

Analyzing Comedy in *As I Lay Dying*

Comedy, beginning in chaos and ending with the restoration of order through marriage, is drama that humorously examines human weakness and fault. According to Holman and Harmon, comedy is a genre "dealing with people in their human state, restrained and often made ridiculous by their limitations, faults, bodily functions, and animal nature, comedy draws its laughter from the spectacle of individual or collective human weakness or failure, hence its tendency to contrast appearance and reality, to deflate pretense, and to mock excess." (*A Handbook to Literature*).

Journey Map task:

- Create a detailed map of the Bundren family's journey that is *As I Lay Dying*.
- Mark all significant plot elements with visual representations, labels, and illuminating quotations.
- Note important comic scenes, highlighting the human weakness and fault being ridiculed.

Epitaph task:

- Create an epitaph for four members of the Bundren family. Each epitaph (in the form of one or two heroic couplets) must highlight a central element of the family member's character and his or her individual human weakness or failure.