

## GRAMMAR GANGNAM STYLE

### IMPLY VS. INFER

- |             |                        |
|-------------|------------------------|
| 1. implying | 8. inferred            |
| 2. infer    | 9. implying            |
| 3. infer    | 10. inferred           |
| 4. implied  | 11. implied            |
| 5. implies  | 12. implying           |
| 6. inferred | 13. Answers will vary. |
| 7. implying |                        |

## DISASTER ON THE MOUNTAIN

### AVALANCHE SAFETY

#### Dangers of Avalanches:

1. suffocation as a result of being buried in snow
2. hypothermia
3. trauma; being injured by snow and debris while tumbling down the mountain

#### Signs That an Avalanche Is Likely:

1. lots of fresh snow
2. steep slopes
3. sudden weather changes
4. high winds

#### Ways to Stay Safe From Avalanches:

1. bring safety/rescue equipment: beacons, shovels, probes, air bags
2. take an avalanche-safety course/learn to recognize the warning signs
3. respect the warning signs/be careful not to get a false sense of security
4. never go out skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, etc., alone

### READING AN INFOGRAPHIC

1. Students should guess that it means something like "cold" or "under the correct temperature."
2. You could use the fact that avalanches travel up to 300 feet in a second, which is equivalent to traveling the length of a football field per second.
3. You could use the fact that from 2000 to 2011, between 23 and 37 people have died in avalanches per year, and the fact that 40.8 percent of these people were snowboarders and skiers.
4. T
5. F
6. T

7. C
8. B

### "DISASTER ON THE MOUNTAIN" QUIZ

- |      |      |
|------|------|
| 1. B | 5. C |
| 2. C | 6. A |
| 3. D | 7. A |
| 4. C | 8. B |
9. Answers will vary but should be similar to the following: The author uses descriptive language to great effect in the article. She begins by describing the late-winter day on which the sights and sounds are calm and beautiful, mentioning "the rugged beauty of the Alaska wilderness" and stating that "the day was so serene." When the avalanche starts, the author uses the word "*Whumph!*" to communicate its tremendous sound. The adjectives and verbs she uses in sentences such as "Tons of ice and snow peeled away from the slope and began a thunderous crashing slide down the mountain," "He was helpless as the icy wave crashed around him" and "He clawed at the snow" emphasize the power of the avalanche and allow the reader to visualize the harrowing event. When the author describes Stroud being buried alive, she explains that he was deprived of most of his senses: He couldn't open his eyes, he couldn't move, and his mouth was full of snow. All of these descriptions heighten the drama for the reader and bring an immediacy to the story.
10. Answers will vary but should be similar to the following: When Jill Fredston says, "Nature sends out strong messages. If only people would learn to listen," she means that there are often clear indications of when a natural disaster is likely to occur, and it's a shame that people either don't see them or fail to heed them. Stroud and Repetto chose a bright, sunny day following a heavy snowfall to ski down a shadowed slope—a combination of conditions under which an avalanche is likely. The two men, both of whom were experienced backcountry skiers, could have and should have realized this and postponed their outing.

### "DISASTER ON THE MOUNTAIN" CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS

Answers will vary but should be similar to the following:

1. Most avalanches are triggered when people step on an unstable slope. These disasters could be avoided if people paid attention to warning signs, such as accumulation of fresh snow, steep slopes, sudden shifts in weather, and high winds.
2. More resorts have opened backcountry areas to adventurers, and as more people venture into the backcountry, the number of deaths rises. Possible answers include that resorts could close off these areas, adventurers could take warnings more seriously, and laws could require lifesaving equipment and education.
3. They study the composition of snow and the history of where avalanches have occurred. Their work is important because they help others avoid catastrophe.
4. Stroud and Repetto's beacons and other rescue equipment, along with Repetto's knowledge, cool-headedness, and determination, allowed for Stroud's unlikely survival.
5. Since 99 percent of avalanche deaths are due to trauma or suffocation, you can infer that air bags could reduce the number of deaths. Fredston might warn that this equipment gives people a false sense of security.

### READ, THINK, EXPLAIN: NONFICTION ELEMENTS

1. "Disaster on the Mountain"
2. It shows snow cascading down a mountain like a waterfall. There is a person just off to the side of the moving snow. The mood is terrifying and dangerous.
3. what makes avalanche country dangerous, and how skiers can stay safe
4. The map reveals that Chugash is in western Alaska, not far from the city of Anchorage. It shows that the avalanche occurred not far from the South Fork River.
5. Fredston suggests that what you need is to have someone with you who can find you.
6. It shows a train that was wrecked when it was swept off its track during the

worst avalanche in U.S. history, on March 1, 1910.

7. A. Cause and Effect  
B. The beginning of the section states that over the past decade, the number of people killed in avalanches has been increasing. The section then explains some of the reasons this has been happening—in other words, the causes. Then the section describes the structure of snow and explains that if there is too much space between particles (a cause), just one person's weight can start an avalanche (effect). This situation, the section states, is what led to the avalanche that buried Stroud.
8. While skiing in Chugash State Park in Alaska, John Stroud triggered an avalanche that buried him alive. Fortunately, he was with a friend, and both men had safety equipment with them. Stroud's friend was able to save him. The article also explains why avalanche fatalities have been increasing, and why most can be avoided if people learn to recognize and respect the signs that an avalanche is likely.
9. Answers will vary but should be similar to the following: Stroud and Repetto could have avoided the avalanche that almost killed Stroud.
10. Claim 1: True; According to the pie chart "How They Kill," only 1 percent of those killed by avalanches from 2000-2011 died from hypothermia, while 75 percent died from suffocation and 24 percent died from trauma.  
Claim 2: True; An avalanche can travel up to 300 feet in one second, so in four seconds, an avalanche could travel up to 1,200 feet.  
Claim 3: False; The fewest number of avalanche deaths per year since 2000 occurred in 2006.  
Claim 4: True; In 2006, about 20 people died in avalanches; in 2007, about 36 people died in avalanches.
11. Answers will vary.
12. Answers will vary.

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL

### LIGHTENING BURDENS

#### Jacob Marley

1. No; Marley's ghost tells Scrooge that he must drag a chain and wander the world forever as punishment for the kind deeds he failed to do in life. He says, "Oh, why did I not show charity?" and "I should have been kinder."
2. No; Marley appears to Scrooge as a model of what *not* to become; Marley regrets that he pursued wealth and success and was not kind.

#### Mr. Fezziwig

3. Yes; With the Ghost of Christmas Past, Scrooge revisits a party that Fezziwig is throwing for his employees. Scrooge says, "Fezziwig was always making people happy. It was the little things mostly—the way he looked at you or patted you on the back."
4. Yes; Scrooge seems very fond of Fezziwig and defends him when the ghost says that Fezziwig is wasting money; it seems clear that Fezziwig made life more pleasant for others and was highly regarded by those who knew him.

#### Scrooge

5. No; At the beginning of the play, Scrooge refuses to let his employee Bob Cratchit add coal to the fire, though Cratchit is cold. Scrooge also gives Cratchit a hard time for wanting to take off work on Christmas, then threatens to fire Cratchit for expressing joy over the holidays. Scrooge tries to dampen the spirits of both his nephew, Fred, and Cratchit. Later, Scrooge journeys with the Ghost of Christmas Present to the Cratchits' house, where it is revealed that thanks to Scrooge, the Cratchits are poor and can afford only a small goose for their Christmas supper; the Cratchits also need more money to help their son Tim, who is sick. Caroline Cratchit calls Scrooge "unfeeling, unkind" and "miserly."
6. No; When the Ghost of Christmas Future takes Scrooge to his own funeral, there is no one there. Scrooge overhears passersby joking that he died of an empty heart and commenting that Scrooge's money did him no good in the

end. Caroline Cratchit's angry remarks about Scrooge also establish him as an unlikely man whom no one admires or appreciates.

7. Yes; After Scrooge is visited by the ghosts, he buys a big turkey for the Cratchits, then spends Christmas Day "spreading Christmas cheer, joyfully sharing his wealth with neighbors and strangers." He gives Cratchit a raise, vows to help Cratchit's family, and in particular his sick son, in any way possible. He becomes "as good a man and as good a friend as the city has ever known."
8. Yes; After his transformation, Scrooge is much happier; he laughs out loud for the first time in a long time, and "joyfully" shares his wealth with others. That Scrooge feels so good about himself suggests that he has found a more meaningful life in helping others than in hoarding his wealth and ignoring the needs of others. Also, the final lines of the play, which state that Scrooge "becomes as good a man and as good a friend as the city has ever known" imply that Scrooge becomes an admirable person who fills a valuable role in society.

#### Charles Dickens

9. Yes; Dickens often wrote about the plight of the poor in his stories. His writing moved his wealthy readers to call for reforms that helped the poor. For example, in 1870, England passed the Education Act, which made it possible for poor children to go to school. The article states that Dickens remained a champion of social causes throughout his life.

### A CHRISTMAS CAROL QUIZ

1. C      5. C
  2. D      6. A
  3. B      7. D
  4. B      8. B
9. Answers will vary but may be similar to the following: Scrooge's struggles are largely internal. He has to overcome a lifetime of selfishness and obsession with making money. The choices Scrooge made emphasized wealth over love and family, so he has ended up old and alone. He has plenty of money but is

miserly; he's determined to hold on to every cent. When his nephew, Fred, and his employee, Bob Cratchit, speak of celebrating Christmas and spreading cheer, Scrooge declares that Christmas is a waste of time and money. He doesn't see the benefit of sharing and caring. When Scrooge is forced to look back on his life, and when he learns what others think of him, he comes to understand how his choices and his attitudes have made him unhappy, and he is motivated to change.

