Before Reading

BEFORE READING ACTIVITIES (PAGE 106)

ACTIVITY 1 BEFORE READING
Encourage students to speculate and to make guesses, but do not tell them the answers. They will find out as they read that the answers are:

Death Wish (b), Death on Christmas Eve (c), The Heroine (a), Ride the Lightning (a), The Lipstick (c), Lazy Susan (b), The Gutting of Couffignal (b)

While Reading

DEATH WISH WHILE READING
1 Because he knew when the man lit a cigarette that he would have time to walk to him.
2 Because he wanted to be sure that the cop would remember his name later when the ‘suicide’ was discovered.
3 Because he wanted the psychiatrist to be aware that he was thinking seriously about suicide.
4 Because she wanted to do the right thing and get a divorce.
5 Because he was very angry when she told him that she was in love with Mark and wanted a divorce.
6 Because Mark was holding a gun to his head.
7 Because he knew that Wright must have been acting shocked and unhappy since his wife died.

DEATH ON CHRISTMAS EVE TO THE BOTTOM OF PAGE 17 WHILE READING
Encourage students to speculate and to make guesses, but do not tell them the answer. They will find out as they read that the answer is c.

DEATH ON CHRISTMAS EVE PAGE 18 TO THE END OF THE STORY WHILE READING
1 Because there were no witnesses, and Jessie’s death might have been an accident.
2 She had a thin bony body, thin lips, and colourless hair pulled back hard from her forehead. Charlie also says that their mother had heart trouble whenever he tried to do anything for himself, and Celia controls him in a similar way.
3 Because he thought she might try to push him down the stairs too.
4 Perhaps it was the memory of Jessie, or her fear of Charlie.
5 Because the lawyer had been coming in on the day of his annual visit to Charlie and Celia since Jessie’s death twenty years before.

6 Because neither Celia nor Charlie could forget Jessie or the twenty years of hatred and unhappiness that had followed her death.

THE HEROINE WHILE READING
Before Lucille came to the Christiansens’ house, she had worked as a maid in different houses for three years. Her mother had died three weeks earlier, but she had not been sane for a long time. Lucille too had been treated in hospital for mental problems, but the Christiansens knew nothing about her past.

Lucille enjoyed her work and liked the children, though she wanted to work harder for less pay. But she felt she wanted to do something special (important) to prove how much she cared about the family. So late one night she used a tank of gasoline to set fire to the house, hoping that this would give her the chance to save the family and be a heroine.

RIDE THE LIGHTNING WHILE READING
1 Holly Ann, to Nudger, about the electric chair in which Curtis was going to be executed next week.
2 Randy Gantner, to Nudger, about the Curtis Colt case, in which he had been a witness.
3 Police Lieutenant Jack Hammersmith, to Nudger, about the idea that it had been the car driver, and not Curtis Colt, who shot the storekeeper.
4 Holly Ann, to Nudger, about the fact that none of the witnesses wanted to change their mind about identifying Curtis as the killer.
5 Hammersmith, to Nudger, about Nudger’s suggestion that Holly Ann’s trailer should be watched to see if ‘Len’ turned up again.
6 Nudger, to Holly Ann, about ‘Len’, who had nothing to do with the robbery or killing.
7 Nudger, to Holly Ann, about the bad dreams that would never leave her because of the two murders she was responsible for.

THE LIPSTICK TO THE BOTTOM OF PAGE 61 WHILE READING
Encourage students to speculate and to make guesses, but do not tell them the answers. They will find out as they read that the answer is (c).

THE LIPSTICK PAGE 62 TO THE END OF THE STORY WHILE READING
1 What . . .? Elinor was a beautiful woman who liked handsome men and who played around with other women’s husbands. She didn’t care much about other people’s feelings and her house was usually dirty and untidy. She liked spending money.
2 Who . . .? She suspected Margaret, because she knew that Margaret hated Elinor, and she thought that Margaret had bribed Mrs Thompson to lie at the inquest.
3 Why . . .? He wanted to warn her not to go out at night, and to stay away from the Hammond house.
4 What . . .? He tried to kill Mrs Thompson, he burnt his postman’s uniform, and he tried to kill Louise.
5 What . . .? Fred shot at Louise, but the bullet only grazed the side of her head, because Dr Barclay grabbed at Fred as he fired. Dr Barclay and Fred then had a terrible fight, and Dr Barclay got a black eye, but Fred got away and later shot himself.

LAZY SUSAN WHILE READING
1 Susan had felt very angry because the robber had stolen her hard-earned money.
2 A typical mugging victim is a little old lady with a shopping bag in one hand and a purse in the other.
3 After three weeks of self-defense training Susan felt very strong and confident.
4 Susan planned to get money the easy way, by robbing people.

THE GUTTING OF COUFFIGNAL WHILE READING
1 F The first sign that something was wrong was when the lights went out.
2 T
3 F One man took the news to the mainland by swimming there from the island.
4 F The robbers pretended to leave the island on Hendrixson’s boat.
5 F The wedding presents were stolen and the two servants guarding them were killed.
6 T
7 T
8 F The princess’s friends had already been arrested when the detective shot her in the leg.

After Reading

ACTIVITY 1 AFTER READING
1 Susan, in Lazy Susan. She had just completed her first robbery, in the shopping center parking-lot.
2 Mrs Christiansen, in The Heroine. She had just hired Lucille as her children’s nurse immediately after the interview, without taking up references. She had introduced her to the children and was about to leave them together to have lunch.
3 Mark, in Death Wish. He was preparing to go and see Edward Wright, after buying the gun he would use to shoot him.
4 Dr Barclay, in The Lipstick. He had just visited Louise to warn her to stay away from the Hammond house, and was now going back to the house himself to keep an eye on Fred’s movements.

ACTIVITY 2 AFTER READING
Students may complete this dialogue how they like.
Possible responses for Charlie would be:

CELIA: Christmas always makes me sad, because it makes me think of poor dear Jessie. I loved her so much.

CHARLIE: That’s a lie! You hated Jessie!

CELIA: No, Charlie, it’s the truth. I did not hate her, and I was very sorry when she died.

CHARLIE: Sorry? You weren’t sorry – you were delighted! Because you killed her!

CELIA: Her death was a terrible accident, Charlie. How many times do I have to tell you that?

CHARLIE: It wasn’t an accident. You and Jessie were arguing violently – I heard you. And then you pushed Jessie down the stairs.

CELIA: Jessie and I never argued, and we didn’t argue that day. She just slipped and fell down the stairs.

CHARLIE: She didn’t fall – she was pushed! And you did it!

CELIA: How could I have done it? I was in my room when she fell.

CHARLIE: I don’t believe you. I heard Jessie scream – I know you pushed her!

CELIA: Yes, she screamed because she was falling down the stairs. But that still doesn’t mean I pushed her.

ACTIVITY 3 AFTER READING
Possible paragraphs:

1 Lucille went into the house with the idea of finding the family and leading them to safety, but the smoke was too thick. She died in the fire with the Christiansen family, and everyone was horrified at the terrible tragedy. The police were unable to find the person responsible for the fire.

2 Lucille called the fire brigade, who rushed to the house and put out the fire. Unfortunately they were unable to rescue the two children, although the parents survived the fire. The police found fingerprints and other evidence which pointed to Lucille, and she was charged with murder and found guilty.

3 Why . . .? He wanted to warn her not to go out at night, and to stay away from the Hammond house.
4 What . . .? He tried to kill Mrs Thompson, he burnt his postman’s uniform, and he tried to kill Louise.
5 What . . .? Fred shot at Louise, but the bullet only grazed the side of her head, because Dr Barclay grabbed at Fred as he fired. Dr Barclay and Fred then had a terrible fight, and Dr Barclay got a black eye, but Fred got away and later shot himself.

LAZY SUSAN WHILE READING
1 Susan had felt very angry because the robber had stolen her hard-earned money.
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THE GUTTING OF COUFFIGNAL WHILE READING
1 F The first sign that something was wrong was when the lights went out.
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3 F One man took the news to the mainland by swimming there from the island.
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8 F The princess’s friends had already been arrested when the detective shot her in the leg.

After Reading

ACTIVITY 1 AFTER READING
1 Susan, in Lazy Susan. She had just completed her first robbery, in the shopping center parking-lot.
2 Mrs Christiansen, in The Heroine. She had just hired Lucille as her children’s nurse immediately after the interview, without taking up references. She had introduced her to the children and was about to leave them together to have lunch.
3 Mark, in Death Wish. He was preparing to go and see Edward Wright, after buying the gun he would use to shoot him.
4 Dr Barclay, in The Lipstick. He had just visited Louise to warn her to stay away from the Hammond house, and was now going back to the house himself to keep an eye on Fred’s movements.

5 Princess Zhukovski, in The Gutting of Couffignal. She was trying to gain some time while she waited for the other Russians to arrive, but the detective wasn’t interested in making love to her.

6 Charlie, in Death on Christmas Eve. The lawyer had just arrived at the house and was coming up the stairs to see him. Charlie was going through his yearly routine of hatred and suspicion, desperate to find a way to punish Celia for murdering Jessie.

7 Nudger, in Ride the Lightning. On the night of Curtis Colt’s funeral, two days after the execution, Nudger realized what was bothering him about Holly Ann and the story she had told him. The missing link was the car.

ACTIVITY 2 AFTER READING
Students may complete this dialogue how they like.
Possible responses for Charlie would be:

CELIA: Christmas always makes me sad, because it makes me think of poor dear Jessie. I loved her so much.

