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To the Teacher

The goal of this book is to get your students excited about English Language Arts activities by leveraging their interest in online tools for collaboration. In addition, students who complete these activities will employ a number of skills directly related to academic standards and 21st century learning.

Increasing numbers of employers expect to hire staff who are skilled in using tools to create and share online content for a wide range of purposes. Your students have probably used one or more of these tools outside of school, but figuring out basic features does not ensure that students will also develop the skills they need to collaborate effectively. Students aren't likely to understand appropriate work-related use of these tools without adult guidance. This book introduces four different Web-based tools—wikis, blogs, Web-based word processors, and Web-based presentations. These technologies were chosen because they promote development of workplace skills and support engaging activities that encourage students to perform well academically.

Each tool is featured in five activities. You may choose to use some or all of these activities. You will find that each wiki and blog activity can stand alone, but the lessons at the end of these sections are best done if many of the earlier activities have been completed. The first two Web-based word processing activities and the first and last Web-based presentation activities are also stand-alone; however, the remaining lessons in both of these sections are most effective if used in sequence.

Most of the activities are meant to be finished in a single class period, although some can be made as detail-oriented as possible and can be spread across a few classes. The material covered would fit well into a general English Language Arts class; many activities are also suitable for other courses that require students to engage in writing activities or share presentations.

The following correlation charts for the activities in this book connect each activity to the IRA/NCTE Standards, ISTE's National Education Technology Standards for Students (NETS*S), and the Framework for 21st Century Learning from the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. There is also a general rubric to help you with assessment. Properly used, this book can be a fun way to help students meet the high academic standards of today's classroom.

2   LITERARY ANALYSIS—21ST CENTURY STYLE

Instructional Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Work in a small group to contribute to a class analysis of a work of fiction.

- Log in to and edit pages of a class wiki.

- Add comments or discussion remarks on a wiki page.

Time frame: one class period

Structure: groups of 3–4 students

IRA/NCTE Standards

Standard 3—Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

Standard 8—Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

NETS*S Standards

Standard 4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making—Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources.

Standard 6. Technology Operations and Concepts—Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems, and operations.

Framework for 21st Century Learning

Core Subjects and 21st Century Themes—Mastery of core subjects and 21st century themes is essential for students in the 21st century.

ICT Literacy—Use technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate and communicate information.

Materials/Hardware/Software

- Student Activity Page (one copy per student)

- Team pages on a classroom wiki for students to use as they contribute to a class analysis of a work of fiction

- If you need to set up a wiki, refer to the Teacher Preparation section of Lesson 1, Working in a Wiki.

- Language Arts textbooks, dictionaries, or other reference sources that include definitions for terms related to literary analysis

- Scratch paper for brainstorming

- One Internet-connected desktop or laptop computer per student team

Teacher Preparation

Prior to teaching this lesson, you need to do the following:

1. Decide which elements of a literary work you want students to analyze (e.g., plot, characters, point of view, setting, symbols).

2. Create teams of 3–4 students and assign one element of the analysis to each team. For example, with ten teams, you might have one team work on setting, two teams work on characters (antagonist and protagonist), one team work on symbols, one team work on point of view, and five teams work on different elements of plot (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution).

3. Create a new page for your classroom wiki and make its title the literary work your students will analyze. Link this page to the wiki's front or main page. (If you need to set up a wiki, refer to the Teacher Preparation section of Lesson 1, Working in a Wiki.)

4. Create a working wiki page for each team. Use the name of the literary work and the element of the analysis that team will work on as the title for the page. Link the team pages to the title page you created for this activity.

5. Add a general prompt to each page, such as: "Your team is analyzing the (fill in the blank) for this literary work. Begin by adding a definition for this element of literary analysis. Next, describe or identify the (fill in the blank) and explain how the (fill in the blank) contributes to the reader's understanding of the literary work." Make this prompt as specific as you want.

6. Add the URL for the wiki to the Student Activity Page before duplicating that page.

7. Provide the students' team assignments prior to starting this lesson.

8. Arrange for each team of students to have access to one Internet-connected desktop or laptop computer for this activity. This may require scheduling lab time or borrowing a laptop cart.

