“The Night the Bed Fell”
by James Thurber

Directions: AS YOU READ JAMES THURBER’S “THE NIGHT THE BED FELL” ON PAGES 254–258 IN THE LITERATURE BOOK, COMPLETE THE PACKET TO GAIN A THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF THE NON–FICTION HUMOROUS ESSAY.

BEFORE READING (2 POINTS)
- SET A PURPOSE

You have learned about James Thurber’s life by reading a biographical article and viewing a short tour of his childhood home. Considering that he entitled this selection, “The Night the Bed Fell,” and the details you have learned about Thurber, list two questions you hope to have answered as you read the selection.

1. ____________________________________________________________

2. ____________________________________________________________

PREVIEW THE READING (3 POINTS)

Humorous essays are brief works of nonfiction meant to amuse readers.

This selection is described as a “humorous essay.”

What characteristics of “The Night the Bed Fell” have led to this classification? Explain your reasoning AND provide at least TWO specific examples from the selection as support.
TEXT STRUCTURE (3 POINTS)

Text structure, also called patterns of organization, is how text is organized in writing. Text structure not only varies from writing to writing, but the text structure may also change frequently from paragraph to paragraph within a single piece of writing.

There are seven different types of text structure:
- Chronological
- Compare and Contrast
- Order of Importance
- Sequence
- Spatial
- Cause and Effect
- Problem and Solution

The author has organized his essay in chronological order, meaning that is organized in time order. Events are organized into a beginning, middle, and end.

Why would Thurber organize the essay chronologically? What evidence (words, phrases, sentences) in the selection signal a chronological pattern of organization? Provide at least TWO specific examples from the selection as support.

PLAN A READING STRATEGY

While you complete this active reading packet, you will:
- Complete a graphic organizer
- Make inferences
- Relate personal experiences
- Analyze the meaning of a cartoon
DURING THE READING

● Read with a purpose and look for information to fit your purpose.

● USE GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS TO UNDERSTAND INFORMATION (12 POINTS)

Directions: Using the house illustration below, locate each person’s bedroom from the Thurber’s description. Then, use arrows to illustrate people’s movements. Finally, indicate key events from the story in captions.

. CHARACTERIZATION (15 POINTS)

Characterization is the process through which a writer develops a character.

Directions: Complete the chart below to identify details that Thurber uses to develop the characters in the selection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct Descriptions</th>
<th>Character’s Actions</th>
<th>Other Character’s Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grandfather</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briggs Beall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (7 POINTS)

Directions: Write the letter of the best answer to each question on the line in front of the question. Please use CAPITAL letters.

1. What sets off the chain of events in the story?
   A. Rex the dog awakens and barks.
   B. Mrs. Thurber shouts that her husband is dying.
   C. The author’s bed collapses.

2. Who was in the house on the night described?
   A. Mother, Father, Herman, Roy, Briggs, James, and Rex
   B. Mother, Father, Herman, Roy, Briggs, James, Grandfather, and Rex
   C. Mother, Father, Herman, Roy, Briggs, James, Aunt Melissa, Aunt Gracie, and Uncle Harold

3. When did the bed collapse?
   A. 10:00 PM
   B. 12:00 AM
   C. 2:00 AM
4. Which detail below helps explain why the characters behave as they do?
   A. They are not fully awake.
   B. Their rooms are far apart.
   C. They are all affected by the smell of camphor.

5. What is Briggs’s big fear?
   A. He is afraid of suffocating in his sleep.
   B. He is afraid of cutting himself on broken glass.
   C. He is afraid of having strangers see him through the window.

6. Which word most accurately describes Thurber’s relatives as he depicts them?
   A. Thurber’s relatives are calm.
   B. Thurber’s relatives are eccentric.
   C. Thurber’s relatives are ordinary.

7. What kind of essay is "The Night the Bed Fell"?
   A. It is a humorous essay.
   B. It is a persuasive essay.
   C. It is an impersonal essay.

**MAKE INFERENCES (8 POINTS)**

Directions: Use James Thurber’s cartoon and the details in “The Night the Bed Fell” to answer the following questions.
1. List two important objects in the cartoon and describe what each represents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Symbolizes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. What event from the selection does the cartoon portray?

__________________________________________________________________


____________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Explain how your suggestion captures the image’s meaning.
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

How does “The Night the Bed Fell” fit the theme “Meeting Challenges”? Support your answer with specific details from the selection.

Discuss a challenge you have faced—or anticipate facing in the future. How do you plan to conquer this challenge?
• AFTER READING

- Pause, reflect, and look back to see if you found information to fit your purpose.

  Can you recall the events that happened on the night the bed fell? If not, you must go back and reread.

- Reread to find things you may have missed the first time.

  Have you answered all of the questions? If not, take a second look at the text and skim for key words and phrases. Review your responses.

- Remember what you have learned.