



Analyzing Maya Angelou's Poems as a Window into Her Character

Guide for Curriculum Unit 03.03.06

by Amber Stolz

Faced with a school philosophy of 'character development' and students that have low reading levels, I had to come up with a way to provide poetry in a form they would be interested in. I chose Maya Angelou as a focus. Her life story is interesting and not without incidents. Her poems can be explicit, but are written on a level that is easily understood. Her content is such that students will be able to use prior knowledge to build from.

This curriculum was written for students in high school. The focus is on the analysis of character traits that Angelou suggests in her poems and on using techniques shown in her poems to create poems. This unit is designed to be a nonthreatening entrance into the study of poetry. The curriculum examines six of Maya Angelou's poems and how they could be used in a classroom. This curriculum is easily adaptable to meet many of the state standards.

(Recommended for Character and English, grades 9-12.)

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2019 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University

For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>