

NEW YORK STATE MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM

TITLE: ELA Regents Prep Expanded Lessons

DESCRIPTION: The expanded lessons provide more content instruction and practice of ELA skills, in addition to test-taking skills. Each lesson has a Student handout and its own Educator Guide with answers and advice embedded into the individual student lesson. These materials are intended to help you prepare a student to take the NYS Common Core English Language Arts Regents Exam.

To help you plan sessions, this Facilitator Guide provides general information about the Regents Exam, along with an overview of the focus for each lesson. For each lesson, this Facilitator Guide identifies any additional supplies or files you will need for the lesson.

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ELA REGENTS PREP SERIES: NYS-MEP Resource Library also has a 4-Session option for students who have a short time to prepare for the ELA Regents Exam. The 4-Session version concentrates on test-taking skills needed for taking the ELA Regents Exam.

REGENTS PREP SERIES: The NYS-MEP continues to build a series of Regents Prep materials, available in the Resource Library on the www.nysmigrant.org website.

FACILITATOR GUIDE

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ELA REGENTS EXAM

The exam itself has three sections, which are **not** weighted evenly. The majority of points (85%) are earned in the first two sections of the exam.

Part 1, **Reading Comprehension**, is designed to test how well students understand what they read. Students will be asked to read three unconnected passages, and then answer a total of twenty-four multiple-choice questions about them. One passage will be prose fiction*, one will be poetry, and the third will be nonfiction prose. Usually, about 40% of the questions deal with the first and the final passage, with only 20% asking about the poem.

*One exam had a selection from a memoir (i.e. nonfiction) for the first passage, but this has not been repeated.

Part 2, **Argument**, asks students to write an essay defending a claim. Students must use specific evidence from at least three of the four texts provided. They will be given a topic question and four relevant passages. The complete list of past Part II topic questions has been compiled and included in these materials.

The final section of the exam, Part 3, is the **Text-Analysis Response** portion. Students will be provided with a passage, which may be fiction or nonfiction, and asked to write two to three paragraphs analyzing how the author uses a specific technique to develop the central idea of the text. The genre of the passage has varied over the years since the current test was introduced in 2014. Originally, nonfiction was most common, with one speech and several memoir/diary selections. Since 2017, however, fiction has held sway, with the passage most frequently being taken from a short story or novel.

SECTION	Part 1: Reading Comprehension	Part 2: Argument	Part 3: Text Analysis
SUGGESTED TIME	60 min.	90 min.	30 min.
TEXTS TO READ	3 texts; ~2,600 words total; literary text, poem, and informational text	4 texts; ~2,600 words total; 4 informational texts	1 text; ~1,000 words; either a literature text or an informational text
TASK	Respond to 24 multiple-choice questions.	Write a source-based argument using the texts as their sources. Students must specifically cite at least three of the texts.	Write a 2-3 paragraph expository essay identifying the text’s central idea and explaining the author’s use of one writing strategy in developing this central idea.
RAW VS WEIGHTED POINTS	24 24	6 24	4 8

OVERVIEW OF LESSONS 1 – 6 AND SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR EACH LESSON

Lesson 1 – Literary Elements & Techniques Part 1 (approximately one hour)

The goal is to reinforce students’ understanding of the literary terms that will be used throughout the ELA Regents Exam, especially in Parts 1 and 3 of the NYS ELA Regents Exam.

Educator Note: Lessons 1-3 provide expanded practice of “*Session 1: Literary Elements & Techniques*,” from the shorter, “ELA Regents Prep in Four Sessions.”

Lesson 1 Supplies

- Educator Key
- Student Lesson Handout
- **Supporting English Learners:** NYSED Guide of Literary Terms & Devices for Language Arts: Follow the link to the Bilingual Glossaries, <https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/resources/glossaries> and then scroll to the very bottom to find the Guide of Literary Terms and Devices.
 - This Guide provides a definition and example for each term, in a bilingual format, with the terms in English in one column and the target language in the second column. It is currently available in 22 languages, including Arabic, Haitian, Karen, Nepali, Somali, and Spanish.

Lesson 2 – Literary Elements & Techniques Part 2

Lesson 2 continues to work with literary elements using poems and articles to strengthen these skills.

Lesson 2 Supplies

- Educator Key
- Student Lesson Handout
- Sample article and questions from the newsela website
 - There are six (6) copies of the same sample article, but they are written at different reading levels and in different languages.
 - The three reading levels are: Gr 3, Gr 6, and Gr 8
 - The two languages are English and Spanish.
 - Select the one(s) that work for your students.

Educator Note: Exercise 6 uses an article, questions, and answers from <https://newsela.com>. See Page 4 in this Facilitator Guide for directions about subscribing to NEWSELA (news ela). These directions also how to change the reading level of its articles, and how to change the language to Spanish.

After you subscribe, the website will send you one email a day with the latest news articles, so you don't have to search the website unless you want to. You can always change the reading level. Many, but not all, articles are available in Spanish.

Lesson 3 – Literary Elements & Techniques Part 3

Lesson 3 moves students to apply some of the concepts they practiced in the earlier lessons. Now applying these techniques to denser reading, as well as when the elements, such as symbolism, are not as obvious.

Lesson 3 Supplies

- Educator Key
- Student Lesson Handout

Lesson 4 – Tips for Multiple Choice & Newsela

Identifies strategies for answering multiple-choice questions, and uses news articles and quizzes from the Newsela website. These articles can be less difficult to read than the past Regents Exams, so are useful to meet the student at their reading level to practice, and then gradually move students to working with more difficult reading.


Educator Note: Lessons 4 – 6 provide expanded practice of the reading comprehension of “Session 2: Exam Overview & Strategies for Part 1 (Reading Comprehension)” from the shorter ELA Regents Prep in Four Sessions.

Lesson 4 Supplies

- Educator Key
- Student Lesson
- YouTube access to watch 1:38 minute clip using the “50-50” choice from “Who Wants to be a Millionaire?” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yh3u5h0syg>
- Newsela Sample 1 – Predator Birds at Hotels (Lexicon 720; Grade 4)
- Newsela Sample 2 – Cherokee Nation Seat in Congress (Lexicon 940; Grade 6)
- Newsela Sample 3 – Magnetic pouches that lock students’ phones (Lexicon 950; Grade 6)
- Newsela Sample 3s – fundas magnéticas que bloquean los teléfonos (Lexicon 940; Grade 6)

Educator Note: These sample articles are from the Newsela website. Subscribe to Newsela for more high interest articles that you can adjust for reading level. See directions below.

- Website: <https://newsela.com>
- Create a log in (for free)

- You will receive one email with 4-7 current news articles
- Click on the link for an article
- Have your user name and password handy – sometimes you need it to read the whole article print.
- Use the tab that starts as “MAX” or a number, to select different reading levels.
 - The number is the Common Core reading level known as “Lexicon.”
 - This number prints on the article when you print or download it.
- The Text Level (grade level) appears near the top of the article on screen.
 - This does NOT show when you print or download the article.
- Next to the Lexicon level, you will find the language box. Click on “English” to see if the article has “Spanish” for a choice.
 - If it does, click on “Spanish,” then select the Lexicon/reading level for Spanish.
- Choose the article and quiz
 - (FYI – the choice that includes answers doesn’t seem to download)
- After you select the printer icon to print, you will have the option to download and save articles, in addition to printing them.
(Click the download icon  at the top of the page. After it opens, you can save it.)

Lesson 5 – Exam Overview & Part 1 Practice

Reviews the three sections of the ELA Regents Exam. Students use a past ELA Regents Exam to practice strategies for Section I: Reading Comprehension, where students need to read three different texts and answer multiple-choice questions about the reading. The lesson focuses on strategies for reading to answer the multiple-choice questions.

Lesson 5 Supplies

- Educator Key
- Student Lesson Handout
- Annotated January 2019 ELA Regents Exam
 - Model/example of how students might mark questions and reading passages to focus on answering the questions
- June 2019 ELA Regents Exam per student (**Note:** save the student copy(ies) to use again with Lesson 6)
- June 2019 Part 1 Answer Key (**Note:** save this printout to use again with Lesson 6)

Lesson 6 – Unfamiliar Vocab & Part 1 Practice

Practice figuring out the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary words and continue practice with multiple-choice questions from the ELA Regents Exam.

Lesson 6 Supplies

- Educator Key
- Student Lesson Handout
- **YouTube** access to watch 8:43 minute video with five tips for using context clues to define an unfamiliar word. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0auqQ82551Y>
- From Lesson 5-
 - Students' copy of June 2019 ELA Regents Exam (to use Part I, Passage C)
 - June 2019 Part I Answer Key

Lesson 6 Resource

You don't need the link to "*E Reading Worksheets*" to use this lesson as the problems are embedded in the lesson, but you might find it useful for future use with your students.

- ***E Reading Worksheets*** – The link below takes you directly to the worksheets for context clues, at different skill levels.
- The website has worksheets for other ELA skills as well.
- The website is free to use, but has many ads that take you to other sites.

<https://www.ereadingworksheets.com/free-reading-worksheets/reading-comprehension-worksheets/context-clues-worksheets/>

Note: Lesson 6 ends with Part C and a task for students to select the past ELA Regents Exam with the question they want to answer in the next lesson. This makes a good transition to "*Session 3: Argumentative Writing*," from the shorter ELA Prep materials, titled, "ELA Regents Prep in Four Sessions," where that past ELA Regents Exam will be put to use.

To continue preparation for the ELA Regents Exam

Use Sessions 3 and 4 from, "ELA Regents Prep in Four Sessions," found on the NYS Migrant website, at <https://www.nysmigrant.org/resources/library/ELAregentsprep/4sessions>

Session 3 has strategies for Part 2 of the ELA Regents Exam, writing an argument. Students will learn about, and then practice the expected steps in argumentative writing. Students will use the question they selected from *Lesson 6, Part C of the Expanded Lessons*.

Session 4 has strategies for Part 3 of the ELA Regents Exam. This uses text analysis. Students learn about the required steps needed to explain how the author uses a specific technique to develop their central idea.

ADDITIONAL WEBSITE RESOURCES

Past Regents Exams nysedregents.org/hseia

learningwithmslee (home page)

youtube.com/channel/UCEQxrd3QSF3TLXFblxqTGFg

A series of videos dealing with each section of the ELA Regents & offering a number of helpful tips & strategies for success. The upload section scrolls left and right. Look for the sideways arrow to see more.

The videos are mostly in English, but each has useful visuals. One video, “ELA CC Regents – Part 2 Directions Explanation,” has a Spanish interpretation in addition to the English.

Literary Elements & Devices literarydevices.net

You can search for any literary term you might run across, to find a definition and description about using it. It can be difficult to work around the multiple advertisements on the website.

Lesson 1: Literary Elements & Techniques Part 1

(approximately one hour)

Educator Note: The goal of this lesson is to reinforce students’ understanding of the literary terms that will be most vital to their success on the exam. This topic is tackled first, before much time is devoted to the specifics of the exam, because it is foundational knowledge for the test as a whole, especially Part I & Part III. The concepts I have chosen to focus on are those that I have deemed most essential. I encourage you; however, to differentiate this lesson based on the needs of the students you’re working with. If you believe they have a good grasp on the terms below, feel free to spend the time reviewing higher-level concepts. For example, if their understanding of the general concept of *figurative language* appears sound, you could spend the time reviewing some of the various types of figurative language, such as *metaphor*, *simile*, *personification*, *hyperbole*, *irony*, etc. I encourage you to explore the resources at literaryterms.net if you want clarification on the meaning of any of these terms.

A. Figurative Language vs. Literal Language

Educator Note: A large number of the terms and concepts that figure prominently in discussions of texts fall under the umbrella of *figurative language*. Students have likely studied various forms of figurative language, such as *metaphor* and *simile*. More important than distinguishing between the various categories, however, is a firm grasp of the basic difference between figurative and literal meanings.

The literal meaning of something is its surface meaning, what the dictionary definitions (denotation) of the words communicate. Figurative language is when a speaker or writer intends to communicate something beyond this literal meaning. **Emphasize that your students use and understand figurative language every day.** Every language on Earth employs this technique. As you go through the following examples, you may have to adjust the instruction based on the native language of your students, as well as their background knowledge. If your students aren’t familiar with any examples you’re able to produce, solicit suggestions from them: what are common *figures of speech* in their language?

When we use figurative language, we don’t mean exactly what we say. The literal meaning of language is what the words mean on a surface level. The figurative meaning is what the speaker is actually trying to communicate.

Educator Note: Discuss the *Family Circle* comic with your students. Do they get the joke? Ask them to explain it to you. They may or may not be familiar with the idiom “It’s raining cats and dogs.” Regardless, the meaning should not be difficult to explain.



In the cartoon above, the father is using figurative language when he says, “It’s raining cats and dogs out there!” He, of course, doesn’t mean that there are actually terrified, furry pets falling from the sky. He just means to say that it is raining very hard.

Educator Note: As you go through the chart in [Exercise 1](#), talk about the difference between the literal and figurative meanings in the two given examples (a metaphorical idiom and hyperbole, respectively).

Exercise 1

In the following table, you’ll see a couple examples of figurative language. After each phrase, the literal and figurative meaning has been explained. Working with your tutor, fill in the empty rows with examples of your own! Every language in the world makes use of figurative language, so you don’t need to limit your examples to English.

Educator Note: As you go through the chart in Exercise 1, talk about the difference between the literal and figurative meanings in the two given examples (a metaphorical idiom and hyperbole, respectively).

Phrase	Literal Meaning	Figurative Meaning
<i>It’s raining cats and dogs.</i>	Small furry animals are falling from the sky.	It’s raining very hard.

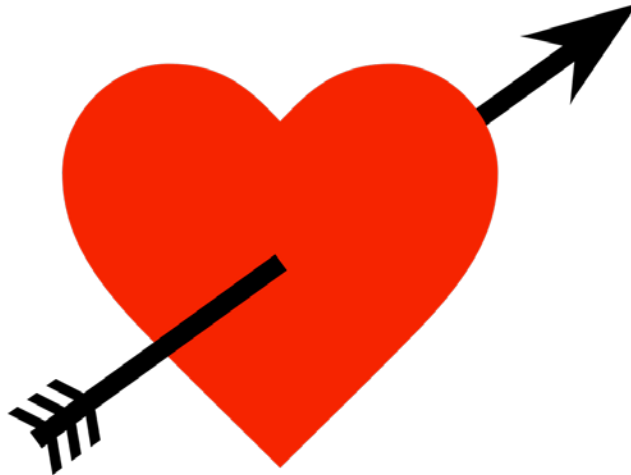
<i>I can't wait until lunch. I'm starving!</i>	I am about to die due to lack of food.	I'm very hungry.
Educator Note: Here are examples you might use.		
Phrase	Literal Meaning	Figurative Meaning
"Life is a highway." (metaphor)	Life is a paved roadway designed for automobiles.	Life is similar to a journey on a road.
"Life is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you're gonna get." (simile)	Life is a container full of candy.	Life is similar to a box of chocolates because, in the same way that you don't know the filling of a chocolate, you don't know what your choices and circumstances will lead to in life.
"The sea was angry that day, my friends." (personification)	The large body of saltwater was emotionally upset for some reason.	The ocean was rough and choppy.
"It took me a million years to do that homework last night!" (hyperbole)	I worked on the homework assignment for 1,000,000 years.	It took a pretty long time to do the homework.

B. Symbolism (10 min)

Educator Note: Symbolism is when something is used to represent something else; frequently, a concrete, tangible object stands in for an abstract idea. Authors can always use symbolism in original and unique ways, but cultures tend to have commonly agreed upon symbols that are recognizable in a variety of contexts. Once again, be sure to be conscious of your students' background knowledge, especially as it relates to their native language and culture. I have done my best to pick symbols that I believed to be widely understood, but your students may not recognize them. Adjust accordingly.

One particularly important type of figurative language is symbolism, which is where something, often an object, represents an abstract idea. Once again, don't let the fancy word intimidate you! Like many other types of figurative language, you use and understand symbolism all the time. **For instance, what does the symbol pictured below represent?**

Educator Note: Discuss the image of the arrow-pierced heart. Ask your students what the picture shows. Talk with them about the distinction between what it *literally* shows (symbolism is a form of figurative language) versus what it represents. Why does our culture use the rather gruesome image of a vital organ pierced by a medieval weapon to represent romantic attachment? Discuss the reasons that might exist behind this symbolism. Then, in Exercise 1.b, work with your students to unpack the meaning behind the other provided examples of symbols.



