



Differentiated Instruction & Understanding By Design Lesson Plan Format

Title: The Pearl novel study

Subject Matter Emphasis and Level: Reading/Lit. class—Middle School—8

Author: Wanda Swenson

School District: Sanborn Central School

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Brief Description of the Lesson/Unit:

This unit is a novel study of the novel *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck. After reading the book, the students should become aware of the affect of greed on the human condition and see how wealth can corrupt the most ethical person. I hope to instill an appreciation for John Steinbeck's style and his topics of writing. Through a variety of activities the students will understand character development, the use of symbolism in literature, and improve their vocabulary. Hopefully, these things will be assessed and applied to their own lives.

SD Content Standards:

This unit will apply the following SD content standards:

8.R.1.1.—Students are able to apply knowledge of word origins and derivations to extend vocabulary development.

8.R.1.2.—Students are able to use reading strategies to comprehend the meaning of words and text.

8.R.2.1.—Students are able to analyze and explain the author's use of literary elements.

8.R.2.2.—Students are able to describe the effect of the author's use of literary devices.

8.R.3.1.—Students are able to compare/contrast literature from different eras or cultures dealing with similar themes or conflicts.

8.R.4.1.—Students are able to determine the appropriate strategy to gather and organize information.

8.R.4.2.—Students are able to evaluate information about a topic gathered from a variety of sources.

8.R.4.3.—Students are able to combine new information with existing knowledge to form interpretations.

Stage 1: Identify Desired Results

1. What enduring understandings are desired?

Students will understand that peace and happiness cannot be bought.

Students will understand that good can succeed over evil.

Students will understand that even ethical people can be corrupted.

2. What essential questions will guide this unit and focus teaching/learning?

Can happiness be bought?

What would make you truly happy?

Is there good in all human beings?

Do you believe that good is stronger than evil?

Can ethical people be corrupted?

What constitutes an ethical person?

3. What key knowledge and skills will students acquire as a result of this unit?

Through reading this novel, the students will gain a better understanding of good versus evil, the corruption of man from greed, and the inherent goodness of the natural world. Students will also consider their own hopes and dreams for the future and what part wealth plays in fulfilling them. Students will improve their comprehension and vocabulary skills, develop analytic skills using reading strategies, and hone their writing and listening skills as they complete activities for the novel.

4. What prior learning, interests, misconceptions, and conceptual difficulties might be brought to this unit?

Students who are children of farmers, ranchers, or laborers will understand the human condition of the characters and the setting in the novel more easily. Most students of this age are quite involved with the wealth of the world—be it monetary or material, so that should create interest in the plot. Many middle school students feel doctors and religious

leaders are law abiding and have chosen their profession because of their compassion toward human beings, which also should pique their interest in the novel's basic premise.

Stage 2: Determine Acceptable Evidence

1. What evidence will show that students understand?

Performance Tasks:

The students will choose one of the following for a final performance task:

The students will divide into groups and rewrite *The Pearl* for the modern times of the 21st century. They will choose a setting, characters, plot, and theme to fit the modern day scenario. The rewrite will use a different venue for sudden wealth with a very different ending than the original novel. The group may use illustrations to enhance their rewrite. Group members will be assigned different tasks to complete this rewrite, depending on their talents and skills—writing, editing, revising, drawing, publishing, etc. This rewrite will be presented to the class using any format the group wishes to use.

In the novel, Kino hears many songs in his head. These songs provide him comfort and give him warnings coinciding with the events in his life. The students will write a 16-20 line poem reflecting on the positive and negative events in their lives. Then they will work in groups to find appropriate music to express the events stated in their poems and create an audio tape or audio presentation of their poem with the music. Each student will have their own presentation, but the group will work together to help each member complete the task.

Steinbeck's short novel is filled with symbols. The obvious one is the pearl, but there are many more. The students will write a 1-2 page, typed and double-spaced paper explaining the symbols they recognize in the story. They will give examples from the story to explain the symbols and reasons for their choices. In addition to this paper, the students will create a poster with illustrations of the symbols they wrote about. This poster must be colorful, labeled and neatly completed so it is pleasing to the eye and ready for display.

Other Evidence:

Quizzes, Tests, Prompts, Work Samples (summarized):

Vocabulary quizzes

Short-answer tests

Essay questions

Journal responses to teacher posed questions

Character web and VENN diagram

Plot diagram Accelerated Reader test

Unprompted Evidence: (observations, dialogues, etc.)

Large and small group class discussion
Teacher observations of students participation in group activities
Student oral responses and dialogue in groups

Student Self-Assessment

Group participation rubric for performance tasks
Accelerated Reader test
Student assessment of performance task using rubric

Stage 3: Plan Learning Experiences and Instruction

1. What sequence of teaching and learning experiences will equip students to develop and demonstrate the desired understandings?

Major Learning Activities:

Essential questions will be posted and discussed.
Expectations and class requirements will be discussed—including handouts.
Students will research and discuss info in John Steinbeck.
Students will read the novel with an audio tape.
The story elements—setting, plot, theme, etc., will be charted, discussed, and analyzed using VENN, web, and graphic aids.
Journal writing and responses will be incorporated.
Final performance tasks will be presented.

Materials & Resources (technology & print):

Novel—*The Pearl* by John Steinbeck
Accelerated Reader quiz for *The Pearl*
Cassette or CD player for music presentation of performance task
Computer to complete typed assignments
Poster size paper or tag board and crayons or markers

Management:

This novel unit will be instructed in the regular 8th grade classroom by the reading/language arts teacher. All assignments and assessments will be conducted in this classroom with this teacher. All students, no matter what their needs and abilities are should be able to read the novel and complete the assigned work with modifications by the classroom teacher. This unit should be completed in 2-3 weeks, depending on the calendar schedule and the ability level of the students.

Support Services and Special Teacher Notes:

Students may complete essay questions or vocabulary quizzes in the resource room, if needed. The Accelerated Reader test may be read to the student, if needed. Students may need guidance and some assistance on the final performance tasks.

Extensions and Adaptation:

Students have several options for the final performance tasks—they can choose the task which emphasizes their strongest skills. Most activities are done in cooperative groups with assigned tasks. Quizzes and tests are adapted to those with special needs. Activities done independently can be modified for special needs students also.

Stage 4: Plan Differentiation

2. What differentiated instruction strategies are being used in this lesson/unit?

Differentiated Process:

The novel is read using an audio tape.

Most activities are done in cooperative groups.

The final performance task is chosen and completed at the student's skill and ability level.

Quizzes and tests are modified/completed in an alternate setting.

Differentiated Content:

Many types of learning styles are used throughout the unit—listening, writing, drawing, performing, composing, etc.

Rubrics are used for teacher and self-evaluation.

Differentiated Product:

Students have a choice of the final performance task they want to use for assessment. Graphic aids are used to display knowledge of story elements, etc. Group presentations and reports



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