FIELD EXPERIENCES MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Field experiences at The University of Texas at Austin are an integral component of our teacher preparation programs, built on strong collaboration between school districts and colleges of the University. Our future teachers engage in purposefully crafted field experiences that cultivate depth of knowledge, research-based practices, and professional ethics. These experiences are designed to be sequential, cumulative, and performance-based, while preparing our graduates to implement and evaluate effective practices with diverse student populations in varied settings. As a result, teachers prepared at the University will master subject knowledge and pedagogical skills, work collaboratively with all stakeholders, develop dispositions to be active citizens, and offer their students the opportunity to develop these characteristics themselves.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

Teachers graduating from our programs will have the dispositions and skills needed to be highly effective teachers of children from all racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socio-economic groups presently underserved by the public school system in Texas.

Middle School and High School Cooperating Teacher Guide

Your Role as a Cooperating Teacher:

The primary instructional focus in working with preservice teachers is helping them write clear lesson plans and showing them how to manage a classroom and a group of students. The university will provide guidelines for lesson plans. In addition, you will find some sample lesson plans in this booklet. Your role involves showing a preservice teacher how to think through the process of planning a lesson for your class. This includes:

- Taking time to talk about the TEKS and curriculum guides.
- Providing students guidance in planning lessons they teach (as the preservice teacher acquires more proficiency in lesson planning, you may wish to modify the format of the plan to include only the objective, the activities, the materials to be used and the method of evaluation or assessment of the lesson...O, A, M, E.)

Your preservice teacher will be observed several times during the semester by a university field supervisor if he/she is an intern and several more times if he/she is a student teacher. At these times, you and the university field supervisor will provide both oral and written feedback for the student (forms will be provided by the university or can be found online on COE Field Experiences Wiki [https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/COEfieldexperiences/Student+Assessments]. You will play a pivotal role in the final evaluation that your intern or student teacher receives.

Preparing for the Preservice Teacher’s Arrival:

Here are suggestions you may find useful in helping the preservice teacher feel welcome when he or she arrives the first day:

- Meet with the university field supervisor ahead of time and get his or her phone number, as well as the telephone number of your intern/student teacher. Call and invite the preservice teacher to visit your classroom before the students arrive. This is a good way to establish a positive rapport and to show the intern/student teacher important places in the school building.
- Ask the preservice teacher to provide you with a brief resume or autobiography (sample included in this packet)
- Talk to the principal about introducing your intern/student teacher at the next faculty or parent-teacher meeting.
- Ask your intern/student teacher to bring some photographs and information about himself or herself and create a bulletin board for the class.
- Provide the preservice teacher with a small desk and place for his or her belongings.
- Ask the intern/student teacher to make nametags for each of the students. In this way, he/she will have an opportunity to get to know their names more quickly.
• Furnish the intern/student teacher with a spiral notebook to serve as a dialogue journal between the two of you throughout the semester.
• Ask the preservice teacher to write a short letter introducing him or herself to the parents of the students in your classroom. You may need to furnish some guidance as to the content and length of the letter.

Write a Letter of Introduction to Your Preservice Teacher:

It is important to set your expectations early and to stress the importance of open communication throughout the semester. Taking time to write a letter of introduction is a good way to do this. It will provide a useful springboard for questions and set the tone for a warm, professional working relationship from the first day your preservice teacher enters your classroom. A letter in which you introduce yourself and outline these expectations might include:

• A bit about your background: hometown, family, alma mater, number of years teaching, why you decided to become a teacher, etc.
• Some general information about the students in your classes, socioeconomic make-up of the community, parent occupations, parental involvement in school activities, students with special needs, etc.
• A copy of your daily schedule and class seating charts.
• Some information about the levels of instruction in your classes.
• A brief explanation of your behavior management system.
• Your philosophy of teaching, education, role of teacher, etc.
• Information concerning your expectations for your intern/student teacher: punctuality, professionalism, openness, initiative, etc.
• A closing paragraph about what your intern/student teacher may expect from you.

A sample letter is included in this packet.

Getting to Know the Students and Monitoring Their Progress:

Your intern/student teacher can learn much about the students by observing them as they work. Each day you might want to give the preservice teacher a 4x6 card and ask him/her to take notes (and write questions) about observations he/she makes concerning the students that the two of you will discuss later. Here are some suggested questions you might want to consider for your 4x6 cards:

• Which students are performing at grade level? Above grade level? Below? Show your intern/student teacher how to keep running reading records on each student. Afterwards, you might suggest that he/she work up some anecdotal records on the high, medium, and low performing students.
• Which students seem to be visual learners? Auditory? Kinaesthetic? How is instruction adjusted for these students?
• Which students work better independently? With a partner? In groups?
• Which students seem to finish their work first? Last?

