

**VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT**

For use with "Emmett Till Revisited" on p. 16 of the magazine

**Get a Clue**

Paying attention to context can help you infer the meanings of challenging words you encounter in texts. Use context clues in this excerpt from the article "Emmett Till Revisited" to figure out the meanings of the boldfaced words.

In the summer of 1955, a 14-year-old black boy named Emmett Till was abducted at gunpoint by white men in Money, Mississippi, then beaten, shot in the head, and thrown into the Tallahatchie River. Till, who lived in Chicago and was in Mississippi visiting relatives, was killed for allegedly whistling at a white woman in a store. At the murder trial, witnesses clearly identified the **perpetrators**, but an all-white jury in a deeply **segregated** South **acquitted** them, and the men walked free. Many experts

say the brutal killing, as well as the **gruesome** photos that circulated of Till's mutilated body at his funeral in Chicago, helped **galvanize** the civil rights movement.

Now, more than 60 years later, Emmett Till's story has taken yet another disturbing twist: Carolyn Bryant Donham, the now 82-year-old woman who had accused Till of offending her in the store, has admitted that a crucial part of her courtroom testimony—that Emmett "grabbed her around the waist and uttered obscenities"—was a lie.

**1.**  
**PART A**  
The word **segregated** most nearly means \_\_\_\_.

- a suspicious
- b unified
- c divided along racial lines
- d well-educated

**PART B**  
Which word or phrase from the article provides the best support for the answer to Part A?

- a "all-white jury"
- b "brutal killing"
- c "civil rights movement"
- d "another disturbing twist"

**2.**  
**PART A**  
The word **acquitted** most nearly means \_\_\_\_.

- a supported the actions of someone
- b found someone guilty of a crime
- c correctly identified
- d found someone not guilty of a crime

**PART B**  
Which word or phrase from the article provides the best support for the answer to Part A?

- a "allegedly whistling"
- b "gruesome photos"
- c "walked free"
- d "deeply segregated"

**3.**  
**PART A**  
The word **gruesome** most nearly means \_\_\_\_.

- a inspiring horror and disgust
- b intensely complicated
- c bright and vivid
- d thought-provoking

**PART B**  
Which word or phrase from the article provides the best support for the answer to Part A?

- a "helped galvanize"
- b "mutilated body"
- c "witnesses clearly identified"
- d "crucial part of her courtroom testimony"

**GOING FURTHER** Use context to explore these additional words from the article.

**4.** Infer the meaning of the word **galvanize**: \_\_\_\_\_

Who else, besides a civil rights activist, might have been galvanized by Till's murder? \_\_\_\_\_

**5.** Infer the meaning of the word **perpetrators**: \_\_\_\_\_

Now use that word in an original sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

Uses: copy machine, opaque projector, or transparency master for overhead projector. Scholastic Inc. grants teacher-subscribers to The New York Times Upfront permission to reproduce this Skills Sheet for use in their classrooms. ©2017 by Scholastic Inc. All rights reserved.