



Deer Valley Unified School District No. 97

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# 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Exploratory Humanities – Literature Studies Curriculum Document

## **Course Description – Humanities Literature Studies**

**This course provides students with the opportunity to read, discuss, compare and analyze high quality literature.**

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. The students will apply a variety of reading strategies for comprehending, interpreting and evaluating a selection of literary texts.
2. The students will explore the differences between literature and informational text.
3. The students will explore different genres of literature.
4. The students will read literature and discuss the ideas, principles, and insights of the authors.
5. The students will investigate a variety of authors.
6. The students will describe, analyze, compare, contrast, and evaluate literary elements in a variety of literary texts.

### **Arizona State Standards:**

#### **Standard 1 –**

##### **Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text**

##### **Concept 1: Elements of Literature**

**PO 1: (Grades 7 & 8) Analyze plot development to determine how conflicts are resolved.**

**PO 2: (Grade 7) Recognize multiple themes in works of prose, poetry and drama**

**PO 2: (Grade 8) Compare & contrast themes across works of prose, poetry, and drama**

**PO 3: (Grades 7 & 8) Describe a character, based upon thoughts, words, and actions of the character, the narrator's description, and other characters**

**PO 4: (Grades 7 & 8) Contrast points of view in literary text**

**PO 5: (Grade 7) Analyze the influence of setting on the problem and resolution**

**PO 5: (Grade 8) Analyze the relevance of the setting to the mood and tone of the text**

**PO 6: (Grades 7 & 8) Draw conclusions about the style, mood, and meaning of literary text based on the author's word choice**

**PO 7: (Grade 7) Identify the characteristics and structural elements of poetry in a given selection**

**PO 7: (Grade 8) Analyze the characteristics and structural elements of a variety of poetic forms**

**PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.**

##### **Concept 2: Historical and Cultural Aspects of Literature**

**PO 1: (Grades 7 & 8) Describe the historical and cultural aspects found in cross-cultural works of literature.**

**PO 2: (Grades 7 & 8) Identify common structures and stylistic elements in literature, folklore, and myths from a variety of cultures.**

# Units of Study and Areas of Focus

## 1. Classic Literature

Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text

Concept 1: Elements of Literature

PO 1: (Grades 7 & 8) Analyze plot development to determine how conflicts are resolved.

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

## 2. Short Stories

Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text

Concept 1: Elements of Literature

PO 3: (Grades 7 & 8) Describe a character, based upon thoughts, words, and actions of the character, the narrator's description, and other characters

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

## 3. Historical Literature

Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text

Concept 1: Elements of Literature

PO 5: (Grade 7) Analyze the influence of setting on the problem and resolution

PO 5: (Grade 8) Analyze the relevance of the setting to the mood and tone of the text

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

## 4. Poetry

Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text

Concept 1: Elements of Literature

PO 6: (Grades 7 & 8) Draw conclusions about the style, mood, and meaning of literary text based on the author's word choice

PO 7: (Grade 7) Identify the characteristics and structural elements of poetry in a given selection

PO 7: (Grade 8) Analyze the characteristics and structural elements of a variety of poetic forms

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

## 5. Science Fiction / Fantasy

Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text

Concept 1: Elements of Literature

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

## 6. Folklore / Myths

Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text

Concept 1: Elements of Literature

PO 4: (Grades 7 & 8) Contrast points of view in literary text

Concept 2: Historical and Cultural Aspects of Literature

PO 1: (Grades 7 & 8) Describe the historical and cultural aspects found in cross-cultural works of literature.

PO 2: (Grades 7 & 8) Identify common structures and stylistic elements in literature, folklore, and myths from a variety of cultures.

## 7. Young Adult Literature

Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text

Concept 1: Elements of Literature

PO 2: (Grade 7) Recognize multiple themes in works of prose, poetry and drama

PO 2: (Grade 8) Compare & contrast themes across works of prose, poetry, and drama

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

## **Suggested Pacing / Sequence Guides**

### **9 Week Course**

Option A – Choose one author to study for the entire 9 weeks. Consider an author of a Classic, Historical Fiction, or Science Fiction.

Read, discuss, and compare several works by a single author. Research the author.

Analyze plot, characters, setting, theme of each work.

