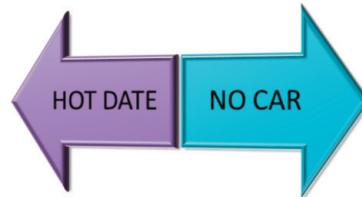Name: _____ Date: _____

CONFLICT

Conflict occurs when a person struggles or fights with another person, society, nature, a machine, an animal, or his or her conscience.

WHY do stories have conflict **?**

Stories have conflict because we like reading about a struggle.

HOT DATE — NO CAR

Why? Because we really like finding out how people overcome their struggles.

what it **IS** ✓ ...and what it **ISN'T** ✗

Conflict

✓ Rick parked his old Toyota on the moonlit, oil-stained concrete behind his apartment, then struggled as usual to remove his key from the ignition. "Damn it!" he hissed, knowing his sick dog, Lady, was inside and hadn't eaten for twelve hours. Muttering curses under his breath, he twisted and pulled at the key, unaware of the towering shadow of a man who approached noiselessly from the left. The man put a gloved hand on the unlocked car door and tore it open, reaching inside to grab the box that

Are you annoyed that the story isn't finished? Answer: YES

No conflict

✗ Rick parked his old Toyota on the clean, moonlit concrete behind his apartment, locked his car, and went inside. His dog, Lady, wagged her tail and he fed her dinner. Then, Rick took a shower and sat down in his favorite chair to read a magazine about different kinds of coffee beans. His friend Mike called him and they spoke for a few minutes about tomorrow's bike ride. "It'll be a beautiful day," Mike said, and Rick enthusiastically agreed. Later, Rick brushed his teeth and climbed into bed, thinking about tomorrow and

Are you bored out of your mind? Answer: YES

YOUR PROBLEM

You know what YOUR problem is? I'll tell you. Your problem is your FACE. It's a sick fuc-

A Brainsheet from **www.LoveYourPencil.com** | search for **cnf67**

hsia color. Are you feeling all right? Maybe you'd better sit down and take it easy.

Made you look.

It was the conflict that did it.

Once you thought that you were being insulted, and you perceived a conflict between you and this document, you got interested. See how conflict can grab a reader? By the way, the color of this text is fuchsia. Hey! You learned a word!

DO YOU WANT TO SEE SOME EXAMPLES OF CONFLICT?   Of course you do.

In all of these stories, the conflict happens at the ✳

Conflict: person versus person

Marisol came home from school, put her books on the table, and opened the refrigerator to get some milk. As she reached for the bottle, her little sister Veronica ran up to her and whispered, "Holy crap, Mom is totally and majorly ✳ pissed at you. You'd better get out of here until she calms down." Marisol felt her stomach tighten. *Shit*, she thought, *how did she find out?*

Conflict: person versus nature

The ocean liner sped through the icy north Atlantic at midnight, headed for New York. The ship's lookout dozed at his post. As the stars twinkled in the inky sky, the lookout lazily glanced ahead. The lookout's eyes ✳ widened, the terrible sight they witnessed electrifying him upright, and he lunged for the intercom to warn the captain: Iceberg! Iceberg! Mammoth iceberg approaching at deadly, unavoidable speed!

Conflict: person versus self, and then person versus society

Tony can't take the lie he's living ✳ anymore. Jenny's so sweet, and she trusts him. Wow, they've been together almost two years now. He tried to stop seeing Autumn, but it keeps happening and happening. He can't take it. He has to tell Jenny the truth before she finds out from someone else, but it's too late. The word is out, and now ✳ nobody will talk to Tony.

Conflict: person versus machine, and then person versus self

Greg knew better. He knew the immense shear's power; for fifteen years, he'd been watching it cut half-inch steel sheets like they were made of paper. But, one day, he lost respect for the shear, and he paid for that lack of respect with ✳ four of the fingers on his left hand. As a result, his boss fired him, and Greg plunged into a deep ✳ depression. He wanted to work again, but he couldn't bring himself to leave the house.

Name: _____   Date: _____

SHOW THAT YOU KNOW

Complete all five tasks and show that you know what conflict is and that you can write a short story that includes conflict.

5 tasks

Circle True/False

1   True   False | Conflict occurs when something struggles against something else. | 1

2   True   False | Most stories don't have conflict, because reading about a fight is stressful for most people. | 1

3   True   False | There is really only one kind of conflict: the struggle of a person against a person. | 1

Underline the sentence that contains conflict in this paragraph.

4   Jimmy walked up to the the ice cream counter at the beach. "I want a chocolate cone," little Jimmy cried out to the man behind the counter. "We're all out of chocolate, kid, and don't yell at me," said the man. Jimmy asked, "How about vanilla instead?" The man replied, "That's better. One vanilla, comin' up!" | 2

5   **Write a very short story (of at least two sentences) that contains conflict.** | 10

> *Need an idea? Think of these things: a family driving to a vacation, a flat tire, and a crying baby.*

→

more space

R Rubric - short story illustrating conflict

Your total score: _____ out of 10. Here's why:

This score	6	7	8	9	10
Equals a %	60	70	80	90	100

0 **1** **2** **3**   Correct punctuation and capitalization

0 **3** **6** **7**   Wrote a story of at least two sentences that contained obvious conflict

impressive: You did an excellent job, making few mistakes. Keep up the high-quality work.

adequate: You did it. Keep working to improve accuracy and quality. Check your work more carefully.

attempted: You tried to do it. You need more practice. Work with your teacher to get better at it.

nonexistent: You didn't do it. Were the directions unclear? Did you forget to do it? Talk with your teacher.

Additional comments: