

Visiting Time

After-Reading Activities

1. **Build a fact file on Emma Brockes** by doing some research work, in pairs:

Index	
- Author's Name	
- Place and Date of birth	
- Awards	
- Published work (till now)	
- Main features of her writing	
- Other relevant information	

2. **Summarize the story:**

Choose the summary that best fits the story and justify your choice:

- A** - Mr. Garrison was the head of the family whose life was always ruled by strict values. Although he had suffered several losses and traumas during his life, one day he experienced the most severe blow a man could endure. His eldest son, John, was violently stabbed to death. After the trial the murderer was sentenced to prison. Displeased with the court's decision, Mr Garrison planned to take revenge. He made the right contacts and studied in detail how he would do it. When he met the murderer eye to eye, the whole plan collapsed.
- B**- Mr. Garrison's family life was always ruled by strict values such as honesty, justice and helping the others. Although he had suffered several losses and traumas during his life, one day he experienced the most severe blow a man could endure. His eldest son, John, was violently stabbed to death, while helping a friend, who was being attacked by drunken men looking for trouble. After the trial the murderer was sentenced to prison. Displeased with the court's decision, Mr Garrison planned to take revenge: he would kill him during a visit in prison. He studied in detail how he would do it. When he met the murderer eye to eye, the whole plan collapsed. John's father came out of the prison without physically killing the murderer but leaving him with an extra burden of guilt, unable to find peace for the rest of his life.

C- Mr. Garrison was the head of the family whose life was always ruled by strict values such as honesty, justice and helping the others. One day his eldest son, John was killed. After the trial, John's murderer was sentenced to prison. Displeased with the court's decision, Mr Garrison planned to take revenge. He made the right contacts and studied in detail how he would do it. In the prison his plans changed. An inner voice led him to another type of revenge.



3. Alternative title:

a) Find an existing film, song or book title which would make a good title for this story.

OR

b) Find a painting, picture or cartoon which would make a good title for this story.

4. Write a headline, leading paragraph and an article on the story.

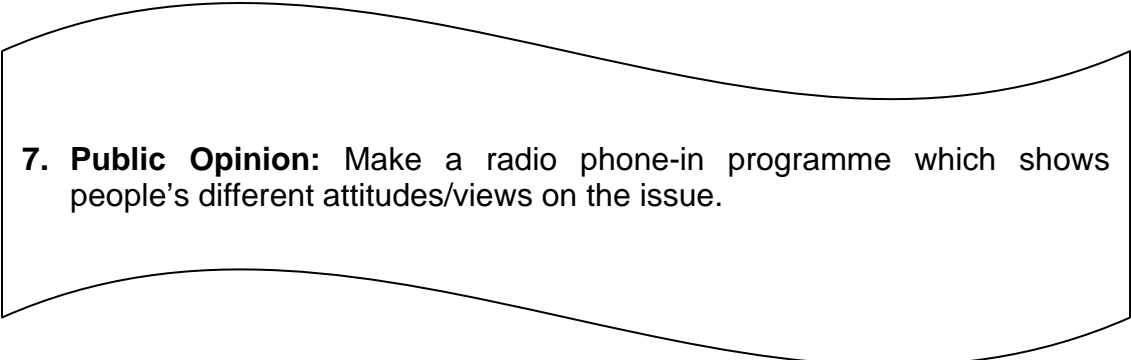


5. Give your opinion/comment on Mr. Garrison's attitude.

- Would you plan everything as meticulously as he did, or would you do it differently?

6. Create a cartoon version of this story.

Work in groups. Make it "juicy" and as close as possible to the story.



7. Public Opinion: Make a radio phone-in programme which shows people's different attitudes/views on the issue.

8. **Time Travel Mirror:** Imagine and write the story of the murderer’s first days of freedom in about 120 words.

9. **Poem writing/creative writing:** Divide into two groups. Each group to write a poem following these ideas and about the words *Revenge* and *Forgiveness*:

- 1 What colour do you associate it with?
- 2 What sound do you associate it with?
- 3 What does it taste like?
- 4 What would it smell like?
- 5 What feeling do you associate it with?
- 6 Finish it creatively/imaginatively

