

# Short story performance assessment: bargain



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Bargain by A. B. Guthrie 8th Grade English Language Arts EDRD 602D

Secondary Reading Instruction 7-12 Performance Assessment 1 Fay Van Vliet

“ Before” Strategy: Activating and Focusing Prior-Knowledge and /or

concepts needed Concept: Bullying Building Background knowledge based on personal and text-to-world connections (15 minutes) To activate prior knowledge and introduce the concept of bullying, I would read the CNN.

com article: “ Bullying rampant in U. S. middle schools” to the class (see attached article). Following the article I would engage the students in a

discussion on bullying. Starter questions: •How common is bullying in U. S.

middle schools? (4 out of 5) •Which students are the most vulnerable targets

of the bullies? (different) •Why do you think kids that are different are the

targets? •What kind of bullying have you observed in our school and how do students typically respond to it? •What tactics do bullies often use? •What

kind of creative ways could students deal with bullying? The next two days

we will be reading a story that describes an all too familiar theme of bullying, but between adults, with a middle school student caught in the action.

Rationale: The prevalence of bullying in middle school is obvious to the

students. By bringing their attention to it, and discussing it their minds and emotions are prepared to engage in the plot of “ Bargain. ” This text-to-

world/text-to-self strategy will provide the students with motivation to

compare the theme and plot with their own situation. Quotations by and

about Characters (35 minutes) Each of the following quotes will be written onto 3X5 cards with the name of the character it pertains to on the reverse

side of the card. Duplicate cards will be made so there will be enough for every student to have a card.

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• Pass cards out to students • Students mix and find others with the same character Students discuss character quotes to predict what qualities they anticipate they will find when they meet the character in the story • Each group will share their character profile with the class and record the descriptions on a laminated tag board T chart posted on the wall. • This chart will have two columns, one for predicted character traits and one for actual character traits. It will be used after the reading to check predictions Mr. Baumer • “ He was a man you wouldn’t remember from meeting once. ” • “... half mule and half beaver. ” • “ A hundred and thirty-five pounds wasn’t much to throw against two hundred.

• “ He spent most of his time at the high desk...” Slade • “ You could never tell by his face what went on inside his skull. ” • “ People said he could hold a lot [of liquor] without showing it except in being ornerier. ” • “ He hates everybody” • “ I had heard it said he could make a horse scream with that whip. ” Al • “ I have been working in the store for him in the summer and after classes ever since pneumonia took my dad off. ” • “ Look Mr. Baumer, I can lay out of school for a few days until you kind of get straightened out here.

” • “ I blurted out that I would have the law on Slade. ” “ I didn’t feel good. I couldn’t look up to Mr. Baumer like I used to and still wanted to.

” Rationale: Having this exercise before the reading allows the students to anticipate aspects of the story (plot, characters, theme) to help them build comprehension. This strategy is good for adolescent students as it will require them to exercise some critical thinking skills which they are

developing at this period of life. It will also encourage them to work as a team toward a common goal, and will allow them the freedom of movement and expressing their own opinions and hearing those of others. During”

Strategy: Selecting and Organizing Sequencing to see plot: Part 1 Give the students the sequence organizer for sequencing (ladder page from J Sprague’06) During the first 20 minutes of the class I will show the students how to do this activity by using a current popular movie such as A Night at the Museum. I will have an overhead of the ladder sequence organizer and each student will have a copy to write on. As we discuss the events of the movie, I will write them beside the ladder and have the students do that also.

We will then select the most important events and list them in order, starting with the bottom rung listing the 8 most important events that carry the plot to its culmination. During the next 30 minutes, the students will be individually reading pages 231-235 of “ Bargain” and doing this strategy. Since students are reading such a small selection, I will only have them fill in the bottom 4 rungs of the ladder. The directions are on their page will be as follows.

1. Outside of the ladder, list the important events in short phrases, like titles.
  2. Decide if any of the events should be combined or dropped.
  3. Place numbers, one-four, next to the events in chronological order.
  4. Write the events using the short phrases on the ladder in chronological order.
- Homework: Answer Socratic Discussion questions 1-6 Rationale: Because narrative text, and this text in particular, is organized in a sequence

in which one event impacts the next, I selected a sequence organizer to help the students see this succession. This will help the students understand what lead to the culmination of Bargain.

