

English 4
Distance Learning Assignments
Week #2 (April 27- May 1) **Due 5/8/2020**

Teacher: Mrs. Sprecksel

Student Office Hours

Zoom Meeting: Monday-Friday, 2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Use this link/ login information to join the meeting. It will be helpful if you have completed the day's work prior to the meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93054058447?pwd=b3ITclowUIZrVS85eHZ4UHVLc1Rjdz09>

Meeting ID: 930 5405 8447

Password: 7HrLvE

Email and/or phone appointments: Monday-Friday, 2:45 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Directions:

- Complete each assignment listed below.
- Assignments are listed by day, but you may work ahead if you choose.
- Assignments should take no more than 30 minutes per day.
- If you are able to participate in the Zoom meetings, please have the work for the assigned day completed prior to our meeting time, that way I can better help you with any questions you may have about the work.
- Assignments are graded and worth 6 lessons each (**30 lessons total**).
- You must earn at least 60% on each assignment in order to receive the lesson credits.
- Write neatly.
- Please staple all work together.

This week we will be working with a selection from the novel *The House of Mirth* by Edith Wharton.

Monday 4/27

Journal Response and Vocabulary Activity

Tuesday 4/28

Read and annotate *The House of Mirth* Excerpt from Chapter III. Use the annotation guide instructions.

Wednesday 4/22

Answer the **Think** and **Focus Questions** (StudySync p. 455-456)

Thursday 4/23

Character Study Activity and Questions

Friday 4/24

Written Response

The House of Mirth

Journal Response and Vocabulary Activity

Journal Response

Directions: Use the space below to answer the following question:

Mark Twain said, “What is the chief end of man?—to get rich. In what way?—dishonestly if we can; honestly if we must.” What do you think the quote means? Do you agree with what Twain is saying? Why or why not?

Vocabulary Activity

Directions: Use a dictionary (book or online resource) and write a definition for each vocabulary word listed.

Vocabulary Word	Definition
in bondage to	
petty cares	
wayfarer	
landed	
vindictiveness	
gorged	
effaced	
remittances	
desultory	
imbibed	

The House of Mirth
Annotation Guide W.S.

Directions: Use the following guidelines to annotate your text. You must mark your text in order to receive credit.

1. Highlight at least two sentences or passages that you have questions about. Enter your questions as annotations.
2. Highlight at least one passage that connects with something you already know and use the annotation tool to explain the connection.
3. Highlight the key characters in the excerpt and use the annotation tool to provide a brief description of what you know about them.
4. Highlight the key events and details in the passage and make annotations that explain the sequential order in which they occur. For example, Highlight: **"The remembrance roused a whole train of association, and she lay in the darkness reconstructing the past out of which her present had grown."** Annotation: **First key event because we learn that Lily's current situation is the result of her family losing their wealth.**
5. Highlight vocabulary words and explain what you think the words mean based on how they are used in the text.
6. Highlight any additional unfamiliar vocabulary. Use the annotation tool to make predictions about the meaning of these unfamiliar terms.
7. Highlight two examples that show how Lily reacts to her situation. Use the annotation tool to explain your reaction to what Lily is going through in these moments.

The House of Mirth

Excerpt from Chapter III

A world in which such things could be seemed a miserable place to Lily Bart; but then she had never been able to understand the laws of a universe which was so ready to leave her out of its calculations.

She began to undress without ringing for her maid, whom she had sent to bed. She had been long enough in bondage to other people's pleasure to be considerate of those who depended on hers, and in her bitter moods it sometimes struck her that she and her maid were in the same position, except that the latter received her wages more regularly.

As she sat before the mirror brushing her hair, her face looked hollow and pale, and she was frightened by two little lines near her mouth, faint flaws in the smooth curve of the cheek.

"Oh, I must stop worrying!" she exclaimed. "Unless it's the electric light——" she reflected, springing up from her seat and lighting the candles on the dressing-table.

She turned out the wall-lights, and peered at herself between the candle-flames. The white oval of her face swam out waveringly from a background of shadows, the uncertain light blurring it like a haze; but the two lines about the mouth remained.

Lily rose and undressed in haste.

"It is only because I am tired and have such **odious** things to think about," she kept repeating; and it seemed an added injustice that petty cares should leave a trace on the beauty which was her only defence against them.

But the odious things were there, and remained with her. She returned wearily to the thought of Percy Gryce, as a wayfarer picks up a heavy load and toils on after a brief rest. She was almost sure she had "landed" him: a few days' work and she would win her reward. But the reward itself seemed unpalatable just then: she could get no zest from the thought of victory. It would be a rest from worry, no more—and how little that would have seemed to her a few years earlier! Her ambitions had shrunk gradually in the **desiccating** air of failure. But why had she failed? Was it her own fault or that of destiny?

She remembered how her mother, after they had lost their money, used to say to her with a kind of fierce vindictiveness: "But you'll get it all back—you'll get it all back, with your face." ...The remembrance roused a whole train of association, and she lay in the darkness reconstructing the past out of which her present had grown.

A house in which no one ever dined at home unless there was "company"; a door-bell perpetually ringing; a hall-table showered with square envelopes which were opened in haste, and oblong envelopes which were allowed to gather dust in the depths of a bronze jar; a series of French and English maids giving warning amid a chaos of hurriedly-ransacked wardrobes and dress-closets; an equally changing dynasty of nurses and footmen; quarrels in the pantry, the kitchen and the drawing-room; **precipitate** trips to Europe, and returns with gorged trunks and days of interminable unpacking; semi-annual discussions as to where the summer should be spent, grey interludes of economy and brilliant reactions of expense—such was the setting of Lily Bart's first memories.

Ruling the turbulent element called home was the vigorous and determined figure of a mother still young enough to dance her ball-dresses to rags, while the hazy outline of a neutral-tinted father filled an intermediate space between the butler and the man who came to wind the clocks. Even to the eyes of infancy, Mrs. Hudson Bart had appeared young; but Lily could not recall the time when her father had not been bald and slightly stooping, with streaks of grey in his hair, and a tired walk. It was a shock to her to learn afterward that he was but two years older than her mother.

Lily seldom saw her father by daylight. All day he was "down town"; and in winter it was long after nightfall when she heard his fagged step on the stairs and his hand on the school-room door. He would kiss her in silence, and ask one or two questions of the nurse or the governess; then Mrs. Bart's maid would come to remind him that he was dining out, and he would hurry away with a nod to Lily. In summer, when he joined them for a Sunday at Newport or Southampton, he was even more **effaced** and silent than in winter. It seemed to tire him to rest, and he would sit for hours staring at the sea-line from a quiet corner of the verandah, while the clatter of his wife's existence went on unheeded a few feet off. Generally, however, Mrs. Bart and Lily went to Europe for the summer, and before the steamer was half way over Mr. Bart had dipped below the horizon. Sometimes his daughter heard him denounced for having neglected to forward Mrs. Bart's remittances; but for the most part he was never mentioned or thought of till his patient stooping figure presented itself on the New York dock as a buffer between the magnitude of his wife's luggage and the restrictions of the American custom-house.

In this desultory yet agitated fashion life went on through Lily's teens: a zig-zag broken course down which the family craft glided on a rapid current of amusement, tugged at by the underflow of a perpetual need—the need of more money. Lily could not recall the time when there had been money enough, and in some vague way her father seemed always to blame for the deficiency. It could certainly not be the fault of Mrs. Bart, who was spoken of by her friends as a "wonderful manager." Mrs. Bart was famous for the unlimited effect she produced on limited means; and to the lady and her acquaintances there was something heroic in living as though one were much richer than one's bank-book denoted.

Lily was naturally proud of her mother's aptitude in this line: she had been brought up in the faith that, whatever it cost, one must have a good cook, and be what Mrs. Bart called "decently dressed." Mrs. Bart's worst reproach to her husband was to ask him if he expected her to "live like a pig"; and his replying in the negative was always regarded as a justification for cabling to Paris for an extra dress or two, and telephoning to the jeweller that he might, after all, send home the turquoise bracelet which Mrs. Bart had looked at that morning.

Lily knew people who "lived like pigs," and their appearance and surroundings justified her mother's **repugnance** to that form of existence. They were mostly cousins, who inhabited dingy houses with engravings from Cole's Voyage of Life on the drawing-room walls, and **slatternly** parlour-maids who said "I'll go and see" to visitors calling at an hour when all right-minded persons are conventionally if not actually out. The disgusting part of it was that many of these cousins were rich, so that Lily imbibed the idea that if people lived like pigs it was from choice, and through the lack of any proper standard of conduct. This gave her a sense of reflected superiority, and she did not need Mrs. Bart's comments on the family frumps and misers to foster her naturally lively taste for splendour.

Lily was nineteen when circumstances caused her to revise her view of the universe.

The House of Mirth

Think and Focus Questions

Directions: Answer each part of the question with complete sentences.

Think Questions

1. At the beginning of the excerpt, why is Lily Bart distressed by the lines on her face? What inference can you make about her situation and about the position of women in the 1890s based on this information? Cite textual evidence to support your answer.
2. What does Lily mean when she says she almost "landed" Percy Gryce? What inference can you make about Lily's history based on her thoughts about Percy? Support your answer with textual evidence.
3. Describe Lily's childhood. What kind of parents did she have? What effect does her upbringing and past have on her current situation? Cite textual evidence to support your answer.
4. Use context to determine the meaning of the word **odious** as it is used in *The House of Mirth*. Write your definition of "odious" here and tell how you found it.
5. Use context to determine the meaning of the word **repugnance** as it is used in *The House of Mirth*. Write your definition of "repugnance" here and tell how you found it.

Focus Questions

1. Describe Lily Bart's character as she is presented in this excerpt. How do outside forces influence Lily's character and actions?
2. What do readers learn about Mrs. Bart's character in this excerpt? What irony is revealed in Mrs. Bart's—and by extension, Lily's—attitude toward money? Highlight evidence in the text to support your response.
3. Early in the excerpt, Lily wonders, "But why had she failed? Was it her own fault or that of destiny?" How might Mr. and Mrs. Bart's marriage have influenced Lily's views on marriage and money? What did Mr. and Mrs. Bart's roles in the family teach Lily about societal roles for men and women? Highlight textual evidence.

4. What is Mrs. Bart's role in Lily's life, both during her childhood and when Lily is an adult? How has Mrs. Bart influenced Lily's perceptions of money and of Mr. Bart? Highlight textual evidence and explain your choices.

5. Recall the unit's Essential Question: How have the literary movements of the last two centuries affected us? Realistic novels often focus on ideas of money and class. What themes about class does the excerpt from *The House of Mirth* suggest? How are these themes presented in the excerpt, and how is that different from what would be expected in a similar novel today? Highlight evidence to support your response.

The House of Mirth

Character Study Activity

Model

AUDIO ANNOTATION NUMBERS

Identification and Application:

- Analyze in depth the author's choices regarding how characters are introduced and developed to understand how the author builds a complete story.
- Characters are developed using direct characterization when an author describes the character explicitly or in a straightforward manner. Characters can also be developed through indirect characterization, which means that an author uses dialogue or the character's actions to reveal that character's personality.
- Identify ways in which setting and events affect characters. You can do this by imagining the plot with different characters or by imagining how the characters would act or respond in a different setting.
- Determine whether the author uses characters who have "typical" characteristics and could therefore be considered archetypes. An archetype is a symbol of some universal aspect of human nature or experience. A character in literature who has archetypal characteristics—such as the rebellious hero, evil villain, beautiful goddess, jealous lover, or innocent child—may help to dramatize themes that are important to the author or culture that created the work.
- Relate the characters to the theme, or central idea, of the text. How do the characters grow or change over the course of the text? What theme might this change reveal?

Model:

Characters are often the most memorable element of a work of fiction. Lily Bart's struggles in *The House of Mirth* have made her a classic figure in American literature.

In this excerpt from Chapter III, readers learn about Lily's character as she gets ready for bed:

She began to undress without ringing for her maid, whom she had sent to bed. She had been long enough in bondage to other people's pleasure to be **considerate of those who depended on hers**, and in her bitter moods **it sometimes struck her that she and her maid were in the same position**, except that the latter received her wages more regularly.

