

Read the following story and **make notes in the margin** as you read. Your notes should include

- Comments that show that you **understand** the story and your reactions to it.
- Questions you have that show what you are **wondering** about as you read.
- Notes and observations on **literary elements** (theme, character, plot, setting, narrator, characterization, tone, mood, etc.) and how the author uses them to create an impact.
- Notes and observations on **literary devices** (figurative language, imagery, point of view, foreshadowing, flashbacks, symbolism, etc.) and how the author uses them to create an impact in the story.

Your **margin notes** are part of your score for this assessment.

Student \_\_\_\_\_ SSID \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Class Period \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ School District \_\_\_\_\_

## WALKING HANNAH

*For 41 years, Samson (Sam) Brown has been caring for Hannah, the lone elephant at the Max L. Biedelman Zoo. Despite his loving care, Hannah's feet are nearly ruined from standing on hard concrete all day. To give her a break from the zoo's elephant house, Sam takes her on walks around the grounds. Read this short excerpt from Oregon author Diane Hammond's novel HANNAH'S DREAM to learn more about these characters.*

SAM IMAGINED THE LORD must have been in an odd frame of mind the day He created the Asian elephant. When he first met her, Hannah had reminded him of nothing so much as a worn-out, hip-shot, low-slung, dog-ugly, poorly dressed old floozy in bad shoes. And what about that tail, scrawny thing with a little hairy flywhisk on the end; looked like something picked up late on the last day of a church sale. And yet there was a soul, a thing of pure beauty behind those eyes. Max Biedelman had seen it clearly all those years ago and, walking in her footsteps, Samson Brown saw it shining there every day.

"Come on, sugar," he said, handing Hannah half a banana as she went through the gate leading out of the elephant yard and into the visitor area. She wore no harness or restraint of any kind, and she never had. Sam carried an elephant hook, a short stick with a blunt metal hook on the end, that had once belonged to Max Biedelman. He brought it along more out of habit than anything else. Hannah was like a big, placid dog padding along beside him on her poor feet. They walked at least once a day when the weather was fine and often when it wasn't, because Sam thought it did her good to walk on grass or even the asphalt paths when she could—anything softer than concrete. And it gave her a change of scene.

Surprised zoo visitors cut wide paths around them, or followed alongside whispering to each other, as they walked all the way up the hill past the rhino,

*Notes on my thoughts,  
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around the tapirs and past the monkeys and the marmosets, shooing a couple of wandering peacocks out of the way, before they headed back down to the elephant barn, which was nestled in a small depression at the bottom of the hill. Sam stayed on Hannah's right side—her seeing side—so she'd know that he was there, watching out for her. She might be big, but she was timid even after all these years.

He heard someone call, "How come you're walking that elephant, mister?" A boy appeared at his elbow, a small but good-looking kid about eleven years old.

"How come you're walking around the zoo?" Sam asked.

The boy shrugged, falling into step beside Sam. "To see stuff."

"Guess you answered your own question, then," Sam said.

"Can she see me? She's awful big."

"She can see you just fine. Say hello to her. Her name's Hannah."

The boy lifted a hand self-consciously. "Hey."

"Hey, *Hannah*. Elephant's got the right to expect good manners."

"Hey, Hannah."

Sam handed Hannah a yam. "What's your name?" he asked the boy.

"Reginald."

"Reginald. That's a pretty big name for a small fry."

"I'm not small," the boy said puffing up a little.

"Your daddy a big man?" Sam asked him.

"He's big." The boy's eyes got shifty: no daddy.

"You got any questions about Hannah you want to ask me?"

The boy looked around Sam at Hannah chewing placidly on a cantaloupe half. "She got teeth? She don't look like it."

"She's got teeth the same as you just not as many," Sam said. "She's got four; two on top, two on bottom. Big molars, look like your sneakers, maybe; about that size. She loses one, she gets another in. Let me see your teeth, Reginald."

The boy bared beautiful, white, even teeth in healthy pink gums. Someone was taking good care of him.

"So how come her chin's all wobbly?" the boy asked.

"That's not her chin, it's her lip," Sam said, slipping Hannah a couple of apple quarters. Hannah chewed with great solemnity. "She can make that lip work just like a funnel. You ever seen someone pour oil into a car engine using a funnel? Same thing—she doesn't lose any food or drink that way, it all goes in just where it's supposed to. You grow up in a hot jungle, you don't want to miss even a drop of that cool stream."

"Give her one of those cantaloupes," Reginald said.

"You want to give it to her?"

"Yeah, I'll give it to her," the boy said, voice shaking a little.

Sam put a cantaloupe half in Reginald's hand. "Come around me, now, so you can get closer to her. Move slow, so you don't startle her.



Girl doesn't like being startled."  
The boy went to stand behind Sam.  
"Go on, now," he said, pulling the boy around him by the arm. "You've got to hold it out to her, or she won't know to take it. Shug's real polite that way."

Reginald held the melon out to her, and Hannah picked it off the boy's palm with great delicacy.

"You see that?" he crowed. "You see her take that right out of my hand? She likes me, I bet." Still, he hurried back to his place on Sam's far side. "Where are you going now?"

"Just around. No place in particular. Does her good to just meander."

*Notes on my thoughts, reactions and questions as I read:*

"Reginald!" A shrill female voice called out from behind them on the path. "Lord, boy, you scared me to death wandering off like that."

"That your mama?" Sam asked.

"Nah, she's my aunt. I live with her."

"Where's your mama, son?"

The boy shrugged.

"All right, go on. Don't make her chase you, now."

Reginald started off, turned back. "I'll see you mister."

"Yeah, I expect you will. Next time you come here, you ask for Sam Brown. Just tell them you're a friend of mine and they'll let you in to see me."

As he and Hannah moved on, Sam could hear the boy calling excitedly to his aunt, "Hey, I fed that elephant. I fed her right off my hand!"

Sam reached up and patted Hannah's shoulder. "You were real good with that boy, sugar. That was a nice thing you did for him."

*From Hannah's Dream by Diane Hammond, Harper Collins Publisher, 2008. Used by permission of the author and Harper/Collins Publishers.*

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**1. In the space below, summarize the story of "Walking Hannah."**

**Reading Performance Assessment**  
**High School – 2009 – *Walking Hannah***

**Practice Task F1**

2. In the chart below, list the most important **details** we learn about each of the three main characters in this selection. List at least three or four details for each character.

<b>Details about Hannah</b>	<b>Details about Sam</b>	<b>Details about Reginald</b>

3. As this selection progresses, Reginald’s emotions and feelings go through a variety of shifts and changes. Briefly describe the feelings Reginald goes through, in the order they occurred, during his encounter with Hannah and Sam.

How does Reginald feel when he first meets Hannah and Sam? How can you tell?

How does Reginald feel in the middle of their visit? How can you tell?

How does Reginald feel when he leaves Hannah and Sam? How can you tell?

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**Practice Task F1**

4. There is evidence scattered throughout this passage of **Sam’s** fondness for Hannah and his strong feelings for her. Use the chart below to list at least three specific phrases or sentences from the passage that show **Sam’s** relationship with Hannah.

Phrase or sentence from passage	What is revealed about <b>Sam’s</b> relationship with Hannah
Line 1:	
Line 2:	
Line 3:	

5. Why does Sam tell Reginald, “Just tell them you’re a friend of mine and they’ll let you in to see me.”? Use examples from the story to support your answer.

**Reading Performance Assessment**  
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**Practice Task F1**

6. **Circle** the statement that you believe best suggests an important **theme** or **big idea** in the story.
- a. “And yet there was a soul, a thing of pure beauty behind those eyes.”
  - b. “She might be big, but she was timid even after all these years.”
  - c. “Elephant’s got the right to expect good manners.”

Explain why you chose this **theme** for the story. What **big idea** does this statement express?

7. In the first paragraph of this selection, the author uses strong imagery to describe Sam’s impressions of Hannah the first time that he met her. The imagery helps to characterize Hannah.
- a. Select at least two examples of imagery and identify them below.
  - b. What does each example reveal about Hannah’s character?

Identify 2 or more examples of imagery.  
Write phrases or sentences from the passage.

Explain how the author uses this image to develop  
Hannah’s character.