

Experiment Teaching Group
Spring 2015
Illinois State University
March 3, 2015

The Genre of Love Notes 9-12 Lesson Plan Guide

Day One¹: The conventions of Love Notes.

In order for students to produce love notes, they will first need to understand the concept of **conventions**. Conventions are like the “rules” of the genre, but they are really more.

Objective:

- Students will analyze the conventions of the genre of love notes.
- Students will be able to define the term convention as it applies to genre analysis.

Materials:

- Enough samples of love notes for each group of students to have 3 to 4 to analyze. (These materials are only necessary students do not have internet access and computers to do their own love note research)
- Google docs to share the conventions list as they are created together. (Not essential, but a good way to share documents composed with students.)
- Computer with internet access
- Projector

Instruction:

Introduction of Conventions:

- In order to help students understand the concept of conventions, things that we come to accept as defining a situation and that imply expectations, teachers may choose to change one of the expected conventions of the classroom. For example you may decide to remove the chairs or desks from your classroom, these are both conventions of a classroom and students expect to see them in a classroom. (10 minutes)
- Introduce the term convention to students and provide the following definition:
 - “rules” of a genre. Students need to understand that these “rules” are flexible, they depend upon the writers using them, and they are historical (They change over time, and they can change in the future.)

¹ Lessons based on 45 minute classes.

- Ask students to provide the conventions of a sentence. (Students will likely provide conventions like capitalizing the first letter in the first word of a sentence, using punctuation.)
- Next, ask students which conventions of the sentence they use when they text.
 - Most students will say that they don't text in complete sentence, don't use punctuation, and use abbreviations.
 - Some students might text in full sentence if they have an iPhone with voice commands.
 - (You could point out that this is a historical change in texting due to the use of evolving tools.)

Once students have an understanding of conventions, they can begin investigating the conventions of a specific genre. (10 min.)

Genre Analysis - Finding Conventions:

- Provide samples of 3 to 4 love notes for each group of students to examine. If students have computer access, ask students to research love notes to analyze.
- Ask students to create a list of conventions for the genre. (15 min.)

Compiling a Conventions List:

- Once students have created their individual conventions lists, have students share the conventions to create a combined conventions list.
 - (These could also be collected and compiled, but it might be more helpful for students to be able to discuss why they chose the conventions they selected.) (20 min.)
- The conventions list that the class compiles can then be used by students to guide their writing in the genre of love notes.

CCSS:

Writing Standard 9-10: 9, Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Day Two: Research and Drafting

Students will consider the history of love notes before they begin researching the kinds of writing that appear on these notes. Students should have some time to begin drafting.

Objectives:

- Students will read literary genres of writing typically included in love notes.
- Students will begin drafting their own individual love notes for an intended audience.

Materials:

- Overhead projector
- Computer with Internet access
- Books : Literary texts or young adult fiction featuring love notes?
- Writer's notebook for drafting

Instruction:

- Prepare students for a short You Tube clip about the love letters.
- Provide the following prompt:
 - How has the genre of the love letter changed?
 - How has distribution affected this genre?
- Show the video clip Hugs and Misses: A Brief History of the Love Letter at <http://youtu.be/ia4tBO6N7o> (approx. 2 min.)
- This video provides a history of the distribution of love letters. By watching this video, students will get a sense of the historical roots of this genre.
- Discuss how the distribution of this genre has changed how it is written and received. (5 min.)

Content Research:

The next step is for students to research the writing that people do when creating love notes. This is content research, the type of research that is done to help the reader provide the information that is composed. While content and genre research are certainly related, this is the research that tells the writer **what** to write, instead of how to write (which is the focus of genre research). (Approx. 20 min.)

- Students could use books of poetry as examples of the types of poems that are included in this genre. Not all love notes are poems, though.
- Teachers could provide copies of online examples of love notes or teachers could provide these websites for students to use.
- Teachers might want to restrict online genre research of love notes due to the adult language and images of some online resources.
- Some suggested sources for background information to guide this inquiry include:

- <http://www.theromantic.com/LoveLetters/main.htm>
 - This source includes historical love letters from celebrities of the time.
- <http://www.janeausten.co.uk/a-history-of-love-letters/>
 - This source also has some literary examples of love letters.
- <http://www.historyhappenshere.org//archives/category/love-letters>
 - This site features historical love letters from the civil war.
- <http://www.experimentalwifery.com/s013/02/14/histories-10-greatest-love-letters-from-wives>
 - This site features love letters from wives to husbands.

You might also consider using the following books with students:

Possession by A.S. Byatt
Persuasion by Jane Austen
Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare
Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens
The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Audience:

Students need to identify the audience for their love note. Teachers might discuss how audience affects the language choices that students will make as they draft their love notes. Teachers might want to stipulate general suggestion for the choice of audience. For example, they may want to ask students to select a famous person from a decade range, maybe the 1950s to the 1980s (5 min.)

Drafting:

Once students have had some time to read through the types of writing that will fit the genre of the love note, they should be ready to begin drafting the text for their love note.

- Teachers should remind students to consider their audience as they are drafting. (Approx. 10 min.)

CCSS:

Writing Standard 9-10: 9, Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Writing Standards 9-10: 8, Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation .

Day Three: Drafting and Conferencing

Students should be provided class time to draft their love notes. During this time the teacher can circulate around the room, conferencing with students as they write. Teachers might remind students that they can likely answer many questions about this genre by referring to their conventions list.

