

A Child's Diary: Reader Response

By Rick Vanderwall

Overview

In this lesson plan, students will write six diary entries as they read the novel, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. Students will select a character from a provided list from the six groups of two chapters. The diary entry will be a response to the events presented in the two chapters from the point of view of the selected character. Students will select a new character for each diary entry. Additionally, each student will do a peer response activity for each of the six diary entries.

Student Objectives

Students will:

- Apply their understanding of the characters to a creative writing assignment.
- Demonstrate they understand the plot of the novel by creating a character's fictional response.
- Demonstrate they understand character motivation and actions through their diary entries.

Skills Attained

Students will be able to:

- Enhance their creative writing skills.
- Apply knowledge of the novel and its characters to an original writing assignment.

Materials Needed

- Diary assignment handouts
- Peer assessment handouts
- Novel, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

The Lesson

Anticipatory Set

Introduce students to the diary assignment before they read the first two chapters. First, discuss the qualities of they should look for in characters and how they can create them by focusing on:

- What they do.
- What they say.
- What others say to them.
- How the author describes them and their actions.

Then, describe what a diary is to the students and give examples--*The Diary of Anne Frank* is a good one.

Procedures

1. Pass out the handouts to students and go over the instructions, telling students to:
 - Select a character from the provided list.
 - Pick a new character for each diary entry.
 - Write a journal entry that covers the characters most important experiences and reflections during the past two chapters.
2. Have students complete a peer assessment activity for one other student's diary after he or she has completed each diary entry.
3. Respond briefly to each entry and assigns points based on the assessment rubric criteria.

Assessment

Diary Assignment Rubric

Use the following rubric as a guide for assigning points to the listed components, keeping in mind that the rubric's percentages are suggestions--you should adapt the assessment guidelines, as necessary, to meet your local criteria and grading philosophy.

Grading Areas	Specific Grading Criteria	Percentage of Total Grade
Completion of Assignment	Entries consist of at least two paragraphs	40%
	Entries shows evidence of the student having revised and proofread	
Quality of Work	Writing is in the voice of the chosen character	40%
	Entries include what the character said	
	Entries include what the character did	
	Entries include what others said to the character	
Peer Response Form	Response One	20%
	Response One	
	Response One	

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Roll of Thunder Unit Character Diary Assignment
Diary for Chapters

Name _____

Date _____ Period _____

Instructions: Select a character from the list below, picking a new character for each diary entry. Then, write a journal entry of at least two paragraphs that relates the characters most important experiences, thoughts, and feelings during the past two chapters. Make sure you provide evidence that you have revised and proofread your entry has been revised and proofread by submitting both a rough and final draft. Finally, you will complete a peer response to one of your fellow student's diary entries. Make sure you do not respond to the same person's diary more than once.

Character List (select one): Cassie, Stacey, T.J., Mama, Big Ma, Papa, Mr. Morrison, Uncle Hammer

Diary Entry:

**Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry Unit Character Diary Assignment
Peer Response Form**

Name: _____

Group Observed: _____

Date: _____

Response One

Explain which qualities this diary entry had that helped to tell the story of the characters activities during these chapters effectively:

Response Two

Give two things this writer could have done to make this diary more effective.

Explain which qualities this diary entry had that helped to tell the story of the characters activities during these chapters effectively:

Response Three

What new information or ideas did you learn from reading this diary?

Explain which qualities this diary entry had that helped to tell the story of the characters activities during these chapters effectively:

List any questions you have about this presentation.