

10.4.1

Unit Overview

“Once in a while, something slips—”

Text	“Death of a Pig” by E. B. White
Number of Lessons in Unit	7

Introduction

In the first unit of Module 10.4, students continue to work on skills, practices, and routines introduced in Module 10.1, Module 10.2, and Module 10.3: reading closely, annotating text, and engaging in evidence-based discussion and writing. Students develop these skills through reading and discussion, focused annotation, and independent analysis of text.

In this unit, students read E. B. White’s personal essay “Death of a Pig.” Students analyze how White unfolds and draws connections between key events and ideas in the text while developing and refining his central ideas. Students examine the text for examples of parallel structure and various types of grammatical phrases. Students’ work with “Death of a Pig” serves as a springboard for discussion of the structure of a narrative essay, of which White’s text is a masterful example, as well as the structure of classic tragedy.

There is one formal assessment in this unit. At the end of the unit, students engage in a two-lesson assessment. First, students synthesize and compose a multi-paragraph response examining how White develops a central idea throughout “Death of a Pig”. In the final lesson, students engage in peer review of the first drafts of their multi-paragraph responses before revising them to improve sentence structure, punctuation, and grammar. At the end of the unit, students respond to a homework prompt that asks them to consider elements of tragedy in White’s essay; this homework transitions students to an analysis of Shakespeare’s tragedy *Macbeth* in 10.4.2.

Literacy Skills and Habits

- Read closely for textual details
- Annotate texts to support comprehension and analysis

- Engage in productive evidence-based discussions about text
- Collect and organize evidence from texts to support analysis in writing
- Collect and organize evidence from texts to support claims made in writing
- Use vocabulary strategies to define unknown words

Standards for This Unit

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading	
None.	
CCS Standards: Reading — Literature	
None.	
CCS Standards: Reading — Informational Text	
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.
RI.9-10.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).
RI.9-10.5	Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).
CCS Standards: Writing	
W.9-10.2.a-f	<p>Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <p>a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p>

	<p>b. Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.</p> <p>c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).</p>
W.9-10.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
W.9-10.9.b	<p>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>b. Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning”).</p>
CCS Standards: Speaking & Listening	
SL.9-10.1.a-e	<p>Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues</i>, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>b. Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g. informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.</p> <p>c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.</p>

	<p>d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.</p> <p>e. Seek to understand other perspectives and cultures and communicate effectively with audiences or individuals from varied backgrounds.</p>
CCS Standards: Language	
L.9-10.1.a, b	<p>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>a. Use parallel structure.</p> <p>b. Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.</p>
L.9-10.2.a-c	<p>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <p>a. Use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses.</p> <p>b. Use a colon to introduce a list or quotation.</p> <p>c. Spell correctly.</p>
L.9-10.3.a	<p>Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.</p> <p>a. Write and edit work so that it conforms to the guidelines in a style manual (e.g., <i>MLA Handbook</i>, <i>Turabian's A Manual for Writers</i>) appropriate for the discipline and writing type.</p>
L.9-10.4.a	<p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 9–10 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p>a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p>

L.9-10.5.a	<p>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.</p>
------------	---

Note: Bold text indicates targeted standards that will be assessed in the unit.

Unit Assessments

Ongoing Assessment	
Standards Assessed	RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.4, RI.9-10.5, W.9-10.2.a-f, L.9-10.1.a, b
Description of Assessment	Varies by lesson but may include short written responses to reading and discussions focused on how the author unfolds events or ideas, develops and refines a central idea, or the cumulative impact of the author's choice of words and phrases.

End-of-Unit Assessment	
Standards Assessed	RI.9-10.2, W.9-10.2.a-f, W.9-10.5, W.9-10.9.b, L.9-10.1.a, b, L.9-10.2.a-c
Description of Assessment	How does White develop the idea "once in a while something slips" over the course of the text?

Unit-at-a-Glance Calendar

Lesson	Text	Learning Outcomes/Goals
1	"Death of a Pig" by E. B. White, section 1, paragraphs 1–8	Students begin analysis of "Death of a Pig." Students listen to a masterful reading of the full text and then analyze specific word choices in the first section of the essay, in which White introduces the reader to the pig and sets the stage for the pig's death. Students review the characteristics of a personal narrative essay and consider the impact of word choice on the development of the humorous and mournful tones interwoven throughout the text. Students also analyze White's use of the word <i>tragedy</i> in the context of the essay's events.

Lesson	Text	Learning Outcomes/Goals
2	"Death of a Pig" by E. B. White, section 2, paragraphs 1–3	Students continue their reading and analysis of E. B. White's "Death of a Pig," identifying and analyzing the development of a central idea in section 2 of the text. Analysis focuses on White's rumination on the bond between himself and his sick pig—and the imbalance it has created in White's inner life—as well as the tragic trajectory of the events of the essay.
3	"Death of a Pig" by E. B. White, section 3	Students analyze the third section of E. B. White's "Death of a Pig," in which White moves between ruminating on the deterioration of his pig and his own state of mind and recounting a humorous conversation with and visit from the veterinarian. Through collaborative discussion, students analyze how White's ideas are developed in this section by particular sentences, paragraphs, and structural choices such as the order of events, use of dialogue, use of comparison, and patterns of language including repetition of key words and phrases.
4	"Death of a Pig" by E. B. White, section 4	Students complete their reading and analysis of "Death of a Pig." Students consider the cumulative impact of words and phrases on meaning and tone in the final section of the essay—in which the pig dies and is buried—analyzing differences in tone between two key paragraphs. For homework, students reflect on their understanding of personal narrative essays and how White achieves beauty and meaning in this essay.
5	"Death of a Pig," by E. B. White (optional: <i>The Elements of Style</i> by William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White)	Students review the structure of an explanatory essay in preparation for the End-of-Unit Assessment in the following lesson. Students also evaluate White's "Death of a Pig," considering his use of parallel structure and varied grammatical phrases.
6	"Death of a Pig," by E. B. White	Students complete their End-of-Unit Assessment, relying on their reading and analysis of "Death of a Pig" to respond to the following prompt: How does White develop the idea "once in a while something slips" over the course of the text?

Lesson	Text	Learning Outcomes/Goals
7	"Death of a Pig," by E. B. White	Students peer-review and edit their End-of-Unit Assessment for correct punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure. Students are assessed on revisions made to their End-of-Unit Assessment. To bridge 10.4.1 and 10.4.2, students consider for homework how White's essay conforms to the classic outline of tragedy.

Preparation, Materials, and Resources

Preparation

- Read and annotate "Death of a Pig."
- Read and annotate *The Elements of Style* (optional).
- Review the Short Response Rubric and Checklist.
- Review the 10.4.1 End-of-Unit Text Analysis Rubric and Checklist.
- Review all unit standards and post in classroom.
- Consider creating a word wall of the vocabulary provided in all lessons.

Materials and Resources

- Chart paper
- Copies of the text "Death of a Pig"
- Copies of the text *The Elements of Style* (optional)
- Writing utensils including pencils, pens, markers, and highlighters
- Methods for collecting student work: student notebooks, folders, etc.
- Access to technology (if possible): interactive whiteboard, document camera, and LCD projector
- Copies of handouts and tools for each student: see materials list in individual lesson plans
- Copies of the 10.4.1 End-of-Unit Text Analysis Rubric and Checklist
- Copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist