



**Literacy Design
Collaborative**

Existentialism and Kafka

by Sherri McPherson

Students will conduct research on the existentialist movement in literature. Students will read Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* and determine if Kafka's work reflects existential ideas.

GRADES

10

DISCIPLINE

 **ELA**

COURSE

 **English II**

Section 1: What Task?

Teaching Task

Task Template 11 - Informational or Explanatory

After researching essays and articles on existentialism, write essay in which you define existentialism and explain its impact on Franz Kafka's work "The Metamorphosis". Support your discussion with evidence from your research.

D 3

What conclusions can you draw?

D 8

Include in text citations and a works cited page .

Common Core State Standards

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading

CCR.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCR.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCR.R.4

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

CCR.R.10

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing

CCR.W.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCR.W.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCR.W.5

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

CCR.W.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCR.W.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Additional Standards

No standards selected


Texts

 Franz Kafka's "The Metamorphosis"


Found online or in several anthologies or textbooks.

 Student-selected texts regarding existentialism, Kafka, and "The Metamorphosis"


Students can use various academic search engines to find the articles.

 Good Reasons Contemporary Arguments: Chapter 3 Definition Arguments 5th edition Lester Faigley, Jack Selzer

Student Resource

 "Organizing Research". Research Skills for Students Series. Dir. Erik Freeland. Schlessinger Media, 2004. DVD.

Teacher Resource

 "Evaluating Sources". Research Skills for Students Series. Dir. Erik Freeland. Schlessinger Media, 2004. DVD.

Teacher Resource

 50 Essential Lessons by Jim Burke

Teacher Resource

LDC Student Work Rubric - Informational or Explanatory

	Not Yet	Approaches Expectations	Meets Expectations	Advanced
	1	2	3	4
Focus	Attempts to address prompt, but lacks focus or is off-task.	Addresses prompt appropriately, but with a weak or uneven focus.	Addresses prompt appropriately and maintains a clear, steady focus. D: Addresses additional demands sufficiently.	Addresses all aspects of prompt appropriately and maintains a strongly developed focus. D: Addresses additional demands with thoroughness and makes a connection to controlling idea.
Controlling Idea	Attempts to establish a claim, but lacks a clear purpose.	Establishes a controlling idea with a general purpose.	Establishes a controlling idea with a clear purpose maintained throughout the response.	Establishes a strong controlling idea with a clear purpose maintained throughout the response.
Reading/Research	Attempts to present information in response to the prompt, but lacks connections or relevance to the purpose of the prompt.	Presents information from reading materials relevant to the purpose of the prompt with minor lapses in accuracy or completeness.	Presents information from reading materials relevant to the prompt with accuracy and sufficient detail.	Accurately presents information relevant to all parts of the prompt with effective selection of sources and details from reading materials.
Development	Attempts to provide details in response to the prompt, including retelling, but lacks sufficient development or relevancy.	Presents appropriate details to support the focus and controlling idea.	Presents appropriate and sufficient details to support the focus and controlling idea.	Presents thorough and detailed information to strongly support the focus and controlling idea.
Organization	Attempts to organize ideas, but lacks control of structure.	Uses an appropriate organizational structure to address the specific requirements of the prompt, with some lapses in coherence or awkward use of the organizational structure.	Maintains an appropriate organizational structure to address the specific requirements of the prompt.	Maintains an organizational structure that intentionally and effectively enhances the presentation of information as required by the specific prompt.
Conventions	Attempts to demonstrate standard English conventions, but lacks cohesion and control of grammar, usage, and mechanics. Sources are used without citation.	Demonstrates an uneven command of standard English conventions and cohesion. Uses language and tone with some inaccurate, inappropriate, or uneven features. Inconsistently cites sources.	Demonstrates a command of standard English conventions and cohesion, with few errors. Response includes language and tone appropriate to the audience, purpose, and specific requirements of the prompt. Cites sources using an appropriate format with only minor errors.	Demonstrates and maintains a well-developed command of standard English conventions and cohesion, with few errors. Response includes language and tone consistently appropriate to the audience, purpose, and specific requirements of the prompt. Consistently cites sources using an appropriate format.
Content Understanding	Attempts to include disciplinary content in explanations, but understanding of content is weak; content is irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate.	Briefly notes disciplinary content relevant to the prompt; shows basic or uneven understanding of content; minor errors in explanation.	Accurately presents disciplinary content relevant to the prompt with sufficient explanations that demonstrate understanding.	Integrates relevant and accurate disciplinary content with thorough explanations that demonstrate in-depth understanding.

