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Interpreting the Words of Olaudah Equiano

From: Kidnapped

**Directions:** Write an interpretation of each of the following sentences below into your own words.

1. Generally when the grown people in the neighborhood were gone far in the fields to labor, the children assembled together in some of the neighbors’ premises to play, and commonly some of us used to get up a tree to look for any assailant or kidnapper that might come upon us, for they sometimes took those opportunities of our parents’ absence to attack and carry off as many as they could seize.

**Example**

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| Interpretation: *When the adults were at work and the children were playing, they had someone keep watch to make sure they were not attacked and kidnapped.* |

2. When we went to rest the following night they offered us some victuals, but we refused it, and the only comfort we had was in being in one another’s arms all that night and bathing each other with our tears. But alas! we were soon deprived of even the small comfort of weeping together. The next day proved a day of greater sorrow than I had yet experienced, for my sister and I were then separated while we lay clasped in each other’s arms.

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| Interpretation: |

3. The small relief which her presence gave me from pain was gone, and the wretchedness of my situation was redoubled by my anxiety after her fate and my apprehensions lest her sufferings should be greater than mine, when I could not be with her to alleviate them. . . .

Define - apprehensions:

Define - alleviate:

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| Interpretation: |

4. This filled me with astonishment; and I could scarce help expressing my surprise that the young gentleman should suffer me, who was bound, to eat with him who was free; and not only so, but that he would not at any time either eat or drink till I had taken first, because I was the eldest, which was agreeable to our custom.

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| Interpretation: |

5. It was a change indeed from a state of bliss to a scene which is inexpressible by me, as it discovered to me an element I had never before beheld and till then had no idea of, and wherein such instances of hardship and cruelty continually occurred as I can never reflect on but with horror. . .

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| Interpretation: |