“Unit Plan: A Unit of Study with Literary Elements and Terms in the Short Story”

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“Unit Plan: A Unit of Study with Literary Elements and Terms in the Short Story” — Part A

Introduction and Demographics to Unit

This unit plan is intended to be a focused unit of study in a general education English or Language Arts classroom at the 9th grade (freshman) level. It is meant to cover English content curriculum that concentrates on the short story genre, the elements of the short story, and two sample short stories for student experience—“The Cask of Amontillado”by Edgar Allen Poe and “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson. “Exploring a unit of short stories offers students many opportunities… to apply their knowledge and help interpret literature” (McCauley, 2007). Supplementary concepts and vocabulary, such as the plot progression chart and the different types of point of view, can also be found within. A variety of literacy strategies are utilized throughout the unit to aid students in their reading and understanding of the lessons and pieces they encounter. Now “what makes a good short story for students?” (Carr, 2008). These two aforementioned short stories are included because they are iconic examples of the genre, contain solid instances of the elements of the short story, and are commonly taught at the freshman level. The primary theme behind this unit of study is for students to come to learn the fundamentals of the short story and apply that essential knowledge to real-life texts.

In order to plan for an effective series of lessons, a teacher needs to verify that their planning “is grounded in high expectations… considers the potential for various kinds of texts… and is informed by ongoing assessment” to account for student demographics (Conley, 2012, p. 93-95). The student demographics in the classroom this unit plan is intended for are somewhat varied. There are 25 students in total; 14 of the students are Caucasian, six are African-American, three are Hispanic, and two identify themselves as Asian-American. A majority of the students (18 of the 25) are at the general academic level, with skills on average with the freshman class as a whole. Three of the students achieve above the median scale, while the remaining four students struggle and perform before the average level of a 9th grader. All students speak English fluently in class, although the Hispanic students know some Spanish as well. There are no students with serious mental or physical disabilities or IEP’s, but those who struggle do require extra support. On the other hand, the students who surpass expectations often ask for additional reading material or need supplementary work to keep them academically challenged. All 25 students come from similar, middling socioeconomic backgrounds (the middle class), with normal home lives and access to at least one computer and the internet.

This short story unit is intended to take place at or around the second week of the first semester (and thus almost at the very beginning of the year). My reasoning behind this is two-fold; being at least the second week, students should already be acclimated to the classroom rules at this time, and be aware (via their syllabus) of upcoming short-term/long-term assignments. By beginning the year with this short story unit, students will have the opportunity to be exposed to several useful literacy strategies that can support their learning and comprehension throughout the year. Furthermore, the elements of the short story and the short story genre itself are rather brief, to-the-point, and fairly easy for beginning high school students to understand. Therefore, they would likely work well toward the start of the semester. This unit plan covers a consecutive five days of lesson plans from Monday to Friday in one full week, with the class meeting for 45 minutes each day. However, it could be extended into two or more weeks depending on how many short stories, strategies, and activities are incorporated. (For example, my homework for Friday would be for students to begin crafting their own ideas and drawing upon their knowledge of the short story to initiate the process of writing their own short story in the following week.)

Discussion of Multimodal Literacy of Unit

Digital literacy can be defined as the ability of students to locate, organize, comprehend, and examine information using different types of digital technology. This unit of study focusing on the short story genre could most certainly be one that meaningfully integrates digital literacy into each lesson plan for students to take advantage of and experience during the learning process. Prior to work using technological media, I intend to begin the unit using a “3-2-1 strategy, in which students visually map concepts by writing three things they learned, two interesting things, and one question they still have” (Parker, 2009). A couple of the assignments throughout this unit plan encourage students to research additional information to complete their homework, or rely on the internet to find answers to help them with given tasks. For example, students are given short stories to read as homework on two different occasions during the week, and are given a resource site online to help those who struggle with the genre reading should they require it. In a similar vein, the teacher can also provide additional short stories for more advanced students through a safe (and free) internet website for recreational reading as well.

Another manner in which this unit effectively integrates technology is through a video I will incorporate into a lesson halfway through the unit week. Via YouTube and an in-class projector, I will provide students with a humorous and catchy (yet still academically sound and useful) video that again reinforces the elements of the short story. Not only will this video help them review before the quiz they are to take in class on the terms and factors of the genre, but it will also serve as a visual technology aid to appeal to visual learners in the classroom. In addition, I will assign a short creative writing assignment early in the week for students to work on as homework, and it is to be handed in as a one-to-two paragraph typed response to one of the short stories they read. As students will be expected to type this task out, they will have the opportunity to practice their writing skills on a computer keyboard (likely a Microsoft Word processor), as well as use a printer to complete the assignment. They will also be able to use an in-class strategy, “the think-pair-share exercise, a discussion approach that involves student partners…” to brainstorm ideas for the assignment beforehand (Parker, 2009).

A third and final way in which I intend to integrate digital literacy into my unit plan is through the use of an online discussion board or class blog. These technological resources are excellent ways for students to convey and communicate information they have independently created and share those thoughts with their teacher and classmates. My instructional strategy will involve students writing acrostic poems (based on their first and last names) that will be required to incorporate student knowledge of the basic elements of the short story genre. Once they finish this homework assignment, students will be asked to post their self-crafted poems to an online discussion board/classroom blog. They will then have the opportunity to experience their peers’ own work and ideas (being asked to comment on at least one other’s poem), thereby facilitating further conversation and learning in the process. These digital literacy practices can work as solid ways for me to “integrate ongoing assessment” into my unit plan and check for student comprehension (Conley, 2012, p. 159).

