

**“Breaking Up is Hard to Do”**  
A Conceptual Unit on Dealing with Loss  
For 10<sup>th</sup> grade

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LAE 4360

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## Table of Contents

Rationale.....	3
Goals and Objectives.....	7
Sunshine State Standards.....	8
Materials for Unit.....	10
Outline of Grades.....	11
Unit Outline.....	12
References.....	21
Appendix A.....	23

**Rationale:**

The purpose of this unit plan is to have students study and think about how people react to different situations of loss. Every person is going to be faced with some sort of loss in their lifetime. The goal of this unit is to get students to expand their idea of traditional loss, or “breaking up”, and to have them look at the different ways one can lose something, and more importantly, the factors that contribute to that loss and how characters and real people handle it.

The text that is selected for this unit is *The Poisonwood Bible*, by Barbara Kingsolver. I chose this text because it deals with loss on many different levels. For one, it deals with the breaking up of a home. The father of the family drags them to Africa so he can be a Baptist missionary to the people of Kilanga. They have to deal with the shock of a completely different culture, and the things they come in contact with changes them forever.

Another form of breaking up that I will highlight in this unit is breaking up with pre-conceived notions and ignorance. The Price family’s eyes are opened and they realize how naïve they have been about Africa and about their presence there. They bring over useless items and do not understand the differences in their cultures. Reverend Price believes he is bringing something that every African needs, and is furious when they reject him. This western ignorance is something that is seen in these times as well. Many Americans look down upon the African culture and we think that we know everything. The Price family represents that ignorance, but the women of the family have their eyes opened very quickly.

Childhood is something that every person has to deal with losing. The Price girls are forced to grow up because of the situation they are placed in. We all have a moment of realizing that we cannot rely on our naivety any longer, because we have grown up. It is a tragic situation

when children are forced to grow up too soon. The girls quickly come to realize that there is little space between a Congolese baby and a Congolese adult. Before they know it, they find themselves in that situation as well.

When we look at losing family in this unit, we will look at it two ways. First, the deterioration of the Price family: each of them pulls away from each other in one way or another. We will analyze the circumstances in which Leah slowly stops trying to please her father, when Orleanna decides she can't be married to Nathan anymore, and when the sisters realize they are too different to even understand each other. Family drama and the breaking up of a family is something that many students will be able to relate to.

Another way this family is pulled apart is through the death of the youngest, Ruth May. Death is the most obvious form of loss we can think of. In this situation, the other forms of breaking up we will discuss, spiral out of control when the family loses Ruth May. We will examine the consequences of the Price family's actions that lead to Ruth May's death, and how they reacted after.

Currently, our country is in a state of war. In *The Poisonwood Bible*, the Congo is being wrecked with warfare and the family is in the middle of it. As the plot furthers, Leah finds herself married to a man who is fully involved in fighting this war. He becomes a prisoner and their relationship is tested by this distance. In the unit, we are going to be able to make comparisons to the kinds of emotions that people deal with when their significant other is fighting in a war.

The last focus in the unit will be "breaking up" with guilt. The mother, Orleanna is wrecked with guilt after the death of Ruth May, and we will see how (or even if) she is able to overcome it. Also, we will look at guilt through the eyes of each character and what type of guilt

they all may feel and if they will ever really be able to “break up” from it. All of these things directly relate to the circumstances that are happening to them, and we will also discuss in this unit how the children are perceived as powerless and how that can carry over into student’s real life.

Along with reading *The Poisonwood Bible*, the students will be reading poetry, song lyrics, and an essay, as well as watching movie clips, journal writing, free writing, doing KWL charts, and participating in literature circles. Their final project will be a piece of creative journal writing that will be work shopped and read aloud to the class. Milner and Milner describe literature circles in as a “recurring and recursive” way that students can strengthen their reading comprehension and analysis.(Milner and Milner, 41) KWL charts are another thing that the students in this unit will be doing. This strategy is a table that is divided up into three sections: “Know, Want to Know, and Learned”. They give students an outline of how to think about the reading, while helping them take note of what they have learned in the story. (Beers, 80) The students will periodically return to these charts and add to them throughout the unit. Daily journals will be used very often in this unit as a way to reflect and review the readings, as well as make statements, ask questions, and make predictions. The book is written in a journal like form, with each chapter being told from a different point of view of each character, except the father. For the final journal, students will be writing a 2-5 page journal entry for Nathan Price. They will have to analyze the author’s reasoning for not giving him a voice, and also how the story would look from his eyes.

I believe that the theme of this unit will not only be interesting for the students, it will be able to make a personal connection with them. Every human has dealt with some type of loss, and being able to examine it through the eyes of different characters in a book can be very

cathartic and informative. This will be relevant to them because they will be able to make many connections to the theme of the book and the outside world. I hope this unit will be able to give them a deeper understanding on the many ways people deal with breaking up, as well as the abilities to critically analyze a piece of text for a specific theme.

## Goals and Objectives:

### Goals

To have students be able to critical analyze a novel for the theme of loss

To have students understand the different meanings of the term “breaking up”

To have students make connections from the novel to current events

To have students write a journal entry from a character’s perspective

### Objectives

SWBAT:

- Participate in literature circle
- Write in their own personal reading journals
- Make predictions about the story
- Work in small groups to examine and discuss texts
- Compare and contrast characters and their emotions
- Find examples in the media that demonstrate loss
- Use KWL charts to keep track of their reading and comprehension
- Use peer work shopping to further their writing assignment
- Use technology to research and draft

## Sunshine State Standards

LA.910.1.5.1: The student will adjust reading rate based on purpose, text difficulty, form, and style.

LA.910.1.6.2: The student will listen to, read, and discuss familiar and conceptually challenging text.

LA.910.1.6.3: The student will use context clues to determine meanings of unfamiliar words.

LA.910.1.7.1: The student will use background knowledge of subject and related content areas, prereading strategies (e.g., previewing, discussing, generating questions), text features, and text structure to make and confirm complex predictions of content, purpose, and organization of a reading selection.

LA.910.1.7.2: The student will analyze the author's purpose and/or perspective in a variety of text and understand how they affect meaning.

LA.910.1.7.3: The student will determine the main idea or essential message in grade-level or higher texts through inferring, paraphrasing, summarizing, and identifying relevant details.

LA.910.1.7.7: The student will compare and contrast elements in multiple texts.

LA.910.1.7.8: The student will use strategies to repair comprehension of grade-appropriate text when self-monitoring indicates confusion, including but not limited to rereading, checking context clues, predicting, note-making, summarizing, using graphic and semantic organizers, questioning, and clarifying by checking other sources.

LA.910.2.1.10: The student will select a variety of age and ability appropriate fiction materials to read based on knowledge of authors styles, themes, and genres to expand the core foundation of knowledge necessary to connect topics and function as a fully literate member of a shared culture.

LA.910.2.2.2: The student will use information from the text to answer questions or to state the main idea or provide relevant details.

LA.910.3.1.2: The student will prewrite by making a plan for writing that addresses purpose, audience, a controlling idea, logical sequence, and time frame for completion.

LA.910.3.3.4: The student will revise by applying appropriate tools or strategies to evaluate and refine the draft.

LA.910.5.2.2: The student will research and organize information for oral communication appropriate for the occasion, audience, and purpose (e.g., class discussions, entertaining, informative, persuasive, or technical presentations).

LA.910.5.2.5: The student will research and organize information that integrates appropriate media into presentations for oral communication

LA.910.6.4.1: The student will use appropriate available technologies to enhance communication and achieve a purpose

LA.910.6.4.2: The student will routinely use digital tools for publication, communication and productivity.

## **Materials:**

- Class set of *The Poisonwood Bible*
- Paper
- pencils
- highlighters
- TV/DVD
- Dear John* movie clip
- Overhead projector and screen
- Dry erase board and markers
- Literature circle role sheets- many copies
- Dictionaries
- Computer access
- Post-it notes
- Large pieces of paper and tape
- post cards

**Outline of Grades for the Unit:**

Total: 323 possible points

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS POSSIBLE
Reading Journal (12)	10 points each
Final Journal Entry and performance	50 points
Examples from media (2)	10 points each
Unknown Vocabulary words	5 points
Vocabulary Quiz	8 points
Webquest	20 points
KWL Charts	10 points
Predictions (2)	10 points each
Sticky note reading activity	10 points
Literature Circle Sheets (6)	10 points each

**Unit Outline**  
(Each day is 55 minutes)

**Day 1:**

Bellwork: Journal question: “What do you think about when you think of the phrase “breaking up”?”

Classwork: Explain to the students that we are about to start a 6 week unit titled “Breaking Up is Hard to Do”. Tell them we are going to spend this time investigating and thinking more critically about the different ways people can experience loss and how they handle it. Have a class discussion about what they wrote in their journals. Direct the conversation into a discussion about the various ways we part ways- positive and negative. Bring up the fact that before people part ways, there’s usually a conflict.

Homework: Have students find one example in media (newspaper, magazines, online article) that represents a different way of thinking about “breaking up” other than the traditional boyfriend/girlfriend way. Tell them to just read it and bring it to class.

**Day 2:**

BW: When the students come into the door, they will pair up and discuss their article that they brought in. Have them identify the conflict in the story and the reactions of the people involved.

CW: Whole class discussion about the articles they just reviewed. Take volunteers to share theirs and talk about them with the class. Focus specifically on the theme of loss in the articles. Pass out the copies of *The Poisonwood Bible*.

HW: Glance through the first couple chapters of the book and write down any unknown vocabulary words- minimum of 2!

**Day 3:**

BW: Have the students read some of the words they flagged as unknown. Write them on the board and then put the students in groups and pass out dictionaries. Divide the list up among groups and have them find the definition and present them to the whole class.

CW: Put the master list (SEE APPENDICES) of vocabulary words from the novel on the overhead projector. Tell students to write them down for the vocabulary quiz (SEE APPENDICES) in two days.

HW: None

**Day 4:**

BW: Vocabulary quiz (SEE APPENDICES)

CW: Africa Webquest- Tell the students that the focus of the day is going to be researching the setting of the book. Give a quick review of the term “setting” and make sure they all know that it’s where the story takes place. Also remind them that it takes place in 1959. Pass out the Africa Webquest assignment sheet (SEE APPENDICES) and go over it with them. Make sure there are no questions, and then partner them up. Take the students to the library or computer lab and allow them to do the assignment. Walk around and help if needed. When they are finished, tell them to make sure their name is on it and hand it in.

HW: None

**Day 5:**

BW: Introduce and start their KWL charts- explain to the students what a KWL chart is- 3 columns, “Know, Want to Know, Learn”- draw an example on the board and tell them to start their own; remind them to keep track of it because they will be adding to it throughout the entire unit. Scribe on the board- prompt them if necessary: they know it takes place in the Congo and Georgia, the title, what a few words mean, etc

CW: Start reading in class- after each section (ex: the “Orleanna” or “Leah” section) pause for discussion and questions. Read from the beginning until page 30

HW: Finish reading up until page 30 if it doesn’t get finished in class

**Day 6:**

BW: Journal- How are the characters in the book feeling about the loss of their home right now? Are they looking at it positively or negatively?

CW: Read until page 55 in class- For this day, start of reading aloud to the class like the day before, but encourage volunteers to read as well.

HW: Finish reading until page 55 if not finished- write down a question, thought, idea, statement after each chapter in their journals

**Day 7:**

BW: Students will get into groups of three and discuss their homework from the night before

CW: Come back into a large group and discuss as a class about the homework. Have each group ask a few of their questions to the class. Reading: ask for volunteers to read (“Adah” pg 55-63)

After you are finished reading, lead them into a discussion on foreshadowing: the loss of Nathan's garden- this is parallel to the fact he couldn't grow anything, but was determined to force it- ask students: is this what he's doing the African people? Do you think he's ready to do anything, even lose his family, to do "God's work?"

HW: Write a short prediction (5 sentences) about what you think will happen in the next few chapters- give evidence from the text to support your predictions

### **Day 8:**

BW: Talk about predictions as a large group- take some volunteers to share them- have students turn them in

CW: Tell the students that today they are going to practice a type of close reading strategy that they may find will help them in their comprehension of the story. They will read silently pages 64-77 and use post-it notes to annotate loss in these two chapters. Every time they read something that reminds them of loss, they should mark it with a sticky note. If they need to jot down why a certain section made them think of loss, they can write that down on the note. Tell them the minimum is 3 for this chapter. On a separate sheet of paper, they need to write down where they marked their books and why to turn in for a grade.

HW: If they don't finish the work in class, they can take it home for homework to finish

### **Day 9:**

BW: Journal- Pretend you are in Africa. What do you miss from or about home? How do you think your feelings of loss would compare to any of the *Poisonwood Bible* characters?

CW: The students will read pages 77-82 today. Have the read in pairs, back and forth and then summarize the chapter in a couple of sentences and turn it in. Come back as a whole group and discuss- Write this quote on the board "...the jungle that will surely take back everything once we are gone." Ask students what they think this means and how it could tie into our discussion of loss.

HW: Read until pg 98 (until "The Things We Learned chapter)

### **Day 10:**

BW: Have students take out their KWL charts and add some more information into each section of the chart.

CW: Come back into a large group and talk about additions to the KWL chart. After that, this day will be focused on introducing literature circles. Assign them their groups and discuss/assign roles for the next day, when the literature circles will meet for the first time. Do an example one with them for the section they read for HW the night before. Example: if I was the "Connector", I would say "On page 96, Orleana says, 'I could never work out whether we were to view

religion as a life-insurance policy or a life sentence.’ How do you guys think this applies in the religious community today? Do you think some people think religion is a life sentence?”

HW: Read to pg124 and take notes for their Literature circle role

**Day 11:**

BW: Journal: Write about a time that you had a pre-conceived notion of someone or some place. How did you start to realize you had misjudged this person/place/thing?

CW: Discuss the Price’s loss of their pre-conceived notions and their ignorance of Africa. Bring up the fact from the beginning of the book how Orleanna brought a mirror and boxed cake mix. Ask students what they think the Price women believed they were getting themselves into, and maybe how they think their attitudes are switching now. Have they come to realize yet they are in a life or death situation?

First meeting of Literature circles- they each have their groups and roles already- get into groups and perform roles

HW: Turn in Literature circle role sheet- no other reading

**Day 12:**

BW: Write down one example of “breaking up” with either ignorance or pre-conceived notions in the book.

CW: Discuss bell work- also talk about how the Price family can represent all of Western civilization and their ignorance of the Congo and what the U.S government did to it. Read the excerpt from *Killing Hope* (See Appendices). Read out loud and discuss with the whole class.

HW: read till pg 142- literature circle roles- study for comprehension quiz on book

**Day 13:**

BW: Reading quiz (SEE APPENDICES)

CW: After the reading quiz is finished and collected, the students will meet in their Literature circle groups and go over the work they did the night before

HW: Read until pg 158

**Day 14:**

BW: Journal- In the book, Reverend Price repeats over and over “Tata Jesus is bangala!” which we know could mean either Jesus is dearly beloved or a poisonwood tree depending on the pronunciation. How is this ignorance on Nathan’s part affecting his entire purpose in the Congo?

Is it driving people away? Is it causing them to not take his messages seriously? Is it causing more fear of the unknown for the Congolese?

CW: Today the students will be working with a reading comprehension strategy call SOAPS and DIDOS: SOAPS stands for Subject, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, and Speaker, while DIDOS stands for Diction, Imagery, Detail, Organization, and Syntax. Divide the class in half. Then, from those halves, put the students in small groups of two or three. Pass out the SOAPS/DIDOS handout (APPENDICES). Give them each some markers and a large piece of lined paper. Assign of half of the class SOAPS and the other DIDOS. In their smaller groups, their jobs will be to analyze the chapters they have read so far for either “SOAPS” or “DIDOS”. When they are finished, they will present their findings to the rest of the class.

-When the activity is done, have them briefly get into their Literature circle groups and rotate so they each get new roles. Give them new, blank role sheets.

HW: Read until page 181 and take notes for Literature circle roles

### **Day 15:**

BW: Journal: Yesterday we talked about the literary devices in *The Poisonwood Bible*. Pick one of the devices discussed (diction, imagery, detail, organization, and syntax) and write about how (at least one example in the book) you think they help Kingsolver highlight the theme of loss.

CW: Discuss the journal exercise and scribe some of their answers on the board. Have them meet in their Literature circles.

HW: None

### **Day 16:**

BW: Have the song lyrics to “Field of Innocence” by Evanescence projected on the board. When the students all sit down, play the song.

CW: Hand out a copy of the lyrics (APPENDICES) and have them get into groups of 4- let them listen to it again and re-read it a few times, circling lines they think highlight loss of childhood. Get back into large group and discuss. Ask students how they think Rachel, Leah, Adah, and Ruth May would identify with this. Orleanna? Show them the Bio-Poem handout and explain homework

HW: Write a bio-poem for one of the characters- needs to be on construction paper using markers, crayons, or colored pencils. Encourage art, too, but they need to follow the format demonstrated on their hand-out

### **Day 17:**

BW: Present Bio-poems to class and hang them up around the room. Each student will come up to the front of the room and read their poem.

