The Lady or the Tiger by Frank Stockton

Common Core Standards:

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.1](#) Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.2](#) Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1b](#) Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

Essential Question:

Do we as humans have the ability to make moral decisions without emotion?

Synopsis:

The semi-barbaric king of an ancient land used an unusual form of punishment for offenders in his kingdom. The offender would be placed in an arena where his only way out would be to go through one of two doors. Behind one door was a beautiful woman hand-picked by the king and behind the other was a fierce tiger. The offender was then asked to pick one of the doors without knowing what was behind it. If he picked the door with the woman behind it, then he was declared innocent but was also required to marry the woman, regardless of previous marital status. If he picked the door with the tiger behind it, though, then he was deemed guilty and the tiger would rip him to pieces.

One day the king found that his daughter, the princess, had taken a lover far beneath her station. The king could not allow this and so he threw the offender in prison and set a date for his trial in the arena. On the day of his trial the suitor looked to the princess for some indication of which door to pick. The princess did, in fact, know which door concealed the woman and which one the tiger, but was faced with a conundrum -if she indicated the door with the tiger, then the man she loved would be killed on the spot; however, if she indicated the door with the lady, her lover would be forced to marry another woman, a woman that the princess deeply hated and believed her lover had flirted with. Finally she did indicate a door, which the suitor then opened.

[http://wiki.answers.com/Q/The_lady_or_the_tiger_plot_summary](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/The_lady_or_the_tiger_plot_summary)
Introduction to The Lady or the Tiger:

In the student’s warm-up journals, I want them to answer this question:

“For the most part, people are generally ___________?” I want them to answer with good or bad and I want them to explain their answer. We will have an opening discussion on their answers and see what their moral understanding is before they read.

Vocabulary: Look through the text first and circle words that you do not know. After you have circled your words, go get a dictionary and look them up. We will have a master list of vocabulary words for this text that everyone will need to copy down.

**exuberant** (ex·u·ber·ant) adj. enthusiastic; lavishly abundant: *an exuberant welcome for the hero.*

**genial** (gen·ial) adj. warmly and pleasantly cheerful; cordial: a genial disposition; a genial host.

**deliberation** (de·lib·er·a·tion) n. careful consideration before decision.

**impartial** (im·par·shəl) adj. not favoring one side more than another; fair; *An honest judge is impartial.*

**allegiance** (al·le·giance) n. loyalty or devotion to some person, group, cause, or the like.

**fervent** (fur´vənt) adj. having or showing great intensity of feeling; passionate; *The coach was a fervent believer in practicing every day in order to improve.*

**procured** (pro·cure) v. (used with object) to obtain or get by care, effort, or the use of special means: *to procure evidence.*

**dire** (dīr) adj. dreadful; terrible; *Breaking certain rules can have dire consequences.*

**retribution** (ret·ri·bu·tion) n. the distribution of rewards and punishments in a future life.
aspire (as·pire) v. (used without object), -pired, -pir·ing. to long, aim, or seek ambitiously; be eagerly desirous, esp. for something great or of high value (usually fol. by to, after, or an infinitive): to aspire after literary immortality; to aspire to be a doctor.

Facilitation of Discussion:

The method of discussion that I would use to discuss the story would be a group discussion after they answered the following questions. It would help with comprehension and retention of the story. However, I would then separate them by gender to answer gender specific questions about the story. I think it would be interesting because I think each gender would have a different interpretation of the story which would make for an interesting discussion. I would separate them into the 2 groups and hand them the gender specific discussion questions. I would then bring them back together after answering the gender specific questions and see what each group came up with.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does Stockton mean when he says “He was greatly given to self-communing and when he and himself agreed upon anything, the thing was done”? (page 1 paragraph 1)

2. What does he mean by Poetic Justice? (Page 1)

3. For what reason was the amphitheater used? (Page 1)

4. From what we have read so far, what characteristics can we use to describe the king? (Page 2)

5. What is the significance of the 2 doors in the arena? (Page2)

6. Does the king have a right to give out this type of punishment/reward? Why or why not? (Page 2)

7. Why did the crowd find such acts in the arena so entertaining? (page 3)
8. What does Stockton mean when he describes the king’s daughter as the “apple of his eye”? (Page 3)

9. Why does this young man find himself in the king’s arena? What is his crime? (Page 4)

10. Why did the young man not take his eyes of the princess? (Page 4)

11. From the paragraph on page 5, what sort of feelings does the princess have towards the rewarded fair maiden? How can you tell?

12. From what you have read on page 5, can you tell which door the young man is hoping to open?

13. From what you have read on page 6, which worried the princess more, the lady or the tiger?

14. Based on the information you have gather from this short story, which door do you think the princess picked? Explain your answer.

Male Discussion Questions: Pre-cursor for group project

1. Which character in the story do you most relate to? Why?

2. We are going to say that the princess sent the young man to the tiger’s door. Did the princess abuse her powers or did she have no other choice? Explain your answer with evidence from the text.

3. Would you have looked up at the Princess to get an answer or would you have chosen your own door? Explain your answer.

Female Discussion Questions: Pre-cursor for group Project

1. Which character in the story do you most relate to? Why?

2. We are going to say that you sent the young man to the tiger’s door. Why did you make that decision? Did you abuse your power or did you not have another choice? Explain your answer with evidence from the text.
3. What would you have done if he did not look up to you for an answer and he made his own decision?

**Gender Group Project:**

In groups you are going to complete a debate. We will discuss as a class where each person stands on whether she sent the man to the tiger or whether she sent the man to the lady. The groups will then be made according to how the discussion goes. I need each group to complete a PowerPoint presentation on why the princess was justified in sending the young man to the tiger or why she was not justified in sending the man to the tiger. I am going to need textual evidence in the presentation to support each side’s argument. I will grade each group’s presentation with a rubric.

**Individual Project/Assessment:**

There will be a series of 3 journal entries in order to prepare for this write up. You will answer three prompts that will help you organize your thoughts to produce a well thought out story. I will read over these and give you feedback so that I get a final draft to grade at the end.

**Prompts:**

1. Which is a stronger emotion – love or jealousy?

   nanunet.ihric.org/PerformanceTasks/HSEnglish/RRedreview.pdf

2. Explain the Princess’ dilemma. Who is she? Why is she in this situation? What choice must she make? Why is it so hard for her to decide? The last sentence of your first paragraph should contain your thesis statement, in which you state where she sent the young man, to the lady or the tiger, and two reasons why.

   www.docstoc.com/docs/.../Persuasive-Prompt-The-Lady-or-the-Tiger
3. Write an outline in your journal for the final story you will be writing. Use the questions you have answered and your previous two questions to help you decide what to write.

Final Draft:

After reading The Lady or The Tiger, I want the students to write their own ending to the story. They have answered and discussed questions to better understand the story and have developed a moral stance on the story. They are now armed with the information to make their own decisions based on evidence they found in the text. They will have to ask themselves the obvious question; does the princess love the man enough to let him live but watch another woman be with the man she loves, or would she rather see him killed so no one else can have him?

Sources:

"The Lady or the Tiger?" Teaching Ideas | eHow.com
http://www.ehow.com/info_8207014_lady-tiger-teaching-ideas.html#ixzz2MWz3vQq