

BECAUSE LET’S PRETEND WE’RE MARRIED

By Tim Stiles

Illustrated by Scott Gandell

Curriculum developed by Léna Garcia



OVERVIEW

Quick-Glance 10 Points for Usage Guide

Student Population	
Age/Grade-Level Appropriateness	* 16+/11th+
Genre/s	* Prose poetry * Narrative nonfiction

Length	* 991 (four-minute read)
Content Advisories	* Teen dating violence * The speaker is threatened with a gun * The words “muthafucka,” “bitch,” and “shit” are used
One-Sentence Summary	A high-school senior witnesses a female friend’s abusive relationship and questions why she is blamed for staying with her abuser.
Lesson Planning	
Topics & Key Themes Overview	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Family * Power * Community * Relationships * High school * Womanhood * Teen dating violence <p>Themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fear * Justice * Agency * Masculinity * Gender politics * Bystanderism * Victim blaming
Historic Events/Time Period for Study	* 1970s women’s movement * Contemporary #MeToo movement
Complementary Text	* Article: “What the Kitty Genovese Killing Can Teach Today’s Digital Bystanders” by Clyde Haberman: https://nyti.ms/2rA1THh * Song: “He Hit Me (And It Felt Like a Kiss)” by The Crystals: https://bit.ly/2tsGf9j * Song: “Ultraviolence” by Lana Del Rey: https://bit.ly/1nUHcPW * Video: “USC Tim Stiles”: https://bit.ly/2TFsVdp
Author & Artist Information	Tim Stiles lives and writes in the San Francisco Bay Area. Scott Gandell is a Los Angeles-based artist.
Key Common Core Standards (found in detail following the curriculum)	<p>Grades 11-12 Common Core Standards:</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.5</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.A CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.B CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.D CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.6 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.7 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.9</p>

	<p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.A CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.5</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.4.C CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.4.D CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5.A</p> <p>* Note: Questions recommended for assessment are marked with two asterisks.</p>
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Author Biography

Tim Stiles lives and writes in the San Francisco Bay Area. He received his MFA in Creative Writing from San Francisco State University. His poems, stories, and lyrics have been published and recorded throughout the United States and Great Britain. His poetry and photography collaboration with photographer Jay Tyrrell, entitled *Botmerica: Repeat After Me*, was published in 2016.

Artist Biography

Scott Gandell is a professional illustrator, print maker, curator, and entrepreneur. He is a long-time board member and the development chair of the Society of Illustrators of Los Angeles (si-la.org) where he has also served as president.

Scott is an alumni of ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena and the owner of Pop Secret Gallery in Glendale. He is the Art Director of *Literature for Life* and a contributing artist to Issues 2 through 6 of the journal. His work and studio have been featured in numerous magazines, newspapers, journals, and books.

In 2018, Scott was given the opportunity to design interiors for three different established auto manufacturers. His first project will debut during the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, Japan. Scott is an active participant in the United States Air Force Art Program through the USAF APO. His work has been exhibited and sold in galleries across the United States and Canada, as well as displayed in collections worldwide.

He is married to his lovely wife, Anneline, with whom he has two fur babies—a male and a female. Together they share an adventurous lifestyle, which leaves little time to update online profiles and websites.

SYNOPSIS

A high-school senior witnesses a female friend’s abusive relationship and questions why their community blames her for staying with her abuser. In this series of realistic prose poems, Stiles weaves neighborhood gossip with personal experience to show Marcella’s path from track star to battered mother. “Because *Let’s Pretend We’re Married*” is a young man’s response to gender politics, violence, and the norms of his American neighborhood.

CURRICULUM

Pre-Reading & Themes Activity Options

Topic

Mini-Research Project:

Find the definition of teen dating violence. How common is domestic violence in teen relationships in the United States? How does dating violence extend beyond the physical? What do teens have to lose in violent relationships? Use reliable sources and cite them.

In pairs, create a 10-minute mini-lesson to educate teens about dating violence. Respond to the following question: how can your school community work to prevent teen dating violence?

Include technology via a Prezi, PowerPoint, YouTube clips, etc. Present your mini-lesson to the class.

Main Ideas

Journaling & Argumentative Writing:

What is your definition of power? In your journal, write down your own definition. Then, share your definition with a partner. How are your definitions similar and/or different? Feel free to edit your definition after hearing from your partner.

Next, look up the dictionary definition of power. How is it similar and/or different from your definition?

In a 15-minute journal entry, explore one or more of the following questions. Reference your own experiences and prior knowledge:

- How important is power in a relationship?
- Who has power in your community?
- What is a power struggle?
- What constitutes misuse of power?

Note: For question one, you do not need to write about romantic relationships but may choose to focus on relationships with family and/or friends.

Next, using your devices, type a two-page response in which you argue in favor, against, or qualify the following statement. Cite reliable sources:

In a relationship, it is always better to be the one in control.

Share your ideas with a partner. Ask your partner to write three strengths of your writing and three constructive comments. Revise into a final draft.

Passage-Specific Themes

** Read the following excerpt from “Because *Let’s Pretend We’re Married*”:

When a baby comes into it, it’s like a glass box closes up around the mother, the father, & the baby. Everybody can see what’s going on inside the glass box for the show, but nobody cares to do anything about it. Then, when the tragedy comes, the glass breaks, and everybody goes

rushing over like they never saw inside to know the trauma was coming. Well I saw it coming & y'all got to wear this shit for always.”

Literary Analysis:

In a one-page response, analyze the glass box. How does the speaker’s use of simile and metaphor illustrate his point? How does his figurative language affect the reader?

Optional: Create a visual representation of the glass box. Display your artwork in the class.

Universal Themes

Discussion:

In small groups or as a class, discuss the following:

A bystander is a person who stands nearby but takes no part in what’s happening (Merriam Webster). Bystanderism, or the bystander effect, happens when a group of bystanders do not intervene on behalf of a person who is suffering (Encyclopaedia Britannica). A bystander can also be someone who has witnessed someone suffering over a long period of time and failed to intervene.

Read the *New York Times* article, “What the Kitty Genovese Killing Can Teach Today’s Digital Bystanders”: <https://nyti.ms/2rA1THh>

Can the concept of bystanderism be applied to domestic violence? Why or why not? Why do people sometimes not intervene in a friend or family member’s violent relationship as it builds over time? Discuss.

Key Vocabulary

Definitions are context-dependent. Make sure any definitions you look up or work from are the ones that most correctly fit in the context of the story.

Level One	Level Two	Level Three
two-a-days	punked	Yankees’ Starter (jacket)
Babe Ruth League	fleeced	Stetson cologne
Prince	<i>Let’s Pretend We’re Married</i>	
hiss	flash on her	
eff	Tiz	
	musty	

Vocabulary Activity Options

1. Research American baseball player Babe Ruth. What was his life like? What is he known for?

Next, use your devices to find an old newspaper or magazine article written about Babe Ruth. Refer to reliable sources like the *Los Angeles Times*. Read the article and condense it into a one-sentence summary. Read your summary aloud to a partner.

Note: If your school has a subscription to the *New York Times*, you may wish to provide students with the login information. The *Times* reported extensively on Ruth during his lifetime.

Follow-up Discussion: How does Babe Ruth exemplify what it means to be in control? During the baseball game, how does Boyd fail to be in control?

2. Re-read “Because *Let’s Pretend We’re Married*” and highlight the details used to describe Boyd. Then, using telling details and sensory language, write a one-page character description of him.

Using technology or a pencil and paper, create an illustration representing Boyd.

3. Look up the etymology (origin) of the word “cologne.” Where and when did the word originate, and when was cologne first made?

In pairs, work together to design your ideal cologne for either Boyd or Marcella to wear. Although you will not actually make the cologne in class, you and your partner will collaborate to make important decisions about your imagined product. Consider the following questions:

- For whom are you designing the cologne? Why?
- How do you think they would want the cologne to smell? How do you know? Cite the text.
- How would you want Boyd or Marcella to feel while wearing the cologne?
- If you were to sell the cologne, how would you market it?

Finally, write a one-paragraph description of your cologne. Write another paragraph describing and justifying your marketing strategy. (For example, would you buy Instagram ads, reach out to influencers, or buy billboard space? Why?)

Post-Reading Class Discussion Options

1. In poetry, the speaker is the voice we imagine to be speaking the poem, which may be separate from the poet. In these prose poems, do you think the speaker is Stiles? Why or why not?
2. In “Because *Let’s Pretend We’re Married*,” Stiles’ speaker talks in a vernacular, or how he would talk in real life. Of what race or ethnicity do you think the character are? Why? Is it impossible to tell? Why or why not?

Stiles is a white man. What do you think of his use of dialect in the poems? Does information on Stiles’ race change your opinion of his poems’ voice? Why or why not? Discuss.

3. If you were Marcella’s friend in high school, do you think you would have intervened to stop Boyd’s abuse of her? Would you have intervened if Marcella told you that she’s never been happier than she is with Boyd? Why or why not?
4. Consider the following excerpt from Stiles’ poems:

Marcella can think. Nobody made her stay. If she wanna go, she needs to go.

Why do you think Marcella stays with Boyd? Do you think it is her fault that she stays with him? Discuss.

** Text-Dependent Question Options

1. At the end of the prose poems, what “tragedy” do you think happens to Marcella? What do you think happens to Boyd and to their children? Cite the text. Why do you think Stiles chooses to end “Because *Let’s Pretend We’re Married*” in tragedy?

2. Read the following excerpt from the poems: “*you know, he ain’t really like that, he’s been holding doors & bringing me roses, & he’s been really sweet*”

Marcella’s description of Boyd differs dramatically from the speaker’s descriptions of him. Whom do you believe? Why? Do you think Marcella’s perception of Boyd will change with time?

3. In literature, an archetype is a character, theme, symbol, or plot pattern which reflects what’s commonly seen in real life. For example, the hero and the villain are common character archetypes, and good versus evil is an archetypal theme.

What archetypes can you find in Stiles’ “Because *Let’s Pretend We’re Married*”? Why do you think writers use archetypes? Cite the poems.

4. Consider the story’s art. What character does artist Scott Gandell depict? How does he portray him? Write down three adjectives you would use to describe the artwork. Share your adjectives with a partner. How were the words you chose similar and/or different?

Writing Exercises

Narrative

In these poems, we never see a moment when the speaker confronts his friend Marcella about her abusive relationship. If this happened, what do you imagine he would say? How would Marcella respond?

In pairs, write a two-minute scene (about two double-spaced pages) between the speaker and Marcella. Be sure to include exposition, or a description of when and where the scene takes place, as well as realistic dialogue.

Share a draft of your scene with another pair. Ask for their feedback and revise into a final draft. Then, rehearse and perform your revised scene for the class.

Descriptive

Option One:

Think about a time when you predicted an event which later happened. Using telling details and dialogue, write a one-page description of the situation.

Here are some questions to get you started: What, exactly, were you right about? Initially, what made you think you were right? How did you feel when you found out you were correct? Why?

Practice telling your story without reading directly from your piece of writing. In small groups, tell your story.

Option Two:

A prose poem is written in spoken language without rhyme or meter, the pattern of syllables within a line of poetry. Stiles' pieces are prose poems because they are written in paragraphs but read like poetry.

Think about a time when you made a mistake or saw a friend make a mistake. What happened? What did you do? Write an eight-sentence-long prose poem exploring the idea of messing up. Use sensory language and telling details to create a vivid picture for your reader. Read your poem aloud to a partner.

