

## **Out of This World and Into Ourselves: Literature as a Bibliotherapeutic Journey**

*Jonathan Bracksieck*  
Sharpstown Middle School

### **INTRODUCTION**

Reading is supposed to be fun. Much like television and motion pictures, reading should catapult the reader into the life and times of someone else. It should help them disregard the challenges they face, or at least focus their attention on another avenue and away from the road they know. It should allow the reader to exchange their circumstances and situations with those of another person, albeit a fictional (or biographical) character. And furthermore, reading should help satisfy our soul and psyche with the emotions and experience we can achieve in literature.

I read for pleasure as a child, and this early intervention has resulted in a continued satisfaction in the written word. Reading was for me what television is to our present society, at least in that little hamlet of West Texas where I grew and prospered. In this generation of illiteracy, however, the child's motivation to read both for pleasure and to learn diminishes drastically (Ruddell and Unrau 121). This becomes paradoxical in light of research that has shown that students' interest and involvement in reading increase following the pleasure they receive when they complete a book or improve their reading ability (Schunk and Zimmerman 204). So, how can this be, I ask?

I began my journey into flights of fiction for more of a healing process. Many were the days that I would sit alone in my room with nothing more than a light in the corner and a book in my hands. Outside in the world, a fight would be progressing between my sister and my parents, or my parents themselves, and I wanted nothing more than to escape the present. During those times I relied heavily on literature, knowing that it would take me on a journey away from my present self. I would eventually become lost in the pages, oblivious to the screaming and crying that raged beyond the door to my bedroom. Reading was my solace from each damaging episode. In my case, I escaped from harmful everyday conflict by reading literature, and in doing so developed the precursor to lifelong literacy: a genuine love for reading. I plunged into book after book, plowing through anything I could get my hands on. But as time wore on, and I became more aware of the cause of my motivation for reading (a flight from the strife in my life), I slowly ventured out and located books that would assist me in working through my feelings. Nonfiction would have been the prudent answer for which I was searching, but as a 13-year-old, the available literature was too sophisticated for me. I needed something a little more user-friendly. Fictional literature was my retreat, and through enough repetition, I launched into a lifetime of what I would later know as bibliotherapy.

Bibliotherapy is a legitimate therapeutic tool, defined without complexity as “the healing power of books.” Many other definitions exist, and heated debates have ensued because of disagreements between mental health professionals, educators, and other professionals and parents. Much of the problem is “undoubtedly due to the incorporation of the word *therapy* in *bibliotherapy*, which automatically invokes assumptions that its purpose is to cure illness or treat dysfunction” (Doll and Doll 6). I, being less a mental health professional and more an educator, take a more lenient consideration of bibliotherapy. I focus on the purpose of bibliotherapy as a whole, as I unwittingly did as a child. According to Jeon, with whom I agree on the aim of bibliotherapy, books are intended to reveal “several different types of insight, including acquired knowledge about the psychology of human behavior, understanding of the basic motivations of person with problems like one’s own, and clarification of the difficulties posed by one’s own behavior.” She further points out that the emotions introduced in books are “more predictable and controlled than the spontaneous emotions that children experience otherwise” (17), which is more conducive for the children’s coping mechanisms and easier for adults to aid. However, John Pardeck, being a mental health professional, developed a clinical model of bibliotherapy, introducing the concepts of readiness activities, which precede the reading of materials, and evaluation activities, which ensure that the problem has been solved (421-427).

But why bibliotherapy? Many teens experience typical adolescence, struggling to cope with many aspects of their lives, the most important being the social. They are clamoring to answer a question, the question, “Who am I?” This question is one that each of us goes through in our lives, one that is governed by developmental factors beyond our control. An adolescent is immersed in developmental egocentrism, which is characterized by two ideation patterns, the imaginary audience and the personal fable. The imaginary audience ideation to which many adolescents subscribe refers to the thought that these adolescents act as though they are being watched, that the world focuses on and evaluates their every action. This, along with the concept of the personal fable, which states that the experiences and feelings of the adolescent are unique and unable to be shared or experienced by others, “capture and explain feelings and behaviors typically associated with early adolescence, such as self-consciousness, conformity to peer group norms, and risk-taking” (1025-1034). Years of the effects of such normal adolescent thinking mount upon each other, and ultimately the teens arrive at adulthood as they were encoded to be, an organism under the suspicion that life is serious and that their lives are consequential on some scale of importance.

But they’re not, at least not on a universal scale. More often than not they will arrive at this conclusion early in their twenties, and they should be prepared for such a monumental realization. Enter *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* and the trivial life of Arthur Dent.



## SOURCE

*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* serves as the primary source for my unit. Written by Douglas Adams, a British author, in 1979, it recounts the story of Arthur Dent and Ford Prefect. In summation, Arthur is having difficulty because his house is to be razed to build a highway, when his friend Ford Prefect informs Arthur of two certainties: that he is from a planet in another galaxy and that the earth will soon be destroyed. Directly the earth is to be demolished to make way for a universal highway, and the two escape on one of the Vogon constructor ships that accomplishes that feat. The Vogons, however, dislike nothing more than interstellar hitchhikers, and soon cast Arthur and Ford from their ship and into the void of space, where they will die in mere seconds, if not for their rescuing by Zaphod Beeblebrox.

Zaphod Beeblebrox is the president of the galaxy, which is learned to be nothing but a figurehead position, for real power is wielded by some unknown group of persons (seemingly a crack about the influence of “advisors” in regards to any governmental position). He, along with his companion Trillian, steals the Heart of Gold, the most complex starship ever to be assembled, which runs on an Improbability Drive. This Improbability Drive provides movement based on formulas of unbelievable odds, and only through such calculations are Arthur Dent and Ford Prefect delivered from their assured asphyxiation in space. The foursome then finds Magrathea, an improbable hibernating planet on which some years prior a group of mice had created the earth as an experiment to find the ultimate question, one that we are all searching for: “Why are we here?”

The author Douglas Adams reveals that earlier a supercomputer had found the answer to the perceived question, only to find that the answer was forty-two. Consequently the earth was the experiment to solve the most important aspect of the equation, the question. Unfortunately, it was destroyed just before the question was found. And so our foursome enters the interior of Magrathea in an effort of exploration for understanding. They are greeted by two mice who inform Arthur and his friends that he holds the key to the question inside his brain. The rodents attempt to kidnap Arthur for the hidden question to life, but he and his three companions escape their clutches to safety aboard The Heart of Gold. And thus the story ends.

## **THEME**

As can be surmised, this experience leaves Arthur dazed and confused throughout much of the book. For the earth to be demolished for a “hyperspatial express route” clearly dents (no pun intended, i.e. Arthur Dent) Arthur’s ego, and in the end he finds solace in his new role in the universe around him. He is able to come to terms with the destruction of his home and learns to function in a life he was ill-prepared for only days before. But along the way, new challenges and obstacles divulge themselves to Arthur and Ford both, and their objectivity to new experiences eventually allows them to not only survive but to flourish in an extreme state of affairs. Eventually Arthur and Ford surmise that the key to happiness in life resides in all of us, and that it is our duty to seek that for ourselves, obviously by being open to the experiences and people we come into contact with throughout our lives.

## **MOOD AND TONE**

Needless to say that in *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*, Douglas Adams has created a work of science fiction. According to Kropf, though, Adams’ work would more aptly be titled mock Science Fiction, for “SF (Science Fiction) frequently celebrates the triumph of the human spirit, as personified by a hero of epic proportions, over seemingly impossible odds. However, Adams’s unlikely hero, Arthur Dent, is a bungling British Everyman whose heroic quest is confined to the search for a drinkable cup of tea” (62). Consequently, the mood of the book is always light, and his tone never wavers from a sense of humor that is readily apparent throughout his writing. The students should be able to easily spot this, and with it bring a sense of fun and amusement to their reading. Enjoyment is, after all, the principal emphasis of novels. By doing this, any audience can appreciate the literary method of Adams, and consequently will, by necessity, arrive at the underlying theme of the book: that any experience, no matter how terrifying and possibly pessimistic in result, could be seen with a sense of humor.

## **GENRE**

Prior to reading *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*, I will introduce my students to science fiction. This genre of literature is characterized by four components:

1. Realistic and fantastic details
2. A basis in science and technology
3. Usually set in the future or in space
4. Unknown inventions

The students and I will peruse literature in science fiction, discussing classic stories that preceded Douglas Adams’ but were able to correctly speculate on life in the future. A few of the predictions of inventions and life in the future we will discuss include Leonardo Da Vinci’s vision of the helicopter and Ray Bradbury’s big screen television.

We will not actually read any of the short stories, save for one, “Rain, Rain, Go Away,” written by Isaac Asimov. We will read this at the conclusion of the unit, assuming there is time, after we finish Douglas Adams’ masterpiece.

In addition, the class and I will read several poems that either deal with the experience of travel, the experience of life, or have a basis in science fiction. Among those I have chosen are:

1. “A Journey” by Nikki Giovanni
2. An excerpt from “Song of Myself” by Walt Whitman
3. “I Stepped from Plank to Plank” by Emily Dickinson
4. “Southbound on the Freeway” by May Swenson

We shall discuss these at length during the unit. Each poem will be perused during the parts of the novel in which both the motifs in the poems and those in the novel coincide.

I would like to find a copy of the original radio show of “The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy.” If I do, I will play excerpts from the radio show, and the students will compare and contrast the elements and give their opinions on each. Furthermore, an audio tape of the book is available, voiced by the original characters in the radio play. I will also attempt to locate a copy of these. If I do, the class will listen to specific chapters of the book as they read along with the cast of the radio play.

## **PRIOR KNOWLEDGE**

From a student-focused perspective, before starting the unit, I intend to discover the students’ experiences of travel. I know many of my students rarely, if ever, venture outside of Houston, and when they do they even more infrequently get an opportunity to explore the locales which they visit. Consequently, much of what they know is gathered through endless hours watching television, viewing movies, or what they see through other forms of media, such as the computer or magazines. Few of my students have known persons with experiences of travel with which to speak, and those that do not take advantage of the wisdom of other’s adventures, or so they say. This, sufficed to say, is precisely the rationale of my unit.

Without examining the particular lessons I will propose in the unit, I will place much emphasis on writing. Being a language arts teacher, writing is equally important to the education of my students. To initiate this certainty, the students will write an essay describing the effect of travel and exploration on their lives. I seek to find a starting point, a point of departure, from which to initiate the cognitive aspect of the unit. Therefore, I can direct the students to predict how travel and exploration will affect their lives in the future. Through this I will uncover a starting point from which to commence the unit.

## READING STRATEGIES

In education, emphasis is placed on Critical Thinking Skills, those skills determined to be necessary for each student to prepare them adequately for their adult lives. I subscribe to such educational thought, and will focus my unit on the upper echelon of those skills, i.e. analysis, synthesis, evaluation, inductive and deductive reasoning, etc. My students will be informed about the applications of the Critical Thinking Skills, as well as the methods to understanding them and the questions that produce them.

Furthermore, I must acquaint the students with the six reading strategies common to literary pedagogy. They are:

1. Predicting
2. Connecting
3. Visualizing
4. Questioning

I begin with two quotes, each similar in significance but different in style. Chronologically, they were spoken almost a millennium apart, but serve as evidence for the continued importance of questioning to all orders of higher education.

“The first key to wisdom is constant questioning...by doubting we are led to inquiry, and by inquiry we discern the truth.”

-Peter Abelard (1079-1142)

“It is better to know some of the questions than all of the answers.”

-James Thurber (1894-1961)

Of course, each of these is nothing but an extension of Socrates' life work, that we should be committed to question everything. During the unit, I will emphasize questioning much more than the other reading strategies because the novel naturally lends itself to such preference.

5. Clarifying
6. Evaluating

Because Douglas Adams is a British author, many of his references are predicated upon knowledge of English geography, history, and current events. Understandably, this will be difficult for my students to grasp, as it was for me when I read *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Therefore, during reading, I will ask my students to concentrate on clarifying and questioning. This will allow them to best uncover the meaning of many of Adams' references. Each of the other Critical Thinking Skills will be addressed in the lessons of the unit, but special emphasis will be placed on the aforementioned because

without them, the students will not arrive at the meaning of the story, which is the purpose of all reading.

## **READING STYLES**

In the class, the students and I will read in a variety of methods.

1. **Read Aloud** - Initially, to begin the story, I will read aloud to them as they read the book silently. This will allow me to interrupt myself and explain any difficulties or misunderstandings they may have about the subject. Furthermore, I can think aloud and give an exhibition of what questions and statements I have about the story. Such modeling will assist students in their reading skills.
2. **Popcorn Reading** - The students and I will “popcorn” read. In it, one student will read a portion of the story aloud (at least two inches of text until they are tired), while the others read silently. When finished, the student will say “popcorn” and choose another student to read. This reading style will accomplish a few goals. One, the teacher will be able to analyze the student’s ability to both read competently and make the transition to speaking what is read. I can assist the student with pronunciation and semantics, which have been shown to seriously undermine a person’s ability to understand what is being read. Two, each student will hear the passage aloud, and will be able to make necessary changes in any difficulties they may have.
3. **Peer Reading** - Students are proven to accept help from peers more often than from teachers. They do not want to be perceived as ignorant in the eyes of their teacher, which is comprehensible. Therefore, the students will undertake some of the reading on their own. They will get into groups either by choice or assignment, and read specific chapters in these groups. Again, one person will read aloud while the others follow along. When the student completes their reading, the next will commence, and so on and so forth until the selection is concluded. I’ve found that this works well with the students. They admit they enjoy this style more than the others, for it helps them help themselves, and allows them to make comments which would not have been made for fear of embarrassment.
4. **Silent Individual Reading** - And finally, the student will engage in silent sustained reading. This method I like the least, but find necessary in any reading program. The incidence of this style of reading will be infrequent because students have, in my experience as a teacher, more difficulty staying on task without the threat of monitoring. Also, I have more difficulty clarifying for twenty-four individual students than six groups of four students each.

## COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRUCTURES

I subscribe wholly to the strategies of cooperative learning in my classroom, and will subsequently endorse such methods in the instruction of the unit. Our particular school, being an Annenburg Foundation Grant fellow, subscribes to the cooperative learning styles of Dr. Spencer Kagan. His pedagogy is rooted in research, which endears him to the administration of the school in which I'm working. There are hundreds of learning structures devised by Dr. Kagan and his staff, but only a handful of those are incorporated into my classroom. Therefore, I will list those I propose to employ in the teaching of the novel unit.

1. **Rally Table** (and Simultaneous Rally Table) - The teacher poses a question with multiple answers, or asks the students to brainstorm possible answers or write a summary of a work. The students get into groups of two, with one student writing an answer on a sheet of paper, then passing the sheet to their partner. The other student then writes another, or successive, answer on the sheet, and then passes the sheet back to the first student. This continues until a predetermined time. (In Simultaneous Rally Table, each student has his/her own sheet for answering, and after an answer is written, both students switch papers and write a new answer on the sheet in front of them).
2. **Round Table** (and Simultaneous Round Table) - Identical to Rally Table (and Simultaneous Rally Table), except students are paired in groups of three (ideally four) or more. Answering sheets are passed in a clockwise direction.
3. **Find the Fiction** - Using prior-learned material as the source, each student writes two true and one false statement about the source on an answer sheet. Students then pass their sheets to their predetermined partners, who circle the statement that is false. The student who created the Find the Fiction then assesses the answer of the other student, and assists them if the answer was incorrect.
4. **Quiz-Quiz-Trade** - Students pose questions on a sheet of paper, and write the answer on the back of the sheet in small print. They stand up and move around, indicating they need a partner by holding their sheet high above their head. When they find a partner, the tallest of the partners (Partner A) asks their question, to which the shorter (Partner B) replies. If Partner B does not know the answer to the posed question, Partner A assists them in understanding the answer. When Partner B has the answer to Partner A's question, Partner B then asks their question to Partner A. Partner A answers, or is assisted by Person B if aid is needed for understanding. Partners then switch their question sheets, and move around looking for new partners. The process is continued until each student has had an opportunity to presumably view each question.



5. **Consensus Placemat** - In groups of four, each student has a sheet of paper on which to reply, in addition to one sheet that serves as the consensus sheet for each group. The teacher poses a question or otherwise has the students create work on their own answering sheet. When each student has written their work on their sheet, each student (in a circular, structured manner) states their answer to the group. If each student agrees, then the answer or work is written on the consensus answering sheet. If the students do not agree, the students discuss the merits of the answer and come to a conclusion about the proposed answer or work. The next student in the group then proposes their answer, and the process is repeated until each student in the group has had an opportunity to offer their work.
6. **Rally Robin** - The teacher poses a question or has the students create work of some kind. Students find their predetermined partners, with Partner A stating their answer to Partner B. Having completed that, Partner B declares their answer to Partner A.
7. **Round Robin** - Identical to Rally Robin, although the students work in groups of three (ideally four) or more. Answering proceeds in a clockwise motion (Kagan 1995).

#### MISCELLANEOUS LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Novels are such splendid resources for learning. They provide a wealth of information and thereby are particularly certified for basing many Reading skills and components. The following are standard activities that will be instituted during the teaching of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.

1. **Vocabulary** - The students will be exposed to much vocabulary throughout the novel, on which they will be quizzed periodically.
2. **Summarization** - The students will also be required to write summaries of specific sections of the novel as the teacher sees fit.
3. **Characterization** - Students will find parts of the novel that exhibit characterization, and be able to list which type of characterization it is.
4. **Conflict** - All stories have conflict. The students will be able to find conflict in the novel and list the type (Man vs. Man, Man vs. Himself, Man vs. Nature, and Man vs. Society) and its manifestation in the story.
5. **Character Logs** - Upon completing certain chapters, each student will choose a character from the chapter and place themselves in the character's mindset. They will then write the feelings and emotions they would have had had they been the character in the story. This allows the students to fully integrate themselves into the story.

## **CROSS-CURRICULUM MINI LESSONS**

### **Science**

I plan to incorporate a few mini-lessons into my unit, primarily because the book is so well suited to do so. Being science fiction, the novel naturally lends itself to a lesson in science, and I am willing to accommodate. In the story, Arthur Dent cannot understand the aliens because he does not speak their language. To remedy this, Ford Prefect places a Babel fish into Arthur's ear, which translates what is being said into English so Arthur can understand it. This is a perfect example of commensalism, a form of symbiosis. The students and I will engage in an activity regarding symbiosis, listing the types and examples of each. I will cooperate with the science teacher for our Small Learning Community to plan a science curriculum mini-lesson.

### **Poetry**

Also in the novel, the Vogons, the group that demolished the earth, are known universally for their horrible poetry. When we find this point in the novel, I will reintroduce poetry and its aspects to my students. Then they will create their own poetry, with an emphasis on it being terrible (to assuage any reservations the students might have). The students will be required to include three of the four elements of poetry (form, sound, imagery, and figurative language). We will read the poems aloud to the class.

### **Mathematics**

Furthermore, the ship The Heart of Gold is powered by an Infinite Improbability Drive. By using this as a model, the students and I will examine basic probability. Through the assistance of the mathematics teacher, I will develop and implement a 20-30 minute lesson on probability, using examples of the story as subjects.

## **LESSON PLANS**

### **Lesson Plan 1: Introduction and Inferencing**

#### ***Overview***

In the introduction to the book, Douglas Adams provides the setting and time for the story in vague descriptions and puzzling depiction, from which the student must infer the answer. The teacher will assure that students have prior knowledge of inferencing, introducing activities if necessary.

#### ***Objectives***

- Students will draw inferences using support from text,
- Will analyze narrative text structure and its features identify the purposes for which the text is written,

- Read with fluency and understanding in texts appropriate difficulty levels,
- Listen effectively in a variety of settings for a variety of purposes,
- Use higher order thinking skills to participate in academic discourse, and
- Connect their own experiences and ideas with those of others.

***Materials needed***

*The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*

Notebook Paper

Different Colored Pens (1 red, 1 blue, 1 black, 1 green)

***Procedure***

The teacher and students will read the introduction to *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*. Students are introduced to “a small blue-green planet whose ape descended life forms are so amazingly primitive that they still think digital watches are a pretty neat idea.” Teacher poses the question “What is the name of this planet?” Using Consensus Placemat, a Kagan cooperative learning structure (Kagan), students will list their answers on their own sheet of paper, then as a group discuss the answer and place the consensus answer on a separate sheet of paper. The teacher will then discuss the correct answer with the entire class.

The class will then read (from the novel) that the people on this planet were unhappy most of the time because of little green pieces of paper. The teacher asks the students to list what the green pieces of paper are, and has the students brainstorm with two purposes: list any small green piece of paper they can think of and list all the reasons why people are unhappy. Students perform this task using Round Table (Kagan), with each student using a different color pen. Next, the students execute Consensus Placemat (Kagan) when an answer for the group is found.

Finally, it is revealed in the novel that the story begins “nearly two thousand years after one man had been nailed to a tree for saying how great it would be to be nice for people for a change....” “Who is that man?” the educator asks, and the students, using Round Table (Kagan), brainstorm each of their possible ideas. Each group then performs Consensus Placemat (Kagan), and following that, the teacher will discuss the answer with the students.

***Assessment***

In this lesson, no formal assessment exists. However, each student uses a different color pen when participating in the various Kagan strategies. In this manner the teacher will be able to ensure that each student has participated in the activity. The teacher monitors as needed. The teacher may choose to assign a participation grade for the activity based on a student’s involvement.

## **Lesson Plan 2: Vogon Poetry**

### ***Overview***

In *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, Douglas Adams states that the Vogons, the destructors of the earth, are generally regarded as having the third worst poetry in the universe. Prior to this lesson, the students will review the characteristics of poetry and read some of the aforementioned science fiction poetry.

### ***Objectives***

- Students will analyze narrative text structure and its features,
- Will describe and compare the characteristics of a variety of texts, forms, and genres,
- Interpret literary terms,
- Distinguish between connotative and denotative meaning,
- Use examples from text to analyze literary devices for stylistic impression,
- Analyze the most effective features of text based on predetermined criteria,
- Interact effectively for a variety of purposes,
- Analyze and evaluate aesthetic language in literature and spoken messages,
- Prepare, organize, and deliver a variety of oral presentations,
- Compare language and oral traditions that reflect customs, regions, and cultures,
- Select appropriate forms for composition, with respect to considered purpose and Audience,
- Write for academic expression and reflection,
- Write creative texts,
- Write with a variety of literary devices,
- Use adjectives and adverbs appropriately to make writing vivid or precise,
- Develop drafts,
- Revise and edit drafts for specific purposes,
- Refine selected pieces to publish for general and specific audiences, and
- Collaborate with other writers for specific purposes.

