

“Crooked Letter, Crooked letter” by Tom Franklin. Chapter Seven, tandem.

Work with a partner. Fold the sheet along the vertical line. Partner A starts.

Partner A	Partner B
<p>What has changed in Larry’s life?</p> <p><i>He has asked Cindy on a date.</i></p>	<p>Why is Larry unwilling to tell his dad about how he asked Cindy to go out with him?</p> <p><i>He didn’t tell his mom the truth. Actually, Cindy approached him and asked him to go to the drive-in theater with her.</i></p>
<p>How does his father react to this bit of news?</p> <p><i>He’s pretty surprised but at the same time proud of his son finally taking out a girl.</i></p>	<p>What is unusual about the communication between his parents and Larry?</p> <p><i>His mom speaks for Larry and asks her husband to allow Larry to take her car. Carl answers his wife and also speaks about Larry as if he weren’t in the room.</i></p>
<p>Why does Carl even let his son take the bigger car?</p> <p><i>The Buick has got a bigger backseat, which implies that Carl expects his son to have sex with the girl. He offers to pay for the movie too.</i></p>	<p>What kind of movies does the drive-in show, and why does Larry’s dad let him to go nevertheless?</p> <p><i>The movies are all rated R, which means that people under 17 have to be accompanied by an adult. Carl is proud of his son’s apparent adult and manly behavior.</i></p>
<p>What telltale signs are there to show that Cindy is not interested in her date with Larry?</p> <p><i>She does not seem to know what movie will be on that night. She doesn’t want to talk to him but seems to be rather embarrassed when he waves at her in the cafeteria.</i></p>	<p>Larry’s date with Cindy triggers all kinds of advice from classmates and his mom. What does his dad tell him?</p> <p><i>He recounts an incident from his own youth when he and his friends challenged drunken Cecil, Cindy’s stepfather, to swing from a tree for a dare. Cecil fell and ended up in the briars.</i></p>
<p>Why did Cindy ask Larry on this date?</p> <p><i>Cecil wouldn’t have let her out of the house with anybody else. She wants to meet her boyfriend in Fulsom.</i></p>	<p>What’s Cindy’s problem and what does she want to meet her boyfriend for so urgently?</p> <p><i>She’s pregnant, but claims not to know who the father is. She wants to talk to her boyfriend about what to do now, therefore she needs Larry to play along. He’s supposed to pick her up later that night, so Cecil would not know.</i></p>
<p>Cindy does not show up at the agreed time. What does Larry do?</p> <p><i>He drives to her house to see whether she is at home. He is confronted by an angry Cecil who would probably have strangled him, hadn’t it been for Cindy’s mother returning home after work.</i></p>	<p>How does life change for the Ott family after Cindy’ disappearance?</p> <p><i>Larry does not return to school, his father becomes a heavy drinker, his mom does not go to church any longer. They have become ostracized. Larry decides to join the army. When his father dies in an accident, he returns home to take care of his mom, whom he finally has to put in a nursing home.</i></p>