Objectives:

- Students will draft their love notes for an intended audience.
- In the genre of the bulleted list, students will identify the conventions they think they need help with from peers.
- Students will conference and provide peer feedback.

Materials:

- Writer's notebook for drafting

Instruction:

- Teachers should remind students to rely on their conventions list as they draft.
- Students should also consider their intended audience as they draft.

Drafting:

- Students should have the first half of class to work on drafting.

Peer Revision and Conferencing:

- During the last 20 minutes of class, students should draft a list of the conventions they would like help with.
- Students would trade papers with a peer to read the love notes along with the list and provide written feedback for revision.
- Once students had time to read and respond, they should also have time to discuss their responses.
- The remaining class time should be used for students to return to their drafts to make revisions to their love notes.

CCSS:

Writing Standard 9-10: 2.d, Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.

Writing Standards 9-10: 5, Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

Day Four: Considering the Tools for Production of Love Notes

Students need to consider the tools available for production and distribution for the celebrity that they selected.

Objectives:

- Students will create a list of materials needed to produce their love notes considering the limitations of the decade.
- Students will begin producing the final draft of their love notes considering the materials available at the time.

Materials:

- Possible tools to produce the genre:
 - Typewriters
 - Stationary
 - Ball point pens
 - Plain Paper
 - Typing paper
- Students might determine that they need additional tools to produce their love notes, depending on the decade. Typewriters might still be tools available in your building. If not you might be able to borrow a couple for students to use.

Instructions:

- Ask students to research and list the tools that they will need to collect in order to create their love notes.
- Next, teachers could ask students to gather the tools need to create the love notes.
- While it might be easier for teachers to provide all of these materials for students, asking students to consider the material first will help them become more aware of the role that tools play in the production of genres.
- Considering the tools that are not available will also help students understand where their genres might fall short of the sample genres they analyzed, especially if students are not able to access these materials.
- Once students have gathered their materials, they could begin producing their love notes.

CCSS:

Writing Standards 9-10: 5, Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

Writing Standards 9-10: 4, Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Day Five: Distribution and Proof of Learning

Since students won't likely have the opportunity to distribute this genre to its intended audience, they should have the opportunity to share them. If your students are familiar with the concept of author's chair, this will be a familiar experience. Ask students to write comments for the students who volunteer to share their love notes.

Objectives:

- Students will share their love notes with the class.
- Students will write short responses for the authors who share their love notes.
- Students will evaluate and write about their activities and practices as they consider the writing they produced while investigating and reproducing the genre of the love note.

Materials:

- Completed love notes
- Paper for responses. This can be scratch paper, students won't need lots of space to write.
- Access to the genre for (re)mediation.
- Samples of the genre for (re)mediation
- Uptake genre questions listed below

Instruction:

- Ask students to share their love notes with the class. You might have students read these aloud, author's chair style, asking students to comment on the genre as the authors read. These comments can be collected after each author presents their love note.
- Another option is to have students pass their love notes around to their classmates, an example of possible distribution for love notes. In this case, students can still write responses for their classmates. In order to keep this option organized, students will need to include the author's name on the response.

Assessment/Proof of Learning:

Once students have completed their love notes, they will evaluate their final product based on the conventions they investigated. Students will answer the following questions:

- Using your conventions list, identify at least 10 of the conventions of the genre that you used to write your love note.
- Provide examples from your genre. You can use the copy of your love notes –

- (these can be labeled and numbered)?
- What specific historical events shaped the production of your love note? (In other words, how did the things you learn about the time period affect the writing that you did?)
 - List all of the activities that you did to produce your love note.
 - How did the tools you have available to use affect the love note that you produced? (Were there any tools that would have been better suited to the time period that you chose?)
 - Compare your final production with the samples that you analyzed
 - How are they similar?
 - How are they different?
 - If you could, how would you get your love note to its intended audience?
 - How might your love note be used if it didn't get to its intended audience?

CCSS:

Writing standard 9-10: 10, Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Day 6: (Re)mediation of Genre

Many genres are (re)mediated. Students are probably familiar with the ways in which genres are mashed up. In this lesson students will view a mash up and consider the ways that their genre can be (re)mediated. While this lesson plan provides one suggestion to (re)mediate the genre of love notes, many other (re)mediations are possible.

Objective:

Students will use the love note they created to (re)mediate or mash up the genre. Students will examine and write about the processes of their production(s). Students will evaluate the quality of their production(s).

Materials:

- Iphone with video capabilities (iPhone 4 or higher)
- iMovie software for editing
- Blank paper
- Markers or colored pencils
- Internet access
- Laptops with Mac software

Instructions:

- Using the original production of the love note, students will use stick figure drawings to convey the message of the love note to her/his intended audience.
- Once the stick figure drawing sequence is completed, students will video the stick figure drawing clip.
- Students will use iMovie software to edit their clip.
- Students will show the clip to their intended audience, if available.
- Clips can be uploaded to the class or school website, if available.

Assessment/Proof of Learning

While students are working on their (re)mediated genre, students will write about the processes necessary to complete their (re)mediation, including any information they needed to research or any new skills they needed to investigate and/or learn in the process of creating the new genre.

Students will write about both successes and failures in the processes of production. Students will evaluate the final product, including both successes and failures along with things they would have changed, if possible.

CCSS: Writing Standard 9-10: 6, Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.