

Text Pairings – Short Story & Nonfiction Article

Texts: “The Phoenix” by Sylvia Townsend Warner and “Reviving Extinct Species” by Carl Zimmer *National Geographic* April, 2013 (cover story)

Goal: To understand how authors communicate messages in different genres (nonfiction magazine article, fiction short story)

Action Steps and questions to direct to students:

- After reading “The Phoenix,” students work on characterizing people’s motives in the story.
 - Why does Lord Strawberry treat his birds the way he does? Cite evidence from the text.
 - Why does Poldero buy the phoenix? Why does he begin to harm the phoenix? Cite evidence from the text.
 - How do the general public treat the phoenix? Look at the imagery at the end regarding the event: filming, the lighting, the loudspeaker etc.
 - Using these lists, does Sylvia Townsend Warner overall think that people have a positive or negative affect on animals?
 - Connect the text to modern day zoos, pets and aquariums. Do people exploit animals?

- After reading “Reviving Extinct Species,” the *National Geographic* article, students should again work at determining people’s motives for reviving extinct animals.
 - Make a list of pros and cons regarding the argument about reviving extinct animals. Do you overall agree it is a good idea or a bad idea?
 - This makes for a good journal entry and/or class discussion.

- Conduct a debate about whether or not students think that people have an overall positive or negative effect on animals using evidence from each text.

- What techniques does Sylvia Townsend Warner use to make her point, and what is her point?
 - Characterization
 - Irony
 - Imagery (description of setting)
 - Allusion to the mythic stories of a phoenix

- What techniques does Carl Zimmer use in the *National Geographic* article “Reviving Extinct Species” to communicate the message of the article? Does the article take a stance or does it pose a question?
 - Facts & statistics
 - Anecdotes
 - Quotes from professionals to establish credibility
 - Experimental research and results

Extension texts for a full unit: “The Interlopers” by Saki, “The Reintroduction of Wolves to Yellowstone” *Time Magazine*, “The White Heron” by Sarah Orne Jewett, “There Will Come Soft Rains” by Sara Teasdale All gather

Name _____

Environment Unit Writing Assignment

Your task is to write a paragraph in regard to the topic humans and their environment. You must use two pieces we have read to back up your argument.

1. Consider the pieces we have studied so far:

- “The Phoenix” by Sylvia Townsend Warner
- “The Interlopers” by Saki
- “Reviving Extinct Species” by Carl Zimmer *National Geographic*
- “There Will Come Soft Rains” by Sara Teasdale
- “The White Heron” by Sarah Orne Jewett
- “Reintroduction of Wolves to Yellowstone” *Time* Article

2. Choose two of the pieces you know best and you think have a similar message.

- 1.
- 2.

3. Your paragraph must take a position.

- *Do you think, according to these two texts, that people have a positive or negative relationship with nature, the environment and/or animals?*
- *Then get more specific, what do the texts have in common that you can include in the thesis statement?*
 - *The role of nature*
 - *The treatment of animals*
 - *The danger of humans*
 - *The attempt to protect animals*
 - *Other ideas?*

4. Synthesize topic and message: