

Name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

SCORE/GRADE:

BIBLIOSCOPIC DIALOGUE: *Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge*

On the lines below, write an **interpretive question** about this story's contribution to a discussion of the idea of **memory** and summarize three (3) possible answers based on the details of the story. An interpretive question is an open-ended discussion question *to which there are several possible answers that can be supported by the text.*

Interpretive Question:

Upon what does memory depend according to the story?

Answer #1

In the story, Miss Nancy's memory depends upon her youth and health. Wilfrid's mother explains the state of the matter to him: "It isn't surprising...After all, she is ninety-six." Nancy is aging, and as she does so, she is losing her memory. In his childishness, Wilfrid struggles to understand memory and to "find" Nancy's again. He assembles a basketful of objects all associated with his own understanding of memory. Sharing his collection, Wilfrid recalls the nature of youthful wonder to Nancy, and she remembers. Her youth is restored by a child.

Answer #2

According to the story, Miss Nancy's memory depends upon her relationships in the community. Alone in the nursing home, she loses touch with the universal experience and begins to forget. Her friendship with Wilfrid is a source of community, which keeps the connection to past and present alive for her. "Then Wilfrid Gordon called on Miss Nancy and gave her each thing one by one. 'What a dear, strange child to bring me all these wonderful things,' thought Miss Nancy. Then she started to remember" (Fox). Nancy's friendship with Wilfrid recalls her own experience and restores her memory. "She bounced the football to Wilfrid Gordon and remembered the day she had met him and all the secrets they had told. And the two of them smiled and smiled because Miss Nancy's memory

had been found again by a small boy, who wasn't very old either" (Fox). According to the story, human relationships preserve memory.

Answer #3

According to the story, memory depends upon an individual's continued connection with the natural world. Removed from daily human experience in the nursing home, Miss Nancy begins to lose vital links to her past. When Wilfrid brings his basket of wonders to her, the natural objects work symbolically to call up her past experience and restore her memory. "Then Wilfrid Gordon called on Miss Nancy and gave her each thing one by one. 'What a dear, strange child to bring me all these wonderful things,' thought Miss Nancy. Then she started to remember" (Fox). The concrete objects Wilfrid shares with Nancy reconnect her with her memories. Nancy "held the warm egg," listened to the seashell, touched the medal, looked at the puppet, and bounced the football. Her physical connection with these symbolic objects recalled her past. Memory depends upon human sensory experience.