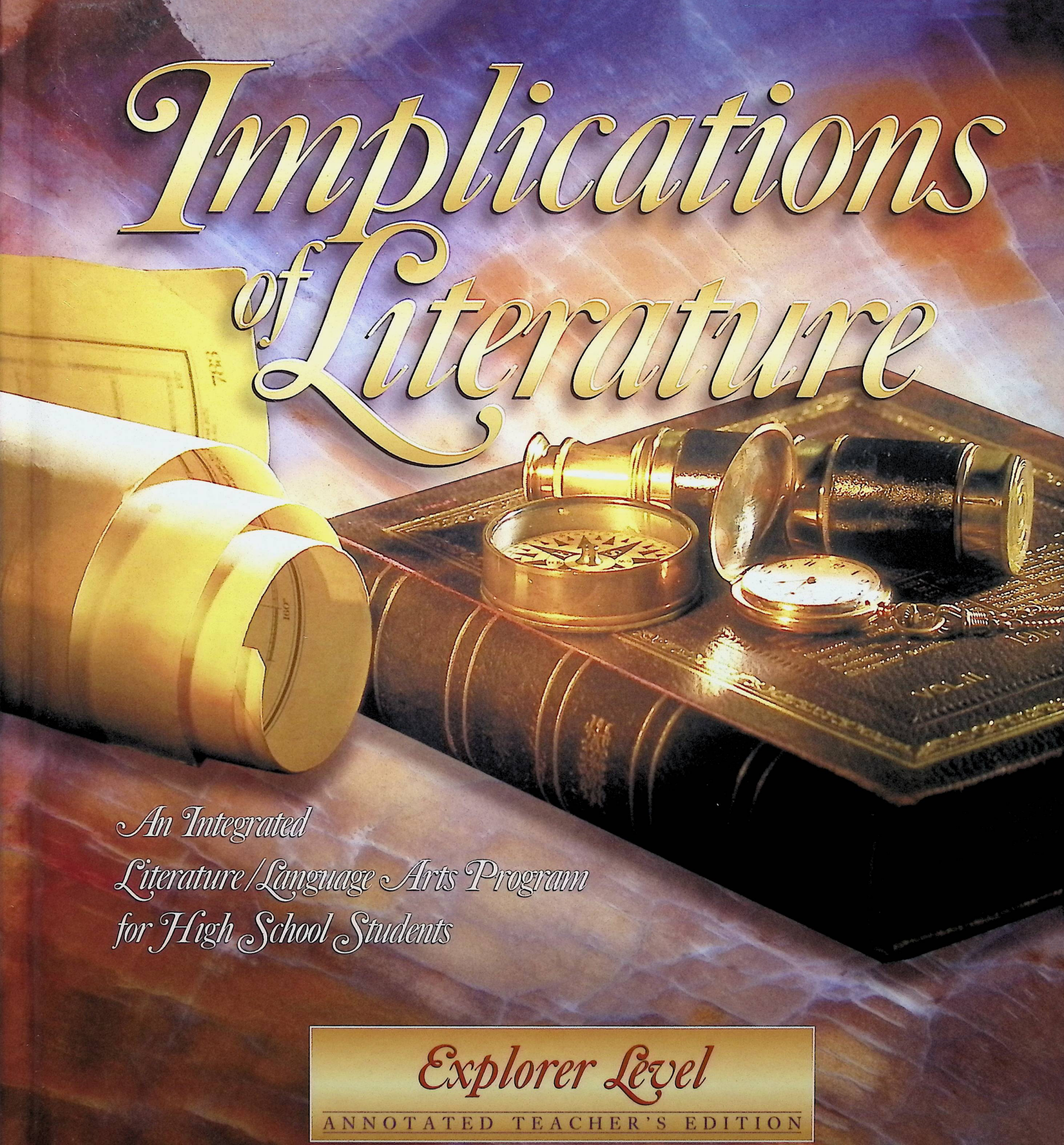


Implications of Literature

A detailed illustration of various objects associated with literature and exploration. On the left, a large, rolled-up scroll is partially unrolled, revealing a page with text. In the center, a brass compass with a detailed face and a small pocket watch with a chain are resting on a dark, textured book. The background is a soft, ethereal blend of purple and blue light rays.

*An Integrated
Literature / Language Arts Program
for High School Students*

Explorer Level

ANNOTATED TEACHER'S EDITION

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SHORT STORY

CONFLICT:

The struggle between two opposing forces, which can be manifested in one or more of four ways: one person fighting (figuratively or literally) against another (man vs. man); a person or people fighting the forces of nature (man vs. nature); a person or people fighting the forces of society (man vs. society); and a person caught in a struggle between opposing forces within himself (man vs. self).

Protagonist:

The main character in a literary work, around whom the action revolves.

Antagonist:

The primary person or force opposing the protagonist.

SETTING:

Not all of the elements of setting are necessarily used in any particular selection. Some works stress one aspect or another to make a point or create an effect.

The short story as a **genre**, a very popular form of literature today, originated many, many years ago in the form of myths, fables, and parables. The short story is a form of fiction that should be read in one sitting; it should create a single unified effect toward which all actions and incidents in the story are directed. It should answer some, but not necessarily all, questions of Who? What? Where? When? How? and Why?

Elements of literature found in good short-story writing include:

❧ CONFLICT

Stories can feature one or more of the following conflicts:

- man vs. man
- man vs. nature
- man vs. society
- man vs. self

Conflict can be **external** or **internal**, or a combination of both. Conflict brings about suspense. Terms such as **protagonist** and **antagonist** are used in relation to conflict. Your teacher will explain these terms.

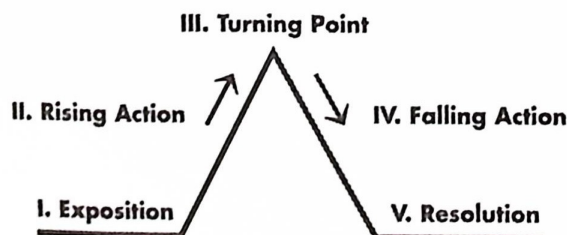
❧ PLOT

The **exposition** and the inciting incidents in the story lead to the **turning point** or **climax**, the point of highest interest and intensity, based on the tension created by the conflict between the protagonist and the antagonist. The tension contributes to the **rising action** that builds into the climax. The **denouement**, or **falling action**, unravels the twisted threads of the situation and provides a **resolution** to the problems that have arisen. It does not follow that the results of the denouement will solve the conflict, nor is the resolution necessarily happy or satisfactory, but a conclusion has been reached.

❧ SETTING

The setting may refer to:

- the location, or physical backdrop against which the story is played out
- the daily lifestyles of the characters



- the emotional, religious, social, and moral condition of the subject
- and/or the time and historical background of the work

The setting adds to the atmosphere of the narrative.

THEME

The theme is the central or dominating concept in a literary work. It is sometimes stated, sometimes implied. The plot and its details are *not* to be confused with the theme. The theme transmits a central idea that must be connected to every action in the story. Most frequently, the themes of literary works deal with life's significant issues.

CHARACTERIZATION

Characterization refers to the development of believable personalities who carry out the actions occurring in the story. The reader should be able to relate to the characters and respond emotionally to their experiences. Because of the tight, limited structure of the short story, words cannot be wasted. Every significant character's personality must be clearly defined; actions, statements, and thoughts must be consistent with the personality as it is portrayed.

The author reveals information about his characters in the following ways:

- by directly describing or explaining their actions
- by revealing them through their actions and/or behavior
- by revealing them through their speech and/or thoughts
- by revealing them through the reactions of other characters

Characterization can be accomplished by using different **points of view**, including:

The **First Person Narrator** technique, which limits the amount of information given; the author reveals only that which the narrator would logically know, do, or think. The story is written in the first person.

The **Third Person Omniscient Narrator** is written from an all-knowing perspective. The author can present the reader with more information than any single character would be able to impart.

The **Third Person Limited Narrator** presents the action from the point of view of an observer who knows some, but not all, of the information needed to resolve the conflict.

SYMBOLISM

Symbolism refers to an object, place, or person that possesses its own significance and, at the same time, represents something bigger and more universal. Thus, a crown can often be spoken of as symbolizing royalty, or a rock might symbolize integrity or

THEME:

The focal, leading idea in a work of literature. A theme must be unified; that is, every action in the work must be connected or related to it.

Omniscient — all-knowing.

Note the difference between irony and sarcasm:

Irony is impersonal and often carries symbolic meaning.

Sarcasm is usually a harsh personal attack and is meant to cause pain.

stability. Generally the symbol represents human emotions or a condition of life, such as age, death, etc. or an abstract concept such as hope, faith, etc. Even a name can imply symbolism in the context in which it is used.

IRONY

Irony occurs when the actual intent of the sentence or thought expressed carries a significance exactly opposite to the meaning intended. Types of irony include:

Verbal irony — when the character says one thing and means the opposite.

Irony of situation — when the turn of events is the complete opposite of what was expected.

Dramatic irony — when the reader knows more about the actual situation than the character does, as in many plays.

All of the concepts listed above are mentioned in various places in the short-story unit. You will soon be able to identify which literary terms apply to a specific story. As you read for understanding and evaluation, these concepts will be extremely valuable.

Before You Read...

The Adventure of the Speckled Band

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was a ship's doctor before establishing a private medical practice in England. At the same time, Conan Doyle combined his penchants for science and sleuthing and began writing detective tales. In 1882, he published a series of short stories, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, featuring the savvy Sherlock Holmes as the brilliant detective-hero of each mystery. Enthusiastically received, this collection was later followed by a novel, *The Sign of Four* (1892), after which Conan Doyle was forever associated with the genre of mystery writing. Indeed, Sherlock Holmes was soon to become the detective of detectives, after whom dozens of subsequent sleuths were modeled.

After a time, Conan Doyle became resentful of Holmes' success, because the author aspired to be appreciated as a more universal writer. So he wrote a story in which Holmes died. The public clamor for more Sherlock Holmes stories was so great that Conan Doyle relented and continued to compose stories about his master sleuth.

ABOUT THE SELECTION

Did you know that Sherlock Holmes is the most famous detective in literature? He is featured in more than 60 stories and scores of parodies, with countless followers worldwide. In the United States alone, there are over 120 Sherlock Holmes societies.

The Sherlock Holmes persona is not just a figment of the author's imagination: Holmes' character is based on the real-life diagnostician, Dr. Joseph Bell, who taught Conan Doyle in medical school. As a man, Holmes is brilliant, eccentric, and undoubtedly a gentleman. As a detective, his encyclopedic knowledge, keen and logical mind, and incredible powers of observation enable him to arrive at astounding conclusions and solve extremely complicated cases. In short, Holmes' unique combination of class and capability make him the quintessential detective who has inspired subsequent authors for more than a century.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND

5

Historical Note

What's so "royal" about the Roylotts?

Why did Helen Stoner find it necessary to tell Sherlock Holmes that the Roylotts were descended from one of the oldest Saxon families in England? What does this tell us about the Roylotts? To understand, we must discover who the Saxons were, and in what era they lived.

The Angles and the Saxons were among the original tribes who settled what we know as England today, in the days before the name England or the English language even existed. In fact, English derives from the name Angle (it was originally Anglish). Together, in 449, these two ancient tribes formed the Anglo-Saxon people, who established the first kingdom in what was then known as Anglia. This kingdom lasted for over 500 years, until the Norman invasion in 1066, which marked the last time in history that England was taken over by outside invaders.

The Anglo-Saxon period was a time when emphasis was placed on athletic and military prowess. In addition, the Anglo-Saxons were the first English-speaking people to produce any form of literature: the famous *Beowulf* epic traced to that period is the earliest manuscript in Old English, an early precursor of the English language as we know it.

In the social hierarchy that was the mainstay of English class structure and social life, family position, based on the line of direct descent, was more important than wealth, although the two often went hand in hand. Anyone who could trace his family back nearly 1,500 years to the Anglo-Saxon period would be honored and esteemed for having an ancient and pure lineage. Thus, Dr. Roylott was descended from one of the proudest, most distinguished families in England. Perhaps this was the reason Conan Doyle uses the name Roylott, which may evoke the word "royal." Helen makes a point of revealing this to Holmes so that the reader can fathom the depths to which Dr. Roylott has sunk, and the irony of his tragic ending.