CW: Read aloud to class till page 186 (up until Book Three)

HW: Assign new literature circle roles and have the students read until page 222

**Day 18:**

BW: Journal- Respond to the following quote from Adah: “Our childhood had passed over into history overnight. The transition was unnoticed by anyone but ourselves.”-pg 218. Get into pairs and compare thoughts. What are the circumstances in which Adah is saying this? What losses are the sisters going through now? How seriously are they taking their situation?

CW: Discuss bell work a little bit as a whole class, and then have the students get into the groups for literature circle meetings

HW: Read until page 270

**Day 19:**

BW: Journal: Pretend you are Rachel and are 15 years old and being courted for marriage. How would you feel? Does this portray a loss of childhood?

CW: Today will be a day of reviewing what the students read for homework, as well as reviewing the plot line entirely. Outline the plot and characters on the board to make sure that no student is falling behind in their understanding. The book starts to get a little more complicated, and the more the story is discussed, the better they will remember it. After that, discuss the bellwork they did. Ask for volunteers to share what they wrote, and if there is time, have them start reading their homework assignment in class.

HW: Read up to Book Four

**Day 20:**

BW: Journal: Write down a secret. It can be real or made up. Discuss how talking or writing about your feelings and secrets can help you let go of your guilt or anxiety about something. Consider the guilt/anxiety of some of the characters in the book.

CW: Ask the students if they've ever heard of Postsecret. Explain (and show them <http://postsecret.blogspot.com/>) that it is a blog on the internet where people physically mail in their secrets or confessions and the owners post new ones online every Sunday. Explore the site with them and read a few. Next, pass out post cards. Each student will make a “post secret” post card based on one of the characters. They should NOT put the characters name on it. Then, they will pass it up to the teacher, who will read each one out loud and the students can try and guess which character it is based on the secret.

HW: Read “Orleanna” (up to What We Lost)- pick a line or two that ties in with loss- write a short explanation of your choice

### **Day 21:**

BW: Have this line on the board “I walked through the valley of my fate, is all, and learned to love what I could lose.” (Orleanna page 324) Journal: How does love complicate losing someone/something? Can something even be considered a loss if you never loved it? Put them in groups after they’ve written about this to share.

CW: Pass out the poem “Because I could not Stop for Death” by Emily Dickinson (See Appendixes)- put them in 6 groups, one for each stanza- give them the poem, with the stanza they are responsible for highlighted- tell them to read the entire poem at least twice out loud in their groups, then analyze their stanza- walk around and help them (See “Poem Summary” in Appendix)- have them write it down nicely because it’ll be posted on a bulletin board Each group will present their summary of their stanza and then discuss it as a whole group and how it applies to the *Poisonwood Bible*

HW: Read till pg 360. Write predictions (about one paragraph)- Tell them to consider the poem in writing their predictions.

### **Day 22:**

BW: Discuss predictions and the reading from the night before- make sure everyone comprehends the story so far

CW: Talk about Leah’s betrayal of her father’s wishes- even her saying “and Father can go straight to Hell.”- Leah’s loss of respect, her father’s loss of control of his family- the family losing their bond- how strong was their bond anyway to begin with? Did anyone predict them falling apart? What does Nathan’s loss to Jesus in the church vote represent? Read the “Stone Soup” essay (SEE APPENDICES)- about breaking apart of families- read together and encourage them to highlight and make notes- discuss how this type of breaking up of a family (divorce) compares to the breaking up of the Price family that is going on

HW: Bring in an example from the media about a family breaking apart or write a paragraph or two about a family situation that you know of or have been through

### **Day 23:**

BW: Get students into small groups to discuss the homework from the night before- Remind them that if someone wrote about something too personal, they don’t have to share it if they don’t want to.

CW: Have them read the next two sections (Adah and Leah) and then teacher read Adah page 365 to the whole class. In this section Adah quotes the poem that we reviewed a few days before.

Get the poem "Because I could not stop for Death" out again and talk about why they think Adah would be quoting from this poem. Read aloud through Leah pg 375 and discuss.

HW: new Literature circle roles- read 428 and perform literature circle roles

**Day 24:**

BW: Journal- Why do you think Kingslover chose to not give Nathan Price a point of view in this novel?

CW: Literature circle meetings- large group discussion and introduce/handout rubric (see Appendices) for final journal entry writing project- They will write a 2-5 page double spaced journal entry from the perspective of Nathan Price

HW: Read until page 490

**Day 25:**

BW: Get out KWL charts and add to them based on what you know now

CW: Review the KWL charts as a class- write it up on the board  
Compare and contrasting each character- see how they were at the beginning, to where they are now- highlight what each of them personally has lost- have they gained anything? Through losses are there benefits? How would each of these girls be different if they had never been to Africa? Leah- how is the breaking up and the war of the Congo and its government directly affecting her life? Can we see examples of this in our own country right now?

HW: Switch literature circle roles one more time- finish the book

**Day 26:**

BW: Journal- What was your general reaction to the end of the book? Tell them to get into pairs and share your thoughts.

CW: Literature circles, last meeting- Come back as a whole class- Discussion about guilt- what guilt does each character feel? Was anyone able to break up with this guilt by the end of the story? Discuss any questions they may have about the final journal writing project.

HW: Assign first draft of journal project- Tell them the next day they are going to be peer-reviewing their papers

**Day 27:**

BW: Journal: Write about a time when you felt guilty about something- how did you feel? How did you deal with it? Did you ever “break up” with this guilt?

CW: Today the students will be working on drafting and peer-reviewing their writing. First, discuss the bell work journals; ask for anyone to share. Put them into small groups to workshop their journal projects using their peer review forms (See Appendices).

HW: Work on revisions using the peer feedback they got

**Day 28:**

BW: Get with a partner- discuss the temporary breaking up of Leah and Anatole- Anatole was a prisoner of war and Leah had to hide out for two years waiting for him. How did this affect their relationship?

CW: Video clip- trailer from “Dear John” the movie (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qc0ODuEYp5o>) - after watching the trailer, have them compare and contrast John and Savannah’s situation to Leah and Anatole’s. How different are they really? How does this everyday situation of common Americans make you think about personal loss of a romantic partner? Discuss as a whole group. More than likely many of the students have already seen this popular movie or read the book so they will be able to widen the discussion.

HW: Work on final journals

**Day 29:**

CW: Today the students will be going to the computer lab to work on drafting their final journals. They will type up their journal entries and work on any finishing touches that the teacher can help them with. They do not have to completely finish it today, but a good amount of them probably will. Help them work on reading it over and getting comfortable with reading it out loud, since that is what they will be doing the next day.

HW: Finish journal entry and be prepared to read it the next day

**Day 30:**

CW: Final journal entry due- The students will showcase their final writing assignments in a “Journal Slam”. This is like a Poetry Slam in which the class will form a circle and each person will stand in the middle and read their papers.

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## Travel Tracer-Literature Circles

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Book: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

**Travel Tracer: In a book where characters move around a lot and the scenes change frequently, it is important for everyone in your group to know where things are happening and how the setting may have changed. Even if the scenery doesn't change much, the setting is still a very important part of the story. Your job is to track where the action takes place. Describe each setting in detail, either in words or with a picture map that you can show and discuss with your group. Be sure to give the page numbers.**

Where the action begins:

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Where the key events happened:

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Where the events ended:

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## Discussion Director-Literature Circles

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Book: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

**Discussion Director: Your job is to write a list of questions that your group might want to discuss about this part of the book. The best questions will come from your own thoughts, feelings, and ideas about this section of the book. You also need to write your own answers to these questions.**

Questions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Sample Questions:

What was going through your mind when you read this?

How did you feel when...?

Can someone summarize this section?

Did anything surprise you about this section of the book?

Predict something about the next section of the book.

## **Illustrator-Literature Circles**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Book: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

**Illustrator:** Your job is to draw some kind of a picture related to what you read in your section. It can be a sketch, cartoon, diagram, or stick figure scene. It can be about something that you read, something that the reading reminded you about, or an element of the story (plot, character, setting).

**Presentation Plan:** When the Discussion Director invites you to participate, you may show your picture without commenting on it, and let the others in your group individually guess what your picture means. After everyone has had a turn to guess, it is your turn to tell them what your picture means, where it came from, or what it represents to you. You may make your picture on this sheet, or on a separate page.

