

Half Broke Horses Common Assignments

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[Comprehension]

List: Use bullet points, complete sentences not necessary.

Prioritize: Put in order of importance so that the most important item is first.

Research: Use web pages, copy excerpts, sum up and present.

Analysis

Analyse: Break down a problem into separate factors, then draw a conclusion.

Characterise: Describe somebody's character and provide suitable examples.

Compare: Tell how things are alike and/or different, use concrete examples.

Describe: Give an account in (your own) words (e.g. present a picture with words).

Explain: Make clear and plain; give the reason or cause.

Relate: Show the relationship between concepts.

Sum up: Condense the main points; use relatively few words.

Evaluation

Assess/evaluate: Give a carefully considered opinion, include all the important aspects of a question.

Comment on/state: Give your opinion, back it up with all the relevant points.

Discuss: Consider all sides of an issue by providing relevant arguments and concrete examples.

Interpret: Explain the meaning or purpose of something.

Write a...: Compose a text in line with the conventions of the required [text type](#).

I "Salt Draw"

Use a pencil and number the chapters of Parts I-IX. They always start with four capitalised words at the top of the page.

Answer these questions in complete sentences.

When you are asked to quote give the pages and lines in round brackets, e.g. (p. 7/l. 34) or (pp 68-70/ll. 42-12)

- 1) – Analyse: What does Lily's behaviour say about herself? What [character traits](#) become apparent?
– Identify: What thought gives her the strength to make it (pp/ll)?
– Analyse: Which family member does Lily feel closest to? Give two examples (pp/ll).
- 2) – List: What does the reader learn about Dad and the farm (pp/ll)?
- 3) – Briefly describe: What was living in the family [home](#) like?
- 4) – Research and sum up: From where, [when](#) and why did Dad's father emigrate?
– List very briefly: What do you learn about (a) Mom, (b) Apache and (c) Lupe?
- 5) – Briefly sum up: What do Mom and Lily's behaviour tell you about their respective attitudes to life?
- 6) – List your short answers to these questions:
 - What does Dad suffer from?
 - What opportunities did he have in early life?
 - What skills does he have?
 - What two interests does he pursue?
 - How does he educate his children early on?
- 7) – List: What interests and [character traits](#) do Mom and Helen [share](#) (pp/ll)?
- 8) – Write a 25-word [job advertisement](#) for someone to replace Lily on the farm.
– What general advice does her father give her? Quote in full (pp/ll).
- 9) – Briefly sum up the lesson that Lily learns about [business](#) when she sells eggs?
- 10) – List: What damage does the "[weather event](#)" do?

II "The Miraculous Staircase"

- 1) – Briefly explain: What makes Lily's moment of "Eureka" so important to her?
- 2) – Sum up in one sentence: According to Lily's description, what [qualities](#) is her father lacking in as a farmer?

- 3) – Judging by the advice Lily’s father gives her, briefly characterise her from his point of view: “*My daughter Lily has... / is... / has always...*”
– Analyse: What do women’s career options tell you about women’s position in society before WWI?
- 4) – Relate: How does the nun’s piece of wisdom about a closing window and an opening door reflect “The American dream”?
- 5) – Lily is disappointed at the reasons Dad gives for his decision. – Write her speech to her family protesting against his decision.
- 6) – Discuss: Dad was right in giving Lily a revolver.
– List: What patterns of behaviour have you seen in so-called Western movies before?
- 7) – Briefly explain: What are “half-broke horses” in your own words?
- 8) – List and give reasons: What character traits has Lily displayed so far that will make her a good teacher?
- 9) – Locate the towns of Tinnie, New Mexico, and Red Lake in the North of Arizona (west of Flagstaff).
– List a few adjectives describing the landscape that Lily will pass through.

III “Promises”

- 1) – Consider the first three paragraphs and list three pieces of evidence (pp/ll) about the fertility of the land.
– Explain: Priscilla Footlose is probably telling the truth saying: “I don’t get a lot of opportunities”.
- 2) – Compare: How was the land used recently, how is it used now?
– Briefly explain: Why is WWI an opportunity for Lily.
– List: three tell-tale signs of people’s poverty (pp/ll) in Red Lake.
– Briefly explain: Why does Lily feel she is being treated unfairly?
- 3) – Research the early history of aviation.
- 4) – Analyse: What does the biplane mean to Lily emotionally?
- 5) – How does Lily assert herself as a woman? List three pieces of evidence (pp/ll).

- 6) – Research what the typical “model of the Chicago flapper” does, wears and looks like.
- 7) – Research: What makes Ted Conover a typical young man in the Big City in the Roaring Twenties? List three pieces of evidence (pp/ll).
- 8) – Research the subject of bigamy, e.g. the case of the “Ding Dong Daddy of the D Car line”.
- 9) – Discuss: It is wise of Lily not to make a scene.
- 10) – Briefly analyse: What protects Lily from wallowing in self-pity?
- 11) – What has Chicago taught Lily? List three pieces of evidence (pp/ll).

IV “Silk Shirt”

- 1) – Analyse: What makes Lily a good student?
- 2) – List three signs showing that the land is being degraded.
– Compare: What method does Lily use to control both horses as well as students?
- 3) – Research: With regard to the American Dream, why would Rooster’s story of the “former Chicago flapper” go down well with people?
- 4) – Identify and list three main character traits Lily appreciates in Jim Smith (pp/ll).
- 5) – Research: How have the Mormons survived and prospered as a religion-based community up to now? Browse this timeline.
- 6) – Write Lily’s (informal) letter to Helen in about 100 words.
– Analyse: What does Helen’s biggest problem seem to be (pp/ll)?
- 7) – [–]
- 8) – Explain: What exactly makes Lily want to throttle her students’ parents?
- 9) – [–]
- 10) – Compare Father Cavanaugh’s stance with attitudes towards single mothers today.

V “Lambs”

- 1) – List three instances (pp/ll) of Lily’s proving herself to be a modern woman.
- 2) – Research: Locate the place names mentioned in the popular song “(Get your kicks on) ‘[Route 66](#)’” on a map.
- 3) – Relate this statement to the concept of the [American Dream](#): “All folks needed to find their own way to heaven.”
- 4) – Research: Identify [historical events](#) that impoverished people at the time.
– What makes Lily’s being a “liquor lady” [profitable](#)?
- 5) – List which two [character traits](#) of Jim’s enable him to save the lambs.
- 6) [–]
- 7) – Research: With regard to the world economy at the time, what would make [investing](#) in a cattle farm in New Mexico attractive to British investors?
- 8) – List the three [character traits](#) that make Lily a good partner in running a cattle ranch (pp/ll).
- 9) – Sketch a map of an area around your own home town covering 160 square miles.
- 10) – Compare: How do the cowboys on the ranch differ from their [popular image](#) in Europe?
– Analyze: What makes Rosemary a “half-broke horse” herself?
- 11) – Sum up what discovery Lily makes about raising one’s own children.
- 12) – Briefly analyze why Jim’s last three sentences of this chapter neatly sum up life on a ranch in that [region](#).
- 13) – Analyze: At which points in this crisis would you have probably failed?

VI “Teacher Lady”

- 1) – List [ways](#) the family uses to save money for a ranch.
- 2) – Evaluate: Lily’s decision to learn flying is wrong.
- 3) – List what observations (pp/ll) make Lily tell her students in Main Street about great women.
– Write one-sentence summaries of

the lives of a) [Eleanor Roosevelt](#), b) [Amelia Earhart](#).

- 4) – Assess: Is Lily right in [threatening](#) Uncle Eli?
- 5) – List and give evidence (pp/ll). What [character traits](#) does Rosemary display?
- 6) – Discuss: Lily’s definition of “Saint Nicholas” is fitting.
- 7) [– Christmas lighting]
- 8) – Discuss: Lily’s teaching methods are appropriate.
- 9) – Write the [formal letter](#) Lily receives.
– Lily has been fired before. List five occasions, places, employers and reasons given.
- 10) – Research: Give one or two examples of things [Scarlett O’Hara](#) has done that Lily would probably not do and briefly explain why not.

VII “The Garden of Eden”

- 1) – I would like my children to grow up like Lily’s. – Discuss.
- 2) – Write an [informal letter](#) to Rosemary, advising her how to fit in better at school.
– Put yourself in Rosemary’s place and make a [speech](#) to her parents asking them to let her live with them again.
- 3) – Explain what [Southern](#) values and ideals make these males do what Lily wants them to do.
- 4) [–]
- 5) – Sum up what a [homestead](#) is.
– Explain: What about the “[Madonna of the Trail](#)” would bring tears to Lily’s eyes?
– Explain: Why does Lily think the Madonna of the Trail would have approved of her decision?
- 6) Research: How did the [cattle](#) reach consumers?
– Analyze what the incidents with (a) Fidel Hanna, (b) the two stray steers and (c) the skinning of the steer reveal about Rosemary’s character.
- 7) – Research and explain: The visiting ladies’ were rather typical of [US policy](#) towards American Indians.
– Interpret: What could the piano be

a symbol of?

– Interpret briefly: What could the “something dark” be that “came out of” Lily?

- 8) Explain: Hanna Fidel has always known his fate (pp/II).
- 9) – Write a paragraph from “We Met in Alleys and He Led Me down the Path of Sin” (30 words, avoid strong language).
– Research and explain: Given the global situation at the time, why would the British investors prefer to move into munitions.
– Oscar Wilde said: “Life imitates Art [...]”. List three pieces of evidence (pp/II) that support his claim.

VIII “Gumshoes”

- 1) – Explain: Why would displaying perfect teeth be a good idea in the city?
- 2) – List what Lily likes and dislikes about driving a motor car.
– “Living on the backs of others” – Lily and Jim are only doing to others what has been done to them. – Discuss.
- 3) – Research: The atom bombs dropped on Japanese cities in 1945.
- 4) – Should a mother tell her daughter how beautiful she is? – Discuss.
– 30 years after Mother Albertina’s statement (II, 3): “a nurse, a secretary, and a teacher”. – Explain why in 1963 the time was right for Betty Friedan’s “Feminine Mystique”.
– “Who is going to protect us from the police?” – Relate this question of Lily’s to the American Dream and the right to carry guns.
- 5) – “Seems to me, you lose more than you gain” – Explain why Jim might have a point in a place like Phoenix.
– Briefly explain what makes Lily’s husband feel he is “Big Jim” again.
- 6) – List and prioritize: According to socio-biology, what qualities would women look for in men?
– List and prioritize: According to socio-biology, are men really “latent polygamists”?
– In the light of VIII, list what each

family member would gain by leaving the city.

IX “The Flyboy”

- 1) – Research and briefly sum up: “Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s public work relief programs”.
- 2) – Relate Lily’s advice on wearing fake pearls to the American dream.
– List what age groups would enjoy living at Horse Mesa most and explain why? – Consult Eric Ericson.
- 3) – “Rosemary thought I was imposing my will on her.” – Analyse if Rosemary is right in thinking that (pp/II)?
– List three character traits that Rex Walls shares with Lily?
- 4) – Rex Walls would make an ideal husband for Rosemary. Analyse (pp/II).
- 5) – Write the speech ‘Big Jim’ could have made explaining to Rex why he must not see Rosemary again.
- 6) – List and prioritize the reasons why Lily adds “checks in the plus column”.
- 7) – With the benefit of hindsight, explain which of Rosemary’s statements seem prophetic.
- 8) [–]

“Author’s note”

- Answer in two words: Who is the first-person narrator?
- Briefly explain: How does the author know what the narrator says or thinks?
- Discuss: Lily Casey is a reliable narrator
- With Jeannette Walls’ experiences (c.f. IX/7) in mind, guess why she may have idealised Lily Casey.
- Discuss: Lily Casey’s life confirms Abraham Maslow’s ideas about a hierarchy of needs.
- Compile a timeline of the 20th century with 1930 at the centre using a horizontal A4-sheet.
Look up this timeline and align historical dates in the lower half of your horizontal sheet with dates of Lily Casey’s biography in the bottom half.