

Grade 7: Unit 4

Short Stories: Whole Class Short Story Seminars

Seminar 1: Whole Class Short Story

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars understand this story's grim argument about population control. They analyze how Vonnegut uses irony to develop the dystopian world of "2BR02B."

Seminar 1:

"2 B R 0 2 B" by Kurt Vonnegut

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 Kurt Vonnegut's grim dystopian short story, "2 B R 0 2 B."

Read and Discuss 1 — 40 minutes

Read:

- **Read Aloud (5 minutes):** Lines 1–42

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What does Vonnegut 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: What is the tone of lines 1–42? How does Vonnegut establish this tone?

Read:

- **Read Aloud (5 minutes):** Lines 43–119

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: How does the mural develop your understanding of this society? What does the mural reveal about the society's values? 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 painter unsatisfied with the mural?

Write — 10 minutes**Write an essay of no more than 200 words:**

- Based on lines 1–119, how does this society perceive death? 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):**

- Lines 120–217

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What is Dr. Hitz's argument about population control? 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 painter kill himself?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes**Write an essay of no more than 200 words:**

- Why is the mural ironic? 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 recognize the hypocrisy in Miss Strangeworth's actions. They analyze how Shirley Jackson characterizes Miss Strangeworth as self-righteous and blind to her own wickedness.

Seminar 2:

"The Possibility of Evil" by Shirley Jackson

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 that they will read and analyze "The Possibility of Evil," a surprisingly sinister short story by Shirley Jackson, who also wrote "The Lottery." Tell scholars to pay particular attention to the protagonist's self-perception as they read.

Read and Discuss 1 — 35 minutes

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Paragraphs 1–33

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: How does Jackson characterize Miss Strangeworth? 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 is Miss Strangeworth's tone when speaking to Helen Crane? How do you know?

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Paragraphs 34–46

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: What is Miss Strangeworth's motive for writing the letters? 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 Miss Strangeworth value most?

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

How does Miss Strangeworth view her role in the community? 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 — 20 minutes

Independent Reading (10 minutes):

- Paragraphs 47–65

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: How does Miss Strangeworth react to the letter she receives? What does this reaction reveal about her character? 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 might Miss Strangeworth's roses symbolize?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- Why is Miss Strangeworth a hypocrite? 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 analyze Rip and Dame Van Winkle's relationship. They understand how Rip Van Winkle's twenty years of sleep freed him from the tyranny of marriage, work, and King George's monarchy.

Seminar 3:

"Rip Van Winkle" by Washington Irving

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 and analyze a short story published in 1819: “Rip Van Winkle” by Washington Irving. Explain to scholars that the story is set in the Catskill Mountains, not far from New York City.

Read and Discuss 1 — 35 minutes

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Paragraphs 1–15

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: How does Washington Irving characterize Rip and Dame Van Winkle’s relationship? 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 Rip’s response to Dame Van Winkle’s lectures reveal about his character?

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Paragraphs 16–32

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: Based on paragraphs 23–32, what can readers infer about Rip Van Winkle’s sleep in the woods? 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 Washington Irving describe the sign outside the inn in paragraph 31?

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- Why does Rip Van Winkle “doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched”? (paragraph 28) 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 — 20 minutes

Independent Reading (10 minutes):

- Paragraphs 33–62

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: How does Rip Van Winkle's life after sleeping for twenty years compare to his life before he fell asleep in the woods? 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 do paragraphs 1–3 and 61–62 frame the story?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- What role does Rip Van Winkle's relationship with his wife play in the story? 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 analyze the sniper's shifting point of view on the violent acts he perpetrates. They understand O'Flaherty's underlying argument about the ruthlessness of civil war.

Seminar 4:

"The Sniper" by Liam O'Flaherty

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 that they will read and analyze an action-packed short story: "The Sniper" by Liam O'Flaherty. Explain to scholars that the story is set during the Irish Civil War, a bloody conflict waged in 1922–1923 over the best way to govern Ireland.

Read and Discuss 1 — 30 minutes

Read:

- **Read or play a recording:** Paragraphs 1–17

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: Based on paragraphs 1–17, what is the sniper’s point of view on war? 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 is the mood of paragraphs 1–17?

Read:

- **Read or play a recording:** Paragraphs 18–28

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: How does the sniper trick his opponent? 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 O’Flaherty show the sniper’s emotions in paragraphs 21–28?

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- How do the sniper’s feelings about the war change over the course of the story? 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 (5 minutes):

- Scholars reread paragraphs 21–28

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: How does the sniper initially feel after killing his enemy? 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 O’Flaherty end the story with the sniper’s realization that he killed his own brother?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- What is O’Flaherty’s argument about war in “The Sniper”? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.