

ELA: Grade 8, Lesson 17, The Gift of the Magi

Lesson Focus: The focus of today's lesson will be on the fictional short story text, "The Gift of the Magi."

Practice Focus: Students will analyze a literary text to determine the main ideas and study author's craft.

Objective: Students will use "The Gift of the Magi" to determine the main ideas with a focus on author's craft.

Academic Vocabulary: pier glass, agile, longitudinal, depreciate, cascade, falter, ransack

TN Standards: 8.RL.KID.1, 8.RL.KID.2, 8.RL.KID.3, 8.RL.CS.4, 8.W.TTP.2

Teacher Materials:

- The Teacher Packet for ELA, Grade 8, Lesson 17

Student Materials:

- Paper, a pencil, and a surface to write on
- The Student Packet for ELA, Grade 8, Lesson 17 which can be found on www.tn.gov/education

Teacher Do	Students Do
<p>Opening (1 min)</p> <p>Hello! Welcome to Tennessee's lesson At Home Learning Series for literacy! Today's lesson is for all our 8th graders out there, though everyone is welcome to tune in. This is the second in this week's series.</p> <p>My name is ____ and I'm a ____ grade teacher in Tennessee schools. I'm so excited to be your teacher for this lesson! Welcome to my virtual classroom!</p> <p>If you didn't see our previous lesson, you can find it at www.tn.gov/education. You can still tune in to today's lesson if you haven't seen any of our others. But it might be more fun if you first go back and watch our other lessons, since today we'll be talking about things we learned previously.</p> <p>[Show Slide 1.] Today we will continue reading a short story called "The Gift of the Magi"!</p> <p>[Show Slide 2.] Yesterday we were introduced to two main characters, Jim and Della. We read that Della has been trying to save up to buy Jim a Christmas gift, but she doesn't have enough money.</p> <p>Today, we will read what Della decides to do about this predicament or problem. What would you do in this situation?</p> <p>Before we get started, to participate fully in our lesson today, you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paper, a pencil, and a surface to write on	<p>Students gather materials for the lesson and prepare to engage with the lesson's content.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Student Packet for ELA, Grade 8, Lesson 17 which can be found on www.tn.gov/education <p>Ok, let's begin!</p>	
<p>Intro (1 min) [Show Slide 3.] Today our goal is to continue reading "The Gift of the Magi" by O. Henry so we can analyze the text to determine its meaning. We will be reading through this text all week long. This is a longer text so I had to cut out a few portions of it so we can be sure to finish it. But don't worry, you'll still have everything you need to understand the text.</p> <p>We will begin today with me reading portions of the text and then we will reread it and pause along the way to take notes and discuss the text for deeper understanding. At the end of the lesson, I will assign you independent work you can complete after the video ends.</p>	<p>Students listen to the teacher and learn an overview of the lesson.</p>
<p>Teacher Model/Read-Aloud (20 min) Let's briefly revisit the independent work you completed yesterday. You wrote a description of the characters of Della and Jim that included specific details from the text. You also used important vocabulary words you learned yesterday, such as imputation and parsimony.</p> <p>[Show Slide 4.] Let's review a few of the key details I included in my description. See if you included these details in yours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Della is dedicated to saving money, a tough negotiator, and is frustrated with her current situation. She is happily married to James (Jim). Della has been trying for months to save enough money for a gift for Jim but doesn't have enough. She really loves and admires Jim. • Jim is happily married to Della and they have a home together. He once lived in prosperity, or had a lot of money. He now makes a lot less money than he once did and he is somewhat ashamed by it. • Jim and Della rent an apartment with furniture already in it called a furnished flat. • They rent it at a really cheap price, and it is not a very nice apartment. <p>Did you have these details in your description? [Pause.]</p> <p>I also included a couple of sentences with vocabulary words. I wrote, "Despite Della's perceived parsimony and predominating attempts, she did not have enough money to</p>	<p>Students will review their notes from yesterday.</p> <p>Students will read about the characters of Della and Jim Young and discover the beginning details of the plot that underlies the story, namely, that Della has been saving money for months to buy Jim a Christmas present but she has not succeeded in saving enough so far.</p> <p>Students use a graphic organizer to record their notes on each of the elements listed above. This graphic organizer will assist them in tracking the meaning of the story and with completing the independent assignments.</p>

buy her Jim a Christmas present.” Were you able to include a couple of sentences in your description using vocabulary words from yesterday? [Pause.] We will be encountering more new words today. Be sure to take notes on them as we go, so you can use them in your independent practice.

