

Drawbridge Activity

Instructions:

- Have students read the story on the following page. Ask them to rank the characters (from 1 to 6) in the order of their responsibility for the death of the Baroness (with 1 being the most responsible, 6 being the least responsible).
- Next, have students work in small groups of three to five people to collectively create a rank order of the six characters.
- Write the group responses on a board:

(Example):

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Baron	1	2	5
Baroness	1	6	1
Boatman	3	5	4
Friend	4	3	2
Lover	5	4	3
Madman	6	1	6

- Discuss the decision-making process that led the groups to choose their rank order.
 - o Did the group come to any true consensus? Did they vote? Did they average their individual rankings? Was the loudest person's opinion taken into consideration?
 - o Did any group create a definition of "responsibility" prior to determining rank order?
 - o How did personal values and/or personal context impact group decision-making? Did any group members consider what each character might represent?
 - Baron = Authority
 - Baroness = Self
 - Boatman = Escape
 - Friend = Friend
 - Lover = Temptation
 - Madman = Consequence
 - o Have the class rank the order of the characters again taking into consideration what the characters might be representing.
 - o Relate the Drawbridge activity to a scenario a first-year student might face—such as drinking in a residence hall.

Drawbridge Exercise

Please read the story, and then follow the instructions at the bottom of the page.

As he left for a visit to his outlying districts, the jealous Baron warned his pretty wife: "Do not leave the castle while I am gone, or I will punish you severely when I return." But as the hours passed, the young Baroness grew lonely, and despite her husband's warning, decided to visit her Lover who lived in the countryside nearby.

The castle was located on an island in a wide, fast flowing river, with a drawbridge linking the island and the land at the narrowest point. "Surely my husband will not return before dawn", she thought, and ordered her servants to lower the drawbridge and leave it down until she returned.

After spending several pleasant hours with her Lover, the Baroness returned to the drawbridge, only to find it blocked by a Madman wildly waving a long and extremely sharp knife. "Do not attempt to cross this bridge, Baroness, or I will kill you" he raved. Fearing for her life, the Baroness returned to her lover and asked him to help.

"Our relationship is only a romantic one," he said, "I will not help".

The Baroness then sought out a Boatman on the river, explained her plight to him and asked him to take her across the river in his boat. "I will do it, but only if you can pay my fee of five Marks." But I have no money with me! The Baroness protested. "That is too bad. No money, no ride," the Boatman said flatly.

Her fear growing, the Baroness ran crying to the home of a Friend, and after again explaining the situation, begged for enough money to pay the boatman his fee. "If you had not disobeyed your husband, this would not have happened," the Friend said. "I will give you no money".

With dawn approaching and her last resource exhausted, the Baroness returned to the bridge in desperation, attempted to cross to the castle, and was slain by the Madman.

Directions: In the story above, there are six characters. Using the list below, rank the characters (from 1 to 6) in the order of their responsibility for the death of the Baroness (with 1 being the most responsible, and 6 being the least).

The Baron: _____

The Baroness: _____

The Boatman: _____

The Friend: _____

The Lover: _____

The Madman: _____

Variations of this inventory appear on multiple institutional web sites. Original source unknown.