

Teacher's Guide to
The Core Classics Edition of
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's
Selected Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

By Judy Gardner

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Publisher's Note

We are happy to make available this *Teacher's Guide* to the Core Classics version of *The Selected Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* prepared by Judy Gardner. We are presenting it and other guides in an electronic format so that is freely accessible to as many teachers as possible. This guide is one teacher's vision of how to make this book both understandable and enjoyable to fifth grade students. You will obviously have ideas of your own and may want to pick and choose among the activities and exercises offered here. We hope that you find the background material, which is addressed specifically to teachers, useful preparation for teaching the book. As always, Core Knowledge prefers to emphasize what to teach rather than how to teach it, but we also are interested in helping teachers share their experience of what works in the classroom. We hope this guide helps make *Sherlock Holmes* an adventure in reading for your students.

Be sure to notice the **Appendix** in which Laura Eberle presents some interesting ideas for literature circles, detection activities for young word sleuths, and research projects for budding historians.

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Biographical Notes on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

*“Doctor, whaler, athlete, writer, speculator, dramatist, historian, war correspondent, spiritualist, ...helper of the underdog”*¹

Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle was born in Edinburgh on May 22, 1859. His mother, Mary Foley Doyle, was Irish, and his father, Charles Doyle, came from an Anglo-Norman line. They settled in Edinburgh where his father had obtained a job in the civil service as a clerk in the Office of Works. Charles Doyle’s real desire, however, was to be an artist, and his frustration at having to work at something else to support his large family – he and his wife had seven children – may have contributed to his drinking problems. Late in life he was institutionalized for mental instability. Fortunately for the children, Conan Doyle’s mother was a strong woman, devoutly religious, and she remained an important influence on her son, giving him advice on many areas of his life, including his writing. It was she who forbade him to kill off Sherlock Holmes the first time he considered doing so because the character had become a burden to him, insisting, “You won’t! You can’t. You *mustn’t*.”²

Arthur was the couple’s first son, and they added Conan to his name to honor his godfather and great uncle, Michael Conan. As a young boy, he loved books but also loved getting into scrapes with the friends he later admitted were “rough boys.”³ In 1868, when his parents felt his education as a Roman Catholic was being neglected, Conan Doyle was sent to a Jesuit school in Lancashire. Perhaps they also wished to get

him away from his friends. His new school's rules proved very strict; order was kept by threats and intimidation. Conan Doyle later wrote, "I went out of my way to do really mischievous and outrageous things simply to show that my spirit was unbroken. An appeal to my better nature and not to my fears would have found an answer at once."⁴

Conan Doyle was not an outstanding student, though he continued to do a great deal of private reading and writing, and he became the editor of the school's magazine. A large and strong child, he also enjoyed sports of all kinds throughout his life.

When it came time to choose a profession, he settled on medicine and enrolled at Edinburgh University so that he could save money by living at home. Here he met Dr. Joseph Bell, who later served as the model for Sherlock Holmes. But Conan Doyle craved adventure, and he interrupted his studies to sail as a ship's surgeon on a whaler bound for the Arctic. During this voyage he wrote adventure stories and historical romances in his free time. When the trip ended, he returned to school, obtained his MD, and then signed on for another voyage, this time to Africa, where he enjoyed swimming in waters full of sharks and alligators and hiking through dangerous jungles.

His return from Africa in 1882 led him to a more settled life, and by 1885 he had married Louise Hawkins and was established in his medical practice. Conan Doyle was never particularly successful as a doctor, even after he decided to specialize in eyes, but his small practice allowed him time to write, and write he did. A fan of stories involving crime and investigation, including those of Edgar Allan Poe, the plots of these tales, especially the endings, often frustrated Conan Doyle. He decided to use his medical training to apply scientific methods to crime, and Sherlock Holmes was born. The great success of this detective allowed his creator to abandon his medical practice forever.

Conan Doyle's personal life was less happy. His wife, whom he called "Touie," fell ill in 1893 of what turned out to be consumption. Although she lived thirteen more years, far longer than expected, she remained an invalid for the rest of her life. During her long illness, Conan Doyle stayed a devoted nurse and faithful husband, even after he met Jean Leckie in 1897 and fell deeply in love. She swore to wait for him, and they both swore to keep their relationship platonic as long as his wife lived. Louise died in 1906, and in 1907, Jean Leckie became his second wife.

Although his detective stories brought fame and financial security, Conan Doyle wished to kill off Sherlock Holmes almost as soon as he invented him. Doyle felt chained to Holmes' popularity, and public demand for more stories prevented him from pursuing his many other interests. In his memoirs he wrote, "I saw that I was in danger of having my hand forced, and of being entirely identified with what I regarded as a lower stratum of literary achievement."⁵ His wished to write other kinds of fiction, including historical fiction and drama, and the interval he gained while Holmes was "dead" allowed him to do so.

Conan Doyle was always willing to employ his considerable energy to fight for his beliefs. He wrote letters and pamphlets and gave lectures in support of the many causes he espoused, including changing English divorce laws, which, he felt, were unfair to women. His reputation as Sherlock Holmes' creator led to his being consulted regarding many real life criminal cases, the most famous of which involved George Edalji. This young lawyer, the son of an Indian minister of the Church of England, had been convicted of killing and mutilating farm animals in 1903, and he was serving a seven-year sentence. Conan Doyle was convinced that he was innocent. He believed that

his conviction in this bizarre case, which, according to some local papers, involved pagan sacrifice, was due in part to British racism. Although Edalji had been suddenly and without explanation released from prison halfway through his term, his reputation and career had been destroyed. Conan Doyle wrote a series of articles in his defense and began lecturing about what he saw as a serious miscarriage of justice. Thanks to his efforts, the Law Society readmitted Edalji, an implicit statement that his name had been cleared.

Although Conan Doyle was not blind to his country's faults, as this case proved, he was a deeply patriotic man, committed to serving his nation when the opportunity arose. In 1899 he went to South Africa to work in a field hospital during the Boer War, and his experiences there inspired him to write a pamphlet defending the British view of the conflict. His effort was so well received that it earned him a knighthood. Later in his life he predicted a conflict with Germany, and when World War I broke out, he attempted to enlist as a private soldier in spite of his age and experience. During this war the ingenuity so obvious in Sherlock Holmes came to the aid of his government. Conan Doyle devised a method of communicating with British prisoners of war by using needle pricks under letters of words in books he sent them. Figuring German censors would examine at least the first two chapters of any book, however, he always began the messages at the third.

Conan Doyle staunchly supported Britain in World War I, but his romantic view of war, formed by his fascination with stories of medieval chivalry, may have left him unprepared for the reality of machine guns and trenches. He lost both his younger brother and his son Kingsley before the conflict ended, and the second tragedy caused

him to redirect his literary energy into a new realm, spiritualism, during the last ten years of his life. His desire to contact the spirits of the dead became an obsession; he consulted mediums and magicians, including Harry Houdini, gave lectures, wrote pamphlets, debated his beliefs in public, and attended a number of séances. At one he believed he did communicate with the spirit of his son. He came to see spreading an understanding of spiritualism as his life's great mission.

Late in 1929, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle suffered a heart attack from which he never fully recovered. On July 7, 1930, he died. His epitaph reads simply, "Steel true, blade straight," but perhaps the best summary of his life is his own, in his memoirs: "I have had a life which, for variety and romance, could, I think, hardly be exceeded."⁶

FOOTNOTES

1. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, The Complete Sherlock Holmes (from the Preface by Christopher Morley, New York: Doubleday, 1927), p. 8.
2. Michael Hardwick, The Complete Guide to Sherlock Holmes (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), p. 51.
3. Michael Coren, Conan Doyle (London: Bloomsbury, 1995), p. 12.
4. Coren, p. 16.
5. Coren, p. 81.
6. Coren, p. 5.

TEACHING NOTES

Almost seventy years after Arthur Conan Doyle's death, a student found, tucked inside a copy of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, a newspaper article that read, "Sherlock Holmes Still Lives." Included in it was a list of all the recent cases the detective has been asked to solve – cases involving Patricia Hearst, James Hoffa, and the Watergate scandal.

Quoted in this article is Chris Bazlington, the then 27-year-old Englishman who spent his days replying to the letters, about a dozen a day, that flood Holmes' imaginary Baker Street address.

What is it about this fictional detective that makes him so real? Why has he become almost a cult figure? Today there are more than 50 periodicals devoted to the study of Holmes and over 300 societies in countries all over the world, including the Society of Baker Street Irregulars, a group that purports to believe that Holmes and Watson really existed and Arthur Conan Doyle is the fictional creation. Holmes and Watson have made their way to the screen, with well over 500 film and TV adaptations of their cases. Parodies of the famous pair are also popular, with names like Thinlock Bones and Herlock Domes for the detective, and Potson or Whatsup for his sidekick. Edgar W. Smith explains our lasting obsession with Holmes this way: "We see him as the fine expression of our urge to trample evil and to set aright the wrongs with which the world is plagued. He is Galahad and Socrates, bringing high adventure to our dull existences and calm, judicial logic to our biased minds. He is the success of all our failures; the bold escape from our imprisonment."¹

Characteristics of a Detective Story

C. Hugh Holman's *A Handbook to Literature* defines a detective story as "a novel or short story in which a crime, usually a murder – the identity of the perpetrator unknown – is solved by a detective through a logical assembling and interpretation of palpable evidence, known as clues." ² The first detective stories were written by Edgar Allan Poe, and Conan Doyle acknowledged their influence on his writing. A good detective story generally follows six "unwritten rules."

First, the crime must be significant, worthy of the attention it receives. Most stories involve murder, though Conan Doyle tied the majority of his crimes to greed and theft.

Second, the detective must be in some way a memorable character. He or she must be very intelligent, of course, unusually clever and observant, but also quirky, possessing perhaps some odd idiosyncrasies that distinguish him or her. Kojak's lollipop, Columbo's crumpled raincoat, James Bond's unruffled cool and high-tech gadgets, all of these things make the hero somehow distinct.

Third, along with an exceptional detective, there must be an outstanding opponent, a criminal clever enough to be a match for the hero. Solving the crime can't be too easy.

Fourth, because a large part of the attraction of a detective story is the opportunity for the reader to try to figure out the solution along with the detective, all suspects of the crime must be introduced early in the story, and

Fifth, all clues the detective discovers must be made available to the reader also.

Finally, at the end of the story, the solution must seem obvious, logical, possible. The crime must not have resulted from accident or supernatural intervention, and the detective must be able to explain all aspects of the case in a reasonable way. A fine detective story should meet each one of these standards.

The Stories of Conan Doyle

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was quite familiar with detective stories when he decided to try his hand at some of his own. In fact, his frustration with many of the ones he read led him to believe he could improve on the form. Although he did admire Poe, many authors, he felt, created weak characters and weaker plots, plots overly dependent on coincidences to provide the solutions to the crimes. In an interview in 1900, Conan Doyle said, "I had been reading some detective stories, and it struck me what nonsense they were, to put it mildly, because for getting the solution of the mystery, the authors always depended on some coincidence. This struck me as not a fair way of playing the game, because the detective ought really to depend for his successes on something in his own mind and not by adventitious circumstances which do not, by any means, always occur in real life."³ Conan Doyle believed in a more scientific way of solving a mystery. For his model he thought of Dr. Joseph Bell, one of his medical professors at Edinburgh University in the 1870's. Dr. Bell was famous for the deductions he was able to make about his patients, telling them their occupations, habits, mode of transportation, as well as some particulars of their diseases all from a rapid observation of what most people would never notice. In his memoirs Doyle describes his experiences as Dr. Bell's outpatient clerk:

I had ample chance of studying his methods and of noticing that he often learned more of the patient by a few quick glances than I had done by my questions. Occasionally the results were very dramatic, though there were times when he blundered. In one of his best cases he said to a civilian patient: "Well, my man, you've served in the army."

"Aye, sir."

"Not long discharged?"

"No, sir."

"A Highland regiment?"

"Aye, sir."

"A non-com officer?"

“Aye, sir.”

“Stationed at Barbados?”

“Aye, sir.”

“You see, gentlemen,” he would explain, “the man was a respectful man but did not remove his hat. They do not in the army, but he would have learned civilian ways had he been long discharged. He has an air of authority and he is obviously Scottish. As to Barbados, his complaint is elephantiasis, which is West Indian and not British.”⁴

With Bell in mind Conan Doyle created the “scientific approach” to solving a crime: observation, analysis of the data observed, formation of a theory based only on the facts. As Holmes says in *A Study in Scarlet*, “It is a capital mistake to theorize before you have all the evidence. It biases the judgment.” Like Bell, Homes would insist on cold, unbiased reason as his guide, confident it would always lead him to the correct solution, however unlikely the result seemed. He insists in *The Sign of Four*, “When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.”

Conan Doyle had another concern in mind as he began to write his Holmes stories. At the time fiction was generally published in magazines. Novels appeared in segments that way before they were republished as books, but Conan Doyle worried that this form would not suit his desire to write mysteries. There was too much danger that one missed edition would cause the reader to lose interest in the whole, he felt, so he decided to connect his segments not by plot but by character. Each offering would be an entire story, able to stand alone, with Holmes and his friend Watson providing the link to hold all the pieces together. The resulting tales first appeared in *The Strand* magazine, and were an instant success. William Vivian Butler, author of *The Young Detective's Handbook*, remembers his father telling of the excitement of standing in line at the booksellers for the new edition of *The Strand*, a line which sometimes stretched five times around the block. The characters Conan Doyle created became so real to his public that much of the mail and many of the gifts that he received were addressed not to the author but to Holmes himself.

Conan Doyle soon became the best-paid writer of his time, and perhaps the best known as well. But he never really liked his creation, confessing once, “If I have sometimes been inclined to be weary of him it is because his character admits of no light or shade. He is a

calculating machine, and anything you add to that simply weakens the effect.”⁵ He felt too that Holmes kept him from other, more serious work, so he determined to kill him off. When he finally did so in “The Final Problem,” writing Holmes off a cliff locked in the arms of his archenemy; he was forced to accept the extent to which his creation had gotten away from him. Letters of outrage covered his desk, one from a woman who accused him of being quite simply “a brute.” The streets of London filled with men in black armbands. His publishers begged him to reconsider, tried bribes of large fees if he did, and made vague promises to their readers. Eventually Doyle did relent, bringing Holmes back to life once again to the delight and relief of his fans all over the world.

The literary criticism written about Conan Doyle’s stories sometimes amused the author. Because he did not care as deeply about these stories as he did about some of his other works, he never bothered to check his details for accuracy. So, in “The Speckled Band,” a snake responds to a whistle and a bribe of milk despite the fact that snakes are deaf and don’t drink milk. In the same story, Dr. Roylott obtains a cheetah and a baboon because of a passion for Indian animals, which they aren’t. Watson frequently feels the pain of an old war wound, but the trouble is sometimes in his shoulder and sometimes in his leg. Even Watson’s Christian name falls into question. He gives it as John, but one of his wives calls him James. Confronted with these inaccuracies, Conan Doyle apparently shrugged, saying, “I have never been nervous about details.”⁶ The stories are fairy tales, he insisted, and should be viewed as such. Yet an entire book has been written attacking Watson’s remark that Holmes rarely laughs, insisting that he actually laughs 65 times, chuckles 31, and smiles 103.

Characterization

Even people who have never read the Sherlock Holmes stories often know something about his character. If nothing else, they will associate the line, “Elementary, my dear Watson,” with him, although the literary Holmes never actually put these words together – only his film counterparts say them. Although Conan Doyle named Holmes for one of his favorite authors, Oliver Wendell Holmes, he imagined Dr. Joseph Bell’s appearance for his hero: around six feet tall, with a thin “razor-like” face, a large nose, like a hawk,

and small, sharp eyes. Interestingly, Conan Doyle said the pictures of Holmes usually depict him as handsomer than he imagined himself. Holmes wears dressing gowns inside and a cape with a deerstalker hat outside, and he usually appears with a pipe or a magnifying glass in his hand.

Entirely unemotional, Holmes remains aloof, coolly rational, and arrogant. He is often irritable and he possesses several idiosyncrasies that try the patience of even his long-suffering best friend, Watson. He clutters his rooms with paperwork from his cases and paraphernalia from his numerous scientific experiments. Watson complains that he keeps his cigars in the coalscuttle, his tobacco in one of his slippers, and his unanswered letters transixed to the mantle with a jackknife. He can play the violin well when he wishes to, but Holmes more often scrapes annoyingly and tunelessly on the strings. He uses the walls of his home for target practice. Moody and plagued by boredom when no case demands his attention, he injects a 7% solution of cocaine, a habit that his concerned friend finally helps him break.

Holmes possesses exceptional gifts and an encyclopedic knowledge of some areas, but remains willingly ignorant of many others, declaring he would rather not clutter his mind with facts that cannot help him solve his cases, even whether or not the earth travels around the sun. He is respectful and polite to women, but he insists he would never let himself fall in love and marry, as Watson does. In some ways Holmes resembles a Romantic hero, standing apart from society and even breaking its laws on occasion to obtain the clues he desires. He will even allow a proven criminal to go free, insisting that he is not, after all, a policeman. Holmes also can give the impression that his motives for solving his cases have less to do with combating crime or doing good than with amusing himself or impressing others.

In “The Hound of the Baskervilles,” when he finds what he supposes is the dead body of his client, he cries out in rage and grief – at the black mark now on his reputation: “In order to have my case well rounded and complete,” he exclaims to Watson, “I have thrown away the life of my client. It is the greatest blow which has befallen me in my career.” Interestingly, when Joseph Bell learned of his former student’s claim that he was the great detective’s inspiration, he admitted to only a slight resemblance, writing back to

Doyle, “You are yourself Sherlock Holmes.” Conan Doyle confessed, “...A man cannot spin a character out of his own inner consciousness and make it really life-like unless he has some possibilities of that character within him – which is a dangerous admission for one who has drawn so many villains as I.”⁷

In appearance at least, Conan Doyle seemed to share more with Dr. John Watson, whom he named after a friend, Dr. James Elmwood Watson, than he did with Holmes. Like Doyle, Watson is a large, athletic man, wearing a bushy mustache. Like Doyle, Watson studied medicine at Edinburgh University, and he served his country during wartime also. He loves sports and has an eye for an attractive lady, and like Doyle, he marries more than once. Watson is as even-tempered and genial as Holmes is moody and aloof. Their temperaments make them opposites, but the most striking contrast between Holmes and Watson comes when they work together on a case. Watson consistently fails when he tries to use his friend’s methods of deduction, and he often complains about how foolish Holmes makes him feel. In “The Hound of the Baskervilles” Holmes tells Watson, “It may be that you are not yourself luminous, but you are a conductor of light. Some people without possessing genius have a remarkable power of stimulating it.” Yet Watson recognizes that for all his friend’s arrogance, Holmes needs him, and not just to record his history.

In “The Adventure of the Creeping Man” Watson notes, “He was a man of habits, narrow and concentrated habits, and I had become one of them. As an institution I was like the violin, the shag tobacco, the old black pipe, the index books, and others perhaps less excusable. When it was a case of active work and a comrade was needed upon whose nerve he could place some reliance, my role was obvious. But apart from this I had uses. I was a whetstone for his mind. I stimulated him. He liked to think aloud in my presence. ...If I irritated him by a certain methodical slowness in my mentality, that irritation served only to make his own flame-like intuitions and impressions flash up the more vividly and swiftly. Such was my humble role in our alliance.” Watson clearly foils Holmes; he is certainly less brilliant, less able, less confident. But he might be more human, as Doyle himself suggested.

Some Notes on the Stories in the Text

In 1927 Arthur Conan Doyle published a list of his twelve favorite Sherlock Holmes stories. The top two on his list were “The Speckled Band” and “The Red-Headed League.” All five of the selections for this text were first published in *The Strand* magazine in 1891 or 1892, and all five were later republished in a collection called *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, with a forward by Dr. Joseph Bell himself.

Conan Doyle also made his favorite story, “The Speckled Band,” into a play, using what he called a “fine rock boa” to play the title role. He described in an interview his disgust when one critic complained that the play contained “a palpably artificial serpent,” noting “I was inclined to offer him a goodly sum if he would undertake to go to bed with it.” He added, “We had several snakes at different times, but they were none of them born actors and they were all inclined either to hang down from the hole in the wall like inanimate bell-pulls, or else turn back through the hole and get even with the stage carpenter who pinched their tails in order to make them more lively. Finally, we used artificial snakes, and everyone, including the stage carpenter, agreed that it was more satisfactory.”⁸

Some Plot Problems

Remembering that Conan Doyle claimed not to be overly concerned with details, a teacher might still want to be prepared for the following points.

“The Speckled Band”

In addition to the fact that snakes can’t hear and don’t drink milk, and cheetahs and baboons don’t live in India, no snake called a “swamp adder” exists in that country either. It is also highly unlikely that anyone could die of a snakebite as quickly as Dr. Roylott does at the end of the story.

“The Red-Headed League”

Students may wonder how a worker could actually dig a tunnel under his place of business without his employer’s realizing it, or even coming down to the basement to see what was occupying his employee so often. In addition, there seems to be no vehicle for removing the earth displaced by the tunnel.

“The Adventure of the Engineer’s Thumb”

One question students may have is why Elise speaks to Fritz in English instead of German, and why he answers her in English. Also, a man holding onto a window ledge would probably not have his thumb positioned in such a way that an ax blow to his hands would cut it off.

“The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”

Carbuncles are garnets, always red and never blue.

The Adventure of the Copper Beeches”

Holmes himself poses a good question about this story, why Miss Hunter would ask his advice when in fact she had already made up her mind to take the position offered to her. One critic suggests that she might possibly be attempting to seduce the famous detective, and this is why she draws his attention to her lovely hair and her sharp powers of observation.

Ideas for Writing Assignments

Foil Characters

A foil is actually a piece of metal placed under a precious stone to increase its brilliance by contrast. If a diamond is set in a plain gold band, the band is the foil, enhancing the sparkle of the gem. In literature a *foil* is a character who, by contrast, underlines or enhances the characteristics of another. Watson is Holmes’ foil, and students might be asked to find specific examples from one of the stories of how Holmes shines brighter for Watson’s inability to see what he considers obvious.

In “The Red-Headed League” Watson himself declares, “I trust that I am not more dense than my neighbors, but I was always oppressed with a sense of my own stupidity in my dealings with Sherlock Holmes. Here I had heard what he had heard, I had seen what he had seen, and yet from his words it was evident that he saw clearly not only what had happened, but what was about to happen, while to me the whole business was still confused.” After collecting plenty of supporting examples, students could write a paragraph demonstrating this function of Watson in a story of their choice.

Six Rules of a Good Detective Story

The six standards most good detective stories follow are:

1. The crime must be significant.
2. The detective must be memorable.
3. The criminal must be a worthy opponent.
4. The clues must be made available to the reader.
5. The suspects must appear early in the story.
6. The solution must be reasonable and possible.

Students could be asked to pick one of these rules and write a paragraph demonstrating that one of the stories from the text meets the standard. For a longer essay, students might select one story and discuss whether or not all six rules apply.

What Makes a Hero?

Is Holmes a hero? Have students discuss what qualities they admire in their heroes. They should then discuss whether or not Holmes possesses these qualities, using examples from the text. Students may want to consider whether some of the flaws Watson acknowledges keep Holmes from becoming truly heroic in their eyes.

Note: Holmes has been compared to the great heroes of epic fiction. He is a man of extraordinary, almost superhuman abilities fighting more or less alone against the forces of evil in order to protect his society. If students have studied any epic literature, you might draw this comparison.

Creative Writing

You may wish to encourage students to try their hands at writing mystery stories of their own, modeled on Conan Doyle's. Or, students might focus on characterization, drawing a sketch of the sort of detective they would invent if they were to write a series of mystery stories. How would they make him or her memorable? Students might also try retelling one of the stories from Holmes' point of view, or perhaps from the point of view of the antagonist. Also possible would be composing a letter to Holmes, explaining the facts of a case the class invents and asking for his help. It might be interesting to mail the letter and see if they get an answer!

Suggestions for Other Activities

The Young Detective's Handbook, by William Vivian Butler, is designed to teach young people how to be like Sherlock Holmes. They learn how to make Holmes-type deductions, how to start a detective club, how to send secret messages, how to take fingerprints. Several games included in this book might make excellent introductions to this unit, including "The Sherlock Holmes Game," in which a class, divided into teams, attempts to deduce as much as possible about the owner of an item just by observing the item itself. It might be interesting to try this game at the beginning of the unit and then again at the end to see if students have indeed become more like Sherlock Holmes.

FOOTNOTES

1. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes* (edited by William S. Baring-Gould, New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1960), p. 103.
2. C. Hugh Holman, *A Handbook to Literature* (Indianapolis: The Odyssey Press, 1975), p. 151.
3. Graham Nown, *Elementary My Dear Watson* (London: Ward Lock Limited), p. 16.
4. Michael Coren, *Conan Doyle* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1995), p. 23.
5. Philip A. Shreffler, ed., *The Baker Street Reader* (London: Greenwood Press, 1984), p. 14.
6. Nown, p. 46.
7. Michael Hardwick, *The Complete Guide to Sherlock Holmes* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), p. 75
8. Shreffler, pp. 11-12.

Study Questions for *The Selected Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*

Included here are study questions meant to aid in teaching each of the stories found in this text. For the most part these questions are designed to help students read carefully; they address plot and character. Occasionally students are also asked to make a guess or form an opinion about what they have read. These questions may be assigned to be completed while students are reading the stories for the first time, or they can be given to them after an initial reading to encourage students to reread while looking for specific details.

In addition, after each set of study questions you will find five *Questions for Further Discussion*. These involve more complex ideas and can be used for class discussion or to spark writing assignments. At the end of this section, on pages 39-44, there are teacher's notes for guiding the discussion of these more complex questions. We have printed the teacher's notes separately so that you can copy the questions as hand-outs without including the matching notes.

Name _____

Study Questions for “The Speckled Band”

1. Describe the woman who has come to consult Holmes and Watson early one morning. How is she dressed? What makes Holmes think he should offer her coffee? What is odd about her hair?
2. Describe what Helen Stoner tells Holmes about her stepfather. Why did he go to India? What forced him to leave?
3. What happened to Helen Stoner’s mother and how did her stepfather change after her mother’s death?
4. Describe what Helen Stoner hears just before her sister dies. What are her sister’s last words to her?
5. Why does Helen move into Julia’s room? What frightens her when she does?
6. Describe Dr. Roylott as he appears in Holmes’ room.
7. Describe Dr. Roylott’s behavior also. What does he do to try to frighten Holmes? What does he want Holmes to do?

8. Holmes obtains a copy of Helen Stoner's mother's will, and it provides a motive for Dr. Roylott's not wishing his stepdaughter ever to marry. Explain.

9. What does Holmes learn from trying to break into the room after Miss Stoner fastens the shutters?

10. The bell-rope Holmes notices in the bedroom would have been used to summon a servant to the room. What things seem odd about the rope?

11. Holmes and Watson see Dr. Roylott return home from their window at the Crown Inn. What do they witness that is another example of his terrible temper?

12. What did Holmes notice is odd about the bed?

13. Give details about exactly what happens after Holmes and Watson hear the whistle.

14. Describe what they find when they enter Dr. Roylott's room after the dreadful shriek. What is the *speckled band*? How did the doctor die?

15. Earlier in the story Holmes warned Miss Stoner that if Dr. Roylott suspected he was nearby, his journey would be in vain. What did he mean by that? How do you think the doctor might have altered his plan if he had known Holmes was nearby?

Questions for Further Discussion on “The Speckled Band”

1. One rule of a good detective story is that the criminal must be clever, a worthy opponent to the detective. In what way does Dr. Roylott meet this requirement?
2. Sherlock Holmes is known for his cleverness, his ability to make quick, rational deductions from what he sees and hears. Write a paragraph demonstrating that Holmes has these qualities based on what he is able to deduce in this story.
3. In your opinion, does the story meet all six requirements of a good detective story?
4. The *mood* of the story is the atmosphere created by the author. What details contribute to the mood of terror Conan Doyle paints here? Look in particular at the ending, beginning with the signal light on page 44.
5. Do you feel that Dr. Roylott deserved what happened to him at the end of the story? Explain.

Name _____

Study Questions for “The Red-Headed League”

1. Watson finds Holmes with a visitor, Mr. Jabez Wilson. Give details about his appearance.
2. Holmes lists the “obvious facts” that he deduces from Mr. Wilson’s appearance. What are they and how did Homes know?
3. What is the only requirement needed to apply for a vacancy in the Red-Headed League? What are the benefits?
4. Mr. Wilson is a pawnbroker, one who lends money at interest to people who give him items of personal property in exchange. What is unusual about his assistant, Vincent Spaulding? Why does he spend a lot of time in the cellar?
5. How does Mr. Wilson learn of the newspaper ad? Describe how he gets the job.
6. Describe the work Mr. Wilson must do for the League. What exactly is it? When must he do it? What is supposedly the purpose? What happens if he leaves the office during working hours?
7. Explain how his job suddenly ends.
8. What does Mr. Wilson learn from the landlord?

9. Holmes begins to question Mr. Wilson about his assistant. List here some of the things that he learns.

10. What detail suggests that Holmes already knows who this man is?

11. Why does Holmes pretend to be lost and ask the way of Mr. Wilson's assistant? What other odd thing does he do in front of Mr. Wilson's place of business?

12. Who are Mr. Jones and Mr. Merryweather? (Note: Scotland Yard is the home of the London police force.) Who is John Clay?

13. What of special interest is hidden where they wait?

14. Describe the two people who enter the room from the hole in the floor.

15. On page 88 Holmes explains to Watson how he guessed the truth. What was the purpose of Clay's hiring Mr. Wilson to copy the Encyclopedia? What was Clay doing in the cellar? How did Holmes know Clay would attempt to rob the bank that night?

Questions for Further Discussion on “The Red-Headed League”

1. What does the story reveal about Holmes’ methods for solving crimes?
2. Watson says, “I trust that I am not more dense than my neighbors, but I was always oppressed with a sense of my own stupidity in my dealings with Sherlock Holmes.” Explain what makes him feel this way. Do you see any evidence that Holmes enjoys making him feel this way?
3. Holmes and his companions are able to catch John Clay red-handed by setting a trap for him. Do you think they are behaving fairly by doing this? Why or why not?
4. Do you generally admire Holmes? Why or why not?
5. Does the story meet the six requirements of a good detective story? Explain.

Name_____

Study Questions for “The Adventure of the Engineer’s Thumb”

1. Paddington Station is a train station in London. Two men from Paddington appear Dr. Watson’s consulting room, a guard and Mr. Victor Hatherley. What brings them there in?
2. Describe Colonel Stark, the man who comes to see Mr. Hatherley about the job.
3. What is the one condition of employment that Colonel Stark insists on over and over?
4. What is the job he offers Mr. Hatherley? At what time of the day will he perform this job?
5. According to Colonel Stark, what has he been doing with his hydraulic press, and why does he wish to keep his actions a secret? Is there anything suspicious about his explanation?
6. Describe what happens when the woman comes to greet them as they enter the house.
7. Who is Mr. Ferguson?

8. Describe the house Mr. Hatherley sees as they walk to the press.

9. What is wrong with the machine?

10. Explain how Colonel Stark tries to kill the engineer. How does he escape?

11. Explain how he loses his thumb.

12. Explain what Holmes guesses about the fresh, glossy horse that helps him locate the house.

13. What was the real use of the machine?

14. What has happened to the house? How did it happen?

15. How did the unconscious engineer end up near the train station? What evidence tells Holmes and Watson who helped him?

