

# Learning English

## **American Stories**

### ***A Pair of Silk Stockings***

*by Kate Chopin*

Lesson Plan

*by Jill Robbins, Ph.D.*

# Introduction

This lesson plan is to accompany the American Stories series episode, *A Pair of Silk Stockings*, by Kate Chopin.

A transcript of the story is included at the end of this lesson to print so students can read as they listen. Teachers who cannot play the audio from the website can read the story aloud or have students read it.

This lesson plan is based on the CALLA Approach. See the end of the lesson for more information and resources on teaching with the CALLA approach. The following slide shows the five parts of this lesson plan.

# Lesson Elements

**Prepare**

**Present**

**Practice**

**Self-Evaluate**

**Expand**

# Prepare

Introduce the story. “Today we will read *A Pair of Silk Stockings*, a story about a woman, Mrs. Sommers. She gets a little extra money one day. What do you think she will do with the money? What would you do?”

Listen to students’ responses. Categorize their answers as saving or spending

Teach the vocabulary for the story. Explain the amount of money Mrs. Sommers found would be a little over \$400 in today’s currency.

# Vocabulary

**investment** - *n.* something that you buy with the idea that it will increase in value, usefulness, etc.

**ankle**- *n.* the joint where the foot joins the leg

**stylish**- *adj.* following the popular style; fashionable

**oyster**- *n.* a type of shellfish that has a rough shell with two parts and that is eaten both cooked and raw

**chop**- *n.* a small piece of meat that usually includes a bone from an animal's side

**sensation**- *n.* a particular feeling or effect that your body experiences

**lace**- *n.* a very thin and light cloth made with patterns of holes

# Present

Introduce the task to students: “As we read the story today, we will practice the strategy ***predicting***. When we predict, we think about what the characters in a story will do. We use what we learn about the people in the story and our imagination to make a good guess about what they will do next. I’ll show you how to do this.”

Play or read aloud to “The needs of the present took all her energy.”

Tell students, “In the first part of the story, we meet the main character, Mrs. Sommers. What details do we know? She is a mother, with four children. We don’t know about her husband. But we know the family has little money. I’m going to ***predict*** that she spends the money on her children.”

# Practice

Tell students, “Now it’s your turn. As we read the next section, I am going to check on whether my predictions are accurate. But it doesn’t matter if I’m right, remember. because use what you learn about Mrs. Sommers to *predict* what she will do. Write the things you predict on your own paper. Then I will ask you to share your predictions with your partner.”

Play or read aloud to “It seemed lost in her worn old shopping bag.”

“Now, sit with your partner and write your predictions. What will Mrs. Sommers do with the rest of the money? Will she save it or spend it on her children?”

Give students time to work together in their groups. Ask students to tell you what they wrote.

Tell students, “Now it’s your turn. As we read the next section, I am going to check on whether my predictions are accurate. If they are not, it doesn’t matter. I am focusing on the details of the story, and that helps me understand it better. After we listen, you can use what you learn about Mrs. Sommers to *predict* what she will do. Write the things you predict on your own paper. Then I will ask you to share your predictions with your partner.”

Play or read aloud to “It seemed lost in her worn old shopping bag.”

Have students sit together with their partners and compare predictions. Ask several students to share their predictions with the class.



Instruct students to listen again. “With your partner, listen to the next part of the story. As you listen, think about what you predicted.”

**Play or read aloud to the end of the story.**

Ask students to stay with their partner and talk about the final phrase, “her heartbreaking wish that the cable car would never stop anywhere, but go on and on with her forever.” Encourage students to explain, “What does this tell you about Mrs. Sommers?”

**Give students time to talk about their ideas.**

Comment on the students’ ideas.

# Self-Evaluate

Continue “Now I’d like to ask – what do you think about using this strategy, *predicting*, when you read? Did it help you follow the story? Write a sentence or two on your paper to turn in about how *predicting* helped you today.”

# Expand

Ask students, “Are there other times when you can *predict*?”

**Listen to students’ responses.**

Continue, “This strategy is helpful in both reading and listening. Predicting prepares your mind to understand what you read or hear. And remember, it doesn’t matter if what you predict happens. Just predicting is enough to get your brain more active as you learn. Try using this strategy tonight when you do your homework, or in your next class. Let me know how it goes!”

*Our story is called "A Pair of Silk Stockings." It was written by Kate Chopin. Here is Barbara Klein with the story.*

Little Missus Sommers one day found herself the unexpected owner of fifteen dollars. It seemed to her a very large amount of money. The way it filled up her worn money holder gave her a feeling of importance that she had not enjoyed for years.

The question of **investment** was one she considered carefully. For a day or two she walked around in a dreamy state as she thought about her choices. She did not wish to act quickly and do anything she might regret. During the quiet hours of the night she lay awake considering ideas.

A dollar or two could be added to the price she usually paid for her daughter Janie's shoes. This would guarantee they would last a great deal longer than usual. She would buy cloth for new shirts for the boys. Her daughter Mag should have another dress. And still there would be enough left for new stockings — two pairs per child. What time that would save her in always repairing old stockings! The idea of her little family looking fresh and new for once in their lives made her restless with excitement.

The neighbors sometimes talked of the "better days" that little Missus Sommers had known before she had ever thought of being Missus Sommers. She herself never looked back to her younger days. She had no time to think about the past. The needs of the present took all her energy.

Missus Sommers knew the value of finding things for sale at reduced prices. She could stand for hours making her way little by little toward the desired object that was selling below cost. She could push her way if need be.

But that day she was tired and a little bit weak. She had eaten a light meal—no! She thought about her day. Between getting the children fed and the house cleaned, and preparing herself to go shopping, she had forgotten to eat at all!

When she arrived at the large department store, she sat in front of an empty counter. She was trying to gather strength and courage to push through a mass of busy shoppers. She rested her hand upon the counter.

She wore no gloves. She slowly grew aware that her hand had felt something very pleasant to touch. She looked down to see that her hand lay upon a pile of silk stockings. A sign nearby announced that they had been reduced in price. A young girl who stood behind the counter asked her if she wished to examine the silky leg coverings.

She smiled as if she had been asked to inspect diamond jewelry with the aim of purchasing it. But she went on feeling the soft, costly items. Now she used both hands, holding the stockings up to see the light shine through them.

Two red marks suddenly showed on her pale face. She looked up at the shop girl.

"Do you think there are any size eights-and-a-half among these?"

There were a great number of stockings in her size. Missus Sommers chose a black pair and looked at them closely.

"A dollar and ninety-eight cents," she said aloud. "Well, I will buy this pair."

She handed the girl a five dollar bill and waited for her change and the wrapped box with the stockings. What a very small box it was! It seemed lost in her worn old shopping bag.

Missus Sommers then took the elevator which carried her to an upper floor into the ladies' rest area. In an empty corner, she replaced her cotton stockings for the new silk ones.

For the first time she seemed to be taking a rest from the tiring act of thought. She had let herself be controlled by some machine-like force that directed her actions and freed her of responsibility.

How good was the touch of the silk on her skin! She felt like lying back in the soft chair and enjoying the richness of it. She did for a little while. Then she put her shoes back on and put her old stockings into her bag. Next, she went to the shoe department, sat down and waited to be fitted.

The young shoe salesman was unable to guess about her background. He could not resolve her worn, old shoes with her beautiful, new stockings. She tried on a pair of new boots.

She held back her skirts and turned her feet one way and her head another way as she looked down at the shiny, pointed boots. Her foot and **ankle** looked very lovely. She could not believe that they were a part of herself. She told the young salesman that she wanted an excellent and **stylish** fit. She said she did not mind paying extra as long as she got what she desired.

After buying the new boots, she went to the glove department. It was a long time since Missus Sommers had been fitted with gloves. When she had bought a pair they were always "bargains," so cheap that it would have been unreasonable to have expected them to be fitted to her hand.

Now she rested her arm on the counter where gloves were for sale. A young shop girl drew a soft, leather glove over Missus Sommers's hand. She smoothed it down over the wrist and buttoned it neatly. Both women lost themselves for a second or two as they quietly praised the little gloved hand.

There were other places where money might be spent. A store down the street sold books and magazines. Missus Sommers bought two costly magazines that she used to read back when she had been able to enjoy other pleasant things.

She lifted her skirts as she crossed the street. Her new stockings and boots and gloves had worked wonders for her appearance. They had given her a feeling of satisfaction, a sense of belonging to the well-dressed crowds.

She was very hungry. Another time she would have ignored the desire for food until reaching her own home. But the force that was guiding her would not permit her to act on such a thought.

There was a restaurant at the corner. She had never entered its doors. She had sometimes looked through the windows. She had noted the white table cloths, shining glasses and waiters serving wealthy people.

When she entered, her appearance created no surprise or concern, as she had half feared it might.

She seated herself at a small table. A waiter came at once to take her order. She ordered six **oysters**, a **chop**, something sweet, a glass of wine and a cup of coffee. While waiting to be served she removed her gloves very slowly and set them beside her. Then she picked up her magazine and looked through it.

It was all very agreeable. The table cloths were even more clean and white than they had seemed through the window. And the crystal drinking glasses shined even more brightly. There were ladies and gentlemen, who did not notice her, lunching at the small tables like her own.

A pleasing piece of music could be heard, and a gentle wind was blowing through the window. She tasted a bite, and she read a word or two and she slowly drank the wine. She moved her toes around in the silk stockings. The price of it all made no difference.

When she was finished, she counted the money out to the waiter and left an extra coin on his tray. He bowed to her as if she were a princess of royal blood.

There was still money in her purse, and her next gift to herself presented itself as a theater advertisement. When she entered the theater, the play had already begun. She sat between richly dressed women who were there to spend the day eating sweets and showing off their costly clothing. There were many others who were there only to watch the play.

It is safe to say there was no one there who had the same respect that Missus Sommers did for her surroundings. She gathered in everything —stage and players and people -- in one wide **sensation**. She laughed and cried at the play. She even talked a little with the women. One woman wiped her eyes with a small square of **lace** and passed Missus Sommers her box of candy.

The play was over, the music stopped, the crowd flowed outside. It was like a dream ended. Missus Sommers went to wait for the cable car.

A man with sharp eyes sat opposite her. It was hard for him to fully understand what he saw in her expression. In truth, he saw nothing -- unless he was a magician. Then he would sense her heartbreaking wish that the cable car would never stop anywhere, but go on and on with her forever.

*"A Pair of Silk Stockings" was written by Kate Chopin. Your storyteller was Barbara Klein. Dana Demange adapted and produced it.*

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### **Words in This Story**

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# About the CALLA Approach

The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) is an instructional model for second and foreign language learners based on cognitive theory and research.





CALLA integrates instruction in priority topics from the content curriculum, development of the language skills needed for learning in school, and explicit instruction in using learning strategies for academic tasks.

The goals of CALLA are for students to learn essential academic content and language and to become independent and self-regulated learners through their increasing command over a variety of strategies for learning in school. CALLA can be used in ESL, EFL, bilingual, foreign language, and general education classrooms.

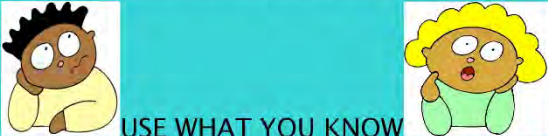




CALLA was developed by Anna Uhl Chamot and J. Michael O'Malley, and is being implemented in approximately 30 school districts in the United States as well as in several other countries.

See a list of language learning strategies below.







# Metacognitive Strategies

CALLA CONTENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES		
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	
<b>METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES</b>		
Plan / Organize	 Planner	Before beginning a task: -Set goals. -Plan the task or content sequence. -Plan how to accomplish the task (choose strategies). -Preview a text.
Monitor / Identify Problems	 Check	While working on a task: -Check your progress on the task. -Check your comprehension as you use the language. Do you understand? If not, what is the problem? -Check your production as you use the language. Are you making sense? If not, what is the problem?
Evaluate	 I did it!	After completing a task: -Assess how well you have accomplished the learning task. -Assess how well you have used learning strategies. -Decide how effective the strategies were. -Identify changes you will make the next time you have a similar task to do.
Manage Your Own Learning	 Pace Yourself	-Determine how you learn best. -Arrange conditions that help you learn. -Seek opportunities for practice. -Focus your attention on the task.

