

The Writer's Craft

Unit Overview

Rationale: This unit, designed for upper division honors level students, concentrates its focus on the practices and techniques that writers employ in the process of making literature. Using literary devices and techniques as its focus, it is the objective of this unit to show students how such devices and techniques are used for maximum effect. Using as its focus the best fiction, poetry, drama, and non-fiction in English, the unit uses the brief (2-3 pp.) analytical paper as the medium for comprehension.

The Writer's Craft Papers: Throughout the course of the year, students will be given a piece of literature to analyze. The analysis of the piece will be based on one of the specific literary terms under study. Students will begin by reading the piece of literature and jotting responses down in their notebooks. They will then begin the process of brainstorming approaches to the analysis in their writing groups, and lastly, students will write drafts of their papers and, in brief editing sessions, peer edit their work. Final papers will then be handed in. The purpose of the papers is to get students thinking about the purposes, uses, and flexibility of language. The literature studied will include short fiction, poetry, and non-fiction. Guest speakers may be included in this unit, as may public lectures. The papers, approximately six for the year, will constitute one portfolio grade (averaged), and will be worth 50 points each.

Paper#1: Irony

1. Define the following in your notebook: Verbal Irony, Dramatic Irony, and Situational Irony.
2. Read the works on the list on the back of this sheet, making sure to respond to each in your Marble Notebook. Look to focus specifically on the element of irony. Identify which type of irony it is.
3. Read the central piece of this study, **Oedipus Rex**, and write a brief Writer's Craft paper in which you identify irony at work in the piece and the effect it has on the piece as a whole.

-See over for more specific instructions-

Reading List for Paper #1: Irony

The following are in Literature: The Human Experience on the pages listed:

1. "Ozymandias" Shelley (1059)
2. "Dulce et Decorum Est" (1071)
3. "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson (328)
4. "The Story of an Hour" Chopin (handout)

Procedure:

Read each piece and type a paragraph or two in which you focus on the irony of the piece. Tell me what you feel is the strongest example of irony in the piece, what type of irony it is, and how the irony changes the overall effect of the piece.

Then...

Read Oedipus Rex (161)

Next...

Write a brief paper, 1½-3 pages, that looks to illuminate how irony is used by the writer in the piece. Your thesis should be clearly stated (it should have something to do with what you feel irony does for the piece) and proven. As always, follow the style sheet.

Due Dates:

Paragraphs 1,2: Tuesday, September 26, 2007

Paragraphs 3,4: Friday, September 28, 2007

Writer's Craft Paper (Draft #1): Wednesday, October 3, 2007

Final Draft: Monday, October 8, 2007

Assessment: Paragraphs (20 points total)
Paper (50 points)