**Shirley Jackson and the Fear of Ordinary People**

**Havenner/Spring 2017**

**All materials/handouts available on Havenner.weebly.com**

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| **Target Grade Level** | 12th Grade Modern Literature |
| **Learning Objective** | Students will be able to analyze character development and its role in building plot and suspense in literature.  Students will be able to recognize patterns in suspense and horror fiction and how these patterns have influenced modern literature and media. |
| **Standards** | [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RL/11-12/3/) Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).  [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.5](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RL/11-12/5/) Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact. |
| **Materials** | Class or individual copies of the following Shirley Jackson short fiction:  “The Lottery”  “Charles”  “The Witch”  “Paranoia”  Selected Excerpts from The Haunting of Hill House  Film: The Haunting (1963 adaptation of The Haunting of Hill House)  Class Set Laptops/Computer Lab Access |
| **Procedures** | **Day 1:**  Journal Writing and Class Discussion:  *In your own words, what does phrase ‘the fear of ordinary people’ mean?*  Begin reading “The Lottery”  Freewrite question and vocabulary exercise  **Day 2:**  Discuss “The Lottery” in small groups and then as a whole class  Guiding Questions:  Who is trustworthy in this story?  What is the biggest threat to Ms. Hutchinson?  If a stranger had intervened in the lottery ceremony, how might it have ended differently?  **Day 3:**  Journal Writing and Class Discussion:  *What is the connotation of “stranger” and how have we been taught to fear the unknown since childhood?*  Being reading “Charles”  Freewrite questions  Class discussion  **Day 4:**  Discuss “Charles” in small groups and then as class as a whole  Guiding Questions:  What hints do we have that Laurie is inventing Charles?  Why are Laurie’s parents so willing to accept his odd behavior at home and to believe him about Charles at school?  How is the concept of ‘ordinary’ made to drive the plot and storyline?  **Day 5**:  Journal Writing and Class Discussion:  *Revisit the concept of “the fear of ordinary people” - what does “The Lottery” and “Charles” exemplify about the idea of everyday horror?*  Small Group Work:  Parallels and Differences between the two stories. What can we determine about the author from the content of the work? What statement on society is Shirley Jackson making?  Whole Class Shareout and Discussion.  **Day 6:**  Journal Writing and Class Discussion:  *Are children more willing to accept facts/situations/people who are left of ordinary? Why or why not?*  Begin Reading “The Witch”  Freewrite questions  **Day 7:**  Discuss “The Witch” in small groups and then as a whole class  Guiding Questions:  Is the old man telling the truth? Find textual evidence to support your answer.  Is the little boy’s reaction abnormal? Or perfectly kid-like? Support your answer with personal experience and textual evidence.  **Day 8:**  Journal Writing and Class Discussion:  *What is paranoia? How does mistrust and fear of other people build on paranoia?*  Begin Reading “Paranoia”  Freewrite questions  **Day 9:**  Discuss “Paranoia” in small groups and then as a whole class  Guiding Questions:  The man’s paranoia is revealed to be justified, what clues does he have to this point throughout the story? How could these clues be seen as entirely innocuous if looked at from another point of view?  What role does point of view play in this story? Consider “Paranoia” from the point of view of anyone the man encounters throughout the story, what is their opinion of the man?  **Day 10**:  Trope: a figurative or metaphorical use of a word or expression  Journal Question:  *Identify at least one trope throughout the four stories we have read?*  Small group work: Find a common trope that links the four stories, relate it to a modern story or movie and discuss how Shirley Jackson’s tropes have been used in modern fiction.  **Day 11:**  Opening Activity:  *Read two short excerpts from The Haunting of Hill House. Identify at least two tropes, things you have seen in other horror/suspense stories/movies.*  Hand out viewing guide/trope chart  Being viewing the film, stopping frequently to discuss the entries to the chart.  **Day 12:**  Finish film and viewing guide/trope chart  **Day 13:**  Small group work: map the tropes from Hill House and the short stories. Connect the work to modern horror/suspense stories/movies  Class shareout  **Day 14:**  In-Class Essay: How does Shirley Jackson use ordinary people and situations to create horror? What statement on society is she making? Use all the stories, novel excerpts and the film viewing guide as textual evidence to support your thesis. |
| **Evidence of Learning** | Class Journal with multiple entries/discussion points  Five freewrite discussion questions (1 page each)  1 semi-formal essay  Video viewing guide/trope chart |
| **Research** | Shirley Jackson: A Rather Haunted Life by Ruth Franklin  “Shirley Jackson and the Fear of Ordinary People” panel discussion and presentation at StokerCon 2017 by Dr. Karen Bovenmyer  “Modern Folk Devils” panel discussion and presentation at StokerCon 2017 by Joanna Parypinski  “Librarian’s Day Why Horror Matters” panel discussion and presentation at StokerCon 2017 by Tim Waggoneer |
| **ELD Accomodations** | Extended Reading Time  Vocabulary Guides for each story  Daily Journal Writings focusing on plot and action of stories  Read stories out loud in class as opposed to silently and independently  Graphic Novel Project:  Illustrate a Shirley Jackson story of your choice: write the dialogue in comic book/graphic novel format. Tell the entire story in 10-12 panels. |
| **GATE Accomodations** | Shirley Jackson Storybird Digital Media Project  (details available on Havenner.weebly.com)  Creative Writing Option:  Write your own short story in which ordinary people/situations become the horror. |
| **Rationalization** | Shirley Jackson has long been a mainstay in high school textbooks. However, the only story most student are ever exposed to is “The Lottery” and then as a tool to teach such literary terms as Irony. By introducing Shirley Jackson as a powerful and influential American writer, we are broadening the genre of horror and suspense writing to include women writers, who have traditionally been given less than their fair share of credit.  In order to create truly literate graduates who have an honest and intrinsic love of reading, we must access high-interest material that will encourage them to enjoy reading and seek out books and stories that in the same vein of the material we share with them at school. Kids like horror stories. The young adult book market shows booming numbers of young adult horror/science fiction/suspense sales. We can tap into that love of spooky stories and tie it to classic literature while introducing complex guiding questions, teaching writing skills and developing a student’s capacity for critical thought and analysis. |