

Week of June 8-12

Grade: 8

Content: ELA

Learning Objective: Greetings 8th graders! We hope you are safe and well with your families! This week we are providing you with 5 engaging and informative readings from **Common Lit** to choose from. We are also providing you with ways to boost your important reading skills through on-line programs. Students with a device and access to the internet should spend time on these sites as well as work on Common Lit activities each week.

Common Lit Activities:

Text Title	Genre
Button, Button	Short Story
The Limits of Empathy	Informational Text
Online Identity	Informational Text
How an 11-Year-Old Boy Invented the Popsicle	Informational Text
There Will Come Soft Rains	Poem

Skills Activities: The following websites provide students with more practice with important reading skills. Only students at the identified schools have access to these sites. Directions for logging on are also in this folder.

School	Program
North, East, West, Plouffe	Amplify Reading
Ashfield, South, Davis	Power Up
Mrs. K Silva's classes at West Mrs. Holm's classes at West Mrs. Freschett's classes at West	READ 180

Name: _____ Class: _____

Button, Button

By Richard Matheson
1970

*Richard Matheson (1926-2013) was an American author known for his fantasy, horror, and science fiction stories. He wrote sixteen episodes of the classic television show The Twilight Zone, and seven of his novels and short stories (including this one) have been turned into movies. **Skills Focus:** In this lesson, you'll practice analyzing how a character's choices and actions affect plot development. This means paying attention to how characters react to specific dialogue or events and how those reactions move the story forward. As you read, make notes on what lines of dialogue or events cause a character to take action or change their behavior.*

- [1] The package was lying by the front door — a cube-shaped carton sealed with tape, their name and address printed by hand: “Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Lewis, 217 E. Thirty-seventh Street, New York, New York 10016.” Norma picked it up, unlocked the door, and went into the apartment. It was just getting dark.

After she put the lamb chops in the broiler, she sat down to open the package.

Inside the carton was a push-button unit fastened to a small wooden box. A glass dome covered the button. Norma tried to lift it off, but it was locked in place. She turned the unit over and saw a folded piece of paper Scotch-taped to the bottom of the box. She pulled it off: “Mr. Steward will call on you at 8:00 P.M.”

Norma put the button unit beside her on the couch. She reread the typed note, smiling.

- [5] A few moments later, she went back into the kitchen to make the salad.

The doorbell rang at eight o'clock. “I’ll get it,” Norma called from the kitchen. Arthur was in the living room, reading.

There was a small man in the hallway. He removed his hat as Norma opened the door. “Mrs. Lewis?” he inquired politely.

“Yes?”

“I’m Mr. Steward.”



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[10] "Oh, yes." Norma repressed¹ a smile. She was sure now it was a sales pitch.

"May I come in?" asked Mr. Steward.

"I'm rather busy," Norma said, "I'll get you your whatchamacallit, though." She started to turn.

"Don't you want to know what it is?"

Norma turned back. Mr. Steward's tone had been **offensive**. "No, I don't think so," she replied.

[15] "It could prove very valuable," he told her.

"*Monetarily?*" she challenged.

Mr. Steward nodded. "Monetarily," he said.

Norma frowned. She didn't like his attitude. "What are you trying to sell?" she asked.

"I'm not selling anything," he answered.

[20] Arthur came out of the living room. "Something wrong?"

Mr. Steward introduced himself.

"*Oh*, the — " Arthur pointed toward the living room and smiled. "What is that gadget anyway?"

"It won't take long to explain," replied Mr. Steward. "May I come in?"

"If you're selling something — ," Arthur said.

[25] Mr. Steward shook his head. "I'm not."

Arthur looked at Norma. "Up to you," she said.

He hesitated. "Well, why not?" he said.

They went into the living room and Mr. Steward sat in Norma's chair. He reached into an inside coat pocket and withdrew a small sealed envelope. "Inside here is a key to the bell-unit dome," he said. He set the envelope on the chair-side table. "The bell is connected to our office."

"What's it for?" asked Arthur.

[30] "If you push the button," Mr. Steward told him, "somewhere in the world someone you don't know will die. In return for which you will receive a payment of \$50,000."

1. **Repress (verb):** to stop oneself from doing

Norma stared at the small man. He was smiling.

"What are you talking about?" Arthur asked him.

Mr. Steward looked surprised. "But I've just explained," he said.

"Is this a practical joke?" asked Arthur.

[35] "Not at all. The offer is completely genuine."²

"You aren't making sense," Arthur said. "You expect us to believe — "

"Whom do you represent?" demanded Norma.

Mr. Steward looked embarrassed. "I'm afraid I'm not at liberty to tell you that," he said. "However, I assure you, the organization is of international scope."³

"I think you'd better leave," Arthur said, standing.

[40] Mr. Steward rose. "Of course."

"And take your button unit with you."

"Are you sure you wouldn't care to think about it for a day or so?"

Arthur picked up the button unit and the envelope and thrust them into Mr. Steward's hands. He walked into the hall and pulled open the door.

"I'll leave my card," said Mr. Steward. He placed it on the table by the door.

[45] When he was gone, Arthur tore it in half and tossed the pieces onto the table.

Norma was still sitting on the sofa. "What do you think it was?" she asked.

"I don't care to know," he answered.

She tried to smile but couldn't. "Aren't you curious at all?"

"No." He shook his head.

[50] After Arthur returned to his book, Norma went back to the kitchen and finished washing the dishes.

"Why won't you talk about it?" Norma asked.

2. **Genuine** (*adjective*): real or actual; authentic
3. reach or size

Arthur's eyes shifted as he brushed his teeth. He looked at his reflection in the bathroom mirror.

"Doesn't it **intrigue** you?"

"It **offends** me," Arthur said.

[55] "I know, but" — Norma rolled another curler in her hair — "doesn't it **intrigue** you, too?"

"You think it's a practical joke?" she asked as they went into the bedroom.

"If it is, it's a sick one."

Norma sat on her bed and took off her slippers. "Maybe it's some kind of psychological research."⁴

Arthur shrugged. "Could be."

[60] "Maybe some eccentric⁵ millionaire is doing it."

"Maybe."

"Wouldn't you like to know?"

Arthur shook his head.

"Why?"

[65] "Because it's immoral," he told her.

Norma slid beneath the covers. "Well, I think it's **intriguing**," she said.

Arthur turned off the lamp and leaned over to kiss her. "Good night," he said.

"Good night." She patted his back.

Norma closed her eyes. Fifty thousand dollars, she thought.

[70] In the morning, as she left the apartment, Norma saw the card halves on the table. Impulsively,⁶ she dropped them into her purse. She locked the front door and joined Arthur in the elevator.

While she was on her coffee break, she took the card halves from her purse and held the torn edges together. Only Mr. Steward's name and telephone number were printed on the card.

4. In one form of psychological research, doctors study human behaviors by presenting people with a strange situation and seeing how they react.

5. **Eccentric (adjective)**: strange or unusual

6. **Impulsive (adjective)**: acting or done without thinking

After lunch, she took the card halves from her purse again and Scotch-taped the edges together. “Why am I doing this?” she thought.

Just before five, she dialed the number. “Good afternoon,” said Mr. Steward’s voice.

Norma almost hung up but restrained herself. She cleared her throat. “This is Mrs. Lewis,” she said.

[75] “Yes, Mrs. Lewis,” Mr. Steward sounded pleased.

“I’m curious.”

“That’s natural,” Mr. Steward said.

“Not that I believe a word of what you told us.”

“Oh, it’s quite authentic,”⁷ Mr. Steward answered.

[80] “Well, whatever — ” Norma swallowed. “When you said someone in the world would die, what did you mean?”

“Exactly that,” he answered. “It could be anyone. All we guarantee is that you don’t know them. And, of course, that you wouldn’t have to watch them die.”

“For \$50,000,” Norma said.

“That is correct.”

She made a scoffing sound. “That’s crazy.”

[85] “Nonetheless, that is the proposition,”⁸ Mr. Steward said. “Would you like me to return the button unit?”

Norma stiffened. “*Certainly* not.” She hung up angrily.

The package was lying by the front door; Norma saw it as she left the elevator. Well, of all the nerve, she thought. She glared at the carton as she unlocked the door. I just won’t take it in, she thought. She went inside and started dinner.

Later, she went into the front hall. Opening the door, she picked up the package and carried it into the kitchen, leaving it on the table.

She sat in the living room, looking out the window. After a while, she went back into the kitchen to turn the cutlets in the broiler. She put the package in a bottom cabinet. She’d throw it out in the morning.

7. **Authentic** (*adjective*): real or actual; genuine

8. **Proposition** (*noun*): offer or plan

[90] "Maybe some eccentric millionaire is playing games with people," she said.

Arthur looked up from his dinner. "I don't understand you."

"What does *that* mean?"

"*Let it go*," he told her.

Norma ate in silence. Suddenly, she put her fork down. "Suppose it's a genuine offer?" she said.

[95] Arthur stared at her.

"Suppose it's a genuine offer?"

"All right, suppose it is?" He looked incredulous. "What would you like to do? Get the button back and push it? *Murder* someone?"

Norma looked disgusted. "*Murder*."

"How would you define it?"

[100] "If you don't even *know* the person?" Norma said.

Arthur looked astounded. "Are you saying what I think you are?"

"If it's some old Chinese peasant ten thousand miles away? Some diseased native in the Congo?"⁹

"How about a baby boy in Pennsylvania?" Arthur countered. "Some beautiful little girl on the next block?"

"Now you're loading things."

[105] "The point is, Norma," he continued, "what's the difference whom you kill? It's still murder."

"The point *is*," Norma broke in, "if it's someone you've never seen in your life and never *will* see, someone whose death you don't even have to know about, you *still* wouldn't push the button?"

