

English 100 Honors  
Ms. Dougard  
Summer Assignment

Due on Monday, September 11, 2023 and will constitute THREE grades.

**Part I: IXL**– Scores will be averaged for one **QUIZ** grade

Log in to IXL (<https://www.ixl.com/signin/rutherfordsd>) and complete the following **9th grade skills**. You must score at least 80 on each.

*A - Main idea*

*1 -Determine the main idea of a passage*

*B - Audience , purpose, and tone*

*1 - Which text is most formal?*

*2 - Identify audience and purpose*

*3 - Compare passages for subjective and objective tone*

*4 - Compare passages for tone*

**Part II: CommonLit** - Scores will be averaged for one **TEST** grade

**All answers must be handwritten.** You should print this document out in order to complete it; if you are unable to do that, you should hand write your answers in a notebook or on lined paper. **Typed work will not be accepted.**

- *Rules of the Game* by Amy Tan
- “The Possessive” by Sharon Olds
- “The Raincoat” by Ada Limon
- “Children” by Khalil Gibran
- “Those Winter Sundays” by Robert Hayden

**Part III: Presentation** - There will be an in class, individual, graded presentation aspect to this project as well. It will be explained and discussed once we meet in September.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

# Rules of the Game

Amy Tan

## About this Text

Amy Tan is an American writer whose works explore mother-daughter relationships and the Chinese-American experience. This vignette is an excerpt from her novel *The Joy Luck Club*; it recounts Waverly Jong's thirst for learning the rules of chess.

## Vocabulary

Let's pronounce these words together as a class:

Adversary [ad-ver-ser-ee]

Impart [im-pahrt]

Relent [ri-lent]

Elaborate [ih-lab-er-it]

Prodigy [prod-i-jee]

Retort [ri-tawrt]

Foresight [fawr-sahyt]

### WHOLE CLASS READING

[1] I was six when my mother taught me the art of invisible strength. It was a strategy for winning arguments, respect from others, and eventually, though neither of us knew it at the time, chess games.

[2] "Bite back your tongue," scolded my mother when I cried loudly, yanking her hand toward the store that sold bags of salted plums.<sup>1</sup> At home, she said, "Wise guy, he not go against wind. In Chinese we say, Come from South, blow with wind — poom! — North will follow. Strongest wind cannot be seen."

[3] The next week I bit back my tongue as we entered the store with the forbidden candies. When my mother finished her shopping, she quietly plucked a small bag of plums from the rack and put it on the counter with the rest of the items.

[4] My mother **imparted** her daily truths so she could help my older brothers and me rise above our circumstances. We lived in San Francisco's Chinatown. Like most of the other Chinese children who played in the back alleys of restaurants and curio shops, I didn't think we were poor. My bowl was always full, three five-course meals every day, beginning with a soup of mysterious things I didn't want to know the names of.

[5] We lived on Waverly Place, in a warm, clean, two-bedroom flat that sat above a small Chinese bakery specializing in steamed pastries and dim sum.<sup>2</sup> In the early morning, when the alley was still quiet, I could smell fragrant red beans as they were cooked down to a pasty sweetness. By daybreak, our flat was heavy with the odor of fried sesame balls and sweet curried chicken crescents. From my bed, I would listen as my father got ready for work, then locked the door behind him, one-two-three clicks.

### DURING READING QUESTIONS

#### COMPLEX CHARACTERS: Paragraphs 1-3

**A. Write:** Interpret Waverly's mother's advice: "Strongest wind cannot be seen."

**B. Turn & Talk:** How does Waverly apply this advice?

**You should take notes on the page to answer questions in the margins.**

<sup>1</sup> a common Chinese treat

<sup>2</sup> a style of Chinese food served in small portions

**PARTNER READING****DURING READING QUESTIONS**

[6] At the end of our two-block alley was a small sandlot playground with swings and slides well-shined down the middle with use. The play area was bordered by wood-slat benches where old-country people sat cracking roasted watermelon seeds with their golden teeth and scattering the husks to an impatient gathering of gurgling pigeons. The best playground, however, was the dark alley itself. It was crammed with daily mysteries and adventures. My brothers and I would peer into the medicinal herb shop, watching old Li dole out onto a stiff sheet of white paper the right amount of insect shells, saffron-colored seeds, and pungent leaves for his ailing customers. It was said that he once cured a woman dying of an ancestral curse that had eluded<sup>3</sup> the best of American doctors. Next to the pharmacy was a printer who specialized in gold-embossed wedding invitations and festive red banners.

[7] Farther down the street was Ping Yuen Fish Market. The front window displayed a tank crowded with doomed fish and turtles struggling to gain footing on the slimy green-tiled sides. A hand-written sign informed tourists, "Within this store, is all for food, not for pet." Inside, the butchers with their bloodstained white smocks deftly gutted the fish while customers cried out their orders and shouted, "Give me your freshest," to which the butchers always protested, "All are freshest." On less crowded market days, we would inspect the crates of live frogs and crabs which we were warned not to poke, boxes of dried cuttlefish, and row upon row of iced prawns, squid, and slippery fish. The sanddabs<sup>4</sup> made me shiver each time; their eyes lay on one flattened side and reminded me of my mother's story of a careless girl who ran into a crowded street and was crushed by a cab. "Was smash flat," reported my mother.

[8] At the corner of the alley was Hong Sing's, a four-table cafe with a recessed stairwell in front that led to a door marked "Tradesmen." My brothers and I believed the bad people emerged from this door at night. Tourists never went to Hong Sing's, since the menu was printed only in Chinese. A Caucasian man with a big camera once posed me and my playmates in front of the restaurant. He had us move to the side of the picture window so the photo would capture the roasted duck with its head dangling from a juice-covered rope. After he took the picture, I told him he should go into Hong Sing's and eat dinner. When he smiled and asked me what they served, I shouted, "Guts and duck's feet and octopus gizzards!" Then I ran off with my friends, shrieking with laughter as we scampered across the alley and hid in the entryway grotto of the China Gem Company, my heart pounding with hope that he would chase us.

