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| **At a Glance – “Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree”*** **Lesson Objective**: Analyze the poem “There Will Come Soft Rains” and consider the relationship between nature and humanity.
* **In the Story:** N/A; no new pages
* **Key Questions:** Questions 3, 5, 6, 9, and 10 are the most important questions of the day and should not be skipped.
* **Words to Watch For:**
	+ N/A
* **Homework Options:**
	+ “Ray Bradbury” reading and questions (attached)
	+ Knowledge Organizer review
	+ Questions from the lesson that were skipped for time
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| **Agenda:** * Do Now Quiz – Vocabulary (10 minutes)
* Optional Do Now (10 minutes)
* Cycle 1 – “Sara Teasdale and World War I” and “There Will Come Soft Rains” (20 minutes)
* Cycle 2 – AIR: Reread Pages 96-98 (20 minutes)
* Cycle 3 – FASE Reading or Read Aloud: “Teasdale and Bradbury” and Reread Pages 98-100 (20 minutes)
* Exit Ticket (10 minutes)
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| **Lesson Plan****Do Now Quiz – Vocabulary (10 minutes)** You may choose to have students complete this quiz immediately as a Do Now, or you may wish to start with the Do Now on page 2 so students start the quiz as a group. Feel free to skip the additional Do Now or assign as homework. Quiz Answers 1. Manifest
2. D, prosaic
3. Gloria rushed **precipitously** toward Robbie because she was so thrilled to see him she ran to him with excessive, careless speed. She didn’t notice that there was a tractor speeding toward her, and Robbie had to save her by pulling her out of the way.
4. A **prosaic** book would be ordinary and potentially dull or boring. It would probably not be inspiring like a **sublime** book which might impress a reader or fill with admiration and awe.
5. Asimov **theorizes** that at some point in the future robots might replace humankind and take control. (Responses may vary).
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| **Optional Do Now (10 minutes)*** Give students 7-8 minutes to respond to the prompt, then review using **Show Call, share out,** or a **brief discussion**.
* **Choose one piece of technology you use every day:**
	+ **How do you theorize this technology will change in the future?**
	+ **How will human beings react to it? Why do you think so?**
	+ **Challenge: Write your response as a narrative set in the future in which these changes are manifest.**
		- Responses will vary
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| **Cycle 1 (20 minutes) — “Sara Teasdale and World War I” and “There Will Come Soft Rains”** * **Read:** **Read Aloud** or use **FASE Reading** to read the embedded text, “Sara Teasdale and World War I.”
* **Write:** Ask students to **Turn and Talk** to respond to **Q1**.
* **Discuss:** Invite 2-3 students to **share out** responses to **Q1**. You might **Cold Call** strong responses to support pacing.
	+ **Q1: How did military technology change during World War I? Compare and contrast these technological changes to those that occurred during WWII and the Cold War.**
		- Military technology changed rapidly during WWI; many new weapons were invented, and existing weaponry was made more efficient and more deadly. Like the development of nuclear technology, these innovations resulted in large loss of life (and presumably increased fear on the part of the public). Unlike nuclear technology, however, these advancements were used frequently by both sides of the conflict (rather than the initial monopoly on nuclear power of the US), causing an even more widespread loss of life.
* **Read: Read Aloud** the poem “There Will Come Soft Rains.” ***Note****: This should be an expressive, contiguous read, without pausing for questioning.*
* **Write**: Ask students to jot notes to respond to **Q2,** then **Turn and Talk** to share observations with a partner.
* **Discuss:** **Share out** or **Cold Call** responses to **Q2.**
	+ **Q2: What is your first impression of this poem? What is it mostly about? How would you describe its mood (the general feeling or atmosphere of the piece)? Note any words or phrases that stand out to you.**
		- Responses will vary; students may begin to notice the peaceful, dreamlike (even idyllic) mood, the beautiful natural imagery, and the gentle rhyming rhythm of the poem.
* **Read**: Use **FASE Reading** to read the poem a second time, pausing to **drop-in** implicit vocabulary.
* **Write**: Ask students to respond to **Q3** independently.
* **Discuss**: **Share out** responses to **Q3**.
	+ **Q3a: What does the pronoun “it” in line 8 refer to? Consider the poem’s historical context.**
		- “[T]he war” (more specifically, we can assume WWI, given the poem’s historical context).
	+ **Q3b: Who or what is the speaker referring to with the repeated pronoun “one”?.**
		- The birds/trees/animals previously mentioned in the poem (nature or the natural world in general)
	+ **Q3c: Summarize lines 7-8.**
		- When the war ends finally, nature will not know or even care.
* **Read**: Ask students to use **AIR** to read the poem a third time, **annotating** any examples of personification. You may wish to review annotations through **Show Call** or **share out** before students begin to write.
	+ **Potential Annotations**
		- *Frogs in the pools singing at night*
		- *Robins will wear their feathery fire*
		- *Whistling their whims*
		- *Spring herself, when she woke at dawn, / Would scarcely know that we were gone*
* **Write**: Give students time to respond to **Q4-Q5**.
* **Discuss**: Lead a **brief discussion** of **Q4-Q5**. You may wish to discuss after each question.
	+ **Q4a: Annotate any examples of alliteration in the lines above.**
		- *Feathery fire*
		- *Whistling / whims / wire*
	+ **Q4b: How does the alliteration change the poem? Why might Teasdale have put it there? Consider any juxtaposition or contrast the alliteration emphasizes.**
		- ***Note****: You may ask students to choose one example of alliteration to focus on or assign to certain students/groups*
		- In each example of alliteration, images of peace and war are juxtaposed. Calling the robins’ plumage “feathery fire” pairs the word “fire” (which makes us think of destruction/violence) with “feathery” – something light, delicate, and natural. The robins “wear” this “feathery fire,” a personifying verb that transforms the fire into something bright, vibrant, and warm rather than frightening or destructive.
		- In the line “whistling their whims on a low fence-wire,” we see the pairing of carefree, playful “whistling” contrasted with a “low fence-wire,” presumably one left on the battlefields of the war. The incongruity of a piece of destructive human technology in this dreamlike, idyllic springtime world draws our attention to the fact that there are no humans left in this place.
	+ **Q4c: Challenge: How are the robins being personified?**
		- The robins are personified as happily indifferent to the residue of war, cheerfully whistling their wishes and desires, without a care, perched on a symbol of violence and division.
	+ **Q5a: Turn and Talk: Brainstorm any associations or potential symbolism you can think of connected with “spring.”**
		- Responses may vary, but could include:
			* Rebirth
			* New growth
			* Fresh start (“dawn”)
			* New beginnings/new life
			* Budding flowers/baby animals
			* Hope
	+ **Q5b: Consider Teasdale’s use of capitalization. How is spring personified? What’s potentially ironic about these final lines?**
		- In the poem, Spring is personified as a woman waking up and hardly noticing that all of mankind has perished. Spring is treated as a character because of the capitalization; it’s the only proper name in the poem.
		- Ironically, in this poem full of images of new growth/spring/dawn/new beginnings, mankind has been destroyed and replaced. The only hope or growth comes from nature – there is no “spring” for humankind. The poem’s gentle, beautiful images of nature will survive without us, indifferent to the loss of humanity.
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| **Cycle 2 (20 minutes) – Reread Pages 96-98*** **Read:** Ask students to use **AIR** to reread pp. 96-98 (from the beginning of the story to “Twelve noon”) and annotate any depictions of nature (including technological imitations of nature).
	+ **Potential Annotations**
		- *It was raining outside* (p. 96)
		- *Flushed them away to the distant sea* (p. 97)
		- *Tiny robot mice darted* (p. 97)
		- *The sun came out from behind the rain* (p. 97)
		- *The garden sprinklers whirled up in golden founts, filling the soft morning air with scatterings of brightness*
		- *The gentle sprinkler rain filled the garden with falling light* (p. 97)
		- *Getting no answer from lonely foxes and whining cats, it had shut up its windows and drawn shades in an old-maidenly preoccupation with self-protection that bordered on mechanical paranoia* (p. 97)
		- *If a sparrow brushed a window, the shade snapped up. the bird, startled, flew off! No, not even a bird must touch the house!* (p. 97)
* **Write:** Ask students to respond to **Q6-Q7**, cueing to **Turn and Talk** for **Q6a**.
* **Discuss:** Lead a **brief discussion** of **Q6-Q7** to surface the key ideas. For pacing, you may wish to **Cold Call** or **Show Call** student responses.
	+ **Q6a: What is literally being described in these two lines? What strikes you about these images? What mood or atmosphere do they create?**
		- These lines describe the way the water from the garden sprinkler system catches the light as it falls on the house. Both lines include images of light, beauty and nature (albeit man-made nature, “sprinkler rain” rather than actual rain). They create a mood of gentle, idyllic peace – the “soft morning air,” the “gentle sprinkler rain,” “scatterings of brightness” and “falling light” create a sense of calm/quiet/bright stillness..
	+ **Q6b:** **What juxtaposition or contrast are you noticing between these details and the scene that comes between them? How might starting and ending the scene with these lines impact the overall mood?**
		- These two images of peace and beauty surround the description of the nuclear shadows left behind when the family was killed. The “scatterings of brightness” and the “falling light” are in stark contrast to the house’s “charred west side” that is “burned black” save for the places the family members were standing when their lives ended. Bookending the excerpt with these lines causes the peaceful, gentle mood to carry through the horrifying descriptions. Readers may not even initially realize they’re reading about a family’s death; the beauty of the images masks the tragedy.
	+ **Q6c: Describe any similarities you see between the excerpt from p. 97 and Teasdale’s poem. Consider the relationship between humanity and nature.**
		- Like in Teasdale’s poem, in this excerpt the natural world continues, peaceful and beautiful, even after the destruction of humanity. Nature isn’t mourning the loss of the family; the dazzling morning light and sparking water are still beautiful, even when no people are there to appreciate the beauty. In both, nature survives (and even thrives) while humans do not.
		- In both the poem and the excerpt, the mood is calm and gentle. While we might expect a poem or a story set after the violent destruction of humanity to be frightening, graphic, or unsettling, both Bradbury and Teasdale describe a world that “scarcely [knows] that we were gone” and continues on, unconcerned.
	+ **Q7: Challenge: What do you notice about the relationship between the house and nature? What might this suggest about the relationship between people and nature before the apocalypse (given who developed the technology)? Include embedded evidence from p. 97 in your response.**
		- The house is paranoid about contact with nature, desperate to protect itself from the natural world. The house is personified as an anxious old woman that “quivered at each sound,” flinching if ever a bird touched it, staying safe from “lonely foxes and whining cats.” The house must have been designed/programmed this way by the family/people in general to prevent contact with anything unpredictable ad natural that might disturb the ritual of its mechanical routine.
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| Cycle 3 (20 minutes) – “Teasdale and Bradbury” and Reread Pages 98-100 * **Read:** **Read Aloud** or use **FASE Reading** to read the embedded text, “Teasdale and Bradbury.” ***Note****: When Bradbury's story was first published, it was set in the year 1985. Later versions have updated the year to 2026 and 2057.*
* **Write:** Ask students to **Turn and Talk** to respond to **Q8** and write responses to **Q9**.
* **Discuss:** Lead a **brief discussion of Q8** by taking hands or using **Cold Call** to surface key ideas.
	+ **Q8: How are both the story and the poem post-apocalyptic?**
		- Both are “post-apocalyptic” because they both describe the word after a massive catastrophe or disaster wipes out the human race.
	+ **Q9: Paraphrase this quote from the article above: *[Bradbury’s] story shares with Teasdale's poem the terrifying insight that mankind is no longer connected, organically, to the natural world.***
		- Bradbury’s poem and Teasdale’s poem share the frightening realization that humans no longer have a close relationship to nature.
* **Read**: Using either **FASE Reading** or **AIR**, reread pp. 98-100, annotating any evidence of interactions between nature, humans, and technology. **Challenge**: Look for anything that reveals “mankind is no longer connected, organically, to the natural world,” as in the quote above.
* **Write**: Ask students to respond to **Q10**.
* **Discuss**: Lead a **brief discussion** of **Q10**.
	+ **Q10a: What part of the house is being described? What futuristic elements does Bradbury imagine it includes?**
		- This excerpt describes the children’s room. It seems to have screens built into the walls that display magical, fantastical images of unrealistic nature.
	+ **Q10b: How might this excerpt support the idea that in Bradbury’s depiction, “mankind is no longer connected, organically, to the natural world”? Challenge: What’s potentially ironic about the verb “lived”?**
		- This might support the idea that “mankind is no longer connected, organically, to the natural world” because rather than experiencing realistic, true nature, nature is manufactured, turned into a fantasy (“blue lions” and “lilac panthers”) and brought inside for entertainment. It’s ironic to say the walls “lived” when the walls are actually an imitation of life. People (before their destruction) created a new version of nature that’s fantastical and not realistic rather than being “organically” connected to the natural world.
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| **Exit Ticket (10 minutes)*** **Q1: What does Sara Teasdale imagine in her poem, “There Will Come Soft Rains”? Include the word post-apocalyptic in your response.**
	+ Teasdale imagines the world after the end of World War I; mankind has been destroyed in this post-apocalyptic situation, but nature lives on, peaceful and indifferent.
* **Q2: What makes Bradbury’s story post-apocalyptic? How is his vision of a post-apocalyptic future similar to Teasdale’s? How is it different? Consider both writers’ use of personification.**
	+ In both depictions of a post-apocalyptic future, humankind has been destroyed through their own acts of violence while nature continues without noticing or caring that humans are gone. In Bradbury’s vision, however, technology plays a central role, carrying on the routines of life as if the humans still relied on it. While in Teasdale’s poem, nature is personified most often, the Bradbury’s, technology takes on humanlike traits.
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| **Homework Answers**1. Many aspects of the house seem like “blessings” in that they make life easier/more convenient for the humans who live there. At the same time, the nuclear war that destroyed the family is an “abomination” because of its devastating effects on humanity.
2. In the first two paragraphs, the author describes Bradbury’s importance to science fiction and the significance of his career more generally. He might have begun the article this way because it shows readers why we should know about Bradbury and how large his effect has been.
3. Answers will vary.
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