



LANGUAGE
English



Goals

- Can read and understand a complex literary excerpt from W.J. Johnston's short story 'A Centennial Telegraphic Romance'.
- Can maintain an in-depth discussion on the role of technology and movement in the story.





Romance and dating have never been easy.



Over the course of history, sweethearts and lovers have harnessed new technology to express their feelings.



A Centennial Telegraph Romance was one of the first stories to explore the **romantic possibilities** of the telegraph...





Technology and love

Literature and cinema often explore the topics of romance and technology.

Can you think of a book or film that investigates both?





A Centennial Telegraphic Romance

A Centennial Telegraphic Romance is a short story which appeared in an 1877 anthology entitled **Lightning Flashes and Electric Dashes** which explored the intersection of love and new technology. Based on the title, what do you think might happen in the story?



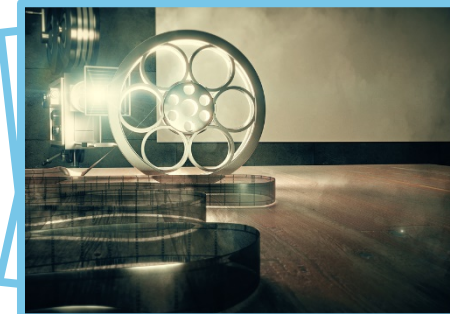
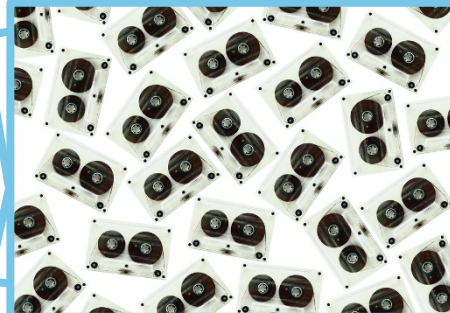


Inventions

Discuss with your teacher how the following inventions had an impact on romance and dating.

Describe the invention in each of the pictures.

Do you know when these technologies were invented?





Vocabulary



I can **scarcely** believe what you are telling me.

He gazed at the **lustrous** jewel with thinly disguised desire.



She **dazzled** everyone with her grand costume.

Jason replied **modestly**, brushing aside the compliment..





Vocabulary



The knight rode **gallantly** in aid of the damsel.

He **reciprocated** the favour by taking his friends to dinner.



Alice loved the **dainty** feel of the cafe.

The patients sat **listlessly** in the waiting room.





A Centennial Telegraphic Romance



The more Summerville looked at the young woman, the warmer grew his admiration for her. He could **scarcely** keep his eyes off of her. But so far he had received no encouragement. If she looked at him at all it was merely a momentary glance. All at once, however, those **lustrous**, handsome dark eyes beamed full upon and almost **dazzled** him with their brightness. Their eyes met. Each looked at the other steadily, but with perfect **modesty** for perhaps ten seconds. His heart quickened its pace, and a little blush stole to her cheek.



A Centennial Telegraphic Romance



After looking out of the window for some moments her eyes wandered in his direction once more. Again their eyes met. There was no smile, no sign of any kind. Each simply gazed full in the face of the other. Her mother noticed the direction of the daughter's glance, and, looking that way, met Summerville's eyes. She turned, and looked at her daughter **reproachfully**, but with a pleasant, **maternal** smile.



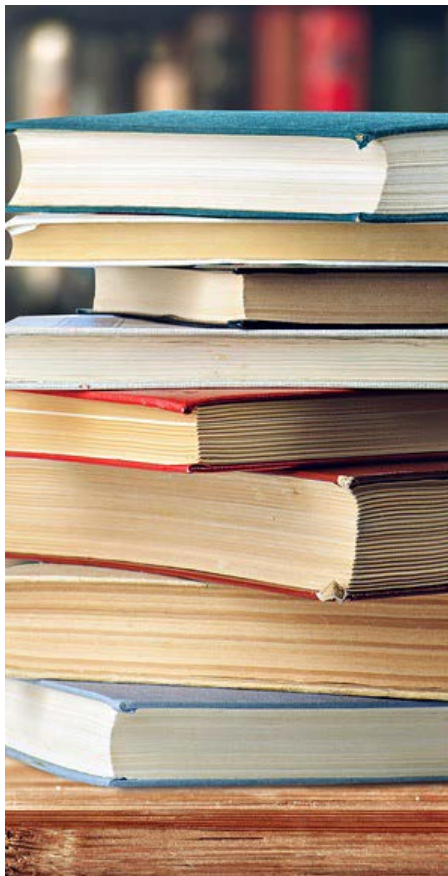
A Centennial Telegraphic Romance

Her daughter returned the smile, and leaning back in the corner, blushed and turned away her face, a little ashamed — not, perhaps, so much of having looked at the handsome stranger as at being caught. Then she looked at Summerville with what was evidently intended for a frown, as if she would say: "Now, see the pretty mess those handsome eyes of yours have got me into! You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" But the frown speedily vanished and gave place to a sweet and much more becoming smile, which Summerville promptly and **gallantly reciprocated**.





A Centennial Telegraphic Romance



The lady seemed a little **abashed** at this, and in her embarrassment caught the little window fastener in her **dainty** fingers and **listlessly** thumbed upon it a moment. Presently she clicked, in tolerably fair Morse : "I, I. That bright smile haunts me still."

Summerville jumped bodily from his seat. It had been a question in his mind all along whether this was all a dream, or whether he had merely taken leave of his senses. Now he was satisfied that it must be both. But if a dream, oh, what a delicious one! If out of his mind, he never desired to be in it again!



Write about how the characters are feeling in your own words.

1. His heart quickened its pace, and a little blush stole to her cheek.



He is growing in excitement, while she is a little embarrassed.

2. After looking out of the window for some moments her eyes wandered in his direction once more.



3. Summerville jumped bodily from his seat.



4. The lady seemed a little abashed at this, and in her embarrassment caught the little window fastener in her dainty fingers and listlessly thumbed upon it a moment.



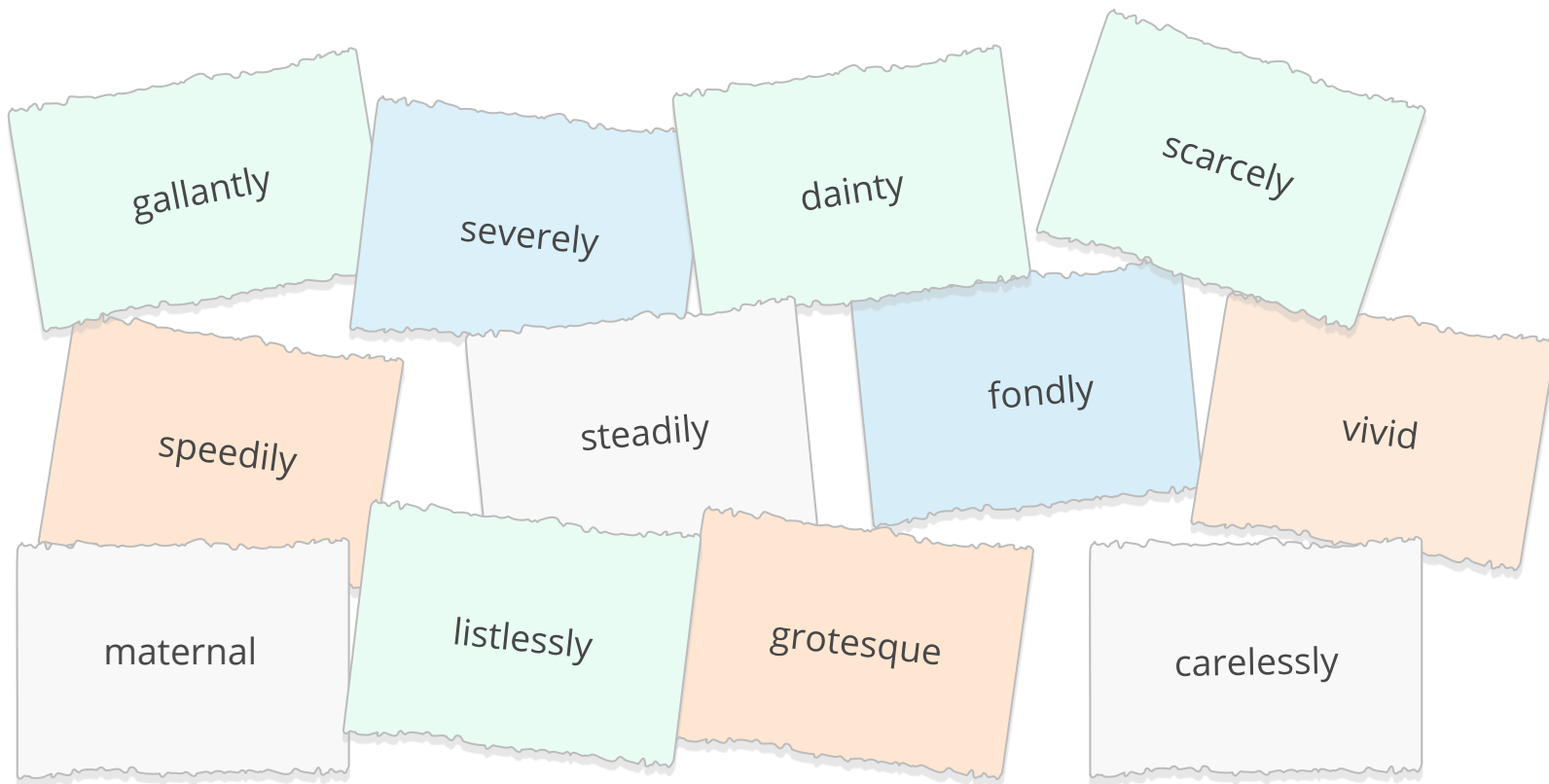
5. But if a dream, oh, what a delicious one! If out of his mind, he never desired to be in it again!





