

ELA: Grade 6, Lesson 14, Arachne

Lesson Focus: Use of descriptive language in the Greek Myth *Arachne*

Practice Focus: Students will focus on how the author of *Arachne* uses descriptive language to develop the characters and to impact the resolution

Objective: Students will use *Arachne* to explore the author's use of language by writing how Arachne feels after her transformation into a spider, using details from the text.

Academic Vocabulary: fair, withered, despite, marveled

TN Standards: 6.KID.3, 6.RL.CS.4, 6.RL.CS.5, 6.RL.KID.3, 6.W.TTP.1

Teacher Materials:

- The Teacher Packet for ELA, Grade 6, Lesson 14
- Chart paper with this chart: Transformations

	Before transformation	After transformation
Arachne's description		
Athena's feelings		
Arachne's feelings		

Student Materials:

- Paper, pencil, surface to write on
- Student response to Lesson 13 independent practice
- The Student Packet for ELA, Grade 6, Lesson 14 which can be found on www.tn.gov/education

Teacher Delivery Notes

- Lessons 11-15 are a lesson set, so you will want to keep all of your materials for the lessons accessible. You may find you need to go back and show a reference chart, an independent practice example response, or other visual.
- There are several visuals used in today's lesson to provide students examples of how to organize their notes. If you are not casting your screen in a way that students can see it, you will want to prepare your own charts. Please refer to the teacher packet for examples.
- Because of the nature of the lesson, students will need more support during the guided practice, and there will need to be extra pause time for students to record their responses on their charts.
- This text has some Greek names and places. There are some phonetic spellings provided. You may want to Google the phrases to hear the pronunciations. Arachne [uh-rak-nee], Idmon [lhd-min], Colophon [kol-uh-fon, -fu h n]
- In the text, the Greek goddess's name is spelled Athené. The accent mark on the 'e' indicates the sound is voiced. Most of us are used to seeing it spelled Athena. Since that's more familiar and gives us the correct pronunciation, I have used that spelling throughout the lessons.

Teacher Do	Students Do
<p>Opening (1 min)</p> <p>Hello! Welcome to Tennessee's At Home Learning Series for literacy! Today's lesson is for all our 6th graders out there, though everyone is welcome to tune in. This lesson is the fourth in this week's series.</p>	

<p>My name is ____ and I'm a ____ grade teacher in Tennessee schools. I'm so excited to be your teacher for this lesson! Welcome to my virtual classroom!</p> <p>If you didn't see our previous lessons, you can find them at www.tn.gov/education. You can still tune in to today's lesson if you haven't seen any of our others. But it might be more fun if you first go back and watch our other lessons, since today we'll be talking about things we learned previously.</p> <p>Today we will be learning about how the author uses language to build characters and to move to a resolution in the story of Arachne! Before we get started, to participate fully in our lesson today, you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper, pencil, surface to write on • Student response to Lesson 13 independent practice • The Student Packet for ELA, Grade 6, Lesson 14 which can be found on www.tn.gov/education <p>Ok, let's begin!</p>	<p>Students gather materials for the lesson and prepare to engage with the lesson's content.</p>
<p>Intro (6 min)</p> <p>In Lesson 12, we studied the elements of the myth, <i>Arachne</i>, and how they led to the resolution. Pop quiz time! Just kidding... but let's see what you remember!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the word that means how the author reveals the main characters and setting? [Pause.] Yes! It is exposition. • Next question: What is the word that means a struggle between the main character and someone or something else? It is first introduced in the exposition. [Pause.] Correct! Conflict is the word. • Third question: This word means the development of the conflict. These are the events that lead to the climax. [Pause.] Rising action is the answer! • What is the turning point of the conflict? It usually is the most exciting part of the story. [Pause.] Did you say climax? If so, you are correct! • Fifth and final question in elements of myth trivia: This word describes the results of the climax and ties together loose ends of the story. [Pause.] You are correct... resolution. <p>During lesson 13, we focused on the conflict. Conflict is the major problem between the main character of the story and someONE or someTHING else. It drives the plot forward. Without a compelling conflict, the reader would likely lose interest. The conflict gives characters a reason to act and change. The conflict in our text is between Arachne, a mortal,</p>	<p>Students prepare to follow the gradual-release trajectory, understanding that they will be doing more listening at first and more "doing" toward the end of the lesson.</p> <p>Students connect to learning in lessons 12 and 13.</p>

and Athena, an immortal. We took notes that helped us determine how the conflict from each episode affected the characters--Arachne and Athena. As a result of the conflict, Arachne is transformed into a spider. As we ended the lesson, I asked you to imagine you were one of spectators of the face-off between Arachne and Athena. Would you have supported your fellow mortal Arachne or the goddess Athena in the competition and why?

