

AMAZING GRACE Worksheet

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Verse 1

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

Verse 2

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Verse 3

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

Verse 4

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my Shield and Portion be,
As long as life endures.

Verse 5

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

Verse 6

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, Who called me here below,
Shall be forever mine.

Verse 7

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

Vocabulary In one or two words define the following terms from the poem.

Verse 1: Amazing, grace, wretch

Verse 2: relieved

Verse 3: toils, snares, hath

Verse 4: secures, Portion, endures

Verse 5: mortal, cease, possess, veil

Verse 6: dissolve, forbear

Word Pictures Word pictures is another way of saying *imagery*. *Imagery* or *figurative language* helps us form a picture of what the author is trying to present. Discuss what these word pictures mean and, perhaps, draw your idea of the *imagery* or *figurative language* the author uses!

Verse 1: How sweet the sound

Verse 2: 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear

Verse 3: many dangers, toils and snares

Verse 4: my Shield and Portion

Verse 5: within the veil

Verse 6: Bright shining as the sun

Mechanics Verbally discuss

Who is the speaker?

What does the poem reveal about the speaker's character?

Is the speaker addressing someone in particular or is it to anyone?

Does the poem have a setting?

Is the poem about a particular event? Is the event past or present? If it is about a past event, does the remembrance of the event have a particular meaning to the speaker?

Is the theme of the poem stated directly or indirectly?

What point of view or perspective is the speaker?

How did you respond to the poem when you read it the first time?

Comprehension Questions Verbally discuss

Verse 1

Explain why the author used the phrase "Amazing Grace."

What is a wretch?

Was the author literally lost? If not, to what is the author referring?

Do you think the author was physically blind? If not, to what is the author referring?

Verse 2

How can grace teach fear? How can grace relieve one's fear?

Why would grace be precious?

Verse 3

When reading the phrase "dangers, toils and snares," what do you think of? (e.g., hunters, Pilgrims, settlers, cowboys, crusaders, miners, sailors, soldiers, spies, missionaries, preachers, etc.)

To what does the author attribute safety to? Why do you think this is so?

Verse 4

Who has promised "good" to the author?

Where does this author secure hope?

What will be the author's "Shield and Portion"?

Verse 5

Discuss and explain this verse.

It would seem to contain many contradictions (things that are seemingly untrue like mortal life ceasing yet having a life of joy and peace). How do you explain this?

Verse 6

Is the author dismissing the importance of creation (e.g., the earth) in the first line or is the author referring to something else?

Who called on the author?

Verse 7

Human life does not last ten thousand (10,000) years. To what is the author referring?

What will be sung?

What Does the Bible Say?

Find Scripture proofs for each of the assertions or statements made for each of the five verses and the refrain.

Discuss how this verse relates to this poem. “He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.” (John 9:25)

The Author/Poet

Based on what you have studied about this poem so far, would you guess that the author was a Christian or a humanist? How did you arrive at your decision?

The author’s name for this poem or lyric is John Newton (1725-1807). He was born 24 July 1725, in London, England, and died 21 December 1807, in London, England. He was buried at St. Mary Woolnoth Church, Lombard Street, London. When Mr. Newton was 7, his mother died. A few years later, at the age of 11, John went to sea with his father. He began to live his life recklessly and was, for 15 months, a mistreated slave in South Africa. It would seem two experiences heavily influenced Mr. Newton in becoming a Christian. The first was reading Thomas à Kempis and the second was his experience steering a ship on a wild sea where he almost lost his life at age 23. Afterwards, he spent six years maturing in the faith while being the captain of a slave ship. Later, Mr. Newton went to Liverpool studying Hebrew and Greek and meeting with Whitefield, Wesley and formed a life long friendship with William Cowper. He became ordained and a curate at Olney, Buckinghamshire, in 1764. He would write under the *pseudonym* Omicron. What is most telling about this man is his epitaph which reads:

JOHN NEWTON, Clerk
Once an infidel and libertine
A servant of slaves in Africa,
Was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour
JESUS CHRIST,
restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach
the Gospel which he had long laboured to destroy.
He ministered,
Near sixteen years in Olney, in Bucks,
And twenty-eight years in this Church.

Epitaph Vocabulary: infidel, libertine, restored, pardoned, appointed

Geography

Locate London, England, South Africa, and Liverpool on a globe, map and atlas.

Challenge Can you find Olney, Buckinghamshire (England) on a map or in an atlas?

Compare/contrast the weather of England and South Africa with your own weather for one week.

Make a meal from England and/or South Africa to serve your family.

Activities

- 1) Be a detective! Go to the library to learn more about John Newton, Thomas à Kempis, George Whitefield, Wesley and William Cowper. Why do you think individuals like Thomas à Kempis, Whitefield, Wesley and William Cowper would have such a huge impact on Mr. Newton? If these individuals were your next door neighbors, do you think they would have an impact on you?
- 2) Make your own book! Without making an image of Christ, draw pictures representing each verse and the refrain. (Note: that will be seven different illustrations). With construction paper and other items readily available at home, make a title page with the name of the song and the author's name which will be your book's cover. You may want to illustrate your cover and include the poem in your book.
- 3) Make your own play! Re-enact with your siblings or friends the event discussed in this poem. Keep it lively, simple, and short. You may want to end your play with singing a rousing chorus of this poem or reading Scripture verses. Videotape your creation.
- 4) Radio Drama! With a handheld tape recorder, create your own radio show dramatizing the historical event this poem reported.
- 5) Be a Reporter ! Either with your family camcorder or with a handheld tape recorder, "interview" various individuals connected with Mr. Newton's life (e.g., parents, fellow sailors, Thomas à Kempis, Whitefield, Wesley, William Cowper, members of Mr. Newton's church, etc.). In order to have the fast paced style of a reporter, watch and/or listen to the news with your parents' permission. Keep the interviews lively, quick, and to the point.

Remain objective! Being objective means just reporting the facts and not giving your opinion of the situation.
- 6) What is one of the things you most enjoy? Is it literature? math? science? sports? cooking? Take that area of interest and relate that to this poem. If you enjoy dance, for example, develop a dance routine that physically expresses the sentiments of this poem. If you enjoy shop, create something out of wood that helps to clarify this poem. Do you enjoy creating stories? Write a story based on any time period you desire that expresses the sentiments of this poem. Do you enjoy creating things in the kitchen? Make an ancient meal from this time or develop your own meal that symbolizes the many different points this poem makes.
- 7) Poster. Create a poster illustrating the before and after (becoming a Christian) of Mr. Newton's life.
- 8) The poem mentions a "Shield and Portion." Create a design for your family crest on a shield.