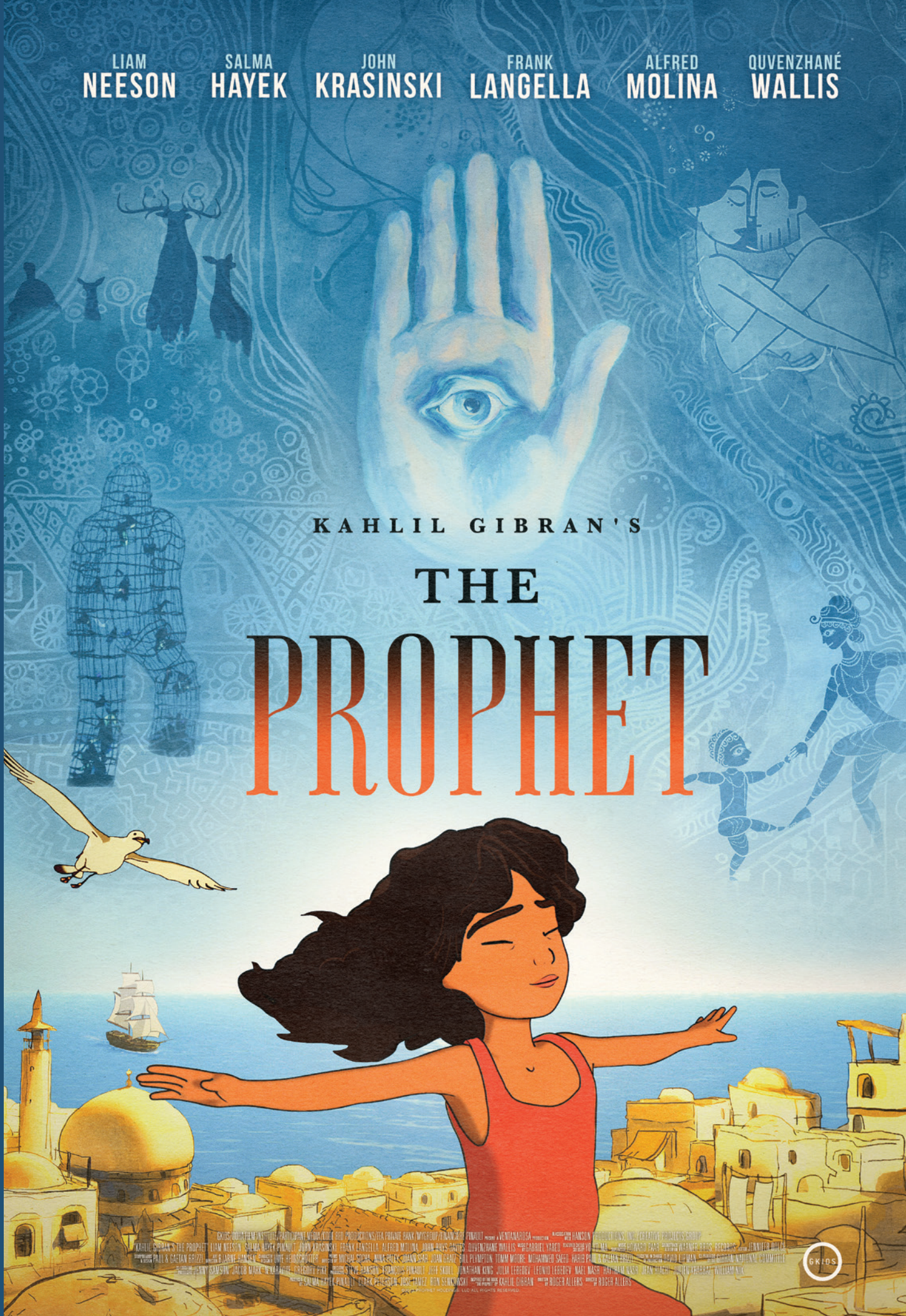
Curriculum Guide



Journeys in Film
EDUCATING FOR GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING
In Partnership with USC Rossier School of Education

Journeys in Film™
EDUCATING FOR GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING
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Curriculum Guide
For the Film
Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet

participant media

Journeys in Film

www.journeysinfilm.org

Educating for Global Understanding

www.journeysinfilm.org

Authors of this curriculum guide

Jack Burton

Anne Engles

Kathryn Fitzgerald

Jonathan Freeman-Coppadge

Bengt Johnson

Matt McCormick

Laura Zlatos

With thanks to Lynn Hirshfield and Hamida Rehimi of Participant Media, and to William Nix of Creative Projects Group and Executive Producer of *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet*

Participant Media
331 Foothill Rd., 3rd Floor
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
310.550.5100
www.participantmedia.com

Journeys in Film
50 Sandia Lane
Placitas, NM 87043
505.867.4666
www.journeysinfilm.org

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About Journeys in Film

Journeys in Film was founded in 2003 to use the storytelling power of film to educate our young generations toward a richer understanding of the diverse and complex world in which we live. Our goal is to help students develop a deeper knowledge of global issues and current challenges. We aim to mitigate attitudes of cultural bias and racism and to cultivate human empathy and compassion. We strive to prepare students for effective participation in the world economy as informed global citizens.

Journeys in Film transforms entertainment media into educational media by using feature-length, domestic and international narrative and documentary films to engage students in active learning. Selected films are used as springboards for lesson plans in math, science, language arts, visual arts, and social studies, as well as on critical current topics: human rights, poverty and hunger, stereotyping, environmental sustainability, global health and pandemics, refugee issues, gender roles, and the status of girls throughout the world. Prominent educators on our team consult with filmmakers and cultural specialists in the development of curriculum guides. Each guide is dedicated to an in-depth exploration of the culture and issues depicted in a specific film. The guides merge effectively into teachers' existing lesson plans and mandated curricular requirements, providing teachers with an innovative way to fulfill their school districts' standards-based goals.

Our research supports the founding premise that film can be a powerful ingredient in a school curriculum.

Many teachers have reported that the Journeys in Film program was beneficial to their students: Students gain in empathy and acceptance; their curiosity about the world beyond their own cultural groups increases.

In addition to the free film-based lesson plans, Journeys in Film offers professional development to help teachers effectively use film as an instructional tool to motivate students in learning about and engaging with the world.

Our Middle School Program for Global Understanding

To be prepared to participate in tomorrow's global arena, students need an understanding of the world beyond their own borders. Journeys in Film offers innovative and engaging tools to explore other cultures and social issues, beyond the often negative images seen in print, television, and film media. For today's media-centric youth, film is an appropriate and effective teaching tool. Journeys in Film has carefully selected quality films that tell the stories of young people living in locations that may otherwise never be experienced by your students. Students travel through these characters and their stories: They drink tea with an Iranian family in *Children of Heaven*, play soccer in a Tibetan monastery in *The Cup*, find themselves in the conflict between urban grandson and rural grandmother in South Korea in *The Way Home*, and watch the ways modernity challenges Maori traditions in New Zealand in *Whale Rider*.

Documentary Films on Contemporary and Historical Topics

In addition to our ongoing development of teaching guides for culturally sensitive foreign films, Journeys in Film brings other outstanding and socially relevant films to the classroom. We have identified exceptional narrative and documentary films that teach about a broad range of social issues in real-life settings such as famine-stricken and war-torn Somalia, a maximum-security prison in Alabama, and a World War II concentration camp near Prague. The curriculum guides from Journeys in Film help teachers integrate these films into their classrooms, examining complex issues, encouraging students to be active rather than passive viewers, and maximizing the power of film to enhance critical thinking skills and to meet the Common Core standards.

Journeys in Film is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and is a project of the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center, a nonpartisan research and public policy center that studies the social, political, economic, and cultural impact of entertainment on the world—and translates its findings into action.

A Letter From Liam Neeson

Working in films such as *Michael Collins* and *Schindler's List*, I've seen the power of film not only to entertain, but also to change the way audiences see themselves and the world. When I first met Joanne Ashe, herself the daughter of Holocaust survivors, she explained to me her vision for a new educational program called Journeys in Film: Educating for Global Understanding. I grasped immediately how such a program could transform the use of film in the classroom from a passive viewing activity to an active, integral part of learning.

I have served as the national spokesperson for Journeys in Film since its inception because I absolutely believe in the effectiveness of film as an educational tool that can teach our young people to value and respect cultural diversity and to see themselves as individuals who can make a difference. Journeys in Film uses interdisciplinary, standards-aligned lesson plans that can support and enrich classroom programs in English, social studies, math, science, and the arts. Using films as a teaching tool is invaluable, and Journeys in Film has succeeded in creating outstanding film-based curriculum integrated into core academic subjects.

By using carefully selected foreign films that depict life in other countries and cultures around the globe, combined with interdisciplinary curriculum to transform entertainment media into educational media, we can use the classroom to bring the world to every student. Our foreign film program dispels myths and misconceptions, enabling students to overcome biases; it connects the future leaders of the world with each other. As we provide teachers with lessons aligned to Common Core standards, we are also laying a foundation for understanding, acceptance, trust, and peace.

In addition to our ongoing development of teaching guides for culturally sensitive foreign films, Journeys in Film has begun a curricular initiative to bring outstanding documentary films and popular feature films to the classroom. Journeys in Film has identified exceptional narrative and documentary films that teach about a broad range of social issues, in real-life settings such as an AIDS-stricken township in Africa, a maximum-security prison in Alabama, and a World War II concentration camp near Prague. Journeys guides help teachers integrate these films into their classrooms, examining complex issues, and maximizing the power of film to enhance critical thinking skills, a Common Core goal. I am particularly pleased that Journeys in Film has developed this guide for *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet*.

Please share my vision of a more harmonious world where cross-cultural understanding and the ability to converse about complex issues are keys to a healthy present and a peaceful future. Whether you are a student, an educator, a filmmaker, or a financial supporter, I encourage you to participate in the Journeys in Film program. (Journeys in Film is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.)

Please join this vital journey for our kids' future. They are counting on us. Journeys in Film gets them ready for the world.

Sincerely,

National Spokesperson
Journeys in Film

Introducing the Film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet*

On the imaginary island of Orphalese, the poet and artist Mustafa continues his writing and painting, despite being under house arrest for many years. He is looked after by Kamila, a beautiful housekeeper, and Hakim, his friendly guard. Kamila's troubled, silent young daughter, Almitra, forms an unlikely friendship with Mustafa. When he is released from house arrest and ordered to leave the country, she trails along. On the way, Mustafa passes by a village wedding, an outdoor café, and a marketplace. At each place, the poet is asked to share his wisdom with the townspeople. Immensely popular and revered by the townspeople, he is increasingly perceived as a threat by the authoritarian government of Orphalese.

The film is inspired by Kahlil Gibran's beloved book of poetic essays, *The Prophet,* but there is so little plot in the original story—just a man waiting for a ship and addressing his followers, that producer Salma Hayek felt that additional background, characterization, and events would make the film more accessible and more appealing to families. She and the other producers turned to writer and director Roger Allers, best known for the Disney film *The Lion King,* to write the storyline and to give direction to the main narrative. With a setting that is deliberately ambiguous, the events could happen anywhere in the Mediterranean, with many characters modeled after people Allers met in Crete as a young man.

An animated narrative becomes a frame story in which marvelous and dreamlike animations are embedded. As Mustafa discourses on love, marriage, work, and other major life issues, the child Almitra's imagination soars and the viewer is engaged in fantastical and magical interludes that interpret the philosophical messages. Several different artists from France, Dubai, Poland, Ireland, and the United States directed the animation, each with free rein to interpret and illustrate a poem. The animations, all very different from each other, nevertheless blend seamlessly into the main story.

Viewers of all ages will find much to admire in the film. Children will enjoy the adventures of the mischievous little Almitra and her equally mischievous seagull companion as they perch on rooftops, share purloined snacks, and torment the mean and gluttonous Sergeant. Older students and adults will appreciate both the film's humor and its poignancy as they compare Orphalese with the repressive regimes we know too well; they will acknowledge Mustafa's courage as a man who, like the most devoted of today's activists, values his principles even more than life itself. *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* portrays the human soul's triumph over oppression through beauty, art, music, friendship, loyalty, tolerance, and love.

Gibran was a man who believed strongly in unity in diversity. The way that the film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* was conceived, financed, produced, and released, and the way that animators from many countries and cultures united to illustrate this story, reflect Gibran's view of the world, his idea that we are all part of a multifaceted culture and design.

Director: Roger Allers

Producers: Salma Hayek, Clark Peterson, José Tamez, and Ron Senkowski

Executive Producers: Steve Hanson, François Pinault, Jeff Skoll, Jonathan King, Julia Lebedev, Leonid Lebedev, Naël Nasr, Haytham Nasr, Jean Riachi, Julien Khabbaz, and William Nix

Cast: Liam Neeson, Salma Hayek, Quvenzhané Wallis, John Krasinski, Frank Langella, and Alfred Molina

Animation Directors:
Michal Socha, *On Freedom* (Poland)
Nina Paley, *On Children* (United States)
Joann Sfar, *On Marriage* (France)
Joan Gratz, *On Work* (United States)
Bill Plympton, *On Eating and Drinking* (United States)
Tomm Moore, *On Love* (Ireland)
Mohammed Saeed Harib, *On Good and Evil* (Dubai/France)
Paul and Gaetan Brizzi, *On Death* (France)

Art Director: Bjarne Hansen

Composer: Gabriel Yared
Additional Music by Lisa Hannigan, Glen Hansard, and Damien Rice
Special Performance by Yo-Yo Ma

Running length: 84 minutes

Awards: Nominated for World Soundtrack Award, Composer of the Year—Gabriel Yared

A Letter From Salma Hayek

PHOTOGRAPHER: GEORGES BIARD

The first time I ever saw the book *The Prophet*, by Kahlil Gibran, I was not even six years old. My Lebanese grandfather kept it by his bedside. I was too young to read it, but I understood that it was a little treasure for him, and I was intrigued by its contents and the drawing of the mysterious man on its cover.

It wasn't until my late teens that I actually experienced its beauty and power, and for many years I have continued to do so because every time I read it, I experience it in a completely different way. It magically takes my mind into new places that I thought I already knew. Gibran's words move me in an intimate way, and have done so for millions of people. The book has sold more than 100 million copies around the world, and it's one of the most beloved books ever.

In an effort to celebrate Kahlil Gibran's writings, we have created a film that visually and musically takes you on an adventure into his poetry and wisdom. So, on behalf of everyone involved in making this film, we invite you to explore the film and the book, and to discover for yourself the joy of Kahlil Gibran's world.

Salma Hayek

Notes to the Teacher

If [the teacher] is indeed wise he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind.

— Kahlil Gibran

These words, from a poem by Kahlil Gibran called "On Teaching," exhort teachers to practice humility and challenge us: How do we lead our students to the thresholds of their own minds? This curriculum guide will help you achieve that goal by introducing lessons that encourage both critical thinking and creativity.

Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet is a film that appeals to students of all ages. The lessons in this guide will help you to use the film in the classroom to further your curricular goals. They have been developed by experienced classroom teachers and are aligned with Common Core State Standards. The lessons may be taught as a unit, or individual lessons may be used independently.

The opening lesson introduces students to Kahlil Gibran's life and philosophy. As a Lebanese-born adolescent, he moved to the United States, where he first learned English. He returned to his native land for Arabic studies and, finally, continued his artistic education in Paris, becoming a true cosmopolitan figure. Gibran's 1923 book, *The Prophet,* universally known and loved, has sold more than 100 million copies and has been translated into more than 50 languages.

Although best known as a writer, Gibran was also a visual artist who took pride in designing and illustrating all his books. The second lesson in the curriculum gives students insight into the artistic traditions that influenced his work, with a survey of some of his paintings demonstrating how the film's embedded animations reflect the influences of the author's visual style.

The eight shorter English language arts lessons focus on the poems and dreamlike animation sequences embedded in the story of Almitra and the poet Mustafa. Each lesson is designed in three parts, so that students can analyze the poem, review important terms for the study of poetry, and produce their own creative writing. The content and objectives of each lesson determine the order in which these three parts are presented.

Finally, there is a film literacy lesson that teaches students to look at not just a film's message, but also how it conveys its message. Students learn to use a contemporary film vocabulary that is more usually applied to live-action films, as a way of analyzing directorial choices in animation.

The film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* and the accompanying curriculum guide may be used independently or in conjunction with the study of the book *The Prophet* in world literature, American literature, poetry, creative writing, and even Advanced Placement literature classes. It is important that students understand the textual differences between the original book and the film. Almustafa, "the chosen and beloved," the "prophet" in the original book, becomes in the film the character Mustafa, a poet. Similarly, in the book, Almitra is a

"seeress" or mystical figure, not the film's mischievous young girl. And in the original text, repressive state officers do not threaten and exile Almustafa; he simply awaits the arrival of his ship. Gibran's exact words have occasionally been edited for the eight poems presented in the film. It may be valuable for students to explore more completely the 28 poems of the original text.

