

Lesson Name : 23

Lesson Title : A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings, Section 1

Course Name : English 2 Part 3 [Honors]

Task Id : 57048118

Course Id : 15021



Essential Instruction

Read ["A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings"](#) through the line "...but that of cataclysm in repose."

It is a good idea to use your digital notebook to keep notes on new vocabulary and definitions that you may need to reference later.

Reading and Literary Skills

When reading a story, many people are often tempted to skip to the end or ask a peer to tell them the ending of the story. As you read paragraphs 1 – 8 of "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings," you may have been curious and asking yourself, "Is the old man really an angel?" "Will he be able to heal those who have come to see him for a cure from their ailments?" Try to not read ahead; instead, make predictions, or logical guesses, about the story's ending.

As you read, you should also notice the differences in character motivations in this story. What is it that motivates Elisenda and her husband Pelayo to keep the old man in their chicken coop? The couple is at first only motivated by the money it might bring in to save their sick child and fix their over-run house infested with crabs. But as the story moves along, and their child gets well, do Pelayo and Elisenda's motivations change? What do you predict they may want to do with the money?

In many of Marquez' stories, especially that of "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings," there is a mystery for the people to figure out. Many people in this story have differing opinions about the old man and his identity, and what to do with the old man. Synthesize the information from all of these differing sources in order to determine your own opinion about the old man. For example, here is what we know about the old man.

- Found lying face down in the dirt
- Has a strong sailor's voice
- Has huge buzzard wings attached to the back
- The neighbor thinks he's an angel
- Shortly after his arrival, their child woke up with a desire to eat
- The Father feels he was much too human and he doesn't understand Latin
- His only virtue seemed to be patience

So, using the information from numerous sources in the story, do you think the old man is an angel?

Understanding Magic Realism

Often, stories with supernatural elements are written to convey a message about our realistic life. This is a genre known as **magic realism**. Read the following line from the story:

The news of the captive angel spread with such rapidity, that after a few hours the courtyard had the bustle of a marketplace; and they had to call in troops with fixed bayonets to disperse the mob that was about to knock the house down.

Can you think of a time that news has spread so rapidly that it drew to a given subject?

In addition to the people's opinions about whether the man was an angel or just an old man with enormous wings, there is also another aspect on which the people disagreed. Marquez writes:

The simplest among them thought that he should be named mayor of the world. Others of sterner mind felt that he should be promoted to the rank of five-star general in order to win all wars. Some visionaries hoped that he could be put to stud in order to implant on the earth a race of winged wise men who could take charge of the universe.

All of these ideas are only opinions. Where are the facts the people are using to create these ideas? Can you list the facts about this man?

Analyzing Theme

When reading a narrative, a person should also be understanding, analyzing, and comparing universal **themes** of the piece, and also comparing **themes** across the genre. **Theme** refers to an author's message about a given subject. Could it be that Marquez is communicating a message, or **theme**, about how rumors can overrun a population's imagination causing a frenzy, which is only based on opinions rather than fact?

Word Analogies and Semantic Maps

When learning new vocabulary, there are several techniques which may help. One technique is to complete **word analogies**. A **word analogy** is a word problem that consists of two word pairs. You should look at the first pair of words and decide how they relate to each other. Then, select the most appropriate term that makes the second pair of words have the same relationship.

For example:

Question: tan: brown; _____: red

Answer: tan: brown; pink: red

(Notice how the first word in each pair is less intense than the second.)

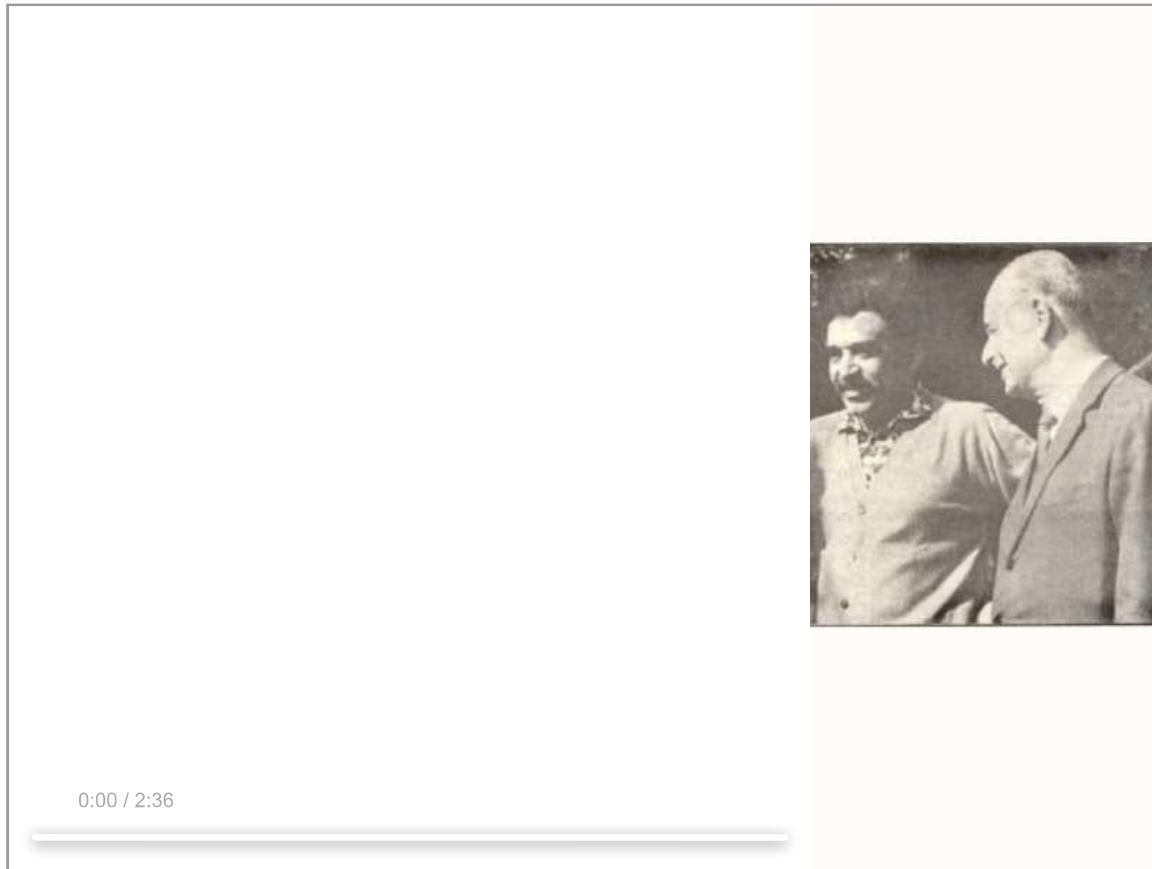
You should also consider creating **semantic maps** for each of your vocabulary words. A **semantic map** is a method to conceptually explore your knowledge of a new word by mapping it with other related words or phrases similar in meaning to the new word.

An example of a [semantic map](#), which will open in a new window.

Words with Multiple Meanings

Often words may carry **multiple meanings**. You may notice that when you look a word up in a dictionary, hard back or online, there are several definitions for each word. Consider looking up four of your vocabulary words in the dictionary and scanning through to see if they carry **multiple meanings**. Consider completing a chart like the one you see below.

Vocabulary Word	Definition #1	Definition #2	Definition #3
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			



[Open Video in New Tab](#)



Vocabulary

Understanding the words used in a story can aid your understanding of the story. Here are some words from paragraphs 1 – 8 of “A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings”:

1. **conjectures** – noun – inferences or guesses
2. **impertinences** – noun – bad manners
3. **magnanimous** – adj. – extremely generous
4. **imposter** – noun – a person who pretends to be someone else
5. **ingenuous** – adj. – innocent and unsuspecting; naïve
6. **prudence** – noun – carefulness or caution
7. **befuddled** – verb – confused
8. **papal** – adj. – having to do with the pope
9. **penitents** – noun – people performing penance
10. **proliferated** – verb – increased in number or spread rapidly
11. **cataclysm** – noun – violent upheaval, especially in politics
12. **repose** – noun – restfulness or sleep
13. **antiquarian** – adj. – archaic or ancient