

SYNOPSIS

Alternating points of view between Codi and her father, Kingsolver sets her novel in Grace, Arizona, home town of Halimeda "Hallie" Noline and Cosima "Codi" Noline, two close sisters. The girls are the daughters of Dr. Homer "Doc" Noline. Three years earlier, Hallie left to work as an agriculture agent in Nicaragua. Codi punishes herself for her sister's departure.

At loose ends with her life and ambitions, Codi returns to the gossipy community in Arizona to tend her 66-year-old father, who is in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease. She takes a position teaching high school biology. On her walks through the neighborhood, Codi discovers that local pecan and quince trees suffer from premature fruit drop.

At a party, she makes casual conversation with Loyd Peregrina, by whom she had a stillborn baby when she was fifteen. She turns her attention to the tree problem. Locals know that the poison ground under their orchards is the result of leaching from the Black Mountain mines, which exude sulfuric acid into the river. The mining firm will continue its polluting as long as the tailings remain lucrative sources of gold and molybdenum.

Codi takes her biology classes on a field trip to the river. The next day, she is annoyed that they can identify nothing on the samples they took of the river water. When she looks into a microscope, she realizes that there is nothing to see—the river is dead.

One October weekend, Codi travels with Loyd to Kinishba, a 800-year-old Pueblo dwelling. She surprises her students by teaching them about condoms. They predict that the school board will fire her for teaching reproduction without permission. She informs them that she doesn't fear authority because she has a temporary contract and will leave at the end of the year. Late that month, a pregnant student tells Codi about a checkup with Doc, who confused the girl with Codi and scolded her for not eating properly during pregnancy.

In their first confrontation since Codi's return, father and daughter tiptoe around the issue of advancing Alzheimer's. She recognizes superficial symptoms in the way that her father organizes and arranges items in his kitchen. He promises her that he will retire when the disease progresses beyond his ability to cope with a medical practice. She confesses that she quit medicine because she is incompetent: during a difficult breach birth, she walked away from the patient. To her father's question about what medicine means to her, she declares that it isn't what she wanted.

In winter, Grace's trees begin to die. Codi informs the ladies' Stitch and Bitch Club that the copper sulfate that leaches from the mine tailings enters the river as sulfuric acid. The club decides to sanction mass demonstrations against the mining operations, beginning at six o'clock the next morning.

One Sunday morning, Loyd and Codi argue about her insinuation that Loyd is a dumb Indian. He asks whom she intends to marry; she replies that she doesn't want a husband. She spills her anxiety that the town expects her to replace Doc Homer.

Over the Christmas holiday, Codi visits Santa Rosalia Pueblo with Loyd. The women, speaking Keres, welcome Codi and lavish love on Loyd, the only male child of the family. The couple sleep together with the blessing of the family, who all seem to like Codi. Men exit the kivas to perform a corn dance; kosharis clown around and pull the ladder away from the roof on which the couple sit. The community hopes that Loyd will marry her.

On Christmas day, a caller tells Doc that Hallie has been kidnapped. There is little hope of recovering her alive. Codi talks about her loneliness and insecurity in childhood, blaming Doc for rearing the girls as though they were better than other people in Grace. She accuses him of going to medical school on the GI Bill so he and his beautiful wife could return to Grace as superior members of the community.

Codi calls the Minister of Agriculture in Managua every week during the rainy month of February. At night, she sees Hallie in her dreams and weeps that she doesn't know how to save her.

While Doc goes to Tucson for a CAT scan, Uda Dell asks permission to clean his house. In the attic, they find pairs of orthopedic shoes left over from the Noline sisters' childhood and photos of children, including Codi and Hallie. Uda explains that she was the girls' surrogate mother for ten years. Doc takes to his bed, weakened by full realization that he is dying. Codi questions his secrets about their family. They discuss their doubts that Hallie will return. Early in April, the school board notifies Codi she has been voted teacher of the year. They want her to return to the classroom in fall.

Loyd encourages Codi to stay in Grace. A call comes that Hallie's body has been found. Loyd drives Codi to Tucson for the formalities. On the way, she sees an ambulance crew shut off their lights because the accident victim inside has died. She weeps for Hallie. In June, Codi holds a memorial service for Hallie. Mourners stitch a blanket with keepsakes and share memories of Hallie.

At the end of a forty-year career, Doc deteriorates. Codi tells Doc that she enjoys teaching and that she and Loyd want another child. Confusing her with his late wife, Doc thinks he sees his children in their cowboy hats and bends to embrace them.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

A winner with her first novel, Barbara Kingsolver has garnered praise and a place in the young adult canon for her off-beat humor, spunky pacing, and optimistic faith in character. A native of Annapolis, Maryland, Kingsolver was born April 8, 1944, to family physician Dr. Wendell R. Kingsolver and Virginia Henry Kingsolver. An introspective child with a keen

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sense of observation, she came of age in Nicholas County, Kentucky, a pocket of poverty. She recalls the nobility of her father, the area's only doctor, who respected his patients' pride by accepting vegetables as payment.

As a child, Kingsolver read Christina Rossetti and juvenile verse, which became the impetus to juvenilia. Along with storytelling, she developed essays and kept a journal. In maturity, she turned to the strong female writers of the South—Eudora Welty, Carson McCullers, and Flannery O'Connor—as models of local color and craft. Feminism appealed to her, especially the polemics of Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem. After high school, Kingsolver continued her journal and began composing sonnets as a means of developing control over construction, cadence, and diction.

