



ELA Virtual Learning

Composition and Reading 2

April 16, 2020



Composition and Reading II

Lesson: April 16, 2020

Objective/Learning Target:

Students will be able to apply Marxist literary theory to a piece of fiction with the purpose of examining how class and economic systems inform everyday experiences.

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Starting Question(s):

Based upon our [handouts](#), please answer the following questions in your notebooks:

1. Reflect from yesterday. What did Marx define as “perfect communism?”
2. Imagine Marx had been woken up in the United States in 2020. What do you think would be his main issues would be with the way Americans live?



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Lesson/Activity:

I would like you to apply Marxist theory to the story “The Standard of Living” by Dorothy Parker. As you are reading, consider how many of the characters’ actions are informed by material possessions.

[“The Standard of Living” by Dorothy Parker](#)



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Practice:

Complete the following practice in your notebooks.

Is the friendship between the two main characters dictated by shared personal interests or by class interests? Say money and materialism were taken out of their relationship. Would they still be friends?



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Practice *Answer Key*:

Complete the following practice in your notebooks.

Is the friendship between the two main characters dictated by shared personal interests or by class interests? Say money and materialism were taken out of their relationship. Would they still be friends?

Annabel and Midge are only friends because they share the way in which they live. It is purely based on class interests. The story reiterates that they have no defining desires or personalities beyond the monotony of the lives they live. There is no personality to share, so they will not only fail to be friends with one another, but they will fail to make friends with anyone until they make an honest attempt to reflect on the ways that they both live and find out who they each are.