**Learning Objectives**

The goal of this lesson is to provide secondary students an opportunity to explore targeted passages of complex texts. Through teacher reading, student independent reading and rereading, and scaffolded discussion of text-dependent questions, students will identify internal and external conflict in a short story and poem. Vocabulary is learned from context and writing aids deeper understanding of text. The lesson culminates in an evidentiary writing activity. Teachers may need to further scaffold activities to address individual students’ needs.

**Rationale:** This lesson explores character development and theme in a short story and poem, guiding students through a close, analytic read of “Thank You, M’am” by Langston Hughes. Students will gain a better understanding of the characters and their actions. The lesson culminates in a literary response and analysis in which students write a persuasive essay analyzing the reasoning behind the characters’ words and actions.

**Text Title(s):** “Thank You, M’am” by Langston Hughes and “If I can stop one Heart from breaking” by Emily Dickinson

**Genre/Text Structure:** Short Story and Poem

**Targeted Text Selection – “Thank You, M’am”**

McDougal Littell Pages 64-68


http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards/reading-literature-6-12/grade-7/

**PERFORMANCE TASK /CULMINATING INDEPENDENT WRITING ASSESSMENT:**

Reading-Writing Lesson Plan- Evaluating a Character’s Decision:


**Writing Situation:** In the story, Roger tries to steal Mrs. Jones’s purse to get money for a pair of blue suede shoes. Instead of calling the police, she takes him home with her, talks to him, feeds him dinner, and then gives him ten dollars for the shoes. Mrs. Jones chose to see the best in Roger rather than to treat him as a criminal.

**Writing Directions:** Write a persuasive essay clearly stating your position about Mrs. Jones’s actions. Support your statements with facts, reasons, quotations, and examples from the story as well as your personal experience. Imagine how readers might not agree with her actions, and address their concerns with logical reasons and relevant details.

**Activity 1**

**GUIDING QUESTION(S):**

1. The teacher/students will read pages 64-68. The opening sections of the piece may be read aloud or played on audio at www.classzone.com in its entirety. Rereading on day one is embedded in the text-dependent questions and discussion activities.
2. Students will independently read pages 62-68.
3. Students should discuss and write about the initial meaning they have made from their reading.

**Activities 2, 3, and 4:**

**GUIDING QUESTION(S):**

1. Returning to the text, the teacher asks students a small set of guiding questions about internal and external conflicts. The targeted text should be in front of the students as they engage in their discussions.
2. Teacher leads discussion of ‘What is integrity?’ Using the Latin root integer, (whole or complete, as used in integral, integer, and integrate), guide the discussion to help the students include the following in their definition:
   a. The quality or state of being whole, unbroken, complete.
   b. Having sound moral principles.
   c. Having the courage to do what is right, even if it is difficult.
   d. Being honest, fair, and trustworthy.

   Students will examine, discuss, and write about their views on how integrity is evident in the story. Ask students to discuss examples of integrity in their lives that may be similar to that exhibited in the story.
3. Graphic organizers or Reader Response journals serve as a means to organize thoughts for prewriting activities.
4. Writing—short answer response: Describe how Roger behaves differently in the street than he does with Ms. Jones.

**Activity 5:**

**GUIDING QUESTION(S):**
1. Use Carol Booth Olson’s lesson plan found at http://www.classzone.com/cz/books/ml_lit_gr07/secured/teacher/resources/pdfs/G7_olson/czRW7MAM.pdf
2. Consider one of Bob Marzano’s Power Thinking activities at http://www.classzone.com/cz/books/ml_lit_gr07/resources/pdfs/power_thinking/7_thankyou.pdf

