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Yearlong Plan

The Personal Journey to Self-Knowledge and the Good Life
for a 12th Grade Language Arts Classroom

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To fulfill requirements of EDUC 463: Methods of Teaching English with Dr. Cindy O'Donnell-Allen
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*In completing this project, we have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance
(including materials created by myself or others from a previous class).*

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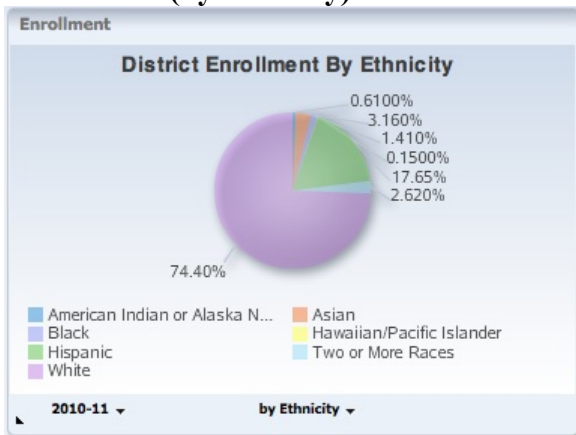
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I. INTRODUCTION:

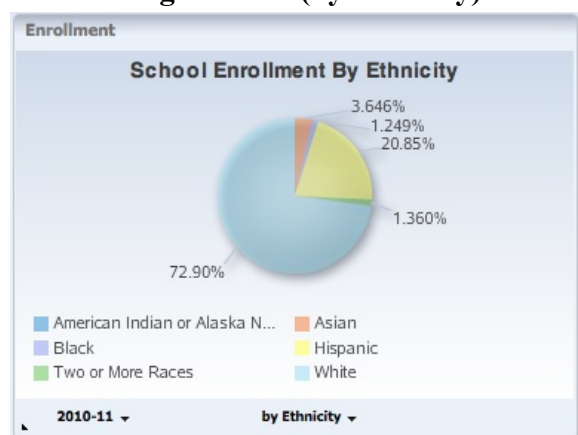
A. CONTEXT: Poudre High School, 12th Grade English, Poudre School District, CO.

Poudre High School is located in Fort Collins, Colorado, and is one of the five high schools that belong to the Poudre R-1 school district. Poudre was built in 1963, but underwent remodeling in the early 90’s. The school prides itself on its’ “International Baccalaureate Program, the Newcomer Academy, the PaCE program, and the Communication Academy, as well as numerous school-sponsored and student-initiated clubs and extra-curricular activities” (pds.psdschools.org). There are roughly 1,850 students in attendance at Poudre, and the student population closely resembles the diversity of the district as a whole (schoolview.org).

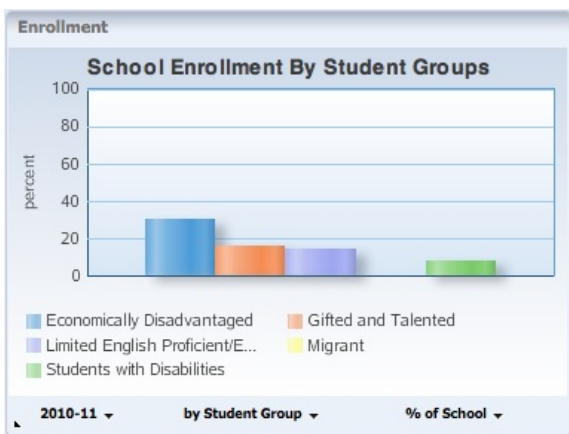
Poudre R-1 (by ethnicity):



Poudre High School (by ethnicity):



The chart on the *right* (from schoolview.org) shows that nearly 75% of students at Poudre identify as White, and the next largest group, self-identified Hispanics, make up about 20% of the student population. The following chart shows Poudre’s student population by “student group”:



Students are grouped according to five categories: *Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient/English Language, Students with Disabilities, Gifted and Talented, and Migrant.*

Note: Last year (2011) roughly 30% of Poudre’s students were consider *economically disadvantaged*, and nearly 15% of students were categorized as *limited English proficient* (schoolview.org).

This information reveals that students at Poudre High School come from a variety of households and backgrounds, and will therefore have a variety of interests and needs. More specifically, teachers at Poudre will have to be conscious of the percentage of students who need extra help with English, either because English is not their first language, or because of other

