

LITERATURE 4B

TEACHER'S NOTES

AUTHOR	O Henry
TITLE	<i>One Thousand Dollars</i>
THEMES	Money and value, talking about future events
WRITING	An essay
THINK STYLE	Irony

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

O Henry (1862–1910) was born in North Carolina, USA. He wrote hundreds of short stories. His most famous collections were *Cabbages and Kings* (1904), *Roads of Destiny* (1909) *Whirligigs* (1910). *One Thousand Dollars* appeared in a collection of short stories, *The Voice of the City* in 1908.

O Henry was a *pseudonym*, or pen name. His real name was William Sidney Porter. While working at a bank, he started a magazine called *The Rolling Stone*. This included his short stories and sketches, and also made fun of politicians. He was arrested in 1896, but escaped to Latin America. He returned and was jailed for five years. While he was in prison, a friend sent his short stories to a magazine where they were published. His stories are famous for their wit and characterisation and plot twists.

INTRODUCTION

Ask students if they have heard of O Henry or *One Thousand Dollars*. If they have, ask them to say more about the author or the story. If they haven't, ask them to predict what the story may be about. Then ask them if they can remember the definition of a short story. Use the information in the *About the author* box to provide an introduction. Ask students to say why authors may choose to use a pen name.

START THINKING ...

- 1 Organise the class into pairs or small groups and have students briefly discuss the questions. Then ask students for their opinions. Encourage them to back up their answers with examples and to give reasons to justify their answers.
- 2 Draw students' attention to the text in the top right-hand corner of the page which 'sets the scene' and clarify understanding. Play the audio. When students have read and listened to the text once, allow time to check unfamiliar words in the glossary. Ask comprehension questions to check understanding of the text.
- 3 Students read through the questions. Check for understanding and remind them to refer closely to the text to find the answers.

Answers

1 T 2 F 3 F 4 F 5 T

- 4 Students read the text again. Discuss the questions and answers with the class.

Answers

- 1 No. Lawyer Tolman says 'I do not know if you paid much attention to its details'.
- 2 No. He received an allowance from his uncle.
- 3 He tells him to go to a sheep ranch because he has 'a particular dislike for sheep'. He also says 'inflict your presence', so they don't have a good relationship.
- 4 He probably won't do as he's told. He says 'I've got to turn in an account for it, and I hate itemizing'.

- 5 Read through the sentences one at a time to check comprehension of any unknown vocabulary. Working individually, students complete the sentences with the words in the glossary. Ask individual students for answers to the questions.

Answers

- 1 late 2 ward 3 will 4 expenditure
- 5 offensive 6 inflict

Optional extension

Ask students to make another sentence for each item in the glossary. Explain that writing new vocabulary items in context is a good way to remember them. Then ask students to find another five new words in the text and to write the words in sentences.

ROLE PLAY

- 6 Organise the class into pairs. Read the instruction and check that students understand what they are going to do. Point out that Lotta's line comes from the text. When she says 'I'm going on', she means 'going on stage'. Ask two students to read the first part of the conversation. Brainstorm ideas and phrases on the board. Set a time limit of 5–10 minutes. Monitor and offer support while students are preparing their role plays. Students should write their scripts. Encourage as many students as possible to perform their role plays. Consider asking groups to perform to each other. The 'audience' group can monitor language use and make corrections if necessary. This can also be done as a full-class exercise.

LISTENING

- 7 Before listening, explain that students are going to hear what about what happened when Gillian visits Miss Hayden. Play the recording twice. The first time, encourage students to listen without taking notes. The second time, they complete the summary with the words in the list.

Answers

- 1 Hayden 2 loved 3 envelope 4 \$50,000
5 Miriam / Miss Hayden 6 horse races

- 8 Students read through the questions. Encourage students to answer from memory. Play the recording again for students to complete their answers and to check.

Answers

- 1 surprised 2 sheep 3 taxi 4 isn't
5 disappointed in

AUDIOSCRIPT

Miss Hayden was writing letters in the library.

'I've just come from old Tolman's,' he explained. 'They found an amendment or something to the will. It seemed that the old boy loosened up a little on second thoughts and willed you a thousand dollars. I was driving up this way and Tolman asked me to bring you the money. Here it is.'

Miss Hayden turned white. 'Oh!' she said, and again 'Oh!'

Gillian half turned and looked out the window.

'I suppose, of course,' he said, 'that you know I love you.'

'I am sorry,' said Miss Hayden, taking up her money.

'There is no use?' asked Gillian, almost light-heartedly.

'I am sorry,' she said again.

'May I write a note?' asked Gillian, with a smile.

Gillian made out his account of his expenditure of the thousand dollars in these words:

'Paid by the black sheep, Robert Gillian, \$1,000 to the best and dearest woman on earth.'

Gillian slipped his writing into an envelope, bowed and went his way.

His cab stopped again at the offices of Tolman & Sharp.

'I have expended the thousand dollars,' he said to Tolman, 'and I have come to render account of it, as I agreed.'

He tossed a white envelope on the lawyer's table.

Mr Tolman went to a door and called his partner, Sharp. Together they opened the safe and brought in a big envelope sealed with wax. They wagged their heads together over its contents. Then Tolman became spokesman.

'Mr Gillian,' he said, 'there was another document in your uncle's will. It was intrusted to us privately, with instructions that it not be opened until you had furnished us with a full account of your handling of the \$1,000. As you have fulfilled the conditions, my partner and I have read the document.'

'In the event that your disposition of the \$1,000 demonstrates that you possess any of the qualifications that deserve reward, much benefit will accrue to you. If your disposal of the money in question has been prudent, wise, or unselfish, it is in our power to hand you \$50,000, which has been placed in our hands for that purpose. But if you have used this money as you have money in the past, the \$50,000 is to be paid to Miriam Hayden, ward of the late Mr Gillian, without delay. Now, Mr Gillian, Mr Sharp and I will examine your account in regard to the \$1,000.'

Mr Tolman reached for the envelope. Gillian was a little the quicker in taking it up. He tore the account and its cover and dropped them into his pocket.

'It's all right,' he said, smilingly. 'There isn't a bit of need to bother you with this. I lost the thousand dollars on the horse races. Good-day to you, gentlemen.'

Tolman & Sharp shook their heads mournfully at each other when Gillian left, for they heard him whistling gayly in the hallway as he waited for the elevator.



CRITICAL THINKING

Ask the students the questions: *Did Gillian spend the money wisely? How do you think he expected Miss Hayden to respond? Do you think he'll regret his decision later on?* Working individually, students write notes for each question. When students have finished, ask them to work in small groups to compare their ideas. You can then bring their ideas together on the board and discuss their ideas as a class. Then ask the following question: *If someone gave you \$1,000 and told you to spend it on helping the largest number of people possible, how would you spend it?*

WRITING: AN ESSAY

- 9 Read through the *Writing* skills box. In open class, discuss the meaning of the quote. Elicit ideas, such as: an inheritance doesn't just have to be money, people can inherit qualities and characteristics from their parents; if children inherit qualities such as being hard working, persistent, ambitious, etc. they can make their own wealth and don't need to rely on inheriting money. Encourage students to form their own opinions. Students can write their essay in class or for homework. Students then swap their essay with a partner. They read each other's work and highlight any mistakes. They assess whether the student has answered the question fully and whether they have followed the steps. They then return the essay to the original student who looks at the comments and redrafts their work. Ask some students to read their essays out loud to the class.

THINK STYLE

Irony

- 10 Read the *Think* box and check that students understand the meaning of *irony*. Ask them to think about situations that could be ironic. Give them some examples: a police officer being arrested; a vegetarian eating a chicken sandwich because they think it looks nice; the *Titanic* being an 'unsinkable' ship, but sinking on its first voyage. Ask them to explain in their own words what irony is. Point out that it can be words or a situation. Then, in partners, students discuss the irony in the situations.

Additional reading or internet research topics

- The USA in the 1900s
- The life of O Henry
- O Henry short stories