Questions for Further Discussion on “The Engineer’s Thumb”

1. What details make the *mood* of the story spooky? Find five details that contribute to the mood.
2. Do you think that the engineer in this story should have know something illegal was going on at Colonel Stark’s home? What clues might have led him to this conclusion?
3. If he did suspect an illegal operation before he agreed to take the job, would that make the engineer at least partly guilty of a crime himself for agreeing to repair the press?
4. If you had been the engineer at the beginning of the story, needing a job desperately but offered such unusual conditions, what would you have done?
5. Watson begins the tale by noting that this is not a typical case, for it gives Holmes few opportunities to use his deductive methods of reasoning. Does the story still meet the requirements of a good detective story? Why or why not?

Name _____

Study Questions on “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”

1. List here the facts Holmes presents to Watson about the battered billycock.
2. Why could the hat and the goose not be returned to the owner?
3. Holmes gives Watson his magnifying glass and asks him to try his methods. List here all the observations that Watson makes.
4. What deductions does Holmes make from what they are able to observe?
5. Explain how Holmes guesses the age and hair color of the hat’s owner.
6. Why does Holmes suggest the owner’s wife has ceased to love him? How does he know he is even married?
7. What is found in the goose? Whose is it?

8. Who was accused of the crime, and what evidence was there against him?

9. Describe Henry Baker.

10. Explain how Sherlock Holmes figures out that Mr. Baker is innocent, that he had no knowledge that the gem was in the goose.

11. What does Holmes learn from the owner of the Alpha Inn?

12. Explain how Holmes tricks the innkeeper into telling him where he got the goose.

13. How does Holmes meet James Ryder? Who is he?

14. Holmes tells Ryder exactly what he did to get the blue gem. Explain in your own words.

15. How did the gem get into the goose's throat?

Questions for Further Discussion on “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”

1. Holmes decides to let Ryder go. Why? Do you think he did the right thing? What would you have done?
2. Once Ryder is safely out of the country, do you think Holmes has an obligation to explain to the police what happened to the gem? Why or why not?
3. What is a *foil character*? In what way does Watson serve as Holmes’ foil in the early pages of the story?
4. One rule of a good detective story is that the crime must be significant, important enough to be interesting to the reader. Do you think this story meets that requirement? Why or why not?
5. Is there any one of the qualifications of a good detective story that this tale does not meet? Explain.

Name _____

Study Questions on “The Adventure of the Copper Beeches”

1. What does the letter from Violet Hunter ask of Holmes?
2. Describe the gentleman with Miss Stoper. How does he react when he sees Miss Hunter?
3. Why does he offer her such a large sum of money?
4. What odd requests does the gentleman say he might make of his new governess? What is her reply?
5. What offer does the letter Miss Hunter receives make? What are the conditions?

6. Describe the family Miss Hunter encounters at her new job. What is the wife like? The child?

7. How does Miss Hunter see out the window while she is sitting in the chair? What does she see?

8. A mastiff is a large dog. What is this dog's job, and how does the owner ensure that he will do it well?

9. What odd thing does Miss Hunter find locked in her drawer? Where do you think it came from?

10. How does Mr. Rucastle explain the shuttered window of the abandoned wing? Do you believe him? Why or why not?

11. Describe what Miss Hunter sees when she steps into the normally locked hallway.

12. Describe Mr. Rucastle's reaction when he learns what she has done.

13. What is Holmes' explanation for the hiring of Miss Hunter?

14. Describe what Holmes and Watson find when they break down the door to the locked room.

15. Explain why Mr. Rucastle locked up his daughter. What has become of her?

Questions for Further Discussion on “The Adventure of the Copper Beeches”

1. From the moment Miss Hunter arrives at the home called the Copper Beeches, the mood is eerie, full of suspense. What details make it so?
2. Now that you know the end of the story, it is easy to see why Mr. Rucastle wanted Miss Hunter to work for him. List all clues that should have told you what his real purpose was.
3. Conan Doyle is well known for creating characters that seem real. What details about Mr. Rucastle make him realistic? What details make Miss Hunter seem real?
4. In order to solve this mystery, Holmes must trespass in another man’s home after instructing his client to lock a servant in the cellar. Are you bothered by these behaviors? Why or why not?
5. Do you feel at all sorry for Mr. Rucastle at the end of the story, or do you feel that he deserves his fate? Explain.

TEACHER'S NOTES ON QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

"The Speckled Band"

Student questions on p.24

1. Students will probably find many ways of proving Dr.Roylott is a clever, worthy opponent for Holmes. Clearly he found a way to kill Julia Stoner without being caught, and the same technique very nearly works on Helen Stoner as well. You may want to point out how cleverly he arranges the work on the house in order to force Helen to move into Julia's room, and the foresight he showed earlier when he had the bell-rope and ventilator installed.
2. Again, students will be able to discover many different examples of this trait. You might want to remind them that Holmes tells Watson he knew he would find a ventilator before they arrived at the house because Julia Stoner smelled Dr.Roylott's cigar. He also clearly deduces why the bed cannot be moved and the purpose of the bell-rope.
3. Students can easily make a case for this story following all six requirements of a good detective story. The crimes, murder and attempted murder, are certainly significant; the detective and the criminal both prove their cleverness in the course of the story; all clues and suspects are made available to the reader; the solution does seem reasonable and possible when Holmes explains it at the end. The only difficulty may lie in the fact that it is unlikely anyone could die from a snakebite as quickly as Dr. Roylott does at the end of the story.
4. Some details which contribute to the mood are the darkness, the chill wind blowing in their faces, the sudden appearance of the "hideous and distorted child" which turns

out to be the baboon, the threat of the cheetah, Holmes' warning that Watson's life may depend on his not falling asleep, the "nervous tension" Watson describes as they wait, the crying of the night bird and the cheetah's whine, and then the hissing just before the snake appears in the bedroom.

5. Opinions may differ. Most students will probably feel that Dr. Roylott deserves his fate because of his murder of Julia and his desire to murder Helen. In fact, students may decide that there is some justice in his falling victim to his own murder weapon.

"The Red-Headed League"

Student questions on p.27

1. Answers to this question might mention how reluctant Holmes is to tell Watson what he suspects, even when Watson asks him directly. He seems to enjoy keeping his friend in the dark. Students might also note his ability to forget about a case right in the middle of it, for he enjoys the violin concert with a "smiling face" and "dreamy eyes," though Watson notes, "As I knew well, he was never so formidable as when he had been lounging in his arm-chair amid his music. Then it was that the lust of the chase would suddenly come upon him, and that his brilliant reasoning power would rise"(p. 72-73). Students might also note that Holmes seems to be more interested in the opportunity to solve a puzzle or have an adventure than he is in money. At the end of the story, he tells Mr. Merryweather, "I have had one or two little scores of my own to settle with Mr. John Clay. I am amply repaid by having had an experience which is in many ways unique"(p. 84).
2. Again, Holmes seems reluctant to tell Watson what he is thinking about a case, even when Watson asks him for information. He tells his friend, "My dear Doctor, this is a time for observation, not talk."(p.71) For Holmes, the time for talk seems to be only

after the case is finished, when he is able to explain to his admiring friend exactly how he solved the puzzle.

3. Opinions will differ. You may wish to point out that Clay and his companion had already dug the tunnel and clearly meant to make off with the gold. They were not enticed into committing the crime.
4. Again, opinions will differ. Most students will probably admire his great cleverness and logic, but some may be troubled by his treatment of Watson and his ego. You also may want to note that his motives are somewhat mixed; he seems to be motivated more by his need of a challenge, perhaps his desire to demonstrate his intellect, than by a strong passion to do good.
5. This story does meet all six requirements of a good detective story. You may want to note that the first requirement, that the crime must be significant, proves true only when the real purpose for the tunnel is discovered.

"The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb"

Student questions on p.30

1. The mood becomes particularly frightening once the engineer arrives at Eyford. He is the only passenger who alights at that station after eleven o'clock at night. Colonel Stark is waiting for him in the shadows, and he leads him to a closed carriage, which rushes to their destination. The colonel is silent during the trip. Once at the house, the engineer notices how dark it is, and how frightened the unknown woman seems to be. Students will of course remember that he has been sworn to secrecy, and that he felt uneasy before he even accepted the job. Then the woman reappears with the frantic warning that he should leave, and the terror builds as the engineer is trapped in the press and then chased by Colonel Stark with a butcher's cleaver.

2. There are many clues that should have made the engineer suspicious. First, his client wants to be assured that he is an orphan and a bachelor; he wants the job done by a man who has no family to ask questions. Colonel Stark demands that he twice swear to keep his job secret. He also offers him an unusually large sum of money for what he claims is an hour's work, and then insists that he come to do the work in the middle of the night. Colonel Stark also answers "carelessly" when the engineer wonders what he could be doing with a hydraulic press, which is not normally used to excavate fuller's earth.
3. Opinions will differ.
4. Answers will differ. You may want to have students reread the paragraph on p. 105 where the engineer debates in his own mind whether or not he should accept the job.
5. Again, opinions will differ. Perhaps Holmes shows enough of his reasoning ability when he alone understands why the horse drawing the carriage, which meets the engineer at the station, is fresh and glossy.

"The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle"

Student questions on p.33

1. Opinions will differ. You may want to ask students to reread Holmes' justification for his actions.

2. Again, opinions will differ. Holmes insists that he is “not retained by the police to supply their deficiencies,” yet by his not coming forth with the truth, an innocent man will remain in jail until the police realize their case has collapsed.
3. Student should contrast the observations Watson makes about the hat with what Holmes is able to deduce from the same information. Holmes tells Watson, “... You can see everything. You fail, however, to reason from what you see”(p. 133), and Watson admits to him, “I have no doubt that I am very stupid; but I must confess that I am unable to follow you.” (p. 134)
4. The gem is quite valuable, but students may feel more concerned about the possibility of an innocent man being convicted of the theft. Ryder is not only guilty of stealing the gem but of framing another man.
5. Students may feel that this criminal is hardly a worthy opponent for Holmes. His breakdown at the end of the story leads Holmes to feel pity and disgust, not admiration.

“The Adventure of the Copper Beeches”

Student questions on p.37

1. First of all, Mrs. Rucastle is silent and pale, possessing some “secret sorrow” which haunts her and leaves her in tears more than once. The child is unnaturally violent, both “savage” and “gloomy.” The servants are also odd, and Mr. Rucastle seems oblivious to their behavior, even when Toller is clearly drunk. Also odd are the requests Mr. Rucastle and his wife make of the new governess, to wear a strange dress, to sit in a particular place for a set period of time, to wave away the strange man in the road. In addition, there is the threat of the large, hungry dog, and the

strange appearance of the hair in Miss Hunter's chest. The locked door and shuttered windows also add to the mood of mystery and terror.

2. As Holmes says, it is clear he needed someone to impersonate his daughter. He instantly offers Miss Hunter the position based on her *appearance*, but insists that she cut her hair, which is of "a peculiar tint of chestnut," and wear a dress that he will provide. He then offers her an unusually large sum of money to take the position even though Miss Hunter well knows he could have employed a governess for much less. She admits to Holmes that the offer seems too good to be true.
3. Mr. Rucastle is described as "a very stout man with a smiling face, and a heavy chin," with "a pair of glasses on his nose." (p. 169) He is demonstrative, rubbing his fat hands together in enthusiasm or throwing them in the air. He seems constantly cheerful, jolly, friendly, but there is something forbidding in the way he describes with delight his son's killing of cockroaches with a slipper. Miss Hunter begins to suspect him, and when Mr. Rucastle discovers her running from the normally locked hallway, she says his manner is a little too coaxing. Perhaps she is not really surprised when he suddenly threatens to throw her to the mastiff. Miss Hunter has a "bright, quick face, freckled, and with the brisk manner of a woman who has had to make her own way in the world." (p. 168) She impresses Holmes right away with her manner, and he tells Watson she seems to be able to take care of herself. She demonstrates courage and curiosity as she explores her new home, and cleverness as she uses a mirror to see behind her after she is placed in the chair in front of the window. She also may display a bit of vanity, for she draws Holmes's attention to her "luxuriant" and unusual hair, and she points out to Holmes that she is "naturally observant."
4. Opinions will differ. Students may feel that these behaviors are justified because Miss Hunter seems to be in danger, or because it is clear to Holmes that someone is being held prisoner in the locked part of the house.

5. Again, opinions will differ. Students may feel that there is some justice in Mr. Rucastle's falling victim to the dog he used to threaten Miss Hunter.

GRAMMAR WORK

The following grammar exercises make use of sentences taken directly from the text. Here is a guide to the source for each section:

Sentence Fragments – These come from all five stories.

Subjects and Verbs – “The Speckled Band”

Nouns – “The Speckled Band”

Adjectives and Adverbs – “The Red-Headed League”

Nouns, Pronouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Adverbs, Conjunctions – “The Adventure of the Engineer’s Thumb” and “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”

Interjections – “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle” and “The Adventure of the Copper Beeches”

Prepositional Phrases - “The Red-Headed League” and “The Adventure of the Copper Beeches”

NAME _____

Sentence Fragments

Authors often use sentence fragments in dialogue; they can do so because the meaning is understood by the context. Each of the following sentence fragments appears in the dialogue of one of the Sherlock Holmes stories in your book. Practice correcting fragments by adding words to make each one a complete sentence. Feel free to use your imagination!

Example: Nothing to complain of, sir.

We have nothing to complain of, sir, for you have paid us well for our services.

1. No, a client.
2. Showing that she had struck a light and looked about her.
3. Dark enough and sinister enough.
4. Holmes the busybody!
5. Perhaps I have.
6. Driving it through the ventilator.
7. John Clay, the murderer, thief, and forger.
8. About a month.
9. In answer to an advertisement.
10. Because he would come cheap.

11. Small, stocky, very quick in his way, no hair on his face, though he's at least thirty.
12. What I expected to see.
13. Oh, fresh and glossy.
14. Only as much as we can deduce.
15. The landlord of the *Alpha*.
16. The white one, with the barred tail, right in the middle of the flock.
17. Or to cut your hair quite short before you came to us?
18. If you please, Miss Stoper.
19. But the money, Mr. Holmes, the money!
20. Yes, the wine cellar.

NAME _____

Subjects and Verbs

Underline the simple subject and the verb or verb phrase in each of the following sentences. Remember that for commands or requests, the subject is an understood *you*.

1. I have heard of you, Mr. Holmes.
2. My stepfather offered no objection to the marriage.
3. The windows of the three rooms open out upon the lawn.
4. The wind was howling outside, and the rain was beating and splashing against the windows.
5. I sprang from my bed and rushed into the corridor.
6. You have done wisely.
7. She dropped her black veil over her face, and glided from the room.
8. He stepped swiftly forward, seized the poker, and bent it into a curve with his huge brown hands.
9. Lock yourself from him tonight.
10. Now, Miss Stoner, we must leave you.
11. The least sound would ruin our plans.
12. Shall I ever forget that dreadful vigil?
13. Did you observe anything very peculiar about that bed?
14. His hand closed like a vice upon my wrist.
15. My companion noiselessly closed the shutters, moved the lamp onto the table, and cast his eyes round the room.

NAME _____

Nouns

Underline and identify all nouns in the following passages.

The idea of a snake instantly occurred to me, and when I coupled it with my knowledge that the Doctor was furnished with creatures from India, I felt that I was on the right track. The idea of using a form of poison, which could not be discovered by any chemical test was just such a one as would occur to a clever and ruthless man who had spent time in India. Then I thought of the whistle. Of course, he must recall the snake before the morning light revealed it to the victim. He trained it, probably by the use of the milk which we saw, to return to him when summoned. He would put it through the ventilator, certain that it would crawl down the rope, and land on the bed. It might or might not bite the occupant, perhaps she might escape every night for a week, but sooner or later she must fall victim.

I had come to these conclusions before ever I had entered his room. An inspection of his chair showed me that he had been in the habit of standing on it to reach the ventilator. The sight of the safe, the saucer of milk, and the loop of cord were enough to dispel any doubts which remained. The metallic clang heard by Miss Stoner was caused by her father hastily closing the door of his safe. Having made up my mind, you know the steps I took to put the matter to the proof. I heard the creature hiss, as no doubt you did also, and I instantly attacked it.

NAME _____

Adjectives and Adverbs

Identify the italicized words as either adjectives or adverbs.

1. I called upon my friend, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, and found him in *deep* conversation with an *elderly* gentleman with *fiery red* hair.
2. “You could *not possibly* have come at a *better* time, my *dear* Watson,” he said *cordially*.
3. Perhaps, Mr. Wilson, you would *kindly* begin your narrative *again*.
4. He was *obese, pompous, and slow*.
5. A *frayed* top hat, and a *faded brown* overcoat with a *wrinkled velvet* collar lay on a chair beside him.
6. We live *very quietly*.
7. Then *suddenly the whole* business came to an end.
8. It is *most refreshingly unusual*.
9. My limbs were *weary and stiff*.
10. Then I made inquiries as to *this mysterious* assistant, and found that I had to deal with one of the *coolest and most daring* criminals in London.

NAME _____

Grammar Review – Parts of Speech

Identify each italicized word as noun, pronoun, action verb, helping verb, adjective, adverb, or conjunction. Use these abbreviations: n, pro, av, hv, adj, adv, conj.

“ ‘You are *mad*, Elise!’ *he* *shouted*, struggling to break away from *her*. ‘You will be the *ruin* of *us*. He *has seen* too much.’ He *dashed* her to *one side*, and, rushing to the *window*, cut at me with *his heavy weapon*. I *was hanging* with my hands across the *sill* when his *blow fell*. I was conscious of a *dull pain*, *my grip loosened*, and I fell into the *garden* below.

I was shaken, *but* not hurt by the *fall*; so I *picked myself up*, *and* rushed off among *the bushes* as hard as I *could run*. I *understood* that I was far from being out of *danger yet*. *Suddenly*, however, as I *ran*, *a deadly dizziness* came over *me*. I *glanced* at *my hand*, which *was throbbing painfully*, and, for the *first time*, saw that my *thumb had been cut off*. *Blood was pouring* from my wound. I *tried* to tie my *handkerchief* round *it*, but there came *a buzzing* in my *ears*, and I *fell* in a *dead faint* among the *bushes*.”

NAME _____

Grammar Review

A. Parts of Speech

Identify each italicized word as noun, pronoun, action verb, helping verb, adjective, adverb, or conjunction. Use these abbreviations: n, pro, av, hv, adj, adv, conj.

I had called upon my friend Sherlock Holmes on the second morning after Christmas to wish him the compliments of the season. He was lounging upon the sofa in a purple dressing gown, with a pile of crumpled papers near. Beside the couch was a wooden chair, and on it hung a very seedy felt hat, much the worse for wear. Objects lying upon the seat of the chair suggested Holmes had been studying the hat.

B. Interjections

Each of the following sentences contains an interjection. Circle it.

1. "Ah," said Holmes, "I can deduce all that remains."
2. "Oh, I am so frightened!"
3. "Ha!" said Holmes, looking keenly at her.
4. "Well, then, you know now."
5. "Hum! We will talk about that."

NAME _____

Prepositional Phrases

Underline the prepositional phrases found in the following sentences taken from two of Sherlock Holmes' adventures.

1. I called upon my friend, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, and found him in deep conversation.
2. Mr. Wilson, my dear friend Dr. Watson has been my helper in many of my most successful cases.
3. I have no doubt that he will be of the utmost use to me in yours also.
4. In this instance the facts are, to the best of my belief, unique.
5. There was nothing remarkable about the man except his blazing red head, and the
6. Finally he returned to the pawnbroker's, and, having thumped upon the pavement with his walking stick two or three times, he went up to the door and knocked
7. I shall be at Baker Street at ten.
8. Our cabs were dismissed, and, following Mr. Merryweather, we passed down a narrow passage, and through a side door, which he opened for us.
9. Mr. Merryweather perched on a crate, with an injured expression on his face, while Holmes fell upon his knees, and, with the lantern and magnifying lens, began to examine the cracks between the stones.
10. Over the edge peeped a clean-cut boyish face, which looked keenly about it, and then with a hand on either side of the opening, drew itself up.
11. I was so terrified that I rushed past him into my room.
12. I could not live there longer without some advice.
13. I was frightened of the house, of the man, of the woman, of the servants, even of the child.

14. They were all horrible to me.
15. I put on my hat and cloak, went down to the office, which is about half a mile from the house, and then returned, feeling very much easier.
16. I slipped back into the house in safety, and lay awake half the night in my joy at the thought of seeing you.
17. We shall be at the Copper Beeches by seven o'clock.
18. If you could send her into the cellar, on some errand, and then turn the key upon her, you would facilitate matters immensely.
19. We shall then look thoroughly into the affair.
20. We passed up the stair, unlocked the door, followed on down a passage, and found ourselves in front of the barricade which Miss Hunter had described.

KEYS FOR GRAMMAR EXERCISES

Sentence Fragments - Answers will vary.

