**Literary Elements and The Short Story**

**This unit, the first of six, uses the short story as the vehicle for reviewing common literary elements.**

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**Overview**

* + Upon entering high school, students arrive with varying degrees of preparation, and this unit enables students to develop a common understanding of important literary elements, as well as a shared vocabulary for discussing them. Each story may be used to focus especially on a particular element, such as “point of view” in “The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe or “symbolism” in “The Scarlet Ibis” by James Hurst. Teachers should choose stories they think are best for their students. The range of suggested works provides exposure to literature from different cultures.
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**Focus Standards**

* + These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.
    - **RL.9-10.1:** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
    - **RL.9-10.5:** Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.
    - **W.9-10.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
    - **SL.9-10.1:** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
    - **L.9-10.5:** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

[Common Core State Standards, ELA](http://commoncore.org/free/resources/CCSSI_ELA_Standards.pdf) (1.5 MB)

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**Suggested Student Objectives**

* + - Identify and explain plot structure (i.e., exposition, rising action, crisis/climax, falling action, resolution) in stories read.
    - Understand and explain why plots in short stories usually focus on a single event.
    - Analyze how authors create the setting in a short story.
    - Define the concept of theme and identify the theme(s) in stories read.
    - Identify and explain characterization techniques in short stories.
    - Identify and explain the use of figurative language in short stories.
    - Analyze how authors create tone in short stories.
    - Identify the point of view in a short story and analyze how point of view affects the reader’s interpretation of the story.
    - Write a coherent essay of literary analysis with a clear thesis statement, at least three pieces of evidence from texts, and a strong introduction and conclusion.
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**Suggested Works**

* + (E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars.

**Literary Texts**

**Short Stories**

* + - “The Gift of the Magi” (O. Henry) (E)
    - “The Overcoat” (Nikolai Gogol) (EA)
    - “The Most Dangerous Game” (Richard Connell)
    - “The Kitchen Boy” (Alaa Al Aswany)
    - “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty” (James Thurber) (EA)
    - “The Cask of Amontillado” (Edgar Allan Poe) (EA)
    - “The Black Cat” (Edgar Allan Poe) (EA)
    - “The Tell-Tale Heart” (Edgar Allan Poe) (EA)
    - “The Scarlet Ibis” (James Hurst)
    - “Everyday Use” (Alice Walker) (EA)
    - “The Minister's Black Veil” (Nathaniel Hawthorne) (EA)
    - “How Much Land Does a Man Need?” (Leo Tolstoy)
    - *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere: Stories* (ZZ Packer)

**Informational Texts**

None for this unit

**Art, Music, and Media**

Prompt:  How do artists create visual narratives in photography and painting?

**Art**

* + - Michelangelo, [*The Creation of Adam*](http://www.christusrex.org/www1/sistine/0-C.jpg), Sistine Chapel (1482)
    - Sultan Muhammad, [*From a Khamsa of Nizami*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Miraj_by_Sultan_Muhammad.jpg) (1539-43)
    - Jacob Lawrence, [*On The Way*](http://hirshhorn.si.edu/dynamic/collection_images/full/91.67.jpg) (1990)
    - Emanuel Leutze, [*Washington Crossing The Delaware*](http://www.metmuseum.org/works_of_art/collection_database/american_paintings_and_sculpture/washington_crossing_the_delaware_emanuel_leutze/objectview_enlarge.aspx?page=10&sort=0&sortdir=asc&keyword=&fp=1&dd1=2&dd2=0&vw=1&collID=2&OID=20011777&vT=1) (1851)
    - Pablo Picasso, [*Young Acrobat on a Ball*](http://en.wahooart.com/A55A04/w.nsf/Opra/BRUE-5ZKH7N) (1905)
    - Tina Barney, [*Marina’s Room*](http://www.mocp.org/collections/permanent/barney_tina.php) (1987)
    - Roy DeCarava, [*Untitled*](http://images.artnet.com/WebServices/picture.aspx?date=20090514&catalog=162328&gallery=111588&lot=00296&filetype=2) (1950)

**Media**

* + - [*Brooklyn Bridge*](http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/brooklynbridge/about/) (documentary film, Ken Burns, director)
    - [BMW short films](http://www.chasingthefrog.com/BMW_Films/bmw%20films.html) (e.g., “Chosen,” Ang Lee, director)
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**Sample Activities and Assessments**

* + ***Teachers Notes:*** *Page and word counts for essays are not provided, but attention should be paid to the requirements regarding the use of evidence, for example, to determine the likely length of good essays. In future iterations of these maps, links to samples of student work will be provided.*

**Essay**

Select a short story and write an essay that analyzes how a particular literary element plays a part in the essence and workings of one of the chosen stories. State thesis clearly and include at least three pieces of evidence to support the thesis. (RL.9-10.1, W.9-10.2)

**Discussion**

Select two works of art to view as a class.  Compare the two works, focusing the discussion on the relationship between character and setting, and on how the artists combined these to suggest a narrative.

**Essay**

Select a short story and an artwork and write an essay in which you discuss the use of symbolism in each. State thesis clearly and include at least three pieces of evidence to support the thesis. (RL.9-10.4, W.9-10.2)

**Speech**

Select a one minute passage from one of the short stories and recite it from memory. Include an introduction that states:

* + - What the excerpt is from
    - Who wrote it
    - Which literary element is exemplifies and why. (RL.9-10.2, SL.9-10.6)

**Seminar Question**

“Is Montresor [from Poe's “The Cask of the Amontillado”) a reliable narrator?” The seminar question may also be used as an essay topic. (RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, SL.9-10.1, SL.9-10.3, SL.9-10.4, SL.9-10.6)

[Scoring Rubric](http://commoncore.org/free/resources/Socratic_Seminar_Rubric_SP.doc)

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**Additional Resources**

* + [Analyzing Irony and Symbolism in a Short Story](http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/5690.pdf) (Louisiana Department of Education) (RL.9-10.4, RL.9-10.5)

[“The Scarlet Ibis” Lesson Plan](http://curriculum2.spps.org/sites/73e1369b-cc0e-4b64-b498-%205067642e2598/uploads/Intro_to_Eng_9_Model_Lesson_-_The_Scarlett_Ibis.pdf) (Saint Paul Public Schools, Saint Paul, MN) (RL.9-10.2)

[“The Minister's Black Veil” Study Questions](http://www.mrburnett.net/HighSchool/AmericanLiterature/ministersblackveil.html) (Mr. Burnett’s Classroom.) (RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3 and more)

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**Terminology**

* + - character/ization
    - figurative language
    - irony (e.g., dramatic, situational, verbal)
    - narrator
    - parable
    - plot (i.e., exposition, rising action, crisis/climax, falling action, resolution/denoument)
    - point of view
    - sensory iImagery
    - setting
    - style
    - symbol/ism
    - theme
    - time
    - tone

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