Several lessons suggest showing the full film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* in one sitting. If you are teaching the entire unit, you should decide whether to show it once or several times. The film clips of the embedded animations used in the lessons are indicated by starting and stopping numbers. Please note that these are approximate, depending on your specific version of the film. Some clips include a bit of the main story because the poem recitation begins before the animation or continues after it. Take the time to set up your projection method before the class begins and bookmark the clip you wish to use so that you can integrate the film clip smoothly into your instruction. New and used printed copies of *The Prophet* are readily available in bookstores and libraries, and over the Internet. A new paperback edition is due for release in conjunction with the release of the film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet*.

Additional Resources

http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/kahlil-gibran
Biography of Kahlil Gibran and a list of his writings

http://www.gibrankhalilgibran.org/Home/
A gallery of paintings owned by the Gibran National Committee (in Lebanon).

http://gibrankgibran.org/eng/gibran-kahlil-gibran/
English translations of essays on the life of Gibran Kahlil Gibran, Lebanon His Motherland, Academic Review, Unpublished Texts and a Catalogue of original art and photos from *Gibran el Profeta.* Museo Soumaya, Carlos Slim Foundation, Mexico City, Mexico. 2009.

Bushrei, Suheil B., and Joe Jenkins. *Kahlil Gibran, Man and Poet: A New Biography*. Oxford, England: Oneworld Publications, 1998. Print.

Gibran, Jean, and Kahlil Gibran, *Kahlil Gibran, His Life and World,* first published New York Graphic Society, Ltd., 1974. Updated and revised with Foreword by Salma Khadra Jayyusi, Interlink Publishing Group, 1991. Scheduled for revision, Interlink Publishing Group, 2015. Print.

Waterfield, Robin, *Prophet: The Life and Times of Kahlil Gibran*. New York: Penguin Books, 1998. Print.

Who Was Kahlil Gibran?

Enduring Understandings

- Kahlil Gibran's early experiences shaped his beliefs in maturity.
- In his poetry and spirituality, Gibran often reconciled apparent opposites in a higher unity.
- The courage to stand alone and stand out gave Gibran his unique, powerful, timeless voice.

Essential Questions

- How did Gibran serve as a bridge between periods, places, and cultures?
- Why is there such a wistful sadness in so many places in Gibran's writings?
- What is the relationship between Gibran's visual art and written work?

Notes to the Teacher

Kahlil Gibran's life is a model for our increasingly global world. Born in Lebanon, he came to the United States at the age of 12, attending school in Boston and later in Beirut and Paris before moving to New York City. He adapted quickly to American culture, but retained his love for his homeland, second only to love for a spiritual, transcendent view of mankind. He wrote in both English and Arabic; his work shows elements of many religious faiths and great understanding of their commonalities. This lesson will familiarize students with his life and his belief in our essential human unity; it will ask them to theorize about some of the many ways that Gibran's work is so relevant to today's divided world.

Gibran was born on January 6, 1883, to a Maronite Catholic family in Bsharri, in what is now northern Lebanon. Gibran had an older half-brother named Peter, and two younger sisters, Mariana and Sultana. When Gibran was eight years old, his father was sent to prison for tax evasion, and the family lost their home and had to go to live with relatives. Gibran's mother, Kamila, soon decided that they should leave for the United States, following a cousin who had left earlier. Gibran's father, after being released from prison, remained behind in Lebanon.

According to Ellis Island records, Gibran, with his mother and siblings, arrived in New York City on June 17, 1895. The family settled in Boston, which at the time had the second-largest Lebanese and Syrian communities in the United States, after New York. At school, Gibran was placed in a class for immigrant children who needed to learn English, and his name was altered from Gibran Khalil to Kahlil Gibran.

Gibran's story is a good example of the immigrant experience in the United States around the turn of the century. He was invited to be involved in the Dennison House, a local community center, or "Settlement House," an institution that helped many immigrants in large cities to learn English, understand American ways, care for their children, and become adjusted to life in the United States—starting to achieve what became known as "the American Dream."

It was through this involvement that his drawings attracted his teachers' attention. He was introduced to Fred Holland Day, a well-known publisher and talented photographer who expanded the young immigrant's cultural horizons and encouraged and supported his artistic aspirations. In 1903 the poet Josephine Preston Peabody sponsored Gibran's first solo art exhibition at Wellesley College. A year later Day held an exhibit of Gibran's works at Boston's Harcourt Studios, where the 21-year-old artist met Mary Elizabeth Haskell, the headmistress of a girls' school; her financial patronage and personal support would prove crucial throughout his career. From 1908 to 1910, he studied art in Paris and in 1912 he settled back in New York, in the 10th Street Studios in Greenwich Village, where he devoted himself to painting and writing.

Gibran's early works were written in Arabic, but from 1918 on he published mostly in English—although he did continue to write in Arabic, mostly on political or cultural subjects relating to the Arab world. Gibran's masterpiece, *The Prophet*, was published in 1923. *Kahlil Gibran, The Collected Works,* published by Everyman's Library in 2007, contains 12 of his major English books; they were originally published in the United States by Alfred A Knopf.

Gibran died in 1931 in New York at the age of 48. According to his wishes, he was buried in his hometown of Bsharri in Lebanon, where a museum has been developed around his gift of the contents of his studio.

The lesson consists of three parts. Near the end of the film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet*, the Pasha of Orphalese reads aloud Mustafa's words about nations and demands that he renounce them or be put to death. Mustafa refuses, and will eventually face the firing squad. Interestingly, the words quoted by the Pasha are not to be found in the book *The Prophet*, but in a later work, *The Garden of the Prophet.* The tempo of the lines in this latter work have a biblical cadence, as in a prophet scolding Israel, or Jesus warning the hypocrites of his age with a repeated series of "Woe to you…." The first part of this lesson asks students to study the longer writing from which the filmmakers excerpted the passage for which Mustafa was condemned and to determine its relevance to the contemporary world.

The second part of the lesson involves another Gibran work, one in which he took a larger perspective than that of nationalism, closer to what we now call "global citizenry," or what Gibran often called "cosmopolite." His spiritual views insisted on the deep and abiding unity of all humankind, despite the fact that people come from many diverse races, religions, languages, and countries. His beliefs were triggered by certain aspects of the conflicts of World War I and the tragic history of Lebanon, a country that had suffered from internal sectarian strife, conflicts with neighbors, and control of its destiny by outside powers. In this part of the lesson, students read Gibran's poem "A Poet's Voice" and consider its value in the contemporary world.

The conclusion of the lesson considers Gibran's biography, although, as Gibran might argue, his thoughts and work are more important and enduring than the incidentals of his personal life. Students research the facts and events of Gibran's personal life and career and then draw conclusions about how they might have influenced his philosophy.

For additional information about Kahlil Gibran's life, see the following websites:

http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/kahlil-gibran#poet

http://www.poemhunter.com/Kahlil-gibran/biography/

https://www.library.cornell.edu/colldev/mideast/gibrn.htm

https://www.thegibranprojects.com

http://leb.net/gibran/

http://gibrankgibran.org/eng/gibran-kahlil-gibran/notas-biograficas/

Duration of the Lesson

Two or three class periods

Assessment

Class discussions

Journal entries

Completion of **Handouts 2** and **3**

Materials

Photocopies of **Handouts 1–3**

Gibran's poem "A Poet's Voice" from *Tears and a Smile,* also known as *Tears and Laughter*, translated by H. M. Nahmad. New York: Knopf 1948. It can be found in *Kahlil Gibran: The Collected Works*, Everyman's Library 2007).

Pen or pencil

Journal or notebook

Student Internet access

Procedure

PART 1: "Pity the Nation"

1. Pass out **HANDOUT 1: "PITY THE NATION."** Have students read the poem aloud, one line at a time, going around the class to involve many students.

2. Ask if there are any questions on the basic meaning of the words and phrases; Gibran writes with a traditional linguistic structure that often echoes the style of the King James Bible.

3. Divide the class into seven small groups and assign each group one of the lines that includes the phrase "Pity the nation." Explain to students that they are going to take apart and analyze each line and present their interpretations to the class. They will need to brainstorm answers to each of the questions on the handout and fully discuss them. Tell them that they should record their answers to the questions.

4. Give the small groups approximately 20 minutes to work on these three questions, writing their ideas and answers in their journal or notebook. Visit the groups to encourage them and stimulate their thinking, especially perhaps with the brainstorming of historical examples.

5. Bring the class back together and have someone from each of the groups share the group's findings and thinking about the questions.

6. To conclude, ask them to consider all the answers that they have heard during the reports. Hold a discussion around questions like these: What do you think of the views expressed by Almustafa? Which of his statements do you agree or disagree with? Why? Would his views prove to be a challenge, a help, or a threat to leaders of nations today? What would Almustafa say if he looked at our contemporary world?

PART 2: Exiles as Global Citizens

1. Start the class with a journal-writing assignment for five to seven minutes as a warm-up, using the following prompts:

a. What do we mean when we talk about our relationship with our native land, the country of our birth, our homeland? How does such a relationship develop?

b. What does it mean to be an exile?

c. Are there any positive aspects to being an exile?

2. Hold a class discussion about the students' responses to the journal prompts. (Be particularly sensitive to students who have come from other countries.)

3. Share the following information with the class: The writer Vera Linhartova, an exile from the former nation of Czechoslovakia, said that exile sends one "toward another place, an elsewhere, by definition unknown and open to all sorts of possibilities…. The writer is above all a free person, and the obligation to preserve his independence against all constraints comes before any other consideration. And I mean not only the insane constraints imposed by an abusive political power, but the restrictions—all the harder to evade because they

are well-intentioned—that cite a sense of duty to one's country."* Ask students what they believe Linhartova is saying about exile.

4. Distribute **HANDOUT 2: A POET'S VOICE.** Have students read Gibran's poem "A Poet's Voice" several times. Give students time to complete the handout and their journal entries. When they are finished, ask them to share their ideas with a partner or with the class.

PART 3: Gibran's Biography

1. Distribute **HANDOUT 3: GIBRAN: A LIFE IN ART AND LETTERS**. Give students time to research Gibran's life and answer the questions. This could be assigned for homework.

2. When the class reconvenes, have students review their answers. (See the information about Gibran's life in Notes to the Teacher.) Conduct a class discussion about the last question, allowing students to speculate on how Gibran's life shaped his work. Be sure to have students consider their responses to Parts 1 and 2 of this lesson as well in formulating their conclusions.

* Quoted by Milan Kundera in *Encounter* (Harper Collins, New York, 2009), pp. 103-05.

Handout 1

'Pity the Nation'

Directions:

Read the following words of Almustafa, excerpted from *The Garden of the Prophet*[1], a book by Gibran published posthumously in 1933. Circle the line that your teacher assigns to your group. Then discuss that line of the poem, using the following questions as a guide:

A. Why would the action or attitude described be considered pitiful? What would be the consequences of a nation behaving in this way?

B. What would the opposite behavior look like? In Almustafa's opinion, what would be a positive way for a nation to conduct itself?

C. What possible examples from history and real life do you think Gibran might be drawing upon? What examples can you think of, whether large or small, recent or long ago?

"[P]ity the nation that is full of beliefs and empty of religion."

"Pity the nation that wears a cloth it does not weave, eats a bread it does not harvest, and drinks a wine that flows not from its own winepress."

"Pity the nation that acclaims the bully as hero, and that deems the glittering conqueror bountiful."

"Pity a nation that despises a passion in its dream, yet submits in its awakening."

"Pity the nation that raises not its voice save when it walks in a funeral, boasts not except among its ruins, and will rebel not save when its neck is laid between the sword and the block."

"Pity the nation whose statesman is a fox, whose philosopher is a juggler, and whose art is the art of patching and mimicking."

"Pity the nation that welcomes its new ruler with trumpetings, and farewells him again with hootings, only to welcome another again with trumpetings."

Handout 2

'A Poet's Voice'

Directions:

Read "A Poet's Voice." This is a selection from Kahlil Gibran's book *A Tear and a Smile*. Then work individually to answer the following questions:

1. What were your first thoughts and responses as you read "A Poet's Voice"?

2. What are Gibran's views of humanity?

3. What do you think he considers the greatest cause of evil? Do you agree? Why, or why not?

4. What do you think he believes to be the greatest virtue? Do you agree? Why, or why not?

5. Ancient religions and modern physics both state that all things are connected and intertwined. Gibran felt the full force of the idea that all of humanity is truly a single family. Write a journal entry of a least a full page completing this sentence and expanding on it: "If everyone fully felt and believed that all of humanity was his or her family, then.…"

Handout 3

Kahlil Gibran: A Life in Art and Letters

Directions:

Research the life of Kahlil Gibran to answer the following questions:

1. Where was Kahlil Gibran born? _____ When? _____

2. What religion did his family practice? _____

3. What events disrupted his family life when he was eight?

4. Why did he come to the United States?

5. Where did he attend school?

6. How did he become an artist?

7. What role did Mary Elizabeth Haskell play in his career?

8. What language(s) did he use for his writing?

9. When was *The Prophet* published? How was it received?

10. When did Gibran die? _____

11. How might events in Gibran's life have influenced his writing?

The Art of Kahlil Gibran

Enduring Understandings

- Gibran was an important Lebanese-American writer, artist, and publisher.
- Although *The Prophet: 26 Poetic Essays* has been published in more than 50 languages and has sold millions of copies, Gibran also considered himself an artist.
- Gibran did not identify with modern art and preferred more traditional styles.
- Many visual and literary artists influenced Gibran's work.

Essential Questions

- What, and who, were the influences on Gibran's work?
- How are these influences used in the film?
- What style would you choose to use to illustrate a poem or essay? Why?

Notes to the Teacher

Kahlil Gibran is well known for his writing, particularly his book *The Prophet*, which has sold millions of copies over almost a century. (Lesson 1 addresses his biography and some of his writings.) Here is some background information on Gibran as an artist:

- He produced more than 700 paintings, watercolors, and drawings.
- He illustrated his own writings (more than 20 books).
- Three contemporary people had major influences on him as an artist:
  - Fred Holland Day, whom he met in 1896, was an avant-garde Boston artist, photographer, and publisher; a Romantic, he believed in art for art's sake.
  - The poet Josephine Prescott Peabody, who first referred to him as a "prophet" in conversations with friends and ultimately wrote about him in her poem titled "The Prophet."
  - Mary Haskell, whom he met in 1904 and who became his patron.
- His first exhibition of drawings was mounted in 1904; within the year, the entire collection was destroyed by fire.
- He formed an important cultural society of Arab-Americans in 1911.
- *The Prophet*, published in 1923, was his most influential work.

- He had little affinity for much of the modern art coming in from Europe in the 1920s.
- Influences on Gibran's work were Islamic/Arabic Art, Classicism (particularly Leonardo da Vinci), Romanticism (especially William Blake and Auguste Rodin), the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Symbolism, and Surrealism.

The lesson begins with a showing of the film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet*. It would be helpful to watch clips of the embedded animations in the film more than once.

After a short introduction to Kahlil Gibran as an artist, students see a PowerPoint presentation about the styles of art that had an influence on him. While it is preferred that you show the PowerPoint in class to supplement it with your own and students' observations, you can also have the students review the PowerPoint online. A handout helps them take notes on the PowerPoint and class discussion. After becoming familiar with the main influences on Gibran's work, you should survey more of his paintings at http://www.gibrankhalilgibran.org/PhotoGallery/ and http://gibrankgibran.org/eng/catalogo/archivo-plastico/. Next, students look at some of the stills from the animations in the film and consider if any of these influences are visible there.

Finally, students choose a poem from the book *The Prophet* to illustrate. (Alternatively, they could choose a poem from another author that sparks an emotional response from them, or even write one themselves.)

If you have students who might benefit from having a printed copy of the PowerPoint slides in front of them as the class watches the slideshow, prepare these ahead of time.

Standards addressed by this lesson

[Note: The Common Core State Standards Initiative has not yet developed national standards for the arts. Therefore, we have listed two sets of standards. The first was developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations. A full set of these standards may be found at ***http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/standards.aspx****. The second set of standards comes from Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL). Since 1990, McREL has been systematically collecting, reviewing, and analyzing state curriculum documents in all subject areas. McREL publishes a report on this work, called Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K–12 Education, and also has these standards and benchmarks available on their website at* ***http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp****. In the standards for this lesson plan, you will be able to recognize the corresponding subject-area standards for your state, even if the language is slightly different.]*

National Standards for the Visual Arts Education

Content Standard #1. Students conceive and create works of visual art that demonstrate an understanding of how the communication of their ideas relates to the media, techniques, and processes they use.

