

High School English Emergency Sub Binder

Emergency sub plans for high school English, grades 9 to 12. The sub needs no English background: every step is on the page.

PREVIEW

What is included

- 7 front pages: binder cover, important information, note to the sub, the filled-in lesson plan, schedule, class list, how it went
- 9 activities with sub scripts and student pages (30 pages): 3 individual, 6 with a partner, a team or the whole class
- A Say this to the class script for every activity, star challenges for fast finishers, every answer in a key
- Each lesson activity lists its Common Core standards (the optional quiz game reviews)
- Color and ink-saver B&W, US Letter and A4

How it works

1. Leave the binder out. The lesson plan lists every activity with its page and minutes.
2. The sub reads the Say this to the class box word for word.
3. Students work from their own pages, with the steps on the page. The sub needs no English background: every answer is in the key.
4. No prep and no tech: print and go.

The 9 activities, 35 to 45 minutes each

1. **Quiet Reading**, 45 min SOLO: central idea and objective summary in an article; theme, complex characters and a flashback in a story
2. **The Proofreader's Desk**, 40 min SOLO: editing grammar and punctuation: agreement, pronoun case, parallel structure, splices, colons, modifiers, usage
3. **Writing Menu**, 45 min SOLO: argument with a claim and counterclaim, a narrative scene with pacing, a literary analysis paragraph with quotations
4. **Partner Check**, 40 min PAIRS: rhetorical appeals, figurative language, irony, sentence and clause types, roots, connotation and point of view
5. **The Audio Tour**, 40 min PAIRS: writing for a listener: audience and purpose, a hook, short clear sentences, tone, a closing that guides
6. **English Puzzle Tournament**, 41 min TEAMS: Greek and Latin roots, literary and rhetorical devices, analogies, anagrams and other word logic
7. **The Spirit Week Slogan Mix-Up**, 40 min TEAMS: close reading of rhetoric: identifying alliteration, anaphora, chiasmus, hyperbole and rhetorical questions
8. **Which Sentence Wins? Stand-Off**, 40 min WHOLE CLASS: style and revision: concise, precise and active sentences, parallel structure, tone, evidence worked in
9. **Whiteboard Quiz Game**, 35 min WHOLE CLASS: a review of this binder: the two readings, editing, literary and rhetorical devices, speaking and writing

What this preview shows: the note to the substitute, the lesson plan, the other front pages, one page of every activity, a sub script, four more student pages and one ink-saver page. Every product page is watermarked, and no answer key is shown. The full binder has 37 pages.



Note to the Substitute

High school English, grades 9 to 12 · 9 one-period activities · no prep, no English background needed

Thank you for covering my class

The front pages (important information, lesson plan, schedule, class list) are filled in for today. After them come 9 English activities: the first 3 are individual work, the other 6 are for partners, teams or the whole class. Each one fills most or all of a period of 40 to 55 minutes, runs from the printout alone, and carries its own texts and answer key, so you never teach anything new. Everything reviews high school English (reading, grammar, argument, narrative and analytical writing, rhetoric and speaking), all on paper.

Texts and talk: Every text is original, except two short labeled lines from a famous old play and a famous old novel. Discussion stays on the texts and nobody shares personal stories; a student who is upset goes to the school counselor or another trusted adult.

The small Common Core line under the focus line of every activity except the review game is for you: the grades 9 and 10 codes, each matched by a grades 11 and 12 standard with the same number in the same skill area (RL.9-10.2 and RL.11-12.2, for example).

The first page of every activity is your script. The box marked **Say this to the class** is written to be read aloud word for word. Every answer is in a key on the script page (for the logic mystery, on the page right after the script). Keep those pages with you and hand out only the student pages. Every student worksheet has a **Challenge** box for early finishers (in the logic mystery, the bonus question on the slip).

The 9 activities

- **Quiet Reading** quiet single · 45 min · p. 7
- **The Proofreader's Desk** quiet single · 40 min · p. 12
- **Writing Menu** quiet single · 45 min · p. 15
- **Partner Check** pairs · 40 min · p. 19
- **The Audio Tour** pairs, project · 40 min · p. 22
- **English Puzzle Tournament** teams, puzzles · 41 min · p. 25
- **The Spirit Week Slogan Mix-Up** team logic · 40 min · p. 28
- **Which Sentence Wins? Stand-Off** whole class · 40 min · p. 32
- **Whiteboard Quiz Game** whole class, teams · 35 min · p. 35

If the class is loud

- Switch to a quiet single activity: Quiet Reading, The Proofreader's Desk or Writing Menu. Nobody needs to move.
- In the scored games (English Puzzle Tournament, Which Sentence Wins? Stand-Off and Whiteboard Quiz Game), the scoring keeps the class honest.
- If an activity is not working, stop it and switch. Every activity can start at any point in the period.
- The games are optional: a fun way to end the class or to use extra time.

Which activity when?



- A student says the class never learned this? Every activity reviews earlier work. Ask them to try the first problem with a partner, and leave me a note.
- The same activity in every period is fine: each class sees it once. The lesson plan (next page) lists all 9.
- A class that needs to settle: start with a quiet single activity. A restless class: a group activity uses the energy.
- Short period? These fit: Whiteboard Quiz Game (35 min) and one reading of Quiet Reading (about 20 min).

Before you leave

Please fill in the How It Went page at the back. It takes two minutes and I read every word. Thank you!

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Lesson Plan

Filled in for today: 9 activities, 35 to 45 minutes each. Write the time of each period you use.

ACTIVITY	PLAN	PAGE
Quiet Reading Quiet single · about 45 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• One reading and its question sheet per student; fast finishers take the other • Silent reading and questions, about 20 minutes per reading • Read the answers out from the key, or collect for me	**p. 7**
The Proofreader's Desk Quiet single · about 40 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Hand out both case sheets; pencils only • Students find the one wrong sentence in each piece, name the mistake and fix it • Read the key out at the end, or collect for me	**p. 12**
Writing Menu Quiet single · about 45 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Three sheets on the desk: A Take a Side, B Write the Scene, C Analyze the Poem • Students choose one, write alone in silence, then check with the checklist • Check against the models on the script, or collect for me	**p. 15**
Partner Check Pairs · about 40 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Pairs: one Partner A sheet and one Partner B sheet • Both do row 1, then compare: the answers must match • Different answers? Talk it through together. The key is on the script	**p. 19**
The Audio Tour Pairs, project · about 40 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Pairs or threes, one Part 1 sheet and one Part 2 sheet per pair or group • Part 1: fix a weak museum audio tour script (keyed) • Part 2: write a 60-second tour stop for a place in the school, checked with the checklist	**p. 22**
English Puzzle Tournament Teams, puzzles · about 41 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Teams of 3 or 4, one puzzle sheet and one answer sheet per team • One round at a time, 1, 2 or 3 points per puzzle • Every answer is on the key. The key settles arguments	**p. 25**
The Spirit Week Slogan Mix-Up Team logic · about 40 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Teams of 3 or 4, one case file and one grid per team • Warm-up together on the board, then the case on their own • Teams hand in their slip; check it against the key and reveal	**p. 28**
Which Sentence Wins? Stand-Off Whole class · about 40 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• One sheet per student; everyone stays seated • Read a round, 20-second guess, count hands, then 60 seconds to decide and give a reason • One speaker per side, then read the answer from the key	**p. 32**
Whiteboard Quiz Game Whole class, teams · about 35 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Draw the 5 by 5 board (or tape up the board sheet); 3 to 5 teams • Teams take turns picking a category and value; you read the question • Right answer: points on the scoreboard. Optional, for the end of class	**p. 35**

Fast finishers

Any quiet single activity can follow any other activity: Quiet Reading (p. 7), The Proofreader's Desk (p. 12) and Writing Menu (p. 15).