10. Answers will vary but should be similar to the following: Because of Charles Dickens's childhood experiences with poverty—he worked in a warehouse and lived in a boarding house—he had firsthand knowledge of the plight of the poor. In *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens is sympathetic toward the character of Scrooge's ill-treated and impoverished employee, Bob Cratchit. Though Scrooge treats him badly, Cratchit does not speak ill of Scrooge, but rather praises him for making the Cratchit family's meager meal possible. Much of Dickens's writings focused on working conditions of the poor and other social injustices. Perhaps because he was able to write about these topics with such authenticity, his novels became extremely popular and helped lead to social reforms in England.

### **A CHRISTMAS CAROL**

#### **CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS**

Answers will vary but should be similar to the following:

1. Amassing the most money possible is all that is important to Scrooge. He won't let Cratchit put more coal on the fire because "coal costs money." He says Fred has no reason to be merry since he's not wealthy. He considers Christmas celebrations a waste of money. Fred and Cratchit both see other reasons to be happy. Fred says, "Many things do us good without making us rich." Although Cratchit is poor and has a sickly child, he has a happy demeanor and agrees with Fred.
2. Marley's chains symbolize his greed and unkindness, which will forever be a weight he must carry. They also represent his enslavement: He is

enslaved to his greed. He visits Scrooge to warn him to change his ways while he still can.

3. Ghost 1 reveals that at one point Scrooge cared about more than just money; he loved a young woman named Belle. But Scrooge chose to pursue money over love; in doing so, he lost his ability to place value on anything other than money.
4. They both allow Scrooge to see himself as others see him. He realizes that he is greedy and hateful, and that his money has done him no good—but it could help save Tiny Tim.
5. The public generally didn't have sympathy for the plight of the poor, but Charles Dickens's stories stirred people's hearts and made them see things differently. Dickens's wealthy readers called for reforms.

#### **BACK TO BASICS: LITERARY ELEMENTS AND DEVICES**

Answers will vary.

##### **Characters**

1. A. Scrooge; major. He is an old man who has spent his whole life in pursuit of wealth. He is miserly and alone and doesn't see the point in celebrating Christmas. He is a dynamic character because he starts the play as a penny-pinching grump with no compassion and transforms into a generous man full of goodwill and good cheer.  
B. Bob Cratchit; minor. He is Scrooge's poverty-stricken employee who works hard even though Scrooge treats him badly. He is a static character because he remains a kindhearted man throughout the play.  
C. Jacob Marley; minor. He is Scrooge's former business partner who died years ago. Marley's ghost must drag a heavy chain and wander the world forever because of unkindnesses he committed while alive. Marley is a static character because he does not undergo any significant change. (*Students could describe another character here.*)
2. There are four ghosts in the play. The first is the ghost of Jacob Marley, who visits Scrooge to warn him that he best change his unkind and ungenerous ways so that he does not end up like Marley, doomed to drag a chain around

for eternity. The Ghost of Christmas Past reminds Scrooge what he was like as a young man: happy and in love. He also shows Scrooge the kind of boss he could have been, by showing him his old boss Fezziwig, a decent man who treated his workers with generosity and respect. The Ghost of Christmas Present takes Scrooge to Bob Cratchit's house to see how grateful the Cratchits are for what little they have. There, Scrooge hears Mrs. Cratchit refer to him as "unfeeling and unkind." He also finds out that if the Cratchit's son, Tiny Tim, does not receive help, he will die. The Ghost of Christmas Future takes Scrooge to his own funeral—to which no one has come. Passersby refer to Scrooge's "empty heart" and joke about how much money he saved by having such a cheap funeral.

3. Answers may include any of the following: In Scene 1, Scrooge won't allow Cratchit to put more coal on the fire because coal costs money. This reveals Scrooge's miserly nature as well as his indifference to the needs of others. When Scrooge's nephew wishes him a merry Christmas, Scrooge says, "Bah! Humbug!" because he sees Christmas as a waste of money. This reveals that Scrooge is focused solely on the accumulation of wealth, and that he has no capacity for joy. Scrooge says of Cratchit, "My clerk, with barely enough to feed his family, and a sickly child too, talking about a happy new year. I must be mad!" This tells us that Scrooge believes if a person doesn't have money, then he has nothing to be happy about. After Scrooge is visited by Marley and the three spirits, however, he becomes a new man. He doubles Cratchit's salary and pledges to help his family in any way he can. This tells us that Scrooge now understands what has been missing from his life: kindness, love, and compassion.

##### **Setting**

4. The play takes place in London in 1843.
5. Life was extremely difficult for poor people. Many worked under terrible conditions and lived in dilapidated boarding houses. Children were often left to wander the streets and fend for themselves. Many men and their families

ended up in debtors' prison. There was a widespread belief that the poor deserved their suffering.

6. The story takes place at Christmastime (on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day), a time of year that is associated with family, love, giving, and celebration. Bob Cratchit and Fred embody these feelings and try to cajole Scrooge to get into the Christmas spirit. Scrooge refuses and even threatens to fire Cratchit for agreeing with Fred that while celebrating holidays does not make us rich, it makes us better people.

