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What America Means To Me: A Conceptual Unit on American Realism

Rationale

As America continues to change and grow, mainly due to the tragic events of September 11th, it is essential to the learning process of our children to see the change and growth of American literature, and how it became what it is today. By examining the literary movements of Realism and Naturalism in American literature, young students will gain a better understanding of America's true struggles from the various perspectives of several different groups of people. Realism and Naturalism explore common characters who battle with ethical conflicts and dilemmas, often responding to environmental forces and internal stresses that drive them to things which they can not control or understand. This six week literary unit will focus on American Realism using various American literature texts, where as Naturalism will be a primary focus for the next six week unit. Works will include a wide range of short stories depicting life from different regions, different social classes, various cultures, and important concerns dealing with race. These areas serve as important categories within Realism and Naturalism and will help to show how America represented something different for everyone. Students will be encouraged and expected to think of their own questions, ideas, or concerns about this type of genre. What characteristics exist in realism and naturalism? How is naturalism an extension of realism? How does literature exemplify the historical influences on our views of America today? What types of observations do the authors make in their writings that contribute to the genres? These questions will constantly be evaluated throughout the unit as well as several issues that students will present and issues I will be prepared to discuss. The goal for this instructional unit is to provide materials with literary significance and historical merit to the contribution of a

changing America, to show how authors reveal truth about

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everyday life without romanticizing the situation, and how naturalism serves as an extension of realism that drives us to our actions.

A major topic to address in this unit is how America is built upon different views and perspectives from a variety of people and cultures. Studying American literature with an overarching concept focusing on Realism and Naturalism is important because it helps students understand that people are different and possess different values, and how to manage personal dilemmas and ethical conflicts. According to the Standards for the English Language Arts, “we need to honor that which is distinctive in the many groups that make up our nation” (41). We must dive into American literature and pull from it definitive works that present different points of view through local and regional dialect, and focus on issues such as living standards, social class, and race. Several works incorporate more than one of these issues in the story. One example of local dialect that will be taught is Mark Twain’s “Jim Smiley and his Jumping Frog”. This story is full of fantastic vernacular metaphors and is very humorous. This will also introduce the students to Mark Twain since we will study Adventures of Huckleberry Finn towards the end of the unit. Several other stories dealing with personal struggle and living conditions will be explored through different regions such as the South and Creole cultures. We will examine local detail and ethical conflict in emerging realism in “Belles Demoiselles Plantation” by George Washington Cable, and experience Sui Sin Far’s quest for assimilation into American culture in her story “Mrs. Spring Fragrance.” Students will gradually learn about other cultures and build an acceptance and appreciation for the differences that exist in America. My unit will help students build from their mistakes, recognize how to handle ethical conflicts, and learn these important values from all types of cultural perspectives. Students must learn about people and conflict in order to learn how to live in society and to live with decisions that they will make in their own lives.

Exploring different perspectives is a major component throughout the unit, but it is not the

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only area we will focus on. We must also examine what we feel the authors are trying to convey in the messages that they are sending in their writings.

In order to understand what types of observations the authors are making in the works of this literary movement, we must emphasize exactly what realism and naturalism attempt to prove. Realism as a literary movement presents everyday people as believable characters in common settings and situations. Most of the focus is on the physical and surrounding social world with no existing symbols. The most important element in realistic writing is that the main character typically suffers from an ethical conflict where they must make a decision that will affect their lives forever. A wonderful story that will be examined in the unit pertaining to the ideas associated with realist writings is “The White Heron” by Sarah Orne Jewett. Dr. James Nagel describes the story in *The Portable American Realism Reader* as portraying a “young girl, Sylvia, caught between her desire to ingratiate herself to a handsome young man and her allegiance to the nature she loves” (71). The story also reveals male and female interactions with nature, and conflicts between industrialization and simple agrarian values. It is fascinating how one short story reveals a variety of different themes, and how the author addresses issues that exist in real life such as adolescence, love, and a struggle to make the right decision. Realist authors write in simple, direct tones that illustrate the truth about society or certain regions during a specific time, depict hard work and struggle, the torturous process of decision-making, how to live in harmony among neighbors, and how to change or not change to conform to a new America. These are the important ideas that I will emphasize in the unit and serve as necessary components in life that students need to be aware of and focus on. This is why I chose to teach this literary movement because students must be exposed to the true

issues and concerns that exist in the world today. They must recognize the reality of America, and that we struggled and are still struggling to make it a better place.

