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Zilpha Keatley Snyder

With the examples of her parents to guide her, Zilpha became an imaginative storyteller at a young age.

Born in 1927, Zilpha Keatley Snyder was raised in rural California. Raised without television, her childhood was filled with pets of all shapes and sizes. With the examples of her parents to guide her, she became an imaginative storyteller at a young age.



When she entered seventh grade, Zilpha began to feel that she was a terrible misfit, and retreated into the world of books and imagination. This retreat would eventually stand her in good stead a few years later, when she began to spin some of the most creative characters and plotlines in young people's literature.

Zilpha attended Whittier College in southern California where she met her future husband, Larry Snyder. Married in 1950, she and her husband had three children. After finishing school, Zilpha taught school for nine years and it wasn't until her children were all in school that she finally began to entertain the idea of writing.

Zilpha has written for both adults and children, but she is happiest writing novels for young people. It is in crafting these stories that her own character, namely her boundless optimism, natural curiosity, and freewheeling imagination, shines through.

Did You Know?

- Zilpha's first novel, *Season of Ponies*, was based on a dream and was published in 1964.
- Zilpha is a three-time Newbery Honor winner!
 - * *The Egypt Game*
 - * *The Headless Cupid*
 - * *The Witches of Worm*
- Zilpha has written over 40 books, including novels, poems and picture books.



Chapters One and Two

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. Describe the most interesting store you have ever been in. What features of the store made it so fascinating?

2. Describe the most interesting person you have ever met. You may choose an individual who was interesting-looking, or had a fascinating personality.

Vocabulary

Complete each sentence with a word from the list.

innovation improvise vantage exotic deadpan dingy taut

1. My grandfather lived in a dark, _____ apartment that was located above an antique shop.
2. We all pulled on the rope until it was very _____.
3. A simple _____ to the scientist's experiment ended up being worth millions of dollars.
4. When the actress forgot her lines, she was forced to _____.
5. The owner of the antique shop gave April and Melanie a blank, _____ expression that the girls found impossible to read.
6. There's no doubt that my friend's pet parrot was the most _____ - looking animal at the school pet show.
7. The guard was forced to leave his _____ place by the window when it began to rain.



Chapters One and Two

Part A

Put a check mark next to the answer that is most correct.

1. Which words best describe the personality of the Professor?
 - A quiet and mysterious
 - B talkative and outgoing
 - C nasty and violent
 - D sarcastic and hurtful
2. What was the setting of the very beginning of *The Egypt Game*?
 - A April's back yard
 - B the laundry room of April's apartment building
 - C the storage yard of an antique shop
 - D an empty lot beside Melanie's apartment building
3. What is the sacred flower of Egypt?
 - A the lotus blossom
 - B the lilac blossom
 - C the yellow rose
 - D the pink carnation
4. April believed that in an earlier reincarnation she was a:
 - A servant girl
 - B sorceress
 - C princess
 - D high priestess
5. What did April plan on becoming when she grew up?
 - A an actress
 - B a museum curator
 - C an archaeologist
 - D a theologian



Chapters One and Two

Part B

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. a) Why do you think it was so appropriate that the Professor owned an antique store?

b) Choose three adjectives that aptly describe the Professor's appearance or personality.

2. Describe the personality of the following characters using one sentence for each description: April, Caroline, Marshall, Melanie, Dorothea.

3. The first two chapters feature at least two examples of foreshadowing (a hint of something coming up in the story). In Chapter One the author writes, "The Professor happened to be the only witness to the very beginning of the Egypt Game". This statement arouses our interest in the Egypt Game and what the game might be all about. Another example of foreshadowing is found in Chapter Two: "It was almost as if the old man's deadly silence was a dangerous dark hole . . ." How is this statement an example of foreshadowing?

4. A simile is a comparison of two objects using the words like or as. Find an example of a simile in the description of the Professor in Chapter One, or the description of him in Chapter Two.

Journal Activity

Now that you have finished the first two chapters of the novel, tell how you think the Egypt Game will come about. How do you think it will come into being, and what will the game be like? Give as many details as possible.



Chapters 1 to 4

The Egypt Gang had a lot of fun writing messages in Egyptian hieroglyphics. Learning the alphabet of another people's written language can be a very exciting activity, especially hieroglyphics, which is like writing a picture puzzle.

