



**Norfolk Public Schools**  
The cornerstone of a proudly diverse community

# English 9<sup>th</sup>



**Phase III**  
**April 27 to May 15, 2020**

**Name:**

**School:**

**Teacher:**

**NPS Curriculum & Instruction**

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<b>Theme</b>	Social Media: How do people portray themselves?
<b>Daily Reading</b>	<b>READ 14.2:</b> Each day read for 15 minutes, something of choice, and complete the reading log including the title of the book/text, the number of pages read, and a hashtag summary of what was read. The reading log is on the back of this sheet. A sample entry is included.
<b>Daily Writing</b>	<b>Three times a week</b> , reflect on how our theme of <b>social media</b> connects to current events by journaling your thoughts and feelings about the ideas here: Are you the same person on social media as in real life? Why or why not? Do you ever worry about social media harming your college or career goals? What would you wish to tell the younger generation about social media? What would you teach the world in an online video? If you aren't on social media, will you join? Why or why not? If you are on social media, would you ever quit? Why or why not? ( <i>Adapted from <a href="http://www.nytimes.com">www.nytimes.com</a></i> ).
<b>Making Thinking Visible</b>	For all texts, annotate by doing each of the following tasks for <b>each paragraph or stanza (if a poem is not written in stanzas, annotate for every five lines)</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>underline or list key words, phrases, or sentences that are important to understanding the work</li> <li>create a question that requires the reader to infer (consider specific words, phrases, sentences, or ideas),</li> <li>make a comment about the author's style (reflect on how the author uses diction, figurative language, or sentence structure to develop the meaning or present his/her point of view)</li> </ul>

**April 27-May 1**

Weekly Reading	Additional Response Tasks	Response to Text Question (Write a 1-2 page response)
"We Wear the Mask" by Paul Laurence Dunbar "Online Identity"	Respond to the discussion questions for each text with several sentences.	In the poem, the poet suggests that African Americans hid their true emotions behind a guise of happiness so the rest of the world would not see their pain while the article explores how online identities may not reflect the true characters of the persons behind them. What are the possible benefits and/or drawbacks of not expressing one's true self to the outside world?

**May 4-8**

Weekly Reading	Additional Response Tasks	Response to Text Question (Write a 1-2 page response)
"Fake Animal News Abounds On Social Media As Coronavirus Upends Life"	Respond to the four discussion questions at the end of the article with several sentences.	Describe what you think the author's purpose was for writing this text and whether they were successful in this purpose. Support your response with specific details from the text.

**May 11-15**

Weekly Reading	Additional Response Tasks	Response to Text Task
"Pancakes" by Joan Bauer	Respond to questions A-K found on the right margins of each page.	Use the Facebook Profile template to create a profile for one of the characters from this short story. Based on what you know about this character, consider what the profile should look like. Be creative and make inferences based on what you read.



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

## We Wear the Mask

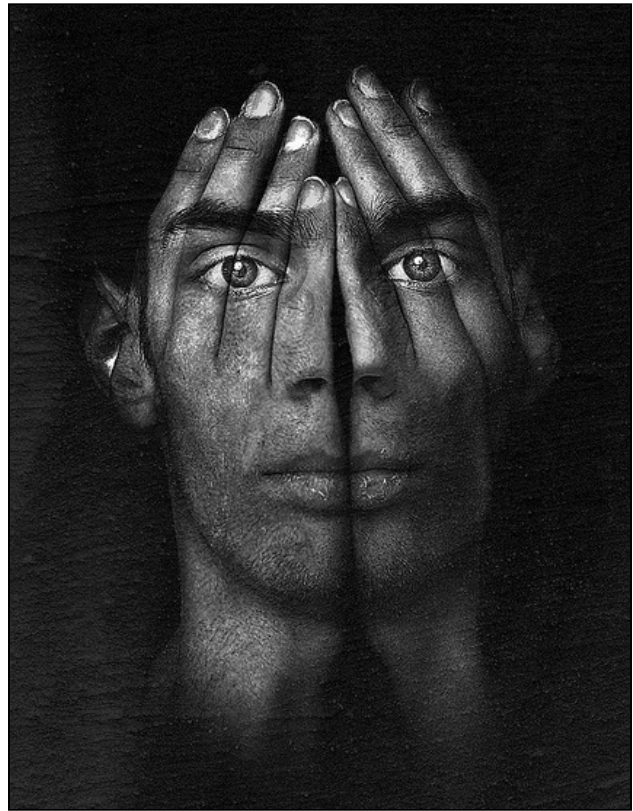
By Paul Laurence Dunbar  
1896

*Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906) was one of the first African American authors to reach a national and international audience. Best known as a poet, Dunbar published his first poems at age 16. **Skill Focus:** In this lesson, you'll practice analyzing an author's use of figurative language. This means paying attention to similes and metaphors. As you read, take note of the comparisons and the message they reveal.*

- [1] We wear the mask that grins and lies,  
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes, —  
This debt<sup>1</sup> we pay to human guile;<sup>2</sup>  
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,  
[5] And mouth with myriad subtleties.<sup>3</sup>

Why should the world be over-wise,  
In counting all our tears and sighs?  
Nay, let them only see us, while  
We wear the mask.

