

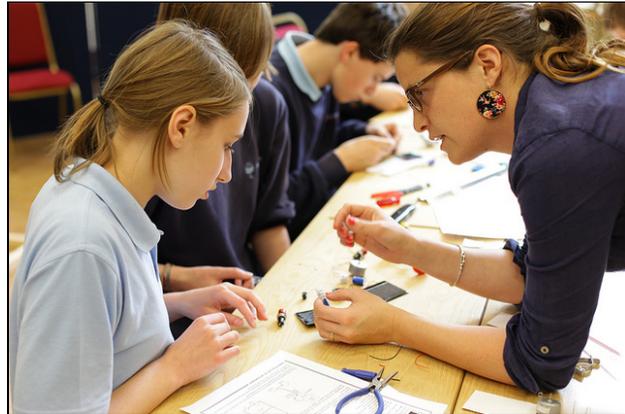
Name: _____ Class: _____

Teacher Tamer

By Avi
1994

Edward Irving Wortis, best known by his pen name Avi, is an American author of young adult and children's literature. In this short story, a boy plans to get revenge on a teacher who he thinks has been unfair to him. As you read, take notes on Mrs. Wessex's character.

- [1] The whole fifth grade was engaged in silent reading. The students were reading their books while Mrs. Wessex, the teacher, sat at her desk in the front of the room, reading hers. Her book was a huge one titled *Crime and Punishment*. Fifteen minutes into the period, a large spitball landed on the middle of the page Mrs. Wessex was reading. She gasped — audibly.



"female student and teacher" by Engineering at Cambridge is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

As the class looked up, the teacher peered down at the page to see what had landed. When she lifted her face, it was the color of chalk.

An uneasy murmur fluttered through the room.

Life in the fifth grade was never good when Mrs. Wessex was angry. Lately, her anger seemed to erupt daily. A tall, big-boned woman with large hands, she had graying, curly hair and wrinkles on her face. That day she was wearing a baggy blue dress that was also wrinkled.

- [5] "Nasty," was the way one student described her. No one disagreed.

She contemplated the class like a surgeon deciding where to cut. "Gregory Martinez!" she called. "Come here this instant!"

A hush fell upon the class as Gregory reluctantly slid out of his chair, then slumped to the front of the class, hands deep in his baggy pockets.

Gregory was short for his eleven years, and heavysset. His complexion was dark, his hair black, his eyes intense and at the moment full of worry. Though he had been in the school only a few months, everyone at Kennedy Middle School knew he was a brain. When Mrs. Wessex asked a question, it was always Gregory who had his hand up. More often than not he had the right answer, too.

Though Gregory liked being smart, his intelligence set him off from the other kids. He wanted to be liked, but they thought of him as different. Lately, however, things had begun to change.

[10] During the past two weeks Mrs. Wessex had accused Gregory of various acts of misbehavior. She had gone so far as to punish him four times. Though getting into trouble improved Gregory's class standing, he kept insisting he was innocent. As far as he was concerned, Mrs. Wessex was picking on him. He wished he knew why.

Halfway to the teacher's desk, he said, "I didn't do it." Mrs. Wessex stopped him in his tracks with a hard glare. "Didn't do *what?*" she demanded.

Instantly aware he had made a tactical¹ mistake by saying anything before he was accused, he replied, "I was just reading."

"Come over here!" the teacher insisted. She pointed to a spot on the floor near her desk.

Gregory drew closer. Mrs. Wessex's desk was always neat. Its uncluttered state was taken by her slovenly² students as a rebuke.³

[15] "Hands out of your pockets!" she snapped.

Gregory ripped his hands out, bringing a shower of small coins that scattered upon the floor. A burst of laughter erupted from thirty-six kids.

Trying desperately to keep from grinning, Gregory bent over to gather up the coins.

"Do that later!" Mrs. Wessex shouted. She had become angrier.

The classroom stilled instantly. Gregory felt his grin evaporate.⁴ As he tried to control his growing anxiety, he stared at his feet.

[20] "Do you see that?" the teacher demanded. She pointed right at her book. "Look"

Gregory lifted his face. The spitball — surrounded by an expanding circle of moisture — lay upon the page. Not only did Gregory recognize the spitball for what it was, he knew that Ryan Jurgensen had shot it. Ryan, who occupied the desk right next to him, combined class bully, wisea-- and dummy in one skinny body topped with short-cropped blond hair. He was also school spitball artist, carrying a bundle of tissues and a bunch of large plastic straws in his pockets the way other kids carried pencils and erasers.