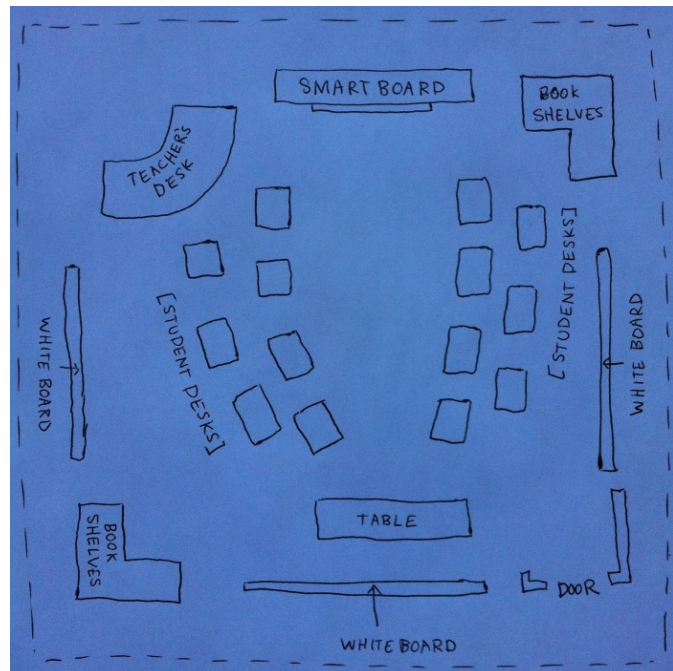
special needs. Additionally, teachers at Poudre will have to be cognizant of the fact that nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ of their students come from economically disadvantaged homes (in comparison to Rocky Mountain High School where only about $\frac{1}{5}$ students enter this way). Likely, this will affect or limit students' abilities to use certain forms of technology, for example, to complete homework assignments.

As mentioned above, Poudre offers numerous programs to help students with particular needs such as these. See, for example Poudre's "Impala Fund," which provides some financial assistance to Poudre as a whole, or their ELA program, which is designed to help even students with no ability to speak English whatsoever (phs.psdschools.org). More than this, however, Poudre also attempts to push students to excel and perform at relatively high academic levels. Two specific ways Poudre does this is through an AVID program (*Achievement Via Individual Determination*), and their IB program (*International Baccalaureate*), which are both designed to prepare students for college and beyond (phs.psdschools.org).

In addition to these resources, Poudre also encourages parent involvement in multiple ways, such as "back to school nights," "parent-teacher conferences," and various volunteer opportunities ([PHS Parent Handbook](#)). Poudre does not offer statistics about what percentage of parents are involved in these ways, or to what extent, but my personal experience at Poudre (I spent one year at Poudre before moving to Rocky) seemed to show that parent involvement was at least as high as other schools I have attended in Fort Collins. We should not safely assume that every parent is involved or desires to be involved in their child's education, but we can make attempts to create bridges wherever we see them missing. Family involvement and home life are *crucial* factors in the success and well being of every student. Unfortunately, there is only so much we can do as teachers for students in unhealthy but not yet dangerous situations at home. But we can at least be vigilant and supportive for students in need whenever we can.

"Blueprint" Sketch of Classroom:

1. Every desk, including the teacher's is eye-level, and the teacher's desk is in the corner to help disrupt "teacher-centered" teaching and promote a peer-review workshop environment.
2. Student desks are arranged facing each other so that student-led conversations are privileged. These desks can be re-arranged into small groups for orbital groups, jigsaw groups or for philosophical chairs discussions.
3. The Smartboard and white boards are positioned for easy access. Students will be able to take communal notes easily, or respond to writing prompts before or after class discussions.



B. OVERARCHING CONCEPT: Personal Journey to Self-Knowledge and the Good Life

“This above all: To thine own self be true.” -*Hamlet*, Act I Scene 3

Following Socrates’ dictum to “know thyself” and Lord Polonius’s advice to Laertes to be true to himself “above all,” our class will focus on the perennial questions: *Who am I* and *how can I live the “good life”*? The class is therefore centered on a journey of self-discovery and personal identity. We will explore a variety of questions, such as *What determines who we are?* *How much do our actions contribute to our character?* *How might we fit into the world?* *What responsibilities do I have to others?* *What type of person do I want to become?* We will use these questions to guide and enlighten our conversations, reading and writing.

Our main rationale for making this the thematic center of our classroom pedagogy is that the question of who we are and how we will live well in light of this knowledge is a perennial and recurring question with which all human beings grapple. Focusing on the topic of self-identity and the good life has two immediate advantages. First, because we instructors are interested in this topic as well, it allows us to take a stance of co-inquirers and co-collaborators with students in our classes. We are on this journey of discovery together, which lends a real and authentic air to our classroom community and discussions. Secondly, this theme allows us to pull some of the best material from the classics of literature our students will be reading. Looking at the literature through the lens of character development, right versus wrong and the importance and duty, human relationship, love and friendship allows us to make the material directly relevant to student lives and pique their interest.

Because all human beings are concerned with being happy and achieving some form of flourishing in their own lives, we wanted to include the component of living the “good life.” We also included this as a part of the theme to overtly suggest to students that coming to a greater appreciation of who we are--our strengths, weaknesses, dreams, and fears--is an integral part of living a richly fulfilling and meaningful life. With hope, this course will encourage students to go out boldly into the world to fulfill their potentials while at the same time giving meaningful practice in reading, writing, thinking, speaking, listening, and command of the English language.

The topic of personal identity is especially appropriate and pertinent for high school seniors, because they find themselves near the end of their public school experience, which is a time when they must begin to think about applying for college or entering the work force. At this point of transition to adulthood, students would do well to remember where they’ve come from--which events, ideas, and texts have shaped their understanding of themselves--and where they hope they are going alongside the literary characters we will be reading, writing, and thinking about.

It is our hope that using this theme will ignite student interest in the textual material we’ll be studying and provide incentive for thoughtful and developmental reading, writing, thinking, speaking and listening, and professional language use. Through a workshop and discussion oriented and student-centered classroom investigating the important themes and insights our texts and characters teach us about who we are as human beings and how we might live a life of flourishing, we aim to fuel the practice generating the skills dictated by the CCSS with the very personal discovery of identity.

