

The Sniper (page 162) **Active Reading SkillBuilder****Noting Details**

To create suspense in a story, a writer usually includes **details** that are intended to arouse the reader's curiosity about what will happen next. A reader's enjoyment and understanding of any story can be broadened by paying attention to details. When reading "The Sniper," record some of the details about the setting, the characters, and the action that help create suspense.

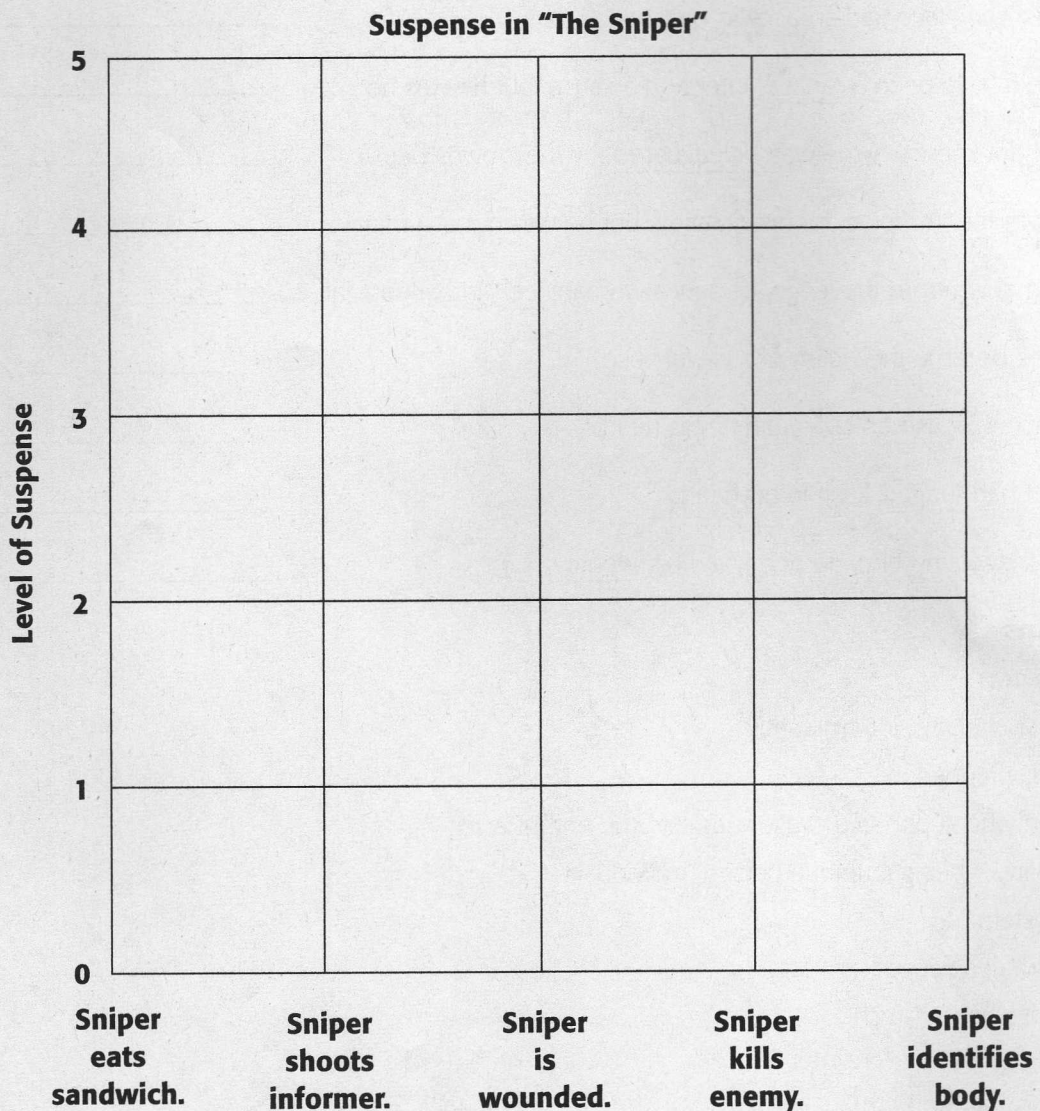
Suspense in "The Sniper"**Setting****Characters****Action**

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Literary Analysis SkillBuilder

Suspense and Surprise Ending

Suspense is the excitement or tension that readers feel as they get involved in a story and become eager to know the outcome. A writer builds suspense by purposely leaving readers uncertain about what will happen. On the graph below, place a dot for each event to show your level of suspense at that point in the story, with 1 being the *least* suspenseful and 5 the *most* suspenseful. Then draw a line to connect the dots.



The Sniper (page 162)**Words to Know SkillBuilder****Words to Know**

ascetic

enveloped

identity

reel

ruse

beleaguered

fanatic

lodge

remorse

spasmodically

A. Think about the meaning of each underlined word. Then fill in each blank with the letter of the correct definition.

1. A small figure was completely enveloped in a long, hooded cloak. _____

2. His unsmiling face had an ascetic quality. _____

3. He could have been a fanatic, intent on a cause, but he was not. _____

4. He did not know why he was beleaguered by the crowds below. _____

5. He might feel remorse for his situation, but he was not a criminal. _____

6. Peering down from the ledge, he saw a woman reel and almost fall. _____

7. Then he became the victim of a clever ruse. _____

8. He reacted, spasmodically turning his head. _____

9. A bullet had lodged itself in his heart. _____

10. When they found him, no one knew his identity. _____

Definitions

- A. bitter regret
- B. at regular intervals; intermittently
- C. covered; wrapped
- D. a person who supports a cause with extreme enthusiasm
- E. the quality of being a unique person; individuality
- F. severe; stern
- G. surrounded; besieged
- H. to fall off-balance; lurch
- I. a trick
- J. to become embedded or stuck

B. Write an editorial expressing your opinion about events in "The Sniper." Use at least **four** Words to Know in your editorial.

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Grammar SkillBuilder: Adverb Placement

Key Concept: By carefully choosing where to place adverbs, writers can emphasize certain words and change the meaning of sentences.

Adverb Placement

An **adverb** usually modifies a verb; it can also modify an adjective or another adverb. Varying the placement of adverbs can change the emphasis or the meaning of a sentence.

Example: "Crawling **quickly** to the left, he peered up at the corner of the roof."

Rewritten, changing emphasis: Crawling to the left, he peered **quickly** up at the corner of the roof.

Example: He was aware of his enemy's identity and was **not** intent on killing him.

Rewritten, changing meaning: He was **not** aware of his enemy's identity and was intent on killing him.

Activity

Rewrite each sentence, changing the placement of the underlined adverb. Notice whether the change mainly affects the emphasis of the sentence or whether it changes the meaning.

Example: Suddenly hearing the sound of gunfire, the sniper lay very still.

Rewritten: Hearing the sound of gunfire, the sniper suddenly lay very still.

1. Listening for suspicious sounds, the sniper carefully considered lighting his cigarette.
2. He decided to risk it and boldly lit the cigarette.
3. A shot rang out, and then he dropped his rifle.
4. Surprisingly, he had been shot in his arm, but he felt no pain.
5. He dropped to the roof and immediately crawled behind a chimney.
6. While he hid silently behind the chimney, his enemy watched from the opposite roof.
7. The sniper cleverly placed his cap over the muzzle of his rifle, fooling his enemy.
8. After he was wounded, the sniper awkwardly lifted his revolver and fired.
9. Soon the gunfire was over, and three people were dead.
10. In a civil war, there is always the danger of killing a brother or friend.

The Sniper (page 162)**Selection Quiz**

Recall the events in the short story. Then answer each question in phrases or sentences.

1. What is happening in Dublin at the time of the story, and on which side is the sniper?

2. What does the sniper do that makes him a target?

3. What happens to the sniper after he shoots the man in the armored car and the woman who had been talking to him?

4. What mistake does the other gunman make that leads to his death?

5. Who is the other gunman?

- _____ 4. The sniper threw down his revolver after shooting his enemy because he
- no longer needed it.
 - was upset by what he had done.
 - was too weak to hold it.
 - was celebrating his success.

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

- _____ 1. An ascetic man most often looks
- comforting.
 - puzzled.
 - stern.
- _____ 2. Which person would most likely use a ruse?
- a magician
 - a sailor
 - a musician
- _____ 3. A feeling of remorse is one of
- forgiveness.
 - regret.
 - enthusiasm.
- _____ 4. A person who is reeling is
- off balance.
 - graceful.
 - quick.
- _____ 5. A city is most likely to be enveloped by
- streets.
 - fog.
 - people.

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 beginning of the story, the sniper's eyes have "the cold gleam of the fanatic." How do you think the sniper will feel about the war and his role in it on the day following the events of this story? Use evidence from the story to support your answer.
- What message do you think the author was trying to convey by the surprise ending of this story? How does the ending lend new meaning to other events in the story?

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)

What kinds of political causes, if any, can justify the sort of violence portrayed in this story? What causes have been used to justify this sort of violence in the past? Do you think this kind of violence could happen today?