and uses words from that inspirational line in a new poem. The striking line then appears, word for word, at the end of the lines in the new poem. This poem uses the first line of Jean Toomer's "Storm Ending" as its striking line. As you read, identify the alliteration and the effect it has on the poem.

- [1] The truth is, every day we rise is like **thunder** —
a clap of surprise. Could be echoes of trouble, or
blossoms
of blessing. You never know what garish¹ or
gorgeously
disguised memories-to-be might rain down from
above.
- [5] So, look up! Claim that cloud with the silver lining.
Our
job, if you ask me, is to follow it. See where it
heads.



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"Truth" from One Last Word: Wisdom from the Harlem Renaissance by Nikki Grimes. Copyright © 2017 by Bloomsbury Publishing Inc.

1. **Garish (adjective):** excessively vivid, showy, or bright

Text-Dependent Questions

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

1. PART A: Which of the following identifies the theme of the poem?
 - A. Honesty is the key to a good life.
 - B. The weather can help predict the future.
 - C. You can choose to be positive and embrace uncertainty.
 - D. Any day can be a bad day, depending on how you look at it.

2. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "The truth is, every day we rise is like thunder — / a clap of surprise." (Lines 1-2)
 - B. "Could be echoes of trouble, or blossoms / of blessing." (Lines 2-3)
 - C. "gorgeously / disguised memories-to-be might rain down from above" (Lines 3-4)
 - D. "Our / job, if you ask me, is to follow it. See where it heads." (Lines 5-6)

3. PART A: How does the author's word choice contribute to the tone of the poem?
 - A. It conveys how it is better to approach the future with humor.
 - B. It stresses that the future is not always predictable.
 - C. It portrays a sense of anxiety about the future.
 - D. It emphasizes how ominous the unknown is.

4. PART B: Which quote from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "The truth is, every day we rise is like thunder —" (Line 1)
 - B. "Could be echoes of trouble, or blossoms / of blessing." (Lines 2-3)
 - C. "So look up! Claim that cloud with the silver lining." (Line 5)
 - D. "Our / job, if you ask me, is to follow it." (Lines 5-6)

5. Alliteration is the repetition of the same letter or sound at the beginning of a word. How does the poet develop the poem's tone through the use of alliteration?