"Do you see that?" the teacher demanded of Gregory again.

"Yes, Mrs. Wessex."

"What is it?"

[25] Gregory's dark face turned darker. "A — a spitball."

1. relating to a plan of action meant to achieve a certain goal
2. messy and dirty
3. **Rebuke (verb):** to express strong disapproval or criticism
4. **Evaporate (verb):** to disappear

"Disgusting!" Mrs. Wessex informed him.

"I didn't do it," Gregory repeated with an intense sense of his own innocence.

"Young man, I believe you did!"

"I didn't!" Gregory protested.

[30] "Then, who did?" she asked.

Gregory made a half turn toward the class. Though he could sense other kids suppressing⁵ laughter at his plight,⁶ he felt they were on his side.

As for Ryan, not only did Gregory observe his barely stifled grin, he noted the bully's right fist balled up, a blatant⁷ threat that if Gregory dared to name him as culprit,⁸ the fist would be put to use.

"Gregory!" Mrs. Wessex said, "I asked you a question. If you didn't do this disgusting thing, who did?"

"I don't know," he replied, struggling to contain his sense of indignation. She had no right to blame him. "Mrs. Wessex," he suddenly blurted out, "how come you're always blaming me?"

[35] The class gasped.

For a moment — but only a moment — Mrs. Wessex's face softened. Then she glared at him. "Gregory," she ordered, "go stand with your face in the shame corner for fifteen minutes."

"But I didn't do anything!" Gregory protested anew.

On appeal, Mrs. Wessex said, "Twenty minutes."

A giggle erupted from somewhere in the class.

[40] "Quiet!" Mrs. Wessex cried.

Gregory, knowing that it would be useless to argue, shoved his hands back into his pockets and headed for the corner. Halfway there he stopped. "Mrs. Wessex, what about my money?"

"You may pick it up, then stand in the corner." This, from Mrs. Wessex, was a measure of kindness.

Hearing the suppressed snickers of his classmates, Gregory picked up the coins.

When he finally got into the shame corner, he was hot, upset, and angry. Mrs. Wessex was so unfair, he kept thinking. Staring into the corner, he vowed that this time he would have revenge.

5. **Suppress** (*verb*): to hold back
6. an unpleasant situation
7. **Blatant** (*adjective*): done openly
8. **Culprit** (*noun*): a person who is responsible for a crime

[45] During recess a bunch of kids gathered around him. “How come she picks on you?” Susan asked.

“I don’t know,” Gregory said, pleased that someone had noticed. “But I’m going to get back at her.”

“Yeah, sure you will,” Ryan teased. “Smartest kid in class does something wicked to the teacher. Sure. Right.”

Gregory looked at the circle of faces. His classmates were really paying attention to him. At the moment he felt they really liked him. If only he could do something to keep their positive feelings. “I *am* going to do something,” he insisted.

“Everybody hear that?” Ryan crowed.⁹ “Gregory’s going to get revenge on Wessex.”

[50] “Man,” said Dori, “you do that you’ll be the hero of the whole class.”

Hero of the whole class. The words filled Gregory with excitement. He looked at Dori and smiled. Here was his opportunity. He would have his revenge and become a hero, too.

Two blocks from the Kennedy Memorial Middle School, tucked between Jack’s Skate & Snow Boards and Robert’s Famous Bar-Bee-Q-Ribs, stood Mrs. Barman’s candy store. You could buy any piece of candy for five cents. During most of the day, the candy store had modest¹⁰ sales. Between the hours of three and four-thirty, it was packed with kids.

The display case contained fifty-two white plastic trays of candy, from Black Crows to clear jellybeans to white peppermints — and all colors and flavors in between.

Behind the display case stood Mrs. Barman. She was a small old woman, whose marshmallow-colored face, arms, and torso seemed to be all there was of her. If she had a lower body, no one had ever seen it.

[55] Kids asked for candy by pointing and saying “one” or “two.” Mrs. Barman counted out the candy pieces and put them in a small white paper sack. “Fifteen cents,” she’d say. The price was all she normally spoke.

It was to Mrs. Barman’s that Gregory went after school. When it was his turn, the old lady gave him an inquiring look. “I want to speak to Tiny,” Gregory announced.

Tiny was Mrs. Barman’s son. If he was asked the proper way, he would sell you fireworks. Selling fireworks was illegal.

“Tiny!” Mrs. Barman shouted. “Kidtaseeya.”

