The Whitman in Everyone

Lesson Overview

Overview: This lesson will introduce the students to Walt Whitman and his ability to convey the feelings of powerful images through his journaling.

Grade Range: 9-12

Objective: Students should be able to:
- Make a connection between Civil War journal writing and their own memories.
- Analyze and evaluate Whitman’s journal writing and their own memories.
- Communicate their ideas in a journal entry.
- Construct well-written journal entries that focus on ideas, feelings, and connections to the material presented in class.

Time Required: One class period of 45 minutes

Discipline/Subject: Language Arts

Topic/Subject: Literature

Era: Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861-1877

Illinois Learning Standards:
Language Arts:
3.A-Use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and structure.
3.B-Compose well-organized and coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences.
3.C-Communicate ideas in writing to accomplish a variety of purposes.
5.A-Locate, organize and use information from various sources to answer questions, solve problems, and communicate ideas.
5.B-Analyze and evaluate information acquired from various sources.
5.C-Apply acquired information, concepts and ideas to communicate in a variety of formats.

Materials
Analysis Tools: Photo Analysis Worksheet
Books: Story of an Hour by Kate Chopin
PowerPoint Slides: "Walt Whitman and Journaling: Connecting with the Life Around You"

What do these two individuals have in common?

http://renaissanceguy.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/waltwhitman.jpg
They are both self-promoters

- What does this mean?
- How is Ashton Kutcher a self-promoter?
- Examples:
- What about Whitman?

Underside of the Butterfly

http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/whitman-goodgraypoet.html

Images Encountered by Whitman

“The Sunken Road” at Antietam
September 1862

http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/whitman-wounddresser.html

Wounded Soldiers in Fredericksburg, VA - 1864

http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/whitman-wounddresser.html

Whitman’s Notebook on Antietam

there was a very large barn & farm house—the barn was filled with wounded, & the barn yard, an[d] the farm house as full as it could stick—a peaceful barn, [inserted “now bloody”] the fragrant hay they used to place the men on for operations—they turned the cattle out of their stalls

http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/images/ww0024as.jpg
Journaling offers a variety of opportunities:

- It is a way to note important words, ideas, or memories that you experience.
- It is a way to reflect on what you have read or experienced.
- It is a way to sort out details and make sure that you truly understand what you are reading, hearing, etc.

This assignment has two parts.

#1 – You are to choose a place that has had a profound impact on you and journal for ten minutes.
You should include the following:

- statements that reflect what you saw, heard, felt, or said
- statements that will put the reader in the scene so that when I (or a peer) reads your journal, we will feel as if we are experiencing it as well
- statements that answer, “Why is this important?”

#2 – This is an ongoing assignment.
You will be expected to journal during and/or after assigned readings. Your journal will be:

- a separate notebook that you use only for this class
- Each journal entry should be a page in length. It will be single-spaced and hand-written.
- I will periodically check/grade the journals, and when I do, I will be looking for the quality of the content.
- At times I will give you a writing prompt to use in your journal writing, and other times I will let you use your own topics in relation to the reading.

In at least one page, journal on the following:

- What theme or themes are present in this short story? Explain.
- You are allowed to rewrite the ending. What would your alternate ending be? Write it now.
Library of Congress Items:
Title of Source: Whitman with butterfly, 1877
Creator of Source: W.Curtis Taylor
URL of Source: http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/whitman-goodgraypoet.html

Title of Source: Reverse Side of Butterfly
Creator of Source: W.Curtis Taylor
URL of Source: http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/whitman-goodgraypoet.html

Title of Source: Cardboard Butterfly
Creator of Source: Walt Whitman
URL of Source: http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/whitman-goodgraypoet.html

Title of Source: "The Sunken Road" at Antietam
Creator of Source: Alexander Gardner
Date of Source: 1862
URL of Source: http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/whitman-wounddresser.html

Title of Source: Wounded soldiers from the battles in the "Wilderness" at Fredericksburg, Virginia, May 1864
URL of Source: http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/whitman-wounddresser.html

Title of Source: Hospital Notebook "At Antietam"
Creator of Source: Walt Whitman
URL of Source: http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/whitman-wounddresser.html

Other:
Title: Walt Whitman
URL: http://renaissancceguy.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/waltwhitman.jpg
Description: Picture of Whitman later in life.

Title: Ashton Kutcher
URL: http://www.solcomhouse.com/images/ashton-kutcher.jpg
Description: Picture of Ashton Kutcher

Title: Revising Himself:Walt Whitman and Leaves of Grass Exhibit
URL: http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/whitman-home.html
Description: Library of Congress Exhibit

Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure Step #</th>
<th>Resource or Material Used</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Show slide #2. Ask who the individuals are and what they have in common.</td>
<td>PowerPoint</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Brainstorm ideas with class as for the answers in the previous step.</td>
<td>PowerPoint</td>
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<td>3. Explain that both men are both known as self-promoters. They are/were common people with the knack for reaching many people through writing-show slide #3 and discuss.</td>
<td>PowerPoint</td>
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<td>4. Examine Whitman further by providing background information on the man.</td>
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<td>5. Explain the story of Whitman’s butterfly (show slides #4 and #5).</td>
<td>PowerPoint</td>
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<td>6. Analyze the picture on slide #6 “The Sunken Road” using Photo Analysis Form. Students will complete and then discuss as a group.</td>
<td>PowerPoint Analysis Sheet</td>
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<td>7. Complete the same activity for the picture on slide #7</td>
<td>PowerPoint Analysis Sheet</td>
</tr>
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<td>8. Point out that Whitman was not only known as a promoter and poet, but also a real person who helped those in need by writing about events so that others could learn from them.</td>
<td>PowerPoint</td>
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<td>9. Show slide #8</td>
<td>PowerPoint</td>
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<td>10. Show slide #9-Why Journal? Ask for suggestions, then show slide #10.</td>
<td>PowerPoint</td>
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The Whitman in Everyone
11. Show slide #11-Read it through to the class and then give them ten minutes to complete the activity.  

12. Show slide #12-Read it through and make sure the class understands the journal requirements.  

13. The homework will be to give the class a copy of Kate Chopin’s short story, *The Story of an Hour*. They will need to read it and journal about the following topics: “What theme or themes are present?” and “You are allowed to change the ending, what would be your alternate ending?” Show slide #13.  

### Evaluation

Teacher will evaluate student learning by question-answer techniques in the beginning of the lesson. The first few times journals are assigned, it will be important for the teacher to review the goals with the students and read the journal entries to make sure that each student is understanding the journaling process.

### Extension

The students are expected to maintain their journals for the entire year. They will continue to record and reflect on what they are reading and make connections to their own lives and their world.

### Author Credits:

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Charleston High School
Photo Analysis Worksheet

What I See (observe)
Describe exactly what you see in the photo.

Some things to consider are:

What people and objects are shown? How are they arranged?

What is the physical setting?

What other details can you see?

What I Infer (deduction)
Summarize what you already know about the situation and time period shown and the people and objects that appear.
Interpretation

Say what you conclude from what you see.

What is going on in the picture? Who are the people and what are they doing?

What might be the function of the objects? What can we conclude about the time period?

What I Need to Investigate

What are three questions you have about the photo?

1.

2.

3.

Where can you go to further research to answer your questions?