

9.2.1

Unit Overview

“And then a Plank in Reason, broke, And I dropped down, and down –”

Text(s)	“The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allan Poe and “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,” by Emily Dickinson
Number of Lessons in Unit	13

Introduction

In the first unit of Module 9.2, students will continue to work on skills, practices, and routines introduced in Module 9.1: close reading, annotating text, and evidence-based discussion and writing, especially through text-dependent questioning and focused annotation. Students will continue learning how to analyze texts critically for deep meaning and will begin identifying and connecting relevant evidence to make claims about text and across texts.

Students will analyze how authors develop and refine central ideas as they read two texts that consider the central ideas of madness and obsession: the Edgar Allan Poe short story, “The Tell-Tale Heart” and the Emily Dickinson poem, “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain.” The unit exposes students to two different literary genres and asks students to make connections across both texts by considering authorial choices and the development of central ideas. As students read, discuss, and write about both texts, they will examine how an author uses text structure, time, and ordering of events to create specific effects and how point of view shapes the content and style of a text. Students will also consider how the effects of these authorial choices and specific details contribute to the development of central ideas.

There are two formal assessments in this unit. The Mid-Unit Assessment focuses on “The Tell-Tale Heart” and asks students to identify a central idea and discuss how point of view and structural choices contribute to the development of that central idea over the course of the text (RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.5, CCRA.R.6, W.9-10.2.b, d). At the end of the unit, students will write a multi-paragraph essay identifying a central idea shared by both texts, “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,” and “The Tell-Tale Heart,” and make an original claim about how Dickinson and Poe develop and refine this idea (RL.9-10.2, CCRA.R.9, W.9-10.2.b, d).

Note: This unit continues Accountable Independent Reading (AIR). See Module 9.1 Prefatory Material for more information about AIR.

Literacy Skills & Habits

- Read closely for textual details
- Annotate texts to support comprehension and analysis
- Engage in productive evidence-based discussions about text
- Collect and organize evidence from texts to support analysis in writing
- Make claims about and across texts using specific textual evidence

Standards for This Unit

CCRA: Reading—Anchor	
CCRA.R.6	Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
CCRA.R.9	Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
CCS Standards: Reading—Literature	
RL.9-10.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.9-10.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
RL.9-10.5	Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

CCS Standards: Writing	
W.9-10.2.b, d	<p>Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.</p>
W.9-10.9.a	<p>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>a. Apply <i>grades 9–10 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]”).</p>
CCS Standards: Speaking & Listening	
SL.9-10.1.a	<p>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.</p>
CCS Standards: Language	
L.9-10.1	<p>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p>
L.9-10.2	<p>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p>
L.9-10.5.a, b	<p>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g. euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.</p>

	b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.
--	--

Note: Bold text indicates targeted standards that will be assessed in the unit.

Unit Assessments

Ongoing Assessment	
Standards Assessed	RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.4, RL.9-10.5, CCRA.R.6, CCRA.R.9, W.9-10.2.b, d
Description of Assessment	Varies by lesson but may include responses to text-dependent questions focused on structural choices, central idea development, point of view, and word choice through discussion and informal writing prompts

Mid-Unit Assessment	
Standards Assessed	RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.5, CCRA.R.6, W.9-10.2.b, d
Description of Assessment	The Mid-Unit Assessment will evaluate students' understanding of how authorial choices, specifically structural choices and point of view, contribute to the development of a central idea. Students will participate in an evidence-based discussion in which they will collect and organize evidence using an Evidence Collection Tool. Students will then respond individually in writing to the following prompt: Identify a central idea in "The Tell-Tale Heart" and discuss how point of view and structural choices contribute to the development of that central idea over the course of the text.

End-of-Unit Assessment	
Standards Assessed	RL.9-10.2, CCRA.R.9, W.9-10.2.b, d

Description of Assessment	Students will individually write a multi-paragraph essay addressing the following prompt: Identify a central idea shared by both texts, “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,” and “The Tell-Tale Heart,” and make an original claim about how Dickinson and Poe develop and refine this idea.
----------------------------------	--

Unit-at-a-Glance Calendar

Lesson	Text	Learning Outcomes/Goals
1	“The Tell-Tale Heart” (entire text and paragraph 1)	Students will begin an exploration of Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart” by listening to a masterful reading of the entire text and beginning an analysis of the first paragraph, in which Poe introduces the narrator. Students will analyze and discuss anchor standard CCRA.R.6 and consider the narrator’s purpose in the first paragraph.
2	“The Tell-Tale Heart” (paragraphs 1 and 2)	Students analyze paragraphs 1 and 2, in which Poe introduces the narrator’s reason for killing the old man. Students will explore how Poe begins to develop the central ideas of obsession and madness through specific textual details by engaging in evidence-based discussion. Additionally, students will continue to consider how point of view shapes the content and style of the text.
3	“The Tell-Tale Heart” (paragraph 3)	Students will analyze paragraph 3 of “The Tell-Tale Heart,” in which the narrator details his methodical plan to murder the old man. Students will be introduced to standard RL.9-10.5 and participate in an evidence-based discussion, focusing on Poe’s structural choices, particularly his manipulation of time, and the effects of this manipulation as the reader waits to find out the narrator’s objective. Additionally, students will continue to trace the development and refinement of central ideas through annotation.
4	“The Tell-Tale Heart” (paragraphs 4–7)	Students analyze paragraphs 4 through 7, in which the actions of the eighth night are slowly revealed as the old man awakens fearfully, and the narrator plans his next move. Students will learn how the narrative point of view further develops the central ideas of madness and obsession. Additionally, students will continue to consider how Poe makes structural choices regarding manipulation

		of time, as the narrator stalls the story’s action, building tension.
5	“The Tell-Tale Heart” (paragraphs 8–13)	Students analyze paragraphs 8 through 13 by responding to questions in an evidence-based discussion. In this excerpt, the tension builds as the narrator finally murders the old man, and buries the body in the floor. Lesson activities include a series of questions, discussion in pairs, and focused annotation in which students consider how Poe’s structural choices develop and refine the text’s central ideas of madness and obsession.
6	The Tell-Tale Heart (paragraphs 14–18)	Students analyze paragraph 14 through the text’s conclusion, in which the narrator finally admits his murderous deed to the police. Students will examine how Poe drives the story toward the narrator’s confession in the last paragraph and consider how a new idea, guilt, emerges and develops in the resolution of the story.
7	“The Tell-Tale Heart” (entire text)	Students analyze the entire text with a focus on Poe’s choices concerning text structure, time, and order of events. Students will practice identifying and connecting textual evidence to develop a claim about Poe’s structural choices. This lesson’s work directly supports the Mid-Unit Assessment.
8	“The Tell-Tale Heart” (entire text)	Students will complete the Mid-Unit Assessment, which asks students to identify a central idea in “The Tell-Tale Heart” and discuss how point of view and structural choices contribute to the development of that central idea over the course of the text.
9	“I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,” (entire text)	Students will listen to two masterful readings of Emily Dickinson’s poem “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,” and share initial reactions and questions. A sequence of questions orients students to the poem and scaffold comprehension by focusing on particular words and phrases in the poem. Students will consider specific lines from the poem that begin to address the central idea and Dickinson’s structural choices, concepts upon which Lessons 10 and 11 will continue to build.
10	“I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,” (entire text)	Students will continue their analysis of the poem by participating in a group gallery walk activity, collaboratively generating observations around the development of a central idea. Through a series of guided questions, students will make meaning of Dickinson’s extended metaphor, of the funeral service (and burial),

		and consider the speaker’s experience as she grapples with a deteriorating mental state and isolation.
11	“I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,” (entire text)	Students complete their analysis of “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,” by considering the structural elements of Dickinson’s poem including the use of capitalization (both at the beginning of each line and for key details), rhyme, and rhythm. This lesson will employ a combination of focused annotation and questions to guide students to an understanding of Emily Dickinson’s structural choices.
12	“The Tell-Tale Heart” and “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,” (entire texts)	Students will engage in an evidence-based discussion in which they will analyze how the two unit texts, “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,” talk to each other. Students will discuss connections across the two texts and will use this information to make a claim about how Poe and Dickinson develop and refine a shared central idea. This work directly prepares students for the End-of-Unit Assessment in the following lesson.
13	“The Tell-Tale Heart” and “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,” (entire texts)	Students will exhibit the literacy skills and habits developed in Unit 1 by writing a formal evidence-based essay addressing the assessment prompt: Identify a central idea shared by both texts and make a claim about how Dickinson and Poe develop and refine this idea.

Preparation, Materials, and Resources

Preparation

- Read and annotate “The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allan Poe and “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,” by Emily Dickinson.
- Review the Text Analysis Rubric.
- Review all unit standards and post in classroom.
- Consider creating a word wall of the vocabulary provided in all lessons.

Materials/Resources

- Chart paper

- Copies of the texts “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,”
- Masterful recordings of both texts (optional): see Lessons 1 and 9
- Self-stick notes for students
- Writing utensils including pencils, pens, markers, and highlighters
- Methods for collecting student work: student notebooks, folders, etc.
- Access to technology (if possible): interactive whiteboard, document camera, and LCD projector
- Copies of handouts and tools for each student: see materials list in individual lesson plans
- Copies of the Text Analysis Rubric
- Copies of the Short Response Checklist and Rubric
- Copies of the Speaking and Listening Checklist and Rubric