

CATCH-22

JOSEPH HELLER

Teacher's Guide

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LIVING
LITERATURE
SERIES

A PERMA-BOUND Production

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SYNOPSIS

Based at an airfield on the Mediterranean island of Pianosa, south of Elba, twenty-eight-year-old Captain John Yossarian is lead bombardier for the 256th Air Force Squadron. He develops a heightened fear of extinction during a bomb run over Avignon, France, after he tries to assist a fellow airman. Snowden, the new crew gunner, who lies blue-lipped and shivering in the plane's metal crawlspace, pleads for warmth. Yossarian cuts away Snowden's flak suit, treats a superficial thigh wound, and covers him with a parachute before discovering an irreparable shrapnel gash in Snowden's side. The boy, oozing organs out his side, dies in Yossarian's arms.

Traumatized by the gory death and his inability to help Snowden, Yossarian feels he doesn't deserve a Distinguished Flying Cross. Unable to face the hypocrisy of military decoration, he attends the ceremony naked. The brass decide that Yossarian may receive his medal any way he likes. An incipient rebel, he hides his feelings behind a quirky sense of humor and logic that enables him to avoid an escalating number of required missions. His ruse is faking liver disease and hiding out in the hospital. He aborts the first bomb run to Bologna by moving a line on a map to indicate Allied control and a second time by pulling out his intercom wires and insisting that McWatt, the pilot, turn back.

At the hospital, Yossarian turns to Doc Daneeka as his last hope. Without Daneeka's approval of an insanity plea, Yossarian cannot get a discharge. Daneeka, who is sympathetic, but incapable of overruling regulations, shoots down the idea by applying Catch-22, a military rule stating that anyone sane enough to try to elude service via an insanity plea is sane enough to fly combat missions. Additional pleas to Major Major prove futile. For Yossarian, death in the skies seems inevitable.

The military milieu of Pianosa reflects less and less sanity as the number of required missions rises. Yossarian petitions to have a dead man removed from his tent. Because of a foul-up in paperwork, the man was never duly registered and can therefore not be declared dead. Other snafus drive Yossarian to the brink of madness. His roommate Orr concentrates on tearing down and reassembling the minute parts of a heater valve. Hungry Joe takes out his frustrations through nightmares that keep the camp on edge. General Peckem delights in the tight formations that the squadrons fly as they unleash

bombs over major cities in Italy, France, and Sicily. Colonel Cathcart, oblivious to his men's sufferings, continues to raise the number of required missions.

To pass the time, the soldiers involve themselves in outside activities. Hungry Joe, posing as an employee of *Life* magazine, attempts to photograph naked women and looks up the skirts of female U.S.O. performers. Yossarian and others play pingpong, swim at the beach, go on leave, drink, fight, gamble, and seduce local women. Mess officer-turned-war profiteer Milo Minderbinder evolves a black market syndicate to buy fruit, vegetables, eggs, and other goods worldwide and sell them at a profit. To recoup his losses on Egyptian cotton, he pays both Germany and the Americans to take part in a single mission. On his greatest mission for profit, Milo bombs Pianosa's airbase, justifying his act as sound business practice.

One of the most enlightening incidents in the circular narrative involves Lieutenant Nately, Yossarian's off-duty companion, who debates the meaning of patriotism with an Italian man who resides in a brothel. According to the aged cynic, the true winner of the world conflict is the country that can survive a series of governmental changes. Using Italy as an example, the old man challenges Nately's chauvinistic ideas of American supremacy by declaring Italy a winner because it has survived so many centuries despite ups and downs of fortune.

Nately as well as Dobbs fall victim to Milo's treachery. Nately's whore, a stalking avenger, nonsensically pursues Yossarian with a butcher knife. Loss and perpetual danger prove unsettling to Yossarian's precarious mentality. He goes to the hospital for treatment of a knife wound and learns that he is about to be court-martialed for going AWOL in Rome. At the same time, his crewmate Aarfy goes unpunished for raping and murdering Michaela, an Italian maid, by throwing her out a window. Just as the illogic of camp life and the fear of more missions lead Yossarian to the end of his wits, Chaplain Tappan announces that Orr's plane crashed and that he has been washed ashore in Sweden, a neutral country. Yossarian, his faith restored, bids farewell to Tappan and Major Danby and leaps from the hospital window, missing the butcher knife wielded by Nately's whore.

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TIMELINE

- December 7, 1941** Japanese planes bomb Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
- December 8** Lieutenant Scheisskopf is glad that war begins. Major Major and Yossarian enlist.
- early 1942** Yossarian reports to Lowery Field, Colorado.
- later** Clevinger and Yossarian train with the army air force in Santa Ana, California.
- July 9, 1943** U. S. forces invade Sicily. Yossarian begins flying combat missions. Kraft dies during the second mission.
- August 24** Yossarian receives a medal after his unit bombs a bridge at Ferrara over a seven-day period.
- September 9** General Mark Clark leads the 5th Army on a beachhead assault at Salerno. Hungry Joe completes 25 missions.
- January 7, 1944** Captain Black replaces Major Duluth, who is killed over Perugia.
- January 15** A second lieutenant arrives at Pianosa and dies two hours later on a mission.
- May** Joseph Heller is stationed on Corsica.
- April** Milo Minderbinder's syndicate flourishes from trade in melons, Polish sausage, and tangerines.
- late April** Wintergreen breaks into a water pipe and nearly drowns.
- June 4** Allied forces capture Rome. Major De Coverley leases apartments in Rome.
- July 16** Heller sees a sergeant shot in the abdomen in a flight over Ferrara, Italy.
- July 26** Allied forces route Mussolini from Italy.
- August 2** Moaning interrupts the briefing preceding the bombing of Avignon, France.
- that afternoon** After Snowden dies from a belly wound, Yossarian loses his nerve. On medication, he sleeps for 24 hours.
- days later** Yossarian appears naked in formation.
- August 8** One of Heller's comrades is shot down over Avignon, France.
- September 8** Italy surrenders.
- September 9** Allied bombers begin assaulting Bologna. Yossarian suspects poison in his food. After he leaves the hospital, the command raises required missions to 50. Yossarian moves the bomb line.
- later** Nately falls in love with a prostitute.
- October** McWatt's plane strikes Kid Sampson. McWatt dies; Doc Daneeka is reported dead. After Yossarian's tent burns, he and Hungry Joe flee to Rome. Aarfy rapes and kills Michaela.
- Thanksgiving that night** Yossarian breaks Nately's nose.
- later** Milo strafes his own unit.
- later** Nately dies on a mission over La Spezia, Italy.
- December** Yossarian completes 71 missions.
- January 1, 1945** Clevinger disappears over Elba as bombers attack Parma.
- May 2** German forces surrender in Italy. The 107-year-old man welcomes Americans and assaults Major de Coverley.

AUTHOR SKETCH

Joseph Heller is one of America's prize satirists. Born to Russian Jewish immigrants in Brooklyn, New York, on May 1, 1923, "Joey" and his brother and sister grew up fatherless on Coney Island after the death of Isaac Daniel Heller, a bakery truck driver, from bleeding ulcers in 1928. Young Heller was a natural merrymaker and trickster and began writing stories in his teens, taking as literary models Franz Kafka, Vladimir Nabokov, William Saroyan, and Nathanael West. During the Depression, he delivered telegrams for Western Union and worked at an iron smithy.

Stationed in Corsica during World War II, Heller flew more than sixty missions as bombardier of a B-25. His pals and in-flight experiences were major influences on *Catch-22* (1961), an experimental war novel that he completed in longhand. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from New York University and obtained an M. A. from Columbia. As a Fulbright scholar to Oxford University, he devoted his life to teaching fiction and drama at Pennsylvania State University before turning to journalism.

In addition to writing advertising copy for *Look*, *McCalls*, and *Time*, Heller produced novels, stage drama, and such television and movie scripts as *Sex And The Single Girl*, *Casino Royale*, *Dirty Dingus Magee*, and "McHale's Navy," published under the pen name Max Orange. In 1968, his Broadway play *We Bombed In New Haven* ran for eighty-six performances. He also contributed short fiction and reviews for *Atlantic Monthly*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Esquire*, *Holiday*, and *New Republic*. He joined anti-war marchers and denounced Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger.