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted Text Selection - Page 64, Lines 1-11</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Teacher Activities and Techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She was a large woman with a large purse that had everything in it but hammer and nails. She had a long strap, and she carried it slung across her shoulder. It was about eleven o’clock at night, and she was walking alone, when a boy ran up behind her and tried to snatch her purse. The strap broke with the single tug the boy gave it from behind. But the boy’s weight and the weight of the purse combined caused him to lose his balance so, instead of taking off full blast as he had hoped, the boy fell on his back on the sidewalk, and his legs flew up. The large woman simply turned around and kicked him right square in his blue-jeaned sitter. Then she reached down, picked the boy up by his shirt front, and shook him until his teeth rattled.</td>
<td>underline words with insufficient contextual clues</td>
<td>Return to the text, and ask students a small set of guiding questions about the targeted section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page 64, Lines 32-33</td>
<td>BOLD Tier Two words</td>
<td>(Q1) Identify the setting (time and place). How does the setting influence the development of the story? Possible answer: Walking home from work at 11 p.m. The setting allows for the development of the conflict between a woman who walks alone at night and being robbed by a boy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He looked as if he were fourteen or fifteen, frail and willow-wild, in tennis shoes and blue jeans.</td>
<td>frail, having delicate health; not robust; weak: My grandfather is rather frail now.</td>
<td>(Q2) What qualities does Mrs. Jones possess? Possible answer: She is a large and physically strong woman who has quick reflexes, is courageous, and has a “no-nonsense” approach to resolving conflicts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page 66, Lines 43-56</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Q3) Sometimes authors provide details of a character’s appearance. How is Roger described in this passage? Possible answer: He is about fourteen or fifteen. He is frail and willowy. He is wearing tennis shoes and blue jeans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweat popped out on the boy’s face and he began to struggle. Mrs. Jones stopped, jerked him around in front of her, put a half-nelson about his neck, and continued to drag him up the street. When she got to her door, she dragged the boy inside, down a hall, and into a large kitchenette-furnished room at the rear of the house. She switched on the light and left the door open. The boy could hear other roomers laughing and talking in the large house. Some of their doors were open, too, so he knew he and the woman were not alone. The woman still had him by the neck in the middle of her room. She said, “What is your name?” “Roger,” answered the boy. “Then, Roger, you go to that sink and wash your face,” said the woman, whereupon she turned him loose—at last. Roger looked at the door—looked at the woman—looked at the door—and went to the sink.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Q4) How does Mrs. Jones seem to feel toward Roger? Cite specific evidence. Possible answer: When she tells him to wash his face, this shows that although she is upset about what just happened, she cares about him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page 67, Lines 102-108</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Q5) What is the origin of the expression, half-nelson? Possible answer: The term “nelson” is derived from “full nelson”, which dates back to the early 19th century. It is supposedly named after the British war-hero Admiral Horatio Nelson, who used strategies based on surrounding the opponent to win the Battle of the Nile and the Battle of Trafalgar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She heated some lima beans and ham she had in the icebox, made the cocoa, and set the table. The woman did not ask the boy anything about where he lived, or his folks, or anything else that would embarrass him. Instead, as they ate, she told him about her job in a hotel beauty-shop that stayed open late, what the work was like, and how all kinds of women came in and out, blondes, red-heads, and Spanish. Then she cut him a half of her ten-cent cake.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Q6) Why didn’t Mrs. Jones want to embarrass Roger? Possible answer: Mrs. Jones identified with Roger and exercised compassion to not make him feel self-conscious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page 68, Lines 109-116</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Q7) Explain what Mrs. Jones meant by, “shoes got by devilish ways will burn your feet”. Possible answer: Things that were acquired by thievery cannot bring comfort or joy to anyone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
pocketbook nor nobody else’s –because shoes got by devilish ways will burn your feet. I got to get my rest now. But from here on in, son, I hope you will behave yourself.” She led the way down the hall to the front door and opened it. “Good night! Behave yourself, boy!” she said, looking into the street as he went down the steps.

Page 68, Lines 117-121
The boy wanted to say something else other than “Thank you, ma’am” to Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones, but he couldn’t do so as he turned at the barren stoop and looked back at the large woman in the door. He barely managed to say “Thank you” before she shut the door. And he never saw her again.

(Q8) Aside from saying thank you, what else might Roger have wanted to say?
Possible answer: Can I visit you again? Can I come back to show you my new blue suede shoes?

