



## **Basic Unit Information**

**Focus:** This unit will explore the meaning of the word “nostalgia” — its definitions, connotations, cultural relevance, and function as a motivating factor in fiction and autobiography. Students will examine the definition of nostalgia from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, read a short story by García Márquez and an essay by Cisneros, and write an autobiographical essay reflecting on a nostalgic time in their own lives.

**Length of Unit:** 10 days

**Content Area:** English Literature & Composition

This unit features works by Latin American authors and could be included in multicultural curriculum; however, the unit does not emphasize this cultural background.

**Grade:** 11

## Brief Description of the Unit

### What will students understand as a result of this unit?

- the etymology and definition of the word “nostalgia”
- introduction to magical realism
- features of autobiographical essays
- nostalgia as both a positive and negative influence in life

### What is the context of the unit?

- This unit could be used as a component in a literature of the Americas series.
- This unit could be used as a component in a multicultural literature series.
- This unit could be used to acquaint students with magical realism before reading *One Hundred Years of Solitude* or another novel of similar classification.

### How does this unit make connections to the real world?

This unit begins with a single word that students may have heard countless times but never stopped to consider fully. By tracing this word and phenomenon through a piece of short fiction and a piece of non-fiction, they may come to a fuller understanding of the role nostalgia plays in creating memories. They will have an opportunity to reflect on their own lives and explore how nostalgia has shaped their memories. At the end of this lesson, students will have crafted a piece of creative non-fiction that employs their new-found understanding of nostalgia and the role it plays in their lives.

### Timeline:

Day 1:

- unit introduction with *OED* definition of “nostalgia”
- unit vocabulary

Days 2–4: “The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World” by Gabriel García Márquez (translated by Gregory Rabassa)

- introduce Gabriel García Márquez and magical realism
- explore and question – whole class
- define magical realism, story pyramid
- quick write

Days 5–7: “Straw into Gold: The Metamorphosis of the Everyday” by Sandra Cisneros

- introduce Sandra Cisneros
- Rumpelstiltskin tale
- explore and question – small groups
- vocabulary quiz

Days 8–10:

- discuss components of an autobiographical essay
- review writing process, discuss rubric for assignment, word web for “nostalgia,” brainstorm, plan/outline and draft
- peer review
- conclude unit: review, answer questions, share stories, collect essays

## Georgia QCCs Addressed

29–Reading/Literature **Standard:** Reads, discusses, and analyzes American literature representing diversity (e.g., gender, ethnicity).

31–Reading/Literature **Standard:** Applies knowledge of literary terms to works of literature.

33–Reading/Literature **Standard:** Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influence on the literature of a given period or culture.

36–Speaking/Listening **Standard:** Engages in discussion as both speaker and listener, critically and constructively interpreting, analyzing, and summarizing ideas.

40–Writing/Usage/Grammar **Standard:** Understands that language usage is shaped by social, cultural, and geographical differences.

41–Writing/Usage/Grammar **Standard:** Writes in narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository modes with emphasis on exposition.

44–Writing/Usage/Grammar **Standard:** Writes coherent, multi paragraph compositions.

## Objectives

- Students will be able to define the term “nostalgia” and provide two examples of its manifestations.
- Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the vocabulary terms for this unit by providing definitions and sentences for each term as well as passing the vocabulary quiz.
- Students will be able to define the term magical realism.
- Students will be able to identify elements of magical realism in the short story.
- Students will be able to define the term allusion.
- Students will make connections between the Rumpelstiltskin tale and the Cisneros essay.
- Students will be able to write an autobiographical essay that demonstrates an awareness of nostalgia in their lives.

## Activities

### UNIT INTRODUCTION

See Unit Notes – Unit Introduction.

### VOCABULARY

1. Review definition of “nostalgia” using the transparency with the *Oxford English Dictionary* entries.
2. Unit Vocabulary List: Students will provide definition(s) and one sentence for each word on the list.
3. Literary Terms: Students will define each term and provide an example from the unit reading selections.
4. Word Web for “nostalgia” will be used to generate thoughts about the unit topic before students brainstorm ideas for their autobiographical essay.

### WRITING

1. Quick Write
2. Autobiographical Essay

### STORY STRUCTURE

1. Story Pyramid

### READING

1. “The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World” by Gabriel García Márquez  
(translated by Gregory Rabassa)
2. “Straw into Gold: The Metamorphosis of the Everyday” by Sandra Cisneros

### GRAMMAR OR SKILLS

1. Parts of Speech Mini-lesson using “nostalgia”

### WHOLE CLASS DISCUSSION

See Discussion notes for García Márquez story.

### SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

See small group discussion questions for Cisneros essay.

## **Evaluation and Assessments**

Quick Write – 20 pts

Vocabulary Sentences – 20 pts

Vocabulary Test – 30 pts

Story Structure Worksheet – 20 pts

Small Group Responses for “Straw into Gold” – 25 pts

Word Web – 10 pts

Autobiographical Essay – 75 pts

TOTAL = 200 pts

## Sequence of Lessons

### Day 1

#### **Lesson Objectives:**

Students will learn the definition, etymology, and background for the word “nostalgia.” Students will demonstrate an understanding of the vocabulary terms for this unit by providing a definition and sentence in which the word is used correctly for each term.

#### **Activities:**

- Teacher will introduce unit topic with questions listed Unit Notes–Unit Introduction.
- Then she/he will display transparency for *Oxford English Dictionary* definition of “nostalgia” and discuss with class.
- Parts of speech mini-lesson for nostalgia. See Unit Notes.
- Students will be asked to name some things they think of in a nostalgic way.
- Students will receive unit vocabulary and spend the remainder of the period working on definitions and sentences.

**Assessment:** Objectives will be assessed later in the unit with a vocabulary quiz and an autobiographical essay.

### Day 2

#### **Lesson Objectives:**

Students will be able to define the term magical realism.

Students will be able to recognize elements of nostalgia in the short story.

#### **Activities:**

- Teacher will introduce “The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World” with some background information on Gabriel García Márquez and magical realism. See Unit Notes.
- Students will begin reading “The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World” with a shared read aloud. They will finish story independently before class the next day.

**Assessment:** Objectives will be assessed later in the unit with a Quick Write, a Story Structure activity, and class discussion.

### Day 3

#### **Lesson Objectives:**

Students will be able to identify elements of magical realism in the short story.

Students will be able to discuss and explore meaning and structure in the short story.

#### **Activities:**

- Teacher will lead whole class discussion. See Notes for Whole Class Discussion for “The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World.”
- Students will provide examples of magical realism from the story and interpret their meaning.
- Students will complete Story Structure worksheet.

**Assessment:** Story Structure worksheet will be graded to assess reading comprehension and understanding of elements of structure in the story. Class discussion will provide an opportunity for teacher to assess general understanding of magical realism and help determine what needs to be reviewed.

#### **Day 4**

**Lesson Objectives:** Students will be able to analyze a short passage from the short story and express their ideas in a well-constructed paragraph.

**Activities:**

- Teacher will review the definition of nostalgia from day 1 and answer any questions students have about the story.
- Students will analyze a short passage from the short story and respond with a Quick Write.

**Assessment:** Quick Write will be graded for assessment.

#### **Day 5**

**Lesson Objectives:**

Students will encounter information about multicultural literature and make connections between fairy tales and contemporary literature.  
Students will be able define the term allusion.

**Activities:**

- Teacher will introduce “Straw into Gold: The Metamorphosis of the Everyday” by Sandra Cisneros (see Notes). Teacher will read the Rumpelstiltskin tale aloud.
- Students will listen and respond to introductory materials before independently reading the essay. The students will finish essay before next class period.

**Assessment:** Objectives will be assessed later in the unit with a small group activity and an autobiographical essay.

#### **Day 6**

**Lesson Objectives:**

Students will be able to make connections between the Rumpelstiltskin tale and the Cisneros essay.

**Activities:**

- Teacher will answer any questions about the story and divide students into small groups for activity.
- Students will work with group members to discuss the essay and answer questions.

**Assessment:** Small Group Discussion Questions worksheet will assess comprehension and understanding of allusion.

## **Day 7**

### **Lesson Objectives:**

Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the vocabulary terms for this unit.

### **Activities:**

- Teacher will answer questions about the stories or vocabulary.
- Students will take vocabulary quiz.

**Assessment:** Vocabulary quiz

## **Day 8**

### **Lesson Objectives:**

Students will be able to move through the parts of the writing process and generate an essay. Students will be able to make connections between life and literature.

### **Activities:**

- Teacher will review the writing process, components of an autobiographical essay, and rubric for the writing assignment. See notes on Writing Process.
- Students will complete a Word Web for “nostalgia.”
- Students will brainstorm ideas for their essay, plan, outline, and begin a draft. The draft is to be completed before the next class period.

**Assessment:** The objectives for this day will be assessed through the autobiographical essay to be completed at the end of the unit.

The Word Web will be used to assess students understanding of the term and how it has been manifest in the stories in this unit.

## **Day 9**

### **Lesson Objectives:**

Students will be able to review their peer’s writing to determine if assignment requirements have been met.

Students will be able to gain insight into their own writing through the peer review process.

### **Activities:**

- Teacher will answer any questions that students may have and conduct mini-conferences with students as needed.
- Students will review peer writing.

**Assessment:** The Peer Review Guide will aid both writer and review to understand the requirements of this assignment.

The objectives for this day will be assessed through the autobiographical essay to be completed at the end of the unit.

## **Day 10**

### **Lesson Objectives:**

Students will be able to write an autobiographical essay that demonstrates an awareness of the affects of nostalgia in their lives.

### **Activities:**

- Teacher will conclude the unit by answering questions, asking students to share their autobiographical essays, and collecting the essays.
- Student volunteers will read their stories aloud to the class.

**Assessment:** The objectives for this day will be assessed through the completed autobiographical essay.

## Materials and Resources

**Teacher:** overhead projector and transparencies, white board, dry erase markers, textbook, Rumpelstiltskin tale, Unit Notes

Handouts: Quick Write, Vocabulary Quiz, Word Web, Story Structure, Small Group Discussion Questions, Autobiographical Essay Assignment, Peer Review Guide

**Students:** dictionaries, textbook, pens, paper, disc, word processor (optional), printer (optional)

## References Used to Develop Unit

- *Oxford English Dictionary*. 1933 and 1972 supplement.
- García Márquez Biographical Information  
<[http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo\\_biography.html](http://www.themodernword.com/gabo/gabo_biography.html)>
- for additional information on the definition of nostalgia  
<<http://www.usm.maine.edu/eng/TLC2003.htm>>  
University of Southern Maine, Graduate Certificate in Theory, Literature, & Culture, Summer 2003: Globalization, Nationalism, and Nostalgia
- *Elements of Literature*, 5<sup>th</sup> Course Literature of the United States. Austin, TX: Holt, 1997.