

THE COTERIE

no small characters.

CREATIVE WRITING LESSON PLAN

Created for use in your classroom after seeing

Brainstorm: Inside the Teenage Brain with The Coterie

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Common Core Reading Standard for Literacy in History/Social Studies:

CCR Anchor Standard 3: Analyze in detail a series of events; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

Student Objectives:

1. Students will be able to write their own monologues, inspired by *Brainstorm*.
2. Students will be able to use personal experiences to describe their point of brain development.
3. Students will be able to cite evidence to defend reasoning behind choices.

Assessments:

- Post- share Q&A: Students will share and discuss their creative writing choices with evidence from the *Brainstorm* and personal experiences.

Lesson:

Introduction

- *Review Brain Science (5 minutes):*
 - *Sprouting:* the act of the teenage brain making many connections, making it easier to learn new things
 - *Pruning:* the act of losing connections that are underused, an action taken as a brain enters the adult phase of development
 - *Pre-Frontal Cortex:* the part of the brain that controls planning and consequences, is often overrun by the limbic system
 - *Limbic System:* the reward center, the part of the brain that makes you want to have fun
- *Group Discussion (5-10 minutes):* Have them discuss their reactions to each of the terms used. How did they show that in the performance? How do you see that in your life?

Building Activities

- *Brainstorming (10-15 minutes):* Ask students to write down or draw their answers to some of the prompt questions that we used in our research for the play:

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- Ask students to grab an object near them of a certain color (i.e. yellow, blue, red, etc.). Next, ask the students to find an object that reminds them of someone they love? Next, ask the students to grab their most special object. After each prompt we will ask for a few volunteers to answer some questions about their object. Why is it near you? What does it mean to you? What is your opinion of this object? If it could talk to you, what would it say?
 - Think about your room. What is in it? How have you personalized it? What makes it feel like home? Take four minutes and draw your room or describe it. Think about objects that are important to you, how the room makes you feel, things you like about it, and things you dislike about it. Now take four minutes to draw your dream room or describe it. What would be in it?
What are the differences between your room and your dream room? What are the similarities?
 - What do adults not understand about being a teenager?
 - What is the best thing about being a teenager?
 - How is your household different from your friends' households?
 - *Teacher Note: The idea is to stimulate thought. Even if ideas given seem way off track, it is still stimulating thoughts.*
- Writing Monologues (20-30 minutes): After gathering the information above, the playwrights turned those thoughts into monologues by the characters. It is now your students' turn to do the same thing. Students will match up their brainstorm writing with each term discussed above (sprouting, pruning, pre-frontal cortex, or limbic system). Then they will choose one of the terms to focus their monologue around. This is a first-person monologue, written from the point of view of a teenage character, inspired by the experiences of the students.
 - Sharing and Q&A (20-30 minutes): Students come together as a class where each student will share their monologue with the class. Facilitate a creative discussion by asking the playwrights questions about how that monologue matches that science term and how it reflects the real world.

Wrap-up

- Collaborative discussion(10 minutes): What similarities did you see between the monologues? Where did they diverge? Why were there so many different possibilities for each term?