Prerequisite Student Skills

Students need to be familiar with:

1. How to log in to the class wiki site, add and edit text, and comment on wiki pages

2. The various elements of a piece of fiction that can be analyzed to learn more about the work

Vocabulary

literary analysis: the act of separating a work of fiction into its parts (e.g., plot, characters, point of view, symbols) to gain a better understanding of the whole

wiki: a Web site where multiple users can create, modify, and delete content found on the site regardless of who originally wrote and posted the material

Teaching Tip

Because wikis permit just one person to edit a page at a time, student teams will need to identify a typist and work together to add text to their assigned page. Once the initial work is done, students may access the wiki from any Internet-connected computer to make additions, edits, or comments.

Activities/Procedures

1. **Accessing the Wiki**—Distribute the Student Activity Page. Ask students to open the Web browser and use the wiki URL written on the activity sheet to navigate to the wiki. Team members should already know how to log in to work on the wiki; they should also know which element of the analysis they have been assigned. (approximately 5 minutes)

2. **Writing a Definition of the Element**—To ensure that students understand the element of analysis they are assigned, give them a few minutes to write a definition for this element and add it to the wiki page. Encourage students to use print or online sources for the definition. (approximately 10 minutes)

3. **Discussing Ideas and Adding Text to the Wiki Page**—Teams brainstorm ideas about the element of analysis they are working on and come to an agreement on the text they will add to the wiki page. (approximately 30 minutes)

4. **Adding a Comment**—Give teams a few minutes to review another team's work and add a comment or discussion remark to that wiki page. (approximately 5 minutes)

Assessment/Evaluation

- Monitor students while they are working.

- Check team pages to see if students accurately defined the element of analysis their team was assigned.

- Check team pages to see if students successfully identified or described the element of analysis their team worked on and if they were able to accurately explain how this element impacts the reader's understanding of the literary work.

Follow-up Activities

- This analysis can become a living document. Encourage students to refer back to and edit or comment on these wiki pages whenever appropriate.

- Use the class wiki to analyze a variety of different literary works.

- Encourage students to use comments or discussion remarks to interact with one another and engage in deeper conversations about various elements of the analysis.

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners

You might find that students with different abilities will benefit from extra help or extra challenges.

- When setting up the teams, think about creating groups in which students' strengths will complement one another, and provide support to students who might need extra help.

- Students who would benefit from extra challenges can review and comment on the work done by other teams. You might also challenge them to discover how to receive automated notifications whenever a new comment is posted. Remind these students that this is an opportunity for them to model norms for discussing other students' work.

Recommended Internet Sites

- Merriam-Webster Online (www.merriam-webster.com)

- Dictionary.com (http://dictionary.reference.com)

Answer Key

Answers will vary depending upon the literary work chosen and the elements analyzed. Accept all reasonable responses.

2 LITERARY ANALYSIS—21ST CENTURY STYLE

Objective

During this activity, you will work in a small group to analyze a work of fiction using the class wiki.

Before You Begin

When reading a play, short story, or novel, it's important to analyze the different parts of the work. For example, you might think about the setting, the characters, and the elements of the plot. Using a wiki, it's possible for you to work with a team to write an analysis with your entire class. And once the analysis is done, you can still use the wiki pages as a reference or model for other assignments.

You will complete this activity with two or three classmates (as assigned by your teacher).

Materials

- Student Activity Page
- Wiki URL: _____
- Team analysis topic (provided by your teacher): _____
- Language Arts textbook, dictionary, or other reference source that defines terms related to literary analysis
- Scratch paper for brainstorming

Directions

Accessing the Wiki

1. Open the computer's Web browser.
2. Use the wiki URL provided above to get to the classroom wiki for this activity.
3. Look at the links on this main wiki page. Find your team's link. Your teacher has assigned one element of the literary analysis to your team.
4. Click to open your team working page.

Write a Definition of the Element

1. Before beginning your analysis, work with your team members to define the element you will work with.

2. Find a definition for the element your team is assigned (e.g., setting, protagonist, or plot climax). Use your textbook, a dictionary (online or off-line), or other reference book to do this.

3. Discuss the definition. Be sure all team members agree on its meaning.

4. Choose a typist. Have that person type the definition on your team's wiki page.

5. Click **Save**.

Discuss Ideas and Add Text to the Wiki Page

1. Take about five minutes to brainstorm ideas about the element you are analyzing.

2. Use a piece of paper to jot down your ideas.

3. Describe or identify the element (e.g., who is the protagonist or what is the setting).

4. Next, explain how this element contributes to the reader's understanding of the literary work.

5. As a team, come to an agreement on your answers.

6. Have the typist add this information to the wiki page.

7. Take a few minutes to proofread your work and make edits or additions.

8. Click **Save**.

Adding a Comment

If there is time, view other teams' pages. If you have a question or comment, use the **Discussion** or **Comment** feature on the wiki page to make your remark. Remember, comments are not anonymous, so think about what you write.

3 BUILD YOUR OWN REFERENCE LIBRARY— GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Instructional Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Contribute to an online glossary of terms.

- Peer edit definitions and examples written by classmates.

Time frame: 20 minutes

Structure: groups of 3–4 students

IRA/NCTE Standards

Standard 3—Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

Standard 8—Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

NETS*S Standards

Standard 2. Communication and Collaboration—Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.

Standard 3. Research and Information Fluency—Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.

Framework for 21st Century Learning

Communication and Collaboration—Assume shared responsibility for collaborative work, and value the individual contributions made by each team member.

Information Literacy—Access and evaluate information.

Materials/Hardware/Software

- Student Activity Page (one copy per student)
- Team pages on a classroom wiki for students to use as they contribute to a class glossary of terms (If you need to set up a wiki, refer to the Teacher Preparation section of Lesson 1, Working in a Wiki.)
- Language Arts textbooks, dictionaries, or other reference sources that include definitions for glossary terms
- Notebook paper for drafting the definition and an example
- One Internet-connected desktop or laptop computer per student team

Teacher Preparation

Prior to teaching this lesson, you need to do the following:

1. Decide how the glossary will be structured. You might have terms grouped by instructional unit or in alphabetical order. Remember that you need to use a structure that allows, at least at first, several teams of students to each have a page to work on at the same time. Once students are comfortable with working on the glossary, you can assign additions and edits as homework.

2. Create teams of 3–4 students and assign one glossary term to each team. For example, with five teams, you might divide the alphabet into five groups and have each team add a term, definition, and example to one of the wiki pages for that letter group.

3. Create a new page for your classroom wiki and title it Glossary of Terms. Link this page to the wiki's front or main page. (If you need to set up a wiki, refer to the Teacher Preparation section of Lesson 1, Working in a Wiki.)

4. Create a working wiki page for each section of the glossary. (Initially you'll want to have enough pages so each team can easily add a term and definition. Later you might combine pages.) Use the name of the subcategories you have chosen as the title for each working page (e.g., A–E, F–J). Link the working pages to the title page you created for the glossary.

5. Add a statement to the main glossary page to explain its purpose. You may or may not need a prompt on each of the remaining glossary pages, depending on how the glossary is organized. For instance, if the glossary is alphabetical, you may simply want to remind students to add new terms in alphabetical order and then add letter headings.

6. Add the URL for the main glossary page to the Student Activity Page before duplicating that page.

7. Provide the students' team assignments prior to starting this lesson.

8. Arrange for each team of students to have access to one Internet-connected desktop or laptop computer for this activity. This may require scheduling lab time or borrowing a laptop cart.

8 WHAT A CHARACTER!

Instructional Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Write a brief description of a character in a literary work.

- Write a diary entry about an event in the literary work from the perspective of that character.

- Post the description and diary entry as a comment to an original blog entry written by the teacher.

- Read blog entries posted by classmates and post a comment on one.

Time frame: 40–45 minutes

Structure: individual

IRA/NCTE Standards

Standard 3—Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

Standard 8—Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

NETS*S Standards

Standard 1. Creativity and Innovation—Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology.

