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The Turn of the Screw
BY HENRY JAMES



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Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Henry James's Contemporaries****Objective:** Comparing the author's contemporaries**Activity**

By researching other writing during Henry James's life (1843 – 1916), you will be able to understand the literary environment in which he was writing. Some of the individuals in the following chart wrote in the same genre, while others were very different from James. Research and make notations about the writers Contemporaries Chart.

Complete the chart for each of the names. Record the respective field (for example, poetry, essays, or general literature) for the writer, his or her country of origin, year of birth and death, and any accomplishments. The first one has been completed for you.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Prologue**Freewrite**

Objective: Reflecting on expressing opinions

Activity

In the prologue to *The Turn of the Screw*, the narrator describes a Christmas party where the visitors are entertaining themselves by telling ghost stories. Reflect on and answer the following questions:

- What is your impression of Douglas?
- What are your thoughts about the governess?
- What kind of comments or observations within the Prologue intrigue you—what details do you want to hear more about?
- Based on some of Douglas's comments, what do you think might happen in the story?

“Freewrite” by writing out your thoughts as they come to you. You should write at least two paragraphs. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. The purpose of a freewrite is to express your ideas.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter VI**Vocabulary**

Objectives: Interpreting archaic language
Recognizing different types of language

Activity

In *The Turn of the Screw*, the narrator sometimes uses archaic (old) words and phrases, which may be difficult for a modern reader to understand. Henry James wrote the story in 1898, and authors' writing styles have changed since then.

Interpret the words or phrases listed in the following chart and convert them into contemporary language. If you cannot figure out the meaning of a word from the context, you may use a dictionary to look it up. We have started the list for you.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters I – X

Outlining

Objective: Outlining key points for better comprehension

Activity

Outlining is an important strategy to help you organize your thoughts about what you're reading and to help you remember key points in the text. It can be particularly effective in understanding and remembering works of fiction or in helping you learn from works of nonfiction, ranging from science and social studies to history and foreign language tests.

Since you have read almost half of *The Turn of the Screw*, it will be helpful to review the events of the book so far by writing an outline. You should continue to update your outline as the story continues.

Create an outline that identifies each character's role, the events of the story, the mood, and the author's insights into the characters' traits or motivations. Your outline should include a number of headings that highlight major points, as well as indented subheadings under the major points.

For example, headings might include the following:

- Setup
- Main Characters
- Plot
- Insights I've Gained into Main Characters
- Main Theme at the End of the Story

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters I – XV**Song Lyrics****Objective:** Writing lyrics to a song**Activity**

Most movies incorporate a soundtrack to enhance the film, draw attention to characters, emphasize parts of the plot, or evoke a specific feeling or response from the viewer. For example, if a character is mysterious, then music that evokes a sense of mystery accompanies him or her. Authors such as James use techniques like imagery and figurative language to accomplish the same thing.

If you were in charge of creating the soundtrack for a film version of *The Turn of the Screw*, what would the theme song be? Choose a song for which you'd like to write the lyrics. You are not limited to current music; the song can be from any time period. Make your choice based on the music itself rather than the lyrics, since you'll be writing your own lyrics to the song.

You can incorporate a major theme that encompasses the whole story, or you can focus on specific motifs or moments from the story. Song lyrics share the same literary elements as poems: rhyme schemes, rhythm, alliteration, personification, metaphors, similes, imagery, etc. Use these devices to help create lyrics that express your ideas in a creative way, but you are not permitted to use offensive and suggestive language. Keep in mind that your lyrics should be written to accompany the music you've chosen. Be sure to give your song a title. When you have completed your lyrics, hand them in to your teacher along with the title of the song on which they were based.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter XX

Debate

Objective: Presenting a persuasive argument

Activity

If your friend told you she was seeing ghosts, would you believe her? What if you don't believe in ghosts? In *The Turn of the Screw*, the mystery of the book hinges upon whether the reader believes that the governess is seeing ghosts.

Conduct a class debate about whether ghosts exist. Divide the class into two groups. One group will argue for the existence of ghosts; the other group will take the opposite stance. Each group must gather evidence that supports its position. This will involve conducting some research. Each group member must participate in the debate in some way, whether by helping research the topic, compiling and organizing information, creating the presentation, or speaking in the debate.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter XXI

Bibliography

Objectives: Researching
 Creating a bibliography
 Distinguishing fact from opinion

Activity

Toward the end of *The Turn of the Screw*, the governess finds that she is the only one who can see the ghosts at Bly, and that the others in the household might not believe her. You are a friend of the governess, and you want to help her by researching whether ghosts are real. Find some books and/or articles on ghosts and the supernatural in the library, a bookstore, or the Internet that will help the governess learn what she needs to know.

Once you've compiled your list of recommended books and articles, arrange the sources you've located into a bibliography, alphabetized by author's last name, in the citation style designated by your teacher. You must locate the number of sources your teacher requires, but the bibliography should include at least one book, one article, and one website.

We have provided some fictitious bibliographic entries as an example:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Blastin, Adam. "Ghosts: New Proof For A New Age." *Journals of the Supernatural* 15.6 (June 2007): 563-598.

Glenn, John. *Why Ghosts Aren't Real*. www.webaddress.com. Accessed September 12, 2008.
Magnuson, Robert. *The Supernatural*. New York: Random House, 2004.