

THEME

Young people often feel pressure from their peers to conform. Asserting oneself in the face of pressure is important for youths to experience.

SUMMARY

Though Millicent would like to be true to her friend Tracy, she also wants to join the high school social sorority. To become a member she must complete a series of tasks that are a part of the initiation process. During the process, several incidents make her realize that the girls in the sorority are exclusive and superficial. In addition, she encounters an interesting rider on a bus, who talks about heather birds, mythological birds that are wild and free. As a result of their conversation, she reevaluates her interest in the sorority; ultimately, she asserts herself and declines their invitation to become a member.

PURPOSE FOR READING: (Find out)

- (1) Why is Millicent locked in a dark basement?

- (2) Why is Tracy sad about Millicent’s joining the sorority?

- (3) What does Millicent realize as she questions people on the bus?

- (4) What decision does Millicent make? Why?

LITERARY ANALYSIS SKILLBUILDER

INTERNAL CONFLICT

Conflict, or the struggle between opposing forces, is the basis of a story’s plot. **Internal conflict** occurs when the struggle takes place within a character. Internal conflicts may result when a character has to make a difficult decision or resolve an inner struggle. Use the diagram to identify the most significant events that influenced Millicent’s internal conflict in this story – and her decision to reject membership in a sorority.

DIAGRAM IS PASTED ONTO HANDOUT