

Humanitas Interdisciplinary Thematic Unit

School: El Camino Real HS	Track: Traditional	Grade: 12	Timeframe: 9 Weeks
Team Members: Jason Firestein	Alonzo Solarez		
Subject Area: English and Literature, Art History, Studio Art	Government, Economics		

Unit Theme: “Imagined Worlds”

Rationale	<p>The world our 12th graders inherit this year is daunting: tuition on the rise, college spaces on the decline, the job market flooded by those more qualified than kids holding a high school diploma in one hand and hopes for their futures in the other. To remain optimistic, our students need to think outside the box. The first step in taking hold of their new lives in the adult world is developing and then utilizing a social imagination: the ability to rethink the world, reshape their roles, redefine their expectations, and reevaluate their priorities. This unit guides students through the arts and sciences, examining how others have re-imagined their worlds for their own benefit as well as the benefit of society. Students uncover the hidden meaning of fairy tales, exposing ancient wisdom in hidden symbols. A deep examination of Freudian thought offers the opportunity to understand the forces and anxieties driving their decisions; examining the role of the imagination, both conscious and unconscious, in art and literature demonstrates how these forces may be used constructively. Students are then given the opportunity to document their worlds, evaluate the social imagination of their communities, and then consciously re-imagine their worlds, developing and then executing concrete strategies to improve the lives of others.</p>		
Student Outcomes			
Focus Standards	<p>Students will be challenged by writing in a variety of rhetorical modes (narrative, interpretive, analytical, comparative, and evaluatory) on projects of high personal relevance.</p> <p>Students will create technically complex presentations using digital media.</p> <p>Students will engage in complex and rigorous thought across a variety of disciplines (the social sciences, art history, and literature) while uncovering the universality of themes across genres and millennia.</p> <p>Students will have the opportunity for reflective and relevant discourse regarding their personal decision-making process as well as their roles in the world.</p>		
Understandings	<p><i>Students will understand that...</i></p> <p>... literature and art contain hidden clues that speak to the universal power of the imagination as a tool for personal and social change.</p> <p>... the economics of charity and community activism support the idea that individual and collective action inspires the “forward-paying” imagination.</p> <p>... the energies that dominate our decisions may be decoded and used to better ourselves and our relationships while overcoming the anxiety that inhibits our own success.</p> <p>... they have the power to affect their communities by identifying problems, imagining solutions, and teaming with others who possess the means to assuage the suffering of their immediate world.</p>	Theme-related Essential Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is magical realism, and how does its use in art and literature give us insight to the world? • How do ancient and modern texts take advantage of our imagination to explain our behavior, deal with primal human fears, and ultimately shape society? • How does the unconscious mind actively shape our thoughts and behaviors, and to what extent can we control it? • According to modern economic theory, does it pay to be nice? • What is a social imagination, and what are the consequences of its absence? • How can the social imagination be inspired and used for the benefit of society?
Interdisciplinary Essay Prompt	<p>Freud states, “The motive forces of fantasies are unsatisfied wishes, and every single fantasy is the fulfillment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality.” This “unsatisfying reality” often comes into conflict with the self-interest of an individual, seeking resolution through our ability to alter our worlds – both our physical environments as well as our psychic houses. In a well-written essay, trace our attempts to understand, manipulate, and master reality. Specifically, how do ancient tales manipulate reality in order to cope with anxiety, and how do the theories of human behavior and personality development put forth by Freud extend this understanding? Next, discuss the role of magical realism and the surreal in art and literature, blending the imaginary with the ordinary for the purpose of reflecting our world while revealing its hidden truths. Finally, evaluate your own ability to manipulate the world, as expressed by the AIDS Walk as well as your “Transforming Reality” project. Be specific in your discussion of how each is a benefit to both the individual as well as society.</p>		

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Subject-Area Unit Plan: “Imagined Worlds”

School: El Camino Real HS

Teacher: Jason Firestein

Subject-Area: English and Literature / Art History / Studio

Essential Understandings	Knowledge/ Skills	Focus Standards
<p><i>Important Concepts</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • genre and subgenre • poetic devices including imagery, figurative language, symbol, and allusion • decoding symbols in literature • magical realism in literature • surrealism in art 	<p><i>Students will know...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...how biographical and philosophical background information of artists (Dali, Magritte, Kahlo, and Chirico) influence their work. ...the effects of magical realism in film and literature. ...poetic and rhetorical devices relevant to decoding meaning in fiction. 	<p>2.5 Analyze an author’s implicit and explicit philosophical assumptions and beliefs about a subject.</p> <p>3.1 Analyze characteristics of subgenres (e.g., satire, parody, allegory, pastoral) that are used in poetry, prose, plays, novels, short stories, essays, and other basic genres.</p>
<p><i>Guiding Questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is magical realism, and how does its use in literature give us insight to the world? • What is surrealism, and how does its use in art give us insight to the world? • How do the philosophical assumptions of artists and writers manifest themselves in their work? 	<p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...identify, analyze, and evaluate the works of surrealists, including relevant connections between the artists’ biographies and philosophical worldviews. ...interpret symbols based on their effects in short fiction. ...evaluate the use of magical realism in fiction, including the use of poetic devices, figurative language, and allusion in contributing to the literary effects of the genre. ...apply their own biographical information and philosophical assumptions in creating original surrealist self-portraits. 	
<p>Assessment Evidence</p>		
<p><i>Formative Assessments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students create an original self-portrait reflecting an understanding of surrealism as well as the influence of the unconscious. They also compose a brief essay articulating the relationship between their medium and image and surrealist thought. • Students trace examples of magical realism in film, commenting on the contribution of the genre to the tone of the overall work. 	<p><i>Summative Assessments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will compose and revise an interpretive essay of appropriate length in which they demonstrate control over an author’s use of symbols within the genre of magical realism. • In discussion and quizzes, students will demonstrate control over the rhetorical power of poetic devices by identifying stylistic elements of the genre in literature and evaluating their contribution toward meaning-making. 	<p>2.2 Write responses to literature:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the significant ideas in works or passages. Analyze the use of imagery, language, universal themes, and unique aspects of the text.
<p>Learning Plan</p>		
<p><i>Texts, major lessons, events, projects, activities, and ELL/SPED differentiation</i></p> <p>Short stories: “An Act of Vengeance”, “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings”, “Tuesday Siesta”, “The Handsomest Drowned Man In The World”, “A Country Doctor”</p> <p>Non-fiction: “Where to Find Magical Realism”, “The Inherent Magical Realism of Place”, and “You Are Not Where You Were” by Albert Rios</p> <p>Art: Works by Salvador Dali, Rene Magritte, Giorgio de Chirico, and Frida Kahlo</p> <p>Film: <i>Un Chien Andalou</i>, <i>Like Water for Chocolate</i> and <i>Frida</i></p> <p>Enrichment Activities: Surrealist Self-portraits and essays</p> <p>Differentiation: vocabulary development, multi-modal learning</p>		

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Subject-Area: English and Literature / Art History / Studio Art

Essential Understandings	Knowledge/ Skills	Focus Standards
<p><i>Important Concepts</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comparing texts • literary criticism • symbols, allegory, and literary analysis • poetic devices contributing to meaning-making, including irony, shifts, sound devices, and figurative language • chunking text and tableaus in art 	<p><i>Students will know...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...how modern analysts reinterpret texts through different critical perspectives (specifically Freudian). ...how poets use deliberate writing and stylistic devices to contribute to meaning-making in their work. ...how to identify shifts in poetry that contribute to a thematic understanding. ...the purpose and techniques of successful chunking of text. 	<p>3.2 Analyze the way in which the theme or meaning of a selection represents a view or comment on life, using textual evidence to support the claim.</p> <p>3.3. Analyze the ways in which irony, tone, mood, the author’s style, and the “sound” of language achieve specific rhetorical or aesthetic purposes or both.</p> <p>3.4. Analyze ways in which poets use imagery, personification, figures of speech, and sounds to evoke readers’ emotions.</p> <p>3.6 Analyze the way in which authors through the centuries have used archetypes drawn from myth and tradition in literature, film, political speeches, and religious writings</p> <p>3.7 Analyze recognized works of world literature from a variety of authors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Contrast the major literary forms, techniques, and characteristics of the major literary periods. b. Relate literary works and authors to the major themes and issues of their eras.
<p><i>Guiding Questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do ancient and modern texts take advantage of our imagination to explain our behavior, deal with primal human fears, and ultimately shape society? 	<p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...identify Jung’s primal fears in ancient and modern texts. ...evaluate the differences between constructive and destructive conflict resolution. ...analyze the creative forces described within these texts that allow for the protagonists’ manipulation of their worlds through their imaginations. ...evaluate the poetic use of language by analyzing sound devices (euphonious, cacophonous, plosive, etc.). ...create visual tableaus of fictional texts. 	
Assessment Evidence		
<p><i>Formative Assessments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students discuss the ways authors infuse imaginative powers analogous to the magical realists that embolden children in their own problem solving. • Students create pastiche art tableaus of pivotal moments in fiction. 	<p><i>Summative Assessments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students compose an essay of appropriate length in which they compare and contrast two fairy tales, identifying the anxieties which drive the protagonists, and evaluate the different methods of conflict resolution: whether reconciliatory/cooperative or abusive/destructive. 	
Learning Plan		
<p><i>Texts, major lessons, events, projects, activities, and ELL/SPED differentiation</i></p> <p>“Ancient Texts”: “The Book of Daniel” from <i>The King James Bible</i>, Grimm’s versions of “Little Red-Cap”, “Hansel and Grethel”, “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” and “Cinderella”</p> <p>Fiction: <i>Where the Wild Things Are</i> and <i>The Velveteen Rabbit</i></p> <p>Poetry: “Cinderella” and “Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs” by Anne Sexton</p> <p>Non-fiction: “The Meaning of Fairy Tales”, “Journey to the Center of the Self”, “In the Company of Wolves”, and “Making Life Bearable” from <i>The Witch Must Die: The Hidden Meaning of Fairy Tales</i></p>		

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Essential Understandings	Knowledge/ Skills	Focus Standards
<p><i>Important Concepts</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the unconscious • collective consciousness • id, ego, superego • ego-defense mechanisms • dream interpretation; latent and manifest dream content 	<p><i>Students will know...</i></p> <p>...Freud’s major theories regarding dream theory, personality formation, and the role of the unconscious in shaping our decision making.</p>	<p>3.9 Analyze the philosophical arguments presented in literary works to determine whether the authors’ positions have contributed to the quality of each work and the credibility of the characters. (Philosophical approach)</p> <p>2.1 Write fictional, autobiographical, or biographical narratives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Narrate a sequence of events and communicate their significance to the audience. b. Locate scenes and incidents in specific places. c. Describe with concrete sensory details the sights, sounds, and smells of a scene and the specific actions, movements, gestures, and feelings of the characters; use interior monologue to depict the characters’ feelings. e. Make effective use of descriptions of appearance, images, shifting perspectives, and sensory details.
<p><i>Guiding Questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the unconscious mind actively shape our thoughts and behaviors, and to what extent can we control it? 	<p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <p>...identify and evaluate unconscious responses to anxiety. ...examine their own unconscious minds through their dreams. ...understand the role of dreaming in fulfilling unfulfilled wishes in order to alleviate anxiety. ...categorize thought and experiences according to Freudian thought. ...chunk (or gist) non-fiction passages.</p>	
Assessment Evidence		
<p><i>Formative Assessments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students keep a “Dream Journal” in which they record a dream, identify and analyze both the manifest and latent content of that dream, and assign and interpretive understanding of the dream based on their understanding of their unconscious wishes, as described in our readings and discussions. 	<p><i>Summative Assessments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are assessed on their abilities to evaluate scenarios referenced by Freud (and discussed during lecture and readings) and “diagnose” which ego-defense mechanisms are represented. 	
Learning Plan		
<p><i>Texts, major lessons, events, projects, activities, and ELL/SPED differentiation</i></p> <p>Non-fiction: Handouts on Freudian thought Enrichment: Students create “unconscious” Dada Poetry using newspaper clippings Differentiation: Freud lectures and handouts are <i>not</i> primary sources. Passages are chunked individually, and progress is monitored by sharing chunks, both in whole class discussion and in small groups. Review questions follow each handout, and time is allotted for individual as well as small group work. Lectures include group work for review questions as well as accompanying vocabulary.</p>		

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School: El Camino Real HS

Teacher: Alonzo Solarez

Subject-Area: Government and Economics

Essential Understandings	Knowledge/ Skills	Focus Standards
<p><i>Important Concepts</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> civic responsibility and civic-mindedness community activism and public service the economic motives of charity evaluating primary sources 	<p><i>Students will know ...</i></p> <p>...the ethical responsibilities of citizens to their communities.</p> <p>...the financial and ethical obligations of corporations to their communities as well as their shareholders.</p> <p>...the role of world powers in allocating relief and development opportunities to lesser-developed countries (LDC's).</p>	<p>12.2 Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.</p> <p>4. Understand the obligations of civic-mindedness, including voting, being informed on civic issues, volunteering and performing public service, and serving in the military or alternative service.</p> <p>5. Describe the reciprocity between rights and obligations; that is, why enjoyment of one's rights entails respect for the rights of others.</p> <p>8. Explain the role of profit as the incentive to entrepreneurs in a market economy.</p> <p>4. Students construct and test hypotheses; collect, evaluate, and employ information from multiple primary and secondary sources; and apply it in oral and written presentations.</p>
<p><i>Guiding Questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to modern economic theory, does it pay to be nice? What is a social imagination, and what are the consequences of its absence? How can the social imagination be inspired and used for the benefit of society? 	<p><i>Students will be able to ...</i></p> <p>...design, conduct, and implement a service learning project.</p> <p>...evaluate the social needs of one's community and take part in fulfilling those needs.</p> <p>...assemble presentations using digital photography, music, and appropriate software.</p>	
<p>Assessment Evidence</p>		
<p><i>Formative Assessments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students research community efforts to affect their world, learning what individuals can accomplish while part of a collective social movement. (For example, our students researched AIDS Project Los Angeles and the L.A. AIDS Walk, then joined in fundraising efforts as well as the event itself.) 	<p><i>Summative Assessments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students use digital cameras to document the needs of their community, then reach consensus by selecting a “cause” (i.e. graffiti removal, abandoned animals, etc.) to champion. Students then create and execute a plan to contribute to their community. (For example, our students decided to help the homeless and collected over 5000 pounds of canned goods to fill a local food pantry prior to Thanksgiving.) Students then assemble a presentation detailing their efforts using appropriate technology. 	
<p>Learning Plan</p>		
<p><i>Texts, major lessons, events, projects, activities, and ELL/SPED differentiation</i></p> <p>reflective journals detailing their personal insights in volunteering and social activism</p> <p>researching Non-profit Organizations and strategies they use to bring awareness to their cause and fundraise</p> <p>Enrichment: AIDS Walk L.A., “Transforming Reality” (Canned Food Drive with Digital Photography and multimedia presentation)</p> <p>Non-fiction: excerpts from <i>Giving</i> by Bill Clinton, “The Ethics of Charity” by Peter Singer, “The Irresponsible Investor” by Michael Lewis in <i>The New York Times</i></p>		