

We were a terrible class. Every class likes to remember that it was pure hellion, but the thirty of us who started under Miss Gallagher at the Down School near the Buick garage really were terrible. We came along just when the argument between the phonics people and the associationists was at its height. We went at reading for three years by the word-recognition method and then in the fourth grade the teacher insisted that we learn to read all over again by sounds. We were also caught in the controversy over manuscript and cursive writing. And we hit the crisis in arithmetic.

In the beginning of the fifth grade, we were forbidden to use brackets in finding the lowest common denominator. We had to go click-click to an equivalent fraction instead, seeing all the pieces of pie in our heads. This meant that nobody at home (after all, who had Gestaltists in their families?) could help us any more. But, willing sneaks, we drew brackets with furtive fingers on our pant legs.

Child-centered psychology burgeoned in our town at this time. We were allowed to do some ridiculous things in school because we wanted to. When our parents heard about them, they were furious at first. Then they decided that the school must know what it was doing, and they let us do the same things and worse at home.

Every year for six years we grew stupider and lazier and fresher and more obnoxious. No one ever separated any of us, or kept any of us back, or adulterated us with new blood. We were a terrible package, referred to by certain members of the PTA as "Les Misérables."

Then came the seventh year and Miss Barracombie.

She was new to the school that year, so we did not have the usual case studies on her from previous classes. Her looks might

have given us a clue, but we had always known amateur, experiential teachers so we did not recognize the career teacher when we saw her. She was perhaps fifty, tall, square-shouldered, and erect; neither feminine nor mannish, merely healthy and strong. Her face was handsome but not pretty. She had no subtle expressions: she smiled outright, she frowned outright, or she concentrated. Her voice was not harsh but had a peculiar carrying quality, vibrating longer than most. Eugene Kent took off his hearing-aid after the first day.

She greeted us that day as no teacher ever had. No talk of adjustment here, no plea for growth, no challenge to find ourselves. She said:

"My name is Virginia Barracombie and it will be Miss Barracombie to you indefinitely. One of these days you will meet someone from the last school in which I taught. The worst that he tells you about me will be true. It's a far cry from child to man, and it's not through games that we get there. You and I are bound together in a contract for one year. I teach; you learn. Behave yourselves and pay attention and this will be one of the good years of your lives. You have a minute to prepare yourself with ruler, compass, pencil, and paper for a review of the meaning and use of decimals."

It was the shock treatment all right—but with economy, with the clarity of piano keys struck singly, above all with authority. We had neither the opportunity nor the mind to look across the aisles at each other until recess. We were at work in the first five minutes—we, who always had a period in which to get ready. It was a blow to our unit pride, but we were less cohesive after the long summer and temporarily distracted from getting together on what to do about it.

We thought at first that we were just going along with her in a

momentary tolerance. She was a novelty, and among teachers that was hard to find.

Then we found ourselves bound in a work routine. At that point some of us tried to bolt.

In its reactions to Miss Barracombie the class divided into four groups. Several of the nicer girls and a couple of the boys who had strict scholastic accountability to professional parents went into her camp almost immediately when they saw that she was systematic, skillful, and just. Another group, whose names and faces are always hard to remember, went along with her because they sensed that she was a stronger personality; that balking would be tiring, involve exposure of weakness, and end in failure. These two groups accounted for perhaps two-thirds of the class. In the remaining third were the Idiot rebels and the Hard-Nut rebels.

The Idiots moved in first, without seeing where they were going. For example:

Idiot: "Do we *have* to put our names on our compositions?" (looking around at the other Idiots for appreciative laughter).

Miss B.: "You don't *have* to."

Idiot (next day after papers had been passed back): "I didn't get my paper back. I have no grade."

Miss B.: "Did you expect one?"

Idiot: "You said we didn't *have* to put our names on them."

Miss B.: "That's right. You don't *have* to walk around with your eyes open, either."

The Idiot sat down, uneasy. That afternoon his name was up with the absentees who had to make up the composition.

The Idiots were beaten from the start. She was indifferent to petty annoyances, and they did not dare try big ones.

The Hard-Nuts, the long-time class heroes, waited more

patiently, seeking their own ground. Their particular dragon in the case of Miss Barracombie was her good sense, which forced an antagonist to assume a role so foolish as to threaten his status among his classmates. This forced the Hard-Nuts to try to operate outside the teaching periods, in the rather limited areas of truancy, ground rules, and personal relationships.

It was difficult to challenge her with truancy because there our parents were solidly on her side, and besides, the occasional absence or trumped-up tardiness of an individual did little to alter the steady civilizing routine. As for opportunities on the school grounds, Miss Barracombie supervised only in her turn, and was by some unexpected quirk more lenient than any of the other teachers, letting us proceed at games considerably rougher than we wished to be playing.

The worst of the Hard-Nuts was Lennie Sopol. He was big and tough and bearded already, very much in the know about engines, baseball statistics, and older women. He had a way of muttering wisecracks half under his breath when girls recited. At first they reached only to people in the surrounding seats. Then one day Lila Crocker went down the aisle, and Lennie said in a loud whisper that shook the room like an east wind.

"Oh, man. I wish I had that swing in my backyard!"

Miss Barracombie stopped listening to a girl at the study table. The girl stopped talking. Lila fled to the waste basket and back to her seat, her face scarlet.

The room became as silent as a tomb in a pyramid.

Miss Barracombie looked at Lennie for a long time, and he locked eyes with her, ready for a showdown.

"What are you thinking about, Lennie?" she asked at last, rather softly for her.

"Nothin'." He could say that one word as though it were the nastiest in the language. "Absolutely nothin'."

"Well, I'm thinking about something," she said, still calm and relaxed. "You come in at three and I'll tell you about it. In the meantime, stand up."

"What for? What'd I do?"

"Stand up, please."

Lennie hesitated. Again it was one of her simple inescapable requests. He slid out into the aisle and stood up.

Miss Barracombie went back to her work with the girl at the table. Lennie started to sit down once, but she gave him a steady eye and he straightened up again. He had to stand by his seat throughout the rest of the afternoon. We kept looking at him, waiting for him to say something. Lennie couldn't seem to think of anything to say.

She kept him after school forty-five minutes every day for six months. He never spoke out of turn again in class and he never missed a session with her. It seemed a heavy punishment for one remark, and we couldn't get over either her giving it or his taking it. When we asked him what he had to do, all he would say was "nothin'."

"For forty hours, Lennie?"

"Who's countin'? And whose business is it?"

Then one day Alice Rowe gave us the lowdown. She had been helping in the inner office when the intercom was open to Miss Barracombie's room.

"She's teaching him to read."

Nobody would believe her. "Lennie's in seventh grade," everybody said. "He knows how to read."

"No, he doesn't," Alice said. "I heard him stumbling over the littlest words up there. Who's ever heard him read in class?"

We tried to remember when we had heard Lennie read. He was a transfer to us in the fourth grade, and there hadn't been much oral reading since then.

"How does he do his other work?" we asked.

"Who says he does?"

No wonder Lennie couldn't fight her. She taught him in secret the one thing he needed to have before giving up cheating and pretending.

The truth was, no rebellion had a chance with her. She wasn't mean and she never struck anybody (although our parents queried us over and over again on this point, wanting, we thought, to be able to say, *Of course she has order! She whips them!*). No situation could come up that she would not know how to handle efficiently and without damage to her single drive: she would teach; we would learn.

Whatever we studied, we mastered. Of course, she knew the ones of us who could not connect with the main lines she was trolling, but she put out other lines for them and they mastered, too. Nobody was free not to learn. We were free to fail, but somehow a failure was not a separate thing; only a step in learning. She never assumed that we had achieved. She probed and exposed until she read it in the blood. A week later when we were not expecting it, she would check again. She was the only teacher whose grades on our report cards we never questioned. Nor would we let our indignant parents go to her. She knew.

This was no love affair between the class and Miss Barracombie, however. She was businesslike and not tender with us. She encouraged no intimacies, and the thought of confiding in her as we had in Miss Tondreau who used to love us in the third grade was wholly ridiculous. We were just different with her. When our special teachers came and Miss Barracombie left the

room, Eugene Kent would replace his hearing-aid, and we would be at once on the Plain of Esdrælon<sup>5</sup>, stalking a world of enemies. By the end of the period our specials would be limp and distraught.

We did no better left on our own. If Miss Barracombie stepped out of the room—something she wisely did rarely—we would have the ceiling. After all, we had been indulged for years. Thirty near-sinians don't slough that off in a few stretching months. We had never been convinced that discipline comes from within, and when the restraining presence was removed we reverted to the barbarians that we were.

Miss Barracombie never mentioned our behavior with other teachers or when she was out of the room, although the specials must have complained bitterly. It seemed to be part of her code that she was responsible when she was left with us and others were responsible when they took us. We liked that. Miss Barracombie did not lecture or make us feel guilty. There was nothing to lecture or feel guilty about. We behaved. We learned. We had to: it was the contract.

But the final lesson we learned from Miss Barracombie was one she did not try to teach us. It was during the last period. We were in the midst of a discussion on the use of quotation marks. The intercom box pinged on the wall and the principal said:

"A telegram has just arrived for you, Miss Barracombie. Will you send a boy down for it?"

She sent Herbert Harvey Bell. He was in the corner seat by the door. He went out running because she knew exactly how long it took to get to the office and back and he did not want to answer for loitering.

<sup>5</sup> *Annagardlon*

He returned with the telegram, gave it to her, and took his seat.

She opened the envelope calmly and neatly so as not to tear the inside sheet. Still reading it, she turned about slowly so that her back was toward the class. Her hands lowered. We could see that she was no longer looking at the telegram but at the bulletin board. She did not turn back to us. She kept looking at something on the board.

Then before the alerted, somehow apprehensive eyes of the class, Miss Barracombie began to grow smaller. It was in her shoulders first. They began to narrow, to go forward. Her back curved. Her head dropped. We waited, not knowing what to do. Herbert Harvey Bell seemed to feel the most responsible. He looked around at all of us with a question in his wide, stunned eyes. We had nothing for him. Herbert Harvey Bell pulled himself up from his seat and ran across the hall to the teacher there.

Lennie Sospel had started down from his seat, but when he saw the other teacher, Mrs. Hamilton, coming, he turned and went back up the aisle.

Mrs. Hamilton went up to Miss Barracombie and peered into her face. Then she bent to the telegram still in her hands.

"Oh, my dear," she said, putting her arm around Miss Barracombie. Miss Barracombie did not move. Her shoulders were gone, melted into her narrow back.

Mrs. Hamilton turned her in the direction of the door. Our teacher put both hands across her face and, huddled and small, walked out like a child under Mrs. Hamilton's arm.

No one breathed or moved. A few minutes later Mrs. Hamilton looked into our room.

"Miss Barracombie has lost someone dear to her, boys and girls. Try to finish the period quietly."

No one came near us for the rest of the afternoon, not even to dismiss us. But we did not behave as we usually did when left alone. Most of us took out our composition notebooks and pens. Some just sat there.

We were frightened—a little sad for Miss Barracombie, of course—but mainly frightened, and frightened for ourselves. If *she* could be struck down, who was so tall, so erect, with all things under control, what could not happen to the rest of us who never had any control on the inside, who had to be made by others to hold our shoulders back?

We were the best we had ever been until the bell rang that day. For a moment we could see our connection with adults.

Through a maze of equivalent fractions and common denominators we could see other people, huddled and shrinking, being led out of strange rooms. And their faces were ours.

*Teresa Feley*

Teresa Feley wrote for popular magazines during the second half of the twentieth century.



sounds like our group!

Repetition

the new ending curriculum pendulum

we were a terrible class. Every class likes to remember that it was pure hellion, but the thirty of us who started under Miss Gallagher at the Down School near the Buick garage really were terrible. We came along just when the argument between the phonics people and the associationists was at its height. We went at reading for three years by the word-recognition method and then in the fourth grade the teacher insisted that we learn to read all over again by sounds. We were also caught in the controversy over manuscript and cursive writing. And we hit the crisis in arithmetic.

In the beginning of the fifth grade, we were forbidden to use brackets in finding the lowest common denominator. We had to go click-click to an equivalent fraction instead, seeing all the pieces of pie in our heads. This meant that nobody at home (after all, who had Gestalists in their families?) could help us any more. But, willing sneaks, we drew brackets with furtive fingers on our pant legs.

Child-centered psychology burgeoned in our town at this time. We were allowed to do some ridiculous things in school because we wanted to. When our parents heard about them, they were furious at first. Then they decided that the school must know what it was doing, and they let us do the same things and worse at home. Major conflicts

Every year for six years we grew stupider and lazier and fresher and more obnoxious. No one ever separated any of us, or kept any of us back, or adulterated us with new blood. We were a terrible package, referred to by certain members of the PTA as "Les Misérables." Allusion

Then came the seventh year and Miss Barracombe. SHE FINE in She was new to the school that year, so we did not have the usual case studies on her from previous classes. Her looks might

undivided territory

Teresa Teley

Characterization of Miss

have given us a clue, but we had always known amateur, experienced teachers so we did not recognize the career teacher when we saw her. She was perhaps fifty, tall, square-shouldered, and erect; neither feminine nor mannish, merely healthy and strong. Her face was handsome but not pretty. She had no subtle expressions: she smiled outright, she frowned outright, or she concentrated. Her voice was not harsh but had a peculiar carrying quality, vibrating longer than most. Eugene Kent took off his hearing-aid after the first day. HA-

She greeted us that day as no teacher ever had. No talk of adjustment here, no plea for growth, no challenge to find ourselves. She said:

"My name is Virginia Barracombe and it will be Miss Barracombe to you indefinitely. One of these days you will meet someone from the last school in which I taught. The worst that he tells you about me will be true. It's a far cry from child to man, and it's not through games that we get there. You and I are bound together in a contract for one year. I teach; you learn. We are

Behave yourselves and pay attention and this will be one of the good years of your lives. You have a minute to prepare yourself with ruler, compass, pencil, and paper for a review of the meaning and use of decimals." total snore!

It was the shock treatment all right—but with economy, with the clarity of piano keys struck singly, above all with authority. We had neither the opportunity (not the mind to look across the aisles at each other until recess. We were at work in the first five minutes—we, who always had a period in which to get ready. It was a blow to our unit pride, but we were less cohesive after the long summer and temporarily distracted from getting together on what to do about it.

We thought at first that we were just going along with her in a

15¢ Thoreau play about 1955

Personal treatment

getting in that bluff

stern punishment

stern punishment

quirks

momentary tolerance. She was a novelty, and among teachers that was hard to find.

Then we found ourselves bound in a work routine. At that point some of us tried to bolt ~~fight~~ ~~fight~~ ~~fight~~

In its reactions to Miss Barracombie the class divided into four groups. Several of the nicer girls and a couple of the boys who had strict scholastic accountability to professional parents went into her camp almost immediately when they saw that she was systematic, skillful, and just. Another group whose names and faces are always hard to remember, went along with her because they sensed that she was a stronger personality; that balking would be tiring, involve exposure of weakness, and end in failure. These two groups accounted for perhaps two-thirds of the class. In the remaining third were the Idiot rebels and the Hard-Nut rebels.

The Idiots moved in first, without seeing where they were going. For example:

Idiot: "Do we have to put our names on our compositions?" (looking around at the other Idiots for appreciative laughter).

Miss B.: "You don't have to."  
Idiot (next day after papers had been passed back): "I didn't get my paper back. I have no grade."  
Miss B.: "Did you expect one?"

