**Assignment for Short Story “*Charles*” by Shirley Jackson**

**Activity #1 Journal**

Journal write:

1. *Have you ever known a classmate or member of any group who has terrorized others in the group? Explain what happened, how it turned out, and how you felt about it.*
2. *Have you ever had an “in joke” in your family or among friends about a person who has demonstrated unusual or aggressive behavior? If so, when and who? (For classroom discussion use no real names.)*
3. *Has someone ever blamed you for something that you haven’t done? Explain what happened and how you felt in each situation.*

**Activity #2 Vocabulary**

Find the sentence that contains each word listed in the left column. Write it. Then make the your best guess definition from the context clues for the following words that are in the short story,

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Vocabulary Word** | **Sentence** | **Context Guess** | **Dictionary definition** |
| **renounce** | The day my son Laurie started kindergarten he renounced corduroy overalls with bibs and began wearing blue jeans with a belt | Give up | To reject or disown. |
| **elaborately** |  |  |  |
| **simultaneously** |  |  |  |
| **incredulously** |  |  |  |
| **resolute** |  |  |  |
| **benediction** |  |  |  |
| **privilege** |  |  |  |

**Activity #4 (Post Reading)**

Students answer the following questions:

1. Who is narrating the short story Charles?

2. According to the narrator, how did Laurie change when he started kindergarten?

3. When was Charles first mentioned in Laurie’s home? Explain what he had done?

4. Explain how Charles became a household joke at Laurie’s home.

5. Why were Laurie’s parents looking forward to meeting his kindergarten teacher?

6. Why did Laurie’s parents take so long to find out the truth about Charles?

7. Why did Laurie create the imaginary boy Charles?

8. Most of us are very surprised to learn the identity of Charles. If you go back and read the story again you may notice that the author plants clues along the way to prepare you. What clue to the identity of Charles can you find in the opening paragraph of the

story?