Suggestions: John Steinbeck, Mark Twain, Jane Austen, Edgar Allen Poe

Option B – 3 week unit of study using a work of Classic Literature to become familiar with plot analysis, character analysis, setting analysis, and theme analysis.

3 week unit of study focusing on Short Stories and character analysis.

3 week unit of study focusing on Poetry and the structural elements of poetry.

### **18 Week Course**

Option A - Choose one author to study for 9 weeks. Consider an author of a Classic, Historical Fiction, or Science Fiction.

Read, discuss, and compare several works by a single author. Research the author.

Analyze plot, characters, setting, theme of each work.

Suggestions: John Steinbeck, Mark Twain, Jane Austen, Edgar Allen Poe

During the second 9 weeks allow students to form book study groups reading various Young Adult Fiction titles.

Allow students to select from a list of titles.

Focus on determining themes of YA Fiction.

Option B – Spend 10 – 14 days on each of the seven units of study.

Option C - Choose one author to study for 9 weeks. Consider an author of a Classic, Historical Fiction, or Science Fiction.

Read, discuss, and compare several works by a single author. Research the author.

Analyze plot, characters, setting, theme of each work.

Suggestions: John Steinbeck, Mark Twain, Jane Austen, Edgar Allen Poe

3 week unit of study using a work of Classic Literature to become familiar with plot analysis, character analysis, setting analysis, and theme analysis.

3 week unit of study focusing on Short Stories and character analysis.

3 week unit of study focusing on Poetry and the structural elements of poetry.

Pacing / Sequence Guide for 9 wks / 18 wks

**Classic Lit** – all literary elements – stress plot

Standard 1 –

Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text

Concept 1: Elements of Literature

PO 1: (Grades 7 & 8) Analyze plot development to determine how conflicts are resolved.

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

**Short Stories** – characters

PO 3: (Grades 7 & 8) Describe a character, based upon thoughts, words, and actions of the character, the narrator's description, and other characters

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

**Historical Lit** – setting

PO 5: (Grade 7) Analyze the influence of setting on the problem and resolution

PO 5: (Grade 8) Analyze the relevance of the setting to the mood and tone of the text

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

**Poetry** – Language and poetic devices

PO 6: (Grades 7 & 8) Draw conclusions about the style, mood, and meaning of literary text based on the author's word choice

PO 7: (Grade 7) Identify the characteristics and structural elements of poetry in a given selection

PO 7: (Grade 8) Analyze the characteristics and structural elements of a variety of poetic forms

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

**Science Fiction / Fantasy** – identifying a genre by its characteristics

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

**Folklore** – Point of View & Historical / Cultural aspects of Literature

PO 4: (Grades 7 & 8) Contrast points of view in literary text

Concept 2: Historical and Cultural Aspects of Literature

PO 1: (Grades 7 & 8) Describe the historical and cultural aspects found in cross-cultural works of literature.

PO 2: (Grades 7 & 8) Identify common structures and stylistic elements in literature, folklore, and myths from a variety of cultures.

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

**Young Adult – Theme**

PO 2: (Grade 7) Recognize multiple themes in works of prose, poetry and drama

PO 2: (Grade 8) Compare & contrast themes across works of prose, poetry, and drama

PO 8: (Grade 7) Identify various genres of fiction based upon their characteristics.

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Humanities - Literature Studies**

### Key Concepts

When studying classic literature, a general knowledge of the basic elements of literature will help the reader to appreciate each classic work.

The basic elements of literature include: theme, characterization, setting, plot, point of view, language and style.

While there is not a common set of criteria for declaring a book 'classic literature', it is commonly accepted as literature that has stood the test of time and is recognized as superior by more than one generation of readers.

#### **Single Author Study:**

Identify several authors who have written several classic novels. (ex: John Steinbeck, Mark Twain, Jane Austen). Allow students to form groups based upon the author they are interested in reading. During the length of the unit of study (possibly 9 weeks) the students will read several works by the same author. The students will meet regularly to discuss and compare plot lines, characters, settings, and use of various literary techniques in the books. In addition, the group should research the author and the political, social, and cultural climate of the time period during which the author wrote in order to understand the influence these may have had on the author. The group should work together to prepare / present a presentation regarding the author and his/her works.

**Subplots:** Determine a movie that all students are familiar with. Point out the main plot and any subplots that were in the film. Many classic novels become classics because they engage the reader through the use of interesting subplots. Encourage the students to notice the author's use of subplots as they read classic books of their choosing.

