

Name:
Before Reading

Class:
Anticipation Guide

Part A: Read the following statements. Tell whether you agree or disagree by circling your response.

Statement	Agree	Disagree
Stealing is trying to get as much as possible, while giving as little as possible.		
Sharing with others is fair.	Agree	Disagree
Breaking the law is justified sometimes.	Agree	Disagree
When you do something wrong, you will have guilt.	Agree	Disagree
Shoplifting is a victimless crime.	Agree	Disagree
Having regrets in life is pointless.	Agree	Disagree
Doing the right thing is easy.	Agree	Disagree
The worst temptation is instant gratification.	Agree	Disagree
Stealing from a person is different than stealing from a store.	Agree	Disagree
People who commit crimes are trying to fill an emotional or physical void in their lives.	Agree	Disagree
Without consequences, people would never follow the rules.	Agree	Disagree
If you don't take ownership of your mistakes, you're bound to repeat them.	Agree	Disagree
Greedy people never feel like they have enough.	Agree	Disagree
Mistakes are valuable if you can learn from them.	Agree	Disagree
Apologies do not fix wrongdoings.	Agree	Disagree

Part B: Pick one of the statements from above. Clarify the meaning of the statement and explain in a few sentences why you agree or disagree.

PREVIEW

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Name:

Date:

"The Pie" by Gary Soto

Reading Questions

PREVIEW

1. What internal struggle does the narrator face in the beginning of the story?

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2. According to the narrator, what makes him sin?

PREVIEW

3. How does the narrator steal the pie?

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4. Why does the narrator allude to the Biblical story of Adam and Eve? What does the allusion tell you?

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5. How old is the narrator at the time of the story?

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6. Why does the narrator shoo his neighbor Johnny?

PREVIEW

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7. Explain the double meaning in the following quote. "Your hands are dirty."

PREVIEW

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8. Does anyone *actually* know that the narrator stole the pie? Why does he think people know?

PREVIEW

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9. How does the narrator feel after eating the pie? Where do his emotions stem from?

PREVIEW

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10. What is the moral or theme of the story?

PREVIEW

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11. What if the narrator had been caught? How should he atone for his actions?

12. Do you judge the narrator? Is he a bad kid? Why or why not?

13. Do you sympathize with the narrator at all? Do you relate to him at all? Explain.

PREVIEW

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14. Why do you think boredom often leads to mischief?

PREVIEW

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15. Read the following quote: *"We must all suffer from one of two pains: the pain of discipline or the pain of regret. The difference is discipline weighs ounces while regret weighs tons."* - Jim Rohn

Explain the meaning of the quote. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.

PREVIEW

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16. How do you think the narrator feels about this memory as an adult? Explain.

PREVIEW

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Name:

Date:

"The Pie" by Gary Soto

Figurative Language

Directions: Complete the following chart.

Quote from Text	Type of Figurative Language	Explanation/meaning
A squirrel nailed itself high on the trunk, where it forked into two large bark-scabbed limbs.		
But even that didn't stop me from clawing a chunk from the pie tin and pushing it into the cavern of my mouth.		
The pie tin glared at me and rolled away when the wind picked up.		
My face was sticky with guilt.		
My mom, peeling a mountain of potatoes at the Redi-Spud factory, knew.		
I got to my feet, stomach taut, mouth tired of chewing, and flung my Frisbee across the street, its shadow like the shadow of an angel fleeing bad deeds.		

PREVIEW

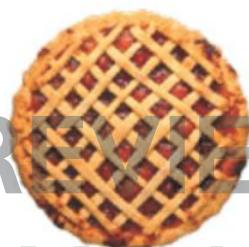
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Name: _____

Author & Title: _____

Climax

Plot Diagram



Rising Actions

Falling Actions

Exposition

Resolution

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“The Pie” by Gary Soto
Suggested Lesson Procedure

1. Assign students the Anticipation Guide. You can have a few volunteers share their responses to open up discussion.

2. Read the short story “The Pie” as a class (this only takes about 5 minutes).

3. Have students work either alone or in pairs on the reading questions. Review the answers as a whole class. This important step will solidify students’ understanding of the literature as well as model important skills for literary analysis.

4. Have students independently complete the plot diagram worksheet. Review the answers as a class.

5. Have students work either alone or in pairs on the figurative language analysis chart. Review the answers as a class.

Note to teachers: I am unable to offer a full text version of the story because of **Copyright**. If you enter “Full Text The Pie by Gary Soto” into any search engine, you will find a copy of the story available for you to print and use in class. Here is the link I used: [The Pie](#)

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me at
chompingatthelit@gmail.com

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Part B: Pick one of the statements from above. Clarify the meaning of the statement and explain in a few sentences why you agree or disagree.

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"The Pie" by Gary Soto
Reading Questions

PREVIEW

1. What internal struggle does the narrator face in the beginning of the story?

The narrator is bored, unsupervised, and hungry. Seeing pies at the market entices him to swipe one, and he struggles internally about his religion which clearly denounces stealing. The narrator is "holy in every bone," and thus is a devout Christian; however, the human side of him wants to steal a pie.

2. According to the narrator, what makes him sin?

He says boredom makes him sin.

PREVIEW

3. How does the narrator steal the pie?

The narrator grabs a pie and hides it behind a frisbee (made from a coffee lid); he walks out the door and smiles at the grocer to avoid suspicion.

4. Why does the narrator allude to the Biblical story of Adam and Eve? What does the allusion tell you?

The narrator compares himself to Eve who ate the forbidden fruit (sometimes referred to as the apple) from the sacred garden, even though she knew it was wrong. This lets readers know that the narrator is well aware that stealing the apple pie is wrong, but he disobeys God and does it anyway. He demonstrates that he has serious concerns of how this sin will affect him moving forward because Eve was punished for her sins. When Adam and Eve stole the fruit, they lost their innocence, similar to how the narrator has lost part of his innocence in this story.

5. How old is the narrator at the time of the story?

He is six years old.

PREVIEW

6. Why does the narrator shoo his neighbor Johnny?

The narrator feels shame and does not want to share. The narrator also does not want to explain how he procured the pie and incriminate himself. Johnny could also be interpreted as a symbol for the narrator's guardian angel because he watches over

him and tells him that he committed a sin (your hands are dirty); nonetheless, the narrator gives into temptation and wants Johnny to leave.

7. Explain the double meaning in the following quote. "Your hands are dirty."

Johnny, the neighbor kid, tells the narrator his hands are dirty. The narrator's hands are literally dirty because he is using them to eat the pie. His hands are soiled with crumbs or jam, just as his face and teeth are covered with pieces of pie. To get one's hands dirty is also a common idiomatic expression which means to become involved in dishonest or dishonorable activity—in this case, referring to the stolen pie.

8. Does anyone actually know that the narrator stole the pie? Why does he think people know?

A symptom of guilt is paranoia. The narrator's guilt is intensifying as he starts to believe everyone he sees is aware of his sin. He is having another internal struggle because his actions don't coincide with his beliefs.

9. How does the narrator feel after eating the pie? Where do his emotions stem from?

The narrator feels guilt, remorse, and uncertainty. "Tears blurred my eyes as I remembered the grocer's forehead." This line shows that the narrator is ashamed of what he has done. The guilt comes from his religion. He never deliberates how his actions might impact the grocer, but instead, the narrator's focus is on how this impacts himself as a Christian moving forward.

10. What is the moral or theme of the story?

You can apologize for a mistake, or regret a mistake, but you can't take back your actions. If you have a conscience, you will feel guilty about the wrong you committed.

11. What if the narrator had been caught? How should he atone for his actions?

Answers will vary.

12. Do you judge the narrator? Is he a bad kid? Why or why not?

Answers will vary.

13. Do you sympathize with the narrator at all? Do you relate to him at all? Explain.

Answers will vary.

PREVIEW

14. Why do you think boredom often leads to mischief?

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15. Read the following quote: *We must all suffer from one of two pains: the pain of discipline or the pain of regret. The difference is discipline weighs ounces while regret weighs tons.* - Jim Rohn

Explain the meaning of the quote. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.

PREVIEW

Answers will vary.

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16. How do you think the narrator feels about this memory as an adult? Explain.

The narrator ends the story with, "I knew sin was what you took and didn't give back." This indicates that the narrator is trying to educate others about guilt/showing how religion can play a role in a person's life. As an adult, he still feels partly guilty, but he understands that he was just a child. He knows that there is no going back on what he did. He probably feels regret, but accepts responsibility and the truth. He pokes humor at the situation by embellishing how everyone "knew" what he did.

PREVIEW

17. Can you relate to the narrator at all? Explain.

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18. What is one way that the narrator can atone or make amends for his actions?

Answers will vary.

PREVIEW

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"The Pie" by Gary Soto
Figurative Language

Quote from Text	Type of Figurative Language	Explanation of Meaning
A squirrel nailed itself high on the trunk, where it forked into two large bark-scabbed limbs.	allusion	The squirrel is an allusion to Jesus Christ. Jesus allowed himself to be nailed to a cross to atone for Adam and Eve's sin. By sacrificing himself on the cross, he took the punishment for everyone's sins at once. The narrator is feeling guilt for committing a sin.
But even that didn't stop me from clawing a chunk from the pie tin and pushing it into the cavern of my mouth.	metaphor	A cavern is a large cave and the narrator is comparing his mouth to a cavern. He is saying that he didn't eat the pie humbly or delicately. The narrator has guilt for even the way that he consumed the pie—in a vulgar manner.
The pie tin glared at me and rolled away when the wind picked up.	personification	The pie tin is given human qualities as it "glared" at the narrator. The narrator feels everyone is looking at him due to his paranoia, so the tin is just another object that is painfully aware of his sin. Perhaps the fact that the tin blows away is symbolic that though the evidence is gone, the sin and guilt remain.
My face was sticky with guilt.	metaphor	The narrator's face was sticky from the pie, but he compares this mess with guilt. The guilt stuck to him, just as the pie pieces stuck to his face. It was not a clean break.
My mom, peeling a mountain of potatoes at the Redi-Spud factory, knew.	hyperbole	His mom was peeling a lot of potatoes, but not a literal mountain's worth. He's highlighting that while she is working hard for the family, he is bringing shame to the family.
I got to my feet, stomach taut, mouth tired of chewing, and flung my Frisbee across the street, its shadow like the shadow of an angel fleeing bad deeds.	simile	The narrator compares the shadow of the frisbee to the shadow of an angel. The narrator imagines that angels will abandon him after the wrong he has committed and shows that the narrator fears all parts of his religion might be lost because of his actions.

PREVIEW

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Name: _____

Author & Title: **"The Pie" by Gary Soto**

Climax

Plot Diagram

Rising Actions

- The narrator sees pies at the market.
- The narrator contemplates stealing a pie.

PREVIEW

Falling Actions

- The narrator goes home and eats the pie.
- The narrator tells the neighbor to leave.
- The narrator imagines that everyone knows that he stole the pie.

Exposition

- The narrator remembers being bored as a young child and thinks about what sin means in his religion.

Resolution

- The narrator crawls under the house and feels guilty.

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