True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle

**by Avi**

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| **CHAPTER1** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **agog**pg. 5 | “There I became instantly agog at the mass of ships thatlay before us, masts and spars thick as bristles on a brush.” |  |
| **oblige**pg. 5 | “Next, please oblige me by following, and everything shallbe as it is meant to be.” |  |
| **porter**pg. 5 | “A rough-looking porter, laboring behind, carried mytrunk upon his back.” |  |
| **intoxicating**pg. 5 | “Oh yes, the smell of the sea was intoxicating to one who knew little more than the smell of the trim cut lawns andthe fields of the Barrington School.” |  |
| **loathsome**pg.7 | “He spoke the name Jaggery as if it were somethingpositively loathsome.” |  |

1. Notice the description of Mr. Grummage on page five. How are his eyes described? What does this reveal about Mr. Grummage?
2. Reread the description of the *Seahawk*. Give three adjectives that would describe the overall presence of the vessel. (pp. 8-9)
3. While waiting to board the *Seahawk*, what did Charlotte see that reminded her of a sloth? (pg. 9)
4. “Mr. Grummage said, ‘Miss Doyle,’ he said loftily, ‘in my world, judgments as to rights and wrongs are left to my Creator, not to children. Now, be so good as to board the *Seahawk*. At once!’” (pg. 10)
	1. What does this tell us about Mr. Grummage?
	2. Why is “At once!” standing alone? What part of speech is it? What is its purpose?

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| **CHAPTER 2** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **stench**pg. 12 | “And a stench of rot permeated the air.” |   |
| **permeated**pg. 12 | “And a stench of rot permeated the air.” |  |
| **decrepit**pg. 15 | “His clothing, what I could see of it, was even moredecrepit than the previous sailor’s, which is to say, mostly rags and tatters.” |  |
| **privy**pg. 16 | “Privy.” |  |
| **trepidation**pg.16 | “I followed with trepidation, stopping at the threshold tolook about.” |  |
| **niche**pg.16 | “He pulled a cup from a niche, filled it with fragrant tea,and offered it. ” |  |

1. Charlotte protests boarding the *Seahawk* because she would be the only girl. (pg. 11)

“Mr. Grummage responded, ‘Miss Doyle, my orders were clear and allow for no other construction. I met you. I brought you here. I had you placed under the protection of his man, who, …fulfilled his obligation by signing a receipt for you.’ To prove his point Mr. Grummage

waved a piece of paper at me. I might have been a bale of cotton.’”

What further insight does this provide about the character of the person named Mr. Grummage?

1. Why didn’t Charlotte dive off the ship or physically never get on the ship if she felt so strongly about it being wrong for her to be the only girl on the ship? (pg. 12)
2. Notice the word order in the sentence: (pg. 12)

“Like a massive tree rising right out of the floor and up through the ceiling was the main mast.” How does the word order affect the impact of the simile?

1. Why did Charlotte consider her cabin her coffin? (Simile or metaphor?) (pp. 13-14)
2. “She’s too big, isn’t she?” (pg. 13) Who or what is the antecedent of “she”? Personification or hyperbole?
3. Who “looked like the very imp of death in search of souls”? (Simile or metaphor?) (pg. 14)
4. What did Zachariah give Charlotte? (pg. 17)
5. What is a final friend? (pg. 16)

**CHAPTER 3**

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| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **britches**pg. 20 | “All wore the distinctive sailor’s garb of canvas britchesand shirts.” |  |
| **sullenness**pg. 20 | “They were, in all, as sorry a group of mean as I had everseen; glum in expression, defeated in posted, with no character in any eye save sullenness.” |  |
| **chiseled**pg. 20 | “From his fine coat, from his tall beaver hat, from his glossy black boots, from hi clean, chiseled countenance, from the dignified way he carried himself, I knew at once – without having to be told – that this much be CaptainJaggery.” |  |
| **countenance**pg. 20 | “From his fine coat, from his tall beaver hat, from his glossy black boots, from hi clean, chiseled countenance, from the dignified way he carried himself, I knew at once – without having to be told – that this much be CaptainJaggery.” |  |
| **sardonically**pg.21 | “He studied the line of sailors, smiled sardonically, andsaid, “But where, then, is Mr. Cranick?’” |  |
| **swoon**pg. 23 | “I did manage to crawl into the bed. And once there Imust have fallen into some kind of swoon.” |  |
| **beguiling**pg.23 | “Captain Jaggery smiled brilliantly, then laughed – abeguiling, manly laugh. ‘Return to Liverpool, Miss Doyle?’ he said. ‘Out of the question….’” |  |

1. The sails were “bellied out”. What does this mean? Personification? (pg. 19)
2. What kept Charlotte form leaving the ship? (pp. 19-20)
3. “They were, in all, as sorry a group of mean as I had ever seen; glum in expression, defeated in posted, with no character in any eye save sullenness. They were like men recruited from the doormat of Hell.” What does this description imply about Charlotte’s first impression of the crew? (pg. 20)
4. Which crew members absence did Captain Jaggery call an “unlooked-for blessing”? (pg. 21)
5. Captain Jaggery states, “…No, we shall have no democracy here. No parliments. No congressmen. There’s but one master of this ship and that’s me.” (pg. 22) What is a parliament? What is a congress? Why are both mentioned by Captain Jaggery?
6. How sick was Charlotte and who took care of her? (pg. 24)
7. Why did the sight of Captain Jaggery sustain Charlotte? (pg. 24)
8. At this point, from Charlotte’s perspective, who symbolized good/right and who symbolizes bad/wrong?

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| **CHAPTER 4** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **taking liberties**pg. 26 | “Fearing he was taking liberties, I changed the subject.” |  |
| **petitioned**pg. 28 | “‘Now, that the crew,’ he continues all the same, ‘eachand every jack of them – once ashore – petitioned the admiralty courts against the captain.’” |  |

1. Reread the description of the sea on page 25. “…heaving rhythmically like the chest of a discomforted sleeper.” Simile or personification?
2. Who saw Charlotte with the dirk? (pg. 25)
3. What had Captain Jaggery done to Cranick? Why? (pg. 28)
4. “Miss Doyle, I only said other men were kept away.” What does this imply? (pg. 28)
5. Where did Zachariah tell Charlotte to keep the dirk? (pg. 29)

#  CHAPTER 5

1. How was the Captain’s quarters described? (pg. 30-31)
2. What book was open on the Captain’s knee when Charlotte met the Captain for tea? (pg. 31)
3. Why does Captain Jaggery prepare Charlotte for his possible crassness or ill-treatment of the crew? How does he justify his behavior? (pg. 33)
4. Where are the muskets? (pg. 33)
5. What is a round robin? (pg. 34)
6. Where does Captain Jaggery tell Charlotte to put the dirk? (pg. 35)
7. A paradox is a statement that contradicts itself, yet might be true. Is there any hint of a paradox in chapter 5?

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| **CHAPTER 6** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **jigger gaff**pg. 37 | “Tighten all braces, and be ready with the jiggergaff.” |  |
| **laconically**pg. 39 | “More cargo,” he explained laconically. “Rats androaches too. And a foul bilge. That’s where the brig is.” |  |
| **brig**pg. 39 | “More cargo,” he explained laconically. “Rats androaches too. And a foul bilge. That’s where the brig is.” |  |
| **bilge**pg. 39 | “More cargo,” he explained laconically. “Rats androaches too. And a foul bilge. That’s where the brig is.” |  |
| **dexterous**pg. 39 | “Despite his decrepit appearance, Barlow was asdexterous as a monkey.” |  |
| **higgledy-piggledy**pg. 40 | “These goods were piled higgledy-piggledy one atop the other, braced and restrained here and there by ropes and wedges, but mostly held in place by theirown bulk.” |  |

1. “Captain Jaggery was a brilliant and I, a , basked in the reflected glory.” Simile or metaphor? What does this explain about Charlotte’s perspective of Captain Jaggery? (pg. 37)
2. “Despite his decrepit appearance, Barlow was dexterous as a monkey.” Simile or metaphor? What did Barlow do that showed his dexterity and strength? ( pg. 39)
3. What does Mr. Barlow try to warn Charlotte about? What is her reaction? (pg. 41)
4. When Charlotte was taken to her trunk, she observed the surroundings. Avi penned the following imagery to describe what Charlotte saw: “In all directions I saw the kinds of bales, barrels, and boxes I had seen upon the Liverpool docks. The sight was not romantic now. These goods were piled higgledy-piggledy one atop the other, braced and restrained here and there by ropes and wedges, but mostly held in by their own bulk. The who

reminded me of a great tumble of toy blocks jammed into a box.”

* 1. Underline the simile.
	2. Circle the metaphor.
	3. What does Charlotte mean by the sentence, “The sight was not romantic now”?
	4. What is the difference between romanticism and realism?

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| **CHAPTER 7** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **grotesque**pg. 42 | “The closer I inched the more distorted andgrotesque grew the head’s features.” |  |
| **malicious**pg. 43 | “Besides, though I hardly knew the man, he seemedtoo submissive, too beaten about, to be capable of such a malicious trick.” |  |
| **fathom**pg. 44 | “Unable to fathom the mystery I ended up scolding myself, convinced that I was making something outof nothing.” |  |

1. What did Charlotte first believe startled her when she was getting her trunk? (pp. 42-43)
2. After pondering the situation again, what did Charlotte realize? (pp. 43-44)
3. What do both Zachariah and Captain Jaggery claim to want from Charlotte? (pp. 44-45)
4. What is Charlotte’s resolution concerning both men? (pg. 45)

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| **CHAPTER 8** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **duff**pg. 47 | “Twice a week we might have duff, the seaman’sdelight…” |  |
| **yarns**pg. 47 | “Then there were their yarns. I hardly knew or cared which were true and which were not.” |  |
| **naught**pg. 48 | “Zachariah was the oldest of the crew, and his lifehad been naught but sailing.” |  |

1. What three things did Charlotte learn about the men? (pg. 48 – top)
2. What story did the crew like best from Charlotte’s Bible readings? (pp. 48-49)
3. What did Zachariah make for Charlotte? Why? (pp. 48-49)
4. On pages 50-51, give an example of specific wording the Captain uses to speak to the crew.
5. When Charlotte and the Captain had tea, what would Charlotte tell the Captain about the crew? (pg. 51)
6. “The storm was – at first – man-made.” (pg. 52) What does this mean? Is it foreshadowing?

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| **CHAPTER 9** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **accosted**pg. 55 | “I was accosted by a heavy stench of sweat andfilth.” |  |
| **hastily**pg. 55 | “I pulled one out, and hastily shut the chest in hopesthat no one else had seen what I had.” |  |
| **pinoined**pg. 58 | “The instant I saw him, he looked up and pinionedme with a gaze of blatant scrutiny.” |  |
| **affirm**pg. 58 | “Mr. Ewing’s chest,” the captain repeated, exchanging a glace with the first mate as to affirmsomething. |  |

1. What about Mr. Ewing did Charlotte find fascinating? (pg. 53)
2. What did Charlotte offer to get for Ewing? (pg. 53)
3. Where did Charlotte have to go to get it? (pg. 54)
4. When Charlotte retrieved the needle, what did she see that upset her? (pg. 56)
5. After reviewing her experience in the forecastle and accounting for the men she saw, Charlotte came up with an extra person. Who?
6. What did Charlotte rush to tell Captain Jaggery? Who else was present in the Captain’s cabin?