Subjects and Verbs

1. I, have heard
2. stepfather, offered
3. windows, open
4. wind, was howling; rain, was beating/splashing
5. I, sprang/rushed
6. You, have done
7. She, dropped/glided
8. He, stepped/seized/bent
9. Understood you/lock
10. we, must leave
11. sound, would ruin
12. I, shall forget
13. you, did observe
14. hand,closed
15. companion, closed/moved/cast

Nouns - First Paragraph

idea	whistle
snake	snake
knowledge	light
Doctor	victim
creatures	use
India	milk
track	ventilator
idea	rope
form	bed
poison	occupant
test	night
man	week
time	victim
India	

Second Paragraph

conclusions	sight	doubts	mind
room	safe	clang	steps
inspection	saucer	Miss Stoner	matter
chair	milk	father	proof
habit	loop	door	creature
ventilator	cord	safe	doubt

Adjectives and Adverbs

1. deep - adj
an - adj
elderly - adj
fiery - adj
red - adj
2. not - adv
possibly - adv
better - adj
dear - adj
cordially - adv
3. kindly - adv
again - adv
4. obese - adj
pompous - adj
slow - adj
5. A - adj
frayed - adj
faded - adj
brown - adj
wrinkled - adj
velvet - adj
6. very - adv
quietly - adv
7. suddenly - adv
the - adj
whole - adj
8. most - adv
refreshingly - adv
unusual - adj
9. weary - adj
stiff - adj
10. this - adj
mysterious - adj
coolest - adj
most - adv
daring - adj

Grammar Review - Parts of Speech: noun(n), pronoun(pro), action verb(av), helping verb (hv), adjective(adj.) adverb(adv.), conjunction (conj.)

you - pro
mad - adj
he - pro
shouted - av
her - pro
ruin - n
us - pro
has - hv
seen - av
dashed - av
one - adj
side - n
window - n
his - pro
heavy - adj
weapon - n
was - hv
hanging - av
sill - n
blow - n
fell - av
dull - adj
pain - n
my - pro
grip - n
loosened - av
garden - n

I - pro
but - conj
fall - n
picked - av
myself - pro
up - adv
and - conj
the - adj
bushes - n
could - hv
run - av
understood - av
danger - n
yet - adv
Suddenly - adv
ran - av
a - adj
deadly - adj
dizziness - n
me - pro
glanced - v
my - pro
hand - n
was - hv
throbbing - av
painfully - adv
first - adj

time - n
thumb - n
had - hv
been - hv
cut - av
off - adv
Blood - n
was - hv
pouring -av
tried - av
handkerchief - n
it - pro
a - adj
buzzing - n
ears - n
fell - av
dead - adj
faint - n
bushes - n

Grammar Review with Interjections

A. Parts of Speech

I - pro	couch - n
had - hv	wooden - adj
called -av	chair - n
my - pro	it - pro
friend - n	hung - av
the - adj	very - adv
second - adj	seedy - adj
morning - n	felt - adj
Christmas - n	hat - n
him - pro	Objects - n
compliments - n	seat - n
season - n	Holmes - n
He - pro	had - hv
was - hv	been - hv
lounging - av	studying - av
sofa - n	
a - adj	
purple - adj	
pile - n	
crumpled - adj	
papers - n	

B. Interjections

1. Ah
2. Oh
3. Ha
4. Well
5. Hum

Prepositional Phrases

1. upon my friend, in deep conversation, with an elderly gentleman, with fiery red hair
2. in many, of my most successful cases
3. of the utmost use, to me, in yours
4. In this instance, to the best, of my belief
5. about the man, except his blazing red head, of extreme discontent, on his features
6. to the pawnbroker's, upon the pavement, with his walking stick, to the door
7. at Baker Street, at ten
8. down a narrow passage, through a side door, for us
9. on a crate, with an injured expression, on his face, upon his knees, with the lantern and
10. over the edge, about it, with a hand, on either side, of the opening
11. past him, into my room
12. without some advice
13. of the house, of the man, of the woman, of the servants, of the child
14. to me
15. on my hat and cloak, to the office, about half a mile, from the house
16. into the house, in safety, in my joy, at the thought, of seeing you
17. at the Copper Beeches, by seven o'clock
18. into the cellar, on some errand, upon her
19. into the affair
20. up the stair, down a passage, in front of the barricade

VOCABULARY WORK

The following vocabulary words appear in the stories selected for this text. There are fifteen words from each story, and each list is accompanied by practice exercises. It is suggested that students be given the lists to look up in a dictionary, copying the definitions on their own paper. They then should use their definitions to complete the matching section that begins each vocabulary practice sheet. The teacher may want to provide sample sentences before students complete Part II, Fill in the Blanks. Next, students work with synonyms and antonyms. Students are then asked to think further about a few of the words and answer questions about them in the last section. Teachers may also wish to hold students responsible for the spelling of these words when they are quizzed at the end of each unit.

The following words were selected from the text of each story.

“The Speckled Band”

1. deduction
2. hereditary
3. aristocrat
4. pauper
5. writhe
6. notorious
7. sinister
8. bland
9. amiable
10. gable
11. cunning
12. occupant
13. homely
14. subtle
15. ruthless

“The Red-Headed League”

1. league
2. cordially
3. narrative
4. pompous
5. snuff
6. candid
7. contemplate
8. improbable
9. curt
10. commerce
11. pedestrian
12. vex
13. sleuth
14. nocturnal
15. benefactor

**“The Adventure
of the Engineer’s
Thumb”**

1. trivial
2. hasten
3. acquaintance
4. genial
5. hearty
6. proficient
7. commission
8. hinder
9. recompense
10. patron
11. glossy
12. headstrong
13. rash
14. frantic
15. ruse

**“The Adventure of the Blue
Carbuncle”**

1. cringe
2. whimsical
3. jostle
4. thug
5. foresight
6. sedentary
7. anoint
8. plausible
9. bureau
10. quavering
11. lunatic
12. felony
13. capacity
14. rummage
15. hubbub

**“The Adventure of the Copper
Beeches”**

1. enterprise
2. degenerate
3. brisk
4. luxuriant
5. exert
6. conjecture
7. relevant
8. uncouth
9. consume
10. impertinent
11. loiter
12. eerie
13. rapt
14. barricade
15. persevere

NAME _____

“The Speckled Band” Vocabulary Exercises

Part I. Match the word with the correct meaning.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. deduction (n) | _____ someone who occupies a house or place; tenant |
| 2. hereditary (adj) | _____ without mercy or pity |
| 3. aristocrat (n) | _____ not obvious or easy to understand; mysterious |
| 4. pauper (n) | _____ friendly, kind-hearted, nice |
| 5. writhe (v) | _____ sly, tricky, clever, crafty |
| 6. notorious (adj) | _____ someone who is very poor |
| 7. sinister (adj) | _____ a pointed part of a roof, forming a triangle |
| 8. bland (adj) | _____ appearing to be evil; threatening evil |
| 9. amiable (adj) | _____ famous in a bad way; known to be bad or evil |
| 10. gable (n) | _____ a guess made from facts or observations |
| 11. cunning (adj) | _____ inherited; passing from parents to their children |
| 12. occupant (n) | _____ ordinary, plain, not fancy |
| 13. homely (adj) | _____ without sharp taste; soothing; gentle |
| 14. subtle (adj) | _____ member of the upper class; a noble |
| 15. ruthless (adj) | _____ to squirm, especially in pain or discomfort |

Part II. Use the words listed in Part I to fill in the following blanks. Choose the best word for each blank.

1. During the French Revolution, many _____, members of the rich ruling class in France, were imprisoned or executed by the common people who seized control of the country.
2. The girl didn't want to wear the dress her mother selected because she thought it made her look _____.
3. In one of Conan Doyle's stories, Holmes is on the track of a _____ killer who shot a man in cold blood.
4. In the same story, Holmes distracts a room full of people by falling to the floor and pretending to _____ in pain.
5. The most _____ of Holmes' enemies is probably Professor Moriarty, for it is he who is supposedly responsible for the detective's death.
6. The rich man gave all the money in his wallet to the _____ he saw begging by the train station.
7. Holmes is excellent at making correct _____ based on very little information; this is how he solves his cases.
8. He is indeed a very clever, _____ detective, able to outwit even the trickiest criminal.
9. There seemed to be something _____ about the deserted, creepy old house with its banging shutters and creaking boards.
10. Although Watson can recognize obvious clues, he is not very good at seeing the more _____, hidden ones.
11. The old-fashioned _____ on that house make it look old, but in fact it was built just last year.
12. If you are recovering from an illness, it is probably better to eat only _____ food, for spicy meals might upset your stomach.

13. The friendly, _____ hostess showed us to our seats.
14. Blue eyes are one of many _____ traits, passed down from parents to children.
15. The _____ of that apartment has recently moved out, but a new tenant has already signed a lease.

Part III. Write a synonym for each of the following. Use the words from Part I.

1. sly -
2. plain -
3. tenant -
4. guess -
5. inherited -
6. to squirm -

Part IV. Write an antonym for each of the following. Use the words from Part I.

1. obvious -
2. millionaire -
3. spicy -
4. peasant -
5. unfriendly -
6. merciful -

NAME _____

“The Red-Headed League” Vocabulary Exercises

Part I. Match the word with the correct meaning.

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. league (n) | _____ a story; a piece of literature with a plot |
| 2. cordially (adv) | _____ open, honest, sincere |
| 3. narrative (n) | _____ unlikely, not probable |
| 4. pompous (adj) | _____ a detective |
| 5. snuff (n) | _____ of the night; active at night |
| 6. candid (adj) | _____ think deeply, ponder, meditate, consider carefully |
| 7. contemplate (v) | _____ someone who helps another, often giving money |
| 8. improbable (adj) | _____ proud, haughty, arrogant, snobby |
| 9. curt (adj) | _____ business, trade between countries |
| 10. commerce (n) | _____ short; brief to the point of rudeness |
| 11. pedestrian (n) | _____ in a friendly manner, warmly |
| 12. vex (v) | _____ a group of people with a common interest; alliance |
| 13. sleuth (n) | _____ powdered tobacco, often inhaled in the nose |
| 14. nocturnal (adj) | _____ trouble, worry, annoy, torment |
| 15. benefactor (n) | _____ a person who travel on foot; a walker |

Part II. Use the words listed in Part I to fill in the following blanks. Choose the best word for each blank.