Discussion of Supplemental Sources of Unit

This short story unit plan offers several texts and academic resources (other than the textbook or aforementioned features of digital literacy) that could be incorporated into my five days of lessons. In addition to the core works of this unit, *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* by Poe and “The Lottery”by Jackson, I have also selected additional pieces and resources that can apply to a variety of students who either struggle or require more of a challenge. Prior to introducing these texts, I want to incorporate a KWL Chart into my first lesson—“an instructional strategy to find out what students already know, what they want to know, and ultimately what they have learned as a result of their study” (Parker, 2009). Once I am able to ascertain the reading and comprehension skill levels of my students, I believe I will better be prepared to provide each student with a supplemental resource to assist them.

For over-achieving students who desire more of a demanding read or are simply more interested in immersing themselves in the genre, I could introduce them to a *Daily Lit* website that I researched online. Titled “Popular Short Stories”, this safe, free, and educational website provides readers with a multitude of extra short stories to read on the internet at home. Some specific titles that I found online which might prove interesting and appropriate for freshman students would be “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County”by Mark Twain or “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Both of these short stories (as well as many of the others available on the site) provide students with iconic examples of well-known, attention-grabbing pieces that carry within them the basic elements of the genre, which would directly relate to my unit plan at hand. As discussed in class, these short stories also “contain underlying themes… that challenge students to grow and draw broader conclusions from the literary material” (McCauley, 2007).

Lastly, I also researched online to locate a resource that would be helpful in assisting students who struggle with understanding the elements of the short story or the basic texts themselves. Rather than give them extra short stories to take a look at (as the two presented in class may be difficult enough), I could give them a very useful handout titled, “How to Read a Short Story” by the *English Companion* organization, instead. This PDF file is only a single page long, but provides struggling students with a variety of formative and summative questions, hints, and tips to help them truly learn the material. For example, the guide instructs students to focus on the main story’s title before reading the work to think of what it may be about, and to use one’s background information before, during, and after reading the text to more effectively grasp the content. Doing so will hopefully “make it possible for students to explore the nature of the short story through these questions” (Carr, 2008). These supplemental texts and resources could be meaningfully integrated into this unit to make it more appealing, supportive, and stimulating overall.

Conclusion and Cultural Responsiveness to Unit

Cultural diversity and multicultural awareness and sensitivity must also be accounted for when creating a unit plan for 9th grade general education students. I believe that I have effectively addressed these diverse cultural needs in my classroom lessons through the content itself, the incorporated activities, and particularly a writing assignment I provide at the end of this week’s unit. In selecting the two texts for this course, I made sure these English content pieces were ones that would express the “Big Ideas” of the short story genre, as well as “demonstrate variety within” to facilitate student learning in a multicultural environment (Conley, 2012, p. 145-147). *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* was written in 1846 by Edgar Allan Poe, a renowned Gothic American male author. Meanwhile, “The Lottery”was written by a female (Shirley Jackson) writer, and though another American work, was composed a full century later in 1948. These two pieces from different time periods and backgrounds offer a solid beginning to the unit itself, and even more curriculum-based diversity could be integrated into the unit with more short stories added in the later weeks.

Another way in which cultural diversity will be integrated into this unit of study is through the group activities I feature as well. Prior to these five lessons and in my future years of teaching, I plan to devote quite a bit of time in the beginning of the semester to organizing established groups that will change only each academic quarter (four times per year) for my classes. I intend to set students together with varying abilities, interests, cultures, and backgrounds in the hopes that these students will be able to truly get to know one another outside of their social groups and expand their academic and social horizons. As such, the different group activities and literacy strategies I incorporate in this unit (including think-pair-share and reciprocal teaching) will join students of varying ethnic backgrounds and skill levels. I think that encouraging distinct students to work cooperatively will foster a communal atmosphere in my classroom, as well as one appreciative of cultural sensitivity.

Finally, students will have the opportunity to explore and apply what they have learned about the short story through a creative, multicultural assignment that would be due in an extended unit. Students will be asked the final day of lessons as their homework for the weekend to begin pre-writing and drafting ideas for their own short story. Their short story should include the basic elements of the genre, some original and key elements (such as characters, plot, and setting), and lastly, some significant connection(s) to their cultural past. For example, Christian students may integrate some religious experience or holiday, African-American students could incorporate a favorite ethnic tradition or food, and Hispanic students might choose to write aspects about music or cultural events from their childhood. By having students draw upon the knowledge of the short story genre they acquired during the week and then applying that to crafting their own short story, they will hopefully be able to “focus on the important themes and profound impact that the elements of the genre bring together” (Carr, 2008). These approaches to having students read, write, experience, and ultimately work with their own cultures (as well as others) should promote a solid sense of awareness and sensitivity to the classroom’s diversity.

