Bess

1. **Write:**  Find two direct quotes from the text that give information pertaining to which social class Bess belongs to. Write these two quotes down on your notebook paper.

**Discuss:** What social class does Bess belong to? How do these quotes prove that? (\*How do you know?)

2. The text states Bess has black eyes. **Discuss and write down** your educated guesses as to the possible reasons Bess has black eyes. What literary technique is the author using here to give the reader clues about what is to come? (\*Hint: What does the color black symbolize in literature?)

3. **Write:** There are two characters who are in love with Bess within this story. Find two direct quotes from the text that supports the claim, “There are two men in love with Bess in the story.” Write those quotes down on your notebook paper.

**Discuss:** Although these two men are in love with Bess...their love is quite different from one another. Explain how The Highwayman’s love differs from that of Tim the Ostler. Use textual evidence when speaking to your group to prove your claims.

4. **Write:** What action does Bess take at the end of the story that makes us pity her as a reader but also revere her as a hero?

**Discuss:**  Why did Bess kill herself? (\*Hint: It was not just because she was warning The Highwayman about The Redcoats.Think of the social norms of the time and the role of women in the 1700’s.)

5. Choosing to place Bess as a main character within this work of literature, the author has made Bess a martyr for the women and people of Europe. The definition of a martyr is: **“a person who is put to death or endures great suffering on behalf of any belief, principle, or cause: a martyr to the cause of social justice.”**

**Discuss:** Explain how Bess’ role in the story could trigger a revolution or political uprising amongst the people of Europe against King George.

(\*Hint: As a reader do you like Bess? What about Bess makes you like her? Isn’t she doing things she isn’t supposed to be doing?...in Europe she might have been banned from society, but as readers we like her...WHY?)

6. **Write:** Where is Bess’ father when the soldiers come into the inn and take Bess hostage? Find a direct quote to support your claim.

**Discuss**: Having this information, how do you feel about Bess’ father? Would you have acted the same...why or why not?

As a group, **draw** a picture that is textually accurate as to what your character would look like in the story. You can choose to do a close up drawing of their face, or you can choose to do a drawing that is far away. Remember to look back for textual evidence as to accurately draw this figure.

**The Highwayman**

1. In the poem, The Highwayman’s pistol butt and rapier hilt are twinkling under the jeweled sky. His pants “fit with never a wrinkle.” His coat was made of claret velvet (a purplish red color). **Write and discuss** what information this gives the reader about The Highwayman’s personality. After you have answered this, try to determine within your group what the color purple symbolizes (\*use your smartphone if you have it with you to Google it) in literature. Why is the main character of this story wearing purple?

2. The Highwayman is clearly infatuated with Bess. **Discuss:** What information do you have as readers as to what kind of love The Highwayman and Bess share? Is it superficial (based on material things and looks) or is it emotional (based on feelings and conversations). **Write** down two quotes to prove your position on the argument.

3. **Write**: What is the most romantic thing The Highwayman says to Bess? **Discuss:**  Why is this the most romantic thing he says to her?

4. How does The Highwayman die? **Write:** two quotes to show how he died. With his death The Highwayman becomes a martyr for the European people. The definition of a martyr is: 1. a person who willingly suffers death rather than renounce his or her religion. 2. a person who is put to death or endures great suffering on behalf of any belief, principle, or cause: a **martyr** to the cause of social justice.

**Discuss**: Why did The Highwayman have to die in this story for this ballad to trigger a revolution amongst the people? If he would have lived (or Bess would have lived), how would the song and story been less effective in its cause?

5. At the very end of the story “The Highwayman” is riding back to Bess. **Discuss:** How is The Highwayman riding back to Bess? Did he not really die in the scene before this?

At the very beginning of the story the author foreshadowed this last scene by a quote The Highwayman said to Bess. **Write down this quote.**

6. **Discuss and write:** Although The Highwayman is a robber we (the readers) like him. How does the author manipulate his audience (and the peasants listening to this song around the campfire) into liking this stagecoach robber? (\*Hint: Think about all of the ways you emotionally connect to The Highwayman. Think back to when we were creating our protagonists for our Jamestown stories. What qualities does a character need to possess in order for the audience to connect with them?)

As a group, **draw** a picture that is textually accurate as to what your character would look like in the story. You can choose to do a close up drawing of their face, or you can choose to do a drawing that is far away. Remember to look back for textual evidence as to accurately draw this figure.

**Tim the Ostler:**

1. Find two direct quotes that give us information as readers about Tim the Ostler. **Write** them down.

2. It is stated within the text that Tim is in love with Bess. Find a quote that gives us information as readers as to what social class Tim the Ostler belongs to. **Write** down the quote. **Discuss** how this quote gives us tells us what social class he is in.

3. The text states that Tim the Ostler is “dumb as a dog.” You might have heard the expression “deaf and dumb” while growing up. Look up the word “dumb” in the dictionary. **Write** down the definition of dumb. People who were “dumb” during this time period would have been socially excluded (left out) of society.  **Discuss:** What is the reason that Tim has not spoken to Bess to profess his love for her?

4. The British Redcoats show up at the inn (seemingly out of nowhere) and are clearly aware The Highwayman will ride the “ribbon of moonlight” back to Bess. **Discuss:** How did the British learn about Bess and The Highwayman’s love affair? **Write:** Find a direct quote to support your claim.

5. **Discuss:** What did Tim the Ostler have to gain if The Highwayman were executed? Knowing the social ladder of Europe, would Tim the Osler’s dream have ever become a reality? Explain.

As a group, **draw** a picture that is textually accurate as to what your character would look like in the story. You can choose to do a close up drawing of their face, or you can choose to do a drawing that is far away. Remember to look back for textual evidence as to accurately draw this figure.

**The British Redcoats**

1. **Write:** Find two quotes that make you dislike the British Redcoats, as readers, within the poem.

**Discuss:** Why, as readers, do you dislike these actions? Why would British people listening to this story around a campfire be more likely to rise up against King George due to these actions?

2. **Write**: What actions do the British soldiers do that make Bess socially unacceptable for marriage later in life. Find two direct quotes to support your claim.

**Discuss:**  Why would these actions have made Bess unable to get married socially? What does this tell you about the role of women in society in the 1700s? (\*Hint: The social ladder of Europe suggests that Bess is now valued as “garbage.” Do you agree with this as readers or do you think Bess still has value? Explain.)

3. **Discuss**: Bess decides to end her own life at the end of the story. How were the Redcoats responsible for this? Do you believe The Highwayman would have still wanted to marry Bess after what the Redcoats did to her? **Write:** Find textual evidence to prove your claim.

4. **Write and Discuss:** When The British Redcoats came in and started drinking the landowner’s ale and “said no word to the landlord,” what does this suggest as to how the army treated European citizens? Did they pay for the ale? Did they have any respect for the landlord’s property? How would these actions lead to a revolution?

5. **Discuss:**  Do you think the British Army truly acted like this, or do you think the original storyteller was purposefully villainizing the army because he himself had something to gain out of making King George seem tyrannical.

**Write:**  What social class would an author belong to and what could a writer have to gain from making King George seem evil?

As a group, draw a picture that is textually accurate as to what your character would look like in the story. You can choose to do a close up drawing of their face, or you can choose to do a drawing that is far away. Remember to look back for textual evidence as to accurately draw this figure.