Gregory waited nervously. He had never spoken to Tiny before, and he was only remembering what some kid told him to do. He hoped he’d ask the right way. One of the things the kid had told him was, “You got to ask right, or Tiny won’t sell you nothing.”

9. to utter in a loud cry

10. **Modest** (*adjective*): limited in size or amount

[60] Tiny, big as a grizzly bear, lumbered out of the backroom. He had a large, glistening bald head, an incredibly thick neck, and a belly so huge it was on the verge of splitting the plaid shirt he always wore. No one had ever seen him smile.

The kids had all kinds of stories about Tiny. Some said he had played professional football. Others said his size was due to the fact that he ate nothing but his mother's candy. Then there were those who claimed Mrs. Barman lost her bottom half because Tiny had blown it away with his fireworks.

"Yawanme, kid?" Tiny said to Gregory. His voice was low, rumbling.

"Crackers," Gregory said, hoping he had remembered the password correctly.

Tiny looked hard at Gregory, then glanced around to make sure no fire marshal was lurking among the clamorous¹¹ crowd of children.

[65] "Follow me," he growled.

Gregory followed Tiny down a narrow, dark passageway into a small room whose walls were covered with metal drawers. A low-wattage bulb dangled from flimsy ceiling wires.

Gregory looked about. It was all so creepy he began to wish he hadn't come.

"Whadayawan?" Tiny asked.

Gregory, fist clenched, said, "A stink bomb and a smoke bomb."

[70] Tiny studied Gregory anew. "Whacha goin'ta do wit'em? "

After a moment, Gregory said, "Put them in my teacher's house."

Tiny's face unfolded into a smile. "I hate teachas," he said. The smile vanished. "Seventy-five cent each," he said.

Gregory laboriously¹² counted out the quarters, nickels, dimes, and pennies into Tiny's huge hands.

"An' twenty-five cent," Tiny added. "Fa-da guvament tax."

[75] Gregory handed over the surcharge.

The large man opened two metal drawers and extracted two small tubes, each as thick as his thumbs. Frizzy gray fuses protruded from their ends. One tube was black and bore a label that read SUPER SKUNK. The other tube was a bright orange color and was called CLOUD OF DARKNESS.

"Okay, kid," Tiny said, "where'dya get tha stuff?"

Gregory struggled to recall the proper reply. "Some kid," he said.

11. **Clamor** (*noun*): loud and confusing noise

12. **Laborious** (*adjective*): requiring a lot of time and effort

"Don'cha forget," Tiny said. Turning Gregory around with his big hands, he pushed him out of the room. But not before he whispered, "Go getcha teacha."

- [80] Gregory left the candy store at a trot and went right to a gas station down the block. It sold cookies, chips, and soda. He went in and made a show of looking at the offerings. When no one was looking, he grabbed a book of complimentary¹³ matches from the counter and raced back to school.

At four-thirty Mrs. Wessex stepped out of the school. In each hand she had a cloth shopping bag loaded with books and papers. One bag bore the faded words, If You Can Read This Thank a Teacher.

Gregory, crouched behind a parked car across the street, was waiting and watching for her.

He found it easy to follow her. Not only was Mrs. Wessex a large woman, she was wearing a bright blue coat. Though Gregory knew — without knowing how he knew — that she lived in that neighborhood, he didn't know where. But then, he still didn't know his way around the area very well. In any case, she walked slowly. To Gregory it appeared she had no interest other than in the pavement before her.

When she went into a small grocery store, Gregory hid behind a garbage can. Emerging, she carried a paper bag stuffed with goods. Every now and then she paused and clumsily shifted her load. She was having trouble balancing all her belongings.

- [85] Gregory, clutching his stink and smoke bombs in his pocket, followed at a safe distance. At one point he thought she might be turning to look. He quickly ducked behind some passing people. When the teacher continued on without looking back, so did Gregory. He was becoming excited.

One block from the grocery store, Mrs. Wessex made a right turn onto Pearl Street, an old street bordered by large oak trees. The early spring leaves were bright green. Pearl Street ran through a dilapidated neighborhood of small wooden houses. Gregory had never been on the street before. Potholes marred the pavement. Many of the houses, if not quite in a state of decay,¹⁴ were in need of new paint and carpentry. Porches sagged. Paint peeled. Here and there a cracked window winked at the world.

After walking another six blocks, Mrs. Wessex turned onto a cement pathway that led to one of the single-story frame houses. It was in a row of similar houses. All had small porches. The house Mrs. Wessex entered was set back from the street by a small, sparse lawn and was covered with dull white aluminum siding. Two cracked cement steps led up to the front porch. Beyond the porch was a faded yellow door.

Upon reaching the porch, Mrs. Wessex set down her two shopping bags, shifted the paper bag, and entered the house. In moments she returned, gathered up the shopping bags, then went back inside again. This time she shut the door firmly behind her.

Gregory, standing behind a lamppost, had watched her intently. Only when Mrs. Wessex had gone in did he appraise¹⁵ the house. The building's rundown appearance was not what he had expected. He was not sure why, but he had assumed his teacher was rich. The apartment house he lived in was in better condition.

13. given free of charge

14. **Decay (noun):** the state or process of rotting or falling apart

15. to judge the value or quality of something

[90] And now that he'd actually arrived at Mrs. Wessex's house, Gregory began to feel uneasy. What if she had kids? What if there was a *Mr. Wessex*? What if he got caught? Worst of all, what if he did nothing, and the kids at school got on his case? Instead of being a hero, he'd be more of a nerd than ever. He wished he'd not been so public about proclaiming¹⁶ his revenge. He remembered Ryan's taunt,¹⁷ Dori's promise. He squeezed the smoke and stink bombs in his pocket, then touched the book of matches. He had to go on.

Mrs. Wessex's house was no more than five feet from the homes to the right and left. In the alleyway between her house and the one on the right was a jungle of bushes. As far as Gregory could tell, that side of the house had no windows. Then he saw what appeared to be a window low to the ground. Partly open, it was built into the building's foundation. Gregory guessed it led into the basement.

After making sure no one was watching him, Gregory darted across the street and into the tangle of greenery. Once there he threaded his way through the foliage to the low window and squatted down. To his surprise, Mrs. Wessex's house was propped up by cement block pillars. Between the pillars was siding. There was no basement. What he had thought was a window was nothing more than a sheet of wood, which covered a gap in the siding.

Gregory touched the board. It fell over with a loud thump. Fearful of discovery, he darted a look over his shoulder. No one was coming.

Feeling safe again, he peered through the gaping hole into a crawlspace.

[95] Next door someone stepped out onto the porch, slamming the front door. Fearful of discovery, Gregory dove into the crawlspace beneath Mrs. Wessex's house. There he lay, face down on the dirt, breathing hard. His courage was evaporating.

When no further sounds came from next door, Gregory lifted his head and looked about. It was gloomy there with a strong, clammy stench that almost made him throw up. Fumbling, Gregory drew out his pack of matches and lit one. The area from the ground to the house was no more than three feet in height. It was littered with junk: bottles, cans, clumps of matted newspapers, an old mattress, even a broken birdcage. Overhead ran crisscrossing pipes and wires. So unlike Mrs. Wessex's desk!

Even as Gregory looked about he heard footsteps above his head. Automatically, he ducked. The match went out.

Gregory listened intently. He heard the sound of muffled voices, but who was speaking, or what was being said, he couldn't tell.

The footsteps retreated. The voices drifted away.

[100] He lifted his head. The more he looked around the more perfect the crawlspace seemed as a place to set off the bombs. All he had to do was find the right location so that stink and smoke would get into the house. His courage returned. He touched the bombs and grinned.

16. **Proclaim** (*verb*): to announce publicly

17. **Taunt** (*noun*): a mean or insulting remark often used to challenge someone or hurt their feelings

Lit match in hand, he explored the area by crawling around. It took three more matches to discover something promising. A trap door. At least it was a square over his head with hinges on one side and a metal latch opposite.

Gregory worked his way beneath the door, then lit another match and examined the latch. It was a metal shot bolt. He yanked at it. Not only did it pull free, the door dropped down, smacking him hard on his head. Gregory saw stars.

When he recovered, he looked about. Three shoes had fallen to the ground. After pushing them aside, he crawled directly under the now open space. Another lit match allowed him to look up.

At first it seemed as if he were gazing up into a bundle of rags.

[105] The match went out.

Gregory drew himself up on his knees, then slowly lifted his head until it was poking up through the opening. He was inside the house. The area was quite dark save for one side where, along the floor, ran a strip of light. Gregory guessed he was seeing room light seeping under a door. That made him realize where he was: in a clothes closet. Better and better.

He decided to take a chance and light one more match. The flame revealed clothing hung from wire and plastic hangers on two sides of the closet. Against another wall — all in a heap — lay shoes and slippers. On the fourth wall was a door: There was also a plastic basket heaped with crumpled clothing. High above was shelving holding a variety of boxes. In the ceiling was an unlit bulb.

