

**Magoffin County Schools
English Language Arts
Kentucky Core Academic Standards Planning Guide**

Teacher: Suggested Unit 6

Date: March 22-May 3, 2012

Title: The Road Not Taken

Unit: 6

5.5 weeks

Grade Level: 8th

Overview – The stage is set by Robert Frost’s poem “The Road Not Taken.” Although students read from classic and contemporary literature, writing and class discussions focus on how literature helps us define the tension between the needs of the individual and the greater good of society. The goal of this unit is for students not only to apply the reading, writing, speaking, and listening strategies and skills they have learned up until this point in the year, but also to analyze how authors use allegory, symbolism, and satire to make an impact on the reader. This unit ends with a review of “The Road Not Taken” in order to see how this unit led to deeper understanding of the poem. As with all other units, this unit ends with an open-ended reflective response to the essential question. This essay is followed with a choice for students: write their own narrative or create their own multimedia presentation that demonstrates what they learned this year.

Essential Question-How can literature help us define the greater good?

Focus Standards

Reading - Literature	Reading - Informational	Writing	Speaking & Listening	Language
RL.8.7: Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.		W.8.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.	SL.8.4: Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. SL.8.6: Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.	L.8.3: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. L.8.3 (a): Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).

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Student Objectives : Knowledge/Understanding Reasoning Performance Skill Product

I can...

1. Read and discuss a variety of novels that reveal, explicitly or implicitly, "the greater good."
2. Experiment with performing poetry in variety of styles and discuss how these changes affect its interpretation.
3. Compare and contrast characters, plots, themes, settings, and literary techniques used in the stories read.
4. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue in literature propel the action and reveal aspects of a character.
5. Analyze how writing styles and literary techniques, such as symbolism or satire, are used and how their use impacts meaning and reader engagement.
6. Write a variety of responses to literature and informational text.
7. Analyze the extent to which a filmed version of a story stays faithful to or departs from the text, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.
8. Create a multimedia presentation on "the greater good" where the message is either explicitly stated or implied.
9. Participate in group discussions.

Resources

[Learning the Lines](#) (My Favorite Poem Project, Boston University) (RL.8.5)

This lesson introduces students to the way lines do work in poems and create texture. As a musical score gives direction to the player of an instrument, the line and line-break give direction to the reader of a poem.

[Louisa May Alcott was born in 1832](#) (ReadWriteThink) (W.8.3)

Little Women is partly autobiographical. Alcott used many of the events of her own life as fodder for her writing, in this and her other novels. In fact, most scholars believe that the character of Jo March closely resembles Louisa May Alcott. It is not unusual for authors to take incidents from their own lives and use them in their fiction. (Note: This is a unit for grades 9-12, but could be modified for eighth grade.)

[From Dr. Seuss to Jonathan Swift: Exploring the History behind the Satire](#) (ReadWriteThink) (RL.8.6)

Begin your class study of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* by reading Dr. Seuss's *The Butter Battle Book* to illustrate the use of satire in a very accessible way. (Note: This is a unit for grades 9-12, but could be modified for eighth grade.)

[Blogtopia: Blogging About Your Own Utopia](#) (ReadWriteThink) (W.8.6)

After studying utopian literature, students design their own utopian society, publishing the explanation of their ideal world on a blog. (*Note: This is a unit for grades 9-12, but could be modified for eighth grade.*)

Full Texts of Classic Literature (SparkNotes)

Lesson Plans: Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken" (Bright Hub)

[Lesson plans for] *Lord of the Flies* (Discovery Channel, Discovery Education Lesson Plans Library)

Understanding The Old Man and the Sea: A Student Casebook to Issues, Sources, and Historical Documents (Patricia Dunlavy Valenti) (This is a book with primary source documents for *The Old Man and the Sea*)

Suggested Works

(E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars.

LITERARY TEXTS

Poems

"The Road Not Taken" (Robert Frost) (E)

Things I Have To Tell You: Poems and Writing by Teenage Girls (Betsy Franco)

Night Is Gone, Day Is Still Coming: Stories and Poems by American Indian Teens and Young Adults (Annette Piña Ochoa, Betsy Franco, and Traci L. Gourdine)

Stories

Little Women (Louisa May Alcott) (E)

I, Juan De Pareja (Elizabeth Borton de Trevino)

Lord of the Flies (William Golding)

The Old Man and the Sea (Ernest Hemingway)

Gulliver's Travels (Jonathan Swift)

The Sea-Wolf (Oxford World's Classics Edition) (Jack London)

Rebecca (Daphne du Maurier)

American Dragons: Twenty-Five Asian American Voices (Laurence Yep) (EA)

The Color of My Words (Lynn Joseph) (easier)

Children of the River (Linda Crew) (easier)

Amos Fortune, Free Man (Elizabeth Yates) (easier)

The Outsiders (S.E. Hinton) (easier)

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

Science/Technical Subjects

"Trek 7, The Fractal Pond Race" (from *Math Trek: Adventures in the Math Zone*) (Ivars Peterson and Nancy Henderson) (E)

ART, MUSIC, AND MEDIA

Media

Little Women (1949)

Little Women (1994)

Lord of the Flies (1990)

The Old Man and the Sea (1958)

The Old Man and the Sea (1990)

Gulliver's Travels (1996)

The Sea Wolf (1941)

Art

Diego Velazquez, *Juan de Pareja* (1650)

Activities -

Introductory Activity

Read "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost. Talk with a classmate about what you think the poem means, both literally and figuratively. Write your ideas down in your journal. We will revisit this poem at the end of the unit to see if our thoughts and ideas have changed. (RL.8.2, RL.8.4, SL.8.5)

Graphic Organizer

As you read the novels (and view the films) in this unit, take notes in your journal about particular lines of dialogue or incidents that propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or "the greater good." Be sure to note page numbers with relevant information so you can go back and cite the text during class discussion.

