



Yale-New Haven  
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2008 Volume II: Storytelling: Fictional Narratives, Imaginary People, and the Reader's Real Life

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## **Narrative Voice: What is Real? What is True? What is Reliable?**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 08.02.07  
by Ruth Chaffee

This three-week unit is specifically designed for tenth-grade students in a special education resource room, but has a number of activities and ideas that could be easily adapted and expanded for the regular education setting. The unit will explore issues of reliability of the narrative voice and characteristics of different genres, as well as real-world and digital texts. One of the most important skills in life is to be able to evaluate voice, whether in a text, online, or face-to-face. We all do this constantly in our everyday lives when we read the news, meet a new person, or shop for a car. We are incessantly determining whether the source of information we encounter is trustworthy. With more information continuously available at our fingertips in the digital era, the skill of discernment becomes even more necessary. In this unit, students will evaluate traditional texts from multiple genres such as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Catcher in the Rye*, and *Monster*, as well as digital texts, such as Myspace, Wikipedia, and phishing scams. Through readings, activities, discussions, and writing, students will develop their own tools of evaluation of voice to apply to texts and non-literary situations.

(Developed for Special Education, grade 10; recommended for English and Special Education, grades 9-12)

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