Introduction

In this lesson, students read and analyze William Carlos Williams’s poem, “Raleigh Was Right” (from “We cannot go to the country” to “for the country will bring us / no peace”), in which Williams contributes a new perspective on the exchange between Christopher Marlowe and Sir Walter Raleigh that emerges from their poems, “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love” and “The Nymph’s Reply to the Shepherd.” Students work in small groups to analyze how Williams uses details, figurative language, and shifting speakers to develop a central idea. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: How does Williams introduce and develop a central idea in “Raleigh Was Right”?

For homework, students begin reading their Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) texts through the lens of focus standard RL.9-10.1 or RI.9-10.1 and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of their texts based on that standard. Also, students reread Williams’s “Raleigh Was Right” as well as Marlowe’s “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love” and Raleigh’s “The Nymph’s Reply to the Shepherd,” and respond in writing to two prompts.

Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessed Standard(s)</th>
<th>RL.9-10.2</th>
<th>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.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addressed Standard(s)</td>
<td>L.9-10.5.a</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.</td>
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Assessment

Assessment(s)

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.

- How does Williams introduce and develop a central idea in “Raleigh Was Right”?

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Identify a central idea in Williams’s poem (e.g., the relationship between humans and nature).
- Analyze how Williams introduces and develops this central idea (e.g., By titling his poem, “Raleigh Was Right,” Williams introduces the idea that the relationship between humans and nature is not ideal and suggests that Williams is further developing Raleigh’s critique of Marlowe’s depiction of country life. Williams develops this central idea through the nymph’s statements in the first lines: “We cannot go to the country / for the country will bring us / no peace” and in the final lines, “the country will bring us / no peace” (lines 1–3, 24–25). The repetition of this phrase emphasizes that nature cannot provide humans with the harmony and happiness they are seeking. In fact, the country life that poets describe in their poems existed only “long ago” (lines 11, 12), if at all, based on the second stanza, which concludes with the phrase, “if ever this were true” (line 16). The poem suggests that not only is the country life that Marlowe represents subject to realities such as time, as Raleigh points out in his poem, but it may never have existed at all in the ways the shepherd describes it.).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- lance shaped (adj.) – narrow, and tapering toward the apex or sometimes at the base, as a leaf
- parched (adj.) – very dry, especially because of hot weather and no rain

Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)

- None.

Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)

- violets (n.) – plants that have small bluish-purple or white flowers
- sow (v.) – to plant seeds in an area of ground
Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda

Standards & Text:
- Standards: RL.9-10.2, L.9-10.5.a
- Text: “Raleigh Was Right” by William Carlos Williams

Learning Sequence:
1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 1. 10%
2. Homework Accountability 2. 10%
3. Masterful Reading 3. 5%
4. Reading and Discussion 4. 55%
5. Quick Write 5. 10%
6. Closing 6. 10%

Materials
- Student copies of the 10.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool (refer to 10.1.1 Lesson 1)
- Copies of “Raleigh Was Right” for each student
- Free Audio Resource: [http://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/](http://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/) (Google search terms: Penn Sound, Raleigh Was Right)
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 10.1.1 Lesson 1)

Learning Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Type of Text &amp; Interpretation of the Symbol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no symbol</td>
<td>Plain text indicates teacher action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▸</td>
<td>Indicates student action(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🔴</td>
<td>Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>📝</td>
<td>Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.</td>
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</table>
Activity 1: Introduction to Lesson Agenda 10%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.9-10.2. In this lesson, students read William Carlos Williams’s contemporary response to the exchange between Christopher Marlowe and Sir Walter Raleigh that emerges from their poems, “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love” and “The Nymph’s Reply to the Shepherd.” Students focus on how Williams introduces and develops a central idea.

- Students look at the agenda.

Instruct students to take out their copies of the 10.1 Common Core Learning Standards Tool. Inform students that in this lesson they begin to work with a new substandard: L.9-10.5.a. Instruct 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 substandard L.9-10.5.a.

Instruct students to talk in pairs about what they think the substandard L.9-10.5.a means. Lead a brief discussion about this standard.

- Students explain the meaning of non-literal language as it is used in a text, and how this use of language contributes to the meaning of a text.

Consider providing students with the following definition: figures of speech are “phrases or expressions that use words in a figurative way rather than in a literal way.”

- Students write the definition of figures of speech on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability 10%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about their research into potential AIR texts and to share the AIR text they chose for the previous lesson’s homework assignment. Lead a brief share out on student choices. Select several students (or student pairs) to explain their choices.

- Students (or student pairs) discuss their choice of AIR text.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student progress.

Instruct students to take out their responses to the previous lesson’s homework assignment. (Reread “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love” and “The Nymph’s Reply to the Shepherd,” and annotate for Marlowe’s and Raleigh’s use of alliteration in their poems. Then respond briefly in writing to the
following prompt: Compare the effects produced by Marlowe’s and Raleigh’s use of alliteration.) Instruct students to discuss their responses in pairs.

- Students discuss their responses to the homework prompt in pairs.

