



The Pygmalion Effect: A Dramatic Study in the Classroom

Guide for Curriculum Unit 85.02.06
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The unit consists of a narrative portion explaining the work of Bernard Shaw, specifically his play “Pygmalion.” Also, it parallels the lyrics and staging of the musical “My Fair Lady” with Shaw’s play. In total, the unit is a teaching unit with dual goals. The first goal, having the students learn via dramatic play all the literary points to be taught and the second goal, is the more complex. This is to develop self-esteem in the classroom. My student population is a Special Needs group. However, I do not feel this unit is limited to this group alone. In an urban environment in which we are the primary educators (guides) to our students, a valuable lesson can be drawn from this unit. The transformation of Eliza Doolittle does not stand alone. The entire story is easily related to the day-to-day teaching experiences of our public school teachers and their students. I feel very strongly that the quality and flexibility of this unit is its finest asset. I also think that whoever wishes to use this, whether in the Learning Center of a middle school or a regular class, can use this as a springboard for all kinds of on-going projects within the realm of the “humanities.”

This unit is complete with bibliography and activities for the class and the students. You need only to adapt it to your student population and create an affective approach to teaching your English lesson.

(Recommended for Learning Center English or Language Arts classes, grade 6 or 7)

Key Words

Literature Drama Comparative Contemporary Renaissance

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