

10.1.3

Lesson 10

Introduction

In this lesson, students begin their exploration of H. G. Bissinger's *Friday Night Lights*. Students read a portion of the chapter "Dreaming of Heroes," from "When his father gazed at him from the hospital bed" through "ready for something truly wonderful to happen to him" (pp. 73–76), in which they encounter high school football star Mike Winchell and learn about his relationship with his father.

Students consider key details in the text in order to explore how Bissinger begins to develop a portrait of Mike Winchell. This analysis will focus on how Bissinger constructs Mike's relationship to his father Billy, as well as the community of Odessa, and how these relationships influence Mike's self-perception as a man and as an athlete. This lesson culminates in a Quick Write that prompts students to consider how Mike's relationship with his father develops central ideas in the text. Student analysis in this lesson will also lay the groundwork for the exploration of the father/son relationship between Charlie and Don Billingsley in subsequent lessons. This analysis further develops many of the central ideas students have been working with throughout this unit, this time through the lens of informational standards.

For homework, students will complete a Preface Activity in preparation for a deeper exploration of authorial authority and subjectivity in the next lesson, building critical reading skills in order to access the complexities of creative nonfiction.

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RI.9-10.2	Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
Addressed Standard(s)	
RI.9-10.3	Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.
L.9-10.1.a	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. a. Use parallel structure.

Assessment

Assessment(s)

The learning in this lesson is captured through a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students answer the following prompt based on the reading (citing text evidence and analyzing key words and phrases) completed in the lesson.

- How does Mike's relationship with his father develop a central idea of the text?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Select several specific details from the text that develop their understanding of Mike's relationship to his father.
- Explore how Mike's relationship to his father develops a central idea of the text.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- Little League (n.) – youth baseball league
- admonished (v.) – to caution, counsel, or advise against something
- arthritis (n.) – acute or chronic inflammation of a joint
- disciple (n.) – a person who is a pupil or an adherent to the doctrines of another; follower
- tutelage (n.) – instruction; teaching; guidance
- brood (v.) – to think or worry persistently or moodily about; ponder
- homers/home runs (n.) – a baseball term for the most successful hit a batter can make
- exalted (adj.) – noble or elevated; lofty
- ceaseless (adj.) – without stop or pause; unending
- instincts (n.) – natural or *innate* impulses, inclinations, or tendencies

Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)

- innate (adj.) – inherent in the essential character of something
- allegiance (n.) – loyalty or devotion to some person, group, cause or the like

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.3, L.9-10.1.a Text: “Dreaming of Heroes” (pp. 73–76) 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Lesson Agenda Homework Accountability Pages 73–76 Reading and Discussion Quick Write Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10% 10% 60% 10% 10%

Materials

- Student copies of 10.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool (refer to 10.1.1 Lesson 1)
- Student copies of Short Response Rubric (refer to 10.1.1 Lesson 1)
- Copies of the Preface Activity Tool (for homework) for each student

Learning Sequence

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.
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
►	Indicates student action(s).
☞	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
ⓘ	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

10%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and assessed standards for this lesson: RI.9-10.2. In this lesson, students consider key details of the text in order to explore how H. G. Bissinger develops a portrait of Mike

Winchell in this informational text. This analysis will focus on Mike's relationship to his father, Billy, and how this relationship influences Mike's perception of himself as a man and as an athlete. Students demonstrate their learning in a Quick Write prompt. Students conclude this lesson by reading a small excerpt from *Friday Night Lights*'s preface in order to explore the role of the narrator and the author in this text.

Inform students that they will begin working with three new standards in this lesson: RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.3 and L.9-10.1.a. Instruct students to find these standards on their 10.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool and to follow along as you read it aloud.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently as standards RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.3, and L.9-10.1.a are read aloud.

Pose the following questions for class discussion of the standards:

What do you notice about these standards?

What are they asking you to be able to do?

What questions do these standards raise for you?

Ask students to write down their ideas. Lead a brief class discussion about these standards.

- 💬 Student responses may include observations like the following:

RI.9-10.2 asks students to:

- determine a central idea of a text and analyze how it develops over the course of the text.
- analyze how a central idea is introduced and is shaped by details in the text.
- provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.9-10.3 asks students to:

- analyze how an author develops an analysis or a series of ideas or events.
- analyze how points are made, introduced, developed, and connected with each other.

