

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court Unit Plan

Mark Twain Teachers Workshop - Mark Twain Museum

July 23-27, 2007 - Hannibal, Missouri

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Grades: 7-10

Duration: 1 quarter, 50 minute classes each day

Unit Rationale:

The easiest way to tie together a unit on King Arthur and Mark Twain is through Twain's, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Students will be entertained by the humorous way in which the main character, Hank Morgan travels back in time from the 1800s to the 6th century. Morgan brings with him the inventions from his time and uses them in the 6th century. His seemingly unique "power" surpasses that of Merlin himself. Students will be analyzing these inventions by creating a bulletin board display.

Missouri State Grade Level Objectives:

Pre-reading

- ✳ Student will develop and apply skills and strategies to the pre-reading process to access prior knowledge and set a purpose for reading.

(Missouri Grade Level Expectation: Reading 1F)

During reading

- ✳ Student will apply post-reading skills to comprehend text through questions by clarifying and analyzing.

(Missouri Grade Level Expectation: Reading 1H)

Post reading

- ✳ Students will develop and apply skills and strategies to the reading process through text ideas and the world by analyzing and evaluating the relationship between literature and its historical period and culture.

(Missouri Grade Level Expectation: Reading 1I)

- ✳ Student will write a multi-paragraph essay to include a beginning, middle, and end on an invention discussed from the book.

(Missouri Grade Level Expectation: Writing 3C)

- ✳ Student will create a bulletin board display of this invention using computer technology.

(Missouri Grade Level Expectation: Social Studies: Tools of Social Science Inquiry: 7D4)

Instructional Strategies:

Pre-Reading Essential Learning Objective: *Students will respond in writing to journal entries written by other students.*

1. The Hook. Ask students to respond in writing to the following questions. If you could time travel, where would you go and why? Who would be there when you got there? What skills do you have to use during this chosen time period? What things would you miss during this time period?
2. Ask for volunteers to share these ideas with the rest of the class and discuss.
3. Give background information to the book.
4. Read the first three chapters out loud.

During Reading Essential Learning Objective: *Students will formulate 2-4 journal entries per chapter group and four-leveled baseball questions per category group.*

Journal Writing: Assign students to the following chapter groups. Adjust accordingly.

Pages 30-59

Pages 282-310

Pages 62-85

Pages 312-333

Pages 88-115

Pages 336-357

Pages 118-145

Pages 360-380

Pages 148-171

Pages 382-404

Pages 174-202

Pages 406-423

Pages 204-223

Pages 426-440

Pages 226-250

Pages 442-447

Pages 252-279

Each chapter group will write 2-4 journal entries from the chapters assigned. They will be due the day chapters are to be discussed. Each student will choose one from the selection and write a response given careful consideration to grammar and spelling. (Food for thought: prepare a "special" journal box just for this book.) Discussion in whole group or chapter groups will take place at this time.

Baseball questions: Students will be grouped into the following categories for the purpose of writing baseball questions for the end of the unit game. The categories will be 1) places, 2) characters, 3) vocabulary, 4) science, 5) inventions, and 6) misc. Each group is responsible for writing questions from easy to hard for the single, double, triple, or homerun plays. Groups will be given time to write these questions with answers in class. Each student should be thinking about these questions as they read. (Instructions for this game follow.)

After Reading Essential Learning Objective: *Students will design a bulletin board highlighting the inventions in the book.*

Bulletin board project: Teacher and students will brainstorm a list of inventions from the 1800s used in the 6th century by Hank Morgan. From this list, students will choose one invention for their independent project. The project will consist of a written description of the invention including background information and how it was used in the 1800s compared to its usage in the 6th century. Students will be given class time for researching and composition. Then they will either draw a picture of the invention or generate it by computer. Next, the picture and written description will be configured on a designated space on the bulletin board. Consideration will be given to placement, size, and appeal. A scoring guide is attached.

Connecticut Yankee's Baseball Game:

1. Divide students into two teams. Have them choose a group name and flip a coin to see who goes first.
2. Each team has their own diamond either on the chalkboard or on the floor where the student walks around the bases in the classroom.
3. The teacher asks the batter if he/she chooses a single, double, triple, or home run question. (Students know that the single question is easier than the double and so on.) Then the batter will choose a question from the question box. The teacher will tell the batter its category before reading the question.
4. If the batter answers correctly, he/she advances accordingly (including other runners). Keep record of the score.
5. If the question is answered incorrectly, a fly ball is called, and the question goes to a player of the team that is "in the field". When a fly ball is called any of the opposing team players not on base may answer, even if they need to look up the answer. Usually a time of one minute is given for this. If the called player in the field answers the question correctly, the fly ball has been caught and the batter is out. If the outfielder misses the question, the fly ball has been dropped, and the batter goes to first base on an error. All runners advance one base on an error.
6. This is a ping-pong game format; the questions alternate between teams. So the second question goes to the team that was in the field during the previous question. Teams then get a chance at the same number of questions and all players get a chance to play.

Follow-up Activities: Field trips to Hannibal, MO or the Renaissance Festival in Kansas City, MO. Invite speakers from the Hannibal area. Videotape students as they give their presentations from the bulletin board to share in class or at a parent meeting.

Assessment(s):

Discussion contributions, group participation, individual project. See attached scoring guide.

Materials:

- ✳ Student copies of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* by Mark Twain.
- ✳ Two baseball diamonds big enough for the chalkboard or the floor.
- ✳ Journal entry/question boxes
- ✳ Paper materials, scissors and glue for the bulletin board.

Research Project Resources:

Students will be allowed research time on the Internet for the bulletin board project.

Some suggested sites:

- ✳ Mark Twain & Technology: <http://fayette.k12.in.us/~cbeard/cy/index.html>
- ✳ Mark Twain in his Time: <http://etext.virginia.edu/railton/index2.html>
- ✳ Connecticut Yankee text: <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/TwaYank.html>
- ✳ 1800s Inventions: <http://inventors.about.com/library/weekly/aa111100a.htm>
- ✳ Mark Twain's Memory Building Game: <http://etext.virginia.edu/railton/timeline/index.html>

Other PowerPoint Games

- ✳ Mark E. Damon Games: <http://jc-schools.net/tutorials/PPT-games/>
- ✳ Nathan Cornett PowerPoint Samples: <http://teach.fcps.net/trt19/>
- ✳ PowerPoint Activities of all kinds: <http://teach.fcps.net/trt10/PowerPoint.htm>
- ✳ Internet 4 Classrooms: http://www.internet4classrooms.com/on-line_powerpoint.htm#game
- ✳ Jeopardy Game Websites:
<http://young.springdaleschools.org/WebsitesTeachersJeopardy.htm>
- ✳ Biology and PowerPoint: http://sps.k12.ar.us/massengale/biology_games.htm

Scoring guide for *Connecticut Yankee*

Group Descriptions	Assigned Points	Total Points
Chapter group journal entries	20	
2-4 per group turned in (10)		
Questions were thought provoking (10)		
Category groups for baseball game	20	
4 questions per category (10)		
Written satisfactory to levels (10)		
Group Participation and discussion (20)	20	
TOTAL POINTS	60	
Individual Descriptions	Assigned Points	Total Points
Pre-reading writing assignment	20	
All questions were covered (5)		
Grammar/Spelling (5)		
Content (10)		
Bulletin Board Project of invention	80	
Written description (Beginning, middle, end) (40)		
Picture (created by hand or computer generated) (10)		
Placement, size, appeal (30)		
TOTAL POINTS	100	