

LESSON OVERVIEW: UNIT INTRODUCTION

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Unit Overview

What does courage look like? Would you recognize it if you saw it? How do people find the courage to take a stand when no one else joins in? In this 360 Unit, students will explore what it looks like to choose courage over fear and doubt. They'll meet characters who choose to face their fears because they want to do the right thing or create a change in their lives and communities. Other characters find their courage through inspiration or the hope of a brighter future. They'll learn about and discuss what it looks like to have a courageous mindset and explore real-world outcomes that can occur when young people choose courage and confidence. Students will practice transferrable reading, writing, discussion, vocabulary, and grammar skills as they scrutinize these essential questions.

Unit Focus Standards

Reading:

- Theme and its relationship to characters, setting and plot [RL.8.2]
- Plot and character development [RL.8.3]
- Impact of word choice and figurative language [RL.8.4]





Writing

- Expository writing [W.8.2]

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: Courageous Choices" (Student Copy) • Key Terms Reference Sheet (Optional)

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
<p><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></p>		
Part 1	 Exploring the Unit's Big Questions: Students will rate how strongly they agree or disagree with five statements related to the unit's big ideas.	5 min
Part 2	 Discussing the Unit's Big Questions: Students will discuss their opinions from Part 1.	10 min
Part 3	 What Will We Read? Students will review a brief overview of the texts in the unit and discuss which texts seem most interesting.	5 min
Part 4	 What Skills Will We Learn? Students will complete a self-assessment gauging their familiarity with the unit skills.	5 min
~25 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Introduction to Unit 2: Courageous Choices

Essential Question: What motivates us to be courageous?
When is courage worth the risk?

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

About this lesson

This lesson will introduce you to the ideas, texts, and skills we will explore throughout the 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. When you are afraid of something, it is always best to face your fear head-on.

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

2. It's important to challenge unfair rules, even if doing so gets you in trouble.

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

3. Hope is a more powerful emotion than fear.

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

4. Young people have more courage than older people.

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5

5. Some things are worth fighting for, even if it may cost you everything.

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...
"The Terror" by Junot Díaz	<i>Memoir</i>	What gives us the strength to face our greatest fears?
"The Friday Everything Changed" by Anne Hart	<i>Short Story</i>	How can you challenge authority?
"Sonnet" by James Weldon Johnson	<i>Poem</i>	How can you keep your courage in difficult moments?
"Transcript of Full Joseph McNeil Interview" by Newsday	<i>Interview</i>	Can one courageous action give others the strength to be brave too?
"The Treasure of Lemon Brown" by Walter Dean Myers	<i>Short Story</i>	What things in life are worth risking everything for?
"I look at the world" by Langston Hughes	<i>Poem</i>	What motivates us to act bravely?



Turn & Talk: Which texts sound most interesting to you? 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 examine how character interactions cause a character to change.			
2. I can analyze how specific moments in a text lead to its resolution.			
3. I know how to read and understand a poem.			
4. I can determine how figurative language develops a poem's theme.			

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 can write a strong argument that is clear, concise, and specific.			
2. I know how and when to provide context in my writing.			
3. I can write explanations that explain what my evidence means and how it supports my argument.			
4. I can plan, organize, and write an essay about more than one text.			

Key Terms for Unit 2: Courageous Choices

UNIT 2 KEY TERMS <i>These 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>
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>
Juxtaposition	<p>When two things or ideas are placed next to each other to highlight their contrasts and differences</p> <p>Example: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..." Charles Dickens, <i>A Tale of Two Cities</i></p>
Figurative Language	<p>Language that goes beyond the literal meaning of the words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples: metaphor, simile, symbolism, personification, hyperbole <p>Example metaphor: "Juliet is the sun." William Shakespeare, <i>Romeo and Juliet</i></p>
Context	Information that clarifies what is happening in a moment or situation
Speaker	The narrator of a 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
Sonnet	A type of poem that has fourteen lines and several other qualities, such as a specific rhyme scheme and rhythm
Memoir	An author's narrative about their own personal experiences

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 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	Explanations/analysis develop ideas and insight in the essay, and support a credible and convincing line of reasoning . Effectively uses a variety of elaborative techniques , such as making connections or comparisons, using analogies or anecdotes, etc. Reflects precise and carefully selected language for clarity and effect Tone is clearly appropriate for the task, audience, and purpose.	Explanations/analysis develop ideas and make connections , and support a coherent line of reasoning . Adequately uses some elaborative techniques, such as making connections or comparisons, using analogies or anecdotes, etc. Reflects use of language that is functional and appropriate Tone is generally appropriate for the task, audience, and purpose.	Explanations/analysis mostly summarize or restate evidence, but the line of reasoning may be difficult to follow or underdeveloped . Uses weak or imbalanced elaborative techniques. Reflects mostly simplistic language Tone is uneven or somewhat ineffective for the task, audience, and purpose.	Explanations/analysis may be missing or show a lack of understanding. There is no line of reasoning . Mostly appeals to emotions instead of using elaborative techniques. Language is unclear or confusing Tone is ineffective for the task, audience, and purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Insufficient (includes copied text)Not written in EnglishNot aligned to the task and/or purpose
Grade 6-10 Argumentative Writing Rubric					
2-Point Section					
Score	2	1	Not Scored		
Writing Conventions	Reflects adequate control of most writing conventions ; contains occasional errors that do not interfere with clarity or message	Reflects partial control of writing conventions; contains errors that interfere with clarity or message	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Insufficient (includes copied text)Not written in EnglishNot 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	

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.

BEST PRACTICES FOR INDEPENDENT READING WITH COMMONLIT 360

Independent reading provides a wealth of benefits to students. Students develop greater reading stamina, deepen their content and background knowledge, widen their vocabulary, and build new reading skills and habits. Dedicating classroom time to teaching students about what, why, and how to read is crucial to students becoming better readers. Providing students a space to actually put in the reading “road miles” will boost students’ academic achievement and help ensure equitable access to books.

Best Practices for Building a Classroom Culture of Reading



Provide frequent and consistent opportunities for students to read self-selected texts in the classroom for a sustained amount of time—even 10-15 minutes makes a difference.

- Provide access to books on a wide range of reading levels, about a variety of topics, and that offer a range of diverse perspectives and experiences. (There are lots of ways to [build your classroom library on the cheap](#).)
- Provide class time for students to self-select their next book.



Build a culture of enthusiasm for reading books outside of class.

- Provide opportunities for students to write and read reviews about books.
- Promote authentic peer-to-peer conversations about books through book clubs or other collaborative routines.
- Build momentum by letting students take their books home, and trust them to bring the books back.



Support readers through accountable practices.

- Monitor and support readers during independent reading time through small-group and [1:1 conferences](#).
- Empower original student thought and writing fluency through accountable reading routines, such as reading responses.
- Encourage students to set goals, and praise them for meeting their goals.



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INDEPENDENT READING TEACHER GUIDE



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UNIT 2: COURAGEOUS CHOICES

INDEPENDENT READING TEACHER GUIDE

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8TH GRADE UNIT 2: COURAGEOUS CHOICES SUGGESTED NOVEL LIST

These novels feature people and characters who make the choice to face their fears and create change in their lives and their community. Some find their courage through the support of other people while others are inspired by the desire to do the right thing. One way to use this list is to encourage students to self-select novels to read independently. Alternatively, you can use this list as inspiration to launch book clubs or other creative independent or whole-class reading options. We recommend that teachers preview these books and select texts that will meet the needs of their students and families; the key is to always provide access to a wide array of full-length books about topics of interest to your students and texts that offer multiple and diverse perspectives.

TITLE AND AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION	GENRE
BOOKS SUITABLE FOR INDEPENDENT READING		
The Boy Who Painted the World by Melody J. Bremen	Indigo has never had much. He's never had a family, and he spends his nights in a homeless shelter, but he does have his drawing pencils and his dream of becoming an artist. When his best friend Jade is arrested for shoplifting, Indigo grabs his pencils and sets out to find her. On his quest, he discovers the meaning of family and friendship and the courage to hold onto his dreams.	Realistic Fiction
I Can Make This Promise by Christine Day	Edie has always been curious about her Native American heritage, but since her mother was adopted by a white couple, Edie has lost all hope of finding out about her background. Then she comes across a box full of letters and photos of a woman who looks strikingly similar to her. Who is she, and what can she tell Edie about her own history?	Realistic Fiction
I Am Malala: The Story of the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban by Malala Yousafzai, Christina Lamb	Sixteen-year-old Malala Yousafzai was riding home from school one day when she was shot in the head by terrorists who fought against girls' education. <i>I Am Malala</i> tells this story and describes the aftermath as Malala and her parents continued to champion education for girls around the world.	Nonfiction, Memoir, Auto-biography
Inside Out & Back Again by Thanhha Lai	Thirteen-year-old Hà has lived in Saigon, Vietnam her entire life, and it is the only world that she has ever known. When the Vietnam War threatens to destroy her world, Hà and her family are forced to relocate to Alabama by boat. While Hà had hoped to feel relief in her new home, she instead feels the disappointment of being an outsider and leans on her family for strength.	Historical Fiction, Realistic Fiction
March: Book One by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, Nate Powell	The first in a three-book graphic novel series, <i>March</i> tells the story of John Lewis's fight for civil and human rights. Book One tells of Lewis's life in the rural South, his life-changing encounter with Martin Luther King Jr., the beginning of the Nashville Student Movement, and their nonviolent fight to end segregation.	Graphic Novel, Nonfiction
When Stars Are Scattered by Victoria Jamieson, Omar Mohamed	Omar and his younger brother, Hassan, live in a refugee camp in Kenya. At the camp, there is never enough of what they need: food, medical care for Hassan, or even a way to pass the time. Hassan needs help, and Omar has the chance to attend school to change their lives for the better, but it would mean leaving Hassan every day. This beautiful graphic novel illustrates what family and opportunity are worth.	Graphic Novel, Memoir
BOOKS SUITABLE FOR WHOLE-CLASS READING		
A Long Walk to Water: Based on a True Story by Linda Sue Park	This book tells the story of war-torn Southern Sudan from the perspectives of two protagonists—Salva in 1985, and Nya in 2008. Both characters face extreme hardship in their quest for survival. From the challenges of their country's harsh climate to the threat of violence from rebel forces, Salva and Nya must do their best to stay alive each day.	Realistic Fiction, Historical Fiction
A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier by Ishmael Beah	What is war like for a child soldier? Ishmael Beah shares his first-hand experience. At just twelve-years-old, he fled from violent rebel forces that had destroyed his land. By the time he turned thirteen, the government had recruited him as a child soldier to fight the rebels. As a soldier, Beah found that he was capable of doing things that he had always feared and capable of living to tell his heart wrenching story.	Nonfiction

Hidden Figures by Margot Lee Shetterly	Before Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, a group of women known as “human computers” calculated the math necessary to send astronauts into space. <i>Hidden Figures</i> tells the story of four of these African American mathematicians who worked at NASA and helped to achieve some of our greatest moments in space exploration.	Nonfiction, Science, History
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TEACHER RESOURCE: READING RESPONSES

(adapted from [Reading with Presence by Marilyn Pryle 2018](#))

Students need to learn how to write and talk about what they read with increasing fluency and sophistication. In order to get there, students need to become skilled at sifting through their own thoughts about texts. They need to be told that it's okay, and even preferable, to have their own personal reactions to the books, stories, films, podcasts, news articles, and reviews that they read. We know that these reactions are the gateway to deeper analysis of texts. We should seek both to empower students to react to their reading and to model how to articulate something unique and important about the texts they encounter.

One way to give power to students' thoughts about texts is through Reading Responses. These paragraph-length reactions to texts provide students an opportunity to step away from teacher-led reading, to refine their own ideas about what they've just read, and to express their ideas with increasing fluency. They hold students accountable for thinking critically about texts through a simple protocol that Marilyn Pryle has outlined in her book *Reading with Presence*. Here is an adaptation of Pryle's protocol and Reading Response categories:

1. Say something original about the text.
2. Choose a reading response category.
3. Use and cite at least one quotation.
4. Write 5 sentences or more.

Here's how to put this in motion in the classroom:

- At the end of students' independent reading time in class—or as homework—have students reflect on their reading using the Reading Response protocol.
- Model how to follow the protocol by using a text from your current unit or by using the Example Student Reading Response below (*"First, I choose a response category, then I write a short paragraph."*).
- Encourage students to maintain a running log of their reading responses in a personal notebook or journal. These notes can be used as jumping off points for book club discussions, small group conferences, or 1:1 conferences.

Example Student Reading Response:

Date: 2/21/21	Book: <i>Inside Out</i>	Author: <i>Francisco Jimenez</i>
Reading Response Category: Capture the Conflict		
Reading Response: <i>In the story "Learning the Game," the main conflict that Francisco has is with this bully Carlos, who won't let Manuelito play kick the can with the rest of the kids. But then the conflict changes. Francisco sees how their boss, Mr. Diaz, is treating another worker named Gabriel, trying to make him plow the fields like an ox. When Gabriel refuses, Diaz says he'll fire him if he doesn't listen. It makes Francisco so mad that he goes home and stands up for Manuelito. He says, "Manuelito plays, or I'm not playing" (93). I think the deeper conflict is that Francisco sees that some people have power over others for no reason. He thinks that people shouldn't get to make others follow whatever rules they want, especially unfair ones.</i>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I wrote about an original idea. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I wrote about a reading response category. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I used and cited a quotation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I wrote at least 5 sentences.		

MENU OF READING RESPONSE CATEGORIES

Students may choose from the list of reading response categories, or you may identify which categories they should write about. Presenting the entire menu of reading responses at once has the potential to overwhelm students who are new to the reading response process. Instead, consider presenting a few response categories at a time, or presenting one group of response categories at a time (e.g. first “reading responses for essential understandings in literary texts,” then “reading responses for nonfiction texts”).

READING RESPONSES FOR ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS IN LITERARY TEXTS

Ask a Question: Your question can be about a part of the text that you don’t understand, or it can be about a larger idea that the text made you wonder about (e.g. life, literature, etc.). Your question must be specific, you must still quote from the text, and you must still write five sentences. You can do this by explaining your question or even by trying to answer it yourself.

Connect to the Text: Great texts remind us of other experiences, like other stories we’ve read, movies we’ve seen, or events we’ve experienced ourselves. Describe the connection you’ve noticed, and explain what is similar between the pairing.

Spot the Setting: Setting is not simply where and when a story takes place, but it is also the general spirit of a particular time and place. Highlight a place in the text where the setting is particularly strong. What does it tell you about the particular place, time, and community? What mood does it convey? Are there specific parts of the setting that stand out as symbols? Who could thrive and who could fail in this specific setting? Be sure to highlight the descriptive words and images that make this setting especially important.

Character Description: Explain what makes this particular character description important to the story. This can be a description of what the character says, does, thinks or feels, how the character looks, or the way other characters treat them. Explain what the description reveals about the character on a deeper level. Why might the author have chosen to represent the character in such a way?

Mind the Motivation: All characters have motives or desires that drive a story forward. Some characters have multiple motivations and even motivations that conflict with each other. Explain what motivates the character(s) and how the motivations influence other characters and the events of the story.

Capture the Conflict: What is the main problem that the character or characters seem to be facing and what is causing it? Explain how the problem is deeper than it seems or how it is linked to a character’s internal struggles.

Identify the Climax: Describe the part in the story that is the biggest turning point for the main character(s). What makes this event so significant, and how does it cause the plot to resolve?

READING RESPONSES FOR NONFICTION TEXTS

Cite the Claim: Pull out the quotation that most directly states the author’s argument. Has the author convinced you? Why or why not?

Impressive Intro: Describe what about this particular introduction has grabbed your attention and kept you interested. You could point to images, narrative techniques, strong language—anything!—but you must be specific.

Captivating Conclusion: How did this particular author leave you wondering? How did they tie up their argument in a way that really affected you? Describe the parts of the conclusion that really stand out to you and explain what makes them meaningful.

READING RESPONSES FOR MORE ADVANCED ANALYSIS

Significant Passage: Describe or quote from a passage that you feel is most important to the meaning of the whole text or a part of the text. Explain what makes this passage especially meaningful to the other parts of the text. Which words and phrases stand out as particularly important? Why might the author have chosen to include this passage, or particular words, phrases, and lines from the passage?

Find Foreshadowing: Notice where the author clues you in to what will happen or the topics that will be covered next in the text. If you haven’t yet read ahead, make a prediction: based on the breadcrumbs the author leaves you, what will happen next? If you have discovered what happened, trace the author’s masterful creation: how did the author clue you in to the big reveal all along? Why did the author choose those specific places in the text to give you clues?

Mark the Mood: The mood of a text is what you, the reader, feels while reading it. What is the mood? What is creating the mood? It could be the plot, setting, details about the characters, dialogue between characters, or even descriptive details. Explain why you think the author chose to create this particular mood.

Trace the Theme: What larger theme or themes is the author developing throughout the text? What details contribute to those deeper messages? Are there any places in the text that seem to contradict or conflict with those themes? Which characters, events, symbols, craft moves, or structures point to the theme?

Track the Tone: Tone is the author’s attitude toward a topic, character, or idea. What is the author’s tone in this text, and how does the author reveal it? Is it illustrated through events of the plot? Word choice? The structure of a passage? Choice of details? Your quote should reveal evidence of the tone. Why does the author feel this way?

Locate Meaningful Language: Identify language that stands out to you. This could be significant figurative language, repeated words or phrases, a certain character’s diction, a pattern you notice in the author’s word choice, or other language features. Describe the meaning and importance of the language you noticed. Why might the author have chosen to write in this specific way at this particular point in the text? What deeper meaning does the language illustrate?

READING RESPONSES FOR UNIT-SPECIFIC CONNECTIONS

Make connections between your novel and the rest of our unit by selecting any of the following questions to answer in the form of a reading response.

1. What made the character(s) or people in your book courageous?
2. What does the ending of your book suggest about how the characters or people will use courage to deal with future obstacles?
3. Consider the characters in your book and those in the stories you have read throughout this unit. In what ways are the characters or people in your book and the other stories similar? Which characters have the most similarities when it comes to the ways that they faced challenges and overcame obstacles?
4. Did the characters in your book act courageously because they were inspired by others? Or did they act courageously because of internal motivation? Explain your answer.
5. Some believe people are born with courage. Others believe that courage finds us when we need it. Based on the book you read, which is true for the main character or subject of your book?
6. Would you consider the main character or subject in your book an activist? Explain your answer using specific examples from your book.
7. After reading your book and the texts in this unit, what personal traits or beliefs are necessary to act courageously? Explain your answers.
8. How does your novel answer our unit's essential question: *What motivates a person to stand up for what's right?*

TEACHER RESOURCE: READING RESPONSE NOTEBOOK TEMPLATE

Use this notebook template to coach students in writing reading responses to their independent or book club reading. Consider modeling how to write responses or using strong student responses as models for the whole class.

Date:	Book:	Author:
Reading Response Category:		
Reading Response:		
<div><input type="checkbox"/> I wrote about an original idea.</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> I wrote about a reading response category.</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> I used and cited a quotation.</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> I wrote at least 5 sentences.</div>		

Date:	Book:	Author:
Reading Response Category:		
Reading Response:		
<div><input type="checkbox"/> I wrote about an original idea.</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> I wrote about a reading response category.</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> I used and cited a quotation.</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> I wrote at least 5 sentences.</div>		

Date:	Book:	Author:
Reading Response Category:		
Reading Response:		
<div><input type="checkbox"/> I wrote about an original idea.</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> I wrote about a reading response category.</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> I used and cited a quotation.</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> I wrote at least 5 sentences.</div>		

TEACHER RESOURCE: BOOKS I'VE READ TEMPLATE

[illegible]

TEACHER RESOURCE: BOOKS I WANT TO READ TEMPLATE

[illegible]

TEACHER RESOURCE: HOW TO RUN STUDENT BOOK CLUBS CONCURRENT WITH A COMMONLIT UNIT

There are vast benefits to having students read in book clubs. Book clubs motivate students to read, write, talk, and argue about complex texts with their peers; they allow students to socialize and to discuss meaningful, purposeful content at the same time with kids their own age. Because book clubs tend to be organized around students' similar skills, reading level, and/or interests, they are rich environments for student learning. Students develop a number of skills through their participation in book clubs. They learn how to:

- Set shared goals for reading
- Prepare for a discussion in advance
- Support their perspectives and analysis with strong textual evidence
- Consider perspectives different from their own and engage in academic debate
- Expand on and revise their own ideas throughout the course of a discussion
- Set and use group norms for entering and engaging in discussions
- Reflect on their collective and individual learning

A strong book club practice often involves running book clubs concurrent with the core readings of the current whole-class unit. This allows students to read self-selected books that are thematically or topically aligned to the unit of study. As a result, students are constantly making connections between their book club readings and the themes and content of the broader unit.

Most book clubs follow a similar structure:

1. Teachers present book club options to students and allow students to rate their top book choices. Teachers group students into book clubs, paying special attention to student skill, reading level, group dynamics, and interest ratings.
2. Students meet initially in book clubs to set group norms and expectations, decide how much to read, what lens or strategy they will use in their independent book club reading, and/or what they intend to talk about when they come back together to discuss. Some student norms and expectations will need to be taught, so keep an eye out for what kinds of speaking and listening skills students will need explicit lessons on.
3. Students read their agreed-upon book club pages independently, gathering their ideas about the book and related text evidence as they go.
4. Students meet in book clubs to discuss their ideas and perspectives, debate opinions and analysis, and revise their thinking through evidence-based conversations. Teachers pop in to book club meetings to listen in, and teach into skills, strategies, or content as conversations necessitate.
5. Students reflect on their own learnings and set new goals for their shared and independent reading. Student groups alternate between independent reading time and book club discussions until they finish their reading and hold their culminating discussion.

Example Book Club Schedule:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily unit instruction • Flex time: Book club meeting #1: goal setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily unit instruction • Flex time: Independent book club reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily unit instruction • Flex time: Book club meeting #2: discussion; goal setting for next meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily unit instruction • Flex time: Independent book club reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily unit instruction • Flex time: Book club meeting #3: discussion; goal setting for next meeting

TEACHER RESOURCE: NORMS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR BOOK CLUBS

As members of book clubs, every student's goal is to develop as a reader, listener, speaker, and thinker. Allowing students to set the norms and expectations that will help them meet these goals is a powerful practice in creating empowered and accountable student communities. Based on your students' readiness, you may choose to use the sample norms and expectations below or allow students to create their own using the guiding questions that follow.

SAMPLE NORMS AND EXPECTATIONS:

1. Read the agreed upon pages.
 2. Come to discussion prepared to share your thoughts.
 3. Bring your book, and follow along when someone shares a quotation.
 4. Keep conversations focused on the book. Use book club discussion questions and reading responses to kick off discussion and keep it going.
 5. Stay engaged in discussion.
 6. Honor everyone's voice and ideas.
 7. We may disagree. When we do, we disagree respectfully.
 8. At the end of each meeting, set page number and reading focus goals for the next meeting.
-

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR STUDENT-CREATED BOOK CLUB NORMS AND EXPECTATIONS:

- What does it mean to be prepared for a book club meeting?
- How do we determine who should speak next?
- What should conversations look and sound like?
- How do we make sure everyone has an equal opportunity to share their ideas?
- What does listening look and sound like?
- What does respect look and sound like?
- What does disagreement look and sound like?
- What if I didn't read last night?
- What if someone in the group isn't doing their share?
- What does it look and sound like to be a leader in this book club?
- What roles will we take on (e.g. facilitator, scribe, time keeper, reporter), and how will they rotate?

OUR BOOK CLUB NORMS AND EXPECTATIONS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

TEACHER RESOURCE: BOOK CLUB READING PLANS TEMPLATE

Book title:

Author:

Meeting number	Meeting date	Group roles	By the next meeting, read to page ____	Next meeting's reading focus <i>What reading strategy are we using?</i> <i>What reading response category will we respond to and discuss?</i>
1		Examples: <i>Facilitator:</i> <i>Scribe:</i> <i>Reporter:</i>		
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				

TEACHER RESOURCE

UNIT 2: COURAGEOUS CHOICES

Questions For Independent Reading Conferences Or Book Club Discussions

You may use these questions to kick off independent reading conferences with your students, or as discussion questions that students can use to get book club conversations up and running.

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

1. What about the text confirmed something you knew or had heard before?
2. What about the text surprised you?
3. What about the text challenged your thinking?
4. What were some of your reading responses?
5. Who else wrote about the same idea that was just shared? What did you write about?
6. Did anyone write a reading response about that same category?
7. Why did you choose to write about that specific category?
8. Who has another example of the idea that was just shared?

UNIT-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

1. What made the character(s) or people in your book courageous?
2. What does the ending of your book suggest about how the characters or people will use courage to deal with future obstacles?
3. Consider the characters in your book and those in the stories you have read throughout this unit. In what ways are the characters or people in your book and the other stories similar? Which characters have the most similarities when it comes to the ways that they faced challenges and overcame obstacles?
4. Did the characters in your book act courageously because they were inspired by others? Or did they act courageously because of internal motivation? Explain your answer.
5. Some believe people are born with courage. Others believe that courage finds us when we need it. Based on the book you read, which is true for the main character or subject of your book?
6. Would you consider the main character or subject in your book an activist? Explain your answer using specific examples from your book.
7. After reading your book and the texts in this unit, what personal traits or beliefs are necessary to act courageously? Explain your answers.
8. How does your novel answer our unit's essential question: *What motivates a person to stand up for what's right?*

LESSON OVERVIEW: “THE TERROR”

(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	Reading Lesson 6
“The Terror” by Junot Díaz (Memoir)	“The Friday Everything Changed” by Anne Hart (Short Story)	“Sonnet” by James Weldon Johnson (Poem)	“Transcript of Full Joseph McNeil Interview” by Newsday (Interview)	“The Treasure of Lemon Brown” by Walter Dean Myers (Short Story)	“I look at the world” by Langston Hughes (Poem)
↑ 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 **characterization and character change**.
[RL.8.2, RL.8.3]

About this Memoir

In this memoir, Junot Díaz describes his difficulties with a teenage group of bullies. After years of avoiding them, along with several other life struggles, the narrator must find it in himself to face his fears and act with courage.

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>45 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 the narrator’s changing thoughts and feelings. 	<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: The Terror

Junot Díaz

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

About this text	
Junot Díaz is a Dominican American writer, creative writing professor, and editor. Díaz's work often focuses on the experience of immigrants. In this memoir, Díaz recounts a time he faced a challenge with a teenage group of bullies.	
Purpose for Reading	Vocabulary
To understand how authors develop theme and to build our understanding about making courageous choices in difficult times.	<p>Let's pronounce these words together as a class:</p> <p>Dreary [dreer-ee]</p>

WHOLE CLASS READING

[1] I got jumped¹ at a pretty bad time in my life. Not that there's ever a good time.

[2] What I mean is that I was already deep in the vulnerability matrix.² I had just entered seventh grade, was at peak adolescent craziness and, to make matters worse, was dealing with a new middle school whose **dreary** white middle-class bigotry³ was cutting the heart out of me. I wasn't two periods into my first day before a classmate called me a "-----," as if it were no big deal. Someone else asked me if my family ate dogs every day or only once in a while. By my third month, that school had me feeling like the poorest, ugliest immigrant freak in the universe.

[3] My home life was equally trying.⁴ My father abandoned the family the year before, plunging our household into poverty. No sooner than that happened, my brother, who was one year older and my best friend and protector, was found to have leukemia⁵, the kind that in those days had a real nasty habit of killing you. One day he was sprawled on our front stoop in London Terrace holding court, and the next he was up in Newark, 40 pounds lighter and barely able to piss under his own power, looking as if he were one bad cold away from the grave.

[4] I didn't know what to do with myself. I tried to be agreeable, to make friends, but that didn't work so hot; mostly I just slouched in my seat, hating my clothes and my glasses and my face. Sometimes I wrote my brother letters. Made it sound as though I were having a great time at school — a ball.

DURING READING QUESTIONS

Paragraphs 2-4

Find Evidence: Underline three details that show that this was "a pretty bad time" in the narrator's life.

- "was dealing with a new middle school whose dreary white middle-class bigotry" (2)
- "By my third month, that school had me feeling like the poorest, ugliest immigrant freak in the universe." (2)
- "My father abandoned the family the year before, plunging our household into poverty." (3)
- "My brother, who was one year older and my best friend and protector, was found to have leukemia." (3)
- "I tried to be agreeable, to make friends, but that didn't work so hot; mostly I just slouched in my seat, hating my clothes and my glasses and my face." (4)

¹ to get attacked by a group like a gang

² An environment full of vulnerability or a state of feeling open to or susceptible to being attacked or hurt.

³ **Bigotry** (noun): extreme hatred or prejudice; the unwillingness to accept views, beliefs, and behavior that differs from others

⁴ having a bad or difficult time

⁵ **Leukemia** (noun): cancer of the bone marrow in which white blood cells grow uncontrollably

PARTNER READING

[5] And then came the beat-down. Not at school, as I would have expected, but on the other side of the neighborhood. At the hands and feet of these three brothers I dimly knew. The youngest was my age, and on the day in question we had a spat⁶ over something — I can't remember what. I do remember pushing him down hard onto the sidewalk and laughing about it, and the kid running off in tears, swearing he was going to kill me. Then the scene in my head jumps, and the next thing I know, the kid comes back with his two older brothers, and I'm getting my face punched in. The older brothers held me down and let the younger brother punch me all he wanted. I cried out for my brother, but he was in Beth Israel Hospital, saving no one. I remember one of the older ones saying, "Hit him in the teeth."

[6] As these things go, it wasn't too bad. I didn't actually lose any teeth or break any limbs or misplace an eye. Afterward, I even managed to limp home. My mother was at the hospital, so no one noticed that I had gotten stomped. Even took my blackened eye to classes the next day, but because my assailants attended another school, I didn't have to tell the truth. I said, "It happened in karate."

[7] My first real beat-down, and I was furious and ashamed, but above all else I was afraid. Afraid of my assailants. Afraid they would corner me again. Afraid of a second beat-down. Afraid and afraid and afraid. Eventually the bruises and the rage faded, but not the fear. The fear remained. An awful withering dread that coiled around my bowels⁷ — that followed me into my dreams. ("Hit him in the teeth.") I guess I should have told someone, but I was too humiliated. And besides, my No.1 confidant, my brother, wasn't available.

[8] So I locked up the whole miserable affair⁸ deep inside. I thought that would help, but avoidance⁹ only seemed to give it more strength.

INDEPENDENT READING

[9] Without even thinking about it, I started doing everything I could to duck the brothers. I shunned¹⁰ their part of the neighborhood. I started looking around buildings to make sure the coast was clear. I stayed in the apartment a lot more, reading three, four books a week. And whenever I saw the brothers, together or individually — in a car, on a bike, on foot — the fear would spike through me so powerfully that I felt as though I was going to lose my mind. In *Dune*, a novel I adored in those days, Frank Herbert observed that "Fear is the mind-killer," and let me tell you, my man knows of what he speaks. When the brothers appeared, I couldn't think for nothing. I would drop whatever I was doing and get away, and it was only later, after I calmed down, that I would realize what I had done.

[10] The brothers didn't pursue me. They would jeer at me and occasionally throw rocks, but even if they weren't chasing me in the flesh, they sure were chasing me in spirit. After these encounters, I would be a mess for days: depressed, irritable,

⁶ A fight over something silly or petty

⁷ **Bowels** (noun): your guts or lower intestines

⁸ an ordeal or situation that is being dealt with

⁹ **Avoidance** (noun): a state of keeping away from or not doing something

¹⁰ **Shun** (verb): to avoid, ignore, or reject

DURING READING QUESTIONS

Paragraphs 5-8

Write: Why isn't the narrator's family aware of what has happened to him?

- *Since the narrator's brother is sick, both his brother and his mother are at the hospital.*
- *He hides the truth about what happened and how he is feeling.*

DURING READING QUESTIONS

CHARACTERIZATION: Paragraphs 9-10

Write: Describe how "fear is a mind-killer" for the narrator.

- *Fear of another attack takes over the narrator's mind and controls where he chooses to go and what he chooses to do.*
- *His fear causes him to instinctively hide and avoid anywhere the brothers might be.*
- *His fear affects the narrator emotionally, making him feel ashamed of himself.*

hypervigilant,¹¹ ashamed. I hated these brothers from the bottom of my heart, but even more than them, I hated myself for my cowardice.¹²

[11] Before that attack, I had felt fear plenty of times — which poor immigrant kid hasn't? — but after my beating, I became afraid. And at any age, that is a dismal place to be.

[12] Given all the other crap, I was facing, my adolescence was never going to win any awards. But sometimes I like to think that if that beat-down didn't happen, I might have had an easier time of it. Maybe a whole bunch of other awfulness would not have happened. But who can really know? In the end, the fear became another burden I had to shoulder — like having a sick brother or brown skin in a white school.

CHARACTERIZATION: Paragraphs 11-12

Write: How does the attack change the narrator?

- *He becomes someone who is always afraid.*
- *Fear becomes another burden in his life, on top of the ones he is already dealing with.*
- *It led to other awful things in his life.*

WHOLE CLASS READING

[13] Took me until I was a sophomore in high school — yes, that long — before I finally found it in me to start facing my terror. By then, my older brother was in remission¹³ and wearing a wig to hide his baldness. Maybe his improbable¹⁴ survival was what gave me courage, or maybe it was all the Robert Cormier¹⁵ I was reading — his young heroes were always asking themselves, “Do I dare disturb the universe?” before ultimately deciding that yes, they did dare. Whatever it was, one day I found myself fleeing from a sighting of the brothers, and suddenly I was brought up short by an appalling¹⁶ vision: me running away forever.

[14] I forced myself to stop. I forced myself to turn toward them, and it felt as if the whole world was turning with me. I couldn't make myself walk toward them, I could barely even look at them, so I settled for standing still. As the brothers approached, the ground started tilting out from under me. One of them scowled.

[15] And then, without a word, they walked past.

DURING READING QUESTIONS

CHARACTERIZATION: Paragraphs 13-15

A. Find Evidence: Underline two pieces of evidence that show what motivated the narrator to stand up to the brothers.

- *“Maybe his improbable survival was what gave me courage, or maybe it was all the Robert Cormier I was reading — his young heroes were always asking themselves, ‘Do I dare disturb the universe?’ before ultimately deciding that yes, they did dare.” (13)*
- *“Whatever it was, one day I found myself fleeing from a sighting of the brothers, and suddenly I was brought up short by an appalling vision: me running away forever.” (13)*

B. Poll the Class: Based on the narrator's actions, would you describe him as courageous? Be prepared to defend your response.

- A. Yes
- B. No

First published in *The New York Times* and reprinted by permission of Junot Díaz and Aragi Inc.

¹¹ **Hypervigilant** (adjective): being very watchful in case of danger

¹² **Cowardice** (noun): having a lack of courage to face danger, pain, or difficulty

¹³ **Remission** (noun): a period of time when a disease, like cancer, is no longer detectable

¹⁴ **Improbable** (adjective): unlikely to happen or come true

¹⁵ well-known author of young adult fiction; famous for *The Chocolate War*, *I am the Cheese*, and *After the First Death*

¹⁶ **Appalling** (adjective): terrifying or horrible

Name _____ Class _____

Independent Practice

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



Note: To ensure test security, answers to the following assessment items are viewable only on commonlit.org for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the Answer Key tab on the text page to gain access.

1. What is the *best* meaning of the word “assailants” as it is used in paragraph 6? **[RL.4]**
 - A. companions
 - B. neighbors
 - C. attackers
 - D. rivals

2. How does the narrator feel about himself when he says, “I hated these brothers from the bottom of my heart, but even more than them, I hated myself for my cowardice”? (Paragraph 10) **[RL.6]**
 - A. He feels confident.
 - B. He feels proud.
 - C. He feels lonely.
 - D. He feels weak.

3. Which piece of evidence *best* supports the idea that demonstrating courage can be difficult? **[RL.1]**
 - A. “But sometimes I like to think that if that beat-down didn’t happen, I might have had an easier time of it.” (Paragraph 12)
 - B. “Whatever it was, one day I found myself fleeing from a sighting of the brothers, and suddenly I was brought up short by an appalling vision: me running away forever.” (Paragraph 13)
 - C. “I couldn’t make myself walk toward them, I could barely even look at them, so I settled for standing still.” (Paragraph 14)
 - D. “And then, without a word, they walked past.” (Paragraph 15)



Independent Practice

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

Note: To ensure test security, a sample answer to the following short response item is viewable only on commonlit.org for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the Answer Key tab on the text page to access it.

PROMPT: Authors often convey theme through character change, the conflict and resolution, or literary devices such as symbolism, metaphors, and repetition. What is a theme in “The Terror,” and how did Junot Díaz convey the theme? **[RL.2]**

Make sure your theme:

- is a complete thought that does not specifically refer to details in the text.
- includes 1-2 big ideas about the text.
- explains the specific way that the author conveys the theme.

CHECKLIST FOR THEME:

☐ **Bold** your argument statement

Does it include a theme that is a complete thought?

- A. Yes
- B. No; I will go back and revise for that.

Does your theme statement have 1-2 big ideas about the text?

- A. Yes
- B. No; I will go back and revise for that.

Did you remove any specific references to this text from your theme statement?

- A. Yes
- B. No; I will go back and revise for that.

Did you state a specific way that the author conveys that theme?

- A. Yes
- B. No; I will go back and revise for 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

- *I agree with _____, and I want to add...*
- *I found another example of what _____ brought up on page _____ ...*
- *I see it slightly differently because on page _____ ...*
- *I can see your point, but...*

1. What does the ending of the story suggest about how the narrator will deal with fear and despair in the future? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

2. Which is worse: the fear of failure or actually experiencing failure? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

3. The narrator did not tell anyone about his challenging experiences at school or the attack. How do you think this affected him? What do you think changes when people talk to others about **dreary** or difficult events in their lives? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

LESSON OVERVIEW: DETERMINING A THEME

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

When and why should I teach this lesson?

This optional theme lesson is designed to be used after any short story or novel. Determining theme is an important reading skill that is challenging for many students. Providing explicit instruction on this essential skill gives students a transferable strategy for determining theme that they can use throughout their academic careers.



This lesson's skill focus

Students will determine the **theme** of a story by examining key moments that often reveal theme. [RL.8.2]

Materials needed

You will need	Your students will need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This lesson handout "Classroom Anchor Chart: Theme" (Optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Determining a Theme" (Student Copy) "Student Reference Sheet: Theme"

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
<p>Note: Students must have access to the student reference sheet on theme to complete this lesson. This teacher copy has answers for "The Terror," but this lesson can be used with any of the texts in this unit.</p>		
Part 1	 Reviewing the Theme Reference Sheet: Students answer four questions about theme by examining the student reference sheet on theme.	10 min
Part 2	 Determining a Theme: Students follow guided steps to determine the theme for a story they have recently finished reading.	10 min
~ 20 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Determining a Theme

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

Today's Goal

You will be able to identify the theme of a story that you recently read.

PART 1: Reviewing The Theme Reference Sheet

Directions: Use your reference sheet on theme to answer the four questions below. *10 minutes*



1. What is the definition of **theme**?

- *the universal message in a story, poem, or text*

2. Review the theme statement about *The Wizard of Oz* on the student reference sheet. What are two things to remember when writing theme statements?

- *Theme statements are a complete thought (not just one word).*
- *Themes are universal (they don't use character names or plot details).*

3. Review the section titled "How Do You Determine Theme?" In one sentence, describe the process for determining theme.

First, review the key details of the story, then identify big ideas and use them to write a theme statement.

4. According to the reference sheet, what are three ways authors often reveal the theme?

1. *through characterization (especially character change)*
2. *through conflict and resolution*
3. *through literary devices like symbols, metaphors, and repetition*



PART 2: Determining a Theme

Directions: Write the title of the text you are analyzing in the space provided. Then complete the guided steps to help you determine a theme for that text. *10 minutes*

Note to Teacher: The answers below are for Junot Díaz's "The Terror," however this template can be used for any story.

Text Title *"The Terror"*

Step 1: Review Key Details From the Story

*To determine a theme, start by considering the ways authors often reveal theme, such as through **characterization**, the **resolution**, and **literary devices**.*

1. Did any **characters change** in the story? How?

The narrator changed because at first he was completely terrified by the group of bullies and avoided them at all costs, but he becomes courageous enough to look them in the eye and walk right past them.

2. How was the **conflict** in the story resolved?

The narrator overcomes his fears by making a choice to look his bullies in the eye and walk past them.

3. Did you notice any important **literary devices**, such as symbols, metaphor, or repetition?

No

Step 2: Identify the Big Ideas

Identify 2-3 important big ideas in the story.

Courage	Friendship	Family	Prejudice	Persistence
Love	Differences	Self-Acceptance	Struggle	Challenge
Forgiveness	Loss	Failure	Community	Greed
Nature	Commitment	Hope	Outsiders	[Your own big idea]
				<i>Fear</i>

Step 3: Write the Theme Statement

What is the author's message about the big ideas? Try combining more than one big idea in your theme statement.

People must face their fears in order to overcome them.

Theme Checklist:

- ☐ My theme is a complete thought
- ☐ My theme does not use characters' names or describe the plot

What is a THEME?

- A theme is the **universal message** in a story, poem or text.
- Example:

Themes must be a complete thought or message. They are never just one word.

One theme in *The Wizard of Oz* is that **home is more important to people than they often realize.**

Themes use words like “people” to make the message universal. They never use character names or describe plot.

How to Determine a Theme

Step 1	Review Key Details from the text <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Consider the ways authors often reveal theme:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ <i>Through characterization (especially character change)</i>○ <i>through the conflict and resolution</i>○ <i>through literary devices (such as symbols, metaphors and repetition)</i>
Step 2	Identify Big Ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Big ideas are the larger topics that a story is about</i>● <i>Identify at least two big ideas found in the text</i>
Step 3	Write the Theme Statement <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Ask yourself, “What is the author’s message about the big ideas?”</i>● <i>Combining more than one big idea often makes a stronger, more complex theme statement</i>

BIG IDEAS IN LITERATURE

Courage	Friendship	Family
Prejudice	Persistence	Love
Differences	Self-Acceptance	Struggle
Challenges	Forgiveness	Loss
Failure	Community	Greed
Nature	Commitment	Hope
Outsiders	Freedom	Beauty

THEME

What is a Theme?

- A **theme** is the universal message in a story, poem or text.
- Example:

Themes must be a complete thought or message. They are never just one word.

One theme in *The Wizard of Oz* is that **home is more important to people than they often realize.**

Themes use words like “people” to make the message universal. They never use character names or describe plot.

How Do You Determine Theme?

Step 1: Review key details from the text

- Consider the ways authors often reveal theme:
 - through **characterization** (especially character change)
 - through the **conflict** and **resolution**
 - through **literary devices** (such as symbols, metaphors, and repetition)

Step 2: Identify big ideas

- Big ideas are the larger topics that a story is about
- Identify at least two big ideas found in the text

Step 3: Write the theme statement

- Ask yourself, “What is the author’s message about the big ideas?”
- Combining more than one big idea often makes a stronger, more complex theme statement

Common Big Ideas in Literature

Courage	Friendship	Family	Prejudice	Persistence
Love	Differences	Self-Acceptance	Struggle	Challenge
Forgiveness	Loss	Failure	Community	Greed
Nature	Commitment	Hope	Outsiders	[Your own big idea]

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	End of Unit Writing Review	Unit 2 Essay: Planning	In this unit, you've read about people and characters who have shown courage. Select one quote about courage. Then, analyze how at least two of the people and characters you've read about demonstrate the ideas in your quote. You can also use examples from your own life. [W.2]
↑ You are here! ↑				






This lesson's skill focus

In this lesson, students will learn to provide context when introducing evidence . [W.8.2]
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Materials needed

You will need	Your students will need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This lesson handout "The Terror" (Teacher Copy) "Classroom Anchor Chart: Introducing Evidence" (Optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Introducing Evidence With Context" (Student Copy) "The Terror" (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	 When to Add Different Types of Context: Students work in pairs or independently to learn when to add different types of context. They will answer three questions by reviewing a provided example and notes.	5 min
Part 3	 Practice Adding Context: Students reread a paragraph of "The Terror" and revise two examples to include better 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
Part 5	 Check Your Work: Students annotate their response to evaluate whether they successfully added context before their evidence.	5 min
~40 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Introducing Evidence With Context

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

Today's Goal

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

Today's Prompt

Some people define courage as overcoming all sense of fear and doubt. Explain how Junot Diaz's memoir, "The Terror," supports or challenges this definition.

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, "I forced myself to turn toward them, and it felt as if the whole world was turning with me."	At the end of the story, when the narrator sees the brothers, he explains, "I forced myself to turn toward them, and it felt as if the whole world was turning with me."

- 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?

- Student 1
- Student 2**

- Based on these examples, why does using context before a quotation improve our writing?

Using context makes the quotation more clear.



PART 2: When to Add Different Types of Context

Directions: Use the example and notes at the bottom of the page to answer the three questions.

5 minutes

- Based on the example, what are three types of context you can include to make your evidence more clear.

1. *When in the story the quotation happens*
2. *What is happening at the moment*
3. *Who is speaking*

- Based on the notes, what type of context do you **always** include when introducing evidence?

You always include who says, thinks, or narrates a piece of evidence.

- What are two other types of context you **sometimes** include to make your evidence more clear?

1. *When in the story the quotation happens*
2. *What is happening at the moment*

EXAMPLE WITH THREE TYPES OF CONTEXT

This **context** tells us **when in the story** the quotation happens.

This **context** tells us **what is happening** in this moment.

This **context** tells us **who is speaking**.

At the end of the story, when the narrator sees the brothers, he explains, "I forced myself to turn toward them, and it felt as if the whole world was turning with me."

NOTES ON WHEN TO ADD CONTEXT

- Always include who says, thinks, or narrates the evidence
- Sometimes, add additional context to make your evidence more clear, such as when it happens or what is happening



PART 3: Practice Adding Context

Directions: Reread paragraph six from “The Terror.” Then, revise the examples. *10 minutes*

“The Terror” - Paragraph 6

As these things go, it wasn’t too bad. I didn’t actually lose any teeth or break any limbs or misplace an eye. Afterward, I even managed to limp home. My mother was at the hospital, so no one noticed that I had gotten stomped. Even took my blackened eye to classes the next day, but because my assailants attended another school, I didn’t have to tell the truth. I said, “It happened in karate.”

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1. Revise the example below by adding context before the evidence.

Example: In the text, it states, “no one noticed that I had gotten stomped” (6).

Answers will vary:

- *After the fight, the narrator explains, “no one noticed that I had gotten stomped”(6).*
- *Because the narrator’s mother was at the hospital when he got home, he explains, “no one noticed that I had gotten stomped”(6).*

2. Revise the example below by adding context before the evidence.

Example: In the text, it states, “It happened in karate” (6).

Answers will vary:

- *After the narrator is attacked, he lies about what happens at school by saying, “It happened in karate” (6).*
- *When the narrator goes to school, he lies about being jumped, stating, “It happened in karate” (6).*

PART 4: Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt. 15 minutes



PROMPT: Some people define courage as overcoming all sense of fear and doubt. Explain how Junot Díaz's memoir, "The Terror," supports or challenges this definition. **[RL.1]**

Student responses will vary; a sample response is below:

SAMPLE STUDENT OUTLINE:

The narrator in Junot Díaz's "The Terror" challenges the idea that courage means overcoming all fear and doubt.

- *"My first real beat-down, and I was furious and ashamed, above all else I was afraid. Afraid of my assailants. Afraid they would corner me again. Afraid of a second beat-down. Afraid and afraid and afraid." (7)*
- *"I couldn't make myself walk toward them, I could barely even look at them, so I settled for standing still." (14)*

SAMPLE SHORT RESPONSE:

The narrator in Junot Díaz's "The Terror" challenges the idea that courage means overcoming all fear and doubt. The narrator of the story is beaten up by a group of boys on his way home from school. Although he was physically okay beyond some bumps and bruises, he writes, "above all else I was afraid. Afraid of my assailants. Afraid they would corner me again. Afraid of a second beat-down. Afraid and afraid and afraid" (7). This fear overtook the narrator's life until three years later, the narrator finally builds up the courage to stand up to the boys. One day, when he sees them on the street, instead of running, he faces them. Still, he notes, "I couldn't make myself walk toward them, I could barely even look at them, so I settled for standing still" (14). As this quote explains, the narrator was still filled with fear, but it was also an act of courage to confront them. Therefore, this story challenges the idea that being courageous means overcoming any sense of fear or doubt.



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.

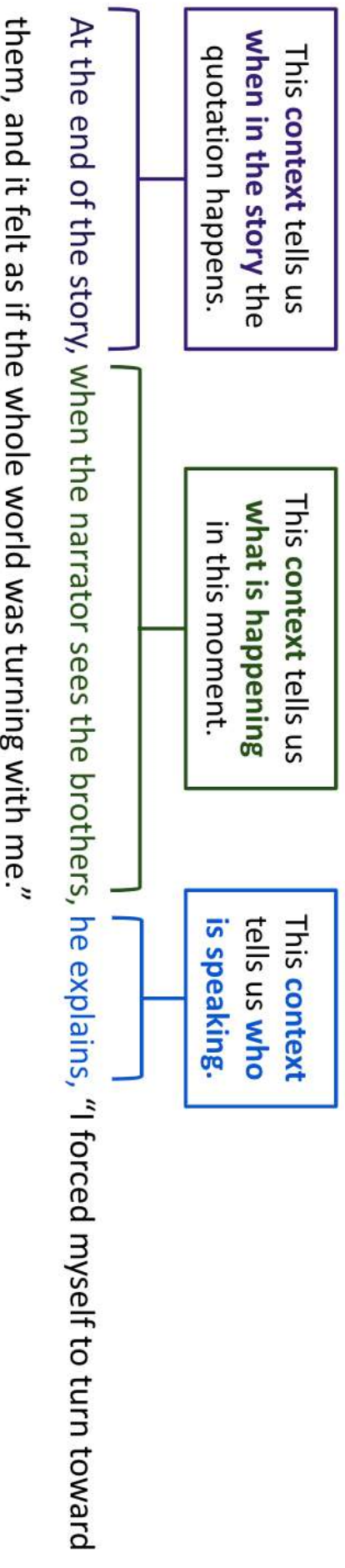
Introducing Evidence With Context

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
- Sometimes add additional context to make your evidence more clear, such as when it happens or what is happening in the moment

Example



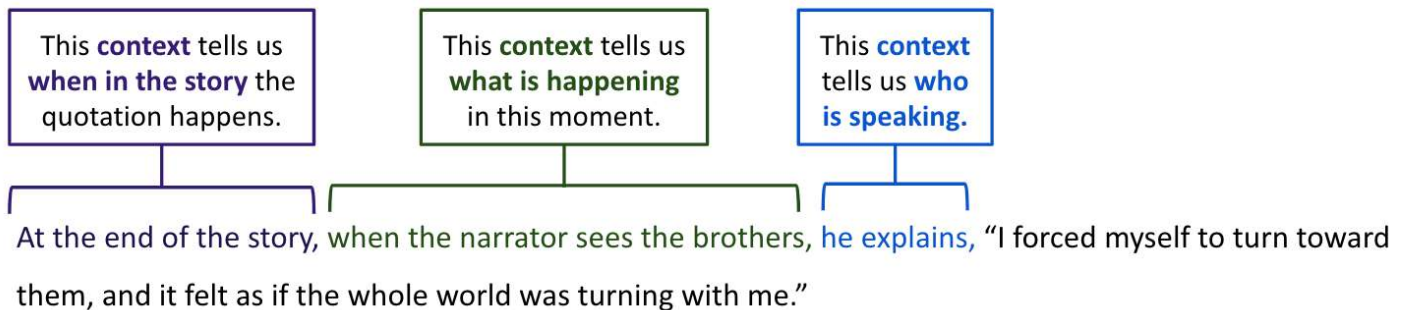
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When introducing evidence:

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Example



Sentence Starters for **When**

- *At the beginning of the story...*
- *At the end of the story...*

Sentence Starters for **What**

- *When...*
- *Before...*
- *After...*

Sentence Starters for **Who**

- *The narrator states,*
- *The author writes,*
- *Greg thinks,*
- *The speaker explains,*

Name _____ Class _____

The Friday Everything Changed

Anne Hart

About this text

Anne Hart, a Canadian author, is best known for her biographies of Agatha Christie characters, *The Life and Times of Miss Jane Marple* and *The Life and Times of Hercule Piorot*. In this text, Hart explores what can happen when people question something that is unfair.

Purpose for Reading

To continue to analyze how authors develop theme and explore ideas about how courage can create change.

Vocabulary

Let's pronounce these words together as a class:

Gloat [gloht]
Intoxicate [in-tok-si-keyt]
Intercept [in-teer-sept]
Preoccupy [pree-ok-yuh-pahy]

WHOLE CLASS READING

DURING READING QUESTIONS

[1] The last hour of school on Friday afternoons was for Junior Red Cross.¹ The little kids would get out their Junior Red Cross pins and put them on and us big kids would start elbowing down the aisles to the book cupboard at the back to see who would get the interesting magazines. There was a big pile of them and they were of two kinds: the National Geographic² and the Junior Red Cross News. Because the boys were stronger and sat near the back they usually got the National Geographics first, which meant they could spend the rest of Red Cross looking at African ladies wearing nothing on top, while us girls had to be satisfied with the Junior Red Cross News, which showed little African kids wearing lots of clothes and learning how to read. Apart from the magazines for the big kids and maybe the teacher reading a story to the little kids, about the only other thing that happened regularly during Red Cross was picking the two boys who would carry water the next week.

[2] In our school the water bucket always stood on a shelf at the front of the room just behind the teacher's desk. First you'd make a paper cup out of a piece of scribbler paper, then you'd grab the teacher's attention from wherever it happened to be and then up you'd go to the front of the room for a drink from the water bucket.

[3] It was kind of interesting to stand at the front of the room behind the teacher's desk and drink water. The school looked different from up there and sometimes you could get just a glimpse of an idea of what the teacher thought she was all about. I mean, from the front, looking down on those rows of kids with their heads bent over their desks and the sun coming in the windows and the blackboards and all that stuff on the walls, you might almost think, at first glance, that you were looking at one of those real city schools — like in the health books

¹ Junior Red Cross is a club-like organization for young people that provides educational resources about the world and offers opportunities for volunteers to support those in need.

² a magazine known for its pictures of different cultures that brought awareness and knowledge of the world

— where the kids were all so neat and all the same size. But after the first strange moment it just became our school again, because you had to start adding in things like the coal stove³ and the scarred old double desks and the kids themselves. I mean, we just didn't look like the kids in those pictures. Maybe it was because we were so many different sizes — from the kids snuffling in the front rows over their Nan and Dan⁴ readers to the big boys hunched over their desks at the back — maybe it was because we wore so many heavy clothes all the time, or maybe it was because of something that wasn't even there at all but seemed to be on the faces of the kids in those city pictures: a look as if they liked being where they were.

[4] But all that's a long way from Junior Red Cross and who would carry the water.

[5] The water for our school came from a pump at the railway station, which was about a quarter of a mile away. One day long ago a health inspector had come around and had announced that water must be made available to the school. For a while there had been some talk of digging a well but in the end we got a big, shiny, galvanized water bucket and permission to use the railway station pump. And from that day on — for all the boys — the most important thing that happened at school, even more important than softball, was who would get to carry the water.

[6] If you were a boy it was something you started dreaming about in Grade 1, even though there was not the remotest⁵ chance it could ever happen to you before at least Grade 5, and only then if the teacher thought you were big and strong enough. You dreamed about it partly because carrying the water meant you were one of the big guys, and carrying the water meant you could get away from school for maybe half an hour at a time. But mostly you dreamed about it because carrying the water was something real, and had absolutely nothing whatever to do with Nan and Dan and all that stuff. So every Friday afternoon toward the end of Red Cross, when it got to be time for the teacher to pick the two boys who would go for water the next week, all the National Geographics came to rest like huge butterflies folding up their yellow wings and a big hush fell all over the back rows. And that's the way it had always been until one extraordinary afternoon when, right out of the blue, just after the teacher had picked Ernie Chapman and Garnet Dixon to carry the water, my seatmate, Alma Niles, put up her hand and said: "Why can't girls go for the water, too?"

Paragraph 3

Turn & Talk: While standing behind the teacher's desk, how does the narrator compare her school to "those real city schools"?

Paragraph 6

Find Evidence: Underline three details that reveal the boys' feelings about carrying the water.

PARTNER READING

[7] If one of those German planes, like in the war movies, had suddenly appeared over the school and dropped a bomb, we all couldn't have been more surprised. A silence fell over the room and in that silence everyone looked at the teacher.

[8] Now our teacher that year was named Miss Ralston and even though she came from River Hibbert we all liked her quite a lot. She was strict but she was never really mean like some of the teachers we'd had. Because she was young (she'd just finished Grade 11 the year before herself—River Hibbert had fancy things like Grade 11) she'd had quite a rough time the first week of school with the bigger boys. But she was pretty big herself and after she'd strapped⁶ most of them up at the front of the room before our very eyes (and even the little kids could see that it really hurt) things had settled down. The boys kind of admired

DURING READING QUESTIONS

³ a metal stove that burns coal to produce heat for cooking and warmth

⁴ reading books where Nan and Dan are characters in the book

⁵ **Remote** (*adjective*): a very small chance of something happening.

⁶ to spank or hit with a belt

Miss Ralston for strapping so hard, and us girls admired her because she was so pretty and wore nylon stockings and loafers all the time. But the really unusual thing about Miss Ralston was the way she sometimes stopped in the middle of a lesson and looked at us as if we were real people, instead of just a lot of kids who had to be pushed through to their next grades. And that was why, on that Friday afternoon when Alma Niles put up her hand and said: "Why can't girls go for the water, too?" we all turned and looked at Miss Ralston first instead of just bursting out laughing at Alma right away.

[9] And Miss Ralston, instead of saying, "Whoever heard of girls going for the water?" or, "Are you trying to be saucy,⁷ Alma?" like any other teacher would, said nothing at all for a moment but just looked very hard at Alma, who had gone quite white with the shock of dropping such a bombshell.⁸

[10] After a long moment, when she finally spoke, Miss Ralston, instead of saying, "Why that's out of the question, Alma," threw a bombshell of her own: "I'll think about that," she said — as if, you know, she would — "and I'll let you know next Friday."

[11] The trouble started right away as soon as we got into the school yard, because all the boys knew, from the moment Miss Ralston had spoken, that something of theirs was being threatened and that, as long as there was the remotest chance that any girl might get to carry the water, they had to do everything in their power to stop it. Like driving a tractor or playing hockey for the Toronto Maple Leafs, carrying water was real, and because it was real it belonged to them.

[12] So they went right for Alma as soon as she came out of school and that was when another funny thing happened. Instead of just standing back and watching Alma get beaten up, as we usually did when the boys were after someone, the girls rushed right in to try and help her. In the first place we all liked Alma, and in the second place we all had seen, as clearly as the boys, what our carrying the water might mean; that, incredibly, we, too, might get to skip school for half an hour at a time, that we, too, might get to sneak into Rowsell's store on the way back and, most dizzying⁹ thought of all, that we too might get to do something real.

[13] And, because we were so **intoxicated** by the whole idea, and took the boys so much by surprise by standing up to them, we somehow managed to get Alma and ourselves out of the schoolyard with only a few bruises and torn stockings, leaving the boys in possession of the schoolyard where, as we could glimpse over our shoulders as we ran down the hill, they had begun to gather together in a single ominous¹⁰ knot.

[14] And for the rest of that weekend, though of course we never talked about it in front of our parents, all we could think of, both boys and girls, was what was going to happen at school that coming week.

Paragraphs 8-10

Turn & Talk: How does Miss Ralston act in ways that are different from what the children are used to?

Paragraph 11

Find Evidence: Underline two reasons why the boys react to Alma the way they do.

Paragraphs 12-14

A. Turn & Talk: Describe how the rest of the girls react to the consequences Alma faces.

B. Find Evidence: Underline two details that reveal the motivations for the girls' reactions.

⁷ **Saucy** (*adjective*): describing a person who likes to cause trouble or whose intent is to cause a problem

⁸ an expression that means to say something so shocking it has the effect as if someone dropped a literal bomb

⁹ **Dizzying** (*adjective*): having the feeling of making a person feel confused, or amazed

¹⁰ **Ominous** (*adjective*): giving the impression that something bad or unpleasant is going to happen; sinister or dark

INDEPENDENT READING

DURING READING QUESTIONS

[15] The first thing, clearly evident¹¹ by recess on Monday morning, was that the boys had decided not to let us girls field at softball any more.

[16] Softball at our school used to go like this: every Monday morning at recess two of the bigger boys — that year it was usually Ernie Chapman and Junior LeBlanc — used to pick their teams for the week. Whoever came out on top in laddering hands¹² up the softball bat got to pick first and the loser second and so it went — back and forth — until all the boys who were considered good enough to be on a team had been picked. Then Ernie and Junior laddered the bat again to see which side would get up first and the losing side took to the field to be joined by the little boys who hadn't been picked and us older girls who were allowed to act as sort of permanent supplementary¹³ fielders. And for the rest of the week the teams remained locked, at every recess and lunchtime, in one long softball game which had, as we discovered to our surprise several years later when the television came through, some strange rules.

[17] The way we played, for example, every single boy had to get out before the other team could come in. And any boy hitting a home run not only had the right to bat straight away again but also to bring back into the game any boy who had got out. Which led to kids who couldn't remember their six times table properly being able to announce — say, by noon on Thursday — "The score's now 46 to 39 because, in the last inning starting Tuesday lunchtime, Junior's team was all out except for Irving Snell, who hit three homers¹⁴ in a row off of Lorne Ripley, and brought in Ira and Jim and Elton who brought in the rest except for Austin who got out for the second time on Wednesday with a foul ball one of the girls caught behind third base..."

[18] Some days it got so exciting that at noon we couldn't wait to eat our lunches but would rush straight into the schoolyard, gobbling our sandwiches as we ran, toward that aching moment when the ball, snaking across the yellow grass or arching toward us from the marsh sky, might meet our open, eager hands.

[19] So it was a hard blow, Monday morning recess, when Ernie Chapman whirled the bat around his head, slammed it down as hard as he could on home base and announced, "The first girl that goes out to field, we break her neck." We clustered forlornly¹⁵ around the girls' entry door knowing there was nothing we could really do.

[20] "Oh Alma," mourned¹⁶ Minnie Halliday, biting the ends of her long, brown braids, "why couldn't you just have kept your mouth shut?" It was a bad moment. If we'd tried to go out to field they'd have picked us off one by one. We couldn't even play softball on our own. None of us owned a bat and ball.

[21] If it hadn't been for Doris Pomeroy, we might have broken rank¹⁷ right there and then. Doris, who was in Grade 9 and had a home permanent and sometimes wore nail polish and had even, it was rumored, gone swimming in the quarry all alone with Elton Lawrence, flicked a rock against the schoolhouse wall in the

Paragraphs 15-20

Write: How do the girls react to the boys' treatment of them?

¹¹ **Evident** (*adjective*): obvious; proved by actions or facts

¹² Laddering Hands is a game kids play by placing hands one on top of the other, until the last hand reaches the top. The top hand wins.

¹³ **Supplementary** (*adjective*): extra or replacing the other

¹⁴ **Homers** (*noun*): homeruns

¹⁵ **Forlorn** (*adjective*): dreary or unhappy

¹⁶ **Mourn** (*verb*): to be sad over a loss

¹⁷ an expression that means to give up the fight and leave the group or cause

silence following Minnie's remark and steadied¹⁸ us all by saying: "Don't be foolish, Minnie. All we have to do is wait. They need us to field and, besides, they kind of like to have us out there looking at them when they get up to bat."

[22] But it was a long, hard week. Besides not letting us field, the boys picked on us whenever they got the chance. I guess they figured that if they made things bad enough for us, sooner or later we'd go to Miss Ralston and ask her to forget the whole thing. But all their picking on and bullying did was to keep us together. Whenever one of us was tripped going down the aisle or got an ink ball in her hair or got trapped in the outhouse by a bunch of boys it was as if it was happening to all of us. And looking back on that week — when there were so many bad feelings and so many new feelings in the air — it was kind of nice, too, because for the first time us girls found ourselves telling each other our troubles and even our thoughts without worrying about being laughed at. And that was something new at our school.

[23] As for Alma, who kept getting notes thrown on her desk promising her everything from a bloody nose to having her pants pulled down, we stuck to her like burrs.¹⁹ But maybe Alma's hardest moment had nothing to do with bullying at all. It was when her cousin Arnold came over to see her Wednesday after school and asked her to drop the whole idea of girls going for the water.

[24] "If they find out about it, Alma," said Arnold, "they'll probably take away the water bucket."

[25] "Who's they?" asked Alma. She and Arnold had played a lot together when they were little kids and she was used to listening to his opinions on most things.

[26] "Well, the health inspector," said Arnold, "and guys like that."

[27] "They'll never take away that water bucket," said Alma, though she wasn't all that sure. "They don't care who carries the water as long as it gets carried."

[28] "Alma," said Arnold earnestly,²⁰ "the other guys would kill me if they ever found out I told you this but sometimes carrying the water isn't that much fun. On cold days it's real hard work. You're better off in the warm school."

[29] Alma knew what it cost Arnold to tell her this but she stood firm. "I'm sorry, Arnold," she said, "but I'm used to cold weather. In winter I walk to school the same as you." So Arnold went away.

Paragraphs 21-22

Find Evidence: Underline two details that reveal how the boys' punishment affects the girls' relationships with one another.

Paragraphs 23-29

Write: What gives Alma the courage to stand up to her cousin?

WHOLE CLASS READING

[30] If Miss Ralston, as the week wore on, noticed anything unusual going on in her school, she gave little sign of it. She passed out the usual punishments for ink balls, she **intercepted** threatening notes and tore them up unread, she looked at Alma's white face, and all she asked about were the principal rivers of Europe. Nor were we surprised. Nothing in our experience had led us to believe the grown-ups had the slightest inkling²¹ — or interest — in what really went on with kids.

[31] Only Doris Pomeroy thought differently. "Miss Ralston looks real mad," said Doris as we trailed in thankfully from Friday morning recess.

DURING READING QUESTIONS

¹⁸ **Steady** (*verb*): to make others feel sure and confident in what they are doing

¹⁹ a type of seed that easily attaches itself to clothes but is difficult to get off

²⁰ **Earnest** (*adjective*): sincere and serious

²¹ **Inkling** (*noun*): a little bit of knowledge or suspicion about something

[32] “Mad?” a couple of us asked.

[33] “Yeah. Like when she comes out to ring the bell and we're all hanging around the entry door like a lot of scared chickens. She rings that old handbell as if she wished all those yelling boy's heads were under it. Of course they do things differently in River Hibbert. I know for a fact that girls there get to play on softball teams just like the boys.”

[34] “On teams? Just like the boys?” But it was all too much for us to take in at that moment, so **preoccupied** were we with that afternoon's decision on the water. All that long, hard week it was as if Friday afternoon and Junior Red Cross would never come again. Now that it was almost upon us most of us forgot, in our excitement, at least for the time being, Doris' heady remark about softball.

[35] So at lunchtime, just as the boys were winding up²² their week's game (“And real great, eh? Without the girls?” Ernie Chapman was **gloating** loudly from the pitcher's mound), when Miss Ralston, without her bell, leaped through our clustered huddles at the entry door and headed straight toward the softball field, she took us all completely by surprise. Crunch, crunch, crunch went Miss Ralston's bright red loafers against the cinders and the next thing we knew she'd grabbed the bat from Irving Snell and, squinting against the sun, was twirling and lining it before our astonished eyes.

[36] “Come on! Come on!” cried Miss Ralston impatiently to Ernie who stood transfixed²³ before her on the pitcher's mound. “Come on! Come on!” she cried again and she banged the bat against the ground.

[37] “Come on! Come on!” cried Doris Pomeroy and we rushed after her across the cinders. The first ball Ernie threw was pretty wobbly and Miss Ralston hit it at an angle so that it fell sideways, a foul ball, toward George Fowler's outstretched hands. “Ah-h-h-h-h,” we moaned from the sidelines and some of us closed our eyes so we wouldn't have to look. But George jumped too eagerly for such an easy ball and it fell right through his fingers and rolled harmlessly along the ground.

[38] Ernie took a lot more time over his second pitch. He was getting over the first shock of finding Miss Ralston opposite him at bat and by this time he was receiving shouts of encouragement from all over the field.

[39] “Get her! Get her!” the boys yelled recklessly at Ernie and they all fanned out behind the bases. Ernie took aim slowly. None of us had ever seen the pirouettings²⁴ of professional pitchers but there was a certain awesome ceremony, nevertheless, as Ernie spat savagely²⁵ on the ball, glared hard at Miss Ralston, slowly swung back his big right arm and, poised for one long moment, his whole body outstretched, threw the ball as hard as he could toward home base where Miss Ralston waited, her body rocking with the bat.

[40] For a fleeting moment we had a glimpse²⁶ of what life might be like in River Hibbert and then Miss Ralston hit the ball.

[41] “Ah-h-h-h-h-h,” we cried as it rose high in the air, borne by the marsh wind, and flew like a bird against the sun, across the road and out of sight, into the ox pasture on the other side.

Paragraphs 30-39

Write: What has *most likely* motivated Miss Ralston to act?

²² an expression that means coming to an end or close

²³ **Transfix** (*verb*): to be frozen, motionless from wonder of something amazing you are seeing

²⁴ spinning around, twirling, or pivoting like a ballet dancer

²⁵ **Savagely** (*adverb*): done in a fierce or violent manner

²⁶ **Glimpse** (*noun*): momentary, temporary view of something

[42] “Ah-h-h-h-h-h...”

[43] We all stared at Miss Ralston. “School’s in,” she announced over her shoulder, walking away. Hitting the ball into the ox pasture happened maybe once a year.

[44] That afternoon, toward the end of Red Cross, there was a big hush all over the room.

[45] “Next week,” said Miss Ralston, closing the school register, tidying her books, “next week Alma Niles and Joyce Shipley will go for the water.”

[46] She swept her hand over the top of her desk and tiny dust motes danced in the slanting sun.