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| **CHAPTER 10** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **aloft**pg. 61 | “Not one sailor was to be seen anywhere, aloft oron deck.” |  |
| **affixed**pg. 61 | “Affixed to its back was a key.” |  |
| **unkempt**pg. 62 | “When I’d seen them on the day we went to seathey seemed unkempt.” |  |
| **mongrel ignorance**pg. 63 | “I should think even you, in your mongrel ignorance, would know the days of piracy are longgone.” |  |
| **putrid eyes**pg. 63 | “Or do you have that much desire to bring back the practice of hanging in chains, of letting men rot sothe crows might peck upon their putrid eyes?” |  |
| **tableau**pg. 64 | “It was then that I saw Zachariah slip from thefrozen tableau and move toward the fallen man.” |  |
| **poor set of curs**pg.65 | “Beyond all that you should know you are a verypoor set of curs. It took only this girl…” |  |

1. What was affixed to the back of Captain Jaggery’s daughter’s portrait? (pg. 61)
2. What happened after Charlotte told Captain Jaggery about the pistol, the needle, and the round robin? Who was the tenth man? (pp. 61-62)
3. After the round robin was announced, what happened to Cranick?
4. What is the purpose of the ship’s log? Why wasn’t Cranick entered into the ship’s log? What does this mean for Cranick’s life?

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| **CHAPTER 11** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **palpable**pg. 68 | “Though the glitter of hatred in their eyes waspalpable enough, no one dared give voice to it.” |  |
| **gumption**pg. 69 | “If you can do no better you’d best stand aside forsomeone who has the gumption.” |  |

1. Who was chosen to be the “example”? (pg. 68)
2. “…the whip shot forward; its tail hissed through the air and spat against Zachariah’s back.” How is this personification? (pg. 68)
3. Explain what action pushed Captain Jaggery to beat Zachariah himself. (pp. 69-71)

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| **CHAPTER 12** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **implacable hatred**pg. 68 | “But it was his eyes that made me shudder. Theyexpressed nothing so much as implacable hatred.” |  |
| **incredulous**pg. 77 | “You?” Fisk said with incredulous scorn. He turnedaway. |  |
| **restitution**pg. 78 | “If only I could make restitution, if only I couldconvince the men that I accepted my responsibility.” |  |

1. Who was to blame for the horrible acts that occurred in chapter 10?
2. What does Charlotte mean when she says she needs to “make amends”?
3. At what point does Charlotte realize she has no support from anyone on the ship? (pg. 76)
4. Charlotte claims she had “no idea” of what the Captain would but Fisk calls her out on it and tells her what? (pg. 78 – top)
5. What does the following mean: “Once again I gave myself up to guilt and remorse”? (pg. 78)
6. With which side did Charlotte choose to stand? (pg. 79)

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| **CHAPTER 13** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **caucus**pg. 82 | “All right then. I’ll go caucus the others.” |  |
| **audacity**pg. 83 | “Having fully committed myself, I was overwhelmed bymy audacity.” |  |
| **maneuvered**pg. 84 | “Now I maneuvered to the outside so that I would beleaning into the rigging and could even rest on it.” |  |

1. What does Foley mean by “a pretty girl”? (pg. 81)
2. What similes are used to describe Charlotte’s hands and Foley’s hands? (pg. 81)
3. What is the royal yard? Why must Charlotte climb it? (pp. 83-84)
4. When Charlotte peered down, the *Seahawk* was like a . (pg. 86)
5. Captain Jaggery pushed through the “knot of men.” What does the word “knot” create for the reader? (pg.88) Is this imagery?

