

Harlem, Hughes, and Hip-Hop

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Overview

My curriculum is entitled “Harlem, Hughes, and Hip Hop”. “Harlem, Hughes, and Hip Hop” is a stimulating, vigorous, hands-on curriculum that allows students to not only learn pertinent information about the prolific and poignant writer Mr. Langston Hughes, but also examine one of his short stories and translate it into a play. This unit will take 8 weeks to complete and I plan to implement this in my twelfth grade drama classes next year. First, I will lead students as we study how essential the Harlem Renaissance was to Mr. Hughes’ career. Then, I will guide students as we read, analyze, and interpret the themes of a few of his poems and short stories. Next, we will study socially conscious, popular hip hop lyrics and compare their message to Hughes’. In addition, students will write narrative and persuasive essays demonstrating their understanding of Hughes’ influence on socially conscious hip hop lyrics studied in this unit. I will use graphic organizers, educational websites, power point presentations, and videos to help students better understand the subject. In addition, I will instruct students on the fundamentals of public speaking and acting so they may effectively communicate what they learned to their audience. Finally, I will direct my students as they narrate biographical events, rehearse the play, and recite some of Hughes’ poems. As a culminating event, students will perform this production during an assembly at Overbrook High School.

Rationale

Recently, the School District of Philadelphia has decided that drama classes should be an elective in most high schools. Students, who ordinarily wouldn’t be exposed to theater, are assigned drama classes for the first time since drastic budget cuts to most after school programs practically eliminated creative and performing arts in public schools. Students who have only been able to express themselves through athletics and academics now have a unique opportunity to express themselves through drama, dance, and creative writing. In addition, students will learn pertinent historical facts about the Harlem

Renaissance, biographical information on Langston Hughes and the influence his poetry had on hip hop lyrics, Marcus Garvey and the Black Nationalist Movement.

Acting for Novices

I have heard many drama teachers say that good actors make acting look easy, bad actors make acting look bad. It is my goal to train my students so they may not only remember their stage blocking and lines, but also be convincing and believable characters. I stress to all my drama classes that “acting can bring them joy, excitement and a sense of fulfillment if they approached each role creatively and seriously.” (Cassady 15) I will encourage them to use their entire self—mind, body, and feeling—to connect with the character they present. Many of my students are huge fans of hip-hop. I see them daily entering my classroom reciting the lyrics to their favorite rap and I overhear most of them when they dialogue with friends about how handsome, beautiful, or “foxy” a particular artist is. I plan to use my students love of hip-hop and hip hop artists as a tool to get them more involved in acting activities. After all, many of their favorite hip hop artists have aspirations of being actors. For example, many of my students are fans of rapper Tupac Shakur. Mr. Shakur has made several entertaining music videos and films. I plan on using my students’ admiration for this artist by showing them the rap video “Keep Your Head Up” and the film *Poetic Justice* as examples of a hip-hop artist participating and excelling in acting.

Improvisation

I love improv! There’s nothing like learning how to think and verbally respond to a scene or skit instantly. I must train my young actors to not only keep their composure, but also articulate, enunciate, and control all emotions—and do so without cursing or using sexual innuendo (unless required for the scene). Teaching students to improvise means arming them with a quick wit, instant problem-solving abilities, and a sense of timing that cannot be taught in a book. More importantly, improv gives young people the chance to practice some social role playing. (Zimmerman 315) I will link this activity to my curriculum by asking students to jot down the words of their favorite hip hop song/rap. Then, I will ask them to form groups of four or five and discuss what they wrote. Next, I will ask them to select one hip hop song/rap and create an improv scene that correlates with their lyrics. Finally, students will present their scene. I plan to videotape these scenes so the class can learn important techniques about acting. Then, I will explain that Mr. Shakur (and many more popular hip hop artists) had to take drama classes, learn stage/film direction, and be proficient at improv in order to become a successful actor. After that, I will demonstrate some warm-up exercises and drama activities that I believe Mr. Shakur would have to have known in order to be a convincing actor.

Stage Direction

In order for me to instruct my students on stage direction, I will teach them the technical theater terms. I will attempt to do this in a manner that is not confusing so all participants feel successful. but I will require them to know their left from their right. For example, down stage left means toward the audience and to the actor's left. Downstage right means towards the audience and to the actor's right. Downstage center means towards the audience and stand in the center of the stage.

Recently, hip-hop mogul Puff Daddy starred in the stage version of *A Raisin In the Sun*. Puff Daddy, who is also known as P. Diddy, played the lead character Walter Lee Younger. The critics were so impressed by his performance that he earned the starring role when this play was adapted for television. I believe that it's important for my students to understand that Mr. Diddy had to learn and follow the same stage direction that I am teaching them. Also, I would like to show my students the stage version of this play and ask them to watch how the actors navigate their stage directions. .

Hip-Hop Dancing

I believe everyone likes to watch people dance. Dance is a healthy way to not only get vital exercise, but also to relieve stress. Many of my students are fans of hip hop dancing, but many don't know that many of their popular hip hop dances are derivatives of dances that were popular during the eighties. In fact, I remember performing many of these dances at college, in clubs, and in my parents' basement. Steps like the Whop, the Reebok, the Cabbage Patch and countless others got everyone back on the dance floor. (Chang 228) I can't help but chuckle when I see my students trying to imitate some of these "old school dances", and I constantly tell them that many of the dances they do today are nothing but "evolved old school dances". "One example is locking, a funk style dance started by the Watts crew, the Campbellockers, in the early 70's; another is popping, a surging, stuttering elaboration of the Robot, pioneered by Fresno dancer Boogaloo Sam, that would later show up in New York as the Electric Boogaloo" (301). The popular dance show "America's Best Dance Crew" illustrates many of these hip hop moves and I plan to show several segments of this program to my students with the goal of writing narratives, explaining why these hip-hop dances are so popular, and why this particular dance style has remained so popular among many people. Finally, I will show my students the film *Breakin'* and ask students to identify one dance move and research this dance move, and present their information via poetry, rap, play/skit, or essay.

Playwriting and Literacy

I believe teaching my students the art of playwriting is an excellent way for them to review sentence structure, punctuation, and literary terms. I discovered that some twelfth graders struggled with writing complete sentences, inserting correct punctuation, and comprehending pertinent literary terms. My class will not only serve as a positive form of education and entertainment, but also serve as support for those students who struggle with writing, comprehension, and public speaking skills. Also, I believe students who

struggle with public speaking will improve their oral communication skills after completing this unit. Unlike novels and short stories, a play tells its story primarily through the actual conversation between the characters (Hallock 3) I believe students who are struggling will have their learning reinforced because they will actually be implementing what they learn.

Historical Background

Marcus Garvey was born in St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica in August 17, 1887 and he came to the United States in 1916. His followers thought of him as a prophet for several reasons. One of his first acts was to shed light on and was very outspoken about the debased condition of Black farmers and canal workers he met on a visit to Panama. Later, Garvey returned to the streets of Kingston to preach Black redemption and repatriation to a united Africa (Chang 24). Garvey was inspired by Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery* and also by the Great Migration of Black Americans. During this time period in America, many black Americans relocated from the South to the North because they believed that employment, education, and housing opportunities were better. Eventually, Garvey settled in Harlem where he organized a branch of his organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). The aims of the group were to set up a Black nation in Africa and to encourage Black people throughout the world to unite. He made speeches throughout the United States and in other countries, and he edited a newspaper, *Negro World*, which by 1920 had a circulation around 200,000. "If you want liberty," claimed Garvey to a meeting held in 1921, "you yourselves must strike the blow. If you must be free, you must become so through your own effort." (Stein 6) He preached that "Black is beautiful" long before the Civil Rights Movement; he called for a separation of the races, and reminded American Blacks that their freedom is not in the hands of the white man. Garvey believed that migrating from the south to the north was a beginning. Arguing that Black people would never be accepted in White society, he urged them to emigrate to Africa. To provide transportation to Africa, Garvey organized the Black Star Steamship Line. Blacks poured hundreds of thousands of dollars into the company. However, Garvey was a poor business man and kept questionable records. In 1925, he was convicted of fraud and sentenced to prison. After his release from prison, he was deported to Jamaica.