Take a minute to reread what you wrote. [Pause.] I'm going to read an example to you. I want you to listen for how the student supported her argument with evidence from the text. Being there to see the weaving battle between Arachne and Athena was one of the greatest contests I have ever witnessed! As I was there silently cheering on my fellow mortal, Arachne, I noticed a strange mood among all of the people watching. Deep down, we all wanted Arachne to win. I mean, she is one of us. But as Athena seemed to get angrier and angrier throughout the contest, it became clear that it would be safer for all of us not to upset the goddess even more. And boy were we right! After Athena punished Arachne by turning her into a spider, the crowd knew once and for all that in any contest between a mortal and an immortal, always make sure you are on the side of the immortal.

When I read this example, I heard the details that Arachne is a mortal, and Athena is a goddess.

Today, our goal is to look a little deeper at the language the author used to develop the characters and to lead to the resolution. We will begin with me showing you what that looks like as we reread some excerpts from the text. Then, there will be time for you to practice on your own with my support. Finally, I will assign you independent work that you can complete after the video ends.

Before we dig in, let's get ourselves organized with a chart to capture text evidence as we read along. Grab your paper and something to write with. I'll give you a few moments to get your things. [Pause.] Now, I'd like for you to make a chart, like this. [Model drawing the chart in the teacher's notes on your paper.] [Show slide L14-A.] We know that big transformations occur in this myth. Let's focus on this transformations and the descriptive language the author uses to reveal them. Let's write transformations as our title. On the left side, let's write: Arachne's descriptions, Athena's feelings, and Arachne's feelings. I think these sound like good headers for our chart. I'm going to write before and after the very top of my chart, and

Students will reread their own writing and compare to the example.

Students will create their own chart about before and after transformation.

<p>then head my left column with <i>before</i> and the right column with <i>after</i>. Like this. You do your chart, too. [Model heading your chart.]</p> <p>I believe we are ready to dig in! Let's do it!</p>	
<p>Teacher Model/Read-Aloud (11 min)</p> <p>In this lesson, you will analyze how the author's language choices support our understanding of the characters and move to the resolution of the transformation of Arachne.</p> <p>As always, it is good to review what happened in our text. We are reading a Greek origin myth. Do you remember the purpose of an origin myth? [Pause.] I hope you remembered the purpose is to explain how something came into being. And what is the origin this text is explaining? [Pause.] Eek! The origin of spiders! Well, some people might like spiders, but as we found out in our myth, most don't!</p> <p>Let's start by looking at a selection about Arachne.</p> <p><i>As the crowd watched, woven flowers sprang up under Arachne's fingers, just as real as the flowers that spring from the ground. Despite herself, Athené marveled at the magic skill of the fair Arachne.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What examples of descriptive language does Lang use to describe Arachne's physical descriptions? Remember, this is before her transformation? [Pause.] Good! Lang says that Arachne is fair. What do you think <i>fair</i> means in this context? [Pause.] Yes, it means beautiful. Lang wants us to know that Arachne was a beautiful girl. • Let's add that to our chart. I'm going to write that before her transformation, Arachne was fair/beautiful. [Model adding to your chart in the box titled Arachne's description before: fair/beautiful.] • Great, let's keep reading. <p>Now, let's dig into how the author uses the language to show the differences, or contrasts, in Arachne's appearance after her transformation. As I read, think about how Athena <i>transforms</i> Arachne.</p> <p><i>Even as Athené spoke, Arachne's fair form dried up and withered. Her straight limbs grew grey and crooked and wiry, and her smooth white arms were no more. Eight legs sprouted and her body shrank. And then just as suddenly as it had started, there was silence. Tiny beside the loom, where just moments before the beautiful weaver of Lydia had stood, crawled a creature that few love and many fear.</i></p>	<p>Students will answer or write as directed in response to prompts and questions.</p> <p>Students follow the teacher's review of the story.</p> <p>Students reflect on descriptions of Arachne before the transformation.</p> <p>Students add to the chart.</p> <p>Students reflect on descriptions of Arachne after the transformation.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you write? The author used some great language. I heard “dried up” and “withered”. Withered is another word for dried up and skinny. Did you capture those? Withered and dried up are interesting word choices. Dry and withered are very negative words. [Add <i>withered</i> and <i>dried up</i> to chart in Arachne’s descriptions after.] • What word from before Arachne’s transformation do these <i>withered</i> and <i>dried up</i> contrast? [Pause.] Notice the author used the word fair to describe Arachne before and then uses it to describe her form again in this paragraph. • Let’s look a little deeper at this phrase: <i>her smooth white arms were no more</i>. What does that mean? [Pause.] I am going to have to infer here - meaning I am going to have to take what the text says and what I know about spiders. I know that spider legs are hairy so I can infer Athena has made Arachne’s arms and legs hairy like a spider. [Add to chart - <i>her smooth white arms were no more</i> in Arachne’s descriptions after.] • Then, there are the other obvious ways she has changed into a spider. What did you list? [Pause.] 8 legs for sure! Also, she now crawls. [Add to chart in Arachne’s descriptions after.] • I think we should also add the line <i>few love and many fear</i> to our chart. That describes Arachne after the transformation. • Using these two selections, what would you say about Arachne’s beauty before and after the transformation? Take a minute to compose a sentence on your paper. [Pause for students to write.] Here are my thoughts: prior to the transformation, Arachne was beautiful. The author describes her as fair. After the transformation she is withered, dried-up, and hairy - a creature that few love and many fear. <p>Okay, so we’ve captured some good examples that help us to see Arachne’s transformation, but let’s think a little deeper. This gives us a real peek into Athena’s feelings. I want you to think about how Athena feels about Arachne before the transformation. Here’s the line: <i>Despite herself, Athené marveled at the magic skill of the fair Arachne</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand the line, we need to break down the meaning of some of the words. When you use the word “despite”, what does that mean? [Pause.] In this sentence “despite herself” means even though Athena did not want to. Sometimes we have feelings we can’t 	<p>Students add to the chart.</p> <p>Students create a sentence on their paper about Arachne’s transformation.</p> <p>Students reflect on Athena’s feelings before the transformation.</p>
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<p>control. Athena can't control these feelings toward Arachne.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What feeling is Athena having? [Pause.] The word "marveled" clues me into her feelings. Marveled means amazed. Athena is amazed by Arachne's weaving. • How would you say this line in your own words? [Pause.] I think I would say - Even though Athena doesn't want to, she is amazed by Arachne's weaving. [Add to chart in Athena's feelings before transformation - <i>Even though Athena doesn't want to, she is amazed by Arachne's weaving.</i>] <p>Now, I'm going to reread a different section, and like before, I want you to think about how Athena must be feeling at this moment? This selection Arachne is speaking: <i>"I have spoken truth," she said. "Not woman, nor goddess, can weave like me. I am ready to abide by what I have said, and if I did boast, by my boast I stand. If you will agree, great goddess, to try your skill against mine and you win, I will gladly pay the price."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So, what do you think? What is this telling us about the way Arachne is feeling at this moment? [Pause.] Arachne is feeling bold - she's saying that she is the best weaver, even better than a goddess. [Add to chart in Arachne feelings before - <i>bold.</i>] • Hmm...how is Athena feeling about this? Let's read the next line to find out. <p><i>The grey-eyes of Athena the goddess, grew dark as the sea when a thunder-cloud hangs over it and a mighty storm is coming.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It did get worse! How do the author's descriptions give us insight into Athena's feelings now? [Pause.] What specific words does Lang use to help us see that Athena is extremely angry? [Pause.] Good! He uses a simile here. Remember a simile is a comparison an author uses to compare two unlike things with the words like or as. He is comparing Athena's eyes to a dark sea during a storm. Eek! That's creepy! • How does this word choice help us to visualize how angry she is? [Pause.] Yes. It helps us see her in our head by using words such as dark, thunder, hangs, and storm. • Let's add this to our chart. I'm going to write that under the before column. [Model adding to your chart in Athena's feelings before: <i>Athena is extremely angry.</i>] • I'm curious to know more about how Lang uses descriptive language to give us more insight into both Athena and Arachne's feelings. Let's read another 	<p>Students add to the chart.</p> <p>Students reflect on Arachne's feelings before the transformation.</p> <p>Students add to the chart.</p> <p>Students reflect on Athena's feelings before the transformation.</p> <p>Students add to the chart.</p>
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<p>section when Arachne is weaving during the battle with Athena.</p> <p><i>Arachne glanced up from her web and looked with eyes that glowed with the love of beautiful things at the creations of Athena. Yet, unafraid, her fingers still sped on, and the goddess saw, with a look that grew yet more clouded, how a mere girl had chosen for subjects the tales that showed the weaknesses of the gods. One after another the living pictures grew beneath her hand, and the crowd held their breath in mingled fear and excitement at Arachne's godlike skill and daring.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did we learn about Arachne's pride and confidence as she wove in front of Athena? [Pause.] Let's look at this line: <i>tales that showed the weaknesses of the gods.</i> What does that tell you about Athena's feelings? [Pause.] This is more evidence that she is bold, which we have already included on our chart. She is bold because she is showing the weakness of the gods in her weaving, and she is competing against Athena - who is a goddess. • What does this tell us about Arachne? [Pause.] She is not intimidated by Athena, and mortals are supposed to be very intimidated by the gods. • What do you think it means to "back down"? [Pause.] I agree, it is that you feel so strongly about something that you are willing to stand up for it. In this section, Lang uses some descriptive language to help us. "<i>Yet, unafraid, her fingers still sped on,</i>" Can you see her fingers moving quickly? I can! <p>We have already read the section I am about to read once again today, but let's revisit for a different purpose. What does this selection tell us about how Athena feels about Arachne after the transformation?</p> <p><i>Even as Athena spoke, Arachne's fair form dried up and withered. Her straight limbs grew grey and crooked and wiry, and her smooth white arms were no more. Eight legs sprouted and her body shrank. And then just as suddenly as it had started, there was silence. Tiny beside the loom, where just moments before the beautiful weaver of Lydia had stood, crawled a creature that few love and many fear.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think about this as a consequence? [Pause.] Yes, this is a pretty harsh and brutal way to punish her! • Why do you think Athena feels like she has to punish her so harshly? [Pause.] Maybe so! Remember, Athena is a goddess and no mortal should ever be thought of as "better." I think she maybe feels embarrassed that 	<p>Students reflect on Arachne's feelings before the transformation.</p> <p>Students reflect on Athena's feelings after the transformation.</p>
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<p>Arachne could out-weave her, and probably a bit of betrayal as well. Remember, mortals were supposed to look up to the gods...not equal them! What other feeling do you think Athena might be experiencing? Think about it...Arachne's weaving is really, really good! [Pause.] Yep, I think Athena was probably a bit jealous of Arachne's weaving skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was Athena's punishment temporary or permanent? [Pause.] Right! Permanent. Why do you think she wanted her punishment to be permanent? [Pause.] Good job, she definitely wanted to show other mortals that they should <i>never</i> try to compete with the gods. I also think she wanted to make sure that the beautiful girl was turned into something ugly and hated. • It looks like we have some more good information to add to our chart. Let's head to the <i>after</i> column. What can we say about the way Athena felt about Arachne <i>after</i> her transformation? [Pause.] Yes! She loved that her punishment had made Arachne ugly, feared, and hated. She was proud of her punishment! Let's add that to our chart. [Model adding to your chart: <i>Athena liked that Arachne was ugly, feared, and hated. She was proud of her punishment</i> in Athena's feelings after.] <p>This was a really interesting look at our story, Arachne. Isn't it cool how authors are so good at helping us visualize as we read? They deliberately choose the perfect words for us!</p>	<p>Students complete the chart.</p>
<p>Guided Practice (7 min)</p> <p>Let's take a look at our chart. We have captured descriptions about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how Arachne <i>looked</i> before and after her transformation • how Athena <i>felt</i> about Arachne before and after the transformation, and • How Arachne <i>felt</i> before the transformation. <p>But, we are missing information about how <u>Arachne</u> <i>felt after</i> her transformation. The last paragraph of the text, I think, will help us infer how Arachne felt - we can make a good guess based upon what the text says and what we already know. Be thinking - how does Lang use descriptions to give us insight into Arachne's feelings? Ready? Let's read.</p> <p><i>The sun has not long enough shown his face to dry up the dew in the garden, and look at the little clipped tree of boxwood, a great wonder! For in and out, and all over its twigs and leaves, Arachne has woven her web, and on the web the dew has dropped a million diamond drops. And, suddenly, all the colors</i></p>	<p>Students follow along and think and act as instructed, gradually gaining confidence and competence to infer Arachne's feelings after the transformation.</p>

in the sky are mirrored dazzlingly on the grey tapestry of her making. Arachne has come to her own again.

Let's investigate what words the author has deliberately added to help us begin to think about Arachne's feelings *after* her transformation to a spider.

- First, let's think... who is the speaker in this section?
[Pause.] Yes, we are hearing from the narrative's perspective. Notice, we do not have Arachne's thoughts or dialogue.
- Take a look at this line: *The sun has not long enough shown his face to dry up the dew in the garden.* What might this tell us about Arachne? [Pause.] I know it is early morning because the author describes dew still on the garden; the sun has not been out long. I think this might tell me that Arachne still likes weaving because she is up early weaving.
- We also read that Arachne's webs were "*a great wonder.*" Do you think those words are another clue that she is still good at her work? [Pause.] Yes, I think so, too!
- What are other clues that she is still good at her work *and* that her webs are really beautiful? [Pause.] Good! Lang writes: "*Arachne has woven her web, and on the web the dew has dropped a million diamond drops. And, suddenly, all the colors in the sky are mirrored dazzlingly on the grey tapestry of her making.*" He makes something as simple as a spider web sound gorgeous!
- Of all the lines, I think the words the author chooses in the last line gives us a clue about her feelings. We will have to infer. *Arachne has come to her own again.*
 - Again, who is saying this about Arachne?
[Pause.] Yes, it is the narrator.
 - Have you heard that expression before - *come to her own again*? What was her own before her transformation? [Pause.] Her weaving was hers. So, I'm thinking that, as a spider, she still owns what belonged to her when she was a human, her weaving. But I think it goes even deeper...she is even more of a weaver than before, for now this is her primary task in life...this is what spiders are born for!

Great thinking! I believe you are ready to head into your independent practice!

<p>Independent Work (1 min)</p> <p>I'm going to read your independent practice aloud to you. Please take notes as I read it. I will read the directions twice.</p> <p>[Show slide L14-B.]</p> <p>In the last paragraph, we only get the narrator's perspective. We don't really know how Arachne felt, and just like we explored in our guided practice, we have to infer based on what the author gave us.</p> <p>Be ready to write this down!</p> <p>So, imagine that you are Arachne <i>after</i> your transformation to a spider. Write a narrative telling us how you feel. Are you happy with your new self? Do you hate it? How does it feel when people are scared of you? Do you like that you get to weave all the time? What are your feelings towards Athena now that you are a spider?</p> <p>Be sure to use details from your chart to help you describe how you feel as Arachne. Also, make sure to use good, descriptive language to help your reader <i>see</i> the story that you are telling.</p> <p>[Read the directions 2x]</p>	
<p>Closing (1 min)</p> <p>I enjoyed looking at descriptions before and after Arachne's transformation with you today! This has been a great journey exploring one of my favorite Greek origin myths with you. In our next lesson, we are going to think about how ancient Greek myths are still relevant today! How cool! Thank you for inviting me into your home. I look forward to seeing you in our next lesson in Tennessee's At Home Learning Series! Bye!</p>	<p>Students will write about Arachne's feelings after the transformation using details captured in the chart.</p>