**Imagery**

7. Answers may include the following:  
In Scene 2, the Ghost Chorus makes a creepy "Oowoooh" sound, and Scrooge "hears a door fly open and the rattling of chains." Marley shrieks and shakes his chains. These sounds create a sense of foreboding and otherworldliness. The Ghost of Christmas Past is described as wearing a long, white gown, evoking a calm and friendly presence. The description of Fezziwig's warehouse as full of food and music and dancing creates a sense of comfort and joy; the ghost is showing Scrooge how his former boss so effortlessly made his workers happy. In Scene 5, the third spirit is described as a phantom cloaked in a black robe, and "Nothing can be seen of it except one outstretched hand." This description, combined with the fact that this third spirit does not speak, evokes a sense of doom and despair. Scrooge becomes terrified of his own future and realizes that he has the power to change it.

**Tone and Mood**

8. Possible answers include: cautionary (toward the reader, toward Scrooge), sympathetic (to the poor, to Scrooge), judgmental (of the rich who do not help the poor), optimistic (that people can change). The tone could be described as cautionary because Dickens shows us the dangers of selfishness and greed—they lead to loneliness and great unhappiness. The tone could be described as sympathetic to the poor, because the Cratchits, who are poor, are portrayed as kind, generous, loving people who appreciate the little that they have. The tone could be described as sympathetic toward Scrooge because while Dickens

certainly portrays Scrooge as an unlikable character at the beginning of the story, he also seems to have great sympathy for Scrooge. By showing the reader what Scrooge was like as a young man—happy and in love—Dickens reveals compassion for Scrooge and allows the reader's heart to soften toward Scrooge as well. Dickens also shows sympathy for Scrooge by revealing Scrooge's disgust with what the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future reveal to him about the effects of his selfish, mean, miserly behavior. At the same time, the tone might be described as judgmental of those who do not show compassion toward the poor, because at the beginning of the play, Dickens certainly portrays the rich, selfish Scrooge as reprehensible and the poor, hard-working Bob Cratchit as sympathetic. The tone might also be described as optimistic, because through the story of Scrooge's transformation, Dickens suggests that it is never too late to change.

9. Possible answers include bleak, grim, etc.; surreal; frightening; touching; hopeful; celebratory, warm, joyful, etc. The author establishes a bleak mood in Scene 1, when Scrooge refuses to let Bob Cratchit put more coal on the fire. The bitter-cold temperature of Scrooge's office matches the coldness in his heart. Scene 2 has a surreal mood, when Scrooge is visited by the clanking ghost of Jacob Marley. The mood lightens in Scene 3, when the Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge to Fezziwig's festive warehouse. But before the scene ends, the mood turns grim as Scrooge is reminded of how he chose wealth over love. In Scene 4, Scrooge is amazed to find the Cratchits so positive and loving when they have so little. The mood quickly turns apprehensive, frightening, etc., as the Ghost of Christmas Future visits Scrooge in Scene 5 and takes him to his own funeral. Upon seeing his tombstone, Scrooge begs for mercy and vows to change his ways. The rest of the play has a celebratory and hopeful mood as Scrooge sends the Cratchits a prize turkey and pledges to help them however he can. He even shows his humorous side when he says, "I'm not going to stand for this any longer," before doubling Cratchit's salary.

**Plot**

10. The play begins in the present. Scrooge then travels back in time to when he was a young man. In Scene 4, the action returns to the present, where it remains until Scrooge travels into the future, to the time of his death, in Scene 5. Scenes 6 and 7 take place in the present.
11. The ghost of Jacob Marley and the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future are able to interact with Scrooge in ways that would be impossible in the natural world. Marley has been dead for years, yet he is able to warn Scrooge to change his ways. The other ghosts are able to take Scrooge to scenes in the past, present, and future, where he is able to hear the private conversations of others. Without Scrooge's seeing these scenes firsthand, it is unlikely that he would have come to understand how his choices doomed him to loneliness and misery, or to realize that others have no respect for his wealth. Thanks to what the ghosts in the story show him, Scrooge gains a new perspective on his life and goes through a dramatic transformation.
12. The primary conflict in the play is within Scrooge, as he is forced to face the terrible truth about himself: that in focusing solely on wealth, he has become a terrible person. He realizes that he has deprived himself of love and friendship, and what's more, that his stinginess and hardheartedness have contributed to the suffering of others. Once Scrooge comes to this realization, he changes his behavior completely, becoming "as good a man and as good a friend as the city has ever known."
13. The climax is when Scrooge sees his own name on the gravestone. In that moment, he decides that he must change. He vows that he is no longer the man he has been. This moment is the peak of the emotional tension that has been building.
14. The resolution of the play is Scrooge becoming a kind, generous man who is dedicated to helping others. He sends a turkey to the Cratchits, doubles Bob Cratchit's salary, puts more coal on the fire, and vows to help Cratchit's family however he can.

