

Minnesota Writing Project

--- Demonstration Lesson Template ---

Title of lesson: Theme support

Suggested grades: 7-10 but higher if ESL/ELL

Approximate time to complete lesson is 7-10 minutes if mini-lessons. The lesson with picture book will be closer to 40 minutes because of the independent exit slip expected.

Learning Objective/significance of lesson: Theme is a difficult concept so it is ongoing with all literature units throughout the school year. The gradual release of theme after mini-lessons and short story unit to independent writing and evidence to support an emerging theme in their personal choice novels is the ultimate goal. To write a clear theme statement proving students comprehended and can support an emerging theme from beginning to middle to end of the book. The standards are met three times throughout the school year.

Brief summary/outline of lesson:

1. Whole group- define the literary term theme, watch a YouTube video (11:05 minutes) entitled "How to find a Theme" to use for common language among group. There are images and examples within the video used in whole group.
2. Several mini-lessons were provided in the presentation: Smartboard matching with theme statements and folk tales like *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Three Little Pigs* and *Cinderella*.
Another mini-lesson used for a monitor and adjust is with commercials like the Darth Vader Volkswagen commercial and Chrysler Eminem imported from Detroit. They can share out/pair-share.
3. A quiz-quiz-trade card review with novels' themes from previous literature circle novels. Laminated cards for a quick review for the middle of the independent reading book. Reminding them to jot notes from beginning to middle to end of the book as they continue.
4. Match theme statements to commercials was another group idea from my feedback sheets that I will employ.
5. Read "The Day of Ahmed's Secret" to the class and have them jot on their desks what they see, hear, feel as Ahmed moves throughout Cairo. Ultimately, he reveals his secret. Write an objective summary first. Then have them think of a theme as the book progressed. Write independently a theme statement for the picture book.

6. Ultimately, theme statement essays will be written for the novel *Night* as well as their independent novels and a novel choice if they are not reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*. These mini-lesson supports will hopefully yield stronger, more developed themes. Three pieces of evidence is capable, but four pieces of evidence to prove the emergence is even stronger.

I use the Smartboard, Expo markers, socks to wipe off the desks, and commercials from YouTube to vary where the messages are emerging.

Possible extensions:

Start with examples of cloze sentences to match the commercials (especially if we are 1:1 next year with headphones)

Use sentence starters like the formula: Subject + revelation= theme but I start and they write the revelation which is their opinion to prove with evidence. By providing more samples, students are likely to rise to those expectations.

Have co-teacher write theme statements on Smartboard to match ELL/ESL cultural fairy tales and folk tales.

Use Lee's 3 x 3 reflection to photo-essay to publish and check with gallery walk. His lesson got the gist of a novel, then portrayed in photos.

Expect students' personal narratives to have a strong theme in their stories as they will be in the following unit in October.

For additional information, contact:

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