

<b>Title:</b> Would You Join In?	<b>Grade:</b> 6th-8th Grades
<b>Content:</b> English Language Arts (Social Emotional)	<b>Duration:</b> 60 minutes

**Standard:**

- **RI 6-8.1:** Use textual evidence to support what you think the text says.
- **RI 6-8.2:** Determine theme and produce an unbiased summary.
- **RI 6-8.3:** Analyze interactions between individuals.
- **RI 6-8.4:** Determine meaning of figurative language.
- **RI 6-8.6:** Determine author's purpose.

**Objective:** Students will analyze characters' and author's motives in a short story, paired with an informational news article.

**Resources Needed:**

- Paper and writing utensils or computer document
- Short story and article, both below.

**Introduction:**

Have you heard the old song that goes "rainy days and Mondays always get me down"? (If not, look it up and listen!) Is it true that weather affects your mood?

My daughter lives in Alaska where they have *l o n g* winters and just a few very hours of daylight during these *l o n g* winters. The first couple of years, it was very hard on her mood; she found herself feeling down, crying a bit too much. (I'm sure this was because she missed her momma too!)

Imagine living in a place where it was rainy, cold, gloomy every day . . . except one. How important would that one sunny day be to you? Keep this in mind as you read the following short story.

**Steps:**

- **Read** "All Summer in a Day" by Ray Bradbury (a short story; found below). Feel free to mark the text as you. It's yours! (It's so well written! You'll love some of the words!)
- **Summary:** On a piece of paper or a blank computer document, write the label: SUMMARY. Pretend your best friend is absent from school the day your teacher reads this story aloud. The teacher asks you to send an email to your friend, telling her the story in one paragraph: short and sweet, just the main stuff. Write that one-paragraph story summary to your friend now. (Don't put any of your own bias/opinion in; just tell the story.)
- **Figurative Language:** On the same piece of paper, draw a nice line and label the

next section FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE. The story is littered with figurative language! Find one example (probably a simile or metaphor), jot down the quote and sketch a picture of what the figurative language puts in your mind (imagery). (Simile: compares two different things, using as or like. Metaphor: compares two different things, without using as or like. Examples: The day is like a ghost. The day is a ghost.)

- **Human Behavior:** Draw another nice line, and label the next section HUMAN BEHAVIOR. Think about and write an answer to this question: Is it normal human behavior to resent someone who has it better than you do? Explain. Can you think of a time that you resented someone for this reason? Explain.
- **Read** the informational article below entitled, “Herd Behavior.”
- **Herd Behavior and Margot:** Label the next section: HERD BEHAVIOR & MARGOT. Using quotes from the story and the news article, write a paragraph or more explaining how herd behavior is evident in the story.
- **Responsibility:** Label your next section: RESPONSIBILITY. Write a paragraph explaining who bears the responsibility/the blame for Margot missing out? Think deeply. Who is *really* to blame?
- **Theme:** In your last section, write a one sentence theme. What is the message the author, Ray Bradbury, wants you and me to hear in this story?

**Finished Product:** Paper, with many sections: well-written, good spelling, neat.

**Adaptations:** This is an excellent short story to have a debate with. Have students read it, write questions to stir up conversation, and join you on a platform where you can speak together. (This would help meet the standard of students coming to a discussion prepared.)

Short story and informational article below.

## All Summer in a Day

By Ray Bradbury

"Ready ?"

"Ready.]"

"Now ?"

"Soon."

"Do the scientists really know? Will it happen today, will it ?"

"Look, look; see for yourself !"

The children pressed to each other like so many roses, so many weeds, intermixed, peering out for a look at the hidden sun. It rained.

It had been raining for seven years; thousands upon thousands of days compounded and filled from one end to the other with rain, with the drum and gush of water, with the sweet crystal fall of showers and the concussion of storms so heavy they were tidal waves come over the islands. A thousand forests had been crushed under the rain and grown up a thousand times to be crushed again. And this was the way life was forever on the planet Venus, and this was the schoolroom of the children of the rocket men and women who had come to a raining world to set up civilization and live out their lives.

"It's stopping, it's stopping !"

"Yes, yes !"

Margot stood apart from them, from these children who could never remember a time when there wasn't rain and rain and rain.

They were all nine years old, and if there *had* been a day, seven years ago, when the sun came out for an hour and showed its face to the stunned world, they could not recall.

Sometimes, at night, she heard them stir, in remembrance, and she knew they were dreaming and remembering gold or a yellow crayon or a coin large enough to buy the world with. She knew they thought they remembered a warmth, like a blushing in the face, in the body, in the arms and legs and trembling hands. But then they always awoke to the tating drum, the endless shaking down of clear bead necklaces upon the roof, the walk, the gardens, the forests, and their dreams were gone.

All day yesterday they had read in class about the sun. About how like a lemon it was, and how hot. And they had written small stories or essays or poems about it:

*I think the sun is a flower,  
That blooms for just one hour.*

That was Margot's poem, read in a quiet voice in the still classroom while the rain was falling outside.

"Aw, you didn't write that!" protested one of the boys.

"I did," said Margot. "I did."

