

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## **WINTER BREAK PAIRED PASSAGE ESSAY PROJECT**

During the break, scholars are required to read and analyze two stories in order to respond to short response questions and a paired passage essay. Each response must be formatted with:

- New Times Roman font
- 12 size font
- Double Space
- Cover Page with an picture/ illustration, name, class (no date)

### **ALL RESPONSE MUST BE TYPED!!!**

Why does the narrator say her “heart hammers” in paragraph 11 of “Excerpt from *Under the Persimmon Tree*”? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

In “Excerpt from *Minuk: Ashes in the Pathway*,” what is the narrator’s point of view about the life of an adult in her culture? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

Adult characters in “Excerpt from *Under the Persimmon Tree*” and “Excerpt from *Minuk: Ashes in the Pathway*” are an important part of these stories. How do these adult characters contribute to the plot of each story? What are the differences in the ways the adult characters contribute to the plots? Use details from **both** stories to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- describe how the adults in “Excerpt from *Under the Persimmon Tree*” contribute to the plot of that story
- describe how the adults in “Excerpt from *Minuk: Ashes in the Pathway*” contribute to the plot of that story
- describe the differences in the ways the adult characters contribute to the plots in each story
- use details from **both** stories to support your response

**Directions**  
Read this story. Then answer question 39.

## Excerpt from *Under the Persimmon Tree*

by Suzanne Fisher Staples

Northern Afghanistan, October 2001

- 1 Nur grumbles, and the quilt rustles as he turns over. But Mada-jan does what she always does when we try to ignore her: she yanks the quilt up from the bottom and tickles his bare feet with a piece of straw. The quilt makes a popping sound as Nur kicks out. But Mada-jan is quick to get out of the way—despite her belly, which is enormous with my unborn brother. I am sure it's a brother because my mother has been well and happy throughout her pregnancy. I have named my unborn brother Habib, which means "beloved friend." I know Habib will be my friend, unlike Nur, who teases me mercilessly.
- 2 Before Nur goes out the door, he picks up the nearly empty water tin and flicks a few drops into my face. It's icy and chases away any thought I might have of sleeping a few minutes longer.
- 3 "If the rooster is up, so must the hen be up," he says, and his hand sloshes again in the water.
- 4 "Nur, stop playing!" Mada-jan says. "Najmah, get up!" She tugs at my quilt again. "After you fetch firewood you must feed this bukri," she says, motioning to the brand-new baby goat that stands on quivering, sticklike legs near the head of the cot where I sleep. She was born yesterday, and her mother won't feed her.
- 5 I hold out my hand to the kid, who nuzzles the underside of my fingers, butting my palm with her nose. Then I throw back the quilt and reach for my shawl. The autumn morning air is chilly, and I savor the cool, knowing how hot it will be before noon.
- 6 "Baba-jan is already milking the goats, and when he gets back he'll want his breakfast," says Mada-jan, folding my quilt so that I can't change my mind and crawl back under its warmth. At the thought of the milk my father will bring, my stomach grumbles.
- 7 Outside, Nur finds the pole and ties the ghee tins<sup>1</sup> to either end of it with goat sinew. He hoists it to his shoulder and waits for me to walk with him to where the path leads

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down the hill to Baba Darya, the little stream at the bottom. Baba means "old man" as well as "father." We call it "Old Man River" because its thin ribbons twist together like the wisps of an elder's beard.

8 "I saw a leopard's pug marks in the dust here last night," Nur says, just as we reach the fork in the path that will take me to the woodpile and Nur to the Baba Darya. I hesitate where the two paths split.

9 "Nur!" Mada-jan says, her voice low with warning. Knowing Nur very well, she has stepped outside the door to listen. "Stop trying to scare her! Najmah, you know there are no leopards here. Now hurry, you two!" Still I hesitate.

10 "Really!" Nur whispers. "They were this big!" He holds his fist up so I can see it in the creeping light of the sunrise. "It must be a very large leopard." Then he turns his back and walks, humming, down the hill toward the Baba Darya, the tins bouncing from the ends of the pole across his shoulder.

11 My heart hammers, and I want to run back to the house, but I know Mada-jan will be angry. I turn and run as fast as I can, all the way to the woodpile. There I spread my shawl on the ground and pile several armloads of wood on top. I feel a tingling along my spine the whole time. I think I see yellow eyes gleaming in the dark to the side of the woodpile. I'm sure I hear a low growl.

12 "Nur was only teasing," I mutter under my breath. "Nur was only teasing." But I really am convinced a large animal with long, pointed teeth is waiting to pounce on me. I am terribly afraid of leopards, although I have never seen one in my life. Mada-jan reminds me of this every time I complain that Nur has told me he's heard one roar. When the shawl holds as much wood as I can carry, I bind up its corners into a knot and heft the bundle onto my head, then hurry back up the path under the heavy load.

13 Usually Mada-jan fetches the wood, leaving me to make naan<sup>2</sup> inside our mud-brick house, because she knows I'm afraid. But Habib, who will arrive in just a few days, keeps her off-balance when she walks along the steep, narrow paths. My father worries that she'll tumble down to the bottom of the hill, and so he has asked me to put aside my fear to help my mother. I feel proud that I can do it, even though I am afraid.

14 I sit outside the curtained front doorway and make a small pyramid of kindling inside the mud oven. Mada-jan brings out the basket that holds the pads of dough she's made and skewers each piece on a hook that she suspends through a hole in the top of the oven. The goat kid butts insistently at my shoulder, wanting to nurse. A few minutes later I hear Nur huffing under the weight of the water as he climbs the last few feet from the Baba Darya.

15 And only a moment later Baba-jan comes whistling down the path that leads from the pens that hold our sheep and goats at the base of the foothills of the Hindu Kush. He carries a large pail of milk.

<sup>1</sup>ghee tins: containers

<sup>2</sup>naan: a type of bread

## **D**irections

Read this story. Then answer questions 40 through 42.

# Excerpt from *Minuk: Ashes in the Pathway*

by Kirkpatrick Hill

Yup'ik Eskimo Village, 1890

- 1 In other years, the first thing Panruk and I did after we got back to the village from spring camp was to get our dolls out and repair their clothes. But Panruk and I were so excited about the missionaries that we'd almost forgotten about our dolls.
- 2 So after we told Mamma and Grandma and the aunts about our visit with the Hoffs, we took our dolls out of the little fish-skin bags where they'd spent the fall and the winter. We were so happy to see them again. They were like little, dear friends we'd not seen for a long time. Even Mamma and Grandma and the aunts came out into the spring sun to touch our dolls and look at their clothes, as if they'd missed them, too. I thought that sometimes it must be hard to be grown-up and not able to play.
- 3 Our grandfather had carved both of our dolls from driftwood. Mine had tiny lines for tattoos on the chin and little black eyes and a straight mouth. I loved her serious little face. You could tell she was a good woman.
- 4 We weren't allowed to play with our dolls in the winter. But in the spring, after the geese had returned, we could. People believed that if girls played with their dolls before spring came, the weather would see and would punish them. Then winter would come again before spring had even begun.
- 5 We took our responsibility for the weather very seriously.
- 6 Our dolls not only had lovely faces, they had wonderful clothes. Mamma and the aunts had helped us sew tiny boots and mittens and caribou pants and beautiful little parkas. The year before I had made a qaspeq, a parka cover, for my doll from a little bit of red calico cloth. I was very proud of that qaspeq. Panruk could sew much better than I, and she'd made a little fish-skin parka for her doll. I wasn't good enough to sew fish skin yet, which was so delicate that it tore easily. But sometimes Panruk let me put her fish-skin parka on my doll, and I let her use my qaspeq for her doll.

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7 Because Maklak was a boy, he couldn't play with dolls, but he liked to sit near us and play with ~~the little~~ sled and dogs that our uncle had carved for him. Sometimes we pretended that his dog team was taking our little women to a big festival in another village, and Maklak was the driver.

8 Grandma had made us tiny dishes of clay and little vole-skin blankets and rabbit-fur robes, and Panruk and I had made small grass mats for our dolls' houses. Everything we had for our dolls was so little and perfect, their world became real to us. It was so real that while we played, we almost forgot about the village around us.

9 In our village there were five women's houses and one men's house. A women's house was called an ena. Each house was built partly underground. The houses looked like beaver houses, with the wood framework covered with grass and then sod.

10 A small, low passageway led into our house, and it was in that passageway that we cooked. One short step up led to the big room, which was higher so that the cold couldn't come into it from the passageway. In summer, we used another entrance on the side of the house. There was a firepit in the middle of the big room, and above the firepit was the seal-gut window I had told Mrs. Hoff about. We pulled it aside to let the smoke out when we lit a fire to heat the big room.

11 We had a seal-oil lamp made of clay. When we needed light, we set fire to a piece of oil-soaked moss in the lamp.

12 Our house was not very big because there weren't too many of us. Uliggaq's house had ten women and children and Cakayak's house had fifteen, so both their houses were bigger than ours.

13 The men's house was called the qasgiq. It was much bigger than the women's houses. ~~It had to be big, because it~~ held all the village men, and it was where the men would stay when people came from other villages. Sometimes everyone from ~~two~~ villages—men and ~~women and~~ children—crowded into the men's house for festivals and ceremonies. There were three tiers of wide benches all around the inside of the men's house.

14 We ~~were~~ very proud of our men's house, because it was the biggest one along the whole Kuskokwim River, and it had the widest benches. The benches were so old, they had been cut with a stone ax. They had been brought long ago, before even Grandpa was born, from a men's house along the Yukon River. Our men had defeated that village in a war, so they brought the benches home to remember their victory. Our men danced ~~that~~ story at every big festival in the men's house, and ~~their~~ war cries at the end of the dance were so fierce and terrible that all of us children hid our faces.

15 Each man had his own place in the house, according to his age. The oldest men were nearest the door, and the youngest often slept under the benches.

---16 There was a wooden floor in the qasgiq, even over the firepit. When the men wanted a fire, they took the boards off, but when there was a dance in the men's house, they put the floorboards back. Our feet made a good drumming sound on the wooden floor over the firepit.

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