**Title:** Themes in Part I

**Time:** 50 minutes

**Setting:**

Standard Academic Literature Class for 10th Grade  
  
The class consists of twenty-four students, ten girls and fourteen boys. This high school is located in a rural town, middle socioeconomic status. There are three students who receive free or reduced lunch. Most students are on track for their grade level reading, however two students read at above average and five students read two years below grade level. Twenty of the students are Caucasian and speak English. Three students are African American and speak in the African American English Vernacular. One student is fluent in Spanish but has limited English proficiency. He has difficulty writing in English but is working on it. One student has an emotional behavior disorder that makes it difficult for him to stay on task and concentrate in class. One student is diagnosed as legally blind, however still has the ability to read large print text.  
  
The district is composed of 97.6% white students, 0.6% Black students, 0% Hispanic students, 1% Asian students, and 0.4% Native American students. 7.1% of the school population is low income, the attendance rate is 94% and the high school graduation rate is 91.5%. The average ACT composite score is 21.0. The average size of a high school class is 16.6.

**Theory Into Practice Background:**

In his chapter on vocabulary in *The English Teacher’s Companion,* Jim Burke says, “While much of the research I surveyed for this chapter repeated what we all know works best—read, read, read—others (Feldman and Kinsella 2005; Beck, McKeown, and Kocan 2002) show that explicit study and discussion of language benefits students” (Burke 113). I will use this theory during my discussion of themes. The students have to read the novel in order to gain an understanding of the themes that are prevalent in the novel. Background content information that I will use will be different websites in order to obtain information on the different themes. The students will use poster boards in order to write down their ideas for the rest of the class room to see. They will read each other’s ideas and then respond to them. This lesson connects to future lessons because the students will be writing a paper on themes at the end of the unit.

**Objectives:** By the end of class..

* Students will be able to identify the themes in the novel
* Students will understand the importance of themes
* Students will start brainstorming for their final paper
* Students will be able to see what it is like to put their ideas onto paper and build off of each other’s ideas

**Materials:**

* Poster board paper
* Markers
* *In the Skin of a Lion* books

**Preparation:**

* Set the markers and poster board paper at the front of the classroom

**Procedure:**

Opening:

* Take Attendance
* Introduce what a theme in a book is: central idea or message within a novel
* Have the students brainstorm about different themes that they have seen within the novel thus far

Body:

* I will divide the students into groups of 5 and have them write on a large piece of paper what themes that they thought were important in the novel
* Each group will hang their poster around the room
* The students will go from poster to poster (like an art gallery) in order to see all the different themes that their peers have come up with
* The students will write at least 1 comment on each poster
* Each group will present their poster to the class and discuss why they think that these themes are important
* I will then introduce the different themes in the novel that I thought were relevant

- **Language and Lack of Language**

**- Immigrants, Insider v. Outsider**

**- Rich and Poor**

**- Stories/theater/plays**

* I will have the students write down all of the themes that we discussed because at the end of the unit we will have a paper based on themes in the novel

Closing:

* Take down the posters so that the room is clean for the next class
* Assign the homework: p.103-120 in *In the Skin of a Lion*

**Discussion Ideas:**

* Why are these themes important to the overall build of the story?
* What characters play a role in each of these themes?
* Why is it important to see other’s ideas instead of just using yours?

**Language Accommodations:**

I will accommodate the lesson for the students that speak in African American English by allowing them to write down the themes on the poster in their form of English. During the discussion, I will allow them to speak in African American English.

I will accommodate the lesson for the Spanish speaking student by letting him know the previous day that we will be discussing different themes within the novel. This will give him time to prepare for the lesson today. I will also excuse him from the class discussion unless he is prepared and comfortable to participate.

**Special Education Accommodations:**

I will accommodate this lesson for the student with the emotional disorder by clearly stating directions to the class in order for him to understand the activity. I will monitor him in order to make sure that he is staying on task. If he becomes antsy walking around the classroom, I will pull him aside and give him side work to complete, such as writing his themes on his own sheet of paper instead of on the poster board. I will also let the class know how much time is left so that he can monitor his time.

I will accommodate this lesson for the student who is legally blind by allowing this student to voice their opinion of the themes that they find are important instead of having to write them down on the board. When it comes time to walk around and view the other groups’ posters, I will walk around with them so that I will be able to read the information to them if they cannot see. I will also allow them to use an audio device to respond to the groups’ themes that are written on the poster.

**Assessment:**

I will be observing the student’s responses when they are doing the theme gallery, and I will be assessing them on the following

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Exceeds Expectations: 5 | Meets Expectations: 3 | Does Not Meet Expectations: 1 | Comments: |
| Content | The student understands the importance of themes within the novel | The student understands the importance of themes, but is not helping the group come up with multiple themes | The student refuses to do the work and come up with themes |  |
| Participation | The student is partaking in the activity | The student is writing down themes on the board, but not responding to their peers responses | The student is not partaking in the activity, and not writing anything on the poster boards |  |

A: 10-9 B: 8-7 C: 6-5 D: 4-3 F: 2-0

**Extension Ideas:**

* I could have the students write an exit slip on how they like the gallery
* I could have the students brainstorm ideas of how they will use these themes in the final paper

**Source of Activity:**

* I’d like to thank my CI 401 and 402 teacher for giving my class this idea. I would like to thank gradesaver.com for helping me find important themes within the novel and I would also like to thank Jeremy Linn for reminding me about the gallery walk idea.

**Resources and References:**

Burke, J. (2007). *The English Teacher's Companion: A complete guide to classroom, curriculum, and*

*the profession* (3rd ed). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

"In the Skin of a Lion Themes." *Study Guides & Essay Editing*. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 Dec. 2012.

**Illinois State English Language Arts Goals:**

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: 6N) The competent teacher: teaches students to analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and summarize information in single texts and across multiple texts, including electronic resources.

This is shown in my lesson because I have the students analyze the novel in order to come up with different themes that they found were important throughout the novel. I then have them evaluate and summarize the information that they have learned by putting the information on the poster boards. The use of electronic resources will be apparent when they put together their ideas for their essay.

Knowledge Indicator 5F) knows strategies to maximize student attentiveness and engagement.

-This indicator is represented in my lesson because my use of the poster board gallery is a different strategy that I use in order to maximize student attentiveness and engagement. The students will be more attentive and engaged because they have to walk around the classroom and discuss with their classmates important themes.

**Common Core English Language Arts Standards:**

CC.9-10.R.L.1 Key Ideas and Details: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text

This is apparent in my lesson plan because I have the students look through the text in order to find the different themes that are dominant in the novel. They need to cite the passages where they find these themes, and they also need textual evidence in order to show why they think these themes are important.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.2](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RL/9-10/2/) Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

This is apparent in my lesson plan because I have the students determine different themes that occur in Part 1 of the book. I have the students provide an objective summary of the text by having them discuss as a classroom the themes that they found important, and discussing it as a class. By having them analyze the different themes within the text, they are analyzing the development of the theme throughout the text.