

12.4.2

Lesson 4

Introduction

In this lesson, students analyze the conclusion of “The Overcoat,” from *The Collected Tales of Nikolai Gogol*, pages 420-424 (from “But who could imagine that this was not yet all” to “vanished completely into the darkness of the night”), in which a “dead man” (p. 420) rumored to be Akaky Akakievich tears overcoats from people. In an independently written response at the beginning of the lesson, students consider the ways in which Gogol’s “fantastic ending” (p. 420) contributes to the interaction of central ideas. This response informs students’ participation in the whole-class discussion that follows, during which they make connections to their previous analysis of two central ideas. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How do two central ideas interact in the “fantastic ending” of “The Overcoat”?

For homework, students review and expand their notes, annotations, and Quick Writes in preparation for the 12.4.2 Mid-Unit Assessment in the following lesson.

File: 12.4.2 Lesson 4 Date: 6/30/15 Classroom Use: Starting 9/2015

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Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.2	Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.11-12.5	Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
Addressed Standard(s)	
W. 11-12.9.a	<p>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>a. Apply <i>grades 11-12 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics”).</p>
SL. 11-12.1.a, c, d	<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 11-12 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>c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.</p> <p>d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.</p>

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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.

- How do two central ideas interact in the “fantastic ending” of “The Overcoat”?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Identify two related central ideas (e.g. power dynamics and identity).
- Analyze how the “fantastic ending” of “The Overcoat” contributes to the interaction of two related central ideas (e.g. The appearance of the “dead man” creates the “fantastic ending” (p. 420) that contributes to the interaction of the central ideas of identity and power dynamics. The “dead man,” whom Petersburg citizens believe to be Akaky Akakievich, becomes a character who “instill[s] fear” by exercising power to “tear[] ... overcoats” from people “regardless of rank or title” (p. 420). With his new supernatural identity, Akaky Akakievich wields power that is outside the power structure of “officialdom” in Petersburg (p. 394). In his second interaction with the *important person* as the “dead man” (p. 420), Akaky Akakievich creates such an “impression” that the “poor *important person*” starts “listening” to “subordinates,” and is less concerned with “who” he “is” (p. 423). Thus, at the end of the story, Akaky Akakievich impacts the identity of the *important person*, and alters the way the *important person* exercises his power.).

Vocabulary

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Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- pretext (n.) - a reason given to hide the real reason for doing something
- timorous (adj.) - full of fear
- akin (adj.) - similar or related
- manifestation (n.) - a public demonstration, as for political effect
- constraint (n.) - repression of natural feelings and impulses
- amiable (adj.) - friendly, sociable
- solicit (v.) - to ask for (something, such as money or help) from people, companies, etc.
- knout (n.) - a whip with a lash of leather tongs, formally used in Russia for flogging criminals
- subordinates (n.) - those who have less power or authority than someone else

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

- None.

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

- remorse (n.) - a feeling of being sorry for doing something bad or wrong in the past; a feeling of guilt

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards: RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.5, W.11-12.9.a, SL.11-12.1.a, c, d • Text: “The Overcoat” from <i>The Collected Tales of Nikolai Gogol</i> by Nikolai Gogol, pages 420-424 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 2. Homework Accountability 3. Pre-Discussion Quick Write 4. Whole-Class Discussion 5. Quick Write 6. Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5% 2. 20% 3. 15% 4. 45% 5. 10% 6. 5%

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Materials

- Student copies of the 12.4 Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist (refer to 12.4.1 Lesson 3)
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 12.4.1 Lesson 1) (optional)

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: RL.11-12.2 and RL.11-12.5. In this lesson, students apply their reading and analysis of “The Overcoat” in response to a prompt that asks them to analyze how the conclusion of the story contributes to the interaction of two related central ideas. Students respond briefly in writing before participating in a whole-class discussion. Students then have the opportunity to review or expand their Quick Write responses after the discussion.

- 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. (Read pages 420-424 of "The Overcoat" and annotate for the interaction of two central ideas.) Instruct students to form pairs and share their annotations.

- Student annotations may include:
 - "pulling from all shoulders, regardless of rank or title" (p. 420) - This evidence demonstrates the interaction of power dynamics and identity because it suggests the "dead man" does not care from whom he "pull[s]" overcoats (p. 420) or what power that person holds.
 - "the *certain important person*, who in fact all but caused the fantastic turn taken by this ... story" (p. 421) - This evidence indicates that the *important person* had the power to cause Akaky Akakievich's death and with it the change in Akaky Akakievich's identity that is the "fantastic turn" in the text.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct students to take out their responses to the second part of the previous lesson's homework assignment. (Respond briefly in writing to the following questions about the conclusion of "The Overcoat.") Instruct student pairs to discuss their responses.