- [10] We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries  
To thee from tortured souls arise.  
We sing, but oh the clay is vile<sup>4</sup>  
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;  
But let the world dream otherwise,  
[15] We wear the mask!



*"Insomnia" by Evan is licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0*

*"We Wear the Mask" by Paul Laurence Dunbar (1896) is in the public domain.*

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1. Here, having a debt to pay means having an obligation, or something one must do.
  2. **Guile (noun):** clever but sometimes dishonest behavior that one uses to deceive others
  3. "Mouth with myriad subtleties" may refer to the many expectations for "respectful" speech, such as calling someone sir or ma'am.
  4. **Vile (adjective):** extremely unpleasant; wicked or immoral

## Discussion Questions

**Directions:** *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. Based on what you know about Paul Laurence Dunbar and the status of black Americans in the early twentieth century, why does the speaker feel the need to wear a mask?
2. Think of other situations where people might wear masks (not literal masks). Do you think a person should hide their emotions? Why or why not?
3. In the context of this poem, how do people overcome adversity? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
4. Does the speaker seem genuine when he recommends wearing “the mask?” Consider when the poem was written and the tone the speaker uses.

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

## Online Identity

By CommonLit Staff  
2014

*Consider the different ways we express ourselves, especially in the new age of technology. The Internet has heavily shaped our notion of identity. On the Internet, people can create a multitude of personas, some of which can be created with false information. As you read, take notes on the ways in which people express their identity on the Internet.*

### Online Identities

- [1] An online identity, sometimes called an Internet persona, is an identity established by a user to interact with others through social media such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, or multi-player games. Although some people use their real names online, many Internet users prefer to be anonymous, identifying themselves by pseudonyms<sup>1</sup>. Some users can be deceptive<sup>2</sup> about their identity.



*"Sisters" by Stephen Harlan is licensed under CC BY 2.0.*

Users express online identity both explicitly and implicitly. Users express themselves explicitly through usernames, pictures, and the information about themselves that they choose to give others, such as their hometown. They can also explicitly express their identity by choosing an avatar, an icon-sized graphic image, or by creating user profiles in social media networks, such as Facebook. Implicitly, users express their identity through what they say to other users and the opinions they express. As other users interact with an established online identity, it gains a reputation, which enables them to decide whether the identity is worthy of trust.

### The Reliability of Online Identity and the “Mask” Effect

Social networking services and online avatars have made the notion of identity far more complex, because the identities that people define in the social media are not necessarily the identities that they actually have. For example, several studies have shown that people lie about themselves in online dating profiles, or in communication with potential partners.

A person may feel that she is able to lie about her identity on the Internet because it creates a “mask” effect, where no one can see her “true self.” Social theorists believe that whenever an individual interacts with others online, she portrays a mask of her identity, not her true identity. This is partly due to the fact that in some online contexts, such as Facebook, she must answer specific questions to create an online profile. Further, as she begins to interact with others, she adds more and more layers to her mask through the vocabulary she uses and the topics she writes about.

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1. **Pseudonym (noun):** a false name  
2. **Deceptive (adjective):** meant to trick or deceive someone

- [5] The kind of mask one chooses reveals at least something about the person who chooses it. While the online mask does not reveal the actual identity of the person, it does reveal an example of what lies behind the mask. For instance, if a person chooses to act like a rock star online, this may mean that he or she has an interest in rock music. Even a person choosing to hide behind a totally false identity says something about the fear and lack of self-esteem he or she may be experiencing.

## Relation to real-world physical and sensory constraints

Online identity offers potential social benefits to those with physical and sensory<sup>3</sup> disabilities, because others cannot see them. These users can free themselves from their disabilities by creating online personas that are not disabled. This is called “disembodiment,” and gives these users the opportunity to operate outside the constraints of social stigmatization. They can be treated on their merits as a person, rather than being seen as someone inferior due to a disability.

## Concerns

Most concerns about virtual identity revolve around the contrast between online and offline existence. The ability to challenge the notion of what “real” means has raised questions about how virtual experience may affect one’s offline emotions.

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3. **Sensory** (*adjective*): something that can be felt by the five senses





# Fake animal news abounds on social media as coronavirus upends life

By National Geographic, adapted by Newsela staff on 04.03.20

Word Count **979**

Level **1200L**



Image 1. Clear waters by gondolas in a Venice canal in Venice, Italy, on March 18, 2020. Viral social media posts claimed swans and dolphins were returning to the waters. It wasn't true. The water has been more clear lately as a result of the decrease in boat activity. The traffic stopped after Italy went on lockdown because of the new coronavirus crisis. Photo: Andrea Pattaro/AFP via Getty Images

In the middle of endless news about COVID-19 case surges, quarantine orders and medical supply shortages on Twitter the week of March 23, 2020, some happy stories softened the blows. Swans had returned to deserted Venetian canals in Italy. Dolphins, too. Also, a group of elephants had sauntered through a village in Yunnan, China, drank a corn drink and passed out in a tea garden.

COVID-19, or the novel coronavirus, is a flu-like illness that causes mild symptoms in many but can make some such as the elderly or those with existing health conditions very sick. The illness is now spreading quickly across the world.

These reports of wildlife triumphs in countries hard-hit by the coronavirus got hundreds of thousands of retweets. They went viral on Instagram and Tik Tok. They made news headlines. If there's a silver lining of the pandemic, people said, this was it — animals were bouncing back, running free in a humanless world.

However, it was not real.

The swans in the viral posts regularly appear in the canals of Burano, a small island in the greater Venice metropolitan area where the photos were taken. The "Venetian" dolphins were filmed at a port in Sardinia, in the Mediterranean Sea, hundreds of miles away. No one has figured out where the elephant photos came from, but a Chinese news report debunked the viral posts. While elephants did recently come through a village in Yunnan Province, China, their presence is not out of the norm, they are not the elephants in the viral photos, and they did not drink and pass out in a tea field.

### **Feel-Good Rumors In Times Of Crisis**

The phenomenon highlights how quickly eye-popping, too-good-to-be-true rumors can spread in times of crisis. People want to share posts that make them emotional. When we are feeling stressed, joyous animal footage can be an irresistible salve. The spread of social phenomena is so powerful, 2016 research shows, that it can follow the same models that trace the spread of diseases.

Kaveri Ganapathy Ahuja's controversial tweet about the swans that "returned" to Venice canals has hit a million "likes."

Ahuja, who lives in New Delhi, India, says she saw some photos on social media and decided to put them together in a tweet, unaware that the swans were already regulars in Burano before the coronavirus tore across Italy.

"The tweet was just about sharing something that brought me joy in these gloomy times," she says. She never expected it to go viral or to cause any harm. "I wish there was an edit option on Twitter just for moments like this," Ahuja says.

Still, she has not deleted the tweet and does not plan to, arguing that it is still relevant because waters in Venice are clearer than usual as a result of decreased boat activity. She has also tweeted about the "unprecedented" number of "likes" and retweets she has received on the tweet. "It's a personal record for me, and I would not like to delete it," she says.

Paulo Ordoveza is a web developer and image verification expert who runs the Twitter account @picpedant, where he exposes fake viral posts and calls out the fakers. He sees firsthand the "greed for virality" that may drive the impulse to pass around misinformation. It is "overdosing on the euphoria that comes from seeing those 'like' and retweet numbers rise into the thousands," he says.



Getting a lot of "likes" and comments "gives us an immediate social reward," says Erin Vogel, a social psychologist and postdoctoral fellow at Stanford University in California. In other words, they make us feel good. Studies have found that posting to social media gives one's self-esteem a temporary boost.

The need to seek out things that make us feel good may be exacerbated right now, as people try to come to grips with a pandemic, a collapsing economy and sudden isolation. "In times when we're all really lonely, it's tempting to hold onto that feeling, especially if we're posting something that gives people a lot of hope," says Vogel. The idea that animals and nature could actually flourish during this crisis "could help give us a sense of meaning and purpose — that we went through this for a reason," she says.

It was the running theme of many of the viral tweets. "Nature just hit the reset button on us," read a tweet celebrating the dolphins supposedly swimming in Venetian canals.

### **People Want To Believe In Power Of Nature To Recover**

"I think people really want to believe in the power of nature to recover," says Susan Clayton, a professor of psychology and environmental studies at the College of Wooster, in Ohio. "People hope that, no matter what we've done, nature is powerful enough to rise above it."

About half of Americans say they have been exposed to made-up news or information related to coronavirus, according to a new Pew Research Center survey. While a fake happy news story about dolphins in a canal may not be all that problematic, relatively speaking, there can still be harm in spreading false hope in times of crisis.

These fake feel-good stories, Vogel says, can make people even more distrustful at a time when everyone already feels vulnerable. Finding out good news is not real "can be even more demoralizing than not hearing it at all."

Spots of hope on social media are likely to play a key role in keeping spirits up in the weeks and months ahead, as people self-quarantine in their homes and connect with each other through screens. "I'd encourage people to share positive things," says Vogel. "But it doesn't have to be anything dramatic. It just has to be true."

- 1 Which of the following sentences from the section "Feel-Good Rumors In Times Of Crisis" BEST develops a central idea of the article?
- 2 Which answer choice provides an accurate and objective summary of the article?
- 3 Which of the following statements BEST represents Kaveri Ganapathy Ahuja's approach toward her viral post in the article?
- 4 Why did the author conclude the article with a psychologist's thoughts on social media sharing?

# Pancakes

JOAN BAUER

The last thing I wanted to see taped to my bathroom mirror at five-thirty in the morning was a newspaper article entitled “Are You a Perfectionist?” But there it was, courtesy of my mother, Ms. Subtlety herself. I was instantly irritated because Allen Feinman had accused me of perfectionism when he broke up with me last month. The term he used was “**rabid** perfectionism,” which I felt was a bit much—but then Allen Feinman had no grip on reality whatsoever. He was rabidly unaware, if the truth be known, like a **benign** space creature visiting Earth with no interest in going native. I tore the article off the mirror; this left tape smudges. Dirty mirrors drove me crazy. I grabbed  
10 the bottle of Windex from the closet and cleaned off the gook until the mirror shined, freed of yellow journalism.<sup>1</sup>

I glowered at the six telltale perfectionist signs in the now crumpled article.

1. Do you have a driving need to control your environment?
2. Do you have a driving need to control the environment of others?
3. Are you miserable when things are out of place?
4. Are your expectations of yourself and others rarely met?
5. Do you believe if something is to be done right, only you are the one to do it?
6. Do you often worry about your performance when it is less  
20 than perfect?

Number six had particular sting, for it was that very thing that Allen Feinman had accused me of the day he asked for his green and black lumberjack shirt back, a truly spectacular shirt that looked a lot more spectacular on me than it did on him because it brought out the intensity of my short black hair and my mysterious brown eyes. He had accused me  
of numbers one through five as well, but on this last fateful day he said, “The problem with you, Jill, is that if the least little thing goes wrong, you

## Analyze Visuals ▶

What qualities of this photograph convey the fast-paced atmosphere of a busy restaurant? Explain how these qualities work together to convey a specific **mood**, or feeling.

**rabid** (răb'īd) *adj.*  
uncontrollable; fanatical

**benign** (bĭ-nĭn') *adj.* good;  
kindly

## A DRAW CONCLUSIONS

Reread lines 21–25 to draw a conclusion about the narrator’s sense of self. Do you think Jill has a strong or a weak self-image? Record your answer in your chart.

1. **yellow journalism:** journalism that exploits or exaggerates the news to create sensations and attract readers.

can't handle it. Everything has to follow this impossible path to perfection. Someday, and I hope it's soon for your sake, you're going to have to settle for  
30 sub-par performance and realize that you're imperfect like the rest of us." He stormed off like an angry prophet who had just delivered a curse, muttering that if I was like this at seventeen, imagine what I would be like at thirty.

"Good riddance," I shouted. "I hope you find a messy, inconsiderate girlfriend who can never find her purse or her car keys, who has no sense of time, no aptitude for *planning*, and that you spend the rest of your adolescent years on your hands and knees looking for your contacts!"

I padded down the hall to my bedroom. It was Sunday morning. I was due at my waitress job at the Ye Olde Pancake House in forty-five minutes. I sat on my white down quilt, saw the chocolate smudge, quick got up and brushed the  
40 smudge with my spot remover kit that I kept in my top dresser drawer, being careful to brush the nap against the grain. I put the kit back in the drawer, refluffed my two white pillows, plucked a dead leaf off my philodendron plant, and remembered my second to last fight with Allen when he went completely ballistic at my selfless offer to alphabetize his CD collection with a color-coded cross-reference guide by subject, title, and artist. **B**

Males.

I put on my Ye Olde Pancake House waitress uniform that I had ironed and starched the night before: blue, long-sleeved ankle-length dress, white apron, white-and-blue flowered bonnet. I could have done without the bonnet, but  
50 when you're going for the ye olde look, you have to sacrifice style. I was lucky to have this job. I got it one week after my parents and I moved to town, got hired *because* I am a person of order who knows there is a right way and a wrong way to do things. I replaced a waitress who was a complete disorganized slob. As Howard Halloran, the owner of the Ye Olde Pancake House, said to me, "Jill, if you're half as organized and competent as you look, I will die happy." I smoothed back my short clipped hair, flicked a sesame seed off my just-manicured nail, and told him that I was. **C**

"I have a system for everything," I assured him. "Menu first, bring water when you come back to take the order, call it in, bring coffee immediately to  
60 follow. Don't ever let customers wait." Then I mentioned my keen knack for alphabetizing **condiments**, which was always a bonus, particularly when things got busy, and how a restaurant storage closet should be properly organized to take full advantage of the space.

"You're hired," Howard Halloran said reverently, and put me in charge of opening and setting up the restaurant on Saturday and Sunday mornings, which is when nine-tenths of all pancakes in the universe are consumed and you don't want some systemless person at the helm. You want a waitress of grit with a strategic battle plan that never wavers. Sunday morning in a pancake house is war.

I tied my white apron in a perfect bow across my back, tiptoed past my  
70 parents' bedroom, taking care not to wake them, even though my mother had taken an insensitive potshot at me without provocation.

It's not like my life had been all that perfect.

### **B CHARACTER TRAITS**

Both the narrator's mother and her former boyfriend have accused her of perfectionism. In what ways do Jill's own actions and emotions illustrate this character trait?

### **C GRAMMAR AND STYLE**

Reread lines 47–57.

Bauer's use of the **precise adjectives** *short*, *clipped*, and *just-manicured* provide insight into Jill's personality.

**condiment** (kɒn'de-mənt)  
*n.* a sauce, relish, or spice used to season food

Did I ask to move three times in eighteen months because my father kept getting transferred? Did I ask to attend three high schools since sophomore year? Did I complain about being unfairly uprooted?

Well . . . I did complain a little. . . .

Didn't I figure out a way to handle the pressure? When my very roots were being yanked from familiar soil, I became orderly and organized. I did things in the new towns so that people would like me and want to hire me, would  
80 want to be my friends. I baked world-class cookies for high school bake sales, even if it meant staying up till three A.M.; I joined clubs and volunteered for the grunge jobs that no one wanted; I always turned in a spectacular performance and people counted on me to do it. I made everything look easy. People looked up to me, or down, depending—I'm five four. And I sure didn't feel like defending all that success before dawn! **D**

I tiptoed out the back door to my white car (ancient, yet spotless) and headed for work.

Syrup, I tried explaining to Hugo, the busboy, must be poured slowly from the huge cans into the plastic pourers on the tables because if you pour it fast, you  
90 can't control the flow and you get syrup everywhere, which never really cleans up. It leaves a sticky residue that always comes back to haunt you. Syrup, I told him, is our enemy, but like Allen Feinman, Hugo was a male without vision. He couldn't anticipate disaster, couldn't cope with forethought and prevention; he let life rule him rather than the other way around, which was why *I* personally filled the syrup containers on Sunday mornings—maple, strawberry, boysenberry, and pecan. **E**

I had just filled the last containers and was putting them on the tables in horizontal rows. I had lined up the juice glasses and coffee mugs for optimal efficiency, which some people who shall remain nameless would call  
100 perfectionism, but when the place gets busy, trust me, you want everything at your fingertips or you'll lose control. I never lose control. Hugo had set the back tables and I followed him, straightening the silverware. You'd think he'd been born in a barn. Andy Pappas, the cook, was making the special hash browns with onion and green pepper that people loved.

I **steeled** myself for the hungry Sunday morning mob that would descend in two hours. I always mentally prepared for situations that I knew were going to be stressful—it helped me handle them right. I could see me, Shirl, and Lucy, the other waitresses, serving the crowd, handling the cash register. Usually Howard Halloran took the money, but he was taking a long-needed  
110 weekend off since his wife said if he didn't she would sell the place out from under him. I could see myself watching my station like a hawk, keeping the coffee brewing, getting the pancakes delivered hot to the tables. Do it fast, do it right—that was my specialty.

It was seven o'clock. Shirl and Lucy were late, but I knew that Lucy's baby was sick and Shirl was picking her up, so I didn't worry. They'd been late before. I myself was never late. I unlocked the front door, and a few customers

**D POINT OF VIEW**

Reread lines 72–85. How, if at all, do the thoughts and feelings of the **narrator** change your perception of her? Explain your answer.

**E POINT OF VIEW**

Reread lines 88–96. Think about the way Jill's point of view affects your impression of Hugo. How might this passage be different if Hugo were the narrator?

**steel** (stēl) v. to make hard or strong



came straggling in with their Sunday newspapers, settling into the booths. Nothing I couldn't handle. Things didn't start getting crazy until around eight-thirty. I had my system.

