

CONTENTS

Word Study	2
Comprehension	3
First Impressions	4
Making a Decision	5
Unreliable Perspective	6
Text-to-Self Connection	7
Continue Thinking and Learning	8

NAME

DATE



Word Study

cask (p. 6) a barrel-shaped vessel for holding liquids

ruffian (p. 21) someone with a rough or bullying nature

trek (p. 39) a difficult journey

cajoling (p. 55) gentle but determined urging

tapestries (p. 68) heavy cloths that are used as hanging decorations and that usually have artistic patterns or pictures woven into them

hierarchy (p. 88) the ranking of a group, often based on perceived ability or social status

dissipating (p. 92) causing something to break up or vanish

mythology (p. 149) a collection of legends dealing with gods and heroes

dilapidated (p. 151) fallen into partial ruin due to neglect

guile (p. 157) deceitful cleverness

panoramic (p. 169) displaying a full or wide view

contours (p. 171) the general form or structure of something

indecipherable (p. 188) incapable of being understood

rehabilitated (p. 206) restored to a good standing or reputation

decrepit (p. 207) worn out or greatly weakened by old age

charlatan (p. 212) someone who pretends to possess great knowledge and abilities; a fraud

To explore more terms used in *The Fire of Eden*, read pages 231–233 in the book.

For each noun in the list above, determine whether it is a concrete noun (such as a person or object) or an abstract noun (such as a concept, action, or idea). Write each word in the appropriate column. In the space provided to the right, either draw a picture of one of the concrete nouns or write an original sentence that uses one of the abstract nouns.

Concrete	Abstract

Comprehension

1. What major event is Brother Andrew preparing for?

2. How are Brother Andrew and Lady Beaumont related?

3. Why does Brother Andrew have a difficult relationship with Lady Beaumont?

4. What does Uncle William ask in his letter to Xan?

5. Why is Aubrey so bossy around Xan and Lucy?

6. Why does Lady Beaumont want to give Eden's Fire to Brother Andrew?

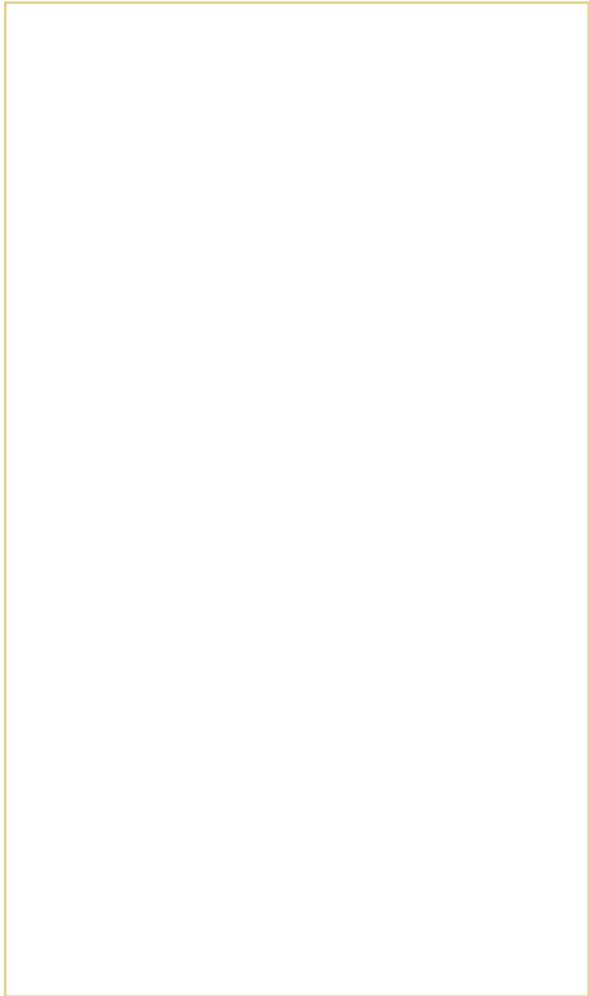
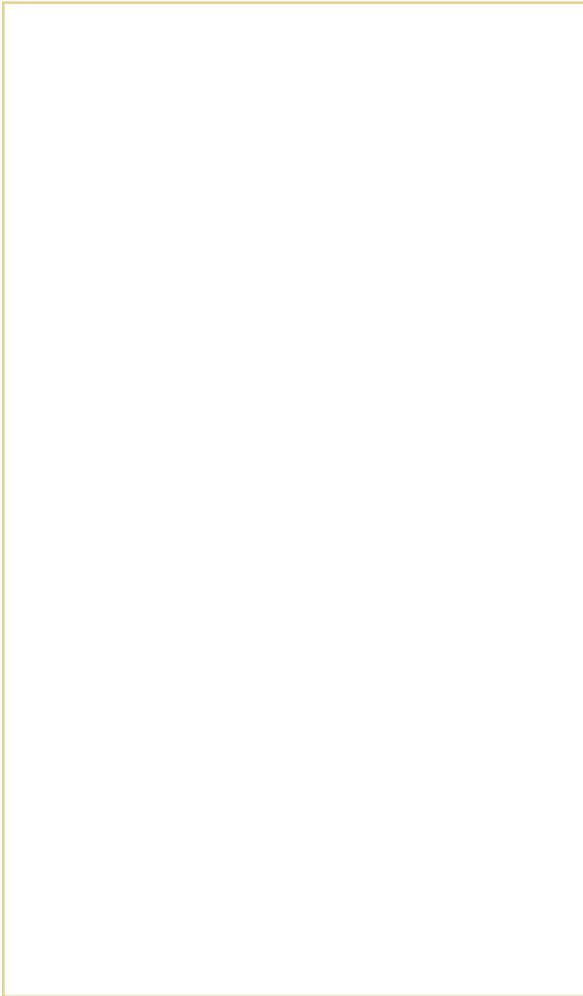
7. What other names do the travelers Gilbert and Adela go by?

8. How does Eden's Fire disappear?

First Impressions

Many of the characters in *The Fire of Eden* are not who they seem at first. Choose one of the characters below and draw two pictures of him or her. In the first picture, draw the character as he or she is initially perceived by Xan. In the second picture, draw the character as Xan perceives him or her at the end of the book. On the lines below your pictures, explain how Xan's perception of the character has changed.

Lady Beaumont | the Magician | John



Unreliable Perspective

The story is told from Xan’s point of view, so the author depicts events as Xan sees them. Because Xan is sometimes wrong about things, this means that there are times in the story when the narration reflects an incomplete or incorrect view of other characters and events. In each quotation below, underline the part that shows Xan’s incomplete perspective on what is happening, then write why he is mistaken.

1:

“I think I liked John better as a bully,” Joshua said, as he chipped at the green slime.

Xan just smiled. Some changes in this new John weren’t entirely bad. If he could accept some kindness and help, he might be easier to get along with. But for now, John was swimming in a pool of self-pity, just as Xan had after Mother and Father died. (p. 23)

2:

John slapped the wall. “I don’t need your pity, Xan. I know the truth: I’m just a burden.” They all looked to each other helplessly. What could any of them say? As much as Xan wanted John to help solve the mystery, the truth was that he didn’t need John at all, actually. (p. 129)

3:

“John, stop talking about magicians, okay?” [Xan] said. “Are you as stupid as you are blind?”

“Xan!” Lucy’s voice was harsher than ever before. “That’s a terrible thing to say.”

It might be terrible, but it was true. “I can’t keep wasting time on these addlepated ideas,” Xan said. (p. 159)

Text-to-Self Connection

Admitting a Mistake

Xan comes to realize that his reasons for wanting to solve the mystery himself are prideful and selfish. When have you had to admit that you were wrong about something or that you were doing something for the wrong reasons? How did you change your behavior?

Possessed by Possessions

On page 38, Brother Andrew says, “Carlo’s jewel was a trifle compared with Eden’s Fire, my father’s red ruby. . . . That one possession seemed to possess him more than anything. Even me.” When have you witnessed a situation where love for an object seemed to “possess” another person? What is the difference between valuing an important possession and being “possessed” by it?

Hard Decisions

Many of the characters face difficult decisions that require them to give up something in order to do what they know is right. When have you or someone you know had to make a decision like this? What were the effects of that decision?

Continue Thinking and Learning

PARALLELS Xan and Brother Andrew have a lot in common with each other in how they meet challenges, think about their calling, and see the world around them. Make a Venn diagram showing how these two characters are similar and how they are unique.

FAMILY TREES Family relationships play a large part in the story of *The Fire of Eden*: Brother Andrew and Lady Beaumont, Lucy and Aubrey, Xan and Uncle William, and so on. Research your own family history and, if possible, make a family tree. Think about how your family history has helped shape you and your family today.

GREEK MYTHOLOGY Many of the common images, figures of speech, and plot elements that show up again and again in English-language novels originated in the fictional stories of ancient Greek mythology. In *The Fire of Eden*, Gilbert and Adela sometimes identify themselves with the names of mythological figures. Research the influence of Greek mythology on Western art and think about other artistic works in which you have encountered this influence.

ALTERNATE ENDING Xan eventually decides to leave Harwood Abbey to live with Uncle William, but the decision is a hard one. He tells Father Andrew, “I may still take the vows of a monk—one day perhaps” (p. 221). Think about how the story might have ended differently if Xan had chosen to stay at Harwood Abbey and take a monk’s vows. Write an alternate final chapter in which he makes that choice instead.

XAN’S TIMELINE Xan leads an eventful life over the course of the three books in the *Harwood Mysteries* series. Make a timeline of Xan’s life, starting with the attack on Xan’s home at the beginning of *Shadow in the Dark* and ending with Xan’s journey to Lincoln at the end of *The Fire of Eden*. Highlight all of Xan’s major decisions and life events on the timeline.