

Under the Bridge

Identifying an Author's Purpose and Intended Response

Polly Base, Kelsey Willems, Cindy Lewis
Published by *K20 Center*

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	3 hours
		Duration	3 periods

Essential Question

What choices do authors make? Why do they make them?

Summary

This lesson is designed to help students use an excerpt from “In Praise of Bats” to identify the author’s purpose by analyzing word choice and figurative language use. By examining an author’s purpose and the mood of a text, students will be able to better identify with texts on a deeper level.

Snapshot

Engage

Students recognize the impact of words on their lives by engaging with the 5W Cube instructional strategy.

Explore

Students manipulate songs to produce different moods using Suno.

Explain

Studying “In Praise of Bats,” students categorize an author's use of mood and literary devices to discover the intended purpose of a text.

Extend 1

Students write an “In Praise Of” text to convey their own personal connection and a deeper meaning to the subject of their text.

Extend 2 (optional)

Students watch an interview with author Rilla Askew about authorial intent and engage with the I Used to Think… But Now I Know instructional strategy to record their observations.

Evaluate

Students study an excerpt from Heaven and Earth in Jest, applying what they learned from In Praise of Bats. Students then engage in an Elevator Speech activity and film a video to discuss what they think about the author’s purpose.

Attachments

- 5W Cube—Under the Bridge.docx
- 5W Cube—Under the Bridge.pdf
- Heaven and Earth in Jest—Under the Bridge.docx
- Heaven and Earth in Jest—Under the Bridge.pdf
- In Praise of Bats—Under the Bridge.docx
- In Praise of Bats—Under the Bridge.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Under the Bridge .pptx
- Mood Cards—Under the Bridge.docx
- Mood Cards—Under the Bridge.pdf
- Popular Quotes—Under the Bridge.docx
- Popular Quotes—Under the Bridge.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- 5W Cube template (optional, attached; optional, one per group)
- Mood Cards (attached; class set of one card per group, see Teacher's Note below)
- Popular Quotes handout (attached; class set of one per group)
- In Praise of Bats handout (attached; one per student)
- Heaven and Earth in Jest handout (attached; one per student)
- Highlighters or colored pencils (three different colors per student)
- Student laptops or devices

Teacher's Note: Preparing the Mood Cards

Consider laminating the attached **Mood Cards** for durability and longevity. Print as many as needed based on your class size. Before distributing to students, cut the cards out. The blank cards enable you to add your own words.

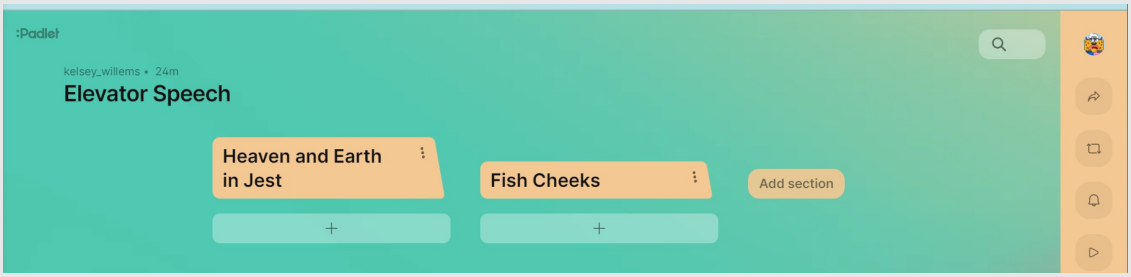
15 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note: Padlet Preparation

During the Evaluate section, students will need to upload their videos to Padlet. Use the following directions for setting up this resource.

1. Go to padlet.com.
2. Log in or create a Padlet account.
3. Create a Padlet using the template below. Consider using the "shelf" format and add the labels as column headings.
4. Once you have made all of your selections and set up your Padlet like the one shown below, click the "Open share panel" arrow (first icon on the right-hand toolbar).
5. Select "Copy link to clipboard" to share the link with your students.
6. Select "Get QR code" and either copy the image of the QR code or select "DOWNLOAD." Add the QR code to slide 26.



Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to facilitate this lesson. Divide students into groups of no more than five. Show **slide 2** and introduce students to the 5W Cube activity.

Teacher's Note: 5W Cube Options

You can use your own cubes or dice for the 5W Cube activity, or you can create a 5W Cube with the attached **5W Cube Template**. Make sure you have one cube per group of students.