"William!" said the teacher.

But that was yesterday. Now the rain was slackening, and the children were crushed in the great thick windows.

Where's teacher ?"

"She'll be back."

"She'd better hurry, we'll miss it!"

They turned on themselves, like a feverish wheel, all tumbling spokes. Margot stood alone. She was a very frail girl who looked as if she had been lost in the rain for years and the rain had washed out the blue from her eyes and the red from her mouth and the yellow from her hair. She was an old photograph dusted from an album, whitened away, and if she spoke at all her voice would be a ghost.

Now she stood, separate, staring at the rain and the loud wet world beyond the huge glass.

"What're you looking at?" said William.

Margot said nothing.

"Speak when you're spoken to."

He gave her a shove. But she did not move; rather she let herself be moved only by him and nothing else.

They edged away from her, they would not look at her. She felt them go away. And this was because she would play no games with them in the echoing tunnels of the underground city. If they tagged her and ran, she stood blinking after them and did not follow. When the class sang songs about happiness and life and games, her lips barely moved. Only when they sang about the sun and the summer did her lips move as she watched the drenched windows. And then, of course, the biggest crime of all was that she had come here only five years ago from Earth, and she remembered the sun and the way the sun

was and the sky was when she was four in Ohio. And they, they had been on Venus all their lives, and they had been only two years old when last the sun came out and had long since forgotten the color and heat of it and the way it really was.

But Margot remembered.

"It's like a penny," she said once, eyes closed.

"No it's not!" the children cried.

"It's like a fire," she said, "in the stove."

"You're lying, you don't remember!" cried the children.

But she remembered and stood quietly apart from all of them and watched the patterning windows. And once, a month ago, she had refused to shower in the school shower rooms, had clutched her hands to her ears and over her head, screaming the water mustn't touch her head. So after that, dimly, dimly, she sensed it, she was different and they knew her difference and kept away. There was talk that her father and mother were taking her back to Earth next year; it seemed vital to her that they do so, though it would mean the loss of thousands of dollars to her family.

And so, the children hated her for all these reasons of big and little consequence. They hated her pale snow face, her waiting silence, her thinness, and her possible future.

"Get away!" The boy gave her another push. "What're you waiting for?"

Then, for the first time, she turned and looked at him. And what she was waiting for

was in her eyes.

"Well, don't wait around here !" cried the boy savagely. "You won't see nothing!"

Her lips moved.

"Nothing!" he cried. "It was all a joke, wasn't it?" He turned to the other children. "Nothing's happening today. Is it?"

They all blinked at him and then, understanding, laughed and shook their heads.

"Nothing, nothing!"

"Oh, but," Margot whispered, her eyes helpless. "But this is the day, the scientists predict, they say, they know, the sun..."

"All a joke!" said the boy, and seized her roughly. "Hey, everyone, let's put her in a closet before the teacher comes!"

"No," said Margot, falling back.

They surged about her, caught her up and bore her, protesting, and then pleading, and then crying, back into a tunnel, a room, a closet, where they slammed and locked the door. They stood looking at the door and saw it tremble from her beating and throwing herself against it. They heard her muffled cries. Then, smiling, she turned and went out and back down the tunnel, just as the teacher arrived.

"Ready, children ?" She glanced at her watch.

"Yes !" said everyone.

"Are we all here?"

"Yes !"

The rain slackened still more.

They crowded to the huge door.

The rain stopped.

It was as if, in the midst of a film concerning an avalanche, a tornado, a hurricane, a volcanic eruption, something had, first, gone wrong with the sound apparatus, thus muffling and finally cutting off all noise, all of the blasts and repercussions and thunders, and then,

second, ripped the film from the projector and inserted in its place a beautiful tropical slide which did not move or tremor. The world ground to a standstill. The silence was so immense and unbelievable that you felt your ears had been stuffed or you had lost your hearing altogether. The children put their hands to their ears. They stood apart. The door slid back and the smell of the silent, waiting world came in to them.

The sun came out.

It was the color of flaming bronze and it was very large. And the sky around it was a blazing blue tile color. And the jungle burned with sunlight as the children, released from their spell, rushed out, yelling into the springtime.

"Now, don't go too far," called the teacher after them. "You've only two hours, you know. You wouldn't want to get caught out !"

But they were running and turning their faces up to the sky and feeling the sun on their cheeks like a warm iron; they were taking off their jackets and letting the sun burn their arms.

"Oh, it's better than the sun lamps, isn't it?"

"Much, much better !"

They stopped running and stood in the great jungle that covered Venus, that grew and never stopped growing, tumultuously, even as you watched it. It was a nest of octopi, clustering up great arms of fleshlike weed, wavering, flowering in this brief spring. It was the color of rubber and ash, this jungle, from the many years without sun.

It was the color of stones and white cheeses and ink, and it was the color of the moon.

