



# Chapter One

## “A Crazy Tale” by G. K. Chesterton

*Stories and Poems for Extremely Intelligent Children of All Ages*  
—Pages 28 to 33

*Student Guide*—Pages 3 to 20

*Workbook*—Pages 1 to 18

**Answers to Comprehension Questions . . . . . Page 17**

**Literary Lesson: Author’s Purpose . . . . . Page 17**

**Mini-Lesson: Taking Notes . . . . . Page 18**

**Writing Exercises . . . . . Page 18**

**Discussion Questions . . . . . Page 19**

**Workbook Answers. . . . . Page 19**

**1.1.L Discerning Author’s Purpose . . . . . Page 19**

**1.2.L Writing with a Purpose . . . . . Page 20**

**1.3.G Capitalization . . . . . Page 20**

**1.4.T Fact and Opinion . . . . . Page 20**

**1.5.M Taking Notes . . . . . Page 21**

**1.6.P “A Crazy Tale” Crossword Puzzle . . . . . Page 22**

**1.7.P “A Crazy Tale” Word Search. . . . . Page 22**

**1.8.E Author’s Purpose . . . . . Page 23**



## Chapter 1: “A Crazy Tale”

### Answers to Comprehension Questions

1. He says he knew there had been a creation of a second Adam.
2. This is how the man describes grass.
3. The man is talking about the sun.
4. The man describes his parents as giants.
5. He says he hears the daisies growing.
6. Being born was the greatest event of the man’s life.
7. The man says his function is thanking God for his creation.
8. The man describes his feet in this manner.
9. The narrator decides the man is mad.

### Literary Lesson: Author’s Purpose

Identifying an author’s purpose in nonfiction writing tends to be easier than in fiction, but as we encounter nonfiction writing every day, it is also very important. Take the time on a regular basis to read newspaper and magazine articles with your student and discuss the author’s purpose. Although many are meant to inform, many are also meant to persuade; and it can be particularly important to discern the difference between these two. Learning this will help students recognize when they are genuinely being informed of facts and when the author has a particular bias that he or she wishes to put across as fact (though it is actually opinion).

Identifying an author’s purpose in fiction tends to be more complex, and if the student has trouble with it in this one lesson, don’t worry too much. The idea is brought up again in future lessons. Students who wish to try again with a different story, though, may read “How Much Land Does a Man Need?” by Leo Tolstoy (p. 298 of *Stories and Poems*). After they’ve read it, ask if they can discern the author’s purpose, that is, Tolstoy’s message. (Tolstoy’s purpose is to communicate the idea that the only land men need to own is that which they will be buried in.) If they cannot, tell them that Tolstoy did not believe in ownership of private property. Then look through the story together to see what clues are in the story itself that express this idea.

If you have an advanced student, another activity you could do to expand this lesson is to read Thornton Wilder’s play *Our Town* together (it is a brief play).

It is available from most libraries. *Our Town* has a similar purpose as Chesterton's story—to emphasize the importance of appreciating common, everyday things. Wilder achieves his purpose in a very different manner, however. Discuss with the student the differences between these two pieces of literature and how they approach the same purpose in different ways. This could even be the topic of a comparison/contrast paper for the student.

This extra challenge possibility, and others I list throughout the year, can be postponed until the end of this course then done as time allows.

## Mini-Lesson: Taking Notes

As I say in the Mini-Lesson, there are four core ideas to taking notes:

- Know what the topic of your paper is and only take notes pertinent to it.
- When you paraphrase a source, avoid plagiarism.
- When you quote directly from a source, quote accurately and in context.
- Note down all pertinent information for proper citation later.

The rest of the lesson goes into more detail about each of these items. This is a skill that best improves with practice. Students who enjoy research papers will find this no trouble. Students who have never done one, or do them only grudgingly, need to be encouraged to write some this year since it is a vital skill for high school and college. To help the first-time or reluctant students, allow them to choose their own topic. Assign short papers at first and require only two or three sources. (Requiring only one source is a bad idea because it encourages the student to rewrite information from only one source rather than merging the ideas and information from two or more places.) This course provides many opportunities for research papers, but you can also assign them in other classes like history, science, or even art and music. (See section on Mini-Lessons on Page 3 of this Guide.)

## Writing Exercises

The first exercise is probably the easiest, as it is the shortest. Some students will be drawn to the creativity of it, while others will not like it (particularly if they did not like the story). It does not directly address the lesson, but may be a good choice for a student who does not like to write or has not written much.

The second exercise directly addresses the lesson, and gives students a chance to use one of their workbook pages as well. This is perhaps a better choice for the student who is uneasy with writing but doesn't want to do something more

creative such as the first selection. If they reuse their two paragraphs from the workbook pages, they need only write three more.

The third exercise addresses the second part of the lesson, on fiction. This is a good choice for students who already like writing short stories or who are eager to start. This exercise may make them more conscious of their writing process in that they need to sculpt the story to communicate their purpose. It also gives them a chance to tie a story directly into their life or beliefs.

The fourth exercise is good for a student who likes research papers or one who needs more practice with research papers and who isn't strongly attracted to one of the other exercises. It is the gentlest of research papers in that students can choose the topic, there is no minimum number of pages required, and they don't even have to worry about citations and a bibliography. It is important that they include their notes though, as this exercise addresses the content of the mini-lesson on note-taking.

## Discussion Questions

1. The man with the story said that his purpose was “thanking God for his creation.” Do you think he was especially well-suited to this purpose, given his unique way of seeing the world? He also says this is a “new function never before conceived truly.” In other words, we've never before really understood how we should thank God for his creation. Do you think that's true?
2. Chesterton believed we should appreciate things. How well do you think you appreciate things, especially the common, every-day things around you? Do you think you can ever appreciate them, or thank God for them, sufficiently? What can you do to increase your appreciation?

## Workbook Answers

### 1.1.L DISCERNING AUTHOR'S PURPOSE (5 POINTS POSSIBLE)

1. The purpose of the paragraph is to **describe**.
2. The purpose of the paragraph is to **inform**.
3. The purpose of the paragraph is to **explore**.
4. The purpose of the paragraph is to **persuade**.
5. The purpose of the paragraph is to **explain/instruct**.

### 1.2.L WRITING WITH A PURPOSE

Student answers will vary. The important thing here is that each paragraph fulfills the purpose the student says it does.

### 1.3.G CAPITALIZATION AND APOSTROPHES (47 POINTS POSSIBLE)

George **B**ernard **S**haw was an **I**rishman, born to **P**rotestant parents, though he became an outspoken atheist. **A**theism wasn't **S**haw's only unusual belief or practice. **H**e was also a vegetarian (more unusual in those days than now, but it may have done his health well, as he lived until age 94), and a radical socialist who believed that land and property should be distributed equally.

**I**t's hard to say which was more important to **S**haw—his politics or his plays. **H**e wrote many of these, perhaps the most famous of which are **M**ajor **B**arbara and **P**ygmalion. **B**ut **S**haw's plays are not free of his politics. **I**n fact, they sometimes include lengthy introductions filled with politics. **O**ne needs to have an understanding of **S**haw's socialism to really understand his plays.

**S**ay what you might about **S**haw, he was a witty man. **H**e is famous for such quotes as, "**M**ost people would rather die sooner than think. **I**n fact, they do so" and "**Y**outh is wasted on the young." **I**f someone tells you that you have a "**S**havian wit" it's a compliment—**S**havian being the adjective form of **S**haw's name.

**S**haw's good friend, **G. K. C**hesterton, said this about him: "**M**ost people say that they agree with **B**ernard **S**haw or that they do not understand him. **I** am the only person who understands him, and **I** do not agree with him." **S**haw was often hard to understand, and even harder to agree with; but his writing has endured, and he is still a fascinating read.

The primary purpose of these paragraphs is to inform.

### 1.4.T FACT AND OPINION (8 POINTS POSSIBLE)

G. K. Chesterton was not a communist, socialist, or capitalist. Instead, he and a friend named Hilaire Belloc formulated a new economic system called *distributism*. Distributism is a fascinating system.

In communism all businesses and resources (formally called "means of production") are owned by the government. In socialism, only some means of production are controlled by the state. In capitalism, people, rather than the government, control businesses; but usually it is only a few people rather than many. Distributism is better than all these ways.

In distributism, the means of production would be distributed among all the people. Everyone would own a small parcel of land (rather than a few people owning much land and many people owning none). Distributism also emphasizes small-scale production such as small farmers and craftspeople rather than large-scale production in factories. Distributists believe these practices will help keep families together (the sacredness of family is very important in distributism) and make people feel more connected to their work. Chesterton and Belloc were brilliant men, and they devised an economic system that would make the world a better place. Distributism would be healthy for families and would preserve people's dignity and elevate the human spirit better than communism, socialism, or capitalism. Distributism is the way of a brighter future.

