

12.4.2 Lesson 16

Introduction

In this lesson, students analyze and discuss pages 188-201 of *The Namesake* (from “A year has passed since his father’s death” to “sitting with her back to the room”), in which Gogol ends his relationship with Maxine and becomes interested in Moushumi. In a written response at the beginning of the lesson, students analyze why Gogol is attracted to Moushumi. This response informs students’ participation in a whole-class discussion that follows. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: What attracts Gogol to Moushumi?

For homework, students read pages 201-218 of *The Namesake* and annotate for character development.

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Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.11-12.3	Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
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>

Assessment

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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.

- What attracts Gogol to Moushumi?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Analyze what attracts Gogol to Moushumi (e.g., Gogol feels an attraction to Moushumi because she is physically “stunning” (p. 197) and because she connects Gogol with his own past and upbringing. On their first date, Gogol “had not expected to enjoy himself, to be attracted to [Moushumi] in the least” (p. 199), but he found Moushumi to be beautiful. Gogol also likes Moushumi because she understands his past and shares his experience of being raised by Bengali immigrants: “it is [Moushumi’s] very familiarity that makes [Gogol] curious about her” (p. 199). After the date, Gogol’s mind becomes preoccupied as thoughts about Moushumi cause him to remember “buried but intact” (p. 200) memories from years ago. Gogol welcomes the connection to his past that comes with conversing with and thinking about Moushumi; he is “secretly pleased that she has seen those rooms, tasted his mother’s cooking, washed her hands in the bathroom, however long ago” (p. 200).).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- broached (v.) - mentioned or suggested for the first time
- endearing (adj.) - causing (someone or something) to become beloved or admired
- prenuptial (adj.) - before marriage
- precarious (adj.) - not safe, strong, or steady
- intact (adj.) - not broken or damaged: having every part

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

- None.

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

- passivity (n.) - lack of interest in or concern about something

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: RL.11-12.3, W.11-12.9.a, SL.11-12.1.a, c, d Text: <i>The Namesake</i> by Jhumpa Lahiri, pages 188-201 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Lesson Agenda Homework Accountability Pre-Discussion Quick Write Whole-Class Discussion Quick Write Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5% 20% 15% 40% 15% 5%

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)

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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 standard for this lesson: RL.11-12.3. In this lesson, students analyze pages 188-201 of *The Namesake* by discussing why Gogol is attracted to Moushumi. 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 and annotate pages 188-201 of *The Namesake*.) Instruct students to form pairs and share their annotations.

- Student annotations will vary.

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. (Additionally, respond briefly in writing to the following questions.) Instruct student pairs to discuss their responses.

How do the Gangulis' various reactions to Ashoke's death refine one or more of the text's central ideas?

- Student responses may include:
 - Ashoke's death causes Gogol to identify more closely with his Bengali culture, which refines the central ideas of identity and home. As Gogol returns to his Bengali roots, there is no place for a woman like Maxine in his home or his family. Gogol is "silen[t] at the dinner table" when he is with Maxine, and he "need[s] to speak to his mother and Sonia every evening" (p. 188) and visit them every weekend without Maxine. Finally, Gogol excludes Maxine from the family's trip to Calcutta to "see their relatives and scatter Ashoke's ashes in the Ganges" (p. 188). Maxine ends her relationship with Gogol when she recognizes that Gogol's identity has changed and there is no longer a place for her in Gogol's life.
 - Gogol's constant visits to his mother's house refine the central idea of home. After his father's death, Gogol begins to return home every weekend largely because the photograph of Ashoke "used during the funeral ... is the closest thing [Ashoke] has to a grave" (pp. 188-189). The photograph "draws Gogol back to the house again and again" (p. 189). The home, a physical location, becomes important to Gogol because it helps him remember and connect with his deceased father.
 - Sonia's commitment to remain in Massachusetts after Ashoke's death refines the central idea of home. With Ashoke gone, Sonia "settle[s] back into the room she had occupied as a girl" (p. 189), so she can fill roles in the home that were previously filled by Ashoke. Sonia demonstrates the shift in her relationship to home when she "appl[ies] to law schools nearby" (p. 189). Sonia's desire to attend law school close to the family's home is notable considering her "independence" and her "need to keep [her] distance from [Ashima]" (p. 166) in the years before Ashoke's death.
 - Gogol finds comfort in activities that remind him of the past in which Ashoke was alive, which refines the central idea of nostalgia. For example, Gogol "enjoys the passivity of sitting in a classroom again" (p. 189) while he is preparing for his architecture exam. In the class, Gogol "is reminded of being a student, of a time when his father was still alive" (p. 190).
 - Even in his conversations with Bridget, Gogol thinks about the past when his father was still alive, which refines the central idea of nostalgia. When Bridget describes

how she and her husband are living apart, Gogol “thinks of his parents then, living apart for the final months of his father’s life” (p. 190).

What draws Gogol to Bridget? What does this relationship suggest about Gogol’s state of mind?

- Student responses should include:
 - Gogol feels drawn to Bridget because the relationship is clearly defined and based on low expectations. Gogol and Bridget “do not have each other’s phone numbers” and Gogol “does not know exactly where [Bridget] lives” (p. 191). Gogol “likes the limitations” (p. 191) of the relationship.
 - Gogol’s relationship with Bridget suggests that Gogol is in a period of transition and uncertainty. At this point in his life, Gogol does not want a meaningful, committed relationship like the one he had with Maxine. When Gogol visits Roosevelt Island, “it doesn’t occur to him to ask [Bridget] to come along” (p. 191), because he only wants to meet her for their encounters after class. Until he meets Bridget, Gogol “has never been in a situation with a woman in which so little of him is involved, so little expected” (p. 191).

