

Minnesota Writing Project

Demonstration Lesson Template

Title: Character Development

Grade appropriate:
Secondary

Approximate Length of time to complete lesson/unit:
Specific lesson = 1 day
Short story unit = 4 weeks

Learning objectives and significance of lesson:

Students will create a character.

Students will begin to develop their character through free writing.

Students will demonstrate an initial understanding of their characters through performing as their characters.

Students will begin to understand how their characters react around other people in a particular situation.

Brief summary/outline:

(Is this lesson an intro? middle? end? All or part of a unit? Does it scaffold a certain learning?)

For this project we will be immersed in a short story unit that takes place for four consecutive weeks of second semester. During this unit we look continuously at literary elements that characterize short stories while also paying close attention to what we studied first semester such as literary devices, word choice, voice, etc . The final project is an original, polished short story of at least three pages that will be published online. I have realized that the more time we spend on character development, the better the short stories are. When students develop characters really well, everything else seems to follow. The most important job I have in this unit is to help students get personal with their characters. I want my students feeling real, honest love or hate or pity or pride or disgust for their creations. This dramatic activity is one of the first activities that we do to really get to know our invented characters.

Related Resources:

Acting, Learning and Change by Jan Mandell

www.bonnettdemo.pbwiki.com

www.artslit.org

Possible extensions or adaptations for different purposes/student needs:

1. Do skit activity after character development project rather than/in addition to before.
2. To better understand texts, students can create skits with characters from literature rather than characters they create.
3. Instead of performing, students can engage in discussion with their groups.
4. Students could introduce their characters to the class before the performance.
5. Students can have more time to develop a polished skit or less time to create a more improvised skit.

For additional information, contact:

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