The Story of an Hour (page 783)

➡️ Active Reading SkillBuilder

Predicting
When readers use what they already know to figure out what might happen in a story, they are predicting. To make a prediction, readers gather clues as they read and then use these clues to make reasonable guesses about what will occur in the story. When reading this story, look for clues, then make predictions based on those clues. In the chart, write down the clues you find and the predictions you make. Revise your predictions as you come upon new clues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clues</th>
<th>Predictions</th>
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Literary Analysis SkillBuilder

Plot and Surprise Ending

Plot is the sequence of events in a literary work. In "The Story of an Hour," the plot focuses on Mrs. Mallard's inner conflict. It begins with a surprise announcement and then builds to a surprise ending, an unexpected plot twist at the conclusion of the story. The events of the plot occur within the span of an hour. In the clock outline below, note the events in order, and note Mrs. Mallard's feelings about each event.

Follow Up: With a group of classmates, discuss the surprise ending. Does it flow from other events of the story? What point might the author be making?
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Selection Quiz

Recall the events in Chopin's short story and then answer the questions in one or two sentences.

1. Why is Josephine especially careful about the way she tells her sister of Mr. Mallard's death?

2. Describe Mrs. Mallard's first response to the news, and explain why she reacts this way.

3. The day before, Mrs. Mallard "had thought with a shudder that life might be long." Why had the thought of a long life made her shudder?

4. When Mrs. Mallard leaves her bedroom, she has a look of triumph in her eyes. Why?

5. How do the doctors explain Mrs. Mallard's death?
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Selection Test

A. Think about the plot of this story. The first and last events are summarized in the chart below. Write a brief summary of each event in between in chronological order. (8 points each)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Richards hears the news of the railroad disaster and confirms that Brently Mallard has died.</th>
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<td>5.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Mallard dies.</td>
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</tbody>
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B. Write the letter of the best answer. (8 points each)

1. Mrs. Mallard's first reaction to the news is
   a. grief.  
   b. relief.  
   c. disbelief.  
   d. bitterness.

2. Mrs. Mallard realizes that what is most important to her is
   a. love.  
   b. security.  
   c. self-respect.  
   d. self-determination.

3. The realization that she has in her room changes Mrs. Mallard's view of
   a. herself.  
   b. death.  
   c. the future.  
   d. her husband.
C. Answer one of the following questions based on your understanding of the story. Write your answer on a separate sheet of paper. (20 points)

1. How do you feel about the surprise ending to this story? Why do you suppose the author chose to end the story this way?

2. Why do you think Mrs. Mallard has difficulty, at first, recognizing the realization that she is free, and why does she resist it when she begins to recognize it?

D. Linking Literature to Life. Answer the following question based on your own experience and knowledge. Write your answer on a separate sheet of paper. (16 points)

Is marriage today a "better deal" for one gender than for the other? Explain your answer.