Collect / leave for me

.....

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SUBSTITUTE BINDER

English · One Day · Grades 9 to 12

Teacher _____

Room _____

Grade and subject _____

School year _____

Everything a sub needs for today's English class is in this binder: the schedule, the class list, a filled-in lesson plan, and 9 one-period classroom activities that run from the printout alone, 3 for individual work and 6 for partners, teams or the whole class. Each one has a script, a Say This to the Class box and its own answer key, so the sub needs no English background and no technology.

Individual work

- Quiet Reading
- The Proofreader's Desk
- Writing Menu

Group activities

- Partner Check
- The Audio Tour
- English Puzzle Tournament
- The Spirit Week Slogan Mix-Up
- Which Sentence Wins? Stand-Off
- Whiteboard Quiz Game



Important Information

The page the sub reads first. Fill it in once and keep it current.

People to call

Office _____

Teacher next door _____

Nurse _____

Principal / admin _____

Tech help _____

Emergency procedures

Fire: exit and meeting point _____

Lockdown _____

Severe weather _____

Medical _____

Where the first aid kit is _____

Helpful students

_____

_____

_____

Students who need extra support

_____

_____

_____

Where things are

Attendance / how to take it _____

Paper, pencils, supplies _____

Hall passes _____

Copier, if the sub may use it _____

Class routines

Start of class _____

Bathroom _____

Phones _____

End of class _____

Seating and groups

Seating chart is _____

Groups for group work _____

Students who should not sit together _____

Technology and passes

Classroom or other room for today _____

Laptops or tablets: allowed when _____

Computer or board login _____

Students who leave the room (time, why) _____

Anything else today

_____

_____

_____

Did this binder work well for your class? A quick review helps other teachers find it and earns you TpT credits. Thank you!

Schedule of the Day

Write the times in. Cross out or rename any period to match the school's day, then write the activity for each class.

TIME	PERIOD	CLASS / ROOM	ACTIVITY AND PAGE
____ to ____	Homeroom / attendance		
____ to ____	Period 1		
____ to ____	Period 2		
____ to ____	*Break*		
____ to ____	Period 3		
____ to ____	Period 4		
____ to ____	*Lunch*		
____ to ____	Period 5		
____ to ____	Period 6		
____ to ____	Period 7		
____ to ____	Dismissal		
____ to ____			

The activities

ACTIVITY	WHAT IT PRACTICES	STYLE	TIME	PAGE
Quiet Reading	central idea and objective summary in an article; theme, complex characters and a flashback in a story	Quiet single	45 min	p. 7
The Proofreader's Desk	editing grammar and punctuation: agreement, pronoun case, parallel structure, splices, colons, modifiers, usage	Quiet single	40 min	p. 12
Writing Menu	argument with a claim and counterclaim, a narrative scene with pacing, a literary analysis paragraph with quotations	Quiet single	45 min	p. 15
Partner Check	rhetorical appeals, figurative language, irony, sentence and clause types, roots, connotation and point of view	Pairs	40 min	p. 19
The Audio Tour	writing for a listener: audience and purpose, a hook, short clear sentences, tone, a closing that guides	Pairs, project	40 min	p. 22
English Puzzle Tournament	Greek and Latin roots, literary and rhetorical devices, analogies, anagrams and other word logic	Teams, puzzles	41 min	p. 25
The Spirit Week Slogan Mix-Up	close reading of rhetoric: identifying alliteration, anaphora, chiasmus, hyperbole and rhetorical questions	Team logic	40 min	p. 28
Which Sentence Wins? Stand-Off	style and revision: concise, precise and active sentences, parallel structure, tone, evidence worked in	Whole class	40 min	p. 32
Whiteboard Quiz Game	a review of this binder: the two readings, editing, literary and rhetorical devices, speaking and writing	Whole class, teams	35 min	p. 35

Class List and Dismissal

Names, what a sub must know, and how every student goes home. Check Here at the start and Gone at the end.

B bus (write the number) W walks P picked up (write who) A after-school program O other

#	STUDENT NAME	NOTES (ALLERGIES, NEEDS, HELPFUL, LEAVES EARLY)	HOME	BUS # / PICKED UP BY / PROGRAM	HERE	GONE
1					☐	☐
2					☐	☐
3					☐	☐
4					☐	☐
5					☐	☐
6					☐	☐
7					☐	☐
8					☐	☐
9					☐	☐
10					☐	☐
11					☐	☐
12					☐	☐
13					☐	☐
14					☐	☐
15					☐	☐
16					☐	☐
17					☐	☐
18					☐	☐
19					☐	☐
20					☐	☐
21					☐	☐
22					☐	☐
23					☐	☐
24					☐	☐
25					☐	☐
26					☐	☐
27					☐	☐
28					☐	☐
29					☐	☐
30					☐	☐

How It Went

For you to leave for me. Two minutes: check the boxes and go.

Today

Date _____ Period(s) _____

Activities used _____

Sub name _____

The class

- ☐ Great, no problems
- ☐ Fine, a little loud
- ☐ Hard work, see notes
- ☐ Finished the activity
- ☐ Stopped early (time)
- ☐ Used a second activity

Stars of the day

Students who helped, led a group well, or were a good sport:

_____

_____

_____

Work collected

_____

_____

Notes

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

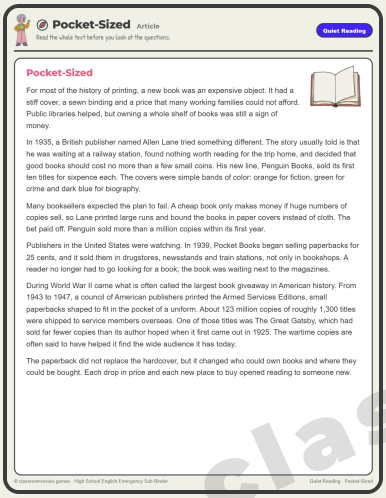
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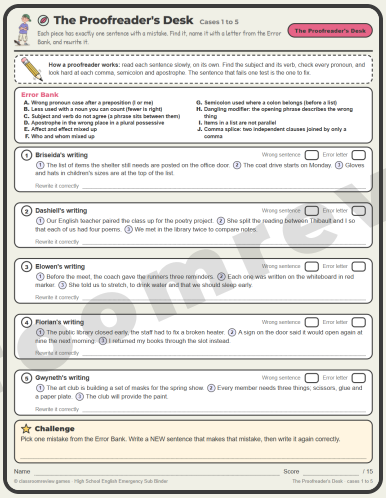
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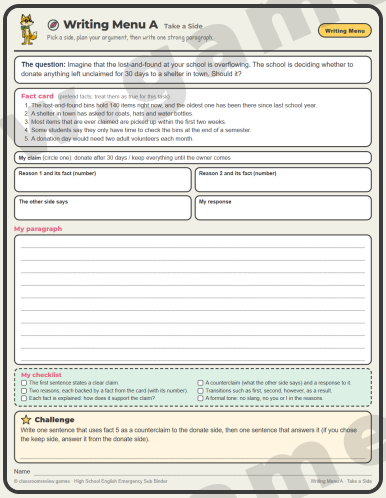
ONE PAGE OF EVERY ACTIVITY



1. Quiet Reading, 45 min (solo)



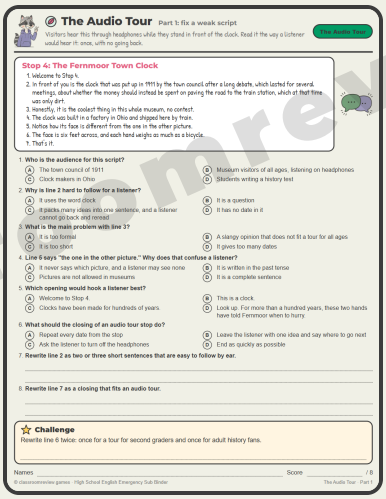
2. The Proofreader's Desk, 40 min (solo)



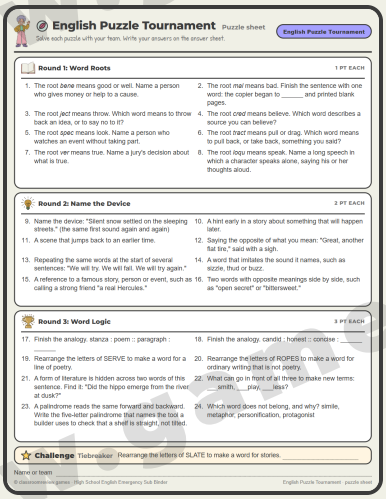
3. Writing Menu, 45 min (solo)



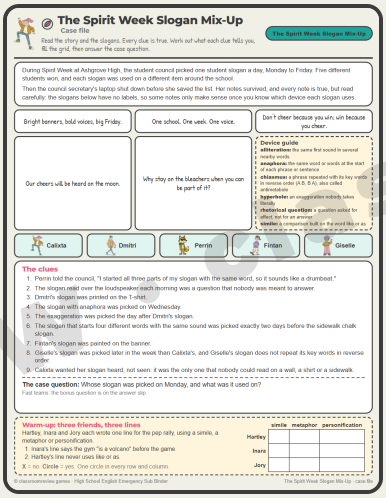
4. Partner Check, 40 min (pairs)



5. The Audio Tour, 40 min (pairs)



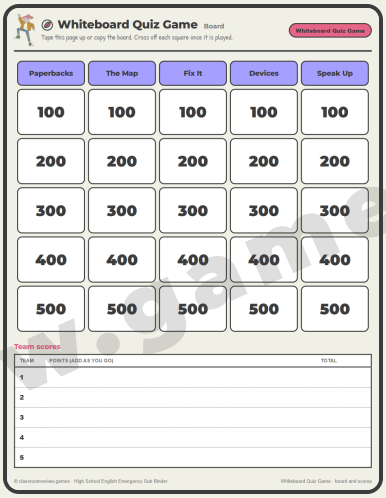
6. English Puzzle Tournament, 41 min (teams)



7. The Spirit Week Slogan Mix-Up, 40 min (teams)



8. Which Sentence Wins? Stand-Off, 40 min (whole class)



9. Whiteboard Quiz Game, 35 min (whole class)

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Every activity also has a sub script with a Say this to the class box



The Spirit Week Slogan Mix-Up

Sub script: a team logic mystery with reading clues

One period · teams of 3 or 4

This activity practices: close reading of rhetoric: identifying alliteration, anaphora, chiasmus, hyperbole and rhetorical questions
Common Core: RI.9-10.6 (purpose and rhetoric), L.9-10.5 (figurative language and nuance)

SAY THIS TO THE CLASS

"The student council lost its list of this week's winning slogans, and your team rebuilds it from the notes. Read the slogans carefully first, because some clues only make sense once you know each slogan's device. First I show you a short warm-up on the board."

Materials

- Teams of 3 or 4. Each team gets one case file and one grid sheet (the grid sheet has the answer slip).
- Pencils (erasers help) and the board for the warm-up.
- Jobs: **reader** (reads the clues out), **device expert** (matches each slogan to its device with the device guide), **marker** (the only one who writes in the grid) and **recorder** (fills in the slip).
- Keep this page and the next one: together they are your key.

Run it (40 minutes)

1. **Set up.** Make the teams, hand out the sheets. 3 min
2. **Read the story and the five slogans.** A volunteer reads them out loud. 4 min
3. **Warm-up together** on the board, as shown below. 6 min
4. **Teams solve the case.** Walk around. After about 10 minutes, give a hint from the next page to any team that is stuck. Fast teams answer the bonus question. 22 min
5. **Reveal.** Collect the slips, then read the answer and the full solution from the key. 5 min

The warm-up: teach the grid (6 minutes)

Draw this grid on the board. Students have the same one on their case file. Hartley, Inara and Jory each wrote one line for the pep rally, using a simile, a metaphor or personification. Read the two clues:

1. **Inara's line says the gym "is a volcano" before the game.**
2. **Hartley's line never uses like or as.**

Then show it step by step:

1. Clue 1 first: saying the gym IS a volcano, with no like or as, is a metaphor. Circle Inara under metaphor. A circle means the rest of that row and that column get an X.
2. Clue 2: a simile always uses like or as, so Hartley did not write the simile. Only the simile and personification are left, so Hartley has personification and Jory the simile. Circle both.
3. Check it against both clues out loud.

The two rules to say out loud: one circle in every row and every column of each small grid; and in this case, decide what a clue really tells you (which device, which item) before you mark the grid. An X means no, a circle means yes.

	simile	metaphor	personification
Hartley			
Inara			
Jory			

Answer: Hartley, personification; Inara, metaphor; Jory, simile.

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The Proofreader's Desk

Cases 1 to 5

Each piece has exactly one sentence with a mistake. Find it, name it with a letter from the Error Bank, and rewrite it.

The Proofreader's Desk

How a proofreader works: read each sentence slowly, on its own. Find the subject and its verb, check every pronoun, and look hard at each comma, semicolon and apostrophe. The sentence that fails one test is the one to fix.

Error Bank

- **A.** Wrong pronoun case after a preposition (I or me)
- **B.** Less used with a noun you can count (fewer is right)
- **C.** Subject and verb do not agree (a phrase sits between them)
- **D.** Apostrophe in the wrong place in a plural possessive
- **E.** Affect and effect mixed up
- **F.** Who and whom mixed up
- **G.** Semicolon used where a colon belongs (before a list)
- **H.** Dangling modifier: the opening phrase describes the wrong thing
- **I.** Items in a list are not parallel
- **J.** Comma splice: two independent clauses joined by only a comma

1 Briseida's writing

Wrong sentence ☐ Error letter ☐

(1) The list of items the shelter still needs are posted on the office door. (2) The coat drive starts on Monday. (3) Gloves and hats in children's sizes are at the top of the list.

Rewrite it correctly .....

2 Dashiell's writing

Wrong sentence ☐ Error letter ☐

(1) Our English teacher paired the class up for the poetry project. (2) She split the reading between Thibault and I so that each of us had four poems. (3) We met in the library twice to compare notes.

Rewrite it correctly .....

3 Elowen's writing

Wrong sentence ☐ Error letter ☐

(1) Before the meet, the coach gave the runners three reminders. (2) Each one was written on the whiteboard in red marker. (3) She told us to stretch, to drink water and that we should sleep early.

Rewrite it correctly .....

4 Florian's writing

Wrong sentence ☐ Error letter ☐

(1) The public library closed early, the staff had to fix a broken heater. (2) A sign on the door said it would open again at nine the next morning. (3) I returned my books through the slot instead.

Rewrite it correctly .....

5 Gwyneth's writing

Wrong sentence ☐ Error letter ☐

(1) The art club is building a set of masks for the spring show. (2) Every member needs three things; scissors, glue and a paper plate. (3) The club will provide the paint.

Rewrite it correctly .....

★ Challenge

Pick one mistake from the Error Bank. Write a NEW sentence that makes that mistake, then write it again correctly.

.....

Name ..... Score ..... / 15

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Writing Menu A Take a Side

Pick a side, plan your argument, then write one strong paragraph.

Writing Menu

The question: Imagine that the lost-and-found at your school is overflowing. The school is deciding whether to donate anything left unclaimed for 30 days to a shelter in town. Should it?

