Activities

Classroom Assignment:
Answer the following questions in paragraph form and discuss the answers in class.
1. According to Emerson, is believing in oneself innate or does it have to be learned?
2. What is Emerson’s point of view on self-trust?
3. What does Emerson suggest regarding nonconformity? How does this view conflict with your own ideas?
4. What does Emerson think about the doctrines of the church?
5. What does he say about good and bad? How does he define what is good? How absolute is this definition?
6. What is his attitude toward the devil?
7. What does he say about chance and fortune?
8. According to Emerson, what is the only thing that can bring peace? Do you think he is mistaken?

Homework Assignment:
Write a one page composition on how you agree or disagree with Emerson’s philosophy about life. Defend your point of view.

Biography
Washington Irving
1873-1859

Washington Irving was the first American writer of imaginative literature to gain international fame. He became, in the words of the English novelist Thackeray, “the first Ambassador whom the New World of Letters sent to the Old.” Irving was born the year the United States won its independence from Britain, and he was named after the new nation’s greatest revolutionary general and first president. As the youngest of eleven children of a prosperous New York merchant, Irving enjoyed a pampered childhood. He became a precocious reader and wrote numerous juvenile poems, plays, and essays. When he was sixteen he ceased his formal education and began the study of the law, but he had little relish for such a burdensome task; he was, as he later acknowledged, a “poor scholar-fond of roguery.” He preferred instead to pass his time in desultory reading and in the society of the literary wits of New York City. At nineteen using the name “Jonathan Old-style” and adopting the pose of an urbane cosmopolite rambling about the town, he began to contribute a series of sketches, or “letters,” on society and the theater to the Morning Chronicle, a New York Newspaper.
When he was twenty-one Irving went on a grand tour of Europe. Two years later he returned to New York to be admitted to the bar and to begin the leisurely life of a gentleman lawyer. He joined with his brother William and with James Kirke Paulding in publishing Salgamundi (1807-1808), a short-lived periodical of social satire and lampoon, grandly intended to "correct the town and castigate the age." Shortly afterward, Irving started work on what was to be his first literary triumph, his History of New York (1809) by "Diedrich Knickerbocker." It was an irreverent spoof of historical scholarship, salted with off-color comments. The book satirized the complacent Dutch burghers of early New York and pointed at the political follies on nineteenth-century America.

At the end of the War of 1812, Irving was sent to England to supervise the Liverpool branch of the family firm, but in 1818, as a result of the war and bad management, the firm went bankrupt. Irving was left with a dislike for the "dirty soul-killing" world of business and a need to find a livelihood. His History of New York had earned the magnificent sum of $3,000, so he turned to writing and began preparation of The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon. It was the first work by an American to receive wide international acclaim, and it made Irving a celebrity. In this work were the two tales that brought him his most and enduring fame, "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow."

In 1826, his literary fame earned him appointment as an American diplomatic attaché in Spain, and there he gathered material for a biography of Christopher Columbus. He wrote A Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada and the Alhambra, A Spanish sketch book that grew out of three months he had spent at the famous Moorish palace in Granada.

Irving was a transitional figure. His work reflected the shift in American literature from the rationalism of the eighteenth century to the sentimental romanticism of the nineteenth century. His early satirical writing had displayed a neoclassical pleasure the comic qualities of life. His humor was often exaggerated, his taste for satire was mingled with a love of melancholy, of a mawkish, even morbid, world of sentiment. Irving was, like most of his writing, amiable, civilized, and gentlemanly, interested in moods and emotions rather than in the metaphysical speculation that became a characteristic of American romanticism.

His writing was English as much as it was American, and it revealed a sense of the contrast between continental Europe and America that later was reflected in Hawthorne and Henry James. Irving tented to find value in the past and the traditions of the Old World. He did not share the hopeful American vision of the New World as an Eden, free of the corrupt traditions of Europe. Much of Irving's popularity in England and America sprang from the very fact that amid the rising materialism and commercialism of the times, he believed that, "We are a young people... and must take our examples and models in a great degree, from the
existing nations of Europe." A nativist literature that would clearly reflect the breadth of American life was yet to be written, and Irving is most clearly seen today as his friend Thackeray says of him, "a very nice bohemian of a gentleman," with "a pleasant chirping voice quite natural and unaffected-speaking English, however, not American."

