

Instructional Lesson Plan EXCERPT

Advanced / Gifted and Talented (GT) English Language Arts

Grade: 8GT	Unit Title: War of Words	Length: 4 Days
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Lesson Overview

Two texts depicting racial tensions in America in the 1950's, the essay "Little Things Are Big" by Jesus Colon and the short story "Everything That Rises Must Converge" by Flannery O'Connor are analyzed for characterization and conflict using a technique called the Johari Window.

Essential Question: How do the perceptions we have of ourselves and of others create various types of conflict?

Lesson Procedure

DAY ONE

Before Reading:

- Quickwrite: Students will write an initial response to the essential question, "How do the perceptions we have of ourselves and of others create various types of conflict?"

During Reading:

- Students will read "Little Things Are Big" independently and annotate the text:

After Reading:

- Students will use various levels of questioning in order to create discussion questions based on this text and the essential question.
- Students will participate in small group or whole class discussion based on these student-created questions.
- The teacher will introduce the **Johari Window** as a tool that is used to help individuals improve communication and relationships. The teacher will explain that the Johari Window can also be used to analyze characters and conflict in a text. The teacher will distribute the Johari Window chart and explain that each section of the chart or pane of the window represents a different aspect of a character. The teacher should emphasize that the Public Self and the Blind Self should be obvious to the reader, but they will have to make inferences about the Private Self and the Unknown Self.

Johari Window	Known by the character	Not known by the character
Known by other characters and/or the reader	<u>Public Self</u> Information that everyone knows.	<u>Blind Self</u> Information that the character does not know or acknowledge (denies), but other characters and/or the reader do know.
	<u>Private Self</u> Private information known only by the character. Other characters and/or the reader can only infer this information.	<u>Unknown Self</u> Information no one knows; the reader must make inferences about aspects of the character's personality that he or she is in denial or unaware of (hidden potential).

Personality

- The teacher will model the use of the Johari Window to analyze characterization using Jesus from "Little Things Are Big." The students will discuss the traits and actions that comprise this character's Public Self, Private Self, Blind Self, and Unknown Self.

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DAYS TWO and THREE

Before Reading

- Quickwrite: After alerting students to the similar time period and the differing perspectives presented in “Little Things are Big” (narrator is an African-American/Puerto Rican man) and “Everything That Rises Must Converge” (main characters are a Caucasian male and his mother), students will either:
 - Predict external and internal conflicts within O’Connor’s short story, or
 - Predict external and internal conflicts based on the title
 - Discuss as a group

- Divide the class in half and assign one group the character of Julian and the other group the character of Julian’s mother (note that she is never given a proper name).
- Explain to students that as they read and interact with the text, they should highlight words and phrases that reveal the internal and external conflicts faced by their assigned character.
- Students will independently use the Johari Window tool to analyze their assigned character.
- Partner students with similar characters to share, discuss, and add to the Johari Window.

Possible answers:

Julian’s Johari Window

<p>Public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ white male in his 20’s ➤ son ➤ just finished college ➤ writer who sells typewriters ➤ unsocial ➤ smokes –asks for a light ➤ discourages mom to give money to the child ➤ helps mother up ➤ runs for help 	<p>Blind</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ungrateful and unkind ➤ has his own set of prejudices ➤ annoying (not impressive) to man on bus
<p>Private</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ trapped by his mother ➤ draws “satisfaction to see injustice in daily operation” ➤ wants to converse with man on bus ➤ unhappy ➤ has mental bubble to retreat into ➤ thinks he is open-minded ➤ wants to hurt his mother by befriending the man on the bus ➤ capable of conversation “above the comprehension of those around him” ➤ “too intelligent to be a success” ➤ “thinks bitterly of the house that has been lost to him” 	<p>Unknown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why he is so arrogant and patronizing ➤ Why he acts like he needs to prove something to the world ➤ Whether he is more like his mother than he realizes

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Julian’s mother’s Johari Window

Public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ wearing ostentatious hat ➤ traveling on bus with her son ➤ overweight ➤ offers penny to the child ➤ loves children ➤ needs physical help from her son ➤ has sacrificed to help her son ➤ widow ➤ believes she is justified in her racism 	Blind <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ childlike ➤ “lived according to the laws of her own fantasy world” ➤ “she had enjoyed the struggle and that she thought <u>she</u> had won” ➤ doesn’t realize that she needs to change with a changing society
Private <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ not who she wants to be ➤ feels guilty ➤ feels fear of being alone ➤ she alone knows what she has gone through without a husband ➤ lived within a prosperous lifestyle and witnessed the economic change 	Unknown <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ “broken” before the story starts

Assessment: Students will compose eulogies from the point of view of their assigned character.

- Julian: Based on his self-perception at the end of the short story, how would he want to remember his mother? Compose a eulogy to be read at her funeral that incorporates these ideas.
- Julian’s mother: Based on her self-perception at the end of the short story, how would she want to be remembered? Compose a eulogy to be read at her funeral that incorporates these ideas.

DAY FOUR: Shared Inquiry Discussion

- Have students respond to the following prompt: How would sharing insights obtained through the use of Johari Window have led to better communication and relationships between the characters in “Little Things are Big” and “Everything That Rises Must Converge”?
- Have students participate in a large-group discussion in which they share their responses to the prompt. If the class is too large to conduct a single discussion, conduct a **Fishbowl Discussion**. In a fishbowl discussion, the class is divided into two equal groups. The inner group begins the discussion while the outer group (the “observers”) quietly takes notes on either the discussion or critiques the speaking/listening ability of members of the inner group. After an allotted amount of time, the two groups switch to continue the discussion.
- After the completion of the discussion, students should review their original response to the prompt to assess if their opinion has changed or been re-affirmed.
- Students should respond to the original prompt for a second time. They are not merely marking up the original response, but instead, re-composing their response on the same worksheet. The purpose of this second response is to be able to respond to the prompt in a much deeper manner as a result of exposure to the discussion and varying ideas.