I personally developed a new appreciation for Marcus Garvey not because of his ideas about emigration, but because he encouraged black pride during a time when being black had several negative connotations and stereotypes. Many hip-hop artists are self-conscious in the way that Garvey was. For example, in 1986, KRS One produced a song called "Self Destruction". This song challenged the hip hop audience to not only stop committing violent crimes against each other, but also uniting to obtain self-sufficiency. I will ask students to list comparisons between Garvey's and KRS One's call for unity. Furthermore, I will encourage students to create parallels between and understand why Garvey and KRS One felt the need to speak out on the state of Black and White America.

The Universal Negro Improvement Association

The Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) was founded by Marcus Garvey and staffed by individuals whose primary goal was to uplift African Americans. Garvey's objective was to create a global, self-help organization that was collective, friendly, humanitarian, charitable, educational, constructive, and expansive society. All members of the UNIA pledged to conserve the rights of their noble race and to respect the rights of all people. They believed in the Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God; the motto of organization was "One God! One Aim! One Destiny!" (Chang 20)

The Harlem Renaissance and the Hip Hop Movement

Black writers and other creative artists used their talent to confront an America that was hostile and racist during the early part of the 20th century. Between the 1920's and 1930's, black writers wrote novels, poetry, and other literature protesting lynching, job discrimination, and racial segregation. However, these writers did not attack basic American ideals; they complained that they were disenfranchised from the concept of the American dream. I believe the Harlem Renaissance and the Hip Hop Movement share several important components. First, both movements have origins in New York City. The Harlem Renaissance began in Manhattan while hip-hop has origins in the Bronx. It may be hard to imagine now, but during the mid 1970's, most of the youthful energy that became known as hip-hop could be contained in a tiny seven-mile circle. (Chang 109) Second, both movements birthed conscientious and prolific artists. For example, poets like Claude McKay wrote powerful poems like "The Lynching" and "If We Must Die" and Langston Hughes wrote influential poems like "Dream Deferred" and "I Too". Both poems focused on segregation, racism, and the terror that many blacks experienced at the hands of white Americans. The hip hop movement had several poignant artists too. For instance, Ice T, also known as Tracey Marrow, wrote, composed and produced "Cop Killer" in 1992. Many politicians boycotted this record and believed it sent reckless messages about killing all police officers. According to Paul Taylor, president of the Fraternal Order of Police, "people who ride around all night and use crack cocaine and listen to rap music that talks about killing cops – it's bound to pump them up. No matter what anybody tells you, this kind of music is dangerous (396)." However, not all representatives of the police force felt that way. Representatives of The National Black Police Association disagreed with Mr. Taylor. One spokesperson said, "this song is not a call for murder. It's a rap of protest. Ice T isn't just making this stuff up." (397).

Langston Hughes

Langston Hughes was born in Joplin, Missouri in 1902. He was considered a highly intelligent high school student and his grades allowed him passage into Columbia University, where he had planned to study engineering. However, Hughes loved poetry and he wanted to follow his desire to become a poet; thus, he dropped out of college and

abandoned his dream of being an engineer. Hughes eventually became known as the “Poet Laureate of Harlem.” Many of Hughes’s poems focused on the disenfranchisement many African Americans felt in the United States in the 1920s, and their willingness to stand up and take pride in their heritage. For example, he wrote “I, Too” in 1921 which depicts a black man’s feelings of isolation, inferiority, and emptiness as he is sent into the kitchen when his white employers have visitors. However, toward the poem’s resolution black pride and patriotism are evident. I believe there is a direct correlation between Hughes’ theme of black pride and unity and many lyrics in hip hop music. For instance, Public Enemy’s “Fight the Power” encouraged hip hop listeners to unite against police corruption and brutality, black on black crime, and racism.

Objectives

The objectives covered will be in the areas of reading, writing, vocabulary, and performance. These are in accord with the mandated objectives of The School District of Philadelphia’s Planning and Scheduling Timeline.

Reading Objectives

My students will read and understand the biography on Langston Hughes and his short story “Thank You, Ma’am.” Also they will read and understand some of Langston Hughes poems. For example, students will read “Dream Deferred,” “I Too,” “Mother to Son,” and “The Silhouette.” After reading these works of literature, I will give students lyrics from the rap called “Self Destruction” and “Cop Killer”. Students will read the lyrics and compare these raps’ theme, imagery, tone, and mood to any poem we read and analyzed. In addition, my students will read biographies and learn pertinent historical facts about Marcus Garvey. To help with reading and comprehension, students will learn how to use a Venn diagram, compare and contrast diagram, and “thinking critically” worksheet. For example, I will lead students as we read “The Silhouette” and discuss this poem’s theme, tone, and images. Next, my students will read lyrics to the rap song “Self Destruction”. I will play this rap for them and I will encourage my student to jot down any images they think upon listening to this rap. Afterwards, students will fill out comprehension constructors and share their answers with their learning team. I will ask for a representative from each group to report their information to the class. Finally, I will encourage my kids to study each note they wrote on their comprehension constructor worksheet.

Writing Objectives

After my students are finished reading “Thank You, Ma’am”, I will show them the correct format of playwriting. Normally, when my students write plays, they write the character’s name adjacent to the dialog, but rarely use stage directions. Of course, this is not correct. The correct format is as follows: stage directions are to be placed to the left (or right) of their page and surrounded by parentheses; the character’s name is to be

placed in the center of their document, and that character's dialogue written under the name beginning at the left margin. Also, my students will write several poems focusing on similar themes and tones used by Langston Hughes, Marcus Garvey, KRS-One, and Tupac Shakur. Furthermore, students will implement a paragraph writing technique called "T.A.G. it to 3." The T stands for *turn* the question into an answer; the A stands for *answer* the question; the G stands for *give three* supporting details from the reading material. Finally, my students will write one narrative essay, one persuasive essay, and one compare-and-contrast essay.

Vocabulary Objectives

I will guide my students as I introduce various vocabulary words and literary terms. First, I will ask my students to attempt to recite and spell words that I introduce. Then, I will make every effort to connect these vocabulary words to their everyday lives. I will encourage my students to use some of these words as dialogue in their class play.

Strategies

During the 2007-08 school year the Philadelphia School District implemented The High School Plan which has six strategies educators must apply. This plan was implemented because many educators understand that students in grades 6-12 have trouble with not only reading various texts, but also comprehending what they read. Many strategies within this innovative, mandated plan will be incorporated into this curriculum. I will direct students as we read "Thank You, Ma'am", a short story by Langston Hughes, and guide them as we transform the short story into a play.

Strategy 1: Preview Vocabulary

The High School Plan for Content Area Literacy wants teachers to guide students as they preview vocabulary words and literary terms. Following this directive, I will highlight words from the Hughes story like "frail," "willow-wild," "icebox," "blue suede shoes," and "barren." Then, I will use context clues to help students guess the definition. Also, I will expose my students to literary elements within the play like dialogue, inferences, basic situation, complication, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. According to the High School Plan, these are strategies that teachers can use that enlarge students' understanding of key words before reading will support improvement in comprehension and recall. (School District of Philadelphia, 3)

Strategy 2: Preview/Analyze/Connect

The Preview/Analyze/Connect strategy places the teacher in the role of the "tour guide" with a strong focus on setting a purpose for reading. The High School Plan states that the tour of the chapter or unit familiarizes students with a procedure for successfully navigating text, builds background information, clarifies teacher expectations, and encourages students to make, confirm, or reject predictions. (School District of

Philadelphia 4) Once my students have previewed vocabulary, I will guide them as they define each term and apply the term to their everyday lives. As students discover the definitions of a vocabulary word, I will ask them to utilize it in a way that means something to them personally. For instance, once understanding the spelling and definition of “frail” I will ask students to identify things in their lives that are frail (i.e. great-grandmother, rickety door, or sickly people). I will use this same approach with all literary elements. First, I will place students in learning teams and demonstrate how they will use a graphic organizer that will assist them in applying assigned literary elements to their favorite movie or television show. Students will be given an opportunity to share their work. Afterwards, I will read the first page of “Thank You, Ma’am” and ask students to identify the basic situation and apply this term to the story. They will write all answers on graphic organizers. As we finish reading the story, I will ask them poignant questions designed to improve comprehension and critical thinking.

Strategy 3: Reciprocal Teaching

The High School Plan further states that reciprocal teaching, an instructional strategy that helps students focus and monitor their reading, is regarded by researchers at a highly effective method for teaching reading and content comprehension (School District of Philadelphia,, 4). I will demonstrate to students four strategies in reciprocal teaching: questioning, clarifying, summarizing, and predicting. First, as my students are completing their graphic organizers I will ask certain questions about the text. The technique calls for teachers share a piece of challenging text that they are reading and model the reasoning needed to understand it (4); I will demonstrate my thinking process so students may understand how I derived at my answer. Third, after I examine the graphic organizers I will determine which terms are giving students the most trouble and model an appropriate problem solving behavior. Finally, clarifying is the final step. In this stage I will model rereading, skipping, consulting with another reader, and make sure students understand what they read. (4).

Strategy 4: Summarize and Synthesize Through Writing

In this strategy I will lead my students as they summarize and put information in their own words. I will begin by discussing the appropriate format for writing a play. I will encourage my play writers to brainstorm their ideas for our class play by using various graphic organizers. I must make sure they know, utilize and implement certain literary elements. The class play writers and editors must ensure that their script has all the plot elements befitting a well-told tale long before they write a word of dialogue. As a guide it might be helpful to model summarizing and synthesizing through writing by allowing them to see me put literary elements in my own words. Typically, we begin by describing the *basic situation*: how we discover the protagonist, antagonist, and the conflict. In past years, when I asked students to put the basic situation into their own words they jokingly said, terms like “the good guy, the bad guy, and the beef these people have.” The *rising action* is a sequence of events in our class play in which our characters become more

developed and the plot becomes more intense. Using their own words, my students have said “it’s when there’s a lot more beef.” Of course, I asked them to translate their slang into words that I can understand. They smiled and replied “it’s when events in the story become more problematic. I will insist that my students phrase their answers using exact details from the text. The *complication* occurs as problems mouth and plot lines intertwine. In their own words, my students have said, “the complication is when there’s more trouble for the good guy”. The climax is the highest part of the excitement in our play. My students lightheartedly told me “it’s when ‘the you know what’ hits the fan.” The falling action is when the different conflicts in our play are resolved. I have heard my students refer to the falling action as “things are beginning to chill.” The resolution is when the conflicts in our play are solved; I heard one member of a learning team say “everything is squashed.” By learning to identify those elements students can gain a better understanding of the playwright’s purpose (Hallock 4) I appreciate this strategy because it allows my students to implement critical thinking skills. I believe when my students translate difficult words or texts into their own vernacular, they are more successful in understanding their meaning

Strategy 5: Comprehension Constructors

Comprehension constructors are teaching tools that help guide students through the reading of difficult text (School District of Philadelphia 6). I will guide students as they use cause and effect maps, sequence maps, concept webs, and the Frayer Model. The Frayer Model, a comprehension constructor, is best for students to learn all types of definitions, characteristics, examples, and non-examples. For instance, I may instruct students to identify the word “willow-wild” by using the Frayer Model. I will use this word in a few sentences and encourage my students to discover the meaning of this word by using context clues. Once they’ve been successful, they will write the word’s definition in a box at the upper left hand corner. Next, I will ask my students to list characteristics of this word in the box located at the upper right hand corner. Next, I will tell them they must write their own example of this word in a box at the lower left corner. Finally, I will guide them as they write non-examples of this word in a box at the lower right corner. These graphic organizers will serve as their notes and I will encourage my students to study and utilize them in all their classes.