On a literal level, this is a picture of a heart pierced by an arrow. If you were to describe that to somebody who wasn't aware of its symbolic meaning, they might find the image pretty gruesome. They certainly would find it strange that, instead of being horrified by this picture, most people in Western culture find it romantic. This is because, to us, a heart pierced by an arrow is **symbolic** of love.

Exercise 2

What symbolic meaning is commonly attached to the following objects?

Figure 1



Figure 2



Exercise 2 Answers

Figure 1 → The crowned woman holding a torch is a symbol for liberty.

Figure 2 → Uncle Sam is a symbol for the United States of America.

These examples we've looked at are some of the most commonly used examples. However, authors can use symbolism in many different ways, and some symbols are easier to spot than others. An author will usually give the reader clues and hints when they're using something as a symbol.

C. Imagery

Educator Note: Imagery is, on its face, a relatively straightforward concept, and it is a valuable term to know for the exam because nearly every piece of descriptive writing contains multiple examples. Precisely because it is so omnipresent; however, it may take some work to help students recognize examples of it *in the wild*.

What are the five senses? **Take a moment to list them with your tutor.**

Educator Note: Have students list the five senses, writing them down on a blank piece of paper. When they read the passage in Exercise 1.c, they can write each example next to the sense it appeals to. There should be one example for each sense. The passage may have some words or concepts that students are unfamiliar with; it's important that they not let this derail them, since identifying the imagery is still possible even if they're not familiar with the Empire State Building or if they don't know what "emanating" means. They **will** encounter unfamiliar words and references on the exam, and it's important for them to learn not to be intimidated by that.

Another type of figurative language that deserves a special look is imagery. Imagery is when an author uses language that appeals to any of our five senses. An author will try to make the reader see something, hear something, taste something, feel something, or smell something.

Why do we care about imagery? Imagery is an especially useful literary technique to have in your toolkit, because nearly every piece of fiction ever written contains imagery. When you're being asked to describe how an author is using a technique, there's a very good chance you'll be able to find examples of imagery you can talk about.

Exercise 3

Identify all the examples of imagery in the passage below. What sense does each example appeal to?

5 *Looking out over the city from the top of the Empire State Building, Jen saw the glittering sunlight reflecting off the windows of skyscrapers, the tiny, darting cars and pedestrians, and the deep blue of the harbor as a backdrop to it all. She thought she could almost smell the salt from the ocean, though that might be the popcorn held by the small child next to her. The wind whistled in her ears, and she could hear the distant honking of car horns emanating from the midtown traffic jams. The frigid wind stung her cheeks as she gripped the cold, smooth metal of the soda can in her hand. Raising the can to take a sip, she savored the sweet citrus flavor of the beverage.*

Exercise 3 Answers

Looking out over the city from the top of the Empire State Building, Jen saw the glittering sunlight reflecting off the windows of skyscrapers, the tiny, darting cars and pedestrians, and the deep blue of the harbor as a backdrop to it all. **SIGHT**

She thought she could almost smell the salt from the ocean, though that might be the popcorn held by the small child next to her. **SMELL**

The wind whistled in her ears, and she could hear the distant honking of car horns emanating from the midtown traffic jams. **HEARING**

The frigid wind stung her cheeks as she gripped the cold, smooth metal of the soda can in her hand. **TOUCH**

Raising the can to take a sip, she savored the sweet citrus flavor of the beverage. **TASTE**

D. Characterization (10 min)

Educator Note: Characterization is another seemingly simple technique that is extremely useful for students to understand. When analyzing the meaning of any piece of fiction, characterization is one of the most versatile and useful tools a student can employ. Anything the reader is told about a character or their actions is characterization. There is a distinction made between *indirect* and *direct characterization*; it isn't vital for the exam that students are able to distinguish between the two, but it might be helpful to discuss the difference so that students are more likely to recognize all the examples in a passage.

Characterization is the way that an author tells us about a character in their writing. They can tell us things about a character directly, by telling the reader something about the character:

Achilles was a strong and brave warrior

Here, the narrator tells the reader directly that Achilles is (a) strong and (b) brave. An author can also tell us things about a character indirectly, through the words, thoughts, & actions of characters in the story.

When they saw him on the battlefield, Achilles’s enemies were terrified.

In this example, the narrator doesn’t actually tell us anything about Achilles, but the reader can probably figure out that he is (a) strong and (b) brave based on the reaction of his enemies.

Characterization is useful because, like imagery, it is one of the most common techniques in literature. It is almost impossible to tell a story without telling the reader something about the characters, and usually, this characterization helps communicate the message or central idea of a text.

E. Central Idea (15 min)

Educator Note: In Part 3, students will need to use a term like those reviewed above to unpack how an author develops the central idea of their writing. Central idea is the language commonly used to describe both the theme of a piece of fiction and the main idea of nonfiction. Its meaning is, mercifully, relatively self-explanatory compared to *theme*, but students still need to practice in order to both (a) identify the central idea and (b) analyze how the author conveys that idea. Students tend to underestimate their ability to do this, especially the first part. The example texts provided are meant to be approachable and familiar. If you think your students would benefit from alternative texts, feel free to seek them out. Nearly any short story would work for the first example, and any set of lyrics for the second.

The **central idea** of a text (also known as its theme) is best described as the main message or idea that the author is trying to get across. Sometimes, the author makes the message pretty obvious. This is the case with fables, like the one below. Take a look.

Exercise 4

Educator Note: For Exercise 4, students should hopefully be able to identify that the central idea or message of the story is something along the lines of **“Don’t brag about your lightning pace, for slow and steady wins the race.”** Once they identify this, ask them to rephrase it. You

should talk about how, in a fable, the central idea is usually directly stated, and that the texts on the exam are unlikely to be so forthright. If you are working with a higher-level student, selecting a text with a less explicitly spelled-out message may be more worthwhile.

The Tortoise and The Hare

There once was a speedy hare who bragged about how fast he could run. Tired of hearing him boast, Slow and Steady, the tortoise, challenged him to a race. All the animals in the forest gathered to watch.

5 *Hare ran down the road for a while and then paused to rest. He looked back at Slow and Steady and cried out, "How do you expect to win this race when you are walking along at your slow, slow pace?"*

Hare stretched himself out alongside the road and fell asleep, thinking, "There is plenty of time to relax."

10 *Slow and Steady walked and walked. He never, ever stopped until he came to the finish line. The animals who were watching cheered so loudly for Tortoise, they woke up Hare. Hare stretched and yawned and began to run again, but it was too late. Tortoise was over the line.*

After that, Hare always reminded himself, "Don't brag about your lightning pace, for Slow and Steady won the race!"

What is the central idea of this text?

Exercise 4 Answer: "Don't brag about your lightning pace, for slow and steady wins the race."

Exercise 5

Educator Note: In Exercise 5, students are asked to unpack the meaning of a song excerpt. Depending on the students' gender, musical tastes, and cultural backgrounds, alternative selections might be preferable. If you use the provided Taylor Swift song, the student should identify a central idea somewhat similar to the one identified below; remember, however, that there is usually more than one way to frame a central idea.

Songs and poems have central ideas as well. Take a look at the following lyrics for example. You might recognize this song.

*I was riding shotgun with my hair undone in the front seat of his car.
He's got a one-hand feel on the steering wheel,
The other on my heart.
I look around, turn the radio down. He says, "Baby, is something wrong?"*

5 *I say, "Nothing, I was just thinking how we don't have a song."*

*And he says, "Our song is a slamming screen door;
Sneaking out late, tapping on your window;
When we're on the phone and you talk real slow,
'Cause it's late, and your mama don't know.*

10 *Our song is the way you laugh;
The first date, man, I didn't kiss her when I should have;
And when I got home, before I said 'Amen',
Asking God if He could play it again."*

"Our Song", Taylor Swift

1. What do you think the central idea of this song is?
2. What lyrics make you think this?
3. Do any of these lyrics fit the definitions of the literary elements & techniques we discussed? Which ones?

Educator Note:

Example Central Idea: The memories shared by the narrator and her boyfriend are just as meaningful a representation of their relationship as having *a song* would be.

Students should be able to support their interpretation of the song's central idea using terms such as those reviewed above. For example, the boyfriend's description of "our song" is an example of figurative language, since he's not actually talking about a song. Additionally, Swift uses imagery ("a slamming screen door" and "tapping on your window"). She uses symbolism, when she talks about her boyfriend having one hand "on my heart"; rather than a mere description of anatomy, the author clearly means to represent the narrator and her boyfriend's romantic attachment. Nearly anything we learn about the narrator and her boyfriend constitutes characterization. Work with your student to talk about as many of these examples as you can and discuss how these techniques help communicate Swift's central idea.

Lesson 1: Literary Elements & Techniques Part 1

(approximately one hour)

A. Figurative Language vs. Literal Language

When we use figurative language, we don't mean exactly what we say. The literal meaning of language is what the words mean on a surface level. The figurative meaning is what the speaker is actually trying to communicate.



In the cartoon above, the father is using figurative language when he says, "It's raining cats and dogs out there!" He, of course, doesn't mean that there are actually terrified furry pets falling from the sky. He just means to say that it is raining very hard.

Exercise 1

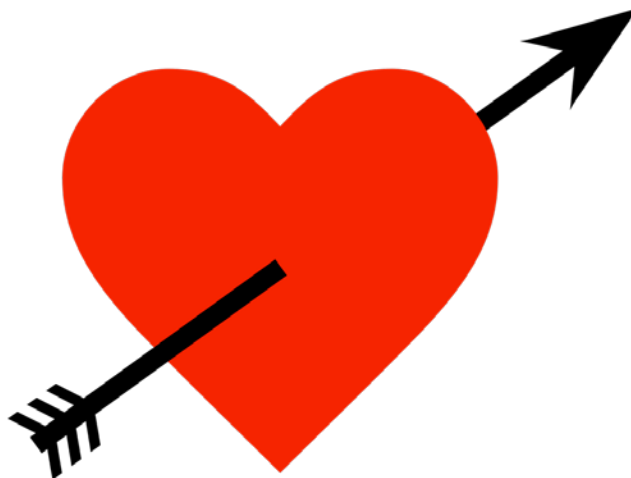
In the following table, you'll see a couple examples of figurative language. After each phrase, the literal and figurative meaning has been explained. Working with your tutor, fill in the empty rows with examples of your own! Every language in the world makes use of figurative language, so you don't need to limit your examples to English.

Phrase	Literal Meaning	Figurative Meaning
<i>It's raining cats and dogs.</i>	Small furry animals are falling from the sky.	It's raining very hard.
<i>I can't wait until lunch. I'm starving!</i>	I am about to die due to lack of food.	I'm very hungry.

Phrase	Literal Meaning	Figurative Meaning

B. Symbolism (10 min)

One particularly important type of figurative language is symbolism, which is where something, often an object, represents an abstract idea. Once again, don't let the fancy word intimidate you! Like many other types of figurative language, you use and understand symbolism all the time. **For instance, what does the symbol pictured below represent?**



On a literal level, this is a picture of a heart pierced by an arrow. If you were to describe that to somebody who wasn't aware of its symbolic meaning, they might find the image pretty gruesome. They certainly would find it strange that, instead of being horrified by this picture, most people in Western culture find it romantic. This is because, to us, a heart pierced by an arrow is **symbolic** of love.

Exercise 2

What symbolic meaning is commonly attached to the following objects?



Figure 1



Figure 2

These examples we've looked at are some of the most commonly used examples. However, authors can use symbolism in many different ways, and some symbols are easier to spot than others are. An author will usually give the reader clues and hints when they're using something as a symbol.

C. Imagery

What are the five senses? **Take a moment to list them with your tutor.**

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Exercise 3

Identify all the examples of imagery in the passage below. What sense does each example appeal to?

5 *Looking out over the city from the top of the Empire State Building, Jen saw the glittering sunlight reflecting off the windows of skyscrapers, the tiny, darting cars and pedestrians, and the deep blue of the harbor as a backdrop to it all. She thought she could almost smell the salt from the ocean, though that might be the popcorn held by the small child next to her. The wind whistled in her ears, and she could hear the distant honking of car horns emanating from the midtown traffic jams. The frigid wind stung her cheeks as she gripped the cold, smooth metal of the soda can in her hand. Raising the can to take a sip, she savored the sweet citrus flavor of the beverage.*

D. Characterization (10 min)

Characterization is the way that an author tells us about a character in their writing. They can tell us things about a character directly, by telling the reader something about the character:

Achilles was a strong and brave warrior

Here, the narrator tells the reader directly that Achilles is (a) strong and (b) brave. An author can also tell us things about a character indirectly, through the words, thoughts, & actions of characters in the story.

When they saw him on the battlefield, Achilles's enemies were terrified.

In this example, the narrator doesn't actually tell us anything about Achilles, but the reader can probably figure out that he is (a) strong and (b) brave based on the reaction of his enemies.

Characterization is useful because, like imagery, it is one of the most common techniques in literature. It is almost impossible to tell a story without telling the reader something about the characters, and usually, this characterization helps communicate the message or central idea of a text.

E. Central Idea (15 min)

The **central idea** of a text (also known as its theme) is best described as the main message or idea that the author is trying to get across. Sometimes, the author makes the message pretty obvious. This is the case with fables, like the one below. Take a look.

Exercise 4

The Tortoise and The Hare

There once was a speedy hare who bragged about how fast he could run. Tired of hearing him boast, Slow and Steady, the tortoise, challenged him to a race. All the animals in the forest gathered to watch.

5 *Hare ran down the road for a while and then paused to rest. He looked back at Slow and Steady and cried out, "How do you expect to win this race when you are walking along at your slow, slow pace?"*

Hare stretched himself out alongside the road and fell asleep, thinking, "There is plenty of time to relax."

10 *Slow and Steady walked and walked. He never, ever stopped until he came to the finish line. The animals who were watching cheered so loudly for Tortoise, they woke up Hare. Hare stretched and yawned and began to run again, but it was too late. Tortoise was over the line.*

After that, Hare always reminded himself, "Don't brag about your lightning pace, for Slow and Steady won the race!"

What is the central idea of this text?

Exercise 5

Songs and poems have central ideas as well. Take a look at the following lyrics for example. You might recognize this song.

I was riding shotgun with my hair undone in the front seat of his car.

He's got a one-hand feel on the steering wheel,

The other on my heart.

I look around, turn the radio down. He says, "Baby, is something wrong?"

5 *I say, "Nothing, I was just thinking how we don't have a song."*

And he says, "Our song is a slamming screen door;

Sneaking out late, tapping on your window;

10 *When we're on the phone and you talk real slow,
'Cause it's late, and your mama don't know.
Our song is the way you laugh;
The first date, man, I didn't kiss her when I should have;
And when I got home, before I said 'Amen',
Asking God if He could play it again."*

"Our Song", Taylor Swift

1. What do you think the central idea of this song is?

2. What lyrics make you think this?

3. Do any of these lyrics fit the definitions of the literary elements & techniques we discussed?
Which ones?

Lesson 2: Literary Elements & Techniques Part 2

(approximately one hour)

Educator Note: Exercise 6 uses an article, questions, and answers from newsela.com. The website writes the articles at different reading levels (lexicons) and translates many articles into Spanish. This Regents Prep module provides one sample article from the newsela website, about texting. There are six choices for Lesson 2, demonstrating how one article can be accessed at multiple reading levels and often in two languages. Each article has questions for students to answer. Download the level(s) and language(s) that will best fit your students.

Today, you'll be working on a number of short exercises designed to reinforce your ability to recognize literary techniques and explain how an author uses those techniques to communicate the central idea.

Educator Note: Use your knowledge of the student when determining the level of detail and analysis you expect for each question. For instance, you can push a student who has demonstrated a strong grasp on the different literary techniques to specify that the figurative language in Exercise 1, Question 1 is an example of metaphor. With a student who is struggling, it may be sufficient to recognize that it is figurative language.

Exercise 1

Read the song lyrics below.

You are the thunder and I am the lightning,

And I love the way you know who you are,

And to me it's exciting when you

Know it's meant to be.

5 *Everything comes naturally, it comes naturally*

When you're with me, baby.

Everything comes naturally.

“Naturally”, Selena Gomez & The Scene

1. Underline the figurative language that appears in the lyrics.

Answer: Students should underline the metaphor in the first line.

2. What is the central idea of these lyrics?

Answer: The relationship between the narrator and the person she is addressing “comes naturally” (line 5).

3. Explain how the author uses this figurative language to communicate their central idea.

Answer: The relationship between the narrator and the person she is addressing “comes naturally” (line 5).

Exercise 2

Read the song lyrics below.

