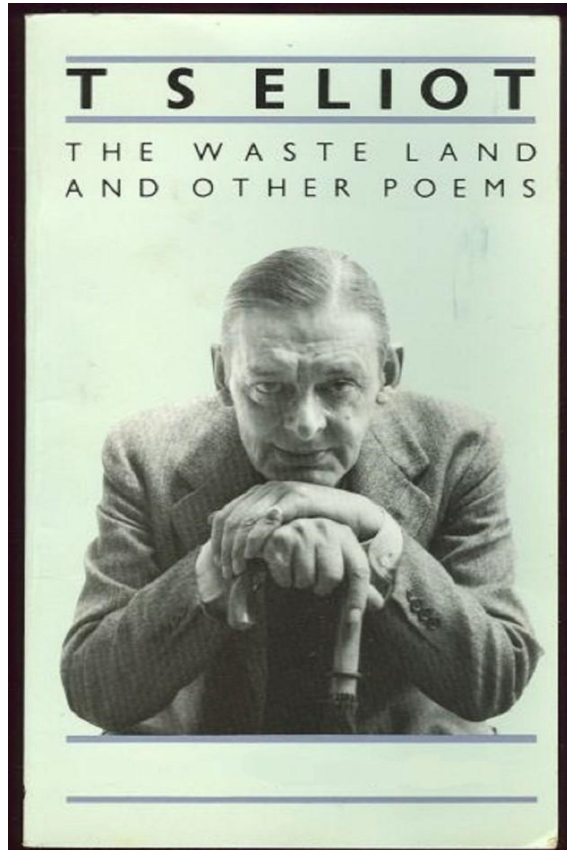# English II
Lesson: April 9th, 2020

Learning Target(s):

- I can analyze the impact of word choice on tone in "The Waste Land: What the Thunder Said" by T.S. Eliot.
- I can explain my thinking in a concise written response with textual evidence.

T S ELIOT
THE WASTE LAND
AND OTHER POEMS

Bell Ringer:

Think about this title for a poem:

What the Thunder Said

In a quick write, explain your thoughts on this title:

What would this poem be about? Be specific!
- What characters would it have?
- What might happen?
- What imagery would it have?

Learn:

Tone is the *attitude* the author has toward the subject they are writing about in a text.

To accurately convey their tone to the audience, writers must take great care in their word choice.

Take, for instance, the words *giggle* and *cackle*. Both have the same general definition: a sound someone makes when they find something humorous. But *giggle* evokes a silly, innocent tone where cackle evokes a malicious, sinister tone.

Examples of Tone

- Cautious
- Humorous
- Affectionate
- Hostile
- Critical
- Objective
- Personal
- Violent

- Solemn / Serious
- Sarcastic
- Disapproving
- Enthusiastic
- Desperate
- Pleading
- Indifferent

Learn:

T.S. Eliot wrote "The Waste Land" after World War I when many people believed they were witnessing the literal and figurative destruction of society. Keeping this context in mind, I want you to put a twist on your perspective as you read! Pay close attention to the scenario below...

Imagine the speaker (or narrator) of this poem is a survivor of a nuclear apocalypse that occurred 50 years before. Imagine this survivor has rummaged through the ruins of a once massive library, collecting charred scraps of classic literature (Shakespeare, King Arthur, Greek mythology and so on). Imagine this survivor has placed these scraps, along with his/her own thoughts, in a journal and titled it "The Waste Land".

Practice:

T.S. Eliot's poem "The Waste Land" is divided into five sections. For the purposes of this lesson, we will only focus on one.
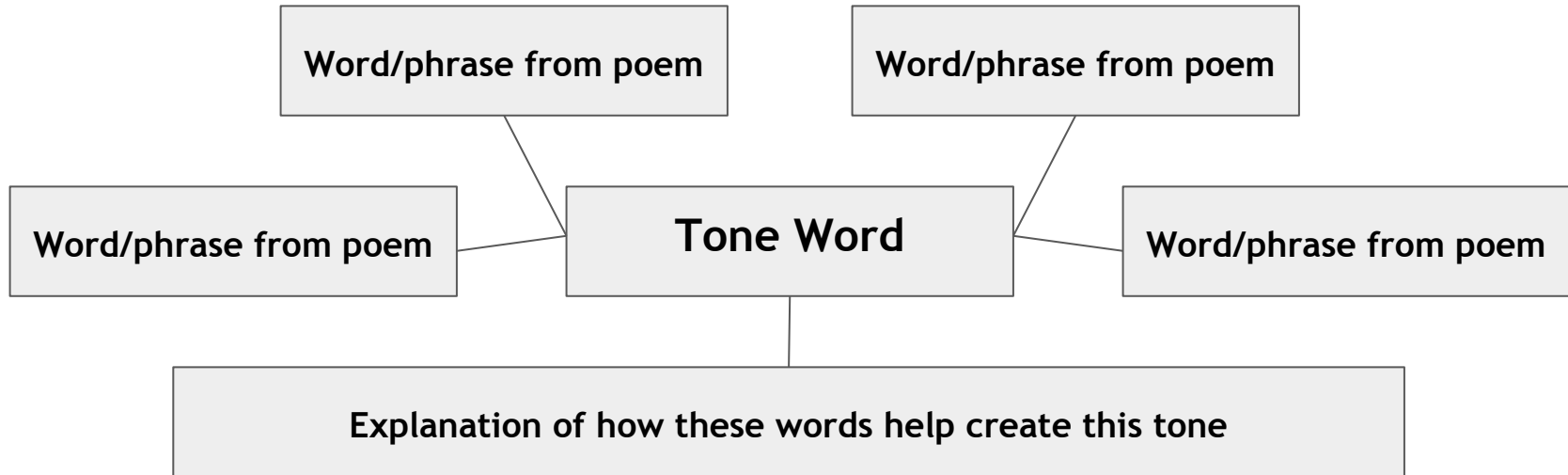
As you read the section of "The Waste Land" titled "What the Thunder Said", take notes. Use the following questions to guide your note-taking process...

