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Personal Responsibility Unit

Ninth Grade

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Unit Rationale

"Responsibility is part of the social cement that holds a society together, gives it cohesiveness, assures continuity, and guarantees meaningfulness. One has a responsibility to one's self...but as the term is employed in our culture, at least, responsibility also implies obligations to others—truthfulness, caring, completion of tasks, and the like" (Phi Delta Kappa, "Teaching Students To Be Responsible," 283). An instructional unit on personal responsibility will focus on the student's individual responsibility, and his or her social responsibility, as well as the impact in which important decisions may have on his or her peer or social groups and society as a whole. Through literature centering on African and Native American mythology and American folklore, a student will learn that one's choices in life inevitably affect other people whether it is family, friends, teachers, classmates, or society at large. This unit will provide various examples of literary characters facing difficult, ambiguous situations in which they must make choices that could possibly alter lives forever.

"Developing responsibility involves:

- understanding and accepting one's own abilities and strengths
- accepting one's uniqueness
- believing in the importance of doing more than is expected
- believing in the importance and fun of behaving responsibly
- understanding the power and possibilities inherent in exercising choice
- making intelligent decisions" (Phi Delta Kappa, "Developing a Sense of Responsibility", 14).

This unit will provide examples of protagonists and antagonists that are forced to make choices in difficult, and sometimes ambiguous, situations, which result in both positive and negative consequences. The instruction will provide examples of how different characters face the consequences for their own decisions, and the repercussions of those actions.

In today's society there is a need for young persons to be equipped to make better choices for themselves, especially in the wake of recent outbreaks of teen tragedies in our country. When teenagers are suffering from abuse, ostracism, oppression and feelings of inferiority, neglect, and hopelessness, they need to know how to cope with those feelings responsibly. Teenagers need to be educated enough to at least make the intelligent decision to talk to someone, rather than taking matters into their own hands.

Importantly, the unit will show examples of situations in which the best, most responsible decision is ambiguous to the main character. In these examples characters will employ critical thinking skills in considering what might be the best decision or decisions that the characters should make in that situation and in others like it. In these instances, the students will be asked to think of similar situations that might call for different kinds of decision making. Students will be encouraged to frame these similar situations in contexts much like the problems they face in their day to day routines within the high school society. This will help sharpen students' decisions making skills and critical thinking skills, and in turn, help prepare them for utilizing such decision making tools in the future.

The instructional unit will show students, through literature, a positive self-image of characters who have taken responsibility for themselves and proven to be strong, mature people with the ability to make healthy self-choices. It will also show the consequences of those who made poor or irrational decisions and the resulting negative consequences of those decisions. Hopefully, these examples will create a desire in the student to imitate such positive and healthy decision making skills.

The unit will provide students with a mixture of cultural diversity through a range of literature centering on folklore and fables. By viewing the means by which people of differing cultures maneuver in stressful situations, the student will be able to develop a greater sense of self by acknowledging how he or she could respond in a similar situation.

The literature will provide students with a sense of duty and responsibility. It will provide them with tools that will aid them in making responsible decisions. It is a goal of the unit that students will learn from mistakes of Trickster characters in the stories of folklore and fables, rather than kids being forced to learn from their own mistakes. Another goal is to motivate students to become more self-reliant, to be able to make firm, conscious, positive decisions, and to stand strong in them. Students will be able to parallel decision-making skills utilized in the literature with decision-making skills of today as a result of studying this unit.

The instructional unit will teach students to carefully consider alternatives and possibilities in a character's situation, as well as their own, rather than making a quick assessment and judgment of the situation. With this in mind, students will be able to develop their own personal code of duty and responsibility in order for them to "understand the power and possibilities of exercising choice". According to Smagorinsky, students "will be more likely to abide by rules that they develop than by rules that others try to instill in them (Smagorinsky, 1999). The

instructional unit seeks to provide students with the tools necessary to create their own code of personal responsibility by teaching them different methods of critical thinking and decision making. A unit plan detailing such skills will enable the students to make rational, well thought decisions for themselves. By studying the folklore and fable texts, students will better be able to understand the methods by which others come to their decisions, and will be able to compare those to methods to those they might implement in creating their own code of responsibility.

The instruction will attempt to show "the fun involved in behaving responsibly", and how difficult situations can seem less so when responsible options are considered. By highlighting the importance of personal responsibility the unit plan hopes to provide teenagers with a sense of duty and desire to be accountable for themselves. It hopes to make students more confident in positive decisions and show that such decisions become easier with implementation and frequent practice. As in most successful lessons, the unit will attempt to focus aspects of personal responsibility in context of the students realistic, daily experiences; at the same time making the concepts fun, useful, and simple to understand in context of their own lived experiences.

COUNTER-ARGUMENT

A unit taught on personal responsibility is not intended by the teacher to infringe upon the moral teachings of parents or guardians in any way. The unit's goal is to present students, through literature, with a variety of situations that would call for effective means of decision-making. According to Robert Knoop, "Students need to be taught that they are accountable for their own actions and, to some extent, for the actions of others" (Education Horizons, 1997).

The unit will not center lessons on teaching moral values to the students; rather, the unit focuses on teach different ways in which they could handle complex situations in order to make positive, healthy choices for themselves. The unit in now attempts to instill a certain set or values or principles within the students; rather, it seeks to simply teach them the importance of personal responsibility and help them to develop their own code of principles in relation to make responsible, mature, and intelligent decisions.

Likewise, the unit's purpose is not to change the character of the student as it exists by forcing particular characteristics or beliefs on him or her. It seeks to create and atmosphere of understanding in relation to personal responsibility. As well it seeks to emphasize the importance of personal responsibility, and how its positive consequences can affect an entire society for the betterment of that society as a large community. Smagorinsky says that "character is something that is part of the environment in which human relationships are established and developed," and thus it can be viewed as a "community issue" (Smagorinsky, 1999). Through this unit we hope to show students that each individual's positive personal actions can work together to create a cohesive society of responsible individuals, and that by being responsible and modeling positive actions, mature, responsible teenagers have the power to influences their peers to act the same. Students can, in turn, help one another to be accountable for their decisions and resulting actions. Robert Knoop says, "Students need to be taught they are accountable for their own actions, and to some extent, for the actions of others" (Education Horizons, 1997).

Materials

"The Cat in the Hat" by Dr. Suess

"The Devil and Daniel Webster" by Stephen Vincent Binet

The Odyssey by Homer

"Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog" by Mark Twain

Selections from Winnebago Trickster Cycle

"The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg" by Mark Twain

Unit Goals and Rubrics

JOURNAL

Students will complete writing assignments for ten minutes during some classes and will finish the journal for homework, if necessary. Students will be asked to reflect on the questions they have generated as a result of reading and classroom discussions. Students will be given the option of choosing from three questions for each entry, provided by themselves and peers, to contemplate and discuss in their journals. The journal should not be a summary of the text, but students may use quotes or ideas from the text to support their own ideas or reflections. Reflections may not necessarily be organized in a particular format, but may be formed as a spontaneous outpouring of ideas or possible answers to major questions. Students may include other questions generated as a result of thinking about the specific question posed to the student. However, they must specifically address the original question posed. Journals may be handwritten or typed and should be compiled in a single notebook to be taken up, graded, and returned to the student with feedback from the teacher. Journals will be graded weekly, and they are allowed no more than two entries that they do not want the teacher to read. Entries that student do not wish to be read must be clearly marked as DO NOT READ and highlighted at the top of the page.

Explanation of "DO NOT READ"

The DO NOT READ is not to be used as an excuse for a shoddy journal entry. I assure you, I will glance at your DO NOT READ entries to ensure that you have on written; however, I **WILL NOT** read them. The purpose of the DO NOT READ entry is to protect and keep your personal life **your** personal life. If you do not place a DO NOT READ caption at the top of your journal entry, "Keep in mind that I am required to share any thoughts or suggestions of violence, substance abuse, or other harmful behavior with the school counselors" (Smagorinsky 6.5).

An 'A' Journal submission must include the following:

- Properly headed journal entries including name, date, class period, and journal entry number.
- Entries at least a half page in length, although emphasis in assessment is on quality above quantity.
- Students must show a serious attempt to address the question posed with good,

legitimate support in relation to his or her own lived experience and the text.

- Includes all five entries with no more than two pages labeled and highlighted as "DO NOT READ".

A 'B' Journal submission must include the following:

- Properly headed journal entries including name, date, class period, and journal entry number.
- Entries at least a half page in length, although emphasis in assessment is on quality above quantity.
- Students show a serious attempt to address the question posed with some, legitimate support from both his or her own lived experience and the text.
- Includes all five entries with no more than two pages labeled and highlighted as "DO NOT READ".

A 'C' Journal submission should include the following:

- Entries without proper headings.
- Entries in length of approximately one-third a page.
- Students show a general understanding of the question with little attempt to address the question posed, but may or may not include information from his or her own lived experience or the text.
- Includes all five entries with no more than two pages labeled and highlighted as "DO NOT READ".

A 'D' Journal submission should include the following:

- Entries in length of one-third of a page or less.
- Entries do not include proper heading.
- Student shows little effort in attempting to answer the question posed neither does he or she attempt to include support from lived experience nor the text.
- Journal does not include a total of five entries.

An 'F' Journal submission should include the following:

- Entries in length of less than one-third of a page.
- Entries do not include proper headings.
- Student exhibits no effort in addressing the question posed.
- Journal includes three or less entries. May or may not include two pages labeled and highlighted as "DO NOT READ".

PARABLE / FABLE PROJECT

Students will create their own parable or fable based upon the examples of those we have read and studied in class. They will be able to model their own text after those works, but will be encouraged to create their own, original parable or fable. Students will be required to produce a

text in the form of a moral tale, with proper elements of a parable or fable, which have been discussed in detail in prior class instruction. Students will submit their created work in the form of a written text. It may be in the format of a narrative story, poem, play or any other feasible written means by which the student feels they could better express themselves. The written text must be submitted for assessment to the teacher.

For the second part of the project students will be required to create a skit, or other type of enactment of his or her story. This part of the project will be, for the most part, student decided and created. He or she may wish to work in groups or independently and can choose the mode of enactment in which they would like to present their moral tale. The enactment will account for fifteen percent of the total project, which will be assessed on an one hundred percent scale. Late papers will be accepted, but will result in a deduction of one letter grade per day late. Late presentations will result in a zero.

An 'A' project must include the following:

WRITTEN TEXT

Format

- Cover page including name, date, course name, class period, and title of the text.
- Title must be creative and say something about the text.
- Written text in length of three to five (no more than five) typed, double-spaced, pages in 12 point, Times New Roman font with standard one inch margins; or may be handwritten in length of five to eight, college ruled, double-spaced (skip one line) pages.
- If handwritten it must be printed clearly and legibly.
- Proper format in terms of student choice of poem, narrative, play, or other means of written expression. For example, a play must be divided into acts in an organized, logical sequence appropriate to the story line. A poem must include stanza paragraphs and a rhyme scheme.

Content

- Must include several elements of typical myth or fable.
- Moral of the story must be explicit upon first reading of the text.
- Should include proper, well-developed presentation of the moral dilemma, along with development of situations, possible choices, resolution, and consequences.
- Should include a proper introduction, climax, and resolution.
- Should include proper development of setting, tone, and plot.
- Logical development of events should take place.
- Appropriate and proper character development and description. Audience should maintain a visual image of the story the writer is presenting.
- Actions of characters should coincide with personality, unless proper epiphany or learning experience is presented along with character's change in thinking, acting, or personal characteristics.

Mechanics

- Must maintain correct rules of grammar usage.
- Must maintain correct rules of punctuation.
- Must spell words correctly.

ENACTMENT

- Must be organized.
- Must clearly present the whole moral tale as intended by the writer.
- All participants must fulfill their intended roles in the skit or presentation. Should be obvious that each participant is putting forth his or her best effort.
- Presentation is maximum of ten minutes.

A 'B' Project must include the following:

WRITTEN TEXT

Format

- Cover page including name, date, course name, class period, and title of the text.
- Title must be creative and say something about the text.
- Written text in length of three to five (no more than five) typed, double-spaced, pages in 12 point, Times New Roman font with standard one inch margins; or may be handwritten in length of five to eight, college ruled, double-spaced (skip one line) pages.
- If handwritten it must be printed clearly and legibly.
- Proper format in terms of student choice of poem, narrative, play, or other means of written expression. For example, a play must be divided into acts in an organized, logical sequence appropriate to the story line. A poem must include stanza paragraphs and a rhyme scheme.

Content

- Must include some elements of typical myth or fable.
- Moral of the story must be implicit upon first reading of the text.
- Should include a developed presentation of the moral dilemma, along with development of situations, possible choices, resolution, and consequences.
- Should include a proper introduction, climax, and resolution.
- Should include adequate development of setting, tone, and plot.
- Logical development of events should take place.
- Appropriate character development and description. Audience should maintain a visual image of the story the writer is presenting.
- Actions of characters should coincide with personality, unless proper epiphany or learning experience is presented along with character's change in thinking, acting, or personal characteristics.
- Mechanics
- Must maintain most correct rules of grammar usage.

- Must maintain most correct rules of punctuation.
- Must spell words correctly.

ENACTMENT

- Must be organized.
- Must clearly present the whole moral tale as intended by the writer.
- All participants must fulfill their intended roles in the skit or presentation. Should be obvious that each participant is putting forth his or her best effort.
- Presentation is maximum of ten minutes.

A 'C' project should include the following:

WRITTEN TEXT

Format

- Cover page including name, date, course name, class period, and title of the text.
- Title should be creative and say something about the text.
- Written text in length of less than three to five typed, double-spaced, pages in 12 point, Times New Roman font with standard one inch margins; or may be handwritten in length of less than five to eight, college ruled, double-spaced (skip one line) pages.
- If handwritten it must be printed clearly and legibly.
- Adequate format in terms of student choice of poem, narrative, play, or other means of written expression.

Content

- Includes few elements of typical myth or fable.
- Moral of the story may or may not be implicit upon first reading of the text.
- Should include a somewhat developed presentation of the moral dilemma.
- Should include a proper introduction, climax, and resolution.
- Should include adequate development of setting, tone, and plot.
- Logical development of events should take place.
- Adequate character development and description

Mechanics

- Maintains some correct rules of grammar usage.
- Maintains some correct rules of punctuation.
- Must spell most words correctly.

ENACTMENT

- Must be organized.
- Must clearly present the whole moral tale as intended by the writer.
- All participants must fulfill their intended roles in the skit or presentation. Should be

obvious that each participant is putting forth his or her best effort.

- Presentation is maximum of ten minutes.

A 'D' Project should include the following:

WRITTEN TEXT

Format

- Cover page does not include name, date, course name, class period, and title of the text.
- Title is not creative.
- Written text in length of less than three to five typed, double-spaced, pages in 12 point, Times New Roman font with standard one inch margins; or may be handwritten in length of less than five to eight, college ruled, double-spaced (skip one line) pages.
- If handwritten it must be printed clearly and legibly.
- Somewhat adequate format in terms of student choice of poem, narrative, play, or other means of written expression.

Content

- Includes very few elements of typical myth or fable.
- Moral of the story is weak and unclear.
- Does not include proper transitions between introduction, climax, and resolution.
- Does not include adequate development of setting, tone, and plot.
- Logical development of events does not take place.
- Inadequate character development and description

Mechanics

- Maintains few correct rules of grammar usage.
- Maintains few correct rules of punctuation.
- Does not spell most words correctly.

ENACTMENT

- Must be organized.
- Must clearly present the whole moral tale as intended by the writer.
- All participants must fulfill their intended roles in the skit or presentation. Should be obvious that each participant is putting forth his or her best effort.
- Presentation is maximum of ten minutes.

A 'F' Project should include the following:

WRITTEN TEXT

Format

- No cover page, or cover page does not include name, date, course name, class period, and title of the text.

- Written text in length of less than three typed, double-spaced, pages in 12 point, Times New Roman font with standard one inch margins; or may be handwritten in length of less than five, college ruled, double-spaced (skip one line) pages.
- Is not printed clearly and legibly. Paper appears to be the first draft.
- Inadequate format in terms of student choice of poem, narrative, play, or other means of written expression.

Content

- Includes no elements of typical myth or fable.
- Moral of the story cannot be derived.
- Does not include introduction, climax, and resolution.
- Does not include development of setting, tone, and plot.
- No logical development of events takes place.
- Little character development and description

Mechanics

- Does not maintain correct rules of grammar usage.
- Does not maintain correct rules of punctuation.
- Does not spell words correctly.

ENACTMENT

- Is inappropriate or lewd for class presentation.
- Is not organized.
- Does not clearly present the whole moral tale.
- All participants must fulfill their intended roles in the skit or presentation. Should be obvious that each participant is putting forth his or her best effort.
- Presentation is maximum of ten minutes.

SUMMARY QUIZ

Instead of pop quizzes you will be given random summary quizzes. You will have ten minutes to complete a summary quiz. **Do not rely on your peers from other classes to inform you when we have quizzes!** Quizzes will be administered randomly; that is, varying classes will take their quizzes on fluctuating days. In the quiz you will summarize your readings/assignments from the previous night. The purpose of the summary quiz is to ascertain if you completed your homework. On the quiz, you will not "bullet list" characters, times, or other petty details; rather, you will prove to me that you finished your assignment by explaining, in brief but concise detail, what occurred and to whom or what it occurred . During this unit on personal responsibility, you should ensure that you include how morals, ethics, and principles are incorporated into your assignment.

An 'A' summary quiz will include the following:

- Conclusive proof that the student completed his or her homework by concisely explaining

- what occurred in the assignment.
- Strong and extensive effort by the student to make sense of the assignment.
- Extensive effort to explain how morals were incorporated into the assignment.
- Writing covers important aspects of the selection.
- Significance of the characters/events in the plot.

A 'B' summary quiz will include the following:

- Adequate proof that the student completed his or her homework by accurately explaining
- what occurred in the assignment.
- Strong effort by the student to make sense of the assignment.
- Extensive effort to explain how morals were incorporated into the assignment.
- Writing covers important aspects of the selection.
- Significance of the characters/events in the plot.

A 'C' summary quiz will include the following:

- Proof that the student completed his or her homework by explaining
- what occurred in the assignment.
- Effort by the student to make sense of the assignment.
- Effort to explain how morals were incorporated into the assignment.
- Writing covers some aspects of the selection.
- Significance of the characters/events in the plot.

A 'D' summary quiz will include the following:

- Little proof that the student completed his or her homework by explaining
- what occurred in the assignment.
- Minimal effort by the student to make sense of the assignment.
- Minimal effort to explain how morals were incorporated into the assignment.
- Writing covers some aspects of the selection.
- Difficulty relating the significance of the characters/events in the plot.

A 'F' summary quiz will include the following:

- No proof that the student completed his or her homework.
- Minimal effort by the student to make sense of the assignment.
- No explanation of how morals were incorporated into the assignment.
- Writing covers no aspects of the selection.
- No linking of the significance of the characters/events to the plot.

PORTFOLIO

The portfolio will encompass all that the student has done over the course of the unit on tricksters. The exhibits need not be a representation of the student's best work, rather the exhibits can be representations that the student feels enabled him or her to come to a better understanding of the unit. Quality, not quantity is the key to this final project. It will take the place of a final exam for the class. Students may include rough drafts, scripts, essays, and presentations of moral debates done as separate grades in the unit.

The portfolio should include:

- Title page with name and date
- Minimum of three exhibits chosen by the student—once again, these need not be the best representation as in a process portfolio.

- Students may include outside resources.

- Outside resources must be extremely convincing as true supplements to students' learning.

- A limit of two outside resources may be included.

- These outside resources will be graded as extra credit; however, it should not be assumed that credit will be given based on the fact that the resources there. The resource must show strong relevance to the topic and to the learning of the student.

- Students must produce a synthesis paper of no less than 750 words detailing why the exhibits were chosen, what the exhibits meant in terms of aiding in understanding of the topic, and why the exhibits were organized as they were.
- Synthesis paper must be typed—lab time will be provided.
- Exhibits must be in a folder or arranged in an artistic manner that allows for ease of grading and understanding set up.

An "A" Portfolio will include:

- Title page with name, date, class period, and title or theme of the portfolio
- Minimum of three exhibits, not including extra credit outside resources
- Synthesis paper of no less than 750 words that gives strong support of the argument of why exhibits were chosen, how the exhibits aided in understanding of the topic, and why the exhibits were organized as they were.

-Synthesis must be typed.

-Synthesis must contain a strong command of grammar usage, mechanics, and spelling (no more than two grammar/spelling mistakes).

-Synthesis must provide rich, thick detail of exhibits chosen—do not

just assume that the teacher knows exactly what was produced and what it means.

- Exhibits and synthesis paper must be in a folder or arranged in an artistic manner to allow

for ease of grading.

A "B" Portfolio will include:

- Title page with name, date, class period, and title or theme of the portfolio.
- Minimum of three exhibits, not including extra credit outside resources.
- Synthesis paper of no less than 750 words that gives good support of the argument of why exhibits were chosen, how the exhibits aided in understanding of the topic, and why the exhibits were organized as they were.

-Synthesis must be typed.

-Synthesis must contain a good command of grammar usage, me-

chanics, and spelling (no more than 3 grammar/spelling mistakes).

-Synthesis must provide thick detail of exhibits chosen

- Exhibits and synthesis paper must be in a folder or arranged in an artistic manner to allow for ease of grading.

A "C" Portfolio will include:

- Title page with name, date, class period, and title or theme of portfolio.
- Minimum of three exhibits, not including extra credit outside sources.
- Synthesis paper of less than 750 words that gives a general description of why exhibits were chosen, how the exhibits aided in understanding of the topic, and why the exhibits were organized as they were.

-Synthesis must be typed.

-Synthesis contains an adequate command of grammar usage, mechanics,

and spelling (no more than four grammar/spelling mistakes).

-Synthesis provides a general detail of exhibits chosen.

- Exhibits and synthesis paper must be in a folder or arranged in an artistic manner to allow for ease of grading.

A "D" Portfolio will include:

- Title page with name, date, class period, and title or theme of the portfolio.
- Minimum of two to three exhibits, not including extra credit or outside sources.
- Synthesis paper of less than 500 words that gives little description of why
- exhibits were chosen, how the exhibits aided in understanding of the topic, and why the exhibits were organized as they were.

-If synthesis is not typed, it must be handwritten, printed legibly.

-Synthesis contains little command of grammar usage, mechanics, and

spelling (4-5 grammar/spelling mistakes).

-Synthesis provides little detail of exhibits chosen.

- Exhibits and synthesis paper not arranged in a manner that allows for ease of grading (i.e. paper clip all of the exhibits and synthesis paper together, no organization to the file).

An "F" Portfolio will include:

- No title page.
- Less than two exhibits.
- Synthesis paper of less than 300 words that gives no description of why exhibits were chosen, how the exhibits aided in understanding of the topic, and why the exhibits were organized as they were.

-Synthesis is handwritten

-Synthesis contains poor command of grammar usage, mechanics, and spelling (5+ grammar/spelling mistakes).

-Synthesis provides no detail of exhibits chosen.

- Exhibits and synthesis paper not in a folder or arranged in a manner that allows for ease of grading.

Introductory Activities

Activity One: Icebreaker

The purpose of this activity is to acquaint the students with each other. The activity is directed toward the freshman class on their first day of school. The purpose is also to get them started with collaborative learning and oral presentation for the class.

Students will be handed a roll of toilet paper. They are to take at least three squares from the roll and pass the roll to the next person, without knowing why they are taking the three squares. They will pair up with each other (teacher will pair off randomly), and they will use the squares to identify three things about themselves and write the things on a sheet of paper. The partner will then introduce the student to the class and tell the three things learned about his or her partner.

Activity Two: Introduction of the Trickster Figure—The Cat in the Hat

Students will be given a concrete example of a Trickster figure—one that they are already familiar with. In this brief activity students will read The Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss.

Activity Three: Beginning the Fable Writing Process

The purpose of Activity Three is to prepare the students for the assignment of writing and presenting their own fables. It introduces them to the processes by which they can create their own fable by first giving them examples of "morals" to follow and subsequent sentences that allow them to generate the story. This only serves as an introduction to writing a fable. When

they create their own fable, they can use this activity to help them with the writing form. The fable that is part of the unit goal will be his or her own; the students will not be provided with a "moral" to focus their writing.

Part One:

From the following sentences, choose one that you would like to center a short paragraph around:

1. People should attempt to accept others for who they are—not what they look like.
2. One should never try to change just to "fit in."
3. You should stand up for what you believe.

Part Two:

Now, choose a few sentences from the following and add a few of your own to combine sentences from Parts One and Two thus forming a "story" that makes sense.

1. Susie just moved to town, and she has no friends.
2. Johnny asked her out; she wants to say, "Yes," but she knows that the ever-popular Johnny likes to "party."
3. Billy is one of the most popular jocks at his high school.
4. He watches as some "toughs" rough up Cecil, a known social degenerate.
5. He thinks she is pretty cool, even though she is "different" from the "normal" girls.
6. She thinks he is a "dweeb;" he does not look or act like any of the other boys.
7. He can't understand why he was not helped; after all, he would have given aid if he could have.
8. Her friends want her to wear only 'X' brand clothing; after all, only 'X' is fashionable.

Weekly Lesson Plans

These lessons are based on conventionally scheduled 55-minute classes; the week begins the new school year.

WEEK ONE Goals: (1) To acquaint students to school and class.

(2) To begin assessing students' reading and writing abilities.

(3) To introduce students to the Trickster unit utilizing history and the basic children's tale.

(4) To introduce students to the process of class discussion and generating questions

(5) To introduce students to collaborative learning, Daily Oral Language Skills, and journal writing.

DAY 1:

10m. Attendance. Take time to get names correct and put names with faces.

10m. Issue books. Record book inventory information.

10m. Hand out syllabus. Explain thoroughly. Answer any questions.

20m. Student inventory survey consisting of questions regarding personal information, literary interests, etc. Explain and answer any questions.

Survey Inventory

Students will answer questions about themselves as readers:

1. How often do you read?
2. What do you like to read? (books, novels, magazines, poetry, etc)
3. Did you read this summer? If so, what did you read?
4. Do you enjoy reading? If not, why not?
5. Have you had a bad experience with reading that led you to not want to read?
6. What could be done to make reading more of an enjoyable experience for you?

5m. Collect surveys; allow students to prepare for next class.

DAY 2:

5m. Housekeeping – attendance, announcements, etc.

25m. Paired personal introduction activity. Students randomly paired. Teacher asks kids to tear several individual squares from a roll of tissue paper (specify that they should take at least 3 squares) - without students knowing why. For each square the student has they must know some bit of personal information about their partner, must remember that information, and be able to introduce that person to the class using the details they discover during the activity. Allow students to talk for at least 10m, then introduce one another for approximately 15m. Kids may take notes if necessary.

10m. Introduction to and explanation of DOL – Daily Oral Language skills activities that will be done immediately each day, as soon as the student gets to class. They will be constructed as worksheets and may include SAT vocabulary, grammar, or skills and will be used by the teacher as a means by which to take inventory of students' prior knowledge of those basic skills. Poor performance on these activities

may show a need for work on such skills. This will also allow time for teacher to take roll and conduct other housekeeping duties. Students will have 5m to complete the worksheets, will exchange with a partner, and will discuss (for 5m.) as a class any questions or problems regarding the activity.

Students will complete first DOL – a vocabulary worksheet. Exchange. Check answers. Discuss answers and any resulting questions.

10m. Daily journal topic explained. Students respond to one of a choice of three questions regarding the student inventory survey.

5m. Flex time; allow students to prepare for next class.

DAY 3:

10m. DOL. Housekeeping. Discussion of DOL.

5m. Introduction to unit in form of teacher lecture. Distribute handout on the Trickster character and his history in literature.

5m. Begin discussion "What is a *good* question?" Have students generate characteristics of good, discussion-provoking questions. List on board. Have students note and keep list in notebooks.

10m. Read aloud "The Cat in the Hat" by Dr. Seuss.

10m. Open-ended, whole-class discussion of the text in terms of the Trickster, using questions generated by the students.

10m. Respond to one of three journal topics resulting from class discussion.

5m. Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Read "The Devil and Daniel Webster" by Stephen Vincent Binet and generate at least 3 good, open-ended discussion questions regarding the text.

DAY 4:

10m. DOL. Housekeeping. Discuss DOL.

10m. Summary Quiz over "The Devil and Daniel Webster". Collect.

10m. Randomly group students in sets of 4 or less. Conduct small group discussions based on students' own questions done for yesterday's HW. During this time teacher notes whether students have their HW.

10m. Reconvene as whole class. Continue discussion.

10m. Students respond to one of three questions generated from class

discussion.

5m. Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

DAY 5:

10m. DOL. Housekeeping. Discuss DOL.

5m. Free writing: Students write about what they think makes a good reader. Collect. Will prepare handout for class and conduct discussion on Monday.

5m. Address any questions regarding previous day's discussion. If none, move on.

10m Introduction to *The Odyssey* including history and background information in the form of teacher lecture.

10m. Begin reading *The Odyssey* aloud. Both students and teacher participates. May or may not assign parts.

10m. Journal topic: Respond by including any thoughts, opinions, or possible predictions you may foresee for *The Odyssey*.

5m. Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

WEEK TWO Goals: (1) *Begin The Odyssey*

(2) Begin Multi-Media Representation Activities

DAY 1:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance.

20m Begin reading Part One of *The Odyssey* (pp. 892-900 end at line 168).

20m Discuss student generated journal questions from prior week.

Clarify characters, settings, tone, etc. if necessary and discuss any other questions about the text.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Students will generate at least 3 good questions, which may be selected as options for journal writing.

DAY 2:

10m DOL . Housekeeping. Attendance.

20m Continue reading *The Odyssey* aloud in class (pp. 900-908).

10m Discuss reading selection for the day.