Standard 2. Communication and Collaboration—Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.

Framework for 21st Century Learning

Communication and Collaboration—Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts.

Creativity and Innovation—Be open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives; incorporate group input and feedback into the work.

Materials/Hardware/Software

- Student Activity Page (one copy per student)

- Teacher-created blog entry describing the assignment and giving the prompt (If you need to set up a blog, refer to the Teacher Preparation section of Lesson 6, Working in a Blog.)

- One copy per student of the literary work being read

- Writing paper (for drafting a short character description)

- One Internet-connected desktop or laptop computer per student

Teacher Preparation

Remember, if you are working with multiple blogs, you will need to repeat the preparation steps for each blog.

Prior to teaching this lesson, you need to do the following:

1. Choose characters from a literary work whose identity students will assume when writing mock-diary entries.

2. Assign a character to each student. More than one student can represent the same character.

3. Write and post a blog entry that describes the overall activity. Post the first event/prompt that students will write about in character.

4. If possible, add a category and/or tag to this post (e.g., Character Responses or the title of the literary work). This will make it easier to retrieve this post later.

5. Add the URL for the class blog and the title of your original entry to the Student Activity Page before duplicating that page.

6. Arrange for each student to have access to an Internet-connected desktop or laptop computer for this activity. This may require scheduling lab time or borrowing a laptop cart.

   Note: This assignment could also be completed using an Internet-connected handheld device such as a cell phone.

Prerequisite Student Skills

Students need to be familiar with:

1. How to log in to the class blog and add comments

2. The profile of an assigned literary character

Vocabulary

blog: The word *blog* is a shortening of the term "Web log." A blog is a Web site that resembles an online journal. Entries appear in reverse chronological order (newest posts are at the top of the page). Typical blogs have one main author, but readers are able to write and publish comments in response to entries.

point of view: Every story is told from an identifiable perspective, usually through the eyes of a character. This perspective is called point of view.

Teaching Tips

- Because blogs allow many readers to simultaneously post comments to an entry, students will be able to work individually and all add their work to the blog in a short period of time. And, once the initial work is done, students may access the blog from any Internet-connected computer to add more comments.

- This activity should be the first in a series of posts that identify events for students to write about in character throughout the reading of the literary work.

Activities/Procedures

1. **Writing a Character Description**—Before accessing the blog, assign students to write a brief description of their assigned character. Students will add this description to the beginning of their first response written in character. (approximately 10 minutes)

2. **Accessing the Blog**—Distribute the Student Activity Page. Ask students to open the Web browser and use the URL written on the activity sheet to navigate to the blog. Unless you have written and posted another entry since preparing for this lesson, your entry describing the assignment should be at the top of the entry column. (approximately 5 minutes)

3. **Composing and Posting a Response**—For the teacher entry, include a brief explanation of the reason for blogging from the perspectives of various characters. Provide guidelines for what students need to include in this first comment. For example, students should include a short character description and a diary entry about the first event. Review the activity with students and then provide time for them to write and post their responses. (approximately 15 minutes)

4. **Adding a Comment**—Give students time to review and comment on a classmate's post. (approximately 10 minutes)

Assessment/Evaluation

- Monitor students while they are working.

- Read students' character descriptions to check for accuracy.

- Check diary entries. Are students staying in character when they write? Are different characters actually stating different points of view?

Follow-up Activities

This activity should be the first of several as students compose diary entries about events throughout the reading of the literary work. It is especially helpful to use categories or tags to easily track all related entries. Encourage students to use comments to interact with one another and engage in deeper conversations about their characters and their differing points of view.

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners

You might find that students with different abilities will benefit from extra help or extra challenges.

- Students who need extra help will benefit from creating a character development chart to fully develop their ideas about the character prior to writing their blog entries.

- Students who would benefit from extra challenges can compare and contrast their responses with others that represent the same character. How are they alike and how are they different? Did some identify a point they missed?

Recommended Internet Site

- Exploring Point of View (www.learner.org/interactives/literature/read/pov1.html)

Answer Key

Answers will vary. Accept all reasonable responses.