

12.4.2

Lesson 19

Introduction

In this lesson, students analyze pages 246-267 of *The Namesake* (from “On the morning of their first anniversary” to “searching for the gap in which it had stood”), in which Moushumi begins her affair with Dimitri. Students work in small groups to answer four guiding discussion questions about Lahiri’s structural choices and how those choices further develop Moushumi’s character. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How do Lahiri’s structural choices in this excerpt impact the development of Moushumi’s character?

For homework, students read and annotate pages 268-291 of *The Namesake*.

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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).
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	<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>

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.

- How do Lahiri's structural choices in this excerpt impact the development of Moushumi's character?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Identify Lahiri's structural choices (e.g., flashback, juxtaposition, reflection, symbolism, and shifting narrator's perspective).
- Analyze how these structural choices impact the development of Moushumi's character. (e.g., Lahiri juxtaposes Moushumi's present with her past through reflection and flashback, showing her conflicted feelings about her marriage and how they lead to her affair with Dimitri. Moushumi's reflections on her past and present during her anniversary dinner with Gogol show that she desires a life that no longer feels like "the inevitability of an unquestioned future" (p. 250) and that she "associates [Gogol] ... with a sense of resignation" because she married him out of "familiarity" and "expect[ation]" (p. 250). Lahiri's use of flashback shows Moushumi's past relationship with and attraction to Dimitri, who still makes her feel "the same combination of desperation and lust he's always provoked" (p. 260). Moushumi likes who she is when she is with Dimitri, as he "reminds her of living in Paris—for a few hours at Dimitri's she is inaccessible, anonymous" (p. 264). Lahiri's juxtaposition of Moushumi's past and present through reflection and flashback demonstrates how Moushumi's discontentment with her "expected" (p. 250) marriage and her attraction to Dimitri lead to her affair.).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- ABD (n.) - all but dissertation; applied to a person who has completed all requirements for a doctoral degree except for the writing of a dissertation
- irreverent (adj.) - disrespectful
- obliterated (v.) - removed or destroyed all traces of
- clandestine (adj.) - marked by, held in, or conducted with secrecy
- transgressive (adj.) - having violated a law, command, moral code, etc.
- breach (n.) - an infraction or violation, as of a law, trust, faith, or promise
- unmoored (adj.) - to loose (a vessel) from anchorage
- induces (v.) - brings about, produces, or causes
- vertigo (n.) - dizzying sensation of tilting within stable surroundings
- talisman (n.) - anything whose presence exercises a remarkable or powerful influence on feelings or actions
- discombobulate (v.) - to confuse or disconcert; upset; frustrate

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

- None.

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

- initiative (n.) - the power or opportunity to do something before others do
- premonition (n.) - a feeling or belief that something is going to happen when there is no definite reason to believe it will
- reaches (n.) - the parts of an area that are a long way from the center
- inaccessible (adj.) - difficult or impossible to reach, approach, or understand
- anonymous (adj.) - not distinct or noticeable
- tangible (adj.) - easily seen or recognized

Lesson Agenda/Overview

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Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: RL.11-12.3, RL.11-12.5, W.11-12.9.a, SL.11-12.1.a, c Text: <i>The Namesake</i> by Jhumpa Lahiri, pages 246-267 	
Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 2. Homework Accountability 3. Reading and Discussion 4. Quick Write 5. Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5% 2. 20% 3. 55% 4. 15% 5. 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)

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%

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Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.11-12.3 and RL.11-12.5. In this lesson, students analyze pages 246-267 of *The Namesake* and consider how Lahiri's structural choices contribute to the development of Moushumi's character.

- 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 246-267 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. (Respond briefly in writing to the following question: How does Dimitri's nickname for Moushumi further develop a central idea in the text?) Instruct student pairs to discuss their responses.

- Student responses may include:
 - Dimitri's nickname for Moushumi develops the central idea of identity. By calling her "Mouse," he "renam[es]" Moushumi and "[makes] her his own," which "irritated and pleased" Moushumi (p. 258). When she calls him and refers to herself as Mouse, she returns to her identity from before her marriage to Gogol, when she felt "claimed" by Dimitri (p. 258).
 - Dimitri's nickname for Moushumi develops the central idea of nostalgia, because when she calls him and says, "It's Mouse" (p. 263), she refers to a time when she was younger, freer. When she was in high school, Moushumi still "resisted" the traditional path of a Bengali woman and she fought against "the inevitability of an unquestioned future" (p. 250). Moushumi's adoption of Dimitri's old nickname for her develops the central idea of nostalgia because it refers to a time in her life that she longs for again.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 3: Reading and Discussion

55%

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Instruct students to form small groups. Explain to students that this discussion focuses on pages 246-267 of *The Namesake* (from “On the morning of their first anniversary” to “searching for the gap in which it had stood”) and is structured with four main discussion prompts. In small groups, students discuss each question in-depth, presenting a variety of text evidence and analysis. Remind students to listen to diverse perspectives, respond to their peers’ observations and consider the possibility of multiple responses. Instruct students to use the relevant portions of the 12.4 Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist to guide their discussion.

