



Gold Seal Lesson

Author(s): Jennifer J. Janowiak			Lesson Title: A Character in My Own Life			
Grade Span			ICLE Application Model			
K-4	5-8 XX	9-12	A	B XX	C	D

Instructional Focus:

Reading

Students read a variety of grade level materials, applying strategies appropriate to various situations.

Writing

Students write for a variety of purposes and audiences with sophistication and complexity appropriate to the grade level.

Performance Task

In this task, students will learn and apply the literary definition of characterization through analyzing themselves as a character in their own lives. They create a character sketch of themselves.

1. Characterization is the act of a character developing and changing throughout a story. To introduce this lesson, have the students free write for four or five minutes about their lives, starting from their first memory to the present. Obviously, the time limit will not allow full development of their ideas at first, so instruct them to start with their first memory and write about big events that affected their lives. Remind them to write in chronological order, but the order need not be perfect at this point.
2. Once students are done free writing, have them reread the free writing and choose four major or minor events in their lives that changed them in some way either for better or worse. Particularly draw their attention to instances in their life where they felt they matured or grew. Ask them to consider times when they changed their point of view about an event or a person. They will need more brainstorming time to add detail to their free writing.
3. Their writing assignment is to write a character sketch of themselves. It is helpful to share a model of a character sketch that you have found in a contemporary magazine or newspaper. The sketch should have four paragraphs. Each paragraph should describe a life-altering event. The paragraphs should be at least five sentences long. They should include their age at the time of the event, tell what the event was, explain how it affected the, and how their point of view of the situation or life or people changed. At this point there will not be transitions between the four paragraphs.
4. Ask students to read their four paragraphs aloud in pairs or small groups. The group members will identify a place they liked best, a place where they would like to know more, and a question they have.
5. Based on feedback from the peers, students will write a fully detailed and edited final draft of a character sketch. They will include transitions between paragraphs. A list of transition words(then, next, even more, etc.) on the blackboard is helpful.
6. As a culminating activity, students will write in a reader response journal their definition of characterization. They will be able to apply the definition to characterization as it applies to their reading of literature in class and to their peer's character sketches.

ICLE Essential Skills

Draft a report that engages an audience and is concise, clear, well-organized, accurate, and informative (ela 12)

Use editing and revising skills to improve effectiveness and accuracy of drafts. (ela 14)

Use ideas from journals, class discussion and literary criticism to write a paper that expresses a personal opinion, sustains a controlling idea, or uses specific evidence from literary texts to support an opinion. (ela 34)

Use writing as a way of expressing personal creativity. (ela 31)

Understand and relate to situations, events and characters in a reading selection (ela 57)

Relate situations, events, and characters in a reading selection to personal experience. (ela 60)

Evaluate the way an author uses language and text characteristics such as plot, setting, theme, character, point of view, genre, etc. to evoke a response in a reader. (ela 72)

Scoring Guide:

1. Did the student participate fully in the prewriting exercises?	Yes	No
2. Did the student produce four paragraphs of at least five sentences that identified and explained a life altering experience?	Yes	No
3. Did the student elaborate and detail the events in the paragraphs?	Yes	No
4. Did the student participate fully in the peer review?	Yes	No
5. Did the student produce a final draft that modeled at least in some degree the example displayed in class, was thoughtful, thorough and mechanically accurate?	Yes	No
6. Is the student able to define and apply to analysis of writing and literature the term characterization?	Yes	No

Keywords

English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science
Reading Construct meaning Response journals	Algebra	Earth Science
Writing Composition Creative writing Critique Editing Journals Narrative Paragraphs Peer review Prewrite	Geometry	Life Science
Communications	Statistics	Chemistry
Literature Character	Calculus	Physics
Other Character sketch	Trigonometry	Other
	Other	