CHARLIE: That’s a lie! You hated Jessie!

CELIA: No, Charlie, it’s the truth. I did not hate her, and I was very sorry when she died.

CHARLIE: Sorry? You weren’t sorry – you were delighted! Because you killed her!

CELIA: Her death was a terrible accident, Charlie. How many times do I have to tell you that?

CHARLIE: It wasn’t an accident. You and Jessie were arguing violently – I heard you. And then you pushed Jessie down the stairs.

CELIA: Jessie and I never argued, and we didn’t argue that day. She just slipped and fell down the stairs.

CHARLIE: She didn’t fall – she was pushed! And you did it!

CELIA: How could I have done it? I was in my room when she fell.

CHARLIE: I don’t believe you. I heard Jessie scream – I know you pushed her!

CELIA: Yes, she screamed because she was falling down the stairs. But that still doesn’t mean I pushed her.

ACTIVITY 3 AFTER READING
Possible paragraphs:

1 Lucille went into the house with the idea of finding the family and leading them to safety, but the smoke was too thick. She died in the fire with the Christiansen family, and everyone was horrified at the terrible tragedy. The police were unable to find the person responsible for the fire.

2 Lucille called the fire brigade, who rushed to the house and put out the fire. Unfortunately they were unable to rescue the two children, although the parents survived the fire. The police found fingerprints and other evidence which pointed to Lucille, and she was charged with murder and found guilty.
3 Lucille ran into the house and managed to find the children. She rescued them from the fire, but was unable to reach their parents, who both died in the disaster. Lucille was called a heroine because of her bravery, and the shocking experience cured her forever of the illness that had troubled her.

**ACTIVITY 4 AFTER READING**

Any appropriate answers are acceptable. Possible answers would be:

1. If Elinor hadn’t married Fred, Louise might have married him.
2. If Louise hadn’t noticed that the lipstick was missing, she wouldn’t have realized that Elinor had been murdered.
3. If the office girl hadn’t seen Elinor putting on lipstick, she wouldn’t have helped Louise.
4. If Mrs Thompson had died, nobody would have discovered that the postman she saw was Fred.
5. If Margaret hadn’t telephoned Margaret about Mrs Thompson, Fred mightn’t have realized that she was suspicious about Elinor’s death.
6. If Margaret hadn’t sent Dr Barclay to warn Louise, Fred might have killed her.
7. If Fred hadn’t murdered his wife, Dr Barclay might never have met and fallen in love with Louise.

**ACTIVITY 5 AFTER READING**

Acceptable answers to this cloze passage are any words that have an appropriate meaning and fit the grammar of the sentence. Students might like to check each other’s work and discuss alternative answers. Some alternatives are given below:

Nudger’s right. He can’t prove anything, but he’s right about what happened. I was the one, God help me, who did the shooting. I didn’t want to, but I had no choice. The old man went crazy and ran at (towards) me, and when I’d shot him, his wife went crazy (mad) too. Every time I close (shut) my eyes, I see that (the) old woman’s face as she fell. It should have been me in that electric chair. Curtis didn’t deserve to die, and I’m going to have to live, knowing he loved me, and I killed him. It doesn’t matter how much whisky I drink, I can’t stop thinking about it . . .

**ACTIVITY 6 AFTER READING**

Open answers.

3 Lucille ran into the house and managed to find the children. She rescued them from the fire, but was unable to reach their parents, who both died in the disaster. Lucille was called a heroine because of her bravery, and the shocking experience cured her forever of the illness that had troubled her. Lucille would look for criminals who came from outside the island. However, I was able to tell the police what had really happened before I found and shot Princess Zhukovski, as she was trying to escape.

**ACTIVITY 7 AFTER READING**

Encourage discussion of the characters and their motives. Students might argue for other ideas, but possible answers would be:

Mark: revenge
Celia: the desire for power, jealousy
Lucille: madness
Holly Ann: greed, fear
Fred: jealousy, the desire for power
Susan: laziness, greed
The Russians: revenge

**ACTIVITY 8 AFTER READING**

One Brave Act
• The Heroine
An Easy Job
• Lazy Susan
Keeping Death Alive
• Death on Christmas Eve
A Better Way to Get Money
• Lazy Susan
Bad Dreams Forever
• Ride the Lightning
Not Guilty?
• Death on Christmas Eve, Ride the Lightning
Steps Towards Death
• Death Wish
The Rich and the Hungry
• The Gutting of Couffignal
Memories Don’t Die
• Death on Christmas Eve, Ride the Lightning
Laying a Trail to Death
• Death Wish
Death Waits At the Window
• The Lipstick
A Death in the Family
• Death on Christmas Eve, The Lipstick

**ACTIVITY 9 AFTER READING**

Open answers.