

Follow, Follow, Follow: Conforming to Society

Task 4: Evaluating the Importance of Institutions

Activity 1: Evaluating the Importance of Institutions Through Word Meanings in Texts

Directions:

You will read both the poem and short story listed below. You will need to use context clues to determine word meanings, define words, and analyze word choice. After reading, complete all parts of the activity.

Read the following:

- “The Rules of the Game” by Amy Tan
- “If” by Rudyard Kipling

1. Read the following sentence from “The Rules of the Game.” Using context clues, determine the best possible meaning of the word **pungent** and define it in your own words.

My brothers and I would peer into the medicinal herb shop, watching old Li dole out onto a stiff sheet of white paper the right amount of insect shells, saffron-colored seeds, and pungent leaves for his ailing customers.

Answers will vary.

Ex: strong.

2. Read the following sentence from “The Rules of the Game.” Using context clues, determine the best possible meaning of the word **prodigy** and define it in your own words.

By my ninth birthday, I was a national chess champion. I was still some 429 points away from grand-master status, but I was touted as the Great American Hope, a child prodigy and a girl to boot.

Answers will vary.

Ex: talented child; an exemplar

3. Read the lines from the second stanza of “If”. Using context clues, determine the best possible meaning of the word **imposters** and define it in your own words.

If you can dream – and not make dreams your master;

If you can think – and not make thoughts your aim;

If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster

And treat those two **imposters** just the same;

Answers will vary.

Ex: fakers, frauds, cheaters, shams

4. What does the word **imposters** refer to?

Triumph and Disaster

5. How does the author's choice to use that word create his intended meaning?

Answers will vary.

Ex: Showing the bad qualities to emphasize the bad traits that his son should have to become a "good man."