

Angela Brazil. The Girls of St. Cyprian's. From Chapter 1

The two class-mates who entered the room at that moment were certainly entirely unlike as regards personal appearance, and the dissimilarity went deeper. Lottie Lowman, the elder by six months, was a brisk, alert-looking girl with a fresh complexion, a rather long, pointed nose, a thin mouth, and a square, determined chin. Her forehead was broad and intelligent, her light hazel eyes were very bright and sparkling, and her brown hair held just a suggestion of chestnut in the warmth of its coloring. Lottie's general effect was one of extreme vivacity. She loved to talk, and could say sharp things on occasion—there was hardly a girl in the Form who had not quailed before her tongue—and above all she adored popularity. To be a general favorite at once with mistresses, companions, and the Lower School was her chief aim, and she spared no trouble in the pursuit. Her flippant gaiety appealed to a large section of the Form, her humorous remarks were amusing, even though a sting lurked in them, and if her accomplishments were superficial, they made a far better show than the more-solid acquirements of others. She could do a little of everything, and had such perfect assurance that no touch of shyness ever marred her achievements. She knew absolutely how to make the best of herself, and she had a savoir faire and precocious knowledge of the world decidedly in advance of her sixteen years.

Mildred Lancaster, though only six months Lottie's junior, seemed a baby in comparison, where mundane matters were concerned. She was slightly built and rather delicate-looking, with a pale, eager face, a pair of beautiful, expressive brown eyes, and a quantity of silky, soft, dull-gold hair, with a natural ripple in it. The far-away look in the dark eyes, and the set of the sensitive little mouth, suggested that highly-strung artistic temperament which may prove either the greatest joy or the utmost hindrance to its possessor. Mildred was dreamy and unpractical to a fault, the kind of girl who in popular parlance needs to be "well shaken up" at school, and whose imagination is apt to outrun her performance. Gifted to an unusual degree in music, at which she worked by fits and starts, her lack of general confidence was a great impediment, and often a serious handicap where any public demonstration was concerned. The feeling of having an audience, which was like the elixir of life to Lottie, filled Mildred with dismay, and was apt to spoil her best efforts.

Define Each Word

flippant: _____

mar: _____

precocious: _____

mundane: _____

dismay: _____

Write the Correct Word from the Vocabulary

1. Albert enjoys seemingly _____ activities such as walking in the woods, reading, and listening to music.
2. A low grade in her algebra exam _____ Felicia’s grade point average.
3. Much to the doctor’s _____, the patient had not taken his medication for five months.
4. Colin’s little sister displayed a _____ talent for reading and mathematics at a very early age.
5. Jarrett’s _____ remark about his deceased uncle’s alcoholism caused Jarrett’s mother a great deal of pain.

Comprehension and Discussion: Answer Each Question in Complete Sentences

1. How does the narrator describe Lottie Lowman?

2. The narrator describes Mildred Lancaster as “dreamy and unpractical to a fault.” How would someone who is “dreamy and unpractical to a fault” behave in a classroom?

