*from* Don Quixote

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra

**(1547–1616)**

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra led a life that was every bit as exciting as that of his famous character, the knight-errant Don Quixote . Cervantes himself also displayed, on occasion, the almost fool hardy bravery that was so characteristic of his absurd knight.

**Military Career**

Born into a poor family, Cervantes received little education. In 1570, he joined the Spanish army and shortly afterward fought in the battle of Lepanto against the Turks. This naval battle saw the destruction of the Turkish fleet by the combined forces of Spain and Italy.

Cervantes was among the 30,000 soldiers transported by the Spanish and Italian galleys. Although he was ill when the battle began, he plunged into the fighting and was wounded twice in the chest and once in the left arm. For the rest of his life, he regarded his maimed left arm as a badge of honor.

Cervantes went on to fight in a number of other battles, but he was captured by Barbary pirates while he was sailing home from the wars. Sold into slavery in Algiers, he repeatedly tried to escape. Although he was always recaptured, his bravery so impressed the Algerians that they did not put him to death. Believing that Cervantes was a citizen of great importance, his captors demanded a considerable ransom for his release. After he had been a prisoner for five years, the ransom was finally paid, and Cervantes was free to return to Madrid.

**Difficult Times**

Back in Spain, Cervantes pursued an ambitious goal: to become Spain’s most successful dramatist. Although he wrote prolifically, his significant collection of theatrical works was largely overlooked. Cervantes braved difficult economic circumstances during his years as a playwright and eventually found a bookkeeping job with the government to support his large household. Problems with his account books, however, led to his imprisonment on two occasions. According to legend, Cervantes began writing *Don Quixote* during one of these spells in prison.

**A Wealth of Imagination**

When the first part of the novel appeared in 1605, it was a great success. Within only a few years, the novel had been translated into English, French, and a number of other European languages. When a false, or unauthorized, sequel to *Don Quixote* appeared on the market, Cervantes quickly embarked upon the continuation of his story—*Don Quixote, Part II* —which was published in 1615. Despite his appreciable success, Cervantes received only a small sum from his publisher for the works. At the time of his death in 1616, he was still a poor man.

It is clear that Cervantes invested his true wealth—his keen observation, playfulness, and imagination—in the creation of his novel. That is why it remains, as one translator called it, “one of the best adventure stories in the world.” To date, Cervantes’s masterpiece has been published in more than sixty languages, and the novel continues to be read, studied, critiqued, and debated by scholars all around the world.

**Preview**

**Connecting to the Literature**

Literature is filled with dreamers—people who hook their wagons to a star or try to lasso the moon. Perhaps the best-known dreamer of all is Don Quixote de la Mancha, an unlikely hero who gets swept away by the stories he reads and the dreams they inspire.

**Literary Analysis**

**Parody**

A **parody** is a humorous imitation of another, usually serious, work. Most often, a parody uses exaggeration or distortion to ridicule the work, its style, or its author. *Don Quixote* affectionately parodies the literature of chivalry—elaborate stories about knights; their code of honor, courage, and chastity; and their adventures. The central character, for example, makes swords out of oak branches and helmets of cardboard, yet he considers himself a well-dressed knight. As you read, look for details that parody chivalric romances.

**Connecting Literary Elements**

Parodies lend themselves to discussions of **theme,** the central message or idea revealed through a literary work. *Don Quixote* uses parody to explore the idea of reality versus fantasy, prompting readers to ask:

* At what point do flights of fancy interfere with reality?
* Is a life of hard-nosed realism more rewarding than a life filled with fantastic adventures?

Note thematic questions like these as you read.

**Reading Strategy**

**Comparing and Contrasting**

**Comparing and contrasting** an ideal knight and Don Quixote’s version means looking for similarities and differences between the two. Before you read, use a chart like the one shown to list the details you know about an ideal knight, such as his armor, squire, horse, and adventures. Then, as you read, record the details from Don Quixote’s world. Identify any conclusions you can draw from comparing and contrasting those details.