Arthur stared at her, appalled. "You mean you *would*?"

"Fifty thousand dollars, Arthur."

"What has the amount — "

9. a region and country in central Africa

[110] *"Fifty thousand dollars, Arthur,"* Norma interrupted. "A chance to take that trip to Europe we've always talked about."

"Norma, no."

"A chance to buy that cottage on the island."

"Norma, *no*." His face was white.

She shuddered. "All right, take it easy," she said. "Why are you getting so upset? It's only talk."

[115] After dinner, Arthur went into the living room. Before he left the table, he said, "I'd rather not discuss it anymore, if you don't mind."

Norma shrugged. "Fine with me."

She got up earlier than usual to make pancakes, eggs, and bacon for Arthur's breakfast.

"What's the occasion?" he asked with a smile.

"No occasion." Norma looked **offended**. "I wanted to do it, that's all."

[120] "Good," he said. "I'm glad you did."

She refilled his cup. "Wanted to show you I'm not — " She shrugged.

"Not what?"

"Selfish."

"Did I say you were?"

[125] "Well" — she gestured vaguely — "last night..."

Arthur didn't speak.

"All that talk about the button," Norma said. "I think you — well, misunderstood me."

"In what way?" His voice was guarded.

"I think you felt" — she gestured again — "that I was only thinking of myself."

[130] "Oh."

"I wasn't."

"Norma — "

"Well, I wasn't. When I talked about Europe, a cottage on the island — "

"Norma, why are we getting so involved in this?"

[135] "I'm not involved at all." She drew in a shaking breath. "I'm simply trying to indicate that — "

"What?"

"That I'd like for *us* to go to Europe. Like for *us* to have a cottage on the island. Like for *us* to have a nicer apartment, nicer furniture, nicer clothes, a car. Like for us to finally have a *baby*, for that matter."

"Norma, we will," he said.

"When?"

[140] He stared at her in dismay. "Norma — "

"When?"

"Are you" — he seemed to draw back slightly — "are you really saying — "

"I'm saying that they're probably doing it for some research project!" she cut him off. "That they want to know what average people would do under such a circumstance! That they're just *saying* someone would die, in order to study reactions, see if there'd be guilt, anxiety, whatever! You don't think they'd *kill* somebody, do you?!"

Arthur didn't answer. She saw his hands trembling. After a while, he got up and left.

[145] When he'd gone to work, Norma remained at the table, staring into her coffee. I'm going to be late, she thought. She shrugged. What difference did it make? She should be home, anyway, not working in an office.

While she was stacking dishes, she turned abruptly, dried her hands, and took the package from the bottom cabinet. Opening it, she set the button unit on the table. She stared at it for a long time before taking the key from its envelope and removing the glass dome. She stared at the button. How ridiculous, she thought. All this furor over a meaningless button.

Reaching out, she pressed it down. For us, she thought angrily.

She shuddered. Was it *happening*? A chill of horror swept across her.

In a moment, it had passed. She made a contemptuous¹⁰ noise. *Ridiculous*, she thought. To get so worked up over nothing.

10. **Contempt** (*noun*): disrespect or disgust

[150] She threw the button unit, dome, and key into the wastebasket and hurried to dress for work.

She had just turned over the supper steaks when the telephone rang. She picked up the receiver.
"Hello?"

"Mrs. Lewis?"

"Yes?"

"This is the Lenox Hill Hospital."

[155] She felt unreal as the voice informed her of the subway accident — the shoving crowd, Arthur pushed from the platform in front of the train. She was conscious of shaking her head but couldn't stop.

As she hung up, she remembered Arthur's life-insurance policy for \$25,000, with double indemnity¹¹ for —

"No." She couldn't seem to breathe. She struggled to her feet and walked into the kitchen numbly. Something cold pressed at her skull as she removed the button unit from the wastebasket. There were no nails or screws visible. She couldn't see how it was put together.

Abruptly, she began to smash it on the sink edge, pounding it harder and harder, until the wood split. She pulled the sides apart, cutting her fingers without noticing. There were no transistors in the box, no wires or tubes.

The box was empty.

[160] She whirled with a gasp as the telephone rang. Stumbling into the living room, she picked up the receiver.

"Mrs. Lewis?" Mr. Steward asked.

It wasn't her voice shrieking so; it couldn't be. *"You said I wouldn't know the one that died!"*

"My dear lady," Mr. Steward said. "Do you really think you knew your husband?"

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11. Double indemnity is a common offering of life insurance policies. In the case of accidental death of the insured person, the insurance company will pay the survivors twice the face value of the policy.

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. What event sets the main action of the story in motion?
 - A. Arthur's argument with Norma over the button unit
 - B. Mr. Steward's threat against Norma and Arthur
 - C. Arthur tearing up Mr. Steward's business card
 - D. Mr. Steward's visit to the Lewis home

2. In paragraph 87, Mr. Steward returns the button unit to the Lewis home after his phone conversation with Norma. How does this action affect the Lewises?
 - A. It encourages Norma to consider using the button unit.
 - B. It makes Arthur think about the advantages of the button unit.
 - C. It makes Norma and Arthur suspect that Mr. Steward is a criminal.
 - D. It encourages Norma and Arthur to think of ways to improve their life.

3. What do paragraphs 97-106 reveal about Norma's view of the world?
 - A. She believes that there are some things one should not do for money.
 - B. She believes people all over the world are essentially the same.
 - C. She believes it is every person's job to care for others.
 - D. She believes some lives are worth more than others.

4. In paragraphs 129-145, what does the dialogue reveal about Norma's motivations for pushing the button?
 - A. She is tired of arguing with Arthur.
 - B. She believes she deserves a better life.
 - C. She wants to become a more adventurous person.
 - D. She wants to be part of a psychological experiment.

5. How do Norma's personal desires affect the outcome of the story?

Discussion Questions

Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. Norma is able to come up with reasons to justify doing what is wrong. Do you think people do this in real life? Explain.

Name: _____ Class: _____

Online Identity

By CommonLit Staff
2014

Consider the different ways we express ourselves, especially in the new age of technology. The Internet has heavily shaped our notion of identity. On the Internet, people can create a multitude of personas, some of which can be created with false information. As you read, take notes on the ways in which people express their identity on the Internet.

Online Identities

- [1] An online identity, sometimes called an Internet persona, is an identity established by a user to interact with others through social media such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, or multi-player games. Although some people use their real names online, many Internet users prefer to be anonymous, identifying themselves by pseudonyms¹. Some users can be deceptive² about their identity.



"Sisters" by Stephen Harlan is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

Users express online identity both explicitly and implicitly. Users express themselves explicitly through usernames, pictures, and the information about themselves that they choose to give others, such as their hometown. They can also explicitly express their identity by choosing an avatar, an icon-sized graphic image, or by creating user profiles in social media networks, such as Facebook. Implicitly, users express their identity through what they say to other users and the opinions they express. As other users interact with an established online identity, it gains a reputation, which enables them to decide whether the identity is worthy of trust.

The Reliability of Online Identity and the “Mask” Effect

Social networking services and online avatars have made the notion of identity far more complex, because the identities that people define in the social media are not necessarily the identities that they actually have. For example, several studies have shown that people lie about themselves in online dating profiles, or in communication with potential partners.

A person may feel that she is able to lie about her identity on the Internet because it creates a “mask” effect, where no one can see her “true self.” Social theorists believe that whenever an individual interacts with others online, she portrays a mask of her identity, not her true identity. This is partly due to the fact that in some online contexts, such as Facebook, she must answer specific questions to create an online profile. Further, as she begins to interact with others, she adds more and more layers to her mask through the vocabulary she uses and the topics she writes about.

1. **Pseudonym (noun):** a false name
2. **Deceptive (adjective):** meant to trick or deceive someone

- [5] The kind of mask one chooses reveals at least something about the person who chooses it. While the online mask does not reveal the actual identity of the person, it does reveal an example of what lies behind the mask. For instance, if a person chooses to act like a rock star online, this may mean that he or she has an interest in rock music. Even a person choosing to hide behind a totally false identity says something about the fear and lack of self-esteem he or she may be experiencing.

Relation to real-world physical and sensory constraints

Online identity offers potential social benefits to those with physical and sensory³ disabilities, because others cannot see them. These users can free themselves from their disabilities by creating online personas that are not disabled. This is called “disembodiment,” and gives these users the opportunity to operate outside the constraints of social stigmatization. They can be treated on their merits as a person, rather than being seen as someone inferior due to a disability.

Concerns

Most concerns about virtual identity revolve around the contrast between online and offline existence. The ability to challenge the notion of what “real” means has raised questions about how virtual experience may affect one’s offline emotions.

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3. **Sensory (adjective):** something that can be felt by the five senses

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following best describes the central idea of the article? [RI.2]
 - A. Individuals are more likely to explicitly share their true interests and personality on social media because online identities are anonymous.
 - B. Online identities allow people to shape how others see them and express themselves in a way they are unable or unwilling to in real life.
 - C. Individuals use online personas to positively and safely express their identities without people judging how they really look, speak, and behave.
 - D. Online identities are deceptive representations of people who are unhappy with themselves and lie about their identity so they can be accepted by other online personas.

