

9.1.2

Lesson 10

Introduction

In this lesson, students prepare for the End-of-Unit Assessment during which they write a multi-paragraph response to the following prompt: Identify similar central ideas in *Letters to a Young Poet* and *Black Swan Green*. How do Rilke and Mitchell develop these similar ideas? During this lesson, students review “Hangman” and “Solarium” from *Black Swan Green* and “Letter One” from *Letters to a Young Poet* and trace the development of central ideas in each text. Students then discuss how the texts address similar central ideas. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: Based on the evidence you have collected about central ideas in *Black Swan Green* and *Letters to a Young Poet*, make a claim about a similar central idea in both texts.

For homework, students organize their notes and add additional details to the Central Ideas Tracking Tool in preparation for the End-of-Unit Assessment.

Standards

Addressed Standard(s)	
CCRA.R.9	Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
RL.9-10.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
RI.9-10.2	Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
Addressed Standard(s)	
SL.9-10.1.b, c	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues</i> , building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. b. Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views),

	<p>clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.</p> <p>c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.</p>
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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"> • Based on the evidence you have collected about central ideas in <i>Black Swan Green</i> and <i>Letters to a Young Poet</i>, make a claim about a similar central idea in both texts.
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a central idea common to <i>Black Swan Green</i> and <i>Letters to a Young Poet</i> (e.g., the nature of beauty or individual versus group identification). • Make a claim about how the central idea applies to each text (e.g., Both texts develop the central idea of the nature of beauty. <i>Black Swan Green</i> refines the idea to mean that truth is beautiful. For example, Madame Crommelynck tells Jason, “if an art is true if an art is free of falsenesses, it is, a priori, beautiful” (p. 155). <i>Letters to a Young Poet</i> refines the idea to mean that beauty lies within and is not dependent on outside approval or opinion. For example, Rilke advises the young poet against seeing outside approval. He even says he does not criticize other poets work (“any attempt at criticism would be foreign to me” (p. 3).).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.*
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.*
Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.*

*Because this is not a close reading lesson, there is no specified vocabulary. However, in the process of returning to the text, students may uncover unfamiliar words. Teachers can guide students to make meaning of these words using the strategies outlined in L.9-10.4.a-d.

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
<p>Standards & Text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: CCRA.R.9, RL.9-10.2, RI.9-10.2, SL.9-10.1.b, c Texts: <i>Letters to a Young Poet</i> by Rainer Maria Rilke, “Letter One,” pp. 3–12; <i>Black Swan Green</i> by David Mitchell, “Hangman” and “Solarium,” pp. 24–28, 142–156 <p>Learning Sequence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Lesson Agenda Homework Accountability Central Ideas Analysis and Discussion Quick Write Closing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10% 10% 60% 10% 10%

Materials

- Student copies of the Central Ideas Tracking Tool (refer to 9.1.1 Lesson 5)—students may need additional blank copies
- Copies of the 9.1.2 End-of-Unit Assessment for each student

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.



Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

10%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: CCRA.R.9, RL.9-10.2, and RI.9-10.2. In this lesson, students analyze and discuss central ideas developed in excerpts of *Black Swan Green* and *Letters to a Young Poet*. Students identify and discuss how the texts develop similar central ideas. This analysis will prepare students for the End-of-Unit Assessment.

- ▶ Students look at the agenda.

Instruct students to take out their copies of the 9.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool. Inform students that in this lesson they begin to work with a new standard: CCRA.R.9. Ask students to individually read this standard on their tools and assess their familiarity with and mastery of it.

- ▶ Students read and assess their familiarity with standard CCRA.R.9.

Instruct students to talk in pairs about what they think standard CCRA.R.9 means. Lead a brief discussion about the standard.

🗨 Student responses may include:

- Analyze texts that develop similar central ideas or address similar topics.
- Compare how different authors develop similar central ideas or address similar topics.
- Analyze different ways authors write about a topic or central idea in order to learn more about it.

Explain that CCRA.R.9 differs from RL.9-10.2 and RI.9-10.2 because RL.9-10.2 and RI.9-10.2 deal exclusively with analyzing how central ideas are developed in a single text, while CCRA.R.9 considers several texts at once.

- ▶ Students listen.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

10%

Instruct students to take out their responses to the previous lesson's homework assignment. (Select a vocabulary word from today's lesson that you think is important to expressing an important idea in the text. Write a paragraph in which you explain the word you selected and how it connects to an important idea in the text.). Instruct students to Turn-and-Talk in pairs about their written responses to the homework assignment.

🗨 Student responses may include:

- *Pseudonym* describes a fictitious name used by an author. This word relates to the idea that Jason needs to be someone different in public than in private. In his school and neighborhood, he does not feel comfortable publishing poetry, so he must use a pseudonym.
- *Quotidian* is an adjective describing that which is usual or customary. This word relates to the idea that poetry sees truth and beauty, ignoring everything else, including the quotidian or everyday things that obscure it.

Activity 3: Central Ideas Analysis and Discussion

60%

Instruct students to take out their notes and annotated copies of *Black Swan Green* and *Letters to a Young Poet*. Explain that students are going to review the texts to analyze how central ideas are developed.

- ▶ Students take out their notes and annotated texts.

Instruct students to take out their copies of the Central Ideas Tracking Tool. Each student should have a copy of the tool with central ideas and evidence from *Black Swan Green* and *Letters to a Young Poet*.

Instruct students to form small groups in order to review “Letter One” from *Letters to a Young Poet*. Instruct students to discuss their previous work on the Central Ideas Tracking Tool and add new responses to the tool.

Remind students to consider SL.9-10.1.c during their discussions. Explain that “propel[ling] conversations” includes posing questions to the group, actively involving other group members, and clarifying or challenging other group members’ conclusions.

- ▶ Small groups work collaboratively to discuss their existing responses and add new analysis from “Letter One” to the Central Ideas Tracking Tool.

🗨️ See the Model Central Ideas Tracking Tool for sample student responses.

- ① Students may not be able to record all central idea development on the tool during the time allotted in class. For homework, students will be able to organize their notes and add to their Central Idea Tracking Tools.
- ① Consider reminding students to look for their “CI” annotations to identify where central ideas are developed.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct small groups to review “Hangman” and “Solarium” from *Black Swan Green*. Ask students to discuss their previous work on the Central Ideas Tracking Tool and add new responses to the tool.

- ▶ Small groups work collaboratively to discuss their existing responses and add new analysis of *Black Swan Green* to the Central Ideas Tracking Tool.
- 🗨 See the Model Central Ideas Tracking Tool for sample student responses.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

After students have discussed and added to their Central Ideas Tracking Tools, instruct small groups to engage in a discussion about connections between the texts. Remind students to refer to their Central Ideas Tracking Tools during the discussion. Post or project the following questions for small groups to discuss, but remind students they can also pose and respond to additional questions during the discussion.

- ① Consider reminding students that this is an opportunity to apply standard SL.9-10.1.b by participating effectively in a collaborative discussion. Students may especially focus on setting rules for discussion, establishing clear goals and deadlines and assigning individual roles as needed.

Which similar central ideas are developed in each of the texts?

- 🗨 Student responses may include:
 - Each text develops a central idea about the nature of beauty.
 - Each text develops a central idea about individual versus group identification.

Explain that two texts can share similar central ideas if two authors refine the central idea differently. For example, “the nature of beauty” is a central idea common to *Black Swan Green* and *Letters to a Young Poet*, but each text refines specific attitudes and beliefs about the nature of beauty.

- ▶ Students listen.

How is a similar central idea shaped or refined differently in each text?

- 🗨 Student responses may include:
 - *Black Swan Green* refines “the nature of beauty” by suggesting that truth is beautiful. For example, when Madame Crommelynck speaks about the girl Jason likes, she says, “if a poem is beauty and truth, your Miss Madden will treasure your words more than money” (p. 155). *Letters to a Young Poet* refines the idea by suggesting that beauty lies within, so it is not necessary to seek outside approval or validation.