Background for Students

Background Quote:

"Take it moment by moment, and you will find that we are all, as I've said before, bugs in amber."

—Kurt Vonnegut

Existentialism is a philosophical and cultural movement that believes the beginning of philosophical thinking lies with the individual and the experiences of the individual. Existential thought continues to influence philosophy, literature and the arts today.

Extension

Students will create a visual presentation of their paper using a digital media tool such as Prezi or Popplet.

Section 2: What Skills?

Preparing for the Task

BRIDGING CONVERSATION > TASK ENGAGEMENT: Ability to connect the task and new content to existing knowledge, skills, experiences, interests, and concerns.

TASK AND RUBRIC ANALYSIS > TASK ANALYSIS: Ability to understand and explain the task's prompt and rubric.

Reading Process

TEXT SELECTION: Ability to identify appropriate texts.

ACTIVE READING : Ability to identify the central point and main supporting elements of a text and ability to summarize key supporting details and ideas in a text.

ESSENTIAL VOCABULARY: Ability to identify and master terms essential to understanding a text.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Ability to use and credit sources appropriately.

NOTE-TAKING : Ability to select important facts and passages for use in one's own writing.

ORGANIZING RESEARCH: Ability to organize research logically and effectively for purpose of task.

Transition to Writing

BRIDGING: Ability to begin linking reading results to writing task.

Writing Process

INITIATION OF TASK > ESTABLISHING THE CONTROLLING IDEA: Ability to establish a claim and consolidate information relevant to task.

PLANNING > PLANNING THE WRITING: Ability to develop a line of thought and text structure appropriate to an informational/explanatory task.

DEVELOPMENT: Ability to define existentialism and its related sub-topics and ability to construct an initial draft with an emerging line of thought and structure.

DOCUMENTATION: Ability to integrate information without plagiarizing.

REVISION: Ability to refine text, including line of thought, language usage, and tone as appropriate to audience and purpose.

EDITING: Ability to proofread someone's work and offer helpful suggestions and ability to proofread and format a piece to make it more effective

COMPLETION: Ability to submit final piece that meets expectations.

Section 3: What Instruction?

PACING	SKILL AND DEFINITION	PRODUCT AND PROMPT	SCORING GUIDE	INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
Preparing for the Task				
15 mins	BRIDGING CONVERSATION > TASK ENGAGEMENT: Ability to connect the task and new content to existing knowledge, skills, experiences, interests, and concerns.	SHORT RESPONSE WITH BULLETS <i>In a quick write, write your first reaction to the task prompt. Add some notes of things you know about this issue.</i>	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link this task to earlier class content. • Discuss student responses. • Clarify timetable and support plans for the task
15 mins	TASK AND RUBRIC ANALYSIS > TASK ANALYSIS: Ability to understand and explain the task's prompt and rubric.	BULLETS <i>In your own words, what are the important features of a good response to this prompt?</i>	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share examples of type of text students will produce (either from past students or from professional writers). • Identify or invite students to identify key features of examples. • Pair students to share and improve their individual bullets. • Create a classroom list: Choose one student to share a few ideas on the board, and ask others to add to it.
Reading Process				
50 mins	TEXT SELECTION: Ability to identify appropriate texts.	NOTES <i>For each text, list the needed bibliographic information. Add bullets on why you think the work is credible and/or worthy of study</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies author, title, publisher, date, and any other needed information (for example, the volume for a periodical or the editor for an anthology). • Includes reasonable evidence that work is credible and/or worthy of study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide citation guide and discuss why each element of citation is needed. • View and discuss Evaluating Sources DVD (Schlessinger Media) • Collaborate with Librarians to provide access to research sources.
45 mins	ACTIVE READING : Ability to identify the central point and main supporting elements of a text and ability to summarize key supporting details and ideas in a text.	REFLECTIVE ENTRY <i>What is the author trying to accomplish? Which parts of the text show you that?</i> <i>Annotate each text using Purpose Questions (PQ):</i> <i>What is existentialism?</i> <i>How is/is not existential thought portrayed in Kafka's Metamorphosis?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers questions with credible response. • Includes reasonable evidence through annotations to respond to the purpose question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite students to brainstorm ways to figure out any author's intent. • Invite students to share and discuss their answers for each text. • After the discussion, allow them to add to their entries.