Activities

Classroom Assignment:
Answer the following questions and discuss the answers in class.
1. What was Irving's writing like?
2. Make a list of the most important events in Irving's life.
3. Why was Irving considered a transitional figure?
4. Why did Irving not share the hopeful American vision of the New World as an Eden? Support your answer with details.
5. What would it be like if Washington Irving and Ralph Waldo Emerson could have a conversation? What would they say to each other?

Homework Assignment:
Investigate Irving's life and way of writing and write a one page report about it.

Literary Work
"The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"

In the bosom of one of those spacious coves which indent the eastern shore of the Hudson, at that broad expansion of the river denominated by the ancient Dutch navigators the Tappan Zee, and where they always prudently shortened sail, and implored the protection of St. Nicholas when they crossed, there lies a small market-town or rural port, which by some is called Greensburgh, by which is more generally and properly known by the name of Tarry Town. This name was given, we are told, in former days, by the good housewives and the adjacent country, from the inveterate propensity of their husbands to linger about the village tavern on market days. Be that as it may, I do not vouch for the fact, but merely advert to it, for the sake of being precise and authentic. Not far from this village, perhaps about two miles, there is a little valley, or rather lap of land, among high hills, which is one of the quietest places in the whole world. A small brook glides through it, with just enough murmur to lull one to repose; and the occasional whistle of a quail, tapping of a woodpecker, is almost the only sound that ever breaks in upon the uniform tranquillity.

I recollect that, when a stripling, my first exploit in squirrel-shooting was in a grove of tall walnut-trees that shades one side of the valley. I had wandered into it at noon time, when all nature is peculiarly quiet, and was startled by the roar of my own gun, as it broke Sabbath stillness around, and was prolonged and reverberated by the angry echoes. Should I ever
wish for a retreat, whither I might steal from the world and its distractions, and dream quietly away the remnant of a troubled life, I know of none more promising than this little valley.

From the listless repose of the place, and the peculiar character of its inhabitants, who are descendant from the original Dutch settlers, this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of Sleepy Hollow, and its rustic lads are called the Sleepy Hollow Boys throughout all the neighboring country, a drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land, and to pervade the very atmosphere. Some say that the place was bewitched by a high German doctor, during the early days of the settlement; others, that an old Indian chief, the prophet or wizard of his tribe, held his powwows there before the country was discovered by Master Hendrick Hudson. Certain it is, the place still continues under the way of some witching power, that holds a spell over the minds of the good people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. They are given to all kinds of marvelous beliefs; are subjects to trances and visions; and frequently see strange sights, and hear music and voices in the air. The whole neighborhood abounds with local tales, haunted spots and twilight superstitions; stars shoot and meteors glare oftener across the valley than in any other part of the country, and the nightmare, with her whole nine fold, seems to make it the favorite scene of her gambols.

The dominant spirit, however, that haunts this enchanted region, and seems to be commander-in-chief of all the powers of the air, is the apparition of a figure on horseback without a head. It is said by some to be the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannon-ball, in some nameless battle during the revolutionary war; and who is ever and anon seen by the country folk, hurrying along in the gloom of night, as if on the wings of he wind. His haunts are not confined to the valley, but extend at times to the adjacent roads, and specially to the vicinity of a church at no great distance. Indeed, certain of the most authentic historians of those parts, who have been careful in collecting and collating the floating facts concerning this spectre, allege that the body of the trooper, having been buried in the church-yard, the ghost rides forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head; and that the rushing speed with which he sometimes passes along the Hollow, like a midnight blast, is owing to his being belated, and in a hurry to get back to the church-yard before daybreak.

Such is the general purpose of this legendary superstition, which has furnished materials for many a wild story in that region of shadows; and the spectre is known, at all the country firesides, by the name of the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow.

It is remarkable that the visionary propensity I have mentioned is not confined to the native inhabitants of the valley, but is unconsciously imbibed by every one who resides there for a time. However, wide a awake they may have been before they entered that sleepy
region, they are sure, in a little time, to inhale the witching influence of the air, and begin to
grow imaginative—to dream dreams, and see apparitions.

I mention this peaceful spot with all possible laud; for it is in such little retired Dutch
valleys, found here and there embosomed in the great State of New York, that population,
manners, and customs, remain fixed; while the great torrent of migration and improvement;
which is making such incessant changes in other parts of this restless country, sweeps by
them unobserved. They are like those little nooks of still water which border a rapid stream;
where we may see the straw and bubble riding quietly at anchor, or slowly revolving in their
mimic harbor, undisturbed by the rush of the passing current. Though many years have
elapsed since I trod the drowsy shades of Sleepy Hollow, yet I question whether I should not
still find the same trees and the same families vegetating in its sheltered bosom.

In this by-place of nature, there abode, in a remote period of American history, that
is to say, some thirty years since, a worthy wight of the name of Ichabod Crane; who
sojourned, or, as he expressed it, “tarried,” in Sleepy Hollow, for the purpose of instructing
the children of the vicinity. He was a native of Connecticut; a State which supplies the Union
with pioneers for the mind as well as for the forest, and sends forth yearly its legions of
frontier woodsmen and country schoolmasters. The cognomen of Crane was not inapplicable
to his person. He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs,
hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his
whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small, and flat a top, with huge ears,
large green glassy eyes, and a long snipe nose, so that it looked like a weather-cock, perched
upon his spindle neck, to tell which way the wind blew. To see him striding along the profile
of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have
mistaken him for the genius of famine descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped
from a cornfield.

His school house was a long building of one large room, rudely constructed of logs;
the window partly glazed, and partly patched with leaves of old copybooks. It was most
ingeniously secured at vacant hours, by a withe twisted in the handle of the door, and stakes
set against the windows shutters; so that, though a thief might get in with perfect ease, he
would find some embarrassment in getting out; an idea most probably borrowed by the
architect, Yost Van Houten, from the mystery of an eel-pot. The school-house stood in a
rather lonely but pleasant situation, just at the foot of a woody hill, with a brook running close
by, and a formidable birch tree growing at one end of it. From hence the low murmur of his
pupils’ voices, conning over their lessons, might be heard in a drowsy summer’s day, like the
hum of a bee-hive; interrupted now and then by the authoritative voice of the master, in the
tone of menace or command, or, peradventure, by the appalling sound of the birch, as he urged some tardy loiterer along the flowery path of knowledge. Truth to say, he was a conscientious man, and ever bore in mind the golden maxim. “Spare the rod and spoil the child.” -Ichabod Crane’s scholars certainly were not spoiled.

I would not have it imagined, however, that he was one of those cruel potentates of the school, who joy in the smart of their subjects; on the contrary, he administered justice with discrimination rather than severity; taking the burden off the backs of the weak, and laying it on those of the strong. Your mere puny stripling, that winced at the least flourish of the rod, was passed by the indulgence; but the claims of justice were satisfied by inflicting a double portion on some little, tough, wrong-headed, broad-skirted Dutch urchin, who sulked and swelled and grew dogged and sullen beneath the birch. All this he called “doing his duty by their parents;” and he never inflicted a chastisement without following it by the assurance, so consolatory to the smarting urchin, that “he would remember it, and thank him for it the longest day he had to live.”

When school hours were over, he was even the companion and playmate of the larger boys; and on holiday afternoons would convoy some of the smaller ones home, who happened to have pretty sisters, or good housewives for mothers, noted for the comforts of the cupboard. Indeed it behooved him to keep on good terms with his pupils. The revenue arising from his school was small, and would have been scarcely sufficient to furnish him with daily bread, for he was a huge feeder, and though lank, he had the dilating powers of an anaconda; but to help him out of his maintenance, he was, according to country custom in those parts, boarded and lodged at the houses of the farmers, whose children he instructed. With these he lived successively with all its worldly effects tied up in a cotton handkerchief.

That all this might not be too honorous on the purses of his rustic patrons, who are apt to consider the costs of schooling a grievous burden, and schoolmasters as mere drones, he had various ways of rendering himself both useful and agreeable. He assisted the farmers occasionally in the lighter labors of their farms; helped to make hay; mended the fences; took the horses to water; drove the cows from pasture; and cut wood for the winter fire. He laid aside, too, all the dominant dignity and absolute sway with which he lorded it in his little empire, the school, and became wonderfully gentle and ingratiating. He found favor in the eyes of the mothers, by petting the children, particularly the youngest; and like the lion bold, which whom so magnanimously the lamb did hold, he would sit with a child on one knee, and rock a cradle with his foot for whole hours together.

In addition to his other vocations, he was the singing-master of the neighborhood, and picked up many bright shillings by instructing the young folks in psalmody. It was a matter of
no little vanity to him, on Sunday, to take his station in front of the church gallery, with a band of chosen singers; where in his own mind, he completely carried away the palm from the parson. Certain it is, his voice resounded far above all the rest of the congregation; and there are peculiar quavers still to be heard in that church, and which may even be heard half a mile off, quite to the opposite side of the mill-pond, on a still Sunday morning, which are said to be legitimately descended from the nose of Ichabod Crane, Thus, by divers little make shifts that ingenious way which is commonly denominated "by hook and by crook," the worthy pedagogue got on tolerably enough, and was thought, by all who understood nothing of the labor of head-work, to have a wonderfully easy life of it.

The Schoolmaster is generally a man of some importance in the female circle of a rural neighborhood; being considered a kind of idle gentlemanlike personage of vastly superior taste and accomplishment to the rough country swains, and, indeed, inferior in learning only to the parson. His appearance, therefore, is apt to occasion some little stir at the tea-table of a farmhouse, and the addition of a supernumerary dish of cakes of sweetmeats, or peradventure, the parade of a silver tea-pot. Our man of letters, therefore, was particularly happy in the smiles of all the country damsels. How he would figure among them in the church-ward, between services on Sundays! gathering grapes for them from the wild vines that overrun the surrounding trees; reciting for their amusement all the epitaphs of the tombstones' or sauntering, with a whole bevy of them, along the banks of the adjacent mill-pond; while the more bashful country bumpkins hung sheepishly back, envying his superior elegance and address.

From his half itinerant half, also, he was a kind of traveling gazette, carrying the whole budget of local gossip from house to house; so that his appearance was always greeted with satisfaction. He was, moreover, esteemed by the women as a man of great erudition, for he had several books quite through, and was a perfect master of Cotton Mather's history of New England Witchcraft, in which, by the way, he most firmly and potently believed.

He was, in fact, an odd mixture of small shrewdness and simple credulity. His appetite for the marvelous, and his power of digesting it, were equally extraordinary; and both had been increased by his residence in this spellbound region. No tale was too gross or monstrous for his capacious swallow. It was often his delight, after his school was dismissed in the afternoon, to stretch himself on the rich bed of clover, bordering the little brook that whimpered by his schoolhouse, and there con over old Mather's direful tales, until the gathering dusk of the evening made the printed page a mere mist before his eyes. Then, he wended his way, by swamp and stream and awful woodland, to the farmhouse where he happened to be quartered, every sound of nature, at that witching hour, fluttered his excited
imagination: the moan of the whip-poor-will from the hill-side; the boding cry of the tree-toad, that harbinger of storm; the dreary hooting of the screech-owl, or the sudden rustling in the thicket of birds frightened from their roost. The fire-flies, too, which sparkled most vividly in the darkest places, now and then startled him, as one of uncommon brightness would stream across his path; and if, by chance, a huge blockhead of a beetle came winging his blundering flight against him, the poor varlet was ready to give up the ghost, with the idea that he was struck with a witch's token. His only resource on such occasions, either to drown thought, or drive away evil spirits, was to sing psalm tunes;—and the good people of Sleepy Hollow, as they sat by their doors of an evening, were often filled with awe, at hearing his nasal melody, "in linked sweetness long drawn out," floating from the distant hill, or along the dusky road.

