

Figure 4.1

In each of the little stories that follow, something bad happens to one of the characters. As you read the story, think about who's responsible and when you've finished assign each character the percent of the responsibility he or she is responsible for. If you think someone or something else is responsible, add that person or thing to your assignment of responsibility. Your percentages should end up equaling 100 percent. Be sure that you are able to justify why and how you assigned responsibility in the way that you did.

1. If you wanted to play varsity basketball, you knew what was in store for you during summer practice: the initiation. At the end of preseason practice, each new team member was taken out by three or four more experienced teammates to be "toughened up." Sometimes that took the form of being left alone in the woods in nothing but underwear. Sometimes it took the form of being made to eat the grisly kind of stuff people have to eat on *Survivor*. Sometimes it took the form of more physical things, like being hit with a paddle. And it seems that the better the young player, the worse the initiation. It might be tough, but the kids on the team say that it helps the team bond. And it's hard to argue with success: the team has made the state tournament each of the last 5 years. This year, however, the administration said that it was cracking down on hazing. They said they had a zero tolerance policy and that anyone who was caught hazing would be expelled. Even before the new policy, Devin, one of the team's best players and the only senior on the team had decided that this year he wouldn't participate, though he didn't tell anyone. But the other lettermen thought it was up to them to continue the tradition. Devin did go last year, though. He didn't make the new players do anything, but he had to admit that he thought it was funny when the others made the new players run up to the coach's door wearing only their jockstraps and ring the doorbell. Devin was glad he wasn't going this year. He was a bit worried about one of the kids who was initiated last year, a kid named Chris. Chris was something of a bully and he had been talking all year about what it was going to be like for the new kids once he had a chance to do the initiating. Chris said he wasn't letting any policy stop him. On the night of the initiation Devin got a call from the coach. The coach told Devin that he was going to kick one of new players off the team because the kid had been found by police passed out in a drunken stupor. The coach said the kid was so drunk that he had to be taken to the hospital, but that the kid would make it. When Devin saw Chris the next day, Chris just smirked and said, "I guess some people just can't hold their liquor." Devin wondered about the other kids who were initiated. And he wondered if it was just coincidence that the kid who had been found drunk played the same position that Chris did.

Who's responsible for what happened to the new kid?

\_\_\_\_ Devin    \_\_\_\_ Chris    \_\_\_\_ The new kid    \_\_\_\_ The coach

\_\_\_\_ other (Please specify \_\_\_\_\_)

2. Day after day Maria had to put up with the same stuff from Joan. Jokes about her accent. Jokes about her clothes. It was the worst on the bus in the morning when Joan would give a loud monologue about her. Most of the kids on the bus seemed scared of Joan, who was a real bully. They laughed nervously, even the couple of kids with whom Maria had gotten friendly in the two weeks she had been in the school. Maria's face burned, but she never said anything. She didn't want to get in a fight, especially since fighting meant suspension. But one day she just couldn't take it anymore. She had an armful of books, and as she was walking down the bus' steps, Joan gave her a shove. All the kids saw it. Books and papers flew everywhere. Maria scrambled to pick them up. As she was picking up her history book, Joan pushed her again and shouted, "Spic! When you're done cleaning here you can come over and clean my bathroom." Maria didn't want to fight, but these actions and this language were more than she could take. She ran up to Joan, pushed her as hard as she could, and punched her in the face when she was on the ground. She would have hit her again, but she was dragged away by a teacher. Now she's suspended for a week, the minimum required by the school's antiviolence policy. And Joan is still going to school! Maria just can't believe it. She's not sure she'll ever go back.

Who's responsible for Maria's suspension?

\_\_\_\_ Maria    \_\_\_\_ Joan    \_\_\_\_ The bus driver    \_\_\_\_ The other kids on the bus

\_\_\_\_ other (Please specify \_\_\_\_\_)