(Q9) Below are three claims that one could make based on the short story “Thank you, M’am.”
Part A
Highlight the claim that is supported by the most relevant and sufficient evidence within “Thank you, M’am.”

Part B
Identify two pieces of evidence that best support the claim selected in Part A.

Cross Genre Connections:
Compare Literary Works
Reread the poem by Emily Dickinson on page 68. Which line reminds you of the way Mrs. Jones might think? Why?

“If I can stop one heart from breaking”

If I can stop one Heart from breaking
I shall not live in vain
If I can ease one Life the Aching
Or cool one Pain

Or help one fainting Robin
Unto his Nest again
I shall not live in Vain.

(Q10) Part A: Which of the following sentence best states an important theme about human behavior as described in Langston Hughes’ “Thank You, M’am” and Emily Dickinson’s “If I can stop one heart from breaking?”
   a. Helping others can have negative results.
   b. Everyone should learn from his or her own life experiences.
   c. One person’s efforts can make a great difference in another’s life.*
   d. Suffering can be a great teacher.

Part B: Select three pieces of evidence from Langston Hughes’ “Thank You, M’am” and Emily Dickinson’s “If I can stop one heart from breaking?” that support the answer to Part A.
   a. “You ought to be my son. I would teach you right from wrong. Least I can do right now is to wash your face.” (lines 34 – 35)*
   b. “The large woman simply turned around and kicked him right square in his blue-jeaned sitter.” (lines 8-9)
   c. “Now, here, take this ten dollars and buy yourself some blue suede shoes.” (lines 110 – 111)*
   d. “If I can stop one Heart from breaking/I shall not live
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<tr>
<th>Summative Assessment/ Culminating Independent Writing Assignment: Keep the following key traits in mind as you compose your essay:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Has a thesis statement which states your opinion of Mrs. Jones’ actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Defends the position with solid logic and relevant facts, quotations, and examples from the story, as well as from personal experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Addresses readers’ possible concerns and counterarguments and address them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Has an introduction, body, and conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses effective transitions to unify and connect ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voice</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writes with authority, using standard English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shows the writer’s investment in and commitment to his/her argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word Choice</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses precise, apt and descriptive language to interpret the literary work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentence Fluency</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Varies sentence structure and length to help the paper flow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Correctly follows the conventions of written English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Carol Booth Olson lesson plan found at [www.classzone.com](http://www.classzone.com) |

**Writing Situation:** In the story, “Thank You, M’am,” by Langston Hughes, Roger tries to steal Mrs. Jones’s purse to get money for a pair of blue suede shoes. Instead of calling the police, she takes him home with her, talks to him, feeds him dinner, and then gives him ten dollars for the shoes. Mrs. Jones chose to see the best in Roger rather than to treat him as a criminal.

**Writing Directions:** Write a persuasive essay clearly stating your position about Mrs. Jones’s actions. Support your statements with facts, reasons, quotations, and examples from the story as well as your personal experience. Imagine how readers might not agree with Mrs. Jones’ actions, and address their concerns with logical reasons and relevant details.

| Key Idea: Potential Throughout “Thank You, M’am,” students explore the concept of potential. The main character is given a chance to validate someone’s faith in him. How does Mrs. Jones show her belief that Roger has the potential to be honest and do the right thing? |

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Extension Activities/Further Resources</th>
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<tr>
<td>Are juvenile crime and violence increasing? What causes juvenile crime and violence? What factors contribute to gang-related juvenile crime? How can juvenile crime be combated? Examination of these topics should give readers an understanding of the various issues surrounding the problem of juvenile crime.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write a Summary
Students use the template displayed on the summary genre direction chart (below) to write their quick summaries.