Pass out one premade 5W Cube or die and one of the attached **Popular Quotes** handouts to each group. Explain to students that they should take turns rolling the cubes and use the first word to complete a list of questions. Explain that if students are stuck and need help thinking of a quote, they can borrow one from the handout. Once they choose a quote, they should place the handout back in the center of their table and continue with the next person's turn. Move to **slide 3** to reveal the list of questions and start a 10-minute timer.

1. "**WHO** is the author of your favorite quote (or something you will never forget)?"
2. "**WHAT** is a quote that means something to you?"
3. "**WHEN** do you find that quotes have the most power (or are the most memorable)?"
4. "**WHERE** do you often see quotes or words of wisdom?"
5. "**WHY** do you share or remember quotes or memes?"
6. "**HOW** do the words of others impact you?"

After their discussions, ask each group to share one thing about the power of words they found meaningful.

Transition through **slides 4–6** to introduce the lesson title, essential questions, and learning objectives in as much detail as you feel necessary.

20 minutes

Explore

Keep students in the same groups as the 5W activity. Using the prepared **Mood Cards**, pass out one card to each group, face down. Ask students to keep their cards face down as you explain the directions.
Display **slide 7** and invite students to use their electronic devices to navigate to Suno.com. Review the instructions for setting up and using Suno on the slide in as much detail as needed. Have each group work together to create a song using one of the mood words from their list. Allow students time to create their songs with their groups.

Teacher's Note: Suno

Students can use Suno to create songs with lyrics and instrumental songs. You may consider having the students create an instrumental song only, depending on your class.

When all groups are ready, move to **slide 8.** Get ready to play the first group's song and invite the other groups to try to guess what mood word prompted the song as it's being played. After the song is over, have a brief discussion with all groups about how the music creates its mood for the listener. Repeat this process for all songs.

Teacher's Note: Optional Activity Extension

If time permits, have the groups switch mood cards and, using the new list, change the mood of their original song. Then have groups discuss with the class how their songs changed after changing the mood word. Unhide and display **slide 9** to help facilitate this new activity.

35 minutes

Explain

Teacher's Note: Reviewing Figurative Language

This lesson assumes students have background knowledge on certain figurative language key terms. To review, consider scaffolding this lesson's content by using the introductory lesson "Nose Like a Cherry."

Give each student a copy of the attached **In Praise of Bats** handout and transition to **slide 10**. The video on the slide, "Discover Austin: The Bats," and the "In Prase of Bats" reading both allude to the bat phenomenon in Austin, Texas.

Tell students, "The first time we read, we read to get the whole picture of the text." Proceed to read the text aloud to students in its entirety. Use the video and the visuals on slide 10 in whatever way works for your class. You might play the video silently in the background as you read, or you might play it with sound after you read to go into more detail about the bats.

After reading, pass out a set of 3–4 different colored highlighters to each student or pair of students. Display **slide 11** and introduce the Categorical Highlighting instructional strategy to students. Invite them to highlight each of the following elements with a different color or underline:

- Similes and metaphors
- Words or phrases that create imagery
- Personification of the bat
- Alliteration

Display **slide 12**. As a whole class, read through the first paragraph and invite students to annotate by highlighting examples of how the author creates a loving mood. Ask students for examples of what they highlighted. After a few responses, transition to **slide 13** and review the answers. Discuss with students what and why they highlighted, helping them understand how those phrases contribute to the mood. This should help lead them to the main idea that something usually regarded as scary can be seen as a pet (or that bats can be friendly). Have them write the main idea in the right margin of their handout.

Now that students have had a model, have them pair up and repeat these actions for the remaining paragraphs. Display **slide 14** and ask students to read and annotate only the second paragraph. Allow students about five minutes to do so. Afterward, as a class, discuss with students what they highlighted in the second paragraph, noting how the language in this paragraph creates a romantic mood. Display **slide 15** to review their answers. Ask the students to identify and write down the main idea of the paragraph. Guide them to use their highlighted portions and mood to formulate a main idea, such as the emergence of bats during a date. Have them write the main idea in the right margin of their handout.

Afterward, transition to **slide 16** and have students read and annotate the third paragraph. Ask the students to identify the paragraph's main idea, guiding them to use their highlighted portions and mood to formulate a main idea. Allow students five minutes to complete the last paragraph. Afterward, ask students for examples of figurative language, then display **slide 17** to review answers. Have them write the main idea in the right margin of their handout. Once you have all three main ideas, ask the students to contemplate what they reveal about life. Display **slide 18** and use the guiding questions to facilitate a class discussion over the whole text.

