

Refined Curriculum for **Illusion and Reality**

Humanities 7, 8

August 2001

HOOK

1. “War of the Worlds”

Simply set the stage for the students (choose from the background articles provided for information) that they are living on October 31, 1938. They have no CNN, no TV at all; they only have the radio from which to receive their entertainment and information. They are an innocent people; they have endured the Depression and World War I. They are spending a relaxing evening at home listening to the radio. Then play Orson Wells’ broadcast. Web site: http://earthstation1.simplenet.com/pgs/radio/dos-War_of_the_Worlds.ram.html download of War of the Worlds—the whole thing for the students to listen to (about 55 min.) Then discuss the theme of illusion and reality of the broadcast. Discuss why people would accept the broadcast as truth. Include a discussion of the Essential Questions.

2. A teacher may wish to show transparencies of illusions—like the picture of the woman (is she old or is she young?)—and further discuss appearances are sometimes illusions.

GREECE

1. “Allegory of the Cave”

Discuss the definition allegory and how an allegory is a type of illusion since it is a two-fold story; in one sense it is a story in itself and secondly it is a symbolic story, standing for another story. Then hand out information on Plato, Greece—just enough to set the stage for the story—and let the students read in groups. They will definitely not understand it. But they will try. Then begin to decipher it with them, discussing Plato’s meaning. Tie discussion to theme and Essential Questions. This discussion should haunt them throughout the semester and perhaps longer.

<http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/7213/cave.html>

a site presenting questions for discussion of “Allegory of the Cave”

<http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/GREECE/ALLEGORY.HTM>

site to download “Allegory of the Cave”

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/greeks/philosophy/plato.htm>

great website on Plato—for kids

2. “Medea”

Pass out the myth “Jason and Medea: Their Beginning.” At the end have the students “Create Your Own Ending.” (Reading strategy: prediction) Create groups of 3-4 students. Have each student share his/her ending to “Jason and Medea.” Have volunteers from the groups share especially interesting endings with the class. On the board, tally how many students produced happy endings and how many produced tragic/unhappy endings. Discuss the endings and why students might have created these types of endings. Discuss how each person views people and events differently (how each person has a different view of reality based on his/her experience.

Read the page entitled “Classical Ideal” and discuss how the Greeks thought a balanced person was the “ideal”

Hand out “Euripides” and discuss how the plays of Euripides usually departed from this ideal of balance and harmony/how his view of the world and of people was different from the views held by other playwrights.

Read “Medea.”

Discuss how the play’s ending differed from the students’ endings. Consider how Euripides view of reality might have influenced his writing of the play.

Hand out “Placing Blame” and have students rate the order of guilt of each of the characters listed. Give students time to write down their thoughts. Put them in groups and have them share their opinions with one another. Have each group come to consensus as to the order of guilt and then discuss their opinions in large group. Be sure to include discussion on theme and Essential Questions.

Assign students the “Culminating Assignment: Illusion vs Reality—Media.” Turn in without sharing.

SKIP MATERIAL ON ROME AND THE CRUSADES!!!

MIDDLE AGES

1. Use the following web pages for the students to concentrate on the illusion or reality of King Arthur and Camelot and to discuss the idea of chivalry as an illusion or reality—and even in today’s world. Discussion can further cover who today could meet many of the Codes of the knight. These sites have activities which are just suggestions which the teacher can use or alter to fit the students.

During Activity 1, the student will play the role of leading archeologist / anthropologist in a quest to find the "real" King Arthur and the "real" Camelot. Students will complete and present a poster and a short position paper that covers their findings. **During this project the student will analyze source material for historical accuracy and use this analysis to create a poster and written response that reflects the social and historical significance of the literature studied. Students orally present their findings and materials to their instructor and/or peers.**

[Archeological Quest for the Real King Arthur:](http://www.uidaho.edu/student_orgs/arthurian_legend/england/arch/)

URL: http://www.uidaho.edu/student_orgs/arthurian_legend/england/arch/

Comments: Students will find resources covering the discussion of possible historical figures that fit the Arthurian profile as well as reasoning and arguments for each.

[Historical Arthurian Sites:](http://www.uidaho.edu/student_orgs/arthurian_legend/england/sites/)

URL: http://www.uidaho.edu/student_orgs/arthurian_legend/england/sites/

Comments: Students will find a list of locations mentioned in the Arthurian Legends and background on each.

[Britannia's King Arthur Site:](http://www.britannia.com/history/h12.html)

URL: <http://www.britannia.com/history/h12.html>

Comments: A great site for resources surrounding King Arthur as a historical and a mythological figure.

[Britannia's Camelot Site:](http://britannia.com/history/cadcast.html)

URL: <http://britannia.com/history/cadcast.html>

Comments: An article on the likelihood of Cadbury being the possible location of the mythical Camelot.

During Activity 2, students will examine the Code of Chivalry and create examples of how its tenets can be applied in today's society. **Students will demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the significant ideas of the Code of Chivalry by creating a poster and a persuasive essay that structures ideas logically and in order and clearly defends a position with precise and relevant evidence.**

[Code of Chivalry and Courtly Love:](#)

URL: <http://www.astro.umd.edu/~marshall/chivalry.html>

Comments: Students can find a simple and accessible rendering of the aspects of chivalry at this site.

Another Site for Chivalric traditions

<http://www.geocities.com/chivalric2/>

Chivalric traditions

With whatever types of activities chosen, the teacher should direct the students to discuss knights as illusion or reality, today's knights as illusion or reality, and to discuss the theme and the Essential Questions.

2. Don Quixote

Don Quixote is a satire of the knights of the Middle Ages. A satire is sort of an illusion itself because it changes the characters, etc. into illusions of the original work. The students will see this as they realize the state of mind of Don Quixote. Of course, the character of Don Quixote acts under the illusion that he has been called out as a knight to protect his Lady.

Have students read the excerpt of Don Quixote on the windmill experience. Discuss the illusion, Don Quixote's experience to see reality, relate to the theme and to the Essential Questions.

Things that might be interesting to the students is that some computer games (ones we do not always want them to become involved in) are based on this time period and on the valor of the knight. Also, it's too bad that "The Mists of Avalon," a TNT production has those two sexy scenes. It is perfect for this theme and the Middle Ages, as is the movie "Excalibur."

Choice of culminating activities: the song or the satire of the knight

RENAISSANCE

1. The focus during the Renaissance is the illusion and reality of art. Peruse the information from the original curriculum. If that is too daunting, concentrate on the following: 1) Leonardo da Vinci, since the sketch book idea comes from his keeping a sketch book. The Biography channel has produced a great video on him which can be found and shown to the students. Or the teacher can find web sites to show his work. He was the true "Renaissance Man." 2) Artistic techniques of the Renaissance which can be seen through art books or through web sites. 3) Some of the other artists mentioned in the period. 4) The practice of patrons, who sponsored the artists so the artists could devote their time to their work. If an artist was supported by a patron, the artist's work certainly was always flattering to the patron or produced a type of art which the patron would admire. Thus, a tie to illusion and reality. Money was the reality and the art sometimes an illusion. The Medici family were famous patrons of the time.

<http://www.mos.org/sln/Leonardo/LeoHomePage.html>

Leonardo da Vinci homepage

<http://banzai.msi.umn.edu/leonardo/>

a great link to Leonardo's sketches; each one can be clicked on and enlarged; these are the sketches from his sketchbook

<http://www.mala.bc.ca/~mcneil/a3.htm>

a great link to artists of the Renaissance

<http://www.dworldonline.com/ren.htm>

GREAT!! Music and
LOOK HERE FIRST!!!

<http://www.csupomona.edu/~jcclark/emusic/>

can download MIDI files of Renaissance music for students to listen to

2. Sketchbook Assignment

Assign the students to keep a sketchbook; one based on the idea of Leonardo's sketchbook. Let the students choose whether they want to create an original invention as the focus of their sketches or whether they want to sketch observations of objects as the focus.

If they choose an invention, they should sketch **ten detailed** aspects of the invention from the origination of the idea to its final conception. They should keep notes in the margins of their drawings, just like Leonardo did, clarifying their drawings and revealing their thought processes and providing notes to themselves on each drawing. Each sketch should be on 8 ½ x 11 paper. The pages should be bound. An introduction should be written reflecting the choice, the content, and their passion for their invention. A Self-Reflection is included at the end. The Reflection is discussed below. A cover should be bound and it should reflect the contents and the passion.