Content Standard #3. Students reflect on how artworks differ visually, spatially, temporally, and functionally, and describe how these are related to history and culture.

Content Standard #5. Students reflect analytically on various interpretations as a means for understanding and evaluating works of visual art.

McREL Visual Arts standards addressed by this lesson

1. Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes related to the visual arts
2. Knows how to use structures (e.g., sensory qualities, organizational principles, expressive features) and functions of art
3. Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts
4. Understands the visual arts in relation to history and cultures
5. Understands the characteristics and merits of one's own artwork and the artwork of others

Duration of the Lesson

Two or three class periods, plus time to view the film

Assessment

Class discussion

Note-taking sheet

Rubric for illustrated poem

Materials

Film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* and method of projection

PowerPoint slideshow and method of projection

Photocopies of **Handouts 1–3**

Oil pastels

Watercolor

Colored pencils and water-color pencils

Color wheel

Sketch paper and pencils

Watercolor paper, 140 pound (cold-pressed is fine)

Newspaper or large craft paper to protect tables

Student access to computers

Procedure

Art History

1. Before viewing the film, advise students to pay particular attention to the scenes when Mustafa speaks on the various subjects such as love and marriage, in order to note the various styles the animators have chosen to illustrate the passages.

2. Show the film, which has an 84-minute run time. This may take several days, depending on the length of your class periods.

3. After students have watched the film, give them some time to express their reactions to the animation and the story line.

4. Explain that the film is based on the work of a poet/philosopher, Kahlil Gibran, who wrote a book called *The Prophet.* Tell students that Gibran began his career as a visual artist and that the purpose of today's class is to learn about his art and the influences that shaped it.

5. Introduce students to Gibran using the information in Notes to the Teacher, above. When you reach the topic of the influences on Gibran, distribute copies of **Handout 1: Influences on Kahlil Gibran, Artist**. Tell students that they are to use it to take notes on a PowerPoint slideshow.

6. Go through the PowerPoint presentation through slide 15. As you present each slide, talk about the various artists and artworks shown. Give students time to take notes. You may wish to show students any supplementary materials you have in the classroom (books, posters, etc.); for example, you could show Dali's *The Persistence of Memory* when you are discussing Surrealism. After slide 15, you may wish to show them additional paintings by Gibran from the gallery at http://www.gibrankhalilgibran.org/PhotoGallery/.

7. Tell students that some of the animators were inspired by some of these same influences in creating their own art. Then show slides 16–25, allowing students to discuss some of the influences that they see in the stills from the film.

Suggested answers, by slide number:

17. Symbolism, Romanticism
18. Symbolism
19. Romanticism
20. Arabic; students may see stylized Romanticism, Classicism, and Symbolism elements as well.
21. Romanticism, Surrealism, Symbolism
22. Romanticism, Symbolism
23. Klimt, Symbolism
24. Arabic
25. Klimt, Symbolism

Art Experience

1. Have students choose a reading from *The Prophet* or another poem of their choice, or even compose a poem themselves if they wish. Ask them to make a copy of the poem and think about it carefully.

2. Distribute **Handout 2: Illustrating a Poem** and review it with students, allowing them to ask questions about your expectations for this project. Explain the location of materials and how they should proceed.

3. Meet individually with students to decide which style they will emulate and which materials would best fit their need for this. Encourage them to try a medium they may not have worked with before, but remind them to practice with it.

4. Follow students as they work through the other steps on **Handout 2**.

5. Plan to have a showing of their work and an opportunity for critique of their work. This would be a great way for your students to share each other's ideas and receive feedback.

Additional Resources

http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/kahlil-gibran
An extensive biography of Gibran

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsL4W5asU3A
A set of slides of Gibran and his art works, accompanied by music

http://leb.net/gibran/
A website on Gibran's writings, life, and art

http://www.gibrankhalilgibran.org/PhotoGallery/
A set of slides of Gibran's art works in the Gibran Museum in Lebanon

http://www.amazon.com/Art-Kahlil-Gibran-Telfair-Museums/dp/093307512X
The art of Gibran at the Telfair Museums

http://gibrankgibran.org/eng/catalogo/archivo-plastico/
A catalogue of Gibran holdings in the Soumaya Museum, Mexico City, Mexico

www.google.com
Search **Google Images** *under "Kahlil Gibran paintings and drawings."*

Handout 1 ▸ p.1

Influences on Kahlil Gibran, Artist: Note-Taking Sheet

Art Style	Characteristics	Artists
Arabic/Islamic Art Patterns		
Classicism		
Romanticism		

Handout 1 ▸ p.2

Influences on Kahlil Gibran, Artist: Note-Taking Sheet

Art Style	Characteristics	Artists
Pre-Raphaelites		
Symbolism		
Surrealism		

Handout 2

Illustrating a Poem

Directions:

1. Choose a reading from *The Prophet* or a poem that you feel expresses something important to you. Make a copy of the poem and think about it carefully.

2. Think about the styles of art you have studied in this lesson on Gibran. Decide which style of drawing or painting you will emulate and which materials would best fit your needs for this. Consider trying a medium you may not have worked with before, and then practice with it.

3. Color: Consider the use of colors as a *statement*: monochromatic with one spot of a second color for focus; warm (yellow, red, and orange) vs. cool (blue, green, and purple) to show seasons, *emotions*, high and low contrast. Use the colors that you think will work best with your theme.

4. Use sketch paper and pencil to create a rough draft of your idea.

5. Once you are satisfied with your sketch, start to create the final piece.

6. When your work is finished, sign and date it on the front bottom right. This shows pride in your work and will give you a benchmark for the future; you can look back to see where you were as an artist at this time.

7. Follow your teacher's directions about showing and critiquing your work.

Handout 3

Rubric for Poem Illustration

Name _____ **Date** _____

Criterion	Score
Participated in class discussion of film	
Took useful notes from PowerPoint about genre and artists	
Chose appropriate reading passage from *The Prophet* or other work	
Created a workable sketch of a design that well illustrates the reading chosen	
Chose a medium that would enhance the concept	
Used color theory to help create an emotional response in the design	
Created and completed the composition	
Signed and dated the work on the front	

Scoring Key	Points
Exceeds expectations	**4**
Meets expectations	**3**
Progressing toward expectations	**2**
Needs improvement	**1**
Did not attempt	**0**

On Freedom

Enduring Understandings

- In seeking to understand the benefits of freedom, one must know what the risks of freedom can be.
- Antithesis is something—an idea or a quality—that is the opposite of something else. By contrasting two subjects that are the antithesis of each other, a writer can help a reader form a personal opinion about the subjects.

Essential Questions

- What does Gibran believe to be the purpose of freedom?
- Why are one's attitude and approach to one's own freedom so important not just to oneself, but also to others?
- How does Gibran use antithesis to explain the pros and cons of freedom?
- How might a writer or a poet use this technique in other ways to explore necessities in our lives?

Notes to the Teacher

Remind students that freedom is not necessarily a right everywhere in the way that many people have come to expect it, especially in the United States. Also point out that although many people live where freedom is the norm, some may still feel that they cannot do what they wish to do. Gibran is trying to express a deeper message about freedom that many students may struggle with. This lesson will help students begin to recognize the nuances of what it means to be truly free, both in their everyday lives and within their own minds.

The lesson begins with students hearing a reading of the poem "On Freedom" and seeing the film clip. Be sure your students understand that the language in the original poem is not exactly the same as the language used in the film. They then review the term *antithesis* so that they can use this concept in understanding Gibran's poem. The next section of the lesson uses Paul Lawrence Dunbar's poem "Sympathy"; his line "I know why the caged bird sings" inspired the title of Maya Angelou's first autobiographical volume and one of her best-known poems. Students then look at Maya Angelou's poem "Caged Bird" to compare its ideas with those of Dunbar and Gibran. Finally, they create art projects that express their own ideas on freedom.

Dunbar (1872–1906) was a precursor of the Harlem Renaissance; although a gifted poet in Standard English, his poems written in black dialect were the ones that received acclaim and publicity. Like Gibran, he died young. Angelou (1928–2014), another African-American poet and an

activist, is best known for her autobiographies and poetry, including her poem for the 1993 inauguration of President Bill Clinton, "On the Pulse of Morning." She was a remarkable performer, and there are many videos available online that show her reciting her poetry. Your students might be interested in watching some of them.

Common Core Standards addressed by this lesson

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.

Duration of the Lesson

One class period, with the option to extend the activity if desired

Assessments

Students will be assessed objectively on their completion of the antithesis worksheet. They can be assessed subjectively on their warm-up and on their interpretation of Maya Angelou's "Caged Bird."

Materials

Student journals

Film clip from *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* (14:21–16:37)

Copies of the poem "On Freedom"

Photocopies of **Handout 1: Antithesis**

Photocopies of **Handout 2: Sympathy**

Copies of or computer access to Maya Angelou's poem "Caged Bird," which can be found at http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/178948

Optional: Computer access or art materials for extension activity

Procedure

Review

1. Ask students to brainstorm a definition of freedom. As the students offer their thoughts about freedom, record them on one side of the board. (The other side will be used during the discussion portion of this lesson.)

2. Ask the students to read the words on the board. Are their thoughts similar to or different from each other? Have the students group their ideas into categories of their own making. (*Suggested categories: personal freedoms, national freedoms, freedoms that come with age, etc. By organizing their thoughts after brainstorming what freedom is, the students will be ready to read and listen to the poem.)*

3. Explain to students that they will be reading the poem "On Freedom" by Kahlil Gibran. Hand out the copies of the poem and let students know that the words are a little different in the film, although the thoughts are the same. They are now going to work with the original words of Gibran's text.

4. Read the poem aloud as students follow silently. Then ask the students which parts of the poem most stand out to them. Ask the students why they think they were able to recall those sections of the poem. (*The comparison of opposites is a likely response.)*

5. Distribute **Handout 1: Antithesis**. Arrange students in pairs or small groups to complete the assignment.

Suggested answers to **Handout 1**:

1. Opposing words or ideas: *temple vs. citadel; freest among you wearing freedom as a yoke or a handcuff*
   Underlying Message: *With the opposing ideas of a temple being a place of worship and a citadel being a fortress we would expect freedom to look different in a place of peace vs. a place of war. Gibran notes that no matter where you are, people wear their freedom like a burden.*

2. Opposing words or ideas: *freedom is a chain (we expect freedom to be the thing that allows us to do whatever we want, but in reality it is restrictive)*
   Underlying Message: *Freedom is the "strongest of these chains" means that some people get caught up in the idea that they cannot do anything with their lives until they are free. Perhaps he is suggesting that freedom is something that must be earned and is not simply a right. He describes it as the most beautiful chain because people seem to think that freedom is the most important thing we can have as people, but maybe we should think of it as an unending pursuit.*

3. Opposing words or ideas: *desired vs. dreaded; repugnant vs. cherished; lights vs. shadows; pursued vs. escaped*
   Underlying Message: *Obtaining freedom means having the ability to make the choice between those things within us that appear to be at odds with each other. People constantly face opposing forces and difficult decisions that force us to make choices. From these opposing thoughts, it seems that Gibran is suggesting that freedom itself is a choice. Either we can be frustrated and tied down by the opposing things in our lives, or we can stand up to them and choose the best option for our individual selves.*

Interpret

1. Ask the students to offer their interpretation of the poem. (*Freedom is something that can be attained only when we recognize the conflict it creates within us. Freedom is best understood by noticing the many ways in which we are and are not free in our day-to-day lives. True freedom is unattainable because the thought that you are free is instantly a chain and a burden you must carry.)* You may wish to compare this with the Buddhist ideal of detachment—i.e., freedom *from* desire.

2. Ask students: What do you think Gibran meant by the line, "You shall be free indeed when your days are not without a care nor your nights without a want and a grief, but rather when those things girdle your life and yet you rise above them naked and unbound"? *(Freedom is about understanding your responsibilities and managing them while staying true to your own path. Freedom is not about being carefree. It is about having many cares, but maintaining your understanding of yourself despite these many things that may seem to weigh you down.)*

3. Turn to **Handout 1**. In the excerpts, what makes the first excerpt a good example of antithetical construction? (*Students should identify the opposing ideas, pace, and use of definite statement that appear to be contradicted, with exceptions to show the antithesis of the poet's ideas. This will be a similar process for all of the examples. You may wish to go through each one to be sure the students have a true understanding of the purpose of the structure.)*

4. Return to the brainstorming session on the board. Ask the students to look at the definitions and thoughts on freedom that they recorded before reading and discussing the poem. Have their thoughts changed? Do they see freedom differently now? (*Label the right side of the board with "After reading Gibran" or something similar. Take notes or write key words from students' responses on the right side of the board.)*

5. Take time to read through the responses of the students. Ask them to explain what part of the poem inspired the change in their understanding of the idea of freedom.

6. Play the clip of "On Freedom" from the film (14:21–16.37).

7. Provide students with copies of **Handout 2: Sympathy**. Give students some background on Dunbar from the information in Notes to the Teacher. Be sure to point out to students that Maya Angelou's autobiography, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings,* derives its title from this poem. Have the students follow along as you read it aloud. Have them read it again silently and make notes of their observations and questions on the handout. Then give them time to discuss the poem.

8. Why do you think both Dunbar and the animator chose birds to represent the idea of freedom? (*Answers will vary. Birds have wings that allow them to fly wherever and whenever they choose. Their very nature suggests that they do things completely of their own free will and are not bound by anything.)* Ask students to recall how the film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* made use of the images of birds and flying to represent freedom. (*Almitra pretending to fly when she sees the sails of the ship; Almitra's seagull; the wooden bird that starts to fly; the animation of birds caged and tied to a tree; the poet's words about flying, saying, "We are spirits."*)

9. Distribute copies or project a copy of Maya Angelou's poem "Caged Bird" and read it aloud.

10. Have students identify any use of antithesis by Angelou in her poem.

11. Have a class discussion with such questions as these: How does Angelou define freedom in her poem? Is it the same as or different from Gibran's description? Are the caged birds in Angelou's poem similar to or different from the birds used to illustrate Gibran's poem in the film? How might Angelou's birds be depicted to reflect her understanding of freedom?

Create

1. For homework, have students create an original work of art using birds to represent their new understandings of freedom. The artwork should contain both images and words that indicate each student's new understanding of freedom, based on the words of the three poets they have studied in this lesson.

2. Have students write a paragraph or more explaining the choices that they made in creating their art project.

3. Have students present and display their artwork in class.

Handout 1 ▸ p.1

Antithesis

Directions:

Read the definition of antithesis below. Then read the examples. What makes them good examples of antithesis?

Antithesis is a rhetorical device in which two opposites appear, often in the same sentence, to create a contrast. Antithesis often uses parallel structure with similar grammatical forms to make the contrast more obvious. (This is called a balanced sentence.)

One main purpose of antithesis is to compare opposing ideas to place emphasis on a certain subject or issue. By examining the pros and cons of a subject, the reader can come to a more reasoned judgment about that subject. In this case, is freedom something that we can truly attain?

Examples of antithesis:

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way." — Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*

"The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here." — Abraham Lincoln, *The Gettysburg Address*

"Patience is bitter, but it has a sweet fruit." — Aristotle

For each of the statements below appearing in Gibran's "On Freedom," identify the opposing ideas in the words and/or phrases. Determine what Gibran is trying to persuade the reader or listener to believe or understand about the nature of freedom.

1. Ay, in the grove of the temple and in the shadow of the citadel I have seen the freest among you wear their freedom as a yoke and a handcuff.

Opposing words or ideas:

Underlying Message:

Handout 1 ▸ P.2

Antithesis

2. In truth that which you call freedom is the strongest of these chains, though its links glitter in the sun and dazzle your eyes.

Opposing words or ideas:

Underlying Message:

3. Verily all things move within your being in a constant half embrace, the desired and the dreaded, the repugnant and the cherished, the pursued and that which you would escape. These things move within you as lights and shadows in pairs that cling.

Opposing words or ideas:

Underlying Message:

Handout 1 ▸ p.3

Antithesis

Look at the poem again. Pick a different sentence or group of sentences that exhibits antithesis. Write the excerpt below and explain why this is an example of antithesis and explain the author's intent by using antithesis in this portion of the poem. (Remember: Antithesis is an attempt to present contrasting ideas for emphasis and to help readers come to their own judgment of the subject.)

Example:

Explanation:

Handout 2

'Sympathy'

By Paul Laurence Dunbar

I know what the caged bird feels, alas!
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;
When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,
And the river flows like a stream of glass;
When the first bird sings and the first bud opes,
And the faint perfume from its chalice steals—
I know what the caged bird feels!

I know why the caged bird beats his wing
Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;
For he must fly back to his perch and cling
When he fain would be on the bough a-swing;
And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars
And they pulse again with a keener sting—
I know why he beats his wing!

I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,
When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore,—
When he beats his bars and he would be free;
It is not a carol of joy or glee,
But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core,
But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings—
I know why the caged bird sings!

On Children

Enduring Understandings

- In the poem "On Children," Gibran recognizes that children ultimately do not belong to anyone, including their parents, but are independent beings with their own ideas and responsibility for themselves.
- Gibran uses metaphor to express qualities of children (and parents) that are otherwise hard to explain.

Essential Questions

- What are Gibran's beliefs about children and parents?
- What is metaphor and why is it used in poetry?
- How might metaphor assist the reader in developing a deeper connection with a poem?

Notes to the Teacher

Some critics have theorized that Gibran's poem from *The Prophet* "On Children" very well might reflect Gibran's own childhood; his father was not a regular presence in his life, and his mother and two siblings died when he was a teenager. Others feel that the poem reflects his profound understanding of the psychology of Self and Fate. Even though his early life was filled with sadness, his family undoubtedly helped to shape the person he became, along with teachers and mentors he had both in Boston and in his home country of Lebanon. Gibran never had children of his own, but his words in this poem illustrate how he felt children were the key to the future.

"On Children" focuses on the idea that a child is an independent being, not owned or controlled by his or her parents. Gibran suggests that parents (or other adults) should guide and nurture children so they grow to their fullest potential. The poem clearly states that adults are not to be in complete control of their children; rather, children need to grow and experience life on their own, not through other people's ideas and desires. With this idea, Gibran implies that the cycle of life will continue indefinitely throughout the rest of time.

This lesson begins with a creative writing exercise in composing metaphors to deepen understanding of this figure of speech and to prepare students for the rest of the lesson. By writing down their own personal connections with the emotion of happiness, students will go into the reading of "On Children" with an introductory understanding of metaphor.

During the second part of the lesson, students listen to "On Children" and view the excerpt from the film. The emphasis is on the film's interpretation and the primary metaphor in the poem, "You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth." (Gibran's painting *The Archer* may well have been the inspiration for this animation; images of the painting can easily be found on the Internet.)

At the end of the lesson, the extension activity encourages students to write original poems based on the metaphors they came up with in the beginning of the lesson and on slide 15 of the PowerPoint for Lesson 2.

Common Core Standards addressed by this lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.1
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.2
Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.5
Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.5
Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.6
Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

Duration of the Lesson

One or two class periods, including time for students to share their poems with the class.

Assessments

Completion of **HANDOUT 1**

Class discussion

Paragraph written at conclusion of class

(Optional) Inclusion of metaphor(s) in a creative writing assignment

Materials

Access to film clip from Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet (18:27–22:43)

Photocopies of **HANDOUT 1: CREATE A METAPHOR**

Copies of the poem "On Children"

Procedure

CREATE

1. Prior to listening to the poem, start the lesson by distributing copies of **HANDOUT 1: CREATE A METAPHOR**. Go over the directions, explaining what is intended by "personalized," "concrete," and "specific."

2. Direct students to write down 10 things that make them happy, to complete the starter sentence "Happiness is…." Once they have their list, have a few students share their ideas.

3. Tell students that the sentences they wrote contain metaphors, which compare one object, action, or emotion with another. (If students write "Happiness is <u>like</u>," they will need to remove the "like" as they have now turned their phrase into a simile. Be sure to point out to students that a comparison between two things using *like* or *as* is called a simile.)

INTERPRET

1. Explain to students that in this lesson they will be exploring metaphor in Gibran's poem "On Children" and then distribute copies of the poem.

2. Read "On Children" aloud while students follow the reading. Instruct students to pay special attention to looking out for examples of metaphor.

3. Ask students whether they picked out any metaphors as they listened to the reading. Ask for one or two to share their ideas. (*Students will likely point out the major metaphor in the poem, "You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth."*)

4. Ask the students what this phrase says about parental or adult involvement in the development of a child. (*Answers may include the interpretation that parents help launch their children into the world, but cannot control what they become, just as the bow cannot control the arrow's flight, once the arrow has been released.*)

5. Ask students to explain the line, "They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself." What does this line mean? What is "Life's longing for itself?" (*Answers will vary, but may focus on or include the idea that creation is a wonderful mystery; life must go on and so children are created to ensure this will occur.*)

6. Ask students to explain the line, "You may give them your love but not your thoughts." (*Parents are to give their children love but not control what they think.*) Do they agree or disagree with this line? (*Answers will vary; be prepared for a lively discussion on this topic!*)

7. Ask students about the significance of the last line of the poem, "For even as he loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable." (*The arrow is a metaphor for children and the stable bow actually represents the parents who bring the child into the world. Thus, Gibran is emphasizing the importance of the stability parents offer a child.*) Why must parents be stable for their children? What will happen if they are not? (*Answers will vary.*)

8. Show the "On Children" segment from the film (18:27–22:43). After viewing, ask students to further explain the major metaphor discussed earlier. Were there any metaphors in the film that are not in the poem itself? (*Students might suggest that children are birds meant to fly on their own journey through time.)*

9. Does the film animation correctly and effectively interpret what Gibran is saying in his poem? (*Answers will vary.*)

10. Optional: Gibran himself was a painter, and one of his own paintings was clearly the inspiration for this animation. Show students the painting *Le Lanceur (The Archer)* at http://www.gibrankhalilgibran.org/PhotoGallery/. It also may be found on the PowerPoint for Lesson 2 of this guide (Slide 15).

Review

1. Point out to students that a metaphor is meant to help explain things that might be otherwise difficult to describe. By specifying and illustrating an emotion (like happiness), this allows for people to personally connect and better understand the idea being presented.

2. Have students write a paragraph in which they explain why the central metaphor from the poem "On Children" is or is not an appropriate one.

Extension Activity

To reinforce and review the use of metaphor in poetry, have students pick out one of the metaphors they developed and wrote down on **Handout 1: Create a Metaphor**. Ask students to write an 8- to 10-line poem including any of the following literary devices you deem appropriate:

—at least one additional metaphor
—at least one example of alliteration (the repetition of the same consonant sound at the beginning of words that are next to or near each other), assonance (the repetition of vowel sounds in a series of words near enough for the "echoes" to be noticed), and/or consonance (the repetition of similar consonant sounds near each other in a text)
—at least one rhyme (internal rhyme or end rhyme)

Encourage students to share their work with a partner, edit and review their work, and then share their work with the class. You may wish to publish the poems in an online blog or print them for display.

Handout 1

Create a Metaphor

Directions:

Come up with 10 examples of happiness. Examples should be personalized, concrete, and specific, using as much detail as possible. Avoid using the words "like" or "as."

Example: Happiness is freshly baked chocolate chip cookies.

Happiness is...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

On Marriage

Enduring Understandings

- In the poem "On Marriage," Gibran uses the devices of repetition, alliteration, and assonance to emphasize the poem's most important ideas and images relating to the union of two people, despite their differences and need for independence from each other.
- Repetition is a technique to provide emphasis through the repeated use of sounds, words, or phrases within a literary work.

Essential Questions

- What are sound devices—specifically repetition, alliteration, and assonance—and why are they used in poetry?
- How can these sound devices highlight the main idea(s) in a poem?

Notes to the Teacher

"On Marriage" was published in 1923, a time when the family unit was beginning to change. The horrors and disruptions of the First World War, the millions of deaths from the influenza pandemic, and the onset of the social change of the Roaring Twenties all meant that change was inevitable. In his own personal life, Gibran was the product of a broken home. His father was arrested for corruption in Lebanon and jailed, and his mother eventually emigrated from Lebanon to the United States with her children. There she carried on an independent life, supporting her family and establishing a business. During Gibran's later education back in Lebanon he met with his father, although their relationship remained strained.

Gibran's poem focuses on togetherness rather than full solidarity. The text encourages marriage as a union in which the partners maintain independence and a sense of self; for Gibran, marriage is not defined by chains of any kind. Gibran's vision of the ideal marriage embraces growth in togetherness and side-by-side independence.

This lesson focuses on some of the techniques of sound that Gibran used. These are often the first and easiest literary devices for students to identify and understand when learning about a poem; this study builds self-confidence and the courage to seek out more advanced poetic devices. The lesson begins with multiple readings of the poem "On Marriage" and a viewing of the film clip. Discussion elicits Gibran's basic theme that, in a healthy marriage, the individuals are together like trees "in their branches" and " in

their roots" but still retain their individuality and independence like the trunks of these trees. Be sensitive to the fact that "On Marriage" might trigger emotional responses from students who have a conflicted view of this particular institution, especially due to the high rate of divorce in today's world; many students today also have parents who have chosen not to marry. Therefore, flexibility in interpretation is key when teaching this lesson.

The second part of the lesson deals with three literary devices. *Repetition* (a technique used to provide emphasis through the repeated use of sounds, words, or phrases within a literary work*) is fairly self-explanatory. Point out to students that items of utmost importance are often repeated in order to call attention to them. *Alliteration* (repetition of the initial consonant sounds in a series) is also simple for students to grasp. Familiar examples of alliteration can be found in many tongue twisters, such as "She sells seashells by the seashore…" or "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers…." *Assonance* (a repetition of vowel sounds, initially and/or within a word) can be more difficult for students to grasp. They sometimes confuse vowel sounds with vowels and this distinction must be made clear; you can use the book title *Little Women* as an example of assonance occurring with different vowels. A common example of assonance can be found in the poem "The Star" by Ann and Jane Taylor:

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star
How I wonder what you are,
Up above the world so high
Like a diamond in the sky.

At the end of the lesson, students will write an original poem in free verse about a relationship that is important to them. Be flexible in helping them define a relationship; some students may feel alienated from family and may wish to write about a friend, a teacher, or even a pet.

Common Core Standards addressed by this lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.1
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.5
Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.5
Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

*Definitions are from the Literary Glossary of the EDSITEment website of the National Endowment of the Humanities, at http://edsitement.neh.gov/reference-shelf/glossaries/literary-glossary-index. This is an excellent resource for teachers.

Duration of the Lesson

Two or three class periods, including time for students to read or show their original poems to the class.

Assessments

Completion of worksheets

Inclusion of three specific sound devices—repetition, alliteration, and assonance—in creative writing exercise

Materials

Access to film clips from *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* (28:30–32:05)

Copies of the poem "On Marriage"

Photocopies of **HANDOUT 1: SOUND DEVICE SCAVENGER HUNT WORKSHEET**

Procedure

INTERPRET

1. Explain to students that in this lesson they will be exploring Gibran's poem "On Marriage" and then distribute copies of the poem. Read "On Marriage" aloud while students read silently.

2. Ask students whether any particular words or sounds stood out to them as they listened to the reading. Ask for one or two to share their ideas. (*Students will likely point out words associated with marriage, such as* "*together*" *and* "*hearts.*") Then have a student read the poem aloud again, this time having students listen specifically for the words and sounds already noted by some students.

3. Ask the students what such words say about the institution of marriage. (*Answers may include two becoming one, a union, a team, mom and dad, mom and mom, dad and dad, etc.*)

4. Ask students to focus on the repetition of the use of the word "alone." Ask the class why Gibran might have chosen to include this particular solitary word in a poem seemingly about togetherness. (*He wanted to emphasize the independence of the marriage partners, who are united but still remain distinct individuals.*)

5. Show the segment of "On Marriage" from the film (28:30–32:05). After viewing, ask students if they recognized the type of dance in the segment. (*The dance shown in this film segment is the tango.)* Explain that this dance is popular in Latin American countries, especially Argentina. The name of the dance is believed to be derived from the Latin verb *tangere*, which means "to touch."

6. Ask students to think about the connection between the man and the woman. Were they doing the same movements at the exact same time? (*No.)* Why is this significant? *(Answers will vary.)* Guide the student discussion to the idea that, even though the steps are not the same, there is still an incredible connection between the two. Ask them to explain why this animation so well interprets what Gibran is saying in his poem.

Review

1. Point out to students that the most common sound technique used in poetry is rhyme; a regular rhythm is often present, too. Ask if they noticed any rhyme or regular rhythm in the poem. (*No*) Explain that a poem of this kind is called "free verse."

2. Point out that Gibran did use other, more subtle sound techniques in this poem. Distribute **Handout 1: Sound Device Scavenger Hunt**. Teach or review with students the definitions for three sound techniques: repetition, alliteration, and assonance. (See Notes to the Teacher.) Give examples of each to the class, writing them on the board and pronouncing them for students.

3. Arrange students in pairs or trios and have them complete the Sound Device Scavenger Hunt. Explain that they are to search for each sound device in Gibran's "On Marriage," marking their copy of the poem as they go.

4. As a class, discuss the answers to the questions in the Sound Device Scavenger Hunt.

Suggested answers to **Handout 1**:

1. *The word is together(ness). This relates to marriage because marriage is an event that brings two people into one union, one bond.*

2. *Hearts, alone, let, another, cup, stand*

3. *"white wings," "sea between the shores of your souls,"*

4. *Answers will vary; examples are present in almost every line of the poem.*

5. *Answers will vary. The words found by identifying sound devices are emphasized because Gibran believes that these words encompass the institution of marriage and therefore are crucial to the meaning of the poem.*

6. *Answers will vary. Perhaps Gibran wishes to show that a marriage is not about becoming one or about taking ownership of another person, but about maintaining one's independence and self-sufficiency while one's (dance) partner does the same thing. There will be similar, complementary movements, but the relationship still emanates from the individual.*

CREATE

1. Tell students that they will now compose their own free verse poem. Review the term if necessary. Give them the following prompt:

   Write a free verse poem of at least eight lines about an important relationship that you have with someone. The poem should use the following techniques to highlight the important elements of the relationship:
   - three examples of repetition
   - two examples of alliteration
   - one example of assonance

   Encourage them to focus on the sound devices to appeal to emotions, to set the mood of their piece, and to emphasize important ideas.

2. Give students time to brainstorm and begin writing in class while you circulate to see if they have any questions or need assistance.

Extension Activities

To reinforce the significance of repetition, hand out copies of "Annabel Lee" by Edgar Allan Poe (http://www.poetry-foundation.org/poem/174151). Have the class pull their chairs into a circle and then instruct them to stand in a circle in front of their chairs. Have them read the poem aloud together, listening for repetitions. Then have the class read the poem aloud again, sitting down when they hear a word or phrase repeated. Each time they sit, stop the reading and discuss the importance of the repetition of that phrase. Continue reading the poem—and stopping—as repetition is heard throughout the second reading.

To review alliteration and assonance, obtain a copy of *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss. Divide the class into two groups; one group will listen for alliteration and the other will listen for assonance. As they hear examples, have them jot down the word or phrase—or, because Dr. Seuss is so visual, have them draw the sound or image they hear. After the story is read, ask students what they heard and why Dr. Seuss decided to highlight those particular sounds to make them stand out.

Handout 1

Sound Device Scavenger Hunt

Directions:

In pairs or trios, complete the following scavenger hunt and questions for Kahlil Gibran's poem "On Marriage."

1. Find a word that is repeated eight times in the poem "On Marriage." What is that word? What does this word have to do with marriage?

2. What other examples of repetition can you find in this poem?

3. Write down two examples of alliteration.

4. Find three examples of assonance.

5. Looking at the examples you have found of repetition, alliteration, and assonance, why do you think Gibran put special emphasis on these words and phrases?

6. After exploring the poem and reviewing the film segment of "On Marriage," what do you think Gibran is attempting to share with the reader about marriage?

On Work

Enduring Understandings

- In seeking to understand why work is important, one must understand the value of all work.
- Attitude toward one's occupation is often more important than the occupation itself.
- Parallelism is a rhetorical device that consists of using a series of words, phrases, or clauses with the same grammatical structure.
- Repetition is the agent through which parallelism achieves its rhythm and flow.

Essential Questions

- What does Gibran believe to be the value of work?
- Why are one's attitude and approach to work or an occupation so important not just to oneself, but also to others?
- How does Gibran use the devices of parallelism and repetition to express his ideas about work?
- How might a writer or a poet use these devices in other ways to explore other necessities in our lives?

Notes to the Teacher

It is important to make students aware that this poem is meant to be a response from the Prophet to a plowman who asks him to speak of work. By viewing the poem from the perspective of a person who may feel that his or her job is considered less important than another person's work, the students may find it easier to understand the intent of this poem. This can be useful in the context of a school, where not all personnel who are essential to the smooth operation of the school may be highly valued.

The first part of this lesson includes an exercise to help students understand this point of view. After multiple readings of the poem, students engage in a journal-writing exercise about undervalued work. They then begin a discussion of the meaning of the poem. Introducing them to the literary concepts of repetition and parallelism allows them then to go deeper into the meaning of the poem. A final exercise asks them to write a letter to someone who might not feel his or her work is valuable; the student who can do this clearly has grasped the essence of Gibran's poem. In this letter, students will demonstrate that they understand the concept of parallelism by including examples of it in their paper.

Common Core Standards addressed by this lesson

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

Duration of the Lesson

One 50- to 60-minute class period with the option to extend the activity if desired

Assessments

Objectively on students' completion of the parallelism and repetition worksheet.

Subjectively on students' warm-ups and letters explaining the importance of work. In the letters, they should only be objectively graded on their three attempts at parallel structure.

Materials

Student journals

Film clip from *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* (37:16–41:15)

Copies of the poem "On Work"

Photocopies of **Handout 1: Parallelism and Repetition: Understanding the Nature and Purpose of Work**

Photocopies of **Handout 2: Storyboard for "On Work" Alternative Animation**

Optional: Computer access or art materials for extension activity

Procedure

Interpret

1. Show the film clip (37:16–41:15) interpreting the poem "On Work" and then have students listen carefully as you read the poem aloud.

2 Explain to the students that there is more to the original poem and that in class they will be reading the whole poem "On Work" by Kahlil Gibran. Tell them that this poem was written in response to a plowman (one who turns the soil for planting crops) who asks the Prophet why we work.

3. Ask the students to think about this plowman's job. Ask if they would want to do that job. Do they think the job would be easy or hard? Lead the class discussion toward the idea that this is a difficult job that may not earn much respect or credit, but is necessary to our existence.

4. Have the students write in their journals for five to ten minutes about a job that they feel does not earn much respect. It might be a good idea to brainstorm various jobs if they struggle with this. When they are finished, have the students share their thoughts and ask them to keep these in mind while listening to "On Work."

5. Hand out the copies of the poem "On Work" and have one or more students read it aloud. Ask the students to offer their interpretation of the main idea the poem is expressing. *(Examples: Work is necessary because it gives us purpose. Work is best when you love what you do and respect the work of others, as well.)*

6. Ask students to look at the first line of the poem. Ask what they think Gibran meant by this sentence. Why did he choose to begin in this way? You might remind the students that his initial audience is a plowman. *(The Prophet wanted to respond directly to the plowman's needs before explaining the general nature of work.)*

7. After reading the poem, do the students agree with Gibran that "Work is love made visible?" Why, or why not? *(Answers will vary.)*

Review

1. Distribute **Handout 1: Parallelism and Repetition: Understanding the Nature and Purpose of Work** and read over the introductory material. Make sure students understand the difference between repetition and parallelism.

2. Organize the students into pairs or small groups to complete the assignment. Work through excerpt #1 together to be sure students understand what is expected. Ask them what makes excerpt #1 a good example of parallel construction. *(Students should identify the repeating phrases, pace, and use of definite statement that are contradicted with exceptions to show the parallelism of his work.)*

3. Give students time to work with their partners to complete the handout. Then go through their answers together, understanding that there may be reasonable variation in what they think is the underlying meaning for each excerpt.

4. Write the following on the board after reviewing the excerpt exercise on the worksheet: "If you do not like crushing grapes to make wine, then you should not crush grapes to make wine because the wine will taste like you have poisoned it." Ask the students to compare this statement with excerpt #3 on the worksheet. Which statement is a clearer expression of the message? Which one sounds more refined? Why is this the case? *(The Gibran quote is more refined because it uses parallelism and repetition to express an opinion in a concise manner. The Gibran statement is also superior because the syllables of each clause are balanced. This Gibran statement is more successful because it employs the technique of parallelism and provides both the reader and the listener with a clear image and a concise thought.)*

Create

This part of the lesson may be assigned as homework. Have the students write a paper of at least one page responding to the following prompt:

> Take the excerpt you chose for #4 on the handout and use this as the basis for a letter to someone who sees his or her work as unnecessary or as less valuable than the work of others. In the letter, copy the excerpt and explain in your own words what the statement says about work. Then explain to the recipient of the letter how this excerpt applies to his or her situation.
>
> In your letter, use parallel structure in at least three places to express your appreciation for the recipient's work. Be conscious of the feelings of the recipient of the letter and show appreciation and understanding for the work done by all people.

Extension Activities

If time allows or interest is piqued, show again the section of the film in which this poem is recited and interpreted with animation. (37:16–41:15) Ask the students to imagine illustrating the poem in a different way. Either individually or in groups, have students prepare storyboards with at least four shots that show how they might illustrate their favorite part of the poem or the whole poem. You may wish to use **Handout 2: Storyboard for "On Work" Alternative Animation** or have students make their own storyboards on poster board, newsprint, or other large paper.

Handout 1 ▸ p.1

Parallelism and Repetition: Understanding the Nature and Purpose of Work

Name _____ **Date** _____

Read the definitions of repetition and parallelism below. Then read the examples. What makes them good examples of parallel structure?

Repetition: Repetition occurs when the same word or phrase is used several times in order to add emphasis. For example, Walt Whitman's poem that begins "Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!" has two examples of repetition.

Parallelism: Parallelism occurs when the same grammatical structure appears repeatedly in a series of words, a series of phrases, or a series of clauses.

Examples of parallelism:

> *"You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time." — Abraham Lincoln*
>
> *"Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." — John F. Kennedy**
>
> *"We are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream." — Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Directions: On the next pages, for each of the statements appearing in Gibran's "On Work," identify the repetition of words or phrases. Determine what Gibran is trying to persuade the reader or listener to believe or understand.

* This famous sentence is actually a paraphrase of a sentence in Gibran's 1925 essay, "The New Frontier." See http://www.princeton.edu/pr/pwb/07/0618/07a.shtml.

Handout 1 ▸ P.2

Parallelism and Repetition: Understanding the Nature and Purpose of Work

1. And I say that life is indeed darkness save when there is urge,
And all urge is blind save when there is knowledge,
And all knowledge is vain save when there is work,
And all work is empty save when there is love;
And when you work with love you bind yourself to yourself, and to one another, and to God.

Repeating words or phrases:

Underlying Message:

2. And in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life,
And to love life through labour is to be intimate with life's inmost secret.

Repeating words or phrases:

Underlying Message:

Handout 1 ▸ P.3

Parallelism and Repetition: Understanding the Nature and Purpose of Work

3. And if you grudge the crushing of the grapes, your grudge distills a poison in the wine.

Repeating words or phrases:

Underlying Message:

4. Look at the poem again. Pick a different sentence or group of sentences that exhibit parallel structure. Write the excerpt below and explain why this is an example of parallel structure.

Example:

Explanation:

Handout 2 ▸ p.1

Storyboard for 'On Work' Alternative Animation

Shot 1

Annotation:

Shot 2

Annotation:

Handout 2 ▸ p.2

Storyboard for 'On Work' Alternative Animation

Shot 3

Annotation:

Shot 4

Annotation:

On Eating and Drinking

Enduring Understandings

- Words can create pictures in the reader's mind through the use of imagery.
- Analyzing imagery in a poem can lead to deeper understanding and a clearer picture of the poet's intent.

Essential Questions

- What is imagery?
- How can the use of imagery benefit a piece of writing?
- Can seemingly disparate forms of media work together to create a cohesive message?

Notes to the Teacher

Many of the images presented in both the poem and the activities that follow presuppose some knowledge of religious imagery (tree of heaven, rejoicing, worship, etc.) and a sense of the power such words and images have in poetry. Kahlil Gibran was a Maronite Christian, as are many Lebanese today. Aligned with and recognized by the Roman Catholic Church, Maronites have had a foothold in Lebanon nearly since the Catholic Church's inception. This in itself provides interesting context to the poem in this lesson. If you have any concerns about teaching a poem with religious connotations, there is an excellent pamphlet on the subject titled "A Teacher's Guide to Religion in the Public Schools," which may be of help. It can be downloaded free from the First Amendment Center at http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/madison/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/teachersguide.pdf. You can teach this lesson simply in the broader context of poetic imagery.

The lesson begins with an optional review of the definition of imagery if you feel this would be helpful to your students. Then students view a clip from the film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* and listen to several readings of the poem "On Eating and Drinking." They record their observations to use for a set of discussion questions to interpret the themes of the poem and animated sequence. An analysis of the imagery follows, and then students have the opportunity to compose menus, which will give them an opportunity to construct images of their own.

Common Core Standards addressed by this lesson

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4
Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.5
Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6
Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

Duration of the Lesson

One class period for the Interpret and Review sections. You will need additional class time for the creative writing activity, or you may choose to assign this as homework.

Assessment

Completion of handouts

Completion of menu project. This could include a required number of images, types of imagery, etc. Evaluating the quality of added artwork, sophistication of the menu, etc., is up to the individual teacher.

Materials

Access to film clip from *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* (42:36–44:06)

Copies of the poem "On Eating and Drinking"

Photocopies of **Handouts 1–4**

(Optional) Computer access or art materials for creative writing and extension activities

Procedure

Interpret

1. Explain to students that the lesson will be on Gibran's poem "On Eating and Drinking," which addresses food as much more than sustenance.

2. If your students need a basic review of the concept of imagery, distribute **Handout 1: Imagery: A Quick Review**, which introduces to students the idea of imagery as a literary device. Although this lesson will focus on visual images in the poem, many other images will be discussed as well. Work with students to complete this handout individually, in teams, or as a whole class.

3. Show the film clip of the animation of the poem "On Eating and Drinking" (42:36–44:06). Next, distribute copies of the poem "On Eating and Drinking" and have a student read the poem aloud for the class. (Point out to the students that the poem in the book is significantly different from its rendering in the film.) This time, on the handout, have students note any observations that occur to them as they hear the poem again. Finally, have an additional reading in silence to allow students to add to their notes.

4. Distribute **Handout 2: Discussion Questions for the Poem "On Eating and Drinking"** to the students. Instruct students that their answers are notes to be expounded upon in discussion and on a later assignment. Give the class time to answer the questions on the handout individually or in pairs or small groups. Complete sentences are not necessary, as the goal is to get ideas flowing.

Suggested answers for **Handout 2:**

1. The title hints that eating and drinking are more than just sustenance. The very fact that the poet is writing about it indicates it must mean more.

2. Answers will vary, but may include things like repeated food imagery, air plants, blood imagery, religious/worship imagery, earth and seasons, farming, connection of food with heaven/religion, etc.

3. The poet juxtaposes the magical idea of surviving only on light with killing to eat and survive. The poem suggests a wish that people would not have to kill to eat, but instead simply exist from the light of the sun. This wish shows a respect for other living things.

4. Killing something for worship is a sacrifice. It makes death something holy. This image elevates eating to something far more than simple sustenance.

5. Grapes, wine, fruit, eternity and heaven, body and blood, apples, seeds, food as body, etc.

6. Many possible answers, including wine and communion, religion, the tree of knowledge and the apple, blood and sacrifice or Christ, the "circle of life," etc.

7. "Rejoice" and "Seasons" are the standouts (and perhaps "together"). This line could cement the poet's ideas that eating and drinking are akin to religious rites, that we should respect the food we eat and the land from which it comes, and that this respect should bring us joy. By referencing the seasons, Gibran stretches this idea to include the entire time of our lives, even the lives of generations.

8. In the poem, Gibran mentions eternity, all the seasons, and heaven. These indicate a circle of life—of things dying to feed the living, who then die and feed others. The consistent flow of the animation symbolizes this idea.
9. Answers will vary.
10. Answers will vary.

Review:

1. Give the class **Handout 3: Imagery in the Poem "On Eating and Drinking."** Ask students to review the definition of imagery, their answers to the questions, and their notes on the poem. (Note: Students will be asked to list visual images and what they "see," but will be challenged to find other imagery in the poem as well.)
2. Point out to students that the poet could say "Killing to eat is regrettable," but instead says, "If only we could live on the fragrance of the earth, and like an air plant be sustained by the light." The images add depth; imagery contributes to making words become poetry. (You may want to point out to students that Gibran includes the consumption of plants under "killing to eat," not just the eating of animals.)
3. Give students time to work individually or in small groups to complete the handout.
4. Ask students how the images are related to each other. Conduct a discussion to develop the idea that all of these images work together to add depth and meaning; they add to the cohesion of the idea that eating and drinking are something more than consumption. Some students may bring up the fact that the poem uses religious imagery through such words and images as "blood," "wine," "worship," and "rejoice."

Create:

1. This project can be as simple or complex as time and skills allow. This is an opportunity for full arts integration. Outcomes will certainly vary, but the goal is to get students to think in terms of imagery.
2. Give the class photocopies of **Handout 4: Create a Menu.** Review the directions on the handout with the students. If desired, arrange students in pairs or small groups.
3. List on the board a few food items, such as chicken soup, applesauce, and spaghetti. (For fun, you might use the school cafeteria menu for that day.) Have students brainstorm at least two related images for each item. Encourage them to make their images clear and specific.
4. Give students time to complete **Handout 4**. If you wish to challenge them more, restrict them to types of imagery: e.g., drinks must relate to smell, appetizers to touch, desserts to sight.
5. Have students use the computer or art materials to design an appropriate menu for the restaurant.

Extension Activities:

Have students choose one of the created menus and build an entire restaurant experience by bringing dishes from home to serve.

Have students write their own poems on food or perhaps dinnertime in their own family. Ask them to concentrate on developing vivid imagery. Give them time to read their poems to the class or have students post the poems.

Have interested students research the Maronite tradition in the Catholic Church and present their findings to the class.

Handout 1 ▸ p.1

Imagery: A Quick Review

Directions:

Read the definition of imagery below. Then look over the examples and fill in the blanks with your own original images.

Definition:

Imagery is a literary device in which words lead the reader to form pictures in his or her mind. A group of connected images in a work helps the author establish tone, setting, mood, atmosphere, etc. Images can be described in single words and phrases or in figures of speech such as metaphors and similes. Imagery appeals to the senses of the reader and is usually classified as sight (visual images), sound (auditory images), taste (gustatory images), smell (olfactory images), touch (tactile images), and movement (kinesthetic images).

Examples:

Sight:

- The darkening sky was sapphire.
- The runner bounded like a gazelle.
- She loved the green carpet. It looked like _____

Smell:

- The pavement smelled of fresh rain.
- The sweet smell of fine chocolate pulled them quickly toward the kitchen.
- His locker smelled like _____

Taste:

- It was about to rain. The metallic taste in the air predicted bad weather.
- Like _____, Mom's soup was bitter and wouldn't make me better.
- The pasta was _____ like _____

Handout 1 ▸ P.2

Imagery: A Quick Review

Hearing:

- The wind roared like a wolf howling at the moon.
- The earth opened with a thunderous boom.
- The crowd sounded like_____

Touch:

- The old cowboy's skin was like leather from years in the sun.
- His breath was like a furnace.
- The pillow was_____

Movement:

- The injured runner crawled across the finish line like an exhausted turtle.
- The defender exploded through the offensive line and crushed the quarterback.
- The old locomotive _____

Handout 2 ▸ p.1

Discussion Questions for the Poem 'On Eating and Drinking'

Directions:

Answer the following questions. You do not need to use complete sentences.

1. Titles are important to poems. They can set tone or define place, among other functions. The title for this poem, "On Eating and Drinking," is simple, establishing the subject matter. What more could the title be doing?

2. Look at your notes from the second and third reading of the poem. What did you notice?

3. An air plant is a plant that has nearly no root structure and can survive even without roots. Its sustenance is provided through its leaf structure. Read the first stanza again. Why would Gibran liken people to such a plant in regard to eating and drinking?

4. Also in the first stanza, Gibran likens killing to eat as an act of worship. Why would he do this?

Handout 2 ▸ p.2

Discussion Questions for the Poem 'On Eating and Drinking'

5. In the second and third stanzas, what images are presented?

6. What do the images from #5 mean to you? What might they mean to others?

7. Look at the last line/stanza. What words stand out? What do you think Gibran is trying to accomplish with this last line?

8. In the animation that accompanies "On Eating and Drinking," after the person takes a bite of a rainbow, the images turn to work and the farmer's sweat becomes water for others to drink, which then waters a grapevine. This idea of one thing becoming another and yet another occurs throughout the animation. What does this meaning convey in relation to the poem itself?

9. Did the animation in the film for "On Eating and Drinking" help your understanding of the poem? Did it change your perception? Why, or why not?

10. Do you agree that eating and drinking are more than just sustenance? Why, or why not?

Handout 3 ▸ p.1

Imagery in the Poem 'On Eating and Drinking'

Directions:

Read the definition of imagery below and reread the poem "On Eating and Drinking." Also look over your notes on the poem and the answers to the questions on **Handout 3**. When you have finished, write each one in the appropriate category or categories on the next page. Words and phrases may be used more than once. The first few have been done for you, as examples.

