Unit 1/Week 1

Title: *The Three-Century Woman*

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.7.1, R.L.7.3, RL.7.4, RL.7.6; W.7.2, W.7.4, W.7.9; SL.7.1; L.7.1, L.7.2, L.7.4

Teacher Instructions

**Preparing for Teaching**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis. Please do **not** read this to the students. This is a description for teachers about the big ideas and key understanding that students should take away **after** completing this task.

Big Ideas and Key Understandings

The very old are often seen as remote, sleepy, and just waiting to die, but they are as quirky, funny, interesting, as individuals in any other group, if you take the time to get to know them.

Synopsis

Megan’s Great-grandmother Breckenridge has lived in three centuries. She was born in 1899 and now it is 2001. On the first day of 2001, Megan is annoyed that she and her mother are going to visit Great-grandmother Breckenridge in an Elder Care Facility. She expects her great-grandmother to be unkempt and asleep. When they arrive, reporters and camera crews are already there, and Great-grandmother is prepared with make-up and a lively manner. Great-grandmother Breckenridge tells the reporters outrageous and untrue stories about her life because she realizes the reporters only care about getting a story about her memories to report, and not about her as she still is. Through her interaction with reporters and creative story-telling, her family comes to a new appreciation for the person she really is. By the end of her visit, Megan’s feelings and opinions about Great-grandmother Breckenridge have changed from distaste and avoidance to eagerness to know her better.

1. Read the entire selection, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.
2. Re-read the text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Tier II/academic vocabulary.

**During Teaching**

1. Students read the entire selection independently.
2. Teacher reads the text aloud while students follow along or students take turns reading aloud to each other. Depending on the text length and student need, the teacher may choose to read the full text or a passage aloud. For a particularly complex text, the teacher may choose to reverse the order of steps 1 and 2.
3. Students and teacher re-read the text while stopping to respond to and discuss the questions, continually returning to the text. A variety of methods can be used to structure the reading and discussion (i.e., whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.).