In 1986, Heller used his experience with Guillain-Barré syndrome as the basis for the novel *No Laughing Matter*. In 1994, he returned to Yossarian for a sequel, *Closing Time*, which received poor reviews. In 1998, Waterstone's, a British bookseller, named *Catch-22* among the century's one hundred best books. When the author died in his sleep at his home in East Hampton, New York, on December 13, 1999, from a heart attack, he earned the praise of his peers—Norman Mailer, Tim O'Brien, and Studs Terkel. Heller left his papers to the University of South Carolina.

CRITIC'S CORNER

Although *Catch-22* earned an immediate rejection from New York reviewers, the wartime tragicomedy eventually sold ten million copies and profoundly altered the way that Americans view World War II. Heller characterized his inventive surreal wit as burlesque rather than black humor, a term he rejected. A popular writer and symbol of the counter culture since the Vietnam War era skyrocketed *Catch-22* to fame, he enjoyed the notoriety of his novel, a fragmented circular narrative that spawned "catch-22" as an American catch phrase. Mike Nichols's 1970 film version featured a star-laden cast—Paula Prentiss as Nurse Duckett, Art Garfunkel as Nately, Tony Perkins as Chaplain Tappan, Orson Wells as General Dreedle, and Alan Arkin as the zany Yossarian. The following year, a stage version of *Catch-22* debuted in East Hampton, New York. In 1972, the novel received a school board banning in Strongsville, Ohio. Additional

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bannings occurred in 1974 in Dallas, Texas, and in 1979 in Snoqualmie, Washington.

As justification for the success of his farcical novel, Heller commented that the book was basically well done and that it reached the public at a time when youth searched for a statement of their anti-war cause. Unlike other books and movies that celebrate World War II as the "good war," Heller's classic introduces a serious question as to the sanity of all wars, which succeed or fail for all the wrong reasons. The quality of his anti-war plot influenced Robert Altman's *M*A*S*H* and the television spin-off, both anti-heroic efforts that mock military thinking during the Korean War.

Catch-22 has become a tautology for bureaucratic absurdity, illustrating that war by its nature is dehumanizing and that death ensnares its victims without regard to skill, honor, or dedication. The apolitical novel pictures the human situation in all its perversity. Yossarian, a hero to modern readers, stands out among literary models of military greatness as the one sane protagonist who finds the guts to label the military-industrial complex a sham. In the author's words, "Great carnage is taking place and my idea was to use humor to make ridiculous the things that are irrational and very terrible."

OTHER WORKS BY THE AUTHOR

We Bombed In New Haven, 1968
Clevinger's Trial, 1974
Something Happened, 1974
Good As Gold, 1979
God Knows, 1985
No Laughing Matter, 1986
Picture This, 1988
Closing Time, 1994
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Now And Then, 1998
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Woolf, Michael, "The Fiction of Joseph Heller," *Journal of American Studies*, April 1991, pp. 118-119.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To enumerate the conventions of war literature
2. To comment on the psychological aspects of foreboding, loss, fear, and violence
3. To evaluate behaviors and attitudes required of soldiers under fire, particularly bonding with buddies through friendship and humor
4. To explain the set-up and management of a bomber squadron
5. To note human reactions to precarious existence
6. To contrast chronological writing with circular narrative
7. To compare the goals of business with military aims
8. To account for disrespect of the Hippocratic Oath
9. To characterize surrealism, satire, and black humor
10. To explain the source of truth in war stories

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To validate the emotions of Yossarian and others on bomb runs
2. To explain why Yossarian is terrified of increased mission quotas
3. To list examples of inhumanity, greed, and savagery in Milo Minderbinder
4. To discuss the strengths of friendship between Nately and Yossarian
5. To summarize the roles of Luciana, Michaela, Nately's whore, and Nurse Sue Ann Duckett
6. To account for Doc Daneeka's inability to intervene and save Yossarian
7. To analyze the rationale of officers as opposed to enlisted men
8. To characterize death jokes or gallows humor
9. To recount the terror of treating Snowden's wounds
10. To express the aspects of life that are missing in wartime, particularly safety, family, a balance of the sexes, cleanliness, relaxation, and independence

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LITERARY TERMS AND APPLICATIONS

For a better understanding of Joseph Heller's fiction, present the following terms and applications:

anti-hero a protagonist or central figure who lacks the usual heroic qualities of an admirable person or leader, particularly skill, grace, honesty, courage, and truth. John Yossarian rids himself of the heroic mindset after he realizes that completing his quota of bomb runs will not save him from death. As officers lie and the quota rises, he begins plotting methods of avoiding exposure to anti-aircraft fire by claiming illness, aborting missions, moving map lines, and going AWOL.

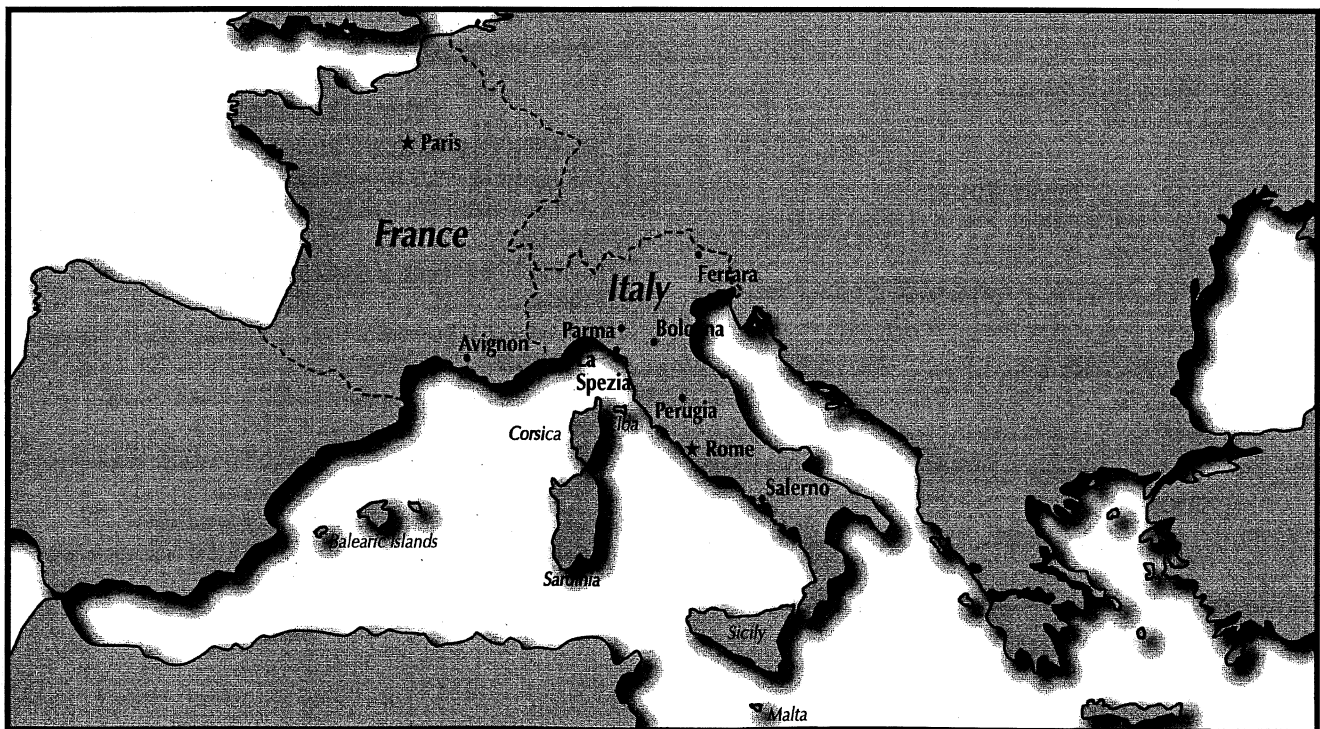
circular narrative a composite picture of an action drawn from individual testimony of several characters. The most complicated mode of fiction, circular narrative produces conflicting stories, events out of chronological order, questionable data, and suspect opinions that tell more about the narrator than about the person or action being described, a method Joseph Heller applies to his text to strip it of a logical chronology and to illustrate the recurring pattern of higher quotas of bomb runs and greater danger to flight crews. The resulting narrative gives a nightmarish aura to events and outcomes.

satire a vigorous, sharply pointed, and, at times, embarrassingly or cruelly effective mockery that may employ wit and derision to reveal weaknesses in human character, the subject of Heller's anti-war novel. His tragicomic narrative ridicules inhumane officers who value strategy and precision over human life. The resulting tension increases Yossarian's terror of flying, the basis of the action. By focusing on bumbling, idiotic orders that have little to do with the war effort, Heller explains why soldiers begin to feel that they are expendable.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING

The milieu of author Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* moves out of time sequence over the disjointed wartime experience of Captain John Yossarian, lead bombardier for the 256th Air Force Squadron. He is stationed on the island of Pianosa south of Elba, where he has a view of "fat mountains . . . and a placid blue [Mediterranean] sea" with white beaches and a "shallow, dull-colored forest." Marking the military layout are the ugly structures of war—repair hangars, bombers, ordnance dump, supply shed, mess halls, rusty railroad tracks, a coal-black road, and an outdoor movie theater. In a search of escape from terror of death, he relives a flight to Avignon, France, from the base at Pianosa, which is Heller's microcosm of the war.

To express the lack of connection with the land war, Heller gives little detail of the bomb targets below or the location of anti-aircraft fire. As the bombs fall and roiling black clouds erupt from the damage below, planes change course and return to safety with little perception of the alteration in the land masses below. In the air aboard a womblike, tomblike B-25, Yossarian tries to rescue Snowden with simple control of bleeding on his thigh wound, but realizes that no amount of binding or medication will save the young man from death. As the boy's organs spill out of a side wound, the floor of the plane grows messy with human tissue and remains of the boy's lunch. On return to Pianosa, Yossarian refuses to wear his uniform to a medal ceremony and chooses to sit naked in a tree as a protest against military sham.



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On free time and during an illegal jaunt, Yossarian and his friends visit the brothels of Rome, a teeming city in peacetime jostling with vehicles and foot traffic, but stripped of human activity during wartime. The brief opportunity for a sensual release from Air Force regulations plunges Yossarian anew into the insanity of the base, where generals value marching and flying in formation over Yossarian's need for security and release from further bomb runs. The war profiteering of Milo Minderbinder brings food and supplies from around the world and enriches the servings in the mess halls, but business demands cause him to bomb and strafe his own base.

By placing scenes in the base hospital, Heller emphasizes the dangers of war to human bodies and the results of artillery fire on survivors. Yossarian's claim of liver disease places him in a safe bed, but the diagnosis quickly returns him to his tent, which is big enough for four more soldiers. Orr regularly installs comforts—"running water, wood-burning fireplace, cement floor." Heller uses the tent setting as an additional source of satire by depicting Orr's obsession with assembling and tearing down a heater valve and by expressing Yossarian's attempts at getting a dead man removed for burial. In the final scenario, Yossarian chooses to flee the military entirely by leaping out of the hospital window and heading to Sweden, a possible source of stability and safety.

CROSS-CURRICULAR SOURCES

For more information about World War II, soldiery, first aid, weaponry, European geography, American politics, and other subjects and issues deriving from the novel, consult these sources:

Article

"Catch-22 25 Years Later," *U. S. News & World Report*, October 14, 1986, pp. 67-68.

Audiocassette

All Quiet On The Western Front, Harper-Caedmon
The Vietnam War, Knowledge Products

Book

All Quiet On The Western Front
Andersonville
Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee
Cold Mountain
Except For Me And Thee
Hiroshima
The Kitchen God's Wife
A Prayer For Owen Meany
So Far From The Bamboo Grove
South Pacific
The Things They Carried
The Underdogs
Zlata's Diary

Internet

"American Involvement in World War II,"
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"North American B-25," <http://www.photohome.com/photos/aircraft-pictures/bombers/pbj-b-25-mitchell-2.html>.
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Maps

Atlas Of World History, HarperCollins
World War II Battlefields, National Geographic

Multimedia Kit

Newscurrents, Knowledge Unlimited

Plays

Hair
A Piece Of My Heart

Poem

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Encyclopedia of World War II, Castle
Historical Encyclopedia of Nursing, ABC-Clio

Short Stories

"In Another Country," Ernest Hemingway
"The Wall," Jean-Paul Sartre

Videos/Films

Born On The Fourth Of July
Coming Home
Conversations: Before The War/After The War
For Whom The Bell Tolls
Gallipoli
The Killing Fields
Patton
Pearl Harbor
Saving Private Ryan
A Town Like Alice
Windtalkers

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RELATED READING

Mariano Azuela, *The Underdogs*
Thomas Berger, *Little Big Man*
Black Elk Speaks
Michael Blake, *Dances With Wolves*
Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee*
Zlata Filipovich, *Zlata's Diary*
Esther Forbes, *Johnny Tremain*
Charles Frasier, *Cold Mountain*
Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell To Arms*
Ernest Hemingway, *For Whom The Bell Tolls*
John Hersey, *Hiroshima*
Irene Hunt, *Across Five Aprils*
John Irving, *A Prayer For Owen Meany*
James Michener, *South Pacific*
Jim Murphy, *The Long Road To Gettysburg*
Walter Dean Myers, *Fallen Angels*
Tim O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*
Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet On The Western Front*
Michael Shaara, *Killer Angels*
Winnie Smith, *American Daughter Gone To War*
Amy Tan, *The Kitchen God's Wife*
Dalton Trumbo, *Johnny Got His Gun*
Yoko Kawashima Watkins, *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*
Jessamyn West, *Except For Me And Thee*

MEDIA VERSIONS OF CATCH-22

Audiocassette (abridged)

Catch-22, Durkin Hayes, 1994

Audiocassette (unabridged)

Catch-22, G. K. Hall, 1992

DVD And Video Adaptation

Catch-22, Paramount, 1970

Large Print

Catch-22, Ulverscroft, 1984

THEMES AND MOTIFS

A study of the central issues and situations in Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* should include these aspects:

Themes

- dilemma
- war
- terror
- impersonal orders
- isolation
- group mentality
- individuality
- survivalism
- torment

- retreat
- escape

Motifs

- coping with regret and protracted violence
- understanding the various psychological states that accompany combat
- assuming the role of bombardier for the crew of a B-25
- coping with a sense of advancing doom
- capturing the whimsical and surreal elements of war

MEANING STUDY

Below are significant words, phrases, or sentences from the novel. Explain each in context. Chapter and page numbers pinpoint each entry so that you can re-read the passage in which it appears.

1. For a little while in the morning he had to censor letters, but he was free after that to spend the rest of each day lying around idly with a clear conscience. (Chapter One, p. 7)

(One of the more irritating tasks of an officer during wartime is the removal of hints of troop strength, location, and activity from letters that soldiers write to family and friends. If bags of mail fell into enemy hands, an innocent reference could delay or defeat a well-planned maneuver. As World War II posters warned, "Loose Lips Sink Ships." Yossarian turns the task into an outlet for his frustrations.)

2. Censoring the envelopes had serious repercussions, produced a ripple of anxiety on some ethereal military echelon that floated a C.I.D. man back into the ward posing as a patient. (Chapter One, p. 8)

(The poser belongs to the Criminal Investigation Department, which handles internal fraud and crime within the ranks. He and his back-up arrive to investigate censored letters signed "Washington Irving" and "Irving Washington," aliases for Yossarian, who is bored with his job as censor.)

3. "It isn't necessary to call me Father," the chaplain explains. "I'm an Anabaptist." (Chapter One, p. 14)

(Yossarian develops a strong relationship with Chaplain Albert Tappan, a member of a sect that rejects infant baptism and follows the biblical example of baptizing followers who have reached the age of consent. After a long and difficult struggle to maintain their ranks, the group reformed under separate leadership of Jacob Hutter and Menno Simons. Hutter's German-speaking group was named Hutterites and still resides in Canada and the western United States. Menno's group is currently called Mennonites and has spread through the world by means of assiduous mission work.)

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4. You're no better than Raskolnikov— (Chapter Two, p. 20)

(Clevinger, who disdains Yossarian's illogic, classes him with Raskolnikov, protagonist of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's psychological novel Crime And Punishment. Raskolnikov murders an aged female pawnbroker with a hatchet.)

