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Utilizing an integrated reading and writing approach to teach Romeo and Juliet to ninth graders

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UTILIZING AN INTEGRATED READING AND WRITING APPROACH TO
TEACH *ROMEO AND JULIET* TO NINTH GRADERS

MASTER'S PROJECT

Submitted to the School of Education
University of Dayton, in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

by

Theresa Beldner

School of Education

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Purpose for the Study

Historically, reading and writing have been taught in schools as two mutually distinct processes. In contrast to this traditional approach, the writer, as a literature major with a long love affair with words and the ability to engage personally in the reading experience, looked for every opportunity to read in conjunction with the writing process as a student both in high school and in college. Naturally, the writer felt both relief and validation when she actually read the theoretical material concerning this issue and found it up to her expectations. According to much current research, there are real and valuable connections to be made between the reading and writing processes.

Later, as a teacher rather than as a student, the writer confirmed and solidified these convictions, concerning the reading and writing approach to teaching in the English classroom, from her student teaching experience in a high school. The very first day of her student teaching experience, the writer distributed a questionnaire concerning the reading habits of the students. It was not a surprise to discover that these General English students (middle to low academic ability) read very little outside of class. A few read the sports section of the newspaper or the comics. What was fascinating, though, was the apparent correlation, based on the information provided in these questionnaires, between the few consistent readers in the class and their somewhat superior writing abilities. This connection served to cement the writer's previous ideas concerning the value of connecting the reading and writing processes in the classroom.

In addition to this personal inclination toward the reading and writing approach, the writer found several aspects of the theory that clearly had value and which reflected the

need to combine the two processes in the high school classroom. Most importantly, both reading and writing employ similar cognitive processes. The logical assumption would seem to indicate that teaching reading and writing as an integrated process would serve to enhance the metacognitive abilities of a student in both reading and writing. Metacognition is an individual's awareness of his/her acquisition of knowledge and his/her awareness of the strategies involved in learning. It includes both the understanding of what it is he/she already knows and what the task is going to teach, as well as what is involved in completing the learning task, whether it is reading or writing. This awareness or lack of awareness is often the difference between skilled and lesser skilled readers and writers.

This fact was demonstrated to the writer through daily interaction with the General English students when she observed the difference interest and active participation had on the reading process. It became clear that the skilled readers are more capable of understanding the different demands which various tasks place on them and are able to make judgments about the time commitment and intensity of study based on the level of difficulty as they perceive it. They are able to actively engage in metacognitive strategies such as adjusting their reading pattern by skimming over unimportant passages and reading slowly and carefully over more difficult passages. Additionally, skilled readers recognize when they are reading less logical passages and read more slowly in order to gain full comprehension. They are able to recognize when they have lost their comprehension of a text and are able to determine what strategy (look back, continue reading, slow down, etc.) they should use to regain their comprehension and understanding. All of these metacognitive strategies in reading have an impact on a student's writing ability. For example, the strategy of questioning the text as he/she reads

it easily translates to the writing process when a student questions a topic in order to engage more fully in the writing process. Additionally, a student who activates his/her prior knowledge or schemata and creates a purpose before reading a selection by making predictions based on the title or the topic uses a similar strategy to activate prior knowledge in the prewriting writing process of jotting down thoughts or ideas as they come to mind as a way to organize his/her thoughts, knowledge and purpose for writing. A student who is able to monitor his/her ability in order to constantly engage with the text will use similar techniques whether the text is a piece of literature or personal writing. With these assumptions concerning the reading and writing processes, it makes sense to "design a course which gradually builds these cognitive skills and increases the writers' knowledge of language by engaging the students in carefully coordinated reading/writing assignments" (Reagan, 1986).

In addition to the interrelated role the metacognitive processes play in reading and writing, the writer became interested in using the reading and writing approach because she believes assimilation plays a crucial part in the development of writing and reading skills. Exposure to a variety of genres and styles will help students focus on their own writing in order to develop a voice that feels comfortable to them. By trying to imitate or emulate a number of different styles and voices, a student can pick and choose among the aspects of writing which appeal to his/her. In addition, exposure to a quantity of literature can impact positively upon a student's knowledge of mechanics and grammar. Reagan has noted that "experienced writers don't need to recall very many specific mechanical rules because they have assimilated this knowledge as a result of their reading experience" (1986). It is much easier and enjoyable to learn by assimilation than through lecture. It is

logical to assume that with a significant increase in the number of texts that a student has been exposed to over the course of the years, the level of knowledge concerning punctuation, spelling, grammar, text structure, etc., he/she has assimilated will increase proportionally. It is much more appealing to the writer, as a teacher, to attempt to teach writing conventions and style through example and assimilation than to try to explain the nuances of the writing process to a confused student who may be turned off from writing by such a dry discussion. In conjunction with these benefits to the writing process, assimilation of mechanics and sentence structure will positively affect the level of comprehension a student achieves during the reading experience.

In the end, after having read the materials relevant to the reading and writing approach, the writer has determined that the reading and writing approach would be an appropriate method for teaching *Romeo and Juliet*. This decision reflects the writer's wholehearted embrace of the notions of metacognition and assimilation and the desire to positively impact the development of students' reading and writing ability.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this project was to develop a handbook for teachers to teach *Romeo and Juliet* to ninth graders which utilizes an integrated reading and writing instructional approach.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

During the past few years, many English departments in high schools across the nation have undergone considerable changes in their rationale, mission, and ideology. While these changes have taken many forms, one idea has consistently risen to prominence: the notion of utilizing a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to teaching reading and composition in the classroom. This idea is not a new one for elementary school teachers, who have whole-heartedly embraced the notions of whole language learning. According to the Educational Research Service, whole language is an:

approach based on [the] premise that young children best learn to read and write in the same way they learned to speak- from whole to part. That is, they learn language as a whole process using many reading, writing, and oral language skills (1991).

Similarly, the reading and writing approach to teaching in the high school English classroom believes that it makes sense to “design a course which gradually builds these cognitive skills and increases the writers’ knowledge of language by engaging the students in carefully coordinated reading/writing assignments” (Reagan, 1986). While this idea has found support with elementary teachers, it is becoming more and more obvious that the tenets of whole language, or the reading and writing approach, can also be applied easily and successfully in high school English curriculums.

Similarities Between the Reading and Writing Processes

The reasons for endorsing and encouraging the implementation of a reading and writing approach in high school English classrooms are numerous. An obvious factor is

the degree of similarity between the two processes of reading and writing. The two processes are comparable and compatible in numerous areas. Several researchers and educators have suggested that there is a high degree of similarity between reading and writing in their use of cognitive processes and strategies and have suggested that the “class which teaches both reading and writing may be more effective than writing [or reading] alone” (Reagan, 1986). The term cognitive strategies refers to the methods students and learners employ when actively reading and writing. There is clearly a connection between reading and writing, as advanced readers tend to be advanced and competent writers (Reagan, 1986). The key seems to lie in the realization that advanced students tend to have more completely developed an awareness of their cognitive strategies for learning. According to Birnbaum (1986), these advanced students are “more purposeful in their approach” and are “more reflective in their engagement with the written language.”

In addition to the apparent connection between reading and writing competency displayed by advanced students, the cognitive strategies employed for success in reading often overlap and coincide with the strategies employed for success in composition or writing (Chew, 1985). For example, the strategy of adjusting one’s reading pattern by skimming over unimportant passages and reading slowly over more difficult passages can translate into writing in a more considered and concise way in order to gain full comprehension of the material that is being written down. Also, the strategy of questioning the text as the student is reading it translates easily to the writing process when a student questions a topic in order to engage more fully in the writing process. According to Birnbaum, a critical element of fluency in both reading and writing is that the student’s “consciousness of written language in one process [can] inform her engagement

in the other” (1986). These overlapping cognitive abilities include the student’s ability to consider a range of writing modes or styles, which coincides with the student’ ability to deliberate and enumerate criteria for selecting a text to read. Additionally, these cognitive abilities are in evidence in a student’s ability to monitor success in transactions with texts and in the ability to “logically relate superordinate to subordinate ideas” (Birnbaum, 1986) in both the reading and writing processes.

Reagan (1986) has noted numerous similarities in the cognitive processes of reading and writing. She notes that the tendency is to read in chunks of information and, similarly, write ideas and thoughts down in phrases and sentences. This two strategies are both conducive to improving the short term memory and fluency in language skills. In addition, she notes that in both reading and writing, the student approaches the text in a similar cognitive fashion involving recursive and constant interaction with the text. This simply means that whether an individual is reading or writing, he/she is constantly rereading and considering the words in front of him/her on the page in order to construct meaning and understanding for himself or herself. This recursiveness allows the student to gain increased comprehension when he/she is reading and improves the clarity and focus of the writing.

Correspondingly, Sternglass (1986) has also noted various cognitive similarities between the reading and writing processes. She has developed a model of cognitive operations in which she explains how individuals “facilitate the processing of a text” (1986). In this model, Sternglass suggests that there are four levels of inference (or understanding) that an individual undertakes in order to comprehend a text: explaining, inferring, assessing, and deducing. According to Sternglass, an important connection

between reading and writing is that, since a writer has engaged in these cognitive strategies as a reader, he/she “is conscious of their responsibility to help readers build appropriate connections.” In essence, the writer is acknowledging an awareness of these strategies for both reading and writing and is developing a text which facilitates the use of these strategies.

Another key similarity between the reading and writing processes is the way in which the individual constructs meaning from the text. The key realization is that both reading and writing are “dynamic acts of thought and communication” (Rosebery et al, 1989). While the processes are different they “draw on common linguistic knowledge and cognitive strategies for meaning-making” (Gunlach, 1989). In the same way, Rose (1988) has suggested a similarity between reading and writing as they are both “composing processes constructing meaning from texts.” The student is actively engaging the mind in creating meaning, whether it is as a writer placing words on a page or as a reader drawing information and understanding from those words. More importantly, the acts of reading and writing are made relevant through this construction of meaning and without this construction the processes become almost insignificant. Until meaning is created in the individual’s mind, the words are simply black impressions on a white page. Words come alive and impact the student when the student engages actively with the material and connects it with his/her own experiences in some way (Watson, 1983; Wittrock, 1984). These processes of creating meaning for a student during either reading or writing follow parallel paths (Journal of Reading, 1990). They begin with the student using background experiences to influence the comprehension and composing processes (Koch, 1986). Researchers and educators have suggested that this is a critical element of both reading

and writing. In essence, it is critical that the student feel a sense of ownership from the very beginning of either process. This sense of ownership is created when the student brings past personal experiences into the reading and writing processes. While the processes are in some ways different, they “draw on common linguistic knowledge” (Gunlach, 1989) as the way to create meaning.

According to Lewin (1992), the processes of reading and writing follow the same four steps in creating or constructing meaning from text. Each process begins with the preparing stage. This stage takes the form of prewriting where the student attempts to write freely and without boundaries on the topic at hand. This is an attempt to focus and direct the student before the actual formal writing begins. In reading, preparing takes the form of pre-reading in which the student may read the back of a book, the title, or any excerpts and consider what he/she knows before beginning to read. In both processes, preparing achieves the same result: to focus and shape the student’s expectations of the assignment which will follow.

The second step in constructing meaning is the drafting stage. In writing, this simply involves the preliminary ideas and notions being written on the page. In reading this involves the first attempts to read and understand the text. Lewin calls the third step “repairing,” in which the writer may need to go over what has been written and make any revisions necessary in order for the piece to be completed in a logical and orderly fashion. In reading, repairing takes the form of re-reading. This is crucial because without this skill many students are unable to gain a complete understanding of the text. It is in re-reading that a fuller understanding of the material is gained.

Finally, writing and reading both involve the concept of “sharing.” In writing, sharing is allowing your piece to be read and discussed by others. In reading, sharing simply involves discussing and critiquing what has been read. In both areas, this stage is critical. In writing, it allows the author to see whether he/she has been clear and understandable in what he/she has written: have the other students interpreted the work as he/she would have liked it to be? In reading, sharing allows the students to see whether their interpretations mirror anyone else’s and to hear any interpretations that they might have missed in the reading.

A third area of similarity between the reading and the writing processes is the important role played by schema in the development of competency in each area. The schema theory utilizes the belief that words and sentences create pictures or associations when they are read (Pearson & Spiro, 1982). The use of schema, also known as prior knowledge, is a necessary element of reading comprehension and strong composition skills. Without the basis of knowledge and experience, a student may not be able to write on a given topic or gain complete understanding of a passage that is read (Rubin & Hansen, 1984; Koch, 1986). Sternglass (1986) has suggested that the degree to which a student can have success in either reading or writing is “influenced by the level of prior knowledge” that the student has before he/she begins the process. Before beginning either a reading or a writing exercise, it is beneficial for a student’s schema to be activated and expanded to include elements which may be necessary for the student to experience success in the assignment, whether it is reading or writing. This can be accomplished by a teacher leading a class discussion prior to a student beginning the selection. This notion of

activating schema fits into Lewin first step in constructing meaning in both reading and writing before successful activities in these areas can begin.

The reading and writing processes are also similar in that they can both be explained, to a certain extent, by the psycho-linguistic model of learning (Anderson, 1984; Sternglass, 1983). According to the psycho-linguistic model of learning, a student must have some conceptual basis for relating the assignment to his/her own experience. Basically, this means that in order for there to be success in either reading or composition, a student must have a purpose: there must be a reason why he/she is going through the acts of reading and writing. According to Sternglass (1983) the “best way for students to investigate through analysis and synthesis is to engage and interact with the materials.” Therefore, in order for a teacher to experience success in writing or reading with her students, she must consistently establish a purpose and rationale for doing something so that the students will have an investment in the activity.

Finally, reading and writing are similar processes because they both involve process knowledge and the mastery of mechanical details. According to Rubin and Hansen (1984), success in writing and reading depends upon the acquisition of informational knowledge, such as vocabulary, concepts, and general learning. In addition, Rubin and Hansen suggest that this success also depends upon transactional knowledge which is the “conceptualization of texts as a medium of communication between author and reader.” Similarly, Smith addresses the notion that both reading and writing require an awareness and mastery of specialized knowledge which cannot be understood through explanation and formalized instruction alone (1984). They are dependent upon each other for the acquisition of rules for spelling, punctuation, and grammar. These rules are acquired as

the student continues to read and then practices the skills he/she has picked up through the reading process. This becomes a circular and inter-dependent pattern of learning. Again, Rubin and Hansen address the notion that both processes require a mastery of mechanical details such as grammar and punctuation. In addition, they suggest that both involved an awareness of structure and writing formulas. In order for the student to write and read well, there must be a basic level of understanding of the rules for communication, including grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, writing structure. As the student increases in awareness of these rules, his /her ability to comprehend texts and compose will increase proportionally.

