Excerpt from *Where the Red Fern Grows*

My fire had burned down, leaving only a glowing red body of coals. The cave was dark and silent. Chill from the night had crept in. I was on the point of getting up to rebuild my fire, when I heard what had awakened me. At first I thought it was a woman screaming. I listened. My heart began to pound. I could feel the strain all over my body as nerves grew tighter and tighter.

It came again, closer this time. The high pitch of the scream shattered the silence of the quiet night. The sound seemed to be all around us. It screamed its way into the cave and rang like a blacksmith’s anvil against the rock walls. The blood froze in my veins. I was terrified. Although I had never heard one, I knew what it was. It was the scream of a mountain lion.

The big cat screamed again. Leaves boiled and stirred where my pups were. In the reflection of the glowing coals, I could see that one was sitting up. It was the boy dog. A leaf had become entangled in the fuzzy hair of a floppy ear. The ear flicked. The leaf dropped.

Again the hellish scream rang out over the mountains. Leaves flew as my pup left the bed. I jumped up and tried to call him back.

Reaching the mouth of the cave, he stopped. Raising his small red head high in the air, he bawled his challenge to the devil cat. The bawl must have scared him as much as it had startled me. He came tearing back. The tiny hairs on his back were standing on end.
The Three Levels of Reading
Foundation Lesson

Complete the following activities on the paper provided.

1. Across the top of the paper, write the title of the work and the author's name.

2. Draw three large concentric circles on the paper (one circle inside another circle inside a larger circle).

3. For the innermost circle, concentrate on the concrete level of meaning—*reading on the lines*.
   a. Write the most significant word from the part of the work assigned.
   b. Quote the entire sentence in which the word appears—or enough of the sentence to reveal the word's use in context. Document the source of the quotation in parentheses.
   c. Write multiple dictionary definitions of the word (denotation).
   d. Explain why the word is important to the meaning of the work by placing it in the context of the narrative.

4. In the middle circle, concentrate on the abstract level of meaning—*reading between the lines*.
   a. Referring to the text, draw four images from the assigned part of the reading.
   b. Write an explanation of the link between each image and the word you have written in the innermost circle.

5. In the outer circle, concentrate on the thematic level of meaning—*reading beyond the lines*. Write two thematic statements drawn from the significant word you wrote in the innermost circle and the images you drew in the middle circle. These should be universal thematic statements and should not refer directly to the text.

6. Select one of your thematic statements to use as the thesis statement for an essay. On the reverse side of your paper, compose a short essay analyzing meaning in the assigned part of the work.
Title: ____________________________________________
Author: __________________________________________