“Unit Plan: A Unit of Study with Literary Elements and Terms in the Short Story” Part B

Day 1 (Monday): Lesson Plan 1 — Introduction to the Elements of the Short Story

Teacher Name: Ryan Arciero

Date: 1 September 2013

Course: English/Language Arts

Grade Level: 9th Grade Freshmen in High School

Ability Level: Average/General Ranges

1. Materials/Technology Needed:
   1. Writing Utensils/Paper
   2. Dry Erase Board/Markers
   3. “Elements of the Short Story” Handout
   4. English Textbook and *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* by Poe
   5. Toolkit Resource: Fix-Up Strategies Handout
   6. “How to Read a Short Story” Worksheet
   7. “Popular Short Stories” Link Page
2. State Standards (English/Language Arts):
   1. Read with understanding and fluency
   2. Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras and ideas
   3. Write to communicate for a variety of purposes
   4. Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations
   5. Use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information
      1. Applications of Learning
      2. Solving Problems
      3. Communicating
      4. Using Technology
      5. Working in Teams
      6. Making Connections

1.B.4a Preview reading materials, clarify meaning, analyze overall themes and coherence, and relate reading with information from other sources.  
1.B.4c Read age-appropriate material with fluency and accuracy.  
1.C.4a Use questions and predictions to guide reading.  
2.A.4b Explain relationships between and among literary elements including character, plot, setting, theme, conflict and resolution and their influence on the literary piece.  
2.A.4c Describe relationships between the author’s style, literary form (e.g., short stories, novels, drama, fables, biographies, poetry, essays) and intended effect on the reader.

3) Learning Objectives:  
 a. The students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of the definition of a short story and its elements through a handout and class discussion  
 b. The students will be able to organize the elements of the short story into a graphic organizer—namely a KWL Chart and T-Chart  
 c. The students will be able to apply useful reading strategies into a relevant short story as a homework assignment

4) Procedures  
 A. Prelude (approximately 5 minutes)  
 a. I will start this first day of the week by performing initial classroom duties, including taking attendance, greeting my students, and verifying everyone is in their seat and prepared for the class session. Once completed, I intend to begin by introducing the upcoming unit to the students—focused on the literary elements and terms in the short story genre. I will then go over the daily agenda and learning objectives with them.  
 B. Instructional Processes (approximately 30-35 minutes)  
 a. KWL Chart (approximately 10 minutes): Before handing out the sheet of short story terms and elements, I will start off class by conducting a KWL Chart with the students (see attached). I will create the chart on the dry erase board with three separate columns as a visual way for students to organize the information. I will then call on students and ask them successive questions of what they already know about short stories, what they want to know, and (by the end of the class) to list what they have learned about the genre. I think this will not only provide me with a formative basis of where my students are on the topic, but also give them an activity to hold their attention and focus on throughout the class period. (Students may choose to right this on a page in their notebooks, or I might provide them with a sample handout to fill in if needed.) They are to hold on to this chart for further reference and reflection later in the unit.  
 b. Provide handout and discussion of short story elements (10-15 minutes): I will give out the attached “Elements of the Short Story” handout, and we will go over each term as a class (see attached). I intend to connect many of these terms to a universal tale that all students know (which I will ask by a show of hands to make sure), such as “Goldilocks and the Three Bears.” I will also ask that students take out their English notebooks to jot down any notes I provide during our discussion. Students will of course have the opportunity to ask any questions or comments they may have at this time, and I will also remind them that we will be using this handout throughout the unit to apply it to the short stories. Therefore, students should hold on to this guided terms worksheet by keeping it in their class folder.  
 c. T-Chart (approximately 10 minutes): During this second portion of the Instructional Process section, I will integrate another literacy strategy, the T-Chart, into my lesson. I will again use the dry erase board to create a T-Chart and list one side with the title, “Short Story”, and the other with “Poems/Longer Texts” (see attached). As a class, we will draw upon our newfound awareness of the short story, as well as our background knowledge of poems and other texts, to compare the two. I will call on students to provide their own input, and hope to create a reasonable list of characteristics of the different literary genres together. This final activity should let students again express their ideas and further understand the short story as a separate genre defined by the elements offered in the handout. (For this strategy as well, I could provide a blank T-Chart worksheet for students, or just have them create it in their individual notebooks.)  
 C. Conclusion (approximately 5 minutes)  
 a. I will close this first day of class by assigning homework and passing out some additional resources for students to use. The homework would be for students to read *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* by Edgar Allan Poe for tomorrow (which would be found in their Literature textbooks). I will also provide students with a list of Fix-up Strategies to help them with the short story reading. They will be encouraged to try and use at least one strategy (but preferably as many as they need to throughout). Lastly, I will pass out to students before they leave a resource page, “How to Read a Short Story”, which offers tips and guided practice to read the genre (see attached). While this sheet is meant specifically for students who struggle or require extra assistance, I will also provide students with a link to a website, “Popular Short Stories” by *Daily Lit*, that higher-achieving students can check out online to read more quality short stories.

5) Accommodations  
 a. I believe that there are several accommodations I could make to better facilitate the learning of all of my students during this particular lesson, particularly those that struggle or require an additional challenge. Firstly, the time allotments of each of my activities could be made slightly shorter or longer, depending on the students’ ability to complete the task. Should my students need it at any point during the lesson, I would also be more than willing to provide extra resources or answer any questions to help them, from re-explaining the objectives to giving further examples to the elements of the short story. In the same vein, I wanted to give my students resources (the “How to Read a Short Story” handout and site link, for example) to aid them in reading the genre or searching for further texts to peruse. In using the KWL Chart and T-Chart, I would be sure to use a new, black-ink dry erase marker on the board to help any students with a minor visual disability and to act as visual learning devices. As noted, a couple other accommodations I might make are providing copies of the KWL Chart or T-Chart so that students who struggle would have the foundation of the activity already drawn. During my verbal questions, I could remember to give extra time to students who need it before requesting an answer, and provide multiple examples with the literary terms. As shown in my samples, I might also show students who require a model for any activity my own “student” work. Lastly, I would be sure to speak clearly, slowly, and repeat directions for any ELL students in my class.

6) Assessments  
 a. There are quite a few assessments that I could conduct throughout this first lesson to evaluate student learning and progress of the class material. My first would of course be to focus on the class objectives I have listed at the beginning of class. If I feel by the end of the lesson that students have successfully completed the three objectives, then I will know that at least my goals of the class were accomplished. To check for comprehension, throughout the activities (such as the KWL and T-Chart organizers) I will continually ask students if they have any questions, confusions, concerns, or comments. Since I will be engaging student participation (such as raising their hands) in this lesson, I will be more aware of who is grasping the content depending on their involvement and appropriate responses. During the literary terms and elements discussion, I might walk around the classroom to verify that students are taking notes or at least paying attention to the resource sheet. The greatest assessor of their progress will be how well students are able to effectively participate and understand the coursework expected of them the following day (when their reading homework is due).Overall, if students accurately answer my verbal questions, compose their activity responses correctly, and demonstrate positive attention and reception to my lesson, I will know that my learning objectives were achieved.

Day 2 (Tuesday): Lesson Plan 2 — Applying the Elements to *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”*

Teacher Name: Ryan Arciero

Date: 2 September 2013

Course: English/Language Arts

Grade Level: 9th Grade Freshmen in High School

Ability Level: Average/General Ranges

1. Materials/Technology Needed:
2. Writing Utensils/Paper
3. Dry Erase Board/Markers
4. “Elements of the Short Story” Handout
5. English Textbook and *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* by Poe
6. Think-Pair-Share Worksheet
7. Creative Writing Assignment Worksheet
8. State Standards (English/Language Arts):
   1. Read with understanding and fluency
   2. Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras and ideas
   3. Write to communicate for a variety of purposes
   4. Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations
   5. Use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information
      1. Applications of Learning
      2. Solving Problems
      3. Communicating
      4. Using Technology
      5. Working in Teams
      6. Making Connections

1.B.4b Analyze, interpret and compare a variety of texts for purpose, structure, content, detail and effect.  
1.B.4c Read age-appropriate material with fluency and accuracy.  
1.C.4e Analyze how authors and illustrators use text and art to express and emphasize their ideas (e.g., imagery, multiple points of view).  
2.A.4b Explain relationships between and among literary elements including character, plot, setting, conflict and resolution and their influence on the effectiveness of the literary piece.  
3.B.4a Produce documents that exhibit a range of writing techniques appropriate to purpose and audience, with clarity of focus, organization, elaboration, and overall coherence.

3) Learning Objectives:  
 a. The students will be able to review and closely examine the elements of the short story in regards to Poe’s *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* through a class discussion  
 b. The students will be able to develop and communicate group responses to a given question about the short story with a think-pair-share activity  
 c. The students will be able to craft a creative piece via a new ending to *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* as an individual homework assignment

4) Procedures  
 A. Prelude (approximately 5 minutes)  
 a. I will begin this second day of the week by again performing initial classroom duties, including taking attendance, greeting my students, and checking to make sure everyone is in their seat and prepared for the class session. I will then go over this day’s agenda and learning objectives on the board.  
 B. Instructional Processes (approximately 35 minutes)  
 a. Class discussion of *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* and its elements as a short story (approximately 15 minutes): For this first part of class, I will engage in an informal but academic conversation about the short story the students were to read for homework, *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”*. I will ask them if the reading strategy techniques I provided proved helpful and why. I might also ask what they thought about Poe’s short story—what did they like, didn’t like, found particularly interesting, or what especially influenced them? After hearing general student feedback and opinions on the work, I want to move into more specific questions in regards to the elements and terms of the genre they learned the previous day. I might ask such questions as what the basic plot of the story was, what types of characters were involved, and what was the mood and setting of the work? I intend to write down student responses on the board as a visual aid. During this time, I additionally expect students to jot down what is being discussed in their notes for studying and future reference. Once I feel the basic aspects of *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* have been effectively covered as a class, we can move into the next exercise, a group think-pair-share activity. Here are some sample questions I might ask my students about “The Cask of Amontillado”:  
 \* What does the narrator of the short story think of himself in the first paragraphs?  
 \* The narrator notes in the plot he’s been wronged by Fortunato. How so?  
 \* Are Montresor and Fortunato round or flat characters? Explain.  
 \* What examples of figurative language did you find in the text?  
 \* At the end of the short story, do you think Montresor feels any guilt for his deed?  
 b. Think-pair-share activity (approximately 20 minutes): For this next phase of the lesson, I will group students into pairs of two (there can be a group of three if there is an odd number of students in a class or to account for absent students). I intend to pair students with cultural and academic diversity in mind, so that students will be in small groups with others of varying backgrounds and abilities. Each group will be given a think-pair-share worksheet, and then different groups will be given varying questions relating to the story and the genre elements. An example of a question may be, “How does the setting of *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* affect the short story?” While both students will take time to think of ideas and share with their partner, one will be designated as the role of the “speaker” and the other as the “writer”. The speaker will do the majority of the wording for the paragraph in the activity, while the writer will actually jot down the sentence responses. After about 10 minutes, the paired partners will have the opportunity to share their ideas and answers with another group who had a different question for the other 10 minutes. This way, students will be able to work on their communication and class collaboration skills, as well as learn more about the story and the elements of the genre from a peer perspective.  
 C. Conclusion (approximately 5 minutes)  
 a. After students complete the think-pair-share activity, I will collect their worksheets and assign their homework for the following day. I will first pass out a writing prompt for their assignment—a creative writing task in which students are asked to write a brief alternate ending to *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* (see attached)*.* Afterwards, I will additionally remind students to review and study their “Elements of the Short Story” handout as there will be a quiz on it tomorrow (Wednesday). Students will then be dismissed, and I will remain after class (as always) to speak with any students who need clarification or have comments/questions.