## Literary Luminary-Literature Circles

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Book: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

**Literary Luminary: Your job is to choose a paragraph or sentences from the book to discuss with your group. Your purpose is to help other students by spotlighting something interesting, powerful, funny, puzzling, or important from the text. You can read parts aloud yourself, or ask another group member to read them. Include your reasons for picking the paragraphs or sections you did. Please record the page number and paragraph.**

Paragraph and reason for choosing:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## MASTER VOCABULARY LIST

**attaché** -A person officially assigned to the staff of a diplomatic mission to serve in a particular capacity: *a cultural attaché; a military attaché.*

**aurora borealis**- Luminous bands or streams of light that are sometimes visible in the night skies of northern regions and are thought to be caused by the ejection of charged particles into the magnetic field of the earth. Also called *northern lights*.

**Babushka**- A woman's head scarf, folded triangularly and worn tied under the chin.

**bängala** (*Kikongo*) -Poisonwood tree.

**bangala** (*Kikongo*)- Something precious and dear.

**Congo**- A country of west-central Africa with a short coastline on the Atlantic Ocean. Called Zaire for many years. Now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**Conniption**- Tantrum; fit of anger; hysteria.

**Demijohn**- A large, narrow-necked bottle made of glass or earthenware, usually encased in wickerwork.

**Exodus**- A departure of a large number of people. The Exodus marked the departure of the Israelites from Egypt.

**Filaires** -Any of nematode worms that are parasitic in vertebrates and are often transmitted as larvae by mosquitoes and other biting insects. The adult form lives in the blood and lymphatic tissues, causing inflammation and obstruction that can lead to elephantiasis.

**Hemiplegia**- Paralysis affecting only one side of the body.

**Hootenanny**- A meeting of folk singers, as for public entertainment.

**Impala**- Medium-sized, reddish antelope of central and south Africa.

**invertebrate zoology**- The study of animals that do not have a backbone or spinal column.

**Jim Crow laws**- The systematic practice of discriminating against and suppressing African Americans, following the Civil War and continuing until the Civil Rights Movement.

**Khrushchev, Nikita** -Premier of the U.S.S.R. from 1958 to 1964.

**malaria** -An infectious disease characterized by cycles of chills, fever, and sweating, caused by the parasitic infection that is transmitted by the bite of an infected female mosquito.

**manioc** -A shrubby tropical American plant widely grown for its large, tuberous, starchy roots, which are eaten as a staple food in the tropics after leaching and drying to remove cyanide.

**martyrdom** -The suffering of death by a martyr; extreme suffering of any kind.

**okapi** -A forest mammal related to the giraffe but smaller and having a short neck, reddish-brown body, creamy white cheeks, and whitish stripes and bands on the legs.

**Palindrome**- A word, phrase, verse, or sentence that reads the same backward or forward.

**Poisonwood**- A medium-sized tree with poisonous sap that causes dermatitis.

**quinine** -A bitter, colorless, amorphous powder derived from certain cinchona barks and used in medicine to treat malaria.

Name:

Date:

## Poisonwood Bible Vocabulary Quiz

Quiz time! Write each word from your word list above the matching definition.

### Vocab Words

attaché  
Congo  
connoisseur  
demijohn  
exodus  
hemiplegia  
impala  
malaria  
martyrdom  
Nikita Khrushchev  
okapi  
palindrome  
quinine

**1)** Soviet statesman and premier of the U.S.S.R. from 1958 to 1964, who denounced his predecessor, Joseph Stalin (b.1894--d.1971).

**2)** a departure, usu. of a great number of people.

**3)** an infectious disease transmitted by mosquitoes and marked by recurring attacks of chills, fever, and sweating.

**4)** (informal) an outburst or fit of anger, hysteria, or the like.

Name:

Date:

## Poisonwood Bible Vocabulary Quiz

- 5) a bitter organic derivative of the bark of a South American and Asian tree that is effective in treating malaria.
- 6) a large, narrow-necked glass or earthenware bottle that is enclosed in wickerwork.
- 7) paralysis of just one side of the body.
- 8) a word, phrase, or longer expression with letters in the same order both backward as forward, such as "level" or "Able was I ere I saw Elba".
- 9) a reddish brown African antelope known for its ability to leap and for the long, ridged, curved horns of the male.
- 10) a central African country between Zaire and Gabon.
- 11) someone assigned to a governmental delegation or embassy, usu. for a specific function.
- 12) a four-legged African animal, closely related to the giraffe but having a short neck.
- 13) the condition of being a martyr; suffering or death that a martyr undergoes.

**Africa Webquest**

For this assignment, you will be working in teams of 2 in the computer lab to perform background research on both Georgia, and the Congo. This knowledge will assist you in better understanding the context of The Poisonwood Bible. For each section, write down three facts that you find:

**Part 1: Georgia in 1959**

**Geography:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**History:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Economics:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Government:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Culture:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Religion:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Part 2: The Congo in 1959

### Geography:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### History:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Economics:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Government:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Culture:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Religion:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Poisonwood Bible Reading Comprehension Quiz

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Methuselah does what most to annoy Nathan?

- a. Curses
- b. Spits
- c. Claws
- d. Escapes

### 2. Absorbed with his own agenda, Nathan does not appreciate or even notice which of his daughter's strong adoration of him?

- a. Rachel
- b. Leah
- c. Adah
- d. Ruth May

### 3. Why are the Kilangan villagers afraid to be baptized in the river by Nathan?

- a. The river is dirty with silt.
- b. A girl from the village was killed in the river by a crocodile.
- c. The river runs too quickly to stand up in.
- d. Rachel secretly tells the villagers that not to get baptized.

**4. Who is the Prices' neighbor who has no legs?**

- a. Mama Bekwa Tataba
- b. Tata Boanda
- c. Mama Mwanza
- d. Pascal

**5. Ruth May befriends the village children and teaches them to play what game?**

- a. Mother, May I?
- b. Kick the Can
- c. Soccer
- d. Stickball

**6. The Price family moves to Kilanga from what U.S. state?**

- a. Mississippi
- b. North Carolina
- c. Arkansas
- d. Georgia

**7. Which Price girl breaks her arm while climbing a tree to spy on the "African Communist Boy Scouts" (the Jeune Mou Pro, or Congolese revolutionaries)?**

- a. Rachel
- b. Leah

- c. Adah
- d. Ruth May

**8. How do the Kilanga men indicate which candidate they are voting for?**

- a. They throw one pebble into the bowl representing the candidate of their choice.
- b. They write the candidate's name on a piece of paper and drop it in a box's slot.
- c. A man writes down each male villager's name and next to that the candidate of his choice.
- d. The chief decides whom the male villagers will vote for.

## SOAPS

### Subject

- The topic, content, and ideas included in the text.
- Can you identify and state the subject in a few words?
- Is there one or more than one subject?
- How does the author present the subject? Does s/he introduce it immediately or not? Is the subject explicit or implicit?

### Occasion

- Identify the time and place of the text. What is the current situation?
- Is it a personal event, a celebration, an observation, a critique, or...?
- Identify the context of the text.

### Audience

- The readers to whom this text is directed.
- The audience may be one person, a small group, or a large group.
- Does the speaker specify an audience?
- What assumptions exist in the text about the intended audience of this text?

### Purpose

- What is the purpose for the passage/text?
- What is the message?
- Why did the author write it? What is the author's goal?
- How does the speaker convey the message?

### Speaker

- Who is the speaker? Identification of the person (or group of people) that wrote this text: what is the speaker's age, gender, class, or education?
- Identify the main voice within the text.
- What can you tell or what do you know about this person's role in the text?

## DIDOS

Diction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diction is the writer's choice of words</li> <li>• Remember that words do not get onto the paper by accident. Each word represents a choice.</li> <li>• Diction can be elevated or low, common or academic</li> <li>• Diction draws on words' connotations, their extra meaning outside the literal.</li> <li>• What specific words are particularly powerful, vivid, descriptive, or unusual?</li> <li>• Are specific words repeated?</li> <li>• Does the writer use concrete or abstract terms? Specific or general terms?</li> </ul>
Imagery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imagery is the use of language that engages the senses</li> <li>• Imagery can affect the tone of the piece and lend weight to a narrative or an argument</li> <li>• What images does the author spend the most time developing?</li> <li>• What effects do the images have?</li> <li>• Why does the author choose to create this type of effect?</li> </ul>
Detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In narrative, details help create the scene and the mood. They help tell the story.</li> <li>• In arguments, the details are what supports the writer's uses to convince the audience</li> <li>• What specific descriptions are provided?</li> <li>• What surprising information does the author provide?</li> </ul>
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization is the way the writer has put together the essay</li> <li>• What type of pieces can the work be divided into? Are their segments definable by tone, point of view, verb tense?</li> <li>• How are the ideas connected to one another?</li> <li>• What types of transitions does the writer use? How do they contribute to the logic of the piece?</li> </ul>
Syntax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Syntax refers to the structure of the writer's sentences.</li> <li>• Sentences can be simple or complex; they can contain parallelism; they can be fragments</li> <li>• What types of sentences, phrases, and punctuation does the writer choose?</li> <li>• Why does the writer use these particular types of sentences?</li> </ul>

## EVANESCENCE LYRICS

### "Field Of Innocence"

I still remember the world  
From the eyes of a child  
Slowly those feelings  
Were clouded by what I know now

Where has my heart gone?  
An uneven trade for the real world  
Oh I, I want to go back to  
Believing in everything and knowing nothing at all

I still remember the sun  
Always warm on my back  
Somehow, it seems colder now

Where has my heart gone?  
Trapped in the eyes of a stranger  
Oh I, I want to go back to  
Believing in everything

[Latin hymn:]  
Iesu, Rex admirabilis  
et triumphator nobilis,  
dulcedo ineffabilis,  
totus desiderabilis.

[Translation:]  
O Jesus, King most wonderful  
the conqueror renowned  
the sweetness most ineffable,  
entirely desirable.

"As the years pass by  
Before my face,  
As wars rage before me,  
Finding myself  
In these last days of existence,  
This parasite inside me,  
I forced it out.  
In the darkness of the storm  
Lies an evil,  
But it's me."

Where has my heart gone?  
An uneven trade for the real world  
Oh I, I want to go back to  
Believing in everything

Oh where, where has my heart gone  
Trapped in the eyes of a stranger  
Oh I, I want to go back to  
Believing in everything

I still remember.

## BIO-POEM

*(First name)-*

*(Four adjectives that describe the person)*

*Son or Daughter of (your parents names)*

*Lover of (three different things that the person loves)*

*Who feels (three different feelings **and** when or where they are felt)*

*Who gives (three different things the person gives)*

*Who fears (three different fears the person has)*

*Who would like to see (three different things the person would like to see)*

*Who lives (a brief description of where the person lives)*

*-(last name)*

STONE SOUP- by Barabara Kingsolver

**IN THE CATALOG** of family values, where do we rank an occasion like this? A curly-haired boy who wanted to run before he walked, age seven now, a soccer player scoring a winning goal. He turns to the bleachers with his fists in the air and a smile wide as a gap-toothed galaxy. His own cheering section of grown-ups and kids all leap to their feet and hug each other, delirious with love for this boy. He's Andy, my best friend's son. The cheering section includes his mother and her friends, his brother, his father and stepmother, a stepbrother and stepsister, and a grandparent. Lucky is the child with this many relatives on hand to hail a proud accomplishment. I'm there too, witnessing a family fortune. But in spite of myself, defensive words take shape in my head. I am thinking: I dare *anybody* to call this a broken home.

Families change, and remain the same. Why are our names for home so slow to catch up to the truth of where we live?

When I was a child, I had two parents who loved me without cease. One of them attended every excuse for attention I ever contrived, and the other made it to the ones with higher production values, like piano recitals and appendicitis. So I was a lucky child too. I played with a set of paper dolls called "The Family of Dolls," four in number, who came with the factory-assigned names of Dad, Mom, Sis, and Junior. I think you know what they looked like, at least before I loved them to death and their heads fell off.

Now I've replaced the dolls with a life. I knit my days around my daughter's survival and happiness, and am proud to say her head is still on. But we aren't the Family of Dolls. Maybe you're not, either. And if not, even though you are statistically no oddity, it's probably been suggested to you in a hundred ways that yours isn't exactly a real family, but an impostor family, a harbinger of cultural ruin, a slapdash substitute--something like counterfeit money. Here at the tail end of our century, most of us are up to our ears in the noisy business of trying to support and love a thing called family. But there's a current in the air with ferocious moral force that finds its way even into political campaigns, claiming there is only one right way to do it, the Way It Has Always Been.

In the face of a thriving, particolored world, this narrow view is so pickled and absurd I'm astonished that it gets airplay. And I'm astonished that it still stings.

Every parent has endured the arrogance of a child - unfriendly grump sitting in judgment, explaining what those kids of ours really need (for example, "a good licking"). If we're polite, we move our crew to another bench in the park. If we're forthright (as I am in my mind, only, for the rest of the day), we fix them with a sweet imperious stare and say, "Come back and let's talk about it after you've changed a thousand diapers."

But it's harder somehow to shrug off the Family-of-

Dolls Family Values crew when they judge (from their safe distance) that divorced people, blended families, gay families and single parents are failures. That our children are at risk, and the whole arrangement is messy and embarrassing. A marriage that ends is not called "finished," it's called *failed*. The children of this family may have been born to a happy union, but now they are called *the children of divorce*.

I had no idea how thoroughly these assumptions overlaid my culture until I went through divorce myself. I wrote to a friend: "This might be worse than being widowed. Overnight I've suffered the same losses--companionship, financial and practical support, my identity as a wife and partner, the future I'd taken for granted. I am lonely, grieving, and hard-pressed to take care of my household alone. But instead of bringing casseroles, people are acting like I had a fit and broke up the family china."

Once upon a time I held these beliefs about divorce: that everyone who does it could have chosen not to do it. That it's a lazy way out of marital problems. That it selfishly puts personal happiness ahead of family integrity. Now I tremble for my ignorance. It's easy, in fortunate times, to forget about the ambush that could leave your head reeling: serious mental or physical illness, death in the family, abandonment, financial calamity, humiliation, violence, despair.

I started out like any child, intent on being the Family of Dolls. I set upon young womanhood believing in most of the doctrines of my generation: I wore my skirts four inches above the knee. I had that Barbie with her zebra-striped swimsuit and a figure unlike anything found in nature. And I understood the Prince Charming Theory of Marriage, a quest for Mr. Right that ends smack dab where you find him. I did not completely understand that another whole story *begins* there, and no fairy tale prepared me for the combination of bad luck and persistent hope that would interrupt my dream and lead me to other arrangements.

Like a cancer diagnosis, a dying marriage is a thing to fight, to deny, and finally, when there's no choice left, to dig in and survive. Casseroles would help. Likewise, I imagine it must be a painful reckoning in adolescence (or later on) to realize true love will never look like the soft-focus fragrance ads because Prince Charming (surprise!) is a princess. Or vice versa. Or has skin the color your parents didn't want you messing with, except in the Crayola box.

It's awfully easy to hold in contempt the straw broken home, and that mythical category of persons who toss away nuclear family for the sheer fun of it. Even the legal terms we use have a suggestion of caprice. I resent the phrase "irreconcilable differences," which suggests a stubborn refusal to accept a spouse's little quirks. This is specious. Every happily married couple I know has loads of irreconcilable differences. Negotiating where to set the thermostat is not the point. A nonfunctioning marriage is a slow asphyxiation. It is waking up despised each morning, listening to the pulse of your own loneliness before the radio begins to blare its raucous gospel that you're nothing if you aren't loved. It is sharing your airless house with the threat of suicide or other kinds of violence, while the ghost that whispers, "Leave here and destroy your children," has passed over every door and nailed it shut. Disassembling a marriage in these circumstances is as much *fun* as amputating your own gangrenous leg. You do it, if you can, to save a life--or two, or more.

I know of no one who really went looking to hoe the harder row, especially the daunting one of single parenthood. Yet it seems to be the most American of customs to blame the burdened for their destiny. We'd like so desperately to believe in freedom and justice for all, we can hardly name that rogue bad luck, even when he's a close enough snake to bite us. In the wake of my divorce, some friends (even a few close ones) chose to vanish, rather than linger within striking distance of misfortune.

But most stuck around, bless their hearts, and if I'm any the wiser for my trials, it's from having learned the worth of steadfast friendship. And also, what not to say. The least helpful question is: "Did you want the divorce, or didn't you?" Did I want to keep that gangrenous leg, or not? How to explain, in a culture that venerates choice: two terrifying options are much worse than none at all. Give me any day the quick hand of cruel fate that will leave me scarred but blameless. As it was, I kept thinking of that wicked third-grade joke in which some boy comes up behind you and grabs your ear, starts in with a prolonged tug, and asks, "Do you want this ear any longer?"

