

LESSON IN LITERATURE . . .

SETTING

- The setting of a story has three parts: place, time, and mood.
- The place is where the story unfolds.
- The time includes the period of history, the season, and the time of day in which the events take place.
- The mood is the feeling the author creates as a background to the story. The mood may be joyful, gloomy, or frightening. There are so many moods a writer can create.
- The setting may be described in detail or hardly at all. When you try to remember a story, you will find that you have stored away a picture of the setting along with the plot and characters.

THINK ABOUT IT!

1. In what time period would you place "Morning Search"? Reread the story and find three clues to the time period in which it is set.
2. What details of Nicole's house are given in the story? What time of day is it? What time of year is it?
3. The mood of the story is especially important to conceal the surprise ending. How would you describe the story's mood—and how does it help hide the surprise?

Morning Search

"Nicole, you'd better hurry up!" Mom called from downstairs.

Nicole was angry with herself. She couldn't find her textbook anywhere. She left her book in exactly the same place—on her bedside table—every night, so that she wouldn't have this problem in the morning. Last night, though, she'd been enjoying *Little House on the Prairie* so much, that she had read it instead of her textbook, and now she had no idea where her school book was.

Nicole reached around the back of the bedside table and under the bed. She ran her hands over the clean surfaces of her dresser and her bookshelf. With her feet, she gently felt the floor around her dresser and in front of her closet. Nothing.

"Nicole! Joey's already finished his breakfast." At the sound of the word "breakfast" she was suddenly aware of the smell of buttered rye toast. She grabbed her backpack and placing her left hand on her door frame, turned a sharp left out into the hallway. As she zipped toward the stairs, she almost stepped on a small object on the carpet. Her foot automatically pulled back before she stepped down onto what she was certain was one of Joey's matchbox cars. She gently kicked the toy in the direction of Joey's room.

As she reached the top step, she felt for the railing. About seven steps down, the sound of the stairwell opening to her right told Nicole she was at the landing, and she turned and headed down the remaining stairs to the kitchen.

Nicole walked straight to her seat and pounced on her toast.

Halfway through her breakfast, she turned suddenly toward the sound of Mom unzipping her book bag.

"My textbook?" she asked.

"You left it by the fireplace last night," Mom said. "I'm putting it in your book bag now."

"By the front door, please?"

"With your cane."

Nicole was relieved. "Thanks, Mom," she said.

Taking a final bite, she headed for the door.

SELECTION VOCABULARY

commemoration: in memory of some person or event

debris: the remains of anything destroyed; bits of old waste matter lying about

deteriorating: becoming worse in some or many ways

facade: the front of a building, especially a decorative one

graffiti: words or pictures painted illegally on public property

inscription: word or words carved on stone or other hard surface; brief dedication or note written by hand in a book, on a photograph, or similar item

renovated: restored to good condition as by repairing or remodeling

rural: characteristics of or having to do with the country

thriving: doing very well; prospering

vandalized: deliberately destroyed or damaged

commemorated facades debris renovate thriving
deteriorating graffiti inscription rural vandalized

1. New York City, like all the world's great cities, is a crazy quilt of beautiful and ugly, prosperous and failing, improving and _____ (growing worse).
2. On Fifth Avenue, one can spend hours window shopping, people watching, or enjoying some of the more interesting _____ (decorative fronts) on the older buildings.
3. Well-dressed people hurry to and fro, new cars crowd the streets; the city is _____ (prospering).
4. But walk a few blocks, turn a corner and, suddenly, the buildings are old and deserted, walls are covered with _____ (illegal scrawling), and the sidewalks are filled with dirt and _____ (waste matter).
5. In some spots, one can see cars that have been _____ (damaged illegally and to no purpose) and left to be towed to the junkyard.
6. A curious tourist might discover a nearly rubbed out _____ (words engraved in stone) on an old building, carved there in better times.
7. A historian might visit a crumbling monument in the area, and note what event it _____ (honored the memory of).
8. But, New Yorkers, being what they are, will not leave things in a rundown state forever. New York is alive. Build! Invest! _____! (restore) are the bywords.
9. For the person who loves all things urban, there is no place like New York. Of course, for those people who feel happier in a _____ (country-like) setting, New York will be too crowded, noisy, and dirty to feel like home.

Using Words in Context

The best way to learn words is to use them! Next to each word below, are two other words. Write a sentence using all three words. Your sentence should be at least six words long.

1. thriving — business — selling
The roadside stand was doing a thriving business selling homegrown peaches.
2. commemoration — dinner — speech

3. inscription — book — grandfather

4. rural — horse — field

5. deteriorating — building — neighborhood

6. vandalized — cars — police

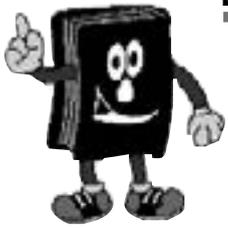
7. debris — streets — deserted

8. facade — ugly — attractive

9. graffiti — angry — spoil

10. renovated — modern — comfortable





LESSON IN LITERATURE

1. The story is set in modern times. Three clues are:

- Nicole is reading *Little House on the Prairie*, a popular book among today's teens which was not even published until the 20th century.
- She has a book bag; twenty or thirty years ago teens carried their books in their arms.
- Matchbox cars are modern toys.

2. Nicole has a bedside table, a bed, a dresser, a bookshelf,

and a closet. The house has stairs, a railing on the stairs, a stairwell, a landing, a kitchen, and a fireplace, a front door. It is morning and, although we don't know whether it is fall, winter, or spring, it is not summer, as Nicole is going to school.

- The mood is a cheerful, everyday mood. This helps conceal the surprise ending, as we think of Nicole as an ordinary school girl who cannot find her book. Had the mood been one of stress and anxiety, we would have immediately felt that Nicole had some problem other than a missing book.

BACKGROUND BYTES

In *New Providence: A Changing Cityscape*, we see a city thriving in 1900. We watch as it becomes less and less prosperous over the decades. In 1992, however, we see that the city has been restored to its original grandeur. As we read the selection, it is sad to see the decline of New Providence and exhilarating to see its renewal.

The cycle of cities throughout history has been much like New Providence, except of course that New Providence has not been attacked during war—the sad fate of many cities.

With their industries, traffic jams, and sleek buildings, cities are often seen as new developments in history. In fact, the origin of cities goes far back and passes through at least three distinct phases.

Cities have existed for several thousand years. The foundations of early cities have been uncovered in the great river valley civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China. The ruins of the walls of many of these ancient cities can still be seen.

Early on, these were settlements that depended on agriculture and domesticated animals. As the civilizations grew in size, trade routes were developed and grew in number. The settlements became centers for merchants, craftspeople, and traders. Settlements need rules, and individuals became “public officials” in a variety of ways: through conquest, selection, or a rise to power. The difference between *town* and *country* and between *urban* and *rural* began. This process was repeated in other civilizations, such as Iranian, Roman, the Great Zimbabwe, and Mayan.

