

10.4.1

Lesson 5

Introduction

In this lesson, 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 phrases. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: What is the effect of White’s use of parallel structure and various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, etc.)?

For homework, students look over their annotations of “Death of a Pig” in preparation for the End-of-Unit Assessment. Students also consider the End-of-Unit Assessment prompt and respond by writing three sentences using parallel structure and two sentences using various types of phrases.

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 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. 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. d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic. 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. 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).
L.9-10.1.a, b	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. a. Use parallel structure. 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.
Addressed Standard(s)	
L.9-10.3.a	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. 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.

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"> What is the effect of White's use of parallel structure and various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, etc.)?
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify parts of "Death of a Pig" where White uses parallel structure (e.g., in section 1, paragraph 3, "Fred, who joined the vigil, held the bag, and, when all was over, presided at the interment"; etc.). Discuss how parallel structure contributes to pattern and clarity. Identify several examples of various types of phrases in "Death of a Pig" (e.g., noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, etc.). Discuss how White's use of a variety of phrases contributes to the essay's flow and style (e.g., using various phrases helps the reader remain interested from sentence to sentence, etc.).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.*
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.*
Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.*

*Because this is not a close reading lesson, there is no specified vocabulary. However, in the process of returning to the text, students may uncover unfamiliar words. Teachers can guide students to make meaning of these words by following the protocols described in 1e of this document http://www.engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/9-12_ela_prefatory_material.pdf

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: W.9-10.2.a-f, L.9-10.1.a, b, L.9-10.3.a Text: “Death of a Pig” by E. B. White 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Lesson Agenda Homework Accountability Essay Structure Review Parallel Structure and Varied Phrases Quick Write Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5% 15% 20% 40% 15% 5%

Materials

- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 10.4.1 Lesson 1)
- Optional use of *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White (available free online at bartleby.com or gutenberg.org)

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 reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: W.9-10.2.a-f and L.9-10.1.a, b. In this lesson, students learn about parallel structure and various types of phrases before analyzing White's "Death of a Pig" through the lens of this instruction.

- Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

15%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about their responses to the following prompts from Lesson 4's homework.

What characteristics and components of a personal essay are present in White's "Death of a Pig"?

💬 Student responses may include:

- White's essay is autobiographical. It is nonfiction and written in the first person, with the narrator referring to himself as "I" throughout.
- The essay tells a story. The central conflict is that "the classic outline of the tragedy was lost" (section 1, paragraph 3) and White's pig dies of sickness rather than the usual system of being raised and slaughtered for food. The conflict happens within White's mind; he is conflicted over the pig's illness and feels it is "the embodiment of all earthly wretchedness" (section 3, paragraph 3). White feels that his entire life has been disturbed by these events. The resolution of the essay comes with the pig's death at the closing. However, this is also referred to at the beginning, making the essay a kind of cycle.

- The essay includes multiple characters (e.g., the narrator (White), the pig, Fred the dog, Mr. Henderson, and the vet) who engage in dialogue. There are several descriptions of the pig, for example, “his wicked eyes, shaded by their coy little lashes,” “four or five small dark spots on his back near the tail end, reddish brown in color” (section 2, paragraph 3); the weather, for example “an unseasonable spell of weather—hot, close days, with the fog shutting in every night” (section 2, paragraph 3); and the scene of the pig’s death, for example, “a small green apple separated itself from a branch overhead and fell into the hole...the dismal sky, the shabby woods, the imminence of rain” (section 4, paragraph 3).
- The essay focuses on a small moment, the “death of a pig,” that comes to represent something very important for White. It represents “all earthly wretchedness,” (section 3, paragraph 3); it represents a “deviation from the classic course” (section 4, paragraph 6); it represents the unpredictability and uncertainty of White’s entire “tidy world” (section 3, paragraph 15) and possibly the tidy worlds of his readers.

How does White achieve beauty and meaning in the context of this personal narrative?

🗣 Student responses may include:

- White’s use of figurative language adds beauty to this personal narrative. The entire event is described as a kind of “play” in which “one of the actors goes up in his lines and the whole performance stumbles and halts” (section 1, paragraph 3). White later personifies the pig as a way to reveal his own interior thoughts and feelings. He thinks that “the pig’s imbalance becomes the man’s” (section 2, paragraph 3) and that what is happening to the pig throws his own life into question.
- White’s reflection, through the cyclical way he orders events and information in the essay—“but I’m running ahead of my story and shall have to go back” (section 1, paragraph 3)—and also through the way he lets the reader into his own inner thoughts, adds beauty and significance to this narrative of a small, personal event.
- White’s movement between humor and tragedy in this essay adds a level of sophistication to the structure of the essay. He moves seamlessly between these two modes, sometimes even in the same sentence: “I discovered, though, that once having given a pig an enema there is no turning back, no chance of resuming one of life’s more stereotyped roles” (section 3, paragraph 3). This sentence is funny because of the physical humor of an enema, but also somber in how it reminds the reader that White and the pig have become unbalanced.