Ok, let’s continue the short story we have been studying. As a reminder, although the events of the story—its plot—are fairly easy to understand, the author tells this simple story in a complex way. Sometimes telling things in a more complex way gives those things layers of meaning, which is important because the more layers of meaning there are to dig into, the more we learn about ourselves and the world around us! And that’s the challenge for us as readers! Are you up for the challenge of learning more about yourself and the world around you? [Pause.]

Great! Well, here’s how we’re going to do it. We’ll only read a couple of sentences at a time and then we’ll dig into the puzzle of seeing what the words mean and what the author is talking about. To help us with this, we will use the graphic organizer we used yesterday to track our notes. It looks like this:

[Show Slide 5.] You can see we have certain sections on the organizer that are labeled various people or things: characters, key details, plot, vocabulary, and literary devices - which are tools like metaphors and images that the author uses to convey meaning, and themes, or important messages. This will be an important tool for us as we work through the text and we will continue to add to it.

As we read and discuss each of these elements of the text, we will pause and give you time to write your notes onto your graphic organizer. We will actually be using this organizer all week so please keep it handy throughout the lesson and in upcoming lessons.

[Show Slide 6.] Ok, now remember yesterday we learned that Della and Jim live in a furnished flat; that is, they rent an apartment with furniture supplied in it. It is not a very nice apartment though, and they rent it for cheap. Della has been working for months to save money and all she has to show for it is one dollar and eighty-seven cents. It’s Christmas Eve and she does not have enough money to buy the gift for Jim she wants to buy for him.

Ok, let's jump back into the text! I can't wait to see how this works out for Della and Jim.

[Show Slide 7.] "There was a pier glass between the windows of the room. Perhaps you have seen a pier glass in an \$8 flat."

A pier glass is long, thin mirror.

[Show Slide 8.] "A very thin and very agile person may, by observing his reflection in a rapid sequence of longitudinal strips, obtain a fairly accurate conception of his looks. Della, being slender, had mastered the art."

There are a few descriptive and potentially new vocabulary words in this part, so let's take a moment to add them to our graphic organizer in the vocabulary section.

[Show Slide 9.] The first is agile. Agile means to be able to move quickly and easily. So, Della was thin and could move quickly and easily. [Pause.] It may be helpful to break down the next part too. "By observing his reflection in a rapid sequence of longitudinal strips."

Remember latitude and longitude from social studies? [Pause.] [Show Slide 10.] Longitude runs length wise from top to bottom. Let's jot this down in our notes, too. [Pause.]

[Show Slide 11.] So, because the mirror, or pier glass is long and thin, someone that is agile and thin, could tell what they looked like in the long mirror. And, according to the text, Della can do just. Let's read it again.

"There was a pier glass between the windows of the room. Perhaps you have seen a pier glass in an \$8 flat." A very thin and very agile person may, by observing his reflection in a rapid sequence of longitudinal strips, obtain a fairly accurate conception of his looks. Della, being slender, had mastered the art."

So, it seems as if Della catches a glimpse of herself in the mirror. The author sure has a way with words!

This is an important moment in the story because of what she does next. Let's keep reading.

[Show Slide 12.] "Suddenly she whirled from the window and stood before the glass. Her eyes were shining brilliantly, but

her face had lost its color within twenty seconds. Rapidly she pulled down her hair and let it fall to its full length.”

In other words, all of a sudden, Della’s whole mood seems to change from being sad.

