7TH GRADE LITERATURE ANALYSIS CURRICULUM UNIT: IDENTIFYING THEME THROUGH MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

A Project

Presented to the faculty of the Department of Graduate and Professional Studies in Education

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by

Bethany McEfee

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7TH GRADE LITERATURE ANALYSIS CURRICULUM UNIT: IDENTIFYING THEME THROUGH MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

A Project

by

Bethany McEfee

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Porfirio M. Loeza, Ph.D.

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Date
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Susan M. Heredia, Ph.D. Date

Department of Graduate and Professional Studies in Education
Abstract

of

7TH GRADE LITERATURE ANALYSIS CURRICULUM UNIT: IDENTIFYING THEME THROUGH MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

by

Bethany McEfee

Statement of Problem

In the area of literature analysis, fifteen-year-old students American are not competitive with their international peers (OECD, 2010). Students are currently taught to recall information on a test and not think critically through problems (Jennings & Rentner, 2006). When given a test not based off of their textbook, they are unable to translate their memorized facts into applicable information. Currently, on an international level, American students are falling further behind in their ability to interpret text because they are not being given the tools to transfer the information learned in the classroom to practical applications (Naumann, 2005).

The purpose of this project is to develop a reading curriculum with an emphasis on identifying theme. The curriculum will be developed for middle school students based on the educational pedagogies used in one of the repeatedly top performing countries, Finland. These pedagogies consist of teaching to multiple learning styles and with...
multiliteracies. The goal of incorporating these methods of instruction into a literary analysis unit is to improve the understanding and usability of analysis techniques in all contexts, resulting in improving American education achievement.

Sources of Data

The data for this study came from a variety of sources. Beginning with evaluating international test scores to understand the problem, and followed with research from both America and Finland of current and past curriculum and teaching strategies. The theoretical basis for the curriculum is based on Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence theory and the New London Group's Multiliteracies.

Conclusions Reached

Students need to be taught literary analysis lessons in a language that they can understand, remember, and transfer to practical uses outside the classroom. My textbook and data analysis demonstrates that although students are taught how to identify theme in a story, they are unable to transfer this knowledge to questions that are not directly stated in the text. Learning literature analysis in a way that students can successfully understand and remember, will save valuable time in the classroom by eliminating hours of re-teaching each year, as well as benefit them outside of the classroom.

_______________________, Committee Chair
Porfirio M. Loeza, Ph.D.

_______________________
Date
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank my mom and Grandma Gene for all of the extra time they put into my education and for teaching me that although learning does not always come easy, through hard work and dedication anyone can succeed in school. I also want to thank my Great Aunt Linda and Aunt Patty for always being supportive and excited about my next adventure in my education. Thank you to all my family and friends that have taken the time to listen to my rants, given me support and suggestions, and challenged me as I completed the research for this project.
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The idea that America is failing to remain competitive in education on an international level has been a source of contention that has received public attention many times over the years. The most notable mention was given in 1983, *A Nation at Risk* (United States, 1983). In this report, evidence that American students were falling behind the rest of the world and that a call to action was needed. Unfortunately, no call to action was made at the time. In 2000, The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) created a test that would assess the knowledge of students at age 15 in countries willing to participate. The first national test administered to gauge student learning in the subjects of: reading, science, and math, in 34 participating countries (OECD, 2015). Results of the test showed America’s students were drastically trailing behind, specifically in reading comprehension, and was the evidence needed to bring the severity of the issue to light and the determination to see a change in this trend (OECD, 2003).
Table 1

*PISA Results 2000*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Combined Reading Literacy Score Average</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Interpreting Text Average</th>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
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<td>OECD Average</td>
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</table>

*Note.* This table displayed the PISA results in 2000. As evidenced by the data the United States average score for the Combined Reading Literacy Score was 504, and the average for Interpreting Text Score was 505.

Upon discovering this issue in the American education system, officials went to work creating rules and guidelines to raise American education on a global scale creating standards for all states to follow and requiring high expectations for their schools and teachers to raise student learning (No Child Left Behind - Overview, 2014). One of these new requirements was that all teachers be highly qualified in their area of teaching (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). Understanding that teachers needed to be educated in the field they were teaching, but not wanting to invest money into requiring a formal education to teach a specific subject, aside from receiving a degree in the subject teaching teachers were also given the opportunity to take short courses to show they were highly...
qualified to teach the subject (Jennings & Rentner, 2006). Along with these lofty goals, the new policy gave teachers less freedom and ownership of their classrooms in the name of accountability (Gabriel, 2010). Teachers were supplied with scripted textbooks to keep instruction consistent and focused on testing material in order to insure student improvement (Neill, 2003).

Throughout the years that this test has been offered, America has made little to no progress in improving test scores, while the same countries continued topping the charts (OECD, 2010). Through all the reforms and regulations, students have remained average among the OECD countries, and have even dropped in the area of interpreting text (OECD, 2010). On a local level, in California some advancement in state test scores have been made. The California state test results are not separated by subcategory as in the national tests; these scores reflect the entire English Language Arts (ELA) test. In 2003, only 32% of 8th graders scored at or above average, while in 2013, 57% of 8th graders scored at or above average (California Department of Education, 2013). Unfortunately, this improvement has not been as great as it seems. From the national results decreasing as local results raise, it can be determined that the testing system in California is not testing if students can use logic and understanding to answer questions (Naumann, 2005), but rather asking similar questions to the curriculum used in schools. It has also been found that because of the pressure from the federal government, schools are focusing their instruction on specific testing areas (Gabriel, 2010) and finding ways to report their students as improving through grouping students differently (Jennings & Rentner, 2006).
Finland is one of the countries leading the world in education. Finland’s learning environment and teaching strategies are drastically different from those commonly found in America. Finland practices hands on education in a laid-back student choice environment (Sahlberg, 2011b). Students practice multiliteracies to help them receive a relevant education in a technology driven world. While their students top the education boards, American students remain at average at best (OECD, 2010). See table 2.

Table 2

PISA Results 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Combined Reading Literacy Score Average</th>
<th>Interpreting Text Average</th>
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<td>OECD Average</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: This table displays the PISA results in 2009. As evidenced by the data the United States average score for the Combined Reading Literacy Score was 500, and the average for Interpreting Text Score was 495.

The results show a reality that educators are aware of, but try to ignore. Finland is reforming education to give teachers more power to develop lessons that teachers can
personalize for students, as well as opportunities to engage in research and collaboration on the best teaching practices (Compton & Wagner, 2013). America is implementing more rules and demands on teachers, isolating them from colleagues and limiting the freedom to personalize lessons to meet the needs of their students (Neill, 2003). There is a strong belief in Finland that it takes a confident and well educated teacher to guarantee success in students (Tirri & Ubani, 2013), and in order to have these qualities in teachers, along with intensive teacher training, they have to be given the respect and trust of education officials (Compton & Wagner, 2013).

**Statement of the problem**

Education in America needs to change if student achievement and the competitive edge is to align with the rest of the world. Students have largely been taught to recall information on a test, with little regard to thinking through problems (Naumann, 2005). In fact, when given a test not based off their textbook, students are unable to translate their memorized facts into applicable information (Naumann, 2005). Finnish students, although rarely given tests in their every day schooling (Compton & Wagner, 2013), are excelling in the national tests do to the fact that they are able to translate classroom learning into usable knowledge (OECD, 2011). Studies have shown that American students come close to their Finnish peers in assessments that are based on recalling facts (Robelen, 2013, p. 8), but American students are drastically lower than other countries in the area of interpreting text (OECD, 2010). While students are competitive in identifying tangible items in the text, such as titles and types of words, when it comes to the intangible interpretation of texts, such as identifying the theme, American students are
lost (OECD, 2015). If students are unable to grasp intangible literary concepts such as theme, they will never understand the meaning or purpose of texts beyond shallow entertainment.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this project is to develop a reading curriculum with an emphasis on identifying theme. The curriculum will be developed for middle school students based on the educational pedagogies used in Finland, one of the repeatedly top performing countries. These pedagogies consist of teaching to multiple learning styles and with multiliteracies. The goal of incorporating these methods of instruction into a literary analysis unit is to improve the understanding and usability of analysis techniques in all contexts, resulting in improving American education achievement.

In 2000, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) was administered to countries all over the world who agreed to test a random selection of 15-year-old students in reading, math, and science literacy (OECD, 2015). Although assessed for all three areas, the emphasis in this test was on reading. To the surprise of all, Finland was on the top of world in reading (Sahlberg, 2011b), while America ranked 15th.

Over the next decade, the test was given every three years with an emphasis on math, and then on science. In 2009, the emphasis of PISA was once again on reading and was given to 15-year-old students in participating countries. The results show that Finland remained at the top, holding a firm second place to Korea in all reading
categories, while America dropped to 17th over all and as low as 23rd out of the 34 countries participating in subcategories of reading (OECD, 2010).

Although there are many economic and societal differences America faces that other countries do not, results show that the American education system is stagnate (OECD, 2010). Policy changes, such as No Child Left Behind, are not helping to improve students' learning and their ability to apply learning (Neill, 2003). In order to achieve this goal, a change in curriculum and instruction practices is required to give this country a more sound education (Jennings & Rentner, 2006).

**Methodology**

The anticipated outcome is to create a project that will improve the reading literacy in middle school students. The project will focus on teaching one of the most difficult concepts to grasp, identifying the theme in text. Targeting multiple intelligences, the project will encompass multiliteracies and student collaboration. It is written as an introductory unit that can be used with any literature book and strategies introduced in this unit can be carried out through the students’ education.

This introduction unit will be divided into two sections: Introduction to Terms and Application to Literature. The first section, Introduction to Terms, is intended to be taught over the course of approximately two weeks in order to thoroughly build a solid foundation for the students. Before beginning a literature unit, the students need to know literary terms so concretely that when asked a question to identify them or use them they will not hesitate to answer confidently. In order for all students to have the same opportunity to understand these concepts, they are presented in each learning style and
through multiple activities. The length of the second part, Application to Literature, will vary depending on the selection of literature used. In this part of the unit, students will identify and discuss the literary terms within a piece of literature as well as use them in writing their own short story collaboratively with the class.

The unit will begin with an overview of the four parts of literature: characters, setting, plot, and theme. Students will engage in discussion, understand definitions, complete drawings, and learn and write poems about the terms. The combination of these activities will give students dominate in all intelligences a memory queue to recall throughout their literature unit and education. Using short stories, students will learn to use the STEAL method (Hinkle, 2012) in identifying character traits, the parts of a plot line, and all aspects of a setting. From these, they will learn how each part can contribute to the development of the theme of the story and how to identify a theme.

The unit of study will then change to the application stage where students will read a full grade level novel and apply their learning. Students will continue to use the memory queues and strategies taught in the first half of the unit to understand the novel in a deeper way. They will track the character development, map out the plot, and understand all parts of the setting throughout the story. To conclude the unit, students will use the information from their reading activities to determine what the author is trying to communicate to the reader and understand the theme. On conclusion of their novel, students will engage in a multiliterate activity creating a movie trailer for the novel that emphasizes the theme of the story while describing the characters, setting, and plot.
Limitations of the Project

When evaluating if a new curriculum will be successful, the usability and limitations need to be considered. Each factor of the project comes with its own set of strengths and limitations. When using the theory of multiliteracies, the major limitation is the emphasis on collaboration. Students will have to work together to complete projects within both technological and physical groups. Using this strategy could be a challenge for some teachers and class dynamics.

A second limitation of the study, as with all projects, will be that this curriculum has not been tested to determine if it will raise student achievement. The theories behind it have been tested and the techniques have sound reasoning to support them, but there is always uncertainty if they will play out as imagined when presented in a classroom.

Finally, when basing a curriculum off the techniques used in another country, the differences between the countries as a whole must be considered. Finland is drastically different from America in everything including cultural, linguistics, economics, and so on (Sahlberg, 2011b). In view of these differences, something that works well in Finland may not have the same effect when used in America.

Theoretical Basis for the Project

The theoretical basis for this project is focused on Howard Gardner and Multiple Intelligences. In his theory, he explains all children learn and understand differently and in order to teach every student a lesson, it needs to be presented in multiple ways (Davis, Christodoulou, Seider, & Gardner, 2015). Before this theory, (presented in 1983), intelligence was based off IQ (Intelligence Quotient), one form of assessing or binding
learning (Gardner, 2006). Gardner argues there are ways a person can prove to be intelligent and people need to understand their primary intelligence to get the most out of their learning and applying of information (Davis, Christodoulou, Seider, & Gardner, 2011). The eight intelligences Gardner identified include: spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, linguistic, logical-mathematical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. No intelligence is more valuable than another is, but some are more focused in education and work giving a disadvantage to students that excel in a different primary intelligence (Multiple Intelligences Oasis).

