

Name _____

Silent Spring
Chapters 1 and 2:
“A Fable for Tomorrow” and “The Obligation to Endure”
Critical Reading Study Guide

- **Materials needed:** The reading, a highlighter, a pen or pencil, a good English-English dictionary
- **Instructions:**
 - Before reading the chapters, read through this study guide to be aware of what you will need to do and how much time it will take.
 - Be sure to answer all questions and complete all tasks, even if they don't require you to write anything!
 - I would prefer that you not make any annotations in your native language, especially for vocabulary.
 - DO NOT USE ANY KIND OF DICTIONARY UNTIL YOU SEE INSTRUCTIONS TO DO SO!

1. PREVIEWING:

- 1) Look at the whole selection (beginning on page 1). How long do you think it will take you to read the two chapters without stopping to figure out vocabulary?

- 2) Quickly read the first sentence of each paragraph to get an overview of what you'll be reading. Does it seem easy, manageable, challenging, difficult, or overwhelming? How do you plan to be successful with this assignment?

2. READING – “A Fable for Tomorrow” (pages 1-3)

- 1) Follow along as Barbara reads this chapter out loud. Do not worry about unknown vocabulary.

- 2) Since you've seen a short video about Carson and this book, you should remember what changed this fictional town and gave it a “silent spring.” What was it?

- 3) Choose a town you know very well (your hometown, San Diego, El Cajon, etc.) In what ways has humanity changed it to make it environmentally worse? What has been done to make it better? Quickwrite a short paragraph about this.

3. READING – “The Obligation to Endure” (pages 5-13)

- 1) Read these pages through one time. Read somewhat quickly but try to understand as best you can. You’ll be able to go back later and figure out confusing sections and vocabulary. Don’t do any writing or highlighting yet. It’s pretty “deep,” so you might need to break it up and take a break every few paragraphs.
- 2) Now get your pencil. For each paragraph, jot down a few words that summarize each paragraph. For example, on page 7, 1st paragraph, you might write:

Dangerous radiation/chems not natural but manmade; nature can't keep up

- 3) Put a question mark in the margin for any sentences of this reading you don’t understand yet.

4. VOCABULARY (No, you cannot use your dictionary quite yet! Almost!)

- 1) Scan Chapter 2 to find the following words. When you find them, highlight them in the reading. They appear here in the same order as they appear in the reading.

- modifies, magnitude, contamination, sinister, organisms, counterparts, linger, toxic, immune, potential, adaptable, checks and balances, quarantine, hitchhikers, ecologists, ingenuity, mesmerized, crusade, contention, condone, unpalatable

- 2) Hopefully you already know some of these words. For the ones you do not, find three that you can explain ONLY USING CONTEXT CLUES from the reading. Write these three words and your GUESS about their meanings here. (See page 530 of the eText in MWL if you need to review what CONTEXT CLUES means.)

1.

2.

3.

- 3) IT'S DICTIONARY TIME! Choose 3 additional words from the list (not words that you already know or that you used for the context exercise above) to fill in the chart below. Please use a good English-English dictionary, and remember you should not translate.

Vocabulary Word and page number	Appropriate Dictionary Definition	Part of Speech (noun, verb, adjective, etc.) and related forms	Synonyms (if any)

- 4) If there are other words in the reading you don't know, spend a little time to figure them out using appropriate strategies (Guessing the meaning from context, looking at word parts, using a dictionary IN THAT ORDER).

5. COMMAS – Search the chapters for one example sentence of the following uses for commas.

Comma Use	Page #	Sample Sentence
<p>Commas in a series</p> <p>Ex: Betsy grows tomatoes, pumpkins, and cucumbers.</p>		
<p>Commas after introductory words and phrases</p> <p>Ex: Before you leave, make sure you clean your room.</p>		
<p>Commas around interrupting words and phrases</p> <p>Ex: The boy, unaware of the danger, jumped into the pounding surf.</p>		
<p>Commas in compound sentences</p> <p>Ex: You don't have to go home, but you can't stay here.</p>		
<p>Commas in complex sentences</p> <p>Ex: Because it was so hot, Paul wore shorts to the office.</p>		
<p>Commas to introduce a quotation</p> <p>Ex: Dr. Markus argues, "We must take a stand against this vile predator of humanity."</p>		

6. COMPREHENSION & DISCUSSION - We will talk about these in class, but please read through the questions and think about how you might answer.

Chapter 1 – “A Fable for Tomorrow”

- 1) In the first two paragraphs on pages 1 and 2, what shows that nature was in balance?
- 2) In the rest of chapter 1, what illustrates that nature was out of balance and poisoned?
- 3) A fable is a story that teaches a lesson. What does Carson want us to learn from this fable? Why does she begin her book with this way?

Chapter 2 – “The Obligation to Endure”

- 4) What do you think has led to humanity’s ability to significantly “alter the nature of [our] world” in the last few centuries?
- 5) Can life on earth adapt to hostile elements, such as radiation and chemicals? If so, what’s the problem?
- 6) As of the publication of *Silent Spring*, how many synthetic chemicals were produced annually?
- 7) What’s the problem with spraying pesticides to kill insects that damage our farms and gardens?
- 8) How do insects exemplify Darwin’s principle of survival?
- 9) Why is single-crop farming a bad idea?
- 10) Where have nearly half of the 180 or so major insect enemies of plants in the U.S. come from?
- 11) Does Carson think chemical insecticides should never be used?
- 12) On page 13, 2nd paragraph, Carson says, “Future generations are unlikely to condone our lack of prudent concern for the integrity of the natural world that supports all life.” Which of the following is a good paraphrase of that quote? Be ready to support your answer!
 - a) Future people probably won’t support our not enough wise thought for the soundness of the real planet that helps everything alive.

- b) People in the future might think what we did for the planet is OK because it helps all life on earth.

- c) Our children's children will probably reflect on this time as a period of ignorance and disregard for the biodiversity that is so important for our health of our planet.

- d) Kids might think on long time ago it is time, that ignorance and irregard. Healthy of planet is lack concern.

13)OK, now you really need to stretch your brain. How might what Carson has said so far relate to Jane Goodall's chimpanzees and Wangari Maathai's tree planting efforts?

OTHER NOTES:

- The environment – always use *the* in front
- Nature (not *the* nature)
- Humanity/mankind/humans/people – listen to Barbara's explanation
- Pollution – non-count