

from **I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings**
Autobiography by Maya Angelou

VIDEO TRAILER



KEYWORD: HML9-254

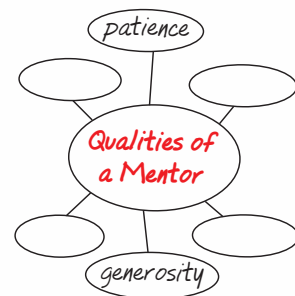
What is a **TEACHER?**



READING 6 Make inferences about the varied features of literary nonfiction. Analyze how literary essays interweave personal examples and ideas with factual information to present a perspective on a situation or event.

Your teachers at school are dedicated to helping you acquire knowledge, but are there individuals outside the classroom who teach you important things as well? In this selection, you'll meet Mrs. Flowers, a woman who acted as a mentor—a wise and trusted counselor or teacher—to a young Maya Angelou.

DISCUSS Think of people who have shared wisdom with you, helped you to see things in new ways, or pushed you when you needed encouragement. With a small group of classmates, discuss the impact a mentor can have, and then generate a word web detailing the most important traits of a mentor.



LITERARY ANALYSIS: CHARACTERIZATION IN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

When describing important individuals they have known, writers of **autobiography** often make use of the same methods of **characterization** that fiction writers do. These include

- description of a person’s physical appearance
- examples of the person’s speech, thoughts, or feelings
- the speech, thoughts, or feelings of other people
- the narrator’s ideas and comments about the person

As you read, look for details that reveal Mrs. Flowers’s personality **traits** and ways she influenced the young Angelou.

READING SKILL: ANALYZE PERSPECTIVES

Though autobiographies are written in first-person point of view, they often reflect two different **perspectives**:

- that of the writer as he or she experiences events
- that of the writer looking back on these events years later

As you read this selection, use a chart like the one shown to record Angelou’s thoughts and observations about Mrs. Flowers from both her childhood and adult perspectives.

| <i>Child’s Viewpoint</i> | <i>Adult’s Viewpoint</i> |
|---|---|
| <i>“Why on earth did she insist on calling her Sister Flowers? Shame made me want to hide my face.” (lines 25–26)</i> | <i>“She was one of the few gentle-women I have ever known, and has remained throughout my life the measure of what a human being can be.” (lines 18–19)</i> |

Review: Make Inferences

VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

In your *Reader/Writer Notebook*, make a chart like the one shown, placing each word in the column where it fits.

| WORD LIST | cascade | illiteracy | sacrilegious |
|------------------|---------|------------|--------------|
| | clarity | infuse | taut |
| | homely | leer | |

| <i>Know Word Well</i> | <i>Think I Know Word</i> | <i>Don’t Know Word</i> |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| | | |

Maya Angelou

born 1928

Marguerite Moves South

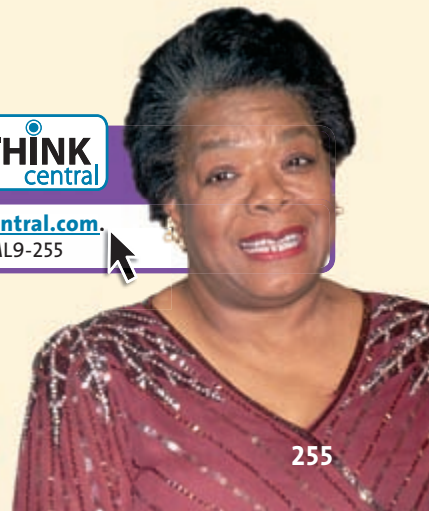
Maya Angelou was born Marguerite Johnson in St. Louis, Missouri. The name Maya was originally given to her by her older brother, Bailey, who called her “mya sister” as a child. When their parents divorced, Marguerite and Bailey were sent to live with their grandmother in the small, rigidly segregated town of Stamps, Arkansas. Their grandmother, whom they called Momma, ran the only African American–owned store in her community, in a part of town referred to as Black Stamps.

Childhood Trauma

After being abused by a family friend when she was eight, Angelou withdrew into herself and spoke to no one but Bailey for five years. It is at this point in her life that this selection takes place.

Never Defeated

Angelou has come a long way since her early struggles. In 1993, when she read her poem “On the Pulse of Morning” to commemorate Bill Clinton’s swearing in as president, she became only the second poet to speak at an inauguration. She served as a coordinator of Martin Luther King Jr.’s Southern Christian Leadership Conference and has taught in Africa and the United States. Her writings have achieved tremendous popularity, inspiring millions of people around the world. When asked what advice she’d like to pass on to her readers, Angelou replied, “You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated.”



Author Online



Go to thinkcentral.com.
KEYWORD: HML9-255



Complete the activities in your **Reader/Writer Notebook**.

I KNOW WHY THE *Caged Bird* SINGS

Maya Angelou

For nearly a year, I sopped around the house, the Store, the school and the church, like an old biscuit, dirty and inedible. Then I met, or rather got to know, the lady who threw me my first life line.

Mrs. Bertha Flowers was the aristocrat of Black Stamps. She had the grace of control to appear warm in the coldest weather, and on the Arkansas summer days it seemed she had a private breeze which swirled around, cooling her. She was thin without the **taut** look of wiry people, and her printed voile dresses and flowered hats were as right for her as denim overalls for a farmer. She was our side's answer to the richest white woman in town.

10 Her skin was a rich black that would have peeled like a plum if snagged, but then no one would have thought of getting close enough to Mrs. Flowers to ruffle her dress, let alone snag her skin. She didn't encourage familiarity. She wore gloves too. **A**

I don't think I ever saw Mrs. Flowers laugh, but she smiled often. A slow widening of her thin black lips to show even, small white teeth, then the slow, effortless closing. When she chose to smile on me, I always wanted to thank her. The action was so graceful and inclusively benign.

She was one of the few gentlewomen I have ever known, and has remained throughout my life the measure of what a human being can be.

20 Momma had a strange relationship with her. Most often when she passed on the road in front of the Store, she spoke to Momma in that soft yet carrying voice, "Good day, Mrs. Henderson." Momma responded with "How you, Sister Flowers?"

Analyze Visuals ►

Examine this portrait. How does it compare with Angelou's description of Mrs. Flowers? Cite details from the painting and the text to support your answer.

taut (tôt) *adj.* pulled or drawn tight

A CHARACTERIZATION

Reread lines 4–13. What is distinctive about Mrs. Flowers's appearance and demeanor?



Mrs. Flowers didn't belong to our church, nor was she Momma's familiar.¹ Why on earth did she insist on calling her Sister Flowers? Shame made me want to hide my face. Mrs. Flowers deserved better than to be called Sister. Then, Momma left out the verb. Why not ask, "How *are* you, Mrs. Flowers?" With the unbalanced passion of the young, I hated her for showing her ignorance to Mrs. Flowers. It didn't occur to me for many years that they
30 were as alike as sisters, separated only by formal education.

Although I was upset, neither of the women was in the least shaken by what I thought an unceremonious greeting. Mrs. Flowers would continue her easy gait up the hill to her little bungalow, and Momma kept on shelling peas or doing whatever had brought her to the front porch.

Occasionally, though, Mrs. Flowers would drift off the road and down to the Store and Momma would say to me, "Sister, you go on and play." As I left I would hear the beginning of an intimate conversation, Momma persistently using the wrong verb, or none at all.

"Brother and Sister Wilcox is sho'ly the meanest—" "Is," Momma? "Is"?
40 Oh, please, not "is," Momma, for two or more. But they talked, and from the side of the building where I waited for the ground to open up and swallow me, I heard the soft-voiced Mrs. Flowers and the textured voice of my grandmother merging and melting. They were interrupted from time to time by giggles that must have come from Mrs. Flowers (Momma never giggled in her life). Then she was gone. **B**

She appealed to me because she was like people I had never met personally. Like women in English novels who walked the moors² (whatever they were) with their loyal dogs racing at a respectful distance. Like the women who sat in front of roaring fireplaces, drinking tea incessantly from silver trays full
50 of scones and crumpets.³ Women who walked over the "heath"⁴ and read morocco-bound⁵ books and had two last names divided by a hyphen. It would be safe to say that she made me proud to be Negro, just by being herself.

She acted just as refined as whitefolks in the movies and books and she was more beautiful, for none of them could have come near that warm color without looking gray by comparison.

It was fortunate that I never saw her in the company of powwhitefolks. For since they tend to think of their whiteness as an evenizer, I'm certain that I would have had to hear her spoken to commonly as Bertha, and my image of her would have been shattered like the unmendable Humpty-Dumpty. **C**

60 One summer afternoon, sweet-milk fresh in my memory, she stopped at the Store to buy provisions. Another Negro woman of her health and age would have been expected to carry the paper sacks home in one hand, but Momma said, "Sister Flowers, I'll send Bailey up to your house with these things."

-
1. **familiar:** a close friend or associate.
 2. **moors:** broad open areas of countryside with marshes and patches of low shrubs.
 3. **scones** (skōnz) **and crumpets** (krūm'pīts): Scones are small, biscuitlike pastries; crumpets are rolls similar to English muffins.
 4. **heath** (hēth): another word for a moor.
 5. **morocco-bound:** Morocco is a soft leather sometimes used for expensive book covers.

B ANALYZE PERSPECTIVES

Reread lines 39–45. Which parts of this passage are written from a child's perspective? Which are written from the viewpoint of an adult reflecting on the experience? Record your answers in your chart.

C MAKE INFERENCES

In lines 56–59, what can you infer about race relations in Stamps, Arkansas, in the 1930s? Consider whether you would be able to make these inferences if Angelou did not comment on her childhood experiences from her adult viewpoint.

She smiled that slow dragging smile, “Thank you, Mrs. Henderson. I’d prefer Marguerite, though.” My name was beautiful when she said it. “I’ve been meaning to talk to her, anyway.” They gave each other age-group looks.

Momma said, “Well, that’s all right then. Sister, go and change your dress. You going to Sister Flowers’s.”

▼ Analyze Visuals

Does the girl in this painting look similar to how you envision Marguerite? Describe the **details** that influenced your answer.



Ancilla with an Orange (1956), Dod Procter. Oil on canvas. Royal West of England Academy, Bristol, UK. © The Bridgeman Art Library.

The chifforobe⁶ was a maze. What on earth did one put on to go to Mrs. Flowers's house? I knew I shouldn't put on a Sunday dress. It might be **sacrilegious**. Certainly not a house dress, since I was already wearing a fresh one. I chose a school dress, naturally. It was formal without suggesting that going to Mrs. Flowers's house was equivalent to attending church.

I trusted myself back into the Store.

"Now, don't you look nice." I had chosen the right thing, for once.

"Mrs. Henderson, you make most of the children's clothes, don't you?"

"Yes, ma'am. Sure do. Store-bought clothes ain't hardly worth the thread it take to stitch them."

"I'll say you do a lovely job, though, so neat. That dress looks professional."

80 Momma was enjoying the seldom-received compliments. Since everyone we knew (except Mrs. Flowers, of course) could sew competently, praise was rarely handed out for the commonly practiced craft.

"I try, with the help of the Lord, Sister Flowers, to finish the inside just like I does the outside. Come here, Sister."

I had buttoned up the collar and tied the belt, apronlike, in back. Momma told me to turn around. With one hand she pulled the strings and the belt fell free at both sides of my waist. Then her large hands were at my neck, opening the button loops. I was terrified. What was happening?

"Take it off, Sister." She had her hands on the hem of the dress.

90 "I don't need to see the inside, Mrs. Henderson, I can tell . . ." But the dress was over my head and my arms were stuck in the sleeves. Momma said, "That'll do. See here, Sister Flowers, I French-seams⁷ around the armholes." Through the cloth film, I saw the shadow approach. "That makes it last longer. Children these days would bust out of sheet-metal clothes. They so rough."

"That is a very good job, Mrs. Henderson. You should be proud. You can put your dress back on, Marguerite."

"No ma'am. Pride is a sin. And 'cording to the Good Book, it goeth before a fall."

"That's right. So the Bible says. It's a good thing to keep in mind."

100 I wouldn't look at either of them. Momma hadn't thought that taking off my dress in front of Mrs. Flowers would kill me stone dead. If I had refused, she would have thought I was trying to be "womanish" and might have remembered St. Louis. Mrs. Flowers had known that I would be embarrassed and that was even worse. I picked up the groceries and went out to wait in the hot sunshine. It would be fitting if I got a sunstroke and died before they came outside. Just dropped dead on the slanting porch. **D**

There was a little path beside the rocky road, and Mrs. Flowers walked in front swinging her arms and picking her way over the stones.

sacrilegious (săk' rə-līj' əs)
adj. disrespectful toward a sacred person, place, or thing

Language Coach

Homophones Words that sound alike but have different meanings and sometimes spellings are called **homophones**. Reread line 80. *Compliments* are admiring remarks. What does the homophone *complements* mean?

D CHARACTERIZATION

In addition to describing her mentor in a compelling way, Angelou also presents a vivid portrait of herself as a child. List three **traits** Marguerite exhibits.

6. **chifforobe** (shīf' ə-rōb'): a chest of drawers combined with a small closet for hanging clothes.

7. **French-seams**: sew seams that are turned in and stitched on the wrong side so that the unfinished edges of the cloth are not visible.

110 **S**he said, without turning her head, to me, “I hear you’re doing very good school work, Marguerite, but that it’s all written. The teachers report that they have trouble getting you to talk in class.” We passed the triangular farm on our left and the path widened to allow us to walk together. I hung back in the separate unasked and unanswerable questions.

“Come and walk along with me, Marguerite.” I couldn’t have refused even if I wanted to. She pronounced my name so nicely. Or more correctly, she spoke each word with such **clarity** that I was certain a foreigner who didn’t understand English could have understood her.

120 “Now no one is going to make you talk—possibly no one can. But bear in mind, language is man’s way of communicating with his fellow man and it is language alone which separates him from the lower animals.” That was a totally new idea to me, and I would need time to think about it.

“Your grandmother says you read a lot. Every chance you get. That’s good, but not good enough. Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to **infuse** them with the shades of deeper meaning.” **E**

I memorized the part about the human voice infusing words. It seemed so valid and poetic.

She said she was going to give me some books and that I not only must read them, I must read them aloud. She suggested that I try to make a sentence sound in as many different ways as possible.

130 “I’ll accept no excuse if you return a book to me that has been badly handled.” My imagination boggled at the punishment I would deserve if in fact I did abuse a book of Mrs. Flowers’. Death would be too kind and brief.

The odors in the house surprised me. Somehow I had never connected Mrs. Flowers with food or eating or any other common experience of common people. There must have been an outhouse, too, but my mind never recorded it.

The sweet scent of vanilla had met us as she opened the door.

“I made tea cookies this morning. You see, I had planned to invite you for cookies and lemonade so we could have this little chat. The lemonade is in the icebox.”

140 It followed that Mrs. Flowers would have ice on an ordinary day, when most families in our town bought ice late on Saturdays only a few times during the summer to be used in the wooden ice-cream freezers.

She took the bags from me and disappeared through the kitchen door. I looked around the room that I had never in my wildest fantasies imagined I would see. Browned photographs **leered** or threatened from the walls and the white, freshly done curtains pushed against themselves and against the wind. I wanted to gobble up the room entire and take it to Bailey, who would help me analyze and enjoy it. **F**

150 “Have a seat, Marguerite. Over there by the table.” She carried a platter covered with a tea towel. Although she warned that she hadn’t tried her hand at baking sweets for some time, I was certain that like everything else about her the cookies would be perfect.

clarity (klār’ī-tē)
n. clearness

infuse (īn-fyōōz’) *v.* to fill,
as if by pouring

E CHARACTERIZATION

Reread lines 109–124. What does this passage reveal about the **conflict** developing in this selection? Summarize what you already know about Marguerite’s conflict.

leer (līr) *v.* to give a sly,
evil glance

F GRAMMAR AND STYLE

Reread lines 143–148. Angelou uses the **adjective clause** “that I had never in my wildest fantasies imagined I would see” to convey with precision Marguerite’s excitement.



Lemonade (2002), Michele Hausman. © Michele Hausman.

They were flat round wafers, slightly browned on the edges and butter-yellow in the center. With the cold lemonade they were sufficient for childhood's lifelong diet. Remembering my manners, I took nice little lady like bites off the edges. She said she had made them expressly for me and that she had a few in the kitchen that I could take home to my brother. So I jammed one whole cake in my mouth and the rough crumbs scratched the insides of my jaws, and if I hadn't had to swallow, it would have been a dream come true.

160 As I ate she began the first of what we later called "my lessons in living." She said that I must always be intolerant of ignorance but understanding of **illiteracy**. That some people, unable to go to school, were more educated and even more intelligent than college professors. She encouraged me to listen carefully to what country people called mother wit. That in those **homely** sayings was couched the collective wisdom of generations.

When I finished the cookies she brushed off the table and brought a thick, small book from the bookcase. I had read *A Tale of Two Cities*⁸ and found it up to my standards as a romantic novel. She opened the first page and I heard poetry for the first time in my life.

illiteracy (ĩ-lĩt'ər-ə-sē)
n. a lack of ability to read and write

homely (hōm'lē) *adj.*
characteristic of home life; simple; everyday

8. *A Tale of Two Cities*: a novel by Charles Dickens, set in Paris and London during the French Revolution (1789–1799).

170 “It was the best of times and the worst of times . . .” Her voice slid in and curved down through and over the words. She was nearly singing. I wanted to look at the pages. Were they the same that I had read? Or were there notes, music, lined on the pages, as in a hymn book? Her sounds began **cascading** gently. I knew from listening to a thousand preachers that she was nearing the end of her reading, and I hadn’t really heard, heard to understand, a single word.

“How do you like that?”

It occurred to me that she expected a response. The sweet vanilla flavor was still on my tongue and her reading was a wonder in my ears. I had to speak.


180 I said, “Yes, ma’am.” It was the least I could do, but it was the most also. **G**

“There’s one more thing. Take this book of poems and memorize one for me. Next time you pay me a visit, I want you to recite.”

I have tried often to search behind the sophistication of years for the enchantment I so easily found in those gifts. The essence escapes but its aura remains.¹⁰ To be allowed, no, invited, into the private lives of strangers, and to share their joys and fears, was a chance to exchange the Southern bitter wormwood for a cup of mead with Beowulf or a hot cup of tea and milk with Oliver Twist.¹¹ When I said aloud, “It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done . . .”¹² tears of love filled my eyes at my selflessness.

190 On that first day, I ran down the hill and into the road (few cars ever came along it) and had the good sense to stop running before I reached the Store.

I was liked, and what a difference it made. I was respected not as Mrs. Henderson’s grandchild or Bailey’s sister but for just being Marguerite Johnson.

Childhood’s logic never asks to be proved (all conclusions are absolute). I didn’t question why Mrs. Flowers had singled me out for attention, nor did it occur to me that Momma might have asked her to give me a little talking to. All I cared about was that she had made tea cookies for *me* and read to *me* from her favorite book. It was enough to prove that she liked me.  **H**

cascade (kă-skād') v. to fall or flow like a waterfall

G CHARACTERIZATION

What does Angelou mean when she says that speaking was both the least and the most she could do?

H ANALYZE PERSPECTIVES

Reread lines 183–198. In which lines is Angelou directly narrating her actions and experiences as a child? In which lines is she sharing insights she learned later, as she grew up? Explain your answers.

9. “It was . . . the worst of times . . .”: the famous opening sentence of *A Tale of Two Cities*.

10. **The essence . . . remains:** The basic quality of a thing or event escapes, but the feelings or atmosphere that it creates remains.

11. **a chance to exchange . . . with Oliver Twist:** Angelou compares her existence as a black child in the bigoted South to wormwood, a bitter herb. Mead (a liquor made from honey) and tea with milk were common drinks in the respective eras of Beowulf and Oliver Twist, two characters from English literature. Angelou suggests that reading about such characters provided an escape from her racist Southern surroundings.

12. “It is a far . . . than I have ever done . . .”: the final line of *A Tale of Two Cities*, spoken by a man who sacrifices his own life to save that of another.

Caged Bird

Maya Angelou

A free bird leaps
on the back of the wind
and floats downstream
till the current ends
5 and dips his wing
in the orange sun rays
and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks
down his narrow cage
10 can seldom see through
his bars of rage
his wings are clipped and
his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.

15 The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
20 on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees
25 and the fat worms waiting on a dawn-bright lawn
and he names the sky his own

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied
30 so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
35 and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

Comprehension

1. **Recall** What is Mrs. Flowers’s feeling about language?
2. **Summarize** What kinds of assignments does Mrs. Flowers give Marguerite?
3. **Clarify** What does Mrs. Flowers mean when she tells Marguerite that some people, though lacking formal schooling, are “more educated and even more intelligent than college professors”?



READING 6 Make inferences about the varied features of literary nonfiction. Analyze how literary essays interweave personal examples and ideas with factual information to present a perspective on a situation or event.

Literary Analysis

4. **Understand Motives** What motivates Mrs. Flowers to help Marguerite?
5. **Analyze Perspectives** Review the chart that you filled in while reading. How does Angelou’s adult perspective help you to understand the long-range effect that Mrs. Flowers had on her life? Cite evidence.
6. **Evaluate Characterization in Autobiography** Skim the selection and find examples of the various methods of characterization used by Angelou in her autobiography. Which would you say is the most powerful method used to characterize Mrs. Flowers? Use the list shown to help you with your response.
7. **Compare Literary Works** Reread the poem “Caged Bird” on page 264. Does Mrs. Flowers teach the young Marguerite to “sing”? If so, in what way?

Methods of Characterization

- description of a person’s physical appearance
- examples of the person’s speech, thoughts, or feelings
- the speech, thoughts, or feelings of other people
- the narrator’s ideas and comments about the person

Literary Criticism

8. **Biographical Context** The title *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* is an allusion to the poem “Sympathy” by Paul Laurence Dunbar. The last stanza reads:

*I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,
 When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore,—
 When he beats his bars and he would be free;
 It is not a carol of joy or glee,
 But a prayer that he sends from his heart’s deep core,
 But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings—
 I know why the caged bird sings!*

Why do you think Angelou refers to this poem in the title of her autobiography?

What is a TEACHER?

What does it take for a person to be considered a teacher?

Vocabulary in Context

▲ VOCABULARY PRACTICE

Determine the relationship between the first pair of words in each analogy. Then write the word that best completes the second pair.

1. *Drift* is to *snow* as _____ is to *water*.
2. *Smile* is to *sweetness* as _____ is to *wickedness*.
3. *Disease* is to *medicine* as _____ is to *education*.
4. *Fancy* is to *special* as _____ is to *everyday*.
5. *Toxic* is to *environment* as _____ is to *religion*.
6. *Bewilderment* is to *confusion* as *understanding* is to _____.
7. *Untied* is to *tied* as *loose* is to _____.
8. *Help* is to *assist* as _____ is to *inject*.

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN WRITING

- complex
- device
- evaluate
- interact
- perspective

Maya Angelou uses the image of a singing bird in a cage as a symbol. Write a paragraph explaining how Angelou uses this **device** to share her experiences as a young black woman. Identify what the bird symbolizes and include examples of its use. Use at least one Academic Vocabulary word in your paragraph.

VOCABULARY STRATEGY: MULTIPLE-MEANING WORDS

Sometimes words, such as the vocabulary word *homely* in this selection, do not have the meanings you expect. Many English words have a number of meanings, and to understand what you are reading, you must decide which of these meanings the writer intends.

PRACTICE Write the letter of the best definition for each boldfaced word. If you need to, consult a dictionary or glossary.

1. She **distinguished** herself from her friends by wearing all black.
(a) successful or commanding great respect, (b) set oneself apart, (c) recognized differences among several choices
2. **Channel** your energies into some worthwhile project.
(a) direct into a particular course of action, (b) body of water connecting two larger bodies of water, (c) band of radio or television frequencies
3. The store sold **notions** as well as yarn and knitting needles.
(a) beliefs about something, (b) vague understandings of something, (c) needles, buttons, and other sewing materials
4. Amassing **capital** was his primary goal.
(a) city where government is located, (b) punishable by death, (c) money

WORD LIST

cascade
clarity
homely
illiteracy
infuse
leer
sacrilegious
taut



READING 1E Use a dictionary or a glossary to determine or confirm the meanings of words.

Interactive Vocabulary **THINK** central
Go to thinkcentral.com.
KEYWORD: HML9-266

Conventions in Writing

◆ GRAMMAR AND STYLE: Add Descriptive Details

Review the **Grammar and Style** note on page 261. In her writing, Angelou uses **adjective clauses** to add interesting, vivid details about her characters and their emotions. Adjective clauses are subordinate clauses that, like adjectives, modify nouns and pronouns. They are introduced by **relative pronouns** such as *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *that*, and *which* and **relative adverbs** such as *when*, *where*, and *why*. Here are some examples from the selection:

... *It seemed she had a private breeze* **which swirled around**. ... (line 6)

... *From the side of the building* **where I waited for the ground to open up and swallow me**, *I heard the soft-voiced Mrs. Flowers*. ... (lines 40–42)

Notice how the revisions in blue make this first draft more descriptive. Use similar methods to revise your response to the prompt below.

STUDENT MODEL

Mrs. Flowers is a generous person, *who goes out of her way to make Marguerite feel at ease*. She invites Marguerite over to her house *, where she serves cookies and lemonade* and reads out loud from a book *that captivates the girl*.



WRITING 15C Write an interpretative response to a literary text that extends beyond a summary and literal analysis.

ORAL AND WRITTEN

CONVENTIONS 17A Use and understand the function of restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses.

READING-WRITING CONNECTION



Broaden your understanding of the selection by responding to this prompt. Then use the **revising tip** to improve your writing.

WRITING PROMPT

Extended Response: Analyze Traits

Think about the most important character traits Mrs. Flowers exhibits. Then review the word web you created detailing the qualities a **mentor** should possess. Write **three to five paragraphs** describing Mrs. Flowers's traits and analyzing how these traits compare with the qualities you listed.

REVISING TIP

Review your response. Did you use adjective clauses to add interesting and vivid details to your description of Mrs. Flowers's traits?

Interactive
Revision

THINK
central

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