What makes the "ending" of the story "fantastic" (p. 420)?

- The narrator refers to the ending as "fantastic" because the appearance of the "dead man" who "pull[s]" overcoats from others "regardless of rank or title" (p. 420) changes from the realistic tone of the rest of the story. To have a dead man appear at the end of the story to avenge the injustice of the *important person* is an unrealistic, or "fantastic," surprise (p. 420).

Who is the "dead man" rumored to be "pulling" overcoats from people (p. 420)? Explain your response.

- Student responses may include:
 - The "dead man" is Akaky Akakievich. The narrator states that Akaky Akakievich "was fated to live noisily for a few days after his death" (p. 420). The narrator also explains that "[o]ne of the clerks from the office saw the dead man with his own

eyes and recognized him at once as Akaky Akakievich” (p. 420). Finally, the *important person* “recognize[s]” Akaky Akakievich as the person who “seize[s] him quite firmly by the collar,” and the narrator refers to the dead man as the “dead clerk” (p. 423).

- The story is unclear as to who the “dead man” is. The narrator admits that the ending of the story is “fantastic” (p. 420), or unbelievable. The narrator refers to the incidents of the “dead man” who begins to appear after Akaky Akakievich’s death as “rumor” (p. 420). Once the rumors spread, people start saying that the “dead man” is Akaky Akakievich. The *important person* “recognize[s]” (p. 423) Akaky Akakievich only after he has been drinking “champagne” (p. 422). At one point, the “dead man” is “seized ... by the collar” by a “neighborhood policeman” (p. 420), but a ghost cannot realistically be “seized,” thus, contributing to the uncertainty regarding the dead man’s identity.
- In the conclusion of the story, the narrator does not refer to the dead man, but instead speaks of a “phantom” who is “much taller” with an “enormous mustache” and “sh[akes]” his “fist” (p. 424), leaving the reader to wonder if the same thieves who originally stole Akaky Akakievich’s coat have reappeared, or if the size of the “dead man” (p. 420) has grown in proportion to the size of the “rumor” (p. 420).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 3: Pre-Discussion Quick Write

15%

Inform students that their analysis in this lesson begins with a Quick Write in response to the prompt below. Students then use their independently generated responses to inform the following discussion and have the opportunity to review or expand their Quick Write responses after the discussion. Instruct students to begin their analysis in this lesson by responding briefly in writing to the following prompt:

How do two central ideas interact in the “fantastic ending” of “The Overcoat”?

- Students listen and review the Quick Write prompt.
- Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students throughout this lesson:

How does the ending of the story connect the text’s central ideas?

Provide students with the definitions of *pretext*, *timorous*, *akin*, *manifestation*, *constraint*, *amiable*, *solicit*, *knout*, and *subordinates*.

- Students may be familiar with some of these words. Consider asking students to volunteer definitions before providing them to the group.
 - Students write the definitions of *pretext*, *timorous*, *akin*, *manifestation*, *constraint*, *amiable*, *solicit*, *knout*, and *subordinates* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the definition of *remorse*.
 - Students write the definition of *remorse* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

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.
- This initial Quick Write is intended to demonstrate student's first thoughts and observations in response to the prompt. Students have additional time to develop their analysis in this lesson and return to this Quick Write after a whole-class discussion.

Activity 4: Whole-Class Discussion

45%

Facilitate a whole-class discussion of student responses and observations from their Quick Write responses. Encourage students to consider points of agreement or disagreement with other students and how the evidence and reasoning presented by other students can help qualify or justify the observations they generated independently (W.11-12.9.a).

Instruct students to use the relevant portions of the 12.4 Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist to guide their discussion.

- Consider reminding students of their previous work with SL.11-12.1.a, as this discussion requires that students come to class having read the material and asks them to explicitly draw on evidence from the text to support their discussion.
- Consider reminding students of their previous work with SL.11-12.1.c, as this discussion requires that students pose and respond to questions, and qualify or justify their own points of agreement and disagreement with other students.

- Consider reminding students of their previous work with SL.11-12.1.d, as this discussion requires that students seek to understand and respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives in order to deepen the investigation of their position and observations.
- Students share their observations and evidence generated during the Quick Write with the whole class.
- Student responses may include:
 - The “fantastic ending” of “The Overcoat” contributes to the interaction of the central ideas of identity and power dynamics because the appearance of the “dead man” (p. 420) causes a change in Akaky Akakievich’s identity and the power dynamics of Petersburg. In life, Akaky Akakievich was powerless and as inconsequential as a “mere fly” (p. 396); he was fearful of others and isolated. In death, the power of his new identity as one who “pull[s] from all shoulders, regardless of rank or title, various overcoats” (p. 420) instills “fear” in other people no matter their rank (p. 421).
 - In his new identity as the “dead man” (p. 420), Akaky Akakievich’s ability to exercise power changes. Though people “recognize[] Akaky Akakievich” (p. 423), he becomes a man of action, a man whom other people “fear” (p. 421). In life, Akaky Akakievich was a man “shown no respect at all” (p. 396) as a man of routine and predictability; in death, his identity is marked by his unpredictability and his lack of respect for all of “officialdom” (p. 394). As his identity for being a “dead man” who exercises power to “pull[] overcoats “from all shoulders” increases (p. 420), so does his physical stature. By the end of the story, “the dead clerk” is “much taller” with “an enormous mustache” (p. 424), and has the power to dismiss a policeman.
 - The “fantastic ending” of “The Overcoat” demonstrates the interaction of the central ideas of power dynamics and identity. Akaky Akakievich’s new identity as the “dead man” disrupts the existing power structure of Petersburg (p. 420). As a “dead man” (p. 420), Akaky Akakievich experiences freedom from the “constraint[s]” (p. 422) of the living. He “tear[s] off ... overcoats” from people “regardless of rank or title” (p. 420), an action that shows the dead man’s disregard for rank, power, and those physical, or superficial labels that indicate a person’s level of “importance” (p. 416), but have no real bearing on the person’s identity.
 - The “fantastic ending” (p. 420) contributes to the interaction of the central ideas by framing the interrelation of power dynamics and identity in a ridiculous, humorous manner. The narrator shares that an “order was issued for the police to catch the dead man ... dead or alive, and punish him in the harshest manner as an

example to others” (p. 420). This desire to catch a dead person and use him as “an example to others” (p. 420) demonstrates the absurdity of power dynamics in Petersburg.

- As the “dead man” (p. 420), Akaky Akakievich experiences the power or ability to alter other’s identities. With the power of his supernatural identity, Akaky Akakievich takes revenge on the “*certain important person*” who “caused the fantastic turn” (p. 421) of the story. Combined with the “regret” (p. 421) he feels over his treatment of the living Akaky Akakievich, the interaction with the “dead man” (p. 420) causes the *important person* to rethink the way he exercises power with “subordinates” (p. 423). He starts “listening” to “subordinates,” and is less concerned with “who” he “is” (p. 423). Thus Akaky Akakievich impacts the identity of the *important person*, and alters the way the *important person* exercises power.
- Consider putting students into small groups and having each group elect a spokesperson to share their observations, or consider asking students to volunteer to discuss the observations and evidence generated during their Quick Write.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** If students would benefit from a more structured analysis, consider providing the following scaffolding questions to support their reading and discussion:

How does humor contribute to the “fantastic ending” (p. 420) of the story?

How does Akaky Akakievich’s change in identity in this excerpt impact the meaning of the text?

Why did the “*important person*[’s] ... rank often prevent[.]” his “many good impulses” (p. 421)?

How do details about the “*certain important person*” (p. 421) in this excerpt further develop his identity?

Instruct students to form pairs and briefly discuss how their opinions were challenged or verified through discussion, or if they made new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented during the discussions.

- Student pairs discuss how their opinions were challenged or verified through discussion, and any new connections they made during the discussion.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student observations.

Activity 5: Quick Write

10%

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Instruct students to return to their Pre-Discussion Quick Write. Instruct students to independently revise or expand their Quick Write response in light of the whole-class discussion, adding any new connections, and strengthening or revising any verified or challenged opinions.

How do two central ideas interact in the “fantastic ending” of “The Overcoat”?

Instruct students to look at their annotations to find evidence. Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses.

- Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.
- Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition to the independent Quick Write.

- Students revise or expand their Pre-Discussion Quick Write responses.
- See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.
- Consider using the Short Response Rubric to assess students’ writing. Students may use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

Activity 6: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to review and expand their notes, annotations, and Quick Writes in preparation for the 12.4.2 Mid-Unit Assessment.

Display the 12.4.2 Mid-Unit Assessment prompt:

How does Gogol’s use of the overcoat relate to two interacting central ideas?

Explain to students they will write a multi-paragraph analysis in response to the prompt.

- Students follow along.

Homework

Review and expand your notes, annotations, and Quick Writes in preparation for the 12.4.2 Mid-Unit Assessment in the following lesson.