

The Witching World of Word Choice

The Crucible: Rhetorical Situation

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Published by *K20 Center*

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Grade Level	11th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	240 Minutes
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	4-5 Periods
Course	A.P. Language and Composition		

Essential Question

How does word choice impact the rhetorical situation?

Summary

Students study excerpts from "The Crucible" to help them understand the impact of diction on tone and the rhetorical situation. Students also work to extend their understanding of the connectedness of the rhetorical situation and write a CER-ER paragraph analyzing how the author's diction works to achieve their purpose.

Snapshot

Engage

Students complete a Card Sort to organize quotes from "The Crucible."

Explore

Students read through AI-generated text conversations, annotating rhetorical situations.

Explain

Students read and annotate a modernized scene from "The Crucible" side-by-side with the same original scene noting rhetorical differences using SPACECAT.

Extend

Students write text conversations between two characters from "The Crucible," given a random description for tone and purpose selected using a die and randomizer chart.

Evaluate

Students write a formal CER-ER paragraph analyzing Arthur Miller's style of writing in "The Crucible."

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 12)

12.3.W.3: Compose argumentative essays, reviews, or op-eds that:
- introduce precise, informed claims
- include a defensible thesis
- acknowledge counterclaims or alternate perspectives
- organize claims, counterclaims, and evidence in a logical sequence
- provide the most relevant evidence to develop balanced arguments, using credible sources
- use sentence variety and word choice to create clarity and concision
- use style and tone that suits the audience and purpose

Attachments

- CERER—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.docx
- CERER—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.pdf
- CERER—The Witching World of Word Choice.docx
- CERER—The Witching World of Word Choice.pdf
- Card Sort—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.docx
- Card Sort—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.pdf
- Card Sort—The Witching World of Word Choice.docx
- Card Sort—The Witching World of Word Choice.pdf
- Lesson Slides—The Witching World of Word Choice.pptx
- Random Text Conversation—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.docx
- Random Text Conversation—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.pdf
- Random Text Conversation—The Witching World of Word Choice.docx
- Random Text Conversation—The Witching World of Word Choice.pdf
- Rhetorical Situation Randomizer—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.docx
- Rhetorical Situation Randomizer—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.pdf
- Rhetorical Situation Randomizer—The Witching World of Word Choice.docx
- Rhetorical Situation Randomizer—The Witching World of Word Choice.pdf
- SPACECAT (Sample Response)—The Witching World of Word Choice.docx
- SPACECAT (Sample Response)—The Witching World of Word Choice.pdf
- SPACECAT—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.docx
- SPACECAT—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.pdf
- SPACECAT—The Witching World of Word Choice.docx
- SPACECAT—The Witching World of Word Choice.pdf
- Text Conversation (Sample Response)—The Witching World of Word Choice.docx
- Text Conversation (Sample Response)—The Witching World of Word Choice.pdf
- Truth Be Told (Sample Responses)—The Witching World of Word Choice.pdf
- Truth Be Told (Sample Responses)—The Witching World of Word Choice.pdf.docx
- Truth Be Told—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.docx
- Truth Be Told—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.pdf
- Truth Be Told—The Witching World of Word Choice.docx
- Truth Be Told—The Witching World of Word Choice.pdf
- Words of Worry and Warning—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.docx
- Words of Worry and Warning—The Witching World of Word Choice - Spanish.pdf
- Words of Worry and Warning—The Witching World of Word Choice.docx
- Words of Worry and Warning—The Witching World of Word Choice.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)

- Card Sort (attached; one per group)
- Truth Be Told (attached; one per student)
- CER-ER (attached; one per student)
- SPACECAT (attached; one per student)
- Words of Worry and Warning (attached; one per student)
- Random Text Conversation (attached; one per student)
- Dice (one per student) or Digital Google Die: https://g.co/kgs/LNWuupr
- Highlighters (Optional)

30 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note: Preparing for the Lesson

Before the lesson, print and cut out the Card Sort cards. Keep them organized in sets using envelopes or paper clips.

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to facilitate the lesson. Display **slides 2-3** to introduce the essential question and the learning objectives.

Display **slide 4** and break the class up into groups of 4-5 students. Introduce the Card Sort strategy and pass out one set of the attached **Card Sort** handouts to each small group. Let students know that there are eight category cards, and the rest are quotes from the first two scenes in "The Crucible." Ask students to place each quote under one of the category cards. Inform students that some of the quotes might seem to fit into more than one category; however, they must choose only one. Give students about five minutes to sort the cards.

If time permits, select some of the groups to share where they placed some of the quotes. Invite them to explain why they organized their cards as they did.

Tell students there are no "correct" answers for this. They need to be able to explain their choices.

30 minutes

Explore

Teacher's Note: Preparing for the Lesson

Review the attached Truth Be Told (Sample Responses) to generate ideas for the discussion beforehand.

Display **slide 5**. Pass out copies of the attached **Truth be Told** handout. Ask half the class to read "Conversation 1: Reality Check" and the other half to read "Conversation 2: Actions Have Consequences."

Inform students that they will be reading the conversations twice. Have students read the passage individually and highlight or underline anything that stands out as important to them. Next, ask students to read the passage a second time. As they read the second time, ask them to take notes in the margins or in the notes section of the hanout about word choice and how it relates to the rhetorical situation. Remind them to consider: Who is the speaker? Who is the audience? What is the context? What is the purpose? What is the message being conveyed?

When students have finished, ask for a few students to share some of the things they highlighted and to share an explanation of why they organized their responses as they did. Then, take those answers and lead them to connect to the rhetorical situation and how/why. Lead a discussion, prompting students with the following questions:

- What specific words or phrases did you highlight? Why did those stand out to you? How do they contribute to the speaker's tone or attitude?
- How does the speaker's word choice help establish their credibility or authority with the audience?
- How do the words and phrases the speakers use appeal to the emotions or values of the audience? What effect do you think the speaker intended?
- In what ways do the context and purpose of the piece influence the speaker's language choices?
- What is the speaker's primary message and how does their choice of words reinforce or clarify that message for the audience?

60 minutes

Explain

Teacher's Note: Preparing for the Lesson

Review the **SPACECAT (Sample Response)** attachment to generate ideas for the discussion beforehand.

Display **slide 6** and pass out the attached **SPACECAT** and **Words of Worry and Warning** handouts, one of each per student. Instruct students to read both passages and find phrases or sentences for each letter of the SPACECAT strategy.

Describe each component that students will be looking for:

- Speaker: Who is the speaker of the text?
- Purpose: What is the speaker hoping to accomplish?
- Audience: Who is the speaker trying to reach?
- Context: What is the time and place of this piece?
- Exigence: What was the catalyst that moved the speaker to act?
- Choices: What are the rhetorical choices the speaker makes in the text?
- Appeals: How did the creator intend to appeal to the audience (ethos, pathos, logos)?
- Tone: What is the speaker's attitude toward the subject?

When students have finished, lead a discussion about rhetorical situations by asking students the following questions:

- Which rhetorical device do you feel was used most often or most effectively?
- Which was the hardest to find a quote for?
- How does word choice affect the modern version?
    - Are the dynamics of the group of girls the same? Different?
    - Do both capture a sense of urgency?
    - Are the overall themes similar?

60 minutes

Extend

Teacher's Note: Preparing for the Lesson

Review the **Text Conversation (Sample Response)** attachment to generate ideas to assist in writing the text conversation.

Display **slide 7** and pass out the attached **Random Text Conversation** handout and one die per student. Explain to students that they will roll the die four separate times. With each roll, they should use the **Rhetorical Situation Randomizer** chart on slide 7 to establish the context for their writing. The first and second roll will indicate which two characters will be having a conversation. The third roll will determine the tone for the conversation, and the fourth roll will establish a purpose for the conversation. Prompt students to write these selections in the table at the top of their handout.

After randomly selecting these four components, students will write a text-based conversation in the bubbles of their handout using that information to guide the conversation.

Optional Handouts

You may choose to provide each student with their own copy of the Rhetorical Situation Randomizer handout in addition to displaying the slide.

60 minutes

Evaluate

Display **slide 8**. Explain to students that they will be using an analytical lens on Miller's work through a CER-ER paragraph.

Provide each student a copy of the attached **CER-ER** handout and explain the modified version of the Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER) strategy to make a claim with two examples of evidence and reasoning from the text. Students will use the handout to organize their ideas before writing a paragraph focusing on the writing style of Arthur Miller in “The Crucible.”

Encourage students to look back at their SPACECAT handout to guide their thinking.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Card sort. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/147
- K20 Center. (n.d.) SPACECAT. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/4264
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Claim, evidence, reasoning (CER). Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/156
- Open AI. (2024). *ChatGPT* (September version). [Large language model]. ChatGPT.https://chat.openai.com/chat