**Paragraphs 6-8**

**A. Find Evidence:** In paragraphs 6-7, highlight at least three descriptions of the alley in Waverly's neighborhood.

**B. Write:** What mood do these descriptions create?

**INDEPENDENT READING****DURING READING QUESTIONS**

[9] My mother named me after the street that we lived on: Waverly Place Jong, my official name for important American documents. But my family called me Meimei, "Little Sister." I was the youngest, the only daughter. Each morning before school, my mother would twist and yank on my thick black hair until she had formed two tightly wound pigtails. One day, as she struggled to weave a hard-toothed comb through my disobedient hair, I had a sly thought.

**You should take notes on the page to answer questions in the margins.**

<sup>3</sup> Elude (verb): not be understood, to escape meaning or understanding

<sup>4</sup> a small type of fish

[10] I asked her, “Ma, what is Chinese torture?” My mother shook her head. A bobby pin was wedged between her lips. She wetted her palm and smoothed the hair above my ear, then pushed the pin in so that it nicked sharply against my scalp.

[11] “Who say this word?” she asked without a trace of knowing how wicked I was being. I shrugged my shoulders and said, “Some boy in my class said Chinese people do Chinese torture.”

[12] “Chinese people do many things,” she said simply. “Chinese people do business, do medicine, do painting. Not lazy like American people. We do torture. Best torture.”

### Paragraphs 9-12

**Write:** How is Waverly being “wicked” in this interaction with her mother?

## WHOLE CLASS READING

## DURING READING QUESTIONS

[13] My older brother Vincent was the one who actually got the chess set. We had gone to the annual Christmas party held at the First Chinese Baptist Church at the end of the alley. The missionary ladies had put together a Santa bag of gifts donated by members of another church. None of the gifts had names on them. There were separate sacks for boys and girls of different ages.

[14] One of the Chinese parishioners<sup>5</sup> had donned a Santa Claus costume and a stiff paper beard with cotton balls glued to it. I think the only children who thought he was the real thing were too young to know that Santa Claus was not Chinese. When my turn came up, the Santa man asked me how old I was. I thought it was a trick question; I was seven according to the American formula and eight by the Chinese calendar. I said I was born on March 17, 1951. That seemed to satisfy him. He then solemnly asked if I had been a very, very good girl this year and did I believe in Jesus Christ and obey my parents. I knew the only answer to that. I nodded back with equal solemnity.

[15] Having watched the older children opening their gifts, I already knew that the big gifts were not necessarily the nicest ones. One girl my age got a large coloring book of biblical characters, while a less greedy girl who selected a smaller box received a glass vial of lavender toilet water.<sup>6</sup> The sound of the box was also important. A ten-year-old boy had chosen a box that jangled when he shook it. It was a tin globe of the world with a slit for inserting money. He must have thought it was full of dimes and nickels, because when he saw that it had just ten pennies, his face fell with such undisguised disappointment that his mother slapped the side of his head and led him out of the church hall, apologizing to the crowd for her son who had such bad manners he couldn't appreciate such a fine gift.

[16] As I peered into the sack, I quickly fingered the remaining presents, testing their weight, imagining what they contained. I chose a heavy, compact one that was wrapped in shiny silver foil and a red satin ribbon. It was a twelve-pack of Life Savers and I spent the rest of the party arranging and rearranging the candy tubes in the order of my favorites. My brother Winston chose wisely as well. His present turned out to be a box of intricate plastic parts; the instructions on the box proclaimed that when they were properly assembled he would have an authentic miniature replica of a World War II submarine.

[17] Vincent got the chess set, which would have been a very decent present to get at a church Christmas party, except it was obviously used and, as we discovered later, it was missing a black pawn and a white knight. My mother

### COMPLEX CHARACTERS: Paragraphs 15-16

**Think & Share:** What does Waverly's strategy for selecting gifts reveal about her?

**You should take notes on the page to answer questions in the margins.**

<sup>5</sup> people who attend a particular church

<sup>6</sup> perfume

graciously thanked the unknown benefactor,<sup>7</sup> saying, “Too good. Cost too much.” At which point, an old lady with fine white, wispy hair nodded toward our family and said with a whistling whisper, “Merry, merry Christmas.”

...

[18] When we got home, my mother told Vincent to throw the chess set away. “She not want it. We not want it,” she said, tossing her head stiffly to the side with a tight, proud smile. My brothers had deaf ears. They were already lining up the chess pieces and reading from the dog-eared instruction book.

[19] I watched Vincent and Winston play during Christmas week. The chessboard seemed to hold **elaborate** secrets waiting to be untangled. The chessmen were more powerful than old Li's magic herbs that cured ancestral curses. And my brothers wore such serious faces that I was sure something was at stake that was greater than avoiding the tradesmen's door to Hong Sing's.

#### Paragraph 19

**Think & Share:** What do Waverly's descriptions of the chess board suggest about her motivations for learning the game?

### PARTNER READING

### DURING READING QUESTIONS

[20] “Let me! Let me!” I begged between games when one brother or the other would sit back with a deep sigh of relief and victory, the other annoyed, unable to let go of the outcome. Vincent at first refused to let me play, but when I offered my Life Savers as replacements for the buttons that filled in for the missing pieces, he **relented**. He chose the flavors: wild cherry for the black pawn and peppermint for the white knight. Winner could eat both.

[21] As our mother sprinkled flour and rolled out small doughy circles for the steamed dumplings that would be our dinner that night, Vincent explained the rules, pointing to each piece. “You have sixteen pieces and so do I. One king and queen, two bishops, two knights, two castles, and eight pawns. The pawns can only move forward one step, except on the first move. Then they can move two. But they can only take men by moving crossways like this, except in the beginning, when you can move ahead and take another pawn.”

[22] “Why?” I asked as I moved my pawn. “Why can't they move more steps?”

[23] “Because they're pawns,” he said.

[24] “But why do they go crossways to take other men? Why aren't there any women and children?”

