



E/LA Virtual Learning

English I

May 7th, 2020



English I

Lesson: May 7th, 2020

Objective/Learning Target:

I can compare how works in different media express ideas
about a similar topic

I can explain my thinking about a challenging idea in writing

Do Now

Watch [this clip](#) of a magician playing with elements of perception and reality.

Before he revealed the trick, did you believe that he had actually combined the Rubix Cube and the paper? Why or why not?

Two-Day Focus

Over the next two lessons, you will work with ideas related to perception and reality. While we are working with those ideas, we will explore how different media (videos, speeches, and stories) approach the problem differently.

Overview

The difference between perception and reality is a philosophical problem that has existed for thousands of years. It comes down to the question of the existence of an objective reality, a reality outside the observer. Everything we interact with in the world around us comes to us through our senses--the smell of sugar cookies baking in the oven, the sound of the lawnmower running outside my window, the keys beneath my fingers right now as I type these words, the words on the screen that you are reading.

So how do I know those things exist? Because I perceived them. I smelt, heard, and felt them. You saw them. The question is, do they exist outside of our perception of them? How can we know and be sure? And how does our perception influence or change our understanding of reality?

Lesson: Exploring how texts in different media explore the same theme

As content creators work to engage their audiences, they do so on multiple levels. One level is the surface level, what the content says directly, what it is *about*. We think of this as the *topic* of a piece.

Another level is deeper, beneath the surface. These are the big ideas that the content may hint at, but not directly say. We think of this as the *theme* of a piece. The *theme* is what the author is trying to say *about* the *topic* of a piece.

Lesson: Exploring how texts in different media explore the same theme, cont.

Depending on the medium in which the creator is working, their methods for conveying information about a topic, or causing you to engage with the deeper themes of a piece, will vary. Written texts will do this differently than visual texts, etc.

Activity: Read text, Watch Video, Chart

For our work today we will look at two different texts in two different media, both of which touch on, either directly or indirectly, the conflict between appearance and reality.

The first is the classic Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale, *The Emperor's New Clothes*. The second is a clip (~5 minutes) from TEDed, exploring Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*.

Activity: Read text, Watch Video, Chart

- Follow [this link](#) to read *The Emperor's New Clothes*.
 - Use the Comment feature in Google Docs to annotate the text.
 - Write your thoughts, questions, confusions, connections, inferences, and summary details as you read.
- After reading the fairy tale, [click here](#) to watch the video for *Allegory of the Cave*.
- Once you've viewed the video, [click here](#) to access the handout for this assignment.
- You'll need to go File-Make a Copy in order to work with *The Emperor's New Clothes* and the handout.
 - Replace "Copy of" with your name.

Activity: Writing

After reading the fairy tale, viewing the video, and completing the chart, compose a writing in which you explore how these texts cause you to engage with appearance and reality.

Activity: Writing, ex.

The Emperor's New Clothes creates a situation in which the perception of the Emperor does not match the outside reality of his audience. The adults choose to play along with the Emperor's flawed perception. Only the innocence of a child is able to break the spell, and cause the Emperor to question his perception. By then it is too late, and the procession must continue. I think the author wants us to think about how we will agree with a perception that doesn't match our reality if that perception comes to us from a figure of authority.

Activity: Writing, ex, cont.

In the video covering *Allegory of the Cave*, the men are chained in a cave, forced only to look at shadows. They believe the shadows are what is real. One of the men becomes free and sees the outside world, but cannot enlighten those still in the cave. This text contrasts with *The Emperor's New Clothes*. Here, the men in the cave reject the revelation and continue to believe that the shadows are real. In *The Emperor's New Clothes*, the subjects know there are no clothes, but go along with the ruse anyway.

Extension/Reflection

Why do you think the content creators chose to present the ideas differently?

Ex. answer: I think that the content creators had different goals. Hans Christian Andersen wanted to tell an entertaining children's story that hints at a larger truth, which is that often, people will blindly accept and follow authority. I think the TEDed group wanted to convey information about *Allegory of the Cave* in a way its audience would understand, and did that with visuals and imagery. I think the source text, Plato's writings, are hinting at a contradictory, but also frequently true idea, that people will value their own perception over outside facts.