- The structure of this lesson is meant to increase student independence in text analysis by scaffolding their understanding through collaborative 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.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students throughout this lesson:

What does the structure of the excerpt show about Moushumi’s character?

Post or project the questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to continue to annotate the text as they read and discuss (W.11-12.9.a).

Instruct student groups to refer to pages 246-267 (from “On the morning of their first anniversary” to “searching for the gap in which it had stood”) and discuss the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the definitions of *ABD*, *irreverent*, *obliterated*, *clandestine*, *transgressive*, *breach*, *unmoored*, *induces*, *vertigo*, *talisman*, and *discombobulate*.

- 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 *ABD*, *irreverent*, *obliterated*, *clandestine*, *transgressive*, *breach*, *unmoored*, *induces*, *vertigo*, *talisman*, and *discombobulate* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the definitions of *initiative*, *premonition*, *reaches*, *inaccessible*, *anonymous*, and *tangible*.
 - Students write the definitions of *initiative*, *premonition*, *reaches*, *inaccessible*, *anonymous*, and *tangible* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

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How does the structure of pages 246-253 contribute to the development of Moushumi's character?

- Student responses may include:
 - Lahiri's choice to begin the excerpt with Moushumi and Gogol's anniversary illustrates Moushumi's conflicted feelings about her marriage. After Moushumi's parents call to wish her and Gogol a happy anniversary before Moushumi and Gogol had the chance to say it to each other, the reader learns Moushumi turned down a grant "to work on her dissertation in France for the year" (p. 246) because of her marriage. By beginning the excerpt with the juxtaposition of Moushumi and Gogol's anniversary, Moushumi's concession of a dream opportunity, and Moushumi's fear of "grow[ing] fully dependent on her husband" like her mother (p. 247), Lahiri develops Moushumi's inner conflict about her marriage to Gogol.
 - Lahiri structures Moushumi and Gogol's anniversary dinner by juxtaposing the events of the anniversary with Moushumi's reflections on her relationship with Gogol. From Moushumi's reflections, it becomes clear that she had "been deeply skeptical herself" (p. 248) about her attraction to Gogol and that part of her attraction was that Gogol had changed his name to Nikhil, making him "somehow new, not the person her mother had mentioned" (p. 248). The reader begins to see that even though Moushumi felt genuinely attracted to Gogol at first, the "familiarity that had once drawn her to him has begun to keep her at bay," and she "associates [Gogol] ... with a sense of resignation" because marrying Gogol was "a breach of her own instinctive will" to resist her Bengali cultural identity (p. 250). Thus, Moushumi realizes that by marrying Gogol, she betrayed a fundamental part of herself. Lahiri's choice to juxtapose Moushumi and Gogol's disappointing anniversary dinner with Moushumi's reflections demonstrates that Moushumi has extreme doubts about her marriage.
 - Lahiri structures the excerpt by focusing the narrator's perspective entirely on Moushumi, unlike the previous excerpt in which the narrator focuses more closely on Gogol. The narrative focus on Moushumi in this excerpt contributes to the development of her character because it allows the reader to see that even though Gogol had "obliterated her former disgrace" (p. 249) with Graham and that she liked dating someone that had "the support of her parents from the very start," this "familiarity ... has begun to keep her at bay" (p. 250). Because she "associates [Gogol] with a sense of resignation" (p. 250), Moushumi demonstrates her deep doubts about the marriage that are similar to some of the same doubts Gogol had in the last excerpt.

- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider reminding students of the definition of *juxtaposition*: “an act of instance of placing close together or side by side especially for comparison or contrast.” Students were introduced to *juxtaposition* in 12.1.1 Lesson 17.
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider reminding students of the definition of *reflection*: “consideration of a subject, idea, or past event.” Students were introduced to *reflection* in 12.1.1 Lesson 17.

How does Lahiri’s manipulation of time in this excerpt impact Moushumi’s character?