Paragraphs 40-46

A. Poll the Class: Were you surprised by Miss Ralston’s actions? Be prepared to defend your response.

- A. Yes
- B. No

B. Write: What point is Miss Ralston making by participating in the game?

“The Friday Everything Changed” by Anne Hart. Copyright © Anne Hart. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

Name _____ Class _____

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the multiple choice questions for “The Friday Everything Changed.” 5 minutes



1. Which piece of evidence *best* reveals why the girls want to be able to carry the water bucket? **[RL.1]**
 - A. “from the moment Miss Ralston had spoken, [the boys knew] that something of theirs was being threatened and that, as long as there was the remotest chance that any girl might get to carry the water, they had to do everything in their power to stop it.” (Paragraph 11)
 - B. “in the second place we all had seen, as clearly as the boys, what our carrying the water might mean; that, incredibly, we, too,... might get to do something real.” (Paragraph 12)
 - C. “If we'd tried to go out to field they'd have picked us off one by one. We couldn't even play softball on our own. None of us owned a bat and ball.” (Paragraph 20)
 - D. “And looking back on that week — when there were so many bad feelings and so many new feelings in the air — it was kind of nice, too, because for the first time us girls found ourselves telling each other our troubles and even our thoughts without worrying about being laughed at.” (Paragraph 22)
2. How does the dialogue in paragraph 21 affect the girls? **[RL.3]**
 - A. It establishes the girls' common goal.
 - B. It establishes Doris as the leader of the group of girls.
 - C. It establishes Minnie as the outsider who is angered by Alma's question.
 - D. It establishes the moment the girls decide to stop caring about the boys and softball.
3. What can the reader infer about Alma from her conversation with Arnold? (Paragraphs 23-29) **[RL.3]**
 - A. She is terrified of all the ways the boys are punishing her.
 - B. She is determined to continue fighting for the right to carry the water bucket.
 - C. She is comfortable talking with Arnold because he is her cousin and she values his opinions.
 - D. She is irritated with Arnold because he and the boys have taken every opportunity to hurt the girls.
4. Which statement *best* expresses a main theme in the story? **[RL.2]**
 - A. Individuals must have the courage to disagree with their family and peers, even if it causes conflict.
 - B. Individuals must have the courage to speak out against things that are wrong, even when no one else agrees with them.
 - C. Even though courageous actions can come with consequences, it is important for people to stand together for a common cause.
 - D. Even though courageous actions can come with consequences, it is important to trust that leaders also have the courage to do what is right.

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt for “The Friday Everything Changed.” 15 minutes



PROMPT: You have just read “The Friday Everything Changed” by Anne Hart. What theme does the resolution reveal? **[RL.2 or RL.3]**

In your response be sure to:

- clarify what is happening by introducing your evidence with context.
- state who is speaking, narrating, or being quoted for each piece of evidence.

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?

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

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

- A. YES!
- B. 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

- *I agree with _____, and I want to add...*
- *I found another example of what _____ brought up on page _____ ...*
- *I see it slightly differently because on page _____ ...*
- *I can see your point, but...*

1. Based on the actions in this story, what advice might the girls give to someone who feels despair? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

2. In paragraph 3, the narrator paints a **dreary** picture of her school and classmates when she compares them to “those real city schools.” How do you think the story’s resolution will affect the school atmosphere? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

3. **CROSS-TEXTUAL:** How do the narrator in “The Terror” and the girls in “The Friday Everything Changed” demonstrate courage in different ways? How are they similar? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

Name _____ Class _____

Vocabulary Quiz 1 for Unit 2: Courageous Choices

PART 1: Scenarios

Directions: Select the vocabulary word that best fits the scenario. Type or write the letter of your answer choice in the column that says “My Answer.”

EXAMPLE:

<p>1. <i>In the morning, when Ophelia noticed her little brother was upset, she read him his favorite story. At lunch, she shared her food with a classmate who forgot his lunch at home. After school, she volunteered at a local children’s hospital.</i></p> <p>a. <i>Angry</i> b. <i>Caring</i> c. <i>Artistic</i></p>	<p>My answer</p> <p>B</p>
---	----------------------------------

<p>1. Ever since Carlton’s accident and removal as captain of the basketball team, Nelson makes it a point to say that he’s the new captain whenever Carlton is around.</p> <p>A. Dreary B. Falter C. Gloat</p>	<p>My answer</p>
<p>2. His heart was racing and everything went blurry. Feeling shaky, Lou grabbed the edge of the table to balance himself. It helped a little bit, but Lou felt he was going down; his knees felt like they were about to give way.</p> <p>A. Intercept B. Falter C. Gloat</p>	<p>My answer</p>
<p>3. Ian looked distant, like he wasn’t even in the room. His mind was filled with so many thoughts. We all laughed at the joke the comedian made, while Ian sat there as if nothing had happened. Later, when I asked him about the joke, he said, “There was a joke?”</p> <p>A. Falter B. Preoccupied C. Gloated</p>	<p>My answer</p>

	My answer
<p>4. Knowing my friend was upset and racing to talk to her archenemy, Samantha, I took off down the hall. Instead of using the elevator, I hustled up the stairs just in time to cut her off before she yelled Samantha's name.</p> <p>A. Intoxicated B. Preoccupied C. Intercepted</p>	
<p>5. It was an honor when Miss Favors asked me to watch the class because I was responsible for making sure everyone behaved. I raced to the board, grabbed the marker, and stared at everyone. The power raced through my veins as I wrote down two names.</p> <p>A. Intoxication B. Preoccupation C. Interception</p>	
<p>6. Something had felt out of place since the beginning of the day. It was as if my world was cloudy and gray. It didn't help that I had on all black. It was like my outward mood matched my inside mood. I was like a fog descending on everything around me.</p> <p>A. Preoccupied B. Dreary C. Intercept</p>	

PART 2: Fill-in-the-Blank

Directions: Select the vocabulary word that best completes the sentence. Type or write the letter of your answer choice in the column where it says “My answer.”

EXAMPLE:

<p>11. I stopped inviting my neighbor over to my house because she never ____ her games and toys, but she always wanted me to let her play with my things.</p> <p>A. Shared B. Dreamed C. Laughed</p>	<p>My answer</p> <p>A</p>
---	----------------------------------

	My answer
<p>7. If you're always ____ with your thoughts, you're really never present to the world around you.</p> <p>A. Intercepted B. Preoccupied C. Gloated</p>	
<p>8. It's difficult to be around ____ people. They bring sad grayness everywhere they go.</p> <p>A. Dreary B. Gloating C. Preoccupied</p>	
<p>9. If you come into power suddenly, it can be just as ____ as drinking too much alcohol.</p> <p>A. Intoxicating B. Dreary C. Faltering</p>	
<p>10. People who lack confidence use ____ to make themselves feel better at the expense of making others feel worse.</p> <p>A. Faltering B. Intercepting C. Gloating</p>	
<p>11. Losing a job and a home in the same week could cause anyone to ____; however, Melanie saw it as an opportunity for a fresh start and new beginnings.</p> <p>A. Falter B. Preoccupy C. Gloat</p>	
<p>12. I sometimes wonder if the school ____ the angry posts my friend makes about the principal.</p> <p>A. Gloats B. Intercepts C. Intoxicates</p>	

Name _____ Class _____

Unit 2: Courageous Choices

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. _____

Part 2: Fill in the Blank

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

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 Friday Everything Changed” by Anne Hart. Rewrite the story from Miss Ralston’s point of view, beginning at paragraph 30. [W.3]

Narrative Writing Checklist:

- ☐ Establish a problem, situation, or setting.
- ☐ Use events and transitions to create a smooth progression of experiences and to signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- ☐ 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: “SONNET”

(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	Reading Lesson 6
“The Terror” by Junot Díaz (Memoir)	“The Friday Everything Changed” by Anne Hart (Short Story)	“Sonnet” by James Weldon Johnson (Poem)	“Transcript of Full Joseph McNeil Interview” by Newsday (Interview)	“The Treasure of Lemon Brown” by Walter Dean Myers (Short Story)	“I look at the world” by Langston Hughes (Poem)
		↑ You are here! ↑			

This lesson’s skill focus

<p>In this lesson, students will learn how imagery and juxtaposition develop the theme of a poem. [RL.8.2, RL.8.4]</p>

Materials needed

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






About this Poem

<p>In this poem, a speaker reacts to struggles and hardships by reminding themselves that challenges are not forever. They are certain better times are ahead, just like they are certain that a bright morning always comes after a dark night.</p>
--

Optional Annotation Task

<p>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 how the speaker uses juxtaposition, or contrasting ideas, and imagery to reveal a message about struggles and hope.</p>
--

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: Sonnet

James Weldon Johnson

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

About this text

James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) was an American writer and civil rights activist. Johnson served a vital role in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The following poem by Johnson is a sonnet, which consists of fourteen rhyming lines.

Purpose for Reading

To learn how a poet uses imagery and the juxtaposition of ideas to emphasize his message about bravery, courage, and hope.

Vocabulary

Let's pronounce these words together as a class:

Falter [**fawl**-ter]

Dreary [**dreer**-ee]

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

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

[1] My heart be brave, and do not **falter** so,

[2] Nor utter more that deep, despairing wail.

[3] Thy¹ way is very dark and **drear** I know,

[4] But do not let thy strength and courage fail;

[5] For certain as the raven-winged² night

[6] Is followed by the bright and blushing morn,³

Lines 1-4

Write: In your own words, paraphrase the speaker's advice.

- Stay brave; stop crying.
- Don't lose your strength and courage.
- Even though it is difficult, don't give up.

¹ an old form of the word "your"

² **Raven** (*noun*): a large bird known for its intense stare, intelligence, and dark, black feathers

³ an old form of the word "morning"

[7] Thy coming morrow will be clear and bright;

[8] 'Tis darkest when the night is furthest worn.

[9] Look up, and out, beyond, surrounding clouds,

[10] And do not in thine own gross darkness grope,⁴

[11] Rise up, and casting off thy hind'ring⁵ shrouds,⁶

[12] Cling thou⁷ to this, and ever inspiring hope:

[13] Tho'⁸ thick the battle and tho' fierce the fight,

[14] There is a power making for the right.

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

A speaker gives advice about not giving up.

Lines 5-8

A. Turn & Talk: What might the "raven-winged night" represent?

- *Hard or difficult times*

B. Think & Share: What might the "blushing morn" represent?

- *New opportunity or chance; a fresh start*
- *Better times*

Lines 9-12

A. Turn & Talk: What might "surrounding clouds" represent in the speaker's life?

- *The difficult situations or moments that overshadow the happy or bright moments.*

B. Write: In your own words, paraphrase lines 11-12.

- *Stand up and take off your burial clothes.*
- *Hold on to hope.*

Lines 13-14

Write: How do the ideas in lines 13-14 juxtapose, or contrast, each other?

- *Line 13 is about a challenge and line 14 is about having hope or strength to overcome the challenge.*

"Sonnet" by James Weldon Johnson (1893) is in the public domain.

⁴ **Grope** (*verb*): to feel about or search for blindly

⁵ a colloquial expression for the word "hindering," which means stopping or holding you back

⁶ **Shroud** (*noun*): a type of cloth used to wrap a dead body for burial

⁷ an old form of the word "you"

⁸ an old way of spelling the word "though"

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

1. **Lines 5-8:** What does juxtaposing the images of night and morning suggest about the future?

- *It suggests that things get better or brighter after a challenge.*

2. **Lines 11-12:** The speaker compares his heart to something wrapped in “hind’ring shrouds.” What does this suggest about the speaker?

- *It suggests that the speaker is held back from realizing that the future is hopeful because he is too focused on his current struggles and hard times.*

3. **Lines 13-14:** How does the juxtaposition of ideas in lines 13-14 develop the poet’s message?

- *The contrasting ideas of struggle and strength develop the message that even though things might be difficult now, something good will happen if they work toward what is good and right.*

Name _____

Class _____

Independent Practice



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

Note: To ensure test security, answers to the following assessment items are viewable only on commonlit.org for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the Answer Key tab on the text page to gain access.

1. The author’s use of the terms “drear,” “raven-winged night,” and “darkness” highlight the: **[RL.4]**
 - A. selfish desire for success that causes hard times.
 - B. hope that helps people overcome hard times.
 - C. courage people need to face hard times.
 - D. sadness and fear found in hard times.

2. In lines 5-7, what does the speaker believe is “certain”? **[RL.4]**
 - A. Struggles disappear when they are ignored.
 - B. Patience helps struggles become easier.
 - C. Hard work can overcome challenges.
 - D. Challenges do not last forever.

3. In line 10, what does the speaker mean when he tells himself to not “[grope] in thine own gross darkness”? **[RL.4]**
 - A. Don’t get lost in your own struggles.
 - B. Don’t waste time regretting your mistakes.
 - C. Don’t seek out new struggles and obstacles.
 - D. Don’t forget to help others overcome their struggles.

4. Which of the following sentences *best* describes a theme of the poem? **[RL.2]**
 - A. People can be courageous in difficult times by remembering to ask others for help.
 - B. People can be courageous in difficult times by remembering that better times are ahead.
 - C. People can be courageous in difficult times by remembering that challenges build patience.
 - D. People can be courageous in difficult times by remembering that challenges make other people scared.



Independent Practice

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

Note: To ensure test security, a sample answer to the following short response item is viewable only on commonlit.org for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the Answer Key tab on the text page to access it.

PROMPT: How does James Weldon Johnson use juxtaposition to develop the theme of “Sonnet”? [RL.2, RL.4]

In your response be sure to:

- clarify what is happening by introducing your evidence with context.
- state who is speaking, narrating, or being quoted for each piece of evidence.

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?

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

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

- A. YES!
B. 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

- *I agree with _____, and I want to add...*
- *I found another example of what _____ brought up on page _____ ...*
- *I see it slightly differently because on page _____ ...*
- *I can see your point, but...*

1. Which do you think *most* inspires people to have courage when they **falter**: understanding that they are fighting for what is right or understanding that they are not alone? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

2. **CROSS-TEXTUAL:** Which sections of the poem do you think the narrator from “The Terror” would most relate to? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

3. **CROSS-TEXTUAL:** Which lines in the poem would the girls from “The Friday Everything Changed” most agree with? Explain your answer.

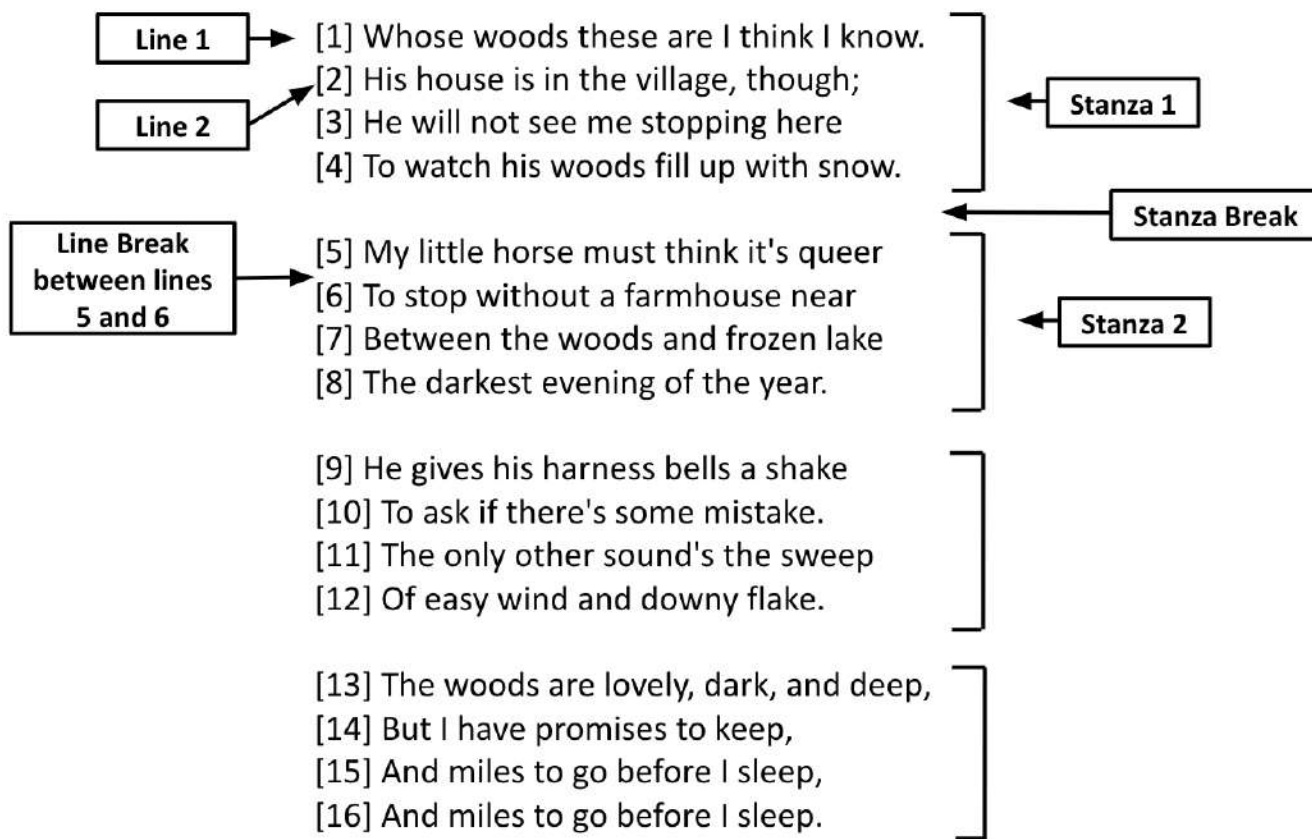
My answer	My partner's answer

Poetry Reference Sheet

Definitions of Common Poetry Terms

- Poems are made up of **lines** and **stanzas**.
- A group of lines is called a **stanza**.
- A **line break** refers to the end of one line and the start of the next.
- A **stanza break** refers to the end of one stanza and the start of the next
- The **speaker** of a poem is like the narrator of a story. The **speaker** is the voice of the poem.

"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"
Robert Frost



"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost is in the public domain

Quoting & Citing Poetry

Notes and Example

Quoting poetry is slightly different from quoting a story or article.

When quoting poetry, you:

- Use a single slash (/) to represent a **line break**
- Use a double slash (//) to represent a **stanza break**
- Always **cite the author's last name and the line numbers** at the end of the quote

Below is an example of how to correctly quote poetry taken from a student essay.

Begin and end your quotation with quotation marks (" ").

This single slash (/) shows a line break.

The speaker describes his quiet surroundings, "The only other sound's the sweep / Of easy wind and downy flake. // The woods are lovely, dark, and deep" (Frost, lines 11-13).

This double slash (//) shows a line break.

At the end of the quote, place the author's last name and the line numbers in parentheses.

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	End of Unit Writing Review	Unit 2 Essay: Planning	In this unit, you've read about people and characters who have shown courage. Select one quote about courage. Then, analyze how at least two of the people and characters you've read about demonstrate the ideas in your quote. You can also use examples from your own life. [W.2]
	↑ You are here! ↑			





This lesson's skill focus

Students will practice explaining what their evidence means and how it supports their argument. [W.8.2]
--

Materials needed

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

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
Part 1	 Analyzing a Strong Explanation: Students will read an exemplary explanation and answer two questions to reflect on what makes it strong.	5 min
Part 2	 Notes on Strong Explanations: Students write notes on criteria for strong explanations. You may choose to provide the notes for students or have students try to name the criteria themselves.	5 min
Part 3	 Practice Writing Strong Explanations: Students apply their learning by revising weak explanations in a sample paragraph about James Weldon Johnson's "Sonnet."	10 min
Optional Revision Task	 Optional Revision Task: You may choose to have students revise their independent practice from "Sonnet." Note: Be sure to consider how to facilitate this task. For example, you may need to unsubmit digital assignments that students have completed.	15 min
~20 to 35 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Writing Explanations

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

Today's Goals

- Learn how to write a strong explanation.
- Practice writing strong explanations. [W.2]

PART 1: Analyzing a Strong Explanation

Directions: Review the prompt and example below. Then answer the questions. *5 minutes*



Prompt: How does James Weldon Johnson use imagery to develop the theme of “Sonnet”?

James Weldon Johnson uses imagery to describe people overcoming difficult situations, which develops the theme that people should remain hopeful, even when times are tough. One moment when Johnson uses imagery to express this theme is in lines 11-12, when he writes, “Rise up, and casting off thy hind’ring shrouds, / Cling though to this, and ever inspiring hope.” Shrouds are used to cover a dead body at a funeral, and this description of someone throwing off their shroud and rising up from their coffin suggests that no matter how difficult the situation, you should pick yourself up and keep fighting.

Part 1 of the Explanation

Part 2 of the Explanation

1. What is the writer explaining in “Part 1” of the explanation?

Answers will vary:

- *The writer is explaining what key parts of the evidence mean.*
- *The writer is explaining what is happening in the evidence.*

2. What is the writer explaining in “Part 2” of the explanation?

Answers will vary:

- *The writer is explaining how the evidence supports the argument.*
- *The writer is explaining why the evidence matters.*



PART 2: Notes on Strong Explanations

Directions: Complete the notes by adding the criteria for strong explanations. *5 minutes*

STRONG EXPLANATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain what the evidence means or represents• Explain how the evidence supports the argument



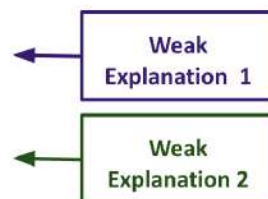
PART 3: Practice Writing Strong Explanations

Directions: The sample response below has two weak explanations. Revise both explanations. 10 minutes

STUDENT SAMPLE

Prompt: How does James Weldon Johnson use juxtaposition to develop the theme of “Sonnet”?

James Weldon Johnson juxtaposes images of struggle and success to express the theme that people should remain hopeful, even during difficult times. In lines 5-7, Johnson juxtaposes night and morning, writing, “For certain as the raven-winged night / Is followed by the bright and blushing morn, / Thy coming morrow will be clear and bright” (5-7). *This shows that you should be hopeful.* Another moment that Johnson uses juxtaposition is in the final two lines. The speaker states, “Tho’ thick the battle and tho’ fierce the fight, / There is a power making for the right” (13-14). *This also shows that you should be hopeful during difficult times.*



1. Revise “Weak Explanation 1.”

In these lines, night represents the challenges in a person’s life, and by juxtaposing night with a bright morning, the speaker suggests that after hard times, things will inevitably get brighter.

Checklist For Strong Explanations:

- ☐ Explains what the evidence means or represents
- ☐ Explains how the evidence supports the argument

2. Revise “Weak Explanation 2.”

Here, the speaker is comparing challenging moments in life to a difficult war, but again, he assures us that there is a power that will make things right again. By using juxtaposition in this way, Johnson develops the theme that even in our darkest hours, we should be confident that things will get better.

Checklist For Strong Explanations:

- ☐ Explains what the evidence means or represents
- ☐ Explains how the evidence supports the argument

Writing Explanations

Strong explanations:

- Explain what the evidence means or represents
- Explain how the evidence supports the argument

Example

Prompt: How does James Weldon Johnson use imagery to develop the theme of “Sonnet”?

James Weldon Johnson uses imagery to describe people overcoming difficult situations, which develops the theme that people should remain hopeful, even when times are tough. One moment when Johnson uses imagery to express this theme is in lines 11-12, when he writes, “Rise up, and casting off thy hind’ring shrouds, / Cling though to this, and ever inspiring hope.” **Shrouds are used to cover a dead body at a funeral, and this description of someone throwing off their shroud and rising up from their coffin suggests that no matter how difficult the situation, you should pick yourself up and keep fighting.**



Sentence Starters to Explain

- *This means...*
- *In other words...*
- *Put another way...*

Sentence Starters to Connect

- *This emphasizes...*
- *This suggests...*
- *This conveys the idea that...*

Writing Explanations

Strong explanations:

- Explain what the evidence means or represents
- Explain how the evidence supports the argument

Weak Example

Prompt: How does James Weldon Johnson use imagery to develop the theme of “Sonnet”?

James Weldon Johnson uses imagery to describe people overcoming difficult situations, which develops the theme that people should remain hopeful, even when times are tough. One moment when Johnson uses imagery to express this theme is in lines 11-12, when he writes, “Rise up, and casting off thy hind’ring shrouds, / Cling though to this, and ever inspiring hope.” This shows that people should remain hopeful during difficult times.