Idiot: "You said we didn't have to put our names on them."  
Miss B.: "That's right. You don't have to walk around with your eyes open, either." **SLAM!**

The Idiot sat down, unasily. That afternoon his name was up with the absentees who had to make up the composition.

The Idiots were beaten from the start. She was indifferent to petty annoyances, and they did not dare try big ones.

The Hard-Nuts, the long-time class heroes, waited more

think  
after  
rock  
diction  
humor  
sarcasm  
not work -  
not all -  
#4

Teresa Teley

thought planned carefully

patiently, seeking their own ground. Their particular dragon in the case of Miss Barracombie was her good sense, which forced an antagonist to assume a role so foolish as to threaten his status among his classmates. This forced the Hard-Nuts to try to operate outside the teaching periods, in the rather limited areas of truancy, ground rules, and personal relationships.

It was difficult to challenge her with truancy because there our parents were solidly on her side, and besides, the occasional absence or trumped-up tardiness of an individual did little to alter the steady civilizing routine. As for opportunities on the school grounds, Miss Barracombie supervised only in her turn, and was by some unexpected quirk more lenient than any of the other teachers, letting us proceed at games considerably rougher than we wished to be playing.

The worst of the Hard-Nuts was Lennie Sopol. He was big and tough and bearded already, very much in the know about engines, baseball statistics, and older women. He had a way of muttering wisecracks half under his breath when girls recited. At first they reached only to people in the surrounding seats. Then one day Lila Crocker went down the aisle, and Lennie said in a loud whisper that shook the room like an east wind.

"Oh, man. I wish I had that swing in my backyard!" **BUSTED!**  
Miss Barracombie stopped listening to a girl at the study table. The girl stopped talking. Lila fled to the waste basket and back to her seat, her face scarlet.

The room became as silent as a tomb in a pyramid. **EVERYTHING FREEZES!**  
Miss Barracombie looked at Lennie for a long time, and he locked eyes with her, ready for a showdown. **SMILE**

"What are you thinking about, Lennie?" she asked at last, rather softly for her.

should know yourself for it.

and something else to save face

Idiot  
miss B's  
eyes

*more* "Nothin'." He could say that one word as though it were the nastiest in the language. "Absolutely nothin'."

"Well, I'm thinking about something," she said, still calm and relaxed. "You come in at three and I'll tell you about it. In the meantime, stand up."

*always* "What for? What'd I do?" *tone*  
"Stand up, please."

Lennie hesitated. Again it was one of her simple inescapable requests. He slid out into the aisle and stood up. *she won*

Miss Barracombe went back to her work with the girl at the table. Lennie started to sit down once, but she gave him a steady eye and he straightened up again. He had to stand by his seat throughout the rest of the afternoon. We kept looking at him, waiting for him to say something; Lennie couldn't seem to think of anything to say. *warning give going up*

*man - she is good!* She kept him after school forty-five minutes every day for six months. He never spoke out of turn again in class and he never missed a session with her. It seemed a heavy punishment for one remark, and we couldn't get over either her giving it or his taking it. When we asked him what he had to do, all he would say was "nothin'." *something up -*

"For forty hours, Lennie?"  
"Who's countin'? And whose business is it?" *defensive*  
Then one day Alice Rowe gave us the lowdown. She had been helping in the inner office when the intercom was open to Miss Barracombe's room.

"She's teaching him to read." *SPR*  
"Nobody would believe her. 'Lennie's in seventh grade,' everybody said. 'He knows how to read.'" *not always true!*  
"No, he doesn't," Alice said. "I heard him stumbling over the fittest words up there. Who's ever heard him read in class?"

*Children amazed at Lennie's situation -*

We tried to remember when we had heard Lennie read. He was a transfer to us in the fourth grade, and there hadn't been much oral reading since then.

"How does he do his other work?" we asked.  
"Who says he does?"

No wonder Lennie couldn't fight her. She taught him in secret the one thing he needed to have before giving up cheating and pretending. *giving him what he needed*

The truth was, no rebellion had a chance with her. She wasn't mean and she never struck anybody (although our parents queried us over and over again on this point, wanting, we thought, to be able to say, *Of course she has order! She whips them!*).

