

## American Stories

### “The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky” by Stephen Crane

#### Lesson Plan

This lesson plan is to accompany the American Stories series episode “The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky” by Stephen Crane.

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.

American Stories lesson plans are based on the CALLA approach. See the end of each lesson for more information and resources on teaching with the CALLA approach.

CALLA has five lesson elements:

**Prepare:** Engage students in the topic and identify objectives for the lesson. Find out what students already know about it and motivate them to learn more. Teach new vocabulary.

**Present:** Present new information. Explain the target learning strategy for the lesson. Model what the students are asked to do. Discuss connections to students’ prior knowledge.

**Practice:** Give students an authentic, active task that they can do in a small group or in pairs. Remind students to use the target learning strategy.

**Self-Evaluate:** Question students so they will reflect on their own learning. Ask students to evaluate their own learning rather than wait for the teacher to assess them. Find out if using the learning strategy helped students’ understanding.

**Expand:** Guide students on how to apply what they learned to their own

lives. Point out other contexts where the learning strategy may help. Make connections between content and language or to the student's first language. When appropriate, request that parents contribute to learning.

### **Prepare:**

Introduce the story: "Today, we will read 'The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky.' It is a story about a man who returns to his hometown in Texas. His hometown is what we might call a cowboy town. Have you ever watched a film or TV show about cowboys? What do you remember about the film? Describe cowboys. What do they wear? What do they do?"

Allow students time to share what they know cowboys and cowboy films. Listen to the students' answers. Depending on the experiences of your students, some may not have seen films or TV shows about cowboys or heard of them. You can show a picture of a cowboy (such as the picture on the following page).

Teach the following evident for the story:

### **Words in this story**

**apparent** - *adj.* easy to see or understand

**aware** - *adj.* knowing that something (such as a situation, condition, or problem) exists

**bride** - *n.* a woman who has just married or is about to be married

**cowboy** - *n.* someone who has qualities that are commonly associated with the cowboys in movies, especially someone who does things that other people consider foolish and dangerous

**dignity** - *n.* the quality of being worthy of honor or respect

**evident** - *adj.* clear to the sight or mind; obvious

**grasp** - *v.* to take and hold (something) with your fingers, hands, etc.

**jokingly** - *adv.* said or done in a way that seems funny or not serious

**merriment** - *n.* laughter and enjoyment

**nervous** - *adj.* having or showing feelings of being worried and afraid about what might happen

## An American Cowboy



Detroit Photographic Co. A Cowboy. [Between 1898 and 1905] [Image] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2008678055/>.

**Present:**

Hand out the transcript of the story and the inferences chart. Explain "When we read a story, we don't always know everything about the characters in it. The writer tells us **gradually** by *showing* us the actions of the characters. We learn little by little by **making inferences** based on what the writer shows us about the characters. This strategy helps us to understand the stories we read."

Explain some of the main characters in the story.

- **Jack Potter** – a man from Yellow Sky; he's the main character of the story
- **Jack's bride** – this is Jack's new wife; we do not learn her name

Say: "Let's read the first part of the story, then we can make some **inferences.**"

Play or read aloud to "**Her uncomfortable expression was strange to see upon this plain face, which was usually calm and almost emotionless.**"

Say: "When I read these first few paragraphs, I learn something about Jack and his bride. I read that Jack's hands are moving over his clothing in a nervous manner and that he looks at his suit. From this, I can infer that Jack is expecting something to happen, probably when he arrives in Yellow Sky. Maybe he is also excited because he just got married."

Then add, "When I read the sentence, 'One could tell that she had cooked and expected to cook, dutifully,' I also learned something about the bride. Without saying it directly, the author is trying to show us that, if a passenger on the train looked at the bride, they could guess that maybe she worked as a cook. It is possible that the bride worked as a servant. During this time period in American history (at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), many people from higher economic classes did not cook for themselves. They hired servants. Let me show you how we can keep a record of our inferences."

Make a chart on the board or display on the screen (see next page):

<b>Character</b>	<b>Actions in the story</b>	<b>My Inferences</b>
Jack Potter	<p>"His roughened hands were continually moving over his new black clothes in a most nervous manner. From time to time he looked down respectfully at his suit."</p>	<p>He is expecting something to happen, probably when they arrive in Yellow Sky. He is excited.</p>
Jack's Bride	<p>"One could tell that she had cooked and expected to cook, dutifully."</p> <p>"Her uncomfortable expression was strange to see upon this plain face, which was usually calm and almost emotionless."</p> <p>"A dollar? Oh, that's too much—for us—isn't it, Jack?"</p>	<p>She is probably from a low economic class. She might be a cook or a servant.</p> <p>The bride's discomfort on the train shows that she probably has never ridden a train before.</p> <p>She is not used to having a lot of money.</p>

## Practice

Have students write notes on the inferences about the bride on their own inferences chart. Say, "Now it's your turn. Let's read some more of the story. When we stop, I will ask you to make an inference about one of the characters."

Play or instruct students to read up to "**He was rather absent-minded and faraway when the bride leaned forward and spoke to him.**" Ask students to work in pairs to write their inferences about the bride and the other characters they read about.

When the pairs have finished writing their inferences from this section, ask several to share what they have written. Have a student come the front to fill in the chart on the board or shared screen with their classmates' inferences as they are sharing them.

Continue to add these inferences to the chart on the board or display on the screen:

<b>Character</b>	<b>Actions in the story</b>	<b>My Inferences</b>
Jack Potter	"His roughened hands were continually moving over his new black clothes in a most nervous manner. From time to time he looked down respectfully at his suit."	He is expecting something to happen, probably when they arrive in Yellow Sky. He is excited.
	"It was evident that, as the distance from Yellow Sky grew shorter, the husband became more nervous."	There is some type of trouble or problem awaiting Jack in Yellow Sky.
	"As a matter of truth, Jack Potter was beginning to find his deed weighing upon him like a great stone."	He believes that he did something wrong.
Jack's Bride	"One could tell that she had cooked and expected to cook, dutifully."	She is probably from a low economic class. She might be a cook or a servant.

<b>Character</b>	<b>Actions in the story</b>	<b>My Inferences</b>
	<p>"Her uncomfortable expression was strange to see upon this plain face, which was usually calm and almost emotionless."</p>	<p>The bride's discomfort on the train shows that she probably has never ridden a train before.</p>
	<p>"A dollar? Oh, that's too much— for us—isn't it, Jack?"</p>	<p>She is not used to having a lot of money.</p>



Say, "Good job in making inferences. Let's read some more of the story. When we stop, I will ask you to make more **inferences**."

Play or instruct students to read to the end of Part One of the story. Ask students to work in pairs to write their inferences about Jack and the other characters they read about.

After students have written their inferences, ask several pairs of students to tell the class about their inferences. Have another student write these inferences about the characters on the shared screen or board:

<b>Character</b>	<b>Actions in the story</b>	<b>My Inferences</b>
Jack Potter	"His roughened hands were continually moving over his new black clothes in a most nervous manner. From time to time he looked down respectfully at his suit."	He is expecting something to happen, probably when they arrive in Yellow Sky. He is excited.
	"It was evident that, as the distance from Yellow Sky grew shorter, the husband became more nervous."	There is some type of trouble or problem awaiting Jack in Yellow Sky.
	"As a matter of truth, Jack Potter was beginning to find his deed weighing upon him like a great stone."	He believes that he did something wrong.
Jack's Bride	"One could tell that she had cooked and expected to cook, dutifully."	She is probably from a low economic class. She might be a cook or a servant.
	"Her uncomfortable expression was strange to see upon this plain face, which was usually calm and almost emotionless."	The bride's discomfort on the train shows that she probably has never ridden a train before.

<b>Character</b>	<b>Actions in the story</b>	<b>My Inferences</b>
	"A dollar? Oh, that's too much— for us—isn't it, Jack?"	She is not used to having a lot of money.
The young man	"It means, my friend," he answered as he came into the saloon, "that for the next two hours this town won't be very healthy."	The young man knows Scratchy is dangerous and is going to cause trouble in the town. He wants to warn everyone.
The station master	"He took her bag and told his wife to hold his arm. As they hurried away he saw that the station master had turned and was running toward them, waving his arms"	The station master knows Jack and wants to say hello. and/or: He is excited to see Jack. and/or: He is happy about Jack's marriage.
The salesman	"The salesman leaned easily upon a table and told many tales with the confidence of a story teller who has found new listeners."	He likes to tell stories. He tells interesting and entertaining stories. His stories may not be true or may be partly untrue.

<b>Character</b>	<b>Actions in the story</b>	<b>My Inferences</b>
	<p>"The salesman, not understanding the importance of the warning, jokingly answered, "All right, old man. Suppose he has? Come in and have a drink anyhow."</p>	<p>He is not from Yellow Sky. He is probably not from cowboy country.                      He doesn't take others seriously.                      He has never seen/heard of Scratchy.</p>
<p>The saloon-keeper</p>	<p>"The saloon-keeper went to the door and locked it. Reaching out of the window, he pulled in heavy wooden boards which covered the windows, and locked there."</p>	<p>The saloon-keeper has had to cover his windows often.                      Gunfights or other dangers may occur frequently.                      He thinks Scratchy will use his gun</p>

## **Self-Evaluation**

When students have completed the story, ask, "How did you feel about making inferences? Do you think that helped you understand and remember this story?"

Allow time for some discussion.

"On a sheet of paper, write a few sentences about the characters in this story. Be sure you include the inferences you made about them."

Give students time to write, then collect all the student sheets.

## **Expand**

Wrap up the lesson by asking students to think of other times they can make inferences. Possible answers are 'reading a textbook, listening to a lecture, or watching a movie.'

Encourage students to go home and make an inference using their homework for another class.

The great train was rushing forward such steady **dignity** of motion that a glance from the window seemed simply to prove that the flatlands of Texas were pouring toward the east.

A newly married pair had come on this train at San Antonio. The man's face was reddened from many days in the wind and sun. His roughened hands were continually moving over his new black clothes in a most **nervous** manner. From time to time he looked down respectfully at his suit. He sat with a hand on each knee, like a man waiting in a shop for a haircut. The glances he gave to other passengers were few and quick.

The **bride** was not pretty, nor was she very young. She wore a dress of blue with many buttons. She continually turned her head to regard some part or other of her dress. It made her feel strange.

One could tell that she had cooked and that she expected to cook, dutifully. The searching glances of some of the passengers as she had entered the car had brought the blood rushing to her face. Her uncomfortable expression was strange to see upon this plain face, which was usually calm and almost emotionless.

They were **evidently** very happy. "Ever been in a train like this before?" he asked, smiling with delight.

"No," she answered, "I never was. It's fine, isn't it?"

"Great! After a while we'll go forward to the dining car and get a big dinner. Finest meal in the world. Costs a dollar."

"Oh, it does?" cried the bride. "A dollar? Oh, that's too much— for us—isn't it, Jack?"

"Not on this trip, at least," he answered bravely. "We're going to enjoy ourselves."

Later he explained to her about the trains.

"You see, it's a thousand miles from one end of Texas to the other. The train runs straight across it, and only stops four times." He had the pride of an owner. He pointed out to her the beauty of the car they were riding in. And in truth her eyes opened wider as she observed the rich sea-green cloth covering the seats, the shining silver and glass, the wood that shone darkly like the surface of a pool of oil.

To the minds of the pair, their surroundings repeated the glory of their wedding that morning in San Antonio. This was the spirit of their new life, and the man's face in particular shone with a joy that made him appear foolish to certain passengers. In the minds of some, there was supposed to be something hugely funny in the pair's situation.

"We are due in Yellow Sky at 3:42," he said, looking tenderly into her eyes.

"Oh, are we?" she said, as if she had not been **aware** of it. To show surprise at her husband's remark was part of her wifely duty. She took from a pocket a little silver watch. As she held it before her, and stared at it with a look of attention, the new husband's face shone.

"I bought it in San Antonio from a friend of mine," he told her proudly.

"It's seventeen minutes past twelve," she said, looking up at him with a happy expression which, nevertheless, showed a lack of experience in conversing with men. A passenger, observing her small nervousness, laughed to himself.

At last they went to the dining car. The man serving their table happened to take pleasure in directing them through their meal. He viewed them with the manner of a fatherly guide, his face shining with kindness. But they did not understand his attentions. As they returned to their seats, they showed in their faces a sense of escape.

It was evident that, as the distance from Yellow Sky grew shorter, the husband became more nervous. His red hands were even more noticeable. He was rather absent-minded and faraway when the bride leaned forward and spoke to him.

