

Name: _____ Date: _____

Everyday Miracles

Read "Voilà!" Then answer the questions below to help you prepare to answer the writing prompt on page 27, which says: On page 23, Simone refers to "everyday miracles" and the magic that is all around us. What do you think she means? What everyday miracles is Simone able to find in the doctor's waiting room? Answer both questions in an essay. Use text evidence.

1. Explain what you think Simone means when she refers to "everyday miracles" and the magic that is all around us. Give at least three examples of the kinds of things that you think might be considered everyday miracles or magic.

2. What signal does Ma Tante give Simone that an everyday miracle is happening? Explain how you know, using text evidence.

3. What tells you that Simone notices the magic that Ma Tante is alerting her to in the doctor's waiting room?

4. What are the everyday miracles that Simone notices in the waiting room? Why does what happens fit the definition of an everyday miracle and the magic that is all around us?

When you write your response to the writing prompt on page 27, use the ideas you wrote in response to the questions in this activity. Be sure to transition smoothly between ideas.



“Voilà!”

Respond to each statement by checking “Agree” or “Disagree.” Be prepared to justify your responses.

	Agree	Disagree
1. Kids are often self-conscious about how their families, homes, or lives appear to others.		
2. It feels bad when people make assumptions about you.		
3. Wonderful, surprising, special things happen all around us every day.		
4. A language is more than just words.		
5. It is easy to take the good things in life for granted.		

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Go to Scope
Online to listen
to the words
and definitions
read aloud.

Vocabulary:

"The Story Behind 'Voilà!'"

1. **affluent (A-floo-uhnt)** *adjective*; *Affluent* means "wealthy." An affluent person has plenty of money. An affluent neighborhood might be full of big houses and nice cars.
2. **convey (kuhn-VAY)** *verb*; To *convey* something is to communicate it or make it known. You might convey a message from your mom to your sister. A painting's dark colors might convey a feeling of sadness.
3. **fissure (FISH-er)** *noun*; A *fissure* is a long, narrow opening or crack in something. An earthquake might cause a fissure in the ground.
4. **informal (in-FAWR-muhl)** *adjective*; The word *formal* means "following an established form, custom, or rule." At a formal dinner, people get dressed up, sit at a tablecloth-covered table, and follow all the rules of "proper" behavior. A formal meeting is one that is planned ahead of time and at which things must be done in a particular way.

The prefix *in-* means "not," so the word *informal* means "not formal." Something that is informal is relaxed, casual, or unofficial. You might have an informal meeting with your student council buddies over lunch—a laid-back gathering that happens without being planned or organized. On a Friday night your family might have an informal dinner of eating pizza on the couch while you watch a movie.
5. **purgatory (PER-guh-tawr-ee)** *noun*; According to the Roman Catholic religion, *purgatory* is a place of suffering where the souls of the dead are sent to be punished and cleansed of their sins before going to heaven.

People also use *purgatory* figuratively to refer to any place or state of suffering or misery, as in, "The final three miles of the marathon were purgatory."

Directions: On the back of this page, list any other words from the interview whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the primary meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence using the word.

Vocabulary Practice

"The Story Behind 'Voilà!'"

Directions: Complete each unfinished sentence in a way that makes the meaning of the boldface word clear.

1. The writer hoped her story would **convey** _____

2. I noticed a **fissure** in the frozen pond. The ice _____

3. As I was revising my essay, I realized the language was too **informal**. It sounded _____

4. Being in my mom's minivan this afternoon was like **purgatory**. The _____

5. The Gleesons were an **affluent** family, so they _____

Directions: Choose the word that is most similar in meaning to each word in bold.

6. fissure

- Ⓐ closure
- Ⓑ gap

7. convey

- Ⓐ receive
- Ⓑ express

8. affluent

- Ⓐ rich
- Ⓑ absent

Directions: Write a sentence that includes a word or words from the list of vocabulary words on page 1 of this activity (including any words you added).

9. _____

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Close-Reading Questions

"Voilà!"

1. What do you think Ma Tante means by this? (figurative language, page 23)
2. Where else in the story do people make incorrect assumptions about each other? (text structure, page 23)
3. What is Simone's attitude toward Ma Tante's doctor? Explain. (tone, page 25)
4. Why do you think the author includes Creole and French words? (author's craft, page 25)

5. How is this statement related to the ideas in the opening section of the story? (theme, page 25)

6. What does Simone mean? What does Waverly do that supports Simone's description?
(character, page 25)

7. How do these last lines connect to the opening section of the story? (text structure, page 26)

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Critical-Thinking Questions

“Voilà!” and “The Story Behind Voilà!”

