

# 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Lesson

## ELA: Dialogue and Incident

### Using *Rivers of Life*

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**Standards:**

**AK ELA Reading Standards Grade 8.3 and CSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.3**

3. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision

**Assessing prior learning/skills related to the lesson:**

This could be a lesson in a larger unit, where students have already had a lesson and several assignments focused on finding the big ideas in a story. In order to be successful, they will have some practice with annotation and are starting to understand some of the components of strong and varied writing.

**Learning Outcomes:**

**Know** (Students will know...) the meaning of the terms dialogue, incident, character development, and direct and indirect characterization.

**Do** (Students will be able to...) explain how authors use dialogue and incidents in a story to develop characters, propel the action, and provoke decisions in the plot.

**Understand** (Students will understand that...) authors use dialogue and incidents in a story to develop characters, propel the action, and provoke decisions in the plot.

**Evidence/Assessment (Performance Tasks and Other Evidence)**

(How will students show you what they know/can do/understand about the day's lesson?)

**Formative Assessment(s):**

**Which learning outcome(s) are being assessed?**

Annotated Article and Response to Prompt

Students will know the meaning of the terms dialogue, incident, character development, and direct and indirect characterization.

Students will be able to explain how authors use dialogue and incidents in a story to develop characters, propel the action, and provoke decisions in the plot.

Students will understand that authors use dialogue and incidents in a story to develop characters, propel the action, and provoke decisions in the plot.

**Learning Plan**

Elements	Introduction of Lesson	Resources/ Materials	Time Estimate
<b>Lesson Intro</b>	<i>Song You Talk Too Much</i> by Joe Jones plays as students arrive and get		2 min

<p><b>Including: Connect to Prior Learning &amp; Hook</b></p>	<p><i>settled.</i><sup>1</sup></p> <p>Good morning! Don't worry – you don't talk too much! Today, we are going to talk about dialogue in text.</p> <p>Dialogue is what is spoken between two characters in a story. It will be written in quotation marks.</p> <p>Maybe some dialogues have characters talking too much, but ideally, they say just enough for us to understand what we need to know in a story. Remember when we talked about how an author should have a purpose for everything they include when we were covering big ideas? It's the same with dialogue. Readers don't need to know everything the characters are saying. Too much dialogue can be confusing and boring.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>For example, let's say we are writing a story about how Jackie catches 15 salmon on his first fishing trip with his Grandma (an unexpectedly large amount, wouldn't you say?) Tell me if you think it would be interesting or useful to include a greeting dialogue with his friend that he saw at the harbor, like:</p> <p>“Hi, Jackie. It's nice to see you. How are you doing today?”</p> <p>“Pretty well, thanks for asking.”</p> <p>(<i>No</i>) Yeah, that probably wouldn't add to our story and isn't very interesting to read. It might serve to show us that Jackie is polite, but we could get that idea across in a more interesting way. So, authors have to be thoughtful about what dialogue will be good to include. They don't include everything that people would normally say.</p>		
<p><b>Transition</b> How will you connect the intro to the lesson's core task? What will you say and/or have students do?</p>	<p>What about an incident? Does anyone know what that word means?</p> <p>Yes, an incident is something that occurs in the story, like an event or an action.</p> <p>Why do you think dialogue and incidents are useful in stories? Any ideas? <i>Students respond with ideas</i></p> <p>Yes, great ideas. Let's look at an example now to see if we can figure anything else out... Let's read this out loud. Do I have a volunteer?</p>		
<p><b>Core Task</b></p>	<p><b>Introduction to Concepts</b></p> <p><i>“The simplest thing would be to tear it down,” the man said. “The house is a shambles.”</i></p> <p><i>She took this news as a blood-rush to the ears: a roar of peasant ancestors with rocks in their fists, facing the evictor. But this man was</i></p>	<p>Slide with Kingsolver excerpt</p> <p>Graphic Organizer Handout</p> <p>Article copies for</p>	<p>15 min</p>

<sup>1</sup> Rockin Resources, & Olivieri, P. (2021, July 20). *Writing Mini Lesson #20- Dialogue in a Narrative Essay*. Rockin Resources. <https://rockinresources.com/2015/04/writing-mini-lesson-20-dialogue-in.html>