5) Accommodations  
 a. I think that there are numerous accommodations I could incorporate into this lesson to help my students learn to the best of their ability, including those that need extra help. Again, the time allotments of each of the activities could be slightly altered, depending on student needs and time constraints. Should my students require it at any point in the class period, I would again be open to offering them additional resources, answer any questions they have, and speak directions slowly for the think-pair-share exercise. If I notice during our initial discussion of *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* that some students are struggling comprehending the material or connecting the elements of the short story to the text, I might offer to stay after school so that they could come once class is over for personal assistance. During the think-pair-share activity, I intend to pair together students of different academic levels so those who struggle can hopefully learn from higher achievers, and at the same time provide roles so that all students have an important part to play. Lastly, I might pass around a sample question and answer to the think-pair-share activity so students who need a model can view one for reference and their own use (see attached). I might also consider possibly pairing two ELL students with one another so they could work at a parallel pace on the in-class task.

6) Assessments  
 a. There are several assessments I could certainly perform in this second lesson to evaluate student progress and comprehension of the class content. My first evaluation would be to take another close look at my class objectives from the start of class. If I feel by the end of the class period that students have effectively covered the three objectives, then I will know my goals of the day were met. To check for understanding, I will pay special attention to which students participate in the class discussion of the short story, as well as how capably they are able to connect the elements of the genre to this particular text. I hope to have students respond with mostly correct or at least arguable answers (to verify they have even read the work). The think-pair-share activity is the day’s primary means of assessing student progress. If students are able to bring forth solid answers to the questions I pose and engage in meaningful discussions with their peers, I will know they understand the material. Their responses during this exercise will also enable me to gauge how prepared they are for their traditional assessment, the short story quiz, the following day. If students are engaged in the lesson and seem to work well, I will be confident my learning goals are being met.

Day 3 (Wednesday): Lesson Plan 3 — The Elements Review and “The Cask of Amontillado”

Teacher Name: Ryan Arciero

Date: 3 September 2013

Course: English/Language Arts

Grade Level: 9th Grade Freshmen in High School

Ability Level: Average/General Ranges

1. Materials/Technology Needed:
   1. Writing Utensils/Paper
   2. Dry erase board/markers
   3. Computer/Movie Projector
   4. Elements of the Short Story Quiz
   5. English Textbook and *“*The Cask of Amontillado*”* by Poe
   6. 3-2-1 Strategy Handout
2. Stand Standards (English/Language Arts):
   1. Read with understanding and fluency
   2. Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras and ideas
   3. Write to communicate for a variety of purposes
   4. Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations
   5. Use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information
      1. Applications of Learning
      2. Solving Problems
      3. Communicating
      4. Using Technology
      5. Working in Teams
      6. Making Connections

1.B.4c Read age-appropriate material with fluency and accuracy.

2.A.4a Analyze and evaluate the effective use of literary techniques (e.g., figurative language, allusion, dialogue, description, symbolism, word choice, dialect) in classic and contem­porary literature representing a variety of forms and media.  
2.A.4b Explain relationships between literary elements including character, plot, setting, conflict and resolution and their influence on the effectiveness of the literary piece.  
3.C.4b Using available technology, view and/or produce compositions and multimedia works for specified audiences.

1. Learning Objectives:  
   a. The students will be able to assess their knowledge of the elements of the short story through a video presentation and traditional quiz

b. The students will be able to raise any concluding questions relating to a short story via a 3-2-1 strategy chart and voice those opinions to the class

c. The students will be able to practice their literacy skills in reading “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson as a homework assignment using fix-up strategies

1. Procedures  
   A. Prelude (approximately 10 minutes)  
    a. I will begin this third day of the week by again conducting initial classroom procedures, including taking attendance, welcoming my students, and verifying everyone is in their seat and ready for the class session. Before going over the day’s agenda and learning objectives on the board, I will be sure to give back the graded think-pair-share tasks and collect the students’ writing homework assignments. I have allowed an additional five minutes to this prelude period so that students can have some last-minute studying time for their elements quiz.

