

O. Henry's  
The Gift of the  
Magi

*and other stories*

Student Learning Materials

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# THE COUNT AND THE WEDDING GUEST

## PRE-READING ACTIVITY 1: FOCUS ON SPECIFIC LANGUAGE FEATURES

“The Count and the Wedding Guest” is a story about Mr. Andy Donovan and Miss Maggie Conway. In the story, both of these characters go through a number of different emotions and feelings. This activity will help you to learn some words related to emotions.

### PART 1: CATEGORIZE THE WORDS

*Directions:*

1. The table below contains a list of words related to emotions and feelings along with the definitions. Learn the words and definitions.

Word	Definition
<b>death (p. 68)</b>	The end of life; the time when someone or something dies
<b>laugh (p. 68)</b>	To show that you are happy or that you think something is funny by smiling and making a sound from your throat
<b>sadness (p. 68)</b>	Not happy; feeling or showing grief or unhappiness
<b>afraid (p. 69)</b>	Feeling fear; nervous or worried that something will happen
<b>smile (p. 69)</b>	To make the corners of your mouth turn up in an expression that shows happiness, amusement, pleasure, affection, etc.
<b>happy (p. 69)</b>	Feeling pleasure and enjoyment because of your life, situation
<b>tear (p. 71)</b>	A drop of liquid that comes from your eyes especially when you cry
<b>love (p. 71)</b>	A feeling of strong or constant affection for a person
<b>cry (p. 71)</b>	To produce tears from your eyes often while making loud sounds because of pain, sorrow, or other strong emotions

2. In the **Word Classes Defined** table below, examine three word classes (verbs, nouns, and adjectives) and their definitions.

**Word Classes Defined**

Word Class	Definition
<b>Verb (V.)</b>	A word (such as <i>think, eat, read</i> ) that is usually one of the main parts of a sentence and that expresses an action, an occurrence, or a state of being
<b>Noun (N.)</b>	A word (such as <i>man, house, restaurant</i> ) that is the name of something (such as a person, animal, place, thing, quality, idea or action) and is typically used in a sentence as subject or object of a verb
<b>Adjective (Adj.)</b>	A word (such as <i>big, small, or fast</i> ) that describes a noun or a pronoun
<b>Pronoun (P.)</b>	A word such as <i>I, he, she, you, it, we</i> or <i>they</i> that is used instead of a noun or noun phrase.

3. Write the words from the first table in the correct column of the Word Class Table. Some words can be placed into two word classes. An example is provided.

**Word Classes Table**

Verb (V.)	Noun (N.)	Adjective (Adj.)
<i>Laugh</i>	<i>Laugh</i> <i>Sadness</i>	

## PART 2: IDENTIFY THE WORD CLASS

### Directions:

1. Read the sentences below.
2. Identify the word class (*verb*, *noun*, or *adjective*) of the *italicized* words. See Word Classes Defined Table if you need to review the word classes.
3. Write down a short form of the word class (V, N, or Adj.) under the italicized words. The first example has been completed for you.

1. “*Laugh* and the world *laughs* with you,” she said, “but the world is not interested in *sadness*.” (p. 68)  
V                                  V    N

2. I was *afraid* they were going to fight. (p. 69)
3. I should not keep you from your friends who can *smile* and enjoy things with you. (p. 69)
4. It was wise, bright—the face of a strong, *happy* man who could be a leader of other men. (p. 69)
5. There never was a man in *love* with me. All the other girls had men in *love* with them. (p. 71)
6. And then, suddenly, she put her head against his shoulder and began to *cry*. She held his arm, and her *tears* wet the black dress. (p. 71)

## PRE-READING ACTIVITY 2: ANALYZING IMAGES

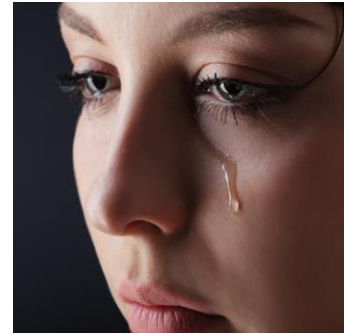
In the story “The Count and the Wedding Guest,” the narrator spends some time describing the main characters. This activity will help you to begin thinking about different descriptive words and their meaning.

**Directions:**

Read the words in the word bank and review the pictures. Match the words with the pictures. Write the word under the corresponding picture. Then, complete the sentences below.

**Word Bank:**

Sad Happy Laughing Rich Crying



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

*happy*

1. Andy Donovan wanted to make Miss Conway *laugh*.
2. Count Fernando Mazzini had a lot of money. He was very \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Andy Donovan thought Miss Conway loved another man. He was \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Miss Conway was very sad and she started to \_\_\_\_\_.
5. When she told the truth, Andy Donovan was very \_\_\_\_\_.

## WHILE-READING ACTIVITY 1: DESCRIBE AND DRAW

The characters in “The Count and the Wedding Guest” are central to the story. The narrator spends a lot of time talking about them. In this activity, you will describe and draw the main characters.

### PART 1: FIND THE DESCRIPTIONS

*Directions:*

1. While you read the story, use the page numbers listed below to find the description of each character.
2. Fill in the description of each character in the blanks below. Several examples are provided.

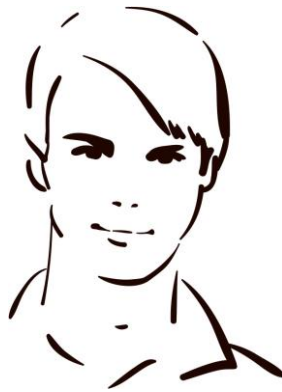
Page Number	Character Description
<b>Miss Maggie Conway</b>	
67	1. Miss Conway was small and <i>quiet</i> .
68	2. She was wearing a _____ dress of soft, thin cloth.
68	3. Her rich _____ hair lay _____ and thick at the back of her neck.
68	4. Her face was not really _____ but her large _____ eyes almost made it beautiful.
69	5. I have his _____ here. I wear it on a _____ around my neck.
<b>Big Mike Sullivan</b>	
70	1. He is the most _____ man in New York.
70	2. He is a mile high and as <i>broad</i> as the East River.
70	3. Big Mike is as good a _____ to a little man as he is to a big man.
<b>Andy Donovan</b>	
67	1. Mr. Donovan had a _____ that everyone liked.
<b>Count Fernando Mazzini</b>	
68	1. He was a real <i>Count</i> . He had _____ and a big house in Italy.
69	2. The _____ of Count Mazzini commanded interest.
69	3. It was wise, _____ – the face of a strong, _____ man who could be a leader of other men.

## PART 2: DRAW THE CHARACTERS

### Directions:

1. Using the descriptions you found in **Part 1** of this activity, draw *two* of the characters in the boxes below.
2. Write the character's name on the line in the top of the box.
3. Some characters are described in more detail than other characters. If there is not much description of a character, draw a picture of what you *think* the character might look like. The example of Andy is provided.

Character's Name: Andy Donovan



Character's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Character's Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## WHILE-READING ACTIVITY 2: SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

“The Count and the Wedding Guest” tells the story of how Mr. Andy Donovan meets a new guest, Miss Maggie Conway, at dinner in a rooming house on Second Avenue. As you read the story, put the major events in the order in which they occur in the story.

*Directions:*

1. As you read the story, focus on the main events.
2. In the bank boxes in the table, write down the events in the order in which they occur in the story. Some events have been completed for you.

Order of events	Events from the Story
1	Mr. Andy Donovan meets a new guest, a young lady, Miss Maggie Conway.
	Two weeks later, Andy sees Maggie again wearing all black.
	Maggie tells Andy the real story about the Count who was never real.
	Maggie receives a letter from Italy saying that Fernando has been killed.
5	After Maggie’s father finally agrees to the marriage, Fernando goes to Italy to prepare for the wedding.
	Maggie plans to marry Count Fernando Mazzini, but her father is against it.
	Maggie shows Andy the picture of Fernando, and Andy decides to take Fernando’s place in Maggie’s heart.
8	After a month, Andy and Maggie decide to get married.
	Andy invites Maggie for a walk, and Maggie tells Andy her sad story.
	A week later, Andy has a sad face all day because he cannot invite Big Mike Sullivan to his wedding for a reason he won’t tell.
	After Maggie tells the truth, Andy is happy again and ready to get married.

## POST-READING ACTIVITY 1: READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

The story “The Count and the Wedding Guest” is about Miss Conway and Andy Donovan. Reading comprehension is important. In this activity you will answer questions about the story to check your reading comprehension.

*Directions:*

1. After reading the story, answer the multiple-choice questions.
2. Circle the best answer for each question.
3. Write a brief answer for Question 6.

1. *Why does Miss Conway wear black at the beginning of the story?*

- A. She is poor.
- B. She says she is mourning her lover, Count Fernando Mazzini, who has died.
- C. She has no friends.
- D. She lives in a very large city.

2. *What does Mr. Donovan want to do?*

- A. He wants to make Miss Conway’s heart live again.
- B. He wants to buy Miss Conway clothes.
- C. He wants to buy a house on Coney Island.
- D. He wants to move to Italy.

3. *At the end of the story, why does Mr. Andy Donovan have a sad face?*

- A. Miss Conway’s father will not let Andy marry Maggie.
- B. Miss Conway does not want to marry Andy.
- C. Big Mike Sullivan is in love with Miss Conway.
- D. Big Mike Sullivan cannot come to the wedding.

4. *Miss Conway says that the man in the picture is Count Fernando Mazzini. But who is the actual man in the picture that Miss Conway has in her room and on a chain around her neck?*

- A. Mr. Andy Donovan
- B. Big Mike Sullivan
- C. Count Fernando Mazzini
- D. Her father

5. *What did Miss Conway tell Andy Donovan that wasn’t true?*

- A. The man in the picture on her chain was Count Mazzini.
- B. She was going to marry Count Fernando Mazzini.
- C. Count Fernando Mazzini is in love with her.
- D. All of the above.

6. Write a short summary of the story "The Count and the Wedding Guest".

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## POST-READING ACTIVITY 2: CHARACTER TRAIT WEB

In the story "The Count and the Wedding Guest," O. Henry uses words and phrases to describe Mr. Andy Donovan and Miss Maggie Conway, the main characters. These descriptions of their qualities are called **character traits**. This activity will help you learn about those character traits and connect them to the characters' actions in the story.

*Directions:*

1. Study the character traits and their definitions in the table below.
2. Match the traits from the **Traits Table** to the quotations in the **Graphic Organizer** on the next page.
3. Write the character traits on the lines provided in the circles. There might be more than one trait for each character. An example has been completed for you.

### **Traits Table**

Character Traits	Definitions
quiet (p. 67)	Making very little noise
kind (p. 68)	Wanting and liking to do good things; to bring happiness to others
friendly (p.68)	Acting like a friend; kind and helpful
proud (p. 69)	Not willing to accept help from other people.
bright (p. 69)	Able to learn things quickly; happy and lively
happy (p. 69)	Feeling pleasure and enjoyment because of your life, situation, etc.

## Graphic Organizer

*She looked up at Mr. Donovan and spoke his name, and then began to eat again. (p. 67)*

Maggie

*He would keep smiling. (p. 69)*

Andy  
*friendly* *happy*

*"Fernando wanted to give me several thousand dollars for new clothes, and my father said no." (p. 69)*

Maggie's father

*"He came up to me to shake my hand," Andy said. (p. 70)*

Big Mike

*"Fernando wanted to give me several thousand dollars for new clothes, and my father said no."*

Fernando

*"Shall we take a little walk in the park? It might be good for you." (p. 68)*

Andy

# ANSWER KEY | The Count and the Wedding Guest

## Pre-reading Activity 1: Focus on Specific Language Features

### Part 1: Categorize the Words

Verb (V.)	Noun (N.)	Adjective (Adj.)
* <i>laugh</i> * <i>love</i> * <i>smile</i> * <i>cry</i>	<i>death</i> * <i>laugh</i> <i>sadness</i> * <i>tear</i> * <i>love</i> * <i>cry</i> * <i>smile</i>	<i>kind</i> <i>afraid</i> <i>happy</i>



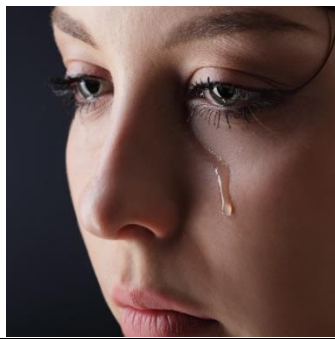


\*These words can be both verbs and nouns.

### Part 2: Identify the Word Class

1. "**Laugh** and the world **laughs** with you," she said, "but the world is not interested in **sadness**." (p. 68)  
V V  
N
2. I was **afraid** they were going to fight. (p. 69)  
Adj
3. I should not keep you from your friends who can **smile** and enjoy things with you. (p.69)  
V
4. It was wise, bright—the face of a strong, **happy** man who could be a leader of other men. (p. 69)  
Adj
5. There never was a man in **love** with me. All the other girls had men in **love** with them. (p. 71)  
N N
6. And then, suddenly, she put her head against his shoulder and began to **cry**. She held his arm, and her **tears** wet the black dress. (p. 71)  
N V

## Pre-reading Activity 2: Analyzing Images

### Part 1: Learn the Vocabulary

<p><b>Directions:</b> Read the words in the word bank and review the pictures. Match the words with the pictures. Write the word under the corresponding picture. Then, complete the sentences below.</p>		
<p><b>Word Bank:</b> Sad    Happy    Laughing    Rich    Crying</p>		
		
<p><u>    <b>Sad</b>    </u></p>	<p><u>    <b>Laughing</b>    </u></p>	<p><u>    <b>Crying</b>    </u></p>
		
<p><u>    <b>rich</b>    </u></p>	<p><u>    <b>happy</b>    </u></p>	

### Part 2: Use the Vocabulary

1. Andy Donovan wanted to make Miss Conway *laugh*.
2. Count Fernando Mazzini had a lot of money. He was very *rich*.
3. Andy Donovan thought Miss Conway loved another man. He was *sad*.
4. Miss Conway was very sad and she started to *cry*.
5. When she told the truth, Andy Donovan was very *happy*.

## While-reading Activity 1: Describe and Draw

### Part 1: Find the Descriptions

Page Number	Character Description
	<b>Miss Maggie Conway</b>
67	1. Miss Conway was small and <i>quiet</i> .
68	2. She was wearing a <i>night-black</i> dress of soft, thin cloth.
68	3. Her rich <i>golden</i> hair lay <i>soft</i> and thick at the back of her neck.
68	4. Her face was not really <i>pretty</i> but her large <i>gray</i> eyes almost made it beautiful.
69	5. I have his <i>picture</i> here. I wear it on a <i>chain</i> around my neck.
	<b>Big Mike Sullivan</b>
70	1. He is the most <i>important</i> man in New York.
70	2. He is a mile high and as <i>broad</i> as the East River.
70	3. Big Mike is as good a <i>friend</i> to a little man as he is to a big man.
	<b>Andy Donovan</b>
67	1. Mr. Donovan had a <i>smile</i> that everyone liked.
	<b>Count Fernando Mazzini</b>
68	1. He was a real <i>Count</i> . He had <i>land</i> and a big house in Italy.
69	2. The <i>face</i> of Count Mazzini commanded interest.
69	3. It was wise, <i>bright</i> – the face of a strong, <i>happy</i> man who could be a leader of other men.

### Part 2: Draw the Characters

Answers will vary.

## While-reading Activity 2: Sequence of Events

Order of events	Events from the Story
1.	Mr. Andy Donovan meets a new guest, a young lady, Miss Maggie Conway.
2.	<i>Two weeks later, Andy sees Maggie again wearing all black.</i>
3.	<i>Andy invites Maggie for a walk, and Maggie tells Andy her sad story.</i>
4.	<i>Maggie plans to marry Count Fernando Mazzini, but her father is against it.</i>
5.	After Maggie's father finally agrees to the marriage, Fernando goes to Italy to prepare for the wedding.
6.	<i>Maggie receives a letter from Italy saying that Fernando has been killed.</i>
7.	<i>Maggie shows Andy the picture of Fernando, and Andy decides to take Fernando's place in Maggie's heart.</i>
8.	After a month, Andy and Maggie decide to get married.
9.	<i>A week later, Andy has a sad face all day because he cannot invite Big Mike Sullivan to his wedding for a reason he won't tell.</i>
10.	<i>Maggie tells Andy the real story about the Count who was never real.</i>
11.	<i>After Maggie tells the truth, Andy is happy again and ready to get married.</i>



## Post-reading Activity 1: Reading Comprehension Questions

1. Why does Miss Conway wear black at the beginning of the story?

*B. She says she is mourning her lover, Count Fernando Mazzini, who has died.*

2. What does Mr. Donovan want to do?

*A. He wants to make Miss Conway's heart live again.*

3. At the end of story, why does Mr. Andy Donovan have a sad face?

*D. Big Mike Sullivan cannot come to the wedding.*

4. Miss Conway says that the man in the picture is Count Fernando Mazzini. But who is the actual man in the picture that Miss Conway has in her room and on a chain around her neck?

*B. Big Mike Sullivan*

5. What did Miss Conway tell Andy Donovan that wasn't true?

*D. All of the above.*

6. Write a short summary of the story "The Count and the Wedding Guest".

*Andy Donovan falls in love with Miss Conway and they plan to get married. Andy wants to Miss Conway to admit that the Count does not exist. The pictures she has been showing are really of a local friend of Andy's, Big Mike Sullivan. At the end, she does tell the truth and it ends happily. \**

\*Answers to Question 6 may vary.

## Post-reading Activity 2: Character Trait Web

Answers may vary. See below for suggested answers.

<p><i>She looked up at Mr. Donovan and spoke his name, and then began to eat again. (p. 67)</i></p>	<p><b>Maggie</b> <i>quiet</i></p>
<p><i>He would keep smiling. (p. 69)</i></p>	<p><b>Andy</b> <i>friendly happy</i></p>
<p><i>“Fernando wanted to give me several thousand dollars for new clothes, and my father said no.” (p. 69)</i></p>	<p><b>Maggie’s father</b> <i>proud</i></p>
<p><i>“He came up to me to shake my hand,” Andy said. (p. 70)</i></p>	<p><b>Big Mike</b> <i>bright friendly</i></p>
<p><i>“Fernando wanted to give me several thousand dollars for new clothes, and my father said no.” (p. 69)</i></p>	<p><b>Fernando</b> <i>kind</i></p>
<p><i>“Shall we take a little walk in the park? It might be good for you.” (p. 68)</i></p>	<p><b>Andy</b> <i>kind friendly</i></p>