- What words or phrases are repeated in the poem?
- What do these repeated words and phrases have in common?
- What types of words tend to begin or end a line?

T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land: What the Thunder Said"

Practice:

- A word web is a great way to organize your thoughts concerning the impact words, phrases, and references have on a text's overall tone.

- Use the information from your notes and select one tone word. Create a word web using the diagram below as a template.

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[Word/phrase from poem]        [Word/phrase from poem]

[Word/phrase from poem] —— [Tone Word] —— [Word/phrase from poem]

              [Explanation of how these words help create this tone]
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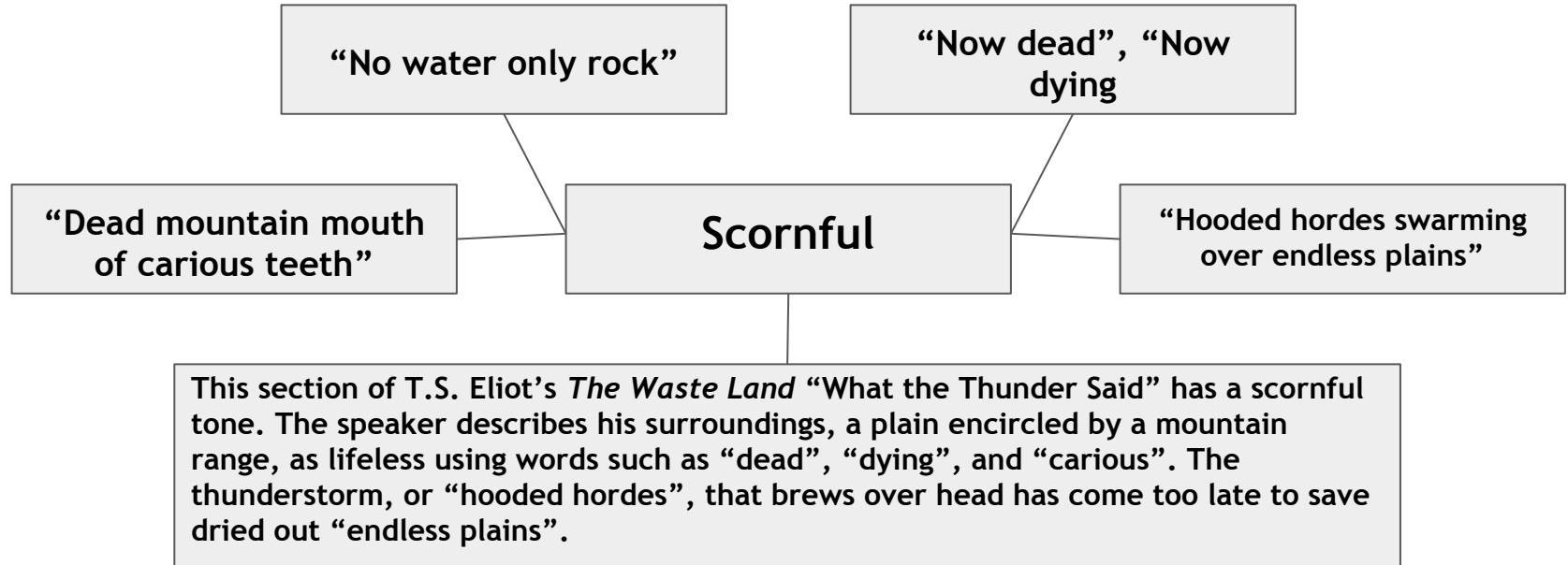
Practice Answer Key:
(Answers will Vary)

- Check your answer to make sure it meets the following criteria:

  → **Did you select a tone word from the poem? Feel free to use an online tone word bank.**
  → **Did you identify at least four words from the text that support this tone?**
  → **Did you explain your reasoning in a grammatically correct, full sentence?**

Practice Answer Key:
(Answers will Vary)

EXAMPLE TONE WORD WEB

"No water only rock"

"Now dead", "Now dying

"Dead mountain mouth of carious teeth"

Scornful

"Hooded hordes swarming over endless plains"

This section of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* "What the Thunder Said" has a scornful tone. The speaker describes his surroundings, a plain encircled by a mountain range, as lifeless using words such as "dead", "dying", and "carious". The thunderstorm, or "hooded hordes", that brews over head has come too late to save dried out "endless plains".

If you want to learn more…Additional Resource:

Reflection:

- Reflect on the question below and write a response on your notebook paper:

  → **On a scale of 1-5, how well were you able to identify different tones within the poem? Explain your rating.**