2. PART B: Which phrase from the text best supports the answer to Part A? [RI.1]
 - A. "Users express themselves explicitly through usernames, pictures, and the information about themselves" (Paragraph 2)
 - B. "For example, several studies have shown that people lie about themselves in online dating profiles" (Paragraph 3)
 - C. "They can be treated on their merits as a person, rather than being seen as someone inferior due to a disability." (Paragraph 6)
 - D. "Most concerns about virtual identity revolve around the contrast between online and offline existence." (Paragraph 7)

3. PART A: What does the word "stigmatization" mean as it is used in paragraph 6? [RI.4]
 - A. standards
 - B. portrayals
 - C. approval
 - D. judgement

4. PART B: Which phrase from the text best supports the answer to Part A? [RI.1]
 - A. "decide whether the identity is worthy of trust" (Paragraph 2)
 - B. "an example of what lies behind the mask" (Paragraph 5)
 - C. "seen as someone inferior due to a disability" (Paragraph 6)
 - D. "the contrast between online and offline existence" (Paragraph 7)

5. How does paragraph 5 contribute to the development of the ideas in the text? Cite evidence from the text to support your answer. [RI.5]

Name: _____ Class: _____

The Limits of Empathy

By David Brooks
2011

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person. Empathy is usually viewed as a positive trait and as motivating helpful social involvement, but not all researchers share this viewpoint. In this opinion piece, David Brooks discusses his views on empathy and whether or not it influences our actions. As you read, identify the claims David Brooks makes about empathy.

- [1] We are surrounded by people trying to make the world a better place. Peace activists bring enemies together so they can get to know one another and feel each other's pain. School leaders try to attract a diverse set of students so each can understand what it's like to walk in the others' shoes. Religious and community groups try to cultivate¹ empathy.



"Untitled" by Strevio is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

As Steven Pinker writes in his mind-altering new book, "The Better Angels of Our Nature," we are living in the middle of an "empathy craze." There are shelfloads of books about it: "The Age of Empathy," "The Empathy Gap," "The Empathic Civilization," "Teaching Empathy." There's even a brain theory that we have mirror neurons² in our heads that enable us to feel what's in other people's heads and that these neurons lead to sympathetic care and moral³ action.

There's a lot of truth to all this. We do have mirror neurons in our heads. People who are empathetic are more sensitive to the perspectives and sufferings of others. They are more likely to make compassionate moral judgments.

The problem comes when we try to turn feeling into action. Empathy makes you more aware of other people's suffering, but it's not clear it actually motivates you to take moral action or prevents you from taking immoral action.

- [5] In the early days of the Holocaust, Nazi prison guards sometimes wept as they mowed down Jewish women and children, but they still did it. Subjects in the famous Milgram experiments felt anguish⁴ as they appeared to administer electric shocks to other research subjects, but they pressed on because some guy in a lab coat told them to.

1. **Cultivate (verb):** to develop
 2. A neuron is a nerve cell in the brain. A mirror neuron is a neuron that fires both when an animal acts and when the animal observes the same action performed by another.
 3. **Morality (noun):** principles concerning the difference between right and wrong or good and bad behavior.
 4. **Anguish (noun):** severe mental or physical pain

Empathy orients you toward moral action, but it doesn't seem to help much when that action comes at a personal cost. You may feel a pang for the homeless guy on the other side of the street, but the odds are that you are not going to cross the street to give him a dollar.

There have been piles of studies investigating the link between empathy and moral action. Different scholars come to different conclusions, but, in a recent paper, Jesse Prinz, a philosopher at City University of New York, summarized the research this way: "These studies suggest that empathy is not a major player when it comes to moral motivation. Its contribution is negligible⁵ in children, modest in adults, and nonexistent when costs are significant." Other scholars have called empathy a "fragile flower," easily crushed by self-concern.

Some influences, which we think of as trivial, are much stronger — such as a temporary burst of positive emotion. In one experiment in the 1970s, researchers planted a dime in a phone booth. Eighty-seven percent of the people who found the dime offered to help a person who dropped some papers nearby, compared with only 4 percent who didn't find a dime. Empathy doesn't produce anything like this kind of effect.

Moreover, Prinz argues, empathy often leads people astray. It influences people to care more about cute victims than ugly victims. It leads to nepotism.⁶ It subverts⁷ justice; juries give lighter sentences to defendants that show sadness. It leads us to react to shocking incidents, like a hurricane, but not longstanding conditions, like global hunger or preventable diseases.

[10] Nobody is against empathy. Nonetheless, it's insufficient.⁸ These days empathy has become a shortcut. It has become a way to experience delicious moral emotions without confronting the weaknesses in our nature that prevent us from actually acting upon them. It has become a way to experience the illusion of moral progress without having to do the nasty work of making moral judgments. In a culture that is inarticulate about moral categories and touchy about giving offense, teaching empathy is a safe way for schools and other institutions to seem virtuous⁹ without risking controversy or hurting anybody's feelings.

People who actually perform pro-social action don't only feel for those who are suffering, they feel compelled to act by a sense of duty. Their lives are structured by sacred codes.

Think of anybody you admire. They probably have some talent for fellow-feeling, but it is overshadowed by their sense of obligation to some religious, military, social or philosophic code. They would feel a sense of shame or guilt if they didn't live up to the code. The code tells them when they deserve public admiration or dishonor. The code helps them evaluate other people's feelings, not just share them. The code tells them that an adulterer¹⁰ or a drug dealer may feel ecstatic, but the proper response is still contempt.¹¹

5. small or insignificant

6. the unfair practice of favoring relatives

7. **Subvert (verb):** to undermine the power and authority of a system

8. **Insufficient (adjective):** not enough

9. **Virtuous (adjective):** having or showing high moral standards

10. a person who is unfaithful to their partner

11. **Contempt (noun):** a feeling that someone is not worthy of respect or approval

The code isn't just a set of rules. It's a source of identity. It's pursued with joy. It arouses the strongest emotions and attachments. Empathy is a sideshow. If you want to make the world a better place, help people debate, understand, reform, revere¹² and enact their codes. Accept that codes conflict.

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12. **Revere (verb):** to feel deep respect or admiration for something

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following best describes Brooks' central claim in the text?
 - A. Empathy provides people with the emotional capacity to care for those who are suffering and drives them to help others.
 - B. While empathy encourages caring feelings towards others, it alone does not drive people to act on their feelings in the same way as a sense of responsibility.
 - C. Feeling empathy for others is a self-serving emotion, as it provides people with the sense that they are good even when they ignore suffering.
 - D. It is best not to feel empathy for others, as people tend to take advantage of the sympathy they know they can inspire in empathetic people.

2. PART B: Which TWO details from the text best support the answer to Part A?
 - A. "School leaders try to attract a diverse set of students so each can understand what it's like to walk in the others' shoes." (Paragraph 1)
 - B. "Empathy makes you more aware of other people's suffering, but it's not clear it actually motivates you to take moral action or prevents you from taking immoral action." (Paragraph 4)
 - C. "Moreover, Prinz argues, empathy often leads people astray. It influences people to care more about cute victims than ugly victims." (Paragraph 9)
 - D. "It has become a way to experience delicious moral emotions without confronting the weaknesses in our nature that prevent us from actually acting upon them." (Paragraph 10)
 - E. "People who actually perform pro-social action don't only feel for those who are suffering, they feel compelled to act by a sense of duty." (Paragraph 11)
 - F. "The code tells them that an adulterer or a drug dealer may feel ecstatic, but the proper response is still contempt." (Paragraph 12)

3. PART A: Which of the following best describes how the author makes his claim?
 - A. The author compares how likely empathetic people are to take moral action with people who have a sense of duty.
 - B. The author draws on personal experiences of witnessing empathetic people not taking action in immoral situations.
 - C. The author emphasizes how much better people with a sense a duty are than people with empathy.
 - D. The author provides scientific evidence for why empathetic people are less likely to take actions than people with a sense of duty.

4. PART B: Which quote from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
- A. "There's even a brain theory that we have mirror neurons in our heads that enable us to feel what's in other people's heads and that these neurons lead to sympathetic care and moral action." (Paragraph 2)
 - B. "In the early days of the Holocaust, Nazi prison guards sometimes wept as they mowed down Jewish women and children, but they still did it." (Paragraph 5)
 - C. "Eighty-seven percent of the people who found the dime offered to help a person who dropped some papers nearby, compared with only 4 percent who didn't find a dime." (Paragraph 8)
 - D. "Empathy is a sideshow. If you want to make the world a better place, help people debate, understand, reform, revere and enact their codes." (Paragraph 13)

5. How does the detail about the Nazi prison guards in paragraph 5 contribute to the text?

Discussion Questions

Directions: *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. Is self-interest more powerful than empathy? Do you think that people are generally more self-interested or empathetic?
2. What code do you live by? How does it shape your actions towards others?
3. Do you consider yourself an empathetic person? Why or why not? How has being empathetic shaped your behavior?
4. According to the text, people with empathy still neglect to help those in need. Have you ever seen someone neglect someone in need? If so, describe the experience.

Name: _____ Class: _____

How an 11-Year-Old Boy Invented the Popsicle

By Shelby Pope for NPR
2015

Frank Epperson is responsible for inventing the popsicle at 11 years old in 1905. What started as a delicious accident, evolved into a world-wide phenomenon that is still enjoyed today. Epperson's original invention has changed much since the idea's conception in 1905, changing hands between big companies, feeling the effects of the Great Depression, and sparking heated debates. Regardless, the popsicle has maintained its reputation as an iconic, icy treat. As you read, take notes on how Frank Epperson's frozen treat became such a success.

- [1] The next time you pop a Popsicle in your mouth, think about this: You're enjoying the fruits of an 11-year-old entrepreneur's¹ labor.

Back in 1905, a San Francisco Bay Area kid by the name of Frank Epperson accidentally invented the summertime treat. He had mixed some sugary soda powder with water and left it out overnight. It was a cold night, and the mixture froze. In the morning, Epperson devoured the icy concoction,² licking it off the wooden stirrer. He declared it an Epsicle, a portmanteau of icicle and his name, and started selling the treat around his neighborhood.

In 1923, Epperson decided to expand sales beyond his neighborhood. He started selling the treat at Neptune Beach, a nearby amusement park. Dubbed a "West Coast Coney Island," the park featured roller coasters, baseball and an Olympic-sized swimming pool. Neptune flourished in the pre-Depression³ days, and consumers eagerly consumed⁴ Epsicles and snow cones (which also made their debut⁵ at Neptune).

Buoyed⁶ by this success, Epperson applied for a patent⁷ for his "frozen confection⁸ of attractive appearance, which can be conveniently consumed without contamination by contact with the hand and without the need for a plate, spoon, fork or other implement"⁹ in 1924. The patent illustrates the requirements for a perfect ice pop, including recommendations on the best wood for the stick: wood-bass, birch and poplar. Eventually, Epperson's children urged him to change the ice pop's name to what they called it: a Pop's 'Sicle, or Popsicle.



"Popsicle" by Alysa is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

1. **Entrepreneur (noun):** a person who starts a business
2. **Concoct (verb):** to create something magical or unusual by mixing different ingredients
3. The Great Depression was a worldwide economic decline that lasted from 1929 to 1939.
4. **Consume (verb):** to eat or drink something
5. **Debut (noun):** the first public appearance
6. made (by something) to feel confident; encouraged

- [5] This origin story is charming, if somewhat apocryphal¹⁰ (sources differ on the details), but it didn't have a happy ending for the inventor. A broke Epperson sold the rights to his creation to the Joe Lowe Co. in the 1920s, much to his regret: "I was flat¹¹ and had to liquidate all my assets,"¹² he later said. "I haven't been the same since."

The Lowe Co. went on to catapult Epperson's invention to national success. During the Great Depression, the company debuted the two-stick version of the Popsicle to help consumers stretch their dollar — the duo sold for 5 cents.

But this delicious duo faced competition from Good Humor, which had recently debuted its own chocolate-covered ice cream on a stick, and Lowe was sued for copyright infringement.¹³ The court's compromise? Popsicle could sell water-based treats, and Good Humor could sell ice cream pops. Popsicle tested the limits of the agreement, selling a "Milk Popsicle," and the two companies tussled in court about the definitions of sherbet and ice cream over the years through a series of lawsuits.

The giant food corporation Unilever scooped up the Popsicle brand in 1989, expanding the brand beyond its original fruity flavors. It also bought Good Humor, ending the feud¹⁴ between the two icy competitors.

Over the years, Epperson's childhood invention has achieved iconic status, standing in for any frozen treat the way Kleenex means a tissue. That explains why also over the years, Unilever has worked to keep the name Popsicle its and its alone: In 2010, the company threatened legal action against artisan¹⁵ Brooklyn ice pop makers People's Pops for using the word "popsicle" on its blog.

- [10] As for Epperson, he died in 1983 and is buried in Oakland's Mountain View Cemetery, where he's featured on a tour celebrating local food luminaries¹⁶ including chocolate mogul¹⁷ Domingo Ghirardelli and mai tai¹⁸ inventor Victor "Trader Vic" Bergeron.

His story lives on in many forms — from the official Popsicle website, where it's illustrated in comic form, to an inspirational Christian self-help book about trusting in God's grand plan for your life. Epperson's childhood invention, born randomly on a freezing night, has also proved to be resoundingly successful and long lived: These days, some 2 billion Popsicles are sold each year.

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7. a license that ensures a right or title for a set period, often the right to prevent others from making, using, or selling an invention
8. a dessert made with sweet ingredients
9. a tool
10. **Apocryphal (adjective):** well-known but probably not true
11. "Flat" can mean utterly ruined or destroyed.
12. to sell one's valuables in exchange for cash
13. legal term that describes the use of a concept, artistic work, or invention that belongs exclusively to someone else
14. **Feud (noun):** a long-standing argument or conflict
15. describes products made in a traditional way (often by hand)
16. **Luminary (noun):** a very famous, successful, or inspirational person
17. a powerful person in one or more specific industries (such as the chocolate industry)
18. a popular alcoholic drink

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which TWO statements best identify the central idea of the text?
 - A. The events of the Great Depression forced Frank Epperson to sell the rights to the popsicle.
 - B. While originally an accident, Epperson helped to make the Popsicle famous through his hard work.
 - C. The copyright issues between Good Humor and Joe Lowe Co. show how patents are not enough to protect one's rights.
 - D. Popsicles would have sold better if Frank Epperson would have kept their original name, "Epsicles."
 - E. After Epperson was forced to sell his business, the Popsicle continued to grow in popularity.
 - F. Epperson should have resisted selling his business because he could have potentially made so much more money.

2. PART B: Which TWO details from the text best support the answer to Part A?
 - A. "In 1923, Epperson decided to expand sales beyond his neighborhood" (Paragraph 3)
 - B. "A broke Epperson sold the rights to his creation to the Joe Lowe Co." (Paragraph 5)
 - C. "But this delicious duo faced competition from Good Humor," (Paragraph 7)
 - D. "Unilever scooped up the Popsicle brand in 1989, expanding the brand beyond its original fruity flavors." (Paragraph 8)
 - E. "As for Epperson, he died in 1983 and is buried in Oakland's Mountain View Cemetery, where he's featured on a tour celebrating local food luminaries," (Paragraph 10)
 - F. "Epperson's childhood invention, born randomly on a freezing night, has also proved to be resoundingly successful and long lived," (Paragraph 11)

3. PART A: In the context of paragraph 2, what does the word "portmanteau" mean?
 - A. Collision
 - B. Embodiment
 - C. Combination
 - D. Division

4. PART B: Which section from paragraph 2 best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "accidentally invented"
 - B. "summertime treat."
 - C. "icy concoction"
 - D. "icicle and his name,"

5. How does paragraph 5 contribute to the overall article? Cite evidence from the text in your answer.

Discussion Questions

Directions: *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. Does Frank Epperson deserve credit for inventing the Popsicle? Why or why not?
2. If Frank Epperson were alive today, what advice do you think he would give to young inventors and entrepreneurs? Why?
3. In the context of the text, why should we value our youth? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.
4. In the context of the article, why do people succeed? Was Frank Epperson's success "random," as paragraph 11 of the article suggests? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.

Name: _____ Class: _____

There Will Come Soft Rains

By Sara Teasdale
1920

Sara Trevor Teasdale (1884-1933) was an American lyric poet born in St. Louis, Missouri. "There Will Come Soft Rains" was published in a collection of poems by Teasdale titled Flame and Shadow. When Teasdale wrote the poem in 1920, the devastation of World War I was fresh in the minds of many American writers. As you read, take notes on the setting of the poem and the poet's use of language.

[1] There will come soft rains and the smell of the
ground,
And swallows circling with their shimmering
sound;

And frogs in the pools singing at night,
And wild plum trees in tremulous white,

[5] Robins will wear their feathery fire
Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;

And not one will know of the war, not one
Will care at last when it is done.

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree
[10] If mankind perished utterly;

And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn,
Would scarcely know that we were gone.



"Liquid Petals" is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

There Will Come Soft Rains by Sara Teasdale is in the public domain.

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. Which of the following best states what lines 7-10 suggest about the setting of the poem? [RL.3]
- A. The poem takes place on a battlefield after a war is won, when peace has finally set in.
 - B. The poem takes place in a forest, far away from the chaos of people and urban life.
 - C. The poem takes place in nature, a short time after humankind has destroyed itself from war.
 - D. The poem takes place on a field in the future, after nuclear warfare has destroyed all living things.

2. How does the poet use language (diction, alliteration, figurative language and imagery) to characterize nature throughout the poem? [RL.4]

3. How does the poem's form contribute to its meaning? [RL.5]
- A. By making each couplet its own separate stanza, the poet is emphasizing the disconnectedness between nature and humanity.
 - B. By beginning with peaceful descriptions of nature and ending with the revelation that humans have become extinct, the poet is deemphasizing the importance of humanity.
 - C. By using consistent meter and rhyme scheme, the poet is creating a whimsical mood that juxtaposes the allusions to war.
 - D. By beginning the poem with imagery of the setting and ending it with the personification of Spring, the poet is suggesting that war is a part of nature itself.

4. PART A: Which of the following best states a theme of the poem? [RL.2]
- A. War is pointless and destructive.
 - B. Time heals all wounds.
 - C. Humanity is cruel and violent at heart.
 - D. Nature is indifferent to humanity.

5. PART B: Which line(s) from the poem best supports the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
- A. "There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground"
 - B. "Robins will wear their feathery fire / Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire"
 - C. "And not one will know of war, not one"
 - D. "Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree / If mankind perished utterly"

Discussion Questions

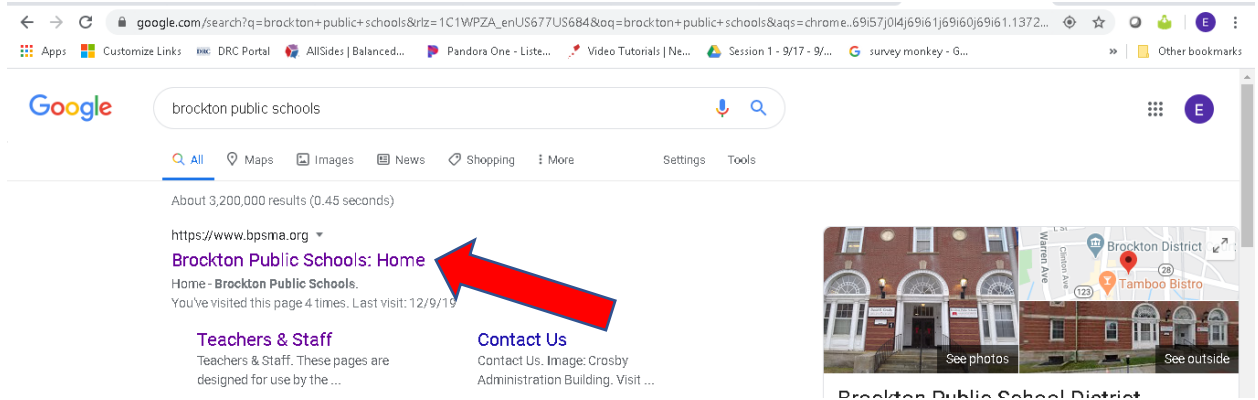
Directions: *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. What seems to be the poet's attitude about war? In your opinion, is war usually a worthy endeavor for humankind?
2. What other themes are revealed in this poem?
3. In the context of this poem, how are people changed by war? In contrast, what is not changed by war?
4. From your own experience, how are we changed by war?

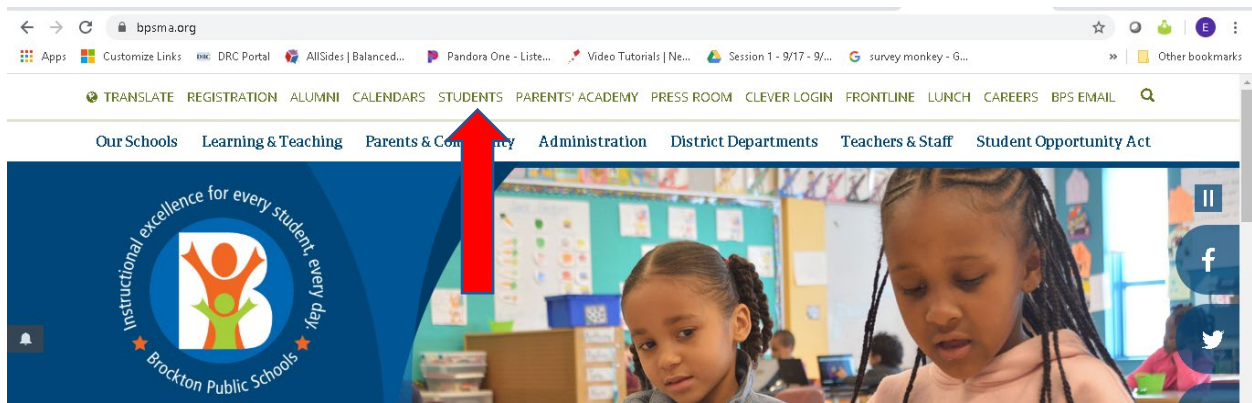
How to Log on to Power Up from Home

(For only Ashfield, South and Davis 6-8 students)

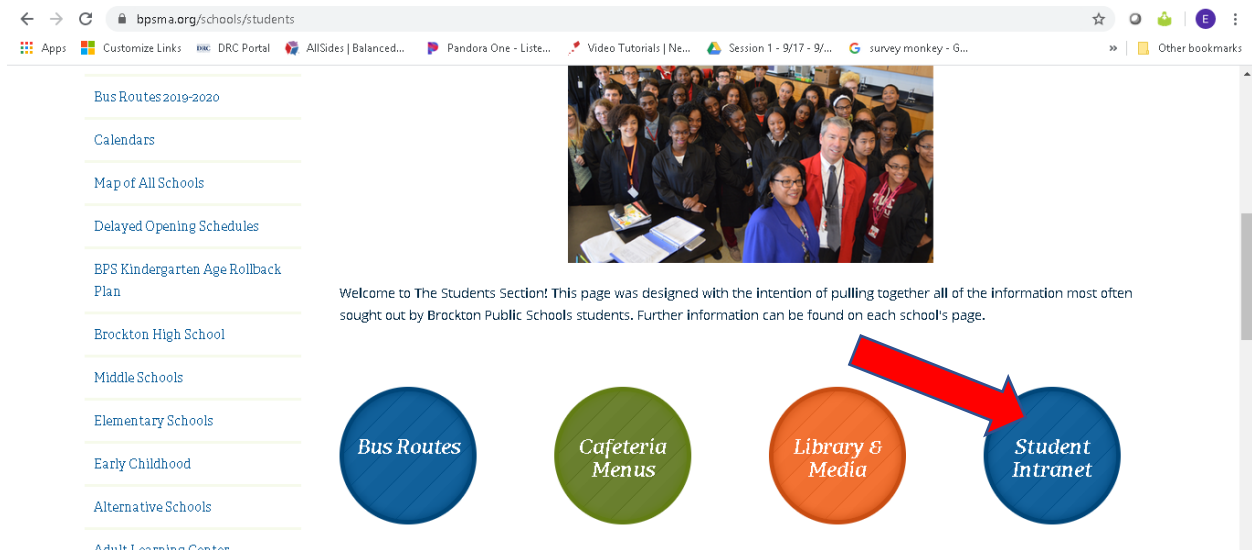
Log on to **Google** and search for **Brockton Public Schools** and go to the **home page**.



Choose the **Students** tab.



Scroll to the bottom of the page and choose **Student Intranet**



Choose ELA

The screenshot shows the BPS Student Intranet Home page. The browser address bar displays 'studentintranet.bpsma.org'. The page features a red header with 'BPS Student Intranet' and links for 'Infinite Campus', 'Email', and 'BPS Website'. A left-hand navigation menu is visible, with 'Home' selected and 'ELA' highlighted by a red arrow. Below the menu, the main content area is titled 'Home' and contains four circular icons: 'Destiny' (a tree), 'Clever' (a blue 'C'), 'Infinite Campus' (a green circle with a white path), and 'Office 365' (an orange circle with a white 'O').

Choose Power Up

The screenshot shows the BPS Student Intranet ELA Resources page. The browser address bar displays 'studentintranet.bpsma.org/ela.html'. The page features a red header with 'BPS Student Intranet' and links for 'Infinite Campus', 'Email', and 'BPS Website'. A left-hand navigation menu is visible, with 'Home' selected and 'ELA' highlighted. Below the menu, the main content area is titled 'ELA Resources' and is divided into two sections: 'Middle School' and 'Elementary School'. The 'Middle School' section contains three circular icons: 'Imagine Learning' (a red and blue figure), 'Lexia PowerUp' (a blue circle with 'LEXIA POWER UP LITERACY' text), and 'Imagine Learning' (a red and blue figure). A red arrow points to the 'Lexia PowerUp' icon. The 'Elementary School' section contains two circular icons: 'Imagine Learning' (a red and blue figure) and 'Read, Write, Think' (a green and white circle with 'read write think' text).

Choose **Student** and log in with their **six-digit lunch number** for both the username and password.

The screenshot shows the Lexia PowerUp Literacy login page for Brockton Public Schools. The page features a blue background with a smiling young man wearing a hat and a plaid shirt. The Lexia PowerUp Literacy logo is prominently displayed. Below the logo, the text 'Brockton Public Schools' is visible. There are two buttons for user selection: 'Student' (selected) and 'Educator'. Below these are two input fields for 'Username' and 'Password', with a 'Show' link next to the password field. A 'Log In' button is located at the bottom right.

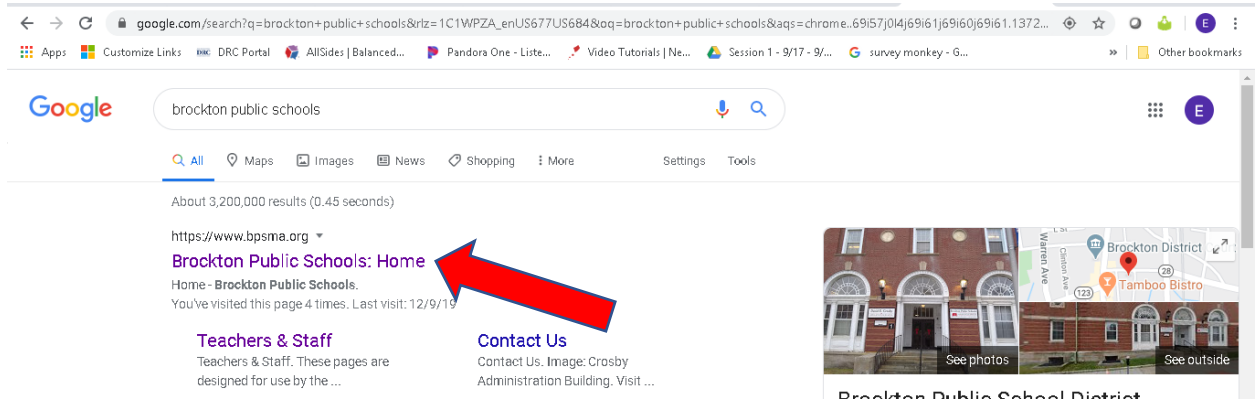
Students are urged to complete their word study minutes on Monday, Grammar minutes on Tuesday, Reading Comprehension on Wednesday and Thursday and the topic of their choice on Friday.

The image shows a dashboard with four vertical cards on a dark blue background. Each card has a colored header, a circular progress indicator, and a timer. The cards are: 1. Word Study (blue header, blue background, circular progress at 0%, timer '35 min left', 'your goal | 35 min'). 2. Grammar (green header, green background, circular progress at 0%, timer '35 min left', 'your goal | 35 min'). 3. Comprehension (orange header, orange background, circular progress at 0%, timer '35 min left', 'your goal | 35 min'). 4. Your Progress (yellow header, yellow background, circular progress at 0%, timer '35 min left', 'your goal | 35 min'). The circular progress indicators contain icons: a magnifying glass for Word Study, a person thinking for Grammar, a person reading for Comprehension, and a trophy for Your Progress.

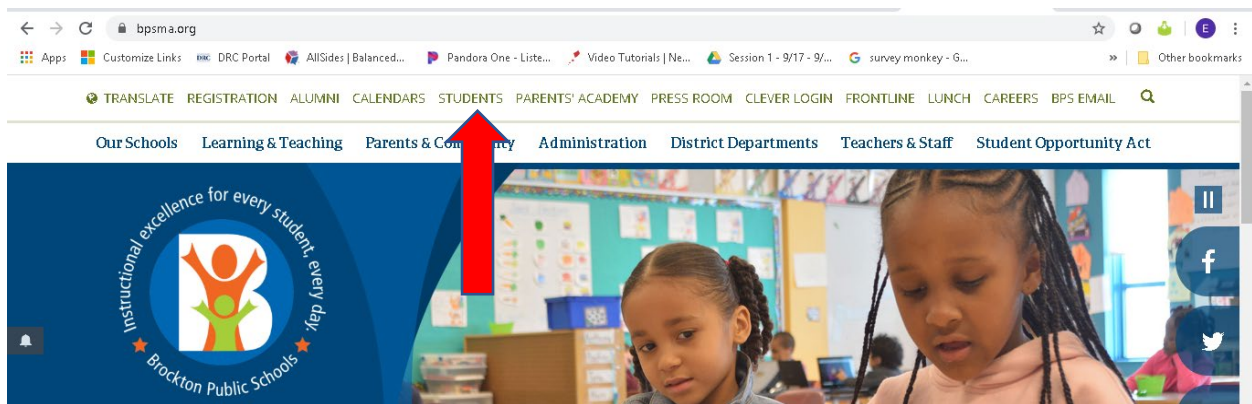
Category	Progress	Time Left	Goal
Word Study	0%	35 min left	your goal 35 min
Grammar	0%	35 min left	your goal 35 min
Comprehension	0%	35 min left	your goal 35 min
Your Progress	0%	35 min left	your goal 35 min

How to Log on to Clever from Home to Access Amplify READING Curriculum

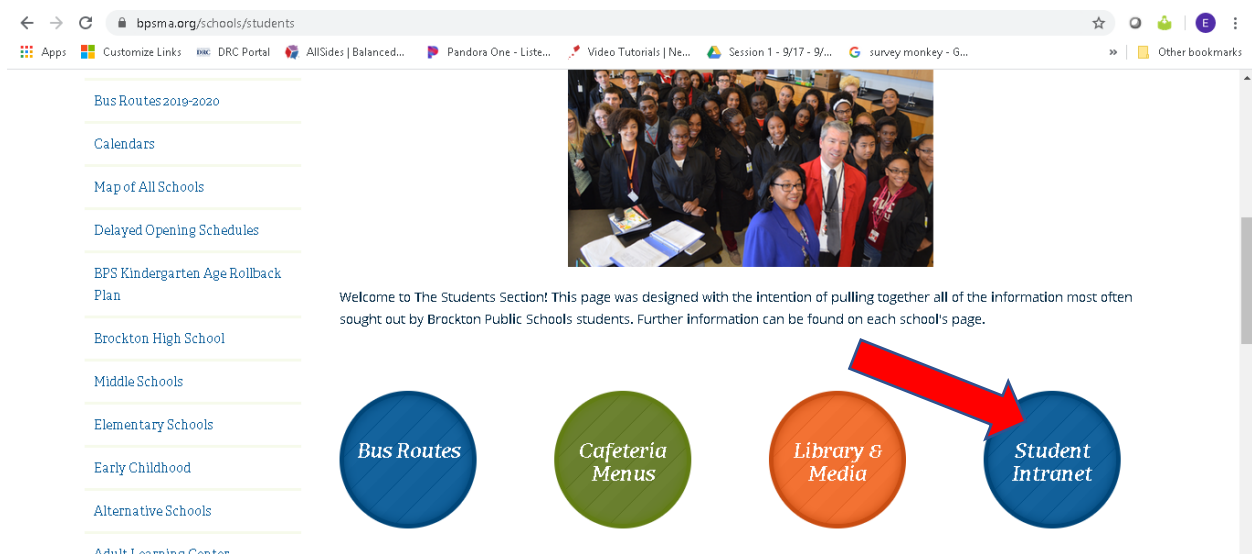
Log on to **Google** and search for **Brockton Public Schools** and go to the **home page**.



Choose the **Students** tab.



Scroll to the bottom of the page and choose **Student Intranet**



Choose Clever.

The screenshot shows the BPS Student Intranet home page. The browser address bar displays "studentintranet.bpsma.org". The page header includes "BPS Student Intranet" and links for "Infinite Campus", "Email", and "BPS Website". A left sidebar lists navigation options: Home, ELA, Math, Reading, Science, Social Science, BPS Website, and Nutrition Survey. The main content area, titled "Home", features four large circular icons: "Destiny" (a tree), "Clever" (a blue circle with a white 'C'), "Infinite Campus" (a green circle with a white 'i'), and "Office 365" (an orange circle with a white 'O'). A red arrow points to the Clever icon.

Choose Amplify Curriculum

The screenshot shows the Clever portal for Brockton Public Schools. The browser address bar displays "clever.com/in/brockton/staff/portal". The page header includes the Clever logo, "Brockton Public Schools", a search bar, and a "Portal" link. A left sidebar lists navigation options: WHAT IS TRENDING..., ELA, MATH, SCIENCE, SOCIAL SCIENCE, At Home Resources, ENRICHMENT, STAFF DATA APPLICATIONS, and BPS HOME. The main content area, titled "WHAT IS TRENDING...", displays a grid of application icons. A red arrow points to the Amplify Curriculum icon, which is an orange square with the word "Amplify" in white.

Choose the hamburger menu in the top left corner.

The screenshot shows the AmplifyELA interface. The browser address bar displays "AmplifyELA > All Units". The page header includes the AmplifyELA logo and "All Units". The main content area displays "8th Grade" with a dropdown arrow. A red arrow points to the hamburger menu icon (three horizontal lines) in the top left corner.

Click in "Go To My Account"

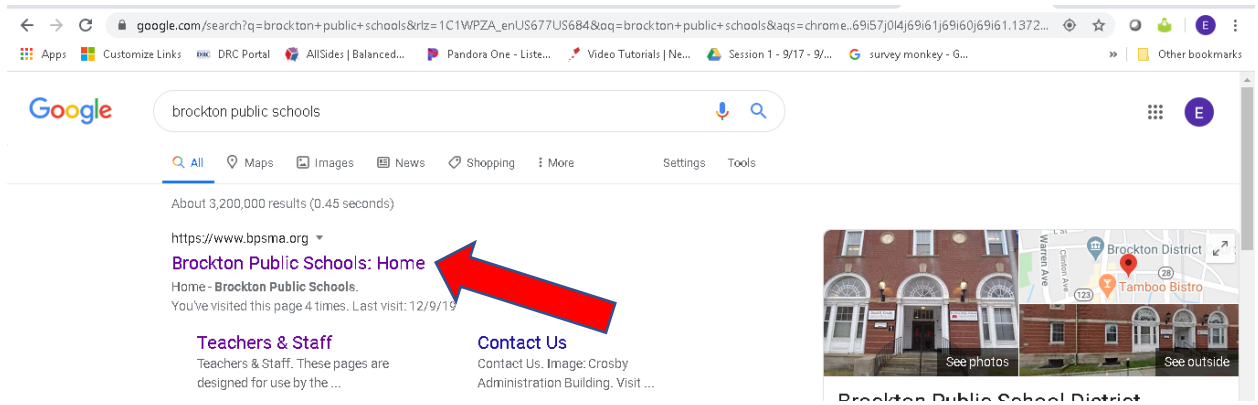
The screenshot shows the AmplifyELA user interface. At the top right, it says "AmplifyELA > All Units" and "8th Grade" with a dropdown arrow. On the left, a user profile dropdown menu is open, showing the user's name "Hello KELLY SILVA" and email "kellycoopersilva@bpsma.org". Below the name are "Log Out" and "Go To My Account" with a gear icon. A red arrow points to the "Go To My Account" option. Below the menu are icons for "Amplify ELA", "Tools", "Classwork", and "Library". The main content area shows two lesson cards: one with a colorful abstract image and another with a portrait of a man.

Click on Reading 6-8

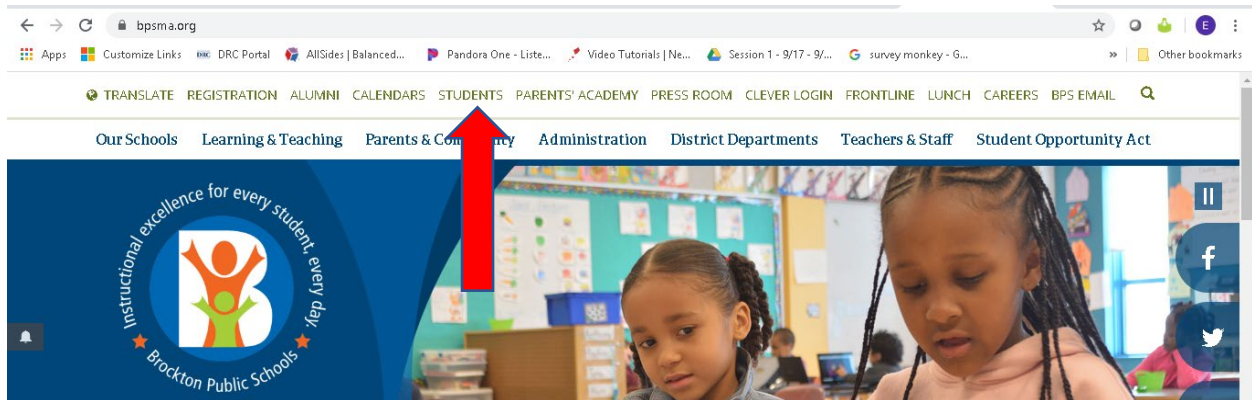
The screenshot shows a button labeled "Reading 6-8". To the left of the text is a circular icon containing a stylized figure in a red hood. The button has a light gray background and rounded corners.

How to Log on to **READ 180** from Home

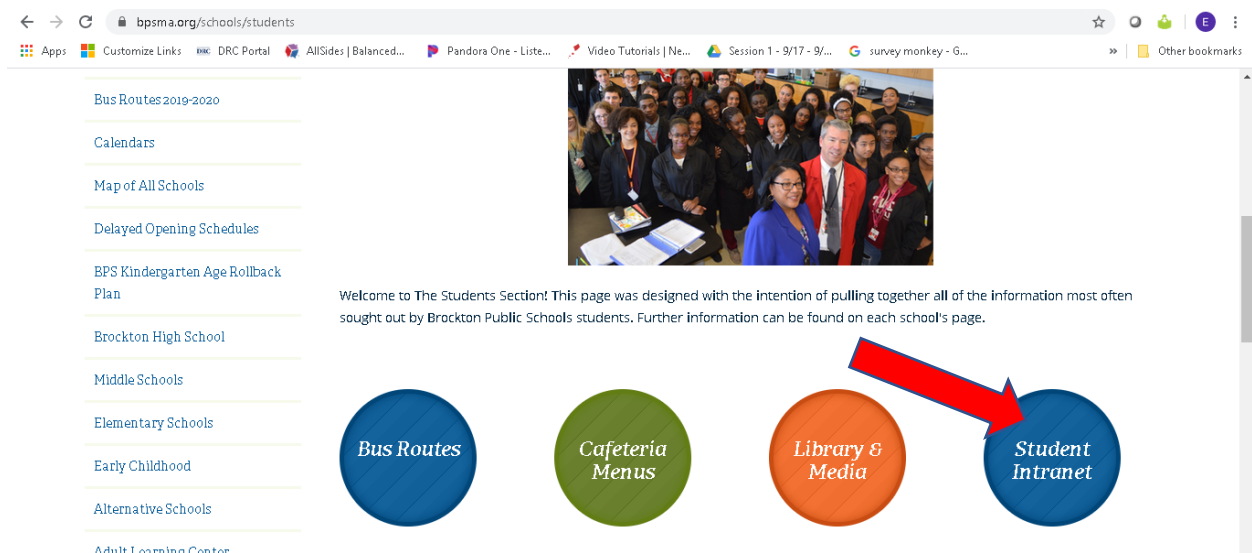
Log on to **Google** and search for **Brockton Public Schools** and go to the **home page**.



Choose the **Students** tab.

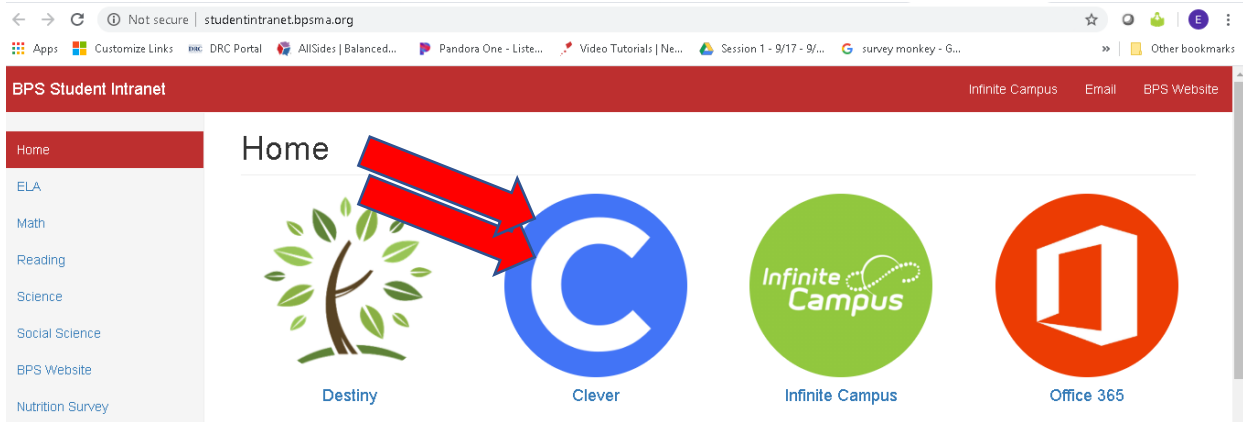


Scroll to the bottom of the page and choose **Student Intranet**

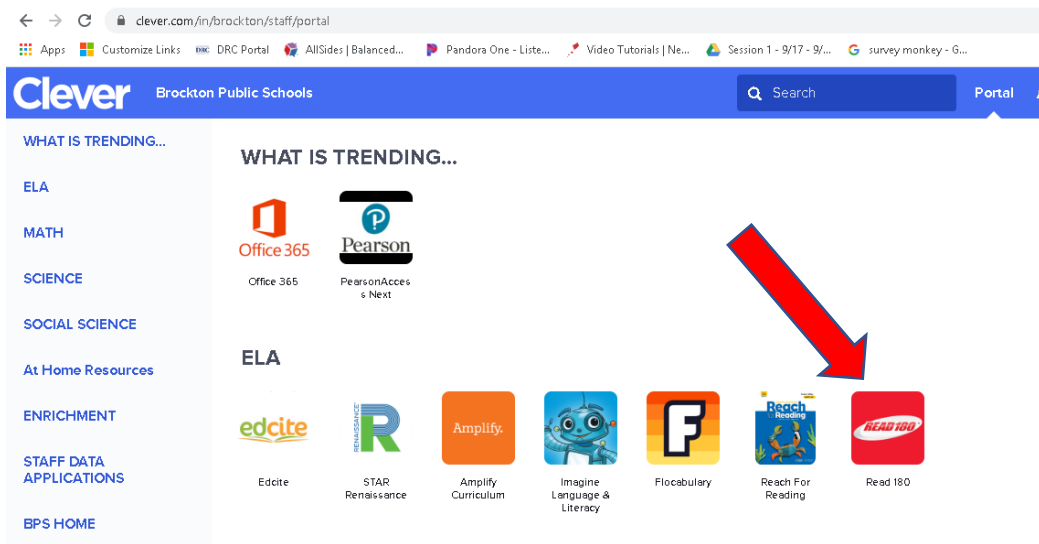


Choose **Clever**. Students will have to log on with their Username: 6-digit lunch number @bpsma.org and the password is their 8-digit birthday bps1920

Example: Username: 123456@bpsma.org Password: 06142007bps1920



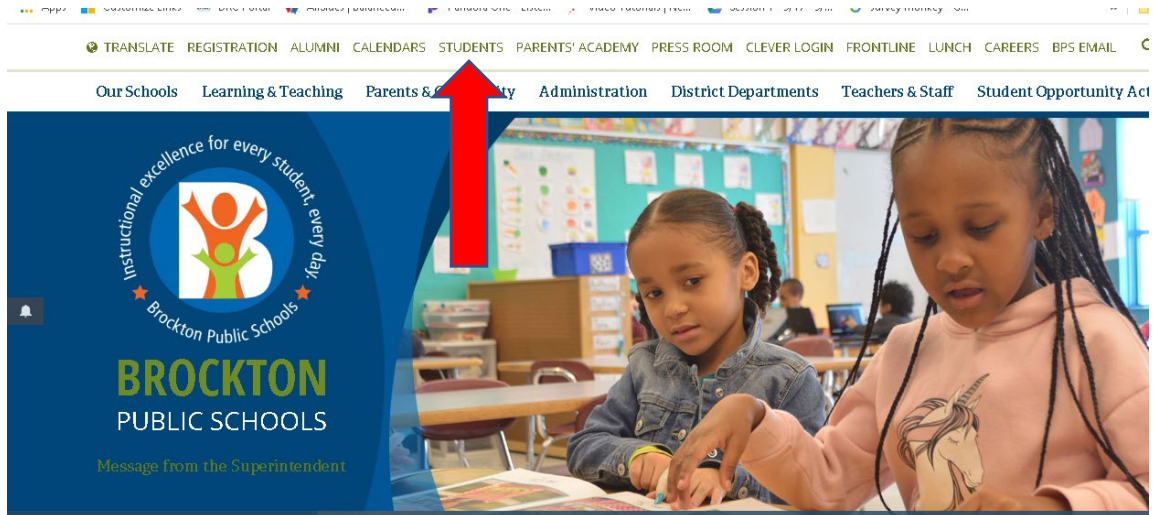
Choose **READ 180**



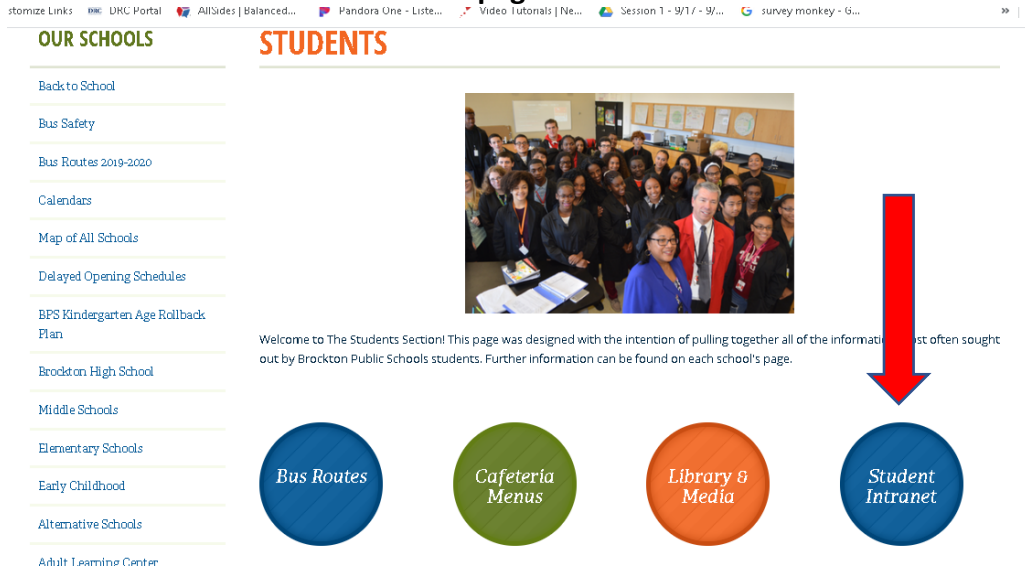
Log on with the username: 6-digit lunch number (123456) and the password: 6-digit lunch number followed by their first and last initials. (123456am)

Directions for Students to Access Common Lit. from Home

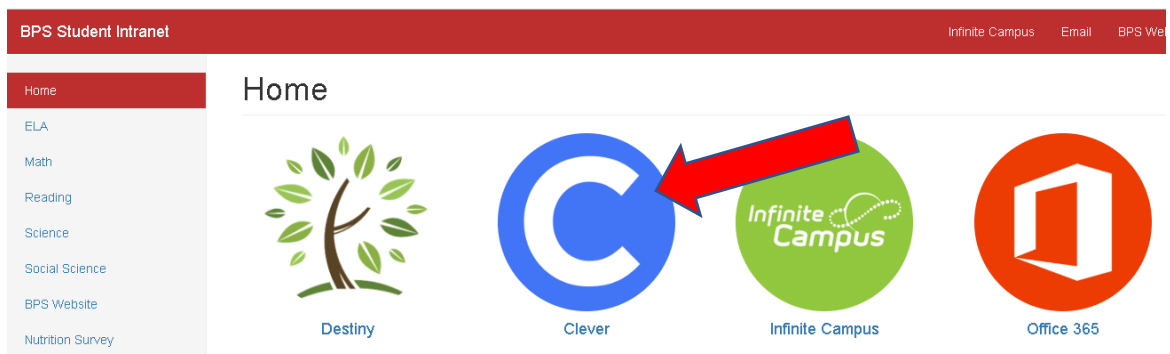
1. Go to the BPS website and choose Students.



2. Scroll to the bottom of the student page and choose the blue Student Intranet button.

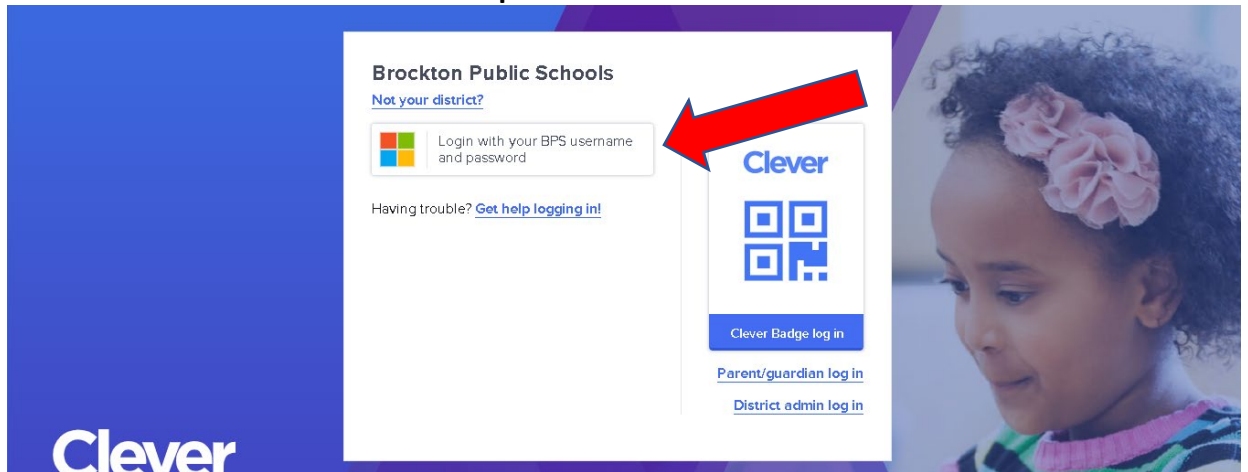


3. Choose the Clever button.



4. Log In with your BPS username and password. Your username is your 6-digit lunch number and your password is your 8-digit birthdaybps1920.

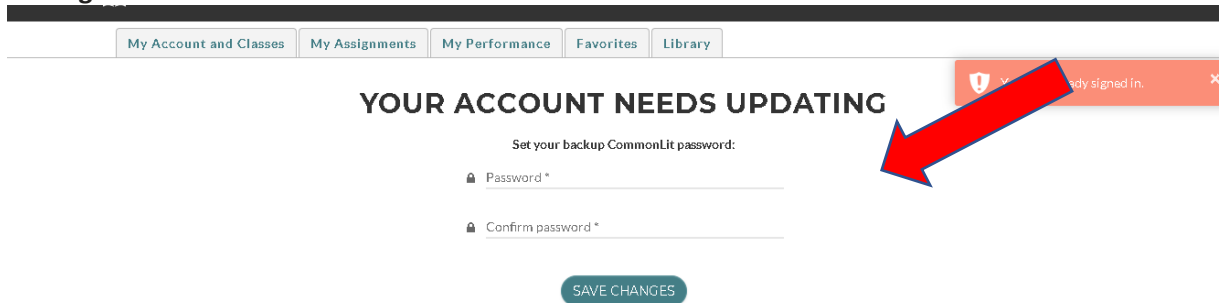
Example: password: 123456
 Username: 12052007bps1920



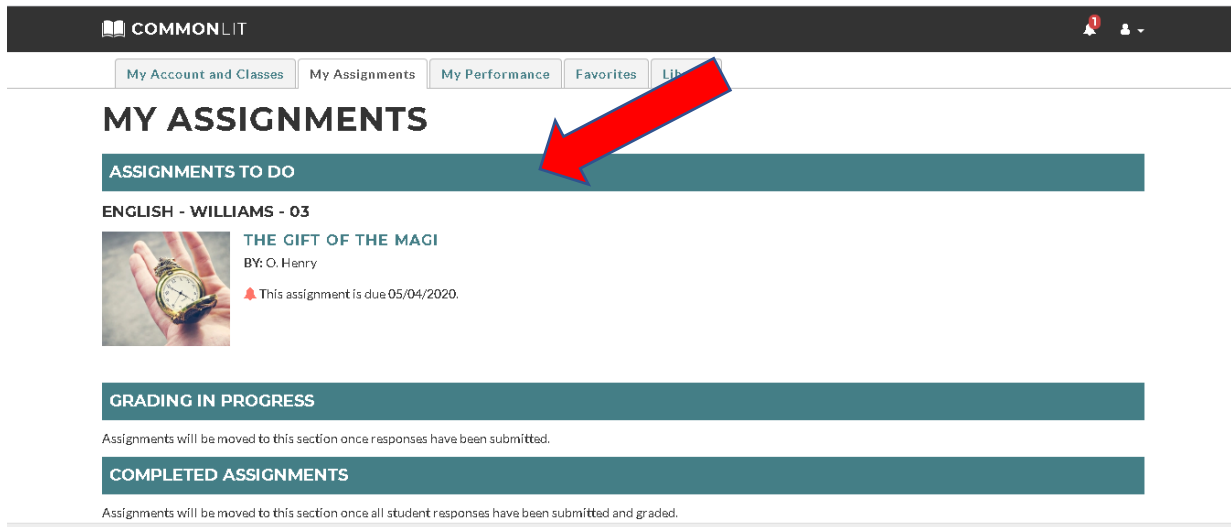
5. Choose the Common Lit app.



6. You will see "Your Account Needs Updating" will asked to set a backup password so you can access your account even in the case of a Clever outage or issue. You will never be asked to do that again.



7. Once you do that, you will be let into the Common Lit and you can do your assignment. Under the heading **ASSIGNMENTS TO DO**.



The screenshot shows the Common Lit interface. At the top, there is a dark navigation bar with the 'COMMON LIT' logo and user profile icons. Below this is a menu with tabs for 'My Account and Classes', 'My Assignments', 'My Performance', 'Favorites', and 'Lit'. The main heading is 'MY ASSIGNMENTS'. Underneath, there are three sections: 'ASSIGNMENTS TO DO', 'GRADING IN PROGRESS', and 'COMPLETED ASSIGNMENTS'. A red arrow points to the 'ASSIGNMENTS TO DO' section. Under this section, there is a card for 'ENGLISH - WILLIAMS - 03' featuring 'THE GIFT OF THE MAGI' by O. Henry. The card includes a watch icon and a due date of 05/04/2020.

COMMON LIT

My Account and Classes My Assignments My Performance Favorites Lit

MY ASSIGNMENTS

ASSIGNMENTS TO DO

ENGLISH - WILLIAMS - 03

THE GIFT OF THE MAGI
BY: O. Henry

▲ This assignment is due 05/04/2020.

GRADING IN PROGRESS

Assignments will be moved to this section once responses have been submitted.

COMPLETED ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments will be moved to this section once all student responses have been submitted and graded.

Good luck!