

12.1.2

Lesson 1

Introduction

In this first lesson of the unit, students begin analysis of Leslie Marmon Silko’s personal narrative essay, “Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit.” Students listen to a masterful reading of the full text before analyzing the first three paragraphs of the essay (from “From the time I was a small child” through “Many worlds may coexist here”), in which Silko introduces the reader to her family history and Laguna Pueblo heritage. Students explore how Silko structures the beginning of her text, analyzing how she engages and orients the reader. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: Analyze the effectiveness of the way Silko begins the text.

For homework, students continue to practice for the Performance Assessment task, a practice college interview at the end of the module. Students write a list of ideas about how they would respond to the following college interview question: What do you want to do after graduating from college? Also for homework, students respond briefly in writing to the following prompt: Analyze how Silko creates a smooth progression of events at the beginning of her text. Additionally, students continue searching for an appropriate Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) text.

- ① This unit focuses on the text of “Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit,” not the other essays in Silko’s collection by the same name, nor the notes that follow this essay. Students may read the other essays or notes as part of their AIR.

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RI.11-12.5	Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
Addressed Standard(s)	
W.11-12.3.a	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a

	narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
L.11-12.4.a, b	<p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grades 11–12 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <p>a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., <i>conceive, conception, conceivable</i>).</p>

Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the effectiveness of the way Silko begins the text. <p> Throughout this unit, Quick Writes will be assessed using the Short Response Rubric.</p>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe an aspect of the way Silko begins the text (e.g., In her first sentence, Silko observes that “[f]rom the time [she] was a small child, [she] was aware that [she] was different” (par. 1).). Explain whether or not and why the way Silko begins the text is effective (e.g., Because this observation indicates that Silko has struggled with this awareness of difference “[f]rom the time [she] was a small child” (par. 1), the reader instantly understands its importance to Silko. By setting out such a personal and significant observation in the very first sentence, Silko immediately engages the reader by making him or her curious about why Silko “was different” (par. 1) and how she has experienced it over the course of her life. Directly following the observation of her difference, Silko reaches further back in time before her childhood and explains that her great-grandfather was white and “married [a] full-blood Laguna Pueblo wom[a]n” (par. 1). Through sharing her family history, Silko clarifies why she and her sisters “didn’t look quite like the other Laguna Pueblo children, but [they] didn’t look quite white either” (par. 1). Including this information helps clarify why Silko’s appearance as both white and Indian is a significant issue for Silko to discuss. Though the reader understands by the end of the first paragraph why Silko “was different” (par. 1), the reader remains curious about why this difference is significant to Silko.).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> survey (v.) – to look at and examine all parts of something reservation (n.) – an area of public land set apart for a special purpose, as for the use of an Indian tribe
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> coexist (v.) – to be or live together at the same time
Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> full-blood (adj.) – having parents who are of the same race or origin strain (n.) – something that is very difficult to deal with and that causes harm or trouble anxiety (n.) – fear or nervousness about what might happen damnation (n.) – the state of being in hell as punishment after death

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<p>Standards & Text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: RI.11-12.5, W.11-12.3.a, L.11-12.4.a, b Text: “Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit” by Leslie Marmon Silko, paragraphs 1–3 (http://www.uidaho.edu/; for search terms, use the title) <p>Learning Sequence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Lesson Agenda Homework Accountability Masterful Reading Reading and Discussion Quick Write Closing 	<p>1. 5%</p> <p>2. 5%</p> <p>3. 45%</p> <p>4. 25%</p> <p>5. 15%</p> <p>6. 5%</p>

Materials

- Copies of “Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit” by Leslie Marmon Silko for each student

- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 12.1.1 Lesson 1)
- ① Consider numbering the paragraphs of “Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit” before the lesson.

Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
no symbol	Plain text indicates teacher action.
	Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.
	<i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
▶	Indicates student action(s).
☞	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
①	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standard for this lesson: RI.11-12.5. In this lesson, students read and discuss paragraphs 1–3 of “Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit.” Students explore how Silko structures the beginning of her text, analyzing how she engages and orients the reader.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

5%

Instruct students to form pairs to discuss their homework from the previous lesson. (Look for an appropriate text for your Accountable Independent Reading.)

- ▶ Students discuss the progress they have made in searching for an appropriate AIR text.

Activity 3: Masterful Reading

45%

Have students listen to a masterful reading of “Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit” in its entirety. Explain that students will follow along and pause twice during the essay (after paragraph 10 and paragraph 24) to write down their initial questions and reactions.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently, then write initial reactions and questions.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider pausing more frequently during the masterful reading to support students' comprehension and understanding.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students throughout this lesson:

How does Silko begin her essay? What information does she give the reader?

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of students' initial reactions and questions. Remind students that as they analyze the text throughout the unit, they will answer many of these initial questions.

- ① Throughout the text, Silko uses the words “Laguna” and “Laguna Pueblo” to describe her family’s cultural background. Students should use Silko’s language when reading or citing textual evidence and when discussing the text.

Activity 4: Reading and Discussion

25%

Instruct students to form small groups. Post or project the following questions for students to discuss. Instruct students to continue to annotate the text as they read and discuss.

Instruct student groups to reread paragraphs 1–3 (from “From the time I was a small child” to “Many worlds may coexist here”), and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students with the following definitions: *survey* means “to look at and examine all parts of something” and *reservation* means “an area of public land set apart for a special purpose, as for the use of an Indian tribe.”

- ① Students may be familiar with some of these words. Consider asking students to volunteer definitions before providing them to the group.
 - ▶ Students write the definitions of *survey* and *reservation* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definitions: *full-blood* means “having parents who are of the same race or origin,” *strain* means “something that is very difficult to deal with and that causes harm or trouble,” *anxiety* means “fear or nervousness about what might happen,” and *damnation* means “the state of being in hell as punishment after death.”
 - ▶ Students write the definitions of *full-blood*, *strain*, *anxiety*, and *damnation* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

What observation does Silko make in the first sentence? What does the reader learn about Silko from this observation?

