

Interactive Introduction Literature Kit Project (Identity)

English 12

Mr. Barrington

Overview:

In your groups, you will take the poem, "Richard Cory," by Edwin Arlington Robinson and bring this poem to life. The end product should be an interactive PDF that would show your understanding of imagery points, figurative language, symbolism, irony, and other poetic devices. Essentially, you will create or modify a PDF inserting active links, pop-ups and notes on it. You will then present your document to the class on our review day.

Step-by-Step Process:

Step 1: Form a group of 3-4 students and sign up group with Mr. Barrington.

Richard Cory

Edwin Arlington Robinson

Whenever **Richard Cory** went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him:
He was a gentleman from **sole** to crown,
Clean favored, and **imperiallly** slim.

And he was always quietly **arrayed**,
And he was always human when he talked;

But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
“Good-morning,” and he glittered when he walked.

And he was rich — yes, richer than a king —

And admirably schooled in every grace:

In fine, we thought that he was everything

To make us wish that we were in his place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,

And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;

And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,

Went home and put a bullet through his head.

<https://www.poetryinvoice.com/poems/richard-cory>

Symbolism Conflict Irony (All described below)

Step 2: Re-read your short story looking for the following categories that you will need to include on your PDF. Brainstorm these examples on the brainstorm page:

___ **Diction** (7 words total, links to online definitions, pop-up or note with example explained)

King: the male ruler of an independent state, especially one who inherits the position by right of birth. (Google Dictionary)

Fluttered: (of a person) move restlessly or uncertainly. (Google Dictionary)

Rich: plentiful; abundant. (Google Dictionary)

Arrayed: displayed/ dressed in specified clothes (Google Dictionary)

Admirably: in a way that arouses or deserves respect and approval. (Google Dictionary)

Imperially: pertaining to an emperor. (Dictionary.com)

Sole: The bottom of someone's foot (Google Dictionary)

___ Imagery – what are the images that arise from this poem, (4 characters)

“He was a gentleman from sole to crown” creates the image of a well put together, rich man. A typical gentleman.

“And he was always quietly arrayed”, despite his wealth, he's described as dressing in everyday clothes.

“We people on the pavement looked at him” This places Richard Cory on an elevated position to the rest of the towns people, as the sidewalk is higher than the pavement.

___ Setting (photo and explanation, both physical and emotional, can be annotated or linked)



Physical Setting: The poem takes place primarily in the downtown area of the city, Its taken place in the summer time and also takes place in Richard Cory's home.

Emotional Setting: In the story there is a lot of admiration, praise for Richard Cory. In the end it is sad and surprising.

___ Symbolism signs (3 signs identified, annotated)

“ yes, richer than a king” - Kings symbolize wealth, power, Royalty and leadership.

“put a bullet through his head” - the bullet in the story symbolizes his death and unhappiness.

“Richard Cory”- he himself is a symbol of wealth and royalty seen by the way people look up to him.

_____ **Conflict highlighted (distinguish 2 types, explain if internal/external, annotated, explained)**

1. “Went home and put a bullet through his head.”

Self-vs. Self Conflict, Internal: Cory didn’t like the way his life was going, didn’t enjoy any part of it. Ended up taking his own life after struggling to find a will to live.

2. “And went without the meat, and cursed the bread”

Person Vs. Society Conflict, External: People describing their suffer and struggle to earn money to eat: inability to feed themselves properly, instead filling themselves with bread because it’s what they can afford.

_____ **Irony (3 examples, can be any type of irony, must explain how it is that type of irony, annotated)**

1. “And he was rich — yes, richer than a king —” Verbal Irony: Saying he was *rich* in monetary terms, but Cory was a very poor man. He was emotionally and mentally poor. He didn’t have anything he wanted.
2. Entire Poem: Situational Irony: We would think that because he was rich, and looked up upon many people that he would be happy – but instead he’s sad and doesn’t have what he truly desires.
3. “To make us wish we were in his place.”: Situational Irony: They think they want to be in Cory’s place, but in reality they don’t know his situation. They don’t understand that he’s suffering with other things.

Author Background:

Name: Edwin Arlington Robinson

Aged: 65

DOB: December 22, 1869, DOD: April 6th, 1935

Born in Head Tide, Lincoln County, Maine. His *Collected Poems* (1921) won the first Pulitzer Prize ever awarded to poetry. He was the third son of a wealthy New England Merchant, and in turn was pushed towards a science background. His father discouraged his literary pursuits, yet he continued. His father finally provided money for a Harvard scholarship mostly because Edwin required medical treatment that could best be provided in nearby Boston. He finally decided to publish his own poems with *Riverside*, a vanity magazine, to produce *The Torrent and The Night Before*. Kermit Roosevelt brought Edwin's works to the attention of his father Theodore who subsequently set Edwin up with a post at the New York customs house. With this he was financially stable and living a good life. Hi career continued fairly well until 1935 when he fell ill with cancer and was hospitalized until his death. During this time, he was correcting his final poem *King Jasper*.

_____ **Other Poetic Devices (3 examples identified and explained, annotated) > <http://literary-devices.com>**

1. "Richer than a king" - Simile. As king's are monarchs and rulers of a region, it makes sense that they would have vast amounts of wealth. The author is making a simile with Richards wealth and a king. He is essentially saying Richard was wildly rich.
2. "To make us wish we were in his place – went home and put a bullet through his head" Allegory. The poem describes a man who has everything in life yet still commits suicide. It's thought provoking as it makes you question what other motives Richard could have had for taking his own life. It goes to show it's impossible to judge someone on simply their surface appearance.
3. "And he was rich – yes, richer than a king-" Caesura. A Caesura is a sentence that is divided yet intrinsically intertwined. This fits the bill in being divided yet absolutely related and formed together.

_____ Thematic Statements (2 thematic statements that fit the story, also must be explained in 2-3 sentences, end of document, annotated)

1. One theme is judgement. From the outside, Richard Cory seems to be a perfect, successful man with more wealth than imaginable. Though he has "everything" he could ask for, he still commits suicide. This implies that there were deeper struggles kept hidden from an oblivious world.
2. Another theme is the idolization of someone. Having an idol is a dangerous game as they usually only serve disappointment. After all, we are all human and elevating another one of us to a higher status in our minds is foolish. Especially comparing ourselves to them.

Step 4: Use Google Doc or Word to create a PDF of the story with annotations and photos, bringing this story to life, allowing the reader to have a deeper understanding (3 in-class working days). You can either use the original text or copy and paste it into a new document if you prefer different formatting. All categories must be color coded, so vocabulary is in one color, literary devices in another, etc.

Step 5: Connect the poem to the following themes:

1. Personal Identity? (How is the poet connected to this poem on a personal level?)
2. Cultural Identity? (How is the poet connected to this poem on a cultural level?)
3. Class Identity? (How is the poet connected to this poem in terms of class?)
4. National Identity? (How is the poet connected to this poem on a social level?)

This poem brings up themes of the great depression which makes sense considering the poet was alive. It talks of the wealth divide as well as many were scrounging for the bare minimum while other Americans lived in opulence.

5. Gender Identity? (How is the poet connected to this poem in terms of gender?)

Step 6: Stories must be saved as a PDF and uploaded to your blog by the assigned due date.