

Week 1 Assessment

Directions: Choose the letter representing the best answer for each question.

1. "Each time she returned from the library, Inez seemed more *agitated*."

In the sentence above, the word *agitated* most closely means:

- A. angry and screaming.
- B. calm and peaceful.
- C. excited and upset.
- D. ugly and old.

2. By profession, Grant is a

- A. sharecropper.
- B. sheriff's deputy.
- C. teacher.
- D. wood cutter.

3. Change Requires _____

- A. Action.
- B. Courage.
- C. Effort.
- D. Integrity.

4. Jefferson is going to be executed for

- A. a crime he planned and carried out.
- B. attacking a white woman.
- C. insulting a white storekeeper.
- D. participating in a liquor store robbery in which a white man died.

5. Miss Emma wants Grant to visit Jefferson to

- A. convince the white people that he is innocent.
- B. encourage him to believe in God.
- C. make him act like a man before he dies.
- D. teach him how to read before he dies.

6. Mr. Henri Pichot shows he doesn't respect Jefferson by

- A. calling him names to his face.
 - B. getting the superintendant to take away his job.
 - C. keeping him waiting for hours in the kitchen.
 - D. telling him he won't help Miss Emma.
7. Mr. Louis wants to bet that
- A. Grant can't get Jefferson ready to die.
 - B. Grant will run away and leave the people in the quarter.
 - C. Jefferson will cry when he is executed.
 - D. Jefferson will try to run away.
8. Place the following events in chronological order, in the order they happen in the novel:
- 1. Grant goes to Bayonne to see his girlfriend, Vivian.
 - 2. Jefferson is sentenced to death.
 - 3. Miss Emma, Tante Lou, and Jefferson go to see Mr. Henri Pinchot.
 - 4. The sheriff gives Grant permission to visit Jefferson.
 - 5. The superintendant comes to visit Grant at work.
- A. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - B. 2, 1, 3, 4, 5
 - C. 2, 3, 1, 4, 2
 - D. 2, 5, 4, 3, 1
9. The setting of the novel *A Lesson Before Dying* is
- A. California, in modern times.
 - B. Louisiana, during segregation.
 - C. Louisiana, in modern times.
 - D. Maryland, during the Civil War.
10. The word *tyrant* in the sentence "I knew that... she had an idiot brother and a tyrant father, and that the father beat the pregnant girl..." most closely means:
- A. a loving relative.
 - B. a man who sells tires for a living.
 - C. a person who uses his power unfairly.
 - D. crazy.

Week 2 Assessment

Directions: Choose the letter representing the best answer for each question.

1. All Jefferson thinks about is
 - A. his nanan's cooking.
 - B. his upcoming execution.
 - C. how he can help his nanan.
 - D. the crime he committed.

2. In the sentence "She turned to Vivian, not saying anything, just *contemplating* her," the word *contemplating* most closely means:
 - A. listening to.
 - B. seeing through.
 - C. to look at thoughtfully.
 - D. to stare down angrily.

3. Joe Lewis and Jackie Robinson were
 - A. friends of Jefferson's who refused to visit him in jail.
 - B. men who led the Civil Rights movement.
 - C. pioneering African-American athletes.
 - D. white baseball players.

4. Paul is
 - A. a white deputy at the jail who treats Grant with respect.
 - B. an African-American deputy at the jail.
 - C. Grant's best friend.
 - D. the meanest deputy at the jail.

5. Grant Wiggins' parents
 - A. both ended up in jail.
 - B. died when he was a small child.
 - C. live in California.
 - D. split up after Paul's father was convicted of abusing his mother.

Character Based Literacy Program Assessment
A Lesson Before Dying

Name _____

6. Place the following events in chronological order:

1. Grant and Miss Emma visit Jefferson for the first time.
2. Grant visits Vivian at her school.
3. The sherriff talks to Grant about visiting Jefferson in the dayroom.
4. Vivian visits Grant in the quarter.

- A. 1, 2, 3, 4
- B. 1, 2, 4, 3
- C. 1, 3, 4, 2
- D. 1, 4, 3, 2

7. The author of *A Lesson Before Dying* is

- A. Ernest J. Gaines
- B. Gary Soto.
- C. Octavia Butler.
- D. Paul Zindel.

8. The first time Grant visits Jefferson alone,

- A. Jefferson eats on his hands and knees like a hog.
- B. Jefferson thanks Grant for visiting him.
- C. Jefferson threatens to knock Grant out.
- D. the two men sit around and listen to the blues on the radio.

9. Vivan is best described by the phrase

- A. "(She) was like a boulder in the road, unmovable..."
- B. "It is pastoral."
- C. "Sounds kind of whorish to me..."
- D. "You're a lady of quality."

10. Which of the below is an example of a secondary source for Grant of information about Jefferson?

- A. Grant hears Tante Lou tell Miss Elouise about what happened when she visited Jefferson.
- B. Grant sees that Jefferson is wearing khaki shirt and brown pants.
- C. Jefferson acts like a hog in front of Grant.
- D. Jefferson refuses to talk to Grant.

Week 3 Assessment

Directions: Choose the letter representing the best answer for each question.

1. "I made a respectful gesture for him to *precede* me, but he would not move...."

In the sentence above, the word *precede* most closely means:

- A. go in front of.
- B. move forward.
- C. pronounce.
- D. speak first.

2. According to Grant, a hero is

- A. a man who saves people from injustice.
- B. just like other men.
- C. someone who does something for other people.
- D. something that only exists in comic books.

3. After the fight, Grant

- A. decides to leave Louisiana for good.
- B. ends up in jail in the cell next to Jefferson.
- C. feels bad for hitting the bricklayer, and apologizes.
- D. goes home with Vivian.

4. Grant is incredibly happy when Jefferson says

- A. "I want me a whole gallona ice cream."
- B. "It don't matter."
- C. "Look like it's pretty out there."
- D. "Tell-tell the chirren thank you for the pe-pecans."

5. In the sentence "Paul and I left the office and walked down the narrow, dark *corridor*," a synonym for the word *corridor* could be:

- A. alley.
- B. hallway.
- C. jail cell.
- D. stairway.

Character Based Literacy Program Assessment
A Lesson Before Dying

Name _____

6. Jefferson starts to act more human after Grant gives him
- a Bible.
 - a Christmas package from the children.
 - a gallon of ice cream.
 - a radio.
7. Paul fights the bricklayer in the Rainbow Club because
- he says that Jefferson deserves to die.
 - he wants to attack a white man.
 - the bricklayer hit him first.
 - the other man insults Vivian.
8. Place the following events in chronological order:
- Everyone thinks about Jefferson at the school's Christmas program.
 - Grant gets into a fight at the Rainbow.
 - Grant tells Jefferson he wants him to be a hero.
 - Jefferson refuses to leave his radio to see Miss Emma.
 - Jefferson's execution date is set.
- 1, 4, 3, 2, 5
 - 1, 5, 4, 3, 2
 - 2, 4, 5, 1, 3
 - 4, 2, 5, 1, 3
9. What is significant about Grant's refusal of a cup of coffee, and Reverend Ambrose's acceptance?
- It illustrates that Grant does not accept the injustice of life in the South, and the Reverend does.
 - It is not significant; Grant just wasn't thirsty that day.
 - It proves that the Reverend Ambrose is greedy and selfish.
 - It shows that Reverend Ambrose is more polite than Grant.
10. What is the significance of Jefferson's execution date being set for a Friday near Easter between noon and three?
- According to the Bible, Jesus Christ died on a Friday between noon and three.
 - Grant's parents died on a Friday afternoon.
 - Jefferson was born on a Friday.
 - There is no significance; it isn't important to the story.

Final Assessment

Directions: Choose the letter representing the best answer for each question.

1. Which of the lines below best illustrates Jefferson's acceptance of responsibility for his own life?
 - A. "good by mr wigin tell them im strong tell them im a man good by mr wigin im gon ax paul if he can bring you this"
 - B. "I aint had no bisnes goin ther wit brother an bear cause they aint no good an im gon be meetin them soon"
 - C. "im gon sleep a long time after tomoro"
 - D. "they got a moon out ther an I can see the leves on the tree but I aint gon see no mo leves after tomoro"
2. What is the significance of Jefferson's execution date being set for a Friday near Easter between noon and three?
 - A. There is no significance; it isn't important to the story
 - B. Jefferson was born on a Friday.
 - C. Grant's parents died on a Friday afternoon.
 - D. According to the Bible, Jesus Christ died on a Friday between noon and three.
3. The word *tranquil* in the sentence "I stood up and stretched and looked across the highway at the river, so *tranquil*, its water as blue as the sky," most closely means:
 - A. peaceful.
 - B. rough.
 - C. tree-filled.
 - D. violent.
4. The setting of the novel *A Lesson Before Dying* is
 - A. Maryland, during the Civil War.
 - B. Louisiana, in modern times.
 - C. Louisiana, during segregation.
 - D. California, in modern times.
5. The first time Grant visits Jefferson alone,
 - A. the two men sit around and listen to the blues on the radio.
 - B. Jefferson threatens to knock Grant out.
 - C. Jefferson thanks Grant for visiting him.
 - D. Jefferson eats on his hands and knees like a hog.

Character Based Literacy Program Assessment
A Lesson Before Dying

Name _____

6. The entire town is affected by
- A. a freak storm on the morning of Jefferson's execution.
 - B. the arrival of the electric chair at the courthouse.
 - C. the church bells ringing after Jefferson dies.
 - D. the screaming of Miss Emma when Jefferson dies.
7. The character who learned *A Lesson Before Dying* was
- A. both Jefferson and Grant.
 - B. Grant.
 - C. Jefferson.
 - D. no one.
8. The author of *A Lesson Before Dying* is
- A. Paul Zindel.
 - B. Octavia Butler.
 - C. Gary Soto.
 - D. Ernest J. Gaines
9. Reverend Ambrose says he is more educated than Grant because
- A. Grant is not an ethical person.
 - B. he believes in God and heaven, and Grant does not.
 - C. he has lived longer, and is therefore wiser.
 - D. he knows and understands the pain of the people in the quarter, and Grant doesn't.
10. Place the following events in chronological order:
- 1. Grant visits Jefferson to help him die like a man.
 - 2. Jefferson is executed.
 - 3. Jefferson is sentenced to death for a crime he didn't commit.
 - 4. Jefferson's lawyer calls him a hog.
 - 5. Paul visits Grant in the quarter.
- A. 4, 3, 1, 2, 5
 - B. 3, 2, 1, 5, 4
 - C. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 - D. 4, 3, 5, 1, 2

11. Paul is
- A. the meanest deputy at the jail.
 - B. Grant's best friend.
 - C. an African-American deputy at the jail.
 - D. a white deputy at the jail who treats Grant with respect.
12. Miss Emma wants Grant to visit Jefferson to
- A. teach him how to read before he dies.
 - B. make him act like a man before he dies.
 - C. encourage him to believe in God.
 - D. convince the white people that he is innocent.
13. Joe Lewis and Jackie Robinson were
- A. white baseball players.
 - B. pioneering African-American athletes.
 - C. men who led the Civil Rights movement.
 - D. friends of Jefferson's who refused to visit him in jail.
14. Jefferson starts to act more human after Grant gives him
- A. a radio.
 - B. a gallon of ice cream.
 - C. a Christmas package from the children.
 - D. a Bible.
15. Jefferson is going to be executed for
- A. participating in a liquor store robbery in which a white man died.
 - B. insulting a white storekeeper.
 - C. attacking a white woman.
 - D. a crime he planned and carried out.
16. In the sentence "She turned to Vivian, not saying anything, just *contemplating* her," the word *contemplating* most closely means:
- A. to stare down angrily.
 - B. to look at thoughtfully.
 - C. seeing through.
 - D. listening to.

Character Based Literacy Program Assessment
A Lesson Before Dying

Name _____

17. Grant is incredibly happy when Jefferson says
- A. "Tell-tell the chirren thank you for the pe-pecans."
 - B. "Look like it's pretty out there."
 - C. "It don't matter."
 - D. "I want me a whole gallona ice cream."
18. Grant first knows Jefferson is dead when
- A. he hears Miss Emma crying.
 - B. he sees a yellow butterfly outside the schoolhouse.
 - C. Paul tells him.
 - D. Reverend Ambrose returns to the quarter.
19. During his last few days, Jefferson doesn't want to go to sleep because
- A. he dreams of happier times, which makes him sad.
 - B. he has bad dreams about going to the electric chair.
 - C. he is afraid of dying in his sleep.
 - D. he wants to experience every last moment.
20. Change Requires _____
- A. Integrity.
 - B. Effort.
 - C. Courage.
 - D. Action.
21. By profession, Grant is a
- A. wood cutter.
 - B. teacher.
 - C. sheriff's deputy.
 - D. sharecropper.
22. At his execution, Jefferson
- A. cried like a small child.
 - B. fought the sherriff and his deputies until they strapped him down.
 - C. walked to the chair on his hands and knees like a hog.
 - D. was the strongest man in the room.

23. After the fight with the bricklayer at the Rainbow Club, Grant
- A. goes home with Vivian.
 - B. feels bad for hitting the bricklayer, and apologizes.
 - C. ends up in jail in the cell next to Jefferson.
 - D. decides to leave Louisiana for good.
24. After the fight at the Rainbow Club, Grant finds out Vivian is upset because
- A. everyone in town now knows that she is dating Grant.
 - B. Grant has ruined her night with her children.
 - C. her husband is making it difficult for her to get a divorce.
 - D. the man Grant attacked was an old friend of hers.
25. According to Grant, a hero is
- A. something that only exists in comic books.
 - B. someone who does something for other people.
 - C. just like other men.
 - D. a man who saves people from injustice.

Answer Keys

Week 1 Assessment

1. C
2. C
3. C
4. D
5. C
6. C
7. A
8. C
9. B
10. C

Week 2 Assessment

1. B
2. C
3. C
4. A
5. C
6. B
7. A
8. A
9. D
10. A

Week 3 Assessment

1. A
2. C
3. D
4. D
5. B
6. D
7. A
8. B
9. A
10. A

Final Assessment

1. B
2. D
3. A
4. C
5. D
6. B
7. A
8. D
9. D
10. A
11. D
12. B
13. B
14. A
15. A
16. B
17. A
18. B
19. B
20. B
21. B
22. D
23. A
24. C
25. B