Novel Lesson Plan

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court

Mark Twain Teacher’s Workshop – Mark Twain Museum

July 23—27, 2007, Hannibal, Missouri

Developed by: Dana Thompson and Barbara Adair

Novel Title: A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court by Mark Twain

Grade Level: Grade 8 (Middle School)

Time Frame for the Lesson: This is a unit that can be taught over the course of one to two weeks.

Objectives:

✓ Students will be introduced to the great American author, Mark Twain.
✓ Students will experience time travel from the 19th century back to the 6th century through his novel A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court.
✓ Students will compare and contrast life in King Arthur’s time with life in the 19th century.
✓ Students will explore events in the novel and share their knowledge with other class members.

Florida State Standards:

✓ Students will understand ways culture and time period influence a literary work.
✓ Students will compare and contrast literature from different time periods and cultures to understand concepts and themes.
✓ Students will explore figurative language techniques to create and comprehend meaning (for example, similes, metaphors, analogies, anecdotes, sensory language).
✓ Students will identify universal themes in various types of literature.
✓ Students will compare and contrast themes in classic and contemporary literature.

Background Information:

✓ Background information will be supplied through the Media Center. Presentations will be made by the media specialist, and the students will tour School Museum displays.
✓ The teacher will review highlights of Mark Twain’s life and works using a PowerPoint presentation and playing the Jeopardy game.

The Lesson:

✓ Introduction - teacher storytelling (summarize the story plot of A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court)
✓ Explain cooperative learning groups and make assignments.
✓ Students will be divided into groups of three. Each group will follow along in their book as they listen to their assigned passage using a recorded compact disk and headsets.
✓ Following this, the students will have time in class to work in their groups.
  o Reader/Researcher - leads discussion on passage and check for understanding
  o Recorder - takes notes on passage to determine which events, characters and vocabulary will be included in their presentation
  o Presenter - determines and oversees the presentation of the passage to the class
    ▪ The Presenter may use any of the following options:
      • Assume the role of a radio reporter and produce a radio broadcast
      • Create a 6th century newspaper
      • Rewrite the story from the point of view of another character (living biography)
      • Create a colorful comic book or children’s book
      • Create and produce a skit using costumes
• Create a scrapbook or memory box
• Illustrate major events using "sandwich" boards
• Storytelling using costumes
• Create a model or a diorama to use in telling the passage
• Create a game such as Jeopardy or Trivial Pursuit
• Other selections approved by the teacher

Suggested Passages Assigned to Cooperative Groups:
1. Chapters 5 & 6 – An Inspiration and the Eclipse (50—65)
2. Chapters 7 - Merlin’s Tower (67—74)
3. Chapters 16, 17 -- Morgan Le Fay, A Royal Banquet (153—173)
4. Chapter 18 -In the Queen’s Dungeons (175—186)
5. Chapters 11, 20 and part of 21 - The Yankee in Search of Adventures, The Ogre’s Castle, and The Pilgrims (103—112; 194—208)
6. Chapters 22 & 23 - The Holy Fountain and The Restoration of the Fountain (219—241)
7. Chapter 27 and 28 - The Yankee and King Travel Incognito and Drilling the King (283—298)
8. Chapters 34 & 36 - The Yankee and King Sold as Slaves and An Encounter in the Dark (356—368; 380—384)
9. Chapters 37 & 38 – An Awful Predicament and Launcelot and the Knights to the Rescue (386—400)
10. Chapter 39 - The Yankee’s Fight with the Knights (402—413)

Presentation:
✓ Teacher will present the story introduction through Chapter 4.
✓ Each group will present assigned passages.
✓ Teacher will facilitate discussion (fill in the gaps) and conclusion of the book.

Evaluation:
✓ Each student within the group will be subjectively evaluated by the teacher and other group members according to his or her role. (25 points)
✓ Presentation (50 points) See rubric below.
✓ Written test on the author (25 points) and novel (25 points)
✓ One-page journal entry as one of the following characters (50 points)
  o Hank Morgan
  o Clarence
  o Merlin
  o King Arthur
✓ Written reflection on the unit (25 points)

Rubric for Presentation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Possible Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepared and on time</td>
<td>10 - All members present and prepared for presentation when called upon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Presentation made, but disorganized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 - Poor effort is made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>20 - Highly creative, unusual, interesting, excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 - Eye-catching presentation, relatively neat and handled creatively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Unoriginal, sloppy, not creative, minimal effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy of Information</td>
<td>20 - Extremely accurate and well presented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 - Very few facts presented with some questionable; incomplete or inaccurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Confused, incomplete, and/or inaccurate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>