

LESSON OVERVIEW: UNIT INTRODUCTION

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Unit Overview

How can one of the most important times in our lives also be one of the most challenging? Adolescence is a pivotal time full of change and new experiences, yet it can also be painful. In this 360 Unit, students will explore the unique, complicated, and even comical experiences and lessons of adolescence. They'll read stories and poems about teens navigating the uncertain waters of adolescence. They'll learn about two kinds of popularity and consider how social status motivates teen behavior and decisions. While students weigh in on these important concepts, they'll also learn new reading, writing, discussion, and grammar skills.

Unit Focus Standards

Reading:

- Theme development [RL.7.2]
- Interaction of story elements [RL.7.3]
- Impact of repetition and figurative language [RL.7.4]
- Structure in poetry [RL.7.5]





Writing:

- Argument writing [W.7.1]
- Expository writing [W.7.2]

Materials needed

You will need	Your students will need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This lesson handout • Unit Intro Slide Deck (Optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Introduction to Unit 2: Adolescence" (Student Copy) • Literary Terms Reference Sheet (Optional)

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
<i>This lesson is intended to introduce students to key ideas within the unit while generating interest and excitement. The paired slide deck supports facilitation.</i>		
Part 1	 Exploring the Unit's Big Questions: Have students rate how strongly they agree or disagree with the five statements.	5 min
Part 2	 Discussing the Unit's Big Questions: Lead students in a discussion about their opinions from Part 1. You might consider a blend of partner and whole class discussion.	10 min
Part 3	 What Will We Read? Lead students through an overview of unit texts or have them read it independently. Then have students turn and talk about which texts seem most interesting.	5 min
Part 4	 What Skills Will We Learn? Have students complete a self assessment gauging their familiarity with the unit skills.	5 min
~25 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Introduction to Unit 2: Adolescence

Essential Question: What makes adolescence challenging?

Answers in blue

About this lesson

In this lesson, you will be introduced to the big questions, texts, and skills in this unit.

PART 1: Exploring the Unit's Big Questions

Directions: Below are several ideas that we will explore in this unit. Rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. *5 minutes*



1. Teens would be better off if they followed the advice of adults.

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

2. Most teenagers are cruel to one another.

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

3. Middle school relationships can be just as real and serious as the relationships between adults.

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

4. It's worth changing things about yourself if it makes you popular.

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

5. I sometimes feel trapped in my town.

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

PART 2: Discussing the Unit's Big Questions

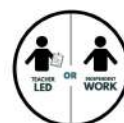
Directions: As you discuss the statements from Part 1 with your classmates, use the space below to capture interesting ideas you hear! *10 minutes*



NOTES CATCHER

PART 3: What Will We Read?

Directions: Read the overview of unit texts. *5 minutes*



Title & Author	Genre	As you read, you will think about...
"Going Steady" by Adam Bagdasarian	<i>Short Story</i>	How do you navigate middle school love?
"Hanging Fire" by Audre Lorde	<i>Poem</i>	How does it feel to be a teenager?
"Saturday at the Canal" by Gary Soto	<i>Poem</i>	Have you ever wanted a more exciting life?
"Likes vs Likeability" by Aaron Moger & Scott Jared	<i>Informational Text</i>	What's the difference between being likable and being popular? Does the difference matter?
"Popularity" by Adam Bagdasarian	<i>Short Story</i>	What would you risk to be popular?



Turn & Talk: Which texts sound most interesting? Why?

PART 4: What Skills Will We Learn?

Directions: Rate your confidence level for each of the unit skills listed below. *5 minutes*



Reading Skills

<i>Mark the column that best matches your confidence level for each skill.</i>	<i>Not Confident</i>	<i>Somewhat Confident</i>	<i>Extremely Confident</i>
1. I can identify the theme of a text.			
2. I can explain <i>how</i> a theme is developed.			
3. I can identify repetition in a text and explain its importance.			
4. I know how to read and understand a poem.			

Writing Skills

<i>Mark the column that best matches your confidence level for each skill.</i>	<i>Not Confident</i>	<i>Somewhat Confident</i>	<i>Extremely Confident</i>
1. I know what context is and how to use it when introducing evidence.			
2. I know how to write strong explanations for evidence.			
3. I know how to plan, organize, and write an essay about more than one text.			

Literary Terms for Unit 2: Adolescence

UNIT LITERARY TERMS <i>These literary terms will appear throughout the unit. Use this reference sheet as needed.</i>	
Theme	<p>A universal message that can apply to real life or other stories</p> <p>Example: A theme of <i>The Wizard of Oz</i> is that someone's home will always have special importance.</p>
Repetition	<p>When an author repeats a phrase, a word, or an idea throughout a text</p> <p>Example: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness" — Charles Dickens, <i>A Tale of Two Cities</i></p>
Imagery	<p>Vivid description of how something looks, sounds, smells, tastes, or feels</p> <p>Example: "When the sun is bright on the upland slopes; / When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass." — Paul Laurence Dunbar, "Sympathy"</p>
Metaphor	<p>A direct comparison between two things to suggest a likeness</p> <p>Example: "Juliet is the sun." — William Shakespeare, <i>Romeo and Juliet</i></p>
Speaker	The narrator of the poem
Line	In a poem, a group of words arranged in a row
Line Break	In a poem, the end of one line and the start of the next
Stanza	In a poem, a group of lines that are set off from other groups by a space
Stanza Break	In a poem, the end of one stanza and the start of the next

Writing Baseline Assessment Goal-Setting Tool

Name _____ Class _____

Writing is an important skill that prepares you to succeed in school, work, and life. It helps you communicate your ideas well and express your creativity. It helps you become a stronger reader and a better thinker. None of us is born a strong writer, but we become strong writers through regular, intentional practice. Use this goal-setting tool to help you reflect on your writing skills and plan for a year of big achievements.

Part 1: Share your perceptions about writing

Directions: Rate how much you agree or disagree with the statements about writing. Then, respond to the short answer questions that follow. This will help you prepare for a writing conference with your teacher.



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I enjoy writing.	1	2	3	4	5
I practiced writing every day in school last year.	1	2	3	4	5
I am comfortable sharing my writing with others.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to imitate the techniques of other writers.	1	2	3	4	5
I know how to improve my writing.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy revising my writing to make it better.	1	2	3	4	5
I will continue to revise a writing assignment until it is my best work.	1	2	3	4	5

1. What kind of writing do you enjoy most?

2. If you could write about one thing all year long, what would it be?

3. What is hard for you as a writer?



Part 2: Reflect on your Writing Baseline Assessment scores

Directions: A baseline assessment is a test at the beginning of the year that helps your teacher understand how to help you improve. Your teacher has scored your Writing Baseline Assessment. Use the scores and teacher comments on your Student Feedback Form to answer the reflection questions.

4. Write the scores you received for each writing category:

Writing Category	My score
Thesis	
Organization	
Evidence	
Analysis	
Writing Conventions	
Overall Score	

5. What were the greatest areas of strength in your writing?

6. What were the areas of writing that needed the most improvement?

Part 3: Set Goals

Directions: Answer the questions below.



7. List at least **three** ways that you would like to improve in your writing between now and the end of the school year.

- Goal 1:

- Goal 2:

- Goal 3:

8. How can your teacher help you meet these goals?

GRADE 6-10 ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING RUBRIC

Directions: Use this rubric to score students' Writing Baseline Assessment and plan instructional next steps.

Grade 6-10 Argumentative Writing Rubric 4-Point Section					
Score	4	3	2	1	Not Scored
Thesis	Thesis or claim is clearly stated. It is specific and relevant to the task and purpose.	Thesis or claim is adequately stated . It responds to the prompt but may be general or broad.	Thesis or claim is attempted , but may be somewhat confusing or ambiguously related to the task and purpose.	Thesis or claim is missing or not relevant to the task and purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient (includes copied text) • Not written in English • Not aligned to the task and/or purpose
Organization	Demonstrates a clear, logical organizational structure that supports the development of the thesis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong introduction and conclusion • Logical and coherent grouping and ordering of key points and evidence within and across body paragraphs • Strong transitions that demonstrate the relationship between ideas • Clearly addresses alternate or opposing arguments (beginning at 7th grade) 	Demonstrates a satisfactory organizational structure that generally supports the thesis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An adequate introduction and conclusion • Logical grouping and ordering of key points and evidence within and across body paragraphs • Some effective transitions between ideas • Adequately addresses alternate or opposing arguments (beginning at 7th grade) 	Demonstrates a general organizational structure which may lack a sense of direction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction or conclusion is weak • Some key points and evidence that are not grouped or ordered logically • Some confusing transitions or connections between ideas • Addresses alternate or opposing arguments in a confusing or unclear way (beginning at 7th grade) 	Demonstrates a weak organizational structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and conclusion may be weak or missing • Key points and evidence that are not grouped or ordered logically • Few transitions or connections between ideas • Does not address alternate or opposing arguments (beginning at 7th grade) 	
Evidence	Includes strong and relevant evidence to support thesis/claim, key points, and overall argument All evidence is contextualized with attention to information intended readers may need.	Includes relevant evidence to support thesis/claim, key points, and overall argument Most evidence is contextualized with attention to information intended readers may need.	Evidence or supporting details may be insufficient or only somewhat relevant . Evidence is inconsistently contextualized with attention to information intended readers may need.	Evidence or supporting details are largely missing . If evidence is present, no context is provided.	

Grade 6-10 Argumentative Writing Rubric 4-Point Section

Score	4	3	2	1	Not Scored
Analysis	<p>Explanations/analysis develop ideas and insight in the essay, and support a credible and convincing line of reasoning.</p> <p>Effectively uses a variety of elaborative techniques, such as making connections or comparisons, using analogies or anecdotes, etc.</p> <p>Reflects precise and carefully selected language for clarity and effect</p> <p>Tone is clearly appropriate for the task, audience, and purpose.</p>	<p>Explanations/analysis develop ideas and make connections, and support a coherent line of reasoning.</p> <p>Adequately uses some elaborative techniques, such as making connections or comparisons, using analogies or anecdotes, etc.</p> <p>Reflects use of language that is functional and appropriate</p> <p>Tone is generally appropriate for the task, audience, and purpose.</p>	<p>Explanations/analysis mostly summarize or restate evidence, but the line of reasoning may be difficult to follow or underdeveloped.</p> <p>Uses weak or imbalanced elaborative techniques.</p> <p>Reflects mostly simplistic language</p> <p>Tone is uneven or somewhat ineffective for the task, audience, and purpose.</p>	<p>Explanations/analysis may be missing or show a lack of understanding. There is no line of reasoning.</p> <p>Mostly appeals to emotions instead of using elaborative techniques.</p> <p>Language is unclear or confusing</p> <p>Tone is ineffective for the task, audience, and purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient (includes copied text) • Not written in English • Not aligned to the task and/or purpose

Grade 6-10 Argumentative Writing Rubric 2-Point Section

Score	2	1	Not Scored
Writing Conventions	<p>Reflects adequate control of most writing conventions; contains occasional errors that do not interfere with clarity or message</p>	<p>Reflects partial control of writing conventions; contains errors that interfere with clarity or message</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient (includes copied text) • Not written in English • Not aligned to the task and/or purpose

STUDENT FEEDBACK FORM

Directions: Fill out this form based on the scores you gave students on the Grade 6-10 Argumentative Writing Rubric. Then, share this synthesis of your feedback with students to help them [reflect on](#) and improve their writing.

Writing category	Student score	Total points possible	Teacher comments
Thesis		/4	
Organization		/4	
Evidence		/4	
Analysis		/4	
Writing Conventions		/2	
Overall Score		/18	

LESSON OVERVIEW: VOCABULARY ACTIVITY SET LIST 1

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How should I use this set of vocabulary activities?

Explicit vocabulary instruction is an effective way to build student capacity to comprehend complex texts. That's why every CommonLit 360 unit includes at least one set of vocabulary words and activities to help students learn the words and retain them.

Unit 2: Adolescence includes 2 vocabulary sets, each with five engaging practice activities. **Note: These activities are not effective when assigned all at once.** Instead, they are meant to be used flexibly throughout the unit in anticipation of the vocabulary quiz. They can be used as warm-up activities, homework, or short, whole-class practice.

Words included in this set

Ambition
Assure
Belittle
Destiny
Enduring
Influence
Prominent
Status

Materials needed

You will need	Your students will need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This answer key Vocabulary Activity 1 List 1 Slide Deck when introducing the set of words for the first time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary for Unit 2: Adolescence – LIST 1 Handout

What activities are included in this set?

Activity	Activity Description	Suggested Facilitation
1	In-Context Predictions: Students use context clues to try to determine the meaning of each vocabulary word.	Whole-Class Activity Use the Vocabulary Activity 1 List 1 Slide Deck to encourage students to use context clues and to facilitate a shared understanding of each word's meaning.
2	Fill-in-the-Blank Sentence: Students fill in the blank with the correct vocabulary word to complete each sentence.	Warm-Up Activity Homework Short Practice
3	Scenarios: Students fill in the blanks using the correct vocabulary word to complete each scenario and explain their choices.	
4	Matching: Students match the vocabulary words to their synonyms.	
5	Application of Vocabulary: Students answer open-ended questions, using the vocabulary words in their responses.	

UNIT 2: Adolescence

ANSWER KEY: VOCABULARY ACTIVITY SET LIST 1

The words in this list can be found in “Going Steady,” “Hanging Fire,” “Likes vs. Likeability,” and “Popularity.”

Activity 1: In-Context Predictions

Correct Definitions:

1. **Ambition:** a strong desire and determination to achieve something
2. **Assure:** to make something certain to happen; to guarantee
3. **Belittle:** to make a person seem small or unimportant
4. **Destiny:** something that is meant to happen to a person in the future
5. **Enduring:** long-lasting
6. **Influence:** the ability to have an effect on the behavior of someone or something
7. **Prominent:** important; famous
8. **Status:** position or rank when compared to others

Activity 2: Fill-in-the-Blank Sentence

1. Prominent
2. Enduring
3. Destiny
4. Ambitious
5. Status
6. Assurance
7. Influence
8. Belittle

Activity 3: Fill-in-the-Blank Scenario

Student explanations will vary, but should show an understanding of each word’s meaning.

1. Prominent
2. Ambitious
3. Assurance
4. Belittled
5. Endured
6. Status
7. Destiny
8. Influential

Activity 4: Matching

1. Goal
2. Guarantee
3. Insult
4. Future
5. Long-lasting
6. Effect
7. Famous
8. Position

Activity 5: Application of Vocabulary

Student answers will vary, but each answer should include the underlined vocabulary word.

Using CommonLit's Supplemental Text Sets

What is the supplemental text set?

Each CommonLit unit is accompanied by a set of supplemental texts. These texts range in both their complexity and thematic links to the unit. Each text is available digitally and prepared with an annotation task, Guided Reading Mode multiple choice questions, and Assessment multiple choice and short-answer questions.

Why use supplemental texts?

Because the texts vary in complexity, teachers can use the texts to support and challenge a wide range of learners. The texts provide an opportunity for remediation and extension within each unit.

Here are a few suggestions on how to implement the supplemental texts:

- **Independent, In-Class reading:** Provide a text to students to read independently in class. This provides students with an opportunity for sustained silent reading. During this time, the teacher can also pull a group of students to read with.
- **Small Group or Partner In-Class Reading:** Provide a text to students to read in partners or small groups in class. This provides students with a chance to collaborate on content connected to the theme of the unit. During this time, the teacher can also pull a group of students to read with.
- **Homework:** Provide students with a text to read independently at home. The teacher can choose to assign the Assessment Questions and/or Guided Reading Mode questions to all or some students.
- **Student Choice:** Use the text set as an opportunity to have students pull from a supplemental "library." Keep in mind that you will want to be transparent about the complexity of each text so students can make the best choice about a text that meets their learning needs.








LESSON OVERVIEW: Related Media Exploration

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What is a “Related Media Exploration”, and how does it support the unit?

About Related Media Explorations	Exploration Title: What experiences do middle schoolers share?
This Related Media Exploration gives students a chance to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with one video and one podcast Work collaboratively Reflect on their lives Discuss what they've learned 	Students will build knowledge about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common adolescent emotions and experiences The way adolescents view themselves and their friends What make adolescence a unique and challenging time

How do I facilitate this Related Media Exploration?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
Use the paired slide deck for this lesson to guide students through the handout. Video and podcast are linked on the handout and in the slide deck.		
Part 1	 What Does It Mean to Be Popular? Students will watch “What Does it Mean to Be Popular?” and answer questions to prepare them for the lesson’s focus on adolescence and middle school.	10 min
Part 2	 Middle School Reflections: Students will listen to “Prologue,” an excerpt from Episode 449: “Middle School” of the This American Life podcast. They will explore one girl’s thoughts and attitude about middle school.	13 min
Part 3	 Changing Adolescent Emotions: Students will listen to “Act Two: Stutter Step,” an excerpt from Episode 449: “Middle School” of the This American Life podcast and explore the different emotions of middle schoolers preparing for a dance.	7 min
Part 4	 The Confusion of Adolescent Relationships: Students will continue listening to “Act Two: Stutter Step” and consider the confusion and hesitation in adolescent relationships.	7 min
Part 5	 Lessons from a Middle School Dance: Students will finish listening to “Act Two: Stutter Step” and examine what the actions and motivations of students at a middle school dance reveal about adolescence.	10 min
Part 6	 Independent Reflection: Students will reflect on the ideas they have explored by considering their personal reactions and connections to the details in the video and podcast.	10 min
Part 7	 Whole Class Discussion: Students have the opportunity to share what they have learned with their classmates.	10 min
~70 min total		

Facilitation options

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
 Teacher-Led Exploration	 Partner Exploration	 Independent Exploration	 Blended Exploration
The teacher leads the lesson whole class.	Students explore in pairs.	Students explore independently (with headphones if possible).	The teacher uses a blend of options 1, 2, and 3.
↑ Recommended! ↑			

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Related Media Exploration

What experiences do middle schoolers share?

Answers in blue

PART 1: What Does It Mean to Be Popular?

Directions: Follow the link and watch “[What Does it Mean to Be Popular?](#)” Then, answer questions 1-4.



1. What makes someone popular?

- *They are known by a lot of people.*
- *They have a lot of friends, and they are often well-liked.*
- *The way someone dresses can make them popular.*

2. What are some of the downsides of being popular?

- *A downside of being popular is that you might not be respected or liked, even if you are well-known.*

3. According to the video, what role can social media play in popularity?

- *People might think you are popular if you have more followers, subscribers, or friends online.*
- *Putting yourself on the internet/social media allows people to see who you are and could make someone more popular.*

4. According to the final speaker in the video, what is more important to her than being popular?

- *It is more important to her to have close best friends than to be known by many people.*



PART 2: Middle School Reflections

Directions:

1. Follow the link and listen to "[Prologue](#)," an excerpt from Episode 449: "Middle School" of the *This American Life* podcast.
2. As you listen, follow along with paragraphs 1-27 below.
3. Stop at 4:35 and answer the questions in the right-hand column.

***This American Life* Podcast** **Episode 449: "Middle School"** Ira Glass

READING & LISTENING	DURING LISTENING QUESTIONS
<p>[1] Ira Glass: Hey everybody. Ira Glass here. So we got this email at our radio show near the end of the last school year from a 14-year-old.</p> <p>[2] Annie: Hello?</p> <p>[3] Ira Glass: Hey, is this Annie?</p> <p>[4] Annie: Yes.</p> <p>[5] Ira Glass: I called her up at her house in California and asked her to read it.</p> <p>[6] Annie: It says, "Dear This American Life, I just escaped the whitewashed, brick-walled, iron-gated prison that is commonly known as middle school, and I'm finally out for good. But in all the time I've listened to your show, I've never heard an episode devoted to what goes on inside the walls of a middle school. I hope you'll think about it. Anonymous."</p> <p>[7] Ira Glass: Yeah, you signed it anonymous, but then your email was signed with your name.</p> <p>[8] Annie: Yeah.</p> <p>[9] Ira Glass: Yeah.</p> <p>[10] Annie: I did anonymous because in middle school, everybody is so judgmental, and I didn't want the kids to judge me or anything if they heard me on the radio.</p> <p>[11] Ira Glass: Mainly, she says that she wrote to us because she and her friends were talking right after they left eighth grade about how terrible middle school was. And she wondered, was it just as bad for other people as it was for them?</p> <p>[12] Annie: You always wonder whether other people are going through the same thing as you. And it'd be cool to hear other people's stories about it and what they went through.</p> <p>[13] Ira Glass: And if you had to explain to somebody what are the worst things about middle school-- can I ask you to just walk me through it. What is so bad about middle school?</p> <p>[14] Annie: Kids there are all in socially awkward stages, that the drama every day can be frustrating. And girls write things that are "someone likes so and so." And then no matter who you are, or what you do, you'll get made fun of for it. Anything, anything in the world you can get made fun of for.</p>	

[15] **Ira Glass:** In Annie's case, she had friends who smoked, so she got criticized for smoking. But then she also was made fun of for not smoking, for being too much of a sissy to start smoking. She was made fun of for coming from a bilingual elementary school where everybody learned to speak Spanish and spoke it throughout the day.