Essentially, there are numerous similarities between the reading and writing processes which encourage an instructional approach which emphasizes these similarities. Both the reading and writing processes utilize similar cognitive strategies, such as approaching the text in a recursive manner. In addition, both processes involve the construction of meaning from the text and emphasize the important role played by schema in the development of competency in these areas. Also, both the reading and writing processes can be explained, to a certain extent, by the psycho-linguistic model of learning. Finally, both the reading and the writing processes involve process knowledge and the mastery of mechanical details. But, the reading and writing approach to teaching English in the classroom has value not only because of the similarities found in the two processes, but also because of the positive effects such an approach will have on reading ability.

Effects of a Coordinated Reading and Writing Approach on Reading Ability

An important consideration in the debate by English teachers is whether or not whole language instruction, or an interdisciplinary approach to teaching reading and writing, has

positive effects on the students' reading ability. It has become clear through the examination of material by both educators and researchers that reading ability is unmistakably and undeniably affected by this instructional approach over time. According to Tiernay and Lays (1986) we "learn to read by writing." In addition, it has become apparent that this approach influences and affects several different and crucial aspects of reading ability.

First, several researchers and educators have suggested that an interdisciplinary approach to teaching reading and writing has a positive effect on concept development. In essence, concept development relates back to the notion of schema and refers to "the little pictures or associations you conjure up in your head when you hear a word or sentence" (Pearson & Spiro, 1982). In order for a student to experience success in reading, he/she must have acquired sufficient knowledge and awareness about the concept under discussion in the selection in order to fully comprehend the reading. Pearson and Spiro believe that:

schema inadequacies are responsible for a great many roadblocks to reading comprehension--particularly those that involve decision-making. Reading comprehension requires decisions about what parts of the text are most important and what information that does not appear in the text must be added or inferred.

These kinds of decisions are based on the information in the schemata.

In order to avoid the problems associated with a lack of schema or understanding of necessary concepts, Pearson and Spiro suggest that an effective means of concept

development involves utilizing writing and composition prior to and during the reading process in order to stimulate and activate the appropriate level of concept development. This is certainly not a novel idea. Tiernay and Lays (1986) have also confirmed that an integrated reading and writing approach in the English classroom will have a positive effect on concept development and, therefore, on the level of reading comprehension.

In addition, an integrated reading and writing approach has a positive effect on word recognition and vocabulary development. According to Tiernay and Leys (1986) this is an important “learning outcome that arises from interrelating or connecting reading and writing.” They believe, as do Pearson and Spiro (1982), that the integrated approach to teaching reading and composition will contribute to the student’s vocabulary development and word recognition. Basically, there is a circular effect as a student sees a word for the first time in a reading selection and then attempts to use it in a writing assignment, the next time the student sees the word in a selection, the level of understanding and recognition will have increased due to its use in writing and the student’s sense of ownership of the word.

Another area of reading that is positively impacted by the use of an integrated approach to teaching reading and composition is comprehension development. Comprehension refers to the level of understanding of facts, concepts, and ideas which have been presented in any selection. Several researchers and educators have commented on the correlation between an integrated approach to teaching reading and writing and an increased level of reading comprehension over time. Reagan (1986) has suggested that there is clearly a link between the reading experience and the writing experience because they employ similar cognitive strategies. These strategies become crucial in reading

comprehension because they ultimately can increase the level of understanding which a student attains. In addition, these strategies are found in both reading and writing activities and the use of these strategies in writing strengthens their use in reading and ultimately improves reading comprehension. For example, in both reading and writing, the student approaches the text in a similar, recursive fashion which involves constant interaction with the text. This is found in the student's use of prewriting before actually beginning the writing process and then revising during the writing process, and in rereading difficult passages the student encounters during the reading process. This strategy relates directly to the student's increased level of comprehension of a text which he/she has read (Reagan, 1986).

Similarly, Koch (1986), Wittrock (1984), Newell and Winograd (1989), and Tiernay and Leys (1986) have reported the positive effects on comprehension as a result of an integrated approach to reading and writing. Koch has reported that "writing improves the understanding of text structure and lead to better comprehension and retention" (1986). In addition, Koch also reported that "correlational studies suggest a modest general correlation between overall reading performance and writing achievement" (1986). Also, Wittrock reported in the details of his study that students experienced doubled retention of information and increased comprehension as a result of an integrated approach to teaching reading and writing (1984). Finally, in the *Journal of Reading* it was reported that these complimentary processes vigorously support students' deeper processing of content lessons, provide avenues for clearer and more precise thinking, and improve ability to express thoughts in writing. (1990)

Again, this article is clearly emphasizing the notion that an integrated approach ultimately results in improved comprehension of the material.

Finally, an integrated reading and writing approach in the English classroom has a positive effect on the students' awareness of the author's role and craft, including the strengths and weaknesses of each piece of literature. Simply put, a student becomes more aware of the effort that an author puts into a work of literature as well as becoming more aware of the structural characteristics of the text. Tiernay and Leys (1986) have concluded that by integrating the two processes, teachers will "contribute to the [student's] sense of the writer's craft" and will encourage students to "approach reading with the 'eye of the writer.'" They conclude that a:

readers' past writing experiences-overall achievement, attitude, genre preference, or sense of audience-contribute to the reader's selection of books, attitude, and sense and appreciation of authorship. (1986)

In addition to encouraging the students' appreciation for the work an author has put into creating a piece of literature, this integrated approach encourages the students' understanding of structure (Reagan, 1986; Rosenblatt, 1989). Koch suggests that "writing experiences help children understand the various characteristics of a text" and this understanding of the text structure will ultimately improve comprehension and overall reading ability (1986). Finally, Eckhoff also endorsed the belief that this integrated approach is beneficial because it enables the student to understand, "learn about and acquire the language structure, style, and format of an author's work" (1984). Obviously, with an increased understanding of the structure of the written language, the student will

benefit from increased comprehension and overall reading ability (Reagan, 1986; Rosenblatt, 1989; Tiernay & Leys, 1986).

Clearly, a coordinated reading and writing approach has significant effects on reading ability. These benefits are diverse and have important implications for the future of English instruction in the high schools. This approach impacts positively on concept development as well as on word recognition and vocabulary development. In addition, comprehension development is positively impacted by the use of an integrated approach to teaching reading and composition. Finally, an integrated reading and writing approach in the English classroom has a positive effect on the students' awareness of the author's role and craft, including their understanding of structure. But, in addition to the positive effects on reading ability which results from a coordinated reading and writing approach, there are also positive effects on writing ability.

Effects of a Coordinated Reading and Writing Approach on Writing Ability

In addition to the numerous positive effects which this integrated approach has on reading ability, it is also important to note the positive effects that it has on writing ability. As a result of coordinating the teaching of reading and writing in the high school English classroom, student writing can reflect a dramatic improvement in several key areas.

First, integrating the teaching of reading and writing in the classroom has a positive effect on the use of vocabulary in students' writing. Tiernay and Leys (1986) have suggested that the exposure to a variety of language which students receive can positively impact the level of vocabulary which appears in their writing. It is clear that the more students are exposed to a rich environment of vocabulary, the richer their vocabulary will become in writing as they experiment with these new words.

Also, a coordinated reading and writing approach positively affects writing ability by allowing students to assimilate knowledge of the structural characteristics and mechanics of writing (Rosenblatt, 1989; Tiernay and Leys, 1986). In a study conducted by Eckhoff, evidence was provided that substantiated the claim that students are influenced by the structure of the texts which they read. In the study, Eckhoff looked at two second grade classes which were using two different basal series. During the course of her study, Eckhoff determined that the children who used a series that had stilted language and format had an obvious tendency to create writing which mimicked this stilted structure and language (1984). This clearly illustrates the negative impact which reading can have on an individual's writing style and format.

Similarly, Ferris and Snyder (1986) conducted a study to determine the relationship between reading and writing. As a result of their evaluation of a program in which students were randomly placed in either a control group which received no instruction or an experimental group which received instruction based on a language experience approach (which emphasized both reading and writing), Ferris and Snyder concluded that an integrated approach to teaching reading and writing had a significant impact on writing ability in terms of structure and format. Their claims are substantiated and supported by a number of other researchers and educators. Reagan (1986) has also suggested that students "assimilate knowledge of mechanics of writing through reading examples" and believes that the greater the variety and number of the texts which are read by the students, the greater the knowledge of mechanics which is attained and retained.

In addition, a coordinated approach to teaching reading and writing has a positive effect on the quality of writing and the fluency of the students in the writing process. This

differs from proficiency in the mechanics of writing because it deals with what is being said, how it is said in the writing, and how easily the student is able to write, rather than how it is put together mechanically. Koch (1986) believes that the student's reading experience has a significant effect on writing proficiency and increased levels of reading will result in an increased ability to write. Reagan (1986) also perceives a connection between reading and writing fluency, or the ability to write smoothly, easily, and expressively. She suggests that a "class which teaches both reading and writing may be more effective than writing alone" in creating fluency in writing. Finally, Tiernay and Leys (1986) conducted a study on the effects of reading on writing while working with third graders. They found that:

with encouragement to do so students will compare their own writing with the plot or character development in what they are reading. Students will begin using their reading as a rich resource for considering possible topics, ideas, and stylistic options.

In essence, Tiernay and Leys (1986) discovered that the expressiveness and style of a student is impacted upon by the material which they read.

Finally, the coordination of instruction for the reading and writing processes will positively effect writing ability by improving students' attitudes toward the writing process. For many students, writing is a task to be endured, rather than to be enjoyed. Before many students can begin to advance their skills in this area they must begin to find writing a process to be eagerly anticipated rather than a process to complete as quickly and as unimaginatively as possible. Tiernay and Leys have suggested that integrating

reading and writing will accomplish this by improving students attitudes toward the writing process.

Utilizing a coordinated reading and writing approach to teach English in a high school classroom setting clearly has merit. In addition to its logical basis found in the similarities between the two processes, its impact can be seen in the positive effects on reading and writing ability which result from such an approach.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Review of Journal Literature

The review and critique of journals and journal articles is a critical component of any research project. These sources serve to influence and contribute to the development of the author's philosophy as well as providing necessary and pertinent background information relevant to the creation of an educational handbook. The writer utilized several journals in the field of English education, which are widely recognized and accepted by English teaching professionals. The writer narrowed the field of available journals by restricting her search to journals published between the years 1980 and 1994. These journals were selected based on their relevance to the subject and included, Convergences: Transactions in Reading and Writing, The Reading Teacher, Journal of Teaching Writing, Language Arts, Journal of Educational Research, and English Journal.

Review of Professional Textbooks

Much like journals, professional textbooks provide material and information which can influence the development of the writer's philosophy. In addition, these professional textbooks assisted the writer in establishing her purpose and argument for developing a handbook in this area. The professional textbooks the writer read included Whole Language Approach to Reading (Anderson), Breaking Ground: Teachers Relate Reading and Writing in the Elementary School (Hansen, Newkirk, & Graves (Eds.)), The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook (Tate & Corbett (Eds.)), Reading and Writing Connections (Mason (Ed.)), A Decade of Reading Research: Implications for Practice (Orasanu (Ed.)), The Writer's Mind (Hays (Ed.)), and Teaching Reading With Other Language Arts (Hardt (Ed.)).

Review of Related Guides and Handbooks

In addition to researching the reasoning and arguments behind the integrated reading and writing approach, it was important for the writer to critique and analyze other

handbooks which have used this or similar approaches in the English classroom.

Therefore, the writer examined several handbooks in an effort to expose herself to the variety of techniques and exercises which could be utilized in her handbook. These handbooks included The Value of Connecting Reading and Writing in the Language Arts Classroom (Hirsh), and A Handbook of Activities Integrating Reading and Writing Skills for Eighth Grade Students (Lewellen).

Critique of Writer's Handbook

The final step in the development of this project was the evaluation and critique of the handbook by the writer's peers. The writer discussed the handbook with several instructors of high school English and utilized their comments and critiques to revise the handbook according to the suggestions of the reviewers. These instructors had several years of experience teaching English in either public or parochial high schools. The writer implemented several of their recommendations including the suggestion to break the handbook into lesson plans, vocabulary lists and worksheets, study questions, and tests and quizzes. In addition, the writer heeded the advice of several teachers who suggested that the final exam should be essay questions rather than multiple choice as a way to more clearly tie together reading and written response to that reading.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS-THE HANDBOOK

A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHING *ROMEO AND JULIET*

Introduction

For many students *Romeo and Juliet* presents a unique challenge as the first full-length example of Shakespearean language that they encounter during their academic careers. In an effort to make the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of this text more accessible, this handbook was created which utilized an integrated reading and writing approach to teach the material. The handbook's author feels that by combining reading and writing in the learning process, the students will more completely understand and appreciate Shakespeare's masterpiece.

This handbook has been designed as a unit overview. The unit utilizes a three week period to read and discuss *Romeo and Juliet*. Each act is addressed as a unit and then the play is addressed as a whole. As a result, each act is treated as a mini unit which begins with a worksheet for vocabulary development in which the words are taken directly from the text, and are, therefore, extremely relevant to the unit. In addition, the unit is organized so that students receive a study guide for each act in order to facilitate learning and encourage active reading. Also, journals are used often to activate prior knowledge and stimulate student interest in the material about to be covered. Finally, writing assignments have been created which allow the student to synthesize what they have learned and apply it in different and interesting ways.

DAILY LESSON PLANS

LESSON ONE

Objectives:

- To activate prior knowledge before students begin reading the play
- To facilitate student understanding of play by acquainting them with relevant vocabulary
- To generate interest in play by introducing it in a more modern light through journal writing and discussion

Activity #1

Distribute worksheet entitled “Before We Read Shakespeare.” Allow students several minutes to complete individually. Use worksheet to generate discussion and activate prior knowledge.

Activity #2

Distribute Vocabulary List and Worksheet for Act I. Have students complete worksheets as a prereading assignment.

Activity #3

Distribute Study Questions for Act I. Have students preview them silently so that they know what to look for as they read the play.

Activity #4

Journal: Ask students to think of a situation-either in real life or in a book or movie-in which two families are feuding with each other. Ask: What might happen if a boy and a girl from opposite sides fall in love? Write in your journal about the difficulties the boy and girl might face.

Activity #5

Transition: Tell students, in case they don't already know, that Romeo and Juliet is a story about two love-sick teenagers and their brief life together.

Activity #6

Teacher read aloud The Prologue to Act I.

Homework

- Read Act I, scene 1
- Write a summary in notebooks of the events which occur

LESSON TWO

Objectives:

- To check for comprehension of Act I, scene 1
- To begin discussing play using literary terms
- To improve comprehension by allowing students to respond to events in their journals

Activity #1

Distribute Literary Terms Handout. Teacher read aloud and explain as needed.

During the course of the play, as terms become relevant, discuss each concept and allow students to fill in examples for future reference

Activity #2

Teacher and students review Act I, scene 1 using Literary Terms Handout where appropriate

Activity #3

Students read aloud Act I, scenes 2-4. Lead class discussion as appropriate during and after the reading.