Hearing nothing, Gregory pulled himself up until he was standing in the dark closet. Reaching into his pocket, he pulled out the stink and smoke bombs. He made up his mind to light them, jerk the door open, heave the bombs in, then make his escape. He'd even be able to watch what happened from out front.

He took out the matches.

[110] Suddenly, he heard a voice from beyond the closet. "... tell you how exhausted I am. I have to lie down."

It was Mrs. Wessex.

"You're always complaining," said another voice. To Gregory's ears it sounded like an older woman, but he could not be sure.

"I'm not complaining," Mrs. Wessex said.

Gregory's first impulse was to dive back down the hole and make his escape. His second impulse was to stay and listen. He was in his teacher's closet! Listening to her *private* stuff. *Irresistible*.¹⁸ He leaned forward and put his ear to the door.

18. **Irresistible** (*adjective*): too tempting to resist

[115] “My dear,” said the voice of the older woman, “I just wish you wouldn’t come home from that school so tired every day.”

“Ma, it is exhausting, that’s all. I just need to lie down.”

“Well, you could be thankful you have a good job. Lots of people don’t have one.”

Suddenly the closet doorknob rattled. Panicked, Gregory flung himself to one side. The door opened. The closet seemed to explode with light. The blue dress Mrs. Wessex had worn that day came flying through the open door and fell in a heap on the floor. It was followed by a pink bra. The door slammed shut.

Gregory looked at the clothes and nearly fainted. What was he doing there! He had done a terrible thing. He’d be arrested. Put in jail! He lowered his feet into the trap door.

[120] “Ma ... ,” the voice continued from beyond.

“Madge, try to remember they’re just children. And you do get vacations?”

“Ma, I’ve been teaching for fifteen years. I have thirty-six kids in my class. I get lousy pay. Each year the kids get worse and worse. Ruder and ruder. They don’t want to learn. All they can talk about is sports, movies and TV. They can’t even sit still. They hate me.”

“Sometimes I think you should have stayed married to Benny. You could have had your own kids.”

“Do you know what happened today?”

[125] “Benny wasn’t such a bad man, Madge. Yeah, he drank a little. But really, not much. And when he was transferred — ”

“Ma, listen to me! Today, I was sitting there reading. It was reading time. Someone shot a spitball right on my book.”

“A what?”

“A spitball.”

“That’s dreadful. ¹⁹Can’t your principal do something?”

[130] “Ma, you don’t understand.”

“Madge, I’m trying to understand?”

“You don’t understand!” cried Mrs. Wessex. “I knew who did it. Ryan Jurgensen. The class clown. But he thrives²⁰ on being the center of attention. So instead, I called up this boy ... Gregory ...

19. **Dreadful** (*adjective*): extremely bad or serious

20. **Thrive** (*verb*): to grow or develop successfully

"Why him?"

"Because Gregory is the smartest one in the class. It makes the other kids resent²¹ him. But I keep thinking if I pick on him enough the other kids will accept him. Can you grasp that? I'm afraid that if the kids turn against him, he'll want to deny his intelligence. I want to keep him smart. That's what it comes to. I'm picking on him so he'll stay smart and amount to something. It's crazy."

[135] "But you know what, Ma? At the same time I resent Gregory. Because he's so young and could do so much and I can't do anything anymore."

"What did he do when you blamed him?"

"Gregory? He made fun of me."

"How?"

"He dumped his money — coins — on the floor."

[140] "Please, Madge, I wish you wouldn't cry."

"Ma, do you know what it is like to have a room full of kids who hate you, despise you, have no respect for you? I hate teaching. I used to be good. I can't stand it anymore."

"You've had a bad day, that's all. Or maybe you should think about getting another position."

"Sure. And if I can't get one, what are we supposed to live on? Your social security?"

"Go to sleep, honey. You're tired. You'll feel better when you're rested."

[145] There was silence.

In the closet, Gregory, who had heard it all, pressed a hand to his heart to keep it from beating so wildly.

He listened and thought he detected the sounds of someone outside the closet. Was it Mrs. Wessex on her bed? He kept listening. After a while, he began to hear snores. Mrs. Wessex's *snores*! He started to laugh, but the laugh faded. He thought of what he had heard, and all he could feel was a heaviness in his heart.