[16] **Annie:** And leaving elementary school, I guess I thought that when I got to middle school, everyone would think it was really cool that I spoke Spanish, but when I got there, they mostly just thought it was dumb. I don't know if they were jealous or what. They would make fun of me for it. Then they'd say we were all full of ourselves, that we spoke different languages and stuff.

[17] **Ira Glass:** Did it make you feel bad?

[18] **Annie:** Yeah, I didn't want to stick out in that way. If I got a new sweater or something, say for Christmas, that I really liked, and I would really want to wear it to school or something, but I'd be nervous because what if someone didn't like my sweater or someone made fun of me for wearing it. It can be hard to do even the smallest things, because you're so nervous that people tease you or judge you from it.

[19] **Ira Glass:** That sweater example, is that a real example?

[20] **Annie:** Yeah, it actually is. I worried about it so much. I also had a pair of moccasins that I'd never worn, and they're kind of my signature now. Everybody really likes them. They're ankle-high, lace-up moccasins.

[21] **Ira Glass:** And how long did you have the moccasins before you actually wore them?

[22] **Annie:** A few months, probably two months. I guess I just thought if people didn't like them, they would all make fun of me for wearing them. And I didn't want to stand out that much.

[23] **Ira Glass:** What could be done to make middle school better?

[24] **Annie:** I don't think you can really do anything about it. [LAUGHS] Nothing.

[25] **Ira Glass:** We talked about this for a little while. She said basically, everybody comes into middle school as a little kid, and you're going to have to grow up, and figure out who's in what group, and who you are, and who's above who. And you're going to have to figure that out somewhere at that age, right? It might as well be middle school. And it was terrible, she says, but now she's in high school.

[26] **Annie:** Whatever middle school was, it worked. Everyone is a lot friendlier, and everyone's lives are a lot better now.

[27] **Ira Glass:** Well, today on our radio program, for Annie we look at whatever it is that happens in those mysterious years that we call middle school. We have stories today from all over the country, people lurching their way through these years when you're figuring out so, so much. We go to middle school dances and classrooms, and down to the Mexican border. From WBEZ Chicago, it's *This American Life*, distributed by Public Radio International. I'm Ira Glass. Stay with us.

Paragraphs 10-24

A. Write: According to Annie, how do people treat each other in middle school?

- *In middle school, people can be very judgmental of others.*
- *There can be a lot of "drama" in middle school.*
- *In middle school, people often make fun of others who stand out or who are different in some way.*

B. Write: How did this affect the choices Annie made in middle school?

- *Annie made choices to make sure she didn't stand out.*
- *For example, she worried about or avoided wearing some of her favorite clothing, because someone might not like it and tease her about it.*

Paragraph 25

Write: According to the podcast, what important experiences are people having in middle school?

- *In middle school, people are growing up.*
- *In middle school, people are figuring out who they are and who they fit in with.*

Paragraph 26

Write: According to Annie, how is her experience in high school different from middle school?

- *People are much more friendly.*
- *Everyone's lives are better now.*

STOP. Be sure you've answered the questions in the right-hand column before you move on.

PART 3: Changing Adolescent Emotions

Directions:



1. Follow the link and listen to "[Act Two: Stutter Step](#)," an excerpt from Episode 449: "Middle School" of the *This American Life* podcast.
2. As you listen, follow along with paragraphs 28-49 below.
3. Stop at 13:33 and answer the questions in the right-hand column.

READING & LISTENING	DURING LISTENING QUESTIONS
<p>[28] Ira Glass: Act Two, Stutter Steps. One good place to see the experiment that is life in middle school in action is a middle school dance. Last Friday, there were middle school dances all over the country, all at the same time, and we sent reporters to a half dozen of them to find out how kids were doing. They talked to them before the kids went inside to the field of battle. And, no surprise, we found a lot of stress, a lot of uncertainty.</p> <p>[29] Rob Wildeboer: Who's nervous about tonight?</p> <p>[30] Girl 1: I am.</p> <p>[31] Rob Wildeboer: Why?</p> <p>[32] Girl 1: Well, just you don't know what it's going to be like. And I'm just confused. I just don't know. Yeah.</p> <p>[33] Ira Glass: These four girls are sixth graders, and they're in a car on the way to a neon-themed dance at Edgewood Middle School in Highland Park, Illinois, with their mom and reporter Rob Wildeboer.</p> <p>[34] Rob Wildeboer: Who's going to dance with a boy tonight?</p> <p>[35] Girl 1: Nobody.</p> <p>[36] Girl 2: I don't know.</p> <p>[37] Girl 3: I can tell you that.</p> <p>[38] Girl 4: No one in this car.</p> <p>[39] Ira Glass: Roughly 800 miles east in New Jersey, sixth grader Ethan Derosé was hoping there would be at least one slow dance, though did he feel ready for a slow dance?</p> <p>[40] Ethan: Nope, not at all.</p> <p>[41] Brian Reed: Why not? What are you worried about?</p> <p>[42] Ethan: I just don't know how to do it. I'm not sure that I'll do it correctly or-- yeah.</p> <p>[43] Ira Glass: He's standing in front of the school with one of our producers, Brian Reed, as kids stream into the school. Ethan is wearing a button-up shirt with green and black stripes that he is not happy with.</p> <p>[44] Ethan: That was my mom. She made me wear it. She said that if I don't wear the two shirts that I am wearing right now that I can't go to the dance.</p>	<p>Paragraph 28</p> <p>Write: In paragraph 28, Ira Glass refers to a middle school dance as a "field of battle." Why do you think he uses this phrase? Do you agree with him?</p> <p><i>Student responses will vary; students may say:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>He is trying to show how stressful and serious middle school dances can be for students.</i> • <i>Yes, I agree because going to dances can seem intimidating or give people anxiety.</i> • <i>No, I don't agree because it's just a group of kids listening to music.</i>

[45] **Brian Reed:** What are you hoping happens at this dance?

[46] **Ethan:** I'm hoping nothing bad happens, like no humiliation or not something that'll be a story for the next month or two.

[47] **Ira Glass:** Of course, Ethan and the girls in that car in Illinois are sixth graders. In New York City, seventh graders Evelyn Benson and Alice Westerman are excited and feeling very grown up on their way to their school's Halloween dance.

[48] **Evelyn:** I'm really happy because last year, they split the gym in half, so it's light on one side and pitch black on the other side. All the sixth graders are banned from the dark side, but that's where all the cool kids are. So now we're in seventh grade, we can dance on the dark side. So it's like, woo, we're cool.

[49] **Alice:** Dance on the dark side.

Paragraphs 28-49

Write: How do the girls in Illinois view the school dance differently than the girls in New York City?

- *The girls in Illinois feel worried, nervous, confused, and uncomfortable with the idea of dancing with a boy.*
- *The girls in New York City feel more grown up and "cool" because they have more privileges at the dance; they are allowed to dance on "the dark side."*

STOP. Be sure you've answered the questions in the right-hand column before you move on.



PART 4: The Confusion of Adolescent Relationships

Directions:

1. Follow the link and listen to "[Act Two: Stutter Step](#)," beginning at 13:33.
2. As you listen, follow along with paragraphs 50-97 below.
3. Stop at 16:27 and answer the questions in the right-hand column.

READING & LISTENING	DURING LISTENING QUESTIONS
<p>[50] Ira Glass: Some of the middle school boys got up the nerve to ask girls to be their dates to the dances. But because this is a new experience for the girls too, being asked out on a date, they don't exactly know how to handle it. Here's a girl named Autumn talking with our producer, Lisa Pollak, in Delaware, the afternoon of the dance.</p> <p>[51] Lisa Pollak: Did you get asked to the dance?</p> <p>[52] Autumn: Yes, I did.</p> <p>[53] Lisa Pollak: And what did you say?</p> <p>[54] Autumn: I said I don't know, but I probably won't say yes.</p> <p>[55] Lisa Pollak: Wait, you haven't told him yes or no yet?</p> <p>[56] Autumn: No.</p> <p>[57] Lisa Pollak: OK, so it's 1:20, and the dance is at 7:00.</p> <p>[58] Autumn: Yeah.</p> <p>[59] Lisa Pollak: When do you have to let him know?</p> <p>[60] Autumn: I probably won't answer.</p> <p>[61] Lisa Pollak: Are you serious?</p> <p>[62] Autumn: Yeah. I just kind of want to hang out with the girls.</p> <p>[63] Lisa Pollak: So he's the only one who asked you.</p> <p>[64] Autumn: There was other people too.</p> <p>[65] Lisa Pollak: How many?</p> <p>[66] Autumn: Probably five-ish.</p> <p>[67] Lisa Pollak: Five boys asked you to the dance?</p> <p>[68] Autumn: Yeah.</p> <p>[69] Lisa Pollak: You told all these guys, I don't know?</p> <p>[70] Autumn: Yeah.</p> <p>[71] Lisa Pollak: What if they took that as a yes?</p> <p>[72] Autumn: Then they got the wrong answer.</p> <p>[73] Lisa Pollak: Do you say "I don't know" because it feels too mean to say no?</p> <p>[74] Autumn: Yeah, I'm not mean.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 50-74</p> <p>Write: Consider Autumn from Delaware. What does her conversation with the reporter suggest about how adolescents express their feelings?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Young people in middle school don't really talk to each other directly.</i> • <i>Young people in middle school don't want to hurt each other's feelings.</i>

[75] **Ira Glass:** Of course, some of the boys are no better. During the dance in Windham, Maine, our reporter Claire Holman pulled six grader, Christopher Potter, out of the action for a chat.

[76] **Claire Holman:** Is there anyone you like at the dance?

[77] **Christopher:** There is.

[78] **Claire Holman:** Does she know?

[79] **Christopher:** Yes, she does. We're kind of dating at the time.

[80] **Claire Holman:** So how's that going?

[81] **Christopher:** Good, it just started 20 minutes into this, so yeah.

[82] **Claire Holman:** You asked a girl to go out during the dance?

[83] **Christopher:** No, a girl came to me and asked me out.

[84] **Claire Holman:** OK, let's go over it minute by minute. So where were you when this happened?

[85] **Christopher:** I was in the cafeteria, just got a drink of root beer, and she walks up to me and asks me to go out.

[86] **Claire Holman:** What did she say exactly?

[87] **Christopher:** She said, "Chris, will you go out with me?"

[88] **Claire Holman:** And were you surprised?

[89] **Christopher:** Not really. We've kind of been on and off again.

[90] **Claire Holman:** So it's not the first time.

[91] **Christopher:** Yeah, not the first time.

[92] **Claire Holman:** But she always asks you? Or do you ever ask her?

[93] **Christopher:** Well, it's kind of weird, because it's always, she wants me to ask her. So it was weird that she asked me.

[94] **Elliot:** Usually, they don't last. It's a middle school relationship. Nothing really happens.

[95] **Eric Mennel:** What does that mean, a middle school relationship? What do you mean it doesn't last?

[96] **Jonathan:** It's destined to fail pretty much.

[97] **Elliot:** Yeah, because it's a middle school. This isn't where you're starting your life with. You don't hear things about middle school sweethearts.

Paragraphs 75-97

Write: Consider Christopher and his friends Elliott and Jonathan from Maine. What does their conversation with the reporter suggest about relationships in middle school?

- *Middle school relationships can start suddenly or can come out of nowhere.*
- *Middle school relationships don't last.*

STOP. Be sure you've answered the questions in the right-hand column before you move on.



PART 5: Lessons from a Middle School Dance

Directions:

1. Follow the link and listen to "[Act Two: Stutter Step](#)," beginning at 16:27.
2. As you listen, follow along with paragraphs 98-126 below.
3. Stop at 20:48 and answer the questions in the right-hand column.

READING & LISTENING	DURING LISTENING QUESTIONS
<p>[98] Ira Glass: In Richmond, outside Moody Middle School's dance, reporter Eric Mennel spoke with Elliot German and his step-brother Jonathan Lawton. They're both eighth graders who ran through the official rules for the dance.</p> <p>[99] Jonathan: So some of them are kind of funny, because I mean it's like no hands below the waist, no petting, which I thought was kind of funny.</p> <p>[100] Eric Mennel: Wait, no petting?</p> <p>[101] Jonathan: Yeah, no petting.</p> <p>[102] Eric Mennel: What does that mean?</p> <p>[103] Jonathan: No one knows.</p> <p>[104] Elliot: It was specifically on the flier that they hand out. They give you the dress code, and then they give you the rules, "no petting." And it's in quotations, and you never know what it means. Do people sit there at dances and just pet other people? Because that would be really weird.</p> <p>[105] Ira Glass: There are rules like this at all the dances, and some more comprehensible than others. As for whether or not the kids obey the rules and what actually happens inside the dance on the actual dance floor, one of our producers, Lisa Pollak, went inside to the dance floor at the Fall Costume dance in Lewes, Delaware. And I'm going to hand it off to her.</p> <p>[106] Lisa Pollak: So the scene in the gym was pretty much the way you remember it. Older kids dancing in the middle, younger kids at the periphery, a few aimlessly wandering around, looking like they're not sure what to do. Lots of kids were dancing, jumping up and down. Occasionally, you'd see a fist pump. They danced in these tightly packed clusters, very little room between them. And outside of the clusters were chaperons, ready to step in if they saw any grinding or suggestive dancing.</p> <p>[107] Hovering outside one of the clusters was a teacher named John Gauze, and he looked perplexed.</p> <p>[108] John: This knot has got me on edge at this point.</p> <p>[109] Lisa Pollak: Why?</p> <p>[110] John: Because they're trying to get away with stuff. You can tell by the way they're looking at you. They have a guilty look, because you're about to see me swoop.</p> <p>[111] Lisa Pollak: He actually did swoop. He plunged into the pack of kids, pulled the boy aside and talked to him. Then he told me why.</p>	

[112] **John:** He needed to be taken aside and told to stop being up against those girls like that. I don't want to jump in too much, but I just want to give them the "whoa," the flat hand "whoa," just whoa. Just calm it down a little. I mean usually, if I see it, then they're going to stop because they see me.

[113] **Lisa Pollak:** And then comes the moment of truth, the moment that forces every kid in the room to make a decision, the moment that separates the timid from the brave, the slow song. I watch it with teacher Brian Comra.

[114] **Brian:** So we got our slow song, and just as I suspected, a majority of the students left the dance floor. All the couples are in the middle of the dance floor in a cluster. I suspect so they're not near an adult.

[115] **Lisa Pollak:** I love how the kids go up to the couples dancing and interrupt them.

[116] **Brian:** Oh absolutely.

[117] **Lisa Pollak:** Some of the couples didn't have much privacy. Their friends were standing a foot away, hanging out and talking to them. And every so often, a random kid would just cut across the dance floor.

[118] **Lisa Pollak:** This girl right here just grabbed onto the back of her friend's neck while the friend was dancing with the boy.

[119] **Brian:** Yeah, I don't know if she didn't want to be left out, or they came as friends. I think at this stage of the game, it's hard when boys and girls pair off, and then one friend is always left behind.

[120] **Lisa Pollak:** There are a few of these slow dances, but most of the songs are fast. And then suddenly, the song, "Hit the Road Jack" starts playing, and the lights snap on.

[121] **Lisa Pollak:** Oh my god, they just all like-- oh my god.

[122] **Brian:** Yeah, it ends very abruptly. It's 9:00. It's 9 o'clock.

[123] **Lisa Pollak:** That's it?

[124] **Brian:** That's it. There's no wind down. 9 o'clock. Lights come on. Parents are waiting. It'll be empty in another minute.

[125] **Lisa Pollak:** And he was right. The experiment in mini-adulthood that is the middle school dance was over. The same kids who, minutes earlier, were holding each other and swaying awkwardly on the dance floor, got into cars and said hi to their parents.

[126] **Ira Glass:** Lisa Pollak. Coming up, surviving middle school by pretending that you are from a completely different family. That is in a minute, from Chicago Public Radio and Public Radio International, when our program continues.

Paragraphs 113-126

A. Write: Consider the reporter's conversation with the adult chaperone at the middle school dance in Delaware. How does he say young people behave with each other at the dance?

- *The "brave" kids will dance with someone else, but many others won't.*
- *Some kids feel left behind when their friend dances or "pairs off" with someone else.*

B. Write: What does Act Two suggest about some of the challenges of being an adolescent?

- *As an adolescent, you want to be more grown-up, but you also feel awkward and confused.*
- *As an adolescent, it can be awkward or difficult to talk to your peers.*
- *As an adolescent, you are trying to be grown-up, but you're not there yet.*

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STOP. Be sure you've answered the questions in the right-hand column before you move on.

PART 6: Independent Reflection

Directions: Respond to the prompt below by writing or typing in the box.



PROMPT: Describe your reactions as you listened to other adolescents describe their middle school experiences. How do the descriptions of middle school in the video and podcast match or differ from your own experiences? Summarize evidence from the video and podcast in your response.

SAMPLE RESPONSE:

Student responses will vary.

PART 7: Whole Class Discussion

Directions: Share your answer to the question from Part 6 with the class. Then, keep the conversation going by discussing the following optional questions.



- In paragraph 6, Annie says, “I just escaped the whitewashed, brickwalled, iron-gated prison that is commonly known as middle school.” Do you agree with her description of middle school? Why?
- Do you think paragraphs 50-97 accurately portray the way adolescent relationships work? Why?
- Based on this podcast, what do you think adults misunderstand about adolescents? How do you think the world would be different if adults spent more time speaking with adolescents and asking them questions, like they do in this podcast?

LESSON OVERVIEW: “GOING STEADY”

(This page does not appear on the student copy.)

How does this lesson fit into the unit?

Reading Lesson 1	Reading Lesson 2	Reading Lesson 3	Reading Lesson 4	Reading Lesson 5
“Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian (Short Story)	“Hanging Fire” by Audre Lorde (Poem)	“Saturday at the Canal” by Gary Soto (Poem)	“Likes vs. Likeability” by Aaron Moger and Scott Jared (Informational Text)	“Popularity” by Adam Bagdasarian (Short Story)
↑ You are here! ↑				




This lesson’s skill focus

In this lesson, students will analyze how a **theme develops** over the course of the text, including how it is **shaped by specific details**. [RL.7.2, RL.7.3]

About this Short Story

In this humorous short story, an adolescent boy struggles to express his true emotions when he finds himself going steady with a classmate. This story highlights how the struggle to be honest about thoughts and feelings is just one reason why growing up can be hard.

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
 <p>Teacher-led, scaffolded and supportive</p>	 <p>Greater student independence</p>	 <p>Student-led, small groups</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the recommended reading modalities (whole class, partner, independent) Pause to answer the During Reading Questions during reading. <p>65 total minutes for this lesson</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign longer chunks of independent reading. Skip some supportive During Reading Questions Instruct students to take notes independently: As you read, take notes on what the narrator’s thoughts and decisions reveal about adolescence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put students into groups of 3-5 Students answer the During Reading Questions and alternate readers to read sections aloud. Circulate to check for understanding
↑ Recommended! ↑		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Going Steady

Adam Bagdasarian

Answers in blue

About this text	
The short story “Going Steady” comes from Adam Bagdasarian’s book <i>First French Kiss: and Other Traumas</i> . It details one boy’s experience with a middle school relationship.	
Purpose for Reading	Vocabulary
To analyze character decisions and interactions so that we can build our understanding about the struggles of adolescence.	<p>Let’s pronounce these words together as a class:</p> <p>Ambition [am-bish-uhn] Destiny [des-tuh-nee] Endure [en-door]</p>

WHOLE CLASS READING

DURING READING QUESTIONS

[1] Linda Lieban was an artist, a free spirit, a bohemian¹ who played the flute in the park, drew pictures of winged horses and naked nymphs,² and signed these drawings with the blood from her own pricked finger. She was someone, we all knew, who was **destined** to go to New York, dance on tabletops, pose naked for struggling artists, and rally the masses³ to riot.

[2] One day, for some reason, she smiled at me in art class. After I passed her a note asking her why, she passed me a note saying that I knew why, and I passed her a note saying that I really didn’t, and she passed me a note telling me to guess, and I passed her a note asking if she liked me, and she passed me a note with a heart on it that said “Yes!”

[3] So Linda Lieban, one of the prettiest girls in the seventh grade, liked me. I was immensely proud of my conquest,⁴ though I had no intention of doing anything about it, partly because she frightened me and partly because, in those days, it was my **ambition** to collect as many female hearts as possible without committing my own heart to any particular one.

[4] Unfortunately, during recess Greg Ransohoff mentioned that he had a crush on Linda, and I mentioned that I could go steady with her anytime I wanted.

[5] “Oh sure,” he said.

[6] “Wanna bet?” I said.

[7] “How much?”

Paragraphs 2-3

Write: Why doesn’t the narrator want to respond to Linda’s feelings for him?

- *He is a little afraid of her.*
- *He wants to be liked by many girls and not date just one.*

¹ someone who doesn’t follow the usual social rules or customs, especially one who is involved in the arts

² a creature from mythology, which usually takes the form of a maiden living in the woods

³ “Rally the masses” is an expression that means “to encourage many people to support someone or something, or to protest someone or something.”

