

Lesson Plan: 9th Grade English

Course Name, grade level: Literature and Composition, Grade 9

Unit/Chapter/Novel: The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien, Chapter 11, The Gospel of Matthew chapter 9: 9-13

Lesson title: The Role of Grace and Nature in The Hobbit

Lesson length:

One class period, although this theme will continue to be developed as students read the second half of the novel.

Essential Questions (*the big picture*)

How does Grace build upon nature?

Lesson's connection to our mission: Forming Catholic hearts and minds in Faith, Reason, & Virtue

In our pursuit of holiness, God builds upon our human nature with supernatural grace to help us live lives of heroic virtue and become the saints we are called to be.

Each human being, made in the image and likeness of God, is called to a vocation. This “calling” (from the Latin vocare, meaning “to call”) is first and foremost to sanctity.

CNS Standards

General:

CS ELA.712 GS3 Analyze carefully chosen selections to uncover the proper nature of man, his problems, and his experiences in trying to know and perfect both himself and the world.

CS ELA.712 GS4 Share how literature can contribute to strengthening one's moral character.

Intellectual:

CS ELA.712 IS2 Describe how the rich spiritual knowledge communicated through fairy tales, fables, myths, parables, and other stories is a reflection on the truth and development of a moral imagination and the mystery, danger, and wonder of human experience.

CS ELA.712 IS7 Use imagination to create dialogue between the reader and fictional characters by entering into the lives of the characters and uncovering deeper meanings, inferences, and relationships between the characters, nature, and God.

Writing:

CS ELA.712 WS2 Write in various ways to naturally order thoughts to the truth with an accurate expression of intent, knowledge, and feelings.

CS ELA.712 WS4 Demonstrate the use of effective rhetorical skills in the service and pursuit of truth.

Dispositional:

CS ELA.712 DS2 Develop empathy, care, and compassion for a character's crisis or choice in order to transcend oneself, build virtue, and better understand one's own disposition and humanity.

CS ELA.712 DS3 Display the virtues and values evident within stories that involve an ideal and take a stand for love, faith, courage, fidelity, truth, beauty, goodness, and all virtues.

Education Objective(s) (Content to be Taught)

Students will examine Bilbo's transformation from a Catholic moral worldview.

How does Tolkien show that grace builds upon nature in *The Hobbit*?

How do we see this theological concept of "Grace builds upon nature" in Bilbo Baggins?

How does Bilbo Baggins receive his "calling" (vocation)?

How is Bilbo especially suited for his vocation, and how does he receive help to fulfill it?

Trivium Model: one way to think about the lesson is through the stages of the Trivium

Grammar: Who, What, Where?

Students will utilize previous knowledge of Bilbo's "call" to be a Burglar and how he is transformed into a heroic figure throughout the adventures in the novel.

Logic: Why? How?

What does it mean to have a calling/vocation?

How might one receive that knowledge?

What is one to do with that calling once one has received it?

What supernatural help (grace) will aid in a human being fulfilling his/her vocation?

Rhetoric: Students articulate their own ideas and theses at this level and support with evidence.

Can students synthesize Tolkien's themes with their understanding of vocation? Can students compare Bilbo's call with Christ's calling of Matthew in Matthew's Gospel?

Vocabulary (as applicable)

Grace: A "gift" or "help," particularly from a Divine Being.

Pedagogical Approach(es) – or Engagement Activities

There could be more than one. Examples include Socratic method, partner reading of Matthew's Gospel, individual work answering discussion questions, or large-group discussion.

Modeling by the Teacher - Think aloud. Pedagogical approach of "I do, we do, you do."

I do (model): I share how I was called to be a teacher by being voted "Most Likely to be a Teacher" in my senior year yearbook—without ever thinking of that as a future profession until that moment!

We do together (guided practice): Students will answer discussion questions related to how the novel develops the theme of “Grace Building upon Nature.” Students will then discuss their answers with a partner. Large group discussion will follow, seeking to answer questions like “Gandalf sees in Bilbo a Burglar, even though he doesn’t see it himself. Why might a hobbit be especially suited to be a burglar? Where does grace come into the story? Where does grace come from in our faith?”

You do (independent practice): Students will then take notes on the following:

1. Bilbo’s Hobbit nature + magic/grace (e.g. Sting, the Ring, Gandalf) = heroic burglar.
2. They will then take notes on the following:
Human nature + supernatural grace (e.g. sacraments, gifts of the Holy Spirit, practicing virtue) = Heroic virtue

Assessments:

Formative: Students will answer and discuss questions related to their own vocation, making connections with the calling of Matthew (Matthew 9:9-13), and articulate ways that Tolkien illustrates and develops the theme, “Grace Building upon Nature,” during class discussion.

Students will be expected to access previous knowledge about the text.

Students will engage in class discussion.

Summative Assessment (student expectations and assigned work)

Students will create a chart comparing Bilbo’s nature as a Hobbit and his journey to being a “heroic burglar” and our human nature and calling to “heroic virtue.”

Skills Taught (or used by students during unit/lesson – in addition to the intellectual concepts taught and noted above under “Lesson Objective”)

How to synthesize previous knowledge and how to compare themes in biblical texts with a fictional text.

Time estimates of lesson/unit work and tasks (different than lesson length above)

One class period lesson. Theme will continue to be developed throughout novel.

On the exam, one of the essay questions will be on this theme. •