1. How did Debbie Rigaud draw on her own experiences to write “Voilà!”?
2. Rigaud says that after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, many people suddenly thought they knew something about those of Haitian descent. This is what happens with Simone and the “look-alikes”—and Simone is not very happy about it. Why might it be irritating to have people think they understand you based on an event that they heard about in the news?
3. Describe one thing you have experienced or observed in the past week that could be considered an “everyday miracle.” Explain why you think so.

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“Voilà!”

Character Thinking Tool

The questions in this activity are about the character of
Simone

1. On page 23, Simone says that Ma Tante is “ever vigilant” of her feelings. What does she mean?

2. On page 23, while talking to Tina and Tara, Simone says, “I nod, squeezing the last bit of polite from my reserves.” How is Simone feeling in this moment? Why?

3. On page 24, Simone says, “Ma Tante’s obviously glad for my company—which makes me feel bad for sulking.” What does it mean to sulk? What has Simone been sulking about?

4. When Simone talks to Louis, she feels "suddenly self-conscious." What does she feel self-conscious about? How do you know?

5. Compare how Simone views Louis with how she views Waverly.

6. How does Simone come to see Waverly in a different light at the end of the story?

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"Voilà!" Quiz

Directions: Read "Voilà!" and "The Story Behind 'Voilà!'" Then answer the questions below.

- How does the opening section contribute to the story? Choose TWO answers.**
 - It introduces the idea of an everyday miracle.
 - It helps readers understand why Simone disapproves of Ma Tante's doctor.
 - It provides information about Ma Tante's life in Haiti.
 - It shows that Simone and Ma Tante have a close relationship.
- How does Simone feel when Louis and Waverly arrive at the doctor's office?**
 - embarrassed about where she lives
 - excited to see her friends
 - worried that Ma Tante will tease her
 - angry that they didn't ask her to volunteer with CARE-A-VAN
- Which lines from the story support your answer to question 2? Choose TWO answers.**
 - "The first thing that catches my eye is his T-shirt."
 - "What're you doing here, Simone?"
 - "I suddenly feel exposed, as if Waverly had walked in on me getting my hair braided."
 - "My embarrassment at being seen in the ghetto doctor's office outweighs my guilt."
- On page 24, Simone says that Ma Tante "dresses to the nines." To "dress to the nines" is to**
 - wear comfortable clothing.
 - wear peach-colored clothing.
 - dress up in a costume.
 - dress up in fancy clothes.
- Why does Ma Tante say "Voilà!" at the end of the story?**
 - to let Simone know that she wants to go home
 - to signal to Simone that some sort of everyday magic is happening
 - to tell Madame Bertrand that the doctor is ready for her
 - to hint that she has just seen a sunbeam
- Which statement is supported by the interview with Debbie Rigaud on page 27?**
 - The characters of Louis and Waverly are based on real people Rigaud knew as a teenager.
 - Rigaud hopes "Voilà!" will inspire kids to volunteer.
 - The main reason Rigaud wrote "Voilà!" was to teach readers about the earthquake in Haiti in 2010.
 - Rigaud drew on her own experiences as a Haitian American to write "Voilà!"

Constructed-Response Questions

Directions: Write your answer in a well-organized response.

- Give at least three details in the story that show that Simone and Ma Tante have a close, loving relationship. Explain how each detail shows this.
- In the interview, Debbie Rigaud's says that one reason she wrote "Voilà!" was to acknowledge the "quietly suffering people" she saw as a child. Who is treated unfairly in "Voilà!" and in what way? Use text evidence to support your answer.

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“Voilà!” Quiz

Directions: Read “Voilà!” and “The Story Behind ‘Voilà!’” Then answer the questions below.

1. How does the opening section contribute to the story? Choose TWO answers.

- (A) It introduces the idea of an everyday miracle.
- (B) It helps readers understand why Simone disapproves of Ma Tante’s doctor.
- (C) It provides background information about Ma Tante’s life in Haiti.
- (D) It establishes that Simone and Ma Tante have a close relationship.

2. How does Simone feel when Louis and Waverly arrive at the doctor’s office?

- (A) self-conscious about where she lives
- (B) excited to see her friends
- (C) worried that Ma Tante will tease her about having a crush on Louis
- (D) angry that they didn’t ask her to participate in CARE-A-VAN

3. Which lines from the story support your answer to question 2? Choose TWO answers.

- (A) “The first thing that catches my eye is his T-shirt.”
- (B) “‘What’re you doing here, Simone?’”
- (C) “I suddenly feel exposed, as if Waverly had walked in on me getting my hair braided.”
- (D) “My embarrassment at being seen in the ghetto doctor’s office outweighs my guilt.”

