



February 2000

To: Principals of Public and Nonpublic Schools
From: Roseanne DeFabio and James R. Butterworth

Enclosed is the third of three installments of *Closing the Gap—Teacher to Teacher: Instructional Units from High School English Teachers*. Each installment contains a collection of instructional units developed by high school English teachers for use with their eleventh- and twelfth-grade students who are facing the challenge of the English Regents examination.

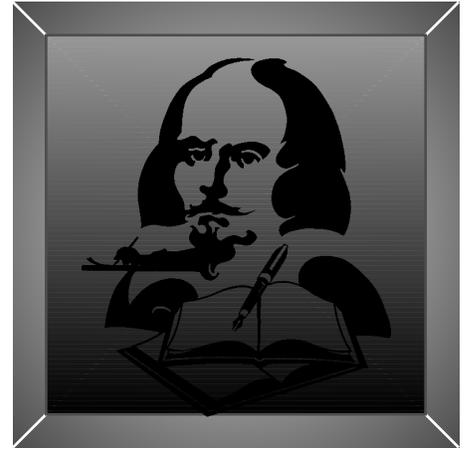
This installment contains the following four instructional units:

- Adult/Child Relationships
- Journey into the Nature of Solitude
- Reading and Writing Memoir
- Romanticism

In addition, we have included in this installment a model for the development of instructional units.

Each unit contains descriptions of activities/tasks, assessment strategies, and the connections to the English language arts standards and core competencies. In addition, the editor has provided introductory comments as well as notes and suggestions throughout the unit. Teachers may want to use all or most of a unit, or select activities that will best support their students' learning. Teachers may also use the format to develop instructional units of their own.

Please be sure that this packet reaches the staff who are working with students who will be taking the English Regents. You may make as many copies as necessary. If you prefer to purchase additional copies, they are \$3.00 each plus a shipping and handling charge of \$3.00 for the first five copies and \$1.00 for every 10 copies thereafter. These copies may be obtained by sending a check made payable to the New York State Education Department to Publications Sales Desk, Third Floor, Education Building, Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234.



Closing the Gap— Teacher to Teacher

Instructional Units from High School English Teachers

with Model for the Development of Instructional Units

Installment III:

***Adult/Child Relationships
Journey into the Nature of Solitude
Reading and Writing Memoir
Romanticism***



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The New York State Education Department wishes to acknowledge the contributions and dedication of the following educators:

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Introduction

In summer 1999, seven high school English teachers came together for a week in Albany to develop and refine instructional units that they had used with their own students. These teachers were selected, in coordination with NYSUT, because their schools had shown an outstanding increase in the number of students passing the English language arts Regents examination.

These units are offered by teachers to their colleagues, who are also facing the challenge of helping high school students to achieve the English language arts standards at the commencement level and to successfully meet the challenge of the English Regents. The units may be used exactly as they are written, or they may be modified to meet particular student needs or accommodate available resources.

The instructional units include the following information:

- A unit overview including connections to the standards and Regents tasks, learning objectives, and recommended duration
- Instructional tasks, activities, and strategies
- Alignment with the English language arts standards, purposes for language use, and core competencies
- Assessment strategies
- A teacher-to-teacher letter from the teacher author.

In addition, a teacher editor has reviewed each unit and added comments that provide additional guidance to the user.

The format that was used for the development of these units is one that can be used by districts or school buildings in their own curriculum development. The process of writing curriculum and identifying the connection to the English language arts standards and assessments is a powerful professional development activity that also results in a usable product.

Adult/Child Relationships

***Myra Paybarah—
Grover Cleveland High School***

Editor's Introduction

Myra's contribution to our series is different from most of the units. Although her initial focus was father and son relationships, she has provided a group of activities that can be adapted to any study of adult/child relationships.

Although there are no research activities in this grouping, Myra often includes a research project with her units. She likes the "I-Search" approach. You can easily find more information on this approach by consulting the Internet Service of the Educational Resources Information Center (Keyword: AskERIC; Address: <http://ericir.syr.edu>).

Myra uses the activities presented here after the students understand her expectations. The students have been exposed to the strategies that support them as they address each activity. You know the needs of your students. Supporting students as they work through assignments is one of the important roles of a teacher. This is called scaffolding. Before using any of these activities, think about what your students can do, and what they need to learn to complete the assignment successfully. Then, break the assignment into small steps and work through the steps with them.

Myra suggests that you write with your students. This is always a valuable activity. It not only models behavior for the students, but also reveals any weaknesses in the assignment. If you have difficulty, so will they.

Myra also suggests that you work with another English teacher and exchange class sets of papers for grading. This helps the students adjust to evaluation procedures and helps you see how your students perform when evaluated by another reader.

As always, these units are offered to you as samples of what you can do in your own classroom. Take and adapt these activities to your needs.

Teacher-to-Teacher Letter

Dear Colleague,

I'm presenting to you a unit on adult/child relationships. This can be a very delicate topic; that is for sure. Much of the literature is heartrending. It'll plug into students' feelings, but it will still allow them to talk about "others" safely. We will be in the safe haven of fictional characters, or even real-life individuals, but they will still be "other" people. We can witness a whole range of impacting forces and see how they have been dealt with. There is not an overwhelming need in this unit to personalize.

You can spin off your own ideas and find materials you personally feel relevant. Once you have established a solid base and created a classroom that is truly meaningful, students will find up-to-date material for you. I expect you'll have students bring in copies of "Just the Two of Us," Will Smith's CD.

I thought about doing this unit because the literature on the topic was compelling. Students are wonderful assessors of their own needs. They will help you. They'll be vital in your own lessons. You wanted attentive students—and now you'll have them, as I did at an urban New York City high school of 3,500 students. Do I need to say more?

Presented to you with much affection,
Myra Paybarah

Adult/Child Relationships

Standards Addressed:

Standard 2—Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

Standard 3—Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

Regents Tasks:

Task IV - Critical Lens

Learning Objectives (what students need to know and/or be able to do to succeed):

- to analyze and evaluate characters
- to analyze poetry
- to understand and apply literary terms
- to use the writing process
- to develop and support a thesis statement

Literary Skills Emphasized/Taught:

- irony
- point of view
- characterization

Recommended Duration:

The time will vary depending upon the decisions you make about including longer works with these activities.

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
	<p>ADULT/CHILD RELATIONSHIPS While I have focused on activities for shorter works in this instructional unit, it is important to include a longer text on this theme of adult/child relationships. Suggested resources include: <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> - H. Lee <i>The Color Purple</i> - A. Walker <i>Color of Water</i> - J.M. McBride <i>Angela's Ashes</i> - F. McCourt <i>Fences</i> - A. Wilson <i>Death of a Salesman</i> - A. Miller <i>The Chosen</i> - C. Potak</p>	<p>Journals-Keeping a journal gives students a resource to call upon for writing activities and to review for the Regents examination.</p>

EDITOR'S SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:
Including longer works in your literature study is an important aspect of the English curriculum. The titles listed above are the ones that Myra suggests for this unit. Students enjoy having a choice in their reading. A good way to incorporate a number of longer works and to address the reading abilities of your students is to use the book club strategy that Cher Sansone discusses in the first installment of instructional units. You may also want to read Harvey Daniels' book, *Literature Circles* (Stenhouse Publishers, 1994).

If you have difficulty locating multiple titles of a book you want to use, try "walking your school." Ask teachers if they have individual copies. You may be surprised at what will turn up. Don't hesitate to approach your public librarian.

In book clubs, or literature circles, students form groups according to the text selected and then meet to set reading schedules and to discuss their reading. If your focus is on adult/child relationships, help them to focus on this issue as they read and discuss. Plan an activity at the end of the unit in which students can share their general understanding of the topic and their specific understanding of the text.

Myra's list contains a variety of genres. If you use a mix, you may also want the students to look at genre and include that in the final discussion.

It is also possible to have each group prepare a presentation that will share the members' understanding of the text and the topic. The presentations could include panel discussions, skits, etc.

You may want to use a critical lens activity as a culminating activity for this part of the unit.

COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS
READING
Identify purpose for reading
Use strategies . . . to assist in comprehension

ELA STANDARD 2
READING
Read, view, and respond independently to literary works that represent a range of social, historical, and cultural perspectives
Recognize a range of literary elements . . .

Activity 1 (approximately 3 days)
You want the students to focus on the father's role in both of these selections. Have the students read these pieces in pairs or small groups and discuss their reactions to the fathers. They can discuss characterization, motivation, tone, etc. After the students have considered the two pieces, they can reread them and begin the writing assignment.

"My Papa's Waltz" - Theodore Roethke (poem)
Excerpt from *Angela's Ashes* - Frank McCourt (memoir)
(I use the section that begins, "There are crowds of noisy men and stale smells that remind me of Dad . . ." and I end when the father loses his job. Chapter 1, page 27, Scribner, 1996)

Essay Assignment:
Read the two selections. Write the essay described in your task.

Literary Elements and Techniques-Myra has taught her students the literary elements she expects them to use. You may want to introduce or review **irony, characterization, point of view**, and other terms that you feel your students may need to accomplish this task.

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
<p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS</p> <p>WRITING</p> <p>Understand the purpose for writing . . .</p> <p>Observe the rules of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling . . .</p> <p>Use correct grammatical construction . . .</p> <p>Use an organizational format that provides direction, coherence, and/or unity</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 2</p> <p>Writing</p> <p>Write interpretive and responsive essays . . .</p>	<p>Task:</p> <p>Write a unified essay about a father's influence on his child. Use ideas from both selections to establish a controlling idea about how these fathers influenced their children. Using evidence from both selections, develop your controlling idea, and show how each author used specific literary elements or techniques to convey that idea.</p> <p>Defining the Task:</p> <p>If this is the first time your students have attempted this writing, you should support them through the writing process and break the task into small parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a controlling idea based on ideas from both passages. 2. Use ideas from both selections to support your controlling idea. 3. Find evidence from the first selection to develop your idea. 4. Find evidence from the second selection to develop your idea. 5. Find literary elements that convey the idea. 6. Organize your ideas. 7. Write a draft. <p>Homework:</p> <p>Write a first draft of your essay.</p> <p>Note:</p> <p>When I ask the students to write, I complete the writing as well. When papers are worked on for peer editing, I have a peer partner as well.</p> <p>Day 2:</p> <p>Students come in with prepared essays and form pairs. These essays are read quietly to a partner. Suggestions are made for revision.</p>	<p>Rubrics—Students grow from being involved with the assessment process. Try developing a list of expectations for each writing assignment with your class. You can use the Regents rubrics as your base, but select areas that you want to stress in a particular assignment.</p>

EDITOR'S SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:

Peer Conferences

Think carefully about your expectations for group work. What do you want your students to accomplish? A list of expectations helps students stay focused.

You may want to determine the composition of the groups until students are familiar with expectations. Assigning a specific role to each student also helps move the discussion forward.

1. Sharing Understanding:

Students can work in groups to discuss their interpretations of the selections. This will help them to respond to the task work effectively. They can use the parts of the task to guide this discussion.

2. Revision:

Students work in pairs to read and revise the essays. A list of questions or expectations will help them focus on this activity. Give them the rubric.

