

# Nightgowns

by Asma Hasan (p. 17)



## Cultural Background

**Candice Bergen** is a star on American television; her speech was given at a graduation ceremony.

The **retreat** is an orientation activity to introduce students to the school and to each other.

A **social climber** is someone who seeks acceptance by the most popular group.

A **geek** is actually a carnival performer, but in this context it denotes a socially unacceptable person.

## Before Students Read: Writing



Ask students to answer questions on the Student's Page (Part A) and to share their answers with another student. Then ask for volunteers to share their answers with the whole class. This activity takes advantage of students' prior knowledge of the story theme, which in turn aids comprehension.

## Grammar Review (on Student's Page)

On the Student's Page, students are asked to find descriptive words (**adjectives**) for the following nouns in the story: *clothes, hands, jewelry, nose, girl*. Ask students to decide if the adjectives they identified have a literal or figurative meaning.

## For Conversation

Ask half the students to read only Millie's Story (p. 17-21) and the other half to read Kyra's Story (p. 21-25). Ask each student from one group to pair up with a student from the other group. In pairs have the students who read Millie's Story describe Millie's feelings for Kyra; the other students will describe Kyra's feelings for Millie. Then have all students read the other half of the story.

This activity will help your students understand the story's points of view. As a modified Jigsaw activity, each student serves as a resource to part of the story and as an information seeker on the other part. The act of integrating speaking, listening, and reading motivates students to negotiate meaning.

## After Students Read: Discussion

Here are some questions to start discussions about "Nightgowns":

1. Millie claims she and Kyra discussed "our flirtations." Yet, according to Kyra, Millie never flirted! There are other subtle discrepancies in the girls' descriptions of themselves and their relationships. Find an area in which their reports do not entirely jibe, and try to figure out what each view reveals about the speaker.
2. Despite their many exterior differences, Kyra and Millie seem to be remarkably alike in important interior ways. How would you describe these similarities, and what role do you think they play in creating a harmonious roommate relationship?
3. Were you happy when Kyra blasted Will for making fun of Millie? Would you have dared to do the same? Is defending your friend an unspoken rule in true friendship, and if so, how far do you believe one must go to remain loyal?
4. Notice the mention of Kyra's nightgown at the close of each narrative. How does the title "Nightgowns" figure into (or alongside of) the story?

# Nightgowns

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Part A: Before You Read

Please respond to the following questions:

1. What makes someone popular at your school? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Is it more important for you to be smart or popular? Explain why. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. If drinking alcohol makes a person socially accepted, is it good to do it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Part B: Grammar Review

**Directions:** Find descriptive words (**adjectives**) for the following things in the story:

**Example:** PRETTY, SNOBBY girl

1. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ clothes

2. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ hands

3. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ jewelry

4. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ nose

# Nightgowns

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Part C: Vocabulary

Based on the way each word below is used in the story, **write** what you think the word means. Then **look up** the same word in your dictionary and copy the definition that comes closest to the way the word is used in the story. Finally, **write a sentence** of your own using the word. Use a separate sheet of paper.

**Example: comfort** (p. 19)

**A. Your definition:** *a help*

**B. Dictionary definition:** *a state of ease or relief*

**C. Your new sentence:** *Having a friend at my new school is a great comfort to me.*

- |                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>1. acquainted</b> (p. 17) | <b>6. admiration</b> (p. 19)    |
| <b>2. shifty</b> (p. 17)     | <b>7. condescending</b> (p. 19) |
| <b>3. norm</b> (p. 18)       | <b>8. quantitative</b> (p. 21)  |
| <b>4. function</b> (p. 18)   | <b>9. homesick</b> (p. 21)      |
| <b>5. unspoken</b> (p. 19)   | <b>10. envious</b> (p. 24)      |

## Part D: Reading Check

After reviewing the story, please complete the following statements.

- Kyra enjoyed going to parties, while Millie spent most of her time \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- At night Millie and Kyra would lie in bed and talk about \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- When Millie was describing Kyra, Kyra \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_