- What is the setting of the novel?
- Who are the major and minor characters?
- What problems are faced by the character(s)? How does he/she overcome this challenge?
- Which lines of dialogue or events were pivotal to the novel? Why?
- What elements were changed between the novel and the film version?
- What traditional, mythical, or Biblical references are made in the novel?
- What elements of "the greater good" are revealed, implicitly or explicitly, in the novel?

Your teacher may give you the opportunity to share your notes with a partner

Assessments –

Informational Text Response

After reading "Trek 7, The Fractal Pond Race" from *Math Trek: Adventures in the Math Zone* by Ivars Peterson and Nancy Henderson, respond to the following question in your journal: "How did Benoit Mandelbrot follow 'The Road Not Taken' in his approach to fractals? What can we learn from him?" (RI.8.1, RI.8.6, RI.8.8, W.8.4, RI.8.10, W.8.9b, L.8.1a, b, c, d, L.8.2a, b, c, L.8.3, L.8.5a, b, c)

Literary Response/Class Discussion

After reading *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott:

- Discuss the role of the setting in *Little Women*. Why does Alcott put such an important historical event into background of her story?
- Why does Alcott alternate between stories about each of the four March sisters throughout *Little Women*? Why is this literary technique effective?

Write responses to these questions in your journal and share with a partner prior to class discussion. (SL.8.1a, b, c, d, RL.8.2, RL.8.4, RL.8.6, RL.8.10)

Speech Writing/Presentation

Compare the societal discriminations the Logan family experienced in *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred Taylor (read in unit 2) to the gender discrimination in *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott. How are the characters' experiences similar yet different? Write a speech where you argue which form

who read the same text, prior to class discussion. (RL.8.3, RL.8.7, RL.8.9, RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.10)

of discrimination is more detrimental, cite specific passages from the texts, and present your speech to the class. (RL.8.1, RL.8.2, RL.8.3, RL.8.10, W.8.1a, b, c, d, e, W.8.4, L.8.5a, b, c, L.8.1a, b, c, d, L.8.2a, b, c, L.8.3, L.8.5a, b, c)

Literary Response/Art Connection

How does the writing style (from the first-person point of view), in *I, Juan De Pareja* by Elizabeth Borton de Trevino impact your connection to the protagonist, Juan? How is Juan's struggle to paint (because Spanish slaves at the time were forbidden to practice the arts) simultaneously fascinating, suspenseful, and inspiring? View Diego Velazquez's portrait

Class Discussion

Compare and contrast settings, themes, and characters, and how these story elements help us to define "the greater good." Evaluate the claims made by your classmates and evaluate the soundness of reasoning they use in discussion. Can you begin to make any generalizations about what is "the greater good"? (SL.8.1a, b, c, d, RL.8.9, SL.8.3)

of Juan de Pareja. How does looking at this painting expand your knowledge of its subject? Write responses to these questions and others that are self-generated in your journal. (RL.8.2, RL.8.3, RL.8.6, RL.8.10, W.8.9a)

Literary Response

Compare the allegorical nature of *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding to Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* in your journal. What important symbols are used in each novel? How is the use of symbolism integral to these novels? Write an informative essay comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences in these novels, citing specific page numbers for explicit and implicit text references. Share your essay with a partner, and discuss as a class. (W.8.2a, b, c, d, e, f, W.8.4, SL.8.1a, b, c, d, RL.8.4, RL.8.5, RL.8.9)

Literary Response

Respond to the following questions in your journal:

- How is satire expressed through Jonathan Swift's use of language and style in *Gulliver's Travels*?
- How does Swift's writing style change as the story evolves?
- How do the characters' physical characteristics reflect their inner feelings?
- How does *Gulliver's Travels* explore the idea of utopia?
- How is the idea of utopia related to "the greater good"? (RL.8.4, RL.8.6, RL.8.9, W.8.4, W.8.9a, L.8.5a, b, c)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Literary Response</p> <p>Compare the characters of Hump and Larsen from <i>The Sea-Wolf</i> by Jack London. How do their perspectives on life differ? Are there any similarities between the two characters? Write your responses to these questions in your journal. (RL.8.1, RL.8.3, RL.8.6, RL.8.10)</p> <p>Literary Response</p> <p>In your journal, respond to the following prompts about <i>Rebecca</i> by Daphne du Maurier:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What impact does the nameless heroine have on the novel? What does this namelessness symbolize? What is the role of Manderley in the novel? How does setting contribute to the plot? To the tone? To the suspenseful nature? What would be “the greater good” learned from <i>Rebecca</i>? (RL.8.2, RL.8.4, RL.8.6)
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Terminology/Vocabulary

Allegory explicit hero/heroine implicit satire strength of character symbolism writing style			
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Notes: