The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Unit Summary
Students as book reviewers read the book -The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain. They analyse the characters in the story by attempting to understand the complex human nature. They use Visual Ranking tool to prioritize the influence of characters of the story on Huckleberry Finn and prepare a multimedia presentation to share their views. They use Seeing Reason tool to study factors influencing Huckleberry Finn’s life and write a journal. They also debate on whether Huckleberry Finn is a hero or not. Through out the unit, they comprehend and appreciate the influence of literature in their lives.

Curriculum Framing Questions

- Essential Question
  How does literature help us understand ourselves better?

- Unit Questions
  How do the characters in the story — ‘Huckleberry Finn’ help us understand our complex human nature?
  How has Huckleberry Finn influenced your life?

- Content Questions
  What promotes Huck’s adventures?
  How are Huck and adventures linked together?
  Write a character sketch of Huck.
  Identify and explain different themes in the novel.

Assessment Processes
View how a variety of student-centered assessments are used in the Unit Plan. These assessments help students and teachers set goals; monitor student progress; provide feedback; assess thinking, processes, performances, and products; and reflect on learning throughout the learning cycle.

Instructional Procedures
Beginning of the Project
Introduce a discussion about why people like a good story asking the following questions –

- Why do most people love to read or hear stories?
- What impact do the characters make on your life?
- What do stories do for us?
- Do stories take us to the world of fantasy or are they something more than that?
- When have you learned something important from a story?
- How is reading a story different from reading other kinds of material?

Handover the discussion rubric (DOC 29.5KB) to keep the discussion more focused and students know the expectations of the discussion.

While students participate actively in the discussion introduce the essential question - How does literature help us understand ourselves better? Encourage whole-class participation in the discussion. Take anecdotal notes regarding individual student discussion points and use to differentiate instruction if necessary.

Reading Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
As a whole class, fill out the first three columns of the K-W-H-L chart (DOC 275KB) to help students access their prior knowledge about Huckleberry Finn and provide useful information about student attitudes and possible misconceptions. Continue the discussion about where students see Huckleberry Finn’s influence in their life. Explain to students that they will work as book reviewers to answer the Unit and Essential Questions, along with learning to appreciate and analyse Mark Twain’s story - Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.

Introduce reading journal (DOC 27.5KB) to students. These journals give students a place to document reading, record thoughts and responses to important questions, and cite examples of literary terms. Some students may want to keep
their response journals in the form of a blog.
Read the text on the back of the book, the note about the author, and the list of other books by Mark Twain. Story reading sessions will go on with complete explanation of all the events and characters. A brainstorming session will be conducted to focus on the characters' role and the plot of the story. Build a climate of trust and acceptance for the varying points of view and interpretations of the book that will arise as students read. Teach students to respond actively to the text by recording their thoughts on post-its as they read.

**Working on Visual Ranking Tool**
Divide students into small discussion groups and have them brainstorm the list of characters of the story that have influenced Huck's adventures. Students will read and comprehend various characters in the story and judge their influence on Huck's life.
The following questions can serve as a starting point for discussions about the story:

- How do the metaphors help to paint a picture of characters' states of mind?
- How does imagery and figurative language affect how we judge the intentions or inclinations of characters?
- How does the use of imagery add to the mood of the scene?
- How does imagery affect the way we respond to the scene?

Periodically, throughout the study of the story, ask students to discuss the Essential Question: *How does literature help us better understand ourselves?* in their journals and in large- and small-group discussions as it relates to their personal interpretation of *Huckleberry Finn*.
Students will write the character sketch of the characters by collecting information about each of them on the basis of their reading and learning. They fill in the character link chart (DOC 25.5KB) to analyse the influence of characters on Huck’s adventures.
Students will use the **Visual Ranking tool** to identify the characters and their influence on Huck's adventures. Pose the prompt question “List the characters according to their influence on Huck’s adventures from the most to the least including Huck”.
Students will use the character analysis sheet and the visual ranking tool to answer their unit question - *How do the characters in the story – ‘Huckleberry Finn’ help us understand our complex human nature?* They will also collect the images of the characters and highlight the characteristics of the roles in their presentation (PPT 1.02MB) and to give explanation about the same. They will be assessed with the help of the presentation rubric (DOC 36.5KB).

**Working on Seeing Reason Tool**
Use the brief guide to introduce **Seeing Reason** to your class. Before proceeding with the next activity, set up the project in student's workspace to address the prompt question: *What factors influence Huck’s Adventures?* Students use **Seeing Reason Tool** to express how characters' traits influence Huck's actions and the plot of the story through various events and incidents. Before students begin the use of the tool, ensure that the students have used a character trait analysis sheet (DOC 26KB) to organize their thinking and analyzed character traits.
The teams interchange their places with other teams and question factors & their relationships. They revisit the maps made the necessary changes if any & save their work. The teacher visits each team while they are working to guide, assess and observe the student learning. The students showcase their project in the form of written Journals. Students refer to rubric for journal writing (DOC 37KB) for impressive entries.

**Debate**
Remind students that characters are an important element of a story. Have students see the movie *Huckleberry Finn*. Traits of a character can be stated or can be shown to the reader by the character's actions. Once students finish the analysis, encourage debate on *Is Huck a Hero?* Students will mark an assertion about Huck's character and then back it up with textual evidence from the story. Ask students to consider in their groups the most important characteristics of the hero. Have students discuss the questions: What are the traits of a hero? Does a hero have to be nice? They will note their points in the story map (DOC 38.5KB) document to help them document their thoughts.
Share information on debate roles and rules using the debate guidelines and debate rubric (DOC 30KB). Encourage students to refer to their collected information as they make points and structure their arguments. Students will take a stance on whether Huck is a hero or not. Students will contemplate the views of various interest groups to argue for or against Huck being a hero. While debating on the stage, encourage students to support their stance by citing examples and articulate their point of view. As students present their positions, assess their work using the debate rubric. When the debate is completed, invite others to provide feedback.

**Wrapping up and revisiting the essential question**
Pose the essential question again, *How does literature help us understand ourselves better?* In small groups, have students discuss the question in relation to what they have learned from reading The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and by using tools. Ask them to take up the **Quiz** (DOC 350KB). Bring the discussion back to the whole group and give students an opportunity to share what they have discussed. Have students fill in the L column of the K-W-H-L chart and give them an opportunity to share real life examples as well. Students will write their impressions about the book in a report.
**Prerequisite Skills**

- Basic use of computers
- Creating power point presentation
- Browsing the Internet
- Collecting and analysing information from Internet
- Checking authenticity of information they collect
- Using online tools, learning online working environment

**Differentiated Instruction**

**Resource Student**

- Provide a summary of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn". Fill in the blank plot worksheets can be used to help students simplify and identify the characters and actions. A template can include scaffolds to help identify the form and content of the plot.
- Break activities into manageable sections, and record tasks on a calendar. Provide extra time to complete assignments. Group the student with more capable learners. Encourage cooperation by explaining to the class that collaboration means working together to meet goals.

**Gifted Student**

- Students will be paired up with other gifted students for the discussions. Students will be encouraged to support their teams creatively and appropriately. Students will be encouraged to look beyond the obvious text quotations and come up with creative but appropriate evidence to support their claims. Encourage the student to create supplemental assignments or extensions.

**Credits**

This project idea has been developed by Ms. Bibiana and Ms. Geeta from Navrachna School. A team of teachers expanded the plan into the example you see here.

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*Note: The hyperlinked support documents are not part of the PDF. They can be downloaded and printed individually.*
Designing Effective Projects: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Assessment Plan

**Assessment Plan**

**Assessment Timeline**

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**Assessment Summary**

Use questioning throughout the unit to assess students’ understanding of the Curriculum-Framing Questions as well as other important questions about the story. Determine students’ background knowledge and help them think about what they already know about Huckleberry Finn by Anecdotal Notes and the K-W-H-L chart (DOC 275KB). Review the reading response periodically to assess students’ understanding as well as redirect teaching if necessary using reading journal (DOC 27.5KB). Use graphic organizers like character link chart (DOC 25.5KB), character trait analysis sheet (DOC 26KB) and story map (DOC 38.5KB) to note down their understanding of the story. Students use presentation rubric (DOC 36.5KB) and debate rubric (DOC 30KB) to support their multimedia presentations and guide them on their expectations during their debate. Students will present their learning through various reports. Student led conferences will take place to compare each group’s decisions for ranking of characters. Each one will answer the questions asked in the quiz (DOC 350KB).
Designing Effective Projects: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Content Standards and Objectives

**Targeted State Frameworks/Content Standards/Benchmarks**
As per CBSE guidelines, by the end of the course, students should be able to understand, interpret, evaluate, and respond to the following features in a literary text.

- Character, as revealed through appearance and distinguishing features, socio-economic background action/events, expression of feelings, speech and dialogues.
- Plot / Story / Theme, emerging through main events, progression of events and links between them; sequences of events denoting theme.
- Setting as seen through time and place, socio-economic and cultural background, people, beliefs and attitudes.

**Student Objectives/Learning Outcomes**
Student will be able to:

- Reflect on values like honesty, empathy, obedience etc.
- Develop creative writing skills.
- Develop communication skills.
- Identify characters that influenced Huck.
- Analyze, synthesize and evaluate Huck’s character.
- Analyze the impact of adventurous actions.
- Identify a theme supported with specific references to the book.
- Break down complex tasks into manageable pieces.
Designing Effective Projects: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Resources

Materials and Resources
Printed Materials

- "The adventures of Huckleberry Finn" by Mark Twain.

Supplies

- Papers

Internet Resources

- www.sparknotes.com/lit/huckfinn/*
- www.123student.com/*
- www.sparknotes.com/*
- www.marktwain.com/*
- http://www.americanliterature.com/*

Other Resources

- DVD of the movie - The adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Technology – Hardware

- Computers
- LCD Projector
- Internet - Broadband connection

Technology – Software

- Internet Explorer 6 or above
- Microsoft Office*
- Operating System - Windows