

UNIT BLUEPRINT -- Communicating a Theme

Note: This unit plan is designed to provide an introduction to the year's learning and includes three genres (story, poem, and painting) so that the focus is on interpretation. Because it includes abilities and knowledge that are at the core of comprehending literature, it provides teachers with an opportunity to pre-assess students' competence and adjust subsequent instruction to respond to identified needs. Parts of this outline that are highlighted in blue are directly from Understanding by Design.

Unit Theme: Communication

UbD Stage 1. Desired Results—What long-term transfer goals are targeted?

BIG Ideas (also called “enduring understandings”)	Essential Questions (Big Questions) students will explore
Writers construct stories and histories that communicate ideas.	How do writers communicate a theme?
Artists create artworks that communicate a theme.	How can you figure out the theme of an artwork?
Poets create poems that communicate a theme.	What techniques do poets use to communicate a theme?

“What knowledge and skill will students acquire?”

“What established goals/standards are targeted?”

CCSS Anchor Reading Standards: (grade-level specific standards will be inserted)

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Knowledge to be developed/expanded:

Author's techniques
Use of figurative language

Abilities to be developed/expanded:

How to...

- analyze the writer's choices
- interpret words and phrases
- analyze the development of a character
- analyze the artist's choices
- infer ideas and themes
- summarize key ideas and supporting details

Write to Learn More -- Integrate in Activities; Use to Assess

Anchor Writing Standards you can integrate in activities and use to design a project or an assessment.

Text Types and Purposes

Anchor Writing Standard 2. Write **informative/explanatory** texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. (Grade-specific standard will be inserted.)

UbD Stage 2: Evidence

Performance Assessment for the Unit:

Write an explanation of how to figure out the theme of a story, painting, and poem.

Directions for Unit Performance Assessment Task:

You have interpreted a poem, a story, and a painting, all with the same theme.

Part 1: Explain how to interpret the theme of a poem

Read this poem. (New poem provided.)

List the steps you will use to figure out its theme.

What do you think the theme is?

Why do you think that is the theme? Explain your conclusion with evidence from the poem.

Part 2: Explain how to interpret the theme of a story

Look at your steps to interpret a poem.

What would you add to figure out the theme of a story?

List any steps that would be added.

Change any steps that would be different.

Give an example of how these steps fit a story you have read.

Extra Challenge:

How is interpreting a poem like interpreting a painting?

Complete a Venn diagram showing what is the same and what is different.

Then write to explain what your diagram shows.

Criteria:

Specify the criteria based on standards for your grade level. The following general criteria apply.

1. Steps are in a logical sequence

2. Student includes analysis of use of techniques including how word choice affects meaning and the use of figurative language

3. Student supports identification of theme with at least three sources of evidence from the poem

4. Student includes elements of fiction in explanation of steps to determine the theme of a story

Extra Challenge: Student includes elements of art in comparing interpretation of poems and artwork. Student provides examples for both forms of communication.

Rubric will be developed based on grade level-specific standards.

Making it Happen—Active Learning and Informative Assessments

UbD Stage 3: Learning Plan

“What activities, experiences, and lessons will lead to achievement of the desired results and success at the assessments?” Correlate with UDL "multiple, flexible options for engagement".

Main Activities Students...	Sequence
Make timeline of events in a story--identifying important actions.	Week 1
Complete "map" a story", characters and setting	Week 1
Infer the theme of the story and support analysis with evidence based on the author's choices--constructed response	Week 1
Complete character chart to analyze how author develops characters in the story--actions, dialogue, reactions of other characters	Week 2
Add dialogue to story--what other characters might say about the main character	Week 2
Dramatize a story, selecting events and adding dialogue that communicate the central message	Week 2
Create reader's guide--how to figure out the theme of a story.	Week 2
Picture the important words in the poem--words that convey theme; figurative language.	Week 3
Analyze a poem, then translate (in own words) the meanings of important lines	Week 3
List examples of techniques the poet used, explain how they helped communicate the theme	Week 3
Write a poem that communicates the same theme	Week 3
List literal components of an artwork, then create web showing how those communicate a theme	Week 4
Complete chart about artist's use of elements--explain how artist's use of elements supports your interpretation of theme	Week 4
Complete Venn diagram comparing artist and poet	Week 4
Identify or draw art that communicates the theme of a poem	Week 4
Write artist's, story writer, or poet's guide--how to communicate a theme.	Week 5
Create a painting, poem, or story that communicates a theme	Week 5

Unit Week to-Week Overview

	FOCUS of the Week <i>Select vocabulary and materials to develop it.</i>	Learning Plan	Choose/create formative assessments for daily and weekly checking for understanding
w e e k 1	<p>Focus: Interpreting theme--fiction</p> <p>Vocabulary: Story elements Plot Setting Technique Climax Problem and solution</p> <p>Materials: Story (cite specific story)</p>	<p>Skill/Strategy: Analyze elements of a story to determine theme</p> <p>Activities: Timeline Map Constructed response</p>	<p>make glossary daily learning report weekly summary graphic organizer with analysis or summary respond to big question with text-based evidence</p>
w e e k 2	<p>Focus: Interpreting the use of characterization and plot to support a theme</p> <p>Vocabulary: Characterization Motive Reaction dialogue</p> <p>Materials: Story--same story as week 1--going deeper.</p>	<p>Skill/Strategy: Analyze the development of the main character</p> <p>Activities: Character chart Dialogue Dramatize story Reader's guide</p>	<p>daily learning report weekly summary graphic organizer with analysis and summary write reader's guide</p>
w e e k 3	<p>Focus: How poets communicate a theme</p> <p>Vocabulary: Poetic Image Structure Figurative language</p> <p>Materials: Poem appropriate to grade level</p>	<p>Skill/Strategy: How to analyze the poet's use of techniques to communicate a theme</p> <p>Activities: Picture important words Translate important lines List and explain techniques Create poem</p>	<p>make glossary daily learning report weekly summary illustrate text write poem</p>

w e e k 4	<p>Focus: How artists communicate a theme</p> <p>Vocabulary: Elements of art Technique Visual literal</p> <p>Materials: Painting--full-color copies or transparency/web- based to display</p>	<p>Skill/Strategy: How to analyze the poet's use of techniques to communicate a theme</p> <p>Activities: List observations then infer theme Chart use of elements Compare artist/poet in Venn Create art to communicate theme of poem</p>	make glossary daily learning report weekly summary illustrate text (poem)
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Week 5: Synthesis and Summative Assessment
(see Summative assessment directions and criteria.)

Write artist's, story-writer, or poet's guide--how to communicate a theme.

Create a painting, poem, or story that communicates a theme
(Allow students to choose format that they are most fluent in so that you are assessing their ability to communicate a theme--apply what they have learned about using elements and techniques to communicate.)