



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2013 Volume II: Interpreting Texts, Making Meaning: Starting Small

Pathways to Making Meaning: Inroads to Interpretation of The Nature of Evil in Heart of Darkness

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This unit is centered on study of the novella *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad. It begins with the use of more accessible, thematically related texts to introduce elements of the story and model the process of interpretation before applying that process to the novella. Throughout the unit the focus is on incorporating strategies that make interpretation of this challenging and rich text more accessible to and relevant for students.

One of the major themes in the book is the nature of evil. Students will engage in conversation and discussion of such essential questions throughout the unit as they interpret the work and express their understandings of and conclusions about this theme and how it is revealed in the book. Students will complete activities that enable them to make connections to the book and support their opinions with evidence from the text.

This unit was created for students taking 11th grade Advanced Placement Language and Composition, but it would be well suited for any 11th or 12th grade World Literature or British Literature class.

(Developed for AP English Language and Composition, grade 11; recommended for World Literature, AP Language and Composition, AP Literature and Composition, and British Literature, grades 11-12)

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