

Character Analysis and The Crucible

Summary

This set of lessons extends over several weeks and incorporates all acts of Arthur Miller's play, The Crucible. Students will closely read The Crucible. Students will cite textual evidence and make interpretations about character development.

Students will combine the textual evidence with their interpretations and write interpretive statements. In the culminating activity, students will write a character analysis.

Main Core Tie

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Reading: Literature Standard 1](#)

Additional Core Ties

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Reading: Literature Standard 3](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 1 a.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 1 b.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 1 c.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 1 d.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 1 e.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Writing Standard 9 a.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Speaking and Listening Standard 1 a.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Speaking and Listening Standard 1 b.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Speaking and Listening Standard 1 c.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Speaking and Listening Standard 4](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Language Standard 1](#)

English Language Arts Grade 11-12

[Language Standard 2 b.](#)

Group Size

Pairs

Materials

The Crucible by Arthur Miller, attached handouts, and a projector or overhead machine. I have also attached the link to the website I use for teaching integrating or embedding quotations.

Background for Teachers

Before beginning the lesson, teachers need to introduce students to the SATDO acronym. This acronym (used by some AP teachers) is useful when analyzing characterization. Teachers may want to lead students in a discussion of the SATDO acronym and have students take notes. Teachers should lead their students to a deeper understanding of the details that build character (it's not just what the character says, but how the character says it). The teacher notes and student notes handout for SATDO may be found in the materials section of this lesson.

Students need to know how to integrate or embed quotations into their own sentences. I have attached the website I use to teach how to integrate or embed quotations in the materials section of this lesson.

Students need to know how to cite quotations (I use and teach MLA).

Student Prior Knowledge

Background knowledge for The Crucible (Conventions of Drama, Puritans, Salem Witch Trials, McCarthy, etc.).

SATDO characterization acronym.

Students need to know how to integrate or embed quotations into their own sentences. (I have a UEN mini-lesson on integrating or embedding quotations.)

Students need to know how to cite quotations (I use and teach MLA).

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how characters are introduced and developed. Students will draw evidence from literary texts to support their analysis of that text.

Students will write a character analysis.

Instructional Procedures

PART ONE - Act 1

Introduce the SATDO acronym.

Introduce the SATDO Evidence/Interpretation Chart.

Begin reading Act 1 of The Crucible (We normally read Act 1 as a class). Choose one character and model how to complete the SATDO/Interpretation Chart. Continue reading and modeling by having students help you complete another entry in the chart. Remember to emphasize that the students must use specific textual quotations (copy down the actual quotations) and cite the page number(s) where they found the quotation. Also, check that the interpretation that is recorded on the chart is actually based on the recorded textual evidence (this is tricky for many students). Be sure to discuss the rationale for each entry. We want our students to think about what they choose to include on the SATDO/Interpretation Chart. Continue reading and modeling until you feel your students are able to complete the chart independently.

When students are ready, put them in groups of four. Each group should choose a character from the list on the board (the characters who are central to act 1) to track on their SATDO/Interpretation Chart. Remind students to record the name of their chosen character. The class continues to read the play, while individual students record at least three entries on their SATDO chart.

After completing Act 1, have students share their SATDO/Interpretation Charts with a partner from their group of four. Encourage partners to give helpful and specific feedback - is the actual textual evidence (quotation) recorded? is a page number given? if it is unclear how an interpretation was made based on the evidence, ask for clarification, etc.

The two sets of partners then meet. Students share their individual SATDO/Interpretation Charts

with their group of four. As a group, students decide their three best entries and record this information on the GROUP SATDO/Interpretation Chart. Groups should also record a rationale for why they chose each entry. Groups should decide who will and how to present their information to the whole class.

As each group presents to the class, students should record the information (on to the back of their SATDO/Interpretation Chart handout or on another sheet of paper). Discuss each piece of evidence and its interpretation. Push for clarification and correct any misunderstandings. Be sure to discuss the rationale for each entry. We should help our students examine the quality of evidence and the potential significance of interpretation.

