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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1988 Volume IV: Responding to American Words and Images

Translation Into Reality

Guide for Curriculum Unit 88.04.02
by Anthony F. Franco

“Translation Into Reality” is a multi-dimensional unit that focuses upon quality American short fiction with themes of great relevance for inner city students. Themes such as suicide, alcohol, or drug abuse, sexual awareness, and parent-child relationships are found in each selection. A series of class discussion questions for each of the ten stories in the unit follow a short synopsis of the story and the reasons for its inclusion. The class discussion questions are also designed to illustrate several fundamental aspects of the short story including character, setting, and point of view.

Once students have read the story and participated in the class discussion, they will attempt to write short reactions to the story and the discussion. Various writing suggestions have been included for this purpose. “Translation Into Reality” brings relevant reading matter to inner city students, teaches several elements of the short story, encourages students to express their own opinions, and provides for students to develop their writing skills while understanding that the problems they face on a daily basis can be overcome. (Recommended for English classes, grades 7-12)

Key Words

Twentieth Century Short Story Adolescence American Literature Journals Writing Instruction

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