

**MISD ELA Post Assessment 7.1—Persistent Pursuits—Close and Critical Reading—Student
(test ID 10886)**

THEME: Solving problems/mysteries involves persistence and attention to all of the evidence.

The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin, Chapter 27

HIS AVIATOR’S HELMET again flapping over his ears. Otis Amber danced up to his soup-kitchen companion, flung his arms around the taut body, and squeezed her tightly. “Hey Crow old pal, old pal, old pal.”

“They said I was innocent, Otis. They said I was innocent,” she replied vaguely.

Angela, too, wanted to hug her in welcome, but closeness was not possible for either of them. Instead, Angela offered a crooked smile. Crow nodded and lowered her eyes, only to raise them to Madame Hoo, clutching a Mickey Mouse clock. “Things very good,” Madame Hoo said, extending her free hand and shaking Crow’s hand up and down.

“It was all a regrettable mistake,” Ed Plum explained to the judge. “Can you imagine, that sheriff wanted to arrest me, not Crow – me, Edgar Jennings Plum – he wanted to arrest the attorney! Fortunately, the coroner determined Mr. McSouthers died of a heart attack, as did Samuel W. Westing.”

“Then Turtle’s right.” Theo said. “There was no murder. The coroner was part of the plot.”

Ed Plum had no idea what Theo was talking about. Masking his ignorance with arrogance, he continued. “I had my suspicions about this entire affair from the start. I came here for one reason only: to announce my resignation from all matters regarding the Westing estate, with sincere apologies to all concerned.”

“Wasn’t there a last document?” Judge Ford asked, knowing that Sam Westing had to make his last move.

“Yes, but as I no longer take a legal interest...”

“Please turn it over to the court.”

Baffled by the word “court,” the lawyer set the envelope on the desk and found his way out of Sunset Towers.

Without once clearing her throat. Judge Ford proceeded to read the final page of the will of Samuel W. Westing.

SEVENTEENTH * *Good-bye, my heirs. Thanks for the fun and games. I can rest in peace knowing I was loved as your jolly doorman.*

EIGHTEENTH * *I, Samuel W. Westing, otherwise known as Sandy McSouthers and others, do hereby give and bequeath all the property and possessions in my name as follows:*

To all of you in equal shares, the deed to Sunset Towers:

And to my former wife, Berthe Erica Crow the ten-thousand-dollar check forfeited by table one, and two ten-thousand-dollar checks endorsed by J. J. Ford and Alexander McSouthers.

NINETEENTH * *The sun has set on your Uncle Sam. Happy birthday, Crow. And to all of my heirs, a very happy Fourth of July.*

Judge Ford set the document down. “That’s it.”

That’s it? What about the two hundred million dollars, the heirs wanted to know.

“We lost the game,” the judge explained, staring at Turtle, her face a mask of sad, childlike innocence as she nestled once again in Flora Baumbach’s arms. “I think.”

Turtle rose and walked to the side window, seeking the Westing house, which stood invisible in the moon-clouded night. (Hurry up, Uncle Sam, I can’t keep up this act much longer. The candle must have burned through the last stripe by now.)

Behind her the discontented heirs grumbled: He made fools of us all. He played us like puppets. He was a g-good m-man. He was a vengeful man, a hateful man. Windkloppel? He tricked us, the cheat. A madman, stark raving mad.

“Oh my, oh my, just listen to you,” Flora Baumbach said. “You each have ten thousand dollars more than you started with and an apartment building to boot. The man is dead, so why not think the best?”

BOOM!

BOOM!

BOOM!

“Happy Fourth of July,” Turtle shouted as the first rockets lit up the Westing house, lit up the sky.

BOOM-BOOM-BOOM-BOOM.

BOOM!!!

The heirs gathered around Turtle at the window.

BOOM! Stars of all colors bursting into the night, silver pin-wheels spinning, golden lances up-up-BOOM! Crimson flashes flashing blasting, scarlet showers BOOM! Emerald rain BOOM! BOOM! Orange flames, red flames leaping from the windows, sparking the turrets, firing the trees....

“BOOM!” cried Madame Hoo, clapping her hands with delight.

The great winter fireworks extravaganza, as it came to be called, lasted only fifteen minutes. Twenty minutes later the Westing house had burned to the ground.

“Happy birthday, Crow,” Otis Amber said, reaching for her hand.

The orange glow of the morning sun had just begun its climb up the glass front of Sunset Towers when Turtle set out to collect the prize. She pedaled north past the cliff, still smoldering with the charred remains of the Westing house. Reaching the crossroads, she turned into the narrow lane whose twisting curves mimicked the shoreline.

The heir who wins the windfall will be the one who finds the fourth. It was so simple once you knew what you were looking for. Sam Westing, Barney Northrup, Sandy McSouthers (west north, south). Now she was on her way to meet the fourth identity of Windy Windkloppel. She could probably have figured out the address too, instead of looking it up in the Westingtown phone book – there it was, number four Sunrise Lane.

A long driveway, its privacy guarded by tall spruce, led to the modern mansion of the newly elected chairman of the board of Westing Paper Products Corporation. Turtle climbed the stairs rang the bells, and waited. The door opened.

Turtle felt her first grip of panic as she confronted the crippled doctor. Could she have been wrong? “I’d like to Mr. Eastman please,” she said nervously. “Tell him Turtle Wexler is here.”

“Mr. Eastman is expecting you,” Doctor Sikes said. “Go straight down the hall.”

The hall had an inlaid marble floor (no Oriental rugs). Reaching its end, she entered a paneled library (this one filled with books). There he was, sitting at the desk.

Julian R. Eastman rose. He looked stern. And very proper. He wore a gray business suit with a vest, a striped tie. His shoes were shined. He limped as he walked toward her, not the crooked limp of Doctor Sikes, just a small limp, a painful limp. Again Turtle was gripped by panic. He seemed so different, so important. She shouldn’t have kicked him (the Barney Northrup him). He was coming closer. His watery-blue eyes stared at her over his rimless half-glasses. Hard eyes. His teeth were white, not quite even (no one would ever guess they were false). He was smiling. He wasn’t angry with her, he was smiling.

“Hi, Sandy,” Turtle said. “I won!”

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What does the text say? (Briefly summarize the excerpt at the literal level.)

How does it say it? In other words, how does the author develop the text to convey his/her purpose? (What are the genre, format, organization, features, etc?)

What does the text mean? (What message/theme/concept is the author trying to get across?)

**So what? (What does the message/theme/concept mean in your life and/or in the lives of others?
Why is it worth sharing/telling? What significance does it have to your life and/or the lives of others?)**

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NASHVILLE, Tenn., Sept. 28, 2009

Lost Dog Gathers Clues to Find Its Family

A Hopelessly Lost Rottweiler and the Dedicated Animal Rescue Worker Who Found Her Family

By Steve Hartman

Ella, a Rottweiler, was in a car crash and scavenged for food on the highway for weeks. Ella was reunited with her family but as Steve Hartman tells us, the story doesn't end there.



Ella, a lost Rottweiler, is reunited with her family. **(CBS)**

(CBS) Over the last 20 years, the Love Me Tender animal rescue in central Tennessee has rounded up more than 1,000 abandoned dogs. And although most are timid and untrusting, **CBS News correspondent Steve Hartman** reports, one Rottweiler named Ella was notably different.

"I could just tell right away she was somebody's baby. She just didn't act like a stray dog to me," said Kathy Wilkes-Myers, who found the dog a few months ago.

Ella was emaciated and drinking from a drainage ditch along an empty stretch of highway. Kathy says it's typical for people to dump unwanted pets in the middle of nowhere - but again, the dog's demeanor convinced her there was more to the story. So she did some detective work, and what she found is a heart-wrenching tale of unending loyalty.

"She was hoping her family could come back. But they couldn't. They couldn't come back. It just breaks your heart," said Kathy.

Kathy found the first clues to this mystery - broken glass and tail lights - right near where she found the dog.

And just down from there, she found a second set of even more intriguing clues: personal items gathered up. By the dog, she assumed.

"It was like she was sleeping with them - or waiting with them," Kathy said. She took a picture with her cell phone and then gathered the items. They were mostly random, personal things - toothbrush, comb, razor, a candle that said Michelle, but nothing that would explain anything -

although now, she did have a hunch.

Kathy remembered two weeks earlier she'd driven by an accident on the same stretch of highway. She remembered because it was such a horrible crash. A single car had flipped over and landed on the side of the road, at just about the same spot where she found the dog.

Based on what she saw that day, Kathy figured there was no way a person could have survived, but what about a dog? So she called the highway patrol.

"She gave me the mom's name and the dad's name and the mom's name was Michelle. And I thought, 'Oh my God, this is their dog,'" she said.

Thrown from the car, rescue crews never saw the dog. She spent 13 days scavenging for food along the highway - and 13 nights bedding down with whatever she could find that smelled like her lost family.

"That's the last spot she saw her family and she was going to stay there," Kathy said.

Kathy figured it all out. But fortunately, she got one thing very wrong. Someone did survive the crash. In fact, all five family members survived.

"I'm lucky to be sitting here with my family," said Joe Kelly, the family's father.

After two weeks believing that their dog, Ella, had died, the family of Joe and Michelle Kelly got the most wonderful, slobbery surprise of their lives.

For the first time since the accident, the Kelly's had a good reason to cry - all thanks to a dog who refused to forget her family - and the stranger who refused to take lost for answer.

Unfortunately, it was a bittersweet reunion because of the accident and the medical expenses; the Kelly family has had to temporarily relocate to a place that doesn't allow dogs.

The good news is, Kathy has promised to hold onto Ella for as long as the Kellys need to get back on their feet.

http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/09/28/assignment_america/main5347232.shtml

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Lost Dog Gathers Clues to Find its Family by Steve Hartman**

What does the text say? (Briefly summarize the article at the literal level.)

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MISD ELA Unit Assessment: Close and Critical Reading Rubric

Questions	3 (meets assignment)	2 (partially meets)	1 (minimally meets)	Score
What does the text say? (Briefly summarize the story.)	Answer is accurate, significant, and relevant with many details and examples. Details support point. Word choice and conventions support meaning.	Answer is accurate, significant, and relevant but has few details to support or explain the answer. Attempts at organization are partially successful. Word choice and errors in conventions do not distract from meaning.	Answer is inaccurate or a misinterpretation with little or no relevance to text or question. Ideas and content are not developed with details or appear random. Word choice and errors in conventions may distract from meaning.	__/3
How does it say it? In other words, how does the author develop the text to convey his/her purpose? (What are the genre, format, organization, features, etc.?)	Answer is relevant with many details and examples. Details support point. Word choice and conventions support meaning.	Answer is relevant but has few details to support or explain the answer. Attempts at organization are partially successful. Word choice and errors in conventions do not distract from meaning.	Answer contains misinterpretation and has little or no relevance to text, question, or genre. Ideas and content are developed with few or no details. Word choice and errors in conventions may distract from meaning.	__/3
What does the text mean? (What theme/concept is the author trying to get across?)	Answer is relevant with many details and examples. Details support point. Word choice and conventions support meaning.	Answer is relevant but has few details to support or explain the answer. Attempts at organization are partially successful. Word choice and errors in conventions do not distract from meaning.	Answer contains misinterpretation and little or no relevance to text or question or is a retelling or summary. Ideas are not developed with details. Word choice and errors in conventions may distract from meaning.	__/3
So what? (What does the message/theme/concept mean in your life and/or in the lives of others? Why is it worth sharing/telling? What significance does it have to your life and/or to the lives of others?)	Answer is relevant and/or insightful with many details and examples. Details support point. Word choice and conventions support meaning.	Answer is relevant but has few details to support or explain the answer. Attempts at organization are partially successful. Word choice and errors in conventions do not distract from meaning.	Answer contains misinterpretation and has little or no relevance to text or question. Answer appears random or inappropriate. Ideas and content are not developed with details. Word choice and errors in conventions may distract from meaning.	__/3
				Total __/12

Adapted from MISD Thematic Literature Units, 2007