Unit Plan

Title: A More Perfect Union

Description: Students will read, assess, and compare poems of conflict. They will in turn interpret into their own meaning and present via an Internet based multimedia program.

At a Glance

Grade Level: 8

Subject sort (for Web site index): Social Studies &/or Communication Arts

Subject(s): American History, Poetry

Topics: Civil War

Higher-Order Thinking Skills: Synthesis, Metacognition (knowledge of your own thoughts and the factors that influence your thinking)

Key Learnings: Interpretation of poetry,

Time Needed: 1-2 weeks, 1 hour daily

Background:

Unit Summary

The potential outcomes resulting from conflict become apparent as students read, assess and compare poetry addressing various forms of conflict; particularly on the subject of the Civil War.

This process will include classroom discussion on chosen poems of conflict. Students will share their thoughts and interpretations via a common forum (i.e. Edmodo, eBlogger, etc). They will then select their own poems addressing conflict or unity and interpret their meaning.

Historical conflicts and occurrences of unity becomes a reality for students as they develop a perception of the two concepts and the influence they have had on human equity. With this new reality students will present their own interpretation of selected poems via an Internet based multimedia software (i.e. VoiceThread, Prezi, etc).

Curriculum Framing Questions

- **Essential Question**
  How does conflict produce change in human equity?
- **Unit Questions**
  How is conflict or unity expressed in poetry?
- **Content Questions**
  What is conflict?
  What does it mean to be unified?
  What constitutes human equity?
  What words or stanzas in the poem(s) portray conflict?
  What words or stanzas in the poem(s) portray unity?
  What words or stanzas represent an outcome of the conflict?
  What kind, of any equity is represented or alluded to in the poem?

Assessment Processes

View and monitor progress with the unit rubric. This will help students and teachers remain focused on the goals. Provide feedback; assess thinking, processes, performances, and products; and reflect on learning throughout the learning cycle.

Instructional Procedures

Prior to Instruction:
1. Compile poetry resources from the Civil War era.
    a. textbooks
    b. printed materials
    c. Internet resources
2. Compile some significant Civil War stories to give a little background or refresher of the era.
3. Select a few key poems to evaluate as a group to demonstrate how to identify words or stanzas representing conflict or unity
4. Prepare Internet based forum for student participation (i.e. Edmodo, Google Docs) in:
    a. Brainstorming activity
    b. Journaling reflection questions

Getting Started
Discuss the Essential Question, ***How does conflict produce change in human equality?***
Engage students in a discussion about conflicts in their lives or other people's lives that have resulted in a change in equality (for the better or worse). Keep sharing of stories in third person format so as to not divulge personal information or cause embarrassment.

After a class discussion, have students individually reflect on the question in their journals on Google Docs.

Introduction to the Unit
1. Discuss the questions:
    a. *What is conflict?*
    b. *What is unity?*
2. As a group, write an operational definition of *Conflict and Unity*.
3. To illustrate the various forms conflict, compile a list of all types of conflict students have heard about.
    a. Keep it in third person to avoid the risk of divulging personal information to the class.
    b. Discuss the outcomes from the conflicts.
    c. Explore current and historical conflict found in the news or history books.
    d. Brainstorm as a class using Edmodo.

4. Use preselected poems with the class and together identify phrases & stanzas of conflict
   a. Highlight on an interactive whiteboard
   b. Google Docs
   c. Edmodo
5. Share the project, explaining that students will choose poems addressing the Civil War period and produce an interpretation using an Internet based multimedia tool
   a. VoiceThread,
   b. Prezi, etc.
6. As a class develop an interpretation of the stanzas using Edmodo
7. Later begin to focus on stories revolving around the Civil War era.
8. Provide resources to students to explore poetry of conflict or unity during the Civil War era
9. Students select own poems
10. With a partner select phrases/stanzas of conflict/unity
    a. In Google Docs create a two column table
    b. Enter original stanzas in left column
    c. Enter own interpretation of stanza/phrase
11. Collect images representing specific phrases/stanzas
    a. Cite pictures
    b. Create project folder

Set expectations by sharing the project rubric with students. After the rubric is reviewed, allow students time to explore resources and select poems involving conflict.

Homework Assignment
To begin exploring the Unit Question, *How is conflict or unity expressed in poetry?* Have students work with partners to evaluate their selected poems for keywords or stanzas displaying conflict or unity.

Using Google Docs, create a two column table with multiple rows. Write the original word or stanza portraying conflict or unity in the left column, then write your own interpretation of that phrase or stanza in the right column.

Provide sharing time in class.

Multimedia Presentation
Share and discuss the [presentation scoring guide](#).
Have each student combine his or her work into a multimedia presentation about conflict or unity.
The multimedia slides can be used to support an oral presentation if using Prezi

Wrapping Up
Have students revisit the essential question*, How does conflict produce change in human equity?*

Prerequisite Skills

- Internet search skills
- Basic keyboarding skills

Differentiated Instruction

Resource Student
- Make modifications as dictated in the student's IEP
- Preselect Web sites and other research material appropriate for the student's reading level
- Assist the student with note-taking techniques by making photocopies and having the student first highlight important information and then record that information in note style

Gifted Student
- Have the student compare the outcomes of conflict vs. unity in regards to human equality
- Call upon the student to assist with

English Language Learner
- Create templates to help the student with breaking down the poem
- Review the concepts of conflict and unity

Credits

Karen March participated in the Intel® Teach Program, which resulted in this idea for a classroom project. A team of teachers expanded the plan into the example you see here.

Content Standards and Objectives

Targeted Content Standards
Social Studies Standard
History
Standard B.8.5:
- Use historical evidence to determine and support a positiong about important political values, such as freedom, democracy, equality, or justice and express the positiong coherently.

Language Arts Standards
Key Ideas and details
- Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Craft and Structure
- Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Student Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify and interpret terms, phrases, stanzas in Civil War poetry representing conflict
- Identify and interpret terms, phrases, stanzas in Civil War poetry representing unity
- Analyze the effects of conflict on human equality
- Produce an interpretive rendition of a Civil War poem using an Internet-based multimedia program

Technology and Resources

Printed Materials

Poetry from Civil War Era

- Goldensohn, Lorrie. American war poetry : an anthology . New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.
- Mandelbaum, Allen and Jr., Robert . Richardson. Three centuries of American poetry, 1620-1923 . New York : Bantam Books, 1999.
- Marius, Richard. The Columbia book of Civil War poetry . New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.
- Ronald C. White, Jr. The eloquent president : a portrait of Lincoln through his words . New York: Random House, 2005.

Internet Resources

- "American Poetry - The Civil War And The Twilight Interval." LitFinder Contemporary Collection. Detroit: Gale, 2008. LitFinder. Gale. BadgerLink. 7 Dec. 2010 <http://go.galegroup.com/ps/start.do?p=LITF&u=badgerlink>.
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Technology—Hardware

- Internet connection for research and multimedia presentation development
- Headphones with microphones

Technology—Software

- Multimedia software for creating slideshow presentation
- Internet browser