

TIME

CLASSROOM EDITIONS

TEACHER'S GUIDE



January 19, 1998

IN THE SPOTLIGHT — FOR DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Toni Morrison: Portrait of a Writer

COVER STORY

THIS WEEK'S COVER STORY PRESENTS a profile of Toni Morrison,

the Nobel Prize-winning American writer whose seventh novel, *Paradise*, was published last week. Morrison has become an undeniably important author in this country; many critics and readers predict she will be judged a great one. Encourage your students to read her work by hearing from classmates who already know her novels and by sampling an excerpt from *Paradise* that provides an introduction to Morrison's signature style.

For Discussion

1. According to **Paradise Found** on page 62, how has winning the Nobel Prize been a benefit for Toni Morrison? How has it been a problem for her as a working writer? Had you heard of Toni Morrison before reading this article? Where? If you were a writer, would you seek the kind of attention Morrison has received?
2. Have you read *The Bluest Eye*, *Jazz*, *Beloved*, or other novels by Toni Morrison? What do you remember about them? What did you like, dislike and learn? (If a number of students can respond, make notes on the board about each novel mentioned.) Which novel would you recommend to other classmates? Why?
3. Read aloud the excerpt in the box above, in which Deacon drives around the town of Haven and thinks back to his childhood. What did you see as you listened? What did you hear? What is the book of stories with "black leather covers with gold lettering"? In the article, Paul Gray describes Morrison's style as "a mélange of high literary rhetoric and plain talk." Read the excerpt aloud again, listening for this signature mix. Where do you hear each ele-

A GLIMPSE OF PARADISE

The morning after the meeting at Calvary, pleased with his bird quota and fired, not tired, from no sleep, he decided to check out the Oven before opening up the bank. So he turned left instead of right on Central and drove past the school on the west side, Ace's Grocery, Fleetwood's Furniture and Appliance and several houses on the east. When he arrived at the site he circled it. Except for a few soda cans and some paper that had escaped the trash barrel, the place was blank. No fists. No loungers. He should speak to Anna Flood who owned Ace's store now—get her to clean

up the pop cans and mess that came from purchases made at her store. That's what Ace, her father, used to do. Swept that place like it was his own kitchen, inside, out and if you'd let him he'd sweep all across the road. Pulling back onto Central, Deek noticed Misner's beat-up Ford parked at Anna's. Beyond, to his left, he could hear schoolchildren group-reciting a poem he'd learned by rote too, except he had had to hear Dunbar's lines only once to memorize them completely and forever.... But none of it was as good as what they learned at home, sitting on the floor in a firelit room, listen-

ing to war stories; to stories of great migrations—those who made it and those who did not; to the failures and triumphs of intelligent men—their fear, their bravery, their confusion; to tales of love deep and permanent. All there in the one book they owned then. Black leather covers with gold lettering; the pages thinner than young leaves, than petals. The spine frayed into webbing at the top, the corners fingered down to skin. The strong words, strange at first, becoming familiar, gaining weight and hypnotic beauty the more they heard them, made them their own.

From *Paradise* by Toni Morrison (Knopf, 1998)

ment? What other words can you find to describe her style?

4. Discuss as a class: Why do you read fiction? What can fiction do? Paul Gray summarizes: "Morrison has argued for years that stories and storytelling convey information, necessary information, available nowhere else." Do you agree? Has this been true for you in your experience with stories and literature? Discuss, referring to particular works of fiction you have heard or read.

For Further Exploration

1. **Respond to Morrison's reflections on race.** What do you think Toni Morrison meant when she said, "Race is the least reliable information you can have about someone. It's real information, but it tells you next to nothing." Do you agree with her? Explain your views in an essay, drawing upon your personal experiences.

2. **Investigate Toni Morrison's style.** Read the first full chapter of any one of Morrison's novels. How do you characterize her writing style? What does it demand from you as a reader? What is its effect? Simply, do you like it? How do you respond to it? Now try writing another paragraph, continuing the chapter in her style. How difficult is it to do? What elements are the hardest to imitate? What more do you learn about how Morrison writes by trying to write as she does?

NEWSMAKER OF THE YEAR UPDATE

Many thanks to the hundreds of classes who participated in this year's competition. Although none of the contest entries matched TIME editors' selection of Andrew Grove, we did receive dozens of powerful nominating essays written by students. In next week's guide, we'll reprint a sampling of these essays, along with a special behind-the-scenes look at the process TIME's editors used to select the top newsmaker of 1997.



New Day Coming?

Page 34 On CNN last week, Iranian President Mohammed Khatami called for a “dialogue” between Iran and “the great American people.” Is this the beginning of a new era in U.S.-Iranian relations?

Sharpening Your Focus

1. What is the current relationship between the United States and Iran? How does each government view the other?
2. What makes Khatami a “moderate” in the world of Iranian politics?
3. What are the two policy directions available to President Clinton and his advisers in response to President Khatami? Which course do you think the U.S. should follow? Why?

