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10/01/07
Smagorinsky
Monday 5-7:45

Differing Perspectives

Texts:

Grendel by John Gardner

Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes

“The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe

“The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allan Poe

“A&P” by John Updike

“My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning

Media:

The Sixth Sense

Charly

Beowulf and Grendel

Rationale

Different people look at the same things from different standpoints producing different points of view. When we appreciate and become sensitive to other people's different ways of looking at things, we begin to develop an ability shared by few - the ability to put oneself in the other's shoes or more simply, to see things from their perspective.

In this unit, students will be reading a wide variety of literature that includes novels, short stories, and poems. These texts were selected for specific purposes, and each makes invaluable contributions to the unit. Each piece we will be reading and examining displays different impacts that point of view can have on readers' understanding of the literature they read. This unit is designed to help students develop an understanding of perspective and to increase their sensitivity to different points of view in their own writing as well as in the writing of others. Performance goals are incorporated which include: having students internalize the concept of point of view; having students identify the variety of viewpoints expressed in different literary works; and having students express their own points of view, using a variety of topics and circumstances as stimuli.

While reading each of the selected pieces of literature, students will be asked in a variety of ways to ask and answer the basic questions surrounding the individual piece's narrator such as “how does the context of the story affect the narrator's reliability?” or “what is the narrator's purpose behind the story?” Differing perspective is the most common basis of conflict among humans. The exploration of perspective leads to a significant increase in communication skill and understanding. It helps one to pause before making assumptions. It allows one to consider the extraordinary possibility that they may, unlikely as it may seem, occasionally be mistaken.

John Gardener's Grendel has been chosen for the main novel of the unit on differing perspectives. It is expected students have some familiarity with Beowulf, as Grendel has been chosen because of its stark opposition to the classic Anglo Saxon epic poem. Grendel is a retelling of Beowulf shown from the perspective of the poem's main antagonist, Grendel. The novel raises questions on the ideas surrounding good and evil and how a differing perspective can enhance the reader's understanding of the situation. By exploring what has previously been stamped "evil," Gardener creates a character that is relatively understandable and can be related to through his existential ideals. By reading Grendel, it the aim of this unit that students will be able to creatively explore how much point of view can alter one's perspective on an event.

Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes is an excellent example of how a narrator's views and ideologies can change throughout the story. The short story revolves around a mentally challenged individual whom undergoes an intelligence-enhancing treatment which, in effect, eliminates his mental deficiency. The narrator's growth is presented not only in his actions throughout the story, but in his writing as well. Readers then witness Charlie, the main character; desperately fight against his brain's reversion to its original state of mental retardation. By the end of the story, Charlie has disappeared back to existing without the intelligence that he'd briefly held. The changing perspectives undergone in the story may seem confusing to students, but all derive from the same narrator. Along with the reading of this short story I will play short clips from the 1968 film rendition entitled *Charly* in attempts to display in a visual sense what the students will be reading.

Edgar Allan Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado" and "The Tell-Tale Heart" have also been chosen for their ability to convey a narrator that cannot necessarily be trusted. Too often in literature, students immediately align with the narrator without question. "The Cask of Amontillado" is a commonly read poem that deals with the deadly revenge taken by the insane narrator on a friend who he claims has insulted him. The poem explores the measures taken by the narrator as well as the thought processes involved in his actions. "The Tell-Tale Heart" follows an unnamed narrator who insists on his sanity despite the murdering of an older man. The murder is carefully calculated and the murderer hides the body by cutting it into pieces and hiding it under the floorboards. Ultimately, the narrator's guilt manifests itself in the hallucination that the man's heart is still beating under the floorboards. By introducing students to a narrator that displays signs of insanity obvious through the actions and narration of the poems, it is my hope that students will begin to consider not just what is said in a piece of literature or in real life, but also where and who it comes from. By understanding that almost anything can carry with it biases dependant on the narrator and point of view, The hope of this unit is that students will be better prepared to understand the literature they read as well as potentially write with an added layer of depth in mind – that of the narrator.

"A&P" by John Updike serves as a relief from the somewhat intimidating readings of Poe while still focusing on how perspective plays a role in any story. This work deals with a first-person narrator seemingly taking a stand for his version of what is right, only to face disappointment by doing so. The events of the story revolve around how this narrator perceives an episode dealing with his work in a grocery store – and how ultimately his actions (however righteous they seemingly are) are punished for their reception by his employer and lack of notice by those he stood up for.

“My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning deals very much with similar attitudes expressed in Poe’s work, but with added layers of narrative unreliability. The dramatic narrative sets up a situation where readers are meant to completely disagree with the narrator’s murder of a young woman whom he loves. The unit will use this work as a jumping stone for independent writing projects which will focus on points of view.

The Sixth Sense (selected clips) is an excellent example of how a narrator’s lack of honesty or openness can influence the way in which viewers understand or relate an entire work. The movie’s ending serves to almost undercut everything preceding it and forces viewers to rethink and reanalyze major events in the movie. By redrawing the lines of understanding and realizing that anything can be creatively altered by its narrator or main character, the movie will cement the notions previously read by the class on perspective and also serve as an accessible cultural connecting point, as it is possible students will have direct knowledge of the movie unlike most of the literature.

