

## ACTIVITY 1.5

### ▶ PLAN

**Suggested Pacing:** 2 50-minute class periods

### ▶ TEACH

**1** Guide students through the “The Departure” section. Explain that as students work through the activity, they should begin thinking about ideas for their own Hero’s Journey narrative. Remind students that their hero can be real or imagined.

**2** Read the Preview and the Setting a Purpose for Reading sections with your students. Help them understand the literary terms they encounter.

**3 FIRST READ:** Based on the complexity of the passage and your knowledge of your students, you may choose to conduct the first reading in a variety of ways:

- independent reading
- paired reading
- small group reading
- choral reading
- read aloud

#### Text Complexity

**Overall:** Very Complex

**Lexile:** 960L

**Qualitative:** Moderate Difficulty

**Task:** Challenging (Evaluate)

**4** Have students look carefully at the imagery and setting created in the opening paragraph before moving on to the rest of the story. Ask what feeling they get from these details, and why the first paragraph has the effect it does.

### TEACHER TO TEACHER

If your class includes English language learners or any students who need extra support while reading, consider **chunking** the text and using the **reading roles** strategy. Place students in small groups and assign roles to each student. The Summarizer briefly restates the main points of each chunk, the Questioner poses questions or points out anything confusing, the Clarifier tries to address the questions, and the Predictor offers a prediction of what will come next.

## ACTIVITY 1.5

# The Departure

**LEARNING STRATEGIES:** Marking the Text, Close Reading, Diffusing, Rereading, Summarizing, Sketching, Visualizing

### My Notes

**ruffle:** to flutter or move in a slow, wavy pattern

### Learning Targets

- Analyze a story for archetypal structure and narrative techniques.
- Draft the opening of an original Hero’s Journey narrative.

### The Departure

Joseph Campbell describes the first stage of the Hero’s Journey as the hero’s departure or separation. The Departure Stage consists of three steps: the Call to Adventure, Refusal of the Call, and the Beginning of the Adventure.

### Preview

In this activity, you will read a story about a hero’s departure and begin creating a hero of your own.

### Setting a Purpose for Reading

- As you read, think about the stages of a hero’s journey. Put a star next to parts of this story that show the stages of Joby’s journey.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meaning of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ray Bradbury (1920–2012) authored the novel *Fahrenheit 451*, which was first published in 1953. Bradbury called his books fantasy rather than science fiction because he wrote stories that could not happen in real life. Other well-known works by Bradbury include *The Martian Chronicles* and *Something Wicked This Way Comes*. Bradbury also authored hundreds of short stories and even wrote and published his own fan magazine.

### Short Story

## “The Drummer Boy of Shiloh”

by Ray Bradbury

**1** In the April night, more than once, blossoms fell from the orchard trees and lit with rustling taps on the drumskin. At midnight a peach stone left miraculously on a branch through winter flicked by a bird fell swift and unseen struck once like panic, which jerked the boy upright. In silence he listened to his own heart **ruffle** away away—at last gone from his ears and back in his chest again.

**2** After that, he turned the drum on its side, where its great lunar face peered at him whenever he opened his eyes.

**3** His face, alert or at rest, was solemn. It was indeed a solemn night for a boy just turned fourteen in the peach field near the Owl Creek not far from the church at Shiloh.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Shiloh** (n.): site of a Civil War battle in 1862; now a national military park in southwest Tennessee

### COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS STANDARDS

#### Focus Standards:

**RL.8.3:** Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

**W.8.3:** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

**W.8.3a:** Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and

introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

**W.8.3d:** Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

#### Additional Standards Addressed:

**RL.8.1; RL.8.2; RL.8.4; RL.8.10; W.8.3b; W.8.4; W.8.10: L.8.4a; L.8.4c**

4 "...thirty-one, thirty-two, thirty-three..."

5 Unable to see, he stopped counting.

6 Beyond the thirty-three familiar shadows, forty thousand men, exhausted by nervous expectation, unable to sleep for **romantic** dreams of battles yet unfought, lay crazily askew in their uniforms. A mile yet farther on, another army was strewn **helter-skelter**, turning slow, basting themselves with the thought of what they would do when the time came: a leap, a yell, a blind plunge their strategy, raw youth their protection and **benediction**.

7 Now and again the boy heard a vast wind come up, that gently stirred the air. But he knew what it was—the army here, the army there, whispering to itself in the dark. Some men talking to others, others murmuring to themselves, and all so quiet it was like a natural element arisen from South or North with the motion of the earth toward dawn.

8 What the men whispered the boy could only guess, and he guessed that it was: "Me, I'm the one, I'm the one of all the rest who won't die. I'll live through it. I'll go home. The band will play. And I'll be there to hear it."

9 Yes, thought the boy, that's all very well for them, they can give as good as they get!

10 For with the careless bones of the young men harvested by the night and **bindled** around campfires were the similarly strewn steel bones of their rifles, with bayonets fixed like eternal lightning lost in the orchard grass.

11 Me, thought the boy, I got only a drum, two sticks to beat it and no shield.

12 There wasn't a man-boy on the ground tonight who did not have a shield he cast, riveted or carved himself on his way to his first attack, compounded of remote but nonetheless firm and fiery family devotion, flag-blown patriotism and cocksure **immortality** strengthened by the touchstone of very real gunpowder; ramrod, Minié ball<sup>2</sup> and flint. But without these last the boy felt his family move yet farther off away in the dark, as if one of those great prairie-burning trains had chanted them away never to return—leaving him with this drum which was worse than a toy in the game to be played tomorrow or some day much too soon.

13 The boy turned on his side. A moth brushed his face, but it was peach blossom. A peach blossom flicked him, but it was a moth. Nothing stayed put. Nothing had a name. Nothing was as it once was.

14 If he lay very still when the dawn came up and the soldiers put on their bravery with their caps, perhaps they might go away, the war with them, and not notice him lying small here, no more than a toy himself.

15 "Well ... now," said a voice.

16 The boy shut up his eyes to hide inside himself, but it was too late. Someone, walking by in the night, stood over him.

17 "Well," said the voice quietly, "here's a soldier crying before the fight. Good. Get it over. Won't be time once it all starts."

18 And the voice was about to move on when the boy, startled, touched the drum at his elbow. The man above, hearing this, stopped. The boy could feel his eyes, sense him slowly bending near. A hand must have come down out of the night, for there was a little rat-tat as the fingernails brushed and the man's breath fanned his face.

<sup>2</sup> Minié ball: a type of rifle bullet that became prominent during the Civil War

**romantic**: fondly imaginary  
**helter-skelter**: in a confused or disorderly way  
**benediction**: a prayer or blessing

#### My Notes

**bindled**: held together in a sack

**immortality**: the ability to live forever



#### WORD CONNECTIONS

##### Etymology

In the past, people would test the quality of gold or silver by rubbing a stone across it and analyzing the color of the streak it left. The 15th-century Middle English word *touch* meant "to test," so this stone became known as a *touchstone*. This term is now a metaphor for any method used to test the quality or effectiveness of something else.

#### SCAFFOLDING THE TEXT-DEPENDENT QUESTIONS

1. **Key Ideas and Details (RL.8.3)** What textual evidence in the beginning of the story shows that the boy is afraid? Try to hear the sound of a peach stone hitting the skin of your drum as it lay beside you in the darkness. How could that cause a panicky feeling?

2. **Craft and Structure (RL.8.4)** The word "harvested" is used figuratively in paragraph 10. How do you know it is used figuratively, and

why did the author choose this word? What is the boy counting? What is beyond the forms of the soldiers the boy can barely see in the night time? Visually, what would this vast army of soldiers look like?

3. **Craft and Structure (RL.8.4)** Consult reference materials to find the meanings of "ramrod" and "flint." Relate these words to the meaning of the last sentence in paragraph 12. How does the sentence convey the boy's mood? From the opening scene, what is the boy's

#### ACTIVITY 1.5 continued

5 As students are reading, monitor their progress. Be sure they are engaged with the text and annotating the stages of Joby's journey. Evaluate whether the selected reading mode is effective.

6 Based on the observations you made during the first reading, you may want to adjust your reading mode. For example, you may decide for the second reading to read aloud certain complex passages, or you may group students differently.









## ACTIVITY 1.5 continued

**11** Have students continue to work in pairs or small groups as they complete the **graphic organizer**.

**12** Ask students to complete the Check Your Understanding. Encourage students to reread the passage to identify text evidence to support their main idea statements.

### Leveled Differentiated Instruction

In this activity, some students may need help writing a main idea statement and supporting it with textual evidence.

**L2–L3** Give students a model main idea statement and ask them to work in small groups to find evidence to support it. You may wish to model finding one piece of evidence and incorporating it into a response cohesively.

**L3–L4** Have students work in pairs to write a main idea statement in one or two simple sentences, then share with another pair to get feedback. After revising the main idea statement, students should work together to find text evidence and incorporate it cohesively into their responses.

**L4–L5** Have students work independently to write the main idea in one complex sentence and provide textual evidence cohesively integrated into their responses.

## ACTIVITY 1.5 continued

# The Departure

10. Reread a chunk of the text to identify and evaluate the narrative elements listed in the graphic organizer.

Structure: Exposition	What descriptive detail does the author provide?	How effective is the description?
<b>Setting</b> 1862; night before the Battle of Shiloh	Anonymous soldiers; darkness; under a peach tree with blossoms falling	The author effectively portrays the quiet before battle when fears are most likely to reveal themselves.
<b>Character</b> Fourteen-year-old volunteer drummer boy	Alone; has a drum; crying and afraid	The reader can clearly imagine the youth and vulnerability of the drummer boy.
<b>Conflict</b> Internal: fear vs. duty	Crying; contrasts his two sticks to soldiers with guns as being better prepared to go into battle	The reader sympathizes with the boy's sense of his vulnerability; he has only a drum; he has no gun.
<b>Point of View</b> Third-person limited; reader knows Joby's thoughts and feelings	Joby feeling his family move farther away into the darkness; Joby feeling his drum is worse than a toy since it cannot protect him	The reader can sense the boy's fear and homesickness. Being away from his family, with no protection, makes him feel weak and helpless.
Techniques	How does the author use each element to develop the story?	How effective is the author's technique?
<b>Description</b>	Shadowy; nighttime; the lack of clear visibility is like the boy's need for more clarity of purpose, so he is not overcome by fear	The scene is obscure as is the boy's fear; he hides his fear in the darkness.
<b>Dialogue</b>	General's dialogue gives the boy a sense of his importance and purpose	The general's words are inspiring; this is the turning point for the boy.
<b>Pacing</b>	The pace is fairly slow, measured, and thoughtful. It is a conversation between wisdom and innocence the night before a battle.	The pacing is effective for a story about a boy experiencing fear and how he is pulled out of his fear.

### Check Your Understanding

Now that you have identified and evaluated the narrative elements of the story, determine its central idea. Write a summary of the central idea, supporting your interpretation using evidence from the text. Explain how the author communicates the idea that Joby is now ready to start his journey.

