



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2005 Volume III: History in the American Landscape: Place, Memory, Poetry

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## **Architecture and Setting in the Shaping of Fictional Characters**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 05.03.05  
by Sean T. Griffin

This unit is designed as a way to help students make a bridge from literature to real life through the examination of architecture and place in the development of fictional characters and plot. I will ask students to look at several short stories, which I have paired up with poems. This is literature that my eighth graders would be reading normally, but the difference is that I am trying to emphasize techniques authors use to create a sense of place. Journal writing will be emphasized as we look closely at how fictional characters are influenced by the architecture and setting in which they live. In a final project students create their own "life maps" in order to see how different settings or places have influenced their own lives.

(Recommended for English, grades 7-8.)

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