- Student annotations may include:
  
  o In Marlowe’s poem: “live” and “love” (lines 1, 20, 24), “pleasures” and “prove” (line 2), “we” and “will” (line 5), “feed” and “flocks” (line 6), “melodious” and “madrigals” (line 8), “cap” and “kirtle” (line 11), “pretty” and “pull” (line 14), “belt” and “buds” (line 17), “coral” and “clasps” (line 18), “may” and “move” (line 19), “me” and “my” (line 20), “shepherds” and “shall” (line 21), “swains” and “sing” (line 21), “May” and “morning” (line 22), and “mind,” “may,” and “move” (line 23), “live” and “love” (line 24), and “me” and “my” (line 24).
  
  o In Raleigh’s poem: “world” and “were” (line 1), “truth” and “tongue” (line 2), “pretty” and “pleasures” (line 3), “might,” “me,” and “move” (line 3), “live” and “love” (lines 4, 24), “thee” and “thy” (lines 4, 20, 24), “flocks,” “field,” and “fold” (line 5), “rivers,” “rage,” and “rocks” (line 6), “complains,” “cares,” and “come” (line 8), “flowers,” “fade,” and “fields” (line 9), “wayward” and “winter” (line 10), “honey” and “heart” (line 11), “fancy’s” and “fall” (line 12), “spring” and “sorrow” (line 12), “cap” and “kirtle” (line 14), “ripe,” “reason,” and “rotten” (line 16), “belt” and “buds” (line 17), “coral” and “clasps” (line 18), “me,” “means,” and “move” (line 19), “last” and “love” (line 21), “no,” “nor,” and “need” (line 22), and “my,” “mind,” and “move” (line 23).

Compare the effects produced by Marlowe’s and Raleigh’s use of alliteration.

- Student responses may include:
  
  o Raleigh’s use of alliteration at the beginning of words draws on the style of Marlowe’s poem. Both poems use alliteration to create a musical effect.
  
  o The songlike quality created by repeated initial sounds seems appropriate for Marlowe’s poem, in which the shepherd creates an optimistic, ideal picture of life in the country. In Raleigh’s poem, however, the light-hearted effect contrasts with the more pessimistic ideas expressed by the nymph in the poem.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

**Activity 3: Masterful Reading**

Distribute copies of “Raleigh was Right.” Have students listen to a masterful reading of “Raleigh Was Right” (from “We cannot go to the country” to “for the country will bring us / no peace”).

- Students follow along, reading silently.
Consider using the following free audio resource, which features Williams reading his own poem: [http://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound](http://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/) (Google search terms: Penn Sound, Raleigh Was Right).

**Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posting or projecting the following guiding question to support students in their reading throughout this lesson:

*What idea about life in the country does Williams express in his poem?*

**Activity 4: Reading and Discussion**

Instruct students to form groups. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss. Instruct students to annotate for central ideas throughout the reading and discussion, using the code CI.

This focused annotation supports students’ engagement with W.9-10.9.a, which addresses the use of textual evidence in writing.

Provide students with the following definitions: *lance shaped* means “narrow, and tapering toward the apex or sometimes at the base, as a leaf” and *parched* means “very dry, especially because of hot weather and no rain.”

Students may be familiar with these words. Consider asking students to volunteer definitions before providing them to the class.

- Students write the definitions of *lance shaped* and *parched* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

**Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students with the following definition: *violets* mean “plants that have small bluish-purple or white flowers” and *sow* means “plant seeds in an area of ground.”

- Students write the definition of *violets* and *sow* on their copies of the text or in a vocabulary journal.

Instruct students groups to read “Raleigh was Right” in its entirety (from “We cannot go to the country” to “for the country will bring us / no peace”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

**What does the title “Raleigh Was Right” suggest about Williams’s poem?**

- Student responses may include:
The title of Williams’s poem suggests that his poem draws upon Raleigh’s poem, “The Nymph’s Reply to the Shepherd.”

- Williams’s title suggests that he shares Raleigh’s opinion and does not share Marlowe’s opinion.
- Williams’s title suggests that his poem will support and develop an idea or ideas in Raleigh’s poem.

**What do lines 1–3 suggest about the identity of the speaker of the first stanza?**

- The speaker may be the nymph from Marlowe’s and Raleigh’s poem. Since the speaker is telling someone, “We cannot go to the country” (Williams, line 1) and the shepherd in Marlowe’s poem invites the nymph to “Come live with me and be my love” (Marlowe, line 1), the speaker appears to be the nymph.

**How does the first stanza of Williams’s poem introduce a central idea from Raleigh’s poem?**

- The first stanza of Williams’s poem introduces the idea that the relationship between humans and nature brings “no peace” (Williams, line 3). The statement develops the idea presented in Raleigh’s poem that the relationship between humans and nature is not one of harmony, but one damaged by time and decay.

**Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider posing the following scaffolding questions:

- **What does the nymph’s reason for not going to the country suggest about her feelings toward nature?**
  - The nymph says, “We cannot go into the country / for the country will bring us / no peace” (Williams, lines 1–3). She does not believe that nature will provide the comforts the shepherd has promised.

- **How does Williams’s description of the flowers in the first stanza contribute to the tone of his poem?**
  - Williams uses specific details such as “small” (Williams, line 4), “furry stems” (Williams, line 5) and “lance shaped leaves” (Williams, line 7) to describe the violets. This description includes details that would not typically be considered beautiful, such as the flowers’ “furry stems,” and creates a tone that is more objective than the sentimental tone of Marlowe’s poem.

**Who is the speaker of the second stanza? To whom is the stanza addressed?**

- Flowers seem to speak in the second stanza as they address Marlowe’s shepherd. In the second stanza, the speaker(s) say, “you praise us / and call to mind the poets / who sung of our
loveliness” (Williams, lines 8–10). In line 8, “you” refers to Marlowe’s shepherd, who lists “a thousand fragrant posies” (Marlowe, line 10) as one of the attractions that should make the nymph want to join him in the country, and “us” refers to the flowers that Marlowe’s shepherd praises.

What does Williams suggest about life in the country in the second stanza?

- By ending the second stanza with the phrase “if ever this were true” (Williams, line 16), Williams suggests that the “loveliness” that poets such as Marlowe described was not only “long ago” (Williams, lines 11, 12), but also imaginary and may never have existed.

How does Williams use figurative language in lines 17–20 to develop a central idea of his poem?

- Student responses should include:
  - In lines 17–18, the speaker of the third stanza describes love as “a flower / with roots in a parched ground.” This metaphor suggests that the country is a harsh environment that is not fertile enough for love to grow.
  - In lines 19–20 the speaker’s statement, “Empty pockets / make empty heads,” contrasts with the “flowering minds and pockets / at ease” (lines 15–16) that earlier poets described, suggesting that the country is not the rich and inspiring place those poets imagined.
  - The figurative language in lines 17–20 develops the idea that the country, or nature, is too harsh to sustain “[l]ove” (line 17) or bring humans “peace” (line 3).

① Consider drawing students’ attention to their application of standard L.9-10.5.a through the process of interpreting figurative language.

① Differentiation Consideration: To support comprehension, consider posing the following scaffolding questions:

Who is the speaker of the third stanza? To whom is the stanza addressed?

- The nymph from Marlowe’s and Raleigh’s poems is the speaker of the third stanza. She repeats the words from the first stanza when she says, “[D]o not believe / that we can live today / in the country” (Williams, lines 21–23) and again addresses the shepherd, who invites her to share his life in the country in Marlowe’s poem when he suggests, “Come live with me and be my love” (Marlowe, line 1).

According to the speakers of Williams’s poem, about what was Raleigh right?

- According to the speakers, Raleigh was right to challenge the idealism of Marlowe’s vision of pastoral life. The speakers of Williams’s poem support Raleigh’s critique by calling into question Marlowe’s idealistic vision of the countryside. For the speakers of Williams’s poem, the reality is that
the country offers “no peace” (line 3) for humans; the country is barren and “parched” (line 18), a place where poverty, or “empty pockets” (line 19), results in a lack of the creativity and imagination necessary for “love” to grow (line 17).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

**Activity 5: Quick Write**

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

**How does Williams introduce and develop a central idea in “Raleigh Was Right”?**

Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses and to practice using specific language and domain-specific vocabulary. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.
- 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**

Display and distribute the homework assignment. Instruct students to begin to read their AIR text, if they have not done so already, through the lens of RL.9-10.1 or RI.9-10.1, and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion based on that standard.

Introduce standard RL.9-10.1 and RI.9-10.1 as focus standards to guide students’ AIR, and model what applying a focus standard looks like. For example, RL.9-10.1 and RI.9-10.1 ask students to “Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.” Students who have read Marlowe’s “A Passionate Shepherd to His Love” might say: “Marlowe selects beautiful images to create an ideal vision of life in the country. For instance, the Shepherd describes sitting on rocks and ‘Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks, / By shallow rivers to whose falls / Melodious birds sing madrigals’ (lines 6–8).”

- Students listen.
In addition, instruct students to reread Williams’s “Raleigh Was Right,” Marlowe’s “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love,” and Raleigh’s “The Nymph’s Reply to the Shepherd,” and respond briefly in writing to the following prompts:

**Compare Williams’s description of flowers in stanza 1 with Marlowe’s description of flowers in stanza 9. How does each poet’s description develop a shared central idea?**

**How do the differences in the nymphs’ responses in “The Nymph’s Reply to the Shepherd” and “Raleigh Was Right” relate to a central idea in Williams’s poem?**

Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- Students follow along.

### Homework

Begin reading your Accountable Independent Reading text through the lens of focus standard RL.9-10.1 or RI.9-10.1 and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of your text based on that standard.

In addition, reread Williams’s “Raleigh Was Right,” Marlowe’s “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love,” and Raleigh’s “The Nymph’s Reply to the Shepherd,” and respond briefly in writing to the following prompts:

**Compare Williams’s description of flowers in stanza 1 with Marlowe’s description of flowers in stanza 9. How does each poet’s description develop a shared central idea?**

**How do the differences in the nymphs’ responses in “The Nymph’s Reply to the Shepherd” and “Raleigh Was Right” relate to a central idea in Williams’s poem?**

Use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide your written responses.