A second phase in the development of cities came much later, around the middle of the eighteenth century, with the industrial revolution in Europe. Factories needed a large labor force and urban centers grew rapidly. The increase in commercial activity created new opportunities for people in cities. Looking for employment and a better life, people moved from rural areas into cities in great numbers.

A third phase began after World War II. The largest and fastest growth in the world's urban population occurred after 1950. As the world economy became global, cities all over the world began to grow larger at a very fast pace. This growth was, and continues to be, explosive both in size and number. Most of it has been concentrated in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, although some cities in the United States—such as Phoenix and Los Angeles—have been growing equally fast. This process is called *urbanization*.

Today, the most rapid urbanization continues to take place in countries on the continents of Asia and Africa and on the North American subcontinent of Central America. Many businesses in the United States and other developed nations have moved to these countries, because there are no environmental regulations and fewer safety regulations to worry about, and they can pay their workers much less than they would in their own countries. The absence of environmental regulations—which makes production cheaper—and the fast growth of industry are the source of terrible problems of pollution.

Cities are becoming more and more important as their size and numbers grow. By the 21st century, it is estimated that half the world's population will be living in cities. Humankind needs to focus attention *now* on how to make big and growing cities better places, because these cities must provide services to millions of people who will suffer greatly without them.

No matter where people live, they need some essential things to survive: shelter (housing), food, and water. Wherever there are *lots* of people, a safe way of disposing of human waste is absolutely critical to avoid the spread of disease. If water in a city is not clean enough, the residents of the city will become ill. Life in a city also requires electricity for buildings and streets. Buildings must have running water, toilets, and heat. Garbage must be dealt with safely. A system of transportation is necessary if the city is large, so that people can get from one place to another. Citizens also need schools so that they can learn to read. Schools must teach many things, but literacy is essential to civilization. Unfortunately, where literacy is very low, infant mortality is very high.

Cities also require such institutions as libraries, hospitals, museums, parks, post offices, and government buildings. There must be stores or markets so that people can buy the food, clothing, and products that they need. A city must build roads and take care of them. A city needs a fire department and a police department.

None of these services and institutions just appear. They all need to be supported, just as the bricks or wood in our homes need strong beams to keep them up. Electricity needs electric lines, water needs plumbing, cars and buses need roads, schools need buildings, governments need elections and offices, hospitals need trained doctors and nurses and supplies, and so on. These are the city's *infrastructure*.

It is a tremendous task for a city to provide the necessary infrastructure and services to its citizens. Yet it is easier for these services to be provided to lots of people in a city than in the

country, because of *population density*—in a city, people are living very close to each other. A single electric line on a single street can provide electricity to hundreds or thousands of people. But what happens when a city grows up without an infrastructure?

Today, the global population has grown so large that the cities need serious attention. Cities are now home to *half of mankind*. Cities have *always* had slums, but now the current worldwide slum population is one billion. The global slum population is expected to triple to three billion in the next fifty years. Cities are usually the hub of national production and consumption. These are the processes that generate wealth and opportunity. But cities also generate disease, crime, pollution, and poverty. More than half of the people living worldwide in slums have no access to shelter, water, or sanitation.

Between 1980 and 2000, Lagos (Nigeria), Dhaka (Bangladesh), Cairo (Egypt), Tianjin (China), and Hyderabad and Lahore (India) grew to populations of over 10 million. These are cities that are unable to provide the basic services that we associate with cities: health clinics, emergency medical service, schools for children, sewerage and sanitation services, water, gas, and electricity provision, shelter construction, building inspection, road building, and law enforcement. These are cities in which fewer than 50% of the adults can read. (The exception, here, may be China, which has had increasing literacy among women over the last several decades.)

The rise of these *mega-cities* (cities of 10 million or more people) in developing countries is a critically important, global issue. People have come together from all over the world to discuss urban problems. One solution has been for national governments to move their capitals. For example, in the African nation of Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), the government replaced Abidjan with Yamoussoukro as the capital city. Assigning a new capital means transferring government offices, foreign embassies, and businesses to a smaller city in order to attract people away from overcrowded sites. Another such created capital city was Brasilia in Brazil.

Other healthy city strategies include

- (1) Intensive recycling programs that require citizens to bag their cans, paper, plastic, and glass separately from garbage.

- (2) Enabling squatters to build their own neighborhoods. The Community Contracts System developed by the National Housing Development Authority in Sri Lanka is an example. To upgrade a squatter settlement, the residents themselves were given the materials and the technical train-

ing and assistance to build footpaths, drains, wells, toilets. Slums were transformed into well-maintained communities. In many places, squatter settlements of homeless people are destroyed by the police on orders from the government, with no solution to the problem of homelessness.

(3) Public education films about public hygiene. Poor drainage, accumulation of garbage, and a lack of drinkable water were among the consequences of runaway population growth in Bamako, Mali. Informal discussion groups were held and films were shown, in a program aimed at women and adolescents. These focused on the importance of sanitation, proper waste disposal, and protection and treatment of drinking water. In addition to the public education campaign, unemployed secondary school graduates were organized in efforts to collect household garbage and to clean up sewage ditches.

These are just a few examples. But the work ahead will need to be massive in order to have an impact. Public education is the beginning.

Exercise for Students Using Table 1

Table 1: Largest cities in 1950 and 2015:

Population in millions

Column A:		Column B:	
City	1950 Population	City	2015 Population
Calcutta	4.4	Jakarta	21.2
Buenos Aires	5.0	Bombay	27.4
Tokyo	6.9	Mexico City	18.8
Paris	5.4	Shanghai	23.4
Moscow	5.4	Tokyo	28.7
New York	12.3	Dhaka	19.0
Essen	5.3	Karachi	20.6
London	8.7	Beijing	19.4
Chicago	4.9	Lagos	24.4
Shanghai	5.3	Sao Paulo	20.8

Look at Table 1. Column A represents the world's largest cities in 1950. Column B represents the world's largest cities in 2015. Make two tables, one for the cities in Column A and one for the cities in Column B. Your tables will be entitled *The Largest Cities of the World in 1950* and *The Largest Cities of the World in 2015*.

Your tables should each have four columns with the headings: City, Country, Continent, and Population. (1) List the cities *in order of their population size*.

(2) Find out which country and continent each city is in and fill in the tables.

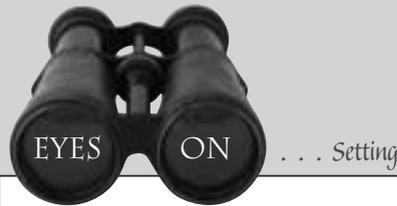
Blueprint for Reading

INTO . . . New Providence

This is the story of a city. It is written as though it were true. But the city of New Providence is imaginary. A group of historians and city designers created it from old designs and plans of actual cities.

This is a story of how a city changes over time. The story has no characters. There are many settings, but no action. We see the city change over time, because we are given snapshots: from 1910, 1935, 1955, 1970, 1980, and 1992.

The theme of the story can be expressed in a word: change. The detailed pictures show the changes and the text explains them. No opinion is offered as to whether the changes are good or bad. The story just presents the facts. It is left to the reader to form an opinion.



