



LITERATURE FESTIVAL

Ten cooperative learning games designed to stimulate literary analysis

Dedication:

To my mother and father – my first, and best, teachers

Author:

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Interact

10200 Jefferson Boulevard
Culver City, CA 90232-0802

ISBN 978-1-57336-082-1

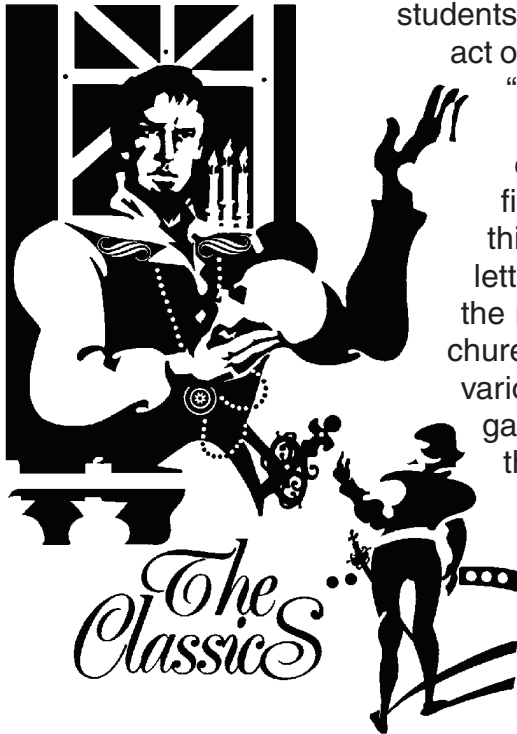
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OVERVIEW - 1

*Here is a way to get your students **involved** in classics or other pieces of literature they are studying.*

LITERATURE FESTIVAL is a collection of 10 cooperative learning games that organize students in various group configurations for the purpose of learning the different aspects of literary analysis. All, while fun to do, require of students careful written analysis of some literary work they have studied for a particular literature class. From the teacher's point of view, all the games have similar set up and play directions which makes conducting any of the games a relatively simple matter. From the student's point of view, each game presents a new challenge in a new format and, hence, offers stimulation to do well on whatever task the student is asked to do.



The first of the 10 games is called PLAYMAKER. In this game students in groups of five or six help one another write the first act of a humorous three-act play after they have analyzed the "lessons" the characters have learned. The second game is titled HELP WANTED. Students in pairs analyze the employment needs chosen characters might have; then find a character in another work who could logically hire this person. This game involves writing want ads as well as letters of application. The third game is called MALL. Utilizing the new American "meeting place," students develop a brochure promoting the reading of books by using elements from various literary works to tout a variety of products. The fourth game is titled UNTOLD STORY. Again working in groups, then in pairs, students act as investigative reporters who are given the assignment to find out and write an "untold" story about one of the characters they have met in their class reading. The fifth game is called HIT! This game capitalizes on students' familiarity with popular music. Organized into teams of five or six, students develop a record jacket cover for a "hit" musical album that a literary character they have studied could have logically written. The cover is divided into various parts with each part a separate task which, in turn, is assigned to a different team member.

The sixth game, FESTIVAL TOURS, has students design various package vacations to the settings of several works studied in class. These tours are run by characters from other literary works. This juxtaposition of character and settings acts as an imagination stretching exercise as well as producing good basic literary analysis. The seventh game is titled THE GREATEST. In this game students pick a character whom they think is the "greatest" and trade character



OVERVIEW - 2

Students enjoy using detective skills.



trait cards to accumulate as many as possible on the character they have chosen. Then, helping one another to understand how a good expository essay is organized, they develop an essay plan. Next, they separate and individually write the essay. Finally, they rejoin their groups for a read-around session to determine the group's best essay. The eighth game is called SOREHEAD. In this fanciful game students examine tone and theme in narrative literature by imagining how characters might complete a questionnaire on attitudes and personality. Each student is given two characters to analyze. Then, the group reforms to compile the questionnaire results and to complete a research report on the results. In the ninth game, titled MISSING PERSON, students are invited to investigate the disappearance of a character from a piece of literature they have read. Given clues, the students analyze the character's previous behavior for additional insight as to where he/she might be. This game keeps students involved and often produces excellent character analysis. Finally, the 10th game, ARCADE, has students construct a video game modeled on a literary work they have read. This game is based primarily on conflict analysis and acts as a good motivator for hard to reach students.

In summary, all 10 games use the principles of cooperative learning to stimulate literary analysis on a level most secondary students can master. In addition, the games provide excellent exercises for developing students' imagination, which is a necessity if they are to appreciate what good literature has to offer. Finally, writing skills are woven into each of the games in such a way as to make this basic instruction vital to the success of the group; hence, peer pressure works for teachers, not against them.



HELP WANTED: Teacher Directions

Hey, Becky Thatcher!
What job do you want?