**Vocabulary Builder**

* constitution *n.* structure or makeup of a person or thing
* conjectures *n.* guesses
* infatuation *n.* foolish or shallow feelings of affection
* ingenuity *n.* cleverness; inventiveness
* incongruous *adj.* inconsistent; lacking in harmony
* appropriate *v.* take for one’s own use

* illustrious *adj.* distinguished or outstanding

## Background

* In traditional courtly romances, a knight-errant is a great fighter who has earned renown in jousting and tournaments. He spends his life wandering the land, performing deeds of bravery in the name of a noble woman who can never return his affection. This impossible love and its accompanying code of honor justify the knight’s death-defying adventures. Don Quixote sees himself as such a knight, and no reality can resist his fabulous imagination.

## Chapter I

* *Which treats of the station in life and the pursuits of the famous gentleman, Don Quixote de la Mancha.*
* In a village of La Mancha**1**the name of which I have no desire to recall, there lived not so long ago one of those gentlemen who always have a lance in the rack, an ancient buckler, a skinny nag, and a greyhound for the chase. A stew with more beef than mutton in it, chopped meat for his evening meal, scraps for a Saturday, lentils on Friday, and a young pigeon as a special delicacy for Sunday, went to account for three-quarters of his income. The rest of it he laid out on a broadcloth greatcoat and velvet stockings for feast days, with slippers to match, while the other days of the week he cut a figure in a suit of the finest homespun. Living with him were a housekeeper in her forties, a niece who was not yet twenty, and a lad of the field and market place who saddled his horse for him and wielded the pruning knife.
* 
* This gentleman of ours was close on to fifty, of a robust **constitution** but with little flesh on his bones and a face that was lean and gaunt. He was noted for his early rising, being very fond of the hunt. They will try to tell you that his surname was Quijada or Quesada—there is some difference of opinion among those who have written on the subject—but according to the most likely**conjectures** we are to understand that it was really Quejana. But all this means very little so far as our story is concerned, providing that in the telling of it we do not depart one iota from the truth.
* You may know, then, that the aforesaid gentleman, on those occasions when he was at leisure, which was most of the year around, was in the habit of reading books of chivalry with such pleasure and devotion as to lead him almost wholly to forget the life of a hunter and even the administration of his estate. So great was his curiosity and **infatuation** in this regard that he even sold many acres of tillable land in order to be able to buy and read the books that he loved, and he would carry home with him as many of them as he could obtain.
* Of all those that he thus devoured none pleased him so well as the ones that had been composed by the famous Feliciano de Silva, whose lucid prose style and involved conceits**2**were as precious to him as pearls; especially when he came to read those tales of love and amorous challenges that are to be met with in many places, such a passage as the following, for example: “The reason of the unreason that afflicts my reason, in such a manner weakens my reason that I with reason lament me of your comeliness.” And he was similarly affected when his eyes fell upon such lines as these: “. . . the high Heaven of your divinity divinely fortifies you with the stars and renders you deserving of that desert your greatness doth deserve.”
* The poor fellow used to lie awake nights in an effort to disentangle the meaning and make sense out of passages such as these, although Aristotle himself would not have been able to understand them, even if he had been resurrected for that sole purpose. He was not at ease in his mind over those wounds that Don Belianís gave and received; for no matter how great the surgeons who treated him, the poor fellow must have been left with his face and his entire body covered with marks and scars. Nevertheless, he was grateful to the author for closing the book with the promise of an interminable adventure to come; many a time he was tempted to take up his pen and literally finish the tale as had been promised, and he undoubtedly would have done so, and would have succeeded at it very well, if his thoughts had not been constantly occupied with other things of greater moment.
* He often talked it over with the village curate,**3**who was a learned man, a graduate of Sigüenza,**4**and they would hold long discussions as to who had been the better knight, Palmerin of England or Amadis of Gaul; but Master Nicholas, the barber of the same village, was in the habit of saying that no one could come up to the Knight of Phoebus, and that if anyone *could* compare with him it was Don Galaor, brother of Amadis of Gaul, for Galaor was ready for anything—he was none of your finical**5**knights, who went around whimpering as his brother did, and in point of valor he did not lag behind him.
* In short, our gentleman became so immersed in his reading that he spent whole nights from sundown to sunup and his days from dawn to dusk in poring over his books, until, finally, from so little sleeping and so much reading, his brain dried up and he went completely out of his mind. He had filled his imagination with everything that he had read, with enchantments, knightly encounters, battles, challenges, wounds, with tales of love and its torments, and all sorts of impossible things, and as a result had come to believe that all these fictitious happenings were true; they were more real to him than anything else in the world. He would remark that the Cid Ruy Díaz**6**had been a very good knight, but there was no comparison between him and the Knight of the Flaming Sword, who with a single backward stroke had cut in half two fierce and monstrous giants. He preferred Bernardo del Carpio, who at Roncesvalles had slain Roland despite the charm the latter bore, availing himself of the stratagem which Hercules employed when he strangled Antaeus, the son of Earth, in his arms.
* 
* He had much good to say for Morgante who, though he belonged to the haughty, overbearing race of giants, was of an affable disposition and well brought up. But, above all, he cherished an admiration for Rinaldo of Montalbán, especially as he beheld him sallying forth from his castle to rob all those that crossed his path, or when he thought of him overseas stealing the image of Mohammed which, so the story has it, was all of gold. And he would have liked very well to have had his fill of kicking that traitor Galalón, a privilege for which he would have given his housekeeper with his niece thrown into the bargain.
* At last, when his wits were gone beyond repair, he came to conceive the strangest idea that ever occurred to any madman in this world. It now appeared to him fitting and necessary, in order to win a greater amount of honor for himself and serve his country at the same time, to become a knight-errant and roam the world on horseback, in a suit of armor; he would go in quest of adventures, by way of putting into practice all that he had read in his books; he would right every manner of wrong, placing himself in situations of the greatest peril such as would redound to the eternal glory of his name. As a reward for his valor and the might of his arm, the poor fellow could already see himself crowned Emperor of Trebizond**7**at the very least; and so, carried away by the strange pleasure that he found in such thoughts as these, he at once set about putting his plan into effect.
* 
* The first thing he did was to burnish up some old pieces of armor, left him by his great-grandfather, which for ages had lain in a corner, moldering and forgotten. He polished and adjusted them as best he could, and then he noticed that one very important thing was lacking: there was no closed helmet, but only a morion, or visorless headpiece, with turned up brim of the kind foot soldiers wore. His **ingenuity** , however, enabled him to remedy this, and he proceeded to fashion out of cardboard a kind of half-helmet, which, when attached to the morion, gave the appearance of a whole one. True, when he went to see if it was strong enough to withstand a good slashing blow, he was somewhat disappointed; for when he drew his sword and gave it a couple of thrusts, he succeeded only in undoing a whole week’s labor. The ease with which he had hewed it to bits disturbed him no little, and he decided to make it over. This time he placed a few strips of iron on the inside, and then, convinced that it was strong enough, refrained from putting it to any further test; instead, he adopted it then and there as the finest helmet ever made.
* 
* After this, he went out to have a look at his nag; and although the animal had more *cuartos,* or cracks, in its hoof than there are quarters in a real,**8**and more blemishes than Gonela’s steed which *tantum pellis et ossa fuit,* **9**it nonetheless looked to its master like a far better horse than Alexander’s Bucephalus or the Babieca of the Cid.**10**He spent all of four days in trying to think up a name for his mount; for—so he told himself—seeing that it belonged to so famous and worthy a knight, there was no reason why it should not have a name of equal renown. The kind of name he wanted was one that would at once indicate what the nag had been before it came to belong to a knight-errant and what its present status was; for it stood to reason that, when the master’s worldly condition changed, his horse also ought to have a famous, high-sounding appellation, one suited to the new order of things and the new profession that it was to follow.
* After he in his memory and imagination had made up, struck out, and discarded many names, now adding to and now subtracting from the list, he finally hit upon “Rocinante,” a name that impressed him as being sonorous and at the same time indicative of what the steed had been when it was but a hack,**11**whereas now it was nothing other than the first and foremost of all the hacks in the world.
* Having found a name for his horse that pleased his fancy, he then desired to do as much for himself, and this required another week, and by the end of that period he had made up his mind that he was henceforth to be known as Don Quixote, which, as has been stated, has led the authors of this veracious history to assume that his real name must undoubtedly have been Quijada, and not Quesada as others would have it. But remembering that the valiant Amadis was not content to call himself that and nothing more, but added the name of his kingdom and fatherland that he might make it famous also, and thus came to take the name Amadis of Gaul, so our good knight chose to add his place of origin and become “Don Quixote de la Mancha”; for by this means, as he saw it, he was making very plain his lineage and was conferring honor upon his country by taking its name as his own.
* 
* And so, having polished up his armor and made the morion over into a closed helmet, and having given himself and his horse a name, he naturally found but one thing lacking still: he must seek out a lady of whom he could become enamored; for a knight-errant without a ladylove was like a tree without leaves or fruit, a body without a soul.
* “If,” he said to himself, “as a punishment for my sins or by a stroke of fortune I should come upon some giant hereabouts, a thing that very commonly happens to knights-errant, and if I should slay him in a hand-to-hand encounter or perhaps cut him in two, or, finally, if I should vanquish and subdue him, would it not be well to have someone to whom I may send him as a present, in order that he, if he is living, may come in, fall upon his knees in front of my sweet lady, and say in a humble and submissive tone of voice, ‘I, lady, am the giant Caraculiambro, lord of the island Malindrania, who has been overcome in single combat by that knight who never can be praised enough, Don Quixote de la Mancha, the same who sent me to present myself before your Grace that your Highness may dispose of me as you see fit’?”
* 
* Oh, how our good knight reveled in this speech, and more than ever when he came to think of the name that he should give his lady! As the story goes, there was a very good-looking farm girl who lived near by, with whom he had once been smitten, although it is generally believed that she never knew or suspected it. Her name was Aldonza Lorenzo, and it seemed to him that she was the one upon whom he should bestow the title of mistress of his thoughts. For her he wished a name that should not be **incongruous** with his own and that would convey the suggestion of a princess or a great lady; and, accordingly, he resolved to call her “Dulcinea del Toboso,” she being a native of that place. A musical name to his ears, out of the ordinary and significant, like the others he had chosen for himself and his appurtenances.

