

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

**"By the Waters of Babylon" by Stephen Vincent Benét****Build Vocabulary**

**Spelling Strategy** When adding a suffix to a word that ends in *y* preceded by a consonant, change the *y* to *i* and then add the suffix. For the word *purify*, for example, change the *y* to *i* before adding the *-ed* ending: *purify* + *-ed* = *purified*. However, keep the *y* when adding *-ing*: *purifying*.

**Using Conjunctive Adverbs**

Conjunctive adverbs show a relationship between ideas and often connect independent clauses. The Word Bank words *moreover* and *nevertheless* are just two examples of conjunctive adverbs. Generally, a semicolon precedes a conjunctive adverb.

**A. DIRECTIONS:** Complete each sentence with one of the following conjunctive adverbs: *furthermore*, *otherwise*, *still*, *therefore*.

1. John is the son of a priest; \_\_\_\_\_, he is allowed to go into the Dead Places.
2. Metal may be taken from the Dead Places; \_\_\_\_\_, no objects may be touched.
3. In his dream, John sees a great Dead Place where gods walk; \_\_\_\_\_, he believes he must travel east and cross the river.
4. John fears what he might find in the great Dead Place; \_\_\_\_\_, he feels he must make the journey.

**Using the Word Bank**

**B. DIRECTIONS:** Circle the letter of the best synonym for each word bank word.

- |                 |                 |             |            |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|
| 1. purified     | a) burned       | b) cleansed | c) blessed |
| 2. bowels       | a) organs       | b) rivers   | c) insides |
| 3. moreover     | a) additionally | b) twice    | c) instead |
| 4. nevertheless | a) impossible   | b) also     | c) however |

**Understanding Sentence Completions**

**C. DIRECTIONS:** In the blank, write the letter of the pair of words that best completes the meaning of the sentence.

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|---|--|
| <p>_____ 1. John's vision compels him to travel east; _____, he feels a fire in his _____ to make the journey.</p> <p>a. bowels—nevertheless<br/>b. bowels—moreover<br/>c. moreover—bowels<br/>d. nevertheless—bowels</p> | <p>_____ 2. Priests are allowed to take metal from the dead place; _____, they and the metal must be _____.</p> <p>a. purified—moreover<br/>b. purified—nevertheless<br/>c. moreover—purified<br/>d. nevertheless—purified</p> |
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**“By the Waters of Babylon”** by Stephen Vincent Benét**Build Grammar Skills: Vary Sentence Beginnings**

If all your sentences begin the same way, your writing becomes monotonous and is less likely to engage readers. **Varying sentence beginnings** can strengthen your writing and make it more interesting to read. Generally, avoid having more than three sentences in a row start the same way. The following examples show some of the ways you can vary sentence beginnings.

**Beginning With an Adverb:** Afterwards, both the man and the metal must be purified!

**Beginning With a Prepositional Phrase:** After a time, I myself was allowed to go into the dead houses and search for metal.

**Beginning With a Participial Phrase:** Taking no food, I waited again on the flat rock.

**Beginning With a Subordinate Clause:** When the night came, I made my fire and roasted meat.

**A. Practice:** Identify the type of beginning of each sentence as adverb, prepositional phrase, participial phrase, or subordinate clause.

1. Nevertheless, it was strange. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Raising my eyes, I saw the place of the gods. \_\_\_\_\_
3. If I went to the place of the gods, I would surely die. \_\_\_\_\_
4. After a while, my eyes were opened and I saw. \_\_\_\_\_
5. When I was very near, my raft struck and turned over. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Ascending the stairs, I reached a door. \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Writing Application:** Rewrite the following paragraph, using a variety of sentence beginnings to make it more engaging. Feel free to combine some sentences.

John is the son of a priest. He has a dream. He goes on a journey. He crosses the river. He visits the place of the gods. The wild dogs see John. He runs away. He finds safety in a building. He enters a room. He discovers the remains of a man. He understands what happened to the people of the city.

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**“By the Waters of Babylon”** by Stephen Vincent Benét**Reading Strategy: Drawing Conclusions**

As you begin reading “By the Waters of Babylon,” you encounter mysterious settings and events. The narrator does not explain how the Dead Places came to be or what caused the Great Burning. You, as an involved reader, must analyze facts and details in the story to **draw conclusions** about the story’s setting and background.

**DIRECTIONS:** Complete the chart by providing details and writing reasonable conclusions that can be drawn from those details.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Detail #1</b>	<b>Detail #2</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
1. What are the old writings?			
2. What are the god-roads?			
3. What is the great river that John crosses?			
4. What is the strong magic that John observes at night in the Place of the Gods?			
5. What was the Great Burning?			
6. When does the story take place?			

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**Literary Analysis: First-Person Point of View**

Point of view is the position or perspective from which the events of a story are seen. When you read a story told from the **first-person point of view**, you experience the story through the eyes of a character who uses the first-person pronouns *I, me, my*. Through that first-person narrator, you—the reader—experience everything that happens in the story and know the character’s thoughts and feelings.

**A. DIRECTIONS:** Write your answers to the following questions.

- 1. Name two details that help you identify John as the first-person narrator of “By the Waters of Babylon.”  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. What mood does the first-person point of view create in this story?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. What does John know that you do not know?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4. What information do you have that John does not?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Does seeing things through John’s eyes make you look at the world around you in a different way? Why or why not?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**B. DIRECTIONS:** Write a paragraph in which you respond to the use of first-person point of view in “By the Waters of Babylon.” What did you enjoy about this point of view? What did you dislike or find frustrating?

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