

Critical Concepts 8.4A Non-Fiction Lesson Plans

Skill Focus: CC 8.4B – Determine the meaning of words or phrases in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings, and analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts

Vocabulary Word Bank: figurative, connotative, rhyme, repetition, stanza, verse, alliteration, assonance, tone

December Lesson Objectives

- SWBAT determine figurative and connotative meanings of words in a text using prefixes, roots, suffixes, and context clues.
- SWBAT identify repetition, alliteration, and assonance in prose.
- SWBAT analyze how sound devices and word choice impact tone and meaning in a passage.

Non Fiction Texts Suggestions for December (text selections are suggestion only, teachers can change the text to fit their classroom needs, if choosing another text it should come from the Educational Epiphany Curriculum)

- *For December ONLY we will use our class novel, Night as our non fiction text*

Graphic Organizer: Citing Evidence Refer to your Educational Epiphany Critical Concepts Binder: Graphic Organizers Tab: CC 8.4 (pages 77-98 in the Graphic Organizers Tab)

I Do (Teacher Model – 15 mins)

Text: *Night* – opening description of Moishe the Beadle returning to Sighet

Steps:

1. Distribute CC7.4B graphic organizer.
2. Review vocabulary in context:
 - *Connotation* = feelings/ideas a word carries beyond literal meaning.
 - *Repetition* = when a word or phrase is used more than once for effect.
 - *Tone* = author's attitude or emotional atmosphere created by words.
3. Read aloud the section where Wiesel repeats words about Moishe's return (e.g., "*day after day, night after night*").

Teacher Think-Aloud:

"As I read this passage, I notice the phrase '*day after day, night after night*.' Let me stop. Why would Wiesel repeat the structure here?

Literally, it means time kept passing. But figuratively, it emphasizes hopelessness and the unending weight of fear.

That repetition slows us down as readers and creates a heavy, relentless tone. Now, let's look at the word 'night.' Connotatively, it doesn't only mean the time of day. Here, 'night' suggests darkness, danger, and the loss of safety. This choice of word sets a haunting mood even before the deportations begin. Wiesel's repetition and word choice show us not just events, but the emotional impact of those events."

Sample Student Response:

- Word/Phrase: "day after day, night after night"
- Figurative/Connotative Meaning: Suggests endless suffering, time dragging with despair
- Sound Device: Repetition
- Impact: Creates a heavy, hopeless tone that reflects fear and uncertainty

We Do (Guided Practice – 20 mins)

Text: *Night* – passage where Moishe tries to warn the townspeople

Steps:

1. Read aloud the section describing how people ignore Moishe's warnings.
2. Highlight Wiesel's use of repetition: "*They did not listen. They refused to believe. They could not believe.*"
3. Work through the organizer as a class.

Teacher Think-Aloud:

"Let's look closely. Wiesel doesn't just say once that the people ignored Moishe—he repeats the idea in three different ways: '*did not listen*,' '*refused to believe*,' '*could not believe*.'"

Why repeat it? I think it shows the layers of denial.

The people weren't just ignoring him—they were actively choosing not to accept the truth. This repetition builds frustration and foreshadows tragedy, because their disbelief will cost them dearly.

The tone here feels desperate, almost like Wiesel is pleading with the reader to see what his neighbors could not. Repetition deepens that feeling."

Sample Class Organizer Response:

- Word/Phrase: "*They did not listen. They refused to believe. They could not believe.*"
- Figurative/Connotative Meaning: Shows people's denial and refusal to face reality
- Sound Device: Repetition
- Impact: Reinforces the theme of disbelief, creates a tone of frustration and foreshadowing

You Do with Partner (Collaborative Practice – 30 mins)

Text: *Night* – description of Sighet before deportation

Steps:

1. Partners reread the section describing Sighet's calm and disbelief before the catastrophe.
2. Pairs identify a word/phrase that carries figurative or connotative meaning.
3. Partners note if repetition, alliteration, or assonance is present.
4. Partners analyze its impact on tone and meaning in the organizer.

Teacher Questions While Circulating:

- "What feeling do these words carry beyond their dictionary meaning?"
- "What effect does Wiesel create by repeating this phrase?"
- "How does this word choice connect to the mood of the memoir?"

Sample Partner Response:

- Word/Phrase: "We continued to laugh, to play, to dream"
- Figurative/Connotative Meaning: Suggests innocence and ignorance, the illusion of normal life before tragedy
- Sound Device: Repetition (parallel phrasing of "to... to... to...")
- Impact: Creates a naive, almost lyrical tone that makes the coming horror even more shocking

You Do Independently

Text: *Night* – return to opening pages

Task:

Students independently select one word or phrase, determine its figurative/connotative meaning, and identify any repetition/sound device. Then they analyze how it shapes tone and meaning.

Teacher Think-Aloud (if scaffolding needed):

"If I choose the word '*night*,' I know it doesn't only mean darkness. Its connotation is fear, loss, and suffering. If I see Wiesel repeat it, that makes the tone even darker, almost like night becomes a symbol for the Holocaust itself. My analysis would explain how that choice impacts the reader's understanding."

Sample Independent Response:

- Word/Phrase: "Night"
- Figurative/Connotative Meaning: Symbolizes fear, suffering, and the destruction of innocence
- Sound Device: Repetition (the word '*night*' echoes throughout the book's beginning)
- Impact: Establishes a dark, foreboding tone and creates a symbolic connection between night and the horrors of the Holocaust