

Clark University Master of Arts in Teaching Program  
Learning Activity Plan (Porcella 12/10/2015-12/11/2015)

*Power in Literature, Power in Life: Living Of Mice and Men* (Two Day LAP)

- I. Content: Describe **what** it is you will teach. What is the content?
- Over the two days of this lesson activity plan (Thursday and Friday), students will read *Of Mice and Men* chapter 4, the scene where Lennie visits Crooks' room. This reading will be aloud and as a whole class.
  - We will read p. 66-76 on the first day and p. 76-83 on the second day.
  - Students will take turns reading as a character in the text, with four students in roles on Thursday and five students in roles on Friday. This will be our first Reader's Theatre.
  - Both days, we will engage in conversation following our reading about the content that we have read as well as deeper meanings and implications in the text.
  - Essential questions can be found in sections below, including in part VI.
- II. Learning Goal(s): Describe what specifically students will **know** and **be able to do** after the experience of this class.
- Students will be able to better visualize the chapter 4 scene through the use of speaking roles.
  - They will continue building their skills as engaged listeners as well as readers.
  - Students will diversify their views of how a text can be read, including through acting.
  - They will begin to express how characters are changing, or staying the same, in the text, while also finding evidence of how characters' dreams impact their actions.
  - Students will use textual evidence to discuss character dreams. They will also cite a passage or quote that demonstrates how one character has power over another.
  - Language goal: students will add the words "ageism" and "ableism" to their lexicon, and, if they have not already, "racism" and "sexism." They will verbally express an example of power/discrimination found in chapter 4.
- III. Rationale: Explain how the content and learning goal(s) relate to your Curriculum Unit Plan learning goals.
- I am engaging students in nuanced ways with the texts we read. I am attempting to facilitate a Reader's Theatre to compliment Socratic seminars and dialogue circles in the unit.
  - Students have been thinking about friendship the past two weeks in terms of whether it is from pleasure, utility, or truth (cf. *Nicomachean Ethics*), and now we will push our thinking to friendships as constructs of power.
  - Next week, we will use our conversations to begin thinking about taking on the role of a character in the text in order to create the second part of our final portfolio (the diary entry).
  - Chapter 4 provides an opportunity to talk about characters in isolation; that is, how do characters act when not part of the "flock"? We can talk about power and dreams.
  - We will continue to use textual evidence as a means to support claims.
- IV. Assessment: Describe **how** you and your students will know they have reached your learning goals.
- Unlike other days where we have done a lot of writing-to-learn and writing as formative assessment, these two days do not involve as much writing.
  - Students will be assessed for their following along in the book by flagging two areas or more each day of the given prompt. Readers will be responsible for their roles.
  - I will keep track of student conversation as a formative assessment.

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- In subsequent journal entries, including the diary entry next week, I will look for how students met the language goal by looking for these words in their writing.
- Students will be required to speak, so I will keep track of their discussion participation.

V. Personalization and equity: Describe how you will provide for individual student strengths and needs. How will you and your lesson consider the needs of each student and scaffold learning? How specifically will ELL students and students with learning disabilities gain access and be supported?

- My ELL students should be able to partake either as readers or as listeners on both days, given what I have seen from them this year.
- I have a couple students who will become very anxious with reading aloud as a role, so for these students (unless they volunteer) I will not require them to read.
- I will not conduct nominations for reading, since I worry one of my IEP students will get nominated as Lennie. Instead, I will seek volunteers and if I need to draw names, then I will consider preselecting certain students whom I know can read well but who never volunteer.
- Listeners will be required to locate sections of the text based on my prompts, so they will be able to go back into the text more easily when we discuss. This inherently builds in scaffolds.

VI. Activity description and agenda

- a. Describe the activities that will help your students understand the content of your class lesson by creating an agenda with time frames for your class. Be prepared to explain why you think each activity will help students on the path toward understanding.

**Day 1 (Thursday 12/10)**

- 0:00-0:10 Welcome students. Everyone will take out their books. I will note that we will read aloud p. 66-76 today, though in a different style than in previous days. I will select four students for roles: a narrator, Crooks, Lennie, and Candy.
- 0:10-0:35 Conduct reading with the aforementioned roles reading in the appropriate places. If not enough people volunteer, then I will draw names from a hat. Students who are reading should strive to read with emotion and accent. Those listening also have a role. They will follow along and while listening to character conversation, they must flag, with the provided Post-It notes, at least 2 lines that are examples of a character talking about a dream that they have.
- 0:35-0:52 Debrief: what was this experience like for our actors? What do we think of Crooks, Lennie, and Candy in this scene so far? That is, do we sympathize with any of them or their situations? **Homework:** Students complete a brief participation self-reflection on Week 2. I will distribute a half-sheet of paper with the questions to expedite the process.

**Day 2 (Friday 12/11)**

- 0:00-0:10 Welcome students and collect homework. Opening conversation: (1) What does it mean to have power over someone? What does this look like? (2) For students in Theatre, what can you tell your classmates about "status"?
- 0:10-0:15 Select five different students today: a narrator, Crooks, Lennie, Candy, and Curley's wife. We will use these roles for p. 76-83.
- 0:15-0:35 Conduct reading with the aforementioned roles reading in the appropriate places. If not enough people volunteer, then I will draw names from a hat. Students who

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are reading should read with emotion and accent. Those listening also have a role. They will follow along and while listening to character conversation, they must flag, with the provided Post-It notes, at least 2 lines that are examples of a character showing power over another person.

0:35-0:52

Debrief: do we sympathize with any of these characters or their situations? Who is “in charge” in this scene? Why do you think that, and what evidence can you provide? Students will concurrently see the following diagram on the board:

Racism	Sexism
Ageism	Ableism

I will ask what students know about these terms. It is my assumption that they have heard of racism and sexism, but perhaps not the others. The connecting point should be that these are all forms of thinking you have power over another. **No homework.**

- b. What particular challenges, in terms of student learning or implementing planned activity, do you anticipate and how will you address them?

Students may get bored if they are in the role of listener. I have been trying to prevent this by having several read-aloud classes prior to today where students can get accustomed to listening and following along. Additionally, students all have a task to complete, either as a reader or as a listener who must find examples in the text.

Students may not volunteer to read, since several of the roles require a lot of reading time. I will be prepared to draw names from a hat, which I may preselect, for students to read. Also, half the class will be reading over the two days, so there is a balance for those who love and those who loathe reading aloud.

Timing could be an issue, particularly on the second day. I do not know with certainty how long reading will take, though I feel as though I have given it enough time. If necessary, conversation can be picked up in subsequent classes.

- VII. List the Massachusetts Learning Standards this lesson addresses.

**RL.9-10.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**RL.9-10.3** Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

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**SL.9-10.1** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**SL.9-10.6** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.