As my students complete these constructors I will address these questions: What in the story may cause students difficulty? What will I model that will help students negotiate the difficult parts of the story? How will I make my own thinking visible for the students? What will students do with information they are reading in the book? What comprehension constructor will help students hold their thinking while they read the chapter? For instance, before students read “Thank You, Ma’am,” I will distribute a sequencing map comprehension constructor, and guide them as they retell the story by using transition words first, then, next, after that, and finally. Thus my students will understand how to keep events in chronological order.

Strategy 6: Structured Note taking

Structured note taking is a systematic practice for taking notes during reading and study (School District of Philadelphia 7). After students have successfully completed their comprehensive constructors within their learning teams, I will ask them to share their information with the class. I believe that when students use the cause and effect graphic organizer it aids in teaching them how characters and events shape the story's plot. Also, I believe that the sequence map will enable students to become better sentence and paragraph writers. In addition, I think the concept web allows students to connect and summarize their ideas around a specific topic (9).

Classroom Activities

The activities described below will increase rapport and trust among my students and motivate them as they learn and reinforce previously learned material. I will accomplish this through provocative class work, cooperative learning, and group games. As a preparation for the unit, I will create two word walls. The first word wall will focus on literary terms, and the second word wall will focus on historical terminology. I will place daily vocabulary words on chart paper and post it on my classroom wall.

Old School vs. Gangster Rap

Old school rap did not use "the n-word" or for that matter promote violence or sexual misconduct. In fact, old school rap promoted fashion, self confidence, and self awareness. For example, RUN DMC recorded My Adidas which instructed the listening audience to buy this brand of sneakers. Queen Latifa's song "Unity" encouraged women not to allow their significant others or good friends to call them a "bitch." KRS-One's recorded "Self Destruction" encouraged the hip hop audience to stop violent crimes. On the other hand, gangster rap encourages its listening audience to be irresponsible, disrespectful, and violent. Examples include Nelly's "Hot in Here," which encourages young people to strip off their clothes and dance in sexually provocative ways. Jay-Z recorded "99 Problems" which explained that a women's name is not important because she is nothing but a "bitch." Onyx's record "Throw Your Guns in the Air" demanded that their fans grab guns and shoot to kill anyone who gives them trouble.

I plan on having a day when my students listen to some of my old school hip hop songs while I listen to some of their gangster songs. Together, we will fill out a comprehension constructor listing the tone of these raps and the mood these raps create. I will also ask my students to compare how many times the n-word is used in my old school raps versus in the gangster rap. I hope this will provide an illustration of how music can be either uplifting and motivating or denigrating and negative.

Jeopardy

Students will be placed in groups of four or six and each group will be given a bell. I will appear dressed as if I am an actual game show host, and will explain the rules to my students. To avoid confusion, I will display these rules on chart paper. Next, I will ask my students to select a category and point value. I will recite the answer and point value, and they will have five seconds to discuss and tell the correct answer. If they answer correctly, they will continue. If they answer incorrectly, the question goes to the group that rings their bell first. When I use this fun game in my curriculum, I will include questions about Langston Hughes, the Harlem Renaissance, Marcus Garvey, and several hip-hop artists and songs.

Guest Speakers, Trips, and Financial Support

I plan to invite guest speakers The Philadelphia Young Playwrights and the Arts Sanctuary to speak to my class about this era. Also, I plan to take my students on trips to see vibrant plays at these venues mentioned above. In order for me to pull this monumental task off, I must receive financial support. Currently, I have had correspondence with several funders. I am hoping to have a total of five thousand dollars when I begin this unit.

Lesson Plans

Title: Find the Poet in You

Grade: Level 9 – 12

Subject: English/ Drama

Time Necessary: 3 50-minute periods

Materials:

Elements of Literature text

Chart paper

Markers

DVD player

Chart paper

Markers

Blindfold

Peppermints

Scented oil

Goals

Students will gain a clearer understanding of poetry terms pertinent to this lesson.

1. Students will learn more about imagery and review the importance of the five senses.
2. Students will review how important the five senses are to learning many poetry terms.
3. Students will create a class poem utilizing various poetry terms.
4. Students will read along and listen to the song “Self Destruction.”
5. Students will identify this songs tone, imagery, rhyme scheme, theme, and metaphors,
6. Students will read The Silhouette by Langston Hughes.
7. Students will identify this poems tone, imagery, theme, metaphor, and rhyme scheme.
8. Students will receive Venn diagram and compare and contrast Self Destruction and The Silhouette.
9. Students will write compare and contrast essay.
10. Students will learn cooperative work habits.
11. Students will connect the themes of both works to violence in today’s society.

Vocabulary Words:

Tone

Imagery

Theme

Metaphor

Rhyme scheme

Compare and Contrast

Silhouette

Dixie

Narrative:

The goal for this lesson is for students to understand and apply various poetry terms to the song “Self Destruction” and the poem “The Silhouette.” For this lesson, I must make sure my students understand imagery. I will ask for a volunteer and blindfold him/her. After making sure the student doesn’t have allergies, I will place an object in his/her hand and ask this student to describe the object to me by using a simile. His/Her response will be written on the board. Then, I will ask for another volunteer, blindfold him/her, and place a peppermint in his or her mouth. I will ask them to describe the taste of the candy by using assonance. I will continue this process until my students have covered all of the five senses, reviewed the assigned poetry terms, and written their responses on the chart paper. Next, I will pass out the lyrics to “Self Destruction” and ask students to follow along as the song plays. I will select a student to read The Silhouette. I will ask students to discuss the similarities themes, tone, and imagery, as well as any differences they might notice. Finally, students will fill out a Venn diagram and share their information with their classmates.

Outcome: Students will make connections between Self Destruction, the Silhouette, and various poetry terms and write a compare and contrast essay.

Assessment: Students will take a test on poetry terms.

Lesson Plan 2

Title: Thank You, Ma'm

Grade: Level -9 -11

Subject: English/ Drama

Objectives:

1. Students will read and comprehend the short story Thank You, Ma'm.
2. Students will identify and apply various vocabulary words and literary terms to this work.
3. Students will review appropriate sentence structure.
4. Students will learn standard play writing format.
5. Students will translate short story into a play.
6. Students will edit and peer edit work.
7. Students will select one person from learning team to type script.
8. Students will participate in class read through.
9. Students will participate in showcasing play to school.

Materials:

1. Elements of Literature Text
2. Word Wall with various literary terms and definitions
3. Computer
4. Flash Drive
5. Printer
6. Teacher-designed handouts
7. Comprehension Constructors
8. Dictionaries and Thesauruses

Vocabulary Words

1. Flail
2. Blue suede shoes
3. Icebox
4. Willow wild
5. Barren

Literary Terms

1. Plot
2. Basic Situation
3. Rising Action
4. Climax
5. Falling Action
6. Resolution

Narrative:

Students will preview, recite, and apply vocabulary words. Next, I will lead students as we read *Thank You, Ma'm*. As they read, students will pause and apply various literary terms to the short story. After reading, students will answer the review questions. I believe this will show their understanding of the story. Next, working in their learning teams, students will be assigned segments of this story to translate into a play. Students will peer edit work. One student from each team will type out their group's assignment. I will print out this play, assign parts, and we will read it.

Outcome:

At the end of this lesson students will have successfully translated *Thank You, Ma'm* from a short story into a play.

Assessment:

Students will take a test on *Thank You, Ma'm*. Also, students will work together to transform written class play into a stage production. Homework: Students will write a narrative essay from the point of view of either Roger or Ms. Jones.

Annotated Resources

Teacher Reading List

Cassady, Marsh, *Acting Games*, Colorado Springs: Meriwether Publishing, LTD, Colorado Springs, (2003). This textbook takes you through a step by step process of learning theater games and improvisation activities.

Zimmerman Suzi, *Introduction to Theater Arts*, Colorado Springs: Meriwether Publishing, LTD, (2004). This clever book guides theater teachers through various acting activities and allows abundant opportunities for students to participate.

Chang Jeff, *Can't Stop Won't Stop*, New York, New York: Picador, 2005. This book chronicles and explains the popularity of hip-hop music.

Hallock Myron, J, *Reading and Understanding Plays*, Providence Rhode Island: Jamestown Publishers, 1999. This book gives a step by step guide for readers to become successful play writers.

Stein Judith, *The World of Marcus Garvey: Race and Class in Modern Society*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986. This book explains the importance of Marcus Garvey during a time when Blacks were all but disenfranchised from the American Dream.

The School District of Philadelphia Office of Curriculum and Instruction, *The High School Plan for Content Area Literacy*, 2007. This booklet brings precision and application to the High School Plan for Content Area Literacy.

Student Resources

Holt, Rinehart, and Winston and Staff. *American Vision History Text*, Austin, Texas: Harcourt, Brace and Company 2004. This text is filled with relevant information on African American History including famous singers, dancers, and writer

Holt, Rinehart, and Winston and Staff, *African American Literature: Voices in Tradition*, Austin, Texas: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1998. A colossal compilation of biographies and plays by renowned African American writers Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, *Elements of Literature*: Austin, Texas: Harcourt, Brace, and Company 2004. This text is filled with many short stories, poems, and plays.

Tanner Fran, Averett, *Basic Drama Projects*, Twin Falls, Idaho: Harcourt, Brace, and Company. 2004. This book is filled with drama projects and tasks for the school aged student.

Breakin. Dir. Joel Silberg, with Lucinda Dickey, Adolpho Quinones, and Michael Chambers. Cannon Pictures, 1984. This movie chronicles the evolution and popularity of hip hop dancing.

Poetic Justice. Dir. John Singleton, with Janet Jackson, Tupac Shakur, and Guy Torrey, Columbia Tri-Star, 1993. This movie stars two hip hop artists who make their film debut in this riveting and complex love story.

Keep Ya Head Up. Dir. DJ Daryl, with Tupac Shakur, Interscope 1993. This video is an excellent form of positive lyrics in rap music.

America's Best Dance Crew. Prod. Randy Jackson. MTV Television 2007. This show allows its audience to witness popular hip hop dance routines.

A Raisin in the Sun. Dir. Daniel Petrie, with Sidney Poitier, Ruby Dee, Diana Sands, Columbia Pictures, 1961. The stage version of this popular play allows students to further study stage direction.

Appendix

Pennsylvania Standards (1)

1.1 – Learning to read independently

1.8 - Select and refine a topic for research

1.1.C- Use knowledge or root words as well as context clues and glossaries to understand specialized vocabulary in the content areas during reading.

1.2.A- Read and understand essential content of informational texts and documents in all academic areas.

1.3A – Analyze and understand the works of literature

1.3B - Analyze the use of literary elements by an author including characterization, setting, plot, theme, point of view, tone, and style.

1.3C- Analyze the effectiveness in terms of literary quality, of the author’s use of literary devices.

1.1E- Expand a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationship to other words; use a dictionary or related reference.

1.1F - Understand the meaning of and apply key vocabulary across the various subject areas.

1.1G- Demonstrate after reading understanding and interpretation of both fiction and non-fiction text, including public documents

1.2C – Produce a work in at least one literary genre that follows the conventions of that genre.

1.4.A- Write short stories poems and plays: Apply varying organizational methods; use relevant illustrations; apply literary conflict; include literary elements; use literary devices.

1.4.B- Write multi-paragraph informational pieces.

1.6C – Speak using skills appropriate to formal speech situations.

Learning Rubrics taken from *Elements of Literature* (2005) pgs. iii - iv.