Your assignment is to write a message at least two sentences in length to another student in your class.

The catch? The message must be either written in **Egyptian hieroglyphics** or in the letters of your own **unique alphabet**. In either case you are to put the letters of the alphabet on the back of your message so it can be deciphered.

Examples: = arm and hand = loaf of bread



Chapters 5 to 8

In Chapter Seven the author makes the statement, "It occurred to her (April) that Caroline ought to know that you don't pick your friends just because they were handy or even lonely. You picked them because you thought alike and were interested in the same things, the way she and Melanie were."

First, explain why you either agree or disagree with this statement. Then tell about a time when you met someone who was to become a very good friend.

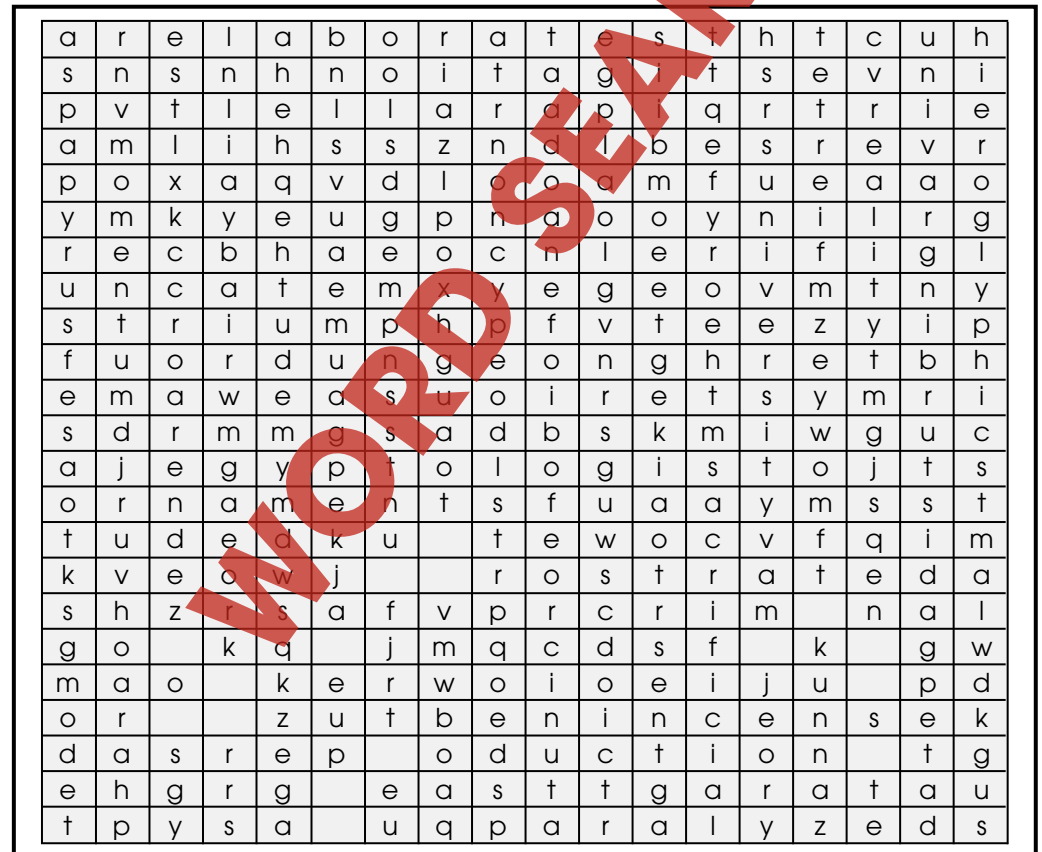
Describe how you felt meeting this person and what it was like getting to know him or her. Was it at all similar to the author's description in this passage?