Argument

Evidence

Weak explanation

Strong Example

Prompt: How does James Weldon Johnson use imagery to develop the theme of “Sonnet”?

James Weldon Johnson uses imagery to describe people overcoming difficult situations, which develops the theme that people should remain hopeful, even when times are tough. One moment when Johnson uses imagery to express this theme is in lines 11-12, when he writes, “Rise up, and casting off thy hind’ring shrouds, / Cling though to this, and ever inspiring hope.” **Shrouds are used to cover a dead body at a funeral, and this description of someone throwing off their shroud and rising up from their coffin** suggests that no matter how difficult the situation, you should pick yourself up and keep fighting.

Revision 1

Revision 2

Sentence Starters to Explain

- *This means...*
- *In other words...*
- *Put another way...*

Sentence Starters to Connect

- *This emphasizes...*
- *This suggests...*
- *This conveys the idea that...*

LESSON OVERVIEW: “TRANSCRIPT OF FULL JOSEPH MCNEIL INTERVIEW”

(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	Reading Lesson 6
“The Terror” by Junot Díaz (Memoir)	“The Friday Everything Changed” by Anne Hart (Short Story)	“Sonnet” by James Weldon Johnson (Poem)	“Transcript of Full Joseph McNeil Interview” by Newsday (Interview)	“The Treasure of Lemon Brown” by Walter Dean Myers (Short Story)	“I look at the world” by Langston Hughes (Poem)
			↑ You are here! ↑		




This lesson’s skill focus

In this lesson, students will analyze the **connections** between **individuals, ideas, and events**. [RI.8.3]

About this Interview

In this interview, Joseph McNeil describes his experiences participating in the Woolworth’s lunch counter sit-ins during the 1960s and the effect it had on his life.

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 Joseph McNeil’s experiences and motivations. 	<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: Transcript of Full Joseph McNeil Interview

Newsday

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

About this text

Joseph McNeil is a retired major general in the United States Air Force. He is best known for the civil rights activism that he participated in when he was a teenager in 1960, specifically the sit-ins at a Woolworth's lunch counter in North Carolina. In the interview below, McNeil describes his experience as an activist and the effect it had on his life and the lives of others.

Purpose for Reading

To understand how the connections between individuals and events develop ideas about courage and standing up for what is right.

Vocabulary

Let's pronounce these words together as a class:

Activist [ak-tuh-vist]
Associate [uh-soh-shee-eyt]
Controversy [kon-truh-vur-see]
Segregate [seg-ri-geyt]
Spontaneous [spon-tey-nee-uhs]

WHOLE CLASS READING

[1] My name is Joseph McNeil. I am 65 years old and I was born in Wilmington, N.C., 1942.

[2] Why did I become an **activist**? I guess I've been an **activist**, if you want to use that term, all my life.

[3] Feelings that are deep and reflective of who you are. There are not points in life where one starts and one stops.

[4] I was blessed in life with very strong, proud parents and good teachers. And, I learned early what I now call core values. Things that I base my life on. Things that matter to me. So, in a sense I've been an **activist** all of my life, as far as I can remember. If you see something wrong, you stand up, you take it on. You try to do things that matter. My core values allow me to focus on what I will call the dignity of mankind. I believe that mankind's fundamentally¹ good, and good will prevail² over evil.

[5] **Q. Is there any specific thing that led you to being an activist?**

[6] McNeil: There are no particular triggers that would be isolated. It all has to be put in context. I grew up in the South in a **segregated** environment. I lived in New York City for three or four of those years and every summer. Went to Public School 13 in Harlem in the third grade. I went to St. Thomas the Apostle in the eighth grade also. So, that environment of being in the North in the summer and going to a **segregated** environment in the South, back and forth, molded who I am.

DURING READING QUESTIONS

Paragraphs 1-4

Think & Share: According to McNeil, what does it mean to be an **activist**?

- *Standing up for what is right*
- *Taking action if you see injustice*
- *Trying to make the world a better place for all people*

¹ **Fundamentally** (*adverb*): at the most basic level

² **Prevail** (*verb*): to win, to succeed, to be victorious

[7] **Q. First, tell us what you did that brings us here today?**

[8] McNeil: Every year various forums and matters have become part of the commemorative³ process where we talk about the sit-ins from 1960 and I was a key part of the sit-ins and something I'm personally very, very proud of. But those sit-ins influenced many, many people in life and I'm so proud to be **associated** with them. I just saw a movie, *The Great Debate ... The Great Debaters* by Denzel Washington and one of the characters in there, in that movie, was James Farmer.⁴ I met James Farmer. I knew James Farmer. James Farmer almost talked me into being part of the Freedom Rides.⁵ There're so many people who were truly great, good human beings involved in that Civil Rights experience. I'm so happy, personally, to have been a part of that.

[9] I became involved and started the sit-ins because I fundamentally believed that segregation was an evil. And I thought it was important for me to step up and to do something about this. It was important as a part of my becoming a man. My friend and cohort Frank McCain says it was a down payment on our manhood and in many, many ways.

Paragraph 9

Write: What were McNeil's motivations in becoming involved with the sit-ins?

- *He believed that racial segregation was evil.*
- *He believed it was important to stand up against injustice.*

PARTNER READING

[10] **Q. Tell us, you were 17 on Feb. 1, 1960. Take us back to that date when you and your cohorts went to that whites-only lunch counter at Woolworth's.**

[11] McNeil: Feb. 1, 1960. Three of my colleagues, David Richmond, who is no longer with us, Jibreel Khazan, who at the time was Ezell Blair Jr., and Franklin McCain and I sat down at a **segregated** Woolworth's lunch counter⁶ in Greensboro, North Carolina. We ordered apple pie and coffee. And we were not served. We were, previously, in other parts of the store where we purchased items like toothpaste, notebook paper, other sundry items, without incident. When we sat down at this lunch counter and asked to be served coffee and apple pie, we were told that we couldn't be served. We were told by several people that if we continued to sit at this lunch counter that we were going to get into a lot of trouble. And we advised the store and its employees and its manager that we intended to sit and to continue to sit until they served us, because they had served us in other parts of the store so they could in fact serve us if they so chose to do so. So we continued to sit.

[12] The store manager called the police and the policeman came and he walked back and forth behind us. And he took his night stick and he thumped it in his hand in a threatening manner, but we continued to sit. People stopped and looked at this phenomenon that was taking place. We continued to sit. The store was getting ready to close and we had been sitting for, oh, about an hour and 30 minutes and an elderly white lady came and sat beside my friend Frank McCain and I, and she looked at Frank and said, 'Son, I am disappointed in you.' And McCain looked at her in

DURING READING QUESTIONS

Paragraph 11

A. Write: How did McNeil and the other civil rights activists respond to their treatment at the Woolworth's lunch counter?

- *They continued to sit at the counter.*
- *They said they would stay there until they were served because they had been served in other parts of the store.*

B. Turn & Talk: How does this story support McNeil's definition of **activism**?

- *He believed that when you see something that is wrong, you stand up and fight.*
- *He thought that it was wrong to have racially-segregated lunch counters, so he protested.*

³ **Commemorative** (adjective): for the purpose of remembering and showing respect for someone or something

⁴ James Farmer was an African American civil rights **activist** and a founder of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE).

⁵ Freedom Rides were political protests against segregation by Blacks and whites who rode buses together through the South in 1961.

⁶ Woolworth's was a national chain of dollar stores. Many locations had lunch counters which sold sandwiches, coffee, and other food. Although there was no law in North Carolina against serving both Black and white customers at lunch counters, the stores refused to let Black people sit and eat there.

amazement and said, 'Ma'am, you're disappointed in me, why would you be disappointed in me? You don't know me.' She said, 'Well I'm disappointed and the reason I'm disappointed is that it took you boys so long to do what you're doing.' And a smile came on McCain's face as well as mine because that was our first sign of open support. Somebody stepping forward and saying you're doing the right thing, even though it may be **controversial**.

[13] The help in the store advised us to leave because it was their means of employment. I don't think they had too much of a choice. So we left the store. We didn't get served coffee or apple pie. We told the store manager that we'd be back and we'd keep coming back until they served us. As we left the store, we were met by an Associated Press photographer. Jack, and I forget Jack's last name, he recently passed away about four or five years [ago], but he took a picture of the four of us leaving the store. And there was a short newspaper article noting that that day, four students sat at a lunch counter and said they were going to keep coming back until they were served. So that made the press, and we went back to campus. Because [we] were young at the time — I was 17, the youngest — we knew that we needed help. So we approached several other students. I would say we probably approached 16 in all, and five or six said they would come back with us the next day. They did. And so our burgeoning movement of four grew into eight. The next day there were probably 25 of us. This, what I will call a movement, it turned out in hindsight to be a movement. We didn't know that at the time, but this movement started to grow, so that by the end of the third day, our 25 of us was happening, but another city, Winston Salem, and Portsmouth, Va., a couple of other cities — Highpoint [N.C.], all these places start to have **spontaneous** sit-ins at these Woolworth lunch counters.

[14] Because we were freshmen, we recognized that we needed help, and we went to the various leadership positions, students who had leadership positions on campus, and asked for their help in doing this. We told those people and those other kids it was important that you be nonviolent, that if we weren't nonviolent we'd probably not accomplish what we wanted to accomplish and that was to bring attention to segregation, it's negative impact on black people so those students agreed to do that. And so by the fourth day the Greensboro group was 125. Other areas in other parts of the country saw... who had been thinking about doing sit-ins for some time, Durham,⁷ places in Maryland, South Carolina, throughout the South — all these **spontaneous** student movements, nonviolent student movements started to happen and started to influence people. And before you knew it there were pickets in all the Woolworth stores nationally. There were pickets in Philadelphia, there were pickets in Harlem,⁸ on 125th Street. It was a magnificent thing to be a part of. I don't know if you've ever been able to say this is something I really believe in. If they're going to put us in jail, that's okay, because this is something worth going to jail for. If they're going to hit us and hurt us, there couldn't be anything more nobler than to stand up for human rights and civil rights at that time. We chose to be nonviolent and in hindsight it worked.

Paragraph 14

Write: Why did the Greensboro group decide that their protest must be nonviolent?

- *They believed a nonviolent approach would help them accomplish their goals, which was to focus attention on how segregation negatively impacted Black people.*

⁷ a city in North Carolina

⁸ a historically Black neighborhood in New York City

WHOLE CLASS READING

DURING READING QUESTIONS

[15] **Q. What was the event that inspired the Woolworth counter sit-in? Were there sit-ins elsewhere?**

[16] McNeil: We had heard of other sit-ins when I was in high school in Wilmington, we had heard of sit-ins and protest movements and talked about doing something. We probably picked it up from someplace in Oklahoma City. There were sit-ins several years ago, so sit-ins... used as [a] means of protest didn't start with the Greensboro Four. But the fact that this massive student movement resulted from the Greensboro sit-ins is a reality. There was no particular event or singular event. It was years and years of injustice. Segregation was an evil. Years and years of lynchings⁹ and murders and beatings. All these things had a cumulative effect. One of the things that impressed me was the fact that the Little Rock Nine¹⁰ was able to influence their history by being strong, being brave, being what I would call Children of Courage, in the fact that they could endure and prevail. Another event that influenced me was the horror that happened to Emmett Till¹¹ left a deep scar on me and the fact that [people] in our country, in our America, let that happen. So there's no particular event, but a series of cumulative events.

[17] **Q. What was your proudest moment? Greatest accomplishment as it relates to your activism. And how would you like to be remembered?**

[18] McNeil: [There's] several things that I would call one of my proudest moments. One would be the fact that I was **associated** with some of the finest people to walk on this earth. People of courage. People of principle. People who didn't ask what's in this for me, but who gave of time, of money, physical presence. People who took abuse. Black people, white people, red people, brown people. People from every segment of life. Poor people, people of wealth, all found a way to be part of this. It became a movement. What I'm proud of is the fact that I was, early on, part of this group, and [it] formed the basis of my life. The fact [that] we could use nonviolence, the fact that I could meet a James Farmer, Floyd McKissick.¹² The fact that we could meet a Dr. King and all those things was so important to me, being a part of my life and my work[.]

Paragraph 16

Find Evidence: Underline four events or people that inspired the Greensboro Four to start their own sit-ins.

- *"We had heard of other sit-ins when I was in high school"*
- *"someplace in Oklahoma City there were sit-ins several years ago"*
- *"It was years and years of injustice...Years and years of lynchings and murders and beatings."*
- *"the Little Rock Nine was able to influence their history by being strong, being brave, being what I would call Children of Courage"*
- *"the horror that happened to Emmett Till"*

PARTNER READING

DURING READING QUESTIONS

[19] **Q. How did you cope with the fear?**

[20] McNeil: [The] fear aspect is one, and I don't like to use the term fear. When I think of fear I think of something [Gen. George] Patton said. He said fear is something that all human beings have. The fact that we have it is not important. What is important is how we handle fear. And I think that whatever fear we had, we handled very, very well[.] [It] was uncertain that we weren't going to be attacked. It was very unusual for four black males to take a stand of defiance. We grew up in a legacy where lynchings took place

Paragraphs 19-20

Write: According to McNeil, what is the relationship between fear and faith?

- *Having faith that what they were doing was right helped McNeil and other activists overcome their fear.*
- *Faith allows you to stand up in spite of fear.*

⁹ **Lynching** (noun): the mob killing of a person, especially by hanging. White Americans used lynching to terrorize and keep control over Black Americans. Between 1877 and 1950, more than 4,000 Black Americans were lynched by white mobs.

¹⁰ Nine African American teenagers who were the first Black students at the formerly all-white Little Rock Central High School (Arkansas) in 1957.

¹¹ Emmett Till was a 14-year-old African American boy who was lynched in Mississippi in 1955 after whistling at a white woman.

¹² Floyd McKissick was a lawyer, activist, leader of CORE, and the first Black student at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill Law School.

normally[.] [To] a large degree we handled it so well because of something intangible called faith. Faith in doing something we knew was right and standing up for it. Faith in our creators that good was going to prevail over evil. That faith sustained us and became an important part of all our demonstrations later on. You stand there and take a slug in the face or you're hit with a pipe like the Freedom Riders. You needed strong faith to be able to handle that[.]

[21] **Q. How do you think history will regard the activism [you were] a part of[?]**

[22] McNeil: I think history will say that this is some of our prouder moments as human beings because what's taking place back in those periods of time became not just local in nature, they became national, and they became international. I received letters from people in Brazil when this was happening. We see the influence of nonviolence and rightness going on for years afterwards. We see it in Poland when Lech Walesa had a [Solidarity] movement.¹³ People were singing "We Shall Overcome."¹⁴ We saw it in China when the students were protesting against the tanks rolling down Tiananmen Square.¹⁵ So, we see this as being an important part of history. We always need to remember the good that we've done. We make a lot of mistakes in life, yet we don't ever need to give up. Goodness will prevail in the end and we just need to keep doing the right[,] principled thing to always have the moral high ground[.]¹⁶

Paragraph 22:

A. Turn & Talk: What was the effect of the Greensboro Four Sit-ins?

- *They inspired massive student protests around the world.*

B. Write: How does this support the idea that you "just need to keep doing right"?

- *The influence the Greensboro Four had around the world shows that when people keep doing the right thing, they can influence many others to do the same.*

WHOLE CLASS READING

DURING READING QUESTIONS

[23] **Q. Talk about meeting people like Farmer[.]**

[24] McNeil: Meeting people in the movement was so important to me because it was part of my growth. SNCC, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, is a product of the sit-ins, a direct product of the sit-ins. It involved students and others from around the country who felt the need to make this thing that was evolving into a movement coherent, focus our attentions and spread our resources and manage our resources effectively[,] people I respect, the John Lewises.¹⁷ Somebody called us the Children of Courage and I think of them in that respect[.] We stood up against an evil, we stood for principle, we stood for justice. We stood for dignity of man[.]

[25] I'm retired now. My last job was with the FAA.¹⁸ I retired in the senior executive service. I was manager of the Eastern Region of Flight Standards. That job was global in nature. It involved not just the [eastern part] of the United States, from Washington up through New York State, but also it involved Europe, Africa and the Middle East, providing regulatory as well as other aspects of aviation. So, it was an important position. I was one of a few diversity candidates, diversity managers in the FAA. I think I was a key part in developing other types of diversity programs in the agency[.]

[26] I was at the FAA from '87 to 2002 .

Paragraph 24

Write: Why were McNeil and his **associates** called "Children of Courage"?

- *They stood up against evil at great personal risk, and that required a lot of courage.*

¹³ Solidarity was a Polish social reform movement in the 1980s that used nonviolent protests to demand free elections and laws protecting workers.

¹⁴ an African American spiritual frequently sung by American civil rights activists in the 1950s and 1960s

¹⁵ In 1989, more than 1 million people protested in Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China, to demand free elections, freedom of the press, and other legal reforms.

¹⁶ To take the "moral high ground" means to keep a standard of good behavior, to be honest and upright, no matter what others may do.

¹⁷ John Lewis, student activist and chairman of SNCC, has served as a U.S. Representative for the state of Georgia for more than 30 years.

¹⁸ Federal Aviation Administration

[27] I served on active duty in the Air Force as a navigator for six years, 1963 to 1969. After that period of time of active duty, I became a part of the Air Force reserve, a citizen soldier. [at McQuire AFB for most of it, squadron commander, etc. becoming a general officer and retiring with 2 stars as major general.]

[28] **Q. [In] 2008, how do you feel about race relations, discrimination? Are you hopeful still amid so many problems?**

[29] McNeil: I am optimistic about race relations. It often seems as if we take three steps forward and two back. Retaining and maintaining some of the gains, I would say, of civil rights is often difficult. I say we stay the moral high ground. It's going to evolve. It's so important to still be here and that we do the right thing[.] When you look at the world on a global basis, if America doesn't exercise this kind of relationship in human relations, then who in our world will? The conflicts, the religious conflicts, all the conflicts that we have, I think it's important for each of us to define our moral high ground and come forward and stand for the principles that we personally believe in. But it's important that we as a country, as a nation, stand up and provide the leadership.

Paragraph 29

A. Write: What does McNeil mean when he encourages others to "stay the moral high ground"?

- *McNeil means that it's important that people continue to stand up for the right thing so that we change society for the better.*

B. Poll the Class: Do you agree or disagree with the following quotation: "Without fear there cannot be courage." Be prepared to defend your response.

- A. Agree
- B. Disagree

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Name _____ Class _____

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the multiple choice questions for “Transcript of Full Joseph McNeil Interview.” 5 minutes



Note: To ensure test security, answers to the following assessment items are viewable only on commonlit.org for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the Answer Key tab on the text page to gain access.

1. In paragraph 12, what was the manager trying to achieve by calling the police? **[RI.2]**
 - A. The manager called the police to protect the men from violence in the diner.
 - B. The manager called the police to remove the crowd that was gathering for the protest.
 - C. The manager called the police to intimidate the men and stop the men from protesting.
 - D. The manager called the police to have the men arrested because they stole food from the diner.

2. In paragraph 13, how did the actions of McNeil and his friends affect others? **[RI.3]**
 - A. They caused the owners of the store to fire the Black workers.
 - B. They divided Black youth on what to do to fight for their civil rights.
 - C. They influenced others and ignited civil rights protests among young people.
 - D. They prevented people from being able to eat at sit-in restaurants for many years.

3. Which quotation from the passage *best* demonstrates the impact of the Greensboro Four’s protests? **[RI.1]**
 - A. “Three of my colleagues, David Richmond, who is no longer with us, Jibreel Khazan, who at the time was Ezell Blair Jr., and Franklin McCain and I sat down at a segregated Woothworth’s lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. We ordered apple pie and coffee. And we were not served.” (Paragraph 11)
 - B. “There was no particular event or singular event. It was years and years of injustice. Segregation was an evil. Years and years of lynchings and murders and beatings. All these things had a cumulative effect.” (Paragraph 16)
 - C. “[There’s] several things that I would call one of my proudest moments. One would be the fact that I was associated with some of the finest people to walk on this earth. People of courage.” (Paragraph 18)
 - D. “I think history will say that this is some of our prouder moments as human beings because what’s taking place back in those periods of time became not just local in nature, they became national, and they became international.” (Paragraph 22)

4. What is the best meaning of “evolve” as it is used in paragraphs 24 and 29? **[RI.4]**
 - A. stop
 - B. worsen
 - C. resolve
 - D. progress

5. Which statement *best* identifies the central idea of the passage? **[RI.2]**
- A. The Greensboro Four inspired others within a larger movement of courageous activists who practice nonviolence.
 - B. The Greensboro Four were inspired by the Freedom Rides to peacefully challenge segregation at lunch counters.
 - C. The Greensboro Four inspired Joseph McNeil and his friends to nonviolently protest segregation at lunch counters.
 - D. The Greensboro Four were met with physical violence the first time they nonviolently protested segregation at a lunch counter.



Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt for “Transcript of Full Joseph McNeil Interview.” 15 minutes

Note: To ensure test security, a sample answer to the following short response item is viewable only on commonlit.org for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the Answer Key tab on the text page to access it.

PROMPT: Joseph McNeil said, “If you see something wrong, you stand up, you take it on.” Explain how McNeil lived by his own words. **[RI.3]**

In your response be sure to:

- clarify what is happening by introducing your evidence with context.
- state who is speaking, narrating, or being quoted for each piece of evidence.

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?

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

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

- A. YES!
- B. 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

- *I agree with _____, and I want to add...*
- *I found another example of what _____ brought up on page _____ ...*
- *I see it slightly differently because on page _____ ...*
- *I can see your point, but...*

1. The leaders of the lunch counter sit-ins were teenagers and young adults. Why is young people's activism sometimes **controversial** to adults? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

2. According to the interview, in what ways did **activism** against **oppression** help change the world? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

3. **CROSS-TEXTUAL:** The speaker in "Sonnet" says, "Thy way is very dark and drear I know, / But do not let thy strength and courage fail;" (Lines 3-4). How does this apply to Joseph McNeil's experience? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer








LESSON OVERVIEW: Related Media Exploration

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





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

About Related Media Explorations	Exploration Title: What motivates people to act courageously
This Related Media Exploration gives students a chance to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with four videos Work collaboratively Reflect on their lives Discuss what they've learned 	Students will build knowledge about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical events where children showed courage to bring about change Modern-day examples of young women with the courage and confidence to advocate for change

How do I facilitate this Related Media Exploration?

Part	Lesson Activities		Time
Use the paired slide deck to guide students through the handout. Videos are linked in the slide deck.			
Introduction		Courage Statements: Students will determine if they agree or disagree with three statements about courage. Students will share their ideas in a whole class share-out.	8 min
Part 1		Courage Over Fear – The Children’s Crusade of 1963: Students will watch “Children’s Crusade of 1963 American Freedom Stories Biography” and consider how young people’s courage brought about change during the Civil Rights Movement.	10 min
Part 2		Courage and Confidence Lead to Change: Students will watch “Malala and teen activists on learning to speak out” to hear from Malala Yousafzai and other young women activists about the importance of confidence as they work to make change.	8 min
Part 3		When Something is Wrong, Change It: Students will watch “Future Women of America: Meet Mari Copeny” and learn about how a young girl named Mari Copeny found the courage and confidence to speak out about the water crisis in Flint, Michigan.	10 min
Part 4		Courage from the Past and for the Future: Students will watch “Teenage activist Marley Dias on the trailblazer who inspired her” to learn about one girl’s work to bring more diverse books into classrooms, continuing the work of Augusta Baker.	8 min
Part 5		Independent Reflection: Students will reflect on the ideas they have explored by considering what can motivate people to act courageously.	10 min
Part 6		Whole Class Discussion: Students have the opportunity to share what they have learned with their classmates.	10 min
~65 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 motivates people to act courageously?

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

Introduction: Courage Statements

Directions: Determine whether you agree or disagree with each statement below and explain your response.



Statement 1: *For an action to be courageous, it must affect a large group of people.*

Do you agree or disagree? Explain your response.

- *Student responses will vary.*

Statement 2: *You must have confidence to be courageous.*

Do you agree or disagree? Explain your response.

- *Student responses will vary.*

Statement 3: *It is especially challenging for young people to show courage.*

Do you agree or disagree? Explain your response.

- *Student responses will vary.*

PART 1: Courage Over Fear — The Children’s Crusade of 1963

Directions: Watch “Children's Crusade of 1963 | American Freedom Stories | Biography.” Then, answer questions 1-3.



1. The monument for the Children's Crusade of 1963 is inscribed with “I ain't afraid.” Why did the children choose courage over fear?

- *The children chose courage over fear because they understood the importance of marching against segregation, racism, and injustice, even if it put them at risk.*
- *The children chose courage over fear because they wanted to try to make a change.*

2. How did the courageous actions of these young people affect others?

- *The courageous actions of young people affected others because they highlighted the horrors of segregation.*
- *It wasn't until people saw innocent children harmed for non-violently protesting that people understood the importance and purpose of the Civil Rights Movement.*

3. Why do you think Charles Avery Jr. says that “our kids need to know the story” of the Children’s Crusade of 1963?

Student responses may vary; students may say:

- *He wants kids to know that their voices and their actions have the power to make a difference and make a change.*
- *He wants today's young people to understand what previous generations sacrificed and fought for.*



Turn & Talk: Refer back to the “Courage Statements” on page 1. How do the children in this video prove or disprove those statements?

Student responses may vary; students may say:

- *They disprove statement 2 because the people interviewed admitted that they were not confident about what would happen. They show that you can act courageously even if you aren't completely confident.*

PART 2: Courage and Confidence Lead to Change

Directions: Watch “Malala and teen activists on learning to speak out.” Then, answer questions 4-6.



4. What motivated these young women to speak out and become activists?

- *They were motivated by seeing and experiencing the inequality of girls’ education around the world.*

5. According to Malala, how does confidence influence a person's ability to make change?

- *Having confidence influences a person’s ability to make change because it helps people find their voice.*
- *Confidence helps you convey the importance of your cause to others.*
- *When you can speak to others about what you believe in, you have a greater chance of making a change because it helps other people understand the problem, too.*

6. What courageous actions *might* these young women have had to take in order to speak up for themselves?

Student answers may vary, students may say:

- *They might have had to stand up to people who disagree with them.*
- *They might have had to stand up to people who were older or more experienced.*

PART 3: When Something is Wrong, Change It

Directions: Watch “Future Women of America: Meet Mari Copeny.” Then, answer questions 7-9.



7. What motivated Mari Copeny to become an activist?

- *She saw that people in her community of Flint, Michigan, were getting sick from the water, and she wanted to help.*

8. How is Mari Copeny living out Malala’s advice about confidence from the previous video?

- *Malala said that an activist must be the first person to accept themselves and believe in themselves.*
- *Mari did not let her age stop her from speaking out about what she knew was wrong.*
- *People listened to Malala because she had confidence in herself and the importance of what Malala was speaking about.*

9. What do Mari Copeny’s words and actions suggest about who can make a change?

- *Her words and actions suggest that anyone can make a change, even if they are young.*
- *They suggest that anyone who sees that something is wrong can gather people together and take action.*



Turn & Talk: How do Mari Copeny’s actions compare to the actions of the girls in “The Friday Everything Changed”?

Student responses may vary; students may say:

- *Her actions are similar to the girls in “The Friday Everything Changed” because she spoke up about what she knew was wrong rather than just accepting the way things were.*
- *Mari speaking up also influenced others to help make change happen. She got President Obama to come to Flint, Michigan, and she helped to get clean water distributed to everyone who needed it. This is similar to Alma and the other girls in “The Friday Everything Changed” influencing their teacher’s reaction.*



PART 4: Courage *from* the Past and *for* the Future

Directions: Watch “Teenage activist Marley Dias on the trailblazer who inspired her.” Then, answer questions 10-12.

10. What motivated Marley Dias to work for change?

- *She noticed that most of the books she was reading in school were about white boys and their dogs. She did not see people like herself (or any diversity) reflected in the books around her.*

11. Consider Marley Dias's admiration of Augusta Baker. What does this suggest about why the stories of other people's courage are important?

- *Stories of other people's courageous actions are important because they can inspire others to continue the work.*

12. What message does Marley Dias want her work to communicate to other young people?

- *She wants her work to help young people see that their voices matter and that their ideas are important.*
- *She wants other young people to see the work she is doing and to use their passions as fuel for change.*

PART 5: Independent Reflection

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



PROMPT: Based on the young people in these videos, what can motivate people to act courageously? Summarize evidence from at least two of the four videos in your response.

SAMPLE RESPONSE:

Student responses may vary; students may say:

From these videos, we learn that people can be motivated to act courageously for many different reasons.

- *Some people are motivated to be courageous when they see injustice in their communities and world.*
 - *For example, the children from the video “Children’s Crusade of 1963” were motivated to have courage and march because of the segregation they experienced and witnessed each day. Their hope and belief in the need for change gave them courage despite their fear.*
 - *Another example comes from the video “Malala and teen activists on learning to speak out.” These young women were motivated to have courage when they saw that girls around the world did not have equal education opportunities. They were motivated by their desire to make people aware of the problem so that change could happen.*
 - *Mari Copeny was motivated to speak out and even write to President Obama about the problems that other people were ignoring. She saw how the people in her community were being harmed by the water and made the courageous choice to do something to try and solve the problem.*
- *People can also be motivated to act courageously because of the examples of others.*
 - *Marley Dias was originally motivated by the lack of diversity she saw in the books at her school, but Marley became even more motivated to act when she learned about Augusta Baker, a librarian who fought for a similar cause in the 1940s.*

PART 6: Whole Class Discussion

Directions: Share your answer to the question from Part 5 with the class. Then, keep the conversation going by discussing the following optional questions.



- Some people say that “courage is contagious.” What does this mean to you? How do these videos support this idea?
- Think back to our earlier discussion about the challenges young people face when showing courage. How did these videos support or change your thinking about this?
- What are some other ways that you have seen young people work toward change in the world? What are some other issues that you think young people should work to change?
- Which of these stories inspired you the most? Why?

LESSON OVERVIEW: “THE TREASURE OF LEMON BROWN”

(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	Reading Lesson 6
“The Terror” by Junot Díaz (Memoir)	“The Friday Everything Changed” by Anne Hart (Short Story)	“Sonnet” by James Weldon Johnson (Poem)	“Transcript of Full Joseph McNeil Interview” by Newsday (Interview)	“The Treasure of Lemon Brown” by Walter Dean Myers (Short Story)	“I look at the world” by Langston Hughes (Poem)
				↑ 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 **characterization and character change**.
[RL.8.2, RL.8.3]

About this Short Story

In this short story, a boy meets an old man who is surprisingly courageous when he takes a risk to protect his treasure. Through this experience, the boy learns a lesson about standing up for what truly matters and comes to appreciate his own father’s tough love.

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><i>75 total minutes for this lesson</i></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 Greg’s changing attitude. 	<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: The Treasure of Lemon Brown

Walter Dean Myers

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

About this text

Walter Dean Myers (1937-2014) was an American writer of children's books and young adult literature. Myers wrote over one hundred books and received the Coretta Scott King Award for African American authors five times.

Purpose for Reading

To understand how authors develop a theme through character descriptions and relationships and to build our understanding about the different reasons people show courage.

INDEPENDENT READING

[1] The dark sky, filled with angry, swirling clouds, reflected Greg Ridley's mood as he sat on the stoop of his building. His father's voice came to him again, first reading the letter the principal had sent to the house, then lecturing endlessly about his poor efforts in math.

[2] "I had to leave school when I was thirteen," his father had said, "that's a year younger than you are now. If I'd had half the chances you have, I'd..."

[3] Greg sat in the small, pale green kitchen listening, knowing the lecture would end with his father saying he couldn't play ball with the Scorpions. He had asked his father the week before, and his father had said it depended on his next report card. It wasn't often the Scorpions took on new players, especially fourteen-year-olds, and this was a chance of a lifetime for Greg. He hadn't been allowed to play high school ball, which he had really wanted to do, but playing for the Community Center team was the next best thing. Report cards were due in a week, and Greg had been hoping for the best. But the principal had ended the suspense early when she sent the letter saying Greg would probably fail math if he didn't spend more time studying.

[4] "And you want to play basketball?" His father's brows knitted over deep brown eyes. "That must be some kind of a joke. Now you just get into your room and hit those books."

[5] That had been two nights before. His father's words, like the distant thunder that now echoed through the streets of Harlem, still rumbled softly in his ears.

[6] It was beginning to cool. Gusts of wind made bits of paper dance between the parked cars. There was a flash of nearby lightning, and soon large drops of rain splashed onto his jeans. He stood to go upstairs, thought of the lecture that probably awaited him if he did anything except shut himself in his room with his math book, and started walking down the street instead. Down the block there was an old tenement¹ that had been abandoned for some months. Some of the

DURING READING QUESTIONS

Paragraph 5

Write: What does comparing his father's words to "distant thunder" reveal about the way Greg feels about his father?

- *Greg feels intimidated by his father.*
- *He feels like his father's words are harsh.*

¹ a room or a set of rooms forming a separate residence within a house or block of apartments

guys had held an impromptu² checker tournament there the week before, and Greg had noticed that the door, once boarded over, had been slightly ajar.

[7] Pulling his collar up as high as he could, he checked for traffic and made a dash across the street. He reached the house just as another flash of lightning changed the night to day for an instant, then returned the graffiti-scarred building to the grim shadows. He vaulted over the outer stairs and pushed tentatively³ on the door. It was open, and he let himself in.

[8] The inside of the building was dark except for the dim light that filtered through the dirty windows from the streetlamps. There was a room a few feet from the door, and from where he stood in the entrance, Greg could see a squarish patch of light on the floor. He entered the room, frowning at the musty smell. It was a large room that might have been someone's parlor⁴ at one time. Squinting, Greg could see an old table on its side against one wall, what looked like a pile of rags or a torn mattress in the corner, and a couch, with one side broken, in front of the window.

[9] He went to the couch. The side that wasn't broken was comfortable enough, though a little creaky. From the spot he could see the blinking neon sign over the bodega⁵ on the corner. He sat awhile, watching the sign blink first green then red, allowing his mind to drift to the Scorpions, then to his father. His father had been a postal worker for all Greg's life, and was proud of it, often telling Greg how hard he had worked to pass the test. Greg had heard the story too many times to be interested now.

[10] For a moment Greg thought he heard something that sounded like a scraping against the wall. He listened carefully, but it was gone.

[11] Outside the wind had picked up, sending the rain against the window with a force that shook the glass in its frame. A car passed, its tires hissing over the wet street and its red taillights glowing in the darkness.

[12] Greg thought he heard the noise again. His stomach tightened as he held himself still and listened intently. There weren't any more scraping noises, but he was sure he had heard something in the darkness — something breathing!

[13] He tried to figure out just where the breathing was coming from; he knew it was in the room with him. Slowly he stood, tensing. As he turned, a flash of lightning lit up the room, frightening him with its sudden brilliance. He saw nothing, just the overturned table, the pile of rags and an old newspaper on the floor. Could he have been imagining the sounds? He continued listening, but heard nothing and thought that it might have just been rats. Still, he thought, as soon as the rain let up he would leave. He went to the window and was about to look when he heard a voice behind him.

[14] "Don't try nothin' 'cause I got a razor sharp enough to cut a week into nine days!"

² unplanned

³ **Tentative** (adjective): without confidence or certainty

⁴ a room to receive guests

⁵ a small grocery store

CHARACTERIZATION: Paragraphs 6-7

Write: What does Greg's decision to avoid going home reveal about him?

- *He does not like conflict.*
- *He doesn't want to face consequences for his actions.*
- *He doesn't like difficult situations.*
- *He's afraid to disappoint his dad.*

Paragraph 9

Write: In paragraphs 2 and 9, what motivates Greg's father to share details about his life?

- *He wants to motivate Greg to work hard and achieve something.*
- *He wants Greg to be proud of him.*
- *He wants to show Greg that he has had to work hard.*

CHARACTERIZATION: Paragraphs 12-14

Find Evidence: Underline two details that reveal how Greg feels.

- *"His stomach tightened as he held himself still and listened intently." (12)*
- *"Slowly he stood, tensing." (13)*
- *"As he turned, a flash of lightning lit up the room, frightening him with its sudden brilliance." (13)*

INDEPENDENT READING

[15] Greg, except for an involuntary tremor in his knees, stood stock still. The voice was high and brittle, like dry twigs being broken, surely not one he had ever heard before. There was a shuffling sound as the person who had been speaking moved a step closer. Greg turned, holding his breath, his eyes straining to see in the dark room.

[16] The upper part of the figure before him was still in darkness. The lower half was in the dim rectangle of light that fell unevenly from the window. There were two feet, in cracked, dirty shoes from which rose legs that were wrapped in rags.

[17] "Who are you?" Greg hardly recognized his own voice.

[18] "I'm Lemon Brown," came the answer. "Who're you?"

[19] "Greg Ridley."

[20] "What you doing here?" The figure shuffled forward again, and Greg took a small step backward.

[21] "It's raining," Greg said.

[22] "I can see that," the figure said.

[23] The person who called himself Lemon Brown peered forward, and Greg could see him clearly. He was an old man. His black, heavily wrinkled face was surrounded by a halo of crinkly white hair and whiskers that seemed to separate his head from the layers of dirty coats piled on his smallish frame. His pants were bagged to the knee, where they were met with rags that went down to the old shoes. The rags were held on with strings, and there was a rope around his middle. Greg relaxed. He had seen the man before, picking through the trash on the corner and pulling clothes out of a Salvation Army box. There was no sign of a razor that could "cut a week into nine days."

[24] "What are you doing here?" Greg asked.

[25] "This is where I'm staying," Lemon Brown said. "What you here for?"

[26] "Told you it was raining out," Greg said, leaning against the back of the couch until he felt it give slightly.

[27] "Ain't you got no home?"

[28] "I got a home," Greg answered.

[29] "You ain't one of them bad boys looking for my treasure, is you?" Lemon Brown cocked his head to one side and squinted one eye. "Because I told you I got me a razor."

[30] "I'm not looking for your treasure," Greg answered, smiling. "If you have one."

[31] "What you mean, if I have one." Lemon Brown said. "Every man got a treasure. You don't know that, you must be a fool!"

[32] "Sure," Greg said as he sat on the sofa and put one leg over the back. "What do you have, gold coins?"

[33] "Don't worry none about what I got," Lemon Brown said. "You know who I am?"

[34] "You told me your name was orange or lemon or something like that."

DURING READING QUESTIONS

CHARACTERIZATION: Paragraphs 15-23

A. Find Evidence: Underline three pieces of evidence that paint a clear picture of Lemon Brown.

- *"The voice was high and brittle, like dry twigs being broken," (15)*
- *"There were two feet, in cracked, dirty shoes from which rose legs that were wrapped in rags." (16)*
- *"His black, heavily wrinkled face was surrounded by a halo of crinkly white hair and whiskers that seemed to separate his head from the layers of dirty coats piled on his smallish frame." (23)*
- *"His pants were bagged to the knee, where they were met with rags that went down to the old shoes." (23)*

B. Write: Why does Greg relax once he sees Lemon Brown?

- *He does not think that Lemon Brown looks intimidating or threatening.*

[35] "Lemon Brown," the old man said, pulling back his shoulders as he did so, "they used to call me Sweet Lemon Brown."

[36] "Sweet Lemon?" Greg asked.

[37] "Yessir. Sweet Lemon Brown. They used to say I sung the blues so sweet that if I sang at a funeral, the dead would commence⁶ to rocking with the beat. Used to travel all over Mississippi and as far as Monroe, Louisiana, and east on over to Macon, Georgia. You mean you ain't never heard of Sweet Lemon Brown?"

[38] "Afraid not," Greg said. "What... happened to you?"

[39] "Hard times, boy. Hard times always after a poor man. One day I got tired, sat down to rest a spell and felt a tap on my shoulder. Hard times caught up with me."

[40] "Sorry about that."

[41] "What you doing here? How come you don't go on home when the rain come? Rain don't bother you young folks none."

[42] "Just didn't." Greg looked away.

[43] "I used to have a knotty-headed boy just like you." Lemon Brown had half walked, half shuffled back to the corner and sat down against the wall. "Had them big eyes like you got. I used to call them moon eyes.⁷ Look into them moon eyes and see anything you want."

[44] "How come you gave up singing the blues?" Greg asked.

[45] "Didn't give it up," Lemon Brown said. "You don't give up the blues; they give you up. After a while you do good for yourself, and it ain't nothing but foolishness singing about how hard you got it. Ain't that right?"

[46] "I guess so."

[47] "What's that noise?" Lemon Brown asked, suddenly sitting upright.

[48] Greg listened, and he heard a noise outside. He looked at Lemon Brown and saw the old man pointing toward the window.

[49] Greg went to the window and saw three men, neighborhood thugs, on the stoop. One was carrying a length of pipe. Greg looked back toward Lemon Brown, who moved quietly across the room to the window. The old man looked out, then beckoned frantically⁸ for Greg to follow him. For a moment Greg couldn't move. Then he found himself following Lemon Brown into the hallway and up the darkened stairs. Greg followed as closely as he could. They reached the top of the stairs, and Greg felt Lemon Brown's hand first lying on his shoulder, then probing down his arm until he took Greg's hand into his own as they crouched in the darkness.

[50] "They's bad men," Lemon Brown whispered. His breath was warm against Greg's skin.

[51] "Hey! Rag man!" A voice called. "We know you in here. What you got up under them rags? You got any money?"

[52] Silence.

CHARACTERIZATION: Paragraph 49-54

A. Find Evidence: Underline at least two details that reveal Greg's and Lemon Brown's different reactions to the men.

- *"The old man looked out, then beckoned frantically for Greg to follow him." (49)*
- *"For a moment Greg couldn't move." (49)*
- *"Then he found himself following Lemon Brown into the hallway and up the darkened stairs. Greg followed as closely as he could." (49)*
- *"Lemon Brown squeezed Greg's hand in his own hard, gnarled fist." (54)*

B. Write: What does this reveal about both Greg and Lemon Brown?

- *This reveals that Greg is sometimes frozen by his fear or struggles to take action.*
- *This reveals that Lemon Brown is a protector and quickly looks for ways to get out of bad situations.*

⁶ **Commence** (verb): to begin

⁷ eyes wide open, as in wonder

⁸ **Frantic** (adjective): feeling or showing a lot of fear and worry through wild, hurried activity

[53] “We don’t want to have to come in and hurt you, old man, but we don’t mind if we have to.”

[54] Lemon Brown squeezed Greg’s hand in his own hard, gnarled⁹ fist.

[55] There was a banging downstairs and a light as the men entered. They banged around noisily, calling for the rag man.

[56] “We heard you talking about your treasure.” The voice was slurred.¹⁰ “We just want to see it, that’s all.”

[57] “You sure he’s here?” One voice seemed to come from the room with the sofa.

[58] “Yeah, he stays here every night.”

[59] “There’s another room over there; I’m going to take a look. You got that flashlight?”

[60] “Yeah, here, take the pipe too.”

[61] Greg opened his mouth to quiet the sound of his breath as he sucked it in uneasily. A beam of light hit the wall a few feet opposite him, then went out.

[62] “Ain’t nobody in that room,” a voice said. “You think he gone or something?”

[63] “I don’t know,” came the answer. “All I know is that I heard him talking about some kind of treasure. You know they found that shopping bag lady with that load of money in her bags.”

[64] “Yeah. You think he’s upstairs?”

[65] “HEY, OLD MAN, ARE YOU UP THERE?”

[66] Silence.

[67] “Watch my back. I’m going up.”

[68] There was a footstep on the stairs, and the beam from the flashlight danced crazily along the peeling wallpaper. Greg held his breath. There was another step and a loud crashing noise as the man banged the pipe against the wooden banister. Greg could feel his temples throb as the man slowly neared them. Greg thought about the pipe, wondering what he would do when the man reached them — what he could do.

[69] Then Lemon Brown released his hand and moved toward the top of the stairs. Greg looked around and saw stairs going up to the next floor. He tried waving to Lemon Brown, hoping the old man would see him in the dim light and follow him to the next floor. Maybe, Greg thought, the man wouldn’t follow them up there. Suddenly, though, Lemon Brown stood at the top of the stairs, both arms raised high above his head.

[70] “There he is!” A voice cried from below.

[71] “Throw down your money, old man, so I won’t have to bash your head in!” Lemon Brown didn’t move. Greg felt himself near panic. The steps came closer, and still Lemon Brown didn’t move. He was an eerie sight, a bundle of rags standing at the top of the stairs, his shadow on the wall looming over him. Maybe, the thought came to Greg, the scene could be even eerier.

Paragraphs 68-74

Write: How does Lemon Brown demonstrate courage?

- *He stands at the top of the stairs to scare the men away.*
- *He stops hiding from the men and finds a way to try to scare them off.*

⁹ **Gnarled** (*adjective*): twisted and rough, especially with age

¹⁰ unclear speech when sounds run into one another

[72] Greg wet his lips, put his hands to his mouth and tried to make a sound. Nothing came out. He swallowed hard, wet his lips once more and howled as evenly as he could.

[73] “What’s that?”

[74] As Greg howled, the light moved away from Lemon Brown, but not before Greg saw him hurl his body down the stairs at the men who had come to take his treasure. There was a crashing noise, and then footsteps. A rush of warm air came in as the downstairs door opened, then there was only an ominous¹¹ silence.

INDEPENDENT READING

[75] Greg stood on the landing. He listened, and after a while there was another sound on the staircase.

[76] “Mr. Brown?” he called. “Yeah, it’s me,” came the answer. “I got their flashlight.”

[77] Greg exhaled in relief as Lemon Brown made his way slowly back up the stairs.

[78] “You OK?”

[79] “Few bumps and bruises,” Lemon Brown said.

[80] “I think I’d better be going,” Greg said, his breath returning to normal. “You’d better leave, too, before they come back.”

[81] “They may hang around for a while,” Lemon Brown said, “but they ain’t getting their nerve up to come in here again. Not with crazy rag men and howling spooks. Best you stay a while till the coast is clear. I’m heading out west tomorrow, out to east St. Louis.”

[82] “They were talking about treasures,” Greg said. “You really have a treasure?”

[83] “What I tell you? Didn’t I tell you every man got a treasure?” Lemon Brown said. “You want to see mine?”

[84] “If you want to show it to me,” Greg shrugged.

[85] “Let’s look out the window first, see what them scoundrels¹² be doing,” Lemon Brown said.

[86] They followed the oval beam of the flashlight into one of the rooms and looked out the window. They saw the men who had tried to take the treasure sitting on the curb near the corner. One of them had his pants leg up, looking at his knee.

[87] “You sure you’re not hurt?” Greg asked Lemon Brown.

[88] “Nothing that ain’t been hurt before,” Lemon Brown said. “When you get as old as me all you say when something hurts is, ‘Howdy, Mr. Pain, sees you back again.’ Then when Mr. Pain see he can’t worry you none, he go on mess with somebody else.”

[89] Greg smiled.

[90] “Here, you hold this.” Lemon Brown gave Greg the flashlight.

DURING READING QUESTIONS

¹¹ **Ominous** (*adjective*): suggesting that something bad is going to happen

¹² mean or wicked people

[91] He sat on the floor near Greg and carefully untied the strings that held the rags on his right leg. When he took the rags away, Greg saw a piece of plastic. The old man carefully took off the plastic and unfolded it. He revealed some yellowed newspaper clippings and a battered harmonica.

[92] “There it be,” he said, nodding his head. “There it be.”

[93] Greg looked at the old man, saw the distant look in his eye, then turned to the clippings. They told of Sweet Lemon Brown, a blues singer and harmonica player who was appearing at different theaters in the South. One of the clippings said he had been the hit of the show, although not the headliner. All of the clippings were reviews of shows Lemon Brown had been in more than fifty years ago. Greg looked at the harmonica. It was dented badly on one side, with the reed holes on one end nearly closed.

[94] “I used to travel around and make money to feed my wife and Jesse — that’s my boy’s name. Used to feed them good, too. Then his mama died, and he stayed with his mama’s sister. He grewed up to be a man, and when the war come he saw fit to go off and fight in it. I didn’t have nothing to give him except these things that told him who I was, and what he come from. If you know your pappy did something, you know you can do something too.

[95] “Anyway, he went off to war, and I went off still playing and singing. ‘Course by then I wasn’t as much as I used to be, not without somebody to make it worth the while. You know what I mean?”

[96] “Yeah.” Greg nodded, not quite really knowing.

[97] “I traveled around, and one time I come home, and there was this letter saying Jesse got killed in the war. Broke my heart, it truly did.

[98] “They sent back what he had with him over there, and what it was is this old mouth fiddle and these clippings. Him carrying it around with him like that told me it meant something to him. That was my treasure, and when I give it to him he treated it just like that, a treasure. Ain’t that something?”

[99] “Yeah, I guess so,” Greg said.

[100] “You guess so?” Lemon Brown’s voice rose an octave¹³ as he started to put his treasure back into the plastic. “Well, you got to guess ‘cause you sure don’t know nothing. Don’t know enough to get home when it’s raining.”

[101] “I guess... I mean, you’re right.”

[102] “You OK for a youngster,” the old man said as he tied the strings around his leg, “better than those scalawags¹⁴ what come here looking for my treasure. That’s for sure.”

[103] “You really think that treasure of yours was worth fighting for?” Greg asked. “Against a pipe?”

[104] “What else a man got ‘cepting what he can pass on to his son, or his daughter, if she be his oldest?” Lemon Brown said. “For a big-headed boy you sure do ask the foolishhest questions.”

[105] Lemon Brown got up after patting his rags in place and looked out the window again.

Paragraphs 91-93

Write: What is Lemon Brown’s treasure?

- *Old newspaper clippings about his life as a musician and an old harmonica*

Paragraphs 94-104:

Write: What motivated Lemon Brown to fight for his treasure?

- *Lemon Brown felt his treasure was worth fighting for because it represents his connection to his son.*

¹³ refers to a high pitched voice

¹⁴ a person who behaves badly

[106] “Looks like they’re gone. You get on out of here and get yourself home. I’ll be watching from the window so you’ll be all right.”

[107] Lemon Brown went down the stairs behind Greg. When they reached the front door the old man looked out first, saw the street was clear and told Greg to scoot on home.

[108] “You sure you’ll be OK?” Greg asked.

[109] “Now didn’t I tell you I was going to east St. Louis in the morning?” Lemon Brown asked. “Don’t that sound OK to you?”

[110] “Sure it does,” Greg said. “Sure it does. And you take care of that treasure of yours.”

[111] “That I’ll do,” Lemon said, the wrinkles around his eyes suggesting a smile. “That I’ll do.”

[112] The night had warmed and the rain had stopped, leaving puddles at the curbs. Greg didn’t even want to think how late it was. He thought ahead of what his father would say and wondered if he should tell him about Lemon Brown. He thought about it until he reached his stoop, and decided against it. Lemon Brown would be OK, Greg thought, with his memories and his treasure.

[113] Greg pushed the button over the bell marked Ridley, thought of the lecture he knew his father would give him, and smiled.

CHARACTERIZATION: Paragraphs 112-113

Write: How has Lemon Brown changed Greg’s view of his dad?

- *He used to want to avoid going home and talking to his father because of his lectures, but now he smiles when he thinks about it.*
- *Greg now understands the reason and love behind his father’s lectures.*

“The Treasure of Lemon Brown” © 1983 by Walter Dean Myers from *Boy’s Life* with permission from DeFiore and Company.

Name _____ Class _____

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the multiple choice questions for “The Treasure of Lemon Brown.” 5 minutes



Note: To ensure test security, answers to the following assessment items are viewable only on commonlit.org for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the Answer Key tab on the text page to gain access.

1. What do Lemon Brown’s actions reveal about courage? **[RL.2]**
 - A. It takes courage to admit you are wrong.
 - B. It takes courage to protect what you love.
 - C. It takes courage to speak out against something that is unfair.
 - D. It takes courage to stay positive after losing the ones you love.
2. Which piece of evidence *best* reveals how Lemon Brown’s courageous actions impact Greg? **[RL.1]**
 - A. “Greg thought about the pipe, wondering what he would do when the man reached them — what he could do.” (Paragraph 68)
 - B. “He swallowed hard, wet his lips once more and howled as evenly as he could.” (Paragraph 72)
 - C. “‘You really think that treasure of yours was worth fighting for?’ Greg asked. ‘Against a pipe?’” (Paragraph 103)
 - D. “Lemon Brown would be OK, Greg thought, with his memories and his treasure.” (Paragraph 112)
3. To Lemon Brown, what does his treasure represent? **[RL.3]**
 - A. It represents the challenges he overcame as a musician.
 - B. It represents the memory of his wife who passed away.
 - C. It represents the love and pride his son had for him.
 - D. It represents the dreams he has for east St. Louis.
4. Read the following excerpt from paragraph 71:

*“He was an **eerie** sight, a bundle of rags standing at the top of the stairs, his shadow on the wall looming over him. Maybe, the thought came to Greg, the scene could be even **eerier**.”*

What is the best meaning of “eerie”? **[RL.4]**

- A. spooky
- B. pleasant
- C. depressing
- D. welcoming



Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt for “The Treasure of Lemon Brown.” 15 minutes

Note: To ensure test security, a sample answer to the following short response item is viewable only on commonlit.org for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the Answer Key tab on the text page to access it.

PROMPT: Consider the example of Lemon Brown. What motivates people to act with courage? Explain your answer with evidence from the text. **[RL.1]**

In your response be sure to:

- clarify what is happening by introducing your evidence with context.
- state who is speaking, narrating, or being quoted for each piece of evidence.

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?

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

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

- A. YES!
B. 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

- *I agree with _____, and I want to add...*
- *I found another example of what _____ brought up on page _____ ...*
- *I see it slightly differently because on page _____ ...*
- *I can see your point, but...*

1. Does a treasure always have to be a physical object? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner's answer

2. **CROSS-TEXTUAL:** Choose another character from this unit. What did they treasure or value? What were they willing to risk to protect it?

My answer	My partner's answer

3. Lemon Brown says, "Every man got a treasure." Do you agree or disagree? Why?

My answer	My partner's answer

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 learn how to form and use sentences in the **conditional tense**.
[L.8.1.C]

Conditionals at a glance

Conditional sentences express situations that are uncertain, haven't happened yet, or depend on something else happening.

Examples of Conditional Sentences

- **Second conditional:** *If I **were** rich, I **would** travel around the world.*
- **Third conditional:** *If you **had told** me you needed a ride, I **would have** left earlier.*

What activities are included?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
Part 1	Examining Conditional Sentences: This activity allows students to notice the characteristics of second conditional sentences.	5 min
Part 2	Notes on Second Conditional Sentences: Students review key points about the purpose of second conditional sentences and learn how to form them.	5 min
Part 3	Writing Second Conditional Sentences Correctly: In this activity, students will fill in the blank with the correct verb tense to complete a second conditional sentence.	10 min
Part 4	Second Conditional Sentence Correction: In this activity, students correct errors in the sentences provided to write correct second conditional sentences.	10 min
Part 5	Second Conditional Sentence Completion: Students will add to the clause provided to create a second conditional sentence.	10 min
Part 6	Examining Conditional Sentences: This activity allows students to notice the characteristics of third conditional sentences.	5 min
Part 7	Notes on Third Conditional Sentences: Students review key points about the purpose of third conditional sentences and learn how to form them.	5 min
Part 8	Writing Third Conditional Sentences Correctly: In this activity, students will fill in the blank with the correct verb tense to complete a third conditional sentence.	10 min
Part 9	Third Conditional Sentence Correction: In this activity, students correct errors in the sentences provided to write correct second conditional sentences.	10 min
Part 10	Third Conditional Sentence Completion: Students will add main clauses to create a third conditional sentence.	10 min
~80 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY:

Grammar and Usage Activities: CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

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

PART 1: Examining Conditional Sentences

DIRECTIONS: Read the set of sentences below. Then, answer the questions that follow.



SET A
If I were rich, I would travel around the world.
If I were taller, I would play basketball.
If she had a million dollars, she would buy homes for the homeless.
If Kami and James possessed all the time in the world, they would paint a million pictures.

REFLECTION:

- Do these sentences express things that are certain and likely to happen, or things that are uncertain and unlikely to happen?

They express things that are uncertain and unlikely to happen.

- What similar patterns do you notice in this set of sentences?

- The sentences have two clauses separated by a comma.*
- The first clause begins with "if."*
- The second clause uses "would" and another verb.*

- Reread the **bolded** verbs in the first clause. What verb tense is used: past, present, or future?

Past tense



PART 2: Notes on Second Conditional Sentences

DIRECTIONS: Review the key points about conditional sentences below. Then, complete the practice exercises on the following pages.

CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

- Conditional sentences express situations that are uncertain, haven't happened yet, or depend on something else happening.
- Conditional sentences use different verb tenses to show what is uncertain or possible.
- There are several types of conditional sentences. In this lesson we will focus on two types:
 - Second Conditional Sentences
 - Third Conditional Sentences

SECOND CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

- Second conditional sentences express outcomes that are unrealistic or unlikely to happen in the future.
- They contain an if-clause and a main clause.
 - *If ... , [then] ...*
- In the **if-clause**, use the past tense of the verb. If the verb is *to be*, use *were*.
- In the **main clause**, use **would, could, should, or might** to express the possibility or unlikely result.

Examples

- If I **owned** a zoo, I **would let** people interact with the animals more.
 → *I don't actually own a zoo, but I'm imagining a situation where I do.*
- If I **were** rich, I **would travel** around the world.
 → *I'm not actually rich, but I'm imagining a situation where I was rich.*



PART 3: Writing Second Conditional Sentences Correctly

DIRECTIONS: Read each sentence. Fill in the blank with the correct verb form to create a second conditional sentence.

Example:

If I were a great dancer, I	<i>would go</i>	to all the parties.
-----------------------------	-----------------	---------------------

- A. **would go**
- B. went
- C. am going

1	If I	were	more talented, I would open an online shop.
----------	------	------	---

- A. would be
- B. **were**
- C. was

2	If I cooked delicious meals on vacation, I	would serve	them near the beach.
----------	--	-------------	----------------------

- A. served
- B. **would serve**
- C. serves

3	If I	had	more money, I would feed all the animals in the shelter.
----------	------	-----	--

- A. would have
- B. **had**
- C. having

4	If Jonquil had new glasses, she	would be	able to see everything!
----------	---------------------------------	----------	-------------------------

- A. been
- B. being
- C. **would be**

5	If I	were	more adventurous, I would go rock climbing.
----------	------	------	---

- A. would be
- B. **were**
- C. was



PART 4: Second Conditional Sentence Correction

DIRECTIONS: Read each sentence with an underlined mistake. Then, revise the sentence using the second conditional correctly.

Example

Original sentence: If I am rich, I would travel around the world.

Correction: If I **were** rich, I would travel around the world.

1. If I were tall, I played basketball.

*If I were tall, I **would play** basketball.*

2. If I had money, I am buying books for everyone to read.

*If I had money, I **would buy** books for everyone to read.*

3. If Ava would possess public speaking skills, she would give a Ted Talk at school.

*If Ava **possessed** public speaking skills, she would give a Ted Talk at school.*

4. If Alma was more competitive, she would fight to be captain of the team.

*If Alma **were** more competitive, she would fight to be captain of the team.*

5. If James has more time, he would take a nap.

*If James **had** more time, he would take a nap.*



Part 5: Second Conditional Sentence Completion

DIRECTIONS: Read each sentence starter or **if-clause**. Then, add a main clause to create a **second conditional** sentence.

Note to Teacher: Student answers will vary, but sample responses are provided.

Example

Sentence starter: If Hope had a passport

Answer: If Hope had a passport, she would travel the world.

1. **Sentence starter:** If Jamie were more interested in sports,

If Jamie were more interested in sports, she would play on a team at her high school.

2. **Sentence starter:** If Carlos liked Chemistry,

If Carlos liked Chemistry, he would sign up for honors Chemistry 2.

3. **Sentence starter:** If Lela had longer hair,

If Lela had longer hair, she might donate it to Locks of Love to support cancer patients.

4. **Sentence starter:** If it were Friday,

If it were Friday, I would be making plans for the weekend with my friends.

5. **Sentence starter:** If it stopped raining,

If it stopped raining, I could take the dog for a walk.



PART 6: Examining Conditional Sentences

DIRECTIONS: Read the set of sentences below. Then, answer the question that follows.

SET B
If you <u>had told</u> me you needed a ride, I <u>would have left</u> earlier.
If Jamela <u>had known</u> about the crime, <u>would she have spoken</u> up?
If Josie <u>had been</u> at the game, her basketball team <u>would have defeated</u> their rivals.
If I <u>had walked</u> into the classroom, I <u>would have seen</u> what really happened.

REFLECTION:

- Are these situations describing uncertain/possible situations in the future, present or past?

- These situations describe situations from the past that are impossible - they will never happen because the moment has passed.*

- What similar patterns do you notice in this set of sentences?

- The sentences have two clauses separated by a comma.*
- The first clause begins with "if" and uses "had" and another verb.*
- The second clause uses "would have" and another verb.*



PART 7: Notes on Third Conditional Sentences

DIRECTIONS: Review the key points about conditional sentences below. Then, complete the practice exercises on the following pages.

THIRD CONDITIONAL SENTENCES:

- Third conditional sentences explain how past circumstances would be different *if* something different had happened beforehand.
- They contain an **if-clause** and a **main clause**.
 - *If ..., [then] ...*
- In the **if-clause**, use the past perfect tense of the verb (*had* + past participle such as *done*, *swum*, and *seen*).
- In the **main clause**, use *would*, *could*, *should*, or *might* with the present perfect tense of the verb (*have* + past participle).

Examples

If you had told me you needed a ride, I would have left earlier.

→ *In the past, if I had known you needed a ride, I would have responded by leaving earlier.*

If you had told me the milk was spoiled, I would not have drunk it.

→ *In the past, if I had known the milk had spoiled and gone bad, I would have responded by not drinking it.*

PART 8: Writing Third Conditional Sentences Correctly

DIRECTIONS: Read each sentence. Fill in the blank with the correct verb form to create a third conditional sentence.



Example:

If you	<i>had told</i>	me you like chicken, I would not have made beef.
--------	-----------------	--

- A. tell
- B. would have told
- C. **had told**

1	If she	<i>had found</i>	the recipe in time, she would have made the cake.
---	--------	------------------	---

- A. found
- B. **had found**
- C. would have found

2	If the students	<i>had known</i>	Ms. Weinzapfel loved caramel, they would have brought her candy.
---	-----------------	------------------	--

- A. would have known
- B. knew
- C. **had known**

3	If Nancy	<i>had asked</i>	for more time on her test, the teacher would have given her more time.
---	----------	------------------	--

- A. asked
- B. **had asked**
- C. would have asked

4	If Carlos had mentioned the importance of the t-shirt, his mother	<i>would have saved</i>	it for him.
---	---	-------------------------	-------------

- A. had saved
- B. has saved
- C. **would have saved**

5	If Tandy knew the punch had pineapple juice, she	<i>would not have had</i>	any; she has a bad allergy.
---	--	---------------------------	-----------------------------

- A. has had
- B. **would not have had**
- C. have had



PART 9: Third Conditional Sentence Correction

DIRECTIONS: Read each sentence with an underlined mistake. Then, revise the sentence to use the **third conditional** correctly.

Example

Original sentence: If you had tell me you didn't like monsters, I would have brought a different movie.

Correction: If you **had told** me you didn't like monsters, I would have brought a different movie.

1. I wonder, if Taneshia knows she would win the award at the assembly, would she have dressed up that day?

*I wonder, if Taneshia **had known** she would win the award, would she have worn dressed up that day?*

2. If I would have reviewed the syllabus, I would have known there were only two exams.

*If I **had reviewed** the syllabus, I would have known there were only two exams.*

3. If I had watched the news, I knew there was a car accident on the highway.

*If I had watched the news, I **would have known** there was a car accident on the highway.*

4. If I had taken a risk, I had asked the girl out.

*If I had taken a risk, I **would have asked** the girl out.*

5. If Telly would have saved more money, she could have bought a nicer car.

*If Telly **had saved** more money, she could have bought a nicer car.*



Part 10: Third Conditional Sentence Completion

DIRECTIONS: Read each sentence starter or **if-clause**. Then, add a main clause using the **third conditional** correctly.

Note to Teacher: Student answers will vary, but sample responses are provided.

Example

Sentence starter: If Hope had prepared for the test,

Answer: If Hope had prepared for the test, she would have passed it.

1. **Sentence starter:** If I had purchased the bigger meal,

If I had purchased the bigger meal, I would be miserably stuffed.

2. **Sentence starter:** If I had sent the payment on time,

If I had sent the payment on time, I would not have paid a late fee.

3. **Sentence starter:** If Josephine had watered her plants,

If Josephine had watered her plants, she could have saved them.

4. **Sentence starter:** If Ms. Favors had described the directions more clearly,

If Ms. Favors had described the directions more clearly, most of the students would not have been confused.

5. **Sentence starter:** If the baby had taken a nap,

If the baby had taken a nap, he would not have cried in the restaurant.

LESSON OVERVIEW: “I LOOK AT THE WORLD”

(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	Reading Lesson 6
“The Terror” by Junot Díaz (Memoir)	“The Friday Everything Changed” by Anne Hart (Short Story)	“Sonnet” by James Weldon Johnson (Poem)	“Transcript of Full Joseph McNeil Interview” by Newsday (Interview)	“The Treasure of Lemon Brown” by Walter Dean Myers (Short Story)	“I look at the world” by Langston Hughes (Poem)
					↑ You are here! ↑

This lesson's skill focus

In this lesson, students will learn how figurative language develops the theme of a poem. [RL.8.2, RL.8.4]
--

Materials needed






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

About this Poem

In this poem, a person examines the oppression around them and vows to work to create a better world.	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 feelings conveyed through the images and ideas in the poem.
---	--

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: I look at the world

Langston Hughes

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

About this text	
Langston Hughes (1902-1967) was an American poet, novelist, playwright, and social activist. Hughes was also a leading figure in the Harlem Renaissance, a social and political movement of Black artists in New York City in the 1920s.	
Purpose for Reading	Vocabulary
To understand how the poet uses figurative language to develop a theme about having the courage to make change.	<p>Let's pronounce these words together as a class:</p> <p>Oppression [<i>uh-presh-uhn</i>]</p>

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

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

- [1] I look at the world
- [2] From awakening eyes in a black face —
- [3] And this is what I see:
- [4] This fenced-off narrow space
- [5] Assigned to me.
- [6] I look then at the silly walls
- [7] Through dark eyes in a dark face —
- [8] And this is what I know:
- [9] That all these walls **oppression** builds
- [10] Will have to go!

Lines 1-5

A. Think & Share: How does the speaker describe their appearance?

- *The speaker describes themselves as Black with open or alert eyes.*

B. Write: What does the phrase “assigned to me” in line 5 suggest about the speaker’s situation?

- *The speaker did not get to choose their place in life.*
- *Other people forced the speaker into this space.*

Lines 9-10

Write: What has the speaker decided?

- *Oppression and discrimination must end or be torn down.*
- *The speaker has decided to get rid of the limits that oppression has placed on him.*

[11] I look at my own body
[12] With eyes no longer blind —
[13] And I see that my own hands can make
[14] The world that's in my mind.
[15] Then let us hurry, comrades,¹
[16] The road to find.

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

A speaker realizes that he is trapped and wants to break free.

Lines 11-16

A. Write: How does the speaker's attitude shift in these lines?

- *The speaker becomes hopeful and motivated that they can change the world to be a better place.*

B. Write: Paraphrase lines 13-14

- *I have the power to create the world I dream of in my head.*

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¹ **Comrade** (*noun*): a friend or trusted companion, especially one with whom you've been through dangerous situations

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

1. **Lines 4-6:** Based on what you know about the speaker and American history, what might the “fenced-off narrow space” (Line 4) and “silly walls” (Line 6) represent?

- *They represent the limits and obstacles caused by racism.*
- *They represent the oppression that Black people face.*

2. **Lines 2, 12:** In line 2, the speaker says their eyes are “awakening.” By line 12, their eyes are “no longer blind.” What change in the speaker does this figurative language suggest?

- *The speaker is now able to “see” — or understand — things that they couldn’t before.*

3. **Lines 13-16:** The speaker states, “My own hands can make / The world that’s in my mind/ Then let us hurry, comrades, / The road to find” (Lines 13-16). How does this figurative language develop the speaker’s message?

- *These lines develop the speaker’s message that oppressed people have the power and should work together to create a better world that they dream of.*

Name _____ Class _____

Independent Practice



Directions: Answer the multiple choice questions for “I look at the world.” 5 minutes

Note: To ensure test security, answers to the following assessment items are viewable only on commonlit.org for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the Answer Key tab on the text page to gain access.

1. Which detail from the poem *best* shows how the speaker wants to change the world? **[RL.1]**
 - A. “This fenced-off narrow space / Assigned to me” (Lines 4-5)
 - B. “I look then at the silly walls / Through dark eyes in a dark face —” (Lines 6-7)
 - C. “That all these walls oppression builds / Will have to go!” (Lines 9-10)
 - D. “I look at my own body / With eyes no longer blind — ” (Lines 11-12)
2. Which lines from the poem *best* expresses the speaker’s attitude toward oppression? **[RL.1]**
 - A. “From awakening eyes in a black face —” (Line 2)
 - B. “I look then at the silly walls” (Line 6)
 - C. “I look at my own body” (Line 11)
 - D. “Then let us hurry, comrades,” (Line 15)
3. How do the phrases “this fenced-off narrow space” (Line 4) and “walls oppression builds” (Line 9) develop the meaning of the poem? **[RL.4]**
 - A. They describe the way freedom looks to oppressed people.
 - B. They reveal how oppression limits people’s opportunities in life.
 - C. They highlight how neighbors build walls and fences to keep people out.
 - D. They illustrate what the speaker believes about how to work against oppression.
4. In lines 15-16, the speaker says, “Then let us hurry, comrades, / The road to find.” What is the *most likely* interpretation of these lines? **[RL.4]**
 - A. The speaker wants to run from their problems rather than confront them.
 - B. The speaker wants to move to a different community with their friends.
 - C. The speaker wants others to join them in pursuing a better world.
 - D. The speaker wants their friends to find their true passions in life.

Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt for “I look at the world.” 15 minutes



Note: To ensure test security, a sample answer to the following short response item is viewable only on commonlit.org for verified teacher accounts. Navigate to the Answer Key tab on the text page to access it.

PROMPT: “I look at the world” was written in the 1920s. What might the speaker of the poem think about the world today, nearly 100 years later? Use evidence from the text to support your answer. [RL.2, RL.4]

In your response be sure to:

- explain what the evidence means or represents.
- explain how the evidence supports the argument.

CHECKLIST FOR WRITING EXPLANATIONS:

- ☐ Highlight or bold each explanation.

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

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

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

- A. YES!
- B. 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

- *I agree with _____, and I want to add...*
- *I found another example of what _____ brought up on page _____ ...*
- *I see it slightly differently because on page _____ ...*
- *I can see your point, but...*

1. Are there still “walls” that **segregate** and limit people’s lives today?

My answer	My partner’s answer

2. **CROSS-TEXTUAL:** How do Joseph McNeil’s ideas about **activism** apply to the speaker of “I look at the world”?

My answer	My partner’s answer

3. **CROSS-TEXTUAL:** Both “Sonnet” and “I look at the world” explore how a person can avoid despair in the face of struggle or **oppression**. Which speaker’s advice do you find most inspiring? Explain your answer.

My answer	My partner’s answer

LESSON OVERVIEW: END OF UNIT WRITING REVIEW

(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	End of Unit Writing Review	Unit 2 Essay: Planning	In this unit, you've read about people and characters who have shown courage. Select one quote about courage. Then, analyze how at least two of the people and characters you've read about demonstrate the ideas in your quote. You can also use examples from your own life. [W.2]
		↑ You are here! ↑		



This lesson's skill focus

Students will review and practice introducing evidence with context and writing strong explanations . [W.8.2]
--

Materials needed

You will need	Your students will need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This lesson handout "I look at the world" (Teacher Copy) Classroom Anchor Charts from previous writing lessons (Optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "End of Unit Writing Review" (Student Copy) "I look at the world" (Student Copy) Student Reference Sheets from previous writing lessons (Optional)

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
Part 1	<p> Reviewing a Strong Paragraph: Students collaboratively review a paragraph for the unit's two major writing skills: introducing evidence with context and writing strong explanations.</p> <p>Note that this review also briefly touches upon arguments, which was a focus skill in unit one.</p>	10 min
Part 2	<p> Independent Writing: Students demonstrate their progress toward mastery of the unit's writing skills by responding to a prompt about Langston Hughes' poem, "I look at the world." The prompt asks students to write about theme and figurative language, since these were two reading skills covered in this unit.</p>	15 min
~25 min total		

Name _____

Class _____

TEACHER COPY: End of Unit Writing Review

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

About this lesson

Strong paragraphs include clear arguments, evidence, and explanations. In this lesson, you will review a strong paragraph. Then, you will demonstrate your ability to use these skills in your own writing. **[W.2]**

PART 1: Reviewing a Strong Paragraph

Directions: Read the prompt and sample response. Then, answer the questions that follow. *10 minutes*



PROMPT: Consider the example of Lemon Brown. What motivates people to act with courage? **[RL.1]**

People are motivated to act with courage when they are defending something they deeply value. In Walter Dean Myers' story, "The Treasure of Lemon Brown," the narrator describes Lemon Brown's treasure as "some yellowed newspaper clippings and a battered harmonica" (91). Although this doesn't sound like a treasure, these objects were found on Lemon's son when his son was killed in a war. To Lemon, they represent his son's admiration for him, so he values them deeply. A conflict in the story involves men attacking Lemon to steal his treasure, which they believe must be money or jewels. Lemon courageously fights them off, and when asked why he risked his life, he says, "What else a man got 'cepting what he can pass on to his son, or his daughter?" (104). In other words, Lemon wasn't protecting the clippings, he was protecting the only thing that mattered to him. This suggests that people are motivated to act courageously when they are protecting what is most important to them in life.

Argument

Context

Second Explanation

1. Arguments should clearly answer the prompt. In your own words, what is this student's answer to the question, "What motivates people to act with courage?"

- *People are motivated to be courageous when they are protecting something important to them.*

2. This student uses more context before her second piece of evidence than before her first. Why?

- *Writers use context to make their evidence clear, and sometimes this requires using more context.*
- *In order for the second piece of evidence to be clear, the writer needed to explain that Lemon Brown was attacked and that he was answering a question about why he fought back.*

3. Analyze the writer's second explanation. What is the purpose of each sentence in this explanation?

- *The first sentence explains what the evidence means.*
- *The second sentence explains how the evidence supports the argument about what motivates people to act courageously.*

PART 2: Independent Practice

Directions: Answer the short response prompt about Langston Hughes' poem, "I look at the world."
15 minutes.



PROMPT: Explain how Langston Hughes' use of figurative language helps develop a theme in "I look at the world."
[RL.4]

SAMPLE STUDENT OUTLINE:

Langston Hughes uses figurative language to develop the theme that people have the power to stand up to oppression and change their world for the better.

- *"This fenced-off narrow space / Assigned to me." (4-5)*
- *"And this is what I know: / That all these walls oppression builds / Will have to go!" (8-10)*
- *"With eyes no longer blind —" (12)*
- *"And I see that my own hands can make / The world that's in my mind." (13-14)*

SAMPLE SHORT RESPONSE:

*Langston Hughes uses figurative language to develop the theme that people have the power to stand up to **oppression** and change their world for the better. As the speaker looks out at the world, they see "this fenced off narrow space / Assigned to me" (Hughes, lines 4-5). In these lines, the fenced off narrow spaces represent the limited choices the narrator has. The speaker suggests they did not choose their situation because it was "assigned" to them. Later in lines 8-10, the speaker says, "and this is what I know: / That all these walls **oppression** builds / Will have to go!" (lines 8-10). Here, the speaker is comparing the challenges **oppression** creates to walls built around them. By saying the walls have to go, they are suggesting that the oppression they face must end. Finally, the speaker says, "With eyes no longer blind... I see that my own hands can make / The world that's in my mind" (lines 12-14). The speaker is suggesting they are now aware of the problems around them and have the ability to create change. They know the world they want to live in and realize it is within their power to make it a reality.*

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 make **statements** and pose **questions** to **connect** ideas during **discussion**. [SL.8.1.C]

Discussion skill at a glance



Statements that Connect Ideas:

- The similarity I see between _____ and _____ is...
- What you said about _____ connects to _____ because...

Questions that Connect Ideas:

- How does _____ connect to _____?

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 connect ideas 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:

Read the following quote for meaning:

*"You cannot swim for new horizons until you have courage to lose sight of the shore."
 ~ William Faulkner*

Discussion Question:

Based on the unit texts, why is it difficult to "lose sight of the shore," and how do people gain the courage to do it?

Name _____

Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Questions that Connect Ideas

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

PART 1: Sample Discussion

Directions: Below is an excerpt from a student discussion about the story “The Treasure of Lemon Brown” and the poem “Sonnet.” Analyze this sample discussion dialogue to learn more about important discussion skills. As you read, pause to answer the questions beside the text.



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

SAMPLE DISCUSSION PROMPT

Is courage always obvious to see?

SAMPLE DISCUSSION DIALOGUE

[1] **Anna:** I think courage is easy to see because you have to do something big to be courageous. In the story “The Treasure of Lemon Brown,” Lemon had to throw himself down the flight of stairs to save his treasure from the group of men. It wasn’t easy to do, but his courage helped him act fast.

[2] **Koye:** I get what you’re saying about Lemon Brown, Anna, but I don’t think courage is always obvious to see.

[3] **Anna:** What do you mean, Koye?

[4] **Koye:** In the poem “Sonnet,” the speaker is gaining all their courage from within. For the speaker, it is courageous just to look forward to brighter days ahead and persevere through difficult times. They’re facing an internal battle.

[5] **Adrienne:** The connection I see between Anna and Koye’s ideas is that you’re both noting that courage means doing something that isn’t easy. What is the connection between courage and challenges?

[6] **Geoff:** I think that to be courageous, you have to be facing a challenge. That was true for Lemon Brown: he faced a physical challenge from the group of men. But for the speaker in “Sonnet,” the challenge is more of a feeling.

[7] **Adrienne:** Yeah, so I think the answer to our discussion question is that you can’t always see courage. Sometimes it *can* be obvious to see courage if you are facing a challenge that requires you to do or say something aloud. But sometimes for a person to face an internal conflict, it requires courage that isn’t always obvious to see.

QUESTIONS

Paragraphs 1-7

A. Write: How are Anna and Koye’s perspectives different?

- *Anna thinks that courage is obvious to see because you have to do something big to be courageous.*
- *Koye thinks that courage isn’t always obvious to see and gives the example of a person facing an internal battle.*

B. Find Evidence: Underline the connection Adrienne identifies between Anna and Koye’s ideas.

- *“The connection I see between Anna and Koye’s ideas is that you’re both noting that courage means doing something that isn’t easy.” (5)*

C. Write: How does Adrienne’s question positively affect the conversation?

- *Her question leads the participants to find a connection or similarity between ideas.*
- *Her question leads Geoff to offer a new insight.*

D. Write: Why is it important to make connections in a discussion?

- *It can help us find similarities between different people’s ideas.*
- *It can help us reach new ideas and insights about the topic.*
- *It can help other people contribute to the conversation.*

PART 2: Statements and Questions that Connect Ideas

Directions: In our unit discussion, we are going to practice an important discussion strategy: how to move a discussion forward by making connections between ideas. With a partner or independently, read the examples and summarize two key points to remember about this skill.



Examples of how you can move a discussion forward by connecting ideas :	
Statements that Connect Ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The similarity I see between _____ and _____ is...</i> • <i>The difference I see between _____ and _____ is...</i> • <i>What you said about _____ connects to _____ because...</i> 	Questions that Connect Ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How does _____ connect to _____?</i> • <i>What similarities do you see between _____ and _____?</i> • <i>What differences do you see between _____ and _____?</i>

Key Points
<p>During a class discussion, remember to...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Make connections between ideas by saying or asking things like:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The connection I see between _____ and _____ is...</i> • <i>How does _____ connect to _____?</i> 2. <i>Make connections between ideas to help others see the relationship between different ideas so that they can reach new ideas and insights about the topic.</i> 3. <i>Invite other classmates into the conversation.</i>

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: 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	End of Unit Writing Review	Unit 2 Essay: Planning	In this unit, you've read about people and characters who have shown courage. Select one quote about courage. Then, analyze how at least two of the people and characters you've read about demonstrate the ideas in your quote. You can also use examples from your own life. [W.2]
			↑ 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.8.2]
--

Materials needed

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

How do I facilitate this lesson?

Part	Lesson Activities	Time
Part 1	 Breaking Down the Essay Prompt: Students read the Unit 2 Essay prompt and make a list of the prompt's requirements.	5 min
Part 2	 Connecting Quotations to the Texts: Students will prepare to have a discussion by selecting two texts that best connect to each quote from the prompt. As they work, encourage students to think through the why behind each of their selections.	5 min
Part 3	 Discussing Your Ideas: In order to help students narrow down their choice of quote and the most relevant texts for that quote, have them discuss and defend their responses from Part 2. After the discussion, students complete a reflection explaining which quote and texts they will use in their essay.	10 min
Part 4	 Finding Evidence: Students select evidence from their chosen texts that best connects to the ideas about courage in their quotation.	10 min
Part 5	 Drafting Your Thesis: Students will use a checklist for drafting a thesis. Note: The thesis in this essay may blend the "text statement" and "thesis statement" part of the introduction. Encourage students to refer to the thesis from the example essay in Part 6 if they need a reference.	5 min
Part 6	 What Does A Great Student Essay Look Like? Students reflect on a strong student essay. This exemplar essay is a powerful tool for students to refer to throughout their essay drafting process.	10 min
~45 min total		

Name _____ Class _____

TEACHER COPY: Unit 2 Essay: Planning

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

Today's Goal

Prepare to write your essay by:

- Breaking down your final essay prompt
- Discussing your ideas
- Planning your evidence
- Drafting your thesis
- Analyzing an exemplar essay

PART 1: Breaking Down The Essay Prompt

Directions: Carefully read the prompt. Then, answer the question. *5 minutes*



Unit 2 Essay Prompt

In this unit, you've read about people and characters who have shown courage. Select **one** quote about courage from the list below. Then analyze how at least **two** of the people and characters you've read about demonstrate the ideas in your quote. You can also use examples from your own life. **[W.2]**

- *"He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life." — Robert Frost*
- *"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear." — Nelson Mandela*
- *"Courage is the ability to do the right thing, all the time, no matter how painful or uncomfortable it might be" — Tony Dungy*

1. What does this prompt require you to do?

1. *Select one of the three quotes.*
2. *Analyze how at least two people and characters from texts in this unit demonstrate the ideas about courage from the quote.*

PART 2: Connecting Quotations to the Texts

Directions: Prepare for a discussion by selecting **two** texts that **best** connect to each quote about courage. Be prepared to defend your choices. *5 minutes*



1. **"He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life." — Robert Frost**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> "The Terror" | <input type="checkbox"/> "Transcript of Full Joseph McNeil Interview" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "The Friday Everything Changed" | <input type="checkbox"/> "The Treasure of Lemon Brown" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Sonnet" | <input type="checkbox"/> "I look at the world" |

2. **"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear." — Nelson Mandela**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> "The Terror" | <input type="checkbox"/> "Transcript of Full Joseph McNeil Interview" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "The Friday Everything Changed" | <input type="checkbox"/> "The Treasure of Lemon Brown" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Sonnet" | <input type="checkbox"/> "I look at the world" |

3. **"Courage is the ability to do the right thing, all the time, no matter how painful or uncomfortable it might be" — Tony Dungy**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> "The Terror" | <input type="checkbox"/> "Transcript of Full Joseph McNeil Interview" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "The Friday Everything Changed" | <input type="checkbox"/> "The Treasure of Lemon Brown" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Sonnet" | <input type="checkbox"/> "I look at the world" |

PART 3: Discussing Your Ideas

Directions: Discuss the question and take notes to help you decide which quote and texts you will write about in your essay. *10 minutes*



Discussion Question: Which **two** texts best connect to each of the quotes about courage?

Reflection: Which quotation and which texts will you use for your essay?

PART 4: Finding Evidence

Directions: Write the title and author of the two texts you will write about. Then, review the texts to find at least **two** pieces of evidence from each text to use in your essay. *10 minutes*



Title and Author	What evidence from the text connects to your quote about courage? (include paragraph # for evidence)
Text Title and Author #1	<i>Student responses will vary.</i>
Text Title and Author #2	



PART 5: Drafting Your Thesis

Directions: Review the prompt and draft your thesis. *5 minutes*

Unit 2 Essay Prompt

In this unit, you've read about people and characters who have shown courage. Select **one** quote about courage from the list below. Then analyze how at least **two** of the people and characters you've read about demonstrate the ideas in your quote. You can also use examples from your own life. **[W.2]**

- *"He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life." — Robert Frost*
- *"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear." — Nelson Mandela*
- *"Courage is the ability to do the right thing, all the time, no matter how painful or uncomfortable it might be" — Tony Dungy*

Thesis

Student responses will vary.

Your thesis should:

- ☐ Clearly answer the prompt
- ☐ Use literary terms and/or academic vocabulary
- ☐ Be 1-2 sentences long



PART 6: What Does a Great Student Essay Look Like?

Directions: Below is an exemplar student essay. Skim the essay and the teacher comments. Then, answer the reflection question. *10 minutes*

Prompt: William Faulkner said, “You cannot swim for new horizons until you have courage to lose sight of the shore.” Write an essay in which you explain how the unit texts demonstrate this idea. [W.2]

EXEMPLAR STUDENT ESSAY

TEACHER COMMENTS

[1] William Faulkner once said, “You cannot swim for new horizons until you have courage to lose sight of the shore.” In other words, if you want to have a better experience in life, you have to be brave enough to do things that might frighten you. The short story “The Terror” by Junot Díaz and the poem “Sonnet” by James Weldon Johnson both explore the idea of courage. Like Faulkner’s quote, both texts suggest that you must be willing to act with courage in order to have a better life.

[2] In “The Terror,” the narrator has to face his bullies head on in order to avoid living in constant fear. After he was jumped coming home from school, the narrator lives in fear of the boys, running from them whenever he sees them. One day as he is running from them, he writes, “I was brought up short by an appalling vision: me running away forever” (13). In this moment, Díaz realizes he has to face his fears or he will be stuck like this forever. So he chooses to stand up to them. As he explains, “I forced myself to stop. I forced myself to turn toward them, and it felt as if the whole world was turning with me” (14). After this courageous act, the boys never bothered him again. As Faulkner suggests, it wasn’t until he found this courage that he was able to create a new world for himself.

[3] Like the narrator of “The Terror,” the speaker in the poem “Sonnet” suggests that you must be courageous in order to experience a better life. The speaker states, “Thy way is very dark and drear I know, / But do not let thy strength and courage fail;” (Johnson, lines 3-4). In other words, even if you are facing something very challenging, you must remain courageous. Later, the speaker returns to this idea when he says, “For certain as the raven-winged night / Is followed by the bright and blushing morn, / Thy coming morrow will be clear and bright” (5-7). Here, the dark night represents the challenges someone will face, and the bright morning that follows is the reason we should remain courageous—a better day will soon follow.

Great job explaining the quote in your own words.

You clearly answered the prompt in your thesis.

Excellent work providing key context for your evidence!

Nice work connecting your explanation back to Faulkner’s quote. Impressive!

I love how you transitioned to this new paragraph!

Strong explanation. You explain what the evidence represents and connect it to your thesis.

[4] People have to be willing to be courageous in order to experience the joys of life. In “The Terror,” if the narrator hadn’t faced his fears head on, he would have spent his whole adolescence hating himself, and in “Sonnet,” the speaker encourages people to take risks in order to get to a better day. Both texts demonstrate the same idea as Faulkner when he wrote, “You cannot swim for new horizons until you have courage to lose sight of the shore.” Until we have the courage to try something daunting, we will be stuck right where we are.

Great conclusion that restates how both texts support the quote.

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. *Student 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 essay.
- 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. To help us ensure assessment security, please do not post or circulate these answers online.

PART 1: Essay Prompt

Directions: Read the essay prompt.



PROMPT

In this unit you've read about people and characters who have shown courage. Select **one** quote about courage from the list below. Then analyze how at least **two** of the people and characters you've read about demonstrate the ideas in your quote. You can also use examples from your own life. **[W.2]**

- *"You cannot swim for new horizons until you have courage to lose sight of the shore" — Robert Frost*
- *"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear." — Nelson Mandela*
- *"Courage is the ability to do the right thing, all the time, no matter how painful or uncomfortable it might be" — Tony Dungy*

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.



Note to Teachers: The exemplar below is taken from the planning lesson in this unit. Note that the quotation used in the exemplar does not appear as an option for students in the prompt above. However, students' essays should analyze their selected quote in a similar way and follow a similar structure.

William Faulker once said, "You cannot swim for new horizons until you have courage to lose sight of the shore." In other words, if you want to have a better experience in life, you have to be brave enough to do things that might frighten you. The short story "The Terror" by Junot Díaz and the poem "Sonnet" by James Weldon Johnson both explore the idea of courage. Like Faulkner's quote, both texts suggest that you must be willing to act with courage in order to have a better life.

In "The Terror," the narrator has to face his bullies head on in order to avoid living in constant fear. After he was jumped coming home from school, the narrator lives in fear of the boys, running from them whenever he sees them. One day as he is running from them, he writes, "I was brought up short by an appalling vision: me running away forever" (13). In this moment, Díaz realizes he has to face his fears or he will be stuck like this forever. So he chooses to stand up to them. As he explains, "I forced myself to stop. I forced myself to turn toward them, and it felt as if the whole world was turning with me" (14). After this courageous act, the boys never bothered him again. As Faulkner suggests, it wasn't until he found this courage that he was able to create a new world for himself.

Like the narrator of "The Terror," the speaker in the poem "Sonnet" suggests that you must be courageous in order to experience a better life. The speaker states, "Thy way is very dark and drear I know, / But do not let thy strength and courage fail;" (Johnson, lines 3-4). In other words, even if you are facing something very challenging, you must remain courageous. Later, the speaker returns to this idea when he says, "For certain as the raven-winged night / Is followed by the bright and blushing morn, / Thy coming morrow will be clear and bright" (5-7). Here, the dark night represents the challenges someone will face, and the bright morning that follows is the reason we should remain courageous—a better day will soon follow.

People have to be willing to be courageous in order to experience the joys of life. In "The Terror," if the narrator hadn't faced his fears head on, he would have spent his whole adolescence hating himself, and in "Sonnet," the speaker encourages people to take risks in order to get to a better day. Both texts demonstrate the same idea as Faulkner when he wrote, "You cannot swim for new horizons until you have courage to lose sight of the shore." Until we have the courage to try something daunting, we will be stuck right where we are.

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	<p>Demonstrates a logical and clear organizational structure that supports the development of the thesis:</p> <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 	<p>Demonstrates a satisfactory organizational structure that generally supports the thesis:</p> <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 	<p>Demonstrates a general organizational structure which may lack a sense of direction:</p> <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 	<p>Demonstrates a weak organizational structure:</p> <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	Includes strongest, most relevant text evidence to support thesis and overall analysis of the text(s). Evidence is introduced and contextualized, quoted, or paraphrased accurately.	Includes relevant text evidence to support thesis and overall analysis of the text(s). Most evidence is introduced and quoted or paraphrased accurately.	Text evidence or supporting details may be insufficient or only somewhat relevant, indicating basic comprehension of the text(s). Evidence is introduced inconsistently. Quotations or paraphrases may be incorrect or incomplete.	Text evidence or supporting details are largely missing, indicating limited comprehension of the text(s). If text evidence is present, it may be copied directly from the text with no introduction or context provided.
Analysis	Explanations draw connections between thesis and evidence.	Explanations attempt to draw connections, but may also summarize.	Explanations mostly summarize or restate text evidence, without drawing connections between ideas.	Explanations may be missing or show a lack of understanding.
Writing Conventions and Craft	Illustrates the use of effective and varied sentence patterns. Includes carefully selected academic and domain-specific words and phrases Reflects exceptional control of conventions; errors are few and minor	Reflects a generally controlled writing style but may lack variety in sentence patterns Includes academic and domain-specific words and phrases, but some usage may be incorrect or awkward Reflects control of most writing conventions; contains occasional errors that do not interfere with clarity or message	Uses some awkward constructions or demonstrates repeated use of a particular sentence pattern Uses common words and phrases that are often repetitious Reflects limited control of conventions; contains frequent errors that may begin to interfere with understanding	Demonstrates the use of fragmented or run on sentences that make the essay difficult to read with understanding Demonstrates limited range of vocabulary, or includes words that are misused Reflects numerous errors in conventions that make the text difficult to read

Name _____

Class _____

TEACHER COPY: End-of-Unit Writing Options

Note to Teachers: Included here are five options for a culminating writing task in this unit. The reading and writing instruction in this unit aligns most closely to *Option 1: Literary Analysis*; however, you may choose a prompt that best aligns to the needs and interests of your students.

Option 1: Literary Analysis (Recommended)

In this unit, you've read about people and characters who have shown courage. Select **one** quote about courage from the list below. Then analyze how at least **two** of the people and characters you've read about demonstrate the ideas in your quote. You can also use examples from your own life. **[W.2]**

- *"He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life." — Robert Frost*
- *"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear." — Nelson Mandela*
- *"Courage is the ability to do the right thing, all the time, no matter how painful or uncomfortable it might be" — Tony Dungy*

Option 2: Personal Reflection Essay

In this unit, we have explored what it means to be courageous and when being courageous is worth the risk. Write a personal narrative about a time when you needed to act courageously. How did this moment change you? **[W.3]**

Option 3: On Demand Theme Essay

In this unit, you have read several texts that feature characters and people who make courageous choices. Write an essay in which you identify a shared theme about courage in at least **two** texts and explain how each author develops the theme. In your essay, be sure to discuss how each author develops their ideas in **at least one** of the following ways:

- character interactions
- character change
- figurative language

Use specific evidence from the texts to support your ideas. **[W.2]**

Option 4: Write Your Own Poem

In this unit, you have read two poems that use figurative language to convey messages about courage. Write your own poem about courage that includes figurative language. **[W.4]**

Option 5: Blended Genre Essay

Choose two characters or people that you read about in this unit and explain how they demonstrated courage. Then, compare this to a time you demonstrated courage. Be sure to use evidence to support your response. **[W.2, W.3]**