C. UNIT SEQUENCE OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

Unit 1: Self-knowledge (3 weeks)

This Unit introduces students to some of the main questions will be working with throughout the school. This unit also will also give us working definitions of the terms we will be exploring and set the stage for why we deem these questions important by asking students to consider what the self is and what knowledge is. By exploring different ways of knowing and different understandings of success and goodness in short readings, we will prime student interest in the topic. Because these concepts are basic, essential and recursive, this Unit logically comes first. This unit connects to the overarching theme of the course by asking the overarching questions of the course: *who am I? Why does self-knowledge matter? How can I use knowledge of who I am to be happy and live the “Good Life”?*

Unit 2: Human relationships (5 weeks)

This Unit is the logical first step to exploring the central questions in more depth since social orientation and human relationships are such a large part of 12th grade life. In other words, we will continue our sustained investigation of who we are and how we will live the good life by exploring the central question: *how are friendships and family as constitutive of identity?* Because friendship and family are recurring themes in *Feed* and students feel strongly about their relationships, we will also use this topic to introduce the major ethical theories we will be working with by asking: *what is right and wrong? What is Virtue? How do my actions with other human beings affect my character, who I am, and my ability to live well?* These questions build on the first unit and directly relate to the overarching theme of the class. We will also explore Utilitarianism versus Deontology as a way of understanding the “goodness” of the good life.

Unit 3: Global Responsibility to Environment (5 weeks)

This unit builds upon the previous by exploring the themes of ecological devastation presented in *Feed*. We put this unit third as a way of beginning to explore the complex environmental/global/ecological relationships that constitute and alter personal identity. In addition, because these relationships are subtler and more expansive than our daily personal relationships with friends and family, we placed this unit after Unit 2. This unit begins to go deeper into the question of personal identity by providing a way for students to explore issues of responsibility in the face of loss of biodiversity and environmental degradation. Moving forward, this sets the stage for thinking about global issues of social injustice (Unit 4), since the poorer, developing nations are usually the ones taking the brunt of various ecological problems and issues. This Unit connects to the overarching theme by asking students: *what is consumerism and is why is it important in our culture and our understanding of identity? How do my actions affect the environment? Does my purchasing power (or lack of) affect who I am? Why or why not?*

Unit 4: Social Justice and Equality (5 weeks)

This unit brings together units 2 and 3 by looking specifically at issues of social justice and equality that we are facing as a society today. Looking at the play of culture and society, privilege and oppression gives students a yet further nuanced understanding of the social factors constituting identity and constructions of the “Good Life.” In addition, this unit builds from the previous Unit by exploring contemporarily relevant topics that affect or will affect students in their lifetimes. This unit connects to the overarching theme by reading about social justice and

asking students: *What is Justice? What is Equality? What are some issues of justice and equality we are facing today? Can one person really make a difference? Does my reaction to injustice help determine who I am? If so, how? And if not, why not?*

Unit 5: The Hero's Journey (5 weeks)

After exploring the major ethical issues students will be presented with in Units 2-4, Unit 5 marks the beginning of students own personal exploration of their own response to the issues we've been exploring by examining the Hero's Journey. We will read excerpts from Joseph Campbell, watch video clips of Campbell and Moyers, and examine various hero figures (both fictional and historical). This unit connects to the overarching theme by asking students: *What are we to do when faced with seemingly insurmountable difficulty? What is courage? What is the Hero's journey? Does my life fit this pattern? If so, how? If not, why not?*

Unit 6: Death and Dying (5 weeks)

This Unit focuses on one important aspect of the Hero's Journey: what is the meaning of death (and life), and how and why does our perspective on death change who we are and how we live? By reading *Hamlet* and excerpts of other short stories, we will explore how different literary characters understand death and use this understanding to enrich our own views. This Unit comes second to last because it is the other and how does. This unit directly connects to the overarching theme of the class by asking students: *Why is death important to life? Does the way we approach death affect life? Can we find examples of this? Is there a better or worse way to think about death? Why or why not? What do I think about death, and how does it impact my life?*

Unit 7: Who am I and how do I live the Good Life? (8 weeks)

This unit is last because it acts as the conclusion of the course before students embark on their lives after high school. This unit asks students to pull the threads together from all of the previous units to create a personally meaningful answer to the questions introduced in Unit 1 (*who am I? How can I use this knowledge to live the Good Life?*). Students will write a position paper and a metacognitive reflection / process analysis recording their answers to the following questions, which directly encapsulate the overarching theme of the course: *What is the good life? What is valuable and most important in life? Based on this understanding, what steps should I take now to be heroic and increase my chances of being happy?*

Rationale for the Sequencing of Units:

We've designed the sequence of these units carefully and deliberately. Unit 1 introduces the main concept and questions of the course. Units 2-4 touch on increasingly expansive aspects of human existence that are constitutive our personal identity. Unit 2 begins with what is most immediate and obvious (friendship and human relationships) and Unit 4 culminates with what may be considered the most hidden and subtle (social justice and equality) parts of what influences our answer to the questions "who am I and how can I use this knowledge to live well?" Unit 5 marks the "turn" of the class, where we ask students to begin to consider what they personally are going to do in the face of the struggles and issues we raised in Units 2-4 by exploring the universal elements of the Hero's Journey. Unit 6 then takes students deeper into their personal response by asking them to consider the process of death and dying and see how this process gives more meaning to their personal responses and reactions to Units 2-6. Lastly, Unit 7 pulls all of the units together by restating the main questions and asking students to write

a position paper on their understanding of the Good life and reflecting on their process of arriving at that conclusion.

