

Exploring Conflict and Theme

Engaging with "The Necklace"

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Grade Level	9th Grade	**Time Frame**	3-5 class period(s)
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	150 minutes
Course	World Literature		

Essential Question

How do types of conflict contribute to theme and author's purpose?

Summary

Students will work with conflict and theme as they engage with Maupassant's "The Necklace." Students will start by charting a video to look at how the different types of conflict are present. They then participate in a debate that encompasses the central theme of the story. After the debate, they will read the story while completing a dialectical journal. By listing the themes as well as the conflicts, students will compare those themes to our current society and complete a one-pager activity to be published for the class.

Snapshot

Engage: Students watch movie trailers/videos and chart different examples of conflict.

Explore: Students engage in a Philosophical Chairs debate centering on a statement related to the text.

Explain: Students read Guy D. Maupassant's "The Necklace" and fill out a conflict dialectical journal.

Extend: Students explore different themes from the story, write basic thematic statements, and use Elbow Partners to share real-life experiences related to those themes.

Evaluate: Students complete a one-pager over their chosen theme using evidence from the text to be published for the class.

Standards

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

IDT402: Identify a clear central idea or theme in somewhat challenging passages or their paragraphs

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 9)

9.3.R.3: Evaluate how literary elements impact theme, mood, and/or tone, using textual evidence:
- setting
- plot structure (e.g., foreshadowing, flashback, *in media res*)
- conflict (i.e., internal, external)
- characters (e.g., protagonist, antagonist)
- characterization (i.e., direct, indirect)
- point of view (e.g., narrator reliability)
- archetypes

9.3.R.7: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics, using textual evidence to support their claims and inferences.

Attachments

- Internal and External Conflict T-Chart—Exploring Conflict and Theme - Spanish.docx
- Internal and External Conflict T-Chart—Exploring Conflict and Theme - Spanish.pdf
- Internal and External Conflict T-Chart—Exploring Conflict and Theme.docx
- Internal and External Conflict T-Chart—Exploring Conflict and Theme.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Exploring Conflict and Theme.pptx
- Philosophical Chairs Directions—Exploring Conflict and Theme - Spanish.docx
- Philosophical Chairs Directions—Exploring Conflict and Theme - Spanish.pdf
- Philosophical Chairs Directions—Exploring Conflict and Theme.docx
- Philosophical Chairs Directions—Exploring Conflict and Theme.pdf
- Philosophical Chairs Written Evaluation Sheet—Evaluating Conflict and Theme.docx
- Philosophical Chairs Written Evaluation Sheet—Evaluating Conflict and Theme.pdf
- The Necklace Dialectical Journal KEY—Exploring Conflict and Theme.docx
- The Necklace Dialectical Journal KEY—Exploring Conflict and Theme.pdf
- The Necklace Dialectical Journal—Exploring Conflict and Theme - Spanish.docx
- The Necklace Dialectical Journal—Exploring Conflict and Theme - Spanish.pdf
- The Necklace Dialectical Journal—Exploring Conflict and Theme.docx
- The Necklace Dialectical Journal—Exploring Conflict and Theme.pdf
- The Necklace Thematic One Pager—Exploring Conflict and Theme - Spanish.docx
- The Necklace Thematic One Pager—Exploring Conflict and Theme - Spanish.pdf
- The Necklace Thematic One Pager—Exploring Conflict and Theme.docx
- The Necklace Thematic One Pager—Exploring Conflict and Theme.pdf

Materials

- White copy paper
- Colored pencils/Crayons/Markers
- "The Necklace" (available on CommonLit)
- Student computers
- Internal and External Conflict T-Chart (attached; one per student)
- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Philosophical Chairs Directions (attached; optional; one per student)
- Philosophical Chairs Written Evaluation Sheet (attached; one per student)
- The Necklace Dialectical Journal (attached; one per student)
- The Necklace Thematic One-Pager (attached; one per student)

Engage

Begin the lesson by displaying the title slide on **slide 2.**

Display **slide 3** and introduce students to the essential question: How do types of conflict contribute to theme and author's purpose?

Display **slide 4** and introduce the students to the lesson objective: Students will be able to analyze how an author uses conflict in a story to develop the theme.

Display **slide 5** and inform students that they will watch a short animated feature called Pip. As they watch the short clip, they should note different examples of conflict.

