



Short Shared Reading Transcript

TEACHER: Today's question that I'd like for us to track is: Growing old is a central theme in the story "The Moustache". Is Robert Cormier optimistic about aging?

Optimistic... does that mean really bummed out about aging?

Students (murmur) No...

TEACHER: Show me an optimistic face. (long pause) Show me a not optimistic face. Show me a really optimistic face. That's exactly right (points to a student). Let's all look at Brian... that's really optimistic.

I'm going to start from the beginning of the story. Please follow along.

At the last minute Annie couldn't go. She was invaded by one of those 24 hour flu bugs sending her to bed with a fever, moaning about the fact that she would also have to break her date with Handsome Harry Arnold that night. We call him Handsome Harry because he's actually handsome, but he's also a nice guy, cool, and doesn't treat me like Annie's kid brother, which I am, but a regular person. Anyway, I had to go to Lawnrest alone that afternoon. But first of all I had to stand inspection. My mother lined me up against the wall. She stood there like a one man firing squad which is kind of funny because she's not like a man at all. She's very funny and we have this great relationship- I mean I feel like she really likes me. I realize that sounds strange, but I know guys whose mothers love them and cook special stuff for them and worry about them and all, but there's something missing from their relationship. Anyway, she frowned and started the routine.

"HMMMMM...that hair," she said. "Well, at least you combed it."

I sighed. I discovered it's better to sigh than argue.

"And, that moustache." She shook her head. "I still say that a seventeen year old has no business wearing a moustache."



I'm going to pause for the first time just because the text mentioned age. I'm thinking about our question. I'm going to star this section of the passage because I think I'm beginning to see something about aging.

What should I do? Which line or lines jump out to you about our question?

(students turn and talk)

TEACHER: Chrissy?

Chrissy: The line about the moustache.

TEACHER: So, what should I do?

Joshua: Underline and take notes describing a character's contribution.

TEACHER: I definitely should underline something. How is the line that Chrissy just asked us to underline related to character contribution?

Joshua: Oh... underline dialogue or interior dialogue that is related to the question of aging.

TEACHER: You're very right. And Joshua, is this dialogue or interior dialogue? Dialogue when they say it out loud, and interior dialogue when they say it in their head.

Joshua: Dialogue.

TEACHER: Correct, so now we know that it's dialogue that is related to our question. Does the mom want her son acting like he's old?

Students: No....

TEACHER: How do you know? (long pause) Does anyone in here have a moustache? How do you know? Abebi?

Abebi: It says that I still say that a seventeen year old has no business wearing a moustache.

TEACHER: Abebi, do you think it's okay for seventeen year olds to wear a moustache?



Abebi: (giggles...) I guess it depends on the seventeen year old.

TEACHER: Does the mom in the passage agree with you?

Abebi: No.

TEACHER: So what do you think the mom thinks about him aging?

Abebi: It's bad.

TEACHER: Why do you think that?

Abebi: Because it says that I still say that a seventeen year old has no business wearing a moustache.

Derek: No business means that he shouldn't be doing it. I think that's slang.

TEACHER: So, what notes should I take?

Samantha: The mom doesn't want her son to look old.

Santiago: But, it's not like she's mad at him or nothing. It's just she doesn't like it. Probably because she wants him to be like her little baby. My mom is always saying that to me.

TEACHER: Santiago... you used what you know about your life to know more about that character. Can anyone help us out and paraphrase what we've read so far?

Owen: The narrator is about to go somewhere... (looks back)

Lily: Lawnrest.

Owen: That's right. Lawnrest. And before he is leaving, his mom is checking to make sure he looks alright. What's Lawnrest?

Bao Yu: It doesn't really say yet.

Teacher: Turn and talk... are we ready to start answering the question? Is Cormier optimistic about aging? Or, should we keep reading to get more information.