



## from *Candide*

Fiction by Voltaire

**READING 5A** Analyze how complex plot structures and devices function and advance the action in a work of fiction.

**5B** Analyze the moral dilemmas and quandaries presented in works of fiction as revealed by the underlying motivations and behaviors of the characters.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Voltaire ...

- reportedly drank dozens of cups of coffee a day.
- spent 11 months in Bastille prison for writing poetry that offended the royal family.
- is sometimes credited with having written the first work of science fiction.

### Meet the Author

## Voltaire 1694–1778

Voltaire (völ-târ'), like his English counterparts Pope and Swift, used satire to rail against the oppression, prejudice, corruption, and religious intolerance he saw in France. During his lifetime, he was praised as a literary genius as well as condemned as a blasphemer. Today, he is acknowledged as one of the leading writers of his era and a champion of human rights.

**Literature Trumps Law** Voltaire, whose real name was François-Marie Arouet (är-wě'), was born into a middle-class Parisian family. At age 10, he began studies at the Jesuit Collège Louis-le-Grand, located in the heart of Paris, where he learned Latin and developed a love for classical literature, as well as a strong skepticism concerning established religions. Upon his graduation in 1711, his father expected him to pursue a law career, but Arouet rejected this plan. He wanted to become a writer.

Arouet had his first literary success at the age of 24 with the play *Oedipe*, which was produced in 1718. The tragedy was an enormous hit and prompted Arouet to choose the pen name Voltaire. Many theatrical successes followed.

**A Very Enlightening Exile** In 1726, Voltaire was forced to leave France after a feud with a young nobleman resulted in Voltaire's arrest. For nearly three years Voltaire lived in England, where he met fellow satirists Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift. He came to look upon England as an enlightened society, with great tolerance for individual thought and expression.

After Voltaire returned to Paris in 1729, he wrote *Letters Concerning the English Nation*, a book that praised English traditions, institutions, and scholarship. The book was perceived as a criticism of the French government, and copies of it were ordered to be burned. Voltaire fled Paris once again. He made his home in the Lorraine region of France, where he produced copious political pamphlets on issues of the day and a series of *contes philosophiques*, or philosophical tales, the most famous of which is *Candide*.

**A Warm Welcome in Paris** Voltaire enjoyed worldwide fame. He returned to Paris for the last time early in February 1778 to oversee a production of his play *Irène*. On opening night, an actor stepped up to Voltaire's seat and placed a crown on the author's head as the audience applauded wildly. Soon after, the 83-year-old Voltaire's health failed, and he died in Paris on May 30, 1778.

### Author Online

Go to [thinkcentral.com](http://thinkcentral.com). KEYWORD: HML12-660



## LITERARY ANALYSIS: HUMOR

Voltaire conveys his satirical messages through **humor**. There are three basic types of humor.

- **Humor of situation** involves exaggerated plot structures or situational irony.
- **Humor of character** often involves exaggerated personality traits or characters who cannot recognize their own failings.
- **Humor of language** may involve devices such as verbal irony, puns, hyperbole, or absurd logic.

As you read, look for examples of these types of humor.

## READING SKILL: DRAW CONCLUSIONS ABOUT CHARACTERS

When you **draw conclusions** about a character in a literary work, you form opinions about his or her personality. You should base your conclusions on the character's words, thoughts, and behaviors as he or she faces various dilemmas, challenges, and obstacles. As you read, use a chart like the one below to record information about what each character says and does to better understand the meaning of Voltaire's satire.

Character	Speech	Actions	Descriptions
Candide			a most sweet disposition

## VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

Knowing the following boldfaced words will help you understand this selection from *Candide*. To see how many words you know, substitute another word or phrase with the same meaning.

1. The **oracle** wisely predicted what would happen.
2. He believed her **implicitly** and asked no questions.
3. The teacher's **doctrine** included several new theories.
4. She was a creature of delicate **sensibility**.
5. The hurricane forecast brought great **consternation** to the community.
6. Was the monster a **terrestrial** creature, or did it come from outer space?
7. Behave with **civility**, not rudeness.
8. She tried in vain to **remonstrate** with the children.



Complete the activities in your Reader/Writer Notebook.

## Are you an OPTIMIST or a PESSIMIST?

It has been said that an optimist sees a doughnut and a pessimist sees the hole. This saying humorously captures the difference between the sunny attitude of the optimist and the bleak outlook of the pessimist. Believing that the world was filled with evils over which neither God nor humanity had any control, Voltaire wrote *Candide* in order to puncture the philosophy of optimism with his sharp satirical pen.

**ROLE-PLAY** With a partner, improvise a conversation between a pessimist and an optimist who are standing at a bus stop when it starts to rain. The optimist should try to persuade the pessimist that the rain is a good thing, while the pessimist should insist that it is bad.





# CANDIDE

Voltaire

**BACKGROUND** Voltaire wrote *Candide* partly in response to German philosopher Gottfried Leibniz, a proponent of the philosophy of optimism. According to Leibniz, God had created the “best of all possible worlds,” and therefore people should accept evil because it is part of God’s plan. Voltaire found such a philosophy both insufficient and appalling. In *Candide*, Voltaire exposes his innocent main character to a world of horrors and folly.

## CHAPTER I

*How Candide was brought up in a magnificent castle, and how he was driven from thence*

In the country of Westphalia, in the castle of the most noble Baron of Thunder-ten-tronckh, lived a youth whom nature had endowed with a most sweet disposition. His face was the true index of his mind. He had a solid judgment joined to the most unaffected simplicity, and hence, I presume, he had his name of Candide.<sup>1</sup> The old servants of the house suspected him to have been the son of the Baron’s sister, by a mighty good sort of a gentleman of the neighborhood, whom that young lady refused to marry because he could produce no more than threescore and eleven quarterings in his arms;<sup>2</sup> the rest of the genealogical tree belonging to the family having been lost through the injuries of time. **A**

10 The Baron was one of the most powerful lords in Westphalia, for his castle had not only a gate but even windows, and his great hall was hung with tapestry. He used to hunt with his mastiffs and spaniels instead of greyhounds; his groom served him for huntsman, and the parson of the parish officiated as grand almoner.<sup>3</sup> He was called “My Lord” by all his people, and he never told a story but everyone laughed at it.

## Analyze Visuals ►

Narrative painting is art that implies a story. Describe the story that Fragonard conveys in *The Stolen Kiss*.

## **A** DRAW CONCLUSIONS

Based on the description in lines 1–4, what is your initial impression of Candide?

1. **Candide** (kăñ-dēd’): The name is a French word meaning “innocent” or “without guile.”

2. **no more than . . . arms**: in his coat of arms, no more than 71 divisions indicating connections with other noble families. The number of quarterings is ridiculously large.

3. **grand almoner** (ăĭ’mə-nər): a person in charge of distributing charity to the poor.







My lady Baroness weighed three hundred and fifty pounds, consequently was a person of no small consideration; and then she did the honors of the house with a dignity that commanded universal respect. Her daughter Cunegund was about seventeen years of age, fresh colored, comely, plump, and desirable. The Baron's son seemed to be a youth in every respect worthy of his father. Pangloss the preceptor<sup>4</sup> was the **oracle** of the family, and little Candide listened to his instructions with all the simplicity natural to his age and disposition.

**oracle** (ôr'ə-kəl) *n.* a wise person who foresees the future

Master Pangloss taught metaphysico-theologo-cosmolo-nigology.<sup>5</sup> He could prove admirably that there is no effect without a cause, and that, in this best of all possible worlds, the Baron's castle was the most magnificent of all castles and my lady the best of all possible baronesses.

"It is demonstrable," said he, "that things cannot be otherwise than they are; for as all things have been created for some end, they must necessarily be created for the best end. Observe, for instance, the nose is formed for spectacles, therefore we wear spectacles. The legs are visibly designed for stockings, accordingly we wear stockings. Stones were made to be hewn, and to construct castles, therefore my lord has a magnificent castle; for the greatest baron in the province ought to be the best lodged. Swine were intended to be eaten; therefore we eat pork all the year round. And they who assert that everything is good do not express themselves correctly; they should say that everything is for the best." **B**

**B HUMOR**  
What examples of absurd logic can you find in lines 26–34?

Candide listened attentively, and believed **implicitly**; for he thought Miss Cunegund excessively handsome, though he never had the courage to tell her so. He concluded that next to the happiness of being Baron of Thunder-ten-tronckh, the next was that of being Miss Cunegund, the next that of seeing her every day, and the last that of hearing the **doctrine** of Master Pangloss, the greatest philosopher of the whole province, and consequently of the whole world.

**implicitly** (ĩm-plĩs'ĩt-lē) *adv.* without the need to hear spoken; without doubt or question

One day, when Miss Cunegund went to take a walk in a little neighboring wood, which was called a park, . . . she happened to meet Candide; she blushed, he blushed also. She wished him a good morning in a faltering tone; he returned the salute, without knowing what he said. The next day, as they were rising from dinner, Cunegund and Candide slipped behind the screen. She dropped her handkerchief; the young man picked it up. She innocently took hold of his hand, and he as innocently kissed hers with a warmth, a **sensibility**, a grace—all very extraordinary—their lips met, their eyes sparkled, their knees trembled, their hands strayed. The Baron of Thunder-ten-tronckh chanced to come by; he beheld the cause and effect, and, without hesitation, saluted Candide with some notable kicks on the breech and drove him out of doors. Miss Cunegund fainted away, and, as soon as she came to herself, the Baroness boxed her ears. Thus a general **consternation** was spread over this most magnificent and most agreeable of all possible castles.

**doctrine** (dŏk'trĩn) *n.* teachings; theories

**sensibility** (sĕn'sə-bĩl'ĩ-tē) *n.* the ability to be affected emotionally; sensitivity

**consternation** (kŏn'stər-nā'shən) *n.* fear or shock that makes one feel bewildered or upset

4. **Pangloss the preceptor** (prĩ-sĕp'tər): Pangloss the teacher. The name of this know-it-all character is from the Greek for "all tongues" or "all languages."

5. **metaphysico-theologo-cosmolo-nigology**: Voltaire is satirizing the widely accepted optimistic philosophy of the day. In the pretentious yet nonsensical name that Voltaire gives the philosophy, the last part, *nigology*, is from the French word for "foolish."

## CHAPTER II

*What befell Candide among the Bulgarians*

Candide, thus driven out of this **terrestrial** paradise, wandered a long time, without knowing where he went; sometimes he raised his eyes, all bedewed with tears, toward Heaven, and sometimes he cast a melancholy look toward the magnificent castle where dwelt the fairest of young baronesses. He laid himself down to sleep in a furrow, heartbroken and supperless. The snow fell in great flakes, and, in the morning when he awoke, he was almost frozen to death; however, he made shift to crawl to the  
 60 next town, which was called Waldberghoff-trarbk-dikdorff, without a penny in his pocket, and half dead with hunger and fatigue. He took up his stand at the door of an inn. He had not been long there before two men dressed in blue<sup>6</sup> fixed their eyes steadfastly upon him.

“Faith, comrade,” said one of them to the other, “yonder is a well-made young fellow, and of the right size.”

Thereupon they went up to Candide, and with the greatest **civility** and politeness invited him to dine with them.

“Gentlemen,” replied Candide, with a most engaging modesty, “you do me much honor, but, upon my word, I have no money.”

70 “Money, sir!” said one of the men in blue to him. “Young persons of your appearance and merit never pay anything. Why, are not you five feet five inches high?”<sup>7</sup>

“Yes, gentlemen, that is really my size,” replied he with a low bow.

“Come then, sir, sit down along with us. We will not only pay your reckoning,<sup>8</sup> but will never suffer such a clever young fellow as you to want money. Mankind were born to assist one another.”

“You are perfectly right, gentlemen,” said Candide; “that is precisely the doctrine of Master Pangloss; and I am convinced that everything is for the best.” **C**

His generous companions next entreated him to accept a few crowns, which he  
 80 readily complied with, at the same time offering them his note for the payment, which they refused, and sat down to table.

“Have you not a great affection for—”

“Oh, yes!” he replied. “I have a great affection for the lovely Miss Cunegund.”

“Maybe so,” replied one of the men, “but that is not the question! We are asking you whether you have not a great affection for the King of the Bulgarians?”

“For the King of the Bulgarians?” said Candide. “Not at all. Why, I never saw him in my life.”

“Is it possible! Oh, he is a most charming king! Come, we must drink his health.”

“With all my heart, gentlemen,” Candide said, and he tossed off<sup>9</sup> his glass.

**terrestrial** (tə-rēs'trē-əl)  
*adj.* of the earth; earthly

**civility** (sī-vīl'ĭ-tē) *n.* good manners; decent behavior

**C DRAW CONCLUSIONS**

What does Candide's reaction to the recruiting officers' kindness suggest about his character?

6. **dressed in blue:** Voltaire speaks of Bulgarians, but he is really satirizing the Prussian king Frederick the Great (1712–1786), whose recruiting officers wore blue uniforms.

7. **five feet five inches high:** Voltaire is poking fun at the Prussian king's height requirement for his soldiers.

8. **reckoning:** bill.

9. **tossed off:** drank down.



90 “Bravo!” cried the blues. “You are now the support, the defender, the hero of the Bulgarians; your fortune is made; you are on the high road to glory.”

So saying, they put him in irons and carried him away to the regiment. There he was made to wheel about to the right, to the left, to draw his ramrod,<sup>10</sup> to return his ramrod, to present, to fire, to march, and they gave him thirty blows with a cane. The next day he performed his exercise a little better, and they gave him but twenty. The day following he came off with ten and was looked upon as a young fellow of surprising genius by all his comrades. **D**

Candide was struck with amazement and could not for the soul of him conceive how he came to be a hero. One fine spring morning, he took it into his head to take  
100 a walk, and he marched straight forward, conceiving it to be a privilege of the human species, as well as of the brute creation, to make use of their legs how and when they pleased. He had not gone above two leagues<sup>11</sup> when he was overtaken by four other heroes, six feet high, who bound him neck and heels, and carried him to a dungeon. A court-martial sat upon him,<sup>12</sup> and he was asked which he liked best, either to run the gauntlet<sup>13</sup> six and thirty times through the whole regiment, or to have his brains blown out with a dozen musket balls. In vain did he **remonstrate** to them that the human will is free, and that he chose neither. They obliged him to make a choice, and he determined, in virtue of that divine gift called free will, to run the gauntlet six and thirty times. He had gone through his discipline twice, and the regiment being  
110 composed of two thousand men, they composed for him exactly four thousand strokes, which laid bare all his muscles and nerves, from the nape of his neck to his rump. As they were preparing to make him set out the third time, our young hero, unable to support it any longer, begged as a favor they would be so obliging as to shoot him through the head. The favor being granted, a bandage was tied over his eyes, and he was made to kneel down. At that very instant, his Bulgarian Majesty, happening to pass by, inquired into the delinquent's crime, and being a prince of great penetration, he found, from what he heard of Candide, that he was a young metaphysician,<sup>14</sup> entirely ignorant of the world. And, therefore, out of his great clemency,<sup>15</sup> he condescended to pardon him, for which his name will be celebrated  
120 in every journal, and in every age. A skillful surgeon made a cure of Candide in three weeks by means of emollient unguents prescribed by Dioscorides.<sup>16</sup> His sores were now skinned over, and he was able to march when the King of the Bulgarians gave battle to the King of the Abares. **E**

*Translated by Tobias Smollett*

**D HUMOR**

What **situational irony** does Voltaire develop in lines 90–97?

**remonstrate**

(rĭ-mŏn'strāt') v. to say or plead in protest or complaint

**E HUMOR**

In lines 104–114, which types of humor does Voltaire employ?

10. **ramrod**: a rod used to ram gunpowder and bullets into a musket.

11. **two leagues**: about five or six miles.

12. **A court-martial . . . him**: He was put on trial at a military tribunal.

13. **run the gauntlet** (gŏnt'lĭt): submit to a form of military punishment in which the person being punished ran between two rows of soldiers, who struck him with clubs or other weapons.

14. **metaphysician** (mĕt'ə-fĭ-zĭsh'ən): someone skilled in metaphysics, the branch of philosophy that investigates the nature of reality.

15. **clemency** (klĕm'ən-sĕ): leniency or mercy toward offenders or enemies.

16. **emollient unguents** (ĭ-mŏl'yənt ũng'gwənts) . . . **Dioscorides** (dĭ'ə-skŏr'ĭ-dĕz'): soothing ointments recommended by Dioscorides, a Greek physician of the first century A.D. whose influential book on the medicinal properties of plants was quite out-of-date even in Voltaire's day.

## Comprehension

1. **Recall** Why does the Baron throw Candide out of the castle?
2. **Summarize** How does Candide become a soldier in the Bulgarian regiment?

## Literary Analysis

3. **Identify Humor** Voltaire employs different types of humor in *Candide*. For each basic type listed, find two examples in the selection.
  - humor of language      • humor of character      • humor of situation
4. **Make Inferences** The Baron houses the philosopher Pangloss, who teaches the Baron's children and Candide. Why might the Baron appreciate Pangloss's philosophy? Provide support from the text for your answer.
5. **Draw Conclusions About Character** Refer to the information you recorded in your chart as you read. What moral dilemmas do the Baron and Candide face? How do their actions reveal their character? Why do you think Voltaire chose to place his characters in such situations?
6. **Analyze Irony** Voltaire relies heavily on irony in *Candide*. **Verbal irony** occurs when a character says one thing but means something else, and **situational irony** occurs when a character expects one thing to happen but something else actually happens. For each example listed, determine what type of irony is employed and explain Voltaire's humorous intention.
  - lines 48–51 (“The Baron . . . out of doors.”)
  - lines 90–92 (“You are now . . . away to the regiment.”)
  - lines 112–114 (“As they were preparing . . . shoot him through the head.”)
7. **Compare Texts** Both Voltaire in *Candide* and Swift in *Gulliver's Travels* employ innocent or naive main characters for their tales. In your opinion, why would both authors have chosen this type of main character? Support your conclusion.



