

ELA: Grade 8, Lesson 19, The Gift of the Magi

Lesson Focus: The focus of today's lesson will be on analyzing the fictional short story text, "The Gift of the Magi" to determine the main ideas and study author's craft.

Practice Focus: Students will analyze a literary text to determine the main ideas and study author's craft.

Objective: Students will analyze plot and characterization in "The Gift of the Magi" in order to predict the story's ending.

Academic Vocabulary: laboriously, patent fact, enfolded, discreet, scrutiny, inconsequential

TN Standards: 8.RL.KID.1, 8.RL.KID.2, 8.RL.KID.3, 8.RL.CS.4, 8.W.TTP.2

Teacher Materials:

- The Teacher Packet for ELA, Grade 8, Lesson 19

Student Materials:

- Paper, a pencil, and a surface to write on
- The Student Packet for ELA, Grade 8, Lesson 19 which can be found on www.tn.gov/education

Teacher Do	Students Do
<p>Opening (1 min)</p> <p>Hello! Welcome to Tennessee's lesson At Home Learning Series for literacy! Today's lesson is for all our 8th graders out there, though everyone is welcome to tune in. This is the fourth in this week's series.</p> <p>My name is ____ and I'm a ____ grade teacher in Tennessee schools. I'm so excited to be your teacher for this lesson! Welcome to my virtual classroom!</p> <p>If you didn't see our previous lessons, you can find item at www.tn.gov/education. You can still tune in to today's lesson if you haven't seen any of our others. But it might be more fun if you first go back and watch our other lessons, since today we'll be talking about things we learned previously.</p> <p>Today we will continue reading a short story called "The Gift of the Magi"!</p> <p>[Show Slide 1.] Yesterday we learned about Della's effort to find the perfect Christmas gift for Jim. We learned that she searched many stores before she found the perfect gift - a platinum fob chain. This chain was simple and beautiful and Della thought it was not only perfect for Jim and his personality but that it would go perfectly with his watch, one of his greatest prized possessions. We also learned how she went home and fixed her freshly cut hair to look as nice as possible. She is really nervous about how he will react to her not having her long hair anymore. So to prepare for him coming home, she makes coffee, prepares to cook dinner, and waits nervously.</p>	<p>Students gather materials for the lesson and prepare to engage with the lesson's content.</p>

<p>We left you hanging yesterday! But you will find out today how he reacts!</p> <p>Before we get started, to participate fully in our lesson today, you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper, a pencil, and a surface to write on • The Student Packet for ELA, Grade 8, Lesson 19 which can be found on www.tn.gov/education <p>Ok, let's begin!</p>	
<p><u>Intro</u> (1 min) [Show Slide 2.] Today our goal is to continue reading “The Gift of the Magi” by O. Henry so that we can analyze the text in order to predict how it will end. The author, O. Henry, is known for his amazing and often surprising endings! Just as a reminder, this is a longer text so I had to cut out a few portions of it so we can be sure to finish it. But don’t worry, you’ll still have everything you need to understand the text.</p> <p>We will begin today with me reading portions of the text and then we will reread it and pause along the way to take notes and discuss the text for deeper understanding. At the end of the lesson, I will assign you independent work you can complete after the video ends.</p>	<p>Students listen to the teacher and learn an overview of the lesson.</p>
<p><u>Teacher Model/Read-Aloud</u> (20 mins) Let’s briefly revisit yesterday’s independent work that you completed. You explained the ways the author helped us to understand Della’s character. You used specific details from the lesson and you used important vocabulary words that you learned from yesterday.</p> <p>For independent practice yesterday, the prompt was:</p> <p>Explain the ways the author helps us to understand Della’s character. Be sure to include details from the story today as well as what those details reveal about Della’s character. Please use three of the vocabulary words that you learned today in your summary.</p> <p>[Show Slide 3.] I’m going to show you the brief essay I wrote in answer to this prompt. I will include details from the story yesterday and show what those reveal about Della’s character. I will also use three of the vocabulary words we learned yesterday. As I read it, feel free to revise parts of your essay from yesterday as that will help you to understand today’s lesson better.</p>	<p>Students review their notes and learning from previous lessons. They assess the work they completed after the previous lesson, comparing it to a sample provided and analyzed by the teacher.</p>

“There are a number of interesting ways in which the author, O. Henry, reveals to his readers that Della loves her husband greatly and that she is willing to sacrifice time, money, and effort to make him happy. In the section that we read today, the author focused mainly on Della’s character and revealed it through a number of key details. One way that he did it was through the use of figurative language. He said that Della turned all of the stores ‘inside out.’ This is a clear way of showing readers that Della was willing to go through all of the stores and search every item to find the perfect Christmas gift for Jim. The author also used detailed descriptions to explain how Della found the perfect gift. He talks about the gift being ‘simple and chaste in design’ and that it showed its value ‘by substance alone.’ He said that it represented Jim in that it possessed ‘quietness and value.’ This all reveals Della’s character because she valued these qualities in the fob chain much like she valued these qualities in Jim’s character. Finally, the author uses good description and sensory language to show Della’s genuine love for Jim. He describes Della as having to break out of her spell of excitement and use prudence and reason in preparing for Jim’s arrival. This begins with her fixing her hair - despite the ravages that resulted from cutting her long hair, Della was determined to make Jim happy. At the end of the section, the author uses sensory language to show Della’s anxious anticipation of his arrival. The author says that ‘she heard his step on the stair away down on the first flight’ and that she ‘turned white for a moment’ while whispering a ‘little silent prayer.’ This language brings the scene to life for the reader and helps them to experience Della’s anxiety. All the while, though, the reader understands that this is another example of Della’s deep love for Jim. In each of these ways, the author develops a clear picture of Della’s character and prepares the reader for the final scenes of the story.”

Let’s review a few of the key details I included in my description. See if you included these details in yours.

[Show Slide 4.] The author uses figurative language to show that Della is very persistent and dedicated to finding the perfect Christmas gift for Jim.

[Show Slide 5.] Della finally finds the perfect gift. Through detailed description, the author shows that Della values this gift for its simple beauty and feels like this gift is the perfect gift for Jim as she sees him the same way.

[Show Slide 6.] **The author uses good description and sensory language to show that as she arrives home, she contains her excitement and focuses on doing things that will make Jim happy - she fixes her freshly cut hair, she makes coffee, and prepares to cook dinner. This shows her genuine love for Jim as she wants to make him happy.**

Did you have these details in your description? [Pause.]

[Show Slide 7.] **I also included three sentences with vocabulary words. I wrote, “He describes Della as having to break out of her spell of excitement and use prudence and reason in preparing for Jim’s arrival.”**

[Show Slide 8.] **Here’s my second sentence: “Despite the ravages that resulted from cutting her long hair, Della was determined to make Jim happy.”**

[Show Slide 9.] **And here’s my third sentence: “The author used sensory detail to show that although Della had thoroughly prepared for Jim’s arrival, she was still very anxious to see his reaction to her hair.”**

Were you able to include a few sentences in your description using vocabulary words from yesterday? We will be encountering new words today so be sure to take notes on them as we go so you can use them in your independent practice.

Ok, let’s continue the short story we have been studying. As a reminder, although the events of the story—its plot—are fairly easy to understand, the author tells this simple story in a complex way. Sometimes telling things in a more complex way gives those things layers of meaning, which is important because the more layers of meaning there are to dig into, the more we learn about ourselves and the world around us! And that’s the challenge for us as readers! Are you up for the challenge of learning more about yourself and the world around you?

Great! Well, here’s how we’re going to do it. We’ll only read a couple of sentences at a time and then we’ll dig into the puzzle of seeing what the words mean and what the author is talking about. To help us with this, we will use the graphic organizer we used for the previous lesson to track our notes. It looks like this:

[Show Slide 10.] You can see we have certain sections on the organizer that are labeled various people or things: characters, key details, plot, vocabulary, and literary devices - which are tools like metaphors and images the author uses to convey meaning, and themes, or important messages. This will be an important tool for us as we work through the text and we will continue to add to it.

Take a moment now to make sure you have your graphic organizer from the previous lesson—or to make yourself a new one if you don't. [Pause.]

As we read and discuss each of these elements of the text, we will pause and give you time to write your notes onto your graphic organizer. We will actually be using this organizer for the next lesson as well, so please keep it handy.

[Show Slide 11.] Ok, now remember we have learned that Della and Jim live in a furnished flat; that is, they rent an apartment with furniture supplied in it. It is not a very nice apartment, though, and they rent it for cheap. Della has been working for months to save money and all that she has to show for it is one dollar and eighty-seven cents. It's Christmas Eve and she does not have enough money to buy the gift for Jim that she wants to buy for him. Della decides to sell her hair in order to buy Jim a nice gift. Della searches through all the stores to find the perfect Christmas gift for Jim. She finally finds it - a platinum fob chain, which will pair perfectly with his watch. Della goes home, fixes her hair, and prepares for Jim's arrival.

Ok, let's jump back into the text! I can't wait to see how this works out for Della and Jim.

[Show Slide 12.] "The door opened and Jim stepped in and closed it. He looked thin and very serious. Poor fellow, he was only twenty-two -and to be burdened with a family! He needed a new overcoat and he was without gloves."

As I read this paragraph again, let's list in your notes all the descriptive words the author chose to use.

"The door opened and Jim stepped in and closed it. He looked thin and very serious. Poor fellow, he was only twenty-two -and to be burdened with a family! He needed a new overcoat and he was without gloves." [Pause.]

Students will read about the characters of Della and Jim Young and discover the unfolding details of the plot. Specifically, Della has sold her hair and purchased a watch chain for Jim with the money that she earned. Della is concerned that Jim will no longer love her because of this drastic change.

Students will learn new vocabulary and explore the author's use of literary devices.

Students will use a graphic organizer to record their notes on each of the elements listed above. This graphic organizer will assist them in tracking the meaning of the story and with completing the independent assignments.

[Show Slide 13.] I wrote: Thin, serious, poor, only 22, burdened, needs new overcoat and has no gloves

The imagery here really paints a depressing picture and certainly reveals a miserable mood. Remember it is Christmas Eve. In some households, this would be a joyous occasion. Poor Jim and Della!

Let's keep reading.

[Show Slide 14.] "Jim stopped inside the door, as immovable as a setter at the scent of quail."

What do you think that could mean? [Pause.] Let's explore. First, I notice the phrase, "a setter at the scent of quail," is a simile. Remember this text is full of metaphors and similes—comparisons that help the story come to life. The author uses them frequently!

Also, a setter is a type of dog.

[Show Slide 15.] Setters are dogs used in bird hunting and a quail is a type of bird that is hunted. When the setter finds a quail, it stands still like you see in the picture here.

This simile provides imagery that helps us picture Jim standing as still as a statue in the doorway of the apartment.

[Show Slide 16.] What kind of mood do you think Jim is in? [Pause.]

It seems like he is very serious, doesn't it? Imagine if instead, he had burst into the apartment singing, whistling, and smiling? That would be quite the opposite of the mood the author has set.

Let's keep reading.

[Show Slide 17.] "His eyes were fixed upon Della, and there was an expression in them that she could not read, and it terrified her. It was not anger, nor surprise, nor disapproval, nor horror, nor any of the sentiments that she had been prepared for. He simply stared at her fixedly with that peculiar expression on his face."

Ok, we know from our previous readings that Jim and Della really love and know each other well. I think it is safe to infer

that Della can tell that Jim really isn't feeling angry, surprised, disapproving, or horrified.

How DOES he feel then? I think Della is terrified because she doesn't understand how Jim feels. She is also probably anxious and worried about Jim's reaction to her new haircut. After all, they were both so proud of her hair.

Let's keep reading.

[Show Slide 18.] "Della wriggled off the table and went for him. " Jim, darling," she cried, "don't look at me that way. I had my hair cut off and sold because I couldn't have lived through Christmas without giving you a present. It'll grow out again-you won't mind, will you? I just had to do it. My hair grows awfully fast. Say 'Merry Christmas!' Jim, and let's be happy. You don't know what a nice-what a beautiful, nice gift I've got for you."

[Show Slide 19.] So, now we watch as Della tries to persuade and convince Jim to feel happy and excited. This really goes along with what we know about their relationship already. She says "let's be happy" and "what a nice-what a beautiful, nice gift I've got for you."

She is still devoted and persistent! Do you think Jim will like his gift? Let's see what happens next.

[Show Slide 20.] "'You've cut off your hair? Asked Jim, laboriously, as if he had not arrived at that patent fact yet even after the hardest mental labor."

How did Jim ask the question? Laboriously? Based on the tone, mood, and context, what do you think that word could mean? [Pause.] It looks like it has the word labor in it which you probably know means work. [Pause.] Laboriously means in a way that takes considerable time, effort, and work.

[Show Slide 21.] Let's be sure to jot that word down, along with its meaning, in the vocabulary section in the graphic organizer.

Another potentially new word is patent. Let's note this one on the graphic organizer as well.

[Show Slide 22.] Patent, in this case, means obvious.

[Show Slide 23.] So Jim asks, "You've cut off your hair?" slowly and with some difficulty as if it is hard work to ask the question, like it is making his brain hurt or as if he doesn't understand, even though, it is really obvious Della has in fact, cut off her hair. Do you think he could be in shock?

Let's see.

[Show Slide 24.] "Cut it off and sold it," said Della. "Don't you like me just as well, anyhow? I'm me without my hair, isn't I?"

Jim looked about the room curiously."

So Della has to come right out and say it. It sounds as if she is hopeful that Jim still loves her. Do you think he does?

[Pause.]

Let's read on to see. The text continues.

[Show Slide 25.] "You say your hair is goner" he said, with an air almost of idiocy."

Well, Jim certainly seems still in a state of shock and disbelief. "With an air of almost idiocy" pretty clearly lets the reader know that Jim is confused or some might say, stupefied.

Continuing,

[Show Slide 26.] "You needn't look for it "said Della. " It's sold, I tell you -sold and gone, too. It's Christmas Eve, boy. Be good to me, for it went for you. Maybe the hairs of my head were numbered/ ' she went on with sudden serious sweetness, "but nobody could ever count my love for you. Shall I put the chops on, Jim?"

So here, Della continues to almost beg Jim to understand what she has done and feel happy.

And then she begins talking about the pork chop dinner. Do you think she is trying to get Jim to snap out of it? Let's see.

[Show Slide 27.] "Out of his trance Jim seemed quickly to wake."

Phew. Finally!

[Show Slide 28.] "He enfolded his Della."

To enfold means to hug. Be sure to jot this down on the graphic organizer in the vocabulary section. [Pause.]

[Show Slide 29.] “For ten seconds let us regard with discreet scrutiny some inconsequential object in the other direction.”

Ok, let’s break this sentence down and then interpret it. First, let’s make sure we know the meaning of the words the author chooses to use. Be sure to list the words and their meanings in the vocabulary section of the graphic organizer. Not only will understanding the words help you understand the reading and complete your independent practice, but you are sure to encounter these words in situations other than this story. And, now, you’ll have a deeper understanding of them.

[Show Slide 30.] Discreet in this case means subtle or unnoticeable. [Pause.]

[Show Slide 31.] Scrutiny is critical observation or examination—looking closely and carefully at something. [Pause.]

[Show Slide 32.] And, inconsequential means unimportant or meaningless. [Pause.] Now that we have jotted down the vocabulary, let’s read the sentence again to try to understand.

[Show Slide 33.] “Out of his trance Jim seemed quickly to wake. He enfolded his Della. For ten seconds let us regard with discreet scrutiny some inconsequential object in the other direction.”

So, it seems like Jim and Della are hugging and the author invites the audience to study some meaningless object subtly. The couple is hugging, and the author want us to look away, maybe to give them privacy! Let’s read it again to see if you pick that up.

“Out of his trance Jim seemed quickly to wake. He enfolded his Della. For ten seconds let us regard with discreet scrutiny some inconsequential object in the other direction.”

I’ve noticed the author seems talk directly to the audience frequently. Like in this paragraph, instead of continuing to tell the story, he says, “Let us regard” urging the reader to look away. This is a literary device called direct address.

