

10.4.1

Lesson 3

Introduction

In this lesson, students analyze the third section of E. B. White’s “Death of a Pig” (from “As my own spirits declined, along with the pig’s” to “the pig was not going to live”), 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. 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. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How do White’s specific structural choices in this section develop ideas he introduced earlier in the text?

For homework, students look up the definition of *tragedy* in a literary context and consider the impact of this word on their understanding of E. B. White’s essay.

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
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).
Addressed Standard(s)	
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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 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. c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current

	<p>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>
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>

Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do White's specific structural choices in this section develop ideas he introduced earlier in the text?
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an idea that was introduced earlier in the text (e.g., Structural choices in this section develop the idea of imbalance, which was introduced in the first section of this essay). Identify one or more structural choices from this section (e.g., repetition of key words and phrases, order of events or dialogue). Analyze how structural choices in this section develop that idea (e.g., E. B. White's choice to repeat key phrases, like the repetition of "deep hemorrhagic infarcts" which is humorous but also represents the connection that the author feels between himself and the pig. This connection makes the idea of imbalance or disorder seem even more central to the text, since something has gone seriously wrong with the pig and possibly also with the man.).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> irrigation (n.) – therapeutic flushing of a body part with a stream of liquid; enema potency (n.) – the strength or effectiveness of something inextricably (adv.) – incapable of being disentangled or untied physicking (v.) – treating with or administering medicine paraphernalia (n.) – objects that are used to do a particular activity; objects of a particular kind rectal (adj.) – relating to the rectum (the last part of the large intestine) embodiment (n.) – someone or something that is a perfect example of a quality, idea, etc.
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stereotyped (adj.) – lacking originality or individuality; conventional
Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> arthritis (n.) – a disease that causes the joints of the body to become swollen and painful stethoscope (n.) – an instrument that is used for listening to the heart or lungs* quack (n.) – an unskillful doctor or person who falsely claims to have medical skills (more commonly: the sound made by a duck) carnival (n.) – a time or place that is exciting, lively, colorful etc. syringe (n.) – a device made of a hollow tube and needle that is used to force fluids into or take fluids out of the body* thermometer (n.) – an instrument used for measuring temperature* <p>① *Consider providing students with a visual aid to support these definitions.</p>

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: RI.9-10.5, SL.9-10.1.a-e, L.9-10.4.a Text: “Death of a Pig” by E. B. White, section 3 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Lesson Agenda 	1. 5%

2. Homework Accountability	2. 15%
3. Reading and Discussion	3. 40%
4. Collaborative Discussion Activity	4. 25%
5. Quick Write	5. 10%
6. Closing	6. 5%

Materials

- Central Idea Chart Paper (begun in 10.4.1 Lesson 2)
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 10.4.1 Lesson 1)

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.
①	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: RI.9-10.5. In this lesson, students continue their reading and analysis of “Death of a Pig.” Through collaborative discussion, students build their understanding of how structural choices in the third section of the essay develop and refine ideas that were introduced earlier in the text.

- Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

15%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about how they applied their focus standard to their Accountable Independent Reading (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 share how they applied their focus standard to their AIR text from the previous lesson's homework.

Instruct student pairs to share and discuss the vocabulary words they identified and defined in the previous lesson's homework. (Preview section 3 of "Death of a Pig," from "As my own spirits declined, along with the pig's" through "the pig was not going to live," and box any unfamiliar words and look up their definitions.)

- 🗨️ Students may identify the following words: *irrigation*, *potency*, *inextricably*, *physicking*, *paraphernalia*, *rectal*, *embodiment*.

① Definitions are provided in the Vocabulary box in this lesson.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 3: Reading and Discussion

40%

Instruct students to re-form their groups from 10.4.1 Lesson 2 and read section 3 of "Death of a Pig," (from "As my own spirits declined, along with the pig's" through "the pig was not going to live"). Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss.

- ① Students have listened to a masterful reading of the full text. However, if necessary to support comprehension and fluency, consider using a masterful reading of the focus excerpt for the lesson.

Instruct student groups to reread section 3, paragraphs 1 and 2, from "As my own spirits declined, along with the pig's" through "was not as difficult as I anticipated," And answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definitions: *irrigation* means "therapeutic flushing of a body part with a stream of liquid; enema"; *potency* means "the strength or effectiveness of something"; *inextricably* means "incapable of being disentangled or untied"; *physicking* means "treating with or administering medicine"; *paraphernalia* means "objects that are used to do a particular activity; objects of a particular kind"; *rectal* means "relating to the rectum (the last part of the large intestine)"; and *embodiment* means "someone or something that is a perfect example of a quality, idea, etc."