**READING 5A** Analyze how complex plot structures and devices function and advance the action in a work of fiction. **5B** Analyze the moral dilemmas and quandaries presented in works of fiction as revealed by the underlying motivations and behaviors of the characters.

## Literary Criticism

8. **Critical Interpretations** Voltaire once said that he felt “satire is almost always unjust” because it presents only one side of an issue or argument—the author's. Do you agree, or does this kind of one-sided expression of ideas have any value in public discourse? Explain your opinion.

### Are you an **OPTIMIST** or a **PESSIMIST**?

Based on what you've read of *Candide*, do you think that the main character's optimism will serve him well as the story unfolds? Or do you think Candide will become pessimistic? Explain your response.



# Vocabulary in Context

## ▲ VOCABULARY PRACTICE

Choose the vocabulary word that best completes each sentence.

1. The professor taught his \_\_\_\_\_ of universal truths.
2. The unexpected quiz caused great \_\_\_\_\_ in the class.
3. Laughing and weeping come easily to someone of such strong \_\_\_\_\_.
4. She felt no doubt but instead followed his instructions \_\_\_\_\_.
5. They lived in a \_\_\_\_\_ paradise, a heaven on earth.
6. The mother had to \_\_\_\_\_ with her noisy children, asking them to be quieter.
7. We asked the \_\_\_\_\_ to foretell the future.
8. She is never impolite but instead treats others with \_\_\_\_\_.

### WORD LIST

civility  
consternation  
doctrine  
implicitly  
oracle  
remonstrate  
sensibility  
terrestrial

## ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN WRITING

• affect • challenge • consent • final • respond

What do you learn about Candide based on how he **responds** to the obstacles that life throws in his path? Does misfortune **affect** his view of the world? Use at least one additional Academic Vocabulary word in your written response.

## VOCABULARY STRATEGY: SYNONYMS AS CONTEXT CLUES

Often you can figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word by examining its **context**, or surroundings. One type of context clue to look for is a **synonym**, or a word with a similar meaning. In the example from *Candide* that appears below, the context presents a synonym for the word *civility*, which means “politeness” or “good manners.”

... they went up to Candide, and with the greatest <sup>unfamiliar word</sup> **civility** and <sup>synonym</sup> **politeness** invited him to dine with them.

**PRACTICE** Study the context of each sentence, looking for a word that is a synonym for the boldfaced word. Then explain its meaning.

1. Candide had a sweet **disposition**, but the Baron’s personality was not as sweet.
2. Candide was attracted to pretty girls, and Cunegund, who was especially **comely**, immediately caught his eye.
3. Stones were **hewn** to build the castle; trees were cut as well.
4. Feeling hesitant about approaching Candide, Cunegund spoke to him in a **faltering** tone.
5. Candide slept in a **furrow**, leaving the ditch in the morning.



**READING 1B** Analyze textual context (within a sentence) to draw conclusions about the nuance in word meanings.

Interactive  
Vocabulary



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KEYWORD: HML12-668

# The Golden Age of Satire

The rise of a literate middle class with an interest in social affairs was one reason for the tremendous popularity of satire in 18th-century England. Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift are two of the most outstanding satirists from this period. In *The Rape of the Lock*, Pope elevates a minor insult—the theft of a lock of hair—to a level of epic grandeur.

*“Just then, Clarissa drew with tempting grace  
A two-edged weapon from her shining case:  
So ladies in romance assist their knight,  
Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.”*

In “A Modest Proposal,” on the other hand, Jonathan Swift makes light of a horrible suggestion.

*“A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends;  
and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will  
make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or  
salt will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in  
winter. . . .”*

Making liberal use of verbal irony, satirists often do not write literally about the targets of their scorn; instead, they create an imaginary scenario as a way to make an indirect point about a real-life problem.

## Writing to Evaluate

Imagine that you are a member of the 18th-century English middle class, educated and concerned about the well-being of society. Consider the satires you have just read. Write a brief essay to explain which you find most compelling, and why.

### Consider

- which piece you find the most clever or amusing
- how you feel about the social issues targeted by each piece
- which piece delivers the clearest social critique

## Extension

### VIEWING & REPRESENTING

The paintings and engravings of William Hogarth offered satirical commentary on 18th-century life that could be every bit as cutting and detailed as the works of Pope or Swift. In this painting, “The Bench,” Hogarth caricatures a group of judges. Identify the qualities of the judges depicted. What satirical comment could Hogarth be making? Give a brief oral review, citing details from the image.



**WRITING 15C** Write an interpretation of a literary text.