

UNIT: Short Stories and Poems

GRADE LEVEL: 7-8

COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

RL8.2 – *Determine* a **theme or central idea** of a text and *analyze* its **development** over the course of the text, including its **relationship to the characters, setting, and plot**; *provide* an **objective summary** of the text.

RL8.3 – *Analyze how* particular lines of **dialogue or incidents** in a story or drama **propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.**

RL7/8.4 – *Determine* the **meaning** of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including **figurative and connotative** meanings; *analyze the impact* of **rhymes** and other **repetitions of sounds** (e.g., **alliteration**) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama; *analyze the impact* of specific word choices on **meaning** and **tone**, including **analogies** or **allusions** to other texts.

RL7.6 – *Analyze* how an author develops and contrasts the **points of view** of different characters or narrators in a text.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

What is the theme or central idea of the text? What's the point? Is the author trying to persuade readers of something or make some sort of social commentary?

How does the theme develop over the course of the text? How does it relate to the characters, setting, and plot?

How do particular lines of dialogue or incidents in the story propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision?

How do specific word choices impact meaning and tone?

What are direct and indirect characterization?

What are figurative and connotative meanings of words?

What are symbols, analogies, and allusions?

ASSESSMENTS:

Discussion – Before reading, define new concepts and give examples.

Annotation – Take note of new vocabulary, setting/context, direct and indirect characterization, conflict, cause and effect, symbols and allusions, themes and central ideas, and relevant questions and comments to prepare for the analysis.

Fill out Reading Response handouts

(http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/english/middle/interactive_reading/responsesheet.ppt), then create a tri-fold graphic organizer identifying a theme's development and impact on characters, setting, and plot, using evidence from the text.

Characterization sheets

(http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson800/Characterization.pdf)

Double-entry journals – Analyze the effects of particular lines of dialogue or incidents and the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.

Summarize the short stories in journal entries. Discuss themes and research nineteenth-century social issues in the stories.

Essay – At the end of the unit, write a one to two-page essay which briefly summarizes one short story and analyzes the development of a theme, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

RL.7.2 – Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

READ: “The Widows and the Strangers” by Juliana Horatia Gatty Ewing

(<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15592/15592-h/15592-h.htm>)

BEFORE READING: Define vocabulary: hamlet, alms, belated, vagabond, victuals, cowl, distinction, protuberance, recompense, begrudged, requite, chattels, aureole

DURING READING: Take turns reading out loud and pause to discuss genre and setting, tone, and irony.

AFTER READING: Identify and discuss themes (charity, generosity, treatment of the poor).

READ: “The Telltale Tile” by Olive Thorne Miller

(<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/5061/5061-h/5061-h.htm>)

BEFORE READING: Define vocabulary: poorhouse, garret, emery, let (as leased), principal

DURING READING: Take turns reading out loud and pause to discuss genre, setting, and tone.

AFTER READING: Identify and discuss themes (charity, generosity, treatment of the poor) and compare to “The Widows and the Strangers.”

READ: “Taking Comfort” by T. S. Arthur (<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4629/4629-h/4629-h.htm>)

BEFORE READING: Assign students to read different parts (George, Anna, Mrs. Aiken, narrator).

DURING READING: Pause to discuss tone, characterization, and theme.

AFTER READING: Use quotes from the text to identify the theme and examples of irony, and describe George, Anna, the narrator, or Tyler, then compare and contrast two characters using a Venn diagram.

READ: “Bachelor Bluff’s Experiences of Holidays” by Oliver Bell Bunce

(<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/5061/5061-h/5061-h.htm>)

BEFORE READING: Review direct and indirect characterization and making inferences.

DURING READING: Pause to discuss characterization, tone, and unfamiliar vocabulary.

AFTER READING: Use quotes from the text to describe Mr. Bluff and compare his attitude the first and second time he meets the narrator.

READ: “The Two Caskets” from Thorpe’s Yule-Tide Stories

(<http://www.surlalunefairytales.com/diamondstoads/stories/caskets.html>)

BEFORE READING: Discuss common elements of fairy tales and their purpose.

DURING READING: Pause to discuss characterization and irony.

AFTER READING: Use quotes from the text to contrast the daughter and stepdaughter.

POETRY:

"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost, 1923

(<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/171621>)

"Christmas Bells" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1863

(http://www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com/Poetry/christmas_bells.htm)

"No, Thank You, John" by Christina Rossetti, 1862

(<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/19188/19188-h/19188-h.htm>)

COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

RL.7.2 – *Determine a **theme or central idea** of a text and *analyze* its **development** over the course of the text; *provide* an objective **summary** of the text.*

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

Take note of the rhyme scheme, setting, tone, imagery and symbolism, unfamiliar phrases or vocabulary, and themes. Discuss irony and the effect of repetition. Discuss how the tone changes stanza by stanza. Connect to the Civil War with the story of Longfellow's son.