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *arthritis* means "a disease that causes the joints of the body to become swollen and painful"; *stethoscope* means "an instrument that is used for listening to the heart or lungs"; *quack* means "an unskillful doctor or person who falsely claims to have medical skills (more commonly: the sound made by a

duck)”; *carnival* means “a time or place that is exciting, lively, colorful etc.”; *syringe* means “a device made of a hollow tube and needle that is used to force fluids into or take fluids out of the body”; and *thermometer* means “an instrument used for measuring temperature.”

- ▶ Students write the definitions of *arthritis*, *stethoscope*, *quack*, *carnival*, *syringe*, and *thermometer* on their copy of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

How does Fred’s attitude affect White?

- 💬 The attitude of the dog develops exactly opposite to White’s attitude: “as my own spirits declined ... the spirits of my vile old dachshund rose” (section 3, paragraph 1). As the author grows more concerned about the condition of the pig, the dog is “delighted” (section 3, paragraph 1) and “happy” (section 3, paragraph 2). This affects White by making him feel even worse about these events.

How does the presence of Fred in paragraphs 1 and 2 develop an idea in the text?

- 💬 Fred’s presence in these paragraphs is humorous—White personifies Fred by describing him like a “happy quack” (section 3, paragraph 2), and this personification is funny to imagine—but his relationship to White also acts as a contrast to the relationship between the man and the pig, which develops the central idea of the relationship between man and nature. Fred and White and the pig are all connected, and the relationship between the man and the dog is a contrast to the relationship to the man and the pig.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to re-read section 3, paragraph 3 (from “I discovered, though, that once having given a pig an enema” through “the dark spots on the pig’s back, his voice changed its tone”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

To what “role” does White refer in section 3, paragraph 3?

- 💬 White refers to the old relationship between himself and the pig, or pigs of the past that he raised and slaughtered in the usual way.
- ① It may be helpful to ask students to recall their understanding from 10.4.1 Lesson 1 that this essay is set sometime in the past, on a country farm. This can support their understanding of butchering livestock for food, which is common to the rural community where the essay is set.

How can your understanding of White’s “role” help you to make meaning of *stereotyped* in this context?

☞ Since *stereotyped* is referring to the usual role carried out by the author, it must mean something that is usual or typical. This reinforces the idea of imbalance in the essay.

① Consider drawing students' attention to the application of L.9-10.4.a through the process of using context and word parts to make meaning of a word.

How does White's use of figurative language develop your understanding of the relationship between the man and the pig?

☞ Student responses may include:

- White uses the image of a "silver cord" that ties him and the pig together "inextricably" (section 3, paragraph 3).
- The author's thoughts are "the bowl of [his] mind"—he is full of thoughts about the pig, to the point of "obsession" (section 3, paragraph 3).
- The pig has come to represent "all earthy wretchedness" (section 3, paragraph 3) to the author.
- White's figurative language is both grieving and ruminating; it creates a sense of a powerful bond between the man and the pig.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct students to re-read section 3, paragraphs 4 through 15 (from "'I don't want to scare you,' he said" through "'McDonald will be over,' said the vet") and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

① It may be helpful to explain to students that *erysipelas* and *hemorrhagic infarcts* refer to medical conditions.

What words and phrases repeat in this section?

☞ "Erysipelas" and "deep hemorrhagic infarcts" repeat in this section.

What is the effect of this repetition?

☞ Student responses may include:

- The effect of the repetition is humorous—because the author gets the words wrong "erysipolas" (section 3, paragraph 5) and the author thinks he also has the disease: "can he give it to a person?" (section 3, paragraph 5).

- It also heightens the tragedy, since it increases the author's distress about how sick the pig is "my confidence in the essential health and endurance of pigs had been strong and deep" (section 3, paragraph 15).
- The repetition of these words and phrases also indicates their importance and "hooks" the phrases into the reader's mind, just as they are in the author's—"the phrase began fastening its hooks in my head" (section 3, paragraph 15).

How does the dialogue between White and the veterinarian refine a central idea of the text?

- The conversation between the author and the veterinarian further refines the idea of the relationship between the author and the pig. The veterinarian increases the author's sense that he and the pig are connected—"I guess I have it, too, by this time, because we've been very close lately" (section 3, paragraph 13).

What effect does White create with his choice to recreate this dialogue in the essay?

- Student responses may include:
 - Recreating this dialogue in the essay shows the humor of these events by repeating words through the dialogue and showing that the author did not know the medical terms the doctor describes.
 - This dialogue makes the reader experience the information from the vet at the same time that the author does. It puts the reader in the same position the author was in when he originally received this information.

