Lesson Plan – Secondary Education Model for English

*The Catcher in the Rye* – 11th Grade Level

1. **Essential Question, Goal, and Rationale**

The goal of this specific lesson is to develop understanding of character motivation within text.

The Essential Questions include:

What is the relationship between certain characters within the text and the main character, Holden Caulfield?

What evidence can be established to support inferences about promoting change to this relationship?

How does dialog promote understanding of character motives and development?

This is a culminating lesson that incorporates the reading, discussion and activities that students experienced during the class reading of *A Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger. Students at this level must acquire a strong understanding of character development in order to understand motivation so that they can think critically about the characters and apply the resolution of problems that characters face to the students’ own life experiences.

**I. Objectives**

Following the reading and discussion of *The Catcher in the Rye*:

- Students will use material on the nature of friendship by Aristotle in order to establish categories of friendship prior to evaluating text.
- Students will develop graphic organizers that reflect inferences about motives of character and the nature of inferences and how they can be applied through careful reading of the text.
- Students will develop a Venn diagram that illustrates the relationship between the main character, Holden, and minor characters using specific evidence in text.

**II. Assessments**

Formative:

- Students will review materials on nature of friendship by Aristotle and apply these categories of friendship through small group discussion. The teacher will monitor group activities, as well as full class discussions to determine understanding of categories for friendship.
Students will learn what inferences are and how they might apply to their understanding of character motivation. The teacher will review graphic organizers that involve review of dialog and inferences about motives of character.

Students will develop a Venn diagram, providing a model of a relationship between the main character and assigned character. The teacher will review all Venn diagrams to establish knowledge base for inferences.

Summative:

- There is no specific summative assessment for this lesson. Note that the culminating unit summative assessment is the role-play, in which students are briefed by their character groups and act in an intervention. This particular lesson leads to the role-play, but a separate lesson will establish guidelines for role-play.

III. State Frameworks

The following state frameworks are covered in this lesson:

Language General Standard 1: Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussions in small and large groups.

Language General Standard 2: Students will pose questions, listen to the ideas of others, and contribute their own information or ideas in group discussions or interviews in order to acquire new knowledge.

Reading and Literature General Standard 8: Students will identify the basic facts and main ideas in a text and use them as the basis for interpretation.

- 8.14: Make judgments about setting, characters, and events and support them with evidence from the text.
- 8.20: Identify and analyze the author’s use of dialogue and description.
- 8.25: Interpret a character’s traits, emotions, or motivation and give supporting evidence from the text.

IV. Connections Across Curriculum

The lesson incorporates elements of philosophy, as students will read materials from Aristotle about categories of friendship. They will also review documents on psychological aspects of friendship.

V. Materials

Students will read from the following texts:


Excerpts provided from Aristotle’s The Nicomachean Ethics.
Website reviews of categories of friendship.

VI. Outline of lesson plan

Method of instruction and student response:

- Begin the lesson by determining student understanding through writing of a journal entry about the nature of friendship, relating it to their own experiences (work at individual desks; 10 minutes)
- Volunteers will read their entries, while teacher writes notations on board, outlining notations about friendship (10 minutes).
- Students will read excerpts from *The Nicomachean Ethics* by Aristotle to categorize friendship (work at individual desks; 10 minutes).
- The teacher will lead a discussion about the nature of friendship, based on new knowledge gained from reading Aristotelian text (full class discussion; 5 minutes)
- They will be assigned characters and will work in groups to review dialog, pulling out important lines that support interaction between main character and minor character. They will use a graphic organizer that provides visual relationship between cited dialogs between the two characters (small group work; 15 minutes).
- The teacher will lead a discussion about inferences, explaining the term (full class discussion; 5 minutes).
- Groups will develop a Venn diagram, showing these inferences between the relationships between Holden (main character) and minor character, based on dialog (small group discussion and work; 20 minutes)
- Students will present these diagrams in class (full class discussion; 15 minutes).
- Note that the next lesson will prepare role-plays that will result in intervention between Holden and minor characters

Adaptations:

- Students will be provided graphic organizers to provide visual understanding of text.
- Students will be scaffolded into groups, based on their level of expertise in reading and evaluating text.

Organization of classrooms, transitions, estimated timing of lesson parts:

See above notes under method of instruction under 90 minute block schedule.

Source for motivating students:

- The teacher will review rationale for lesson, as well as review of standards.
- The teacher will make connections to students’ own friendships to provide contrast to relationships between Holden and minor characters.

Source for activating students’ prior knowledge:
Students will write in their journals to determine elements of friendship.

**Teaching of terms/vocabulary and key questions:**

- Vocabulary: friendship, inference.
- Key questions, based on Bloom’s Taxonomy:
  - **Knowledge:**
    - What is friendship?
    - What is inference?
    - What specific quotes reveal information about characters’ friendship?
  - **Comprehension:**
    - What is the difference between one character’s dialog and another’s?
    - How is the tone of each character’s dialog?
    - Describe what is happening between the two interactions.
  - **Application:**
    - What lessons did you learn about the motivation between the two characters?
    - List the excerpts from the dialog that most exemplify how the characters relate to one another.
  - **Analysis:**
    - What main motives does each character have for their interactions with one another?
    - Analyze the dialog, line by line.
  - **Synthesis:**
    - How do you cite dialog?
    - Synthesize your thoughts about interaction between the dialogs.
  - **Evaluation:**
    - What inferences can you make about how characters?
    - How might this character help Holden to develop as a person, based on your evaluation of dialog?

**Closure:**

The teacher will outline how this material will support the intervention which will be the basis of the next lesson plan, as well as the summative assessment.

**VII. Reflection**

Students found the Aristotle text fairly easy to read, as they determined categories of friendships. They appeared to gain an understanding of the materials and were able to pull dialog from the novel, with support from one another. The major problem with the lesson is that the teacher had to rush students from one activity to another. This lesson should be readjusted to flow into the next class period, allowing for more time at each task.