L.9-10.1.a asks students to:

- use parallel structure in their writing and conversations.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students are unfamiliar with parallel structure, it may be helpful to offer a definition: “a way of using the same pattern in writing or speaking to show that words or ideas hold equal importance.” Students will be dealing with specific examples and more direct instruction later in this lesson.

- ① Additionally, it may be helpful to ask students to consider how the reading informational text standards compare to the reading literature standards that they have been working with up to this point in the unit.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

10%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about how they can apply focus standard RL.9-10.6 or RI.9-10.6 to their AIR text. Lead a brief share out on the previous lesson's AIR homework assignment. Select several students (or student pairs) to explain how they applied their focus standard to their AIR text.

- ▶ Students (or student pairs) discuss and then share how they applied their focus standard to their AIR text from the previous lesson's homework.

Activity 3: Pages 73–76 Reading and Discussion

60%

Introduce the assessment prompt (How does Mike's relationship with his father develop a central idea of the text?). Explain to students that this is the lesson assessment and the focus for today's reading.

- ▶ Students read the assessment prompt and listen.

- ① Display the assessment prompt for students to see.

Provide or display the definitions for the following vocabulary: *Little League*, *admonished*, *arthritis*, *disciple*, *tutelage*, *brood*, *homers/home runs*, *exalted*, *ceaseless*, and *instincts*.

Instruct students to read the section of text they will be studying in this lesson independently in its entirety, from "When his father gazed at him from the hospital bed" through "ready for something truly wonderful to happen to him" (pp. 73–76).

Direct students to annotate the passage for key details that help them to identify the setting and the key individuals introduced in this passage.

- ▶ Students read the excerpt independently and annotate according to established protocols.
- 🗨 After their initial reading, students should identify:
 - Setting: the town of Odessa.
 - Key individuals: Mike Winchell, Mike's father Billy, Mike's grandmother Julia, and Mike's brother Joe Bill. Students may also identify Mike's mother, who is not named, and Coach Gaines, who is briefly mentioned.

- ① Students may likely not be aware at this point that this is a work of nonfiction. Avoid explicitly establishing this. Students will work toward this understanding throughout their reading of *Friday Night Lights*. Allowing students to experience initial productive confusion about the genre of this text will illuminate the unique considerations necessary for a critical engagement with literary nonfiction. Students explicitly explore the integral questions about authorship and point of view that literary nonfiction raises later on in the unit.
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Group students into pre-established heterogeneous groups of four. Inform students that they will remain in these groups for the remainder of this lesson for added support during their analysis. Instruct students to scan the excerpt to answer the following question:

How much time has passed in this passage?

- 💬 Students should identify Mike's age at the beginning and end of the excerpt in order to determine the passage of time. Mike is 13 at the beginning of the excerpt (p. 73), and a senior in high school at the end, probably 17 or 18 (p. 76). This passage covers four to five years.

Offer students a description and examples of parallel structure (L.9-10.1.a) as a type of sentence in speaking or writing where the pattern of words stays the same to show that two or more ideas have the same level of importance.

- ① See <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/623/1/> for a handout that describes and provides examples of parallel structure.

After reviewing parallel structure, instruct students to reread the first paragraph on page 73. Once students have finished, direct students to the first sentence of "Dreaming of Heroes," and pose the following question for full class discussion:

Is the first sentence of "Dreaming of Heroes" an example of parallel structure?

- 💬 The first sentence of "Dreaming of Heroes" ("When his father gazed at him from the hospital bed with those sad eyes that had drawn so narrow from the drinking and the smoking and the endless heartache..." (p. 73)) is not an example of parallel structure. Although the first two verbs ("drinking" and "smoking") follow the same pattern, the third description in the list, "endless heartache," does not follow this pattern.
- ① Consider displaying or projecting the first sentence of "Dreaming of Heroes" during this activity.
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Instruct students to reread paragraphs 1–3 on page 73. Display the following question for students to discuss in their groups:

- ▶ Students reread the first three paragraphs of “Dreaming of Heroes,” and discuss the following questions in their groups, individually noting their responses in preparation for the full-class discussion.

