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Perception and Reality

“ Now I do not know whether it was then
I dreamt I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly,
dreaming I am a man. ”

—Chuang Tzu

COLLECTION 2

Perception and Reality



In this collection, you will explore how things in life are not always how we perceive them to be.



COLLECTION

PERFORMANCE TASK Preview

After reading the selections in this collection, you will have the opportunity to complete two performance tasks:

- In one, you will write an argument expressing your opinion of the saying, “Seeing is believing,” using evidence from the literature to support your opinion.
- In the second, you will give a summary presentation that shows an understanding of the drama *Sorry, Wrong Number*.

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Study the words and their definitions in the chart below. You will use these words as you discuss and write about the texts in this collection.

Word	Definition	Related Forms
abnormal (ăb-nôr´məl) <i>adj.</i>	not typical, usual, or regular; not normal	normal, normalcy, normality, normalize, paranormal, subnormal
feature (fē´chər) <i>n.</i>	a prominent or distinctive part, quality, or characteristic	feature article, featured, featureless, featuring, text feature
focus (fō´kəs) <i>v.</i>	to direct toward a specific point or purpose	autofocus, focused, refocus, unfocused
perceive (pər-sēv´) <i>v.</i>	to become aware of something directly through any of the senses	misperceive, misperception, perception, unperceived
task (tăsk) <i>n.</i>	an assignment or work done as part of one’s duties	multitask, taskmaster



Background Between the 1600s and 1800s, millions of Africans were taken forcibly to the Americas as enslaved people. Their labor spurred the growth of large-scale farming in the colonies. Despite the hardships of oppression, these people nurtured a strong sense of tradition, passing stories from generation to generation. **Virginia Hamilton** (1934–2002) grew up listening to such stories. As an adult, she put many of them into writing and wrote a number of her own books about African American history and culture.

The People Could Fly

Folk Tale by Virginia Hamilton

SETTING A PURPOSE As you read, think about what this folk tale says about the importance of hope in the lives of oppressed people.



As you read, mark up the text. Save your work to **myNotebook**.

- Highlight details
- Add notes and questions
- Add new words to **myWordList**

They say the people could fly. Say that long ago in Africa, some of the people knew magic. And they would walk up on the air like climbin' up on a gate. And they flew like blackbirds over the fields. Black, shiny wings flappin' against the blue up there.

Then, many of the people were captured for Slavery. The ones that could fly shed their wings. They couldn't take their wings across the water on the slave ships. Too crowded, don't you know.

10 The folks were full of misery, then. Got sick with the up and down of the sea. So they forgot about flyin' when they could no longer breathe the sweet scent of Africa.

Say the people who could fly kept their power, although they shed their wings. They kept their secret magic in the land

of slavery. They looked the same as the other people from Africa who had been coming over, who had dark skin. Say you couldn't tell anymore one who could fly from one who couldn't.

20 One such who could was an old man, call him Toby. And standin' tall, yet afraid, was a young woman who once had wings. Call her Sarah. Now Sarah carried a babe tied to her back. She trembled to be so hard worked and scorned.

The slaves labored in the fields from sunup to sundown. The owner of the slaves callin' himself their Master. Say he was a hard lump of clay. A hard, glinty coal. A hard rock pile, wouldn't be moved. His Overseer¹ on horseback pointed out the slaves who were slowin' down. So the one called Driver cracked his whip over the slow ones to make them move faster. That whip was a slice-open cut of pain. So they did
30 move faster. Had to.

Sarah hoed and chopped the row as the babe on her back slept.

Say the child grew hungry. That babe started up bawling too loud. Sarah couldn't stop to feed it. Couldn't stop to soothe and quiet it down. She let it cry. She didn't want to. She had no heart to **croon** to it.

"Keep that thing quiet," called the Overseer. He pointed his finger at the babe. The woman scrunched low. The Driver cracked his whip across the babe anyhow. The babe hollered
40 like any hurt child, and the woman fell to the earth.

The old man that was there, Toby, came and helped her to her feet.

"I must go soon," she told him.

"Soon," he said.

Sarah couldn't stand up straight any longer. She was too weak. The sun burned her face. The babe cried and cried, "Pity me, oh, pity me," say it sounded like. Sarah was so sad and starvin', she sat down in the row.

"Get up, you black cow," called the Overseer. He pointed
50 his hand, and the Driver's whip snarled around Sarah's legs. Her sack dress tore into rags. Her legs bled onto the earth. She couldn't get up.

Toby was there where there was no one to help her and the babe.

croon

(krōon) v. When someone *croons*, that person hums or sings softly.

¹ **Overseer** (ō'vər-sē'ər): a person who directs the work of others; a supervisor. During the time of slavery, the overseer was usually a white man.



“Now, before it’s too late,” panted Sarah. “Now, Father!”

“Yes, Daughter, the time is come,” Toby answered. “Go, as you know how to go!”

He raised his arms, holding them out to her. “*Kum . . . yali, kum buba tambe,*” and more magic words, said so quickly, they sounded like whispers and sighs.

The young woman lifted one foot on the air. Then the other. She flew clumsily at first, with the child now held tightly in her arms. Then she felt the magic, the African mystery. Say she rose just as free as a bird. As light as a feather.

The Overseer rode after her, hollerin’. Sarah flew over the fences. She flew over the woods. Tall trees could not **snag** her. Nor could the Overseer. She flew like an eagle now, until she was gone from sight. No one dared speak about it. Couldn’t believe it. But it was, because they that was there saw that it was.

snag
(snăg) v. If you *snag* something, you catch it quickly and unexpectedly.

Say the next day was dead hot in the fields. A young man slave fell from the heat. The Driver come and whipped him. Toby come over and spoke words to the fallen one. The words of ancient Africa once heard are never remembered completely. The young man forgot them as soon as he heard them. They went way inside him. He got up and rolled over on the air. He rode it awhile. And he flew away.

“ She flew clumsily at first, with the child now held tightly in her arms. ”

Another and another fell from the heat. Toby was there. He cried out to the fallen and reached his arms out to them. “*Kum kunka yali, kum . . . tambe!*” Whispers and sighs. And they too rose on the air. They rode the hot breezes. The ones flyin’ were black and shinin’ sticks, wheelin’ above the head of the Overseer. They crossed the rows, the fields, the fences, the streams, and were away.

“Seize the old man!” cried the Overseer.

“I heard him say the magic *words*. Seize him!”

The one callin’ himself Master come runnin’. The Driver got his whip ready to curl around old Toby and tie him up. The slave owner took his hip gun from its place. He meant to
90 kill old black Toby.

But Toby just laughed. Say he threw back his head and said, “Hee, hee! Don’t you know who I am? Don’t you know some of us in this field?” He said it to their faces. “We are ones who fly!”

And he sighed the ancient words that were a dark promise. He said them all around to the others in the field under the whip, “. . . *buba yali . . . buba tambe . . .*”

There was a great outcryin’. The bent backs straighted up. Old and young who were called slaves and could fly joined
100 hands. Say like they would ring-sing. But they didn’t **shuffle** in a circle. They didn’t sing. They rose on the air. They flew in a flock that was black against the heavenly blue. Black crows or black shadows. It didn’t matter, they went so high. Way above the **plantation**, way over the slavery land. Say they flew away to *Free-dom*.

And the old man, old Toby, flew behind them, takin’ care of them. He wasn’t cryin’. He wasn’t laughin’. He was the seer. His gaze fell on the plantation where the slaves who could not fly waited.

shuffle

(shŭf’əl) *v.* When you *shuffle*, you move with short sliding steps.

plantation

(plăn-tă’shən) *n.* A *plantation* is a large farm or estate on which crops are raised.

110 *“Take us with you!”* Their looks spoke it, but they were afraid to shout it. Toby couldn’t take them with him. Hadn’t the time to teach them to fly. They must wait for a chance to run.

“Goodie-bye!” the old man called Toby spoke to them, poor souls! And he was flyin’ gone.

So they say. The Overseer told it. The one called Master said it was a lie, a trick of the light. The Driver kept his mouth shut.

120 The slaves who could not fly told about the people who could fly to their children. When they were free. When they sat close before the fire in the free land, they told it. They did so love firelight and *Free-dom*, and tellin’.

 They say that the children of the ones who could not fly told their children. And now, me, I have told it to you.

COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSION Sarah, Toby, and the others hold onto hope in the most difficult of circumstances. With a partner, discuss what this folk tale says about the nature of hope.

Analyze Story Elements: Folk Tales

ELA RL.7.3
ELD PI.7.6

Folk tales are stories passed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. “The People Could Fly” is a folk tale that would have been around a long time as an oral tradition before it was finally recorded.

Folk tales can vary from culture to culture, but often have these elements:

- supernatural events set in the distant past
- talking animals or other characters with supernatural abilities
- lessons about what is important to the culture of origin

Folk tales are often told using **dialect**—a form of language that is spoken in a particular place or by a particular group of people—to suggest real people talking. In “The People Could Fly,” Virginia Hamilton uses dialect to suggest the folksy speech of the African American storyteller. The use of dialect helps to draw the reader or listener more fully into the setting.

Choose one of the listed features of folk tales. Tell how the feature is shown in “The People Could Fly.”

Summarize Text

ELA RL.7.2
ELD PI.7.10

A **summary** of a story is a brief retelling that gives only the most important details. When you summarize a story, you use your own words to answer the basic questions *who?* *when and where?* and *what happens?* A story map like the one shown can help you organize your answers.

Title and Genre
(kind of story):

Setting:

Conflict:

Main Events (several events in order):

Outcome/Resolution:

Here is a possible first sentence of a summary of the story you have read:

“The People Could Fly” is a folk tale that originated among people held captive as slaves.

What would you write as the next sentence of the summary?

Analyzing the Text

Cite Text Evidence

Support your responses with evidence from the text.

- 1. Interpret** Folk tales often feature lessons that are important to a culture or group of people. What is the lesson of this folk tale? How would enslaved Africans have perceived the lesson as being important?
- 2. Summarize** Early in the folk tale, the narrator says, “The folks were full of misery, then.” Review the first half of the tale to find details about the conditions under which the slaves lived. Then in your own words, describe these conditions.
- 3. Summarize** Fill out a story map for “The People Could Fly.” Use your completed map to summarize the plot of the folk tale. Compare your summary with that of a classmate.
- 4. Analyze** Reread lines 1–10 to identify examples of dialect. What effect does the use of dialect achieve at the beginning of the story?
- 5. Analyze** Reread lines 23–30. What is the Master compared to? What is the whip compared to? Why might the author have included these figurative comparisons?
- 6. Analyze Theme** Reread lines 98–105. What theme is expressed in this paragraph?

PERFORMANCE TASK



Speaking Activity: Dramatic

Reading With a small group, do a dramatic reading of “The People Could Fly,” using the text of the folk tale as a script. Follow these tips for preparing and performing:

- Rehearse the reading several times.
- Make sure your voices fit the personalities of the characters you portray.
- Deliver lines with the appropriate emotion.
- Keep in mind how the tale begins somberly but builds in intensity.

Critical Vocabulary

ELA L.7.4b, L.7.4d
ELD PI.7.6, PI.7.12

croon

snag

shuffle

plantation

Practice and Apply Identify the vocabulary word that is tied in meaning to the italicized word in each question. Provide reasons for your choices.

1. Which word goes with *song*? Why?
2. Which word goes with *farm*? Why?
3. Which word goes with *thorn*? Why?
4. Which word goes with *feet*? Why?

Vocabulary Strategy: Latin Suffixes

A **suffix** is a word part added to the end of a root or base word to form a new word. Readers can use their knowledge of suffixes to analyze words and find familiar parts to determine the meaning of a word. Many suffixes in English words come from Latin. Look at the meanings of the suffixes in the chart.

Suffix	Example Words
-ure	exposure, lecture
-ery/-ary	nursery, military
-ence/-ance	violence, reliance
-ive/-ative	selective, talkative
-ion/-ation	tension, imagination

For example, notice the word with a Latin suffix in this sentence from “The People Could Fly.”

His gaze fell on the plantation where the slaves who could not fly waited.

You can see that *plantation* is made of the base word *plant* and the suffix *-ation*. The meaning of *plantation* is “a farm where crops are planted.”

Practice and Apply Choose a suffix from the chart to complete each word. Use a print or online dictionary to find the meanings of unfamiliar words and to confirm your answers.

1. To be enslaved is to live in **mis**_____.
2. Human flight is an unusual form of **transport**_____.
3. The people stood up and straightened their **post**_____.
4. When confronting evil, story characters show **defi**_____.
5. The solutions in folk tales may be magical and **creat**_____.

COMPARE TEXTS

Background *“The Song of Wandering Aengus”* was inspired by Aengus, the Irish god of love and inspiration. In the original myth, Aengus falls in love with a girl he has dreamed about, but when he is unable to find her, he becomes ill. His parents go searching for her, and after three years the couple is finally united.



The Song of Wandering Aengus

Poem by W. B. Yeats

Sonnet 43

Poem by William Shakespeare

William Butler Yeats (1865–1934) was an Irish poet and playwright, and one of the most notable literary figures of the 20th century. As a boy, Yeats lived in a rural region in Ireland called Sligo. There he enjoyed local stories about Irish heroes, heroines, and magical creatures. In Yeats’s later life as a poet and playwright, the region and its folklore inspired his poetry and drama. *“The Song of Wandering Aengus”* is an example of this inspiration.



William Shakespeare (1564–1616) was an English playwright, poet, and actor. While Shakespeare is widely regarded as the greatest playwright in the English language, he was also just as influential as a poet. He began writing poetry when theaters shut down during an outbreak of the plague in London. Adapting and refining the sonnet form, he produced 154 of his own sonnets. Now the Shakespearean sonnet is itself a unique poetic form.



SETTING A PURPOSE As you read, think about what each poem has to say about the absence of a loved one. How does each poem convey a sense of loss and longing?

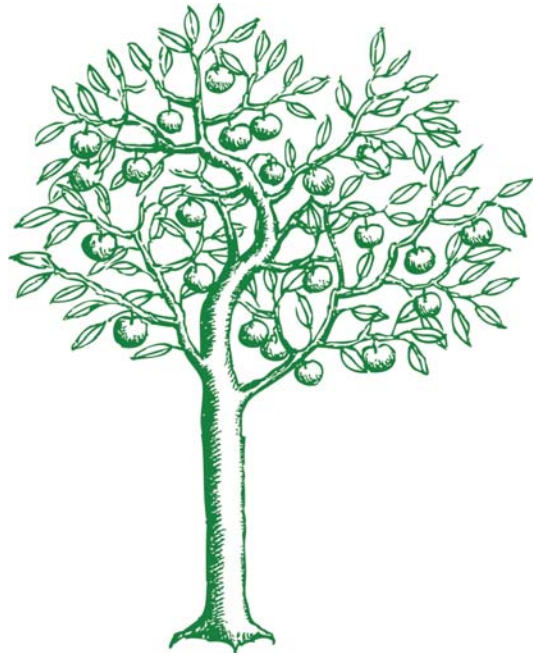
The Song of Wandering Aengus

by W. B. Yeats

I went out to the hazel wood,
Because a fire was in my head,
And cut and peeled a hazel wand,
And hooked a berry to a thread;
5 And when white moths were on the wing,
And moth-like stars were flickering out,
I dropped the berry in a stream
And caught a little silver trout.

When I had laid it on the floor
10 I went to blow the fire aflame,
But something rustled on the floor,
And someone called me by my name:
It had become a glimmering girl
With apple blossom in her hair
15 Who called me by my name and ran
And faded through the brightening air.

Though I am old with wandering
Through hollow lands and hilly lands,
I will find out where she has gone,
20 And kiss her lips and take her hands;
And walk among long dappled¹ grass,
And pluck till time and times are done,
The silver apples of the moon,
The golden apples of the sun.



¹ **dappled:** marked with many spotted colors or light.

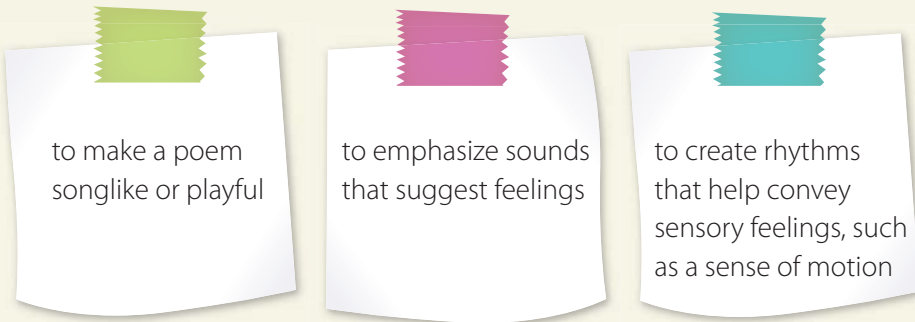
Determine the Impact of Rhyme

ELA RL.7.4, RL.7.5

ELD PI.7.6, PI.7.8, PII.7.1

A poem is a combination of sound and meaning. Poets choose their words carefully, since word choice, or **diction**, affects a poem's meaning and the way it sounds. **Rhyme** is the repetition of sounds at the end of words, as in *more* and *roar*. Words rhyme when their accented vowels and the letters that follow have identical or similar sounds.

Poets use rhyme for a number of purposes:



End rhyme refers to words that rhyme at the ends of lines of poetry. For example, the second and fourth lines from “The Song of Wandering Aengus” contain end rhymes:

**I went out to the hazel wood,
Because a fire was in my head,
And cut and peeled a hazel wand,
And hooked a berry to a thread;**

The end rhymes are *head/thread*. Reread the first stanza of the poem to listen for and identify a second pair of end rhymes.

Analyzing the Text

ELA RL.7.1, RL.7.4, RL.7.5

ELD PI.7.6, PI.7.8, PII.7.1

Cite Text Evidence

Support your responses with evidence from the text.

- 1. Summarize** What are the primary actions that take place in each of the three stanzas of the poem?
- 2. Identify Patterns** Find end rhymes and other examples of repetition in the second stanza. What effects do those forms of repetition have? Do they emphasize a particular meaning?
- 3. Interpret** What is the quest of Aengus in this poem?
- 4. Analyze** What words suggest that Aengus is chanting a song?



Sonnet 43

by William Shakespeare

- When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see,
For all the day they view things unrespected;¹
But when I sleep, in dreams they look on thee,
And, darkly bright, are bright in dark directed.
- 5 Then thou, whose shadow shadows doth make bright,
How would thy shadow's form form happy show
To the clear day with thy much clearer light,
When to unseeing eyes thy shade shines so!
How would, I say, mine eyes be blessèd made
- 10 By looking on thee in the living day,
When in dead night thy fair imperfect shade
Through heavy sleep on sightless eyes doth stay!
All days are nights to see till I see thee,
And nights bright days when dreams do show thee me.

COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSION Each of these two poems is, in a sense, a love poem. With a partner, discuss how effectively each poet expresses his feelings about love and loss.

¹ **they view things unrespected:** during the day the poet's eyes are looking at things that are insignificant or unimportant.

Analyze Form: Sonnet

The deliberate arrangement of words is the mark of a well-crafted poem. The **form** of a poem is the arrangement of its words and lines on a page. One established form is a 14-line poem called a **sonnet**. The sonnet is a form that originated in Italy but was altered by English poets, especially William Shakespeare. The Shakespearean sonnet is named for the best-known user of the form.

A Shakespearean sonnet has these features:

- The whole poem develops a single idea.
- The idea is developed in three parts, each made of four lines.
- The **rhyme scheme** is the pattern of end rhymes: a-b-a-b, c-d-c-d, e-f-e-f, g-g. The matching letters refer to the pairs of end rhymes.
- The final pair of lines, called a **couplet**, completes the poet's message with a strong impact and helps focus the reader's attention on the theme.

A sonnet may also have a specified **meter**, which is a regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables. Notice where the stress falls in this line of the poem.

When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see,

Look again at the sonnet you have just read. How does the punctuation at the end of the lines show how the ideas are organized?

Analyzing the Text

ELA RL.7.2, RL.7.4, RL.7.5, SL.7.1a-e, SL.7.4, SL.7.6. **ELD** PI.7.6, PI.7.8, PII.7.1

Cite Text Evidence

Support your responses with evidence from the text.

- 1. Identify Patterns** Explain what you notice about the rhyme scheme of this poem.
- 2. Summarize** A **paradox** is a statement that seems to contradict itself. What paradox presented in the first line is developed throughout the sonnet? (Note that the word *wink* means "to close one's eyes to sleep.")
- 3. Interpret** Reread the final couplet. Restate its message in your own words.
- 4. Analyze** Reread line 5. How should it be read aloud to express its meaning?

Determine Meanings

ELA RL.7.4, RL.7.5
ELD PI.7.8

Figurative language is the use of words in imaginative ways to express ideas that are not literally true. Poets use figurative language to convey meaning and achieve certain effects. This chart shows three common types of figurative language with examples from “The Song of Wandering Aengus.”

Types of Figurative Language	Examples	Effect
Simile is a comparison between two unlike things using the words <i>like</i> or <i>as</i> .	<i>moth-like stars</i> , line 6	The twinkling stars look like moths fluttering.
Metaphor is a comparison of two unlike things without the words <i>like</i> or <i>as</i> .	<i>a fire was in my head</i> , line 2	A feverish, uneasy feeling is likened to a fire in the head.

The figurative language in “Sonnet 43” seems subtler than that in the Yeats poem. In Shakespeare’s sonnet, which words help create a metaphor for the absence of the poet’s loved one?

ELA RL.7.2, RL.7.4, RL.7.5,
SL.7.1a–d, SL.7.4, SL.7.6
ELD PI.7.1, PI.7.6, PI.7.8

Analyzing the Text

Cite Text Evidence Support your responses with evidence from the texts.

- 1. Identify Patterns** What is the rhyme scheme of the Yeats poem and how does it differ from the rhyme scheme of “Sonnet 43”?
- 2. Compare** An **extended metaphor** compares two unlike things at length and in a number of ways, sometimes throughout an entire work. In each poem, the poet uses an extended metaphor. What is the metaphor in each poem and what words does the poet use to extend it?
- 3. Analyze** Read each poem aloud to hear and feel the unstressed and stressed syllables in each line. What qualities does the meter contribute to each poem? Explain.

PERFORMANCE TASK



Speaking Activity: Discussion With a small group, discuss which speaker of these two poems seems more affected by what he perceives. To prepare for your discussion:

- Consider what each speaker is longing for.
- Think about the words used to express the speaker’s longing in each poem.

Background *Brain scientists Susana Martinez-Conde and Stephen L. Macknik study how the human visual system responds to and perceives the world around us. They see science at work behind magicians' techniques. A good magician relies on the inner workings of the brain to create all kinds of sensory illusions. By studying how these tricks work, scientists are learning more about the brain. Their work has led them to start a new area of science that they call neuromagic.*

Magic and the Brain



Magazine Article by Susana Martinez-Conde and Stephen L. Macknik

SETTING A PURPOSE As you read, think about the term *neuromagic* and its usefulness as a new field of scientific study. Write down any questions you may have during reading.

The spotlight shines on the magician's assistant. The woman in the tiny white dress is a luminous beacon of beauty radiating from the stage to the audience. The Great Tomsoni announces he will change her dress from white to red. On the edge of their seats, the spectators strain to focus on the woman, burning her image deep into their retinas. Tomsoni claps his hands, and the spotlight dims ever so briefly before reflaring in a blaze of red. The woman is awash in a flood of redness.

10 Whoa, just a moment there! Switching color with the spotlight is not exactly what the audience had in mind. The magician stands at the side of the stage, looking pleased at his little joke. Yes, he admits, it was a cheap trick; his favorite kind, he explains devilishly. But you have to agree, he did turn her dress red—along with the rest of her. Please, indulge him

and direct your attention once more to his beautiful assistant as he switches the lights back on for the next trick. He claps his hands, and the lights dim again; then the stage explodes in a supernova of whiteness. But wait! Her dress really has turned
20 red. The Great Tomsoni has done it again!

The trick and its explanation by John Thompson (aka the Great Tomsoni) reveal a deep intuitive¹ understanding of the **neural** processes taking place in the spectators' brains—the kind of understanding that we **neuroscientists** can appropriate for our own scientific benefit. Here's how the trick works. As Thompson introduces his assistant, her skintight white dress wordlessly lures the spectators² into assuming that nothing—certainly not another dress—could possibly be hiding under the white one. That reasonable assumption, of course, is
30 wrong. The attractive woman in her tight dress also helps to focus people's attention right where Thompson wants it—on the woman's body. The more they stare at her, the less they notice the hidden devices in the floor, and the better adapted their retinal neurons³ become to the brightness of the light and the color they perceive.

All during Thompson's patter after his little "joke," each spectator's visual system is undergoing a brain process called neural adaptation. The responsiveness of a neural system to a constant stimulus (as measured by the firing rate of the
40 relevant **neurons**) decreases with time. It is as if neurons actively ignore a constant stimulus to save their strength for signaling that a stimulus is changing. When the constant stimulus is turned off, the adapted neurons fire a "rebound" response known as an after discharge.

In this case, the adapting stimulus is the redlit dress, and Thompson knows that the spectators' retinal neurons will rebound for a fraction of a second after the lights are dimmed. The audience will continue to see a red afterimage in the shape of the woman. During that split second, a trap door in
50 the stage opens briefly, and the white dress, held only lightly in place with fastening tape and attached to invisible cables leading under the stage, is ripped from her body. Then the lights come back up.

neural
(nōōr'əl) *adj.*
Anything that is *neural* is related to the nervous system.

neuroscientist
(nōōr'ō-sī'an-tīst) *n.*
A *neuroscientist* is a person who studies the brain and the nervous system.

neuron
(nōōr'ōn') *n.* A *neuron* is a nerve cell.

¹ **intuitive** (īn-tōō'ī-tīv): having the ability to know or understand something without evidence.

² **spectators**: the people who are watching the event.

³ **retinal neurons** (rēt'n-āl'nōōr'ōnz'): the cells in the retina of the eye that convert light into images.

VISUAL ILLUSIONS

FOOLING MIND OR EYE?

An illusion created by an image like this one often induces a false sense of flowing movement in the concentric rings (start at the center dot in the pictures). But does the illusion originate in the mind or in the eye? The evidence was conflicting until the authors and their colleagues showed in October that the illusory motion is driven by microsaccades—small, involuntary eye movements that occur during visual fixation. Knowing the roles of eye and mind in magic can be used as experimental tools **neuroscience**.



neuroscience

(nōŏr'ō-sī'əns) *n.*
Neuroscience is any of the sciences that study the nervous system.

Two other factors help to make the trick work. First, the lighting is so bright just before the dress comes off that when it dims, the spectators cannot see the rapid motions of the cables and the white dress as they disappear underneath the stage. The same temporary blindness can overtake you when you walk from a sunny street into a dimly lit shop. Second, Thompson performs the real trick only after the audience thinks it is already over. That gains him an important cognitive advantage—the spectators are not looking for a trick at the critical moment, and so they slightly relax their scrutiny.

The New Science of Neuromagic

Thompson's trick nicely illustrates the essence of stage magic. Magicians are, first and foremost, artists of attention and awareness. They manipulate the focus and intensity of human attention, controlling, at any given instant, what

we are aware of and what we are not. They do so in part by
70 employing bewildering combinations of visual illusions (such
as afterimages), optical illusions (smoke and mirrors), special
effects (explosions, fake gunshots, precisely timed lighting
controls), sleight of hand, secret devices and mechanical
artifacts (“gimmicks”).

Neuroscience is becoming familiar with the methods of magic.

But the most versatile instrument in their bag of tricks
may be the ability to create cognitive illusions. Like visual
illusions, cognitive illusions mask the perception of physical
reality. Yet unlike visual illusions, cognitive illusions are not
sensory in nature. Rather they involve high-level functions
80 such as attention, memory and causal inference. With all
those tools at their disposal, well-practiced magicians make
it virtually impossible to follow the physics of what is actually
happening—leaving the impression that the only explanation
for the events is magic.

Neuroscientists are just beginning to catch up with the
magician’s facility in manipulating attention and cognition.
Of course the aims of neuroscience are different from those of
magic, the neuroscientist seeks to understand the brain and
neuron underpinnings of cognitive functions, whereas the
90 magician wants mainly to exploit cognitive weaknesses. Yet
the techniques developed by magicians over centuries of stage
magic could also be subtle and powerful probes in the hands
of neuroscientists, supplementing and perhaps expanding the
instruments already in experimental use.

Neuroscience is becoming familiar with the methods of
magic by subjecting magic itself to scientific study—in some
cases showing for the first time how some of its methods work
in the brain. Many studies of magic conducted so far confirm
what is known about cognition and attention from earlier
100 work in experimental psychology. A **cynic** might dismiss such
efforts: Why do yet another study that simply confirms what is

cynic

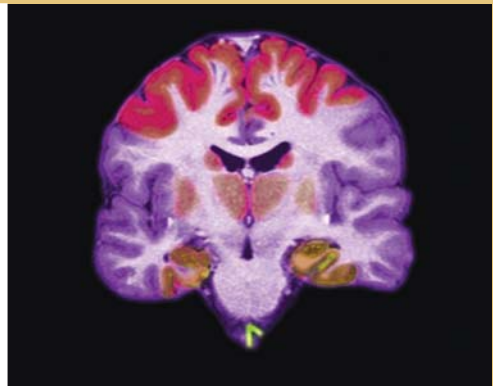
(sĭnˈĭk) *n.* A *cynic* is
a person who has
negative opinions
about other people
and what they do.

already well known? But such criticism misses the importance and purpose of the studies. By investigating the techniques of magic, neuroscientists can familiarize themselves with methods that they can adapt to their own purposes. Indeed, we believe that cognitive neuroscience could have advanced faster had investigators probed magicians' intuitions earlier. Even today magicians may have a few tricks up their sleeves that neuroscientists have not yet adopted.

