

Discovering Fiction

A READER OF NORTH AMERICAN SHORT STORIES

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2nd Edition

Judith Kay
Rosemary Gelshenen



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Charles, Blue Eyes Far Away; Lori Mitchell: *The Bracelet, Home*; Rick Powell: *A Secret for Two; You Go Your Way, I'll Go Mine*.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

JUDITH KAY has extensive experience teaching writing, communication skills, and grammar. While teaching at Marymount Manhattan College in New York City, she met Rosemary Gelshenen. In addition to being colleagues, they started writing textbooks together. When Kay moved to Florida she taught at Lynn University in Boca Raton and Broward College in Broward County, Florida. Both Kay and Gelshenen have taught seminars in collaborative writing, and have presented workshops at regional and international meetings of TESOL.

Kay has a master's degree in TESOL from Hunter College and is a member of Phi Beta Kappa. She has published both short stories and poetry.

ROSEMARY GELSHENEN teaches literature, creative writing, and grammar in New York City at both Hunter College and New York University. She has also taught at Marymount Manhattan College, where she met Judith Kay. Formerly, she taught English at Norman Thomas High School and was a teacher trainer for the New York City Board of Education. Her awards include the Veritas Medal for Excellence in Education (1986) and New York City Teacher of the Year (1983). She also received two Impact II grants for innovative methods of teaching.

Gelshenen's articles on teaching methods have appeared in numerous educational publications, and she lectures on literary topics. She is the author of *Instant English Literature* (1994), a lighthearted approach to the lives and works of nineteenth-century English novelists.

TO THE INSTRUCTOR

As teachers, we have seen many students eager to learn English but frustrated by the challenges of mastering the language. Some of our students' favorite lessons, however, are those in which they read and discuss short stories. In fact, students and teachers alike find that lessons incorporating short stories provide some of the most interesting ways to focus on reading skills, vocabulary, and even grammar.

An extra bonus in learning a language through literature is that stories are rooted in culture – in this case, that of America. The authors of the stories in this text represent different backgrounds and experiences in the rich heritage of the United States. As most teachers would agree, celebrating diversity promotes understanding and tolerance. Moreover, building our students' self-esteem should be a goal in every classroom.

We hope you enjoy the stories you are about to read. You are giving your students a special opportunity by guiding them through the new world of American literature.

JUDITH KAY
ROSEMARY GELSHENEN

155 we fix it up,” she began. “I’ll ask Mrs. Simpson to send me some material for curtains. I could make some cushions too, and . . . well . . .” She stopped. She couldn’t think of anything more to say.

160 Mr. Noma said he’d go get some mattresses for us. “I’d better hurry before they’re all gone.” He rushed off. I think he wanted to leave so that he wouldn’t have to see Mama cry. But he needn’t have run off, because Mama didn’t cry. She just went out to borrow a broom and began sweeping out the dust and dirt. “Will you girls set up the cots?” she asked.

165 It was only after we’d put up the last cot that I noticed my bracelet was gone. “I’ve lost Laurie’s bracelet!” I screamed. “My bracelet’s gone!”

We looked all over the stall and even down the ramp. I wanted to run back down the track and go over every inch of ground we’d walked on, but it was getting dark and Mama wouldn’t let me.

170 I thought of what I’d promised Laurie. I wasn’t ever going to take the bracelet off, not even when I went to take a shower. And now I had lost it on my very first day in camp. I wanted to cry.

I kept looking for it all the time we were in Tanforan. I didn’t stop looking until the day we were sent to another camp, called Topaz, in the middle of a desert in Utah. And then I gave up.

175 But Mama told me never mind. She said I didn’t need a bracelet to remember Laurie, just as I didn’t need anything to remember Papa or our home in Berkeley or all the people and things we loved and had left behind.

180 “Those are things we can carry in our hearts and take with us no matter where we are sent,” she said.

And I guess she was right. I’ve never forgotten Laurie, even now.



CHAPTER 4

A Secret for Two

QUENTIN REYNOLDS



CHAPTER 5

Charles

SHIRLEY JACKSON



CHAPTER 6

Two Thanksgiving Day Gentlemen

O. HENRY



UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

1 Reading Comprehension

With a partner, answer these questions:

- 1 What are some of the bad things that Charles does in kindergarten?
- 2 What are some of the ways that the teacher punishes Charles?
- 3 How do Laurie's parents react to his stories about Charles?
- 4 Why does Laurie's mother want to attend the PTA meeting?
- 5 What is the surprise at the end of the story?

2 Guessing Meaning from Context

The words in the list are in the story. Find the words in the story and try to understand their meanings. Choose the word from the following list that best completes each sentence below. Do not use the same word more than once.

transformed	remark	incredulously	abandoned
insolent	anxiously	plotting	adjust

- 1 Laurie's parents listened incredulously to his reports of Charles's bad behavior.
- 2 We were _____ waiting for a bus to get us home before the rain started.
- 3 It is hard for people who live in a warm climate to _____ to a colder climate.
- 4 My brother _____ his study of law to start a career as a writer.
- 5 Children will be suspended from school if they break the rules or if they are _____ to teachers.
- 6 The prisoner was _____ a way to escape from jail.
- 7 People often _____ on how similar the two brothers are.
- 8 The shy baby _____ into a very friendly child.

- 4 Margie was **scornful**. “School? What’s there to write about school? I hate school.”
- a expressing friendliness and understanding
 - b expressing excitement and interest
 - c expressing dislike and lack of respect
 - d expressing great sadness
- 5 She always had to write [her answers] out in a punch code . . . and the mechanical teacher **calculated** the mark in no time.
- a guessed the answers
 - b figured out the grade
 - c wrote comments
 - d read the answers
- 6 “I think the geography **sector** was geared a little too quick.”
- a teacher
 - b part
 - c test
 - d map
- 7 “I think the geography sector was **geared** a little too quick.”
- a set
 - b broken
 - c prepared
 - d finished
- 8 Tommy looked at her with very superior eyes. “Because it’s not our kind of school, stupid. This is the old kind of school that they had hundreds and hundreds of years ago.” He added **loftily** . . . “*Centuries* ago.”
- a as if angry at someone else
 - b as if better than someone else
 - c as if not sure about something
 - d as if in a hurry to leave
- 9 “[My father] knows almost as much [as my teacher] I betcha.” Margie wasn’t prepared to **dispute** that. She said, “I wouldn’t want a strange man in my house to teach me.”
- a argue about
 - b repeat
 - c laugh at
 - d hear