As a matter of truth, Jack Potter was beginning to find his deed weighing upon him like a great stone. He, the town policeman of Yellow Sky, was a man known, liked, and feared in his community. He—an important person—had gone to San Antonio to meet a girl he believed he loved. And there he had actually married her without discussing any part of the matter with Yellow Sky. He was now bringing his bride to a sure-to-be-surprised town.

Of course, people in Yellow Sky married as it pleased them. But Potter's thoughts of his duty to his friends, or of their idea of his duty, made him feel he was sinful. He was guilty of a great and unusual crime. Face to face with this girl in San Antonio, he had leaped over all the social fences. At San Antonio he was like a man hidden in the dark. A knife to cut any friendly duty was easy to take in his hand in that distant city. But the hour of Yellow Sky—the hour of daylight—was approaching.

He knew very well that his wedding was an important thing to the town. It could only be equaled by the burning of the new hotel. His friends could not forgive him, he felt. And now the train was hurrying him toward a scene of surprise, **merriment**, and blame. He glanced out of the window again.

Yellow Sky had a kind of band, which played its horns and drums painfully, to the delight of the people. He laughed without heart as he thought of it. If the citizens could dream of his arrival with his bride, they would march the band at the station and accompany them, among cheers and laughter, to his house.

He decided that he would use all methods of speed and cleverness in making the journey from the station to his house. Once safely at home, he would



announce the news. Then he would not go among the citizens until they'd had time to master their emotions.

The bride looked anxiously at him. "What's worrying you, Jack?"

He laughed. "I'm not worrying, girl. I'm only thinking of Yellow Sky."

She understood, and her face turned red again.

They shared a sense of slight guilt that developed a finer tenderness. They looked at each other with eyes softly glowing. But Potter often laughed the same nervous laugh; the deep red color upon the bride's face did not lessen.

"We're nearly there," he said.

As the train began to slow, they moved forward in the car. The long line of cars moved into the station of Yellow Sky.

"The train has to get water here," said Potter, from a tight throat and face, as one announcing death. Before the train stopped, his eye had searched the station, and he was glad and surprised to see there was no one there except the station master.

"Come on, girl," said Potter with a thick voice. As he helped her down, they each laughed in a strained manner. He took her bag and told his wife to hold his arm. As they hurried away he saw that the station master had turned and was running toward them, waving his arms. Potter laughed, and sighed as he laughed, when he realized the first effect of his wedding upon Yellow Sky. He **grasped** his wife's arm firmly to his side and they hurried away.

The California train was due at Yellow Sky in twenty-one minutes. There were six men in the Weary Gentleman **Saloon**. One was a salesman who talked a great deal and rapidly; three were Texans who did not care to talk at that time; and two were Mexican sheep farmers who did not usually talk in the saloon. The saloon-keeper's dog lay in front of the door. His head was

resting on his feet, and he glanced sleepily here and there with the ready watchfulness of a dog that is sometimes kicked. Across the sandy street were some bright green grass spots, so wonderful in appearance next to burning sands in the hot sun. At the cooler side of the railroad station, a man without a coat sat in a chair leaned back against the building. He smoked his pipe. The waters of the Rio Grande river circled near the town, and beyond it could be seen great flatlands.

Except for the busy salesman and his companions in the saloon, Yellow Sky was sleeping. The salesman leaned easily upon a table and told many tales with the confidence of a story teller who has found new listeners.

He was interrupted by a young man who suddenly appeared in the open door. He cried, "Scratchy Wilson's **drunk**, and has started to make trouble." The two Mexicans at once put down their glasses and disappeared through the rear door of the saloon.

The salesman, not understanding the importance of the warning, **jokingly** answered, "All right, old man. Suppose he has? Come in and have a drink anyhow."

But the information had made such an **apparent** impression upon everyone in the room that the salesman was forced to see its importance. All had become instantly serious. "Well," he said, filled with mystery, "what is this?" His three companions started to tell him, but the young man at the door stopped them."

"It means, my friend," he answered as he came into the saloon, "that for the next two hours this town won't be very healthy."

The saloon-keeper went to the door and locked it. Reaching out of the window, he pulled in heavy wooden boards which covered the windows, and locked there. The salesman was looking from one to another.

"What is this, anyhow?" he cried. "You don't mean there is going to be a gun-fight?"

### **Words in this story**

**apparent** - *adj.* easy to see or understand

**aware** - *adj.* knowing that something (such as a situation, condition, or problem) exists

**bride** - *n.* a woman who has just married or is about to be married

**cowboy** - *n.* someone who has qualities that are commonly associated with the cowboys in movies, especially someone who does things that other people consider foolish and dangerous

**dignity** - *n.* the quality of being worthy of honor or respect

**evident** - *adj.* clear to the sight or mind; obvious

**grasp** - *v.* to understand (something that is complicated or difficult)

**jokingly** - *adv.* said or done in a way that seems funny or not serious

**merriment** - *n.* laughter and enjoyment

**nervous** - *adj.* having or showing feelings of being worried and afraid about what might happen

### **Inferences Chart on next page**

<b>Character</b>	<b>Actions in the story</b>	<b>My Inferences</b>
Jack Potter		
Jack's Bride		
The young man		

<b>Character</b>	<b>Actions in the story</b>	<b>My Inferences</b>
The station master		
The salesman		
The saloon-keeper		

## **About the CALLA Approach**

This lesson is based on 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.

A list of CALLA learning strategies follows. These strategies were researched by J. Michael O'Malley and Anna Uhl Chamot.

See a list of language learning strategies below.

### **METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES**

#### **Plan / Organize**

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**

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**

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**

Determine how you learn best.

Arrange conditions that help you learn.

Look for Ways to Practice.

Focus your attention on the task.

## **TASK-BASED STRATEGIES - USE WHAT YOU KNOW**

### **Use Background Knowledge**

Think about and use what you already know to help you do the task.

Make associations between new information and your prior knowledge.

Use new information to clarify or modify your prior knowledge.

### **Make Inferences**

Use context and what you know to figure out meaning.

Read and listen between the lines.

Go beyond the text to understand its meaning.

### **Make Predictions**

Anticipate information to come.

Make logical guesses about what will happen in a written or oral text.

Make an estimate (math).

Make a hypothesis (science).

### **Personalize**

Relate new concepts to your own life, to your experiences, knowledge, beliefs and feelings.

### **Transfer / Use Cognates**

Apply your linguistic knowledge of other languages (including your native language) to the target language.

Recognize cognates.

### **Substitute / Paraphrase**

Use a synonym or descriptive phrase for unknown words or expressions.

## **TASK-BASED STRATEGIES - USE YOUR SENSES**

### **Use Images**

Use or create an actual or mental image to understand and/or represent information.

Use or draw a picture or diagram.

### **Use Sounds**

Say or read aloud a word, sentence, or paragraph to help your understanding.

Sound out/vocalize.

Use your "mental tape recorder" to remember sounds, words, phrases, and/or conversations.

### **Use Your Kinesthetic Sense**

Act out a role, for example, in Readers' Theater, or imagine yourself in different roles in the target language.

Use real objects to help you remember words, sentences, or content information.

## **TASK-BASED STRATEGIES - USE YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS**

### **Find/Apply Patterns**

Apply a rule.

Make a rule.



Recognize and apply letter/sound, grammar, discourse, or register rules.

Identify patterns in literature (genre).

Identify patterns in math, science, and social studies.

### **Classify/Sequence**

Categorize words or ideas according to attributes.

Classify living things; identify natural cycles.

Identify order and sequences in math, science, and social studies.

Sequence events in history.

### **Take Notes**

Write down important words and ideas while listening or reading.

List ideas or words to include in speaking or writing.

### **Use Graphic Organizers**

Use or create visual representations (such as Venn diagrams, time lines, webs, and charts) of important relationships between concepts.

### **Summarize**

Create a mental, oral, or written summary of information.

### **Use Selective Attention**

Focus on specific information, structures, key words, phrases, or ideas.

## **TASK-BASED STRATEGIES - USE A VARIETY OF RESOURCES**

### **Access Information Sources**

Use the dictionary, the internet, and other reference materials.

Seek out and use sources of information.

Follow a model

Ask questions

### **Cooperate**

Work with others to complete tasks, build confidence, and give and receive feedback.

### **Talk Yourself Through It (Self-Talk)**

Use your inner resources. Reduce your anxiety by reminding yourself of your progress, the resources you have available, and your goals.