

For my inquiry project, my goal is to use non-conventional assessments to teach conventional skills. The culminating project for the year is a thesis paper, which my students will write in April. Each preceding unit works to build a different skill which is integral to a successful thesis statement.

For *The Handmaid's Tale*, the students focused on crafting persuasive text-based arguments. Accordingly, the final assignment for the unit is a debate where students present their passages and arguments orally before submitting a written outline of their ideas.

Materials used for unit

- Class set of *The Handmaid's Tale*, chromebooks
- Promethean board, white board

Supplementary Texts

- [Article] "How 'Carry That Weight' Is Changing the Conversation on Campus Sexual Assault: Columbia student Emma Sulkowicz's protest inspires nationwide actions" by Rebecca Nathanson
 - Week 1; sexual violence in modern America.
- [Artwork] "Every Fist Clenched as One," Cover of 1934 A.I.Z. (Workers Illustrated Magazine)
 - Week 3; the way in which Gilead manipulates handmaids by adapting elements of Marxism
- [TV Episode] "Pilot," *New Girl*
 - Week 5; what cheating means in our contemporary culture in preparation for final debate

Plotting of Unit

This is a six week unit.

Students will have weekly reading assignments, due on the Mondays of weeks 2-5.

Students will create weekly blog posts in class on the Tuesdays of weeks 2-5.

Thursdays and Fridays of weeks 1-4 will be spent on in class reading, with the option of reading silently on their own or aloud in a group.

Mondays and Wednesdays of weeks 1-5 will be spent on class discussions focusing on the themes articulated in the weekly blog posts and the exploration of supplementary texts.

The final week of the unit will be spent on the debates, with the outline due the following Sunday.

Unit Objectives

- SWBAT understand how an author creates a world as commentary on her culture
- SWBAT create three part thesis statements, write blog posts and conduct debates IOT build text based argumentation skills

Common Core Standards for English Language Arts

1.1 Foundational Skills – Students gain a working knowledge of concepts of print, alphabetic principles, and other basic conventions

1.2 Reading Informational Texts – Students read, understand and respond to informational text – with emphasis on comprehension, making connections among ideas and between texts with focus on textual evidence.

1.3 Reading Literature – Students read and respond to works of literature – with emphasis on comprehension, making connections among ideas and between texts with focus on textual evidence.

1.4 Writing – Students write for different purposes and audiences. Students write clear and focused text to convey a well-defined perspective and appropriate content

1.5 Speaking and Listening – Students present appropriately in formal speaking situations, listen critically, and respond intelligently as individuals or in group discussions.