

The Most Dangerous Game

Protagonist & Antagonist

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Published by *K20 Center*

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Grade Level	8th – 9th Grade	**Time Frame**	3-4 class period(s)
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	150 minutes

Essential Question

What key literary elements does the author use to develop the characters in the story "The Most Dangerous Game"?

Summary

Students will read and interact with the short story, "The Most Dangerous Game." They will focus on making predictions, analyzing the text, and evaluating the characters—namely protagonist v. antagonist.

Snapshot

Engage

Students will evaluate statements related to the content and context of the short story and determine whether they agree or disagree.

Explore

Students will make predictions about the story by previewing excerpts from the short story.

Explain

Students will analyze the character development of the two main characters and annotate the text for discussion.

Extend

Students will compare the character development of the main characters and determine which is the protagonist and which is the antagonist.

Evaluate

Students will judge which statement their character would most likely agree with and use evidence from the text to support their argument.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

CLR401: Locate important details in somewhat challenging passages

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 9)

9.1.R.1: Students will actively listen and speak clearly using appropriate discussion rules with control of verbal and nonverbal cues.
9.1.R.2: Students will actively listen and interpret a speaker's messages (both verbal and nonverbal) and ask questions to clarify the speaker's purpose and perspective.
9.1.R.3: Students will engage in collaborative discussions about appropriate topics and texts, expressing their own ideas clearly while building on the ideas of others in pairs, diverse groups, and whole class settings.
9.3.R.3: Students will analyze how authors use key literary elements to contribute to meaning and interpret how themes are connected across texts:

- setting
- plot
- characters (i.e., protagonist, antagonist)
- character development
- theme
- conflict (i.e., internal and external)
- archetypes

Attachments

- Elevator Speech Rubric—The Most Dangerous Game.docx
- Elevator Speech Rubric—The Most Dangerous Game.pdf
- Four Corners Signs—The Most Dangerous Game.pdf
- La presa más peligrosa—The Most Dangerous Game.docx
- La presa más peligrosa—The Most Dangerous Game.pdf
- Lesson Slides—The Most Dangerous Game.pptx
- Tea Party Statements—The Most Dangerous Game - Spanish.docx
- Tea Party Statements—The Most Dangerous Game - Spanish.pdf
- Tea Party Statements—The Most Dangerous Game.docx
- Tea Party Statements—The Most Dangerous Game.pdf
- Venn Diagram—The Most Dangerous Game.docx
- Venn Diagram—The Most Dangerous Game.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Four Corner Signs (attached; one per teacher; print one-sided)
- Tea Party Statements document (attached; one set per class; print one-sided)
- Venn Diagram Graphic Organizer handout (attached; one per student)
- The Most Dangerous Game Short Story (linked)
- Elevator Speech Rubric (attached; one per student; print one-sided)

15 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note: Preparation

Print the attached **Four Corners Signs** and hang them around the room. Print and cut out the attached **Tea Party Statements**. There are 29 statements. If you have more students than that, print out an additional copy or pair students together to discuss one statement instead of two statements.

Display **slide 2** of the attached **Lesson Slides** to introduce the lesson to students. Move to **slides 3–4** and go over the essential question and lesson objectives.

Display **slide 5** and introduce students to the Four Corners instructional strategy. Explain to students that they will be shown statements and they will determine their level of agreement. Indicate the signs that are posted around the room. When you show a statement they will move to a sign that best represents their personal level of agreement: agree, disagree, strongly agree, or strongly disagree. Move to **slide 6**. When students are at their chosen sign, they will discuss the reason they made that choice with their group. They will develop a justification for their choice and share with the class. This process will be repeated for the other statements.

Use **slides 7–11** to display the statements your students will be discussing in the Four Corners activity. The statements are:

- Hunting is a sport.
- Hunting is evil.
- Hunting is unfair.
- Animals have no feelings.
- Strength is better than intelligence.

15 minutes

Explore

Transition to **slide 12** and introduce students to the Tea Party instructional strategy. Pass out one of the cards from the **Tea Party Statements** to each student. Explain to students that they have just received an excerpt from "The Most Dangerous Game," a short story they will read later in the lesson.

Provide students with a moment to read the statement they received and reflect on it. Instruct students to find a partner and share their sentences. They should discuss how the statements might be connected. Have students repeat this process 2–3 more times with new partners.

Ask students to return to their seats and invite students to share connections they might have made during the activity. Ask students what they think the story might be about considering the Four Corner activity and the Tea Party statements.

70 minutes

Explain

After your students have completed the Tea Party activity, distribute the link, PDF, or printed out copies of **The Most Dangerous Game Short Story** from CommonLIT and have students read "The Most Dangerous Game."

Make sure your students are provided with enough time to complete the reading (either in class or as an outside activity in between meeting times). As your students read, you will want to have them analyze the text using the instructional strategy CUS and Discuss. This text annotation strategy gives students practice identifying important information in a text, and it provides them with an easy way to refer back to those important points in the future.

Teacher's Note: Differentiation

Listening to an audio recording of The Most Dangerous Game while following along and making text annotations can help students comprehend the text in more than just one way. A PDF file, digital copy, and paired texts for an extension activity can also be found for the story using sites such as CommonLIT. For a Spanish translation of the short story, see the attached **La presa más peligrosa** handout.

Before you have your students begin the reading, assign (or allow students to choose) one character for them to focus on, with half of the class joining "Team Rainsford" and the other half joining "Team Zaroff." Display **slide 13**. Each student will read and annotate the story while paying particularly close attention to whichever character their team is focusing on. They will use the following instructions found on **slide 14:**

- C - Circle new or unfamiliar words.
- U - Underline details that support whether your character is the protagonist or the antagonist.
- S - Star the main idea that shows your character is the protagonist or the antagonist.

After your students have completed the reading with a focus on their character, they will compare their notes with a partner before sharing with the rest of the class. Display **slide 15**. Facilitate a class discussion about the reading.

20 minutes

Extend

After reading the story, pair up your students with one from "Team Rainsford" and one from "Team Zaroff." Together, partners will compare and contrast their characters using the attached **Venn Diagram Graphic Organizer**. Display **slide 16**. In their Venn Diagram, it is important for them to record the similarities and differences between their characters, using textual evidence, as it applies to the following:

1. Physical Appearance
2. Thoughts and Feelings
3. Dialogue
4. Narrator's Comments

Instruct your students to come to a consensus on which character is the protagonist and which is the antagonist. They can show their thinking by labeling the top of their Venn Diagrams.

After your students have completed their Venn Diagrams, you will want to revisit the original Four Corners sentences. Display **slides 17–23**. This time, rather than assessing the statements from their own point of view, students will assess the statements from the point of view of the character they are an expert on.

30 minutes

Evaluate

Now that your students have interacted with and read the story "The Most Dangerous Game," it is time for them to choose one statement that they believe is most agreeable to their character. Have your students prepare a short Elevator Speech relating to the statement and relying upon textual evidence. Display **slide 24**. Their Elevator Speeches should not exceed 90 seconds and should be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- The student focuses on the character and their statement throughout the speech.
- Textual evidence is provided to support the claims of their character.
- The student speaks clearly and is easily understood.
- The flow of the speech was organized and easy to follow.

Teacher's Note: Evaluate Timing & Speeches

Depending on how many students you have in your class and how you decide to have students present their Elevator Speeches (ex. one-by-one, small groups, or digitally) will change the timing of this phase of the lesson. Allow for adjustments as necessary.

Optional Technology Integration

VoiceThread is a great collaboration and feedback tool that allows students to make comments on a post using audio, video, or text.

Resources

- Connell, R. (1924). The most dangerous game. CommonLit. https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/the-most-dangerous-game
- K20 Center. (n.d.). CUS and discuss. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/162
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Elevator speech. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/57
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Four corners. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/138
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Tea party. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/105
- ThisIsTheSoundOfMyVoice (2016, May 21). The most dangerous game - Richard Connell (Audiobook). YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JaZe97zRcy8