



## A Lesson on The Train Ride by Jennifer Ross

**Grade Level:** Grade 7

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Lesson Length:** 45 minutes

**Lesson Keywords:** "The Train Ride" close reading tone setting history obama

**Lesson Description:** In this close reading lesson, students will read an excerpt from "The Train Ride" and complete activities on vocabulary while answering discussion questions about the author's tone, use of details, and setting. At the end, students will write their own narratives about an exciting event they have witnessed firsthand.

### Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.1: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3a: Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3b: Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4a: Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

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## Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

**Instructions:** Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

### The Train Ride

by

**Content:** Hurry up, Tee, or we're going to miss it.?

?My name is actually Terrence, but you'd never know it from listening to everyone?around me. The only person who ever called me by my proper name was my grandmother,?but since she's been gone, Tee is all I hear.?

Get out of the fridge. We don't have time, and you already finished the last of the?macaroni.?

Mom generally moves at 90 miles an hour, but she's really in overdrive this evening.?Since this whole thing began, she's been watching the news every night, clipping newspaper?articles, and talking about nothing but politics to anyone who'll sit still and listen for more?than a minute. Except for the times when she's chasing after me, I've never seen her so?energized. The way she's been talking about it all week long, you'd think that she was the one?delivering the acceptance speech tonight.?

If you're not ready in 30 seconds, I'm leaving you here, she yells from the front door.?But I know she wouldn't leave without me. You'll be grounded for a month of Sundays if?we're still on the train when he begins.

The truth is that she managed to get me excited about the election, too. I'm not quite as?excited as she is. I don't think anybody is. But seeing someone who looks like me, a skinny?kid with big ears, become President of the United States, well, it makes me think anything is?possible. That thought is enough to get me to slam shut the refrigerator door, grab my?sweatshirt, and race down the hallway for the door.?

As we speed walk towards the station, I have to almost run to keep up with Mom. I?never saw her hurry like this.?

Finally, we're at the station, and I feel like we're really on our way now. When the train?pulls in, I can't believe my eyes. Each train car is packed full. There's standing room only, just?like rush hour. It seems like everyone is talking, and even the silent few are smiling. I've?never seen any of these people in my life, yet people are talking with me.?

The intercom crackles: 47th Street, 47th Street. No smoking or radio players. Next?stop 35th.?

I look over to my mom, who's lost in thought. I know she can't tell whether or not I?understand everything that's going on - that's been going on for these last 12 months. I don't?know if I do, but I feel a tingling inside that tells me I might.?

Harrison... Harrison. No smoking or radio players. Next stop, Jackson. Thats Grant?Park. Everyone cheersit is so exciting.?

I feel my heartbeat quicken as I realize that, for once in my life, I won't be reading about?the big things that make it into history books. I'll be watching it unfold in front of my eyes.?

I look over at my mom and catch her looking at me, nodding. We've arrived.

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## Task 1: Vocabulary

**Instructions:** Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

**Q: 1 WordPhrase:** proper **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** The author states that only his grandmother called him by his "proper" name. What he is referring to?

- A: The name given to him at birth.
- B: A formal name given to him to be used in certain situations.
- C: The name of the President.
- D: His nickname.

**Question:** Which sentence below correctly uses the word "proper"?

- A: The boy ran away from his mom, which was proper.
- B: It is proper for students to call teachers by their first names.
- C: The boy said
- D: It is proper to talk back to your teacher.

**Q: 2 WordPhrase:** crackle **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** The boy states that he hears the intercom "crackle" when he is on the train. What does "crackle" mean in this sentence?

- A: a very loud noise
- B: whispers
- C: repeated sudden, sharp noises
- D: chirping

**Question:** In which sentence below is the word "crackle" correctly used?

- A: The boy's hair crackles when he combs it.
- B: The fish crackles as it swims in the water.
- C: The towels crackle in the dryer.
- D: The french fries crackle when they are thrown into hot oil.

**Q: 3 WordPhrase:** "really in overdrive this evening" **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** Tee says that is mom is "really in overdrive this evening." What does he mean by this phrase?

- A: She is more tired than usual.
- B: She is more energetic than she usually is.
- C: She is on his case more than normal.
- D: She is driving her car faster than normal.

**Question:** Which sentence below correctly uses the word "overdrive"?

- A: The student had to put it in overdrive to complete all of the assignments and study for an exam.
- B: The teenager had to put it in overdrive to sleep late into the morning.
- C: The car was in overdrive while idling.
- D: The girls were in overdrive as they leisurely walked throughout the mall.

**Q: 4 WordPhrase:** "tingling inside" **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** When he is on the train, Lee says he feels a "tingling inside" of himself. What does this tingling refer to?

- A: The worry he has for his mom.
- B: The nervous energy he feels for this momentous occassion.
- C: The loudness of the intercom.
- D: His anger.

**Question:** Which sentence below correctly uses the word "tingling"?

- A: When my cat scratches my leg it tingles.
- B: The mosquito bite made my skin tingle.
- C: When my arm falls asleep, my fingers begin tingling.
- D: The flowers tingle in the sunshine.

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## Task 2: Forum Discussion

**Instructions:** This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

### 1 - Details and Tone

How does the author's use of details contribute to the tone of the story? Support your answer with specific textual evidence.

### 2 - Infer

What is the importance of Tee telling the reader that only his grandmother called him by his full name, Terence? Why might the author start with the story with this information?

### 3 - Setting

What can you infer about the setting based on the behaviors of the people Tee describes on the train. Use textual evidence to support your answer.

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### Task 3: Writing Activity

**Instructions:** Tee says that he won't be reading about the big things that make it into the history books but will instead be watching it unfold in front of my eyes. In a narrative of 500 words, tell about a time you have witnessed something first hand?that most people will have to read about in history books or something most people had to watch on the news. Tell your story using first person point of view. Use specific details to help create the setting.

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