[25] “Why is the sky blue? Why must you always ask stupid questions?” asked Vincent. “This is a game. These are the rules. I didn't make them up. See. Here in the book.” He jabbed a page with a pawn in his hand. “Pawn. P-A-W-N. Pawn. Read it yourself.”

[26] My mother patted the flour off her hands. “Let me see book,” she said quietly. She scanned the pages quickly, not reading the foreign English symbols, seeming to search deliberately for nothing in particular.

[27] “This American rules,” she concluded at last. “Every time people come out from foreign country, must know rules. You not know, judge say, Too bad, go back. They not telling you why so you can use their way go forward. They say, Don't know why, you find out yourself. But they knowing all the time. Better you take it, find out why yourself.” She tossed her head back with a satisfied smile.

**You should take notes on the page to answer questions in the margins.**

#### Paragraph 27

**Turn & Talk:** What is Waverly's mother's attitude toward “American rules”?

<sup>7</sup> **Benefactor** (*noun*): a person who gives money or help to a person or cause

[28] I found out about all the whys later. I read the rules and looked up all the big words in a dictionary. I borrowed books from the Chinatown library. I studied each chess piece, trying to absorb the power each contained.

[29] I learned about opening moves and why it's important to control the center early on; the shortest distance between two points is straight down the middle. I learned about the middle game and why tactics<sup>8</sup> between two **adversaries** are like clashing ideas; the one who plays better has the clearest plans for both attacking and getting out of traps. I learned why it is essential in the endgame to have **foresight**, a mathematical understanding of all possible moves, and patience; all weaknesses and advantages become evident to a strong **adversary** and are obscured to a tiring opponent. I discovered that for the whole game one must gather invisible strengths and see the endgame before the game begins. I also found out why I should never reveal “why” to others. A little knowledge withheld<sup>9</sup> is a great advantage one should store for future use. That is the power of chess. It is a game of secrets in which one must show and never tell.

[30] I loved the secrets I found within the sixty-four black and white squares. I carefully drew a handmade chessboard and pinned it to the wall next to my bed, where I would stare for hours at imaginary battles. Soon I no longer lost any games or Life Savers, but I lost my **adversaries**. Winston and Vincent decided they were more interested in roaming the streets after school in their Hopalong Cassidy cowboy hats.

...

[31] On a cold spring afternoon, while walking home from school, I detoured through the playground at the end of our alley. I saw a group of old men, two seated across a folding table playing a game of chess, others smoking pipes, eating peanuts, and watching. I ran home and grabbed Vincent's chess set, which was bound in a cardboard box with rubber bands. I also carefully selected two prized rolls of Life Savers. I came back to the park and approached a man who was observing the game.

[32] “Want to play?” I asked him. His face widened with surprise and he grinned as he looked at the box under my arm.

[33] “Little sister, been a long time since I play with dolls,” he said, smiling benevolently.<sup>10</sup> I quickly put the box down next to him on the bench and displayed my **retort**.

[34] Lau Po, as he allowed me to call him, turned out to be a much better player than my brothers. I lost many games and many Life Savers. But over the weeks, with each diminishing roll of candies, I added new secrets. Lau Po gave me the names. The Double Attack from the East and West Shores. Throwing Stones on the Drowning Man. The Sudden Meeting of the Clan. The Surprise from the Sleeping Guard. The Humble Servant Who Kills the King. Sand in the Eyes of Advancing Forces. A Double Killing Without Blood.

[35] There were also the fine points of chess etiquette. Keep captured men in neat rows, as well-tended prisoners. Never announce “Check” with vanity,<sup>11</sup> lest someone with an unseen sword slit your throat. Never hurl pieces into the sandbox after you have lost a game, because then you must find them again, by

<sup>8</sup> **Tactic** (*noun*): carefully planned actions or strategies

<sup>9</sup> **Withhold** (*verb*): to hold back

<sup>10</sup> kindly

<sup>11</sup> **Vanity** (*noun*): great pride, ego

### COMPLEX CHARACTERS: Paragraphs 28-30

**A. Write:** What does Waverly learn about the qualities that make someone excel at chess?

**B. Write:** Waverly says that chess “is a game of secrets in which one must show and never tell.” How is this similar to her mother's advice?

### Paragraphs 31-35

**Turn & Talk:** What do you notice about what all of the names of the strategies or “secrets” have in common?

**You should take notes on the page to answer questions in the margins.**

yourself, after apologizing to all around you. By the end of the summer, Lau Po had taught me all he knew, and I had become a better chess player.

### WHOLE CLASS READING

[36] A small weekend crowd of Chinese people and tourists would gather as I played and defeated my opponents one by one. My mother would join the crowds during these outdoor exhibition games. She sat proudly on the bench, telling my admirers with proper Chinese humility, “Is luck.”

[37] A man who watched me play in the park suggested that my mother allow me to play in local chess tournaments. My mother smiled graciously, an answer that meant nothing. I desperately wanted to go, but I bit back my tongue. I knew she would not let me play among strangers. So as we walked home I said in a small voice that I didn’t want to play in the local tournament. They would have American rules. If I lost, I would bring shame on my family.

[38] “Is shame you fall down nobody push you,” said my mother.

[39] During my first tournament, my mother sat with me in the front row as I waited for my turn. I frequently bounced my legs to unstick them from the cold metal seat of the folding chair. When my name was called, I leapt up. My mother unwrapped something in her lap. It was her chang, a small tablet of red jade which held the sun’s fire. “Is luck,” she whispered, and tucked it into my dress pocket. I turned to my opponent, a fifteen-year-old boy from Oakland. He looked at me, wrinkling his nose.

[40] As I began to play, the boy disappeared, the color ran out of the room, and I saw only my white pieces and his black ones waiting on the other side. A light wind began blowing past my ears. It whispered secrets only I could hear.

[41] “Blow from the South,” it murmured. “The wind leaves no trail.” I saw a clear path, the traps to avoid. The crowd rustled. “Shhh! Shhh!” said the corners of the room. The wind blew stronger. “Throw sand from the East to distract him.” The knight came forward ready for the sacrifice. The wind hissed, louder and louder. “Blow, blow, blow. He cannot see. He is blind now. Make him lean away from the wind so he is easier to knock down.”

