



Name: _____

Date: _____

An Excerpt from

The Land of the Blue Flower by Frances Hodgson Burnett

Read the story below. Then use the prompt to write a response.

The Land of the Blue Flower was not called by that name until the tall, strong, beautiful King Amor came down from his castle on the mountain crag and began to reign.

Only once, when he was a boy of twelve, a strange and painful thing happened to him. From his kingdom in the plains below there had been sent to him a beautiful young horse which had been bred for him. Never had so magnificent an animal been born in the royal stable. When he was brought into the courtyard the boy King's eyes shone with joy. He spent the greater part of the morning in exercising and leaping him over barriers. The Ancient One in his tower chamber heard his shouts of exultation and encouragement. At last the King went out to try him on the winding mountain road.

When he returned he went at once to the tower chamber to the Ancient One, who, when he raised his eyes from his great book, looked at him gravely. "Let us climb to the battlements," the boy said. "We must talk together."

So they went, and when they stood looking out on the world below, the curving turquoise sky above them, the eyes of the Ancient One were still more grave. "Tell me, young King."

"Something strange has happened," King Amor answered. "I have felt something I have not felt before. I was riding my horse around the field on the plateau and he saw something which he refused to pass. It was a young leopard watching us from a tree. My horse reared and snorted. He would not listen to me, but backed and wheeled around. I tried in vain to persuade him, and suddenly, when I saw I could not make him obey me, this strange new feeling rushed through all my body. I grew hot and knew my face was scarlet, my heart beat faster and my blood seemed to boil in my veins. I shouted out harsh, ugly sounds—I forgot that all things are brothers—I lifted my hand and clenched it and struck my horse again and again. I loved him no longer, I felt that he no longer loved me. I am hot and wearied and heavy from it still. I feel no more joy. Was it pain I felt? I have never felt pain and do not know. Was it pain?"

"It was a worse thing," answered the Ancient One. "It was anger. When a man is overcome by anger he has a poisoned fever. He loses his strength, he loses his power over himself and over others, he throws away time in which he might have gained the end he most desires. THERE IS NO TIME FOR ANGER IN THE WORLD."

After reading, respond to this prompt on a separate piece of paper.

In the story, the Ancient One explains that anger is a poison that takes away a person's strength and power. Describe a time that you were poisoned by anger. Compare your own experience to that of King Amor.

*Hint: Try using words like *similarly*, *unlike*, or *comparatively* and refer to specific examples in the story.