### ***Materials needed***

*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*

Notebook paper

Stationery

Markers

### ***Procedure***

The teacher and students will read the excerpt from the novel in which the Vogon commander reads his poetry to Arthur and Ford. The students will be asked to identify the characteristics of poetry, as well as all nonsense words used by the Vogon in his poem.

In groups and using Consensus Placemat (Kagan), the students will brainstorm all words they deem representative, distinctive, or otherwise pertinent from the novel, with which to rhyme other nonsensical words that they invent. For example, Vogon and Betelguise are words particular to this story, and students will be directed to list these and other words as they see fit.

Following the brainstorming activity, the students, on their own, will devise nonsense words that rhyme with the words chosen from their lists. They are to write an original poem on notebook paper that tells some aspect from the story, whether a summary of the novel thus far, or a character personal narrative entry (in which they are the character), etc. The students will be directed to incorporate characteristics of poetry into their poems and include nonsense words of their choosing. The teacher will emphasize that horrendous poetry will be rewarded, for their goal is to write bad poetry (and it should minimize any reservations the students might have concerning their poetry).

After revising and editing their poems, the students will write the final drafts on stationery using markers. The students will read theirs to their group members, who will then judge the poems on their merits for characteristics of poetry and originality. The winners of each group will read theirs aloud to the class, to be judged by both their peers and the teacher. All this is to be done in fun, and all students will be expected to be supportive of their fellow classmates.

### ***Assessment***

Each student's work will be judged for the characteristics of poetry and the effort displayed in their writing. The following is a presumptive grading scale of the work:

- A - Each work will exhibit the characteristics of poetry, most notably Rhythm, Rhyme, and Repetition. The work will be composed in a thoughtful and pertinent manner, and will be devoid of grammatical mistakes or mistakes in conventions.
- B - Each work will exhibit at least two of the characteristics of poetry, but is lacking an essential element of poetry in the poem. The work will be composed adequately, but will lack the creativity or pertinence of an A poem. Grammatical mistakes may be present.
- C - Each work will show significant poetic deficiencies and lack pertinent ties to the story. The method in which it is written will be commonplace and lack insight into the story or the characters. Problems in diction and grammar will also be evident.
- D - The work will be so poorly written that any comparison to poetry will be difficult to judge. The work will show misinformation or will not be relevant to any aspect of the story, and errors in grammar and conventions will make it difficult to understand.

### **Lesson Plan 3: A New World**

#### ***Overview***

In the novel, the earth is destroyed within the first few chapters. In this lesson, it is the assignment of the students to recreate the earth, with a few minor personal modifications. This lesson will emphasize visualization, which is necessary while reading. The student must also have prior knowledge of the geologic makeup of the earth, which the teacher will ensure prior to this lesson.

#### ***Objectives***

- The student will be able to listen effectively in a variety of settings for a variety of purposes,
- Interact effectively for a variety of purposes,
- Use higher order thinking skills to participate in academic discourse,
- Choose and adapt spoken and non-verbal language appropriate to the audience and purpose,
- Monitor and modify his/her own communication,
- Experiment with design and ideas with those of others, and
- Collaborate with other writers for specific purposes.

#### ***Materials***

Drawing or Construction Paper  
Pencils  
Markers and/or Map Colors

#### ***Procedure***

The teacher will explain to the students that the earth will be re-created, just as the mice are doing in the novel. However, the students' goal is to place their own personal spin on the re-creation of the earth, which will allow them to add their own unique geologic features to the newborn planet.

The students, already in groups, will discuss their ideas for the new earth. They must abide by the following rules that the teacher will dictate:

1. The students are not allowed to compare their works of their fellow group members by placing their quadrants side-by-side. Nor are they allowed to measure with any object. All measurements and comparisons between group members must be done by sight only.
2. Each group member can only draw on their piece of paper, i.e. they can only draw in their own quadrant.
3. Each new earth must have a similar geologic feature present in each "quadrant" of the new earth \*\* (This will be explained).

The students will be grouped in fours. Each student will be given drawing or construction paper on which to draw their quadrant of the new earth. When placed together, each quadrant will serve as a piece of the overall picture of the new earth. For example, envision any picture of the earth broken into four equal quadrants. When these four quadrants are placed together, they form the entire picture.

\*\* There will be, however, a unifying geologic feature between each quadrant. For example, each group member will draw a geologic feature that will continue onto another group member's quadrant. To make it easier, envision the group as a compass, with group members being Northwest, Northeast, Southeast, and Southwest. The following are the rules to be abided by:

1. Southwest Student must have a geologic feature in common with both Southeast student and Northwest student.
2. The Northwest student must have a geologic feature in common with both the Northeast student and the Southeast student.
3. The Southeast student must have a geologic feature in common with both the Southwest student and the Northeast student.
4. The Northeast student must have a geologic feature in common with both the Northwest student and Southeast student.

This ensures that each quadrant of the overall composition will be fluid in geologic relation to each other. In other words, the picture will look whole.

Upon completion, the students will color their version of the new earth and tape the quadrants together to create the whole. The compositions will be displayed around the room.

### ***Assessment***

Since I am not an art teacher, nor do I possess any artistic abilities whatsoever, the students will not be assessed on their artistic abilities. They will, however, be graded on their ability to incorporate the aforementioned characteristics into their new earth. They must abide by the rules of the lesson, and should include geologic features that continue onto other quadrants of the same composition. The students will be rewarded for creativity in respect to the geologic features created in the illustration. Each grade will be given as a group grade, without regard to the individual abilities of the students in the group.

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Works Cited

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- Pardeck, John T. "Using Literature to Help Adolescents Cope with Problems." *Adolescence* 29 (1994): 421-427.  
A journal article that discussed the effect of bibliotherapy on the adolescent mind.
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Explores the relationship between the student's progression through education and their subsequent motivation.
- Schunk, D.H., & Zimmerman, B.J. "Social Origins of Self-Regulatory Competence." *Educational Psychologist* 32 (1997): 195-208.  
Research that explores the link between motivation and educational competence.



## Supplemental Resources

Adams, Douglas. *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. In *The Ultimate Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. New York: Wings Books, 1996.

The source that is the basis for both the thematic representation and the literary criticism of the unit.

Asimov, Isaac. "Rain, Rain, Go Away." In *The Language of Literature*. Ed. Arthur Applebee, et al. Evanston, IL: McDougal Littell, 2001. 554-561.

This short story is resplendent with examples of science fiction elements.

Gaiman, Neil. *Don't Panic: Douglas Adams and The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. London: Titan Publishing Group, 2003

A literary criticism of Douglas Adams that examines the thematic effects of the book.

Giovanni, Nikki. "A Journey." *The Language of Literature*. Ed. Arthur Applebee, et al. Evanston, IL: McDougal Littell, 2001. 423.

A symbolic poem that compares the journey of the author to life.

Robinson, Frank M. *Science Fiction of the 20th Century*. New York: Collector's Press, Inc., 1999.

This literary criticism is an in-depth look at Douglas Adams' work.

Simpson, M. J. *The Pocket Essential Hitchhiker's Guide*. London: Trafalgar Square Press, 2001.

This work ponders the book as a metaphor for the journey of life.

Swenson, May. "Southbound on the Freeway." *The Language of Literature*. Ed. Arthur Applebee, et al. Evanston, IL: McDougal Littell, 2001. 588.

A poem about aliens that describe the relationship between people and their cars. A wonderful source for inference.

Whitman, Walt. "Song of Myself." In *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*. Ed. Paul Lauter. Lexington, MA: DC Heath and Company, 1990. 2759.

An excerpt of poetry to give thematic insight into the poetry genre.

## Discography

*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy Radio Show*. Douglas Adams. London: British Broadcasting Company Channel 4, 1978.

The original radio show which I hope to locate.