PART TWO - Act 1 Review

Pass out and preview the Interpretive Statement Handout. This handout includes a rubric which lists the required elements of interpretative statements and shows how the statements will be assessed. Using the GROUP SATDO/Interpretation Charts that students completed earlier, model how to create Interpretative Statements. An interpretative statement is created by combining textual evidence (a quotation) and the interpretation of that evidence. An interpretive statement may be longer than one sentence. *Students should copy down at least two of the model interpretive statements - these models will help them to complete the task.

Choose one entry from the chart and model how to write an interpretive statement. Emphasize the importance of including the evidence and the interpretation. Review the proper method of embedding quotations into sentences and review MLA citation format.

Continue modeling for the class; work with students and create collaborative interpretive statements.

When students are ready, pass out copies of the GROUP SATDO/Interpretation Charts. Put students in groups of four. Have them work with a partner from their group to create two interpretive statements based on entries from the GROUP SATDO/Interpretation Charts. After partners have completed their interpretative statements, have partners meet with their groups of four. Students should work in their groups to polish their interpretive statements and choose one statement to share with the whole class.

Groups present their best interpretive statement to the whole class (use a document camera or overhead). As a class, check to see if each interpretive statement includes textual evidence (a quotation) and an interpretation of that quotation. Check if each quotation is correctly embedded and is correctly cited. Refer to the rubric on the Interpretive Statement Handout.

Explain to the class that when they write interpretive statements, they are writing literary analysis. We are practicing the skills of gathering evidence and interpreting that evidence so that we may turn our interpretive statements into a more fully developed character analysis.

PART THREE - Act 2

Pass out the SATDO/Interpretation Chart for Act 2. Point out that students will need to choose three characters to track from Act 2 (write a list of characters central to Act 2 on the board). Students may choose to record the textual evidence while we read as a class, and then they may go back and write their interpretation and rationale. This will help some students pay attention to the reading.

Read Act 2 (we do this as a class). Students work to complete their SATDO/Interpretation Charts.

After the reading and the charts are completed, students will choose one entry for each of their characters and write interpretive statements. They will have three interpretive statements about three different characters from Act 2.

PART FOUR - Act 2 Review

Collect the charts and randomly choose one interpretive statement from each student's work to assess (using the rubric). Choose some of the strongest interpretive statements to share with

the class. Choose some examples of problematic interpretive statements to share with the class. Make sure that you have included examples that represent the most common problems you saw in your assessment. Type these examples up without names.

Pass back the scored interpretive statements. Project the prepared examples. Start with the strongest interpretive statements, identifying each required element. Project the statements that need to be improved. Identify what required elements the interpretive statements have and what elements need to be tweaked or added. Work as a class to revise these statements.

PART FIVE - Act 3 and Act 4

Finish reading Act 3 and Act 4 of *The Crucible*. Students complete SATDO/Interpretation Charts and Interpretive Statements. Continue assessing the charts and the statements and reviewing as a whole class. At this point, you should really be encouraging your students to dig for deeper meaning and significance in their interpretations.

PART SIX - Character Analysis

Have students take out all SATDO/Interpretation Charts and Interpretive Statement Handouts (be sure to give them lots of reminders as you are reading the play that they will need to keep all of these handouts).

Pass out and preview the Character Analysis Handout

Brainstorm and review themes (students should record these on the handout).

Help students understand the SO WHAT part of literary analysis. Characters exist in literature for a reason - and with literary analysis that reason is most often to develop and convey theme. Help students understand this. In true analysis, one must do more than gather evidence about characters and make interpretations about characters; one must tie it to author's purpose or theme.

Model how to use the brainstormed list of themes and the SATDO/Interpretation Charts and the Interpretive Statement Handouts to develop a CLAIM and outline the body of the analysis.

Students write the rough draft (depending on your student population, your school technology resources, and your time, this may be assigned as an in-class or out-of-class task).

Devote class time for a peer review session. I have students work with a partner. I review the rubric with the class, and have a student complete the rubric for his or her partner.

Students proofread, revise and edit their analysis. Students turn in the final draft.

Extensions

After reading an act from the play, students may watch a movie version of the act. Students can complete the SATDO/Interpretation Chart and the Interpretive Statements based on the movie version of the act. Students can write a comparative analysis of characters based on the text and movie versions of the play.

This extension supports Reading: Literature Standard 7 Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)

Assessment Plan

Formative and summative assessments (and rubrics) are included in the handouts and the instructional procedures sections.

Authors

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