PERSONAL NARRATIVE

STANDARD: LITERACY.W.10.3A ENGAGING AND ORIENTING THE READER

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| **STANDARD** | **OBJECTIVE** |
| [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3.A](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/9-10/3/a/)  **Engage** and **orient** the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events. | IWBAT…  Use graphic organizers to identify the purpose of literary techniques in a fiction/non-fiction narrative and write descriptions that analyze how these *engage* and *orient* the reader. |

**PART I**

**DIRECTIONS**: In the space provided below, use your iPad to define “engage” and “orient.”

DEFINITIONS: [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

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| **Engage** | **Orient** |
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| How might someone be *engaged* during a soccer game? | What are some ways you could orient a new student to ESAT? |

**Warm-Up Comprehension Questions**

1. Who is the narrator and what is his position/role/job in the Burmese village?
2. How are Europeans, particularly the British, regarded by the native population? Why? Include 2 specific examples in your answer.
3. What is Orwell’s attitude towards the native peoples?
4. How is the elephant described in Orwell’s narrative? If you were to encounter it in real life, how do you think you would react (based on his description)?

**ACTIVITY STEPS:**

1. Re-Examine the text and your annotations.
2. As you re-read the section of text, search for moments when the author “engages” the reader. **Place a star at the beginning and end of the example.**
3. As you re-read the section of text, search for moments when the author “orients” the reader. **Place a star at the beginning and end of the example.**

**After you have read and analyzed the text, fill out the chart below by:**

1. Selecting and explaining 3 examples of the author engaging the reader.
2. Selecting and explaining 3 examples of the author orienting the reader.

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| **CLASS EXAMPLE:**  PAGE 1 of “Shooting an Elephant” |

In Moulmein, in lower Burma, I was hated by large numbers of people – the only time in my life that I have been important enough for this to happen to me. I was sub-divisional police officer of the town, and in an aimless, petty kind of way anti-European feeling was very bitter. No one had the guts to raise a riot, but if a European woman went through the bazaars alone somebody would probably spit betel juice over her dress. As a police officer I was an obvious target and was baited whenever it seemed safe to do so. When a nimble Burman tripped me up on the football field and the referee (another Burman) looked the other way, the crowd yelled with hideous laughter. This happened more than once. In the end the sneering yellow faces of young men that met me everywhere, the insults hooted after me when I was at a safe distance, got badly on my nerves. The young Buddhist priests were the worst of all. There were several thousands of them in the town and none of them seemed to have anything to do except stand on street corners and jeer at Europeans.

CLASS/TEACHER EXAMPLES:

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| EXAMPLE | Engaging? Orienting? | Why does the author include this? Why is it important for the reader? What does this information or technique ADD to the story? What would be missing without it? |
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STUDENT RESPONSES:

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| EXAMPLE | Engaging? Orienting? | Why does the author include this? Why is it important for the reader? What does this information or technique ADD to the story? What would be missing without it? |
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**PART II – [extended] EXIT TICKET**

GUIDING QUESTION: How does a STUDENT engage and orient the reader?

**DIRECTIONS:**

1. Close-Read the text using the strategy introduced in class.
2. Go back.
   1. Search for moments when the author “engages” the reader. **Place a star at the beginning and end of the example.**
   2. Search for moments when the author “orients the reader. **Place a star at the beginning and end of the example.**
3. Select and explain 3 examples that show how the student **engages** the reader.
4. Select and explain 3 examples that show how the student **orients** the reader.

Breaking Through

My fan was on. The steady hum of machinery was all that was really heard on such a warm summer night, making the air cool, like a refreshing kiss from lips of ice. The nearby lamp gave off a tired, yellow glow that provided just enough light to see everything, but not enough to see the faint stains that spotted the carpet. There wasn’t much to see anyway because the room was unfurnished aside from a bed, hardly big enough for me, and a grey crate supporting the lamp. I wasn’t complaining, I had just gotten my room back. It still smelled faintly like my sister’s cheap body perfume and fabric softener.

I looked at the foot of the bed, and my blank closet looks back at me. Its white surface is clean, but the fact that is was knocked off its track told the real story behind its condition. I got up, and the chorus of springs met my ears, creaking and groaning with every movement. I opened my closet and was met with clothes accumulated over years, including clothes from my mother, father and stepfather’s days of youth filled the closet. I gazed at a long, greatcoat of my mother’s with light brown fur the color of cinnamon. I pushed its sleek surface aside and was met by a blazer of my stepfather’s that still didn’t resonate well with me. It was as if I could almost smell the beer, because I know he didn’t drink in it, but I never really saw him without him drinking at least once. I recalled the blue tin cans with its silver writing in my recycling bags.

Continuing my search, I found something that stuck out strongly. It was black leather that was in pristine condition, with those little patterns that seemed to follow a grand scheme, but were truly just small marks made at random. It smelled slightly of cologne and adventure. It was just the length of my torso, which was so strange, my father and stepfather were bulky men, giant arms and bigger stomachs, and my mother was ridiculously thin. The light noise it made was faint, like a butterfly’s wingflap, but sounded like creaking. I grinned: it was perfect. I donned it, and aside it being a little tight in the shoulders, but otherwise it fit perfectly. It was the color of coal inside and out, with an equally shadowy zipper. Excited, I looked at myself in the mirror to see how cool I looked. I felt a bit like a child, but it wasn’t like my reflection was going to bully me.

In the corner, there was a photo of me just last year. I compared it to myself. My raven mess of hair was now just a ski-jump shape. My thin, hopelessly broken glasses were taped on my nose; now a thick frame occupied my eyes. The black trenchcoat wasn’t on my shoulders now, a slim tight leather jacket was holding me. I flopped onto the bed.

“Hey!”

I looked up. Someone looked back at me. Rather, I looked back at me. A youth, despite his dark bangs, pierced me with his eyes that seemed to be infinitely deep. His slate eyes were accompanied with a large, intimidating scowl. He almost blended in; his dark, olive skin was only a few shades lighter than the pitch-dark shades of his coat. I forgot how scary I could look when I was angry. I knew He wasn’t really there because He was just *me*, from two years ago. A 13-year old Cristian was staring back at me with black flames in his eyes.   
 “What?” Intimidating? No. But definitely came out as I felt. Confused.

“Who are you man? What are you doing? You look like some idiot who thought he could play dress-up. Get out of here. You’re shallow and superficial. You’re nothing like you used to be.”  
 I returned his volley of insults, “At least I’m not angry, volatile and violent. I control myself. And don’t call me shallow. I’m happy because my relationships have substance.” Even as I said it, I wasn’t so sure if I was just talking. What if He, rather I, was right? I had spoken forcefully, but I felt my argument was transparent like the lenses on the bridge of my nose.

He scoffed. His cold laugh pierced me. He seemed to know, no, he must have known, I doubted myself. “I can see right through you. You’re a poser. You ain’t gonna go nowhere. So when you want to catch up, listen to me for a change.”

“No, I will never go back there. I don’t want to be so wild and changing. I need dependability. I’m going to be me, and I’m substantial.” I knew now that with the natural strength of my voice I believed in that. The old me was like dust in the wind: subject to change. I had settled, I was a rock and I wasn’t going to give that up. When I spoke, I spoke with the strength of a mountain. I stood up and locked eyes with myself. I walked up close to him and stared down into those eyes of steel that only the cold anger brought out. I was scared of this side of me. But I couldn’t show it. Life is a continuous fight. Not always is your enemy a 6’8 muscular monster. Sometimes it’s just you. I walked right on by him.

“Get back here. I’m not done with you! Hey I’m talking to you!” He called out after me, begging for a fight. Trying to get me to break was his objective; I wasn’t going to give him the satisfaction. His voice was like nails on chalkboard, but I refused to shudder.

Despite his calls, I kept walking. I opened the front door and walked into the cool night. I turned onto the quiet avenue, letting the warm air embrace me, like the hug of a loved one. That’s what I needed most. I turned the corner, onto a dark, almost forested alley, where the darkness rivaled that of the cold fury in my eyes. I heard a whisper like dry leaves.

“Why are you abandoning me?”

I responded strong with the confidence of a thousand soldiers trained in battle. “Because I’m not you anymore.”

The old me was nothing but a shadowy outline. With one step and a smile quite like the Chesire Cat, he vanished. I knew he wasn’t physically real. But he had existed, he was me of 2 years ago. This experience helped me purge him. He was gone. A painting on the cave wall of my mind, nothing more. I walked back home. Soon, the sun would rise. And then, no shadows would surround me.

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| EXAMPLE | Engaging? Orienting? | Why does the author include this? Why is it important for the reader? What does this information or technique ADD to the story? What would be missing without it? |
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**HOMEWORK**

Overview:

It’s time for you to start brainstorming for your OWN PERSONAL NARRATIVE! In order to help you choose your topic wisely, I am assigning you a helpful (and fun) task.

Directions:

1. Go home and find 3-4 objects that you associate with a story.
2. Record your item in the table below, and give a quick overview of the story that is related to the object (4-5 sentences).

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| **OBJECT** | **STORY** |
| TEACHER EXAMPLE:  Flower Crown  (hair accessory) | TEACHER EXAMPLE:  When I was in Brazil, I had the opportunity to celebrate the final World Cup match on Copacabana Beach. It was here that I met a girl from Argentina who actually shared my love of the poem “Invictus” by William Earnest Henley. To show her appreciation and to represent our newfound friendship, she gifted me the flower crown she had been wearing her whole trip. |
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