

THE GLENCOE LITERATURE LIBRARY

Study Guide

for

**The True
Confessions of
Charlotte Doyle**

by Avi



New York, New York Columbus, Ohio Woodland Hills, California Peoria, Illinois

Meet Avi



*I want my readers to feel, to think, sometimes to laugh.
But most of all I want them to enjoy a good read.*

—Avi

Fans of novelist Avi know that his goal is to create stories that are exciting and fun as well as thoughtful and well written. He has attracted a loyal audience of young readers, teachers, and critics and has earned numerous awards and honors. The thirty books Avi has written include tales of mystery, history, adventure, comedy, and fantasy. He says:

I take a great deal of satisfaction in using popular forms—the adventure, the mystery, the thriller—so as to hold my reader with the sheer pleasure of a good story.

Avi Wortis was born in New York City, on December 23, 1937, and he grew up in the borough of Brooklyn. His parents held strong political views and fought actively against racism and for women's rights. Avi remembers that his home was always filled with lively discussions.

Despite the author's love of reading and learning, school was a constant struggle for

him. Later in his life, he realized that he had a learning disorder that affected his ability to spell and form letters. Because at that time people did not understand learning disorders, Avi was criticized at school and told that he would never be a good student or a writer.

Avi, however, would not be discouraged. With the encouragement of his family and a helpful tutor, and because of his love of books and his own stubbornness, he kept writing. While still in high school, he decided that he wanted to have a career as a writer. Avi based the experiences of many of his later fictional characters on his own experience of feeling like an outsider.

After high school, Avi studied at the University of Wisconsin and earned two degrees. He then moved back to New York City and took a job with the New York Public Library. He worked as a librarian for the next twenty-five years, and he continued to write.

Avi became interested in children's literature after the birth of his own children. His first published book, *Things That Sometimes Happen* (1970), was a collection of stories based on tales Avi told his two sons. After he published his first novel, *No More Magic*, in 1975, he realized that writing novels for preteens and teens was what he wanted to do most.

Today, Avi writes full time and travels around the country to give talks in schools. He likes to share his story of success with students, particularly students with learning disorders. Avi believes that being in touch with his readers helps him keep his stories realistic:

I think it's very important for me to keep these kids in front of my eyes. They're wonderfully interesting and hold me to the reality of who they are.

Introducing the Novel

“Miss Doyle, please . . . I have something else to offer.”

“No more tea, thank you.”

“No, miss. It is this.” He held out a knife.

With a scream I jumped back.

“No, no! Miss Doyle. Don’t misunderstand! I only wish to give you the knife as protection—in case you need it . . . Miss Doyle doesn’t know what might happen . . . A ship sails with any wind she finds,” he whispered.

—*The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*,
chapter 2

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle, published in 1990, is an adventure novel set in 1832. When the novel begins, Charlotte Doyle is a sheltered schoolgirl who knows only the wealthy world of her family. She is about to embark on a journey that will take her from her school in England to her family’s home in Providence, Rhode Island.

From the moment she steps aboard the *Seahawk*, Charlotte Doyle has unsettling experiences. In the earliest days of her voyage, these experiences strengthen Charlotte’s feeling that she should not be traveling across the Atlantic Ocean by herself on a ship full of strangers. The voyage cannot end soon enough for her. Charlotte has no idea that her time aboard the *Seahawk* will change her life forever.

Originally, Avi did not plan to focus this novel on one character. When he began to write, he was planning to create a mystery novel. He even titled his work-in-progress “The *Seahawk*.” However, in working on the book, Avi found that he was drawn to the character of Charlotte. He began to care about how events might affect her. The element of mystery then became secondary to the story of Charlotte.

Of his writing style, Avi says, “I try to write about complex issues—young people in an adult world . . . in a narrative style that relies heavily on suspense with a texture rich in emotion and imagery.” This style can be seen in his

characterization of Charlotte, his images of the ship and the sea, and his development of the story’s events. Charlotte, like other characters in Avi’s writing, struggles to find her true self in a world that is not always flexible or kind.

Suspense, vivid details, the believable characterization of Charlotte and others, and the emotional impact of its ending have earned this novel much critical praise and several awards. One reviewer described the book as a “sensuous novel evoking the sights, sounds, and smells of the ship and the sea; the moods of captain and crew; . . . and the nature of friendship and loyalty.”

THE TIME AND PLACE

Most of the action in *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* takes place in 1832 on an old two-masted sailing ship, called a brig. The brig is traveling from England to the United States to transport cargo. Another setting, used later in the novel, is the wealthy, orderly home of Charlotte’s parents in Providence.

Early in the novel, Charlotte tells readers that her father “engaged in the manufacture of cotton goods” and had been working at an American business located in England. At the time in which the novel is set, the manufacture of cotton cloth was an important and profitable industry in both England and the northeastern United States.

In the 1800s, some people were reaping the benefits of what is called the Industrial Revolution—the period during which machines replaced skilled workers and their handtools. The new machines were kept in large factories. Goods, such as clothing and furniture, could now be manufactured much faster than ever before.

The Industrial Revolution started in England around 1750 and soon spread to other countries. Cloth-producing factories, called textile mills, were among the first businesses to

use machines. Inventors developed machines that could quickly spin large amounts of cotton into yarn and weave the yarn into cloth. In 1790 Rhode Island became the first state in the United States to copy the cotton-spinning machines used in England. By the late 1820s, the manufacture of cotton goods was Rhode Island's most important industry.

The Industrial Revolution made nations wealthier, but this wealth was not shared by all the people. In many countries, the gap between the rich and the poor widened, and distinct social classes became more noticeable. It was difficult, if not impossible, for factory workers to lift themselves out of poverty and climb to a higher social level.

Did You Know?

In addition to being an adventure story, *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* is also a historical novel. In a historical novel, realistic details are used to show the conditions and the spirit of a specific time period in history. This type of writing may feature actual historical figures and events, fictional characters and scenes, or a combination of both. Avi believes that historical novels can help readers understand the past more effectively than can books that contain only facts. He says:

Somewhere along the line, I can't explain where, I developed an understanding of history not as fact but as story. That you could look at a field and, with only a slight shift of

your imagination, suddenly watch the battle that took place there.

Through descriptive details, Avi helps readers understand what life was like for sailors and passengers aboard a nineteenth-century sailing ship traveling the open sea. Readers can think of the fictional characters as representative of persons who actually lived in 1832 and had similar experiences. A nonfiction book might tell readers how a ship was constructed, what a sailor's job involved, and where ships traveled. In Avi's historical novel, readers understand what it feels like to climb a ship's rigging in hurricane-force winds; to sit in a dark, rat-infested ship prison; or to pull into a busy port after months at sea.

Before You Read

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Chapters 1–8

FOCUS ACTIVITY

Think about a time when you were in an unfamiliar or unusual situation that made you feel uneasy. How did you get through the experience?

Journal

Write about an unfamiliar experience in which you were uncomfortable. Include details that help explain your feelings.

Setting a Purpose

Read to find out how a thirteen-year-old girl copes when finding herself among unfamiliar people and in unfamiliar situations as she begins a difficult journey.

BACKGROUND

Time and Place

In this first section, Charlotte meets the ship's African cook, Zachariah. She observes that he is often the target of cruel jokes made by the white crew members. This kind of prejudice was common during the 1800s. In 1832 Africans and people of African descent were enslaved in parts of the United States. Even those Africans who were free, like Zachariah, faced discrimination in the workplace and in the courts.

Foreshadowing

What keeps readers on the edge of their seats as they read a mystery? In mysteries and adventures, as well as in other kinds of fiction, writers use a technique known as **foreshadowing**—the use of clues to hint at events that will happen later in the story. Until the end of a story, the reader may not know the special meaning of a detail presented earlier. At other times, an author may imply, or even say directly, that an item or character will resurface later.

VOCABULARY PREVIEW

adversity [əd vur' sə tē] *n.* hardship; misfortune

brawny [brô' nē] *adj.* strong

congenial [kən jēn' yəl] *adj.* agreeable; pleasant

decorum [di kôr' əm] *n.* proper, dignified behavior

docile [dos' əl] *adj.* easily taught; easily led or managed

quell [kwel] *v.* to crush; to hold back

reprieve [ri prēv'] *n.* relief

slandorous [slan' dər əs] *adj.* false and damaging to one's reputation

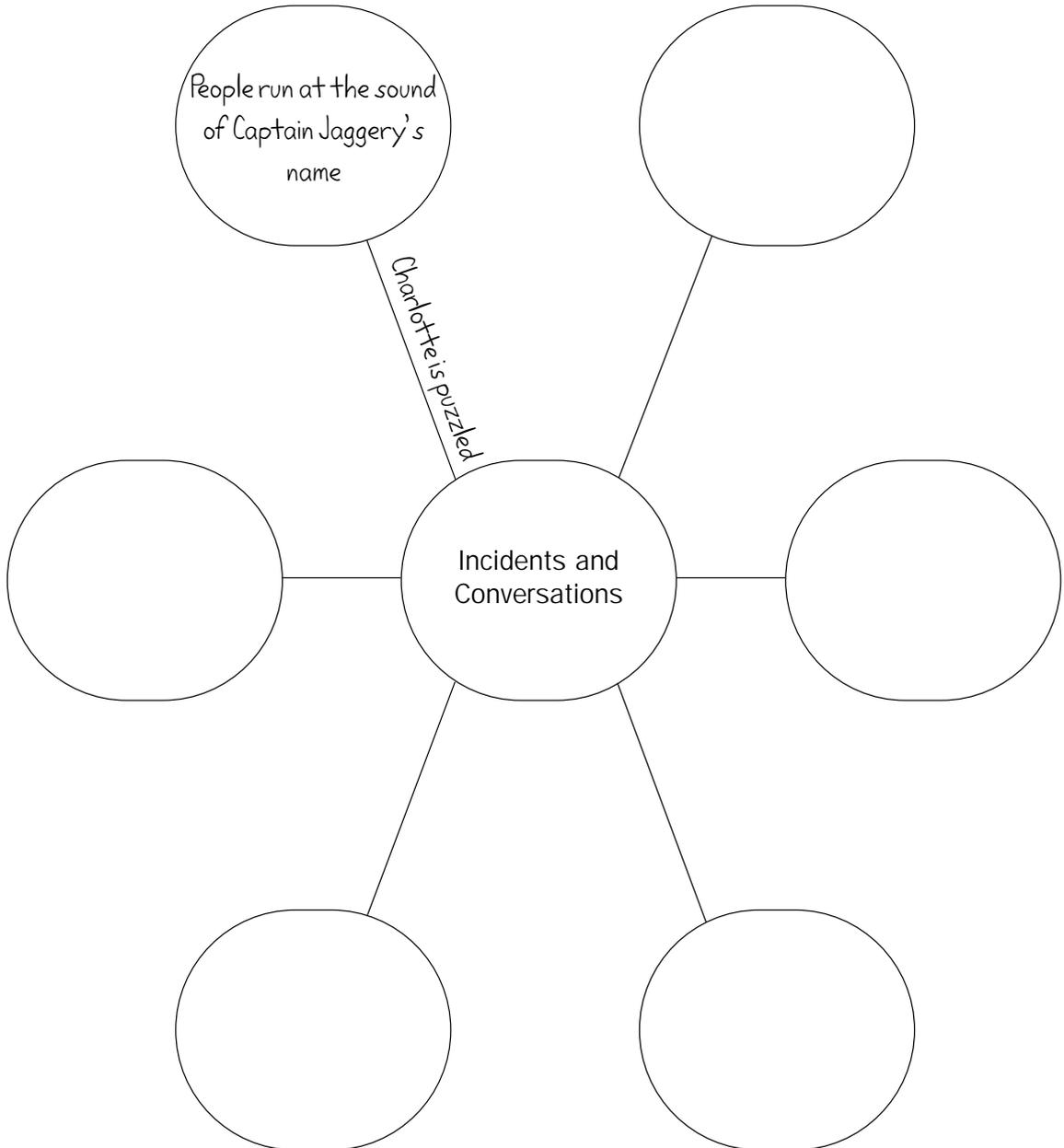
transpire [tran spīr'] *v.* to come to be; to happen

vigilant [vij' ə lənt] *adj.* alert; watchful

Active Reading

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Chapters 1–8

In the first section of the novel, Charlotte experiences several incidents and overhears conversations that seem mysterious or disturbing to her. Note these instances in the graphic organizer below. In each circle, write a specific detail, word, or action that bothers Charlotte or raises questions in her mind. On the lines leading to the circles, write how these incidents make Charlotte feel or what questions they raise for her or for you.



Responding

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Chapters 1–8

Personal Response

How did you react to the narrator and to the other characters in this section?

Refer to the descriptive paragraph you wrote for the **Focus Activity**. How does Charlotte's experience compare with yours? Do you understand her feelings? Explain.

Analyzing Literature

Recall and Interpret

1. Why is Charlotte so uneasy about being on the ship? What do her reactions to the ship and its crew reveal about her character?

2. According to Zachariah, why does Charlotte need a knife? How does Charlotte show concern for Zachariah when discussing the knife with the captain?

3. What disturbing information does Zachariah give Charlotte about Captain Jaggery and the ship's crew? Why does she refuse to believe him?

Responding

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Chapters 1–8

Analyzing Literature (*continued*)

Evaluate and Connect

4. How does the scene in the dark cargo area, where Charlotte feels a presence and sees two faces, add to the story's mood? Describe how this scene affects you as a reader.

5. What is your opinion of Captain Jaggery so far? Who do you think knows more about the captain's true nature—Charlotte or Zachariah? Why?