Activity #4

Journal: Have students, in their journals, describe their first impressions of Romeo, Juliet, Mercutio and Benvolio. Stress the importance of providing specific reasons and examples from the text for their beliefs. Lead brief discussion based on the journal writing.

Homework

- Read Act I, scene 5
- Study questions for Act I due

LESSON THREE

Objectives:

- Review Act I using Study Questions in order to check for literal understanding as well as to develop critical and interpretive skills of students
- To develop student understanding of pun, paradox, and aside through a discussion of Act I

Activity #1

Teacher orally review the plot of Act I, scene 5 in order to check for student comprehension.

Activity #2

Allow students to work in small groups in order to discuss their answers to the Study Questions Handout. Then review the answers as a class. Write the questions on the board or on an overhead transparency so that students can have the correct answers for study purposes. You may consider allowing a student to gain practice in leadership skills by allowing him/her to lead the class discussion as you write the answer down. Of course, you should continue to guide the discussion when it is appropriate in order to be sure that all gaps which students may have are completely filled in.

Homework

- Study for quiz on Act I

LESSON FOUR

Objectives:

- To activate prior knowledge before students begin reading the second Act
- To facilitate student understanding of play by acquainting them with relevant vocabulary for this Act

Activity #1

Administer quiz on Act I.

Activity #2

Distribute Vocabulary List and Worksheet for Act II. Have students complete worksheets as a prereading assignment. They can easily work individually or in pairs.

Activity #3

Distribute Study Questions for Act II. Have students preview them silently so that they know what to look for as they read the play.

Activity #4

Journal: Have students discuss what they have learned about Romeo, Juliet, and the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets. Then have them respond in writing to the following question: What do you think Romeo and Juliet will do next? Why?

Activity #5

Teacher read aloud The Prologue to Act II and discuss

Homework

- Read Act II, scenes 1 and 2
- Write brief summary for each in notebooks

LESSON FIVE

Objectives:

- To check for comprehension of Act II, scenes 1 and 2
- To acquaint students with the style of Shakespeare and increase awareness of his use of poetic devices

Activity #1

Review Act II, scenes 1 and 2 as needed, checking for literal comprehension and referring to Literary Terms sheet as needed.

Activity #2

Students read aloud Act II, scenes 3 and 4. Lead class discussion during and after the reading as appropriate in order to facilitate comprehension. Refer to Literary Terms sheet as necessary.

Activity #3

Distribute Shakespeare's Language Worksheet. Allow students to work in pairs in order to complete it. Then share results with entire class

Homework

- Read Act II, scenes 5 and 6
- Study questions for Act II due

LESSON SIX

Objectives:

- Review Act II using Study Questions in order to check for literal understanding as well as to develop critical and interpretive skills of students
- To develop student understanding of theme, soliloquy, meter, blank verse, metaphor, simile, and paradox through a discussion of Act II

Activity #1

Teacher orally review the plot of Act II, scenes 5 and 6 in order to check for student comprehension.

Activity #2

Allow students to work in small groups in order to discuss their answers to the Study Questions Handout. Then review the answers as a class. Write the questions on the board or on an overhead transparency so that students can have the correct answers for study purposes. You may consider allowing a student to gain practice in leadership skills by allowing him/her to lead the class discussion as you write the answer down. Of course, you should continue to guide the discussion when it is appropriate in order to be sure that all gaps which students may have are completely filled in.

Homework

- Study for quiz on Act II

LESSON SEVEN

Objectives:

- To give students to practice writing in a letter format and to give the teacher the opportunity to evaluate students' writing
- To facilitate student understanding of play by acquainting them with relevant vocabulary for Act III

Activity #1

Administer quiz on Act II.

Activity #2

Distribute Vocabulary List and Worksheet for Act III. Have students complete worksheets as a prereading assignment. They can easily work individually or in pairs on this assignment.

Activity #3

Distribute Study Questions for Act III. Have students preview them silently so that they know what to look for as they read the play. Discuss any questions they may have about the questions.

Activity #4

Distribute the Dear Abby Writing Assignment. Discuss the directions in detail and give students the remainder of the class period to begin work on it.

Homework

- Continue work on Dear Abby Writing Assignment. It should be completed and due on Day 9

LESSON EIGHT

Objectives:

- To activate students' prior knowledge through the use of a journal before reading Act II
- To allow students the opportunity to act out portions of the play in front of the class

Activity #1

Journal: Have students summarize Acts I and II in journal. Then ask: Does fate, or fortune, seem to be favoring Romeo and Juliet so far or working against them? Have students explain their answers.

Activity #2

Have student volunteers act out Act III, scenes 1 and 2. Then discuss the relevant incidents to check for comprehension. Refer to Literary Terms sheet as needed.

Activity #3

If time permits, allow students to work silently on Dear Abby letter

Homework

- Read Act III, scene 3
- Write a brief summary of the events that occur
- Dear Abby letter due

LESSON NINE

Objectives:

- To allow students to act out portions of the play in front of the class
- To review the main ideas presented in Act III

Activity #1

Teacher briefly review orally Act III, scene 3 for literal comprehension. Refer to Literary Terms sheet when needed.

Activity #2

Have student volunteers act out Act III, scenes 4 and 5. Then discuss the relevant incidents to check for comprehension. Refer to Literary Terms sheet as needed.

Homework

- Write a one page summary of Act III
- Study questions for Act III due

LESSON TEN

Objectives:

- Review Act III using Study Questions in order to check for literal understanding as well as to develop critical and interpretive skills of students
- To develop student understanding of allusion, paradox and theme through a discussion of Act III

Activity #1

Allow students to work in small groups in order to discuss their answers to the Study Questions Handout. Then review the answers as a class. Write the questions on the board or on an overhead transparency so that students can have the correct answers for study purposes. You may consider allowing a student to gain practice in leadership skills by allowing him/her to lead the class discussion as you write the answer down. Of course, you should continue to guide the discussion when it is appropriate in order to be sure that all gaps which students may have are completely filled in.

Homework

- Study for quiz on Act III

LESSON ELEVEN

Objectives:

- Distribute writing assignment in which students will analyze the actions of a character and make judgments concerning the personality and character of that individual.

Activity #1

Administer quiz on Act III

Activity #2

Distribute Character Analysis Assignment sheet. Teacher should review the instructions completely and carefully with the students. Then allow students to spend the remainder of the period working and drafting the paper.

Homework

- Draft of Character Analysis due on Day 13

LESSON TWELVE

Objectives:

- To activate prior knowledge before students begin reading the remainder of the play
- To facilitate student understanding of play by acquainting them with relevant vocabulary for the last two Acts

Activity #1

Distribute Vocabulary List and Worksheet for Acts IV and V. Have students complete worksheets as a prereading assignment. They can easily work individually or in pairs on this assignment.

Activity #2

Distribute Study Questions for Acts IV and V. Have students preview them silently so that they know what to look for as they read the play.

Activity #3

Journal: Have students list in journals the unexpected events which have occurred in the first three Acts and describe their impact on the events which follow

Activity #5

Read aloud Act IV, scenes 1 and 2

Homework

- Read Act IV, scenes 3 and 4
- Write brief summary for each

LESSON THIRTEEN

Objectives:

- To check for comprehension of Act IV, scenes 3 and 4
- To give students the opportunity to read aloud scenes from Act IV

Activity #1

Teacher reviews Act IV, scenes 3 and 4 as needed, checking for literal comprehension and referring to Literary Terms sheet as needed.

Activity #2

Students read aloud Act IV, scene 5. Lead class discussion during and after the reading as appropriate in order to facilitate comprehension. Refer to Literary Terms sheet as necessary.

Activity #3

Journal: Have students review the main events of the first four acts. Ask: What has gone wrong for Romeo and Juliet and what difficulties do they still face? Have them describe in their journals the problems that have challenged the lovers.

Homework

- Read Act V, scenes 1 and 2
- Write brief summary of each scene

LESSON FOURTEEN

Objectives:

- To check for comprehension of Act V, scenes 1 and 2
- To give students the opportunity to read aloud scenes from Act V

Activity #1

Teacher reviews Act V, scenes 1 and 2 as needed, checking for literal comprehension and referring to Literary Terms sheet as needed.

Activity #2

Journal: Review the passage in Act V, scene 2 in which Friar Lawrence realizes that his letter to Romeo was never delivered. Have students write in their journals what they think will happen following this complication of events?

Activity #3

Students read aloud Act V, scene 3 . Lead class discussion during and after the reading as appropriate in order to facilitate comprehension. Refer to Literary Terms sheet as necessary.

Homework

- Study questions for Acts IV and V due

LESSON FIFTEEN

Objectives:

- Review Acts IV and V using Study Questions in order to check for literal understanding as well as to develop critical and interpretive skills of students
- To develop student understanding of irony, tragedy, personification, and theme through a discussion of Acts IV and V

Activity #1

Allow students to work in small groups in order to discuss their answers to the Study Questions Handout. Then review the answers as a class. Write the questions on the board or on an overhead transparency so that students can have the correct answers for study purposes. You may consider allowing a student to gain practice in leadership skills by allowing him/her to lead the class discussion as you write the answer down. Of course, you should continue to guide the discussion when it is appropriate in order to be sure that all gaps which students may have are completely filled in.

Activity #2

Teacher and students review for exam using study questions as the basis for a review game. If desired, you can split the class into groups and take turns asking questions of each group. The team with the most points receives extra credit on exams.

Homework

- Study for exam on *Romeo and Juliet*

LESSON SIXTEEN

Objectives:

- To administer comprehension exam on *Romeo and Juliet*

Activity #1

Administer exam. Explain directions fully and allow students the entire class period to complete.

PREREADING VOCABULARY LISTS

AND WORKSHEETS

Romeo and Juliet
Vocabulary Worksheet and List
Act I

Part I

Directions: Below are the vocabulary words which appear in Act I. Using a dictionary, your glossary, and any knowledge you may have of the words, match the word to its appropriate definition.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. Profaners | A. Evil; wicked |
| _____ 2. Pernicious | B. Foreboding |
| _____ 3. Augmenting | C. To become weak or feeble |
| _____ 4. Portentous | D. Those who have irreverence for what is sacred |
| _____ 5. Transgression | E. Regard with respect |
| _____ 6. Posterity | F. A person who holds controversial ideas |
| _____ 7. Languish | G. To make (something already developed) greater |
| _____ 8. Heretics | H. To free from impurities |
| _____ 9. Esteem | I. Future generations |
| _____ 10. Obscured | J. To dislike (someone or something) greatly |
| _____ 11. Boisterous | K. Indistinctly hear; faint |
| _____ 12. Alderman | L. Rough and stormy; violent |
| _____ 13. Benefice | M. A violation or a law, command or duty |
| _____ 14. Purged | N. A member of the municipal legislative body |
| _____ 15. Loathed | O. A church office endowed with fixed capital assets |

Romeo and Juliet

Vocabulary Worksheet and List

Act I

Part II

Directions: Below you will find the sentences in which the vocabulary words appear in the text. Complete each sentence with the vocabulary word which best fits the meaning of the sentence. Each word is only used once.

1. That quench the fire of your _____ rage/ With purple fountains issuing from your veins,
2. Black and _____ must this humor prove/ Unless good counsel may the cause remove.
3. Cuts beauty off from all _____/ She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair.
4. Transparent _____, be burned for liars!
5. And what _____ in this fair volume lies? Find written in the margent of his eyes.
6. On the forefinger of an _____,/ Drawn with a team of little atomies/
Athwart men's noes as they lie asleep.
7. Thus from my lips by thine my sin is _____
8. _____ of this neighbor-stained steel-/Will they not hear? What ho! You men, you beasts
9. With tears _____ the fresh morning's dew,/Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs.
10. Why, such is love's _____,/Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast,/ which thou wilt prorogate, to have it presses
11. One desperate grief cures with another's _____
12. Here in Verona, ladies of _____/Are made already mother.
13. Too rude, too _____ and it pricks like thorn.
14. Then dreams he of another _____/ Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
15. Too early seen unknown, and known too late!/ That I must love a _____ enemy

Romeo and Juliet

Vocabulary Worksheet and List

Act II

Part I

Directions: Below are the vocabulary words which appear in Act I. Using a dictionary, your glossary, and any knowledge you may have of the words, match the word to its appropriate definition.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| _____ 1. Invocation | A. Deep seated, often mutual hatred |
| _____ 2. Envious | B. To express disapproval |
| _____ 3. Discourse | C. To attribute; credit |
| _____ 4. Enmity | D. To express grief for or about |
| _____ 5. Impute | E. Feeling, expressing or characterized by envy |
| _____ 6. Predominant | F. Bitter |
| _____ 7. Chide | G. A soft, moist mass of bread, meal or clay |
| _____ 8. Rancor | H. Most common or conspicuous |
| _____ 9. Lamentable | I. An incantation used in conjuring |
| _____ 10. Poultice | J. To narrate or discuss |
| _____ 11. Drudge | K. A person who does tedious, menial or unpleasant work |

Romeo and Juliet

Vocabulary Worksheet and List

Act II

Part II

Directions: Below you will find the sentences in which the vocabulary words appear in the text. Complete each sentence with the vocabulary word which best fits the meaning of the sentence. Each word is only used once.

1. I am the _____ and toil in your delight,/But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
2. Why, is not this a _____ thing.
3. I pray thee, _____ not. She whom I love now/Doth grace for grace and love for love allow.
4. Therefore pardon me,/ And not _____ this yielding to light love,/ Which the dark night hath so discovered.
5. Her eye _____, I will answer it.
6. That were some spite. My _____/ Is fair and honest, and in his mistress' name.
7. Arise, fair sun, and kill the _____ moon,/who is already sick and pale with grief.
8. Then twenty of their swords. Look thou but sweet,/And I am proof against their _____.
9. And where the worser is _____,/Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.
10. To turn your households' _____ to pure love.
11. Is this the _____ for my aching bones?

Romeo and Juliet

Vocabulary Worksheet and List

Act III

Part I

Directions: Below are the vocabulary words which appear in Act I. Using a dictionary, your glossary, and any knowledge you may have of the words, match the word to its appropriate definition.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| _____ 1. Beseech | A. Well grounded |
| _____ 2. Abhors | B. A companion or partner |
| _____ 3. Validity | C. A cloak |
| _____ 4. Beguiled | D. To reject vehemently |
| _____ 5. Tedious | E. To deceive by guile |
| _____ 6. Mantle | F. Moving or progressing very slowly |
| _____ 7. Consort | G. To request earnestly |
| _____ 8. Appertaining | H. To belong as a proper function or part |

Romeo and Juliet

Vocabulary Worksheet and List

Act III

Part II

Directions: Below you will find the sentences in which the vocabulary words appear in the text. Complete each sentence with the vocabulary word which best fits the meaning of the sentence. Each word is only used once.

1. Thou, wretched boy, that didst _____ him here.
2. So _____ is this day/As is the night before some festival/To an impatient child that hath new robes.
3. More _____,/More honorable state, more courtship, lives.
4. Good father, I _____ you on my knees,/Hear me with patience but to speak a word.
5. Doth much excuse the _____ rage/To such a greeting.
6. With thy black _____ till strange love grown bold/ Think true love acted simple modesty.
7. Take up those cords. Poor ropes, you are _____,/Both you and I, for Romeo is exiled.
8. Oh, how my heart _____/To hear him named and cannot come to him,/To wreak the love I bore my cousin/Upon his body that hath slaughtered him!

Romeo and Juliet

Vocabulary Worksheet and List

Acts IV and V

Part I

Directions: Below are the vocabulary words which appear in Act I. Using a dictionary, your glossary, and any knowledge you may have of the words, match the word to its appropriate definition.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| _____ 1 Inundation | A. Destitution |
| _____ 2. Arbitrating | B. Comfort in sorrow |
| _____ 3. Culled | C. A funeral hymn or lament |
| _____ 4. Presage | D. To cover with water |
| _____ 5 Penury | E. To discontinue a session |
| _____ 6. Impeach | F. A prayer |
| _____ 7. Prorogue | G. An omen |
| _____ 8 Orisons | H. To gather, collect |
| _____ 9 Dirges | I. To challenge the validity of; try to discredit |
| _____ 10. Solace | J. To submit to settlement or judgment by arbitration |

Romeo and Juliet

Vocabulary Worksheet and List

Acts IV and V

Part II

Directions: Below you will find the sentences in which the vocabulary words appear in the text. Complete each sentence with the vocabulary word which best fits the meaning of the sentence. Each word is only used once.

1. To stop the _____ of her tears,/Which, too much minded by herself alone,/ May be put from her by society.
2. Shall play the umpire _____ that/Which the commission of thy years and art/Could to no issue of true honor bring.
3. No, madam, we have _____ such necessaries/As are behooveful for our state tomorrow.
4. Our solemn hymns to sullen _____ change,/Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corpse,/And all things change them to the contrary.
5. Noting this _____ to myself I said,/"An if a man did need a poison now,
6. And here I stand, both to _____ and purge/Myself condemned and myself excused.
7. I hear thou must, and nothing may _____ it,/On Thursday next be married to this County.
8. For I have need of many _____/To move the Heavens to smile upon my state,/Which, well thou know'st is cross and full of sin.
9. But one thing to rejoice and _____ in,/ And cruel death hath caught it from my sight!
10. My dreams _____ some joyful news at hand.

**STUDY QUESTIONS AND
LITERARY TERMS HANDOUT**

Romeo and Juliet

Study Questions

Act I

Directions: In your notebooks answer the following questions about the play. You should review these questions carefully before you begin each reading assignment in order to help you focus on the important elements of the story. Then, as you are reading, you should keep these questions handy and answer them as you discover the answers.

1. The Chorus gives the reader some background for the play. What is the social status of the feuding families? Where do they live?
2. Why do Sampson and Gregory fight with Montague's men?
3. Benvolio and Tybalt witness the servants fighting. Compare and contrast their reactions to the fight.
4. When Montague and Capulet enter and see the disturbance, they want to fight too. What do their wives say to this desire?
5. What does the Prince tell the feuding families? What is the penalty if they fight again?
6. Why is Romeo so sad?
7. How old is Juliet? What plans has her father made for her future?
8. Why is Capulet giving a feast?
9. How does Romeo find out about the feast and why does he decide to go?
10. Describe Juliet's relationship with her family in Act I
11. Describe Capulet's actions as host
12. Who is Tybalt? How does he feel about Montagues attending his family's party?
13. Compare and contrast Juliet's relationship with her mother and with her nurse

Romeo and Juliet

Study Questions

Act II

Directions: In your notebooks answer the following questions about the play. You should review these questions carefully before you begin each reading assignment in order to help you focus on the important elements of the story. Then, as you are reading, you should keep these questions handy and answer them as you discover the answers.

1. What does Juliet say in her famous “What’s in a name?” speech? Why does Romeo hesitate to identify himself?
2. Why is Juliet embarrassed that Romeo overhears her? What are her fears?
3. After Romeo and Juliet profess their love for one another, Juliet is to contact Romeo through a servant the next day. Why?
4. What is Friar Lawrence’s first reaction to Romeo and Juliet’s plans to marry? Why does he finally agree to marry them?
5. What message does Nurse take to Juliet?
6. What is Juliet’s state of mind while she waits for this message?
7. What warning does Friar Lawrence give Romeo that foreshadows future events of the play?
8. Why are Romeo and Juliet in such a hurry to get married?
9. What do Romeo and Juliet say to each other just before they marry?
10. What is the nurse’s attitude when Juliet first speaks of Romeo? Why does she go along with Juliet’s plan to marry Romeo?

Romeo and Juliet

Study Questions

Act III

Directions: In your notebooks answer the following questions about the play. You should review these questions carefully before you begin each reading assignment in order to help you focus on the important elements of the story. Then, as you are reading, you should keep these questions handy and answer them as you discover the answers.

1. In Act III, Mercutio and Benvolio get into a conflict with Tybalt. What does Romeo do when he comes upon them? Why?
2. How do Mercutio and Tybalt die?
3. Does Benvolio give a fair account of the fight to the Prince? What punishment does the Prince give to Romeo?
4. How does Juliet react to Tybalt's death?
5. How does Romeo react to the news that he has been banished? What advice does Friar Lawrence give him?
6. How does Juliet react to the news that she is to marry Paris within the week?
7. Describe Lord Capulet's reaction to Juliet's refusal to marry Paris.
8. What advice does the nurse give Juliet?
9. What is Mercutio's attitude towards death and towards the Montagues?
10. Explain the importance of Juliet's parting speech to Romeo.

Romeo and Juliet

Study Questions

Acts IV and V

Directions: In your notebooks answer the following questions about the play. You should review these questions carefully before you begin each reading assignment in order to help you focus on the important elements of the story. Then, as you are reading, you should keep these questions handy and answer them as you discover the answers.

1. Why does Juliet go to Friar Lawrence's cell?
2. What do Friar Lawrence and Juliet decide to do?
3. Why does Juliet pretend to be obedient to her father?
4. How do the nurse and the Capulets react to Juliet's death?
5. What news does Balthasar bring Romeo? How does Romeo react?
6. List the things that went wrong with the Friar's plan.
7. Describe the circumstances of Paris' death.
8. How does Juliet kill herself? Why does she kill herself?
9. How does Friar Lawrence explain his actions to the people? In what ways is he to blame for the deaths?
10. How does the Prince react to the deaths?
11. What have the families learned at the end of the play?

Romeo and Juliet

Literary Terms Handout

Directions: During the course of this unit on *Romeo and Juliet*, we will define and discuss each of the literary terms that follow. As each of them is discussed, be sure to write the definition down and an example of its use in the play.

Pun

Paradox

Aside

Soliloquy

Theme

Meter

Blank Verse

Heroic Couplet

Simile

Metaphor

Allusion

Imagery

Foreshadowing

Irony

Extended Metaphor

Mood

Foil

Hyperbole

Dramatic Irony

Personification

Tragedy

**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS AND
RELATED ACTIVITIES**

Romeo and Juliet

Prereading Assignment

Before We Read Shakespeare

Directions: Before we begin reading *Romeo and Juliet*, take a few minutes to gather together all the information that you have that might help you in understanding and enjoying this play. Respond to the following questions as honestly and completely as you can.