## **Classic Literature**

### Resources

[http://www.ylpl.lib.ca.us/ya/ya\\_classics.php](http://www.ylpl.lib.ca.us/ya/ya_classics.php) List and brief descriptions of classic literature.

<http://www.literacyrules.com/pdf/plot32.pdf> a graphic organizers for diagramming plot

[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=904](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=904) lesson plans re: literary elements

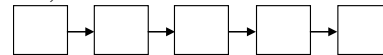
### Suggested Titles

*Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen  
*Jane Eyre*, by Charlotte Bronte  
*David Copperfield*, by Charles Dickens  
*The Old Man and the Sea*, by Ernest Hemingway  
*To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee  
*Of Mice and Men*, John Steinbeck  
*The Jungle*, Upton Sinclair  
*Catcher in the Rye*, J.D. Salinger

### Instructional Activities

#### **Analysis of Plot:**

Classic literature is a great opportunity to identify the various stages of plot development. Use a Flow Map to identify as many of the following stages as possible as the plot develops: exposition, foreshadowing, inciting force, conflict, rising action, crisis, falling action, resolution.



### Related Vocabulary

**Exposition:** The introductory material which gives the setting, creates the tone, presents the characters, and presents other facts necessary to understanding the story.

**Foreshadowing:** The use of hints or clues to suggest what will happen later in the story.

**Inciting Force:** The event or character that triggers the conflict.

**Conflict:** The conflicts we encounter can usually be identified as one of four kinds. (Man versus...Man, Nature, Society, or Self)

**Rising Action:** A series of events that builds from the conflict. It begins with the inciting force and ends with the climax.

**Crisis:** The conflict reaches a turning point. At this point the opposing forces in the story meet and the conflict becomes most intense. The crisis occurs before or at the same time as the climax.

**Falling Action** - The events after the climax which close the story.

**Resolution (Denouement)** - Rounds out and concludes the action.

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### Key Concepts

Works of Young-Adult fiction portray an adolescent as the protagonist. The subject matter and story lines are typically tales of “coming of age”, but beyond that YA stories span the entire spectrum of fiction genres.

Young Adult fiction includes sub-genres such as e-books, graphic novels, light novels and manga.

Themes related to coming of age, dating, fitting in, friendships, sex, drugs, self esteem, school, and relationships with parents and siblings are common to YA fiction.

## **Young Adult Fiction**

### Resources

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/spring96/bleeker.html>  
suggestions for responding to works of fiction through poetry.

<http://www.teenreads.com/features/ultimate-reading-list.asp>  
brief reviews of YA fiction

<http://librarybooklists.org/fiction/ya/yaindex.htm> young adult book lists by theme

### Suggested Titles

Classic YA Titles:  
*The Swiss Family Robinson*  
*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*  
*Little Women*  
*Anne of Green Gables*  
*The Outsiders*

Recent YA Authors:  
Stephanie Myers  
Walter Dean Myers  
Gary Paulsen  
Meg Cabot

### Related Vocabulary

*Theme* is the central idea or message in a literary work. It is not the subject of the work. It is usually a perception about human life.

*Man vs. self conflict* - The internal conflict of an individual to understand himself or herself.

*Man vs. nature conflict* – An individual’s relationship with nature or the natural world.

*Man vs. man conflict* - Conflict that pits one person against another.

*Man vs. society conflict* – Conflict between an individual and the values and customs of others.

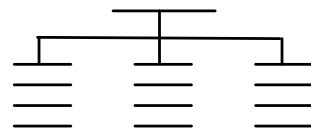
### Instructional Activities

**Book Talks:** Several students select the same book to read. As they read independently, they place post-it notes to mark passages that interest them, confuse or amuse them, or that remind them of a personal experience or something they read in another book.

When the group comes together to talk about the book, they use these post-it notes to guide their conversations. During the book talks students are able to share their own impressions and thoughts as well as listening to the opinions of their classmates.

#### **Analyzing Theme:**

As students read individual YA novels and identify the theme of the novel, have them create Tree Maps with the theme at the top and the branches labeled ‘characters’, ‘setting’, and ‘action’. Under the branches, list examples of how the author developed the theme of the story.