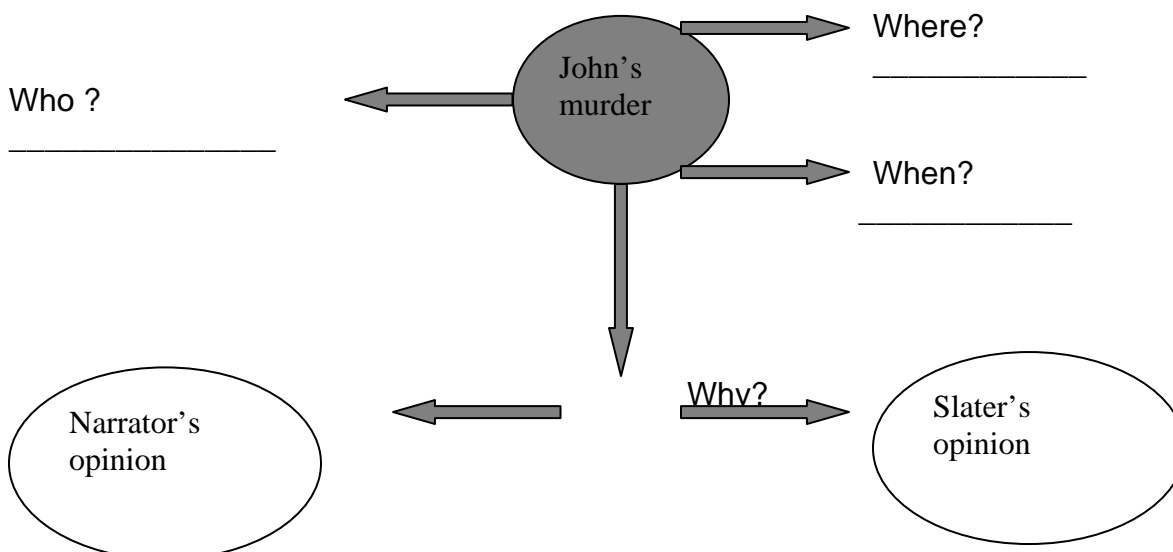
REVENGE

- 1 Revenge is
- 2 It sounds like.....
- 3 It tastes of
- 4 It smells like
- 5 It feels like
- 6

FORGIVENESS

- 1 Forgiveness is.....
- 2 Forgiveness is
- 3 It tastes of
- 4 It smells like
- 5 It feels like.....
- 6

10. Fill in the diagram with information from the text.

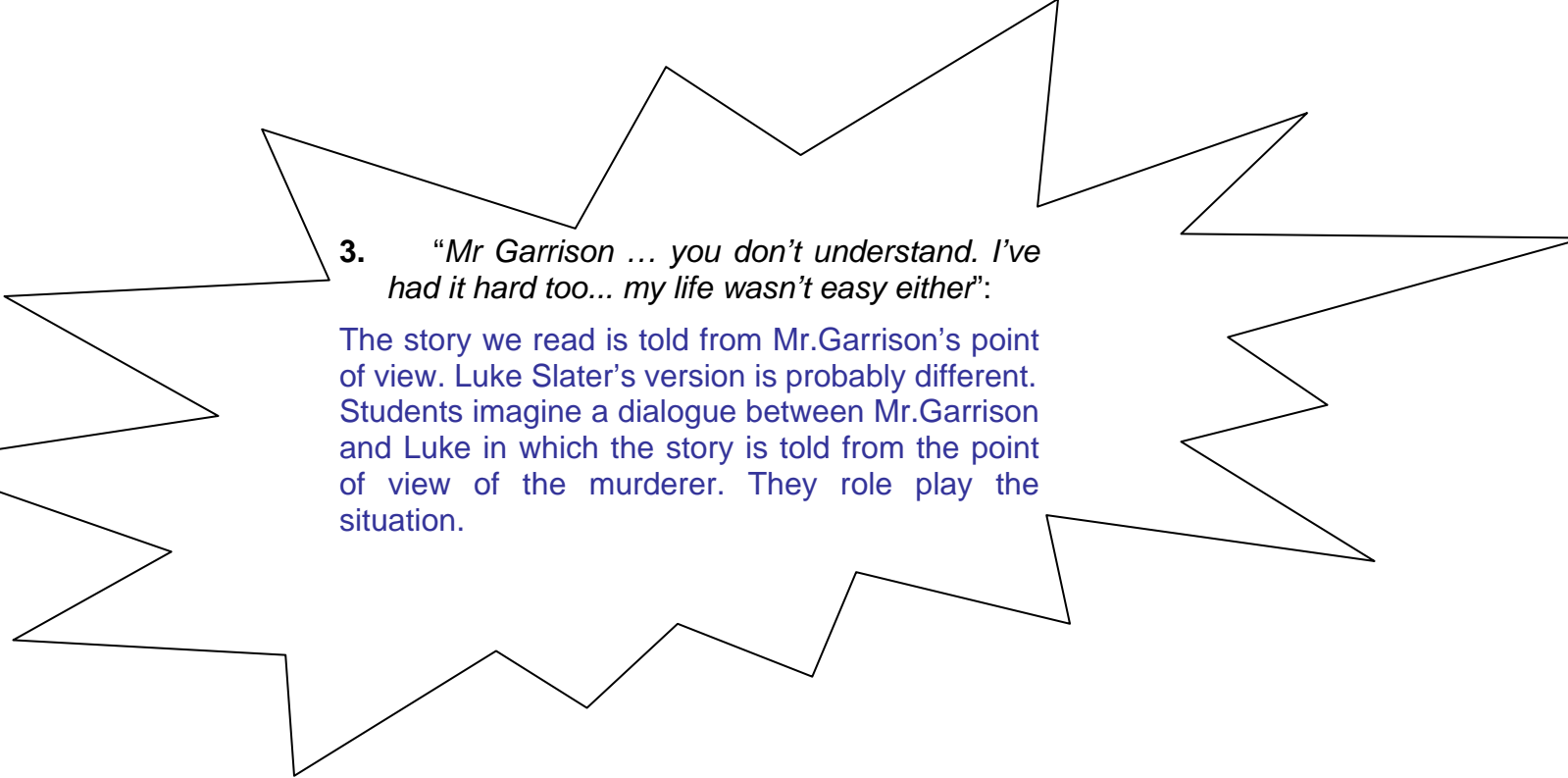


4. Alternative title.

- a) Find a quotation from the story itself which could provide a good title.
- b) Find other quotations from other sources which might be suitable for the title of this story.
- c) Find a proverb or motto which could provide a good title.

☺ Try using the Internet!

- d) Find an alliterative title of three words (all words should begin with the same letter) which could provide a good title –

- 
3. *“Mr Garrison ... you don't understand. I've had it hard too... my life wasn't easy either”:*

The story we read is told from Mr.Garrison's point of view. Luke Slater's version is probably different. Students imagine a dialogue between Mr.Garrison and Luke in which the story is told from the point of view of the murderer. They role play the situation.

4. The narrator had a clear plan of revenge when he visited the murderer in prison. However, there was something that made him alter his initial plan. Scan through the text to find the turning point in the narrator's plan of revenge and state the reason why you decided on that part.

5. Social rehabilitation has been a real concern in modern societies.

5.1 Divide into groups to browse the following links in order to get as much information as possible on this issue.

http://www.psychosocial.com/IJPR_7/social_justice.html

<http://www.crimrehab.com/reviews.shtml>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/archer/article/0,2763,1045287,00.html>

<http://www.petercoad.co.uk/050.htm>

5.2 Organize a class debate in which you feature some of the following characters: probationer/parolee, probation officer, psychologist, prison director, social worker, representative from the local government, etc.

7. Poem writing/creative writing: Divide into two groups and write a poem, using these ideas:

a) Each line should start like this:

R _____
E _____
V _____
E _____
N _____
G _____
E _____

b) A poem that either has one of the following titles or first lines:

Forgiveness as way of revenge

Revenge is a dish best served cold

8. Complete the table:

This story is about.....	
The message is.....	
What I learned from the story is.....	
I think this story is	

Visiting Time

After Reading

Further Reading

Read the following plot description of the Short Story “*The Way Up to Heaven*” by Roald Dahl:

Mrs. Foster has a pathological fear of being late. Whenever she is in danger of missing a train or plane or an engagement, a tiny muscle near her eye begins to twitch. The worst part is that her husband, Mr. Eugene Foster, seems to torment her by making sure that they always leave the house one or two minutes past the point of safety. On this particular occasion Mrs. Foster is leaving to visit her daughter and grandchildren in Paris for the first time ever, and she's frantic to think that she'll miss her flight. By the time her husband finally joins her at the car, she's too far behind schedule. Luckily the flight is postponed till the next day, and Mr. Foster persuades her to come home for the night. When she's ready to leave the next day, though, her husband suggests that they drop him off at his club on the way. Knowing this will make her late, she protests in vain. Just before the car leaves, he runs back in the house on the pretence of picking up a gift he forgot for his daughter. While he's gone Mrs. Foster discovers the gift box shoved down between the seat cushions. She runs up to the house to tell him that she has the gift... and suddenly she pauses. She listens. She stays frozen for 10 seconds, straining to hear something. Then she turns and runs to the car, telling the driver that they're too late and her husband will have to find another ride. She makes her flight and has a wonderful visit with her grandchildren. She writes her husband every week and sends him a telegram before she flies home six weeks later. He's not at the airport to meet her though, and when she enters the house (after taking a taxi home) she notices a curious odour in the air.

- How do you think it ends?
- What is the common thread between Roald Dahl's short story and Emma Brockes' *Visiting Time*?
- How can we explain why Mrs. Foster let her husband die in “*The Way Up to Heaven*”?

SUGGESTION: Why not read the short story “*The Way Up to Heaven*”?