Text Dependent Questions

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| **Text-dependent Questions** | **Evidence-based Answers** |
| The title of the selection is The Three-Century Woman. The narrator gives an explanation. What does the title mean? | The narrator explains that Megan’s great-grandmother was born in 1899 in the 19th century, lived through the 20th century, and is still alive into the 21st century. The title refers to the three different centuries in which her great-grandmother has lived. |
| Where does Great-grandmother Breckenridge live, and what kind of place is it? | Megan’s great-grandmother lives at Whispering Pines, which is an Elder Care Facility. It is a home for elderly people who cannot live on their own any more, who need nursing care and 24-hour-a-day supervision. |
| The narrator’s mom uses the phrase, “fifteen minutes of fame.” What does the phrase mean? | The phrase “fifteen minutes of fame” refers to the fact that fame comes and goes quickly. |
| When the narrator says, “I hated going” to visit her great-grandmother at the Elder Care Facility, what can the reader assume about why she hates going? | Megan could be referring to visiting an Elder Care Facility. Most people assume that a nursing home is full of old, sick people waiting to die, and is therefore a depressing place to visit.  Or Megan could be referring to visiting her great-grandmother herself. Maybe she does not know her, or maybe she thinks that she is grouchy and unpleasant, or sad. |
| The narrator says, “Needless to say, I hated going.” What does she mean by the phrase “needless to say.” | The narrator means that she doesn’t need to explain her attitude to the reader because she assumes everyone understands why a fourteen-year-old does not want to visit an Elder Care facility. |
| Which words or phrases from the text tell why Megan’s Aunt Gloria doesn’t want the media to interview Great-grandmother Breckenridge? | When Aunt Gloria says, “She doesn’t even know where she is, let alone how many centuries she’s lived in. The poor old soul. Leave her in peace. She’s already got one foot in the …” She doesn’t want the reporters to bother and confuse Great-grandmother. |
| Based on what you quoted in the previous answer, how does Aunt Gloria perceive Great-grandmother Breckenridge? | Aunt Gloria perceives Great-grandmother Breckenridge as confused and unable to talk about her life. When she says, “…one foot in the … [*grave*],” she means that the old woman is close to death and disconnected from the living. She also perceives her as fragile and pitiful, saying, “The poor old soul. Leave her in peace.” |
| According to the narrator, what is her great grandmother’s “claim to fame”? | Her claim to fame, or the reason that she is famous, is that she is a “three-century woman.” The reader can also infer that there is no other reason she could be famous than for how long she has lived. |
| If Great-grandmother Breckenridge’s only claim to fame is her old age, what else can the reader infer about her? | The reader can also infer that she has never done anything else to become famous, that her life has been ordinary and dull. |
| What is Mom’s attitude towards the TV anchor, the cameramen, and the woman reporter who want to interview Great-grandmother Breckenridge? | Mom says,”…you’re not going in there. You’d scare her to death.” Mom perceives these people as sharks waiting to attack her unsuspecting grandmother. She feels protective of her grandmother. |
| The newswoman asks, “Is it Alzheimer’s?”  Why would she assume that Great-grandmother has Alzheimer’s Disease? | The main reason is that she is in an Elder Care Facility. Most people assume that really old people have Alzheimer’s and need to be cared for. Another reason is that Mom tells her, “She’s got nothing to say,” so that the newswoman may assume that Great-grandmother can’t talk or that she has nothing to talk about. |
| The author writes that Mom’s and Megan’s “eyes popped” when they went into Great-grandmother’s room. What did they assume they would see, and why were they surprised? | They were surprised because they assumed that Great-grandmother Breckenridge would be as she usually was, “flat out in the bed, dozing,” but “today she was bright-eyed and propped up.” |
| What can the reader infer from the comment, “Oh for pity’s sake,” Mom murmured. “They’ve got her done up like a Barbie doll”? What does Mom’s comment tell the reader? | When Mom makes a comment, she assumes that the staff at the nursing home got her all “done up” for the reporters. It upsets her that they have made her look fake and different from how she usually looks. |
| Great- grandmother asks the narrator and her mother who they are when they enter the room. Use evidence from the text to determine whether or not she really knows who they are. | The text states that Great-grandmother “peered” at Mom and then asked, “And who are you?” Her question implies that she doesn’t recognize or know Mom and Megan. However, when Great-grandmother says, “That’s right,” the narrator tells the reader that she realizes that she is making a joke and really does know who they are. |
| What can the reader assume from Great-grandmother’s statement, “That’s right”? | The reader knows that Great-grandmother Breckenridge lives in an Elder Care Facility, spends much of her time dozing, and, according to the newswoman, might have Alzheimer’s, so when Great-grandmother proves that she really does know who her family members are, the reader can assume that she understands what is going on and knows exactly what she is saying. |
| When Great-grandmother Breckenridge says, “At least you know who you are. Plenty around this place don’t,” what can the reader infer | Readers can infer that Great-grandmother realizes that many residents in the Elder Care Facility don’t remember who they are. Her comment may also refer to the reporters in the room, who may not know who they really are, or who she really is. Additionally, her comment may refer to Mom or Megan, and how well they know her or themselves. In fact, Great-grandmother’s comment is ambiguous, so listeners and readers can interpret it in many ways. In fact, she sounds sarcastic, which is the first indication that she has a sharp sense of humor. |
| When the TV anchor reassures Great-grandmother Breckenridge, “Don’t you worry about all this modern technology. We don’t understand half of it ourselves,” she responds in an unexpected way. What is her response and why is it unexpected? | Great-grandmother Breckenridge responds by saying, “Nothing to it!” “You sure this mike’s on? Let’s do this in one take.” As an elderly person born in 1899, who was young before TVs and computers, her listeners and readers do not expect her to be knowledgeable about TV reporting. Her comments make her sound lively and smart. |
| The cameraman responds to Great-grandmother Breckenridge’s unexpected comments by snorting. What can the reader infer about his reaction? | The cameraman “snorted” because her comment was unexpected and therefore funny. He perceives her as eager and ready to be televised. |
| *Attribute to* means to tell the reason for something or to give credit for something. To what does Great-grandmother Breckenridge attribute her long life? | Great-grandmother says, “I was only married once,” “And he died young.” She attributes her long life to having no husband. She is implying that marriage is bad for a person’s health! |
| Great-grandmother Breckenridge’s comments are ambiguous, because her listeners and readers aren’t sure if she is being serious, humorous, or sarcastic. How do her listeners respond to her statements? | When great-grandmother attributes her long life to living most of it without a husband, the TV anchor “stared” and said, “Ah. Anything else?” He didn’t laugh or ask what she meant. He seems to ignore her ambiguous remark because he does not know what to say. Mom just “stood still as a statue, wondering” what Great-grandmother would say next. |
| What does Megan assume based on the TV anchor’s response? | Megan comments, “You could tell he thought he was a great interviewer, though he had no sense of humor.” By her comment, the reader can assume that Megan thinks he can’t tell when people are being serious or are *pulling his leg*, and that he doesn’t seem to be a good interviewer at all. A good interviewer would ask for more information or would laugh along with the joke to keep Great-grandmother Breckenridge in a good mood. |
| After the anchor ignores Great-grandmother’s comments about marriage and falling off a bed pan, Megan says, “A tiny smile played around Great-grandma’s wrinkled lips”. What does that sentence reveal? (Teacher may need to provide support for this question.) | It reveals that Great-grandmother Breckenridge is amused by the anchor. She is smiling because she notices the reporter has ignored the two opportunities she has given him for questions, and he is searching his mind for a question to ask her. She is probably thinking it would be easy to trick him. |
| Why does the author include the picture? What does it show? | The picture shows some of the effects of the San Francisco Earthquake in 1906. The author includes it to illustrate the damage to the city. It is also an example of a resource that Great-grandmother Breckenridge may have drawn from to make up the story she told the TV anchor. |
| How does the author help the reader understand the disaster that Great-grandmother Breckenridge claims she experienced in 1937? | The illustration shows the headline from “The New York Times” newspaper from May 7, 1937. The author includes it to help the reader understand the “scope of the tragedy.” The Hindenburg Zeppelin, which was the size of three football fields, caught fire, burned, and crashed. The caption underneath it says that the crash was reported nationwide, so the whole nation was shocked by the tragedy. Of the approximately 100 people on board, about a third were killed or injured. The article reported that 21 were killed, 12 were missing, and 64 escaped with their lives. According to another caption, no one was sure why or how the vehicle caught fire. After the crash, Americans refused to ride Zeppelins, and Zeppelin travel in America died out. |
| Great-grandmother Breckenridge tells four stories about her life to the TV anchor. Does she change the kind of stories she relates to the TV anchor? | The first two stories Great-grandmother Breckenridge tells are things that may have happened to her. First she talks about having been married. She also attributes her long life to only being married once and for a short time. Her listeners and the reader are unsure whether she is serious or is looking for a reaction.  The second thing she tells about her life is that she fell off “the bed pan.” This could easily be true, but could have been said for effect also. When she doesn’t get a good reaction from the TV anchor, she tells a dramatic story about having lived through the oh-six earthquake, adding three interesting details.  He is enthusiastic, so she tells another story, this time about the crash of the Hindenburg. She adds over ten details to the story this time. Great-grandmother Breckenridge needs very little encouragement to go from small, realistic sounding stories, to huge, dramatic stories about two of the biggest catastrophes of the twentieth century. |
| As the TV anchor and his crew leave Great-grandmother Breckenridge, she predicts, “TV’s on the way out.”  What does she mean by this?  How does the anchor feel after her last remark, and did his perception of her change from the beginning of the interview? | When she tells the TV anchor that he’ll “be looking for work” because “TV’s on the way out,” she means she wants to play one last joke on him.  He looks “shaken” and leaves without responding. He is confused and a little upset. When he entered Great-grandmother Breckenridge’s room, he expected her to be confused and in need of reassurance. He talks to her as if she is a child, saying, “Don’t you worry about all this modern technology.” He also expected to be able to find “an angle” that would make a good story. Even though she lives “in the present,” her present life “didn’t look like much,” so he prompts her by saying, “You’ve lived through amazing times.” Great-grandmother responds by giving him what he has asked for: amazing stories about living through the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and the crash of the Hindenburg in 1937. He loves her stories (which are not true). On page 16, he says, “In your sensational span of years you’ve survived two great disasters!” He closes the interview by asking her if she has “any predictions for this new twenty-first century.” She makes three safe predictions about taxes, parking places, and an aging population, and then slips in the prediction about TV being on the way out. What a thing to say!  From his point-of-view, he has done a good thing by coming to interview her and make her famous. She should be grateful and accommodating. Instead, she insults his profession and his job prospects. His perception of her has gone from seeing her as a weak-minded old lady, to a fascinating interview subject, to a sarcastic, mocking individual. He leaves without asking her what she meant. Great-grandmother Breckenridge was right. He didn’t really want to know her. “He didn’t know I’m still here. He thought I was nothing but my memories.” |
| Throughout the story Mom has hinted that Great-grandmother has been pretending about her life. What evidence is there to confirm the mother’s suspicion? | After the reporters leave, Mom confronts Great-grandmother about the stories she told the media people. On page 16, the text states that “Mom planted a hand on her hip. ‘Grandma. Number one, you’ve never been to San Francisco. And number two, you never saw one of the zeppelin things.’ Great-grandma shrugged. ‘No, but I can read.’” She confesses she was lying because she did not like his reason for the interview. |
| When great-grandmother says, “Once upon a time, I was your age. How scary is that,” what is she trying to say to Megan? How does Megan respond to her comment and question? | Great-grandmother Breckenridge is reaching out to Megan by remembering how she was at Megan’s age long ago, and Megan responds with affection. |
| By the end of the story, how does Megan perceive her great-grandmother? | At the end of the visit when Great-grandmother says, “Once upon a time, I was your age. How scary is that?” Megan grins and gives her a kiss on the cheek. Megan feels affectionate towards her and now sees her great-grandmother as a fun character, with a lot to say. |
| Based on the text, why did Great-grandmother make up stories about her participation in those historical events? | She says, “The TV dude in the $500 suit set me off. He made me mad, and it put my nose out of joint. He didn’t notice I’m still here. He thought I was nothing but my memories. So I gave him some.” The TV anchor never knew she was leading him on. He says, “Fantastic!” “What detail!” Great-grandmother pretended these events were part of her life because the reporter was treating her as if she had no interest as a person, with a lifetime of real experiences to share. Since he wanted sensational stories, she made some up. |

Tier II/Academic Vocabulary

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|  | **These words require less time to learn**  (They are concrete or describe an object/event/  process/characteristic that is familiar to students) | **These words require more time to learn**  (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, are a part  of a word family, or are likely to appear again in future texts) |
| **Meaning can be learned from context** | (easily explained with a synonym, gesture, example)  gunned across  bickered  wavering  flights (twelve flights of stairs)  pondered  peeled out (of the windows)  a wrap  hunched (hunched up her shoulders) | (explained with quick definition, example)  fame (fifteen minutes of fame)  state-of-the-art  Elder Care Facility  severe  intersection  “on to us” (rushed at them and started talking)  surge (surged forward)  popped (our eyes popped)  one take (in a filming context)  groaned (in embarrassment)  stirred (anxiously)  predictions  withered-up |
| **Meaning needs to be provided** | (need a thoughtful explanation/example; possible rereading)  “one foot in the –“ (one foot in the grave)  inmate  dawned (dawned on me)  angle (looking for an angle)  shaken (looking shaken) | (need to be taught and practiced)  claim (claim to fame)  achievement  attribute (verb) (attribute \_\_\_ to \_\_\_)  venerable  set \_\_\_ off |

Culminating Writing Task

* Prompt

*What is Megan’s perception of her great-grandmother Breckenridge? How does it change over the course of the story and what causes that change? Write a paragraph or paragraphs to answer these questions. Use evidence and quotes from the text to support your ideas.*

* Teacher Instructions

1. Students identify their writing task from the prompt provided.
2. Students complete an evidence chart as a pre-writing activity. Teachers should guide students in gathering and using any relevant notes they compiled while reading and answering the text-dependent questions earlier. Some students will need a good deal of help gathering this evidence, especially when this process is new and/or the text is challenging!

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| ***Evidence of Megan’s perception***  ***Quote or paraphrase*** | ***Elaboration / explanation of how this evidence supports Megan’s changing perception*** |
| “…who’s lived there since I was a little girl.”  “Needless to say, I hated going.” | Megan doesn’t like or know her great-grandmother Breckenridge. She resents having to visit her at the Elder Care Facility. |
| “Great-grandmother Breckenridge wasn’t going anywhere and hadn’t for twenty years.” | Megan perceives her great-grandmother as being stuck in a room in an elder-care home and of being incapable of action. |
| From Aunt Gloria, “She doesn’t know where she is, let alone how many centuries she’s lived in.” | Family opinion is that she has lost a lot of her memories and intelligence. Megan is probably influenced by how her aunt and mother perceive Great-grandmother. |
| “…our eyes popped. Great–grandmother was usually flat out in the bed, dozing” but “today she was bright-eyed and propped up.” | Megan and her mom are surprised that Great-grandmother was ready and eager to speak to the reporters and cameramen about her life. |
| “You could tell he thought he was a great interviewer, though he had no sense of humor.” | Megan, the great-granddaughter, is commenting humorously on the TV anchor. She has an ironic way of speaking that is like her great-grandmother’s. Megan, the narrator, is telling the reader that the TV anchor is missing an opportunity to get information from Great-grandmother Breckenridge, that he is distanced from her as a real person. Therefore, she does not respect him. |
| “But you’ve lived through amazing times.” “Don’t you ever think back about them?” | The TV anchor asks about what he thinks would make a good story.  Megan observes all that follows. She begins to be interested in what her great-grandmother is saying because it is not what she expected. |
| “You mean you want to hear something interesting? Like how I lived through the San Francisco earthquake – the big one of oh-six?” | Great-grandmother Breckenridge responds to the anchor’s question with what he asked for – an amazing story about two famous disasters that she didn’t actually experience. |
| “I’ve been through too much. I don’t have time to remember it all.” | Great-grandmother says this to cover for the fact that she isn’t really conveying memories from 70 or 90 years ago, which might be difficult to remember. |
| “I was on the Hindenburg when it blew up, you know.” | The TV anchor so appreciates the 1906 earthquake story, so Great-grandmother Breckenridge decides to give him another famous disaster. |
| “ ‘And then the Hindenburg exploded,’ the anchor said, prompting her.” | The TV anchor is busy prompting her to continue adding to the fake stories she is telling him. |
| “Great-grandma cocked her head and pondered for the camera.” | Great-grandmother is doing a good job of acting and making up stories for the TV anchor, the crew, and the TV audience. Megan realizes that she is enjoying them.  It is suspenseful for all those present to listen to great-grandmother leading the media farther on. |
| “ ‘Fantastic!’ the anchor breathed. ‘What detail!’ Behind him the woman reporter was scribbling away on her pad. | The media people believe everything she is saying. Also, there is such “detail” because Great-grandmother Breckenridge is making it up on the spot. She doesn’t have to worry about remembering it correctly. |
| “And one more prediction…TV’s on the way out.” I predict you’ll be looking for work.”  “Honey, I only deal with professionals. There’s the door.” | Great-grandmother Breckenridge put the reporters in their place because they were being condescending to her. She was rude, but not mean. She was also funny. Neither Megan nor her mom scolded her, so the reader can infer that they were surprised, amused, and impressed. |
| “ ‘I’ll tell you something else.’ We waited, holding our breath to hear.” | After their experience of the day, seeing Great-grandmother acting in a completely different way from how she normally does, they are not sure what Great-grandmother will say. She has been so unpredictable. |
| “Once upon a time, I was your age. How scary is that?” | Great-grandmother made a joke and connected with Megan in a humorous way. |
| “She grinned and I grinned.”  “I felt like giving her a kiss on her little wrinkled cheek, so I did.”  “I’ll come and see you more often.” | From perceiving her great-grandmother as a sleepy, inactive old person, Megan now sees her as smart and funny, someone who will stand up for herself. She put on a show for the media people, making it appear that she was part of some of the most sensational events in the 20th century. She fooled the media people, all the while knowing that Mom and Megan were aware that she was not telling the truth. By end of this visit, Megan expresses her affection for her great-grandmother and wants to get to know her better. |

1. Once students have completed the evidence chart, they should look back at the writing prompt in order to remind themselves what kind of response they are writing (i.e. expository, analytical, argumentative) and think about the evidence they found. (Depending on the grade level, teachers may want to review students’ evidence charts in some way to ensure accuracy.) From here, students should develop a specific thesis statement. This could be done independently, with a partner, small group, or the entire class. Consider directing students to the following sites to learn more about thesis statements: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/ OR http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/ thesis\_statement.shtml.
2. Students compose a rough draft. With regard to grade level and student ability, teachers should decide how much scaffolding they will provide during this process (i.e. modeling, showing example pieces, sharing work as students go).
3. Students complete final draft.

* Sample Answer:

*In the story, “The Three Century Woman,” the narrator’s perception of her great-grandmother changes from seeing her as a typical old person in a nursing home, sleepy, and uninteresting, to seeing her as a unique individual that she’d like to know better. Megan had not developed a relationship with her great-grandmother Breckenridge before the visit described in the story. On previous visits to the Elder Care Facility where her great-grandmother lives, “Great-grandma was usually flat out in bed, dozing”. She didn’t or couldn’t make the effort to talk to Megan. Megan says that she “hated going” to visit her great-grandmother Breckenridge. The Elder Care Facility, Whispering Pines, “isn’t that bad,” although “you have to push a red button to unlock the front door” “to keep the inmates from escaping.” By using the word “inmates” and “unlock the front door,” Megan gives the impression that the old people who live there, including her great- grandmother, are too weak or strange to be out in the world. It’s no wonder that she did not want to visit.*

*As the story goes on, Megan is surprised by both Great-grandmother’s appearance and behavior. When she and her mom first see Great-grandmother, their “eyes popped” at the way she looked. Instead of dozing in bed, she is “bright-eyed and propped up. She wore a fuzzy pink bed jacket,” with a “matching bow stuck in what remained of her hair”. Instead of being nervous about being interviewed, she seemed to be looking forward to it. She tells the TV anchor, “You sure this mike’s on? Let’s do this in one take.” After trying to interest him in her real life, saying, “Something’s always happening. Last night I fell off the bed pan,” she realizes he’s not really interested in her, but only in past events. So she describes living through the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco, and the Hindenburg Zeppelin explosion. She adds lots of details to make it sound like she is remembering her actual experiences, but, as Mom points out, she is making it up. Megan and her mom just listen in amazement.*

*After seeing a completely new side of her great-grandmother, Megan’s perception of her as a remote and uninteresting old person changes. Megan now perceives her great-grandmother as being funny, unpredictable, and an interesting, maybe fascinating, person. From hating to visit her at the beginning of the story, to where she says, “I’ll come and see you more often.” Megan now looks forward with pleasure to getting to know Great-grandmother better.*

Additional Tasks

* *How did Mom’s perception of Great-grandmother Breckenridge change over the course of the story? (Many characters’ perceptions of Great-grandmother Breckenridge changed. This and other possible prompts explore other characters perceptions.)*
  + Answer: *From the beginning of the story, the reader perceives that Mom cares about her grandmother. This doesn’t change over the course of the story. What does change is Mom’s perception of Great-grandmother as a fragile, old person to be protected. Mom makes regular visits to see her. She also brings Megan to visit. When Megan says,” I’ll wait in the car,” Mom insists, “Get out of the car.” At the beginning of the story, Mom feels protective of her grandmother. She tells the media people, “Listen. You’re not going to be interviewing my grandmother.” “You’d scare her to death.” When the TV anchor does interview Great-grandmother, Mom is surprised by how energetic she is and by what she tells him about her life. Mom stands “still as a statue, wondering what was going to come out of Great-grandma’s mouth next.” As readers, we assume that Mom is amused and surprised by her grandmother’s behavior because Mom doesn’t contradict her in front of the media people. Instead, Mom just “groaned” and hissed quietly to Megan, “She’s never been to San Francisco.” “I’ve heard her say so”. She waits until all the media people are gone before she confronts Great-grandmother, and she does it in an affectionate way, planting “a hand on her hip,” listing the discrepancies, and giving Great-grandmother a chance to explain.* *After Great-grandmother explains, not only does Mom accept what she says, but she waits, “holding” her breath, to hear what Great-grandmother will say next. She realizes that Great-grandmother Breckenridge may be old, but she can still take care of herself with vigor.*
* *Research the Hindenburg Zeppelin crash. Write a short essay about it. Use the text box on page 15 and the caption on page 19, as well as other sources.* 
  + Possible source: use Pearson Website Resources – infoplease.com – article follows:

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| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Fall of the HindenburgThe fiery explosion on May 6, 1937  |  |  | | --- | --- | | by Michael Morrison |  |  |  | | --- | | ource: Arttoday.com |   On May 6, 1937, the German [airship](http://ph.infoplease.com/id/CE000975.html) *Hindenburg* burst into flames 200 feet over its intended landing spot at New Jersey's Lakehurst Naval Air Station. Thirty-five people on board the flight were killed (13 passengers and 22 crewmen), along with one crewman on the ground. 803 Feet Long and 242 TonsThe giant flying vessel measured 803.8 feet in length and weighed approximately 242 tons. Its mostly metal frame was filled with hydrogen. It came complete with numerous sleeping quarters, a library, dining room, and a magnificent lounge, but still managed a top speed of just over 80 miles per hour. The zeppelin had just crossed the Atlantic Ocean after taking off from Frankfurt, [Germany](http://ph.infoplease.com/id/A0107568) 2½ days prior on its first transatlantic voyage of the season. Thirty-six passengers and a crew of 61 were on board. Disaster Strikes As it reached its final destination in New Jersey, it hovered over its landing spot and was beginning to be pulled down to the ground by landing lines by over 200 crewmen when disaster struck. A small burst of flame started just forward of the upper fin, then blossomed into an inferno that quickly engulfed the *Hindenburg's* tail. "Oh, the Humanity!" Many jumped from the burning craft, landed on the soft sand of the naval base below, and lived to tell about it; others weren't so lucky. Herb Morrison, a reporter for WLS Radio in Chicago, happened to be covering the event and cried out the now famous words, "Oh, the Humanity!" The majestic ship turned into ball of flames on the ground in only 34 seconds. Unknown Cause The cause of the disaster is still uncertain. At the time, many thought the ship had been hit by [lightning](http://ph.infoplease.com/id/CE030641.html). Many still believe that the highly flammable [hydrogen](http://ph.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/CE025009.html) was the cause. Some Germans even cried foul play, suspecting sabotage intended to sully the reputation of the [Nazi](http://ph.infoplease.com/id/CE036471.html) regime. [NASA](http://ph.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/CE036411.html) research, however, has shown that the highly combustible varnish treating the fabric on the outside of the vessel most likely caused the tragedy. | |

Note to Teacher

* Here are some general academic vocabulary words which are not included in the text, but which are used in the questions and writing prompt, and which students can use in their written responses. Teach them using Structured Student Talk and the Academic Vocabulary Graphic Organizer.

1. ambiguous; am·big·u·ous; adjective; (syn.) questionable, debatable; (related forms) ambiguity, noun, ambiguously, adv.; (root) ambiguous – Latin: doubtful; (def.) 1. could mean more than one thing, 2. unclear or inexact meaning; (Structured Student Talk) With a partner, choose two common phrases or sentences, such as, *That sounds great!* or *It’s no problem*. Practice saying them to your partner in different ways so that he or she is unsure of your real meaning. Use the following dialog pattern:
   * + Partner 1 says a common phrase ambiguous; e.g., “*I don’t have a care in the world.*”
     + Partner 2 responds: *That sounds* *ambiguous to me. Are you \_\_\_\_\_? (serious, joking, upset, putting me on,…)*
     + Partner 1 responds appropriately: (*Of course I don’t. Can’t you tell? What do you mean? Do I have to spell it out? I always mean what I say, ….)*
2. assume; as\*sume; verb; (syn.) suppose, conclude as true, presume; (related forms) assumption, noun, assumed, adj.; (root) assumere – Latin: to take; (def.) to think or believe something is true; (Structured Student Talk Q/A) When people \_\_\_\_ (laugh, cry, wave, sigh), what do you assume? When people \_\_\_\_\_ (laugh), I assume they are \_\_\_\_\_ (happy). When people \_\_\_\_\_ (cry), others assume they are \_\_\_\_\_ (upset).
3. perceive; per\*ceive; verb; (syn.) consider, view, regard; (related forms) perception, noun, perceived, adj; (root) percipere – Latin: to seize, to understand; (def.) to interpret or view something or someone in a particular way; (Structured Student Talk Q/A) How do students perceive homework? Students perceive homework as being \_\_\_\_\_\_ (good practice, not helpful,,…).