**Book Club:** Sponsor a Book Club for youth interested in sharing and discussing YA fiction. Keep in mind here that the goal is to have fun reading.

**Book Reviews:** Submit brief book reviews to the school newspaper or as a link on the school website.

**Blogs:** Students maintain blogs regarding YA literature. Cross-school possibilities!

#### **Understanding Theme:**

Read *The Tortoise and the Hare* aloud to the class. Ask students to brainstorm what the story was about. Answers such as ‘a race’ should be identified as the subject of the tale. Lead students to answers that suggest ‘persistence pays’. Point out the difference between a subject and theme.

Challenge students to think of fairy tales with themes of “Good wins out over evil”, “You can’t buy happiness”, or “Honesty is the best policy.”



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### Key Concepts

In historical fiction, setting is the most important literary element. Because the writer is writing about a particular time in history, the information about the time period must be accurate and authentic. Authors of historical fiction must research the time period thoroughly in order to know how people lived, what they ate, what kinds of homes they had, and what artifacts were common to their lives.

Historical fiction books may have characters who are either imaginary or who actually lived during the time period. Settings also may be real or imaginary. The plot events may be documented historical events or they may be fictional.

The genre of Historical Fiction brings history to life by reconstructing characters, events, movements, ways of life, and the spirit of a bygone day.

The setting is the background against which the action takes place. Three basic elements of setting include place (city, country, castle, playground, ship), time (clock time, afternoon, future, date), and environment (weather, noise level, darkness).

## Historical Fiction

### Resources

[http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson\\_images/lesson107/SettingHandout.pdf](http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson107/SettingHandout.pdf)

[http://www.eduref.org/Virtual/Lessons/Language\\_Arts/Writing/WCP0222e.pdf](http://www.eduref.org/Virtual/Lessons/Language_Arts/Writing/WCP0222e.pdf)

both sites contain graphic organizers that could be used for recording the elements of setting.

### Suggested Titles

*Time Enough for Drums*, Anne Rinaldi  
*Johnny Tremain*, Esther Forbes  
*The Watsons Go to Birmingham*, C P Curtis  
*A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens  
*Across Five Aprils*, Irene Hunt  
*The Runaway Quilt*, Jennifer Chiaverini

### Instructional Activities

#### **Identifying Setting:**

Collect picture books from the school library. Have students work in pairs to determine when and where the author has set the story. Place post-it notes on text and pictures that help the reader to know when and where the story is taking place.

#### **Suggested Titles of Picture Books with Strong Settings:**

*Pink and Say*, Patricia Polacco  
*Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*, Judi Barrett  
*For You Are a Kenyan Child*, Kelly Cunnane  
*Thunder Cake*, Patricia Polacco  
*Canoe Day*, Gary Paulsen  
*The Relatives Came*, Cynthia Rylant  
*Dakota Dugout*, Ann Warren Turner  
*Covered Wagons*, *Bumpy Trails*, Kay Verla  
*Uptown*, Bryan Collier

#### **Understanding Setting:**

Read the children's story *Roxaboxen* by Barbara Cooney with the setting removed. <http://www.lessonplanspage.com/LAReadingSetting23.htm>

Ask students to describe Roxaboxen, where is it, what do the shops and houses look like? Ask students if they can describe the war.

Next, read the actual *Roxaboxen*. Ask the students to describe Roxaboxen, where is it, what do the shops and houses look like, describe the war.

Lead a discussion about the role that setting played in this book. What was different between the first and second reading of *Roxaboxen*?

### Related Vocabulary

*Historical fiction* is a sub-genre of fiction that often portrays fictional accounts or dramatization of historical figures or events.

*Setting* is the time and place where the story takes place. It can be specific or ambiguous.

When an author portrays history significantly different from the actual events the story may fall into the genre of *alternate history*.

When an author portrays historical events that defy the laws of physics, historical fiction becomes *historical fantasy*.

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**Key Concepts**

Science fiction is a genre of fiction in which the stories often tell about science and technology of the future. The principles of science are evident in science fiction but the laws and theories of science may be partially true and partially fictitious.

Science fiction texts are often set in the future, in space, in a different world, universe, or dimension.