## Critical Reading

* **1. Respond:**What do you find most humorous about Don Quixote’s behavior? Why?
* **2. (a) Recall:**What name does Don Quixote choose for his horse?**(b) Infer:**Identify two considerations Don Quixote makes as he chooses names.**(c)Speculate:**In what way might a simple change of name affect Don Quixote’s entire world?
* **3. (a) Recall:**Who is Aldonza Loreno?**(b) Analyze:**What role will she play in Don Quixote’s adventures?**(c) Compare:**In what way does she fulfill the stereotype of a knight’s ladylove?
* **4. (a) Make a Judgment:**What theme do you think Don Quixote embodies?**(b) Support:**Which details in Chapter I reflect that theme?
* **5. Evaluate:**Do you consider Don Quixote insane or the noble victim of an overactive imagination? Explain.

## Chapter VII

*Of the second sally of our good knight, Don Quixote de la Mancha.*

. . . He remained at home very tranquilly for a couple of weeks, without giving sign of any desire to repeat his former madness. During that time he had the most pleasant conversations with his two old friends, the curate and the barber, on the point he had raised to the effect that what the world needed most was knights-errant and a revival of chivalry. The curate would occasionally contradict him and again would give in, for it was only by means of this artifice that he could carry on a conversation with him at all.

In the meanwhile Don Quixote was bringing his powers of persuasion to bear upon a farmer who lived near by, a good man—if this title may be applied to one who is poor—but with very few wits in his head. The short of it is, by pleas and promises, he got the hapless rustic to agree to ride forth with him and serve him as his squire.**1**Among other things, Don Quixote told him that he ought to be more than willing to go, because no telling what adventure might occur which would win them an island, and then he (the farmer) would be left to be the governor of it. As a result of these and other similar assurances, Sancho Panza forsook his wife and children and consented to take upon himself the duties of squire to his neighbor.



Next, Don Quixote set out to raise some money, and by selling this thing and pawning that and getting the worst of the bargain always, he finally scraped together a reasonable amount. He also asked a friend of his for the loan of a buckler and patched up his broken helmet as well as he could. He advised his squire, Sancho, of the day and hour when they were to take the road and told him to see to laying in a supply of those things that were most necessary, and, above all, not to forget the saddlebags. Sancho replied that he would see to all this and added that he was also thinking of taking along with him a very good ass that he had, as he was not much used to going on foot.

