

Minnesota Writing Project

--- Demonstration Lesson Template ---

Title of lesson:

Poetry Through The Class and Social Power Lens

Suggested grade/age:

9th to 12th grade

Approximate time needed to complete lesson:

To teach multiple lenses, you will need about 2 weeks, depending on how many lenses you focus on and how your class periods are structured.

Learning objective(s) and significance of lesson:

(Why is this lesson important in the development of your students' skills or knowledge? What do you want students to learn or be able to do? What "best practice" does this lesson incorporate?)

- I've found that this lesson helps students verbalize their analysis because they can "try on" other views. It scaffolds well into their own analysis and their favorite lens.
- After completing discussion on the class and social power lens, students will be able to work in groups to analyze a poem, and then present their analysis to the rest of the class. This helps the students focus their discussion.
- Pushing students to develop their critical thinking skills by using literary criticism prepares students for a college environment where they need to hold their own opinions while also drawing on other thinkers and researchers.

Brief summary/outline of lesson:

(What steps do you take to implement this lesson in your classroom? Where is this lesson located in the school year or unit—beginning, middle, end? Does this lesson scaffold or build to a culminating assessment or demonstration of learning?)

Before this lesson: Students will have been introduced to the concept of literary lenses, and have worked through the reader response lens.

1. Students will read a news article and annotate it from their perspective.
2. We will discuss the major points of the class and social power lens.
3. Students will again read the news article and annotate it from the perspective of someone who is focusing on class and social power.
4. Students will read the poem "A Nation's Strength" by Ralph Waldo Emerson.
5. After analyzing the poem, students will break up into small groups and each group will have another poem. Teacher rotates throughout the room.
6. Students will present their poem to the class as a group.

Related Resources:

(What technology, articles, books, or supplies do you recommend?)

- Critical Encounters In High School English, teaching literary theory to adolescents by Deborah Appleman. Most material for this lesson came from her.
- Material for the classroom is best if it is current and matches your students.

Possible extensions or adaptations for different purposes/student needs:

- Writing a critical essay through the lens of their choice, or a more focused unit, like a research writing unit through the historical lens.
- Calling the lenses "glasses" and simply discussing different perspectives.

For additional information, contact:

sonia.olson@spps.org.