

Lesson Overview: True Crimes

Author/Teacher: Joan Rowe

Grade Level: Grade English Elective, 12

Unit Description:

This unit focuses on how law enforcement and media shape public's perception of serial killers. The public is fascinated with not only the gruesomeness of what serial killers do, but also with the life they live prior to, during their killing spree, and often times their post killing period. This unit also sets out to examine serial killers psychological motivation as well as and the impact of their criminal activities on victims (those who escaped), families, friends and community.

Time: 9 Weeks: (40 x 45 minutes periods): This includes time spent on classroom instruction of lessons, activities, assessments, and research.

Essential Question:

How do race, class, and sex impact the popularized images of criminals?

Summative Assessment Description: Research an unknown or forgotten serial killer from a minority group and evaluate his or her profile and treatment by the media, law enforcement, and the public. Juxtapose your findings with that of a popularized serial killer. Draw conclusions about your findings. Use any technological mode or medium to present the results of your research.

Woke Cypha Elements:



Fashionable: This unit reflects the current socio-political context and empowers students to develop and/or deepen their self-agency and asks in what ways can we use the public forum of social media and other ways of communicating to bring about awareness.



CREAM: Cash Rules Everything Around Me — Examining socio-economic policies and disparities and their effect on urban communities and creating entrepreneurial opportunities that benefit the community.

Materials and Resources for the unit:

- *True Crime Library: Serial Killers*, Seth H. Pulditor
- *Why We Love Serial Killers*, Dr. Scott Bonn
- www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2014/10/the-grisly-all-american-appeal-of-serial-killers/381690/
- "Criminal profiling: the reality behind the myth" www.apa.org/monitor/julaug04/criminal.aspx
- "Criminal Profiling from Crime Scene Analysis" (U.S. Department of Justice) www.researchgate.net/publication/227630905_Criminal_Profiling_from_crime_scene_analysis
- www.videopress.com/v/Q1RZ0vzY
- www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/catching-killers/criminal-profiling/1003122/3375553
- "Serial Killers: Nature vs. Nurture. How Serial Killers are Born" www.nc-cm.org/article213.htm
- www.entrepreneur.com/video/235583
- www.filmicpro.com/videos/tutorials/
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=qoxihY5Buc8

Summative Assessment

Project Name	True Crimes: What You Didn't Know
<p>In depth summative assessment description</p>	<p>What are the similarities and differences between the ways popular criminals are treated in comparison to their marginalized counterparts? Choose a popular serial killer and one that is relegated or forgotten from a minority group whom you will research and juxtapose their profiles and treatment. Analyze the information and data and make your own conclusion. Present your findings in the form of a video (for example, a buzz feed), another social media form, or graphic booklet.</p>
<p>Standards: Common Core and State No more than 3 standards</p>	<p>CCRA.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <p>CCRA.W.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.</p> <p>CCRA.W.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.</p>

About the Educator

Educator Bio:

Teaching for more than 16 years, Grade12, Subject: English Elective.

Pedagogical Philosophy:

Knowledge is power. It is imperative that we help students to know that they have the ability to learn and be successful. It is important that students are provided with the opportunity to be successful at a variety of things. In addition, students should be allowed to explore issues that are relevant to them as individuals or fundamental to the groups to which they belong. It is my wish that when students leave my class, they will be critical thinkers with minds of their own. They will know to use knowledge, skills and attitude developed in class to solve real life problems.

Reflection:

1. How have the **CREAD elements** impacted the way you approach unit/curriculum planning?

The CREAD elements allow students to be engaged in meaningful ways, which validate ownership of the materials under examination as well as themselves and their abilities.

2. How has the experience of the Woke Cypha impacted your pedagogical practice?

The Woke Cypha has helped me to be more conscious of how I design educational instruction for students of color. It allows me to use what they have foundationally to move them to their next destination.

3. In which ways is this unit different from the last time you taught it?

It was designed with certain guiding questions in mind. For example: how can I make this unit relevant to students of color?

Notes:

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Day 4

Objective SWBAT:

Analyze people's fascination with serial killers

Common Core Standards:

RI.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CREAD Element:

Sankofa and story telling

Materials:

"The Grisly, All-American Appeal of Serial Killers" - Julie Beck (cut up in sections) and the Smartboard

Starter/Do Now:

Children around the world from different cultures have been told terrifying stories by adults. Think of a story, (Boogeyman, duppy, El Cuco, Dongola Miso, Jumbi, Mètminwi etc.,) that an adult or older sibling told you as a child in order to get you to go to bed early or do something else. Pair and Share. How old were you? What was the story? Who told it to you and why? Do you still believe the story? Why or why not? When did you stop believing the story/ Why do you still believe the story? When you get older, would you tell your children or other children those terrifying stories? Why or why not? Why do you think adults tell these and other similar stories to their kids?

Direct Instruction:

Making evidence based claims:

- **Claim:** "The defendant hit me with his car."
- To get your day in court, you must be able to substantiate your claim.
- What evidence can we use to support the fact that the defendant hit you with his car?
- Write the answer in your notebook. We will return to it later.
- How does circumstantial evidence differ from **direct evidence**?
 - "Direct" evidence establishes a specific fact without the need for one to make inferences to connect the evidence to the fact. "Circumstantial" evidence, requires an inference to connect the evidence or to establish a fact. An eyewitness testimony, in which he, or she describes an accident he or she saw, heard, or experienced it is direct testimony. "The defendant hit me with his car."

Let us examine our responses to the question earlier. Is the evidence circumstantial or direct?

Photos of a damaged car or body injuries are not eyewitness testimony of the accident and requires inferencing to determine if there was an accident and whether or not the injuries and the damages to the car resulted from the accidents.

- What are some other examples of direct evidence?
- What are some other examples of circumstantial evidence?
- What is sufficient evidence? (**Sufficient:** enough; adequate)
- What is valid evidence? (**Valid:** legitimate, authentic, authoritative, reliable, bona fide)
- How does evidence-based claim apply to reading and discussing a text?
 - When you make a claim about a text you must be able to support your claim with evidence from the text.
- The victim uses ethos, pathos and/ logos / and imagery in her sworn testimony that the defendant hit her with the car.

Activities/Student Work:

Each group will get a section of the newspaper article, to read, discuss and make claims regarding the public's fascination with serial killers.

Guiding questions: Groups will choose one of the following questions, or make its own to share out on.

1. Why have serial killers taken center stage in the news, entertainment and media?
2. Why are real murderers transformed into ghoulish celebrities?
3. How do fictional characters, such as Hannibal Lecter and Dexter, demonstrate the public's reaction to the human predators?
4. What drives people's appetites for the macabre?
5. Why are serial killers' paraphernalia displayed at museums?

Assessment/Evidence of Learning:

Exit Ticket: Respond to the prompt using valid sufficient evidence. How are people fascinated with serial killers?

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Day 11

Objective SWBAT:

Examine different psychological profiles of serial killers

Common Core Standards:

CCRA.SL.2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CREAD Element:

Spoken word

Materials:

"Criminal profiling: the reality behind the myth"- Lea Winerman and Smartboard

Starter/Do Now:

Listen to the instrumental and write 4 bars on what we know about serial killers. Circle up and share

Note to educator: What instrumental? What are 4 bars? Remember, not everyone who reads this uses the same vernacular.

Direct Instruction:

A psychological profile is a report that utilizes information and approaches from various social and behavioral sciences and focuses on a specific type of violent crime. According to many accounts, serial killers are typically Caucasian males between the ages of 18-32 who have been victims of child abuse and who had exhibited signs of the McDonald triad.

Discuss the following questions. Read the handout and give additional examples.

1. What is criminal profiling?
 - An educated attempt to provide specific information about a certain type of suspect, (Geberth, 1981).
 - A biographical sketch of behavioral patterns, trends and tendencies, (Vorpagel, 1982).
2. What is the significance of criminal profiling?
 - Criminal profiling offers an investigator a character sketch, especially mentally, of unknown suspect(s) that could potentially lead to an arrest. Criminal profiling assumes that a person manner of thinking motivates her or his behavior.

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Day 13

Objective SWBAT:

By the end of the lesson students should know that a documentary demonstrates the power of words and the creativity of minds to presents ideas.

Common Core Standards:

SL.11-12.2: Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems.

CREAD Element:

Fashionable and Artistry

Materials:

- www.smithsonianchannel.com/shows/catching-killers/criminal-profiling/1003122/3375553
- Smartboard

Activities/Student Work:

Watch a video and determine two central ideas and their development. Respond to text-based questions.

1. Identify the criminal.
2. When and where did the crimes take place?
3. Who was/were targeted?
4. How were the investigators limited/ hampered in their investigation?
5. What did profiling establish about the criminal(s)?
6. What, if anything, led to a breakthrough in the case?
7. How accurate was the criminal profile?
8. Did criminal profiling solve the case? Explain.

Assessment/Evidence of Learning:

Prompt: To what extent did profiling help with the investigation? Craft and create your response to the above prompt using technology and audio visual aids.

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Day 14

Objective SWBAT:

Differentiate between Modus Operandi and Signature of serial killers

CREAD Element:

Movement and Storytelling

Materials:

True Crime Library: Serial Killers, Seth H. Pulditor

Starter/Do Now:

Turn and talk in small groups!

Were you or someone you know the victim of a crime? Tell the story:

When? Where? What? Who? Why? How? Do you believe you (or the person you know) were (was) the criminal's first victim? Why or why not?

Direct Instruction:

Two interesting things about serial killers and other serial criminals are their MO and their signature.

- 1. Modus operandi** is a distinct pattern or method of operation that indicates or suggests the work of a single criminal in more than one crime. Major L W Atcherley, an English constable developed the following categories of modus operandi in the 1800's:
 - **classword:** the kind of property attacked, such as a house, a college dormitory, people parked in cars at lover's lanes
 - **entry:** the point of entry, such as open bedroom windows, sliding glass doors
 - **means:** implements or tools that were used, such as a pry bar, ladder, screw driver
 - **object:** kind of property taken, such as bras and panties
 - **time:** time of day or night, weekdays, non-work days, holidays (when people would not miss the perpetrator at work)
 - **style:** the description the criminal gives the victim to gain entrance (plumber, cable TV repairman)
 - **tale:** any disclosure the criminal makes as to his business/purpose
 - **pals:** any co-conspirators
 - **transport:** what type of vehicle was used in connection with the crime
 - **trademark:** any unusual act committed by the suspect while in the commission of the crime (i.e. poisoning the cat, eating at the scene after murdering the grandmother)

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Day 15

Objective SWBAT:

Analyze song lyrics on serial killers

CREAD Element:

Music as text

Materials:

Handouts of the lyrics of the following songs:

- “Clownin’ Around” - Deer Tick (John Wayne Gacy)
- “The Axeman’s Jazz” – Beasts of Bourbon, (The Axeman of New Orleans)
- “Dead Skin Mask” by Slayer (Ed Gein)
- “TeenWitch Intro” by Bones (Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold)
- “Jack the Ripper” by LL Cool J (Jack the Ripper)
- “Edmund Kemper Had a Horrible Temper” by Macabre (Edmund Kemper)

Starter/Do Now:

What is the denotation and connotation of the term “Clownin’ Around?”

- Listen to “Clownin’ Around,” by Deer Tick without making notes.
- Listen to “Clownin’ Around,” by Deer Tick a second time and make notes on what the song is saying.

Turn and talk!

- What is/are the central idea(s)?
- What is the meaning of the lyrics/ song?
- What is the purpose of the song?
- What is the writer’s or artist’s point of view?
- Who is the intended audience?
- What are the cultural or historical relevance/ context of the song?
- Have you heard it before? What did you think about it then or the first time you listened it?

Direct Instruction:

Some of the world’s most evil people have inspired some of the world’s greatest lyricists and musicians. They make use a variety of literary/ writing strategies to develop the central ideas of their work. Together, students will analyze “Clownin’ Around,” on Smartboard.

