

A Conceptual Unit on Gangs, Cliques, and Peer Pressure

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Sensitivity Must Not Silence Discussion: A Rationale for a Unit on Gangs,
Cliques, and Peer Pressure

How can I rationalize discussing topics such as gangs, cliques, and peer-group pressure in a ninth grade English classroom? The answer is simple. These issues exist in a ninth grade English classroom and therefore should be discussed positively. Every high school in the United States has some form of gang, clique, or peer-pressure problems no matter the state, town, or socioeconomic status of the community. Students who come from half million-dollar homes in Kennesaw, Georgia became caught up in a drug and sex ring in a local high school. Students who come from “the comfortable town of tree-lined streets, churches, and universities” known as Kalamazoo, Michigan have the highest juvenile arrest rate in the state (Webb, 62). And, students in the Los Angeles area become involved in gangs as early as the age of ten. Gangs, cliques, and peer-pressure exist everywhere, in many different forms.

As Allen-Carey Webb states in his book, Literature and Lives, students turn to the drastic measures of gangs and cliques as a cry for help. He writes, “What is truly unfortunate about the lives of these young people is that their anti-social behavior is often a desperate if misdirected attempt to secure their most basic human needs, to establish for themselves safety, respect, and belonging. Therefore, we as teachers, need to address this cry and answer it in our classrooms. Gangs, cliques, and peer-pressure are not only dangerous on the streets, but also tear up the classroom environment. Under these pressures and stresses, students are left feeling afraid, different, and often abandoned. Ignoring these problems in the classroom will only make these tensions grow. My hope is that by discussing literature related to gangs, cliques, and peer-pressure, the students

will relate to the literary characters and themes of the literature, and open themselves up. An open-minded student is the best ammunition in the fight against peer-pressure and violence in schools.

Educational philosopher, John Dewey once said, “ All learning is a simple reconstruction of experiences. This may be why some students do not like history. They simply do not have enough personal experiences to apply towards history,”(Ed. Theory, 3). This states exactly why I want to teach about gangs, cliques, and peer groups. High school students have enough experiences with these issues to reconstruct and learn from them. Students at this age are trying to fit in so badly with their peers that they will do just about anything. William Glassner’s book ,The Control Theory in The Classroom, says that the four fundamental needs of students this age are “to belong and to love, to gain power, to be free, and to have fun,”(Ed. Theory, 15). All of these needs can be met in either a positive or negative manner involving gangs and cliques. My hope is that teaching literature about these issues and discussing them in class, students will choose the positive side of peer pressure during adolescence.

Violence has been at its peak in the past few years, especially in the school system. Instances like Columbine High School in Colorado and Heritage High School in Georgia illustrate this point. When looking back at cases such as these, the culprits were almost always people who felt left out or were teased in school. They were victims of peer pressure, gangs, and cliques before they created their own victims.

These major instances seen on the news are not the only ones occurring, however. Every year ten percent of schools across the nation have to call authorities for at least one serious violent crime. In 1997, 202,000 students from the age of twelve to eighteen were

violated by serious crimes at school. This number has significantly increased since then, and is getting worse every day. According to Carey Allen-Webb, “more teenagers are killed by firearms than by natural causes combined,”(Webb ,53). Why are so many students harming themselves and others? In most cases, the students who turn to gangs and cliques feel that they are completely on their own. They turn to these groups to find a sense of belonging that they are not receiving at home or in school.

Kody Scott, author of the book , Monster:Autobiography of an L.A. Gang Member, joined his gang at the age of eleven after repeatedly having his lunch money stolen. His mother was also never at home, and therefore, “ He felt he had to join a gang to survive and fit in with others,”(Webb 63). Students like Kody who do not feel like they get respect on a regular basis, find this respect in gangs and cliques. “At the heart of the street code is the issue of respect- loosely defined as being treated “right,” or granted the deference one deserves,”(64 Webb). Students like Kody enter gangs to belong, but then turn around and begin to make others feel that they do not belong. This also relates to simple peer cliques of “cheerleaders,” “jocks,” and “nerds.” While this may seem less serious than the gang member example, it can cause just as much harm on adolescents’ learning environment. The leaders of these gangs and cliques often allow and demand that their members and followers hurt others who are not up to their caliber. In a study measuring the prevalence of hazing among the American high school population, Alfred University found that 30 percent of surveyed students reported engaging in potentially illegal acts as part of initiation into a group. 43 percent reported being subjected to humiliating activities, and 23 percent reported substance abuse in high school (Hoover, 2000). Therefore, the students who join these groups cause other

students to feel badly about themselves, and cause them to engage in activities that promote either mental or physical danger, or both. So how do we stop this cycle?

There is no definite answer to this question. In today's society, danger and crime will always exist. But there are ways to lessen the risk. One of these is to address the problems of gangs, cliques, and peer pressure in the classroom. As long as these issues remain taboo in the classroom, they will continue to fester and grow. Therefore, I have chosen the following selection of poetry, short stories, one novel, and one movie for this six-week unit. I chose a variety of genres, types of authors, and themes in order to embrace that which is different and promote tolerance and unity in the classroom. I will begin the unit with a poem entitled, "To Know All is to Forgive All." Many more poems dealing with differences, peer pressure, and forgiveness will be read throughout the unit.

I have selected two short stories out of Judith Ortiz Cofer's book An Island Like You. The characters in "Matoa's Mirror," and "Bad Influence" will be easy for ninth graders to relate to, and the issues in the stories are things that these students are experiencing right now. I also chose the short story "Bernice Bobs her Hair," by F. Scott Fitzgerald, in order to show the classic tradition of trying to fit in, and how this has always been a problem. I think it will be healthy for the kids to understand how much has changed since the times of this story in the way of violence and peer pressure.

Finally, I will have my students read The Outsiders, by S.E.Hinton, and watch the movie. This is a novel that is fairly easy to read, and that most students really enjoy. It deals directly with the issue at hand and will allow a lot of open discussion about such issues. Overall, all of the literature that I have chosen for my students to read during

these six weeks hits on topics that are not often talked about in class, but need to be addressed.

So, how can I justify teaching about gangs, cliques, and peer pressure in a ninth grade classroom? Carey Allen-Webb sums it up pretty well with the following quotation: “Years ago, Rodney King asked a simple question: ‘ Can’t we all just get along?’ I submit that the answer to this question depends significantly on high school and college English teachers and our willingness and courage to draw on the wisdom of minority writers and scholars and address racial issues in our classrooms openly and maturely,”(Webb 61). Add gangs, cliques, and peer pressure to the topic of race that Webb mentions, and he has justified my entire unit in one simple statement. We will only all be able to get along when we are able to talk about getting along. Students will only be able to talk about getting along if they are taught to do so in a positive manner inside the classroom. These issues are sensitive and must be handled in a careful manner, but still must be handled. Otherwise, violence and peer pressure will continue to run rampant in our schools. “Sensitivity must not silence the classroom,” or our lives and the lives of our students will be harmed irreparably, (Webb 61).

Unit Goals

Gangs, Cliques, and Peer Pressure

Unit Goal One:

To create a journal reflecting the topics discussed in class and the materials read in class. The students will respond to assigned writing topics or a topic that they create on their own. The students will be able to respond to ideas that are generated by the theme of the unit. They will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the materials read in class and things that they have read outside of class. The students will be able to show how the topics discussed and read in class relate directly to their lives. The students will demonstrate creativity and uniqueness in order to discover their own sense of style.

Unit Goal Two:

To create a poetry project based on the life of one of the poets we read in class. The students will demonstrate outside research and biographical skills. The students will demonstrate creativity in their presentation of the project. The students will demonstrate their knowledge of types of poetry and poetry terms discussed in class through their own poetry writing.

Unit Goal Three:

To create a group short story. The students will create a character sketch using creative and descriptive language as taught in class. The students will use examples seen in the short stories read in class of how to “show and not tell” about their characters. In a group, the students will then create a short story involving the characters. The students will demonstrate collaborative work efforts, knowledge on the components of a short story, creativity, and grammar and mechanics.

Unit Goal Four:

To write an essay based on a given topic related to the novel *The Outsiders*. Students will be required to write a 3-5 page paper that is typed and double-spaced, with one inch margins and 12 point type. The students will demonstrate their knowledge of their reading of the novel. They will also demonstrate knowledge of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and writing skills learned in class. The students will also be held accountable for claiming their major source in the proper MLA parenthetical documentation.

Break Down For Unit Grading

Journals- 15% of unit grade

Poetry Project- 25% of unit grade

Short Story- 30% of unit grade total

a) character sketch-10% of unit grade

b) group story-20% of unit grade

Persuasive Paper- 35% of unit grade

Introductory Activity Gangs, Cliques, and Peer Pressure Unit

Explanation:

In order to demonstrate the importance of unity in the high school environment, I will break the students up into four different groups. Each group will be given a rule sheet that is different from all the other groups. Each group will be given a name and a set of characteristics that separates them from the other groups. We will then come together as a group again and discuss gangs, cliques, and peer pressure and the way it has effected them in their education so far. Each groups' rules will require them to say something anytime someone from another group talks. This way, the students will see the ways in which peer pressure, gangs, and cliques harm the learning process.

