



Grade Level: 7
Subject: ELA

Apple in the Middle - Literature Circle

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- History
- Identity
- Language

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will be able to discuss different elements of the story.
- Students will be able to compare a fictional story and its events to real events that happened in Oregon's history.
- Students will be able to reflect on their own identity while learning about the identity of Apple.
- Students will be able to conduct research on issues by generating questions and ideas.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PRACTICES

- Connecting to the lives of students
- Higher level thinking: analysis
- Interaction with others through group discussion
- Connecting to students' personal families and family members
- Preserving and honoring cultural history
- Student talk, working together and individually

TIME REQUIRED

2-4 weeks - see Differentiation on final page of lesson plan for time options

Overview

In this lesson unit, students will participate in a literature circle while reading the young adult novel, *Apple in the Middle* by Dawn Quigley. Throughout the story students will explore, research and compare/contrast this fiction story to real events in Oregon history.

MATERIALS

- [Critical Thinking Questions](#)
- [Literature Circle Roles](#)
- Student Role Paperwork
 - [Discussion Facilitator](#)
 - [Literary Extraordinaire](#)
 - [Vocabulary Director](#)
 - [Monitor](#)
- [Literature Circle Process for Students](#)
- [Reflection](#)
- Student Journals

LOGISTICS

- Where does this activity take place?
Classroom, Home (optional)
- How are the students organized?

Whole Class Teams: 3-5

Pairs Individually

STANDARDS

Oregon Common Core State Standards: ELA

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.3 Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.9 Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.

Background for Teachers

Teachers should pre-read the book prior giving it to students. This will help teachers be prepared for questions students may have. Pre-reading will also provide teachers with the ability to research resources for their students that are outside of the recommended resources given in this lesson.

Both during and after pre-reading, teachers can use the reading resources at [Teaching Books: Apple in the Middle](#) to guide their own thinking and answer any questions teachers may have. This resource also provides information about the author, Dawn Quigley.

The teacher will need to determine a schedule for the literature circle. Some options include: every class period, every other class period, once a week, etc. Share this schedule with the class so they know the timeline of when they will need to be reading the chapters and complete the book and their assignment.

ASSESSMENT

Teachers will use student journals as a way to assess their understanding and participation. Teachers can also assess understanding through small group or whole group conversations.

Opening

To begin the unit, have students take out a piece of paper and give them 1 minute to write down as many things as they can about what makes up their identity. The teacher may need to give them some examples, such as: female, teacher, mother, sister, friend, writer, lover of dogs, etc.

Activity

1. Explain to students that they are going to be working in groups and participating in a literature circle for the book Apple in the Middle. Explain to students this is a story about a Native American teenager who, through many experiences, learns more and more about herself by spending her summer with some long lost relatives on a Native American reservation. If students do not have any background on this subject, teachers may need to do further explanation
2. Assign students to their groups. Each group should have approximately 4 students each.
3. Once students are in their groups pass out the student roles description. Go over what each role is and the responsibilities of each role. Have students decide among themselves who will do what. Students will rotate through the roles after each chapter section (as laid out on the discussion questions document).
4. Once students know what their role will be and what they are in charge of, pass out the materials accordingly so that each person has the right assignment.
5. Share the literature circle schedule with students, then pass out the Literature Circle Process for Students. Review the process and allow for clarification questions.
6. After students understand their roles and the schedule for literature circles, teachers can pass out the Critical Thinking Questions. Students will use this document to guide discussions and journal entries throughout the book. The also provides a layout for breaking the book into sections by grouping chapters. Teachers may choose to follow this layout or have students meet after every chapter.

Closure

Following each Literature Circle meeting, students will journal their responses to the critical thinking questions for those chapters. This should take place after small group and whole group discussions.

Differentiation

- This literature circle activity guides students through the entire young adult novel, *Apple in the Middle*. In the event that there is not enough time to read the entire story, teachers may decide to only read certain chapters or even a singular chapter. For example, if the teacher wants to discuss native language and how many tribal languages have died to colonization, then they may choose to have students only read the chapter that talks about the Michif language (Chapter 3).
- Teachers can modify the Literature Circle Process if desired. It may be more beneficial to allow time for students to respond to the Critical Thinking Questions individually or while they are reading.
- Teachers can set their own parameters for journal responses to critical thinking questions. Teachers can decide if they would like to set a minimum sentence number response, how many questions they would like the students to answer each time, and if they would like the students to keep a continuing journal or turn in the responses each time.

Extension

- These Literature Circles can be used to repeat this process with other Native books. For recommendations, please refer to the [CTGR Recommended Reading List](#).
- At the end of the book, have students write a book review. This review could include: summary of the book, their rating of the book, recommendations for who would enjoy the book, and any critiques.

Notes/Other

Jan Michael Looking Wolf's or Grand Ronde Canoe Family audio tracks can be played as background music while students are working. These audio tracks can be found on Spotify or Apple Music.

Jan Michael Looking Wolf: [Spotify](#) and [Apple Music](#)
Grand Ronde Canoe Family: [Spotify](#) and [Apple Music](#)

Appendix

- Critical Thinking Questions:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_d9TGAYwckYvzmqgDaFSLKj2UuATvuK/view?usp=share_link
- Literature Circle Roles:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qS_hXkPawlApslEQMTVPhrhSuUr6Dgak/view?usp=share_link
- Student Role Paperwork
 - Discussion Facilitator:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1G8z6bOwraattbEJP6RPn8ExAt7JjY_hB/view?usp=share_link
 - Literary Extraordinaire:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CDKayaOc-LRMrAoZQRUi1TPbudsZFPi/view?usp=share_link
 - Vocabulary Director:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eNbSDTpGqGqyCMuz9-yw-4vkS7CdEE03/view?usp=share_link
 - Monitor:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bH_E8k5vih371-V-hhAumEwJp9Z0ebL8/view?usp=share_link
- Literature Circle Process for Students:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/17Uns2EVAWrzFaxCzKXN7Xslr88cAJMJ/view?usp=share_link
- Reflection:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OJXCr9JbZP5H9W0RjpjRTcEmqPz3Mic0/view?usp=share_link