

Minnesota Writing Project

--- Demonstration Lesson Template ---

Title of lesson: Redefining the Literacy Narrative

Suggested grade/age: Grade 12

Approximate time needed to complete lesson: 2-3 weeks

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?)

Students will explore the meaning of literacy through various mentor texts. This lesson incorporates speech writing and an oral presentation as students recount a literacy experience.

- **Emotional Purpose:** To encourage confidence in a tracked system where many students feel frustrated with their literacy skills.
- **Community Purpose:** To establish stronger relationships with peers who may have similar literacy experiences.

Standards addressed in this lesson:

Reading

- 11.5.1.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Writing

- 11.7.3.3 Write narratives and other creative texts to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Speaking and Listening

- 11.9.1.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions

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?)

- Pre-writing: Defining Literacy
 - Students will brainstorm characteristics of literacy and will refer back to this list throughout the unit
- Introduce and study a variety of mentor texts:
 - "Superman and Me" Sherman Alexie
 - ✦ Discussion questions: How does Sherman Alexie define literacy? What insights does the author gain about literacy?
 - "The Danger of a Single Story" Chimamanda Adichie
 - ✦ Discussion questions: How does Adichie define literacy? What does it remind you of? What insights does the author gain about the authors she was exposed to as a child?

- Sport Speeches: “Winning is Self-Defined” Janet Evans, *Remember the Titans*
 - ✦ Discussion Questions: What language (words or phrases) did the speaker use in the speech that showed she/he had literacy for her/his sport?
 - ✦ What structural and organizational techniques were used in the speech to demonstrate a competency of literacy? (i.e. thesis statement, repetition, literary elements)
- Reflect on the original definition of literacy and have students add or remove characteristics from the beginning of the unit.
- Brainstorm possible speech topics using one of the prompts below:
 - How did you learn to read and write?
 - How do you communicate with your friends? How does this influence your understanding of language?
 - Do you know another language? How did this influence your experience at school? At home? With friends/family?
 - Which teachers do you remember from your past who had a particular impact on you?
 - What is something that you are especially good at? Describe the activity using language associated with the activity. Define and explain any words or phrases the audience may not know.
- Choose topic and conduct an informal proposal through teacher conferencing
- Provide more examples of quality speeches and study how they are performed
- Discuss characteristics and structure of a speech
 - Introduction: Introduce your topic and how it relates to your definition of literacy, language, skill, or communication
 - Body: Supporting ideas, plot, structural techniques
 - Conclusion: Review major ideas and message
- Begin outlining speech
- Edit and revise speech in small groups and through teacher conferencing
- Practice speech
- Conduct speech

Related Resources:

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

- Copies of mentor texts mentioned above
- Computer, projector, and speakers for the TED Talk videos
- Reader’s/Writer’s notebook
- Highlighters
- Pens/Pencils
- Notecards

Possible extensions or adaptations for different purposes/student needs:

This lesson could be adapted to different formats. Students could use digital storytelling to capture the narrative, which may be more approachable. Refer to the speech as a “TED Talk” in order to reduce anxiety.

Other texts to consider:

- “Mother Tongue” Amy Tan
- *Lives on the Boundary* Mike Rose
- “Reading Without Words” in Linda Christensen’s *Reading and Rising*