
Unit 4: Chain of Why

Introduction:

During this week, the students are going to have to dig deeper for their courage. In addition to the usual poetry, they will be giving impromptu speeches. Also this week, we move into the most difficult part of reading: Asking Questions

The Week:

Unit 4:1:

Poetry and Literary Terms

Made-Up Words

Class Notes: Asking Questions

Homework: Read "On Being a Cripple"; p. 456 (Content: 1;
Strategies/Structures: 4, Language: 5)

Unit 4:2:

Poetry

Made-Up Words

Homework: Read Judy Syfers' "I Want a Wife." Answer questions p. 506
(Content: 1,2; Strategies/Structures: 4)

Unit 4:3:

Poetry

Made-Up Words

Homework: Read Richard Wright "The Power of Books." P. 425 Answer
questions (Content: 1,2; Strategies/Structures: 4): Define the word
"nigger" as it is used in this essay.

Unit 4:4:

Poetry

Made up words

Homework: Memorize poems

Unit 4:5:

Essay due

Poetry due

Class Notes:

4:1c Literary Terms 3

4:1f Chain of Whys

Unit 4: Chain of Why Daily Lesson Plans

Unit 4:1 Yankee

Introduction: Welcome to the fourth week of the course. The class has two more weeks of prep work in front of it before we begin working through the literature.

This week begins the most difficult aspect of reading: asking questions. The students may get frustrated and may need many examples. As long as they keep going with this, they will be fine. This skill is one that will help them for the rest of their lives.

Note that the poems have become more difficult.

Materials Needed:

- 4:1a Syllabus
- 4:1b Poetry for Week Four
- 4:1c Literary Terms Three
- 4:1d Made-Up Words assignment
- 4:1e “What is a Yankee?”

Setup: Change your seating chart and reseal the students. Keep the desks in a circle. Write the Day’s activities on the board. Remember to cross one off as you finish.

Procedure:

- Seat them and take attendance.
- Return quizzes and essay. Ask the students to punch them into their binders.
- Distribute the syllabus: Explain that this will be the work you will be doing this week. Talk through the list, highlighting the homework and the assignments due.

Poetry

- Distribute Poetry for Week Four and Literary Terms 3, and a blank sheet of paper.
- Pick one student to read “Little Boy Blue” aloud: Point out the repetition, the rhyme scheme, and the other literary terms there. (Hand a candy to the student who reads the poem aloud.)
- Ask the students to write ten questions about the poem.
- Have students trade and narrow their lists to the best two questions.
- Write a total of six of those questions on the board.
- Have the class work through them aloud:
- One by one, have students read the rest of the poems, with you guiding them to the literary terms.
- Announce to the students that they will need to memorize and recite one of these poems at the end of the week. It will be graded on accuracy.

Unit 4: Chain of Why Daily Lesson Plans

Critical Reading

Distribute copies of “What is a Yankee?”

Write on the board “A text question only focuses on the text. It frequently starts with the word “Why?” i.e. “Why does the author use slang?”

Ask the students to read it and to write “Text Questions” in the margins.

Ask the students to read some questions aloud: Write the ones that seem to need the longest answers on the board. Rank the questions in order of difficulty.

- If you have time, try to do a “Chain of Whys.” Pick one of the questions and answer it, then follow it up with a “Why” question until you get to a universal point.

Made-Up Words

- Distribute Made-Up Words. Remind the students about courage and respect.
- Ask the students to read through the assignment.
- Ask them to look particularly at the outline and think what they may want to write.
- Ask the student’s to look to the left and say “Hello” to his or her partner.
- For one minute, a student is going to attempt to define to her partner one of the words. Her partner is going to listen actively and write down two questions. When the speaker has finished, the partner will ask the two questions.
- For another minute, switch roles and repeat the exercise.
- After everyone has spoken, distribute lined paper to the class.
- Ask the students to write 300 words on their words. You may ask them to write for ten minutes instead. This is a freewrite.
- Ask the students to save the freewrite in their binders.

Homework:

Read "On Being a Cripple"; p. 456, Content: 1; Strategies/Structures: 4, Language: 5
Pick a poem to memorize.

Evaluation:

You have listened to the students read their poetry. Who seemed to have particular trouble reading aloud or understanding the literary terms?

Are there any students who cannot make up questions that require a 100-word answer?
This is a difficult skill and will need time to master.

Unit 4: Chain of Why Daily Lesson Plans

Unit 4:2: On Being a Cripple

Introduction: The critical reading and “The Chain of Whys” is a very, very important skill. Have patience with the students and don’t be afraid to model.

Content Background: “On Being a Cripple” is an unflinching look at life from the point of view of a woman with almost useless legs. In the essay, she makes an impassioned argument against using polite language and euphemism in favor of the brutal and honest.

Materials Needed:

The Essay Connection

Setup: I would resear the students exactly as they had been on Unit 4:1 and keep the desks in a circle.

Write the Day’s activities on the board. Remember to cross one off as you finish.

Procedure:

- Seat them and take attendance.
- Return paperwork. Ask the students to punch it into their binders.
- Walk around the class checking for the responses to homework.

Poetry

- Ask the students to take out the Poetry for Week Four.
- Choose a student to read a poem.
- After he reads the poem, ask the reader to do one of the following actions aloud:
 1. Describe a picture of the poem.
 2. Describe the speaker.
 3. Describe the literary devices in the poem. (Find the rhyme scheme, etc.)
 4. Pick one of the poems for a “Chain of Whys”

“On Being a Cripple,” p. 456

- Ask the students to clear their desks and to open to this essay.
- Ask them to read the first paragraph and to come up with a mental picture. Ask one or two of them to describe it, perhaps with choice details on the board.
- Ask another student to read the first two sentences with the correct tone. You may have to model different tones of voice.
- With those clearer, write on the board “Why does she use the word cripple?” Complete of “Chain of Whys” under it.
- Ask the students to now explain paragraph 25.

Unit 4: Chain of Why Daily Lesson Plans

Made up Words

Ask the students to clear their desks. Take out the freewrite definition they worked on yesterday.

Long pieces of work require structure. This essay is definitive and it should be organized logically. So, ask the students to either make a list of three definitions or connotations the word has or to make a list of three definitions that don't apply. They may have to be creative.

After the outline is created, ask the students to write the body paragraphs.

Homework:

Ask the students to take the outline and to write them out in detailed sentences.

Read Judy Syfers's "I Want a Wife." Answer questions p. 506, Content: 1,2; Strategies/Structures: 4.

Evaluation:

Read, grade, and record the "On Being a Cripple" homework. Grade as follows:

Mark a check minus, if the answers are wrong or show little thought.

Mark a check, if the answers are basically right, albeit uninspired.

Mark a check plus, if the answers are inspired and thoughtful.