Before asking intern/student teacher to observe the students as they work, it would be helpful if you would show him/her some examples of what you consider “average”, “exceptional,” and “below average” work for the grade level at which you are teaching. Frequently, preservice teachers have difficulty at first in understanding quality of the work they are observing in the students. Some guidance and input from you would be most useful. If you keep portfolios or folders of written work on your students, share these with your intern/student teacher early in the semester.

Also, share your methods of grading the students’ work. If you use any rubrics in evaluating assignments, discuss these with the preservice teacher. We highly encourage co-planning and co-teaching throughout the semester, so please feel free to take this as far as you wish.

Examining Texts and Curriculum Materials:

Your intern/student teacher will be anxious to examine some of the texts and teaching aids that you use in your teaching. If you have a copy of the TEKS, it is important to share these and show how you incorporate them into your teaching. If you are involved in team planning or interdisciplinary teaching, let the preservice teacher sit in on your team planning sessions and encourage him/her to take an active role in participating. When you teach a lesson involving a textbook, ask the intern/student teacher to follow along from your teacher’s guide so that he/she will begin to see how you use these materials.

Structuring Observations of Your Lessons:

After your preservice teacher has been in your classroom for about a week, you may want to get him/her involved in watching you teach. If you want your intern to do more that just watch, you will need to structure the observation of selected lessons that you teach. One of the best ways to do this is to first discuss and then demonstrate a particular teaching behavior during a lesson. For example you might want to consider planning some lessons that model the following teacher behaviors:

• Communication learning expectations to the students
• Checking for understanding
• Varying the cognitive level of questions asked.
• Redirecting or stopping inappropriate behavior that may occur during the lesson
• Modifying instruction to adjust to different learning styles and abilities
• Maintaining appropriate pacing of the lesson

Before each lesson, discuss the teaching behavior with your intern/student teacher that you want him/her to observe. Ask him/her to take notes during the lesson and write down questions about what is observed. Discuss and debrief the lesson later the same day. Ask your preservice teacher to keep these observations filed in a notebook for future reference.

Adjusting to Being in Front of the Class:

Early in the semester, you should give your intern/student teacher opportunities to be in front of the students and interact with them. If you begin slowly and deliberately to get him/her ready to face the class, he/she will likely to find that teaching of the first lesson less overwhelming. Again, co-teaching can help here. The following suggestions may prove helpful in giving you some ideas in which you might help your preservice teacher to feel confident and in control in front of the students:

• Taking roll and other beginning (What is this??) of class routines
Talking one-on-one with the students to get to know them better
Collecting papers at the end of a lesson
Co-teaching in which the intern/student teacher has to give directions for a number of simple activities
Sharing information about him/herself with the class (hometown, hobbies, experiences)
Encouraging the intern/student teacher to move “up front” as he/she moves around the room during work periods to begin to get comfortable being in front of the students.
Get the preservice teacher involved in a moderate level of grading
Encourage your intern/student teacher to assist you with a small amount of group work
Ask the preservice teacher to read a particular story or article to the class and to plan some questions for discussion afterwards

Observing and Planning Effective Conferences With Preservice Teachers:

Before an observation of a lesson, it is suggested that you:

- Discuss together the goals of the lesson to be observed. Keep the goals simple at first. For example, you might want to focus on looking for a clear statement of objective, clarity of directions to the students, and overall management of the class
- Discuss together the success indicators of the lesson. Ask: “How will you know if the students are on task?” or “How will you know if they are successful?”
- Discuss the materials needed for the lesson
- Discuss approaches, strategies, and decisions that may need to be made during the lesson
- Explain the methods of data collection you will use for the observation. Some lessons involve anecdotal writing; others may involve timing, tallying, or coding. Explain these methods to the preservice teacher before you make use of them. In that way, your post conference will be more meaningful

During an observation of a lesson, it is suggested that you:

- Focus on the observation goals that were agreed upon before the lesson.
- Write down questions and suggestions for later discussion
- Look for positives as well as suggestions for improvement.
- Collect data on both teacher behavior and student behavior that may prove useful to your intern/student teacher.

After an observation of a lesson, it is suggested that you:

- Pick an appropriate time and place for your discussion. Talk to your intern/student teacher as soon as possible after the observation of the lesson…remember that timing is important. However, if it has been a rough day for both of you, it might be best to save the conference for tomorrow.
- Be seated in chairs that are side-by-side…not across from one another. You want to emphasize the feelings of collegiality.
- Talk with your intern/student teacher in private. Never offer criticism in front of the students or in the presence of other faculty.
- Begin by asking the preservice teacher how he/she felt about the lesson. Encourage him/her to discuss some of the success indicators of the lesson. Ask: “How could you tell that the students were engaged?” and “How could you tell that they were successful during guided practice?” If your preservice teacher “draws a blank” when you ask these questions, begin by pointing out a few positives that you observed. This may help to “prim the pump” and get your intern/student teacher talking.
- Share the data you collected during the observation. Together, summarize impressions and assessments of the lesson.
- Check for clarity of communication
- Give your intern/student teacher an opportunity to ask questions he/she may have. Remember that feedback is most useful when the receiver formulates the question which the observer can answer.
- End on a positive note. If the lesson was a disaster, remind the preservice teacher that tomorrow is a new day and a new opportunity. Concentrate on what has been learned from this lesson and how it can be effectively used next time.

You may find some of the questions from the book Cognitive Coaching by Costa and Garmston helpful in planning your post observation conferences:

The Language of Coaching: Questioning

A direct correlation exists between the levels and syntactical structure of questions and the production of thought. Effective coaches deliberately use questions in ways that produce desired mental processes in the mind of the teacher. Following are some of examples of desired mental processes and the syntactical signals to a question that might produce them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Conferences</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>If the desired thought process in the teacher is to:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Describe) State the purpose of the lesson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Translate) Translate the purposes of the lesson into descriptions of desirable and observable behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Predict)</strong> Envision teaching strategies and behaviors to facilitate student's performance of desired behaviors.</td>
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<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Sequence)</strong> Describe the sequence in which the lesson will occur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Estimate)</strong> Anticipate the duration of activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Operationalize criteria)</strong> Formulate procedures for assessing outcomes (envision, operationally define, and set criteria).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Metacognate)</strong> Monitor their own behavior during the lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Describe)</strong> Describe the role of the observer.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Reflecting Conference:**

If the desired cognitive process in the teacher is to: Then the coach might ask:

| **(Assess)** Express feelings about the lesson. | “As you reflect back on the lesson, how do you feel it went?” |
| **(Recall and Relate)** Recall student behaviors observed during the lesson to support those feelings | “What did you see students doing (or hear them saying) that made you feel that way?” |
| **(Recall)** Recall their own behavior during lesson. | “What do you recall about your own behavior during the lesson?” |
| **(Compare)** Compare student behavior performed with teacher behavior planned. | “How did what you observed compare with what you did?” |
| **(Compare)** Compare teacher behavior performed with teacher behavior. | “How did what you planned compare with what you did?” |
| **(Megacognate)** Become aware and monitor one’s own thinking during the lesson. | “What were you thinking when you decided to change the design of the lesson?” |
| **(Analyze)** Analyze why the student behaviors were or were not achieved | “What hunches do you have to explain why some students performed as you had hoped while others did not?” |
| **(Cause-Effect)** Draw causal relationships. | “What did you do for (or didn’t do) to produce the results you wanted?” |
| **(Synthesize)** Synthesize meaning from analysis of this lesson. | “As you reflect on this discussion, what big ideas or insights are you discovering?” |
| **(Self-prescription)** Prescribe alternative teaching strategies, behaviors, or conditions. | “As you plan future lessons, what ideas have you developed that might be carried forth to the next lesson or other lessons?” |
| **(Evaluate)** Give feedback about the effects of this coaching session and the coach’s conferencing skills. | “As you think back over our conversation, what has this coaching session done for you? What is it that I did (or didn’t) do? What assisted you? What could I do differently in future coaching sessions?” |
These questions are only examples and are not meant to be prescriptive or complete. The purpose is to show how skilled coaches intentionally pose questions. Their intent is to engage, mediate, and thereby enhance the cognitive functions of teaching. The questions, therefore, are adroitly focused on, composed, and posed to deliberately engage the intellectual functions of teaching.

An Ending Note:

Enjoy this time with your intern or student teacher and just know that we could not properly train our preservice teachers without your invaluable assistance, patient guidance, and unending support. Thank you very much!

FERPA Statement

I acknowledge institutional services for The University of Texas at Austin with regard to student information. I will not redisclose student FERPA information that is under the direct control and protection of The University of Texas at Austin.

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Special thanks to Mr. Max Fisher for the following sample letter (all names have been changed).

Introducing:

Ms. Nancy Moreno
Student Teacher from the University of Texas
B.A. in History from U.T. in 1993
Graduate Austin High School 1988

Interests: History and World Cultures, U.S. government and World Affairs, Camping, Hiking, Travel, and seeing live music in Austin.

Future Plans and Goals: Have a great semester at Harris High School, Travel to Europe this summer (Germany, Italy, Austria, and the Czech Republic). Find a job teaching high school or junior high here in Austin. Continue my education by taking classes and eventually entering a masters program.

I’m excited to be working with Mr. Jones’ classes this semester. We are going to be exploring an exciting time in American history. Please come to me with any questions or comments you may have.

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Sample Letter from Cooperating Teacher - *Thanks to Mr. Fisher for providing this sample letter. Names and phone numbers have been changed.

Teacher Intern Info--- J.D. Jones---Spring 2015

Welcome to Harris High School and U.S. History 101 in room 198. This packet is set up to acquaint you with the classes, the students, the subject, the school, and Mr. Jones. The items preceded with an asterisk (*) need to be returned at the end of your stay. You may keep copies of anything you wish. I use a Mac computer and most work is on disk; you are welcome to any files you want. We are on accelerated block and will finish the course at the end of this term.

Daily Procedures: Check roll-attendance sheets in office—put sheets in folder below light switch after you check class roll from seating charts on podium; put number of date absent above student’s name on seating chart.

I teach three U.S. History classes in the block.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Period</th>
<th>Second Period</th>
<th>Third Period</th>
<th>Fourth Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 to 10:25</td>
<td>10:33 to 12:13</td>
<td>1:12 to 2:37</td>
<td>2:45 to 4:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful students</td>
<td>Helpful students</td>
<td>Helpful students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Bell</td>
<td>John Evans</td>
<td>All teachers report to hallway by 170’s to help with tardy sweep</td>
<td>Emily Frost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuart Huss</td>
<td>Tami Lighfoot</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mark Oliver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Steven Bryd teaches U.S. history in this room (198) during 3rd period.
LUNCH is from 12:13 to 1:04

Second period includes announcements and Channel 1. Be sure the TV is turned on to channel 1 cable 61.

Information Sheets Enclosed:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>This information folder list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Substitute information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Jones vita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Class guides &amp; student job app</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Bell schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Class seating charts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Class attendance cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Semester &amp; AISD calendars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Various forms/referrals, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Class textbook lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Classwork done in this class so far</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>School rules/conduct and map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Possible videos list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Sample lesson plan styles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

YOU WILL NEED TO GET:

* a. parking permit
  b. library usage info
  c. care of valuables (purse, etc)

Teachers who can help you:  (Social Studies Phone 51982)

Doris Melling, 232, teaches US History just across the hall.

Sam Myers, 277, teaches World Geography

Office numbers:  Phone is beside 240’s office directly across the hall and to your right.

Principal:  Patti Landers 414-3333

Substitute Principal:  Joe Keeler 414-8888

Student Teacher Sample Letter - Thanks to Judy LeMoine for this sample letter.

WELCOME!!

I hope this does not scare you away…but answers some questions while I am busy keeping control…and teaching…this is a great bunch of students…with very involved parents…we will plan closely together…but, I want you to feel like there is enough room here for you to develop your own style and techniques…please tell me if I do not give you enough space to make your own decisions…OR on the other, please do not hesitate to let me know if I don’t give enough guidance!

- Make a seating chart…circulate while the students are working in groups…names…first and last…make me a copy too, please!
- Find out: schedule, routine, lunch, standing at door to monitor hall, attendance.
- Meet with me Monday and Wednesday last period…Monday: tentative plans for the next week/Thursday: plans, activity sheets etc, for the next week…plans have to be on your desk at all times…by Monday morning they need to include objectives, activities, and method of evaluation…if you are out and I am out a substitute must be able to follow them.
- Keep two folders with a copy of everything you plan and use with the students…one on your desk and one on mine.
- You will teach 3rd/7th period and help 1st/5th and 2nd/6th.  Our planning period is 4th/8th.  I usually eat lunch in the room.  Please do not feel you need to!  I also sometimes use this time for detention for students…for late work or missing materials.  I require students to stay and read the first 10 minutes of lunch.
- We have a work plan that outlines the year for students and parents.  This will restrict some of your choices, but you can develop your own lessons and add your own touch.
- We are required to teach every STAAR skill…plan when we are going to teach it…keep a record of it being taught.  The first thing you will plan is when you are going to teach these objectives…lessons should be 15 to 20 minutes long and use the novel the students are reading or the research topics they are on…you must keep a grid with the skills and whether or not each student has mastered the skill…you will start these lessons next week 12:00 to 12:25…all five days.  After that you could use them as your warm up and have them last 5-15 minutes…it will be hard to find the time to work these lessons in…You can start planning those this week while you watch and get to know the kids…so don’t get nervous…yet.
- The students will begin teaching Lupita Manana when you take over…While you are here…you will also teach Let the Circle Be Unbroken.  I want you to have a study guide for the novels before you start them…You can change anything you want as you go along, but you must have a plan before you start.  How you do it and what you emphasize will be up to you…I will make available any materials of mine…The only things you have to do are the things required by the office to cover the STAAR objectives and the TEKS.
- You will work with the students guiding them in writing a persuasive research paper.  They will have already started the research process.
• You will be using Co Learning while you are here. You will use it while the students work on Rights and Responsibilities and prepare for their research papers, persuasion essays and debate. Use every opportunity you have to get familiar with it.
• You will also be teaching and using Hyperstudio while students work on their HyperCard stacks for Geotopia.
• We will discuss everything in detail...and everyday all day long as we go along!
• On Friday we will sit down and plan out a calendar for the rest of the semester...remember it is not written in stone...but it is necessary, to keep from losing our minds.

Taking Over

Week 1...observe, start routines, become familiar with Co Learning and Hyperstudio, plan STAARS activities, grade and enter grades for language arts.
Week 2...teach STAARS activities, plan novel, and research paper
Week 3...take over language arts...teach novel, STAARS activities, and research paper

Things we will be working on and need to discuss!

Let The Circle be Unbroken
Lupita Manana
Co Learning
Hyperstudio
TAKS Activities
Research Paper
Debate
Geotopia

UNWRITTEN RULES

Materials I need to give you!

STAARS objectives and grid sheet
Novels and files on novels
Co Learning information
Hyperstudio
Computer sign up times
Research paper information
Debate information

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Lessons

Title: Lesson Plan on Using Primary and Secondary Sources in History

Grade: Seventh (Texas History)

Objectives: The student will be able to:

• Distinguish between primary and secondary sources of information by categorizing various examples of each source of information.
• Collect and use information about the Texas Revolution from at least primary and secondary sources of information to complete the data disk.
• Prepare an essay that examines the causes, major events and effects of the Texas Revolution

TEKS Objectives: The student is expected to:

• 4.22(A) differentiates between, locate, and use primary and secondary sources to acquire information about Texas.
• 4.3(A) analyze the causes, major events, and effects of the Texas Revolution

Time: 1 week

Materials Needed:
Student: paper, pencil, Social Studies textbook, dictionary, materials for student-made data disk

Teacher: primary and secondary sources of information dealing with the Texas Revolution available for the students to use such as: web sites, their textbook, *Early Days in Texas* by Felda Davis Shanklin, *Easy-to-Read Texas History* by Belle Russell, copies of newspapers from 1836, *Tell Us About Texas, "Following the Lone Star",* a pageant of Texas Independence, examples of primary and secondary sources such as: encyclopedias, newspapers, biographies, autobiographies, Constitution of the State of Texas, diary or journal of a famous person, photos of different people from 1836, letters from Sam Houston, Santa Anna, Suzannah Dickenson, Jim Bowie, William Travis.

Focus

1. Did you ever wonder how life and people were different in Texas 150 years ago? If we wanted to find out what could we do? Where could we look for information?
2. Hold up different types of sources and ask the students to identify them: ex: newspaper, magazine, encyclopedia, textbook, etc.
3. What can these be used for (guide them to answer-learn something, get information, read, etc.)?
4. Do you think we could find out about Texas in the 1830’s from all of these different resources? (Point out different examples)

Guided Practice

1. Divide the students into 5 groups of 4 and give them an example of the source of information.
2. Have them work as a group to classify their different sources of information and prepare an explanation as to why they classified that source as primary or secondary.
3. The teacher will monitor and ask the students to explain their source. The teacher will guide them to the correct categorization if they are not on track.
4. The teacher will call on one student from each group to report on their group's findings and we will discuss the results as a class.
5. Point out that both types of information are equally important, and it is good to have both types of sources when doing research.

Independent Practice:

1. Advise the students that they will use the data disk to collect information from at least one primary and one secondary source of information to answer questions about the Texas Revolution. Explain to the students that they are to answer the questions in their own words and not just copy an answer from a book or an article.
2. They will then use the data disk to prepare an essay that explains the causes, major events, and effects of the Texas Revolution in their own word. They essay must be at least 3 paragraphs long and discuss at least 3 of the topics discussed from their data disk.
3. Students may add more information to their essay if they choose to do so.

Evaluation: Students will earn:

**PART 1: DATA DISK**

- 30% if the data is collected from at least one primary and one secondary source of information
- 20% if the data disk is filled out: complete sentences spelled correctly
- 15% if answers are accurate
- 10% if work is legible

**PART II: ESSAY**

- 25% for an essay that is excellent (includes at least 3 topics from their data disk, written in their own words, 3 paragraphs long, correctly spelled, legibly written)
- 15% for an essay that is average (uses only 2 topics from their data disk, meets the length requirement, legibly written in their own words, few spelling errors)
- 5% for an essay that is not well done (uses only 1 topic from their data disk, does not meet the length requirement, information not in their own words, many spelling errors)

Title: Lesson Plan on *The Odyssey:* Teaching “The Sirens” Adventure

Grade: Secondary English

(The students will have already finished reading the memoir excerpt “Daddy” by Yolanda King. In keeping with the theme of the day-temptation-I will set up a tray of cookies to pique the students’ attention and “tempt” them. I will tell the students that they are not the receivers of the tasty treats, but will fill them in on my scheme at the end of the class by letting them have the cookies that were intended for them all along)

Objectives:

1. To establish connections between different texts and time periods, students will be able to list at least 2-3 differences and similarities between “The Sirens” and the story “Daddy.”
2. To promote creative expressions of *The Odyssey’s* themes and to encourage students to see links between the text and their own lives, students will be able to create a collage on the theme of the day-temptations.

Materials:

- Tray of cookies
- Video “Little Mermaid”
- Copy of *The Odyssey*’s “Sirens” excerpt
- Materials for collages

Anticipatory Set (5-7 minutes): Show a film clip from *The Little Mermaid* (approximately 2 minutes). Students should respond to the following quick-write:
In the film clip, we saw Prince Eric tempted and lured by Ursula’s song. What in your life has “sung to you” even though you tried to resist (e.g., food, love, a great pair of jeans at the mall, drugs, that CD you know you can’t afford, alcohol, parental or school rules that you wanted to break)? Describe your thoughts and feelings as you were trying to decide whether to succumb to your temptation or not... Do you regret your decision? Why or why not? (Since this journal entry may be quite personal, it need not be shared unless students do so voluntarily.)

Story Time (5 minutes): I will read aloud the section on the “The Sirens” (p. 617 of the text).

Group Activity (10 minutes): In small groups, students jot down at least 2-3 similarities and differences between “Daddy” and “The Sirens” (e.g. on themes, character traits, settings, moral choices, tone, style).

Class Share (10 minutes): On a transparency, I will jot down the similarities and differences offered by students. (Each group should state at least one similarity and difference.) Next, ask students to suggest some of the temptations—both obvious and subtle—that teens, children, and adults face in today’s society.

Pair-n-Share Project (10-25 minutes): Using a sheet of construction paper, pairs of students will create a collage on the theme of “temptations” in The Odyssey and their own lives. I will show my example first (enclosed). They should find/draw pictures, words, symbols, and quotes from the stories and their own lives. Examples may be serious, funny, representative of ancient Greece and/or contemporary times, literary, personal, media related, etc.

Class Share (10 minutes): Ask for volunteers to share and explain their collages.

Oral Reading and Story Share (7 minutes): I will copy three very brief stories from pp 56-72 of the children’s book, The Adventures of Odysseus (enclosed) and distribute these to the students. I will ask for volunteers to read aloud each story. (I want students to experience the tales of Odysseus as an adventure that can be enjoyed by readers of all ages.) Even though the language in this particular book is geared toward children, the students will nevertheless become exposed to even more of Odysseus’ escapades, even if I’m not formally teaching these particular episodes in this unit.