"Gimpel the Fool"

- "Gimpel the Fool" first appeared in an English translation in 1953.
- The story introduced Singer to an entirely new reading audience and paved the way for many other publications.
- Singer's career continued to flourish, peaking in 1978 when he won the Nobel Prize for literature.

- The story questions whether Gimpel is a schlemiel or not.
- The story focuses on the simple baker Gimpel, who believes anything and everything people tell him.
- Note Gimpel's reaction to these stories when he discovers people have lied to him.
- Gimpel finally visits the local rabbi for some advice. How do you interpret the rabbi's words:
  "It is written, better to be a fool all your days than for one hour to be evil."

“Gimpel the Fool”

• The height of Gimpel's "Foolishness" comes with his marriage to the town prostitute, who he is told is a virgin.
• In this scene, also see that one of Gimpel's virtues (faults?) is his inability to get angry.
• Gimpel's great temptation comes in the form of the "Spirit of Evil."

• What does Gimpel's decision not to spoil the village's bread say about him?
• What do you make of the story's ending?
• What does the following quote reveal about Gimpel:
  "What's the good of not believing? Today it's your wife you don't believe, tomorrow it's God Himself you won't take stock in."