B. Instructional Processes (approximately 30 minutes)  
 a. Viewing of YouTube clip online (approximately 5 minutes): Before giving the quiz on the elements of the short story to my students, I will provide them with one last fun and effective form of review via a YouTube clip. This brief educational video, titled “Flocabulary”, should serve as a visual means through which students can familiarize themselves with the elements of the genre before their assessment. In a catchy song-form, the video discusses five important parts of the short story (that relate to the quiz). This clip should also help students de-stress before the quiz and refresh their memories.

b. Elements of the short story quiz (approximately 10 minutes): During this portion of my instructional procedures, I will give the quiz itself to each student (see attached). I find the quiz to be fairly straightforward, with every question being “fair game” and fully discussed and covered in the two previous class sessions. Students are to complete the quiz individually; I will go around making sure students are being honest, and clarifying any questions the students may have. When everyone is finished with the assessment, students will hand the quizzes in and we will begin the next phase of the lesson.  
 c. 3-2-1 activity on “The Cask of Amontillado” (approximately 15 minutes): I will now have students flip to a clean sheet in their notebooks (or possibly provide them with a blank template for the 3-2-1 exercise if necessary). I will inform students we will be working on a class activity that involves them writing three things they discovered from the short story they read (it can relate to the elements or “The Cask of Amontillado” itself), two things they found interesting, and one question they still have. Each student will be asked to raise their hand to offer one insight (a discovery, interesting point, or question), which I will summarize in writing on the board. We can answer any questions as a class, and students should complete the exercise using their own thoughts and those of their peers. The activity will be finished once every student has participated and contributed to the discussion. I will close this portion of the lesson by asking students to save this page in their notebooks or folders for future studying purposes or for reference.

C. Conclusion (approximately 5 minutes)

a. Once students finish jotting down answers for their 3-2-1 activities, I will assign them their homework for tomorrow (Thursday) before dismissal. Students will be asked to read the short story, “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson for homework (which should be in their textbooks), again trying to use some (possibly new) strategies from the Toolkit Fix-up handout I provided them on Monday. As always, I will remind them to come after school or email me with any questions/comments they have.

5) Accommodations  
 a. I believe that there are quite a few accommodations I could integrate into this lesson to aid my students in learning according to their differentiated needs. As always, the time allotments of the exercises (such as an extra minute or two on the quiz) could be slightly changed if necessary. Should I notice my students require extra help or are not understanding a concept or activity (such as the movie or 3-2-1 strategy), I will be available to answer any questions throughout the lesson or help in any way possible. I tried to accommodate and appeal to my students’ visual and musical learning styles using the YouTube clip to help them study, and for my students who struggle, I can help clarify any questions they have during the quiz itself. During the 3-2-1 activity, I will also remember to take special care on when I call on certain students to participate. Although it may seem more helpful to have students who have a challenge speaking to wait to gather their thoughts, I might also consider asking such students for their opinion earlier on in the discussion so that they will have more insights or comments to choose from. For any ELL student I have, I might develop a system where I tap their desks a minute or so before calling on them so they know that I will ask them a question soon, and they have time to gather and articulate their thoughts.

6) Assessments  
 a. There are also a few significant assessments I integrate into this third lesson to examine student progress and evaluate their understanding of the material. The most notable and traditional form of assessment I make during this class period is an actual quiz on the elements of the short story. Although I do not deem it overly difficult, I think that it does require students to have a solid grasp on the terms they need to know, while also testing them on their ability to connect those terms to a real-life short story, such as “The Cask of Amontillado”. When I grade these quizzes, depending on student grades, I will be able to see who is effectively grasping the content I am trying to teach, and who potentially needs additional work or assistance from me as their instructor. I also feel I can assess student progress and interest in the material during my 3-2-1 class activity. If students give meaningful answers or insightful comments or questions to the story, I will know that they are at least thinking about the genre and the elements (which is my primary goal). Thus, if students seem engaged in this lesson and perform well on the quiz and activity, I will know my learning objectives are being accomplished so far in this unit plan.

Day 4 (Thursday): Lesson 4 — Discussion and Main Themes of Jackson’s “The Lottery”

Teacher Name: Ryan Arciero

Date: 4 September 2013

Course: English/Language Arts

Grade Level: 9th Grade Freshmen in High School

Ability Level: Average/General Ranges

1. Materials/Technology Needed:
2. Writing Utensils/Paper
3. Dry erase board/markers
4. English Textbook and “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson
5. State Standards (English/Language Arts):
   1. Read with understanding and fluency
   2. Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras and ideas
   3. Write to communicate for a variety of purposes
   4. Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations
   5. Use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information
      1. Applications of Learning
      2. Solving Problems
      3. Communicating
      4. Using Technology
      5. Working in Teams
      6. Making Connections

1.B.4c Read age-appropriate material with fluency and accuracy.  
1.C.4a Use questions and predictions to guide reading.  
2.A.4b Explain relationships between and among literary elements including character, plot, setting, theme, conflict and resolution and their influence on the effectiveness of the literary piece.  
3.B.4b Produce, edit, revise and format work for submission and/or publication (e.g., manu­script form, poetry, citation of sources) using contemporary technology.