[Show Slide 13.] She whirls around to look in the mirror, her eyes are “shining brightly,” she lets her hair down, and her faces loses its color.

What to do you think this could mean? Is she still crying? Why not? [Pause.] It could mean that she has had an idea, has made a decision, and now has a plan. Let’s keep reading to see if that’s the case.

[Show Slide 14.] “Now, there were two possessions of the James Dillingham Young’s in which they both took a mighty pride.”

This just means there were two things Jim and Della were proud of owning. Let’s see what they are.

[Show Slide 15.] “One was Jim’s gold watch that had been his father’s and his grandfather’s. The other was Della’s hair. Had the queen of Sheba lived in the flat across the airshaft, Della would have let her hair hang out the window someday to dry just to depreciate Her Majesty’s jewels and gifts.”

So, Jim and Della are proud of Jim’s gold watch and Della’s hair. Let’s talk about the next part the author alludes to, the queen of Sheba.

[Show Slide 16.] The queen of Sheba is an ancient, historical figure. She was famous for her wealth and knowledge.

[Show Slide 17.] The text also uses the term “depreciate”. Let’s be sure to write that word down on our vocabulary list.

[Show Slide 18.] Depreciate means to belittle or make something not look as important or valuable. Let’s read the text again to make sure we appreciate the author’s description of Della’s hair.

[Show Slide 19.] “Had the queen of Sheba lived in the flat across the airshaft, Della would have let her hair hang out the window someday to dry just to depreciate Her Majesty’s jewels and gifts.”

So, the author is saying, if the queen of Sheba lived close, Della could let her hair dry out of the window to make the queen's treasures look like nothing in comparison. It is easy to infer that the author is implying Della's hair is more impressive and valuable than a queen's riches. That is some hair! Let's take a look at the next part.

[Show Slide 20.] "Had King Solomon been the janitor, with all his treasures piled up in the basement, Jim would have pulled out his watch every time he passed, just to see him pluck at his beard from envy."

[Show Slide 21.] Like Queen Sheba, King Solomon is also royalty from history. He is legendary for his vast wealth as well. The author seems to claim that Jim's watch would have made even King Solomon jealous. Can you picture a rich, famous king, stroking his beard and feeling jealous of a stop watch?

Comparing Della's hair and Jim's watch to the treasures of royalty really illustrates just how proud the couple were of these two possessions. Della and Jim must have really loved her hair and his watch. Let's read this entire paragraph one more time and then jot down a few notes.

[Show Slide 22.] "Now, there were two possessions of the James Dillingham Young's in which they both took a mighty pride. One was Jim's gold watch that had been his father's and his grandfather's. The other was Della's hair. Had the queen of Sheba lived in the flat across the airshaft, Della would have let her hair hang out the window someday to dry just to depreciate Her Majesty's jewels and gifts. Had King Solomon been the janitor, with all his treasures piled up in the basement, Jim would have pulled out his watch every time he passed, just to see him pluck at his beard from envy."

By the way, the Magi, like in the title of this story, King Solomon, and the queen of Sheba are from almost the same time period of history. Including these references is called an allusion and it is a tool that authors often use.

[Show Slide 23.] Let's make a note of this on the graphic organizer in the literary devices section. [Pause.]

Okay. Let's pause our reading to review. Jot down a few notes in the Key Details section of the graphic organizer that summarize this paragraph. [Pause.] [Show Slide 24.] I wrote:

Jim and Della are very proud of Della's hair and Jim's gold watch. [Pause.] Ok, let's keep reading.

[Show Slide 25.] "So now Della's beautiful hair fell about her rippling and shining like a cascade of brown waters. It reached below her knee and made itself almost a garment for her."

This section is packed full with imagery.

[Show Slide 26.] I can picture Della's beautiful, flowing, long hair as the author compares it to a waterfall by saying "rippling and shining like a cascade of brown waters."

Cascade is another word for a waterfall. Let's add that to our vocabulary as well. [Show Slide 27.]

This line is also a simile. Remember a simile is a metaphor or comparison that uses like or as. "Rippling and shining like a cascade of brown waters." Let's add this to the section of the graphic organizer about literary devices.

[Show Slide 28.] [Pause.]

[Show Slide 29.] The author also says her hair reaches below her knees and is "almost a garment for her." A garment is an article clothing, so Della's hair must be very full! Continuing,

[Show Slide 30.] "And then she did it up again nervously and quickly. Once she faltered for a minute and stood still while a tear or two splashed on the worn red carpet."

To summarize, Della takes her hair down, looks at it in the mirror, and puts it back up again.

[Show Slide 31.] The text then says "she faltered for a minute and stood still while a tear or two splashed on the worn red carpet."

I wonder why she crying again? By the way, faltered means to hesitate or lose momentum. Be sure to add this to your notes in the vocabulary section.

Remember Della seemed as if she had an idea. The text says she falters once for a minute, so it may be she isn't 100% certain that her idea is a good one. What do you think she is going to do? [Pause.]

[Show Slide 32.] **Let's keep reading.**

"On went her old brown jacket; on went her old brown hat. With a whirl of skirts and with the brilliant sparkle still in her eyes, she fluttered out the door and down the stairs to the street. "

Ok, so no faltering now. Her sparkle returned to her eyes and she's left the apartment. The story continues,

[Show Slide 33.] **"Where she stopped the sign read: "Mme. Sofronie. Hair Goods of All Kinds." One flight up Della ran, and collected herself, panting. Madame, large, too white, chilly, hardly looked the Sofronie.**

Madame Sofronie, the owner of the hair shop, doesn't sound like a very warm character! She doesn't even greet Della. Let's see what happens next.

[Show Slide 34.] **"Will you buy my hair?" asked Della. "I buy hair," said Madame. "Take year hat off and let's have a sight at the looks of it."**

Down rippled the brown cascade.

"Twenty dollars," said Madame, lifting the mass with a practiced hand.

"Give it to me quick," said Della."

Whoa! What just happened!? [Pause.] Della sold one of her most prized possessions for \$20! Don't you think she did that so she could buy Jim a Christmas gift? [Pause.] This is a big moment in the story. We should definitely add it to our graphic organizer under plot.

[Show Slide 35.] [Pause.] **What does all of this say about Della's character? [Pause.] What does it say about her relationship with Jim? [Pause.] We can infer about Della's character from her actions. What does it mean about her as a person that she would sell her hair, one of her most prized possessions, for money? Include your answer in her character description on the graphic organizer. [Pause.]**

[Show Slide 36.]

I wrote Della has long beautiful hair and she is willing to sacrifice for Jim, or do something hard in order to do something nice for him. We could see it was a little difficult

for her when she shed a few tears in the mirror, but in the end she sold her hair with only a little hesitation. You may have written other characteristics as well, and that's okay, just be able to support your notes with evidence from the text. [Pause.]

[Show Slide 37.] Let's think about theme for a moment too. What are a few themes you can identify so far? [Pause.]

[Show Slide 38.] Della's actions seem selfless. So let's list selflessness as a theme on the graphic organizer.

[Show Slide 39.] What about devotion? I think Della's actions demonstrate devotion to Jim. I'm going to add that to our list of themes as well.

[Show Slide 40.] Della was also persistent. Persistence is when you aren't willing to give up. After feeling sad for a bit, Della decided on a plan to solve her problem, and carried through. This is persistence and I think we can add it to our graphic organizer under theme as well.

Feel free to add others, but be able to support your answers with evidence from the text by saying, I put this because...

Let's finish the reading for the day. I wonder what happened after she sold her hair.

[Show Slide 41.] "Oh, and the next two hours tripped by on rosy wings. Forget the hashed metaphor. She was ransacking the stores for Jim's present."

The metaphor the author tells us to forget, "the next two hours tripped by on rosy wings" paints a picture of two hours that go by swiftly, but merrily. The imagery conjured by rosy wings suggests Della is quick and happy.

