

1. The Grapes of Wrath, by John Steinbeck, tells the story of the Joad family. Forced by the dust bowl to leave their farm in Oklahoma in the mid-1930s, they travel to California in search of work. Along with thousands of other migrant farm workers who have come to California to better their lives, the Joads find conditions harsh and work difficult to find. With poverty and starvation ever-present, the migrant workers must be increasingly kind and charitable towards one another in order to survive. They must also organize against wealthy landowners who, in their quest for profit, ignore the desperate conditions of the workers' lives.

Which fictional character below would not be a believable addition to this story?

- A. Davis "Babe" Claussen, a traveling salesman
- B. The James family, owners of a dusty gas station in the desert
- C. Mr. Hennessey, orange grove foreman in the Imperial Valley
- D. Sharon Mandible, astronaut

2. Once there was a little rabbit who lived on the edge of a forest. It was a pleasant forest, full of light and good things to eat. Even though the rabbit had grown up close to this forest, he was somewhat nervous in it. He was often startled when he heard noises. One day as the little rabbit was lumping along nibbling at flowers, he was suddenly startled by a rustling noise and a low growling that came from a spot several yards in back of him. He could not see through the thick brush and was so terrified, not knowing what the noise could be, that he dashed off as fast as his four legs could carry him.

A chipmunk saw him fleeing and called out, "Why are you running?" The rabbit said, "A monster is coming!" When the chipmunk heard this, he began running with the rabbit. Not long afterward, they met a fox who asked, "Why are you in such a hurry?" "A monster is coming!" The fox immediately joined them in running. So the news spread in this way through the forest, and soon a great many creatures were running for their lives. They had only one thought in mind: they must run. The faster they ran, the more frightened they became.

Then a cougar saw the fleeing animals. He roared to a bear who had joined the group, "You have such sharp claws, a fearsome growl, and so much strength. What are you running from so fast?" "A monster is coming!" the bear said breathlessly. "What is this monster?" asked the cougar. "Well, I really don't know," he stammered. "Why are you running then?" asked the cougar. The bear just stared stupidly. "Come on, let's find out what this monster is. Who told you about it?" asked the cougar. "A deer," said the bear.

The cougar asked the deer, who said that a squirrel had told him. The squirrel said that a racoon had told him. The question was passed from animal to animal until the chipmunk said that he had heard it from the rabbit. The cougar went over to the rabbit, and the little rabbit said, "I heard it with my own ears. It was terrible! Come with me, and I'll show you where I heard it."

He led the rest of the animals to the spot where he had heard the sound and pointed in the direction from which it had come. Sure enough, after a moment or two, they all heard the rustling and the growling.

The cougar went over to some bushes and found that an ordinary family dog had become entangled and could not get free. The cougar slashed through the dog's trap, and the two animals went over to where the others stood. "Now look, all of you. Here is your monster. What is so terrifying about a dog?"

The animals all felt relieved and foolish. They had a good laugh at themselves. So much excitement about nothing!

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Which is the best reason why the setting of this story may be one of the causes for the stampede that happens later?

- A. The bushes hide the monster well, and he is able to sneak up behind the animals and scare them.
- B. Because the animals don't want to share the good food in the forest, they get scared when warned of a strange animal nearby.
- C. Because the growling animal is hidden by the thick bushes of the forest, the rabbit cannot see it and fearfully runs away to warn the other forest creatures.
- D. Out in the forest, there is a large amount of space in which animals can run.

3. On Their Own

Oliver Twist, the main character in *Oliver Twist*, by Charles Dickens, is a poor orphan who escapes a wretched orphanage and runs away to London. The time period is the 1830s. In London, Oliver wanders the streets with a gang of criminal boys and receives an education in thievery. Throughout, Oliver maintains his good heart and never gives up the search for his parents.

Alex, the main character in *The Wild Children*, by Felice Holman, finds himself wandering through Russia in search of distant relatives. His family has been stolen and probably imprisoned by the government in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution. The time period is the 1920s. Alex, who is twelve, joins up with other homeless children running through Russia's cities in packs. The children, desperate and sick, must steal to eat and to live. Throughout, Alex attempts to maintain his integrity in these awful conditions.

Benno, the main character in *Secret City*, by Felice Holman, is a thirteen-year-old in the Bronx, New York, in contemporary times. Grief stricken after his grandfather dies, Benno and other poor children band together. They convert a burned building, in a ravaged part of the city, into a refuge where homeless families and children can live. They scour the city for what they need and find that they can improve their own and others' lives.

These three main characters band with other children and act out their stories on the streets of big cities. Although they live in different times and different cultures, what is the common motivation for their actions?

- A. Love of country
- B. Peer pressure to do the right thing
- C. The thrill of a life of crime
- D. The will to survive.

4. Laurence Yep is a third-generation Chinese American, born in San Francisco in 1948. He has written many young adult novels, as well as an autobiography. His writing draws on his Chinese heritage and his knowledge of San Francisco's Chinatown. **Yep wrote one of the following books. Find the one he wrote.**

A. Hello My Name is Scrambled Eggs, the story of a boy whose family sponsors a Vietnamese family that comes to the United States.

B. Novio Boy, a play about dating in a Mexican-American community

C. Children of the Owl, a novel about a young girl who knows nothing about her cultural heritage until she has to move in with her grandmother in Chinatown.

D. If You Lived at the Time of the Great San Francisco Earthquake, a factual book about the earthquake that occurred in San Francisco in 1906.