

12.1.1

Lesson 20

Introduction

In this lesson, students analyze a section from chapter 15 of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, pages 284–287 (from “Not long ago, the black man in America” to “in the ‘long, hot summer’ of 1964, unprecedented racial crises”). In this passage, Malcolm X claims that the March on Washington did nothing but “lull Negroes for a while” (p. 287). Students consider how Malcolm X makes his points clear, convincing, and engaging while recounting the events leading up to and following the March on Washington. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: Analyze the author's exposition in this passage, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

For homework, students read and annotate the first half of chapter 16, pages 294–309, and write 2–3 discussion questions focused on how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RI.11-12.5	Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
Addressed Standard(s)	
L.11-12.4.a	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 11–12 reading and content</i> , choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.

Assessment

Assessment(s)
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.

- Analyze the author's exposition in this passage, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Identify how the exposition in these pages of the March on Washington is structured (e.g., chronologically, beginning well before the March).
- Identify the main points in these pages (e.g., The March on Washington was a “farce” and only served to “lull Negroes for a while” (p. 287) instead of effecting meaningful change.).
- Identify how the author uses the structure to support his points (e.g., Malcolm X begins his discussion with a controversial opinion stated outright: “It was that ‘Farce on Washington,’ I call it” (p. 284). He then explains how the White House was nervous that “thousands of milling, angry blacks not only could completely disrupt Washington—but they could erupt in Washington” (p. 284), and so ““endorsed”” and ““welcomed”” (p. 285) the March publicly—and invited the ““big six”” African-American leaders (p. 285)—in order to reduce the risk of an angry protest. Therefore, “the white man” ended up controlling the March, even telling the marchers “*how* to arrive, *when*, *where* to arrive” (p. 286). Structuring the exposition of the events surrounding the March in this way—with an opinion, followed by a series of dramatic events that seem to support this opinion—helps to clarify the point that the March was not what people had originally anticipated, and served only to “lull Negroes for a while” (p. 287).).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- farce (n.) – a foolish show; a mockery; a ridiculous sham
- coalesced (v.) – grown together or into one body
- squabbling (v.) – engaging in a petty quarrel
- philanthropic (adj.) – of or engaged in altruistic concern for human welfare and advancement

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

- riptide (n.) – a tide that opposes another or other tides, causing a violent disturbance in the sea

Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- march (n.) – an organized walk of a large group of people who are protesting or supporting something

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: RI.11-12.5, L.11-12.4.a Text: <i>The Autobiography of Malcolm X</i> as told to Alex Haley, Chapter 15, pages 284–287 Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Lesson Agenda Homework Accountability Reading and Discussion Quick Write Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10% 20% 50% 15% 5%

Materials

- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 12.1.1 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.
❗	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

10%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standard for this lesson: RI.11-12.5. In this lesson, students read pages 284–287 and evaluate the structure of the author’s exposition and how the structural choices make points clear, convincing, and engaging.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

20%

Instruct students to take out their responses to the first part of the previous lesson's homework assignment. (Conduct a brief search into the March on Washington, and write down three details you learn about the March.) Instruct students to form pairs and share what they learned about the March on Washington.

- ▶ Students get into pairs and discuss what they learned from the previous lesson's homework assignment.

① Students will have learned different things from different sources, but most students will have learned that it was a united march for civil rights in Washington, D.C., during which Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his famous “I Have A Dream” speech.

Instruct students to take out their responses to the second part of the previous lesson's homework assignment. (Read and annotate pages 271–293 of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* and develop 2–3 discussion questions focused on how the structure of the text makes points clear, convincing, and engaging (RI.11-12.5). Prepare possible answers to your questions for discussion.)

Instruct students to talk in pairs about questions they developed for homework, specifically analyzing the structure of these pages (RI.11-12.5).

- 💬 Student questions may include:

How does Malcolm X outline the strengths and weaknesses of “the white man’s ... intelligence” (p. 273)?

- 💬 Malcolm X states that “the white man ... has an extraordinary intelligence, an extraordinary cleverness” (p. 273), but that when it comes to “dealing with human beings, the white man’s working intelligence is hobbled” (p. 273). Malcolm X first makes the point that “the white man” is intellectually intelligent but qualifies this point by writing that ultimately, “the white man” cannot interact with others well.

How does Malcolm X use examples from history to make his point about the March on Washington?

- 💬 Just before discussing the March on Washington, Malcolm X states that “the Jew in Germany” experienced “history’s most tragic result of a mixed ... ethnic identity” (p. 283). Malcolm X claims that once Jews had “been increasingly intermarrying” and “thinking of

themselves as ‘Germans,’” Hitler began speaking of an “‘Aryan master race’” (p. 283). Malcolm X’s point is that if Jewish people had separated themselves and not intermarried, Hitler would not have risen to power. This argument against segregation, which, presented just before his discussion of the March on Washington, supports Malcolm X’s claims in that discussion.

- ① If student discussion is rich, text-dependent, and building toward the assessment prompt, consider extending the discussions beyond the allotted time. Then lead a brief, whole-class discussion using any additional Reading and Discussion questions necessary to ensure students are prepared for the assessment. (Key questions are marked with an asterisk*.)

Activity 3: Reading and Discussion

50%

Instruct students to form pairs. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to continue to annotate the text as they read and discuss.

- ① If necessary to support comprehension and fluency, consider using a masterful reading of the focus excerpt for the lesson.

Instruct student pairs to read pages 284–287 (from “Not long ago, the black man in America” to “in the ‘long, hot summer’ of 1964, unprecedented racial crises”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class. Instruct students to identify the author’s points and annotate portions of the text that seem relevant to the exposition (or development of those points). Instruct students to mark examples in which the author’s points are especially clear, convincing, and engaging.

Provide students with the following definitions: *farce* means “a foolish show; a mockery; a ridiculous sham,” *coalesced* means “grown together or into one body,” *squabbling* means “engaging in a petty quarrel,” and *philanthropic* means “of or engaged in altruistic concern for human welfare and advancement.”

- ① Students may be familiar with some of these words. Consider asking students to volunteer definitions before providing them to the class.
 - ▶ Students write the definitions of *farce*, *coalesced*, *squabbling*, and *philanthropic* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definition: *march* means “an organized walk of a large group of people who are protesting or supporting something.”
 - ▶ Students write the definition of *march* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout the lesson:

Explain what the author writes in this passage (his main points), and explain where his points are clear, powerful, and interesting.

***According to Malcolm X, how was the March on Washington first conceived (p. 284)? In the early days of “the March on Washington idea,” what did people think of it?**

Student responses should include:

- Originally, the idea was “the brainchild of ... A. Philip Randolph” and floated around for “twenty or more years” (p. 284).
- Malcolm X states that people thought about the March as a coming-together of African Americans to aggressively “[demand] ... some concrete civil rights action” (p. 284) or in other words, to make gains in their human rights.

What sparked the idea for such a march (p. 284)?

Malcolm X states that it was “national bitterness” that sparked the idea in “young Negroes” who were “sick and tired of the black man’s neck under the white man’s heel” (p. 284). Ultimately, it was anger in the African-American community about being oppressed by “the white man” that sparked the idea for such a march.

How did the White House react to the plans for a march (p. 285)? Based on how the author presents this evidence, what point does he make?

Student responses should include:

- The White House panicked and “speedily invited in the major civil rights Negro ‘leaders’” (p. 284). Then, in a “fanfare of international publicity,” the White House “‘approved’” and “‘welcomed’” the March on Washington (p. 285).
- By first presenting the White House as nervous, then explaining why the White House would be panicked, then portraying them as agreeable, the author makes the point that the only reason the White House seemed agreeable was because it was nervous about the possibility that an uncontrolled and leaderless March on Washington would lead to the chaos it originally sought to create.

What does Malcolm X claim was the purpose of the \$800,000 donation to the United Civil Rights Leadership council?

Malcolm X claims that the \$800,000 was incentive for the “‘big six’” to become heavily involved with the March and to let the donors advise them about what to do: “What was the string attached to the money? Advice” (p. 285).

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider explaining to students that the “big six” were some of the prominent leaders of the Civil Rights Movement (i.e., Martin Luther King, Jr., James Farmer, John Lewis, A. Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins, and Whitney Young).

***How did the “big six” and the White House step into the plans for the March on Washington and make the March “like a movie” (p. 285)?**

- ☛ People heard that the “big six” were going to join the March: “They probably assumed that now those famous ‘leaders’ were endorsing and joining them” (p. 285). According to Malcolm X, the White House brought on the “big six” to ensure that “all went well” (p. 285). The March was “like a movie” because the White House was like a movie director and the “big six” were like actors, doing what the director told them.

What effect does comparing the March on Washington to a movie have on the exposition (p. 285)?

- ☛ With the statement, “It was like a movie” (p. 285), the author draws the reader into the drama and makes his points more engaging. By suggesting that the events unfolded scene-by-scene like a movie, the author also instills in the reader a sense that everything was staged or pre-planned.

What impact do the metaphors “gentle flood” and “riptide” have on the author’s points (p. 286)?

- ☛ These metaphors highlight that instead of being a forceful event (i.e., a “riptide”), the March was basically inconsequential (i.e., “a gentle flood”). By comparing the March to a flood, the author is implying that Washington is not used to the presence of demands for civil rights, just as dry land is not used to water; these metaphors draw the reader in and help to make the author’s points clearer.

What does *riptide* mean in this context (p. 286)?

- ☛ Because “angry riptide” is being contrasted with “the gentle flood,” *riptide* probably means a large, fast, and hazardous flow of water.

- ① Consider drawing students’ attention to their application of standard L.11-12.4.a through the process of determining the meaning of words through context.

How does Malcolm X use the image of the crowd singing “We Shall Overcome” to support his point about the March (p. 286)?

- ☛ Malcolm X uses the image of African Americans being told “*how to arrive, when, where to arrive, where to assemble*” (p. 286) and singing “We Shall Overcome” together with white people. His point is that this image is absurd: “Who ever heard of angry revolutionists all harmonizing ‘We Shall Overcome ... Suum Day ...’ while tripping and swaying along arm-in-arm with the very

people they were supposed to be angrily revolting against?” (p. 286). Malcolm X uses this image to show how the March had been robbed of its power by figures of authority. The contrast between the sweet image of a singing crowd and angry revolutionists is powerful and makes his claim more convincing.

***According to Malcolm X, how did the March on Washington affect congressional opposition to civil rights?**

- Malcolm X claims that “in a subsequent poll, not one Congressman or Senator with a previous record of opposition to civil rights said he had changed his views” (p. 287). The March, then, had no observable effect on congressional opposition to civil rights.

What does Malcolm X claim was the ultimate effect of the March on Washington on civil rights?

- Malcolm X claims that all the March on Washington did was “lull Negroes for a while” until they realized that “they had been smoothly hoaxed again by the white man” (p. 287). People felt like there had been a giant push for change, but in fact they had been tricked into not being angry for a while.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 4: Quick Write

15%

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

Analyze the author's exposition in this passage, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

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 5: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to read and annotate pages 294–309 in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (from “In nineteen-sixty one, Mr. Muhammad’s condition” to “if not actually initiated—by only one man”). Instruct students to also develop 2–3 discussion questions focused on how style and content contribute to the power or beauty of the text (RI.11–12.6). Instruct students to prepare possible answers to their questions for discussion.

► Students follow along.

- ① For Accountable Independent Writing homework, instruct students to continue drafting their personal narratives. Students may continue the draft they have been working on or choose to respond to a new Common Application prompt that better allows them to fulfill their statements of purpose. Remind students to focus on using a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).

Students may post their drafts to the class’s online writing community and be paired for peer review. Remind peer reviewers to consider how effectively their peer uses a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).

Consider maintaining the same peer review pairs through 12.1.1 Lesson 24 so that students can provide and receive consistent feedback from a peer familiar with their work in relation to W.11–12.3.c.

Homework

Read and annotate pages 294–309 in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (from “In nineteen-sixty one, Mr. Muhammad’s condition” to “if not actually initiated—by only one man”). Develop 2–3 discussion questions focused on how style and content contribute to the power or beauty of the text (RI.11.12.6). Prepare possible answers to your questions for discussion.