PACING	SKILL AND DEFINITION	PRODUCT AND PROMPT	SCORING GUIDE	INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
45 mins	ACTIVE READING : Ability to identify the central point and main supporting elements of a text and ability to summarize key supporting details and ideas in a text.	SUMMARY NOTES <i>For each text, create a summary using the Summary Notes format</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides thorough summary of text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a model summary response. Provide and teach Burke's Summary Notes template Have students work in pairs to create a summary for one of the texts before students begin to work on this individually.
Not provided	ESSENTIAL VOCABULARY : Ability to identify and master terms essential to understanding a text.	VOCABULARY LIST <i>In your notebook, list words and phrases essential to the texts. Add definitions, and (if appropriate) notes on connotation in this context.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lists appropriate phrases. Provides accurate definitions. 	<p>**This will be on-going throughout the reading process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After scoring, ask some students to share definitions of terms that others overlooked or misunderstood. After scoring, be willing to provide direct instruction or guide a close reading if needed to work through a key phrase most students missed.
15 mins	ACADEMIC INTEGRITY : Ability to use and credit sources appropriately.	DEFINITION AND STRATEGIES <i>Discuss "plagiarism" and list ways to avoid it</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides accurate definition of plagiarism. Lists several appropriate strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss respect for others' work to assemble evidence and create texts. Discuss academic penalties for stealing others thoughts and words.
20 mins	NOTE-TAKING : Ability to select important facts and passages for use in one's own writing.	NOTES <i>From each text, make a list of the elements that look most important for answering the prompt. Do what you need to do to avoid plagiarism.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies relevant elements. Includes information to support accurate citation (for example, page numbers for a long text, clear indication when quoting directly). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach Cornell Notes for note taking. Check that early student work is in the assigned format (or in another format that gathers the needed information effectively).
30 mins	ORGANIZING RESEARCH : Ability to organize research logically and effectively for purpose of task.	NOTES <i>For each text, record useful quotes, summaries, or paraphrases to complete the task.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes research systematically (electronic or print) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> View and discuss Organizing Research DVD Introduce various note-taking systems (note cards, electronic files, NoodleBib)
Additional Attachments:				
🔗 Link to create a paid subscription for NoodleBib				
Transition to Writing				

PACING	SKILL AND DEFINITION	PRODUCT AND PROMPT	SCORING GUIDE	INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
25 mins	BRIDGING: Ability to begin linking reading results to writing task.	QUICK WRITE AND "MY THOUGHTS THEIR THOUGHTS" ORGANIZER <i>My Thoughts Their Thoughts Organizer</i> <i>In a quick write, write about what you know now that you've read about existentialism).</i> <i>Form a group and discuss your findings.</i> <i>Use the "My Thoughts Their Thoughts" Graphic organizer to record your group's discussion.</i>	No scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small group discussion using question. Use "My Thoughts Their Thoughts" organizer
Writing Process				
45 mins	INITIATION OF TASK > ESTABLISHING THE CONTROLLING IDEA: Ability to establish a claim and consolidate information relevant to task.	CONTROLLING IDEA, THESIS STATEMENT ORGANIZER AND OPENING PARAGRAPH <i>Write an opening paragraph that includes a controlling idea and sequences the key points you plan to make in your composition</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides direct answer to main prompt requirements. Establishes a controlling idea. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use "Creating a Thesis Statement for Definition paper" organizer Creating A Thesis Statement Organizer Review the list that students created earlier to identify needed elements (from Cluster 1, skill 2).
45 mins	PLANNING > PLANNING THE WRITING: Ability to develop a line of thought and text structure appropriate to an informational/explanatory task.	OUTLINE/ORGANIZER <i>Create an outline based on your notes and reading in which you state your claim, sequence your points, and note your supporting evidence.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a topic outline Supports controlling idea. Uses evidence from texts read earlier. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide and teach one or more examples of outlines or organizers. Provide a "Topic Outline Organizer" for students to use Topic Outline
25 mins	DEVELOPMENT: Ability to define existentialism and its related sub-topics and ability to construct an initial draft with an emerging line of thought and structure.	PRE-WRITING ACTIVITY <i>Explore various meanings and associations with "existentialism" by completing the Pre-Writing Activity</i> Pre-Writing Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a personal definition of "existentialism" Respond to Pre-Writing activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide "Existentialism Pre-Writing" activity
1 hr	DEVELOPMENT: Ability to define existentialism and its related sub-topics and ability to construct an initial draft with an emerging line of thought and structure.	INITIAL DRAFT <i>Write an initial draft complete with opening, development, and closing; insert and cite textual evidence.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides complete draft with all parts. Supports the opening in the later sections with evidence and citations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage students to re-read prompt partway through writing, to check that they are on-track.

PACING	SKILL AND DEFINITION	PRODUCT AND PROMPT	SCORING GUIDE	INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
25 mins	DOCUMENTATION: Ability to integrate information without plagiarizing.	IN-TEXT CITATIONS AND WORKS CITED PAGE <i>Incorporate sources within text of paper without plagiarizing. Write a Works Cited page.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses in-text citations correctly • Drafts an accurate Works Cited page. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer examples of papers documenting sources correctly. • Offer examples of Works Cited pages. • Refer students to MLA resources.
1 hr	REVISION: Ability to refine text, including line of thought, language usage, and tone as appropriate to audience and purpose.	MULTIPLE DRAFTS <i>Refine composition's analysis, logic, and organization of ideas/points. Use textual evidence carefully, with accurate citations. Decide what to include and what not to include.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides complete draft with all parts. • Supports the opening in the later sections with evidence and citations. • Improves earlier edition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model useful feedback that balances support for strengths and clarity about weaknesses. • Assign students to provide each other with feedback on those issues. • Peer writing partners can grade each other using LDC Explanatory Rubric and offer suggestions for improvement. • Students will write multiple drafts as needed to improve upon earlier editions.
35 mins	EDITING: Ability to proofread someone's work and offer helpful suggestions and ability to proofread and format a piece to make it more effective	PEER EDITING <i>Read a classmate's draft for grammar, mechanics and usage errors.</i>	<i>Provides useful feedback for peer review.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss peer editing ethics. • Provide "Peer Edit Exercise" handout to guide students through process of peer reviewing.
35 mins	EDITING: Ability to proofread someone's work and offer helpful suggestions and ability to proofread and format a piece to make it more effective	CORRECTED DRAFT <i>Revise draft to have sound spelling, capitalization, punctuation and grammar. Adjust formatting as needed to provide clear, appealing text.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides draft free from distracting surface errors. • Uses format that supports purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefly review selected skills that many students need to improve. • Teach a short list of proofreading marks. • Assign students to proofread each other's texts a second time.
5 mins	COMPLETION: Ability to submit final piece that meets expectations.	FINAL PIECE <i>Turn in your complete set of drafts, plus the final version of your piece.</i>	<i>Fits the "Meets Expectations" category in the rubric for the teaching task.</i>	Not Provided

Instructional Resources

No resources specified

Section 4: What Results?

Student Work Samples

No resources specified

Teacher Reflection

For this module, I wanted students to find sources to use in the essay. I did not provide any sources except for the literary text of *The Metamorphosis*. As a result, I spent some time teaching students how to evaluate a source and how to organize their research. Further, students needed to have a good working definition of existentialism before tackling the writing task, so it was important for them to sift through multiple sources before responding to the writing task.