

The Sound of Solitude

Argumentative Writing

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	210 Minutes
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	4-5 Class Periods

Essential Question

How does media and literature influence our opinions on meaningful life issues?

Summary

Is it really worth it? In this lesson, students will read “The Bet” by Anton Chekhov and view “The Silence,” an episode from the Twilight Zone, analyzing the motives and outcomes of the characters. Students begin by participating in a word cloud listing things they’d be willing to give up. Next, they generate a double bubble map and discuss their thoughts with a partner. Students culminate the lesson by writing an argumentative essay based on the topics discussed in the stories.

Snapshot

Engage

Students consider things in their own lives that they would be willing to sacrifice to prove a point using a Collaborative Word Cloud.

Explore

Students use a Double Bubble Map to generate thoughts and ideas comparing and contrasting the death penalty versus life in prison and material wealth versus freedom.

Explain

Students read the short story “The Bet” and view The Twilight Zone episode, “The Silence,” while considering character's perspectives using Step In, Step Out, Step Back.

Extend

Students write an argumentative essay based on the topics discussed in the stories.

Evaluate

Students reflect on their learning through Walking Vote and class discussions.

Standards

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

ORG 401: Determine the need for transition words or phrases to establish straightforward logical relationships (e.g., first, afterward, in response)

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 12)

12.3.R.7: Evaluate how two or more texts address similar themes or topics, using textual evidence to support their claims and inferences.
12.3.W.3: Compose argumentative essays, reviews, or op-eds that:

- introduce precise, informed claims
- include a defensible thesis
- acknowledge counterclaims or alternate perspectives
- organize claims, counterclaims, and evidence in a logical sequence
- provide the most relevant evidence to develop balanced arguments, using credible sources
- use sentence variety and word choice to create clarity and concision
- use style and tone that suits the audience and purpose

Attachments

- Argument Outline—The Sound of Solitude - Spanish.docx
- Argument Outline—The Sound of Solitude - Spanish.pdf
- Argument Outline—The Sound of Solitude.docx
- Argument Outline—The Sound of Solitude.pdf
- Argumentative Essay Evaluation Rubric—The Sound of Solitude - Spanish.docx
- Argumentative Essay Evaluation Rubric—The Sound of Solitude - Spanish.pdf
- Argumentative Essay Evaluation Rubric—The Sound of Solitude.docx
- Argumentative Essay Evaluation Rubric—The Sound of Solitude.pdf
- Double Bubble Maps—The Sound of Solitude - Spanish.docx
- Double Bubble Maps—The Sound of Solitude - Spanish.pdf
- Double Bubble Maps—The Sound of Solitude.docx
- Double Bubble Maps—The Sound of Solitude.pdf
- Lesson Slides—The Sound of Solitude.pptx
- Step In, Step Out, Step Back—The Sound of Solitude - Spanish.docx
- Step In, Step Out, Step Back—The Sound of Solitude - Spanish.pdf
- Step In, Step Out, Step Back—The Sound of Solitude.docx
- Step In, Step Out, Step Back—The Sound of Solitude.pdf
- The Bet by Anton Chekhov—The Sound of Solitude - Spanish.docx
- The Bet by Anton Chekhov—The Sound of Solitude - Spanish.pdf
- The Bet by Anton Chekhov—The Sound of Solitude.docx
- The Bet by Anton Chekhov—The Sound of Solitude.pdf
- The Silence Script—The Sound of Solitude - Spanish.docx
- The Silence Script—The Sound of Solitude - Spanish.pdf
- The Silence Script—The Sound of Solitude.docx
- The Silence Script—The Sound of Solitude.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Double Bubble Map (attached; one per student)
- The Bet by Anton Chekhov (attached; one per student)
- Step In, Step Out, Step Back (attached; one per student)
- The Silence Script (attached; one per student)

- Argument Outline (attached; one per student)
- Argumentative Essay Evaluation Rubric (attached; one per student)
- Student devices with Internet access
- Highlighters

Teacher's Note: Preparing Materials for the Lesson

To cut down on the number of copies printed, consider printing the two pages of the **Double Bubble Maps** handout (attached) and the **Step In, Step Out, Step Back** handout (attached) double-sided on one page for each student prior to the lesson. When teaching, instruct students which side of the handout they should be working on.

15 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note: Preparing for the Lesson

Using Mentimeter or a similar tool, create a class code for students to join before teaching the lesson using the following prompt: *What is something you would be willing to sacrifice to prove a point?* Add the code to slide 5 for students to access quickly. If you are using a word cloud tool different from Mentimeter, edit the information on slide 5 to align with the directions for students to access the tool.

Use the **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Introduce the lesson by asking the essential question and explaining the objectives on **slides 2-4**.

Display **slide 5** to share the link to the Collaborative Word Cloud generator that you set up earlier with the class. As students type in their examples, present the changing word cloud to the class. As their ideas are generated, guide them to make the observation that the larger the word in the cloud, the more consensus the class has on what the main symbols of power are.

Lead a conversation with the class, asking the following questions:

- *Are there any words that surprise you?*
- *Are there any words that stick out to you?*
- *Are there any words that make you wonder?*

30 minutes

Explore

Display **slide 6**. Explain to students that they will complete two Double Bubble maps using the Double Bubble Map strategy. Distribute the **Double Bubble Maps** handout (attached). Direct students to the first map on "Death Penalty versus Life in Prison." Let the students know they will fill out the map with as many ideas, examples, points of view, and feelings as correspond to this topic. Give the students 4 minutes to complete this map.

Display **slide 7** and direct students to the second map on "Material Wealth versus Freedom." Let students know they will fill out the map with as many ideas, examples, points of view, and feelings as correspond to this topic. Give the students 4 minutes to complete this map.

Once students have completed both maps, display **slide 8**. Partner students and ask them to share their thoughts from both maps. Instruct students to add any information from their partner's maps that resonates with them.

After students are done discussing as partners, invite students to share a few responses with the class.

90 minutes

Explain

Teacher's Note: Accessing the Text

It is recommended to print **The Bet by Anton Chekhov** handout (attached) for students as they will be highlighting the text in the following activity. However, the text is also available on CommonLit with an account.

Distribute a copy of **The Bet by Anton Chekhov** handout (attached) to each student. Instruct students that they will be using the Categorical Highlighting strategy. Display **slide 9**. Explain to students that they will use two different colored highlighters; one color for each of the two main characters, the banker and the young lawyer, highlighting details and information about each that show us what their opinion is on the topic.

Distribute the **Step In, Step Out, Step Back** handout (attached) to each student. Ask students to write in the banker and the young lawyer on the front side of their handout in the character boxes.

Display **slide 10**. Prompt students to review the details and information they highlighted from the text to respond to the prompts on the handout for each character.

Teacher's Note: Accessing the Episode

At the time that this lesson is published, The Twilight Zone episode "The Silence" (season 2, episode 25) is available for free through Pluto TV's streaming service.

Prior to the lesson, print copies of **The Silence Script** handout (attached) for each student.

As needed, before watching the episode, preview the synopsis on Wikipedia.

Display **slide 11**. Explain to students that now they will watch an episode from The Twilight Zone. Distribute **The Silence Script** handout (attached) and explain to students that they will use two different colored highlighters; one color for each of the two main characters, Colonel Archie Taylor and Jim Tennyson, highlighting details and information about each as they watch.

Display **slide 12** and prompt students to flip over the Step In, Step Out, Step Back handout and write in Colonel Archie Taylor and Jim Tennyson from "The Silence" in the next two character boxes. Ask students to review the details and information they highlighted on the script to respond to the prompts on the handout for each of these characters.

As students respond to the Step In, Step Out, and Step Back prompts, ask prompting questions to make sure students are picking nuances and finding the details that give insights into each of the character's motives, ideas, and actions. Ask students to think about why the characters do what they do.

60 minutes

Extend

Explain to students that they will be composing an argumentative essay in which they take on the perspective of one of the main characters they've explored earlier in the lesson. Students should think about decisions of that character to argue a claim for or against a decision their character made.

Distribute the **Argument Outline** handout (attached) for brainstorming. Display **slide 13** and read through potential thesis sentences with the class. Explain that students can use these starters to generate ideas for their thesis or they can come up with one on their own.

Once students have had enough time to brainstorm claims, evidence, and reasonings for their essay, prompt students to begin writing their argumentative essay. Display **slide 14** or provide a copy of the **Argumentative Essay Evaluation Rubric** handout (attached) to each student and review the rubric grading criteria with the class so they know what their essays should include.

15 minutes

Evaluate

Explain to students that they will be participating in a Walking Vote to decide between two options. Display **slide 15** with the first two choices: "*What is more humane—the death penalty or life in prison?*" Instruct students to move to the side that aligns with their choice. Once students have moved to the side they most agree with, have them discuss in the group the questions on the slide.

Display **slide 16** with the next prompt: "*What is more meaningful—material wealth or personal freedom?*" Instruct students to move to the side that aligns with their choice. Again, have students discuss in their group the questions on the slide.

Resources

Chekhov, Anton. (1889). The bet. CommonLit. https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/the-bet

K20 Center. (n.d.). Collaborative word cloud. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/103

K20 Center. (n.d.). Double bubble map. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/3035

K20 Center. (2021, September 21). K20 Center 4 minute timer [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpCsfuvzQeY&list=PL-aUhEQeaZXLMF3fltNDxiuSkEr0pq0c2&index=6

K20 Center. (n.d.). Mentimeter. Tech tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/645

K20 Center. (n.d.). Step in, step out, step back. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/1585

K20 Center. (n.d.). Walking vote. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/4126

Serling, R. (Writer) & Sagal, B. (Director). (1961, April 28). The silence (Season 2, Episode 25) [TV series episode]. In Serling, R. (Executive Producer), *The twilight zone*. CBS.