Vocabulary

Create new sentences using these vocabulary items from the texts.
Sort them into adverbs and adjectives.





Feelings

"Their eyes met. Each looked at the other steadily, but with perfect modesty for perhaps ten seconds."

How do you think the characters feel at this moment?

Try to describe this feeling.





Describe the scene

But the frown speedily vanished and gave place to a sweet and much more becoming smile, which Summerville promptly and gallantly reciprocated.



What do you think the characters are feeling at this moment?

Have you ever felt this feeling?

Describe the feeling of love.



A Centennial Telegraphic Romance



She still held the improvised telegraph key in her fingers. A happy thought struck Summerville. He would telegraph to her. Tell her how much he thought of her. In a few hours they would be parted, perhaps forever, but here was a means by which he could tell her that she had at least one admirer.



A Centennial Telegraphic Romance



But how was he to do it? If the window fastener beside him were pressed into service, it might attract attention. He felt in his pockets. His lead pencil! The very thing. He drew it from his pocket carelessly, tapped listlessly for a moment on the window sill, at the same time keeping his eyes intently upon the young lady before him. Finally he caught her eye. She looked over, and he spelled out very slowly in Morse characters:

"Oh, I see you are an operator."



A Centennial Telegraphic Romance



Now it was the lady's turn to be surprised. Had the train been run into and telescoped, the passengers tossed fifty feet in the air, and half their number killed, she could not have been more so. In fact, she had half expected that all along, but to meet a real live telegrapher, one who could read what she clicked off the little window fastener, and answer her in the same "language," was more than her most vivid imagination could have fancied. It was several moments before she recovered sufficiently to click back: "Yes, or perhaps you would say a plug."



A Centennial Telegraphic Romance



"If the writing, on a regular, key is as beautiful as the writer — "

"You mustn't flatter," with a sweet smile.

"Excuse me; but I — "



A Centennial Telegraphic Romance

At this moment a newsboy interrupted the lovers' telegraph by opening the door and bellowing:

"Only authorized guide to Philadelphia and the Centennial, fifty cents!"

The father purchased a copy, and while his wife and himself examined it the young people kept up a pleasant telegraphic communication with their eyes. Very little was said, but both their faces wore pleased, contented smiles, and each seemed what might be called "**unutterably**" happy. He attempted to say something in telegraphic characters with the eye farthest from the passengers, and she essayed a similar feat, but **veracity** compels me to say that neither effort was entirely successful.





A Centennial Telegraphic Romance

As the lady looked at Summerville, the one side of his face as solemn as a judge's, while with the other he made frantic efforts to "send firm." The spectacle was so **grotesque** that, completely forgetting the crowd in the car, she gave vent to the heartiest kind of a little giggle.





Vocabulary

Johnston uses a diverse range of adverbs to describe how the characters move in the story.

Practise using these adverbs in sentences to describe how characters move and do things.

gallantly

severely

daintily

scarcely

speedily

steadily

fondly

vividly

maternally

listlessly

grotesquely

carelessly



Discuss how the adverbs chosen by Johnston tell us more about how the characters are feeling.