Imagery is a literary device in which words allow the reader to form pictures in his or her mind. A group of connected images in a work helps the author establish tone, setting, mood, atmosphere, etc. Images can occur in single words, phrases, or figurative language such as metaphors and similes. Imagery appeals to the senses of the reader: sight (visual images), sound (auditory images), taste (gustatory images), smell (olfactory images), touch (tactile images) and movement (kinesthetic images). Imagery creates mental pictures for readers to explore.

tree of heaven	kill to eat	crush an apple
gather the grapes	act of worship	your blood and my blood
feeds the tree	winepress	fruit shall be gathered
buds of your tomorrow	fruit	blossom
eternal vessels	wine	vineyard
teeth	sap that feeds the tree	seeds

Handout 3 ▸ p.2

Imagery in the Poem 'On Eating and Drinking'

Religious Imagery: Tree of heaven, eternal vessels

Farming Imagery: Gather the grapes

Time imagery:

Food/Taste imagery: Gather the grapes

Touch or Kinesthetic Imagery:

Handout 4

Create a Menu

Directions:

A team of investors has designated you to be the creative mind behind a new restaurant. You must not only name the restaurant but also develop the menu. The investors have unlimited funds, but have given you one stipulation: The menu items must be described using imagery. For example, if it were a Greek restaurant, the menu might offer French fries described as "Golden Spears of Ajax."

Create at least 10 items for your menu. Try to include appetizers, entrees, drinks, and desserts. Note that in the poem, the imagery worked together to create a cohesive "flavor." Have your menu do the same.

Name of restaurant _____ Restaurant theme _____

Menu Item	Description

On Love

Enduring Understandings

- Love is a force in our lives that, while sometimes painful, pushes us to grow emotionally for the health and benefit of ourselves and everyone around us.
- Personification—the assigning of human characteristics to nonhuman things—is a device that adds dimension or strength to an author's writing, helping a reader associate familiar human qualities with a nonhuman form.

Essential Questions

- Why is love sometimes painful?
- Is the pain of love worth the benefit?
- How can writers and artists communicate rich messages about complex subjects without explicitly stating everything they wish to say?

Notes to the Teacher

This lesson helps students to understand both Gibran's thoughts on the nature of love and the way that Gibran used personification to deepen and enrich his poetry. Although Gibran never married, there were several older women whom he loved. One was Josephine Peabody, a poet he met when he was only 15; she helped to arrange his first art exhibition. Another, the most significant, was his patron, the schoolmistress Mary Elizabeth Haskell; this relationship endured until his death. His relationship with May Ziadah was only by correspondence. Collections of his letters to each of these women have been published; the titles are listed in Additional Resources.

Students will most likely be familiar with the concept of personification. The core of this lesson consists of getting them to think critically about what specific meaning Gibran intends through the personification he employs. Students may tend to gravitate to vague, generic answers about the device's effect. Push them to think and articulate exactly what value is added in the depictions Gibran creates.

The beginning of this lesson consists of several readings of Gibran's poem, followed by an analysis of the theme that while love may inevitably bring pain, a life without love is meaningless. Students analyze how the poet's three personifications of Love—as an angel, a baker, and a gardener—enrich the reader's understanding of the theme. Then, using Gibran's poem as an example, students will choose an abstract concept and describe it with three personifications from their own imagination. Extension activities showcase connections in the worlds of art and music.

Common Core Standards addressed by this lesson

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.D
Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.3
Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

Duration of the Lesson

One period for analysis and discussion of the poem. Additional class time may be needed if the creative writing is to be done in class or shared aloud, or if you use the extension activities.

Assessment

Students may be graded objectively on their ability to depict their chosen concept with three personifications and three details per personification.

Materials

Film clip from *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* (48:05–52:04)

Copies of the full text of the poem "On Love"

Handout 1: Creating Your Own Personified 'Portrait'

Optional: Computer access for the extension activity

Procedure

Review

1. Explain to students that they will be exploring Gibran's "On Love," a poem that presents the idea of love through some rather unconventional verbal images. Show the film clip (48:05–52:04).

2. Provide students with a printed copy of the full text of "On Love" and read the poem aloud. Point out to students that there are some differences between the original text and the text used for the animation.

3. Ask students who "he" is in the poem. When they respond with "Love," ask why this abstract idea is indicated with a personal pronoun. (*Making the idea of love into a sentient human being makes it more personal to the reader.*) Ask students what this technique is called. (*Personification*) Ask the students for a definition of personification. (*The assigning of human characteristics to nonhuman things, such as inanimate objects, animals, or abstract ideas.*)

Interpret

1. Ask students to identify places in the poem where personification is used. *("when his wings enfold you…the sword hidden among his pinions may wound you"; "when he speaks to you believe in him"; "even as he is for your growth…so shall he descend to your roots and shake them in their clinging to the earth"; "like sheaves of corn he gathers you…that you may become sacred bread for God's sacred feast."*)

2. Drawing attention to each of the three sections above, ask the students what kind of image is being created by each personification. *(An angel, a gardener, a bread maker)*

3. Explain that personification works by creating a recognizable image and investing the personified image with implicit meaning. Readers bring to the poem their own associations with the personified images, and use those associations to understand and interpret the poem.

4. Ask the students what extra meaning Gibran creates by personifying Love as an angel. (*It implies that love is divine and benevolent, something to be trusted and something that will save or redeem us.)*

5. Ask the students what extra meaning Gibran achieves by personifying Love as a gardener. (*A gardener is someone who looks out for the health of his or her plants, who protects them from harmful forces and does what is necessary to make them fruitful, including painfully pruning them when necessary. It implies that love is a force that will make us healthy and whole. It implies that love will protect us from that which could harm us in life. It implies that any pain we feel from love is ultimately for our own benefit.)*

6. Ask the students what extra meaning Gibran achieves by personifying Love as a baker. (*A bread maker (or a miller) takes the raw material from the fields and purifies it so that it can be used for good purposes. His actions can be harsh and forceful, but it is the only way to separate the grain from the husk. It implies that love may put our hearts through a tough process. We may feel as if we are being torn apart, ground down, or painfully kneaded. But if we let love do its work on us, we will become pure flour, beautiful and useful and beneficial to all those who partake of us.*)

7. Tell students that some poems have a turning point, sometimes called a fulcrum or, in sonnets, a volta. Ask them to find the fulcrum of the poem. ("*But if in your fear…")* Direct them to paraphrase that section up through "…not all of our tears." You may want to give them a few minutes to write out a paraphrase before sharing their answers. (*Sample paraphrase: If all the above promised benefits and costs of love are not what you want, it is better to close yourself off from love entirely. You will protect yourself from love's pain, but you will never experience the depths of love's abundant joy.*)

8. Ask students what the emotional effect of this section is, given its placement after the personified sections we saw earlier. (*After the rich images of the personified sections, the fulcrum feels hollow and fragile. The life it portrays is unattractive, and the rhetorical effect is to cause the reader to desire the full life of Love.*)

9. Ask students to write a page or more in their journals stating whether or not they agree that love is a beneficent but necessarily painful force. Ask them if they think pain is a necessary part of love, and if so, why. (*Answers will*

vary, but may include the idea that love changes us for the better, and any change brings with it a certain amount of pain.) When they are finished, allow students to share their journals if they wish to do so. It's best not to *require* anyone to read aloud when the subject is so personal.

Create

1. Distribute **Handout 1: Creating Your Own Personified 'Portrait.'**
2. Review the directions on the handout and help students choose concepts they would like to write about. Encourage them to find three ways to depict their chosen concept, and to consider what extra meaning their personification brings to the interpretation of that concept. The portrait may be in poetry or prose, but each depiction should include at least three details that deepen the comparison and enrich our understanding of the idea. Tell students ahead of time if you expect them to share their work with the class.
3. When students have completed the handout, have them write a first draft of their essay or poem. This may be assigned as homework, but it will be helpful for students if they have time in class to write and to have individual conferences with you.
4. When students have finished, give them the opportunity to read or listen to each other's work.

Extension Activities

1. Philosophical concepts and abstract ideas have been depicted in many forms for millennia. Consider assigning students a brief report on an artistic depiction of one of the ideas below, or one of their own choosing. Research and scholarship on these works of art are available online. Encourage students to look for symbolic imagery, visual cues that help us understand something about the idea being presented. Their brief reports can be written or oral.

   Classical depictions of virtues and ideas:

   Prudence (Piero del Pollaiolo)
   Justice (various artists)
   Fortitude (Botticelli)
   Temperance (Piero del Pollaiolo)
   Abundance (Rubens)
   Wisdom in the guise of the goddess Athena (various artists)
   Victory in the guise of the goddess Nike (various artists)
   Love in the guise of the god Cupid (various artists)
   Death depicted as the Grim Reaper (various artists)

2. Students who are fans of country music may enjoy listening to a different expression of the theme of love's value despite the pain it may cause: Garth Brooks's classic song, "The Dance." Ask students to find other popular expressions of the same idea in the music they listen to.

Additional Resources

Gibran, Kahlil, Suheil Bushrui , and Salma Haffar al-Kuzbari. *Love Letters: The Love Letters of Kahlil Gibran to May Ziadah.* London: Oneworld Publications, 2008. Print.

Gibran, Kahlil, and Virginia Hilu, *Beloved Prophet: The Love Letters of Kahlil Gibran and Mary Haskell.* New York: Knopf, 1972. Print.

Gibran, Kahlil, Salim Majais, and Josephine P. Peabody. *Letters of Kahlil Gibran to Josephine Peabody*. Beirut: Kutub, 2009. Print.

Handout 1

Creating Your Own Personified 'Portrait'

Directions:

Now that you have studied Gibran's poem "On Love," compose your own personified "portrait" of an abstract idea. Use the planning sheet below for help.

Step One: Choose a concept that appeals to you. You may use one of Gibran's titles, or choose from the following list: friendship, joy, trust, selfishness, contentment, betrayal, intelligence, fear, forgiveness, gratitude, loss, compassion, courage, anger, grief, knowledge, entitlement, sacrifice, hatred, achievement.

The concept you have chosen: _____

Step Two: What does your concept mean to you? Explain this in your own words; someone else's definition from a dictionary will not help you think through what you want to say.

_____

_____

_____

Step Three: Find three ways to use personification to depict your chosen concept. Then consider what extra meaning the personification brings to your interpretation of that concept.

Personification	What this adds to your interpretation of the poem

Your portrait may be in poetry or prose, but should include at least three examples of personification that deepen the comparison and enrich the reader's understanding of the idea.

On Good and Evil

Enduring Understandings

- Repeating words and phrases—in poems, essays, songs, and elsewhere—is a literary device called anaphora that serves many purposes for an author.
- Even simple literary devices can have profound effects on a work of literature.

Essential Questions

- What is anaphora and where is it found?
- What use(s) does anaphora have in literature?
- How does something as simple as repetition affect a work of literature?

Notes to the Teacher

Anaphora is often used in literature and elsewhere, yet the term will likely be unfamiliar to many students. Anaphora is a fairly simple technique: the deliberate repetition of words or phrases at the beginning of successive lines or sentences. (If the repetition comes at the end of lines, it is not anaphora, but epistrophe.) Anaphora in poetry creates a rhythm and appeals to the listener's emotions. It is an ancient technique dating back to Biblical writing, such as the Psalms or Beatitudes. Later, it became a favorite technique of the Elizabethans. Think, for example, of Shakespeare's Marullus denouncing the commons in *Julius Caesar*: "*You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!*" The Romantics favored it too: As he and his mariners set sail, Tennyson's Ulysses predicts:

> *It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:*
> *It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles, …*

Modern poets have also used anaphora to dramatic effect.

[Note that anaphora as a rhetorical term has a different meaning: using a pronoun to replace a word in a sentence. Be sure students are not distracted by this alternate meaning.]

The lesson is divided into several parts. Students view the film clip interpreting "On Good and Evil" and then listen to several readings of the poem. They learn the definition of the literary technique anaphora; next, they identify it in several well-known literary and oratorical examples and discuss the impact that its use has on the page. Then they move on to discussion questions about both the style and substance of the poem itself. Finally, there is a creative writing assignment

that asks them to apply what they have learned to a speech on a topic of their choosing. For this assignment, you may wish to vary your requirements for the number of sentences, the repeated words or phrases, the particular topic, etc., depending on the interests and abilities of your class.

Common Core Standards addressed by this lesson

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.4
Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare, as well as other authors.)

Duration of the Lesson

One or two periods, though easily more if extension activities are included.

Assessment

Completion of worksheets

Completion of speech project

Optional: Delivery of speech or performance of extension activities; this is up to the individual teacher.

Materials

Access to film clip from *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* (57:32–1:01:07)

Photocopies of **Handouts 1–3**

Copies of the poem "On Good and Evil"

Optional: Depending on the extension activities—musical instruments and online access

Procedure

Review

1. Explain to students that the lesson will address Gibran's "On Good and Evil," a poem that speaks to a broad and ancient idea; it will also focus on one literary technique within the poem, called *anaphora*.

2. Distribute **Handout 1: Anaphora—An Introduction** and discuss the literary term *anaphora* described at the beginning of the handout. Give students time to complete the handout, working individually or in pairs.

   Suggested answers to **Handout 1**:

   3. Underline "blessed." Possible answer: Much like the King example, the repeat of "blessed" highlights the outcome of being a follower of the Bible's teachings. It unites several ideas with one word.

   4. Underline "This." Possible answer: The repeated use of "this" shows an emotional attachment to England.

   5. Underline "I have a dream." Possible answer: The phrase adds a rhythm that helps to make this speech more memorable. "Dream" describes an ideal situation, not an impossibility. The words that follow emphasize what he hopes will happen.

   6. Underline "We shall." Possible answer: The repeated phrase flies in the face of war and the prospects faced by England. Even without context, students should pick up on the positive and defiant tone set by "we shall."

   7. Underline "I want." Possible answer: The repeated phrase "I want" illustrates the selfish behavior of the speaker. More deeply and juxtaposed against #5, this satirizes the common practice of anaphora in political speeches.

3. Review the answers in class to be sure that students understand the term *anaphora*.

Interpret

1. If possible, show the film clip (57:32–1:01:07) of the animation interpreting "On Good and Evil." Then read aloud "On Good and Evil" for the class. At first have the students just listen. Next, hand out copies of the poem "On Good and Evil" and have a student read the poem aloud for the class. This time, on the handout, have students note examples of anaphora. If necessary, have a final reading with students either adding to their notes or listening for what they heard the first time.

2. Distribute **Handout 2: Discussion Questions** to the students. Have the class take the time to answer the questions on the handout. Complete sentences are not necessary; the goal is to get ideas flowing. Instead instruct students that their answers are notes to be expounded upon in discussion or on a later assignment. For numbers 8 and 9, the animation that accompanies the poem is needed or should have been recently viewed.

   Suggested answers to **Handout 2**:

   1. The poem will be about the ancient struggle between good and evil or right and wrong. The poem will pit good against evil.

   2. They are equal. Perhaps there is no evil, but instead good just weakens sometimes.

   3. "you are good" and/or "yet you" and/or "In your/our longing"

   4. The repeated phrases seem to perpetuate an idea from the first set of lines that evil does not exist on its own. Instead we as people are inherently good. "You are

good" shows up again and again and when coupled with "Yet you" are not evil seems to say that none of us are—or maybe can be—evil.

5. Yes and no. The examples of anaphora that contain or address evil really relate only to people being "not evil." Gibran seems to imply that people are good and what we perceive as evil could actually still be considered good.

6. Although it is about both, the poem focuses on good. There are many definitions of what good is, but none for evil. There doesn't seem to be a definition of evil.

7. Answers will vary widely. One possible answer: As long as we try to better ourselves, we are good; and all of us have the ability to try, therefore we are all good.

8. It is a pity that the stags cannot teach swiftness to turtles.

9. The stags and turtles are both longing to escape from the fire as people have longing within to be better. Although they took different routes and at different speeds, they both reached the same destination. This could reflect Gibran's lesson that we are all good, even if we get there differently.

CREATE

1. Give the class **HANDOUT 3: ANAPHORA—YOUR TURN.** Review the directions with students so that they fully understand your expectations. If time is short, you may wish to assign this for homework. Students can limit themselves to the one-paragraph assignment or expand upon it as skill and time allow.

2. Give students adequate time to brainstorm issues and start writing in class. Circulate to be sure that students using the same issue are not using the same anaphora to write the speech.

3. On the following day, ask students to deliver their speeches aloud. After they have practiced giving the speech in front of you, you may want to invite a sympathetic administrator into your classroom to hear the speeches.

Extension Activities

1. Have students think of a particularly evil character from a film, story, play, or book they've seen or read. Have them write a short essay applying "On Good and Evil" to that character and determining whether or not the chosen character was truly evil or just "limping" forward in his or her longing to be good.

2. If the "Create" assignment generated conflicting views, arrange a student debate on the topics covered by their speeches.

3. Many pop songs and poems use the technique of anaphora. Examples are readily available online. Have students find and bring into class popular music that uses anaphora as a technique. Discuss how the use of anaphora affects the impact of each song.

4. Have students write songs, poems, or chapter openings using anaphora. Students could share their creative efforts in an "Anaphora Day." Some creative writing classes hold evening meetings in local coffee shops; perhaps you could even arrange an "Anaphora Evening."

Handout 1 ▸ P.1

Anaphora – An Introduction

Directions:

The definition of *anaphora* is fairly simple. It is a rhetorical device (a use of language) in which words or phrases at the beginning of successive lines or sentences are repeated. Authors use anaphora for many reasons; the most common are to create rhythm, to bring focus to an idea, or to create natural groupings of ideas. Anaphora is used not only in poetry, but also in fiction, nonfiction, drama, and speeches.

Underline the examples of anaphora below and then explain what effect the anaphora has on the passage. The first two are done for you as examples.

1. It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair… (Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities)*

Answer: By repeating "it was," the author focuses the reader's attention on each phrase that follows. The focus is on the time period that is the topic of the piece. Anaphora also makes this excerpt memorable.

2. I hear and see not strips of cloth alone,
I hear the tramp of armies, I hear the challenging sentry,
I hear the jubilant shouts of millions of men, I hear Liberty!
I hear the drums beat and the trumpets blowing…
(Walt Whitman, "Song of the Banner at Daybreak" from *Leaves of Grass*)

Answer: The poet can express many ideas in different lines, but they are all linked. There is also a sense of rhythm provided by the repeated "I hear," which suggests the regular tramp of the army.

Handout 1 ▸ p.2 Anaphora – An Introduction

3. …blessed shall be thy basket and thy store,
blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in,
blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out...
(Deut. 28:6)

Answer:

4. This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings...
This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land.
(Shakespeare, *Richard II: Act I, sc. i)*

Answer:

5. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."
I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood….
I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.
(Rev. Martin Luther King, 1963 speech at the Lincoln Memorial)

Answer:

Handout 1 ▸ P.3

Anaphora – An Introduction

6. We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills. We shall never surrender.

(Winston Churchill, 1940 speech to the House of Commons)

Answer:

7. I want to shake off the dust of this one-horse town. I want to explore the world. I want to watch TV in a different time zone. I want to visit strange, exotic malls. I'm sick of eating hoagies! I want a grinder, a sub, a foot-long hero! I want to *live*, Marge! Won't you let me live? Won't you, please?

(Homer Simpson, *The Simpsons,* 1994, "Fear of Flying")

Answer:

Handout 2 ▸ p.1 Discussion Questions

Directions:

Answer the following questions on the poem "On Good and Evil." You do not need to use complete sentences.

1. Titles are important to poems. They can set tone or define place among other uses as well. What is the significance of the title "On Good and Evil"?

2. In the opening lines of the poem, Gibran equates evil to good simply being hungry. What does this image mean to you?

3. On your second or third reading of the poem, what example(s) of anaphora did you find?

4. What effect does the use of anaphora have on the poem?

Handout 2 ▸ p.2 Discussion Questions

5. Are there examples of anaphora pertaining to evil? If so, why do you think this is? If not, why not?

6. Reread the poem. Though the title implies the poem will be about both Good and Evil, is the poem about that? Is there a definition of evil in the poem?

7. Poems, like stories, novels, and plays, have themes—lessons to be conveyed by the author. The theme of "On Good and Evil" could be summed up by its final line. Interpret that line in your own words.

8. In the animation from *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* that accompanies this poem, stags and turtles are seen moving away from a fire. What does the poem say about stags and turtles?

9. Also in the animation, the turtles and stags are seen reaching the end of their run at nearly the same time. Relate this to the poem's theme.

Handout 3

Anaphora – Your Turn

Remember, anaphora is a rhetorical device (a use of language) in which words or phrases at the beginning of successive lines or sentences are repeated. Authors use anaphora for several reasons: to create rhythm, bring focus to an idea, to paint a larger picture, or to create natural groupings of ideas—among many others.

Directions:

Think of something at school that you'd like to change. This could be the lunch menu, the decision whether or not to wear uniforms, the addition of breakfast to the cafeteria offerings, the amount of homework, rules for phone use, etc. Using one of the words or phrases in the box below repeatedly, write the opening paragraph of a speech in which you try to persuade the teachers and administrators to think as you do. Remember that anaphora uses repetition for some kind of desired effect: to connect ideas, to paint a larger picture, to add rhythm, etc. Use the space below to plan out some ideas.

Bring it home	We must	Don't we
Say yes	Say no	Must I
If this	that	this
Wrong way	Right way	One
They	I	Cold
Hot	You do	We do
I can	You can	We can
Should I	Should we	Yes
No	Do	Don't

On Death

Enduring Understandings

- In seeking to understand something mysterious (like death), sometimes one must begin by understanding its opposite.
- The interconnectedness of life and death makes it impossible to understand one without the other.
- Complex subjects (like death) strain the limits of conventional knowledge and understanding. Poetry and poetic devices such as paradox can deepen our understanding of life's mysteries and open us up to previously obscure experience.

Essential Questions

- How can embracing life fully help us understand death?
- What is a paradox and how does it work?
- What benefit does paradox offer a poet in communication?
- How can we use poetic devices like paradox to communicate mysterious or opaque ideas about life?

Notes to the Teacher

The poem on which this lesson focuses may raise sensitive subjects for some students. If there are students who have been personally and deeply affected by death, the teacher may wish to stick closer to the questions that focus on paradox and how the poem works. The poem may also raise discussion of students' beliefs about the afterlife and religion. If the conversation gets too personal or contentious, you may wish to refocus the students on the interpretation of the poem itself, rather than the expression of their personal views. However the conversation goes, the students should never lose sight of the mystery captured in the paradoxes of this poem—a mystery as deep as life itself, in which (it may help to remind students) none of us is an expert.

In this lesson, students begin by watching the film clip interpreting the poem and listening to a reading of the poem "On Death." They then review the literary concept of paradox, discussing its definition and looking at obvious examples from other literary works. Student groups next work to identify and explain some of the paradoxes from the poem. A general class discussion helps them to interpret some of the more complex aspects of the poem. Finally, a creative writing assignment asks them to compose their own poems using Gibran's poem as a mentor text.

Common Core Standards addressed by this lesson

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.1
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

Duration of the Lesson

One 50- to 60-minute period for the completion of the paradox worksheet and discussion questions. Additional class time may be needed if the creative writing is to be done in class, and if students wish to share their creative writing aloud.

Assessment

Ability to identify the paradoxical terms in Gibran's lines of poetry on the paradox worksheet

Ability to articulate coherent interpretations of those paradoxical claims

Creative writing: Assessment should be limited to the student's fulfillment of the required number of paradoxes, not on the quality of the poem.

Materials

Film clip (1:06:49–1:10:04) from *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* and projection equipment

Copies of the poem "On Death"

Handout 1: Paradox: The Death of Sense and the Birth of Wisdom

Answer sheet for **Handout 1** (for teacher only)

Optional: Computer access or art materials for extension activity

Procedure

Review

1. Explain to students that they will be exploring Gibran's "On Death," a poem in which things surprise us by turning out to be something other than what we expected. Show the clip of the animated sequence at (1:06:49–1:10:04). Then distribute copies of the poem "On Death" and read it aloud as students read it silently.

2. Ask students whether they notice anything strange or confusing about the ideas in the poem. (You may wish to read the poem aloud more than once. If needed, focus their attention on one line of the poem at a time.) (*Suggested answer: The poem is full of paired opposing ideas: life and death, night and day, silence and singing, etc.)*

3. Ask the students what effect such pairings have on their experience and understanding of the poem. (*Suggested answers: It makes you stop and think about what's being said. It makes the meaning more mysterious and challenges the reader to understand.)*

4. Pass out **Handout 1, Paradox: The Death of Sense and the Birth of Wisdom.** Have a student read the description of a paradox at the top of the page, along with the examples. As students discuss the examples, make sure that they understand the concept of paradox.

5. In small groups, pairs, or individually, have the students complete the handout. Explain that they are to examine each paradox from Gibran's "On Death" and identify the words that make it a paradox (the words that seem to contradict), and then offer an interpretation on what deeper meaning the paradox communicates. See Answer sheet for teachers on page 97.

Interpret

1. Ask students to offer an interpretation of the poem as a whole. You may want to give them a few minutes to write something out. Have them share their answers. *(Suggested answers: Death is not the end of someone, but merely the next step in someone's journey. We are part of the earth, and our death is simply becoming one with it. Life is the preparation for eternity. To die is to transcend the limitations of physical life.)*

2. Ask students: Does the paradox make the underlying claim clearer or more confusing? How? (*Answers will vary.)*

3. Have a student read the third sentence aloud. Ask students what they think the owl has to do with life and death. (*Suggested answer: The owl is a metaphor for us. By day, the owl cannot see—just as we, in life, don't understand what is coming. But in darkness, the owl sees—just as we, in the darkness of death, will understand it. Since life and death are one, in embracing life we may come to understand its opposite, death.*

4. How do dreams hide the gate to eternity? (*Suggested answer: Dreams are visions of what has not yet come to be. They are unbounded by physical limitations. They point to a future of limitless possibilities, of eternal promise.)*

5. What does it mean that we begin to climb only when we have reached the mountaintop? (*Suggested answer: It means that what we think of as the end of our journey is often just the beginning. Our full understanding of life and death can only truly begin when we have climbed the mountain of life and are ready to begin the journey of death.)*

6. Do the paradoxes and their claims point to an underlying assumption or presupposition on Gibran's part? Does he, for example, presuppose an afterlife? (*Answers will vary, but may include the ideas that the breath rising to seek God or dancing after earth has claimed your limbs could be a reference to the afterlife. Conversely, students may read "melt into the sun" as a rejection of spiritual afterlife and an embrace of death as the simple dissolution of the physical body.)*

7. As the variety of opinions in the past three questions reveals, there are many different ways to interpret "On Death." Is this frustrating or appropriate? (*Answers will vary.)*

8. Why might Gibran have chosen to express his ideas about death in such abstruse, paradoxical ways? (*Suggested answer: Death is a very complex, obscure concept. Simple language may not be suited to complex ideas.)*

9. What would be lost if Gibran chose to articulate his ideas in concrete, unambiguous language? (*Suggested answer: A technical or unambiguous answer would lose the "otherworldly" or transcendental tone and may fail to communicate the mystery that is an authentic part of our incomplete understanding of death.)*

Create

Have students write their own poem on a complex concept in the style of Gibran's "On Death." Encourage them to use rich imagery (involving all the senses) and challenge them to use between five and 10 paradoxes that communicate the experience of their concept. If they need help choosing a concept, they may use one of Gibran's titles, or choose from the following list: friendship, joy, trust, selfishness, contentment, betrayal, intelligence, fear, forgiveness, gratitude, loss, compassion, courage, anger, grief, knowledge, entitlement, sacrifice, hatred, achievement. Suggested length: a minimum of 10 lines. You may choose to give this assignment as homework, but try to start it in class so that students have an opportunity to ask questions and get assistance.

Extension Activity

Have students emulate the artistic vision of the film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* by illustrating their original poems. They may wish to type the poems out and use digital art, or inscribe them on poster paper and illustrate them by hand. The final version may make for a beautiful display of literary and visual art. You might consider teaming with an art teacher for this interdisciplinary project.

Handout 1 ▸ P.1

Paradox: The Death of Sense and the Birth of Wisdom

A. Directions:

Read the definition of paradox below. Then read the examples and explain why each is a paradox.

> Paradox (n.): An apparently absurd or self-contradictory statement or proposition, or a strongly counterintuitive one, which investigation, analysis, or explanation may nevertheless prove to be well founded or true. (*OED Online*)

Examples:

"Seek freedom and become captive of your desires. Seek discipline and find your liberty."
—Frank Herbert, *Chapterhouse: Dune*

Whatever you do will be insignificant, but it is very important that you do it."
— Mahatma Gandhi

"In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it. "
— Oscar Wilde, *Lady Windermere's Fan*

"He who fears what he shall suffer already suffers what he fears."
— Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays*

Handout 1 ▸ P.2

Paradox: The Death of Sense and the Birth of Wisdom

B. Directions:

For each of the paradoxes below appearing in Gibran's "On Death," identify what specific words contradict one another and create the paradox. Then offer an interpretation of the underlying claim that the paradox makes.

1. *For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one.*

Paradoxical words:

Underlying claim:

2. *For how would we know the secret of death unless we look for it in the heart of life?*

Paradoxical words:

Underlying claim:

3. *Only when you drink from the river of silence shall you indeed sing.*

Paradoxical words:

Underlying claim:

Handout 1 ▸ P.3

Paradox: The Death of Sense and the Birth of Wisdom

4. *And when you have reached the mountaintop, then you shall begin to climb.*

Paradoxical words:

Underlying claim:

5. *And when the earth shall claim your limbs, then shall you truly dance.*

Paradoxical words:

Underlying claim:

Handout 1
Answer Sheet

Paradox: The Death of Sense and the Birth of Wisdom

1. *For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one.*
Paradoxical words: life, death
Underlying claim: While the river and the sea might be thought of as separate waterways, the same water flows from one into the other. Likewise, our lives flow from one into the other. Death may not be the end of the river, but the expansion into a greater sea of existence.

2. *For how would we know the secret of death unless we look for it in the heart of life?*
Paradoxical words: death, life
Underlying claim: While we may think of life and death as opposites, Gibran claims that they are complementary aspects of the larger phenomenon of existence (just as day and night are complements in the 24-hour day). Just as day can teach us things about night, so can life teach us things about death. If we want to understand death, we must first understand life.

3. *Only when you drink from the river of silence shall you indeed sing.*
Paradoxical words: silence, sing
Underlying claim: It is only when we have understood the profound silence of death (as opposed to the noisiness of life) that we will be able to exist fully, in such a way that our songs (or lives) will not merely be noise, but true music.

4. *And when you have reached the mountaintop, then you shall begin to climb.*
Paradoxical words: reached the mountaintop, begin to climb
Underlying claim: We are wrong in thinking that our journeys end on the mountaintop at the end of our lives. What we think of as the summit is actually just the base camp for the spiritual climb we may not have known existed.

5. *And when the earth shall claim your limbs, then shall you truly dance.*
Paradoxical words: earth shall claim your limbs, truly dance
Underlying claim: While we prize our physical lives, it is only when we give up our physical bodies that our souls are free to live and dance without restriction or inhibition.

The Visual Imagery of *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet*

Enduring Understandings

- Animated film can be used in both a storytelling mode (similar to that of live-action film) and in a highly abstract mode to create stunning visual impressions.
- Literature and film often address our need to understand others and be understood by them.

Essential Questions

- What elements do film storytelling and literary storytelling have in common?
- Can a film inspire its audience to become more strongly interested in poetry?

Notes to the Teacher

The nerves of the human eye continue to "see" an image for a fraction of a second after the image is gone. This is why we seem to see continuous motion in a film when, in reality, we are presented with a series of separate and largely similar still *shots* (called *frames*), which present consecutive still views of an action. After each frame is shown, the screen is without light (black) while the next frame is moved into place, yet we remain unaware of the absence of light during this blackout. This phenomenon was investigated extensively in the last half of the 19th century using hand-made drawings instead of photographs. In machines like the kinetoscope and the praxinoscope, drawings were "given life," that is, *animated*, by their rapid presentation and replacement. Thus, before celluloid film allowed photography to create moving pictures from life, hand-made drawings had already been doing just that.

Modern storytelling films, both action and animated, are made up of thousands of frames shown at the rate of 24 per second. A single frame, when reproduced as a photograph, is called a *still*. If the frame is from an animated film, it may also be called a *cel*. Frames related by being part of a continuous action make up the *shot*. All of the shots from varying camera angles or points of view of the same event and location make up the *scene*. Scenes united by some idea or continuous activity make up the *sequence*. The director combines selected scenes and sequences to tell the story.

The framing story of the film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* (that part featuring Almitra, Kamila, Mustafa, the soldiers, and townspeople) was created in much the same manner as

a live-action film. For each of the poetry sections, however, the filmmaker used the freedom of the abstract nature of artistic interpretation to explore the poetry, as opposed to telling a story. In some of the poetry sections, there are fragments of a suggested story but note that these segments are not directly related to the framing story.

Analyzing and describing even a part of the film this way will help the student realize that, though the film is now set in its appearance, it came to look as it does as a result of a lengthy process of creation, involving a series of related decisions on the many choices available for each particular element of the film. Film criticism is less about finding fault than it is about trying to understand the reasons for the film's effectiveness, that is, giving consideration to the positive contribution of various elements of the film.