Another of his sources of his fearful pleasure was, to pass along winter evenings with the old Dutch wives, as they sat spinning by the fire, with a row of apples roasting and spluttering along the hearth, and listen to their marvelous tales of ghosts and goblins, and haunted fields, and haunted brooks, and haunted bridges, and haunted houses, and particularly of the headless horseman, or galloping Hessian of the Hollow, as they sometimes called him. He would delight them equally by his anecdotes of witchcraft, and of the direful omens and portentous sights and sounds in the air, which prevailed in the earliest times of Connecticut; and would frighten them woefully with speculations upon comets and shooting stars; and with the alarming fact that the world did absolutely turn round, and that they were half the time topsy-turvy!

But if there was a pleasure in all this, while snugly cuddling in the chimney corner of a chamber that was all of a ruddy glow from the crackling wood fire, and were, of course, no spectre dared to show his face, it was dearly purchased by the terror of his subsequent walk homewards. What fearful shapes and shadows beset his path amidst the dim and ghostly glare of snowy night!—With that wistful look did he eye every trembling ray of light streaming across the waste fields from some distant window!—How often was he appalled by some shrub covered with snow, which, like a sheeted spectre, beset his very path!—How often did he shrink with curdling awe at the sound of his own steps on the frosty crust beneath his feet; and dread to look over his shoulder, lest he should behold some uncouth being tramping close behind him!—and how often was the thrown into complete dismay by some rushing blast, howling among the trees, in the idea that it was the Galloping Hessian on one of his nightly scouring!

All these, however, were mere terrors of the night, phantoms of the mind that walk in darkness; and though he had seen many spectres in his time, and been more than once beset by Satan in divers shapes, in his lonely perambulations, yet daylight put an end to all
these evils; and he would have passed a pleasant life of it, in despite of the devil and all his works, if his path had not been crossed by a being that causes more perplexity to mortal man than ghosts, goblins, and the whole race of witches put together, and that was—a woman.

Among the musical disciples who assembled, one evening in each week, to receive his instructions in psalmody, was Katrina Van Tasse, the daughter and only child of a substantial Dutch farmer. She was a blooming lass of fresh eighteen; plump as a partridge; ripe and melting and rosy cheeked as one of her father’s peaches, and universally famed, not merely for her beauty, but her vast expectations. She was withal a little of a coquette, as might be perceived even in her dress, which was a mixture of ancient and modern fashions, as most suited to set off her charms. She wore the ornaments of pure yellow gold, which her great-great-grandmother had brought over from Saardam; the tempting stomacher of the old time; and withal a provokingly a short petticoat, to display the prettiest foot and ankle in the country round.

Ichabod Crane had a soft and foolish heart toward the sex; and it is not to wonder, that so tempting a morsel soon found favor in his eyes; more especially he had visited her in her paternal mansion. Old Baltus Van Tassel was a perfect picture of a thriving, contented, liberal-hearted farmer. He seldom, it is true, sent either his eyes or his thoughts beyond the boundaries of his own farm; but within those, everything was snug, happy, and well-conditioned. He was satisfied with his wealth, but not proud of it; and picked himself upon the hearted abundance, rather than the style in which he lived. His strong hold was situated on the banks of the Hudson, in one of those green, sheltered, fertile nooks, in which the Dutch farmers are so fond of nestling. A great elm tree spread its broad branches over it; at the foot of which bubbled up a spring of the softest and sweetest water, in a little well, formed of a barrel; and then stole sparkling away through the grass, to a neighboring brook, that bubbled along among alders and dwarf willows. Hard by the farmhouse was a vast barn, that might have served for a church; every window and crevice of which seemed bursting forth with the treasures of the farm; the flail was busily resounding within it from morning to night; swallows and martins skimmed twittering about the eaves; and rows of pigeons, some with one eye turned up, as if watching the weather, some with their heads under their wings, or buried in their bosom, and others swelling, and cooing, and bowing about their dames, were enjoying the sunshine on the roof. Sleek unwieldy porkers were grunting in the repose and abundance of their pens; whence sallied forth, now and then, troops of sucking pigs, as if to snuff the air. A stately squadron of snowy geese were riding in an adjoining pond, convoying whole fleets of ducks; regiments of turkeys were gobbling through the farmyard and guinea fowls fretting about it, like ill-tempered housewives, with their peevish discontented cry. Before the barn
door strutted the gallant cock, that pattern of a husband, a warrior, and a fine gentleman, clipping his burnished wings, and crowing the pride and gladness of his heart-sometimes teeming up the earth with his feet, and then generously calling his ever-hungry family of wives and children to enjoy the rich morsel which he had discovered.