1. The primary purpose of the paragraphs is to persuade. (Some students may say the primary purpose is to inform. Although these paragraphs do also inform, that is not their primary purpose.)
2. Yes, the writer of these paragraphs has a bias.
3. The writer is biased in favor of distributism (or against communism, socialism, and capitalism). The writer is also biased in favor of Chesterton and Belloc, though that is secondary.

### 1.5.M TAKING NOTES

Answers will vary somewhat, but students should have notes from all three sources. Each source should also contain full information:

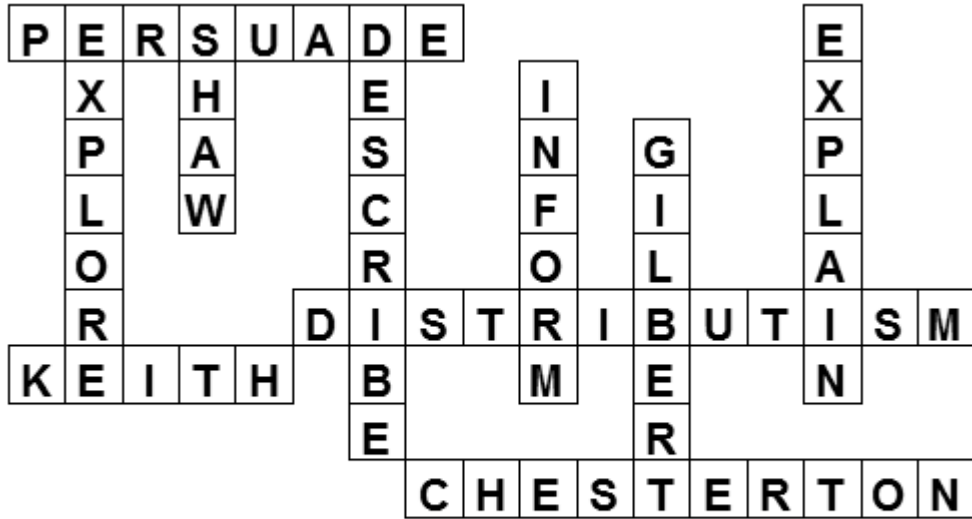
“Shaw for Better or Worse” by Margo Sturgis in a magazine entitled *Luck of the Irish* (issue 5, number 9, pages 32–36).

Arthur Bailey, *Distributism Facts and Fallacies*. The website address is [www.distributismisforyou.com](http://www.distributismisforyou.com). (This entry should also have a date for when the student took down the information.)

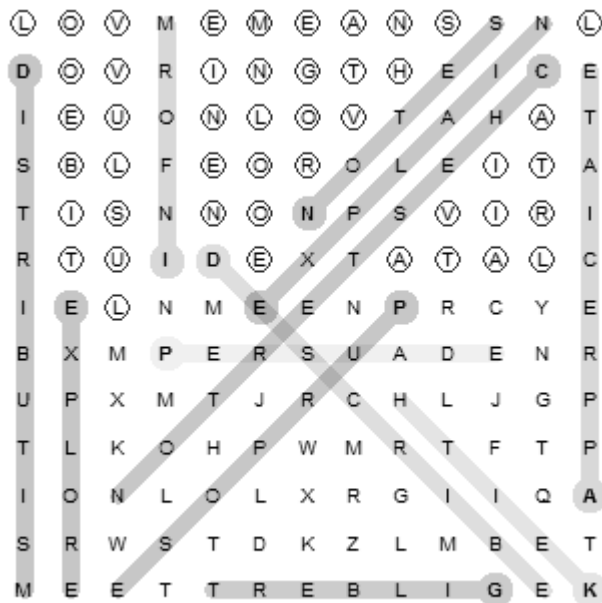
Elizabeth Kamath, *Lightning Literature and Composition*, Grade 8, pages 5–6. Published by Hewitt Homeschooling Resources, 2006, Washougal, WA.

Be sure all notes pertain to the topic, a comparison and contrast paper on G. K. Chesterton and George Bernard Shaw. Student must also include one quote. Be sure it matches the original source exactly.

1.6.P “A CRAZY TALE” CROSSWORD PUZZLE



1.7.P “A CRAZY TALE” WORD SEARCH



**1.8.E AUTHOR'S PURPOSE**

1. c
2. c
3. e
4. Any of these
5. He saw the humor of how it appears to eat asparagus, and took advantage of the “etiquette” involved in the process.