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Humanities

Beauty and the Beast OR Run for the Border

I. HUM 1020 (Humanities)  

Beauty and the Beast OR Run for the Border  

College Level  
- A week of class, consisting of one 50-minute class, one Saturday morning at Kendall Campus’ Environmental Center (one yoga class and two hours of service-learning), and one 50-minute class discussion

II. Goal: In this lesson, students will explore different creative writing forms while learning about the history, vanishing beauty and unique attributes of Pine Rockland. They will start by going with their gut and picking a theme to reflect on: either Beauty and the Beast OR Run for the Border. They won’t know ahead of time what this theme means. They will then divide into two groups, depending on what they chose. Then their writing assignment and service learning will extend from that.

III. Instructional Objectives: Students will:

1. learn about the different creative writing forms (sonnet, haiku, etc. from Ch. 6 on literature in the course textbook used for the humanities classes at Wolfson Campus: Perceiving the Arts: An Introduction to the Humanities, 10th edition by Dennis J. Sporre)
2. learn about the history of the Pine Rockland and why it is important by visiting the website of the Institute for Regional Conservation and reading this page in particular: http://regionalconservation.org/ircs/aboutus/PRI.asp
3. practice new ways for reflecting on a theme by taking a yoga class with Prof. Carlos González Morales
4. conduct service-learning by spending a Saturday morning removing invasive species at the Environmental Center at Kendall Campus
5. politely discuss different perspectives on the need for conservation vs. the need for an inviting campus that is “beautiful” (formal landscape vs. natural habitat)
6. write a creative piece entitled either “Beauty and the Beast” or “Run for the Border” based on some aspect of the week of classwork, homework and service-learning above (the yoga class, service learning, IRC reading, class discussion)
7. bring the creative writing piece to class. Pair with a student who wrote on the OPPOSITE theme. Discuss that
8. use the Harkness Method for a 20-minute group discussion of the week’s discoveries

IV. Content Outline:

1. What are some of the different creative writing forms? Scan the chapter and know how to distinguish a sonnet from a haiku and an essay from a short story
2. Be able to define what Pine Rockland is, where in the world it once existed and the few spots where it now remains, and why it is so unique (hint: limestone bed)

3. If you’ve never taken a yoga class before, jot down a list of three things you think you would like about it and three things you wouldn’t like. You won’t have to share this unless you want to, so be honest. If you have taken a yoga class, do the same quickly listing three things you like and three things you don’t about taking a yoga class

V. Instructional Strategies

Warm-up:
The first day of class for this three-session series will be the last class of the week, so the students can learn about the discussion topics and then attend the service-learning on Saturday, then write a short creative piece and bring it to the first class of the following week. On this first day for the Rockland series, students will be asked to pick one of the two topics as they enter the class: either “Beauty and the Beast” or “Run for the Border.” They will NOT have to think about this until Saturday, they will only have to remember their chosen topic (prof. to write it down so students commit. Goal is to have an equal number in each of the two groups, so the indecisive students will be lumped into the smaller group). Before this first class, they should scan Chapter Six in Perceiving the Arts: An Introduction to the Humanities, 10th edition by Dennis J. Sporre and also visit the website of the Institute for Regional Conservation, making sure they read this page in its entirety: http://regionalconservation.org/ircs/aboutus/PRI.asp

Activities Lesson 1:

1. The students take turns quickly defining the different literary forms on the whiteboard, from sonnet and haiku to essay and short story.
2. Students then on another whiteboard write in brainstorming fashion what they learned about the Pine Rocklands.

Homework: Review class notes on literary forms and the Pine Rockland history. Think for a minute about what could possibly be the meaning of having to pick between two topics without having a clue as to why.

Activities Lesson 2:

1. Students arrive at the Environmental Center for a one-hour yoga class followed by two hours of removing invasive plants species and planting native species.
2. Prof. Carlos González Morales teaches a yoga class, opening with the six-second hand-holding/eye-gazing exercise, then a bit of deep breathing while he tells the tale about how stories save us. Next, as students move through the postures, he briefly suggests ideas about “Beauty and the Beast” (i.e., beauty vs. ugliness of a posture, or how we perceive nature, sweat vs. AC, mosquitoes vs. smell of bug spray, etc.) and “Running for the Border” (avoiding a class assignment we might dread, a person who we find different and therefore assume we wouldn’t like, etc.).
3. Students work at the Environmental Center for two hours as Prof. Carlos González Morales talks about how some ugly plants attract the most beautiful of butterflies and
how some species “run for the border” (head to the fence far from the lawn mowers) in order to survive.

**Homework:**

- Write a creative piece on the theme you picked in the first class for this series and how that applies to your experience of the yoga and service-learning at the Environmental Center. So the title is either “Beauty and the Beast” or “Run for the Border.” If writer’s block hits, practice deep breathing and think back on your day outdoors at Kendall Campus. Be prepared to share this writing piece.

**Activities Lesson 3:**

1. As students come in, they pair up w/ someone who had the opposite theme from them and they share their writing. Students should taking five minutes in silence to read the piece and reflect before asking their partner about the work.
2. The class then conducts a Harkness Discussion, starting with the service-learning project and what they discovered there, then working backward to see how this experience affected their creative writing.

**Homework:**

- Read the following url about lawns [http://michaelpollan.com/articles-archive/why-mow-the-case-against-lawns/](http://michaelpollan.com/articles-archive/why-mow-the-case-against-lawns/) and think about what you would recommend to MDC administration if they were to ask a group of students about ways to beautify Kendall Campus. Would you persuade them to save the Pine Rocklands or plant a more formal garden with grass and hedges? Write down five specific points to defend your choice

VI. **Assessment:** Students will be graded as a group, according to the Harkness Discussion rules. As individuals, they will receive either a complete or an incomplete for turning in the writing sample and participating in the service learning.

VII. **Materials:**

1. Chapter Six on literature in *Perceiving the Arts: An Introduction to the Humanities*, 10th edition by Dennis J. Sporre
2. Website of the Institute for Regional Conservation, reading in full detail this particular page: [http://regionalconservation.org/ircs/aboutus/PRI.asp](http://regionalconservation.org/ircs/aboutus/PRI.asp)

VIII. **Miami Dade College General Education Outcomes:**

- **Outcome #1:** Communicate effectively using listening, speaking, reading and writing skills
- **Outcome #4:** Formulate strategies to locate, evaluate and apply information
- **Outcome #5:** Demonstrate knowledge of diverse cultures, including global and historical perspectives
- **Outcome #10:** Describe how natural systems function and recognize the impact of
hums on the environment

HUM 1020 Course Competencies:

**Competency 1:** The Student will demonstrate knowledge of the Humanities by:
a. Identifying perspectives, views and content of the Humanities in terms of literature
b. Relating those issues to specific art works (a poem on flowers, an essay on lawns, such as Michael Pollan’s)
c. Recognizing the various forms that comprise the discipline