

## Half Broke Horses

### Common Assignments

#### [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.