Still, the friend who holds your hand and says the wrong thing is made of dearer stuff than the one who stays away. And generally, through all of it, you live. My favorite fictional character, Kate Vaiden (in the novel by Reynolds Price), advises: "Strength just comes in one brand--you stand up at sunrise and meet what they send you and keep your hair combed."

Once you've weathered the straits, you get to cross the tricky juncture from casualty to survivor. If you're on your feet at the end of a year or two, and have begun putting together a happy new existence, those friends who were kind enough to feel sorry for you when you needed it must now accept you back to the ranks of the living. If you're truly blessed, they will dance at your second wedding. Everybody else, for heaven's sake, should stop throwing stones.

**ARGUING ABOUT** whether nontraditional families deserve pity or tolerance is a little like the medieval debate about left-handedness as a mark of the devil. Divorce, remarriage, single parenthood, gay parents, and blended families simply are. They're facts of our time. Some of the reasons listed by sociologists for these family reconstructions are: the idea of marriage as a romantic partnership rather than a pragmatic one; a shift in women's expectations, from servility to self-respect and independence; and longevity (prior to antibiotics no marriage was expected to last many decades--in Colonial days the average couple lived to be married less than twelve years). Add to all this our growing sense of entitlement to happiness and safety from abuse. Most would agree these are all good things. Yet their result--a culture in which serial monogamy and the consequent reshaping of families are the norm—gets diagnosed as "failing."

For many of us, once we have put ourselves Humpty-Dumpty-wise back together again, the main problem with our reorganized family is that other people think we have a problem. My daughter tells me the only time she's uncomfortable about being the child of divorced parents is when her friends say they feel sorry for her. It's a bizarre sympathy, given that half the kids in her school and nation are in the same boat, pursuing childish happiness with the

same energy as their married-parent peers. When anyone asks how *she* feels about it, she spontaneously lists the benefits: our house is in the country and we have a dog, but she can go to her dad's neighborhood for the urban thrills of a pool and sidewalks for roller-skating. What's more, she has three sets of grandparents!

Why is it surprising that a child would revel in a widened family and the right to feel at home in more than one house? Isn't it the opposite that should worry us--a child with no home at all, or too few resources to feel safe? The child at risk is the one whose parents are too immature themselves to guide wisely; too diminished by poverty to nurture; too far from opportunity to offer hope. The number of children in the U.S. living in poverty at this moment is almost unfathomably large: twenty percent. There are families among us that need help all right, and by no means are they new on the landscape. The rate at which teenage girls had babies in 1957 (ninety-six per thousand) was twice what it is now. That remarkable statistic is ignored by the religious right--probably because the teen birth rate was cut in half mainly by legalized abortion. In fact, the policy gatekeepers who coined the phrase "family values" have steadfastly ignored the desperation of too-small families, and since 1979 have steadily reduced the amount of financial support available to a single parent. But, this camp's most outspoken attacks seem aimed at the notion of families getting too complex, with add-ons and extras such as a gay parent's partner, or a remarried mother's new husband and his children.

To judge a family's value by its tidy symmetry is to purchase a book for its cover. There's no moral authority there. The famous family comprised of Dad, Mom, Sis, and Junior living as an isolated economic unit is not built on historical bedrock. In *The Way We Never Were*, Stephanie Coontz writes, "Whenever people propose that we go back to the traditional family, I always suggest that they pick a ballpark date for the family they have in mind." Colonial families were tidily disciplined, but their members (meaning everyone but infants) labored incessantly and died young. Then the Victorian family adopted a new division of labor, in which women's role was domestic and allowed time for study and play, but this was an upper-class construct supported by myriad slaves. Coontz writes, "For every nineteenth-century middle-class family that protected its wife and child within the family circle, there was an Irish or German girl scrubbing floors...a Welsh boy mining coal to keep the home-baked goodies warm, a black girl doing the family laundry, a black mother and child picking cotton to be made into clothes for the family, and a Jewish or an Italian daughter in a sweatshop making 'ladies' dresses or artificial flowers for the family to purchase."

The abolition of slavery brought slightly more democratic arrangements, in which extended families were harnessed together in cottage industries; at the turn of the century came a steep rise in child labor in mines and sweatshops. Twenty percent of American children lived in orphanages at the time; their parents were not necessarily dead, but couldn't afford to keep them.

During the Depression and up to the end of World War II, many millions of U.S. households were more multigenerational than nuclear. Women my grandmother's age were likely to live with a fluid assortment of elderly relatives, in-laws, siblings, and children. In many cases they spent virtually every waking hour working in the company of other women--a companionable scenario in which it would be easier, I imagine, to tolerate an estranged or difficult spouse. I'm reluctant to idealize a life of so much hard work and so little spousal intimacy, but its advantage may have

been resilience. A family so large and varied would not easily be brought down by a single blow: it could absorb a death, long illness, an abandonment here or there, and any number of irreconcilable differences.

The Family of Dolls came along midcentury as a great American experiment. A booming economy required a mobile labor force and demanded that women surrender jobs to returning soldiers. Families came to be defined by a single breadwinner. They struck out for single-family homes at an earlier age than ever before, and in unprecedented numbers they raised children in urban isolation. The nuclear family was launched to sink or swim.

More than a few sank. Social historians corroborate that the suburban family of the postwar economic boom, which we have recently selected as our definition of "traditional," was no panacea. Twenty-five percent of Americans were poor in the mid-1950s, and as yet there were no food stamps. Sixty percent of the elderly lived on less than \$1,000 a year, and most had no medical insurance. In the sequestered suburbs, alcoholism and sexual abuse of children were far more widespread than anyone imagined.

Expectations soared, and the economy sagged. It's hard to depend on one other adult for everything, come what may. In the last three decades, that amorphous, adaptable structure we call "family" has been reshaped once more by economic tides. Compared with fifties families, mothers are far more likely now to be employed. We are statistically more likely to divorce, and to live in blended families or other extranuclear arrangements. We are also more likely to plan and space our children, and to rate our marriages as "happy." We are less likely to suffer abuse without recourse or to stare out at our lives through a glaze of prescription tranquilizers. Our aged parents are less likely to be destitute, and we're half as likely to have a teenage daughter turn up a mother herself. All in all, I would say that if "intact" in modern family-values jargon means living quietly desperate in the bell jar, then hip-hip-hooray for "broken." A neat family model constructed to service the Baby Boom economy seems to be returning gradually to a grand, lumpy shape that human families apparently have tended toward since they first took root in Olduvai Gorge. We're social animals, deeply fond of companionship, and children love best to run in packs. If there is a *normal* for humans, at all, I expect it looks like two or three Families of Dolls, connected variously by kinship and passion, shuffled like cards and strewn over several shoeboxes.

The sooner we can let go the fairy tale of families functioning perfectly in isolation, the better we might embrace the relief of community. Even the admirable parents who've stayed married through thick and thin are very likely, at present, to incorporate other adults into their families--household help and baby-sitters if they can afford them, or neighbors and grandparents if they can't. For single parents, this support is the rock-bottom definition of family. And most parents who have split apart, however painfully, still manage to maintain family continuity for their children, creating in many cases a boisterous phenomenon that Constance Ahrons in her book *The Good Divorce* calls the "binuclear family." Call it what you will--when ex-spouses beat swords into plowshares and jump up and down at a soccer game together, it makes for happy kids.

**CINDERELLA, LOOK, WHO** needs her? All those evil stepsisters? That story always seemed like too much cotton-picking fuss over clothes. A childhood tale that fascinated me more was the one called "Stone Soup," and the gist of it is this: Once upon a time, a pair of beleaguered soldiers straggled home to a village empty-handed, in a land ruined by war. They were famished, but the villagers had so little they shouted evil words and slammed their doors. So the soldiers dragged out a big kettle, filled it with water, and put it on a fire to boil. They rolled a clean round stone into the pot, while the villagers peered through their curtains in amazement.

"What kind of soup is that?" they hooted.

"Stone soup," the soldiers replied. "Everybody can have some when it's done."

"Well, thanks," one matron grumbled, coming out with a shriveled carrot. "But it'd be better if you threw this in."

And so on, of course, a vegetable at a time, until the whole suspicious village managed to feed itself grandly.

Any family is a big empty pot, save for what gets thrown in. Each stew turns out different. Generosity, a resolve to turn bad luck into good, and respect for variety--these things will nourish a nation of children. Name-calling and suspicion will not. My soup contains a rock or two of hard times, and maybe yours does too. I expect it's a heck of a bouillabaise.

