

TITLE OF LESSON

English 1 Unit 2 Lesson 9 – Autobiography, Reflection, Evaluation

TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One Class Period

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – Eng 9-10: R1.0-3, 2.0, 3.0-4, 3.6-10, W/O1.0-4, L/S1.0-1

MATERIALS

Trash by Dorothy Allison
Story Tools – Student Page (double-sided copy)

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To introduce new elements of writing: evaluation, reflection, and dialogue
 - To reinforce old elements of writing: metaphor/simile, adjectives, show not tell, hook
 - To reinforce the idea of backing up ideas with concrete evidence
 - To reinforce positive discussion of literature
 - To help students determine which tools are best used for hooks in their individual writing
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EXPLANATION OF LESSON

Today, you will be working towards helping students realize the importance of forming unique opinions and being able to back them with solid evidence, a skill you will be supporting daily. There will be much class discussion so be prepared to guide students through the lesson. You will also be modeling for them the good work strategies you use when completing assignments. So be aware that your behavior will translate into the students' behavior. If you have a hard time accepting answers from certain students, they will probably be less likely to accept answers from each other. You will walk a fine line today between acceptance and guiding students who think that any answer should be acceptable (Any old answer is definitely not acceptable!). You want to foster an atmosphere where all students want to share their opinions, but you want the opinions to be thoughtful. So make that clear to students. Let them know that you want them to share their opinions, but their opinions should show proof that they are true. Leave room for disagreement and differing opinions only if they are well thought out as well. One rule of thumb I use when working with opinions is this: “You are entitled to your opinions/feelings as long as they do not hurt anyone else.”

FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Check – Stamp/initial all complete homework assignments. Pass back all graded assignments. Have students place them in the appropriate section of their folders.
- 2) **Agenda/Daily Log** – Have students copy the agenda you have written on the front board.
- 3) **Silent Read Around** with Peer Feedback – Have students take out their homework from last night, **Journal 6**. Without talking, ask students to exchange papers with a partner. Ask students to silently read their partner's piece. Give students approximately two to five minutes to complete their reading. You may want to ask them to silently look up at you when they have finished so that you can gauge when all students are done reading. Next, ask students to sign their name to the top of the paper.
 - a) Title – Without talking to their partner, ask students to look at the title of this piece. If there is no title, ask them to circle the top line where a title should be and write the words, “find an original title.” If there is a title, ask students to think about whether or not the title makes them want to read more. Does it catch their attention? Or does it just say Journal 6? Tell students if the title seems boring or does not catch their attention to circle it and write the words, “find a better title” next to it. Then ask students to give two suggestions for a better title.

- b) Hook – Now, ask students to decide if there is a hook at the beginning of this story that grabs them. If there is not, ask students to write the author one suggestion for a better way to start their story.
 - c) Message – Next, ask students to decide what the message of this piece of writing is. Have them write what they believe the message is on the bottom of the story.
 - d) Golden Line – Finally, have them underline one golden line and write it down in their folders on their list of golden lines. Pass papers back to the author without talking.
 - e) Later Changes – Tell authors they will not be making any changes to this piece of writing right now, but have them read what their partners wrote. Did their partner get the message they were trying to convey? If they missed the message, ask authors how they might change their piece to make the message clearer. It is important to stress here that writers write for both themselves and an audience. Most writers are very aware that they will not be there to explain something to the reader, if the reader doesn't understand. So they work very hard to make their ideas clear and understandable. It is a very fine line a writer must walk between making their story too easy and making it too hard for their readers to understand. You want the reader to have to work at reading, but you don't want them to get frustrated and quit. Their job as new authors will be to create pieces that are fun to read, grab the reader's attention, are clear and understandable, and don't make the reader feel as if they are in kindergarten again. Last, ask students to look at their hooks. Ask students to put these pieces in their folders for right now.
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ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. **Read Out Loud** – Look at Dorothy Allison's "Gospel Song" from her book *Trash*. Read this one out loud to the students and ask them to follow along, underlining the golden lines as they follow along. This is a fairly high interest read because of her descriptions. However, if you find that students are not paying attention, ask them to take turns reading, **Popcorn** style. (If you are not familiar with **Popcorn** reading, look it up in the *Teaching Strategies* portion of our web site.)
2. **Golden Lines** – When you have finished reading, ask students to copy their golden lines into their notebook. Ask for one or two volunteers to read their golden lines out loud.
3. **Hook and Dialogue** – Ask students what kind of hook this author started with (ie. character description). Finally, ask students what kind of tool the words in italics are (ie. they represent dialogue). You will want to point out that this author uses italics to let the reader know when a character is speaking. You may want to ask why she does this instead of using quotation marks. Let students think about this one before you give your ideas. If they cannot come up with anything, you may want to point out that this is a sort of internal monologue (that is, the speaker's thoughts while the events are occurring). She could be using the italics to show that the people speaking are not speaking to the main character, but it is her memory of their words or voices.
4. **Story Tools** – Next, take out a double-sided copy of your Story Tools graphic organizer. Ask students to look at the titles for each section. Explain to them that every author gets to decide which tool they will use to start their piece. What works with one story may not work for another. Ask them to fill in the columns for "Gospel Song," beginning with the hook Dorothy Allison uses (i.e. character description). Tell students that you will fill out your overhead copy along with them, but you will not show your answers until they have finished filling in their answers. Tell students that they should just write in the important ideas not entire paragraphs in the character description. When they have finished with appearance/character description, ask for volunteers to read off their answers. While they are reading off their answers, add any pieces of description they have that you did not write down on your overhead. This is a kind of backward exercise to confidence build with students using yourself as the example and resource. When you have exhausted ideas from the class, reveal your original list. Ask students to look at and compare their answers to yours. If students had the same answers as you, congratulate them on their astuteness. If they had more answers than you, congratulate them for being such diligent seekers of details. Ask them if this author's use of character description was a good hook. Take all answers, making sure to ask them to explain why they believe their answer is correct. Some students may agree and others may not like it. To each his own. You want to encourage students to think for themselves so that they can be great creators, great authors.

5. **Message** – Next, tell students that good authors do not just stop at their hook. They use many tools when they are writing so that their readers will not get bored. Today, they will look at some new tools and some old tools. Ask them to decide if there was a message to Ms. Allison's piece. Without talking, have students write what they think the message might be. Ask them to back it up with evidence from the story in the column marked Message. You do the same thing on your Story Tools sheet. Repeat the same steps as above.
6. **Action/Events** – Move on to action/events. Remind students that in every story there is a series of important events. Each of the events they list should be crucial to the understanding of the piece. Have them list IN ORDER OF OCCURANCE the events that took place in “Gospel Song.” There are actually two steps to this portion of the exercise 1) choosing the important events and 2) ordering them. You may want to have students choose the top six and then go back and number them in the order they occurred. Repeat the same steps as above. If students have different answers than yours, ask them why they chose those events. Ask them why they believe that particular event was crucial. Ask the class if they agree. You want to generate discussion and the forming of solid opinions backed with evidence from the story. Make sure you do not allow answers like, “Just because...” or “I don't know” or “I just feel that way.” Push the students to back their responses and ideas.
7. **Reflection** – How you felt about it then. Tell students this is a new tool. Ask them to think about where the places are in the story that the author tells how she felt about it then. Write them in this column. Follow the steps from appearance/character description. Be sure to make sure students are understanding reflection because they will be asked to demonstrate their understanding in their own piece of writing. You may want to tell them this so they understand the importance of the concept and ask questions if they do not understand.
8. **Evaluation** – How you feel about it now. Ask students if there is anywhere in this piece that the author demonstrates an awareness that her attitude, thoughts or feelings about an event or character have changed and that she feels differently now. Have them write their responses in the evaluation column of their Story Tools sheet. Repeat the same steps as above.
9. **Dialogue** – Any conversation between two characters or the words a character speaks. Ask students to find the places in this story where there is a character speaking. Repeat the same steps as above. When you have finished, ask students to flip their Story Tools sheet over and title the back side *Journal 7*. Then move on to Step 10.
10. **Journal 7** – Tell students not to begin until you ask them to start. Explain that this will be their prompt:
Write about a time when someone was amazing or awful to you.
11. **Visualization** – Have them put their pens or pencils down. Ask them to close their eyes and think about a time when someone was amazing or awful to them. Ask them to picture what that person looked like. Ask them to picture the events that took place on that day. Ask them to think about the words that were spoken that they may want to include in their writing. Ask them to think about the message they would like to reveal to their reader through the telling of this event. What did they learn on that day? Ask them if they can remember how they felt about it then. How do they feel about it now or have their thoughts, feelings or ideas changed?
12. **Fill in Story Tools** – When they know what they are going to write about, have them open their eyes and fill in the Story Tools sheet for their story. Tell them they may not start writing the actual story until they have filled in their Story Tools sheet because you are going to have them make one crucial decision before they start writing today. Wait until everyone has finished with their Story Tools sheet. You may want to walk around the room and look for students who seem stuck. Sometimes they just need you to ask some good questions about their ideas to get them started. Remind them that this is just a graphic organizer to help them jot down ideas. It is not a time for them to write whole paragraphs or try to fill in all the details. They will do that when they write the story.
13. **Hook and Ending** – When everyone has finished, ask students to decide which of their tools would be the most effective way to start their story. Which tool would be the best hook? Which tool will they use to grab the reader's attention and draw them in? Remind them that they will be including all of these tools in their story, but they should put a circle around the one they want to use as their hook. When all students are done, remind them that endings are also important. Ask them to think about how they want to leave the reader. How can they make

the reader remember their story? Have them put a star next to the tool they want to close their story. Now they are ready to write.

14. Homework Review – Review their homework assignment. If you have time, have them begin their new writing assignment. If you do not have time, assign it as homework. Either way, the entire first draft of the story is due at the beginning of the period tomorrow.
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HOMEWORK

Journal 7 – Write about a time when someone was amazing or awful to you.

You must include the following:

- 1) All of the tools from your Story Tools sheet.
 - 2) At least one metaphor/simile
 - 3) At least five adjectives
 - 4) Show Not Tell
 - 5) One extended metaphor/simile
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GROUP ROLES

None

DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

Unit 1

Final Exam Unit 1
Hero Myth
Trickster Myth
Monster Myth
Creation Myth

Unit 2

Autobiographical Incident 1