

# THE PRINCESS BRIDE

# LIVING LITERATURE SERIES

WILLIAM GOLDMAN

A PERMA-BOUND PRODUCTION

TEACHER'S GUIDE

GUIDE WRITTEN BY MARY ELLEN SNODGRASS

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## SYNOPSIS

**Introduction:** The speaker, presumably Goldman, calls *The Princess Bride* his favorite story. Because he didn't like to read, in the fifth grade, his teacher, Antonia Roginski, praised his imagination. After publishing *Temple of Gold*, he has the publicist send a copy to his former teacher. The speaker tells how, in fall 1941, the semi-literate father reads William the story of the princess while William recovers from pneumonia. The story so enflames William that he impresses Miss Roginski by devouring classic novels and devoting himself to movies.

While working in Beverly Hills, the speaker sends a copy of his favorite novel to his son Jason for his tenth birthday. The boy doesn't read the book, but Goldman renews his old fascination with it. In 1972, he puts his movie writing on hold to abridge the novel.

**Chap. One: The Bride** Buttercup, at age 15, is astoundingly beautiful, but cruel to Westley, the farm boy. After he wards off insulting suitors at her window, she declares her love for him. Nonetheless, he bids farewell and sets out for America. Buttercup determines to improve herself by bathing more often and working hard in the dairy. She writes to Westley until she learns that his ship, *Queen's Pride*, sinks off the Carolinas after encountering Pirate Roberts, who never leaves survivors. Buttercup gives up love.

**Chap. Two: The Groom** Prince Humperdinck, a fanatic hunter, assembles the Zoo of Death. He ignores his role as member of the royal family of Florin until his father, King Lotharon, becomes critically ill.

**Chap. Three: The Courtship** The prince rejects possible mates, including the bald Princess Noreena. His friend, Count Rugen, recalls having seen Buttercup, the dairy maid. When he explains that he doesn't demand love, Buttercup agrees to the betrothal.

**Chap. Four: The Preparations** Buttercup appears at Florin City's Great Square and begins learning how to behave as Princess of Hammersmith. During her three years of training, the king's health improves.

**Chap. Five: The Announcement** At age 21, Buttercup endears herself to the people of Florin by walking among them. While she rides out at dusk, Vizzini the dark Sicilian, accompanied by a Turk named Fezzik and a Spaniard named Inigo, kidnap her by boat and leave shreds of a Guilder uniform to implicate Florin's neighbor and cause a war. She regains consciousness and leaps into Florin Channel. He recovers her and aims for the Cliffs of Insanity. A man in black sails a boat toward the kidnapers.

Fezzik carries Buttercup on his shoulders up a rope as the pursuer climbs steadily behind him. After Fezzik arrives at the cliff top, Vizzini unties the rope and leaves his henchmen to kill the pursuer. Inigo carries the six-fingered sword, made

by his father, Domingo Montoya. When Inigo was nine and living in Arabella above Toledo, Spain, Domingo made magnificent swords, but refused to work for Yeste of Madrid. When a six-fingered nobleman commissions a sword, Domingo takes a year to complete it. The buyer belittles it; Domingo gives it to Inigo. The buyer kills Domingo.

Inigo challenges the killer, who refuses to fight a 10-year-old, but marks his cheeks with his blade. Yeste tends the boy for two years. After extensive wanderings, Inigo returns at age 22 after having strengthened and trained himself in sword fighting. Yeste fears that Inigo will never be a master. Inigo tracks down Bastia, the wizard swordsman. At age 30, Inigo stops practicing when he encounters Vizzini, who reclaims him from alcohol and joins with Fezzik to make a trio of adventurers.

Inigo allows the man in black to climb to the top of the cliff. The two duel. The man in black knocks Inigo on the head and ties him to a tree. Vizzini sends Fezzik to finish the job. Fezzik was a giant from infancy. His father gave up carpentry to manage his career as a fighter. On tour, his parents died of plague in Mongolia. Facing the man in black, Fezzik falls to the ground out of breath.

The man in black approaches Vizzini, who holds Buttercup at the site of a picnic. The man in black challenges Vizzini to a test of logic involving an Australian poison named iocane. The man in black tricks Vizzini by poisoning both cups. With Buttercup in hand, he runs from the prince's pursuers. At dawn, they see Florin's armada. Buttercup confides that she ceased loving when Westley died. Tumbling into a ravine, the man un.masks his face to reveal he is Westley.

The prince pursues on four giant white horses. Westley and Buttercup approach the Fire Swamp, where sulphur and flame threaten them during a six-hour crossing that exposes them to giant rats. Count Rugen follows; the prince rides to the other side. Westley intends to lead Buttercup to the *Revenge*, which is anchored in Giant Eel Bay. He admits that he is the current incarnation of the dreaded pirate Roberts.

In sight of the ship, Westley meets Rugen and the armada. The prince insists that Westley surrender. Because she can live without love, Buttercup compromises and asks that the prince not hurt Westley. As prince and princess depart, Rugen breaks his vow and clubs Westley, who notices that his attacker has six fingers.

**Chap. Six: The Festivities** In the nearly three months preceding the wedding, Buttercup assumes that Westley sailed safely away. At the cliffs, Inigo reclaims the six-fingered sword and finds a fisherman to sail him to Florin City to sink into a bottle. Fezzik returns to the picnic and finds Vizzini dead.

Westley awakens in a cage and faces terrible torture. Meanwhile the king weakens and dies. Buttercup becomes queen, but must wait 60 days for the country's 500th anniversary for the wedding. She dreams she encounters an old

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woman who boos because she deserted Westley. A second nightmare depicts Buttercup's infant daughter dying of milk with no love in it. A third nightmare shows her infant son dying in her arms of poisoned love.

On awakening, Buttercup confesses her mistake to the prince. He promises that, if Westley still wants her, the prince will give her up. She writes four letters to send in all directions to summon her true love. Secretly, he plans to murder her on their wedding night to launch a revenge war against Guilder. While pre-nuptial parties continue, Rugen silently observes Westley's torture. Twelve days before the wedding, the prince sends Yellin, his police chief, to jail everyone in the Thieves Quarter.

Below ground, Rugen applies a torture device that sucks out Westley's life year by year. Meanwhile, Fezzik reunites with Inigo. Fezzik knows that the six-fingered man is Rugen. Inigo needs someone as clever as Vizzini to help him plan revenge on Rugen for killing Domingo.

The prince increases castle security on the last day before the wedding. Buttercup realizes that he did not send her summons to Westley. After the ceremony, the prince locks her in a room. She hears Westley's death cry. Inigo tracks the sound, which he once heard Domingo make, and plunges into the prince's underground zoo.

**Chap. Seven: The Wedding** Inigo and Fezzik make their way through animal terrors in the dark corridors and locate Westley's body. A skinny man retrieves Max the wonder worker from retirement, who restores Westley enough to utter "true love." As the time of war draws near, Yellin resigns from the prince's service. A magic resurrection pill revives Westley's voice in his stiff body. As Buttercup kneels before the archdean, screaming erupts at the gate. Fezzik bursts into flame; the guests panic.

**Chap. Eight: Honeymoon** Inigo and Fezzik force Yellin to give up the key to the gate. Rugen faces Westley, whom he believed to be dead. Inigo challenges Rugen, who runs. Buttercup fears that Westley will not rescue her and is aiming a dagger at her breast when he appears. Rugen stabs Inigo.

The Prince expects Westley to challenge him, but the hero can only smile. Meanwhile, Inigo forces himself up and cuts out Rugen's heart. Westley orders Buttercup to tie the prince. Inigo lets slip Westley's weakened condition. Fezzik returns with the four white horses. Buttercup takes charge and dispatches the brutes on the order of their new queen. She and Westley gallop away with Inigo and Fezzik. The author chooses to believe that they escape on the pirate ship. In his opinion, "Life isn't fair. It's just fairer than death."

### TIME LINE

age 3	When Buttercup is still growing up on the farm, a six-fingered man kills Domingo Montoya.
7 years later	Count Rugen begins making a devastating torture device.
age 15	Buttercup is astoundingly beautiful, but cruel to Westley, the farm boy, who rejects her love and sets out for America.
immediately	Buttercup determines to improve herself by bathing more often and working hard in the dairy.
later	She gives up love after she learns that his ship encounters Pirate Roberts and sinks.

age 18	She is betrothed in a loveless match with Prince Humperdinck and studies how a queen behaves.
age 21	She endears herself to the people of Florin
that evening	Vizzini, Fezzik, and Inigo kidnap her.
next day	After they arrive at the Cliffs of Insanity, a man in black tricks Vizzini with poison and flees with Buttercup.
at dawn	They see Florin's Armada and run into the Fire Swamp.
6 hours later	They emerge unharmed except for bites by giant rats.
later	Rugen clubs Westley.
nearly 3 months later	Buttercup confesses to the prince her love for Westley.
day before the wedding	Buttercup hears Westley's death cry.
later	Max the wonder worker revives Westley.
after the wedding	Westley appears in time to halt Buttercup from committing suicide.
	Inigo cuts out Rugen's heart. Buttercup and Westley gallop away with Inigo and Fezzik toward the <i>Revenge</i> .
fall 1941	The speaker's father reads a story while the boy recovers from pneumonia.
1962	The speaker and wife Helen produce a son named Jason.
1972	The speaker sends a copy of the novel to Jason for his tenth birthday.
later	Because the boy doesn't read the book, Goldman puts his movie writing on hold to abridge the novel.
1973	The speaker completes <i>The Princess Bride</i> .

### AUTHOR SKETCH

A pacesetter in fiction and film, William W. Goldman is a product of Chicago. Born on August 12, 1931, to Marion Weil and businessman Maurice Clarence Goldman, he attended Highland Park High School, but got his career education watching movies at the Alcyon Theatre. His love of the film classic *Gunga Din* stuck in his mind and recurred in his scripting of the cliff leap in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*. An undistinguished student, he earned a B.A. in creative writing from Oberlin and edited fiction for the campus literary magazine. He served in the Army for two years and attained the rank of corporal before entering graduate school.

Upon completion of his M.A. in English from Columbia University in 1957, Goldman married photographer Ilene Jones in 1961 and fathered two daughters, Jenny and Susanna. On the brink of going into advertising, he published *The Temple of Gold*, which he wrote in ten days, and continued freelancing fiction until he began writing for film, the career he always intended for himself. Cliff Robertson engaged him to script *Flowers for Algernon*, but fired him and replaced him with Stirling Silliphant. Robertson again gave him a chance at film writing in 1965 with the scripting of *Masquerade*.

For *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, which took him eight years to write, Goldman pushed the role of screenwriting to the forefront by earning \$400,000, a major coup in the star-driven movie world. His writing for Robert Redford

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spanned a variety of settings and subjects—*The Hot Rock*, *A Bridge Too Far*, *The Great Waldo Pepper*, and *All the President's Men*. Goldman also wrote children's literature and novels and published articles in *Transatlantic Review*, *New York Magazine*, *Rogue*, *Esquire*, and *New World Writing*. Two of his works were adapted to other use: *Soldier in the Rain* (1963) and *No Way To Treat a Lady* (1968) for film and the latter as a Broadway musical in 1987. He intends to produce a sequel to *The Princess Bride* and a textbook on movies and to adapt to cinema Stephen King's *Hearts in Atlantis*.

### CRITIC'S CORNER

Goldman has made a secure place for himself in Hollywood under his own name and under the pseudonyms S. Morgenstern and Harry Longbaugh. Prolific in cinema writing, he has flourished since his departure from graduate school and has twice teamed with his brother, writer James Goldman, who won an Oscar for scripting *The Lion in Winter*. His honoraria include two Academy Awards for screenplays of *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *All the President's Men*, as well as a Writers Guild Award and British Academy Award for *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and the Laurel award for lifetime achievement.

A successful author for 30 years, in 1973 William Goldman created a legend with *The Princess Bride*, his favorite novel. His spoof on fairy tale logic, it satirizes folklore by pretending to excerpt a work by the fictional "S. Morgenstern." The remaining tale coordinates melodramatic extremes of absolute monarchs, miracle workers, heroes, maniacal sadists, and pirates. As parody and cult classic, the story pleases young readers with engaging characters and non-stop motion while giving adults some instructive themes on the nature of devotion and persistence.

Critics laud Goldman's facile writing, skillful dialogue, and a controlling humanism, all marks of a master storyteller. His style is straightforward and uncluttered, characterized by a clear omniscience, escapist adventure, and heavy character action and frequent plot shifts. He emphasizes the illusions that dominate human motivation, particularly about affluence and the security of fortune. Balancing chaos with the ideas, he reverts to the classic reliance on friendship as the height of civilized attainments. To counter sentimentality, he produces these effects in tandem with breezy delivery, slang, humorous clichés, and such tongue-in-cheek humor.

