

CRRE ELA Lesson Plan Template

Expanded Success Initiative – New York City Department of Education

Lesson Title/#: The Agent

Grade Level: 12th

Name of Teacher: Devon Hegeman

1. Learning Central Focus

<p>Student Learning Goal(s)/ Objective(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are the specific skills and processes students will learn in this lesson? ● What are the specific concepts and reasoning students will explore/learn in this lesson? 	<p>Students will be able to consider colonialism as a system. They will take the perspective of the colonizer and think about the strains that the system places on him. Students will role play a hypothetical problem a colonizer might have.</p> <p>After this lesson, students will be prepared to critique colonialism in <i>The Heart of Darkness</i>.</p>
<p>Student Cultural Learning / Sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What connections are students able to make between what they are learning to their lives, communities, and interests? 	<p>My students understand colonization as a horrible abuse of indigenous people, but they did not come to me with the ability to critique the system of colonization. This activity will put them in the role of colonizer and help them think critically about how the system is constructed and the choices that are forced on its actors. Students are able to make connections between colonialism as a broader system and its effects on American history, most notably, the confiscation of Native American lands and slavery.</p>
<p>Lesson Rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why are you teaching this lesson? Why are the learning tasks for this lesson appropriate for your students? ● How does this lesson connect to what comes before and after it? ● What (if any) theories, philosophies or research inform this lesson? 	<p>This lesson opens a unit focused on the study of <i>The Heart of Darkness</i>. Before reading the text, most students have read Chinua Achebe's <i>Things Fall Apart</i>. Beyond that, their understanding of European economies, colonialism, and Africa is very vague. They certainly cannot make immediate connections to <i>The Heart of Darkness</i>. In my attempts to make this text more culturally relevant for students, I came across the <i>Journal of Educational Controversy's</i> article "Teaching a "Racist and Outdated Text": A Journey into my own <i>Heart of Darkness</i>" by Melody Wong. While a number of her suggestions are geared at students who are much higher than my own, this particular activity is fantastic for making the text relevant for students.</p>
<p>Context for Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who are the students in your class? ● What do I know about my students that will inform this lesson? ● What school/classroom conditions might impact the planning and delivery of the lesson? 	<p>My students are 21 12th graders, they all chose to take an AP level course in literature. Four of my students have the intellectual development to read and write on an AP level, but many of them do not. Some of those who do not are ELLs, so their issues stem more from language than they do from thinking skills. Very few of my students have the stamina to complete reading and writing tasks on an AP level.</p> <p>I know that my students perform well in heterogeneous groups, as the highest performing students serve as peer tutors and support for the lower performing students.</p>
<p>Prior Academic Knowledge and Conceptions</p>	<p>This lesson is a hook for the unit. As such, this lesson does not require prior knowledge. My students have a worksheet of literary terms, our "Nuts and</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What knowledge, skills, and concepts must students already know to be successful with this lesson? • What prior knowledge, skills and/or resources do these students have that would support the learning for this lesson? 	<p>Bolts” that they can refer to, but I do not believe that it will be necessary for this lesson.</p>
<p>Aim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential question(s) to be answered during the lesson. 	<p>How can we critique the system of colonization?</p>
<p>Do Now</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity to “jumpstart” the lesson. 	<p>What countries have been colonized at some point in history?</p>
<p>Opportunities to Problem Solve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are students (Collectively or Individually) provided opportunities to apply the skills they have? Newly acquired skills? 	<p>Working in groups, students are interacting with problem, developing and debating those solutions, and finally presenting their solution. In the end, they will reflect on the process.</p>
<p>Common Errors, Misconceptions, Partial Understandings, or Misunderstandings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are common errors or misunderstandings of students related to the central focus of this lesson? • How will you address them for this group of students? 	<p>Students have difficulty understanding what it means to critique. They can list ‘bad things’ or ‘good things,’ but they may not be able to create a meaningful argument out of their observations. This lesson gives them the opportunity to try out different solutions and judge them. Later in the unit, they will be able to compare the actions and systemic pressures of the system with the solutions they developed to critique colonialism in a meaningful way.</p>
<p>Standard(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What standard(s) are most relevant to the learning goals? 	<p>RL.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)</p> <p>RL. 11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p> <p>RL.11-12.2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.</p>

2. Assessments

Describe the tools/procedures that will be used in this lesson to monitor students' learning of the lesson objective(s).
Attach a copy of the assessment and the evaluation criteria/rubric in the resources section at the end of the lesson plan.

Type of assessment (formative or summative)	Description of assessment (what is this designed to assess?)	Modifications to the assessment (so that all students may demonstrate their learning)	Evaluation criteria: What evidence of student learning does the assessment provide? (related to the learning objectives and central focus)	How will you give feedback to students on this assessment and for what purpose? (Consider whole class, individual and group levels)
Formative	The Do Now is designed to discover what background knowledge they can apply to the lesson.	N/A	Students will share their responses with the group.	As a class, we will go through students' responses, until they make the connection that most countries have been colonized at some point.
Formative	Teacher circulates, assessing each group's performance during the brainstorming time. Teacher may provide feedback, push back on ideas, or redirect groups.	Teacher will look for any students/groups who seem confused regarding the assignment. A breakdown of expectations and/or examples of solutions will be provided to guide students/groups.	In this particular activity, student debates and small group discussions are full of student driven learning. In many ways, this is when the learning happens, and the presentations are simply a tie-up.	The teacher may provide sample responses. She may address any students' questions or confusions.
Summative	Students will share out the solution their group developed. In my experience, groups often discuss more radical solutions than they are willing to present.	N/A	Students will be able to explain and defend their solution.	Students and teacher may ask group clarifying questions,
Summative	Journal Responses - students will write their responses to the journaling prompts	N/A	This provides evidence of thinking. It allows the teacher to know how the student is thinking about colonialism and whether they made connections between the role of the individual and the role of the institution.	Feedback may include notes on writing style, but it will not critique content. I will use the information to determine whether further information or discussion on the topic is necessary.

3. Academic Language Demand(s)

What language function do you want students to develop in this lesson? What must students understand in order to be intellectually engaged in the lesson?	This activity will give students an opportunity to use some of the language surrounding colonialism and <i>The Heart of Darkness</i> in a less intimidating context.
What content-specific terms (vocabulary) do students need to meet the learning objective for this lesson?	Colonialism, post-colonialism, systems, agent (with specific references to the agents in the text)
What specific way(s) will students need to use language (reading, writing, listening and/or speaking) to participate in learning tasks and demonstrate their learning for this lesson?	Most of their language use in this lesson will be oral.
What are your students' abilities with regard to the oral and written language associated with this lesson?	In regards to this lesson, my students language abilities are certainly up to the task. For the novel overall, however, many students will struggle with limited vocabularies and Conrad's complex sentence structures.
How will you support students so they can understand and use the language associated with the language function and other demands in meeting the learning objectives of the lesson?	I will answer any questions, but do not expect language function to be a factor in this lesson.

4. Instructional Strategies and Learning Tasks

Description of what the teacher (you) will be doing and/or what the students will be doing.