Word Search

Find all of the words in the word search. Words may be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal. A few may even be backwards. Look carefully!

ceremony	theory	momentum	incense
mysterious	triumph	tunic	ornaments
antique	monolith	prostrated	queasy
paralyzed	pharaoh	investigation	parallel
sacrificial	egyptologist	papyrus	disturbing
elaborate	university	rendezvous	reality
reproduction	hieroglyphics	dungeon	criminal



Comprehension Quiz

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

- What was there about the Professor that appealed to April at the beginning of the story? 23

- What career was April's mother pursuing and whom did she leave April to live with? 2

- Name one thing about April that made it difficult for other children to like her right away. 2

- What did Marshall keep with him at all times as a type of "security blanket"? 1

- Why did the girls decide to let Elizabeth join the Egypt Game even though she was only in grade four? 1

- What tragedy in the neighborhood stopped the gang from playing the Egypt Game for awhile? 1

- Who fell under suspicion as a result of the tragedy? 2

SUBTOTAL: /10

Five W's Chart

Major event from the novel:

What happened?

Who was there?

Why did it happen?

When did it happen?

Where did it happen?

NAME: _____

After You Read 



Chapters Ten to Twelve

Part B

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. What do you think is meant by the statement, “Ken Kamata and Toby Alvillar were just about the most disgusting boys in the sixth grade, in a fascinating sort of way”?

2. In Chapter Ten the author uses a **simile** (a comparison of two things using the words like or as) to compare Toby’s eyes to “a pair of TV screens turned on full blast”. Use this literary device to describe the following items:

a) April’s hair _____

b) The Professor’s shop _____

3. What do you think Marshall meant in Chapter Eleven when he said, “somebody already heard us”?

4. Put the following statement in your own words: “Kamata and Alvillar were two guys who weren’t easy to confuse”.

5. Describe both Ken and Toby’s reaction to Elizabeth’s invitation to join the game.



1. The girls were beginning to be interested in boys

1. Answers will vary

1. a) T

1. Answers will vary

2. a) Answers will vary
b) Answers will vary

2. Answers will vary

b) T
c) F
d) F
e) T
f) T

2. Answers will vary (i.e. not being invited to the wedding, no time when April could move home)

3. _____ was aware that there was an eavesdropper to the Egypt Game

Vocabulary

2.

3. Answers will vary

4. Answers will vary

1. aggravated

a) 5

4. Answers will vary

5. Toby was interested; Ken went along reluctantly because of Toby’s interest

2. plain

b) 6

3. hesitant

c) 3

4. tragic

d) 1

5. decipher

e) 2

6. exchanged


f) 4

7. inquiry

5. Rubber spiders, snakes, bugs, a skull, tarantula, etc.



EASY MARKING ANSWER KEY

Journal Activity  Imagine you are either Ken or Toby. Write a journal entry describing how you feel about joining the Egypt Game.

The Egypt Game

- **RSL.5.1** Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **RSL.5.2** Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.
- **RSL.5.3** Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.
- **RSL.5.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.
- **RSL.5.5** Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.
- **RSL.5.6** Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.
- **RSL.5.9** Compare and contrast stories in the same genre on their approaches to similar themes and topics.
- **RSL.5.10** By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- **RSL.6.1** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **RSL.6.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
- **RSL.6.3** Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.
- **RSL.6.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- **RSL.6.5** Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.
- **RSL.6.6** Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.
- **RSL.6.10** By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
- **RSFS.5.3** Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words. **A)** Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context.
- **RSFS.5.4** Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. **A)** Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. **B)** Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. **C)** Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.
- **WS.5.1** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. **A)** Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose. **B)** Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details. **C)** Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses. **D)** Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.
- **WS.5.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. **A)** Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting, illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. **B)** Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic. **C)** Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses. **D)** Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. **E)** Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.
- **WS.5.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally. **B)** Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations. **C)** Use a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses to manage the sequence of events. **D)** Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely. **E)** Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.
- **WS.5.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **WS.5.7** Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- **WS.5.8** Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.
- **WS.5.9** Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.
- **WS.6.1** Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. **A)** Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly. **B)** Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. **C)** Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons. **D)** Establish and maintain a formal style. **E)** Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.
- **WS.6.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. **A)** Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting, graphics, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. **B)** Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. **C)** Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. **D)** Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. **E)** Establish and maintain a formal style. **F)** Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.
- **WS.6.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. **A)** Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. **B)** Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. **C)** Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another. **D)** Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events. **E)** Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.
- **WS.6.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **WS.6.7** Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.
- **WS.6.8** Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.
- **WS.6.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. **A)** Apply *grade 6 Reading standards* to literature. **B)** Apply *grade 6 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction.