

American Stories

“William Wilson,” Part Two, by Edgar Allan Poe

Lesson Plan

This lesson plan is to accompany the American Stories series episode “William Wilson,” Part One, by Edgar Allan Poe.

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.

Now for this week's lesson.

Prepare

Introduce the story: "Today, we will read Part Two of 'William Wilson,' by Edgar Allan Poe. In the story, the narrator talks about memories from his childhood at a boys' school. We learn that a boy at his school is similar to him in some ways – same birthday, same age, and same name. But, in other ways, he's different."

Ask students, "Have you ever known someone who has a twin? Or, have you ever known two people who look alike, or someone who looks just like you? It could be someone you're related to or not. Do the two people act and talk the same way? Describe the personalities of the two people. What's different? What's similar?"

Put students into pairs. Give them few minutes to discuss this then elicit a few examples to share with the class.

Continue, "When we compare the qualities of someone's personality with our own, our minds often place things into groups to understand the similarities and differences." Share an example of something similar about your personality and someone you know. ("For example, I like to go to the gym and my good friend likes to ride a bike. If I think about what quality this represents, I can classify us both as athletic.")

Continue, "In Part Two of 'William Wilson,' we learn more about the narrator's relationship with the mysterious boy at school. And, we learn the two have some things in common, but are different in other ways."

"Today we will learn how to use the strategy *Classify* to understand the similarities and differences of the two boys. But first, let's learn the new vocabulary."

Teach the new vocabulary for the lesson (below). Use images, gestures, or items for visual aids. The vocabulary also appears on the page after the story transcript.

Vocabulary in the Story

lighthearted - *adj.* having or showing a cheerful and happy nature

perhaps - *adv.* possibly but not certainly

height - *n.* a measurement of how tall a person or thing is

schoolfellow *n.* - a more formal word for schoolmate or classmate

likeness - *n.* the quality or state of being alike or similar especially in appearance

tremble - *v.* to shake slightly because you are afraid, nervous or excited

Present

Note: Some students may already be able to guess that the narrator is imagining this other boy, but Poe doesn't tell us this directly yet so, if students bring this up, ask them to treat the other boy as if he were real for the sake of the class activities today.

Hand out copies of the story transcript and vocabulary page to students. (Note that there is a second vocabulary list called “Personality Vocabulary” on the vocabulary page that students will use to help them during the activities.)

Introduce the task to students: “As we read the story today, we will practice the strategy **Classify** to help us understand what we read. When we classify something, we put it into a group based on similar qualities. We'll put the

narrator's descriptions about his personality and the other boy's personality into groups. I'll show you how to do this."

Play or read aloud to, "This weakness I have never failed to use in any way that was in my power" (end of fifth paragraph).

Model the strategy: "Let's look at an example. In the first paragraph, the narrator says he 'gained firm control' over the other boys at the school. We can learn a lot about his personality just from that one statement. Ask yourself, 'What kind of personality does this show me?' I think he has a controlling personality. He likes having control over the other boys. I am going to classify him as *controlling*."

Make a four-column chart on the board or a shared screen (like the one on the following page) and write the four column headings. Put the quote about the narrator "gaining firm control" in the first column under "Quote about himself." You can put shortened quotes in the columns, as below. In the second column, classify the narrator's personality quality: "He is controlling."

Continue, "In the next line, the narrator tells us that the only boy who 'would not follow my commands, who would not do what I told him to do' was the other William Wilson."

Then, tell students that the other boy seems to be a strong person; he won't allow the narrator to control him, unlike the other boys at the school. Then, classify his personality qualities into the four columns. (Note: there is a completed Classifications Guide for the teacher on pages 13, 14 and 15.)

Quote about himself	How I classify his personality	Quote about other boy	How I classify the other boy's personality
"...about the other boys – over whom I gained firm control" (1)	He is controlling.	"who would not follow my commands, who would not do what I told him to do" (1)	He does not want to be controlled. He is different from the other boys.

Notice that the number of the paragraph appears at the end of the quotes as "(1)." It is a good idea for students to do the same during their practice activities. This will help them locate the quotes easier during the activities.

As a quick practice before going to the second section of the story, ask students (in their pairs) to look for one more example from the first section. They should try to find one sentence that describes the narrator and one sentence that describes the other boy. Choose a volunteer to offer a quote about the narrator's personality and have that student classify the personality quality. (The Personality Vocabulary list will help them choose words to describe the boys if needed.) Then, ask a different volunteer to offer a quote about the other boy's personality and have that student classify the quality.

Practice

Now, place students into groups of three. Try to put them with students they haven't worked with yet today.

Prepare students for the next part: "Now, you will practice classifying some more." Hand out the blank Classifications Chart to students.

Say, "Let's listen to the next part of the story. As we listen, underline the personality descriptions that catch your attention the most. Try to underline a few sentences about the narrator's personality and a few about how he describes the other boy.

Play or read aloud to, "As I grew older I wanted less and less to listen to him" (end of paragraph 10).

Give students time to first fill in their charts with things they underlined about both boys, and then to write their classifications. They can write shortened quotes to save space, but should note the paragraph numbers.

Then, have the students share with their groups the quotes they chose and compare how they classified the boys.

Afterward, ask several students to share aloud what they wrote in their charts and what comparisons the groups discussed.

Ask students to listen again: "As we listen to the rest of the story, continue to underline the descriptions that catch your attention. Remember to try to choose things about the narrator *and* the other boy."

Play or read aloud until the end of the story.

Again, give students time to fill in their charts and then to discuss and compare the quotes and classifications with their group members.

Ask several students to share aloud what they wrote and what comparisons the groups discussed about the boys.

It is likely that students will have questions about what is happening in the last paragraph of the story. But, try to maintain the mystery by telling them they may not find out until Part Four (the last part of the story). By the last

paragraph, we have more evidence to believe the narrator is probably delusional and paranoid, but Poe tries to maintain some suspense.

Self-Evaluate

Have students stay with their groups and ask them about the last paragraph of story: “Do you believe everything that the narrator tells us about himself and the other boy? Why or why not?”

Give students time to discuss the end of the story and then ask a few students to share their responses.

Ask, “Now I’d like to ask you: What did you think about using the strategy *Classify* when you listened and read? Did it help you understand the story better? Write a few sentences on a sheet of paper about how classifying helped you today. Then, turn it in to me at the end of the class.”

Expand

Ask students, “In addition to thinking about personalities, are there other times when classifying things can help you understand them better?”

Elicit examples from students.

Say, “This strategy is helpful both inside and outside of school. For example, in all of the sciences, we put things into groups. We do this in biology, chemistry, earth science, and many other sciences. In math, we look at a math problem and classify it in our minds: we decide what type of problem it is, such as algebra or something else. In history and art, we put the events of different time periods into groups. Outside of school, our minds constantly group things based on things they have in common. For example, when we make a shopping list, we often organize the lists based on their similar qualities or their locations in the supermarket. Try using this strategy in your next class or when you leave school tonight. Let me know how it goes!”

"William Wilson," Part Two

By Edgar Allan Poe

In the first part of my story I spoke about my life at my first school, and about the other boys — over whom I gained firm control. But there was one boy who would not follow my commands, who would not do what I told him to, as the other boys did. His name was the same as mine — William Wilson — although he did not belong to my family in any way. He seemed to feel some love for me, and had entered the school the same day as I had. Many of the boys thought we were brothers. I soon discovered that we had been born on the same day: January nineteenth, eighteen hundred and nine.

Wilson continued his attempts to command me, while I continued my attempts to rule him. The strange thing is that, although I did not like him, I could not hate him. We had a battle nearly every day, it is true. In public it would seem that I had been proved the stronger; but he seemed somehow able to make me feel that this was not true, and that he himself was stronger. Nevertheless, we continued to talk to each other in a more or less friendly way. On a number of subjects we agreed very well. I sometimes thought that if we had met at another time and place we might have become friends.

It is not easy to explain my real feelings toward him. There was no love, and there was no fear. Yet I saw something to honor in him, and I wanted to learn more about him. Anyone experienced in human nature will not need to be told that Wilson and I were always together.

This strange appearance of friendship — although we were not friends — caused, no doubt, the strangeness of the battle between us. I tried to make the others laugh at him; I tried to give him pain while seeming to play a lighthearted game. My attempts were not always successful, even though my plans were well made. There was much about his character that simply could not be laughed at.

I could find, indeed, but one weakness. Perhaps he had been born with it, or perhaps it had come from some illness. No one but me would have made any use of it against him. He was able to speak only in a very, very soft, low voice. This weakness I never failed to use in any way that was in my power.

Wilson could fight back, and he did. There was one way he had of troubling me beyond measure. I had never liked my name. Too many other people had the same name; I would rather have had a name that was not so often heard. The words sickened me. When, on the day I arrived at the school, a second William Wilson came also, I felt angry with him for having

the name. I knew I would have to hear the name each day a double number of times. The other William Wilson would always be near. The other boys often thought that my actions and my belongings were his, and his were mine.

My anger grew stronger with every happening that showed that William Wilson and I were alike, in body or in mind. I had not then discovered the surprising fact that we were of the same age; but I saw that we were of the same height, and I saw that in form and in face we were also much the same. Nothing could trouble me more deeply (although I carefully tried to keep everyone from seeing it) than to hear anyone say anything about the likeness between us of mind, or of body, or of anything else. But, in truth, I had no reason to believe that this likeness was ever noticed by our schoolfellows. He saw it, and as clearly as I; that, I knew well. He discovered that in this likeness he could always find a way of troubling me. This proved the more than usual sharpness of his mind.

His method, which was to increase the likeness between us, lay both in words and in actions; and he followed his plan very well indeed. It was easy enough to have clothes like mine. He easily learned to walk and move as I did. His voice, of course, could not be as loud as mine, but he made his manner of speaking the same.

How greatly this most careful picture of myself troubled me, I will not now attempt to tell. It seemed that I was the only one who noticed it. I was the only one who saw Wilson's strange and knowing smiles. Pleased with having produced in my heart the desired result, he seemed to laugh within himself and cared nothing that no one laughed with him.

I have already spoken of how he seemed to think he was better and wiser than I. He would try to guide me; he would often try to stop me from doing things I had planned. He would tell me what I should and should not do; and he would do this not openly, but in a word or two in which I had to look for the meaning. As I grew older I wanted less and less to listen to him.

As it was, I could not be happy under his eyes, that always watched me. Every day I showed more and more openly that I did not want to listen to anything he told me. I have said that, in the first years when we were in school together, my feelings might easily have been turned into friendship; but in the later months, although he talked to me less often than, I almost hated him.

Yet, let me be fair to him. I can remember no time when what he told me was not wiser than would be expected from one of his years. His sense of what was good or bad was sharper than my own. I might, today, be a better and happier man if I had more often done what he said.

It was about the same period, if I remember rightly, that by chance he acted more openly than usual and I discovered in his manner something that deeply interested me. Somehow he brought to mind pictures of my earliest years — I remembered, it seemed, things I could not have remembered. These pictures were wild, half-lighted, and not clear, but I felt that very long ago I must have known this person standing before me. This idea, however, passed as quickly as it had come.

It was on this same day that I had my last meeting at the school with this other, strange William Wilson. That night, when everyone was sleeping, I got out of bed, and with a light in my hand, I went quietly through the house to Wilson's room. I had long been thinking of another of those plans to hurt him, with which I had until then had little success. It was my purpose now to begin to act according to this new plan.

Having reached his room, I entered without a sound, leaving the light outside. I advanced a step, and listened. He was asleep. I turned, took the light, and again went to the bed. I looked down upon his face.

The coldness of ice filled my whole body. My knees trembled, my whole spirit was filled with horror. I moved the light nearer to his face. Was this — this the face of William Wilson? I saw indeed that it was, but I trembled as if with sickness as I imagined that it was not. What was there in his face to trouble me so? I looked, and my mind seemed to turn in circles in the rush of my thoughts. It was not like this — surely not like this — that he appeared in the daytime. The same name, the same body; the same day that we came to school! And then there was his use of my way of walking, my manner of speaking! Was it, in truth, humanly possible that what I now saw was the result — and the result only — of his continued efforts to be like me? Filled with wonder and fear, cold and trembling, I put out the light. In the quiet darkness I went from his room and, without waiting one minute, I left that old school and never entered it again.

Vocabulary in the Story

lighthearted - *adj.* having or showing a cheerful and happy nature

perhaps - *adv.* possibly but not certainly

height - *n.* a measurement of how tall a person or thing is

schoolfellow *n.* - a more formal word for schoolmate or classmate

likeness - *n.* the quality or state of being alike or similar especially in appearance

tremble - *v.* to shake slightly because you are afraid, nervous or excited

Personality Vocabulary

cruel - *adj.* causing or helping to cause suffering; terrible and unfair

conniving - *adj.* acting in a dishonest way; using or controlling other people for selfish reasons

underhanded - *adj.* intended to deceive or trick someone

introvert - *n.* a shy person; a quiet person who does not find it easy to talk to other people

extrovert - *n.* a friendly person who likes being with and talking to other people

bully - *n.* someone who frightens, hurts, or threatens smaller or weaker people

obsessive - *adj.* thinking about something or someone too much or in a way that is not normal

responsible - *adj.* able to be trusted to do what is right or to do the things that are expected or required

noble - *adj.* having, showing, or coming from personal qualities that people admire

Classifications Guide (for teacher)

Quotes about himself	How I classify his personality	Quotes about the other boy	How I classify the other boy's personality
<p>"...about the other boys – over whom I gained firm control" (1)</p>	<p>He is controlling.</p>	<p>"who would not follow my commands, who would not do what I told him to do" (1)</p>	<p>He does not want to be controlled. He is different from the other boys.</p>
<p>"In public it would seem that I had proved to be stronger" (2)</p>	<p>Self-conscious; he cares about how strong he appears in public</p>	<p>"..but he seemed somehow able to make me feel this was not true, and that he himself was stronger" (2)</p>	<p>Convincing; confident; he can convince other people of his strengths</p>
<p>"..although I did not like him, I could not hate him" (2)</p>	<p>He doesn't want to hate the other boy; therefore he is sympathetic</p>	<p>"There was much about his character that simply could not be laughed at" (4)</p>	<p>He is respected by others; he is honorable</p>

Quotes about himself	How I classify his personality	Quotes about the other boy	How I classify the other boy's personality
<p>"Yet I saw something to honor in him, and I wanted to learn more about him" (3)</p>	<p>He looks up to the other boy. In this way, he is humble.</p>	<p>"He was able to speak only in a very, very soft, low voice" (5)</p>	<p>He is shy; he is introverted</p>
<p>"I tried to make the others laugh at him" (4)</p>	<p>He is cruel; he is a bully</p>	<p>"Wilson could fight back, and he did" (6)</p>	<p>He is not afraid of the narrator, so he is brave</p>
<p>"I tried to give him pain while seeming to play a lighthearted game" (4)</p>	<p>He is underhanded/conniving; he is not trustworthy</p>	<p>"He discovered that in this likeness he could always find a way of troubling me" (7)</p>	<p>He know what upsets the narrator; therefore he is clever</p>
<p>"This weakness I never failed to use in any way that was in my power" (5)</p>	<p>He is cruel; he is heartless</p>	<p>"He easily learned to walk and move as I did" (8)</p>	<p>He learns quickly; therefore he is smart</p>

Quotes about himself	How I classify his personality	Quotes about the other boy	How I classify the other boy's personality
"I had never liked my name. Too many other people had the same name" (6)	He is not confident; he doesn't like himself	"I was the only one who saw Wilson's strange and knowing smiles" (9)	He is hiding something; therefore he is secretive
"My anger grew stronger with every happening that showed that William Wilson and I were alike..." (7)	He has an anger problem	"He would try to guide me...and stop me from doing the things I had planned" (10)	He believes knows what is best for the narrator; therefore maybe he is wise, or a good advisor
"Nothing could trouble me more....than to hear anyone say anything about the likeness between us of mind, or of body..." (7)	He doesn't want people to think they are the same; maybe he is insecure)	"Yet...no time when what he told me was not wise than would be expected from one of his years" (12)	He is wise; he is responsible

Quotes about himself	How I classify his personality	Quotes about the other boy	How I classify the other boy's personality
<p>"...I could not be happy under his eyes, that always watched me" (11)</p>	<p>He thinks the other boy is judging him; maybe he is paranoid</p>	<p>"His sense of what was good and bad was sharper than my own" (12)</p>	<p>He has good judgment</p>
<p>"Having reached his room, I entered without a sound..." (15)</p>	<p>He is obsessed with the other boy; therefore he has an obsessive personality</p>		

Classifications Chart (for students)

Quotes about himself	How I classify his personality	Quotes about the other boy	How I classify the other boy's personality

Quotes about himself	How I classify his personality	Quotes about the other boy	How I classify the other boy's personality

Quotes about himself	How I classify his personality	Quotes about the other boy	How I classify the other boy's personality

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.