

# Boxing and Analysis

## Summary

In this set of lessons which extend over several days, students read excerpts from "The Death of Benny Paret" by Norman Mailer and "The Fight" by William Hazlitt. Students annotate the text, specifically looking for metaphor and simile, tone, and syntax. Working with a partner, students write three paragraphs, analyzing metaphor or simile, tone, and syntax in "The Death of Benny Paret." Working independently, students write one paragraph, choosing to analyze metaphor or simile, tone, or syntax in "The Fight."

## Main Core Tie

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 1](#)

## Additional Core Ties

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 4](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 9](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 2](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 4](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 5](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 7](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 10](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Speaking and Listening Standard 1](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Language Standard 1 b.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Language Standard 2 b.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Language Standard 4 a.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Language Standard 4 c.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Language Standard 4 d.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Language Standard 5 a.](#)

## Group Size

Pairs

## Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Communication

## Materials

Copies of an excerpt from ["The Death of Benny Paret"](#) by Norman Mailer. This text may be found in some AP Language textbooks or online. The excerpt I use starts with "Paret was a Cuban, a proud club fighter who had become welterweight champion because of his unusual ability to take a punch" and ends with "As he went down, the sound of Griffith's punches echoed in the mind like a heavy ax in the distance chopping into a wet log." I have included a link to the website I use as a source for this text.

Copies of an excerpt from William Hazlitt's ["The Fight."](#) The excerpt I use starts with "This is the trying time" and ends with "Alas, for Mrs. Hickman!" I have included a link for the website I use as a source of this text.

## Background for Teachers

"The Fight" by William Hazlitt is a challenging text. Students will need help building background. I have included an idea for using research to build background in the instructional procedures section of this lesson.

Students need to know how to deal with challenging vocabulary - how to use context clues, how to consult reference materials, and how to check the inferred meaning of a word or phrase in context or in a dictionary.

Students need to know how to integrate or embed quotations into their own sentences. I have attached the website I use to teach how to integrate or embed quotations in the materials section of this lesson.

Students need to know how to cite quotations (I use and teach MLA).

## Student Prior Knowledge

Students need to build background for William Hazlitt's "The Fight."

## Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will read two pieces of informational text ("The Death of Benny Paret" and "The Fight"), annotating textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says.

Students will use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. Students will consult reference materials to determine or clarify the precise meaning of words.

Students will verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase.

Students will conduct a short research project to answer questions.

Students will produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

## Instructional Procedures

### **PART ONE - "The Death of Benny Paret"**

Pass out copies of the passage.

Read, write on the board, and/or project the directions (I put them on the handout with the passage).

### **DIRECTIONS**

This is a THINK ALOUD with your partner assignment. Trade roles as you READ AND THINK ALOUD and as you LISTEN. You must each ANNOTATE your own copy of the text. You will be GRADED on the QUALITY/INSIGHT of your annotations. Work with your partner

to make meaning.

Determine the TONE of the passage. Identify HOW the author carefully chooses words and details to create the tone. How does the tone help Mailer convey his claim?

Look for METAPHORS and SIMILES -- Try to determine WHY Mailer chooses the metaphors and similes he includes -- What significance does the figurative language add to the passage? How does the figurative language help Mailer convey his claim?

Look at SYNTAX (sentence structure) -- How does Mailer's syntax "capture" the action of the fight and help Norman Mailer convey his claim?

What IS Mailer's claim? \*Remind students that there may be more than one correct claim and there are many different ways to word the same claim.

Begin by modeling a think aloud with this text. As you read, and think aloud, annotate the text.

Project this for your students to see. Students should read along with you and annotate their own copies of the passage. I normally model the first paragraph and then let students complete the assignment with their partners. Circulate around the room as students read and annotate. When all students have completed the assignment, move on to the second, more challenging passage by William Hazlitt.

#### PART TWO - Background for "The Fight"

Pass out the "The Fight" Background handout.

Put students in pairs and take them to a computer lab.

Partners should quickly research and record the items on the handout. This should only take about 10-15 minutes.

Return to class and discuss your findings as a whole group. Students should add additional information to their handout during the class discussion.

Remind students to keep this handout; they may refer to it as they read the Hazlitt passage.

#### PART THREE - "The Fight"

Pass out copies of "The Fight."

Read, write on the board, and/or project these directions (I put them on the handout with the passage):

##### DIRECTIONS

This is a THINK ALOUD with your partner assignment. Trade roles as you READ AND THINK ALOUD and as you LISTEN. You must each ANNOTATE your own copy of the text. You will be GRADED on the QUALITY/INSIGHTS of your annotations. Work with your partner to make meaning.

This is an OLD and challenging piece. Take your time. Figure out words in context or look them up. Verify the inferred meaning by rereading the sentence(s) with the challenging vocabulary.

Pay attention to (and annotate) the items we researched and discussed. Refer to your Quick Research Background handout and use the information on it to deepen your understanding of the passage.

Determine the TONE of the passage. Identify HOW the author carefully chooses words and details to create the tone. How does the tone help Hazlitt convey his claim?

Look for METAPHORS and SIMILES -- Try to determine WHY Hazlitt chooses the metaphors and similes he includes -- What significance does the figurative language add to the passage? How does the figurative language help Hazlitt convey his claim?

Look at SYNTAX (sentence structure) -- How does Hazlitt's syntax "capture" the action of the fight and help William Hazlitt convey his claim?

What IS Hazlitt's claim? \*Remember there can be multiple correct claims and there are many different ways to word the same claim.

Begin by modeling a think aloud with this text. As you read, and think aloud, annotate the text.

Project this for your students to see. Students should read along with you and annotate their own copies of the passage. I normally model a larger chunk of this challenging text before I let students complete the assignment with their partners (you should be able to tell when the class is feeling more comfortable with the text). Circulate around the room as students read and annotate.

#### PART FOUR - "The Death of Benny Paret" Analysis

Put students into pairs and have them take out their annotated copies of "The Death of Benny Paret."

Pass out one copy of the Formula for Analysis "The Death of Benny Paret" handout to each pair.

Read through the directions with the class.

Model how to complete the metaphor or simile paragraph for the class by referring to your own annotated copy of "The Death of Benny Paret." Use the appropriate checklist (on the back of the handout) to lead the class in an assessment of the paragraph.

As a class, collaboratively write the two remaining analysis paragraphs (tone and syntax). As a class, assess the two remaining paragraphs.

Partners will now work together to collaboratively write three new paragraphs about "The Death of Benny Paret." Remind students to proofread, edit and revise. Remind them to assess each paragraph by completing the checklist on the back of their handouts.

Remind them to staple their paragraphs to the handout.

You must actively monitor the collaborative writing process. I grab my clipboard and take anecdotal records; students know they will earn (or lose) points based on their participation in the activity.

#### PART FIVE: Review Analysis of "The Death of Benny Paret"

Randomly choose one paragraph to assess for each partnership.

Note the COMMON problems students are having with the assignment. Choose a few strong examples. Choose a few examples that need some work - these examples should represent the common problems students are having with the assignment. Type these paragraphs up (leave off the names).

Return the paragraphs to the students. Project the strong examples and, and as a class, use the checklist to assess these examples. Project the examples that need some work, and as a class, use the checklist to assess the paragraphs. Don't forget to tell students that you chose this examples because they show common problems - things with which many of their classmates struggled. Also emphasize what the writers of these paragraphs did well.

#### PART SIX - "The Fight" Analysis

1.

Pass out the Formula for Analysis "The Fight"

Preview the handout and the directions. Tell students to take out their annotated copies of "The Fight."

Students will work on their own to write a one-paragraph analysis of "The Fight." They may CHOOSE to write an analysis of metaphor or simile, tone or syntax.

Remind students to use the checklist to assess their paragraph. Students should proofread, edit and revise the rough drafts. Students should type their final drafts, using MLA format.

#### Extensions

Student write a comparative analysis of the two pieces ("The Death of Benny Paret" and "The Fight," examining how the two authors develop their claims.

#### Assessment Plan

Formative and summative assessments (and checklists) are included in the handouts and the instructional procedures sections.

Authors

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