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Authors contributing to the realism and naturalism movement observe changes and conflicts that existed in America and present these themes in their truthful and honest writing techniques. John Dewey states that society can only be true to itself “only by being true to the full growth of all the individuals who make it up.” An area that is often sensitive to examine is the issue of race and how it affects America. To address this topic with my students, I want to expose them to some realist literature, historical background of what was going on in America when the literature was written, and to open up a discussion with my students about any concerns or issues they might have. I want to discuss the stories “Desiree’s Baby” by Kate Chopin, and “The Lynching of Jube Benson by Paul Laurence Dunbar. Chopin’s famous story essentially serves as a portrayal of the destructive inhumanity of ethnic bigotry, and what devastating consequences occur from the injustices of racism. Desiree is dismissed from her house and husband because he believes that she is African American. The story presents to the students what happens when wrong assumptions and accusations are made, which are extremely important lessons to be taught. Dunbar’s story also emphasizes a character’s guilt over an act which he did not stop, but presents the issues of racism and making the wrong decisions through the eyes of a white narrator. Throughout the unit, students will discover many facets to realist writings such as local dialect, cultural practices, and the issue of race during this specific time period. The students will gain an understanding for these topics and pull them together as we read Adventures of Huckleberry Finn which encompasses all these concepts as Huck’s personal adventure down the river becomes a lesson in life and a lesson in becoming a man.

The purpose of this literary unit is to provoke questions about America, and to

think about how society has changed and how it has stayed the same, and to think about our growth as a country and just how tolerant and accepting we are of other view points. Many of the texts that I will be teaching throughout the unit will not only challenge my

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students to think about how much America has changed for so many people, but to help them to continue to think about issues of race, ethical dilemmas, and means of survival before placing themselves in compromising positions. I want students to feel free in creating their own insight and interpretations of what the texts represent to them, and hopefully make them appreciate the things in life that they can change and have awareness of the things that they cannot. In the process of creating this unit, I am constantly asking myself why I want to teach this to my students. Naturally as a teacher I think of the great literary terms my students will learn and the wonderful exposure they will have to famous authors. However, my main objective is to show the growth and change America experienced through different perspectives by various people. This unit concentrates on real issues and concerns in which authors have created magnificent stories discussing the lives and struggles of characters that students can understand and possibly carry over into their own lives. Several counterarguments might be made about the unit regarding race and other cultures, or that some stories are too depressing, but I feel it is inappropriate to ignore issues and major topics that pose real concern and still exist in the world today. We cannot shut out the outside world once we enter a classroom. Instead, we must take these concerns and embrace them in a positive and healthy learning environment where everyone is comfortable. Students will learn to appreciate different points of view and begin to think about their own place in society and how they can make a difference. We are all undergoing a process of change and growth. Therefore, by creating a literary unit based on this idea, we are capable of embracing the things that helped society to prosper, and recognize the things that contributed to its destructiveness. We learn from what we cannot change and move towards the future

with an awareness of what we can.

Works Cited

- Nagel, James, and Tom Quirk. The Portable American Realism Reader. New York:
Penguin Books. 1997.
- NCTE. Standards for the English Language Arts. Illinois: NCTE. 1996.

GOALS AND RUBRICS:

Assessment 1.)

On-going assignment for American Realism Unit JOURNAL WRITING

Goal: To provide students with the opportunity to freely write and think about the materials presented in class, while keeping track of important ideas, information revealed during class discussions, and jotting down important quotes or passages. Students should feel free to ask questions, state opinions, or write about anything involved with their process as a reader and reflective thinker!

~Journals will be hand-written and kept in a note book. Hand writing creates an informal feeling and makes it more personal. If you wish to type your journal entries feel free to do so. I will not complain. Your journal does not need to be written in traditional essay form. However, in your writing I would like to see evidence that you are reflecting on the material presented in class.

~Do not summarize what you read. Tell me what you think, how something makes you feel, and most of all how you engage with the literature.

~Make note of important quotes and passages. Be mindful that towards the end of the unit there will be an in-class essay where you can use your journals as references and a guide in helping you remember important elements. I will not babysit you in telling you what to write down...just keep this in the back of your mind!

~You are more than welcome to share personal stories or issues that relate to the material. **NOTE: I am required by law to report any thoughts or suggestions of violence, substance abuse, family abuse, suicide, or other harmful behavior.**

~Journals will be collected at the end of each week for a participation grade of 10pts. There must be a total of at least four entries per week. More entries could equal extra points. You must have four each week. You cannot write five entries one week and only three the next week. Journals must be at least one page in length and show that you are thinking, reading, questioning, and reflecting.

~Towards the end of the marking period, you will have the opportunity to re-write a journal entry if you did not receive the full 10 points one week. If you have received the full 10 points each week, then you can write another journal for two points extra credit that will be added to your final grade. Let's say you have an 88 in the class. If you complete an extra journal, then your grade will go up two points to a 90.

Assessment 2.)

IN- CLASS ESSAY TEST

Please select one of the following essay questions to respond to. You will have the entire class period to write and that is all. Timed writing is frequently used in college classes and is a great skill to develop. It helps you to think quickly and to express your ideas on paper. No extra time will be granted. You have two entire class periods to complete the essay so my expectations are somewhat high for this essay. Carefully read the question and be sure to answer exactly what it is asking for. Emphasis for mechanics and spelling is not that important, I am mostly looking for clear content, a focused thesis and topic sentences, and strong support for your answer. Remember to be specific and not leave out any important information. This is a timed piece of writing, so manage your time wisely. Good Luck!

