

Lesson 5: Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is a device used by the writer in which clues are placed in a story to prepare the reader for events that will happen later. Foreshadowing may clearly foretell an event or it may hint at it less obviously. This can create a feeling of suspense and help draw the reader into the tale. Foreshadowing can also add layers of meaning that may only be fully revealed after the foreshadowed events have taken place or at the conclusion of the story.

DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage and then answer the questions on the next page.

- 1 The soldiers lay on the ground, wrapped in their worn coats and cloaks, sleeping fitfully. Across the length of a vast field, they could see the lights of the enemy campfires, small flickering points in the darkness.
- 2 The general, wandering quietly through the camp, spoke warmly to the men he saw were not asleep. He had a good and a thoughtful word for them all, but the situation was desperate and he knew it. They were in a foreign land, under a foreign sky, and the soldiers feared they would never see their homes again.
- 3 Even the stars above them were unfamiliar and held no comfort. One of the officers, approaching the general in the gloom, said as much.
- 4 "I can't get my bearings here. I don't know any of the constellations. It seems strange to look up at the stars and recognize nothing," said the officer.
- 5 As the two men gazed up, they saw a shooting star flash across the inky black void and burn out, then another and another. The two men watched in silence as a shower of meteors filled the heavens for a few brief moments. It was an extraordinary, frightening sight, as each object was struggling to shine brightly only to die away to nothingness in the next instant. Unnerved, the officer turned to the general with a troubled face. The general returned his gaze and nodded sadly. His shoulders sagging, he turned and walked slowly back to his tent without saying another word.
- 6 The officer looked up once more at the night sky. The meteor shower had ended and the heavens were still once more. The officer closed his eyes and took a shaky breath, then began walking back to his own tent. He needed to get some sleep. Dawn and the coming battle were just hours away.

1. Which side do you think will win the battle in the morning?

2. Identify the foreshadowing that hints at who is going to be victorious in the battle.

3. What specific descriptive words does the author use to help create an ominous mood?



For more information on foreshadowing, see *Glencoe Literature: World Literature*, pp. 626 and R5.