1. The famous _____ Sherlock Holmes has solved many difficult cases.
2. Owls are _____ animals, coming out to hunt at night.
3. If you _____ the dog by pulling on its tail and teasing it, it is much more likely to bite you.
4. Gentlemen used to carry their _____ in little boxes, and it was quite fashionable for them to put a pinch in their nostrils in public.
5. Holmes seems instantly to doubt the existence of a _____ made up of only red-headed men.
6. A _____ poem tells a story, while a lyric poem expresses emotion.
7. Sometimes Holmes' _____ answers to Watson hurt his friend's feelings, but Watson always forgives the detective for his rudeness.
8. Holmes refuses to give his _____ opinion about a case until he has all the facts.
9. Sherlock Holmes prefers to be by himself when he needs to _____; he often asks Watson to leave him alone in their Baker Street flat so he can have time to think.
10. Any good detective would know not to dismiss a possibility just because it seems _____; according to Holmes, one must eliminate only those answers that are absolutely impossible.
11. _____ are asked to cross only in the crosswalks and only when the light is green.
12. The owner of the restaurant _____ welcomed the customers, and he himself showed them to their seats.
13. In *Great Expectations* a boy named Pip receives a gift from a mysterious _____ which forever changes his life.
14. That sailor has never served on a warship; all of his assignments have been on ships engaged in _____
15. The _____ surgeon treated his nurses so badly that most of them quit, refusing to be constantly treated as slaves by the arrogant man.

Part III. Write a synonym for each of the following. Use the words from Part I.

1. a story -
2. a detective -
3. short -
4. walker -
5. proud -
6. honest and open -
7. ponder -
8. unlikely -
9. annoy -
10. alliance -

Part IV. Answer each of the following questions.

1. Do you know of any *leagues* in your community?
2. If someone were not behaving *cordially*, how might he be behaving?
3. What is the meaning of *snuff* when it is used as a verb?
4. Where do you go when you have a problem to *contemplate*?
5. If your best friend showed up with a terrible haircut and asked for your *candid* opinion about it, would you give it?

NAME _____

**“The Adventures of the Engineer’s Thumb”
Vocabulary Exercises**

Part I. Match the word with the correct meaning.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. trivial (adj) | _____ someone you know by sight but do not know well |
| 2. hasten (v) | _____ frenzied; crazy with excitement, anxiety, passion |
| 3. acquaintance (n) | _____ shining; having a gloss |
| 4. genial (adj) | _____ stubborn |
| 5. hearty (adj) | _____ heartfelt, enthusiastic, or satisfying |
| 6. proficient (adj) | _____ to move or go quickly, to hurry |
| 7. commission (n) | _____ warm, welcoming ,friendly, mild |
| 8. hinder (v) | _____ having little importance; petty |
| 9. recompense (n) | _____ a clever trick |
| 10. patron (n) | _____ what is paid for service or to make up for wrong |
| 11. glossy (adj) | _____ too quick to act without thinking |
| 12. headstrong (adj) | _____ supporter or protector; also a customer in a shop |
| 13. rash (adj) | _____ skilled; very good at something |
| 14. frantic (adj) | _____ to prevent from happening; to stop or thwart |
| 15. ruse (n) | _____ an order to act, a charge; a group given
authority to act |

Part II. Use the words listed in Part I to fill in the following blanks. Choose the best word for each blank.

1. The mother of the lost child was quite _____ by the time he was found playing in the fountain at the mall.
2. Sometimes Sherlock Holmes believes he has a _____ problem on his hands, but the case turns out to be of major importance.
3. _____ to finish your breakfast or you will miss the bus.
4. Twenty years ago a good secretary needed only to be a _____ typist; now he or she must also have excellent computer skills as well.
5. The smiling, _____ old man seemed the perfect choice to play Santa Claus.
6. Walking into his new classroom the first day, the child was happy to see several _____ from his new neighborhood were in the same class.
7. After a _____ meal and a pipe full of tobacco, Holmes felt ready for the long vigil waiting for his adversary to make a move.
8. A _____ has been appointed to study the problem of traffic congestion on that road.
9. The Trojan Horse, used to fool the enemy, is a famous example of a war-time _____.
10. The dog's _____ coat told the vet she was healthy and well fed.
11. Several famous actresses are _____ of that boutique, but the clothes are too expensive for most people to buy.
12. The bride's long skirt _____ her from dancing easily, so she decided to change her dress.
13. The _____ child refused to put on the coat his mother brought even though it was clear he was shivering.
14. Holmes often takes cases for free, stating that the pleasure of the hunt is all the _____ he desires.
15. Believing he held a winning lottery ticket, the man made a _____ decision to quit his job; he discovered later he was mistaken.

Part III. Write a synonym for each of the following. Use the words from Part I.

1. payment -
2. stubborn -
3. to hurry -
4. customer -
5. trick -
6. friendly -

Part IV. Write a word that is the opposite or nearly the opposite of each. Use the list from Part I.

1. close friend -
2. important -
3. without skill -
4. dull -
5. carefully thoughtful -
6. calm -

Part V. Answer each of the following.

1. What might *hinder* you from doing a good job on your English homework?
2. How would you describe a *hearty* handshake?
3. Who might serve on a *commission* studying school safety?

NAME _____

**“The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”
Vocabulary Exercises**

Part I. Match the word with the correct meaning.

1. cringe (v) _____ to put oil on, especially as part of a religious rite
2. whimsical (adj) _____ a serious crime
3. jostle (v) _____ to search by carefully looking through items
4. thug (n) _____ a robber or murderer; a villain
5. foresight (n) _____ given to whims or odd notions, fanciful, capricious
6. sedentary (adj) _____ to cower, especially in fear
7. anoint (v) _____ a chest with drawers for clothes; an office
8. plausible (adj) _____ seemingly possible or true
9. bureau (n) _____ requiring or given to sitting; not exercising
10. quavering (adj) _____ to push out of the way, often using the elbows
11. lunatic (n or adj) _____ crazy or insane; an insane person
12. felony (n) _____ shaking or trembling; speaking in a shaking voice
13. capacity (n) _____ the volume of a place; also competence
14. rummage (v) _____ loud noise, especially of people talking at once
15. hubbub (n) _____ power to see the needs of the future; prudence

Part II. Use the words listed in Part I to fill in the following blanks. Choose the best word for each blank.

1. Murder is certainly an example of a _____, but running a stop sign is not.
2. To find the scarf she wanted to wear, Gwynne had to _____ through her drawer for several minutes.
3. The teacher's choices of activities sometimes seemed rather _____, but the children soon learned that even the oddest project or silliest game was designed to teach them something.
4. _____ing under the table, the kitten tried to hide from the big dog.
5. It was impossible for us to hear each other talk over the _____ of the crowd at the fair last night.
6. His voice _____ with emotion, the groom promised to love and cherish his new wife.
7. People with mostly _____ occupations should try to get some exercise after their work day ends.
8. We stripped the paint off the old _____ and refinished it before we put it in the bedroom of our new house.
9. The ancient Hebrews would _____ their kings with sacred oil to show they were chosen by God to be leaders.
10. Find a cooler with a larger _____ so we can carry all of these drinks to the beach.

11. Luna means moon, and perhaps the word _____ means crazy because ancient people believed the moon's light could cause madness.
12. Although Sam's explanation sounded _____, we still had trouble believing he was telling us the truth.
13. The people standing in line for the concert pushed and _____ each other, trying to get closer to the ticket window.
14. Sherlock Holmes and Watson chased down the _____ who was trying to escape in the crowd.
15. I'm glad you had the _____ to bring your umbrella, for it looks like there will be a storm.

Part III. Write a synonym for each of the following. Use the words from Part I.

1. to cower -
2. to elbow -
3. a criminal -
4. a dresser -
5. shaking -
6. to search -

Part IV. Write an antonym for each of the following. Use the words from Part I.

1. hindsight -
2. active -
3. implausible -
4. sane -
5. misdemeanor -
6. quiet, silence -

Part V. Answer each of the following.

1. Does a pint bottle of milk or a quart bottle have a larger *capacity*?
2. Give an example of a time someone you know did something *whimsical*.
3. Write a sentence using the word *anoint*.

NAME _____

“The Adventure of the Copper Beeches”

Vocabulary Exercises

Part I. Match the word with the correct meaning.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. enterprise (n) | _____ a barrier, often to block a road or stop an enemy |
| 2. degenerate (v) | _____ guess or inference based on available information |
| 3. brisk (adj) | _____ active, lively, stimulating, quick |
| 4. luxuriant (adj) | _____ a project or plan; a venture |
| 5. exert (v) | _____ to eat up or use up; to devour |
| 6. conjecture (n) | _____ having to do with the matter at hand; appropriate |
| 7. relevant (adj) | _____ to stick to something despite difficulties; to persist |
| 8. uncouth (adj) | _____ very abundant; producing a large amount |
| 9. consume (v) | _____ to put forth, as in strength or energy |
| 10. impertinent (adj) | _____ to deteriorate in body or in morals |
| 11. loiter (v) | _____ not refined; rude; awkward |
| 12. eerie (adj) | _____ strange, spooky, weird; causing fear |
| 13. rapt (adj) | _____ to linger; to hang around a place |
| 14. barricade (n) | _____ totally absorbed in something |
| 15. persevere (v) | _____ rude, especially to superiors; insolent |

Part II. Use the words listed in Part I to fill in the following blanks. Choose the best word for each blank.

1. Although publishing our own newspaper at first seemed like an impossible _____, we discovered the work was far easier and more interesting than we thought it would be.
2. The governess in the story of the copper beeches has _____ hair, very long and thick.
3. Sherlock Holmes refuses to make a _____ before he feels comfortable with the facts of a case.
4. It is unwise to _____ yourself in physical activity when the temperature outside tops 90 degrees; wait until the heat breaks before you try a workout.
5. Holmes is excellent at sorting through facts to see which are _____ clues and which are unimportant details.
6. No one could understand why the princess preferred the _____ peasant to the handsome, refined nobleman.
7. After the game the baseball team _____ a dozen packages of hot dogs and two dozen hamburgers.
8. When the old man's condition began to _____, his family decided to move him into a nursing home.
9. If you _____ in the halls, you may be late to class.
10. A _____ March wind lifted the kite high above the trees.
11. As we picked our way through the debris on the floor of the abandoned house, we were troubled by the _____ atmosphere and unnatural quiet of the place.
12. If you are _____ when answering your teacher, you may find yourself in the principal's office.
13. Holmes never gives up on a case, and his inclination to _____ certainly pays off; he nearly always solves the mystery.

14. _____ by his book, Jim didn't hear the ringing phone.
15. After showing her media badge, the woman was allowed to pass the _____ and approach the president.

Part III. Write a synonym for each of the following. Use the words from Part I.

1. a venture -
2. lively -
3. devour -
4. engrossed -
5. linger -
6. a guess -

Part IV. Write a word which is the opposite or nearly the opposite of each.

1. polite, respectful -
2. give up -
3. refined, graceful, classy -
4. irrelevant -
5. skimpy -
6. improve -

Part V. Answer each of the following.

1. At which sport do you prefer to *exert* yourself?
2. Where might you encounter a *barricade*?
3. Name a story where the author creates an *eerie* mood.

VOCABULARY ANSWER KEYS

“The Speckled Band”

Part I. 12, 15, 14, 9, 11, 4, 10, 7, 6, 1, 2, 13, 8, 3, 5

Part II.

1. aristocrats
2. homely
3. ruthless
4. writhe
5. notorious
6. pauper
7. deductions
8. cunning
9. sinister
10. subtle
11. gables
12. bland
13. amiable
14. hereditary
15. occupant

Part III.

1. cunning
2. homely
3. occupant
4. deduction
5. hereditary
6. writhe

Part IV.

1. subtle
2. pauper
3. bland
4. aristocrat
5. amiable
6. ruthless

Part V. Answers will vary.

“The Red-Headed League”

Part I. 3, 6, 8, 13, 14, 7, 15, 4, 10, 9, 2, 1, 5, 12, 11

Part II.

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. sleuth | 11. pedestrians |
| 2. nocturnal | 12. cordially |
| 3. vex | 13. benefactor |
| 4. snuff | 14. commerce |
| 5. league | 15. pompous |
| 6. narrative | |
| 7. curt | |
| 8. candid | |
| 9. contemplate | |
| 10. improbable | |

Part III

1. narrative
2. sleuth
3. curt
4. pedestrian
5. pompous
6. candid
7. contemplate
8. improbable
9. vex
10. league

Part IV. Answers will vary.

“The Adventures of the Engineer’s Thumb”

Part I. 3, 14, 11, 12, 5, 2, 4, 1, 15, 9, 13, 10, 6, 8, 7

Part II.

1. frantic
2. trivial
3. hasten
4. proficient
5. genial
6. acquaintances
7. hearty
8. commission
9. ruse
10. glossy
11. patrons
12. hindered
13. headstrong
14. recompense
15. rash

Part III.

1. recompense
2. headstrong
3. hasten
4. patron
5. ruse
6. genial

Part V. Answers will vary.

Part IV.

1. acquaintance
2. trivial
3. proficient
4. glossy
5. rash
6. frantic

“The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”

Part I. 7, 12, 14, 4, 2, 1, 9, 8, 6, 3, 11, 10, 13, 15, 5

Part II.

1. felony
2. rummaging
3. whimsical
4. cringing
5. hubbub
6. quavering
7. sedentary
8. bureau
9. anoint
10. capacity
11. lunatic
12. plausible
13. jostled
14. thug
15. foresight

Part III.

1. cringe
2. jostle
3. thug
4. bureau
5. quavering
6. rummage

Part V. Answers will vary.

Part IV.

1. foresight
2. sedentary
3. plausible
4. lunatic
5. felony
6. hubbub

“The Adventure of the Copper Beeches”

Part I. 14, 6, 3, 1, 9, 7, 15, 4, 5, 2, 8, 12, 11, 13, 10

Part II.

1. enterprise
2. luxuriant
3. conjecture
4. exert
5. relevant
6. uncouth
7. consumed
8. degenerate
9. loiter
10. brisk
11. eerie
12. impertinent
13. persevere
14. rapt
15. barricade

Part III.

1. enterprise
2. brisk
3. consume
4. rapt
5. loiter
6. conjecture

Part IV.

1. impertinent
2. persevere
3. uncouth
4. relevant
5. luxuriant
6. degenerate

Part V.

Answers will vary.

SUGGESTED BOOKS FOR FURTHER READING

The Young Detective's Handbook, by William Vivian Butler, could introduce or enrich a unit on Sherlock Holmes. It includes detective games the class can use to practice Holmes' technique.

Michael Coren's *Conan Doyle* is an excellent and very readable recent biography of the author.

The Complete Guide to Sherlock Holmes – A 100th Anniversary Companion to the Master Detective, by Michael Hardwick, offers brief commentaries on the stories as well as biographical information, trivia, some fine pictures, and a list of who's who in the canon.

Elementary My Dear Watson, by Graham Nown, contains the essay on Sherlock Holmes by Dr. Joseph Bell as well as information on the culture of Victorian England, including a glossary of Victorian underworld slang.

SOURCES

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Orel, Harold, ed., *Critical Essays on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*

Shreffler, Philip A., *The Baker Street Reader*

Appendix

Activity Suggestions for Sherlock Holmes

I. Literature Circles

A different option for reading Sherlock Homes is to use a Literature Circle format. This format works particularly well if time does not permit each student to read every story in the collection. In literature circles, students are given some choice in the selection of the story read, and each student performs a unique role in preparing for and participation in the group discussion.

One way to set up literature circles is for the teacher to give a short introduction to each mystery. Students then list on an index card their top three choices of which mystery they would like to read. The teacher can then look at the choices and create groups based on student preference as well as other factors, such as reading levels, behavior concerns, etc. It is ideal for each group to consist of a variety of students who, ultimately, will work well together.

There are many options for the roles that student perform during literature circles. This teacher guide includes five possible roles that the teacher may choose to use. These roles have been given a ‘mystery twist’ to heighten student interest in the genre and to encourage them to think like a detective. The roles are as follows:

Discussion Detective:	Create questions for the group to consider while reading
Investigator:	Track important clues in the story and encourage group members to predict outcomes
Term Tracker:	Identify words in the story that may be important to the story or tricky to figure out
Travel Tracer:	Track where the action of the story is taking place and note how setting changes may be key to figuring out the mystery
History Highlighter:	Look for things in the story that are unique to the time period when it is taking place

In literature circles, students meet to discuss the story assigned, reread confusing parts if necessary, and clarify understanding. Students read the assigned pages and prepare their roles ahead of time. When they come to the group, they should be prepared to share what they have learned and thus contribute in unique ways to the group discussion. Depending on time, students may switch roles in the course of their reading.

Note: it is very important to the success of literature circles that students understand what is expected of them. Modeling the completion of each role sheet and teacher expectations is a key part in preparing for group meetings. If possible, find another

Sherlock Homes mystery that is not included in the Core Classics version. Use this additional story to model each role sheet and to host a “practice” literature circle meeting where a small group, including the teacher, can model what an ideal group meeting would look like.

2. Reader’s Theater and Dramatic Performances

Because the mysteries in Sherlock Holmes are so exciting and action-packed, they lend themselves well to dramatic performances. Students can be divided into groups and assigned a story to present in dramatic fashion. They may choose to excerpt a particular scene from the story and read it, as is, from the book. Another option is for them to summarize the main points of the story and act it out in their own words. Students often enjoy bringing in small props and costume pieces from home to bring the story to life.

This idea works well in conjunction with the literature circle format, because it enables students to be exposed to all five of the selected adventures, even though each group may read only one of them.

3. Character Webs

One way to assess students’ understanding of the stories is to have the students create character webs that show the relationships between characters. The main character is placed in an oval in the middle of a sheet of paper or large piece of poster board. The rest are placed in other ovals around the edges of the sheet. The characters are then connected with arrows that explain their relationships. For example, in “The Specked Band,” Helen Stoner would be placed in the center. Dr. Roylott could be placed around the edge, with a double arrow going between them labeled “stepfather/stepdaughter.” In some cases, arrows would also be appropriate between the minor characters as well.

DISCUSSION DETECTIVE

Name _____

Date _____

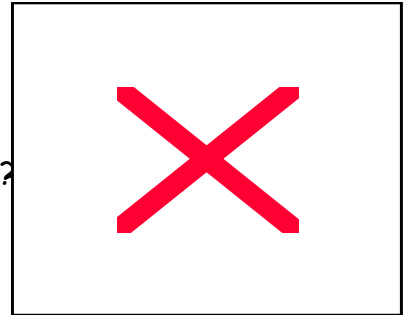
Book _____

Reading Assignment-pages _____

You are the *Discussion Detective*. Your job is to look for some good questions that you think your group would want to talk about. Don't worry about the small details: your task is to help people talk over the big ideas in the reading and share their reactions. *Get your group talking!*

Sample Questions:

What was going through your mind while you read this?
What questions did you have when you finished the reading?
Did anything in the reading surprise you?



Discussion Questions:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

HISTORY HIGHLIGHTER

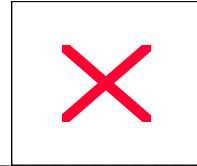
Name _____

Date _____

Book _____

Reading Assignment-pages _____

You are the *History Highlighter*. Your job is to look for things in the story that are unique to the time period in the story. For example, in a story about pioneers, there may be references to a covered wagon or travel by wagon train. Those things are unique to that time period. In today's reading, find items that are unique to this time period. Indicate where you found the items and their use.



Example:

Item: covered wagon

Use: The pioneers used covered wagons as a means of transportation from their homes in the east to the new land they were looking for in the west. Often they traveled in wagon trains.

Things to highlight:

Item: _____

Use: _____

Item: _____

Use: _____

Item: _____

Use: _____

Item: _____

Use: _____

INVESTIGATOR

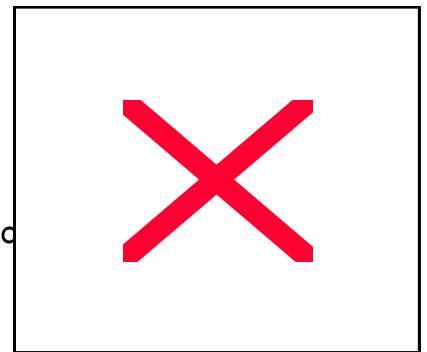
Name _____

Date _____

Book _____

Reading Assignment-pages _____

You are the *Investigator*. Your job is to look for things in today's reading that are possible clues to the mystery. You will be making predictions and recording them here. When you have finished the story, you will go back and determine what things really were clues and what things were red herrings. Indicate where you found the clues and why you think they are important.



Clue 1: _____ page _____ paragraph _____

Importance: _____

Clue 2: _____ page _____ paragraph _____

Importance: _____

Clue 3: _____ page _____ paragraph _____

Importance: _____

Clue 4: _____ page _____ paragraph _____

Importance: _____

Clue 5: _____ page _____ paragraph _____

Importance: _____

TRAVEL TRACER



Name _____

Date _____

Book _____

Reading Assignment-pages _____

You are the *Travel Tracer*. Your job is to track carefully where the action takes place during today's reading. Describe each setting (time and place), being sure to indicate the reason for the setting changes (new clue, new character, etc.). Also describe the action that is happening in each setting. Use the back of this page for any illustrations that may help your group understand each setting.

Setting 1: page _____ paragraph number _____

Time _____

Place _____

Action _____

Setting 2: page _____ paragraph number _____

Time _____

Place _____

Action _____

Setting 3: page _____ paragraph number _____

Time _____

Place _____

Action _____

Setting 4: page _____ paragraph number _____

Time _____

Place _____

Action _____