Some would raise the argument that this unit seems unimportant in relation to other widely-taught concepts such as freedom, pride, or war to name a few. While this unit’s texts do not display the depth and range of its counterparts, I would argue that the lessons learned in perspective and narrator unreliability directly apply to all other units incorporated throughout the school term. Through this unit students can not only develop more intuitive reading skills that apply to all areas of reading, both inside and outside of school; but through the overarching goals presented, students are given the chance to grow as writers as well.

Unit Outline

Week One

Day 1 (Monday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(45 min) Introductory Activity involving Statue of Liberty pictures

(2 min) Prepare for departure. Pass out copies of “The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe for students to take home.

Homework: Read “The Cask of Amontillado.” Ask students to start journals, recording their experience reading the piece., and to bring journals to class on Tuesday. Also, journals will be turned in to the teacher each Friday and returned to the students each Monday.

Materials: intro activity, “The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe handouts.

Day 2 (Tuesday)

(Students should come to class having read “The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(10 min) Journal jump-start. (Prompt: *How might perspective play an important role in literature? How might a narrator affect the telling of a story?*)

(10 min) Sharing of journals as a whole class. (Students can raise their hands to share what they have written.)

(10 min) Brainstorming stories, movies, songs, etc that include different perspectives by their narrators such as in “The Cask of Amontillado.” (Jump-off ideas: *21 Grams*, *Memento*, *Fight Club*, *Wolf’s Story*, *Wicked*, etc.)

(15 min) Connect journals and homework together by discussing the idea of the “unreliable narrator” and how perspective plays a role in literature through “The Cask of Amontillado” examples.

(2 min) Prepare for departure.

Materials: student journals, student copies of “The Cask of Amontillado”

Day 3 (Wednesday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(10 min) Bridge yesterday’s activity and discussion to recap on perspective and narrator reliability. Recap ways to identify narrator specific language through “The Cask of Amontillado.” Allow students to identify the narrator’s emotion, intelligence, and motive through his actions and language.

(35 min) Introduce “The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allan Poe historical background. Afterward, students will follow along with the short story tape-recorded version.

Materials: Tape version of “The Tell-Tale Heart,” handouts of story as well.

Homework: Record in journals how the story made you feel. Describe how you viewed the narrator of the story. Do you trust him? What isn’t he telling us?

Day 4 (Thursday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(10 min) Go over journal assignments as a class, picking on students to read excerpts from their homework on the narrator of “The Tell-Tale Heart.”

(35 min) Distribute copies of *Flowers for Algernon* to students and begin reading through page chapter 3.

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure.

Materials: *Flowers for Algernon* copies for students.

Day 5 (Friday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(5 min) Journal “jump-start” - is it a good idea to make everyone smart? Why or why not?

(20 min) Read chapter 4 aloud in class.

(5 min) Discuss reactions to chapter 4.

(2 min) Collect student journals and prepare for departure.

Materials: *Flowers for Algernon*, student journals

Homework: Over the weekend read chapters 5-10 of *Flowers for Algernon*.

Week Two

Day 1 (Monday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(10 min) Journal “jump-start” and intro video clip from “Charlie.” (Prompt: *Is this how you imagined the character Charlie? How would you have described him otherwise? Can you see elements earlier discussed in Poe? Explain.*).

(7 min) Discuss journal responses in pairs for 5 minutes, allowing each student to respond to each question and discuss.

(8 min) As a class discuss reactions the groups had.

(10 min) Reading Quiz #1 on chapters 1-10

(10 min) Activity #1 – changes in Charlie’s intelligence. After completing worksheet relate activity to previously read stories through Charlie’s reliability as a narrator. In what ways can the story itself be altered to readers because of Charlie’s condition? What biases should readers recognize?

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Homework: read chapters 10-15 of novel.

Materials: video clip from “Charlie,” worksheet activity.

Day 2 (Tuesday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(45 min) Activity #2 (inkblot and maze). Goal: This activity could allow the students to put themselves in Charlie’s place, letting them identify with the character with more ease

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Materials: Ink blot test, maze.

Homework: Read chapters 15-17 of novel.

Day 3 (Wednesday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(10 min) Reading Quiz #2 on chapters 10-17

(35 min) Book Jacket Activity:

Students will be given 20 minutes to create an interesting book jacket for the story. The goal is for students to convey their thoughts on the novel through art instead of writing, creating more connections to the story. The jacket should have a brief summary, a brief review, at least one quote, and some form of creative design on the cover. After the students complete the jacket, they will present their work to the class and explain one aspect of the jacket, explaining the choices they made.

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Materials: 40 sheets of white 8 ½ X 11 paper, markers, pencils, erasures, construction paper, scissors, tape.

Day 4 (Thursday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(10 min) Read “My Last Duchess” aloud by Robert Browning

(25 min) Discussion questions (#1) asked to the class as a whole.

(10 min) Activity - Based on the clues that Browning provides in the poem, explain both what happened before the opening of the poem (i.e., what fate befell the Duchess and how) and what will happen just after the poem closes. Finish for homework. Essays should be one page long.

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Homework: Read “A & P”

Day 5 (Friday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(10 min) Split class into 4 groups, assign each group a number corresponding to questions on the “A & P” handout. Give class 10 minutes to answer questions and discuss.

(10 min) Review as a class discussion questions read by each group, allow time for any other responses to the work.

(10 min) Distribute presentation project rubric and explain handout. Also, pick groups of 5-6 people each for project.

(15 min) Separate groups into different tables and allow time to work

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Week Three

Day 1 (Monday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(45 min) Groups meet and work on presentations. Teacher’s expected to offer insight or suggestions to groups to spur conversation and ensure full participation.

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Day 2 (Tuesday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(45 min) first 5 presentations @ 8 min each

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Day 3 (Wednesday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(10 minutes) Finish Presentations

(20 min) Intro into John Gardener's Grendel. Chalk talk on the character Grendel from Beowulf's perspective. Who was Grendel? Where is this story taking place?

(15 min) read first chapter and journal respond until class ends. Topic: What do you know directly (and what can you infer) about Grendel after reading only the first paragraph?

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Homework: Read through chapter 4

Day 4 (Thursday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(20 min) Review events in first four chapters briefly, student-led. Discussion questions: "What, if anything, do you think young Grendel learns about himself and the world while he is trapped in the tree?", "Describe the quality of Grendel's relationship with his mother."

(25 min) Split class into groups of four; give each group member a copy of Grendel Activity #1 (Signs of the Zodiac). Tell students assignment will be taken up when the novel is completed. If groups finish first four chapters, allow students to read their responses as groups.

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Homework: Read through chapter 8

Day 5 (Friday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(20 min) Kennings explanation and Activity #2 part one and share most original aloud as class.

(10 min) Students work on Activity #2 part two and share.

(15 min) As a whole class, allow students to give some of their own kennings and then pose the question to students, "Why does Grendel use kennings so much? What does it say about his character? What do the kennings tell us about his personal feelings?"

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure, collect journals

Homework: Finish Grendel over weekend. Hand out and look over activity #3 and be prepared to discuss and support claims.

Week Four

Day 1 (Monday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping, return journals.

(35 min) Point of View discussion questions on handout. Discuss as class.

(10 min) Check how far students are on Zodiac Activity handout, go over first 5 in class aloud.

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Day 2 (Tuesday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(15 min) Hand out persuasive essay assignment and rubric. Go through handout and answer any questions pertaining to expectations.

(30 min) Start rough Draft in class.

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Homework: Bring rough drafts to class tomorrow for peer editing.

Day 3 (Wednesday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(45 min) Split students into six groups of 5. Each group has four specific roles that each focus on an individual aspect of the rough draft. The roles are as follows: grammar, organization, content, and citations. Two members in each group will have the same role (preferably content or grammar). Groups will spend approximately 7-8 minutes reading and editing papers focusing specifically on their assigned role, making comments as necessary.

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Day 4 (Thursday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(20 min) Watch Grendel vs. Beowulf fight scene from “Beowulf and Grendel” and “The 13th Warrior.” Compare two scenes and how different movies depicted Grendel in each scene.

(25 min) Allow students to continue working on final draft of paper. If completed, students are expected to complete Zodiac activity.

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Day 5 (Friday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(5 min) Collect Persuasive Essays

(20 min) Collect Signs of the Zodiac handout and go over last 7 answers as class.

(20 min) Afterward ask class to respond in journal to the question, “how has reading Grendel changed your outlook on a narrator’s reliability? Do you feel as if you’ve taken something away from this unit? What exactly was it?”

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure

Introductory Activity

The purpose of my introductory activity is to establish a physical representation of the written unreliability generated by the authors of my unit by sharing with the class each of the images from the website American Memory (<http://memory.loc.gov/>). I will present the pictures in their given order without revealing that they are photos of the Statue of Liberty until after the last picture. After showing each image, I will ask students to write down what they think they are seeing.

- **Ringlet of Hair**
(<http://memory.loc.gov/pnp/habshaer/ny/ny1200/ny1251/photos/120433pv.jpg>)
- **Nose Detail**
(<http://memory.loc.gov/pnp/habshaer/ny/ny1200/ny1251/photos/120439pv.jpg>)
- **View from the Torch**
(<http://memory.loc.gov/pnp/habshaer/ny/ny1200/ny1251/photos/120461pv.jpg>)
- **View of Liberty Island with city in background**
(<http://memory.loc.gov/pnp/habshaer/ny/ny1200/ny1251/photos/120259pv.jpg>)

In making an analogy between photography and narration, I will be asking students to consider the photographer as the narrator, the photograph as a moment in the narrative, and the subject (the Statue) as a main character. With this in mind, each of the photographs of the Statue of Liberty can represent one of many possible “narrative perspectives.”

The Ringlet of Hair compares to the so called “objective” point of view, which is when the writer tells what happens without stating more than can be inferred from the story's action and dialogue. The narrator never discloses anything about what the characters think or feel, remaining a detached observer. In the photo, nothing can be inferred; it is even difficult to recognize the subject of the photo. The photographer/author has chosen, in this case, to create in the viewer/reader a sense of mystery or a desire to know more.

Ex. *“The man slowly walks down the street, sometimes looking over his shoulder behind him. The rain hit his face and his wet hair covered his eyes.”*

The Nose Detail compares to third-person narration. Here the narrator does not participate in the action of the story as one of the characters, but lets us know exactly how the characters feel. We learn about the characters through this outside voice. This photo shows a large sculpted nose that has incurred some damage. The viewer/reader can infer that this detail is part of a much larger, though unseen, statue that it is exposed to the elements, that it is aging; considering the statue as a character, the reader begins to learn how the character “feels” about the damage.

Ex. *“John knew he shouldn't have allowed his grandmother to go down the stairs alone. She wasn't steady on her feet and sometimes she grabbed onto the nearest object when dizziness overwhelmed her.”*

The View from the Torch compares to a first-person narrator—the statue itself. Here, we are looking out from the statue's point of view. Share with your students the information on “First Person Point of View” from Types of Point of View on Learner.org. Compare the Detail of nose and lips showing strap-iron armature supporting copper skin to the limited omniscient point of view, in which the narrator “knows” what’s “inside” one character.

Ex. *“I was sure there was someone following me. I walked faster, but the sense of foreboding closed in around me like a cold hand clenching around my spine. When I turned to look behind me, the street was deserted.”*

Compare the View of Liberty Island with the city in background to the omniscient point of view. Here the narrator sees everything and has all the answers we will receive in the story.

Ex. *“John stood next to his grandmother. He wanted to help her down the stairs. Mrs. Smith looked at her grandson, her blue eyes sharp, and moved a strand of hair from her face.”*

All of these pictures show how, just as in writing, the “author” can choose to distort or alter how much information is allowed to flow to the “reader.” This activity could, if properly executed and well-received, spur interest in the students and change their previous notions on the subject of the unreliable narrator.

Reading Quiz #1
Chapters 1-10

1. Why was Charlie taking the tests?
 - A. He was applying for a permit to live alone without a guardian.
 - B. He wanted to be admitted to a special training school and needed to
 - C. He hoped the doctors would use him in an experiment to make him smarter.
 - D. He wanted to graduate from the adult school.

2. Who was Algernon?
 - A. He was the doctor who had devised the surgical procedure.
 - B. He was the other person being used in the experiment.
 - C. He was a student who was helping with the testing.
 - D. He was a mouse who had already had the operation.

3. Which of the following was not one of the results Charlie saw within a few weeks after the surgery?
 - A. He started dreaming and remembering.
 - B. He beat Algernon at the maze.
 - C. He started spelling better.
 - D. He learned to ride a bike and roller skate.

Short Answer

4. How did Charlie feel after the operation, and how did the doctors help him?

5. Describe Charlie's dream about P.S. 13. Why was it significant?

Activity #1**Changes in Charlie: Pros vs. Cons**

Directions: Use the following chart to list the advantages and disadvantages that “intelligence” or the “lack thereof” has. There are good and bad elements to both. Then, apply your opinions both to Charlie and his situation: Charlie’s whole persona changes when his intelligence is altered. Were the changes good or bad for Charlie?

Category	Advantages	Disadvantages
Charlie (presurgery) With little intelligence		
Charlie (postsurgery) with “super” intelligence		

Activity #2:

Remind the students that they are each essentially Charlie for the remainder of the class period. Have them take out a piece of paper and pen. Hold up one ink blot at a time and ask them to write down what the inkblot reminds them of. After you receive all of the inkblot tests, choose one student's responses and designate him the "smart" one of the class by saying all of his inkblots showed he was the most intelligent.

Next, have the students race the clock with a maze. Hand out maze #2 to the "smart" individual without anyone noticing, while handing out maze #1 to everyone else. Tell students they have 4 minutes to complete their "average difficulty" maze, and when they're done to hand it in silently. Rank students based on their times for completing the maze, the student with maze #2 should be the only one that finishes.

Individual response:

Have the students write about how they felt with the tests and how Charlie must have also felt. After all the tests are completed, reveal to the students that the tests were rigged and the entire activity was planned. As a class, discuss how the activity made them feel and if it was helpful in contextualizing the story.

Activity #2 (continued)

Inkblot 1

Response:



Inkblot 2

Response:



Inkblot 3

Response:



Activity #2 (continued)

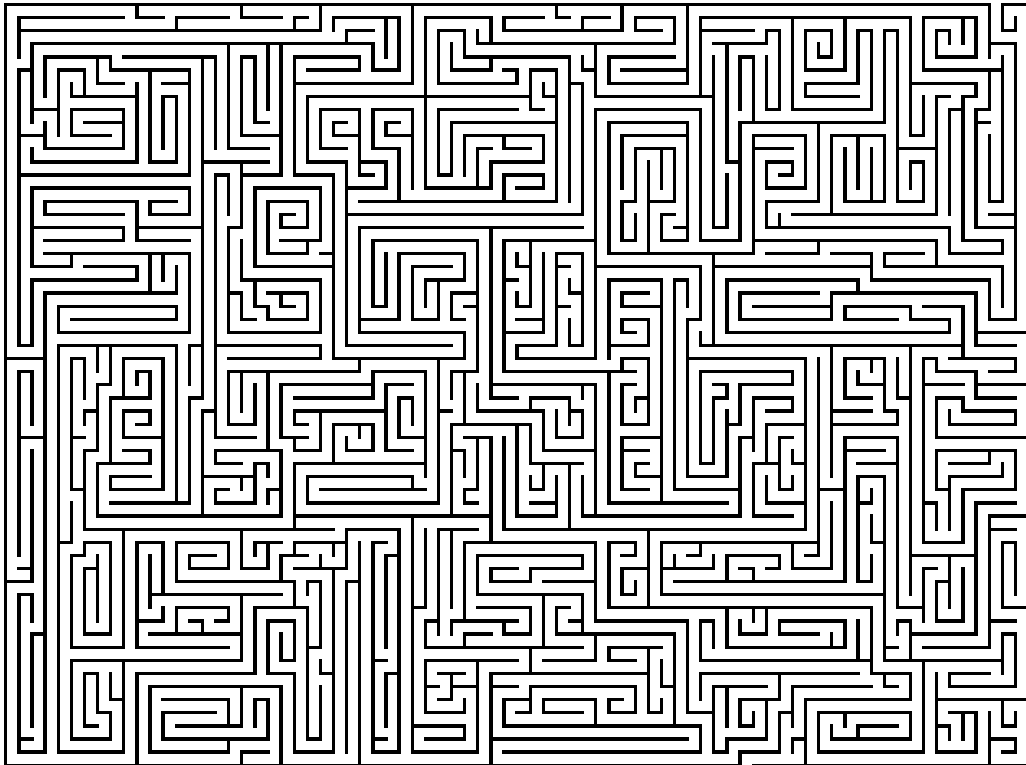
Inkblot 4

Response:



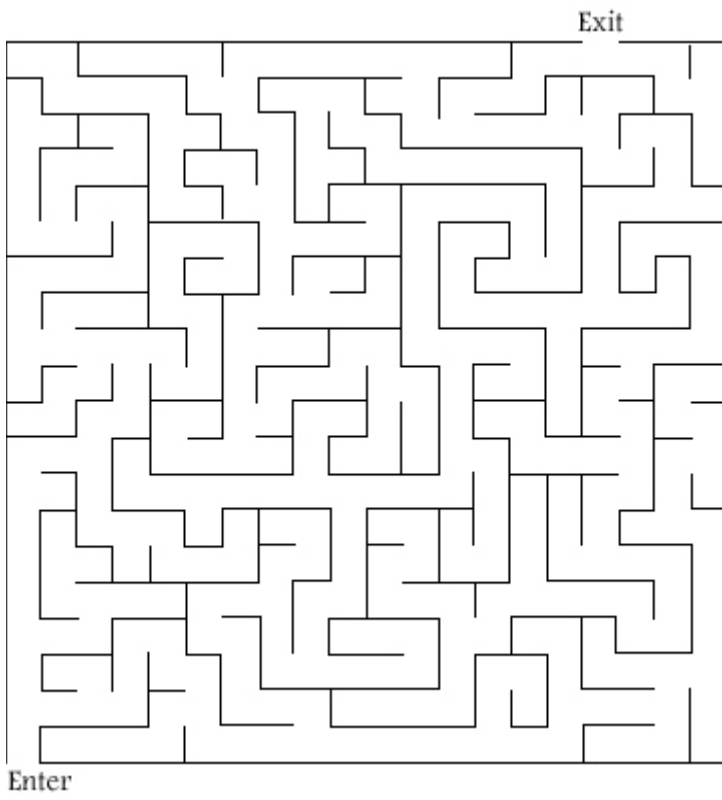
Activity #2 (continued)

MAZE 1



Activity #2 (continued)

MAZE 2



Reading Quiz #2
Chapters 10-17

1. To whom did Charlie talk about his memories and dreams?
 - A. He talked to Algernon.
 - B. He talked to Mr. Donner.
 - C. He talked to Dr. Strauss.
 - D. He talked to Burt Selden.

2. What concerned Charlie about making friends with some of the boys at the Campus Bowl?
 - A. They were talking about girls. He was still afraid of girls and didn't want them to know it.
 - B. They were discussing the existence of God. This frightened Charlie, because he had just begun to think about what God meant.
 - C. He was afraid they would find out he didn't go to college.
 - D. He thought he was too old to become friends with any of them.

3. What gift did Fay bring for Algernon?
 - A. She brought him a block of sharp cheddar cheese.
 - B. She brought him one of her paintings.
 - C. She brought him a stuffed cat to play with.
 - D. She brought him a female mouse named Minnie.

4. Charlie wanted to know what would happen to him if he regressed. What was Burt's reply?
 - A. Alice had offered to take care of him.
 - B. He would be sent to live with his sister.
 - C. Charlie would be placed in the Warren State Home and Training School.
 - D. He would be kept in a special room in the lab for further research.

5. Which of the following describes Charlie's visit to his mother?
 - A. Rose was not in total command of her mental faculties. She would start raving at the child Charlie, then come back to reality and talk to the adult Charlie.
 - B. Rose told him her son was dead. She refused to let him in. He left without talking to her.
 - C. Rose was glad to see him. They talked for a long time. She explained her fears and feelings from when he was small. They parted on good terms.
 - D. Rose refused to believe he got smarter. She thought it was an impostor playing a trick on her. Charlie could not convince her to believe otherwise.

Reading Quiz #2 (continued)

6. What was the first thing Charlie now refused to do for the doctors?
 - A. He wouldn't write progress reports.
 - B. He wouldn't do any more mazes.
 - C. He would not look at them.
 - D. He would not tell them what he was thinking or feeling.

7. What was Charlie's request in his last progress report?
 - A. He asked Professor Nemur to use his (Charlie's) research to find a way to make him smart again.
 - B. He asked Alice to visit him and write letters to him.
 - C. He asked that someone put flowers on Algernon's grave.
 - D. He asked Burt to make sure Norma got the money in his savings account.

8. What was the length of time that elapsed from the first to the last progress report?
 - A. three years
 - B. fifty-six days
 - C. eighteen months
 - D. seven months

Book Jacket Activity Prompt

You work for a book company which will soon be publishing a new edition of *Flowers for Algernon*. Please design a book jacket that will catch the attention of customers as well as give important information about the story. Your book jacket should also include:

- A creative and interesting cover
- A summary of the story on the back
- Memorable quotes

“My Last Duchess” Discussion Questions

Is the reader expected to feel both sympathy and judgment?

Are readers to trust the Duke?

Discuss any contradictory characteristics that Browning reveals in the Duke, showing how each quality or characteristic is subtly revealed.

What do we learn about the character and situation from the opening scene? What do his choice of words reflect in the character throughout the rest of the poem?

The Duke eliminated (divorced? sent to a convent? had executed or poisoned?) his last duchess because (he felt) she undervalued him and treated him much as she treated other men. Which trivial incidents in particular seem to have produced this response in the Duke?

The statue of Neptune ("a rarity") taming a seahorse may be regarded as a symbol of brutal male domination of the beautiful and natural. How might we regard this statue as representing the Duke?

Precisely what about the duchess did the Duke object to? How do his values partially *justify* or mitigate his actions to the reader?

“A&P” Discussion Questions

Group #1

Is Sammy's quitting a form of rebellion or a statement of some sort? Does it have any meaning? What is he rebelling against? Are there unconscious targets of his rebellion? Who is the enemy here? Are there any forms of oppression at work in the story? Who is oppressed (or "embarrassed" for that matter)? Is Sammy's standing up for the girls in some way a form of standing up for himself?

Group #2

Is the girls behavior itself a kind of statement or rebellion of some sort? What message are they sending by walking into the A&P in their bathing suits? What messages do they girls send through the commodities which they pick? Why is it significant that they choose a supermarket for their self-display? What is significant about the language Sammy uses to describe the girls' bodies? Why does the store manager oppose the girls' behavior? Are different sets of values clashing here? Is the commodifying of the self presented in a sense as a sort of liberation from the oppression of traditional values?

Group #3

What social class issues/conflicts become apparent in the story? Is Queenie an upper class girl? What does Sammy think? How does he imagine her life? How does he contrast his own existence to that of Queenie? Is Queenie her real name? What does Sammy know for a fact about her? What does her behavior reveal? Why does Sammy imagine her to be of higher class? How is that supposition related to his later actions? What in a sense is he trying to achieve by impressing Queenie?

Group #4

What is the artificial light symbolic of? What does Sammy realize as soon as he steps out of the store and into the sunshine? What illusions/delusions was Sammy a victim of while inside the store? What images await him in the outside? How do they relate to Sammy's encounter with the girls?

Presentation Assignment and Rubric

“The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe

“The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allan Poe

“A&P” by John Updike

“My Last Duchess” by Robert Browning

Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes

Group Project

Students will be split up into four groups of five to six people after each of the works listed above and create either a scene not included in the original work for a presentation it to the class or rewrite a previously written scene.

The presentation may be:

1. Live action – to be acted for the class
2. Video – to be played for the class
3. Cartoon/ puppet show/ etc. – to also be performed for the class

Each group will be asked to turn in one written script of whichever presentation they choose. Additionally, each group member will be asked to write a separate two-page paper explaining the choices they made and consider the implications their scene makes upon the original work as a whole. The scene may elaborate or further explain an idea in the work, change or alter some aspect of the original work, or focus on some minor aspect of the work otherwise unaddressed. Group presentations should be approximately four to eight minutes long. There is a large amount of creative license given for this project, so after each group decides upon their choice they will meet with the teacher in class briefly to approve their decision. Each member of the group is expected to participate to the group’s overall performance, whether that is in preparation or presentation. Each group will perform self-evaluations worth approximately 30% of each student’s total grade for the project.

Presentation: 40%

Rationale: 30%

Peer Evaluation: 30%

Rubric:

Based on: http://www.coe.uga.edu/~smago/VirtualLibrary/Berry_Donovan_Hummel.pdf

Group Self-Evaluation rubric
30%

Group member	Helpful? Yes or No	Took group off topic?	Participatory? Yes or No	OVERALL 1-5	Comments

- 1- No contribution at all
- 2- Frequently off task, not very helpful
- 3- Participated somewhat, but often lacked focus
- 4- Helpful to the whole group
- 5- Contributed greatly to project, worked well with everyone

Rubric for Presentation Rationale

Category	4	3	2	1
Focus on Topic (Content) 60 %	The writer clearly explains his/her reasons for choosing a scene and what his/her contributions were to the group (if applicable).	The writer explains his/her reasons for choosing a scene and his/her contributions (if applicable), but not as clearly.	The writer does not clearly explain his/her reasons for choosing a scene or his/her contributions (if applicable).	The writer does not explain his/her reasons for choosing a scene or his/her contributions (if applicable).
Grammar & Spelling (Conventions) 10%	Writer makes occasional proofreading errors or flaws. Writer Manipulates mechanics for effect.	Writer makes limited errors which are not severe enough to interfere with meaning.	Writer demonstrates mixture of correct and incorrect elements.	Errors interfere with understanding and are repeated and are severe.
Flow & Rhythm (Sentence Fluency) 10%	Writer exhibits extensive sentence variety in length, type, and sentence structure.	Writer demonstrates variety in length and type of sentences. There may be occasional run-ons or ineffective sentences, but they do not detract from the meaning.	Writer demonstrates competence with simple sentences. There is a mixture of effective and ineffective sentences.	Writer frequently uses fragments and run-ons. The sentences are not clear and detract from the meaning.
Transitions (Organization) 10%	A variety of thoughtful transitions are used. The paper reads smoothly.	Transitions clearly show how ideas and paragraphs are connected, but there is little variety.	Some transitions work well; but connections between other ideas are fuzzy.	The transitions between ideas and paragraphs are unclear or nonexistent.
Word Choice 10%	Writer uses vivid words and phrases that linger or draw pictures in the reader's mind, and the choice and placement of the words seems accurate, natural, and not forced.	Writer uses vivid words and phrases that linger or draw pictures in the reader's mind, but occasionally the words are used inaccurately or seem overdone.	Writer uses words that communicate clearly, but the writing lacks variety, punch, or flair.	Writer uses a limited vocabulary that does not communicate strongly or capture the reader's interest. Jargon or clichés may be present and detract from the meaning.

Rubric for Presentations

Category	20	15	10	5
Creativity	The scene contains many creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment. The author has really used his imagination.	The scene contains a few creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment. The author has used his imagination.	The scene contains a few creative details and/or descriptions, but they distract from the story. The author has tried to use his imagination.	There is little evidence of creativity in the scene. The author does not seem to have used much imagination.
Dialogue	There is an appropriate amount of dialogue to bring the characters to life and it is always clear which character is speaking	There is too much dialogue in this scene interpretation, but it is always clear which character is speaking.	There is not quite enough dialogue in this scene interpretation, but it is always clear which character is speaking	It is not clear which character is speaking
Content	Shows a full understanding of the scene.	Shows a good understanding of the scene.	Shows a good understanding of parts of the scene.	Does not seem to understand the scene very well.
Preparedness/ Group Dynamic	Student is completely prepared and has obviously thought out the scene. Group worked efficiently and every member contributed.	Student seems pretty prepared and showed some thought about the scene. Everyone worked together with little disagreement	The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that the scene required more thought. Student did not work well with group.	Student does not seem at all prepared. The student did not participate in the project.
Vocabulary/ Grammar	Uses vocabulary and grammar appropriate for the scene and its context. Extends audience vocabulary by defining words that might be new to most of the audience.	Uses vocabulary and grammar appropriate for the scene and its context. Includes 1-2 words that might be new to most of the audience, but does not define them.	Uses vocabulary appropriate for the audience. Does not include any vocabulary that might be new to the audience.	Uses several (5 or more) words or phrases that are not understood by the audience.

Signs of the Zodiac in Grendel

The zodiac is divided into twelve signs, each associated with a symbol, and each representing particular personality traits. Each chapter of Grendel is associated with a sign of the zodiac. In the space provided, connect each chapter to its associated sign and list the textual examples.

1. **Aries the Ram.** Aries is energetic, innovative, original, pioneering, assertive, quick-tempered, strong drive, leader, ambitious, extroverted, sometimes aggressive, competitive, enthusiastic, self-reliant, and self-assured.

2. **Taurus the Bull.** Taurus is determined, efficient, stubborn, cautious, placid, persistent, enduring, introverted, conservative, conventional, materialistic, security conscious, stable, industrious, dependable, and one generally having significant financial ability.

3. **Gemini the Twins.** Gemini is flexible, versatile, restless, a jack-of-all-trades, lively, alert, quick-witted, literary, communicative, a good conversationalist, changeable, sociable, logical, ingenious, agile, dexterous, intellectual, and mentally ambitious.

4. **Cancer the Crab.** Cancer is introverted, reserved, emotional, sensitive, moody, sympathetic, security-conscious, prudent, retentive, domestic, maternal, protective, quiet, calm, imaginative, conscientious, and quite the traditionalist.

Signs of the Zodiac in Grendel (continued)

5. **Leo the Lion.** Leo is ambitious, a lover of limelight, speculative, extroverted, optimistic, honorable, dignified, confident, proud, exuberant, sunny, flamboyant, charismatic, dramatic, competitive, a leader and an organizer.

6. **Virgo the Virgin.** Virgo is practical, responsible, sensible, logical, analytical, highly discriminating, a careful planner, precise and punctual, dedicated, perfectionist, critical, health conscious, and somewhat introverted.

7. **Libra the Scales.** Libra is idealistic, a peacemaker, diplomatic, refined, poised, gracious, kind, courteous, fair-minded, sociable, charming, artistically creative, affable, cooperative, extroverted, and usually somewhat indecisive.

8. **Scorpio the Scorpion.** Scorpio is intense, determined, powerful, strong-willed, forceful, bold, courageous, enduring, competitive, resourceful, researcher, an investigator, secretive, mysterious, penetrating, psychic, self-reliant, and somewhat introverted or closed.

9. **Sagittarius the Archer.** Sagittarius is idealistic, optimistic, freedom-loving, casual, friendly, buoyant, gregarious, enthusiastic, philosophical, studious, farseeing, direct, outspoken, honest, loyal, restless and loves travel.

Signs of the Zodiac in Grendel (continued)

10. **Capricorn the Goat.** Capricorn is ambitious (power, position, money), organizational, self-disciplined, rigid, thrifty, prudent, security-conscious, conservative, responsible, practical, persistent, political, business oriented, methodical.

11. **Aquarius the Water-bearer.** Aquarius is individualistic, unconventional, progressive, unique, independent, humanitarian, altruistic, visionary, perceptive, intellectual, logical, ingenious, inventive, unpredictable, detached, friendly, and scientific.

12. **Pisces the Fish.** Pisces is receptive, supersensitive, impressionable, peace-loving, serious, sympathetic, charitable, compassionate, artistic, creative, dreamer, dedicated, imaginative, psychic, shy, introverted, spiritual, and reclusive.

Activity #2 - Kennings

Kenning - a literary device in which a noun is renamed in a creative way using a compound word or union of two separate words to combine ideas

If you call “school” a “scholar's home” - then you have created a kenning.

If you tell your friends that your parents are the “car loaners” - then you have created a kenning.

The folks at Coca-Cola might agree that a cold Coke is “humanity's beverage.”

Part One: Consider carefully how you could creatively rename each of the following through the use of the kenning technique. Choose your own words and continue through #10.

1. a teacher
2. a bus driver
3. firemen
4. television
5. meatloaf
6. School
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Kenning Examples in Grendel:

earth-rim-roamer 7

shadow-shooter 7

walker of the world's weird wall 7

Ruiner of Meadhalls 80, 91

world-rim monster 87

Hrothgar-Wrecker 91

truth-teacher, phantasm-tester 110

anger's child 111

old hellroads-runner 116

world-rim-walker 127

The Destroyer 130, 159

Part Two

Create at least eight new kennings that somehow fit into Grendel's story and explain their relevance.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Point of View Discussion Questions

1. Why would John Gardner choose to retell Beowulf from the monster's point of view?
2. What is to be gained from such a shift?
3. How does Grendel's telling of his own story affect your response to him? How is this response different from the way you thought of him in Beowulf?
4. Try to imagine this novel written from the third person point of view - though still from the monster's side. What does first person narration add to Gardner's tale?
5. Imagine that the author of the original Beowulf epic has just read Gardner's book. What would his reactions be? What might he like about the novel? What would confuse or upset him?
6. In what ways is Grendel a "modern" monster?
7. Although Grendel in Beowulf represents all that is evil, Gardner seems to take a different, more complex approach. Identify some signs of potential goodness in Grendel.
8. What prevents these "seeds" of goodness from developing?
9. What exactly makes Grendel a monster? Consider not only his physical appearance but also his moral and spiritual understandings.
10. Where does Grendel find Evil in the world? According to Grendel, who or what are "the bad guys"?
11. Who or what is Good in Grendel's eyes? Of what does that goodness consist?

Argumentative Paper – Grendel

Rationale:

Since one of the reasons for writing a position paper is to persuade another person to take your side, what you also do if you ignore other sides is to antagonize your readers and insult their intelligence. If your audience feels that you are not interested in their viewpoints, then there is no reason for them to continue reading your argument. If you are writing a proposal, your audience might dismiss the proposal altogether if it lacks these points. If you have not anticipated objections and made concessions, then you run the risk of seeming to have shallow ideas. Making concessions and anticipating objections also gives you a built-in checklist to make sure that you have covered all the bases you need to in order to write a thorough proposal or position paper. The practice also enlarges thinking; forcing writers to realize that they are only a small part of a very complex universe and those other points of view not only exist, but have validity.

Purposed Paper Topic:

Although Grendel in “Beowulf” represents all that is evil, John Gardner seems to take a different, more complex approach to Grendel’s character. With textual support, write a 3-4 page double-spaced persuasive essay either defending or attacking Grendel’s character through the story. Is Grendel absolutely evil or simply misunderstood?

EITHER identify some signs of potential goodness in Grendel and describe what prevents these "seeds" of goodness from developing **OR** describe what exactly makes Grendel an “evil” monster, considering not only his physical appearance but also his moral and spiritual understandings.

Questions to keep in mind and/or address while writing your paper:

- Where does Grendel find evil in the world?
- According to Grendel, who or what are "the bad guys"?
- Why would John Gardner choose to retell Beowulf from the monster's point of view? what is to be gained from such a shift?
- How does Grendel's telling of his own story affect your response to him? How is this response different from the way you thought of him in Beowulf?
- Who or what is good in Grendel's eyes? Of what does that goodness consist?
- Imagine that the author of the original Beowulf epic has just read Gardner's book. What would his reactions be? What might he like about the novel? What would confuse or upset him?

Rubric – Persuasive Essay on Grendel

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Argument	I make a clear argument and explain why it is controversial.	I make an argument but don't explain why it is controversial.	My argument is buried, confused and/or unclear.	I do not take a clear stance on the argument.
Support	I give many clear and accurate reasons in support of my claim.	I give some reasons in support of my claim but I may overlook important reasons.	I give 1 or 2 weak reasons that don't support my claim and/or irrelevant or confusing reasons.	I do not give convincing reasons in support of my claim.
Counter-arguments	I address any counter-arguments against my claim and explain why it is valid anyway.	I address the counter-arguments against my claim but leave some reasons out and/or don't explain why the claim still stands.	I say that there are reasons against the argument but I don't discuss them.	I do not acknowledge or address any reasons against the argument.
Organization/ Grammar	My writing has an interesting opening, an informative middle and a satisfying conclusion. Few, if any, common grammatical errors.	My writing has a beginning, middle and end. It contains common grammatical errors, but they are not distracting from the work as a whole.	My writing is somewhat organized but often gets off topic. Grammatical errors are distracting from argument.	My writing is aimless and disorganized. Many careless grammatical errors. Little proofreading shown.
Voice and tone	It sounds like I care about my argument. I show how I think and feel about it. This paper is uniquely mine.	My tone is okay but my paper could have been written by anyone. I need to tell more about how I personally think and feel.	My writing is bland or hollow. There is no hint of a personal voice in the paper.	My writing is too formal or too informal. It sounds like I don't like the topic of the essay.