5. Only when all the *Sturm und Drang* had been left far behind would he tip his flak helmet back wearily on his sweating head and stop barking directions to McWatt at the controls, who had nothing better to wonder about at a time like that than where the bombs had fallen. (Chapter Three, p. 29-30)

(The German literary term Sturm und Drang means "storm and stress" and derives from a melodramatic literary movement of the eighteenth century. The phrase characterizes Yossarian's behavior during bombardment in an earlier time when he flew fearlessly.)

6. "Où sont les Neigedens d'antan?" Yossarian said to make it easier for him. (Chapter Four, p. 35)

(Early in the novel, Yossarian reveals his obsession with the death of Snowden, who bled to death of massive shrapnel wounds. To emphasize his questioning of fate and death, Yossarian makes a pun out of the famous and oft-quoted lines from poet François Villon's "Ballade des Dames du Temps Jadis": "Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?" [Where are the snows of yesteryear?] By adding the syllable -den to the French word for snow, Yossarian makes a pun on Snowden's name.)

7. One of the surprising things always was the sense of calm and utter silence, broken only by the test rounds fired from the machine guns, by an occasional toneless, terse remark over the intercom, and at last, by the sobering pronouncement of the bombardier in each plane that they were at the I. P. and about to turn toward the target. (Chapter Five, p. 48)

(Yossarian's job as bombardier of the B-25 is to announce the impact point, where the bombs will drop on a chosen target. The change in behavior suggests an experience that Heller recalls from his own involvement in World War II.)

8. Just when I was all set to really start stashing it away, they had to manufacture fascism and start a war horrible enough to affect even me. (Chapter Six, p. 51)

(Doc Daneeka resents the coming of fascism, the totalitarian government of Italy from 1922-1943. Under Benito Mussolini, the fascists promoted fanatical nationalism and law and order, which they accomplished by callous enforcement of laws against minorities and aggressive alterations in the class structure. Mussolini's coalition with the national socialists of Nazi Germany produced the Axis alliance with Hitler's war machine. As Hitler's ambitions led to greater atrocities against personal

freedom, European nations had little choice but to fight for their existence.)

9. And back they had gone while the planes in the other flights circled safely off in the distance and every crashing cannon in the Hermann Goering Division below was busy crashing shells this time only at them. (Chapter Six, p. 55)

(Hermann Wilhelm Goering (1893-1946) rose from a World War I hero in Baron von Richtofen's squadron to Hitler's Minister of the Interior. To benefit the Third Reich, Goering created the Gestapo and the idea of concentration camps. After his capture by American forces in 1945, he stood trial and declared, "No one else worked with the fuehrer as closely as I. No one else had the influence which I had." Found guilty of war-mongering and crimes against humanity, he swallowed cyanide and died two hours before he was to be hanged.)

10. I can't help thinking of the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, where the early licentiousness of Theseus is probably responsible for the asceticism of the son that helps bring about the tragedy that ruins them all. (Chapter Seventeen, p. 171)

(After Yossarian explains how he caught gonorrhea from a spur-of-the-moment intimacy with a WAC in Marrakech, Dunbar moralizes that Yossarian reminds him of a Greek tragedy. In the myth of Hippolytus, a prim young man falls in love with Phaedra, his father's second wife. Hippolytus and Phaedra commit adultery. Tormented by guilt, the boy dies after he drives his chariot over a precipice into the sea.)

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 with quotations from the novel.

Character

1. What makes Captain John Yossarian special?
(Scattered throughout the circular narrative are bits of information about one of the most memorable protagonists in American fiction. In Chapter 1, he confesses to Chaplain Tappman that he is a captain in the 256th Squadron. The list of adjectives grows in the second chapter in which Heller describes his anti-hero as "taller, stronger, broader and faster" than Orr, his roommate, who lives with Yossarian in a tent "big enough for six.")

Also brighter than most of his companions, Yossarian is frequently described as crazy. He expresses his paranoia as a revolt against people who hate him because he is Assyrian. Once lead bombardier, Yossarian is "demoted because he no longer gave a damn whether he missed or not." Even though he rebels against authority, he maintains close friendships in Pianosa with Doc Daneeka, Chaplain Tappman, Hungry Joe, Nately, and Nurse Sue Ann Duckett, with whom he has an affair.

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Antipathetic to the pointless show of military parades, Yossarian signed up for flight instruction in Santa Ana, California, because he believed that the war would end before he could finish cadet training. Yossarian's job as bombardier of a flight crew is to slip "the plane in on the bomb run and then [whip] them all away violently around the ravenous pillars of exploding shells." He is the "best man in the group at evasive action, but [has] no idea why." Despite his avoidance of war involvement, he wins the Distinguished Flying Cross.

During his off hours, Yossarian searches for diversions from his regrets and fears. He stalks lustily after women, particularly Luciana, the Italian streetwalker with scars on her back, the maid in the lime-colored panties, and Nurse Sue Ann Duckett, whom he escorts to the beach for late-night blanket rendezvous. Ironically, it is a woman who brings him closest to death as he dodges the ever-present steak knife of Natel's whore.)

Setting

2. Describe the interior of a bomber from the bombardier's point of view.

(Lodged in the tight crawlway of the "stable, dependable, dull-green ships with twin rudders and engines and wide wings," Yossarian lashes out at the confinement of the B-25. To his personal detriment, the "bombardier's compartment in the plexiglass nose" lies distant from the nearest escape hatch. Close to the bombardier is the navigator, who is responsible for charting the route to the I. P. or impact point.

The crawlspace separates Yossarian from the flight deck and gun turret, where a "sheltering igloo of extra flak suits" gives the aura of protection. In contrast to the metal body of the B-25, Yossarian resents his own "cantilevered goldfish bowl" where "black tiers of flak" burst and boom and billow around him. The overall effect of a front-row scene of war heightens his terror of death.)

Character Development

3. Describe Yossarian's final trip to the hospital
(Throughout the novel, Yossarian manufactures reasons to enter himself in the hospital, such as his elusive liver complaint which he bolsters with faulty diet. After he makes a deal with Colonel Korn and Colonel Cathcart, they affectionately name him "Yo-Yo." He saunters onto the balcony corridor past a "private in green fatigues" who salutes before lunging at him with a "bone-handled kitchen knife." Wounded in the side beneath his upraised arm, Yossarian sinks to the floor and is carried to the hospital.

Awakening under the knife of a neophyte surgeon, ironically, Yossarian continues to battle for his life by ruling out an unnecessary operation on a wound that only needs stitches. From total anesthesia, he wakes up in a private room. Disturbing visions of a malicious man tells him, "We've got your pal." Unsettled by the visitations, Yossarian takes courage from Chaplain Tappman, from whom Yossarian learns that he is now a hero because Cathcart and Korn claim that he saved them from a "Nazi assassin."

Yossarian, who is honest to a fault, spills the whole deal to Chaplain Tappman—that he promised to like the two colonels in exchange for passage home and out of their hair. The chaplain agrees with Yossarian that deal-making is "odious." Faced with imminent court-martial, Yossarian lays plans to desert. With Major Danby's assistance, Yossarian comes to grips with the "Scheisskops, Peckems, Korn and Cathcarts" who have plagued his life.

At this point, Chaplain Tappman interrupts with shouts of joy that Orr has survived and "washed ashore in Sweden." Yossarian takes heart. Realizing that Orr has planned his escape all along by posing as an innocent, Yossarian maps his own departure. On his way out the door, he barely misses another attack by Natel's whore.)

Action

4. Why does Yossarian fail to save Snowden?

(The new tail gunner in the flight crew lies shivering and moribund in the rear of the plane when Yossarian goes to aid him. Yossarian fights nausea and panic as he attempts to bandage a thigh wound which at first appears "as large and deep as a football." Without morphine to ease Snowden's pain, Yossarian makes do with a tourniquet, which he loosens periodically to prevent gangrene in the leg.

Cutting through Snowden's gabardine overalls with scissors, Yossarian examines the gaping hole that allows a glimpse of "a tube of slimy bone." He continues his examination, trying to determine why Snowden is so deathly white. Reassured that the patient is not in mortal danger, Yossarian applies sulfanilamide, an antiseptic powder.