3. Editing:

Here students are attending to the conventions of the language. If possible, provide language handbooks or style manuals.

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p>Teacher monitors groups and offers suggestions.</p> </div> <p>Homework: Papers are taken home that night for rewriting.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p>Collect the revised essays and exchange them with essays from another English teacher's class. Each teacher evaluates the essays according to the rubric. The added benefit here is that your students get a different set of comments, and the same happens for the other teacher's students.</p> </div>	<p>Exchanging Assessments- This is a good technique for preparing students for the kind of assessment they will experience with the Regents examination .</p>
<p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS</p> <p>LISTENING Listen respectfully and responsively Identify own purpose for listening</p> <p>SPEAKING Respond respectfully Establish and maintain eye contact . . .</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 2</p> <p>LISTENING Interpret and respond to texts from a variety of genres, authors, and subjects</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 3</p> <p>WRITING State an opinion, or present a judgment by developing a thesis and providing evidence, arguments, and details</p>	<p>Activity 2 (1 - 2 days)</p> <p>Listening</p> <p>“When Heaven and Earth Changed Places” - L. Hayslip</p> <p>The teacher reads, and the students take notes. It is presumed that prior lessons have been given on the taking of notes.</p> <p>Discuss the incidents in the reading, particularly as they relate to adult/child relationships.</p> <p>Task: The title of this piece is significant. Write a short essay explaining the significance of the title and describing how it applies to the incident in this selection. Students share and discuss their essays.</p>	<p>Reading Aloud-If you are not comfortable reading aloud, select pieces for which audiotapes are available, or ask a friend or colleague to record the piece for you.</p> <p>Listening Exercise-This is not a Regents task; however, it does give students practice in listening and taking notes.</p> <p>Taking Notes-Many students have difficulty taking notes while listening. Discuss different organizational strategies for taking notes with the students. A good English language handbook should address this issue. Have students select a strategy and apply it to a particular listening experience. Then let students get into groups and share their strategies. Seeing how their peers selected and recorded information helps struggling students better understand the process.</p> <p>Essay-Myra has the students write a short essay. You could replace this with a response. Try having students respond in their journals to the prompt before the class discussion. Then have them share their responses.</p>

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
<p>ELA STANDARD 3 READING Generate a list of significant questions to assist with analysis and evaluation of texts Analyze and evaluate poetry in order to recognize the use and effect of . . .</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 2 WRITING Use resources such as personal experience, knowledge . . . to create . . . responsive texts</p> <p>SPEAKING Express opinions and support them . . . Describe the features of the genre . . . Ask and respond to questions and follow up questions to clarify . . .</p>	<p>Activity 3 (1 day) Poetry Analysis Practice</p> <p>“Those Winter Sundays” - Robert Hayden</p> <p>If possible, provide a copy of this poem for each student so that he/she can mark up the poem as it is read. Read it at least two times. Students should record questions as well as reactions.</p> <p>Have students write a response to the concept of a father <i>showing</i> love rather than <i>talking</i> about it.</p> <p>Have students share responses and discuss in small groups. Include a discussion of language and form as well as the relationship described in the poem. Have them bring their ideas to the whole class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this poem relate to the other selections read? • How does the poet use language and techniques to convey his message? 	<p>Responding to Text-Students are more aware of their thinking if they write as they read or listen to a text. This is a strategy that students need to learn. Some may mark every line and others may mark nothing. Pair them and have them share their strategies and then hold a class discussion about what they have observed.</p> <p>Reading Responses-Students tend to be more comfortable sharing in small groups first. You could ask each group to select one response to be shared with the entire class. Allow discussion to develop around the issues raised by the students.</p> <p>Focusing Discussions-You can give the students specific questions to answer within their groups. Try to build in the kind of thinking they will need to respond to Regents tasks.</p> <p>Class Discussions-If you are new at leading literature discussions, you may want to ask your supervisor about signing up for Great Books training. It offers many strategies for supporting class discussions.</p>
<p>ELA STANDARD 3 WRITING State an opinion, or present a judgment by developing a thesis and providing evidence, arguments, and details</p>	<p>Activity 4 Task: Write a critical essay in which you discuss two works of literature you have read in this unit from the particular perspective of the statement provided for you in the critical lens. In your essay, provide a valid interpretation of the statement, agree or disagree with the statement as you have interpreted it, and use specific references to appropriate literary elements from the two works.</p> <p>Critical Lens: <i>It is clear that most American children suffer too much mother and too little father.</i>—Gloria Steinem</p> <p>Guidelines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give a valid interpretation of the critical lens. 2. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement as you interpreted it. 3. Choose two works that you have read that support your opinion. 	<p>Culminating Activity-You may wish to use this after students have completed the full-length work on the theme of adult/child relationships. If you have students working in book clubs, this could come after the groups have finished their efforts.</p> <p>Guidelines-The guidelines here come right from the Regents examination. You can take the students step-by-step through the process so that they know how to use the guidelines when they sit for the examination.</p>

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Use the criteria suggested by the critical lens to analyze the works you have chosen. 5. Avoid plot summary. Instead, use specific references to appropriate literary elements (theme, character, setting, point of view) to develop your analysis. 6. Organize your ideas in a unified and coherent manner. 7. Specify the titles and authors of the literature you chose. 8. Follow the conventions of standard written English. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Evaluate essays based on the rubric.</p> </div>	<p>Rubrics- You can develop your own assessment tool with your students by identifying your objectives for a particular assignment.</p>

<p>EDITOR'S SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES: There are many creative extensions that you could design for this unit.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students might enjoy doing research on adult/child relationships. Have them start by brainstorming some questions. Examples: How has the definition of <i>child</i> changed during this century? What were the expectations for children in the 1920s (or any decade)? 2. Another interesting activity would be to have students interview people about important adult/child relationships. Here students could address Standard 4. They would need to develop questions and practice interviewing techniques. They would also need to take notes and check for accuracy of their information.
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Journey into the Nature of Solitude

***Melanie Pigeon—
Theodore Roosevelt High School***

Editor's Introduction

Melanie wants her students to read, reflect, and apply their reflections to their lives. She wants to provide a peaceful environment and a safe place for them to engage in those activities. What she is attempting requires building a classroom community of trust and caring. Melanie shares her reasoning for this unit in her letter. She also speaks about some of the strategies that work for her. Please be sure to take the time to read her letter and think about her reasoning.

This is a unit that lends itself to selection of individual activities. As you read, think of the activities that suit the needs of your students and fit your teaching style. Adapt ideas, alter assignments, and build on the ideas that Melanie presents.

English teachers face a tremendous paper load. You may want to find a copy of *Alternatives to Grading Student Writing*, edited by Stephen Tchudi (NCTE, 1997). For more issues about building groups and community, consult the Internet Service of the Educational Resources Information Center (Keyword: AskERIC; Address: <http://ericir.syr.edu>).

Teacher-to-Teacher Letter

Dear Colleague,

I wanted to create a series of lesson plans for my eleventh-grade American literature class exploring the nature of solitude. I chose this theme because many of my students don't have the quiet time necessary to think about themselves and their place in the world. It is easy to get caught up in the general mayhem of a typical day and forget to stop and check in with ourselves.

In my school our students are bombarded with constant noise and stimuli—muffled announcements, bells going off every 42 minutes, house parties in the hall, bangs on classroom doors followed by sweet expletives that interrupt the teacher's voice—and rarely, if ever, do our students experience silence, let alone solitude. However, my school is a virtual oasis of peaceful existence compared to life in the Bronx. This is why it was my goal to create a quiet atmosphere in my classroom where students had time to sit in silence and reflect on their lives.

Solitude is a rich topic that goes beyond the typical classroom experience. If my students leave my classroom not only having read insightful and thought-provoking literature but also having developed an understanding of themselves and their roles in the world, I will feel proud of the work I have done. It is easy to become disheartened as a teacher in the inner city because of the many difficult circumstances our students face every day. I have come to realize how limited I am when it comes to changing their circumstances. I cannot control their family situations, the situation in their neighborhoods, or their past academic experiences, but I can help them discover themselves and learn how they can make themselves happy and more fulfilled in spite of their circumstances. In this unit I hope to present my students with poetry, stories, and nonfiction pieces that emphasize the importance of going inward, knowing oneself, and finding the conviction to live out one's dreams. In addition to reading literature related to the theme of solitude, my students keep a journal in which they complete writing assignments. They are responding to the literature, contemplating their future goals, thinking about what will make them happy and what pivotal events shaped them into the individuals they are now.

When I taught this unit, I was very impressed with the levels of discussion we had in the classroom. We had interesting debates about what the students were writing. I also noticed that my students had no problem writing silently; in fact, many of them seemed to enjoy the quiet time they had in my classroom. They would proudly show me their work and ask me what I thought. Many of them became extremely introspective and creative in their writing. I think they enjoyed the amount of freedom they had with the assignments. This unit allows students on all different levels to work at their own pace and to the best of their ability. I also noticed that students really enjoyed the fact that I joined in with them on all the writing assignments. When we share our writing in the class, we can all discuss the difficulties we had with an assignment, and students also know that I won't give them anything to do that I wouldn't do. I wish you the best of luck on this unit and confidently recommend it to you. I was very pleased with the outcome because I knew my students were working on their basic reading and writing skills while writing about things that are extremely important and often overlooked.

Melanie Pigeon

Journey into the Nature of Solitude

Standards Addressed:

Standard 2—Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

Standard 3—Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

Regents Tasks:

Task III - Reading and Writing for Literary Response

Learning Objectives (what students need to know and/or be able to do to succeed):

- to read and analyze a variety of poems, short stories, and essays that explore goal setting, journeys, and self-realization
- to weave the texts read in class with the texts of their lives in a reading notebook
- to analyze and evaluate poetry in order to recognize the use and effect of a variety of literary techniques
- to analyze and evaluate fiction in order to recognize the use and effect of a variety of literary techniques
- to analyze different genres dealing with a common theme
- to write introspective assignments exploring various themes related to solitude
- to share their writing and have small and large group discussions about the writing process
- to determine the criteria for their own writing
- to compile a portfolio of their best writing
- to write a reflective essay about what they have learned about themselves
- to set goals for improvement
- to celebrate their writing in a read-around showcase for peers and invited guests

Literary Skills Emphasized/Taught:

- symbolism
- rhyme scheme
- point of view
- transcendentalism

Recommended Duration:

