

## OBJECTIVE:

This lesson is intended to help students understand how to recognize the distinguishing features of play in order to better understand their reading by analyzing the way that plays are different than other narrative texts.

Supports the ELAR TEKS: 6.5 understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of drama and provide evidence from text to support their understanding

LEARNING TARGET(S):	EVALUATION:
I will understand how to recognize the characteristics of a play.	Reader's Notebook

## PREPARATION:

- Ensure that students have a copy of the pages from *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown* by Clark Gesner (play in textbook) and that students have a copy of the *Happiness is a Charming Charlie Brown* at Orlando Rep (script in textbook) by Matthew MacDermid.
- Two anchor charts—one as an ongoing reference for characteristics of plays and one to display students' discoveries about the nature of plays versus other texts.
- A Reader's Theater script or play for each student/group of students to read during independent reading.

## Whole Group Mini-Lesson

## BELLRINGER: Week 2, Day 1

Learning Objective: Combining sentences by joining nouns  
Follow the model to combine each pair of sentences below.

Example: Tasha likes jumping rope. She also likes swimming.  
Tasha likes jumping rope and swimming.

1. There are oak trees in the park. There are pine trees in the park, too.
2. House cats need water and food. They also need litter boxes.

## ENGAGE:

- Tell students that today they are going to be introduced to a new genre of narrative text called plays, or dramatic performances. Explain that plays are written as literature to be performed and that they are written in an entirely different format than most other texts.

## EXPLAIN:

- Inform students that plays are an engaging way for storytellers to bring a story to life on stage. A play contains the story elements of narrative text such as characters, setting, plot, conflict and resolution. Often there is a theme that drives the storyline. The actors in the play help the audience feel like they are right there on stage encountering whatever problems or situations that the characters are facing. Good plays touch the audience by helping

them experience the different laugh or cry. They can even make us feel angry. Briefly relate any personal experience regarding plays. On the characteristics anchor chart, write the definition for the genre plays.

## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING:

- Half way through *The Phantom Tollbooth*, have students stop and turn to their shoulder partner to discuss, "How do you know what characters and sets are in this play?"
- Answer: The characters and the sets are listed on the first page of the play.

## WORD WORK: Vocabulary Knowledge Rating

- Have students preview the selection vocabulary.
  - For each word, have students say the word aloud.
  - Then, use the word in a sentence that defines the word.
  - Finally, repeat your definitional sentence or a similar sentence with the word missing and have the class "fill in the blank" chorally. Here are some examples:
    - Something done to prevent harm or danger is precautionary. The ranger's warning to the campers to leave before the storm was [student's say, "precautionary"]
    - Ferocious means to be dangerous. Modern zoos seek to create natural habitats for animals while protecting human visitors from those who may be unmeddled [students say, "ferocious"].
- Create a Vocabulary Knowledge Rating Chart (Professional Development Notebook page 35)
- Write the word ethnomusicology on the board. Discuss the meaning of the root. (Answer: Ethnomusicology is the study of music in the context of customs or culture.)
  - Using the Vocabulary Knowledge Rating Chart, have students mark their rating of each word on the chart. Urge them to be alert to the words as they read and discuss the selection.
  - Have them rate the words again after concluding reading.
  - Clarify any that remain problematic and add to the class interactive word wall.

## EXPLORE:

- Ask the students to view both the page from the book and the page from the play. Ask them to pay attention to ways that a play is written different than a book or novel.
- Ask students to work with a partner to write their thoughts on a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting the two narrative forms.
- Ask students to share their insights with you. Record their thoughts on a compare and contrast anchor chart.
- Be certain to highlight common features/characteristics of plays that differ from those of other types of literature. (i.e. actors, narrators, dialogue, action to move the story along, and stage directions). This conversation will serve as the ground work for subsequent lessons.

#### ELABORATE:

- Tell students that soon they will learn more about the characteristics of plays, how to read them, and how to perform them. Today in their independent reading they will be reading through a short script to become familiar with how plays are written.

#### EVALUATE: Reader's Notebook Response

I read (title) by (playwright/author). I noticed the play is the same/different from a narrative story because . . .