⁴ **Conquest** (*noun*): the use of military force to take over or control a place or people

[8] "A dollar."

[9] "Okay," he said, "there's Linda. Go and ask her."

[10] So I walked over to Linda and asked her to go steady with me. She said yes, of course, but before she could kiss me or embrace me or hold my hand, I walked back to Greg Ransohoff and said, "She said yes. Give me a dollar."

[11] So now I was going steady with Linda Lieban, which meant I would have to call her every night, gaze at her during class, stop flirting with other girls, write romantic letters signed with a heart, carry her books, defend her if necessary, and generally stop being myself. Also, Linda was a girl who, though lovely, was looking for someone to love much as a boa constrictor looks for a small pig or an owl to swallow.

[12] That night I called her and did my best to sound as docile⁵ and love-struck as possible. This I accomplished by lowering my voice an octave and whispering as though I had laryngitis. A half hour into our conversation she asked me if I loved her, and I said, "Of course," and she said, "How much?" and I said, "A lot," and she said "I love you more," and I said, "No, you don't," and she said, "Yes, I do," and I said, "No, you don't," and she giggled and I giggled and she hung up and I felt a little queasy.⁶

[13] The next morning during recess she walked over to me coyly⁷ with her hands behind her back, kissed me, said, "Hi, lover," and handed me a small white stuffed unicorn with silver glitter on its horn, its tail, its mane, and its hooves. She handed it to me as though it were a baseball signed by Willie Mays,⁸ and I took it as though it were a poison apple.

[14] "Do you know what it means?" she asked.

[15] "No," I said, which was the first honest thing I had said to her since I asked her to go steady.

[16] "It means I love you."

[17] "Oh," I said, trying to look grateful and moved.⁹ Then the bell ending recess rang and she kissed me and we walked together arm in arm toward our next class.

[18] During math class she handed me a note covered with red hearts and when I looked at her she blew me a kiss and I managed to smile and kiss the air and Mrs. Fine said, "William, if you are going to carry on with your girlfriend, you can do it in the vice-principal's office."

Paragraphs 11-18

A. Write: The narrator says, "I took [the stuffed unicorn] as if it were a poison apple." (13) What does this suggest about the difference between his actions and his true feelings for Linda?

- *He is pretending to like Linda, but he really doesn't.*

B. Poll the Class: Do you think Linda really loves the narrator as much as she says she does? Be prepared to defend your response.

- A. Yes
- B. No

PARTNER READING

[19] Naturally, we talked on the phone that night:

[20] "Hi, lover," she said.

[21] "Hi," I said in my breathy baritone.

[22] "Do you miss me?"

DURING READING QUESTIONS

⁵ **Docile** (*adjective*): willing to accept instructions from another person; obedient

⁶ **Queasy** (*adjective*): feeling sick

⁷ **Coy** (*adjective*): pretending to be shy, but really wanting to attract attention

⁸ a famous Major League Baseball player

⁹ **Moved** (*adjective*): affected emotionally; having a strong feeling

[23] "Yes."

[24] "Come over."

[25] "Now?"

[26] "Right now."

[27] "It's nine o'clock at night, Linda."

[28] "So? Sneak out."

[29] "I can't sneak out."

[30] "Sneak out now and throw a pebble at my window."

[31] I laughed nervously.

[32] "Then I'll sneak out and throw a pebble at your window," she said.

[33] Here was the Linda I had feared. Here was the bohemian, free-spirited Linda who would come to my house, throw a pebble at my window, alarm my parents, and ruin my life.

[34] "No, no," I said. "Let's just go to sleep instead and *think* about each other."

[35] "I'm thinking about you now!"

[36] "It's different when you're in bed. Pretend we're lying under the stars together."

[37] "In Oregon?"

[38] "Okay, Oregon."

[39] "I love you, lover," she said.

[40] "I love you, too," I said.

[41] "Not as much as I love you."

[42] "Yes, I do."

[43] "No, you don't."

[44] "Yes, I do."

[45] "No, you don't."

[46] Then she giggled and I giggled and she hung up and I felt queasy again.

CHARACTER INTERACTIONS: Paragraphs 30-46

Think & Share: Why do you think the narrator keeps **assuring** Linda that he loves her?

Student responses will vary; students may say:

- *He feels uncomfortable saying what he really thinks and feels.*
- *She expects him to say it, so he does.*
- *He is afraid of hurting her feelings.*

THEME DEVELOPMENT: Paragraphs 19-46

Write: What does the narrator's conversation with Linda suggest about adolescents and their feelings?

- *It can be difficult for adolescents to be honest about their feelings.*

INDEPENDENT READING

[47] Things proceeded in roughly this fashion for four days. By the end of the fourth day I knew I had to break up with her. I was tired of cooing, kissing the air, and carrying her books. I was tired of looking love-struck and docile and content.¹⁰ Also, I knew that one night she would really throw a pebble at my window, and if I pretended to be asleep, she would throw a rock, and Sam, our dog, would bark, and my parents would wake up, and all h--- would break loose.

[48] On Friday she asked me if I was going to Chris Block's party Saturday night.

[49] "I didn't even know he was having a party," I said.

¹⁰ **Content** (*adjective*): happy, satisfied, or peaceful

DURING READING QUESTIONS

[50] "He sent our invitation to my house."

[51] "Our invitation?"

[52] "Uh-huh."

[53] That night I decided I would break up with her at Chris Block's party. "Linda," I said to the mirror, "it's not working. We're two different people looking for two different things."

[54] "Linda," I said, "sometimes two people, even if they love each other, can't be together."

[55] "Linda," I said, "let's break up... I think it's time to break up... let's do ourselves a favor and break up."

[56] And no matter what I said, my imaginary Linda smiled, told me she understood, and walked cheerfully out of my life.

[57] The night of the party I felt happier than I had felt for a week. I decided that I would not waste any time. As soon as I got to the party, I would pull Linda aside, explain the situation as tenderly as I could, kiss her on the cheek, and enjoy my freedom.

[58] Unfortunately, it didn't quite work out that way because as soon as I got to the party, Linda ran over to me, picked a piece of lint off my jacket, told me I looked delicious and that she had missed me all day. As I started to say, "Linda, sometimes two people, even if they — " she said, "Come on," led me into Chris Block's living room where everyone was dancing, and said, "Let's dance."

[59] So we danced. To be absolutely honest, she felt very good in my arms, and for one brief moment I was actually happy that she was mine. When the song ended, however, I remembered that I had to reclaim¹¹ my freedom and said, "Linda, I have to talk to you." With that, I led her out to the backyard, past a row of rosebushes, to the swimming pool. I sat her down on the diving board, took a deep breath, and looked at her.

[60] "Linda," I began. "Lover..." She smiled. "I... I have something to say."

[61] She looked earnestly¹² into my eyes.

[62] "I love you," I said.

[63] "I love you, too. Is that what you wanted to tell me?"

[64] "Yes," I said. "That's all. Let's go back to the party."

[65] "Did you buy the ring?"

[66] I had promised to buy her a ring.

[67] "I ordered it," I said. "Yes."

[68] "What kind of ring?"

[69] "Gold," I said.

[70] Linda smiled, stood up, and kissed me. Then we went back to the party. Ten minutes later, after one slow dance, a glass of punch, and endless cooing and pet name calling, I asked her to come outside with me again. I was determined to

Paragraphs 53-56

Write: Why does the narrator need to practice talking to Linda in front of the mirror?

- *He is practicing breaking up with Linda, and he needs to build the confidence to do it.*
- *It is going to be difficult for him to say these things.*

CHARACTER INTERACTIONS: Paragraphs 59-70

Find Evidence: Underline three things Linda does that make it difficult for the narrator to say what he wants to say.

- *"She looks earnestly into my eyes." (61)*
- *"I love you, too. Is that what you wanted to tell me?" (63)*
- *"Did you buy the ring?" (65)*

¹¹ **Reclaim** (*verb*): to get something back

¹² **Earnest** (*adjective*): serious, intense, or passionate

succeed this time, determined to sit her down, speak my piece,¹³ and regain¹⁴ my freedom. So I took her by the hand, walked her back to the diving board, sat her down, and after a few false starts, told her I loved her again and walked her back to the party.

THEME DEVELOPMENT: Paragraphs 47-70

Write: What do the narrator's interactions with Linda suggest about adolescents and their feelings?

- *Adolescents don't express their true feelings because others influence them not to.*
- *It can be difficult for adolescents to be honest about their feelings when they feel pressure from others.*

WHOLE CLASS READING

[71] This, I knew, could not go on. A real man, I knew, could look a girl in the eye, speak his piece, and walk away. A real man was nobody's puppet, nobody's property. I simply had to take her outside again, sit her down, and get it over with.

[72] So I walked over to her, looked her in the eye, and said, "I have to talk to you."

[73] "Again?"

[74] "It's about the ring," I said.

[75] So once again we walked out to the backyard, past the rosebushes to the diving board.

[76] "Linda," I said, "how do you feel?"

[77] "Fine," she said.

[78] "Happy?"

[79] "Yes."

[80] "Are you sure?"

[81] "What do you mean?"

[82] "Don't you sort of feel like something isn't right — like maybe you could be happier, or I could be happier?"

[83] Here her face changed. I was about to tell her that I loved her again and take her back to the party, but I knew that this was my last chance to prove to myself that I had character and backbone.

[84] "No," she said. "Do you?"

[85] "I think so," I said. And then, because that sounded too spineless and weak-willed, I added, "Yes. Yes, I do. I want to break up."

[86] I had prepared myself for at least a dozen questions, but she did not say a word. She just looked at me. Then her eyes filled with tears and she ran back to the party.

[87] I would like to say that I ran after her, but I didn't. I would like to say that I held her in my arms and comforted her until she stopped crying, but I didn't do that either. I would like to say that we parted that night with a warm and **enduring** understanding of each other, and that we remain good friends to this day, but we didn't and we aren't.

DURING READING QUESTIONS

Paragraphs 72-85

Turn & Talk: Does the narrator prove that he is "nobody's puppet, nobody's property" in his conversation with Linda? (71). Be prepared to defend your response.

Student answers will vary, but they may include responses such as:

- *Yes, because he breaks up with Linda*
- *No, because he hesitates and this shows that he is "spineless and weak-willed" (85).*

¹³ to "speak your piece" means to state your opinion clearly

¹⁴ **Regain** (*verb*): to get something back after losing it

[88] What I did do was watch her run into the house. Then I smiled. I smiled because I had stood my ground — because I had had the strength and character to look a girl in the eye and break up with her. So proud was I of my achievement, so sure was I of my irresistible attraction to women, that ten minutes later I went back to the party, found Eileen Weitzman, and asked her to go steady.

Paragraph 88

A. Think & Share: What is surprising about the narrator's actions in the final paragraph?

- *The narrator spent so long trying to break up with Linda to be a "free man," then ten minutes later he got a new girlfriend.*

B. Poll the Class: Do you agree that the narrator should feel "proud" at the end of the story? Be prepared to defend your response.

- Yes
- No

"Going Steady" from *First French Kiss: and Other Traumas* by Adam Bagdasarian. Copyright © 2005.

Name _____ Class _____

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the multiple choice questions for “Going Steady.” 5 minutes



1. How does the narrator’s failed conversation with Linda in paragraph 70 affect him? **[RL.3]**
 - A. He decides to make his friendships a more important part of his life.
 - B. He becomes discouraged about relationships in general.
 - C. He becomes determined to express his true feelings.**
 - D. He decides to continue his relationship with Linda.

2. Which detail from the story *best* reveals the narrator’s true feelings toward Linda? **[RL.1]**
 - A. “So Linda Lieban, one of the prettiest girls in the seventh grade, liked me. I was immensely proud of my conquest” (Paragraph 3)
 - B. “A half hour into our conversation she asked me if I loved her, and I said, ‘Of course,’” (Paragraph 12)
 - C. “I was tired of cooing, kissing the air, and carrying her books. I was tired of looking love-struck and docile and content.” (Paragraph 47)**
 - D. “To be absolutely honest, she felt very good in my arms, and for one brief moment I was actually happy that she was mine.” (Paragraph 59)

3. In paragraph 11, the narrator observes: “Also, Linda was a girl who, though lovely, was looking for someone to love much as a boa constrictor looks for a small pig or an owl to swallow.” Which word *best* describes the narrator’s view of Linda? **[RL.4]**
 - A. worried
 - B. confident
 - C. uncertain
 - D. controlling**

4. How does the interaction between the narrator and Linda in paragraphs 19-46 develop the theme of “Going Steady”? **[RL.2]**
 - A. It shows how the narrator and Linda both wish they could find a way out of the relationship.
 - B. It shows how the narrator copies Linda’s actions rather than expressing his own feelings.**
 - C. It shows how the narrator and Linda both struggle to express how they really feel.
 - D. It shows how the narrator is honest with Linda until she gives him gifts.



Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt for “Going Steady.” 15 minutes

PROMPT: By the end of the short story “Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian, what lesson should the narrator have learned? Did he learn that lesson? **[RL.2]**

In your response, make sure to include all the parts of a complete paragraph:

- argument statement
- two pieces of evidence
- two explanations

SAMPLE STUDENT OUTLINE:

By the end of “Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian, the narrator should have learned that he is not ready to be in a relationship. However, he did not learn that lesson because at the end of the story it looks like he is making the same mistake again.

- *“...it was my ambition to collect as many female hearts as possible without committing my own heart to any particular one.” (3)*
- *“By the end of the fourth day I knew I had to break up with her. I was tired of cooing, kissing the air, and carrying her books. I was tired of looking love-struck and docile and content.” (47)*
- *“So proud was I of my achievement, so sure was I of my irresistible attraction to women, that ten minutes later I went back to the party, found Eileen Weitzman, and asked her to go steady.” (88)*

SAMPLE SHORT RESPONSE:

By the end of “Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian, the narrator should have learned that he is not ready to be in a relationship. However, he did not learn that lesson because at the end of the story, he makes the same mistake again. Before the narrator begins to go steady with Linda, he makes his feelings about relationships clear when he says, “it was my ambition to collect as many female hearts as possible without committing my own heart to any particular one” (3). He knows that he is not interested in being in a relationship. He reveals that he wants to stop going along with Linda’s requests and demands when he explains “I was tired of cooing, kissing the air, and carrying her books” (47). He should have been learning and realizing that he does not want to be in a relationship. Even though the narrator is eventually successful in breaking up with Linda, he quickly “finds Eileen Weitzman, and asks her to go steady” (88). This final decision shows that the narrator did not learn anything from his experience with Linda.

CHECKLIST FOR WRITING A COMPLETE PARAGRAPH:

☐ Circle your argument.

Does your argument clearly answer all parts of the prompt?

- a. Yes
- b. No; I will go back and revise my argument.

☐ Underline each piece of evidence you included.

Do you have two pieces of evidence?

- a. Yes
- b. No; I will go back and revise my evidence.

☐ Highlight your explanations.

Do your explanations connect your evidence to your argument?

- a. Yes
- a. No; I will go back and revise my explanations.

LESSON OVERVIEW: INTRODUCING EVIDENCE WITH CONTEXT

(This page does not appear on the student copy.)

How does this lesson fit into the arc of writing for the unit?

Writing Lesson 1	Writing Lesson 2	Writing Lesson 3	Writing Lesson 4	Final Unit Writing Prompt (Recommended)
Introducing Evidence With Context	Writing Explanations	Review: Introducing Evidence and Writing Explanations	Unit 2 Essay: Planning	Some people say that, "Adolescence is a war; no one gets out unharmed." Write an essay in which you argue whether the quote is true. You must use evidence from at least two of the following texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Going Steady" - "Hanging Fire" - "Saturday at the Canal" - "Likes vs. Likeability" - "Popularity" You may also use your own experiences to support your response. [W.1, W.2]
↑ You are here! ↑				





This lesson's skill focus

In this lesson, students will learn to provide context when introducing evidence . [W.7.2]
--

Materials needed

You will need	Your students will need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This lesson handout • "Going Steady" (Teacher Copy) • Classroom Anchor Chart: Introducing Evidence (Optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Introducing Evidence With Context" (Student Copy) • "Going Steady" (Student Copy) • Student Reference Sheet: Introducing Evidence (Optional)

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
Part 1	 What is Context and Why Does it Matter? Students compare two student examples in order to identify how a lack of context about evidence can be confusing.	5 min
Part 2	 How to Add Context to Evidence: Have students review and summarize the brief notes on how to add context to evidence.	5 min
Part 3	 Partner Practice: Students complete three guided questions to identify a problem with a student example and revise the example to include important context.	10 min
Part 4	 Independent Practice: Have students apply their new skill of introducing evidence with context in their independent writing prompt.	15 min
~35 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Introducing Evidence With Context

Answers in blue

Today's Goal

Learn how to provide context when introducing quotations so that your evidence is always clear. [W.2]

Today's Prompt

"Going Steady" takes place in the 1960s. How are relationships similar or different today? In your response, use at least two pieces of evidence from the story.

PART 1: What Is Context and Why Does It Matter?

Directions: Compare how two students introduced the same piece of evidence. Then, answer the questions. *5 minutes*



Student 1	Student 2
In the text, it states, "It's not working. We're two different people looking for two different things."	When practicing breaking up with Linda in front of his mirror, the narrator says, "It's not working. We're two different people looking for two different things."

1. *Context is information that clarifies what is happening in a moment or situation.*

Both students used the same piece of evidence. Which student provides context before their evidence?

- A. Student 1
- B. Student 2**

2. Compare the two examples. How could someone be confused by the example that did not include context?

- *The reader wouldn't know that the narrator of the story said the quote.*
- *The reader wouldn't know that the narrator is just practicing how to break up with Linda. They might think this is the part of the story where the narrator actually breaks up with her.*



PART 2: How To Add Context To Evidence

Directions: Read the notes and the example. Then answer the question. *5 minutes*

HOW TO ADD CONTEXT TO EVIDENCE

Context is information that clarifies what is happening in a moment or situation.

When introducing evidence:

- Always include who says, thinks, or narrates the evidence
- Add important context if your evidence could be confusing without it

EXAMPLE

Without this context,
the evidence would
not be clear.

Without this, we
would not know **who**
is speaking.

When practicing breaking up with Linda in front of his mirror, the narrator says, "It's not working. We're two different people looking for two different things."

1. In your own words, when should you add context to your evidence, and how do you do it?

If your evidence might be confusing, you should add context that clarifies what is happening at that moment in the story.

PART 3: Partner Practice

Directions: Answer three questions about how to introduce the evidence in the box below. *10 minutes*



Evidence: “I went back to the party, found Eileen Weitzman, and asked her to go steady” (88).

1. Read how one student introduced the evidence from the box:

The narrator went back inside, found Eileen, and asked her to go steady. As the narrator states, “I went back to the party, found Eileen Weitzman, and asked her to go steady” (88).

Although this student provided context, this is bad writing. Why?

You should add context to make evidence less confusing, but this context says the exact same thing as the evidence. It’s repetitive.

2. Let’s consider what context is important at the end of the story. What happened just before the narrator asks Eileen out?

Just before he asks out Eileen, he broke up with Linda.

3. Introduce the piece of evidence by adding the important context you identified in question two.

Answers will vary.

Immediately after breaking up with Linda, the narrator states, “I went back to the party, found Eileen Weitzman, and asked her to go steady” (88).



PART 4: Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt. *15 minutes*

PROMPT: “Going Steady” takes place in the 1960s. How are relationships similar or different today? In your response, use at least two pieces of evidence from the story.

Student responses will vary; a sample response is below:

SAMPLE STUDENT OUTLINE:

Relationships at my school are mostly similar to the narrator’s in “Going Steady.”

- *“I passed her a note asking if she liked me, and she passed me a note with a heart on it that said ‘Yes!’” (2)*
- *“it was my ambition to collect as many female hearts as possible without committing my own to any particular one” (3)*

SAMPLE SHORT RESPONSE:

Relationships at my school are mostly similar to the narrator’s in “Going Steady.” One similarity is the way relationships start. When the narrator and Linda were first getting to know each other, they passed notes back and forth. The narrator explains: “I passed her a note asking if she liked me, and she passed me a note with a heart on it that said ‘Yes!’” (2). This is similar to what I’ve seen happen this year at my school. Kids are always passing notes back and forth to ask if they like each other. One difference is that we also “pass notes” using our phone, not just paper. Another similarity is how the narrator treats girls. After Linda tells the narrator she likes him, he explains, “it was my ambition to collect as many female hearts as possible without committing my own to any particular one” (3). This happens all the time at my school. Boys are always trying to get girls to like them, but don’t really want to spend time with them. One difference, though, is that girls also do this now. It’s not unusual for a girl to be flirting with several boys at once. I could go on and on, but I’ve seen a lot of people at my school act like the narrator and Linda in “Going Steady.”

PART 5: Check Your Work

Directions: Use the box below to check your work. *5 minutes*



Check Your Work

[] Highlight your **FIRST PIECE OF EVIDENCE** in green.

Did you provide context for this evidence? Yes No I’m Not Sure

Would your evidence be clear to someone who never read the story? Yes No I’m Not Sure

[] Highlight your **SECOND PIECE OF EVIDENCE** in yellow.

Did you provide context for this evidence? Yes No I’m Not Sure

Would your evidence be clear to someone who never read the story? Yes No I’m Not Sure

Go back and add any missing context.

Introducing Evidence

Context is information that clarifies what is happening in a moment or situation.

When introducing evidence:

- Always include who says, thinks, or narrates the evidence
- Add important context if your evidence could be confusing without it

Example

Without this **context**,
the evidence would
not be clear.

Without this, we
would not know **who**
is speaking.

When practicing breaking up with Linda in front of his mirror, **the narrator says**, "It's not working. We're two different people looking for two different things."

TEACHER COPY: Vocabulary Quiz 1 Answer Key

Unit 2: Adolescence

Part 1: Scenarios	Part 2: Fill in the Blank
1. A	9. A
2. B	10. C
3. C	11. A
4. A	12. B
5. C	13. A
6. A	14. A
7. B	15. C
8. A	16. C

Note:

On the next page, there is an optional answer sheet that can be printed and distributed to students..

Name _____ Class _____

Unit 2: Adolescence

Vocabulary Quiz 1 Answer Sheet

Directions: Write the letter of each of your answer choices on the lines below.

Part 1: Scenarios

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

Part 2: Fill in the Blank

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

13. _____

14. _____

15. _____

16. _____

Name _____ Class _____

Unit 2 Narrative

PART 1: Narrative Prompt

Directions: Read the narrative prompt and review the Narrative Writing Checklist.



NARRATIVE PROMPT

You have read the short story “Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian. In paragraphs 11-46 of the story, the narrator describes his feelings for Linda at the beginning of their relationship. Rewrite this part of the story from Linda’s perspective. Use details from the paragraphs and add elaboration of your own to show Linda’s own thoughts and feelings. **[W.3]**

Narrative Writing Checklist:

- ☐ Establish a problem, situation, or setting.
- ☐ Use events and transitions to create a smooth progression of experiences.
- ☐ Use dialogue, thoughts, reflection, pacing and description to develop your narrative.
- ☐ Use precise words, telling details and sensory language to create a vivid picture of events, setting, and characters.
- ☐ Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved.
- ☐ Use correct pronouns to establish point of view (such as using I, me, or mine for first person point of view or she, her, they for third person point of view).

PART 2: Drafting Your Narrative

Directions: Draft your narrative in the space provided. Be sure to respond to all parts of the prompt and use the Narrative Writing Checklist as you write.



LESSON OVERVIEW: “HANGING FIRE”

(This page does not appear on the student copy.)

How does this lesson fit into the unit?

Reading Lesson 1	Reading Lesson 2	Reading Lesson 3	Reading Lesson 4	Reading Lesson 5
“Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian (Short Story)	“Hanging Fire” by Audre Lorde (Poem)	“Saturday at the Canal” by Gary Soto (Poem)	“Likes vs. Likeability” by Aaron Moger and Scott Jared (Informational Text)	“Popularity” by Adam Bagdasarian (Short Story)
	↑ You are here! ↑			

This lesson’s skill focus

In this lesson, students will analyze how the author uses repetition to develop the meaning of the poem. [RL.7.2, RL.7.5]
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Materials needed

You will need	Your students will need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This lesson handout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Hanging Fire” (Student Copy) “Student Reference Sheet: Poetry Terms” (Optional) “Student Reference Sheet: Quoting & Citing Poetry” (Optional)






About this Poem

In this poem, an adolescent girl lists her concerns and worries about life as she tries to gain her mother’s attention.

Optional Annotation Task

You may choose to instruct students to take notes independently instead of, or in addition to, the second read questions: As you read, take notes on repeated words, phrases, and ideas in the poem.

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
CommonLit 360 poetry lessons focus on a multi-read process for understanding and analyzing poems.		
First Read	 Read for the Gist: As a whole class, make predictions based on the title. Then, read the poem aloud. At the end of the poem, you may ask students for any initial noticings. Another best practice is to poll the class about how easy or difficult the poem seems.	5 min
Second Read	 Read for Literal Understanding: Students work independently or in pairs to re-read the poem and answer the questions in the margin to help them understand what is happening in the poem	15 min
Third Read	 Read for Deeper Meaning: Have students work in pairs to discuss and analyze the deeper meaning of their annotations.	15 min
Independent Practice	 Students will complete four multiple choice questions and answer a final writing prompt about the poem.	20 min
Partner Discussion	 Students can complete this optional extension activity to further their ideas and interpretations of the poem.	5 min
~60 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Hanging Fire

Audre Lorde
Answers in blue

About this text

Audre Lorde was an African American poet known for writing about culturally relevant topics through her poetry. The term “hanging fire” refers to 17th century muskets. When shooting these guns, there was a delay between a person pulling the trigger and the gun actually firing. Now the term can be used to refer to anything that is stuck or delayed.

Purpose for Reading

To understand how the poet uses repetition to develop their message about adolescence.

FIRST READ (WHOLE CLASS): *Read for the gist.*

SECOND READ (WHOLE CLASS):
Read for literal understanding.

- [1] I am fourteen
- [2] and my skin has betrayed¹ me
- [3] the boy I cannot live without
- [4] still sucks his thumb
- [5] in secret
- [6] how come my knees are
- [7] always so ashy
- [8] what if I die
- [9] before morning
- [10] and momma’s in the bedroom
- [11] with the door closed.
- [12] I have to learn how to dance
- [13] in time for the next party
- [14] my room is too small for me

Lines 2-7

Write: In one word, describe how the speaker feels about herself.

- *Self-conscious; insecure; negative; let-down*

Lines 8-9

Write: How do the speaker’s concerns shift in lines 8-9?

- *In lines 8-9, the speaker is worried about something larger and more serious: death.*

¹ **Betray** (verb): to go against; to give away something that was secret

[15] suppose I die before graduation

[16] they will sing sad melodies²

[17] but finally

[18] tell the truth about me

[19] There is nothing I want to do

[20] and too much

[21] that has to be done

[22] and momma's in the bedroom

[23] with the door closed

[24] Nobody even stops to think

[25] about my side of it

[26] I should have been on Math Team

[27] my marks³ were better than his

[28] why do I have to be

[29] the one

[30] wearing braces

[31] I have nothing to wear tomorrow

[32] will I live long enough

[33] to grow up

[34] and momma's in the bedroom

[35] with the door closed.

After the FIRST READ: What do you *think* the poem is about?

A teenage girl worries about life, but her mom is not around to help.

Lines 12-18

Find Evidence: Underline two pieces of evidence that reveal the narrator's deeper insecurities.

- *"I have to learn how to dance in time for the next party" (12-13)*
- *"they will sing sad melodies / but finally / tell the truth about me" (16-18)*

Lines 22-23

Write: What do these lines suggest about the speaker's relationship with her mother?

- *They do not have a close relationship.*

Lines 24-25

Write: Paraphrase the speaker's concerns in these lines.

- *The speaker does not think anyone notices her or cares about what she thinks.*

Lines 32-35

Turn & Talk: How do these lines reinforce the speaker's major concerns from throughout the poem?

- *They express her concerns about death and her mother not being there.*

"Hanging Fire." Copyright © 1978 by Audre Lorde, from THE COLLECTED POEMS OF AUDRE LORDE by Audre Lorde. Used by permission of W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

² songs
³ grades

THIRD READ (PARTNER OR INDEPENDENT): *Read for deeper meaning.*

1. The speaker repeats the final two lines of each stanza throughout the poem: “and momma’s in the bedroom / with the door closed.” Why do you think she keeps repeating this?

Student responses will vary; students may say:

- *The speaker wants her mother’s attention and interaction.*
- *The speaker wants her mother to listen and help her with her problems.*
- *The speaker is trying to emphasize the fact that no one is listening to her.*

2. **BIG IDEAS:** What 2-3 Big Ideas best relate to “Hanging Fire”? *Use the chart below.*

Greed	Struggle	Challenges	Differences	Use your own Big Idea
-------	----------	------------	-------------	-----------------------

3. **THEME:** Based on your reading of the poem, what is one possible theme of “Hanging Fire”?

*Remember to ask yourself “What is the poet’s message about the big ideas?”
Refer to the Theme Checklist for guidance.*

Answers will vary but may include:

- *Adolescence is a challenging time because it can feel like there are huge differences between children and parents.*
- *Adolescents struggle because their challenges are often ignored by adults.*

Theme Checklist:

- ☐ My theme uses 1-2 Big Ideas about the text.
- ☐ My theme is a complete thought, not just one word.
- ☐ My theme does not refer to specific lines or details in the poem.

Name _____ Class _____

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the multiple choice questions for “Hanging Fire.” *5 minutes*



1. The speaker repeats “and momma’s in the bedroom / with the door closed” in the last two lines of each stanza (Lines 10-11, 22-23, 34-35). What do these lines reveal about the speaker’s feelings? **[RL.5]**
 - A. They reveal that the speaker is concerned about the health of her mother.
 - B. They reveal that the speaker is frustrated at her mother’s lack of availability.**
 - C. They reveal that the speaker is relieved to learn that her mother is not bothering her with questions.
 - D. They reveal that the speaker is worried about what her future looks like without her friends’ support.
2. Based on lines 19-21, how does the speaker feel? **[RL.4]**
 - A. She feels confident.
 - B. She feels anxious.**
 - C. She feels hopeful.
 - D. She feels weak.
3. Which statement *best* describes the speaker’s view of herself throughout the poem? **[RL.3]**
 - A. She feels that she is always being told what to do and doesn’t have independence.
 - B. She feels that she is not smart enough to compete with her peers.
 - C. She feels that she is alone and that no one is listening to her.**
 - D. She feels that she is supported and that she belongs.
4. Which piece of evidence *best* reveals the speaker’s concern about fitting in with her peers? **[RL.1]**
 - A. “the boy I cannot live without / still sucks his thumb / in secret” (Lines 3-5)
 - B. “my room is too small for me” (Line 14)
 - C. “I should have been on Math Team / my marks were better than his” (Lines 26-27)
 - D. “why do I have to be / the one / wearing braces” (Lines 28-30)**



Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt for “Hanging Fire.” 15 minutes

PROMPT: How does Audre Lorde use repetition to develop the theme in “Hanging Fire”? [RL.2. RL.4]

Consider beginning your response with this sentence starter:

The poet uses repetition to reveal the theme that _____

↑
Your theme statement for
“Hanging Fire”

SAMPLE STUDENT OUTLINE:

The poet uses repetition to reveal the theme that adolescents struggle because their challenges are often ignored by adults.

- “and Momma’s in the bedroom / with the door closed” (10-11, 22-23, 34-35)
- “what if I die / before morning” (8-9)
- “I have nothing to wear tomorrow” (31)

SAMPLE SHORT RESPONSE:

The poet uses repetition to reveal the theme that adolescents struggle because their challenges are often ignored by adults. Throughout each stanza, the speaker repeats a list of worries and concerns. She repeats small concerns about daily life as a teenager like “I have to learn how to dance / in time for the next party” (12-13) and “I have nothing to wear tomorrow” (31). The speaker also repeatedly expresses her worries about death when she asks “what if I die / before morning” (8-9). The speaker’s need to repeat these big and small worries suggests that no one is listening to her or taking her seriously. At the end of each stanza, the speaker repeats “and Momma’s in the bedroom / with the door closed” (10-11, 22-23, 34-35). This repetition supports the idea that the speaker feels alone because it reveals that she doesn’t feel like her mother supports her. The poet uses this repetition to illustrate teenagers’ frustration when their struggles are not taken seriously.

CHECKLIST FOR INTRODUCING EVIDENCE WITH CONTEXT:

- ☐ Highlight or bold each piece of evidence.

Did you clarify what is happening by introducing the evidence with context?

- YES!
- No, I will go back and add that.

Did you state who is speaking, narrating, or being quoted?

- YES!
- No, I will go back and add that.



Quick Partner Discussion

Directions: Discuss the questions with a partner. Record both of your answers to the questions. Practice speaking with academic language by using the discussion sentence starters. *5 minutes*

DISCUSSION SENTENCE STARTERS :

- *In paragraph/line [X], the narrator/character/speaker says...*
- *For example, in the text it says that...*
- *One moment that illustrates this is...*
- *Remember in the story we read that...*
- *I can prove this because...*
- *Look at...*

1. If you could talk to the speaker of this poem, what might you say to **assure** her?

My answer	My partner's answer

2. **CROSS-TEXTUAL:** In "Going Steady," it is difficult for the narrator to express his true feelings. How is this similar to the speaker in "Hanging Fire"? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

3. If she opened the door, what type of **influence** do you think the speaker's mom could have on the speaker? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

LESSON OVERVIEW: “SATURDAY AT THE CANAL”

(This page does not appear on the student copy.)

How does this lesson fit into the unit?

Reading Lesson 1	Reading Lesson 2	Reading Lesson 3	Reading Lesson 4	Reading Lesson 5
“Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian (Short Story)	“Hanging Fire” by Audre Lorde (Poem)	“Saturday at the Canal” by Gary Soto (Poem)	“Likes vs. Likeability” by Aaron Moger and Scott Jared (Informational Text)	“Popularity” by Adam Bagdasarian (Short Story)
		↑ You are here! ↑		

This lesson’s skill focus

In this lesson, we’ll analyze how the author uses descriptive language to develop the meaning of a poem. [RL.7.2, RL.7.4]
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Materials needed






You will need	Your students will need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This lesson handout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Saturday at the Canal” (Student Copy) “Student Reference Sheet: Poetry Terms” (Optional) “Student Reference Sheet: Quoting & Citing Poetry” (Optional)

About this Poem

In this poem, a speaker reflects on the disappointing way their dreams for the future compare with their current reality.	You may choose to instruct students to take notes independently instead of, or in addition to, the second read questions : As you read, take notes on the descriptive language in the poem.
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Optional Annotation Task

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
CommonLit 360 poetry lessons focus on a multi-read process for understanding and analyzing poems.		
First Read	 Read for the Gist: As a whole class, make predictions based on the title. Then, read the poem aloud. At the end of the poem, you may ask students for any initial noticings. Another best practice is to poll the class about how easy or difficult the poem seems.	5 min
Second Read	 Read for Literal Understanding: Students work independently or in pairs to re-read the poem and answer the questions in the margin to help them understand what is happening in the poem	15 min
Third Read	 Read for Deeper Meaning: Have students work in pairs to discuss and analyze the deeper meaning of their annotations.	15 min
Independent Practice	 Students will complete four multiple choice questions and answer a final writing prompt about the poem.	20 min
Partner Discussion	 Students can complete this optional extension activity to further their ideas and interpretations of the poem.	5 min
~60 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Saturday at the Canal

Gary Soto

Answers in blue

About this text

Gary Soto is an American author who has written more than forty books for young adults. Many of his poems and stories are inspired by his Mexican American heritage and his experience growing up in central California. In this poem, the speaker reflects on their life while sitting by a man-made river.

Purpose for Reading

To understand how the poet uses descriptive language to reveal his message about adolescence.

FIRST READ (WHOLE CLASS): *Read for the gist.*

SECOND READ (WHOLE CLASS):
Read for literal understanding.

- [1] I was hoping to be happy by seventeen.
- [2] School was a sharp check mark in the roll book,¹
- [3] An obnoxious² tuba playing at noon because our team
- [4] Was going to win at night. The teachers were
- [5] Too close to dying to understand. The hallways
- [6] Stank of poor grades and unwashed hair. Thus,
- [7] A friend and I sat watching the water on Saturday,
- [8] Neither of us talking much, just warming ourselves
- [9] By hurling large rocks at the dusty ground

Lines 1-6

Find Evidence: Underline three examples of imagery that reveal how the speaker feels about school.

- *"a sharp check mark in the roll book" (2)*
- *"An obnoxious tuba playing at noon"(3)*
- *"teachers were / Too close to dying to understand." (4-5)*
- *"The hallways / Stank of poor grades and unwashed hair" (5-6)*

Lines 6-9

Write: What do the actions of the speaker and their friend suggest about how they are feeling?

- *Watching the water and kicking the rocks shows that they are bored or uninterested.*

¹ a book where teachers keep a record of student attendance

² unpleasant or awful

[10] And feeling awful because San Francisco was a postcard

[11] On a bedroom wall. We wanted to go there,

[12] Hitchhike under the last migrating³ birds

[13] And be with people who knew more than three chords⁴

[14] On a guitar. We didn't drink or smoke,

[15] But our hair was shoulder length, wild when

[16] The wind picked up and the shadows of

[17] This loneliness gripped loose dirt. By bus or car,

[18] By the sway of train over a long bridge,

[19] We wanted to get out. The years froze

[20] As we sat on the bank. Our eyes followed the water,

[21] White-tipped but dark underneath, racing out of town.

After the FIRST READ: What do you *think* the poem is about?

The speaker doesn't like their school or their life and wants to leave and go to San Francisco.

Lines 10-14

Write: Why does the speaker "feel awful [that] San Francisco was a postcard / On a bedroom wall"?

- *They want to go to San Francisco, but they can't go or haven't gone yet.*

Lines 15-21

Write: What does the speaker want to "get out" of?

- *The speaker wants to get out of the place where they are now.*

"Saturday at the Canal" is copyrighted 1985 by Gary Soto. Used by permission of the author.

³ **Migrate** (*verb*): to move to a new place to find better living conditions

⁴ a group of three or more notes played together

THIRD READ (PARTNER OR INDEPENDENT): *Read for deeper meaning.*

1. **Lines 19-21:** The speaker says that the “years froze” as they watched the water “[race] out of town.” How does the water contrast to the speaker’s situation?

- *The water was able to leave town, but the speaker was not.*
- *The water escaped the town, but the speaker did not.*

2. How do the speaker’s desires compare with their reality at the end of the poem?

- *The speaker wants to escape their current life, but they can’t.*

3. **BIG IDEAS:** What 2-3 Big Ideas best relate to “Saturday at the Canal”? *Highlight or circle them below.*

Greed	Struggle	Challenges	Differences	Use your own Big Idea
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4. **THEME:** Based on your reading of the poem, what is one possible theme of “Saturday at the Canal”?

*Remember to ask yourself “What is the poet’s message about the big ideas?”
Refer to the Theme Checklist for guidance.*

Answers will vary but may include:

- *Adolescents often struggle to escape the life they have in exchange for a different one.*
- *One struggle adolescents face is that they want a new and exciting experience.*

Theme Checklist:

- ☐ My theme uses 1-2 Big Ideas about the text.
- ☐ My theme is a complete thought.
- ☐ My theme does not refer to specific lines or details in the poem.

Name _____ Class _____

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the multiple choice questions for “Saturday at the Canal.” *5 minutes*



1. When describing his teachers, the speaker says they “were / too close to dying to understand” (Lines 4-5). What is the *most likely* interpretation of these lines? **[RL.4]**
 - A. The teachers don’t understand how to help students set goals for their lives.
 - B. The teachers don’t understand how to improve school for their students.
 - C. The teachers don’t remember or understand young people’s problems.**
 - D. The teachers don’t understand young people’s friendships.

2. How are the speaker and his friend like the “migrating birds” he mentions in line 12? **[RL.4]**
 - A. They are trying to stay friends but are drifting apart.
 - B. They are in search of a better place or life.**
 - C. They are unsure about leaving their home.
 - D. They are used to traveling.

3. In the first line of the poem, the speaker says, “I was hoping to be happy by seventeen.” How does this line contribute to the meaning of the poem? **[RL.2]**
 - A. It shows the difference between the life the speaker hoped for and the disappointing life they have.**
 - B. It reveals the difference between how old the speaker feels and how old the speaker actually is.
 - C. It emphasizes the difference between how quickly adolescence passes and how slow it feels.
 - D. It highlights the difference between the way the speaker views school and the reality of it.

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt for “Saturday at the Canal.” 15 minutes



PROMPT: You have just read “Saturday at the Canal” by Gary Soto. What theme does this poem express about how people sometimes feel during adolescence? **[RL.2]**

In your response, make sure to introduce your evidence by:

- Adding important context to clarify the situation
- Including who is saying, thinking, or narrating the evidence

SAMPLE STUDENT OUTLINE:

Adolescents often struggle to escape the life they have in exchange for a different one.

- “School was a sharp check mark in the roll book / An obnoxious tuba playing at noon” (2-3)
- “feeling awful because San Francisco was a postcard / On a bedroom wall” (10-11)
- “The years froze / As we sat on the bank. Our eyes followed the water / White-tipped but dark underneath, racing out of town.” (19-21)

SAMPLE SHORT RESPONSE:

In “Saturday at the Canal” by Gary Soto, the poet reveals the message that adolescents often struggle to escape the life they have in exchange for a different one. The speaker begins by describing their dislike for high school. They say, “School was a sharp check mark in the roll book / An obnoxious tuba playing at noon” (Soto, lines 2-3). The speaker thinks that the routine of high school is harsh and annoying. The speaker says they were “feeling awful because San Francisco was a postcard / on a bedroom wall” (lines 10-11). To the speaker, San Francisco represents an escape from a boring life. To get away from the boredom of high school, the speaker watches the water at a canal and dreams of escaping. They say, “The years froze / As we sat on the bank. Our eyes followed the water / White-tipped but dark underneath, racing out of town” (lines 19-21). Here, the speaker is comparing their life to the water. They want to leave town like the water, but they are stuck, or frozen, in place. The speaker’s experience shows that many adolescents long for a different, more adventurous life.

CHECKLIST FOR INTRODUCING EVIDENCE WITH CONTEXT:

- ☐ Highlight or bold each piece of evidence.

Did you clarify what is happening by introducing the evidence with context?

- YES!
- No, I will go back and add that.

Did you state who is speaking, narrating, or being quoted?

- YES!
- No, I will go back and add that.



Quick Partner Discussion

Directions: Discuss the questions with a partner. Record both of your answers to the questions. Practice speaking with academic language by using the discussion sentence starters. *5 minutes*

DISCUSSION SENTENCE STARTERS :

- *In paragraph/line [X], the narrator/character/speaker says...*
- *For example, in the text it says that...*
- *One moment that illustrates this is...*
- *Remember in the story we read that...*
- *I can prove this because...*
- *Look at...*

1. Do you think the speaker is resigned to the idea that San Francisco is just a dream, or do you think he will act on his **ambitions** to go there? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

2. If only one part of the speaker's school experience could be changed, which one do you think would make the most **enduring** difference in their life? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

3. **CROSS-TEXTUAL:** Evaluate how the speaker in this poem, the speaker in "Hanging Fire," and the narrator in "Popularity" handle their adolescent worries. In your opinion, which one handles it best? Why?

My answer	My partner's answer

LESSON OVERVIEW: WRITING EXPLANATIONS

(This page does not appear on the student copy.)

How does this lesson fit into the arc of writing for the unit?

Writing Lesson 1	Writing Lesson 2	Writing Lesson 3	Writing Lesson 4	Final Unit Writing Prompt (Recommended)
Introducing Evidence With Context	Writing Explanations	Review: Introducing Evidence and Writing Explanations	Unit 2 Essay: Planning	<p>Some people say that, "Adolescence is a war; no one gets out unharmed." Write an essay in which you argue whether the quote is true. You must use evidence from at least two of the following texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Going Steady" - "Hanging Fire" - "Saturday at the Canal" - "Likes vs. Likeability" - "Popularity" <p>You may also use your own experiences to support your response. [W.1, W.2]</p>
	↑ You are here! ↑			





This lesson's skill focus

<p>Students will practice explaining what your evidence means and how the evidence supports your argument. [W.7.2]</p>
--

Materials needed

You will need	Your students will need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This lesson packet • "Saturday at the Canal" (Teacher Copy) • Classroom Anchor Chart: Writing Explanations (Optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Writing Explanations" (Student Copy) • "Saturday at the Canal" (Student Copy) • Student Reference Sheet: Writing Explanations (Optional)

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
Part 1	 Analyzing a Weak Explanation: Students work collaboratively to analyze a weak explanation.	5 min
Part 2	 Learning About Strong Explanations: Students will read an exemplary explanation and answer questions to help them understand why it is strong.	5 min
Part 3	 Making Your Own Notes: Have students synthesize their learning from Parts 1 and 2 to jot their own notes for writing explanations.	5 min
Part 4	 Practice Writing Strong Explanations for "Saturday at the Canal": Now students apply their learning by completing the missing explanations in a paragraph about "Saturday at the Canal."	10 min
~25 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Writing Explanations

Answers in blue

Today's Goal

- Learn the difference between a weak and strong explanation.
- Practice writing strong explanations. [W.2]

PART 1: Analyzing a Weak Explanation

Directions: Review the example. Then answer the question. *5 minutes*



Prompt: Explain how Audre Lorde's use of repetition reveals the speaker's emotions in "Hanging Fire."

The poet uses repetition to reveal that the speaker is stressed and needs help. At the end of each stanza, the speaker repeats the lines, "and Momma's in the bedroom / with the door closed." This repetition shows that the speaker's mother is always in the bedroom with her door closed.

Argument

Evidence

Weak Explanation

1. Why do you think the **explanation** in the example above is weak?

- *It just repeats the evidence almost exactly.*
- *It doesn't explain how the quote connects back to the argument.*



PART 2: Learning About Strong Explanations

Directions: Review the example and revised response. Then answer the questions. *5 minutes*

Prompt: Explain how Audre Lorde's use of repetition reveals the speaker's emotions in "Hanging Fire."

The poet uses repetition to reveal that the speaker is stressed and needs help. At the end of each stanza, the speaker repeats the lines, "and Momma's in the bedroom / with the door closed." This repetition shows that the speaker's mother is never around to help, which makes the speaker feel alone.

Argument

Evidence

Explanation

1. What is the purpose of the underlined part of the explanation?

It explains the quotation in different words.

2. How does the **bolded** part of the explanation connect back to the prompt and the writer's argument?

It explains how the repetition reveals the speaker's emotion (she feels alone).

PART 3: Making Your Own Notes

Directions: Using the information you have learned about explanations, list 2-3 qualities of both strong and weak explanations. *5 minutes*



WEAK AND STRONG EXPLANATIONS	
QUALITIES OF A <u>STRONG</u> EXPLANATION	QUALITIES OF A <u>WEAK</u> EXPLANATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what the evidence means or shows (without repeating it exactly). • Connect the evidence to the argument. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat what the evidence says almost word for word. • Do not tie back to the argument.



PART 4: Practice Writing Strong Explanations for “Saturday at the Canal”

Directions: The sample response is missing two explanations. Read the prompt and the response. Then, complete the table. *10 minutes*

PROMPT: You have read “Saturday at the Canal” by Gary Soto. What does the imagery in lines 3-6 reveal about the speaker’s high school experience? [RL.4]

Argument	<p><i>The imagery reveals that the speaker feels frustrated with his high school experience. In lines 3-4, the speaker says school was, “An obnoxious tuba playing at noon because our team / Was going to win at night.” The imagery of the tuba reveals that the speaker finds high school events annoying, even if they’re supposed to be fun. In lines 4-5, the speaker says, “The teachers were / Too close to dying to understand.” [Explanation #2 - explain what the second piece of evidence means and how it connects to the argument.] Last, the speaker says, “The hallways / Stank of poor grades and unwashed hair” (5-6). [Explanation #3 - explain what the third piece of evidence means and how it connects to the argument.]</i></p>	
Evidence 1		
Explanation 1		
Evidence 2		Explanation 2
Evidence 3		Explanation 3

1. Add the missing explanations to the table below.

Helpful sentence starters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The imagery reveals that... • The imagery of _____ reveals that... 	
Explanation 2	<i>The imagery of the old teachers shows that the speaker feels like his teachers don’t get him because he is a teenager.</i>
Explanation 3	<i>The imagery of the hallways shows that the speaker is not impressed with the other kids at the school.</i>

LESSON OVERVIEW: VOCABULARY ACTIVITY SET LIST 2

(This page does not appear on the student copy.)

How should I use this set of vocabulary activities?

Explicit vocabulary instruction is an effective way to build student capacity to comprehend complex texts. That's why every CommonLit 360 unit includes at least one set of vocabulary words and activities to help students learn the words and retain them.

Unit 2: Adolescence includes 2 vocabulary sets, each with five engaging practice activities. **Note: These activities are not effective when assigned all at once.** Instead, they are meant to be used flexibly throughout the unit in anticipation of the vocabulary quiz. They can be used as warm-up activities, homework, or short, whole-class practice.

Words included in this set

Insecure
 Recede
 Resigned
 Routine
 Temporary
 Triumphant
 Variation

Materials needed

You will need	Your students will need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This answer key Vocabulary Activity 1 List 2 Slide Deck when introducing the set of words for the first time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary for Unit 2: Adolescence – LIST 2 Handout

What activities are included in this set?

Activity	Activity Description	Suggested Facilitation
1	In-Context Predictions: Students use context clues to try to determine the meaning of each vocabulary word.	Whole-Class Activity Use the Vocabulary Activity 1 List 2 Slide Deck to encourage students to use context clues and to facilitate a shared understanding of each word's meaning.
2	Fill-in-the-Blank Sentence: Students fill in the blank with the correct vocabulary word to complete each sentence.	Warm-Up Activity Homework Short Practice
3	Scenarios: Students fill in the blanks using the correct vocabulary word to complete each scenario and explain their choices.	
4	Matching: Students match the vocabulary words to their synonyms.	
5	Application of Vocabulary: Students answer open-ended questions, using the vocabulary words in their responses.	

UNIT 2: Adolescence

ANSWER KEY: VOCABULARY ACTIVITY SET LIST 2

The words in this list can be found in “Popularity.”

Note: “Insecure” is a thematic unit word and does not come from specific unit texts. This word will support students in writing and speaking about the unit texts and topics.

Activity 1: In-Context Predictions

Correct Definitions:

1. **Insecure:** not confident; uncertain
2. **Recede:** to move away from
3. **Resigned:** showing acceptance of something unpleasant
4. **Routine:** a habit or procedure that happens on a regular basis
5. **Temporary:** not permanent; happening for a limited time
6. **Triumphant:** feeling or expressing joy after having won a victory
7. **Variation:** different form or version of something

Activity 2: Fill-in-the-Blank Sentence

1. Routine
2. Recede
3. Insecure
4. Variety
5. Temporary
6. Resigned
7. Triumphant

Activity 3: Fill-in-the-Blank Scenario

Student explanations will vary, but should show an understanding of each word’s meaning.

1. Triumphant
2. Temporary
3. Vary
4. Insecure
5. Resigned
6. Receded
7. Routine

Activity 4: Matching

1. Unsure
2. Leave
3. Accepting
4. Habit
5. Short-term
6. Proud
7. Version

Activity 5: Application of Vocabulary

Student answers will vary, but each answer should include the underlined vocabulary word.

LESSON OVERVIEW: “LIKES VS. LIKEABILITY”

(This page does not appear on the student copy.)

How does this lesson fit into the unit?

Reading Lesson 1	Reading Lesson 2	Reading Lesson 3	Reading Lesson 4	Reading Lesson 5
“Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian (Short Story)	“Hanging Fire” by Audre Lorde (Poem)	“Saturday at the Canal” by Gary Soto (Poem)	“Likes vs. Likeability” by Aaron Moger and Scott Jared (Informational Text)	“Popularity” by Adam Bagdasarian (Short Story)
			↑ You are here! ↑	




This lesson’s skill focus

In this lesson, students will analyze how ideas influence individuals . [RI.7.3]

About this Informational Text

This informational text introduces students to the two types of popularity: likeability and status. The text will help students understand the benefits and drawbacks of each and apply the concept of likeability vs. status to unit texts and their own lives.
--

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
 <p>Teacher-led, scaffolded and supportive</p>	 <p>Greater student independence</p>	 <p>Student-led, small groups</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the recommended reading modalities (whole class, partner, independent) Pause to answer the During Reading Questions during reading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign longer chunks of independent reading. Skip some supportive During Reading Questions Instruct students to take notes independently: As you read, take notes on the difference between likeability and status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put students into groups of 3-5 Students answer the During Reading Questions and alternate readers to read sections aloud. Circulate to check for understanding <p><i>35 total minutes for this lesson</i></p>
		↑ Recommended! ↑

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Likes vs. Likeability

Aaron Moger and Scott Jared

Answers in blue

About this text	
Aaron Moger and Scott Jared explain the two types of popularity that Dr. Mitch Prinstein examines in his book <i>Popular: Finding Happiness and Success in a World that Cares Too Much About the Wrong Kinds of Relationships</i> .	
Purpose for Reading	Vocabulary
To learn about the two different kinds of popularity so that we can build our understanding about how it influences adolescent behavior.	<p>Let's pronounce these words together as a class:</p> <p>Influence [in-floo-uhs] Status [stat-uhs]</p>

SMALL GROUP READING

- [1] Two different types of popularity exist, according to Carolina professor Mitch Prinstein, and being cool is not always a good predictor¹ of future success.
- [2] Prinstein explains the differences between the desirable² kind of popularity called likeability and the kind called **status** in his book, *Popular: Finding Happiness and Success in a World That Cares Too Much About the Wrong Kinds of Relationships*.
- [3] *Popular* was the 2018 summer reading book for Carolina's 5,095 incoming students, which they discussed in small groups on Aug. 20. Later that day, Prinstein spoke about his research at Memorial Hall.
- [4] In *Popular*, Prinstein, the John Van Setters Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at Carolina,³ looks at why some people are popular, why others struggle and "what you can do to make sure you have the kind of popularity that predicts the most fulfilling and longest life possible."
- [5] When thinking about popularity, Prinstein says that some people we call popular are those who are highly likeable.
- [6] "We like spending time with them, we trust them, they make us feel good and make us feel included," he says.
- [7] "But that's very different from the kind of popularity we think about immediately, which is often that image of who is cool, influential and powerful."

DURING READING QUESTIONS

Paragraphs 2-4

Think & Share: According to Mitch Prinstein, which is the better kind of popularity?

- *Likeability*

Paragraphs 5-6

Write: How do others tend to react to likeable people?

- *They like to spend time with likeable people.*
- *They trust likeable people; they feel good and included.*

¹ **Predictor** (*noun*): something that suggests what will happen in the future

² **Desirable** (*adjective*): wanted or wished for

³ an award acknowledging a professor's work and knowledge in the field of Psychology and Neuroscience

[8] Prinstein says that the two kinds of popularity lead to opposite outcomes in life. He suggests the following for teens and adults to consider:

- For kids, popularity is about being likeable, and it comes from making others feel valued, included and happy. That's important, because whether someone is 8 or 80, being likeable is a remarkably powerful way to increase his or her chances for a happy marriage, well-adjusted kids and a successful career.
- Likeability is not the kind of popularity that people remember from high school. Teenagers often crave **status**, which is all about power, dominance,⁴ **influence**, and being known by as many people as possible. **Status**, however, isn't always a good thing. **Status** is related to long-term problems with depression, anxiety, substance use and relationships.
- Here's the scariest part: For three decades, society has pushed people to care about **status**, not likeability. Gaining "followers" and "likes" is a measure of **status**. Be careful with social media; maybe take a smartphone holiday and hang out with friends instead, which is a great way to become more likeable and reduce stress.

[9] It's human nature for people to care about what others think about them, Prinstein says. He suggests that people be mindful⁵ of their own actions. "Think about a typical day and ask yourself — how do you spend your time and energy? By doing what you can to become more likeable? Or by pursuing⁶ **status**?"

Paragraph 8

Find Evidence: Underline one piece of evidence that supports the idea that seeking **status** can lead to long-term problems.

- *"Status is related to long-term problems with depression, anxiety, substance use and relationships."*

Paragraph 9

Turn & Talk: Consider Prinstein's final question for yourself: Do you spend more time trying to become more likeable or trying to gain **status**?

- *Student answers will vary.*

"Likes vs. Likeability" by Aaron Moger and Scott Jared. Copyright © 2018 University Gazette at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

⁴ **Dominance** (*noun*): power over someone else

⁵ **Mindful** (*adjective*): being aware of what is going on around you and the impact of your actions and choices

⁶ **Pursue** (*verb*): to go after, follow, or chase something

Name _____ Class _____

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the multiple choice questions for “Likes vs. Likeability.” 5 minutes



1. Which of the following is the central idea of “Likes vs. Likeability”? **[RI.2]**
 - A. Popularity based on status leads to a healthier and more successful future.
 - B. Popularity always increases the number of people who want to be around you.
 - C. Popularity based on likeability leads to a healthier and more successful future.**
 - D. Popularity has a small influence on what a person’s life will be like after high school.

2. Which piece of evidence *best* supports the idea that likeable people have greater long-term achievements? **[RI.1]**
 - A. “In *Popular*, Prinstein... looks at why some people are popular, why others struggle and ‘what you can do to make sure you have the right kind of popularity that predicts the most fulfilling and longest life possible.’” (Paragraph 4)
 - B. “When thinking about popularity, Prinstein says that some people we call popular are those who are highly likeable.” (Paragraph 5)
 - C. “That’s important, because whether someone is 8 or 80, being likeable is a remarkably powerful way to increase his or her chances for a happy marriage, well-adjusted kids and a successful career.” (Paragraph 8)**
 - D. “Teenagers often crave status, which is all about power, dominance, influence, and being known by as many people as possible.” (Paragraph 8)

3. How does the quoted information in paragraph 6 contribute to the author’s explanation of likeability? **[RI.5]**
 - A. by showing how difficult it is to be likeable
 - B. by discussing the negative impact of status
 - C. by describing reasons why people enjoy likeable people**
 - D. by comparing the difference between likeability and status

4. Based on the information in paragraph 8, which best describes the relationship between social media and status? **[RI.3]**
 - A. Overuse of social media can have a negative impact on someone’s status.
 - B. Social media causes people to care about status over likeability.**
 - C. Status cannot be achieved without social media.
 - D. High status is a result of social media breaks.



Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt for “Likes vs. Likeability.” 15 minutes

PROMPT: You have just read “Likes vs. Likeability” by Aaron Monger and Scott Jared. Do you think people at your school are more concerned with status or likeability? Why does it matter? Use evidence from the text to support your answer. **[RI.3]**

In your response, make sure to:

- Explain the evidence without directly repeating it
- Use the explanation to connect the evidence to the paragraph’s argument

SAMPLE STUDENT OUTLINE:

After reading the article “Likes vs. Likeability,” I think people at my school are more concerned with status.

- *“For kids, popularity is about being likeable, and it comes from making others feel valued, included and happy.” (8)*
- *“Teenagers often crave status, which is all about power, dominance, influence, and being known by as many people as possible.”(8)*
- *“Gaining ‘followers’ and ‘likes’ is a measure of status.” (8)*

SAMPLE SHORT RESPONSE:

After reading the article “Likes vs. Likeability,” I think people at my school are more concerned with status. In the article, status is described as something that is more about people building up their own image than helping others. The article states that status is “all about power, dominance, influence, and being known by as many people as possible” (8). At my school, people often make choices just because it will make them look popular. They post items online, wear certain clothes, or act a certain way in class that is just meant to get attention. This fakeness might help them be more well-known, but it won’t make them more well-liked. The article explains that “gaining ‘followers’ and ‘likes’ is a measure of status” (8) and I think that sounds like a lot of people at my school. People are more worried about the appearance of being liked than actually doing things that would make them likeable. This is important because if young people don’t learn how dangerous it is to just focus on status, they might grow up to be adults who don’t care or know how to reach out to others or “make others feel valued, included, and happy” (8). That seems like a pretty awful way to go through life.

CHECKLIST FOR WRITING EXPLANATIONS:

- ☐ Highlight or bold each explanation.

Did you explain what the evidence means or shows without repeating it?

- YES!
- No, I will go back and add that.

Does your explanation connect the evidence to the paragraph’s argument?

- YES!
- No, I will go back and add that.

Quick Partner Discussion

Directions: Discuss the questions with a partner. Record both of your answers to the questions. Practice speaking with academic language by using the discussion sentence starters. *5 minutes*



DISCUSSION SENTENCE STARTERS:

- *In paragraph/line [X], the narrator/character/speaker says...*
- *For example, in the text it says that...*
- *One moment that illustrates this is...*
- *Remember in the story we read that...*
- *I can prove this because...*
- *Look at...*

1. Do you agree with the author that **enduring** likeability is more important than the power that comes with **status**? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

2. Do you think it is possible to have **status** and be likeable at the same time? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

3. **CROSS-TEXTUAL:** Was the narrator in “Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian more concerned with likeability or **status**? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

LESSON OVERVIEW: “POPULARITY”

(This page does not appear on the student copy.)

How does this lesson fit into the unit?

Reading Lesson 1	Reading Lesson 2	Reading Lesson 3	Reading Lesson 4	Reading Lesson 5
“Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian (Short Story)	“Hanging Fire” by Audre Lorde (Poem)	“Saturday at the Canal” by Gary Soto (Poem)	“Likes vs. Likeability” by Aaron Moger and Scott Jared (Informational Text)	“Popularity” by Adam Bagdasarian (Short Story)
				↑ You are here! ↑




This lesson’s skill focus

In this lesson, students will analyze how a **theme** is revealed over the course of the text, including how it is shaped by **specific details**. [RL.7.2, RL.7.3]

About this Short Story

In this short story, an adolescent boy yearns to be more popular amongst his peers on the playground, even if it means hurting someone else. Through his journey to gain status, he quickly learns that popularity is fleeting.