3 - 4 weeks

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
<p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS</p> <p>WRITING</p> <p>Use prewriting activities . . .</p>	<p>JOURNEY INTO THE NATURE OF SOLITUDE</p> <p>During this unit students will read literature, thoughts, and philosophies that explore goal setting, journeys, and self-realization. They will be responding to this literature in their reading notebooks. In addition, they will be asked to complete several introspective writing assignments. All of this writing will be kept in a reading notebook that will serve as a working portfolio.</p> <p>Introduction:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute a reading notebook to each student. 2. Explain the purpose of the notebook: <p>A reading notebook is a place for you to create and imagine, to weave the texts of your life with the texts you read. Use the notebook for producing all kinds of writings that get you involved, personally and imaginatively, in what you read. One way to understand a reading notebook is to contrast it with a traditional diary. In a diary you write about feelings, personal issues and problems, or goals; perhaps you explore your family background, childhood experiences, joys, and traumas. A reading notebook is a place where you respond to texts, such as stories, poems, essays, and plays, or unprinted "texts," such as movies, TV programs, pictures, songs, memories, personal relationships, experiences, or conversations. You use these texts as prompts for your own writing.</p> <p>Note:</p> <p>It is very important that students write ONLY on the right-hand side of the notebook, because the left-hand side will be used during the rereading and selecting component of their portfolio assembly.</p> <p>The following exercise reminds students of happy times when they had quiet moments for introspection. I found this to be a great way to start the unit because many of my students have negative associations with being alone.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students to clear their desk except for a pen and reading notebook. I like to tell them to put their heads down and to close their eyes so that they are able to focus. 2. Ask them to think of a time when they were alone but very happy. Where were they? What were they doing? How did they feel? Tell them to begin to write about it in their reading notebook. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Observe and identify students who may have problems thinking of ideas and help them.</p> </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Students share writing with the person sitting next to them. 	<p>Reading/Writing Notebook-Students can purchase a notebook for this purpose, use a section in their binders, use a folder, or even make their own notebook. You may want to read Janet Angellillo's article on using writer's notebook in <i>Primary Voices</i>, August 1999.</p> <p>Using the Notebook-Melanie has thought about how she wants students to use the reading notebook. Think about how you plan to use the notebook before you begin the unit.</p> <p>Directions-Melanie has built a community with her students. Your students may not respond to putting their heads on their desks at this point. Use your knowledge of your students and their needs to adapt this unit. You may want to find a different way of sharing these responses.</p> <p>Assessment-Observing and interacting with students as they work is a good way of assessing progress. Keep a notebook in which you record your observations about students and groups. This will help you address specific issues, identify concerns for the whole class, and plan for future lessons.</p>

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<p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS</p> <p>SPEAKING Respond respectfully</p> <p>LISTENING Listen respectfully and responsively</p>	<p>4. After students have shared their thoughts on solitude, I tell them we will be reading other people's thoughts on solitude.</p> <p>5. Place the following quotes related to solitude on construction paper and place them around the room. Ask students to walk around and read them and copy down the words of any that resonate with them.</p> <p>Solitude Quotes: <i>Loneliness does not come from having no people about one, but from being unable to communicate the things that seem important to oneself.</i>—Carl G. Jung</p> <p><i>Solitude is a silent storm that breaks down all our dead branches. Yet it sends our living roots deeper into the living heart of the living earth.</i>—Kahlil Gibran</p> <p><i>Aloneness is to feel—to be enveloped in feeling; to sense the air, the noise, the smell, and then to sense nothing but sense itself.</i>—Natalie Rogers</p> <p><i>And you should not let yourself be confused in your solitude by the fact that there is something in you that wants to break out of it.</i>—Rainer Maria Rilke</p> <p><i>Only when one is connected to one's own core is one connected to others, I am beginning to discover. And for me, the core, the inner spring, can be best re-found through solitude.</i>—Anne Morrow Lindbergh</p> <p><i>Funny how we think of romance as always involving two, when the romance of solitude can be ever so much more delicious and intense alone, the world offers itself freely to us. To be unmasked, it has no choice.</i>—Tom Robbins</p> <p><i>My need to be introspective, inward, meditative, and spiritual seems in constant conflict with my drive and ability to get things accomplished, be organized, and active.</i>—Natalie Rogers</p> <p><i>I had penetrated a mystery, and, by the way, I had sailed through a fog.</i>—Joshua Slocum</p> <p>6. Students will make their way back to their desks and choose one of the quotes and write a reaction to it in their reading notebook.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p>Informally walk around the room and interact with students, asking them to verbalize why they are interested in the various quotes.</p> </div>	<p>Walk-Around-Melanie is asking her students to move around the room and read the thoughts on solitude. This means there will be talking and movement. If your students are ready for this activity, the talk will be productive and the movement will help students who sometimes get distracted. However, if you are not comfortable with this approach, give individual copies of the quotes to the students. There are some students who will need the quote in front of them to respond even if you include the walk.</p>

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	<p>Independent Writing Assignment #1: Look through your old favorite belongings from your childhood—baby shoes, old photos, stuffed animals, toys, books, christening gowns, etc. Pick out three or four artifacts that especially reveal who you were in those early years. Describe or draw them in your reading notebook. What do they say about you?</p> <div data-bbox="444 411 1102 667" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Walk around the room and read over the students' shoulders.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Throughout the unit periodically check the students' reading notebooks to see if they are keeping up with the assignments and to see if their writing is introspective and creative.</p> </div>	<p>Drawing-Some students are able to identify their thoughts more clearly if they can use sketches in their responses.</p> <p>Assessment-Some students may be uncomfortable if you read over their shoulders. Be sure students are aware that you will be reading their notebooks. You may want to prepare a list of expectations for the responses. This will guide the students. The notebooks do not need to be graded. Short notes from you describing the strengths of the entries and areas that need work can be very useful.</p>
<p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS</p> <p>READING Identify a purpose for reading Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words . . .</p>	<p>Literature Study: Steps for Reading</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce the poet/author and provide background. 2. Identify and define vocabulary. 3. Explain/review literary devices and elements. 	<p>Reading Steps-Melanie uses this strategy throughout the unit, so these steps have been moved to the beginning.</p>
<p>ELA STANDARD 3</p> <p>READING Analyze and evaluate poetry . . .</p> <p>WRITING State an opinion . . .</p>	<p>"The Road Not Taken"</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute "The Road Not Taken" - Robert Frost (poem). 2. Literary elements: symbolism, rhyme scheme 3. Read and discuss poem and its meaning. <div data-bbox="444 1304 1102 1434" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Check students' understanding by holding a whole class discussion.</p> </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ask students to respond in their reading notebook. <p>Independent Writing Assignment #2: Reread "The Road Not Taken" by R. Frost. In your world, your reality, what is the most common road chosen? Why do you think it is so well traveled? What is appealing about it? What would be the road less traveled for you?</p> <div data-bbox="444 1755 1102 1885" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Observe and identify students who are having difficulty and work one-on-one with them.</p> </div>	

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<p>ELA STANDARD 3 READING Analyze and evaluate fiction . . .</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 2 READING Read, view, and respond independently to literary works . . . Recognize a range of literary elements and techniques . . . Interpret multiple levels of meaning . . .</p> <p>SPEAKING Express opinions and support them . . .</p>	<p>“Journey”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute “Journey” - Joyce Carol Oates. This is a story of the symbolic quest for direction. Literary elements: symbolism, point of view Identify and define challenging vocabulary. Read “Journey.” Be prepared to discuss point of view and symbolism in the quest for direction. Place students in groups of three for discussion. Assign each student a role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ RECORDER: records the group consensus ◆ READER: rereads the passage, should anyone need something clarified ◆ PRESENTER: presents the group’s findings to the whole class. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Assessment</p> <p>Walk around and observe that all students are participating in group discussions and provide encouragement and clarification when needed.</p> </div> <p>7. Groups will present their responses to “Journey.”</p> <p>Independent Writing Assignment #3: Respond to the following questions: What do we want to happen in our lives (this week, this month, this year, for the next five years)? What problems do we want solved? What material things would we like to possess? What changes do we want to make in ourselves? What would we love to do for a career? What do we want to accomplish?</p>	<p>Group Direction-Melanie has students assume roles. You can also appoint a facilitator who keeps the discussion moving. Students need practice and guidelines if they are to be productive in group discussions. Harvey Daniels presents another method of assigning roles in Literature Circles (Stenhouse, 1994). Look for articles about scaffolding literature discussions by going to AskERIC on the Internet.</p> <p>You may want to have students note their questions on the story/poem or on self-stick notes. These questions could form the basis for their discussions. It helps students to be aware of their thoughts if they make notes as they read.</p>
<p>ELA STANDARD 2 WRITING Write interpretive and responsive essays . . .</p> <p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS WRITING Understand the purpose for writing . . . Use tone and language appropriate for audience and purpose Use prewriting activities . . . Use the writing process . . . Observe the rules of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling . . . Use correct grammatical construction . . . Use an organizational format that provides direction, coherence, and/or unity . . .</p>	<p>Essay Writing: Students will spend the next two days writing a five-paragraph essay.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review essay-writing techniques and strategies. Together determine the criteria and develop a rubric for the essay. Provide directions to the students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ After rereading “The Road Not Taken” and “Journey” (short story and poem), write a unified essay. Use ideas from both passages to establish a controlling idea about journeys and choices in life. The essay should also examine the details of the story and the poem and what they represent. Using evidence from each passage, develop your controlling idea and show how the author or poet uses specific literary elements or techniques to convey that idea. ◆ Organize essay. ◆ Write a first draft. ◆ Revise, referring to the rubric. ◆ Proofread essay. 	<p>Writing Response-Melanie develops her responses based on her knowledge of her students. You should adjust the assignments to fit your students.</p> <p>English Handbook-There are several publishers who provide easily accessible handbooks for high school students. Try to make copies of these available to students.</p> <p>Small Steps-If your students need support as they write, consider breaking this assignment into small steps. Charlene Hahn has a good example of how to do this in her unit on realism in the first installment of these learning exercises.</p> <p>Writing Process-You may want your students to meet in pairs or small groups to revise and edit their essays. Make your expectations clear.</p>

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	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Collect essay for a grade. Use a rubric.</p> </div> <p>Independent Writing Assignment #4: Interview your parents or caregivers about what kind of child you were. What kinds of things did you like to do? Describe them.</p>	<p>Rubric-You can use the Regents rubric, but you can also develop your own. Including the students in this process helps them understand the assignment and your expectations.</p> <p>Proofreading-This is an important step in the process, and one that students often skip. Remind students that this final reading can make a big difference.</p> <p>Writing Assignment-Melanie bases all her assignments on her knowledge of her students. This may be a difficult piece for some students. Base your decisions on your knowledge of your students.</p>
<p>ELA STANDARD 2 READING Distinguish between different forms of poetry . . . Interpret literary texts based on understanding of the genre and the literary period</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 3 READING Analyze and evaluate poetry . . .</p> <p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS WRITING Use prewriting activities . . .</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 2 WRITING Use resources such as personal experience, knowledge from other content areas, and independent reading to create imaginative, interpretive, and responsive texts</p>	<p>Emily Dickinson:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute “How Happy Is the Little Stone” and “There Is a Solitude of Space” - Emily Dickinson. 2. Read poems. 3. Discuss meaning and have students respond in their reading notebook to one of the following questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) What other elements of the natural world do you think could serve as models for human behavior? Explain your choices. b) Explain how it is possible for a person to live in solitude while surrounded by other people. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Identify students who are having trouble and assist them.</p> </div> <p>Independent Writing Assignment #5: This weekend go off in solitude to an empty room, a park, or any quiet place. Open your journal to a clean page and write—write from your heart, write truth. Think about where you are in your life and what is on your mind. This writing will be kept private.</p>	<p>Emily Dickinson-The March 1998 issue of English Journal looks at teaching the classics and contains an article about teaching Dickinson.</p> <p>Response-You can also ask the students to respond by writing about what they think the poems mean, or by focusing on their questions and concerns.</p> <p>Writing Assignment-Melanie bases all her assignments on her knowledge of her students. This may be a difficult piece for some students. Base your decisions on your knowledge of your students.</p>

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<p>ELA STANDARD 2 READING Recognize a range of literary elements . . . Recognize how the author uses tone to express an attitude toward the subject matter or audience</p> <p>WRITING Use resources such as personal experience, knowledge from other content areas, and independent reading to create imaginative, interpretive, and responsive texts</p>	<p>“The Tell-Tale Heart”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute “The Tell-Tale Heart” - Edgar Allan Poe. <i>I like to use this story to discuss what happens when you get TOO MUCH solitude. The students usually enjoy this slight diversion from the theme.</i> 2. Do a dramatic reading of the story. 3. Discuss the meaning of the story. 4. In this story the backgrounds are deliberately vague; the past lives of the central characters are merely hinted at. For this reason, I ask students to do one of the following things after reading the story: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Compose a prequel or sequel to the story. ◆ Write about any personal connections they have with the reading. ◆ Rewrite a text from a point of view different from that presented in the original text. ◆ Write an imaginary interview with the author or with a character in the story. ◆ Draft a fictional biography or autobiography of a character in the story. <div data-bbox="386 827 1045 949" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Observe and identify students who are having difficulty and help them.</p> </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Ask some students to share the beginnings of their writing with the entire class. <div data-bbox="386 1050 1045 1150" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Listen and provide positive reinforcement.</p> </div> <p>Homework: Independent Writing Assignment #6: Reread “The Tell-Tale Heart” if necessary, and finish your writing project.</p>	<p>Dramatic Reading-If you feel comfortable doing a dramatic reading, this is a good way to develop the mood of this story. There are also several recordings of this story that you can use.</p> <p>Class Discussions-There have been many articles written about conducting discussions. Try consulting AskERI C for more information.</p> <p>Creative Writing-Melanie plans to use this assignment later in the unit.</p> <p>Time Allotment-You may want to give students more time.</p>
<p>ELA STANDARD 3 READING Analyze and evaluate nonfiction texts . . .</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 2 READING Recognize the relevance of literature to contemporary and/or personal events and situations</p> <p>SPEAKING Express opinions and support them . . . Describe the features of the genre and the period to interpret and respond to imaginative texts</p>	<p>“The Mortgaged Heart”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute “The Mortgaged Heart” - Carson McCullers. (This is an argumentative essay that explores the causes of, and possible solutions to, the problem of loneliness.) 2. Have students read the essay and discuss how this genre differs from other genres studied. 3. Ask students to think about a time when they were lonely and the things that caused the loneliness. Students should write about this time. 4. After providing time for writing, conduct a whole group discussion. Ask students what they think are the main causes of loneliness in contemporary society. Have them prepare a list of reasons for people’s loneliness with a partner and then list some possible solutions. <div data-bbox="386 1848 1045 1969" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Listen to student contributions and ask appropriate follow-up questions.</p> </div>	<p>Discussion-You may want to focus on issues and questions that the students raise. Small group discussions are a good way for students to address individual issues. The group can determine which issues or questions need to be brought to the whole class.</p> <p>Great Books Strategies-The <i>Great Books Foundation</i> provides training for leading discussions and offers strategies that can help you become a participant in the discussion with the students. Speak with your supervisor about the availability of training.</p>

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<p>ELA STANDARD 4 SPEAKING Speak informally with familiar and unfamiliar people, individually and in group settings</p> <p>LISTENING Listen for multiple levels of meaning . . .</p>	<p>Independent Writing Assignment #7: Character study—Observe or speak with someone who seems isolated and alone, perhaps because of a language barrier or old age, etc. Tell the person's story.</p>	<p>Writing Assignment-Melanie bases all her assignments on her knowledge of her students. This may be a difficult piece for some students. Base your decisions on your knowledge of your students.</p>
<p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS READING Identify purpose for reading</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 2 READING Form opinions and make judgments about the validity and accuracy of informational, interpretive, imaginative, and persuasive texts</p> <p>WRITING Write imaginative texts . . .</p>	<p>Walden excerpt:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute copies of "Where I Lived, and What I Lived For" from <i>Walden</i> - Henry David Thoreau. 2. Literary devices and elements: transcendentalism 3. Ask students to imagine how they might go about simplifying their own lives to learn about what they consider most important. Students should share their thoughts with a partner. 4. Discuss what a person might learn by going to live in the wilderness. 5. Read excerpt and discuss meaning. <p>Independent Writing Assignment #8: (See attachment) Write a quote modeled after one by Thoreau.</p> <p>Creative Writing: I like to allow at least one day when students can do some creative writing in the form of poetry, songs, stories, etc. I also encourage students to do this continually throughout the unit. The minimum requirement is that they have at least one piece of creative writing.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p>Walk around the room and work one-on-one with students who need feedback or encouragement.</p> </div>	<p>Writing Assignment-Melanie bases all her assignments on her knowledge of her students. This may be a difficult piece for some students. Base your decisions on your knowledge of your students.</p>
<p>ELA STANDARD 2 WRITING Maintain a portfolio that includes imaginative, interpretive, and responsive writing</p>	<p>Introduction to Portfolio and the Rereading Stage:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the rationale and purpose of a portfolio. A portfolio is a selection of your best work that you assemble, over a period of time, to present to others and to please yourself. The portfolio will include selections from your reading notebook and any other writing you have completed in our "journey into the nature of solitude" activity. No writer writes well consistently; for every piece of writing that succeeds, there may be five or ten or a dozen that fail. Portfolio evaluation takes into account this unevenness in quality that is common to all writers. Rather than being graded on your failures, a portfolio allows you to be judged on the portion of your work which is <i>best</i>. 2. Explain the process of rereading: 	<p>Portfolio-Melanie makes her purpose for the portfolio very clear. You can use this idea in any unit or at the end of a semester or a year.</p>

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<p>ELA STANDARD 3 READING Analyze and evaluate the intellectual and/or emotional impact on the reader of specific texts</p> <p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS WRITING Understand the purpose for writing . . . Use tone and language appropriate for audience and purpose Use the writing process . . . Observe rules of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling . . . Use correct grammatical construction . . .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Read through your entire reading notebook. ◆ Bracket or mark any pieces that grab or strike you. ◆ Reread the marked pieces and choose your favorites. ◆ On the left-hand side of the notebook, jot down what it is you like about it, how you could improve the piece, and what you learned about yourself from completing the writing. <p>If students cannot decide on a favorite text, they can obtain input from a partner or small group. Class time should be allotted for this.</p> <p>3. Students should select three to five of their best pieces of writing from their reading notebook and place them in a portfolio.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Assessment</p> <p>Observe students as they make their choices.</p> </div> <p>Revision:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students should revise and improve three pieces of writing. 2. Students should edit and proofread their writing, using preestablished criteria. 3. Students should type or write neatly. <p>Reflective Essay:</p>	<p>Notebook Strategy—Here Melanie shows the students how she wants them to use the blank pages she asked them to leave at the beginning of the unit.</p> <p>Group Strategy—Here Melanie is encouraging students to get support from their peers. Think about how you can make this strategy work in your classroom.</p> <p>Criteria—Discuss your expectations with your students. They can help to establish the criteria for this project.</p> <p>Time Allotment—This is a major project, so you may want to build some extra work time during class to ensure that all students are focusing on the goals.</p> <p>Conference Groups—You may want to include time for peer revision and editing.</p>
<p>ELA STANDARD 2 WRITING Write interpretive and responsive essays . . .</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the process of writing a reflective essay. Tell students to follow these steps: Step 1: Introduce the various selections in your portfolio: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) What kind of text is it? Poem? Letter to the author? Sequel to a play or story? Explain why, out of all the possibilities available to you, you chose this particular selection for your portfolio. b) Discuss how the selection originated. What literary text or other source—personal experience, memory, observation, song, movie, or photograph—inspired it? c) Discuss how the piece evolved. Once you got your initial idea, through what sequence of steps did the selection grow into its final form? What challenges or problems did you face during the process of composing, and 	<p>Process—Having students reflect on the pieces they have included in their portfolios is important. Your students may need a more detailed outline of what you expect. Example: Paragraph 1, An introduction to the portfolio Paragraphs 2- 4, Discussion of individual selections Paragraph 5, Lesson from the experience/goals</p>

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	<p>how did you resolve (or try to resolve) them? d) If the selection is still not completely satisfactory to you, describe how (given more time) you would change or improve it.</p> <p>Step 2: Describe the single most important thing you have learned about yourself during our journey into the nature of solitude.</p> <p>Step 3: Goal setting: Identify the one aspect of yourself that you would like to improve.</p> <p>Step 4: Illustrate/decorate your portfolio in a creative and expressive way.</p> <p>Showcase of Portfolios:</p>	
	<p>1. Students will place their completed portfolios around the room for review by their peers. 2. Students will circulate around the classroom. Using self-stick notes, they can respond to the writing of their peers.</p> <p>Read-Around:</p>	<p>Walk-Around-You will decide whether or not this activity will work for your students. You could have the students meet in small groups and share their portfolios. Students could respond to the portfolios in their group. Be sure to give students specific instructions about the kind of responses you expect.</p>
<p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS</p> <p>SPEAKING Use a presentational format appropriate for the audience and purpose Use the conventions of standard spoken English appropriate to the message and audience Apply delivery techniques such as voice projection, and demonstrate physical poise</p> <p>LISTENING Listen respectfully and responsively</p>	<p>It is always nice to invite other students, administrators, and parents to this event.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Each student will read one of the selections from his or her portfolio to the entire class. The audience will actively listen and respond to the writing. <p>I like to distribute small index cards to each person in the audience. After a student has read from the portfolio, each person listening should write a positive response on the index card. This will be shared with the reader orally. It is also nice to give the cards to the reader to take home.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;"> <p>Collect the notebook and the portfolio for grading.</p> </div>	<p>Assessment-Be sure to tell the students that you will be grading the notebooks at the beginning of the unit. Prepare a rubric for this task as well.</p> <p>You may want to check out articles and books on handling the paper load.</p>

Journey into the Nature of Solitude

Attachment

Writing Assignment

Excerpt:

Walden - Henry David Thoreau

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartanlike as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and if it proved to be mean, why then to get to the whole and genuine meanness out of it and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience.

Task:

Write a quote of your own, using Thoreau's style as your guide.

Use phrases such as:

- I went to . . . because . . .
- I did not wish to . . .
- I wanted to . . .

Ideas:

In your quote declare your dreams, desires, and wants in life and tell why you want to live this way.

- I want to be a lawyer because . . .
- I want to jump out of a plane because . . .

Example:

This is only the beginning. You should write one about the same length as Thoreau's quote. For example:

I went to India, Africa, Europe, and South America because I wished to see the world.
I wanted to gather up all the various pieces of the human experience and make them a part of me so that I may be richer, more complete, and more fully human.

Reading and Writing Memoir

***Cher Sansone—
Monroe Academy for Business and Law***

Editor's Introduction

Cher has developed a unit that leads students to writing memoirs. Her unit is short and focuses on the writing. However, students often have not studied this kind of writing before, and so will need more exposure by reading full-length examples of this genre. I have included some suggestions for adding a literature component to this unit. I suggest that you read Cher's unit on book clubs in the first installment for suggestions.

Often we neglect professional journals that do not focus on the level we teach, but sometimes those are the very places where we can find important ideas and concepts. NCTE publishes many journals; one is *Primary Voices K-6*. The August 1999 issue is devoted to units of study in the writing workshop. Edited by Katie Wood Ray and Lester L. Laminack, the issue is filled with ideas that can be adapted to high school use. Isoke Titilayo Nia offers a fruitful discussion about developing possible units of study. There are articles about using memoir, writer's notebook, and genre study. At the end of the issue, the editors offer a helpful list of professional resources. I urge you to find a copy of this issue.

When you want to help students develop the craft of writing, it is useful to read what the experts have to say. Cher cites *Time for Meaning: Crafting Literate Lives in the Middle and High School* by Randy Bomer (Heinemann, 1995). I would like to suggest *Inventing Truth: The Art and Craft of Writing Memoir* by William Zinsser (Houghton Mifflin, 1998), and *What a Writer Needs* by Ralph Fletcher (Heinemann, 1993). Think about how you can use the theory as well as the practice to enhance your high school classes.

Teacher-to-Teacher Letter

Dear Colleagues,

I teach at Monroe Academy for Business and Law. This is an alternative high school in the Bronx.

In the academic lives of our students there is very little room for them to focus on their own lives as they learn. Self-discovery is an important part of learning and should have room in the classroom. As teachers, we tend to forget that students understand literature by comparing it to their own lives, and that people find meaning in their life experiences. People love to talk about themselves and the things they've encountered. As adults, this is what we do. We talk about our days and the things that go on in our lives. Students also have days filled with meaning that they should be able to share. For these reasons I chose to do an instructional unit on the reading and writing of memoir.

Students enjoy reading memoirs because there are truths in the stories they read. I find that it encourages them to look deeper into themselves for the stories that shape who they are and who they may become. When we give students a chance to read and write memoir, we give them the opportunity to shape what is important to them and what is important to people they know and read about. My students love this unit. They create their own memoirs, and we have a celebration of their work and dedication to what is meaningful and important. I hope you have as much fun with this unit as we have.

Cher Sansone

Reading and Writing Memoir

Standards Addressed:

Standard 2—Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

Learning Objectives (what students need to know and/or be able to do to succeed):

- to understand the genre of memoir
- to maintain and use a writer’s notebook
- to work in groups effectively
- to critique and evaluate memoir
- to write their own memoirs
- to celebrate their writing

Regents Tasks:

Task IV - Critical Lens

Literary Skills Emphasized/Taught:

- understanding the genre of memoir

Recommended Duration:

2 weeks

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
<p>Interpret literary texts based on understanding of the genre and the literary period</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 2 WRITING Write interpretive and responsive essays</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 2 SPEAKING Express opinions and support them through specific references to the text Describe the features of the genre . . .</p>	<p>to know this just yet. I use excerpts from the following: <i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i> - Maya Angelou <i>A House on Mango Street</i> - Sandra Cisneros <i>This Boy's Life</i> - Tobias Wolf <i>When I Was Puerto Rican</i> - Esmeralda Santiago <i>Growing Up</i> - Russell Baker</p> <p>Some of the texts listed above are long works. You may choose excerpts to share with your students. You may also want to add to the list.</p> <p>3. Students look through the materials provided, select several of interest, and read the memoir. Ask students to identify characteristics that make this genre different from others they have studied.</p> <p>4. When students finish reading, have them respond in their writer's notebooks. (How well does the author tell the story and why? What is the "point in time" of the story? Is it effective? How does the author use language and/or dialogue, if at all? How does the author get his/her point across? How does the memoir begin? How does it end?)</p> <p>5. After students write their responses to the memoir in their notebooks, have them share their thinking. Try to hear from as many students as possible and allow students time to respond to what their peers say. Be sure to let students know that if they didn't speak, they will be expected to speak the following day. This will allow the shyer student time to prepare what s/he wants to express.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Assessment Walk around and assist as students read and respond.</p> </div>	<p>"A Study of Memoir" (<i>Primary Voices K-6</i>, August 1999). Amy brings in many examples and has students develop a definition for this genre. Collect as many titles as you can and let the students browse until they are comfortable with the genre.</p> <p>Assessment-As you walk around when students are working, carry a notebook so that you can record your observations. This helps you remember concepts that need to be addressed with individuals or with the whole class. Stop and talk with students who are having difficulty. An individual may need help in selecting an appropriate memoir or in getting started writing.</p>

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
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EDITOR'S SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

Another way to help students define *memoir* would be to use children's books. Ralph Fletcher offers a bibliography of memoirs written for children in *What a Writer Needs* (Heinemann, 1993). Again, Amy Arnberg includes a helpful bibliography in her article, "A Study of Memoir" (*Primary Voices K-6*, August 1999). Collect as many titles as you can and let the students browse until they are comfortable with the genre. The public librarian and your school librarian can help. Ask anyone with children to check for titles they may have at home. If you can't get enough titles for a good browse, collect as many as you can find and read some aloud or have students read aloud in groups so that they get a feeling for this genre.

As the discussion of memoir continues and students begin their writing, have students select a full-length example of this genre to read. Cher has presented a list for you. Another title you might consider is *Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution* by Ji Li Jiang (HarperCollins, 1997). Once again, walk the halls of your building, looking for copies of appropriate titles. Enlist the aid of the librarian and other members of your department. Check with the social studies teachers. You will be surprised at what a search can uncover.

Have students form book groups, so that they can discuss the memoir with other students reading the same title. Cher has described this activity in her unit on book clubs in the first installment. You may also want to read *Literature Circles* by Harvey Daniels (Stenhouse, 1994). Groups can meet once or twice a week to discuss the reading and to test the class definition of *memoir* against the text selected. Group members can use the double-entry journal that Cher describes later in this unit as a means of preparing for discussions. At the end of the unit, students can join in a whole class discussion of memoir and each group can discuss how its selection fits the established criteria.

Cher provides a quote from Randy Bomer that might provide a critical lens:

"In most good memoirs, it is not so much the hugeness of what happens to the subject that sticks with the reader, but the ordinary minutiae of everyday life."

You could ask students to respond to this in an essay at the end of this unit. This essay would be another writing activity for the unit.

ELA STANDARD 2

READING

Read, view, and respond independently to literary works . . .

Interpret literary texts based upon the genre . . .

Speaking

Express opinions and support them through specific references to the text

Describe features of the genre . . .

Day 3

1. Continue to have students share responses.
2. Have students read and respond to two more examples of memoir.
3. Next, have students individually make a list of characteristics of the memoir genre, and describe how it is different from other genres.
4. After about ten minutes, place students in small groups and have them share their findings. Each student should contribute. Before group work begins, ask students to choose one group member who will act as a reporter and report the group's findings to the whole class.

Assessment

Walk around the room and interact with every group to let students know that each of them must contribute at least one idea to the list. This will avoid having one student doing all the work.

5. When each group has a list, you can ask the groups to come together as a whole class to share and discuss their findings. As each reporter shares the ideas of the group, write the ideas on the board.

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
<p>ELA STANDARD 2</p> <p>READING Read, view, and respond independently to literary works . . . Interpret literary texts based upon the genre . . .</p> <p>SPEAKING Express opinions and support them through specific references to the text Describe features of the genre . . .</p>	<p>6. Create a list of the characteristics of memoir from the students' responses and post it so that students can check it during this unit.</p> <p>Most of the time your students will be able to come up with the important points you want them to know. If there are still points you think the list should include, ask some questions that will help the students add them to the list. Your students should know that memoir is personal and reflects the life of the writer. Writers of memoir place their attention on small details within an event, rather than the whole story. Share the following quotation with students, and use it, if necessary, to trigger discussion: "In most good memoirs, it is not so much the hugeness of what happens to the subject that sticks with the reader, but the ordinary minutiae of everyday life." (<i>Time for Meaning</i> - Randy Bomer)</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Assessment Check for student participation in class discussion.</p> </div> <p>Days 4 and 5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue the discussion of memoir from the previous day. Students who did not speak the previous day should speak today. 2. Show students how to use a double-entry journal. Then ask them to choose a passage that contain features of the genre and copy it on the left column of their notebook. In the right column of their notebook they will explain why they chose the passage and how it is characteristic of memoir. (Students can refer to the posted list of characteristics.) 3. After about ten minutes place students in small groups and have them share their journal entries. 4. Have the groups share their discussions with the whole class. <p>Note: You may also want to provide a few more examples of good memoir writing. Another idea is to ask students to find memoir writing they think is good to share with the rest of the class. Of course, the student will be expected to identify what works in the memoir and why. Another idea that works well at this point is to ask students to think about and search for memoir written during another time period, for example, memoir written during the 1500s or 1800s. If you do decide to incorporate a study of memoir from different time periods, you should allow your students another week to research, evaluate, and critique their findings. The teacher can work with the librarian to help students complete this project. For homework you can have students make a list of memories that were triggered by the memoir they read and discussed in class.</p>	<p>Resources-Cher mentions Randy Bomer's book as a good source for help in teaching memoir. Another is <i>Inventing the Truth</i> by William Zinsser (<i>Houghton Mifflin, 1998</i>).</p> <p>Research Project-Here is an opportunity to work with the social studies teacher to develop a research project. Your librarian can help you find titles and guide you to the best resources for this activity.</p>

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
<p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS</p> <p>WRITING Understand the purpose for writing . . . Use prewriting activities . . . Use the writing process . . .</p> <p>LISTENING Listen respectfully and responsively Demonstrate appropriate body language as a listener</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 2</p> <p>WRITING Write imaginative text . . . Use resources such as personal experience . . . to create imaginative . . . text</p>	<p>Week Two: Students as writers of memoir</p> <p>Day 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give students time to review the list of memories and the quotes they have in the notebook. Ask students to look back at their work and add any new ideas they've had as a result of the discussions. 2. Familiarize your students with active listening and peer feedback. <p>Note: To model this type of group work you can use an activity called "the fishbowl." Select a small group of students (three or four) to model active listening. They come to the front of the room. The other students watch, as if staring into a fishbowl. One student in the model group speaks about his or her memory and says why s/he thinks it will make a good piece of memoir. When the student finishes, others within the group tell the speaker what they heard. Next, the listeners can ask for more information.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Form groups of four or five to share memories and help students develop ideas for their memoirs. Provide guiding questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would you like to hear more about? • What is working? • Can anything be said more clearly? • Should anything be eliminated? • What is the focus? <div data-bbox="444 1178 1102 1434" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p>As the teacher, you can join a group or walk around the room, making yourself available to the students. You should check to see that each group and group member are contributing and working. By the end of this day, students should be confident and ready to start their memoir writing.</p> </div> <p>Day 2 At this point students should be given enough time to write the first draft of their memoir.</p> <div data-bbox="444 1566 1102 1755" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p>While students are writing, the teacher can take this time to walk around the room and confer with as many students as possible. Keep notes on student progress.</p> </div> <p>Note: Early in the writing process, you can pair students up and ask them to share their work so far. Pairing students at this time may make it less difficult for them to share their unfinished pieces of writing. Ask students to give each other feedback and take notes.</p>	<p>Writing Process-Students need time to complete their best work. Give them the time they need, but some of the writing time can be outside of class time. Remind students to consider what they have learned from their reading of memoirs as they write their own.</p> <p>Assessment-Keeping notes in a notebook or on seating charts helps you to identify students who have difficulty making effective use of writing time. These are the students you need to visit and talk</p>