#### Supported Independent Reading

- Allow students to spend a few minutes reading the short excerpt from a play and completing their responses. Students will resume reading in their independent reading books upon completion of the response.
- Note that students may read one script or several during the course of this unit depending upon length and availability. Students may read for a set number of minutes or until a certain point in a script and then resume independent reading in their books of choice.

#### Conferring/Invitational Group

- Utilize conferring time to ensure that students can see the differences between plays are noticed as well as how the narrative features are scripted.

#### Possible Conference Questions:

- What are you noticing as a reader today?
- What did you find in your reading of a play that is the same as previous texts you have read?
- What did you find in your reading of a play that is different from other texts you have read?

#### Share

- Have students write one feature of plays or one way plays and stories are different on an exit slip.

#### TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

- Using an Online Comic Creator First, review ReadWriteThink's Comic Creator (<https://www.readwritethink.org/materials/comic/comiccreator.pdf>).
- Then, reserve your school's computer lab in advance or use classroom laptops.
- Arrange for the Comic Creator site to be on each computer.
- Print out, distribute, and discuss the Sample Comic Strip Planning Sheet.
- Have students use the planning sheet to develop a comic strip about You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown.
- Then, have students read and share their comic strips in small groups.
- Display them in your classroom.

#### GRAMMAR:

- Read aloud this sentence describing an incident from the selection students have read:  
After he cleared his throat, the Gatekeeper, a proud man, welcomed the travelers to Dictionopolis.
- Ask students what they notice about the sentence. Elicit from them that the sentence begins with a prepositional phrase. Ask them to identify the preposition after and the object of the preposition, he.
- Then, ask what else they notice about the sentence? (The subject of the sentence, Gatekeeper, is a simple subject. It is followed by an appositive phrase that describes the subject: a proud man.)
- Have students imitate the sentence in a sentence to describe a character of their own choosing from the play, matching each grammatical and stylistic feature discussed.
- Have students share their sentences with the class.

#### WRITING WORKSHOP:

Writing TEKS 6.14B & D, 6.17B & C  
Conventions TEKS 6.10A & V, 6.20A, ii, iii, 6.20C and 6.21B

#### Introducing the Assignment

- Review the assignment and the Exit slip, "In a response to literature you give your opinion of a piece of writing. One good way to respond to literature is to write a letter to an author. You might see examples of this form in movie reviews, book reviews, or critical responses.
- Today, you will write a letter to a favorite author to share your response to his or her work. Include the elements:
    - An introduction
    - An interpretation that exhibits careful reading, conveys ideas, and includes important information
    - Clear organizational format in which you provide evidence from the text to demonstrate understanding
    - Elements of formal business lettersError-free writing, including correct use of participial phrases (See rubric on page 743 of textbook.)

#### PREWRITING/PLANNING STRATEGY:

##### SIX TRAITS FOCUS (Ideas and Organization)

- Using a hexagon, choose a favorite work of literature. Then use the six headings of a hexagon like the one show on page 738 in textbook to help you consider a variety of ideas.
- Gather details about the work under each heading.
- Review your ideas and choose one to present in your letter.

#### Focus Your Response

- Create a focused, organized, and coherent letter.
- Begin by identifying your most important ideas.
- Then organize your thoughts around those ideas.

#### TIPS:

1. Determine your purpose.
2. Organize and build on your ideas.
3. Create coherence.

## I. Milo

There was once a boy named Milo who didn't know what to do with himself-not just sometimes, but always.

When he was in school he longed to be out, and when he was out he longed to be in. On the way he thought about coming home, and coming home he thought about going. Wherever he was he wished he were somewhere else, and when he got there he wondered why he'd bothered. Nothing really interested him-least of all the things that should have.

"It seems to me that almost everything is a waste of time," he remarked one day as he walked dejectedly home from school. "I can't see the point in learning to solve useless problems, or subtracting turnips from turnips, or knowing where Ethiopia is or how to spell February." And, since no one bothered to explain otherwise, he regarded the process of seeking knowledge as the greatest waste of time of all.



As he and his unhappy thoughts hurried along (for while he was never anxious to be where he was going, he liked to get there as quickly as possible) it seemed a great wonder that the world, which was so large, could sometimes feel so small and empty.

'I\nd worst of all," he continued sadly, "there's nothing for me to do, nowhere I'd care to go, and hardly anything worth seeing." He punctuated this last thought with such a deep sigh that a house sparrow singing nearby stopped and rushed home to be with his family.

Without stopping or looking up, Milo dashed past the buildings and busy shops that lined the street and in a few minutes reached home-dashed through the lobby-hopped onto the elevator-two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, and off again-opened the apartment door-rushed into his room-flopped dejectedly into a chair, and grumbled softly, 'I\nother long afternoon."

He looked glumly at all the things he owned. The books that were too much trouble to read, the tools he'd never learned to use, the small electric automobile he hadn't driven in months-or was it years?-and the hundreds of other games and toys, and bats and balls, and bits and pieces scattered around him. And then, to one side of the room, just next to the phonograph, he noticed something he had certainly never seen before.

Who could possibly have left such an enormous pack-age and such a strange one? For, while it was not quite square, it was definitely not round, and for its size it was larger than almost any other big package of smaller dimension that he'd ever seen.

## THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH

Attached to one side was a bright-blue envelope which said simply: "FOR MILO, WHO HAS PLENTY OF TIME."

Of course, if you've ever gotten a surprise package, you can imagine how puzzled and excited Milo was; and if you've never gotten one, pay close attention, because someday you might.

"I don't think it's my birthday," he puzzled, "and Christmas must be months away, and I haven't been outstandingly good, or even good at all." (He had to admit this even to himself) "Most probably I won't like it anyway, but since I don't know where it came from, I can't possibly send it back." He thought about it for quite a while and then opened the envelope, but just to be polite.

"ONE GENUINE TURNPIKE TOLLBOOTH," it stated-and then it went on:

"EASILY ASSEMBLED AT HOME, AND FOR USE BY THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER TRAVELED IN LANDS BEYOND."

"Beyond what?" thought Milo as he continued to read.

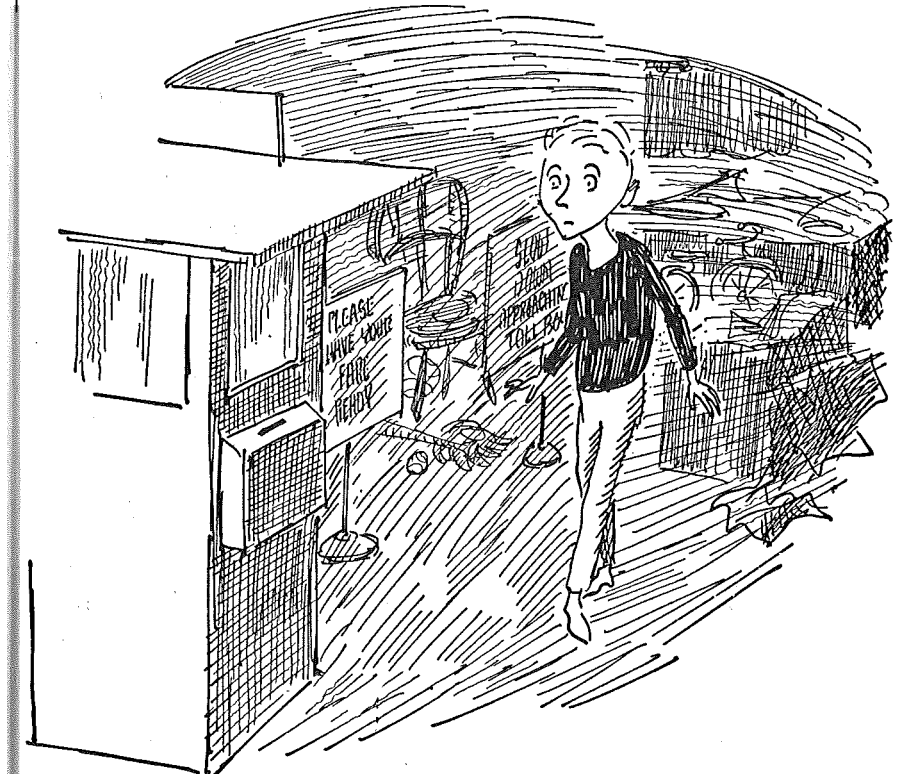
"THIS PACKAGE CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

"One (1) genuine turnpike tollbooth to be erected according to directions.