How does the conversation with the vet affect White?

- The conversation with the vet causes White to rethink his assumptions. Before these events he had "confidence in the essential health and endurance of pigs" (section 3, paragraph 15) but now that is being called into question. White describes this shift in thinking as "violent" and "distasteful" and he is "scared" (section 3, paragraph 15).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct students to re-read section 3, paragraphs 16 through 20 in their groups (from "It was long after dark and the supper dishes had been put away" through "the pig was not going to live") and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

How does the final sentence of paragraph 20 develop your understanding of White's choices around the order of information and events in this essay?

- The final sentence of paragraph 20 states that “I was beginning to think ... that the pig was not going to live,” however the title of this essay has already informed the reader that the pig does die. This final sentence in section 3 represents White’s state of mind at the time these events were happening, not his state of mind as the writer of this narrative essay. The author and the reader both know that the pig is definitely going to die.

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Students may need additional support in returning to their work with the title of this essay. The essential understanding is that White had already informed the reader that the pig is going to die, so this statement says more about how White is feeling than it does offer new information.

What effect does the order of information and events create in the essay?

- Student responses may include:
- This order creates the effect of tension in the essay, since the reader knows that the pig is going to die but does not know exactly when or how.
 - This structure also casts sadness over the author’s reflection, since the author writes about his thinking before he knew the pig was definitely going to die.
 - This order of information sets the reader up to be able to look back with the author and feel sad about the death of the pig even before the event actually happens.

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider asking the following optional extension question to deepen students’ understanding.

How does White’s choice to order events and information in this way relate to the way he refers to the passage of time throughout the essay?

- There is a relationship between the decision to tell the reader what is going to happen before it happens but also the uncertainty around the amount of time that passes between the pig’s sickness and his death. White uses these decisions to control the way the reader experiences the death of the pig alongside the author.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 4: Collaborative Discussion Activity

25%

Instruct students to return to the chart paper they used to record central ideas in 10.4.1, Lesson 2. Ask students to volunteer examples of structural choices in section 3 of “Death of a Pig.”

- Student responses may include:

- Dialogue
- Comparison
- Repetition of key words and phrases
- Order of time and events

Assign one structural choice to each student group. Instruct student groups to collaboratively discuss how that structural choice develops or refines their understanding of the central ideas they identified from earlier in the text.

① Consider informing students that their participation in this activity supports their engagement with SL.9-10.1.a-e, which addresses collaborative discussion. Students may especially focus on setting goals for the discussion, summarizing points of agreement and disagreement, and making new connections in light of new evidence and reasoning.

- ▶ Students collaboratively discuss the effect of a specific structural choice on the central ideas they identified from earlier in the text.

Instruct each student group to briefly share out with the class the observations that arose from their discussion. As they listen, students should take notes on the structural choices that other groups discussed.

- ▶ Students briefly share the results of their collaborative discussion.

💬 Student responses may include:

- Dialogue: Recreating this dialogue in the essay puts the reader in the same position the author was in when he originally received this information. White receives information about the pig's condition and feels uneasy about his connection to the pig and his condition, revealing the central idea of mortality in a humorous way. White is scared for his own health and is realizing in real time how serious the pig's condition has become.
- Comparison: The comparison of the dog and the author develops the central idea of the relationship between man and nature by creating a relationship that stands in contrast to the relationship between the man and the pig.
- Repetition of key words and phrases: The repetition of the medical condition demonstrates White's feelings of insecurity and imbalance about his own health. The repetition of key words and phrases in this section develops the central idea of imbalance by emphasizing the feeling of imbalance in the author.
- Order of time and events: The order of time and events sets the reader up to be able to look back with the author and feel sad about the death of the pig even before the event actually happens. This develops the central idea of mortality because this order creates an environment where death is being contemplated both before and after it happens.

Activity 5: Quick Write

10%

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

How do White’s specific structural choices in this section develop ideas he introduced earlier in the text?

Instruct students to look at their annotations to find evidence. Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. 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 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 return to section 1, paragraph 3 of “Death of a Pig” (“The classic outline of the tragedy was lost”). Instruct students to briefly respond in writing to the following questions.

What is the “classic outline of the tragedy” according to E. B. White?

What is the “classic outline” of tragedy in literature? Conduct a brief search into the definition and description of “tragedy” in literature.

Ask students to use this unit’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses.

- ▶ Students follow along.

Homework

Briefly respond in writing to the following questions:

What is the “classic outline of the tragedy” according to E. B. White?

What is the “classic outline” of tragedy in literature? Conduct a brief search into the definition and description of “tragedy” in literature.

Use this unit’s vocabulary wherever possible in your written responses.