For Further Exploration

● **Test the political waters.** As Bruce Nelan reports, elected officials walk a dangerous line between encouraging a more “moderate” Iranian President and being seen by the public as “soft on Iran.” Conduct a random sample of public opinion by asking 10 or more people this question: “Should the U.S. move toward a reopening of political relations with Iran?” Based upon your results, what policy position would you advise a future Presidential candidate to take?

■ **Interpret President Khatami’s words.** Read the text of Khatami’s CNN interview at the CNN Website (<http://cnn.com/WORLD/9801/07/iran/interview.html>). What do you find most striking about his remarks? Most encouraging for future U.S.-Iranian relations? Most discouraging? What do you think Khatami was trying to achieve, both internally and externally, by conducting this interview?

Dead Teen Walking

Page 50 Sixty-three juvenile offenders sit on death row in U.S. prisons. Are death sentences for convicted offenders under the age of 18 a powerful deterrent or a cruel injustice?

Sharpening Your Focus

1. What Supreme Court ruling has guided state laws on the execution of juveniles? How has this decision been interpreted? In how many states may offenders as young as 16 be executed?
2. Find voices quoted in the article who speak out for or against executing juveniles, and underline each statement. Which arguments are most persuasive on both sides of the debate? Record them in a two-column list on the board.
3. Why do you think the TIME article focuses on Shareef Cousin? Does the inclusion of this detailed case history in the article sway your opinion on capital punishment for juveniles? In which direction? Why?

4. Do you predict that the next 10 years will see an increase or a decrease in the number of juveniles sentenced to death and executed? What legal, ethical and political factors will come into play in determining the direction of this trend?

For Further Exploration

● **Write a position paper.** Using information in the article and the notes on the board, draft a one-page position paper laying out an argument either for or against capital punishment for juvenile offenders.

■ **Evaluate point of view.** Where do you think writers Christopher John Farley and James Willwerth stand on capital punishment? Is the writers’ position stated openly? If not, how do you know? Refer to specific lines in the article.

■ **Craft a portrait of the justice system.** Based on this article, what can you learn about how the American justice system works? Begin: “The case of Shareef Cousin teaches that...” When you have finished, critique the lesson: Is it a fair or distorted representation of the system?

Of Headless Mice... and Men

Page 76 In a provocative essay, Charles Krauthammer predicts that current advances in cloning and genetic engineering may soon lead to an unethical and intolerable use of these new techniques.



Sharpening Your Focus

1. What recent development in genetic research spurred Krauthammer to write this essay? Why did researchers conduct these experiments? Do you think this research is ethical?
2. Where does Krauthammer believe these experiments, when combined with cloning technology, will lead?
3. Is Krauthammer’s concern reasonable or alarmist? Explain your position.

For Further Exploration

● **Take a moral stand.** Do you agree that it is unequivocally wrong to create a cloned, consciousnessless copy of yourself to be used to prolong your life? If so, why is it wrong? What would be some of the consequences of this practice if it were developed and became available to those who could afford to pay for it?

■ **Reflect on the ethical consequences of scientific breakthroughs.** With others, make a list of notable scientific developments in the past decade. Select one or more and discuss, in writing, ethical questions that have arisen or may arise about the use of this technology or knowledge. Are there any breakthroughs that raise no ethical concerns?

Note to Instructor: On this page we offer a broad range of ideas for activities and assignments keyed to selected articles in the current issue of TIME. All exercises can be modified to suit the needs of your students. The symbols below provide an approximation of the time required to complete each assignment:

- **Brief assignment;** can be completed in class or as a homework exercise.
- **Mid-range assignment;** can be completed during several class or homework sessions.
- ▲ **Long-term assignment;** may involve extensive library research and/or multiple revisions.

Quiz Answers Available only in printed versions of the teacher’s guide, sent weekly to TIME Education Program subscribers.

TEP WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR

The TIME Education Program has a new director: Leanna Landsmann, a nationally recognized leader in education. For the past decade, Leanna has run her own education company, which has helped corporations and associations build stronger relationships with students and their schools. As a volunteer, she launched New York City’s Principal for a Day initiative in 1994 and was its volunteer director for two years. Prior to starting her own company, she was publisher and editor-in-chief of *Instructor* magazine and director of Children’s and Young Adult Books at Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Leanna will also serve as President of *TIME for Kids*, a weekly newsmagazine for students in the elementary grades.



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T I M E W E E K L Y Q U I Z

Name Date

The Who, What and Where of the News: Identify the person, place or term that best fits each of the following descriptions. Write the letter of the item in the space provided. The number in parentheses indicates the first page of the TIME story in which the answer will be found.* (NOTE: Not all items will be used.)

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|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| A. Richard Seed | G. glucosamine | L. 115 | R. Sonny Bono | W. U.S. Postal Service |
| B. Macedonia | H. Judy Clarke | M. Paula Jones | S. buprenorphine | X. Ayatullah Ali Khamenei |
| C. 63 | I. Kosovo | N. Fiat | T. William Downes | Y. Toni Morrison |
| D. Xavier Suarez | J. Egon Schiele | O. Karla Faye Tucker | U. Gary Bauer | Z. Beetle |
| E. 90 | K. Mohammed Khatami | P. UPS | V. 5 | |
| F. Terje Haakonsen | | Q. Derek Walcott | | |

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|---|--|
| <p>_____ 1. Iranian leader who spoke of his desire to crack the “wall of mistrust” between Iran and the U.S. (p. 34)</p> <p>_____ 2. Federal judge who ruled that reintroduced wolves must be removed from Yellowstone (p. 22)</p> <p>_____ 3. Person whose political career began with a campaign for mayor of Palm Springs, California (p. 73)</p> <p>_____ 4. World champion snowboarder who is boycotting the 1998 Winter Olympics (p. 61)</p> <p>_____ 5. President of the Family Research Council (p. 33)</p> <p>_____ 6. A court order froze two works by this artist, taken from Jewish families by the Nazis, in the U.S. until their rightful owners could be determined (p. 70)</p> <p>_____ 7. Person scheduled to become the first woman executed in Texas since 1863 (p. 56)</p> <p>_____ 8. Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature who has co-written the book and lyrics for a Broadway musical (p. 66)</p> <p>_____ 9. Value in billions of dollars of the male urban-clothing market (p. 71)</p> <p>_____ 10. Service that delivers more than 80 percent of all packages shipped by land in the U.S. (p. 46)</p> <p>_____ 11. The Treasury Department has begun an investigation into reasons for an IRS audit of this person’s taxes (p. 29)</p> | <p>_____ 12. Approximate number of grey wolves now in Yellowstone National Park (p. 22)</p> <p>_____ 13. New version of a famous car that is being reintroduced in the U.S. (p. 44)</p> <p>_____ 14. Person whose announcement of a plan to open a commercial human cloning clinic in the Chicago area was met with surprise and hostility (p. 58)</p> <p>_____ 15. Drug that is being hailed as a breakthrough in the fight against heroin addiction (p. 59)</p> <p>_____ 16. Serbian province where the danger of a guerrilla war between Serbs and Albanians is growing (p. 42)</p> <p>_____ 17. First native-born American winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature since 1962 (p. 62)</p> <p>_____ 18. One of the attorneys who had hoped to use mental illness as part of a defense for accused Unabomber Theodore Kaczynski (p. 26)</p> <p>_____ 19. Number of youthful offenders currently on death row in the U.S. (p. 50)</p> <p>_____ 20. Mayor of Miami who threatened to pull city ads from a newspaper unless it was “a lot nicer to me, my people, my citizens and my city” (p. 30)</p> |
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Interpreting Diagrams: In the article **The Big (not so bad) Wolves of Yellowstone**, review the diagram on **pages 24-25**. Based on the diagram, decide whether the following statements are true or false. Place an X next to each true statement. Leave false or unsupported statements blank.

- _____ 21. Pine martens are among the leading scavengers in the Yellowstone ecosystem.
- _____ 22. Bears prey directly on wolves in the Yellowstone ecosystem.
- _____ 23. The return of wolves has had both positive and negative effects on the coyote population.
- _____ 24. The return of wolves to Yellowstone has helped willow and aspen trees there flourish.
- _____ 25. Rodents make up a good part of the diet for many of Yellowstone’s predators.

Writing About Social Issues: Review the article **Dead Teen Walking** that begins on **page 50**. That article notes the United States is one of the few countries that executes juvenile offenders—those who committed crimes when they were under the age of 18. Do you agree or disagree with the laws that allow juveniles to be executed? Write your answer, and your reasons for it, in the form of a brief essay that might appear on the op-ed page of your local newspaper.

*** LATE-BREAKING STORIES MAY CAUSE CHANGES IN PAGINATION.**

Name

Date

Predicting the Next

TIME

An Exercise in Sharpening Your News Judgment

As a weekly newsmagazine, TIME strives to provide analysis and commentary on major events that occur around the globe. But for every story that is covered in the magazine, there are literally hundreds of others that are excluded. How do the editors decide which stories are worthy of coverage?

Explore this question over the next week by monitoring each day's news as it is reported in daily newspapers and on television. (Your instructor may assign you to small groups to conduct this research.) Then, using the questions below as a guide, try to predict which of the many events in the week's news will be featured in the upcoming TIME. Check your predictions against next week's copy of the magazine.



Identify three domestic stories that you predict will be included in the upcoming issue's Nation section. How will each be covered? Be as specific as you can in guessing the angle TIME will take on the topic. Who will be interviewed? What photos, graphs or illustrations will accompany the piece? What makes these stories particularly important?

1.

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2.

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3.

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Identify two international stories that you predict will be covered in next week's World section. What angle do you think TIME will take on each? Why are these stories important to TIME readers?

1.

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2.

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What stories from previous weeks will be updated with coverage of recent developments? What currently "hot" domestic or international topics might be the subject of TIME articles even if these topics are not tied to specific news events of the week?

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2.

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If you were TIME's managing editor, what story would you choose for next week's cover? Why?

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