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
 <p>Teacher-led, scaffolded and supportive</p>	 <p>Greater student independence</p>	 <p>Student-led, small groups</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the recommended reading modalities (whole class, partner, independent) Pause to answer the During Reading Questions during reading. <p>60 total minutes for this lesson</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign longer chunks of independent reading. Skip some supportive During Reading Questions Instruct students to take notes independently: As you read, take notes on how the narrator’s actions help him gain popularity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put students into groups of 3-5 Students answer the During Reading Questions and alternate readers to read sections aloud. Circulate to check for understanding
↑ Recommended! ↑		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Popularity

Adam Bagdasarian

Answers in blue

About this text	
The short story “Popularity” comes from Adam Bagdasarian’s book, <i>First French Kiss: and other traumas</i> . It details the struggles and worries of a teenage boy.	
Purpose for Reading	Vocabulary
To learn how character decisions and interactions build our understanding of the author’s message about adolescence.	<p>Let’s pronounce these words together as a class:</p> <p>Ambition [am-bish-uhn] Assure [<i>uh</i>-shoor] Belittle [bih-lit-l] Destiny [des-tuh-nee] Prominent [prom-uh-nuhnt] Recede [ri-seed] Resigned [ri-zahynd] Routine [roo-teen] Temporary [tem-puh-rer-ee] Transformation [trans-fer-mey-shuhn] Triumphant [trahy-uhm-fuhnt] Variation [vair-ee-ey-shuhn]</p>

WHOLE CLASS READING

[1] Somewhere inside me I knew that ten-year-old boys were not supposed to spend their recess circling oak trees in search of four-leaf clovers. Still, that’s what I and my equally unpopular acquaintances,¹ Allan Gold and Allan Shipman, were doing while the rest of our classmates played tag and kickball and pushed each other higher and higher on the swings.

[2] Aside from having a little more than our share of baby fat, the two Allans and I had very little in common. In fact, we could barely stand one another. Still, during recess we were the only company we had, so we tried to make the best of it. Now and then one of us would bend forward, pick a clover, examine it, shake his head, and let it fall to the ground.

[3] “Got one,” Allan Gold said.

[4] “Let’s see,” Allan Shipman said.

[5] Allan showed Allan the clover.

¹ **Acquaintances** (*noun*): people you know or spend time with; not close friends

DURING READING QUESTIONS

Paragraphs 1-2

Think & Share: How do the narrator and the two Allans feel about spending recess with each other?

- *They do not like each other, but they do not have anyone else to spend recess with.*

[6] "That's only three."

[7] "No, that's four. Right here. See?"

[8] "That's not a whole leaf," Allan Shipman said sourly. "There's one leaf, two leafs, three leafs."

[9] "Four leafs!"

[10] "That's not a whole leaf!"

[11] We had been looking for four-leaf clovers every school day for six months. And each of us knew exactly what he would do if he ever found one: he would hold the lucky clover tight in his hand, close his eyes, and wish he was so popular that he would never have to spend time with the other two again.

[12] "Got one!" Allan Shipman said.

[13] Allan Gold swiped the clover from him. "One, two, three," he said, throwing it to the ground.

[14] "There's four there! That was a four-leaf clover! Pick it up!"

[15] "You pick it up!"

[16] "You pick it up!"

[17] "You!"

[18] "You!"

Paragraphs 11-18

Think & Share: What is the goal of the narrator's daily **routine** with the Allans?

- *They hope to become popular and leave each other behind.*

PARTNER READING

DURING READING QUESTIONS

[19] While the two Allans faced off, I looked across the black tar and asphalt at a crowd of boys who were making more noise and seemed to be having more fun than anyone else on the playground. These were the popular boys, and in the center of this group stood their leader, Sean Owens.

[20] Sean Owens was the best student in the fourth grade. He was also one of the humblest,² handsomest, strongest, fastest, most clear-thinking ten-year-olds that God ever placed on the face of the earth. Sean Owens could run the fifty-yard dash in six seconds, hit a baseball two hundred feet, and throw a football forty yards. The only thing Sean didn't have was personality. He didn't need one. When you can hit a baseball two hundred feet, all you have to do is round the bases and wait for the world's adulation.³

[21] I gazed at Sean and the rest of the popular boys in bewildered admiration.⁴ It seemed like only yesterday that we had all played kickball, dodgeball, and

² **Humble** (*adjective*): not bragging or showing off

³ **Adulation** (*noun*): extreme amount of praise

⁴ **Admiration** (*noun*): a feeling of respect, approval, and appreciation

basketball together; and then one morning I awoke to find that this happy democracy⁵ had devolved into a monarchy⁶ of kings and queens, dukes and duchesses, lords and ladies. It did not take a genius to know that, upon the continent of this playground, the two Allans and I were stableboys.⁷

[22] I had been **resigned** to my rank for many months, but now, looking at the two Allans (still arguing over the same three-leaf clover), then at the popular boys, I suddenly knew that I could not stand another day at the bottom. I wanted to be a part of the noise and the laughter; I wanted, I needed, to be popular.

Paragraphs 20-22

- A. **Write:** Who is the “king” of this playground “monarchy”? Explain your answer.
- *Sean Owens, because he is the most admired and popular boy in the school.*
- B. **Write:** What does the narrator mean when he says that he and the Allans had become “stableboys”?
- *They were the least important and least popular.*
 - *No one knew who they were.*

INDEPENDENT READING

[23] Being ten years old, I did not question this **ambition**, but I did wonder how on earth I was going to realize it. Though I only stood twenty yards from the heart of the kingdom, I felt a thousand miles removed from the rank and prestige⁸ of its citizens. How could I bridge such a gap, knowing I might be stared at, or laughed at, or **belittled** to a speck so small that I could no longer be seen by the naked eye? And as I stood on that playground, torn between fear and **ambition**, those twenty yards began to **recede** from the view, and I knew that I must either step forward now, or retreat⁹ forever to a life of bitter¹⁰ companions and three-leaf clovers.

[24] I took a deep breath and then, with great trepidation,¹¹ crossed the twenty longest yards I had ever walked in my life and found myself standing a few feet from the outer circle of what I hoped was my **destiny**. I lowered my head a little, so as not to draw attention to myself, and watched and listened.

[25] Mitch Brockman, a lean, long-faced comic, considered by many to be the funniest boy in the fourth grade was in the middle of a story that had something to do with Tijuana and a wiener mobile. I wasn’t sure what the story was about, but there was a lot of body English and innuendo, all of which the crowd seemed to find absolutely hilarious.

[26] I noticed that every time Mitch said something funny, he eyed Sean Owens to see if he was laughing. He was. Silently. His mouth was open, but it was the laughter of the other boys that filled the silence. I realized then that Mitch was Sean’s jester.¹² As long as he could make Sean laugh, he was **assured** a **prominent** position in the group.

DURING READING QUESTIONS

Paragraphs 23-24

- A. **Write:** What are the narrator’s conflicting feelings about traveling to “the heart of the kingdom”?
- *He is afraid that he will be made fun of.*
 - *He knows he must take the chance in order to become popular.*

THEME DEVELOPMENT

- B. **Write:** What does this suggest about adolescents and popularity?
- *Adolescents are willing to take big risks in order to be popular.*

⁵ **Democracy** (noun): a government where everyone has equal input and power

⁶ **Monarchy** (noun): a government where one person has all the power; no equal power among the citizens

⁷ people with the least important status or rank

⁸ **Prestige** (noun): importance; something with a positive reputation and respect

⁹ **Retreat** (verb): to move backward; run away

¹⁰ **Bitter** (adjective): upset, hurt, or angry due to a sense of unfair treatment

¹¹ **Trepidation** (noun): a feeling of fear or hesitation about what might happen

¹² reference to a “court jester,” whose job it was to bring entertainment to the king in medieval and Renaissance times

[27] I wondered what *my* position in the group might be. I certainly wasn't a great athlete, student, or ladies' man, but I did have a sense of humor. Maybe I could be the *second* funniest boy in the fourth grade. My thoughts went no further because the bell ending recess rang. But that night, just before I fell asleep, I saw myself standing in the center of the popular boys telling the funniest stories anyone had ever heard. I saw Sean Owens doubled up with laughter. I saw myself **triumphant**.

[28] I returned to the group every recess, for three days. I stood, unnoticed, just outside the outer circle, waiting for my moment, for the one joke or wisecrack¹³ that would make me popular. I knew that I would only get one chance to prove myself, and that if I failed, I would be sent back to the stables. And so, with the single-mindedness of a scientist, I listened to the jokes the other boys made, hoping to align my comic sensibilities with theirs. Now and then I found myself on the verge¹⁴ of saying something, but every time I opened my mouth to speak, Mitch would launch¹⁵ into another **routine**, and my moment passed, and I had to **reign** myself to yet another day in the dark.

[29] I did not know then that popularity has a life span,¹⁶ and that Mitch's time was about to run out.

THEME DEVELOPMENT: Paragraph 29

Write: What does the line "popularity has a life span" suggest?

- *Popularity can change quickly.*
- *Popularity is temporary.*
- *Popularity is not based on real friendship.*

PARTNER READING

[30] It is a sad fact of life that the clothes a child wears and how he wears them often determine his rank in school society. I knew it, Sean Owens knew it, everyone in school knew it. So maybe it was carelessness, or **temporary** insanity, or a subconscious desire to step back into the stress-free shadows of anonymity that caused Mitch Brockman to wear a yellow shirt with a yellow pair of pants. He might have gotten away with it if I hadn't left for school that morning unaware that one folded cuff of my jeans was noticeably lower than the other. As it was, the two of us were on a collision course that only one of us would survive.

[31] At recess on that fateful day, I took my customary place a foot from the popular boys (wondering if I would ever get a chance to prove myself) and listened to Mitch tell another **variation** of his story about the wiener mobile. I pretended to enjoy this story as much as the others, while my mind strayed to a dream world where I did not have to feel so out of place, and Mitch and Sean and I were the best of friends. And then, with a suddenness that jarred¹⁷ me back to reality, Mitch Brockman, a boy who had never noticed me, never seemed to know or care that I was alive, turned to me, pointed at my uneven pants and said, "Someone needs a ruler."

[32] This was, perhaps, the wittiest¹⁸ remark he had ever made, and I froze. With four words he had devastated¹⁹ all my aspirations,²⁰ defined me as a fool, and all

DURING READING QUESTIONS

¹³ **Wisecrack** (*noun*): a clever or smart joke

¹⁴ **Verge** (*noun*): the edge

¹⁵ **Launch** (*verb*): start or begin

¹⁶ **Life span** (*noun*): length of time something lives or functions

¹⁷ **Jar** (*verb*): to send painful shock or feeling of surprise through

¹⁸ **Witty** (*adjective*): funny

¹⁹ **Devastate** (*verb*): to destroy or ruin

²⁰ **Aspirations** (*noun*): dreams

but condemned²¹ me to a life of shame and obscurity.²² I could see my future, my boyhood itself, crumbling to dust, and as I heard the laughter and felt the heat of the spotlight upon me, I pointed at Mitch's yellow pants and shirt and said, "Someone else needs a mirror. You look like a canary." Then, with the grace of a magician's assistant, I raised my left arm in a presentational gesture and said, "Boys, I give you Tweety Bird."²³

Paragraph 32

A. **Write:** How does the narrator react after Mitch belittles him?

- *The narrator is embarrassed and devastated.*
- *It makes him want to get even with Mitch.*
- *The narrator gets even by making a joke back at Mitch.*

THEME DEVELOPMENT:

B. **Write:** What does this paragraph suggest about adolescents and popularity?

- *Popularity is so important to adolescents that they'll do whatever it takes in order to get it.*

WHOLE CLASS READING

[33] And it was all over. As the volume of the laughter doubled, Mitch seemed to vanish, and that day, on that playground, Sean Owens's laughter was heard for the first time. In an instant, Mitch Brockman became Tweety Bird, and I, an absolute nonentity,²⁴ became somebody. And then somebody special. Someone to seek out. Someone to follow. Sean Owens's first jester and best friend. The entire **transformation** was complete in a matter of months.

[34] During this time Mitch became a less and less vocal part of the group, telling fewer and fewer stories, until finally, the following year, he was gone — to another school perhaps, or another state, or another country. I never knew. No one knew because no one noticed — no one had called him for months. But *my* phone rang. *My* weekends were filled with sleep-overs and baseball games and bowling parties and bicycle races and more new friends than I knew what to do with.

[35] And I did not trust one of them, because I knew then that I was standing on sand and was only a yellow shirt and pair of pants away from the oak trees where the two Allans were still looking for four-leaf clovers.

DURING READING QUESTIONS

Paragraphs 33-35

A. **Find Evidence:** Underline two pieces of evidence that reveal how the joke changed the narrator's **status** on the playground, or "kingdom."

- *"In an instant, Mitch Brockman became Tweety Bird, and I, an absolute nonentity, became somebody" (33).*
- *"Sean Owens's first jester and best friend. The entire transformation was complete in a matter of months" (33).*
- *"My weekends were filled with sleep-overs and baseball games and bowling parties and bicycle races and more new friends than I knew what to do with" (34).*

B. **Turn & Talk:** What does the narrator mean when he says that he "was standing on sand"?

- *He knows that his status in the popular group can change in an instant.*

THEME DEVELOPMENT:

C. **Write:** What does the narrator's thinking suggest about popularity?

- *It suggests that popularity is temporary.*
- *It suggests that popularity can change quickly.*
- *It suggests popularity isn't based on meaningful personality traits.*

"Popularity" from *First French Kiss: and Other Traumas* by Adam Bagdasarian. Copyright © 2005.

²¹ **Condemn** (verb): to punish

²² **Obscurity** (noun): the state of being unknown

²³ reference to the yellow canary bird from the *Looney Tunes* cartoons

²⁴ **Nonentity** (noun): an unimportant person or thing

Name _____ Class _____

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the multiple choice questions for “Popularity.” 5 minutes



1. Which of the following statements *best* expresses a theme of “Popularity”? [RL.2]
 - A. When adolescents gain popularity, they often abandon their friends.
 - B. Popularity is not only motivating to adolescents, it is also temporary.**
 - C. Sometimes adolescents wish for popularity, but they should actually wish for self-confidence.
 - D. Although adolescents believe popularity is important, it’s also true that being funny is more important.

2. In paragraph 30, the narrator says “As it was, the two of us were on a collision course that only one of us would survive.” What does the narrator mean when he says only one would “survive”? [RL.4]
 - A. Only one would stay alive.
 - B. Only one would be harmed.
 - C. Only one would be able to tell a joke.
 - D. Only one would end up being popular.**

3. Which piece of evidence *best* shows how the narrator’s joke affects his own status on the playground? [RL.1]
 - A. “In an instant, Mitch Brockman became Tweety Bird, and I, an absolute nonentity, became somebody.” (Paragraph 33)**
 - B. “and that day, on that playground, Sean Owens’s laughter was heard for the first time.” (Paragraph 33)
 - C. “During this time Mitch became a less and less vocal part of the group, telling fewer and fewer stories” (Paragraph 34)
 - D. “I was standing on sand and was only a yellow shirt and pair of pants away from the oak trees where the two Allans were still looking for four-leaf clovers.” (Paragraph 35)

4. Which of the following best describes how the author develops the narrator’s point of view in paragraphs 20-22? [RL.6]
 - A. by comparing the playground to a kingdom where the narrator holds no power**
 - B. by describing the daily routine the narrator and the two Allans have at recess
 - C. by contrasting the narrator’s accomplishments to those of Sean Owens
 - D. by showing how cruel the other boys are to the narrator



Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt for “Popularity.” 15 minutes

PROMPT: In “Likes vs Likeability,” the author writes: “Teenagers often crave status... Status, however, isn’t always a good thing.” Explain how the narrator’s struggle for status in paragraphs 30-35 of “Popularity” by Adam Bagdasarian supports this idea. **[RL.3]**

In your response, make sure to:

- Explain the evidence without directly repeating it
- Use the explanation to connect the evidence to the paragraph’s argument

SAMPLE STUDENT OUTLINE:

*In paragraphs 30-35 of “Popularity,” the narrator shows that he will do whatever it takes to gain **status**, but then he realizes that higher status isn’t a good thing because it is **temporary**.*

- “In an instant, Mitch Brockman became Tweety Bird and I, an absolute nonentity, became somebody. And then somebody special” (33)
- “My phone rang. My weekends were filled with sleepovers” (34)
- “And I did not trust one of them, because I knew then that I was standing on sand” (35)

SAMPLE SHORT RESPONSE:

*In paragraphs 30-35 of “Popularity,” the narrator shows that he will do whatever it takes to gain **status**, but then he realizes that higher status isn’t a good thing because it is **temporary**. The narrator wants to be popular so much that he is willing to **belittle** and make fun of Mitch’s all-yellow outfit. The narrator explains that “in an instant, Mitch Brockman became Tweety Bird and I, an absolute nonentity, became somebody. And then somebody special” (33). The narrator gains a higher status than Mitch when he becomes Sean Owen’s favorite. The narrator reveals, “My phone rang. My weekends were filled with sleepovers,” which shows that the narrator gained friends by hurting Mitch (34). However, the narrator admits that his status may not last. At the end of the story the narrator explains his understanding of status when he admits, “And I did not trust one of them, because I knew then that I was standing on sand” (35). The narrator realizes that the boys quickly dropped Mitch and he knows the same thing could happen to him. Therefore, gaining status isn’t always a good thing because it is only **temporary**.*

CHECKLIST FOR WRITING EXPLANATIONS:

- ☐ Highlight or bold each explanation.

Did you explain what the evidence means or shows without repeating it?

- YES!
- No, I will go back and add that.

Does your explanation connect the evidence to the paragraph’s argument?

- YES!
- No, I will go back and add that.

Quick Partner Discussion

Directions: Discuss the questions with a partner. Record both of your answers to the questions. Practice speaking with academic language by using the discussion sentence starters. *5 minutes*



DISCUSSION SENTENCE STARTERS:

- *In paragraph/line [X], the narrator/character/speaker says...*
- *For example, in the text it says that...*
- *One moment that illustrates this is...*
- *Remember in the story we read that...*
- *I can prove this because...*
- *Look at...*

1. Do you agree that most people with high **status** are “standing on sand”? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

2. **ESSENTIAL QUESTION:** How would both the narrator and Mitch answer the unit's essential question: What makes adolescence challenging?

My answer	My partner's answer

3. **CROSS-TEXTUAL:** What do this story and “Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian teach us about adolescents and their peers? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

LESSON OVERVIEW

REVIEW: INTRODUCING EVIDENCE AND WRITING EXPLANATIONS

(This page does not appear on the student copy.)

How does this lesson fit into the arc of writing for the unit?

Writing Lesson 1	Writing Lesson 2	Writing Lesson 3	Writing Lesson 4	Final Unit Writing Prompt (Recommended)
Introducing Evidence With Context	Writing Explanations	Review: Introducing Evidence and Writing Explanations	Unit 2 Essay: Planning	Some people say that, "Adolescence is a war; no one gets out unharmed." Write an essay in which you argue whether the quote is true. You must use evidence from at least two of the following texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Going Steady" - "Hanging Fire" - "Saturday at the Canal" - "Likes vs. Likeability" - "Popularity" You may also use your own experiences to support your response. [W.1, W.2]
		↑ You are here! ↑		



This lesson's skill focus

Students will review and practice introducing evidence with context and writing strong explanations . [W.7.2]
--

Materials needed

You will need	Your students will need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This lesson handout • "Popularity" (Teacher Copy) • Classroom Anchor Charts from previous writing lessons (Optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Review: Introducing Evidence and Writing Explanations" (Student Copy) • "Popularity" (Student Copy) • Student Reference Sheets from previous writing lessons (Optional)

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
Part 1	 Reviewing Part of a Strong Paragraph: Students collaboratively review a paragraph for the unit's two major writing skills: introducing evidence with context and writing strong explanations.	5 min
Part 2	 Independent Writing: For this particular prompt, students will independently apply unit writing skills, introducing evidence, and writing strong explanations.	15 min
~20 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Review: Introducing Evidence and Writing Explanations

Answers in blue. To help us ensure assessment security, please do not post or circulate these answers online.

Today's Goal

You have learned how to introduce evidence with context and how to explain that evidence. In this lesson, you will review both skills and practice applying them on your own in a complete paragraph. **[W.2]**

Today's Prompt

You have read "Popularity" by Adam Bagdasarian. In paragraphs 20-21, what does the metaphor reveal about the different statuses on the playground? **[RL.4]**

PART 1: Reviewing Part of a Strong Paragraph

Directions: Read the prompt and sample response. Then, answer the questions that follow. *5 minutes*



PROMPT: In "Likes vs Likeability," the author writes: "Teenagers often crave status... Status, however, isn't always a good thing." Explain how the narrator's struggle for status in paragraphs 30-35 of "Popularity" by Adam Bagdasarian supports this idea. **[RL.3]**

In paragraphs 30-35 of "Popularity," the narrator shows that he will do whatever it takes to gain status, but then he realizes that higher status isn't a good thing because it is temporary. At the end of the story the narrator explains his understanding of status when he admits, "And I did not trust one of them, because I knew then that I was standing on sand" (35). The narrator realizes that the boys quickly dropped Mitch and he knows the same thing could happen to him.

1. What context does the writer provide before their evidence?

The writer explains that the narrator is having these thoughts at the end of the story, so it is referring to after he became popular.

2. How does the writer's explanation connect to the paragraph's argument?

It explains that the narrator knows his new status might not be a good thing because he realizes he could become unpopular just as quickly as he became popular.

PART 2: Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt. *15 minutes.*



PROMPT: You have read “Popularity” by Adam Bagdasarian. In paragraphs 20-21, what does the metaphor reveal about the different statuses on the playground? **[RL.4]**

In your response, make sure to:

- Explain the metaphor
- Introduced the evidence with important context
- Provide strong explanations for each piece of evidence

SAMPLE STUDENT OUTLINE:

The metaphor in paragraphs 20-22 reveals that there are different levels of popularity on the playground.

- *“a monarchy of kings and queens, dukes and duchesses, lords and ladies” (21)*
- *“the best student in the fourth grade. He was also one of the humblest, handsomest, strongest, fastest, most clear-thinking ten-year-olds that God ever placed on the face of the earth” (20)*
- *“the two Allans and I were stableboys” (21)*

SAMPLE SHORT RESPONSE:

The metaphor in paragraphs 20-22 reveals that there are different levels of popularity on the playground. When describing the playground, the narrator calls it “a monarchy of kings and queens, dukes and duchesses, lords and ladies” (21). The metaphor of the kings and queens reveals that the kids on the playground are not all equal in status because some are very popular, like Sean Owens, and others are not. The narrator describes Sean as “the best student in the fourth grade. He was also one of the humblest, handsomest, strongest, fastest, most clear-thinking ten-year-olds that God ever placed on the face of the earth” (20). This reveals that Sean is like the king of the playground because he is the best at everything. When describing himself, the narrator says, “the two Allans and I were stableboys” (21). The metaphor of the stableboys reveals that the narrator sees himself and the Allans as the lowest in status amongst the boys.

TEACHER COPY: Vocabulary Quiz 2 Answer Key

Unit 2: Adolescence

Part 1: Scenarios	Part 2: Fill in the Blank
1. A	8. C
2. C	9. B
3. B	10. C
4. B	11. A
5. C	12. B
6. B	13. C
7. A	14. A

Note:

On the next page, there is an optional answer sheet that can be printed and distributed to students..

Name _____ Class _____

Unit 2: Adolescence

Vocabulary Quiz 2 Answer Sheet

Directions: Write the letter of each of your answer choices on the lines below.

Part 1: Scenarios

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

Part 2: Fill in the Blank

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

13. _____

14. _____

LESSON OVERVIEW: DISCUSSION SKILL LESSON

(This page does not appear on the student copy.)

How should I use this discussion skill lesson?

Research shows that students in language-rich environments retain more content knowledge and are more engaged in their learning. We also believe discussion is important because it allows students to develop their ideas in conversation with others. That's why every CommonLit 360 unit includes explicit instruction on essential speaking and listening skills for academic discussions. This lesson gives students a chance to analyze a sample discussion between students and learn powerful discussion moves that they can apply across content areas.

This lesson's skill focus



Students will learn how to **refer to text evidence to support and advance ideas.**
[SL.7.1.A]

Discussion skill at a glance

Statements that Refer to Text Evidence

- *In paragraph/line [X], the narrator/character/speaker says...*
- *For example, in the text it says that...*
- *One moment that illustrates this is...*

What activities are included in this packet?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
Part 1	 Sample Discussion: Students analyze the transcript of a sample student discussion to notice strong discussion moves.	8 min
Part 2	 Statements and Questions that Connect Ideas: Students learn prompts they can use to refer to text evidence during a discussion.	7 min
~15 min total		

Looking ahead in the unit: upcoming class discussion

In the following lesson, students will participate in a discussion, applying the skills they learned in this skill lesson.

DISCUSSION PROMPT:

In this unit, we read the poem "Hanging Fire" by Audre Lorde. "Hanging fire" is a term that can be used to refer to anything that is stuck or delayed.

Based on the texts in this unit and your own experiences, do you think this term accurately describes adolescence? Why or why not?

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Referring to Text Evidence

Answers in blue

PART 1: Sample Discussion

Directions: Read the excerpt from a student discussion about the text “Going Steady.” As you read, pause to answer the questions beside the text.



Note to Teachers: Consider having three students perform the “Sample Discussion Dialogue” while their classmates listen and answer the questions.

SAMPLE DISCUSSION PROMPT

What is the theme of “Going Steady”?

SAMPLE DISCUSSION DIALOGUE

[1] **Zachary:** I believe the theme of “Going Steady” is that adolescent boys would rather have freedom than be in a relationship. One moment that illustrates this is paragraph 11, when the narrator compares Linda to a boa constrictor looking for a small animal to swallow. That’s why he broke up with her at the end.

[2] **Ophelia:** I agree with that theme, Zachary. I’d like to add evidence to support it. In paragraph 47, the narrator says, “By the end of the fourth day I knew I had to break up with her. I was tired of cooing, kissing the air, and carrying her books. I was tired of looking love-struck and docile and content.”

[3] **Nico:** Ophelia, you added great evidence, and it supports Zachary’s theme, but I think there is something else happening here. Look at the final sentence. *[Nico waits while Ophelia and Zachary reread the final sentence].* The narrator breaks up with Linda and says, “ten minutes later I went back to the party, found Eileen Weitzman and asked her to go steady.” So how could the narrator really be focused on freedom from girls?

[4] **Ophelia:** Oh, good point. Now that I look back to the final sentence, I am wondering if freedom wasn’t actually very important to the narrator. He thought his freedom was important, but he gave it up again ten minutes after he got it!

[5] **Zachary:** That is an interesting point, and I definitely agree. Let’s revise the theme. Maybe the theme is something like adolescents often act in ways that are the opposite of what they feel.

DURING READING QUESTIONS

Paragraphs 1-5

Find Evidence: Underline three phrases students use to present to evidence from the text.

- *“One moment that illustrates this is paragraph 11” (1)*
- *“In paragraph 47, the narrator says,” (2)*
- *“Look at the final sentence.” (3)*

Write: How did Nico help Zachary and Ophelia understand his point?

- *Nico asked Ophelia and Zachary to look at the final sentence in the text and read part of it aloud before asking them a follow up question.*

Think & Share: How might the discussion have been different if Zachary, Ophelia, and Nico had not referred back to textual evidence to support their responses?

- *They might not have been able to come up with an accurate theme statement.*
- *They might have discussed personal opinions only and forgotten about the text.*

PART 2: Referring to Text Evidence

Directions: In our discussion, we are going to practice an important discussion strategy: how to refer to text evidence to support your ideas. With a partner or independently, read the examples and summarize two key points to remember about this skill.



Examples of how you can **refer to text evidence to support your ideas**:

- *In paragraph/line [X], the narrator/character/speaker says...*
- *For example, in the text it says that...*
- *One moment that illustrates this is...*
- *Remember in the story we read that...*
- *I can prove this because...*
- *Look at...*

Key Points

During a class discussion, remember to...

1. *Refer to evidence from the text to allow you to have a stronger discussion and come up with better ideas*
2. *Refer to the line or paragraph number or read the evidence aloud to help your classmates follow along when you present text evidence*

5 Ways to Have a Great Class Discussion

Preparing for A Class Discussion

Below are five different ways to conduct classroom discussions. Read over the options and select the one that best fits the needs and personality of your classroom. Before starting any discussion, give students time to prepare talking points with their student-facing brainstorming handouts.

1. Silent Discussion (Distance Learning Option)

In this type of discussion, students write their answer to the discussion question on a piece of paper. Then they pass the paper to a classmate, who reads the answer and responds. This discussion is done on paper or a digital discussion board.

How to:

1. The teacher gives each student a paper with the discussion question at the top.
2. Students respond to the question by writing their answer down. Students should be given about 2 minutes to write.
3. Students pass their paper (and response) to another person. Then they respond to the comment on the new paper they were just handed.
4. Students continue passing the papers and responding. As this activity progresses, students will need to read all of the comments on the paper they were handed, so they may need more than two minutes.
5. Students should support their claims with text evidence and use the discussion sentence starters that were taught before the discussion started.
6. This type of discussion typically lasts between 10 and 15 minutes. Students should respond 5-10 times on different papers.

Preparation considerations:

- How will you have students pass the discussion papers?
- What will your noise expectations be? We recommend complete silence.
- How will you grade student participation?
- How will you share examples of successful “discussions” once writing is over?

Variations:

- Have a variety of discussion questions being passed around the room at the same time. For example, half the students have one discussion question and the other half have a different discussion question.

Distance Learning Option:

- Have students respond digitally. If you use Google Classroom, here’s a short [tutorial](#) on how to post a question that students can respond to.

2. Concentric Circles

In this type of discussion, students stand in concentric circles, facing a partner. Students have short discussions with a variety of partners as the concentric circles shift one person to the right or left.

How to:

1. Students form concentric circles and face a partner. Each student should have one partner.
2. Teacher poses the first discussion question and gives a time limit for discussion (no more than 2 minutes). Pairs begin the conversation. Each partner in the duo should share their thoughts on the discussion question.
3. Students should support their claims with text evidence and use the discussion strategy that was taught before the discussion started.
4. After the time limit has been reached, the teacher instructs one of the circles to shift one student to the left or the right.
5. New pairs are formed and begin discussing the discussion question again.
6. The teacher shifts the circles again and may pose new discussion questions as needed.
7. This type of discussion typically lasts between 10 and 15 minutes.

Preparation considerations:

- How will you arrange your classroom so everyone can stand in concentric circles?
- What should students take with them to the discussion? Paper? Pencil? Texts?
- How will you grade student participation?
- How long should each partner discussion last?
- How will you quiet the class down when the discussion time limit has been reached?

Variations:

- Have students stand in lines facing each other, instead of circles.

3. Conversation Stations

In this type of discussion, students begin discussion in groups of 4-6, then 2 of those students rotate to a new group as the teacher poses a new discussion question.

How to:

1. Students are arranged in groups of 4-6.
2. Teacher poses the first discussion question and gives a time limit for discussion (no more than four minutes).
3. Groups begin the conversation. Each student in the group should share their thoughts on the discussion question.
4. Students should support their claims with text evidence and use the discussion skill that was taught before the discussion started.
5. After the time limit has been reached, the teacher instructs two of the students from each group to join a new group.
6. The teacher poses a new discussion question and again allows 3-4 minutes for discussion. This process is repeated until the time for discussion is over and/or all discussion questions have been answered.
7. This type of discussion typically lasts between 15-20 minutes.

Preparation considerations:

- How will you arrange your classroom so everyone can be in a group of 4-6 students?
- How will you decide which students should rotate? Should the same students rotate each time?
- What should students take with them to the discussion? Paper? Pencil? Texts?
- How will you grade student participation?
- How long should each group discussion last?
- How will you quiet the class down when the discussion time limit has been reached?

Variations:

- Have more or less than two students change groups for each discussion question.
- Have the same students change groups each time.
- Have different students change groups each time.

4. Fishbowl

In this type of discussion, one pair of students have a discussion while the rest of the class observes. There are many variations of this discussion protocol that can get all students talking to one another.

How to:

1. Two students sit facing each other. The rest of the class forms a circle around them.
2. Teacher poses the first discussion question and gives a time limit for discussion (2-4 minutes, but the time limit depends on the age of your students and their ability to maintain a conversation).
3. The pair begin the conversation. Both students should share their thoughts on the discussion question.
4. Students should support their claims with text evidence and use the discussion strategy that was taught before the discussion started.
5. After the time limit has been reached, the teacher has a couple options: pose a new question to the same students, sub in a new student for one of the original students in the pair, or sub in two new students.
6. This process is repeated until the time for discussion is over and/or all discussion questions have been answered.
7. This type of discussion typically lasts between 15-30 minutes.

Preparation considerations:

- Which two students should be the first pair in the fishbowl?
- Will you have other students enter the center of the fishbowl?
- What will students who are observing be instructed to do? Take notes? Grade the discussion?
- What should students take with them to the discussion? Paper? Pencil? Texts?
- How will you grade student participation?
- How long should each group discussion last?

Variations:

See step 5 in “How to” for several options.

5. Socratic Seminar

In this type of discussion, students sit in a circle and have a free-flowing discussion about an open-ended question that is related to texts they've read.

How to:

1. All students sit in a circle.
2. Teacher poses the discussion question.
3. Students begin the conversation. All students are encouraged to talk, and they don't need to raise their hands to participate.
4. Students should support their claims with textual evidence and use the discussion skill (i.e. acknowledging their peer's idea) that was taught before the discussion started.
5. If the conversation stalls, the teacher may allow for silence or pose another open-ended discussion.
6. Socratic Seminars typically last between 10 and 30 minutes, depending on students' experience participating in discussions, students' ages, and the number of questions posed.

Preparation considerations:

- How will you arrange the desks in your classroom so everyone can sit in a circle?
- What should students take with them to the discussion? Paper? Pencil? Texts?
- How will you grade student participation?
- How long should the discussion last?
- What are the additional open-ended questions that you will ask students when the conversation stalls?

Variations:

- Half of the students sit in an inner circle, while the other half observe from an outer circle. Reverse roles half-way through the discussion. Students should be taking notes on their discussion handout.
- Another option is to allow individual students from the outer circle to join the conversation as the discussion progresses.

Note: Inspiration for this list of discussion protocols came from www.cultofpedagogy.com. "Conversation Stations" is based on the work of Sarah Brown Wessling.

During Discussion: Student Voice Tracker

Note to Teachers: Use this resource to capture notes on student participation during discussion.

Focus Discussion Skill: _____

Student Name	Tally the # of times the student has spoken	Tally the # of times student has used this unit’s focus discussion skill	Additional Notes

LESSON OVERVIEW: GRAMMAR AND USAGE ACTIVITIES

(This page does not appear on the student copy.)

How should I use these grammar and usage activities?

In CommonLit 360, grammar and usage activities can be used flexibly according to the needs of your classroom and students. They can be used as warm-up activities, homework, or short, whole-class practice. Students can work independently or in groups as needed. Reviewing the answers as a class will reinforce grammar and usage skills and ensure that students apply these skills to their writing.

Skill Focus

Students will choose among **compound and complex sentences** to signal **differing relationships among ideas**. [L.7.1.B]

Compound and Complex Sentences at a glance

A **compound sentence** combines two independent clauses with a coordinating conjunction such as and, but, or so.

A **complex sentence** combines an independent clause with one or more dependent clauses.

What activities are included?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
Part 1	Analyzing Student Writing: This activity allows students to notice the characteristics of simple and compound sentences through discovery.	5 min
Part 2	Notes on Compound Sentences: Students review notes on compound sentences.	5 min
Part 3	Practice Writing Compound Sentences: In this activity, students will create compound sentences by connecting two independent clauses with coordinating conjunctions.	5 min
Part 4	Notes on Complex Sentences: Students review notes on complex sentences.	5 min
Part 5	Practice Writing Complex Sentences: Students will write complex sentences using the given independent clauses and their own dependent clauses with subordinating conjunctions.	10 min
Part 6	Compound or Complex? This activity allows students to identify whether sentences are compound or complex.	5 min
Part 7	Writing Compound and Complex Sentences: Students will write compound and complex sentences by combining the provided clauses.	10 min
Part 8	Revising a Paragraph: In this activity, students will revise a paragraph of simple sentences by combining sentences so that the revised paragraph includes at least 2 compound sentences and at least 2 complex sentences.	10 min
~55 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Unit 2 Grammar and Usage Activities

COMPOUND AND COMPLEX SENTENCES

Answers in blue

PART 1: Analyzing Student Writing

DIRECTIONS: Read the two paragraphs below. Then answer the reflection questions.



Paragraph A	Paragraph B
Sandra and Kevin went to the river. They were going to go kayaking. It was quiet. The water was calm. They put on their wetsuits. They still felt cold. They turned around quickly. They heard a growl. They looked towards the sound. They saw it was a bear. It was moving towards them.	Sandra and Kevin went to the river because they were going to go kayaking. It was quiet, and the water was calm. They put on their wetsuits, but they still felt cold. They turned around quickly because they heard a growl. When they looked towards the sound, they saw it was a bear. It was moving towards them.

REFLECTION:

- How are the sentences in Paragraph B different from those in Paragraph A?

Answers will vary, but may include:

- *They're longer.*
- *They use more connecting words like **and**, **but**, and **for**.*
- *They sound more mature and less choppy.*

- Which paragraph reads more smoothly? Circle or highlight your answer.

Paragraph A

Paragraph B

- What about the sentences makes the paragraph read more smoothly?

Answers will vary, but may include:

- *The sentences flow better because they are longer without being too long.*
- *The sentences aren't so short that they sound choppy when you read them.*
- *The sentences use connecting words like "but" or "and" to link related ideas.*



PART 2: Notes on Compound Sentences

DIRECTIONS: Review the key points about compound sentences below. Then complete the practice exercises.

COMPOUND SENTENCES
<p>➤ A compound sentence combines two independent clauses with a coordinating conjunction such as and, but or so.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remember, an independent clause is part of a sentence that can stand alone. It has a subject and a verb, and it expresses a complete thought. <p>➤ Compound sentences help writers express multiple ideas clearly in a single sentence.</p>

COMMA RULE FOR COMPOUND SENTENCES
<p>➤ When using a coordinating conjunction to connect two independent clauses, always place a comma before the conjunction.</p>
<p>Non-Example: The starting gun went off. The racers sprinted from the starting line.</p> <p>Example: The starting gun went off, and the racers sprinted from the starting line.</p> <p>→ “The starting gun went off” and “the racers sprinted from the starting line” are both independent clauses. They are joined by the coordinating conjunction “and.”</p> <p>→ The writer uses a comma to separate the two independent clauses in the sentence.</p>

Coordinating Conjunctions	
Used to connect two independent clauses	
And	Nor
But	Or
Yet	So



PART 3: Practice Writing Compound Sentences

DIRECTIONS: For each practice exercise below, create a compound sentence by connecting the two independent clauses with a coordinating conjunction.

- Refer to the list of coordinating conjunctions below as you complete the practice exercises.
- Remember to follow the correct rules for using commas in a compound sentence

EXAMPLE	
Independent Clause A	Independent Clause B
We wanted to go swimming	The water is too cold
<i>We wanted to go swimming, but the water is too cold.</i>	

Coordinating Conjunctions Used to connect two independent clauses	
And	Nor
But	Or
Yet	So

PRACTICE:

1

Independent Clause A	Independent Clause B
James auditioned for the school play	He got the starring role
<i>James auditioned for the school play, and he got the starring role.</i>	

2

Independent Clause A	Independent Clause B
He can borrow the book from the library	He can buy it from the store
<i>He can borrow the book from the library, or he can buy it from the store.</i>	

3

Independent Clause A	Independent Clause B
He had to practice his lines	He asked his friends to help him
<i>He had to practice his lines, so he asked his friends to help him.</i>	

4

Independent Clause A	Independent Clause B
The cast practiced almost every night after school	They still made many mistakes
<i>The cast practiced almost every night after school, but they still made many mistakes.</i>	

5

Independent Clause A	Independent Clause B
Everyone was nervous on opening night	They gave a great performance
<i>Everyone was nervous on opening night, yet they gave a great performance.</i>	



PART 4: Notes on Complex Sentences

DIRECTIONS: Review the key points about complex sentences below. Then complete the practice exercises.

COMPLEX SENTENCES	
➤	A complex sentence combines an independent clause with one or more dependent clauses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember, a dependent clause has a subject and a verb, but does not express a complete thought. It cannot stand alone outside of a sentence. Dependent clauses begin with a subordinating conjunction such as <i>after, because, or when.</i>
➤	Complex sentences allow writers to add more detail to their writing and make their writing flow more smoothly.

COMMA RULES FOR COMPLEX SENTENCES	
➤	When a subordinating conjunction is used at the beginning of a sentence, use a comma to separate the two clauses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example: <u>After</u> I do my homework, I play video games.
➤	When a subordinating conjunction is used in the middle of a sentence, do not use a comma. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example: I play video games <u>after</u> I do my homework.
Non-Example: After the runners took their places. The starting gun went off. Example: After the runners took their places, the starting gun went off. → “After the runners took their places” is a dependent clause connected to the independent clause “the starting gun went off” and separated by a comma.	

Subordinating Conjunctions	
Used to connect a dependent clause with an independent clause	
After	Although
As	When
While	Until
Before	Because
If	Since

PART 5: Practice Writing Complex Sentences



DIRECTIONS: For each practice exercise below, write a complex sentence using the given independent clause and your own dependent clause with a subordinating conjunction.

- Refer to the list of subordinating conjunctions below as you complete the practice exercises.
- Remember to follow correct rules for using commas in a complex sentence.

Note to Teachers: Sample answers are included, but student answers will vary.

EXAMPLE

Independent Clause: Coach pushed us to run faster

*Coach pushed us to run faster **because** practice was almost over.*

Subordinating Conjunctions

Used to connect a dependent clause with an independent clause

After	Although
As	When
While	Until
Before	Because
If	Since

PRACTICE:

1

Independent Clause: We wanted to attend the wedding

Although we were not invited, we wanted to attend the wedding.

2

Independent Clause: The couple did not invite us

The couple did not invite us *because the wedding was in a very small chapel.*

3	Independent Clause: We sent the newly married couple a gift by mail.
	<i>After the wedding date had passed,</i> we sent the newly married couple a gift by mail.

4	Independent Clause: We did not know if they had received the gift
	We did not know if they had received the gift <i>until we got a nice thank you card.</i>

5	Independent Clause: We hope to visit them in their new home soon
	We hope to visit them in their new home soon <i>since we haven't seen them recently.</i>



PART 6: Compound or Complex?

DIRECTIONS: Read each sentence. Identify whether the sentence is compound or complex and circle or highlight your answer.

Example:

If you study for the test, you will get a good grade.

- A. compound
- B. **complex**

1 Shoppers lined up at the door, but the store did not open on time.

- A. **compound**
- B. complex

2 Because she wanted a good deal, Katie had made a plan to arrive early.

- A. compound
- B. **complex**

3 She was frustrated when it didn't open on time, although she continued to wait.

- A. compound
- B. **complex**

4 When it finally opened, she rushed inside with the other shoppers.

- A. compound
- B. **complex**

5 Katie couldn't find what she wanted, so she had to ask a store clerk.

- A. **compound**
- B. complex



PART 7: Writing Compound and Complex Sentences

DIRECTIONS: Using the clauses provided, write either a complex or compound sentence as indicated in each practice exercise. Based on the type of sentence you write, be sure to choose the correct kind of conjunction and follow the appropriate comma rules. Refer to the conjunctions below for support.

Coordinating Conjunctions Used to connect two independent clauses		Subordinating Conjunctions Used to connect a dependent clause with an independent clause	
And	Nor	After	Although
But	Or	As	When
Yet	So	While	Until
		Before	Because
		If	Since

Note to Teachers: Sample answers are included, but student answers will vary.

EXAMPLE	
Clause A	Clause B
My teacher was gone for two weeks	The class had a substitute
COMPOUND SENTENCE	
<i>My teacher was gone for two weeks, so the class had a substitute.</i>	

- Clause A:** She wanted to learn to swim
Clause B: Virginia was scared of the water

Complex Sentence:

Although she wanted to learn to swim, Virginia was scared of the water.

2. **Clause A:** Virginia researched taking swimming lessons
Clause B: She contacted her local YMCA

Compound Sentence:

Virginia researched taking swimming lessons, and she contacted her local YMCA.

3. **Clause A:** She was scared for the first swim class
Clause B: She was afraid she'd be the oldest one there

Complex Sentence:

She was scared for the first swim class because she was afraid she'd be the oldest one there.

4. **Clause A:** Virginia arrived for her class
Clause B: She saw people of all ages

Complex Sentence:

When Virginia arrived for her class, she saw people of all ages.

5. **Clause A:** The instructor was young
Clause B: She was a very good teacher

Compound Sentence:

The instructor was young, but she was a very good teacher.



PART 8: Revising a Paragraph

DIRECTIONS: Read the paragraph of simple sentences below. Rewrite the paragraph, combining sentences to include at least 2 compound sentences and at least 2 complex sentences.

Note to Teachers: Sample answers are included, but student answers will vary.

Original Paragraph

Phoenix wants to be a musician. He plays guitar. He also plays drums. His favorite instrument is guitar. He can't sing very well. He's taking singing lessons. His friend Emma knows how to play keyboards. Phoenix and Emma want to form a band. Their parents aren't sure it's a good idea. They want Phoenix and Emma to focus on their schoolwork. Phoenix and Emma promise to finish their schoolwork. Then they will practice their music. They want to be famous.

Your Paragraph

Answers will vary, but should contain at least two compound and two complex sentences.

*Phoenix wants to be a musician. He plays guitar, **and** he also plays drums. His favorite instrument is guitar. **Although** he can't sing very well, he's taking singing lessons. His friend Emma knows how to play keyboards. Phoenix and Emma want to form a band, **but** their parents aren't sure it's a good idea. They want Phoenix and Emma to focus on their schoolwork. Phoenix and Emma promise to finish their schoolwork. Then they will practice their music **because** they want to be famous.*

LESSON OVERVIEW: UNIT 2 ESSAY: PLANNING

(This page does not appear on the student copy.)

How does this lesson fit into the arc of writing for the unit?

Writing Lesson 1	Writing Lesson 2	Writing Lesson 3	Writing Lesson 4	Final Unit Writing Prompt (Recommended)
Introducing Evidence With Context	Writing Explanations	Review: Introducing Evidence and Writing Explanations	Unit 2 Essay: Planning	<p>Some people say that, "Adolescence is a war; no one gets out unharmed." Write an essay in which you argue whether the quote is true. You must use evidence from at least two of the following texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Going Steady" - "Hanging Fire" - "Saturday at the Canal" - "Likes vs. Likeability" - "Popularity" <p>You may also use your own experiences to support your response. [W.1, W.2]</p>
			↑ You are here! ↑	






This lesson's skill focus

In this lesson, students will plan for their Unit 2 Essay and review the structure and parts of a well-written essay . [W.7.2]

Materials needed

You will need	Your students will need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This lesson handout • Teacher Copy of all unit texts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Unit 2 Essay: Planning" (Student Copy) • Annotated copies of all unit texts

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
Part 1	 Breaking Down the Essay Prompt: Have students read the Unit 2 Essay prompt and make a list of the prompt's requirements.	5 min
Part 2	 Supporting Your Argument: Students review and brainstorm the quote referenced in the prompt and write down evidence to use in their Unit 2 Essay.	15 min
Part 3	 Discussing Your Argument: Lead students through a brief discussion about the quote referenced in the prompt to further prepare for their Unit 2 Essay. Students can jot down strong ideas from their peers as they listen.	10 min
Part 4	 Writing Your Thesis: Students draft their thesis statement for the Unit 2 Essay.	10 min
Part 5	 What Does a Great Student Essay Look Like? Students reflect on a strong student essay about "Going Steady" and "Hanging Fire." Have students refer to this throughout their own essay drafting process.	10 min
~50 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Unit 2 Essay: Planning

Answers in blue

Today's Goal	Other Materials Needed
Prepare to write your essay by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking down your final essay prompt • Finding evidence for your essay • Discussing your ideas • Drafting your thesis • Analyzing an exemplar essay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annotated copies of all unit texts

PART 1: Breaking Down the Essay Prompt

Directions: Carefully read your Unit 2 Essay prompt. Then, answer the questions. *5 minutes*



Unit 2 Essay Prompt
<p>Some people say that, "Adolescence is a war; no one gets out unharmed." Write an essay in which you argue whether the quote is true. You must use evidence from at least two of the following texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Going Steady" - "Hanging Fire" - "Saturday at the Canal" - "Likes vs. Likeability" - "Popularity" <p>You may also use your own experiences to support your response. [W.1, W.2]</p>

1. Highlight the quote within the prompt and rewrite it in your own words.

Answers will vary. Students may say:

- *Being a teenager is hard, everyone gets hurt.*
- *Adolescence is full of fights and no one can escape its pain.*

2. What are the two main things the prompt asks you to do?

1. *Argue whether the quote "Adolescence is a war; no one gets out unharmed" is true*

2. *Prove my argument using evidence from any of the texts in this unit or my own experiences*

PART 2: Supporting Your Argument

Directions: Prepare for a discussion by completing the steps below. Use your unit texts. *15 minutes*



1. **Think & Share:** Reread the quote from the prompt and select the choice that reflects your thinking:

“Adolescence is a war; no one gets out unharmed”

- a. I think this quote is true.
- b. I think this quote is untrue.

2. **Turn & Talk:** Discuss which unit texts you feel *best* support your side of the argument. You must use at least two of the following texts. Highlight the texts you will use.

- “Going Steady”
- “Hanging Fire”
- “Saturday at the Canal”
- “Likes vs. Likeability”
- “Popularity”

3. Select evidence from the texts you chose to support your side of the argument. In the organizer, write the title of the story the evidence comes from and the evidence and paragraph number.

Text Title and author	Evidence and paragraph #

PART 3: Discussing Your Argument

Directions: Discuss and defend your argument with your classmates using your evidence. Use the space provided to jot down ideas from your classmates that you want to use to strengthen your own argument. *10 minutes*



DISCUSSION QUESTION:

Is it true that “Adolescence is a war; no one gets out unharmed”?

Ideas I can use in my essay

PART 4: Writing Your Thesis

Directions: Consider your evidence and the great ideas you heard in your class discussion. Then, reread the prompt and draft your thesis statement using the guidelines in the box. *10 minutes*



PROMPT: Some people say that, “Adolescence is a war; no one gets out unharmed.” Write an essay in which you argue whether the quote is true. You must use evidence from at least two of the following texts:

- “Going Steady”
- “Hanging Fire”
- “Saturday at the Canal”
- “Likes vs. Likeability”
- “Popularity”

You may also use your own experiences to support your response. **[W.1, W.2]**

Your thesis statement should:

- Clearly state which side of the argument you are on: true or untrue
- Use the word “because” to explain why
- Be 1-2 sentences long

PART 5: What Does a Great Student Essay Look Like?

Directions: Below is an exemplar student essay about “Going Steady” and “Hanging Fire.” Skim the essay and the teacher comments. Then answer the reflection question about what surprised or stood out to you. *10 minutes*



Prompt: Some people say that, “Adolescence is the time in your life when you are most insecure about yourself.” Write an essay in which you argue whether the quote is true. You must use evidence from at least two texts in this unit. [W.1, W.2]

EXEMPLAR STUDENT ESSAY	TEACHER COMMENTS
<p>[1] Adolescents are always worrying about their problems and what others think of them. Some people even say that “Adolescence is the time in your life when you are most insecure about yourself.” The short story “Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian and the poem “Hanging Fire” by Audre Lorde both give examples of adolescents who are struggling with their insecurities. I believe that adolescence is a time when you struggle the most to accept yourself.</p>	<p>Great work introducing the quote from the prompt and connecting it to your thesis!</p>
<p>[2] In “Going Steady” by Adam Bagdasarian, the narrator’s struggle to break up with Linda reveals that he is very insecure. The narrator wants to break up with Linda but doesn’t because he’s too insecure to tell Linda his real thoughts and feelings. He explains, “I was tired of cooing, kissing the air, and carrying her books. I was tired of looking love-struck and docile and content” (47). Even though he knows he wants his freedom back, the narrator is not confident enough to break up with Linda. Later, when the narrator begins to tell Linda that he wants to break up, he struggles to be honest: “She looked earnestly into my eyes. ‘I love you,’ I said” (60-62). He feels pressure when she tells him she loves him and he does not express how he really feels. The narrator’s struggle to be honest in his relationship with Linda highlights the lack of confidence adolescents often feel.</p>	<p>This flows very well from your thesis. Well written!</p> <p>Excellent context for this piece of evidence!</p>

[3] In “Hanging Fire” by Audre Lorde, the speaker's repetition of different worries reveals how adolescents can feel insecure about nearly everything. In the first stanza, the speaker wonders, “how come my knees are / always so ashy” (Lorde, lines 6-7). Then in the third stanza she asks, “why do I have to be / the one / wearing braces / I have nothing to wear tomorrow” (lines 28-31). These repeated ideas reveal that the speaker feels insecure and alone and is concerned with fitting in. The speaker also repeats concerns about much bigger things. In both the first and last stanzas, the speaker takes her feelings of loneliness further when she wonders about death and asks “will I live long enough / to grow up” (lines 32-33). Her small worries build until they become larger and less easy to solve. The speaker’s long list of repeated concerns supports the idea that adolescence is a time of uncertainty.

[4] The struggles of the narrator and speaker in each text support the idea that adolescents struggle with feeling insecure. Both “Going Steady” and “Hanging Fire” provide examples of the worries that take over an adolescent’s mind and cause them to feel unsure of themselves. These texts can show people that adolescence is a difficult time in many people’s lives.

← Your use of vocab words like “insecurity” and literary devices like “repetition” make your writing stand out. Great work!

← Your explanations go beyond just restating the quote! You really dig into what these quotes reveal!

] Your conclusion restates your thesis, names your key points, and connects to the world. Short but fantastic!

1. **Reflect:** Based off of the exemplar student essay and the teacher comments, write 2-3 things you want to accomplish in your own essay.

1. *Answers will vary.*

2.

Tips For Using This Student Exemplar

- When you have time, read the essay closely. Pay attention to writing moves you can make in your own writing.
- When you feel stuck with your own essay, return to the exemplar to see how this student dealt with

the challenge you are facing.

- Identify the things you like most about this essay, and then do them in your own writing!

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Unit 2 Essay

Answers in blue

PART 1: Essay Prompt

Directions: Read the essay prompt about adolescence.



ESSAY PROMPT

PROMPT: Some people say that, “Adolescence is the time in your life when you are most insecure about yourself.” Write an essay in which you argue whether the quote is true. You must use evidence from at least two of the following texts:

- “Going Steady”
- “Hanging Fire”
- “Saturday at the Canal”
- “Likes vs. Likeability”
- “Popularity”

You may also use your own experiences to support your response. [W.1, W.2]

PART 2: Drafting Your Essay

Directions: Draft your essay in the space provided. If you created an outline for this essay in a previous lesson, use it to help you draft. As you draft your essay, be sure to apply the skills you’ve practiced in writing lessons throughout this unit.



Adolescents are always having conflicts with their friends, parents, and even themselves. Some people go so far as to say that “Adolescence is a war. No one gets out unharmed.” The short story “Popularity” by Adam Bagdasarian and the poem “Saturday at the Canal” by Gary Soto both give examples of adolescents who face challenges that change them. I believe that adolescence is like a war that affects everyone.

In “Popularity” by Adam Bagdasarian, the narrator has a battle with Mitch Brockman that changes them both. Mitch is part of a group of popular boys that the narrator wants to hang out with. One day, Mitch makes fun of the narrator’s uneven pants. Mitch says, “Someone needs a ruler” (31). The narrator fights back, saying, “Someone else needs a mirror. You look like a canary” (32). This shows that adolescents often fight over who can be more popular by making someone else feel insecure. Later in the story, the narrator explains how his insult changed his own role with the other boys and took away Mitch’s status: “Mitch Brockman became Tweety Bird, and I, an absolute nonentity, became somebody” (33). The narrator was the winner of this war because he became popular.

In "Saturday at the Canal" by Gary Soto, the speaker is in a battle with his boring life. One of his main problems in life is that he doesn't like school. The speaker says, "School was a sharp check mark in the roll book" (Soto, line 2). This shows that he goes to school only because he's forced to. Later in the poem, the speaker goes to the canal and dreams about San Francisco. He says, "[he wanted] to be with people who knew more than three chords" (line 13). In this part, he's battling his sad feelings that come with adolescence by dreaming of a more exciting life. One day, he hopes he will no longer be a teen stuck in school and move to a place like San Francisco. Moving from a small town to a big city could completely change his life.

The main characters' battles in each text support the idea that adolescence is like a war that everyone has to get through that changes you forever. Both "Popularity" and "Saturday at the Canal" provide examples of teens fighting against normal adolescent problems. These are the sorts of fights that every adolescent goes through whether they want to or not.

	Literary Analysis Essay Rubric			
Score	4	3	2	1
Reading Comprehension	Provides an in-depth and accurate analysis of what is stated in the text and/or what can be inferred from the text(s).	Provides an accurate analysis of what is stated in the text and/or what can be inferred from the text(s).	Provides a somewhat accurate analysis of what is stated in the text and/or can be inferred from the text(s).	Provides a minimally accurate analysis of what is stated in the text and/or what can be inferred from the text(s).
Thesis	Thesis is clearly stated and uses compound or complex sentence structure appropriate to the grade-level. Thesis is relevant to the task and specific.	Thesis is adequately stated and uses compound or complex sentence structure appropriate to the grade-level. Thesis is relevant to the task, but may be general or broad.	Thesis is attempted , but may be somewhat confusing or ambiguous.	Thesis is missing or not relevant to the task.
Organization	Demonstrates a logical and clear organizational structure that supports the development of the thesis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong introduction and conclusion that make connections between the claim, text, and broader world • Logical grouping and ordering of key points and evidence within body paragraphs • Strong transitions that show how claim, key points and evidence connect 	Demonstrates a satisfactory organizational structure that generally supports the thesis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recognizable introduction and conclusion • Solid grouping and ordering of key points and evidence within body paragraphs • Some transitions that clearly connect ideas 	Demonstrates a general organizational structure which may lack a sense of direction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction or conclusion may be missing • Some key points and evidence are not grouped logically • Some confusing transitions or connections between ideas 	Demonstrates a weak organizational structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction or conclusion may be missing • Key points and evidence are not grouped logically • Few transitions or connections between ideas

Evidence	<p>Includes strongest, most relevant text evidence to support thesis and overall analysis of the text(s).</p> <p>Evidence is introduced and contextualized, quoted, or paraphrased accurately.</p>	<p>Includes relevant text evidence to support thesis and overall analysis of the text(s).</p> <p>Most evidence is introduced and quoted or paraphrased accurately.</p>	<p>Text evidence or supporting details may be insufficient or only somewhat relevant, indicating basic comprehension of the text(s).</p> <p>Evidence is introduced inconsistently. Quotations or paraphrases may be incorrect or incomplete.</p>	<p>Text evidence or supporting details are largely missing, indicating limited comprehension of the text(s).</p> <p>If text evidence is present, it may be copied directly from the text with no introduction or context provided.</p>
Analysis	<p>Explanations draw connections between thesis and evidence.</p>	<p>Explanations attempt to draw connections, but may also summarize.</p>	<p>Explanations mostly summarize or restate text evidence, without drawing connections between ideas.</p>	<p>Explanations may be missing or show a lack of understanding.</p>
Writing Conventions and Craft	<p>Illustrates the use of effective and varied sentence patterns.</p> <p>Includes carefully selected academic and domain-specific words and phrases</p> <p>Reflects exceptional control of conventions; errors are few and minor</p>	<p>Reflects a generally controlled writing style but may lack variety in sentence patterns</p> <p>Includes academic and domain-specific words and phrases, but some usage may be incorrect or awkward</p> <p>Reflects control of most writing conventions; contains occasional errors that do not interfere with clarity or message</p>	<p>Uses some awkward constructions or demonstrates repeated use of a particular sentence pattern</p> <p>Uses common words and phrases that are often repetitious</p> <p>Reflects limited control of conventions; contains frequent errors that may begin to interfere with understanding</p>	<p>Demonstrates the use of fragmented or run on sentences that make the essay difficult to read with understanding</p> <p>Demonstrates limited range of vocabulary, or includes words that are misused</p> <p>Reflects numerous errors in conventions that make the text difficult to read</p>

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Unit 2 Grammar and Usage Quiz

COMPOUND AND COMPLEX SENTENCES

Answers in blue

DIRECTIONS: In the space below, write a paragraph that responds to the prompt. In your response, use at least two complex and two compound sentences.

Prompt: Describe someone you care about and why they are important to you.

Student answers will vary, but should include at least 2 compound and 2 complex sentences, following all rules for correct conjunction and comma use.

Compound sentence example: *My mother is important to me, and I try to show her that I feel that way.*

Complex sentence example: *Sometimes we don't get along, although I think she knows I love her.*

Category	Points
Correct compound sentence #1	/5
Correct compound sentence #2	/5
Correct complex sentence #1	/5
Correct complex sentence #2	/5
Final Score	/20

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: End-of-Unit Writing Options

Note to Teachers: Included here are four options for a culminating writing task in this unit. The reading and writing instruction in this unit aligns most closely to *Option 1: Argumentative Literary Analysis Essay Prompt*; however, you may choose a prompt that best aligns to the needs and interests of your students.

Option 1: Argumentative Literary Analysis Essay Prompt (Recommended)

Some people say that, “Adolescence is the time in your life when you are most insecure about yourself.” Write an essay in which you argue whether the quote is true. You must use evidence from at least two of the following texts:

- “Going Steady”
- “Hanging Fire”
- “Saturday at the Canal”
- “Likes vs. Likeability”
- “Popularity”

You may also use your own experiences to support your response. **[W.1, W.2]**

Option 2: Personal Reflection Essay

Write an essay where you reflect on and describe which character(s) from this unit you most relate to and why. Use evidence from the text and your own life. In your essay, include: **[W.2]**

- Character thoughts and feelings
- Character experiences and decisions
- Character relationships

You may consider the following characters from the following texts:

“Going Steady”	“Popularity”	“Hanging Fire”	“Saturday at the Canal”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The narrator - Linda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The narrator - Mitch Brockman - Sean Owens - The Allans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The speaker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The speaker

Option 3: On Demand Essay

In this unit, you have learned how character interactions develop the theme. Choose one of the listed unit or supplemental texts and write an essay that states the text's theme and how the theme is developed. Refer to evidence from multiple places in the text. **[W.2]**

Consider the ways an author might develop a theme:

- Character change
- A story's ending
- Figurative language

Unit Texts:

- "Going Steady"
- "Hanging Fire"
- "Saturday at the Canal"
- "Likes vs. Likeability"
- "Popularity"

Supplemental Texts:

- "Seventh Grade" by Gary Soto
- "Momentum" by Catherine Doty

Option 4: Creative Email to the Author

Adam Bagdasarian, the author of "Going Steady" and "Popularity," was born in 1954. Write an email to him in which you explain what has remained the same and what has changed about being an adolescent today. In your email, use evidence from your own life, unit texts, and supplemental texts to support your ideas. **[W.1, W.2]**