

**Literary Devices**  
**Finishing Strong**  
by J. Robbins

High school senior Regina Lampert's heart was racing, and her breath was coming in short, painful gasps. She looked up and realized that she was more than halfway up the steep hill. Her arms felt like limp noodles after pushing herself through the eight mile wheelchair race. Now she was almost to the finish line, and she wondered if she had the strength to go on.

Her wheelchair jerked beneath her as she ran over rocks and ruts on the path. She remembered how the car accident that had paralyzed her had seemed like the end of the road for all her hopes and dreams. Life after the accident was full of unexpected bumps and bruises, but Regina was learning to keep on rolling. As she reached the top of the hill, Regina strained her eyes to see the finish line. It was at least a mile away, and her courage almost deserted her.

With a pained cry, Regina drove herself forward. She was surprised to find that the path was smoother on the other side of the hill, and her weary arms didn't have to work as hard to push her wheelchair forward. *As long as I don't give up, either things will get easier or I will grow stronger*, Regina told herself. The thought of finishing her first wheelchair race filled her heart with happiness. Her arms seemed filled with new strength as she sped across the finish line.

1. This passage is considered an allegory because

- A. the author of the passage only shows the race from one character's viewpoint.
- B. the events of the passage are symbolic of the main character's inner struggles.
- C. the passage uses descriptive language such as "her arms felt like limp noodles."
- D. the main character is a young woman who is living with a physical disability.

**Liam Moves On**

Liam was a strong boy—tough from the start  
But something hurt within him—a wound in his heart  
The way she made him feel—she was his Achilles' heel  
The girl whom he adored—tore Liam in his core

He played lacrosse and won debates  
He knew just how to gather As  
As filled with dreams and brighter things  
Liam was alright, till he thought of his feelings

Now, he was in junior high, as time was flying by  
Liam felt no pain, as he searched his soul and eyes  
He was no Sherlock Holmes to figure out mysteries  
But Liam had moved on; his broken heart was history

2. The poem is making reference to "Achilles' heel" in Greek mythology. What technique is the poet using to do this?

- A. allusion
- B. ballad
- C. dialect
- D. symbolism

### Out My Back Door

Milford and Tobias crept slowly up the path that ran past the river in the woods.

"I reckon the cottonmouths will be makin' their way up to the porch soon," Milford said.

"It don't make no never mind. The same thing happened last summer. They stay in their place just fine. Long as we don't go looking for trouble, there won't be none," Tobias responded.

Tobias kept wading through the muck of the swamp. He could feel the leeches sucking against his ankles.

3. Why is it appropriate for these characters to speak with regional dialects?

- A. They are uneducated.
- B. It gives the reader a hint as to the setting.
- C. The author speaks the same way.
- D. It is never okay to use dialects in writing.

### The Chimney Sweeper

by William Blake

When my mother died I was very young,  
And my father sold me while yet my tongue  
Could scarcely cry " 'weep! 'weep! 'weep! 'weep!"  
4 So your chimneys I sweep and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head  
that curl'd like a lamb's back, was shav'd, so I said,  
"Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head's bare,  
8 You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair."

And so he was quiet, and that very night,  
As Tom was a-sleeping he had such a sight!  
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,  
12 Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black;

And by came an Angel who had a bright key  
And he open'd the coffins and set them all free;  
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing they run,  
16 And wash in a river and shine in the Sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,  
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind.  
And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,  
20 He'd have God for his father and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark  
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.  
Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm;  
24 So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

4. Blake uses repetition in line three of the poem. What effect does this have?

- A. Repetition shows that the father is beating the speaker.
- B. Repetition shows how many children the speaker's father sold.
- C. Repetition emphasizes the speaker's youth and sadness.
- D. Repetition emphasizes the speaker's speech impediment.

*from* **Some Soul to Keep**

by J. California Cooper

Seems like a long time ago I was born and grew up in a little ole town ain't nobody ever hardly heard of. For another long time I was afraid it was going to be the whole world for me, and I thought I'd live without anything nice or good happening to me in my whole life! I found out it was silly to think like that, but it wasn't crazy, cause a whole lot of people live poor, in one spot, all the days of their life. Already, you know we was poor. The house we lived in seemed held together by the newspapers glued on the walls and taped over cracked windows. . . . I had a older sister and brother. My sister took over when Daddy went to prison...She worked me like a dog while she laid up and read magazines. . . . Course, she was only sixteen, but you don't have to always get old to be kind and good to people. My brother just stayed gone! I had a little sister who was kind of sickly, so I did all her work for her, and any food I got hold to, I shared with her.

5. Which of the following statements is an example of **hyperbole**?

- A. "She was only sixteen, but you don't have to always get old to be kind and good to people . . ."
- B. "The house we lived in seemed held together by the newspapers glued on the walls . . ."
- C. "I had a little sister who was kind of sickly, so I did all her work for her . . ."
- D. "I found out it was silly to think like that but it wasn't crazy . . ."

**Elegy in a Country Churchyard**

by G. K. Chesterton

The men that worked for England  
They have their graves at home:  
And birds and bees of England

About the cross can roam.

But they that fought for England,  
Following a falling star,  
Alas, alas for England  
They have their graves afar.

And they that rule in England,  
In stately conclave met,  
Alas, alas for England  
They have no graves as yet.

6. The author of the poem uses satire in order to

- A. insult the laborers in England.
- B. describe the war in England.
- C. support England's burial practices.
- D. criticize England's rulers.

Morgan and Travis looked over the list of potential invitees they had constructed to attend their wedding in June. It was more of a game of chess than it was a cooperative effort to choose close friends and family. Morgan had a list of people she absolutely did not want to see sitting in the church on their wedding day, and most of them were Travis' friends.

Travis knew who Morgan would have a fit over. He knew which names would drive Morgan crazy, and they were on the top of his list. As they exchanged lists, Travis could picture the steam coming out of Morgan's ears as she read off the first three names. Morgan's mother could be heard humming from the kitchen.

"No. I'm vetoing Pascal. He will not be attending," Morgan stated plainly.

"Are you kidding? I've known Pascal since I was 8. He has to be there."

"If he shows up, I won't be there."

"That's a reasonable response. What did Pascal ever do to you?"

"Forget it! Every time you two get together, I have the pleasure of getting a call from the authorities."

"Is everything okay in there?" Morgan's mother called out from the kitchen.

"Absolutely. Only, Morgan disapproves of my choice in best man," Travis called back.

"Calling Pascal a best anything is crazy. Why not ask Dorian to be best man? Dorian is nice, sweet, and considerate," Morgan pleaded.

"Seriously?" Travis responded. "The guy is as exciting as knee surgery."

"At least with Dorian in attendance, I won't have to worry about you getting to the church on time."

"Unless he puts me into a coma with his endless chatter. He is the answer to insomnia. Besides, he's your friend, not mine. The entire list is mostly your friends. I only have eight invitees so far. Thanks for being fair and balanced."

"I can't help that your friends are boring. Most of them would turn our wedding into a book report."

"That makes about as much sense as your decision to have Cadence as your maid of honor. Cadence is about as honorable as a three-dollar bill."

7. Morgan's mother calls out from the kitchen, "Is everything okay in there?" Travis' answer is "Absolutely." Why is Travis' answer an example of verbal irony?

- A. because Travis and Morgan are fighting
- B. because Travis likes planning the wedding
- C. because Travis thinks Morgan's mother is nosy
- D. because Travis needs to go to the kitchen

8. "Every time you two get together, I have the pleasure of getting a call from the authorities."

What is ironic about this sentence from the story?

- A. Travis likes to spend time with his friends.
- B. Morgan is actually annoyed by the calls.
- C. Morgan wants to talk to the police more.
- D. Travis calls Morgan almost every day.

### **The Trail of the Meat**

The dark spruce forest frowned on either side the frozen waterway. The trees had been stripped by a recent wind of their white covering of frost, and they seemed to lean toward each other, black and threatening, in the fading light. A vast silence reigned over the land. The land itself was a desolation, lifeless, without movement, so lone and cold that the spirit of it was not even that of sadness. There was a hint in it of laughter, but of a laughter more terrible than any sadness—a laughter that was as mirthless as the smile of the Sphinx, a laughter cold as the frost and partaking of the grimness of infallibility. It was the masterful and incommunicable wisdom of eternity laughing at the futility of life and the effort of life. It was the Wild, the savage, frozenhearted Northland Wild.

9. The phrase "frozenhearted Northland Wild" means that

- A. the area is busy with many visitors.
- B. the area is the main part of the forest.
- C. the area is cold and lacks feelings.
- D. the area resembles a large heart.

10. Luis was running the trail he did every morning. The sun burned into his back like a laser. The concrete under his feet felt sturdy as it normally did. The only problem was that this morning Luis woke up more sore than usual. His ankle felt like a million ants were circling around his bone and marching onto his foot. He decided to take his usual run anyway. Ten minutes into his jog, his ankle gave out. It snapped, and Luis' body buckled under him, sending him rolling like a stone. Suddenly, his entire right leg was a lightning rod attracting all the pain in his body. He rolled on the ground for a second. All at once, the pain disappeared. Before long, he was able to stand and limp back to his house to ice down the swelling in his leg.

Which of these sentences from the passage contains a metaphor?

- A. "It snapped, and Luis' body buckled under him, sending him rolling like a stone."
- B. "Suddenly, his entire right leg was a lightning rod attracting all the pain in his body."
- C. "His ankle felt like a million ants were circling around his bone and marching onto his foot."
- D. "Before long, he was able to stand and limp back to his house to ice down the swelling in his leg."

11. The swarm of bees swirled around the baobab tree. Their voices created one large buzzing and clicking. All at once, something in the distance caught the swarm's attention. It began to move away from the baobab tree like a fog lifting away from the ground. The kids were finally safe enough to pull the crops from the fields outside.

The author compares the swarm to

- A. a rising fog.
- B. a baobab tree.
- C. crop fields.
- D. buzzing voices.

