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Grace Carroll Zimmermann
University of South Carolina - Columbia

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Incorporating Study Abroad Experiences into the High School Classroom

Using Practices Informed by Cognitive Research

Grace Zimmermann
Introduction

As part of my major in English and cognate in Education, I was required to take a course titled “Educational Psychology” (EDPY 401). This course had a practicum component where I would spend time in a high school to examine aspects of educational philosophy that were present in the academic content of the course overall. EDPY 401 was to be taken by any students wishing to teach at any level K-12. It is one of the few opportunities where future educators of all levels were expected to gain something from a generalized instruction. As a result, all of these future educators benefit from learning about how students learn at different points in their lives. With aging, the brain changes, and as a class, we were able to delve into the scientific understandings of the physical changes in the brain that lead to changes in learning over time. My personal focus is high school students, but I learned about the various impacts that would affect the students in my classroom. I learned about memory, motivation, epigenetics, and language acquisition, all of which would continue to affect my students even after the primary effects had been felt.

In EDPY 401, I was able to further examine the impact that teachers have upon students inside and outside of the classroom. I learned about different theories of learning like the Information-Processing theory and Behaviorism, and an underlying emphasis of the class was the importance of substantiated, scientific methods and results. The class learned about how our brains retain information and how individuals can think about their own thinking (referred to as meta-cognition). From this base, the class dove into the physical features of the brain that facilitate learning. For example, we learned about the hippocampus, which is a part of the brain that is responsible for the storage of memory, and it is located directly next to the part of the brain that triggers emotions such as fear and stress called the amygdala (Bohlin, Durwin, and
Another important biological aspect of learning is the development of the frontal lobe, which is responsible for decision-making, attention, the working memory, and coordination (ibid. 103). The class’s textbook was supplemented with articles published by modern researchers who were investigating how humans learn best and what anomalies can happen in a classroom.

One of the first articles that the class was assigned to read was entitled “Technology or Craft: What Are We Doing?” (1998) by Richard Clark and Fred Estes. In this piece, the authors propose that a great deal of what happens in the classroom is based on craft. That is to say, the successful practices that teachers use to engage students, to help students learn, to convey information, and to assess the information are successful in that specific context, with those specific students. When other teachers try to use those same practices in their classrooms, the results vary. If teachers were using a thoroughly researched and scientifically proven method, known as technology, instead of using craft, the amount of success would be clear. In order to develop more technological remedies to classroom challenges, more teachers need to become teacher researchers. Many are hesitant to do so because it takes a significantly longer period of time to establish a technological solution than a craft solution, and teachers need solutions for countless problems each day. Additionally, there is a mentality that research oversimplifies the complexities of the teaching profession. Research is oftentimes thought of as removed from the quotidian events that take place in a classroom. Teachers hesitate to incorporate research in their classrooms because they fear it will be inutile when confronted with the realities of the classroom. As a result, teachers continue employing methods that have varying rates of success without furthering the profession into an age where universal application and success is now a feasible ideal.
Later in my educational career, I took a class entitled “Teaching Middle and High School English” (EDSE 547) during which I learned about creating lesson plans for reading, writing, and speaking. Over the course of the semester, the class examined different ways to make fiction, poetry, theater, and nonfiction engaging in the classroom by pairing classic texts with modern ones. Part of the class was devoted to establishing the importance of choice in the classroom—choice in assessment and content. In providing opportunities for students to exhibit their personal preferences, they become more involved in their education, which will affect classroom dynamic and the quality of their work. The class learned about various modes of evaluating student work using multiple means of evaluation to fairly assess student learning and effort. These evaluations and lessons were constructed to abide and fulfill the English Language Arts Standards for South Carolina, which is the set of standards that South Carolina uses instead of the Common Core. As the final project for the course, each student was to create a Unit Plan (a group of six lessons) that could be used in a high school classroom. The Unit Plan had to have one central piece that was a classic, canonical text. This central text must be paired with modern texts in order to maintain student interest. Additionally, accommodations were to be made for students who have different emotional and physical limitations that could affect their ability to perform optimally in the classroom.

For my Senior Thesis, I wanted to incorporate canonical literature from the places where I had studied abroad during my time as an Undergraduate at the University of South Carolina. These are pieces that are of a high level of rigor, and I wanted to pair them with modern texts, so students would be able to understand the themes and advance their abilities to understand complex texts. The Unit Plan was written with an “At Risk” population in mind, so students who are statistically more likely to drop out of high school before receiving their diploma might
also benefit from an education that is simultaneously engaging, relevant, and rigorous. In each lesson, I attempt to promote student choice and emotional connection to the literary pieces by employing technology based solutions. Thus, it is my goal to motivate students to learn about different parts of the world, while furthering their ability to think critically in a variety of contexts.

Selection of Core Texts

For this Unit Plan, I decided to utilize three core texts from whose themes I would incorporate others secondary texts, one for each country where I studied abroad. The overarching theme of the Unit Plan includes the ideas of liberation, revolution, and agency. The three core texts contain these ideas, and two of the three core texts are excerpts from longer texts. Should the students show interest in the core texts, they will have the opportunity to further their learning by reading more of these texts. The French text is an excerpt of *The Social Contract* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and I have entitled it “The Social Compact.” In this text, Rousseau delineates the rights that a person is expected to forfeit in order to participate in a perfect society. The Italian text is Cantos Thirty-Two through Thirty-Four of Dante Alighieri’s *Inferno*, which focuses on the Ninth Circle of Hell, which is reserved for those who betray others, including those who commit treason against their country. The third text comes from Ireland and was co-written by Lady August Gregory and William Yeats entitled “Cathleen Ni Houlihan.” This text emphasizes the theme of national loyalty at personal cost. Each text received a lesson devoted to furthering comprehension and critical thinking involving the text, and one lesson puts all three pieces in conversation with each other to promote understanding of the themes that apply to them all.
In my lessons, I pair these texts with other texts that contain the same theme, even if these texts use a different medium. In doing so, I hope to promote skills that will help students better understand these core texts. As explained by Joshua Cuevas in his article “An examination of the effect of customized reading modules on diverse secondary students’ reading comprehension and motivation” published in 2012, “four factors widely believed to be essential to improving reading comprehension in adolescents and adults: (1) improving vocabulary; (2) prior knowledge and background information; (3) inferencing and prediction; (4) and cognitive and metacognitive strategies” (447). To substantiate this claim, Cuevas cites a plethora of scientific studies: Alfassi 2004, Beck et al. 1982, Connor et al. 2004, Cromley and Azevedo 2007, Leone et al. 2005, Nelson and Stage 2007, Ouellette 2006, Joshi 2005, Marzano 2004, Merriam et al. 2007, Tracey and Morrow 2006, Cromley and Azevedo 2007, Dewitz and Dewitz 2003, Dinnel and Glover 1985, Guthrie et al. 1999, Kozminsly and Kozminsly 2001, Allbritton 2004, Dewitz and Dewitz 2003, Hock and Mellard 2005, Thiede et al. 2003, and Dunlosky and Lipko 2007 (Cuevas 447-8). The lessons of this unit reflect the findings of these studied because they are crafted to incorporate new diverse vocabulary; students are frontloaded with relevant information; students are encouraged to approach the texts inquisitively; and new modes of perspective taking are integral to the lessons’ success. These “four factors” that facilitate improvement in comprehension are heavily relied upon for the incorporation of these difficult and rigorous core texts.

Secondary Text Selections

All of the secondary texts that were selected as possible means of furthering student understanding of the themes addressed over the course of the unit were selected based on their
ability to appeal to students who have different interests. These texts have various types of intrigues that push the plot forward, and they are written for varying reading levels, so all students have a piece with which they will be able to engage fully. Because the particular reading selection will be determined in part by student interest, the students will be able to partake in a reading that they have generated interest in, rather than being told what they must read without having any input. It is hoped that by providing students some agency in their reading assignment and project associated with that reading, students would be more motivated to complete the tasks to the best of their ability; as Wigfield and Eccles explain in their article entitled “Expectancy–Value Theory of Achievement Motivation” that, “individuals’ choice, persistence, and performance can be explained by their beliefs about how well they will do on the activity and the extent to which they value the activity (Atkinson, 1957; Eccles et al., 1983; Wigfield, 1994; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992)” (68). By providing students the ability to choose a text that they have preference for, there is a greater likelihood that they will attribute value to the text and to the work they do from the text because they have expressed interest, which shows value. It then becomes the teacher’s task to instill a sense of self-efficacy in the student. A similar philosophy is explained by Nicole Mirra, Danielle Filipiak, and Antero Garcia in their article “Revolutionizing Inquiry in Urban English Classrooms: Pursuing Voice and Justice through Youth Participatory Action Research,” in which they discuss how using student interests when providing text selections and allowing independent research can help students think critically about a variety of texts:

Agency represents the power that derives from the pursuit of those questions that matter most to students… explore firsthand the nuances of issues that have a direct bearing on their lives. It is contextually bound, always in negotiation, and mediated by the histories,
social interactions, and cultures that young people’s identities are entangled within. We argue that agency cannot be framed as a competency then, but as a capacity to imagine and act upon the world. Central to this is the opening of spaces for students in their plurality, spaces where they can examine their relationships with each other, with texts, and with the world. (53)

The importance of student interests in the classroom now is less emphasized than the standards that the lessons must accomplish, but as Eccles and Wigfield posit in their article “Motivational Beliefs, Values, And Goals” published in 2002, “interest is more strongly related to indicators of deep-level learning (e.g., recall of main ideas, coherence of recall, responding to deeper comprehension questions, representation of meaning) than to surface-level learning (e.g., responding to simple questions, verbatim representation of text) (Schiefele 1999)” (115). In order to simultaneously meet the standards and engage students, I have chosen to employ text sets, which pair canonical texts (the core texts) with Young Adult novels and other forms of more modern fiction. As Laurie Elish-Piper, Linda S. Wold, and Kathy Schwingendorf state in their article “Scaffolding High School Students’ Reading of Complex Texts Using Linked Text Sets,” “Linked text sets address the Common Core’s expectation that students read multiple texts on similar topics or themes to develop their skills related to key ideas and details (RL9-10.1, 2, and 3), craft and structure (RL9-10.4 and 5), and integration of knowledge and ideas (RL9-10.7 and 9)” (567). They state that using “texts that link to [students’] lived experiences” can connect with students in a meaningful way, all the while “scaffolding toward more complex texts, including pieces from the canon” (568).

Tim Urdan and Erin Schoenfelder published an article in a 2006 edition of The Journal of Psychology entitled “Classroom effects on student motivation: Goal structures, social
relationships, and competence beliefs,” in which they address the importance of engaging students based on their needs and interests. If teachers are able to combine students’ needs for social interaction with classroom learning, the students’ efforts in the classroom will benefit positively from the combination. Students’ interests outside of the classroom can help them engage in the lessons; “the learning students are emboldened to do outside of schools can mirror and enhance the learning opportunities we create within our classrooms through projects that authentically address real-world issues and are published in public spaces” (Mirra, Filipiak, and Garcia 54). The unit theme of freedoms, privileges, rebellion, and revolution affect students each day, and it is my hope that by engaging with these themes, students might be able to think critically about what challenges they face and what limits are imposed on them each day.

A role of the teacher in this setting of motivating students to be engaged with the lessons would be to help facilitate learning by helping students feel capable of completing each task. When students feel capable of completing a task, they are more willing to put forth the effort to complete the task to the best of their ability. Should the students feel there is no chance of success, they can become overwhelmed and underperform because there seems to be no reason to put forth the effort when failure is inevitable. This creates unmotivated students in the classroom, which can contribute to individual failure as well as classroom management problems, which would affect the class dynamic as a whole. These kinds of issues can often be found in “at risk” communities because the education that students receive in the classroom frequently does not have a connection to the lives that they lead, so they are not invested in the process of learning. Additionally, students can feel that even if they succeed, nothing will come of that success, so they do not put the effort forth.
As a result, I have tried to create lessons that make these core texts approachable, use themes that relate to the teenage experience, and provide outlets for individual preference and expression. Each of these lessons provide the opportunities to incorporate methods of instruction that have been scientifically tested and are proven to be sound for the acquisition and implementation of acquired knowledge. A great deal of learning and memory are related to the emotions that are associated with the material that is being learned; it would then be logical that teachers attempt to create an environment that is conducive to learning in a low-stakes, non-stressful setting and gradually adding more weight and stress once students have been given a chance to succeed. Many classrooms employ this method of thinking, and perhaps if this information is shared with the class, they might also be able to view the unit as if it were a piece of music that has crescendos and decrescendos over its span.

The Lessons

As an overarching theme to my lessons, I have attempted to prime students for learning by providing them with more structure at the beginning of the unit, frontloading them with the information they will need to have success. Using the Four-Component Instructional Design (4C/ID) as a base for these lessons, I am applying these ideals to help promote genuine learning. Jeroen J. G. van Merriënboer and Dominique M. A. Sluijsmans explain the merits of such a system in their article “Toward a Synthesis of Cognitive Load Theory, Four-Component Instructional Design, and Self-Directed Learning:”

As learners acquire more expertise, support and guidance is gradually decreased until learners are able to perform the learning tasks independently, without any support or guidance. Then, learners may continue with the performance of more difficult tasks (i.e.,
a next task class), for which they initially receive a high level of support and guidance again. In the context of cognitive load theory and 4C/ID, the completion strategy is probably the most familiar example of a highly effective fading-guidance strategy… In this strategy, three phases are distinguished. In the first stage, the learning tasks take the form of worked examples the learners must study or analyze. In the second stage, learning tasks take the form of completion tasks with increasingly more incomplete solutions that learners must finish. Only in the final stage are conventional tasks used for which learners must independently generate solutions. (58)

There are those in the field of education that think having students have completely unguided learning would be best because it would be driven entirely by student interest. Kirschener Sweller, and Clark disagree, stating “Not only is unguided instruction normally less effective [than structured instruction]; there is also evidence that it may have negative results when students acquire misconceptions or incomplete or disorganized knowledge” in their article “Why Minimal Guidance During Instruction Does Not Work: An Analysis of the Failure of Constructivist, Discovery, Problem-Based, Experiential, and Inquiry-Based Teaching” published in 2006 (84). I hoped to combine these two modes of thinking by providing opportunities for students to express their own personal interests over the course of the unit, while maintaining a structure and goals for students to meet.

