

Name \_\_\_\_\_

10th Grade

### *The Censors*

**A. Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences.**

1. What is the reason for Juan's choice to work for the censorship office?

In order to receive his letter from them in order to not get censored.

2. Explain the difference between *understatement* and *hyperbole*? State an example of each one from "The Censors."

**Understatement** and **hyperbole** are two opposite forms of expression:

- **Understatement** involves presenting something as smaller or less important than it really is. It downplays the significance of an event or feeling.
- **Hyperbole**, on the other hand, involves exaggeration, making something seem far more extreme or intense than it actually is.

1. **Understatement:**

- When Juan first starts working as a censor, he feels that his job is just a simple task of "checking" the letters, which is an understatement. He downplays the seriousness of his role and its eventual impact on his life.

2. **Example:** "Juan didn't realize he was becoming an expert at the task."

- This is understated because it minimizes the idea that Juan's obsession with censorship has taken over his life and led him to betray his own values.

3. **Hyperbole:**

- As Juan becomes more obsessed, he starts to over-exaggerate the danger of the letters and the threat they pose, which leads him to make extreme decisions.

4. **Example:** "He had crossed out whole paragraphs of an innocent letter just because one word seemed suspicious."


- This is a hyperbole because it exaggerates how Juan takes extreme measures over a trivial thing, showing the extent of his obsession

3. What are some elements used in Satire? How is this story considered satire?

**Satire** is a genre of literature that uses humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to criticize or mock people, society, or institutions. Some common elements used in satire include:

1. **Exaggeration:** Overstating situations, characters, or behaviors to highlight their absurdity.
2. **Irony:** Saying one thing but meaning the opposite, often to emphasize contradictions or absurdities in society.
3. **Parody:** Imitating or mocking a particular style, person, or idea to highlight its flaws.
4. **Humor:** Using comedy to make serious points about issues in society or human nature.
5. **Social Criticism:** Highlighting and criticizing societal norms, institutions, or behaviors that the author finds problematic or hypocritical.

**How "The Censors" is considered satire:**

- **Exaggeration:** The story exaggerates the bureaucratic absurdities of censorship. Juan becomes so obsessed with his job that he ends up censoring his own letters and even his own thoughts, highlighting the extremes of government control.
  - **Irony:** The story is filled with irony. Juan starts his job as a censor to protect his country, but in the end, his obsession with his task leads to his own tragic demise. The fact that his job ultimately causes his downfall is a satirical critique of how blindly following authority can have destructive consequences.
  - **Social Criticism:** The story critiques oppressive government systems, particularly censorship and the loss of individual freedoms. It satirizes the way such systems dehumanize people and strip away personal autonomy.
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First Read: Comprehension

Identify the choice that best answers the question.

\_1. In “The Censors,” how does Juan get his first promotion after taking the job as a censor?

- a. by betraying a fellow worker
- b. by replacing an accident victim
- c. by seeking his letter to Mariana**
- d. by offering to do dangerous work

\_2. Which statement **best** sums up Juan’s career in “The Censors”?

- a. He remains at the same level and never gets promoted.
- b. He begins at a low level and then keeps getting promoted.**
- c. He is promoted to a high level but then keeps getting demoted.
- d. He is promoted to a middle level but then keeps getting demoted.

3. What happens to Juan at the end of “The Censors”?

a. He finally discovers his letter to Mariana and is able to destroy it.

b. He becomes so devoted to his job that he stops eating and gets sick.

c. He reaches *Section B*, has too few letters to censor, and grows bored.

**d. He censors his own letter, getting himself in trouble, and is executed.**

4. “The Censors” takes place in a country ruled by a dictator. What do the details and outcome of “The Censors” suggest **most clearly** about dictatorships in general? Choose **three** options.

a. They are very compassionate.

**b. They encourage conformity.**

c. They stimulate creativity.

**d. They can be very violent.**

**e. They often seem absurd.**

f. They inspire rejoicing.

First Read: Concept Vocabulary

Identify the choice that best answers the question.

5. Which description **best** illustrates what it means to *sabotage* something?

- a. A spy removes a vital part of a car so that it no longer starts.
- b. A police officer gives a driver a ticket for driving a car too fast.
- c. A motorist registers a car with the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- d. A driver visits a service station and fills a car's tank with gasoline

6. How would someone **most likely** *intercept* a message being delivered?

- a. prepare the message well in advance
- b. suggest ways to speed up delivery time
- c. read the message before it is delivered
- d. pass the message along via email or text

7. What sort of person can **best** be described as *subversive*?

- a. someone who is mourning a loss
- b. someone who is plotting a rebellion**
- c. someone who has learned a new skill

d. someone who has inherited a huge fortune

Close Read: Analyze the Text

Identify the choice that best answers the question.

8. Early in “The Censors,” the narrator makes this comment.

Well, you’ve got to beat them to the punch, do what everyone tries to do: sabotage the machinery, throw sand in its gears, get to the bottom of the problem so as to stop it.

What **main** reason for Juan’s applying for a job as a censor does this comment support?

- a. Juan wishes to show support for his government.
- b. Juan wants to prevent a friend from getting in trouble.**
- c. Juan seeks a well-paid job with good opportunities for advancement.
- d. Juan hopes to snoop into the private lives of friends and neighbors.

9. The following question has two parts. Answer Part A first, and then Part B.

**Part A** What do the details in “The Censors” suggest about the work of censoring letters?

- a. Few letters are actually scrutinized.
- b. The censors tend to be fairly lenient.

**c. A letter can be censored for a variety of reasons.**

- d. The censors follow a set of unclear guidelines.

**Part B** Which of these sentences from “The Censors” **best** supports the answer to Part A?

**a. He knows that they examine, sniff, feel, and read between the lines of each and every letter, and check its tiniest comma and most accidental stain.**

b. Ulterior motives couldn’t be overlooked in the *Censorship Division*, but they needn’t be too strict with those who applied.

c. And when he was transferred to *Section F*, where letters are carefully checked for poison dust, he felt he had climbed a rung in the ladder.

d. Very few letters reached him in *Section B*—only a handful passed the other hurdles—so he read them over and over again.

10. The following question has two parts. Answer Part A first, and then Part B.

**Part A** “The Censors,” what **main** change has Juan experienced by the time he reaches *Section B* in the *Censorship Division*?

a. He comes to despise his job as a censor.

**b. He becomes proud of his job as a censor.**

c. He wins great fame in his job as a censor.

d. He grows quite lazy in his job as a censor.

**Part B** Which of these sentences from “The Censors” **best** supports the answer to Part A?

a. The building had a festive air on the outside that contrasted with its inner staidness.

b. He didn’t even worry when, in his first month, he was sent to *Section K* where envelopes are very carefully screened for explosives.

**c. He had a truly patriotic task, both self-denying and uplifting.**

d. He was about to congratulate himself for having finally discovered his true mission, when his letter to Mariana reached his hands.



