

ELA: Grade 6, Lesson 12, Arachne

Lesson Focus: Structure of the Greek Myth *Arachne*

Practice Focus: Students will use *Arachne* to study the structure of the text.

Objective: Students will use *Arachne* to study the structure of the text

Academic Vocabulary: exposition, conflict, rising action, climax, resolution

TN Standards: 6.RL.CS.5

Teacher Materials:

- The Teacher Packet for ELA, Grade 6, Lesson 12
- Chart paper or white board and markers

Student Materials:

- Paper, pencil, surface to write on
- Student response to Lesson 11 independent practice
- The Student Packet for ELA, Grade 6, Lesson 12 which can be found on www.tn.gov/education

Teacher Delivery Notes

- Lessons 11-15 are a lesson set, so you will want to keep all of your materials for the lessons accessible. You may find you need to go back and show a reference chart, an independent practice example response, or other visual.
- There are several visuals used in today's lesson. If you are not casting your screen in a way that students can see it, you will want to prepare your own charts. Please refer to the teacher packet for examples.
- This text has some Greek names and places. There are some phonetic spellings provided. You may want to Google the phrases to hear the pronunciations. Arachne [uh-rak-nee], Idmon [Ihd-min], Colophon [kol-uh-fon, -fuh n]
- In the text, the Greek goddess's name is spelled Athené. The accent mark on the 'e' indicates the sound is voiced. Most of us are used to seeing it spelled Athena. Since that's more familiar and gives us the correct pronunciation, I have used that spelling throughout the lessons.

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| <p>Opening (1 min)</p> <p>Hello! Welcome to Tennessee's At Home Learning Series for literacy! Today's lesson is for all our 6th graders out there, though everyone is welcome to tune in. This lesson is the 2nd in this week's series.</p> <p>My name is ____ and I'm a ____ grade teacher in Tennessee schools. I'm so excited to be your teacher for this lesson! Welcome to my virtual classroom!</p> <p>If you didn't see our previous lessons, you can find them on www.tn.gov/education. You can still tune in to today's lesson if you haven't seen any of our others. But it might be more fun if you first go back and watch our other lessons, since today we'll be talking about things we learned previously.</p> | |

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| <p>Today we will be learning about how the author develops the story of Arachne! Before we get started, to participate fully in our lesson today, you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper, pencil, surface to write on • Student response to Lesson 11 independent practice • The Student Packet for ELA, Grade 6, Lesson 12 which can be found on www.tn.gov/education <p>Ok, let's begin!</p> | <p>Students gather materials for the lesson and prepare to engage with the lesson's content.</p> |
| <p>Intro (4 min)</p> <p>In Lesson 11, we read Arachne, a Greek origin myth. The story told of a mortal, Arachne, who got into a weaving contest with the goddess Athena. After our lesson, you wrote a journal entry from the goddess Athena's point of view. These were the directions:</p> <p>[To help your students follow this section, show slide L12-A or use the Directions Chart you created for Lesson 11 and refer to this visual as you talk through this model.]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a journal from Athena's point of view. • Explain how she felt during her day with Arachne. • Retell this myth that we learned today from Athena's point of view. <p>Take a minute to reread what you wrote. [Pause.] I'm going to read an example to you. Listen for how Athena felt about Arachne.</p> <p>Why am I still so angry? Is it because the girl, Arachne, thought that she was a better craftswoman than me? Or is it because she didn't listen to my warning that challenging the talents of the gods and goddesses would be a crime to be punished for? Or is it because she chose to mock the powers of the gods and goddesses with her tapestry? Whatever it may be, Arachne suffered the fate that she chose even after being warned. What message would it send to the mortal humans that they can challenge the advice, authority, talent, or power of the gods and goddesses? How silly for her to think of herself better than me, the goddess Athena. I tried to warn her, both in disguise as the old woman and as myself, that to rival a god would be an unforgivable mistake, and she still persisted.</p> <p>Some people might think the punishment of turning poor Arachne into a spider may have been too harsh, but her foolish pride in her skills gave me no other option but to act as I did. Arachne will spend forever doing what she loves,</p> | <p>Students prepare to follow the gradual-release trajectory, understanding that they will be doing more listening at first and more "doing" toward the end of the lesson.</p> <p>Students will reread their own writing.</p> <p>Students will listen for words or phrases in the sample journal entry that show how Athena feels about Arachne.</p> <p>Students will mark words or phrases in their journal entries that show how Athena feels about Arachne.</p> |

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| <p>but as a creature that “few love and many fear”. Please listen to my advice carefully, mortals will never possess the knowledge or skills that the gods and goddesses do. To believe otherwise would be a crime to be punished for.</p> <p>In this example, how did the writer let you know what Athena’s feelings toward Arachne? [Pause.] Right! In the first sentence, Athena says she is angry. She also called her “silly” and talked about her “foolish pride.” Take a minute to mark words or phrases in your journal that show how Athena feels about Arachne. [Pause.]</p> <p>Today our goal is to analyze how the author develops the plot of the story. We will begin with me showing you what that looks like, and then there will be time for you to practice on your own with my support. Finally, I will assign you independent work that you can complete after the lesson ends.</p> <p>To organize your notes today, let’s create a three column chart. Label the columns Plot Element, Episode, and How does this episode lead to the resolution? [To help your students follow this section, show slide L12-B or create your own chart and refer to this visual as you talk through this model.]</p> | <p>Students will create their own three column chart with “plot element, episode, and how does this episode lead to the resolution” above each column.</p> |
| <p><u>Teacher Model/Read-Aloud</u> (13 min)</p> <p>In this lesson, you will learn how to describe the way a story’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes by identifying major episodes and considering each episode’s role in the plot.</p> <p>We read the myth in our last lesson, so let’s review a little about what we learned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our text is the Greek myth, Arachne. It is an origin myth, meaning that the purpose of the myth is to explain how something came into being. What does our myth explain? [Pause.] That’s right! Spiders! The myth explains how spiders came into being. • This story has been told and retold over hundreds, well, probably thousands, of years! But the version we read was written by Jean Lang. • In this story, Arachne is transformed into a spider. <p>Today, we are going to look at how the author crafted this story. Every plot consists of five parts. Can you think of any or all of those parts of a story? [Pause.] Let’s review each</p> | <p>Students will answer or write as directed in response to prompts and questions.</p> |

one. [Show slide L12-C or create your own chart and use as a visual as you talk through the plot elements.]

- **Exposition** -the author reveals the main characters and setting
- **Conflict**- a struggle between the main character and someone or something else; first introduced in the exposition
- **Rising action**-development of the conflict; events that lead to the climax
- **Climax**- turning point of the conflict; usually the most exciting part of the story
- **Resolution**-describes the results of the climax and ties together loose ends of the story

Our question for today is, *What is the series of episodes that lead to Arachne being transformed into a spider?* [Repeat question 2x.]

To answer the question, we'll follow these two steps:

[Show slide L12-D or create your own reference chart and refer to it as a visual as you discuss.]

- 1. Reread parts of the text, recording episodes that make up the basic elements of the plot.**
- 2. Ask, "How does this episode lead to the resolution?"**

Let's reread some of the text: We are looking for the exposition--the place where characters, setting, and conflict are introduced. Listen for those things as I read.

The hay that so short a time ago was long, green grass, with fragrant meadow-sweet and gold-eyed flowers growing amongst it in the green meadow-land by the river, is now dry hay—fragrant still, though dead, and hidden from the sun's warm rays underneath the dark wooden rafters of the barn. Occasionally a cat on a hunting trip comes into the barn to look for mice, or to nestle cozily down into purring slumber. Now and then a hen comes tip-toeing through the open door and makes for itself a secret nest. Sometimes children come in, chasing cat or hen, or merely to tumble each other over the soft hay, and when they have gone away, a little more of the sky can be seen through the little window in the roof, and through the wooden bars of the window lower down. Yet, whatever other living creatures may come or go, near those windows of the barn, and high up on its dark rafters, there is always one living creature working, ceaselessly working. When, through the skylight, the sun-god drives a golden sunbeam, the web of the unresting worker can also to

be seen, for the window is hung with shimmering grey cloths made by Arachne, the spider, and from rafter to rafter her threads are suspended with matchless skill.

She was a girl once, they say—the daughter of Idmon the dyer, of Colophon, a city of Lydia. In all Lydia there was no one who could weave as well as the beautiful Arachne. To watch her brush the wool of the white-fleeced sheep until in her fingers it grew like the soft clouds that hang round the hill tops, was pleasure enough to draw a crowd from all over.

This text is a little tricky because the first paragraph describes one setting, but the second introduces another! What clues does the author use to signal a shift in time? [Pause.] Like I said, it's a little tricky. The myth begins with a description of the setting and the introduction of a spider. The first clue that a flashback is used is the use of the image of the spider to show the separation of time and place. Next, the text says, "She was a girl once, they say—the daughter of Idmon the dyer, of Colophon, a city of Lydia." The use of the words, "was once a girl" shows that she is different now. As the story continues, it is made clear that the story is being told a long time after it happened.

For now, we'll focus on the story from where it introduces the reader to Arachne.

Let's read a little more:

One day, Athena, goddess of craftsmen, heard news that there was a girl whose skill rivaled that of the goddess herself, and she, always jealous, disguised herself a woman bent with age, and, leaning on her cane, joined the little crowd that so often hung round Arachne as she did her busy work with the needle.

So, let's think about what we need to record on our chart for an episode in the exposition. [If you are projecting the screen as you film, you can show slides that reveal the addition of each episode as you talk through them. If you aren't showing your screen, you can record the notes in real time as you ask students to do the same.] **How about this? Athena hears of Arachne's talent and wants to see her in action.** [Show slide L12-E.] **Write your answer on your chart.** [Pause.]

All right. Let's determine the conflict. Listen as I read:

Students write their answer on their chart for the exposition.

Gently she spoke to the girl, and, with the words of a wise old woman, and warned her that she must not let her ambition soar too high. "Be careful girl, there is no better craftswomen than the goddess Athena, and were you to dream that one day you might equal her...that would indeed be a crime for any god to punish."

Glancing up for a moment from the picture whose perfect colors grew fast under her slim fingers, Arachne fixed scornful eyes on the old woman and gave a merry laugh.

"Did you say equal Athena? Old woman," she said. "You must be from the far-off hills where the goat-herds live, otherwise, you would not speak to me, Arachne, of equaling the work of Athena; excelling is the better word."

There it is, right? Let's record the conflict: Arachne wants to be a better weaver than the goddess Athena.

[Pause; Show slide L12-F. You may want to repeat what students need to write.]

Remember, the conflict is developed more during the events of the rising action. Let's read a little more.

"Be careful what you say child, there may indeed be punishment with time." The old woman croaked. Laughing still, Arachne replied, "I don't fear Athena." And turning to the crowd who, half afraid, listened to her daring words, she said: "You who watch me day by day, you know well that I and not just boasting. My skill is as great as that of Athena, and greater still it shall be. Let Athena compete with me if she dare! Well do I know who will be the victor."
(Then Athena drops her disguise)

"Athena is here," she said, and the crowd fell on their knees before her, humbly adoring. Arachne alone was unabashed. Her cheeks showed how fast her heart was beating. From rosy red to white went the color in them, yet, in firm, low voice she spoke.

"I have spoken truth," she said. "Not woman, nor goddess, can weave like me. I am ready to abide by what I have said, and if I did boast, by my boast I stand. If you will agree, great goddess, to try your skill against mine and you win, I will gladly pay the price."

Students write their answer on their chart for the conflict.

The grey-eyes of Athena the goddess, grew dark as the sea when a thunder-cloud hangs over it and a mighty storm is coming. Not for one moment did she delay, but took her place by the side of Arachne. On the loom they stretched out two webs with a fine yarn, and quickly set to work.

So, let's summarize the rising action in this way: [Show slide L12-G.]

Athena warns Arachne to be careful of her pride. Arachne doesn't listen and challenges Athena to a weaving contest. You're doing a great job of collecting evidence from the text!

Now, we'll move to the climax. Do you remember the moment when we read the story in our last lesson that made you want to gasp? [Pause.] Yes! Let me read that part again:

Then at last the storm broke, and with a scream, the enraged goddess shredded Arachne's weaving, the beautiful pictures were torn into rags and ribbons.

Record the episode on your note taker. [Show slide L12-H.]

Realizing that she is not winning the contest, Athena rips Arachne's tapestry to shreds.

Now, all that's left is to see the outcome of the climax. How are the characters affected?

Listen as I read:

Arachne, shamed to the dust, knew that life for her was no longer worth living. She had aspired, in the pride of her splendid genius, to compete with a god, and knew now that such a contest can never be won.

Athena looked at her and smiled with icy kindness. "Oh guilty and shameless Arachne! For evermore you and your descendants will live and weave as you did today so that men will never forget the punishment of those dare to rival a god."

Even as Athena spoke, Arachne's fair form dried up and withered. Her straight limbs grew grey and crooked and wiry, and her smooth white arms were no more. Eight legs sprouted and her body shrank. And then just as suddenly as it had started, there was silence. Tiny beside the loom,

Students write their answer on their chart for the rising action.

Students write their answer on their chart for the climax.

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| <p>where just moments before the beautiful weaver of Lydia had stood, crawled a creature that few love and many fear.</p> <p>How would you describe the resolution? [Pause.] Great! Go ahead and add that to your chart. Here's what I wrote: [Show slide L12-I] Athena tells Arachne her punishment, and Arachne is transformed into a spider.</p> | <p>Students write their answer on their chart for the resolution.</p> |
| <p>Guided Practice (5 min)</p> <p>The second step in analyzing the series of episodes that lead to Arachne being transformed into a spider is to ask: <i>How does this episode lead to the resolution?</i> I think you will be able to complete some of this on your own, but let's try at least a couple together.</p> <p>Let's go back to the exposition. Obviously, I could answer the question with something general like, "the exposition sets up the context including characters and conflict," but it's much more helpful in our analysis to be specific to this story. So, I think I would say, "This episode leads to the resolution because it is the beginning of the interaction of Athena and Arachne." [Show slide L12-J.] Add that to your chart.</p> <p>How does the conflict between Arachne and Athena help the plot move toward resolution? [Pause.] That's right! Without a conflict, there really isn't a story, is there? Because it is a Greek myth, it's not surprising that the conflict is between a mortal, Arachne, and a goddess. Take a minute and add your response to your chart. [Show slide L12-K.]</p> <p>Moving on to the rising action, how does this story build to move toward the resolution? I think it's important to note here that an author really gets the reader's attention with the rising action. If there isn't enough tension in the events of the rising action, a reader might decide they aren't interested enough to stay with the story. So, what do we see in this story's rising action that makes us want to know the climax? [Pause.] I think so, too! Arachne makes some pretty bold statements even after Athena, disguised as an old woman, tries to warn her. Then, the author keeps us guessing as she describes the intense weaving battle between Arachne and Athena. I think a reader might even choose one of them to root for! Did you? [Pause.] Well, let's see if we can summarize this for our notes. I'll read mine to get you thinking, but you can write your answer in your own words. I said: [Show slide L12-L.] This episode leads to the resolution because there is a chance for Arachne to back</p> | <p>Students follow along and think and act as instructed, gradually gaining confidence and competence.</p> <p>Identify here what, specifically, students will be able to do by the end of the segment.</p> <p>Student writes: This episode leads to the resolution because it is the beginning of the interaction of Athena and Arachne.</p> <p>Student writes: Without the conflict between a mortal, Arachne, and a goddess, Athena, there would not have been a story to resolve.</p> <p>Student writes: This episode leads to the resolution because there is a chance for Arachne to back down from her boasting. When she doesn't, it is clear that there will be a contest.</p> |

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| <p>down from her boasting. When she doesn't, it is clear that there will be a contest.</p> <p>We've made it to the point that we will see how the conflict ends--the climax. I really did catch my breath when I read that Athena ripped Arachne's tapestry to shreds and ended the contest! Did you? [Pause.] Write down your response to how this episode moved the plot toward resolution. [Longer pause, then show slide L12-M.] I'll share my thoughts with you. I wrote: This episode leads to the resolution because Athena rips up Arachne's tapestry making it clear that no matter how talented Arachne is, she cannot win a contest with a goddess. Your answer is probably similar.</p> <p>It sounds a little funny to ask, "How does the resolution move the plot toward resolution," doesn't it? But, we want to include the resolution in our analysis. Were you satisfied with the resolution? Do you think things ended the way they should have? We'll talk more about the characters and how they were affected by the resolution in another lesson, so keep those questions in mind. You can add your thoughts about the role of the resolution on your notes as part of the independent practice today. [Teacher may want to show slide L12-N as a scaffold or leave that for students to complete on their own.]</p> <p>In this lesson, you have learned to analyze how a story's plot unfolds in a series of episodes by identifying major episodes and considering each episode's role in the plot. You've done some great work with me today!</p> | <p>Student writes: This episode leads to the resolution because Athena rips up Arachne's tapestry making it clear that no matter how talented Arachne is, she cannot win a contest with a goddess.</p> <p>Student writes: Arachne loses her prideful attitude but is punished by being turned into a spider.</p> |
| <p><u>Independent Work</u> (2 min)</p> <p>The next step will be on your own. [Show slide L12-O.]</p> <p>Grab your pencil and a piece of paper so you can complete your independent practice. [Pause.] Choose one episode and write a paragraph about the importance of that episode in the overall plot. How does this episode move toward the resolution?</p> <p>Use the text evidence you collected and the notes you took about the explanation to write your paragraph.</p> <p>Use this structure to organize your paragraph:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An introductory sentence with the title, author, and genre (origin myth) • 1-2 sentence summary of the story | <p>Student chooses one episode and writes a paragraph about the importance of the episode on the overall plot. Student should cite evidence from their notes.</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● 3-4 sentences to explain the episode and its role in the plot● 1 concluding sentence to end your paragraph | |
| <p><u>Closing</u> (1 min)</p> <p>I enjoyed looking a little deeper into this myth with you today! Thank you for inviting me into your home. I look forward to seeing you in our next lesson in Tennessee's At Home Learning Series! Bye!</p> | |

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