Rules:

Group One: You are all members of the gum gang. (group members will each be given a stick of gum.) You are not to associate with anyone who doesn't have gum. Anytime someone from the crossed arms gang says anything, you are to smack your gum so loudly that it distracts the other group from talking. Do not inform the other groups of your gang's rules.

Group Two: You are all members of the crossed arm gang. You are not to associate with anyone who does not cross their arms. Anytime someone from the hat gang says anything, you are to tap your feet on the ground in order to distract them from talking. Do not inform the other groups of your gang's rules.

Group Three: You are all members of the hat gang. (group members will each be given a hat.) Anytime someone from the sunglasses gang says anything, you are to cough in order to distract them from talking. Do not inform other groups of your gang's rules.

Group Four: You are the sunglasses gang. (group members will each be given a pair of sunglasses.) Anytime someone from the gum gang says anything, you are to stomp your feet on the ground in order to distract them from talking.

Once the rules have been read and the discussion has taken place, I will begin to talk about the unit we are about to begin. I will also explain the importance and relevance of the activity we just completed in class, and the importance of treating everyone equally and promoting non-violence. I will then pass out the following poem for them to read in order to begin the first part of the unit, which will be poetry.

To Know All is to Forgive All
By Nixon Waterman

If I knew you and you knew me-
If both of us could clearly see,
And with an inner sight divine
The meaning of your heart and mine-
I'm sure that we would differ less
And clasp our hands in friendliness;
Our thoughts would pleasantly agree
If I knew you, and you knew me.

If I knew you and you knew me,
As each one knows his own self, we
Could look each other in the face
And see therein a truer grace.

Life has so many hidden woes,
So many thorns for every rose;
The "why" of things our hearts would see,
If I knew you and you knew me.

Journal Assignment

Gangs, Cliques, and Peer Pressure Unit

Directions: Over the next 5 weeks, we will be studying a unit on gangs, cliques, and peer pressure. We will be reading many poems and short stories. We will also read a novel and watch the movie. During the course of this unit, you will be asked to keep a writing journal. Some of the writing topics will be assigned to you, and others will be very open. At the end of the unit, you will receive a grade for your journal. However, there **WILL BE PERIODIC JOURNAL CHECKS** that will count towards your final grade. I will not tell you when these checks are going to be. I will let you know as we go along what journal entries will be written in class and which ones will be written as homework. If there is something private in your journal that you do not want me to read, simply fold that page and write a note to me on the outside. I will check it to make sure you did the work, but will not read it. The schedule of the journals is as follows:

Week One:

Tuesday-(Entry #1IN CLASS) write a one page journal entry on instances of bullying that you've noticed in our school. How did this make you feel? How were you involved in the bullying? What could have been done to stop the bullying?

Friday-(ENRTY #2 HOMEWORK FOR MONDAY) write a one page journal entry using the following writing prompt: If I had no one in the world to depend on, I would...

Week Two:

Tuesday- (Entry #3IN CLASS) write a one page journal entry on ways that your feelings have been hurt in the past. How have you solved the problem? Explain the process of forgiving and how hard or easy it was for you.

Thursday- (Entry #4 HOMEWORK FOR FRIDAY) Choose any of the poems we have read in class so far and write about. Do you like it? Do you hate it? Does it relate to your life? Explain what the poem means to you and defend your decision on whether you like the poem or not.

Week Three:

Monday- (Entry #5 HOMEWORK FOR TUESDAY) write a one page journal entry using the following writing prompt: One day I was walking down that street when I saw a group of people, about my age. They were all wearing the exact same outfit. They all talked exactly the same. I thought they were extremely...

Wednesday-(Entry #6 IN CLASS) write a one page journal entry using the following writing prompt: The most important people in my life are...

Friday-(Entry #7HOMEWORK FOR MONDAY) Choose any of the short stories we have read and place yourself in the story as the main character, or protagonist. How would the story differ? What would you do the same or do differently?

Week Four:

Monday- (Entry #8 IN CLASS) write a one page journal entry about your thoughts on the novel we are reading. Have you read *The Outsiders*? If so, what did you think of it? If you haven't read it, have you heard anything about it?

Thursday-(Entry #9 IN CLASS) write a one page journal entry using the following writing prompt: I think that the level of violence in America's schools is...

Friday-(Entry #10 HOMEWORK FOR MONDAY) write a one page journal entry about your favorite character in *The Outsiders*. Why do you like this character? How does the author's description of the character help make the character interesting?

Week Five:

Tuesday-(Entry # 11 IN CLASS) Write a one page journal entry using the following writing prompt: If I was the most popular person in school, I would...

Wednesday-(Entry #12 IN CLASS) Write a follow up one page journal entry to journal entry # 8. If you had read the book before, do you feel differently about it now? If you hadn't read the book, what did you think? Would you recommend the use of this book in this class in the future?

Friday- (IN CLASS) Turn in all of your journal entries neatly bound together. They may be on separate sheets of paper or in a single notebook. If they are on separate sheets of paper, they must be attached in some manner.

Grading Procedures for Writing Journals

- **An “A” journal will:** Be turned in on time and contain all twelve entries. The entries will be well-thought out and at least a page long. The journal will show signs of effort through details and rich language. The journal will contain more than just the minimum effort and direct answering of the topic.
- **A “B” journal will:** Contain all twelve entries. The entries will be somewhat thought out and a page in length, but could be a little more in depth. The journal will show some thought in language and details, but could have been carried a little bit further. The journal will contain just a slight amount more than a direct answering of the topic.
- **A “C” journal will:** Contain less than all twelve entries. The entries will not be well thought out, and will be less than a page. The journal will show little thought in language and details. The journal will only remain on the surface of answering the topic.
- **A “D- Below” journal will:** Contain less than all twelve entries and the entries will be much less than one page in length. The journal will show no thought in details and language. The journal will only touch on the topic and not even answer that completely.

Week One

Day One:

(3min) housekeeping

(10 min) SAT word list #1- Copy down this week's SAT words into your notebook

(37 min) Introductory activity (see attached handout and explanation)

(5 min) Read "To Know all is to Forgive All" aloud

Day Two:

(3 min) housekeeping

(25 min) Read and discuss "We Real Cool" by Gwendolyn Brooks. This discussion will be with the whole class and will be based around the definition of rhythm and the way that the ideas of this poem play into peer pressure. We will then read and discuss "Coward" by A.R. Ammons. This discussion will be based around the students opening up and discussing their family lives and the way it relates to this poem. They will be asked to tell me what runs in their family and then do some in class writing on it.

(27 min) Journal Writing. Write one page on instances of bullying you've noticed in our school. How did this make you feel? How were you involved in the bullying? What could you have done to stop the bullying?

Day Three:

(3 min) housekeeping

(5 min) poetry project assigned- see attached assignment sheet and grading rubric

(32 min) poetry terms lesson. Students will take notes on the following terms: images, simile, personification, metaphor, diction, voice, and tone.

(15 min) Students will read "Aftermath" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost silently until the end of class and write down examples of the poetry terms that they find in the poems.

Day Four:

(3 min) housekeeping

(15 min) discuss and put up on the board a chart of all the different people that make up our school. How do they all contribute- how would it be different without them?
(10 min) Read “We are Many” by Pablo Neruda and discuss the translation of the poem.
(27 min) In small groups come up with ideas on paper to turn in for participation points of how we could "translate" this poem once again into modern language. What would it talk about? How would the poem say it?

Day Five:

(3 min) housekeeping

(20 min) SAT Quiz #1

(15 min) Poetry terms lesson/ Recap. Have the students act out the term or give examples in front of the class.

(17 min) Time to get started on homework: One page journal entry using the following writing prompt: If I had no one in the world to depend on, I would...

Poetry Project

Directions: You are to choose one of the poets we have read in class to research briefly. You are to find information of their personal life and their writing. You may work in a group or individually, but will be grading individually no matter what. The different components of the project are listed below, but will all be turned in at the same time.

Part One: The Written Biography

You must turn in a one-two page typed biography of your poet. Your paper should be typed in a 12 point font with one inch margins. You must have at least one outside source and you must credit this source. Your paper should give vivid details into the personal life of your poet as well as his or her writing.

Part Two: Your Own Poem

Using the information you have researched and the poems read in class, you are to create your own poem in the type of style that your poet most often writes. You may write on any topic relating to gangs, cliques, or peer pressure. Your poem may be in any form that you want it to be. You are to use at least one example of a poetry term learned in class in your poem. This is to be original and creative- Do whatever interests you!!

Part Three: The Creative Presentation

You will create a presentation to show your knowledge of your poet and to show case your original poem. Some ideas for your presentation are listed below, but you are not limited to these. See me with any other ideas you may have.

