Unit: 2

Title: A Day’s Wait

Suggested Time: 2-3 days (45 minutes per day)

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

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

While a person’s being strong for others is noble, it sometimes causes that person more problems.

Synopsis

The story’s narrator notices one morning that his nine-year-old son is ill. A doctor visits the home and notes that the boy’s temperature is 102. After the doctor leaves, the boy seems strangely detached and refuses to go to sleep. The dad leaves the house with a carefree attitude, which contrasts sharply with the boy’s serious demeanor. Eventually he asks his father, “About what time do you think I’m going to die?” Questioned by his father, the boy reveals that while at school in France he heard that a person cannot live with a temperature over 44. The father explains the difference between the Fahrenheit and Celsius scales and tells Schatz (the son) that he is not going to die. The boy, having faced his ordeal with dignity and courage, gradually relaxes and goes back to worrying about ordinary little things.

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** |
| What does the boy say that shows he is concerned about his father? | The boy says, “You don’t have to stay in here with me, Papa, if it bothers you.” His father responds that he isn’t bothered, and the boy repeats his line. The son says this because he is under the impression that he is going to die, and he does not want to put his father through the anguish of being too close to a dying son. |
| What does the boy say and do that reveal his character? Describe his character at this point in the story. | When asked to go to bed, the boy says, “No. I’m all right.” When his father tells him that he is sick, the boy again says, “I’m all right.” This tells the reader that the boy is showing a desire to not appear weak or vulnerable. |
| What text demonstrates that the father is not worried about his son’s illness? | the father gives the boy some medicine and then goes outside. “…and after giving him the prescribed capsules at eleven o’clock I went out for a while.” He takes the dog for a walk. “I took the young Irish setter for a little walk up the road and along a frozen creek.” He hunts birds as well. “We flushed a covey of quail under a high clay bank with overhanging brush and I killed two.” All these activities indicate that the father is not concerned about his son beyond the fact that he has the flu. |
| Why does Hemingway dedicate so much of his story to the details of his activities outside after giving Schatz his capsules? | Possible answer: Hemingway is trying to convey that the father (himself) is not concerned at all about his son’s illness. So much so that he would rather be outside on a cold day when the ground is covered in sleet than sit inside, fussing over Schatz. |
| How does Schatz’s behavior at the end of the story differ from his behavior at the beginning? Use text evidence to support your answer. | At the beginning Schatz (the son) puts on a mask of toughness, as evidenced by his comments that he is “all right” when his father tells him he should go to bed because he is sick. He continues to act tough, even telling his father, “You don’t have to stay in here with me, Papa, if it bothers you” when he assumes that he is going to die from his illness. At the end, when his father informs him that he has mistaken his temperature as fatal because he misunderstood the conversion between Celsius and Fahrenheit, he lets his guard down. The line, “the hold over himself relaxed too…he cried very easily at little things that were of no importance” shows that Schatz is no longer trying to appear tough. He is now allowing his emotions to express themselves. |
| Schatz is detached from his father's reading. What information explains why Schatz is distracted by his thoughts? How does the information help the reader? | The boy hears his doctor say that his temperature is 102 degrees which leads the boy to think that he is going to die because he does not understand that there is a difference between Celsius and Fahrenheit |
| The boy says, “I mean you don’t have to stay if it’s going to bother you.” What does the boy mean by “it”? What text evidence supports your answer? | "it" refers to the boy's dying. He is trying to be brave for his father and also excuse his father from watching him die. The reader knows that the son is referring to his own death when the son asks his father, “about how long will it be before I die. |
| What is the author revealing in this sentence? Use text evidence to support your answer. | In this sentence, the author reveals the dramatic change that his son quickly experiences. The “hold,” refers to the thought that he is going to die. This has lifted and the boy no longer feels like he has to be strong for his father. The boy went from thinking he had to be brave and emotionless to allowing his emotions to show; “…it was slack and he cried easily at little things that were of no importance.” |
| How does the boy as described throughout the story differ from the boy as described in the last sentence? Use text evidence to support your answer. | The theme or “big idea” is maintaining “grace under pressure.” The last sentence in the story brings that idea to the forefront for the reader. The reader sees that the son’s desire to appear tough, “I’m all right” “You don’t have to stay in here with me, Papa, if it bothers you.” “I don’t worry”, has been all for nothing and he can relax and let down his guard. |

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** | capsules  sleet  brush  varnished  glassy  mounds  bank  commenced  evidently | detached |
| **Meaning needs to be provided** | epidemic  pneumonia  bare | poised  slack |

Culminating Writing Task

* Prompt
  + *In a well-developed essay, describe how Schatz handles his illness. Explain how this approach is both good and bad. Cite specific evidence from the text to support your answer.*
* 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 remind students to use any relevant notes they compiled while reading and answering the text-dependent questions.

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| ***Evidence***  ***Quote or paraphrase*** | ***Elaboration / explanation of how this evidence supports ideas or argument*** |
| "When I put my hand on his forehead I knew he had a fever. 'You go up to bed…you’re sick.' 'I’m all right.'" | Right away the reader sees Schatz put up a brave front. Even though his father can see undoubtedly that his son (Schatz) is sick, Schatz plays it off like it’s no big deal. |
| "He lay still in the bed and seemed very detached from what was going on." | Schatz is removing himself from his world to make it easier for him to appear brave and maintain a level of grace and strength. |
| “'You don’t have to stay in here with me, Papa, if it bothers you.'” | Again, the reader sees Schatz is determined to remain brave and maintain the idea of “grace under pressure”. He tells his father twice that he doesn’t have to stay here if *it* bothers him, meaning watching his son die. Schatz is offering his father the chance to avoid witnessing this tragic event and that he is strong enough to go through it on his own. |
| The father goes out hunting while his son is sick in bed. | The father is unconcerned with Schatz's illness. |
| “'You can’t come in…you mustn’t get what I have.'” | Evidence again supporting the idea that Schatz is protecting his family and being the stronger person. |
| “'Take this with water.' 'Do you think it will do any good?'” | This is a pivotal part in understanding Schatz’s character. Here the reader sees that Schatz feels that his symptoms are incurable and his actions have been driven by that idea. |
| “'About what time do you think I’m going to die...At school in France the boys told me you can’t live with forty-four degrees.'” | The reader discovers what Schatz has been thinking all day long and what has been motivating him from the start. The thought that he is going to die has driven Schatz to act the way he has. |
| “'…You aren’t going to die. That’s a different thermometer. On that thermometer thirty-seven is normal. On this kind it’s ninety-eight'…The hold over himself relaxed too, finally, and the next day it was very slack and he cried easily at little things that were of no importance." | The moment Schatz realizes his mistake and that he is not going to die, his demeanor changes and he lets his guard down. The “hold” over him is gone and his body and mind become overtaken by emotion. Schatz goes from being the strong one to being the weakest. |

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:

Schatz, the son in the short story A Day’s Wait, is demonstrating the idea of *grace under pressure*. The reader right away gets a glimpse as to the type of character that Schatz is and his belief that one must appear tougher than they are during difficult situations. When the father says, “You go up to bed…you’re sick,” Schatz replies, “I’m all right”. The reader sees that Schatz does not want to bother his father or make a big deal over anything. As the day progresses, Schatz upholds this notion that he must be strong for his loved ones. “He lay still in the bed and seemed very detached from what was going on.” Here, Schatz is removing himself from his world to make it easier for him to appear brave. “You don’t have to stay in here with me, Papa, if it bothers you.” Again, the reader sees Schatz’ determination to remain fearless and preserve the idea of *grace under pressure*. Schatz tells his father twice that he doesn’t have to stay here if it bothers him, meaning watching Schatz die. Schatz is offering his father the chance to avoid witnessing this tragic event by showing he is strong enough to go through it on his own. “You can’t come in…you mustn’t get what I have.” Schatz is again protecting his family and being the stronger person. And finally, as the father gives Schatz medicine, Schatz asks, “Do you think it will do any good?” This is a pivotal part in understanding Schatz’s character. Here the reader sees that Schatz feels that his symptoms are incurable and his actions have been driven by that idea.

At the end of the short story, the reader learns that Schatz has developed a false understanding that he is going to die because of a misunderstanding of temperature conversions. Schatz explains, “At school in France the boys told me you can’t live with forty-four degrees. I’ve got a hundred and two.” His father replies, “…You aren’t going to die. That’s a different thermometer. On that thermometer thirty-seven is normal. On this kind it’s ninety-eight.” Upon realizing his mistake, Schatz’s whole demeanor changes and he let’s go of the idea of *grace under pressure*, “The hold over himself relaxed too, finally, and the next day it was very slack and he cried easily at little things that were of no importance.”

Shatz's approach to his illness - acting brave and strong, as if nothing is wrong, keeps his father unaware that Shatz really is worried that he will die. Had Schatz shared his concern with his father earlier, his father might have clarified the thermometer scale sooner. Schatz's worries could have been alleviated and he might have relaxed much sooner.

Additional Tasks

* *Craft a narrative with a main character that hides his or her true feelings to mask what is bothering them. Your narrative may be based on your own experiences.* 
  + Sample Narrative:

“Is it cancer, dad?”

Jon’s father stared at him for a second too long, then glanced downward at his feet. That said it all.

“But she’s not even 50! It’s not fair!” His father continued to stare towards the ground. He curled his upper lip downward and bit it with his lower teeth. A long sigh escaped his lungs as he sat back up.

“Jon, look. Your mother…. Ah, you know she has suspected this for awhile – ever since the doctor first had her take the tests.” Jon opened his mouth to say something but then couldn’t find the words. His father continued. “This is going to be a tough time for all of us. Your mother needs us to be strong for her. But Jon, it’s ok to let out the emotions too.” Jon sat back in his chair. He and his father put his face in his hands as he leaned over. The two said nothing more for a long time.

The next day at school, Jon met up with his two best friends at his locker. “Dude, what’s up? You don’t look too good,” said Matt. He was a thin boy and short for his age. He tended to avoid confrontation and conflict, but was an empathetic friend.

“Oh, it’s nothing,” Jon said hastily. He looked at Nate, who preferred to talk about sports and girls than difficult stuff like feelings. Instinctively, Nate changed the subject.

“Hey, you guys see the game last night?”

Matt, not buying Jon’s answer that everything was fine, looked to him to see how he would answer. He gave Nate a quick nod but focused on Jon. “Naw, I uh, I was busy last night. My parents and I –“

“Oh yeah, how’s your mom, man?” Nate said.

“Fine,” Jon said a bit too quickly. “She um, she just had something the doctor couldn’t figure out, but it turns out it’s just some illness that will go away after she takes some medicine. Come on, let’s get to class. We’re going to be late.”

“Yeah, you’re right. Good to hear, Jon. About your mom, I mean,” said Nate cheerily. Matt hadn’t said anything, but his observations of Jon’s body language told him there was more to it than Jon let on. He decided to confront Jon later.

At lunch, the two talked. “Jon, I can tell something is bothering you. It’s your mom, right?”

Jon let out a sigh. He decided to come clean. Matt was always understanding. He also was too intuitive to hide things from. “Yeah. You see…. My mom has cancer….” Matt stared back, unable to speak. He didn’t know what to say and figured silence was best. He let Jon continue. “So, yeah. Um, anyway, I just couldn’t talk about it with Nate. He and I are the starting guards on the basketball team, and you know…. I just –“ Tears started to roll down his cheek. Nate patted him on the shoulder.

“It’s alright, man. It’s alright. I’m here for you, buddy.”

* *Pretend Schatz, or a character of your own creation, is 10 years older and in college. Create a scenario where the character is getting poor grades, but again wants to put on a tough face. The character does not want to admit this struggle to his/her parent. Create the dialogue between the two of them.* 
  + Sample Task:

Sarah: Hey mom, how are you?

Mom: Hi honey. I’m doing well. This is so cool, being able to have a video chat with you.

Sarah: Yeah, Skype is cool. Glad we got you set up with an account over Thanksgiving.

Mom: So, you said when you were home that things were going well at school. It’s hard to believe that your first semester of college is almost over.

Sarah: Yep. (She glances down as she says this)

Mom: What is it, dear?

Sarah: Oh, nothing, Mom.

Mom: Is it finals? Are you ready? Have you been studying for them?

Sarah: Definitely. They are a big part of our grade.

Mom: Good. I am sending you a care package this week. There are some goodies for you and your friends to share when you are up late studying.

Sarah: Thanks!

Mom: So, are you looking forward to volleyball after break? Have you talked to the coaches? You were hanging out with that sophomore on the team who showed you around last summer. What’s her name, again? Is she helping you get ready?

Sarah: Um, yeah, she’s showed me some things. Mom, I’ve got to go. I have a study group in 15 minutes. Love you!

Mom: I’m glad things are going well. I love you.

Next week….

Mom: Hi, Sarah.

Sarah: Hi Mom. Let me adjust the screen camera. There we go.

Mom: So, you’re heading home tomorrow. How were finals?

Sarah: Good. I did well on them, I think.

Mom: Sarah – we got a letter in the mail yesterday. It’s from your volleyball coach. It says you won’t be eligible?

Sarah: Oh, yeah, that. Um, I was hoping to talk to you about it over break.

Mom: What’s going on? I thought you said things were fine and you did well on your finals. Are you failing your classes?

Sarah: I DID do well on my finals. It’s just that, well, my Calculus class…I had an F and…

Mom: What?! Why didn’t you say anything? We could have paid for a tutor, or your father could have helped you out over Thanksgiving break. We…

Sarah: Mom – look, I thought if I did well on my final that I could pull out a D. Then I was going to ask you guys for some help when I got home. I didn’t want you to worry about me. I thought I’d be ok.

Mom: But now you can’t play volleyball this year. Are you going to be able to be on the team? The coach didn’t say in the letter.

Sarah: She says I can practice and if I get my grades up this semester then I can play next year…

Note to Teacher

* Make sure that students read the “Before You Read” section. This section helps the reader orient themselves with narrator’s son and builds their understanding as to why the boy was confused.
* The words "strangely," "unsteadily," "glassy," and "springy" are a good opportunity to highlight prefixes and suffixes and how they help us to know what words mean.
* The words "flushed," "brush," "bank," and "bare" are a good opportunity to discuss multiple meaning words.
* For the first additional task, realize that the depth/length of student narratives is dependent on your time frame for this story.
* For the second additional task (the college dialogue), students could be encouraged to create a Skype-like video chat.

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**“A Day’s Wait”**

1. What does the boy say that shows he is concerned about his father?
2. What does the boy say and do that reveal his character? Describe his character at this point in the story.
3. What text demonstrates that the father is not worried about his son’s illness?
4. Why does Hemingway dedicate so much of his story to the details of his activities outside after giving Schatz his capsules?
5. How does Schatz’s behavior at the end of the story differ from his behavior at the beginning? Use text evidence to support your answer.
6. Schatz is detached from his father's reading. What information explains why Schatz is distracted by his thoughts? How does the information help the reader?
7. The boy says, “I mean you don’t have to stay if it’s going to bother you.” What does the boy mean by “it”? What text evidence supports your answer?
8. What is the author revealing in this sentence? Use text evidence to support your answer.
9. How does the boy as described throughout the story differ from the boy as described in the last sentence? Use text evidence to support your answer.