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
<p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS</p> <p>WRITING Understand the purpose for writing . . . Use prewriting activities . . . Use the writing process . . . Write clear, concise sentences Observe rules of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling . . . Use correct grammatical construction . . .</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 2</p> <p>SPEAKING Use devices such as voice, tone, volume, pitch, rate, body language, rhyme, and repetition to create an emotional or aesthetic response.</p>	<p>Homework: Students complete their drafts.</p> <div data-bbox="386 352 1042 472" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Assessment Use checklists to record students' progress in completing the steps in the process.</p> </div> <p>Days 3-4</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students continue the revision and feedback process. 2. Students edit and revise based on preestablished criteria that students have developed with the teacher. 3. Students submit final draft. <div data-bbox="386 730 1042 886" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Assessment (Editor's Attachment) Students will submit all drafts. Memoirs will be graded based on the rubric developed by the teacher and the student.</p> </div> <p>Day 5</p> <p>Writing Celebration: Invite students, teachers, administrators and/or parents to the library, where they will hear students read aloud their memoirs in a celebration of their achievements in the study of reading and writing memoir. Have fun.</p>	<p>with daily as the writing continues. Your interest in their efforts may be all the motivation that is necessary to move them forward.</p> <p>Handbooks/Style Manuals- Whenever students are writing, they should have access to materials that will help them revise and edit. Students should learn to use a handbook. Try to have copies available in the classroom.</p> <p>Time Allotment- You will need to determine how much class time will be allotted to the writing process.</p> <p>Assessment- It is important for the students to know the expectations for this writing assignment. Having them contribute to the rubric is an important way to help them understand and meet expectations.</p> <p>Celebration- If you decide to have students share their memoirs with the public, be sure they are aware of your plans from the start. This is a good place to introduce some public speaking skills. Students should rehearse, so that the celebration is a serious presentation of their best work.</p>

Reading and Writing Memoir Editor's Attachment

Grading Expectations: Memoir Essay

Name _____ Date _____

					Student	Teacher
Prewriting (20 points)						
A	B	C	D	F		
20-18	17-16	15-14	13	12-0	_____	_____
<i>Student has</i>						
<i>Maintained a notebook with all required responses</i>						
<i>Used ideas from responses as a source of material</i>						
<i>Participated in peer conferences</i>						
<i>Edited and revised</i>						

Language Use and Conventions (20 points)						
A	B	C	D	F		
20-18	17-16	15-14	13	12-0	_____	_____
<i>Student has</i>						
<i>Written clear, concise sentences</i>						
<i>Varied structure and length of sentences</i>						
<i>Used language that is precise and engaging</i>						
<i>Developed a sense of voice and an awareness of audience and purpose</i>						
<i>Observed rules of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling</i>						
<i>Used correct grammatical construction</i>						
<i>Utilized suggestions from editing conferences</i>						

Final Product (50 points)						
A	B	C	D	F		
50-45	44-40	39-35	34-32.5	32-0	_____	_____
<i>Student has</i>						
<i>Focused on a specific memory and time</i>						
<i>Added details that create a picture for the reader</i>						
<i>Developed a strong beginning</i>						
<i>Developed a strong ending</i>						
<i>Used dialogue if appropriate</i>						
<i>Developed ideas fully and used a wide range of relevant and specific details</i>						

Best Effort (10 points)						
A	B	C	D	F		
10-9	8	7	6.5	6-0	_____	_____
<i>Student has</i>						
<i>Proofread for errors</i>						
<i>Prepared a paper that represents best work</i>						
<i>Completed the assignment on time</i>						

Romanticism

***Gail Burnham Kamm—
Lansingburgh High School***

Editor's Introduction

This unit consists of some background reading, two short stories, and a literary essay. Gail uses this unit as a way of introducing the romantic period to her students. A chronological study is one approach to literature. Students should have an understanding of literary periods. If your units tend to focus on themes, you may want to consider building in a few short units such as the one Gail has prepared to introduce students to this concept.

Gail has developed a notebook strategy she requires her students to use. Routines that you develop and support throughout the year help to scaffold your students' learning. Many students have difficulty organizing their notes, so you should always be thinking about ways to share strategies to assist them. Gail's notebook entries provide a way for students to collect the information about literature they have studied. If these notebooks are carefully maintained, the students will have a valuable resource as they prepare for the Regents examination.

You will need to develop ways to evaluate student notebooks. One way is to use peer evaluation. Develop a guide for the expectations you have for the notebooks. Have the students work in pairs. Using the guide, students can assess each other. You may also want to occasionally have a quiz for which students are able to use their notebooks. This encourages students to stay up-to-date.

Always remember that these units are offered as samples. Use them to help you create your own units that suit your students and your needs.

Teacher-to-Teacher Letter

Dear Colleagues,

I hope this unit presents some different ways to look at things which we have been doing for years. Yes, the new standards force us to rethink what we are doing—and that's great! They can invigorate us, shake us up a bit, and clear the air. If we work hard enough to incorporate the standards, perhaps our students will be more successful on the Regents examination. More importantly, students will be acquiring skills that they need beyond high school.

Perhaps you are a new teacher and need all the help you can get. But that's OK; successful teachers are always looking for new ideas. I've been teaching for 22 years, 20 of them at Lansingburgh High, a small city school in upstate New York. I'm constantly looking for new materials and techniques. Welcome to a wonderful profession. It will exhaust you, frustrate you, perhaps even anger you—but you will know you are truly alive when those (sometimes all-too-rare) moments come, and you see the light of understanding in a student's eyes.

Both new and experienced teachers must take on new challenges as we are faced with the English language arts standards. It's an exciting time to be teaching! These techniques have worked for me; I hope this unit is helpful to you. I wish you much success in your school year—and if you have any ideas you would like to share, I can use all the help I can get!

Sincerely,
Gail Burnham Kamm

Romanticism

Standards Addressed:

Standard 2—Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

Standard 3—Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

Regents Tasks:

Task IV - Critical Lens

Learning Objectives (what students need to know and/or be able to do to succeed):

- to understand the differences between classicism and romanticism
- to identify the elements of short story structure
- to identify mood in a piece of literature
- to write personal responses to short stories
- to construct a simple rubric and know how it is used
- to understand Poe's theory of the short story
- to demonstrate knowledge of the components of a critical lens essay

Literary Skills Emphasized/Taught:

- romanticism
- mood
- conflict
- "doubling"
- climax
- resolution
- denouement
- imagery

Recommended Duration:

1 - 2 weeks

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
	<p>ROMANTICISM This is a short unit to introduce the concept of romanticism. This is one way to introduce a period in the chronological study of literature.</p> <p>As the 18th century came to a close, a shift from classicism to romanticism occurred in America. This unit will have students examine that shift and study two short stories, Washington Irving's "The Devil and Tom Walker" and Edgar Allan Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher." Students will study the structure of a short story and will write a critical lens essay. If your students have not studied classicism, you should be able to use this unit by omitting the comparisons between the two periods.</p> <p>Before you begin this unit, talk to an art teacher. Try to arrange to have him/her visit your class to show examples of classicism and romanticism in art. S/he might give the students some ideas for a final project for this unit. You may also want to work with the social studies teacher to see how this time period is taught.</p>	<p>Interdisciplinary Connections-It is wonderful to connect different branches of the humanities. Having the art teacher work with you and/or your classes will enrich this experience.</p>
<p>ELA STANDARD 1 READING Interpret and evaluate data, facts, and ideas . . .</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 2 READING Read, view, and respond independently to literary works . . . Recognize a range of literary elements and techniques . . . Interpret the works based upon an understanding of the genre and the literary period</p>	<p>INTRODUCTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to point out differences in mood or subject in art prints. • Have students copy the definitions for classicism and romanticism into their notebooks. Point out that the use of the word <i>romantic</i> when discussing literature is not the same as the use of the word <i>romantic</i> when discussing human relationships. • Have students read "First Harvest 1800 - 1840" in their textbook. (You might want to provide an alternate introduction to the period). They should take notes as they read and complete them at home if necessary. • Have students review a list of the characteristics of classicism. Have them begin to develop a list of characteristics of romanticism. Discuss and develop a chart comparing the two. Leave it posted during the unit. <p>"The Devil and Tom Walker" Read the first few paragraphs of the story aloud and stop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students discuss the mood of the story. • Discuss whether this is a classical or romantic story and have students point out words or phrases that support their views. • Finish reading the story in class. 	<p>Art Prints-Some literature series include transparencies of fine art. If these are not available, you can use posters. There are prints available on CD and the Internet if you have those capabilities.</p> <p>Background Information-Gail is using the information provided in her literature series. If your text does not provide this, find a short selection that will accomplish this for you.</p> <p>Genre-Here Gail is asking the students to attend to the features of genre.</p> <p>Literature Response-Gail is asking the students to respond to the story for homework. This is also a legitimate class activity. You need to decide where you want your students to keep their responses. You can use a notebook that is your literature log or</p>

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
<p>SPEAKING</p> <p>Express opinions and support them through specific references to the text</p> <p>Describe the features of the genre and the period to interpret and respond to imaginative texts</p>	<p>Homework: Students write a response to the story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students break into groups of four. They will be working cooperatively to share their responses and discuss the story. They should select a reporter and recorder. • Students identify characteristics of romanticism that can be added to the chart. • Students consider the elements of conflict, climax, resolution, and denouement in their discussions. These elements may need to be taught or reviewed. • The reporter shares the groups' ideas with the class. • Other group members should be prepared to add to the report. • All students should listen and take notes. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Assessment Observe students' participation as you move from group to group.</p> </div> <p>Homework: Students write a notebook entry.</p> <p>Note: I require students to keep a notebook and make an entry for most of the literature studied. Students maintain the notebook throughout the school year and use it as a study tool. (If students maintain the notebook in tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades, they will have a record of the literature studied in class. Students can then use the notebook as a resource to review the literature studied and to prepare for the critical lens task of the English Regents.)</p> <p>Early in the school year, I give students the following format:</p> <p>Title: Author: Genre: Literary term/technique: Main characters: Summary: Response:</p>	<p>journal, or you can have the students store their responses in folders. Make this part of the routine.</p> <p>Literary Concepts-Gail has identified literary elements she wants the students to consider as they discuss the story.</p> <p>Notes-Taking notes during the reports may interfere with the flow of the discussion. You may want to note important points on the board and have the students copy them at the end of the discussion.</p> <p>Assessment-Carry a seating chart or pad and note your observations, so that you have them to reflect upon after the class has ended.</p>
<p>COMPETENCIES ACROSS ALL ELA STANDARDS</p> <p>READING</p> <p>Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words by using classroom and other resources</p>	<p>"The Fall of the House of Usher"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vocabulary in this story is extensive. Develop ways to help the students understand new words. • Read aloud the first paragraph of the story. • Ask students to identify examples of strong imagery. Have them describe the mood of the opening paragraph of the story. 	<p>Vocabulary Development Students seem to learn new words best when they are in context. Charlene Hahn gives an example of a vocabulary strategy in her unit on work in 1 installment //</p>

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
<p>ELA STANDARD 2 READING Read, view, and respond independently to literary works . . . Recognize a range of literary elements and techniques . . . Interpret the works based upon an understanding of the genre and the literary period</p> <p>SPEAKING Express opinions and support them through specific references to the text Describe the features of the genre and the period to interpret and respond to imaginative texts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is not an easy story to read. You might want to read the entire story aloud. <p>Homework: Students should write a response as homework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students share their responses. Discuss. • Explain that authors sometimes use “doubling:” the pairing of characters, word meanings, or objects. One character adds to our understanding, or provides a missing component of another character; one word can have two different meanings; one object reinforces our perceptions of another object. • Students will break into groups to use the concept of “doubling” to discuss the story. Each group will work with only one section of the study sheet. (See attachment.) • The reporter for each group will report the group’s findings. • Class will discuss. 	<p>Literary Elements and Techniques-Your students may need a mini-lesson on imagery. You want them to be able to apply this to other works.</p> <p>Reading the Story-Students could read the story in pairs, assisting each other with unfamiliar words. If you think the students need to hear the entire story, you might want to find a professional recording.</p> <p>Cooperative Groups-You should carefully plan the makeup of each group to ensure its success. Balance is the key. You want to be sure to make all expectations clear. You need to be moving from group to group; this helps you observe the progress being made and keeps the students on task. Carry a notebook and record your observations. This will help you address individual issues and refer to points during class discussions.</p>
<p>ELA STANDARD 2 WRITING Write interpretive and responsive essays . . .</p> <p>ELA STANDARD 3 WRITING State an opinion, or present a judgment by developing a thesis and providing supporting evidence, arguments, and details</p>	<p>Essay Writing: Show students how to write a critical lens essay. Students should record the form in their notebooks. Construct a simple rubric on the board or overhead, asking students what should be included in this essay.</p> <p>Task: Write an essay in which you discuss “The Devil and Tom Walker” and “The Fall of the House of Usher” from the particular perspective of the statement that is provided. In your essay, provide a valid interpretation of the statement, agree or disagree with the statement as you have interpreted it, and support your opinion by using specific references to the appropriate literary elements from the two works.</p> <p>CRITICAL LENS <i>Fiction reveals truth that reality hides.</i>—Jessamyn West</p> <p>Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a valid interpretation of the critical lens that clearly establishes the criteria for analysis. • Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement as you have interpreted it. 	<p>Essay Form-Charlene Hahn gave a fine example of the steps in writing a critical lens essay in her unit on realism in <i>Installation 1</i>.</p> <p>Critical Lens Essay-This task is similar to the Regents task, but here students are directed to use two specific pieces.</p>

STANDARDS	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EDITOR'S COMMENTS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For this particular essay, you must use “The Devil and Tom Walker” and “The Fall of the House of Usher.” • Use the criteria suggested by the critical lens to analyze the works you have chosen. • Avoid plot summary. Instead, use specific references to appropriate literary elements (for example: theme, characterization, setting, point of view) to develop your analysis. • Organize your ideas in a unified and coherent manner. • Specify the titles and authors of the literature. • Follow the conventions of standard written English. <p>Distribute copies of the final rubric. Have students exchange essays and use the rubric to evaluate them. Allow time for students to conference. They can share ideas as well as offer assistance with revision and editing. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses revealed.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Collect and evaluate the essays, using the rubric.</p> </div>	<p>Assessment-Having students read and respond to the work of their peers is a powerful way to help them understand expectations. You need to establish a classroom community in which this can happen before attempting this type of assessment. Students need to know, trust, and respect one another.</p>
<p>ELA STANDARD 2 READING Read literary criticism to increase comprehension and appreciation of imaginative texts</p>	<p>Literary Criticism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a way to have students focus on the genre of short story, at the end of this short unit I have them read Poe’s theory of the short story as discussed in his “Philosophy of Composition.” • Students work in groups to interpret the essay and bring their findings to a class discussion. • Students look at the two stories and work in pairs to identify specific scenes or words in the stories that develop a single effect. • Students report their findings to the class. • Give the students a diagram of the structure of a short story to add to their notebook. • Have the students identify specific scenes that correspond to the points of the diagram. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Overall unit assessment includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contents of student notebooks • Students’ responses in discussion. <p>Note: Look for students to be able to apply this information in future discussions.</p> </div>	

Romanticism Attachment

Group Work: “The Fall of the House of Usher”

Authors sometimes use “doubling:” the pairing of characters, word meanings, or objects. One character adds to our understanding of, or provides a missing component of, another character; one word can have two different meanings; one object reinforces our perception of another object.

Today, we will look at the “doubling” in this story. Each group will look at a pair and determine the similarities and differences in that pair. The group will also determine the effect of the doubling. The group will report its findings to the entire class at the conclusion of the group work. Each student will be responsible for taking notes on all the group reports.

Group 1 - How do Roderick and Madeline complete one another?

Group 2 - What are the similarities of Roderick and the house? (Do not consider the poem.)

Group 3 - By the end of the story, how are Roderick and the narrator similar? (Consider the epigraph.)

Group 4 - In what ways is the poem similar to Roderick’s mind?

Group 5 - The tarn mirrors the house. Explain how it also isolates it.

Model for the Development of ELA Instructional Units

PURPOSE

The instructional units that are included in *Closing the Gap — Teacher to Teacher* will be helpful to many teachers and administrators as they continually assess the content and instructional strategies of their English language arts programs. Some schools will decide that they can adopt an instructional unit just as it is presented in *Closing the Gap* because it fits well into their overall curriculum. Other schools have instructional units in place that just need to be modified in order to be better aligned with the State standards. Some ELA staff will want to develop new instructional units.

This model for the development of instructional units outlines a process that schools may find helpful. The process can be modified to suit individual needs.

INSTRUCTIONAL UNITS DEFINE ELA CURRICULUM AND ARE IMPORTANT TO:

- Ensure that all students meet the ELA standards and can be successful on the ELA assessments.
- Ensure that all students are exposed to and involved in the full range of language purposes; i.e. the activities of reading, writing, speaking, and listening for information, literary response, critical analysis, and social interaction.
- Ensure continuity and progression within and across grade levels.
- Provide an opportunity to analyze the learning needs of students based on available data.
- Build a body of learning experiences that can be shared with colleagues, both new to the profession and experienced.
- Provide an opportunity to reflect on practice.

HOW TO BEGIN

• STANDARDS, ASSESSMENTS, CORE CURRICULUM

It is important that all those involved in the curriculum development process be confident in their understanding of the New York State ELA standards, the NYS ELA core curriculum, and the New York State ELA assessments and scoring rubrics. The process of developing curriculum will also enable delving into the standards and the core curriculum as teachers work to justify the reasons for including the learning activities proposed.

• SELF-ASSESSMENT

Conduct an assessment of your ELA program to determine where the strengths are and where the biggest gaps exist. Both teachers and administrators should be involved in this activity. You might give particular attention to:

- ◆ Multiple measures of student assessment data, including state assessments, other standardized assessments, school-based assessments, and classroom-based assessments, to determine areas of greatest need
- ◆ Current curriculum materials to determine if all ELA standards and core competencies are addressed, including a review of what is taught, what strategies are used, and how much time is devoted to each standard. See “Using the ELA Standards to Strengthen Local Curricula” at the end of this unit for guiding questions
- ◆ Strategies used to assess student achievement at the school and classroom levels
- ◆ Assessment of available resources in the school and community, including people, texts, films, videotapes, technology, libraries, museums, etc.

- **EFFECTIVE PRACTICE**

Discuss effective practices. This step might be based on:

- ◆ reading and discussing current professional literature
- ◆ sharing successful practices that teachers have used in their own classrooms
- ◆ reviewing the instructional units and editor's comments in *Closing the Gap*
- ◆ checking "Best Practice: What Research Tells Us" at the end of this model
- ◆ checking Web sites such as the New York State Academy for Teaching and Learning (www.nysatl.nysed.gov) and Sharing Success (www.sharingsuccess.org).

- **COURSE ORGANIZATION**

Think about the way that you want to structure the curriculum for the year and how it fits into a school-level plan for ELA. Will the English course be organized around genres, thematic units, cultures, historical periods, nations, or another organizing principle?

The *Preliminary Draft Framework for English Language Arts* (1994, New York State Education Department, p. 42) also highlights the importance of sequence and connections in organizing curriculum:

At the same time as it strikes a balance among the standards, the curriculum that emerges should set a plausible sequence so that students have a chance to acquire knowledge, develop skills, and develop good learning habits. This sequence may take a distinct shape for individual schools or even programs within schools. In some instances, an historical sequence for the study of language and literature may be appropriate, particularly if the planners in a school believe that historical connections are important. There are other possible links that may help students understand the variety of connections. Each of these has proved useful in the English language arts curriculum for shaping a unit or a year of study:

- Cultural or Geographic: Focuses on groups and places;
- Genres and Types: Focuses on the formal and structural elements of language;
- Skill Area: Focuses on one skill area at a time (e.g., speaking or viewing);
- Technology: Focuses on particular ways of processing language, such as the computer or the television camera;
- Local-Global: Focuses on the school and its environment and moves out into the world;
- Thematic or Topical: Focuses on a particular unifying theme such as heroes or the environment;
- Functional: Focuses on one of the uses of language, such as the social or the informational.

Each of these organizations, as well as combinations of several, has proved successful in various schools; teachers and planners are urged to follow the sequence that makes the most sense for their situation.

**AN
INSTRUCTIONAL
UNIT FORMAT
(see attached)**

- **WHAT AND WHO**

Decide on the focus of the instructional unit you will develop and who will be involved in the process. This decision should be based on all the conversations you have had about data, standards, best practices, and the overall organization of the year. You may decide to develop a new instructional unit that has never been included in the curriculum before, or your data analysis may suggest that you have potentially strong units that could benefit from revisions and additions. You may decide that you want to include teachers from another content area in the group. This is especially helpful when the unit has an interdisciplinary focus.

- **RESOURCES**

Gather all the resources that you think you will need to have available during the process of writing an instructional unit. This may include the texts and electronic media you will use, samples of state assessments and scoring rubrics, the *English Language Arts Resource Guide with Core Curriculum*, and the *Learning Standards for English Language Arts*.