In 1977, Kingsolver entered DePauw University and took part in anti-Vietnam War demonstrations. She intended to major in classical piano, but, for practical reasons, earned a B. A. in biology and an English minor. She graduated *magna cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa. Four years later, she completed an M. S. from the University of Arizona with a thesis on termites. She pursued graduate study in a University of Arizona doctoral program in evolutionary biology and ecology, but grew disillusioned. After working two years as a research assistant in the University of Arizona's physiology department and five years as a technical writer for a desert study, she turned to free-lance journalism and fiction. During a period of investigative reporting, she supported Amnesty International, covered human rights issues in Latin America, and wrote environmental studies, in particular, the exposé of the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Plant.

Kingsolver was married to chemistry professor Joseph Hoffmann from 1985 to 1993 and settled on a Tucson farm. Immersed in the contrasts of light and color, she turned hiking and gardening into pantheism, her avowed religion. During her pregnancy, she began sitting up late at night to write fiction. Before daughter Camille's birth, Kingsolver completed her first novel, *The Bean Trees*, which she fleshed out with memories, Kentucky colloquialisms, and observations from her journal. She is still eager to help others and leads workshops in creative writing. For a getaway, she plays keyboard and percussion with Dave Barry, Amy Tan, Stephen King, Robert Fulghum, and Ridley Pearson in a rock group, the Rock Bottom Remainers.

CRITIC'S CORNER

Kingsolver's interest in the peculiarities and strengths of the ordinary has endeared her to a devoted audience. For *Holding the Line*, a documentary on civil rights during the Phelps Dodge Company 1983 mining strike, Kingsolver stayed on the scene, recording and analyzing tensions, and aims. She admired female strikers, many of them Hispanic and Native American single parents, for their commitment to ideals. No less accurate a form of reportage, her command of short fiction is evident in *Animal Dreams* in the intermingling of straightforward word play and sensitivity to rural life. In her depiction of Hallie, she displays a concern for destitute Third World people. Her strikingly resonant blend of realism and fiction has found favor with Paramount Pictures, which holds an option on *The Bean Trees*. Likewise, Jane Fonda has contracted to produce the sequel—*Pigs in Heaven*—for Turner Pictures. Kingsolver publishes in numerous periodicals—*McCall's*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Calyx*, *Progressive*, *New Mexico Humanities Review*, *Redbook*,

Natural History, *Architectural Digest*, *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, *Sojourner*, *Smithsonian*, *Tucson Weekly*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Heresies*, and *Mademoiselle*. She also reviews for the *Los Angeles Times Book Review* and the *New York Times Book Review*.

A remarkably balanced populist, Kingsolver maintains idealistic themes of ecological responsibility and concern for the outsider while developing enjoyable human scenarios as true-to-life as a tape recording. In an interview, she claimed to be an inveterate eavesdropper as a means of studying human speech and psychology. Of note is her skilled poetic closure, a lyrical gathering-in of images and meanings, for example, the contrast between living creatures and the poisoned soil of Grace. From minor awards like the Arizona Press Club and a short story contest sponsored by the Phoenix *New Times*, she has gone on to two American Library Association commendations, Enoch Pratt Library Youth-to-Youth Books award, United Nations National Council of Women award, PEN West Fiction prize, *New York Times* Notable Book, Mountains and Plains award, Woodrow Wilson/Lila Wallace fellowship, honorary degree from DePauw University, Western Heritage award, *Los Angeles Times* Book Award, and Edward Abbey Ecofiction award. She is the first author to be nominated four times in succession for the Abby Award.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To discuss the meaning of altruism
2. To list and contrast various loving relationships
3. To define types of pollution in nature and in the human spirit
4. To examine the importance of self-esteem
5. To discuss the difficulties of classroom teaching
6. To list types of adjustment that people make before marriage
7. To chart events that involve Americans in Latin American politics
8. To discuss the strengths of an all-female network
9. To contrast settings
10. To account for rituals of welcome, celebration, and mourning

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To describe how and why Codi accepts a second year's contract in Grace
2. To note Emelina's kindness and support of Codi
3. To evaluate decisions that help Grace rid itself of sulfuric poisoning
4. To account for the popularity of peñatas
5. To analyze scenes in which Codi quarrels with Doc and with herself
6. To comprehend the burial of garments
7. To analyze Codi's love for Loyd
8. To discuss symbolism in All Souls Day, Halloween, the corn dance, and cockfighting
9. To evaluate similar qualities in Doc, Hallie, Codi, and Carlo
10. To project how Grace will respond to Doc's death and to Codi's decision to teach a second year

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MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have a particular meaning in this novel. Explain each. Chapter names and page numbers pinpoint the context in which the item appears.