- you may create a cd cover with a picture representing your poet and create a song list for with titles related to your poets life and work. If you choose this option, you will put your creative poem as a song in your cd case with the lyrics in tact. You may either read your poem aloud, or if you are so inclined may perform your poem as a song.
- You may create a collage of pictures and words related to your poet. If you choose this option, you can either put your own poem on the poster board, or you may simply read it aloud to the class during your presentation.
- You may do a news interview or talk show about your poet. If you choose this option, you may either just read your poems aloud or incorporate them into your presentation somehow.

Grading for the Poetry Project

The poetry project will be broken down using the following checklist.

Written Biography- (30 pts. Possible, 10 points per area)

- Paper was the proper length and format
- Paper was proofread for grammar, spelling, and mechanical errors
- Paper showed use of outside sources and the sources were documented properly.

Comments:

Your Own Poem: (30 pts. Possible, 10 points per area)

- Poem was turned in on time
- Poem demonstrated effort and detail through the use of language and imagery.
- Poem contained at least one example of a poetry term learned in class

Comments:

Your Creative Presentation: (40 pts. Possible, 10 points per area)

- Presentation demonstrated outside effort and creativity
- Presentation gave informative information about the poet
- Presentation was given with clear diction, good eye contact, and open posture
- Presentation was given on time, with all parts of the project in order and completed.

SAT List #1- Copy the following words into your SAT notebook. You will be expected to define them, give the part of speech, and use each in a sentence for the quiz on Friday.

1. Extricate-(v)- to free or release
2. Immutable-(adj)- unchangeable
3. Indefatigable-(adj)-incapable of being tired out
4. Expound-(v)- to set forth in detail
5. Redundant-(adj) something repeated over and over
6. Resilient-(adj)-able to spring back
7. Anomaly-(n) a deviation from the norm
8. Revoke-(v) to take away
9. Revitalize-(v) to regain energy
10. Atheist-(n) One not believing in God

SAT Quiz # 1

Name _____

Directions: For each of the following words, give the definition, part of speech, and use the word in an original sentence.

1. Extricate-

2. Immutable-

3. Indefatigable-

4. Expound-

5. Redundant-

6. Resilient-

7. Anomaly-

8. Revoke-

9. Revitalize-

10. Atheist-

Week Two:

Day One:

(3 min) housekeeping

(10 min) SAT list #2- copy down the following set of words in your SAT notebook

(32 min) Read “American Hero” by Essex Hemphill and discuss what a hero is and onomatopoeia. The students will take notes on onomatopoeia.

(10 min) Recap poems and terms. I will lead this discussion in a quick lecture/ recap form.

Day Two:

(3 min) housekeeping

(15 min) journal- write one page on ways that your feelings have been hurt in the past. How have you solved the problem? Explain the process of forgiving and how hard or easy it was for you.

(37 min) poetry project work day

Day Three:

(3 min) housekeeping

(52 min) poetry project workday

Day Four:

(3 min) housekeeping

(49 min) poetry project presentations

(3 min) assign homework- One page journal entry on any of the poems we have read in class so far. Did you like it? Did you hate it? Does it relate to your life? Explain what the poem means to you and defend your decision on whether you like the poem or not.

Day Five:

(3 min) housekeeping

(20 min) SAT Quiz #2

(32 min) poetry project presentations

SAT List #2- Copy the following words into your SAT notebook. You will be expected to define them, give the part of speech, and use each in a sentence for the quiz on Friday.

1. Inviolable-(adj)- secure from destruction
2. Unparalleled-(adj)- unequaled or unmatched
3. Impious-(adj)-lacking reverence, disrespectful
4. Insatiable-(adj)-incapable of being satisfied
5. Unfounded-(adj)- not based on fact or reality
6. Unorthodox-(adj)- not following standard ways
7. Impartial-(adj)- unbiased, treating all equally
8. Intrepid-(adj)-having no fear
9. Inauspicious-(adj)-not favorable
10. Unremitting-(adj)-unrelieved, ceaseless

SAT Quiz # 2

Name _____

Directions: For each of the following words, give the definition, part of speech, and use the word in an original sentence.

1. Inviolable-

2. Unparalleled-

3. Impious-

4. Insatiable-

5. Unfounded-

6. Unorthodox-

7. Impartial-

8. Intrepid-

9. Inauspicious-

10. Unremitting-

Week Three

Monday:

(3 min) Housekeeping- journal check

(10 min) SAT words. Copy the words into your SAT notebook for the quiz on Friday

(30 min) Introduction to short stories. Diagram a short story on the board, explaining the different parts. We will make up the short story in class using our imaginations and then diagram it on the board, showing the rising action, characterization, climax, and falling action.

(10 min) Begin reading “Bernice Bobs her Hair” aloud in class

(2 min) Assign homework: Journal #5- Write one page in your journal for tomorrow using the following writing prompt: One day I was walking down the street when I saw a group of people about my age. They were all wearing the exact same outfit. They talked exactly the same. I thought they were...

Tuesday:

(3 min) housekeeping

(52 min) finish reading “Bernice Bobs her Hair” by F. Scott Fitzgerald and discuss in groups of five, each one having a section of the story. Each group will be asked to discuss the story based on the theme of peer pressure and the key concepts for this story of external and internal conflict. We will then report back together as a whole class to discuss our findings.

Wednesday:

(3 min) housekeeping

(20 min) In class journal writing. Write one page in your journal using the following writing prompt: The most important people in my life are...

(32 min) read and discuss Matao’s Mirror by Judith Ortiz-Cofer. This discussion will be set up in an open-class discussion about individuality. The students will be asked about what they think individuality is and ways that they express it. They will then relate this to the story and to the key concepts of this story which are characterization, both direct and indirect.

Thursday:

(3 min) housekeeping

(52 min) read and discuss “Bad Influence” by Judith Ortiz-Cofer. This discussion will be in groups of five. The students will be asked to find examples of irony and point of view and then report their findings to the class.

Friday:

(3 min) housekeeping

(20 min) SAT Quiz. Define, give the part of speech, and use each of the ten SAT words and each root in a sentence.

(10 min) Group Short Story Assigned

(20 min) Quietly work on character sketches

(2 min) Assign homework- Write a one page journal for Monday on any of the short stories we have read. Place yourself in the story as the main character or protagonist. How would the story differ? What would you do the same or differently?

SAT List #3- Copy the following words into your SAT notebook. You will be expected to define them, give the part of speech, and use each in a sentence for the quiz on Friday.

- 1.solemn-adj.-serious; grave-
- 2.alleviate-v.-to lessen; to relieve
- 3.negligence-n-carelessness; failure to give or care
- 4.conspicuous-adj.-standing out;obvious;easily seen
- 5.advocate-v- to speak in favor of; to support
- 6.ascetic-n- a person who practices self denial
- 7.profound-adj.-deep thought; insightful
- 8.ironic-adj.-unexpected
- 9.dogmatic-adj.-positive in stating opinions
- 10.condone-v-to overlook; to permit to happen

SAT Quiz # 3

Name _____

Directions: For each of the following words, give the definition, part of speech, and use the word in an original sentence.

1.Solemn-

2.Alleviate-

3.Negligence-

4.Conspicuous-

5.Advocate-

6.Ascetic-

7.Profound-

8.Ironic-

9.Dogmatic-

10.Candone-

Create A Short Story

THIS SHEET MUST BE TURNED IN WITH GROUP STORY

ASSIGNMENT

Individually, you are to create an original character sketch using vivid detail and characterization that shows and does not only tell. Then, in small groups, you are to create a short story that involves one or more of your designed characters from your individual character sketches, and some other minor characters. Your group may choose to write the story in either first or third person point of view.

FORMAT

The story will be at least 1,000 words and must include all the following requirements. Follow your progress by checking off areas when you complete them.

1. Content

_____The story has a clear setting and mood.

_____The story has a clear plot including a theme, conflict, climax, and resolution.

2. Character

_____One of the group member's characters is used.

_____The character's actions/emotions/backgrounds are consistent from the character sketches.

_____One character trait is indirectly characterized (showing, not telling).

3. Theme

_____The theme of the story is developed throughout the entire story. The theme is

_____.

4. Point of View

_____The story stays in the same point of view throughout.

CIRCLE: First -or- Third

5. Literary Devices

_____The authors use at least one example of either flashback, symbolism, or foreshadowing in the story. Device used _____.

(highlight the literary device in your paper)

6. Dialogue

_____How well does the story incorporate dialogue?

Grading for Group Short Story

Each person in the group will be graded separately on their character sketch. The character sketch grading will be as follows:

- An “A” character sketch will demonstrate clear understanding of “showing and not telling.” Many creative adjectives and detailed descriptive language will be used. The sketch will contain only a few minor spelling or grammar errors.
- A “B” character sketch will demonstrate understanding of “showing and not telling,” but could have been a little more vivid and detailed. Not as many creative adjectives and detailed descriptions were used as needed to be. The sketch contains more than a few minor spelling or grammar errors.
- A “C” character sketch will demonstrate the minimum understanding of “showing and not telling.” A small amount of creative adjectives and detailed descriptions were used. There will be a considerable amount or major spelling and grammar errors.
- A “D-Below” character sketch will demonstrate very little understanding of “showing and not telling.” Little to no creative adjectives and detailed descriptions were used. There will be enough major spelling and grammar errors to hinder the reading process.

The Grading Process for the Group will be based on the same checklist that you turn in with your story. The points break down as follows: Each section is worth 10 points. This will come up to 99 points. The last point will be earned for turning the story in on time.

1. Content

____ The story has a clear setting and mood.

____ The story has a clear plot including a theme, conflict, climax, and resolution.

2. Character

____ One of the group member’s characters is used.

____ The character’s actions/emotions/backgrounds are consistent from the character sketches.

____ One character trait is indirectly characterized (showing, not telling).

3. Theme

____ The theme of the story is developed throughout the entire story. The theme is _____.

4. Point of View

____ The story stays in the same point of view throughout.

CIRCLE: First -or- Third

5. Literary Devices

_____The authors use at least one example of either flashback, symbolism, or foreshadowing in the story. Device used _____.
(highlight the literary device in your paper)

5. Dialogue

_____How well does the story incorporate dialogue?

Week Four

Day One:

(3 min) housekeeping

(10 min) SAT list #4- copy the following words into your SAT notebook

(15 min) Journal #8 in class. Write one page on The Outsiders. Have you read it before? If so, what did you think of it? If not, have you heard anything about it?

(27 min) quiet work on character sketches

Day Two:

(3 min) housekeeping

(25 min) peer editing of character sketches

(27 min) begin working on group stories

Day Three:

(3 min) housekeeping

(52 min) work on and finish group stories

Day Four:

(3 min) housekeeping- group stories due

(20 min) Journal #9 in class. Write one page using the following writing prompt: I think that the level of violence in America's schools is...

(32 min) Introduction to The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton. I will read a biography of S.E. Hinton without mentioning the name of the person or the book they wrote. I will pay special attention to the fact that S.E. Hinton was so close to my students age when she wrote the book. I will then ask them to tell me about their accomplishments so far and we will have a class discussion on this and then I will tell them how this relates to the novel that we are about to start reading.

Day Five:

(3 min) housekeeping

(20 min) SAT Quiz #4

(10 min) paper topics distributed... see attached paper

(22 min) Begin reading Ch. 1-3 of The Outsiders silently in class and finish the rest for homework. Also assign homework of journal# 10- one page on your favorite character of the book so far and why.

SAT List #4- Copy the following words into your SAT notebook. You will be expected to define them, give the part of speech, and use each in a sentence for the quiz on Friday. This week you are required to look up the definition on your own in order to practice your dictionary skills.

- 1.Eminent-
- 2.Anarchy-
- 3.Exorbiant-
- 4.Repatriate-
- 5.Eccentric-
- 6.Extrovert-
- 7.Refurbish-
8. amorphous-
- 9.juvenate-
10. Elusive-

SAT Quiz # 4

Name _____

Directions: For each of the following words, give the definition, part of speech, and use the word in an original sentence.

1.Eminent-

2.Anarchy-

3.Exorbiant-

4.Repatriate-

5.Eccentric-

6. Extrovert-

7. Refurbish-

8. amorphous-

9. juvenate-

10. Elusive-

The Outsiders Paper

Directions: You will write a 3-5 page persuasive paper on an assigned topic related to *The Outsiders*. The paper should be typed in 12 point font with 1 inch margins. You will be required to demonstrate writing knowledge learned in class and to support your claims with evidence from the book. You must use proper citation for your sources as learned in class. You will be held accountable for grammar, punctuation, and spelling. The writing should be in the persuasive form.

Grading for this paper will be based on the following rubric:

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Focus on Topic (Content)	There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main idea stands out and is supported by detailed information.	Main idea is clear but the supporting information is general.	Main idea is somewhat clear but there is a need for more supporting information.	The main idea is not clear. There is a seemingly random collection of information.
Support for Topic (Content)	Relevant, telling, quality details give the reader important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable.	Supporting details and information are relevant, but one key issue or portion of the storyline is unsupported.	Supporting details and information are relevant, but several key issues or portions of the storyline are unsupported.	Supporting details and information are typically unclear or not related to the topic.
Adding Personality (Voice)	The writer seems to be writing from knowledge or experience. The author has taken the ideas and made them "his own."	The writer seems to be drawing on knowledge or experience, but there is some lack of ownership of the topic.	The writer relates some of his own knowledge or experience, but it adds nothing to the discussion of the topic.	The writer has not tried to transform the information in a personal way. The ideas and the way they are expressed seem to belong to someone else.
Grammar & Spelling (Conventions)	Writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.
Transitions (Organization)	A variety of thoughtful transitions are used. They clearly show how ideas are connected.	Transitions clearly show how ideas are connected, but there is little variety.	Some transitions work well; but connections between other ideas are fuzzy.	The transitions between ideas are unclear or nonexistent.
Introduction (Organization)	The introduction is inviting, states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper.	The introduction clearly states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper, but is not particularly inviting to the reader.	The introduction states the main topic, but does not adequately preview the structure of the paper nor is it particularly inviting to the reader.	There is no clear introduction of the main topic or structure of the paper.
Conclusion (Organization)	The conclusion is strong and leaves	The conclusion is recognizable and	The conclusion is recognizable, but	There is no clear conclusion, the

	the reader with a feeling that they understand what the writer is "getting at."	ties up almost all the loose ends.	does not tie up several loose ends.	paper just ends.
Sentence Length (Sentence Fluency)	Every paragraph has sentences that vary in length and the paper is the proper length.	Almost all paragraphs have sentences that vary in length and the paper is just slightly shorter than the proper length.	Some sentences vary in length, and the paper is at least a page shorter than required.	Sentences rarely vary in length, and paper is completely shorter than required.

(rubric idea borrowed from rubistar.com)

Week Five

Day One:

(3 min) housekeeping

(10 min) SAT List #5- copy the words into your SAT notebook

(42 min) The Outsiders. Discuss ch. 1-3. Handout character explanation sheet and then ask the kids to read/ discuss their journal entries from who their favorite character is.

Day Two:

(3 min) housekeeping

(25 min) journal entry #11 in class. Write one page using the following prompt: If I was the most popular person in school, I would...

(27 min) silently read ch. 4-5 and finish the rest for homework.

Day Three:

(3 min) housekeeping

(15 min) journal #12 in class- write one page responding to what you think about The Outsiders so far.

(37 min) The Outsiders. Discuss setting in the book and how the mood of the book changed when the setting changed to the abandoned church. Assign ch. 6 for homework.

Day Four:

(3 min) housekeeping

(52 min) Discuss ch. 6 related to the fire. Why was the fire a good thing for these boys? Ask the students about their personal experiences with trouble that turned out to be for the best. Assign ch. 7 for homework

Day Five:

(3 min) housekeeping

(52 min) class writing day- how to write an introduction. Put up examples on board and have the students write their own examples and share them. Assign ch. 8-10 for homework.

The Outsiders Character List

Ponyboy: The narrator of the story, a member of the greasers

Sodapop: The charming, high school drop out

Darry: Ponyboy's oldest brother who takes care of him since the death of their parents

Johnny: The sensitive sixteen year old greaser

Two-Bit: The oldest and funniest greaser

Cherry: The red headed soc from the movies

Marcia: Cherry's soc friend

Bob: The soc that Johnny kills

Randy: The other Soc that attacked Johnny and Ponyboy

Dally: The older greaser who sends Ponyboy and Johnny to the abandoned church.

SAT List #5- Copy the following words into your SAT notebook. You will be expected to define them, give the part of speech, and use each in a sentence for the quiz on Friday. This week you are required to look up the definition on your own in order to practice your dictionary skills.

- 1.Supercilious
- 2.Malicious
- 3.Malevolent
- 4.Benediction
- 5.Gregarious
- 6.Amity
7. Fidelity
- 8.Amicable
- 9.Infidelity
- 10.Acrid

SAT Quiz # 5

Name _____

Directions: For each of the following words, give the definition, part of speech, and use the word in an original sentence.

1. Supercilious

2. Malicious

3. Malevolent

4. Benediction

5. Gregarious

6. Amity

7. Fidelity

8. Amicable

9. Infidelity

10. Acrid

Week Six

Day One:

(3 min) housekeeping

(30 min) lecture on how to write body paragraphs

(22 min) Discuss up to ch. 10 of the book. This will be in a lecture format by me to review the book for them. Assign the rest of the book for homework.

Day Two:

(3 min) housekeeping

(30 min) conclusion writing day- lecture from me on how to write a good conclusion

(22 min) peer editing/ review of papers time

Day Three:

(3 min) housekeeping

(52 min) Outsiders movie

Day Four:

(3 min) housekeeping- papers due

(52 min) Outsiders movie

Day Five:

(3 min) housekeeping

(52 min) finish outsiders movie