4. On page 24, Simone says that Ma Tante “dresses to the nines” for her doctor’s appointments. The idiom “dress to the nines” means to

- (A) wear comfortable clothing.
- (B) wear peach-colored clothing.
- (C) dress up in a costume.
- (D) dress up in fancy clothes.

5. Why does Ma Tante say “Voilà!” at the end of the story?

- (A) to let Simone know that she wants to go home
- (B) to signal to Simone that some sort of everyday magic is happening
- (C) to tell Madame Bertrand that the doctor is ready for her
- (D) to indicate that she has just seen a sunbeam filled with particles

6. Which of the following does the interview with Debbie Rigaud on page 27 NOT support?

- (A) Rigaud wanted “Voilà!” to bring attention to the unfair treatment that seniors and the less affluent sometimes experience.
- (B) Rigaud drew on her own experiences as a Haitian American to write “Voilà!”
- (C) Like Ma Tante and Simone, Rigaud looks for everyday miracles.
- (D) The characters of Louis and Waverly are based on real people Rigaud knew as a teenager.

Constructed-Response Questions

Directions: Write your answer in a well-organized response.

7. Describe the relationship between Ma Tante and Simone. Support your analysis with text evidence.

8. Debbie Rigaud says that “Voilà!” is her way of acknowledging the “quietly suffering people” she witnessed as a child. Explain what Rigaud means and how she does this through “Voilà!”

Note: *Scope* does not accept Google Docs. If you are e-mailing your entry, please send a .pdf or .doc file.

Voilà! Contest

On page 23, Simone refers to “everyday miracles” and the magic that is all around us. What do you think she means? What everyday miracles is Simone able to find in the doctor’s waiting room?

Answer both questions in an essay. Use text evidence.

Five winners will each get *Serafina’s Promise* by Ann E. Burg.

Entries will be judged on:

- ⇒ a clearly stated central idea
- ⇒ good organization and transitions
- ⇒ use of supporting text evidence
- ⇒ grammar, spelling, and punctuation

My name: _____

My home phone number: _____ My grade: _____

My teacher’s name: _____ My teacher’s e-mail: _____

School name: _____

School address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

School phone number: _____

My parent or legal guardian consents
to my participation in this contest.

Parent’s or legal guardian’s signature: _____

Include this form with your written entry and send both to: scopemag@scholastic.com
or mail them to: Voilà! Contest, c/o *Scope*, P.O. Box 712, New York, NY 10013-0712

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY May 15, 2019!

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Making Inferences

Making an inference means using clues from the text to figure out something the author doesn't tell you directly.

Directions: Answer the questions or follow the directions that appear in italics to fill in the chart. We completed the first row for you.

Clues	Inference
<p>1. On page 23, Simone describes the process of waiting in the office with Ma Tante:</p> <p>"My great-aunt is positioning her metal cane below her seat as she settles into her chair, getting acquainted with its contours in preparation for the long wait. The doctor's office is filling up quickly. Over the past few years, as Ma Tante's painfully curved back has pulled her closer to the earth, the matching-scrubs sisters have started jumping her nearer to the top of the waiting list."</p>	<p><i>What do these lines suggest about Ma Tante's health?</i></p> <p>You can infer from the fact that Ma Tante uses a cane that she has trouble getting around. You can also infer that Ma Tante has back problems and that they are getting worse from the fact that Simone says that Ma Tante's back is "painfully curved" and that it "has pulled her closer to the earth" over the years.</p>
<p>2. On page 25, Simone runs into a classmate, Louis, at the doctor's office:</p> <p>"You're a volunteer here too?" Louis asks.</p> <p>"Um, no," I mutter, suddenly self-conscious. Why did Anne have to dump me here today?</p> <p>"Oh," he says, and I can see he understands. <i>You're from the East Ward.</i> Before I can busy myself with a fake text, he continues. "Nice running into you, though."</p>	<p><i>What can you infer about how Simone is feeling at this moment?</i></p>
<p>3. Find two lines in the story that support the inference on the right.</p>	<p>Simone doesn't enjoy being around Waverly.</p>

Clues	Inference
<p>4. On page 24, Ma Tante and Simone are talking about what the "look-alikes" at the doctor's office said:</p> <p>We tumble into a silent giggle. Me shaking my head no and Ma Tante gesturing <i>oui</i>. But as messed up as it sounds, Ma Tante's right. Most people don't recognize the gems in front of them. And to me, Ma Tante is the most precious kind.</p> <p>"That's not true," I say, and rub her forearm, enjoying the easy movement of her loose chocolate skin. "You're a beautiful queen."</p> <p>"Aaah, Simone." Ma Tante sings out my name in a delight that shows she knew what I was thinking.</p>	<p><i>What can you infer about the relationship between Ma Tante and Simone from this passage?</i></p>