- Regarding individual versus group identification, *Black Swan Green* refines “individual versus group identification” by exploring the desire to adapt and fit in with a social group. For example, Jason uses a pseudonym because he believes other children will call him a “poofter[]” or a “creep[]” (p. 153). *Letters to a Young Poet* refines the idea by exploring the effect of criticism and the desire to be accepted by a group. Rilke states that the young poet has sent his work to magazines and is upset when “certain editors reject [his] work” (p. 5), but he advises that this is worthless.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle to determine how each text refines a similar central idea, consider posing the following scaffolding questions:

How does each text refine a central idea about the nature of beauty?

- 🗨️ *Black Swan Green* refines the central idea by suggesting that truth is beauty. Madame Crommelynck teaches Jason about the importance of truth, especially in art. She says, “If an art is *true* if an art is *free of falsenesses*, it is, a priori, beautiful” (p. 155).
- 🗨️ *Letters to a Young Poet* refines the idea by suggesting that beauty lies within the individual. Rilke says that poets are “creator[s]” who should not rely on “what reward might come from outside” (p. 10). Instead he says each poet must be “world for himself.” These words suggest that beauty is not dependent on others’ opinion or perception.

How does each text refine a central idea about individual versus group identification?

- 🗨️ *Black Swan Green* refines the central idea by showing how individuals struggle between fitting into a group and developing their own personal identities. Jason seeks to develop his skill as a poet, but is not open about his poetry. He believes that because of his background, he cannot be honest about his poetry, poetry is something “you can’t do if your dad works at Greenland Supermarkets and if you go to comprehensive school” (p. 154).
- 🗨️ *Letters to a Young Poet* refines the central idea by suggesting that the desire to be accepted conflicts with individual identity. The young poet asks others “if his verses are any good” (p. 5) but Rilke encourages him to stop seeking outside approval and “go into [him]self” (p. 6) which means he should form his own opinion about his poems.

Compare how Rilke and Mitchell develop similar central ideas.

- 🗨️ Student responses may include:
 - In both texts, the author develops this idea of the nature of beauty through advice to a younger poet. For example, Rilke gives the young poet advice such as begging the poet to stop sending his poems to magazines and comparing them with other poems (p. 5). Rilke

- advises that the poet should avoid “looking outside” (p. 5) for critique of his poems. Likewise, Mitchell develops the idea through the advice Madame Crommelynck gives to Jason about the honesty and beauty in his poems.
- Rilke develops a central idea of individual versus group identification through the young poet’s desire to gain outside approval contrasted with Rilke praise of the poems’ “silent and hidden beginnings of something personal” (p. 4). Mitchell develops this central idea through Jason’s conflict between fitting in with his peers and pursuing his talent of poetry. For example, Jason clearly likes poetry because he continues to write and publish, but he believes that writing poems is “sort of ... gay” (p. 153).

① Consider discussing with students the slang use of “gay” in this context.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 4: Quick Write

10%

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

Based on the evidence you have collected about central ideas in *Black Swan Green* and *Letters to a Young Poet*, make a claim about a similar central idea in both texts.

Instruct students to look at their annotations to find evidence. Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary whenever 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 students 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 5: Closing

10%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to continue to prepare for the End-of-Unit Assessment by organizing their notes, adding annotations and adding new details to their Central Ideas Tracking Tools.

Distribute copies of the End-of-Unit Assessment. Read the End-of-Unit Assessment prompt and explain that students will write a multi-paragraph analysis in response to the prompt.

- ▶ Students follow along.

Homework

Prepare for the End-of-Unit Assessment by organizing your notes, adding to your annotations and by adding new details to your Central Ideas Tracking Tools for *Black Swan Green* and *Letters to a Young Poet*.

9.1.2 End-of-Unit Assessment

Text-Based Response

Your Task: Rely on your reading and analysis of *Black Swan Green* and *Letters to a Young Poet* to write a well-developed response to the following prompt:

Identify a central idea common to both Rilke and Mitchell and analyze its development over the course of both texts.

Your writing will be assessed using the 9.1.2 End-of-Unit Assessment Text Analysis Rubric.

Guidelines:

Be sure to:

- Closely read the prompt
- Address all elements of the prompt in your response
- Paraphrase, quote, and reference relevant evidence to support your claim
- Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
- Maintain a formal style of writing
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

CCSS: CCRA.R.9; RL.9-10.2; RI.9-10.2; W.9-10.2.a,f

Commentary on the Task:

This task measures CCRA.R.9 because it demands that students:

- Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

This task measures RL.9-10.2 and RI.9-10.2 because it demands that students:

- Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

This task measures W.9-10.2.a because it demands that students:

- Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

This task measures W.9-10.2.f because it demands that students:

- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

Model Central Ideas Tracking Tool

Name:		Class:		Date:	
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Directions: Identify the central ideas that you encounter throughout the text. Trace the development of those ideas by noting how the author introduces, develops, or refines these ideas in the texts. Cite textual evidence to support your work.

Text:	<i>Black Swan Green</i> by David Mitchell and <i>Letters to a Young Poet</i> by Rainer Maria Rilke
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Page / Paragraph #	Central Ideas	Notes and Connections
Page 147 <i>Black Swan Green</i>	Nature of beauty	Madame Crommelynck says, “the master knows his words is just the <i>vehicle</i> in who beauty sits.” This supports Madame Crommelynck’s belief that beauty cannot be created.
Page 148 <i>Black Swan Green</i>	Nature of beauty	Madame Crommelynck says “Beauty is immune to definition.” She explains to Jason that artists cannot create beauty.
Pages 155–156 <i>Black Swan Green</i>	Nature of beauty: Truth is beautiful	Madame Crommelynck tells Jason, “True poetry <i>is</i> truth” (p. 155). She also tells him that “Hangman” is his best poem because it is truth about his speech impediment.
Pages 153–154 <i>Black Swan Green</i>	Individual versus group identification: Individuals struggle between fitting into a group and developing their own personal identities	Madame Crommelynck questions Jason about his use of a pseudonym. Jason explains that poetry is something one cannot do if “your dad works at Greenland Supermarkets and if you go to a comprehensive school” (p. 154). This illustrates the conflict between Jason’s individual identity and the expectations of his culture.
Pages 3–4 <i>Letters to a Young Poet</i>	Individual versus group identification: The desire to be accepted conflicts with individuality	Rilke addresses the young poet’s concerns about criticism. He says that “nothing touches a work of art so little as words of criticism” (p. 3). Rilke claims that is worthless to try writing poetry that will gain the acceptance of others.

<p>Pages 5–6 <i>Letters to a Young Poet</i></p>	<p>Individual versus group identification: The desire to be accepted conflicts with individuality</p>	<p>Rilke tells the young poet, “You are looking outside, and that is what you should most avoid right now” (p. 5). He also says that young poet must go into himself to “find out the reason that commands [him] to write” (p. 6).</p>
<p>Page 7 <i>Letters to a Young Poet</i></p>	<p>Individual versus group identification: The desire to be accepted conflicts with individuality</p>	<p>Rilke tells the young poet he should write about “things around [him], the images from [his] dreams, and the objects [he] remembers.” All of these are personal to the poet, rather than being what is common or popular to others.</p>
<p>Page 10 <i>Letters to a Young Poet</i></p>	<p>Nature of beauty: Beauty lies within</p>	<p>Rilke says the “creator” should not rely on “what reward might come from outside.” Instead he says the creator must be “world for himself.” This suggests that beauty is not dependent on others’ perceptions.</p>
<p>Page 11 <i>Letters to a Young Poet</i></p>	<p>Individual versus group identification: The desire to be accepted conflicts with individuality</p>	<p>Rilke’s final advice in the letter is to “keep growing, silently and earnestly” without “looking outside and waiting for outside answers.” This advice suggests that the young poet should remember his individual identity without giving in to the pressure of others’ opinions.</p>