Let's add the word imagery to our graphic organizer under literary device.

[Show Slide 42.] Imagery is visual symbolism. Imagery is descriptions that help us imagine.

[Show Slide 43.] In this case the author uses "tripped by on rosy wings" to help the reader picture a joyful flurry of activity.

<p>[Show Slide 44.] During the two hours, Della is “ransacking the stores for Jim’s present.”</p> <p>[Show Slide 45.] Based on the context, what do you think ransacked probably means? [Pause.] Let’s include that word in our vocabulary section of the graphic organizer.</p> <p>[Show Slide 46.] To ransack means to go hurriedly through a place, chaotically. To ransack can also mean to steal or rob. Based on Della’s character, I would guess the word ransack is used here as a metaphor rather than something she literally did. After all, if she was the kind of person to steal, she wouldn’t have sold her own hair!</p> <p>[Show Slide 47.] By the way, remember a metaphor is the opposite of literal and is symbolic. Let’s add this to the graphic organizer under literary devices.</p> <p>Let’s pause in our reading for today. We’ll find out tomorrow what Della buys with her \$20. Any ideas? We’ll also see what Jim does. What do you think he has been up to? I look forward to seeing what happens next!</p>	
<p><u>Guided Practice</u> (10 min)</p> <p>Ok, before we close for today, let’s review our notes for our graphic organizer. As I read what I have in my notes, please add anything that you don’t already have to your notes.</p> <p>[Show Slide 48.] For Della, I have the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She has long beautiful hair • She is willing to sacrifice for Jim • She is persistent. [Pause.] <p>[Show Slide 49.] For Jim, I only added he has a prized gold watch. I’ll bet we learn more about him tomorrow. [Pause.]</p> <p>[Show Slide 50.] For key details, I added Jim and Della are very proud of Della’s hair and Jim’s gold watch.</p> <p>[Show Slide 51.] In the plot section, here’s what I have written. Della sells her hair for \$20 so she can buy Jim a nice Christmas gift.</p> <p>[Show Slide 52.] In the vocabulary section, here’s what I have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agile means to be able to move quickly and easily. • Longitude runs lengthwise from top to bottom. 	<p>Students review their notes and consolidate their understanding of the text in preparation for writing about the two characters, Della and Jim, for independent practice.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depreciate means to belittle or make something not look as important or valuable. • Cascade is another word for a waterfall. • Faltered means to hesitate or lose momentum. • To ransack means to go hurriedly through a place, chaotically. To ransack can also mean to steal or rob. <p>[Show Slide 53.] And finally, In the literary devices section, I have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allusion: a reference or an expression designed to call something to mind • Simile: a comparison or metaphor that uses like or as • Imagery: visual symbolism • Metaphor is the opposite of literal and is symbolic. <p>Great. These notes will help you to complete the independent assignment.</p>	
<p>Independent Work (1 min)</p> <p>Let's reflect on today's lesson. Today we explored O. Henry's use of several literary devices including imagery, allusion, and metaphor. We learned new vocabulary words, and we read about Della's sacrifice of selling her hair, one of her most prized possessions. For your independent work today, please respond in writing to the following prompt:</p> <p>[Show Slide 54.] Students, please write the prompt down on your notebook paper so you will have it handy for when you are responding in writing.</p> <p>How does the author's craft, use of literary devices, character development, setting, and vocabulary develop the story, "The Gift of the Magi"? In a brief essay, using your graphic organizer and your notes from today and yesterday, explain how the author writes. Be sure to include new vocabulary and specific examples from the text.</p>	<p>Students will respond to a writing prompt that synthesizes their knowledge from today's lesson.</p>
<p>Closing (1 min)</p> <p>Thank you. I enjoyed reading the short story, "The Gift of the Magi," with you today! Thank you for inviting me into your home. I look forward to seeing you in our next lesson in Tennessee's At Home Learning Series! Bye!</p>	