

“A Visit of Charity”: Integrating Technology to Understand the Elements of a Short Story

*adapted from a lesson plan found at <http://edsitement.neh.gov>

Grade Level: Middle School (grades 6-8)

Objectives:

- * To understand the elements of a short story (theme, plot, characterization, setting).
- To introduce students to Eudora Welty's short stories.
- To read and analyze “A Visit of Charity.”
- To integrate technology into the Language Arts curriculum.
- To appreciate how visual representations enhance the written text.
- To engage in a creative hands-on project.
- To work collaboratively in small groups.
- To integrate art into the Language Arts curriculum.

Activities for teaching:

- Introduce Eudora Welty and her love of word play as well as the correlation of words and images by having students play one of Welty's favorite word games. Tear pictures that include people or animals out of old magazines and have students add bubble dialog to begin a story.
- Have the class read “A Visit of Charity” individually. Re-read sections together.
- Discuss the story, with a focus on uncovering the theme of people's selfishness and insensitivity to the elderly. Discuss their experiences with their grandparents and other elderly. Discuss the notion of charity and what that means. Uncover the hints about setting in the story. How are the characters described? How is Marian's being scared shown? What can we say to describe Marian physically and emotionally? How does the plot develop? Help the students keep the theme in mind.
- Model an example. As a whole class, map out a story board on the board.
- With the assistance of the Tech Integrator, show students the Comic Life application on the ibooks. (If computers are not available, students can make comic strips by hand, with the help of the art teacher.)
- Ask students to work in groups of three, with one student responsible for setting, one for characters, and one for plot development.
- Each group will complete a Comic Life presentation of the story “A Visit of Charity.”

Assessment:

- Students will share their work with the class.
- Students explain to the class how their work shows setting, plot development, and characterization, referring to the text to defend what they have created.