# Task-Based Strategies

CALLA CONTENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES		
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	
<b>TASK-BASED STRATEGIES</b>		
 <b>USE WHAT YOU KNOW</b>		
Use Background Knowledge	 I know.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Think about and use what you already know to help you do the task.</li> <li>- Make associations between new information and your prior knowledge.</li> <li>-Use new information to clarify or modify your prior knowledge.</li> </ul>
Make Inferences	 Use Clues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use context and what you know to figure out meaning.</li> <li>-Read and listen between the lines.</li> <li>-Go beyond the text to understand its meaning.</li> </ul>
Make Predictions	 Crystal Ball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Anticipate information to come.</li> <li>-Make logical guesses about what will happen in a written or oral text.</li> <li>-Make an estimate (math).</li> <li>-Make a hypothesis (science).</li> </ul>
Personalize	 Me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Relate new concepts to your own life, to your experiences, knowledge, beliefs and feelings.</li> </ul>


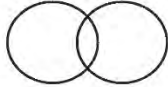


# Task-Based Strategies

CALLA CONTENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES		
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	
<b>TASK-BASED STRATEGIES</b>		
Transfer / Use Cognates	 Coffee/Café	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Apply your linguistic knowledge of other languages (including your native language) to the target language.</li> <li>-Recognize cognates.</li> </ul>
Substitute / Paraphrase	 Make it work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use a synonym or descriptive phrase for unknown words or expressions.</li> </ul>
  <b>USE YOUR SENSES</b>		
Use Images	 See it in your mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use or create an actual or mental image to understand and/or represent information.</li> <li>-Use or draw a picture or diagram.</li> </ul>
Use Sounds	 Sound Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Say or read aloud a word, sentence, or paragraph to help your understanding.</li> <li>-Sound out/vocalize.</li> <li>- Use your "mental tape recorder" to remember sounds, words, phrases, and/or conversations.</li> </ul>






# Task-Based Strategies

CALLA CONTENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES		
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	
<b>TASK-BASED STRATEGIES</b>		
Use Your Kinesthetic Sense		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--Act out a role, for example, in Readers' Theater, or imagine yourself in different roles in the target language.</li> <li>-Use real objects to help you remember words, sentences, or content information.</li> </ul>
  <b>USE YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS</b>		
Find/Apply Patterns	 abacus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Apply a rule.</li> <li>-Make a rule.</li> <li>-Recognize and apply letter/sound, grammar, discourse, or register rules.</li> <li>-Identify patterns in literature (genre).</li> <li>-Identify patterns in math, science, and social studies.</li> </ul>
Classify/Sequence	 Life cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Categorize words or ideas according to attributes.</li> <li>-Classify living things; identify natural cycles.</li> <li>-Identify order and sequences in math, science, and social studies.</li> <li>-Sequence events in history.</li> </ul>

# Task-Based Strategies

CALLA CONTENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES		
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	
<b>TASK-BASED STRATEGIES</b>		
Take Notes	 <p>PDA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Write down important words and ideas while listening or reading.</li> <li>-List ideas or words to include in speaking or writing..</li> </ul>
Use Graphic Organizers	 <p>A Venn diagram</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use or create visual representations (such as Venn diagrams, time lines, webs, and charts) of important relationships between concepts.</li> </ul>
Summarize	 <p>Main Idea</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Create a mental, oral, or written summary of information.</li> </ul>
Use Selective Attention	 <p>Focus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Focus on specific information, structures, key words, phrases, or ideas.</li> </ul>

# Task-Based Strategies

CALLA CONTENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES		
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	
<b>TASK-BASED STRATEGIES</b>		
 		
<b>USE A VARIETY OF RESOURCES</b>		
Access Information Sources	 Look it up!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use the dictionary, the internet, and other reference materials.</li> <li>-Seek out and use sources of information.</li> <li>-Follow a model</li> <li>-Ask questions</li> </ul>
Cooperate	 Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Work with others to complete tasks, build confidence, and give and receive feedback.</li> </ul>
Talk Yourself Through It (Self-Talk)	 I can do it!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use your inner resources. Reduce your anxiety by reminding yourself of your progress, the resources you have available, and your goals.</li> </ul>