**** The questions in the boxes are not meant to be answered directly but are there to guide your thinking & planning.**

<p>Opening/Introduction 3 Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will you start the lesson to engage and motivate students in learning? 	Do Now: Which countries have been colonized at some point in history?
<p>Instruction/Steps of the Lesson <i>Create a numbered list of steps for the body of your lesson.</i> 45 Minutes</p>	<p>You are a European agent in the middle of Africa in 1890, miles away from home, and any other Europeans are days away by boat. You and four large wooden boxes have just been dropped off on the banks of the Congo river. The steamer will not be back for a couple of months, in order to pick up your quota of ivory and to bring fresh supplies. There are native villages within the trading area that you have been assigned. You don't speak the language, you don't have any maps of the territory, you don't know what is in the jungle, and you have only enough food to last you for a week. The</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will you and the students do during the lesson? • What will you do to engage students in developing understanding of the lesson objective(s) and concepts? • How will you link the new content (skills and concepts) to students' prior academic learning and their personal/cultural and community assets? • How will you transition smoothly from one learning activity to the next? • How will students apply what they have learned? • How will you determine if students are meeting the intended learning objectives? 	<p>rest of your boxes are filled with cheap trading goods. You also have guns and ammunition. You will not leave Africa until you make enough money to go back home a rich man—or you die of disease, native attack, or accident. What is your plan?</p> <p>With your group, brainstorm a plan. Your group will create a way for your agent to survive.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What will the agent do to find food? 2. How will the agent interact with the natives (indigenous people)? 3. How will the agent find the ivory necessary to leave the country? 4. Who will help the agent? <p>Use a big paper to document your plan. Be prepared to present your group's work.</p> <p>When every group has presented its work, students will reflect on the activity: Journal Entry #1</p> <p>What type of person (man) would be attracted to the job of colonizer?</p> <p>Do you think this agent would leave the Congo the same way he entered? What might change him?</p> <p>How would his integrity and humanity be affected by the job he has in front of him?</p>
<p>Closure 5 Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the key points of the lesson be articulated? By whom? • What questions or prompts will you use to elicit student articulation of their learning? • How will students rethink and revise their understanding and work? 	<p>Students will share out their reflections on the activity. Teacher will ask students to share their predictions about the text we will read, <i>The Heart of Darkness</i>.</p>
<p>Differentiation/ Planned Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does your instructional design for this lesson meet individual and group needs? • How will you support students with gaps in the prior knowledge that is necessary to be successful in this lesson? 	<p><i>Whole class:</i> Groups are heterogeneously organized to support students with different needs. Because this lesson is mainly an oral lesson, my students will not require much differentiation.</p> <p><i>Students with similar needs:</i> I have a number of former ELLs in this course. They do struggle to write at the level of the AP curriculum, but they do not struggle with speech or processing.</p> <p><i>Individual students:</i> N/A</p> <p><i>Students with IEPs or 504 plans:</i> N/A</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will you provide enrichment for students with a strong understanding of the lesson concepts? 	<p><i>Strategies for responding to common errors and misunderstandings, developmental approximations, misconceptions, partial understandings, and/or misunderstandings:</i> Teacher will circle and answer any issues as they arise.</p>
<p>Interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How and why are students interacting with one another (how are students grouped)? How and why are students interacting with texts? How and why are students interacting with the teacher? 	<p>Students are brainstorming and debating within their groups. This will give them the opportunity to consider viewpoints they may not have developed on their own. My students are well versed in socratic seminars, so this type of thinking and interacting is comfortable for them and expected in this class.</p>
<p>Flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What might not go as planned and how can you be ready to make adjustments? 	<p>There is a potential for group dynamics to go awry in this activity. These students do know each other well, and groups are thoughtfully put together to maximize individuals' skills and personalities. Nevertheless, if students do not manage their behavior well, they may be put in another group or asked to complete the work individually.</p>
<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What materials does the teacher need for this lesson? What materials do the students need for this lesson? 	<p>Teacher needs activity handouts, flip chart paper, markers, pens, etc. I put together my directions on a powerpoint for students. Students need their journals for reflection and their binders with daily class notes.</p>

5. Analyzing Teaching

To be completed after the lesson has been taught

<p>Reflecting on the lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What worked? What didn't? For whom? 	<p>This lesson worked well to encourage student thinking. As we continued to read, it gave them a clear understanding of disconnect between colonizing agents and European culture. This knowledge was particularly helpful when we read about Marlow's preparations in Belgium and the Kurtz's experiences in the Congo.</p> <p>I was interested by the fact that debates amongst groups often touched on violence and control. However, in their presentations, every group focused on language acquisition and relationship building as the preferred method for colonization. Clearly, they made the connections between the violence inherent in the system of colonization, but they did not want to partake in any responsibility for that type of violence.</p>
<p>Informing future instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What instructional changes do you need to make as 	<p>The students' journals showed me that, even though their presentations painted colonialism as a peaceful process, they understood that an agent would become a different person through his experiences as a colonizer. They also expressed a range of concerns with the colonizer's feelings of loss and loneliness in a foreign country. They thought he would learn from the colonized through the process of colonizing.</p>

<p>you prepare for future lessons?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you use the assessment(s) to determine what worked, what didn't, and for whom? • How well did your feedback help students meet the learning goals? 	<p>They did not make all of the connections to the system that I had hoped they would. Further exploration of colonialism and the book will allow us to look more seriously at this. "Shooting an Elephant" by George Orwell may also be a good text to explore this connection.</p>
<p>Proposed changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you could teach this lesson again to this group of students what changes would you make to your instruction? 	<p>If I were to teach this lesson today, I would revise the journal questions. I think I would ask students to consider the system more. I might specifically ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -What do you think of the government or company that sent the agent to colonize? -How do you think the colonized people feel about the agent? -How do you think the colonized people feel about the government or company that sent the agent?
<p>Reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why will these changes improve student learning? • What research/theory supports these changes? 	<p>On the whole, this activity was very successful at meeting my goals. However, I do think these changes may bring some ideas that specifically critique colonization to the forefront.</p>

6. Sources/Resources

Acknowledge and cite any sources used in developing this lesson. Attach handouts, materials and each assessment and associated evaluation criteria/rubric.

Wong, Melody. "Teaching a "Racist and Outdated Text": A Journey into my own *Heart of Darkness*." *The Journal of Educational Controversy*. February 4, 2015. <http://www.wce.wvu.edu/Resources/CEP/eJournal/v003n001/a025.shtml>