

Where Have You Gone, Charming Billy? (page 62) **Active Reading SkillBuilder****Making Inferences**

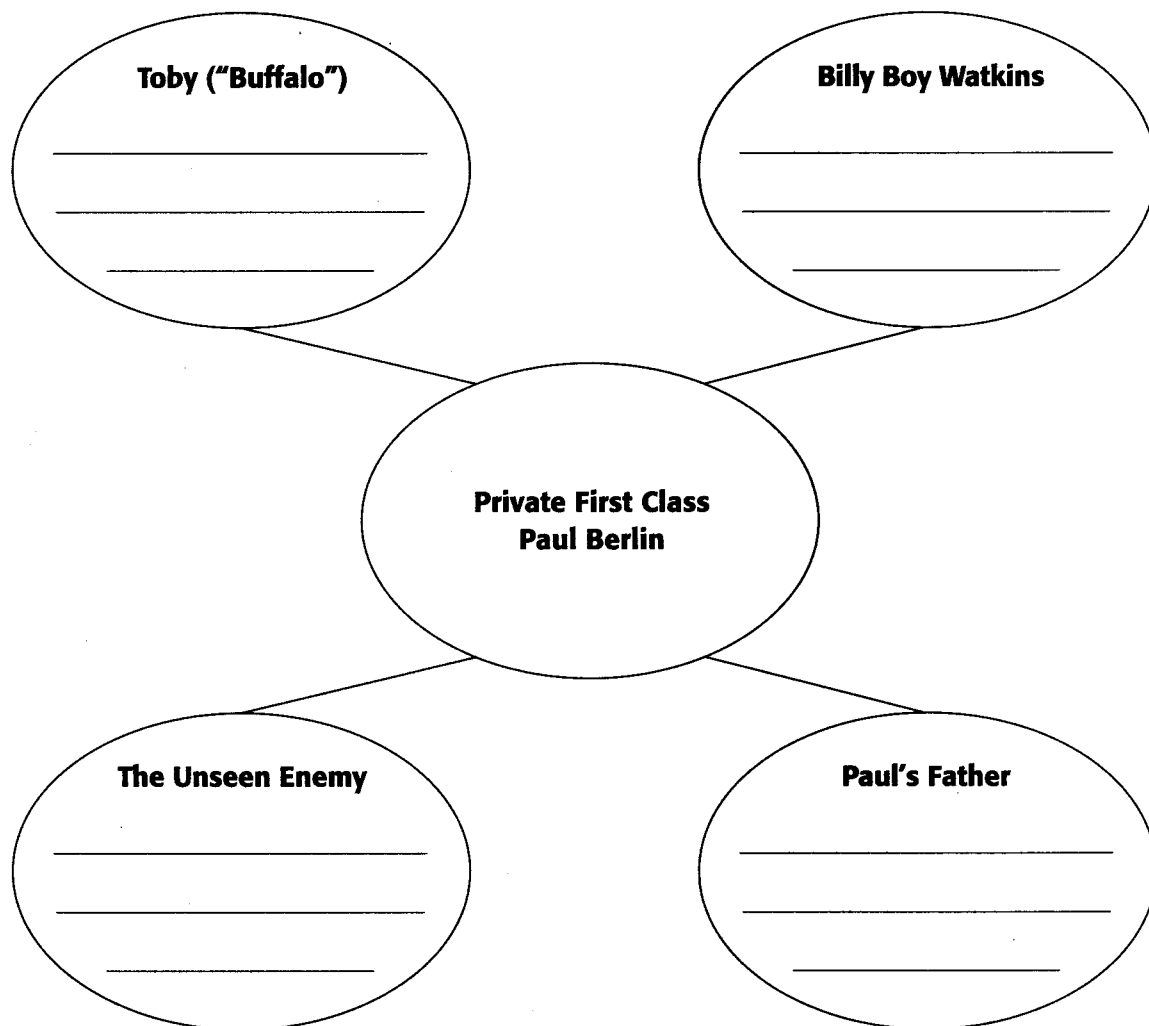
When readers make a logical guess about something in a story, based on information in the story and their own common sense, they are making an **inference**. Use the chart below to record clues that help you understand who Paul Berlin is and what he is going through. Pay special attention to what he does with his body, what he notices in his surroundings, and what he thinks about.

Private First Class Paul Berlin		
Statement in Story	Common Sense	Inference
<i>"He pretended he was not a soldier."</i>	<i>People pretend that things they wish were true <u>are</u> true.</i>	<i>Paul does not like being a soldier.</i>

Where Have You Gone, Charming Billy? (page 62)**Literary Analysis SkillBuilder****Character**

Most short stories center on the experiences and actions of one or more **main characters**. Their experiences, reactions, and changes are the focus of the story.

Minor characters interact with the main characters and help move the story along. Use the spider map to illustrate how the minor characters in this story affect the main character, Paul Berlin.



Follow Up: On the lines below, identify Paul's conflict and whether it is primarily external or internal. Then, with a group of classmates, discuss which minor characters contribute to Paul's conflict and which help him resolve it.

Where Have You Gone, Charming Billy? (page 62)**Words to Know SkillBuilder****Words to Know**casually
conicalconsolation
diffuseelegantly
executeinertia
primitivesilhouetted
transparent**A.** Circle the word in each group that is closest in meaning to the boldfaced word.

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. consolation | grief | hope | gratitude | comfort |
| 2. elegantly | gracefully | quickly | happily | efficiently |
| 3. execute | prevent | perform | eliminate | consider |
| 4. diffuse | confusing | definite | unfocused | different |
| 5. silhouetted | brilliant | outlined | visible | prominent |
| 6. casually | informally | thoughtfully | immediately | carefully |
| 7. transparent | opaque | presentable | clear | murky |

B. Fill in the blank in each sentence with the correct Word to Know.

- Only a corner of the muddy windshield was _____ enough to see through.
- He noticed a weird shape _____ against the stormy sky.
- The image was _____, like a photograph out of focus.
- Top to bottom, the shape was _____, similar to that of a tornado.
- The scene looked strange and _____, like something from prehistoric times.
- In his truck, he sat and stared, as if _____ kept him from moving.
- Finally, the shape passed gracefully and _____ beyond the distant hills.
- He decided that only a film crew could _____ so mysterious a vision.

C. Write a letter to Tim O'Brien, the author of "Where Have You Gone, Charming Billy?" Tell him your reactions to his story. Include at least **three** Words to Know in your letter.

Where Have You Gone, Charming Billy? (page 73)

Grammar SkillBuilder: Adverbs

Key Concept: Writers use adverbs for clarity—to help their readers more clearly visualize or understand an action, a character, or a scene.

Adverbs

An **adverb** modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. Adverbs supply additional information about *when*, *where*, *how much*, or *to what extent* something happens or is done. Look at the following examples of adverbs from Tim O'Brien's short story "Where Have You Gone, Charming Billy?"

Modifying a Verb: "So he walked **carefully**, counting his steps."

Modifying an Adjective: "The soldier's hand was **strangely** warm and soft."

Modifying an Adverb: ". . . now the fear was mostly the fear of being **so** terribly afraid again."

Activity

For each sentence, supply an adverb to modify the underlined word or words. Identify the modified word as a verb, an adjective, or an adverb.

1. Although the soldiers were given special training, many of them were anxious.
2. Some people appear calm, no matter what the difficulty.
3. When darkness fell, the platoon moved in single file without speaking a word.
4. He crawled toward his rifle.
5. He looked away so he would not be afraid.
6. The rifle felt heavy in his grasp.
7. They marched from the village, moving silently.
8. As he followed the others in his platoon, he tried to remember what he had been taught.
9. They waited in the tall grass for clouds to cover the brightness of the moon.
10. He hoped that when they reached the sea he would do better.

Where Have You Gone, Charming Billy? (page 62)**Selection Quiz**

Recall the events in the story. Then answer the questions in phrases or sentences.

1. Where is Private Paul Berlin and why?

2. What are some reasons for his fear?

3. Berlin tries several strategies to deal with his fear. Name two and tell how well they work for him.

4. What does Billy Boy Watkins have to do with Berlin and his experience?

5. Why is it important that Toby stop Berlin's giggling?

Where Have You Gone, Charming Billy? (page 62)**Selection Test**

A. In this selection, you learn many things about the character Paul Berlin. The story tells about the events of his first day in the war. But you also learn about his thoughts, and from his thoughts you can infer things about him and his family. In the boxes on the left, list three things you can infer about Paul and his relationship with his family. In the boxes on the right, give evidence from the story for each of your inferences. (10 points each)

Inference About Paul Berlin	Evidence from the Story
1.	
2.	
3.	

B. Write the letter of the best answer. This exercise is continued on the next page. (5 points each)

- _____ 1. To help himself feel less afraid, Paul
- thinks about avoiding land mines
 - pictures Billy Boy's face
 - counts his steps
 - talks about his fears
- _____ 2. When Toby talks with Paul, he conveys an attitude of
- indifference.
 - sympathy.
 - scorn.
 - anger.
- _____ 3. What did Billy Boy do when he stepped on the land mine?
- He sat down casually.
 - He passed out.
 - He rolled on the ground, screaming in agony.
 - He began laughing uncontrollably.

- _____ 4. What did Paul fear most of all?
- land mines and booby traps
 - being so terribly afraid again
 - mortar fire from the enemy
 - dying of a heart attack

C. Words to Know. Write the letter of the best answer. (4 points each)

- _____ 1. If your thoughts are diffuse, they are
- contradictory.
 - unfocused.
 - resolute.
- _____ 2. A bird in flight at night is most likely to be silhouetted against
- a tree.
 - the moon.
 - a nest.
- _____ 3. A person who does something casually is
- awkward.
 - hostile.
 - unconcerned.
- _____ 4. Words of consolation are intended to offer
- comfort.
 - practical advice.
 - praise.
- _____ 5. To execute a stunt is to
- eliminate it.
 - attempt it.
 - perform it.

D. Answer one of the following questions based on your understanding of the selection. Write your answer on a separate sheet of paper. (15 points)

- At the end of the story, a soldier says to Paul, "You got to stay calm, buddy. Half the battle, just staying calm." Relate this quotation to the internal struggles of Paul and to the death of Billy Boy. Do you think Paul will win this "half the battle"? Explain why or why not.
- Irony is a situation in which the result is very different from what one would have expected. Why did Billy Boy's death seem ironic to his companions? What impact did this ironic death have on Paul?

E. Linking Literature to Life. Answer the following question based on your own experience and knowledge. Write your answer on a separate sheet of paper. (15 points)

How do you think you would feel about being a soldier in a war? Would the reason for the war make a difference? Explain.