1. List words or phrases that come to mind immediately when you hear the name William Shakespeare.

2. List any information about William Shakespeare that you know.

3. How do you feel about reading literature by Shakespeare?

4. Why do you think you feel this way about reading Shakespeare?

5. Write anything you already know about the play *Romeo and Juliet*

6. Answer YES or NO to each of the following questions:
 1. Do you enjoy love stories?
 2. Do you like action packed adventure with fights till the death?
 3. Do you enjoy surprise endings?
 4. Can a fourteen year old truly be in love?
 5. Have you ever deceived your parents?
 6. Is it right to do so?
 7. Do adults sometimes treat you like a child?
 8. Would you be interested in reading a story that contained all of these elements?

Romeo and Juliet

Shakespeare's Language

Directions: Shakespeare is famous for his use of vivid and descriptive language. This handout is designed to help you focus on this language in order to appreciate its appeal.

1. A simile is a comparison between two things that are unlike but that have something in common. This comparison uses the words like or as. Find 10 similes in the play and write them here.

2. A metaphor is a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two unlike things which have something in common. Metaphors do not contain like or as; they make comparisons directly. Find 10 metaphors in the play and write them here.

3. Imagery refers to words and phrases that recreate sensory experiences for the reader. The majority of these images are visual and appeal to the sense of sight and thus create pictures in the reader's mind. Find 10 examples of imagery used in the play and write them here.

4. The expression of romantic sentiments has changed very little in four hundred years. Try your hand at writing several exaggerated poetic compliments of this sort. (5 examples) Be creative, imaginative, and daring.

Romeo and Juliet

Dear Abby Writing Assignment

Directions: Your assignment is to write a letter to “Dear Abby” from either Romeo or Juliet and then to write the response from Abby.

Prewriting:

First, decide whom you would like to be: Romeo or Juliet. Then consider your problems. What events do you need to include in your letter. Spend a few minutes jotting down your notes and then place them in the order in which you will be writing about them.

Then, pretend you are Abby. What kind of advice would you give this teenager? Again, write down your thoughts and possible responses.

Drafting:

Write your letter in the traditional letter format with a date and address it to “Dear Abby.” Give some background about the problem and explain the situation. Sign the letter appropriately

Then, once again you will pretend you are Abby. Write a response in letter format giving advice and suggestions.

Revision:

Give your rough drafts to a fellow student so that he/she can offer constructive criticism. Consider his/her comments and make the appropriate changes before writing your final copies.

Final Copy:

Be sure that your final copy is neat, clean and free of grammatical or spelling errors.

Romeo and Juliet

Character Analysis Assignment

We have discussed the way in which Shakespeare has carefully created the personalities of his characters in the play *Romeo and Juliet*. Choose one character and write a character analysis. The introductory paragraph should contain basic information which we may need to know (for example: the name of the work, the author, when it was written, and a brief synopsis of the plot), as well as your thesis statement. The thesis statement should explain your belief concerning the character's personality. For example, you could say "Tybalt was a very angry young man who play an important role in the play. The second part of your paper should be the analysis of your character. It should contain a description of the character which contains between three and five character traits. Each trait should be supported with quotes from the text. The third part of your paper should be your conclusion where you explain why the character traits support your thesis. For example, this would be where you would explain why Tybalt was portrayed as impetuous and what impact this characterization had on the outcome of the play.

TESTS AND QUIZZES

Romeo and Juliet

Quiz

Act I

Directions: Choose one of the three questions that follow and write a 250 word response to it.

1. Compare and contrast Romeo's love for Rosalie and his love for Juliet.

2. Compare and contrast Juliet's relationship with her mother and her relationship with the Nurse.

3. Explain what the chorus is and what it does in this act.

Romeo and Juliet

Quiz

Act II

Directions: Choose one of the three questions that follow and write a 250 word response to it.

1. Define soliloquy and give an example of one from the play. Then explain its purpose in the play.
2. What does Friar Lawrence mean when he says to Romeo “Wisely and slow. They stumble that run fast?”
3. Describe, in detail, Romeo’s friend Mercutio

Romeo and Juliet

Quiz

Act III

Directions: Choose one of the three questions that follow and write a 250 word response to it.

1. Describe Mercutio's attitude towards death, Romeo, and the houses of Montague and Capulet as he lies dying.
2. Consider the concept of family honor. Is Romeo justified in killing Tybalt? Explain your answer and support with information from the text.
3. Why did Capulet try to compel Juliet to marry Paris? Give three reasons and explain your answer.

Romeo and Juliet

Test

Directions: Please choose seven of the following eight essay questions and write a one or two paragraph response to each one. Please remember to support your answer with specific examples from the text.

1. Define soliloquy. Provide one example from the play and explain the purpose for that soliloquy within the context of the play.
2. Define Foil and provide an example from the text. Remember to explain why your example fits the definition of a foil.
3. Explain what Friar Lawrence meant when he said “Wisely, and slow. They stumble that run fast.” What literary term is this an example of?
4. Are the lovers responsible for their deaths in any way, or are they merely “star-crossed lovers,” as the Prologue to the play suggests? What mistakes, if any, do they make? How might they have acted more sensibly? What role does fate play in the events of the play?
5. At the end of the play, Friar Lawrence says “And here I stand, both to impeach and purge/ Myself condemned and myself excused.” Explain how he can be both condemned and excused for his role in the tragedy.
6. One common idea in tragedy is human ignorance; often characters who act without full information trigger the tragic events. Give three examples which show how characters acting out of ignorance hasten the central tragedy.
7. Compare and contrast Capulet’s attitude toward Juliet at the beginning of the play to the way he treats her at the end of the play.
8. Compare and contrast Romeo and Juliet in their reactions to the news of banishment. What similarities do you see in their reactions? How do they express their reactions? What conclusions can you draw about the two individuals from their behavior?

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

During the past few years, educators in the field of high school English have seen a gradual shift in the way in which literature and composition are traditionally taught. More and more school districts and English departments are embracing this new trend which encourages the instruction of these two areas as integrated processes. While the elementary schools have recognized the value of this integration for many years, it is only in recent years that researchers and educators have begun to recognize the value of this approach and encourage its implementation in high schools. With the emergence of this new approach to teaching reading and writing in the high school classroom, new curriculums and unit plans need to be developed which emphasize and encourage this approach.

The purpose of this study was to develop a handbook for teaching *Romeo and Juliet* to ninth graders using an integrated reading and writing approach.

The writer conducted a comprehensive computer search using ERIC in order collect information on this topic. In addition, the writer reviewed other sourcebooks and consulted with peers during the development of the handbook.

The activities in this handbook are designed to incorporate an integrated reading and writing approach to teaching *Romeo and Juliet*. The handbook is divided into several sections including lesson plans, vocabulary worksheets, study questions, writing assignments and related activities, and tests and quizzes. The handbook is designed as a

unit plan and includes all the materials needed to teach a three week unit *on Romeo and Juliet*.

Conclusions

The writer's development of a unit plan using the reading and writing approach was facilitated by the logical and natural feel of this approach. The writer was able to create cohesive plans which utilized both writing and reading on a daily basis. Also, it is clear that this approach, which encourages teachers to prepare students for reading by activating prior knowledge and developing vocabulary, is beneficial to the students who are more prepared to read and comprehend the material. In addition, students are forced to be active learners and to utilize critical thinking skills rather than to be passive learners. Through this approach, students will develop language skills naturally and easily.

Recommendations

The writer recommends not only this use of this handbook to teach *Romeo and Juliet*, but also encourages teachers and educators to develop unit plans which develop reading and writing skills through an interdependent process rather than as separate processes.

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