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| **CHAPTER 14** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **acrid**pg. 93 | “’He’s waiting, wanting you to make a mistake,’ Morgan put in, taking a deep pull on his pipe, then filling theforecastle with its acrid smoke.” |  |
| **despot**pg. 95 | “You’ll be seen by everyone as the cruel despot you are!” |  |

1. What ties did Charlotte’s father have to the S*eahawk*? (pg. 90)
2. When Charlotte chose to be one of the crew, Captain Jaggery made a change in the ship’s log. What was it? What did it imply? (pg. 90)
3. “My knowledge of physical labor had been all but nil, of course; hardly a wonder then from that moment I joined the crew I was in pain.” What is the meaning of nil? (pg. 91)
4. What did Captain Jaggery do to provoke Charlotte to shout to him, “’Coward!...Fraud!’” (pg. 95)
5. Why would Grimes insist that Charlotte learn to handle a knife? (pg. 96)
6. What kind of storm blew up? (pg. 96)

**CHAPTER 15**

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| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **pitched and yawed**pg. 97 | “Even as the cry came, the *Seahawk* pitched andyawed violently.” |  |
| **asunder**pg. 97 | “But I awoke to find myself sprawling on the floor,the curtain torn asunder, the forecastle in wildest confusion.” |  |
| **impeding**pg. 100 | “The wind and rain – as well as the tossing motionof the ship – kept impeding me.” |  |
| **ebbing**pg. 104 | “Whatever strength I had was fast ebbing.” |  |

1. How many days had the *Seahawk* been to sea when the storm struck? (pg. 97)
2. “Whether I got out of my hammock on my own, or was tossed by the wrenching motion of the ship, to this day I do not know. But I woke to find myself sprawling on the floor, the curtain torn asunder, the forecastle in wildest confusion. Above my head the lantern swung grotesquely, the men’s possessions skittered about like

 , trunks rolled helter-skelter.” (pg. 97) Simile or metaphor?

1. Who hands Charlotte a knife to cut the sail? (pg. 98)
2. To make matters worse, my wet heavy hair, like a , kept whipping across my face. Metaphor or simile?
3. “The foreyard is one of the biggest sails, one of a sailing ship’s biggest engines. But even though it worked hard for the ship under normal circumstances, in this storm, it strained against her as if it were trying to uproot the mast from the deck.” Why does Avi choose the word “uproot” in this passage? Personification? Metaphor? (pg. 99)
4. What did Charlotte lose in the storm? (pg. 100)
5. Who offered his hand to help Charlotte in the storm? (pg. 101)
6. Who had been found underneath the last torn sail? What had happened? What was he clutching? (pg. 102)
7. “On the edge of sleep I suddenly recalled the visitation of Zachariah and the demise of Mr. Hollybrass. This thought of the dead served to remind me that I was still alive. And that consolation eased my body and calmed my mind. Within seconds I slept the sleep of the dead who wait – with perfect equanimity – upon the final judgment.” (pg. 104) What kind of sleep was this? Why?

**CHAPTER 16**

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| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **blithely**pg. 105 | “For the moment, however, I remained in my hammock, blithely assuming it was simply not yettime for my normal watch.” |  |
| **tumultuous voyage**pg. 109 | “For a brief moment I caught a distant vision of myself as I had been before the Seahawk, beforethis tumultuous voyage.” |  |

1. What was the “type of kindness Barlow or Ewing would have done”? (pg. 105)
2. How long did Charlotte sleep? (pg. 105)
3. Who charged Charlotte with the death of Hollybrass? (pg. 107)
4. Who visited Charlotte in the brig? (pg. 108-109)

#  CHAPTER 17

1. Zachariah is black and a “common sailor.” What challenges could this possibly cause for him in Providence, RI?
2. Who does Charlotte think could have killed Hollybrass?

#  CHAPTER 18

1. What book is used on the ship as the “judgment/the scales of justice?” (pg. 117)
2. Fisk must place his hand upon the book. How does he touch the book? What does this imply? (pg. 117) Simile or metaphor?
3. “ From the solemnity that showed upon their faces, from their nervous fidgets and downcaste eyes, it was clear to me that the men were mightily unsettled by the oath they had been made to take. They could not take the Bible lightly.” (pg. 118) What does this tell us about the members of the crew?
4. What lie does Captain Jaggery catch Charlotte in right at the beginning of her trial? How does he use this against her?
5. What did Charlotte do that got her deemed “unnatural”? (pp. 123-125)
6. What was the verdict of Charlotte’s trial?