- Student responses may include:
 - Lahiri structures the excerpt through flashbacks and present-day events to develop Moushumi’s character. By shifting the narration from Moushumi’s disenchantment or discontent with her marriage, to the discovery of Dimitri’s résumé and then back to her attraction to Dimitri when she was a young woman, Lahiri demonstrates that Moushumi wants a life different from the one she has with Gogol. She wants a life that is “inaccessible, anonymous” (p. 264), similar to her former life in Paris. Moushumi also desires a life that no longer feels like “the inevitability of an unquestioned future” (p. 250), hence her attraction to a man from a time when so much of her future was unknown and undecided.
 - Lahiri’s manipulation of time increases the pace of the excerpt once Moushumi begins her affair with Dimitri. Once Moushumi’s affair begins, time speeds up in the excerpt. At first, time moves forward in small increments, such as “[t]wo days later” (p. 253), and finally it moves forward in much larger increments, such as “A month of Mondays and Wednesdays passes” (p. 266). Lahiri’s manipulation of time suggests that Moushumi becomes complacent or content with her affair with Dimitri because “the affair causes her to feel strangely at peace” (p. 266).
- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider reminding students of the definition of *flashback*: “a transition in a narrative to an earlier scene or event.” Students were introduced to *flashback* in 12.1.1 Lesson 17.

What does the narrator’s perspective demonstrate about Moushumi and Gogol’s relationship?

- Student responses may include:
 - The narrator’s perspective or focus on Moushumi demonstrates a rift or division in Moushumi and Gogol’s relationship. Through the narrator’s focus on Moushumi, the reader learns how she “associates [Gogol] ... with a sense of resignation” and that the “familiarity that had once drawn her to him has begun to keep her at bay” (p. 250). Through the narrator’s focus on Moushumi, the reader also learns that she begins an affair with Dimitri that Gogol does not “suspect[.]” (p. 264). The

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narrator's close focus on Moushumi's feelings of separation that lead to her affair mirror the emotional disconnect between Moushumi and Gogol.

- The narrator's perspective demonstrates the personal distance between Moushumi and Gogol. Throughout this excerpt, neither the narrator nor Moushumi ever refers to Gogol's pet name, only his legal name, Nikhil. That "Moushumi refers to Nikhil in conversation as "my husband" (p. 264) when talking to Dimitri creates a bigger divide in Moushumi and Gogol's relationship, because she cannot even say Gogol's legal name while she is having the affair. The narrator's focus on Moushumi shows that she and Gogol are not as intimately connected as they thought because Moushumi never refers to him by the pet name reserved for those dearest to him.

How does the "volume of photographs of Paris" (p. 267) relate to Moushumi's character in this excerpt?

- Student responses may include:
 - The "volume of photographs of Paris" relates to Moushumi's character because her interaction with the book demonstrates her feelings throughout this excerpt's entirety. When Moushumi looks at the book, she recalls "the first time she'd visited" Dimitri to begin the affair, then she reflects on "the streets and the landmarks [of Paris] she once knew" in the book, and "her wasted fellowship" (p. 267). Moushumi's reflections while skimming the "volume of photographs of Paris" (p. 267) symbolize her discontent with her marriage and the comfort she finds in her affair with Dimitri. Moushumi "associates [Gogol] ... with a sense of resignation" (p. 250) because she gave up a life largely disconnected from her Bengali heritage to be with him, whereas being with Dimitri "reminds her of living in Paris—for a few hours at Dimitri's she is inaccessible, anonymous" (p. 264).
 - The "volume of photographs of Paris" relates to Moushumi's character because Moushumi's interaction with the book shows her inability to reconcile the different aspects of her identity. After she reflects on her affair with Dimitri, her time in Paris and "her wasted fellowship" (p. 267), Moushumi tries to put the book back on the shelf and she "search[es] for the gap in which it had stood" (p. 267), which implies she cannot remember where the book belongs. Moushumi's interaction with the book relates to her character because it shows how she cannot figure out where or how the different parts of her identity belong together.

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:

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How do Lahiri’s structural choices in this excerpt impact the development of Moushumi’s character?

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 independently answer the prompt using evidence from the text.
- 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 5: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to read and annotate pages 268-291 of *The Namesake* (from “Gogol wakes up late on a Sunday morning, alone,” to “For now, he starts to read”) (W.11-12.9.a).

- **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider reminding students that they should annotate for character development, structural choices, and central ideas.
- Students follow along.

Homework

Read and annotate pages 268-291 of *The Namesake* (from “Gogol wakes up late on a Sunday morning, alone” to “For now, he starts to read”).