

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

*Noughts & Crosses*  
Act One, Scenes 1-4

### **I. Power**

1.1

1. What two words or phrases confirm the setting as England?
2. What possible conflicts does this scene foreshadow? Evidence?
3. Who/what has power in this scene? How do you know?

First impression of Sephy:

First impression of Callum:

1.2

1. What might have caused the rift between Mrs. Hadley and Mrs. McGregor?
2. List two ways that a Cross is referred to in this scene. Why can Crosses be thought of as both descriptions at once?
3. Have you ever been in a situation where you were asked or felt like you had to represent your "people or "country"? Briefly describe and indicate how you felt.
4. Who/what has power in this scene? How do you know?

1.3

1. Who/what has the power in this scene? How do you know?
2. How does Sephy try to shift the power?



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# Little Rock Revisited: 40th Anniversary of Integration at Central High

## Overview:

Black students everywhere made history as pioneers paving the way for racial integration in their hometowns.

Along with "Back to School" sale displays being replaced by Halloween candy and costumes, the newness and fresh beginnings of the school year are fading in the minds of students who feel as if they're now well into the groove. Yet the memories of opening day are still undimmed in the minds of nine former students who are reuniting this month to commemorate the 40th anniversary of racial integration at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

September 4, 1957, marked the first day at Central High for 15-year-old Elizabeth Eckford, one of the "Little Rock Nine," as the black students were later dubbed by the national press. Two years after the Supreme Court in the 1954 *Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education* decision overturned the "separate but equal" status that allowed for segregation, the NAACP sued Little Rock's Board of Education for failing to integrate its public schools.

The following year, in 1957, under federal court order, the board received between 75 and 80 black student registrations to attend the all-white Central High School, but allowed only nine to enroll: Elizabeth Eckford, Minniejean Brown, Ernest Green (the only 12th grader among the nine selected), Thelma Mothershed, Melba Pattillo, Gloria Ray, Terrence Roberts, Jefferson Thomas and Carlotta Walls. Arkansas Gov. Orval Faubus, warning that "blood will run in the streets," vehemently opposed what he considered federal interference and pushed for states' rights by ordering the armed Arkansas National Guard to block the entrance of the black students to Central High.

After repeatedly trying to enter the school building amid a mob of hundreds of angry white citizens who cursed, threatened and spat upon her, Elizabeth Eckford eventually had to return home. Stating that "one person's opinions have no bearing on the matter of enforcement," President Eisenhower directed the Attorney General to obtain an injunction against Gov. Faubus to comply with desegregation. Faubus responded three weeks later by removing the Guard surrounding the high school but providing no other protection for the black teens. As a consequence, Eisenhower ordered the deployment of 1,200 paratroopers - 52 planeloads of the "Screaming Eagles" from the 101st Airborne Division - into Little Rock.

## Day one at Central High

Following two more attempts by Elizabeth's classmates to attend classes - thwarted by protests that included white students jumping from second story windows to avoid contact with the black teens - the Little Rock Nine finally began their first day of school at Central High on September

25. Arriving in an Army station wagon surrounded by a convoy of jeeps with mounted turret guns and helicopters hovering overhead, the first black students to integrate the high school were escorted up the stairway and in the front door. Each of the Nine were assigned individual bodyguards bearing bayonet rifles. These guards would walk with them between classes but were unauthorized to enter the classrooms, cafeteria, locker room, lavatories or assemblies.

The black students of Central High were targeted by most of their white peers at every opportunity. They were called derogatory names, tripped in the hallways, slapped, punched, stabbed, shot with water pistols full of acid, thrust under scalding water, had glue poured on their hair, and were sexually harrassed. In addition to this, the black students received threatening notes, menacing phone calls in the middle of the night, and explosives tossed into their homes.

"It was trench warfare," recalled Ernest Green. "A battlefield every day," remarked Melba Pattillo. Some of the black students were virtually ignored by their teachers whenever they would raise their hand in class and were unaided by them when the taunts turned physical. The Nine knew from the outset that they would be excluded from joining Central's football team, chorus, and any other extracurricular activity they had participated in at their previous high schools. They quickly realized that their main objective was not learning but survival.

By November, the 101st Airborne was withdrawn and the federalized Arkansas National Guard remained. After Thanksgiving, the staunch segregationist students began their attacks in earnest, often with the Arkansas National Guardsmen looking on and whispering words of encouragement to the offenders under their breath. The Nine dug in their heels and each adopted his or her own way of making it through the day - either by silent withdrawal, aggressive but cautious resistance, or verbal comebacks.

After the Christmas holiday, Minniejean Brown was expelled from Central for defending herself both verbally and with a bowl of chili (!) against a group of white teens who continually targeted her for her persistent efforts to sing with the school glee club. The other black students became even more vigilant, fearful that their least response to the daily violence would result in the same fate that met Minniejean. Signs reading "One Down, Eight To Go!" cropped up all over Central the week following Minniejean's dismissal.

### **Unexpected support**

At this point, the troops were withdrawn from the school building and posted outside. Consequently, the abuse in the hallways, classes and assemblies intensified. All the more memorable, then, was the kindness shown the Nine by a few white teenagers, by some of the Guardsmen, the assistant principal, the chief of police and members of the press. But despite occasional demonstrations of support, the black teens found it hard to trust these overtures completely. They relied on the strength of their parents and families, many of whom lost their jobs by sending their sons or daughters to Central.

Many of the Nine's former classmates urged them to give up and leave the school, stating that their actions were making life tougher for other black teens in town. Realizing then that the cost of the struggle was also the forfeit of a normal social life, the Nine applied themselves to schoolwork as best they could, looking ahead to the end of May and the anticipated historic "first" of their classmate Ernest Green's graduation.

Finally, the 1957-58 school year came to an end. Although the seats around him were empty because no other graduate would sit near him, Ernest walked tall as he crossed the stage to receive his Central High diploma. No one but his family and their guest, Dr. Martin Luther King

Jr., applauded him on that crowded football field, but around the country and across the world Ernest was heralded as a hero.

The remaining black teens would not pass through the front doors the following September, nor would any other student of Central High. That summer, Gov. Faubus implemented two statutes that authorized him to shut down the public schools of Little Rock rather than integrate them. In 1959, the courts called Faubus' statutes "evasive schemes," a violation of due process and the equal protection clauses of the 14th Amendment. On August 12, 1959, Central High School reopened and integration took a tentative but decisive step into the future.

### **Little Rock today**

Today, Central's student population is about 65 percent black, and the school is acclaimed for providing one of Arkansas' strongest academic programs. Ten percent of the state's National Merit semifinalists have graduated from Central over the last decade, and almost half of Arkansas' black semifinalists are Central students.

This month Little Rock will commemorate the 40th anniversary of the 1957 crisis with the opening of the Central High Museum and Visitor Center, located across from the high school in a former gas station. Prior to this, the nearest exhibit on the crisis of 1957 was located in Memphis, 130 miles away.

Thanks to the planning of Dr. Johanna Miller Lewis, project manager, the 40th anniversary boasts an impressive calendar of events scheduled from September 19-27. Among noted guests and speakers are the Little Rock Nine and President Clinton, who will join for a ceremony at Central on September 25. The high school will host an open house on September 20, and a 70th Birthday party for the building, once voted "America's Most Beautiful High School," will be held on the 27th.

The Museum and Visitor Center publishes a complete bibliography detailing the Little Rock crisis and sells videos and children's books on this topic. A timeline of the crisis and a complete 40th Anniversary calendar of events are also available. Their Web site is forthcoming. You can reach the Central High Museum by calling (501) 374-1957, or writing: P.O. Box 390, Little Rock, AR 72203.

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### Little Rock Nine Activity

Photojournalism is the recording of events through photographs. The photographs by Will Counts of the Central High School Crisis captured disturbing events that occurred in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957 as nine African-American students were integrated into the formerly all-white high school.



September 5, 1957: A jeering Student follows Elizabeth Eckford as she walks down a line of National Guardsmen who barred her from entering the Central High School

Photojournalism often makes viewers feel "as if they were there" when important events happened. **First**, based on the above photograph by Will Counts ("It was not the plan for Elizabeth Eckford to walk alone toward Central High" 1957), write about your impressions of the event in the photo (8-15 sentences) and how it communicates what happened based on one of the following roles. **Then**, find and attach two other images from the event to your paragraph that convey powerful visual images of what occurred that day.

**Role #1** - imagine you are the photojournalist recording the event with your camera. What is happening to the people who are there, how are they affecting other people around you and the country?

**Role #2** - Imagine you are Hazel Bryan Massery. Massery is the person directly behind Elizabeth in the photo shouting at her in the photograph. You are looking at the photo now and remembering what happened when you were young. You think of how it affected your life and the changes you saw because of it.

**Role #3** - It's the night before your first day of High School. You're filled with excitement, fear and tension. You wonder what the school will be like. Will the classes be hard? Will the students like you? Will the teachers be friendly? You want to fit in. Your stomach is full of butterflies as you try to sleep and wonder what tomorrow will be like. You get up the next morning preparing to meet the other students before you go into Central High. You arrive at the school and you are unable to find Ernest, Melba, or any of the others. Where is everyone? People began surrounding you yelling "Get out of hear you monkey". People are spitting on you and telling you to go home.

1.4

1. How has the power shifted once again? How do you know? (words, actions, literary devices)

2. Predict: What kind of friendship can Sephy and Callum have? Why?

## II. Point-of-view

Act, Scene	Point-of-view Character A	Point-of-view Character B
1.1 The future	Sephy's Point-of-view	Callum's Point-of-view
1.2 Heathcroft School	Meggie's Point-of-view	Ryan's Point-of-view
1.3 Word: Blanker	Sephy's Point-of-view	Callum's Point-of-view
1.4 Friendship	Sephy's Point-of-view	Callum's Point-of-view

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

*Noughts & Crosses*  
Act One, Scenes 5-11

**Directions:** For each quote, write the name of the speaker from *Noughts & Crosses* on the line provided and complete the MLA citation by entering the appropriate page number. In addition, identify which of the following elements can be observed in each quote. Circle the appropriate elements.

A. Social/Political Environment    B. Foreshadowing    C. Conflict    D. Character Development

1.5

1. \_\_\_\_\_ "Except that the teachers totally ignored us, and the Crosses used any excuse to bump into us and knock our books on the floor, and even the dinner ladies made sure they served everyone else in the queue before us" (Cooke \_\_\_\_\_).

A. Social/Political Environment    B. Foreshadowing    C. Conflict    D. Character Development

2. \_\_\_\_\_ "Friends? We were never friends. She patronized me and I put up with it 'cause I needed a job—that's all" (Cooke \_\_\_\_\_).

A. Social/Political Environment    B. Foreshadowing    C. Conflict    D. Character Development

3. \_\_\_\_\_ "The Liberation Militia are misguided terrorists and we will leave no stone unturned in our efforts to bring them to justice" (Cooke \_\_\_\_\_).

A. Social/Political Environment    B. Foreshadowing    C. Conflict    D. Character Development

Observation of political environment:

1.6

1. \_\_\_\_\_ "Serves her right. Coming over to our table and acting the big 'I am'" (Cooke \_\_\_\_\_).

A. Social/Political Environment    B. Foreshadowing    C. Conflict    D. Character Development

2. \_\_\_\_\_ "Well, if you're not a snob, you're a hypocrite, which is even worse. I'm okay to talk to as long as no one can see us. As long as no one knows" (Cooke \_\_\_\_\_).

A. Social/Political Environment    B. Foreshadowing    C. Conflict    D. Character Development

3. \_\_\_\_\_ "I was so busy concentrating on getting into Heathcroft that I didn't give any thought to what it'd be like when I actually got there" (Cooke \_\_\_\_\_).

A. Social/Political Environment    B. Foreshadowing    C. Conflict    D. Character Development

Observation of social environment:

**Directions:** For scenes 7-11, please select one to two quotes/scene that demonstrate one of the following elements: social/political environment, foreshadowing, conflict or character development. Follow the model above in recording your information.

1.7

1.8

1.9

1.10

1.11



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

*Noughts & Crosses*  
Act One, Scenes 12-18

1.12

**Directions:** Ominous comments are made in this scene. For each quote, analyze Lynette's comments and try to find meaning behind her words. The first quote has been done as an example.

#1: Callum: You ok?  
Lynette: No. You?

**Message:** Lynette has just had a breakthrough in the last scene; she "remembers" her past and seems to know that she is a Nought and not a Cross. Although she realizes the uncertainty of her situation, she does demonstrate concern for Callum which supports her "return" to awareness, both self and external.

#2: Lynette: How do you do it, Callum?  
Callum: Do what?  
Lynette: Keep going.

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#3: Lynette: You've always been so focused. You've always known exactly where you wanted to end up. I hope it works out for you. You know what I miss? I miss being bonkers!  
Callum: Don't say that.  
Lynette: I do. I know I was living in a fantasy world before, but at least I was somewhere. Now I'm nowhere.

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#4: Callum: Lynny, you are all right, aren't you?  
Lynette: I don't know.

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#5: Callum: It's not too late for you to go to college.  
Lynette: How would we pay for that? Anyway, I'm not like you. I don't have what it takes.

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#6: Lynette: Just remember, when you're floating up and up in your bubble, that bubbles burst. The higher you climb, the further you have to fall.

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1.13

What forces are working to keep Sephy and Callum together? Identify two from this scene.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

1.14

What is happening to Callum's family? Use two examples from past events to support your rationale.

1.15

Compare and contrast Meggie's, Jude's and Ryan's reaction to Sephy coming to Lynette's wake.

	Meggie	Jude	Ryan
Reaction: To Sephy in person...			
Reaction: Once Sepy has left...			

1.16

What does Sephy mean when she says, "This is growing up, I guess, isn't it?" (Cooke 46). Identify three things that have taken place since the start of the play to make her say this.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

1.17

What is known about the Liberation Militia? How could Ryan's and Jude's membership affect Callum?

1.18

What does Sephy mean when she says, "Nothing was a given any more. Not my life. Not theirs. Nothing"(Cooke 50).