<sup>2</sup> Rockin Resources, & Olivieri, P. (2021, July 20). *Writing Mini Lesson #20- Dialogue in a Narrative Essay*. Rockin Resources. <https://rockinresources.com/2015/04/writing-mini-lesson-20-dialogue-in.html>

	<p><i>a contractor. Willa had called him here and she could send him away. She waited out her panic while he stood looking at her shambles, appearing to nurse some satisfaction from his diagnosis. She picked out words.</i></p> <p><i>“It’s not a living thing. You can’t just pronounce it dead. Anything that goes wrong with a structure can be replaced with another structure. Am I right?”</i></p> <p><i>“Correct. What I am saying is that the structure needing to be replaced is all of it. I’m sorry. Your foundation is nonexistent.”<sup>34</sup></i></p> <p>What’s going on here? <i>Students respond.</i> What do you think the point of this conversation in the story might be?</p> <p><i>Students should establish that this is a dialogue where an incident is occurring. They can make inferences about the feelings and thoughts of the characters (indirect character development). They may also make further observations.</i></p> <p>Wonderful observations. Here is a worksheet that includes these concepts and goes into a little more detail. There are spaces for you to fill out examples of each concept. I’m also handing you an article that we will be looking at in a minute. Let’s take a look at the worksheet and see if each concept makes sense with our excerpt. You can fill in the examples as we go. <i>Go over the key vocabulary, concepts, and annotation and look for each concept in the excerpt with student input.</i></p> <p>Great. So, let’s recap. What can we use dialogue and incidents for in storytelling? <i>Students respond.</i> (They can reveal aspects of characters, move the plot forward, or provoke a decision in the story.)</p>	each student	
<b>Transition</b>	Now, let’s take a look at the article.		
<b>Core Task</b>  <b>Formative Assessment</b> (if appropriate)	<p>It’s called, “Rivers of Life” by Owens Manly from the Alaska Humanities Forum Magazine in Spring 2023.<sup>5</sup> As we’ve been doing, we are going to identify the key ideas after we have read through it, but we are going to add identifying dialogue and incidents that propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.</p> <p>First, you will number the paragraphs, so we can quickly refer to different parts of the article, like we have been doing in the past. When you get to paragraph 9, let’s take a look at that together. <i>Pause for first task. Have the article on the projector and show the numbering of 1-8, pausing at paragraph 9.</i> What is happening here? <i>Students respond.</i> Yes, paragraph 9 is the beginning of a dialogue. So, why does it look so choppy? Do you see any pattern? <i>Students respond.</i> Yes, you see two people talking back and forth. When writing dialogue, you start a new</p>	<p>Projector to view the article being annotated</p> <p>Blue highlighters and pencil for each student</p>	10 min

<sup>3</sup> Kingsolver, B. (2018b). *Unsheltered: A Novel*. HarperCollins.

<sup>4</sup> Reedsy. (2021, January 14). *15 examples of great dialogue (and why they work so well)*.

[https://blog.reedsy.com/guide/how-to-write-dialogue/dialogue-examples/#5\\_\\_j\\_r\\_r\\_tolkien\\_\\_the\\_hobbit](https://blog.reedsy.com/guide/how-to-write-dialogue/dialogue-examples/#5__j_r_r_tolkien__the_hobbit)

<sup>5</sup> Manly, O. (2023). Rivers of life. *Alaska Humanities Forum Magazine*.

	<p>paragraph for each person speaking. So, in this case, every sentence is a new paragraph. Go ahead and label each sentence with a number and then continue. <i>Demonstrate this on the projector.</i> 16 should be the last paragraph on that page.</p> <p>As I start reading, please help me identify the incident in this first paragraph and tell me what you think the story of the incident tells us about the author. You can make notes on your article and when we find the incident, we will put an “I” beside it, like on your note sheet. We will highlight areas of character development (or what we are learning about the author) in blue.</p> <p><i>Read first paragraph aloud to the class. Students will identify the move to Alaska as the incident and should arrive at indirect characterization development through “I had lived all over and called no place home.” And “I felt like I was home almost as soon as I landed here.” Throughout this exercise, annotate the article on the projector and make sure the students understand how to make the annotations.</i></p> <p>Yes, as you said, we are starting to know the author through her description of her experience, thoughts, and feelings. Would this be direct or indirect characterization? (<i>indirect</i>) Yes! Why? Let’s highlight those parts in blue and put an “IC” for indirect character development.</p> <p>Let’s go on to read a couple more paragraphs and identify an incident or two that either propels the action (keeps the story moving forward) or provokes a decision. <i>Students may identify a few incidents, but the opportunity to participate in the ECCI program would be propelling the action and a deeper reading would see that her experience so far in Alaska had provoked the decision to participate.</i></p> <p><i>Continue reading through paragraph 7, identifying incidents together and discussing characterization while modeling the annotation of the article on the projected article.</i></p>		
<p><b>Transition</b></p>	<p><i>I will designate partners beforehand, making sure that students with weaker reading comprehension skills are grouped with those that are at or above the assignment level. Instructions for effective partner work will be on the whiteboard and the students will already be familiar with these. The specific instructions for this assignment will also be on the slide.</i></p> <p>Ok, now for this next part each of you will have a partner. You will read through the article aloud together, taking turns for each paragraph, until you get to the end of the article. As you read, annotate where you find dialogue, incidents, and characterization. Then, after you are done reading, identify the key ideas. Next, go back and look at the incidents you marked and note which ones you think developed characterization, propelled the action, or provoked a decision. You should each be annotating on your own article, although you will be working together.</p> <p>Once you are finished annotating your article, please discuss the following question with your partner and then prepare an individual written response.</p> <p><b>“What purpose does the dialogue in this text serve (character</b></p>	<p>Partner work instructions and writing prompt on a slide on the smartboard</p>	<p>2 min</p>

	<p><b>development, propelling action, provoking decision)? Support your answers by referencing the dialogue and other parts of the text.”</b></p> <p>Please staple your response to your annotated article and turn it in to the bin when you are done.</p> <p>If you finish early, please continue to read <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i><sup>6</sup> or write in your journals.</p>		
<p><b>Core Task</b></p> <p><b>Formative Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>Partner read aloud, annotation, and prompt</b> (instructions above)</p> <p><i>I will go around to the groups and check in to see how they are understanding the concepts and to clarify where needed.</i></p> <p><i>Students will read or write when finished until just before the bell.</i></p>		20 min
<p><b>Closure</b> (Procedural and Content);</p> <p><b>Homework—</b></p>	<p>If you didn't get to finish, please still turn in what you have completed. You will have time tomorrow to finish it up. Thank you all for your hard work today.</p>		
<p><b>Lesson Extender</b> (Whole class &amp; individual)</p>	<p><i>After I review their work, I will see if there are areas that need further instruction. A review of where to make annotation in the article may be needed. If it will be useful and the responses to the prompt are sufficiently varied, have each group share out with the class how they responded to the prompt or use a few examples from their responses to show the class on the projector.</i></p> <p><i>Students that are finished and clearly understood the content (as evaluated in their response and annotation), should be placed in a small group to further their knowledge. They will read through a section of <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i><sup>7</sup> together or in pairs and annotate it with the skills they learned in this lesson.</i></p>		
<p><b>Differentiation:</b> <b>Process, Product, Content</b></p>	<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Article is printed and read aloud</li> <li>• Written as well as verbal instructions</li> <li>• The article is varied in its complexity. Students with stronger skills will be able to find more examples, but students with weaker skills will also be able to find good examples.</li> <li>• A song was incorporated into the learning</li> </ul> <p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole class and partner work</li> <li>• Options are given for reading or writing after partner work</li> <li>• Weaker-skilled students are partnered with stronger-skilled students</li> </ul>		

<sup>6</sup> Lee, H. (2004). *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Random House.

<b>Accommodations and/or Modifications</b>	Some possibilities could include having an audio recording of the texts or having only one student read aloud in a group; larger print size; responding via audio recording instead of written response; seating options; or allowing assignment to be completed at home		
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