Possible Discussion Responses

Take time to break down the simile about life, how it is compared to a “beautiful and winged creature,” how that might relate to the bats. Discussing the word “undulating” and how it mimics the water under the bats is also helpful. Use this to help them discover the main idea of the third paragraph: life can be confusing, unexpected, mysterious, strange, etc. Help students understand that the author’s purpose can be discovered by exploring the relationships between these main ideas.

Explain that the author’s purpose identifies a deeper meaning that connects the audience with the text. For example, students are led to see bats as pets even though they might usually see bats as scary. Then the text describes the emergence of the bats as something romantic. The last paragraph gives readers a comparison of the situation to life itself. Students should eventually decide that the author’s purpose is to reveal that there is beauty in (or something romantic about) the unexpected or strange. This should lead the students to a deeper meaning that they can relate to their own lives: Life can be unexpectedly beautiful, even in times that are ugly or scary.

30 minutes

Extend 1

Display **slide 19** and invite students to write their own “In Praise Of” paragraph. Students should brainstorm something unexpected that they could praise in their lives. Encourage students to praise something that others may not appreciate. Allow students time to choose an object before moving on.

Once everyone has had time to choose their object of praise, transition to **slide 20** and continue to explain the assignment. Tell students that the paragraph should be 5–7 sentences long and capture a sense of love, beauty, or admiration. Remind students that they should describe this object as a beloved companion or a cherished treasure. Ask them to include sensory details (sight, sound, touch, smell, etc.) to bring their admiration to life for their reader. Allow students time to complete their paragraph.

10 minutes

Extend 2 (optional)

Move to **slide 21** and introduce students to the I Used to Think... But Now I Know instructional strategy. Have students divide a piece of paper into two columns with the headings "I Used to Think..." on the left side and "But Now I Know" on the right. Ask students to write about what they think about an author's writing process and purpose.

Transition to **slide 22** and have students watch the ICAP video of author and professor Rilla Askew talk about using her word choices to create a mood and deeper meaning of a text: K20 ICAP - Writing with Purpose

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=ZHwhQJAfWwM

After the video, display **slide 23** and have students complete the I Used to Think... But Now I Know activity by reflecting on the topic again, completing the right side of the column with their thoughts on what they have learned about an author's writing process. These responses can be turned in, shared with a partner, or shared with the whole class.

45 minutes

Evaluate

Move to **slide 24** and introduce students to the Elevator Speech instructional strategy. Tell them they will be expected to give a short description of a particular text and explain how they viewed the author's tone and purpose. Pass out a copy of the attached **Heaven and Earth in Jest** reading to each student. Invite students to highlight and annotate the author's choices that lead the reader to a main idea and ultimate purpose, just as they had before with "In Praise of Bats." Then, explain that they will answer the questions on the slide.

Have students reflect on the questions in the slide:

1. What is the text's deeper meaning?
2. What choices did the author make to create the meaning?
3. How does the text connect with you?

After students finish reading and answering the questions, transition to **slide 25**. Invite students to use the information on the slide to create a script for their Elevator Speech. Each speech should be a maximum of three minutes long, which means students should take time to edit their answers for clarity and conciseness. Remind students to connect their thoughts with transition words as if they were talking to someone and that they should practice before filming themselves.

Once you've given students enough time to prepare, transition to **slide 26** and review how students should access the Padlet you previously set up (see the teacher's note in the Materials section.) Have students create a Video in Padlet to show their understanding of how authors use language and mood to create a deeper meaning of a text to connect the purpose with their audience. Unhide **slide 27** if you'd like to give students more guidance on how to record and upload a video for Padlet.

Allow students time and space for filming and uploading their videos. Afterward, ask for volunteers to share their videos.

Facilitate a class discussion around the authors' purposes for both texts, asking students, "*What choices do authors make? Why do they make them? How do they influence the main idea of a text?*"

Possible Discussion Responses

- Students may note the action words in paragraph 1 and the sudden death words and similes in paragraph 2. Paragraph 3 is mainly about the monstrous bug that caused the death.
- Students may pick up on the idea that the narrator couldn't catch her breath. This could lead students to discuss the suddenness and finality of death. Alternatively, they may notice that she stood and brushed her pants off, connecting the movement with the idea that life goes on after experiencing a trauma or death.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). 5w cube. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/81
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Categorical highlighting. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/192
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Elevator speech. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/57
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I used to think . . . but now I know. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/137
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Padlet. Tech tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/1077
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Suno. Tech tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/3870
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Video in padlet. Tech tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/4077
- K20 Center. (2024, October 23). K20 ICAP - Writing with Purpose (with Prof. Rilla Askew) [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHwhQJAfWwM