English-BRIDGE Packet 5:

Identifying & Interpreting Imagery

Student Message:

Hi, Bridge students. In order to prepare you to write your literary analysis essay, you need to be able to identify examples of imagery in what you read and then explain the impact this imagery has on the setting and the mood of the story. Although in class you were reading a short story based on real events, in this packet you will read a news article published in 1906 about the Great San Francisco Earthquake and the fires that resulted.

As you read the article, think about the following:

- What visual images do you see in your mind?
- What specific words does the author use to create these visual images in your mind?
- What does the imagery reveal about the time and place where the event happened?
- What effect do these images have on the reader? How does it make the reader feel?

MSDE Standards:

RI1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RI4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.

At 5:15 a.m. on April 18, 1906, an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.8 on the moment magnitude...
scale struck San Francisco, California. The earthquake ruptured many main water and gas lines; as a result, leaking gas caused a rapid spread of fires throughout the city and there were limited water sources to fight them. Firefighters from multiple cities used dynamite to blow up strategic buildings to help stop the fires from spreading. In the end, over 3,000 people died and 80% of the city was destroyed, marking one of the deadliest natural disasters in United States history.

THOUSANDS DEAD AT SAN FRANCISCO: MILLIONS GONE IN FIRES STILL RAGING

The Washington Times

April 18, 1906

City Was Tossed Like a Feather as Shock Came

Great Buildings Rose into the Air, Then Collapsed.

Earth Seemed to Sink

Walls Rocked and Wobbled Like Frail Things in a Storm.

SAN FRANCISCO, Cal., April 18. — Amid a heap of bricks and mortar which heap up about the telegrapher (A telegraph was a form of communication at a distance through coded signals; journalists used to use telegraphs to report stories from far away), this story of the awful calamity (a disastrous event marked by great loss and suffering) that has befallen San Francisco; a calamity that in seriousness and magnitude makes the recent eruption of Vesuvius (Mount Vesuvius, near Naples, Italy, erupted on April 5, 1906, killing over 100 people) appear trivial, is being sent.

It was exactly at 5:15 o’clock this morning that the city was tossed about like a feather by the wind. The earth seemed to sink for a moment and then the buildings to rise in the air like a balloon. Then there was a sort of sinking, the like of which no mortal ever
experienced a second time. Then the buildings of the town rocked and wobbled like a frail thing in the storm.

No mortal can ever experience the peculiar sensation that accompanied this upheaval twice, for no city can twice withstand such a shock. Three minutes after the awful earthquake the town was a mass of torn streets and the city filled with automobiles and hacks (a common horse-drawn wagon). Immediately a force of volunteer rescuers appeared and the work of gathering the dead and injured began without delay.

The shock of the trembling earth was followed by a multitude of fires, which swept the waterfront and the southern portion of the city, destroying within an hour over $20,000,000 worth of tenements (a house used as a dwelling or apartment) and business property.

The catastrophe came like a thunderbolt out of the clear sky. Tuesday was an ideal Western day, made up of bracing breezes and a soothing sunset. The night came on like a quiet sleep. Hundreds of hacks and automobiles wheeled and whirled to the opera to hear Fremstadt and Caruso in “Carmen,” as the day died away and the night stole on.

Q1: What destroyed the city of San Francisco?

A. a very large and powerful earthquake  
B. extremely large and pervasive fires  
C. a thunderbolt struck down from the sky started fires  
D. an earthquake that caused widespread fires

The Grand Opera House was thronged with music loving people. Then came the end of the show and the after supper. Later diners had scarcely reached their homes when the entire peninsula was rocked like a reed in the wind.

At first the bystanders thought the trembling of the earth was an ordinary quiver. Then the cornices of the main buildings began to drop into Market street. The rattling of the brick and the shrieks of the wounded mingled in a sound of horror.

The Postal Telegraph Building is still rocking like ocean waves, in consequence of a second shock, a little more than three hours after the first shock.
Word has just been received of the death of Fire Chief Sullivan and Policeman Fenner. They died like heroes fighting the fire.

Already the ghouls (thieves and looters) are in action, and in consequence a regiment (a military unit) of soldiers has been detailed from the Presidio to watch the business district. Martial law (when the military administers the law for an area, usually in times of crisis) will, in all probability, prevail (to be or become effective or influential) as a result of the advent of the ghouls.

The public library, donated to the city by former Mayor James D. Phelan, is a mass or disordered bricks, and the picturesque tower of the new city hall is a mere skeleton of rusted steel.

**EMERGENCY HOSPITALS OPENED.**

At the morgue twenty-five bodies have been received, and the authorities have pressed the Mechanics pavilion and the basement of the Hall of Justice into service as an emergency hospital.

The magnificent office of the Postal Telegraph Company, on Market street, opposite Second, is a mass of broken telegraph instruments and heaps of brick and plaster. Hysterical women and frenzied men are rushing about offering to do anything in their power to get the news of San Francisco’s fate to the world. Word has just been received of the burning of the Winchester House, on Third street, between Mission and Market, and of the magnificent Aronson building, on the corner of Mission and Third streets.

The sight of the thousands of poor who have been rendered (to cause to be or become) homeless by the combined efforts of the tossing earth and flames is pathetic in the extreme. Women are seen by the hundreds heaped up on piles of blankets appealing to the firemen to save the remaining sticks of their furniture. Mothers with babes in their arms rush about frantically screaming for their husbands. The shrieking of these women and the crackling of the flames produce a sound that is simply appalling.Q2
Q2: The people of San Francisco could best be described...

A. in a state of chaos and desperation
B. in a state of disbelief and shock.
C. in a state of anger and frustration.
D. in a state of mourning and grief.

Word has just come in that Police Sergeant Bunner was crushed in the collapse of a fire house.

Numerous fires are reported from the Potrero district. This is the section of the city that surrounds the Union Iron Works, where the great battleship Oregon was built. Throughout the entire southern portion of the city buildings are momentarily reported to have collapsed. This section of the city is made up of small tenements.

The Grand Opera House, where Metropolitan Opera company was playing, is now in flames, and the adjoining buildings, which are occupied by manufacturing, are rapidly giving way to the flames.

Directions: Use the article to complete the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Imagery</th>
<th>Diction: What specific words create a picture for the reader?</th>
<th>Setting: What does the imagery reveal about the setting?</th>
<th>Mood: What effect does the imagery have on the reader?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example 1: “the city was tossed”</td>
<td>tossed</td>
<td>The buildings and streets were shaken about and were twisted every which way</td>
<td>Feeling out of control, that the city was at the mercy of this quake</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example 2: “The earth seemed to sink for a moment and then the buildings to rise in the air like a balloon”

| earth sink | buildings rise balloon | It’s almost like the buildings were riding a wave. If standing on the street, a person would sink but the buildings would rise | The reader can feel the dizziness of this moment |

Example 3: “Then there was a sort of sinking, the like of which no mortal ever experienced a second time.”

Example 4:

Example 5:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name _______________</th>
<th>Last Name _______________</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School _______________</td>
<td>Teacher _______________</td>
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**Example 6:**