

Grade 5: Unit 4

Short Stories: Whole Class Short Story Seminars

Seminar 1: Whole Class Short Story

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars analyze the interactions between the children and understand their motivation for mistreating Margot. Scholars explain the moves Bradbury makes to communicate the children's remorse for excluding Margot from experiencing the sun.

Seminar 1:

"All Summer in a Day" by Ray Bradbury

Do Now — 10 minutes

- Scholars revise their Exit Tickets from the previous seminar based on the feedback you gave them.

Launch — 2 minutes

- Build excitement for this unit by telling scholars that they will spend the next week analyzing excellent short stories. Tell scholars that today, they will dive into Ray Bradbury's exploration of life on Venus in "All Summer in a Day."

Read and Discuss 1 — 40 minutes

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Paragraphs 1–42

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What does Bradbury reveal about the setting? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: Why do the children treat Margot differently?

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Paragraphs 43–84

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: How do the children respond to the sun? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: How does the description of the sun in paragraphs 52–58 compare to Margot’s description in paragraph 13?

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- Why do the children lock Margot in the closet? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Wrap-up — 5 minutes

- Show an exemplar essay to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes the claim clear and compelling. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they need to apply to their own work moving forward.

Read and Discuss 2 — 25 minutes

Independent Reading (10 minutes):

- Scholars reread paragraphs 58–84

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What does paragraph 77 reveal about the children? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: What effect does repeating the word “slowly” have in paragraphs 82 and 84? What does this help the reader understand?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- Why is “All Summer in a Day” a good title for this story? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Seminar 2: Whole Class Short Story

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars explain how Mr. Martin’s reputation allows him to perfectly execute his plan to get rid of Mrs. Barrows. Scholars understand Thurber’s choice to name the story “The Catbird Seat.”

Seminar 2:

“The Catbird Seat” by James Thurber

Do Now — 10 minutes

- Show an exemplary Exit Ticket from the previous seminar. Have scholars discuss what makes it exemplary. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they will apply to their revisions.
- Scholars revise their Exit Tickets from the previous seminar based on the feedback you gave them.

Launch — 2 minutes

Build excitement for today’s seminar by telling scholars they will read a short story by James Thurber, originally published in 1942, about a man planning to murder his boss’s special advisor.

Read and Discuss 1 — 30 minutes

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Paragraphs 1–6

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What is Mr. Martin’s motive for killing Mrs. Barrows? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: How does Thurber characterize Mr. Martin?

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Paragraphs 7–15

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: Why does Mr. Martin abort his plan when he arrives at Mrs. Barrows’ home? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: What does the repetition of “as usual” in paragraph 7 help the reader understand?

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- What is the idea that “began to bloom” in Mr. Martin’s mind? (paragraph 14) Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Wrap-up — 5 minutes

- Show an exemplar essay to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes the claim clear and compelling. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they need to apply to their own work moving forward.

Read and Discuss 2 — 25 minutes

Independent Reading (10 minutes):

- Paragraphs 16–20

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: Why did Mr. Martin’s plan work? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: How does paragraph 19 build dramatic irony in the story?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- Why is this story titled “The Catbird Seat”? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Seminar 3: Whole Class Short Story

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars understand Rex’s argument that one does not need superpowers to be a hero. They analyze how Will’s character develops this argument throughout the story.

Seminar 3:

“Will” by Adam Rex

Do Now — 10 minutes

- Show an exemplary Exit Ticket from the previous seminar to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes it exemplary. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they will apply to their revisions.
- Scholars revise their Exit Tickets from the previous seminar based on the feedback you gave them.

Launch — 2 minutes

- Build excitement for today’s seminar by telling scholars they will read a short story about teenage superheroes and a comical less-than-super villain in Adam Rex’s “Will.”

Read and Discuss 1 — 30 minutes

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Paragraphs 1–21

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: Why is Will’s teacher upset? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: What do paragraphs 1–8 help us understand about Will?

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Paragraphs 22–70

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: What is one of Will’s strengths? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: How does Rex portray the supervillain as comical?

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- How does Will define a hero? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Wrap-up — 5 minutes

- Show an exemplar essay to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes the claim clear and compelling. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they need to apply to their own work moving forward.

Read and Discuss 2 — 25 minutes

Independent Reading (15 minutes):

- Paragraphs 71–189

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: Who is the true hero of the story? How do you know? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.

- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: Why is the final line ironic?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- What is Rex’s argument about being a hero? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Seminar 4: Whole Class Short Story

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars understand how Flack contrasts the Duvitches with their neighbors on Syringa Street to build his argument about humility and acceptance. Scholars analyze the importance of Father’s actions in driving the plot and developing the themes of the story.

Seminar 4:

“The Strangers that Came to Town” by Ambrose Flack

Do Now — 10 minutes

- Show an exemplary Exit Ticket from the previous seminar to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes it exemplary. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they will apply to their revisions.
- Scholars revise their Exit Tickets from the previous seminar based on the feedback you gave them.

Launch — 2 minutes

- Build excitement for today’s seminar by telling scholars they will read a short story by New York resident Ambrose Flack that examines ways of overcoming prejudice.

Read and Discuss 1 — 30 minutes

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Paragraphs 1–24

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: Why do the townspeople treat the Duvitches poorly? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: What effect does repetition of the phrase “Syringa Street seemed to be a friendly street” have on the story?

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Paragraphs 25–86

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: What does Father's reaction to Tom and Andy's trick reveal about him? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: Why does the narrator describe his and his brother's appearance as "more condemned than redeemed"? (paragraph 86).

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- How does Flack contrast the poverty of the Duvitches with the prosperity of Syringa Street? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Wrap-up — 5 minutes

- Show an exemplar essay to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes the claim clear and compelling. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they need to apply to their own work moving forward.

Read and Discuss 2 — 25 minutes

Independent Reading (15 minutes):

- Paragraphs 87–119

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: Why does Andy describe returning the fish to Mr. Duvitch as "my greatest lesson in humility"? (paragraph 90). Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: How did life change for the Duvitches following the dinner with the narrator and his family? Why?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- Why is Andy and Tom's punishment significant to the story? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.