1. Learning Objectives:  
   a. The students will be able to discuss and elaborate on their opinions and insights of a short story via a classroom conversation  
   b. The students will be able to synthesize information from a text and establish a theme from “The Lottery” by Jackson through the use of a directed reading sequence activity  
   c. The students will be able to creatively apply the elements of the short story to “The Lottery” by constructing acrostic poems using their own names for homework
2. Procedures  
   A. Prelude (approximately 10 minutes)  
    a. I will initiate this fourth day of the unit by again performing the daily classroom duties, including taking attendance, greeting my students, and making sure that everyone is in their seat and prepared for the class period. Once I go over the daily agenda and learning objectives that are always copied on the board, I will hand back the students’ creative writing assignments and their graded quizzes from the elements of the short story. I have allotted an additional five minutes during this prelude time so that we as a class can go over the quiz and answer any remaining questions the students still have about their examination or the content.  
   B. Instructional Processes (approximately 30 minutes)  
    a. Class discussion of “The Lottery” (approximately 15 minutes): During this first half of my instructional procedure time, I will engage all of my students in a class conversation of “The Lottery” by Jackson. I might first begin asking my students what they thought of the work—what did they think of the surprise ending? Did they have any questions about the text, or encounter any confusion throughout the work? What did they think about the lottery itself in the story, and how it drove the plot and characters’ actions along? During this period I hope for a variety of students to volunteer and participate in the discussion, noting what they particularly liked, disliked, or found interesting. I also hope to clarify any issues they had during their first read of the text. I might additionally ask what were some popular literacy strategies they used from the fix-up toolkit handout, and if they were helpful or not. Once we have a solid conversation time, we can move into the second exercise of the lesson. Here are some sample evaluative questions I may ask of my students to facilitate the discussion about “The Lottery”:  
    \* What were some ways that the element of foreshadowing was used in the text?  
    \* How does the setting of the small, rural town affect this eerie short story?  
    \* Looking back, why do you think Tess in particular was chosen as the “winner”?  
    \* Describe some of the important parts of the plot that lead to the climax.  
    \* How much different is the story the second time you closely read it through?  
    b. Directed reading sequence activity (approximately 15 minutes): In this second portion of my process time, I intend to group the students into sets of three. Each student will be tasked with a specific role in the group—a paraphraser, verifier, and synthesizer. The paraphraser will be tasked with summarizing “The Lottery”, the verifier will check to make sure the information is correct and add any missing points, and the synthesizer will write the theme of the story in a sentence from that summary. Students will be able to spend a majority of the time working together to come up with their theme sentence. I will walk around the class and answer questions or assist as necessary. Once everyone is finished, one student in each group (likely the verifier, who did the least amount of work in the task) will read out their theme to the rest of the class. Not only does this activity allow students to work collaboratively to organize and express a condensed theme, but it will also show everyone how people have come up with different perspectives on the same story. While some of the themes may of course be very distinct, I do hope that some will overlap or show similarity in student thinking. The theme of “The Lottery” I want to leave my students with is that there can be great danger in following a bad tradition or beliefs without independent thought. Thus, I will encourage all my students to enter the adult world thinking for themselves and asking the important life question of “why”.  
   C. Conclusion (approximately 5 minutes)  
    a. Once students complete their directed sequence activity, I will assign them their homework for tomorrow (Friday) before dismissal. Students will be asked to write a creative acrostic poem. Using the letters of their first and last name, they will need to craft a piece that either describes “The Lottery” or connects the short story to the elements of the genre. I will provide students with a sample acrostic poem I created so they will be able to have an example to begin from (see attached). They will then need to post and “publish” their poems to our class blog or online discussion forum, and write a constructive comment on at least one other student’s poem. I think that this is a fun and challenging assignment that will make students think critically about the work and their knowledge of the content. I will also stay after class to answer any questions, too.
3. Accommodations  
   a. I think that there are several accommodations I could incorporate into this particular lesson to help my students with any specific needs they might have. As always, the time lengths of the different exercises (such as the class discussion or direct sequence activity) could be slightly altered if necessary. I will of course also devote any extra time my students require to answer any lingering questions they have or confusions from their reading of “The Lottery”. I attempted to appeal to any auditory learners in my class by having a meaningful discussion of the text, and allowing students to voice their own opinions or insights into the story through the conversation. There are also quite a few adjustments I might make to the directed sequence activity. Although groups of three are intended, I could create a group of four if there is a student absent or odd number of students; I would simply split up their tasks a little more broadly in such a situation. I would also want to divide students into groups that are culturally distinct with varying ability levels. I might have a student who struggles with reading, for example, act as the verifier so that they only have to acknowledge another student’s summary. At the same time, I could give a gifted student the role of theme and sentence synthesizer because it requires more advanced thinking. Lastly, I made sure to create a sample of the acrostic poem homework assignment so students who are confused would have a model to refer to when they craft their own piece at home.
4. Assessments  
   a. There are a few significant measures of assessment that I tried to weave into this fourth lesson to evaluate how my students are performing in this unit. In handing back the graded quizzes and homework assignments, I will be able to ascertain how my students are doing so far in their work. My first informal form of assessment is the class discussion. If students are able to adequately respond to my proposed questions about “The Lottery” and present interesting insights of their own, I will know that they understood the short story and are making solid connections to the elements of the genre as well. If students are not answering well or seem still puzzled about the short story, I might go back and perform a read-aloud or discuss which passages in the text are hindering their progress. The directed sequence activity is another exercise through which I will be able to evaluate student learning. I will have the opportunity to observe and facilitate the students’ group work as they come up with their own definitions of the theme of the short story through their respective roles. If all students come up with supportable themes, then I will know the activity was a success. Lastly, my acrostic poem assignment is intended to be a fun but still relevant academic activity in which students can express themselves and demonstrate their understanding of the content material. If students follow directions and write meaningful poems about the elements and the short story itself, I will know they have reached their intended learning targets.