D. STANDARDS BEING USED

Throughout this plan, we use the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) for Reading, Writing and Communicating developed by the Colorado Department of Education. We've paid special attention to the standards and grade level expectations for twelfth grade English Language Arts. Taken from the CAS document, these standards are (1) Oral Expression and Listening, (2) Reading for all purposes, (3) Writing and Composition, and (4) Research and Reasoning. The following chart is taken directly from the CDE standards document:

Reading, Writing, and Communicating Grade Level Expectations at a Glance

Standard	Grade Level Expectation
Twelfth Grade	
1. Oral Expression and Listening	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effective speaking in formal and informal settings requires appropriate use of methods and audience awareness 2. Effective collaborative groups accomplish goals
2. Reading for All Purposes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Literary criticism of complex texts requires the use of analysis, interpretive, and evaluative strategies 2. Interpreting and evaluating complex informational texts require the understanding of rhetoric, critical reading, and analysis skills
3. Writing and Composition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Style, detail, expressive language, and genre create a well-crafted statement directed at an intended audience and purpose 2. Ideas, evidence, structure, and style create persuasive, academic, and technical texts for particular audiences and specific purposes 3. Standard English conventions effectively communicate to targeted audiences and purposes
4. Research and Reasoning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent research designs articulate and defend information, conclusions, and solutions that address specific contexts and purposes 2. Logical arguments distinguish facts from opinions; and evidence defines reasoned judgment

[RWC Standards 2010.pdf](#)

E. HOW STANDARDS ARE BEING ADDRESSED

Each of the Units will feature substantial small-group and whole-class discussion based on readings and writings that students will complete on a weekly basis. While the content and structure of these assignments will change per the goals of each Unit, students will repeatedly be asked to perform the following sequence of tasks: (1) **read** a stimulus text for various purposes, (2) **writing and composing** a response to the texts in the form of sticky notes, agree/disagree prompts, write-to-learns, and online wiki literature circles (see Edmondson), (3) **orally express** their own written positions and **listen** to the positions of other students in small and large group discussions. As a way of culminating their work in reading, writing, and communicating, students will **independently research a thoroughly reasoned position**—their cumulative assessment—about class readings and discussions. Students will present this culminating project to the class as a way of further practicing Oral expression and listening. (Further detail about how these standards are specifically addressed can be found below in the Unit Description. See also Tables 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5).

II. DESCRIPTION OF UNITS:

Note: FT=Fulcrum Texts; CT=Context Texts; TT=Texture Texts (See Wessling).

1. SELF KNOWLEDGE: Why does self-knowledge matter? (3 weeks)

- Video Clip: *Star Wars Return of the Jedi* (CT)
- Short Essays: *ThisIBelieve.org* (CT)
- Magazine Interview: “Steve Jobs: The Next Insanely Good Thing” *Wired* Interview (CT)
- Poetry: Emily Dickenson “Nobody” (CT)
- Essay: Ralph Waldo Emerson “Self-Reliance” (CT)

Week 1 Focus / Skills practice: **Critical Reading and Analysis**
Standards Addressed: -CAS 2.2.a, 2.2.b, 2.2.e

Week 2 Focus / Skills practice: **Reading the Rhetorical Situation**
Standards Addressed: -CAS 2.1.a, 2.1.b, 2.1.c, 2.1.d

Week 3 Focus / Skills practice: **Reading as Literary Criticism: “Lenses”**
Standards Addressed: -CAS 2.1.e, 2.1.f, 2.1.g, 2.2.g

Formative Assessment: Reader-Response Journal. This is a free-form writer’s notebook that will ease students into the class and into the bigger conversation the class will have over the course of the year. Although this notebook should take the form of a reader-response journal, students will be given some autonomy about what to include in the journal itself (audio-visual media is encouraged). The important thing is for students to practice and demonstrate the readings skills we’re practicing as a class and to begin to develop the habits of continual, deep thinking and writing. **Rationale:** This assignment is fitting for the topic of self-knowledge, because it is conducive to introspection, self-reflection, and meta-cognition. On the flipside, as Smagorinsky notes, this type of assignment is also good for “*getting to know [your] students*” (84). Following Smagorinsky, we will require students to write roughly 500 words per week, but we will also allow students to mark pages with an X if they would like to keep an entry private (85). To reinforce the broad goal of getting students to become better readers in Unit 1, all of the entries in the Reader response journals ask students to get deeper into their habits of reading as rhetorically aware critical thinkers with particular lenses.

2. HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS: Why do human relationships matter? (5 weeks)

- Novel: First two thirds of M.T. Anderson, *Feed* (FT)
- Poetry: Selections from Hafiz’s *The Gift* (TT)
- Essay: Martin Luther King Jr., “An Experiment in Love” (CT)
- Short Readings in Philosophy: Selections from Aristotle “Nicomachean Ethics” (TT)
- WebQuest Research: Student-directed online research on family and friendship (TT)

Week 4 Focus / Skills practice:	Generating Inquiry Questions
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.2.a, 1.2.b, 2.1.a, 2.1.b
Week 5 Focus / Skills practice:	The Power of Community Inquiry
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.2.c, 1.2.d, 2.1.c, 2.1.d
Week 6 Focus / Skills practice:	Figurative Language and Meaning
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.2.e, 1.2.f, 2.1.e, 2.1.f
Week 7 Focus / Skills practice:	Collaboration and Critique: Group Research
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.2.e, 1.2.f, 3.1.a, 3.1.b
Week 8 Focus / Skills practice:	Effective Speech and Communication
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.1.a, 1.1.b, 1.1.c, 1.1.d

Formative Assessment: Dialectical Journal. This log will be an extension of the Personal Journal, but it will be slightly more structured and directed to focus student thought on the assigned readings for class. Here, we will model and scaffold close and critical reading strategies to give students deeper and more effective ways of responding to literature. But students will still be given freedom about what exactly they would like to ruminate on; entries might take a reader-response format. **Rationale:** Smagorinsky claims that the purpose of these logs is “to encourage students to attend carefully to the language of the literature and to read reflectively, pausing to think about particular passages before moving along, or perhaps reading longer sections and writing about the text in retrospect” (86). We will be using these logs to teach students inquiry skills and habits and generate the fuel for our small group and whole class philosophical discussions on the meaning and importance of human relationships in *Feed* and beyond.

Summative Assessment: Student Research “Ignite Show” Power-Point Presentations. Throughout the second half of this unit, students will be given time to research, in small groups, a particular aspect of human relationships. Then, each will present their research and findings in the form of an “Ignite show”: a 5-minute, 20-slide power-point presentation. Students will integrate and synthesize class readings as well as their own online research, conduct a peer and self-evaluation of the quality of their work, and learn to be more comfortable working in groups.

3. GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY: What is my responsibility to the globalized world/environment? (5 weeks)

- Novel: Last third of M.T. Anderson, *Feed* (FT)
- Speech: Martin Luther King Jr., "A time to break silence" (on the Vietnam war) (TT)
- Video Clip: Sylvia Earle TED Talk about "My One Wish: To Protect the Oceans" (CT)
- Newspaper Articles: on Chernobyl, BP Oil Spill, Hypoxic Dead Zone (TT)
- Magazine Articles: Issues of Teen Magazines *Seventeen*, *US Teen* (TT)

Week 9 Focus / Skills practice: Standards Addressed:	Argument: Thesis, Reason, Evidence -CAS 4.2.a, 4.2.b, 4.2.c
Week 10 Focus / Skills practice: Standards Addressed:	Opinion Versus Reality -CAS 4.2.d, 4.2.c, 1.2.a, 1.2.b
Week 11 Focus / Skills practice: Standards Addressed:	The Oceans Argument: Presentation of Evidence -CAS 3.2.e, 3.2.f, 2.1.e, 2.1.f
Week 12 Focus / Skills practice: Standards Addressed:	Toxicity in the Environment -CAS 3.2.g, 3.2.h, 3.1.a, 3.1.b, 1.2.g
Week 13 Focus / Skills practice: Standards Addressed:	Critical Literacy of Popular Culture -CAS 1.1.a, 1.1.b, 1.1.c, 1.1.d, 3.2.f

Assessment: Dialogue Journal. This is a journal shared by two or more students – a communal journal. This assignment encourages cooperative thinking and communicating. It privileges a conversation model of inquiry and composition. This fits the major theme of this unit that we are “in this together,” and we need to speak to one another to work through our problems. This could either be a physical journal passed between students, or a blog or discussion post where students speak to each other online **Rationale:** This assignment, as Smagorinsky suggests, provides “a forum for discussion beyond what the classroom offers” (86). This has many benefits. Sometimes students are too shy to speak in class, or sometimes certain voices seem to get drowned out in larger class discussions. This offers a space for everyone to speak, but it also gives students a chance to speak with one another.

4. SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUALITY: Why do Justice and Equality matter? (5 weeks)

- Novel: Suzanne Collins, *Hunger Games* (FT)
- Video Clips: *Hunger Games* (TT)
- Novel: Walter Dean Myers *Monster* (TT)
- Academic Essay: Critical Literacies (TT)
- Essay: Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (TT)
- Novel: Sherman Alexie, *Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian* (FT)
- Non-Fiction: Excerpts from Jonathan Kozol *Savage Inequalities* (TT)

Week 14 Focus / Skills practice: **What is Social Justice? Group Investigation**
Standards Addressed: -CAS 1.2.a, 1.2.f, 1.2.g, 3.2.a

Week 15 Focus / Skills practice: **Race and Equality**
Standards Addressed: -CAS 2.2.b, 2.2.e, 2.2.f, 2.2.g, 1.2.b

Week 16 Focus / Skills practice: **Feminist Theory and Gender Equality**
Standards Addressed: -CAS 3.2.c, 3.2.e, 3.2.f, 3.2.g, 2.2.c

Week 17 Focus / Skills practice: **Poverty and Social Justice**
Standards Addressed: -CAS 1.2.d, 2.2.d, 3.2.d, 3.2.h

Week 18 Focus / Skills practice: **Education as a Social Issue**
Standards Addressed: -CAS 3.3.a, 3.3.b, 3.3.c

Assessment: Multi-media/pictographic Guide Book. This assignment takes the form of a “how to guide,” where students get to explain to some audience how and why they should act in a particular way. Smagorinsky introduces this as a way for students to “warn” future students about how to do well in a class, but we think it can be expanded to become a handbook for just about anything. In this unit, students could be asked to write a “how to create... a better world, more just world, more loving world, etc.” **Rationale:** The assignment will require higher-level synthesis skills, because students will be asked to draw from a number of readings to create their own “how to” book. In addition, it represents one way to create authentic writing, because students will be asked to pick a real audience for the piece.

5. HERO'S JOURNEY: What makes a hero? (5 weeks)

- Novel: Portions of Homer's *The Iliad* (FT)
- Non-Fiction: Selections from Joseph Campbell's *The Hero's Journey* (CT)
- Non-Fiction: Selections from Joseph Campbell's *Hero With 1000 Faces* (CT)
- Bill Moyers and Joseph Campbell *Power of Myth* DVD video Clip (CT)
- Short Academic Readings: Jungian Archetypes of characters and situations/symbols (TT)
- Video Clip: *Star Wars The Empire Strikes Back* video clips (TT)
- Newspaper Articles: Heroism in Current Events

Week 19 Focus / Skills practice:	Heroes and Villains
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.1.a, 1.1.f, 1.2.a, 1.2.b, 4.1.a
Week 20 Focus / Skills practice:	Power of Mythology
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.1.b, 1.2.c, 1.2.d, 4.1.b, 4.1.c
Week 21 Focus / Skills practice:	The Hero's Journey
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.1.c, 1.2.e, 1.2.f, 4.1.d, 4.1.e
Week 22 Focus / Skills practice:	Jungian Archetypes
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.1.d, 1.2.g, 3.1.a, 3.1.b
Week 23 Focus / Skills practice:	Contemporary Heroes
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.1.e, 3.1.c, 3.1.d, 3.1.e, 4.1.f

Assessment: Children's Book or Graphic Novel. This assignment asks students to either (1) pick a scene, act, chapter, or event in one of the assigned readings and "retell it" visually with a children's book or graphic novel, or (2) create a new story – in the same vein as the readings – and write/draw a children's book or graphic novel to show their answer to the question: what makes a hero/villain? **Rationale:** Smagorinsky describes this type of assignment as one way to get students engaged with a text in such a way that they prove that they understand what's going on in the text (93). Presumably this is why he envisions the assignment in terms of a children's book. But this type of assignment can be taken further than this by asking students to reinterpret some event or character in their own way to make a point about the nature of heroes and villains. It seems to be a perfect intersection between reading and writing.

6. DEATH AND DYING: What is the meaning of death (and life)? (5 weeks)

- Play: Shakespeare *Hamlet* (FT)
- Play: excerpts from Shakespeare’s plays: *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet* (TT)
- Novel: excerpts of Robert Persig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* (TT)
- Poetry: William Cullen Bryant’s “Thanatopsis” (TT)
- Poetry: Dickinson’s “I felt a funeral in my brain,” “Heard a fly buzz,” “It was not death” (TT)
- Poetry: selections of Walt Whitman’s “Song of Myself” and “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” (TT)
- Novel: Excerpts from Dante’s *The Inferno* (TT)
- Video Clips: Excerpts of *2001: A Space Odyssey*

<p>Week 24 Focus / Skills practice: Standards Addressed:</p>	<p>Introduction to Shakespeare: Reading Strategies -CAS 2.1.a, 2.1.b, 2.1.c, 2.1.g</p>
<p>Week 25 Focus / Skills practice: Standards Addressed:</p>	<p>Tragedy and Comedy -CAS 2.1.d, 2.1.e, 2.1.f, 2.1.g</p>
<p>Week 26 Focus / Skills practice: Standards Addressed:</p>	<p>Meanings of Death and Dying -CAS 1.2.a, 1.2.b, 1.2.c, 4.1.e, 4.1.f</p>
<p>Week 27 Focus / Skills practice: Standards Addressed:</p>	<p>Questions of the Afterlife: Spirits and Ghosts -CAS 4.1.a, 4.1.b, 4.1.c, 4.1.d</p>
<p>Week 28 Focus / Skills practice: Standards Addressed:</p>	<p>What do you think? Building a Case -CAS 4.2.a, 4.2.b, 4.2.c</p>

Assessment: Building a case. This assignment closely resembles a persuasive paper in that it asks students to “build a case” for their take on the meaning of death. We will build up to this “case” by examining other peoples’/characters’ “cases” for the meaning of death. This will require close reading and interpreting skills, in addition to a simple “record of research” where students will summarize and compile these cases. Students are allowed to offer a primarily positive case for their own view, or they can argue against, or “refute,” other views. **Rationale:** This is an incredibly exciting and engaging way to get students into argumentative reading, thinking, and writing. While teachers will have to be careful about how discussions of death are carried out from day to day (some students might feel sensitive about the issue), it is nevertheless a real and authentic topic for discussion.

