

11. You are reading Internet memes.

What degree of knowledge do I need to take from this information? _____

What type of reading is it? _____

How long will I need this knowledge? _____

12. You are reading *War and Peace* the night before the final exam.

What degree of knowledge do I need to take from this information? _____

What type of reading is it? _____

How long will I need this knowledge? _____

Reading Zone 3

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow. You can check your answers on page 236.

Sherwood Anderson in his *Memoirs* testifies to the nearly miraculous sense of ease and liberation with which the stories of *Winesburg, Ohio* were written—poured out in a Chicago room in a concentrated fury of creations, sometimes two or three stories in a week. If his account of their composition is literally true, it is a symbolic parallel to the creative exuberance of the Twenties. The *Winesburg* stories speak with the voice of the Twenties, too, in their rebellion against lingering Victorianisms, middle-class repressions, Midwestern pieties, Puritan hypocrisies, village narrowness—all the things which hampered and limited the “life of realization” upon which Anderson and his whole generation were bent.

Individually the stories of *Winesburg, Ohio* do not represent Anderson's best and richest work, and we have acknowledged that fact by selecting a story from another book, *The Triumph of the Egg*. But collectively they are both impressive and of absolutely first importance. They are revolutionary in more than their disregard of conventional morals. The outraged protest that they inspired may even have been obscurely aesthetic in part, for these were no stories by conventional standards; even Anderson's friend Floyd Dell said so; Mencken said so; the reviewers said so. They were little vignettes of buried lives, throbs of muffled desire, sketches of characters foundering among the village tribalisms, glimpses of torment behind drawn (and sometimes undrawn) blinds. They were not only plotless, but they did not even make use of the sensuous impressionism by which Crane and Steele could impress by mere vividness. These stories moved obscurely, like nightthings.

To this day the warmest admirers of Anderson cannot quite say how they get their effects. The style is flat, the method more narrative than dramatic; and yet *Winesburg's* people have the terrible shamefaced look of people caught in something unspeakably persona. The suppressed emotions of their lives burst out of them like moans or cries, and they compel attention and exact sympathy as more cunningly made and steered characters could not. The influence of Chekhov, obviously, is strong here: Chekhov was one of the new and exciting writers of whom Anderson's mind was full, and it was not entirely unjust that a reviewer should later call him the "phallic Chekhov." It may be precisely the strong Chekhovian sympathy that makes *Winesburg, Ohio* a great book—William Faulkner says it is the only great book that Anderson ever wrote. "Unlighted Lamps" is our choice because it contains, along with the themes of frustration and loss and yearning and human waste that were the soul of *Winesburg*, the rich and warmly felt background of the county fairgrounds and race tracks where many of his best non-*Winesburg* stories are laid. If a single story is to represent Anderson, this will serve as well as any, and better than most.

And after Anderson, the deluge. Two of the major novelists of the Twenties, Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis, were never successful with the short story, but consider those who were: Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Faulkner, Katherine Anne Porter, Steele, Lardner, and, in addition, Edith Wharton and Willa Cather and Ellen Glasgow, in the twilight of their powers but still producing. On its short stories alone, the Twenties would have been notable. And supporting the great figures, packed around them like excelsior in a tight box, was an astonishingly large and astonishingly good body of lesser writers upon whose work and against whose competition the best ones grew. You do not sharpen an axe against a wheel of cheese; neither do you produce great writers without the pressure of a solid body of competing talent. It is from its secondary figures as well as from its great ones that a period gets its quality. Yet the great ones make themselves known unmistakably.

From his earliest stories—dismissed as mere contest by some of the editors to whom he sent them—Hemingway impressed those who knew him as somebody inevitably special. His first books, *Three Stories and Ten Poems* and *In Our Time* were hardly more than a sample of what was to come, and yet there was a widespread feeling that a giant was on his way up, as witness Edmund Wilson's early review in *The Dial* in October 1924. It may be, as William Faulkner has said, that Hemingway found out early what he could do, and has continued to do it, and that this constitutes a deficiency in him, a lack of daring. On the other hand, most readers will find plentiful signs of progress and growth from "Up in Michigan" and the early vignette of *In Our Time* to "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," or "The Old Man and the Sea." Incorporated in this change is evidence that Hemingway, like Chekhov and James, has increasingly chafed against the artificial constrictions of the short story, and has moved more and more toward James's "blessed nouvelle." His first stories were vignettes less than a page long; his last one, just as true a short story, his long enough to make a small book. It is a long way from the things he was producing when as a young correspondent in Paris he was learning to write, "beginning with the simplest things."

1. The primary subject of the passage can best be summarized as
 - (A) short story writers of the Twenties
 - (B) a book called *Winesburg, Ohio*
 - (C) Sherwood Anderson and Anton Chekov
 - (D) Sherwood Anderson and Ernest Hemingway
 - (E) Ernest Hemingway and Anton Chekov

2. Anderson's stories could best be described as
 - (A) conventional
 - (B) similar to Hemingway's
 - (C) revolutionary
 - (D) supportive of Victorianism
 - (E) intricately structured and plotted

3. According to the passage, what makes secondary writers important?
 - (A) They have an axe to grind.
 - (B) They make inferior writers feel more adequate.
 - (C) They make primary writers look better by contrast.
 - (D) The competition improves writers in general.
 - (E) They supply extra packing material.

4. How do most readers feel about Hemingway's artistic progress?
 - (A) His lack of daring made him just keep doing what he was good at.
 - (B) "In Our Time" is better than "The Old Man and the Sea."
 - (C) He eventually advocated "beginning with the simplest things."
 - (D) His success was inevitable.
 - (E) Over time, he began to flourish within the boundaries of the short story.

5. The “deluge” referred to in the passage means
- (A) the uncontrolled downpouring
 - (B) the unstoppable flooding
 - (C) the unanticipated promulgation
 - (D) the rapid decrease
 - (E) the overwhelming emergence

Reflection

For any question you got wrong, go back and leave notes next to each answer choice indicating why it is correct or incorrect. It's important that you not only practice, but also reflect on your performance! This way, you'll see what issues give you trouble and gain a better understanding of how to improve.