The pedagogue's mouth watered, as he looked upon his sumptuous promise of luxurious winter fare. In his devouring mind's eye, he pictured to himself every roasting-pig running about with a pudding in his belly, and an apple in his mouth; the pigeons were snugly put to bed in a comfortable pie, and tucked in with a cover of crust; the geese were swimming in their own gravy; and the ducks pairing costly in dishes, like snug married couples with a decent competency of onion sauce. In the porkers he saw carver out the future sleek side of bacon, and juicy relishing ham; not a turkey but he beheld daintily trussed up, with its gizzard under its wing, and peradventure, a necklace of savory sausages; and even bright chanticleer himself sprawling of his back, in a side-dish, with uplifted claws, as is craving that quarter which his chivalrous spirit disdained to ask while living.

As the enraptured Ichabod fancied all these, and as he rolled his great green eyes over the fat meadow-lands, the rich fields of wheat, of rye, of buckwheat, and Indian corn, and the orchards burthened with ruddy fruit which surrounded the warm tenement of Van Tassel, his heart yearned after the damsel who was to inherit these domains, and his imagination expanded with the idea how they might be readily turned into cash, and the money invested in immense tracts of wild land, and shingie palaces in the wilderness. Nay, his busy fancy already realized his hopes, and presented to him the blooming Katrina, with a whole family of children, mounted on the top of a wagon loaded with household trumpery, with pots and kettles dangling beneath; and beheld himself be-striding a pacing mare, with a colt at her heels, setting out for Kentucky, Tennessee, or the Lord knows where.

When he entered the house the conquest of his heart was complete. It was one of those spacious farmhouses, with high-ridged, but lowly-sloping roofs, built in the style handed down from the first the Dutch settlers; the low projecting eaves forming a piazza along the front, capable of being closed up in bad weather. Under this were hung flails, harness, various utensils of husbandry, and nets for fishing in the neighboring river. Benches were built along the sides for summer use; and a great spinning-wheel at one end, and a churn at the other, showed the various uses to which this important porch might be devoted. From this piazza the wondering Ichabod entered the hall, which formed the centre of the mansion and the place of usual residence. Here, rows of resplendent pewter, hanged on a long dresser, dazzled his eyes. In one corner stood a huge bag of wool ready to be spun; in another a quantity of linsey-woolsey just from the loom, ears of Indian corn, and strings of dried apples
and peaches, hung in gay festoons along the walls, mingled with the gaud of red peppers; and a door left ajar gave him a peep into the best parlor, where the claw-footed chairs, and dark mahogany tables, shone like mirrors; andirons, with their accompanying shovel and tongs, glistened from their covert of asparagus tops; mock -oranges and conch-shells decorated the mantelpiece, strings of various colored birds eggs were suspended above it; a great ostrich egg was hung from the centre of the room, and a corner cupboard, knowingly left open, displayed immense treasures of old silver and well-mended china.

