Text and Context: Using Primary Resources from the American Memory Collections and other Internet Resources for Literary Criticism

Program: Grade Range: Graduate English Majors
Subject: Criticism of American and British Literature
Topic: Researching and Teaching on American and British Literary Works
Profile: Professional Preparation
Duration: Six weeks
Purpose: To ensure that graduate English students can identify primary, particularly in The American Memory Collections, and secondary resources on the Internet and incorporate those resources into their teaching of middle school, high school or undergraduate students about not only the literary text but the context in which the literature was written and to assist their students in positioning their own interpretations within the broader scholarly world of literary criticism.

Student Learning Outcomes:
1. Identify and analyze primary and secondary resources in the Library of Congress’s American Memory Collections.
2. Effectively search the Library of Congress Web site, especially the American Memory Collections, for primary resources related to American and British literature.
3. Use the library’s citation and full text databases and Internet subject directories to identify additional primary and secondary resources related to American and British literature.
4. Interpret and analyze primary and secondary resources to develop a Web site for teaching about the text and context of one piece of American or British literature. Develop and include lessons plans for using the Web site to teach middle school, high school or undergraduate students.
5. Cite primary and secondary resources using MLA Style and the Adventure of the American Mind primary sources format.
6. Use effective group strategies to develop the Web site and give a multimedia presentation on the Text and Context project.

Standards:

National Educational Technology (NETS) Standards for Teachers

I. TECHNOLOGY OPERATIONS AND CONCEPTS

Teachers demonstrate a sound understanding of technology operations and concepts. Teachers:

A. demonstrate introductory knowledge, skills, and understanding of concepts related to technology.
II. PLANNING AND DESIGNING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND EXPERIENCES

Teachers plan and design effective learning environments and experiences supported by technology. Teachers:

A. design developmentally appropriate learning opportunities that apply technology-enhanced instructional strategies to support the diverse needs of learners.

E. plan strategies to manage student learning in a technology-enhanced environment.

III. TEACHING, LEARNING AND THE CURRICULUM

Teachers implement curriculum plans that include methods and strategies for applying technology to maximize student learning. Teachers:

B. use technology to support learner-centered strategies that address the diverse needs of students.

C. apply technology to develop students’ higher-order skills and creativity.

VI. SOCIAL, ETHICAL, LEGAL, AND HUMAN ISSUES

Teachers understand the social, ethical, legal, and human issues surrounding the use of technology in PK-12 schools and apply that understanding in practices. Teachers:

A. model and teach legal and ethical practice related to technology use.

NETS English Language Arts Standards

1. Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, and aesthetic) of human experience.

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, and graphical).

8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, and video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Activities:

Students will:

1. differentiate primary and secondary resources, and identify and analyze primary resources in the American Memory Collections using “Looking into Holidays Past: Through Primary Sources.”

2. develop effective search strategies of Library of Congress Web site to identify primary sources related to American and British literature using the materials provided on the Library of Congress site and an in-class demonstration.
3. Divide into groups of two or three and search the American Memory Collections for a literary text and author with at least five related primary sources. Once a text and author are decided upon, they will identify, examine, interpret and analyze the related primary and secondary sources found on the Library of Congress Web site.

4. Using literary subject directories on the Internet, identify, interpret and analyze additional primary and secondary resources related to the context of their literary text in the areas of the author, the text, the place, and the literary and other thematic contexts, including literary criticism.

5. Develop a Web site for the purpose of teaching on the theme of Text and Context using the primary and secondary resources found in searching the American Memory Collections and other Internet sites. They will include at least five primary sources from the American Memory Collections, an online version of the literary text, other appropriate primary and secondary digital resources related to the context of their literary text in the areas of the author, the text, the place, and the literary and other thematic contexts, a List of Works Cited using MLA Style and an Adventure of the American Mind Primary Sources table on the Web site. All primary sources used on the Web site will be linked back to their original collection.

6. Develop lessons plans for using the Web site to teach on the text and context theme of the chosen literary work to middle school, high school or undergraduate students. Each group member will choose a different audience. The lessons plans will be included on the Web site. The Web site will be published on the Governors State University Adventure of the American Mind site – http://aam.govst.edu.

7. Develop and give a 20-minute group presentation using PowerPoint and their Text and Context Web site on their Web site and lessons plans.

Evaluation:

Students will be evaluated on their Web site, lesson plans and group presentations.

1. The Web site will be evaluated on implementation of best practices in web design, appropriateness and diversity of primary and secondary sources used, use of MLA Style, use of Adventure of the American Mind Primary Resource, and written expression in concise, grammatically correct prose.

2. The lessons plans will be evaluated on the appropriateness of student learning outcomes, standards, activities and evaluation for the chosen audience, and written expression in concise, grammatically correct prose.

2. Group presentations will be graded on the linked rubric.