



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1983 Volume III: Reading the Twentieth Century Short Story

An Introduction to Literature for the Learning-Disabled High School Student

Guide for Curriculum Unit 83.03.01
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This unit is an introduction to literature, specifically fiction and the short story, for students with learning-disabilities Which have resulted in severe reading deficits. This units, however, can be used with any class of students if these elements are present: 1) reading problems, 2) lack of motivation to read, and 3) lack of exposure to literature and reading.

The unit is divided into two sections. The first three-week section is a motivational period titled, "Communication from Past to Present". In this section the students are presented with background information concerning the development of language from earliest times (cave drawings, pictography) to the present (literature, film, computers). The premise for this section is the idea that, perhaps, students who have difficulty with language (reading and writing) have a very basic lack of understanding concerning its uses and functions, not just a lack of understanding of skills.

The second section of the unit is the reading section. In this 4-5 week section the students will read and react to four short stories chosen by the teacher and finally one chosen by themselves. The students will have been presented with five elements of fiction, plot, setting, character, point of view and theme, and they will have to analyze the Stories in terms of these.

Since the students have such varieties of reading and writing abilities, any material Which Will be presented to or expressed by the students must be adapted to their individual abilities. For this reason I have included in the Unit two charts which explain in detail information and strategies for the Use of reading and writing materials for any class in which there are students with multiple levels of abilities.

(Recommended for 9th-12th High School Learning Disability English Class and High School Developmental English Class)

Key Words

Short Stories Reading Instruction

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