From the moment Ichabod laid his eyes upon these regions of delight, the peace of his mind was at an end, and his only study was how to gain the affections of the peerless daughter of Van Tassel. In this enterprise, however, he had more real difficulties than generally fell to the lot of a knight-errant of yore, who seldom had any thing but giants, enchanters, fiery dragons, and such like easily -conquered adversaries, to contend with; and had to make his way merely gates of iron and brass, and walls of adamant, to the castle keep, where the lady of his heart was confined; all which he achieved as easily as a man would carve his way to the centre of Christmas pie; and then the lady gave him her hand as a matter of course. Ichabod, on the contrary, had to win his way to the heart of a country coquette, beset with a labyrinth of whims and caprices, which were for ever presenting new difficulties and impediments, and he had to encounter a host of fearful adversaries of real flesh and blood, the numerous rustic admirers, who beset every portal to her heart; keeping a watchful and angry eye upon each other, but ready to fly out in the common cause against any new competitor.

Among these the most formidable was a burly, roaring, roistering blade, of the name of Abraham, or, according to the Dutch abbreviation, Brown Van Brunt, the hero of the country round, which rang with his feats of strength and hardihood. He was broad-shouldered and double-jointed, with short curly black hair, and a bluff, but not unpleasant countenance, having a mingled air of fun and arrogance. From his Herculean frame and great powers of limb, he had received the nickname of BROM BONES, by which he was universally known. He was famed for great knowledge and skill in horsemanship, being as dexterous on horseback as a Tartar. He was foremost at all races and cock-fights; and, with the ascendancy which bodily strength acquires in rustic life, was the umpire in all disputes, setting his hat on one side, and giving his decisions with an air and tone admitting of no gainsay or appeal. he was always ready for either a fight or a frolic; but had more mischief than ill-will in his composition; and with all his overbearing roughness, there was a strong dash of waggish good humor at bottom. He had three of four boon companions, who regarded him as their model, and at the head of whom he scoured the country, attending every scene of feud or
merriment for miles round. In cold weather he was distinguished by a fur cap, surmounted with a flaunting fox's tail; and when the folks at a country gathering descried this well-known crest at distance, whisking about among squad of hard riders, they always stood by for a squall. Sometimes his crew would be heard dashing along past the farmhouses at midnight, with whoop and halloo, like a troop of Don Cossacks; and the old dames, started out of their sleep, would listen for a moment till the hurry-scurry had clattered by, and then exclaim, Aye, there goes Brom Bones and his gang! The neighbors looked upon him with a mixture of awe, admiration, and good will; and when any madcap prank, or rustic brawl, occurred in the vicinity, always shook their heads, and warranted Brom Bones was at the bottom of it.

This rantipole hero had for some time singled out the blooming Katrina for the object of his uncouth gallantries, and though his amorous toyings were something like the gentle caresses and endearments of a bear, yet it was whispered that she did not altogether discourage his hopes. Certain it is, his advances were signals for rival candidates to retire, who felt no inclination to cross a lion in his amours; insomuch, that when his horse was seen tied to Van Tassel's paling, on a Sunday night, a sure sign that his master was courting, or, as it is termed, "sparking," within, all other suitors passed by in despair, and carried the war into other quarters.

Such was the formidable rival with whom Ichabod Crane had to contend, and, considering all things, a stouter man than he would have shrunk from the competition, and a wiser man would have despaired. He had, however, a happy mixture of pliability and perseverance in his nature; he was in form and spirit like a supplejack-yielding, but though; though he bent, he never broke; and though he bowed beneath the slightest pressure, yet, the moment it was away-jerk! he was as erect, and carried his head as high as ever.

To have taken the field openly against his rival would have been madness; for he was not a man to be thwarted in his amours, any more than that stormy lover, Achilles. Ichabod, therefore, made his advances in a quiet and gently-insinuating manner. Under cover of his character of singing-master, he made frequent visits at the farmhouse; not that he had any thing to apprehend from the meddlesome interference of parents, which is so often a stumbling-block in the path of lovers. Balt Van Tassel was an easy indulgent soul; he loved his daughter better even than his pipe, and, like a reasonable man and an excellent father, but girls can take care of themselves. Thus while the busy dame bustled about the house, or plied her spinning-wheel at one end of the piazza, honest Balt would sit smoking his evening pipe at the other, watching the achievements of a little wooden warrior, who, armed with a sword in each hand, was most valiantly fighting the wind on the pinnacle of the barn. In the mean time, Ichabod would carry on his suit with the daughter by the side of the spring under