In the first lesson entitled “Revolution or Terrorism?” (Appendix A), students are encouraged to think about the world from multiple perspectives, specifically by defining terms like “terrorism” and “revolutionary.” Students will create their own definitions and examples, share them with their peers, and reflect on the differences that are present. They will then take these definitions and use them in different contexts informed by other informational texts. The
texts that I have chosen to use in this lesson are nonfiction, but they are not the typical nonfiction texts, so it is unlikely that the students will have read them before. The creation and application aspects of this lesson were conceived in line with the ideal of Constructivism as defined by Sjøberg in 2007:

1. Knowledge is actively constructed by the learner, not passively received from the outside. Learning is something done by the learner, not something that is imposed on the learner.

2. Learners come to the learning situation (in science etc.) with existing ideas about many phenomena. Some of these ideas are ad hoc and unstable; others are more deeply rooted and well developed.

3. Learner has their own individual ideas about the world, but there are also many similarities and common patterns in their ideas. Some of these ideas are socially and culturally accepted and shared, and they are often part of the language, supported by metaphors etc. They also often function well as tools to understand many phenomena.

4. These ideas are often at odds with accepted scientific ideas, and some of them may be persistent and hard to change.

5. Knowledge is represented in the brain as conceptual structures, and it is possible to model and describe these in some detail.

6. Teaching has to take the learner's existing ideas seriously if they want to change or challenge these.

7. Although knowledge in one sense is personal and individual, the learners construct their knowledge through their interaction with the physical world, collaboratively in social settings and in a cultural and linguistic environment. (The relative stress on such
factors account for the different 'versions' of constructivism earlier alluded to.) (Sjøberg 3).

In this lesson, students have a forum in which they can process their own ideas and use the community of the classroom as a sounding board for their beliefs. While they might not consciously be aware of the opinions they have formed, the classroom will act as a place where they can air their views, refine their opinions, and engage in conversation about something that would be more engaging than if they were assigned one specific view or one belief to defend. The activities included in this lesson are low-stakes, and students who do not have the same pre-existing knowledge base about revolutionary or terrorist figures will have the opportunity to learn from their peers in addition to their teacher. Conversely, students who know a great deal about such individuals will benefit from hearing their peers’ opinions and interpretations. The lesson intentionally incorporates cross-curricular aspects to broaden accessibility for increased student interest and participation. Much of the opinion sharing is with one other individual, which would encourage students who would be intimidated by sharing with the class as a whole.

The second lesson, “Mother Ireland and Her Sons” (Appendix B), focuses on the core text Cathleen Ni Houlihan. The lesson is devoted in large part to an activity where students will be working with others to create an image that they feel quintessentially represents the play. The groups will present their poses and then they will state why they chose a particular pose. The teacher will facilitate a discussion about the types of imagery used in the presentation, the emotions that the students are attempting to portray, and provide feedback to the performers. Students will also have to understand and summarize one other groups’ presentation for credit. Over the course of this lesson, students will have to socialize their learning in formulating a group plan. Additionally, they will further develop an understanding of the emotions present in
the play, which could help them form a connection with the piece. The connection would help students learn the material covered and understand at least the plot, but perhaps also the imagery, figurative language, and allusions used. Immordino-Yang and Damasio in an article published in 2007 state:

[N]either learning nor recall happen in a purely rational domain, divorced from emotion, even though some of our knowledge will eventually distill into a moderately rational, unemotional form. Second, in teaching students to minimize the emotional aspects of their academic curriculum and function as much as possible in the rational domain, educators may be encouraging students to develop the sorts of knowledge that inherently do not transfer well to real-world situations. (9)

In “Mother Ireland and Her Sons,” students are asked to sympathize with the characters and the situation to construct their image, and from this image, they are able to assess the emotions, stakes, and stakeholders in a situation that could relate to them in a more personal way than simply analyzing the text and performing a scene once. Because knowledge acquisition is tied intimately with recall, it is important to be able to establish emotional bonds with the literature discussed in order for it to have relevance to students inside and outside the classroom.

In the third lesson (Appendix C), the importance of an excerpt of *The Social Contract* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau is analyzed using multiple modes of interpretation and understanding. This lesson is entitled “Making a Social Compact,” and in it, the teacher would use one song, its lyrics, and the core text to guide discussion. The text would also be used for a popcorn lecture about public speaking. This particular concept was brought to my attention during a presentation at the South Carolina Council of Teachers of English Annual Conference this year. The speaker, Erik Palmer, underlined how students are expected to speak well, but rarely is it explained how
one achieves that level of proficiency with public speaking. Traditionally, the idea of speaking before others can make students nervous and uncomfortable, which could be very damaging to students. Christina Hinton, Koji Miyamoto and Bruno Della-Chiesa illustrate the potential negative consequences of asking students to perform a skill that they are uncomfortable with in their 2008 article entitled “Brain Research, Learning and Emotions: implications for education research, policy and practice”:

Patricia, a high school student, struggles with mathematics. The last few times she answered a mathematics question she got it wrong and felt terribly embarrassed, which formed an association between mathematics (CS) and negative emotions (US). Her teacher had just asked her to come to the blackboard to solve a problem. This caused an immediate transfer of this emotionally-charged association to the amygdala, which elicits fear. Meanwhile, a slower, cortically-driven cognitive appraisal of the situation is occurring: she remembers her difficulty completing her mathematics homework last night, notices the problem on the board contains complicated graphs, and realizes that the boy she has a crush on is watching her from a front-row seat. These various thoughts converge to a cognitive confirmation that this is a threatening situation, which reinforces her progressing fear response and disrupts her ability to concentrate on solving the mathematics problem. (91)

To prevent a similar situation from happening during this popcorn lecture on public speaking, the teacher would first model the skill that the students will perform. By asking for volunteers to participate afterwards, students will not have the same kind of pressure to perform that Patricia had because participation is optional and if a student feels uncomfortable with the expectation at that moment in time, they do not have to perform. Students will be able to apply this skill in all
of their classes, and it has relevance outside of the classroom as well. The popcorn lecture would be framed in order to convey that anyone can become a good speaker because good speaking is a skill that is practiced and refined—not something innate. David Paige and Theresa Magpuri-Lavell write that “Because too much of the student’s attention is devoted to just reading the words, little is left over to consider what the text means. Thus, fluent reading is critical because it allows the reader to pivot their attention from decoding processes to understanding” in their article “Reading Fluency in the Middle and Secondary Grades” that was published in 2014. By incorporating reading skills and discussion, I hope to elevate student thinking from simply speaking the words to understanding their meaning and how the meaning is malleable based on inflection.

“Poetics in the Inferno’s Canto 32,” the fourth lesson (Appendix D), incorporates specific close reading skills with the expectation that students would be able to follow the models that are discussed during the in-class presentation. The students perhaps are uncomfortable with this particular diction, and it is very possible that they would have difficulty completing the assignment. While state standards dictate that all students have the appropriate grade-level reading skill, sometimes students who are struggling are not identified. In particular, I reflect on an example that was presented to me in Matusov, DePalma, and Drye’s article entitled “Whose Development?: Salvaging the Concept Of Development Within a Sociocultural Approach to Education,” in which they reference a young boy named Mike. Mike was tested for ADHD because he did not seem to be paying attention in class, but Matusov discovered that Mike’s lack of attention could stem from the fact that he had difficulty reading. Mike had such a difficult time, that Matusov suspects Mike could not read at all (415). Instead of providing the necessary instruction to help Mike obtain grade-level reading skills, Mike was given prescriptions to
manage his ADHD symptoms, and he was passed to the next grade level. Because my unit plan is geared towards high school honors students, students who come from similar backgrounds could be in my classroom, and this particular lesson would be incredibly challenging for such students. In understanding this, I have left extra time at the lesson, which can be incorporated to give more time to students who need it, and students can work in pairs on the assignment in order for students to work together and help each other. Should I see that any particular student is struggling, I would be able to provide them with resources that would help them, and further ascertain the level of their difficulty to assess whether or not the school’s literacy coach would need to be contacted.

In the fifth lesson, entitled “A Frenchman, an Italian, and an Irishman Walk Into a Classroom” (Appendix E), the class will be asked to apply different theories of literary criticism to the core texts that were covered over the course of the preceding weeks. They will be given specifics details about these various ways of interpreting texts, and in conjunction with other class members, they will try to create their own literary criticism that examines the texts of the unit. The lesson itself is crafted in such a manner that the emphasis is placed upon the practice applying these theories of literary criticism, not on the execution of these ideas. This lesson provides a platform for students to apply these theories and receive constructive feedback on how to support the claims they make in regards to interpretation of the theories themselves and of their application. Urdan and Shoenfelder explain this educational outlook as follows:

Mastery goals represent a concern with developing competence and skills, and are generally considered to be evaluated against internal norms (i.e., Have I learned? Have I improved?)… Research has found a generally positive constellation of correlates with mastery goals. For example, when pursuing such goals students generally persist longer
when faced with difficulty, are more willing to attempt difficult or challenging tasks, use more deep-level cognitive processing strategies, are more intrinsically motivated, and feel better about school and school work. (334)

I hope to employ this approach in my future classroom, and I wanted to imagine how such a practice would manifest in this unit plan. Because critical synthesis and literary theory are both difficult areas to master and oftentimes present a challenge to students, I wanted to incorporate them in the unit plan in a relatively low-stakes situation so students could practice the skill, receive feedback, and act upon that feedback the next class period. Because students work in groups, they are able to bounce ideas off of each other, and the teacher would be able to help guide student groups as needed. With lessons such as this, I hope to promote grittiness in my students that will help them overcome challenges they face and adapt to different circumstances.

“Writing Workshop,” the sixth lesson (Appendix F), helps students identify characteristics of strong writing style that they employ innately while speaking. The formal instruction about the pairings of dependent and independent clauses will help students convey their more complicated thoughts in such a manner that readers will be able to easily follow the author’s thoughts and repeated information can be eliminated from the paper. As a result, students’ sentences will develop varying syntax, from which they will continue to benefit as they mature. Students will receive feedback from the teacher and their peers over the course of the lesson. At the end of the lesson, the teacher will ask students if they feel comfortable adding dependent and independent clauses as a criterion on the rubric for the unit paper. Because students will have practiced this skill during the entire class period, alone and together, with others’ writing and their own writing, with feedback and in isolation, students will have a variety of means of understanding the concept. It is my hope that by bringing this to their attention, they
will feel more capable of performing the task well. The concept of understanding one’s own abilities is called self-efficacy, defined by Bandura in Christopher Walker, Barbara Greene, and Robert Mansell’s 2006 article “Identification with academics, intrinsic/extrinsic motivation, and self-efficacy as predictors of cognitive engagement” as “the belief that one is capable of successfully performing a particular task” (4). The authors continue, “many researchers have empirically demonstrated that the level of confidence a student has regarding his/her ability to succeed academically is related to the use of cognitive strategies that translate into higher academic performance and/or achievement” (ibid.). This idea resonated with what was discussed in the previous lesson; at this point in the unit, the class has surpassed the superficial understanding of the plot of the texts, and now, the focus shifts to application of knowledge. I want to instill in my students this self-efficacy and foster their own confidence in their abilities. Even if the concept does not immediately resonate with them, it is my hope that the variety of circumstance in which they will practice the acquired information will help them become stronger writers and problem solvers.

In the final lesson (Appendix G), students will incorporate the secondary text they have chosen to read and incorporate it into an academic discussion. In part, this will show how the interpretational methods learned in the class can apply to all mediums, and in part, the lesson aims to highlight that all forms of text can have merit and are worth discussing. The lesson aims to promote reading of all types, but particularly the types of reading that interest students. Sometimes students refuse to read a certain book because it will not serve them well in their studies, but perhaps if students were taught that all types of texts have merit, students would be less likely to limit themselves to one genre, one medium, one basic plot structure. This lesson provides opportunities to work alone and in conjunction with others, and students (and the
A teacher will be able to track the evolution of students’ ideologies based upon the worksheet given to the students at the onset of the class period. Feedback from peers and from the teacher drive the lesson, and students will be able to showcase their knowledge in a variety of formats, including presenting their ideas to the class, writing their ideas for evaluation, and discussing their ideas within their group. The use of group work in writing workshops when employing text sets can be helpful given each student will be writing on different texts, so groups will have exposure to a variety of ideas. As Dawan Coombs and Devery Bellingham explain in their article “Using Text Sets to Foster Critical Inquiry:”

Working in small groups put the responsibility on students to be involved in their own learning, and students felt a greater need to master the content because the final assessment required them to teach others. Also, because each group studied a different text set and topic, the class learned about a greater variety of ideas and increased the amount of information covered. In addition, looking at the articles as models of different ways to organize an informational text helped students learn how informational texts function and how they might organize their own. (90)

This lesson relies on thinking of new perspectives in regards to characters, plots, and themes, while taking into account the opinions of their peers, all of which have the potential to relate to students’ lives. As Suparna Choudhury, Sarah-Jayne Blakemore, and Tony Charman explain in their article entitled “Social cognitive development during adolescence,” published in 2006, “Perspective taking includes awareness of one’s own subjective space or mental states (‘first-person perspective’ or 1PP) and the ability to ascribe locations, mental states or emotions to another person (‘third-person perspective’ or 3PP)” (168). On the same page, the researchers state that the method of processing emotion during adolescence can be influenced by
environmental factors as well as genetic predispositions. This lesson acts as a means of mediating that emotional processing and perspective taking; by calling to mind the different stakeholders in fictional situations, the texts become a low-stakes means of understanding what could be a complicated problem. Students then look for similarities and differedenced among the core texts read and are able to respond to them personally and communally. The teacher has the ability to watch this progression and perhaps bring other points of view to the students’ attentions. Doing so would help the students mold their own pathway for understanding others and for processing their own emotions, which reinforces the researchers findings that “suggest that, prior to adolescence, children are less efficient and have a less systematic style of processing the emotional perspectives of other people” (171). The system that adolescents formulate could be influenced by classroom experiences, and this particular lesson is a good vehicle for such instruction.

**A Note on Accommodations**

Students will encounter unique challenges in the classroom based upon their own personalities, experiences, and heritages. It is my hope that the accommodations outlined in the online portfolio can be a space to start thinking about the nature of the challenges and some solutions that could be provided to students to help them succeed. Certainly, all of these ideas are subject to alterations based upon the students’ needs, but it is important when conceiving how a lesson will unfold in the classroom to consider how students of different demographics will be affected. While I do not believe that it is possible or beneficial to attempt to shelter students from ideas that are different than their own or to never challenge them academically, I do believe that doing so in an a manner where students feel affronted can cause more damage
than good. By encouraging students, helping them realize their own strengths, and building a classroom community, it is my hope that students from all backgrounds will feel valued, welcomed, and capable. In doing so, all students will have an equal opportunity to succeed in my classroom. Part of my philosophy of teaching is that equality in the level of education does not equate to sameness of education; students express their learning in different ways, and I want to provide an opportunity for all students to celebrate what they have learned.

**Influence of Personal Experiences Abroad**

While studying abroad in my undergraduate career, I read stories of places that I thought I knew and understood, but I was surprised to realize that I knew very little in comparison to the wealth of culture and tradition I experienced while in the country itself. Learning about the “Great Famine” in Ireland that caused an influx of Irish immigrants to the United States in an American History textbook is very different from reading about the “Great Hunger” in an Irish text where I learned of Irish citizens building roads for the British simply to get one meager meal a day, and I was struck by that staggering difference.

In selecting these particular texts, I hope to bring the world to students; I would be able to provide different perspectives on history that are not typically studied in the classroom. These lesser-known stories convey the same ideas but with more of a human element. There is a possibility that these texts could instill a global curiosity in my students, leading them to think like global citizens. Such a change would certainly increase their ability to think of new perspectives, and even if they cannot see the world in person, I hope to bring an aspect of that travel and experience to them.
Additionally, the unit’s theme aims to help students engage in the world around them, realizing their own agency within current society. Students might feel as if they are hemmed in by an immovable governing entity (family, school, local, state-wide, federal, etc.), and I hope to show them that they have the ability to create change. This makes the texts relevant to their lives, and they might be able to better assess their own values after thinking of these pieces in such a context.

Conclusion

In helping students become aware of their own rights, I hope to help them engage with the world around them in a way that is meaningful to them. Such engagement takes different forms depending on the student in question. In addition to this, my unit aims to aid students in the process of thinking critically about literature, the context of that literature, and the application of the themes of that literature to the modern day. One way to extend the significance of this unit would be to facilitate conversations of personal rights and freedoms, something that could be done informally or in conjunction with the history classes. During the unit, the students would practice skills that would facilitate such an open exchange of opinions in a respectful manner. The students would practice public speaking, writing, research, and analytical skills that will be of use to them regardless of the profession to which they decide to dedicate themselves.
Works Cited


Appendix A

Lesson Plan One

Subject: English II, CP
Class Duration: 55 minutes
Topic: Unit Introduction
Lesson Title: Revolution or Terrorism?

Objectives:
- Students will read and decipher the significance multiple informational texts (RI.4.1 & RI.5.1)
- Students will discuss with peers about the methods used in “When Silence is Betrayal” that make the piece impactful (RI.10.1 & C.1.2)
- Students will use what they have read and apply the lessons to their daily lives (RI.12.3)

Purpose:
In this lesson, students will be confronted with the idea that each conflict has multiple points of view. In cases where revolutionaries are trying to fight a perceived injustice, another party could consider these revolutionaries to be terrorists. Supporting one side or another becomes complicated, and individuals have to weigh the validity of points made by all parties in the conflict to confidently and justifiably support one party instead of another. These are skills that will help students make decisions currently, and hopefully, it will give them a reason to pause before joining a side in any sort of conflict.

Materials:
- “Day One” PowerPoint Presentation
- Computer and projector
- “Revolutionaries or Terrorists” handout (24 for everyone in the class)
- “When Silence is Betrayal” handout (24 for everyone in the class)
- 12 (2x11) slips of paper
- 1 poster board entitled “Standout Phrases from ‘When Silence is Betrayal’”

Procedure:

Enter (10 minutes)
- (4 minutes) When students enter the classroom, they will find a prompt (adapted from Milner 137-138 “Opinion Survey”) for a quick writing assignment projected on the board that will read:
  Please respond to the following questions as part of your classwork grade (write the question first and then respond). Your responses will be collected at the end of class:
  o How do you define the word “revolutionary’”?
  o Can you list some examples of revolutionary people or movements?
  o How do you define the word “terrorism’”?
  o What are some examples of terrorism?
- While the students work on responding to the questions, the teacher will mark absences.
- (4 minutes) The teacher will ask students to get into a group of three, pairing students based upon the numbers on their desks (1, 2, 3; 4, 5, 6; etc.) to discuss what they wrote down and try to answer the following questions which will be projected onto the screen:
  - What about our responses is similar?
  - What are the differences and why do these differences occur?
- Teacher will circulate room as students discuss and answer questions when applicable and warn students when they have a minute left to discuss.
- (2 minutes) Teacher will ask class to share their thoughts and answers.

**Explore (35 minutes)**

- (7 minutes) The teacher will pass out a copy of “Revolutionaries or Terrorists” to each student and instruct them to read along individually as (s)he reads the piece aloud.
- (2 minutes) The teacher will pause and ask students what about this piece stood out to them. Did they learn something new? Is there something they want to learn more about? (adapted from Milner 139 “Interrogative Reading”).
- (3 minutes) The teacher will explain “This kind of conversation is incredibly complex, even though it seems so simple at times. Part of what makes deciding if something is justified or not so difficult is that it changes all the time with different circumstances. A lot of the deciding factors are not clear cut, so what the people in power say and how they say it greatly influences whether or not they will receive support.”
- (1 minute) The teacher will continue “A great example of the importance of how things are worded is Martin Luther King Jr. As you know, he spoke out against racial discrimination and injustice, but he also addressed the American military involvement in Vietnam.”
- (7 minutes) The teacher will pass out copies of the “When Silence is Betrayal” handout and have students read it individually and underline the phrases that stick out to them as being powerful and emotional (adapted from Milner 136-137 “Focal Judgments”).
- (7 minutes) The teacher will pair student based on their desk number (1 with 24, 2 with 23, etc.) and instruct them to discuss why they chose their phrases with their partners, and at the end of the conversation, they will pick the phrase that they like best and write it on a slip of paper that they will be given.
- While passing out slips of paper, the teacher will circulate the room to help facilitate discussions and answer questions.
- (8 minutes) The teacher will ask students to rejoin the class as a whole to discuss the phrases that everyone chose, and the teacher will ask each group to put their quote up on the poster board and provide feedback to student responses.

**Extend (10 minutes)**

- (6 minutes) The teacher will ask students to write on the same sheet that they wrote on for their bellwork activity a response to the following prompt:
  - To my knowledge, none of us have the ability to engage in a war with another country. Can you think of a circumstance in everyday life where the principals of a “just war” might be applicable?
- The teacher will collect the students’ responses and ask if anyone came up with an example they are particularly proud of for a participation point.
Evaluation:

Enter
- Student responses to the bellwork prompt will count as 2 points in the Classwork grade.

Explore
- Students will be informally evaluated on their participation in their paired discussion.

Extend
- Student responses to the closing prompt will be noted as 2 points in the Classwork grade, and students who volunteer responses will receive 1 point towards their Participation grade.

*A note on grading:
There are 1000 points total each Unit:
- 600 for tests, quizzes, and projects (60%)
- 300 for Classwork/Homework (30%)
- 100 for Participation (10%)
Subject: English II, CP  
Class Duration: 55 minutes  
Topic: Irish Revolution  
Lesson Title: Mother Ireland and Her Sons

Objectives:
- Students will practice performance by portraying the meaning of the play after understanding the broader context the play has in Irish history (DL).
- Students will discuss and analyze the mode of presentation of the idea in the play affect the audience’s perception (C.3.1)
- Students will create their own version of Cathleen Ni Houlihan based on Lady Liberty (W.3 & W.4)

Purpose:
In this class period, students will be able to engage with a text written in part by one of Ireland’s most well-known authors and will be exposed to a country’s history with which they may not be particularly familiar. By asking them to take on the personas of the characters, student will be able to engage in the action of the play, take a critical role in it, and analyze the play’s impact on audience members. What is most significant about the lesson is its exposure of a time period seldom discussed in classrooms in the United States. This discussion could lead students to further question what has happened in the world as a whole, and what aspects of world history have been left out of the curriculum to make room for tested material.

Materials:
- Extra copies of the text for those who have forgotten this class (6 copies)
- Computer and projector
- “Mother Ireland and her sons” presentation
- “What is a Picture Worth” handout (12 copies cut in half) adapted from Milner 144

Procedure:

Enter (10 minutes)
- (3 minutes) Students will enter into the classroom and submit their homework assignment. As this happens, the teacher will take role.
- (1 minute) Once all students are seated, the teacher will explain that the sport the characters are discussing at the beginning of the play is a sport that is traditionally Irish, played even today by individuals who are not paid professional sports players.
- (3 minutes) The teacher will play the video clip embedded in the presentation for students to watch and enjoy.
The teacher will ask students if they have heard of the sport before and if they think it looks like fun. The teacher will continue that playing the sport is a way of keeping an Irish tradition alive and helps define the culture in a way similar to Cathleen Ni Houlihan.

*Explore (35 minutes)*
- (4 minutes) The teacher will hand each student a “What is a Picture Worth?” Handout, explain directions, and divide students into groups of four using the count off system (asking students to count off 1-6).
- (1 minute) The teacher will ask if students have any questions before they get started brainstorming.
- (10 minutes) The students will discuss what they want to do and practice responding to the three questions listed on the handout. While students do this, the teacher will circulate the room and ask about what they have so far, providing a 2-minutes-remaining and 1-minute-remaining warning.
- (20 minutes) Students will pose, present, and discuss their chosen pose.

*Extend (10 minutes)*
- (5 minutes) The teacher will ask students to write a summary of one other groups’ presentation for 5 Classwork points.
- (5 minutes) The teacher will explain that night’s homework, included as the last slide in the presentation.

**Evaluation:**

*Enter*
Students will be informally assessed based upon their contribution to the conversation.

*Explore*
Students will be assessed on their individual participation within the group, in addition to a group grade based on the explanations provided.

*Extend*
Students will receive 10 homework points for submitting completed homework the next class period.

*A note on grading:*
There are 1000 points total each Unit:
- 600 for tests, quizzes, and projects (60%)
- 300 for Classwork/Homework (30%)
- 100 for Participation (10%)
Subject: English II, Honors  
Class Duration: 55 minutes  
Topic: Interrelations in a Social Construct  
Lesson Title: Making a Social Compact

Objectives:
- Students will analyze “The Social Compact” by identifying the persuasive language in the text (RI.8.1)  
- Students will apply the ideas in “The Social Compact” to their own lives and discuss with others the potential impact (RI.10.1)  
- Students will defend their own opinion and analyze the opinions of others in their quick argument writing homework assignment (RI.5.1)

Purpose: 
In this lesson, students will confront what it is to be in a social setting where there are expectations that certain rights will be forfeited for the betterment of the society on the whole. They will decide which rights are the most important, which rights must be maintained for the sake of justice, which rights to defend. This analysis will provoke a deeper understanding of their own ability to be able to function in society and what sort of rights they maintain or lose given the societal and legal climate.

Materials:
- copies of “Talkin’ Bout a Revolution” by Tracy Chapman (one per student)  
- Computer with internet access for Tracy Chapman video  
- Projector  
- “Social Compact” presentation  
- copies of “The Social Compact” by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (one per student)  
- Teacher Copy of “The Social Compact”  
- Speakers for the video

Procedure:

Enter (10 minutes)  
- As students enter the classroom, they will be handed a copy of “Talkin’ Bout a Revolution,” and informed that they should look onto the board to see the prompt for what to do next.  
- (3 minutes) Projected onto the board will be the “Social Compact” presentation, and the first slide will have the day’s bellwork. (Adapted from Milner 137)  
- While students complete this objective, the teacher will take role.  
- (3 minutes) The teacher will then play the song and ask students to circle any new words they hear that stand out to them. (Adapted from Milner 137)
- (4 minutes) The teacher will ask students to share what words they had selected with a students sitting next to them, and then will ask if any students would like to share with the class.

**Explore (35 minutes)**

- (2 minutes) The teacher will say, “To me, this song is all about how the people interact with each other and how those relationships are affected by the government and the society. Today, we are looking at a piece of literature that addresses how one author believes people should interact with each other giving up all of their freedoms for the sake of the nation and government as a whole. Let’s take a look at the text.”

- (10 minutes) The teacher will read from the Teacher Copy of “The Social Compact” to the class, making sure to emphasize the highlights portions of the text as important and where the author makes his ideas clear and ask students to underline these passages.