No situation could come up that she would not know how to handle efficiently and without damage to her single drive: she would teach; we would learn. *contact successful*  
Whatever we studied, we mastered. Of course, she knew the

ones of us who could not connect with the main lines she was trolling, but she put out other lines for them and they mastered, too. Nobody was free not to learn. We were free to fail, but somehow a failure was not a separate thing, only a step in learning. She never assumed that we had achieved. She probed and exposed until she read it in the blood. A week later when we were not expecting it, she would check again. She was the only teacher whose grades on our report cards we never questioned. Nor would we let our indignant parents go to her. She knew.

*more of same* This was no love affair between the class and Miss Barracombe, however. She was businesslike and not tender with us. She encouraged no intimacies, and the thought of confiding in her as we had in Miss Tondreau who used to love us in the third grade was wholly ridiculous. We were just different with her. When our special teachers came and Miss Barracombe left the

*functional and*

*looped material*



go back to Hellions

Monkey's

no self-discipline at all-

to take the other features

Time Shift

room, Eugene Kent would replace his hearing-aid, and we would be at once on the Plain of Esdras<sup>5</sup>, stalking a world of enemies. By the end of the period our specials would be limp and distraught.

We did no better left on our own. If Miss Barracombie stepped out of the room—something she wisely did rarely—we would have the ceiling. After all, we had been indulged for years. Thirty near-sinians don't slough that off in a few stretching months. We had never been convinced that discipline comes from within, and when the restraining presence was removed we reverted to the barbarians that we were.

Miss Barracombie never mentioned our behavior with other teachers or when she was out of the room, although the specials must have complained bitterly. It seemed to be part of her code that she was responsible when she was left with us and others were responsible when they took us. We liked that. Miss Barracombie did not lecture or make us feel guilty. There was nothing to lecture or feel guilty about. We behaved. We learned. We had to: it was the contract. SHIFT

But the final lesson we learned from Miss Barracombie was one she did not try to teach us. It was during the last period. We were in the midst of a discussion on the use of quotation marks. The intercom box pinged on the wall and the principal said: "A telegram has just arrived for you, Miss Barracombie. Will you send a boy down for it?"

She sent Herbert Harvey Bell. He was in the corner seat by the door. He went out running because she knew exactly how long it took to get to the office and back and he did not want to answer for loitering.

Spill Under firm control-

<sup>5</sup> Amagaddon

He returned with the telegram, gave it to her, and took his seat. SUSPENSE

She opened the envelope calmly and neatly so as not to tear the inside sheet. Still reading it, she turned about slowly so that her back was toward the class. Her hands lowered. We could see that she was no longer looking at the telegram but at the bulletin board. She did not turn back to us. She kept looking at something on the board. SOMETHING VERY WRONG-

Then before the alerted, somehow apprehensive eyes of the class, Miss Barracombie began to grow smaller. It was in her shoulders first. They began to narrow, to go forward. Her back curved. Her head dropped. We waited, not knowing what to do. Herbert Harvey Bell seemed to feel the most responsible. He looked around at all of us with a question in his wide, stumped eyes. We had nothing for him. Herbert Harvey Bell pulled himself up from his seat and ran across the hall to the teacher there.

Lennie Sopol had started down from his seat, but when he saw the other teacher, Mrs. Hamilton, coming, he turned and went back up the aisle.

Mrs. Hamilton went up to Miss Barracombie and peered into her face. Then she bent to the telegram still in her hands.

"Oh, my dear," she said, putting her arm around Miss Barracombie. Miss Barracombie did not move. Her shoulders were gone, melted into her narrow back.

Mrs. Hamilton turned her in the direction of the door. Our teacher put both hands across her face and, huddled and small, walked out like a child under Mrs. Hamilton's arm.

No one breathed or moved. A few minutes later Mrs. Hamilton looked into our room.

"Miss Barracombie has lost someone dear to her, boys and girls. Try to finish the period quietly."

physical shift

A LESSON IN DISCIPLINE

No one came near us for the rest of the afternoon, not even to dismiss us. But we did not behave as we usually did when left alone. Most of us took out our composition notebooks and pens. Some just sat there.

We were frightened—a little sad for Miss Barracombie, of course—but mainly frightened, and frightened for ourselves. If she could be struck down, who was so tall, so erect, with all things under control, what could not happen to the rest of us who never had any control on the inside, who had to be made by others to hold our shoulders back?

We were the best we had ever been until the bell rang that day. For a moment we could see our connection with adults.

Through a maze of equivalent factions and common denominators we could see other people, huddled and shrinking, being led out of strange rooms. And their faces were ours.

*Teresa Feley*

Teresa Feley wrote for popular magazines during the second half of the twentieth century.



Realize  
they could  
be hurt  
know  
their  
live changed  
forever

# “A Lesson in Discipline” ~ Test

## General Directions:

Read the directions for each section **VERY** carefully. Do **NOT** write on this test.

## Section 1: Matching

Match the item in the left column with the correct information in the right column. On your own paper, write the number and letter of your answer.

- |                         |   |                                  |   |                                   |   |                                   |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Miss Barrocombe      | 2. Alice Rowe                             | 3. Lennie Soppel                 | 4. Herbert Harvey Bell                            | 5. Ms. Hamilton                   | 6. Idiots   | 7. Hard-nuts                      |
| A. They wait patiently. | B. Can't read and misbehaves as a result. | C. Strict, traditional educator. | D. Attacks Miss B. without knowing how to attack. | E. Informs students about Lennie. | F. Gets the telegram from the office and delivers it to Miss B. | G. Leads Miss B. out of the room. |

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 8. Connotation                 | A. An exaggerated statement used especially as a figure of speech to heighten effect.  |
| 9. Denotation                  | B. The main idea or underlying meaning of a work.  |
| 10. Flat Character             | C. A comparison using <i>like</i> or <i>as</i> .   |
| 11. Round Character            | D. Uses I, me, we, us . . .  |
| 12. Theme                      | E. The literal or dictionary meaning of a word.  |
| 13. Simile                     | F. A character that expresses one or two superficial emotions.   |
| 14. Hyperbole                  | G. The emotional, imaginative, cultural, or traditional associations surrounding a word, as opposed to its strict, literal dictionary meaning. |
| 15. First Person Point of View | H. A character that expresses a wide range of emotions.  |

## Section 2: Fill in the blank

Fill in the blank with the correct vocabulary word. Each word will be used only once. There are context clues in the sentences, so read them very carefully. Write the number and the answer on your own paper. You do **NOT** need to write the complete sentence.

- Truancy      Trumped-up      Quirk(s)      Queried      Distracted      Loitering

16. Many students were highly \_\_\_\_\_ when they received their report cards.  
 17. There is no \_\_\_\_\_ in the halls during passing period.  
 18. The defendant was placed in prison on a \_\_\_\_\_ charge of murder.  
 19. Mrs. Janeway, a woman of many \_\_\_\_\_, bounced out the door in seventh period.

20. \_\_\_\_\_ is a offence punishable by SOS.  
21. Mrs. Janeway \_\_\_\_\_ the students for hours to make sure they knew their nouns.
- 

**Section 3: Short Answer**

Answer the following questions using complete sentences. Think through your responses **BEFORE** you begin to write. Write the number of the question and your answer on your own paper. You do **NOT** write the question. Remember, if I can't read it, it's wrong!

22. What is literature?  
23. Why doesn't the author give more details on Miss B's loss?  
24. What is the *theme* of "A Lesson in Discipline"?

# **“A Lesson in Discipline”**

## **Comprehension Exercise**

1. When Miss Barracombie came to the new school and announced her “contract”, the students divided into four groups. In each box below, describe those groups.


2. If you were a student in Miss Barracombie’s class, which of the four groups do you think you would fit in? Why?

3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of child-centered education?

Disadvantages	Advantages

4. On page 353, second column, the conversation is as follows:  
Idiot: "You said we didn't *have* to put our names on them."  
Miss Barracombie: "That's right, you don't *have* to walk around with

your eyes open either."

What is the point Miss Barracombie is trying to make?

point of view  
smart  
bold  
smart growth

silence  
growth ~  
growth ~

smart growth  
growth ~  
growth ~  
growth ~

growth ~  
growth ~

loitering  
distracted  
querried  
quirt  
trumped-up  
trunary

Vocabulary:  
"Lesson in Discipline" Teresa Foley

- 1st person point of view

- terrible class

- want to be remembered that way

- Miss Gallagher @ Down School

- near Buck garage

Q1: - child centered psychology

- growing quickly

- focus is on the child's needs, desires,

≠ individuality

- contrasted with content centered education

- basics are stressed

disadvantages

- allowed to do what they want

- parents followed school's example

- never separated students

- never failed them

advantages

- focus on child's

needs, desires ≡

individuality

- 7th grade ~ Miss Barrowcombe

- new to the school

- didn't know the ins & outs of the teacher

from the previous class

- looks like "... amateur, experimental teacher"

thinking shell-brand new ≡ unsure

"... not recognize as a career teacher"

one that <sup>has been</sup> ~~with~~ <sup>thus</sup> for years

- the teacher



2/3 of class

look up underlined words

7th grader point of view

- shock treatment

- ringing with authority

- scared them to death

- not look at each other until recess

- at work with 5 minutes

- completely new - blow to pride

- students see two things happening

1 - going along with her in a momentary tolerance ~ she was a novelty to them

2 - they were bound in a work routine

sound like prisoners

then some tried to bolt / misbehave

- class now divided into 4 groups due to miss B

1 - several girl couple of boys

- strict scholastic accountability to professional parents

- miss B systematic, skillful & just

2 - went along - faces & names hard to remember

- sensed she was a stranger

- fighting back would show their personality

3 - idiot rebels

- went at her without seeing where they were going

- Miss B remained perfectly calm
- in at 3 to discuss
- stood up rest of class time
- kept after 45 minutes everyday for 6 months
- never acted up in class
- never missed a session after school

Q6: What does this tell you about the room?  
 What does this tell you about the students' reaction to Lenne's comments?  
 - the room was completely solemn  
 - the students are fearful of Miss B

"The room became as silent as a tomb in a pyramid."  
 - smile

- all things stop
- embarrassed - Miss B ready for a shutdown
- comment about Ula Grecker shot the class
- muttered wisecracks under his breathe
- women "women"
- into engines, baseball stats, older
- big, tough, bearded in 7th grade
- worst of hard-nuts
- Lenne Soper
- lenient than others ~ rough games

information

- it was part of them before she believed they mastered the information

- always checking  $\hat{=}$  double checking

- grades were never questioned

- parents not allowed to go talk to her

- not in love w/ the teacher

- not tender

- not want intimacy

- they acted up for other teachers (leaving them)

limp  $\hat{=}$  distraught

- they behaved the same on their own

\* hyperbole

describes class as "near-simians"

"barbarians"

- they reverted back to their old selves when the disciplinary force was removed

- Miss B never discuss the class' behavior

- part of her code  $\sim$  responsibility

- they liked this

- they did what they had to for her

- the contact

- the final lesson not one she intended to teach

- what happened

- telegram

- Herbert Harvey Bell went to get it  $\sim$  ran

- bad news

Theme  
discipline must come from within oneself,  
not from other people

- seems to have matured them  
- possibly be more self disciplined in the future

Q10: How do you think the students' reaction to Miss B's tragedy might affect their behaviour in the future?

- best behaved that day  
- saw the connection with adults  
- saw that one person's misfortune could very easily be their own

so easily  
- always under control inside  
- what could happen to them  
- never under control inside  
- must have others to give them the discipline