

Harrison Bergeron



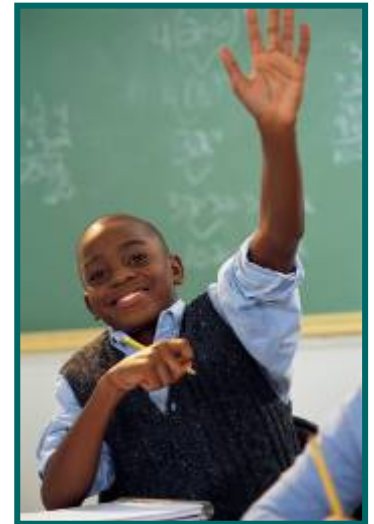
FICTION SELECTION
Unit 1, Part 1, Grade 10

Preparing to Read

Connect to Your Life

Can you think of a time when you've had to hide your skills for someone else's sake?

- Maybe you gave a wrong answer in class, just to avoid looking too smart in front of friends.
- Perhaps you let a friend beat you at a video game.



Preparing to Read

Connect to Your Life

What are the advantages and disadvantages of covering up your strengths to pretend as though you are “equal” to someone else?

- What are some examples to support your ideas?



Preparing to Read

Build Background

If you've played golf or run a footrace, you might know the term "handicap."

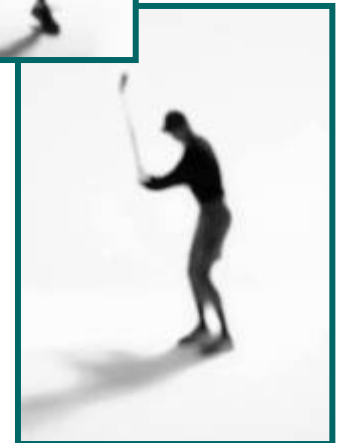
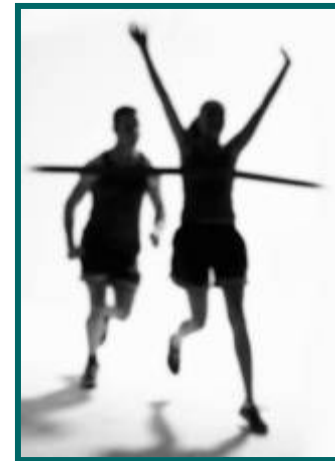
- It's a way to even up the game so that good, average, and poor players can compete as equals.



Preparing to Read

Build Background

- In a footrace, for example, faster runners might handicap themselves by giving slower runners a head start.
- In golf, where players win by completing the course with the fewest number of strokes, better golfers sometimes start the game with a handicap of extra strokes.



Preparing to Read

Build Background

In “Harrison Bergeron,” people are given handicaps in daily life, so that no one will be any stronger, smarter, or better looking than anyone else.



Preparing to Read

Words to Know

- calibrated
- consternation
- cower
- hindrance
- luminous
- symmetry
- synchronizing
- vague
- vigilance
- wince

Preparing to Read

Focus Your Reading

- Stories often have a central idea or message, also known as the **theme**.
 - The theme gives meaning to the story by providing some insight into life or human nature.
- The first lines of “Harrison Bergeron” give you a clue to the story’s theme:
 - *The year was 2081, and everybody was finally equal. They weren’t only equal before God and the law. They were equal every which way.*

Preparing to Read

Focus Your Reading

- **Inferences** are logical guesses based on clues in the text and on common sense.
 - *It wasn't clear at first as to what the bulletin was about, since the announcer, like all announcers, had a serious speech impediment.*
- In that society, all news announcer have speech impediments, which would make them unfit for the job by today's standards.
 - From this clue, you can infer that people in that society are not hired according to their strengths.



Preparing to Read

Focus Your Reading

As you read, jot down at least five inferences you can make about the main characters and the society.

Making
Inferences

Clue	Inference
All announcers have speech impediments.	People are not hired for their strengths.



Reading and Analyzing Literary Analysis

Theme

- Think about what happens to the central characters as the story progresses.
 - » Have the characters changed?
 - » Have they learned anything?
 - » What is the conflict of the story?



Reading and Analyzing

Active Reading

Making Inferences

- Making inferences helps you anticipate the events of the plot.
 - » The clues in the text will help you to make inferences about them.



Reading and Analyzing

Reading Skills and Strategies

Questioning

- Monitor your reading strategies and make modifications when your understanding breaks down.
- Question what happens and what is said as you read.
 - » What does the author mean when he says, “In the race of life, Harrison carried three hundred pounds”?



Reading and Analyzing Literary Analysis

Elements of Science Fiction

- The setting of a science fiction story often helps to explain the events of the plot.
- Describe the setting of the story and how it contributes to the plot.



Reading and Analyzing Reading Skills and Strategies

Predict

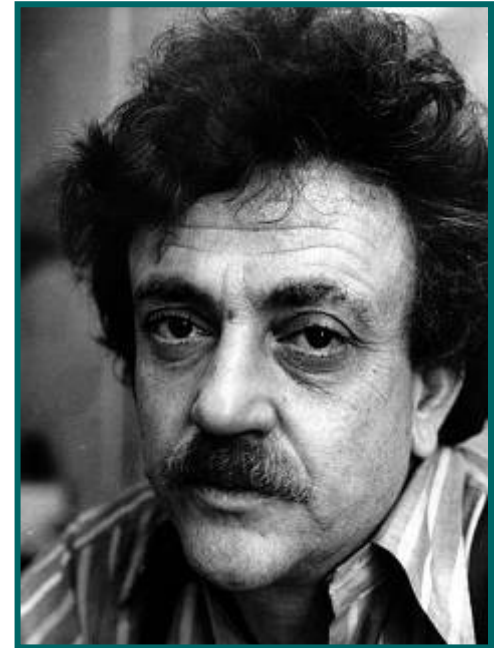
- How will the H-G respond to Harrison's defiant behavior?



Reading and Analyzing **Literary Analysis**

Theme

- What are your thoughts about the theme, or Vonnegut's message?
- After you finish the story, decide if you would change your mind about the theme or message.



Reading and Analyzing

Active Reading

Making Inferences

- Look back through the story for details about the ballerina who danced with Harrison.
 - » Make inferences about her character.
 - » Support your inferences with text evidence.

Reading and Analyzing Literary Analysis

Science Fiction

- Why is this selection considered science fiction?