Fantasy is often mistakenly included in the genre of science fiction. Fantasy is a separate genre that has magic, secondary worlds, mythical creatures, quests, and great battles between good and evil in most of the books. Common elements in the genre are dragons, wizards, elves, trolls and other imaginary characters.

Fantasy is one of the oldest genres of literature and may even include myths. Homer's The Iliad and The Odyssey are early examples of fantasy while Tolkein's Lord of the Ring series and Rowling's Harry Potter series are examples of very recent successful fantasy stories.

While science fiction and fantasy are two separate genres, they do occasionally overlap as in the case of the Wrinkle in Time Series by Madeleine L'Engle.

**Science Fiction / Fantasy**

**Resources**

<http://www.umich.edu/~umfandsf/>  
(Univ. of Michigan Fantasy and Science Fiction Site – includes a dictionary of symbolism frequently used in these genres)

[http://www.cynthialeitichsmith.com/lit\\_resources/favorites/by\\_genre/fantasy.html](http://www.cynthialeitichsmith.com/lit_resources/favorites/by_genre/fantasy.html) (summaries of young adult fantasy books)

[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=927](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=927)  
(lesson plan suggestions for paired readings of science fiction and nonfiction)

**Suggested Authors**

H G Wells  
Jules Verne  
George Orwell  
Anne McCaffrey  
Ayn Rand  
Isaac Asimov  
Tamora Pierce  
Ray Bradbury  
Robert Heinlein  
Roald Dahl  
Madeleine L'Engle  
JK Rowling  
JRR Tolkein

**Related Vocabulary**

*Technology elements* of science fiction and fantasy includes things such as – robots, spaceships, laser guns, time travel.

*Fantastical elements* of science fiction and fantasy includes things such as dragons, magic wands, cursed items.

*Metaphysical elements* of science fiction and fantasy include things such as time running backwards, effects not following causes.

*Supernatural* – Something that cannot be explained by laws of nature. Many events and characters in science fiction and fantasy are said to be supernatural.

**Instructional Activities**

**Is it Sci Fi or is it Fantasy:**

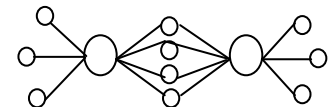
Introduce these genres of literature by showing video clips of movies such as Harry Potter, Transformers, Lord of the Rings, X-Men, Wizard of Oz, Men in Black, Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, Star Trek, Fantastic Four, It's A Wonderful Life, Edward Scissorhands, Clash of the Titans. (Screened clips only – not entire movies!!!! Trailers of these movies are available on websites of the movie. Google the name of the movie and look for trailers.)

Students should analyze what makes each movie science fiction or fantasy.

**Reading Journals** - Construct a T-chart with the term 'Realistic' on one side of the T-chart and 'Imaginary' on the other side. As students read their selections, record examples of events, objects, beings, etc of each.

**Comparing SciFi and Fantasy:**

Create a Double Bubble Map comparing how the genres of SciFi and Fantasy are alike and different.



After reading samples of SciFi and Fantasy create additional Double Bubble maps comparing and contrasting settings or other literary elements.

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### Key Concepts

The modern short story began in the 1800's. Washington Irving is recognized as the "Father of the American Short Story".

There is not a specific page count that differentiates a short story and a novelette.

The study of short stories presents a great opportunity to analyze the literary element- characterization.

Short stories use few characters. One character is clearly central to the story with all major events having some importance to this character.

In order for a story to seem real to the reader its characters must seem real. Characters are convincing if they are: consistent, motivated, and life-like (resemble real people)

An author may choose to create a character that is:

\*Round - this character has many sides and is complex, unique and interesting

\*Dynamic – this character may change for the better or for the worse as the story develops.

\*Static – this character is very stereotypical, the author focuses on one or two characteristics that never change. (e.g., a brilliant detective, a cruel stepmother, a drunk)

## **Short Stories**

### Resources

<http://www.classicshorts.com/>  
(printable short stories organized by title as well as by author)

<http://www.classicreader.com/browse/6/> (short stories appropriate for adolescent readers)

<http://www.americanliterature.com/ss/ssindx.html> (classic short stories by American authors)

[http://www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/readingliterature/literary\\_elements\\_devices/characterization.htm](http://www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/readingliterature/literary_elements_devices/characterization.htm) (great ideas for teaching characterization)

### Suggested Authors

Edgar Allen Poe  
Arthur Conan Doyle  
O Henry  
Nathaniel Hawthorne  
Washington Irving  
William Wymark Jacobs  
Lucy Maud Montgomery  
Rudyard Kipling  
Henry Lawson  
Jack London  
Beatrix Potter  
Mark Twain  
Ernest Hemingway

### Related Vocabulary

*Short Story* – A fictional narrative.

