

“A Man Who Had No Eyes” by MacKinlay Kantor
Time Needed: (~125 minutes)

Suggested Lesson Procedure

1. Before Reading (~10 Minutes)

- Instruct students to complete Part 1 of the handout, finishing each phrase honestly based on their own beliefs and experiences.
- Emphasize that there are no “right” answers; the goal is to activate thinking about empathy, judgment, responsibility, and character.
- Allow students to work independently.
- After completion, have a few students share responses to expose differing viewpoints.

2. Vocabulary (~10 minutes)

- Have students define the vocabulary words.

3. Read the Short Story (~30 minutes)

- Read “A Man Who Had No Eyes” aloud as a class.
- Pause briefly at key moments to check for understanding, but avoid revealing the ending or twist.

4. Comprehension Questions (~20 minutes)

- Have students complete Part 1: Comprehension Questions independently or in pairs.
- Remind students to answer in complete sentences and return to the text for evidence.
- Review answers as a class to ensure everyone understands the plot, characters, and twist.

5. Short-Answer Literary Analysis (~30 minutes)

- Assign Part 2: Short-Answer Questions.
- Students should answer in 2–4 complete sentences, using specific details from the text.
- This section can be completed independently or in small groups.

6. Writing Activity: The \$100 Summary Challenge (~25 minutes)

- Introduce Part 3: The \$100 Summary Challenge.
- Review the directions carefully.
- Emphasize that the summary should:
 - Focus on main events
 - Avoid personal opinions
 - Clearly show the story’s beginning, conflict, and resolution
- This summarizing strategy is designed as an independent activity.

Name:

Date:

Before Reading

Part 1: Read each phrase and complete it in a way that reflects your own opinion.

1. The only excuse for bad behavior is _____

PREVIEW

2. Empathy requires _____

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

3. People often judge others based on _____

4. When guilt is involved, people often _____

PREVIEW

5. A person's true character is revealed when _____

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

6. True blindness isn't about eyesight, it's about _____

7. Pain explains behavior, but it does not _____

8. Adversity tests whether a person will _____

PREVIEW

Part 2: Vocabulary

Vocabulary Word	Part of Speech	Definition	Synonyms
furtive	Adjective		
immaculate	Adjective		
wheedled	Verb		
boorish	Adjective		
unamiously	Adverb		
fiendishly	Adverb		

Name:

Date:

“A Man Who Had No Eyes”
by MacKinlay Kantor

Part 1: Comprehension Questions (Answer in 1-2 complete sentences)

1. What is Mr. Parsons' initial reaction to the blind man?

PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

2. How does seeing the blind beggar make Mr. Parsons reflect on how his life has changed?

PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

3. What item does the blind man try to sell to Mr. Parsons?

PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

4. Why does Mr. Parsons hesitate to buy from the man at first?

PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

5. How does the blind man say he lost his sight?

6. According to the blind man's story, what happened to him during the explosion?

PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

7. What is the blind man's reaction when he realizes Mr. Parsons knows the truth?

PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

8. What surprising fact does Mr. Parsons reveal at the end of the story?

PREVIEW

Part 2: Short-Answer Questions (Answer in 2-4 complete sentences)

1. How does the story explore the theme of truth vs. deception?

PREVIEW

2. How does the author use Markwardt and Mr. Parsons to show different ways people respond to trauma?

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

3. What does the story suggest about victim mentality through Markwardt's behavior?

PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

4. How does Mr. Parsons's appearance contribute to the theme that things are not always as they seem?

PREVIEW

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

5. Why do you think Parsons never confronted Markwardt until this moment?

PREVIEW

6. How does the final twist (that Parsons is also blind) change your understanding of him as a character?

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

PREVIEW

7. In what ways does the story challenge the reader to rethink what "strength" looks like?

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Part 3: The \$100 Summary Challenge

Directions: Write a brief summary of "A Man Who Had No Eyes" using the word-value chart provided. Each word on the chart has a dollar amount, and the total cost of the chart words you use must add up to \$100 or more. You may use words that are not on the chart, but those words are worth \$0.

Your summary should explain the main events of the story and clearly show what happens from beginning to end. Focus on the characters, the conflict, and the outcome rather than personal opinions or detailed analysis.

Each chart word may only be used once for credit, even if it appears more than once in your summary.

To help track your dollar amount, underline each word you use from the chart in your summary and write the dollar value in parentheses after each word.

For example: "A beggar (\$1) stood on the street (\$1) trying to sell items for money (\$1)."

\$1	\$3	\$5	\$10
beggar	truth	trampled	politely
street	future	generosity	deception
money	tragedy	survival	persevered
cigarette	pity	accomplished	perspective
bitter	chemical	adversity	insisting
blind	explosion	grateful	prosperous
Mr. Parsons	twist	honesty	consequently
Markwardt	hotel	escape	ironically
sight	attempts	moral	shockingly