Embedded video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07d2dXHYb94

Teacher's Note

You may choose to research different trailers that you or the students are interested in. It is imperative that you watch the trailer before showing it to the class to verify the content is age appropriate. Chart the different conflicts you see before you show it to the class so that you have a reference point for discussion.

Once the video clip is over, have the students discuss some of the examples of conflict and problems that they noticed with an Elbow Partner.

Display **slide 6** and inform students that they will be participating in the instructional strategy called T-chart to help them determine if the problems they discussed with their elbow partners are internal or external. Pass out the attached **Internal and External Conflict T-Chart** or have students set up their paper by drawing a vertical line down the center of their paper and labeling the two columns *Internal Conflict* and *External Conflict*.

Once your students have completed their T-charts, have a class discussion on how they charted the problems and conflicts on their papers.

Explore

Transition to **slide 7** and inform students that they will be participating in an activity called Philosophical Chairs. This is a debate-style activity that centers on a statement related to the text.

Inform students that Philosophical Chairs is a conversation that is centered on listening to understand rather than listening to respond.

Display **slide 8** and share the directions for participating in the activity and go over it thoroughly. At this time, you can also choose to disseminate the **Philosophical Chairs Directions** handout so students have a copy of the directions in front of them throughout the activity. Students can use the back of this paper to take notes as they listen to their classmate speak.

Display **slide 9**. The statement that the students discuss is "Money can buy happiness." Reiterate that everyone must fully understand the statement and rules before starting the activity. As the facilitator, you should have a few responses prepared to help guide the conversation along.

Teacher's Note: A Little Help

Students are often timid when first participating in this activity. Giving them a grade for voicing their opinion can alleviate some of the silence that may creep into the conversation. As you move along, encourage students who haven't spoken yet to voice their opinion. Some students may also need help with the summarizing step in the first few rounds. As facilitator, you should help these students summarize.

As the debate begins, instruct the students to move to different sides of the room. One side should be the agree side, and the other the disagree side. Once all students have moved to their chosen sides, you may begin the debate. As facilitator, you should choose the side with the most students to go first.

Possible Student Responses: Agree

Some agreement responses might include the following: "Money can buy happiness because it can buy the things that make us happy," "Everyone is going to be sad in life, but having the items money can buy will make that sadness not feel as bad," or "The statement doesn't say money can always buy happiness or it can buy happiness forever, so in certain situations, yes it can buy happiness." Formulating your own opinions before the debate can help you drive the students to ask questions and explore their own claims.

Possible Student Responses: Disagree

Some disagreement responsed might include the following: "Money can't buy happiness because money is limited. Eventually it will run out and then what?" "Money can't buy love," "Money can't buy true friends, because you would never know if they really cared about you or about the money," and "Money can change people into monsters and therefore take away their happiness."

After the debate, pass out the attached **Philosophical Chairs Written Evaluation Sheet** and instruct your students to reflect on the activity while filling it out.

Explain

Transition to **slide 10** and say, *"Everyone, at one time or another, has felt that the grass is greener on the other side of the fence—in other words, that someone else's life is better than our own. We believe that having what someone else has will make us happy . . . until we experience the negative effects of envy."*

Instruct your students to complete a quick write of just a few lines to jot down their feelings about envy. Ask, *"Have you ever seen or felt its negative effects?"* Time the students for three minutes while encouraging them to keep their pencil/pen to paper that entire time. When the time is up, have them share with a neighbor, and ask for three volunteers to share with the class.

Possible Student Responses

Anticipate some responses like the following: "People are jealous of others' money," or "I've wanted the clothes or material possessions others have." Some students will respond by saying, "I thought I really wanted something until I actually had it, and then it wasn't as cool anymore."

Display **slide 11** and inform the students that they will read a short story written by 19th century French author Guy D. Maupassant called "The Necklace." Pass out copies of the short story or instruct your students to log in to their Common Lit accounts. You can read this as a silent sustained reading or a read aloud depending on what works for your students.

After reading, give a review over the different types of conflict. The types of conflict should be divided into two categories: internal and external.