120 I took orders, walked quickly to the kitchen window. "Four over easy on eight with sausage," I said crisply. "Side of cakes." That was restaurant-speak for four plates of two eggs over easy with sausage and pancakes on the side. Andy tossed his spatula in the air, went to work. The man had total focus. He could have two dozen eggs cooking in front of him and he knew when to flip each one. **F**

A young family came in with three small children; gave them the big table by the window. Got them kid seats, took their order.

"Number three."

That was my waitress number. Andy called the number over the loudspeaker when my order was ready and I went and picked it up. A nice time-efficient  
130 system. I walked quickly to the counter (running made the customers nervous), grabbed the eggs, sausage, and pancakes, carried them four up on my left arm to table six, smiled professionally. Everything all right here, folks? Everyone nodded happily and dug in. Everything was always merry and pleasant at the Ye Olde Pancake House. That's why people came. Merry people left big tips.

I checked the ye old wall clock. Seven forty-seven. Still no Shirl or Lucy. They'd never been this late. Allen Feinman had been more than an hour late plenty of times. Allen Feinman didn't care about time—his or anyone else's. I didn't understand the grave problems he had at first; I was so caught up in him—this cute, brainy, funny guy who really seemed to want a shot  
140 of discipline. I put in my usual extra effort into the relationship—baked his favorite cookies (cappuccino chip), packed romantic picnics (French bread, brie,<sup>2</sup> and strawberries), thought about unusual things to do in Coldwater, Michigan, which was quite a challenge, but I went to the library and came up with a list of ten possible side trips around town that we could do for free.

"You're just so *organized*," he would say, which I thought was a true compliment. Later on, I realized, coming from him, it was the darkest insult.

Andy was flipping pancakes on the grill. I scanned my customers to make sure everyone was cared for, turned to dash into  
150 the bathroom quickly when a screech of tires sounded in the parking lot. I looked out the window. A lump caught in my throat.

A large tour bus pulled to a grinding halt.

I watched in horror as an army of round, middle-aged women stepped from the bus and headed toward the restaurant like hungry lionesses stalking prey.

It was natural selection—I was as good as dead.

160 "Number three."

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2. **brie** (brē): a soft French cheese.

## **F** DRAW CONCLUSIONS

Think about Jill's description of Andy. Does he seem like someone Jill would admire? Cite thorough evidence to support your conclusion.

## Analyze Visuals ▼

As you examine the photograph below, think about why the photographer chose to take such an extreme close-up of the clock. What effect does this create?



I looked at Andy, who raised his face to heaven.

“Call them,” I shrieked. “Call Shirl and Lucy! Tell them to get here!”

Andy reached for the phone.

I turned to the front door as the tour bus women poured in. They were all wearing sweatshirts that read MICHIGAN WOMEN FOR A CLEANER ENVIRONMENT. “A table for sixty-six,” said a woman, laughing.

My lungs collapsed. Sixty-six hungry environmentalists. I pointed to a stack of menus, remembering my personal Waitress Rule Number One: Never let a customer know you’re out of control.

170 “Sit anywhere,” I cooed. “I’ll be right with you.” **G**

“If you wrote the menu on a blackboard you wouldn’t waste paper,” one said.

“Number three.” I raced back to the kitchen. Pancakes for table eight. I layered the plates on my left arm, plopped butter balls from the ye olde butter urn on the pancakes. Andy said he’d tried Shirl and Lucy and no one answered. At least they were on their way. I raced to table eight. The little girl took one look at her chocolate chip pancakes and burst into tears.

“They’re not the little ones,” she sobbed.

180 “Oh, now, precious,” said her father, “I’m sure this nice young lady doesn’t want you to be disappointed.”

I looked at the environmentalists who needed coffee. Life is tough, kid.

“Tell the waitress what you want, precious.”

Precious looked at me, loving the control. She scrunched up her dimples, dabbed her tears, and said, “I want the teeny weeny ones, pwease.”

“Teeny weeny ones coming up,” I chirped, and raced to Andy. “Chocolate silver dollars for the brat on eight,” I snarled. “Make them perfect, or someone dies.”

“You’re very attractive when you get busy,” Andy said laughing.

“Shut up.”

190 The phone rang. I lunged for it. It was Lucy calling from the hospital. Her baby had a bronchial infection,<sup>3</sup> needed medicine. She couldn’t come in, but Shirl was on her way, she should be pulling onto the interstate now.

“Are you all right there, Jill?”

“Of course,” I lied. “Take care of that baby. That’s the most important thing.”

“You’re terrific,” she said, and hung up.

200 I’m terrific, I told myself. I can handle this because, as a terrific person, I have an organized system that always works. I grabbed two coffee pots and raced to the tour group, smiling. Always smile. Poured coffee. They’d only get water if they asked. We’re so glad you came to see us this morning. Yes, we have many tours pass through, usually we have more waitresses, though. It’s a safe bet that any restaurant on this earth has more waitresses than the Ye Olde Pancake House does at this moment. **H**

### **G** DRAW CONCLUSIONS

Consider the difference between what Jill is thinking and what she actually says. What does this indicate about her character? Explain how you came to this conclusion.

### **H** PREDICT

Will Jill be able to handle the crisis at the pancake house? Make a prediction about what will happen as Jill struggles to cope with the teeming crowd of hungry customers.

3. **bronchial infection:** an infection of the bronchial tubes—the tubes that connect the windpipe to the lungs.

I took their orders like a shotgunner shooting clay pigeons.

*Pull!*

Pigs in a blanket.

Steak and fried eggs.

Buttermilk pancakes.

Betsy Ross (buttermilks with strawberry and blueberry compote).

210 Colonial Corn Cakes (Allen Feinman's favorite).

A round-faced woman looked at me, grinning. "Everything looks so good." She sighed. "What do you recommend?"

I recommend that you eat someplace else, ma'am, because I do not have time for this. I looked toward the front of the restaurant; six large men were waiting to be seated. Hugo was pouring syrup quickly into pourers to torture me, sloshing it everywhere. I said, "Everything's great here, ma'am. I'll give you a few seconds to decide." I turned to the woman in the next booth. The round-faced woman grabbed my arm. I don't like being touched by customers.

220 "Just a minute. Well . . . it all looks so good."

"Number three." I glared in Andy's direction. "And number three again."

A cook can make or break you.

The round-faced woman decided on buttermilk pancakes, a daring choice. **1** I ran to the kitchen window. "Hit me," Andy said.

"I'd love to. You're only getting this once. Buttermilks on twelve. Pigs on four, Betsy's on three. Colonials on seven." I threw the rest of the orders at him.

"You have very small handwriting," he said. "That's often the sign of low self-esteem."

230 I put my hand down in one of Hugo's syrup spills, pushed back my bangs with it; felt syrup soak my scalp.

Andy said, "You're only one person, Jill."

I scanned the restaurant—juice glasses askew, hungry people waiting at dirty tables. I could do anything if I worked hard enough. Shirl would be here any minute.

240 "Waitress, we're out of syrup!" A man held his empty syrup container up. I looked under the counter for the extra maple syrup containers I had cleverly filled, started toward the man, tripped over an environmentalist's foot, which sent the syrup container flying, caught midair, but upside down by a trucker who watched dumbly as syrup oozed onto the floor in a great, sticky glop. I lunged for the syrup container, slid on the spill, felt sugared muck coat my exposed flesh.

"Hugo!" I screamed, pointing at the disaster. "Hot water!"

"Number three."

I moved in a daze as more and more people came. Got the tour bus groups fed and out. Had they mentioned separate checks, one woman asked?

*Nooooooooo . . .*



9.3b

### Language Coach

**Multiple Meanings** *Pull* normally means "the opposite of *push*." In clay-pigeon shooting, its meaning is different. At the command "Pull!" a clay disk launches into the air. Reread lines 204–205. What does this use of *pull* say about how the narrator takes orders?



9.4k

### **1** SARCASM

**Sarcasm** is a cutting, often ironic remark. Jill uses sarcasm when she refers to the woman's order as "a daring choice." She actually means the opposite—that it is *not* daring to order the buttermilk pancakes. Ordinarily, a sarcastic remark is intended to wound the recipient. Rather than speaking it aloud, Jill keeps the potentially offensive remark to herself. Given the context of the story so far, why do you think she does this?

Made coffee. More coffee. Told everyone I was the only waitress here, if they were in a hurry, they might want to go someplace else. But no one left. They just kept coming, storming through the restaurant like Cossacks.<sup>4</sup> People were grabbing my arm as I ran by.

“What’s your name, babe?” asked a lecherous man.

“Miss,” I snarled.

“Number three.”

260 “I had a life when I woke up this morning! Everything was in place!”

Buckwheats on table three.

The man looked at them. . . . He said, “You call these buckwheats?

Buckwheats are supposed to be enormous and hearty.” I’m the fall guy for everything that happens in the restaurant. It’s my tip that’s floating down the river waving bye-bye. I embraced my personal Waitress Rule Number Two: The customer is always right, even if they’re dead wrong. I said, “That’s the way we do them here, sir,” and he said he can’t eat them, he can’t look at them, he’ll have the buttermilks, not knowing the trouble he’s caused me. Andy gets sensitive if someone sends the food back—he’s an artist, can’t handle criticism. You have to lie to him or he slows down. I raced back to the kitchen.

270 “The man’s a **degenerate**,” I said to Andy. “He wouldn’t know a world-class buckwheat if it jumped in his lap. He doesn’t deserve to be in the presence of your cooking.”

The phone rang. I lunged for it. It’s Shirl calling from someone’s car phone on the interstate with impossible news. A trailer truck had jackknifed, spilling soda cans everywhere. There was a five-mile backup. She’d be hours getting to work.

“Are you all right?” Shirl asked.

280 I looked at the line of cars pulling into the parking lot, the tables bulging with hungry customers, the coffee cups raised in anticipation of being filled, the line at the cash register. I heard a woman say how the restaurant had gone downhill, and the people were looking at me like I was their breakfast savior, like I had all the power and knowing, like I could single-handedly make sure they were happy and fed. And I was ashamed that I couldn’t do it, but no one could. ❶

*Not even me!*

I tore off my ye olde bonnet. “I’m trapped in a pancake house!” I shrieked into the phone, and, like in all sci-fi stories, the connection went dead.

“Number three.”

290 I limped toward him, a shadow of my former self.

“We’re out of sausage,” Andy said solemnly.



**degenerate** (dĭ-jĕn'ər-ĭt)  
*n.* a corrupt or vicious person

### ❶ POINT OF VIEW

Reread lines 280–285. Consider how learning Jill’s thoughts contributes to your understanding of her character. How would your reaction to Jill be different if you didn’t know what Jill was thinking and feeling?

4. **Cossacks:** a people of southern Russia, known as fierce cavalymen.

“Good. It’s one less thing to carry.” I stood on the counter, put my head back, and screamed, “We’re out of sausage and it’s not my fault!”

A man at a back table hollered that he needed ketchup for his eggs. I reached down in the K section under the counter. Nothing under K. I got on my knees, hands shaking, rifling through jams, jellies, lingonberries. *Hugo!* I shrieked.

He ran up to me.

“Ketchup, Hugo! Wake up! The sky is falling!”

He pointed to the C section. “Catsup,” he said meekly.

300 I was falling down a dark, disorderly tunnel. There was no end in sight. Coffee grounds were in my eyebrows, my hands smelled like used tea bags. I was exhausted, syrup encrusted, I’d had to go to the bathroom for three hours. People were going to get their own coffee—the ultimate defeat for any waitress. I looked at my haggard reflection in the coffee urn. The only consolation was that I wouldn’t live till noon.

“Waitress!”

I raced down the aisle to table twelve, seeing the hunted look in my customer’s eyes. I wanted to be perfect for every one of you. I wanted you all to like me. I’m sorry I’m not better, not faster. Please don’t hate me, I’m only one  
310 person, not even a particularly tall person.

“I’m sorry,” I said to a table of eight, “but I simply can’t do everything!”

I felt a ripple of **crass** laughter in the air. I turned. Allen Feinman had walked in with his parents. **K**

No. . . . Anything but this.

Our eyes met. I could hear the taunts at school, the never-ending retelling of this, my ultimate nightmare.

“Can I help, Jill?” He rolled up his shirtsleeves. Allen Feinman was offering to help.

I grabbed his arm. “Can you work the register?”

320 “Of course.” Allen organized the people into a line, made change, smiled. He had such a nice smile. Thanked everyone for their patience, got names on lists.

Mrs. Feinman took off her jacket and asked, “Can I make coffee, dear?”

“Mrs. Feinman, you don’t have to—”

“We’ve always been so fond of you, Jill.”

I slapped a bag of decaf in her sainted hands. Mr. Feinman poured himself a cup of coffee and went back to wait in the car.

We whipped that place into shape. All I needed was a little backup. My pockets were bulging with tips, and when Shirl raced in at eleven forty-five, I pushed a little girl aside who’d been waiting patiently by the bathroom door  
330 and I lunged toward the toilet stall. Life is tough, kid.

By one-thirty the crowds had cleared. Lucy called—her baby was home and doing better. Allen Feinman and I were sitting at a back table eating pancakes. He said he’d missed me. I said I’d missed him, too. Hugo was speed-pouring boysenberry syrup, spilling everywhere—but somehow it didn’t matter anymore. It was good enough.

And that, I realized happily, was fine by me. ☺

**crass** (krās) *adj.* crude; unrefined

**K PREDICT**

Predict what might happen with the arrival of Allen. Give reasons for your prediction.



9.3d

**Language Coach**

**Idioms** An **idiom** is an expression that cannot be understood literally. Given the context of the story leading up to line 327, what do you think “we whipped that place into shape” means?

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Idols:

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My birthday:

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I am \_\_\_\_ years old.

I live in:

---

I go to school at:

---

My friends:

---

My family:

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_