Introduction

HELP WANTED is a game in which students apply the concepts of the world of work to the characters and situations found in literary works. After brainstorming details about a work, students identify needs of characters they have encountered and express those needs by writing “help wanted” ads on behalf of those characters. They then look for distinctive qualities in other characters which might make them potentially helpful to those in need of help and write letters of application from those characters in response to the help wanted ads.

HELP WANTED should involve characters from one or more books, stories, plays, or poems which have been read in class. The game particularly fits into a “free standing” unit in which small groups have read different works.

Setup Directions

1. Organize your class into groups of five or six.
2. Duplicate the following in the amount indicated in parentheses:
 - PLAYERS’ INSTRUCTIONS (class set)
 - CHARACTER QUESTIONNAIRE (one per group)
 - HELP WANTED ENTRY FORM (three per group)
 - MEMORANDUM (one per group)
 - EVALUATION SHEET (three per group)
3. Place duplicated copies in group manila folders.

Daily Directions

Day 1

1. Organize groups. Try to place at least one bright student in each. Appoint this person as leader.
2. Pass out group folders. Tell leaders they have 10 minutes to have their groups complete the CHARACTER QUESTIONNAIRE.
3. Tell leaders to divide their groups into three pairs. (Some groups may have to have three persons in their "pair" if there is an odd



MALL: Players' Directions

Introduction

Welcome to the game MALL! During this session your group will complete a task based on five of this semester's reading selections. How well you remember those works, how imaginative you are, and how skillfully you follow instructions and work together will determine your success. Before you begin, elect a leader. Then he/she should take the group through the following instructions.

The Situation

You are the owners and managers of a small regional shopping mall located just outside the city of Reading, Pennsylvania. Despite the small size of your mall (it contains only five stores), it has become well-known and successful by sponsoring many special promotional events during the year, both as a public service and as a way to bring shoppers into the mall. Last month, for example, you celebrated National Sleepwalkers' Day by passing out literature in the mall's concourse and by showing the classic film, *Walk At Midnight*. Your stores participated by offering special sales on pajamas, nightgowns, slippers, and protective pads to wear while sleepwalking.

Now you have decided to put on a "Get Reading, Reading" weekend, an event to encourage people in and around Reading, Pennsylvania, to read good books. Each of the stores in your mall will sponsor a particular work by publicizing it in the store and by offering special promotions connected in some way with the characters, setting, or events of that work. In addition, the mall as a whole will sponsor activities throughout the weekend to publicize literature and encourage reading.





ARTICLE PAGE (Model)

Your publication's masthead (its name) goes here. Consider adding a slogan or illustration to make it stand out dramatically.

The publication date goes here.

Write a dramatic headline here to introduce your article.

Your article begins in this column.

Your article continues in this column.

In these columns you should also put in at least one illustration and an accompanying caption to add interest to your article. In the example below the caption is on the left. A caption usually appears under an illustration.

Doug Spaulding's younger brother Tom watches his older brother every day during that fateful summer in Ray Bradbury's Dandelion Wine.





MEMORANDUM

To: President, LITERATURE FESTIVAL TOURS

From: (Print clearly in *block letters*.)

Names of group members:

Message:

Tour # _____

Enclosed is our brochure for a tour we have planned to this vacation site:

The tour guide we have chosen for this LITERATURE FESTIVAL TOUR is:

We are certain you will like our tour package.

Thank you.



THE GREATEST: Teachers' Directions- 2

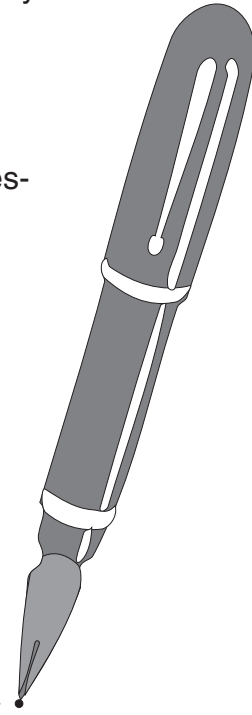
3. Put a time limit of no more than 20 minutes for trading. If a team does not have its four cards by that time, it must write on the character you randomly draw from their stack. Tell them this during the Trading Session if necessary to stimulate activity.
4. Allow the remainder of the hour for group planning of the essay.

Day 2

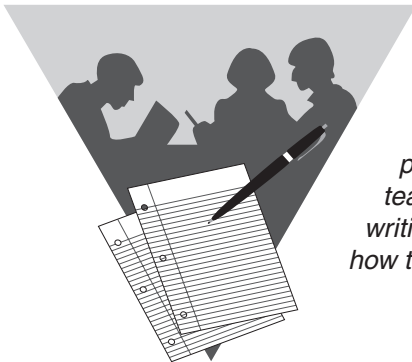
1. Have groups briefly meet to review their essay plans. Then split up the groups so that each member writes his/her own essay.
2. Allow the remainder of the hour for the essays to be written.

Day 3

1. Have groups meet to read one another's essays, in order to pick the best.
2. After this is done, collect the ENTRY FORMS with the best essays attached. Also, collect the group folders which should contain the remaining essays. (Award bonus points if every member has completed an essay.)



Atticus Finch is the greatest!....



If you lead your students to see the value of cooperating during READ-AROUNDS, they should all increase their writing skills significantly—some by being peer teachers, some by learning from their teaching peers. Working cooperatively within writing groups can really help all of us learn how to write more effectively.

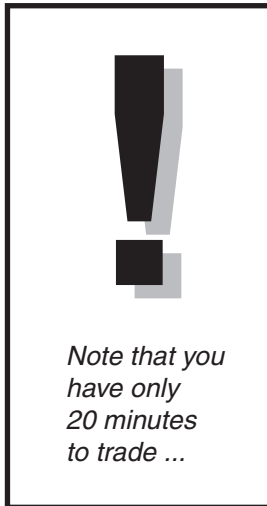


THE GREATEST: Players' Directions - 3

Step 5: The trading continues

Instructions to traders

1. Traders may work together or split up. (If you split up, keep in touch so that you know what each other is doing.)
2. Before trading is over, you must collect at least four cards on your team's greatest character. Every card after the first four will give your team bonus points. At any time after you have collected four cards, you may quit trading and return to your team. Finishing early means your team will have more time for writing.
3. Cards may be traded one at a time or in groups: 1 for 1, 2 for 2, 1 for 2, etc. It doesn't matter how many total cards you end up with, only how many you have on your greatest character. (A strategy tip: "Wheel and deal" some more by discussing traits of various characters. You might even trade for characters other than your greatest character to strengthen your hand for future trades.)
4. All trading will be stopped after 20 minutes.



Step 6: The planning continues

1. After your traders report in with the name of the greatest character they are going for, send them back to the trading area and start brainstorming about that greatest character. Write down character traits on scratch paper. Make a list of important events from the work. Collect as many reasons as possible why this character deserves to be called "the greatest." Then determine which are your strongest arguments and which events or details best support those arguments. Use the ESSAY PLAN OUTLINE sheet to record the group's thinking. (**Note:** Each member should do his/her own outline using the group discussion for details.)
2. When the group is finished brainstorming, each group member should select a "voice" or point of view for his/her paper. The essay may be written from either of two points of view: the "first person," using the pronoun "I"; or the "third person," using the pronouns "he" or "she." (That is, "I am the greatest"; or "He/She is the greatest.") Choose one voice, then use it throughout. *Do not mix voices.*
3. Once you have your outline finished and your voice determined, you are ready to write.

Note: The ESSAY PLAN OUTLINE sheet on page 8:9 is only one way to organize your essay. You and your teacher may have some other plan you wish to follow. Regardless of how you organize what you wish to write, be sure that you organize your thoughts **clearly**.





ESSAY PLAN OUTLINE

Thesis statement

We believe the character _____ in
the author _____'s literary work,
_____, is the greatest character for these reasons:

Reason 1. _____

Reason 2. _____

Reason 3. _____

Body Outline

1. (First reason listed in thesis; key words only) _____
 - a. Specific detail (fact, incident, quotation supporting or explaining the general idea listed in Reason 1 above)

 - b. SD: _____
 - c. SD: _____
2. (Second reason listed in thesis; key words only) _____
 - a. SD: _____
 - b. SD: _____
 - c. SD: _____
3. (Third reason listed in thesis; key words only) _____
 - a. SD: _____
 - b. SD: _____
 - c. SD: _____

Summary statement

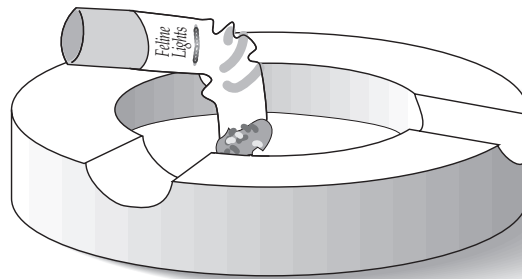
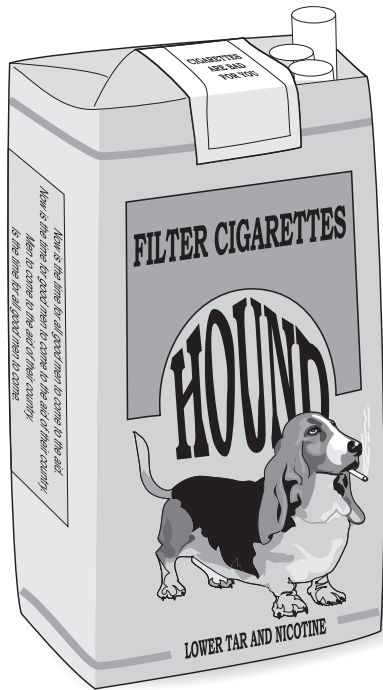
All in all, _____ is the greatest character
because _____,
because _____, and
because _____.

(Note: Summary statement should rephrase the three ideas as stated in the thesis statement above.)



CLUE CARDS 7 and 8

Cigarettes and ash tray found on coffee table in living room:



Picture of baby