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| **CHAPTER 19** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **copiously**pg. 127 | “By the time I was done I was weeping copiously.” |  |
| **punctilious**pg. 127 | “’Punctilious,’ I spat out, remembering the word thecaptain had used to describe himself.” |  |

1. Why did Charlotte keep silent about Zachariah?
2. What had Zachariah and Charlotte started calling each other which showed that neither trusted the other? (pg. 129)
3. How does Charlotte and Zachariah reason through everything and identify Jaggery as the killer?

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| **CHAPTER 20** |
| **WORD** | **SENTENCE FROM TEXT** | **MEANING** |
| **ballast**pg. 138 | “. . . trying to rid myself of the fear that lay likeheavy ballast in the pit of my stomach . . .” |  |

1. “‘Yet, inexplicably, I remained standing there, wasting precious time . . . trying to rid myself of the fear that lay like heavy ballast in the pit of my stomach . . . voices I had heard the first night . . . The suspicion became rather like an invisible rope that restrained me . . . I could not . . . unbind it.’” (pg. 138) Identify the two comparisons within this text. Be specific in your identification and be ready to explain it.
2. Who was to have Captain Jaggery occupied on deck? Who do you believe the voices to have been that Charlotte heard but could not understand on the first night? (pg. 138) Be prepared to provide proof.

#  CHAPTER 21

1. Who had been Captain Jaggery’s informant? (pg. 139)
2. Why did Captain Jaggery despise Charlotte? (pg. 140)
3. Analyze the following passage. Be ready to discuss what it means to “not work according to its own order.” “’The world of a ship, Miss Doyle, is a world not without quarrels,’ he began, ‘sometimes bitter quarrels. But it is, Miss Doyle, a world that does not work according to its own order. ’”
4. Did the majority of the events in chapter 21 occur in the day or night?
5. “The bow seemed to dance under my feet.” (pg. 144) What figurative language is being used in this sentence?
6. What act earned Charlotte the spot as captain of the ship? (pg. 145)
7. Explain the difference in Zachariah addressing Charlotte as “Miss Doyle” on page 145 to his addressing her as “Miss Doyle” on pages 128-129.

#  CHAPTER 22

1. What makes Zachariah and Charlotte unique to the sea? (pg. 147)
2. Zachariah’s advice: “’I can tell you this, Charlotte. A sailor chooses the wind that takes the ship from a safe port. Ah, yes, but once you’re abroad, as you have been, winds have a mind of their own. Be careful, Charlotte, careful of the wind you choose.’” (pg. 147) What does this advice mean?
3. June 16, 1832, Charlotte left , , and on August 17, 1832, Charlotte arrived at , .
4. How did Charlotte’s Seahawk family say good-bye to Charlotte? (pg. 148)
5. How did Charlotte’s Rhode Island family receive her?
6. Complete the chart to compare Charlotte’s family with the ship’s crew.

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| **Rhode Island Family** | **Ship’s Crew** |
| **Members:** | **Crew:** |
| **Attire:** | **Attire:** |
| **Family’s basis for person’s worth:** | **Crew’s basis for a person’s worth:** |

1. Describe life inside the Doyle house in Providence, RI.
2. What did Charlotte’s father do to the journal she had carefully kept?
3. “’When I sent you to the Barrington School for Better Girls, I had been, I believed, reliably informed that it would provide you with an education consistent with your station in life, to say nothing of your expectations and ours for you. I was deceived. Somehow your teachers there filled your mind with the unfortunate capacity to invent the most outlandish, not to say unnatural tales.’” Analyze this quote from Charlotte’s dad, Mr. Doyle. Be ready to share what you have pulled from the quote.
4. Use specific and inferred details from the text to complete the following chart to compare Mr. Doyle and Captain Jaggery.

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| **Mr. Doyle** | **Captain Jaggery** |
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1. What makes a home a “home”