The **setting** is the physical background of a story. The setting tells the reader *when* the story takes place and *where* it takes place. Setting can also include the weather, the clothing people wear, the furniture and design of a house, the region—whether city or country, and other details that help the reader enter into the story. All the things we need when we are planning a play—props, costume, scenery, and makeup—are the setting.

New Providence: A Changing Cityscape is nearly all setting and theme. Notice that the descriptions are very clear and exact. None of the poetic language that we see in *Kate Shelley* is used to describe *New Providence*.

See if you can keep track of the changes to the cityscape as you read the selection.

For Teachers: The two tables are filled in for you, below.

Largest Cities of the World in 1950: Population in Millions

City	Country	Continent	Population
New York	U.S.A.	North America	12.3
London	England	Europe	8.7
Tokyo	Japan	Asia	6.9
Paris	France	Europe	5.4
Moscow	Russia	Europe/Asia	5.4
Essen	Germany	Europe	5.3
Shanghai	China	Asia	5.3
Buenos Aires	Argentina	South America	5.0
Chicago	U.S.A.	North America	4.9
Calcutta	India	Asia	4.4

Largest Cities of the World in 2015:

Population in Millions

City	Country	Continent	Population
Tokyo	Japan	Asia	28.7
Bombay	India	Asia	27.4
Lagos	Nigeria	Africa	24.4
Shanghai	China	Asia	23.4
Jakarta	Indonesia	Asia	21.2
Sao Paulo	Brazil	S. America	20.8
Karachi	Pakistan	Asia	20.6
Beijing	China	Asia	19.4
Dhaka	Bangladesh	Asia	19.0
Mexico City	Mexico	N. America	18.8

NEW PROVIDENCE

A C H A N G I N G C I T Y S C A P E



CONCEIVED BY RENATA VON TSCHARNER AND RONALD LEE FLEMING ◀ THE TOWNSCAPE INSTITUTE ◀ ILLUSTRATIONS BY DENIS ORLOFF



New Providence ~ 65

In the annotations for *Samuel's Choice*, we said that the theme is usually what we react to most powerfully when we read a story. It is the source of the feelings we are left with when we are done reading. This is very clear in *New Providence: A Changing Cityscape*.

How do students feel when they read the text for each of the years? Do they feel good when the city is thriving and looks like a wonderful place to live? Do they feel bad as they watch it go downhill? How dreadful it is in 1980 when, even with the changes that have been made, the decline of this city seems inevitable. New Providence will continue to decline, until the wonderful relief offered by 1992!

Clearly, this selection is not a complex story. But it does elicit regret and a sense of loss—a yearning for times of yore when life may have been simpler. At the same time, it generates a sense of excitement about change and progress in an America that never gives up.

EYES ON...SETTING

How odd to have a story in which there is so much setting and so little metaphor! Nothing is compared with anything else. The physical features are simply recorded details. However, the theme emerges when the physical features are compared and contrasted across time.

The changes in time, and the alteration in details over time, bring this map of a city to life—as do the wonderful drawings. Here is literature that we see and hear: the story of a city in eight decades as told through changes in setting.

Language Alert

The English word *city* comes from the Latin *civitas*, which meant a highly organized community such as the city-states of Ancient Greece. The selection mentions a statue of the fictional Chief Tenebo. In Latin, the word *tenebo* means I shall hold, keep, have, grasp, hold fast.

On page 68, we read that “the city has fallen on hard times.” This is an idiom. Or it may be two idioms. In this context, *to fall on* means to encounter, to meet, to come together. *Hard times* are a period of difficulty or hardship, especially financial hardship. The entire expression, *to fall on hard times*, has been dated to a first use in English in the 1500s.

SUMMING UP THE PLOT

- It is 1910.
- The city is thriving and bustling with activity.
- There is a bandstand where concerts are held.

- A statue of an Indian chief is about to be unveiled.
- At the base of the fountain is an inscription: GOOD CITIZENS ARE THE RICHES OF A CITY.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ **1. Exposition; Setting:** The city is New Providence and it is thriving in 1910.
- ▶ **2. Characterization:** There are no characters. Only the city is characterized: “New Providence is thriving. Cobblestone streets bustle with activity...”
- ▶ **3. Setting; Character of the City:** This is a city that has a fountain and a statue to commemorate a Native American from a local tribe.
- ▶ **4. Declaration; Theme:** “GOOD CITIZENS ARE THE RICHES OF A CITY.” In other words, a city will be poor without good citizens.



Put the city up; tear the city down; put it up again; let us find a city.... —CARL SANDBURG

1910

1

2

3

4

New Providence is thriving. Cobblestone¹ streets bustle with activity—Model T Fords, streetcars, and horse-drawn carts carrying meat, milk, and ice. There is no concert in the bandstand today, but a crowd has gathered in the square in front of the Town Hall and the Tenebo County Courthouse. A fountain has been built in commemoration of Chief Tenebo, a Native American from a local tribe. The statue is about to be unveiled. Around the base of the fountain is an inscription: GOOD CITIZENS ARE THE RICHES OF A CITY.

1. Cobblestones are naturally rounded stones that were used to pave streets before asphalt came into use.

WORD BANK

thriving (THRY ving) *adj.*: doing very well; prospering

commemoration (kuh MEM uh RAY shun) *n.*: in memory of some person or event

inscription (in SKRIP shun) *n.*: a word or words carved on stone or other hard surface; a brief dedication or note written by hand in a book, on a photograph, or on a similar item

66 ~ Unit I

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: What is the name of the city?

A: The city is called New Providence.

Q: What year is it?

A: It is 1910.

Q: In 1910, how is New Providence doing?

A: The city is thriving.

Q: After whom is the County Courthouse named?

A: Tenebo County Courthouse is named after Chief Tenebo, a Native American from a local tribe.

Q: According to the inscription on the base of the fountain, what are the riches of a city?

A: Good citizens are the riches of a city.

ANALYTICAL

Q: What sometimes happens at the bandstand, but not today?

A: On some days there are concerts.

Q: Why has a crowd gathered in front of the Town Hall?

A: The statue of Chief Tenebo is about to be unveiled.

Q: Why are good citizens the riches of a city?

A: Answers will vary. Without law-abiding, working citizens, no amount of beautiful buildings will make it a good city. It is ultimately the people who matter. Buildings come and go, but steadfast, productive citizens have real value.

SUMMING UP THE PLOT

- Women in long skirts and men in hats shop at Getz & McClure’s—the largest store in town—and at the other New Providence stores; they have supper at Gilman’s or the Butler House Café.
- Lush, rural hillsides surround the city and comfortable Victorian houses dot the landscape.
- The Bloom mill and worker housing are in the distance.

- A flock of birds flies peacefully overhead.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

► **5. Characterization of Citizens; Setting; Laying the Foundation for the Theme:** The citizens dress in the manner of the period. They are good citizens who do all of their shopping in town and eat supper at Gilman’s or the Butler House Café. Many of the business establishments in the picture—which will change over time—are identified.

► **6. Setting; Theme:** The surrounding area is described as rural and lush, with comfortable (large; the seat of affluence) Victorian homes. A feature of the times in some regions of the country, such as Lowell, MA—worker housing for mill employees—is present.

► **7. Theme; Setting; Mood:** What is in the skies in 1910? A flock of birds flying *peacefully*.



New Providence’s good citizens—women in long skirts and men in hats—buy fruit **5** at the sidewalk stand in front of the grocery and most of their clothing and household items at Getz & McClure’s, the largest store in town. They shop for shoes and jewelry and office supplies and have supper at Gilman’s or at the Butler House Café.

The rural hillsides surrounding the city are lush, with comfortable Victorian **6** homes dotting the landscape and the Bloom mill and worker housing in the distance. The large red brick schoolhouse is attended by all school-age children in the region. A flock of birds flies peacefully overhead. **7**



New Providence is filled with a typical jumble of late-nineteenth-century architectural styles: Gothic, Classical, and Romanesque revivals, Queen Anne and Italianate Victorians. Pictured here is the Colonel Fleming House, which was built in the late eighteenth century and is the last single-family home left on the square.

WORD BANK **rural** (RUH rul) *adj.*: characteristic of or having to do with the country (compare to *urban*: characteristic of or having to do with the city)

New Providence ~ 67

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: What do the men and women wear in 1910 (in addition to their other clothing)?

A: The women wear long skirts; the men wear hats.

Q: Where do the citizens buy most of their clothing and household items?

A: The citizens buy clothing and household items at Getz & McClure’s.

Q: What is the largest store in town?

A: The largest store in town is Getz & McClure’s.

Q: What else is available at the stores in New Providence in 1910?

A: The citizens can buy shoes, jewelry, and office supplies.

Q: What can be seen in the distance?

A: The lush rural hillsides with Victorian homes; the Bloom mill and the mill worker housing.

Q: How many schools are in New Providence?

A: There is one school for all the school-age children in the region.

ANALYTICAL

Q: What does the clothing of the men and women tell us about the times?

A: Answers will vary. But the women cover themselves—they are modest—and the men are more formally clothed.

Q: Are the surrounding hillsides like the city or like the country?

A: The surrounding hillsides are rural, which means of, relating to, associated with, or typical of the country.

Q: The hillsides are described as “lush.” How does the word “lush” mirror what is happening in the town?

A: Lush means vigorously growing, producing an abundance of juicy green foliage; lush also means thriving, generous, plentiful, even prosperous. Although the land is undeveloped, which is why it is lush, it is similar to the town which is thriving as well.

Q: Have you ever heard of a factory or mill building housing for their workers?

A: Answers will vary. Ask students why this policy may have changed in the last century.

Q: What mood is conveyed about the setting when we read, “A flock of birds flies peacefully overhead”?

A: Answers will vary.

SUMMING UP THE PLOT

- It is 1935 and a mist rolls into town.
- The effects of the Great Depression can be seen—the city has fallen on hard times.
- Homeless men now huddle over makeshift fires in the courthouse square.
- Jobless men wait for free bread in lines outside the post office.
- But life goes on. People still go to concerts, drink coca cola, and buy cars.
- The Bloom mill is still in operation as are a shoe store and a jeweler's.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ **8. Setting as Time; The Illustration Has Changed:** The picture doesn't look as pretty.
- ▶ **9. Characterization of the City; Mood; Theme:** A mist may feel cold, and its sensation unpleasant. As a metaphor, a mist may hide objects or concepts. A mist dims one's perceptions or understanding. What has happened to the city? How did it happen?
- ▶ **10. Historical Reference:** The Great Depression began with the crash of the New York Stock Market in 1929 and lasted until 1939. It was the longest and most severe economic depression of the Western world.
- ▶ **11. Idiom:** In this context, *to fall on* means to encounter, to meet, to come together. *Hard times* are a period of difficulty or hardship, especially financial hardship.
- ▶ **12. Mood; Theme:** Twenty-five years have passed, and the bandstand is gone. This is not a time when people gather together to listen to music. There are now people in the city who have no homes, who need fires from trash cans to get warm. The city is cold both literally and metaphorically.
- ▶ **13. Historical Reference:** WPA stands for Works Progress Administration, a program of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. The program was created in 1935. Its goal was to stimulate the economy during the Great Depression.
- ▶ **14. Setting; Characterization of the City:** Recall the inscription on the fountain that the riches of a city are its citizens. Now, many of the citizens have no jobs or money, and the city has lost much of its riches.
- ▶ **15. Characterization of the City and Its People:** Life goes on. What are the indications? A concert at the Strand Theater. An advertisement for Coca Cola—so someone must have the money to buy it.
- ▶ **16. Characterization of the City; Setting:** Now traffic lights tell cars when to go and when to stop.
- ▶ **17. Setting:** What has changed? What remains the same? Again, look at the pictures with your students.



1935

- 8
- 9 10
11 12
- A**s a mist rolls into New Providence, effects of the Great Depression are visible; the city has fallen on hard times. Gone is the bandstand from the courthouse square, where homeless men now huddle over trash can fires for warmth. A WPA sign publicizes the Works Progress Administration, a jobs program funded by the government. A line of jobless men waits for free bread outside the post office, and hobo²es are taking a free ride out of the city on trains. Many buildings are in need of repair.
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16 17
- But even in times such as these, life goes on. There is a concert playing at the Strand Theater. A huge Coca-Cola advertisement goes up on the side of a building. A streetlight now controls automobile traffic. The Bloom mill—expanded before the stock market crash—is still in operation, the grocery has become a shoe store, and the dry goods store, a jeweler's. The Colonel Fleming House now accommodates

2. *Hobo* is an old-fashioned word for a tramp or a jobless person who wanders from place to place.

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GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

- Q:** In 1935, the effects of what are visible?
A: The effects of the Great Depression are visible.
- Q:** According to the text, what has happened to the city financially?
A: The city has fallen on hard times.
- Q:** What are men waiting for outside the post office?

A: They are waiting for the distribution of free bread.

Q: How do we know that life goes on?

A: There is a concert at the Strand and a huge Coca Cola sign has been painted on a building.

ANALYTICAL

Q: What does it mean to fall on hard times?

A: To fall on hard times means to enter a period of financial hardship.

Q: Why do you think the city has not repaired its buildings?

A: Cities rely on taxes for public works. If many of its residents are not employed, they will not pay taxes. The city will not have the money to hire people and to buy materials to make repairs.

Q: Why do a concert and a Coca Cola sign show that life goes on?

A: Answers will vary, but listening to music shows that people are still interested in—and some are still able to pay for—the pleasure of hearing it. The sign shows that in spite of the Depression there are still potential customers out there.

SUMMING UP THE PLOT

- A new style of design called Art Deco dominates the cityscape.
- A modern apartment building squats on the hillside and biplanes and blimps appear where birds once flew peacefully overhead.
- A biplane and a blimp cruise the skies.



three small businesses. Art Deco chrome and glass streamline some of the storefronts, contrasting with the older styles of the upper stories. A modern yellow apartment building squats on the hillside, while a biplane and a blimp cruise the skies.

18

19 20



The house at the end of Main Street has been replaced by a cottage-style gas station.

A neoclassical granite post office has been constructed, revealing the train station in the distance.



New Providence ~ 69

LITERARY COMPONENTS

► **18. Historical Reference:** Art Deco refers to a popular architectural and decorative style of the 1920s and 1930s characterized especially by bold outlines and colors, by streamlined and geometric forms, and by the use of man made materials (such as chrome and glass). The etymology of the term is the French *Art Dutchéco*, from *Exposition Internationale des Arts Dutchécoratifs et Industriels Modernes*, an exposition of modern decorative and industrial arts held in Paris, France, in 1925. Here, *streamlined* means designed with flowing contours. An *exposition* such as this one is like a World's Fair: a display on a rather large scale.

► **19. Words Create Feelings:** The word *squat* surely has an ugly sound—which is certainly intended by the authors. Now a yellow apartment building appears to have replaced the Victorian homes that dotted the lush, rural hillsides. *Squat* means to crouch on the ground with legs fully drawn up before the body, but it also means to crouch close to the ground to escape observation or to settle on land without right or title.

► **20. Setting; Characterization of City and Sky:** Peaceful birds of 1910 have been replaced by a biplane (an airplane with two main supporting surfaces usually placed one above the other) and a blimp.

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

To the Teacher: Most of the questions below are based upon the illustrations. The students will need to compare the pictures of the city in 1910 and 1935 for the answers.

Q: What is on the top floor of the Getz & McClure building in 1935?

A: A printing business is located on the 5th floor.

Q: What has replaced the 1910 building

that housed the Market & Grocery and the Dentist?

A: A building with only two windows in the upper floors that houses Reiter's Shoes.

Q: What is different about the windows of the Butler Café and Hotel building?

A: The striped awnings have been removed.

Q: How is the post office different from the building it replaced?

A: The building it replaced had several more floors, with a shorter first floor. The 1910 building had a rounded, fancy corner part with

three narrow windows on the upper floors. Students may add to this discussion.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Comparing the 1910 and 1935 pictures of New Providence, what do you see that has changed?

A: Answers will vary. It may be helpful for students to make a list, since the changes are many and various.

SUMMING UP THE PLOT

- It is 1955.
- Although a postwar prosperity has settled over New Providence, the downtown is deteriorating.
- The night sky glows with neon lights and lights

from advertising billboards.

- Part of the courthouse square has been paved with asphalt to make room for more and larger cars.
- Buses have replaced streetcars.

- Franchise businesses have moved into town.
- Traveling businessmen stay at the Alpine Motel.
- The New Providence Symphony Orchestra is performing at the Strand.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

▶ **21. Setting:** It is 1955.

▶ **22. Characterization of the City:** For the first time in the text, the word *downtown* is used. *Downtown* means the lower part or business center of a city. In 1910, New Providence was a place where people lived. Even if they resided in the Victorian houses on the hillsides in the distance, they were still part of the town. Now the picture is of a place *separate* from its citizens.

▶ **23. Rising Action; Theme:** The sky is lit by neon and the light of advertising billboards. The courthouse square is paved with asphalt to make room for more and larger cars. This is no longer a place where people will want to live. In the illustration, we see that a liquor store has replaced the beautiful Butler Café of 1910 and 1935.

▶ **24. Characterization of the City:** What happens when franchises come to town? Please make sure the students know that, in this context, a *franchise* is the right granted or sold to an individual, or group, to market a company's goods in a particular territory. When Rexall's or Woolworth's comes to town, they replace family-run businesses that cater to local tastes. Local businesses have a local character. Franchises and chains work because they do so much business across such a large territory (say, the United States) that they do not need to make so much profit on each item they sell. They can afford to sell their goods much more cheaply than the family-owned business. This is why the supermarkets put most of the family-owned grocery stores out of business.

▶ **25. Characterization; Theme:** A motel is a place where people stay briefly and cheaply. The word is a portmanteau word made from *motor* and *hotel*. The idea was/is that people could enter their rooms directly from the parking lot. A motel does not have the character of a hotel. Now the city becomes a place for transients, people who come and go and that no one in New Providence knows.



1955

21

22

23

24 25

postwar prosperity settles over New Providence, although there are signs that downtown is deteriorating.

The night sky glows with neon, holiday lights, and lighted billboards advertising bread and used cars. Part of the courthouse square is now paved with asphalt to make room for more and larger cars. Buses have replaced streetcars.

Franchises³ like Rexall's and Woolworth's have moved into town, and the Alpine Motel attracts traveling businessmen. The New Providence Symphony Orchestra is performing at the Strand.

3. Sometimes companies, instead of doing their own marketing, sell the right to market their products or services to private individuals or groups. This right is called a *franchise* (FRAN chyz). The people who have bought the franchise use the name, advertisements, and products of the company, but privately own and run their own stores.

WORD
BANK

deteriorating (dee TEER ee uh RAYT ing) *v.*: becoming worse in some or many ways

70 ~ Unit I

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: In 1955, what has settled over New Providence?

A: A postwar prosperity has settled over New Providence.

Q: What does the night sky glow with?

A: The night sky glows with neon and holiday lights and the lights of advertising billboards.

Q: What has happened to the courthouse square?

A: Part of it has been paved with asphalt to make room for more and larger cars.

Q: Who stays at the Alpine Motel?

A: Traveling businessmen stay at the Alpine Motel.

ANALYTICAL

Q: How does the use of the word *downtown* show how much the city has changed since 1910?

A: Downtown suggests that this is not a place where people live any longer, that the daily lives of the citizens are not steeped in the daily life of the town.

Q: How does the feeling of the city change, when part of the courthouse square is paved with asphalt to create parking spaces for larger cars?

A: Answers will vary. Asphalt paving means fewer plants, less grass, fewer trees. Plants

provide oxygen. Plants provide a softer mood. When the plants and trees disappear, so do the squirrels and the birds. More and larger cars mean more air pollution. At the same time, more cars could indicate more business, more activity, more prosperity, more excitement. In this case, it does not. Downtown has become a depressing, concrete wilderness.

Q: When a franchise such as Rexall's or Woolworth's replaces local businesses, what has the town lost?

A: The town and its citizens lose a family-run business that caters to local tastes.

SUMMING UP THE PLOT

- The elegant Butler House is now a liquor store and a boarding house for transients.
- The Victorian building next to it is being covered with prefabricated siding.
- Getz & McClure's has been sheathed with metal grillwork and a popular style of lettering.
- The old slate roof of the Town Hall has been replaced by asphalt shingles.

- A fire is raging at the train station, while citizens are shopping.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

► **26. Characterization of the City; Rising Action:** The elegant Butler House is replaced by a liquor store and a boarding house.

► **27. Characterization:** A series of architectural changes rob the city of its former elegance.

► **28. Rising Action:** Why are the citizens shopping when the train station is on fire? Where are the firemen? This is not clear in the story.