*Protagonist* – the hero or central character of a literary work.

*Antagonist* - The opposer of the main character (protagonist). The antagonist may be a human, an animal, or even nature or an act of nature.

*Deuteragonist* – The protagonist's 'side-kick'. Similar to a supporting actor or actress.

*Foil* – A character with opposing traits to another character. The author uses a foil to emphasize another character's traits.

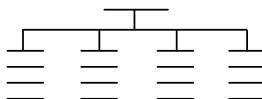
### Instructional Activities

#### **Characterization:**

The author may reveal a character in several ways:

- a) his/her physical appearance
- b) what he/she says, thinks, feels and dreams
- c) what he/she does or does not do
- d) what others say about him/her and how others react to him/her

Create a Tree Map with the name of the main character in the short story at the top of the map. Each branch of the tree will be labeled with one of the four ways that the reader learns about the character. Analyze the story for examples of each characterization strategy.



#### **Role Playing:**

After the class has read several short stories, ask students to 'become' the main character of each short story.

Other students in the class will then ask them questions that may or may not be related to the events in the story.

Example: Detective Holmes, what do you think should be done to stop illegal immigration in the United States.

Staying in character, respond to the questions.

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### Key Concepts

Traditional poetry follows standard rules of grammar and syntax with a regular rhythm and rhyme scheme.

Modern poetry is more likely to avoid rhyme and standard grammatical organization and seeks new ways of expression.

The analysis of poetry includes a close examination of not only the content and language of the poem but also the poet's use of imagery, form, and syntax.

A poem should be read several times in order to "hear" it and feel its emotions. The more times you read the poem, the more you can analyze and understand subtle shades of meaning in a poem.

## **Poetry**

### Resources

<http://www.poemofquotes.com/article/s/analyzing-poetry-tips.php> guiding questions for analyzing poetry.

<http://library.thinkquest.org/C005319/analyze.htm> suggestions for reading and analyzing poetry

[http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson\\_view.asp?id=354](http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=354) 8 lessons related to analysis of poetry

### Suggested Authors/Titles

Poems, by Emily Dickinson

The United States of Poetry, by Joshua Blum

How Does a Poem Mean, by John Ciardi and Miller Williams

Reflections on a Gift of Watermelon Pickle...and Other Modern Verse by Stephen Dunning and others.

### Related Vocabulary

*Poetry* – There are as many definitions of poetry as there are poets.

*Imagery* – the ability to form mental images of things or events as well as actions and ideas.

*Form* – refers to the structural characteristics of poetry. Forms of poetry include ballads, haiku, free verse, and many more

*Syntax* - The way in which linguistic elements (words and phrases) are arranged to form grammatical structure.

### Instructional Activities

**Content:** How does the tone of the speaker and the context of the work change your understanding of the poem?

**1) Speaker:** How is the speaker involved in the poem? Does the speaker refer to himself/ herself in the 1st person? Is the speaker from an identifiable time period?

**2) Tone:** How is the tone of the poem developed through the language used to create imagery? How does diction influence the understanding of the tone? Does the tone change as the poem progresses? Is it consistent at the beginning and ending of the poem?

**3) Context:** When was the poem written? What were the historical, political, philosophical, and social issues of that time? Does that change your understanding of the poem's theme?

**Language:** How does the language and rhythm contribute to the meaning, purpose or emotional force of the poem?

**1) Word Choice:** How would you characterize the poet's word choice? Is it formal, conversational?

**2) Meaning:** What are the connotations and denotations of particular words? Are certain words repeated? Are they abstract? Concrete? Literal? Metaphorical?

**3) Rhythm:** Does the poem have an identifiable rhythm arranged in the meter (iamb, spondee, trochee, dactyl, etc)? How many syllables are in each line? Does it follow a pattern? What syllables are stressed and unstressed? How does alliteration, assonance, or consonance enhance the poem?