Requiring them to select the most important events to put on the ladder and sequence them will build their critical thinking ability. This activity is fitting as a “ during” strategy as it assists the students in selecting and organizing information. The adolescent student is beginning to deal with text that is multifaceted and this activity will help him/her pull out key information from complex text. “ During” Strategy: Selecting and Organizing Sequencing to see plot: Part 2 Making connections through discussions, and Activating and focusing/reviewing sequence (20 minutes): There will be a whiskey barrel at the front of the room with the word “ Bargain” stenciled across it to create mental images and build historical understanding of the text. This will also bring the students back to the previous lesson’s reading and promote class discussion.

Discussion starter questions: 1. “ How strong does a freighter need to be to handle these barrels? ” 2. “ What happened in the first part of the story yesterday? ” 3. “ Students, take out your ladders and let’s discuss the events. ” 4.

Using an overhead of the ladder, the class will discuss the sequence of events and put them in order, determining what to include and what to leave out. 5. “ Based on the events up to this point, what would you anticipate might happen next and why? The next 30 minutes the students will read individually and finish the second half of the ladder to see the complete

sequence of the events. Homework: Complete Socratic Discussion questions 7-11.

Rationale: See part 1 “ After” Strategy: Integrating and Applying Community share plan – •Discuss character profile descriptions to check predictions: students will refer to the poster boards to see how accurate their predictions were (the left side of T chart) and fill in accurate descriptors for each character on the right side of the chart. •Socratic Discussion Prior to the class The students will have completed the Socratic discussion questions before this class period. •Discussion table will be set up with chairs enough for half of the class and 2 extra chairs around it Before the Socratic Discussion •Rules for the Socratic discussion will be reviewed oOnly those who have answered the questions will be in the inner circle •The students are to have only prepared answers on the desk •The participants decide what format the discussion will take such as go around the circle or the last speaker choose the next speaker •The inner circle students determine who speaks first Another student speaks only when the one currently speaking finishes •Clarifying questions may be asked by inner circle members •The discussion is complete when the inner circle members have agreed on each question or have agreed to disagree with all members having given their opinion oThe outer circle participants will not speak or communicate with body language •Participants must hand in their discussion question answers before the discussion ensues •They are to take notes logging as much of the discussion of the inner circle as they can •Key words or phrases should be highlighted or circled Students in the outer circle may take one of the empty chairs in the inner circle when: •the discussion appears to be off topic •the

discussion becomes nonproductive •the inner circle members have not discussed an area deemed important •the student who takes the empty seat becomes the next speaker oThe inner circle is complete when all the chairs are filled and students may not leave the inner circle until the discussion is ended. oWhen the inner circle discussion is completed the outer circle shares their summaries or key words and phrases with the inner circle students while the inner circle becomes the listeners

During the Socratic Discussion

- Inner circle will discuss questions 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9
- When the inner circle has completed their round, the outer circle will become the inner circle and discuss questions 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10
- When this group has finished their round, the whole class will discuss question 11

Assessment: Since this will be an early implementation of the Socratic Discussion, the goal will be to initiate and practice critical thinking skills. The assessment will be taken from the student's written responses to the three types of questions.

Rationale: Conducting a Socratic Discussion after the reading provides an opportunity for the students to review the story, its theme, its characters, and discuss the actions of the characters in the story. It provides a platform in which each participant must consider and respect others' opinions. This is essential for middle school students as they are becoming young adults and need to hear and be heard in life. This discussion will build comprehension the students review the story and build a greater understanding while listening and internalizing others perspectives. Socratic Discussion Questions

Answer the following questions in complete sentences and explain your answers thoroughly.

Literal Questions 1. What is the setting of this story? 2. What is a freighter? 3. Which character is narrating the story? Inferential Questions 4. Why does Slade call Mr.

Baumer, “ Dutchie? ” 5. Why did Mr. Baumer persist in giving Slade the bill even though he knew Slade would not pay it? . What does Al mean when he says, “ I didn’t feel good. I couldn’t look up to Mr.

Baumer like I used to and still wanted to. ”? 7. How does the author imply that Slade drank the wood alcohol? Evaluative Questions 8. What contemporary issue was Mr. Baumer facing that was the foundation for his anger? 9.

What options did Mr. Baumer have for dealing with his situation and his anger with Slade? 10. Why do you think the author chose “ Bargain” for the title? 11. What “ bargains” do you think people make today?