1. Discuss and describe the term 'realism' as discussed in class. What elements and characteristics are present in realist writing? Provide three specific examples from *Huck Finn* supporting the idea that it is a realist piece of writing.
2. We have discussed the concept of moral dilemma throughout the novel *Huck Finn*. Discuss and explain the moral dilemmas faced by Huck and Jim. How have their moral dilemmas changed their character? Do they view and think of each other differently now? Be sure to be specific when describing the moral dilemmas since they face more than one.
3. Discuss what you feel is the most important lesson Huck learned. Include how, what he learned, and how it changed his thinking. Be specific.
4. Jim as Huck's true father. Discuss what this means using specific examples.

IN-CLASS ESSAY EVALUATION

AREA 5 4/3 2/1 0

THESIS: Stated clearly and directly in intro. Very specific and states exactly what essay will focus on **5**
Stated clearly but not specific enough. Needs more development. **4/3**
Thesis is present but lacks in ideas and is not clear. **2/1**
No thesis. No clear focus on paper. **0**

STRUCTURE/ VOICE: Clear topic sentences. Well-developed paragraphs. Evidence of creative thought with clear transitions. **5**
Clear topic sentences but need more support in developing paragraphs. Shows creativity but needs clearer transitions. **4/3**
Topic sentences unclear. Lacks support in paragraphs. Shows little creativity and lacks in clear transitions between ideas. **2/1**
Little to no evidence of topic sentences. No developing paragraphs. No clear transitions between ideas. **0**

CONTENT: At least three well-developed examples that support thesis. Shows excellent knowledge of texts. Uses multiple examples and quotes that are relevant. **5**
Shows good knowledge of texts but lacking in depth. Sufficient number of examples and quotes but lacking in explanation and relevancy. **4/3**
Shows fair amount of knowledge and strongly lacks in examples and development. Moves away from thesis and does not stay on topic. **2/1**
Shows no knowledge of texts. No quotes or examples to support essay. **0**

CONCLUSION: Recaps thesis well without repeating. Reflects evidence from body of paper. Adds personal insight to the essay. **5**
Recaps thesis but lacks in depth and clarity. Starts to restate and provides some personal insight. **4/3**
Does not reflect on thesis but restates the question. Little personal insight. **2/1**
No clear conclusion. Paper ends with no insight or recap. **0**

TOTAL: _____/20 = _____/100

Assessment 3.)

American Realism Unit Oral Presentation

Throughout the unit, we have been looking at America from the various perspectives of several different groups of people. In this project, I want you to explore what America means to you. Has your view changed due to recent events or because of materials we have read? Below is a list of ideas you can use to communicate your own personal view of America which will be shared with the class in a brief presentation. Have fun and be creative!

1. **Essay or short story- at least 500 words**
2. **Poem- at least 20 lines. You can use any format**
3. **Write a personal monologue or song- these must be at least three minutes in length and typed on paper to turn in. Monologues may be video taped and songs can be recorded. Songs must be set to music (this does not mean you have to come up with an original tune, but feel free to do so)**
4. **Art- create a poster, painting, collage, shoebox diorama, etc. with one-page typed explanation**
5. **Create your own children's book at least 10 pages with pictures**
6. **Pick your own idea-discuss it with me first**

Feel free to ask me any questions about your presentations. The project is worth 100 points so I expect only excellence from you. I would also like to consult with each of you what you are going to do on your project so that I know you are on track. Be sure to follow the directions. A rubric

is attached so you know how I will grade and what I will be looking for!

Oral Presentation Grading Sheet

Name: _____

Requirements: _____

- ~ all requirements are met and exceeded. Project goes above and beyond expectations (5 pts)
- ~ all requirements are met (4 pts)
- ~ one requirement was not specifically met (3/2 pts)
- ~ more than one requirement was not completely met (1 pt)

Originality: _____

- ~ product shows large amount of original thought. Ideas are creative and inventive (5 pts)
- ~ product shows some original thought. Work shows new ideas and insight (4 pts)
- ~ product shows little evidence of original thinking (3/2 pts)
- ~ product shows no original thinking and uses other people's ideas (1pt)

Attractiveness: _____

- ~ makes excellent use of font, color, graphics, etc. to enhance presentation (5 pts)
- ~ makes good use of font, color, graphics, etc. (4 pts)
- ~ makes use of color but does not bring out presentation (3/2 pt)
- ~ little use of color (1pt)

Organization: _____

- ~ content is well organized using headings or lists grouping related materials (5pts)
- ~ uses headings to organize, but overall organization is not clear (4 pts)
- ~ content is somewhat organized, lacks headings and groupings (3/2 pt)
- ~ there is no logical organization (1pt)

Oral Presentation: _____

- ~ interesting, rehearsed, smooth, good voice projection, holds audience attention (5pts)
- ~ relatively interesting, rehearsed, fairly smooth delivery, usually holds audience attention (4pts)
- ~ delivery not fully rehearsed and tends to lose audience (3/2 pts)
- ~ not prepared and does not care about audience (1pt)

Total Points _____x2_____points. 100 points possible

LIST OF MATERIALS

Short Stories

“Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog” by Mark Twain

“The Story of The Old Ram” by Mark Twain

“Belles Demoiselle Plantation” by George Washington Cable

“The White Heron” by Sarah Orne Jewitt

“Desiree’s Baby” by Kate Chopin

“The Lynching of Jube Benson” by Paul Laurence Dunbar

Novel

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain

Weekly Lesson Plans

created by: Kristen Demaree

Week One

- Monday:* **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up activity/Attendance
(students will keep a notebook of daily exercises)
 30-35 min.: The rest of the day will be devoted to housekeeping, going
over rules and syllabus, introductions, letter to parents, and personal
surveys. (listed below)
 10 min.: Begin lecture on realism and the elements of realism. I will
address the class and instruct students to take notes on important facts. I
might include an overhead projection of my lecture notes and remind
students only to write down important information.

I nventory: Personal Survey

This questionnaire is designed to help me get to know each and every one of you, and learn important information so that I can teach the class well. Please answer each question as honest as possible!

1. What is your favorite book?
2. Who is your favorite author?
3. What do you particularly dislike to read? Why?
4. Did you write or read over the summer? If so, what did you write and what did you read?
5. What are your favorite hobbies?
6. What type of music do you like? Favorites?
7. What is your favorite subject in school? Why?
8. If you could change one thing about reading performed in school, what would it be?
9. What are your expectations for this class? What do you hope to learn?
10. Do you feel that grades accurately portray how smart you are? Explain.

Feel free to write a little paragraph or anything that you feel I should know about you. I am looking forward to a great year!

Tuesday: **5 min.** Daily Warm-up/Attendance
 5 min.: Finish up notes
 15 min.: Provide students with a set of instructions and have them write.

Introductory Activity

Throughout the unit, we will explore several examples of American realism literature and work with concepts and definitions of what makes specific works realist pieces. One major element to realist writing is that one or more of the characters struggle with some type of moral dilemma that they must overcome. This happens several times to the character Huck in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, which we will be reading later in the unit. Moral dilemmas typically occur when someone must make a decision that does not always benefit themselves, but is the right thing to do. In this introductory activity, you will have the opportunity to write a personal narrative about a time where you experienced a moral dilemma and were forced to make a decision. Make sure to include:

- ~ a catching introduction
- ~ what the moral dilemma was that you faced
- ~ how that dilemma made you feel
- ~ the decision that you made

The paper will be hand-written and completed in class. Feel free to write in a conversation style just as long as you are specific and use concrete examples of your experience. This assignment is worth 20 points and will be part of your participation grade. As long as you follow the basic requirements, you will receive full credit for the assignment.

15 min.: Have students get in groups no more than four. Provide instructions on what they should do in groups:

Each students will share their experience out loud in groups. After everyone has shared, identify the moral dilemmas and think about these questions:

- ~ if the situation came about again, would you have done something differently?
- ~ do you have any advice for the members in your group about their situations?
- ~ what do you know about ethics and values? What roles do these play in your decision? Do people hold the same beliefs and values as you do?

10 min.: Bring class together for whole class discussion on small group conclusions. Discuss the elements of realism and moral dilemma in the conversation. Address the small group questions to the whole class and see how they respond. Put room together, prepare to leave.

Wednesday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Attendance
 10 min.: Finish up discussion (if needed). Introduce journal/reading log assignment (listed in goals and rubrics at beginning of unit)

5 min.: Introduce two short stories and author notes on Mark Twain. I will prepare background information on Mark Twain's life and what he wrote, the time period, and why he is a realist writer. I will give these orally and ask students to write down notes to keep in their notebooks. I will give students the option to read out loud or silently. Assigned readings: "Jim Smiley and his Jumping Frog," and "The Story of the Old Ram." Stories are short.

27 min.: Begin reading stories

3 min.: Assign HW: Finish stories if not completed in class. Each student must come to class tomorrow with two questions that they might have about the stories. Ask questions about something specific, like a character or point in the story. You could write a question about something that you didn't understand or that was puzzling. You could ask a question about the future of the story, speculate what could happen next. Also, think about the term realism and how these are realist pieces of writing. These questions will be used to generate class discussion tomorrow.

Thursday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Attendance

15 min.: Group work. Divide into groups of no more than four and discuss the questions you wrote for homework and talk about the stories in general (what you liked, disliked, what made it funny, etc.) Remember to think about the elements of realist writing and why these are considered this.

25 min.: Bring the class back together for class discussion. Review the stories. Point out important passages and details. Discuss how these stories are realism pieces. Discuss some questions from the groups.

5 min.: Assign HW: Rd. "Belles Demoiselles Plantation." They can begin reading in class if time permits. Give brief author notes on George Washington Cable if time permits. Inform students that it is highly likely they will have a reading quiz the following day when reading is assigned for homework.

Friday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Attendance

5 min.: Short reading quiz to make sure students did their reading. 5-7 questions that they will write down the answers on a sheet of paper. Go over answers after the quiz.

3 min.: Finish up notes from yesterday if necessary. See if anyone has any questions.

20-25 min.: From the students questions, a class discussion will generate. If no one asks questions, then I will begin to ask students questions about the stories. In the discussion, I will go over the story and point out important passages and details. I will also remind students of the reading logs and to keep up with recording in them. I will also ask students to discuss the issue of moral dilemma.

5 min.: Assign HW: Read "The White Heron." Allow them to start

reading if time permits.

Week Two

Monday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Attendance

5 min.: Short reading quiz to make sure students did the reading over the weekend. Go over answers when quiz is completed.

5 -10 min. I will give background notes orally to the class about Sarah Orne Jewitt which they will write down and keep in their notebooks. I will also announce to the class that Friday will be a test over the short stories, themes, elements of realism, background author notes, quotes, etc. The test is not made up yet so I can not answer specific questions. I will tell the students it will be a mix of multiple choice and short answers. There will not be any long essays to answer.

30 min.: This is a very rich piece packed with information that I want to make sure the students get. I will start the class discussion by asking general questions to the students and ask them to tell me what happens in the story and what they liked about it. In the conversation I will point out important themes, the issue of moral dilemma, assimilation to the industrial world. I will only point out these things and keep the conversation on the right track if students do not pick up on them. I will point out important symbols if they are missed, and point out important passages and quotes. I will constantly remind students to take notes and keep up with their reading logs. If time permits, students can write in logs or begin reading Mrs. Spring Fragrance which will be read in class tomorrow.

Tuesday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Attendance

20 min.: In class reading of “Mrs. Spring Fragrance.” We will read out loud as a class. Students will decide whether to popcorn read or have me pick who reads next. I will interject every now and then to make sure students understand what is going on, or to ask them questions about the story.

15-20 min.: Writing activity to be completed in class but can be turned in tomorrow if we run out of time. After the class has finished reading the stories, I will ask the students to complete a short writing assignment about what it would be like to live in a different country and to try and assimilate to the ways of that culture and to try and fit in. The writing will be informal and more like a journal entry. I will write the question on the board and just have them free write close to the end of class and think about this topic.

5 min.: Assign HW: Rd. “Desiree’s Baby.” Remind them of their test on Friday and to review all the short stories we have read, author notes, notes on realism, and any notes they have taken. They can finish up the writing activity if they did not complete it in class. Also ask them to keep track of any questions they might have because Thursday will be a review session in class.

Wednesday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Attendance

5 min.: Free write on “Desiree’s Baby.” To make sure the students completed their HW, I will ask them to free write about the story and write everything they know about it. I will also ask them to tell me what happens at the end of the story since it is the most important moment to the whole story.

5 min.: I will give the students oral notes on Kate Chopin and her life and life as a writer. I will mention her most famous work *The Awakening*

20-25 min.: After giving oral notes about Kate Chopin, I will transition into a whole class discussion about the short story. First, I will ask one student to give a brief summary of what happened in the story. Then, in the course of the discussion I will point out the realist elements such as local colorism, values, ethics, and important passages in the story. I will address these elements in question form to the class to make sure that they are catching these things in their readings of the stories. I will also emphasize the importance of analyzing the stories and that we are learning to read intelligently and to pay attention to detail as oppose to just skimming through them. I will reiterate the reading logs and how they are designed to help the students remember the parts that they think are important in the stories. Towards the end of the discussion, I will ask the whole class if they have any other questions.

1-2 min.: Look over materials and come to class with questions for review session. Rd. “The Lynching of Jube Benson”

Thursday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Attendance

(inform students that some time next week there will be a daily warm-up quiz over the concepts they are learning)

10-15 min.: Begin a brief discussion on the story and ask questions to class such as plot summary, main characters, major themes, moral dilemma, and anything that they feel is important. If time permits, I will give some author notes but I want to allow plenty of time for review.

5 min.: I will make a review guide for the class to help them study for the test. The guide will simply be a list of all the stories, authors, important terms, etc. I will explain to the class that the test will consist of matching authors to works, matching specific background information to the specific author, identifying characters in the works, defining key terms such as local color, moral dilemma, realism, and identifying these terms by using examples from the stories. The test will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short answers. If they read the materials, took sufficient notes, and asked questions, then everyone should get an A!

25 min.: The remainder of the class will be devoted to questions and reviewing the stories and anything else the class would like to do to help them for the test. If time permits, we could play a type of quiz game after the review where I ask questions and the kids raise their hands and I call on them. If they are correct, then I will give them a piece of candy. I will only mention this to the class if they seem to get bored or off task. Remind

students I will also be checking their reading logs during the test to see if they are being completed.

Friday: **50 min.:** No Daily Warm-up. I will take attendance and collect reading logs from students. Once everyone is settled, I will pass out the test. I will also remind class that next week we will begin our novel Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. The test will consist of thirty questions covering the material over the past two weeks. There will be ten multiple choice, ten true/false, five quote/character identifications, and five short answer questions.

Week Three

Monday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Vocab/Attendance

This week we will also be starting daily vocabulary words taken from the school issued vocabulary book where students will copy five words a day into their notebooks and then complete multiple choice vocabulary quizzes every Friday. They will receive a total of twenty words to study for the quiz at the end of each week.

5 min.: Introduce Oral Presentation Assignment which will be due in three weeks. (listed in goals and rubrics section) Students will receive a hand-out and I will go over it, and answer any questions they might have.

30 min.: Introduction to Huck Finn. I will write on the board the reading due dates for each episode so that the students will know when everything is due. We will begin discussion of ch.1-2 on Wednesday. I will also pass out a list of important study questions that will need to be answered throughout the reading of the book and explain to students that the questions are for the entire novel and not just the first episode so they must keep up with answering them. I will begin giving lecture notes on the novel by explaining the setting of the novel and how the story takes place in the South prior to the Civil War, and note that the country was divided into slave and free states.

I will discuss Twain's use of dialects and how the story is told as if Huck is speaking out loud. I will also address Twain's use of irony and satire and will explain these in greater detail as we get into the novel and examples of these themes show up. My goal is to provide a clear introduction to the story, time period, setting, local color, regionalism, and elements of realism.

10 min.: Pass back tests. Go over answers as a class. Tell students to begin reading novel for homework.

Reading Due Dates:

Episode 1- (ch.1-7) due Fri.

Episode 2- (ch.8-15) due Tues. (the following week)

Episode 3- (ch.16-22) due Fri.

Episode 4- (ch.23-29) due Tues.

Episode 5- (ch.30-30) due Fri.

Episode 6- (ch.37-43) due Monday

Study Questions: (created by the Family Network of Education)

1. Describe Huck's feelings about living with the Widow Douglas and her sister, Miss Watson. Which one of the ladies does he like more? Why? What does he feel about their attempts to "civilize" him?
2. What kind of man was Huck's father? Use examples from the story to support your answer. How did Huck feel when his father returned to the village?
3. Why does pap forbid Huck to go to school? How would you react to pap's demand if you were Huck? Explain.
4. Why did Huck stage his own death?
5. When Huck finds Jim, he promises that he will not turn Jim in, even though Jim is a runaway slave. What does this tell you about Huck's character?
6. What did the river mean to Huck? Explain.
7. Huck quickly realizes that the Duke and Dauphin are con men. What is a con man? What does his ability to see these men for what they really are tell you about Huck? What does his decision not to confront them about their fraud tell you?
8. How was Jim betrayed? How did Huck react when he learned that Jim had been captured as a runaway slave? What did he decide to do?
9. The story contains several ironic episodes. Identify three and describe them. Explain why they are ironic.
10. Throughout the story, Huck rebels against civilization. At the end of the novel, has he become more "civilized"? Explain.

Tuesday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Vocab/Attendance
 5 min.: Review notes/wrap up from yesterday (if needed)
 40 min.: Today I will address the issue of satire to the class by showing a tape of an opening monologue done by Jay Leno and David Letterman, and possibly a Saturday Night Live skit (making sure it is not obscene) to have the students watch and discover the different ideas that they are satirizing. Students will take notes on what they see and hear. Students will be amazed at what they poke fun of in those presentations. After watching the monologues, students will take their notes and break into groups of no more than four and create a group monologue, scenario, etc. of appropriate school satire. No running down of individuals is allowed. Hopefully this will help you understand what Twain is satirizing in his writing. Let them write their own monologue, scenario, etc. of appropriate school satire. No running down of individuals is allowed. This helps them understand what Twain was satirizing in his writings.

Wednesday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Vocab/Attendance
 5 min.: Wrap up on satire. Ask question about the character of Pap and whether or not Twain create him as a satirical character. (something to think about). Remind students that there will be a vocabulary quiz on Friday and at least two sentences from the daily warm-up to do on the quiz. Also, remind the class that a typed journal is due on Friday from the reading log given at the beginning of the unit. They should go back and review the handout.
 30 min.: Follow up on satire. Hopefully question will generate some discussion. Presentation of group monologues. These do not have to be

really long, just something written in satire form to make sure that the students are getting a grasp for this concept. I will tell the class to keep a list of the satirical events that happen throughout the story to help them with their unit test. If needed, I will also have a short story by Jonathan Swift or someone that is a satire if they do not understand the concept. I will also make an announcement that tomorrow will be a working/reading day in class so if they have materials they need to work on their oral presentation at home they can bring them in.

Thursday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Vocab/Attendance

45 min.: I will give the students an option of what they would like to do for the day. I feel that they need a working day in class to catch up on reading (or read ahead!), work on their reading logs/journals since I will collect them on Friday, and even work on their oral presentation which is due in two weeks. They can work on any of these things as long as people are busy and working diligently. If it gets too noisy or out of hand, I will make every one write in class or read silently with no noise. I want to give them this opportunity because the next two weeks will be packed with tests, projects, papers, reading, etc.

Friday: **10-15 min.:** No daily warm-up. I will pass out vocabulary quiz to the class and take attendance during quiz. Collect journals for participation grade. The quiz will be multiple choice and twenty questions. Possible bonus question about the novel to see if they did the reading.

15 min.: Small group discussions of no more than four in each group. I will give the class the option of me giving them specific questions/topics to answers in each group, or if they are capable enough of discussing episode one and facilitating their own discussions and questions.

20 min.: Bring class together as a whole and go over the main points and plot summary of episode one. Then I will address each group and ask what each group discussed or any questions they might have. I will make sure to point out important passages/quotes. I will ask questions to the class about Pap and the Widow, and how they would describe Huck's character at the beginning of the novel. If the class discussion goes well, I will not make them take reading quiz.

1-2 min.: Assign HW: Over the weekend they must read episode two (8-15) and answer study questions that I will give them on a hand out. They should expect reading quiz Monday morning or in-class writing.

Week Four

Monday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Vocab/Attendance

(vocab and DWU are copied from overhead and kept in notebook)

5 min.: Reading quiz over episode two making sure they completed the

reading. These questions will come directly from the text and possibly pulled from the study questions (which should be completed)

Go over answers to quiz. These questions will help to generate class discussion.

30 min.: Class discussion of episode two with the entire class. I will ask specific questions about plot and important parts of Huck's journey. We will talk about the characters and any other questions that the students have.

10 min.: For the last ten minutes I want the students to do a quick free write about the story and tell me how they are liking the book, or write about their reading experience with the novel. Do they like Huck? How is Huck growing, or changing? Do they have a favorite part of the novel? Can any predictions be made yet as to what they think will happen next in the adventure? I want my students to feel comfortable writing in class and writing on the spot when they don't know what the topic is going to be. I also mention to them that the Huck Finn test at the end will most likely be an in-class essay. I also emphasize how in-class essays are a big part of college English classes so they need all the practice they can get!

HW: Continue to work on oral presentation. We will begin reading 16,17 in class tomorrow.

Tuesday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Vocab/Attendance

45 min.: We will read together as a class at least ch.16 and 17, or they can read silently if they chose to (if I find a decent recording then listening on tape can also be an option. They must have Episode three completed by Fri.

Wednesday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Vocab/Attendance

10 min.: Announcements. I will remind the class that oral presentations will be done in two weeks next Thursday and Friday in front of the class. The presentation is due next Thursday, but not everyone will get to present, but it must be turned in. Remind students of journals and vocab quiz

5 min.: I will ask the class questions about yesterday's reading before we begin to read ch.18-19 as a class. I will also check to see if anyone has any questions about the story and reiterate important events, themes, satires.

30 min.: In class reading as a whole. HW: I will ask the students to make note of the last line Huck says at the end of ch.18 about home being a raft. They will write at least a paragraph (10 lines) about the symbolism of the raft, what it represents for Huck and Jim, and why Huck refers to it as home. I will collect the paragraphs tomorrow for participation grade.

Thursday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Vocab/Attendance

5 min.: Collect paragraphs and ask class to share what they think the raft represents.

15-20min.: This will lead into discuss of the events that occurred in ch.18-19 (Shepherdson/Grangerford situation). Also address how women are portrayed in the novel (Emmeline Grangerford, Miss Charlotte, Miss Sophia, Widow Douglas) Point out important passages and quotes. Ask questions.

20 min.: Begin reading ch.20-22 as a class. (option of reading as a class or silently) HW: Study for vocab quiz and have journals ready to turn in on Fri.

Friday: **5-10min.:** No daily warm-up. Vocabulary quiz and journals collected. I will take attendance during quiz. Two daily-warm exercises on quiz for grade plus a bonus question about the novel.

10 min.: Finish reading episode three

30 min.: In class discussion by answering my questions and going over study questions. I want to take some time out looking at important themes, looking at the relationship between Huck and Jim, and ask the class what they think is happening in their relationship. I want the class to think about Huck's moral dilemma that plagues him throughout the novel and to remember the introductory activity they did at the beginning of the unit.

1-2 min.: Assign HW: Rd. ch.23-26

Week Five

Monday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Vocab/Attendance

5 min.: Reading quiz to make sure they did the reading over the homework. I will make questions directly related to the text. Go over answers to quiz.

10min.: Re-cap of previous chapters to remind everyone what happened

30min.: In class reading of ch.27-29 (I will frequently interrupt to ask questions or point out important parts, ask students what they think is going on, what they think is happening, how they feel, etc.)

HW: work on reading the rest of novel, continue to work on OP and finish reading for homework whatever was not finished in class.

Tuesday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Vocab/Attendance

20 -25min.: As a class we will read ch.30-31 and discuss how Huck must face his moral dilemma again and how he handles the situation. I will ask questions about the text as we go along and read. Review study questions and answer any questions the class might have.

20 min.: Free writing

Every student will free write and turn in at the end of class. For this writing assignment, I will ask the students to pretend that they are Huck, and to create an alternate journey for him. What if Huck turned Jim in at the beginning? What if Huck did not fake his own death. What would be some interesting twists to the story if one of these crucial events changed?

Think of an important event that happens in the story such as the ones I have mentioned, and write how Huck's adventure would be different? How would Huck's character be different? This is a great way to explore the novel and use multi-genre writing. It does not have to be lengthy, just to get you thinking.

HW: Finish up novel and work on OP

Wednesday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Vocab/Attendance

5 min.: Housekeeping. Pass back vocab quizzes and papers.