1. He slashes at the oleanders with the metal flashlight. He'd meant to cut these down when Cosima was born. One well-chewed leaf could bring on cardiac arrest in a child. ("The Flood," p. 20)
(Doc is fearful of the poisonous effects of a tall evergreen shrub native to the tropics of North and South America, Africa, Asia, Pacific islands, and the East Indies. Oleander is an attractive landscaping or garden plant grown in tubs or in the ground in warm climates as hedges and ornamentals. Its relatives include periwinkle, Natal plum, frangipani, and Mandevilla. Common to walkways, perennial beds, driveways, riversides, and parks, the oleander produces long, graceful limbs covered in narrow green leaves and terminal fragrant clusters of white, pink, or lilac blossoms. The plant is useful as a source of latex and alkaloids, such as rauvolfia, serpentine, and rescinnamine, which were the main psychotropic drugs of the early twentieth century. The plant's alkaloid juices are strong emetics and purgatives originally used to stabilize blood pressure.)
2. Those Baron Münchhausen stories. I found it in with my books when I was cleaning my room. ("Killing Chickens," p. 34)
(On her departure from the United States, Hallie discovers that she hasn't returned a borrowed book and telephones Codi. The volume contains the adventures of Baron Münchhausen, a series of picaresque episodes claimed by Karl Friedrich Hieronymus under the title Baron Munchausen's Narrative of His Marvelous Travels and Campaigns in Russia (1785). The stories emulate the Arabian Nights, Gulliver's Travels, and Gargantua and Pantagruel and recount the Baron's memories of a war between Russia and the Turks in 1737-1739.)
3. Our football team was called the Apaches, but Loyd was also a real Apache, and the kind of handsome you could see coming down the road like bad news. ("The Miracle," p. 52)
(Loyd Peregrina takes pride in his mixed ancestry, part of which is Apache. He claims membership in a tribe of hunter-gatherers derived from the ancient Anasazi, the earliest settlers of the American Southwest and the builders of ancient adobe-walled multiple dwellings. The Apaches claim as revered leaders Geronimo, Cochise, Mangas Coloradas, and Dr. Carlos Montezuma, author of a journal, Wassaja (1865-1923).)
4. "Quince," he said, with a perfect short "i," not "queens." ("Poison Ground," p. 56)
(The orchards hit by fruit drop in Grace include stands of pecan and quince trees. A small showy tree or shrub of the pear and apple family, the quince is either a pure strain or grafted stock that produces fuzzy round fruit, usually green, white, or yellow in color. The quince contains a hard flesh used in preserves, jellies, and condiments.)
5. They won't fight the EPA. It's not worth it. ("Poison Ground," p. 63)
(The strongest federal environmental force is found in the Environmental Protection Agency, established in 1970 to monitor the nation's air, water, soil, plants, and animals from pollutants. One purpose of the agency is to establish standards by which situations can be compared and to grant money and technical support for massive cleanups, for example, after the oil spill from the tanker Valdez off the Alaska coastline and in neighborhoods affected by the Love Canal industrial toxins. As an enforcement agency, EPA officers have the power to arrest and prosecute polluters who flout the law or to shut down entire operations, for example, the approach of substandard tanker ships to an unstable or treacherous coastline.)
6. And we'd decided realistically that we didn't have room for a dog, so it went to the Humane Society. Terms like that, "Humane Society," are devised with people like me in mind, who don't care to dwell on what happens to the innocent. ("The Bones in God's Backyard," p. 93)
(The Humane Society is a volunteer relief agency that protects children and animals from cruelty, menace, or neglect. Established in the eighteenth century to prevent drowning, it expanded its outreach to animals in England in 1824 and 42 years later in the United States. Some people are misled by the name, which refers to the easy death offered to injured, diseased, or aged animals that can't be saved or placed in homes.)
7. J. T. informed me that game birds were fighting cocks. ("A River on the Moon," p. 101)
(Cockfighting is an ancient sport that pits two belligerent male cockerels or roosters in a deadly battle provoked by livestock breeders and fight promoters for the purpose of entertainment and gambling. Usually set in a sand pit edged by boards, brick walls, or other enclosures, the fights begin when two cocks are released in close quarters and claw and peck at each other until one is dead or incapacitated. To enhance their killing force, fighters arm the claws with metal studs, lancets, or razors. Such deadly fights usually end in a matter of seconds after one bird has lacerated the other in the neck or head. As a blood sport, the practice of raising, selling, transporting, or fighting with cocks is outlawed in many countries.)
8. Our classmates were treating intestinal parasites in Niger and Haiti, black lung in Appalachia, while Carlo and I set broken legs on the steep slope of Mount Ida, mythical birthplace of Zeus. ("A River on the Moon," p. 107)
(Zeus, the father of the Olympian gods in Cretan mythology, was the son of Cronos, a bloodthirsty deity and father of the Titans. Cronos regularly sired and ate his children because a prophecy warned that his son would overpower and dethrone him. After Gaea, the earth mother, bore Zeus, she presented Cronos with a stone swaddled in a baby blanket. He swallowed the stone without knowing that Zeus was in hiding. When Zeus was ready to overthrow his father, he defeated him in open combat and forced Cronos to disgorge Zeus's brothers and sisters, who made up the panoply of Olympian gods. The story bears elements of sadism common to the uncivilized era that preceded classical Greece.)

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9. The pH, which we test, from some areas came in just a hair higher than battery acid. ("A River on the Moon," p. 110)

(A measure of acidity, pH, a symbol referring to the "power of hydrogen ion concentration," standardizes the degree of acidity and basicity in chemical substances. The base level is 7, the pH of purified or distilled water. High on the scale is stomach acid at 1.4, lemon juice at 2.1, and coffee at 5. Lower levels of acidity include milk at 6.6, blood at 7.4, and household ammonia at 11.9)

10. She was so malnourished, he could have predicted toxemia, even placenta abruptio. ("Crybabies," 142)

(While silently taking stock of Codi's physical condition during pregnancy, Doc predicts that her nutritional deficiencies could result in a threatening number of toxins in the blood or in the separation of the fetus from the placenta, a network of vessels that supplies oxygen and nutrients from the mother's blood directly into the fetus's bloodstream.)

COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages from the novel.

Questions 1-5 Literal Level

1. Make an alphabetized list of foreign terms from the story and explain each.

(Kingsolver expresses the influence of converging cultures by lacing the story with foreign words and phrases:

abuelita—grandmother

• arroz con pollo—chicken with rice

• causam meam cognosco—I recognize my purpose

• Cielo santo—holy sky

• claro que sí—clear as is

• cucaracha—cockroach

• cumpleaños—confirmation

• Desde antes que tú cagabas en tus pañales!—Since before you soiled your diapers!

• doña—lady, madam

• equipales—equipment, crew

• haute cuisine—artful cooking

• huérfanas—orphan girls

• Keres—a language spoken by one segment of Pueblo Indians

• malcriado—rude, discourteous

• modus operandi—work style; method of operating

• muchacha—girl, child

• no estamos seguros—We are uncertain

• puro—pure

• semilla besada—little seeds that were kissed

• sopa del día—soup of the day

• tia—aunt

• veneno—poison)

2. How have Codi and Hallie spent their lives after they moved away from Grace and their father?

(After leaving home to study medicine, Codi Noline was still doing research for the Mayo Clinic at her last meeting with Doc in Las Cruces, which was two years previous to the beginning of the novel. Anguished at her flight from a difficult breach birth, she abandons her career two months shy of a medical degree and lives with Carlo, a gung-ho medical student who works in emer-

gency rooms. The couple moves to Crete, where she serves as a housewife and occasionally treats animals.

When Carlo and Codi return to the United States to settle in Tucson, she and her sister Hallie live happily in Carlo's home until Hallie volunteers to be an agricultural agent in Central America. Living with Carlo is not as much fun after Hallie departs. Codi gives up her third shift job at the 7-Eleven, leaves Carlo, and returns to Grace to help Doc, who is in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease.)

3. What does Codi find on her return to Grace?

(The situation is difficult for Codi, who does not remember her stern father with affection. While delivering a paper in Las Cruces on medical work she was conducting at the Mayo Clinic two years earlier, she had met Doc and learned about his Alzheimer's disease. She returns home to take a one-year job teaching Biology I and II at Grace High School and to decide how to help Doc prepare for retirement and for the deterioration that will rob him of his memory. Both fear his demise, but have no words or rituals for sharing their love and concern.

The return to Grace reunites Codi with the Domingos family, including J. T. and Emelina and their boys, who consider Codi their aunt. While living in the family's guesthouse during her year of teaching, she resumes a love affair with Loyd Peregrina, whose stillborn child she had secretly buried in Tortoise Canyon when she was fifteen. The attraction between Codi and Loyd is still physically strong, but emotionally unstable. However, Loyd pursues Codi with obvious ardor and love.

Codi has her difficulties with the men in her life. Both Loyd and Doc are argumentative and testy as they settle unfinished business with Codi from the past. Loyd believes that Codi looks down on him for his meager education and because of his part in the cockfighting business. Doc is angry that Codi didn't finish her internship and that she gave birth and buried her child without consulting him. Dealing with the two men is Codi's emotional task in Grace.)

4. What evidence is there that the Black Mountain mines are poisoning the town?

(When Codi arrives, she recognizes that fruit drop in pecan and quince trees is a sign of pollution. Kingsolver gives a detailed sketch of the problem with sulfuric acid in "Bleeding Hearts": "People used to use [blue vitriol] to kill rats and pond algae and about everything else you can name. There's a ton of it in your river. And there's straight sulfuric acid in there too. The EPA finally sent a report saying that kind of pollution is very dangerous, and they can't put it near people and orchards, so Black Mountain is building a dam to run the river out Tortoise Canyon."

A class project gathering samples from the river results in no microscopic protozoa on the students' slides because acidity has killed water-borne biota. As the trees begin to die that winter, the weight of suspicion about sulfuric acid in the water proves deadlier than Codi originally thought. Codi's lecture to the Stitch and Bitch Club informs local women of the danger of increasing acidity from copper tailings, which the mining company smelts to extract gold and molybdenum.)

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5. How does Hallie's death affect the Noline family?
(Late in the winter, Codi and her father agonize over Hallie's disappearance, which they learned about from an unidentified caller at Christmas. When Hallie's body is found shot through the head with hands tied, Codi at first screams in shock and disbelieves the evidence, then accepts the sketchy details as true. She completes paperwork, reads the remaining letters from her sister, and relives some of her misgivings about their motherless home and about Doc's stiff rules for his daughters. Doc and Codi quarrel.)

After learning that she is the daughter of two local families, Codi rethinks her insecurities about being outside the Grace community circle. Childhood photographs of Gracela syndrome place Codi and Hallie among other children in Doc's practice. Information from Uda Dell fills in the years that she served as surrogate mother to the unruly Noline girls. Grave markings indicate that the Nolines and Altheas are integral to the community's past. Codi begins to think of herself as an insider in Grace.)

Questions 6-8 Interpretive Level

6. Why is Canyon de Chelly an important setting?
(When Loyd escorts Codi to Canyon de Chelly, he tells her the ancient Navaho-Pueblo story of Spider Woman. In "Ground Orientation," Codi absorbs the splendor of the "prehistoric condos" and their architectural beauty: "The canyon walls rose straight up on either side of us, ranging from sunset orange to deep rust, mottled with purple. The sandstone had been carved by ice ages and polished by desert eons of sandpaper winds. The place did not so much inspire religion as it seemed to be religion itself."

Kingsolver does not express the bitter Navajo history of the Long Walk, a brutal forced march launched by Colonel Kit Carson in 1863. Carson's troops rounded up herders and orchard keepers from the Canyon at Four Corners, the juncture of Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico. He supervised the slaughter of their livestock and ordered his men to hack down peach trees and vegetables to force the Indians southeast to the Bosque Redondo Agency near Fort Sumner, New Mexico.

The Long Walk is an historic event on par with the Trail of Tears, which displace East Coast Indians to reservations in Oklahoma. The 300-mile Long Walk began in March 1864 and concluded with four years's confinement of 8,491 people, many of whom died of communicable disease, starvation, exposure, and despair. In 1868, the government signed treaties with rebel forces, led by Manuelito and Barboncito, and allowed the Navajo to return on foot to their sacred Canyon de Chelly.)

7. What is the significance of dancers departing the pueblo's kiva?
(In prehistoric Anasazi tradition, the kiva is a round underground chamber in which Pueblo men of a single clan gather to worship and propitiate their gods for healing, successful hunts and harvests, and the strength and perpetuation of the village. The kiva has a circular hole in the roof, through which worshippers enter by ladder and settle on the stone floor below. A small hole on the

floor, the sipapu, represents the birth canal through which humanity emerged from the underworld. The walls may be decorated with sacred petroglyphs and drawings.

Kiva societies perform multiple religious services for the Navajo community. They store and repair prayer sticks, turquoise and shell beads, and other ritual implements. They make ceremonial prayers, chants, and offerings preparatory to seasonal dances, such as the Corn Dance that Codi witnesses. For the Snake Dance, participants wash and release purified snakes to north, south, east, and west in search of good weather.)

8. What is the purpose of koshari?
(The Pueblo rituals include a clown society called koshari or koyala, who may be painted with the horizontal white-on-black lines representing a human skeleton or dressed as demons or spirits. These entertainers lighten the mood of ritual dances and worship services by dressing in women's garb, gobbling food, playing pranks on tribe members, satirizing serious ritual, joking with visitors, and climbing a pole to retrieve a prize. In Kingsolver's words, "Koshari had acquired a new-looking straw cowboy hat, which he cocked ridiculously on one of his horns. I had a feeling it wasn't the Navajo he was aping here. He walked duck-footed with a John Wayne swagger and was using a length of two-by-four as a gun. He knelt and fired repeatedly at the dancing deer, grandly falling over backward each time. Later he stalked them, trailing his gun in the snow and tripping over it with admirably practiced body comedy." As holy buffoons, the kosharis tumble, beg for coins, and perform magic tricks and time-honored comedy routines as part of the annual festival.)

Questions 9 and 10 Critical Level

9. How does Kingsolver speak her own idealism in *Animal Dreams*?
(Through the device of Hallie's letters, Kingsolver has a voice in the proceedings, which she carefully tempers with humor and wisdom. In a retort to Codi for worshipping Hallie, she composes an intensely philosophical letter about the purpose of her mission to Nicaragua. Hallie denies that she is saving the Third World. She explains that she had to leave the country which subsidized the killing of Central Americans. She declares that she works on a scaled-down daily agenda, one problem at a time. She absents herself from wars and elections, which "are both too big and too small to matter in the long run." A proponent of "one day at a time," Hallie is more concerned with what "goes into the ground, into crops, into children's bellies and their bright eyes. Good things don't get lost.")
10. How does Hallie encourage Codi to live with hope?
(She instructs her sister to "figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope." A practical message at a time when Codi is drifting toward wasting her energies, the philosophy inspires her to accept Doc's disease and to work for Grace in her classroom and through local activism. As Hallie describes this form of realism, "Right now I'm living in that hope, running down its hallway and touching the walls on both sides."

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Kingsolver works at the character of Hallie to instill a nobility and courage in her character. The beauty of Hallie's encouragement is that it comes from so poor and hopeless a country and abounds with love and blessing. She writes, "I can't tell you how good it feels. I wish you knew. I wish you'd stop beating yourself up for being selfish, and really be selfish, Codi." Hallie compares Codi to a mother and urges her to "squander" herself.)

Questions 11 and 12 Creative Level

11. Write a letter to the EPA expressing your concern for fruit drop, lack of biota in the river, and other signs of sulfuric pollutants from the Black Mountain mines. Make practical suggestions for improvements to the city water supply.
12. Create a role for a social worker or public health nurse who will visit Doc and help him cope with his failing memory. Make a list of areas of his house and office that must be made safe, e. g., the darkroom, attic stairs, and patient files. Suggest activities that he can share with Codi, for instance, arranging family photos in albums.

LITERARY TERMS AND APPLICATIONS

For a better understanding of Barbara Kingsolver's style, present the following terms and applications to her novel:

A **first-person narrative** is a story or series of actions told from the vantage point of a single observer. *Animal Dreams* examines a father/daughter relationship by presenting two points of view. In Homero's chapters, Doc tries to justify his behavior as a single parent, particularly in the scenes in which the girls rescue coyote pups and in which Codi gives birth in the bathroom and buries the stillborn fetus. In Cosima's chapters, she tells her own story, interspersing events in Crete and Tucson, and on her departure from Grace with the major episodes of her return to town. By emphasizing first-person narrative, Kingsolver epitomizes the conflicted parenthood in Doc's earlier years with his ambivalence toward the future for a victim of Alzheimer's disease and the frustration Codi feels about her sister's altruism and her father's matter-of-fact treatment of them in childhood.

The **historic milieu** is the setting of fictional events in a real period of history. The race prejudice and genocide in Latin American countries cast an ominous shadow over Codi's communications with her sister.

A **symbol** is a concrete object that stands for a complex or abstract idea or relationship. In *Animal Dreams*, ordinary items intensify themes, as with the neat stack of refrigerator boxes in Doc's kitchen, which parallel his neat rules for a healthy life. Other significant objects include the startled faces of children whom Doc has photographed, Loyd's explanation of the difficulties of driving a train over mountains, the failed engine on the plane that is to take Codi out of Arizona to Telluride, the black sweater that swaddles the stillborn child, and the burden basket that Loyd gives Codi for Christmas.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Art

1. Collect material for a bulletin board about the effects of removing gold and molybdenum from copper tailings. Include EPA rules and recent legislation concerning clean air and water.
2. Draw contrasting murals, cartoons, or posters to demon-

strate these pairs: the smelter and Canyon de Chelly, a dead river and volcanic hot spring, All Saints Day and Hallie's funeral, the ambulance and AMTRAK to Grace, Codi's delivery of a dead child and the child injured in Guatemala, and meeting the Stitch and Bitch Club and introducing the skeleton of Mrs. Josephine Nash.

3. With a group, create piñatas that commemorate the work of volunteers in Central America or of protesters who demand clean soil and water.

Geography

1. Draw a map of the settings named and described in the story. Show where Hallie works, the route Codi takes from Tucson to Grace, and Loyd's routes on his job as engineer. Pinpoint other areas named in the text: Illinois, Managua, Chinandega, Chiapas, Rio Grande, Zanzibar, Crete, Venice, Minnesota, Telluride, Colorado River reservations, Las Cruces, La Cruz, Canyon de Chelly, Ship Rock, Minnesota, and the Jemez Mountains.
2. Locate on a map of the American Southwest the tribes mentioned—Navajo, Zuni, Hopi, Apache, Tewa, and Papago. Indicate with symbols the area where the Keres language is spoken. Append paragraphs about each entry on the map.
3. Make a chalk talk about Third World countries where American forces have intervened in local affairs. Include Guatemala, Panama, Somalia, Haiti, and Grenada.
4. Use sand, clay, paper mache, or another malleable substance to demonstrate these geological terms from the novel: arroyo, mesa, dry river bed, volcanic hot spring, canyon, jungle, and butte.

Social Studies and Law

1. Using desktop publishing or other media, draw up a roster of ways that volunteers can assist nations in distress and help individual refugees, orphans, noncombatants, merchants, farmers, students, the illiterate, and victims of disease and hunger. Mention assistance to the Red Cross, UNICEF, Amnesty International, Christian Children's Fund, Peace Corps, Jewish World Relief, and Caritas.
2. Conduct interviews with people who knew Hallie. Include Doc, Uda Dell, Alice Kimball, Doña Althea, Loyd, Emelina, Codi, former schoolmates, the Minister of Agriculture, and the unidentified caller who tells of Hallie's abduction. Compose a single biography from these divergent points of view.
3. Create a time line of peoples who have lived in Mexico, Arizona, and New Mexico in prehistory.

Computers

1. Using a word processor, compose a pronouncing gazetteer of medical terms to accompany this novel. Include words such as CAT scan, aneurysm, ganglion, puberty, menarche, hemorrhage, neurological workup, genetics, gene pool, lancet, invertebrates, DOA, orthopedic shoes, biotic death, fetal pig, hysteria, and pigmentation.
2. Design a website that describes the interrelated lives of protozoa and other biota that exist in rivers.

Science and Mental Health

1. Summarize chapters in psychology books that describe the effects of abduction, torture, and execution on relatives, the military, government officials, and fellow citi-

ANIMAL DREAMS

zens of a victim.

2. Describe aloud the use of the microscope to study protozoans gathered on a field trip.
3. Demonstrate on a dummy or doll the procedure by which Codi saves John Tucker from choking.
4. Compose an introductory lesson on one of these topics: the human skeleton, trauma medicine, Alzheimer's disease, pesticide poisoning, correct use of condoms, major food groups, suturing human tissue, oleander poisoning, and prenatal nutrition.

Language Arts

1. Explain to a small group the symbolism of names, items, and places in the novel. Use as a model the name of the town, Grace, which is a Christian concept naming a gift that does not have to be deserved. Also discuss Simon Bolivar, Cosima, Homer, Uda Dell, Althea, Loyd Peregrina, Violet, Leander, and piñata.
2. Compose an extended definition of parent. Select different examples from the book, particularly Emelina, J. T., Uda Dell, Alice, Homer, Rita Cardenal, Loyd, *abuelita*, and Codi.
3. Collect a series of closing lines of sections and chapters to discuss. List Kingsolver's methods of creating humor or meaning. Use as models p. 86, "The day I left Grace I bought a pair of gladiator sandals and my sex life picked right up" and pp. 215-216, "Set carefully among an assortment of old petroglyphs were two modern ones: the outlined left hands of two small boys, just touching, perfectly matched."

History and Current Events

1. Lead a discussion of Barbara Kingsolver's involvement in Latin American politics. Express how novels can change opinions and inspire people to take action to relieve world want and misery.
2. Make an oral report on differing political opinions concerning pollution. Explain why conservative factions tend to side with business against efforts to preserve animal and plant life and to raise standards for soil, air, and water.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Explain in a paragraph the stresses that weigh on Codi. Name her responsibilities to her father and sister, love for Loyd, failed relationship with Carlo, teaching career, disinterest in medicine as a profession, mourning for her mother and stillborn child, distaste for cockfighting, and confusion about her family's belonging in Grace.
2. Join a discussion group to determine the plot strands that ally themes on nature, stewardship of the earth, tribal and community membership, family love, honesty, racism, parenthood, and grief.
3. Draw stage settings for a dramatization of a crucial scene, such as the decoration of graves on All Saints Day, the corn dance outside the kivas, returning on AMTRAK, teaching about pollution, and conducting a service to honor Hallie. Include a list of characters, props, music, make-up, costumes, and lighting necessary to the scene, e. g., kachinas, marigolds, moccasins, afghan, orthopedic shoes, slides, microscopes, water, burden basket, and bus tickets.
4. Contrast a map of Central America with a map of the

southwestern United States. Determine the greatest concentration of different races and ancient settlements. Indicate mountains, mesas, deserts, forests, jungles, lakes, and rivers. Add a paragraph about climate and native plants and animals.