Quick Summary Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The author:</th>
<th>Author’s Name, wrote a/an</th>
<th>Genre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>titled:</td>
<td>Title of Story, which took place</td>
<td>Setting: When and Where?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the story, the main character,</td>
<td>Main Character’s Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem or Main Event in the Plot: What did the character do? What happened to the character?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

English Language Learner (ELL) Resources and Strategies

Key Academic Vocabulary

| Idioms/Figurative Language/ Sayings |

Find Your Match!
1. Distribute vocabulary word cards and corresponding picture cards: release (line 25), contact (line 39, 40), job (line 105), stoop (line 15), pocketbook (line 12), snatch (line 4), gas plate (line 90), icebox (line 91), lima beans (line 102), devilish (line 113). Half of your class will receive vocabulary word cards and the other half will receive picture cards.
2. Students must walk around and match pictures with words. Students are allowed to use their dictionaries.
3. Once students have found their match, distribute a Word Analysis Square handout to each pair.
4. Each pair fills out the handout and glues the picture in the corresponding box.

Explain the following phrases, expressions to students. Help students paraphrase and use these phrases in their own sentences:

- “...to be frail and willow-wild” (line 32)
- “...to kick someone right square” (line 9)
- “...I didn’t aim to it.” (line 19)
- “...to turn someone loose” (line 23)
- “...to get another thought coming” (line 40)
- “...to put a half nelson about someone’s neck” (line 44)
- “...to make a dash” (line 75)
- “...to latch onto” (line 112)

Literary Analysis

Use McDougal Littell Best Practices - Toolkit Plot – Copy Mater C42 and Transparency D59-60 for additional support in analyzing how the five stages of a story plot develop throughout the reading selection. These graphic organizers can be found at www.classzone.com or McDougal Littell Easy Planner.

Discussion Activity

Building Character: Integrity
Directions: Read over each situation and write what you would do, how you would feel, and what you think of each situation. Discuss your answers as a group.
1. You haven’t finished your homework and during lunch your friend takes out his homework. He offers to let you copy the answers. Do you?
2. Your friend tells you that someone stole a CD from her CD collection. A few days later, another friend of yours, who is friends with her as well; shows you a new CD she bought. Sure enough, it’s your other friend’s. Do you say anything to your other friend? What do you do?
3. Your parents give you ten dollars for the school supplies you need. However, before you get to buy it, you see a comic book on sale for ten dollars; which you know is out of print and usually very expensive. You need to have the supplies for your class that afternoon. What do you do?

4. You are at a grocery store; the cashier gives you an extra five dollars in change. Do you return it? Do you keep it?

5. Your teacher had an emergency and left the room in a rush. The answer key for next week’s test was left unattended. Would you take advantage of this situation or would you not?

6. You borrowed a Play Station DVD game, Call of Duty, from your best friend. You accidentally scratched the DVD. Would you return the game to your friend without mentioning the incident or would you tell him or her?

For further information regarding this document contact the Department of Language Arts/Reading, Secondary District Instructional Supervisors, Dr. Erin Cuartas, Ms. Laurie Kaplan or Dr. Sharon Scruggs-Williams, 305-995-3122; for ELL questions, contact the Division of Bilingual Education and World Languages District Supervisor, Ms. Caridad Perez, 305-995-1962.
**Targeted Text Selection - Page 64, Lines 1-11**

She was a large woman with a large purse that had everything in it but hammer and nails. It had a long strap, and she carried it slung across her shoulder. It was about eleven o’clock at night, and she was walking alone, when a boy ran up behind her and tried to snatch her purse. The strap broke with the single tug the boy gave it from behind. But the boy’s weight and the weight of the purse combined caused him to lose his balance so, instead of taking off full blast as he had hoped, the boy fell on his back on the sidewalk, and his legs flew up. The large woman simply turned around and kicked him right square in his blue-jeaned sitter. Then she reached down, picked the boy up by his shirt front, and shook him until his teeth rattled.

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“Eat some more, son,” she said. When they finished eating, she got up and said, “Now here, take this ten dollars and buy yourself some blue suede shoes. And, next time, do not make the mistake of latching onto my pocketbook nor nobody else’s —because shoes got by devilish ways will burn your feet. I got to get my rest now. But from here on in, son, I hope you will behave

**Vocabulary**

- **frail**: having delicate health; not robust; weak: *My grandfather is rather frail now.*

**Teacher Activities and Techniques**

- **Text-Dependent Questions**

- **Q1** Identify the setting (time and place). How does the setting influence the development of the story?
  - Possible answer:

- **Q2** What qualities does Mrs. Jones possess?
  - Possible answer:

- **Q3** Sometimes authors provide details of a character’s appearance. How is Roger described in this passage?
  - Possible answer:

- **Q4** How does Mrs. Jones seem to feel toward Roger? Cite specific evidence.
  - Possible answer:

- **Q5** What is the origin of the expression, *half-nelson*?
  - Possible answer:

- **Q6** Why didn’t Mrs. Jones want to embarrass Roger?
  - Possible answer:

- **Q7** Explain what Mrs. Jones meant by, “shoes got by devilish ways will burn your feet”.
  - Possible answer:
Page 68, Lines 117-121
The boy wanted to say something else other than "Thank you, ma’am" to Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones, but he couldn’t do so as he turned at the barren stoop and looked back at the large woman in the door. He barely managed to say "Thank you" before she shut the door. And he never saw her again.

**Cross Genre Connections:**
**Compare Literary Works**
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**"If I can stop one heart from breaking"**
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I shall not live in vain
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Or help one fainting Robin
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(Q8) Aside from saying thank you, what else might Roger have wanted to say?
Possible answer:

(Q9) Part A: Which of the following sentence best states an important theme about human behavior as described in Langston Hughes’ “Thank You, M’am” and Emily Dickinson’s “If I can stop one heart from breaking?”
   e. Helping others can have negative results.
   f. Everyone should learn from his or her own life experiences.
   g. One person’s efforts can make a great difference in another’s life.
   h. Suffering can be a great teacher.

Part B: Select three pieces of evidence from Langston Hughes’ “Thank You, M’am” and Emily Dickinson’s “If I can stop one heart from breaking?” that support the answer to Part A.
   i. “You ought to be my son. I would teach you right from wrong. Least I can do right now is to wash your face.” (lines 34 – 35)
   j. “The large woman simply turned around and kicked him right square in his blue-jeaned sitter.” (lines 8-9)
   k. “Now, here, take this ten dollars and buy yourself some blue suede shoes.” (lines 110 – 111)
   l. “If I can stop one Heart from breaking/I shall not live in vain” (lines 1 - 2)
   m. “I shall not live in vain” (line 2)
   n. “I have done things, too, which I would not tell you, son—neither tell God, if he didn’t already know.” (85 – 87)
   o. “He did not trust the woman not to trust him. And he did not want to be mistrusted now.” (lines 95 – 96)
   p. “But I wish you should behave yourself, son, from here on in.” (line 114)

(Q10) Below are three claims that one could make based on the short story “Thank you, M’am.”

Part A
Highlight the claim that is supported by the most relevant and sufficient evidence within “Thank you, M’am.”
**Summative Assessment/ Culminating Independent Writing Assignment:** Keep the following key traits in mind as you compose your essay:

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**Sentence Fluency**
- Varies sentence structure and length to help the paper flow

**Conventions**
- Correctly follows the conventions of written English

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**Key Idea:** Potential

The main character is given a chance to validate someone’s faith in him. How does Mrs. Jones show her belief that Roger has the potential to be honest and do the right thing?

**Extension Activities/Further Resources**

**Interdisciplinary Connections**

Are Juvenile Crime and Violence Increasing? What causes juvenile crime and violence? What factors contribute to gang-related juvenile crime? How can juvenile crime be combated?

**Technology:**

**Write a Summary**

Use the template displayed to write a summary.
Active Viewing Strategies

Directions: Carefully study the photo and answer the questions.
1. **Monitor** Summarize what is happening in this image. Think about the people in the image and what they are doing.

   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

2. **Predict** What details do you notice about the setting and the people? What do you think the boy in long pants and jacket is going to do? Why?

   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

3. **Make Inferences** Use the chart below to record your inferences. What is the time period? How can you tell?

   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detail about the Picture</th>
<th>What I Infer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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