

**South Georgia Writing Project Folklife Lesson Plans, A Guide for
Educators, Jennifer A. Trevisol, Editor Valdosta State University, 2000**

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Introduction

Recent test results in Georgia show a continuing need for effective writing strategies in the state's schools. Studies on pedagogy of writing repeatedly show that students write best when they write about what they know. "What they know" is the folklife or living traditions of their families and communities. Folklore and folklife bring together a body of information—including narratives, songs, customs, beliefs, crafts, and foodways—that are at the heart of culture and define an individual's and a community's sense of place and identity. Folklife as an educational tool can be used at any grade level and with all types of learners. Folklife dovetails with "educational theories such as Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, which honors all the types of knowledge students acquire; whole-language reading and writing, for which the traditional arts can provide new materials; process-method writing, for which folklife provides intimate, inspiring subjects; and interdisciplinary projects that incorporate social studies, language arts, science, math, photography, recording, or music" (National Roundtable of Folk Arts in the Classroom, 1993). In addition, as the nation becomes increasingly diverse, folklife provides a vehicle for developing local multicultural resources that reflect the traditions of all members of the community.

This booklet of lesson plans is a result of a week-long collaborative effort between South Georgia Writing Project and South Georgia Folklife Project. South Georgia Writing Project is one of 168 sites of National Writing Project, a nationwide network of school/university programs dedicated to improving the teaching of writing in K-college classrooms. To accomplish this goal, the project looks to successful teachers and invites them to participate in an intensive institute every summer. During the 2000 Invitational Summer Institute, Laurie Somers, director of South Georgia Folklife Project and Diane Howard, director of South Georgia Writing Project, teamed up to work with fifteen educators to develop the units and lesson plans in this booklet.

We hope these units will provide you with specific plans for using folklife topics as you teach writing. More importantly, we hope these units will give you ideas for writing your own lesson plans that combine the teaching of writing and folklife for your students.

Laurie Sommers, Ph.D
Director, South Georgia Folklife Project

Diane W. Howard, M.Ed
Director, South Georgia Writing Project

Title: *All About Me*

Grade Level: First Grade

Curriculum Areas: Social Studies, Language Arts

Purpose / Objective:

Students will learn about themselves and their family history.

Procedure / Activities:

Activity One

1. Read the book *The Relatives Came* by Cynthia Rylant.
2. Discuss the book and ask questions.
3. What does relative mean?
4. Do you have any relatives?
5. Make a chart listing the different kinds of relatives one might have (i.e., mom, dad, sister, brother, aunt, uncle, stepmother, stepfather, grandmother, cousin, etc.).
6. Ask students to draw a picture of their own family and label the family members. The teacher will model by drawing a picture of his/her own family. The teacher will also monitor students and help them when needed.
7. Allow students time to share their pictures with the whole class. Make sure students are aware of the fact that some families are different and that there is nothing wrong with being different.
8. Display students' pictures with the title "My Family." If possible, ask parents to send a photograph of their family to hang up with the students' drawings.

Activity Two

1. At the beginning of the unit, send home a letter explaining to parents what the class will be doing during the unit on family. Include in the letter an invitation for family members to visit the class. Any family member is welcome.
2. Send home with the students a disposable camera with instructions. In the instructions, ask parents to help their child take only 5 pictures of things that have special meaning (i.e., house, favorite pet, favorite object, special family member, a place in the community, etc.).
3. Provide time in class for students to share their pictures. Place the pictures in a photo album and let the students write captions beside their pictures. At the end of the unit, photocopy the album and give each student a copy (be sure to get permission to share these pictures).

4. Make sure to get double prints of the pictures taken by the students so that they may have a color copy of their pictures.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: 2 weeks

Materials:

1. Disposable camera
2. Art supplies
3. *The Relatives Came* by Cynthia Rylant
4. Photo album

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Candi Pridgen
Ambrose Elementary School
Ambrose, Georgia



Title: *Exploring Lifestyles of the Past—Heritage*

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Curriculum Areas: Language Arts, Social Studies

Purpose / Objective:

The students will know that lifestyles of the past were different from what they are today. The students will appreciate and value lifestyles of the past. Students may participate in experiences associated with the past and learn to be nonjudgmental when dealing with differences between the present and past.

Procedure / Activities:

1. Introduce the theme of Heritage—Families of the Past by asking the students to brainstorm things related to Thanksgiving at their house. Use a word web or organize the student's thoughts.
2. Read and discuss the book, *The First Thanksgiving*. After completing the book, ask the students to again brainstorm things related to Thanksgiving. Use a different web for this activity.
3. Compare the webs while giving factual information about the pilgrims and Indians. Discuss the friendship between the pilgrims and Indians.
4. Show the students a movie of the Plymouth, MA settlement.
5. Discuss the movie. Have the students compare the lifestyles of the pilgrims with today's lifestyle.
6. Journal Writing—students will draw a picture of the pilgrim lifestyle and write a story depicting what life was like during the pilgrim days.

Additional Activities:

1. Have students make costumes to portray pilgrim men and women and Indian men and women.
2. Have an authentic "First Thanksgiving" dinner (deer meat, kernel corn, cranberries, etc.).
3. Have students perform a play dramatizing the "First Thanksgiving." Invite parents to come and enjoy the play.
4. Introduce games that pilgrim and Indian children played in the 1600's.
5. Daily Journals—topics can include the following:
6. What My Family Does on Thanksgiving...
7. If I Were a Pilgrim...
8. If I Were an Indian...

9. The First Thanksgiving
10. Our Thanksgiving Feast

Time Required: 2 weeks

Materials:

1. Journals
2. Pencils
3. Crayons
4. Crafts
5. *The First Thanksgiving*
6. Games
7. Thanksgiving meal foods

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Yvonne Flowers
Cox Elementary School
Moultrie, Georgia



Title: *Family Traditions*

Grade Level: First Grade

Curriculum Areas: Language Arts, Social Studies

Purpose / Objective:

Students will know that families express their cultures through traditions, rituals, and celebrations. Students will know that traditions and celebrations have similarities and differences.

Procedure / Activities:

1. Explore rituals. Have students identify rituals in their families. Teachers may want to start with items such as
2. Every Saturday evening _____.
3. Every Sunday morning _____.
4. Every summer _____.
5. Every morning _____.
6. Use a concept lesson to develop understandings about rituals. Present "yes" and "no" examples of a ritual as statements. Use statements such as
7. My aunt is bringing her new husband to visit us for the first time.
8. My grandparents are coming to visit. They always spend Thanksgiving at our house.
9. Dad says that this year we will take a holiday instead of exchanging Christmas presents.
10. Our family always goes to church together on Sunday morning.
11. Mom always lets me stay up a little later on Friday evenings.
12. In our community, people who have moved away always try to come back for funerals or weddings.
13. My aunt always takes part in the festivities at the May Day celebrations.
14. Every Saturday morning we buy groceries.
15. Explore rituals that are connected with celebrations.
16. Ask students how they celebrate family traditions like birthdays, special events like weddings and funerals, Mother's Day, Father's Day, etc.
17. Have students draw pictures of their family having a special time together. Write a sentence to go with the picture. Share the picture with the class and describe the special time.
18. Discuss how children learn about customs from parents and grandparents and by taking part in the celebration. Talk about ways the children help to prepare for celebrations. Ask students to tell ways they can help get ready for

celebrations in their homes. Identify and diagram similarities and differences in celebrations.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: 1 week

Materials:

1. Paper
2. Crayons
3. Pencil

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Tirzah Morris
Doerun Elementary School
Doerun, Georgia



Title: *My Family Tree*

Grade Level: First Grade

Curriculum Areas: Language Arts, Social Studies

Purpose / Objective:

A family tree is a great way to see how everyone fits into a student's family. Creating a family tree gives students a personal perspective on their family history. Learning objectives across the curriculum can reinforce family history.

Procedure / Activities:

1. Teacher reads books/poems about different types of families.
2. Students talk about their families by naming family members.
3. Students list family members on their trees.
4. Students write short stories about family members.
5. Students decorate and share stories and trees with class.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: 50-60 minutes

Materials:

1. Cutouts of family trees
2. Writing paper
3. Pencils, markers, crayons
4. Scissors
5. Books and poems about family life

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Sandra Nelson



Elementary School

Lomax-Pinevale

Valdosta, Georgia

Title: *Quilts of Memories*

Grade Level: First Grade

Curriculum Areas: Language Arts, Social Studies

Purpose / Objective:

The Patchwork Quilt by Valeria Flourney helps students to learn and discuss traditions in their own families.

Procedure / Activities:

1. The teacher reads *The Patchwork Quilt* to the students.
2. Teacher and students discuss the book and the importance of the fabric scraps that were taken from the family to create the quilt.
3. Teacher and students share special memories about their families.
4. Several students may share a short statement about their special memory on an Interactive Chart (teacher and student share the pen).
5. Teacher will share a special memory with students on chart paper in order to model narrative writing activity.
6. Students share their special memory in writing by following the writing process on a sheet with colorful borders that resemble panels of a quilt.
7. Teacher and students display their special memory narrative writing panels together as a class quilt.

Additional Activities:

1. Share quilts as a class
2. Make a list of things that students like to do with grandparents
3. Make a list of different names for grandparents
4. Plan and present a "Grandparents Day" in September with all the trimmings
5. Have the students write a "TELE-GRAM" postcard to their grandparents
6. Set up an "Adopt a Grandparent" program in your school or classroom
7. Create a "Great" Grandparents Day gift (complete with poem)
8. Create a map of where all students' Grandparents live across the globe
9. "In the Good Ol' Days" activity where the students interview their parents or grandparents about when they were the same age as the students
10. "Grandparents of Tomorrow" activity: Allow students to explore their own thoughts about how they will act and behave as grandparents in the future
11. Set up a "Family Day" complete with story telling, sharing, and celebrations that will be a culminating activity for a unit on families

Time Required: 60 minutes

Materials:

1. *The Patchwork Quilt* by Valeria Flourney
2. Writing materials
3. Art materials

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Nikki Weaver
G.O. Bailey Primary School
Tifton, Georgia



Title: *Story Quilts*

Grade Level: Kindergarten

Curriculum Areas: Language Arts, Math, Social Studies

Purpose / Objective:

After listening to a story, the students will draw a picture and create a class story quilt.

Procedure / Activities:

1. Teacher brings in old quilts for the students to view. Teacher talks about quilts and allows students to ask questions and discuss the quilts.
2. Teacher shows students pictures of children with senior citizens. Teacher and students will talk about pictures.
3. Teacher reads *The Keeping Quilt* by Patricia Polacco.
4. Teacher discusses how we pass on traditions from generation to generation. Teacher also discusses cultures and how different cultures view the world around them.
5. Teacher asks students to name things they do with their grandparents as teacher writes answers on chart paper.
6. Teacher instructs students to draw a picture of them doing something they enjoy with a grandparent.
7. Students write a sentence describing what they are doing in the picture; or students raise their hands, dictate the sentence to the teacher, and the teacher writes the sentence for them.
8. Teacher provides an example of the picture for the students to look at.
9. Each student's construction paper picture will become one square on the class story quilt.
10. Students share pictures with the class.
11. Teacher glues squares on bulletin board paper and uses strips of the paper to make a quilt. The quilt is displayed for everyone to see. Grandparents can come for lunch and see the masterpiece.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: 60 minutes

Materials:

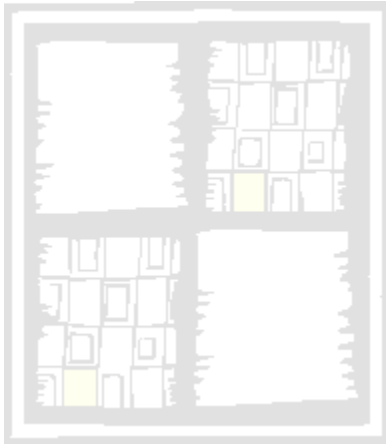
1. Construction paper
2. *The Keeping Quilt* by Patricia Polacco
3. Glue sticks
4. Pencils, markers, crayons
5. Bulletin board paper
6. Quilts
7. Pictures of children with senior citizens

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Dana C. Miller
Indian Creek Elementary School
Douglas, Georgia



Title: *Culture Pizza*

Grade Level: Middle School

Curriculum Areas: Language Arts, Social Studies

Purpose / Objective:

Students will compare the daily aspects of their culture to those of their parents and/or grandparents.

Procedure / Activities:

1. The teacher will provide *Culture Pizza* worksheets (a circle divided into eight equal slices).
2. The class will discuss and select eight areas of their culture to compare and contrast with that of their parents and/or grandparents. Possible areas include the following:

favorite foods	music	weekend
entertainment		
holiday traditions	clothing	jobs
transportation	restaurants	housing/heating and air
education	recreation	movie content
books	government	technology (TV, VCR's,
computers, video games,		
tapes, CD's, appliances, etc.)		

1. Each student will complete his/her *Culture Pizza*.
2. Each student will interview a parent and/or grandparent to complete a second *Culture Pizza*.
3. Each student will prepare a written essay to compare and contrast the differences and similarities between the two or three generations. All stages of the writing process will be completed. Students are encouraged to use *Word* or other communication technologies available.
4. Each student will prepare an oral report of his/her essay.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: 5 one-hour classes

Materials:

1. *Culture Pizza* worksheets
2. Writing materials—paper, pens
3. Computers with word processing software, if available
4. Overhead and transparency of *Culture Pizza* to lead discussion and labeling

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Gwen S. Pittman
Central Middle School



Georgia

Thomasville,

Title: *Folklife for Eighth Grade*

Grade Level: Eighth Grade

Curriculum Areas: Social Studies, Language Arts

Purpose / Objective:

Students view a list of folk life topics as possible choices for the Georgia eighth grade social science fair.

Procedure / Activities:

1. Each student views a list of topics and chooses four that appeal to him/her. These need to be numbered one through four, with one being the first choice.
2. Each student writes four brief explanations about the reasons for choosing those particular topics.
3. Students gather into groups of three or four and share their choices and reasons. The others in the group may offer suggestions of ways to pursue a particular topic.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: 50 minutes

Materials:

1. Topic list
2. Writing supplies—pen, pencil, paper

Additional References:

See attached topic list

Lesson Plan Provided By: Joan K. Griffin
Williams Middle School
Moultrie, Georgia

Folklife Topics

- Hometown / community festival
- Country store / ethnic markets
- Gospel sings

- Wiregrass ecosystem
- Seasonal tradition in family / community
- Native Americans in Georgia
- Quilting bees
- Barn styles / raisings
- Tapping trees for turpentine
- Fish camps
- Fish traps and lures
- Building wooden boats
- Medicinal plants
- Basketry
- Weaving textiles
- Handmade instruments
- Specialty foods like mayhaw jelly or fried green tomatoes
- Freight trains and lines
- Cane squeezing
- Tobacco growing, curing then and now, and auctioning
- Labor force changes
- Decorative arts like carving or tatting
- Reunions
- Turkey shoots
- Crops grown then and now
- Landscape of forest, savannah, and sandy bottom



- Family tree

Title: *Folk Stories*

Grade Level: Middle School

Curriculum Areas: Language Arts

Purpose / Objective:

Students will interview persons of an older generation to obtain and publish folk stories.

Procedure / Activities:

1. The teacher will share several examples and many types of folk stories. (i.e., family stories, animal stories, ghost stories, funny stories, war stories, how things were done, what things were made or eaten, etc. Stories can be about anything that used to go on in the life of the person telling the story.) He/she may also choose to share folklore articles.
2. The teacher will lead a discussion about folk stories (types, significance, etc.).
3. Each student will interview someone of an older generation (i.e., parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, older neighbors, bus drivers, teachers, etc.) and record the events revealed in the story.
4. Each student will complete the writing process and publish the story. Publications may be videos, created children's books, plays or skits, poems, songs, oral story-tellings, etc. Artifacts, foods, or pictures may be used to visually support oral presentations. Students are encouraged to use *Word* or other communication technologies available.
5. Stories may be published on the Internet or shared via distance learning with other classes.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: 5 one-hour class periods

Materials:

1. Many examples of folk stories (audio tapes of Bailey White, Jerry Clower, etc.)
2. Writing materials—paper, pens
3. Computers with word processing software, if available
4. Examples of folklore (quilts and other crafts, games, pictures, etc.)

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Gwen S. Pittman
Central Middle School
Thomasville, Georgia

Title: *Collage Poem*

Grade Level: High School

Curriculum Areas: English, Literature

Purpose / Objective:

Students will learn the poetic forms and write a poem from what they've learned, exemplified through a collage.

Procedure / Activities:

1. Students will gather pictures and images that are important to them in some way. If this is done with a thematic unit, images will be related to subject covered. The theme of the poster can be something to do with the school year, one aspect of the year, a special place, memory, or whatever the student is motivated to use as an inspiration.
2. Students will cut the images into various shapes and sizes, depending on the value placed on the images for the given theme.
3. After creating their masterpieces, the students will choose one of the various poetic forms that have been discussed in previous lessons (narrative or any other writing style is fine). The piece and the collage should complement each other in order to bring the emotion to life.
4. Allow time for students to discuss ideas with other students.
5. Depending on the topic covered, a presentation ceremony of the art should be organized.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: 2 days

Materials:

1. Poster board
2. Construction paper
3. Scissors
4. Newspapers, magazines, photographs
5. Glue
6. Markers
7. Memories
8. Minds

Additional References:

1. This assignment is good for a year-end project or in collaboration with a thematic unit.
2. This assignment can be done individually or in small groups.
3. Depending on time, the pictures can be gathered at home.
4. This is a good opportunity to work with the historical society of a town or arts department of the town or school

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Eric Tedders
Pike County High School
Zebulon, Georgia



Title: *Exhibit Labels*

Grade Level: High School

Curriculum Areas: Language Arts, Social Studies

Purpose / Objective:

Students will view a folklife exhibit and write on an assigned group topic, following the writing process.

Procedure / Activities:

1. Students view a folklife exhibit, which consists of visuals.
2. Students will be asked to create a label identifying this visual.
3. Post viewing, students break in three groups based on subheadings of exhibit.
4. Students compose a rough draft exhibit label based on the subheading topic, summarizing the visual in their own words. Writing should be no more than 100 words, in active voice and include sensory details.
5. Students share rough drafts through peer review and make revisions.
6. Students read verbatim their labels for the entire class.

Additional Activities:

1. Students create a visual display and label from their own personal experience.
2. Based on exhibit subheadings, students choose a single topic and develop a personal narrative label.
3. Students must follow the label guidelines (active voice, sensory details, 100-word limit).
4. Student exhibits will be posted in the classroom.

Time Required: variable—1 class period

Materials:

1. Exhibit
2. Writing materials
3. E-classroom (if applicable)

Additional References:

1. See attached examples
2. <http://lcweb.loc.gov/folklife>

3. <http://www.crt.state.la.us>
4. <http://edheritage.org>

Lesson Plan Provided By: Gretchen Geisinger

Samples of Exhibit Labels

Church and Sacred Life

1. Our church still has the old-time singing from the red-backed hymnal. Songs I've heard so often, I don't need a hymnal to sing along. The congregation can join in whenever. The church and religion are center of South Georgia's spiritual and social life. Church life consists of gospel sings where southern gospel groups perform their latest releases and some they've resurrected from the red-backed hymnal. It wouldn't be complete without celebrating homecoming with dinner on the grounds. Church wouldn't be the same without the food and fellowship with friends and family. Music wouldn't be complete with the clapping of hands to the beat, the bass guitar, and the drums projecting the tempo.
2. Looking at the picture of the white church and the congregation inside truly reminds me of my great grandmother's church in Clyattville, Georgia. The last time I was there was the weekend of my great grandmother's 100th birthday. Before that, I haven't been there in years. Seeing that white old church brought back some good memories. I can remember those Sunday dinners and church celebrations. I loved being in Clyattville—the church is down the road from my great grandmother's house and we used to walk to church. Most of my family went to that church. To me it was like a family reunion on Sundays.
3. The Bible Belt—so aptly named years ago—is still worthy of the label. With its old desolate churches, always with a fresh coat of white paint, South Georgia stands, if not on the forefront, on definitely high ground. These churches, which appear to be in the middle of nowhere, are still called home to a large group of farmers and other homesteaders—on every other Sunday, of course.

Farms and Farming

1. The pictures of this project show how the wiregrass region has changed. Farmers no longer have pastures of wiregrass for the cattle and hogs to graze. Today, the wiregrass has been replaced by bermuda and bahial grass. Family farms are hard to find. It is no longer commonplace for entire families to work the fields. Many farms these days are worked by crews of Mexicans who travel from farm to farm.
2. Often, the evening air would be heavy with the scent of tobacco dust—"poison"—that had been applied to the fields with a duster hooked to the back of the tractor. Daddy believed the dust to be harmful to us and would make us stay inside when it was strongest. He did the dusting of the tobacco himself and had to "bathe off" when he came to the house afterwards. You could see the dust hanging over the fields, and, as a child, I thought that it had a pleasant smell like talc. Later in the evening, the dust would drift away and we would go out and sit on the porch where the grownups would talk about tomorrow's work.
3. The wiregrass region of Georgia covers the southern portion of the state. Wiregrass along with scrub oak and long leaf pine compose the original vegetation of the area. The overall landscape consists of the gently rolling forests of oak and pine, the savanna and the cypress swamps. Wiregrass is a unique plant. Once it is gone, it cannot be replaced by growing it from seed or transplanting it. Due to this, it is rapidly becoming a symbol of agriculture's past. Its passing should serve as a wake-up call before it has totally disappeared.

Community Art and Life

1. Two older gentlemen hunker down in a low-bellied skiff, a water cruiser of their own creation. Once, boat builders abounded in the Wiregrass, specifically in the area of the Okefenoke Swamp. Local crafted shallow wooden boats, which served both as fishing vessels and communication vehicles—traversing the swamp, gliding to and from neighbors carrying both supper and salutations.
2. "Watch the bobber, watch the bobber," my grandfather hissed. Concentration burned on the red and white small plastic ball hovering half in and out of the water like a timid bather. Wind blew gently, ruffling the still pond, raising narrow peaks, which broke against the side of our small boat and tickled the hesitant bobber, heightening my focus. Light gleamed against the slick veneer of my cane pole. "There it goes, pull it up!" The bobber dove beneath the murk. Tugging heartily, steadying myself against the boat's buoyancy a shining bream emerges dewy and blinking in the bright light.



Title: *Folklife in Text vs. Folklife in Students' Communities: Superstitions, Beliefs, and Customs Practiced*

Grade Level: High School, Ninth Grade

Curriculum Areas: Literature, Social Studies

Purpose / Objective:

Upon completion of this lesson, the students should be able to do the following:

1. Discuss superstitions, beliefs, and customs practiced in their community in regards to the death of a friend or loved one.
2. Compare the superstitions and beliefs in their community with those in the novel.
3. Write in expository mode the similarities and differences between these two systems of superstitions and beliefs.

Procedure / Activities:

1. Students will read *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson and discuss stages of the grieving process (denial, anger, coming to terms, and acceptance)
2. Teacher questions students about superstitions, beliefs, and customs practiced in their communities.
3. Teacher draws a chart comparing and contrasting superstitions, beliefs, and customs in the novel with those of students' communities.
4. Teacher discusses cremation in the novel and asks if this practice is common in students' communities.
5. Teacher records ideas and interpretations on poster board and discusses with students how their customs differ from those practiced in the novel.
6. Teacher and students discuss how cremation affects a service.
7. Students record the differences and similarities in customs and beliefs.
8. Students write in expository form the similarities and differences between the systems of beliefs and customs discussed.

Additional Activities:

1. Students interview grandparents about beliefs and customs practiced fifty to seventy years ago in regard to this theme, and write an essay discussing their findings.
2. Students write a paper discussing practices in rural areas versus practices in urban areas.

Time Required: 40 minutes

Materials:

1. *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson
2. Poster board
3. Markers

Additional References:

1. <http://www.terabithia.com>

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Carla Alvarez
Anglican Cathedral College
Belize City, Belize



Title: *Grandparents and Grand Stories: Documenting the Past for the Future*

Grade Level: High School

Curriculum Areas: Language Arts, English

Purpose / Objective:

Students will observe, interview, and write stories they have "heard over and over" from their grandparents in order to document and appreciate their families and traditions. Students will engage in several writing activities, and these will form a mini family portfolio to be shared with students and family.

Procedure / Activities:

Students will be given characteristics of folklore and folk life. See additional references for list.

Activity One

1. Students will bring in a picture of a deceased relative—preferably a grandparent or great-grandparent.
2. Students need as much information as possible about this relative (date of birth, name, age at time of picture, place lived, etc.).
3. Students will write a brief summary of what they know about this person.
4. Students will also write a brief summary of what they *don't* know about this person.

Activity Two

1. Students will create a brief diary entry from the point of view of the relative describing a "day in the life" of this person's life.
2. Students are encouraged to use sensory detail and narrative structure (diary form) for this writing exercise.
3. Students will share with a partner and with the class.

Activity Three

1. Students will share writings with a parent or guardian, and the parent or guardian will write a response to this writing.
2. Parents or guardians may give factual information about this person or simply write a response.
3. Writing will be included in their family portfolio.

Activity Four

1. Students will interview a grandparent or relative about a family story.
2. Students will use material gathered about interviewing from websites provided.
3. Students will conduct mock interviews in class with students and teachers and focus on what makes a good interview.
4. Family stories can include the following:
5. Legend or family stories passed through generations
6. Family histories
7. Songs (children's songs, ballads, work songs, ethnic songs)
8. Games played
9. Artifacts special to the family
10. The place of family (farm planning, use of land and space)
11. Folk art
12. Crafts and trades
13. Customs of the family or religious traditions
14. Rites of passage such as weddings, funerals, births, deaths

Activity Five

1. Students will create a mini family portfolio.
2. Students will use the interview for several different types of writing: narrative, expository, and descriptive.
3. Teacher will encourage students to write poems or stories from what they have learned.
4. Students will be encouraged to present finished portfolios for assessment.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: 2-3 weeks

Materials:

1. Pictures
2. Pen, pencil, paper

Additional References:

1. Characteristics of folklore and folk life include the following:
2. Folk life is living traditions passed down through time. They are closely connected to history.

3. A group or family shares folk life and folklore. Everyone belonging to a group shares folklore.
4. Folklore is traditionally learned by word of mouth, observation, or imitation.
5. Folklore can be either complex or simple.
6. Folklore changes through time. Certain things are lost or kept as they are retold.
7. Folklore can be anonymous in origin and often can't be remembered as a 1st writing.
8. Folklore is not necessarily antique or old; in fact, it is often contemporary.
9. Folklore is not written history, not is it an historical re-enactment of an event.
10. Folklore is not elite or popular culture.
11. Folklore is not something crude, primitive, or quaint; it is not always good, true, and beautiful.

Examples: Children's games or songs, oral stories told by family members, traditions in towns that were never officially written down, and ways of doing things that perhaps are no longer used in society today.

1. Websites for interviewing hints
2. <http://lcweb.loc.gov/folklife/pub.html>
3. <http://www.crt.state.la.us> (use the path Arts, Folklife, Louisiana Voices)
4. Websites helpful for writing about place
5. <http://www.edheritage.org>
6. <http://www.crt.state.la.us>

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Carlyn C. Bland
Thomasville High School
Thomasville, Georgia



Title: *Odyssey Scrapbook*

Grade Level: High School, Ninth Grade

Curriculum Areas: English

Purpose / Objective:

At the end of this unit, the students will have a better understanding of the *Odyssey* and of their own surroundings.

Procedure / Activities:

1. Students read the *Odyssey*.
2. After reading the *Odyssey*, the class will have a group discussion about all the places Odysseus has been (Circe's Island, Cyclops, Ithaca, Sirens, etc.)
3. The class will be instructed that they are going to create a scrapbook for Odysseus. Each group will pick a different place that Odysseus has been and develop a page for the scrapbook. Each page will contain a picture and a description of what happened to Odysseus at this place.
4. The class will be broken up into groups and will demonstrate their knowledge of the story by creating a picture that represents the place they have chosen to focus on. The picture can be created in any way the group decides. They will be allowed to get pictures from magazines, books, freehand, Internet, or whatever medium they can think to use.
5. The group will be responsible for creating a summary of the section describing what took place. An emphasis will be places on this being for Odysseus to remember for a lifetime all his many adventures.
6. When the class has gotten their ideas together, they will be allowed to put the picture on scrapbook paper (construction paper) and will also compose their summary on the computer. The summary will be cut and attached to the picture accordingly.
7. Each group will present their page to the class and it will then be placed in the scrapbook.

Additional Activities:

1. The students will find pictures of their favorite places and bring them into class.
2. Following the model of the Odysseus scrapbook, the students will create a scrapbook for themselves. They will write about each picture, describing its importance to them. Focus will be placed on using places in their hometown.
3. The student will pick on of his/her pages to present to the class and to place into a classroom scrapbook that will be kept by the teacher.

Time Required: 4 weeks

Materials:

1. Imagination
2. *Odyssey*
3. Construction paper/scrapbook paper
4. Glue/tape
5. Pen and paper
6. Large notebook

Optional Materials

1. Magazines for cutting
2. Scissors
3. Internet access
4. Markers/crayons
5. Art teacher

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Adam Hathaway
Cook County High School
Adel, Georgia



Title: Our *Our Town*

Grade Level: Eleventh Grade

Curriculum Areas: English, Literature, Theater

Purpose / Objective:

"Our *Our Town*" is designed to teach a work of literature to students in a personal way and encourage them to research the history of their own town with the goal of writing an original play about local history and residents. Students will become more intimate and familiar with Thornton Wilder's play as they study it in order to emulate the playwright's style and follow a similar development pattern. They will gain a sense of ownership over the material by producing their own play based on their local community, and will gain new insights into that community through research.

Procedure / Activities:

1. Students will read and discuss in class Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, keeping in mind their upcoming project so that they can notice elements of the play that they may or may not want to include in their own piece. The class should discuss character, theme, setting, and other elements of the play as well as style and staging. This portion of the unit should take one to two weeks.
2. Students begin working on the research portion of the project. Divide the class into three groups: one group will research people, one buildings, and one events. Allow about a week of in-class research. Try to provide as many resources as possible so that out-of-class assignments are few. Each group should prepare a presentation of their findings in order to bring the other groups up to speed with their research.
3. Students will share findings from their research with the class during one class period. Students will then decide which pieces of information they would like to include in their play. Students should choose titles and themes for the three acts just as Wilder does for his play and decide whether to keep such conventions as the stage manager and the absence of properties.
4. Once decisions are made, break the students into the three groups again, assigning members from each of the research groups into each of the new writing groups. Assign one act of the play to each group and have them write the dialogue and stage directions for that act,

basing their sections loosely on Wilder's acts, respectively. This portion should take one to two weeks, depending on the class.

1. When the play is complete, assign roles to the students and have them read their own work, revising and editing if necessary. Once the product is satisfactory, plan a staging or staged reading of the show, depending on time and the desire/ability of the class. Invite other classes to see the piece. If there are more characters than students, double cast the roles, if there are more students than characters, assign jobs such as costuming, stage management, etc. to students who do not wish to be on stage.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: 6 weeks on a 90-minute block schedule, but may be shortened or lengthened as necessary

Materials:

1. Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*
2. Pen
3. Paper

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Jeremy Williams
Cook High School
Adel, Georgia



Title: *Oral Tradition*

Grade Level: First-Year Composition—College

Curriculum Areas: English

Purpose / Objective:

Students will follow the writing process and demonstrate appropriate rhetorical and organizational skills.

Procedure / Activities:

1. Students will listen and watch an oral recipe demonstration handed down from generation to generation.
2. Students will freewrite after the demonstration to think about an oral tradition or an apprentice skill in their family. This writing activity will start a flow of ideas for an essay.
3. The students will write an essay of no more than 2 pages, in active voice, with correct mechanical skills, grammar skills, and sensory details.
4. Students will perform mini-tutorials with one another and revise.
5. The students will present their papers before the class.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: 50 minutes

Materials:

1. Pen
2. Paper

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Anetia Ports



English

Department of

Valdosta State University

Title: *History Quilt*

Grade Level: Elementary—College Level

Curriculum Areas: Language Arts

Purpose / Objective:

American quilts have always reflected our diverse heritage, from simple and refined quilts of the Amish communities to the crazy-patchwork quilts of early settlers. Women etched the births and deaths of family members onto quilt squares with indelible ink, then sewed them into quilts. Today, quilt making continues to be a creative expression of personal, family, and community history.

Any community can honor its history and create a quilt that will reflect the personalities and pastimes of each member, whether the community is in a classroom or is a biological family.

Procedure / Activities:

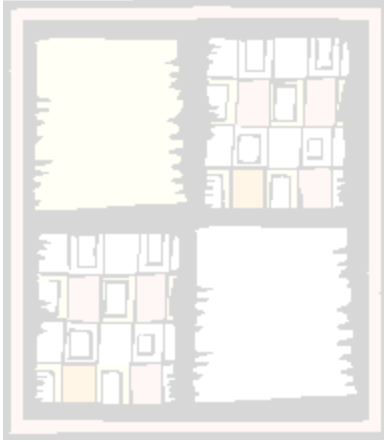
1. The class will, through a process of "pre-writing," decide on the significant events in the history of the class: parties, new classmates, birthdays, etc.
2. Each person will be given a square of muslin or some other appropriate material for creation of the individual quilt square.
3. Each person will complete the "writing process" by using various scraps of other cloth, markers, and buttons to decorate the square.
4. Square will be sewn together to complete quilt. It may be necessary to seek assistance from a professional seamstress or perhaps one of the parents of the class.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: 5 one-hour class periods

Materials:



1. Paper and pencil
2. Squares of prewashed, unbleached muslin, one per student, cut to size
3. Material for decorating each square, scraps, fabric, paint, glue, markers
4. Cotton batting, cut to size
5. Sewing supplies

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Bobbie Warren
Valdosta State University
Valdosta, Georgia

Title: Invitation Letter

Grade Level: 6-12 Grades

Curriculum Areas: Language Arts

Purpose / Objective:

To help students use details in a persuasive letter.

Procedure / Activities:

1. The teacher should lead a class discussion in types of special events held in the town, in the communities, and within individual families. (i.e., a festival, parade, reunion, church homecoming or revival.)
2. Each student should make individual lists of the events he/she has attended.
3. Each student should complete a clustering activity for the events he/she has attended.
4. Each student should do a freewriting on one of these events.
5. The teacher should teach or review the format for a friendly letter.
6. The teacher should instruct the students in computer skills needed to make a flier or poster.
7. Each student will draft a flier or poster announcing the event.
8. Students will get in groups of 4 or 5 to evaluate the drafts.
9. Each student will revise and print his/her poster.
10. Each student will draft a friendly letter inviting someone to the event. The letter should give the date, time, specific place, and activities related to the event. Also, the letter should mention one drawback or unpleasant aspect of the event and refute or turn the negative into a positive statement.
11. Each student should include the letter and the flier in an appropriate envelope before submitting the assignment.

Additional Activities:

1. Students may display their fliers and posters in the room or in the hallway for other students to see.

Time Required:

This assignment can be one to two weeks depending on the grade and amount of emphasis placed on the quality of the fliers and posters.

Materials:

1. Colorful paper and envelopes.
2. Computer and printer access.

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Valdosta State University
Department of English
Valdosta, Georgia

Diane W. Howard



Title: *The Legend of Boo, and Other Tales*

Grade Level: High School, First-Year Composition—College

Curriculum Areas: Literature, Social Studies

Purpose / Objective:

The students will read Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* and write creatively about a "Boo Radley" in their hometown, from that person's perspective, telling the story of "what really happened." Through this activity, the students will learn acceptance and tolerance of "different" people in society as well as sharpen their creative writing skills.

Procedure / Activities:

1. Students and teacher will read and discuss Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*.
2. Teacher speculates with students Boo Radley's "true story" and spawns a discussion on the story if it were told from Boo's perspective.
3. Teacher prompts students to discuss people with a legendary story, like Boo, from their hometowns.
4. Students write a short story (of variable length, but long enough to tell the full story) about the person they discussed from their hometown, telling the story from that person's perspective, including the "true story" of the legend behind them.
5. If students cannot think of a person in their hometown to write about, they may write Boo Radley's story from his perspective, or they may create a fictitious legend from their hometown.
6. Students will share their legends with the class.

Additional Activities:

N/A

Time Required: Five 50 minute class periods

Materials:

1. Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*
2. Pen
3. Paper

Additional References:

N/A

Lesson Plan Provided By:

Jennifer Trevisol
Valdosta State University
Valdosta, Georgia