"Three (3) precautionary signs to be used in a precautionary fashion.

"Assorted coins for use in paying tolls.

"One (1) map, up to date and carefully drawn by mas-



ter cartographers, depicting natural and man-made features.

"One (1) book of rules and traffic regulations, which may not be bent or broken."

And in smaller letters at the bottom it concluded:

"RESULTS ARE NOT GUARANTEED, BUT IF NOT PERFECTLY SATISFIED, YOUR WASTED TIME WILL BE REFUNDED."

Following the instructions, which told him to cut here, lift there, and fold back all around, he soon had the toll-



booth unpacked and set up on its stand. He fitted the windows in place and attached the roof, which extended out on both sides, and fastened on the coin box. It was very much like the tollbooths he'd seen many times on family trips, except of course it was much smaller and purple.

"What a strange present," he thought to himself. "The least they could have done was to send a highway with it, for it's terribly impractical without one." But since, at the time, there was nothing else he wanted to play with, he set up the three signs,

SLOW DOWN APPROACHING TOLLBOOTH

PLEASE HAVE YOUR FARE READY

HAVE YOUR DESTINATION IN MIND

and slowly unfolded the map.

As the announcement stated, it was a beautiful map, in many colors, showing principal roads, rivers' and seas towns and cities, mountains and valleys, intersections and detours, and sites of outstanding interest both beautiful and historic.

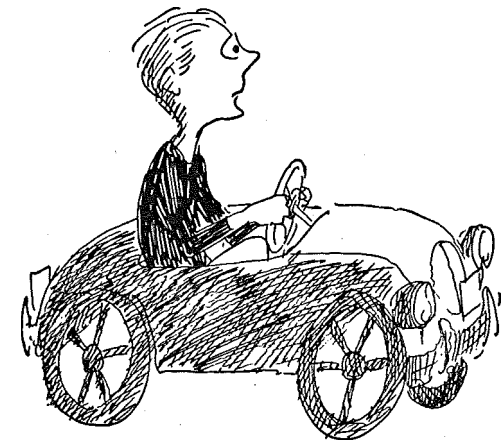
The only trouble was that Milo had never heard of any of the places it indicated, and even the names sounded most peculiar.

"I don't think there really is such a country," he concluded after studying it carefully. "Well, it doesn't matter anyway." And he closed his eyes and poked a finger at the map.

"Dictionopolis," read Milo slowly when he saw what

his finger had chosen. "Oh, well, I might as well go there as anywhere."

He walked across the room and dusted the car off carefully. Then, taking the map and rule book with him, he hopped in and, for lack of anything better to do, drove slowly up to the tollbooth. As he deposited his coin and rolled past he remarked wistfully, "I do hope this is an interesting game, otherwise, the afternoon will be so terribly dull."



# THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH

Susan Nanus

based on  
the book by  
Norton  
Juster

## Cast (in order of appearance)

- THE CLOCK
- MILO, a boy
- THE WHETHER MAN
- SIX LETHARGARIANS
- TOCK, THE WATCHDOG (same as the clock)
- AZAZ THE UNABRIDGED, KING OF DICTIONOPOLIS
- THE MATHEMAGICIAN, KING OF DIGITOPOLIS
- PRINCESS SWEET RHYME
- PRINCESS PURE REASON
- GATEKEEPER OF DICTIONOPOLIS
- THREE WORD MERCHANTS
- THE LETTERMAN (fourth word merchant)
- SPELLING BEE
- THE HUMBUG
- THE DUKE OF DEFINITION
- THE MINISTER OF MEANING
- THE EARL OF ESSENCE
- THE COUNT OF CONNOTATION
- THE UNDERSECRETARY OF UNDERSTANDING
- A PAGE
- KAKAFONOUS A.
- DISCHORD, DOCTOR OF DISSONANCE
- THE AWFUL DYNNE
- THE DODECAHEDRON
- MINERS OF THE NUMBERS MINE
- THE EVERPRESENT WORDSNATCHER
- THE TERRIBLE TRIVIAM
- THE DEMON OF INSINCERITY
- SENSES TAKER

## The Sets

1. MILO'S BEDROOM-with shelves, pen• nants, pictures on the wall, as well as suggestions of the characters of the Land of Wisdom.
2. THE ROAD TO THE LAND OF WISDOM• a forest, from which the Whether Man and the Lethargarians emerge.
3. DICTIONOPOLIS-a marketplace full of open air stalls as well as little shops. Letters and signs should abound.
4. DIGITOPOLIS-a dark, glittering place without trees or greenery, but full of shining rocks and cliffs, with hun• dreds of numbers shining everywhere.
5. THE LAND OF gray, gloomy place full of cliffs and caves, with frightening faces. Different lev• els and heights should be suggested through one or two platforms or ris• ers, with a set of stairs that lead to the castle in the air.

# Act I Scene i

*(The stage is completely dark and silent. Suddenly the sound of someone winding an alarm clock is heard, and after that, the sound of loud ticking is heard.)*

*(LIGHTS UP on the CLOCK, a huge alarm clock. The CLOCK reads 4:00. The lighting should make it appear that the CLOCK is suspended in mid-air (if possible). The CLOCK ticks for 30 seconds.)*

**CLOCK.** See that! Half a minute gone by. Seems like a long time when you're waiting for something to happen, doesn't it? Funny thing is, time can pass very slowly or very fast, and sometimes even both at once. The time now? Oh, a little after four, but what that means should depend on you. Too often, we do something simply because time tells us to. Time for school, time for bed, whoops, 12:00, time to be hungry. It can get a little silly, don't you think? Time is important, but it's what you do with it that makes it so. So my advice to you is to use it. Keep your eyes open and your ears perked. Otherwise it will pass before you know it, and you'll certainly have missed something! Things have a habit of doing that, you know. Being here one minute and gone the next. In the twinkling of an eye. In ajiffy.

In a flash!

I know a girl who yawned and missed a whole summer vacation. And what about that caveman who took a nap one afternoon, and woke up to find himself completely alone. You see, while he was sleeping, someone had invented the wheel and everyone had moved to the suburbs. And then of course, there is Milo. *(LIGHTS UP to reveal MILO's Bedroom. The CLOCK appears to be on a shelf in the room of a young boy—a room filled with books, toys, games, maps, papers, pencils, a bed, a desk. There is a dartboard with numbers and the face of the MATHEMAGICIAN, a bedspread made from KING AZAZ's cloak, a kite looking like the spelling bee, a punching bag with the HUMBUG's face, as well as records, a television,*

## Vocabulary

**ignorance** (ig' ne rens)  
n. lack of knowledge, education, or experience

## Summary

Maintain meaning.  
Summarize the point  
Clock is making.

## Check for Understanding

- How do you know what characters and sets are in this play?



## LITERATURE IN CONTEXT

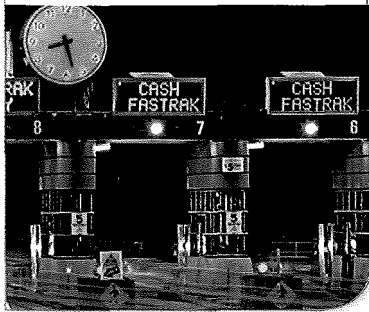
### Culture Connection

#### Turnpike Tollbooth

A turnpike is a road that people pay a fee, or toll, to use. Long ago, long spears called "pikes" barred the road. The pikes were turned aside only after travelers paid the toll. A tollbooth is the booth or gate at which tolls are collected. The first record of tolls being collected dates from about 2000 B.C., when tolls were collected on a Persian military road between Babylon and Syria.

### Connect to the Literature

How might the tollbooth—an unusual gift—affect Milo's bored state of mind?



#### Vocabulary

**precautionary** (pri ko' she ner' e) *adj.* done to prevent harm or danger

a toy car, and a large box that is wrapped and has an envelope taped to the top. The sound of FOOTSTEPS is heard, and then enter MILO d(jectedly. He throws down his books and coat, flops into a chair, and sighs loudly.] Who never knows what to do with himself—not just sometimes, but always. When he's in school, he wants to be out, and when he's out he wants to in. [During the following speech, MILO examines various toys, tools, and other possessions in the room, trying them out and rejecting them.] Wherever he is, he wants to be somewhere else—and when he gets there, so what. Everything is too much trouble or a waste of time. Books—he's already read them. Games—boring. T.V.—dumb. What's left? Another long, boring afternoon. Unless he bothers to notice a very large package that happened to arrive today.

**MILO.** [Suddenly notices the package. He drags himself over to it, and disinterestedly reads the label.] "For Milo, who has plenty of time." Well, that's true. [Sighs and looks at it.] No. [Wallows away.] Well ... [Comes back. Rips open envelope and reads.]

**A VOICE.** "One genuine turnpike tollbooth, easily assembled at home for use by those who have never traveled in lands beyond."

**MILO.** Beyond what? [Continues reading.]

**A VOICE.** "This package contains the following items:" [MILO pulls the items out of the box and sets them up as they are mentioned.] "One (1) genuine turnpike tollbooth to be erected according to directions. Three (3) precautionary signs to be used in a precautionary fashion. Assorted coins for paying tolls. One (1) map, strictly up to date, showing how to get from here to there. One (1) book of rules and traffic regulations which may not be bent or broken. Warning! Results are not guaranteed. If not perfectly satisfied, your wasted time will be refunded."



**MILO.** *[Skeptically.]* Come off it, who do you think you're kidding? *[Walks around and examines tollbooth.]* What am I supposed to do with this? *[The ticking of the CLOCK grows loud and impatient.]* Well . . . what else do I have to do. *[MILO gets into his toy car and drives up to the first sign.]*

**VOICE.** "HAVE YOUR DESTINATION IN MIND."

**MILO.** *[Pulls out the map.]* Now, let's see. That's funny. I never heard of any of these places. Well, it doesn't matter anyway. Dictionopolis. That's a weird name. I might as well go there. *[Begins to move, following map. Drives off.]*

**CLOCK.** See what I mean? You never know how things are going to get started. But when you're bored, what you need more than anything is a rude awakening.

*[The ALARM goes off very loudly as the stage darkens. The sound of the alarm is transformed into the honking of a car horn, and is then joined by the blasts, bleeps, roars and growls of heavy highway traffic. When the lights come up, MILO's bedroom is gone and we see a lonely road in the middle of nowhere.]*

## Scene ii The Road to Dictionopolis

*[Enter MILO in his car.]*

**MILO.** This is weird! I don't recognize any of this scenery at all. *[A SIGN is held up before MILO, startling him.]* Huh? *[Reads.]* WELCOME TO EXPECTATIONS. INFORMATION, PREDICTIONS AND ADVICE CHEERFULLY OFFERED. PARK HERE AND BLOW HORN. *[MILO blows horn.]*

**WHETHER MAN.** *[A little man wearing a long coat and carrying an umbrella pops up from behind the sign that he was holding. He speaks very fast and excitedly.]* My, my, my, my, my, my, welcome, welcome, welcome, welcome to the Land of Expectations, Expectations, Expectations! We don't get many travelers these days; we certainly don't get many travelers. Now what can I do for you? I'm the Whether Man.

**MILO.** *[Referring to map.]* Uh . . . is this the right road to Dictionopolis?

### Spiral

#### Review

Make Inferences  
Based on evidence  
in the text, what can  
you infer might hap-  
pen next?

### Summary

Reread Scene i to  
identify the main ideas  
and supporting details.  
Then, summarize the  
key events in the scene.

### Dialogue in

What do Drama  
you learn  
about the Whether Man  
from his first speech?