The elegant Butler House is now a liquor store and a boarding house for transients.²⁶

Next to it, a Victorian cast-iron building is being covered with prefabricated siding.²⁷

Getz & McClure's has already been sheathed with stark metal grillwork and a currently popular style of lettering. Two of the small businesses in the Colonel Fleming House are boarded up. Behind it, a bland new building has been erected to house Monarch Insurance. The old slate roof of the Town Hall has been replaced by asphalt shingles. A fire is raging at the train station, while the citizens of New Providence go about their holiday shopping.²⁸

4. *Transients* (tran ZEE ints) are people, usually workers or salesmen, who stay in a city for a short time.

The nuclear age arrives: An air-raid siren has replaced the decorative ornament atop Town Hall, and the courthouse bears a fallout shelter sign.



The baby boom following World War II explains the new addition to the schoolhouse. The surrounding hills are gradually filling up with the ranch-style and split-level houses of suburbia.

New Providence ~ 71

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: What has replaced the Butler House?

A: A liquor store and a boarding house for transients have replaced the Butler House.

Q: What has happened to Getz & McClure's?

A: The building has been encased in or covered with stark ("having no ornaments; appearing stripped") metal grillwork.

Q: What has happened to the business in the Colonel Fleming House?

A: Two of the businesses have been boarded up.

Q: What is happening as shoppers shop?

A: The train station is on fire.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Why are each of the architectural changes misguided?

A: A Victorian cast-iron building is a thing of beauty, an architectural legacy from the past, and a solidly made structure. Asphalt shingles do not have the permanence nor the beauty of a slate roof. If students compare the pictures,

they may be better able to articulate the reasons why the changes are not desirable.

Q: If citizens keep shopping when there is a fire raging, what may it suggest about life in the city?

A: Answers will vary. (1) The city may be so large now, that people do not know what is going on in another part of town. (2) It seems unlikely, but people may think it is more important to get their holiday shopping done than to be concerned about a fire. Presumably the authors took this event from the history of an actual city. But their point really is not clear.

SUMMING UP THE PLOT

- It is 1970, and downtown New Providence is an unattractive jumble of old and new buildings.
- To attract people from suburbia, part of Main Street has been converted into a pedestrian mall.
- A protest against the Vietnam War is taking place

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ **29. Setting; Rising Action:** It is 1970. The city is an architectural mess. No planning was involved in what the city has come to be today.
- ▶ **30. Theme; Characterization:** Attempts to attract people from “thriving suburbia” have thus far failed. New Providence is *not even a downtown* for the outer area associated with it. Suburbia, itself, is thriving and presumably does not need the town.
- ▶ **31. Characterization:** However, the demonstration against the Vietnam War shows that the town is still the legal and governmental brain for the people who are ordinarily so separated from it. The demonstration also shows that there are people living in the suburbs who are concerned about the actions of government. This may be a sign of hope for the city.
- ▶ **32. Characterization; Theme:** Advertising may presumably be good for business, but billboards don't do much for the environment.
- ▶ **33. Characterization; Rising Action:** The ugly city no longer needs the beautiful post office.

in front of the courthouse.

- The courthouse square is newly sunken and cemented.
- A mugging is in progress.
- The city is marred by graffiti and billboards.

- The post office and several other buildings have been demolished and turned into parking lots.
- The Bloom mill is for rent.
- The train station tower has not been restored.



1970

29

30 **B**y 1970, downtown New Providence is an uninspired jumble of old and new. To attract people from thriving suburbia, part of Main Street has been converted into a pedestrian⁵ mall, dominated by a harsh concrete fountain. But there is less traffic than ever in the city center, and fewer people actually live there.

31 A number of people in town today are gathered outside the courthouse, taking part in a protest march against the Vietnam War. Across the newly sunken and cemented

32 square, a mugging is in progress. Graffiti mars the area, as do more and more billboards, and an Army/Navy surplus⁶ store. The post office and several other

33 buildings have been demolished and turned into parking lots, the Bloom mill is for rent, and the train station tower remains burnt out.

5. A *pedestrian* (puh DESS tree un) *mall* is a large area closed to traffic, used by people walking on foot.
6. *Surplus* is something extra or left over. *Army/navy surplus stores* sell leftover army and navy supplies.

WORD BANK **graffiti** (gruh FEE tee) *n.*: words or pictures painted illegally on public property

72 ~ Unit I

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: What has been done to attract people from the suburbs?

A: A pedestrian mall has been built over part of Main Street.

Q: What has been done to the courthouse square?

A: It has been sunken and cemented.

Q: What mars the area?

A: Graffiti and billboards make the town ugly.

Q: What has replaced the grand post office building?

A: A parking lot has replaced it.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Why is New Providence an “uninspired jumble of old and new” in 1970?

A: The city came to be as it is because it was buffeted about by the winds of time and fashion. As the city developed, there was no planning, no design. New businesses and developers had no respect for the architecture of the past. Students may have other answers.

Q: If suburbia is now thriving, what does that mean for the city?

A: It will be harder to draw people in from the suburbs. Why come into the city if there is a mall in the suburbs?

Q: What is your opinion of protest marches?

A: Answers will vary. A protest march shows that people care, and that they have the courage and discipline to plan an event and publicly express their feelings. A protest march can be abused if it turns violent or if it promotes prejudice or demagoguery. We are fortunate to live in a country where the government not only allows protest, but also defends the right of its citizens to protest.

Q: Why is the train station tower burnt out?

A: Apparently it was destroyed in the fire of 1955 and never fixed.

SUMMING UP THE PLOT

- The Alpine Motel has become a Holiday Inn and a Fotomat has opened.
- The Colonel Fleming House seems about to be rescued by a preservation group.
- The Victorian homes on the hills are making room for highways and look-alike suburban housing.
- A jet flies over the increasing number of power lines strung across the horizon.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

► **34. Are Change and Rescue on the Way?** A day school has opened! The Colonel Fleming House—whatever it once was—may be saved by a preservation society.

► **35. Theme:** But the beautiful Victorian houses are being demolished so that highways can come through. They will also make way for lots of look-alike housing. Of course highways, housing, and a school addition are necessary for a growing population.

► **36. Theme:** Now the sky reveals power lines and a jet.



The Alpine Motel is now a Holiday Inn, a Fotomat has opened, and a famous musician is playing at the Strand. A day school has opened, complete with colorful murals and giant toadstools. The Colonel Fleming House seems about to be rescued by a preservation group.⁷ Victorian homes in the hills are disappearing to make room for highways, look-alike suburban housing, and another addition to the school. In the afternoon sky, a jet flies over the increasing number of powerlines strung across the horizon.

7. A *preservation group* is an organization that has been formed to save old buildings or sculptures that have historical value from being destroyed or changed.

An ordinary digital clock now hangs where there was once a quaint shoe sign, and the bank's classical architecture has recently been covered with mirrored glass.



The Butler House features trendy boutiques, a Day-Glo mural, and resident hippies. Space-age pavilions line the sidewalk.

New Providence ~ 73

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: Who is performing at the Strand Theater?

A: A famous musician is performing.

Q: What has opened?

A: A day school with colorful murals and giant toadstools.

ANALYTICAL

Q: What does the program at the Strand Theater consistently show?

A: Fine, classical music sustains the culture of a city. It seems to be all that is left of the elegant, old New Providence.

Q: Why is it sad that the Victorian houses are being taken down?

A: These are big, old, beautiful houses.

Q: Why is it necessary for the Victorian houses to be taken down?

A: If their location is the only place the highways and needed middle-income housing can be built, they must make way for the people of the 1970s. It may also be that too few people are interested in buying them or can afford to heat them. Obviously, a greater supply of housing is necessary when the population

grows. A highway may also make it possible for people to travel to the city more easily. This will bring life and money to the city.

SUMMING UP THE PLOT

- The year is 1980.
- Downtown is sadly in need of recovery. But there are signs that help is on the way.
- Chief Tenebo's statue has been vandalized (in fact, the statue doesn't even seem to be there!).

- Debris and graffiti are everywhere and street lamps are smashed.
- The Colonel Fleming House has been moved across the street to the courthouse square.
- In its old place are a Cor-Ten steel sculpture

and Monarch Insurance's new highrise—which has no architectural relationship to the buildings around it.

- But the streets seem more populated. People are again living downtown in the new red brick building next to McDonald's.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

► **37. Setting; Theme:** It is 1980. New Providence looks really dreadful. The text declares that there are signs that help is on the way, but one has to look hard at the picture to find them.

► **38. Powerful Use of Word:** The text tells us that *debris* blows around the statue's base and across the square. Although today debris is used as a synonym for trash, the word originally came from French and meant "the remains of something broken down or destroyed." This describes New Providence very well.

► **39. Repeated Reference; Architectural Reference:** Once again, we are given information about the Fleming House, the original function of which is obscure. In its old location is a Cor-Ten sculpture. In the last half of the 20th century, weathering steel (COR-TEN®) came to be widely used in city sculptures. COR-TEN® is a trademark of US Steel. Cor-Ten is a corrosion resistant low-alloy steel that forms a protective coating of rust (hydrated iron oxide) when exposed in natural climate. The authors' point seems to be that these sculptures are not welcoming. They make the city a stark people-less place of steel and glass.

► **40. Rising Action; Signs of Hope; Theme:** People have returned to live in the city. And we know what people are: Citizens are the riches of a city. (The word *Good* seems to have disappeared from the base of the fountain.)



1980

37

Ten years later, there are signs that downtown New Providence is sadly in need of recovery—and also signs that help is on the way.

38

Chief Tenebo's statue has been vandalized; debris blows around its dry base and across the square. Graffiti is everywhere, street lamps are smashed, and a

39

police box has appeared. The Colonel Fleming House has been moved across the street, but its placement does not look permanent. In its old location are a Cor-Ten steel sculpture and Monarch Insurance's new highrise, which bears no architectural relationship to the buildings around it.

40

But the streets seem more populated, and people are again living—even barbecuing—downtown in the new red brick infill structure^a next to McDonald's.

WORD
BANK

vandalized (VAN duh LYZD) *v.*: deliberately destroyed or damaged
debris (duh BREE) *n.*: the remains of anything destroyed; bits of old waste matter lying about

74 ~ Unit I

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: In 1980, what has been vandalized?

A: Chief Tenebo's statue has been vandalized. Since it is no longer there, hopefully it has not been destroyed but only removed for repairs.

Q: What blows across the square?

A: Debris blows across the square.

Q: What has happened to the street lamps?

A: The street lamps have been smashed.

Q: What has been done with the Colonel Fleming House?

A: It has been moved across the street from its original location to the courthouse square.

Q: What major change has occurred?

A: People are living again downtown.

Q: What are the riches of a city?

A: Good citizens are the riches of a city.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Why would a business build a new building that has no architectural relationship to the other buildings in the town?

A: Answers will vary.

SUMMING UP THE PLOT

- There is only one billboard in town and it advertises health food and a cultural event.
- A sign on the abandoned Butler House shows that rehabilitation is planned.
- A superhighway cuts through the hillside, which makes downtown more accessible to summer holiday travelers.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- **41. Characterization of the City:** The single billboard advertises health food and a cultural event.

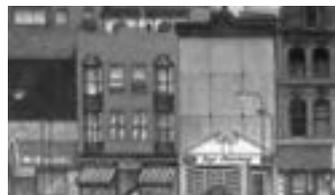


The only billboard in town advertises health food and a cultural event. The old Strand Theater is being expanded into a Cultural Center. And although the Butler House has been all but abandoned, a sign shows that rehabilitation is being planned. A superhighway now cuts through the hillside, making downtown more accessible to summer holiday travelers. A large parking structure has been built, and well-tended plantings soften the mall.

41

8. An *infill structure* is a building placed so as to fill up the gap between two other buildings.

Graffiti and rusted steel girders indicate that citizens' groups have so far been able to prevent further construction of a highrise office tower on the old post office site.



A Health Center has replaced the Medical Offices, and New Providence has its first McDonald's.

New Providence ~ 75

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: What does the only billboard in town advertise?

A: The billboard advertises health food and a cultural event.

Q: Has the old Butler House been completely abandoned?

A: No. The building has a Preservation/Development sign posted on the second floor.

Q: How has the look of the pedestrian mall been "softened"?

A: The pedestrian mall looks less severe now,

because of the planting of bushes and trees.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Look at the picture. Where the post office once was, where a parking lot was subsequently located, there is now a sign that reads "Save New Providence" and a picture of the proposed skyscraper. Scrawled on the fence are the words, "Stop the Tower." Why would people not want a skyscraper placed on that corner?

A: Answers will vary. But skyscrapers block

the sky and block the horizon. They make a city stark and ugly. Skyscrapers also create wind tunnels.

SUMMING UP THE PLOT

- It is a sunny afternoon in 1992 and a flock of birds heads back to its winter home.
- All of the old building façades have been renovated, and the condition of the buildings is much as it was in 1910.
- The slate roof of the town hall has been restored.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ **42. Setting; Coming Full Circle:** It is 1992 and once again there are birds in the sky! People have returned to the city. Just as in 1910, people are now living, shopping, working, and playing in New Providence.
- ▶ **43. The Importance of Language:** In the 1992 text, the word *downtown* is never used.
- ▶ **44. More Echoes of 1910:** Sidewalk vendors sell produce, the mall (and its plants) are gone, the busses look like old-fashioned trolley cars. The bandstand is back and people are sitting on the grass listening to a concert.
- ▶ **45. Building to a Climax; Rising Action:** All of the old building façades have been renovated.



It is wisdom to think the people are the city... —CARL SANDBURG

1992

42

43

44

45

In the sunny afternoon sky a flock of birds heads back to its winter home. Below, people have returned to the city—living, shopping, working, playing. New Providence has never looked better. Sidewalk vendors sell their produce once more, and traffic again flows through handsomely paved streets. Buses are made to look like old-fashioned trolleys. Chief Tenebo has been restored, and the bandstand is back, a concert in full swing. Gone are graffiti, billboards, and harsh sculptures. Plants and fall flowers are everywhere—even the parking structure has been elegantly camouflaged.

All of the old building façades have been renovated, and the condition of most buildings is strikingly similar to what it was in 1910. The Town Hall's slate roof has been restored, and the air-raid siren is gone. Street furniture is comfortable and

WORD BANK **façade** (fuh SOD) *n.*: the front of a building, especially a decorative one
renovated (REN uh VAY tuhd) *v.*: restored to good condition as by repairing or remodeling

76 ~ Unit I

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: On a sunny afternoon in 1992, what is in the sky over New Providence?

A: A flock of birds is returning to its winter home.

Q: What has happened to the pedestrian mall?

A: The mall has apparently been removed.

Q: What do the busses look like?

A: The busses are made to look like old-fashioned trolleys.

Q: In 1992, what is everywhere in New Providence?

A: Plants and fall flowers are everywhere.

Q: To what are the buildings now similar?

A: The buildings are strikingly similar to what they were in 1910.

ANALYTICAL

Q: By bringing back the old architecture, handsomely paving the streets, restoring the bandstand, getting rid of billboards and harsh sculptures, and placing plants and flowers everywhere, what effect has been created?

A: New Providence looks like a town, like a place that is not too big for people to live in. Answers may vary.

SUMMING UP THE PLOT

- The Butler House is beautifully refurbished.
- An arcaded building where people live and work occupies the site of the proposed tower.
- An atrium full of plants softens the look of the Monarch Insurance building.
- A Fitness Center has replaced a Health Center and an arts festival is in progress at the Strand.
- The good citizens of New Providence have worked hard to make the city livable again.

LITERARY COMPONENTS

- ▶ **46. Rising Action:** The clock is back and the Butler House is restored.
- ▶ **47. Climax; Theme:** Good, involved citizens are the riches of a city.



compatible with⁹ the architecture. The circular clock is back in front of the Butler House, now beautifully refurbished. An arcaded building where people live and work occupies the site of the controversial tower, serving as an entry into the restored train station, and an atrium full of plants softens the Monarch Insurance skyscraper. A Fitness Center has replaced the Health Center, and an arts festival is in progress at the Strand Cultural Center.

The good citizens of New Providence have worked hard to make the city livable again—and true to its heritage.

9. *Compatible with* means that something fits in with the people, objects, or ideas around it.



The Colonel Fleming House has been carefully restored—not as a historical museum but as an outdoor restaurant.

New buildings and additions to existing structures have been designed to complement the medley of architectural styles in downtown New Providence.



New Providence ~ 77

GUIDING THE READING

LITERAL

Q: What was built in place of the controversial tower?

A: An arcaded building where people live and work.

Q: What softens the look of the Monarch Insurance skyscraper?

A: An atrium full of plants.

ANALYTICAL

Q: Which group of people may be adversely affected by the urban renewal we see in 1992?

A: Unfortunately, urban renewal is not always good for everyone. When slums are torn down and new properties built in their place, there is often no housing that lower-income working people can afford.

Q: Looking at the picture for 1992, we can see that the parking garage built in 1980 made what possible?

A: The parking garage made it possible to get rid of the parking spaces and expand the courthouse square.

New Providence, a small American city, will not be found on any map. It is the creation of a team of architectural historians and designers, and yet its fictional cityscape is truly authentic. The buildings, the signs, even the street furniture can be found somewhere in urban America. Almost every detail was discovered in old photographs and assembled by the design team at The Townscape Institute.



Baltimore, Maryland (McDonald's building and H₂O fountain); Binghamton, New York (courthouse lights); Boston, Massachusetts (church in center and 1970 concrete plaza); Brookline, Massachusetts (church); Cambridge, Massachusetts (signs); Chelsea, Massachusetts (storefront); Chicago, Illinois (metal awning on the Butler House); Cincinnati, Ohio (1987 City Identity System booth); Denver, Colorado (building across the street from courthouse in 1910); Eugene, Oregon (1970 modern concrete fountain); Flint, Michigan (1910 shoe sign and street awnings); Fresno, California (1970-1980 sculptural clock tower); Garland, Utah (Bloom mill); Grand Rapids, Michigan (City Hall); Heber City, Utah (water tower); Junction City, Kansas (corner bank); Knoxville, Tennessee (billboard); Los Angeles, California (Getz & McClure building); Milwaukee, Wisconsin (suburban villas); Montclair, New Jersey (Colonel Fleming House); Montgomery, Alabama (Victorian cast-iron building); New York, New York (Butler House and train station); Portland, Oregon (fountain base); Richmond, Virginia (signs on Reiter's shoe store); Salem, Ohio (cornice on Main Street); San Diego, California (circular clock); Scottsdale, Arizona (parking structure with plantings); Staunton, Virginia (stained glass in McDonald's building); Syracuse, New York (layout of courthouse square); Topeka, Kansas (Alpine Motel sign); Townsend, Massachusetts (bandstand); Traverse City, Michigan (mansard roof on Butler House); Upper Sandusky, Ohio (horse fountain and pavilion); Waltham, Massachusetts (bench); Washington, D.C. (Masonic building); Westerville, Ohio (gas station); Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania (park outline); Wilmington, Delaware (1970 metal Main Street shelters); Winooski, Vermont (Main Street building).

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Answers will vary. Ask the students to explain their choice.

Studying the Selection

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

In which year do you think the city was most attractive?

QUICK REVIEW

1. What is the name of the city?
2. Which years of the city's existence are described?
3. What is the Butler House?
4. Whom does the fountain commemorate?

FOCUS

5. Select one change that stands out for you. Do you think it is a change for the better or for the worse? Why?
6. Choose a year and describe how New Providence looked that year. You may even choose a year in the future.

CREATING & WRITING

7. Choose one of the cityscapes described in the story, and write about what New Providence was like that year and why.
8. Choose a subject from 1910: cobblestone streets, Model T Fords, streetcars, horse-drawn carts, bandstand concerts, food shopping before there were supermarkets, or Victorian homes. Do you wish we had some of those things today, or are you thankful that we don't? Perhaps you have mixed feelings—you like the idea of, say, horse-drawn carts, but you know they would be slower and bumpier than a car. Write a paragraph about what life would be like if we still had the item you chose.
9. Draw a picture of one or several of the buildings in New Providence. In the caption, name the buildings and the year.

New Providence ~ 79

QUICK REVIEW

1. The city is called New Providence.
2. We see the city in 1910, 1935, 1955, 1970, 1980, and 1992.
3. Butler House is both a café and a hotel in 1910 and 1935. By 1955 it is a liquor store and a boarding house for transients. In 1970, the building houses Someplace Else Music, Amy's Boutique—and looks like apartments on the second and third floors. In 1992, the Butler House Café is back. Again it looks like apartments—albeit nicer ones—on the upper floors in that year.
4. The fountain commemorates Chief Tenebo, a Native American from a (probably) once-local tribe.

FOCUS

5. Answers will vary.
6. It will be especially interesting, if students pick years not in the selection, by extrapolating from those that are.

CREATING & WRITING

7. Answers will vary. Encourage students to use their imagination and try to go beyond what is in the selection.
8. Try to help the students see the pros and cons of modernization.
9. While the students should be able to choose the building or buildings of their choice, you may want to encourage a distribution of choices that will give you the opportunity to create the city along your wall, for several of the years described.