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## Flashback and Foreshadowing Practice Exercises

### Practice 1: The Grasshopper and the Ant An Aesop's Fable Retold

Read the selection, and then answer the questions that follow.

(1) One fine summer day, Grasshopper was hopping about in the field. As he chirped and danced, he spied Ant carrying a big kernel of corn to his nest. Grasshopper watched as Ant came back, lifted another kernel, then carried it to the nest as well. This happened repeatedly. Finally, Grasshopper asked, "Ant, why do you work so hard on such a lovely day?"

(2) "Soon it will be winter," replied Ant. "I'm gathering food for my family. I suggest you do the same!"

(3) "Why bother about winter?" asked Grasshopper. "There's plenty of food in the fields now!"

(4) Ant remembered last winter and how deep snow had covered everything. There had been no way to get out of his anthill, let alone try to find food! Now, an even worse winter was predicted. "You'll feel differently when the big snow comes!" said Ant, as he shook his head and walked away.

(5) When winter came, Grasshopper had no food. The fields were covered with deep snow. Grasshopper was very hungry and sad, knowing that Ant had food enough because he had worked hard to prepare in advance.

- \_\_\_ 1. In this fable, the author uses flashback to have
- Grasshopper remember a song he used to sing.
  - Ant remember where Grasshopper used to live.
  - Ant remember how bad last winter was.
  - Grasshopper remember where he hid seeds during the summer.

- \_\_\_ 2. Which best foreshadowed what might happen in the story?
- Grasshopper hopped about in the field.
  - An even worse winter was predicted.
  - Ant walked away.
  - Grasshopper chirped.

- \_\_\_ 3. Based on the story, which do you predict could NOT happen?
- Grasshopper begs Ant for just a small bit of food.
  - Ant feels sorry for Grasshopper and gives him food.
  - Grasshopper digs under the snow and finds lots of food.
  - Grasshopper gets weaker without any food.

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## Practice 2: *The Fall of the House of Usher*

### Excerpted and adapted from the story by Edgar Allan Poe

Read the selection, and then answer the questions that follow.

(1) During a dull, dark, and soundless day in autumn, I was passing alone, on horseback, through a dreary tract of country. At length I found myself within view of the melancholy House of Usher. With the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom spread through me. I looked upon the house and its bleak walls with vacant eye-like windows and a few white trunks of decayed trees with utter depression. What was it, I paused to think, that so unnerved me about the House of Usher?

(2) I reined my horse to the steep brink of a black mirror-like mountain lake that lay by the house. I looked down with a shudder upon the inverted images of the gray marsh plants, ghastly tree stems, and vacant eye-like windows. Nevertheless, in this gloomy mansion I intended to spend some weeks. Its owner, Roderick Usher, had been one of my close companions in boyhood, but many years had elapsed since our last meeting.

(3) I called to mind the letter I had lately received from Roderick that indicated an uneasiness. He had spoken of an illness, a mental disorder, that depressed him. He also expressed an earnest hope that if he were to see me, his best friend, it would both cheer him up and improve his health. It had been his straightforward manner and truthfulness about the situation that compelled me to honor his request without hesitation.

(4) As boys, we had been even closer, yet I knew very little of my friend. He had always been quite shy and not forthcoming about his situation. I was, of course, aware that for generations his family had been noted for its somewhat peculiar temperament and involvement in the arts, although more often the unusual rather than the typical styles of art and music. I had learned, too, that in the minds of the peasantry, over the centuries, the family had always been thought a bit strange. According to the local people, both the mansion and the family were referred to as "The House of Usher."

(5) Now, I was here, looking down into the mountain pool. I again lifted my eyes to the house itself from its image in the pool, and scanned the building more closely.

(6) The years of weather had discolored the stonework. Minute molds overspread the exterior, hanging from the masonry in a fine tangled web. No portion of the walls had fallen but there was a great inconsistency between the overall look and the crumbling condition of individual stones. It reminded me of old woodwork that rots for many years, with no breakage. Perhaps the eye of a more observant person might have seen a barely visible split, which extended from the front roof of the building down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the dark waters of the mountain pool! I, obviously, did not!

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\_\_\_ 4. In this selection, the author uses flashback to have the narrator

- remember a similar house where he had grown up.
- recall what was in a letter he had received.
- recall how he had almost drowned in a mountain pool.
- remember when he had visited Roderick in the hospital.

\_\_\_ 5. The author also uses flashback to have the narrator explain

- what the local people thought of Roderick's family.
- what kinds of games he and Roderick used to play as children.
- how long it took for Roderick's family to built the old house.
- where Roderick's mother and father were.

\_\_\_ 6. Which of these is NOT an example of foreshadowing in the selection?

- a sense of insufferable gloom
- the steep brink of a lake
- gray marsh plants
- a barely visible split in the wall

\_\_\_ 7. Which do you predict best foreshadows what might happen later in the story?

- that it's an autumn day
- that the windows look like eyes
- that the side of the house has a split
- that the narrator's riding a horse

\_\_\_ 8. Based on the selection, which do you predict could NOT happen?

- The narrator finds that Roderick is sick and needs his help.
- The narrator finds things inside the House of Usher as creepy as on the outside!
- The narrator worries about his own safety in the House of Usher.
- The narrator has a pleasant, uneventful stay at the House of Usher.