Motivational Material

READING MYSTERY: Although ordinary life can be full of mysterious

happenings and things that we don't understand, in literature, a mystery is a work of fiction dealing with an unsolved situation or a perplexing crime. In addition to the puzzlement and unanswered questions that surround a mysterious happening, mystery stories often have the added dimension of danger, due to the crime that must be solved. Usually, mysteries feature a detective who bravely and cleverly assembles the clues, draws inferences, confronts the criminal, and eventually solves the case, often with some danger to his own person. Tell students that "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" is a classic mystery story, full of unanswered questions, perplexing and suspicious occurrences, and danger. However, rather than asking the classic question of "Whodunnit?", "The Adventure of the Speckled Band," a "locked-room mystery," asks "How was it done?" The reader is given the identity of the murderer, but has the opportunity, with Holmes himself, to piece together information and clues and try to determine how the crime was committed.

Tell students that their job is to try to emulate Holmes by sharpening their wits and carefully observing anything out of the ordinary.

What is the nature of the relationship between Holmes and Watson?

A. Holmes is obviously the leader of the pair, with Watson admiring him without being able to emulate him. They are already good friends, nonetheless.

Focus

Inference — drawing reasonable conclusions about characters or events based on the limited information presented by the author — is the focus of the story. Encourage students to actively participate in the solving of the mystery by sharpening their senses and increasing their awareness of details of plot, setting, and nuances of character. For the sake of literary interest and to sustain suspense, occasionally the author deliberately misleads the reader as well as the detectives, by piling up clues that may lead to erroneous conclusions. These mistaken, albeit logical, judgments are called faulty inference; tell students that even the great Sherlock Holmes sometimes makes a wrong guess or follows the wrong lead. This is a good springboard for a discussion of the results of making hasty judgments or jumping to conclusions. Invite students to describe personal experiences of this sort, and caution them to be alert to misleading clues.

Elements of Plot

Motivation is the underlying reason for a character's words or actions, and literary characters may have many motives, both logical and emotional, for their deeds. In a detective story, **motive** has a slightly different connotation: it is the reason that a character commits the crime being investigated. Since the point of any detective story is to solve the crime, discovering and understanding the motive becomes the most important factor. In this case, the motive is clearly established from the outset, and Dr. Roylott's guilt is presumed. Hence, the plot entails determining how the crime was committed, what weapons were employed, which accomplices were involved, etc.

The Adventure of the Speckled Band

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

FOCUS: INFERENCE

On glancing over my notes of the seventy-odd cases in which I have during the last eight years studied the methods of my friend Sherlock Holmes, I find none which presented more *singular* features than that which was associated with the well-known family of the Roylotts of Stoke Moran. The events in question occurred in the early days of association with Holmes, when we were sharing rooms as bachelors in Baker Street.

It was early in April in the year '83 that I woke one morning to find Sherlock Holmes standing, fully dressed, by the side of my bed. He was a late riser as a rule, and as the clock showed me that it was only a quarter past seven, I blinked up at him in some surprise, and perhaps just a little resentment, for I was myself regular in my habits.*

"Very sorry to rouse you up, Watson," said he.

"What is it, then — a fire?" I asked.

"No, a client. It seems that a young

lady has arrived in a considerable state of excitement, who insists upon seeing me. She is waiting now in the sitting room. Now, when young ladies wander about the metropolis at this hour of the morning, I presume that it is something very pressing which they have to communicate. Should it prove to be an interesting case, you would, I am sure, wish to follow it from the outset. I thought, at any rate, that I should give you the chance."

"My dear fellow, I would not miss it for anything."

I had no keener pleasure than in following Holmes in his professional investigations, and in admiring the rapid deductions, as swift as *intuitions*, and yet always founded on a logical basis, with which he unraveled the problems which were submitted to him. I rapidly threw on my clothes, and accompanied my friend down to the sitting room. A lady dressed in black and heavily veiled, who had been sitting in the window,* rose as we entered.

What is the nature of the relationship between Holmes and Watson?

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

regular in my habits — accustomed to a fixed schedule.
in the window — in a chair near the bay window.

6 IMPLICATIONS OF LITERATURE / UNIT ONE

- 1 The story is told from the point of view of Dr. Watson. This limited first-person perspective allows the reader to follow the events of the plot from up close, along with Watson, Holmes' trusted assistant.
- 2 The story takes place in Victorian England; tell your students that '83 is 1883.
- 3 The motif of a damsel in distress is common in 19th-century literature and particularly in tales of mystery.

"Good morning, madam," said Holmes, cheerily. "My name is Sherlock Holmes. This is my intimate friend and associate, Dr. Watson, before whom you can speak as freely as before myself. Ha! I am glad to see that my housekeeper, Mrs. Hudson, had the good sense to light the fire. Pray draw up to it, and I shall order you a cup of hot coffee, for I observe that you are shivering."

"It is not cold which makes me shiver," said the woman, in a low voice, changing her seat as requested.

"What, then?"

"It is fear, Mr. Holmes. It is terror." She had raised her veil; and we could see that she was indeed in a pitiable state of agitation, her face all drawn and gray, with restless, frightened eyes, like those of some hunted animal. Her features were those of a woman of thirty, but her hair was shot with premature gray, and her expression was weary and haggard. Sherlock Holmes ran her over with one of his quick, all-comprehensive glances.

"You must not fear," said he, soothingly. "We shall set matters right, I have no doubt. You have come in by train this morning, I see."

"You know me, then?"

"No, but I observe the second half of a return ticket in the palm of your left glove. You must have started early, and yet you had a good drive in a dogcart,* along heavy roads, before you reached the station."

The lady gave a violent start, and stared in bewilderment at my companion.

"There is no mystery, my dear madam," said he, smiling. "The left arm

of your jacket is spattered with mud in no less than seven places. The marks are perfectly fresh. There is no vehicle save a dogcart which throws up mud in that way, and then only when you sit on the left-hand side of the driver."

"Whatever your reasons may be, you are perfectly correct," said she. "I started from home before six, reached the railway station of Leatherhead at twenty past, and came in by the first train to Waterloo.* Sir, I can stand this strain no longer; I shall go mad if it continues. I have no one to turn to — none, save only one, who cares for me, and he, poor fellow, can be of little aid. I have heard of you, Mr. Holmes, from Mrs. Farintosh, whom you helped in the hour of her sore need. It was from her that I had your address. Oh, sir, do you not think that you could help me, too, and at least throw a little light through the dense darkness which surrounds me? At present it is out of my power to reward you for your services, but in a month or six weeks I shall be married, with the control of my own income, and then at least you shall not find me ungrateful."

"Farintosh," said he. "Ah, yes, I recall the case. I think it was before your time, Watson. I can only say, madam, that I shall be happy to devote the same care to your case as I did to that of your friend. As to reward, my profession is its own reward; but you are at liberty to *defray* whatever expenses I may be put to, at the time which suits you best. And I beg you will lay before us everything that may help us in forming an opinion upon the matter."

"My name is Helen Stoner," replied our visitor, "and I am living with my stepfather, who is the last survivor of

*Who is Mrs. Farintosh?
What is her part in
the story?*

*What can we assume
about Holmes' economic
situation? Is
detection his livelihood?*

*Who is Mrs. Farintosh?
What is her part in the
story?*

A. Holmes had previously helped her in an earlier case. She informed Miss Stoner about Holmes.

*What can we assume
about Holmes' economic
situation? Is detection his*

livelihood?

A. Holmes is a gentleman; detective work is a hobby, not a source of income. Apparently he is independently well-to-do.

Exposition

The exposition of the plot begins when Helen Stoner begins her tragic tale. The detailed background information she provides is necessary for the characterization of Roylott as an unmistakable villain. However, her long exposition leaves many questions unanswered, thus requiring a "second exposition" at the end of the story.

A second exposition is a common feature in mystery stories. In this story's *denouement*, or unraveling of the mystery, the detective explains how he arrived at the solution to the crime. In "The Adventure of the Speckled Band," the second exposition takes place at the end, during the *falling action*. Its purpose is to answer any remaining questions for the reader and, ostensibly, Watson.

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

dogcart — a light, one-horse open carriage, with two seats back to back.
Waterloo — a large railway station in London.

④ The author creates dramatic effect by emphasizing the woman's distress while delaying the revelation of the specific problem that brought her to Holmes.

⑤ Here the plot really begins with Helen's exposition. Her long-winded background information intentionally provides the information necessary for understanding the basic premise of the case. Remind students to be on the lookout for significant details.

Explaining motive: Helen alludes to the motive with the provisions of her mother's will, and her description of the poverty that drove Roylott to open a medical practice.