With regard to the ass, Don Quixote had to do a little thinking, trying to recall if any knight-errant had ever had a squire thus asininely mounted. He could not think of any but nevertheless he decided to take Sancho with the intention of providing him with a nobler steed as soon as occasion offered; he had but to**appropriate** the horse of the first discourteous knight he met. Having furnished himself with shirts and all the other things that the innkeeper had recommended, he and Panza rode forth one night unseen by anyone and without taking leave of wife and children, housekeeper or niece. They went so far that by the time morning came they were safe from discovery had a hunt been started for them.



Mounted on his ass, Sancho Panza rode along like a patriarch, with saddlebags and flask, his mind set upon becoming governor of that island that his master had promised him. Don Quixote determined to take the same route and road over the Campo de Montiel**2**that he had followed on his first journey; but he was not so uncomfortable this time, for it was early morning and the sun’s rays fell upon them slantingly and accordingly did not tire them too much.



“Look, Sir Knight-errant,” said Sancho, “your Grace should not forget that island you promised me; for no matter how big it is, I’ll be able to govern it right enough.”

“I would have you know, friend Sancho Panza,” replied Don Quixote, “that among the knights-errant of old it was a very common custom to make their squires governors of the islands or the kingdoms that they won, and I am resolved that in my case so pleasing a usage shall not fall into desuetude.**3**I even mean to go them one better; for they very often, perhaps most of the time, waited until their squires were old men who had had their fill of serving their masters during bad days and worse nights, whereupon they would give them the title of count, or marquis at most, of some valley or province more or less. But if you live and I live, it well may be that within a week I shall win some kingdom with others dependent upon it, and it will be the easiest thing in the world to crown you king of one of them. You need not marvel at this, for all sorts of unforeseen things happen to knights like me, and I may readily be able to give you even more than I have promised.”

“In that case,” said Sancho Panza, “if by one of those miracles of which your Grace was speaking I should become king, I would certainly send for Juana Gutiérrez, my old lady, to come and be my queen, and the young ones could be infantes.”**4**

“There is no doubt about it,” Don Quixote assured him.

“Well, I doubt it,” said Sancho, “for I think that even if God were to rain kingdoms upon the earth, no crown would sit well on the head of Mari Gutiérrez,**5**for I am telling you, sir, as a queen she is not worth two maravedis.**6**She would do better as a countess, God help her.”



“Leave everything to God, Sancho,” said Don Quixote, “and he will give you whatever is most fitting; but I trust you will not be so pusillanimous**7**as to be content with anything less than the title of viceroy.”

“That I will not,” said Sancho Panza, “especially seeing that I have in your Grace so **illustrious** a master who can give me all that is suitable to me and all that I can manage.”

## Chapter VIII

*Of the good fortune which the valorous Don Quixote had in the terrifying and never-before-imagined adventure of the windmills, along with other events that deserve to be suitably recorded.*

At this point they caught sight of thirty or forty windmills which were standing on the plain there, and no sooner had Don Quixote laid eyes upon them than he turned to his squire and said, “Fortune is guiding our affairs better than we could have wished; for you see there before you, friend Sancho Panza, some thirty or more lawless giants with whom I mean to do battle. I shall deprive them of their lives, and with the spoils from this encounter we shall begin to enrich ourselves; for this is righteous warfare, and it is a great service to God to remove so accursed a breed from the face of the earth.”

“What giants?” said Sancho Panza.

“Those that you see there,” replied his master, “those with the long arms some of which are as much as two leagues**8**in length.”

“But look, your Grace, those are not giants but windmills, and what appear to be arms are their wings which, when whirled in the breeze, cause the millstone to go.”

“It is plain to be seen,” said Don Quixote, “that you have had little experience in this matter of adventures. If you are afraid, go off to one side and say your prayers while I am engaging them in fierce, unequal combat.”



Saying this, he gave spurs to his steed Rocinante, without paying any heed to Sancho’s warning that these were truly windmills and not giants that he was riding forth to attack. Nor even when he was close upon them did he perceive what they really were, but shouted at the top of his lungs, “Do not seek to flee, cowards and vile creatures that you are, for it is but a single knight with whom you have to deal!”

At that moment a little wind came up and the big wings began turning.

“Though you flourish as many arms as did the giant Briareus,” said Don Quixote when he perceived this, “you still shall have to answer to me.”

He thereupon commended himself with all his heart to his lady Dulcinea, beseeching her to succor him in this peril; and, being well covered with his shield and with his lance at rest, he bore down upon them at a full gallop and fell upon the first mill that stood in his way, giving a thrust at the wing, which was whirling at such a speed that his lance was broken into bits and both horse and horseman went rolling over the plain, very much battered indeed. Sancho upon his donkey came hurrying to his master’s assistance as fast as he could, but when he reached the spot, the knight was unable to move, so great was the shock with which he and Rocinante had hit the ground.



“God help us!” exclaimed Sancho, “did I not tell your Grace to look well, that those were nothing but windmills, a fact which no one could fail to see unless he had other mills of the same sort in his head?”

“Be quiet, friend Sancho,” said Don Quixote. “Such are the fortunes of war, which more than any other are subject to constant change. What is more, when I come to think of it, I am sure that this must be the work of that magician Frestón, the one who robbed me of my study and my books, and who has thus changed the giants into windmills in order to deprive me of the glory of overcoming them, so great is the enmity that he bears me; but in the end his evil arts shall not prevail against this trusty sword of mine.”

“May God’s will be done,” was Sancho Panza’s response. And with the aid of his squire the knight was once more mounted on Rocinante, who stood there with one shoulder half out of joint. And so, speaking of the adventure that had just befallen them, they continued along the Puerto Lápice highway; for there, Don Quixote said, they could not fail to find many and varied adventures, this being a much traveled thoroughfare. The only thing was, the knight was exceedingly downcast over the loss of his lance.

“I remember,” he said to his squire, “having read of a Spanish knight by the name of Diego Pérez de Vargas, who, having broken his sword in battle, tore from an oak a heavy bough or branch and with it did such feats of valor that day, and pounded so many Moors, that he came to be known as Machuca, and he and his descendants from that day forth have been called Vargas y Machuca. I tell you this because I too intend to provide myself with just such a bough as the one he wielded, and with it I propose to do such exploits that you shall deem yourself fortunate to have been found worthy to come with me and behold and witness things that are almost beyond belief.”



“God’s will be done,” said Sancho. “I believe everything that your Grace says; but straighten yourself up in the saddle a little, for you seem to be slipping down on one side, owing, no doubt, to the shaking up that you received in your fall.”

“Ah, that is the truth,” replied Don Quixote, “and if I do not speak of my sufferings, it is for the reason that it is not permitted knights-errant to complain of any wound whatsoever, even though their bowels may be dropping out.”

“If that is the way it is,” said Sancho, “I have nothing more to say; but, God knows, it would suit me better if your Grace did complain when something hurts him. I can assure you that I mean to do so, over the least little thing that ails me—that is, unless the same rule applies to squires as well.”

Don Quixote laughed long and heartily over Sancho’s simplicity, telling him that he might complain as much as he liked and where and when he liked, whether he had good cause or not; for he had read nothing to the contrary in the ordinances of chivalry.**9**Sancho then called his master’s attention to the fact that it was time to eat. The knight replied that he himself had no need of food at the moment, but his squire might eat whenever he chose. Having been granted this permission, Sancho seated himself as best he could upon his beast, and, taking out from his saddlebags the provisions that he had stored there, he rode along leisurely behind his master, munching his victuals and taking a good, hearty swig now and then at the leather flask in a manner that might well have caused the biggest-bellied tavernkeeper of Málaga to envy him. Between drafts he gave not so much as a thought to any promise that his master might have made him, nor did he look upon it as any hardship, but rather as good sport, to go in quest of adventures however hazardous they might be.



