

Every selection has embedded support to facilitate student readability and comprehension.

Before You Read tips focus on activating prior knowledge and building background knowledge as well as encouraging students to activate pre-reading strategies such as predicting and skimming.

As You Read tips focus students' attention on strategies and techniques to broaden their understanding.

Author and context notes are provided for students to aid comprehension.

A convenient glossary includes literary and media terms that students can quickly refer to.

Before you read, write about a moment when you did something adventurous that caused you to experience unexpected anxiety or fear.

As you read, write down in your notebook your opinions of the old man.

Notes

Ghassan Kanafani (1936–1972) was born in Acre, Palestine. He was killed in Beirut when his car was sabotaged. He was a spokesman for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and taught and worked as a journalist in Damascus and Kuwait.

austerely: severely simple; harshly; sternly

convulsive: characterized by irregular motions of limbs

gelatinous: of a jelly-like consistency

jerry cans: water or gas cans

relapsed: fell back or sunk back

uncomprehendingly: without understanding

The Slave Fort

"Don't be afraid—I am not mad, as you believe."

Short Story by Ghassan Kanafani

Had he not been so sadly shabby one would have said of him that he was a poet. The site he had chosen for his humble hut of wood and beaten-out jerry cans was truly magnificent; right by the threshold the might of the sea flowed under the feet of the sharp rocks with a deep-throated, unvarying sound. His face was gaunt, his beard white though streaked with a few black hairs, his eyes hollow under bushy brows; his cheekbones protruded like two rocks that had come to rest either side of the large projection that was his nose.

Why had we gone to that place? I don't remember now. In our small car we had followed a rough, miry and featureless road. We had been going for more than three hours when Thabit pointed through the window and gave a piercing shout:

"There's the Slave Fort."

This Slave Fort was a large rock the base of which had been eaten away by the waves so that it resembled the wing of a giant bird, its head curled in the sand, its wing outstretched above the clamour of the sea.

"Why did they call it 'The Slave Fort'?"

"I don't know. Perhaps there was some historical incident which gave it the name. Do you see that hut?"

And once again Thabit pointed, this time toward the small hut lying in the shadow of the gigantic rock. He turned off the engine and we got out of the car.

"They say that a half-mad old man lives in it."

"What does he do with himself in this waste on his own?"

"What any half-mad old man would do."

From afar we saw the old man squatting on his heels at the entrance to his hut, his head clasped in his hands, staring out to sea.

"Don't you think there must be some special story about this old man? Why do you insist he's half-mad?"

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G L O S S A R Y

alliteration repetition of consonant sounds usually at the beginning of a line or series of words

allusion brief reference to a person, place, or event from history, literature, or mythology

antagonist major character or force that opposes the protagonist

anecdote short narrative used to make a point or introduce a topic

antihero a protagonist who has none of the qualities normally expected of a hero; the antihero can be a humorous take-off of the traditional hero

assonance repetition of vowel sounds usually at the beginning of a line or a series of words

atmosphere prevailing feeling created by the story

audience who the selection is intended for: target readers, viewers, or listeners for a selection

autobiography nonfictional book which a person writes about his or her own life

ballad a poem that tells a story, often about a tragic event, popular legend, courageous act, or great love

biac *Nipikti* *al agenda*

collage artwork made of selected pieces or a mix of various materials

compare to look at the similarities between two things, situations, or characters

complication event which starts or causes a conflict

conflict struggle between opposing characters or forces

content the ideas and situations of a selection; sometimes called "the what" or subject matter

context specific situation in which a word is used, or the personal or historical situation a person or character is in

contrast striking difference distinguishing two things being compared

convention rule of writing or familiar pattern within a genre

cover(ing) letter letter accompanying a résumé which often explains the applicant's special interest in or qualifications for a specific job

crisis moment of intense conflict

Extensive end-of-selection activities promote personal response and extension of the topic. These questions include a variety of responses, including writing, role-playing, drawing/sketching, researching, and presenting. Students are often encouraged to use graphic organizers to consolidate information. Self-assessment tips reinforce the importance of students taking ownership for their learning.

You take it from here ...

Responding

1. **Respond Personally** In your notebook, write a sentence identifying what Nipikti wanted to achieve when he reached the Co-op. Did he succeed? Now write a paragraph telling about a time when you, like Nipikti, decided what you wanted and you persisted until you attained it.

SELF ASSESSMENT

- How was your experience the same as Nipikti's?
- What did you learn from Nipikti's story about what it takes to achieve a goal?

2. **Chart Character Traits** What does Nipikti think about each time he sits down on one of the familiar rocks? What do we learn about him as a character? Record your responses in a chart.

Rock	Nipikti thinks about ...	What it shows about Nipikti's character
1. Ojagajaak		
2. Ojagakaluk		
3. Ojagakutaaq		

TIPS

- For each speech, put the character's name on the left, followed by a colon. Put any stage directions or actions in parentheses. For example:
Nipikti: I want to sell these.
(Nipikti places the carvings onto the counter.)
Co-op manager: I'll give you \$130.
- You don't need to use quotation marks in this format.

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Extending

3. **Write a Dialogue** Imagine the conversation that might occur as Nipikti takes his next collection of carvings to the Co-op. Write it in the form of a scene in a play.
4. **Conduct an Interview** With a partner, assume the roles of an interviewer and of an Inuit artist. Together, prepare questions and responses on what problems rapid social and technological changes in the North cause the independent Inuit artist. Write your work in script form, or present your interview to the class.
5. **Create a Fairy Tale** Tell about an Inuit carving that comes to life for a child. You could write and illustrate a story, or create a cartoon, story-board, or puppet show. Keep in mind that fairy tales are fantastic, imagined stories made up for young children and usually end with a moral or lesson.