Comparing Texts
You will now read an excerpt from An Invisible Thread. First, complete the first-read and close-read activities. Then, compare the point of view of “A Simple Act” with the point of view of An Invisible Thread.

from An Invisible Thread

Concept Vocabulary
You will encounter the following words as you read an excerpt from An Invisible Thread.

Before reading, note how familiar you are with each word. Then, rank the words in order from most familiar (1) to least familiar (3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD</th>
<th>YOUR RANKING</th>
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<tr>
<td>resilience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perseverance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>generosity</td>
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After completing the first read, come back to the concept vocabulary and review your rankings. Mark changes to your original rankings as needed.

First Read NONFICTION
Apply these strategies as you conduct your first read. You will have an opportunity to complete the close-read notes after your first read.

- **NOTICE** the general ideas of the text. What is it about? Who is involved?
- **ANNOTATE** by marking vocabulary and key passages you want to revisit.
- **CONNECT** ideas within the selection to what you already know and what you have already read.
- **RESPOND** by completing the Comprehension Check and by writing a brief summary of the selection.
BACKGROUND
Laura Schroff and Maurice Mazyck had been friends for 15 years when he gave the final toast at the celebration of her 50th birthday. Maurice's words, and Laura's reaction to them, reveal what each had gained from their long friendship.

Then came the final toast. The speaker was in a sharp black tuxedo with spectacular black-and-white shoes, and his wife was in a stunning navy blue gown, her hair swept up. Nearly everyone in the room had met him or at least knew his story, and so everyone was excited to see him and hear him speak. He kissed his wife, walked up and took the microphone, and began his toast.

"Laurie, where can I start," Maurice began. "We met . . . the way we met was so special to me. I was a young boy on the street with barely nothing, and I was very hungry that day and I asked this lady, 'Miss, can you spare some change?' And she walked away. And then she stopped. She was in the middle of the street—she almost got hit—and she looked and came back and took me to McDonald’s. We ate and then walked around Central Park; she took me to Haagen-Dazs and then we played some games.

"You know, at that moment she saved my life. ‘Cause I was going down the wrong road, the wrong hill, and, you know, my mother—bless her soul, my mother died—and the Lord sent me an angel. And my angel was Laurie.

"Without you," Maurice said, raising his glass, "I could not be the man I am today."

I was so incredibly moved when I heard Maurice say I saved his life. Heck, I nearly lost it throughout his whole darn toast. Whenever I hear someone tell me how lucky Maurice is to have
met me, I have to stop them and correct them. The truth is that the lucky one is me.

Maurice taught me so many things; I can’t possibly list them all. He taught me how to live. He taught me one of the most important lessons a person can hope to learn—he taught me to be grateful for what I have. He taught me about resilience, courage, perseverance, and about the special strength that comes from overcoming adversity. He taught me the true value of money, the real meaning of lunch in a brown paper bag, the importance of a silly ritual like baking cookies. He taught me, more than I ever taught him, what it means to be a friend.

Everything I ever gave to Maurice, he gave back to me tenfold. Every meal, every shirt, every bike or toothbrush, was matched by Maurice with a more genuine appreciation than I have ever known. Every hand I ever lent him was returned with a hug; every kindness was paid back with an impossibly optimistic smile. If love is the greatest gift of all—and I believe it is—then the greatest privilege of all is to be able to love someone. Maurice appeared out of nowhere and allowed me to love him, and for that, I simply can never thank him enough. His generosity of spirit continues to astound me, and to this day my relationship with him is the relationship I am most proud of in my life.

6 resilience (rih ZIHL yuhs) n. ability to recover quickly

perseverance (pur suh VIHR uhns) n. continued, patient effort

generosity (jehn uhr AHS uh tee) n. willingness to give or share

Discuss It In what way does this video of Maurice’s toast deepen your understanding of and appreciation for the text? Write your response before sharing your ideas.
Comprehension Check
Complete the following items after you finish your first read.

1. At what stage of his life does Maurice give a toast explaining how he and Laura met?

2. What statement does Maurice make that makes Laura “nearly lose it”?

3. How does Laura respond when people say that Maurice was lucky to meet her?

4. What does Laura say she learned from knowing Maurice?

5. According to Laura, what are the greatest gift and greatest privilege of all?

6. Notebook Write a summary of the excerpt from *An Invisible Thread* to confirm your understanding of the selection.

RESEARCH

Research to Clarify Choose at least one unfamiliar detail from the text. Briefly research that detail. In what way does the information you learned shed light on an aspect of the story?

Research to Explore Choose something that interests you from the text and formulate a research question.
Close Read the Text

1. The model, from paragraph 1 of the essay, shows two sample annotations, along with questions and conclusions. Close read the passage, and find another detail to annotate. Then, write a question and your conclusion.

   **ANNOTATE:** This phrase has unusual word order.
   **QUESTION:** Why did the author choose to put the verb before the noun?
   **CONCLUDE:** Using this word order makes the sentence seem more formal, which suits the setting of the scene.

   Then came the final toast. The speaker was in a sharp black tuxedo with spectacular black-and-white shoes, and his wife was in a stunning navy blue gown, her hair swept up.

   **ANNOTATE:** The author uses vivid language here.
   **QUESTION:** Why does the author provide so much detail about the speaker and his wife?
   **CONCLUDE:** These details emphasize that Maurice has become successful.

2. For more practice, go back into the text and complete the close-read notes.

3. Revisit a section of the text you found important and **annotate** what you notice. Ask **questions** such as “Why did the author make this choice?” What can you **conclude**?

