

"LISPETH" a short-story by Rudyard Kipling, from the collection entitled *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888).

Worksheet

Characters

1. Fill in the chart below with brief descriptions of each character.

Character	Brief description of character
Lispeth	
The Chaplain's wife	
The young Englishman	

- How does the narrator awaken our interest in Lispeth (pay particular attention to the physical description l. 33 to 39)?
- Reread the passage beginning with "The Chaplain's wife" (l. 100) and ending with "He will come back" (l. 110), then fill in the chart below with appropriate adverbs from the list.

• Kindly	• Cruelly	• Wrongly	• Blamelessly	• Wisely	• Dishonestly
• Sensibly	• Foolishly	• Unforgivably	• other adverbs of your own		

In Lispeth opinion	the Chaplain's wife acted	
In the narrator's opinion		
In her own opinion		
In your opinion		

Setting

- Where is the story set? Find and quote references to the physical setting in the story.
- When does the story take place? Find and quote the references to the temporal setting in the story.

Structure

- How much time is covered in the course of the story?
- Fill in the chart below, placing the period of narrative time covered opposite the appropriate passage.

Passages in the text	Periods of time covered
From the beginning to "the unknown world" (l. 51)	
From "One day" (l. 52) to "She never came back" (l. 149)	
From "She took to her own unclean people" (l. 151) to the end.	

- How would you define the structure of the story? Complete the following sentence with one or more of the adjectives below.

The story's structure is _____

complex – simple – traditional - innovative

Symbolism

- Lispeth's beauty, stature, and strength have a literal value in that they awaken the reader's interest. Do they also have a symbolic value?
- The young Englishman has come to India to "hunt for plants and butterflies". Does this have any symbolic significance?

Language

- Fill in the chart below with adverbs from the list to describe the ways in which two characters speak.

• Straightforwardly	• Honestly	• Dishonestly
• Complacently (avec suffisance)	• Conventionally	• Simply

Lispeth	speaks	
The Chaplain's wife		

- Look at the passage beginning "He was a traveller" (l. 80) and ending "young and small" (l. 82). What is the difference between a "traveller in the east" and a "globe-trotter"?
- The chart contains words and phrases used in the narrative to describe Lispeth when she was seventeen years old. Complete the chart by placing "the narrator's view of Lispeth" at the head of the other, as appropriate. (n.b.: it could be argued that one of the phrases is in the wrong group. Can you tell which one?)

[like] Diana of the Romans	uncivilizes
A stately goddess	a savage
Like the Princesses in fairy tales	a heathen
	an infidel

Narrator

- Which of the following describes this narrative (find evidence in the text to support your view)?
 - The story is told by an omniscient narrator.
 - The story is told by a third-person narrator describing events from one character's point of view.
 - The story is a first-person narrative.
- Which of the following adjectives best describes the narrator of this story narrative (find evidence in the text to support your choice)?
 - Naive
 - Ironic
 - Reticent
 - Omniscient
- Complete the following sentence with one of the options offered below:

The events in the story are related _____

- In chronological order
- From a moment in the past

Themes

- Discuss the issue of lying in the story.
- Look at the epigraph to "Lispeth" (the short poem that introduces the story). How is Christianity represented in the story?
- What are the political implications of the story, that is to say, what view does the story imply of British rule in India.