5. Explain in a short speech the implications of the title *Animal Dreams*. Why do dreams haunt Codi? What aspects of animal life does her behavior parallel? Summarize her dreams about the eyeball and about Hallie's return.
6. Dramatize in a short skit one of these conversations: Loyd's memories of Leander, the Indian women's welcome to Codi, Doc's warnings to Rita Cardenal, Doña Althea's interest in Codi, Violet's concerns for the Stitch and Bitch Club, Officer Metz's enforcement of Tucson vending laws, Hallie's concern for the coyote pups, Uda's memories of the Noline sisters' childhood, Carlo's invitation to Telluride, and Doc's interest in his daughter's failed medical career.
7. Explain in a theme the significance to the novel of one of these quotations: "Central America was becoming a toilet bowl of agricultural chemicals," "He listens inside himself for a long time before he understands that it's the teakettle that is screaming," "I'd just done what I knew how to do," "What we suffered in our lives we went through together, but somehow we came out different doors, on different ground levels," and "I hadn't thought before about how self-sufficiency could turn on you in old age or sickness."
8. Write a scene in which Hallie says farewell to her sister, father, and Carlo. Express her reasons for leaving the hotline and going to work in the cotton fields of Central America. Summarize what she hopes to accomplish among poor farmers in a hostile political climate.
9. Discuss the effects of lovelessness on young children. Contrast Codi's lack of love in childhood with her father's attention to details, such as pregnancy, orthopedic shoes, ear piercing, and nutrition. Comment on the significance of boots and moccasins to Loyd's mother. Project what type of parents Codi and Loyd will be.
10. Draw a cause-and-effect diagram illustrating how Doc's decision to practice medicine in Grace causes Codi to grow up lonely, isolated, and insecure. Express the importance of the childhood photographs to Codi's epiphany and her understanding of her family's connection to the Nolines and Altheas of Grace.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. List examples of teamwork, intrigue, cruelty, suffering, fear, need, intimidation, loyalty, ethics, cooperation, skill, appreciation of nature, nurturing, compassion, curiosity, and pride in the novel's characters.
2. Compile a list of scenes that reflect the Noline sisters' concern for others. Include Hallie's work for the hotline and Codi's advice to a pregnant teenager.
3. Compose a scene in which a new doctor comes to Grace and takes over Doc Homer's practice.
4. Make a character list and explain the relationship of each to the Noline family. Include Doña Althea, Mrs. Quintana, Uda Dell, Emelina, Rita Cardenal, Loyd, school board, Alice Kimball, Minister of Agriculture, unidentified caller,

ANIMAL DREAMS

J. T., Viola, and patients.

OTHER WORKS BY BARBARA KINGSOLVER

The Bean Trees, 1988
Homeland and Other Stories, 1989
Animal Dreams, 1990
Another America, verse, 1991
Pigs in Heaven, 1993
High Tide in Tucson, essays, 1995

RELATED READING

Hal Borland's *When the Legends Die*
James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier's *My Brother Sam Is Dead*
Caroline B. Cooney's *The Face on the Milk Carton*
Robert Cormier's *I Am the Cheese*
Robert Frost's "The Death of the Hired Man"
Barbara Kingsolver's *The Bean Trees*
Lois Lowry's *The Giver*
Scott O'Dell's *Sing Down the Moon*
Gary Paulsen's *The Crossing*
Conrad Richter's *The Light in the Forest*
Jesse Stuart's *The Thread That Runs So True*
Jessamyn West's *Except for Me and Thee*

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ANIMAL DREAMS

VOCABULARY TEST

Using the terms that follow, complete each sentence below with a pair of details from the novel. You will have answers left over.

| | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|------------|-----------|----------------|
| anomaly | childbearing | hysteria | momentum | putative | squash-blossom |
| basins | civic | idiomatic | onslaught | refugees | sublime |
| bleakness | compelled | interrogation | orbits | relocated | terrain |
| bludgeoning | genetic | land-based | orthodox | skeleton | triceps |
| cannibalizing | hemorrhagic | manifold | phenomenon | species | truant |
| chaos | hominy | moderation | plaza | sprigs | visual |

1. We buzzed smoothly uphill past the _____ wicked bulldogs, who lay with their _____ chins on their paws.
2. Hallie was a _____ in the _____ closet.
3. There was some _____ when I got to the _____ aids.
4. When it came to _____ and gardening, Emelina seemed unable to walk the path of _____.
5. A whole _____ culture is being _____ out of its land—like a body trying to move out of its skin.
6. My Spanish was passably good, thanks to the years of Hallie's _____ sleeping on my couch, but some of Doña Althea's more _____ swear words were new ones on me.
7. Bugs swirled in the headlights like the planets cut loose from their _____, doomed to _____.
8. The landmarks on this list, he said, were protected from the _____ of industry, as if they were endangered _____.
9. Of course I knew about the eyes, an _____ of pigmentation that was _____ proof of Gracela heritage on both sides.
10. The tops of flat tailing mounds were dimpled with rain-catching _____ and I'd noticed that _____ of rabbitbrush were starting to grow up there.

ANIMAL DREAMS

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (30 points)

Match the following descriptions with characters. Choose your answers from the list of characters below. You may use some of the answers more than once and some not at all.

- | | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| A. Doc | D. Loyd | G. Codi | J. Rita Cardenal | M. Mason |
| B. Officer Metz | E. Doña Althea | H. Emelina | K. Viola | N. Jack |
| C. Hallie | F. Carlo | I. Josephine Nash | L. Alice | O. Mrs. Galvez |

- _____ 1. dies of renal failure
- _____ 2. chokes on a bean
- _____ 3. removes his boots to please his mother
- _____ 4. the biology class's skeleton
- _____ 5. was sired by Gunner
- _____ 6. does not object to being called *abuelita*
- _____ 7. carries a condom
- _____ 8. misunderstands Doc's anger about prenatal nutrition
- _____ 9. brings Codi a black sweater
- _____ 10. dodges the need for a vendor's license
- _____ 11. knows that Codi intends to make love with Loyd at Whiteriver
- _____ 12. teaches students to accept some of the blame for pollution
- _____ 13. accepts mothering in the form of casseroles and desserts
- _____ 14. expertly massages a stiff triceps
- _____ 15. saves orthopedic shoes in the attic

Part II: Cause and Effect (20 points)

Finish each of these statements.

- 1. Doc Homer returns to Grace from Illinois because

- 2. Hallie does not expect to leave Guatemala because

- 3. Codi accepts a second contract because

- 4. Loyd argues with Codi about cockfighting because

- 5. Viola tells Codi about her kinship to the Althea family because

- 6. The company intends to dam the river because

- 7. The Stitch and Bitch Club gains notoriety because

- 8. Codi tells Loyd about the stillborn child because

- 9. Mourners share memories of Hallie because

- 10. Codi fails to complete a medical degree because

ANIMAL DREAMS

Part III: Identification (30 points)

Place an X by statements that refer to Codi.

- 1. receives fresh bread baked in a native oven
- 2. looks like her mother
- 3. recognizes a pink sweater
- 4. places boxes of casserole in Doc's refrigerator
- 5. goes with Doc for his CAT scan
- 6. tells students about condoms
- 7. believes that copper tailings are used by the jeans industry
- 8. shows Emelina how to treat Mason for choking
- 9. saves Hallie's letters until she is found
- 10. asks Doña Althea if she is *abuelita*
- 11. weeps when the ambulance crew turns off the light
- 12. drives from Telluride to Grace
- 13. shares family history with Alice Kimball
- 14. expects Raymo to fail Biology I
- 15. is surprised that Loyd quits cockfighting just for her

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Contrast the effects of water pollutants and pesticides with the hurtful memories that Codi carries inside.
2. Explain the significance of *Animal Dreams*.
3. Contrast Codi before and after she takes a teaching job.
4. Summarize the value of the piñata sale.

ANIMAL DREAMS

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Settings (20 points)

Identify the settings that fit the following descriptions. Select your answers from the list that follows.

- | | | | | |
|----------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Aspen | cemetery | Grace High School | Mayo Clinic | Telluride |
| Black Mountain mines | Crete | guesthouse | plum orchard | Tortoise Canyon |
| Canyon de Chelly | Denver | Las Cruces | Santa Rosalia Pueblo | Tucson |

- _____ 1. Codi and Emelina spend the night
- _____ 2. city where Carlo wants Codi to meet him
- _____ 3. community members celebrate All Souls Day
- _____ 4. grave of stillborn baby
- _____ 5. Codi conducts medical research
- _____ 6. Doc joins Codi and tells her about his disease
- _____ 7. Codi stays with the Domingos
- _____ 8. sulfuric acid leaches into the river
- _____ 9. female relatives discuss Loyd's love for Codi
- _____ 10. Loyd shows Codi a prehistoric pueblo where he and his twin worked for Maxine Shorty

Part II: Fill-in (20 points)

Fill in the paired blanks with answers that complete each statement.

- 1. While staying with Loyd's family over Christmas, Codi is not aware that an unidentified woman has telephoned _____ from Guatemala to tell of _____'s disappearance.
- 2. In a stand of cottonwoods, Doc observes _____ and wonders what type of medication to give her to stop _____.
- 3. Because Codi abandons a _____ birth, she fails to receive her _____ degree.
- 4. Loyd is low man on the list of _____, but is proud of his ability to drive a _____ over the mountain.
- 5. _____ admires the piñatas and tells local people how to have their community declared an _____ property.

ANIMAL DREAMS

Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

Explain the significance of the following details:

1. burden basket

2. marigolds

3. tailings

4. pesticides

5. piñatas

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Account for Doc's unusual style of parenting.
2. Discuss arguments for clean water in Grace.
3. Describe Uda Dell's function in the Noline family.
4. Summarize significant scenes of Codi's childhood.

ANIMAL DREAMS

ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY TEST

1. putative, manifold
2. skeleton, civic
3. hysteria, visual
4. childbearing, moderation
5. land-based, relocated
6. refugees, idiomatic
7. orbits, chaos
8. onslaught, species
9. anomaly, genetic
10. basins, sprigs

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. L | 6. E | 11. H |
| 2. M | 7. D | 12. G |
| 3. D | 8. J | 13. A |
| 4. I | 9. C | 14. F |
| 5. N | 10. O | 15. A |

Part II: Cause and Effect (20 points)

Answers will vary.

Part III: Identification (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|------|-------|
| 1. X | 6. X | 11. X |
| 2. X | 7. | 12. |
| 3. X | 8. | 13. X |
| 4. | 9. X | 14. |
| 5. | 10. | 15. X |

Part IV: Essay (20 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Settings (20 points)

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Tucson | 6. Las Cruces |
| 2. Telluride | 7. guesthouse |
| 3. cemetery | 8. Black Mountain mines |
| 4. Tortoise Canyon | 9. Santa Rosalia Pueblo |
| 5. Mayo Clinic | 10. Canyon de Chelly |

Part II: Fill-in (20 points)

1. Doc, Hallie
2. Codi, hemorrhaging
3. breach, medical
4. engineers, train
5. Sean Rideheart, historic

Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

Answers will vary.

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

ANIMAL DREAMS

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