As we are transitioning into a technological world, education must move this direction as well. In 1996, the New London Group developed the theory of Multiliteracies noting not only do students need to see a lesson presented in different ways to learn it, they also need to collaborate with their peers and use technology to get the most out of a lesson (Cope, 2009). It is through a collaboration of all activities that they are able to translate the information from a classroom lesson to something useable in the real world.

**Definitions of Terms**

Multiliteracies – “The term multiliteracies was coined by the New London Group (1996) to highlight two related aspects of the increasing complexity of texts: (a) the proliferation of multimodal ways of making meaning where the written word is increasingly part and parcel of visual, audio, and spatial patterns; (b) the increasing salience of cultural and linguistic diversity characterized by local diversity and global connectedness.” (The Multiliteracy Project).
Multiple Intelligences - "a critique of the standard psychological view of intellect: there is a single intelligence, adequately measured by IQ or other short answer tests. Instead, on the basis of evidence from disparate sources, the theory claims that human beings have a number of relatively discrete intellectual capacities" (Multiple Intelligences Oasis).

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - An organization that works to "promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world" (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015).

The Programme for International Student Assessment – “a triennial international survey which aims to evaluate education systems worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students” in the subjects of Reading, Math, and Science. (OECD, 2015)

Theme – “is defined as a main idea or an underlying meaning of a literary work that may be stated directly or indirectly” (Theme, 2014).

Organization of the Project

Chapter 1 introduces the project of creating a month long curriculum on literature analysis, specifically identifying theme, in the middle school classroom using the theory of multiliteracies. The project is meant to teach students how to identify theme in simple and complex texts, and understand the importance of identifying theme in writing. The chapter includes the subtopics of Significance of the Problem, Purpose of the Study,
Methodology, Limitations of the study, Definitions of Terms, and Background of the Researcher.

Chapter 2 reviews literature concerning the need for this curriculum, beginning with the status of education in America from the early 1980s. The chapter then moves through from the history of the need to where our country has come since discovering the need. Ending with the investigation of the pedagogy and theology of education in Finland to evaluate the options to improve education in America.

Chapter 3 presents the research completed in investigating current adopted textbooks and how they present the literary analysis skill of identifying theme to students. It goes over the results of students using these textbooks on local and international tests. It defines the textbooks analyzed for this project, evaluating how these textbooks teach the concept of theme in literary analysis, and where there are holes in the textbooks that need to be addressed to better suit student needs in learning.

Chapter 4 discusses the findings and implications of the unit presented. It gives ideas for further investigation on the topics looked into and some possible problems that could arise when using this unit in the classroom setting. The chapter concludes with recommendations for further research and for teacher action.

The appendix contains the handbook for teachers. Beginning with a welcoming letter to teachers and users guide for the curriculum, it outlines the curriculum with timelines of how to present the information to the class, descriptions of each activity the class will engage in, and follow up work to be used as homework or reinforcement for slower learners.
Background of the Researcher

I came across the topic for this project through many facets in my life. School never came easy to me, and reading and writing was where I struggled the most. Although never professionally diagnosed, I have a learning disability that prevents me from being able to learn anything that is taught in only one way, using only one sense. I completed my elementary through high school education in independent study where I was able to work at my own pace and use different methods of learning other than only reading a textbook. Through intrinsic motivation and a supportive family, despite it being difficult, I fostered a love for learning and teaching others. At 17, I entered college on my way to becoming a teacher. During my credentialing program, I learned about brain development, learning styles, and special learners. It was at this point that I realized there were other learners out there like me and that not all students were given the freedom I was to learn in a way that was possible for this type of brain. I knew that if I was going to do something meaningful with my life, it would be through being an educator that understood those that learn differently and help them to excel as I had.

After getting my teaching credential, I went to work for an independent study public charter school and volunteered in a middle school English classroom at a classroom based public charter. I observed many things while working with these middle school students. First, that intrinsic motivation is rare in the classroom. Second, if students do not learn the traditional way, they fall behind in the classroom and give up. Teachers do not have enough time to tailor lessons to fit every student’s, need so the lessons that are tougher to grasp leave half the class in the dark.
One of these hard to comprehend topics is identifying theme in literature. I watched the teacher present the lesson, give memory clues and guidelines to follow when finding a theme, and ask students questions to check understanding. At the end of the seemingly successful lesson, a quiz was passed out and the results showed that several students were unable to identify theme on their own. Throughout the next week, I worked with several of these struggling students in a small group to reinforce the lesson and give them some targeted attention. Throughout our time together they would answer my questions correctly, but a few weeks later when asked to identify a theme in their own reading, again they were unable. They just were not getting it!

Now teaching my own 7th-8th grade English class, I have come across the same issue. Students appear to grasp the concept of identifying theme when using simple texts, but when asked to identify the theme in their daily reading, they make all the mistakes they made before the lesson.

This frustration sparked an interest in learning about how other countries teach literature that currently excel in education. From this point, I discovered the success of Finland and was awestruck by the difference in their education system and the results they are getting when compared nationally.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Background of the Problem

Although the idea that the American educational system is not functioning as best it should has been talked about as far back as 1983 with the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (United States, 1983). It was in 2000 when the idea was backed up by international data. It was at this time that the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) published the results of the first international test in reading, math, and science. This test was given to fifteen-year-old students in randomly selected schools of the 43 participating countries (OECD, 2015). America ranked fifteenth in reading literacy while the previously unremarkable country of Finland ranked first (OECD, 2015). The shock of this news was worldwide, including with the Finnish, who although they had recently restructured their education system, did not know it was so successful (Sahlberg, 2011b).

With interest growing in helping our students catch up to the rest of the world in education, the United States implemented new policies, such as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), to work on getting all of our students at a reading literate level.

Through NCLB, President George W. Bush said that all children would be testing at proficient or higher than their grade level of reading by the year 2014 (No Child Left Behind - Overview, 2014). Under this new policy, every state was required to develop grade level standards to measure student progress by. They pushed for more testing, accountability for schools, and yearly goals for improvement (Nichols & Berliner, 2007). The Federal government rewarded those that met these goals, mostly high-income
schools, while those who struggled to reach their goals were than tighter regulations and more requirements to meet the next year in hopes to prevent this from happening again (No Child Left Behind - Overview, 2014). The lower achieving schools had to cut extra programs and spend more time and money on reading and math (Neill, 2003). They even went as far as giving teachers scripted instruction guides so that every child would receive the same instruction and in theory learn the same information (No Child Left Behind - Overview, 2014). The easiest scapegoat for this issue was that teachers were not relaying the information to the students correctly, so if they read their lines from scrip this would eliminate the chances of flawed teachers preventing students from receiving all the needed information.

In order to measure the yearly growth of students, tests were developed in each state. The major textbook publishers in America developed many of these tests and their textbooks focused on teaching students how to take the tests. Owing to the fact that schools were greatly penalized for not performing on tests well, classroom education changed from a teacher planned creative learning environment, to a testing preparation course (Jennings & Rentner, 2006). This benefited schools on a local scale, in 2003 only 32% of 8th graders in California scored at or above average, while in 2009, 48% of 8th graders in California achieved average or above (California Department of Education, 2013). With confidence from local success, America anticipated their results from the next international assessment.

PISA continued its cycle of focusing on a different subject; math, science, or reading, every three years, until it cycled back to a reading focus in 2009. When the
results for this test came in, America found their efforts were not affecting student learning (The White House, 2010). While Finland remained at the top of the list, now joined by Korea, the United States remained at the OECD average score with rank fourteenth (OECD, 2010). Despite efforts to give all students a broad and complete education, they were still unable to excel in an assessment that did not correlate to their classroom curriculum.

To make matters worse, in the area of interpreting text, (where this project is to be focused), students from the United States dropped from rank 15 to 17 and remained within five points of the OECD average (OECD, 2010). Due to the results, it is clear that the United States, again, is in need of a revamp in their education system. Over the next few years, new policies were written and have been implemented in schools. Instead of just having statewide standards, the country developed Common Core standards to ensure that students all over the country are receiving the same education and reaching the same grade level goals (Hirsh, 2013). These new standards state that they want to teach students to think critically and build on prior knowledge to learn new concepts (California Department of Education, 2015). Many believe there is great potential for these standards to increase student understanding, but without knowing how to implement multiliterate curriculum to achieve these standards schools will fall into the same rut (Hirsh, 2013). This project will be a resource to teachers, giving them understanding and technique in teaching literary analysis to their students.
Strategies Used to Improve

When looking at Finland, we see many obvious differences from America. Finnish have an almost all homogeneous population with only three possible first languages. The total population is not even double the size of Los Angeles. Finland is also a welfare nation and education is completely free to residents including books and food while at school, and all of their teachers have master’s degrees in their field of instruction before they are put in a classroom (Sahlberg, 2011b). Although these differences make it impossible for the United States to compare socially to Finland, evaluating aspects of their educational policies and procedures gives the US hope for improvement. Some areas that can be examined are the professional development of the teachers, the strategies used in the classroom, and the steps taken to improve learning for students that are behind or learn differently.

Professional Development

The view of the teaching profession is one of admiration and value in Finland (ÖZTÜRK, 2013). They are held at a level equal to lawyers and doctors (Compton & Wagner, 2013). The decision to get into the teaching profession is made early in a student's education and they must work hard to get there, staying at the top of their class throughout their education as well as getting involved in extracurricular and leadership activities (Sahlberg, 2011b). The way that the Finnish school system is set up; students complete their general education at age 16 and are then given the choice to go to vocational school or Upper Secondary school. This level of education is equivalent to American high school, but students focus on the profession they wish to be in after
graduation (Finnish National Board of Education, 2012). There are many vocational
schools for all sorts of technical jobs. The upper secondary schools are much like
traditional high schools where student's complete classroom and book work in all areas of
education. The courses are set up in block schedules and the students have the freedom
to choose their classes. Although the upper secondary education is meant to take a
student three years to complete, they can chose to complete it in two to four years
depending on their motivation and schedule choices (Compton & Wagner, 2013). The
population understands that all people are different and have different goals in life. It is
not looked down upon to go to vocational school, and about 50% of the population
chooses this route (Sahlberg, 2011b). In addition, once a student decides if they would
like to go the vocational route or to upper secondary school, they are not locked into this
decision and can transition to another school at any time or take courses at both if their
schedule permits it (Finnish National Board of Education, 2012).

To get into the teacher preparation program, the first step is to obtain a certificate
of graduation from an upper secondary school. On graduation from upper secondary
education, students take the only national test Finland has, the matriculation examination
(Finnish National Board of Education, 2012). This test determines if and where they will
continue their education. All students are assessed in their mother tongue and choose
three or more additional subjects in determined by their prospective next step in
education (Finnish National Board of Education, 2012). In view of the fact that students
are able to chose the classes they take during their upper secondary education and the
Finnish understand that not all subjects are applicable to all career paths, students are not required to take assessments in all subjects.

Because of the competitive nature of the teaching profession, it is only the brightest students with the highest test scores and most diverse experiences and learning that are accepted to the teacher training programs (Sahlberg, 2011b). Approximately one in ten students get into the program each year, owing to the competitive acceptance rate; the retention rate is over 90% (Finnish National Board of Education, 2012). All teachers must complete a bachelor's degree, master's degree, and pedagogical training.

Throughout these years of education, they are taught to create lessons based on the national standards, implement these lessons into classrooms, and collaborate with other student teachers, principles, and master teachers on how to differentiate instruction for different learners (ÖZTÜRK, 2013). This training focuses heavily on learning to formatively assess students and create lessons based on their students' learning (Darling-Hammond & McCloskey, 2015). Unlike in America, Finland puts a huge emphasis on collaboration within the teacher training program (Compton & Wagner, 2013). Students meet with a team of student teachers, experienced teachers, and principles to discuss and plan lessons before presented to the classroom. The team then sits and observes the lesson being taught and follows the lesson with a debriefing on what they feel went well and what could be done better next time. Teacher training is seen more as a group effort to improve student learning than as a competition to be the best teacher (Compton & Wagner, 2013).
Once in the classroom, teachers are still not expected to go it alone. Teachers are assigned between 16 and 24 hours of teaching in the classroom (Finnish National Board of Education, 2013) and many of those hours there are two teachers assigned to one classroom (Walker, 2013). Teachers are assigned to assist in other grade levels to encourage flow throughout a child's education and with special needs teachers to ensure that all students are getting the assistance they need in the classroom (Walker, 2013). As a result of the few classroom hours teachers hold, they have time to work with colleagues to develop lessons and tutor students that are not keeping up with the pace of class (OECD, 2011).