What can you infer about Mike’s father’s expectations of his son based on what he wants to make sure his son hears?

- ☛ Mike’s father “wanted Mike to listen” to his advice about baseball: “he had to go to college, there could be no two ways about it,” “it was ok to drink beer sometimes, but never drugs,” and “he told his son he loved him” (p. 73). He is giving his son advice to avoid mistakes and have a good life. Listen for students to infer that Mike’s father expects him to get an education, succeed in sports, and lead a healthy and responsible life.
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Instruct students to reread from the fourth paragraph on page 73, “Mike ran out of the room when it happened” through “despite what he thought about Odessa, it was impossible to let it go” (p. 74). Display the following questions for students to discuss in their groups:

What is the effect of the words “always” and “unfailingly” in Joe Bill’s description of Mike (p. 74)?

- ☛ Joe Bill says Mike “had always been...quiet, loyal, unfailingly steady” (p. 74). Listen for students to suggest that Joe Bill’s descriptions double as his expectations of Mike. They are things that Mike is supposed to do and be no matter what.

What is “it” in the first sentence of the fourth paragraph on page 73?

- ☛ The “it” is Mike’s father’s death. He “didn’t have to put up a fight anymore” and he “let go” of his life (p. 73). He held until he had imparted all the most important words to his son. He was able to die because he had said all he could say to Mike.

What effect is created by the repetition of “power” in paragraph 3 on page 74?

- ☛ Students should identify the repetition of power: “the power of Permian football” and “the most powerful pull” (p. 74). The effect of this repetition is to make football seem really, really important.

What phrase in paragraph 4 can help you to determine the meaning of *allegiance* in this context?

- ☛ Students should point to the phrase “it was impossible to let it go” (p. 74) to determine that allegiance means adherence to something, or loyalty.

According to Joe Bill, why is Odessa uniquely suited to Mike’s “dream” (p. 74)?

- Joe Bill calls upon the dream of playing for Permian and being a football hero to keep Mike in Odessa. Odessa is uniquely suited to Mike's dream because there are "so few places that could offer the same sense of allegiance and tradition" (p. 74).

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posing the following extension question to enrich students' understanding of the text:

Consider the phrase "impossible to let it go" (p. 74). Where have you seen these words before? What is the effect of this repetition?

- The phrase "let...go" that first appears in the description of Billy's death on page 73 ("he let go"). The effect of the repetition is to reinforce the connection between Mike's relationship with his father and his dreams of football success. This repetition echoes the words used to describe his father's death, emphasizing the reasons behind, and pressure on, Mike's decision to stay and play football.

Instruct students to reread from the fifth paragraph on page 74 from "He stayed in Odessa and sometimes, when he went over" through "'but you don't want him hurtin' all the time either'" (p. 75). Display the following questions for students to discuss in their groups:

What framing phrase repeats in the first two paragraphs on page 75? What about the relationship between Mike and Billy might this repetition reveal?

- Students should notice the repetition of the sentence structure "There was Mike," "There was Billy," "There they were together" (p. 75). Mike and Billy were always together; they were inseparable; they really loved each other.

How does Billy's illness affect Mike's attitude toward his athletic abilities?

- As his father's health declines, Mike loses confidence in his own abilities. Listen for students to infer that it was Billy's confidence, pride and "demanding tutelage" that first encouraged Mike to excel at sports (p. 75). Billy's illness corresponds to the loss of an essential support system for Mike.

What familiar words can help you to understand the meaning of the word *innate* (p. 75)?

- Students should identify the familiar words "inner" from the prefix and "natural" from the suffix, and make the connection that *innate* means "something that comes naturally from within."
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, encourage them to consider both the prefix "in" and the suffix "nate" separately, finding familiar words to help make meaning of both.

Instruct students to reread from the last paragraph on page 75, “After Billy died, Mike’s life didn’t get any easier” through “ready for something truly wonderful to happen to him” on page 76. Display the following questions for students to discuss in their groups:

What details in the text inform your understanding of Mike’s economic circumstances?

- Student responses should identify key details, like “brother who was sent to prison,” “they didn’t have much money,” and “‘not havin’ a nice home or a nice car’” (p. 76). Listen for students to infer that Mike is ashamed or embarrassed of his situation, because he never lets his girlfriend DeAnn come over to his house and “almost never talked of his mother” (p. 76).

How does Mike’s approach to football compare to his earlier experiences with baseball?

- Mike is a “coach’s dream” and that he was a “gifted student” of football (p. 76), just as he was a “gifted disciple” of baseball (p. 75). Students should also make the connection between the fact that Mike would “agonize over [football]” (p. 76) and the fact that Mike would “brood over” (p. 75) baseball. The “checklist racing through his mind” (p. 76) when he plays football is the result of the same lack of confidence that began in his Little League days.

Lead a brief full class discussion of student observations; then pose the following question for full-class discussion. Allow time for students to briefly jot their initial responses before discussing with the whole class:

How does “pressure” affect Mike’s game (p. 76)?

- Mike’s athletic ability is directly influenced by the level of pressure he is under: “when the pressure was off...it was hard to find a better quarterback” but “when the pressure was on...something seemed to unravel inside him” (p. 76). The pressure comes from both the community and his own expectations. Some students might suggest that Mike’s expectations of himself are directly related to his father’s expectations of him.

Activity 4: Quick Write

10%

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

How does Mike’s relationship with his father develop a central idea of the text?

Instruct students to look at their text and notes to find evidence. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.

① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition students 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 5: Closing

10%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. Inform students that for homework they will complete an activity using the Preface Activity Tool. Distribute the Preface Activity Tool. Instruct students to complete the Preface Activity Tool for homework and come to the next lesson prepared to discuss their response.

- ① This activity asks students to begin to consider the role of the author/narrator and starts to approach the complexities of the genre of creative nonfiction (RI.9-10.6). Students will further explore and analyze the text through this lens in subsequent lessons. Some students may make this inference on their own, but avoid explicitly providing this information.

Students should also preview the excerpt for the next lesson, “He didn’t dwell much” through “see his own reflection” (pp. 77–79), and annotate according to established protocols. Provide students with the vocabulary to be given directly in this excerpt:

- jiggering (v.) – interfering with; manipulating or altering, especially in order to get something done illegally or unethically
- succinct (adj.) – expressed in few words
- waning (v.) – decreasing in strength, intensity, power, importance, prosperity, etc.; drawing to a close, approaching an end
- immaculate (adj.) – free from spot or stain; free from moral blemish; pure; free from errors
- methodical (adj.) – systematic; orderly; painstaking, especially slow and careful; deliberate
- meticulous (adj.) – taking or showing extreme care about minute details; precise; thorough
- debut (n.) – a first appearance on a stage, on television, etc.
- balmy (adj.) – mild and refreshing

Homework

Complete the Preface Activity Tool and preview the excerpt for the next lesson, from “He didn’t dwell much” through “see his own reflection” (pp. 77–79).

Preface Activity Tool

Name:		Class:		Date:	
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Directions: Read the excerpt from “Maybe it was a suddenly acute awareness of being “thirtysomething.”” through “*Twenty thousand*...I knew I had to go there.” (“Preface,” xi); then answer the questions below.

Excerpt Vocabulary

Self-satisfaction (adj.) – an unbothered enjoyment of one’s own self

Atlas (n.) – a bound collection of maps

1. Who is the “I” in this excerpt?

2. How does the preface influence your understanding of Bissinger’s relationship to the residents of Odessa?

Model Preface Activity Tool

Name:		Class:		Date:	
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Directions: Read the excerpt from “Maybe it was a suddenly acute awareness of being “thirtysomething.”” through “*Twenty thousand*...I knew I had to go there.” (“Preface,” xi); then answer the questions below.

Excerpt Vocabulary

Self-satisfaction (adj.) – an unbothered enjoyment of one’s own self

Atlas (n.) – a bound collection of maps

1. Who is the “I” in this excerpt?

- ☛ The “I” is the author of this text, H. G. Bissinger. He is also the narrator of the text.

2. How does the preface influence your understanding of Bissinger’s relationship to the residents of Odessa?

- ☛ The preface reveals that the narrator is actually also the author, H. G. Bissinger. Odessa is a real town in a poor part of West Texas. Bissinger moves to Odessa specifically to study the football culture, therefore his relationship to the residents is one of an observer.