Fact card (pretend facts: treat them as true for this task)

1. The lost-and-found bins hold 140 items right now, and the oldest one has been there since last school year.
2. A shelter in town has asked for coats, hats and water bottles.
3. Most items that are ever claimed are picked up within the first two weeks.
4. Some students say they only have time to check the bins at the end of a semester.
5. A donation day would need two adult volunteers each month.

My claim (circle one): donate after 30 days / keep everything until the owner comes

Reason 1 and its fact (number)	Reason 2 and its fact (number)

The other side says	My response

My paragraph

My checklist

- ☐ The first sentence states a clear claim.
- ☐ Two reasons, each backed by a fact from the card (with its number).
- ☐ Each fact is explained: how does it support the claim?
- ☐ A counterclaim (what the other side says) and a response to it.
- ☐ Transitions such as first, second, however, as a result.
- ☐ A formal tone: no slang, no you or I in the reasons.

☆ Challenge

Write one sentence that uses fact 5 as a counterclaim to the donate side, then one sentence that answers it (if you chose the keep side, answer it from the donate side).

Name

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Partner Check

Partner A

Circle one choice in each row, then compare with your partner. The answers should be the same. If not, talk it through.

Partner Check

1. RHETORICAL APPEAL
The new bus route is two miles shorter, so each trip will save about ten minutes.
ethos · pathos · logos
Why? (a few words) .....
☐ Same as my partner

2. RHETORICAL APPEAL
I have repaired bicycles in this town for twenty years, so trust me: check your brakes every spring.
ethos · pathos · logos
Why? (a few words) .....
☐ Same as my partner

3. FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE
After the power went out for three hours during the dance, the DJ said, "Well, that was a little less bright than planned."
hyperbole · understatement · simile · personification
Why? (a few words) .....
☐ Same as my partner

4. FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE
"All the world's a stage" (William Shakespeare, As You Like It, about 1599)
simile · metaphor · hyperbole · onomatopoeia
Why? (a few words) .....
☐ Same as my partner

5. IRONY
Viewers know the treasure map is a fake, but the hero spends all his savings to buy it.
verbal irony · situational irony · dramatic irony
Why? (a few words) .....
☐ Same as my partner

6. SENTENCE TYPE
When the rain stopped, the players returned to the field, and the game started again.
simple · compound · complex · compound-complex
Why? (a few words) .....
☐ Same as my partner

7. THE UNDERLINED WORDS ARE
She kept reading <u>until the sun went down</u>.
an independent clause · a dependent clause · a prepositional phrase
Why? (a few words) .....
☐ Same as my partner

8. THE ROOT IN THE UNDERLINED PART MEANS
de<u>scribe</u>, in<u>scribe</u>, <u>scribble</u>
write · see · carry · speak
Why? (a few words) .....
☐ Same as my partner

9. CONNOTATION OF THE UNDERLINED WORD
The <u>thrifty</u> shopper compared prices before buying a coat.
positive · negative · neutral
Why? (a few words) .....
☐ Same as my partner

10. POINT OF VIEW
Saoirse hoped no one could see her hands shaking; she had no idea what the judges were thinking.
first person · second person · third person limited · third person omniscient
Why? (a few words) .....
☐ Same as my partner

Challenge

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times" (Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities, 1859)

antithesis · alliteration · rhetorical question

Compare again. Then, together, write your own example on the back.

My name ..... Partner .....

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English Puzzle Tournament

Puzzle sheet

Solve each puzzle with your team. Write your answers on the answer sheet.

English Puzzle Tournament

Round 1: Word Roots

1 PT EACH

1. The root *bene* means good or well. Name a person who gives money or help to a cause.
2. The root *mal* means bad. Finish the sentence with one word: the copier began to _____ and printed blank pages.
3. The root *ject* means throw. Which word means to throw back an idea, or to say no to it?
4. The root *cred* means believe. Which word describes a source you can believe?
5. The root *spec* means look. Name a person who watches an event without taking part.
6. The root *tract* means pull or drag. Which word means to pull back, or take back, something you said?
7. The root *ver* means true. Name a jury's decision about what is true.
8. The root *loqu* means speak. Name a long speech in which a character speaks alone, saying his or her thoughts aloud.

Round 2: Name the Device

2 PT EACH

9. Name the device: "Silent snow settled on the sleeping streets." (the same first sound again and again)
10. A hint early in a story about something that will happen later.
11. A scene that jumps back to an earlier time.
12. Saying the opposite of what you mean: "Great, another flat tire," said with a sigh.
13. Repeating the same words at the start of several sentences: "We will try. We will fall. We will try again."
14. A word that imitates the sound it names, such as sizzle, thud or buzz.
15. A reference to a famous story, person or event, such as calling a strong friend "a real Hercules."
16. Two words with opposite meanings side by side, such as "open secret" or "bittersweet."

Round 3: Word Logic

3 PT EACH

17. Finish the analogy. stanza : poem :: paragraph : _____
18. Finish the analogy. candid : honest :: concise : _____
19. Rearrange the letters of SERVE to make a word for a line of poetry.
20. Rearrange the letters of ROPES to make a word for ordinary writing that is not poetry.
21. A form of literature is hidden across two words of this sentence. Find it: "Did the hippo emerge from the river at dusk?"
22. What can go in front of all three to make new terms: ___smith, ___play, ___less?
23. A palindrome reads the same forward and backward. Write the five-letter palindrome that names the tool a builder uses to check that a shelf is straight, not tilted.
24. Which word does not belong, and why? simile, metaphor, personification, protagonist

Challenge Tiebreaker Rearrange the letters of SLATE to make a word for stories. _____

Name or team _____

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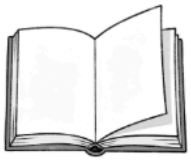


Pocket-Sized Article

Read the whole text before you look at the questions.

Quiet Reading

Pocket-Sized



For most of the history of printing, a new book was an expensive object. It had a stiff cover, a sewn binding and a price that many working families could not afford. Public libraries helped, but owning a whole shelf of books was still a sign of money.

In 1935, a British publisher named Allen Lane tried something different. The story usually told is that he was waiting at a railway station, found nothing worth reading for the trip home, and decided that good books should cost no more than a few small coins. His new line, Penguin Books, sold its first ten titles for sixpence each. The covers were simple bands of color: orange for fiction, green for crime and dark blue for biography.

Many booksellers expected the plan to fail. A cheap book only makes money if huge numbers of copies sell, so Lane printed large runs and bound the books in paper covers instead of cloth. The bet paid off. Penguin sold more than a million copies within its first year.

Publishers in the United States were watching. In 1939, Pocket Books began selling paperbacks for 25 cents, and it sold them in drugstores, newsstands and train stations, not only in bookshops. A reader no longer had to go looking for a book; the book was waiting next to the magazines.

During World War II came what is often called the largest book giveaway in American history. From 1943 to 1947, a council of American publishers printed the Armed Services Editions, small paperbacks shaped to fit in the pocket of a uniform. About 123 million copies of roughly 1,300 titles were shipped to service members overseas. One of those titles was The Great Gatsby, which had sold far fewer copies than its author hoped when it first came out in 1925. The wartime copies are often said to have helped it find the wide audience it has today.

The paperback did not replace the hardcover, but it changed who could own books and where they could be bought. Each drop in price and each new place to buy opened reading to someone new.

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In the full binder

A whole English sub day, planned and ready to print.

37 pages in color and ink-saver B&W, US Letter and A4

9 activities of 35 to 45 minutes, one per class period

7 front pages: note to the sub, lesson plan, schedule, class list

3 + 6 individual activities + partner, team and whole-class activities

Use it your way

- A sudden sick day: emergency sub plans that are ready before you need them.
- Any high school English class, grades 9 to 12: every activity fits a 40 to 55 minute period. Reading, writing, editing, rhetoric and word work, all on paper.
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