Teachers are also given the opportunity for at least three days of professional development a year (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014). These in-service days are a part of the salary agreement and are therefore treated as a privilege rather than an extra demand on teachers. The teaching profession is viewed as a profession that enables constant learning and growing (Sahlberg, 2011a). Although three days of professional development are required and funded by the government, most teachers report that they spend closer to seven days a year in professional development (OECD, 2011). Teachers are encouraged to do research and continue education even after their required degrees and pedagogical studies are complete (Finnish National Board of Education, 2012).

**Instruction in the classroom**

There are two overarching strategies, or approaches to teaching/learning, used in Finland that can be given credit for much of their educational success. The dominate pedagogies practiced are Multiliteracies and Multiple Intelligences. Using these
strategies in the classroom, Finland has stayed ahead of the majority of the world. With the new Common Core Standards in America, classrooms here could have the same opportunity to improve achievement (Hirsh, 2013).

The first theory that comes up when looking at the teaching strategies used in Finnish classrooms, is called Multiliteracies. This term was created by the New London Group in 1996. Researchers noticed that the current education system was teaching children how to succeed in a pre-technology world and it was time to bring education up to speed (Cope, 2009). A group of ten academics from across the world got together to discuss the current state and future outlook in reading literacy. As a result of this meeting, Cope (2009) stated, “It was argued that the world in which we were living (the working lives, public lives and personal lives) was changing and hence required a new educational response.” The two areas where they identified the most drastic change were in linguistic and cultural diversity and the forms of text now available to the common person (The New London Group, 1996). It is important to understand that Multiliteracies does not mean to replace traditional reading and writing with books and pencils, but rather educate students on how to translate these skills into other common contexts (Olthouse, 2013). Without taking these changes into consideration education is meaningless for our students (Cope, 2009).

In the Finnish classroom students are led in text based instruction, engage in discussions on music and movies that pertain to their learning (Compton & Wagner, 2013), followed by student led activities on other surfaces to give all students the opportunity to collaborate and transfer their learning to a variety of contexts (Olthouse,
2013). For example, a class of third graders completed a project on local birds where they had to create online portfolios of their work and engage in complex computer skills including navigated databases, adding and editing their work online, and researching topics (Compton & Wagner, 2013). While the teacher guides the activity, the students aid each other in navigating the database and uploading their work. Much of the classroom time is spent with the students working independently or in small groups on tasks individually planned out and agreed upon by the student and teacher. The teacher takes a coaching position, while students learn to be active learners developing skills in analytical thinking, problem solving, and higher level thinking (Darling-Hammond & McCloskey, 2015). Feeling as though they are contributing to a bigger project and helping their peers to understand and complete the project, keeps the students motivated to learn and explore the concept being taught (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). Students learn literacy more through experiencing it (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000), than through direct instruction and from the international test scores (OECD, 2015) we can see that this pays off.

Another strategy seen in the classrooms in Finland is the theory of Multiple Intelligences, or MI. Howard Gardener developed this theory in the late 70's and early 80's. He argues that, although schools only focus on and assess literacy and arithmetic, there are eight types of intelligence and every person possesses different amounts of each one (Gardner, 2006). The eight intelligences are linguistic, logical-mathematical, special, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, naturalistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Everyone
possesses some of each intelligence, but no two people have the same amounts of each (Davis, Christodoulou, Seider, & Gardner, 2011).

It has been widely advertised that males are better at mathematics and females are better at linguistics. In light of this assumption, a study was done in Finland (Tirri & Nokelainen, 2008) to evaluate whether males were dominant in mathematical intelligence and females in linguistic intelligence. When testing 5th and 6th grade male and female students with a multiple intelligence assessment, they found that mathematical and linguistic, as well as the other 6 intelligences, were evenly spread through the population and that no intelligence was gender bias (Tirri & Nokelainen, 2008). This proved that all students can learn all subjects, it is merely stereo types and gender inequalities that hold students back from understanding excelling subjects and it is vital that instruction be given in a way to combat these problems and give students a diverse and student led education (Gardner, 2006).

The intelligence's Garner discusses are required to meet specific qualifications and must be differentiated from skills and learning styles (Davis, Christodoulou, Seider, & Gardner, 2011). These requirements consist of, being present in all human brains that are not compromised in some way along with having the ability to be magnified in prodigies, they must have the ability to be developed by anyone, profitable to survival even at a primal level, testable, and used to process information (Gardner, 2006). Knowing the requirements for being identified as an intelligence, it can then be distinguished from a skill or a learning style.
Unlike an intelligence that is born into a person, a skill is something dependant on outside sources, culture, and availability. It takes a combination of multiple intelligences to excel at a skill and throughout thorough training in a skill multiple intelligences will be used (Davis, Christodoulou, Seider, & Gardner, 2011). It can take a lifetime to perfect a skill and one may not be born knowing how to use it.

Even more often confused with intelligences, are learning styles. Although both are valuable to understand when trying to communicate something to an individual, learning styles are different in the fact that they span across all content (Davis, Christodoulou, Seider, & Gardner, 2011). A learning style may even be used to determine how a person will excel in an intelligence (Davis, Christodoulou, Seider, & Gardner, 2011).

Gardner argues that it is less important to learn the details of topics while in lower elementary, but that instruction should be focused on how to think and learn so that when put into other contexts, students can use their knowledge to understand the details (Education, 2009). This concept is seen clearly through the non-prescriptive national standards in Finland, focusing on broad ideas of how to learn and how to become a good citizen rather than what specific operations a student should know (Ministry of Education, 2004). In Finland, classrooms demonstrate the understanding that students have different intelligences through differentiating instruction and activities to cater to all types of intelligence and giving students the power over how they will complete a task (OECD, 2011).
**Intervention**

Finland also stands out in the way they handle intervention in and out of the classroom. The format of and quality of intervention offered in Finland has a lot to do with their view on school and learners (Finnish National Board of Education, 2012). They believe that intervention is needed for all students that, in the traditional classroom, will not achieve to their greatest potential (OECD, 2011). It may be needed for students that are falling behind the speed of the class, or for those that are being held back by staying at the speed of the class. Teachers take the responsibility to differentiate their lessons to help these students continue learning (Finnish National Board of Education, 2013). One major difference in Finland's intervention plans is that there is no negative connotation attached to the term intervention. Almost 50% of students will have some type of support or assistance in their education (Huizenga, 2013).

If possible, all Finnish students complete their schooling in the traditional public classroom (Finnish National Board of Education, 2012). The administration and teachers work to keep as many kids in the mainstream classes as possible while providing the extra support that they will need to keep pace with the traditional classes (Huizenga, 2013). There are multiple levels of support that a student will be given before being sent to a special education class or school. These levels include small group or individual tutoring with their teacher, being assigned a classroom helper, and last working with a special education teacher in the mainstream classroom (Grubb, 2007). It is not until all of these resources have been exhausted that a student will be sent to a special education classroom. Only about 1.8% of students attend special education schools (Grubb, 2007).
The classroom teachers provide the first level of intervention. It is the teacher's job to identify students in need of intervention (Finnish National Board of Education, 2013). Finland does not have national assessments, and therefore, there are no test results to tell teachers which students are not keeping up with the class (Grubb, 2007). The teachers identify the students and work with other support staff to create modifications and support for the students in need (Huizenga, 2013). As a benefit of teachers being required to be in the classroom less than in American schools, they are given time to meet with support staff and discuss particular student needs in their classroom, meet with parents and students to create learning plans and goals, and provide individual tutoring when necessary (OECD, 2011). Teachers understand that it is their responsibility to ensure that all students receive the support they need to achieve their greatest potential and they do all they can to keep struggling students in the main stream classroom and up to speed with the rest of their class (Huizenga, 2013). Within the teacher preparation program, teachers are educated on how to help with special needs students as well as their mainstream classroom (Grubb, 2007). This ensures that all teachers are equipped and educated to help their students succeed.

If the student is not supported enough with the teacher tutoring, the student is assigned a classroom helper. These helpers are not fully credentialed teachers, but individuals that have completed secondary school and one year of training specific to working with students that are behind (Grubb, 2007). They work with the student and teacher to give assistance in the classroom that, if performed by the teacher, would hinder the class as a whole.
The last effort when the student fails to keep up in the mainstream class, is to involve a special education teacher. These teachers are fully credentialed and trained in working with students with special needs (Huizenga, 2013). The students remain in the mainstream class at this point, but are given modifications and support to assist their specific needs (Grubb, 2007). Supplying these students with fully credentialed and specially trained teachers shows the value Finland places on giving the greatest chance of success to all students.

The other side of intervention is assisting students that are being held back in the mainstream classroom. These students, if kept at the pace of the class, will never reach their full potential and therefore need extra assistance as well. Keeping with their equity policy in education, Finland keeps these students in the mainstream class as well (Finnish National Board of Education, 2012). It was not until the 1980's that Finland started to recognize that these students are in need of individualized curriculum as well (Tirri & Kuusisto, How Finland Serves Gifted and Talented Pupils, 2013). Due to the freedom to individualize curriculum in the classroom, the teacher now has the ability encourage student led activities and give these students extra challenges to keep them motivated to learn (Olthouse, 2013). Even more recently, optional extracurricular activities have been created for these students to enhance learning even further. Colleges hold evening and weekend classes and invite students to attend to expand their learning and skills in a specific subject of their interest (Tirri & Kuusisto, How Finland Serves Gifted and Talented Pupils, 2013).
American education policy makers can learn a lot from this small countries' practices. Although the population and culture are drastically different from that of America, many lessons could be taken from Finland on teacher preparation, educational pedagogies, and intervention used to ensure all students are given the same chances at success (Sahlberg, 2011a). The reform in Finland took decades to implement and they are still changing and adapting their system to the current age (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014). As America transitions into the Common Core age, schools and teachers are given a fresh opportunity to develop and implement instruction for their students (Hirsh, 2013). Unfortunately, America is implementing change backwards, requiring new methods of instruction with little teacher training (Neill, 2003) while Finland has focused on educating teachers in order to implement new teaching strategies (Sahlberg, 2011a). This project is meant to aid teachers in learning new teaching strategies and techniques, so that even with little professional development time, teachers have the ability to give the best education to their students.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The Finnish Education system has shown time and time again that their teaching practices and pedagogies are creating students with the capability to learn information in the classroom and translate it to useful contexts (OECD, 2011). Teachers are given ample amounts of professional development and authority in their classroom to create a learning environment that promotes student learning and understanding (Finnish National Board of Education, 2013). Educators have an understanding of the importance of teaching a multiliterate curriculum (Cope, 2009) to a multiple intelligent (Gardner, 2006) population (Compton & Wagner, 2013). America has not achieved this level of trust in their teachers, but is transitioning to an understanding based classroom environment through the implementation of the Common Core standards (California Department of Education, 2015). In order to create a curriculum that assists teachers in bringing the successful Finnish practices of multiliteracies and multiple intelligences to the American classroom, it is important to know how students are currently being taught and where the holes are in the current curriculum. This chapter evaluates the current curriculums used in traditional public school classrooms to teach literature analysis. The curriculum chosen are mostly California versions, but these same publishers make textbooks aligned to both national and individual state standards. This project is aligned to the California Common Core standards. There are minor differences between these and the National Common Core Standards.
Research Design

Setting of the project

The purpose of the study is to identify the qualities in current middle grades curriculum in the area of literary analysis, create supplemental lessons that fill these holes as well as target students that may not learn in the traditional way. The lessons will give students a firm foundation in understanding all literary tools, teach students how to identify themes in literature, and how to write their own stories based on a theme.