Day 5 (Friday): Lesson 5 — Short Story Elements and Text Review/Reflection Day

Teacher Name: Ryan Arciero

Date: 5 September 2013

Course: English/Language Arts

Grade Level: 9th Grade Freshmen in High School

Ability Level: Average/General Ranges

1. Materials/Technology Needed:  
   a. Writing Utensils/Paper  
   b. English Textbook and “The Cask of Amontillado” and “The Lottery”
2. State Standards (English/Language Arts)
   1. Read with understanding and fluency
   2. Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras and ideas
   3. Write to communicate for a variety of purposes
   4. Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations
   5. Use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information
      1. Applications of Learning
      2. Solving Problems
      3. Communicating
      4. Using Technology
      5. Working in Teams
      6. Making Connections

1.B.4a Preview reading materials, clarify meaning, analyze overall themes and coherence, and relate reading with information from other sources.  
2.A.4b Explain relationships between literary elements including character, plot, setting, theme, conflict and resolution and their influence on the effectiveness of the literary piece.  
2.B.4c Discuss and evaluate texts and motive, resulting behavior and consequences demonstrated in literature.  
3.B.4a Produce documents that exhibit writing techniques appropriate to purpose and audience, with clarity of focus, logic of organization, elaboration, support and overall coherence.

3) Learning Objectives:  
 a. The students will be able to individually journal on their learning and experiences of the two short stories and elements of the genre  
 b. The students will be able to develop their evaluative and collaborative skills with a partner via a reciprocal teaching activity  
 c. The students will be able to begin crafting their own short story ideas and incorporated elements through a suggested homework assignment for the following week

4) Procedures  
 A. Prelude (approximately 5 minutes)  
 a. I will start this fifty day of the unit by again conducting the daily classroom duties, such as taking attendance, welcoming my students to class, and verifying that everyone is in their seat and ready for the session. After I go over the daily agenda and learning objectives that are written on the board, I intend to congratulate the students on their posted online poems. I will return hard copies of their poems with my comments and evaluation sometime next week. Once these tasks are completed, we can begin the final lesson of this week.  
 B. Instructional Processes (approximately 35 minutes)  
 a. Individual journaling time (approximately 15 minutes): For the first part of class, I will have the students complete a private journaling session. Due to the busy and content-filled week during this unit, I think allowing the students some quiet, reflective time to practice their writing skills and consider what they have learned will be a positive experience. I will ask students to simply craft a personal journal on anything they would like to write that pertains to the elements of the genre, “The Cask of Amontillado” or “The Lottery”, or even ideas they may have for their own short story. During this time, I will occasionally walk around the room to check and make sure that students are indeed writing something that pertains to the content. I feel that this will be a solid learning opportunity and sort of reward session for students.  
 b. Reciprocal teaching activity (approximately 20 minutes): For the remainder of the class period, I will have students engage in a fun and educational strategy/activity in which they have the chance to take on the role of “teacher” for a short time. Students will join into partner pairs (likely the same instructor-assigned partner for this particular quarter) and discuss what they have learned or possibly wrote about in their journal regarding the short stories or genre elements. Some time will be given to each student to ask the other student verbal questions, pose some issues they may still have, and act like a one-on-one teacher and student conference. This interesting exercise will not only give students a sense of pride in being able to act as a student and especially teacher for the moment, but will also let them work with one another to further discuss and explore the content material. I will only serve to facilitate student work and make sure that students stay on task, helping with any questions or comments throughout the period.

C. Conclusion (approximately 5 minutes)  
 a. Once students finish with the reciprocal teaching activity to help them review the reading, I will assign their homework for the weekend. Since the students have evidently worked very hard this week, there will be no written work due. However, like every weekend, I will ask that students read something—a book, magazine, comic—for a minimum of 30 minutes. I will also let them consider an upcoming idea for a project to be included in this short story unit. I intend to reveal to students that this project will involve writing their own short story; while their options are very open, there will be two things to keep in mind as they brainstorm ideas over the weekend. The first is that a main point of the project will be to include many (if not all) of the major elements of the short story, and the second is that they are to remember to incorporate some important cultural aspect about themselves or their family into their work. I believe having students creatively craft their own short story while asking them to reflect and eventually write about their own cultures or customs will serve as a great way for them to express themselves and cultivate a supportive sense of multiculturalism and diversity in my classroom.

5) Accommodations  
 a. I think that while this class period (as a “reward” day) requires fewer accommodations than the previous days in the unit, there are a couple of accommodations I might make to ensure student learning and support differentiated instruction as well. As always, the time allotments of my activities (including the journaling time or reciprocal teaching activity) could be slightly changed if needed. I will of course help students in any way I can, from answering questions during their group work to adding in comments, suggestions, or gentle warnings to keep students on task. During the personal journaling activity, if I know some students struggle in writing, I might accommodate them by allowing students to draw a picture of what they learned about the short story instead (such as the plot chart or a scene from the text). During the teaching exercise, I will again pair pre- and purposely planned student partners together, and might join two ELL students so that they could work at a similar pace on the activity.

6) Assessments  
 a. There are a few measures of assessment that I tried to integrate into this final lesson to evaluate my students, too. By walking around during journaling time and reading a bit of what each student writes, I will discover what students have learned, what stuck out to a particular student, and what (if any) big ideas have been covered or missed. If students journal in a comprehensive and detailed way practicing good writing skills, then I feel the time will be well-spent. Another form of assessment I incorporate is the reciprocal teaching exercise. By listening to what questions students pose to one another (as well as pay attention to given responses and other ideas discussed), I hope to find that students are able to converse knowledgeably about the content, and that they have learned from the unit so far. Lastly, discussing on Monday what short story ideas students have come up with will further help me evaluate their progress. Ultimately, I believe that students eventually writing their own short stories will inform me what they have learned about the short story and elements of the genre, which is my main objective.

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