He drew it from his pocket **carelessly**, tapped **listlessly** for a moment on the window sill, at the same time keeping his eyes intently upon the young lady before him.

But the frown **speedily** vanished and gave place to a sweet and much more becoming smile, which Summerville **promptly** and **gallantly** reciprocated.

Her father looked up with a frown and said, **severely**...

Their eyes met. Each looked at the other **steadily**, but with perfect **modesty** for perhaps ten seconds.



Romance and technology

Summerville and Eva aren't the only couple who have experimented with technology in the search for love. Talk about how successive generations have used these technologies in their romantic escapades. Do you have a preference?

smartphones

internet

telephone



Continue the story

**After looking out of the window for some moments her eyes wandered in his direction once more. Again their eyes met.
Continue this story using vocabulary from the text.**

scarcely

modesty

lustrous

maternally

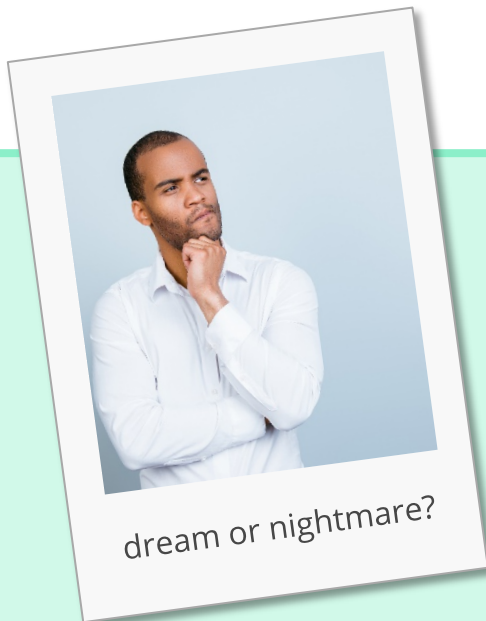
dazzled

reproachfully

A blank sheet of lined paper with a spiral binding on the left side, intended for writing the continuation of the story.



Opinion



Have you ever used a modern dating app?

Discuss what you think about their effect on modern dating.

Are they an effective way to meet that special someone?

What are some pros and cons of apps like these?



Write a response

She looked over, and he spelled out very slowly in Morse characters...

What kind of complications would be involved in flirting in Morse code?

Have you ever flirted in a secret language before?



A Centennial Telegraphic Romance



She blushed, but did not reply. Her mother looked at her, and probably divining that the handsome stranger was at the bottom of it, smiled. Summerville was so pleased that he felt like throwing his arms around the mother's neck and kissing her for not interrupting their little **flirtation**.

Summerville made several efforts to reopen telegraphic communication with her, but on only one occasion was he successful. After attracting her attention he drummed with his pencil: "Eva, of thee I'm fondly dreaming."



A Centennial Telegraphic Romance

She bowed her head a little and smiled. They had now reached the junction. Two trains were on the track ahead of them, but after a slight delay, they proceeded. The **flag-bedecked** buildings were soon in sight, and every one was **craning** their necks to get a glance of them. Summerville felt that the moments to be spent in her company were now fast **waning**. He took out his notebook and pencil and wrote. He folded the paper and waited, wondering whether he would have an opportunity of handing it to her.





Love or loss?

Finish writing the story.

Comment on the revolutionary nature of each of the technological leaps below. How did it change the way humans led their lives?

Will Summerville get a chance to slip Eva the note?

What will her response be?

Will their face-to-face communication be an anticlimactic end after their clandestine communication by Morse code?



Pros and cons

Technological leaps in the world of dating have come a long way in the last decade.

Talk about the pros and cons of modern dating below.



1

What do you think doesn't work so well with modern dating apps?



Improvement

How could modern dating be improved?



1

What do you think doesn't work so well with modern dating apps?



2

Write a list of ways dating could be improved via technology.



Dating apps

Is there something that current dating apps aren't offering?



1

What do you think doesn't work so well with modern dating apps?



2

Write a list of ways dating could be improved via technology.



3

If you could design your own dating app what features would it include?



Writing

**The time has come to design your own dating app.
Write a 200 word overview of how it would work and why it
would be of interest to lovers old and new.**

Try to use some of
the new
vocabulary you
have learned in
the lesson!



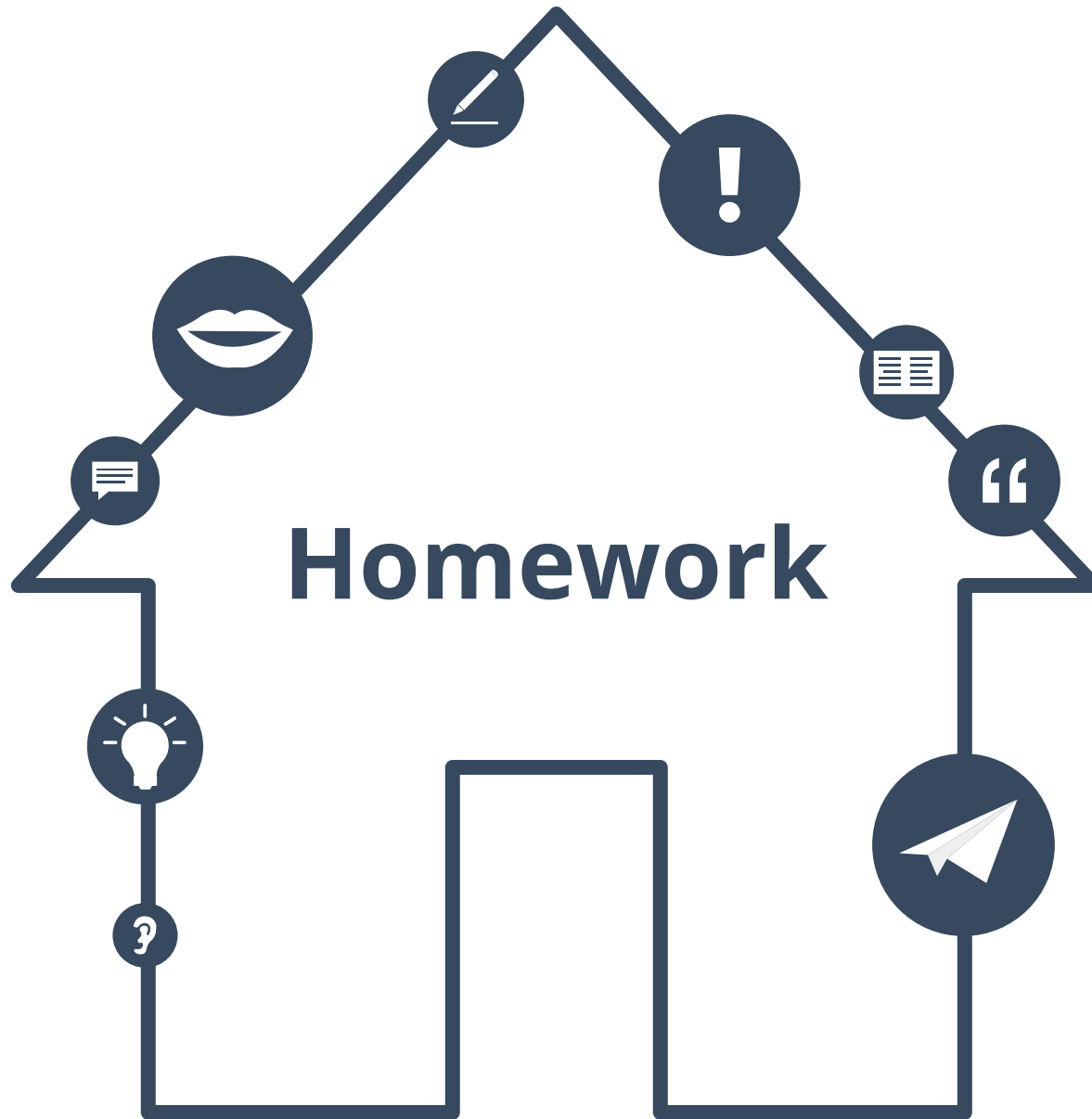


Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!







Predicting the future...

Predict the future of dating. Technological innovation is expanding at a rapid pace.

What will it be capable of? What will dating be like in 20 years?

Aim for 200 words.

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Vocabulary

Johnston uses a range of rich vocabulary in *A Centennial Telegraphic Romance*.

**Create flashcards to develop your vocabulary.
Remember to practice using them in order that they enter your
active vocabulary!**





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