

Franz Kafka's The Metamorphosis (3rd Edition)
During Reading Activity: Problematic Situation

1. **Context:** This activity will be taught after reading Part 1 of The Metamorphosis so that that the students are already read and been exposed to Gregor's situation without having read what happens to Gregor. This allows them to think creatively and critically without knowing the outcome, which allows them to come to their own conclusion.

2. **Statement of Purpose:** This activity helps them to become more involved in the text and forces them to put themselves in Gregor's shoes. It also prompts students to find textual evidence as well as to put their own voice, thoughts, and analysis into their reading and writing as well.

3. **Directions:**
 - a. Students have just finished reading Part 1 of The Metamorphosis. They have the problem and information that they need to begin thinking about what they would do given Gregor's present situation. They also have not yet read what Gregor chooses to do and what happens to him in the end, allowing students to come to their own decisions.
 - b. Materials needed: Each student needs a copy of the following Problematic Situation handout.
 - c. This should only take 1 class period to do. Students should be allowed to begin working on it in class, then finish at home.?
 - d. After students have written up their response to the Problematic Situation, they will share their responses in groups of 3 or 4 students.

FRANZ KAFKA'S THE METAMORPHOSIS

PROBLEMATIC SITUATION

THE SITUATION:

You have just read Chapter 1 of *The Metamorphosis*. Put yourself in Gregor's shoes. You wake up one morning to find that you have turned into an enormous bug. Your body doesn't feel like your own and you have difficulties making coordinated movements. On top of this, you are the sole provider for your family and are concerned that if you don't go to work, your family will have no money to live off of. Your boss comes to speak with you. You try to reason with him, but it quickly becomes apparent that you cannot be understood verbally. After revealing yourself to your boss and your family, mass chaos breaks out. Your boss runs away, your mother faints, your father refuses becomes belligerent, and the only person who recognizes you is your sister, though she is distant. Now you are locked in your room again. What do you do now? How do you correct this situation or start trying to make it better?

QUESTIONS:

- What are the feelings that come from being mistreated and misunderstood by your family?
- Do you get angry with them for not accepting you? Or do you try to understand their situation?
- What do you do now that you are confined to your room?
- Do you give into your bug-like urges, or do everything that you can to resist and keep your human qualities?
- There's nothing to indicate that you will be transforming into a human anytime soon. Is it even worth the struggle? Why or why not?
- Are there any other possible solutions?



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SHARING:

Divide into groups of four. Discuss your answers to these questions. What arguments and reasoning strengthen your views? Are there any new insights that your classmates give you? How does this help you to better understand the feelings of alienation that Gregor is going through at this point? What situations have you had in your life where you might have felt conflicted like this? Have you ever been in a situation that you couldn't see an immediate solution to? How did you react?