

60 Literary Minutes

This activity takes place at least halfway through a novel or at its conclusion. The teacher will assign students to role-play characters or to be reporters who ask questions during the news conference or interview. Students enjoy acting as various characters or being tough investigative reporters of the 60 Minutes variety. It is very important, however, to require the homework preparation; otherwise, unprepared students produce a disastrous performance. I also encourage students to wear an appropriate costume.

FORMAT

1. The teacher must decide how many characters from the tale will be role-played during the news conference or news magazine.
 - I often limit the amount of characters who will be role-played to eight or less because of time constraints, but that is a flexible number depending on the literary work.
 - Students who are not role-playing a character are reporters. Each reporter is assigned to write questions for two characters being role-played.
 - Reporters should model themselves after real-life reporters.
2. Students should locate as many passages from the text concerning their assigned character as possible.
3. Generate a list of ten or more adjectives and phrases describing the character.
4. Beside the listed characteristics, write the textual support for each conclusion. (It's not necessary to write complete sentences; jot down phrases. The goal is to prove the particular conclusion.)

CHARACTERISTICS	PAGE	QUOTATION
<i>emotionally strong</i>	25	"he decided he would..."
<i>compassionate</i>	87	"he put his arms around me as I cried..."

5. Follow any directions (see next page) that apply to the assigned role, be it the role of character or reporter.
6. Turn in all written preparation at the end of the period.

DIRECTIONS**When role-playing a "character," students**

- should be familiar with the "possible questions" at the bottom of this page. How would the character respond to each of them? Students do not need to prepare anything additional in writing, but they should be prepared to elaborate thoroughly.
- should be prepared to answer questions based on evidence about the character from the text, referring to incidents and traits as often as possible.

When role-playing a reporter, students

- should choose several questions from either list of "possible questions" below that you might ask the character. Prepare short anticipated written responses.
- should generate a few questions, beyond those listed below, concerning the specific actions in the text that you might ask the characters. Approach your questions as a reporter/journalist interrogating the characters. Please write these questions down, along with the anticipated answers by the characters.

Possible questions

1. What do you find motivates you in your life?
2. Who has influenced your life the most?
3. How did this occur?
4. What are your most significant failings or weaknesses?
5. What are your strengths?
6. Have you ever misjudged someone or a situation?
7. What actions should we praise you for?
8. Were you ever a victim? Did you ever allow yourself to be taken advantage of?
9. What was the nature of your power over others? How did you affect them?
10. What moments of your life do you recall as having been most painful and distressing?
11. Did you ever experience moments of happiness or hope? If so, describe some.
12. Did your experiences heighten your awareness of life or enrich you or make you wiser? Elaborate.
13. How have you changed because of your life's experiences?

Ontological Questions Questions about the nature of existence.

1. What does it mean to be a man or woman?
2. What is love?
3. Is a person inherently good? bad? both? Explain.
4. How much freedom should an individual have? Why?
5. Is a person basically alone, or is he or she an integral member of society?