In the set of state standards, the English-Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools, used in California from years 1997-2014 students as young as third grade were required to “Determine the underlying theme or author’s message in fiction and nonfiction text” (California Department of Education, 1998, p. 17). In the new Common Core standards, it is not until students reach fourth grade that they are expected to, "Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text" (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2010, p. 12). With the research on brain development and learning practices, it was determined that students need to thoroughly understand a few topics that are taught each instead of being introduced to many topics but only shallowly understanding them (California Department of Education, 2015).

Regardless of whether understanding theme is taught in second grade or fourth, by the time the student enters middle school, they should have a solid knowledge of what theme is and how to identify it in a text. Unfortunately, as seen in test results, Californian student are still struggling with interpreting texts when they are in middle school.
Access to Textbooks

The textbooks evaluated are those of publishers that are the board-adopted text for most Northern California districts and beyond. When researching the exact books that were used in the districts surrounding Sacramento it was found that, although using the typical publishers, most school districts were using the 2003 editions of these texts. The site at which access to the textbooks was given does not keep text older than 2009 and therefore the textbooks evaluated are 2009 or newer versions of the district adopted textbooks.

Three textbooks were evaluated, two that followed the old California standards and one following the new California Common Core Standards. Following the old standards was McDougal Littell Literature (2009) and Holt Literature (2010). In accordance with the new California Common Core State Standards, the textbook evaluated was Prentice Hall Literature (2012).

Analysis of the Data

Findings of Textbook Evaluations

In the evaluations of the textbooks, many of the same techniques were found in their lessons on identifying theme in a story. Each textbook devoted one unit to identifying theme; starting the section out with a nice description of what theme is and different ways of identifying the theme of the text such as the wording of the title, change in the characters, mood of the writing, etc. They went on to explain that there are themes unique to a writer and there are universal themes that span time and culture, finishing their description of theme with the mention of central ideas in nonfiction text.
On the completion of the description of theme and how to find it in a text, each textbook gave a sample story with questions throughout it prompting the student to find the theme of the text using the different ways of identification. In the Common Core text, the only difference was that the story had different colors highlighting the identification of theme, there were multiple chapters used to define theme, and there was one higher level-thinking question.

In the remainder of the chapter on theme, there were many stories followed by comprehension questions. In most of the stories there was a question asking the students how a specific instance showed the theme of the story or what the mood said about the author’s theme. The questions varied, but were all cloze-answers, asking for specific information and leaving little room for individual interpretation of the theme. The common core textbook included a "Performance Task" at the end of the first unit where students were challenged to choose a theme from one of the passages they had read, write a story of their own based on the theme, and use specific language and structure to emphasize their theme.

In the Common Core textbook there were two additional chapters reinforcing the concept of theme and connecting it to point of view and structure of the text. These units followed the same format as the first one, describing the literary analysis skills, giving an example passage thoroughly highlighted with explanations, and then continuing on as the first one, with multiple stories all containing a cloze question on identifying theme.
Table 3

*Evaluation of Lessons Theme in Current Textbooks*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Units on Theme</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of stories with questions on theme each unit</td>
<td><em>Multiple choice</em></td>
<td><em>Multiple choice</em></td>
<td><em>Multiple choice</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of questions</td>
<td><em>Explain a Theme based on specific example from the story</em></td>
<td><em>Explain a Theme based on specific example from the story</em></td>
<td><em>Explain a Theme based on specific example from the story</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Questions promoting higher thinking</td>
<td><em>Multiple questions throughout the chapter ask the student to think about a concept as they read</em></td>
<td>Some in the teacher’s manual for the teacher to ask the students, none in the student textbook</td>
<td>3 - connecting theme to tone, connecting theme to point of view, writing a story with a predetermined theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions on theme outside of theme units</td>
<td>2-3 per unit</td>
<td>2-5 per unit</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connects Theme to Writing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unguided questions on theme</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. This table displays the textbooks …..The McDougal literature was from 2009 and was the California edition, as was the Holt 2009 literature. The 2012 Prentice Hall literature was the Common Core State Standards edition.

Although the three textbooks examined all had at least one unit on identifying theme, their methods in teaching students to identify theme did not go beyond asking specific questions about a story that could be used to determine the theme. Questions that
follow the lines of, "What does the relationship of these two characters say tell you about how the author feels about trust". Although not relying on all multiple choice questions to assess students understanding of theme, they do not require the students to think critically about the story and come to their own conclusions of what might tell the authors views in the story.

Table 4

*Usage of Multiple Intelligences in Textbooks*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musical</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Logical-Mathematical</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linguistic</strong></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Writing a story based on a theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>graphs</td>
<td>graphs - Filling their own graph</td>
<td>Finding evidence in a story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spatial</strong></td>
<td>Boxing words or phrases</td>
<td>Highlighting</td>
<td>Color Coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graphs</td>
<td>Create a movie cover to emphasize a theme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Body-Kinesthetic</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intrapersonal</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The current textbooks are written for students dominate in the Linguistic and Spatial intelligences. Students that are weak in these intelligences will struggle to understand the concepts and remember them in the future. If the goal is to give all students an equal chance at understanding all concepts, they need to be presented in multiple intelligences. Only the oldest edition surveyed contained an activity that
incorporated a third intelligence, and if completed as a group activity, could also involve a fourth, interpersonal intelligence. The newer editions, although have more instances in which they teach the concept of theme and ask the students to use higher level thinking to communicate theme in their writing, only present the concept in the linguistic and spatial intelligences.

**Description of the Project**

This project is meant to fill the gaps in the instruction of literary analysis in literature. In view of the fact that the international testing results show that American students are unable to translate a lesson with cloze response questions into practical use, instruction on important literary analysis elements needs to transition students from the cloze responses to open ended interpretation of the text. By the end of this unit, students will be able to read any text and identify the authors point in writing the text without being told exactly where to look and what key to use, fulfilling the Common Core standard for seventh grade, "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" (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2010).

Another important aspect to this curriculum literary analysis is the idea that very few students learn by reading something and answering questions. Students need to understand what theme is beyond a written explanation they can recite. In order for all students to really grasp the meaning of theme, it needs to be presented to students of multiple intelligences can understand the meaning and how to use it. A very small population of students learns best through reading a definition and answering questions
on it, many students need visuals or outside connections to understand the meaning of an abstract word. These students will be considered in this curriculum so that all students are given the same opportunity for learning.

Once the students have a firm multi-intelligence understanding of what theme is, the curriculum will give students experience identifying the theme of multiple texts. The unit will conclude with students demonstrating their understanding of theme by writing their own stories to convey a theme. Using the multiliteracies approach students will work together building a book centered on a common theme. This will give students the experience working as a team, collaborating on a common topic and theme, writing together, editing each other’s work, and publishing their work.
Chapter 4
DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussions

While writing this curriculum it is important to consider why the current curriculum is the way it is. Over the years, America's theology of quality education and how to assess it has swung on a pendulum. At times teachers are given the freedom to create their own resources, teach to the student's needs in their classroom, and use assessments to drive their instruction. At other times, teachers were given a strict guideline on how they were supposed to teach, what curriculum they could use, what words they could say, and instruction was given in order to excel on assessments. Although the current system is transitioning from scripted textbooks and fact based assessments to a more critical thinking based goal, because the system was so regulated for so long, it seems as though the country still does not trust teachers to build their own lessons and instruction practices. The new textbooks offer students a chance to think critically and express themselves in creative writing, but they still give very prescribed and routine lessons.

Finland gives hope to a less restricted and trust based education system. They too had a very restricted and regulated education system until the 1970s when they began their first education reform (Compton & Wagner, 2013). They placed value on teachers and began giving them more freedom and authority to make decisions for their classroom. They took the emphasis off regulated testing and on to teaching for understanding. A paradigm shift of this size does not happen quickly, they did not give
teachers full reign with no training on what to do with it. Finland built up confident and qualified teachers to lead their classrooms before giving them the freedom to do so. They instilled the belief that learning to understand is far more important than learning to pass tests (Sahlberg, 2011a).

It seems as though America is working on making this change as well. The new Common Core standards are focused on gaining deeper understanding of concepts rather than learning the correct answer for an assessment (California Department of Education, 2015). They are transitioning from telling the teacher what the students need to know, to telling the teacher how the students should be able to do (Hirsh, 2013).

Although the standards have great potential for raising a generation of students that are able to think more in depth about topics and form educated opinions, the country has yet to give teachers the confidence and training to communicate these lessons to their students. Unlike Finnish teachers that complete a university degree, a masters degree, and student teaching accompanied by mentoring (ÖZTÜRK, 2013), American teachers are expected to reach the same outcome with only a degree and eighteen weeks of hands on practice. They are placed in a classroom on their own and handed a textbook they have never seen, expected know the material and teaching strategies with sometimes as little as a few days prep before school starts.

Finland also gives teachers time to work outside the classroom. This provides them time to focus on the students that are not grasping concepts at the same time as the bulk of the class through tutoring, collaborating with teachers and specialists to gain new teaching strategies, and engaging in research on new techniques and practices to help
those students (Finnish National Board of Education, 2013). When teachers in American schools notice that they have students falling behind, they do not have the time or expertise to add or adjust lessons so that these students can grasp the concepts. American teachers should be provided with resources that will assist them in the endeavor of being required to work long hours and keep all students moving at the same pace. Curriculum should not be focused on telling the teacher what to say to the class to teach a lesson, it should be focused on offering new techniques to reach the students that do not learn in the traditional way.

Curriculum based on teaching through multiple intelligences will give teachers a resource to implement when the traditional instruction does not work. It is too costly and time consuming to retrain teachers and restructure the school day to give teachers time to collaborate and learn new techniques; therefore giving them resources to supplement their traditional lessons will help teachers to smoothly transition into a new way of teaching.

**Limitations**

As seen through the discussions above, there is much room for improvement in the American education system. Writing curriculum to help and fill the gaps will always have its obstacles. By focusing on multiple intelligences as the basis of this curriculum, the time needed to complete an entire lesson is extended. Giving students' time to explore their best learning environment and fully grasp the concepts of the lesson, may not easily fit into the schedule of classes in a traditional school. The teacher also has to spend extra time setting up the classroom and learning to assess learning that is presented
in multiple ways. This is an extra toll on the teacher when they are already working long hours.

The theory of multiliteracies presents two limitations, first with its emphasis on collaboration and second, the need for access to technology. Students will have to work together to complete projects within both technological and physical groups. Using this strategy could be a challenge for some teachers and class dynamics. Although American society is buzzing with the newest technology and the need for students to understand how to use it, classrooms are often one of the last places to receive access.

Another limitation of this project, as with all projects, this curriculum has not been tested to determine if it will raise student achievement. The theories this curriculum is based on have a long history of improving learning in students of all backgrounds and abilities, but when presented in a new environment with a new population the results are never certain.

Finally, when basing a curriculum off the techniques used in another country, the differences between the countries as a whole must be considered. Finland is drastically different from America in everything from cultural, linguistics, economics, and so on. Do to these differences, something that works well in Finland may not have the same effect when used in America.

**Recommendations**

**Recommendations for Further Research**

It would be beneficial to this study to continue research on student outcomes in Finland. Where are students once they have completed this thorough education?
Although there is much support for the argument that these teaching practices impact the students while in school, how do they transfer to the world after school. Are Finnish children growing into contributing individuals in their society? Are they bringing knowledge and understanding to the world beyond their country? Succeeding in education becomes irrelevant if there is no success of the individual beyond school or positive impact on the world.

Another area of study that would benefit the American education system is why teachers are less valued in American than they are in other counties. Many of the high achieving countries place a high value on education and the educator shown by their salary and level of respect by students and authorities. Are teachers thought poorly of in America as a result of limited training being required to enter the profession and therefore seen as not deserving respect and prestige? America clearly places high value on entertainment giving the highest salaries to those in the movie, music, and sports industries. Many of the individuals receiving the highest salaries will never get a college degree. Is it the priorities of the American society that devalue education and in turn teachers?

**Recommendations for Teacher Action**

This curriculum is merely one resource for instilling confidence and raising capabilities of American students. Using the theories and practices in this curriculum teachers can transform their instruction to meet the needs of all students. The state and schools will continue to regulate textbooks and school structures, but teachers have the
ability to deliver their lessons to fit their class. Using practices in multiple intelligences and multiliteracies, gives students tools to grasp concepts that they otherwise wouldn't.