7. THE GOOD LIFE: Who am I and how can I use this knowledge to live the good life? (8 weeks)

- Novel: Angela Johnson *The First Part Last* (FT)
- Video Clip: RSA Animate video on Youtube “Are You Past or Future Oriented?” (CT)
- Novel: excerpts of Herman Hesse *Siddhartha* (TT)
- Website: www.7billionworld.com website (TT)
- Novel: Excerpts from Marlys Millhiser *The Mirror* (TT)

Week 29 Focus / Skills practice:	Philosophical Inquiry Groups: The Good Life
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.2.a, 1.2.b, 1.2.c, 4.1.a, 4.2.d, 4.2.e
Week 30 Focus / Skills practice:	Living in Time
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.1.a, 1.1.b, 1.1.c, 1.2.d,
Week 31 Focus / Skills practice:	Responsibility and Social Complexity
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.1.d, 1.1.e, 1.1.f, 1.2.e, 1.2.f, 1.2.g
Week 32 Focus / Skills practice:	Ethics, Values, and Virtues
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 3.1.a, 3.1.b, 3.1.c
Week 33 Focus / Skills practice:	Happiness and Fulfillment
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 3.1.d, 3.1.e, 3.2.a, 4.1.c
Week 34 Focus / Skills practice:	Wisdom Literature: World Perspectives
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 3.2.b, 3.2.c, 3.2.d, 3.2.e
Week 35 Focus / Skills practice:	The Good Life Re-vision and re-view
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 4.1.d, 4.1.e, 4.1.f, 3.2.f, 3.2.g, 3.2.h
Week 36 Focus / Skills practice:	The Good Life Student Presentations
Standards Addressed:	-CAS 1.1.a, 1.1.b, 1.1.c, 1.1.d, 4.2.a, 4.2.b

Assessment: The Good Life Position Paper, Presentation, and Self-Reflection. This assignment is a way to introduce students to the final project in the class, which is the “Good Life Position Paper,” where students essentially compile their written work from throughout the to show their progress in thinking about the question of *who am I and how will I use this knowledge to live well?* Students will asked to (1) write an position paper about the good life and (2) write a metacognitive reflection and compile a portfolio that shows how they reached their position.

Rationale: This encourages students to think of composition in terms of a process, and shows that most things worth creating require planning and pre-design. Students will also work with other students in peer review sessions to help plan their final projects, which privileges communal and cooperative work.

III. CULMINATING ASSESSMENT

Assignment Description:

We opened this course with Socrates' dictum to "know thyself," and began a journey guided by the questions: *who am I and how can I use this knowledge to live the "good life"?* We have investigated a variety of answers and perspectives on these questions. It is now your chance to develop and defend your position and explore how you came to this position.

Your final task is twofold.

First, you will craft a "**position paper**" in which you compare two positions on the "good life," and use this comparison to argue for your own perspective. This means that you will need to answer the guiding question of our class as your thesis statement in the first paragraph of your paper. (You may present your "paper" in whatever medium you choose, but you must clear it with me first and include a 3 page written rationale explaining your choices).

Second, you will write a "**metacognitive reflection**" in which you tell the tale of how you came to this position. In order to do this, you will need to reflect on and reference the progress of your own work in this course. You should include aspects of dialectical journal, argumentative essay, guidebook, and any other process work you have collected in your portfolio.

The Artifact(s) you'll be producing:

Position Paper: 7-8 page argumentative paper that expresses an answer to the question: *who am I and how can I use this knowledge to live the "good life"?* Students will compare at least two distinct positions on this issue in order to offer a positive statement of their own view.

Metacognitive Reflection: 2 page reflective paper that shows thoughtful examination of the student's progress over the course of the year. Students will use textual evidence from their own dialectical journals and other major assignments to construct this narrative.

Culminating Assessment Rubrics

Part 1: Position Paper (7-8 pages)

Criterion	Insufficient	Limited	Adequate	Proficient	Exceptional
Format (title page, introduction, position, analysis, conclusion, presentation, bibliography, necessary footnotes)	Elements missing; minimal organization and lack of flow.	Some elements missing; regular breaks in organization; flow breaks down.	All elements present with occasional disorganization and flow interrupted.	All elements well presented; well organized and flows smoothly	All elements thoroughly presented; extremely well organized, allowing smooth & logical flow; crisp and ready for publication.
Mechanics	Frequent errors; seriously impairs flow/meaning of paper.	Regular errors; flow/meaning of paper breaks down.	Errors noticeable, and on occasion, detract from flow or meaning of paper.	Some errors, which are minor in nature, & don't detract from overall meaning of paper.	Essentially faultless; errors may result from risk-taking and do not detract from meaning of paper.
Positions	Positions incomplete; ineffective explanation (minimal information).	Positions partially presented; weak information; shows lack of relevant data.	Positions substantially presented; some imbalance in positions; some info. missing or gaps in explanation.	Positions completely presented; relevant, accurate, clear and well explained.	Two or more positions thoroughly presented; comprehensive, relevant and accurate explanation of positions.
Analysis (compare/contrast, evaluate positions)	Little or no examination of data (information); lacks comparison, contrast, and evaluation.	Some examination of data (information); little comparison, contrast and evaluation.	Adequate examination of data (information); some degree of comparison, contrast & evaluation.	Skillful examination; shows strong degree of comparison, contrast, & evaluation.	Demonstrates thorough examination of data; shows advanced degree of comparison, contrast, & evaluation.
Understanding	Little or no understanding of positions; failure to appreciate points of view.	Little understanding of positions; little appreciation for points of view.	Adequate understanding of positions; some attempts to appreciate points of view.	Reveals strong understanding of positions and an effort to appreciate points of view.	Reveals mature and insightful understanding of the positions and solid appreciation of points of view.

