

10.1.3

Lesson 6

Introduction

In this lesson, students read “Two Kinds” from “Three days after watching *The Ed Sullivan Show*” through “I was determined to put a stop to her foolish pride” (pp. 136–138), as they continue their exploration of Jing-mei’s interactions with other characters. There should be an emphasis on how these interactions reveal the interwoven thematic threads of “Two Kinds.” This lesson builds upon the foundational character analysis established in Lesson 5, with a focus on storytelling as an integral mode of interaction between the characters of Tan’s text.

Guided by a set of text-dependent questions, instruct students to work in groups to analyze and discuss pages 136–138, in which Jing-mei defies her mother’s expectations by refusing to devote herself to her piano lessons. These questions will guide students in an exploration of how Jing-mei and her mother redefine themselves and others through storytelling. Ask students to connect their analysis of the narrative interactions between characters to the thematic development of parental expectations and Jing-mei’s sense of self. Students conclude the lesson with a Quick Write to the following prompt: What is the impact of Tan’s choice to insert Waverly into “Two Kinds”?

For homework, ask students to read from “A few weeks later, Old Chong and my mother” to “and then clap enthusiastically” (pp. 138–139), annotate, and then respond to a reflective writing prompt.

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.9-10.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail 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)	
RL.9-10.3	Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
SL.9-10.1.a	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts or issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>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 keywords and phrases) completed in the lesson.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the impact of Tan’s choice to insert Waverly into “Two Kinds”? <p>① The learning sequence in this lesson prompts students towards an analysis of how the character interactions orchestrated by Tan’s structural decision to reintroduce an earlier narrative develops some aspect of a central idea established thus far in “Two Kinds.”</p>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider how the interactions between characters in the passage in which Waverly and Jing-mei’s stories collide develop a central idea in “Two Kinds.”

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> treble (n.) – a high or shrill voice or sound bass (n.) – a low pitched voice or sound arpeggios (n.) – the sounding of the notes of a chord in rapid succession instead of simultaneously

- sonatas (n.) – compositions of one or two instruments, typically in three or four movements in contrasted forms and keys
- preludes (n.) – musical sections that serve as an introduction to the rest of the piece

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

- staccato (adj.) – composed of or characterized by abruptly disconnected elements
- discordant (adj.) – disagreeable to the ear; dissonant; harsh

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards: RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, SL.9-10.1.a • Text: <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> “Two Kinds,” (pp. 136–138) 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 2. Homework Accountability 3. Masterful Reading 4. Pages 138–139 Reading and Discussion 5. Quick Write 6. Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5% 2. 10% 3. 10% 4. 55% 5. 15% 6. 5%

Materials

None.

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

5%

Begin by introducing the agenda and assessed standard for this lesson: RL.9-10.2. In this lesson, students work in groups as they continue to develop their analysis of Jing-mei's interactions with her mother. After participating in evidence-based discussions in their groups, students complete a Quick Write.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

10%

Instruct students to independently reread the last three paragraphs that they read for homework on page 136, from "What are you picking on her for?" to "because later on I had to learn how to play it."

Review the expectations of SL.9-10.1.a with students. Inform students that they will be drawing upon the preparation they have done in this homework assignment in their full-class discussion.

Lead a full-class discussion of student responses to the homework prompt: According to Jing-mei's mother, why is Jing-mei "not the best?" (p. 136). What trait does she find valuable?

- ❗ This homework assignment encourages students to practice the skills outlined in SL.9-10.1.a. Students have prepared for a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas about this passage through their annotations, and have identified specific evidence from the text in order to answer the focus question. Students call upon their individual preparation in their responses to the question that the teacher poses for a follow-up discussion.

- ▶ Students share their written responses to the homework prompt.

- According to her mother, Jing-mei is “not the best” (p. 136) because she does not try hard enough. Students should infer from this statement that Jing-mei’s mother finds hard work and perseverance valuable.

Pose the following question for a full-class discussion.

What values does Jing-mei express in her defense of the girl? How do these values compare to those of Jing-mei’s mother?

- Jing-mei defends the girl on the TV against her mother’s criticism by arguing that although she is not perfect, “she’s trying hard” (p. 136). Jing-mei is talking about the same value as her mother—hard work. It is not how perfectly she plays, but how hard she’s trying that really matters. Students should express an understanding that, although Jing-mei and her mother are fighting, both sides of the debate share a common value. Some students might point to this lack of recognition of shared beliefs as a sign that Jing-mei and her mother often have difficulty communicating.

Activity 3: Masterful Reading

10%

Introduce the Quick Write assessment (What is the impact of Tan’s choice to insert Waverly into “Two Kinds”?). 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 Quick Write assessment prompt for students to see.

Have students listen to a masterful reading of “Two Kinds” from “Three days after watching *The Ed Sullivan Show*” through “I was determined to put a stop to her foolish pride” (pp. 136–138). Instruct students to read along in their text.

- Students follow along in their texts, reading silently.

Provide definitions for the following words as they appear during the masterful reading: *treble*, *bass*, *arpeggios*, *sonatas*, and *preludes*.

Activity 4: Pages 138–139 Reading and Discussion**55%**

Place students into heterogeneous groups. Instruct students to read independently from “Three days after watching *The Ed Sullivan Show*” to “slid off the meat when I picked it up” (pp. 136–137) and annotate according to established protocols to the focus question:

How does Jing-mei describe Mr. Chong? Underline the words in the text that support your understanding.

- ▶ Students read independently and annotate to the focus prompt.
- 💬 Student annotations should include some or all of the following adjectives: “old,” “strange,” “ancient,” “tired,” and “sleepy” (p. 136).

Pose the following questions one at a time for full-class discussion.

What clues in the text indicate that Mr. Chong may have been different from how Jing-mei remembers him?

- 💬 Students should point to the phrase “but he must have been younger than I thought, since he lived with his mother and was not yet married” (p. 136) to indicate that Jing-mei’s memories of Mr. Chong as “ancient” and “old” might not have been entirely accurate.

How might this insight shape your understanding of Jing-mei’s memories in this story?

- 💬 Students should begin to make the connection that the memories that make up Jing-mei’s story may not be entirely correct. In the case of “Old” Chong, Jing-mei is revising her original memories based on her new perspective, a perspective that she did not have when she was first experiencing these events. Look for students to begin to make the crucial shift from understanding memories as objective descriptions of what happened, to an understanding of memories (and by extension storytelling) as narratives constructed by others.
- ① This series of questions prompts students to engage with the broad definition of storytelling as the interactive process of the narration of self and others. The analysis students conduct in this lesson of how characters develop through the stories they tell thus includes both the stories told within the text by one character to another, as well as the more subtle process of the first-person narration of the text itself, as in this exploration of the authenticity of Jing-mei’s memories.

How does Jing-mei’s mother’s meaning and tone change when she shifts from English to Chinese in this passage?

- Students should make connections between this switch in language and a corresponding shift in meaning and tone. When Jing-mei's mother speaks in English, she tells her daughter that she wants her to succeed for her own sake: "Who ask you be genius? ... Only ask you be your best. For you sake. You think I want you be genius? Hnnh! What for? Who ask you!" (p. 136). She is speaking directly to Jing-mei, and her tone, although frustrated, is constructive. When she speaks in Chinese, she criticizes her daughter for the temper that leads her to disobey her mother: "So ungrateful ... If she had as much talent as she has temper, she would be famous now" (p. 136). Her tone makes it seem more like she is speaking to herself as she "mutter[s]" her criticism (p. 136), and her disappointment in her daughter's behavior is more clearly expressed.
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Instruct students to read independently from "I soon found out why Old Chong" to "but now you must learn to keep time" (p. 137). Display the following questions for students to discuss in their groups.

How can the description "like an obedient little soldier" help you to understand the meaning of *staccato* on page 137?

- Students should derive the meaning of the unfamiliar word *staccato* from context: Jing-mei's fingers move stiffly and precisely on the keys, and so *staccato* must be an adjective that describes musical notes arranged in this kind of rhythm.

What does Jing-mei learn in her piano lessons? Why? Use evidence from the text to support your response.

- Rather than learning how to play the piano, Jing-mei learns "how to be lazy and get away with mistakes" (p. 137). Old Chong cannot hear the incorrect notes that she plays, so Jing-mei learns that she can get away with not practicing, as long as she puts on a convincing enough performance.

How does Jing-mei take advantage of the ways that both Mr. Chong and her mother cannot "hear" her?

- Students should make the connection that both Jing-mei's mother and Mr. Chong demand obedience and discipline, and both Mr. Chong and her mother cannot hear Jing-mei (Mr. Chong literally because he is hard of hearing, and her mother figuratively). Because Mr. Chong and Jing-mei's mother cannot hear Jing-mei, they do not initially recognize the reality of Jing-mei's disobedience. Jing-mei takes advantage of this by refusing to do what they ask.

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle to make the connection between communication obstacles and generational and cultural alignment, consider posing the following question:

How do Jing-mei's interactions with Mr. Chong compare to her interactions with her mother?

- 💬 Student responses will vary, but should make a connection between the communication gap that distances Jing-mei from Mr. Chong and the communication barrier that separates Jing-mei from her mother. Students may point out that Jing-mei defies the expectations of both her mother and Mr. Chong, or that she rebels against both authority figures in her life.

