

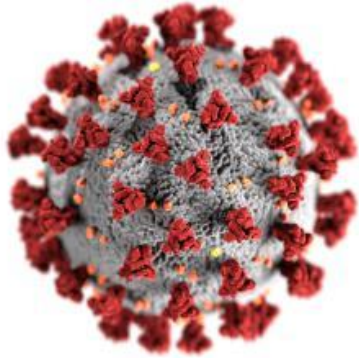
English II

Lesson: April 8th, 2020

Learning Target(s):

- Analyze two or more central themes in *Harrison Bergeron* by Kurt Vonnegut Jr.
- Explain the significance of the two central themes and provide a concise summary of the text through a writing response

Bell Ringer:



In light of what is happening in the world today with the coronavirus, **please write a short, succinct paragraph answering the following question:**

How has the coronavirus impacted the freedom of people all over the world?

Learn:

- On your paper, please write down the definition of theme:
 - **“Theme is defined** as a main idea or an underlying meaning of a **literary** work, which may be stated directly or indirectly” (literarydevices.net)
- In any literary work, readers can establish a variety of themes that take place. These themes may be very easily understood while others are more difficult to grasp. With that being said, an author establishes themes within their literary works to develop their story and sometimes teach a moral lesson.

Learn:

- On your same piece of paper, please copy down the correct body paragraph format to ensure you are writing clear, succinct body paragraphs in your response:
 - Topic Sentence
 - Supporting Detail
 - Evidence (make sure to include citation)
 - Commentary
 - Transition into next supporting detail
 - Evidence (make sure to include citation)
 - Commentary
 - Concluding sentence

Practice:

- Use the information from the slide before (slide 3) to establish two themes within the short story *Harrison Bergeron* by Kurt Vonnegut Jr.
 - As you read, please write down four themes you find within the story. Next to each theme you find, write two-three sentences explaining why you believe this theme is present within the story. Link to *Harrison Bergeron* can be found [here](#).
 - After you have read the story, choose two themes that you found within *Harrison Bergeron* and write a two-paragraph response explaining the significance of those themes. Some questions to ask yourself: *Why did Kurt Vonnegut create these themes? How do these themes impact the development of the story? How do these themes develop over the course of the story?*

Practice Answer Key:

(Answers will Vary)

- Check your answer to make sure it meets the following criteria:
 - Response is at least two-paragraphs in length and follows the body paragraph format from previous notes
 - No grammatical errors within response
 - Response answers the questions from slide 4 to support the two chosen themes and their development over the short story.
 - Response includes at least two pieces of textual evidence to support the two chosen themes.

Practice Answer Key:

(Answers will Vary)

- Beginning of an example answer:

- The short story *Harrison Bergeron* by Kurt Vonnegut Jr. discusses many ideas centered around equality. It challenges readers to look into a complete dystopian society that controls all of their citizens, which in turn eliminates the idea of equality. As the story unfolds, it is clear that the theme of control is established through the character of George Bergeron. He was not only controlled through his daughter being taken away, but his smarts were also seen as a deficit to him; therefore, they were taken away: “Every twenty seconds or so, the transmitter would send out some sharp noise to keep people like George from taking unfair advantage of their brains” (Bergeron para.3). When individual thought processes are either taken away or controlled, both of which occur in George’s life, they are immediately stripped of a basic human right. Their control over their minds is stripped, but it is then given to whoever is in charge of the controlling.

(Notice how I introduced my quote and also explained its significance after I cited it)

(Notice my in-text citation by paragraph #)

Practice Answer Key:

(Answers will Vary)

- Beginning of an example answer:
 - The short story *Harrison Bergeron* by Kurt Vonnegut Jr. discusses many ideas centered around equality. It challenges readers to look into a complete dystopian society that controls all of their citizens, which in turn eliminates the idea of equality. As the story unfolds, it is clear that the theme of control is established through the character of George Bergeron. He was not only controlled through his daughter being taken away, but his smarts were also seen as a deficit to him; therefore, they were taken away: “Every twenty seconds or so, the transmitter would send out some sharp noise to keep people like George from taking unfair advantage of their brains” (Bergeron para.3). When individual thought processes are either taken away or controlled, both of which occur in George’s life, they are immediately stripped of a basic human right. Their control over their minds is stripped, but it is then given to whoever is in charge of the controlling. Not only does the idea of control exist within the short story, but the theme of freedom is tied within the citizens lack of control over their lives.

(Topic Sentence, Supporting Detail, Evidence (make sure to include citation), Commentary, Transition into next supporting detail --- I would then go into my next theme of freedom and start back at the top of my body paragraph format!)

If you want to learn more...Additional Resource:

- [Understanding Theme in Literary Works](#)

Reflection:

- Reflect on the questions below and write a response on your notebook paper:
 - What comparisons do you see within our current society and the one in which the story takes place?
 - On a scale of 1-5, how well were you able to identify different themes within the story? Explain your rating.