Snowden continues to complain, "I'm cold. I'm cold." After Snowden's mouth turns blue, Yossarian covers him with parachute silk and continues to labor over the ragged wound, which he forces himself to handle. He applies a compress and pats Snowden comfortingly, promising that the plane will soon be on the ground, where Doc Daneeka will be waiting.

Snowden gathers enough strength to point his chin at a wound on his side. Yossarian, realizing that the leg wound is only part of Snowden's suffering, unsnaps the flak suit and screams as "Snowden's insides slithered down to the floor in a soggy pile and just kept dripping out."

Traumatized at the extent of the wound and the appearance of bits of Snowden's lunch of canned tomatoes leaking from his digestive tract, Yossarian vomits before trying to decide how to aid the stricken man. Cuddling him in his arms, Yossarian murmurs a motherly "There, there"—slim comfort to a dying soldier whose guts lie strewn on the floor of the B-25.)

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Conflict

5. Describe how Milo Minderbinder saves M & M Enterprises from collapse.

(Because of his haste in cornering the market on Egyptian cotton, Milo finds himself in a financial quandary. Only quick action will insure his recovery. He lands a contract with the Germans to bomb Pianosa airfield. Milo coordinates the attack personally as his outfit of B-25 bombers aims for fuel stocks, ordnance dump, repair hangars, and bombers. His men spare the landing strip and mess halls "so that they could land safely when their work was done and enjoy a hot snack before retiring.")

Attacking with their landing lights on, the renegade bombers enjoy a free run with no counterattack. They hit "all four squadrons, the officer's club and the Group Headquarters building." Even with men scurrying in terror from the exploding bombs, the holocaust continues with Milo impersonally calling the shots. Colonel Cathcart, for the first time on the receiving end of death from the skies, drives his jeep to the airfield and shrieks at Milo, "Are you crazy? What the hell are you doing? Come down! Come down!"

Still, Milo persists until the last supply shed is bombed. He upbraids Purvis for a sloppy job and then directs Alvin Brown to strafe, as his contract directs. In the end, Milo sustains attacks from the press and Congress. His reply is true to the crassness of big American business—Milo falls back on the logic of money as the supreme answer to all moral questions.)

Interpretation

6. What is Doc Daneeka's role in the novel?

(A seedy urban doctor with an eye toward dollars, Doc Daneeka admits that he makes money from a local beauty parlor, which fills his office with clients needing illegal abortions. Drafted into the army medical corps, Doc continues to practice medicine halfheartedly. He rises a bit in stature, however, after Yossarian returns to the ground with the dismembered Snowden splattered over him. Doc wraps Yossarian tenderly in a blanket, washes off the human debris, and quietens him with pills and shots until Yossarian's mind returns to normal.)

At a pivotal moment in the action, Doc redeems himself during Milo's attack on the base. With no regard to his own safety, he remains in direct line of fire and treats casualties with "tourniquets, morphine, splints and sulfanilamide." Eventually Milo is able to buy off Doc's scorching disapproval with a "lightweight aluminum collapsible garden chair."

On the day of Kid Sampson's gruesome death, Doc gains flight pay by bribing others to name him on the passenger manifest. To his dismay, he becomes a nonperson after McWatt cracks up the plane in which Doc is officially flying. Even though Doc begs others to acknowledge his presence, the camp mourns his passing. His wife receives widow's benefits, and Doc recedes into memory.)

Atmosphere

7. How does the atmosphere shift during Yossarian's visit to Rome? *(During an illegal trip to Rome, Yossarian walks the deserted streets of the city looking for familiar faces. The war has gone grim after officials have rounded up friendly Italians and removed them from local restaurants and street corners. Wandering the surreal landscape, Yossarian thinks over his relationships with two women, Luciana and Nurse Sue Ann Duckett. He recalls his revulsion at Aarfy's murder of Michaela, the "plain maid in the officers' apartment." After raping the girl, he held her prisoner in a closet for nearly two hours before hurling her from a window to her death.)*

Yossarian remembers arriving after the multiple crimes of rape, false imprisonment, and murder. He responds to the neighbors who "[pointed] up bitterly toward the second-floor windows in their private, grim, accusing conversations." Racing up the stairway, Yossarian confronts Aarfy with the immorality of his act. Words seem to have no effect on Aarfy, who continues to smoke his pipe and brag of never having paid for sex. Yossarian warns that the authorities are on the way to arrest Aarfy. True to prediction, the M. P.'s appear—and arrest Yossarian for going AWOL. The cynical episode dramatizes the moral bankruptcy of the military.)

Motivation

8. How does Yossarian's behavior denote war's emotional toll on his mind?

(After bravely following the stereotypical picture of a soldier in action, Yossarian alters his behavior. He stops guiding the flight crew toward well-run bombings and schemes to get out of his duty. He moves the map line to indicate that Bologna has been taken by Allied troops. He yanks out his intercom wires to abort a mission in flight. He lies about illnesses, cultivates a bad liver, and hides in his hospital bed. He stalks Major Major and begs to be released from service.)

In Yossarian's mind, the motivation for these actions is clear: someone is out to kill him. There is no reason to continue the waning days of the war. With victory obviously on the way, he envisions himself killed for no other reason than to make the high command look good. Frantic as his friends die all around him, he withdraws into madness but is labeled one of the few sane men left on the base.)

Yossarian's logic of survival transcends patriotism—and "matriotism"—as he avoids an even more lethal stalker. After Natelly's death, he must elude Natelly's whore, who refuses to accept explanations that exonerate Yossarian. Projecting all her frustration and grief on one victim—much as Yossarian places all his frustration on the bomb runs—she pops up at unexpected places and times, steak knife in hand ready to dismember the captain.)

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Yossarian, who narrowly escapes a knife wound in the side, advances his logic to a kind of situational ethics. The only way to escape a dilemma that places him squarely in the path of a court-martial and personal dishonor is to desert. At the last moment, hope comes in the form of a message that Orr has succeeded in eluding the war by making his way to Sweden. Guided by Orr's example, Yossarian leaps from the hospital window.)

Author Method

9. How does Heller use humor in satire?

(To temper the harsh criticisms of modern warfare and to offset the gore of scenes such as Kid Sampson's death in a plane pro-peller and Snowden's disintegration in Yossarian's hands, Heller falls back on varied forms of humor. He concocts funny names for his characters, such as the alliteration of Milo Minderbinder and the absurdity of Chief White Halfoat, Nurse Duckett, General P. P. Peckem, and Hungry Joe. Other forms of humor are blatant incongruity, such as the description of Nately, whose name suggests birth: "Nately had a bad start. He came from a good family.")

Silly patter reminiscent of vaudeville routines introduce illogic at crucial moments, such as the debate over whether to punish the rebel Yossarian or give him a medal. Yossarian's response is even better—to demonstrate his distaste for military finery, he receives his medal in the nude. On the day of his deal with Cathcart and Korn, he accepts the nickname Yo-Yo, which denigrates his Assyrian surname while conjuring up a picture of his dilemma.

The effectiveness of Heller's humor is the soul of the novel. Without a light touch, he would blast readers with the acerbic accusation that war constitutes a waste of money and life. The comparison of Milo's poorly run investment firm with the military is a stroke of genius. Milo, by applying American economic acumen to the matter of bombing his own base, brings home the absurdity and inhumanity of bombing anyone. Through these stark pictures etched in lethal comedy, Heller impresses on the reader the idea that Yossarian exists in all people, whether or not the threat is war. Human nature avoids death instinctively. The manner in which Yossarian defeats the threat is unique, no less to his credit than the way in which he decides that desertion is the better part of valor.)

Point Of View

10. How does circular narrative suit the novel's flow?

(Rather than tell a straight-out chronological wartime tale, Heller falls back on circular narrative to allow himself fuller control of the major events—the death of Snowden, Milo Minderbinder's bombing of Pianosa airbase, and Yossarian's revolt against military authority. Working through the minds and actions of individual characters, Heller picks up first one point of view, then another. He juxtaposes the weak with the strong, the stalwart with the seamy. His method dumps the whole gamut of human response to war into a single pot and stirs well.

Because the circular narrative draws slowly and raggedly toward the inexorable revelation of Yossarian's confrontation with death, the reader hovers on the edge of discovery. Tidbits of information filter in from each repetition until the whole tale is told. Consequently, the final pages crystallize Yossarian's strength. He faces his wrongdoing, rejects the ill-conceived deal with his superiors, and grasps a last-ditch effort to stay alive. Without looking back, he leaps from the picture. The reader, by now fully versed on his wiles, assumes that so cursed and durable a character as Yossarian will triumph in his escape from the military.)

HOW LANGUAGE WORKS

Heller introduces characters as caricatures of human foibles. Consider these examples, which reflect on individuality at the same time that they add to the zaniness of the novel:

1. Dunbar was lying motionless on his back again with his eyes staring up at the ceiling like a doll's. He was working hard at increasing his life span.
2. The soldier in white was encased from head to toe in plaster and gauze. He had two useless legs and two useless arms. . . . All four limbs pinioned strangely in air by lead weights suspended darkly above him that never moved.
3. The colonel dwelt in a vortex of specialists who were still specializing in trying to determine what was troubling him. They hurled lights in his eyes to see if he could see, rammed needles into nerves to hear if he could feel.
4. The Texan wanted everybody in the ward to be happy but Yossarian and Dunbar. He was really very sick.
5. Orr, who was a grinning pygmy with pilots' wings and thick, wavy brown hair parted in the middle, furnished all the knowledge, while Yossarian, who was taller, stronger, broader and faster, did most of the work. Just the two of them lived there, although the tent was big enough for six.
6. Nately's whore's kid sister . . . was a tall, strapping girl with long hair and incandescent blue veins converging populously beneath her cocoa-colored skin where the flesh was most tender, and she kept cursing and shrieking and jumping high up into the air on her bare feet to keep right on hitting him on top of his head with the spiked heel of her shoe.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Science, Health, And First Aid

1. Make an oral report on post-traumatic shock syndrome. Why do military and medical personnel of wars continue to suffer flashbacks, bouts of alcoholism and drug addiction, attempted suicide, and paranoia as a result of their involvement? What strategies and treatments bring the most lasting relief?

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- Using charts of the human circulatory system, explain why Yossarian performs the proper first aid for Snowden's thigh wound, but has no hope of rescuing him from a worse wound to the side. Discuss why shock and loss of blood cause the victim to feel cold.
- Make a chart of advice to rookies concerning first aid to the wounded. Name items useful in saving lives, for example, tape, compresses, tourniquets, sulfanilamide, and morphine.
- Explain how first aid has changed since World War II, when the military depended on sulfanilamide to stop infection.

Geography

- Make a war map that stresses the major bombing efforts of World War II over Europe. Compose a guided tour of sites that includes Avignon, Salerno, Ferrara, Rome, Arezzo, Naples, and Bologna.
- Explain in a chalk talk the types of terrain that Yossarian and his crew fly over on the way from Pianosa to Avignon. List landmarks that guide the navigator during the flight.

Art

- Create a bulletin board contrasting settings in Pianosa, Rome, Avignon, Ferrara, Salerno, Arezzo, Sicily, Adriatic Sea, Sweden, Naples, and Bologna.
- Using desktop publishing or other media, design murals or posters to contrast these pairs: first aid kit and plane propellers, medals and valve parts, butcher knife and parachute, flak and chocolate-covered cotton, white beach and officers' club, gonorrhea and censored letters, WACs and an elite guard of corporals, tent and second-floor apartment, and bombardier's seat and hospital bed.
- With a group, design a brochure, web site, frieze, or poster series illustrating relationships between people with different wartime experiences and attitudes, particularly General Dreedle and Yossarian, Doc Daneeka and Major Major, Nurse Sue Ann Duckett and Aarfy, Gus and the soldier in white, McWatt and the old man in the brothel, Michaela and Hungry Joe, and Nate-ly's whore and Dori Duz.
- Draw a montage or mural detailing uniforms, weapons, artillery, equipment, hospitals, and B-25s and other transportation during World War II. Include medical workers, firemen, enemy soldiers, the press, and Italian civilians as well as bomber crews.
- List books, stories, movies, videos, art, sculpture, dance, song, and other creativity that depict soldiers' faces as they perform a miserable job, for example, articles on prisoner of war Jeremiah Denton or John McCain, the sculpture of flag-raising at Iwo Jima or the nurses' memorial, the movies *Saving Private Ryan* or *The Bridge Over The River Kwai*, the Vietnam Wall or the Crazy

Horse memorial, the musical *Hair* or the play *A Piece Of My Heart*, photographs taken by Margaret Bourke-White, "Eternal Father, Strong to Save" or "The Marine's Hymn," and the folk song "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?"

Language

- Using a computer art program, illustrate a gazetteer of terms from the novel. Include such abbreviations, slang, and military terms as P.F.C., lurid, hedonistic, evasive action, axis, strafe, mustard plaster, glut, savoir-faire, ecclesiastical, insatiably, solace, calumny, chagrin, licentious, fascist, Mussolini, opportunist, heil, Oberleutnant, Cracow, whitening, fuselage, petits fours, strudel, disrepute, bridling, rancor, metamorphosis, C.I.D., scruples, nonconformist, Saul, belligerent, disdain, loyalty oath, oscillating, nephritis, sere, fruition, flight plan, fusilier, shah, caliph, syndrome, insubordination, bourgeois, pennant, syndicate, Atabrine, bombsight, flak suit, Hermann Goering, subitio, come, horse chestnut, apparition, déjà vu, acquiescence, Padre, bruto, gunport, gabardine, I. P., sulfanilamide, plaintive, air pocket, tail gunner, and sabotage.
- Draw up a contrasting list of elements that characterize military jobs. Enumerate aspects of the work of supplier, chaplain, strategist, fireman, bombardier, pilot, maintenance crew, investigator, cook, and medical corps. Include the volunteer efforts of the Red Cross and of U.S.O. performers.

Economics

- Create a non-combat military job for men like Aarfy, Nate-ly, Tappman, Hungry Joe, Orr, and Yossarian who need a break from sorrow, terror, and regret. Put their experiences to use, for example, in writing news from the front, buying needed food-stuffs and supplies, rehabilitating disabled veterans, preparing bodies for burial or transport to survivors, or preparing recruits for their first encounter with a bomb run.
- Total in columns the year-by-year expenditures for World War II, including post-war counseling, medical care, prostheses, and rehabilitation.

Literature

- Read aloud passages that capture a single negative feeling, especially cruelty, callousness, sexism, inappropriate humor, hesitation, anger, terror, loss, self-doubt, racism, or grief. Add details that express how these feelings linger and haunt the men on Pianosa Island. Why do the men play tricks and laugh easily, but speak hesitatingly about loss, friendship, and anxiety?
- Read or listen to an audio cassette of Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge Of Courage*. Compare Henry to Yossarian in terms of fears, inadequacies, self-knowledge, and courage. What do both men learn best by experience? Describe the scenes in which each discovers what Crane calls "the great death."

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3. Using incidents from the book, comment on gradual changes in Yossarian. Explain how fragmented circular narrative serves the author in depicting the protagonist's obsession and terror.
4. Draw a Venn diagram or cause-and-effect chart explaining the relationship of Yossarian and other characters, both military and civilian.

Social Studies

1. Write a theme, create a web site, or sketch a flow chart describing the different levels of command and the responsibilities each officer has to guard the soldiers and to accomplish the war objective. Make a separate presentation on the medical hierarchy, which moves from first aid to medic, nurse, and doctor.
2. Divide the class into small groups to discuss how Yossarian's war differs from combat in Korea, Belleau Woods, Anzio, D-Day beaches, Iwo Jima, Bosnia, the Falkland Islands, Little Big Horn, Guadalcanal, Sicily, Khe Sanh, Fallujah, Mogadishu, the Ardennes, Beirut, Saigon, Yorktown, the Alamo, Ypres, Gettysburg, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf.
3. Summarize in a chalk talk the influence of the *Geneva Accord* on modern warfare.
4. Make an oral report on the limited role of nurses and other women in World War II. Suggest why Nurse Sue Ann Duckett is a poor example of military spirit. Discuss the growth of prostitution as a means of keeping women alive during occupation.
5. Using a computer art program, create lessons in field command. Draw on the strategies of famous leaders, notably General William Westmoreland, Tran Hung Dao, Blackjack Pershing, Boadicea, Napoleon Bonaparte, Geronimo, Richard the Lion Heart, Julius Caesar, George Patton, Joan of Arc, Robert E. Lee, Colin Powell, Le Loi, Poncho Villa, General Dwight Eisenhower, James Doolittle, Crazy Horse, the Trung sisters, and Saladin.

Drama

1. Improvise a scene in which John Yossarian returns to his old neighborhood or tells of his adventures as bombardier of a B-25 on Pianosa Island. What might he warn the innocent about military service and combat? What details might he keep from friends and family?
2. Role-play the part of a doctor, nurse, farmer, officer, bombardier, pilot, chaplain, Red Cross volunteer, corpsman, or rehabilitation counselor. Explain how the story would change if Yossarian had been shot down and survived severe injury or if Snowden had survived the plane crash.

Composition

1. Write a poem, recruiting or combat slogan, eulogy, or the lyrics to a song or hymn in which you express the frustration of men fighting a long, exhausting, dehumanizing war. Compare your lyrics to those of popular American music from the mid-to-late 1940s.
2. Characterize in a theme the ironic or ominous implications of names like Aarfy, Hungry Joe, Major Major, Lieutenant Scheisskoff, Milo Minderbinder, Mudd, Orr, Dori Duz, General P. P. Peckem, Kraft, Colonel Korn, General Dreedle, Chief White Halfoat, Yo-Yo, and Nurse Sue Ann Duckett. Explain how the name Snowden adds to the poignance of Yossarian's attempt at first aid and comfort to a dying crew member.
3. Write an encyclopedia entry on bombing and strafing. Explain how air maneuvers improve the chances of ground forces by cutting supply lines, discouraging an enemy advance, or blowing up rail lines, bridges, highways, warehouses, airfields, and wartime industrial efforts.

Cinema

Summarize aloud the attitude of several screenwriters of movies about war. Consider *Platoon*, *The Patriot*, *Gods And Generals*, *Full Metal Jacket*, *Pearl Harbor*, *Patton*, *All Quiet On The Western Front*, *Gallipoli*, *Charlie Company*, *The Killing Fields*, *Born On The Fourth Of July*, *Geronimo*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Coming Home*, *Farewell To Arms*, *Gone With The Wind*, *Cold Mountain*, *Saving Private Ryan*, *We Were Soldiers*, *Windtalkers*, and *Good Morning, Vietnam*. Contrast several plots with Heller's approach to war themes and situations, for example, accepting additional bomb runs, applying first aid to a dying crew member, seeking relaxation on a beach, receiving counsel from a chaplain, flying in tight formation, and recovering from wounds.

Journalism

1. Compose a list of questions to accompany a televised interview with soldiers in a war zone. Balance questions and answers to give civilians a fair, unbiased view of day-to-day activities and combat demands, including grim details and moments of rest and humor, such as practical jokes and touring Rome.
2. Discuss in an editorial why opportunists like the old Italian and profiteers like Milo Minderbinder are equally offensive.
3. Set up an interview with Hermann Goering. Determine why he is effective in the field and why American troops fear him.

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Psychology

1. Discuss in a short speech the effects of psychological warfare on American forces, Italians, and Germans. What physical and mental symptoms demonstrate the trauma of extended bomb runs and news of losses among comrades?
2. Explain why a sensitive writer like Heller chooses to make light of his wartime experience rather than express a straightforward self-revelatory truth about bombing European targets.
3. Make a web site or bulletin board on dealing with the severe disablement or death of a soldier or a case of AWOL. Suggest ways that families can relieve sorrow, humiliation, and loss, for example, by supporting the U.S.O. or by joining a support group.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. List examples of cruelty, vulgarity, and racism in various characters, for example, abuse of the soldier in white, Michaela's rape and murder, Hungry Joe's photos up the skirts of U.S.O. performers, soldiers groaning at a beautiful woman, Hungry Joe's shooting into tents, feeding of the soldier in white with his own excrement, Luciana's war wound, and Milo Minderbinder's raid on the airbase.
2. Compile a list of actions that demonstrate alienation, tension, and emotional upset, particularly Yossarian's belief that people are shooting at him, Colonel Korn and Colonel Cathcart's wish to be liked, Orr's plot to desert, Dunbar's fake illness and retreat to the hospital, Yossarian's removal of intercom wires before the plane's return to base, and Hungry Joe's screaming nightmares.
3. Compose a scene in which Yossarian or Orr is captured by M.P.'s, returned to Pianosa airbase, and court-martialed for being AWOL.
4. Make a character list and explain the character flaws of each, including Nately's whore's mania, General Dreedle's lack of compassion for soldiers, Doc Daneeka's greed, Colonel Korn and Colonel Cathcart's venality, the old man's cynicism, Chaplain Tappman's ineffectiveness, Major Major's avoidance of making decisions, Milo Minderbinder's monomania, and Yossarian's fear of death.
5. Analyze the significance of these images: legs cut from a soldier, attending a ceremony naked, Doc Daneeka's official death in a plane crash, a row of extra flak suits on board the B-25, covering Snowden with a parachute, a bribe of a collapsible aluminum lawn chair, morphine missing from a first aid kit, Hungry Joe's tent on the wrong side of the tracks, and Yossarian's arrest in Rome.

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VOCABULARY TEST

Underline the synonym for each word in boldface

1. **beaten**: disentangled, immobilized, petrified, bludgeoned, disengaged
2. **belief**: rancor, sham, pretension, ostentation, credo
3. **weepy**: jaunty, lachrymose, verdant, teeming, impregnable
4. **cruelly**: sadistically, vilely, yearningly, balefully, prodigiously
5. **trait**: inherent, idiosyncrasy, lethargy, aneurysm, moue
6. **hermit**: barrage, bane, recluse, metamorphosis, allusion
7. **pretending**: ululating, whinnying, vouchsafing, fainting, domineering
8. **ancestral**: voluminous, primeval, intralinear, prolix, patriarchal
9. **cataclysm**: antagonism, misadventure, catastrophe, subordinate, endorsement
10. **puzzle**: frivolity, masochism, gentian, enigma, magenta
11. **graceful**: lateral, conscientious, leonine, protracted, lithe
12. **common**: ubiquitous, insensate, ineradicable, paramount, inviolable
13. **servile**: glacial, obsequious, vexatious, frenetic, tantamount
14. **draining**: quavering, invigorating, enervating, excoriating, defensive
15. **avenger**: elation, flak, nemesis, hobgoblin, conniver
16. **slanted**: wry, portentous, viscous, peremptory, diverse
17. **lazily**: sonorously, languorously, incredulously, remorselessly, beneficently
18. **angrily**: menacingly, virilely, irately, contemptuously, exultantly
19. **knapsack**: canteen, dispensary, chemist, musette, bedlam
20. **corrupt**: saunter, wrench, lure, debauch, hedonism

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COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Character Identification (30 points)

Name the characters who fit these descriptions.

- _____ 1. is lying in the sun with Yossarian when Kid Sampson dies.
- _____ 2. is "disappeared" from the hospital.
- _____ 3. owns the cat that kills Hungry Joe.
- _____ 4. is the dead man in Yossarian's tent.
- _____ 5. urges Yossarian to help murder Colonel Cathcart.
- _____ 6. lives in the woods to avoid Chief White Halfoat.
- _____ 7. has a scarred back from an American air raid in Naples.
- _____ 8. receives promotion to lieutenant general.
- _____ 9. questions Yossarian about sex dreams.
- _____ 10. faces accusation of murdering the soldier in white.
- _____ 11. leases apartments in Rome for soldiers to use.
- _____ 12. is a promiscuous friend of Lieutenant Scheisskopf's wife.
- _____ 13. receives sentence by the Action Board to 57 punishment tours.
- _____ 14. calls General Dreedle "Dad."
- _____ 15. plays ping-pong at the officer's club and fights with Orr.

Part II: Fact or Opinion (20 points)

Mark the following statements either **F** for fact or **O** for opinion.

