

SAD SONG

Teacher's Guide

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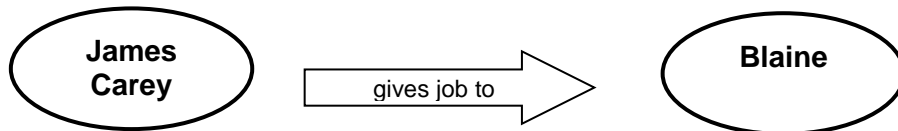
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Preliminary remarks

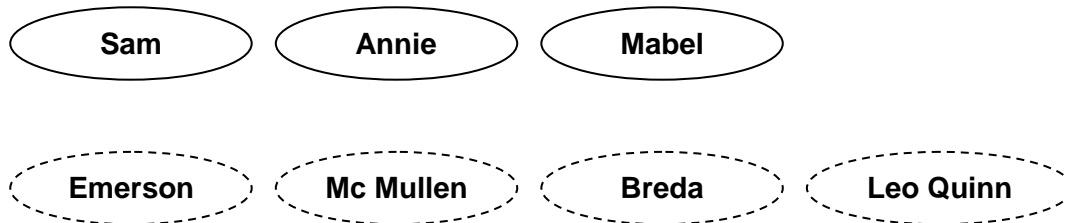
- The following assignments offer tasks and activities, which the teacher or students can choose from.
- Many tasks are suitable for talks or presentations to the class.
- Some tasks overlap with others.
- Since the material can be edited, the teacher may enlarge the tables, diagrams, and charts, or the students may copy them into their exercise books.

Pre-reading activities

- 1 Look at the picture and title on the **cover**. What ideas do they suggest?
- 2 If you have heard about arranged marriages, tell the class what you know.

While-reading activities**1 Constellation of figures**

Group the characters below around the characters above and show how they are connected. Use lines, arrows, symbols, and/or keywords to indicate the relationships.

**2 Titles**

Create titles for each chapter.

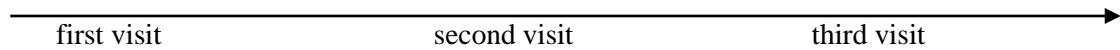
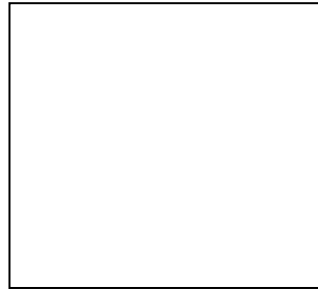
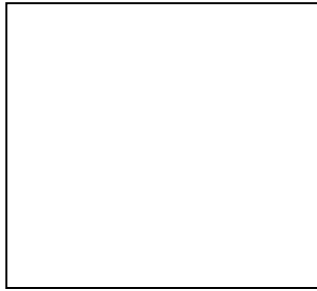
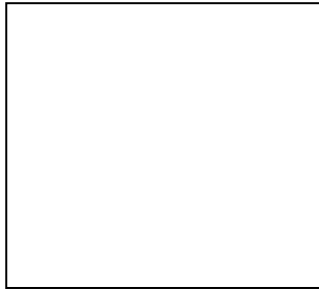
3 Summaries

Write a very short summary of each chapter (2 or 3 sentences each)

4 Structure

Describe Blaine's physical and mental condition after the visits to Carey.

(If you like drawing, you can make sketches of Blaine.)



first visit

second visit

third visit

5 Characterization and relationships

- 1 What impression of Carey and Blaine do you have after reading the first two chapters?
- 2 In what way does the image of Carey and Blaine change in the following chapters?
- 3 Describe Blaine's outward appearance.
- 4 Describe Sam's outward appearance.
- 5 Describe Annie's outward appearance.
- 6 Describe Mable's outward appearance.
- 7 Describe the relationship between Blaine and Annie.
- 8 Is Blaine a good detective?
- 9 Characterize James Carey as a husband, a father, and a businessman.

6 Setting

- 1 What does Carey's office look like?
- 2 In what way is Blaine's apartment typical of someone who lives alone?

7 Narrator and point of view

Who is the narrator of the story?

(You can find a definition of narrator and point of view in a library or on the Internet, or your teacher may have one ready for you.)

8 Themes

While reading the book, make notes about the following themes:

- 1 How does the story show that **love** does not seem to be part of Carey's vocabulary?
- 2 In what way is this novel a story of **dreams**?
- 3 In what way does this novel remind you of a story about the **Mafia**?

9 Interpretation by acting

- 1 Chapter 2: Act the whole chapter.
- 2 Chapter 13, p. 55, line 22 through p. 58: Act the scene.

(These are just two examples. There are more opportunities for acting in other passages.)

10 Freeze frame

Make a freeze frame of this scene: Chapter 11, p. 46, line 21 through p. 48, line 15. A freeze frame is like a snapshot of a situation.

1st step: Imagine your character's body position in this situation and decide what your character's face looks like. Then find and freeze your pose. Don't talk.

2nd step: Hold your pose while the rest of the class interprets the freeze frame.

3rd step: Rejoin the class and participate as students discuss this interpretation.

(This is just one example. More freeze frames are possible in other passages.)

11 Language and Style

- 1 Blaine is a person who likes a good joke. Collect at least 5 of Blaine's jokes and, if necessary, explain them to the class.
- 2 Name and explain the following figures of speech within the context:
 - Chapter 6, p. 24, lines 1–2: *The muscular hero bent over and bit the dust.*
 - Chapter 11, p. 46, line 8: *Have you got his ear?*
 - Chapter 13, p. 54, lines 5–6: *There's more than one way to skin a cat.*
 - Chapter 18, p. 80, line 10: *I can put on my warpaint.*

12 Name-dropping

Use your library or the Internet to learn more about the following figures:

- Bloom (p. 13)
- James Bond (p. 26)
- Mike Tyson (p. 53)
- Dr. Spock (p. 56)
- Puff the Magic Dragon (p. 56)
- Hulk Hogan (p. 59)
- Tin Man from *The Wizard of Oz* (p. 60)
- E.T. (p. 60)

Post-reading activities**1 Book review**

Write a critical book review and state your personal opinion.

(If you liked the book, you may encourage other students to read it.)

2 Summary

Write a summary of the story in 90–100 words or 180–200 words or 270–300 words.

(It is more difficult to summarize a story like this in 100 words than in 300 words.)

3 Interior monologue

Write down what goes through Carey's mind after he makes the deal with Blaine about Sam.

4 Comment

Comment on the following question: Should young people listen only to their hearts when it comes to getting married?

5 Book cover

Design your own book cover.

(Your teacher may hold a contest for the best entry.)

6 Title

1 How has the meaning of the title changed at the end of the story?

2 Think of other titles for the story.

(Your teacher may hold a contest for the best suggestion.)