The instructional unit format included in this model evolved from a variety of resources, including the learning experience outline from the NYS Academy for Teaching and Learning, and from models developed by New York State teachers. It is the model that teachers used in the *Closing the Gap—Teacher to Teacher* project. The format includes the following components:

- **INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT COVER SHEET**

- ◆ Unit title
- ◆ ELA standards addressed
- ◆ Learning objectives for the instructional unit (students will be able to . . .)
- ◆ Literary elements/devices emphasized and taught
- ◆ Literary elements/devices reinforced
- ◆ Resources (primary and supplementary)
- ◆ New York State ELA assessment tasks reinforced during this unit

- **INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT TEMPLATE**

This template is divided into three columns:

- ◆ **STANDARDS:** In this column, indicate the standard, the mode of language (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and the core competencies from the *English Language Arts Resource Guide with Core Curriculum* for each of the learning activities.
- ◆ **LEARNING ACTIVITIES:** In this column describe the day-by-day activities of teachers and students, and the interactions among and between them. Procedures used to accommodate diverse student needs, including the needs of students with disabilities and limited English proficiency, should be included.
- ◆ **ASSESSMENT:** In this column describe:
 - The manner in which students are involved in developing assessment criteria, maintaining awareness of their progress and reflecting on their work
 - The techniques used to collect evidence of student progress toward meeting the learning standards (e.g., observations, group discussions, student work)
 - The tools used to document student progress (e.g., rubrics, scoring guides, rating scales, checklists).

WRITING THE INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT

Follow the format described above, using the attached template. Although modifications to the format are certainly acceptable, we encourage you to include all of the components included in the template. During the *Closing the Gap—Teacher to Teacher* project, teachers indicated that they learned a great deal by using all the components of this format.

• INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES AND STANDARDS

Once you have identified the focus of your unit, brainstorm with your colleagues about:

- ◆ Available resources
- ◆ Learning objectives
- ◆ Standards and competencies you want to address
- ◆ Literary elements that you will reinforce or emphasize
- ◆ Strategies you want to use

Keep in mind the characteristics of good practice that you identified early in the process. You can then start to write out your day-by-day activities. Build in, if you wish, opportunities to make decisions with your students.

For each activity, it is important to identify the standard and the core competency that is addressed. Refer to the *English Language Arts Resource Guide with Core Curriculum*. By identifying the standards and core competencies for each instructional unit, you will ultimately be able to see if all the standards and competencies are addressed sufficiently over the course of the year.

The degree of specificity in the description of learning activities will vary. What you write, however, should contain enough detail to be useful to teachers who are not involved in the development process, including new teachers. If you look at the learning activities in the *Closing the Gap —Teacher to Teacher* installments, you will see varying approaches and varying degrees of detail despite the use of the same template.

• ASSESSMENT

As you think about each learning activity, think about how you will measure whether a student has been successful. Students need ongoing feedback, and teachers need information on which to base their instruction.

Assessment runs the gamut from grading tests and formal writing assignments to taking notes on a seating chart, joining in on a small group, or conducting a conference. The assessment column is included in the template because it is important to make conscious decisions about the best ways to assess student progress. You may also want to include strategies that help students to be successful on the New York State ELA assessments.

As you think about assessment, keep in mind the five qualities on the New York State scoring rubrics:

- ◆ Meaning: the extent to which the response exhibits sound understanding, interpretation, and analysis of the task and text(s)
- ◆ Development: the extent to which ideas are elaborated using specific and relevant evidence from the document(s)
- ◆ Organization: the extent to which the response exhibits direction, shape, and coherence
- ◆ Language Use: the extent to which the response reveals an awareness of audience and purpose through effective use of words, sentence structure, and sentence variety
- ◆ Conventions: the extent to which the response exhibits conventional spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, capitalization, grammar, and usage.

THE IMPORTANCE OF REFLECTION

After you have written two or three days' worth of learning activities, stop and ask a colleague to read what you have recorded and discuss:

- What learning activities do you think will work well?
- What needs clarification?
- Are the standards and core competencies cited accurate?
- Are there standards and core competencies that should be addressed in this unit but are not included? If so, how can they be included?
- Are the assessment strategies appropriate?
- Are the principles of effective instructional strategies reflected in the unit?

It is important that there be opportunities for reflection and revision at several points in the instructional unit development process. Taking time for reflection will result in stronger products, as well as provide the opportunity for collegial work and professional development for the participants.

SHARING THE PRODUCT

Developing strong instructional units that help students to achieve the NYS learning standards in ELA and be successful on the New York State ELA assessments is both challenging and rewarding work. If a small group of teachers is writing an instructional unit that will be used by other colleagues, it is important to think about how this work will be shared with them. Share both the product and what you have learned during the process.

EVALUATION

It is also important to consider how you will evaluate the effectiveness of what you have written and how you will modify it as necessary. Consider the content, the instructional strategies, and the assessments in this evaluation. Be sure that plans for evaluation and follow-up are determined before you conclude the instructional unit development process. Evaluation activities can be included in district professional development plans.

CELEBRATION

Plan ahead of time to celebrate your hard work, your product, and the joy of working with your colleagues!

ATTACHMENTS

- Templates:
 - ◆ Instructional Unit Cover Sheet
 - ◆ Instructional Unit Template
- Using the ELA Standards to Strengthen Local Curriculum
- Best Practice: What Research Tells Us

NOTE: Although this model is included in a document for high school English programs, it may be useful at other grade levels and for other content areas. Feel free to make modifications that will make it the most helpful to your curriculum development work.

Instructional Unit Cover Sheet

Unit Title:

ELA Standards Addressed:

- Standard 1—
- Standard 2—
- Standard 3—
- Standard 4—

Literary Elements/Devices Emphasized and Taught:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Learning Objectives for the Instructional Unit:
Students will be able to . . .

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Literary Elements/Devices Reinforced:

-
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-
-
-
-
-

Resources (Primary and Supplementary):

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

New York State Assessment Tasks Reinforced in this Unit:

-
-
-
-

Instructional Unit Template

STANDARDS/CORE COMPETENCIES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	ASSESSMENT

Using the ELA Standards to Strengthen Local Curriculum*

Locally developed procedures for raising student achievement and improving professional practice are most effective if they are initiated by those involved in implementation, developed in a culture of shared inquiry, and focused on a common mission that integrates local priorities with State policies and purposes. Thus, the following suggestions are intended not as steps to curriculum development but as possibilities for using the standards to examine continuity of teaching and learning across the grades. The first column indicates some traditional areas of concern; the second column lists some questions prompted by the standards for staff members to use in discussing those concerns.

<i>Concern</i>	<i>Guiding Questions</i>
The literature program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For each language function addressed by the standards (informational, literary, critical, social), what specific texts and listening/viewing experiences are required of students? • Which of those texts and experiences could be considered exemplars of their genres? • To what extent is the range of genres referred to in the standards reflected in the program? • What areas of omission and/or duplication need to be addressed?
Written work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What specific opportunities do students have for writing in the forms and modes associated with each standard? • What opportunities do students have for a) assigned writing, b) writing to learn activities, and c) self-sponsored writing? • What areas of omission or duplication (for the previous two questions) need to be addressed? • To what extent do expectations for written work meet the level of rigor suggested by the standards at the elementary, intermediate, and commencement levels?
Listening and speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What specific opportunities do students have for speaking in the forms and modes associated with each standard? • What opportunities do students have for a) informal, school-related conversation, b) small group and individual discussion, and c) formal presentations and debates? • What areas of omission or duplication (for the previous two questions) need to be addressed? • To what extent do expectations for spoken work meet the level of rigor suggested by the standards at the elementary, intermediate, and commencement levels?

Instructional strategies

- What strategies are needed to help students be successful in reading, writing, listening, and speaking for the four purposes addressed by the standards?
- For student activities repeated in successive grades (e.g., research reports, response journals, literature discussions) how are students encouraged to address those activities in increasingly complex ways?
- What strategies and techniques can encourage students' language proficiency along the dimensions of range, independence, flexibility, connections, and control over the conventions?
- What is done to make students aware of these dimensions?

Interdisciplinary teaching and learning

- Do students have frequent opportunities to read, write, listen, and speak for all four purposes in every content area?
- What literary forms and genres do students read in their content-area classes?
- What are students who are encouraged to write and talk about content-area concepts learning about the concepts?
- What are students who are encouraged to write and talk about content-area concepts learning about language?

Assessment practices

- For each language purpose addressed by the Standards, what specific products or performances are assigned to assess students' language abilities?
- To what extent do these products and performances assess progress toward the behaviors listed in the Standards?
- Using the dimensions of growth as indicators of increasing proficiency, what evidence of growth in each of these areas is revealed in these assignments?
- To what extent do the State assessments for English language arts assess progress toward achievement of the Standards and complement the school's required products and performances?
- How should the requirements and results of local and State assessments be conveyed to students, parents, and the community?
- How can the results of State and local assessments be used to strengthen local curriculum and instruction?

Best Practice: What Research Tells Us*

Research that both informs and is informed by practice can have a powerful effect on teaching and learning. The following factors have been consistently identified in the professional literature as having a positive influence on achievement in English language arts and are therefore likely to foster achievement of the learning standards.

■ **Extensive reading**

Extensive reading of material of many kinds, both in school and outside, results in substantial growth in the vocabulary, comprehension abilities, and information base of students.

■ **Interactive learning**

Learning in which children and young people are involved in thinking about, writing about, and talking about their learning produces far more effective growth than instruction in which they are passive.

■ **Extension of background knowledge**

The more a reader knows about the topic of a text, the better the reader is able to construct meanings from the text.

■ **Instruction in reading and writing strategies**

When strategies spontaneously used by skilled readers and writers are intentionally taught to less skilled learners, those strategies contribute to improved reading comprehension and written composition.

■ **Integrated activities**

Organizing instruction into broad, theme-based clusters of work through which reading, writing, and speaking activities are interrelated promotes understanding of the connections among activities and ideas.

■ **Attention to skills**

Many children will not automatically acquire such basic skills as word attack or grammar without direct instruction. However, when children with reading problems receive skills-based instruction to the exclusion of ample opportunities to read for meaning, the development of both vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension suffers.

■ **Discussion and analysis**

Instruction that emphasizes discussion and analysis rather than rote memory contributes most effectively to development of students' thinking abilities.

■ **A range of literature**

Reading and reflecting on a range of traditional and nontraditional literary works of high quality can help young people learn about the ideas and values of their own and other cultures, as well as about the experiences of different groups.

■ **Emphasis on the writing process**

Devoting time to all the processes involved in composing (planning, drafting, sharing, revising, and publishing) contributes to improved competence in writing.

■ **Imaginative and informative language**

Programs that provide balanced attention to both imaginative and informative reading, writing, listening, and speaking promote competence in handling discourse of many kinds.

■ **Early intervention**

Carefully designed early intervention can produce significant long-term improvement in reading and writing. However, research warns against extensively isolating children for remedial instruction and highlights the need to provide extensive opportunities for children to read and write, rather than to practice skills in isolation.

■ **Appropriate assessment**

Assessment that focuses on what is being taught in a school's curriculum and on the modes of instruction used in the curriculum promotes learners' growth toward curricular goals. It follows that alignment between curriculum and assessment must begin with goals that are central to the purposes for schooling.

