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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
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The Big Con: Tricking the High School Student into Writing a Research Paper

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This curriculum unit explores the teaching of the research paper by using trickster literature. It is geared towards students who have found the research paper challenging or have had yet to complete one. Each step of the research process is broken down for the students. High school students will research the various tricksters from different cultures and will explore the relevance of the trickster mythology to the culture in question. Students will also read a piece of literature outside of class and will identify the trickster(s) in the work as well as the role that the character plays in the work. They will also identify the author's reason for using that character. This unit contains instructions for teaching the research paper on the high school level and contains strategies that work no matter what the topic is. A sample library lesson and classroom activities are included.

(Developed for World Literature, grade 12; recommended for Language Arts, grades 9-12)

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