This lesson will guide the students through an examination of the frame story and ask them to evaluate the decisions made by the filmmakers. At the beginning of the lesson, students review film vocabulary and then view and discuss a PowerPoint presentation of stills from the film to reinforce their understanding of the terms. Some of these terms are familiar words but used by the film industry in film-specific ways. Most of these terms are the same for both live-action (photographically recorded) films and animated films. This is especially true for animated films that tell a story (such as the framing story of Mustafa and Almitra) as opposed to the highly abstract un-storied film or segments (such as the segments accompanying each of the poems). When students are comfortable with these terms, they view as many clips from the film as time permits and use the terms to analyze other scenes from the film. Finally, they write a short essay summing up the impact that such analysis has on their viewing habits. Additional subjects for class or individual research for discussion are provided. Students should view the film in its entirety first, before starting the lesson, and then view film clips after they have learned the film vocabulary in order to continue their analysis. If desired, you may give a vocabulary quiz on the film terms covered in the lesson.

Some additional sites that may be helpful:

www.filmsite.org/filmterms.html
This site offers a valuable dictionary of many film terms.

25 Beautiful Stills from the New Anthology Feature 'The Prophet' (Gallery)
An article by Amid Amidi showcasing the 10 stills used in this lesson, along with 15 others taken from the poetry sections.

Common Core Standards addressed by this lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1C:
Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.2:
Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1:
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.2:
Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.3:
Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed.

Duration of the Lesson

Four class periods, including time for viewing the film

Assessment

Participation in class

Writing assignment

Vocabulary quiz on the terms

Materials

Photocopies of the following handouts:
- **Handout 1: Film Vocabulary**
- **Handout 2: Using Your Film Vocabulary**
- **Handout 3: *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet*: A Closer Look** (optional)

Projector and screen

A copy of the film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet*

PowerPoint presentation of stills from the film

Procedure

1. Write the following list of characters on the board to help students with unfamiliar names:

CAST OF CHARACTERS:
Almitra: a somewhat troubled little girl, about 7 or 8 years old
Abyad: Almitra's friend, a seagull
Kamila: Almitra's mother, a widow of about two years
Halim: A military guard
Mustafa: the prisoner, a poet-philosopher
Sergeant (unnamed): Halim's superior officer
Pasha: the ruler of Orphalese ("Pasha" is his title)
Townspeople, vendors, wedding guests, etc.

2. Show the film to the class. Depending on the length of your class period, this may take several days.

3. Pass out **HANDOUT 1: FILM VOCABULARY.** Tell students that the specialized vocabulary of a group of people is called jargon. For example, lawyers use jargon to denote concepts used by their professions, and sometimes even Latin; for example, "declaratory judgment" and "sequestration." Doctors, athletes, and teachers are others who each have a particular jargon. So do filmmakers. Tell students that they are going to learn some of this specialized vocabulary today.

4. Read and review these terms with students to be sure they understand this specialized vocabulary. Refer to Notes to the Teacher for additional information.

5. Tell the class that they will be discussing 10 stills from the film *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet* using the terms from **HANDOUT 1** and noting examples of each.

6. Show the PowerPoint presentation for this lesson, stopping at each slide to discuss as follows:

Viewing *Still #1:*

a. Ask the students to look at *Still #1.* Ask a student to read the definition of abstract (v/transitive) aloud. Notice the difference in the presentation of the sunlight vs. the presentation of the artwork on the walls. Which has details emphasized and which has details omitted? (The expression of sunlight is obvious but the artwork is vague in subject and style.)

b. Ask a student to read the definitions of **key lighting** and **high**, **medium**, and **low keys**. Ask the students to squint as they look at *Still #1* and consider the effect of the high-key exterior vs. low-key interior. (The clear sky and the warm light enhance the appeal of the exterior; the dimly lit interior suggests a gloominess, and we discover that the room has been a prison to Mustafa for seven years.)

Viewing *Still #2*:

a. What is the overall **key** here? Why is it appropriate? (The still continues to suggest the gloominess of imprisonment.)

b. Have a student read the definitions of **camera angle** and **p.o.v**. How would you describe the angle in *Still #2?* (The view is level with tabletop, looking slightly downward; not quite Mustafa's p.o.v., since his head would be above the tabletop unless he had been previously shown bending over.)

c. Have another student read the two definitions of **cartoon**. Ask what makes this still (and the entire framing story) a cartoon *in style*, in the old sense (line drawing, lack of detail, simplified shading). Make clear that, in the new sense, while a cartoon is meant

to be humorous, the film itself is not a cartoon; it would be categorized as an animated feature. This still, and most of the frames for the rest of the story, could be "cartoons" in the original (Renaissance) sense of the word—in that they could be used as the pattern for a highly detailed, more realistic painting.

d. Have a student read the definitions for **o.s. (off screen)** and **v.o. (voice over**). Ask: Are the words "little mouse" spoken by Mustafa o.s. or as v.o.? (Answer: o.s., since he is clearly in the scene but not shown in the shot.)

Viewing *Still #3:*

a. What color predominates in this still? Introduce the term **monochromatic** (an art term meaning multiple shades of the same color).

b. Almitra's dress is the first strong element of color, other than the brown/sepia tones found in the first three stills. Why? (She's from outside this room.)

Viewing *Still #4:*

a. Ask students to pay attention to the **abstracting** by noting which facial features are emphasized (eyebrows, eyes, Mustafa's "five-o'clock shadow"), which are presented quite simply (nose, chin), and which are omitted (details of facial shape and lines).

b. Ask students to read the definitions of, and be able to distinguish between, the following: (1) **stills** and **frames**; (2) **shot, scene,** and **sequence**.

c. Tell students that each of these first four stills is a different shot, but in the same sequence. [Note: Still #5 will be from a new sequence.] What might be the name of the sequence for stills 1–4? (Answer: Mustafa's house or quarters). Point out that one might further subdivide the sequence into three scenes: (1) the scene in which Almitra is hiding from her mother, (2) the conversation between Almitra, Mustafa, and Kamila, and (3) the scene with the sergeant.

Viewing *Still #5:*

a. Tell students that this next sequence might be called "On the road to Orphalese" where, among other events, the travelers encounter a wedding feast taking place in a churchyard.

b. Have students read the various definitions of **cel**. Assuming that this still is made up of three or four different cels, describe what would be in each cel (Answer: foreground cel: table and items on it; character cel: the three people; background cel #1: near tree; background cel #2: sky, hills, distant trees). Point out that the characters move, but since the other objects and the scenery remain stationary, the animators can use the same cel for them, saving drawing time.

Viewing *Still #6:*

a. Ask the students to consider what would be on each of the separate cels that make up the still. (Answer: The distant trees, hills and sky; the cemetery; the near trees; the grave; the character Almitra and her seagull friend, Abyad; the flowers. This would allow the animators to redraw only Almitra and Abyad when they move.)

b. If the filmmaker wanted to show a gentle breeze on Almitra, which of the cels would need to be redrawn from one frame to the next? (Answer: Almitra's hair; the flowers and perhaps the near trees. A strong wind would probably require the additional redrawing of the trees in the background as well as the near trees.)

Viewing *Stills #7* and *#8:*

a. Ask the students if it is likely that the same background cel was used for both stills? (Answer: Yes. The p.o.v. has moved closer to the arch and the camera angle has changed, but the arch is still exactly the same drawing.)

Viewing *Still #9:*

a. Ask a volunteer to describe the **camera angle** used in this still and suggest that he or she try to word it as if writing the script, describing for the artist the angle desired. (Answer: "Close-up of Almitra; we are looking up at her, seeing her strength and determination, with Kamila in the background appearing to be much smaller, unable to restrain Almitra's determination.")

b. Ask the students to consider what the effectiveness would be of showing this action from behind Kamila or from the right or left of the pair of them. What would be lost or gained by using a different angle?

Viewing *Still #10:*

a. Ask students why there are different lighting effects on Almitra and her mother. (Answer: In this still, we see Almitra, now "enlightened" by what she has seen, pointing to "it," while Kamila is still "in the dark.") In the film, this shot is clearly a "set-up shot" for the next shot, which is from their p.o.v., looking at the departing ship.

b. Point out that the filmmaker could have taken the camera right to the ship for a close-up of the person on board. Instead, we see that person from the point of view of Almitra and Kamila. Why? (Answers will vary.)

7. Distribute **HANDOUT 2: USING YOUR FILM VOCABULARY**. Read the directions with students and tell them the number of observations that you expect. Point out that they must be specific in hypothesizing about the director's reasons for his or her choices. Show Still #1 again and ask them why the high-key background of the window contrasts with the rather low-key figure of Mustafa. (The window was put there by an artist: Mustafa could have been shown against a dark wall. The appealing warmth of the out-of-doors, contrasted with the almost cavelike appearance of his room, heightens the viewer's understanding of the dreariness of his confinement.)

8. Show as many clips from the film as you have time for. Then give students time to interpret the notes that they have taken. At the end of the exercise, have them share what they have found in small groups.

9. Have students write a concluding essay of one or more paragraphs based on the following prompt:

> Did the viewing of the film clips, while searching for examples of basic film terms, strengthen the experience you had as a film viewer? That is, do you think you were more involved or less involved because of the assignment to look for examples? If one or more of the terms became particularly meaningful as a result of the examples you discovered, describe the term and your discoveries.

Extension Activities

Students who are interested in film or are members of a film club may wish to continue working with *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet.* **HANDOUT 3: *KAHLIL GIBRAN'S THE PROPHET*: A CLOSER LOOK** provides additional suggestions for research and writing assignments.

Handout 1 ▸ P.1

Film Vocabulary

abstract (adj.): an appearance of something that is in some significant way removed from everyday reality.

abstract (v/transitive): to select and highlight details, at the same time de-emphasizing or even omitting other details.

camera angle: the angle of the camera as it records the scene. For example, an extremely low angle, looking up, suggests the strength and dominance (sometimes the evil nature) of the subject; a slight low-angle, looking up, suggests the strength and nobility of the subject; an extreme high-angle, looking down on the subject, suggests the weakness, perhaps pitifully so, of the subject; a moderate high-angle, looking down, suggests disdain for the subject.

cartoon (n), (modern): a short animated film, usually humorous.
cartoon (n), (original; artistic use): a preparatory full-size line drawing for a painting, fresco, or tapestry with colors suggested, if at all, only in broad strokes and without significant detail.

cel: a term used in animation with multiple meanings. At its simplest, a cel is a drawing on celluloid or other transparent medium such as acetate. The drawing covers only a portion of the cel and is used in conjunction with additional cels, in layers, to form a complete picture, also called a cel. At its simplest the picture may have a background cel, which doesn't have to be redrawn for subsequent frames, and a subject cel, which is redrawn for each frame if the subject is in motion. There can be additional cels for layers of scenery and for stationary characters. In the larger sense, a cel is the same as a frame and these words are used interchangeably.

frame (n): same as in live-action film, a frame is a single, still image, in sequence with many other frames on a single strip (formerly of celluloid film, now on digital recording). Similar to a photo or slide but meant to be shown in such a way through projection to create a motion picture. In one sense, a frame and a cel are identical; while, in another sense, a frame can be made of several separate cels (see "cel," above).

key light: used to describe the amount of light on the primary subject(s) in the frame. Can also be used to describe other portions of the picture as in, "The shot is in extreme low key, but with a shaft of sunlight falling on the prisoner, so he is in high key."
high-key: brightly lit
mid-key (medium key): medium light
low-key: little or no light; frame is dark
(A scene is said to be in *high contrast* if different areas are lit in high- or low-key lighting; *mild contrast* if the frame is only high-to-mid or mid-to-low; *little contrast* if the entire frame is all in one key.)

metaphor (n): a term borrowed from literature to describe the use of an object, character, or action that is meant to suggest, through association, another object, character, or action with which it has an implied relationship. (Since this definition may be difficult to grasp, an example from the film is in order: In the sequence "On Marriage," the tango danced is a metaphor for a lifetime together. The broken walls behind them and the broken wine glass can be seen as metaphors for life's difficulties. Metaphors are used throughout the film, especially in the poetry sections.

Handout 1 ▸ p.2

Film Vocabulary

m.o.s. A shot for which sound recording is unnecessary. It is filmed without sound. (There are many possible explanations for the derivation of the abbreviation "m.o.s.")

o.s. (adj. phrase): refers to dialogue or sound coming from *off-screen* but understood to be nearby.

p.o.v. (n. phrase) a shot taken to suggest the perspective (including relative height and direction of view) from a character's *point of view*. Usually a *p.o.v. shot* follows a shot showing a character looking in a particular direction.

scene (n): consists of a series of shots usually taken in a single location.

sequence (n): a series of shots united by the same action or idea. May be the same as a scene or may consist of more than one scene.

shot (n): constant sequence of frames, uninterrupted by cuts or editing.

still (n): a single, unmoving image; one frame, usually enlarged, often as a photograph, from the film; sometimes a staged photograph, not necessarily found in the actual film, used for publicity.

v.o.: voice-over; when an off-screen narrator, not present in the scene, speaks or comments on the action. (For example, when Mustafa begins reciting his poetry, and we are in the same scene as he is, he might be o.s [off-screen]. Once the visual and abstract poetry sequence begins, his voice becomes that of a narrator, said to be a voice-over or v.o. Without a doubt, Mustafa's voice, present in the final words of the film, would be v.o.)

Handout 2 ▸ p.1

Using Your Film Vocabulary

Directions:

As you watch clips from *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet,* note as many examples of the film terms below as possible. When the film viewing is over, look at your notes and ask yourself, "Why was it done this way?" (The answer "Because that's how it really would be" would not be meaningful. Everything looks the way it does because someone decided that it would be effective that way.)

Here is a word bank to help you:

abstract (adj.)	key light	p.o.v. (n. phrase).
abstract (v/transitive)	high-key	scene
camera angle	mid-key	sequence
cartoon (n)	low-key	shot (n)
cel (n)	metaphor	still (n)
frame	o.s. (adj. phrase)	v.o.

Handout 2 ▸ p.2

Using Your Film Vocabulary

Observation	Why Was It Done This Way?

Handout 2 ▸ p.3

Using Your Film Vocabulary

Observation	Why Was It Done This Way?

Handout 3 ▸ p.1

Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet: A Closer Look

Directions:

Choose one of the following topics for additional analysis:

A. Pay close attention to the use of the abstracted facial features of the characters in the film. How are we shown (a) the differences between several characters and (b) the different moods of one or more characters? Give several examples.

B. The relationship between mother and daughter (Kamila and Almitra) is clearly strained at the beginning, but warm and loving at the end. What are the stages by which it gets better in the course of the film? How is the improvement depicted? Give several examples, especially the hugs that take place early versus late in the film.

C. Several times in the film, in both the framing story and in the abstract illustrations of the poems, an image is replaced or "turns into" another image which is visually similar yet somehow entirely different. This happens most notably near the end of the film when papers thrown into the air become a large flock of seagulls. Describe at least two other times this happens and consider the meaning, effect, or suitability of each time.

D. One visual effect used over and over is that of the passing of light through the atmosphere. While other details are de-emphasized, this effect is given significant attention. Select at least three separate scenes where this play of light is important and describe carefully and completely why it is important.

E. Watch for the gradual changes in Almitra's attitude and expression, which begins as neutral at best but is usually angry. Notice when she begins to soften and starts to smile. Describe the animation on her face at the end of the film.

F. Those who were responsible for creating this film were very moved by Gibran's poetry; they may have wanted to re-awaken the public's interest in his work. Did this film give you a desire to read and think about any of the poems presented? If so, which ones, and why? If not, why not?

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Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet: A Closer Look

G. Find other Gibran poems from the book *The Prophet* and read one not presented in the film. Write an essay on the poem: How does it reflect your own experience of the topic Gibran is writing about? If you are artistic, suggest how it might be illustrated or illustrate it yourself.

H. In the series of shots that end this film, Almitra tells her mother she sees Mustafa on the ship and points. Kamila then joins her and sees nothing. We, too, have seen nothing in the p.o.v. shot of the departing ship. Almitra insists and Kamila squints and looks again. She, and the viewer, seem to see someone resembling Mustafa in the glaring light. She looks again and again and seems to see this figure, though very faintly. What does this ending mean? Would you have preferred that the filmmaker show the departing figure on the ship clearly in a close-up? Do the poet's words, heard in a v.o., help with these images? Is it, for you, a satisfactory conclusion to this film?

I. Choose another animated film and watch it carefully, noting some of the film techniques that you have learned about in this lesson. Write an essay about your observations, explaining what techniques were used and why you think the filmmaker used them.

Participant Media
331 Foothill Rd., 3rd Floor
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
310.550.5100
www.participantmedia.com

Journeys in Film
50 Sandia Lane
Placitas, NM 87043
505.867.4666
www.journeysinfilm.org