- (2 minutes) The teacher will take this time to illustrate how important it is to have “life” when presenting a piece by first reading a sentence without inflection and rereading with inflection. (Adapted from Palmer “Water and Insanity” speech at SCCTE Conference 2016). The sentence is “Each of us puts his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the general will.”

- (2 minutes) The teacher will then ask for student volunteers to read the same sentence with a different inflection: Pick one word to emphasize in the sentence, and we will tell you what it makes us think.

- (1 minute) The teacher will the state that this is an important skill to work on when we speak and that the class will practice it over the course of the year.

- (3 minutes) The teacher will show the slide of the main ideas in the piece, and then will ask students if they have other points they want to add to the list.

- (6 minutes) The teacher will divide the class into four groups (based on alphabetical order) and have each group discuss the importance of the now underlined passages and how the piece makes the reader believe what is being said. The teacher should circulate the room at this time.

- (4 minutes) The teacher will then have the groups brainstorm a list of rights that they have and which rights they would sacrifice to live peacefully in society.

- (5 minutes) The teacher will ask each group to share their findings using only a 45 seconds, and the teacher will give the groups this time to prepare.

**Extend (10 minutes)**

- (5 minutes) Each group representative will present and the teacher will provide feedback specific to the ideas brought up and will ask for other students to participate in providing feedback.

- (3 minutes) The teacher will take this time to explain that the night’s homework is to write a brief argument about whether or not they agree with Rousseau. This argument should include evidence from the text in addition to addressing whether or not they think Tracy Chapman agrees with Rousseau and why that is or isn’t the case. The homework is 5 Homework points.

- (2 minutes) The teacher will ask if there are questions about the assignment and provide responses to students.
Evaluation:

*Enter*
Students will be informally evaluated based upon their willingness to contribute in the class discussion.

*Explore*
Students will be informally evaluated on their contributions within the group conversation and ability to remain on task.

*Extend*
Students will be evaluated on the completion and quality of their homework next class period.

*A note on grading:*
There are 1000 points total each Unit: 600 for tests, quizzes, and projects (60%)
300 for Classwork/Homework (30%)
100 for Participation (10%)
Appendix D

Lesson Plan Four

Subject: English II, Honors
Class Duration: 55 minutes
Topic: Poetics in the Inferno’s Canto 32
Lesson Title: Analyzing Hell

Objectives:
- Students will discuss various forms of poetic diction present in selected lines from Canto XXXII and provide evidence for their established understanding (C.1.3 and RL.13.1)
- Students will write their own addition to this canto inserting their own example of someone who has betrayed another (W.3).
- Students will collaborate with others to determine how Dante employs language to create a certain mood in this reading (RL.11.1)

Purpose:
In today’s lesson, we will be examining the Ninth Circle of Hell as described by Dante Alighieri in his Divine Comedy. The text is rife with historical and mythical examples, which will serve as a point of entrance into this engaging and applicable text. We will be examining the form in which Dante conveys his ideas, and we will attempt to ascertain what it is about treachery (on the political and interpersonal levels) that so deeply disturbs Dante. By examining the language and form, students will be empowered to recognize the emphasis they put on promises in their own lives and how this emphasis varies from person to person based on communication with others.

Materials:
- Copies of Canto 32 (one per student)
- “Imagine More” (one section per student)
- Computer with Internet access
- Projector
- “Poetics in Dante” presentation
- “What Are Your Thoughts?” (one per student)

Procedure:

Enter (15 minutes)
- (2 minutes) As students enter the room, the teacher will request that they write the line from Canto XXXII that they liked most for a Classwork point.
- (7 minutes) Teacher will start the “Poetics in Dante presentation” explaining each term, pointing out the examples from the text, asking students if they have questions along the way, and explaining that the Inferno is written differently from what is typically considered poetry.
- (3 minute) Teacher will return to the line that student have written as their favorite line and pair students together using seat proximity to have them switch quotes and find a type of special diction in the quote.
- (3 minutes) The teacher will then split the pairs so each student has a new partner and gets to look at one more quote.

**Explore** (30 minutes)
- (1 minute) The teacher will hand students a copy of “Imagine More” and ask them to read along as the teacher reads the prompt. (adapted from Milner 133-4)
- (1 minute) The teacher will tell students that they can work individually or in pairs to complete this assignment, but each student must submit their own copy.
- (18 minutes) The teacher will circulate the room to help students while the student work.
- (10 minutes) The teacher will put students in groups of four or five to discuss their character, why they chose that character, and the types of diction they decided to use.

**Extend** (10 minutes)
- (2 minutes) The teacher will ask students to pass in their written work and return to their seats.
- (3 minutes) The teacher will explain the homework assignment, ask students if they have questions, and collect their writing from the day.
- (5 minutes) The teacher will leave this time for students to start on their homework, pack up, or ask questions individually.

Evaluation:

**Enter**
- Students will be informally evaluated based on their participation in the bellwork activity.

**Explore**
- Students will be evaluated based upon the effort present in their writing sample that day in the “Imagine More” handout for 2 points.

**Extend**
- Students’ homework assignment will count as 1 point towards their homework grade on completion.

*A note on grading:
There are 1000 points total each Unit: 600 for tests, quizzes, and projects (60%)
300 for Classwork/Homework (30%)
100 for Participation (10%)
Lesson Plan Five

Subject: English II, Honors
Class Duration: 55 minutes
Topic: Intertextuality
Lesson Title: A Frenchman, an Italian, and an Irishman Walk Into a Classroom

Objectives:
- Students will cite examples from the three primary texts used this unit to present a certain mode of critical thinking and literary criticism (RL.5.1)
- Students will examine certain archetypes present in the works and trace their impact on the text (RL.9.1)
- Students will search with classmates for examples from the texts that coincide with the lessons and interpretations taught today in class (RL.13.1)

Purpose:
In today’s class, students will be exposed to three different modes of interpreting literature and constructing meaning from texts. In doing so, they will practice skills such as focusing in on one aspect of a piece, taking into account multiple influential factors, and using the text as evidence. By practicing these skills, students will refine their ability to substantiate an argument, which will continue to serve them well long after they have left my classroom.

Materials:
- Computer with Internet Access
- Projector
- “How Do These Pieces Work Together” presentation
- Copies of “Demonstrate What You Have Learned” (one per student)

Procedure:

Enter (10 minutes)
- (5 minutes) As students enter the class, they will respond to the prompt projected onto the board that is included in the “How Do These Pieces Work Together” presentation while the teacher takes attendance.
- (3 minutes) The teacher will ask for students to share their responses with the person sitting next to them.
- (2 minutes) The teacher will ask if anyone would like to share with the class and respond to student answers.

Explore (35 minutes)
- (2 minutes) The teacher will state: We already know some of the historical significances that these pieces present, which is one way of understanding literature. Let’s look at some other ways of interpreting these texts.
- (15 minutes) The teacher will start the “How Do These Pieces Work Together” presentation, tell the students to take notes, and elaborate on the examples contained therein, pausing for student questions when appropriate.
- (5 minutes) The teacher will split the room in half, assigning New Historicism to one half and Archetype to the other half.
- (8 minutes) The teacher will give this time to students groups for them to find one example from each of the texts that is applicable to the mode of literary criticism.

Extend (10 minutes)
- (5 minutes) The teacher will ask each group to list their ideas, and the teacher will make note of all of these ideas on a document that will be posted to the classroom website.
- (5 minutes) The teacher will pass out the “Deomonstrate What You Have Learned” assignment sheet, and will announce that the homework for the night is to consult the list of ideas discussed in class to look for inspiration for the topic or create a new thought, but by next class, students should have an idea of where they would like to start because it will count as 2 points in their homework grade.

Evaluation:

Enter
- Students will be informally evaluated based on their participation in the bellwork activity.

Explore
- Students will be informally evaluated based on their attentiveness to the popcorn lecture and participation in the group activity.

Extend
- Students will be evaluated based on their having an idea of what they have interest in exploring as a paper topic next class (2 points).

*A note on grading:
There are 1000 points total each Unit: 600 for tests, quizzes, and projects (60%)
300 for Classwork/Homework (30%)
100 for Participation (10%)
Appendix F
Lesson Plan Six

Subject: English II, Honors
Class Duration: 55 minutes
Topic: Differentiating Independent Clauses and Dependent Clauses
Lesson Title: Writing Workshop

Objectives:
- Students will practice identifying independent and dependent clauses in their own work and in others’ (W.6.1)
- Students will craft new, more complex sentences based on their learning (W.4.1)
- Students will comment on others’ work and speak their own work aloud to the class (C.1.3 & C.2.4)

Purpose:
In today’s lesson, students will learn more sentence structures and a good way to practice elevating their own writing style. While this may be a refresher for some students, it could serve as an introduction to others. Varying sentence structures creates a dynamic, engaging piece that will help these young authors retain reader attention and have their points heard and understood.

Materials:
- Computer with Internet access
- Projector
- “Writing Workshop” presentation
- Copies of “Writing Workshop Worksheet” (one per student)

Procedure:

Enter (10 minutes)
- (3 minutes) As bellwork, students will identify the two main parts of the following sentences: “When we arrived, we were tired,” “If I had known, I would have done something different,” and “the dog played with the toy while his human did homework.”
- (3 minutes) The teacher will ask students to pair with each other (using alphabetical order) to discuss what the two main parts are and how they were able to identify them.
- (4 minutes) The teacher will call the class back together to ask what their ideas are, writing them on the board as more students contribute. Additionally, the teacher will use this time to provide constructive feedback and encourage student participation.

Explore (40 minutes)
- (2 minutes) The teacher will ask students to bring out their paper drafts because they will be working with them today.
- (3 minutes) The teacher will pass out copies of “Writing Workshop Worksheet” to each student and will transition to the next slide in the presentation to explain the expectations.
- (10 minutes) During this time, the teacher will circulate the classroom to check in on student progress and answer questions that arise.
- (6 minutes) The teacher will call the class back as a whole and ask if it was difficult to rethink sentences in this way. The teacher will use this time to make sure students have a clear understanding of the practice.
- (10 minutes) The teacher will then pair students with a new partner to state what their original sentences were and their new revised versions. The student hearing the revisions is to select a favorite, of which the author will take note on the worksheet.
- (9 minutes) Students will read their “favorited” sentence aloud, and the teacher will write it on the board, explaining where the sentence’s strengths lie.

   **Extend** (5 minutes)

- (3 minute) The teacher will ask if the class feels comfortable adding onto their rubric for their paper a section about using independent and dependent clauses correctly and they will discuss any questions that students might have about their papers.
- (2 minutes) The teacher will ask students to pass in their worksheets and return to their seats to pack up.

**Evaluation:**

*Enter*
- Students will be informally assessed on their participation in the bellwork activity and engagement.

*Explore*
- Students will be assessed on their completion of the “Writing Workshop Worksheet” and their willingness to share their work (3 points).

*Extend*
- Students will contribute to the means of evaluation by commenting on the paper’s rubric.

*A note on grading:*

There are 1000 points total each Unit:

- 600 for tests, quizzes, and projects (60%)
- 300 for Classwork/Homework (30%)
- 100 for Participation (10%)
Subject: English II, Honors  
Class Duration: 55 minutes  
Topic: Thematic Connection Texts  
Lesson Title: Book Group Work  

Objectives:  
- Students will think critically about their chosen text and how it relates to the core texts, writing their answer in a clear and understandable manner (W.6.1).  
- Students will collaborate with their peers to evaluate ways in which archetypal patterns are present in their chosen text (RL.13.1, RL.13.3 & C.1.4).  
- Students will work independently and in collaboration to analyze their text in relation to the theme of the unit and prepare to present their findings (I.4.1-3).  

Purpose:  
In today’s lesson, students will engage with their selected text in a manner such that critical thinking and reflection on the overall theme of the unit will be necessary to complete the day’s tasks. It is important that students learn there is a deeper meaning and value to everything we read, from the classics to Young Adult Fiction to graphic novels and so on. In this way, students can begin to see the merit of examining a wide variety of texts and putting them into conversation with one another to make meaning. Isolated, these pieces have much less power; together, they become complicated and interesting. Today serves as a model of what I would like to continue to foster in students’ writing to help them make their message more powerful.  

Materials:  
- “Independent Reading Questions” (one per student)  
- Computer with Internet access  

Procedure:  

*Enter* (10 minutes)  
- (10 minutes) As students enter the classroom, they will be handed a copy of “Independent Reading Questions,” which they will complete while the teacher takes role and circulates to answer any questions.  

*Explore* (35 minutes)  
- (10 minutes) The teacher help all of the students reading the same book form a cluster to compare answers and write down additions to what they came up with themselves in a different colored writing utensil. The teacher will collect these sheets at the end of the 10 minutes.
- (10 minutes) The teacher will ask students to look for any Archetypal patterns, symbols, colors, etc. that they had discussed in a previous class; the teacher will project linked photo onto the screen to help guide students in their search.

- (15 minutes) The teacher will announce that each group will informally present their findings tomorrow, which is why the teacher will now go to each group and have a mini-conference with them (where each group member will take notes). It is here where the teacher will evaluate the validity of the groups’ responses to the questions posed and to the found archetypes.

**Extend** (5 minutes)

- (2 minutes) The teacher will explain that each of the students will be evaluated separately for the presentation, and they must write what they contributed to be submitted after the presentation.

- (3 minutes) The teacher will ask for student questions and resolve any outstanding issues.

Evaluation:

**Enter**

- Students will be evaluated based on their substantiated responses to the “Individual Reading Questions” sheet (10 points).

**Explore**

- Students will be informally evaluated based upon the effort shown in their groups and their taking notes during the mini-conference.

**Extend**

- Students will be evaluated based upon their completion of their self-assessment and presentation next class period.

*A note on grading:

There are 1000 points total each Unit:

- 600 for tests, quizzes, and projects (60%)
- 300 for Classwork/Homework (30%)
- 100 for Participation (10%)