

Written Comprehension

An Amazing Show

Civil Rights was an important question in the South of the United States in the 1950's and 60's. When schools were opened to black children as well as white, many white Southerners tried to prevent this desegregation, either violently, or by intimidation.

It is such an incident that John Steinbeck describes in this extract.

1 The show opened on time. Sound of sirens. Motor-
cycle cops. Then two big black cars filled with big
men in blond felt² hats pulled up in front of the
school. The crowd seemed to hold its breath. Four
5 big marshals got out of each car and from some-
where in the automobiles they extracted the littlest
Negro girl you ever saw, dressed in shining white,
with new white shoes on feet so little they were almost
round. Her face and little legs were very black against
10 the white.

The big marshals stood her on the curb³ and a
jangle of jeering shrieks⁴ went up from behind the
barricades. The little girl did not look at the howling
crowd but from the side the whites of her eyes
15 showed like those of a frightened fawn⁵. The men
turned her around like a doll, and then the strange
procession moved towards the school, and the child
was even more a mite because the men were so big.
Then the girl made a curious hop⁶. I think in her
20 whole life she had not gone ten steps without
skipping⁷, but now in the middle of her first skip the
weight bore her down and her little round feet took
measured steps between the tall guards. Slowly they
climbed the steps and entered the school.

John STEINBECK.
Travels with Charley (abridged) 1961.



2. felt : *feutre*

3. a curb (U.S.) : a pavement (G.B.)

4. a jangle of jeering shrieks : *des brèves railleuses et discordantes*

5. a fawn : *un faon*

6. a hop : *un petit saut*

7. to skip : *sautiller*

1/ Describe the cartoon. What are the differences with the painting by Norman Rockwell? / 10

2/ Identify the document : use the following words to complete the sentence / 2

« **Travels with Charley** » / John Steinbeck / extract / a novel / 1961

The document is an _____ from _____ entitled _____

written by _____ in _____