### OTHER WORKS BY WILLIAM GOLDMAN

#### Fiction

*Blood, Sweat and Stanley Poole* (1962)  
*Boys and Girls Together* (1964)  
*Brothers* (1987)  
*The Color of Light* (1984)  
*Control* (1982)  
*A Family Affair* (1962)  
*Father's Day* (1971)  
*Heat* (1985)  
*Hype and Glory* (1990)  
*Magic* (1976)  
*Marathon Man* (1975)  
*No Way To Treat a Lady* (1964)  
*The Silent Gondoliers* (1983)  
*Soldier in the Rain* (1960)  
*The Temple of Gold* (1957)  
*The Thing of It Is . . .* (1967)

*Tinsel* (1979)  
*Wait Till Next Year* (1988)  
*Wigger* (1974)  
*Your Turn To Curtsy, My Turn To Bow* (1958)

#### Nonfiction

*Adventures in the Screen Trade: A Personal View of Hollywood and Screenwriting* (1983)  
*The Big Picture: Who Killed Hollywood? and Other Essays* (2000)  
*The Season: A Candid Look at Broadway* (1969)  
*Which Lie Did I Tell? More Adventures in the Screen Trade* (2000)  
*William Goldman: Four Screenplays with Essays* (1995)

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Steinberg, Sibyl, "Interview: William Goldman," *Publishers Weekly*, March 18, 1983, p. 26.  
Travers, Peter, "Review: Princess Bride," *People Weekly*, September 28, 1987, p. 14.  
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### GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the importance of beauty and strength in fairy tales
2. To account for the success of a devious plot

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3. To interpret cultural customs of royalty and their subjects
4. To contrast reality with fantasy
5. To discuss the themes of cruelty and ruthlessness
6. To explain the main events in time order
7. To analyze reading and its influence on children
8. To describe attitudes toward trophy wives
9. To describe elements that delineate atmosphere and tone
10. To analyze the roles of real and unreal characters and settings

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To explain how and why Inigo Montoya learns to use a sword
2. To analyze the symbolism of the 500th anniversary
3. To summarize the speaker's role in teaching his son William about fantasy
4. To account for Fezzik's weakness
5. To justify Buttercup's decision to kill herself
6. To predict how Westley and Buttercup will fare as pirates
7. To summarize Prince Humperdinck's strengths
8. To discuss the implications of torture as a symptom of madness
9. To describe the roles of Queen Bella, the albino, Max, and Valerie
10. To list events in which Westley triumphs over evil
11. To explain why the speaker abridges Morgenstern's book
12. To account for an ambivalent ending that implies escape on a pirate ship

### LITERARY TERMS AND APPLICATIONS

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

**fantasy** a dimension of imaginative literature that blends the real world with incredible and supernatural elements. In *The Princess Bride*, Goldman relies on fantastic elements such as a flaming swamp, giant rats, and a resurrection pill.

**parody** a humorous or witty imitation of another work in a ridiculous or absurd style to demean the original piece or its author. Goldman creates humor and meaning by ridiculing fairy tales, in many of which female characters are impossibly beautiful and heroes more valiant than real life.

**whimsy** a blend of bizarre, capricious, or fantastic elements and surprise events or outcomes in an imaginative literary work. Goldman enriches his parody with surprising elements, such as Fezzik's knack for rhyming words and phrases and his ability to fight off groups of attackers after his father teaches him how to defend himself. The irony of a sensitivity for poetry and a giant, muscular body adds to the parody of the standard fairy tale, in which characters lack a true blend of human traits.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING

*The Princess Bride* begins in a believable bucolic setting and wanders across romantic adventures and a European palace to conclude on a mysterious pirate ship named *Revenge*. The grounding of the story at a humble dairy farm helps establish the parody by making Buttercup a normal girl. Buttercup arrives in Florin as future princess and queen through no talent or inner trait. Goldman depicts the separation between peasantry and royalty with a public square and

a guarded gate that blocks off the world of the princess from ordinary people outside.

She takes her evening gallop and falls into the hands of Vizzini, Fezzik, and Inigo. The scene rapidly alters from impossibly safe and regal to the bottom of a boat and a blanket over the victim, who listens to the details of the shark-infested waters. The rope-climb up the Cliffs of Insanity leads to the cliff-top to the ravine, where the plot tips in the princess's favor as the man in black sweeps her away from her captors.

The settings then shift from menacing outdoor obstacles to the security of Florin, a spoof of the insular European kingdom. In the falling action, after Buttercup observes the royal armada and realizes that the prince has lied to her about sending out messengers to locate Westley, danger overwhelms the setting once more. Goldman moves rapidly about dark and sinuous corridors, threatening snakes and spiders, and the torture chamber in which Count Rugen tries out his direst torment on Westley.

Because the insurgents arrive too late to save Westley from death, Goldman must add a side journey to the retirement hut of Max the wonder worker and his wife Valerie before hurrying back to the sunset wedding and to the immurement of the bride in a locked room. The story deliberately dangles before the reader the freedom of the open sea aboard the *Revenge* as a possible escape route for Westley and Buttercup, who reunite once more.

### CROSS-CURRICULAR SOURCES

#### Novels

Richard Adams, *Watership Down*  
James M. Barrie, *Peter Pan*  
L. Frank Baum, *The Wizard of Oz*  
Ray Bradbury, *The Martian Chronicles* and *Dandelion Wine*  
Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*  
Madeleine L'Engle, *A Wrinkle in Time*  
Ian Fleming, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*  
Robin McKinley, *Beauty*  
Robert C. O'Brien, *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*  
J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*  
J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*  
Mark Twain, *The Prince and the Pauper*  
E. B. White, *Stuart Little*

#### Plays

Karel Capek, *R. U. R.*  
Mary Chase, *Harvey*

#### Poetry

Robert Browning, "The Pied Piper of Hamelin"  
Christian Rossetti, "The Goblin Market"

#### Short Stories

Hans Christian Andersen, "The Little Mermaid"  
Maurice Maeterlinck, "The Blue Bird"  
Edgar Allan Poe, "The Masque of the Red Death"  
Frank R. Stockton, "The Lady or the Tiger"  
Oscar Wilde, "The Happy Prince"

#### Internet

"The Ballad of Mulan,"  
<[is6.pacific.net.hk/~shung/favorites/mulan.html](http://is6.pacific.net.hk/~shung/favorites/mulan.html)>.  
"Fantasy and Science Fiction," <[www.sfsite.com/fsf/](http://www.sfsite.com/fsf/)>

#### Videos/DVDs

*The Court Jester*  
*The Little Mermaid*  
*The Princess Bride*

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*The Secret of NIMH*  
*Shrek*  
*Stuart Little*  
*Watership Down*  
*Willow*  
*The Wizard of Oz*

### THEMES AND MOTIFS

A study of the central issues and situations in *The Princess Bride* should include these aspects:

#### Themes

- beauty
- country life
- patriarchy
- collusion
- training
- danger
- escape
- reunion
- courage
- revenge
- flight

#### Motifs

- coping with a deceitful mate
- understanding the criminal mentality
- assuming the role of rescuer
- battling overwhelming forces
- overcoming death

### MEANING STUDY

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

1. You're a late bloomer, that's all. Winston Churchill was a late bloomer and so are you. (Introduction, p. 5)  
*(In his youth, Sir Winston Churchill suffered parental neglect and rejection and fared poorly at Harrow, a prestigious school for elite young men. He required three tries to pass the entrance examination to the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, where he steadily rose in attainment to twentieth in a class of 130. His political career was seemingly over until World War II, when, at age 66, he became prime minister and led Britain from near-certain defeat to complete victory.)*
2. Not only did it not establish me as the freshest thing since Kit Marlowe, it also didn't get read by anybody. (Introduction, p. 7)  
*(Christopher "Kit" Marlowe was the prize playwright of the Elizabethan age when William Shakespeare was just beginning his career. Marlowe, who was skilled at iambic pentameter and stirring stage tragedy, was best known for Doctor Faustus.)*
3. "Cooper maybe," she'd say, so off I went into *The Deerslayer* and all the Leatherstocking stuff, and then on my own one day I stumbled onto Dumas and D'Artagnan and that got me through most of February, those guys. (Introduction, p. 11)  
*(From the adventure lore of Robert Louis Stevenson and romances of Sir Walter Scott, the speaker advances to the American novelist James Fenimore Cooper, author of the Leatherstocking Tales, a series of frontier adventures featuring Natty Bumppo and his friend Chingachgook, the last of the Mohicans.)*
4. And "How is it possible this happens before glamour when glamour is an ancient concept? See 'glamer' in the Oxford English Dictionary." (Chap. One, p. 39)  
*(While Goldman reads galley proofs, the mock pages that precede a final typeset in book form, he fields questions from his copy editor, who points out faults in logic and refers Goldman to the Oxford English Dictionary, the final authority on word derivation in the English language.)*
5. This was all taking place in the ape pit, where the Prince had his pleasure with any simians. (Chap. Two, p. 61)  
*(Prince Humperdinck, who enjoys tormenting and killing animals, both great and small, comes close to humanity in his wrestling with an orangutan, a primate that he kills offhandedly by cracking its spine. Goldman implies that the next stage in the prince's moral deterioration will be the torment of a human being.)*
6. You would have said, "Excellent parry, Inigo, now that's enough for one day; let's have supper." (Chap. Five, p. 109)  
*(In fencing, a parry is a slight hand or wrist motion that brushes aside a dangerous thrust from an opponent. The purpose of training is to teach the fencer to ward off deadly gestures with a small expenditure of energy and no loss of concentration, balance, or control.)*
7. He was never popular, what with his hunting fetish and leaving the country to kind of rot once his old man got senile, but the way he foiled the kidnapping made everybody realize that this was some brave fella and they were lucky to have him next in line to lead them. (Chap. Six, p. 175)  
*(Prince Humperdinck hides his obsession with torturing and killing animals from his subjects. Based on his swift action to retrieve the princess, their judgement tends to applaud him for courage and rapid response.)*
8. What happens here that you aren't going to read is the six-page soliloquy from Inigo in which Morgenstern, through Inigo, reflects on the anguish of fleeting glory. (Chap. Six, p. 177)  
*(While pretending to abridge S. Morgenstern's long, tedious romance, Goldman is actually instructing readers on rhetorical method. He indicates that authors sometimes speak their opinions through soliloquy, a long musing speech or a formal aside of a stage character to the audience.)*
9. Because when she died of murder on their wedding night, it was crucial that all Florin realize the depth of his love, the epochal size of his loss, since then no one would dare hesitate to follow him in the revenge war he was to launch against Guilder. (Chap. Six, p. 193)  
*(The prince's evil plot to give the appearance of devotion to his bride hinges on deceiving his subjects and to create a loss that only war with Guilder can compensate. Goldman satirizes the paltry causes of European wars, which often erupted from some egotistical royal who wanted to avenge a private grief.)*
10. You understand nothing, but it really doesn't matter, since what you mean is, you're glad to see me, just as I'm glad to see you because no more loneliness. (Chap. Six, p. 218)  
*(Inigo's elaborate point-by-point explanation of why he must ally with Westley doesn't penetrate Fezzik's limited*

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thoughts. Inigo understands that logic is wasted on the giant Turk, but he does realize how much the two need each other. The theme is characteristic of Goldman's humanistic writing.)

### 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 book.

#### Motivation

1. What causes Buttercup to miss Westley?

(While living on the dairy farm, Buttercup disdains the nameless orphaned farm boy, taunting him daily. After the village boys desert the local girls to pursue Buttercup, the farm boy thrashes them for insults and laughter under her window. She first notices Westley when he catches the eye of the countess, who wants to see how he feeds the cattle. In a jealous snit Buttercup orders him to clean Horse and the stable that night.

Plagued by the sight of the countess ogling Westley, Buttercup gets up during the night to think over his muscular body, tanned skin, and good teeth, which she has never noticed before. Weeping and tossing on her bed, she arises at dawn to confess her love to Westley. To her surprise, he leaves to seek his fortune in America after confessing his own love for her.

Buttercup's first experience with rejection arouses mature responses, causing her to write him and cherish his love letters in reply. When she learns from her parents that Westley was the victim of the Dread Pirate Roberts, she withdraws to her room. She emerges changed: she is still impossibly lovely, but she is wiser and "an ocean sadder" because she has given up all hope of love.)

#### Setting

2. Describe life at the palace.

(The author introduces the royal family at a meeting in the great council room, where they discuss the selection of a bride for Prince Humperdinck. The result of the meetings is the choice of a likely candidate. At dinner in the Great Hall, the family and Princess Noreena eat at candlelit tables "placed end to end along the center" in a drafty spot chilled by gusts from so many outer doors and giant entranceways. A dozen wine stewards pour drinks from kegs as the family awaits the serving of brandied pig, to be flamed with kerosene. When the wind from the main door rushes in with Lotharon's tardy entrance, it blows Noreena's head covering away. The prince rages at a potential marriage with a bald princess.

The next major view of castle life occurs with the arrival of Buttercup, named Princess of Hammersmith for an adjacent patch of land. In preparation for public life, she studies "curtsying and tea pouring and how to address visiting nabobs and like that." At noon, Humperdinck appears on the castle balcony to announce that he will marry a princess and sire an heir. The sight of Buttercup stuns them into silence at her beauty. She leaves the balcony to walk down the great steps to pass among the people in the square below.)

#### Character Development

3. How does Inigo cope with the loss of his father?

(Growing up in Central Spain above Toledo in the village

of Arabella, young Inigo Montoya loves his father Domingo, the absent-minded sword maker. The boy witnesses his father's negotiations with Yeste and observes his father's struggle to fill the order of the six-fingered man, who commissions a sword like Excalibur. In the fight that results from the man's rejection of the glistening sword, Domingo dies of a flashing weapon that shreds his heart. Immediately, ten-year-old Inigo challenges the killer, who refuses to fight a child. Because the attacker marks his face with slashes to the cheeks, Inigo carries a scarred visage into adulthood as he spends a decade learning to duel. He studies with masters in Venice, Bruges, and Budapest. He tracks the Corsican wizard, his competition, for eight years, becoming an alcoholic along the way. In despair, he becomes a follower of Vizzini, the hunchback Sicilian.

In the final pages of the story, Inigo faces off against Count Rugen, who is the six-fingered swordsman. Dying from his wounds, he nonetheless confronts Rugen. With the same cruelty that killed his father, Inigo chops at Rugen's heart, causing him to die.)

#### Historical Setting

4. How does the story suggest a time and place?

(Although Florin is not a real setting, it takes shape in numerous details. The trifling wars between European states and the style of warfare centered on mounted warriors and swords indicate that the author sets the story in the Middle Ages. The concept of the royal choice of a bride to provide the kingdom with an heir was a convention of the era. Details such as dining in a great hall, wine stewards, brandied pigs, and visiting royal brides reinforce the setting.

The use of a miracle worker and witch as healers was a convention of medieval literature, in which potions carried a reputation for wondrous cures, including restoring the dead to life. Piracy, which flourished much earlier, survived in the Middle Ages, when the fictional Westley takes up with the Pirate Cumberbund and builds a new reputation under his acquired title as the next incarnation of the Dread Pirate Roberts. The conclusion of the story suits an historical era when might still preceded law among the privileged.)

#### Theme

5. Why does Goldman focus on life's unfairness?

(The story suits the speaker in childhood, when his semi-literate immigrant father entertains him with a reading while the boy recovers from pneumonia. He recalls, "I loved that. Even today, that's how I summon back my father when the need arises." Still believing in a child's concept of justice, the boy recoils at a swashbuckling story that ends with the hero's death. He recalls, "Something was wrong . . . Suddenly there was this discontent gnawing away until it had a place big enough to settle in and then it curled up and stayed there and it's still inside me lurking as I write this now."

When the boy grows up to manhood and shares the story with Jason, his 10-year-old, he intends to teach the same lesson—life is unfair, but it is better than death. The theme of uneven fortune begins with the opening lines, which attest to the world's adulation of the most beautiful women for no other reason than physical perfection. Buttercup, despite her beauty, grows up with few

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admirers. Because Count Rugen witnesses her loveliness, the plot carries her to Florin. The unfairness of her fate lies in the deranged prince's willingness to murder her and launch a war with Guilder as a political ploy.

In the end, the speaker stops short of a happy or sad ending by leaving open the possibility that the prince survives to stalk Buttercup and Westley and the equal chance that the couple escape aboard the *Revenge*. From his own experience with marriage and wives, the author hedges, "But that doesn't mean I think they had a happy ending either. Because, in my opinion anyway, they squabbled a lot, and Buttercup lost her looks eventually." His statements imply that no adult life is free of worries.)

### Interpretation

6. Why does Goldman introduce a sadistic killer and a champion of pain?

(Goldman teams Count Rugen with Prince Humperdinck as though people with evil intent belong together. To superintend his underground animal collection and torture chamber, the prince needs the day labor of the albino and the crafty plotting of Rugen, Humperdinck's confidant. The existence of pure evil in the two men balances the pure goodness in the devotion of Buttercup to Westley and his willingness to rescue her from harm. Without stalkers, Westley has no pressing reason to return to his homeland to retrieve Buttercup.)

As the plot brings the two opposing forces together, Westley acquires the assistance of Fezzik and Inigo. The latter stalks Count Rugen, not out of championship of Westley's true love for Buttercup, but out of festering hatred for Domingo Montoya's killer. Fezzik, who merely acts at the direction of a leader, serves as Inigo's cat's paw rather than as a minion motivated by evil. In the final face-off, the author allows Inigo to silence Count Rugen, but keeps alive the hero Westley and the cruel prince, a new balance of power between good and evil. Thus, the story requires the survival of the sadistic killer to maintain tension in a plot that turns on the struggle between hero and villain.)

### Conflict

7. Why do the Cliffs of Insanity become a major battleground?

(The author first challenges the evil trio of kidnappers with the appearance of the unidentified man in black, whose relentless pursuit of the trio and Buttercup hints that some power of good is willing to fight for the wronged princess. At the top of the cliff, Westley, still masked and anonymous, fights the challengers one by one, ending his face-off against Fezzik and Inigo with a deadly duel of wits against Vizzini, their hunchback Sicilian leader.)

The author allows the tension to remain fearful by hinting that the unnamed hero wants Buttercup for himself. As he carries her away, the new state of danger reigns until Westley falls into the ravine, at the same time removing his mask and identifying himself to his lady love. The tension broken, the story continues in a new direction, with the reunited lovers forming a duo in flight from Prince Humperdinck, the story's real villain.)

### Atmosphere

8. How does the author heighten the terrors of the under-

ground torture chamber?

(In the stereotypical medieval pit of confinement and torment, the torture chamber lies outside the knowledge of the Florians, who adore goodness and beauty in the princess who walks among them. Yet beneath lurk the animals and staff of the subterranean Zoo of Death, where Count Rugen pursues a scholarly study of pain while promoting Prince Humperdinck's fascination with the hunt. When the scene shifts from festivities honoring the lovely bride-to-be to the future groom's twisted mind, the author describes Westley, who is nearer to Buttercup than she imagines. Chained to a huge cage in foul dankness where animal sounds rouse him from unconsciousness, he bides his time until he can rescue her once again.)

The pathetic albino minion who attends Westley appears to serve him with "bandages and food, healing powders and brandy" as an act of courtesy and hospitality. The albino's clipped replies to Westley's questions indicate that there is much to hide in the underground chamber, particularly the prince's reason for imprisonment. The author enhances the menacing atmosphere with the first hint that the prince killed the three soldiers who carried Westley to the chamber as a means of concealing worse crimes to come.)

The shift to Buttercup, who battles three nightmares and confesses her error in abandoning Westley, implies that life in the castle gives a semblance of leisure and luxury, but torments the future queen with psychological terrors and emotional unrest. At night, Westley undergoes Count Rugen's tortures while the prince watches and comments as though observing experiments on laboratory animals. The torture reaches its height after Rugen completes his hellish doomsday machine and kills a wild dog, which dies emitting agonizing screams.)

### Author Purpose

9. Why does the novel appeal to readers?

(The key to Goldman's plotting is the constant creation of an uneasy balance followed by overwhelming upset followed by cliffhangers. Thus, Buttercup falls in love with the farm boy, but loses him. She rises to the position of bride-to-be in a royal household, then falls into the hands of three kidnappers. She flees their boat, but exposes herself to shark-infested waters. The cyclical give and take of fortune propels the story to a likely height—the wedding that will make Buttercup the official bride of Prince Humperdinck and the future mother of Florin's royal heirs.)

Unlike most fairy tales, where a wedding ends the tension, the official status of Queen Buttercup plunges her into despair and pushes her to suicide after Humperdinck locks her in his bedchamber. Readers enjoy the patterned shifts of power in the final episodes, as Max produces a resurrection pill and Westley arises from the dead to challenge the prince. Because the author persists in cliffhangers, possibilities always exist for more triumphs, more unforeseen obstacles, and more challenges. By ending the story ambiguously, the author implies that, like real life, Westley and Buttercup have a chance at happiness, but that happiness is never a sure thing.)

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### Structure

10. How do shifts from past to present suit the author's purpose?

*(Beyond light humor and the parody of fairy tale, Goldman pursues an important message about reading. Remembering his childhood and the loving father who immigrated to the United States and succeeded as a barber in Highland Park, Illinois, the speaker honors the role of parent. The father himself is heroic as purveyor of culture and home tutor to children, especially the bedfast boy who must miss school while recovering from pneumonia. Unlike the fanciful story where great powers of goodness and purpose battle evil, the semi-literate barber/father entertains his sick child and shares a stirring adventure story based on universal themes of courage and triumph.)*

*When the author shifts to his own attempt to rescue Jason, an overweight, coddled boy, from boredom, he also honors his son's tenth birthday with a treasured story. More important, the passage of folklore from father to son parallels the transference of sword power from the maker Domingo Montoya to the user Inigo. Their stories, like those of the speaker and Jason, display different situations, different challenges, but the underlying message remains the same. One generation attempts to retrieve from past human history the virtues that strengthen the side of right against the challenge of evil.)*

### HOW LANGUAGE WORKS

The author's lightly cynical tone derives from witty understatement or ironies that retrieve the novel from sentimentality, especially in regard to true love and marriage.

1. To satirize his own marriage, the speaker confides, "Nothing drives me crazier than when Helen does that. Because, see, with this horrible psychiatrist background of hers, she only accuses me of hiding things from her when I'm hiding things from her."
2. The motif of battling mates continues with a tournament image characterizing the relationship of Buttercup's parents: "This was their thirty-third spat of the day—this way long after spats—and he was behind, thirteen to twenty, but he had made up a lot of distance since lunch, when it was seventeen to two against him."
3. The dissension in the palace at Florin stems from the prince's misperception of Queen Bella, his stepmother: "Prince Humperdinck was but a child then, and since the only stepmothers he knew were the evil ones from stories, he always called Bella that, or 'E. S.' for short."
4. The minor issue of tension in Max's household stems from his life with Valerie, a witch whom he met at Miracle School: "I'm not a witch, I'm your wife—" she was advancing on him now, an ancient tiny fury—"and after what you've just done I don't think I want to be that any more—"
5. The reunion of Buttercup with the resurrected Westley presages a truly loving relationship, which Goldman salvages from mush with offbeat humor: "Are you angry at me for getting married?" she wondered. "You are not married," he said, softly. Strange his voice was. "Not in my church or any other." "But this old man did pronounce—" "Widows happen. Every day."

## ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

### Art and Music

1. Make an illustrated notebook of touches of the royal lifestyle among Florians, especially the castle guard, royal hunts, princess lessons, sunset wedding, and a royal welcome to Buttercup.
2. Demonstrate how an animator would draw cells of a cartoon version of *The Princess Bride*. Chose a dramatic moment, e.g. Westley's arrival aboard the *Revenge*.
3. Design an insignia and uniforms for the crew of the *Revenge*. Illustrate both Westley's daring and persistence and Buttercup's love for him. Propose a suitable shipboard title for Buttercup as well as a uniform.
4. Select mood music for a stage or outdoor drama version of the book.

### Cinema

View films based on fantasy. Compare the movies' fanciful settings, themes, characters, and dialogue to those of *The Princess Bride*. Comment on the interplay of realism and fantasy, for example, Westley's death on Count Rugen's torture device and his resurrection under the power of Max, the wonder worker.

### Education

1. Role-play the job of a governess or teacher of etiquette. Characterize the methods by which Buttercup abandons farm behaviors and learns to act like a princess and future queen. Name and describe the types of skills she learns.
2. Propose curriculum for a class to teach swordsmanship. Include strength training, agility, balance, and strategy.

### History and Social Studies

1. Create a mural or web site on Florin. Explain the system of government, seat of power at the palace, Yellin's police force and its work in the Thieves Quarter, security measures at the gate, and structure of the army and armada. Explain why war with Guilder is imminent after Prince Humperdinck connects the princess's kidnapping with shreds of a Guilder uniform.
2. Make a web site or bulletin board characterizing attitudes of locals toward a princess who walks among the people. Suggest other ceremonies and public appearances that could endear her to Florians. Compare her public demeanor with that of real royal, such as Princess Grace of Monaco or Princess Diana of Britain.
3. Divide the class into small groups to brainstorm ways to improve community relations with Guilder after the foiled war.
4. Based on your understanding of the book, lead a panel discussion of the logic on pp. 217-218 by which Inigo explains his need of the man in black to reunite Inigo with Count Rugen. Discuss why the exercise means nothing to Fezzik and why Inigo expects him to accept the conclusion without understanding.

### Language Arts

1. Read aloud from novels, plays, and stories based on fantasy or fairy tales. Isolate elements that rely on supernatural elements rather than logic or human skill, such as Max's resurrection pill.
2. Explain in a theme the significance of the names Buttercup and Westley. Propose other names that characterize their roles as hero and heroine.



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3. Write a theme in which you explain the role of a minor character. Determine which characters represent fair and realistic attitudes toward loyalty and love.
4. Explain how literary devices such as irony and hyperbole assist the satirist and parodist.
5. Explain the last sentence. Why does Goldman conclude his adventure story with a comment on death? Why does he reject the stereotypical "happily ever after" ending in favor of the possibility of more stalking and plotting?
6. Contrast Westley and Buttercup in their ability to speak their true intent. Explain how Westley's speech alters after he takes Max's resurrection pill and how Buttercup changes after losing Westley, escaping kidnappers, fleeing the Fire Swamp, becoming Princess of Hammersmith, and marrying Prince Humperdinck. Comment on her command to the Brute Squad as their queen.
7. Prepare a dialogue dramatizing the royal family's welcome to Buttercup, a former dairy maid promoted to Princess of Hammersmith. Propose questions for the King of Lotharon and Queen Bella to ask about her habits and interests, for example, music, art, needlework, and horseback riding. Add questions from Buttercup about her duties and life in the palace.
8. Compose posters of common aphorisms from the novel, such as "Don't expect too much from life" and "Excuses are the refuge of cowards." Discuss which sayings are clichés.
9. Lead a debate about feminism and the depiction of Buttercup as vain, juvenile, dull-witted, disloyal, and self-absorbed. Comment on scenes in which she displays her own brand of courage and commitment.
10. Organize a discussion of reading. Suggest methods by which a parent can read stories aloud to a reluctant reader and build interest and curiosity. List adventure books that a boy or girl might like to hear at age ten.
11. Make a web site or bulletin board that identifies these terms: Einstein, RCA, Random House, Alfred A. Knopf, Kit Marlowe, Stevenson, Scott, Cooper, Leatherstocking, Dumas, D'Artagnan, Hugo, Hunchback of Notre Dame, Alan Ladd, John Wayne, Errol Flynn, Zanucks, Doubleday, mashuganuh, nougat, Voltaire, Bengal, Sussex, Thames, galley proofs, abridging, Oxford English Dictionary, excision, Columbia University, tiller, Gargantuan, Excalibur, Corsican, Gobi, jujitsu, karate, kung fu, Mongolia, Venice, Bruges, anaconda, mamba, Orinoco, Ty Cobb, bifocals, Budapest, parry, feint, riposte, chicanery, armada, Perth, verbatim, epochal, soliloquy, Gaboon viper, stonefish, and spiel.

### Psychology

1. Describe aloud the drive for survival and the goal of vengeance. Explain how Inigo makes himself the best swordsman and how he stanches the blood flow from a wound with his fist while he challenges Rugen and slices out his heart.
2. Report orally on the physical and psychological effects of imprisonment. Account for Westley's ability to pretend that torture hurts him while surviving without pain the burning of his hand. Discuss why Goldman makes his hero seem stronger and tougher than real life heroes.
3. Using incidents from the book, comment on gradual changes in Buttercup. Discuss how she copes with the demands and expectations of a future queen.
4. Characterize the moral integrity, courage, cleverness, and influence of Fezzik. Summarize physical, ethical, and personal traits that strengthen him after he believes himself alone and leaderless. Why does his return with the four horses prove that he no longer needs Vizzini or Inigo to lead him? How does this action redeem him from self-doubt?
5. Write an encyclopedia entry on attempted suicide. Add details that explain why Buttercup loses her faith in rescue so shortly after the royal wedding and why she chooses to kill herself with a dagger.

### Science and Health

Compose a lecture on lovesickness. Determine why Westley chooses to leave for America on the *Queen's Pride* and why he disguises himself and hurries to save Buttercup from the three kidnappers. Comment on the source and purpose of adrenaline and the body's ability to exert unusual strength and stamina during times of danger or challenge.

### Speech and Drama

1. Draw stage settings for a dramatization of a scene from the novel. Supply sketches of costumes and props.
2. Create a storyboard account of Buttercup's wedding to Prince Humperdinck. Conclude with her immurement in the prince's room and her reunion with Westley, who foresees that she may soon be a widow.
3. Outline a speech honoring Buttercup as future queen of Florin. Characterize her attitude toward rule and her experience with difficult tasks.

### ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. List examples of violence in the lives of the characters.
2. Compile a list of actions and statements that demonstrate Westley's loyalty to Buttercup.
3. Compose a scene in which Buttercup meets the crew of the *Revenge* and becomes a pirate queen.
4. Make a character list and explain the character flaws of each.

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### VOCABULARY TEST

Complete each of the following sentences with an appropriate word from the list below. You will have answers left over when you finish.

abridger	dullard	mamba	soliloquy
albino	fey	nuptials	spiel
allotted	expository	parry	sublimity
chicanery	fetish	prominence	swarthy
chronicled	foray	pyre	syllabub
constellation	holocaust	quibbling	vein
dabbles	impasse	ripostes	wince

1. A more logical explanation would be that he is simply an ordinary sailor who \_\_\_\_\_ in mountain climbing as a hobby who happens to have the same general final destination as we do.
2. Nothing of importance in an \_\_\_\_\_ way was related because every time Buttercup began "Tell me about yourself," Westley quickly cut her off with "Later, beloved; now is not the time."
3. It's like eighty-nine days till the \_\_\_\_\_ and every high muckamuck in Florin has to give a "do" for the couple.
4. He was never popular, what with his hunting \_\_\_\_\_ and leaving the country to kind of rot once his old man got senile, but the way he foiled the kidnapping made everybody realize that he was some brave fella and they were lucky to have him next in line to lead them.
5. All those Columbia experts can \_\_\_\_\_ all they want about the delicious satire; they're crazy.
6. He gathered the best of the Brute Squad and led them into the Thieves Quarter for what simply had to be the final \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Now there was Westley. And with a giant and a strangely scarred \_\_\_\_\_ fellow.
8. Well, I'm an \_\_\_\_\_, so I'm entitled to a few ideas of my own.
9. Inigo was anxious to see how well he moved when quarters were close, when you could not thrust or \_\_\_\_\_ with total freedom.
10. The Duchess's grumpiness became legendary, as Voltaire has so ably \_\_\_\_\_.
11. She married soon thereafter, the selfsame man who accused her of \_\_\_\_\_, and gave him merry hell for many years.
12. She could chide herself for her silly infatuation with a \_\_\_\_\_.
13. All this was in a satiric \_\_\_\_\_, naturally, since Morgenstern hated royalty more even than doctors.
14. And do you wish your point coated so as to enter more easily or do you enjoy seeing the opponent's \_\_\_\_\_?
15. He could thwart thirty \_\_\_\_\_, but not the thirty-first, and now his shoulder bled.

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### COMPREHENSION TEST A

#### Part I: Description Identification (30 points)

Match each of the following descriptions from the book with a character. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left. Some of the answers will be used more than once and some not at all.

- |       |  |                |
|-------|--|----------------|
| _____ | 1. tries to commit suicide with a Florian dagger.                | A. Inigo       |
| _____ | 2. polices the Thieves Quarter.                                  | B. Lotharon    |
| _____ | 3. likes Chapter One the best.                                   | C. Jason       |
| _____ | 4. includes too many details about Florian history.              | D. Fezzik      |
| _____ | 5. gives up a title to Westley.                                  | E. Yeste       |
| _____ | 6. was a witch at Miracle School.                                | F. Buttercup   |
| _____ | 7. brings the white horses to the castle.                        | G. Morgenstern |
| _____ | 8. enjoys cracking an orangutan's spine.                         | H. Yellin      |
| _____ | 9. makes a formal study of torture.                              | I. Vizzini     |
| _____ | 10. wants the prince to marry for the sake of the kingdom.       | J. Valerie     |
| _____ | 11. accepts a commission from the prince to kidnap the princess. | K. Westley     |
| _____ | 12. pretends to send out four letters.                           | L. Ryan        |
| _____ | 13. claims to be "good at dead."                                 | M. Humperdinck |
| _____ | 14. un.masks in the ravine.                                      | N. Rugen       |
| _____ | 15. pledges at age 12 to avenge a parent's death.                | O. Max         |

#### Part II: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either **T** for true or **F** if any part is false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. King Lotharon dies before Buttercup arrives at Florin to take curtsy and tea pouring lessons.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Buttercup's parents realize that their newborn daughter is the world's most beautiful woman.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Westley and Buttercup require six hours to cross the Fire Swamp.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. At the palace, Buttercup realizes that she has made an error in parting from her true love.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. In a dream, one old woman boos the new princess.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. When Westley dies off the Carolina coast, Buttercup resigns herself to marrying Humperdinck, whom she doesn't love.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Inigo uses his fist to stop the bleeding during one last duel with Count Rugen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Domingo grows proud and haughty from his ability to make better swords than Yeste, his rival in Madrid.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Max's resurrection pill first restores Westley's voice.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. During the ninety days before the wedding, Buttercup learns about the underground hunting zoo.

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### Part III: Completion (20 points)

Fill in the blanks below with a word or phrase which completes the sentence. Place your answer in the space provided.

1. While working in Beverly Hills, the speaker sends a copy of his favorite novel to his son \_\_\_\_\_ for his \_\_\_\_\_ birthday.
2. In 1972, the speaker puts his \_\_\_\_\_ writing on hold to \_\_\_\_\_ Morgenstern's novel.
3. Westley, the \_\_\_\_\_ boy, bids farewell to Buttercup and sets out for \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Buttercup writes to Westley until she learns that his ship, \_\_\_\_\_, sinks off the Carolinas after encountering the Dread Pirate \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The prince rejects possible mates until his friend, \_\_\_\_\_, recalls having seen Buttercup, a ravishingly lovely \_\_\_\_\_ maid.

### Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Describe how Florians display their interest in the king's successor.
2. Explain why the speaker relishes rereading Morgenstern's novel.
3. Discuss what the speaker learns from his childhood reading of the novel.
4. Account for Inigo's acts of vengeance against Count Rugen.
5. Summarize events that lead to Westley's death from torture.

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### COMPREHENSION TEST B

#### Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Select the phrase that completes each of the following sentences. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. After losing the farm boy, Buttercup  
A. rides from the castle each evening on Horse.  
B. bathes more often.  
C. follows the albino into the dark passage.  
D. accepts the love of all Florians.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. To Valerie, Max  
A. confesses he messed up the amounts in the pill.  
B. offers a chance to resurrect Westley and to end their life in the hut.  
C. suggests relieving her of work pressure.  
D. accuses her of hiding things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The attorney agrees to  
A. allow the speaker to stop his *Stepford Wives* project.  
B. attend the birthday party.  
C. read aloud in the father's place.  
D. purchase the book.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Buttercup and Westley escape  
A. to America.  
B. the snow sand by following the R. O. U. S.  
C. on the fastest horses in Florin.  
D. and halt the war at the Guilder border before it begins.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Vizzini tries to trick Westley by  
A. switching the poisoned cups.  
B. cutting the rope and hurling boulders into the ravine.  
C. hiding on the Cliffs of Insanity.  
D. pretending to be immune to iocane.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Fezzik entertains himself with  
A. rhymes.  
B. a six-fingered sword.  
C. R. O. U. S.  
D. a fight with pirates from the *Revenge*.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Vizzini torments the kidnap victim with  
A. threats of dropping her from the rope into Giant Eel Bay.  
B. descriptions of sharks.  
C. a mamba.  
D. warnings about the nearness of the man in black.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Roberts is known for  
A. sword fighting.  
B. sinking ships off the Carolina coast.  
C. never leaving survivors.  
D. making deals with Prince Humperdinck.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. At night under the window,  
A. Westley begs to marry Buttercup.  
B. the old woman hurls insults at the princess.  
C. Buttercup listens to the cries of the tortured prisoner.  
D. the farm boy thrashes some of the boys who annoy Buttercup.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Fezzik learns to fend for himself  
A. because he joins Vizzini's gang.  
B. from his father.  
C. after Inigo explains the logic of fighting.  
D. to stop Yeste from exploiting Domingo.

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### Part II: Matching (30 points)

Match the following descriptions with names of characters from the list below. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left. You will use some answers more than once and some not at all.

- |       |   |                |
|-------|---|----------------|
| _____ | 1. leaves a ship anchored below and climbs the cliff.           | A. Inigo       |
| _____ | 2. considers smashing a pursuer with a boulder.                 | B. Lotharan    |
| _____ | 3. retreats into drink in Thieves Quarter.                      | C. Jason       |
| _____ | 4. installs a new torture device after eleven years work on it. | D. Fezzik      |
| _____ | 5. takes charge of local security during the wedding.           | E. Yeste       |
| _____ | 6. urges the archdean to complete the ceremony.                 | F. Buttercup   |
| _____ | 7. tends Inigo's injuries in Madrid.                            | G. Domingo     |
| _____ | 8. instructs Max to use the bellows cram.                       | H. Yellin      |
| _____ | 9. rides the white horses to the other side of the fire swamp.  | I. Vizzini     |
| _____ | 10. impresses Count Rugen when he visits the dairy farm.        | J. Valerie     |
| _____ | 11. calls Bella "E. S. for short."                              | K. Westley     |
| _____ | 12. inherits his title from Cumberbund.                         | L. Ryan        |
| _____ | 13. dies from the same torment that kills the wild dog.         | M. Humperdinck |
| _____ | 14. halts the Brute Squad by declaring her title.               | N. Rugen       |
| _____ | 15. rejects Yellin's resignation.                               | O. Max         |

### Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

Supply a word or phrase in answer to the following questions. Place your response in the blank provided.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Who believes her overweight son chooses to be fat?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. What is pictured on the great wheel with a spinner?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. What does the torture machine draw out of Westley?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Who believes that beginning duels left-handed is good practice?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Who orders Thieves Quarter emptied and its villains jailed?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Who indicates that the three soldiers who carried Westley were assassinated?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Who lived like a king in Patagonia?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. What does the man in black remove in the ravine?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Who does not have to suffer fools because he lives in obscurity?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Who mumbles?

### Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Explain how Inigo trains for vengeance.
2. Contrast Westley, Inigo, and Buttercup as survivors.
3. Describe life as a princess or swordfighter in training.
4. Summarize the changes in Buttercup from childhood.
5. Describe the speaker's enthusiasm for adventure stories.

## THE PRINCESS BRIDE

### ANSWER KEY

#### VOCABULARY TEST

- |               |                |               |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. dabbles    | 6. foray       | 11. sublimity |
| 2. expository | 7. swarthy     | 12. dullard   |
| 3. nuptials   | 8. abridger    | 13. vein      |
| 4. fetish     | 9. parry       | 14. wince     |
| 5. spiel      | 10. chronicles | 15. ripostes  |

#### COMPREHENSION TEST A

##### Part I: Description Identification (30 points)

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

##### Part II: True/False (20 points)

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

##### Part III: Completion (20 points)

- Jason, tenth
- movie, abridge
- farm, America
- Queen's Pride*, Roberts
- Count Rugen, dairy

##### Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

#### COMPREHENSION TEST B

##### Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. A  |
| 2. A | 7. B  |
| 3. D | 8. C  |
| 4. C | 9. D  |
| 5. A | 10. B |

##### Part II: Matching (30 points)

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

##### Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

- |                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Helen       | 6. albino    |
| 2. animals     | 7. Roberts   |
| 3. his past    | 8. mask      |
| 4. Inigo       | 9. Domingo   |
| 5. Humperdinck | 10. Lotharan |

##### Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.



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