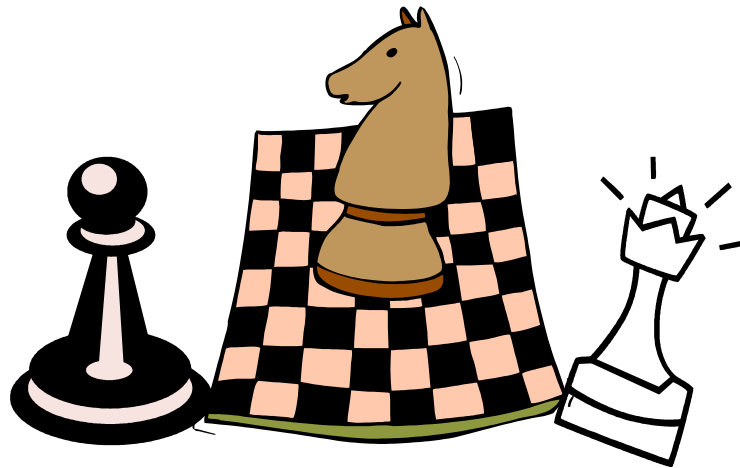


THE WESTING GAME

BY ELLEN RASKIN



NAME _____

HOUR _____

The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin

Question and Activity Packet

Learning Targets

1. I can explain how the setting of the story affects the plot.
2. I can accurately describe the physical traits, personality traits, feelings, actions, and motives of characters using evidence from the text.
3. I can explain how a character's traits, feelings, actions, and motives direct the plot of a story.
4. I can identify themes in a story and explain how these themes are revealed through the plot, characters, and setting of a story.
5. I can use information from the text to draw inferences and conclusions.

Rubric

- Complete sentences (2pts)
- Best handwriting (1pt)
- Thoughtful and correct answers (2pts)

Grade Chart

Since you will not receive a final grade until the end of the Novel Study, I want you to record your grades in this chart so that you can keep track of your progress in the class.

Assignment	Pts Earned	Pts Possible	I have hit these learning targets	I need to adjust my aim to hit these targets
Chapter Questions 1 – 5		10		
Quiz 1 – 5		10		
Chapter Questions 6- 10		10		
Quiz 6 - 10		10		
Chapter Questions 11 - 15		10		
Quiz 11-15		25		
Chapter Questions 16 - 20		10		
Quiz 16 - 20		10		
Chapter Questions 21 - 25		10		
Quiz 21 - 24		10		
Chapter Questions 26-30		10		
Quiz 25-30		10		

Don't Read Ahead!

Character Descriptions

This book contains several different characters, which can be confusing at times. Please add descriptions to the characters after you read each section. Refer to this page if you get confused about a character and their connection to the game. The more details you add the better it will help you to understand the story and solve the mystery.

Major Characters

Sam Westing- _____

Flora Miller Baumbach- _____

Sandy McSouthers _____

Julian R. Eastman _____

Berthe Erica Crow _____

George Theodorakis – _____

Catherine Theodorakis _____

Theo Theodorakis _____

Chris Theodorakis _____

Sydelle Pulaski – _____

Otis Amber- _____

J.J. Ford- _____

Barney Northrup- _____

Jake Wexler – _____

Grace Windsor Wexler- _____

Angela Wexler – _____

Denton Deere _____

Turtle Wexler – _____

James Shin Hoo- _____

Sun Lin Hoo – _____

Doug Hoo- _____

Other Characters (Mentioned that are not listed)

Chapter; 1-3 Section 1

1. In Chap. 1 & 3, the author focuses on Grace Windsor Wexler’s thoughts as she sees the apartment for the first time and her actions and speech as she interacts with Turtle and Angela. Describe her character using examples from the text and then give your opinion about her. (1)

2. At the end of chapter one we are told that one of the tenants was a mistake. Which tenant do you think was a mistake? Explain.

3. Describe Mrs. Wexler’s relationship with her two daughters.

4. *Discussion Question:* From a writer’s perspective, what purpose does Sunset Towers serve at the beginning of the novel? (2)

5. List four aspects of the Westing house that create suspense. (1)

Chapter 4-5 Section 1

6. Which character traits of Turtle's cause her to enter the Westing house? (3)

7. Using the text, describe Sam Westing's character. For added depth, include anything else you can infer about Westing from Crow's comments on pg. 12, Hoo's thoughts on pg. 13, and J.J. Ford's thoughts on pg. 14. (3)

8. Summarizing. Write a paragraph summarizing the main events of chapters 1-5.

9. *Discussion Question:* Thinking about what you know now about Sam Westing and the discrepancies between the newspaper article and Turtle's account of her time in the Westing house, what do you think is really going on?

Chapters 6 – 10 Section 2

10. What does the lawyer Edgar Jennings Plum reveal as he reads from the will?

What are you thinking as you read this? How would you feel?

11. *Discussion Question:* Chapter 7 begins to introduce readers to a major theme in The Westing Game: different people interpret the same information in different ways and come to different conclusions. In America today, many people are presented with the same information in the form of historical documents, both governmental and religious: the Constitution, the Bible, the Koran, etc... Different people, however, can come to wildly different conclusions based upon their different interpretations of the same information. Share with your table any real-life examples where you have seen this occur. (4)

12. In Chapter 7, each pair of heirs receives a check for \$10,000 to do with as they please. Based on the character traits revealed in the book, predict how the following tenants of Sunset Towers will use their cash: (3)

Turtle: _____

J.J. Ford: _____

Sydelle Pulaski: _____

13. *Activity.* After reading Chapter 8, working with your group, write the clues on pieces of paper and try to make sense of them. What do you think they mean? Keep the clues for later. (either staple to your study guide or have a responsible person keep them)

14. Explain *why* J.J. Ford has planned a cocktail party for the tenants of Sunset Towers and what her motivations behind the hosting of the cocktail party reveal about her character. (3)

15. In Chapter 10, the author reveals more of Angela's inner thoughts and actions. Explain the issues she is struggling with and then recommend a course of action for her to deal with these issues. (2)

16. Summarizing. Write a paragraph summarizing the main events in chapters 6-10.

Chapter 11-15 Questions Section 3

17. What purpose does the snowstorm serve to further the plot of the novel? (1)

18. Toward the end of Chapter 12, Angela explains to Sydelle that a “crutch” is a symbol, “that people are so afraid of revealing their true selves they have to hide behind some sort of prop.” This introduces another theme in the story: people often hide their true identities. Have you ever been a person who hides? Do you know someone who is? Without revealing more information than you’d like, please explain. (4)

19. Who do you think is the private investigator J.J. Ford calls and how do you know? It is possible to figure it out just from reading the end of Chapter 12.

20. Summary. Write a paragraph summarizing the main events in chapters 11-15.

Projects

Option 1: Illustrator

Ellen Raskin, the author of The Westing Game was an accomplished illustrator. Following in her footsteps, pick a scene from the story and illustrate it. In your illustration, I want you to focus on three things:

- **Setting** – Make sure the setting of the scene is clearly presented. As you reread the section of the book you are going to illustrate, try to picture it clearly in your mind. Then, sketch it out with a pencil first before adding color. Think about any details you don't want to forget to include.
- **Characters and Plot** – Your illustration should show a pivotal moment in the plot, one where the characters are interacting with each other and driving the plot forward. Focus on expressions and body language.
- **Artistry** – Hey, if you picked this option, make the most of it! Make sure your illustration is fit for the next edition of The Westing Game. You can use any size of paper and any materials you would like.

You may choose from one of the following scenes or pick one of your own.

- Turtle discovering the body
- Reading the will
- The party at J.J. Fords

Option 2: Westingtown Detective

You have been hired as the Westingtown detective. Your job is to create a file on 3 suspects from The Westing Game. Use manila folders for each file and try to make each as genuine as possible (It should look like it could go right into the file folders of the Westingtown Police Department). Each file should contain:

Chapter: 19 – 20 Section 4

25. Explain who Violet Westing is and how she is connected to the other Westing heirs.

26. Try to figure out the information being implied between Theo and Turtle in Chapter 20. What does Theo think? What does Turtle think?

27. Summary. Write a paragraph summarizing the main events in chapters 16-20.

Chapter 21-24 Section 5

28. Only when all the clues are collected together does their meaning become apparent, and only as the heirs' pasts come to light do their connections to Sam Westing and possible motives for his murder become known. What theme is being expressed through these aspects of the plot? (4) (Hint: There is a line from the will that states this theme quite clearly)

