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| 9.1.2 | Lesson 5 |

# Introduction

In this lesson, students read an excerpt from the “Hangman” chapter of David Mitchell’s *Black Swan Green*,pages 24–26 (from “So anyway, Mum dropped me at Malvern Link” to “the speech therapist at Malvern Link clinic. That was five years ago”), in which Jason Taylor, the narrator, discusses his struggle with stammering. Students investigate the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: What is the cumulative impact of Mitchell’s specific word choices on meaning and tone in this excerpt?

For homework, students write a paragraph in response to the following prompt: How does Jason’s tone in this passage develop his character? Students also continue to read their Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) text through the lens of focus standard RL.9-10.3 or RI.9-10.3 and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of their text based on that standard.

# Standards

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| Assessed Standard(s) | |
| RL.9-10.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone). |
| Addressed Standard(s) | |
| None. | |

# Assessment

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| Assessment(s) |
| Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.   * What is the cumulative impact of Mitchell’s specific word choices on meaning and tone in this excerpt? |
| High Performance Response(s) |
| A High Performance Response should:   * Cite specific word choices (e.g., Mitchell uses words like “*duh*-brain,” “flid,” and “ashamed” (p. 26), or word choices like “guppergupperguppers” (p. 26) and “Bunsen-burnered” (p. 25).). * Analyze the cumulative impact of those word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., Word choices such as “guppergupperguppers” (p. 26) and “Bunsen-burnered” (p. 25) create a funny and creative tone, because they are made up words used for comedic effect. However, there is also a dark, angry tone to Jason’s humor as word choices such as “*duh*-brain” and “ashamed” (p. 26), to demonstrate how embarrassed and ashamed Jason feels about himself due to his stammer.). |

# Vocabulary

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| Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction) |
| * acest (adj.) – coolest * Bunsen-burnered (v.) – burned with a Bunsen-burner, a type of gas burner * satchel (n.) – a small bag, sometimes with a shoulder strap * froggering (v.) – jumping * skive (v.) – to cut * gorse (n.) – a spiny yellow-flowered European shrub * hobbity (adj.) – short, tiny |
| Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions) |
| * None. |
| Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly) |
| * clinic (n.) – a place where people get medical help * receptionist (n.) – a person whose job is to deal with the people who call or enter an office, hotel, etc. * diarrhea (n.) – an illness that causes you to pass waste from your body very frequently and in a liquid rather than solid form * constipation (n.) – the condition of being unable to easily release solid waste from your body |

# Lesson Agenda/Overview

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| Student-Facing Agenda | % of Lesson |
| **Standards & Text:**   * Standards: RL.9-10.4 * Text: *Black Swan Green* by David Mitchell, “Hangman,” pp. 24–26 |  |
| **Learning Sequence:**   1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 2. Homework Accountability 3. Masterful Reading 4. Reading and Discussion 5. Quick Write 6. Closing | 1. 5% 2. 10% 3. 15% 4. 50% 5. 15% 6. 5% |

# Materials

* Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 9.1.1 Lesson 1)

# Learning Sequence

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| How to Use the Learning Sequence | |
| Symbol | Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol |
| **10%** | **Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.** |
| no symbol | Plain text indicates teacher action. |
| **Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.** |
| *Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.* |
| ⏵ | Indicates student action(s). |
| 🗨 | Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions. |
| 🛈 | Indicates instructional notes for the teacher. |

**Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda 5%**

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standard for this lesson: RL.9-10.4. Students read an excerpt from the “Hangman” chapter of David Mitchell’s *Black Swan Green*,pages 24–26(from “So anyway, Mum dropped me at Malvern Link” to “the speech therapist at Malvern Link clinic. That was five years ago”), and analyze the cumulative impact of Mitchell’s specific word choices on meaning and tone.

* Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability 10%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about their written responses to the previous lesson’s homework prompt. (Write a brief reflection about how your preparation helped you with the Mid-Unit Assessment, or how you might have prepared more effectively.)

* Student pairs discuss their written responses to the homework prompt.
* Student responses may include:
  + Preparing for the Mid-Unit Assessment allowed me to use the best evidence to support my response.
  + Preparing for the Mid-Unit Assessment prepared me to respond fully to the prompt.
  + I could have more effectively prepared for the Mid-Unit Assessment by organizing my tools and annotations.

Activity 3: Masterful Reading 15%

Have students listen to a masterful reading of pages 24–26 of David Mitchell’s *Black Swan Green*. As students listen, instruct them to focus on how Mitchell’s specific word choices develop Jason’s tone.

* **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout this lesson:

Who is speaking during this excerpt?

* Students follow along, reading silently.

Activity 4: Reading and Discussion 50%

* Consider reminding students that *Black Swan Green* is a novel, so the chapters comprise a larger story. Explain that each chapter represents one month of the narrator’s life, and Jason is the narrator throughout the entire novel. Although students will not read every chapter as part of this unit, they can still conduct meaningful analysis including how the author develops characters and central ideas.

Instruct students to form pairs. Post or project the questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to continue to annotate the text as they read and discuss.

Instruct student pairs to read pages 24–25 of David Mitchell’s *Black Swan Green* (from “So anyway, Mum dropped me at Malvern Link” to “An American woman in it’d taught chimpanzees to speak in sign language”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definitions: *acest* means “coolest,” *Bunsen-burnered* means “burned with a Bunsen-burner, a type of gas burner,” *satchel* means “a small bag, sometimes with a shoulder strap,” *froggering* means “jumping,” *skive* means “cut,” *gorse* means “a spiny yellow-flowered European shrub,” and *hobbit*y means “short, tiny.”

* Students may be familiar with some of these words. Consider asking students to volunteer definitions before providing them to the class.
* Students write the definitions of *acest, Bunsen-burnered, satchel, froggering, skive, gorse,* and *hobbity* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
* **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *clinic* means “a place where people get medical help” and *receptionist* means “a person whose job is to deal with the people who call or enter an office, hotel, etc.”

Students write the definitions of *clinic* and *receptionist* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

* Consider reviewing contractions with students to acclimate them to the narrator’s informal style. For example, “Pluto Noak’d hit” (p. 25) means “Pluto Noak had hit,” and “Stammering’s where you get stuck” (p. 26) means “Stammering is where you get stuck.”

How does Mitchell develop the setting of Jason’s school on page 25?

* Student responses may include:
  + Mitchell develops the violent setting of Jason’s school through Jason’s description of the “mass scrap” between the “fourth years” at Jason’s school and those of “Dyson Perrins School” (p. 25). At this fight, “Pluto Noak” is rumored to have hit another boy so hard, doctors “had to sew his jaw back on” (p. 25).
  + Mitchell develops the tough setting of Jason’s school through phrases like “any ‘Lorenzo’ in *my* school’d get Bunsen-burnered to death” (p. 25), which make Jason’s classmates sound rough and unfair.

How do Mitchell’s specific word choices develop Jason’s tone on page 25?

* Student responses may include:
  + Mitchell’s word choices such as “Bunsen-burnered” and “hobbity” (p. 25) establish a humorous, creative tone as Jason plays with words and creates new ones.
  + Mitchell’s use of contractions such as “Pluto Noak’d,” “I s’pose,” and “‘cept” (p. 25) create a casual tone.

How does Jason’s waiting in the clinic develop his character?

* Jason’s waiting shows that he needs help with something, even if, like the other people there, he does not look like he has “much wrong” (p. 25) with him.

What tone does Jason’s description of the waiting room develop?

* Student responses may include:
  + Jason’s description develops a humorous tone because he describes a woman waiting as having “coat hangers instead of bones” (p. 25), showing that Jason is creative and witty with his descriptions.
  + At the same time, the description develops a sad, bitter tone because Jason says no one wants to talk about why they are at the clinic. Jason envies “*anyone* who can say what they want at the same time as they think it” (p. 25).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct students to form pairs. Post or the questions below for students to discuss.

Instruct students to read pages 25–26(from “Most people think stammering and stuttering are the same” to “the speech therapist at Malvern Link clinic. That was five years ago”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

* **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *diarrhea* means “an illness that causes you to pass waste from your body very frequently and in a liquid rather than solid form” and *constipation* means “the condition of being unable to easily release solid waste from your body.”

Students write the definitions of *diarrhea* and *constipation* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

Toward whom or what does Jason direct his humor?

* Jason directs his humor at himself. Most of the humorous word choices like “*duh*-brain” (p. 26), or the comparison of his expression while stammering with that of “an evenly matched arm wrestler” (p. 26) are used to describe how he appears or feels while stammering.

When does Jason’s stammer first develop?

* Student responses should include:
  + Jason’s stammer develops during a summer when “it never rained and the Malvern Hills turned brown and fires broke out” (p. 26).
  + Jason’s stammer develops during a game of hangman in school (p. 26).
  + Jason says that the game of hangman was “five years ago,” meaning that he has been struggling with his stammer for five years (p. 26).

How do Mitchell’s specific word choices demonstrate how Jason feels about his stammer?

* Student responses may include:
  + Mitchell’s specific word choices like “shocked, scared, breathless, ashamed” (p. 26) show that Jason feels embarrassed about his stammer, and is afraid of it. The phrase “I *hated* myself” reinforces Jason’s shame and anger towards himself (p. 26).
  + Jason says that his “life divided itself into Before Hangman and After Hangman” (p. 26), which shows what a powerful moment this game of hangman was in his life.
  + The repetition of the word “waiting” on page 26 shows how time stands still for Jason when he is struggling with his stammer.

What tone does Mitchell establish through Jason’s description of his stammer? Cite evidence from the text to support your answer.

* Student responses may include:
  + Jason compares the difference between a stutter and a stammer to the difference between “diarrhea and constipation” (p. 25), because someone who stutters cannot stop saying the first part of a word, while someone who stammers can only say the first part of the word before getting stuck.
  + Jason uses the made-up word “guppergupperguppers” (p. 26) to describe the fish-like look on his face when he begins to stammer. These word choices create a humorous tone.
  + At the same time, words like “*duh*-brain” and “flid” (p. 26), which Jason uses to describe himself, show how bitter and angry he is with himself about his stammer.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 5: Quick Write 15%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

What is the cumulative impact of Mitchell’s specific word choices on meaning and tone in this excerpt?

Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to look at their text and notes to find evidence, and to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

* Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.
* Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition to the independent Quick Write.

* Students independently answer the prompt using evidence from the text.
* See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

Activity 6: Closing 5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to write a paragraph in response to this prompt:

How does Jason’s tone in this passage develop his character?

Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Also remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

Also for homework, students should continue to read their AIR texts through the lens of focus standard RL.9-10.3 or RI.9-10.3 and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of their text based on that standard.

# Homework

Write a paragraph in response to this prompt:

How does the tone in this passage develop Jason’s character?

Use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in your written responses. Use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide your written responses.

Continue to read your Accountable Independent Reading text through the lens of focus standard RL.9-10.3 and RI.9-10.3 and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of your text based on that standard.