The children lay out, laughing, on the

jungle mattress, and heard it sigh and squeak under them resilient and alive. They ran among the trees, they slipped and fell, they pushed each other, they played hide-and-seek and tag, but most of all they squinted at the sun until the tears ran down their faces; they put their hands up to that yellowness and that amazing blueness and they breathed of the fresh, fresh air and listened and listened to the silence which suspended them in a blessed sea of no sound and no motion. They looked at everything and savored everything. Then, wildly, like animals escaped from their caves, they ran and ran in shouting circles.

They ran for an hour and did not stop running.

And then -

In the midst of their running one of the girls wailed.

Everyone stopped.

The girl, standing in the open, held out her hand.

"Oh, look, look," she said, trembling.

They came slowly to look at her opened palm.

In the center of it, cupped and huge, was a single raindrop. She began to cry, looking at it. They glanced quietly at the sun.

"Oh. Oh."

A few cold drops fell on their noses and their cheeks and their mouths. The sun faded behind a stir of mist. A wind blew cold around them. They turned and started to walk back toward the underground house, their hands at their sides, their smiles vanishing away.

A boom of thunder startled them and like leaves before a new hurricane, they tumbled upon each other and ran. Lightning struck ten miles away, five miles away, a

mile, a half mile. The sky darkened into midnight in a flash.

They stood in the doorway of the underground for a moment until it was raining hard. Then they closed the door and heard the gigantic sound of the rain falling in tons and avalanches, everywhere and forever.

"Will it be seven more years?"

"Yes. Seven."

Then one of them gave a little cry.

"Margot!"

"What ?"

"She's still in the closet where we locked her."

"Margot."

They stood as if someone had driven them, like so many stakes, into the floor.

They looked at each other and then looked away. They glanced out at the world that was raining now and raining and raining steadily. They could not meet each other's glances. Their faces were solemn and pale.

They looked at their hands and feet, their faces down.

"Margot."

One of the girls said, "Well... ?"

No one moved.

"Go on," whispered the girl.

They walked slowly down the hall in the sound of cold rain. They turned through the doorway to the room in the sound of the storm and thunder, lightning on their faces, blue and terrible. They walked over to the closet door slowly and stood by it.

Behind the closet door was only silence.

They unlocked the door, even more slowly, and let Margot out.

Informational article:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Herd Behavior**

By CommonLit Staff  
2014

*"Herd behavior" is a term used to describe the tendency of individuals to follow the actions of others. Read, take notes on the causes of herd behavior.*

### **Background**

- [1] The term "herd behavior" comes from the behavior of animals in herds, particularly when they are in a dangerous situation such as escaping a predator. All of the animals band closely together in a group and, in panic mode, move together as a unit. It is very unusual for a member of the herd to stray from the movement of the unit.



*"Herd of Goats" by*

The term also applies to human behavior, and it usually describes large numbers of people acting the same way at the same time. It often has a connotation<sup>1</sup> of irrationality, as people's actions are driven by emotion rather than by thinking through a situation. This is often observed at large-scale demonstrations, riots, strikes, religious gatherings, and outbreaks of mob violence. When herd behavior sets in, an individual's independent thinking process is shut down as he or she automatically follows the group.

### **Examples of Herd Behavior**

Herd behavior in humans is frequently observed at times of danger. In a crisis, panic building often causes herd behavior, with people often suspending their individuality and fleeing together in a pack. People in a crisis that requires escape will, in a panic, copy the actions of others, interact physically with each other, and act in favor of following the mass escape trend.

Another commonly cited example of human herd behavior is the phenomenon of market bubbles. Large stock market trends often begin and end with a massive buying (bubbles) and selling (crashes). Many observers see these stock market trends as irrational because individuals are driven by emotion rather than reason to "jump on the bandwagon" during buying frenzies, and fear drives crashes.

1. **Connotation (noun):** an idea or quality that a word expresses in addition to its literal meaning.



## Behavior in Crowds

- [5] A more obvious example of human herd behavior occurs in dense public crowds or mobs. Crowds that gather because of a grievance or protest can involve herding behavior that becomes violent. Psychologists posit that a “group mind” can overtake a mob and embolden people to act in ways they would not individually, increasing the likelihood that situations become violent.

Sporting events can also create herd behavior on a violent scale. The football hooliganism prevalent in Europe in the 1980s is a well-known example of sports-related herding behavior and violence. Overzealous fans of football teams often engaged in unruly or destructive behavior in the name of supporting their team and intimidating the rival team, to the extent that people involved could be badly injured or even killed.

Some historians believe that Adolf Hitler purposefully took advantage of herd behavior psychology by planting a significant number of undercover German officers in the crowds at his speeches. These officers would enthusiastically cheer for Hitler, and the rest of the crowd followed suit, making it seem as if the entire crowd supported Hitler. These speeches would then be broadcast to a larger public audience, magnifying the effect.

## Everyday Decision-Making

Herd behavior does not always have such harmful effects; it can be influential in people’s everyday, simple decisions. For example, suppose that a family is walking down the street looking for a restaurant to have dinner. If they pass a restaurant that is empty and one that is relatively crowded with patrons, they are far more likely to choose the crowded one, on the assumption that it’s better because there are more people there. Herding can be subtle in this way; it simply involves people’s tendency to follow a crowd rather than carve out an individual path in many situations.

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**End of assignment.**