

Lesson Plan: Martin Needs to Save His Job: Analyzing a Character’s Decision in “The Catbird Seat.”

RL.9-10.1 - Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.9-10.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

Common Core Writing Standard 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Common Core Writing Standard 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W.9-10.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Procedures

- Read the opening couple paragraphs to “The Catbird Seat.” Focus on Martin’s problem and his goal.
- Fill in the boxes. You can fill the boxes out as a class and instruct students to decide or vice versa.
- Instruct students to write a letter of advice to Mr. Martin on how to handle the whole job difficulties.

Assessment

Use the chart as a formative assessment. It’s a necessary skill needed on the included quizzes—summative assessments.

Problem Solution

Instructions: Mr. Martin has a problem. You're here to help him. Identify his problem and then three possible solutions. Analyze the potential results—positives and negatives. Finally, identify the best solution and why.

Problem/Issue:

Mr. Martin has a tranquil life and a decent job. Mrs. Barrows, the new advisor to the president of the company, wants to shake things up—possibly get rid of him.

Martin must act with the goal of keeping his job.

Possible Solution #1

Action

Possible Solution #2

Action

Possible Solution #3

Action

Potential Result

Potential Result

Potential Result

In the space below, document why this solution is the best answer to the problem.

Problem Solution (Possible Answers)

Instructions: Mr. Martin has a problem. You're here to help him. Identify his problem and then three possible solutions. Analyze the potential results—positives and negatives. Finally, identify the best solution and why.

Problem/Issue:

Mr. Martin has a tranquil life and a decent job. Mrs. Barrows, the new advisor to the president of the company, wants to shake things up—possibly get rid of his job.

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Possible Solution #1

Action

Mr. Martin could assassinate Mrs. Barrows.

Possible Solution #2

Action

Mr. Martin could talk to Barrows and Fitweiller about his future in the company.

Possible Solution #3

Action

Mr. Martin could look for another job.

Potential Result

It would certainly get rid of the Barrow problem, if successful, but he could get caught and lose his job anyway—along with his freedom. And he'd be a murderer.

Potential Result

Barrows doesn't seem like the type of advisor to the president that changes her mind easily. This would be way out of Martin's comfort zone and would ruin his chances for a no risk assassination.

Potential Result

He would have a job doing basically the same thing, but it wouldn't be the same. It could be better, too, but Martin doesn't strike me as a good adjuster to new things.

In the space below, document why this solution is the best answer to the problem.

Mr. Martin needs to realize his days with the company are numbered. It's time to find a new job.