Quietly, he lowered himself the rest of the way through the trap door. Once in the crawlspace, he looked around for the shoes that had fallen down. He put them back into the closet with care, then shut the trap door and latched it. When he made his way out from under the house, he ran all the way home, dumping the firecrackers in a garbage can. The next morning Gregory was waiting at the school before they let the early arrivals into the building. He was glad none of the kids from his class were there.

21. **Resent** (*verb*): to feel bitter towards someone or something

As soon as the doors were unlocked, he raced down the hallway toward his classroom. He reached it. Mrs. Wessex was alone in the room. She was at her desk, working on papers.

[150] Gregory edged into the room.

After a moment Mrs. Wessex looked up. She began to smile, caught herself, and frowned. "Yes, Gregory," she said, rather severely. "The bell hasn't rung. What do you want?"

In spite of himself, Gregory blushed. "It was about yesterday."

"Yes ... ?" said Mrs. Wessex. There was pain in her eyes.

Gregory wanted to put his arms around her and give her a hug. Instead he said, "I just wanted to say ... you're the best teacher in ... the ... the whole world."

[155] A startled look came to Mrs. Wessex's face. For a moment Gregory thought she was going to cry. "Why do you say that?" she asked.

"I just think so." He looked down at his feet.

"Oh ..." she said, very softly. "Thank you."

On the playground, his classmates gathered around.

"Did you get your revenge?" Ryan taunted.

[160] "Yeah," Gregory replied.

"Cool. What did you do? "

"Never mind what. Just see the way she acts."

Gregory was right. It was almost a month before Mrs. Wessex became angry again. But not before Ryan had given him a new name: "Teacher Tamer."

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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following describes the main theme of the short story?
 - A. Kind words and consideration may seem simple, but they can go a long way.
 - B. Responding to anger with hateful actions never solves problems.
 - C. Adults and kids tend to have similar problems, despite their differences.
 - D. Children should not let peers pressure them into doing something they don't want to.

2. PART B: Which detail from the story best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "Mrs. Wessex was so unfair, he kept thinking. Staring into the corner, he vowed that this time he would have revenge." (Paragraph 44)
 - B. "He wished he'd not been so public about proclaiming his revenge. He remembered Ryan's taunt, Dori's promise." (Paragraph 90)
 - C. "'But you know what, Ma? At the same time I resent Gregory. Because he's so young and could do so much and I can't do anything anymore.'" (Paragraph 135)
 - D. "Gregory wanted to put his arms around her and give her a hug. Instead he said, 'I just wanted to say ... you're the best teacher in ... the ... the whole world.'" (Paragraph 154)

3. PART A: How is Gregory influenced by his classmates?
 - A. Gregory feels pressured to prove himself to his classmates by getting revenge on Mrs. Wessex.
 - B. Gregory wants to uphold his reputation with his classmates for being a troublemaker by getting revenge on Mrs. Wessex.
 - C. Gregory is afraid that if he doesn't get revenge on Mrs. Wessex, his classmates will continue to bully him.
 - D. Gregory feels like he owes it to his classmates to get revenge on Mrs. Wessex because of how mean she's been lately.

4. PART B: Which quote from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "'Yeah, sure you will,' Ryan teased. 'Smartest kid in class does something wicked to the teacher. Sure. Right.'" (Paragraph 47)
 - B. "Worst of all, what if he did nothing, and the kids at school got on his case? Instead of being a hero, he'd be more of a nerd than ever." (Paragraph 90)
 - C. "The next morning Gregory was waiting at the school before they let the early arrivals into the building. He was glad none of the kids from his class were there." (Paragraph 148)
 - D. "It was almost a month before Mrs. Wessex became angry again. But not before Ryan had given him a new name: 'Teacher Tamer.'" (Paragraph 163)

5. What does it mean when Gregory feels "a heaviness in his heart" (Paragraph 147)?
 - A. He feels sad after hearing about Mrs. Wessex's troubles.
 - B. He feels proud for sneaking in Mrs. Wessex's house.
 - C. He is embarrassed for discovering that Mrs. Wessex snores.
 - D. He is terrified of being discovered by Mrs. Wessex or her mother.

6. Reread paragraphs 115-122. What do they reveal about Mrs. Wessex?
- A. Mrs. Wessex is extremely bothered by how her students treat her.
 - B. Mrs. Wessex never wanted to be a teacher, which is why she always appears angry.
 - C. Mrs. Wessex truly loves her students, despite coming off as harsh to them.
 - D. Mrs. Wessex is easily upset at school because of the stress of caring for her mother.

7. How does Ryan giving Gregory the name "Teacher Tamer" contribute to the conclusion of the story?