Analyze the Text

**Notebook** Respond to these questions.

1. **Analyze** In the first paragraph of the excerpt from her memoir, Laura Schroff gives the reader a positive impression of Maurice. Which of her word choices contribute most to this positive tone?

2. **Draw Conclusions** In his toast, Maurice says that when he asked Laura for spare change, at first she walked past him. Then, she stopped in the middle of the street, almost got hit by a car, and then walked back to him. Why do you think Laura turned around?

3. **Interpret** In paragraph 7, Laura says, “Everything I ever gave to Maurice, he gave back to me tenfold.” What does this statement suggest about her friendship with Maurice?

4. **Make Inferences** Why do you think Maurice gave the final toast?

5. **Essential Question:** **What can one generation learn from another?** How did reading this excerpt affect your understanding of how people from different generations can learn from one another?
ESSENTIAL QUESTION: What can one generation learn from another?

Analyze Craft and Structure

Narrative Point of View  
An Invisible Thread is a memoir written from the first-person point of view. You can tell a work of nonfiction is written from the first-person point of view by looking for the following clues.

- The author uses the pronoun I to refer to himself or herself.
- The author is involved in the events being described.
- Authors often use direct quotations, or a person’s exact words, to reflect the views of other people involved in the narrative.

Memoirs are usually written from the first-person point of view. Authors of memoirs use the first-person point of view because they are describing events and experiences in their own lives—both what happened as well as personal reactions and emotions.

Practice

Notebook  Respond to these questions.

1. Record two examples of first-person point of view in paragraphs 5–7 of the text. Rewrite each example to change the point of view to third person by using the pronoun she. An example is shown.

Example: “I was so incredibly moved when I heard Maurice say I saved his life.”

She was so incredibly moved when she heard Maurice say she saved his life.

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<tr>
<th>ORIGINAL PASSAGE</th>
<th>REWRITTEN PASSAGE</th>
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2. (a) When the text begins, the point of view is unclear. At what point in the text is it evident that it is written in the first-person point of view? (b) What clues in the text helped you to recognize point of view?

3. (a) What strategy do the writers of An Invisible Thread use to present Maurice’s point of view? (b) Do you think this strategy is effective? Why or why not?

4. How do the ideas expressed by the first-person narrator in An Invisible Thread deepen your understanding of relationship between Laura and Maurice?

CITE TEXTUAL EVIDENCE to support your answers.
Concept Vocabulary

Why These Words? These concept vocabulary words show positive qualities or personality traits. Maurice and Laura demonstrate these qualities in their relationship with each other. For example, the way Maurice overcomes adversity teaches Laura about resilience and perseverance. Notice that both of these words show positive aspects of Maurice’s personality.

1. How does the concept vocabulary sharpen your understanding of how both Laura and Maurice benefited from their relationship?

2. What other words in the selection connect to the concept of positive personality traits?

Practice

Notebook The concept vocabulary words appear in the excerpt from An Invisible Thread.

1. Use each word in a sentence that demonstrates your understanding of the word’s meaning.

2. Work with a partner, and take turns coming up with as many synonyms, or words with similar meanings, and antonyms, or words with opposite meanings, as you can for each concept vocabulary word.

Word Study

Latin Suffix: -ity The Latin suffix -ity means the “state, quality, or condition of.” In the selection, the author refers to Maurice’s “generosity of spirit.”

1. Explain how the suffix -ity contributes to the meaning of the concept vocabulary word generosity.

2. Look at paragraph 6, and find another word that uses the suffix -ity. Identify the base word that was combined with the suffix. Write a definition for that word.
Conventions

Adjectives  An adjective is a word that modifies or describes a noun or pronoun. Adjectives may answer the question What kind? How many? Which one? or Whose? Possessive nouns and pronouns are used as adjectives to answer the question Whose?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What kind?</th>
<th>The young boy had a genuine smile.</th>
<th>Which one?</th>
<th>Have you read that book?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many?</td>
<td>They talked for fifty minutes.</td>
<td>Whose?</td>
<td>I greatly admired Maurice's speech.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two or More Adjectives  Coordinate adjectives are two or more adjectives that modify the same noun and are separated by a comma. You can tell whether adjectives are coordinate if the word and could be used in place of the comma and you could reverse the adjectives. Cumulative adjectives also modify the same noun, but they are not separated by a comma. Cumulative adjectives cannot be reversed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COORDINATE ADJECTIVES</th>
<th>CUMULATIVE ADJECTIVES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They became lifelong, devoted friends.</td>
<td>She wore a light blue sweater. (She wore a blue light sweater does not mean the same thing.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You could say: They became devoted and lifelong friends.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Read It

Identify the adjectives in each sentence, and name the nouns they modify. Then tell whether the adjectives are coordinate or cumulative and explain why.

1. Maurice gave an emotional, heartfelt speech.
2. His warm good nature inspired many listeners.
3. The book teaches many valuable life lessons.

Write It

The original sentence in the example below was revised by adding two adjectives. Review the example, and then add two adjectives to each practice sentence. Separate the adjectives with commas if needed.

EXAMPLE

Original: Laura wrote a memoir.
Revision: Laura wrote an unforgettable personal memoir.

1. Maurice shared a story with the audience.
2. Laura wore a dress.

Notebook  Write a paragraph describing Laura and Maurice’s relationship. Include at least one pair of coordinate and one pair of cumulative adjectives.