

Unit Organizer--Seventh-Grade English
Cyrano de Bergerac

Subject Matter and Relationship to Core Knowledge Sequence:

- ❖ Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*
- ❖ Elements of drama (tragedy and comedy, soliloquies and asides)
- ❖ Elements of fiction: plot, setting, theme, point of view, conflict (internal/external), climax, character (static/dynamic; flat/round) (*Thinking Framework = Knowledge*)
- ❖ Literary terms (Irony, flashbacks, foreshadowing) (*Thinking Framework = Knowledge*)

Assessments:

- ❖ Class discussion (factual, cause-effect, interpretation, themes, literary terms)
- ❖ Bell-work paragraphs during and after the reading of the play, dealing with key themes and questions
- ❖ Times for the class to act out scenes in the play
- ❖ Class debate/discussion groups, observed by the teacher, on whether or not the ending is "happy" or not
- ❖ Final essay test

Standards for Achievement and Performance:

AFTER THIS UNIT THE STUDENT SHOULD BE ABLE TO...

- ❖ Explain the uniqueness of drama and how it compares/contrasts to other genres. This will include a knowledge and appreciation of facets of performance and staging: casting, sets, costumes, disguises, the role of the audience.
- ❖ Express the classically defined difference between tragedy and comedy.
- ❖ Understand how key literary ideas like conflict, suspense, and characterization are developed in drama.
- ❖ Be convinced that plays were meant to be seen, not just read.
- ❖ Be more comfortable acting in front of a group.
- ❖ Know key dramatic terms like sets, soliloquies, asides, etc.
- ❖ Know the distinctive artistic context of late 19th century France in which this play appeared.
- ❖ Understand why the people of this historical/artistic context reacted so triumphantly and jubilantly in response to Rostand's work. Also, they should be able to make some conclusions from this about what the role of art is in our lives.
- ❖ Trace plot structure in the course of a five-act play.
- ❖ Express the play's themes, write meaningfully about them, and understand their relevance and application to today.
- ❖ Want to emulate Cyrano's memorable qualities and learn from his weaknesses.
- ❖ Want to read more drama.
- ❖ Think of writing some drama of their own.

Character Traits/Habits of Mind:

This classic play received not one, nor two, but forty-two curtain calls on its first night. It made people proud to be French again after a string of sobering years (politically and artistically). Doubtless, Cyrano himself is the main reason. He is one of the more dominating and memorable characters in dramatic history. In his own words, he had many life paths before him to choose from, and he chose the most simple and lucid: in all things to be admirable. His flashy panache-driven life results in some heartache and weakness, but it also results in sacrificial love and an end that leaves him without worldly regret. Students are moved by these ideas and convinced of language's power, not from a piece of rational argument, but from the words and actions of someone they have grown deeply attached to in the context of a vision-gripping story.

Previous Unit(s):

- ❖ Vocabulary
- ❖ Essays and Speeches

Next Unit(s):

- ❖ *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*
- ❖ Continue Vocabulary (at this point, students should be done with the twenty lists and should be in the process of continually reviewing them)
- ❖ Continue Foreign Phrases/Spelling