Activity 3: Essay Structure Review

20%

Explain that students will now briefly review the structure of an explanatory multi-paragraph response in preparation for the End-of-Unit Assessment in the following lesson.

① Remind students of their work with crafting essays in 10.3.3 Lessons 4–6.

Ask the following questions to the whole class:

What are the major structural components of an essay response?

☞ Student responses may include:

- introduction
- body paragraphs
- conclusion

What is the purpose and function of an introductory paragraph?

☞ The introduction should catch the reader’s attention, provide context for what will be covered in the essay, and include a thesis.

- ① Inform students that the thesis is the primary claim put forward for consideration to be discussed throughout the essay.
- ① If necessary, remind students that an introduction paragraph begins a paper. The introduction should be interesting so as to catch the reader’s attention, provide context for what will be covered in the essay, and include the thesis. An effective introduction should be one to two paragraphs long, and be written in a clear, organized fashion that establishes clear relationships among facts and evidence. The introduction should state the thesis, which may be the last sentence of the introduction. Finally, remind students that although they should mention their strongest supporting claims in the introduction, all of the evidence and reasoning that supports the claims will come as the body of the essay unfolds.
- ① Remind students of their work with introductions in 10.3.3 Lesson 4.

What are the purpose and function of the body paragraphs?

☞ The body paragraphs support the thesis. They include the supporting claims and all relevant evidence and reasoning.

- ① If necessary, remind students that after the introduction and before the conclusion of an essay, there must be several supporting or body paragraphs. Supporting paragraphs should include well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient details from the text. Each paragraph should stand alone, and there

should be transitions between body paragraphs to ensure logical flow and cohesion throughout the body of the essay.

- ① Remind students of their work with body paragraphs in 10.3.3 Lessons 4 and 5.

What is the purpose and function of the conclusion?

💬 A conclusion is the last chance to state the major ideas in an essay. In the conclusion, the writer should summarize the initial claim and the supporting evidence.

- ① If necessary, remind students that the conclusion of an essay is the writer's final opportunity to state his/her ideas. A *conclusion* serves as a final statement that synthesizes the supporting details provided in the paper and shows how this evidence supports the thesis. Explain to students that an effective conclusion restates the thesis of the paper and briefly summarizes the supporting claims, evidence, and reasoning presented in the paper to reinforce that thesis.
- ① Remind students of their work with conclusions in 10.3.3 Lesson 6.

Activity 4: Parallel Structure and Varied Phrases

40%

Remind students that effective writing contains various types of phrases (e.g., noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, etc.) and clear sentence structures, like parallel structure. Remind students that parallel structure is a rhetorical strategy commonly used in writing. Parallel structure improves clarity by establishing a pattern of language that aids in the logical communication of ideas. Parallel structure often uses repetition of the same part(s) of speech and verb tenses. Lead the class in a discussion about parallel structure using the questions below.

- ① Consider reminding students of their work with parallel structure as a rhetorical technique (RI.9-10.6) in 10.2.1 Lessons 7 and 8.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If necessary, consider connecting the idea of parallel structure in writing with the concept of parallel objects in mathematics. The idea of parallel lines being lines that always share the same properties and distance might assist student understanding of how components of writing can be parallel. Explain to students that parallel structure is built by providing sentence structure that uses the same components repetitively to enforce an idea.
 - ▶ Students listen.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If necessary to support student work and understanding, consider spending additional time reviewing how to establish clarity through sentence structure.

Instruct students to form pairs. Inform students that they will now analyze “Death of a Pig” for parallel structure, as well as various types of phrases (e.g., noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, etc.). Ask students to take out their copies of “Death of a Pig.” Instruct student pairs to read the first three paragraphs of section 1 and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

- ▶ Students take out their copies of “Death of a Pig,” form pairs, and prepare to analyze it for various types of phrases.

Where do you notice parallel structure in the first three paragraphs of section 1?

☞ Student responses may include:

- In section 1, paragraph 1: “death came on the third night or the fourth night.”
- In section 1, paragraph 2: “The scheme of buying a spring pig in blossom time, feeding it through summer and fall, and butchering it when the solid cold weather arrives”
- In section 1, paragraph 3: “that the play would never regain its balance and that my sympathies were now wholly with the pig”
- In section 1, paragraph 3: “Fred, who joined the vigil, held the bag, and, when all was over, presided at the interment.”
- In section 1, paragraph 3: “...not that he represented a distant nourishment in a hungry time, but that he had suffered in a suffering world.”

① If necessary, consider spending more time explaining to students why each one is parallel. For instance, the first example (“death came on the third night or the fourth night”) is parallel because of the repeated definite article and noun structure (the third night/the fourth night). This would not be parallel if the sentence read “death came on the third night—or fourth.”

Lead a brief, whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to reread the remainder of “Death of a Pig” to find other examples of parallel structure, and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

- ▶ Student pairs work through “Death of a Pig” to find other examples of parallel structure, and answer the following questions.

What effect does parallel structure have in the examples you found?

☞ Student responses may include:

- The sentences are clear and concise because there is an established internal pattern that is easy to follow.

- In the sentence in section 1, paragraph 2 (“The scheme of buying a spring pig”), the flow of the sentence mirrors the flow of the seasons being described.
- The sentence in section 1, paragraph 3 (“not that he represented a distant nourishment”) places two ideas beside one another and structures the clauses similarly for comparison. This makes it easy to read and pushes the reader to make these comparisons.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider asking students to rephrase several sentences to get rid of parallel structure in order to reinforce recognition of its effects (e.g., “Fred, who joined the vigil, held the bag, and, when all was over, presided at the interment,” to “Fred, who joined the vigil and who was also holding the bag, and who would later preside at the interment”).

Lead a brief, whole-class discussion of student responses.

Inform students that in addition to parallel structure, effective writers use a variety of different types of phrases. Remind students that phrases are parts of a sentence comprised of more than one word. Provide students with the following definitions:

A **noun phrase** is a phrase that acts as a noun within a sentence. For example, “The scheme of buying a spring pig in blossom time...is a familiar scheme to me and follows an antique pattern” (section 1, paragraph 2). While “scheme” is the noun in the sentence, the phrase “The scheme of buying a spring pig in blossom time” is the noun phrase.

Similarly, an **adjectival phrase** is a phrase that describes the noun. For example, “When we slid the body into the grave, we both were shaken to the core” (section 1, paragraph 3). While “shaken” is the only adjective in the sentence, “shaken to the core” acts as a single adjectival phrase.

A **verb phrase** is a phrase that assigns a verb to the subject of the sentence. For example, “We had been having an unseasonable spell of weather” (section 2, paragraph 3).

An **adverbial phrase** is a phrase that modifies the verb in the sentence. For example, “The pig, curiously enough, stood rather quietly” (section 3, paragraph 2). Because “curiously enough” and “rather quietly” modify how the subject (“the pig”) stood, they are adverbial phrases.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Since students may need additional support with simple parts of speech (nouns, adjective, verbs, adverbs, etc.), consider teaching them these one-word parts of speech before moving onto more complex, multi-word phrases.

Explain to students that using a variety of phrases makes their writing more interesting to read. Using the same type of sentence structure too often makes the writing dull and hard to follow.

Ask student pairs to answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

What types of phrases do you notice in the first three paragraphs of “Death of a Pig”?

💬 Student responses may include:

- A verb phrase in section 1, paragraph 1: “things might easily have gone”
- A noun phrase in section 1, paragraph 2: “The scheme of buying a spring pig in blossom time”
- An adverbial phrase in section 1, paragraph 2: “with perfect fidelity to the original script.”
- A noun phrase in section 1, paragraph 3: “one of the actors”

Lead a brief full-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student pairs to go through the essay once more, this time looking for various types of phrases.

- ① The point of this exercise is to reinforce for students the variety of phrases White uses, not for them to find every single example of a noun phrase, a verb phrase, etc.

What effect does the variety of phrases White uses in “Death of a Pig” have on the essay?

💬 White’s use of many types of phrases makes the essay interesting to read. The sentences are structured differently, but they are all clear.

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing this optional extension activity to deepen students’ understanding. Provide students with a copy of Strunk and White’s *The Elements of Style* and ask them to use the index to find and read what White himself writes about the use and effect of parallel structure or, as he calls it, “parallel construction.” Ask the following questions:

According to Strunk and White, what mistake does the “unskilled writer” often make and to what effect?

💬 The unskilled writer is “constantly varying the form” of sentences which makes him/her seem “undecided or timid.”

When do Strunk and White say it may be necessary to vary the form of a statement?

💬 They recommend that the writer vary the form when “repeating a statement in order to emphasize it.”

Based on this recommendation, what general rule can be devised about parallel structure and varying phrases?

💬 Student responses may include:

- It is important to maintain parallel structure when expressing ideas with similar content or function.
- Writers should maintain a balance between varying phrases and maintaining parallel structure.

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 effect of White’s use of parallel structure and various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, etc.)?

Instruct students to look at their annotations to find evidence. Ask students to use this unit’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 review their annotations and notes on “Death of a Pig” in preparation for the End-of-Unit Assessment. Post or project the End-of-Unit Assessment prompt for students to consider as they review their notes and annotations.

How does White develop the idea “once in a while something slips” over the course of the text?

In addition, instruct students to write three sentences using parallel structure and two sentences using various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, etc.).

- ① Explain to students that this homework offers them an opportunity to practice using parallel structure and various phrases in writing as they begin to formulate a response to the End-of-Unit Assessment prompt.

- ▶ Students follow along.

Homework

Review your annotations and notes on “Death of a Pig” in preparation for the End-of-Unit Assessment. Consider the End-of-Unit Assessment prompt (How does White develop the idea “once in a while something slips” throughout the text?) as you review your annotations.

In addition, write three sentences using parallel structure and two sentences using various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, etc.).