- _____ 1. McWatt commits suicide because he appears to know that he is in trouble for killing Kid Sampson.
- _____ 2. Nately's whore knows that Yossarian is to blame for Orr's disappearance.
- _____ 3. Doc Daneeka dislikes flying and asks that his name be placed on the list of passengers aboard planes.
- _____ 4. If the war is over in Europe, Doc Daneeka will be shipped to the Pacific.
- _____ 5. Yossarian realizes that he will be AWOL if he accompanies Milo on the flight to Rome.
- _____ 6. Aarfy rapes Michaela and holds her prisoner in a closet before throwing her from a window.
- _____ 7. Colonel Korn and Colonel Cathcart believe that if Yossarian likes them, then the men will not mind flying dangerous missions.
- _____ 8. Yossarian moves the line on the map in order to halt the bomb run to Bologna.
- _____ 9. By pretending to be a dying soldier, Yossarian convinces a visiting family that he is proud of his Italian heritage.
- _____ 10. No one recovers Kid Sampson's legs from the beach because everyone felt too close to the tragedy to volunteer for the detail.

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Part III: Quotation Identification (20 points)

Name the character who speaks each of these quotations:

- _____ 1. I wouldn't mind being shipped someplace civilized where I might pick up a buck or two in abortion money every now and then.
- _____ 2. I've got a dead man in here with me. His name is Mudd.
- _____ 3. Milo and Colonel Cathcart are pals now. He made Colonel Cathcart a vice-president and promised him an important job after the war.
- _____ 4. Please taste this and let me know what you think. I'd like to serve it to the men.
- _____ 5. Run away to Sweden, Yossarian. And I'll stay here and persevere.
- _____ 6. I don't want you to come here while I'm here to ask me if there's anything you can do for me. Is that clear?
- _____ 7. America is the strongest and most prosperous nation on earth . . . And the American fighting man is second to none.
- _____ 8. All great countries are destroyed. Why not yours?
- _____ 9. I have a Garnett-Fleischaker syndrome . . . A liver condition.
- _____ 10. I'm cold.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Discuss Yossarian's attitudes toward survival and patriotism.
2. Describe various close calls in which Yossarian is injured or nearly killed.
3. Describe Yossarian's close relationships with military and civilian people in Pianosa.
4. Contrast situations in which characters are described as crazy.
5. Summarize events that force Yossarian to save himself.

CATCH-22

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Short Answer (30 points)

Provide an answer to each of these questions:

- _____ 1. Who treats a severe thigh injury with compression and applies sulfanilamide?
- _____ 2. Where is Yossarian during a funeral?
- _____ 3. Whom does Aarfy hurl out a window?
- _____ 4. Who accompanies Yossarian and Nurse Duckett to the beach, but stays away from them?
- _____ 5. What does Orr repeatedly dismantle?
- _____ 6. For what periodical does Hungry Joe claim to work?
- _____ 7. Who threatens Yossarian with a knife just before he deserts?
- _____ 8. Which disabled character is never seen because of his bandages?
- _____ 9. Which character is an Anabaptist?
- _____ 10. How does Chief White Halfoat claim he will die?
- _____ 11. What kills Hungry Joe?
- _____ 12. What washes up on the beach after Kid Sampson's death?
- _____ 13. How does Major Major escape from his office?
- _____ 14. On which bomb run is Snowden killed?
- _____ 15. Which bomb run does Yossarian delay by moving a line on a map?

Part II: Fill-in (20 points)

Fill in the word which completes each statement.

1. _____ angers Yossarian by pretending he cannot hear.
2. A note from M & M Enterprises replaces the _____ in the first aid kit.
3. A _____ on Luciana's back attests to an American air raid over Naples.
4. The _____ men investigate Washington Irving and Irving Washington.
5. Yossarian serves as the crew's _____ during missions.
6. Following Snowden's death, Yossarian refuses to wear a _____.
7. _____ becomes a nonperson after McWatt buzzes the beach and kills Kid Sampson.
8. _____, who believes he is Tarzan, Mandrake, Flash Gordon, Bill Shakespeare, Cain, Ulysses, the Flying Dutchman, Lot, Deirdre, Sweeney, and miracle ingredient Z-247, also claims to be supraman.
9. Yossarian is in the hospital because of _____ disease, which he is supposed to combat with fruit juice.
10. General Dreedle threatens a firing squad for the next man who _____.

CATCH-22

Part III: Matching (20 points)

Match parts of quotations. You will have answers left over when you finish.

- ___ 1. A good Garnett-Fleischaker syndrome isn't easy to come by
- ___ 2. It's a pretty satisfying experience
- ___ 3. We have with us today a very distinguished guest, General Peckem from Special Services,
- ___ 4. He'd die of exposure if
- ___ 5. I hear he's going around saying that
- ___ 6. I heard them say they were going to threaten to court-martial you for
- ___ 7. He felt goose pimples clacking all over him as he gazed down despondently at the grim secret
- ___ 8. Can't you just picture him
- ___ 9. But she wouldn't hit him hard enough,
- ___ 10. I buy them in Sicily for one cent apiece and transfer them to Malta secretly at four and a half cents apiece
- A. the man who gives us all our softball bats, comic books and U.S.O. shows.
- B. in that yellow raft, paddling through the Straits of Gibraltar at night with that tiny little blue oar—
- C. deserting in the face of the enemy.
- D. in order to get the price of eggs up to seven cents apiece when people come to Malta looking for them.
- E. and I don't want to ruin mine.
- F. for he was no longer able to boast that he could beat hell out of any man in his outfit.
- G. a very moral and highly laudatory procedure, sir.
- H. Snowden had spilled all over the messy floor.
- I. where Milo cornered the market on cotton that no one else in the world wanted and brought himself promptly to the brink of ruin.
- J. so he had to row to Sweden.
- K. he tried to live in the woods in this weather.
- L. frankly I'd like to see the government get out of war altogether and leave the whole field to private industry.
- M. that sent him hurrying querulously into the medical tent to have his temperature taken by Gus and Wes and to obtain a mustard plaster and vaporizer.
- N. he's finished his missions and the war's over for him.
- O. pulling rank.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Explain why war stories need humor and fantasy as well as action.
2. What does the old man in the brothel believe about patriotism?
3. How does Orr practice for desertion?
4. Analyze the title.
5. Describe the types of humor that help men cope with death.

ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. bludgeoned | 11. lithe |
| 2. credo | 12. ubiquitous |
| 3. lachrymose | 13. obsequious |
| 4. sadistically | 14. enervating |
| 5. idiosyncrasy | 15. nemesis |
| 6. recluse | 16. wry |
| 7. fainting | 17. languorously |
| 8. patriarchal | 18. irately |
| 9. catastrophe | 19. musette |
| 10. enigma | 20. debauch |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Character Identification (30 points)

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Nurse Duckett | 9. Sanderson |
| 2. Dunbar | 10. Texan |
| 3. Huple | 11. de Coverly |
| 4. Mudd | 12. Dori Duz |
| 5. Dobbs | 13. Clevinger |
| 6. Flume | 14. Colonel Moodus |
| 7. Luciana | 15. Appleby |
| 8. Scheisskopf | |

Part II: Fact or Opinion (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. F |
| 2. O | 7. O |
| 3. F | 8. F |
| 4. O | 9. O |
| 5. F | 10. O |

Part III: Quotation Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| 1. Doc Daneeka | 6. Major Major |
| 2. Yossarian | 7. Nately |
| 3. Major Danby | 8. old man |
| 4. Milo | 9. Yossarian |
| 5. Chaplain Tappman | 10. Snowden |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Short Answer (30 points)

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Yossarian | 9. Chaplain Tappman |
| 2. in a tree | 10. pneumonia |
| 3. Michaela | 11. cat |
| 4. Nurse Cramer | 12. legs |
| 5. valve | 13. window |
| 6. <i>Life</i> | 14. Avignon |
| 7. Nately's whore | 15. Bologna |
| 8. soldier in white | |

Part II: Fill-in (20 points)

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Aarfy | 6. uniform |
| 2. morphine | 7. Doc Daneeka |
| 3. scar | 8. Yossarian |
| 4. C.I.D. | 9. liver |
| 5. bombardier | 10. groans |

Part III: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. E | 6. C |
| 2. O | 7. H |
| 3. A | 8. B |
| 4. K | 9. J |
| 5. N | 10. D |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

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