

### Learning from Experience

1. Mr. Hundert begins his narrative with a list of negations regarding the purpose of the story: “not for my own honor,” “not as a warning,” “Nor do I tell it in apology for St. Benedict’s School” (169). What effect does this beginning of denials have on your perception of the narrator and on your anticipation of the story?
2. Hundert the history teacher gives this explanation for eschewing warnings: “for a man of my calling learns quickly that all warnings are in vain” (169). Perhaps you who are youths and students will have better tact and technique at speaking to your age group. What do you think people of your generation should be warned about? Write a warning that will work, one that people of your generation will heed/listen to. You can choose any form you think most effective: letter, poem, short story, short play, essay, T-shirt, poster, bumper sticker, line sticker, facebook banner, etc.
3. How does the initial pronouncement “This is a story without surprises” turn out as you continue to read?
4. Shelley’s “Ozymandias,” like Hundert’s term project that resulted in the Shutruck-Nahhunte tablet, is designed to teach what to students? In what ways does the narrative of both texts like that of Hundert’s narrative?
5. How does Hundert’s selective rhetoric of certainty (“of course,” “obvious,” “knew”) against uncertainty (“I suppose,” “might”) affect your reading of content couched within either?
6. What is the Mr. Julius Caesar competition to the St. Benedict’s community?
7. Mr. Hundert says that his “first mistake” was giving Sedgewick Bell “an A on a quiz on which he had earned only a B” (181). Do you agree with Hundert that this was his first bad step?
8. What role do parents play in St. Benedict’s School?
9. In the middle of Mr. Julius Caesar, the “tortoiselike” (183) description of Sedgewick’s performance is an allusion to what other competition? How does this analogy enrich the lesson of the St. Benedict’s case?
10. Mr. Hundert is fond of moralizing history. From the beginning of his narrative to his article in *The St. Benedict’s Crier*, he extracts learning points from experience and foists them as lessons upon others. During the Mr. Julius Caesar competition, he says the event should teach audience “that, under fire, discipline produces accurate thought” (182–83). Rewrite the lesson “the twittering boys” might take home.