Using direct characterization, Wharton tells the reader that Lily is "considerate of those who depended on [her pleasure]," meaning her servants. At the same time, we learn that Lily has some awareness of her situation as a woman in a society in which marriage is the best way to improve one's life station: "it sometimes struck her that she and her maid were in the same position." With this information, readers can infer that Lily is intelligent and observant.

A world in which such things could be seemed a miserable place to Lily Bart; but then **she had never been able to understand the laws of a universe which was so ready to leave her out of its calculations**.

Lily also thinks highly of herself, which readers learn through indirect characterization when she thinks the universe unfair for not considering her problems directly: "she had never been able to understand the laws of a universe which was so ready to leave her out of its calculations."

The other key characters in this excerpt are Lily's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Bart:

Ruling the turbulent element called home was the **vigorous and determined** figure of a mother still young enough to dance her ball-dresses to rags, while the hazy outline of a **neutral-tinted** father **filled an intermediate space between the butler and the man who came to wind the clocks**. Even to the eyes of infancy, Mrs. Hudson Bart had appeared young; but Lily could not recall the time when her father had not been bald and slightly stooping, with streaks of grey in his hair, and a tired walk. It was a shock to her to learn afterward that he was but two years older than her mother.

Wharton uses contrasts to present the Barts. Mrs. Bart is "vigorous and determined," but her husband is "neutral-tinted." To Lily, her father's character is "hazy" and lacks color. He "filled an intermediate space between the butler and the man who came to wind the clocks," meaning that her father was someone who remained in the background of Lily's life, rather than filling an important role.

She remembered how her mother, after they had lost their money, used to say to her with a kind of fierce vindictiveness: "But you'll get it all back—you'll get it all back, with your face."

Mrs. Bart, on the other hand, fills an outsized role in Lily's life. Mrs. Bart is the one who initially pushed Lily to marry rich: "She remembered how her mother, after they had lost their money, used to say to her with a kind of fierce vindictiveness: 'But you'll get it all back—you'll get it all back, with your face.'"

Lily was naturally proud of her mother's aptitude in this line: she had been brought up in the faith that, whatever the cost, **one must have a good cook, and be what Mrs. Bart called 'decently dressed.'** Mrs. Bart's worst reproach to her husband was to ask him if he expected her to **'live like a pig';** and his replying in the negative was always regarded as a justification for cabling to Paris for an extra dress or two, and telephoning to the Jeweller that he might, after all, send home the turquoise bracelet which Mrs. Bart had looked at that morning. ...This gave [Lily] a sense of reflected superiority, and she did not need Mrs. Bart's comments ...to foster her **naturally lively taste for splendour.**

Mrs. Bart's disgust for people who "live[d] like pig[s]" was passed down to Lily, who also has a "naturally lively taste for splendour." Lily "had been brought up in the faith that, whatever it cost, one must have a good cook, and be what Mrs. Bart called 'decently dressed.'" These social constraints and inherited tastes make money a key issue for Lily's happiness.

Mrs. Bart's role in Lily's life may be described as the archetype of the overbearing, pushy mother. Lily has archetypal characteristics as well, as the woman trying to use her looks to get ahead. Although using types as a characterization technique can sometimes fall flat, Wharton uses them as a shortcut that helps readers better understand the main ideas of the novel. In this way, viewing characters as types can help provide clues to the novel's theme.

Short Answer

Directions: After reading the model, answer each question with complete sentences.

1. Characters are developed using direct characterization when _____.
2. Indirect characterization happens when _____.
3. A character in literature who has archetypal characteristics may help to _____.
4. In *The House of Mirth*, how does Wharton use direct characterization to develop Lily's character? _____.
5. How does Wharton use indirect characterization to develop Lily's character? _____.
6. How does Wharton use contrasts to present Lily's parents? _____.
7. How is Lily's character shaped by her mother? _____.
8. In what ways are Lily and her mother archetypal characters? _____.

The House of Mirth

Written Response

Directions: Use the space below to answer the writing prompt with at least two paragraphs.

Prompt: Does Lilly truly want wealth and a rich husband, or does she want something else? Use your understanding of character and make inferences based on Lily's childhood and the society in which she lives to form your claim. Support your claim with textual evidence.