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***Tears of a Tiger***  
BY SHARON M. DRAPER



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All references come from the Simon Pulse edition of *Tears of a Tiger*, copyright 1994.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pre-Reading****Brainstorming**

**Objectives:**     Understanding the feelings associated with death by suicide  
                      Creating ideas for helping a survivor deal with feelings of grief

**Activity**

How does a parent feel when a child has been lost to suicide? How could a teenager have so many problems to decide that suicide is the only way out?

Working in small groups, discuss the painful effects of depression and suicide.

Of course, talking with friends and family can provide help for survivors of suicide, but many others need more help to cope with their grief. Working in your groups, brainstorm as many ways as you can for survivors to deal with grief on the **Tips for Survivors of Suicide List**. The first three suggestions are provided for you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**November****Setting**

**Objectives:**     Generating a drawing or sketch from physical description and details  
                      Recognizing the importance of setting in a novel

**Activity**

Read the newspaper article from the novel that describes the accident. Draw or sketch the scene of the accident. Pay careful attention to details, characters, as well as the background of the scene.

**TEEN BASKETBALL STAR KILLED IN FIERY CRASH**

Nov. 8—Robert Washington, age 17, captain of the Hazelwood High School basketball team, was killed last night in a fiery automobile accident on I-75. Witnesses say the car, driven by Andrew Jackson, 17, also of the Hazelwood team, had been noticeably weaving across the lanes of the expressway just before it hit a retaining wall and burst into flames.

Jackson, who police said had been drinking, was taken to Good Samaritan Hospital, where he is being treated for burns and bruises. He is listed in good condition. Two other Hazelwood students, B.J. Carson, 16, and Tyrone Mills, 17, who were also in the car, were treated and released.

The three students who escaped serious injury were able to jump from the four-door Chevy immediately after the accident, say witnesses. Washington, however, who was sitting in the front seat next to the driver, had his feet on the dashboard. The force of the crash sent his feet through the windshield, pinning him inside the automobile. The car's gas tank then exploded. Although Jackson tried frantically to rescue Washington, he and his friends watched helplessly as Robert Washington burned to death.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**November****Slang/Non-Standard English**

**Objectives:** Translating slang words and phrases into Standard English  
Composing formal Standard English free from grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors

**Activity**

There are many slang words and phrases in this novel. Understanding the slang terms will lead to a better understanding of the novel. Working alone or in small groups, use your experience and context clues to translate the following slang into Standard English. The first one is done for you as an example. Following the chart, list some slang you use or hear and put down its translation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**December****Writing Style**

**Objectives:**     Rewriting informal sentences into formal Standard English  
                      Correcting grammatical errors in writing

**Activity**

When people are having a conversation, they often speak using incorrect grammar. Likewise, some of the dialogue in *Tears of a Tiger* is written informally to make it seem more realistic to the reader. This is acceptable much of the time, but it is best to use formal Standard English in school or in the workplace. Here are two examples of how to rewrite informal language:

- **Informal:** “And don’t let all four of us come in together—the old biddy would just about wet her pants!” (Pg. 72)
- **Formal:** If all of us come in the store together, the lady becomes quite nervous.
- **Informal:** “Sometimes you get sick of bein’ treated like dirt.” (Pg. 73)
- **Formal:** Sometimes you dislike being mistreated.

Remember these guidelines when writing formally:

- Omit contractions. For example, replace “don’t” with “do not.”
- Omit any slang terminology, like “the old biddy.” Replace with “woman” or other formal term.
- Write in complete sentences. Sometimes, we do not speak in complete sentences, but it is best to write using formal language for academic purposes.
- Omit any unnecessary words as in the first example: “And don’t let” was deleted.
- Add words for clarity. For instance, in the first example, it was not clear that they were talking about being in a store.
- Do not begin sentences with “and” or “but.” Just begin the sentence with the next word in the sentence.
- Fix all grammatical errors.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**January****Symbolism****Objective:** Interpreting common literary symbols**Activity**

Re-read “Black on White: Andy and Keisha on a Snowy Day” from January 11<sup>th</sup>, and examine how color is used as symbols and metaphors for feelings and ideas. For example, Andy asks Ms. Blackwell why “black usually stands for somethin’ bad and white stands for somethin’ good? The good guys always ride a white horse, and the bad guy is always a black-hearted villain.” (Pg. 85)

Using the clues, unscramble the following common literary symbols. Look for colors, seasons, animals, and other common symbols are used. The first two are done for you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**February – March**

**Character Profiles**

- Objectives:**     Identifying character traits  
                         Analyzing character motivations  
                         Recognizing important events in a novel

**Activity**

By now, you are very familiar with each of the following characters: Andy, Rob, Keisha, B.J., Tyrone, Dr. Carrothers, Mr. Jackson, Mrs. Jackson, and Ms. Blackwell. Complete a character profile for each character using information from November through March. Describe important events in which the character is involved, character traits, the character's relationship to Andy, and include what Andy thinks or feels about the character. Mr. Jackson's profile has been completed for you.

**CHARACTER PROFILE (EXAMPLE)**