Display **slide 12** and explain to students that external conflicts are situations outside of their control. These can be classified as:

- Man v. Man
- Man v. Nature
- Man v. Society
- Man v. Fate

Ask students if they can think of an example for each type of external conflict. For example, you might use "The Hunger Games" as a reference point, since many students have read it or seen the film.

Possible Student Responses

Some examples of conflicts students might give are Man vs. Man: Katniss vs. the other tributes; Man vs. Nature: Katniss vs. animals when she is hunting, or Katniss vs. berries; Man vs. Society: Katniss or the districts vs. The Capitol; Man vs. Fate: Katniss vs. her destiny as tribute.

Display **slide 13** and explain that internal conflicts are conflicts inside a character's mind. These can be classified as:

- Emotional Conflict: any conflict that causes an emotional response.
- Insecurity
- Moral Dilemma: when a character must decide from right or wrong

If you're keeping with "The Hunger Games" themes as before, ask students if they can think of examples for

Possible Student Responses

Students may offer the following examples of Emotional Conflict: Prim crying when Katniss volunteers as tribute or the sadness Katniss shows when Rue is killed; Insecurity: Peeta questioning his abilities or Katniss' feelings for him; Moral Dilemma: when Katniss volunteers for tribute to take Prim's place.

Teacher's Note: Reminder/Preparation

The focus here is conflict. You should preview the story before teaching it to the class to pinpoint conflict you want to talk about for the dialectical journal. There is a sample key for the dialectical journal in attachments.

Display **slide 14** and pass out **The Necklace Dialectical Journal** handout. As a class, chart the different types of conflict throughout the story. There is a key in the attachments, but students will point out all types of conflicts. On the back of the paper, students could make a list of other conflicts for extra credit.

Extend

Transition from the dialectical journals by displaying **slide 15** and asking students what the theme of any story is.

Possible Student Responses

Anticipate students offering simple answers like "the moral of the story" or "subjects covered," but some classes may just stare blankly.

Remind the students that theme is not difficult, but that in literature, as in life, we read stories to learn lessons and gain a glimpse from someone else's point of view. Tell the students that every author has a purpose when constructing a story, and that they are meticulous when selecting what message they want to send and how they want to send it. Display **slide 16** and share that the theme, or "lesson learned," in the story makes up the author's purpose, or what they want us, the reader, to understand about life.

Display **slide 17** and ask the class what possible themes they can identify in "The Necklace."

Possible Student Responses

Some student response could be "Vanity," "Greed," "Deception," "Money," "Selfishness," "Importance of telling the truth," "Ungratefulness," etc.

After you have written several themes on the board, ask each student to get out a sheet of paper and choose a theme. Give them 1-2 minutes to jot those themes down on their paper.

Next, instruct students to turn their theme into a basic statement of advice for life. Some examples include:

- "Don't be too consumed with vanity, or it will cause you to be selfish."
- "Be thankful for what you have, or you will lose it all."
- "Beauty is only skin deep."
- "Looks can be deceiving."
- "Sometimes telling the truth in the moment is difficult, but it can be beneficial later on."

After students complete their statements, have them turn to Elbow Partners and share a time when they have seen the results/consequences/experiences involving their statement. Have them write down different real-world scenarios in which people experience the different situations explained in the statements. This provides a great segue into the final activity.

Teacher's Note: AP Extension

For advanced students, these thematic statements could be the basis for a thesis statement of a full essay. Students could write an essay using the text and relate it to the real-world situations.

Evaluate

Transition to **slide 18** and inform students that they will participate in an activity called a one-pager over their chosen theme using evidence from the text to be published for the class. Pass out the attached **The Necklace Thematic One-Pager** rubric and directions, also noted on **slide 19**. Using their thematic statements from the previous activity, they should already have a theme ready to go for this assignment.

Teacher's Note: Preparation

White copy paper and crayons or colored pencils should be available to students before starting this lesson.

Give students one class period to complete the assignment. The main goal of this project is for the students to become more comfortable with using textual evidence. Once they have completed them, have your students post them around the room for their peers to see.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Elbow partners. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/116
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Philosophical chairs. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/71
- K20 Center. (n.d.). One pager. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/72
- Maupassant, G. (1884). The Necklace. CommonLit. https://www.commonlit.org/texts/the-necklace
- Southeastern Guide Dogs. (2018, October 24). Pip [Video]. Youtube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07d2dXHYb94