



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2009 Volume III: Shakespeare and Human Character

King Lear, Part II--It's All About the Play

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by Janelle A. Price

In this unit, middle school students will use a myriad of scaffolding activities to read Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of King Lear* and write a one-act sequel using plausible plot threads from the play. To aid in teaching this unit, numerous strategies and methods are included such as: basic understanding of the play, its history of being rewritten and Shakespeare's original work not being seen by audiences for almost 150 years, comparisons between Shakespeare's and the rewritten version, Freytag pyramid analysis, discussion of themes, motifs, and symbols, Aristotle's definition of tragedy from the Poetics as it applies to the play, the influence of the Great Chain of Being, rhetorical and blocking exercises, playwriting tips, differentiation cues, and suggested activities to further aid in student comprehension and playwriting.

(Developed for Communications, grades 6-8; recommended for Creative Writing, grades 6-12, Communications, grades 6-8, and English I-IV, grades 9-12)

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