

GRADE 7 LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE: CHARACTER IDENTITY AND BELONGING

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LEARNING PLAN OVERVIEW

Subject(s)	English Language & Literature
Grade Level (s)	Middle School (ages 12- 13)
Systems Tool(s)	Behavior Over Time Graphs (BoTG)
Purpose of Using Tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquiry • Critical Thinking • Discussion • Reflection
Summary	Students use the Behaviour Over Time Graphs (BoTG) to collaboratively map the causes and effects of the changes the characters in their chosen novel undergo.

Learning Objectives

- Identify unique traits/behaviour of characters in order to map the change they undergo over the duration of the plot of a novel.
- Using the levers plotted on the BoTG, students identify the causes and effects of the change characters undergo.
- Analyse the change of character thoughts, motives and beliefs that have caused the change to occur.

Material and Settings

- Realistic Fiction Novels
- Children's Book (Recommendations: *I Talk Like a River* by Jordan Scott; *Eyes That Kiss in the Corner* by Joanna Ho; *Eyes that Reach the Sky* by Joanna Ho are good choices)
- A3 BoTG scaffold
- Markers
- Sticky notes

Learning Context

Students have completed 4 weeks of a novel study focusing on analysing character identity, internal and external motivations and character relationships. Students choose the novel they wish to read from a curated list and organise it into groups based on their novel choice.

Purpose of Using the Systems Thinking Tools

The Behavior Over Time Graphs (BoTG) provides a scaffold for students to critically think about the traits and behaviours of characters and to practise causal thinking.

Learning Plan Step-by-step Description

Step 1: Mini-lesson on character change in the literature using a short story mentor text.

Step 2: Collaborative identification and class discussion of cause and effect evident in the [OK Go - This Too Shall Pass - Rube Goldberg Machine](#)

Step 3: Introduction to the Behaviour Over Time Graph through a class collaboration using a children's book as a stimulus. I Talk Like a River by Jordan Scott is beautiful text to use for this step.

Step 4: Students identify the varying character traits/behaviours unique to the chosen character in their novel. Map along the y-axis.

Step 5: Students identify the various stages/time of the plot along the x-axis.

Step 6: Students then map the character's change of traits/behaviour over the stages/time of the novel.

Step 7: Students identify and comment on the causes/levers of change the character has undergone.

Step 8: Students repeat the process as many times as necessary with additional characters. Identify the reasons for parallel change or cross-over changes.

Note: Students are encouraged to view this process as iterative and make changes to the y-axis and adjust their mapping as necessary.

Step 9: Students then identify a cause/lever of change to focus on and analyse in greater detail using an iceberg model. Students place the cause/lever at the top of the iceberg and underneath infer how the following layers caused this change to occur:

- Change of thoughts
- Change of motives
- Change of beliefs.

REFLECTION

Plusses

- Using the 'Notice and Wonder' combined with the "Yes, And" protocol for classroom discussion can generate lots of insight from the students to transfer to the class collaborative BoTG. These insights also serve as a guide for students to refer to as they engage in their group BoTG creation.
- Ensure you provide students with the time necessary to discuss the y-axis character traits/behaviours. Furthermore, encouraging students to view this as an iterative process where each part impacts and allows change is an important approach to support critical thinking.

EVIDENCE

Character Change – Behavior Over Time Graphs by Laura England



