
Unit 4 Short Stories

UNIT LENGTH: 23 DAYS

Overview:

This unit introduces the students to the short story and elements of plot. The students will also continue to study the elements of fiction and plot structure. In addition, they will write their own narrative short story.

Objectives: (The student will...)

- Use prereading strategies that are appropriate to the short stories.
- Determine the author's purpose and point of view and their effects on the text.
- Use appropriate prewriting strategies.
- Draft and revise writing that is focused, purposeful, and reflects insight into the writing situation.
- Produce a final document that has been edited for spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Write fluently for a variety of audiences and purposes.
- Use effective strategies for formal and informal discussion.
- Apply an understanding that language and literature are the primary means by which culture is transmitted.
- Understand specific ways in which language has shaped the reactions, perceptions, and beliefs of global communities.
- Understand the relationships among elements of literature including plot, setting, tone, point of view, irony, conflict, and theme.
- Recognize, understand, and explain differing personal connections people make between one's own life and the characters and events in texts.
- Understand the use of images and sounds to elicit the reader's emotions in fiction

Skills Attained:

- Examine various themes within short stories.
- Work productively in cooperative groups.
- Reflect daily in their journals about class discussions and readings.
- Analyze discussion questions for short stories.
- Create original poetry based on a short story.
- Diagram the content of their short story using a prewriting strategy.
- Evaluate multiple short stories for elements of plot, content, purpose and organization.
- Rewrite short story for content, proofreading, and editing purposes.
- Apply various reading strategies to short stories.

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- Discuss cultural similarities and differences as seen in various short stories.
- Compare and contrast friendships between two short stories.
- Write letters for different purposes and audiences.
- Create a movie poster based on a short story.
- Analyze the use of conflict and irony as seen in fiction.

Motivation:

During the course of this unit, students will develop an understanding of short stories and the elements that make up those short stories. They will analyze the plot and the elements of fiction and then apply that knowledge to the development of their own narrative short story. The main reason for this course is to expose students to the similarities that exist across all cultures. The teacher should point out to the students that the stories they will be reading come from all across the world, but they all contain common feelings, thoughts and ideas. The students should be reminded as well that they will be doing a research project and author biography later so they should pay close attention to the different world cultures and authors.

Unit Lessons:

Day 1

Objective: Students will compare and contrast characteristics of friendship. The students will read, interpret and analyze a short story, "Two Friends" focusing on the elements of plot. Students will illustrate their understanding of plot by developing a plot summary of the story.

Journal Topic: Make a list of movies that depict special friendships.

Procedures:

- Students will write in their journals for the first 10 minutes of class
- Students will discuss in whole class format their journal entries
- Teacher will review with students the elements of plot
- Students will devise a plot summary (Worksheet 4:1) as they read the story
- Students will read "Two Friends" (This short story can be found on the internet at <http://www.bartleby.com/313/5/2.html>)

Homework: None

Application/Reflection: Students will use their previous knowledge of fiction to help them in analyzing the elements of plot in the story.

Assessment: 20 points for the plot summary of "Two Friends"

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Teacher Notes: The story "Two Friends" can be found at the following web address: <http://www.bartleby.com/313/5/2.html>. The teacher should encourage students to look closely and analyze what characteristics define friendship. They should compare the friendships depicted in popular movies to their own friendships. Are the characteristics the same or different? Why? How important are our friendships to our lives? Why? After discussing friendship, the teacher should refresh students on the elements of plot: setting, characters, basic situation, conflict, climax and resolution. Then as they read, the students should complete their own plot summary according to the aforementioned elements.

Day 2

Objective: Students will review their plot summaries. Then students will analyze and answer questions about the short story "Two Friends". Students will discuss and defend their answers when the class reviews the questions.

Journal Topic: Write about the friendship in the story. What was it like? How does it compare to you and your best friend's relationship?

Procedures:

- Students will write in their journals for the first 10 minutes of class
- Students will discuss their journal entries in whole class discussion
- Students will review their plot summaries and then turn them in to the teacher
- Students, in pairs, will work on questions (Worksheet 4:2) from "Two Friends"
- Students will turn in their questions and then discuss them in class

Homework: None

Application/Reflection: Students will use their previous knowledge of the story to analyze and answer the questions from the story.

Assessment: 30 points for the questions on "Two Friends"

Teacher Notes: Teacher should be sure to review the plot summary in detail with the students to make sure that they understand the elements of plot. Teacher should roam the room and facilitate as the students work in pairs on the questions from the story. Students may have difficulty with these questions but the teacher should encourage them to work as partners and find the answers within the story. If they struggle on the interpretation, analysis or evaluation then the teacher should encourage them to try to figure those out from what they read. The students will struggle with those answers that do not come directly from the text, but they need to learn the skills needed to evaluate material and develop their own answers.

Day 3

Objective: Students will compare and contrast the characteristics of friendship between two short stories. Students will devise a Venn diagram. Students will create an idea map of friendship.