



CEL F Summer Institute '10

Subject: English Grade: 10th

School: Boston Latin School [public] MA Teacher: Kit K

Unit Title: English Reframing Curriculum through a Sustainability Lens

Stage 1- Desired Results

Established Goal(s) (National and/or MA State and/or District goal):

Massachusetts Standards:

#1: Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussions in small and large groups.

#2: Students will pose questions, listen to the ideas of others, and contribute their own information or ideas in group discussions or interviews in order to acquire new knowledge.

#3: Students will make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and the information to be conveyed.

#9: Students will deepen their understanding of a literary or non-literary work by relating it to its contemporary context or historical background.

#11: Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of theme in a literary work and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

#23: Students will organize ideas in writing in a way that makes sense for their purpose.

National Standards:

Grade 9 & 10

1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
3. Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

Education for Sustainability Standards:

EfS Standard 2 – Students recognize the concept of sustainability as a dynamic condition characterized by the interdependency among ecological, economic, and social systems and how these interconnected systems affect individual and societal well-being. They develop an understanding of the human connection to and interdependence with the natural world.

Enduring Understandings:

Students will understand that...

- All living things are connected and every organism/system/place depends on others (Interdependence)
- Actions will have effects beyond immediate reactions (Long-term effects)
- The views on individual needs/desires vs. family obligations and what constitutes a healthy family relationship varies culturally and generationally and with regard to gender
- That there is a direct connection between family interconnectedness and other types of connectedness (using “Defining Community” at Creativechange.net)
- Change is always possible

Essential Questions:

- Why is it nearly impossible to separate the connectedness of family?
- How do one’s actions affect others’ lives?
- What conflicts can arise due to different views on individual needs vs. family/traditional obligations?
- What constitutes healthy relationships within families and cultures?

Students will know...

Students will be able to...

- Document the interconnectedness of individuals within families through use of the text
- Determine how individual characters in Joy Luck Club get support from other family members to embrace change
- Document how the characters’ actions in Joy Luck Club have long-term effects.
- Discuss conflicts of beliefs about women’s rights, family traditions and obligations

Stage 2 – Assessment Evidence

Performance Task(s):

- Find quotes in text that answer essential questions
- Write a paragraph answering the essential question
- In groups, discuss answers to the essential question and determine one that can be connected to the earlier lesson “Defining Community”

Other evidence:

- Small groups will present how their answer to the essential question with regard to the book is connected to our lives today and the larger environment using “Defining Community”
- Individual paragraphs will be assessed by the teacher

Stage 3 – Learning Plan

Learning Activities:

I plan to start the year off with several days introducing students to the idea of sustainability as one of several lenses that we will use to explore American literature this year. This will allow me to use that lens and refer back to the big ideas with every piece of literature that lends itself to that lens. Just before delving into this one section of the book Joy Luck Club, we will spend a day doing “Defining Community” on Creativechange.net - Activity 3. This will be the backdrop against which the analysis of the chapter will occur.

The main two objectives of this lesson are 1) to clarify how inescapable is the reality of interconnectedness for humans just as it is in nature because we are, after all, a part of nature, and 2) to draw parallels between our individual lives and the sustainability of our society.

My hope is that, rather than negating human beings and posing us as the “problem” within our environment (which is often how environmentalists pose it) we will look at the realities of interconnectedness and determine how we can use this interconnectedness to explore solutions to some of our challenges whether they be imposed due to gender, tradition or society. The study of the entire book, Joy Luck Club, will last approximately three weeks. The big understandings (first left column above) will be achieved over this whole period. The following single lesson plan is one example of how an individual lesson plan would fit into this overall sustainability lens. This lesson will last about an hour and begin to move the students towards these big understandings. The homework leading into this lesson would be to read p215 – 241 and for each student to choose one of the essential questions to explore during class the next day.

Students will focus on Section IV, the first part – *An-Mei Hsu: Magpies* in Joy Luck Club. In this section An-Mei remembers her own mother’s suicide due to a terrible marriage and a culture that oppressed women. It ends by presaging how this suicide will enable An-Mei’s daughter to attain a better life.

Students will be broken into four groups. Each group will be composed of the students who chose to work on each essential question. For each question students will find quotes that directly answer their essential question. Once they have found at least 5 examples in the text, they each, individually write a page answering the question based on at least three of the quotes from the text (which they turn in as an assessment). Then they discuss their answers and jointly decide on one example that they can connect to yesterday’s lesson on environmental interdependence. Finally, each group presents their connection to the rest of the class.