- Silko makes the observation that since she was very young she “was aware that [she] was different” (par. 1), which suggests that this awareness of difference has been present throughout her life and has had a powerful effect on her.

How does the observation in the first sentence engage the reader?

- By sharing a personally significant observation at the very beginning of her essay, Silko makes the reader immediately curious about why she felt “different” (par. 1) and how she experienced this difference “[f]rom the time [she] was a small child” (par. 1).

How does Silko’s explanation of what happened “[i]n the 1880s” (par. 1) orient the reader?

- Student responses may include:
 - Silko orients the reader by going back to a time before she was born to explain the reason for her difference, why she and her sisters “didn’t look quite like the other Laguna Pueblo children, but [they] didn’t look quite white either” (par. 1). Her great-grandfather was white and “married [a] full-blood Laguna Pueblo wom[a]n” (par. 1).
 - Silko explains that the white side of her family originally came to where the Laguna Pueblo lived to “survey the land for the U.S. government” and “send[] Indian children thousands of miles away from their families” (par. 1). Including this information orients the reader by helping clarify why Silko’s appearance as both white and Indian is a significant issue for Silko to discuss.

What details in the second paragraph develop Silko’s observation from the first sentence of the essay?

- Student responses may include:
 - Silko begins the essay by observing only that she “looked different” (par. 1) without stating whether her experience of difference was positive or negative. In paragraph 2, she develops this observation by sharing that she “sensed immediately that something about [her] appearance was not acceptable to some people, white and Indian” (par. 2).
 - In contrast to “some people” (par. 2), Silko’s Grandma A’mooh does not seem to care about Silko’s “appearance” (par. 2), because Silko never saw Grandma A’mooh express “any signs of that strain or anxiety” (par. 2) that Silko saw in other people who judged her for the way she looked.

- ① Consider clarifying that the woman Silko calls “Grandma A’mooh” (par. 2) is Silko’s “great-grandmother” (par. 1). Throughout the essay, Silko uses “Grandma A’mooh” and “great-grandmother” interchangeably.

How does Silko’s description of the views of the “[y]ounger people” and “the old-time people” (par. 3) further develop the situation she describes in paragraph 2?

- ☛ Silko’s description of the views of the “[y]ounger people” and “the old-time people” (par. 3) clarifies the difference she experiences in paragraph 2 based on how people view her. By highlighting the differences in the two worldviews—the “[y]ounger people” value “a person’s appearance” while “the old-time people” value “a person’s behavior” (par. 3)—Silko clarifies why her “appearance was not acceptable to some people” (par. 2), but her appearance did not matter to Grandma A’mooh.

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle to make the connection between paragraphs 2 and 3, consider posing the following scaffolding questions:

What is important to the “[y]ounger people” (par. 3)?

- ☛ According to Silko, the “[y]ounger people” view the world in a “way” that “included racism” (par. 3). They value a person’s “physical appearance” (par. 3).

What is important to “the old-time people” (par. 3)?

- ☛ “[T]he old-time people” are not interested in the way someone looks or how much they own, “[f]or them, a person’s value lies in how that person interacts with other people, how that person behaves toward the animals and the earth” (par. 3).

What does Silko mean when she writes “[m]any worlds may coexist here” (par. 3)?

- ☛ Although Silko identifies differences between the “modern way” and “[t]he old-time beliefs” (par. 3), Silko means that both ways of seeing the world exist in the present moment. The phrase “[m]any worlds may coexist here” explains why Silko plans to “refer to the old-time people in the present tense as well as the past” (par. 3).

- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle to understand the phrase “[m]any worlds may coexist here” (par. 3), consider asking the following scaffolding questions:

What familiar word is in *coexist*?

- ☛ The familiar word *exist* is in the word *coexist*.

Using the context and word parts, what does the word *coexist* mean?

Even though “[t]he old-time beliefs” (par. 3) are from an earlier time than the “more modern way” (par. 3), these “beliefs persist today” (par. 3), indicating that they exist in the present at the same time as the “modern way” (par. 3) beliefs. *Coexist* means “being found or occurring together at the same time.”

- ① Consider drawing students’ attention to their application of standard L.11-12.4.a, b through the process of using context and word parts to make meaning of a word.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 5: Quick Write

15%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

Analyze the effectiveness of the way Silko begins the text.

Instruct students to look at their annotations to find evidence. Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- ▶ Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.

- ① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition to the independent Quick Write.

- ▶ Students independently answer the prompt using evidence from the text.

See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

Activity 6: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to write a list of ideas about how they would respond to the following college interview question. Remind students to keep in mind their task, purpose, and audience as they consider their response. Inform students that they will practice responding to this interview question in the following lesson.

What do you want to do after graduating from college?

Also for homework, instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

Analyze how Silko creates a smooth progression of events at the beginning of her text.

Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses.

- ① Consider drawing students' attention to their work with W.11-12.3.a as they analyze the way Silko structures the events in her introduction.

Additionally, remind students to continue to look for an appropriate text for their AIR, which they will begin reading in 12.1.3.

- ▶ Students follow along.

Homework

Write a list of ideas about how you would respond to the following college interview question. Remember to keep in mind your task, purpose, and audience as you consider your response. You will practice responding to this interview question in the following lesson.

What do you want to do after graduating from college?

Also, respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

Analyze how Silko creates a smooth progression of events at the beginning of her text.

Use this lesson's vocabulary wherever possible in your written responses.

Additionally, continue to look for an appropriate text for your Accountable Independent Reading, which you will begin reading in 12.1.3.