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.

What attracts Gogol to Moushumi?

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

Provide students with the definitions of *broached*, *endearing*, *prenuptial*, *precarious*, and *intact*.

- 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 *broached*, *endearing*, *prenuptial*, *precarious*, and *intact* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

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- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the definition of *passivity*.
 - Students write the definition of *passivity* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students throughout this lesson:

Why does Gogol like Moushumi?

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 students' 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

40%

Facilitate a whole-class discussion of student responses and observations based on their responses to the Pre-Discussion Quick Write. 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.

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.

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- Students share their observations and evidence generated during the Pre-Discussion Quick Write with the whole class.
- Student responses may include:
 - Gogol is initially attracted to Moushumi because she understands his past and his family. The fact that Moushumi can “recall these details [about Gogol’s childhood home] so precisely is at once startling and endearing” (p. 195) to him. Gogol is “secretly pleased that [Moushumi] has seen [the same] rooms, tasted his mother’s cooking, washed her hands in the bathroom, however long ago” (p. 200). Gogol’s interest in Moushumi demonstrates Gogol’s attempts to create a stronger connection to his own past.
 - Gogol is surprised and impressed by Moushumi’s differences. He is impressed by Moushumi’s ability to speak French when “he has never bothered to master another language” (p. 198). Her “frankness” about the “prenuptial disaster” and how she moved to New York “for love” (p. 196) catches Gogol by surprise.
 - Gogol is intrigued by Moushumi, because they share some common experiences from their upbringing. For example, Gogol remembers a Christmas party that “[h]e and Sonia had not wanted to [attend]” (p. 200). At the same party, Gogol remembers that Moushumi “glared at her mother” (p. 201) after her mother forced her to play a song she did not want to play on the piano. In light of their shared backgrounds, “it is [Moushumi’s] very familiarity that makes [Gogol] curious about her” (p. 199).
 - Gogol is physically attracted to Moushumi. He “had not expected to enjoy himself, to be attracted to [Moushumi] in the least” (p. 199), but he finds her “stunning” (p. 197). Furthermore, Gogol “assume[s] he’d recognize her” (p. 193) when they meet at the bar, but he does not immediately recognize her because her appearance has changed significantly. Moushumi confirms that Gogol “ignored [her] thoroughly” (p. 196) at her high school graduation party, the last time they saw each other, but as an adult, Gogol has a different reaction that includes being “distracted by [Moushumi’s] reflection in the glass” (p. 197).
 - Gogol is attracted to Moushumi because she causes him to reflect on his past and Bengali identity in a new way. In the days after their first date, Gogol “begins to remember things about Moushumi, images that come to him without warning” (p. 200). The new memories are “scenes [Gogol] has never thought about or had reason to conjure up until” (p. 200) his date with Moushumi. In his cab ride home after the date, Gogol remembers how his parents “would have struck up a conversation with the driver” (p. 199), and he is willing to speak to the driver “in Bengali” (p. 200), a recognition of his Bengali roots. At a time when Gogol strives

to connect with his Bengali roots, Gogol is “grateful that his mind has retained ... images of [Moushumi]” (p. 200) because the images of Moushumi cause him to reflect on similar experiences they share from their Bengali-American upbringing.

- Gogol is attracted to Moushumi because he shares a connection with her that he did not share in his prior relationships. Whereas Gogol views Maxine as an outsider who could not be part of his family, he understands that “Bengali friends [such as Moushumi] were the closest thing they had to family” (pp. 200-201). Gogol never learns Bridget’s address, despite regular intimate encounters, but after his first date with Moushumi, Gogol “wait[s] to see if a light will turn on in one of the windows” (p. 199) because he wants to know where she lives.
 - Gogol feels an attraction to Moushumi because, as adults, they are able to choose to be together. Prior to meeting at the bar, Gogol and Moushumi’s only contact had been “artificial, imposed, something like [Gogol’s] relationship to his cousins in India” (p. 199). However, their contact as adults is based on a desire and choice to be with each other. After Moushumi goes home, Gogol “wonders when he might see her again” and becomes “lost in his own thoughts, thinking of Moushumi” (p. 199). Gogol ends the date by asking, “should we make our parents happy and see each other again?” (p. 198), which suggests that the Gangulis and Mazoomdars will be pleased by Gogol and Moushumi’s relationship, but it is Gogol and Moushumi’s choice to be together.
- Consider putting students into small groups and having each group elect a spokesperson to share their observations or 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 Gogol’s past affect his perception of Moushumi?

How does Moushumi differ from Maxine?

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

15%

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

What attracts Gogol to Moushumi?

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 response.
- 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 read pages 201-218 of *The Namesake* (from “A week later they meet for lunch” to “asking if she remembered a boy named Gogol”) and annotate for character development (W.11-12.9.a).

- Students follow along.

Homework

Read pages 201-218 of *The Namesake* (from “A week later they meet for lunch” to “asking if she remembered a boy named Gogol”) and annotate for character development.