

# Stories of Here & NOW 2

Third Edition

15 Short stories for teenagers



**New!** Text Analysis  
and  
Revised writing  
activities



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**Theme:**

*Growing Up, Value of Teenagers*

**Text Analysis:**

*Main idea & drawing conclusion*

*Prediction / Cause and effect*

## The Day the Teenagers

1 In Stockton that morning, in house after house, mothers and fathers woke up to find that their teenagers were gone. Each family had its own explanation. “She probably left early for cheerleader practice,” Mrs. Townsend reasoned. Mr. and Mrs. Cron thought their son wasn’t back from his paper route yet. Mrs. Fisher’s daughter had spent the night with a friend, so Mrs. Fisher didn’t even know she was gone.

2 Bus riders wondered at the half-empty seats. For the first time in his life, Mr. Evans rode to work sitting down.

3 The drivers on the city streets noticed that traffic was much lighter than usual. There were not many cars on the main routes to the high schools.

4 When Miss Casey got to school that morning, she was struck by the quiet. All the teachers looked at one another as they entered the main building.

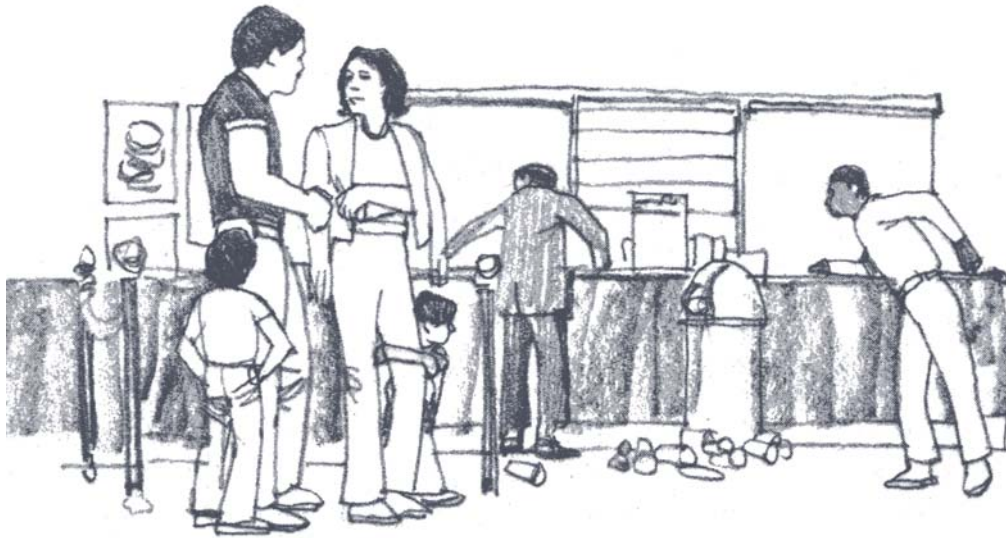
5 Out in the cafeteria, the milk and juice were getting warm, and the rolls were getting cold. The staff was concerned because none of the food was being eaten. None of it would be.

6 The teachers sat in their empty classrooms. Mr. Smith looked into Mr. Jones’ room. “Am I going crazy?” he asked. “This isn’t a holiday, is it?”

7 “No,” Mr. Jones answered. “Maybe it’s a trick. Maybe they all planned this.”







8            Soon the principal's voice came over the loudspeaker asking all the teachers to report to the library for a meeting. There the principal announced that the teachers were out of their jobs. The high school was no longer in business. He was sorry to tell them this. He hoped that they would all find new jobs.

9            The teachers were stunned. They couldn't believe that such a thing could happen. If only the teenagers would come back, things would be different. They wouldn't demand so much. They would accept late papers. Matters could be worked out. Besides, what would they do?

10           By afternoon the whole town knew that something was wrong. Mrs. Peters told her husband about it when he got home. "When I went into the grocery store, there were huge lines at each checkout counter. There were no carts. They were all out in the parking lot. When I got to the counter, there was no one to sack my groceries. I had to do it myself. What is this world coming to?"

11           Mr. Peters didn't know. He had had trouble too. On the way home he had stopped at his usual gas station for a fill-up. There were long lines. He wondered if there was a gasoline shortage again. But the line was

because there was only one man at the station—and that was the boss. Everyone had to wait a long time. And no one cleaned his windshield.

12        The Peters were going out that night. They took their two children, aged three and five, to a hamburger stand for dinner before they went out. Everything was a mess when they got there. One busy man was trying to do everything. Baskets, paper cups, napkins, and straws were all over the floor. Nobody was there to pick them up. And the hamburgers and fries took forever. The teenagers who usually did most of the work were nowhere to be seen. This was impossible, the Peters agreed.

13        They got home just in time to change clothes before they went out. The baby-sitter was supposed to come at 7:00. But it was 7:15 and she still had not arrived. Finally, they called Mrs. Peters' mother. She agreed to come over to take care of the children—but she didn't like it.

14        When Mr. and Mrs. Peters got to the theater, there was a good deal of confusion. There was just one man at the door. A long line formed outside. When they finally got inside, there was no one to show them to their seats. They had to pick up a program from the floor. They were put out.

15        All evening it was very quiet in Stockton. There were no motorcycles racing up and down the street. Some babies could not get to sleep. They were used to the noise—it was like a lullaby to them.

16        There was no loud music either. Houses that usually throbbed to a rock beat were silent. The rhythm of life had changed.

17        Every family with teenagers had suffered a loss. There was no one to do the dishes. The little kids tried, but they weren't much help. The plates were still dirty. Fathers and mothers had to take out the trash for the first time in years. "Where are our teenagers?" they moaned.

18        But worst of all, there was no one to blame for anything. If the kitchen wasn't cleaned up, whom could they blame?

19 Many mothers and fathers were restless that night. It was time to tell their teenagers to do their homework. Or to get off the phone. Or to clean up their rooms. But there was no one there.

20 The world needs teenagers.

## FOLLOW-UP

### A. DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think the author wrote this story?
2. Do you think the events in this story really took place?
3. When do you begin to know that this story is fantasy (not fact)?
4. Is it important to know where the teenagers went?
5. How else might life be affected if all teenagers disappeared?

### B. READING COMPREHENSION

1. At first the parents weren't worried that their teenagers had disappeared because they
  - a. did not care about them.
  - b. thought there was a simple explanation.
  - c. thought it was time the teenagers left home.
2. People who benefitted from the teenagers' absence were the
  - a. bus riders.
  - b. cafeteria workers.
  - c. teachers.