<http://www.tucsonweekly.com/tw/09-28-95/cover.htm>

“Because I Could not Stop for Death” by Emily Dickinson

Because I could not stop for Death,  
He kindly stopped for me;  
The carriage held but just ourselves  
And Immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste,  
And I had put away  
My labor, and my leisure too,  
For his civility.

We passed the school, where children strove  
At recess, in the ring;  
We passed the fields of gazing grain,  
We passed the setting sun.

Or rather, he passed us;  
The dews grew quivering and chill,  
For only gossamer my gown,  
My tippet only tulle.

We paused before a house that seemed  
A swelling of the ground;  
The roof was scarcely visible,  
The cornice but a mound.

Since then 'tis centuries, and yet each  
Feels shorter than the day  
I first surmised the horses' heads  
Were toward eternity.

## “Because I Could not Stop for Death” Poem Summary

### Lines 1-2

Death is personified, or described in terms of human characteristics, throughout literature.

Whether Death takes the form of a decrepit old man, a grim reaper, or a ferryman, his visit is almost never welcome by the poor mortal who finds him at the door. Such is not the case in “Because I Could Not Stop for Death.” Figuratively speaking, this poem is about one woman’s “date with death.” Dickinson uses the personification of Death as a metaphor throughout the poem. Here, Death is a gentleman, perhaps handsome and well-groomed, who makes a call at the home of a naive young woman. The poem begins with a comment upon Death’s politeness, although he surprises the woman with his visit. Knowing that the woman has been keeping herself too busy in her daily life to remember Death, he “kindly” comes by to get her. While most people would try to bar the door once they recognized his identity, this woman gives the impression that she is quite flattered to find herself in even this gentleman’s favor.

### Lines 3-4

It would have been shocking for a young, unmarried 19th century woman to take a carriage ride alone with a strange gentleman. In this instance, a chaperon named Immortality rides with them. This is another example of personification. Though the poem’s speaker offers no description of Immortality, one might imagine an ageless-looking little woman in a gray dress. In any case, the poem’s speaker hardly notices Immortality’s presence beyond a brief mention in line four. The young woman’s attention is still focused on Death, her gentleman caller.

### Line 5

There are many possible explanations for the slow speed with which Death drives the carriage. Perhaps, since the woman is now “dead,” the carriage has been transformed into a hearse, and they are moving at the slow, deliberate speed of the lead car in a funeral procession. Another possible explanation is that Death has no concept of time. Time and space are earthly concerns, and Death, courier of souls from this world to the unknown, is not bound by such vague human concepts.

### Lines 6-8

People spend much of their lives keeping busy with work or amused with play so that they do not have to think about their own imminent death. The poem’s speaker seems to be no exception; however, she admits that she was willing to put aside her distractions and go with Death, perhaps because she found him so surprisingly charming. She comments upon his “Civility,” or formal politeness. She appears to be seduced by his good manners. If she had any expectations about Death, he has certainly exceeded them.

## Lines 9-12

This quatrain is rich with imagery. Death's passenger does not seem as concerned with where they are going as she does with the scenery along the way. In spite of the fact that she "put away" her "labor" and "leisure" in the previous quatrain, she is still distracted by things of the mortal world. It is possible that she knows she is seeing the last of these things which are so common that she may not have noticed them before: children playing, wheat growing, the sun setting. Taken for granted in the daily grind of life, these things grow more meaningful in relation to this final journey. The children are playing "in a ring," and rings have magical significance for human beings because they are a symbol of eternity. The grain represents the natural world as she knows it, only this time the grain seems to be "gazing" at her, or looking at her with great interest. The "setting sun" is the universal clock, the thing by which humans measure their lives on earth. As they pass it by, she seems to pass into a new dimension.

## Lines 13-16

Here again we see, as in line 5, that Death has no concept of time or earthly concerns. It is the Sun that is moving ("He passed Us), indicating the passage of time by its daily course across the sky. The carriage here seems to be going so slowly as to be nearly motionless. In any event, night appears to be falling, and a chilly dew is settling in. The references to the thinness of the woman's clothing (her gossamer gown and her tulle tippet, or cape) suggest that she is growing cold — another reminder that she is now "dead."

## Lines 17-20

This "House" is a grave, even though the speaker uses a euphemism to describe it. This is where her body will be housed while her soul journeys onward. She describes the house as a "Swelling of the Ground," clearly an image of a fresh burial plot. She can hardly see the roof, and the "Cornice," or ornamental molding near the roofline, is only just visible above the pile of earth. She does not describe how long they "paused" there, but it could not have been long. This seems to be just a way station, though the woman does not seem to know it at this point. Her destination is still a mystery.

## Lines 21-22

These lines contain an excellent example of hyperbole, an intentional exaggeration or overstatement that is not meant to be taken literally. Naturally, centuries are longer than a single day. However, some great moments in human life seem longer than they are, and moments of great revelation seem to stretch out forever. The greatest revelation of all must be the moment when the mystery of death and the afterlife is revealed. Also, perhaps because that day was the last day that the woman experienced the temporal, or time-related, world, the memory of it is the last remnant of her previous existence.

## Lines 23-24

Sometimes the poetic experience is the closest thing to knowing the unknowable. In these final lines, Dickinson has attempted to describe what no living human can know: that moment the meaning of “forever” becomes clear. Oddly enough, there is no bolt of lightning or clap of thunder. Dickinson uses the word “surmised,” meaning that the woman guesses, through intuition, the answer to the riddle of human existence. She looks at the heads of the horses and sees that they are pointed “toward Eternity,” and suddenly she remembers that Immortality has been sitting beside her all along.

<http://www.answers.com/topic/because-i-could-not-stop-for-death-poem-3>

# A Peer Review Form for Evaluating Writing

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Poor	Comments
<b>Layout/Organization</b>				
Paper structure				
Clearly stated purpose				
Transitions used				
Introduction & conclusion focus clearly on the main point				
<b>Development &amp; Support</b>				
Major ideas/topics received enough attention and explanation				
Supporting material persuasive				
<b>Style</b>				
Topic and level of formality appropriate for audience				
Sentences and words varied				
<b>Grammar and Mechanics</b>				
Grammar				
Punctuation				
Spelling				
<b>Recommended Changes</b>				
Please recommend three specific changes in the writing.				
1. 2. 3.				

### Rubric for Final Journal Assignment

For this final writing assignment, you will be taking on the persona of Nathan Price in *The Poisonwood Bible*. As we know, the Reverend does not get a narrative voice in this book, so through this creative writing piece, you are going to explore the character of Nathan and how the story may have looked through his eyes. The journal entry needs to be 3-5 typed pages, double spaced.

### Scoring Rubric for Final Journals

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Exemplary 4</b>	<b>Accomplished 3</b>	<b>Developing 2</b>	<b>Beginning 1</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	Strong voice and tone that clearly addresses the purpose for writing.	Appropriate voice and tone. The purpose is largely clear.	Attempts to use personal voice and tone. Somewhat addresses the intended purpose.	Demonstrates limited awareness of use of voice and tone. Limited evidence of intended purpose.	
<b>Understanding</b>	Many interesting, specific facts and ideas are included.	Many facts and ideas are included.	Some facts and ideas are included.	Few facts and ideas are included.	
<b>Conventions</b>	All grammar and spelling is correct.	Only one or two grammar and spelling errors.	A few grammar and spelling errors.	Many grammar and spelling errors.	

## The Congo 1960-1964

### The Assassination of Patrice Lumumba by William Blum

#### *Excerpt from the book Killing Hope*

*Within days of its independence from Belgium on 30 June 1960, the land long known as the Belgian Congo, and later as Zaire, was engulfed in strife and chaos as multiple individuals, tribes, and political groups struggled for dominance or independence. For the next several years the world press chronicled the train of Congolese governments, the endless confusion of personalities and conspiracies, exotic place names like Stanleyville and Leopoldville, shocking stories of European hostages and white mercenaries, the brutality and the violence from all quarters with its racist overtones.*

*Into this disorder the Western powers were "naturally" drawn, principally Belgium to protect its vast mineral investments, and the United States, mindful of the fabulous wealth as well, and obsessed, as usual, with fighting "communism".*

*Successive American administrations of Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson, looking through cold-war binoculars perceived an East-West battleground. The CIA station in the Congo cabled Washington in August that "Embassy and station believe Congo experiencing classic communist effort [to] takeover government." CIA Director Allen Dulles warned of a "communist takeover of the Congo with disastrous consequences ... for the interests of the free world". At the same time, Dulles authorized a crash-program fund of up to \$100,000 to replace the existing government of Patrice Lumumba with a "pro-western group".*

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*Years later, Under Secretary of State C. Douglas Dillon told a Senate investigating committee (the Church committee) that the National Security Council and President Eisenhower had believed in 1960 that Lumumba was a "very difficult if not impossible person to deal with, and was dangerous to the peace and safety of the world." This statement moved author Jonathan Kwitny to observe:*

*"How far beyond the dreams of a barefoot jungle postal clerk in 1956, that in a few short years he would be dangerous to the peace and safety of the world! The perception seems insane, particularly coming from the National Security Council, which really does have the power to end all human life within hours.*

*Patrice Lumumba became the Congo's first prime minister after his party received a plurality of the votes in national elections. He called for the nation's economic as well as political liberation and did not shy away from contact with socialist countries. At the Independence Day ceremonies he probably managed to alienate all the attending foreign dignitaries with his speech, which read in part:*

*"Our lot was eighty years of colonial rule ... We have known tiring labor exacted in exchange for salary which did not allow us to satisfy our hunger ... We have known ironies, insults, blows which we had to endure morning, noon, and night because we were "Negroes" ... We have known that the law was never the same depending on whether it concerned a white or a Negro ... We have known the atrocious sufferings of those banished for political opinions or religious beliefs ... We have known that there were magnificent houses for the whites in the cities and tumble-down straw huts for the Negroes."*

*In 1960, it must be borne in mind, this was indeed radical and inflammatory language in such a setting.*

*On 11 July, the province of Katanga-home to the bulk of the Congo's copper, cobalt, uranium, gold, and other mineral wealth-announced that it was seceding. Belgium, the principal owner of this fabulous wealth, never had any intention of giving up real control of the country, and it now supported the move for Katanga's independence, perceiving the advantage of having its investments housed in their own little country, not accountable to nor paying taxes to the central government in Leopoldville. Katanga, moreover, was led by Moise Tshombe, a man eminently accommodating to, and respectful of, whites and their investments.*

*The Eisenhower administration supported the Belgian military intervention on behalf of Katanga; indeed, the American embassy had previously requested such intervention. Influencing this policy, in addition to Washington's ideological aversion to Lumumba, was the fact that a number of prominent administration officials had financial ties to the Katanga wealth.*

*The Belgian intervention, which was a very violent one, was denounced harshly by the Soviet Union, as well as many countries from the Afro-Asian bloc, leading the UN Security Council on the 14th to authorize the withdrawal of Belgian troops and their replacement by a United Nations military force. This was fine with the United States, for the UN under Dag Hammarskjold was very closely allied to Washington. The UN officials who led the Congo operation were Americans, in secret collaboration with the State Department, and in exclusion of the Soviet bloc; the latter's citizens who worked at the UN Secretariat were kept from seeing the Congo cables. Hammarskjold himself was quite hostile toward Lumumba.*

*The UN force entered Katanga province and replaced the Belgian troops, but made no effort to end the secession. Unable to put down this uprising on his own, as well as one in another province, Lumumba had appealed to the United Nations as well as the United States to supply him with transport for his troops. When they both refused, he turned to the Soviet Union for aid, and received it, though military success still eluded him.*

*The Congo was in turmoil in many places. In the midst of it, on 5 September, president Joseph Kasavubu suddenly dismissed Lumumba as prime minister-a step of very debatable legality, taken with much American encouragement and assistance, as Kasavubu "sat at the feet of the CIA men". The action was taken, said the Church committee later, "despite the strong support for Lumumba in the Congolese Parliament.*

*During the early 1960s, according to a highly-placed CIA executive, the Agency "regularly bought and sold Congolese politicians". US diplomatic sources subsequently confirmed that Kasavubu was amongst the recipients.*

*Hammaraskjold publicly endorsed the dismissal before the Security Council, and when Lumumba tried to broadcast his case to the Congolese people, UN forces closed the radio station. Instead, he appeared before the legislature, and by dint of his formidable powers of speech, both houses of Parliament voted to reaffirm him as prime minister. But he could taste the fruits of his victory for only a few days, for on the 14th, army strongman Joseph Mobutu took power in a military coup.*

*Even during this period, with Lumumba not really in power, "CIA and high Administration officials continued to view him as a threat" ... his "talents and dynamism appear [to be the] overriding factor in reestablishing his position each time it seems half lost" ... "Lumumba was a spellbinding orator with the ability to stir masses of people to action" ... "if he ... started to talk to a battalion of the Congolese Army he probably would have had them in the palm of his hand in five minutes".*

*In late September, the CIA sent one of its scientists, Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, to the Congo carrying "lethal biological material" (a virus) specifically intended for use in Lumumba's assassination. The virus, which was supposed to produce a fatal disease indigenous to the Congo area of Africa, was transported via diplomatic pouch.*

*In 1975, the Church committee went on record with the conclusion that Allen Dulles had ordered Lumumba's assassination as "an urgent and prime objective" (Dulles's words). After hearing the testimony of several officials who believed that the order to kill the African leader had emanated originally from President Eisenhower, the committee decided that there was a "reasonable inference" that this was indeed the case.*

*As matters evolved in the Congo, the virus was never used, for the CIA's Congo station was unable to come up with "a secure enough agent with the right access" to Lumumba before the potency of the biological material was no longer reliable.*

*The Church committee observed, however, that the CIA station in Leopoldville continued to maintain close contact with Congolese who expressed a desire to assassinate Lumumba. CIA officers encouraged and offered to aid these Congolese in their efforts against Lumumba, although there is no evidence that aid was ever provided for the specific purpose of assassination.*

*Fearing for his life, Lumumba was on the run. For a while he was protected from Mobutu by the United Nations, which, under considerable international pressure, had been forced to put some distance between itself and Washington. But on 1 December, Lumumba was taken into custody by Mobutu's troops. A 28 November CIA cable indicates that the Agency was involved in tracking down the charismatic Congo leader. The cable spoke of the CIA station working with the Congolese government to get the roads blocked and troops alerted to close a possible escape route of Lumumba's.*

*The United States had also been involved in the takeover of government by Mobutu-whom author and CIA-confidant Andrew Tully described as having been "discovered by the CIA." Mobutu detained Lumumba until 17 January 1961 when he transferred his prisoner into the hands of Moise Tshombe of Katanga province, Lumumba's bitter enemy. Lumumba was assassinated the same day.*

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*The government was now headed by none other than Moise Tshombe, a man called "Africa's most unpopular African" for his widely-recognized role in the murder of the popular Lumumba and for his use of white mercenaries, many of them South Africans and Rhodesians, during his secession attempt in Katanga. Tshombe defended the latter action by explaining that his troops would not fight without white officers.*

*Tshombe once again called upon his white mercenary army, numbering 400 to 500 men, and the CIA called upon its own mercenaries as well, a band which included Americans, Cuban-exile veterans of the Bay of Pigs, Rhodesians, and South Africans, the latter having been recruited with the help of the South African government. "Bringing in our own animals" was the way one CIA operative described the operation.*

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*The concluding tune for the musical chairs was played in November, when Joseph Mobutu overthrew Tshombe and Kasavubu. Mobutu, later to adopt the name Mobutu Sese Seko, has ruled with a heavy dictatorial hand ever since.*

*In the final analysis, it mattered precious little to the interests of the US government whether the forces it had helped defeat were really "communist" or not, by whatever definition. The working premise was that there was now fixed in power, over a more-or-less unified Congo, a man who would be more co-operative with the CIA in its African adventures and with Western capital, and less accessible to the socialist bloc, than the likes of Lumumba, ... et al. would have been. The CIA has chalked this one up as a victory.*

*What the people of the Congo (now Zaire) won is not clear. Under Mobutu, terror and repression became facts of daily life, civil liberties and other human rights were markedly absent. The country remains one of the poorest to be found anywhere despite its vast natural riches. Mobutu, however, is reputed to be one of the richest heads of state in the world.*

*William Atwood, US Ambassador to Kenya in 1964-65, who played a part in the hostage negotiations, also saw the US role in the Congo in a positive light. Bemoaning African suspicions toward American motives there, he wrote: "It was hard to convince people that we had provided the Congo with \$420 million in aid since independence just to prevent chaos; they couldn't believe any country could be that altruistic."*

*Atwood's comment is easier to understand when one realizes that the word 'chaos' has long been used by American officials to refer to a situation over which the United States has insufficient control to assure that someone distinctly pro-Western will remain in, or come to, power.*

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