Note: If poets seem proud of their work, you may wish to ask for volunteers to share aloud to the class.

Analysis

In "Because *Let's Pretend We're Married*," Stiles' speaker writes how he would talk in real life. In literature, we call this writing in a vernacular.

** Option One:

In a two-page response, analyze how Stiles' use of a vernacular influences his work. Why do you think he chooses to write how he talks? What does it bring to his poetry? Cite his poems.

Share your paper with a partner. Ask for their feedback and revise into a typed final draft, which you will turn in to your teacher.

Option Two:

How do you talk in real life? Write an eight-line prose poem in your own vernacular. You may write about whatever you like, as long as you write how you talk. Here are some writing prompts to get you started:

- Imagine it's the first week of school. What's going through your mind?
- You've overheard a friend talking about her new romantic relationship. What more do you want to know?
- You've given a friend a 4" x 6" copy of your school photo. What do you write on the back?

Read your poem aloud to a partner.

Complementary Text Options

Read the lyrics to the pop group The Crystals' 1962 song "He Hit Me (And It Felt Like a Kiss)," which justifies an abusive relationship. Listen to the song.

He Hit Me (And It Felt Like A Kiss)
Written by Carole King and Gerry Goffin
Performed by The Crystals

He hit me
And it felt like a kiss
He hit me
But it didn't hurt me

He couldn't stand to hear me say

That I'd been with someone new,
And when I told him I had been untrue

He hit me
And it felt like a kiss
He hit me
And I knew he loved me

If he didn't care for me
I could have never made him mad
But he hit me,
And I was glad

Yes, he hit me
And it felt like a kiss
He hit me
And I knew I loved him
And then he took me in his arms
With all the tenderness there is,
And when he kissed me,
He made me his

Next, read the lyrics to pop singer and songwriter Lana Del Rey's 2014 song "Ultraviolence," which romanticizes an abusive relationship and references The Crystals' song. Watch the music video.

Ultraviolence

Written by Lana Del Rey and Daniel Heath

Performed by Lana Del Rey

He used to call me DN
That stood for deadly nightshade
'Cause I was filled with poison
But blessed with beauty and rage
Jim told me that
He hit me and it felt like a kiss
Jim brought me back
Reminded me of when we were kids

This is ultraviolence
Ultraviolence
Ultraviolence
Ultraviolence
I can hear sirens, sirens
He hit me and it felt like a kiss
I can hear violins, violins
Give me all of that ultraviolence

He used to call me poison
Like I was poison ivy
I could've died right then
'Cause he was right beside me
Jim raised me up
He hurt me but it felt like true love

Jim taught me that
Loving him was never enough

This is ultraviolence
Ultraviolence
Ultraviolence
Ultraviolence
I can hear sirens, sirens
He hit me and it felt like a kiss
I can hear violins, violins
Give me all of that ultraviolence

We can go back to New York
Loving you was really hard
We could go back to Woodstock
Where they don't know who we are
Heaven is on earth
I will do anything for you, babe
Blessed is this union
Crying tears of gold, like lemonade

I love you the first time
I love you the last time
Yo soy la princesa, comprende mis white lines
'Cause I'm your jazz singer
And you're my cult leader
I love you forever
I love you forever

This is ultraviolence
Ultraviolence
Ultraviolence
Ultraviolence
I can hear sirens, sirens
He hit me and it felt like a kiss
I can hear violins, violins
Give me all of that ultraviolence

Writing Exercise

Although The Crystals' song was written in 1962 and Lana Del Rey's in 2014, both romanticize a physically abusive relationship. In your journal, respond to the following questions:

- Why do you think songwriters Del Rey and King attempt to justify being hit by a partner?
- Does this kind of thinking happen in real life? If so, why?
- Do you think we should support artists who romanticize abuse? Why or why not?

Share your ideas with a partner.

Activity Options

Classroom Activity One

In poetry, an image is a sensory detail that allows the reader to visualize a moment in time. Re-read “Because *Let’s Pretend We’re Married*” and highlight the most memorable images.

Review your highlights and pick three images you would like to represent in a collage, which you’ll create using either technology or magazines, scissors, and glue.

After making the collage, write an artist’s statement, or a description, in which you describe which three images you selected, why you chose them, and how you represented them in your collage.

Present your artwork and artist’s statement to the class, and post them in the classroom.

Suggested Materials: computers and Internet access, highlighters, magazines, scissors, glue sticks, and plain white printer paper

Classroom Activity Two

A gender role, or sex role, is a learned social role that dictates how each gender is expected to behave. Oftentimes, gender roles focus on the ideas of femininity and masculinity.

In small groups, watch five trailers for popular movies and/or television shows. Try to select trailers from multiple genres, like a comedy, a drama, or horror. Takes notes. Consider the following questions:

- How are different genders portrayed in the trailers?
- What gender stereotypes do you notice?
- What breaks gender stereotypes?
- How does the entertainment industry influence how we understand our roles as masculine or feminine?

Next, select one trailer to present to the class. Show the trailer, then share your analysis of gender roles and responses to the above questions.

Follow-up Writing Exercise:

In a one-page response, respond to the following question:

What gender roles do you see represented in Stiles’ poems? How do traditional male versus female gender roles influence the characters in “Because *Let’s Pretend We’re Married*”?

Home Activity

In Stiles’ poems, the speaker tells a story about Boyd beating up a pitcher during a baseball game. In your community, what stories or urban myths do people tell? Remember, urban myths are often exaggerated as they are passed down over time.

Ask a trusted adult or peer to tell you a story they heard that has stayed with them. Who is the story about? When does it take place? What happens in the story? Take notes while they are speaking.

Write down the story or urban myth and turn it in to your teacher.

Guest Speaker

Option One: Invite the poet, Tim Stiles, to speak about his current projects, day job, and path to becoming a published poet. You may wish to show students this clip of Stiles reading at USC: <https://bit.ly/2TFsVdp>

Option Two: Invite the artist, Scott Gandell, to speak to the class about how he created the artwork for Stiles' poems, as well as his career as an artist. Ask him to lead an art workshop.

Option Three: Invite a speaker from the Los Angeles-based domestic violence prevention center Peace Over Violence to share statistics on teen dating violence and healthy relationships: <https://bit.ly/2GGIUUH>

Note: *Literature for Life* helps coordinate and facilitate author and artist visits. Gandell is the journal's Art Director.

Field Trip

Visit a Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) district office. Ask to tour the office and meet with a social worker who can explain the department's role, how to prevent teen dating violence, and how to report domestic violence, as well as what happens after a report has been made.

Students may also wish to ask questions about the employee's path to becoming a social worker and typical daily duties.

Here's how to contact the DPSS: <https://bit.ly/2Ec5cMu>

Follow-up Activity:

Option One:

In a 15-minute journal entry, explore the following question: what steps can you take to prevent teen dating violence? Cite what you learned at the DPSS' office.

Option Two:

How do you want to be treated in your relationships with others? In your journal, create a list of five ways you would like to be treated (ex: I want my ideas to be taken seriously.) Then, create a list of five ways you would not like to be treated. Reference what you learned at the DPSS' office.

Note: For option two, you do not need to write about romantic relationships but may choose to focus on relationships with family and/or friends.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS REFERENCE

This story and its exercises are appropriate for 11th grade and above. Eleventh- and twelfth-grade standards are cited.

Pre-Reading & Themes Activity Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when

appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.5: Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.4.D: Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5.A: Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.

Vocabulary Activity Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.D: Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.B: Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.4.C: Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.

Post-Reading Class Discussion Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.A: Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

Text-Dependent Question Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.5: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5.A: Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.

Writing Exercise Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.B: Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.D: Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Complementary Reading Text (Comparative Writing Exercise)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Activity Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.A: Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.5.A: Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text.