Literature and Writing

Critic's Review

Imagine that you are a literary critic. Write a short analysis of Avi's skill in setting up the novel as a mystery. Where in this first section does he build suspense and give clues about the future? Which chapters end with suspenseful situations? In your opinion, does Avi create an air of mystery that would make a reader want to continue reading?

Extending Your Response

Literature Groups

In this section, Charlotte's attitude toward the ship, the captain, and the crew is influenced by her upbringing. Working as a group, locate specific passages in the text that reveal how Charlotte's background has influenced her values and her attitudes toward others. You might look at her conversations with crew members and the captain and at her reaction to her room on the ship. With your group members, discuss how you think Avi wants readers to feel about Charlotte. Is she very difficult to like, completely likable, or a combination of both? Support your responses with details from the novel.

Performing

Working with a small group, dramatize a scene from chapters 1–8. Assign persons to act, direct, and adapt Avi's words for the stage. You might consider dramatizing the following scenes:

- Charlotte and Mr. Grummage arguing on the dock
- Charlotte in conversation with Zachariah
- Charlotte and the captain having tea
- Charlotte in the dark cargo area looking for her clothes

Rehearse your scene and then perform it for the class.



Save your work for your portfolio.

Before You Read

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Chapters 9–15

FOCUS ACTIVITY

Recall a time when your original impressions of a person proved to be incorrect.

Journal

Write about a time when you realized that your initial impressions of a person were incorrect. Why did you form your original opinion? Why did your feelings change? Did you regret not understanding the person sooner?

Setting a Purpose

Read to find out why Charlotte's views of herself and others on the ship change dramatically.

BACKGROUND

Did You Know?

Piracy at sea has occurred throughout history and among many cultures. Pirates searched for ships carrying valuable products, such as gold or silver. They would attack their target, steal what they wanted, and sometimes take over the entire ship and crew. Despite the legends that show pirates as rough and lawless, pirate ships operated under certain self-imposed rules to maintain order. Many pirate ships could be called democratic because the crew elected the captain and because stealing from other crew members landed the thief before a pirate court.

At a tense moment in this section, Captain Jaggery reminds his crew that the “days of piracy” are over. In fact, starting in the late 1700s, some European governments enacted strict piracy laws, which by the mid-1800s put an end to the operation of many pirate ships. Nevertheless, piracy still exists in some parts of the world.

Internal and External Conflict

A **conflict** is the opposition of persons or forces. In a novel, the plot, or sequence of events, is always driven by one or more conflicts. An **external conflict** describes a character's confrontation with an outside force, such as another character, a physical obstacle, nature, or society. An **internal conflict** takes place within a character and may involve, for example, the character's struggle with a difficult decision, with guilt, or with fear. In this section, Charlotte Doyle experiences both types of conflict. As you read, identify her conflicts.

VOCABULARY PREVIEW

atonement [ə tōn' ment] *n.* the act of making up for a wrong

audacity [ô das' ə tē] *n.* boldness

gesticulate [jes tik' yə lāt'] *v.* to wave; to motion

impertinence [im purt' ən əns] *n.* rudeness

implacable [im plak' ə bəl] *adj.* unable to be changed

mutiny [mū' tə nē] *n.* uprising; rebellion

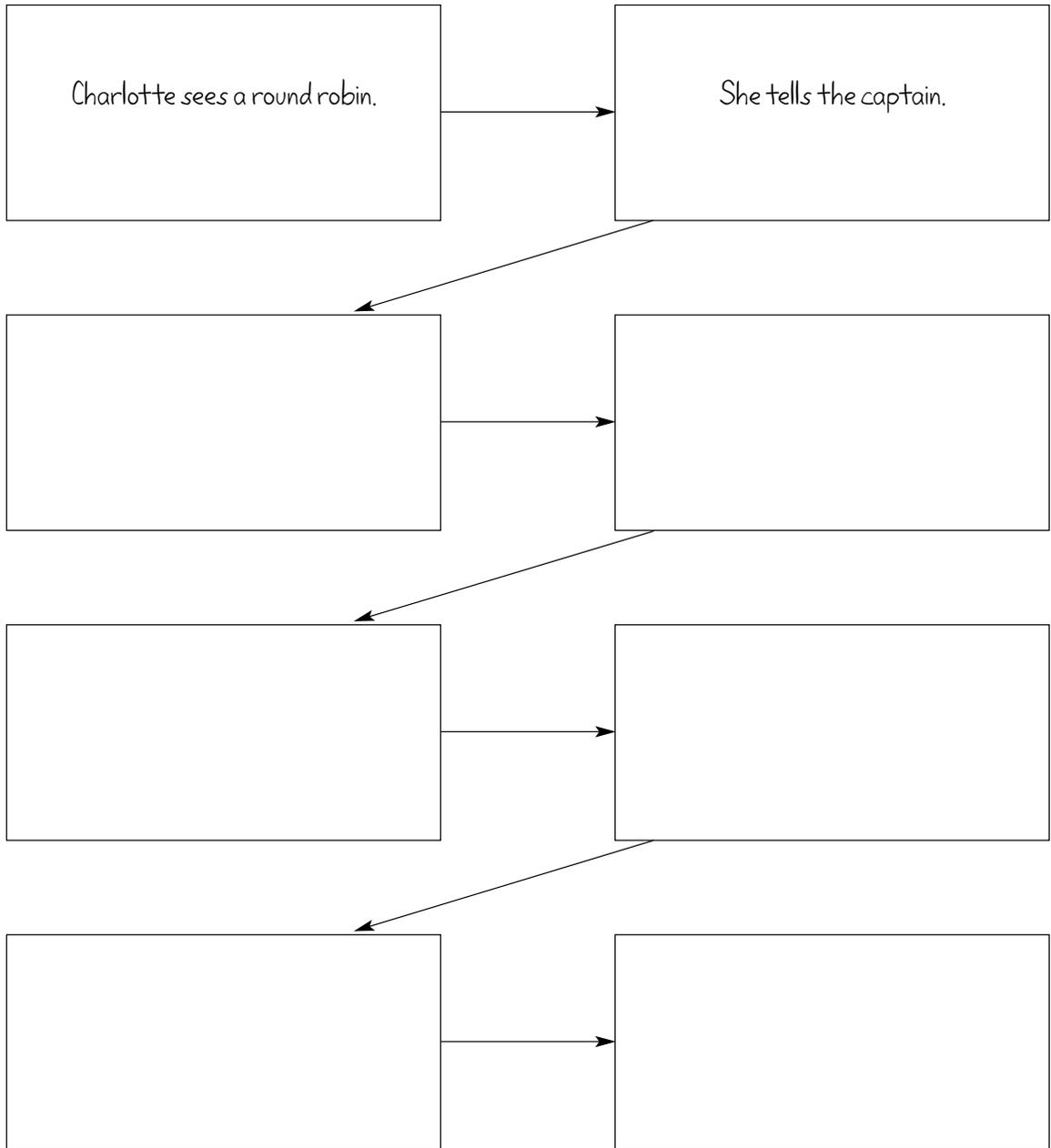
pinion [pin' yən] *v.* to restrain; to hold

scrutiny [skrōōt' ən ē] *n.* inspection; examination

Active Reading

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Chapters 9–15

In these chapters, Charlotte's life takes an unexpected turn. In looking over the events so far, you can see that each event leading to this dramatic life change has been caused by an earlier event. As you read, fill in the cause-and-effect chart below with events from this section. Use as many boxes as you need.



Copyright © by The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Responding

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Chapters 9–15

Personal Response

How did you react to Charlotte's behavior in this section? Which of her actions seems particularly wise or foolish to you? Why?

Analyzing Literature

Recall and Interpret

1. Why does Charlotte tell the captain about the round robin? What do you think she expects him to do?

2. What does Charlotte do that angers the captain as he oversees the beating of Zachariah? What angers him most about her action?

3. Explain the crew's attitude toward Charlotte after Jaggery squashes the mutiny. How does Charlotte feel about her actions?

Responding

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Chapters 9–15

Analyzing Literature (*continued*)

Evaluate and Connect

4. Even though she has observed his cruel behavior, Charlotte tries to make peace with Captain Jaggery immediately after he ends the crew's rebellion. In your opinion, why does she try to get along with the captain?

5. Do you agree with Charlotte's decision to join the crew? Why or why not?

Literature and Writing

Letter to the Crew

Imagine that Charlotte decides to write a letter to the crew after watching Zachariah's funeral. What might she say to them at this point in the story? How is she feeling about herself and her actions? Write the letter that you feel that Charlotte might write.

Extending Your Response

Literature Groups

Charlotte tries to apologize to the crew for informing Captain Jaggery of the mutiny. She starts to tell Mr. Fisk, "I had no idea . . .," but he angrily dismisses her excuse, saying that Zachariah did warn her about the captain. In your group, debate whether, under the circumstances, Charlotte is responsible for the death of Cranick and the beating of Zachariah. Review your responses to the **Focus Activity**. Then relate your experience to Charlotte's experience. Do you think Charlotte should have believed Zachariah? Or did she need to observe the captain's cruelty for herself before changing her mind about him?

Art and Music Connection

The vivid imagery that Avi creates with words can be re-created in a painting or with music. With a partner, do one of the following activities:

- Paint a picture that expresses the terror and chaos of the storm. Your picture may represent exact details from the story, or it may be more abstract. Use color, shading, and paint strokes that show movement and express emotion.
- From your own collection or from the library, choose music that you feel could accompany the storm scene and the period during which Charlotte falls asleep after the storm passes. Play your selection for the class, and be prepared to explain your choice.



Save your work for your portfolio.

Before You Read

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Chapters 16–22

FOCUS ACTIVITY

What words and phrases come to mind when you think of the word *independence*? When you think of the phrase *social customs*?

Web It

Make two word webs, one with terms related to the word *independence* and the other with terms related to the phrase *social customs*.

Setting a Purpose

Read to find out what life Charlotte finally chooses for herself.

BACKGROUND

Did You Know?

In 1832, when the events of the novel take place, the state of Rhode Island was thriving. Its job opportunities attracted many immigrants; its attractive coastline and the island city of Newport drew wealthy vacationers. Providence and Blackstone Valley were manufacturing centers. Providence was then, as it is today, the cultural and economic center of the state.

Free States and Slave States

State laws regarding slavery were changing at the time Charlotte took her voyage. Many states wanted to do away with slavery altogether. Southern plantation owners, however, felt that they could not farm their lands without the inexpensive labor provided by enslaved people. The country became divided into free states and slave states. Some enslaved people escaped to freedom by following the Underground Railroad, a secret cooperative network among antislavery people that led from the South to the North. In the North, however, conditions for African Americans were far from ideal. Discrimination and segregation were widespread.

VOCABULARY PREVIEW

abominations [ə bom 'ə nā 'shəns] *n.* horrors

apparition [ap 'ə rish 'ən] *n.* ghost

commence [kə mens ʃ] *v.* to begin

conspiracy [kən spir 'ə sē] *n.* secret plan

copiously [kō 'pē əs lē] *adv.* plentifully; in great amounts

mutely [mūt 'lē] *adv.* silently

perplexity [pər plek 'sə tē] *n.* confusion

prophecy [prof 'ə sē] *n.* a foretelling of the future

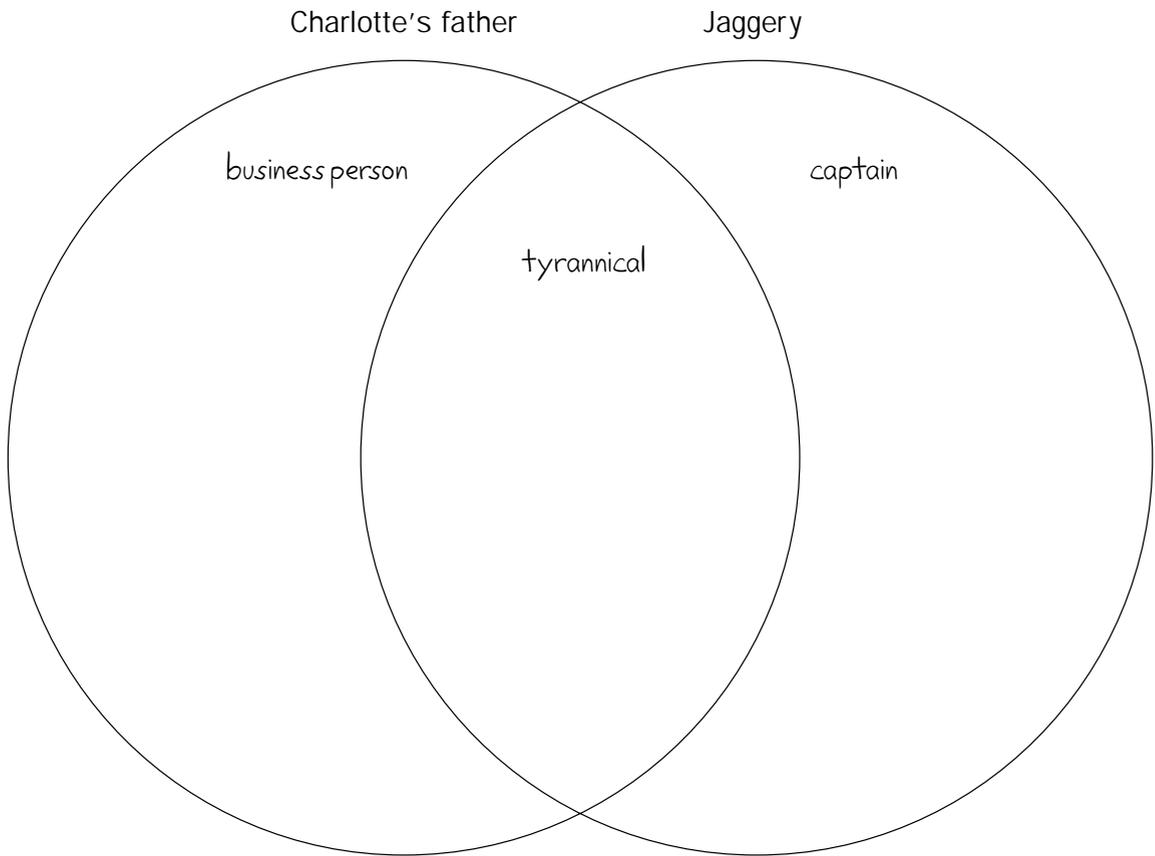
renounce [ri nouns ʃ] *v.* to give up

shrewdly [shrōōd 'lē] *adv.* cleverly

Active Reading

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Chapters 16–22

Earlier in the novel, Charlotte tells Captain Jaggery that he reminds her of her father. At that point in the book, the similarities between the two men give Charlotte comfort. In chapters 16–22, Charlotte realizes that her father also resembles the Captain Jaggery whom Charlotte has learned to fear. Use the Venn diagram to compare and contrast the two men. In the space in which the circles overlap, write characteristics the men share. In the other areas, write characteristics they do not share.



Copyright © by The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Responding

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Chapters 16–22

Personal Response

What were your feelings or thoughts as you read the last section of the novel? Record your ideas.

Think about the word webs you created for the **Focus Activity**. In looking over your words, do you understand why Charlotte made the choice she made? Why or why not?

Analyzing Literature

Recall and Interpret

1. What reasons does Captain Jaggery give for finding Charlotte guilty of the murder?

2. Why is Charlotte surprised to see Zachariah in the brig? How did he end up down there? Who brings him food?

3. Explain the family's reaction to Charlotte when she first gets off the boat. What is Charlotte's attitude toward them?

Responding

The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle Chapters 16–22

Analyzing Literature (*continued*)

Evaluate and Connect

4. Evaluate Charlotte's relationship with Zachariah. Why did the two become close?

5. If you had been Charlotte, would you have left home for a life on the sea? Why or why not?

Literature and Writing

Understanding Details

In the final chapter, Avi provides many details about Charlotte's life with her family. These details reveal much about her family and her feelings about being home. For example, when she removes her sailor clothing and puts on her old dress, Charlotte says, "I felt so much pinched and confined I found it difficult to breathe." How does this detail reveal her attitude about returning to her family? Find other details that show what Charlotte's family is like and what her attitude toward them is. Write a short explanation of the meaning of each detail.

Extending Your Response

Literature Groups

In your groups, discuss the following issue: Should the crew be more supportive of Charlotte when she is falsely accused? Discuss why the crew members are tempted to believe Jaggery and why, even if they feel that Charlotte is innocent, they remain silent. For more insight into their actions, think about how the crew members treat Charlotte after the captain is dead.

Learning for Life

Imagine that Charlotte wants people to know the truth about Captain Jaggery's behavior aboard the *Seahawk*. As the new captain of the ship, she must write an incident report and give it to the proper authorities. Write the report you believe Charlotte would write. Include details of all improper conduct.



Save your work for your portfolio.

from Catherine, Called Birdy

Karen Cushman

Before You Read

Focus Question

When parents say they want their children to be well behaved, what do they mean? Do they mean the same thing for their sons as they do for their daughters?

Background

Like Charlotte, thirteen-year-old Catherine is asked by a male family member to write a diary. Unlike Charlotte, who lived in the 1800s, Catherine lived in the 1200s. Her diary reveals fascinating details about life in England during the Middle Ages. It also points out the frustrating restrictions placed on girls and women.

Responding to the Reading

1. What is Catherine's station in life, or her social group? To which groups would she rather belong and why?

2. According to what you have learned about the Middle Ages from Catherine's diary, to which social group would you have liked to belong and why? Give details from the diary in your answer.

3. How does Catherine manage to get rid of one of her suitors?

4. **Making Connections** Compare Catherine's father with Charlotte's father. What are their similarities and differences?

Creative Writing

Imagine that Catherine's mother knows how to read and write. Write the diary entries that she might enter from September 22 through October 11. Try to capture her thoughts and feelings about the events that occur during those days.

The Little Girl Who Dared

Henry W. Lanier

Before You Read

Focus Question

Do you think of yourself as courageous? For what cause might you risk your own comfort or safety?

Background

Writer Henry W. Lanier based this story on real people and events. In the mid-1800s, many people left the eastern United States in search of new homes in the unsettled West. Often traveling with other families, they made their way in wagon trains to places like California and the Oregon Territory. In the winter of 1846, young Virginia Reed was heading west with the Donner Party. Early snows trapped the group of eighty-seven in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Virginia's father would later help save the lives of the forty members of the Donner Party who survived.

Responding to the Reading

1. How were Virginia and Milt able to find Virginia's father?

2. In your opinion, was the verdict of the committee that judged Virginia's father fair? Why or why not?

3. What was the driving force behind Virginia's courage?

4. **Making Connections** How are Charlotte Doyle and Virginia Reed alike?

Travel Diary

Much of what we know about the trips west along the Oregon Trail and other trails was recorded in the diaries of travelers. Today many of these diaries are in natural history museums. Write a diary entry that Virginia may have recorded upon returning to camp after finding her father. As you write the entry, consider her feelings about the trial, about finding her father, and about her ability to help him in the future.

Whaling Wives

Peg Connolly Schwabel

Before You Read

Focus Question

What kinds of things are acceptable for women to do today that were not as acceptable in the past?

Background

In the 1800s, wives of sea captains began to accompany their husbands on long whaling voyages. Although the ships were small and far from luxurious, many women made a home for themselves and their families aboard whaling ships. In this article from *Cobblestone Magazine*, the author examines the daily lives of women at sea.

Responding to the Reading

1. What were whaling ships with women aboard called?

2. Why do you think women began to bring their families and accompany their husbands on whaling ships?

3. In your opinion, would the women mentioned in this reading have been as accepted by the crews if they had not been the captains' wives? Why or why not?

4. **Making Connections** In *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*, Charlotte comes to love life at sea. What pleasant aspects of life at sea do the women in this reading and Charlotte seem to enjoy?

Researching a Topic

Do research to find out the history and purpose of whaling. Write a report on the use of whales in the past and the measures taken today to protect whales. Your report might also include information on how different countries have addressed, or refused to address, the issue of protecting whales.

A Cornered Ship, 31 Men and a Date with Doom

Cynthia Corzo, Curtis Morgan, and John Barry

Before You Read

Focus Question

Have you ever witnessed a severe storm? What kinds of damage did it leave behind?

Background

In late October of 1998, Hurricane Mitch formed in the southwest Caribbean Sea. By early November, Mitch had claimed the lives of nearly eleven thousand people in Central America. More than one million people were left homeless in what has been called one of the worst natural disasters of the twentieth century. This article from the *Miami Herald* tells the harrowing story of one ship that was trapped at sea in Mitch's deadly winds.

Responding to the Reading

1. When the *Fantome* drops its passengers and nonessential crew in Belize City, why don't the captain and the rest of the crew also get off the boat?

2. What does Captain March tell Burke about the conditions he is facing just before the ship loses its satellite antenna?

3. What is eerie about the *Fantome's* name and the boat's eventual fate?

4. **Making Connections** In *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* the crew faces a storm at sea, one that might be a hurricane. What methods does the crew of the *Seahawk* use to combat the storm?

Science Connection

In small groups, research the causes of hurricanes and methods for predicting the course of these storms. Display your findings on a poster, using both images and text.

	<h1 style="margin: 0;">The Gallant Ship</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">Sir Walter Scott</p>
	<h1 style="margin: 0;">Sea-Fever</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">John Masefield</p>
	<h1 style="margin: 0;">The Sea Gypsy</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">Richard Hovey</p>

Before You Read

Focus Question

Is there a natural setting that you find more attractive than others? Do you like the peacefulness of the forest, the pounding surf of the ocean, or the grandeur of the mountains? How does being in this natural setting make you feel?

Background

The call to the sea is a common theme in literature. In these three poems, the authors describe the sea and its attractions. Sir Walter Scott was a Scottish novelist and poet who wrote in the early nineteenth century. John Masefield was a twentieth-century English poet, dramatist, and novelist who is well known for his sea poems. Richard Hovey was a nineteenth-century poet.

Responding to the Readings

1. Does “The Gallant Ship” remind you of a certain part of *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*? Explain.

2. How does the narrator of “Sea-Fever” feel about the sea? How does the narrator of “The Sea Gypsy” feel? Compare their feelings with the way Charlotte feels about the sea at the end of *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*.

3. In “The Sea Gypsy,” what does Hovey mean when he writes, “There’s a schooner in the offing, / With her topsail shot with fire”?

4. **Making Connections** In your opinion, which poem best connects to *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*? Which lines in the poem help form the connection?

Dramatic Reading

Working with a small group, choose one of these poems and rehearse and present a dramatic reading of it. Decide whether your group will speak in unison or one person at a time, and consider using music to enhance your reading.