If they choose to sketch observations, they should choose a thematic connection of objects or different sketches of the parts of a whole. (i.e. leaves, trees, people, or parts of the hand or anatomy—acceptable parts) The **ten detailed** sketches show different angles or different perspectives of their choice. The students also keep notes in the margins which clarify their drawings, reveal their thought processes, and provide notes to themselves on their drawings. Each sketch should be on 8 ½ x 11 paper; bound; with an introduction reflecting their choice of subjects and how these choices connect under a theme, and their passion for their choice; and a Reflection (discussed below). A cover should be included and it should reflect the contents and the passion.

3. Sketchbook Reflection

In 1 ½ -2 ½ pages, discuss why you chose the direction you did for your sketchbook. Discuss your thought processes as you proceeded with the sketchbook. Also discuss how you captured the essence of illusion/reality in your choice and in your sketches. Explain how your life experiences influence your perspectives of what is truth what is fallacy. Include how this sketchbook is based on a passion of yours.

SKIP THE ENLIGHTENMENT SECTION

NINETEENTH CENTURY

1. Romanticism

<http://cyberessays.com/History/112.htm>

short essay on Romanticism

<http://www.artcyclopedia.com/history/romanticism.html>

Romantic artists

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Oracle/7259/romanticism.html>

good definition of Romanticism and its attributes

Literature

Use Edgar A. Poe—"The Tell-Tale Heart;" Washington Irving—"The Legend of Sleepy Hollow;" Nathaniel Hawthorne—"The Minister's Black Veil" or "Young Goodman Brown;" Emily Dickinson; Percy Shelley; John Keats; William Wordsworth

Choose from the poetry/prose to look at figures of speech, since metaphors, similes, personifications create an illusion to veil words to create sensory images.

Art

<http://www.mala.bc.ca/~mcneil/a6.htm>

Romantic artists

<http://www.van-gogh-art.co.uk/artist/delacroix.htm>

Eugene Delacroix, Romantic artist

<http://www.j-m-w-turner.co.uk/>

J.M.W. Turner, Romantic artist

Music

<http://members.tripod.com/~dorakmt/music/romantic.html>

great site on Romantic music and its characteristics

<http://www.ipl.org/exhibit/mushist/rom/index.htm>

short bios on Romantic composers

<http://www.radio.cz/hudba/romantic.html>

another site with Romantic characteristics and very long list of Romantic composers

Play CDs of Romantic composers, place art books (from library) out for students to study Romantic artists and their art.

Discuss the theme and tie to the Essential Questions.

2. Victorian Era

Show students the movie "The Age of Innocence" which emphasizes appearance over reality.

Discuss theme of illusion and reality and tie to Essential Questions.

The following questions can be drawn on to discuss and connect with the theme and the Essential Questions. Though meant for the book, the questions certainly pertain to the movie.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1) Wharton's title *The Age of Innocence* was an allusion to a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds depicting a five-year-old girl. What light does this cast on Wharton's view of the world she was writing about? Do you think the title is ironic? Newland Archer seems to love May largely for her innocence, yet he "did not want May to have that kind of innocence, the innocence that seals the mind against imagination and the heart against experience." What kind of innocence, then, does he want?
- 2) What do you make of Newland Archer's assertion – and of his later regret for that assertion – that "women should be free – as free as we are"? Do you think Wharton, who believed in many of Old New York's values, among them the importance of family, might have agreed with him? Do you think any aspects of Old New York's double standard for men's and women's conduct still hold sway in today's society?
- 3) Wharton seems both to satirize and to respect the society she writes about in *The Age of Innocence*. Where do you think one ends and the other begins? What good was there in the "old ways" as Wharton illustrates them? What was not so good? What is good and bad in the "new ways"? How does the relationship between Newland and his son Dallas reflect on the evolution of Old New York?
- 4) "That terrifying product of the social system he belonged to and believed in, the young girl who knew nothing and expected everything, looked back at him like a stranger through May Welland's familiar features." Is "knowing nothing and expecting everything" a fair characterization of May? If not, what does she know that Archer doesn't know she knows? And if she doesn't expect everything, what is she willing to forgo? In what ways is May different from what Newland thinks she is? How does Wharton reveal strengths and individuality in her that Newland doesn't perceive?
- 5) What does Newland's relationship with Ellen bring out in him that his relationship with May does not? What, beyond it being taboo, troubles him? Does he seem comfortable with her? More "himself"? In what ways is Newland's perception of Ellen Olenska as limited and/or inaccurate as his perception of May? What do his feelings for Ellen really "mean"?
- 6) In early outlines for *The Age of Innocence*, Wharton tried on the idea of having Newland break his engagement to May and marry Ellen; eventually the two separate and return to their own worlds. In the end, why do you think she didn't opt for this plot line? What, if she had, would have been different about the "message" of the book? What, if she had pursued this plot, would you ultimately have thought of Newland? Of Ellen?
- 7) What does Wharton reveal about Old New York and/or about Newland Archer through the characters of Cynthia Mingott, Ned Winsett, Julius Beaufort, Mr. Welland, and Janey?
- 8) In what ways has American society evolved, and in what ways does it still seem similar to the particular American social subset Wharton wrote about? In what arenas does a significant pressure to conform still exist? Do you think there are places today where Countess Olenska might receive the same sort of reception she received in Old New York? Do mainstream American values still differ from European ones when it comes to sex, divorce, and marital fidelity? Or as regards artists, Bohemians, and "people who write"?
- 9) Why do you think Newland doesn't, in the end, meet with Ellen after May's death? Does his decision strike you as "right"? Why does he send his son, Dallas?
- 10) Do you agree with Newland Archer that he missed "the flower of life"? What would this other life have been like, if he could have lived it without negative consequences to May or anyone else?
- 11) Though it was for the most part well received, at least one influential critic thought *The Age of Innocence* was irrelevant to the larger issues of its day. A recurring criticism of Wharton's work was that it was largely concerned with the trivial concerns of trivial people. Do you agree with these criticisms? If not, what gives Wharton's subject matter its larger significance? How do depictions of

the love lives of the upper class illumine larger or more important issues about the world? What do these criticisms presuppose about what is important, or what constitutes a large issue?

<http://www.teachervision.com/lesson-plans/lesson-4417.html> the web site of the questions on “The Age of Innocence”

TWENTIETH CENTURY

1. American Dream? Illusion? Reality?

Tie the research to the Twentieth Century.

Establish with the students the meaning of “the American Dream” and discuss what American has had to offer both to immigrants and to Americans. When looking up the American Dream on the internet, everything was materialistic—mortgaging homes, buying cars, going on cruises, buy motorcycles, buying things, etc. Below are some sites which actually discuss the American Dream. Choose and read and discuss with students.

<http://www.ecofuture.org/pk/pkar9506.html>

interesting statistics of today versus yesterday

<http://goinside.com/99/11/myth.html>

The American Dream: Myth or Reality

<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/org/mhnews/S97/feb27/voices/Vlure.htm>

Lure of the American Dream

<http://www.uta.edu/english/hawk/syllabi/virtua/myth/ponce/forrest.htm>

interesting essay on “Forest Gump the American Dream”

2.

The Research Concept
Illusion/Reality

Teacher Information

The research should be given to the students in time for them to complete all the necessary research and turn in assignments before the Winter Break. This due date will prevent the students from using their Break to complete their research. The Break is what it says it is—a break. The teacher has an opportunity to view the students' progress by having the students turn in graphic organizers and other assignments in along the way.

The presentation of the research will be given after Winter Break at the discretion of the teacher. The presentation will probably take more than one class period. The presentation can serve as the Semester Exam, though a writing is given as a reflection of the research which can be used as the Semester Exam. (Reflection included)

- Each student will choose to become an immigrant. The students will research their situation in their country, their reasons for wanting to travel to America, what America had to offer them; they will research their life (or one representative of) after immigration in America.
- The crux of the research is the illusion and reality of what they had in their own country and the illusion and reality of what they achieved in America. For example, if they came to America in the Colonial Period to achieve religious freedom, they probably found religious oppression. The hoped-for reality turned into an illusion.
- The students will turn in their research at teacher-determined times; students will keep their research in graphic organizers and/or in Double Column Notes.
- The students will use their research 1) to find/create visual items to place in a container of sorts which represent their reasons for coming to America and the opportunities America offered them; 2) to find/create visual items or original written items which represent the illusion and reality of their immigration experience.
- The students will come together in a large group and share their immigration experience via the visual and/or written items and their explanation of how their immigration experience demonstrated illusion/reality. They will also discuss how their life experiences as an immigrant affected their views of what is reality and what is illusion. This large group presentation and the reflection which follows makes up the Semester Exam.

The following sites will be especially helpful with the immigration research.

<http://www.bergen.org/AAST/Projects/Immigration/>

excellent—why people immigrated to America, how, when, how, treatment received—great for student research

<http://www.multnomah.lib.or.us/lib/homework/amhsthc.html>

excellent—scroll down to Immigration Megasites and go for it!

Student Information

<http://www.bergen.org/AAST/Projects/Immigration/>

excellent—why people immigrated to America, how, when, how, treatment received—great for student research

<http://www.multnomah.lib.or.us/lib/homework/amhsthc.html>

excellent—scroll down to Immigration Megasites and go for it! Scrolling further will give you more sites on immigration, as well as sites on the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.

The above web sites will provide you with a great deal of information about immigration. Through your surfing, I am sure you will find many more. But you'll have to get up really early in the morning to find better sites!!!

1. Choose who you are and in what country you live. Research to find the following, elaborating on each question with details from your research:

- ❖ Who are you? What is your name? Where do you live? Explain the work you do in your country, how much you are paid.
- ❖ What time period did you live in?
- ❖ What was your and your family's situation in your home country?
- ❖ How did you make up your mind to travel to America?
- ❖ What opportunities did life in America offer to you and your family?
- ❖ How did you travel to America? Where did you enter America?
- ❖ What process of entering America did you follow?
- ❖ Where did you settle in America?
- ❖ How were you treated by other Americans?
- ❖ How did you affect America? Vice versa?
- ❖ What opportunities for success did you experience?
- ❖ How did you assimilate into the American culture?
- ❖ What did you find in America that you did not expect?
- ❖ When you consider your immigration experience, was the move worth it?
- ❖ From this immigration experience, what have you learned about the concepts of illusion and reality?
- ❖ How has this immigration experience affected your ideas about the concepts of illusion and reality?
- ❖ From your immigration experience, how would you define the concepts illusion and reality?
- ❖ How does a person make sense of his life in considering the concepts of illusion and reality?
- ❖ How necessary is it that a person understands the concepts of illusion and reality?

2. Now that you have considered your immigration experience, synthesize your thoughts and provide the following for a presentation:

First Group of items/objects:

- ❖ A **container** that you would have brought your things in—some container that reflects the era in which you lived, the country in which you lived, what status you were in the country;
- ❖ A **minimum** of **six** visual items/objects which you find/create and which represent the reasons why you came to America and the opportunities America offered to you; place these inside the container; they express your hopes and dreams and passion for the move;
- ❖ A written portion for each visual item/object which in detail explains the reasons you decided to come and/or the opportunities America promised; you must include at least two explanations which relate to the reasons you immigrated and two explanations which related to the opportunities offered by America; these explanations should be attached in some way or organized so that the teacher can correlate the item/object to the correct explanation if the student is not present;

Second Group of items/objects/a “something”

- ❖ An original “something”—written or created—which expresses the illusion and reality connected to your immigration experience.
- ❖ An explanation at large group time in which you discuss the illusion and reality of the immigration experience—the illusion and reality in your life—which you have learned through your research.

This entire “container” and its contents will probably be graded before/during the Christmas break without benefit of the students’ presence. Thus every part of the contents must be clear and clearly indicated as to what it is and what belongs to what, etc.

Final Exam (just a suggestion, if you are required to give a written exam and cannot just let the large group presentation be the exam; you may wish to add the Essential Questions to the exam if you need

too make it longer; otherwise, this written assignment could be a quick-write of approximately 30 minutes)

Answer the following questions with elaboration from all material you have experienced this semester. Elaborate and be sure to provide reference to your research.

Synthesis=the semester's study causing you to have some newly formed ideas about reality

1. What have you learned about the concept "illusion and reality" from the material we have discussed this semester. As you discuss specific ideas you have learned or discovered, be sure to cite from what discussion you learned or discovered the information.
2. Based on the information found in your research, explain how life's experiences can affect a person's view of reality. Cite specific situations in your immigrant's life as you discuss life's realities (and don't forget—illusions).

Another Possible Research Product

Look in the original Illusion and Reality curriculum under the Twentieth Century. The research entitled “Twentieth Century: Humanities Search for Understand...” could be the research for the semester. In this research, the students would primarily concentrate on the Twentieth Century’s illusion and reality. I know the “Sports” topic is pretty hard to find information for.

The group product following this page can be modified to become an individual product. Most of us have found that having the students approach research and presentation in an individual manner keeps parents off our backs about group work and students in the group who do not carry their own weight. It also helps the student who cannot say NO.

The research should still be completed before Winter Break and turned in. The presentation can still be the Semester Exam. The wording of the above Exam can be altered to reflect a change in the research.