*Looking back on the memory of
The dance we shared beneath the stars above,
For a moment, all the world was right.
How could I have known you'd ever say goodbye?*

5 *And now I'm glad I didn't know
The way it all would end, the way it all would go.
Our lives are better left to chance. I could have missed the pain,
But I'd have had to miss the dance.*

10 *Holding you, I held everything.
For a moment, wasn't I the king?
But if I'd only known how the king would fall...
Hey, who's to say? You know, I might have changed it all.*

15 *And now I'm glad I didn't know
The way it all would end, the way it all would go.
Our lives are better left to chance. I could have missed the pain,
But I'd have had to miss the dance.
Yes, my life is better left to chance.
I could have missed the pain, but I'd have had to miss the dance.*

“The Dance”, Garth Brooks

1. In line 10, what is the figurative meaning of the narrator’s language?

Answer: When the narrator says, “wasn’t I the king”, he doesn’t actually mean he was a reigning monarch; rather, he means to say that he felt like he was ‘on top of the world’ when he was with his dance partner.

2. What does “the dance” symbolize in this song?

Answer: The dance symbolizes a relationship the narrator had in the past that has since ended.

3. What is the central idea of this song?

Answer: The central idea of this song is that even if an experience, such as a relationship, ends badly, the experience is still worthwhile. In other words, the pain of heartbreak is worth the joy of love—as Tennyson wrote, “better to have loved and lost / Than never to have loved at all”.

4. How does the lyricist use figurative language to convey his central idea?

Answer: The lyricist uses a dance to symbolize the failed love affair he had with the person the song is addressing. He communicates his central idea by stating that even if he could have somehow avoided the heartbreak that accompanied the end of the relationship, it would not have been worth missing “the dance”, a single moment that he uses to symbolize all the good memories and experiences of the relationship.

Exercise 3

Take a look at the political cartoon below.



1. What is the central idea of this cartoon?

Answer: The central idea of this cartoon is that nature is behaving in out-of-the-ordinary and chaotic ways.

2. How does the cartoonist use symbolism to convey his central idea? Make specific reference to at least two symbols used in the cartoon.

Answer: The cartoonist uses two symbols: the woman, who is labeled Mother Nature, is a personification of the forces of nature. The remote control she holds symbolizes the different elements of climate and weather. The central idea of the cartoon, that nature is losing control, is communicated by Mother Nature’s remote control malfunctioning.

Exercise 4

Doree had to take three buses—one to Kincardine, where she waited for one to London, where she waited again, for the city bus out to the facility. She started the trip on a Sunday at nine in the morning. Because of the waiting times between buses, it took her until about two in the afternoon to travel the hundred-odd miles. All that sitting, either on buses or in the depots, was not a thing she should have minded. Her daily work was not of the sitting-down kind.

From “Dimension”, Alice Munro

How does the author characterize Doree? Cite specific evidence from the text.

Answer: The author characterizes Doree as somebody with a working-class job, telling us that she “had to take three buses” (line 1) to get to work. We also learn that her job is “not of the sitting-down kind” (line 6), which implies that she has a job that requires her to be on her feet.

Exercise 5

- He had plastic bags wrapped ‘round his shoes.
He was covered with the evening news.
Had a pair of old wool socks on his hands.
The bank sign was flashing ‘five below’.*
- 5 *It was freezing rain and spitting snow.
He was curled up behind some garbage cans.
I was afraid that he was dead.
I gave him a gentle shake.
When he opened up his eyes,*

10 *I said, "Old man, are you ok?"*

He said, "I just climbed out of a cottonwood tree.

I was running from some honeybees.

Drip-drying in the summer breeze

After jumping into Calico Creek.

15 *I was walking down an old dirt road*

Past a field of hay that had just been mowed.

Man, I wish you'd just left me alone

'Cause I was almost home."

Then he said, "I was coming round the barn

20 *'Bout the time he grabbed my arm.*

When I heard Momma holler, 'Son, hurry up!'

I was close enough for my own nose

To smell fresh cobbler on the stove.

When I saw Daddy loading up the truck,

25 *Cane poles on the tailgate,*

Bobbers blowing in the wind,

Since July of '55,

That's as close as I've been."

"Almost Home", Craig Morgan

1. How does the lyricist characterize the old man? Cite specific evidence from the lyrics.

Answer: The old man is characterized as likely homeless. We know this because he has "plastic bags wrapped 'round his shoes" (line 1) and he was "covered in the evening news" (line 2). The lyricist also suggests that he grew up on a farm in the 1940s & 1950s.

2. How does the lyricist characterize the narrator? Cite specific evidence from the lyrics.

Answer: The narrator is characterized as compassionate and concerned. We know this because in line 10, he asks "'Old man, are you ok?'"

3. This song makes use of imagery at several points. Identify at least three specific examples of imagery appealing to three **different** senses. Make sure you specify these senses.

Sample Answers:

Sight → Any of the visual descriptions is an example of imagery, such as "Cane poles on the tailgate" (line 25).

Touch → The old man remembers in his dream that he was “drip-drying in the summer breeze” (line 13).

Smell → “I was close enough for my own nose / To smell fresh cobbler on the stove” (lines 22-23)

Sound → “I heard Momma holler, ‘Son, hurry up!’” (line 21)

4. In this song, “home” has both a literal and a symbolic meaning. What is the literal meaning?

Answer: The literal meaning of “home” is the farm where the old man grew up; in his dream, he had almost reached “home” when he was woken up.

5. Depending on your interpretation, there are a few layers of symbolic meaning that “home” could have; what do you think it symbolizes?

Answer: Figuratively, “home” could symbolize a moment of happiness and peace that the old man was about to experience in his dream. It could also symbolize some type of peace or afterlife that the old man, in danger of freezing to death, was nearly arriving at.

Exercise 6

Read the Newsela article about texting and answer the attached questions.

<https://newsela.com/read/texting-instead-of-yelling/id/50826/>

Educator Note: The link above takes you to one reading level of this article.

The title of the article changes with the reading level. This Regents Prep module provides one sample article and quiz that is available in English and Spanish, and at three different reading levels/lexicons in each language. Thus, you will find six versions in the download files for Lesson 2. Select the ones that will work best with your students.

The Facilitator Guide has directions for subscribing to newsela, how to change the reading level, and how to find out if the article is also available in Spanish or not.

Lesson 2: Literary Elements & Techniques Part 2

(approximately one hour)

Today, you'll be working on a number of short exercises designed to reinforce your ability to recognize literary techniques and explain how an author uses those techniques to communicate the central idea.

Exercise 1

Read the song lyrics below.

*You are the thunder and I am the lightning,
And I love the way you know who you are,
And to me it's exciting when you
Know it's meant to be.*

- 5 *Everything comes naturally, it comes naturally
When you're with me, baby.
Everything comes naturally.*

“Naturally”, Selena Gomez & The Scene

1. Underline the figurative language that appears in the lyrics.
2. What is the central idea of these lyrics?

3. Explain how the author uses this figurative language to communicate their central idea.

Exercise 2

Read the song lyrics below.

*Looking back on the memory of
The dance we shared beneath the stars above,
For a moment, all the world was right.
How could I have known you'd ever say goodbye?*

5 *And now I'm glad I didn't know
The way it all would end, the way it all would go.
Our lives are better left to chance. I could have missed the pain,
But I'd have had to miss the dance.*

10 *Holding you, I held everything.
For a moment, wasn't I the king?
But if I'd only known how the king would fall...
Hey, who's to say? You know, I might have changed it all.*

15 *And now I'm glad I didn't know
The way it all would end, the way it all would go.
Our lives are better left to chance. I could have missed the pain,
But I'd have had to miss the dance.
Yes, my life is better left to chance.
I could have missed the pain, but I'd have had to miss the dance.*

“The Dance”, Garth Brooks

1. In line 10, what is the figurative meaning of the narrator’s language?

2. What does “the dance” symbolize in this song?

3. What is the central idea of this song?

4. How does the lyricist use figurative language to convey his central idea?

Exercise 3

Take a look at the political cartoon below.



1. What is the central idea of this cartoon?

2. How does the cartoonist use symbolism to convey his central idea? Make specific reference to at least two symbols used in the cartoon.

Exercise 4

Doree had to take three buses—one to Kincardine, where she waited for one to London, where she waited again, for the city bus out to the facility. She started the trip on a Sunday at nine in the morning. Because of the waiting times between buses, it took her until about two in the afternoon to travel the hundred-odd miles. All that sitting, either on buses or in the depots, was not a thing she should have minded. Her daily work was not of the sitting-down kind.

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How does the author characterize Doree? Cite specific evidence from the text.

Exercise 5

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I said, "Old man, are you ok?"*
- He said, "I just climbed out of a cottonwood tree.
I was running from some honeybees.*

*Drip-drying in the summer breeze
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15 *I was walking down an old dirt road
Past a field of hay that had just been mowed.
Man, I wish you'd just left me alone
'Cause I was almost home."*

*Then he said, "I was coming round the barn
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When I heard Momma holler, 'Son, hurry up!'
I was close enough for my own nose
To smell fresh cobbler on the stove.
When I saw Daddy loading up the truck,*

25 *Cane poles on the tailgate,
Bobbers blowing in the wind,
Since July of '55,
That's as close as I've been."*

“Almost Home”, Craig Morgan

1. How does they lyricist characterize the old man? Cite specific evidence from the lyrics.

2. How does the lyricist characterize the narrator? Cite specific evidence from the lyrics.

3. This song makes use of imagery at several points. Identify at least three specific examples of imagery appealing to three **different** senses. Make sure you specify these senses.

4. In this song, “home” has both a literal and a symbolic meaning. What is the literal meaning?

5. Depending on your interpretation, there are a few layers of symbolic meaning that “home” could have; what do you think it symbolizes?

Exercise 6

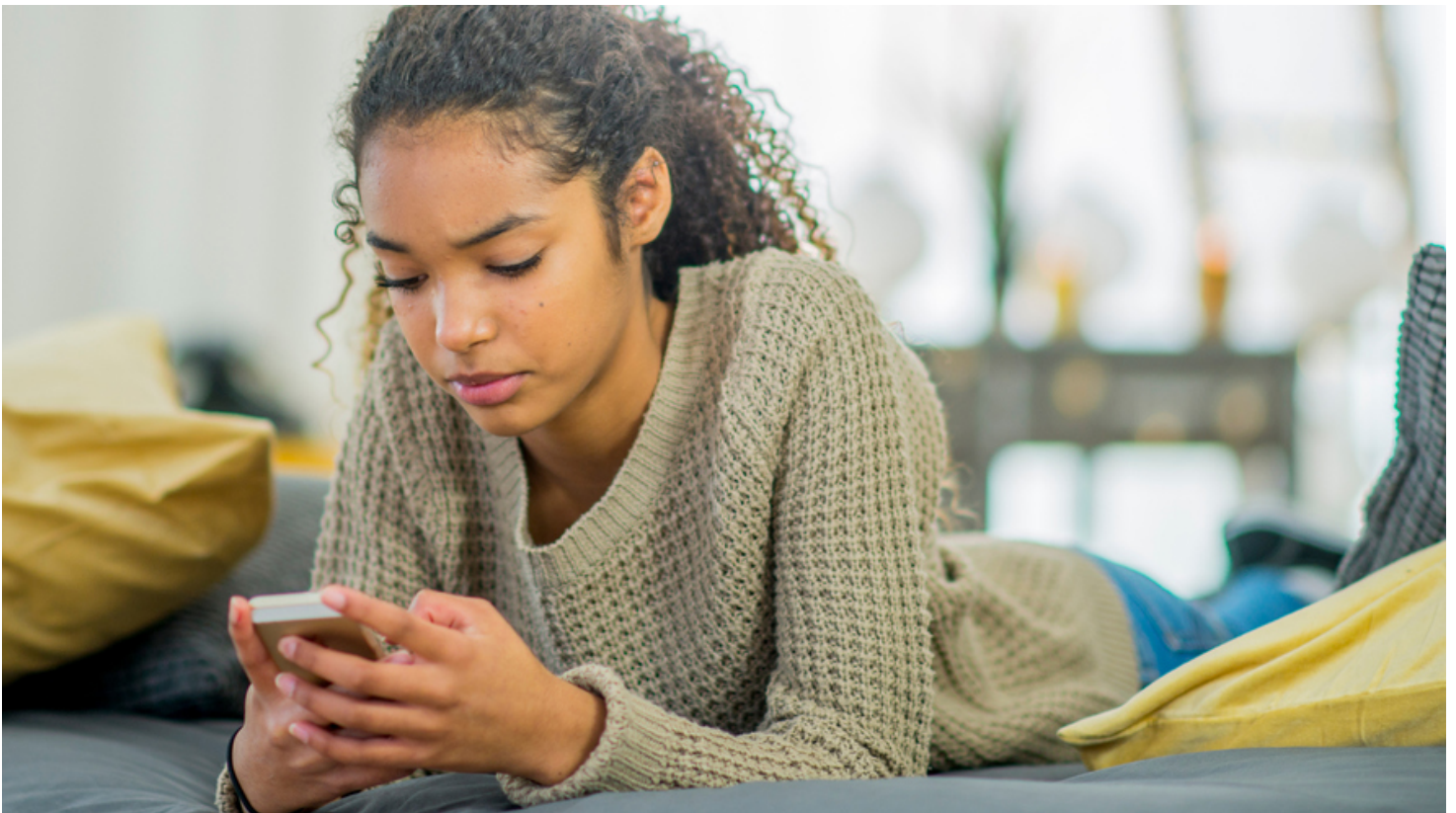
Read the article from newsela.com about texting and answer the attached questions.

Some parents are fine with texting their kids instead of talking to them

By USA Today, adapted by Newsela staff on 04.29.19

Word Count **525**

Level **580L**



Texting at home may be a prelude to a deeper conversation. However, a dependence on devices may also impede learning social interaction and how to read body language, experts say. Photo by: FatCamera/Getty Images

Dinner is ready. Parents have a choice. They can yell out to kids to announce it. Today, though, many are texting their kids instead.

Is this good or bad? In texting kids at home, are parents encouraging kids to stay addicted to smartphones?

Some parents shared their opinions. Many are cool with same-home texting.

Wendy Anton is a Michigan nurse. She texts with her kids at home. The adults text each other too, she says.

Yelling may actually have negative effects anyway, says Dr. Pamela Rutledge. She is an expert on how people use technology and how it affects them. She says yelling covers up details that are heard in a regular talking voice. There's no "benefit of adding an emoji for clarification," she says.

Humans respond without even thinking to certain behaviors, she says. Yelling makes people defend themselves right away. It might make you feel like you are in trouble.

Trying To Avoid Trouble

Dr. Nancy Mramor is a psychologist in Pennsylvania. She is an expert in how people behave. She says that, actually, we often turn to technology when we think we are in trouble. People of all ages do this. We want to avoid long conversations, she says.

Texting can sometimes lead to longer talks.

Tamra Forsman is a mother of three. She lives in Washington state.

She often lets her kids communicate in "their way" – text – first. Then she does it her way – conversation. This hopefully strikes a balance, she says.

"Communication is so important, especially in the teen years," Forsman says. "I am thankful for a text because a lot of teens would never text their mom."

Kelli Jones Geiger is a mom in Houston. She agrees. Texting allows her to carefully craft her words before "blurting them out."

Kids may also see texting as a more comfortable way to start certain conversations.

Short Messages Have Replaced Conversations

Amy Wing lives in Chandler, Arizona. Her 12-year-old daughter Erin explains to her mother why she texts her. "I text you when there's something difficult for me to talk about straight to your face, or if I'm tired or doing something, or if I'm with friends and don't want to go and talk to you. If you call me to come talk to you, I'll go. But if I need something and it doesn't have to be straight away, I'll text you."

Still, some parents are against the practice.

Katie May is a mother of six. She does not allow texting in the house. Instead she requires talking to each other in real life.

So, we often talk by text instead of in person. Will this create lasting brain problems?

Today, says Mramor, people depend on phones. Phones let us respond quickly. Often it is with short messages. She says this is a shame. Instead, we could be "really talking something through." By having conversations, she says, we learn social skills. We learn how to read others' reactions.

Rutledge does not agree. She says things haven't changed all that much. Before texting, kids still did not always "happily come downstairs" to chat in person, she said.