Circle the room and assist as needed. When student groups have discussed all the questions, lead a full-class discussion of student observations.

Instruct students to read from “So maybe I never really gave myself a fair chance” to “ear-splitting preludes, the most discordant hymns” (pp. 137–138). Display the following questions for students to discuss in their groups.

Remind students that they should be noting their group observations individually.

What other adjective in this sentence can help you to make meaning of the word *discordant* (p. 138) in this context?

- 💬 Students should identify the corresponding adjective “ear-splitting” to help them understand that *discordant* is an adjective that describes an unpleasant or disagreeable combination of sounds.

What does Jing-mei realize? Why has her perspective changed?

- 💬 In hindsight, Jing-mei realizes that she might have been a good pianist if she had not been so set on defying her mother's expectations for excellence. Jing-mei's perspective has changed because she is reflecting on her childhood decisions from the more experienced position of adulthood.

How does Jing-mei's understanding of herself change through the telling of her own story?

- 💬 Students should begin to forge the crucial connection between the process of storytelling and the construction and reconstruction of identity. In this case, Jing-mei looks back on the decisions of her childhood and reflects on how things might have been different had she made different choices. Within the course of this reflection, a little girl who refuses to practice piano becomes a girl who squandered her own potential in her attempts to defy her mother. In the process of

telling her own story, Jing-mei transplants her present understanding onto her past self. She is revising her understanding of herself through a reinterpretation of her own past.

- ① This sequence of questions builds upon student analysis of how Jing-mei develops as a character through the interactive process of storytelling. It may be helpful to prompt students to make a connection between this moment of reflection and the similar moment on page 136 when Jing-mei reflects that Mr. Chong may not have been quite as old as she remembers.

Circle the room and assist as needed. When student groups have discussed all the questions, lead a class discussion of student responses.

Instruct students to read from “Over the next year, I practiced like this” to “I was determined to put a stop to her foolish pride” (p. 138). Display the following questions for students to discuss in their groups.

What is the tone of the conversation between Lindo Jong and Jing-mei’s mother? How does your understanding of the tone of this conversation influence your understanding of the content?

- Even though the content of Jing-mei’s mother and Lindo Jong’s conversation makes it appear as if they are complaining about their daughters, in reality they are bragging about the accomplishments of their children, as is evidenced from the description of the tone of their voices as “loud” and “bragging” (p. 138).

What stories are the two mothers telling each other about their daughters? How are these stories different from the stories that Jing-mei and Waverly tell about themselves?

- In the story that Jing-mei’s mother tells Lindo Jong, Jing-mei is a devoted musical prodigy, and Jing-mei’s mother is only a passive spectator of Jing-mei’s amazing accomplishments. Lindo Jong tells a similar story of Waverly’s chess success. Students should contrast these stories with those told by the girls themselves. In Waverly’s “Rules of the Game,” it is clear that Waverly has conflicting feelings about chess and her mother’s relationship to her success. Thus far in “Two Kinds,” it is clear that Jing-mei isn’t a musical prodigy, and that her mother plays an active and aggressive role in her daughter’s life. Ultimately, the mothers’ stories are a form of wish fulfillment, one that is highlighted by the reader’s inside knowledge of Jing-mei and Waverly’s differing perspectives.
- ① This question and the following Quick Write prompt students to reflect on storytelling as a mode of interaction between the characters in “Two Kinds” and how these interactions develop central ideas of Tan’s text. This concluding analysis complicates and broadens students’ initial analysis of how Jing-mei develops as a character through the stories she tells about herself.

Activity 5: Quick Write

15%

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

What is the impact of Tan’s choice to insert Waverly into “Two Kinds”?

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 response.

- ▶ Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.

① Display the Quick Write 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 6: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to independently read from “A few weeks later, Old Chong and my mother” to “and then clap enthusiastically” (pp. 138–139), annotate according to the protocols established in 10.1.1 Lesson 1, and then respond to the following questions in writing:

What song is Jing-mei playing for the talent show? How does she describe this song?

Provide the following definitions to support student reading:

- stricken (adj.) – deeply affected, as with grief, fear, or other emotions
- fiasco (n.) – a complete failure
- nonchalantly (adj.) – coolly unconcerned, indifferent, or unexcited; casual
- ▶ Students follow along.

Homework

Read independently from “A few weeks later, Old Chong and my mother” to “and then clap enthusiastically” (pp. 138–139), annotate according to the protocols established in 10.1.1 Lesson 1, and then respond to the following questions in writing:

What song is Jing-mei playing for the talent show? How does she describe this song?