**A CHRISTMAS CAROL**

**VOCABULARY PRACTICE**

- |                 |                        |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1. dilapidated  | 7. unblemished         |
| 2. miserly      | 8. devastation         |
| 3. squalid      | 9. charitable          |
| 4. hobble       | 10. Answers will vary. |
| 5. evoke        | 11. Answers will vary. |
| 6. preposterous |                        |

**PAIRED TEXTS:**

**"Is the World Going to End in 2012?"  
and "Computers Prevail in First  
Hours of '00"**

**THE END(S) OF THE WORLD**

- The world will end on December 21, 2012.
- The ancient Maya Long Count calendar, which begins on the date the Maya believed the world began, ends on December 21, 2012. This date is also the winter solstice—the shortest day and longest night of the year. Plus, some people believe that on this date, the sun will align with the equator of our solar system for the first time in 26,000 years. Some people interpret the end date of the Maya calendar, in combination with these astronomical events, to be signs of a cataclysmic event.
- No. Text evidence: The headline asks, "Is the World Going to End in 2012?" The summary below the headline answers the question with one word: "No." On page 18, the author says that "other than last-minute holiday shopping," probably nothing awful will happen on December 21. The author also writes, "Scientists and scholars say there is nothing to worry about." She explains that the ancient Maya calendar had nothing to do with the end of the world; December 21, 2012, is simply the end of a period of time the ancient Maya referred to as a "Great Cycle."
- Mass chaos and destruction were predicted to erupt as the date changed from December 31, 1999, to January 1, 2000.
- Some people believed computers worldwide would crash as their clocks switched from 1999 to 2000.
- No. Text evidence: The author writes, "And then, the century turned over without a hitch."
- 22 percent
- The Hunger Games series and *The Walking Dead*
- Michael Shermer, a psychologist and science historian, says, "There have been over 269 doomsday predictions in the last 500 years alone."
- No.
- Michael Shermer says, "People have a desire to start over with a clean slate. They long for a time when everything was simpler." The writer also notes that there have been events in the past, such as a 1918 influenza outbreak, a volcano erupting in Pompeii in 79 A.D., and, perhaps, an asteroid hitting the Earth at the time of the dinosaurs, that have caused mass destruction. Some people conclude that we are bound to have other events of this nature in the future.
- The article mentions predictions of major catastrophes, including widespread power failures and planes crashing. It was predicted that computers around the world would fail as the year changed from 1999 to 2000.
- According to the article, in the 1960s, computer programmers omitted the first two digits in year dates. The fear was that computers would fail to recognize "00" as the year 2000.
- As of January 1, 2000, there were some minor problems associated with Y2K, but nothing major had gone wrong. The writer states, "January 1 arrived without the kind of catastrophes once feared. . . ." He adds, "Instead, computer specialists are watching for a rash of small, but fixable, glitches." According to the article, by January 1, 2000, most analysts considered predictions of worldwide computer failures as "exaggerated." Lou Marcoccio, the year 2000 research director for the Gartner Group, a computer consulting and market research firm, said, "There have been massive investments made . . . and the most severe problems should be avoided."
- Answers will vary but should be similar to the following: During the Y2K panic, many people believed that the calendar turning from 1999 to 2000 would cause computers to fail and result in worldwide chaos. Some believed it would be the end of life as we know it. Today, there are people who think that the end date of the Maya Long Count calendar—December 12, 2012—coinciding with an unusual cosmic alignment signifies the end of the world. Both the Y2K and the Maya 2012 prophecies caused a great number of people to panic. But while the Y2K scare revolved solely around technology—something over which we have control—the Maya 2012 prediction is based on belief in a cataclysmic event over which we would have no control. On the other hand, though the Y2K panic was based on a real situation that did have the potential to create many problems (if not the mass destruction that some feared), experts agree that Maya 2012 fears are misplaced, as they are based on an incorrect interpretation of the Maya Long Count calendar.
- Answers will vary but should be similar to the following: "Is the World Going to End in 2012?" explains why the doomsday prediction for December 21, 2012, is not going to come true, and refers to other doomsday predictions that proved inaccurate. The article states that scientists and scholars say there is nothing to worry about in terms of the predictions of a December 21 catastrophe, and explains that such predictions are based on a misunderstanding of the Maya Long Count calendar. The article quotes psychologist and science historian Michael Shermer, who says, "There have been over 269 doomsday predictions in the last 500 years alone, and none of them came true." The article also mentions Y2K, a doomsday prediction from 13 years ago that failed to come true. "Computers Prevail in First Hours of '00" goes into more detail about Y2K. The article was published on January 1, 2000, the day many predicted worldwide computer failures would lead to chaos and disaster. The article states, "January 1 arrived without the kind of catastrophes once feared, of widespread

**END-OF-THE-WORLD QUIZ**

- |      |      |
|------|------|
| 1. D | 5. A |
| 2. C | 6. B |
| 3. B | 7. D |
| 4. A | 8. A |

power failures or planes crashing." It goes on to say, "But most analysts now regard such warnings as exaggerated." From these two articles, a reader could conclude that predictions of catastrophe are often overblown.