Teachers are a vital part of raising an educated and capable society. It is crucial that they understand this responsibility and give their students the greatest chance of success in their classroom. Changes will happen slowly to mend the American views on education, but the greatest change can happen when teachers take the responsibility to make their classroom successful.
7TH GRADE LITERATURE ANALYSIS CURRICULUM UNIT: IDENTIFYING
THEME THROUGH MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

By Bethany McEfee
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Letter to the Teacher

Dear Instructor,

Every three years since 2000, 15 year olds from around the world participate in an international assessment developed by The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to help governments find the strength and weaknesses of their education systems and make changes where needed (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015). Throughout this time, Finland has scored at the top of the charts in reading while America has ranked 17th out of the 43 participating countries (OECD, 2015). It has become clear that America needs to make changes in their education practices and pedagogies and looking to Finland is a great place to start.

When researching how instructional practices in Finland, it was discovered that teachers are in the class much fewer hours and spend a great deal of time preparing lessons so that all students will be engaged in learning (Finnish National Board of Education, 2012). The benefit of this is undeniable when comparing their students' eighth grade national test scores with their American counterpart. Finnish students are taught in a manner that encourages knowledge retention and transfer.

Along with teachers having more time to plan lessons, there are also several prominent pedagogies that contribute to the success of Finnish students (OECD, 2011). Among these are Multiple Intelligences and Multiliteracies. Both of these pedagogies focus on using multiple approaches to teach a concept. Studies show that every student learns differently and need different platforms to display this learning in order to retain information and transfer it to other areas of life (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000).
Multiple Intelligences is the "how" something is presented to a student, while Multiliteracies is the "where" something is taught and displayed. According to Howard Gardener's Multiple Intelligences, each individual has unique combinations of these intelligences that they excel in and greatly benefit from when presented a concept in these intelligences (Davis, Christodoulou, Seider, & Gardner, 2011). Every student will naturally excel in an intelligence or two (Gardner, 2006), but with exposure and practice, they can strengthen their ability to use other intelligences (Hoerr, 2015). To become a well-rounded individual, it is important that students continue to expand and strengthen their ability in each intelligence (Hoerr, 2015). The other component to becoming a well-rounded individual in the world today is to possess multi-literate abilities. Using Multiliteracies in the classroom gives students the knowledge and skills of working in groups and using technology to display their learning. In a technology-driven world we live in, it is crucial that students understand how to use this technology to its greatest potential and to work collaboratively using it (Cope, 2009).

One area American students are falling behind in is literature analysis (OECD, 2010). Although making progress on local tests in this area (California Department of Education, 2013), when given tests not based off the classroom curriculum, students are unable to transfer their learning and scores are dropping (Neill, 2003). Teaching in a way that presents information in a way every learner can comprehend, retain, and transfer, will give students the ability to use what they learned in their classroom on assessments that are not directly tied to their textbooks and even transfer the concepts to life outside of school (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000).
Unfortunately, with all of the responsibilities a teacher has here in America, it is often impossible to find time to differentiate instruction for every student's needs and incorporate collaborative technological projects. This curriculum is meant to give you a head start on planning instruction for all learners. Through the lessons, students will be exposed to and given the opportunity to explore and use literary analysis skills in multiple intelligences and through multiliteracies. Students will have the opportunities to choose projects that fit their dominate intelligences, and explore and strengthen other intelligences.

It is a pleasure to welcome you to this curriculum. I believe you have one of the most important and underappreciated jobs, therefore my goal is to give you, the teacher, a springboard into a more complete way of teaching concepts that will benefit every student. I hope that this curriculum will excite both you and the students and ignite a passion for learning new concepts.
Users Guide

The intention of this curriculum is to give instructors a resource for building a solid foundation of literary analysis at the beginning of the school year so students can be confident reading and evaluating literature throughout the school year and beyond. Once this introductory unit is complete, students will be able to transfer the knowledge and skills learned to any literature assignment. Although specific stories and books are used in this manual, the activities and projects used to teach literary analysis skills are transferable to any book or story preferred by the teacher. The teachers and administration are free to adjust the readings to fit their school population.

The unit is fractioned into two sections, the introduction to basic literary analysis with an in-depth analysis on identifying and using themes in literature followed by a section on applying the lessons to a literature book. It is advised a class complete all of the assignments in each section of the unit to fully understand and be equipped with the skills needed to analyze literature. The assignments in the final section of the unit can be used with any grade level novel already used in the classroom.

The units are separated into concepts rather than lessons to give the instructor freedom to arrange lessons in the best way to fit their schedule and population. Each concept is built with consideration of different learners and has options of instruction in multiple intelligences. When teaching all parts of the concept, all learners should be given the same opportunity to learn. If a class is unable to complete all the activities listed, it is advised that activities from different intelligences are chosen throughout the unit.
The first concept is an introduction and exploration of the literary analysis terms plot, setting, character, and theme. Students will engage in activities encompassing many of the intelligences to build a solid understanding of the terms and their meanings. This concept can take anywhere from one class session to four class sessions depending on the time available and the previous experience of the students with these concepts.

The second concept will give the students a look at how these terms are found in literature. Students will get the opportunity to use multiple intelligences in identifying, analyzing, and defending their claims of plot, characters, and setting. This concept should take one to two class periods.

The final concept of the first part of the unit focuses solely on identifying and analyzing theme. This concept is much harder for students to grasp as it is not a tangible item like the other terms, but rather an idea. Students will engage in discussions and activities that give them a deeper understanding of what a theme is. Students will be given tools on identifying and analyzing theme to give clarity to this obscure term. This concept can take anywhere from one to four lessons.

At this point in the unit, students should be able to identify and analyze setting, plot, character, and theme in short works of literature. The class will then transition into using these skills in a full length, grade level novel. The teacher may chose to use any novel for this part of the unit. The length of this section of the unit will depend on the novel chosen by the teacher and the reading speed of the class.
**Curriculum Overview**

The American education system is now transitioning into a more uniformed way of assigning learning benchmarks. Following what many successful nations have done, these standards are meant to bring unity to the nation through holding the same requirements for grade level achievement throughout the nation. Although there is much controversy over whether these standards will improve the nation's national scores, if used correctly, they could solve many of America's educational problems. The following unit on Literature analysis is aligned to these standards to give the instructor convenient reference when applying the unit to their classroom.

The following lessons on literary analysis and theme are aligned to Common Core State Standards (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2010):

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

**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).

**RL.7.6.** Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

**RL.7.10.** By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
RI.7.2 Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.7.3 Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

W.7.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Finland is one of many countries that use national standards. However, the Finnish standards are set up differently than that of America. The Finnish standards are divided into two sections called Objectives, more procedural goals for the students, and Core Contents, or the substantive goals. Finland has a large emphasis on using their educational system to build positive contributing citizens. Many of their goals for their students are based on understanding the culture and interacting with others as well as mastering an academic skill. As a result, students build confidence and capability of functioning in the world beyond the classroom.

In this unit, you will find the Finnish National Core Curriculum aligned with the lessons. Because their standards focus on mental and social skills, many of them are addressed in each lesson instead of focusing on mastering only a couple standards each lesson.

Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education addressed in this Unit (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014):

Grades 6-9 - OBJECTIVES
The pupils' interaction skills will increase:

The pupils will

- Improve their communication capabilities and sense of situation
- Become practiced in functioning purposefully and ethically as speakers, readers, and writers, building interactive relationships in their various communication environments at school and elsewhere
- Try to maintain an atmosphere conductive to interaction; they will become accustomed to the existence of differing viewpoints and ways of interacting.

The pupils' skills in interpreting and utilizing various texts will develop:

The pupils will

- Gain practice with active and critical reading and listening; there interpretive and evaluative reading and listening skills will improve
- Become use to the process of obtaining and using information to learn use many types of sources.

The pupils' skills in producing texts and utilizing them for different purposes will develop:

The pupils will

- Develop into versatile and independent creators of texts who know how, when speaking and writing, to make use of the language they have learned
- Feeling encouraged to bring up and justify their viewpoints and to comment constructively on the ideas of others
• Learn, in their texts, to consider the situation, the medium of communication, and the recipient.

Grades 6-9 - CORE CONTENTS

Text comprehension

• Practice listening for comprehension and evaluative listening
• Building bridges between the text and the recipient; sharing reading experiences
• Examination and interpretation of literary texts as sources of experiences and developers of opinions
• Examination of the verbal, visual and auditory techniques used in texts as builders of the texts' meaning
• Summarizing text content, recognizing opinion materials and the author's intentions and techniques, analysis and assessment from the standpoint of impact, comparison of texts from different viewpoints
• Looking for and evaluating viewpoints, values, and attitudes concealed in speech, writing, and illustrations

Along with meeting the national standards and teaching students to interact positively with peers, there are also specific learning objectives for this unit. At the conclusion of this unit students should be able to read a literary text of any sort and critically analyze it. With the aid of the tools given in these lessons, students should be able to interpret text in any given format whether it is a curriculum based assessment or a national assessment.
Overall Objectives for the Unit:

1. Students will be able to give definition and examples from a text of the literary analysis terms of plot, setting, character, and theme.
2. Students will be able to identify a theme in a literature selection and give evidence to why this is the theme.
3. Students will be able to explain how a change in character or setting can develop a theme.
4. Students will be able to write a story based on a predetermined theme.

The unit is divided into two sections, skill building and application of skills. In the first section of the unit, students will acquire skills and tools used to interpret literary text. This is the most important time to make sure students are exposed to the majority of intelligences. Every student needs to be given the opportunity to build a tool box for analyzing literature in the language they understand easiest.

The lesson focuses on understanding and being able to use the terms of literary analysis. This is important because if they do not know the names of what they are doing, when asked on an assessment to find theme, even if they are proficient in the process of identifying a theme, they will not know how to answer the question.

Part 1 of Unit:

Lesson 1: Identification of Literary Terms

1. Students will identify the definitions of character, setting, plot, and theme.
2. Students will make connections to literary terms from prior knowledge and shared
discussion with peers.
3. Students will deepen their understanding of literary terms through creating
visuals, poems, and acrostics for the terms.

In the second lesson, students are given tools to identify these term literature. They need
to understand the aspects of a character, the parts of plot, and what makes up a complete
setting in a story.

Lesson 2: Identifying Literary Elements - Character, Plot, Setting

1. Students will be able to describe a character using evidence from a story.
2. Students will be able to map out a plot of a story.
3. Students will be able to describe a setting using evidence from a story.

And finally, students need a full understanding on how to find a theme in a story.
This is a difficult lesson to understand because theme is an abstract idea and not usually
spelled out in the story.

Lesson 3: Identifying Literary Elements - Theme

1. Students will be able to define the meaning and purpose of theme.
2. Students will be able to identify a theme in a short story.
3. Students will be able to base a story off a predetermined theme.

Part 2 of Unit:

The second part of the unit will focus on how to use these new skills and
understanding to interpret full text. Many times students are taught complex ideas, such
as interpreting theme, through simple text but are not shown how to use the skills to
interpret grade level complex texts. In order to transfer the knowledge from skills to application, students need to be shown at the level that they will be expected to work at alone.

Lesson 4 will span over the entire time of reading the novel. Students will work cooperatively to dissect the novel and use as many intelligences to identify and track the parts of the story. It is important that students complete the entire novel before discussing theme. Once they have the whole picture, other elements of the story will be used to determine the theme.

Lesson 4: Applying Concepts to a Novel

1. Students will be able to identify setting, plot, character, and theme in a grade level novel.

2. Students will be able to cite evidence for their claims of literature analysis.

The final lesson of the unit will be applying all that has been learned to identify the theme of the novel. This lesson gives the students real life, grade level experience in identifying and interpreting the theme of the story. This is also a vital part of the learning experience to use multiple intelligences so that all students can process what has been learned and communicate their understanding.

Lesson 5: Identifying the Theme of a Novel

1. Students will be able to identify theme in a grade level novel

2. Students will be able to describe the connection between character development and plot development to interoperate the theme
Lesson 1 - Defining Literary Terms

Date Taught

Concept Topic  Defining Literary Terms

Learning Objectives

1. Students will identify the definitions of character, setting, plot, and theme.
2. Students will make connections to literary terms from prior knowledge and shared discussion with peers.
3. Students will deepen their understanding of literary terms through creating visuals, poems, and acrostics for the terms.

Standards Addressed

CCSS: RL.7.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education grades 6-9:
- Examination of verbal, visual, and auditory techniques used in the texts as builders of the texts' meaning.

Materials Used and Classroom Set up

Class will be set up with a table or desks in four corners. The corners are labeled with a different literary term.
Students will need at stations:

- Paper
- colored pens or pencils

- 3x5 cards

**Lesson Activities:**

**Review**

TEACHER: Ask students what the terms character, plot, setting, and theme mean.

STUDENTS: Answer with previous knowledge of literary terms. **Intrapersonal**

**Why:** This gives students a chance to recall previous lessons on the topic and make personal connections with the topic. In Finland, classrooms encourage students to take responsibility of their learning *(Compton & Wagner, 2013)*. Having students make connections to their learning is the first step in getting them excited to learn and making the lesson personal.

**Introduction**

TEACHER: Have students look up the dictionary definitions of the terms.

STUDENTS: Look up definitions of literary terms. Read definitions of terms. **Linguistic**

Possible definitions:

Character - "An account of the qualities or peculiarities of a person or thing" *(Character, n.d.)*.

Theme - "Theme is defined as a main idea or an underlying meaning of a literary work that may be stated directly or indirectly" *(Theme, 2014).*
Plot - "Plot is a literary term used to describe the events that make up a story or the main part of a story. These events relate to each other in a pattern or a sequence. The structure of a novel depends on the organization of events in the plot of the story" (Plot, 2015).

Setting - "Setting is an environment or surrounding in which an event or story takes place" (Setting, 2015).

Why: Linguistic learners need to understand the words in order to be able to transfer the knowledge to other areas of life (Connell, 2005).

TEACHER: Ask the students how these definitions are similar to what they thought and how they are different.

STUDENTS: Share some comparisons the definitions with their previous knowledge.

**Logical-Mathematical** Linguistic

Why: Logical-Mathematical is a difficult intelligence to capture in a literature unit, but giving them comparisons will help memory retention and transfer. (Connell, 2005)

**Instruction/ Activities**

TEACHER: Define an analogy and send students to different corners of the room.

STUDENTS: Discuss with their small group different analogies that can be used to define the term in their corner. Write their definitions and analogies on 3x5 cards. Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Intrapersonal

STUDENTS: Share an analogy written with the whole class. Interpersonal
**Why:** This activity gives students the opportunity to connect to previous learning, make connections, and understand the words better.

**TEACHER:** Show students a visual of some of the terms and describe how pictures can be used to remember meanings of words. (See examples following lesson)

**STUDENTS:** Discuss cooperatively in small groups, what pictures they could use to define literary terms. **Interpersonal, Spatial**

**Why:** Often times just giving the students the opportunity to share what they learned in their own words with peers helps them to process what the lesson was about.

**TEACHER:** Send students in groups to different corners of the room. **Body-Kinesthetic**

**Why:** Moving from spot to spot in the room will help the Body-Kinesthetic learners to remember what they studied by where they moved. This gives them a physical recall point that is not just in the mind.

**STUDENTS:** Write the literary term that is in their corner and draw pictorial clues of the meanings of the terms. (If it is a large class students can split into smaller groups within the corner group) **Spatial**

**TEACHER:** Demonstrate a jingle, acrostic poem, and a rhyming poem. Read a poem written as a definition of the one of the terms. (See examples following lesson)

**STUDENTS:** Listen to teacher's poems.

**TEACHER:** Instruct class to rotate to a new corner.

**STUDENTS:** Move to a new corner of the room.
Discuss how they could make a poem for the term at their station.  

**Interpersonal**

Creates a poem, jingle, or acrostic for the term in their corner.  **Musical**  
**Linguistic**

Share their writing with the class and why they chose the words and symbols to define that term.  **Interpersonal**

**Closure**

TEACHER: Bring students back to the middle of the room. Ask students to share with a partner the meaning of each term and how they are going to remember the meaning of each term.

STUDENTS: Return to the middle of the room and discuss with their partner the meanings and memory clues for the terms.  **Intrapersonal**

**Formative Assessment**

TEACHER: After the peer discussion, ask the students to share the meaning of one of the terms. Write their answer on a chart paper to have accessible throughout the unit. This will insure that the final word of the day is the correct answer, even if some students were still unsure of a clear definition of the term during the peer discussion time.

**Other Notes**

Lesson is written for a block schedule with longer class periods. Lesson can be extended across multiple days completing 1-2 stations a day as time permits.
Examples of pictures for definitions of terms

*Figure 1.* Examples of illustrated literature analysis words.
Examples of Poems for Terms

**Setting** is the place and time,
Answering the questions of where and the when.
Once the location is prime,
The story can begin.

The **plot** is in five
First, characters arrive
Next, something goes wrong
At the climax we find out who's strong
The action starts to settle down
There is peace all around.

You learn a lot about a **character** from watching their life.
What they say, what they think, do they cause others strife?
How a character acts or how it looks
Will help you define each character if your books.

The story's **theme**
Is the author's dream
Of how life is
Or how it may seem.
Lesson 2 - Identifying Literary Elements - Character

Date Taught

Concept Topic  Identifying Literary Elements - Character

Learning Objectives

1. Students will be able to describe a character using evidence from a story.
2. Students will be able to map out a plot of a story.
3. Students will be able to describe a setting using evidence from a story.

Standards Addressed

CCSS: RL.7.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education grades 6-9:

- Practice listening for comprehension and evaluative listening
- Building bridges between the text and the recipient; sharing reading experiences
- Examination and interpretation of literary texts as sources of experiences and developers of opinions
- Examination of the verbal, visual and auditory techniques used in texts as builders of the texts' meaning
Materials Used and Classroom Set up

Class will be set up with a table or desks in four corners. The corners are labeled with a different literary term.

Students will need at stations:

- Paper
- colored pens or pencils
- Writing utensils

Lesson Activities:

Review

TEACHER: Ask students to recall the meanings of the terms learned in the previous lesson and the queues they can recall to remember the meanings of the terms.

STUDENTS: Recall from memory the meanings of literary analysis terms and the queues they use to remember.

TEACHER: Bring students to the center of the room. Tell students that you will read the definitions and analogies on the 3x5 cards and they have to run to the corner with the term that they think the card is describing.

STUDENTS: Sit in the middle of the room and listen to instructions.

TEACHER: Read the 3x5 cards.

STUDENTS: Listen to the definitions and analogies and run to the correct corner. 

Kinesthetic
**Why:** Starting with a body-kinesthetic activity will help to get the students interacting with one another and excited to learn the new concept. When students are sitting at desks and working quietly for long periods of time, it is easy to lose focus of the students. One observation of Finnish classrooms is that students are up and moving around if not given a recess about every 45 minutes (Compton & Wagner, 2013). Adding kinesthetic activities in class will help with the fact that American schools were not structured this way.

**Introduction**

TEACHER: Tell the class that today they will learn how to use these literary tools to describe a story.

STUDENTS: Listen to teacher.

**Instruction/ Activities**

TEACHER: Give the students a written copy of a short, well-known story and have them follow along while reading the class.

STUDENTS: Follow along while the teacher reads the story. Linguistic

TEACHER: Introduce the use of STEAL to define a character.

- Speech - The words a character uses can tell you a lot about who that character is. For example, if they use highly academic language they may be well educated.
• Thoughts - What a character thinks about others may reveal personality traits of that character. If they have negative thoughts about other characters, they may be stuck up or highly critical of people's differences.

• Effects on Others - What others think about a character or how they react to the character may give you incite on their personality. If people are eager to help them when in trouble, they may be a good friend to people.

• Actions - What a character does tells you about the character. Do they play sports? They could be athletic or competitive.

• Looks - The looks of a person will give you a picture of the character when no visuals are given as well as could reveal personality traits of the character. A character with dirty clothes or messy hair might be poor.

Ask the student what pictures they could use to remember these parts of character analysis.

Why: STEAL is a concept taught to help students remember all aspects of character analysis (Hinkle, 2012). Using this method gives students a visual and an easy to remember acronym for students that process information in many different ways.

STUDENTS: Discuss and decide on a simple picture for each word in STEAL. Spatial

TEACHER: Ask the students to work in groups to identify the character traits using the STEAL method in the story.

Tell students to underline the traits they find and draw the simple picture that represents the type of evidence it is next to each one.
STUDENTS: Work in groups to underline the evidence found about the character and draw the simple picture that coordinates with the type of evidence it is. **Interpersonal Spatial**

**Why:** Because there are different ways intelligence can be portrayed in a student, it is important to give students as many tools as possible when building a foundation. Although putting information in a chart and giving students picture cues fall in the category of spatial intelligence, some students will be more prone to recall pictures while others will recall the placement in the graph to remember how analyze a character. (Connell, 2005)

In Finland, students work in small groups to give build a common understanding, cooperation skills, and support for those that are slower in understand the concept (Compton & Wagner, 2013).

TEACHER: Ask the students to go to a group-work table of their choice to complete a project in character using the skills they just learned. Explain that at each table, they have the choice to work alone or in a small group to complete the project of that table. They will start by reading the story at the table and underlining and coding the evidence they can identify.

**Why:** Giving students the ability to work alone or in a group gives students that are more intrapersonal or interpersonal feel comfortable in their learning. Although it is important for all students to learn to be cooperative learners...
and to work independently and sometimes necessary for the teacher to direct, it gives the students more control over their learning to let them decide how they will finish the project. One important aspect to the quality of classroom instruction in Finland, is that they highly encourage independence and student led activities (Grubb, 2007).

**STUDENTS:** Choose a table that has the project they would enjoy most **Body-Kinesthetic**

  Work in groups or independently to read the story. Underline and code the evidence they can identify using STEAL.

**TEACHER:** Monitor students while they complete the project.

Students participate in table options-

**Creative writing:**

- Using the evidence in the story, write a description of the character in the story. **Linguistic**

- More advanced students can create a back-story for the character using the evidence in the story. **Linguistic**

**Drawing/building:**

- Using the evidence in the story, draw or create with clay the character in the story. **Spatial Body-Kinesthetic**

- Discuss with someone at the table what evidence was used to create the character. **Interpersonal**

**Graphing:**
• Fill out a STEAL graph with the character traits in the story. **Spatial | Logical-Mathematical**

• Compare the character in the story to yourself or someone you know, may use a Venn diagram or a column chart. **Intrapersonal | Interpersonal**

**Why:** Students learn best when they are enjoying their assignment and feel comfortable working on their task. Although it is not always best to give students the choice in what task they want to complete, giving them the option gives them power over their learning and allows them to choose the intelligence they are dominate in. If necessary the teacher may choose to assign students to a group or have students complete more than one activity. Exposing students to intelligences other than their most dominate, still strengthen their intelligence in other areas (Hoerr, 2015).

**Closure:**

**TEACHER:** Bring students together. Have students form pairs with someone not in their group. Ask partners to take turns reading or evaluating their partners' project. Have partners guess some character traits by looking at the project.

**STUDENTS:** Form pairs with a peer not from their table group. **Interpersonal** Take turns looking at partners' project and guessing character traits from their story. Have the students make a list of the character traits that they can find in the project.
TEACHER: Ask students to then describe their character including evidence for their description from the story.

STUDENTS: Describe the project made and give evidence from the story for why the project was done this way. Match the character traits the evaluator found with the traits that the creator of the project say are included. Interpersonal Linguistic

Formative Assessment:

The assessment for this lesson will be done through the projects that the students have complete and the evaluations of their peers. A student that fully understands character traits will be able to recognize them in a project and be able to represent them in the project. If a student cannot give evidence for the character traits they identified in their own project, they may not fully understand. This can be used as a class discussion opportunity by asking students, "How could you portray this trait in the character so that the reader will recognize it?" Taking suggestions from other students can help ignite creativity and give examples of how to demonstrate a character trait in a project.

Other Notes

Lesson is written for a block schedule with longer class periods. Lesson can be extended across multiple days completing 1-2 stations a day as time permits.
Lesson 3: Identifying Literary Elements - Theme

Date Taught

Concept Topic  Defining Literary Terms - Theme

Learning Objectives

1. Students will be able to define the meaning and purpose of theme.
2. Students will be able to identify a theme in a short story.
3. Students will be able to base a story off a predetermined theme.

Standards Addressed

CCSS: RL.7.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education grades 6-9:

Text comprehension

- Practice listening for comprehension and evaluative listening
- Building bridges between the text and the recipient; sharing reading experiences
- Examination and interpretation of literary texts as sources of experiences and developers of opinions
- Examination of the verbal, visual and auditory techniques used in texts as builders of the texts' meaning
• Summarizing text content, recognizing opinion materials and the author's intentions and techniques, analysis and assessment from the standpoint of impact, comparison of texts from different viewpoints
• Looking for and evaluating viewpoints, values, and attitudes concealed in speech, writing, and illustrations

**Materials Used and Classroom Set up**

Class will be set up with a table or desks in three corners.

Students will need at stations:

• Paper
• colored pens or pencils
• Author's History cards

**Lesson Activities:**

**Review**

TEACHER: Ask students recall what they know about character, plot, setting, and theme from the first lesson. Looking at the chart paper from lesson one, and other projects that they have completed and have been placed around the room as clues, the students should be able to give complete descriptions of the terms.

STUDENTS: Students form pairs and recall the meanings of character, plot, setting, and theme.

TEACHER: Ask the students to share with the class some examples of these terms.
STUDENTS: Share with the class some of the connections and experiences from the previous lessons that explain the terms.

Introduction

TEACHER: Remind or have the students recall the meaning of theme in literature.

Sample definition from lesson 1: Theme - "Theme is defined as a main idea or an underlying meaning of a literary work that may be stated directly or indirectly" (Theme, 2014).

Explain to the students that a theme is what the author is trying to communicate to the reader, and therefore, is based off the author's experiences and ideas. While the reader will come from a different background and have different ideas, it is important to remember that you do not have to agree with the author's message.

Give an example of a specific perspective someone might have because of a life event. An example could be, because a clown startled a person when they were a kid, they might be afraid of clowns, where as a person that saw a clown do a silly thing that made them laugh might think when someone is sad they should meet a clown.

Ask the students, if they were to write a story about eating broccoli. How would it go?

STUDENTS: Students share ideas of their stories.

TEACHER: Discuss with the students how their own ideas on the subject form their story.
Why: Eating broccoli is an experience that almost all kids have experienced and will have formed an idea about. Some students may love broccoli and some may hate it. Their stories should reflect their view on broccoli without them even trying. Teacher may use a different example depending on their population, but the goal is for students to realize that a theme is based off the author's perspective and is not a fact to be discovered.

TEACHER: Ask the students to share with a partner, what other experiences they might have had in life that would give them a specific idea about a thing or situation that someone else might not agree with.

STUDENTS: Share in pairs about an experience they have had that has formed an idea about life.

Why: The intention here is to get the students' to make personal connections bringing the abstract term to a more personal level. When the idea can be applied to their life, it will be more relevant and memorable to the students in the future.

TEACHER: Give the students the rules of theme in a list. Spatial Logical-Mathematical

1- A theme is not a topic, it is what the author thinks about the topic.

Explain to the students that a topic is what the story is about, it can be an event or an idea. Ex. A story is about getting your homework done or being courageous.
A theme, is what the author thinks about these topics. The author believes that it is important to do your best work when completing homework. When asked to write the theme of the story, the answer would be, "It is important to do your best work when completing homework."

2- A theme is not specific to a particular story. It does not include characters or events in the story.

Pretend there is a story about Jane. She does a quick job on her homework to get it done, but when she gets her grade back it is so low that she is not allowed to go out with her friends and is grounded. The theme would not include Jane or the fact that she wanted to go out with her friends. These are both subject to that specific story.

3- A theme is a complete sentence.

The theme cannot be one word or phrase such as work hard or dedication. It must be a complete sentient, It is important to always work hard. Work hard on its own does not tell the author's perspective of the idea. They could mean working hard is a waste of time or working hard will make your dreams come true!

Why: Providing specific rules for writing a theme offers the students a guide for their independent work. They are no longer required to grasp at the unknown but rather follow a rubric for success. Students that excel in a spatial or logical intelligence can use these rules like a graph to fill in to make sure they have all the requirements (Gardner, 2006).
TEACHER: Read the students a familiar short story, such as, the three little pigs. Ask the student's to name the main ideas of the story.

STUDENTS: List the main ideas of the story. Examples would be safety, bullying, tough houses, etc.

TEACHER: Ask the students to pick one of these topics and write a sentence that tells what the author thinks about this topic.

STUDENTS: Chose one of the topics on the list and write a sentence about what the author thinks about this topic.

TEACHER: Ask a few students to share their sentences. Discuss if the sentence is a theme.

STUDENTS: Volunteer to share their sentence with the class and explain why it is a theme of the story.

TEACHER: Lead the class in a discussion about multiple themes for the same story.

Why: Although the teacher is leading the discussing, it is intended to allow the students to form connections and new ideas about finding theme. The teacher should not be giving the students the answers they want to hear, instead allow the students to come to conclusions. This will encourage memory transfer because time was allowed for students to work through the idea for themselves (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000).

Instruction/ Activities

TEACHER: Tell the class that they will now transition into some group and individual activities focused on theme. Explain all of the options for the activities and
put students in groups or let students form groups after all instructions have been given.

**FORMAT:** The stations will need at least 20 minutes, longer is preferred. The lesson can be split into multiple days to let students experience every station or students can choose which station they would like to complete based on their dominant intelligence. Teacher will give the entire class a topic, (ex. Giving a presentation, going to the zoo, buying a gift for someone) and students will use it to complete the activity at their station. For the first round, each group will have an author's history card that gives the history of the author to base their theme on (ex. They are poor/rich, lots of siblings/only child, lots of friends in school/one really close friend...), for the second round they can come up with a theme based on their own experiences. If there are more than two rotations, the teacher will decide if they have an Author's History Card or not, or the students can choose.

Stations will consist of:

1. Students will be split into at least two groups. Students have 5 minutes to determine what the author, either from their Author's History card or their own experiences, would think in the situation and create a skit to act it. The opposite group(s) will have to guess what the theme of the story is. **Body-Kinesthetic**
2- From the given a topic and students will write a story about the topic from their perspective. Another student will read their story or listen to the story read to them and will write down what they think the theme of the story is. Linguistic

3- Students will draw a comic about the topic and a partner will determine the theme from the story portrayed in the comic. Spatial

TEACHER: Split students into four groups to rotate through activities on theme. Have students travel from one corner of the room to the next. Body-Kinesthetic

STUDENTS: Students complete the station they are at, working in small groups and independently. They complete their personal assignment and then interpret the other groups or individuals at their station. Intrapersonal Interpersonal

Why: Depending on the time available the teacher can choose to use this as an opportunity to strengthen new intelligences' in students by requiring them to complete all stations or let them choose the intelligence they are most comfortable in to complete (Hoerr, 2015).

Closure

TEACHER: Bring students back together. Ask students if they can explain the theme of a classmate's project and how they came to this conclusion. Encourage someone from each of the different stations to share.
STUDENTS: Recall the projects they had the chance to interpret and share their idea of what the theme was and why they thought that was the theme.

*Intrapersonal* *Interpersonal*

**Formative Assessment**

This is a self-checking activity where students are encouraged to give a summary of a story, identify the theme of that story, and defend the theme they have written with evidence. Much of the common core is based on stating evidence for a claim (California Department of Education, 1998). If students begin doing this in their verbal summaries of the activities, it will come more naturally in their writing.

**Other Notes**
Lesson 4: Applying Concepts to a Novel

Date Taught

Concept Topic  Applying Literary Concepts to a Novel

Learning Objectives

1. Students will be able to identify setting, plot, character, and theme in a grade level novel.

2. Students will be able to cite evidence for their claims of literature analysis.

Standards Addressed

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

RL.7.6. Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

RL.7.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

W.7.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education grades 6-9:

Text comprehension

- Practice listening for comprehension and evaluative listening
• Building bridges between the text and the recipient; sharing reading experiences
• Examination and interpretation of literary texts as sources of experiences and developers of opinions
• Examination of the verbal, visual and auditory techniques used in texts as builders of the texts' meaning
• Summarizing text content, recognizing opinion materials and the author's intentions and techniques, analysis and assessment from the standpoint of impact, comparison of texts from different viewpoints
• Looking for and evaluating viewpoints, values, and attitudes concealed in speech, writing, and illustrations

**Materials Used and Classroom Set up**

Class will be set up with a table or desks on three walls. Each station will be equipped with material for one part of literary analysis, Character, Plot, and Setting.

Plot: Plot will have a large plot line on the wall. This consists of a string or tape with a horizontal line marked "Introduction", a long incline marked "Rising Action", at the top of the line is marked "Climax", followed with a declining line labeled "Falling Action", and at the bottom of the line is the label "Resolution".

Setting: The setting area of the room will have a large map. The layout of the map will depend on the novel chosen by the teacher.

Character: The character section of the room will have a large outline of the main character of the book (See Figure 3). On this character will be different areas marked out for STEAL. A large box on the top half of the head, including the eyes, will be marked
out for "Looks". A speech bubble coming from the mouth is marked "Speech". A large
thought bubble coming off the other side of the head will be labeled "Thoughts". "Effects
on Others" is marked in a large box covering the chest of the character with a heart drawn
on it. "Actions" is marked on a large box on the opposite side of the body including a
hand of the character.

Students will need at stations:

- Worksheets
- Colored pens or pencils
- Writing utensils
- Sticky-notes (Character table)

Lesson Activities:

**Review**

**TEACHER:** Review the meanings of the terms character, setting, and plot using the
chart paper and other clues from previous projects in the unit.

**STUDENTS:** Give meanings of terms character, setting, and plot. Use any examples or
recall points they use to remember meanings.

**Why:** Even though the class has been engaged in this topic for several lessons, it
is important to continue to recall the basic definitions before beginning a
new lessons that uses them. As the lessons get more complex, students
run the risk of transforming the meaning to fit a particular activity they
completed instead of the basic and clear definition they should know
(Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). To ensure that students are
prepared for the next lesson, it needs to be clear that they understand the basic meanings of the terms and how to identify them in any story.

**Introduction**

**TEACHER:** Introduce the novel that will be read in class. Introduce the assignments that will be completed each time they complete reading.

**STUDENTS:** Listen to instructions and ask questions as they arise.

**TEACHER:** Split the students into mixed level groups to work with for the novel reading. Groups can stay the same throughout the unit or be mixed up, but students should get an opportunity to complete all sections at least one time.

**FORMAT:** Throughout the reading of the novel, students will engage in three different activities and will rotate each time they are assigned new reading. Each activity will focus on a different part of literature. The classroom will be set up so that there is an area for each group.

**Plot:**

Students will have to write or draw a summary of what happened during their reading and post in on the plot line where it belongs in the story.

**Setting:**

On this map students will draw the setting of each chapter. If the novel happens in many places they can have multiple maps, if the setting is all in the same relative area, it will be tracked on the same map in different colors.
Character:

On the poster, the group will write character traits and the page number on sticky notes and post it in the box it belongs. Each reading section of the book will be done in a different color to assist in tracking character development throughout the story.

Why: The activities chosen in this unit encompass most of the intelligences. Students are given the opportunity to work in groups or alone on a project giving both the students that excel in interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences a way to excel in analyzing literature. They can chose to use graphs, verbal queues, or pectoral queues taught in the previous lessons to analyze the literature giving students with high special, logical-mathematical, or verbal intelligences an edge on the assignment. Also, each station involves students getting up and physically putting the story in order, illustrating the setting, and analyzing the main character helping the students with greater kinesthetic intelligence stay engaged and active in their learning.

Instruction/Activities

TEACHER: Give students the worksheet they will be completing for homework as they read.

STUDENTS: Look over the worksheet and ask questions.

Why: Letting the students look over the work sheet before explaining it will increase attention during explanation.
TEACHER: Walk students through each part of the worksheet. Explain the requirements of each section of the worksheet.

Instructions: Students will complete each of the rows, Setting, Plot, and Character, each week. They will draw or write a description of what happened or what they learned about each of these in the appropriate box. In the evidence box, they will record the page number and any quotes that prove why they said or drew what happened. They do not have to write and draw, they can choose which ever they prefer, but they do have to give evidence for their claim.

Why: Give the students homework of completing each section will keep them understanding all aspects of the study even though they will only post in one section when completing the classroom activities.

TEACHER: Read the first chapter of the book to the class. Have the class work in pairs to fill out their worksheet for this chapter.

STUDENTS: Listen to the story and follow along in their own books as it is being read.

TEACHER: Ask the students to, in their pairs, describe the setting of the chapter and draw a picture of it or write sentences describing it.

STUDENTS: With their partner, give a description of the setting in the chapter read to them.

TEACHER: Have the students get up and group near the setting wall.

STUDENTS: Move to the setting wall, remain with their partner.
TEACHER: Ask students to give descriptions of the setting. As the students share ideas about the setting and the evidence they have for why they believe this is the setting of the story, begin to draw the map on the setting wall. Once a good description has been given of the setting, ask the students to move so they are facing the Plot wall and find a new partner.

STUDENTS: Move to the Plot wall and chose a new partner.

TEACHER: Ask the students to work with their new partner to fill in the Plot boxes.

STUDENTS: Work with their partner to fill in the Plot, either with pictures or descriptive sentences, and give evidence for the plot they wrote.

TEACHER: Ask the students to share some ideas of what is happening in the Plot so far. Work together to come up with a descriptive picture with some sentences describing what has happened so far.

STUDENTS: Share ideas on what has happened in the story so far and how it could be draw or written about in a couple sentences.

TEACHER: Ask students where on the plot line this part of the story would go.

STUDENTS: Answer where this section of the Plot would be, post the picture and sentences on the wall under the introduction.

TEACHER: Ask the students to move to the Character wall and choose new partners to fill out the character section with.

STUDENTS: Move to the new wall and choose a new partner. Begin filling out the character section with pictures or descriptions of the main character of the story. Give evidence for how the character might look.
TEACHER: Give each student a sticky note and ask them to write one characteristic of
the main character, the quote that gave them this characteristic, and the
page number on it.

STUDENTS: Write the information on the sticky-note. Post the sticky-note on the wall
in the section of STEAL that it is.

Closure

TEACHER: Have students journal about their activities for the day. Did they make
any connections with their story or about the aspect of the story they were
analyzing that they found interesting? Teacher can choose to give
students a prompt to journal about regarding what has happened in the
story at this point, or allow them to journal about their own connections.
Journals are never graded for grammar or writing structure, but credit can
be given if they complete the journal to encourage all students to complete
the assignment. Offer the opportunity for students to share their journal
entry if they desire.

STUDENTS: Follow the prompt or complete a free-write on the connections to the text
they made during the activities of the day. Share their writing if they
desire.

Why: Grading the journal gives the students a fear of doing the assignment
"right" and may infringe on their freedom to make connections to the text.
Requiring journaling exposes all students to using interpersonal
intelligence even if it is not their greatest strength.
Formative Assessment

Although grading will not be based off the journal entries, in order to know if students are understanding the concepts, the teacher will need to read the journal entries and make sure that students are making logical entries that reflect knowledge about the activity they completed. By just looking at the papers on the wall, the teacher will only know what the students know as a group, but the journal will show what an individual knows and can communicate about the activity.

Other Notes

When time is available, do recapping activities that touch on different intelligences not easily captured in everyday activities such as having students act out the scene they read, write a jingle about a situation that brought out a character trait, go on nature walks and make comparisons to where they live and the setting of the story. Because these format will continue through the entire reading of the novel, often several weeks, mix up the activities done in the opening and closure of each lesson. If there is time, complete some of the activities above between analysis lessons to keep the students excited about the lessons and from getting board of the routine.

Students in Finland will engage in multiple activities to learn one lesson giving students of all strength the opportunity to make connections and fully understand the concepts being taught (Compton & Wagner, 2013).
Because all students learn differently, mixing up the activities will also give a variety of students an opportunity to be a leader or more dominate in the activity building confidence in all students.
**Weekly Worksheet - Applying Concepts to a Novel**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Pictures or Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Setting" /></td>
<td><strong>Setting</strong></td>
<td>Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Meaning" /></td>
<td><strong>Meaning</strong></td>
<td>Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Characters" /></td>
<td><strong>Characters</strong></td>
<td>Evidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2.** Weekly Worksheet for Analyzing a Novel
Example of Poster for Character Wall - Applying Concepts to a Novel

Figure 3. Example of STEAL Poster.

For a class of 30+ students, it would be beneficial to have the section much larger and each section of the STEAL could be on a different poster board to provide space for each class's input and clear separation between the areas.
Lesson 5: Identifying the Theme of a Novel

Date Taught

Concept Topic   Identifying the Theme of a Novel

Learning Objectives

1. Students will be able to identify theme in a grade level novel
2. Students will be able to describe the connection between character development and plot development to interoperate the theme

Standards Addressed

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

   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).

Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education grades 6-9:

OBJECTIVES

The pupils' interaction skills will increase:

The pupils will

- Improve their communication capabilities and sense of situation
• Become practiced in functioning purposefully and ethically as speakers, readers, and writers, building interactive relationships in their various communication environments at school and elsewhere

• Try to maintain an atmosphere conductive to interaction; they will become accustomed to the existence of differing viewpoints and ways of interacting.

The pupils' skills in producing texts and utilizing them for different purposes will develop

The pupils will

• Develop into versatile and independent creators of texts who know how, when speaking and writing, to make use of the language they have learned

• Feeling encouraged to bring up and justify their viewpoints and to comment constructively on the ideas of others

• Learn, in their texts, to consider the situation, the medium of communication, and the recipient.

CORE CONTENTS

Text comprehension

• Practice listening for comprehension and evaluative listening

• Building bridges between the text and the recipient; sharing reading experiences

• Examination and interpretation of literary texts as sources of experiences and developers of opinions
• Examination of the verbal, visual and auditory techniques used in texts as builders of the texts' meaning

• Summarizing text content, recognizing opinion materials and the author's intentions and techniques, analysis and assessment from the standpoint of impact, comparison of texts from different viewpoints

• Looking for and evaluating viewpoints, values, and attitudes concealed in speech, writing, and illustration.

**Materials Used and Classroom Set up**

Walls will still have plot line, character diagram, and setting map on the walls.

Students work is covering the templates showing the entire story read.

Students will need:

• Journal to write in

• Colored pens or pencils

• Writing utensils

• Video camera (if possible)

Lesson Activities:

**Review**

TEACHER: Ask students to tell the story they just read. They may look at the walls for assistance in their retelling.

STUDENTS: Retell the story from beginning to end. Students can work together to tell the story.
TEACHER:  Ask students to describe the character as they were in the beginning of the story and what changed about the character as the story went on.

STUDENTS: Students work together and use the wall diagram to describe the main character of the story.

Why: Students are asked to recall the story and character from their story to give them a fresh look at the story as a whole. Through the past few weeks where they have been reading and analyzing the parts of the story, they have not been asked to put it all together. Using the walls as guides gives students stronger in the Special intelligence a memory queue for what happened earlier in the story. Working as a team to retell the story and describe the character encourages collaboration and builds on interpersonal skills.

Introduction

TEACHER:  Ask students to recall what a theme is. They are able to use any of the tricks they learned in the first part of the unit to give the definition and examples of a theme.

STUDENTS: Use the pictures, poems, songs, and analogies to recall what a theme is and how to identify a theme in the story.

TEACHER: Tell the students that there a several key places to look in a story when looking for the main theme of the story. The first and easiest to identify is in the main character. By looking at how the main character has changed throughout the story, the reader can get a good idea of what the author was
trying to communicate to the reader. For example, in the story Lion King, Simba starts out rebellious and wanting to be independent. At the end of the story, his character knows he needs to be responsible to save his people. The change in this character shows us that the author thinks it is important to be responsible and do what is right.

TEACHER: Have students work in teams and make a list of characteristics of the main character in the novel they just finished.

STUDENTS: Make lists of the character traits of the main character from the beginning of the novel. Spatial Interpersonal

TEACHER: Have the students make a list of the character traits the character showed by the end of the book.

STUDENTS: Work together to write a list of the character traits that the character possessed at the end of the book. Spatial Interpersonal

TEACHER: How could we use these traits to write a theme about the book?

STUDENTS: Give examples of what themes can be seen when evaluating the change in the main character through the story.

TEACHER: The theme can also be discovered through looking at the events of the story and their outcome. Because of the character's actions, what happened to the character? In the story.... the character was greedy and then lost everything they had. What would the author be trying to tell the reader? Or what does the author think about being greedy?

STUDENTS: Discuss that the author probably thinks it is bad to be greedy.
TEACHER: What happened to the character in our novel? What caused these things to happen? Have the students fill in a cause and effect graph with a few major events from the book they read.

STUDENTS: Fill in a graph with a couple major events from the book and what made those events happen. Discuss what themes the author might have been writing about in the book.

Why: Students are working with a familiar but complete novel to find a theme. Often times students understand theme when it is asked in a fable or a Dr. Sues book because they are very clear and sometimes stated in the text. When asked to discover the theme in an actual text, many students are overwhelmed and forget the rules to writing a theme.

Instruction/Activities

TEACHER: Instruct the students on the creative project to conclude the novel.

Project: Create a movie cover for the novel read. On the movie cover it must include: The theme of the story with pictures, quotes, or summaries of the text that would portray this theme. Work with a group of students to create a movie trailer for your novel. Trailer can include songs, scenes, and interviews with the character. You need to communicate the theme of the movie through your trailer.

REMEMBER: You don't want to give away the end of the story!
NOTES: If a video camera is not available, movie trailers can be acted out for the class. It is beneficial for the students to experience using a video camera even if it is a very simple camera. In the best situation, students should be given time to shoot the trailer, put the video on a computer and do minor edits, and publish the video on a class or private account on a public video playing site. This gives the students a great opportunity to build their multiliterate skills for the current world.

STUDENTS: Work in small groups to create the movie cover and trailer. The team must agree on the theme and have evidence to support why they chose this theme. All students should be included in the project evenly but not all have to work on all parts.

Why: This project incorporates multiliteracies. It gives students the opportunity to use technology to give a summary of their reading and illustrate their theme. In the technologically advanced world we live in, it is important that students are given the opportunity to use technology and learn how to communicate through it (The New London Group, 1996). It also gives students dominate in a variety of intelligences an opportunity to communicate what they have learned through the novel and literary analysis units. Students are given freedom to communicate their learning in whatever way comes easiest to them.
Closure

TEACHER: Have students write a journal article on their experience making the movie cover and trailer. Ask them to reflect on what skills they learned, how they feel about literary analysis and their ability to identify theme. Students will not be graded on the content of the journal, just the fact that they did it.

STUDENTS: Write a journal of their experiences and what they learned.

Why: Having the students reflect on their experiences without awarding a grade gives the teacher a more authentic assessment of how well the students understood the project and concepts and if the projects were a success with this class. This also gives the students strong in intrapersonal intelligence a chance to communicate their learning in a way that they might not have been able to do through the group activities.

TEACHER: Finish the unit with a showing of the movie trailers. Depending on the class, students could offer reviews of the movies as if they were movie critics. If this is done, have the students focus on if the evidence backed up the theme chosen, if the plot stated was accurate to the book, and if the characters were portrayed in reflection to the book and the theme chosen to emphasize in the movie trailer and cover.

Formative Assessment

The assessment for this lesson and unit will be done through the video made. Students should be graded depending on the quality of information
put into their video. The following rubric can be used to assess student learning.
Rubric for Assessing Student videos:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literary Element/Quality of work</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting</td>
<td>The video accurately portrays the setting of the story with originality and creativity.</td>
<td>The video accurately portrays the setting of the original story but lacks creativity.</td>
<td>The video somewhat accurately portrays a setting that somewhat resembles the original story.</td>
<td>The video does not portray a setting resembling that of the original story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>The character in the video portrays qualities of the character from the original story from 4-5 of the STEAL categories.</td>
<td>The character in the video portrays qualities of the character from the original story from 2-3 of the STEAL categories.</td>
<td>The character in the video portrays qualities of the character from the original story from at least 1 of the STEAL categories.</td>
<td>The character in the video does not resemble the character from the original story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plot</td>
<td>The plot in the video gives great detail of what will happen in the story while leaving the viewer interested in watching/ reading the whole story.</td>
<td>The plot in the video gives some detail of what will happen in the story and leaves the viewer questioning what is next.</td>
<td>The plot in the video gives a brief summary of what will happen in the story but does not lead the viewer to question what is next.</td>
<td>The plot in the video does not follow the plot of the original story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>The theme of the original story is clearly emphasized in the promotion of the story through at least two of elements.</td>
<td>The theme of the original story is somewhat emphasized in the promotion of the story through at least one of elements.</td>
<td>The theme of the original story is vaguely represented in the promotion of the story.</td>
<td>There is no evidence of a theme in the video.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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