The short of the matter is, they spent the night under some trees, from one of which Don Quixote tore off a withered bough to serve him as a lance, placing it in the lance head from which he had removed the broken one. He did not sleep all night long for thinking of his lady Dulcinea; for this was in accordance with what he had read in his books, of men of arms in the forest or desert places who kept a wakeful vigil, sustained by the memory of their ladies fair. Not so with Sancho, whose stomach was full, and not with chicory water. He fell into a dreamless slumber, and had not his master called him, he would not have been awakened either by the rays of the sun in his face or bythe many birds who greeted the coming of the new day with their merry song.

Upon arising, he had another go at the flask, finding it somewhat more flaccid than it had been the night before, a circumstance which grieved his heart, for he could not see that they were on the way to remedying the deficiency within any very short space of time. Don Quixote did not wish any breakfast; for, as has been said, he was in the habit of nourishing himself on savorous memories. They then set out once more along the road to Puerto Lápice, and around three in the afternoon they came in sight of the pass that bears that name.



“There,” said Don Quixote as his eyes fell upon it, “we may plunge our arms up to the elbow in what are known as adventures. But I must warn you that even though you see me in the greatest peril in the world, you are not to lay hand upon your sword to defend me, unless it be that those who attack me are rabble and men of low degree, in which case you may very well come to my aid; but if they be gentlemen, it is in no wise permitted by the laws of chivalry that you should assist me until you yourself shall have been dubbed a knight.”

“Most certainly, sir,” replied Sancho, “your Grace shall be very well obeyed in this; all the more so for the reason that I myself am of a peaceful disposition and not fond of meddling in the quarrels and feuds of others. However, when it comes to protecting my own person, I shall not take account of those laws of which you speak, seeing that all laws, human and divine, permit each one to defend himself whenever he is attacked.”

“I am willing to grant you that,” assented Don Quixote, “but in this matter of defending me against gentlemen you must restrain your natural impulses.”

“I promise you I shall do so,” said Sancho. “I will observe this precept as I would the Sabbath day.”

## Critical Reading

**1. Respond:**Which aspects of Don Quixote’s appearance or behavior—if any—do you find endearing? Explain.

**2. (a) Recall:**What promise does Don Quixote make to convince Sancho Panza to be his squire?**(b) Speculate:**Do you think this promise will be fulfilled? Why or why not?

**3. (a) Recall:**What reasons does Don Quixote give for fighting the windmills?**(b) Infer:**What characteristics of the windmills convince him that they are worthy foes?**(c) Interpret:**What does Sancho Panza mean when he says Don Quixote has “other mills of the same sort in his head”?

**4. (a) Infer:**Why is Sancho Panza a particularly helpful squire to Don Quixote?**(b) Draw Conclusions:**Why do you think Sancho Panza stays with Don Quixote even after realizing that Don Quixote has lost touch with reality?

**5. Speculate:**For which careers might it be considered an asset to have a vivid imagination like that of Don Quixote?

**Quick Review**

A **parody** is an imitation of another work of literature for amusement or for instruction.

A **theme** is a central message or idea revealed through a literary work.

To **compare and contrast,** note the similarities and differences between two things.

### Literary Analysis

**Parody**

**1. (a)**List three characteristics of a medieval romance that *Don Quixote***parodies.** **(b)**What details indicate that the parody is affectionate or gentle?**(c)**(c) In what way does Cervantes suggest his admiration for chivalric tales? Explain.

**2.**Using the chart shown below, identify details from the selection that parody elements of a real knight’s life. Indicate how Don Quixote’s personality or circumstances influence the parody.

### Connecting Literary Elements

**3. (a)**Identify three events that suggest a struggle between reality and fantasy.**(b)**What **theme** or insight into life do these events reveal?

**4. (a)**In what ways does Don Quixote embody the theme that a vivid imagination makes a life richer?**(b)**Do you agree with this theme? Why or why not?

**5. (a)**List two ways in which Sancho Panza is a realist—someone who sees the world as it is.**(b)**What theme does he embody?

### Reading Strategy

**Comparing and Contrasting**

**6. (a) Compare and contrast** the appearance, attitude, and motives of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza as they embark on their quest.**(b)**Do you think their personalities complement each other, or are their differences obstacles to be overcome? Explain.

**7.**In what ways is Don Quixote, at least in his own mind, similar to the knights of old?

### Extend Understanding

**8. Career Connection:** What careers require the kind of determination Don Quixote needed to become a knight? Explain.