**Imagery:** How does the imagery construct the poem's theme, tone, and purpose?

**1) Visuals and Sensory:** Are the images literal or figurative, abstract or concrete? What sensory experiences are evoked?

**2) Metaphor:** Does the poet use metaphors to make comparisons and express images or abstract ideas?

**3) Symbolism:** Are certain objects or actions developed in

**Form:** How does the form of the poem correspond to theme and main idea of the work?

**1) Structure:** Does the poem follow a formal poetic structure such as a sonnet, haiku, sestina, ode, blues poem, etc.? If so, what are the characteristics of that form?

**2) Stanza and Lines:** Are stanzas and lines consistently the same length? Do they follow a particular pattern?

**3) Rhyme Scheme:** Does the poem follow an identifiable rhyme scheme corresponding to a specific poetic form?

**Syntax:** How do the poet's syntactical choices change or expand the ideas in the poem?

**1) Verbs:** Are verbs active or passive? What tense does the poet use? Is it consistent?

**2) Sentence Structure:** Does the poet use complete sentences, fragments, or a combination of both?

**3) Punctuation:** How is punctuation used or not used? What effect does the punctuation create on how the poem is read? How does it affect the speed? Where are the pauses? Does the poet use italics, bold fonts, dashes, or any other uncommon fonts or punctuation devices? If so, why?

**Deer Valley Unified School District  
Exploratory Curricular Guide  
Humanities - Literature Studies**

**Key Concepts**

Both folklore and folk tales pass along the stories and legends of a people from generation to generation. Folklore is passed along orally, while folk tales can be passed along orally or in print.

**Myths** It usually attempts to explain a phenomenon or strange occurrence without regard to fact or common sense and appeals to the emotions rather than reason

**Point of view** refers to the perspective from which a story is told.

In literature the first person point of view ("I") is not uncommon. In folktales and myths this would not be a common occurrence.

The omniscient narrator knows everything, may reveal the motivations, thoughts and feelings of the characters, and gives the reader information.

The objective point of view presents the action and the characters' speech, without comment or emotion. The reader has to interpret them and uncover their meaning.

**Folk Tales / Myths**

**Resources**

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/write/wit/mff/myths.htm> Myths from around the world.  
<http://mythicjourneys.org/bigmyth/> myths from various cultures that explain creation  
<http://www.americanfolklore.net/> American folk tales, myths, legends, and tall tales including state specific tales.

**Suggested Titles**

*Johnny Appleseed*  
*Babe the Blue Ox*  
*Blackbeards' Ghost*  
*Pecos Bill*  
*Brer Rabbit*  
*John Henry*  
*Paul Bunyan*  
*Legend of Sleep Hollow*  
*Davy Crockett*

**Instructional Activities**

**Rewrite a folktale:**

Ask students to choose a folktale from the American folklore website and rewrite the tale from a different point of view.

<http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/english/melani/pv.html> provides an example of the fairy tale *Sleeping Beauty* told from the objective point of view, 1<sup>st</sup> person point of view, omniscient and several limited omniscient points of view.

**The Legend of Sleepy Hollow:**

Read the Washington Irving's *Legend of Sleepy Hollow* aloud to the class or listen to an audio recording, asking students to allow pictures to form in their minds as they listen. After reading the legend, have students locate several different artists renderings of scenes from *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and identify the one that most closely matches what they imagined. Ask students to share why they picked a particular illustration. Compare several depictions.

**Related Vocabulary**

*Folk tales* – a story, legend, myth, or fable that may be oral or written down and is passed down through a family or people.

*Myths* - a legendary or traditional story, usually one concerning a superhuman being and dealing with events that have no natural explanation.

*Legend* - tradition or story handed down from earlier times and popularly accepted as true but actually a mix of fact and fiction.

*Fable* - a short, simple story, usually with animals as characters, designed to teach a moral truth.

*Tall tales* - A tall tale is a special kind of hero story because the heroes of tall tales are 'larger than life'. They are bigger or stronger than real people, even when the tall tale is based on a real person.

**Motifs:** Folktales from around the world use familiar elements such as:

- Youngest or smallest sibling is successful after others fail
- animals talk
- wishes are granted
- magic objects
- the number 3 is significant
- use of trickery
- a poor person becomes rich
- use of tools

Create a class chart, identifying motifs from folktales that various students read.