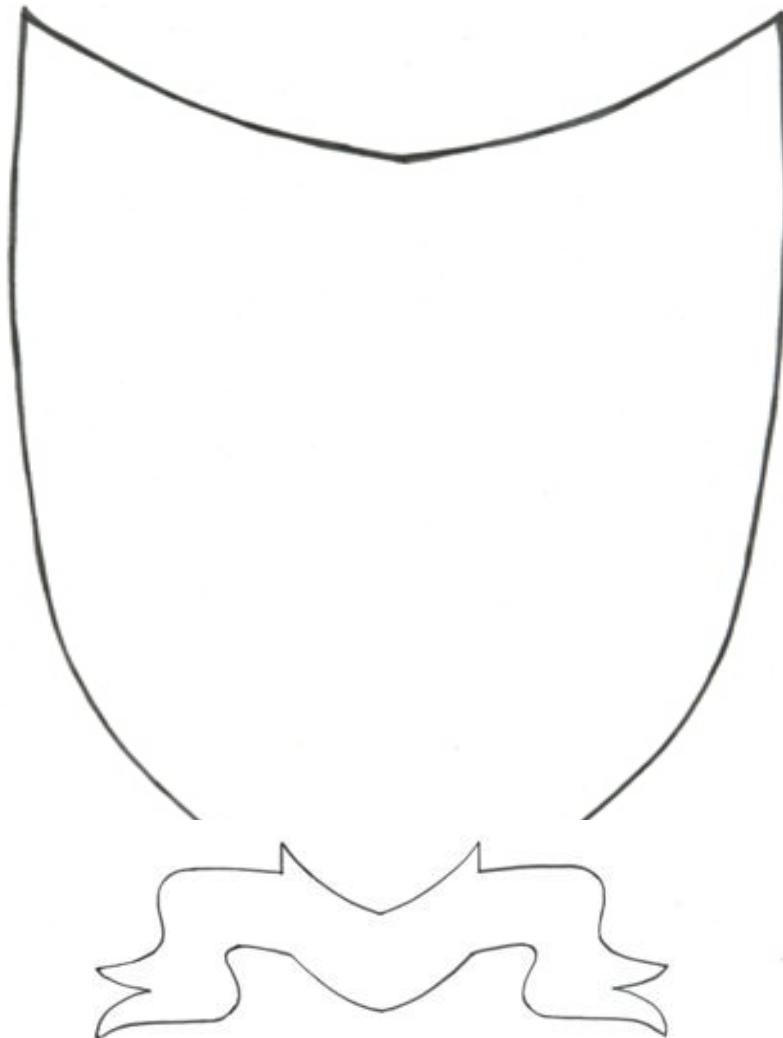
29. Determine the reason Grace Windsor Wexler starts crying and explain. (2, 3)

31. Why would Sam Westing want to punish Crowe?

32. Summary. Write a paragraph summarizing the main events in chapters 21-24.

Chapter: 25 – 27 Section 6

33. For centuries, clans and families in Europe designed family crests that symbolized the families' identities. Design a family crest for Sam Westing that incorporates aspects of each of his identities, his wife, and his daughter. Around the crest explain the symbolism you've used. You can use this website to help: <http://www.irishsurnames.com/heraldiccharges.htm>



35. What does Turtle finally realize about the meaning of the statement that the "heir who wins the windfall will be the one who finds the fourth"?

36. Who is Alice and how is she like Turtle? _____

37. What do the words of the song "America the Beautiful" have to do with the Westing mystery? Do the words to the song help the heirs as they try to solve the puzzle?

38. Summary. Write a paragraph summarizing the main events in chapters 25-30.

End of Book Discussion Questions

39. The Westing Game raises issue about race and equality by including several diverse characters: Judge Ford is African-American and Mr. Hoo is Chinese-American, while Chris and Rosalie are challenged with either physical or mental disabilities. The book is also pretty clear about telling us when characters like Grace act bigoted or prejudiced. How are these hot-button issues addressed in the book, by the author and by the characters? What's the effect of having these topics as part of a consuming murder mystery?

40. Would you have answered the will's question in those last five minutes, if you knew the answer? Why or why not?

41. Turtle, or T. R. Wexler as she came to be called, always kept her secret about Sam Westing, even from her own family, including her husband Theo. Why do you think she kept the secret? What would you do in her shoes? Can you imagine keeping such a secret from the people most important to you? _____

42. Argue. Would you say there are one, two, or three resolutions to this novel? What is/are the resolution(s)? Why do you believe this to be true?

43. Setting. Look back through the book at the setting (time, place, mood, weather). How did the setting affect some of the main events and help to create suspense in the story? Give examples from the book. _____

44. What part of the story is the climax? Explain how you know this. _____

45. Why did Sam Westing set up the Westing Game? Thoroughly explain your answer with reasons and SPECIFIC examples from the book.

Don't Read Ahead!