[42] “Check,” I said, as the wind roared with laughter. The wind died down to little puffs, my own breath.

[43] My mother placed my first trophy next to a new plastic chess set that the neighborhood Tao society had given to me. As she wiped each piece with a soft cloth, she said, “Next time win more, lose less.”

[44] “Ma, it’s not how many pieces you lose,” I said. “Sometimes you need to lose pieces to get ahead.”

[45] “Better to lose less, see if you really need.”

[46] At the next tournament, I won again, but it was my mother who wore the triumphant grin.

[47] “Lost eight piece this time. Last time was eleven. What I tell you? Better off lose less!” I was annoyed, but I couldn’t say anything.

### DURING READING QUESTIONS

#### Paragraphs 36-39

**A. Think & Share:** How does Waverly get her mother’s support?

#### Paragraphs 40-42

**A. Find Evidence:** Highlight three descriptions of wind and what it “says” to Waverly.

**B. Write:** What does the wind represent?

#### COMPLEX CHARACTERS: Paragraphs 43-47

**Write:** Why can’t Waverly “say anything” in response to her mother’s criticism?

**You should take notes on the page to answer questions in the margins.**

**INDEPENDENT READING**

**DURING READING QUESTIONS**

[48] I attended more tournaments, each one farther away from home. I won all games, in all divisions. The Chinese bakery downstairs from our flat displayed my growing collection of trophies in its window, amidst the dust covered cakes that were never picked up. The day after I won an important regional tournament, the window encased a fresh sheet cake with whipped-cream frosting and red script saying “Congratulations, Waverly Jong, Chinatown Chess Champion.” Soon after that, a flower shop, headstone engraver, and funeral parlor offered to sponsor me in national tournaments. That’s when my mother decided I no longer had to do the dishes. Winston and Vincent had to do my chores.

[49] “Why does she get to play and we do all the work,” complained Vincent.

[50] “Is new American rules,” said my mother. “Meimei play, squeeze all her brains out for win chess. You play, worth squeeze towel.”

[51] By my ninth birthday, I was a national chess champion. I was still some 429 points away from grand-master status, but I was touted as the Great American Hope, a child **prodigy** and a girl to boot. They ran a photo of me in Life magazine next to a quote in which Bobby Fischer said, “There will never be a woman grand master.” “Your move, Bobby,” said the caption.

[52] The day they took the magazine picture I wore neatly plaited braids clipped with plastic barrettes trimmed with rhinestones. I was playing in a large high school auditorium that echoed with phlegmy coughs and the squeaky rubber knobs of chair legs sliding across freshly waxed wooden floors. Seated across from me was an American man, about the same age as Lau Po, maybe fifty. I remember that his sweaty brow seemed to weep at my every move. He wore a dark, malodorous<sup>12</sup> suit. One of his pockets was stuffed with a great white kerchief on which he wiped his palm before sweeping his hand over the chosen chess piece with great flourish.

[53] In my crisp pink-and-white dress with scratchy lace at the neck, one of two my mother had sewn for these special occasions, I would clasp my hands under my chin, the delicate points of my elbows poised lightly on the table in the manner my mother had shown me for posing for the press. I would swing my patent leather shoes back and forth like an impatient child riding on a school bus. Then I would pause, suck in my lips, twirl my chosen piece in midair as if undecided, and then firmly plant it in its new threatening place, with a triumphant smile thrown back at my opponent for good measure.

**Paragraph 53**

**Write:** Consider Waverly’s description of how she acts in front of her opponent. Why does she “swing her patent leather shoes back and forth like an impatient child riding on a school bus”?

**WHOLE CLASS READING**

**DURING READING QUESTIONS**

[54] I no longer played in the alley of Waverly Place. I never visited the playground where the pigeons and old men gathered. I went to school, then directly home to learn new chess secrets, cleverly concealed advantages, more escape routes.

[55] But I found it difficult to concentrate at home. My mother had a habit of standing over me while I plotted out my games. I think she thought of herself as my protective ally. Her lips would be sealed tight, and after each move I made, a soft “Hmmpmph” would escape from her nose.

**You should take notes on the page to answer questions in the margins.**

<sup>12</sup> Malodorous (*adjective*): smelling very unpleasant

[56] “Ma, I can't practice when you stand there like that,” I said one day. She retreated to the kitchen and made loud noises with the pots and pans. When the crashing stopped, I could see out of the corner of my eye that she was standing in the doorway. “Hmmp!” Only this one came out of her tight throat.

[57] My parents made many concessions<sup>13</sup> to allow me to practice. One time I complained that the bedroom I shared was so noisy that I couldn't think. Thereafter, my brothers slept in a bed in the living room facing the street. I said I couldn't finish my rice; my head didn't work right when my stomach was too full. I left the table with half finished bowls and nobody complained. But there was one duty I couldn't avoid. I had to accompany my mother on Saturday market days when I had no tournament to play. My mother would proudly walk with me, visiting many shops, buying very little. “This my daughter Wave-ly Jong,” she said to whoever looked her way.

[58] One day after we left a shop I said under my breath, “I wish you wouldn't do that, telling everybody I'm your daughter.” My mother stopped walking. Crowds of people with heavy bags pushed past us on the sidewalk, bumping into first one shoulder, than another.

[59] “Aii-ya. So shame be with mother?” She grasped my hand even tighter as she glared at me.

[60] I looked down. “It's not that, it's just so obvious. It's just so embarrassing.”

[61] “Embarrass you be my daughter?” Her voice was cracking with anger.

[62] “That's not what I meant. That's not what I said.”

[63] “What you say?”

[64] I knew it was a mistake to say anything more, but I heard my voice speaking, “Why do you have to use me to show off? If you want to show off, then why don't you learn to play chess?”

[65] My mother's eyes turned into dangerous black slits. She had no words for me, just sharp silence.

[66] I felt the wind rushing around my hot ears. I jerked my hand out of my mother's tight grasp and spun around, knocking into an old woman. Her bag of groceries spilled to the ground.

[67] “Aii-ya! Stupid girl!” my mother and the woman cried. Oranges and tin cans careened down the sidewalk. As my mother stooped to help the old woman pick up the escaping food, I took off.

[68] I raced down the street, dashing between people, not looking back as my mother screamed shrilly, “Meimei! Meimei!” I fled down an alley, past dark, curtained shops and merchants washing the grime off their windows. I sped into the sunlight, into a large street crowded with tourists examining trinkets and souvenirs. I ducked into another dark alley, down another street, up another alley. I ran until it hurt and I realized I had nowhere to go, that I was not running from anything. The alleys contained no escape routes.

[69] My breath came out like angry smoke. It was cold. I sat down on an upturned plastic pail next to a stack of empty boxes, cupping my chin with my hands, thinking hard. I imagined my mother, first walking briskly down one street or another looking for me, then giving up and returning home to await my arrival. After two hours, I stood up on creaking legs and slowly walked home.

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<sup>13</sup> **Concession** (*noun*): agreement to let someone else do or have something.

### COMPLEX CHARACTERS: Paragraphs 55-56

**Write:** Waverly says of her mother: “I think she thought of herself as my protective ally.” How does Waverly view her mother?

### Paragraphs 58-68

**Think & Share:** After the argument with her mother, Waverly feels “the wind rushing around her hot ears” and realizes that the alley “contained no escape routes” (Paragraphs 66, 68). What does this language suggest about her interaction with her mother?

**You should take  
notes on the page to  
answer questions  
in the margins.**

[70] The alley was quiet and I could see the yellow lights shining from our flat like two tiger's eyes in the night. I climbed the sixteen steps to the door, advancing quietly up each so as not to make any warning sounds. I turned the knob; the door was locked. I heard a chair moving, quick steps, the locks turning — click! click! click! — and then the door opened.

[71] “About time you got home,” said Vincent. “Boy, are you in trouble.”

[72] He slid back to the dinner table. On a platter were the remains of a large fish, its fleshy head still connected to bones swimming upstream in vain escape. Standing there waiting for my punishment, I heard my mother speak in a dry voice.

[73] “We not concerning this girl. This girl not have concerning for us.”

[74] Nobody looked at me. Bone chopsticks clinked against the inside of bowls being emptied into hungry mouths.

[75] I walked into my room, closed the door, and lay down on my bed. The room was dark, the ceiling filled with shadows from the dinnertime lights of neighboring flats.

[76] In my head, I saw a chessboard with sixty-four black and white squares. Opposite me was my opponent, two angry black slits. She wore a triumphant smile. “Strongest wind cannot be seen,” she said.

[77] Her black men advanced across the plane, slowly marching to each successive level as a single unit. My white pieces screamed as they scurried and fell off the board one by one. As her men drew closer to my edge, I felt myself growing light. I rose up into the air and flew out the window. Higher and higher, above the alley, over the tops of tiled roofs, where I was gathered up by the wind and pushed up toward the night sky until everything below me disappeared and I was alone.

[78] I closed my eyes and pondered my next move.

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### CHARACTER ANALYSIS: Paragraphs 76-78

**Write:** What does the chess imagery in these paragraphs represent about Waverly's relationship with her mother?

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

## Independent Practice

**Directions:** Answer the multiple choice questions for “Rules of the Game.” *5 minutes*



1. In paragraph 30, why do Winston and Vincent most likely stop playing chess with Waverly? **[RL.3]**
  - A. Winston and Vincent think chess is a girls’ game.
  - B. Winston and Vincent get bored by how easy the game is.
  - C. Winston and Vincent have to do Waverly’s chores instead.
  - D. Winston and Vincent get tired of always losing to Waverly.
2. Which of the following is the best meaning for the word “solemnity” and as it is used in paragraph 14? **[RL.4]**
  - A. Confidence
  - B. Confusion
  - C. Happiness
  - D. Seriousness
3. What does the wind symbolize in the text? **[RL.5]**
  - A. Bad luck
  - B. Hope
  - C. Strategy
  - D. Threats
4. Which statement best expresses a central theme of the story? **[RL.2]**
  - A. Children can feel suffocated by parents and assert their independence.
  - B. Parents understand what their children want and should make all the decisions.
  - C. Parents want their children to be successful even if the child doesn’t want to be.
  - D. Children want to be protected by their parents and feel isolated when they aren’t.

## Independent Practice

**Directions:** Answer the short response prompt for “Rules of the Game.” *15 minutes*



**PROMPT:** You have just read “Rules of the Game” by Amy Tan. How does the author use the metaphor of a chess game to develop Waverly's relationship with her mother? Write a response consisting of two paragraphs. **[RL.3]**

Make sure your response is strong by:

- clearly answering the prompt.
- including and explaining at least two pieces of relevant evidence.
- using transitions to connect ideas.

Also, make sure to incorporate relevant unit vocabulary in your writing.

**Only handwritten responses will be accepted. You may write on this page and continue on a separate paper.**

### CHECKLIST FOR WRITING A STRONG RESPONSE:

- Did you begin with an argument that clearly answers all parts of the prompt?
  - A. YES!
  - B. No, I will go back and add that.
- Did you include at least **two** pieces of evidence that support your argument?
  - A. YES!
  - B. No, I will go back and add that.
- Did you use transitions to help readers follow your ideas?
  - A. YES!
  - B. No, I will go back and add that.
- Did you explain how each piece of evidence supports your argument?
  - A. YES!
  - B. No, I will go back and add that.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

# The Possessive

Sharon Olds

## About this Text

Sharon Olds is an American poet and winner of several major awards, including the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Critics Circle Award. Her poetry is known for its honest and emotional examination of marriage, sexuality, and parenthood. In this poem, the speaker reacts to her daughter getting a haircut.

## Vocabulary

Let's pronounce these words together as a class:

Possessive [*puh-zes-iv*]

### FIRST READ (WHOLE CLASS):

*Read the poem for the gist. Then answer the question.*

### SECOND READ

*Read the poem again for literal understanding. As you read, answer the questions.*

[1] My daughter — as if I  
 [2] owned her — that girl with the  
 [3] hair wispy as a frayed bellpull

[4] has been to the barber, that knife grinder,  
 [5] and had the edge of her hair sharpened.

[6] Each strand now cuts  
 [7] both ways. The blade of new bangs  
 [8] hangs over her red-brown eyes  
 [9] like carbon steel.

[10]                    All the little  
 [11] spliced<sup>1</sup> ropes are sliced. The curtain of  
 [12] dark paper-cuts veils the face that  
 [13] started from next to nothing in my body —

[14] My body. My daughter. I'll have to find  
 [15] another word. In her bright helmet  
 [16] she looks at me as if across a  
 [17] great distance. Distant fires can be  
 [18] glimpsed in the resin<sup>2</sup> light of her eyes:

[19] the watch fires of an enemy, a while before  
 [20] the war starts.

### Lines 1-9

**A. Find Evidence:** Highlight the words and phrases related to knives or cutting.

**B. Write:** What tone do these words and phrases develop?

### Lines 10-11

**Think & Share:** Interpret the figurative meaning of lines 10-11.

### Lines 17-20

**A. Find Evidence:** Highlight words and phrases that describe what the speaker sees when she looks at her daughter.

**B. Write:** What similarities do you see among these words and phrases?

<sup>1</sup> joined by weaving or braiding the strands together

<sup>2</sup> sticky, highly flammable substance that oozes from some trees

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

## Independent Practice

**Directions:** Answer the multiple choice questions for “The Possessive.” *5 minutes*



1. In lines 6-7, the speaker describes her daughter's haircut: "Each strand now cuts / both ways." What is the most likely interpretation of these lines? **[RL.4]**
  - A. The daughter's hair hangs unevenly in front of her face.
  - B. The mother both likes and dislikes the daughter's new hairstyle.
  - C. The daughter's growing independence can hurt both mother and daughter.
  - D. The mother wants her daughter to be independent but is afraid for her safety.
  
2. Which lines from the poem best express the idea that the relationship between parents and children can change? **[RL.1]**
  - A. "hair wispy as a frayed bellpull / has been to the barber, that knife grinder," (Lines 4-5)
  - B. "Hangs over her red-brown eyes / like carbon steel." (Lines 8-9)
  - C. "The curtain of / dark paper-cuts veils the face that" (Lines 12-13)
  - D. "My body. My daughter. I'll have to find / another word." (lines 14-15)
  
3. Which of the following best describes a theme of the poem "The Possessive"? **[RL.2]**
  - A. When children start to become independent, parents can feel wounded.
  - B. When children start to become independent, parents rejoice at their new freedom.
  - C. When children start to become independent, parents look for ways to support children.
  - D. When children start to become independent, parents seek the advice of other parents.
  
4. Why is the poem's title significant? **[RL.2]**
  - A. It suggests that both a parent and child can be possessive of one another.
  - B. It describes how parents become jealous of their children's independence.
  - C. It alludes to the speaker's possessive language about feelings toward her daughter.
  - D. It evokes a sense of irony because the speaker encourages her daughter's independence.
  
5. What is the purpose of the long space at the beginning of line 10? **[RL.5]**
  - A. It emphasizes the daughter's silence in response to her mother.
  - B. It emphasizes the growing distance between mother and daughter.
  - C. It indicates a shift with the mother starting to approve of her daughter's haircut.
  - D. It indicates the departure of the daughter from her mother's presence.



## Independent Practice

**Directions:** Answer the short response prompt for “The Possessive.” *15 minutes*

**PROMPT:** You have just read “The Possessive” by Sharon Olds. How does the author's use of language develop the speaker's tone in the poem? **[RL.4]**

Make sure your response is strong by:

- clearly answering the prompt.
- including and explaining at least two pieces of relevant evidence.
- using transitions to connect ideas.

Also, make sure to incorporate relevant unit vocabulary in your writing.

**Only handwritten responses will be accepted. You may write on this page and continue on a separate paper.**

### CHECKLIST FOR WRITING A STRONG RESPONSE:

- Did you begin with an argument that clearly answers all parts of the prompt?
  - A. YES!
  - B. No, I will go back and add that.
- Did you include at least **two** pieces of evidence that support your argument?
  - A. YES!
  - B. No, I will go back and add that.
- Did you use transitions to help readers follow your ideas?
  - A. YES!
  - B. No, I will go back and add that.
- Did you explain how each piece of evidence supports your argument?
  - A. YES!
  - B. No, I will go back and add that.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

# The Raincoat

Ada Limón

## About this Text

Ada Limón's poem "The Raincoat" is included in her book of poetry, *The Carrying*. In this poem, she describes her experiences and time spent with her mother.

### FIRST READ

*Read the poem for the gist. Then answer the question.*

### SECOND READ

*Read the poem again for literal understanding. As you read, answer the questions.*

- [1] When the doctor suggested surgery  
[2] and a brace for all my youngest years,  
[3] my parents scrambled to take me  
[4] to massage therapy, deep tissue work,  
[5] osteopathy,<sup>1</sup> and soon my crooked spine  
[6] unspooled a bit, I could breathe again,  
[7] and move more in a body unclouded  
[8] by pain. My mom would tell me to sing  
[9] songs to her the whole forty-five minute  
[10] drive to Middle Two Rock Road and forty-  
[11] five minutes back from physical therapy.  
[12] She'd say, even my voice sounded unfettered<sup>2</sup>  
[13] by my spine afterward. So I sang and sang,

#### Lines 1-8

**Find Evidence:** Highlight two images that reveal how the speaker is affected by her parents' actions.

**You should take notes on the page to answer questions in the margins.**

<sup>1</sup> Osteopathy is a preventative medical treatment that massages bones, joints, and muscles.

<sup>2</sup> **Unfettered** (*adjective*): not restricted

[14] because I thought she liked it. I never  
[15] asked her what she gave up to drive me,  
[16] or how her day was before this chore. Today,  
[17] at her age, I was driving myself home from yet  
[18] another spine appointment, singing along  
[19] to some maudlin<sup>3</sup> but solid song on the radio,  
[20] and I saw a mom take her raincoat off  
[21] and give it to her young daughter when  
[22] a storm took over the afternoon. My god,  
[23] I thought, my whole life I've been under her  
[24] raincoat thinking it was somehow a marvel<sup>4</sup>  
[25] that I never got wet.

**After the FIRST READ:** What is the main idea or “gist” of this poem?

**Lines 16-17**

**Think & Share:** What do these lines reveal about the speaker’s point of view in this poem?

**Lines 20-25**

**Write:** What does the raincoat symbolize?

**You should take notes on the page to answer questions in the margins.**

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<sup>3</sup> **Maudlin** (*adjective*): overly sad or sentimental

<sup>4</sup> **Marvel** (*noun*): miracle

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

## Independent Practice

**Directions:** Answer the multiple choice questions for “The Raincoat.” *5 minutes*



1. When describing the impact of her therapy appointments, the speaker says her body is “unclouded / by pain.” Which of the following phrases best matches the meaning of the phrase “unclouded by” as it is used in lines 7-8? **[RL.4]**
  - A. overwhelmed by
  - B. consumed by
  - C. adapted from
  - D. free from
  
2. In lines 9-11, what is the effect on the speaker repeating the phrase “forty-five minute(s)” when describing the drive to and from physical therapy? **[RL.4]**
  - A. It illustrates how slowly the speaker’s mother had to drive.
  - B. It shows how hard it was for them to find good medical care.
  - C. It emphasizes how long and routine the drives became for them.
  - D. It reveals how much the speaker paid attention to detail as a child.
  
3. What does the phrase “My god” in line 22 suggest about the speaker’s tone? **[RL.4]**
  - A. It suggests that the speaker is frustrated by what she has realized.
  - B. It suggests that the speaker is astonished by what she has realized.
  - C. It suggests that the speaker is ashamed about what she has realized.
  - D. It suggests that the speaker is indifferent about what she has realized.
  
4. Which statement best expresses a central theme of the poem? **[RL.2]**
  - A. Parents view their responsibilities to their children as hard work.
  - B. Parents feel unappreciated by children throughout most of their lives.
  - C. Children are too selfish to ever truly appreciate the work their parents do for them.
  - D. Children often do not realize how their parents have contributed to their success until later in life.



## Independent Practice

**Directions:** Answer the short response prompt for “The Raincoat.” 15 minutes

**PROMPT:** You have just read “The Raincoat” by Ada Limón. How does the poet’s diction reveal the speaker’s perspective over the course of the poem?[RL.4]

In your response, make sure to use precise verbs for word choice analysis by:

- quoting the line or phrase with the word or phrase you are analyzing.
- using a precise verb in your explanation.
- explaining what the word choice suggests or implies.

Also, make sure to incorporate relevant unit vocabulary in your writing.

**Only handwritten responses will be accepted. You may write on this page and continue on a separate paper.**

### CHECKLIST FOR USING PRECISE VERBS FOR WORD CHOICE ANALYSIS:

- Highlight or bold each explanation.

Did you use a precise verb in your explanation?

- a. YES!
- b. No, I will go back and add that.

Did you explain what the word choice suggests or implies?

- a. YES!
- b. No, I will go back and add that.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

# Children

Khalil Gibran

## About this Text

Khalil Gibran (1883-1931) was a Lebanese American poet and visual artist. This poem is an excerpt from *The Prophet*. His masterpiece, *The Prophet* (1923), sold millions of copies and made him the best-selling American poet of the twentieth century. In this verse novella, Almustafa, a prophet, is leaving the city where he has lived for many years and returning to his childhood home. The people of the city come to the dock and ask him to share some final wisdom with them before he goes.

### FIRST READ

*Read the poem for the gist. Then answer the question.*

### SECOND READ

*Read the poem again for literal understanding. As you read, answer the questions.*

[1] And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, 'Speak to us of Children.'

[2] And he said:

[3] Your children are not your children.

[4] They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

[5] They come through you but not from you,

[6] And though they are with you, yet they belong not to you.

[7] You may give them your love but not your thoughts.

[8] For they have their own thoughts.

[9] You may house their bodies but not their souls,

[10] For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

[11] You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you. For life goes not backward nor tarries<sup>1</sup> with yesterday.

[12] You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.

[13] The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far.

[14] Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;

[15] For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.

#### Lines 3-4

**Write:** Rewrite these lines in your own words.

#### Lines 7-11

**Think & Share:** What do lines 7, 9, and 11 suggest about the tension in parents' attitudes toward their children?

#### Lines 12-15

**Write:** Interpret the figurative meaning of line 13.

**You should take notes on the page to answer questions in the margins.**

**After the FIRST READ:** What is the main idea or "gist" of this poem?

"Children" from *The Prophet* by Khalil Gibran (1923) is in the public domain.

<sup>1</sup> stay longer than planned; delay leaving a place

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

## Independent Practice

**Directions:** Answer the multiple choice questions for “Children.” 5 minutes



1. Which statement best expresses a theme of the poem? **[RL.2]**
  - A. Parents that are not very religious will struggle to raise their children.
  - B. Parents may prepare children for the future, but a child’s journey is not theirs to control.
  - C. Parents do not always wish the best for their children, so children must find their own way.
  - D. Parents are not equipped to raise their children, so they must seek guidance from higher powers.
  
2. Which piece of evidence best supports the idea that parents struggle with the idea of their children’s independence? **[RL.1]**
  - A. “And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, ‘Speak to us of Children.’” (Line 1)
  - B. “They are the sons and daughters of Life’s longing for itself.” (Line 4)
  - C. “You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you. For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.” (Line 11)
  - D. “For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.” (Line 15)
  
3. Which is the *most likely* interpretation of lines 9-10?
 

“You may house their bodies but not their souls, / For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.” **[RL.4]**

  - A. Parents should encourage their children to chase their dreams.
  - B. Children will eventually move out of their parents’ houses into homes of their own.
  - C. Children long to grow up and be independent, and parents should not try to change this.
  - D. Parents cannot understand or imagine all the experiences their children will live through.
  
4. According to lines 12-15, what impact does the archer have on children? **[RL.4]**
  - A. The archer teaches children how to think.
  - B. The archer sets the path of children’s lives.
  - C. The archer influences how children see their parents.
  - D. The archer causes children to leave their parents’ homes.



## Independent Practice

**Directions:** Answer the short response prompt for “Children.” *15 minutes*

**PROMPT:** You have just read “Children” by Khalil Gibran. How does the metaphor of the archer develop the meaning of the poem? [RL.4]

In your response, make sure to use precise verbs for word choice analysis by:

- quoting the line or phrase with the word or phrase you are analyzing.
- using a precise verb in your explanation.
- explaining what the word choice suggests or implies.

Also, make sure to incorporate relevant unit vocabulary in your writing.

**Only handwritten responses will be accepted. You may write on this page and continue on a separate paper.**

### CHECKLIST FOR USING PRECISE VERBS FOR WORD CHOICE ANALYSIS:

- Highlight or bold each explanation.

Did you use a precise verb in your explanation?

- a. YES!
- b. No, I will go back and add that.

Did you explain what the word choice suggests or implies?

- a. YES!
- b. No, I will go back and add that.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

# Those Winter Sundays

Robert Hayden

## About this Text

Robert Hayden (1913-1980) was an American poet haunted by history. In his quest to describe the Black experience through poetry, Hayden wrote about such historical figures as Nat Turner, Frederick Douglass, Malcolm X, Harriet Tubman, and Cinquez. He also wrote poems about the Underground Railroad, the Civil War, and the American slave trade. In this poem, Hayden explores the lingering effects of a more personal history.

## Vocabulary

Let's pronounce these words together as a class:

Austere (aw-**steer**)

Indifferent (in-**dif-ruhnt**)

### FIRST READ (WHOLE CLASS):

*Read the poem for the gist. Then answer the question.*

### SECOND READ

*Read the poem again for the literal understanding. As you read, answer the questions.*

[1] Sundays too my father got up early  
 [2] and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,  
 [3] then with cracked hands that ached  
 [4] from labor in the weekday weather made  
 [5] banked fires<sup>1</sup> blaze. No one ever thanked him.

[6] I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.  
 [7] When the rooms were warm, he'd call,  
 [8] and slowly I would rise and dress,  
 [9] fearing the chronic<sup>2</sup> angers of that house,

[10] Speaking **indifferently** to him,  
 [11] who had driven out the cold  
 [12] and polished my good shoes as well.  
 [13] What did I know, what did I know  
 [14] of love's **austere** and lonely offices?<sup>3</sup>

#### Lines 1-9

**A. Find Evidence:** Highlight 3 descriptions of the father's daily efforts.

**B. Think & Share:** How does the sentence in line 5 contrast with the rest of the stanza?

#### Lines 10-14

**A. Write:** How do lines 10-12 develop the contrast introduced in the first stanza?

**B. Think & Share:** Paraphrase the speaker's final 2 lines.

<sup>1</sup> to bank a fire means to pile ashes on top of the hot coals so that they stay hot. This makes it easier to restart the fire in the morning.

<sup>2</sup> constant or on-going; often used to describe a disease

<sup>3</sup> services or kindnesses done for another person or group of people

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

## Independent Practice

**Directions:** Answer the multiple choice questions for “Those Winter Sundays.” *5 minutes.*



1. Which of the following *best* describes the speaker’s tone in this poem? **[RL.4]**
  - A. affectionate
  - B. regretful
  - C. joyful
  - D. angry
  
2. How does the author’s use of imagery develop the poem’s meaning? **[RL.5]**
  - A. by describing how painful and difficult the father’s work was
  - B. by comparing how loving the speaker was to how distant the father was
  - C. by describing the speaker’s loving actions towards their father later in life
  - D. by comparing how warm the fire inside was to the bitter cold outside
  
3. Which piece of evidence best supports the author’s idea that children’s understanding of their parents can change? **[RL.1]**
  - A. “Sundays too my father got up early / and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold” (Lines 1-2)
  - B. “then with cracked hands that ached / from labor in the weekday weather made” (Lines 3-4)
  - C. “When the rooms were warm, he’d call, / and slowly I would rise and dress” (Lines 7-8)
  - D. “What did I know, what did I know / of love’s austere and lonely offices?” (Lines 13-14)

4. Read the following line from the poem:

*“Speaking indifferently to him, / who had driven out the cold / and polished my good shoes as well.”*  
(10-12)

How do these lines contribute to a theme of the poem? **[RL.5]**

- A. by revealing how strong the bond is between father and child
- B. by demonstrating how a parents' small acts of love can go unappreciated
- C. by illustrating how financial difficulties can harm a parent child relationship
- D. by highlighting how important it is for parents to communicate with their children

## Independent Practice

**Directions:** Answer the short response prompt for “Those Winter Sundays” 15 minutes



**PROMPT:** You have just read “Those Winter Sundays” by Robert Hayden. What theme does Hayden develop through word choice in this poem? [RL.4]

In your response, make sure to use precise verbs for word choice analysis by:

- quoting the line or phrase with the word or phrase you are analyzing.
- using a precise verb in your explanation.
- explaining what the word choice suggests or implies.

Also, make sure to incorporate relevant unit vocabulary in your writing.

**Only handwritten responses will be accepted. You may write on this page and continue on a separate paper.**

### CHECKLIST FOR USING PRECISE VERBS FOR WORD CHOICE ANALYSIS:

- Highlight or bold each explanation.

Did you use a precise verb in your explanation?

- a. YES!
- b. No, I will go back and add that.

Did you explain what the word choice suggests or implies?

- a. YES!
- b. No, I will go back and add that.
- a.