110 By applying the tools of magic, neuroscientists can hope to learn how to design more robust experiments and to create more effective cognitive and visual illusions for exploring the neural bases of attention and awareness. Such techniques could not only make experimental studies of cognition possible with clever and highly attentive subjects; they could also lead to diagnostic and treatment methods for patients suffering from specific cognitive deficits—such as attention deficits resulting from brain trauma, ADHD (attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder), Alzheimer's disease, and the like. The



Diagnosing a Brain Disorder Physicians and scientists use Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) as shown above on the left to make detailed scans of the body's internal structures. The MRI scan on the right highlights regions of the brain most affected by Alzheimer's disease.



Brain Regions and Alzheimer's Disease

- The hippocampus is the region where the disease may start.
- In the temporal lobe, the advancing disease affects memory, hearing and language.
- The cerebral cortex thins as the disease progresses, judgement worsens and language is impaired.

120 methods of magic might also be put to work in “tricking” patients to focus on the most important parts of their therapy, while suppressing distractions that cause confusion and disorientation.

Magicians use the general term “misdirection” to refer to the practice of diverting the spectator’s attention away from a secret action. In the lingo of magic, misdirection draws the audience’s attention toward the “effect” and away from the “method,” the secret behind the effect. Borrowing some terms from cognitive psychology, we have classified misdirection as
130 “overt” and “covert.” The misdirection is overt if the magician redirects the spectator’s gaze away from the method—perhaps simply by asking the audience to look at a particular object. When the Great Tomsoni introduces his lovely assistant, for instance, he ensures that all eyes are on her.



Magicians use the general term ‘misdirection’ to refer to the practice of diverting the spectator’s attention.



“Covert” misdirection, in contrast, is a subtler technique; there, too, the magician draws the spectator’s attentional spotlight—or focus of suspicion—away from the method, but without necessarily redirecting the spectator’s gaze. Under the influence of covert misdirection, spectators may be looking
140 directly at the method behind the trick yet be entirely unaware of it.

Cognitive neuroscience already recognizes at least two kinds of covert misdirection. In what is called change blindness, people fail to notice that something about a scene is different from the way it was before. The change may be expected or unexpected, but the key feature is that observers

do not notice it by looking at the scene at any one instant in time. Instead the observer must compare the postchange state with the prechange state.

150 Inattention blindness differs from change blindness in that there is no need to compare the current scene with a scene from memory. Instead people fail to notice an unexpected object that is fully visible directly in front of them. Psychologist Daniel J. Simons invented a classic example of the genre. Simons and psychologist Christopher F. Chabris, both then at Harvard University, asked observers to count how many times a “team” of three basketball players pass a ball to each other, while ignoring the passes made by three other players. While they concentrated on counting, half of the
160 observers failed to notice that a person in a gorilla suit walks across the scene (the gorilla even stops briefly at the center of the scene and beats its chest!). No abrupt interruption or distraction was necessary to create this effect; the counting task was so absorbing that many observers who were looking directly at the gorilla nonetheless missed it.

Controlling Awareness in the Wired Brain

The possibilities of using magic as a source of cognitive illusion to help isolate the neural circuits responsible for specific cognitive functions seem endless. Neuroscientists recently borrowed a technique from magic that made
170 volunteer subjects incorrectly link two events as cause and effect while images of the subjects’ brains were recorded. When event A precedes event B, we often conclude, rightly or wrongly, that A causes B. The skilled magician takes advantage of that predisposition by making sure that event A (say, pouring water on a ball) always precedes event B (the ball disappearing). In fact, A does not cause B, but its prior appearance helps the magician make it seem so. Cognitive psychologists call this kind of effect illusory correlation.

In an unpublished study in 2006 Kuhn and cognitive
180 neuroscientists Ben A. Parrish and Tim L. Hodgson, both then at the University of Exeter in England, showed videos of magic tricks that involved apparent violations of cause and effect to subjects undergoing functional magnetic resonance imaging. The subjects’ brain images were compared with those of a control group: people who watched videos showing no

apparent causal violations. The investigators found greater activation in the anterior cingulate cortex among the subjects who were watching magic tricks than among the controls. The finding suggests that this brain area may be important for interpreting causal relationships.

190

The work of Kuhn and his colleagues only begins to suggest the power of the techniques of magic for manipulating attention and awareness while studying the physiology of the brain. If neuroscientists learn to use the methods of magic with the same skill as professional magicians, they, too, should be able to control awareness precisely and in real time. If they correlate the content of that awareness with the functioning of neurons, they will have the means to explore some of the mysteries of consciousness itself.

COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSION The authors have invented the term *neuromagic*. Why do they think it is a useful term? Talk about your ideas with other group members.

Analyze Structure: Text Features

ELA RI.7.4, RI.7.5
ELD PI.7.1

Text features are elements of a text that help organize and call attention to important information. Informational texts such as “Magic and the Brain” often contain one or more text features, such as those shown in the chart.

Text Features in Informational Texts	
titles, headings, subheadings	The title of a piece of writing is the name that is attached to it. It often identifies the topic of the whole text and is sometimes referred to as a heading . Subheadings appear at the beginning of sections within the text and indicate the focus of that section.
sidebar	A sidebar is a box alongside or within an article that provides additional information that is related to the article’s main text.
boldface type	Boldface type is dark, heavy print that is used to draw attention to unfamiliar vocabulary.
footnotes	Footnotes , which appear at the bottom of the page, provide definitions or additional information about terms in the text.

Graphic aids, such as maps, charts, diagrams, graphs, and pictures are visual text features that can help you understand ideas or processes.

Text features may be used to highlight **technical language**—terms used in a specialized field such as science or technology. If there is no definition for a technical term, use context to determine its meaning. You can confirm the meaning in such resources as print or online dictionaries and encyclopedias.

Look at the top of page 79 of “Magic and the Brain.” Identify the text feature that appears there.

Summarize Text

ELA RI.7.2
ELD PI.7.10

When you **summarize** a text, you briefly retell the central ideas in your own words. An **objective summary** reports what the original writer intended, without opinions or unnecessary details. Do not include opinions or commentary. Use headings and subheadings to help you organize ideas.

To summarize a paragraph, find and restate the main idea. To summarize a section, turn the heading into a question. Answer the question using the main idea and important details in the paragraph. To summarize an article, combine your section summaries. Add a sentence to sum up the central idea of the whole article.

Reread lines 1–20 of “Magic and the Brain.” How would you complete a summary of that section?



Analyzing the Text

Cite Text Evidence

Support your responses with evidence from the text.

1. **Summarize** Reread lines 124–141. Write a summary of these paragraphs to explain how magic tricks work through the techniques of “misdirection.”
2. **Draw Conclusions** Reread the sidebar on page 79. What discovery did the authors make about the origin of illusion? Why is it important?
3. **Interpret** Reread the heading on page 83. Use the information in that section to explain what is meant by “the wired brain.”
4. **Summarize** Reread lines 85–94. In your own words, describe how the aims of a magician might differ from those of a neuroscientist.
5. **Infer** Reread lines 154–165. What is the most surprising detail about the counting task that is performed by the test subjects?
6. **Compare** Reread lines 65–80. What is the difference between a cognitive illusion and a visual illusion?
7. **Synthesize** Reread lines 110–123. Why do the authors want neuroscientists to use “tools of magic”?

PERFORMANCE TASK



Speaking Activity: Demonstration

Do research to find an easily performed “magic trick” that is based on a science principle. Follow the step-by-step directions for the trick and practice performing it. Determine the principle that makes the trick work. Then demonstrate the trick in a performance for your classmates. Follow these suggestions during the demonstration:

- If necessary, perform the trick a second time, but more slowly, indicating whatever you’re doing to distract their attention.
- At the end of the performance, explain the principle at work in the trick and how it relates to the article “Magic and the Brain.”
- Invite feedback. Discuss with your classmates whether the demonstration increases their understanding of neuromagic.

Critical Vocabulary

ELA L.7.4a, L.7.4b, L.7.4c

ELD PI.7.6, PI.7.12

neural

neuroscientist

neuron

neuroscience

cynic

Practice and Apply Answer each question.

1. How is a **neural** network like and different from a computer network?
2. How is a **neuroscientist** like and different from a brain surgeon?
3. How is a **neuron** like and different from a blood cell?
4. How is **neuroscience** like and different from medical science?
5. How is a **cynic** like and different from a critic?

Vocabulary Strategy: The Greek Prefix *neuro-*

A **root** is a word part that came into English from an older language, such as ancient Latin or Greek. The Greek word for “cord” or “nerve” was *neuron*. The Greek root *neuro* appears as a prefix at the start of many English words about nerves and the nervous system.

This sentence comes from “Magic and the Brain”; notice the two words with the prefix *neuro-*:

**The responsiveness of a neural system to a constant stimulus
(as measured by the firing rate of the relevant neurons)
decreases with time.**

Restate the sentence, replacing each word with *neuro* with another term that includes *nerve* or *nervous*.

Practice and Apply Use the context and your knowledge of the root *neuro* to write a likely meaning for each bold word. Use a print or online dictionary to look up unfamiliar words or word parts and to confirm word meanings.

1. A patient with an abnormal tingling in one arm may consult a **neurologist**.
2. Some snakes paralyze their prey by injecting a **neurotoxin**.
3. People with a **neuromuscular** disorder may have difficulty with tasks such as unscrewing a jar lid.
4. The **neurosurgeon** removed a tumor from the patient’s brain.

Language Conventions: Adverb Clauses

An **adverb** is a part of speech that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. It answers the question *When? Where? How?* or *To what extent?*

A **clause** is a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate—the two main parts of a complete sentence. An **adverb clause** is a subordinate clause that completes the same task as an adverb: it modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.

Adverb clauses start with a connecting word called a **subordinating conjunction**, such as *after, although, as, because, before, even though, if, since, so that, though, unless, until, when, where, while*. Notice the subordinating conjunction and adverb clause in this sentence from “Magic and the Brain.”

When the constant stimulus is turned off, the adapted neurons fire a “rebound” response known as an afterdischarge.

The phrase *When the constant stimulus is turned off* modifies the verb *fire* in the rest of the sentence. The clause tells when the “neurons fire.” It begins with the subordinating conjunction *when*.

When you write, be careful not to confuse an adverb clause with a complete sentence; an adverb clause cannot stand alone. If you position an adverb clause before the main clause, set it off with a comma.

Sentence Fragment	Complete Sentence
Because not enough research had been done	The science of magic could not be used in medicine because not enough research had been done.
After the lights on stage flashed	After the lights on stage flashed, a set of cables switched the dresses worn by the assistant.

Practice and Apply Identify the adverb clause in each of these sentences and tell whether it modifies a verb, an adjective, or an adverb. Tell which question the adverb clause answers: *When? Where? How?* or *To what extent?*

- After the magician’s “little joke,” the real illusion took place.
- The trick was as complicated as any the magician had ever performed.
- The magician and his assistant stood here, where they usually performed their act.
- Before the assistant left the stage, the magician handed her his hat.

Julian Beever (b. 1959) creates unusual chalk drawings on public sidewalks. Beever started drawing pavement art as a way to make money while traveling. Since then, he has gained international recognition. Beever chooses to draw on sidewalks so that everyone can have access to his art. He says, "My work appeals literally to the man (and woman) in the street and is not confined in galleries or limited by the gallery system."

MEDIA ANALYSIS

Pavement Chalk Art

Public Art by Julian Beever

SETTING A PURPOSE Beever has developed a special technique of using distortion to unequally magnify images in his work. When seen from one special angle, these images come together to create the illusion that his "anamorphic" drawings are truly three dimensional. Viewed this way, his drawings seem to come to life.

Beever's pavement art gives viewers the impression that they are entering a very real, physical place that exists in the drawings. As you view the two drawings, think about what it would be like to be a passerby who suddenly walks across—or into—one of Beever's works. Write down any questions you have as you view.



A Slight Accident in a Railway Station

AS YOU VIEW Artists make choices about the works they produce and the techniques they use to create those works. **Perspective** is the technique that artists use to give the illusion of three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface, which in Beever's case is the sidewalk. One way that Beever creates this illusion is through his use of lines. Beever uses thick and thin as well as long and short lines to frame the stairway in the drawing. Notice how the lines make the stairs look thinner the farther away they seem to get from the viewer.



Meeting Mr. Frog

AS YOU VIEW In addition to lines, Beever uses colors and shadows to create the illusion that we are seeing something real. Artists can use color to create mood and to create images that imitate life. Notice how the colors Beever uses at the top of the frog seem brighter or lighter. He uses shadows, or shading, at the bottom of the drawing where the frog sits on the lily pad. Color and shadow work together to give the whole image a sense of shape and depth.



COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSION Beever's drawings focus on the sudden collision of perception and reality. With a partner, discuss your reactions to one of Beever's drawings.

Analyze Diverse Media

ELA SL.2
ELD PI.7.6

Art is created with an audience in mind. The **audience** is the group of people who view an exhibit or performance. Because Beever produces art that is viewed in public outdoor spaces, his audience is everyday passersby.

Artists also have a **message**, an idea or point, that they want to convey through their art. Beever uses various artistic elements and techniques, such as lines, perspective, and distortion, to convey his message and to make his illusions come to life.

Analyzing the Media

ELA SL.7.2, SL.7.5, W.7.6
ELD PI.7.2, PI.7.6

Cite Text Evidence

Support your responses with evidence from the media.

1. **Analyze** How do the colors and lines in “A Slight Accident in a Railway Station” create a feeling of movement and make the image seem real?
2. **Analyze** Choose one of Beever’s drawings. Tell how Beever uses the elements of line, color, perspective, shadow, and distortion to create effects. As shown in the graphic below, explain what effect each element creates.



3. **Compare** Both drawings create the illusion of depth. What are some ways the two drawings are different?
4. **Synthesize** Why do you think Beever chooses to create this style of art to put in public spaces? What message or messages does Beever convey through his art?

PERFORMANCE TASK



Media Activity: Poster Working in small groups, create a poster or a flyer that announces an exhibit of Beever’s art in a city. Use your favorite design software program to lay out your work, including images and text.

- Highlight the effectiveness of Beever’s drawings as public art.
- Promote the advantages of having sidewalk art in a city.
- Present your completed flyer or poster to the other groups, explaining what you intend to communicate with it and how you accomplished that goal.



Background When Cory Doctorow (b. 1971) first saw the movie *Star Wars* at the age of six, he was inspired to rewrite the entire story as a self-made book. The movie sparked his desire to be a science fiction writer. Publishing his first story at 17, Doctorow has since produced many science fiction novels, short stories, and magazine articles. The author has an online presence as a blogger and makes most of his books available online for free.

Another Place, Another Time

Short Story by Cory Doctorow

SETTING A PURPOSE Science-based ideas are important in this story. As you read, think of the significance of these ideas to the characters—especially to Gilbert.

Gilbert hated time. What a tyrant it was! The hours that crawled by when his father was at sea, the seconds that whipped past when he was playing a brilliant game in the garden with the Limburgher children. The eternity it took for summer to arrive at the beach at the bottom of the cliffs, the flashing instant before the winter stole over them again and Father took to the sea once more.

“You can’t hate *time*,” Emmy said. The oldest of the three Limburghers and the only girl, she was used to talking younger boys out of their foolishness. “It’s just *time*.”

Gilbert stopped pacing the tree house floor and pointed a finger at her. “That’s where you’re wrong!” He thumped the book he’d taken out of his father’s bookcase, a book fetched

home from London, heavy and well made and swollen with the damp air of the sea-crossing home to America. He hadn't read the book, but his tutor, sour Señor Uriarte, had explained it to him the day before while he was penned up inside, watching summer whiz past the study's windows. "Time isn't just time! Time is also space! It's also a dimension." Gilbert
20 thumped the book again for emphasis, then opened it to the page he'd marked with a wide blade of sawgrass.

"See this? This is a point. That's one dimension. It doesn't have length or depth. It's just a dot. When you add another dimension, you get *lines*." He pointed at the next diagram with a chewed and dirty fingernail. "You can go back and you can go forward, you can move around on the surface, as though the world were a page. But you can't go up and down, not until you add another dimension." He pointed to the diagram of the cube, stabbing at it so hard, his finger dented the page. "That's
30 three dimensions, up and down, side to side, and in and out."

Emmy rolled her eyes with the **eloquence** of a thirteen-year-old girl whose tutor had already explained all this to her. Gilbert smiled. Em would always be a year older than he was, but that didn't mean he would always be dumber than she was.

eloquence

(él'ə-kwəns) *n.* If someone behaves or speaks with *eloquence*, he or she uses persuasive, powerful expression.

"And Mr. Einstein, who is the smartest man in the whole history of the world, he has proved—absolutely *proved*—that time is just *another dimension*, just like space. Time is what happens when you can go up and down, side to side, in and
40 out, and *before and after*."

Em opened her mouth and closed it. Her twin brothers, Erwin and Neils, snickered at the sight of their sister struck dumb. She glared at them, then at Gilbert. "That's stupid," she said.

"You're calling *Einstein* stupid?"

"Of course not. But you must not understand him properly. Space is space. Time is time. Everyone knows that."

Gilbert pretended he hadn't heard her. "But here's the part no one knows: why can we move through space in any
50 direction—"

"You can't go up!" Em said, quickly.

"You got up into my tree house," he said, putting a small emphasis on *my*. "And you could go back *down*, too."

Emmy, who was a better fighter than any of them, put her fists on her hips and mimed *Make me*. He pretended he didn't see it.

"Why can we move through space in *almost* any direction, but time only goes in one direction, at one speed? Why can't we go faster? Slower? Backwards?"

60 "Sideways?" Neils said. He didn't speak often, but when he did, what he said was usually surprising.

"What's sideways in time?" his twin asked.

Neils shrugged. "Sideways is sideways."

"This is dumb," Emmy declared, but Gilbert could see that she was getting into the spirit of the thing—starting to understand how it had made him all so angry.

Outside Gilbert's house the summer roared past like a three-masted schooner before a gale,¹ with all sails bellied out. Inside the study, the hours crawled by. And then, in between, there
70 were the breakfasts and dinners with Gilbert's father, who was home for the summer, whose kind eyes were set into an ever-growing net of wrinkles and bags, who returned from his winter voyages each year a little thinner, a little more frail.

"And what did you learn today, my boy?" he said, as he tucked in to the mountain of lentils and beans made by the housekeeper, Mrs. Curie (who was so old that she had actually once served as Father's nanny and changed his diapers, which always made Gilbert giggle when he thought of it). Father was a strict vegetarian and swore by his diet's life-enhancing
80 properties, though that didn't seem to stop him from growing older and older and older.

Gilbert stopped fussing with his lentils, which he didn't like very much. "Geography," he said, looking at his plate. "We're doing the lowlands." He looked out at the sunset, the sun racing for the other side of the planet, dragging them all back toward the winter. "Belgium. Belgium, Belgium, Belgium."

His father laughed and smacked his hands on his thighs. "Belgium! Poor lad. I've been **marooned** there once or twice.
90 Land of bankers and cheese-makers. Like hitting your head, Belgium, because it feels so good when you stop. What else?"

¹ **three-masted schooner before a gale:** a vessel with three sails, moving fast because of a forceful wind.

maroon

(mə-rōōn') v. To *maroon* is to abandon or leave someone in a place that is hard to get away from.

“I *want* to do more physics, but Señor says I don’t have the math for it.”

His father nodded **judiciously**. “He would know. Why physics?”

judicious
(jōō-dīsh’əs) *adv.* If
you are *judicious*, you
have good judgment.

100 “Time,” he said, simply. They’d talked of time all summer, in those few hours when Gilbert wasn’t with his tutor and when Father wasn’t sitting at his desk working at his accounts, or riding into town to huddle over the telephone, casting his will over place and time, trying to keep his ships and their cargos in proper and correct motion.

“Why time, Gil? You’re eleven, son! You’ve got lots of time! You can worry about time when you’re an old man.”

110 Gilbert pretended he hadn’t heard. “I was thinking of more ways that time is like space. If I was at sea, standing on the deck of a ship, I could see a certain ways before me, and if I turned around, I could see a small ways behind me. But the horizon cuts off the view in both directions. Time is like that. I can think back a certain ways, and the further back I try to remember, the fuzzier it gets, until I can’t see at all. And I can see forward—we’ll have cobbler soon, go to bed, wake tomorrow. But no further.”

120 His father raised his furry eyebrows and smiled a genuine and delighted smile. “Ah, but things separated by time affect each other the way that events separated by space can’t. A star dying on the other side of the universe, so far away that its light hasn’t yet had time enough to crawl all the way to us, can’t have any effect on us. But things that happened hundreds of years ago, like the planting of the seed that grew the oak that made this table . . .” He rattled his saucer on it, making his coffee sway like a rough chop. He waggled his eyebrows again.

“Yikes,” Gilbert said. That hadn’t occurred to him. “What if time moved in every direction and at every speed—could you have a space where events at the far end of the galaxy affected us?” He answered his own question. “Of course. Because the events could travel backwards in time—or, uh . . .” He fumbled, remembered Neils. “Sideways.” He swallowed.

“What’s sideways in time?”

130 He shrugged. “Sideways is sideways,” he said.

“WHAT IF TIME MOVED IN EVERY DIRECTION AND AT EVERY SPEED?”

His father laughed until tears rolled down his cheeks, and Gilbert didn't have the heart to tell him that the phrase had been Neils's, because making his father laugh like that was like Christmas and his birthday and a day at the beach all rolled into one.

And then his father took him down to the ocean, down the rough goat trail cut into the cliff, as surefooted as a goat himself. They watched the sun disappear behind the waves, and then they moved among the tidepools, swirling their
140 hands in the warm, salty water to make the bioluminescent² speck-size organisms light up like fireworks. They sat out and watched the moon and the stars, lying on their backs in the sand, Gilbert's head in the crook of his father's arm, and he closed his eyes and let his father tell him stories about the sea and the places he went in the long, lonely winters, while the waves went *shhh, shhh*, like the whisper of the mother who'd died giving birth to him.

Then they picked their way back up the cliff by moonlight that was so bright, it might have been day, a blue-white noon
150 in shades of gray, and his father tucked him up into bed as if he were three years old, smoothing the covers and kissing him on the forehead with a whiskery kiss.

As he lay along a moment that stretched sleepily out like warm taffy, suspended on the edge of sleep, the thought occurred to him: *What if space moved in only one direction, in two dimensions, like time?*

² **bioluminescent** (bī'ō-lōō'mə-nēs'ənt): visible light, caused by chemical reactions, that emits from a living organism.

The year passed. For so long as Gilbert could remember, summer's first messenger had been the postmaster, Mr. Ossinger, who rode his bicycle along the sea road to the house to deliver his father's telegram advising of his expected arrival in port and the preparations to be made for him. Mrs. Curie usually signed for the letter, then knocked on the study door to deliver it into Gilbert's eager hands.

But this year, while the wind and rain howled outside the window, and Señor Uriarte plodded through the formation of igneous rock,³ Mrs. Curie did not come and deliver the letter, rescuing him from geography. She didn't come to the door, though Señor had finished rocks and moved on to algebra and then to Shakespeare. Finally, the school day ended. Gilbert left Señor stirring through the coals of the study fire, adding logs against the unseasonal winds outside.

Gilbert floated downstairs to the kitchen as though trapped in a dream that compelled him to seek out the housekeeper, even though some premonition told him to hide away in his room for as long as possible.

From behind, she seemed normal, her thin shoulders working as she beat at the batter for the night's cake, cranking the mixer's handle with slow, practiced turns. But when the door clicked shut behind him, she stopped working the beater, though her shoulders kept working, shuddering, rising, falling. She turned her face to him and he let out a cry and took a step back toward the door. It was as though she had been caught by an onrush of time, one that had aged her, turning her from an old woman to an animated corpse. Every wrinkle seemed to have sunk deeper, her fine floss hair hung limp across her forehead, her eyes were red and leaked steady rills of tears.

She took a step toward him, and he wanted to turn and run, but now he was frozen. So he stood, rooted to the spot, while she came and took him up in her frail arms and clutched at him, sobbing dry, raspy sobs. "He's not coming home," she whispered into his ear, the whiskers on her chin tickling at him. "He's not coming home, Gilbert. Oh, oh, oh." He held her and patted her and the time around him seemed to crawl by, slow enough that he could visualize every sweet moment he'd had with his father, time enough to visualize

³ **igneous rock** (ĭg'nē-əs rŏk): rock formed when melted rock, called magma, cools and solidifies above or below the earth.

every storm his father had ever narrated to him. Had all that time and more before Señor Uriarte came downstairs for his tea and found them in the kitchen. He gathered up frozen
200 Gilbert and carried him to his bedroom, removed his shoes, and sat with him for hours until he finally slept.

When morning dawned, the storm had lifted. Gilbert went to his window to see the stupid blue sky with its awful yellow sun and realized that his father was now gone forever and ever, to the end of time.

Emmy and her brothers were queasy of him for the first week of summer, playing with him as though he were made of china or tainted with plague. But by the second week, they were back to something like normal, scampering up the trees and down
210 the cliffs, ranging farther and farther afield on their bicycles.

Most of all, they were playing down at the switchyards, the old rail line that ran out from the disused freight docks a few miles down the beach from their houses. Señor and Mrs. Curie didn't know what to do with him that summer, lacking any direction from Father, and so Gilbert made the most of it, taking the Limburghers out on longer and longer trips, their packs bursting with food and water and useful tools: screwdrivers, crowbars, cans of oil.

Someone probably owned the switchyard, but whoever
220 that was, he was far away and had shown no interest in it in Gilbert's lifetime. It had been decades since the freighters came into this harbor and freight trains had taken their cargos off into the land on the rusted rails. The rusted padlocks on the utility sheds crumbled and fell to bits at the lightest touch from the crowbars; the doors squealed open on their ancient hinges.

Inside, the cobwebby, musty gloom yielded a million treasures: old time-tables, a telegraph rig, stiff denim coveralls with material as thick as the hall carpet at home, ancient
230 whiskey bottles, a leather-bound journal that went to powder when they touched it, and . . .

A handcar.⁴

"It'll never work," said Emmy. "That thing's older than the dinosaurs. It's practically rusted through!"

⁴ **handcar:** a small, open railroad car that is propelled by a hand pump.

Gilbert pretended he hadn't heard her. He wished he could move the car a little closer to the grimy windows. It was almost impossible to make sense of in the deep shadows of the shed. He pushed hard on the handle, putting his weight into it. It gave a groan, a squeal, and another groan. Then it moved
240 an inch. That was a magic inch! He got his oilcan and lavishly applied the forty-weight oil to every bearing he could find. Neils and Erwin held the lamp. Emmy leaned in closer. He pushed the handle again. Another groan, and a much higher squeal, and the handle sank under his weight. The handcar rumbled forward, almost crushing Emmy's foot—if she hadn't been so quick to leap back, she'd have been crippled. She didn't seem to mind. She, her brothers, and Gilbert were all staring at the handcar as if to say, "Where have you been all my life?"

“THE HANDCAR RUMBLED
FORWARD, ALMOST CRUSHING
EMMY'S FOOT.”

250 They christened it *Kalamazoo* and they worked with oil and muscle until they had moved it right up to the doorway. It cut their fingers to ribbons and turned their shins into fields of bruises, but it was all worth it because of what it promised: motion without end.

The track in the switchyard went in two directions. Inland, toward the nation and its hurrying progress and its infinite hunger for materials and blood and work. And out to sea, stretching out on a rockbed across the harbor, to the breakers where the great boats that were too large for
260 the shallow harbor used to tie up to offload. Once they had bullied *Kalamazoo* onto the tracks—using blocks, winches, levers, and a total disregard for their own safety—they stood to either side of its bogey handle and stared from side to side. Each knew what the others were thinking: Do we pump for the land, or pump for the sea?

“Tomorrow,” Gilbert said. It was the end of August now, and lessons would soon begin again, and each day felt like something was drawing to a close. “Tomorrow,” Gilbert said. “We’ll decide tomorrow. Bring supplies.”

270 That night, by unspoken agreement, they all packed their treasures. Gilbert laid out his sailor suit—his father bought him a new one every year—and his book about time and space and stuffed a picnic blanket with Mrs. Curie’s preserves, hardtack bread, jars of lemonade, and apples from the cellar. Mrs. Curie—three quarters deaf—slept through his raid. Gilbert then went to his father’s study and took the **spyglass** that had belonged to his grandfather, who had also been lost at sea. He opened the small oak box holding Grandad’s **sextant**, but as he’d never mastered it, he set it down. He took
280 his father’s enormous silver-chased⁵ turnip watch, and tried on his rain boots and discovered that they fit. The last time he’d tried them on, he could have gotten both feet into one of them. Time had passed without his noticing, but his feet had noticed.

He hauled the bundles out to the hedgerow at the bottom of the driveway, and then he put himself to bed and in an instant he was asleep. An instant later, the sun was shining on his face. He woke, put on his sailor suit, went downstairs, and shouted hello to Mrs. Curie, who smiled a misty smile to
290 see him in his sailor suit. She gave him hotcakes with butter and cherries from the tree behind Señor’s shed, a glass of milk and a mountain of fried potatoes. He ate until his stomach wouldn’t hold any more, said goodbye to her, and walked to the bottom of the hedgerow to retrieve his secret bundle. He wrestled it into his bike’s basket and wobbled down to the Limburghers’ gate to meet his friends, each with a bundle and a bike.

The half-hour ride to the switchyard took so little time that it was over even before Gilbert had a chance to think
300 about what he was doing. Time was going by too fast for thoughts now, like a train that had hit its speed and could now only be perceived as a blur of passing cars and a racket of wheels and steam.

spyglass

(spīˈgläs) *n.* A *spyglass* is a small telescope.

sextant

(sɛkˈstənt) *n.* A *sextant* is an instrument used to determine location by measuring the position of the stars and sun.

⁵ **silver-chased:** Silver-chasing is a technique used in engraving silver. The silver is moved, rather than removed, with a small pointed tool and mallet to create a design or texture.



Kalamazoo was still beaded with dew as they began to unload their bundles onto its platform. Gilbert set his down at the end farthest from the sea, and Emmy set hers down at the end farthest from the land, and when they stood to either side of the pump handle, it was clear that Emmy wanted to push for the land while Gilbert wanted to push them out to sea.

310 Naturally.

Emmy looked at Gilbert and Gilbert looked at Emmy. Gilbert took out his grandfather's spyglass, lifted off the leather cap from the business end, extended it, and pointed it out to sea, sweeping from side to side, looking farther than he'd ever seen. Wordlessly, he held it out to Emmy, who turned around to face the bay and swept it with the telescope. Then she handed it off to Neils and Erwin, who took their turns.

Nothing more had to be said. They leaned together into the stiff lever that controlled *Kalamazoo's* direction of travel,
320 threw it into position, and set to pumping out to sea.

What the spyglass showed: waves and waves, and waves and waves, and, farther along, the curvature of the planet itself as it warped toward Europe and Africa and the rest of the world. It showed a spit of land, graced with an ancient and crumbling sea fort, shrouded in mist and overgrown with the weeds and trees of long disuse. And beyond it, waves and more waves.

The gentle sea breeze turned into a stiff wind once they'd pumped for an hour, the handcart at first rolling slowly on the complaining wheels. Then, as the rust flaked off the axles
330 and the bearings found their old accommodations, they spun against one another easily. The pumping was still hard work, and even though they traded off, the children soon grew tired and sore and Emmy called for a rest stop and a snack.

As they munched their sandwiches, Gilbert had a flash. "We could use this for a sail," he said, nudging his picnic blanket with one toe. Neils and Erwin—whose shorter arms suffered more from the pumping labor—loved the idea, and set to rigging a mast from their fishing poles and the long crowbar they'd lashed to *Kalamazoo's* side. Emmy and Gilbert
340 let them do the work, watching with the wisdom of age, eating sandwiches and enjoying the breeze that dried their sweat.

As they started up again, *Kalamazoo* seemed as refreshed from the rest as they were, and it rolled more easily than ever, the sail bellied out before the mast. When Gilbert and Emmy stopped to trade pumping duties back to the twins, *Kalamazoo* continued to roll, propelled by the stiff wind alone. All four children made themselves comfortable at the back of the pump car and allowed the time and the space to whip past them as they would.

350 “We’re moving through space like time,” Gilbert said.

Emmy quirked her mouth at him, a familiar no-nonsense look that he ignored.

“We are,” he said. “We are moving in a straight line, from behind to in front, at a rate we can’t control. Off to the sides are spaces we could move through, but we’re not. We’re on these rails, and we can’t go sideways, can’t go back, can’t go up or down. We can’t control our speed. We are space’s slaves. This is just how we move through time.”

360 Emmy shook her head. Neils seemed excited by the idea, though, and he nudged his twin and they muttered in their curious twinnish dialect to one another.

The sea fort was visible with the naked eye now, and with the spyglass, Gilbert could make out its brickwork and the streaks of guano that ran down its cracked walls. The rails ran right up to the fort—last used as a customs inspection point—and past it to the hidden docks on the other side of the spit.

“Better hope that the wind shifts,” Emmy said, holding a wetted finger up to check the breeze.

370 “Otherwise we’re going to have a devil of a time pumping ourselves home in time for supper.”

Gilbert drew out the turnip watch, which he’d set this morning by the big grandfather clock in the front hall, carefully winding its spring. He opened its face and checked the second hand. It seemed to be spinning a little more slowly, but that could have been his imagination. According to the watch, it was nearly eleven, and they’d been on the rails for three hours.

“I think we’ll make the fort in time for lunch,” he said.

380 At the mention of food, Neils and Erwin clamored for snacks, and Emmy found them cookies she’d snatched from the big jar in the Limburgher kitchen.

Gilbert looked at the watch for a moment. The second hand had stopped moving. He held it up to his ear, and it wasn't precisely ticking any longer, but rather making a sound like a truck-wheel spinning in spring mud. He closed the lid again, and held it so tight that the intricate scrolling on the case dug into his palm.

Time passed.

And then it didn't.

390 And then it did again.

"Oh!" said Neils and Erwin together.

“GILBERT LOOKED AT THE
WATCH FOR A MOMENT.
THE SECOND HAND HAD
STOPPED MOVING.”

To either side of the car, stretching into infinity, were more tracks, running across the endless harbor, each with its own car, its own sail, its own children. Some were edging ahead of them. Some were going backwards. A racket overhead had them all look up at once, at the tracks there, too, the rails and the cars and the Limburghers and the Gilberts in them. Some children were older. Some were younger. One Gilbert was weeping. One was a girl.

400 Gilbert waved his hand, and a hundred Gilberts waved back. One made a rude gesture.

"Oh!" said Emmy. To her right, another Emmy was offering her a sandwich. She took it and handed over the last of her cookies and Emmy smiled at herself and said thank you as politely as you could wonder.

"Sideways is sideways," Neils and Erwin said together. Emmy and Gilbert nodded.

Gilbert pulled out his spyglass and looked ahead at the fort. All the rails converged on it, but without ever meeting.

410 And some stretched beyond. And out there, somewhere, there was time like space and space like time. And somewhere there was a father on a ship that weathered a storm rather than succumbed to it.

Gilbert turned to his friends and shook each of their hands in turn. Neils was crying a little. Emmy gave Gilbert a friendly punch in the shoulder and then a hug.

There was another *Kalamazoo* to the right, and Gilbert was pretty sure he could easily make the leap from his car to it. And then to the next car, and the next. And beyond, into
420 the infinite sideways.

If there was an answer, he'd find it there.

COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSION Why is Gilbert so interested in the dimension of time? Talk about your ideas with other group members. Discuss how time interacts with and changes Gilbert.

Analyze Story Elements: Character

ELA RL.7.3
ELD PI.7.6

The characters of “Another Place, Another Time” bring amazingly complex happenings down to a human level. **Characters** are the people, animals, or other creatures who take part in a story. A short story often has a **main character**, whose problem or goal drives the plot. The behavior and action of all the characters affects what happens. In addition, the **setting** of the story, or the time and place of the action, can affect the characters’ traits, motivations, and actions.

When you analyze how characters act and change throughout a story, consider the chart below.

Character traits are the qualities shown by a character. Traits may be physical (blond hair) or expressions of personality (fearlessness).	The writer may directly state the character’s traits, or you may have to infer traits based on the character’s words, thoughts, actions, appearance, or relationships.
Character motivations are the reasons for a character’s behavior.	To understand a character’s obvious or hidden desires and goals, notice what makes the character take or avoid action.

Think about the main character, Gilbert, in “Another Place, Another Time.” Use one or two words to describe his traits. How do the setting and events change him as the story unfolds?

Determine Meaning of Words and Phrases

ELA RL.7.4
ELD PI.7.8

A **symbol** is a person, a place, an object, or an activity that stands for something beyond itself. Often, a symbol represents an important idea or concept, such as freedom, love, or loneliness. For example, a dove is often a symbol of peace. Characters, objects, conflicts, and settings can serve as symbols for important ideas in a story.

You can identify symbols and determine their meanings by analyzing details in the text.

- Look for people, places, things, or actions that the writer emphasizes or mentions frequently.
- Think about the importance of these details to the characters.

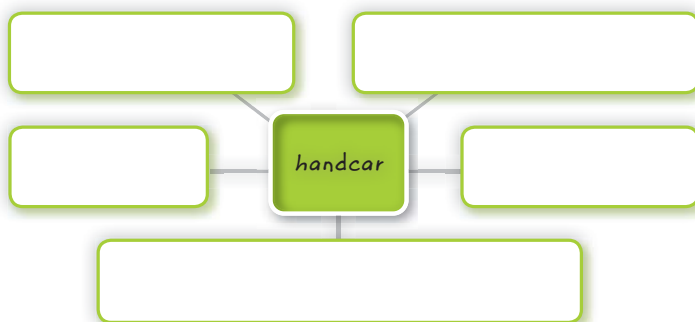
The sea setting is a major feature in “Another Place, Another Time.” The sea stands for at least one idea or feeling that is important to Gilbert. Reread lines 138–147 of the story. What might the sea represent for Gilbert here?

Analyzing the Text

Cite Text Evidence

Support your responses with evidence from the text.

- Infer** What does the story title have to do with the setting and the main character's motivations?
- Interpret** Reread lines 1–7. What words or phrases describe time? What do these descriptions suggest about the story's **theme**, the message about life or human nature?
- Cite Evidence** How might Albert Einstein be a motivating factor in Gilbert's quest?
- Infer** Reread lines 353–358. What does this speech reveal about Gilbert and how he perceives reality?
- Interpret** Examine lines 408–413. What do these lines suggest about Gilbert's emotional state at this point of the story?
- Synthesize** Use a web like the one shown to explore symbolism in the story. In the central circle, write *handcar*, *father's watch*, or the name of something else from the story that works as a symbol. Fill out the web by recording your ideas about what the symbol represents.



PERFORMANCE TASK



Writing Activity: Character Analysis

With a partner, find and record references to the passage of time that connect to key experiences for Gilbert. For each important reference, also note what is happening to Gilbert. Together, write a one-page character profile of Gilbert, including details that answer these questions:

- What are Gilbert's personal traits?
- What motivates Gilbert's actions?
- What life-changing events occur in his life?
- When and where is he at the start of the story? At the end?
- How has he changed by the end of the story?

Critical Vocabulary

ELA L.7.4c, L.7.6
ELD PI.7.6, PI.7.12

eloquence maroon judicious spyglass sextant

Practice and Apply Complete each sentence to show that you understand the meaning of the vocabulary word.

1. Everyone was impressed by the **eloquence** of . . .
2. The sailors were **marooned** on . . .
3. Before the travelers set out, they were **judicious** about . . .
4. The way to use a **spyglass** is to . . .
5. Sailors long ago needed a **sextant** to . . .

Vocabulary Strategy: Reference Aids

A **dictionary** is a valuable resource for anyone who is checking and expanding their vocabulary. The searching and browsing methods differ for print and digital dictionaries, but users can find the same basic information about each entry word.

- pronunciation
- one or more definitions
- part of speech label
- related forms

in•tri•cate (in'trī-kīt) *adj.* **1.** Having many complexly arranged elements; elaborate. **2.** Difficult to understand, analyze, or solve for having many interconnected elements. —**in'tri•cate•ly** *adv.* —**in'tri•cate•ness** *n.*

Synonyms are words with similar meanings. The dictionary entry shown for *intricate* includes a synonym within the definition: *elaborate*. Some dictionaries provide a list of synonyms after an entry. A **thesaurus** is a reference aid that lists synonyms. Writers can use a print or digital thesaurus to help find the exact word they need.

intricate *adj.* complicated, complex, elaborate, involved, convoluted

Practice and Apply Find the sentence with *judiciously* in line 94 of "Another Place, Another Time." Look up the word *judicious* and find the related form in an available dictionary and thesaurus. Use your own words to tell what the sentence means. Then rewrite the sentence using an appropriate synonym.

Language Conventions: Spell Correctly

ELA L.7.2b
ELD PL.7.10

When you proofread your writing for accuracy, you should check the spelling of every word. If you are using computer software to write, you will find that the spellchecker catches most misspellings—but not all. So, you still need to check the spelling in your work. In particular, be attentive to the spelling of proper nouns, proper adjectives, personal titles, and abbreviations, which are less likely to be corrected by a spellchecker.

Read these sentences from “Another Place, Another Time.”

He thumped the book he’d taken out of his father’s bookcase, a book fetched home from London, heavy and well made and swollen with the damp air of the sea-crossing home to America. He hadn’t read the book, but his tutor, sour Señor Uriarte, had explained it to him the day before . . .

Note the capitalization and spelling of the geographical names *London* and *America*; a personal title, *Señor*; and a proper name, *Uriarte*.

The chart shows categories of words to check for correct spelling and capitalization.

Category	Examples
geographical names	Madagascar, Kaskaskia River, Cincinnati, Sagamore Boulevard
personal titles and names	Madame Thibeau, Professor Moriarty, Señorita Madariaga
proper adjectives	Parisian, Colombian, Shakespearean, Einsteinian
abbreviations	Mme., Mr., Dr., Ave., Sq., Blvd.

Practice and Apply These sentences include errors in spelling and capitalization. In each sentence, identify the misspellings and write the words correctly. Refer to “Another Place, Another Time” and to other reference resources to check spellings.

1. Cory Docorow, the author of “Another Place, Another Time,” tells how the children named the handcar *Kamalazoo*.
2. In this story, Gilbert is friends with Emmy Limberger and her twin brothers, Neils and Irwin.
3. Gilbert’s tutor, Señor Uriate, and his housekeeper, Mme. Curie, care for him when his father is crossing the Altantic ocean.
4. Profesor Einstein’s book leaves a deep impression on Gilbert, who wants to understand how the newtonion view of the universe has changed.



Background Long before cell phones, telephone service went over wires. People called the operator, who connected them to a number. Occasionally, malfunctions resulted in “crossed” wires, allowing a caller to hear other people’s phone conversations.

Lucille Fletcher (1912–2000) wrote novels, radio plays, stage plays, and screenplays. She is best remembered for her radio play *Sorry, Wrong Number*, which was first broadcast in 1943. The play became a sensation, capturing the imaginations of mystery fans around the world.

Sorry, Wrong Number

Drama by Lucille Fletcher



SETTING A PURPOSE A drama is mainly intended to be performed for an audience. As you read, pay attention to the stage directions to help you imagine the plot events as if they were being performed by live actors. Write down any questions you have while reading.

Cast of Characters

Mrs. Stevenson
1st Operator
1st Man
2nd Man
Chief Operator
2nd Operator
3rd Operator

4th Operator
5th Operator
Information
Hospital Receptionist
Western Union
Sergeant Duffy
A Lunchroom-Counter Attendant

Scene: *As the curtain rises, we see a divided stage, only the center part of which is lighted and furnished as Mrs. Stevenson's bedroom. Expensive, rather fussy furnishings. A large bed, on which Mrs. Stevenson, clad in a bedjacket, is lying. A nighttable close by, with phone, lighted lamp, and pill bottles.*
10 *A mantel, with clock, R. A closed door, R. A window, with curtains closed, rear. The set is lit by one lamp on nighttable. Beyond this central set, the stage on either side is in darkness.*

Mrs. Stevenson is dialing a number on the phone as the curtain rises. She listens to the phone, slams down the receiver in irritation. As
20 *she does so, we hear the sound of a train roaring by in the distance. She reaches for her pill bottle, pours herself a glass of water, shakes out a pill, swallows it, then reaches for the phone again, dials the number nervously. Sound: Number being dialed on the phone. Busy signal.*

Mrs. Stevenson *(a querulous, self-centered neurotic). Oh, dear!*
30 *(Slams down receiver. Dials Operator. A spotlight, L. of side flat, picks up out of peripheral darkness the figure of 1st Operator sitting with headphones at small table.)*

Operator. Your call, please?

Mrs. Stevenson. Operator? I've been dialing Murray Hill 4-0098 for the last three quarters of an hour and the line is always busy.

40 But I don't see how it *could* be busy

that long. Will you try it for me, please?

Operator. Murray Hill 4-0098? One moment, please. *(She makes gesture of plugging in call through a switchboard.)*

Mrs. Stevenson. I don't see how it could be busy all this time. It's my husband's office. He's working late tonight and I'm all alone here in the house. My health is very poor and I've been feeling so nervous all day.

Operator. Ringing Murray Hill 4-0098. *(Sound: Phone buzz. It rings three times. Receiver is picked up at the other end. Spotlight picks up a figure of a heavy-set man seated at a desk with a phone on R. side of dark periphery of stage. He is wearing a hat. Picks up phone.)*
60

Man. Hello.

Mrs. Stevenson. Hello? *(a little puzzled)* Hello. Is Mr. Stevenson there?

Man *(into phone, as though he has not heard). Hello. (louder) Hello. (Spotlight on L. now moves from Operator to another man, George—a killer type, also wearing a hat, but standing as in a phone booth.)*
70

2nd Man *(slow heavy quality, faintly foreign accent). Hello.*

1st Man. Hello? George?

George. Yes, sir.

Mrs. Stevenson *(louder and more imperious, to phone). Hello. Who's this? What number am I calling, please?*

80 **1st Man.** We have heard from our client. He says the coast is clear for tonight.

George. Yes, sir.

1st Man. Where are you now?

George. In a phone booth.

1st Man. Okay. You know the address. At eleven o'clock, the private patrolman goes around to the bar on Second Avenue for
90 a beer. Be sure that all the lights downstairs are out. There should be only one light visible from the street. At eleven-fifteen, a subway train crosses the bridge. It made a noise in case her window is open and she should scream.

Mrs. Stevenson (*shocked*). Oh—*hello!* What number is this, please?

George. Okay. I understand.

100 **1st Man.** Make it quick. As little blood as possible. Our client does not wish to make her suffer long.

George. A knife okay?

1st Man. Yes. A knife will be okay. And remember—remove the rings and bracelets, and the jewelry in the bureau drawer. Our client wishes it to look like simple robbery.

110 **George.** Okay—I get—(*Spotlight suddenly goes out on George. Sound: A bland buzzing signal. Spotlight goes off on 1st Man.*)

Mrs. Stevenson (*clicking phone*). Oh! (*Bland buzzing signal continues. She hangs up.*) How awful! How unspeakably—(*She*

lies back on her pillows, overcome for a few seconds, then suddenly pulls herself together, reaches for phone. Sound: Dialing. Phone buzz. Spotlight goes on at 1st Operator's switchboard. 1st and 2nd Man exit as unobtrusively as possible, in darkness.)

Operator. Your call, please?

Mrs. Stevenson (*unnerved and breathless, into phone*). Operator, I—I've just been cut off.

130 **Operator.** I'm sorry, madam. What number were you calling?

Mrs. Stevenson. It was supposed to be Murray Hill 4-0098, but it wasn't. Some wires must have crossed—I was cut into a wrong number. And I've just heard the most dreadful thing—a—a murder—and (*imperiously*) you'll simply have to retrace that call at once, Operator.

140 **Operator.** I beg your pardon, madam, I don't quite—

Mrs. Stevenson. Oh, I know it was a wrong number and I had no business listening, but these two men—they were cold-blooded fiends and they were going to murder somebody—some poor innocent woman who was all alone—in a house near a bridge. And we've got to stop them—

150 **Operator** (*patiently*). What number were you calling, madam?

Mrs. Stevenson. That doesn't matter. This was a *wrong* number.

And *you* dialed it. And we've got to find out what it was—immediately!

Operator. But, madam—

160 **Mrs. Stevenson.** Oh, why are you so stupid? Look—it was obviously a case of some little slip of the finger. I told you to try Murray Hill 4-0098 for me—you dialed it but your finger must have slipped and I was connected with some other number. I could hear them, but they couldn't hear me. I simply fail to see why you couldn't make that same mistake again—on purpose.
170 Why you couldn't *try* to dial Murray Hill 4-0098 in the same careless sort of way—

Operator (*quickly*). Murray Hill 4-0098? I will try to get it for you, madam.

Mrs. Stevenson (*sarcastically*). *Thank you. (She bridles, adjusts herself on her pillows, reaches for a handkerchief and wipes her forehead, glancing uneasily for a moment toward the window. Sound of ringing and busy signal.)*
180

Operator. I'm sorry. Murray Hill 4-0098 is busy.

Mrs. Stevenson (*frantically clicking receiver*). Operator—Operator!

Operator. Yes, madam?

Mrs. Stevenson (*angrily*). You *didn't* try to get that wrong number at all. I asked explicitly and all you did was dial correctly.
190

Operator. I'm sorry. What number were you calling?

Mrs. Stevenson. Can't you forget what number I was calling and do something specific? I want to trace that call. It's my civic duty—it's *your* civic duty—to trace that call and to apprehend those dangerous
200 killers. And if *you* won't—

Operator (*glancing around wearily*). I will connect you with the Chief Operator.

Mrs. Stevenson. *Please! (Sound of ringing. Operator puts hand over mouthpiece of phone, gestures into darkness.)*

Operator (*a half whisper*). Miss Curtis, will you pick up on
210 seventeen, please? (Miss Curtis, Chief Operator, enters. Middle-aged, efficient, pleasant. Wearing headphoned.)

Miss Curtis. Yes, dear. What's the trouble?

Operator. Somebody wanting a call traced. I can't make head nor tail of it.

Miss Curtis (*sitting down at desk as Operator gets up*). Sure, dear. (She makes gesture of plugging in her headphoned, coolly and professionally.) This is the Chief Operator.
220

Mrs. Stevenson. Chief Operator? I want you to trace a call. Immediately. I don't know where it came from, or who was making it, but it's absolutely necessary
230 that it be tracked down. It was about a murder, a terrible, cold-

blooded murder of a poor innocent woman—tonight, at eleven-fifteen.

Chief Operator. I see.

Mrs. Stevenson (*high-strung, demanding*). Can you trace it for me? Can you track down those men?

240 **Chief Operator.** It depends, madam.

Mrs. Stevenson. Depends on what?

Chief Operator. It depends on whether the call is still going on. If it's a live call, we can trace it on the equipment. If it's been disconnected, we can't.

Mrs. Stevenson. Disconnected?

250 **Chief Operator.** If the parties have stopped talking to each other.

Mrs. Stevenson. Oh, but of course they must have stopped talking to each other by *now*. That was at least five minutes ago.

Chief Operator. Well, I can try tracing it. (*She takes a pencil out of her hair.*) What is your name, madam?

260 **Mrs. Stevenson.** Mrs. Elbert Stevenson. But listen—

Chief Operator (*writing*). And your telephone number?

Mrs. Stevenson (*more irritated*). Plaza 4-2295. But if you go on wasting all this time—(*She glances at clock on the mantel.*)

Chief Operator. And what is your reason for wanting this call traced?

270 **Mrs. Stevenson.** My reason? Well, for heaven's sake, isn't it obvious? I overhear two men planning to murder this woman—it's a matter for the police!

Chief Operator. Have you told the police?

Mrs. Stevenson. No. How could I?

Chief Operator. You're making this check into a private call purely as a private individual?

280 **Mrs. Stevenson.** Yes. But meanwhile—

Chief Operator. Well, Mrs. Stevenson, I seriously doubt whether we could make this check for you at this time just on your say-so as a private individual. We'd have to have something more official.

290 **Mrs. Stevenson.** Oh, for heaven's sake! You mean to tell me I can't report a murder without getting tied up in all this red tape? It's perfectly idiotic. All right, then I will call the police. (*She slams down the receiver. Spotlight goes off two Operators.*) Ridiculous! (*Sound of dialing as Mrs. Stevenson dials phone and two Operators exit unobtrusively in darkness. On R. of stage, spotlight picks up a 2nd Operator, seated like first, with headphone at table—same one vacated by 1st Man.*)

2nd Operator. Your call, please?

Mrs. Stevenson (*very annoyed*). The Police Department—please.

2nd Operator. Ringing the Police Department. (*Ring twice. At table L. spotlight now picks up* Sergeant Duffy, seated in a relaxed position. Just entering beside him is a young man in a cap and apron, carrying a large brown-paper parcel, delivery boy for a local lunch counter. Phone is ringing.)

Lunchroom Attendant. Here's your lunch, Sarge. They didn't have no jelly doughnuts, so I got French crullers, okay?

Duffy. French crullers. I got ulcers. Whyn't you make it apple pie? (*picks up phone*) Police Department, Precinct 43, Duffy speaking.

Lunchroom Attendant (*anxiously*). We don't have no apple pie, either, Sarge.

Mrs. Stevenson. Police Department? Oh. This is Mrs. Stevenson—Mrs. Elbert Smythe Stevenson of 53 North Sutton Place. I'm calling to report a murder. (*Duffy has been examining lunch, but double-takes suddenly on above.*)

Duffy. Eh?

Mrs. Stevenson. I mean, the murder hasn't been committed yet, I just overheard plans for it over the telephone—over a wrong number the operator gave me. (*Duffy relaxes, sighs, starts taking lunch from bag.*) I've been trying to trace the call myself, but everybody is so stupid—and I guess in the end

you're the only people who could do anything.

Duffy (*not too impressed*). Yes, ma'am. (*Attendant exits.*)

Mrs. Stevenson (*trying to impress him*). It was perfectly definite murder. I heard their plans distinctly. (*Duffy begins to eat sandwich, phone at his ear.*) Two men were talking, and they were going to murder some woman at eleven-fifteen tonight—she lived in a house near a bridge.

Duffy. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Stevenson. There was a private patrolman on the street who was going to go around for a beer on Second Avenue. And there was some third man, a client, who was paying to have this poor woman murdered. They were going to take her rings and bracelets—and use a knife. Well, it's unnerved me dreadfully—and I'm not well.

Duffy. I see. (*He wipes his mouth with a paper napkin.*) When was all this, ma'am?

Mrs. Stevenson. About eight minutes ago. Oh—(*relieved*)—then you *can* do something? You *do* understand.

Duffy. And what is your name, ma'am? (*He reaches for a pad of paper.*)

Mrs. Stevenson (*impatiently*). Mrs. Stevenson. Mrs. Elbert Stevenson.

Duffy. And your address?



(bridge) ©DLA/Shutterstock; (curtains) ©s duffett/Shutterstock

Mrs. Stevenson. 53 North Sutton Place. *That's* near a bridge. The Queensboro Bridge, you know—and *we* have a private patrolman on *our* street. And Second Avenue—

390 **Duffy.** And what was that number you were calling?

Mrs. Stevenson. Murray Hill 4-0098. (*Duffy writes it down.*) But that wasn't the number I

overheard. I mean Murray Hill 4-0098 is my husband's office. (*Duffy, in exasperation, holds his pencil poised.*) He's working late tonight and I was trying to reach him to ask him to come home. I'm an invalid, and it's the maid's night off, and I *hate* to be alone even though he says I'm perfectly safe as long as I have the telephone right beside my bed.

400

Duffy (*stolidly*). Well, we'll look into it, Mrs. Stevenson, and see if we can check it with the telephone company.

410 **Mrs. Stevenson** (*getting impatient*). But the telephone company said they couldn't check the call if the parties had stopped talking. I've already taken care of that.

Duffy. Oh—yes? (*He yawns slightly.*)

Mrs. Stevenson. Personally, I feel you ought to do something far more immediate and drastic than
420 just check the call. What good does checking the call do if they've stopped talking? By the time you track it down, they'll already have committed the murder.

Duffy (*he reaches for a paper cup of coffee*). Well, we'll take care of it, lady. Don't worry. (*He begins to remove the top of the coffee container.*)

430 **Mrs. Stevenson**. I'd say the whole thing calls for a complete and thorough search of the whole city. (*Duffy puts down the phone to work on the cup as her voice continues.*) I'm very near a bridge, and I'm not far from Second Avenue. And I know I'd feel a whole lot better if you sent around a radio car to *this* neighborhood at once.

440 **Duffy** (*picks up phone again, drinks coffee*). And what makes you think the murder's going to be committed in your neighborhood, ma'am?

Mrs. Stevenson. Oh, I don't know—the coincidence is so

horrible. Second Avenue—the bridge—

Duffy. Second Avenue is a very long street, ma'am. And do you
450 happen to know how many bridges there are in the city of New York? How do you know there isn't some little house out on Staten Island—on some little Second Avenue you never heard about? (*He takes a long gulp of coffee.*) How do you know they were even talking about New York at all?

Mrs. Stevenson. But I heard
460 the call on the New York dialing system.

Duffy. How do you know it wasn't a long-distance call you overheard? Telephones are funny things. (*He sets down coffee.*) Look, lady, why don't you look at it this way? Supposing you hadn't broken in on that telephone call? Supposing you'd got your husband the way
470 you always do? Would this murder have made any difference to you then?

Mrs. Stevenson. I suppose not. But it's so inhuman—so cold-blooded—

Duffy. A lot of murders are committed in this city every day, ma'am. If we could do something to stop 'em, we would. But a clue of
480 this kind that's so vague isn't much more use to us than no clue at all.

Mrs. Stevenson. But surely—

Duffy. Unless, of course, you have some reason for thinking this call

is phony, and that someone may be planning to murder *you*?

Mrs. Stevenson. *Me?* Oh, no—I hardly think so. I mean—why should anybody? I’m alone all day
490 and night. I see nobody except my maid Eloise—she’s a big two-hundred-pound woman too lazy to bring up my breakfast tray—and the only other person is my husband Elbert. He’s crazy about me—adores me—waits on me hand and foot. He’s scarcely left my side since I took sick twelve years ago—

Duffy. Well, then, there’s nothing
500 for you to worry about, is there? *(The Lunchroom-Counter Attendant has entered. He is carrying a piece of apple pie on a plate and points it out to Duffy triumphantly.)* And now, if you’ll just leave the rest of this to us—

Mrs. Stevenson. But what will you do? It’s so late—it’s nearly eleven o’clock.

510 **Duffy** *(firmly)*. We’ll take care of it, lady.

Mrs. Stevenson. Will you broadcast it all over the city? And send out squads? And warn your radio cars to watch out—especially in suspicious neighborhoods like mine. *(The Attendant, in triumph, has put the pie down in front of Duffy.)*

520 **Duffy** *(more firmly)*. Lady, I said we’d take care of it. Just now I’ve got a couple of other matters here on my desk that require my immediate—

Mrs. Stevenson. Oh! *(She slams down the receiver hard.)* Idiot! *(Duffy listening at the phone, hangs up and shrugs, then attacks his pie as spotlight fades out. Mrs. Stevenson, in bed, looks at the phone nervously.)* Why did I do that? Now he’ll think I *am* a fool. *(She sits tensely, then throws herself back against the pillows, lying there a moment, whimpering with self-pity.)* Oh, why doesn’t Elbert come home? Why doesn’t he? *(We hear sound of train roaring by in the distance. She sits up, reaching for phone. Sound of dialing operator. Spotlight picks up 2nd Operator, seated R.)*

Operator. Your call, please?

Mrs. Stevenson. Operator—for heaven’s sake—will you ring that Murray Hill 4-0098 number again? I can’t think what’s keeping him so long.

Operator. Ringing Murray Hill
550 4-0098. *(rings—busy signal)* The line is busy. Shall I—

Mrs. Stevenson *(nastily)*. I can hear it, you don’t have to tell me it’s busy! *(Slams down receiver. Spotlight fades off on 2nd Operator. Mrs. Stevenson sinks back against the pillows again, whimpering to herself fretfully. She glances at the clock, then, turning, punches her pillows up, trying to make herself comfortable. But she isn’t and she whimpers to herself as she squirms restlessly in bed.)* If I could get out of this bed for a little while. If I could get a breath of fresh air—or

just lean out the window—and see the street. (*She sighs, reaches for pill bottle, and shakes out a pill. As she does, the phone rings and she darts for it instantly.*) Hello, Elbert? Hello. Hello. Hello. Oh—what’s the matter with this phone? Hello? Hello? (*Slams down the receiver and stares at it tensely. The phone rings again. Once. She picks it up.*) Hello? Hello! Oh, for heaven’s sake, who is this? Hello. Hello. Hello. (*Slamming down the receiver, she dials the operator. Spotlight comes on L. showing 3rd Operator, at spot vacated by Duffy.*)

3rd Operator. Your call, please?

Mrs. Stevenson (*very annoyed and imperious*). Hello, Operator, I don’t know what’s the matter with this telephone tonight, but it’s positively driving me crazy. I’ve never seen such inefficient, miserable service. Now, look. I’m an invalid, and I’m very nervous, and I’m *not* supposed to be annoyed. But if this keeps on much longer—

3rd Operator (*a young, sweet type*). What seems to be the trouble, madam?

Mrs. Stevenson. *Everything’s* wrong. The whole world could be murdered for all you people care! And now my phone keeps ringing!

Operator. Yes, madam?

Mrs. Stevenson. Ringing and ringing and ringing every five seconds or so, and when I pick it up there’s no one there!

Operator. I’m sorry, madam. If you’ll hang up, I’ll test it for you.

Mrs. Stevenson. I don’t want you to test it for me, I want you to put through that call—whatever it is—at once.

Operator (*gently*). I’m afraid that’s not possible, madam.

Mrs. Stevenson (*storming*). Not possible? And why, may I ask?

Operator. The system is automatic, madam. If someone is trying to dial your number, there’s no way to check whether the call is coming through the system or not—unless the person who is trying to reach you complains to his particular operator.

Mrs. Stevenson. Well, of all the stupid, complicated—And meanwhile *I’ve* got to sit here in my bed, *suffering* every time that phone rings, imagining everything!

Operator. I’ll try to check it for you, madam.

Mrs. Stevenson. Check it! Check it! That’s all anybody can do. Of all the stupid, idiotic—(*She hangs up.*) Oh, what’s the use! (3rd Operator fades out of spotlight as Mrs. Stevenson’s phone rings again. *She picks up the receiver.*) Hello! Hello! Stop ringing, do you hear me? Answer me? What do you want? Do you realize you’re driving me crazy? (Spotlight goes on R. We see a Man in eyeshade and shirtsleeves at a desk with a phone and telegrams.) Stark, staring—

Western Union (*dull, flat voice*).
Hello. Is this Plaza 4-2295?

Mrs. Stevenson (*catching her breath*). Yes. Yes. This is Plaza 4-2295.

Western Union. This is Western
650 Union. I have a telegram here
for Mrs. Elbert Stevenson. Is
there anyone there to receive the
message?

Mrs. Stevenson (*trying to calm herself*). I am Mrs. Stevenson.

Western Union (*reading flatly*).
The telegram is as follows: "Mrs.
Elbert Stevenson, 53 North Sutton
Place, New York, New York.
660 Darling. Terribly sorry. Tried to
get you for last hour, but line busy.
Leaving for Boston eleven P.M.
tonight on urgent business. Back
tomorrow afternoon. Keep happy.
Love. Signed, Elbert."

Mrs. Stevenson (*breathlessly, aghast, to herself*). Oh, no—

Western Union. That's all, madam.
Do you wish us to deliver a copy of
670 the message?

Mrs. Stevenson. No—no,
thank you.

Western Union. Thank you,
madam. Goodnight. (*He hangs up
the phone. Spotlight on Western
Union immediately out.*)

Mrs. Stevenson (*mechanically, to phone*). Goodnight. (*She hangs
up slowly, suddenly bursting into*)
680 No—no—it isn't true! He couldn't
do it! Not when he knows I'll be
all alone! It's some trick—some

fiendish—(*We hear the sound of
a train roaring by outside. She
half rises in bed, in panic, glaring
toward the curtains. Her movements
are frenzied. She beats with her
knuckles on the bed, then suddenly
stops and reaches for the phone.*
690 *Spotlight picks up 4th Operator,
seated L.*)

Operator (*coolly*). Your call,
please?

Mrs. Stevenson. Operator—try
that Murray Hill 4-0098 number
for me just once more, please.

Operator. Ringing Murray Hill
4-0098. (*Call goes through. We
hear ringing at the other end, ring
after ring.*)
700

Mrs. Stevenson. He's gone. Oh,
Elbert, how could you? How
could you? (*She hangs up, sobbing
pityingly to herself, turning restlessly.*
Spotlight goes out on 4th Operator.)
But I can't be alone tonight, I can't!
If I'm alone one more second—
(*She runs her hands wildly through
her hair.*) I don't care what he
710 says, or what the expense is, I'm a
sick woman—I'm entitled! (*With
trembling fingers she picks up the
receiver again and dials Information.*
*The spotlight picks up Information
Operator, seated R.*)

Information. This is Information.

Mrs. Stevenson. I want the
telephone number of Henschley
Hospital.

Information. Henschley Hospital?
720 Do you have the address, madam?

Mrs. Stevenson. No. It's somewhere in the Seventies. It's a small, private, and exclusive hospital where I had my appendix out two years ago. HENCHLEY. H-E-N-C—

Information. One moment, please.

730 **Mrs. Stevenson.** Please—hurry. And please—what's the time?

Information. I don't know, madam. You may find out the time by dialing Meridan 7-1212.

Mrs. Stevenson (*irritated*). Oh, for heaven's sake, couldn't you—?

Information. The number of HENCHLEY Hospital is Butterfield 7-0105, madam.

740 **Mrs. Stevenson.** Butterfield 7-0105. (*She hangs up before she finishes speaking and immediately dials the number as she repeats it. Spotlight goes out on Information. Phone rings. Spotlight picks up Woman in nurse's uniform, seated at desk L.*)

Woman (*middle-aged, solid, firm, practical*). HENCHLEY Hospital, good evening.

750 **Mrs. Stevenson.** Nurses' Registry.

Woman. Who was it you wished to speak to, please?

Mrs. Stevenson (*high-handed*). I want the Nurses' Registry at once. I want a trained nurse. I want to hire her immediately. For the night.

Woman. I see. And what is the nature of the case, madam?

760 **Mrs. Stevenson.** Nerves. I'm very nervous. I need soothing—and companionship. My husband is away and I'm—

Woman. Have you been recommended to us by any doctor in particular, madam?

770 **Mrs. Stevenson.** No. But I really don't see why all this catechizing is necessary. I want a trained nurse. I was a patient in your hospital two years ago. And, after all, I *do* expect to pay this person—

Woman. We quite understand that, madam. But registered nurses are very scarce just now and our superintendent has asked us to send people out only on cases where the physician in charge feels it is absolutely necessary.

780 **Mrs. Stevenson** (*growing hysterical*). Well, it is absolutely necessary! I'm a sick woman. I'm very upset! Very! I'm alone in this house—and I'm an invalid—and tonight I overheard a telephone conversation that upset me dreadfully. About a murder—a poor woman who was going to be murdered at eleven-fifteen tonight. In fact, if someone doesn't come at once, I'm afraid I'll go out of my mind!

Woman (*calmly*). I see. Well, I'll speak to Miss Phillips as soon as she comes in. And what is your name, madam?

Mrs. Stevenson. When do you expect Miss Phillips in?



Woman. I really don't know, madam. She went out to supper at eleven o'clock.

Mrs. Stevenson. Eleven o'clock. But it's not eleven yet. (*She cries out.*) Oh, my clock *has* stopped. I *thought* it was running down. What time is it? (Woman *glances at wristwatch.*)

Woman. Just fourteen minutes past eleven. (*Sound of phone receiver being lifted on same line as Mrs. Stevenson's. A click.*)

Mrs. Stevenson (*crying out*). What's *that*?

Woman. What was what, madam?

Mrs. Stevenson. That—that click just now—in my own telephone? As though someone had lifted the receiver off the hook of the extension phone downstairs.

Woman. I didn't hear it, madam. Now, about this—

Mrs. Stevenson (*scared*). But I *did*. There's someone in this house! Someone downstairs in the kitchen! And they're listening to me now—they're (*She puts hand over her mouth, hangs up the phone, and sits in terror, frozen, listening.*) I won't pick it up, I won't let them hear me. I'll be quiet—and they'll think—(*with growing terror*) But if I don't call someone now while they're still down there, there'll be no time! (*She picks up the receiver. There is a bland, buzzing signal. She dials the operator. On the second ring, spotlight goes on R. We see 5th Operator.*)

Operator (*fat and lethargic*). Your call, please?

840 **Mrs. Stevenson** (*a desperate whisper*). Operator—I—I'm in desperate trouble—

Woman. I cannot hear you, madam. Please speak louder.

Mrs. Stevenson (*still whispering*). I don't dare. I—there's someone listening. Can you hear me now?

Operator. Your call, please? What number are you calling, madam?

850 **Mrs. Stevenson** (*desperately*). You've got to hear me! Oh, please! You've got to help me! There's someone in this house—someone who's going to murder me! And you've got to get in touch with the—(*Click of receiver being put down on Mrs. Stevenson's line. She bursts out wildly.*) Oh—there it is—he's put it down! He's coming!
860 (*She screams.*) He's coming up the stairs! (*She thrashes in the bed. The phone cord catching in the lamp wire, the lamp topples, goes out. Darkness. Hoarsely.*) Give me the Police Department (*We see on the dark C. stage the shadow of the door opening. Mrs. Stevenson screams.*) The police! (*On stage, there is the*

870 *swift rush of a shadow advancing to the bed—the sound of her voice is choked out as*)

Operator. Ringing the Police Department. (*Phone is rung. We hear the sound of a train beginning to fade in. On the second ring, Mrs. Stevenson screams again, but the roaring of the train drowns out her voice. For a few seconds we hear nothing but the roaring of the train, then, dying away, the phone at Police Headquarters ringing. Spotlight goes on Duffy, L. stage.*)

Duffy. Police Department. Precinct 43. Duffy speaking. (*Pause. Nothing visible but darkness on C. stage*) Police Department. Duffy speaking. (*Now a flashlight goes on, illuminating the open phone to one side of Mrs. Stevenson's*
890 *bed. Nearby hanging down, is her lifeless hand. We see the second man, George in black gloves, reach down and pick up the phone. He is breathing hard.*)

George. Sorry, wrong number. (*He replaces the receiver on the hook quietly and exits as Duffy hangs up with a shrug and the curtain falls.*)

COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSION *Sorry, Wrong Number* was originally performed as a radio play. With a partner, discuss how you would translate this drama into a radio or stage production. How would you direct the actors to bring the mystery story to life in performance?

Analyze Form: Drama

ELA RL.7.3, RL.7.5
ELD PI.7.6, PII.7.1

The play you have just read is a **drama**, a form of literature meant to be performed by actors in front of an audience. Like other forms of literature, a drama presents a series of events, called the **plot**, and establishes the time and place of those events, called the **setting**. The plot centers on a **conflict**, a struggle between opposing forces, and unfolds through the characters' words and actions.

Unlike other forms of literature, a drama usually includes the following elements:

- **cast of characters**—a list of all the characters in the drama; the cast appears at the beginning of the drama.
- **dialogue**—the words that the characters say; the character's name precedes his or her lines of dialogue.
- **stage directions**—instructions for how the drama is to be performed in front of an audience; the instructions are often set in parentheses.

Because dramas are primarily meant to be performed, reading the script requires you to focus on the dialogue and stage directions to picture the action and understand the drama's meaning. Use a graphic organizer to keep track of the plot as you read and to help you analyze how the elements of the drama interact.

Setting:	Where: <i>Mrs. Stevenson's bedroom</i>	When: <i>around 11 P.M.</i>
Major Characters: <i>Mrs. Stevenson</i>	Minor Characters: <i>various operators, two murder conspirators, Sergeant Duffy, the lunchroom attendant</i>	
Problem/Conflict: <i>Mrs. Stevenson overhears a murder plot and wants to convince someone to stop it.</i>		
Event: (List as many as occur.)	Event:	Event:
Outcome/Resolution:		

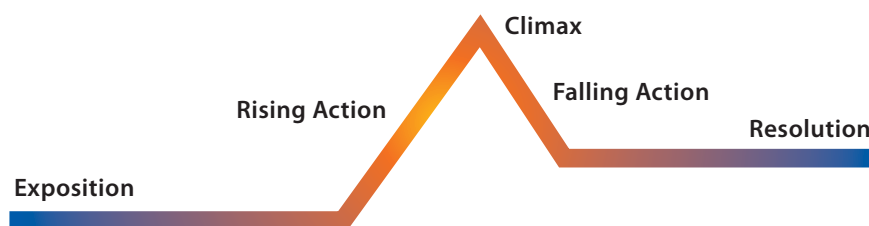
Return to *Sorry, Wrong Number* and complete the graphic organizer to show the Plot Events and Outcome/Resolution.

Analyzing the Text

Cite Text Evidence

Support your responses with evidence from the text.

- Infer** Reread the stage directions in lines 16–27. What do Mrs. Stevenson’s actions reveal about her physical condition?
- Cause/Effect** Reread lines 328–531. How does Sergeant Duffy react to Mrs. Stevenson’s call and how does his reaction affect Mrs. Stevenson?
- Summarize** Create a plot diagram like the one shown. Then place the events of *Sorry, Wrong Number* in their correct position on the diagram.



- Analyze** When a writer provides hints that suggest future events in a story, it’s called **foreshadowing**. Go back through the drama and find examples of foreshadowing. For each example, provide a description of what eventually happens.
- Analyze and Evaluate** How do the setting and other details from the drama show that perception and reality do not always match up?

Speaking and Listening

Watch the clip from the film version of *Sorry, Wrong Number*. How is seeing the drama as a film different from reading it? With a partner, discuss the differences between the use of stage directions in the drama and the filmmakers’ use of film techniques to create suspense and a feeling of terror.

PERFORMANCE TASK



Writing Activity: Character

Analysis Write a three-paragraph character analysis of Mrs. Stevenson. Support your analysis with examples of her actions, as expressed in the dialogue and stage directions. Try to answer these questions.

- How does she perceive herself?
- How does she perceive other people such as the operators, police sergeant, and hospital workers?
- What parts of her personality might have been misunderstood or allow her to be misunderstood by others?
- How do her actions affect the drama’s plot?

COLLECTION 2

PERFORMANCE TASK A

Interactive Lessons

To help you complete this task, use *Writing Arguments*.

Write an Argument

Folktales like “The People Could Fly” often make readers reflect on the ways we perceive our world. Consider the common saying “seeing is believing” and its meaning. After reading the texts in this collection, do you believe this saying is true? You will draw from “The People Could Fly” and other texts in the collection to write an argument that states and supports your position.

ELA W.7.1a–e, W.7.4, W.7.5, W.7.9, W.7.10

ELD PI.7.4, PI.7.10, PI.7.11, PI.7.12, PII.7.1, PII.7.2

A successful argument

- contains an engaging introduction that clearly states the claim, or opinion
- supports the opinion with logical reasoning and relevant evidence
- presents and refutes opposing claims, or viewpoints
- uses language that effectively conveys ideas and adds interest
- concludes with a restatement of the claim

PLAN

Form a Claim Revisit the texts in the collection. Consider your answers to the following questions as you form your claim:

- How and why do the characters or people perceive the things that happen?
- How does this information relate to the meaning of the saying “seeing is believing”?

Gather Information Focus on the selection(s) that have information you can cite to support your claim.

- Consider the points of view or opinions that are expressed.
- Make a list of the reasons you have for your claim.
- Identify evidence in the texts that supports your reasons.

myNotebook

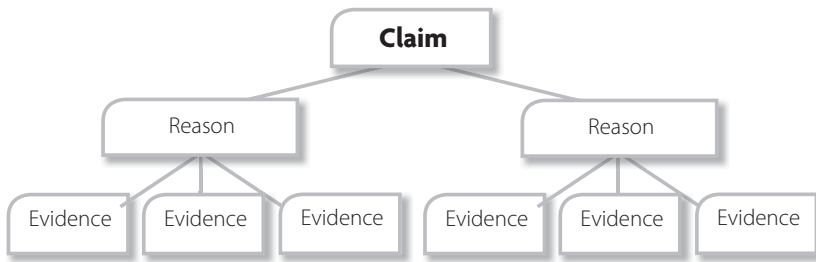
Use the annotation tools in your eBook to find evidence to support your claim. Save each piece of evidence to your notebook.

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

As you plan, write, and review your draft, be sure to use the academic vocabulary words.

abnormal
feature
focus
perceive
task

Organize Your Ideas Think about organizing your argument. A graphic organizer like this one can help present ideas logically.



Interactive Lessons

For help in organizing your ideas, use:

- [Writing Arguments: Building Effective Support](#)

Consider Your Purpose and Audience Think about who will read or listen to your argument. What do you want them to understand? What will be most convincing to them? Keep these questions and your answers in mind as you prepare to write.

PRODUCE



Write Your Argument Review the information in your notes as you begin your draft.

- Begin by introducing the topic and stating your claim. Include an attention-grabbing lead.
- Write your reasons and support them with evidence, such as facts and examples. Organize your argument logically.
- Be aware of any **counterarguments**, arguments that oppose your position.
- Include words and phrases such as *because*, *therefore*, and *for that reason* that will link your opinion, reasons, and evidence and make your argument clearer and more coherent.
- Establish and maintain a formal style and tone.
- Summarize your argument, repeating the most important reasons and evidence, and leave a lasting impression.

Write your rough draft in myWriteSmart. Focus on getting your ideas down, rather than perfecting your choice of language.

Interactive Lessons

For help in developing your argument, use:

- [Writing Arguments: Creating a Coherent Argument](#)

Language Conventions: Connect Ideas

Words like *and*, *but*, and *or* can help to combine ideas in a sentence. Read the following example from "Magic and the Brain."

“Tomsoni claps his hands, **and** the spotlight dims ever so briefly before reflaring in a blaze of red.”

Notice how the word *and* connects two clauses to form a compound sentence. Look for places in your argument where you can add words to make connections between ideas.

REVISE

Evaluate Your Draft Work with your partner to determine whether your argument is effective. Use this chart to help you.

Questions	Tips	Revision Techniques
Does my introduction clearly state the claim?	Underline the claim.	Clarify the claim of introduction to make it hard to miss.
Is my claim supported by reasons and evidence?	Highlight each reason, and underline your evidence.	Add facts, statistics and examples to strengthen your claim.
What words or phrases are helping to make my argument clear?	Highlight words that help to connect your reasons and evidence.	Use words like <i>and</i> , <i>but</i> , <i>so</i> , and <i>because</i> to connect ideas and to create cohesion.
Have I addressed counterarguments?	Underline the claim. Consider what an opposing claim might be and how to address it.	Include a visible counterargument to show you are being reasonable about an opposing view.
Is the tone of my argument formal?	Highlight any contractions and use of casual wording.	Change the contractions. Revise so the tone sounds objective.
Does the conclusion restate my claim and end convincingly?	Underline the restatement.	Summarize your main points in a restatement that tells the audience what you want it to believe or understand.



Have your partner or a group of peers review your draft in *myWriteSmart*. Ask your reviewers to note any reasons or evidence that does not support your claim.

Interactive Lessons

For help in refining your argument, use:
• [Writing Arguments: Concluding Your Argument](#)

PRESENT

Create a Finished Copy Finalize your argument and choose a way to share it with your audience. Consider these options:

- Post it as a blog on a personal or school website.
- Present your ideas in a debate with someone who has an opposing claim.

PERFORMANCE TASK A RUBRIC

ARGUMENT

Ideas and Evidence

Organization

Language

4

- The introduction is engaging; it clearly states the writer's claim about the statement.
- Logical reasons and relevant evidence from the texts convincingly support the writer's claim.
- Opposing claims are anticipated and effectively refuted.
- The concluding section effectively summarizes the claim and leaves a lasting impression.

- The reasons and evidence are organized logically and consistently throughout the argument.
- Words and phrases logically connect reasons and evidence to the writer's claim.

- The writing reflects a formal style and tone.
- The use of clear, succinct language effectively conveys the writer's ideas.
- Sentence beginnings, lengths, and structures vary and have a rhythmic flow.
- Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are correct.
- Grammar and usage are correct.

3

- The introduction could do more to grab the reader's attention; the introduction states the writer's claim.
- Most reasons and relevant evidence from the texts support the writer's claim, but they could be more convincing.
- Opposing claims are anticipated, but they could be more effectively refuted.
- The concluding section restates the claim, but it is not very memorable.

- The organization of reasons and evidence is confusing in a few places.
- A few more words and phrases are needed to connect reasons and evidence to the writer's claim.

- The style and tone become informal in a few places.
- Sentence beginnings, lengths, and structures vary somewhat.
- Few spelling, capitalization, and punctuation mistakes occur.
- Some grammatical and usage errors are repeated in the argument.

2

- The introduction is ordinary; the writer's claim is not clearly stated.
- The reasons and evidence are not always relevant or logical.
- Opposing claims are anticipated but not addressed logically.
- The concluding section includes an incomplete summary of the claim.

- The organization of reasons and evidence is generally logical, but it frequently doesn't follow a pattern.
- Many more words and phrases are needed to connect reasons and evidence to the writer's claim.

- The style and tone become informal in many places.
- Sentence structures barely vary, and some fragments or run-on sentences are present.
- Several spelling and capitalization mistakes occur, and punctuation is inconsistent.
- Grammar and usage are incorrect in many places.

1

- The introduction is missing.
- Supporting reasons and evidence are missing.
- Opposing claims are neither anticipated nor addressed.
- The concluding section is missing.

- A logical organization is not used; reasons and evidence are presented randomly.
- Connecting words and phrases are not used.

- The style and tone are inappropriate for an opinion essay.
- Repetitive sentence structure, fragments, and run-on sentences make the writing hard to follow.
- Spelling and capitalization are often incorrect, and punctuation is missing.
- Many grammatical and usage errors occur.

COLLECTION 2

PERFORMANCE TASK B

Interactive Lessons

To help you complete this task, use *Giving a Presentation*

Give a Summary Presentation

Sorry, Wrong Number is a drama chockful of actions and shifting perceptions. In the following activity, you will draw from *Sorry, Wrong Number* to deliver a summary presentation.

A successful summary presentation

- includes the title and author of the work being summarized
- restates in your own words the **theme**, or main idea, and its supporting details
- shows a comprehensive understanding of the source
- interests listeners through the use of effective verbal and nonverbal techniques

PLAN

Review and Take Notes The first step in presenting a summary is making sure you fully understand the work that you are summarizing. Review *Sorry, Wrong Number* closely to identify key details.

- Jot down notes about the setting, the characters' personalities, and the major plot events.
- Look for details that help you decide what point the writer is making. Reread for details that support this point.
- Consider that not every detail will be important enough to include.
- Sum up the details in your own words in a statement about the **theme**, or main idea, the writer has expressed.

Consider Your Purpose and Audience Think about who will see your presentation and what you want them to understand. Keep in mind the essential information you want to share and how to capture your audience's attention.

ELA W.7.2a–f, W.7.4, W.7.5, W.7.6, W.7.10, SL.7.4

ELD PI.7.4, PI.7.9, PI.7.10, PI.7.12, PII.7.5

myNotebook

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to mark up key details that you might want to include. Save each detail to your notebook.

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

As you plan your summary, try to use the academic vocabulary words.

abnormal
feature
focus
perceive
task

PRODUCE



Draft Your Summary Review your notes as you begin a draft of your summary. Your draft should

- cite the drama's title and writer
- clearly identify the theme by stating it in your own words
- include the most important details that support the theme
- present this information in a condensed, short passage
- show that you fully understand the source

Write your rough draft in myWriteSmart. Focus on getting your ideas down before condensing your summary.

Language Conventions: Modifying to Add Details

An **adverbial phrase** is a group of words that modifies much like a simple adverb. There are different categories of adverbial phrases. Adverbial phrases of time describe when an action occurs, how often, or to what extent. Read the following speech from *Sorry, Wrong Number*.

Mrs. Stevenson: I've been dialing Murray Hill 4-0098 **for the last three quarters of an hour** and the line is always busy.

The phrase *for the last three quarters of an hour* modifies the verb *dialing*, telling how long Mrs. Stevenson has waited and revealing her impatience.

REVISE



Practice Your Delivery Once you have a firm grasp of your summary, you are ready to practice how you'll present it. Practice until you know your summary well. The tips below will help you make your summary presentation more engaging.

Have your partner or a group of peers review your draft in myWriteSmart. Ask your reviewers to suggest possible cuts.

Verbal Elements	Nonverbal Signals
Enunciation: Pronounce your words clearly.	Eye contact: Look into the eyes of your audience members.
Inflection: Let your voice rise and fall naturally as you speak.	Facial expressions: Look serious, look intense, or raise an eyebrow.
Pace: Match the speed of your delivery to the mood of what you are describing.	Gestures: Use your hands, shrug, nod, or shake your head.

Interactive Lessons

For help in practicing your presentation, use:

- [Giving a Presentation: Delivering Your Presentation](#)

Evaluate Your Summary To help you smooth out any rough spots, have a partner view a practice run of your presentation. Use the following chart to help you.

Interactive Lessons
For help in refining your presentation, use:
• [Giving a Presentation:](#)
 [Style in Presentation](#)

Questions	Tips	Revision Techniques
Are the author and title included in your summary?	Highlight the author and title.	Mention the author and title at or near the beginning of the summary.
Does your summary state the theme of the drama in your own words?	Underline the theme.	Check to be sure you have used your own words.
How well do the details in the summary support the theme?	Highlight supporting details.	Revise the details so that the connections to the theme are clear.
How effective are your nonverbal and verbal techniques?	Pair with a partner to find out how you are using your body language and voice.	Improve your delivery by trying out any suggestions.

PRESENT

Create a Finished Copy Finalize your summary presentation for a wider audience. You might present it to the class or record it as a video to post on an approved website.

PERFORMANCE TASK B RUBRIC

SUMMARY PRESENTATION

	Ideas and Evidence	Organization	Language
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The summary cites the work's title and author. • The summary states the work's theme in the presenter's own words. • The summary reflects the presenter's full understanding of the work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The theme is supported strongly by relevant details. • The summary consists of a condensed, short passage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presentation quite effectively conveys the work's theme and supporting ideas. • The presenter's verbal and nonverbal techniques engage the audience. • The summary features rich details through use of strong modifiers.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The summary doesn't include both the title and author. • The summary states the theme of the work but it could be less wordy. • The summary shows a sufficient understanding of the work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is sufficient support for the theme. • The summary passage, though short, could use some tightening. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presentation needs more work to convey the theme and supporting ideas well. • The presenter shows a decent grasp of verbal and nonverbal techniques. • Improved use of modifiers would add more detail to the summary.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The title is mentioned in the summary but not the author. • The theme that is stated seems relatively minor. • The summary could do more to show a better understanding of the work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or two supporting details seem randomly chosen. • The summary includes too many repeated words and phrases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work's theme and supporting ideas are not evident. • The verbal and nonverbal techniques are minimal. • The summary needs modifiers in more places.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neither the title nor the author is included. • The theme is missing. • The lack the details show no understanding of the work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supporting details for the theme are missing. • Due to lack of detail, the summary shows no understanding of the work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No communication of the work's theme and supporting ideas. • The summary lacks the details to demonstrate understanding of the work. • There is little or no use of modifiers.