### "IS THE WORLD GOING TO END IN 2012?" VOCABULARY PRACTICE

- 1-4. Answers will vary.
5. E
6. D
7. A
8. B
9. C
10. Answers will vary.
11. Answers will vary.

### "IS THE WORLD GOING TO END IN 2012?" CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS

Answers will vary but should be similar to the following:

1. The Maya Long Count calendar ends on December 21, 2012. This is both the winter solstice and, some say, the day that the sun aligns with the equator of the Milky Way for the first time in 26,000 years. Some people interpret these facts to be signs of a coming disaster.
2. Some people long for the end of life as we know it and fantasize about humanity getting a fresh start. Others fear the end of the world because disasters have wiped out cultures in the past. Opinions will vary.
3. According to the author, it is not at all likely that the prediction will come true. She writes, "So it seems pretty clear that the world is not ending this winter." The author seems dismissive of doomsday predictions; she follows information about the panic surrounding Y2K with the glib statement "And then, the century turned over without a hitch." At the end of the article, she lightly notes that the world will end in about 6 billion years.
4. The writer says that most analysts consider the worst predictions to have been overblown. There was, however, a real threat of many smaller problems occurring, though most of these were prevented.
5. The tone of "Is the World Going to

End in 2012?" is somewhat glib, and the writer is dismissive of doomsday predictions. The article is also reassuring; the writer tells the reader that there is nothing to worry about. "Computers Prevail" has a more neutral, purely informational tone.

### THE LAZY EDITOR Is This Weird Doll Worth a Million Bucks?

#### CONCERNING COMMAS

1. Mia doesn't like that mall; it has no Starbucks, Forever 21, or Build-a-Bear.
2. After trying pigs' feet for the first time, Devin thought he was going to hurl.
3. Selma wants to train for the big race, but she pulled a muscle in her calf yesterday.
4. I never knew that Michael Jordan, who played for the Chicago Bulls, is six-and-a-half feet tall!
5. b
6. a
7. a
8. a
9. Answers will vary.
10. Answers will vary.
11. Answers will vary.
12. Answers will vary.

#### PARENTHESES PRACTICE

1. One of our dogs (Roxie, not Nala) almost caught a squirrel in our backyard yesterday.
2. Mark grew up in a small town in Texas (population, 1800).
3. Avery's mom goes a little overboard at Thanksgiving (four different kinds of pie), but everything is always delicious.
4. Cary Grant (whose real name was Archibald Leach) starred in some of my favorite classic movies.
5. My brother thinks Kareem Abdul-Jabbar is the best basketball player of all time. (I'd choose Michael Jordan.)
6. Adrian quickly cleaned up his room before his grandma (a bit of a neat freak) came over.
7. I decided not to buy the Nike Air Max sneakers because they were so expensive. (Who has \$170 for shoes?)
8. We painted (well, I painted and Jacqueline danced around with a brush) our room.

9. Voter turnout was an estimated 58 percent this year (down from 62 percent in 2008).

#### IT'S VS. ITS

1. B      5. It's
2. C      6. its, its
3. B      7. its
4. C      8. Answers will vary.

#### USING CONSISTENT VERB TENSE

1. Adele is my favorite singer now, but when I was in fifth grade, I liked Miley Cyrus.
2. I need to go to the dentist tomorrow, since I missed my appointment today.
3. When my dad was in middle school, he surfed with his friends every day after school.
4. The school dance was a total catastrophe. First, we danced to bad music. Then the photographer did not show up. After that, I spilled chocolate cake all over my pink dress. Then my best friend slipped on the cake and twisted his ankle. What a nightmare!
5. When I missed the layup, I lost the basketball game for my team; my teammates were so cool about it though. They told me to stop beating myself up and that I would get a chance to redeem myself at the next game.

Answers will vary but should be similar to the following: Storm clouds darkened the blue sky as I rode my bike home from the park. I had never seen clouds like that before, and the wind was shaking the trees violently. I couldn't seem to pedal fast enough. Up ahead, I saw my house and breathed a sigh of relief. As soon as I walked in the door, I knew something was up. My mother explained that news reports were saying that a big storm was coming. Suddenly, I heard a loud pop! Then there was another pop! And another! I raced to look out the window and saw hail the size of golf balls falling all over my street. I was so thankful I made it home before it started falling!

#### RUN-ONS AND RAMBLERS

Answers will vary but should be similar to the following:

1. I know fruit is healthy, but there aren't

- many kinds of fruit that I like.
- This weekend is supposed to be warm and sunny; consequently, it will be perfect for our canoe trip.
  - I saw an adorable black-and-white puppy on the animal shelter's website. I can't stop looking at him.
  - Leslie and Kari watched a scary movie; as a result, both of them had nightmares for a week.
  - Four species of monkeys are native to Costa Rica. We saw all four on our trip there last spring.
  - Liz invited me to go to a movie on Friday, but I can't go because my brother's recital is that evening.
  - I talked to Gavin and he was excited about the plan; however, I haven't talked to Sophia yet.
  - Every Tuesday and Thursday, Hannah goes to rehearsal. She has a performance coming up in June.

Last week was my mom's birthday, and the whole family came over to celebrate. My sister Leah made a chocolate-chip cheesecake, which is my mom's favorite dessert. It looked absolutely wonderful; however, as soon as we tasted it, it was clear that something had gone wrong. It tasted awful. Leah realized that she had forgotten to add the sugar!

## THE CHOICE

### "THE CHOICE" QUIZ

- B
- A
- D
- C
- D
- C
- C
- D
- Answers will vary but should be similar to the following: When Zander first finds the ring, he is excited and nervous. When, after some hesitation, he shows it to his friends, he gets caught up in thinking about what he could buy with the money he would make from selling it. However, when his friend Yuri suggests that Zander knows that keeping the ring isn't the right thing to do, Zander admits that his friend is right. As the story progresses, Zander feels increasingly conflicted and anxious about

the ring; he knows he should return it, but can't quite bring himself to do it. Eventually, though, he begins to think about how good it would feel to return the ring to its owner, fantasizing about being treated as a hero. But when he sees a sign in the thrift-shop window from the ring's "heartbroken" owner, he stops thinking about himself completely, and decides once and for all to return the ring. When he discovers that the ring is a fake, he feels foolish and manipulated. But ultimately, he seems to understand the value of Weird Counter Guy's experiment. Zander knows he is a "Returner" and feels good about himself and his decision, regardless of the fact that the ring is fake.

- Answers will vary. Camus meant that a person who has no sense of right and wrong can be a danger to society. A person without ethics doesn't consider how his or her actions affect others and is likely to cause great harm. In "The Choice," Zander has to decide if he is going to try to find the rightful owner of the ring. If Zander were, as Camus describes, "a man without ethics," he wouldn't have been concerned with the person who may have lost the ring. In the advice column, the Ethicist advises Josh to explain to his friend how his friend's cheating is adversely affecting the rest of the class. Zander, Josh, and Josh's friend all need ethics to guide them toward nonselfish action.

### "THE CHOICE"

#### CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS

Answers will vary but should be similar to the following:

- He doesn't tell anyone because he isn't sure what he is going to do with the ring. His secrecy suggests that at least part of him knows he should try to return the ring to its owner, but that he is thinking of keeping it; otherwise, he would have told his mom and friends about it right away.
- Yuri advises Z to return the ring because it belongs to someone else. Z seems to recognize that this is the right thing to do. When Yuri points out that Z is hiding the ring from his mom—as a way of telling Z to listen to his conscience—Z says, "I hate it when he's right."

- He is tempted by the items he dreams of buying with the money he thinks he could get for the ring. He might also be somewhat influenced by Xavier, who urges Z to keep the ring. Plus, details suggest that Z and his mother have recently come on hard times and could really use the money.
- The parameters are the guidelines Josh has set up: He will not tell on his friend. Some students may say that Klosterman is right to respect Josh's decision to be loyal to his friend. Others may argue that the parameters are flawed and that Klosterman should urge Josh to turn in his friend.
- Both are based on consideration of how one's actions affect others. Also, Z makes his decision based on what he believes, not what his friends tell him; Klosterman tells Josh he must define his own principles, regardless of what his friends do.

## BACK TO BASICS: LITERARY ELEMENTS AND DEVICES

Answers will vary.

### Characters

- A. Zander; major. He is a 12-year-old boy who lives with his mother in a somewhat shady part of town. He and his mother don't have much money. Z is a dynamic character because over the course of the story he resolves an internal conflict about what to do with a ring that he finds. In doing so, he comes to appreciate that he is a good, honest person.  
B. Yuri; minor. He is one of Zander's two best friends. Yuri is the voice of Zander's conscience in the story, urging Zander to do the right thing and try to return the ring to its owner. Yuri is a static character because he does not change during the story.  
C. Zander's mom; minor. She is a single mom who is having some financial difficulties. She is a supportive, kind mother to Z, and is an honest person with strong principles of right and wrong. She is a static character because she does not undergo any significant change. (*Students could describe another character here.*)
- Z describes Xavier and Yuri as opposites, saying, "One goes one way, and the

other goes the other.” Xavier encourages Z to daydream about what he could buy with the money from selling the ring. Yuri, on the other hand, points out that the ring probably belongs to someone who is missing it. Xavier and Yuri represent the two sides of the argument going on in Z’s head. One option (Xavier’s) is to be selfish, keeping the ring and enjoying its rewards. The other option (Yuri’s) is to think of others and try to find the ring’s owner.

3. Answers may include any of the following: At the beginning of the story, Z begs to leave the thrift shop, indicating that he is embarrassed to be seen shopping there. This tells us that he is concerned what others think of him. Z hides the ring from his mother because he knows she will probably tell him to return it. This suggests that he knows the right thing to do, he’s just not sure he wants to do it. Z spends hours staking out the thrift shop, looking for someone who might have lost the ring. This tells us he is trying to work up the courage to do what he knows is right. As he watches several people enter the thrift shop, he thinks about how they might feel if he returned the ring to them, as well as how they might praise him. This demonstrates Z’s growing empathy, but also that he is not entirely selfless, as he wants to be acknowledged for doing good. At the end of the story, Z decides to keep the ring that he now knows is useless, suggesting that he is proud to be, as Weird Counter Guy calls him, a “Returner.”

4. Answers may include any of the following: Z’s mom whistles as she looks through the clothes at the thrift store. This tells us that she is comfortable shopping there and doesn’t feel as concerned about being judged as Z does. After Z finds the ring, his mom mistakes his squeaky voice for embarrassment about wearing thrift-shop pants. She says, “You know, Zander, no one knows where we bought them.” This tells us that she is sensitive to what her son is going through. Z doesn’t tell her about the ring because he knows that she would return it; Z knows his mom is trustworthy and ethical.

#### Setting

5. Zander and his mom live in an

apartment. Z says he doesn’t exactly “live in the best neighborhood,” and there is, it seems, a thrift shop in Zander’s neighborhood or close by. These are clues that the story takes place in a city, in a neighborhood where people are not affluent.

6. Zander doesn’t want to show Xavier and Yuri the ring while they are walking home because, Z says, “let’s face it, I didn’t exactly live in the best neighborhood.” This suggests that he is not proud of where he lives.

#### Point of View

7. First person; The narrator, Z, refers to himself as “me” and uses the pronouns “I” and “my.” Z tells the story from his perspective.
8. If the story were told in third-person omniscient point of view, the reader would have more insight as to what other characters besides Z were thinking and feeling. We would likely find out more about Weird Counter Guy and his motives for conducting the Keeper/Returner experiment, for example.

#### Tone and Mood

9. Possible answers include sympathetic or understanding, supportive, reflective, and moralistic. The author presents Zander as a likable kid who has good friends and treats his mother with respect. The author seems sympathetic to Z as he struggles to do what’s right; she lets the reader in on his thoughts, which are easy to relate to and which elicit sympathy from the reader. Though she is sympathetic to Z’s struggle, the author also seems approving of Z’s final decision to try to return the ring to its owner: She has Z walk away at the end of the story feeling good about himself. By making Z such a likable, relatable character, the author seems to be inviting readers to put themselves in his position.
10. Possible answers include thoughtful, conflicted, tense, uncomfortable, anxious, lighthearted, and intriguing. The story begins with discomfort in the air as Zander is mortified to be at the thrift shop. After he finds the ring, the mood becomes intriguing, as Zander—and readers—wonder where the ring came from. As Z struggles to decide what to do with the ring, the mood is conflicted and uncomfortable, though there are also

lighthearted moments, such as when Z imagines various thrift-shop customers as owners of the ring, and pictures himself as a hero for returning it. There is more intrigue when Z sees the “LOST” sign in the thrift-shop window, followed by apprehension as Z goes in and gets his courage up to talk to Weird Counter Guy. At the end of the story, the mood is peaceful and content, as Z comes to appreciate what he has discovered about himself—that he is an honest person who does the right thing.

#### Plot

1. Zander finds a ring in the pants he got from a thrift shop.
2. Zander deliberates about whether to keep the ring or try to return it to its owner. He goes back to the thrift shop and sees a lost sign for it in the window.
3. Zander attempts to return the ring to the thrift store, and the thrift store clerk tells Z that the ring is a fake—that he, the clerk, put it in the pants as part of an experiment on human behavior.
4. Z is upset that he went through so much struggle for nothing. He feels cheated and betrayed.
5. Z realizes that he learned something about himself and decides to keep the ring.

## YOU WRITE IT

#### QUOTATION PUNCTUATION

1. “My mom’s favorite movie is *The Princess Bride*. Actually, I like it a lot too,” said Ariella.
2. “Could you please tell me where Third Street is?” asked Ed. “I’m trying to find the Magnolia Bakery.”
3. “The only way to get there,” explained the policewoman, “is to go down Fairfax and then turn left.”
4. “When are you going to show me your art project? I’m really looking forward to seeing it!” Mom said.
5. Jake shouted, “Whoa! That was awesome! He almost broke the bat with that home run.”
6. “If you don’t have anything nice to say,” said Mrs. Lewis, “then it’s best not to say anything at all.”

7. "Wait until you hear this!" Dani exclaimed. "Hailey just ran by and said, 'Free ice cream in the cafeteria until 3:00.' Then she disappeared around the corner."
8. Lily chattered, "It's freezing in here. Can someone turn the heat on?"

**WHOLE ISSUE**

**CROSSWORD**

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