

**UNIT 2 Expressing a National Spirit**  
**American Renaissance 1800 to 1850**

A STEIN WOOD  
**FROEBEL**  
**BILINGUAL SCHOOL**  
Home of the Space Generation



# THE DEVIL & TOM WALKER

**WITH**  
**JIM SOTO**



*“And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?”*

- Matthew 16:26, New Living Translation



# SPEAK YOUR MIND

Integrity is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness. Not many of our leaders seem to possess it. In the news all we hear about is how the lack of integrity of many of them, impacts our society with their devastatingly corrupt ways. Selling your soul can be a hell of a thing!

What makes people sacrifice their integrity for short-term gain or success? How do they justify it?



Take a minute to consider and answer the question.



# ABOUT FAUSTIAN DEALS

In literature, **Faustian deal** (or bargain) is a familiar literary trope or motif in which a character makes a deal with the devil, either literally or metaphorically. Usually, the deal involves trading their soul or something else of enormous importance in exchange for what they desire.



# AN AMERICAN FAUSTIAN DEAL

“The Devil and Tom Walker,” first published in 1824 as part of a collection of stories by New Yorker, Washington Irving, most famous for his short stories “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” and “Rip Van Winkle”.

This story is about a man who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for wealth. There are several theories about the origin of this story. Many literary scholars believe “The Devil and Tom Walker” is an adaptation of **Faust**, the famous play by German writer Johann Goethe. Other scholars contend that the story is rooted in a centuries-old New England legend.

# LITERARY ELEMENTS

## Plot

Is the structure that contains the sequence of events which involves the characters in conflict.

## Conflict

Refers to a literary element that involves a struggle between two opposing forces, usually a protagonist and an antagonist. This struggle becomes the narrative itself. Conflict provides crucial tension in any story and is used to drive the narrative forward.



## Exposition

A story commonly begins with exposition, an explanation of the situation and the condition of the characters. Here, we are introduced to the characters, the setting, and the conflict.

## Climax

Refers to the peak or turning point of the action; at this point we know the story's outcome. It is a very specific moment.



As one of the pioneers of the short story, Washington Irving was a master at weaving a cleverly crafted tale. As you read “The Devil and Tom Walker”, analyze the plot. Identify what parts of the story comprise the exposition, the conflict, and the climax. Trace how Irving carefully develops the plot to create a feeling of suspense.





# ASSESSMENT

After reading pages 127-138 in your book, complete the following activities:

1. REFER TO TEXT &
2. REASON WITH TEXT
3. & ANALYZE LITERATURE
  - **Plot, Conflict, Exposition, and Climax** - Review your analysis of the plot. What characters, descriptions, and actions appear in the exposition? How do these details set the story in motion? What is the conflict? What event is the climax? How does the climax lead to the end of the story?



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