Authors use this technique to help the reader feel as if they are included in the story. Do you feel included in the story? Do you remember other instances in the text where the author addresses the audience directly? [Pause.]

If you saw our first lesson about this story, you might remember that the author told us he was going to show us around the apartment a bit while Della finished crying. That was another example of direct address.

[Show Slide 34.] Let's add this technique to the graphic organizer under Literary devices. Direct address is when the author talks directly to the audience.

Ok, let's read that part one more time. This time, notice the direct address.

[Show Slide 35.] "Out of his trance Jim seemed quickly to wake. He enfolded his Della. For ten seconds let us regard with discreet scrutiny some inconsequential object in the other direction."

What a cool technique! Let's keep reading.

[Show Slide 36.] "Jim drew a package from his overcoat pocket and threw it upon the table."

I'll bet it is a Christmas present for Della! What do you think it is? [Pause.]

[Show Slide 37.] "Don't make any mistake, Dell," he said, "about me. I don't think there's anything in the way of a haircut or a shave or a shampoo that could make me like my girl any less."

Well, that is a relief! He DOES still love her. I'll bet Della is relieved too. I wonder why Jim has been acting so strangely, then. Let's keep reading.

[Show Slide 38.] "But if you'll unwrap that package you may see why you had me going a while at first."

A-ha! So, Jim is going to reveal why he was acting so oddly earlier.

But, that will have to wait until tomorrow to find out. We'll leave this as a cliff-hanger. Be sure to join us tomorrow to see what happens next.

<p>Let's add a few notes to our graphic organizer to make sure we summarize what we read today.</p> <p>In the plot section of the graphic organizer, summarize what happened in today's reading.</p> <p>[Show Slide 39.] [Pause.]</p> <p>I wrote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jim comes home and is shocked to discover that Della has cut her hair.• Della is worried that Jim will be upset, but, in the end, he still loves her.• Jim brings home a gift for Della.	
<p>Guided Practice (10 min)</p> <p>Ok, before we close for today, let's review our notes for our graphic organizer. As I read what I have in my notes, please add anything that you don't already have to yours.</p> <p>I added to the plot, vocabulary, and literary device sections of the graphic organizer today. The characters continued to exhibit characteristics that we've already noted, such as how much they love and care for each other.</p> <p>For the plot, we summarized that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jim comes home and is shocked to discover that Della has cut her hair.• Della is worried that Jim will be upset, but his actions and words indicate he still loves her.• Jim brings home a gift for Della. <p>We did encounter quite a bit of vocabulary words today. Let's make sure we got all of them:</p> <p>[Show Slide 40.]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Laboriously means in a way that takes considerable time, effort, and work.• Patent, in this case, means obvious.• To enfold means to hug• Discreet, in this case, means subtle or unnoticeable.• Scrutiny is critical observation or examination.• Inconsequential means unimportant or meaningless. <p>[Pause.]</p> <p>And, we also added on a new literary device.</p>	<p>Students review their notes and consolidate their understanding of the text in preparation for writing a narration of an ending for independent practice.</p>

<p>[Show Slide 41.] A direct address is when an author speaks directly to the readers.</p> <p>Ok. These notes will help you to complete the independent assignment.</p>	
<p><u>Independent Work</u> (1 min)</p> <p>I look forward to reading what happens next, and I’m sure you are curious as well. I’ll bet you could make some good guesses!</p> <p>For your independent work today, please respond in writing to the following prompt:</p> <p>[Show Slide 42.] Students, please write the prompt down on your notebook paper so you will have it handy for when you are responding in writing.</p> <p>Based on the plot and character development, what do you think will happen next In O. Henry’s short story, “The Gift of the Magi”? Write a narrative in which you create a possible ending for the story. Be sure to use the same literary devices that O. Henry uses, and keep in mind what you already know about the characters.</p>	<p>Students will respond to a narrative writing prompt that allows them to apply their learning from the lesson in a creative way.</p>
<p><u>Closing</u> (1 min)</p> <p>Thank you. I enjoyed reading the short story, “The Gift of the Magi,” with you today! Thank you for inviting me into your home. I look forward to seeing you in our next lesson in Tennessee’s At Home Learning Series! Bye!</p>	