(Adapted from "Position Paper" in *Language Arts Rubrics* on rubrics4teachers.com)

Part 2: Metacognitive Reflection (2 pages)

Criterion	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Examination of critical reading and writing	The reflection shows thoughtful examination of the student's critical reading and writing. The student connects the early thinking he/she did to later assignments and reveals how his/her thinking evolved throughout the entire course.	Although the reflection does reveal that the student has thought about his/her own critical reading and writing, the examination could be more thorough. Connections among early and later assignment could be more complete.	The reflection does not show that the student has thought critically about his/her own reading and writing throughout the semester. There are few, if any, connections between early assignments and later thought processes or the connections made are surface-level and do not show critical reflection.
Looking ahead	The reflection clearly shows that the student has considered how he/she best functions as a writer and how that knowledge will carry through the rest of his/her academic career.	The student may need to explain in more concrete terms how he/she best functions as a writer and to make more explicit how this knowledge will carry through the rest of his/her academic career.	The reflection does not show that the student has carefully considered how he/she functions best as a writer.
Narrative and Evidence	The self-reflection is a clear narrative that tells the story of the student's thinking and writing throughout the semester. Rather than simply charting what was done, the student's narrative focuses on what the student learned and connections that were made. The student has used concrete evidence from his/her own writing to explore this evolution and uses specific rhetorical terms to articulate the changes in his/her thinking and writing.	Though the student has attempted to write a narrative of his/her thinking, at times the explanations of the evolution could be more clear and fluid. The reflection may lapse into discussions of what was done, rather than what was learned throughout the course. The piece includes some specific evidence from the student's own writing, but would benefit from more evidence and/or better explanation of that evidence.	The reflection is not a narrative of the student's changes in thinking/writing and/or the reflection is simply a re-cap of what was done in the course, rather than a narrative of what was learned in the course. The reflection includes little or no direct evidence from the student's own writing.
Conventions & Style	The language, tone, and voice of the reflection are those of a careful and critical reader, and the essay is edited for clear communication that is free of distracting errors.	While the reflection could be more carefully edited for style, it is generally clear and readable.	Because of poor editing and/or style choices, the reflection is confusing or unclear for readers.

(Adapted from "Assignment 5 Rubric" of CSU CO150 Common Syllabus 2012 at composition.colostate.edu).

IV. GRAPHIC DISPLAY OF LANGUAGE ARTS AND STANDARDS

Table 1.1: Language Arts Map

Language Arts: Literacy Components	Unit 1: Self-Knowledge	Unit 2: Human Relationships	Unit 3: Global Responsibility	Unit 4: Justice and Equality	Unit 5: Hero's Journey	Unit 6: Death and Dying	Unit 7: The Good Life
Reading	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Writing	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Listening	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Speaking	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Viewing	X		X		X		
Visually Representing		X			X		X

Table 1.2: Standards Map

Colorado Academic Standards: 12th Grade Expectations	Unit 1: Self-Knowledge	Unit 2: Human Relationships	Unit 3: Global Responsibility	Unit 4: Justice and Equality	Unit 5: Hero's Journey	Unit 6: Death and Dying	Unit 7: The Good Life
1.1			X		X		X
1.2		X	X	X	X		X
2.1	X	X				X	
2.2	X	X		X			
3.1		X			X		X
3.2			X	X			X
3.3			X	X			
4.1			X		X		X
4.2	X					X	X

Table 1.6: Evidence Outcomes Map (Unit 7, weeks 29-36)

CAS: Evidence Outcome	Unit 7: Week 29	Unit 7: Week 30	Unit 7: Week 31	Unit 7: Week 32	Unit 7: Week 33	Unit 7: Week 34	Unit 7: Week 35	Unit 7: Week 36
1.1.a		X						X
1.1.b		X						X
1.1.c		X						X
1.1.d			X					X
1.1.e			X					
1.1.f			X					
1.2.a	X							
1.2.b	X							
1.2.c	X							
1.2.d		X						
1.2.e			X					
1.2.f			X					
1.2.g			X					
2.1.a								
2.1.b								
2.1.c								
2.1.d								
2.1.e								
2.1.f								
2.1.g								
2.2.a								
2.2.b								
2.2.c								
2.2.d								
2.2.e								
2.2.f								
2.2.g								
3.1.a				X				
3.1.b				X				
3.1.c				X				
3.1.d					X			
3.1.e					X			
3.2.a					X			
3.2.b						X		
3.2.c						X		
3.2.d						X		
3.2.e						X		
3.2.f							X	
3.2.g							X	
3.2.h							X	
3.3.a								
3.3.b								
3.3.c								
4.1.a	X							
4.1.b								
4.1.c					X			
4.1.d							X	
4.1.e							X	
4.1.f							X	
4.2.a								X
4.2.b								X
4.2.c								
4.2.d	X							
4.2.e	X							

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