

Creative Writing

Creative writing provides students with the opportunity to respond freely and create their own text world. Often creative writing is omitted from the English and language arts curriculum because it is deemed nonessential. We beg to differ. Through creative writing students gain the vital skills and ability to create text worlds as they experience and read classic literature. All writing, whether creative or academic, teaches kids how to express their ideas, which is an essential skill as our adolescent students mature into adult members of a democratic society. Creative writing provides students with the opportunity to respond freely and create their own text world. Often creative writing is omitted from the English and language arts curriculum because it is deemed nonessential. We beg to differ. Through creative writing students gain the vital skills and ability to create text worlds as they experience and read classic literature. All writing, whether creative or academic, teaches kids how to express their ideas, which is an essential skill as our adolescent students mature into adult members of a democratic society. The following creative writing activity uses Marlowe's poem, "Come With Me and Be My Love" and Raleigh's response, "The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd."

Exhibit 5.4 Creative Writing Lesson Plan

Creative Writing Activity	Come With Me and Be?
Objective	To provide the opportunity for students to respond to literature through a creative writing experience
Materials	Paper, writing utensils
Time	50 minutes
Procedure	
Step 1	Read and discuss the poems and explain how Raleigh's is a response to Marlowe's character. This takes about 20 minutes.
Step 2	Like Marlowe and Raleigh, the class will also write a paired poem. Divide the students into writing teams of three students. Each group will be assigned either "plea" or "response" in one of the following pairings. The students will need to be divided into an even number of groups. The students generally take about 20 minutes to write their pleas and responses.

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Exhibit 5.4 (Continued)

Creative Writing Activity	Come With Me and Be?
Step 3	Each group should read aloud their written piece. The students should read their pieces according to the pairings that are listed. The plea is read first and then the reply. See student samples that accompany this activity.
IRA/NCTE Standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Some additional tips for “Come With Me and Be My Love” creative writing lessons.

Group Pairings for “Come with Me and Be My Love”?

Directions: Assign each writing team of three students either a plea or a response. The idea here is to mimic how poets like Marlowe and Raleigh responded to each other’s work. Exhibit 5.5 suggests some possible plea and response pairings for the students.

Casting characters

Casting characters is an after-reading activity that prompts readers to delve into the details of characterization. By assuming the role of famous movie producers, the students are encouraged to cast an imaginary production of a recently read text. Exhibit 5.6 uses Arthur Miller’s *The Crucible* as an example.

Exhibit 5.5 Creative Writing Activity: Plea and Response

Plea	Response
The student's plea for an A in the class	The teacher's response to the student
The blind date's plea to the prom queen	The prom queen's response to the blind date
The speeder's plea to the police officer	The police officer's response to the speeder

Another strategy for the exploration of character is the character resume. As an after-reading activity, the students can select a major character from a given text and create a resume. Through this activity the students delve deeply into a character's attributes, skills, and talents and discover more about characterization. Figures 5.1 and 5.2 are templates that can be used in the classroom for the character resume activity.

Exhibit 5.6 Casting Characters

Creative Writing Activity	Casting Characters
Objective	To promote visualization of characters and development of student expression in writing
Materials	Paper, writing utensils
Time	20 minutes
Procedure	
Step 1	Brainstorm and list the key major and minor characters of a recently completed text.
Step 2	Direct the students, working independently or in pairs, to assign parts to each character role. For example: <i>Congratulations! You have been hired by a major motion picture studio to direct [insert text title]</i> Take 3–5 minutes to assign roles. <i>Note:</i> One variation is to cut out pictures of actors from magazines or have the students draw the actors.
Step 3	The students can share their casting through one of the following groupings: Large-group discussion Think-pair-share Small-group discussion
Step 4	Let the students revise their casting if they so desire.
Step 5	Provide the students with the following voicemail message from their secretary: <i>The head of the studio has called, and he wants the casting and an explanation of the casting decisions. He wants this information in 10 minutes.</i>
Step 6	Break into the same sharing groups as in step 3 and have the students share their casting materials. See the example below of a possible cast call: <i>The Crucible</i> by Arthur Miller <u>Cast</u> Tituba: Whoopi Goldberg John Proctor: Robert DeNiro Elizabeth Proctor: Meryl Streep

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Exhibit 5.6 (continued)

Creative Writing Activity	Casting Characters
	Rev. Parris: Keanu Reeves Rev. Hale: Brian Denehy Abigail Williams: Shannon Doherty Betty Parris: Hillary Duff
Step 7	Students should complete their casting by writing a note to the producer as the example demonstrates below: <i>Dear Mr. Big-Time Producer:</i> <i>I want to thank you for the opportunity to direct this production of Arthur Miller's <u>The Crucible</u>. Attached is my list of roles and the actors that I have assigned. I think that these actors can portray the personalities of these characters because I thought this is what they looked like as I studied the play. I think each of the actors will be able to convince the audience of this movie that they are actually the character.</i> <i>Sincerely,</i> <i>Director Dana</i>
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Figure 5.1 Mock Character Résumé

<p style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</p> <p>OBJECTIVE To conquer any opponents to become King of Scotland</p> <p>EXPERIENCE Thane of Glamis Thane of Cawdor</p> <p>ACCOMPLISHMENTS Vanquished traitors of King Duncan and displayed great valor in combat.</p> <p>EDUCATION Military education and received supernatural counsel from the three witches.</p> <p>SKILLS Can unseam enemies from the knave to the chaps. Outstanding sword skills and military expertise.</p>

Exhibit 5.7 Character Résumé Lesson Plan

Creative Writing Activity	Character Resume
Objective	Create a résumé for a character from a recently read text
Materials	Plain paper
Time	20 minutes
Procedure	
Step 1	Brainstorm and identify the main characters of a recently read text with the students.
Step 2	Provide the students with the résumé template (see Figure 5.3) and model with the class résumé writing. In the past, I have created résumés for Cinderella, Snoopy, and other commonly known characters with the students.
Step 3	Instruct the students to write a character résumé using the template provided.
IRA/NCTE Standards	<p>2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.</p> <p>3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).</p> <p>5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.</p> <p>11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.</p> <p>12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).</p>

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Figure 5.2 Character Résumé Template

<p style="text-align: center;">Character Name</p> <p>Address of Character</p> <p>Contact Info of Character</p> <p>OBJECTIVE: [List the objective of the character.]</p> <p>EXPERIENCE: [List any experience the character may have to accomplish his or her objective.]</p> <p>ACCOMPLISHMENTS: [List any special accomplishments or awards this character has received.]</p> <p>EDUCATION: [What is the character's education?]</p> <p>SKILLS: [List any special skills this character has.]</p>

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Exhibit 5.8 Character Portraits: Picture Perfect

Creative Writing Activity	
Objective	To promote visualization of the text and develop artistic and creative responses to text
Materials	Plain paper, markers, crayons, colored pencils
Time	20 minutes
Procedure	
Step 1	Brainstorm the major characters of a recently read text with the students.
Step 2	In paired student groupings, instruct the students to find passages that offer clues and/or direct description of a pre-selected character from step 1.
Step 3	Use the accompanying template (Figure 5.3) and direct the students, working in pairs or individually, to draw a picture of their character and complete the information that is requested on the template.
IRA/NCTE Standards	<p>2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.</p> <p>3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).</p> <p>5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.</p> <p>11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.</p> <p>12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).</p>

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