

“Sound of Thunder” Guided Reading Questions

I. Diction: an author’s choice of words chosen for the connotative effect

1. Read the following lines which describe Eckels as he is travelling back in time to kill the dinosaur and circle details that show Eckels is **nervous**.

“Eckels swayed on the padded seat, his face pale, his jaw stiff. He felt trembling in his arms, and he looked down and found his hands tight on the new rifle.”

2. Now, read the following lines:

“His flesh twitched. His hands twitched. He stood drinking the oddness with the pores of his body. Somewhere, someone must have been screaming one of those whistles that only a dog can hear. His body screamed silence in return.”

- A. How would you describe the tone in this passage? _____
- B. Circle the words in the above passage that indicate this tone.
- C. Identify and explain the oxymoron at the end of this passage.

Oxymoron _____ Explain: _____

II. Imagery: the use of language that appeals to the senses.

3. Read the following lines and fill in the chart with the sensory images that are provided.

“They sat in the ancient wilderness. Far birds’ cries blew on a wind, and the smell of tar and an old salt sea, moist grasses and flowers the color of blood.”

Sense	Detail(s) from text
Sight	
Sound	
Smell (multiple)	
Touch	

III. Figurative Language: language that uses words or expressions with a meaning that is different from the literal interpretation.

4. ***“Like a stone idol, like a mountain avalanche, Tyrannosaurus fell.”***

- A. Circle the two similes

Name _____ Hour _____

B. Explain each simile:

5. ***“...suns rise in western skies and set in glorious easts, moons eat themselves opposite to the custom, all and everything cupping one in another like Chinese boxes, rabbits into hats...”***

A. Identify and explain the example of personification:

B. Identify and explain the example of simile:

6. ***“Sounds like music and sounds like flying tents filled the sky, and those were pterodactyls soaring with cavernous gray wings, gigantic bats of delirium and night fever.”***

A. Identify and explain the example of simile:

B. Identify and explain the example of metaphor:

IV. Syntax: the way words are arranged into sentences.

7. ***“The Machine slowed; its scream fell to a murmur. The Machine stopped. The sun stopped in the sky.”***

A. Why is the word “Machine” capitalized? _____

B. What is the effect of very short clauses and the final, very short, sentence? (How does the sentence structure, syntax, contribute to the meaning of the story?)
