

Title of Artifact - Introduction to Gothic Literature Lesson Plan

Date Completed - Spring 2013

Artifact Description:

This artifact is the introductory lesson plan that I used to introduce my Gothic Literature Unit, which was created during the spring of 2013 at Dobson High School. This lesson was created to teach my students the characteristics and elements of gothic literature, as well as having them analyze specific pictures and movie clips from this genre in order to further develop their understanding. Within this lesson I incorporated a variety of activities and teaching techniques that would allow myself to reach as many students and learning styles as possible.

Wisconsin Teacher Standard Alignment

This lesson plan best aligns with Wisconsin Teaching Standard #6. This experience best satisfies this standard because it shows “The teacher used effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques as well as instructional media and technology to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.”

When creating this unit, I wanted to make sure I included activities that would reach multiple learning styles of students within my classroom. By choosing the activities I did, I set my class up in a large part to learn through discussion and interaction by exploring the many ideas behind gothic literature. With my introductory lesson, which included a powerpoint of facts, pictures, and video clips, I allowed the students to explore the main concepts of gothic literature. I did this by first lecturing about the characteristic of gothic literature and then scaffolding the discussion with the class. This is where my verbal techniques came into play. In order to scaffold I had to engage the students in a series of questions in order to lead them toward the right answer. For example, I would show the students a picture and ask them, “What gothic characteristics does this picture have?” Some students would reply with basic and vague answers, such as comments about the colors and objects displayed. These answers were correct, but in order to lead them into a deeper form of thinking I had to reply back with questions that drove them to think deeper. These questions would force them to think about things such as the

symbolic nature behind their ideas and even lead them to forming their own opinions about hard topics such as death and the notion of time.

Another teaching technique that I included in this lesson was completely non-verbal. As I said before, I would show the students multiple pictures and video clips and allow them to pick out specific characteristics and qualities they had that linked them to gothic literature. Once I gave them a minute to think, I would allow them to say their answers. Sometimes the students would be spot on or completely wrong, and I would use things such as the nodding and shaking of my head to signal if they were right or wrong. I also used a lot of hand movements in order to motivate them to dig deeper into their answer and keep thinking it out. Another non-verbal technique I use is using my hands to show dramatic ideas such as size. If something we talk about is big or dramatic I like to use my hands to get their attention. I talk with my hands a lot, and it seems to keep them focused and engaged.

Another aspect of this lesson that made it fun for the students was the media and technology I used in the process. In terms of technology, I had to use my lab top and a projector to project pictures and clips onto the wall. Using a projector to give the students some sort of visual aid is always helpful when trying to reach as many learning styles as possible. The media used is really what grabbed the student's attention. I used pictures that I got from the internet that had gothic elements. Some of these pictures were famous paintings, and others were graphics with a dark element. The last form of media are the video clips, which served to be the hit of the lesson. I used appropriate clips from classic horror films such as *Halloween*, *The Shining*, and *The Ring*, and asked them to pick out the specific elements that we talked about in class. This not only kept them engaged, but made learning this complex idea, fun. These activities caused the students to actively question themselves and other student's ideas when trying to guess the characteristics and symbols in the movie clips. It allowed them to discuss their ideas with one another, while under the support and guidance of my help.

UW-Platteville School of Education Knowledge, Skills, and Disposition Statement

Alignment

This artifact best aligns with KS3.c. of the UW-Platteville School of Education

Knowledge, Skills, and Disposition statements which states: “The candidate, with appropriate student input, has the ability to develop relevant, goal-directed, engaging, clear, and varied learning activities that progress coherently and produce a unified instructional setting that reflects recent professional research.”

This lesson plan best aligns with this KDS because I truly created a fun, yet educational lesson to help my students learn. The students in my classroom thrive on YouTube videos and anything exciting flying through the internet at the time. Students just seem to be more engaged when presented with some sort of visual aid and/or media based activity to help them explore and better understand the ideas being studied. In order to build the students background knowledge on gothic literature elements, I created a lesson that was relevant to both the material being taught and their lives. I used famous gothic pictures and horror movie clips in order for them to test their knowledge of the lecture that went with it. Students are really into this type of stuff, so when I played the clip, everyone was engaged. Even after the clip was over students could barely keep their mouths closed. They wanted to shout out all the things they found, and it even sparked a lot of discussion.

Although this lesson does seem free-spirited, it was still a very structured, goal-directed one. I used a variety of activities in order to lead my students through a process. I started by asking them to brainstorm any background knowledge they might have had on the vocabulary words I would be lecturing about that day. Once they did so, we discussed them thoroughly. I then moved onto showing my powerpoint presentation that would guide me during my lecture about the elements of gothic literature. After they took notes, it was time to test their understanding of the ideas. I first showed pictures and allowed them to pick out specific gothic elements. Then I moved to movie clips from famous horror films. This really allowed them to test their understanding of the vocabulary and ideas we had been talking about in a deeper way. Once I had enough proof that they understood my lesson for the day, I allowed them to fill out their closing box on their worksheet. They were to write a paragraph discussing, “Something interesting they learned about gothic literature in class.”

As you can see, I set up an entire process of activities, and provided clear instruction by using both my powerpoint and verbal cues to give direction, in order to scaffold my students to a

deeper understanding of the material. I not only had them practice and work with the content I had taught them, but I linked it to their interests and life.

Secondary Alignment:

KSD1.c. SELECTS INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

KS1.e. DESIGNS COHERENT INSTRUCTION

KSD1.f. ASSESSES STUDENT LEARNING

KS3.a. COMMUNICATES CLEARLY AND ACCURATELY

KS3.b. USES QUESTIONING AND DISCUSSION TECHNIQUES

KS3.c. ENGAGES STUDENTS IN LEARNING

What I learned about teaching/learning:

What I learned about teaching through creating and teaching this lesson is that it is so easy to engage students if you just get to know them. By knowing your students' interests and the things they like to do, you can easily create a lesson that is interesting to them, but still is teaching content. This can be done with something as simple as a video clip, or even a short news article that discusses their favorite athlete. Learning is supposed to be fun, and by making those connections between school and outside life, they are going to find more relevance and worth to their education.

What I learned about myself as a prospective educator:

When creating this lesson I was extremely excited because gothic literature is one of my favorite genres to talk about. Also being a fan of classic horror films and art, I wanted to produce an introductory lesson that would really grasp their attention. When doing the lesson I noticed I talked a lot about my own favorite gothic movies and literature, and the opinions I have about them. By getting into the lesson and really caring about, the students seemed more apt to question and discuss ideas with me. Just by putting a little bit of yourself into the lessons, you can create an amazing education atmosphere.