

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer Unit Overview
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Rationale: Students will recognize classic literature as a record of human experiences while reading Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. Students will work collaboratively, using a wide range of movement and theater techniques, to discover an author's process of creating a character, setting, conflict and plot. Students will connect their personal lives to the thoughts and struggles of the main characters through reflective journal topics and an end of the unit personal narrative.

Introduction:

This unit will be used as an introduction to 7th grade English and to theater and movement activities. Students should have a basic understanding of literary elements before entering 7th grade as well as exposure to reader's theater. Activities and discussions will be conducted in small to whole class groups.

Grade Level: 7th grade English/Language Arts

Time Frame: 4-5 weeks

Materials:

1. Composition books (all assignments are written in composition books)
2. Copies of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*
3. Reader's Theater examples
4. Ipads/Laptops
5. Found Theater objects (drumstick, cloth, string, yo-yo, options are endless)

Standards:

Oral Expression and Listening

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. (CCSS: SL.7.1)

Reading for All Purposes

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (CCSS: RL.7.1)

Recognize the influence of setting on other narrative elements

Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film). (CCSS: RL.7.7)

Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot). (CCSS: RL.7.3)

Research and Reasoning

Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation. (CCSS: W.7.7)

Drama and Theater Arts

Employ drama and theatre skills, and articulate the aesthetics of a variety of characters and roles

Unit Objectives:

1. Students will develop questions and responses in Think Pair Share activities, small groups, and literature circles and in improv activities.
2. Students will define and identify literary terms (characterization, STEAL, Setting, Conflict, Protagonist, and Antagonist).
3. Students will analyze characters, including their traits, motivations, conflict, and relationships and the changes they undergo throughout the course of a novel.
4. Students will define setting and discuss how setting impacts characters and conflict.
5. Students will conduct research about Hannibal, Missouri.
6. Students will observe Norman Rockwell's artwork and create inferences based off of details in the artwork.
7. Students will develop opinions and claims from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and cite evidence from the novel.
8. Students will define theater vocabulary such as tempo, duration, repetition, kinesthetic response, architecture, shape, gesture, topography.

Themes:

(The following are an overview of CRISPA themes for the unit. Individual lessons will have more detailed CRISPA themes).

Connections- Students will participate in journal/reflection activities where they may free write or answer teacher conducted topics that connect to *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

Examples:

1. What was your childhood like? What did you do for fun? What activities were you allowed to do? What activities were off limits? (Connection to Tom Sawyer's daily activities).
2. Discuss a time you were blamed for something you didn't do. How did the other person's words make you feel? (Connection to Tom blamed by Aunt Polly)
3. Did you ever run away, or threaten to run away, when you were little? What did you say? What did you do? (Connection to Tom, Huck and Joe running away to Jackson Island)
4. If homesickness were a color what color would it be? Find a color within this classroom that symbolizes homesickness. (Connection/Perceptivity to Tom and Joe experiencing homesickness while away on Jackson Island).

Risk-Taking- Students will participate in Found Theater activities to practice theater view points, characterization, and plot sequences. These activities will require students to step out of their comfort zone and perform in front of their peers.

Imagination- (Intuitive/Interactive) Students will have the opportunity to utilize the immediate location of the school by hiking to Ute Valley Park. Students will use the park environment to connect with the setting of the novel.

Found Theater Activity- This is not a stick: Students interact with certain materials on the floor as a character from the novel (Tom Sawyer, Sid, Becky Thatcher, or Aunt Polly).

Examples:

1. This is not a stick it is a paint brush
2. This is not a stick it is a fishing pole
3. This is not a stick it is a pirate sword
4. This is not a curtain it is a dress
5. This is not a curtain it is a cloud

Sensory Experience:

Students will have heightened sensory experiences when given the opportunity to write or read outside. Since most of the novel takes place outdoors it is vital to give students the same opportunity to discover natural details about their immediate environment.

Perceptivity- Students will be asked to observe items in detail for an extended period of time. The teacher can use this as an opportunity to connect to Science studies/units. By using movement throughout the unit, students will be asked to notice movements of their classmates as well as their own bodies and how these movements reflect the mood, setting, and character in the novel.

Active Engagement- Students will be actively engaged in the unit through many different small group and whole class activities.

Examples:

1. Choices in final assessments (personal narrative, plot pop up books, character monologue)
2. Finding objects throughout the classroom, school, and outdoor environment to observe and interact with.
3. Choices in plot scenes to choreograph
4. Opportunity to participate in Found Theater activities

Activities (overview):

1. Whole class Found Theater activities- students will rotate to present how they think a character from the novel would interact with an object or another character. For example- if Tom Sawyer were asked to sit in his chair for 30 minutes how would he begin to act?
2. Small group Found Theater- in small groups students will discuss how characters would interact with objects found in the classroom.
3. Whole Class Tableaux - in small groups students will recreate a scene from the novel with a background/foreground, or high/medium/low levels. Present tableaux to the class.
4. Whole Class Improv- students will be given a type of conflict (Man vs. Man, Man vs. Self, etc) and must create a scene with another classmate.

5. Whole class hike/walk- for setting activities students will walk to the softball field and/or local park to interact with environment.
6. Small group research- in small groups students will research Mark Twain's hometown. Students create a one-act play set in a fictional town along the Mississippi River.

Assessments:

Informal:

1. Found Theater Activities
2. Tableaux scenes
3. Setting Skits
4. Journal/reflection writing
5. Risk-taking self evaluation

Formal:

1. Cumulative novel test
2. Choice Project
 - a. Personal Narrative
 - b. Pop Up Scenes
 - c. Character Monologue