

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*"The Little Prince Reading Study Guide"*A. Vocabulary

*Write new words and phrases from the text. Write the English on one side and the Japanese translation on the other.*

Ten times bigger than	
At last	
prove	
Demand that~	
ephemeral	
In all	

B. Quotes

*Write one or two quotes from the story that made an impression on you. What do you like/dislike about this quote/passage and why?*

1. "'My flower is ephemeral,' the little prince said to himself. 'She only has four thorns to protect herself against the world! And I left her all alone'" (126).

This is a very beautiful and sad quote. At this point, the little prince first begins to realize not only the impermanence of life, but also his love for the flower. Or, it is possible to say that his realization that all things will eventually fade away and die makes him appreciate and love his flower more. However, unfortunately for the little prince, he has left his flower alone. This separation makes the pain of his new discovery more acute.

C. Metaphor and symbolism

*What metaphors and/or symbolism did you identify in the text?*

Textual object	Metaphorical and/or symbolic meaning
Geographer	Scholars and/or scholarship in general
Lamplighters	"Like dancers on a great stage" (128)
Other planets on the LP journey	Earth (people on Earth)

D. Subjects and themes

*Identify some subjects and themes in the story.*

Subjects	Themes
Scholars/scholarship	Scholars often study their subject from afar without really ever experiencing it for themselves. The book indicates that this is a somewhat hypocritical and odd way to go about life, and it suggests that sometimes it would be better to actually experience things, rather than just study them "objectively."
Impermanence	All things are impermanent and fade away (die); therefore, we should treat things with love, respect, and appreciation while there are here.

E. Comprehension questions

*Write between three to five questions about the text content.*

1. Is the geographer a metaphor for anything? If so, what?
2. Why do you think the geographer doesn't actually visit the places that he studies?
3. Is the geographer similar to the other characters that the LP has met thus far? If so, how?
4. What does the little prince's conversation with the geographer make him realize?
5. Consider the narrator's description of Earth. In light of this, how can we interpret the people on the other planet's that the little prince has visited thus far?

F. Summary

*Write a one-paragraph (about ten sentences) summary of the assigned text reading.*

In Chapter 15, the little prince visits the final planet where he finds a geographer. At first, the little prince is excited to learn of the geographer's job. However, the little prince soon realizes that, like the other adults he has met, the geographer is rather strange. In particular, the geographer never actually goes to visit the places that he studies. In place of this, he relies on information gathered from "explorers" who must "prove" to him that the places they have seen are real. Although the little prince is not impressed with the geographer's job, he does learn some other important information: that some things like flowers are not permanent -- they are ephemeral. This realization makes the little prince wish that he hadn't left his flower all alone. After the little prince leaves the geographer's planet, he arrives on the planet Earth. This is the biggest planet yet; however, many of the people there are just like the other adults that he has already met.

### G. Impressions

*Write your impressions of the chapter. Focus especially on the text's use of metaphor and themes.*

In Chapter 15, the little prince meets a geographer. Although the little prince is impressed with the geographer's job at first, he changes his mind when he realizes that the geographer doesn't actually visit the places that he studies. In fact, the geographer is a metaphor for scholars and scholarship in general, and the story subtly pokes fun at the somewhat paradoxical and hypocritical way that many scholars today approach their subjects. In other words, The Little Prince indicates that it would be better to actually experience somethings in person, rather than study them "objectively" from afar and only rely on second-hand information. Moreover, the little prince also discovers that, despite his scholarly air of "objectivity," the geographer is, in fact, much more similar to other adults than he may like to believe.

At first, the little prince exclaims that the geographer's job is "very interesting" and says, "at last, this is a real job" (120). Yet his excitement soon changes to disappointment. "It is not a geographer's job to look for cities or rivers or mountains or oceans or deserts," says the geographer, "a geographer is too important to do that" (122). In other words, instead of visiting the places he studies in person, the geographer relies on second-hand information from "explorers." Moreover, the explorers must present the geographer with "evidence" which the geographer must then verify the veracity of. Of course, this situation bears much similarity to the work of actual scholars today, who often study their subjects from afar without actually going to experience what it is they are writing about. Moreover, considered in this way, *The Little Prince* also throws into question the actual "objectivity" of scholars and the authenticity of their second-hand information and "evidence." The story questions, therefore, whether it is really possible to know something without directly experiencing it.

In addition, the geographer's elitist and detached position vis-a-vis his subjects border on the point of absurdity. Geographers are "too important" to actually visit the places they study, he explains, and he continues to say that "geography books are the most important books of all" (122, 124). With these statements, we see that, in spite of his "objective" appearance, the geographer (scholar) is, in fact, more concerned about his own perceived "importance" rather than discerning the truth of reality. In this sense, the geographer is very similar, indeed, he is the same, to the other adults that the little prince has met thus far. That is to say, he mainly acts out of selfish desire rather than from pure curiosity and in the interest of others.