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| **Unit Overview:**   1. Describe the scope of content which will be included in the unit: explain how you determined what specific standards and content (topics) to bundle into a unit of instruction. List the standards covered in the unit.     **The unit will cover the letter from Samuel Clemens to his sister on March 9 & 11, 1859, regarding his experience of Mardi Gras that year. It will also cover Mardi Gras more generally and informal letter writing.**  **I chose the letter because it is short enough to read in one sitting, and it provides an entertaining insight into an early Mardi Gras celebration that had recently evolved into something similar to what we observe today. I wanted two basic outcomes:**   1. **To increase students’ understanding of Mardi Gras then and now.** 2. **To give the students experience writing informal letters.**   **Standards used:**  **ELA 11 RSL 3. Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama, including how the author develops character and setting, builds the plot and subplots, creates themes, and develops mood/atmosphere.**  **ELA 11 RSL 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)**  **ELA 11 RSIT 1. Cite strong, thorough, and relevant textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.**  **ELA 11 RSIT 3. Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.**  **ELA 11 RSIT 7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.**  **ELA 11 SLS 1.b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.**  **ELA 11 LS 1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.**  **ELA 11 LS 2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.**   1. Explain how the unit fits within the overall curriculum including an explanation of precedents and antecedents (what comes before and after). Also, describe the prerequisite skills students will need in order to be successful in this unit.   **In an earlier unit, I plan to have them work on their own narrative when studying *Gulliver’s Travels*.**  **After the Sam Clemens unit, I plan to have the students write a formal letter as part of their political unit.**  **In addition to needing basic writing skills, the students will also need to be able to use the Internet for research.**   1. Describe how the unit of instruction will be meaningful to learners.    1. How does the unit meet both academic and social needs of the learners?    2. How does the unit meet both current and future needs of the learners?   **This unit will meet the social needs of students both in the class through group work and partner work, and also in the broader community by helping them understand and participate in the living history of Louisiana.**  **This unit will help the students academically by guiding them to research unfamiliar words and concepts to better understand their reading, and will give them practice writing informal letters.**   * 1. Identify areas of possible student misconceptions and explain how these will be addressed within the unit.   **The letter is full of unusual terms and ideas. Part of the unit will be letting the students research these and sharing their answers with the rest of the class.**   * 1. How does the unit connect content knowledge with authentic, real world contexts and applications?   **This unit connects directly with one of the signature annual events in Louisiana. While much of the celebration is focused in New Orleans, there are parades and other Mardi Gras events in every quadrant of the state, making it accessible to the bulk of our students.**   * 1. How does the unit integrate content across subject silos?   **This unit delves into social studies, Louisiana history, religious traditions, and world geography.**  I |
| **Lesson Sequence:**   1. Show the planned sequence of topics, lessons, activities, and assessments within the unit.    1. Use an outline or graphic format to show an overall picture of the unit.       1. For elementary unit plans clearly show the interconnectedness of lessons from the core disciplines of ELA, math, science, and social studies. Additionally, show the connections with arts and physical education.       2. For secondary {6-12) unit plans clearly show cross-curricular connections: especially, integration of reading and language across disciplines. Additionally, show specific connections   to post-secondary education, and careers.   * + - 1. **Monday.** Initial class reading of the Sam Clemens letter with guided notetaking.       2. **Tuesday.** We’ll study the history of Mardi Gras in Louisiana.       3. **Wednesday.** Group work looking up words and ideas from the letter, followed by group presentations so everybody will have the same information. Individuals will work drafting a letter about their experience with Mardi Gras to somebody out-of-state who does not know much about it.       4. **Thursday.** Groups will finish their presentations, and individuals will continue drafting.       5. **Friday.** We will review theformat for an informal letter. Students will continue drafting, and have a peer-review partner session.   This unit delves into social studies, Louisiana history, religious traditions, and world geography.  **Careers.** Louisiana has a population of 4.8 million, with a total of 47 million visitors to the state in 2017. Currently 236,000 people in Louisiana are directly employed in tourism, with a ripple effect that reaches much further. |
| **Unit Launch:**   1. How will you engage students with the unit?    1. How will you engender excitement, anticipation, enthusiasm, and curiosity?    2. How will you motivate students to succeed at high levels?   C. How will you communicate high expectations?   1. How will you present the "Unit Overview" and "Lesson Sequence" to students? 2. How will you inform the school, community, and parents/guardians about the unit?    1. Include in your unit a press release, a memo to your principal and other teachers, and a letter to parents about your unit. In each of the aforementioned communications be sure to   explain how the particular constituents can contribute to the unit.   * 1. Include in your unit a press release, a memo to your principal and other teachers, and a letter to parents about your unit. In each of the aforementioned communications be sure to   explain how the particular constituents can contribute to the unit.    On Monday, I’ll introduce the unit to the students. I’ll get them interested by showing them an old drawing of a Mardi Gras parade and having them write a paragraph as one of the characters in the drawing. Then I’ll play them a recording of Clemens’ first paragraph with another image of an early Mardi Gras.  I find that my enthusiasm is contagious. This is a unit I really believe in, enough so that the students will pick up on that.  I have attached the memos and letters to the first lesson below. |

Mardi Gras Letter Grading Rubric

**A. SELECTION OF TOPIC**

1. You selected a topic that offers no potential for insight into your life or character.

2. a. You selected a topic that is so common that it offers little insight into your unique personality.

b. You selected a topic that you have no emotional distance from; therefore, you were unable to handle it effectively

3. You selected a topic that is generally acceptable.

4. You selected an outstanding and interesting topic.

**B.PARAMETERS**

1. a. The parameters for your essay were far too broad, leading you to skim over the events of the story. You tried to tell too much.

b. You did not include events crucial to the understanding of the event.

2. a. Your parameters were too broad, reducing the amount you could focus on the events.

b. You left out elements of the story that would have helped the understanding of the event.

3. You used adequate narrative techniques.

4. You excellently used narrative techniques such as flashback, flashforward, etc.

**C. DETAIL**

1. a. You provide no detail or dialogue.

b. You provide details in an apparently random order.

2. a. You provide some details, but they are too general and vague.

b. You provide some details, but too many do not belong where you place them.

3. You provide detail and dialogue in the proper places and provide a general picture of what you are describing.

4. Your detail and dialogue invoke a clear image of what you are describing.

**D. WRITING THE ESSAY**

1. Your essay lacks coherence and cohesion. Transitions are ineffective. The paragraphs read like a list, with no connection between the sentences. You did not follow the formatting guidelines.

2. The paragraphs have a general focus, but some sentences are unrelated. Coherence, cohesion, and transitions need work. Formatting is weak.

3. Paragraphs are generally well developed with fewer than three problems of focus, unity, or coherence. Transitions may be a bit forced. Formatting generally good.

4. Paragraphs are focused, unified, and coherent. Transitions are logical and effective. Excellent formatting.

**E. GRAMMAR**

1. You exceeded the maximum allowable number of serious grammatical mistakes (15 for this essay), automatically dropping your grade to an "F."

2. You had 10-15 grammatical errors, making the highest grade you can receive on this essay a "D."

3. You had 5-9 errors.

4. You had 1-4 errors.

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| **Unit Project:**   1. Describe at least one project that spans several days and integrates multiple learning outcomes with authentic, real-world, applications.    1. Include a detailed set of directions for students.    2. Include an evaluation rubric.   The students will spend several days writing an informal letter to an out-of-state friend. Letter-writing skills will be necessary to them throughout their lives.  I |
| **Summative Assessment:**   1. How will you assess overall learning to make sure that goals and objectives are met?    1. How will you empower students to demonstrate their learning in multiple ways?   The students will write singly and in groups. Their will also use illustrations in their writing. They will research and present their research to the class.   * 1. How will you accommodate learners so that all learners have opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned (what they know and can do): this is in contrast to an assessment such as a multiple guess test which assesses a finite set of learning outcomes in only one way.      1. Include in your unit fully developed assessments.         1. For objective tests (multiple guess, matching, true false) include the actual test.         2. For project-based and performance assessments include clear specific directions and an evaluation rubric.   I have a variety of assessments — bell ringers, individual writing, group research, presentations, and closing activities. They are all included *in situ* below.  C. How will you accurately assess the achievement of English language learners, and students with IEPs  and 504 plans?  I’ll make sure they receive the mandated accommodations.  I |
| **Enrichment:**   1. How will you enable students who learn easily and well (gifted and high achieving students) to set and meet high expectations?   This unit provides an entrance into Mardi Gras, which opens up an entire world to the inquiring mind — art, music, history, culture, religion, race, gender, language. Whatever interests a bright student, he or she will find plenty of it in the topic of Mardi Gras. |
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| **Remediation:**  1) How will you make certain that all learning experiences are at an appropriate level (accommodations) for students who lack specific prerequisite knowledge and skills to engage with the planned curriculum?  I have quite a bit of group work and paired work, along with a variety of assignments adapted to people of varying abilities and learning styles. | | |
| **Culminating Experiences:**   1. Describe the strategies you will use to provide closure to the unit (kind of like the closing ceremony of the Olympics).    1. How will you enable students to self-reflect on their growth (metacognition) throughout the unit?    2. How will you enable students to recognize and value their own accomplishments?    3. How will you facilitate the transition to the next unit?    4. How will you communicate the accomplishments of your students to various constituents including parents/guardians and community and school leaders? | |  |
| We have completion assignments every day, with a unit completion assignment on the last day.  I give graded assignments daily along with one large assignment. All these will be averaged and forwarded to the office.  **Unit Evaluation:**   1. How will you reflect on the strengths and challenges encountered through teaching the unit?   I plan to get feedback from my students about the unit. I’ll also talk to other teachers about it.    2) How will you share your work with the professional educational community?  I plan to make the lesson plans available on my web site and at TeachersPayTeachers. They’ll be free in both places. | | I |
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