Quiz

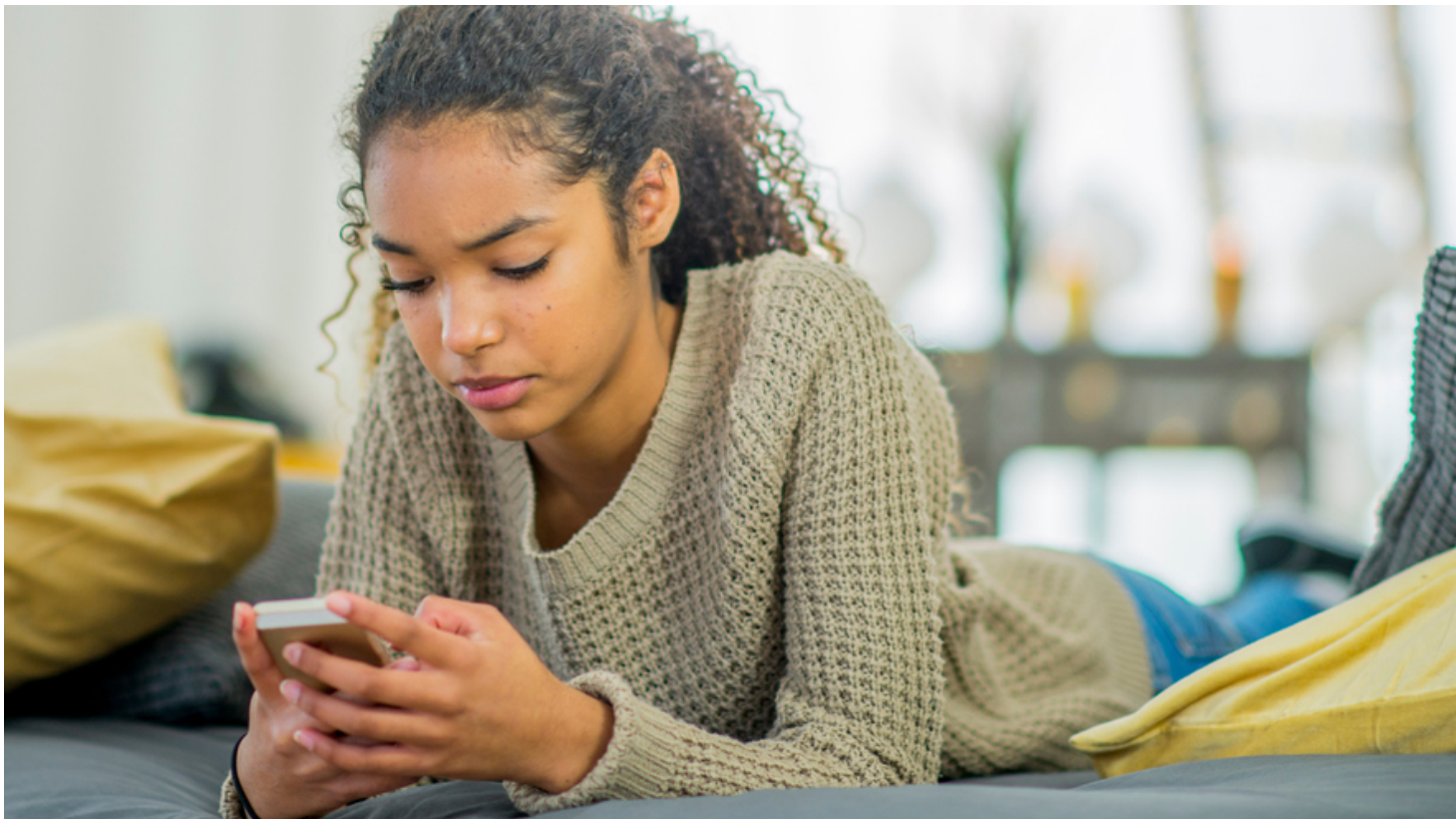
- 1 One main idea of the article is that some parents think it is OK to text their kids instead of talking to them.
Which key detail from the article supports this MAIN idea?
- (A) Yelling may actually have negative effects anyway, says Dr. Pamela Rutledge. She is an expert on how people use technology and how it affects them.
 - (B) Kelli Jones Geiger is a mom in Houston. She agrees. Texting allows her to carefully craft her words before "blurting them out."
 - (C) Katie May is a mother of six. She does not allow texting in the house. Instead she requires talking to each other in real life.
 - (D) Today, says Mramor, people depend on phones. Phones let us respond quickly. Often it is with short messages.
- 2 What is the MAIN idea of the section "Trying To Avoid Trouble"?
- (A) Some people say texting helps them to communicate better.
 - (B) Some people yell to talk to their kids instead of texting.
 - (C) The short messages in texting let people respond quickly.
 - (D) The technology behind texting has changed over time.
- 3 What information will readers find in the introduction [paragraphs 1-6]?
- (A) reasons why some parents dislike texting
 - (B) reasons why teens are texting more now
 - (C) how texting at home compares with yelling
 - (D) how many people now text instead of talking
- 4 What does the section "Short Messages Have Replaced Conversations" show the reader?
- (A) ways that texting affects family dinner conversations
 - (B) reasons why technology can get people into trouble
 - (C) problems caused by yelling at kids instead of texting them
 - (D) different opinions about texting instead of talking in person

Parents try to balance the way they communicate with their kids

By USA Today, adapted by Newsela staff on 04.29.19

Word Count **792**

Level **940L**



Texting at home may be a prelude to a deeper conversation. However, a dependence on devices may also impede learning social interaction and how to read body language, experts say. Photo by: FatCamera/Getty Images

When dinner's ready, many parents have traditionally yelled up the stairs to make the announcement to kids. For many, though, yelling is an ancient habit. Now they're texting kids instead.

Is texting under one roof yet one more example of our technology taking the place of face-to-face communications?

The act of texting one another in the same house may be built on the assumption that kids are already glued to a screen at the other end. It's quite likely they're on Instagram or playing a game, rather than reading or studying for the next day's exam. Does that mean you are encouraging their dependence on the device by communicating this way?

Many parents said they are perfectly cool with same-home texting.

Is It Better To Text Than To Yell?

Wendy Anton is a Michigan nurse. She not only texts with the family at home but communicates with them through Amazon Alexa, the home virtual assistant device. She says, "the adults will also text each other for the same reasons or even if we want to say things we don't want the kids to hear."

Yelling, in fact, may have negative consequences, says Dr. Pamela Rutledge. She's director of the Media Psychological Research Center in Newport Beach, California.

"It is an aggressive act and loses all the subtleties of regular voice without the benefit of adding an emoji for clarification," she says. "Humans react instinctively to certain behaviors," she says. Yelling make people get defensive right away. "If Mom yells, 'Come down here, please,' it's hard to know if you're in trouble or if she just needs to tell you something that yelling can't accomplish."

Pittsburgh psychologist Dr. Nancy Mramor says we often turn to technology when we think we're in trouble. People of all ages do this to avoid long or hard conversations, she says.

A Way To Start A Serious Talk

We may message family members as a nudge. Sometimes, texting in the house can be a lead-in to a deeper conversation.

"I will let them text, then say come see me so we can talk," says Tamra Forsman, a mother of three in Washington state. "I try to balance out communicating in their way – text – and my way – conversation – because I realize relationships are give and take. Communication is so important, especially in the teen years. I am thankful for a text because a lot of teens would never text their mom."

Houston mom Kelli Jones Geiger has a teen daughter. She resisted texting at home with her for a long time. Now, however, the two sometimes text even when they're sitting next to each other on the couch.

"At 14, some things are hard to talk face-to-face with Mom about. I meet her at her level, and we are able to come together. I have the chance to edit my words before blurting them out. It opens up the lines of communication for both of us."

Kids may also see texting as a more comfortable way to start certain conversations.

In Chandler, Arizona, Amy Wing's 12-year-old daughter Erin explains to her mother why she texts her: "I text you when there's something difficult for me to talk about straight to your face, or if I'm tired or doing something, or if I'm with friends and don't want to go and talk to you. If you call me to come talk to you, I'll go. But if I need something and it doesn't have to be straight away, I'll text you."

Still, some parents remain firmly against the practice.

Katie May is a mother of six. She forbids texting in the house in favor of "forcing human interaction at all costs."

Social Skills Are Being Lost

Does skipping eye contact in favor of screens have a lasting effect?

As a society today, says Mramor, "we've learned to do so many things dependently on our device." She says it's unfortunate that technology often leads us to have short responses, "as opposed to really talking something through. Reading of body language is not learned. Social skill in navigating a conversation is not learned."

Rutledge does not entirely agree. "We have this illusion that before cellphones, children would happily come downstairs for meaningful face time. Not so," she said. She said she is used to yelling up the stairs, "I can't understand what you're saying, please come down if you want to ask me something."

Rutledge sees another positive to texting.

"My kids send me pictures of their cats. That's nice because what it's really telling you is that they're thinking about you. It's really not about the cat – well mostly. What we don't talk about is those silly things make us feel more connected."

Quiz

- 1 Which statement is a CENTRAL idea of the article?
- (A) Psychologists say that using technology is always better than yelling.
 - (B) Families who text are better at communicating than other families.
 - (C) Some parents use texting as a way to communicate with their kids.
 - (D) Texting should not be allowed at home because it gets in the way of body language.
- 2 Which sentence from the article would be MOST important to include in a summary of the article?
- (A) It's quite likely they're on Instagram or playing a game, rather than reading or studying for the next day's exam.
 - (B) Many parents said they are perfectly cool with same-home texting.
 - (C) She says, "the adults will also text each other for the same reasons or even if we want to say things we don't want the kids to hear."
 - (D) People of all ages do this to avoid long or hard conversations, she says.

- 3 Read the sentence from the section "A Way To Start A Serious Talk."

She forbids texting in the house in favor of "forcing human interaction at all costs."

What is one way the placement of this sentence develops the way parents feel about texting instead of talking?

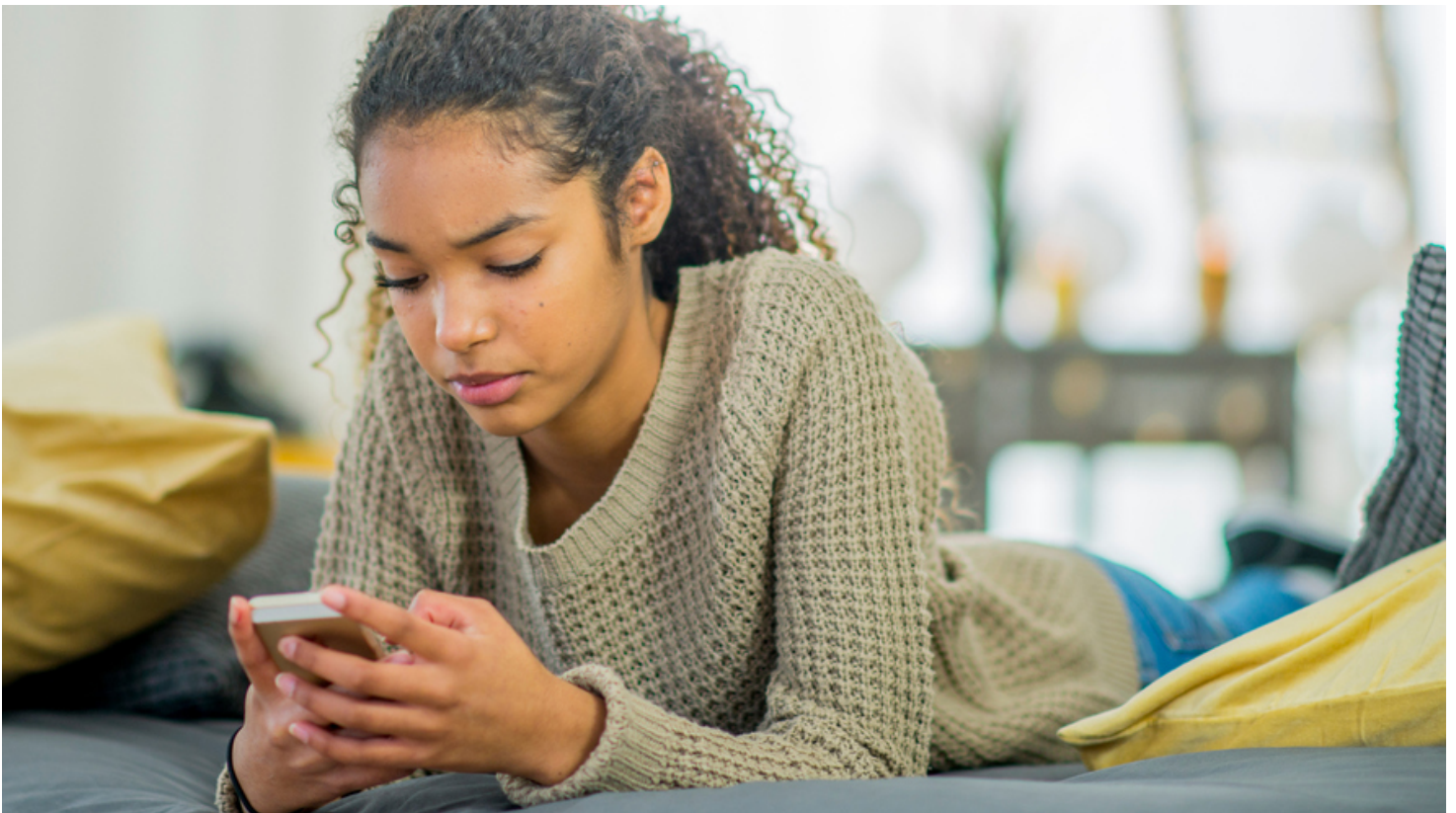
- (A) It elaborates on the problems texting is causing for teens.
 - (B) It introduces the contrasting point of view against texting.
 - (C) It emphasizes the positive effects of human interaction.
 - (D) It illustrates problems with getting teens to stop texting.
- 4 How effective is the introduction [paragraphs 1-4] at introducing the topic of how parents feel about texting at home?
- (A) It is very effective because it uses a familiar anecdote to ask questions about the way texting is changing communication with teens and parents.
 - (B) It is very effective because it uses an expert opinion to outline problems with encouraging teens' dependence on their devices by texting them at home.
 - (C) It is not very effective because it describes the effects of yelling rather than texting without exploring what causes families to start this habit.
 - (D) It is not very effective because it explores ideas about yelling to get kids to come for dinner without showing how the practice has changed over time.

Are you texters or yellers? Many families turn to texting at home to "talk"

By Edward C. Baig, USA Today on 04.29.19

Word Count **1,115**

Level **MAX**



Texting at home may be a prelude to a deeper conversation. However, a dependence on devices may also impede learning social interaction and how to read body language, experts say. Photo by: FatCamera/Getty Images

It's time for homework or to summon the troops for dinner. Sure, you could holler upstairs, but that seems so last century. You save your voice and text them instead.

And let's be honest. It's not just the kids we are texting – we're also texting each other, at home.

So is texting under one roof becoming the modern-day equivalent of the dinner bell or intercom? Or is it yet one more example of our obsession with technology taking the place of face-to-face communications?

The mere act of texting one another in the same house may be built on the assumption that your kid is already glued to a screen at the other end – quite likely on Instagram or playing a game, rather than reading or studying for the next day's exam. Does that mean you are unwittingly condoning their dependence on such a device by communicating this way?

Many parents who exchanged messages with USA Today are perfectly cool with same-home texting or even the odd phone call that requires only a quick answer to a casual question or that reminds the kids that food is on the table or that it's time to get to the household chores.

For that matter, though, your son or daughter is just as likely to text first. ("Dad, can you approve my app request?")

Texting Instead Of Yelling

"This is 2019. We use technology rather than yelling through the house," says Michigan nurse Wendy Anton, who not only texts with the family at home but communicates with them via Amazon Alexa. And Anton says, "the adults will also text each other for the same reasons or even if we want to say things we don't want the kids to hear."

Yelling, in fact, may have negative consequences, says Dr. Pamela Rutledge, director of the Media Psychological Research Center in Newport Beach, California.

"It is an aggressive act and loses all the subtleties of regular voice without the benefit of adding an emoji for clarification," she says. "Humans react instinctively to certain behaviors and yelling creates a defensive reaction until decoded. If Mom yells, 'Come down here, please,' it's hard to know if you're in trouble or if she just needs to tell you something that yelling can't accomplish. If, like most houses, there is no response to the first yell, then the next yell loses the 'please' and reflects the annoyance of being ignored."

But Pittsburgh psychologist Dr. Nancy Mramor says we often turn to technology as an "avoidance technique" when we think we're in hot water.

"It doesn't even have to be a teenager who's going to get in trouble," she says, "but rather anybody who wants to communicate with somebody but wants to avoid a long conversation."

Avoiding Embarrassment

Though we may message family members as a nudge or as a random touchpoint, texting in the house is often a prelude to a deeper conversation.

"Sometimes I am OK with it, especially if it is something they are embarrassed to say face-to-face," says Tamra Forsman, a mother of three in Washington state. "I will let them text, then say come see me so we can talk. I try to balance out communicating in their way – text – and my way – conversation – because I realize relationships are give and take. I guess I just feel that communication is so important, especially in the teen years. I am thankful for a text because a lot of teens would never text their mom, so I take the win."

Houston mom Kelli Jones Geiger echoes those thoughts. Geiger says she resisted texting at home with her teenage daughter for a long time. But now the two sometimes text even when they're sitting next to each other on the couch.

"At 14, some things are hard to talk face-to-face with Mom about. I meet her at her level, and we are able to come together. I have the chance to edit my words before blurting them out. It opens up the lines of communication for both of us."

In Fort Worth, Cara Gunia has a similar experience with her 12-year-old son, who has a more difficult time talking to her than his sister, who is a year older.

"There have been quite a few times that he has texted me, letting me know that someone said something inappropriate or that he was watching something and an inappropriate commercial came up before he realized what was going on, things like that," Gunia says. "Then, when the time is right, I'll bring it up and he's really comfortable talking. I can always tell that he's just waiting to talk to me about it. It's really sweet."

Kids may also see it that way.

In Chandler, Arizona, Amy Wing's 12-year-old daughter Erin explains to her mother why she texts her: "I text you when there's something difficult for me to talk about straight to your face, or if I'm tired or doing something, or if I'm with friends and don't want to go and talk to you. If you call me to come talk to you, I'll go. But if I need something and it doesn't have to be straight away, I'll text you."

To be sure, some parents remain dead-set against the practice.

Katie May, a mother of six, forbids texting in the house in favor of "forcing human interaction at all costs."

The Effects Of Texting At Home

So, are we actually creating lasting psychological effects by opting for convenient screen contact over making eye contact?

"What has happened in our society is we don't exist separate from our devices anymore because we've learned to do so many things dependently on our device," says Mramor. "One of the things that's happening with technology, which is very unfortunate, is people responding with brevity as opposed to really talking something through. Social interaction is not learned. Reading of body language is not learned. Social skill in navigating a conversation is not learned."

But Rutledge says, "We have this illusion that before cellphones, children would happily come downstairs for meaningful face time. Not so. If I had a dime for every time I had to yell back up the stairs to some query, 'I can't understand what you're saying, please come down if you want to ask me something,' I'd be a very rich woman."

However, Rutledge sees another positive to texting.

"My kids send me pictures of their cats. That's nice because what it's really telling you is that they're thinking about you. It's really not about the cat – well mostly. What we don't talk about is those silly things make us feel more connected."

Quiz

- 1 Which of these statements would be MOST important to include in an objective summary of the article?
- (A) While some are concerned that relying on texting is bad for social skills, a number of parents say texting helps them connect with their teens.
 - (B) While many parents are perfectly cool with same-home texting, they have failed to realize that kids are sometimes embarrassed by their parents.
 - (C) Parents today are more accepting of texts from their teens, even though most of the texts are probably just silly pictures of cats or other animals.
 - (D) Parents have realized that yelling is not an effective way to get teens' attention, even though texting also lets them avoid talking or getting in trouble.

- 2 Read the following selection from the section "Avoiding Embarrassment."

"Sometimes I am OK with it, especially if it is something they are embarrassed to say face-to-face," says Tamra Forsman, a mother of three in Washington state. "I will let them text, then say come see me so we can talk. I try to balance out communicating in their way – text – and my way – conversation – because I realize relationships are give and take."

Which central idea of the article is MOST supported by the selection above?

- (A) Some parents prefer texting their teens rather than yelling aggressively at them.
 - (B) Some parents say that texting teens encourages dependence on their devices.
 - (C) Parents see texting as a way to begin deeper conversations with their teens.
 - (D) Parents think same-house texting is an easy way to give and get quick answers.
- 3 Read the following paragraph from the section "Texting Instead Of Yelling."

"This is 2019. We use technology rather than yelling through the house," says Michigan nurse Wendy Anton, who not only texts with the family at home but communicates with them via Amazon Alexa. And Anton says, "the adults will also text each other for the same reasons or even if we want to say things we don't want the kids to hear."

What is the MAIN reason the author includes this paragraph in the article?

- (A) to indicate that many types of technology are used to communicate
- (B) to introduce support for texting as valid type of modern communication
- (C) to elaborate on the types of messages commonly sent in text
- (D) to emphasize that yelling is an old-fashioned way to communicate

Read the following two sentences from the section "The Effects Of Texting At Home."

"One of the things that's happening with technology, which is very unfortunate, is people responding with brevity as opposed to really talking something through."

"We have this illusion that before cellphones, children would happily come downstairs for meaningful face time."

The two sentences develop the debate over texting at home by _____.

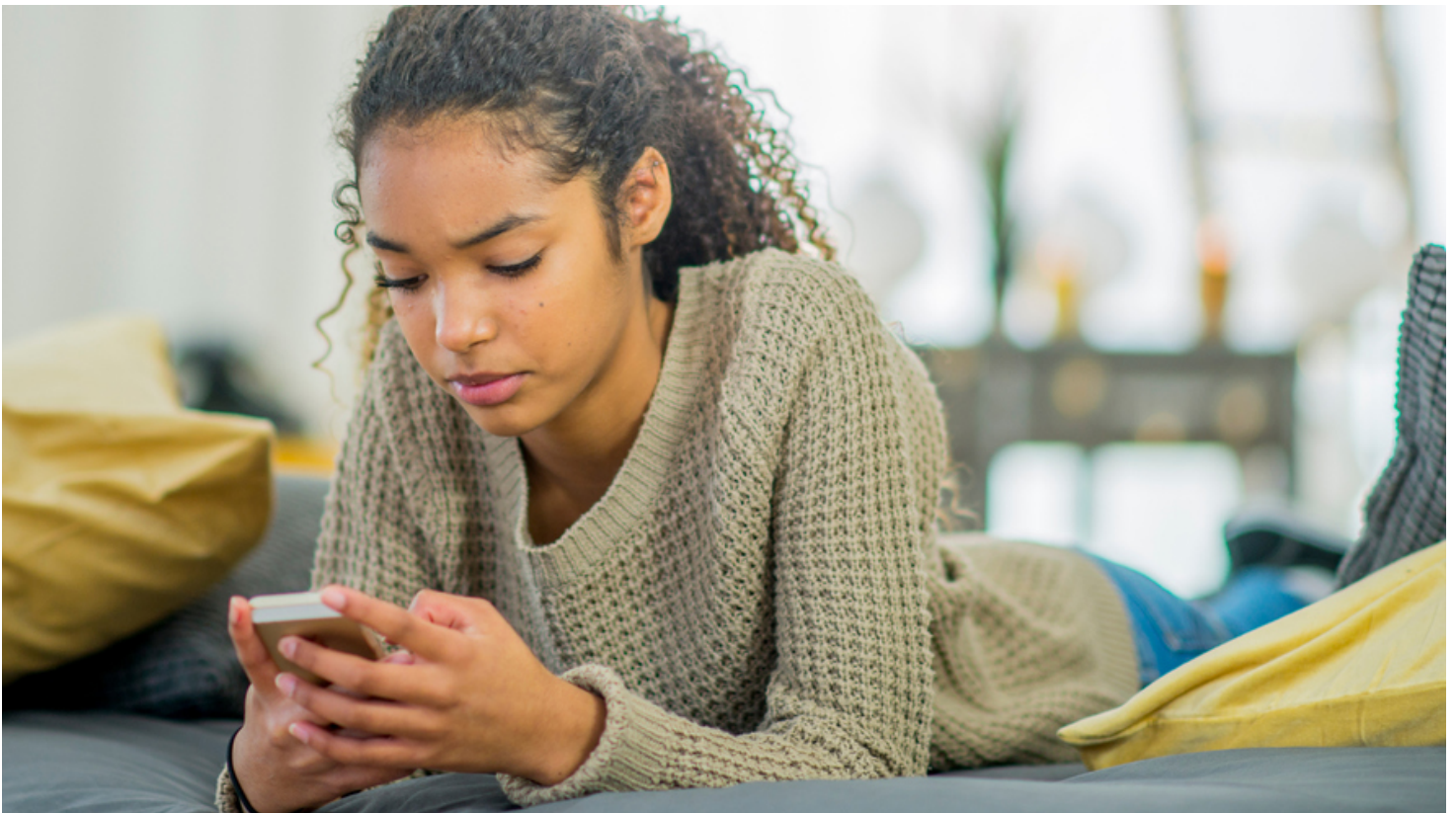
- (A) providing a pro and a con of communicating via text message rather than face to face
- (B) providing a cause and an effect of the growing support for texting among experts
- (C) illustrating contrasting perspectives on the realities of texting held by psychology experts
- (D) illustrating the problem with texting to communicate and offering a possible solution

Some parents are fine with texting their kids instead of talking to them

By USA Today, adapted by Newsela staff on 04.29.19

Word Count **525**

Level **580L**



Texting at home may be a prelude to a deeper conversation. However, a dependence on devices may also impede learning social interaction and how to read body language, experts say. Photo by: FatCamera/Getty Images

Dinner is ready. Parents have a choice. They can yell out to kids to announce it. Today, though, many are texting their kids instead.

Is this good or bad? In texting kids at home, are parents encouraging kids to stay addicted to smartphones?

Some parents shared their opinions. Many are cool with same-home texting.

Wendy Anton is a Michigan nurse. She texts with her kids at home. The adults text each other too, she says.

Yelling may actually have negative effects anyway, says Dr. Pamela Rutledge. She is an expert on how people use technology and how it affects them. She says yelling covers up details that are heard in a regular talking voice. There's no "benefit of adding an emoji for clarification," she says.

Humans respond without even thinking to certain behaviors, she says. Yelling makes people defend themselves right away. It might make you feel like you are in trouble.

Trying To Avoid Trouble

Dr. Nancy Mramor is a psychologist in Pennsylvania. She is an expert in how people behave. She says that, actually, we often turn to technology when we think we are in trouble. People of all ages do this. We want to avoid long conversations, she says.

Texting can sometimes lead to longer talks.

Tamra Forsman is a mother of three. She lives in Washington state.

She often lets her kids communicate in "their way" – text – first. Then she does it her way – conversation. This hopefully strikes a balance, she says.

"Communication is so important, especially in the teen years," Forsman says. "I am thankful for a text because a lot of teens would never text their mom."

Kelli Jones Geiger is a mom in Houston. She agrees. Texting allows her to carefully craft her words before "blurting them out."

Kids may also see texting as a more comfortable way to start certain conversations.

Short Messages Have Replaced Conversations

Amy Wing lives in Chandler, Arizona. Her 12-year-old daughter Erin explains to her mother why she texts her. "I text you when there's something difficult for me to talk about straight to your face, or if I'm tired or doing something, or if I'm with friends and don't want to go and talk to you. If you call me to come talk to you, I'll go. But if I need something and it doesn't have to be straight away, I'll text you."

Still, some parents are against the practice.

Katie May is a mother of six. She does not allow texting in the house. Instead she requires talking to each other in real life.

So, we often talk by text instead of in person. Will this create lasting brain problems?

Today, says Mramor, people depend on phones. Phones let us respond quickly. Often it is with short messages. She says this is a shame. Instead, we could be "really talking something through." By having conversations, she says, we learn social skills. We learn how to read others' reactions.

Rutledge does not agree. She says things haven't changed all that much. Before texting, kids still did not always "happily come downstairs" to chat in person, she said.

Quiz

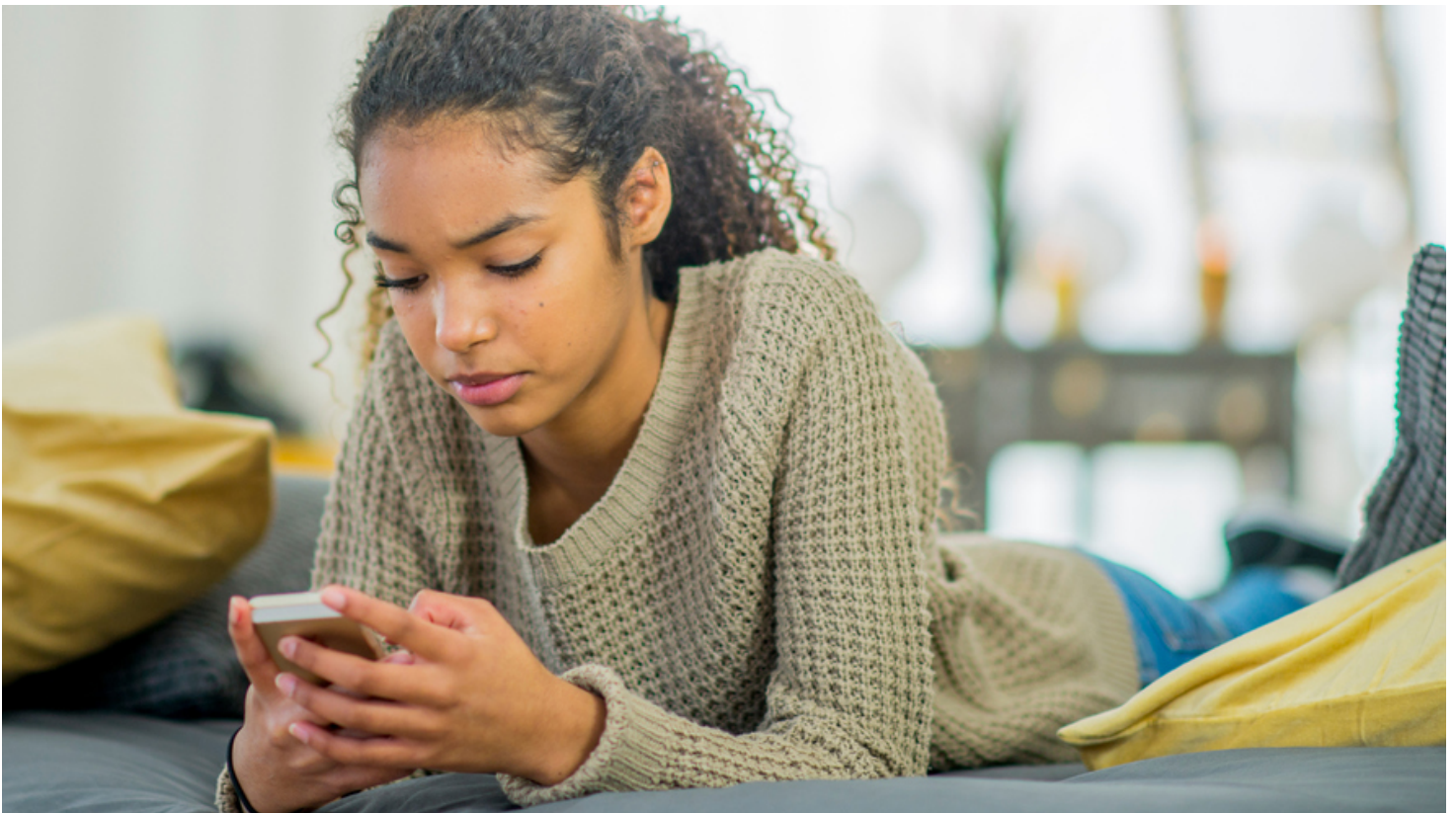
- 1 One main idea of the article is that some parents think it is OK to text their kids instead of talking to them.
Which key detail from the article supports this MAIN idea?
- (A) Yelling may actually have negative effects anyway, says Dr. Pamela Rutledge. She is an expert on how people use technology and how it affects them.
 - (B) Kelli Jones Geiger is a mom in Houston. She agrees. Texting allows her to carefully craft her words before "blurting them out."
 - (C) Katie May is a mother of six. She does not allow texting in the house. Instead she requires talking to each other in real life.
 - (D) Today, says Mramor, people depend on phones. Phones let us respond quickly. Often it is with short messages.
- 2 What is the MAIN idea of the section "Trying To Avoid Trouble"?
- (A) Some people say texting helps them to communicate better.
 - (B) Some people yell to talk to their kids instead of texting.
 - (C) The short messages in texting let people respond quickly.
 - (D) The technology behind texting has changed over time.
- 3 What information will readers find in the introduction [paragraphs 1-6]?
- (A) reasons why some parents dislike texting
 - (B) reasons why teens are texting more now
 - (C) how texting at home compares with yelling
 - (D) how many people now text instead of talking
- 4 What does the section "Short Messages Have Replaced Conversations" show the reader?
- (A) ways that texting affects family dinner conversations
 - (B) reasons why technology can get people into trouble
 - (C) problems caused by yelling at kids instead of texting them
 - (D) different opinions about texting instead of talking in person

Padres buscan balance en la forma de comunicarse con sus hijos

By Edward C. Baig, USA Today, adaptado por la redacción de Newsela on 04.29.19

Word Count **966**

Level **960L**



Comunicarnos mediante mensajes de texto en casa puede dar paso a conversaciones más profundas. Sin embargo, la dependencia de los aparatos puede impedir que aprendamos a interactuar socialmente y a leer el lenguaje corporal, señalan los expertos. Fotografía tomada por: FatCamera/Getty Images

Durante mucho tiempo, los padres de familia han gritado escaleras arriba para anunciar a sus hijos que la cena está lista. Sin embargo, para muchos, eso de gritar es un hábito antiguo. Ahora envían mensajes de texto.

Entonces, ¿se podría decir que los mensajes de texto bajo un mismo techo son otro ejemplo más de cómo la tecnología reemplaza la comunicación directa y personal?

El solo hecho de enviar mensajes de texto dentro de la misma casa puede deberse a que usted ya supone que su hijo está pegado a la pantalla en el otro extremo. Es muy posible que esté viendo Instagram o jugando algún video juego, en lugar de estar leyendo o estudiando para el examen del día siguiente. ¿Podría ser esta forma de comunicarse señal de que inconscientemente usted está alimentando la adicción de sus hijos al teléfono?

Muchos padres de familia no tienen inconveniente alguno con los mensajes de texto en la misma casa.

¿Es mejor enviar un mensaje que gritar?

Wendy Anton es enfermera en Michigan. Ella no solo se comunica con su familia en casa por mensajes de texto, sino a través de Alexa, de Amazon. Alexa es una asistente inteligente virtual para el hogar. "También los adultos nos escribimos mensajes de texto por la misma razón, o porque no queremos que los niños escuchen lo que decimos", dijo Anton.

De hecho, comunicarse a gritos puede tener consecuencias negativas, dijo la Dra. Pamela Rutledge. Ella es directora del Centro de Investigación Psicológica sobre Medios en Newport Beach, California.

"Este es un acto agresivo y pierde toda la sutileza de la voz normal sin la ventaja de los emoticonos, que sirven para aclarar la intención", dijo. Los seres humanos reaccionamos instintivamente ante cierto comportamiento. Los gritos hacen que las personas se pongan a la defensiva de inmediato. Según Rutledge, si mamá grita "¡venga acá, por favor!", es difícil saber si uno está en problemas o si simplemente necesita decirnos algo que no puede decirnos a gritos.

Sin embargo, la Dra. Nancy Mramor, psicóloga en Pittsburgh, dijo que a menudo recurrimos a la tecnología cuando creemos que estamos en problemas. Personas de todas las edades hacen esto para evadir conversaciones largas o difíciles, dijo.

Una forma de comenzar una conversación seria

Aunque a veces escribamos mensajes de texto a los miembros de la familia para algún recordatorio, los mensajes a menudo dan paso a una conversación más profunda.

"Dejo que me escriban y luego les digo que me vengan a ver para que podamos hablar", dijo Tamra Forsman, madre de tres hijos en el estado de Washington. "Trato de encontrar un equilibrio entre la comunicación a su manera (mensajes de texto) y la mía (conversación), porque me doy cuenta de que en las relaciones hay que aprender a hacer concesiones mutuas. Quizá es porque la comunicación me parece sumamente importante, sobre todo en la adolescencia. Me siento agradecida por el hecho que me escriban, porque muchos adolescentes jamás escriben mensajes de texto a sus madres, así que creo que soy afortunada".

Kelli Jones Geiger, una madre en Houston, Texas, tiene una hija adolescente. Según dijo, por mucho tiempo se negó a comunicarse con su hija por mensaje de texto cuando estaban en casa. Pero ahora lo hacen inclusive cuando están sentadas una al lado de la otra en el sofá.

"A los 14 años de edad hay cosas que resultan difíciles de hablar con la madre. Me pongo a su nivel y entonces podemos entablar una conversación. Tengo la posibilidad de editar mis palabras antes de simplemente lanzar al aire lo que pienso. Esto abre los canales de comunicación entre las dos".

Es posible que los chicos también piensen que esta forma de enviar mensajes de texto sea más cómoda para iniciar cierto tipo de conversaciones.

En Chandler, Arizona, Erin, la hija de 12 años de Amy Wing, le explicó a su madre por qué le escribe mensajes de texto: "Le escribo cuando hay algo que me resulta difícil conversar frente a frente, o cuando estoy cansada o haciendo algo, o cuando estoy con mis amigas y no quiero ir a

hablar con usted. Si me llama para que vaya a hablar con usted, iré. Pero si necesito algo que no es urgente, le escribiré un mensaje de texto".

Sin duda alguna, hay padres de familia que se oponen rotundamente a tal práctica.

Katie May, madre de seis hijos, prohíbe los mensajes de texto entre sí en casa, pues busca que "la interacción humana prevalezca por encima de todo".

Las habilidades sociales se pierden

Entonces, ¿evitar el contacto directo a los ojos y optar por la pantalla tiene algún efecto a largo plazo?

Como sociedad, dijo Mramor, hemos aprendido a depender de los teléfonos inteligentes para gran cantidad de cosas. Algo realmente lamentable que está pasando con la tecnología es que la gente se limita a responder lo más brevemente posible en lugar de hablar las cosas a fondo. No se aprende a leer el lenguaje corporal. Tampoco se aprenden las habilidades sociales necesarias para mantener una conversación, dijo.

Sin embargo, Rutledge no está totalmente de acuerdo. "Tenemos esta idea fantasiosa que antes de los celulares nuestros hijos bajaban felizmente las escaleras para entablar una conversación seria frente a frente con nosotros. Eso no era así". Ella dijo que está acostumbrada a gritar escaleras arriba: "¡No entiendo lo que dice, por favor baje si tiene algo que preguntar!".

Rutledge considera que comunicarse por mensaje de texto tiene otro aspecto positivo.

"Mis hijos me envían fotos de sus gatos. Eso me parece muy lindo porque lo que indica es que están pensando en mí. En cierta forma no se trata realmente del gato. Lo que no vemos es que esas pequeñas cosas sin importancia nos acercan más unos a otros".

Quiz

1 Escoja DOS ideas clave del artículo de entre las siguientes:

1. *Trasmitir mensajes orales en casa mediante gritos hace que las personas se pongan a la defensiva de inmediato.*
2. *Se puede optar por usar asistentes virtuales para el hogar, como Alexa, en lugar de enviar mensajes de texto.*
3. *Enviar mensajes de texto entre padres e hijos mientras están en casa podría dar pie a conversaciones más profundas.*
4. *Permitir que los hijos se comuniquen a través de mensajes de texto en casa hace que pierdan las habilidades sociales.*

- (A) 1 y 2
- (B) 2 y 3
- (C) 3 y 4
- (D) 1 y 4

2 Lea el siguiente resumen:

Hay quienes creen que el uso de los medios tecnológicos está limitando la comunicación por varias razones, como la brevedad de los mensajes o la falta de contexto social. Sin embargo, otros opinan que la tecnología no es la culpable de la falta de comunicación que ya existía en las familias e incluso, en algunos casos, la facilita.

¿A qué sección del artículo resume?

- (A) Introducción [párrafos 1-4]
- (B) "¿Es mejor enviar un mensaje que gritar?"
- (C) "Una forma de comenzar una conversación seria"
- (D) "Las habilidades sociales se pierden"

3 Lea el siguiente párrafo de la sección de introducción [párrafos 1-4]:

Durante mucho tiempo, los padres de familia han gritado escaleras arriba para anunciar a sus hijos que la cena está lista. Sin embargo, para muchos, eso de gritar es un hábito antiguo. Ahora envían mensajes de texto.

¿Qué tipo de estructura muestra el párrafo? ¿Con qué propósito?

- (A) Causa y efecto, con el propósito de resumir las consecuencias del abuso tecnológico en la vida diaria de las familias.
- (B) Problema y solución, con el propósito de adelantar una solución al problema del abuso tecnológico dentro del hogar.
- (C) Comparación o contraste, con el propósito de abrir el debate sobre si la tecnología fomenta o destruye la comunicación.
- (D) Secuencia u orden cronológico, con el propósito de analizar cómo comenzó el problema de la comunicación en el hogar.

Lea la sección "¿Es mejor enviar un mensaje que gritar?".

¿Qué papel juega la sección dentro de la estructura del artículo?

- (A) La sección desarrolla la idea de que enviar mensajes de texto en casa es un PROBLEMA al que hay que buscar una SOLUCIÓN.
- (B) La sección analiza la idea de que enviar mensajes de texto en casa es la SOLUCIÓN al PROBLEMA de la mala comunicación.
- (C) La sección discute la idea de que enviar mensajes de texto en casa es la consecuencia lógica (EFECTO) de una sociedad tecnológica.
- (D) La sección debate, mediante un CONTRASTE, si enviar mensajes de texto en casa es mejor o peor que comunicarse a gritos.

¿Usted escribe o grita? Muchas familias recurren a los mensajes de texto para "hablar" en casa

By Edward C. Baig, USA Today, adaptado por la redacción de Newsela on 04.29.19

Word Count **1,287**

Level **MAX**



Comunicarnos mediante mensajes de texto en casa puede dar paso a conversaciones más profundas. Sin embargo, la dependencia de los aparatos puede impedir que aprendamos a interactuar socialmente y a leer el lenguaje corporal, señalan los expertos. Fotografía tomada por: FatCamera/Getty Images

Es hora de hacer la tarea o de llamar a todos para que vengan a cenar. Usted podría gritar escaleras arriba, pero eso es muy anticuado. En lugar de desgastarse la voz, usted envía un mensaje de texto a sus familiares.

Seamos sinceros. Cuando estamos en casa, no solo enviamos mensajes de texto a los niños. También nos escribimos mensajes entre adultos.

Entonces, ¿se podría decir que los mensajes de texto bajo un mismo techo se están convirtiendo en el sustituto moderno de la campana para cenar o del intercomunicador? ¿O será más bien un ejemplo más de nuestra obsesión por la tecnología que toma el lugar de la comunicación directa y personal?

El solo hecho de enviar mensajes de texto dentro de la misma casa puede deberse a que usted ya supone que su hijo está pegado a la pantalla, quizá viendo Instagram o jugando algún video juego, en lugar de estar leyendo o estudiando para el examen del día siguiente. ¿Podría ser esta forma de comunicarse señal de que inconscientemente usted está alimentando la adicción de sus hijos al teléfono?

Muchos padres de familia que intercambiaron mensajes con USA Today no tienen inconveniente alguno con los mensajes de texto bajo un mismo techo, ni tampoco con la llamada telefónica que busca una respuesta rápida a una simple pregunta, o que les recuerda a los niños que la comida está servida, o que ya es hora de cumplir con los deberes de la casa.

Es más, si vamos al caso, su hijo o su hija seguramente le escribe primero ("Papá, ¿puede aprobar mi solicitud para descargar una aplicación?").

Mensajes de texto en lugar de gritos

"Estamos en el 2019. Utilizamos la tecnología en lugar de andar gritando por toda la casa", dijo Wendy Anton, enfermera en Michigan, quien no solo se comunica con la familia en casa por mensajes de texto, sino a través de Alexa, de Amazon. "También los adultos nos escribimos mensajes de texto por la misma razón, o porque no queremos que los niños escuchen lo que decimos", dijo Anton.

Además, comunicarse a gritos puede tener consecuencias negativas, dijo la Dra. Pamela Rutledge, directora del Centro de Investigación Psicológica sobre Medios en Newport Beach, California.

"Este es un acto agresivo y pierde toda la sutileza de la voz normal sin la ventaja de los emoticonos, que sirven para aclarar la intención", dijo. "Los seres humanos reaccionamos instintivamente ante cierto comportamiento, y los gritos generan una reacción defensiva hasta saber de qué se trata. Cuando mamá grita diciendo '¡venga acá, por favor!', es difícil saber si uno está en problemas o si simplemente necesita decirnos algo que no puede decirnos a gritos. Si sucede, como en la mayoría de los hogares, que al primer grito no hay respuesta alguna, entonces al siguiente mamá omite el 'por favor' y se puede percibir su molestia por haber sido ignorada la primera vez".

Sin embargo, la Dra. Nancy Mramor, psicóloga en Pittsburgh, dijo que a menudo recurrimos a la tecnología como "técnica de evasión" cuando creemos que estamos en problemas.

"No tiene que ser necesariamente un adolescente que está en problemas", dijo, "puede ser cualquier persona que quiera comunicarse con alguien pero que a la vez busca evitar entablar una conversación larga".

Evitar pasar vergüenza

Aunque a veces escribamos mensajes de texto a los miembros de la familia para algún recordatorio o como una simple forma de interacción, los mensajes a menudo dan paso a una conversación más profunda.

"A veces estoy de acuerdo con ello, en especial si se trata de algo que les avergüenza decir frente a frente", dijo Tamra Forsman, madre de tres hijos en el estado de Washington. "Dejo que me escriban y luego les digo que me vengan a ver para que podamos hablar. Trato de encontrar un equilibrio entre la comunicación a su manera (mensajes de texto) y la mía (conversación), porque

me doy cuenta de que en las relaciones hay que aprender a hacer concesiones mutuas. Quizá es porque la comunicación me parece sumamente importante, sobre todo en la adolescencia. Me siento agradecida por el hecho que me escriban, porque muchos adolescentes jamás escriben mensajes de texto a sus madres, así que creo que soy afortunada".

Kelli Jones Geiger, una madre en Houston, tiene una opinión similar. Según dijo, por mucho tiempo se negó a comunicarse con su hija por mensaje de texto cuando estaban en casa, pero ahora lo hacen inclusive cuando están sentadas una al lado de la otra en el sofá.

"A los 14 años de edad hay cosas que resultan difíciles de hablar con la madre. Me pongo a su nivel y entonces podemos entablar una conversación. Tengo la posibilidad de editar mis palabras antes de simplemente lanzar al aire lo que pienso. Abre los canales de comunicación entre las dos".

En Forth Worth, Cara Gunia tiene una experiencia similar con su hijo de 12 años de edad, a quien le resulta más difícil hablar con ella que con su hermana, que es un año mayor que él.

"En repetidas oportunidades me ha escrito para decirme que alguien dijo un comentario inapropiado o que estaba viendo algún programa y que de pronto, antes de que pudiera darse cuenta de lo que sucedía, pasaron un comercial indebido, o cosas así", dijo Gunia. "Entonces, cuando el momento es oportuno, saco el tema y él no tiene problema alguno en hablar al respecto. Me doy cuenta de que está deseoso de hablar de ello. Me da mucha ternura".

Es posible que los niños también piensen lo mismo.

En Chandler, Arizona, Erin, la hija de 12 años de Amy Wing le explicó a su madre por qué le escribe mensajes de texto: "Le escribo cuando hay algo que me resulta difícil conversar frente a frente, o cuando estoy cansada o haciendo algo, o cuando estoy con mis amigas y no quiero ir a hablar con usted. Si me llama para que vaya a hablar con usted, iré. Pero si necesito algo que no es urgente le escribiré un mensaje de texto".

Sin duda alguna, hay padres de familia que se oponen rotundamente a tal práctica.

Katie May, madre de seis hijos, prohíbe los mensajes de texto entre sí en casa, pues busca que "la interacción humana prevalezca por encima de todo".

Los efectos de comunicarse mediante mensajes de texto en casa

Entonces, ¿estaremos en realidad generando efectos psicológicos perdurables al optar por el conveniente contacto con la pantalla en lugar del contacto visual?

"Lo que ha sucedido en nuestra sociedad es que ya no existimos independientemente de nuestros aparatos y hemos aprendido a depender de ellos para gran cantidad de cosas", dijo Mramor. "Algo realmente lamentable que está pasando con la tecnología es que la gente se limita a responder lo más brevemente posible en lugar de hablar las cosas a fondo. No aprende a interactuar socialmente ni aprende a leer el lenguaje corporal. Tampoco aprende las habilidades sociales necesarias para mantener una conversación".

Sin embargo, según Rutledge, "tenemos esta idea fantasiosa que antes de los celulares nuestros hijos bajaban felizmente las escaleras para entablar una conversación seria frente a frente con nosotros. Eso no era así. Si yo recibiese diez centavos cada vez que tuve que gritar escaleras arriba 'No entiendo lo que dice, por favor baje si tiene algo que preguntar', sería millonaria".

Rutledge también considera que comunicarse por mensaje de texto tiene otro aspecto positivo.

"Mis hijos me envían fotos de sus gatos. Eso me parece muy lindo porque lo que indica es que están pensando en mí. En cierta forma no se trata realmente del gato. Lo que no vemos es que esas pequeñas cosas sin importancia nos acercan más unos a otros".

Quiz

1 ¿Cuáles son las PRINCIPALES líneas de desarrollo del tema del artículo?

1. *Qué es, qué implica y cuándo se recurre a enviar mensajes de texto dentro del hogar.*
2. *Ventajas del uso de los medios tecnológicos para comunicarse dentro del hogar.*
3. *Opiniones en contra del uso de los medios tecnológicos en la comunicación con la familia.*
4. *Evolución de la comunicación en la familia antes y después de la llegada de los medios tecnológicos.*

- (A) 1 y 2
- (B) 2 y 3
- (C) 3 y 4
- (D) 1 y 4

2 ¿Qué oración del artículo debería tener la PRIORIDAD de aparecer en un resumen del mismo?

- (A) Aunque a veces escribamos mensajes de texto a los miembros de la familia para algún recordatorio o como una simple forma de interacción, los mensajes a menudo dan paso a una conversación más profunda.
- (B) Me siento agradecida por el hecho que me escriban, porque muchos adolescentes jamás escriben mensajes de texto a sus madres, así que creo que soy afortunada".
- (C) En Forth Worth, Cara Gunia tiene una experiencia similar con su hijo de 12 años de edad, a quien le resulta más difícil hablar con ella que a su hermana, quien es un año mayor que él.
- (D) "Lo que ha sucedido en nuestra sociedad es que ya no existimos independientemente de nuestros aparatos y hemos aprendido a depender de ellos para gran cantidad de cosas", dijo Mramor.

3 ¿Qué DOS fragmentos del artículo guían el debate y sirven de introducción o transición a un nuevo tema?

1. *Entonces, ¿se podría decir que los mensajes de texto bajo un mismo techo se están convirtiendo en el sustituto moderno de la campana para cenar o del intercomunicador? ¿O será más bien un ejemplo más de nuestra obsesión por la tecnología que toma el lugar de la comunicación directa y personal?*
2. *¿Podría ser esta forma de comunicarse señal de que inconscientemente usted está alimentando la adicción de sus hijos al teléfono?*
3. *Es más, si vamos al caso, su hijo o su hija seguramente le escribe primero ("Papá, ¿puede aprobar mi solicitud para descargar una aplicación"?).*
4. *Entonces, ¿estaremos en realidad generando efectos psicológicos perdurables al optar por el conveniente contacto con la pantalla en lugar del contacto visual?*

- (A) 1 y 2
- (B) 2 y 3
- (C) 3 y 4
- (D) 1 y 4

4 ¿Cuál de las siguientes opciones describe MEJOR cómo se organizan las ideas en el artículo?

- (A) El artículo establece varios CONTRASTES: el pasado y el presente de la comunicación en el hogar, la comunicación antes y después de la llegada de los medios tecnológicos y la comunicación a gritos frente a la silenciosa (por mensaje de texto).
- (B) El artículo hace un recorrido histórico (CRONOLÓGICO) sobre cómo ha evolucionado la comunicación en el hogar desde la aparición en escena de los medios tecnológicos y su particular forma de establecer interacciones en la familia.
- (C) El artículo establece un debate entre si el uso de la tecnología para comunicarse en el hogar es un PROBLEMA al que hay que buscarle solución, o en realidad, el uso de la tecnología es la SOLUCIÓN al problema de la falta de comunicación en la familia.
- (D) El artículo analiza en detalle los EFECTOS que tienen sobre las familias tanto la comunicación a gritos, como el uso de medios tecnológicos en sustitución de la comunicación en persona, ambas CAUSAS de controversia.

Lesson 3: Literary Elements & Techniques Part 3

(approximately one hour)

Educator Note: In this session, students are going to be asked to apply some of the concepts they’ve played with in the first two sessions in broader ways. For instance, while they’ve been asked to deal with symbolism in relatively isolated contexts, in this session they’ll be asked to think about how those concepts might function in more subtle ways in longer pieces of literature.

It is likely students will find some of the later questions challenging, but you should encourage them not to be intimidated because they don’t know the “right” answer. As long as they can make an argument to convincingly support their case, there can be different ways to answer many of these questions.

Exercise 1

*Found you when your heart was broke,
I filled your cup until it overflowed.*

“Without Me”, Halsey

In the lines quoted above, how does the lyricist use figurative language?

Answer: The lyricist writes, “I filled your cup until it overflowed” (line 2), meaning that she showed a lot of love to the broken-hearted person she met.

Exercise 2

*Woke up feeling like a new James Dean.
I comb my hair like an old-school Sheen.
I'm feeling high like a late-night summer of last year, yeah.
Standing there with the red dress on you,
5 A Killer Queen, like a young Jane Fonda-
Is it me, or am I just having a good year?*

“Cool”, The Jonas Brothers

While the lyrics above are from a popular song, some of the references may not be familiar to you—you may not know, for instance, who James Dean or Jane Fonda are. Using context clues, however, answer the following question to the best of your ability.

Citing specific examples from the text, how does the lyricist use figurative language to characterize himself and the woman he is addressing?

Answer: The narrator says he felt like “a new James Dean” (line 1) and describes the woman in the red dress as a “young Jane Fonda”. Given the title of the song, and lines like “am I just having a good year?”, we can surmise that the narrator sees himself and the woman as ‘cool’ and is communicating this by comparing them to famous cool people.

Exercise 3

Educator Note: In the manner of the Regents exam, I’ve selected a few of the tougher vocabulary words in the next two selections to define at the foot of the page. Sometimes, the chosen words on an exam will be vital to the understanding of the passage. Occasionally, however, the test creators will select words of comparatively less importance and neglect to define more difficult and essential vocabulary.

The following story is set during the Irish Civil War, which took place during the 1920s. A civil war is when people from the same country fight each other.

The long June twilight faded into night. Dublin lay enveloped in darkness but for the dim light of the moon that shone through fleecy clouds, casting a pale light as of approaching dawn over the streets and the dark waters of the Liffey. Around the
 5 ***beleaguered** Four Courts the heavy guns roared. Here and there through the city, machine guns and rifles broke the silence of the night, **spasmodically**, like dogs barking on lone farms. Republicans and Free Staters were waging civil war.*

*On a rooftop near O’Connell Bridge, a Republican sniper lay watching. Beside him lay his rifle and over his shoulders was slung a pair of field glasses. His face was the face of a student, thin and **ascetic**, but his eyes had the cold gleam of the fanatic. They were deep*
 10 *and thoughtful, the eyes of a man who is used to looking at death.*

He was eating a sandwich hungrily. He had eaten nothing since morning. He had been too excited to eat. He finished the sandwich, and, taking a flask of whiskey from his pocket, he took a short drought. Then he returned the flask to his pocket. He paused for a moment, considering whether he should risk a smoke. It was dangerous. The flash
 15 *might be seen in the darkness, and there were enemies watching. He decided to take the risk.*

20 *Placing a cigarette between his lips, he struck a match, inhaled the smoke hurriedly and put out the light. Almost immediately, a bullet flattened itself against the **parapet** of the roof. The sniper took another whiff and put out the cigarette. Then he swore softly and crawled away to the left.*

Cautiously he raised himself and peered over the parapet. There was a flash and a bullet whizzed over his head. He dropped immediately. He had seen the flash. It came from the opposite side of the street.

25 *He rolled over the roof to a chimney stack in the rear, and slowly drew himself up behind it, until his eyes were level with the top of the parapet. There was nothing to be seen-- just the dim outline of the opposite housetop against the blue sky. His enemy was under cover.*

...

30 *Suddenly from the opposite roof, a shot rang out and the sniper dropped his rifle with a curse. The rifle clattered to the roof. The sniper thought the noise would wake the dead. He stooped to pick the rifle up. He couldn't lift it. His forearm was dead. "I'm hit," he muttered.*

Dropping flat onto the roof, he crawled back to the parapet. With his left hand he felt the injured right forearm. The blood was oozing through the sleeve of his coat. There was no pain--just a deadened sensation, as if the arm had been cut off.

35 *Quickly he drew his knife from his pocket, opened it on the breastwork of the parapet, and ripped open the sleeve. There was a small hole where the bullet had entered. On the other side there was no hole. The bullet had lodged in the bone. It must have fractured it. He bent the arm below the wound. The arm bent back easily. He ground his teeth to overcome the pain.*

40 *Then taking out his field dressing, he ripped open the packet with his knife. He broke the neck of the iodine bottle and let the bitter fluid drip into the wound. A paroxysm of pain swept through him. He placed the cotton wadding over the wound and wrapped the dressing over it. He tied the ends with his teeth.*

45 *Then he lay still against the parapet, and, closing his eyes, he made an effort of will to overcome the pain.*

...

The sniper lay still for a long time nursing his wounded arm and planning escape. Morning must not find him wounded on the roof. The enemy on the opposite roof covered his escape. He must kill that enemy and he could not use his rifle. He had only a revolver to do it. Then he thought of a plan.

50 *Taking off his cap, he placed it over the muzzle of his rifle. Then he pushed the rifle slowly upward over the parapet, until the cap was visible from the opposite side of the street. Almost immediately there was a report, and a bullet pierced the center of the cap. The sniper slanted the rifle forward. The cap clipped down into the street. Then catching the rifle in the middle, the sniper dropped his left hand over the roof and let it*
60 *hang, lifelessly. After a few moments, he let the rifle drop to the street. Then he sank to the roof, dragging his hand with him.*

Crawling quickly to his feet, he peered up at the corner of the roof. His ruse had succeeded. The other sniper, seeing the cap and rifle fall, thought that he had killed his man. He was now standing before a row of chimney pots, looking across, with his head
65 *clearly silhouetted against the western sky.*

The Republican sniper smiled and lifted his revolver above the edge of the parapet. The distance was about fifty yards--a hard shot in the dim light, and his right arm was
paining him like a thousand devils. He took a steady aim. His hand trembled with eagerness. Pressing his lips together, he took a deep breath through his nostrils and
70 *fired. He was almost deafened with the report and his arm shook with the recoil.*

Then when the smoke cleared, he peered across and uttered a cry of joy. His enemy had been hit. He was reeling over the parapet in his death agony. He struggled to keep his feet, but he was slowly falling forward as if in a dream. The rifle fell from his grasp, hit the parapet, fell over, bounded off the pole of a barber's shop beneath and then
75 *clattered on the pavement.*

Then the dying man on the roof crumpled up and fell forward. The body turned over and over in space and hit the ground with a dull thud. Then it lay still.

*The sniper looked at his enemy falling and he shuddered. The lust of battle died in him. He became bitten by **remorse**. The sweat stood out in beads on his forehead.*
80 *Weakened by his wound and the long summer day of fasting and watching on the roof, he revolted from the sight of the shattered mass of his dead enemy. His teeth chattered, he began to gibber to himself, cursing the war, cursing himself, cursing everybody.*

85 *He looked at the smoking revolver in his hand, and with an oath he hurled it to the roof at his feet. The revolver went off with a concussion and the bullet whizzed past the sniper's head. He was frightened back to his senses by the shock. His nerves steadied. The cloud of fear scattered from his mind and he laughed.*

90 *Taking the whiskey flask from his pocket, he emptied it a drought. He felt reckless under the influence of the spirit. He decided to leave the roof now and look for his company commander, to report. Everywhere around was quiet. There was not much danger in going through the streets. He picked up his revolver and put it in his pocket. Then he crawled down through the skylight to the house underneath.*

95 *When the sniper reached the laneway on the street level, he felt a sudden curiosity as to the identity of the enemy sniper whom he had killed. He decided that he was a good shot, whoever he was. He wondered did he know him. Perhaps he had been in his own company before the split in the army. He decided to risk going over to have a look at him. He peered around the corner into O'Connell Street. In the upper part of the street there was heavy firing, but around here all was quiet.*

100 *The sniper darted across the street. A machine gun tore up the ground around him with a hail of bullets, but he escaped. He threw himself face downward beside the corpse. The machine gun stopped.*

Then the sniper turned over the dead body and looked into his brother's face.

From "The Sniper", Liam O'Flaherty

beleaguered: suffering difficulties

spasmodically: sudden and brief

ascetic: strict & severe

parapet: low protective wall at the edge of a rooftop

remorse: regret

Educator Note: The ELA Regents Exams provide a short glossary of terms and definitions in the reading. Students need to know that they should check these words, but they are not necessarily important to the reading or questions.

1. How is the protagonist characterized?

Answer: The protagonist is characterized as having eyes with "the cold gleam of the fanatic" that are "used to looking at death" (lines 9-11).

2. What are some examples of imagery in this story? Specify what senses the author appeals to.

Sample Answers:

Sight: *“Dublin lay enveloped in darkness but for the dim light of the moon that shone through fleecy clouds, casting a pale light as of approaching dawn over the streets and the dark waters of the Liffey.”*

Taste: *“He broke the neck of the iodine bottle and let the bitter fluid drip into the wound.”*

Sound: *“machine guns and rifles broke the silence of the night, spasmodically, like dogs barking on lone farms”*

Touch: *“There was no pain--just a deadened sensation, as if the arm had been cut off.”*

Mood is probably a term you’ve heard your English teacher use. The **mood** is the feeling or atmosphere of a story. For instance, a horror story might have a frightening, suspenseful, or dangerous mood, while a story about the author’s childhood might have a happy and loving mood. An author creates the mood of a story in many different ways, including with the imagery they use. Keep this in mind as you answer the next question.

3. What mood or feeling does this story have? Explain how the imagery helps create this mood.

Answer: This story has a threatening and tense mood. The author uses imagery to create this mood by setting the story during a dark, haunting night, with sporadic gunshots echoing through the air, as well as vividly describing the sensations of being shot.

4. What might the protagonist’s action in the line below symbolize?

He looked at the smoking revolver in his hand, and with an oath he hurled it to the roof at his feet.

Answer: The protagonist throws his gun away, which symbolizes his sudden feeling of disgust for the violent act he’s just committed.

5. Given that the story takes place during a civil war, what do you think the symbolic meaning of the sniper’s duel might be?

Answer: On a literal level, the story is about a man who unwittingly kills his brother. On a symbolic level, it is a story about the horrible results of civil war, when people fight against

their fellow citizens, neighbors, and even family. It can even symbolize the fact that in any war, we are killing our “brother man”.

Exercise 4

Knowing that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with a heart trouble, great care was taken to break to her as gently as possible the news of her husband’s death.

*It was her sister Josephine who told her, in broken sentences; veiled hints that revealed in half **concealing**. Her husband’s friend Richards was there, too, near her. It was he who had
5 been in the newspaper office when intelligence of the railroad disaster was received, with Brently Mallard’s name leading the list of “killed.” He had only taken the time to assure himself of its truth by a second telegram, and had hastened to forestall any less careful, less tender friend in bearing the sad message.*

*She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed inability
10 to accept its significance. She wept at once, with sudden, wild **abandonment**, in her sister’s arms. When the storm of grief had spent itself, she went away to her room alone. She would have no one follow her.*

*There stood, facing the open window, a comfortable, roomy armchair. Into this she sank, pressed down by a physical exhaustion that haunted her body and seemed to reach into her
15 soul.*

She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all a quiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.

20 There were patches of blue sky showing here and there through the clouds that had met and piled one above the other in the west facing her window.

She sat with her head thrown back upon the cushion of the chair, quite motionless, except when a sob came up into her throat and shook her, as a child who has cried itself to sleep continues to sob in its dreams.

*25 She was young, with a fair, calm face, whose lines bespoke **repression** and even a certain strength. But now there was a dull stare in her eyes, whose gaze was fixed away off yonder on one of those patches of blue sky. It was not a glance of reflection, but rather indicated a suspension of intelligent thought.*

*There was something coming to her and she was waiting for it, fearfully. What was it? She
30 did not know; it was too subtle and elusive to name. But she felt it, creeping out of the sky, reaching toward her through the sounds, the scents, the color that filled the air.*

Now her bosom rose and fell **tumultuously**. She was beginning to recognize this thing that was approaching to possess her, and she was striving to beat it back with her will—as powerless as her two white slender hands would have been. When she abandoned herself, a
 35 little whispered word escaped her slightly parted lips. She said it over and over under her breath: “free, free, free!” The vacant stare and the look of terror that had followed it went from her eyes. They stayed keen and bright. Her pulse beat fast, and the coursing blood warmed and relaxed every inch of her body.

She did not stop to ask if it were or were not a monstrous joy that held her. A clear and
 40 exalted perception enabled her to dismiss the suggestion as trivial. She knew that she would weep again when she saw the kind, tender hands folded in death; the face that had never looked save with love upon her, fixed and gray and dead. But she saw beyond that bitter moment a long procession of years to come that would belong to her absolutely. And she opened and spread her arms out to them in welcome.

45 There would be no one to live for during those coming years; she would live for herself. There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow creature. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination.

50 And yet she had loved him—sometimes. Often she had not. What did it matter! What could love, the unsolved mystery, count for in the face of this possession of self-assertion which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being!

“Free! Body and soul free!” she kept whispering.

Josephine was kneeling before the closed door with her lips to the keyhole, imploring for
 55 admission. “Louise, open the door! I beg; open the door—you will make yourself ill. What are you doing, Louise? For heaven’s sake open the door.”

“Go away. I am not making myself ill.” No; she was drinking in a very elixir of life through that open window.

Her fancy was running riot along those days ahead of her. Spring days, and summer days,
 60 and all sorts of days that would be her own. She breathed a quick prayer that life might be long. It was only yesterday she had thought with a shudder that life might be long.

She arose at length and opened the door to her sister’s importunities. There was a feverish triumph in her eyes, and she carried herself unwittingly like a goddess of Victory. She clasped her sister’s waist, and together they descended the stairs. Richards stood waiting
 65 for them at the bottom.

*Someone was opening the front door with a latchkey. It was Brently Mallard who entered, a little travel-stained, **composedly** carrying his grip-sack and umbrella. He had been far from the scene of the accident and did not even know there had been one. He stood amazed at Josephine’s piercing cry; at Richards’ quick motion to screen him from the view of his wife.*

70 *When the doctors came, they said she had died of heart disease—of the joy that kills.*

“The Story of an Hour”, Kate Chopin

Concealing: hiding

Abandonment: giving up of self-control

Repression: rejection of emotions or ideas

Tumultuously: violently

Composedly: calmly

1. In 3-5 sentences, summarize what happens in this story.

Answer: A woman’s husband is believed to have died in a railroad accident. Those close to her try to break the news gently because she has a heart condition. She is overcome with grief and sadness for a moment, but then she begins to feel “free” as she realizes she will have a lot more control over the rest of her life without her husband. Her husband, however, did not actually die, and when she sees him alive and well, she dies of a heart attack. People say she died of happiness, though the reader might suggest other reasons.

2. Explain how the characterization of Mrs. Mallard in the story’s first line foreshadows the ending.

Answer: The reader learns of Mrs. Mallard’s heart condition in the first line, which is what eventually causes her death in the final line.

3. How many examples of imagery can you identify in the following paragraphs? Specify what sense each example appeals to.

She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.

There were patches of blue sky showing here and there through the clouds that had met and piled one above the other in the west facing her window.

Sample Answers:

Sight

“tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life”

“patches of blue sky showing here and there through the clouds”

Taste

“delicious breath of rain was in the air”

Sound

“a peddler was crying his wares”

“notes of a distant song...reached her faintly”

“countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves”

4. What mood or feeling does the imagery in this section of the story create?

Answer: The imagery creates a feeling of natural beauty and vibrant life.

5. How does the mood created by this imagery contrast with the news Mrs. Mallard has just received? How might this reflect Mrs. Mallard’s emotional state?

Educator Note: Mrs. Mallard has just been told that her husband has died. What she notices in the natural world is music and “new spring life”, and blue sky shining through the clouds. This reflects the feeling of freedom that she is overcome with as she imagines her life without her husband.

Lesson 3: Literary Elements & Techniques Part 3

(approximately one hour)

Exercise 1

*Found you when your heart was broke,
I filled your cup until it overflowed.*

“Without Me”, Halsey

In the lines quoted above, how does the lyricist use figurative language?

Exercise 2

*Woke up feeling like a new James Dean.
I comb my hair like an old-school Sheen.
I'm feeling high like a late-night summer of last year, yeah.
Standing there with the red dress on you,
5 A Killer Queen, like a young Jane Fonda-
Is it me, or am I just having a good year?*

“Cool”, The Jonas Brothers

While the lyrics above are from a popular song, some of the references may not be familiar to you—you may not know, for instance, who James Dean or Jane Fonda are. Using context clues, however, answer the following question to the best of your ability.

Citing specific examples from the text, how does the lyricist use figurative language to characterize himself and the woman he is addressing?

Exercise 3

The following story is set during the Irish Civil War, which took place during the 1920s. A civil war is when people from the same country fight each other.

*The long June twilight faded into night. Dublin lay enveloped in darkness but for the dim light of the moon that shone through fleecy clouds, casting a pale light as of approaching dawn over the streets and the dark waters of the Liffey. Around the **beleaguered** Four Courts the heavy guns roared. Here and there through the city, machine guns and rifles broke the silence of the night, **spasmodically**, like dogs barking on lone farms. Republicans and Free Staters were waging civil war.*

*On a rooftop near O’Connell Bridge, a Republican sniper lay watching. Beside him lay his rifle and over his shoulders was slung a pair of field glasses. His face was the face of a student, thin and **ascetic**, but his eyes had the cold gleam of the fanatic. They were deep and thoughtful, the eyes of a man who is used to looking at death.*

He was eating a sandwich hungrily. He had eaten nothing since morning. He had been too excited to eat. He finished the sandwich, and, taking a flask of whiskey from his pocket, he took a short drought. Then he returned the flask to his pocket. He paused for a moment, considering whether he should risk a smoke. It was dangerous. The flash might be seen in the darkness, and there were enemies watching. He decided to take the risk.

*Placing a cigarette between his lips, he struck a match, inhaled the smoke hurriedly and put out the light. Almost immediately, a bullet flattened itself against the **parapet** of the roof. The sniper took another whiff and put out the cigarette. Then he swore softly and crawled away to the left.*

Cautiously he raised himself and peered over the parapet. There was a flash and a bullet whizzed over his head. He dropped immediately. He had seen the flash. It came from the opposite side of the street.

He rolled over the roof to a chimney stack in the rear, and slowly drew himself up behind it, until his eyes were level with the top of the parapet. There was nothing to be seen-- just the dim outline of the opposite housetop against the blue sky. His enemy was under cover.

...

30 *Suddenly from the opposite roof a shot rang out and the sniper dropped his rifle with a curse. The rifle clattered to the roof. The sniper thought the noise would wake the dead. He stooped to pick the rifle up. He couldn't lift it. His forearm was dead. "I'm hit," he muttered.*

Dropping flat onto the roof, he crawled back to the parapet. With his left hand he felt the injured right forearm. The blood was oozing through the sleeve of his coat. There was no pain--just a deadened sensation, as if the arm had been cut off.

35 *Quickly he drew his knife from his pocket, opened it on the breastwork of the parapet, and ripped open the sleeve. There was a small hole where the bullet had entered. On the other side there was no hole. The bullet had lodged in the bone. It must have fractured it. He bent the arm below the wound. The arm bent back easily. He ground his teeth to overcome the pain.*

40 *Then taking out his field dressing, he ripped open the packet with his knife. He broke the neck of the iodine bottle and let the bitter fluid drip into the wound. A paroxysm of pain swept through him. He placed the cotton wadding over the wound and wrapped the dressing over it. He tied the ends with his teeth.*

45 *Then he lay still against the parapet, and, closing his eyes, he made an effort of will to overcome the pain.*

...

The sniper lay still for a long time nursing his wounded arm and planning escape. Morning must not find him wounded on the roof. The enemy on the opposite roof covered his escape. He must kill that enemy and he could not use his rifle. He had only a revolver to do it. Then he thought of a plan.

50 *Taking off his cap, he placed it over the muzzle of his rifle. Then he pushed the rifle slowly upward over the parapet, until the cap was visible from the opposite side of the street. Almost immediately there was a report, and a bullet pierced the center of the cap. The sniper slanted the rifle forward. The cap clipped down into the street. Then catching the rifle in the middle, the sniper dropped his left hand over the roof and let it*
60 *hang, lifelessly. After a few moments, he let the rifle drop to the street. Then he sank to the roof, dragging his hand with him.*

65 *Crawling quickly to his feet, he peered up at the corner of the roof. His ruse had succeeded. The other sniper, seeing the cap and rifle fall, thought that he had killed his man. He was now standing before a row of chimney pots, looking across, with his head clearly silhouetted against the western sky.*

70 *The Republican sniper smiled and lifted his revolver above the edge of the parapet. The distance was about fifty yards--a hard shot in the dim light, and his right arm was paining him like a thousand devils. He took a steady aim. His hand trembled with eagerness. Pressing his lips together, he took a deep breath through his nostrils and fired. He was almost deafened with the report and his arm shook with the recoil.*

75 *Then when the smoke cleared, he peered across and uttered a cry of joy. His enemy had been hit. He was reeling over the parapet in his death agony. He struggled to keep his feet, but he was slowly falling forward as if in a dream. The rifle fell from his grasp, hit the parapet, fell over, bounded off the pole of a barber's shop beneath and then clattered on the pavement.*

Then the dying man on the roof crumpled up and fell forward. The body turned over and over in space and hit the ground with a dull thud. Then it lay still.

80 *The sniper looked at his enemy falling and he shuddered. The lust of battle died in him. He became bitten by **remorse**. The sweat stood out in beads on his forehead. Weakened by his wound and the long summer day of fasting and watching on the roof, he revolted from the sight of the shattered mass of his dead enemy. His teeth chattered, he began to gibber to himself, cursing the war, cursing himself, cursing everybody.*

85 *He looked at the smoking revolver in his hand, and with an oath, he hurled it to the roof at his feet. The revolver went off with a concussion and the bullet whizzed past the sniper's head. He was frightened back to his senses by the shock. His nerves steadied. The cloud of fear scattered from his mind and he laughed.*

90 *Taking the whiskey flask from his pocket, he emptied it a drought. He felt reckless under the influence of the spirit. He decided to leave the roof now and look for his company commander, to report. Everywhere around was quiet. There was not much danger in going through the streets. He picked up his revolver and put it in his pocket. Then he crawled down through the skylight to the house underneath.*

95 *When the sniper reached the laneway on the street level, he felt a sudden curiosity as to the identity of the enemy sniper whom he had killed. He decided that he was a good shot, whoever he was. He wondered did he know him. Perhaps he had been in his own company before the split in the army. He decided to risk going over to have a look at him. He peered around the corner into O'Connell Street. In the upper part of the street, there was heavy firing, but around here all was quiet.*

100 *The sniper darted across the street. A machine gun tore up the ground around him with a hail of bullets, but he escaped. He threw himself face downward beside the corpse. The machine gun stopped.*

Then the sniper turned over the dead body and looked into his brother's face.

From "The Sniper", Liam O'Flaherty

beleaguered: suffering difficulties

spasmodically: sudden and brief

ascetic: strict & severe

parapet: low protective wall at the edge of a rooftop

remorse: regret

1. How is the protagonist characterized?

2. What are some examples of imagery in this story? Specify what senses the author appeals to.

Mood is probably a term you've heard your English teacher use. The **mood** is the feeling or atmosphere of a story. For instance, a horror story might have a frightening, suspenseful, or dangerous mood, while a story about the author's childhood might have a happy and loving mood. An author creates the mood of a story in many different ways, including with the imagery they use. Keep this in mind as you answer the next question.

3. What mood does the author’s use of imagery create?

4. What might the protagonist’s action in the line below symbolize?

He looked at the smoking revolver in his hand, and with an oath, he hurled it to the roof at his feet.

5. Given that the story takes place during a civil war, what do you think the symbolic meaning of the sniper’s duel might be?

Exercise 4

Knowing that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with a heart trouble, great care was taken to break to her as gently as possible the news of her husband’s death.

*It was her sister Josephine who told her, in broken sentences; veiled hints that revealed in half **concealing**. Her husband’s friend Richards was there, too, near her. It was he who had 5 been in the newspaper office when intelligence of the railroad disaster was received, with Brently Mallard’s name leading the list of “killed.” He had only taken the time to assure himself of its truth by a second telegram, and had hastened to forestall any less careful, less tender friend in bearing the sad message.*

*She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed inability 10 to accept its significance. She wept at once, with sudden, wild **abandonment**, in her sister’s arms. When the storm of grief had spent itself, she went away to her room alone. She would have no one follow her.*

There stood, facing the open window, a comfortable, roomy armchair. Into this she sank, pressed down by a physical exhaustion that haunted her body and seemed to reach into her 15 soul.

She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.

20 *There were patches of blue sky showing here and there through the clouds that had met and piled one above the other in the west facing her window.*

She sat with her head thrown back upon the cushion of the chair, quite motionless, except when a sob came up into her throat and shook her, as a child who has cried itself to sleep continues to sob in its dreams.

25 *She was young, with a fair, calm face, whose lines bespoke **repression** and even a certain strength. But now there was a dull stare in her eyes, whose gaze was fixed away off yonder on one of those patches of blue sky. It was not a glance of reflection, but rather indicated a suspension of intelligent thought.*

There was something coming to her and she was waiting for it, fearfully. What was it? She
30 *did not know; it was too subtle and elusive to name. But she felt it, creeping out of the sky, reaching toward her through the sounds, the scents, the color that filled the air.*

*Now her bosom rose and fell **tumultuously**. She was beginning to recognize this thing that was approaching to possess her, and she was striving to beat it back with her will—as powerless as her two white slender hands would have been. When she abandoned herself, a*
35 *little whispered word escaped her slightly parted lips. She said it over and over under her breath: “free, free, free!” The vacant stare and the look of terror that had followed it went from her eyes. They stayed keen and bright. Her pulse beat fast, and the coursing blood warmed and relaxed every inch of her body.*

She did not stop to ask if it were or were not a monstrous joy that held her. A clear and
40 *exalted perception enabled her to dismiss the suggestion as trivial. She knew that she would weep again when she saw the kind, tender hands folded in death; the face that had never looked save with love upon her, fixed and gray and dead. But she saw beyond that bitter moment a long procession of years to come that would belong to her absolutely. And she opened and spread her arms out to them in welcome.*

45 *There would be no one to live for during those coming years; she would live for herself. There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow creature. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination.*

50 *And yet she had loved him—sometimes. Often she had not. What did it matter! What could love, the unsolved mystery, count for in the face of this possession of self-assertion which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being!*

“Free! Body and soul free!” she kept whispering.

Josephine was kneeling before the closed door with her lips to the keyhole, imploring for
55 *admission. “Louise, open the door! I beg; open the door—you will make yourself ill. What are you doing, Louise? For heaven’s sake open the door.”*

“Go away. I am not making myself ill.” No; she was drinking in a very elixir of life through that open window.

Her fancy was running riot along those days ahead of her. Spring days, and summer days,
60 *and all sorts of days that would be her own. She breathed a quick prayer that life might be long. It was only yesterday she had thought with a shudder that life might be long.*

She arose at length and opened the door to her sister’s importunities. There was a feverish triumph in her eyes, and she carried herself unwittingly like a goddess of Victory. She clasped her sister’s waist, and together they descended the stairs. Richards stood waiting
65 *for them at the bottom.*

*Someone was opening the front door with a latchkey. It was Brently Mallard who entered, a little travel-stained, **composedly** carrying his grip-sack and umbrella. He had been far from the scene of the accident and did not even know there had been one. He stood amazed at Josephine’s piercing cry; at Richards’ quick motion to screen him from the view of his wife.*

70 *When the doctors came, they said she had died of heart disease—of the joy that kills.*

“The Story of an Hour”, Kate Chopin

Concealing: hiding

Abandonment: giving up of self-control

Repression: rejection of emotions or ideas

Tumultuously: violently

Composedly: calmly

1. In 3-5 sentences, summarize what happens in this story.

2. Explain how the characterization of Mrs. Mallard in the story’s first line foreshadows the ending.

3. How many examples of imagery can you identify in the following paragraphs? Specify what sense each example appeals to.

She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.

There were patches of blue sky showing here and there through the clouds that had met and piled one above the other in the west facing her window.

4. What mood does the imagery in this section of the story create?

5. How does the mood created by this imagery reflect Mrs. Mallard’s emotional state?
