

**PAIRED PASSAGE:  
PROSE FICTION (ACT)**

Passage A is adapted from the short story "The Necklace" by Henri René Albert Guy de Maupassant. Passage B is adapted from the short story "How the Widow Won the Deacon" by William James Lampton.

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**Passage A by Guy de Maupassant**

She was one of those pretty and charming girls who are sometimes, as if by a mistake of destiny, born in a family of clerks. She had no dowry, no expectations, no means of being known, understood, loved, wedded, by any rich and distinguished man; and she let herself be married to a little clerk at the Ministry of Public Instruction.

She dressed plainly because she could not dress well, but she was as unhappy as though she had really fallen from her proper station; since with women there is neither caste nor rank; and beauty, grace, and charm act instead of family and birth. Natural fineness, instinct for what is elegant, suppleness of wit, are the sole hierarchy, and make from women of the people the equals of the very greatest ladies.

She suffered ceaselessly, feeling herself born for all the delicacies and all the luxuries. She suffered from the poverty of her dwelling, from the wretched look of the walls, from the worn-out chairs, from the ugliness of the curtains. All those things, of which another woman of her rank would never even have been conscious, tortured her and made her angry. The sight of the little Breton peasant who did her humble housework aroused in her regrets which were despairing, and distracted dreams. She thought of the silent antechambers hung with Oriental tapestry, lit by tall bronze candelabra, and of the two great footmen in knee breeches who sleep in the big armchairs, made drowsy by the heavy warmth of the hot-air stove. She thought of the long *salons* fatted up with ancient silk,

of the delicate furniture carrying priceless curiosities, and of the coquettish perfumed boudoirs made for talks at five o'clock with intimate friends, with men famous and sought after, whom all women envy and whose attention they all desire.

When she sat down to dinner, before the round table covered with a tablecloth three days old, opposite her husband, who uncovered the soup tureen and declared with an enchanted air, "Ah, the good *pot-au-feu*! I don't know anything better than that," she thought of dainty dinners, of shining silverware, of tapestry which peopled the walls with ancient personages and with strange birds flying in the midst of a fairy forest; and she thought of delicious dishes served on marvelous plates, and of the whispered gallantries which you listen to with a sphinx-like smile, while you are eating the pink flesh of a trout or the wings of a quail.

She had no dresses, no jewels, nothing. And she loved nothing but that; she felt made for that. She would so have liked to please, to be envied, to be charming, to be sought after.

**Passage B by William J. Lampton**

Of course the Widow Stimson never tried to win Deacon Hawkins, nor any other man, for that matter. A widow doesn't have to try to win a man; she wins without trying. Still, the Widow Stimson sometimes wondered why the deacon was so blind as not to see how her fine farm adjoining his equally fine place on the outskirts of the town might not be brought under one management with mutual benefit to both parties at interest. Which one that management might become was a matter of future detail. The widow knew how to run a farm successfully, and a large farm is not much more difficult to run than one of half the size. She had also had one husband, and knew something more than running a farm successfully. Of all of which the deacon was perfectly well aware, and still he had not been moved by the merging spirit of the age to propose consolidation.

85 This interesting situation was up for  
discussion at the Wednesday afternoon  
meeting of the Sisters' Sewing Society.

90 "For my part," Sister Susan Spicer, wife  
of the Methodist minister, remarked as she  
took another tuck in a fourteen-year-old girl's  
skirt for a ten-year-old—"for my part, I can't  
see why Deacon Hawkins and Kate Stimson  
don't see the error of their ways and depart  
from them."

95 "I rather guess she has," smiled Sister  
Poteet, the grocer's better half, who had  
taken an afternoon off from the store in order  
to be present.

100 "Or is willing to," added Sister Maria  
Cartridge, a spinster still possessing faith,  
hope, and charity, notwithstanding she had  
been on the waiting list a long time.

"Really, now," exclaimed little Sister  
Green, the doctor's wife, "do you think it is  
the deacon who needs urging?"

105 "It looks that way to me," Sister Poteet

did not hesitate to affirm.

110 "Well, I heard Sister Clark say that she  
had heard him call her 'Kitty' one night  
when they were eating ice-cream at the Mite  
Society," Sister Candish, the druggist's wife,  
added to the fund of reliable information on  
hand.

115 "'Kitty,' indeed!" protested Sister Spicer.  
"The idea of anybody calling Kate Stimson  
'Kitty'! The deacon will talk that way to  
almost any woman, but if she let him say it  
to her more than once, she must be getting  
mighty anxious, I think."

\*"Pot-au-feu" is a humble French beef stew, usually consisting of a tough  
cut of meat that requires a long period of cooking.

Source: Passage A - <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/12758/12758-h/12758-h.htm#necklace>

Source: Passage B - <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10947/pg10947.html>

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1. Which of the following statements best describes the way the fourth paragraph (lines 44-59) functions in Passage A as a whole?

- A) It illustrates an established theme with examples from the protagonist's domestic life.
- B) It heightens a conflict between the protagonist and her husband.
- C) It provides concrete examples supporting the theme, established earlier, that the protagonist is living the life she believes she deserves.
- D) It contrasts a theme concerning the protagonist established in the second paragraph.

2. It can be reasonably inferred that the protagonist's husband is:

- A) a teacher who works with the public.
- B) of royal descent.
- C) of a similar social status as the protagonist.
- D) able to buy his wife whatever she desires.

3. The statement "She dressed plainly because she could not dress well" (lines 9-10) suggests that the protagonist:

- A) has much to learn about social etiquette.
- B) is resigned to her place in the world.
- C) is indignant toward her social position.
- D) wishes she had had a career as a seamstress.

4. As it is used in line 11, the word *station* most nearly means:

- A) municipal headquarters.
- B) social position.
- C) train depot.
- D) primary occupation.

5. Passage B mentions all of the following as reasons why a union between Widow Stimson and Deacon Hawkins would make sense EXCEPT:

- A) Deacon Hawkins's farm is adjacent to Widow Stimson's farm.
- B) Deacon Hawkins's sight is impaired.
- C) Widow Stimson has already had a husband.
- D) Widow Stimson knows how to manage a farm.

6. Which of the following statements best explains how the first paragraph (lines 64-83) relates to the dialogue within the Sisters' Sewing Society contained in rest of the passage (lines 84-118)?

- A) The first paragraph establishes Widow Stimson's situation and perspective; the dialogue manifests the community's criticism of that perspective.
- B) The first paragraph provides reasons why Deacon Hawkins should marry Widow Stimson; the dialogue rationalizes why he should not do so.
- C) The first paragraph is an emotional argument for marriage; the dialogue is a pragmatic argument against it.
- D) The first paragraph is an anecdote concerning Deacon Hawkins and Widow Stimson; the dialogue is a retelling of that scene from other perspectives.

7. Which of the following statements best describes the way Sister Spicer's comments (lines 113-118) relate to those of Sister Candish (lines 107-110)?

- A) Sister Spicer redirects Sister Candish's criticism of Deacon Hawkins's behavior to reflect poorly on Widow Stimson.
- B) Sister Spicer redirects Sister Candish's criticism of Widow Stimson's behavior to reflect poorly on Deacon Hawkins.
- C) Sister Candish redirects Sister Spicer's criticism of Deacon Hawkins's behavior to reflect poorly on Widow Stimson.
- D) Sister Candish redirects Sister Spicer's criticism of Widow Stimson's behavior to reflect poorly on Deacon Hawkins.

8. The protagonist in Passage A and Widow Stimson in Passage B are similar in that they both:

- A) decline a marriage proposal.
- B) are the subject of gossip.
- C) have aspirations for a better life.
- D) have had lives free of hardship.

9. Which of the following statements accurately compares the emotions of the protagonist in Passage A with those of Widow Stimson in Passage B?

- A) The protagonist is resigned; whereas, Widow Stimson is excited.
- B) The protagonist is frustrated; whereas, Widow Stimson is confused.
- C) The protagonist is scared; whereas, Widow Stimson is disappointed.
- D) The protagonist is resentful; whereas, Widow Stimson is understanding.

10. Passage A states that the protagonist “had no dowry, no expectations” (line 4) when she was preparing to find a husband. Which of the following statements from Passage B supports the idea that Widow Stimson’s situation differs from that of the protagonist in Passage A?

- A) “Still, the Widow Stimson sometimes wondered why the deacon was so blind as not to see how her fine farm adjoining his equally fine place on the outskirts of the town might not be brought under one management with mutual benefit to both parties at interest” (lines 67-73).
- B) “This interesting situation was up for discussion at the Wednesday afternoon meeting of the Sisters’ Sewing Society” (lines 84-86).
- C) “‘For my part,’ Sister Susan Spicer, wife of the Methodist minister, remarked as she took another tuck in a fourteen-year-old girl’s skirt for a ten-year-old—‘for my part, I can’t see why Deacon Hawkins and Kate Stimson don’t see the error of their ways and depart from them’” (lines 87-93).
- D) “‘The idea of anybody calling Kate Stimson “Kitty”! The deacon will talk that way to almost any woman, but if she let him say it to her more than once, she must be getting mighty anxious, I think’” (lines 114-118).