10m Journal writing, using student generated discussion questions.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Read pp. 911-918 of *The Odyssey*.

DAY 3:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance.

10m Summary quiz over *The Odyssey* pp.911-918.

10m Collect Summary Quizzes. Discuss reactions to the quiz and any confusion kids may have regarding the text that has been read so far.

10m Read remainder of Part One of *The Odyssey* aloud in class.

10m Introduce Multi-media Activity: The purpose of the Multi-media Activity is for students to demonstrate in some creative way a general understanding of the plot of *The Odyssey* thus far, or illustrate their own interpretation of the events that have taken place. Students may draw a picture, write a poem, do a dance, or create any other imaginative type of multi-media to express their understanding or interpretation of Part One of *The Odyssey*. The activity will be completed within a given amount of time (approximately 35 minutes) during the next day of class. Crayons, colored pencils, markers, construction paper, etc. will be supplied for the students, but they will be encouraged to bring any other materials they might need to create their project.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Think about possibilities for the Multi-media Activity to be completed tomorrow, and prepare any materials that may be needed in order to create it.

DAY 4:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance.

35m Students work on Multi-media Activity. Teacher will circulate room, offering assistance and ensuring all outside materials brought from home are appropriate and safe for the activity. Students will clearly label their activities with a title, and should write their names on the activities

somewhere so that the teacher can identify them. However, activities will be displayed in the classroom and they may choose to place their names somewhat inconspicuously if they like.

10m Wrap-up activities. Clean up, making sure all materials are in proper places for storage.

HW: Students may complete activities at home if necessary.

DAY 5:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance.

10m Some students may volunteer to present their completed Multi-media activities to the class (allow for approximately five students having two minutes each) and explain how it expresses their own understanding or interpretation of Part One of *The Odyssey*. All activities will be on display so that they may be enjoyed by all.

10m Presentation of Multi-media projects should provide a good segue for a large group discussion of Part One of *The Odyssey* as a whole. The class may elaborate on their own current understandings and interpretations as allotted for in the Multi-media project, or the discussion may lead to further conversation in regard to other concerns students may be having about the text. Wrap up Part One.

20m Begin reading Part Two of *The Odyssey* pp. 926-936 aloud in class.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Students will generate at least 3 questions to be used later for discussion and possible journal writing topics.

WEEK THREE Goals: (1) Conclude *The Odyssey*

(2) Connection between Trickster characters and personal responsibility

(3) Watch film version of *The Odyssey*

(4) Begin next section on Trickster figures

DAY 1:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance

20m Read pp. 937-945 of *The Odyssey* aloud in class.

20m Wrap-up of *The Odyssey*. Class discussion in terms of personal responsibility issues - which have most likely been brought up in prior class discussions – in light of the conclusion of the text. Discuss final reactions and responses to the text in terms of the Trickster character

as related to issues of personal responsibility.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for the next class.

HW: Journal writing in which each student responds to one of the question / options generated from homework or class discussion in relation to final responses or reflections that may have come about as a result of class discussion.

DAY 2:

5m Housekeeping. Attendance.

45m Watch film version of *The Odyssey*.

5m Note comparisons between the actual epic and the film version. Allow students to prepare for next class.

DAY 3:

5m Housekeeping. Attendance.

45m Watch film version of *The Odyssey*.

5m Note comparisons. Allow students to prepare for next class.

DAY 4:

5m Housekeeping. Attendance.

45m Finish watching film version of *The Odyssey*.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

DAY 5:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance.

10m Introductory Activity to Goal: "Creating Your Own Fable" (See Introductory Activity Two). Students will form three relatively small groups during this time in order to complete the activity.

5m After completing the activity, teacher will explain the general form of the fable and its typical elements.

20m Read aloud in class "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog" by Mark Twain.

5m Discuss the story in terms of the students reactions and responses.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

WEEK FOUR Goals: (1) Student generation of Trickster fables

(2) Group collaboration

(3) Present fables

DAY 1:

10M DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance.

Remind students of Portfolio Project introduced in Week One that will be due at the end of Week Six. Distribute explanation sheet and Portfolio Rubric.

15m Return to discussion of "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog," focusing on the story with emphasis of its aspects of fable, and characterization relating to the Trickster. Wrap-up.

10m Distribute information sheet which introduces the "Creating Your Own Fable" goal, and outlines expectations for students by providing a very general rubric, and explain. Further discuss the format of the fable and possible tips for students to use in going about writing their own fable. Answer any questions in relation to the goal.

5m Students are to be thinking about possible narratives for their own fable, and decide whether they will work independently or in a group. Groups must be decided and names turned in by next day of class.

10m Students begin working on creating their own written fable, and are encouraged to begin the formal processes of writing including brainstorming and creating a jot-list or outline to get started writing.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

DAY 2:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance.

25m Students may work independently or in groups on writing their own fables. Students are encouraged to continue the writing process by completing a first rough draft today in class.

10m Students will exchange those written rough drafts with peers - regardless of how complete or incomplete they may be – in order to conduct a short peer-editing "workshop" to proofread the written text and exchange ideas.

5m Hand back papers, review suggestions, and prepare to make proper

corrections or adjustments.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Students may revise rough drafts of fable.

DAY 3:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance.

20m Students will revise, polish and turn in final drafts of the fable.

20m Students will work individually or in their groups to construct their enactments of their fable, and will sign-up to enact them on Day 4 or 5, depending upon how complete they are by the end of the period.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Brainstorm and create a jot-list of at least three ideas for possible themes that could encompass their portfolio best. Also jot down three possible exhibits that may be included in the portfolio to be turned in.

DAY 4:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance. Collect jot-lists.

During this time, inform students that they will be writing a brief expository paper in class that is due the next Thursday.

40m Students present fable enactment. Each group or individual has approximately five minutes to present.

5m Flex time. Reassemble room and allow students to prepare for next class.

DAY 5:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance.

20m Students or groups who have not presented fable enactment present them.

10m Journal writing in which students evaluate their experiences with the goal they have just completed. May include responses to group work and collaboration, or how they felt about the lessons on the fable. Students may also respond openly to general evaluations of what we have been doing over the past four weeks.

10m Class discussion stemming from student responses in journal

writing. Open forum discussion on how things have been going over the past four weeks. What have students enjoyed? What have they not enjoyed? What types of activities would they like to do again? Etc.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

WEEK FIVE Goals: (1) Introduction of Winnebago Trickster Cycle (Native

American)

(2) Begin expository writing

(3) Work on portfolios

DAY 1:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance. DOL focuses on essentials of writing a good expository paper. Inform students that we will be working on Portfolios in class next week.

10m Introduction and background discussion of the Trickster in American Indian Mythology focusing on the Winnebago Trickster Cycle.

20m Read excerpts aloud in class.

10m Discussion of Trickster roles found in the excerpts.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Begin paper outline.

DAY 2:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance. Collect homework.

15m Finish reading Winnebago Trickster Cycle excerpts silently.

5m Discuss how to go about writing the paper.

20m Begin free writing for rough draft.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Students may work on rough drafts at home.

DAY 3:

Class meets in computer lab.

10m DOL . Housekeeping. Attendance.

20m Continue free writing for Rough Draft—ideally students would complete rough draft.

10m Peer-editing workshop. Form pairs or small groups for proofreading and general suggestions for improvement. Switch with at least two different people.

10m Reconvene to make revisions based on peer-editing.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class

HW: Continue to edit and revise rough draft to type and turn in tomorrow if necessary.

Day 4:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance. Collect expository writing papers.

15m Create list of exhibits for Portfolio along with descriptions of the exhibits and how each will tie into the theme of the Portfolio.

25m Create outline for synthesis paper and begin to work on rough draft.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Work on rough draft for class tomorrow – will be checked.

DAY 5:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance. Check that all students have made progress on rough draft.

20m Students continue working on rough drafts. Teacher circulates room to provide assistance.

10m Peer-editing workshop. Students switch papers with at least two other students.

10m Reconvene to adjust rough drafts.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Continue working on portfolios – have rough draft completely revised and ready to type. Will try to finish in class on Week Six, day

four and they must be turned in on day five.

WEEK SIX Goals: (1) Problem solving (personal responsibility)

(2) Exposure to more Trickster characters

(3) Work on portfolios

DAY 1:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance.

Pose question to the class for discussion: "What would you do if you discovered a large sum of money?"

10m Brainstorming, group discussion, exchange of ideas and brief instruction on argumentative writing. Students should jot-list and take notes.

30m In-class (but individual) argumentative writing, students take the side of how they would react if placed in the above stated situation. Students should argue why, or why not, they should keep the money from the perspective of:

1. Person that keeps the money
2. Person that turns in the money to authorities
3. Other

5m Collect papers. Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Read first half of "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg" by Mark Twain.

DAY 2:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance.

10m Summary quiz over 1st half of "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg".

20m Class discussion of reactions and responses to homework, and summary quiz. Return to prior day's writing during discussion to talk about possible predictions.

10m Students generate journal questions.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Read 2nd half of "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg"

DAY 3:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance.

10m Summary quiz over 2nd half of "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg"

15m Small group discussions to share reactions and responses to the story's conclusion.

15m Reconvene as a class and conduct a discussion of the story as whole, highlighting and recapping small-group discussions.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

HW: Be sure to have all portfolio materials, synthesis paper drafts, etc. tomorrow. We will be meeting in the computer lab to complete the final revisions.

DAY 4:

Class meets in computer lab.

5m Housekeeping. Attendance.

10m Work on portfolios. Complete final revisions, if necessary.

35m Type final draft of synthesis paper.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.

DAY 5:

10m DOL. Housekeeping. Attendance. Collect portfolios.

15m Student evaluation or reflective free-writing (NOT FOR A GRADE) of Personal Responsibility unit. Writing should include:

1. How they see some of the Trickster characters we have studied as portraying positive or negative attributes of personal responsibility.
1. How they may be able to utilize lessons learned from the Trickster figure in relation to themselves and responsibility.

25m Wrap up with a class discussion of personal reflections on how the unit related to their personal lives and how they may define or think about responsibility differently than before the unit.

5m Flex time. Allow students to prepare for next class.