10 min.: Start class discussion by asking the class what happens in ch30-31 and what character re-appears. What is the plan they are trying to create? What are they hoping to do? How has Huck's character changed? Look back and think about when Huck's view changed about Jim, and

when he started to look at Jim as a man rather than just a slave? How is Huck maturing? I will also answer any questions anyone might have.

30 min.: Class reading of ch.32-33. The class will break into small reading groups that I will have assigned and will read out loud in a group the assigned chapters and answer a set of questions that I will pass out. If the questions are not finished they must be completed for homework. Each student is responsible for writing down the answers to the questions because at the end of the unit I will collect all the study questions and the answers for a participation grade. If the class gets too noisy, everyone will do silent work alone.

HW: Finish up novel. Must be up to ch.36 by Fri.

Thursday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Vocab/Attendance

5 min.: Announcements. Remind students that OP are due next Thursday and that in-class Huck Finn essay is next Wednesday. Students should be caught up on reading, keeping up with logs, taking notes, marking in their books. Vocab quiz on Friday and journals due. Keep up with study questions because I will collect those next week.

10-15 min.: Divide back into groups and go over answers to the questions in the groups. Ask each other any questions.

10 min.: Bring class together and answer the questions as an entire class. I will check to see that everyone has the questions completed. I will ask people from each group to answer one of the questions so that everyone gets the opportunity to participate.

15-20 min.: See if students began reading ch33-36. Start reading in class as a whole class. HW: Study for vocab. Turn in journals. Make sure that you have read all the way up to ch.37. The entire book must be finished this weekend when you come into class on Monday. Keep working on OP and review study questions and notes over the novel. In class essay will be on next Wednesday.

Friday: **10 min.:** No daily warm-up. Vocabulary quiz and I will collect journal/reading logs. Students should have at least four entries each week

for me to see that they are keeping up with the reading and critically thinking about the text and their experience with the text. (listed in goals and rubrics section)

10 min.: In class discussion about the events in episode five. How exactly were Huck and Tom going to rescue Jim? What does this tell you about their imaginations? Do you have any predictions as to what is going to happen or how you think the story might end?

30 min.: As a reward and for some fun on Friday, I will allow the students to play a Jeopardy game that I will have prepared and win some candy for the correct answers. I will divide the class into two teams and whoever has the highest score at the end will receive homework passes for one a assignment. The questions will be a mix of authors, works, characters, terms, quotes, and vocabulary words. Hopefully they will not get too out of hand.

HW: Remind students that OP are due Thursday and that Huck Finn in-class will be on Wednesday. The novel must be finished by Monday. We will do some practice in-class writing on Tuesday which will also be a working day.

Week Six

Monday: **5mins.:** Daily Warm-up. No vocabulary words this week since their will be no quiz on Friday.

5 min.: Announcements. Go over the week and everything that is due. Journals will not be collected this week because of orals and in-class essay.

40 min.: For the remainder of class I will discuss episode six and the conclusion of the novel. I will ask the students their opinion of the novel. Then I want to emphasize important themes, ideas, character traits, realist elements, reiterate moral dilemma and satire and review specific examples about these elements in the text and to emphasize that these are the type of questions that will appear on the in-class essay. I will remind the students to take notes now in class and mark in their books important passages to help them study. They will need to remember the events because they will not be allowed to use the novel. This will also be the perfect opportunity to answer questions, go over study questions, and provide as much assistance as possible. Tomorrow will be an in-class work day where we will practice in-class writing, work on orals, and finish up answering any questions that might arise.

HW: Work on OP. Huck Finn should be completed. Bring in materials too class for oral or study materials.

Tuesday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Attendance

30-35 min.: In class writing. I will have a prompt prepared for the students with specific instructions to help prepare them for tomorrow. The questions will not be the ones they will get tomorrow, but the type of

questions will be the same and the directions will be identical for analytical essay writing. This is to be completed silently and alone and should be treated like an actual test, even though they will have the entire period tomorrow to complete the essay. I will only allow 30 min. because it is timed, and they will be timed tomorrow. This will teach them to manage their time wisely.

10-15 min.: I will ask the class how they feel about timed writing and go over important strategies or any questions they might have about timed writing, the text, grading of the essay, etc. I want them to feel comfortable with the process and not be shocked tomorrow when they receive the test.

HW: Review novel. Work on OP. The questions will be over themes, characterization, important events, and will not be out of the ordinary and definitely things we covered in class.

Wednesday: No daily warm-up.

50 min.: In-class essay on Huck Finn. Pass out immediately. Students will write in pen or pencil on their own paper. I will check paper to make sure there is nothing written on it. Closed book. Collect at end of class.

No extra time allotted. (test listed in goals and rubrics section)

HW: Oral Presentations due tomorrow. Half the class will present.

Thursday: **5 min.:** Daily Warm-up/Attendance

45 min.: Oral Presentations for the remainder of the class. I will take volunteers first. (listed in goals and rubrics)

Friday: **5min.:** Daily Warm-up

45 min.: Finish up oral presentations. If time permits, start watching film version of Huck Finn or play games.