

Ghosts of the Trail

Developed by: Jennifer Reiter

Discipline / Subject: Writing

Topic: Ghost Stories

Grade Level: 6-8, 9-12

Resources / References / Materials Teacher Needs:

Jon Van Zyle 1988 Iditarod Print “Beyond the Unknown

<http://www.artifact.com/auction-lot/jon-van-zyle-beyond-the-unknown-17-c-e2e57afcbb>

Alaska Dispatch Article:

<http://www.alaskadispatch.com/article/ghosts-alaskas-itarod-trail>

“Ghosts of the Trail” from Along Alaskan Trails by Helen Hegener available here:

<http://northernlightmedia.com/?p=864>

Advice for Writing Ghost Stories:

<http://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2012/oct/31/writing-tips-ghost-stories-cornelia-funke>

Lesson Summary:

Students will create an original ghost story that is set along the Iditarod Trail.

Standard’s Addressed: (Local, State, or National)

Common Core Writing Standards Grade 7:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3a Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3b Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3c Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3d Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

Learning Objectives:

- TLW write a narrative based on imagined experiences.

Assessment:

The attached checklist could be used as an assessment tool.

Procedural Activities:**Motivation:**

Use the Van Zyle print, Alaska Dispatch article, or Helen Hegener chapter to introduce the idea of ghosts along the Iditarod Trail to the students.

Procedure:

Share with the students Cornelia Funke's suggestions for writing great ghost stories before they brainstorm for their writing. Attached is a graphic organizer based on her suggestions.

Students can then draft, revise, and edit their stories using the attached checklist.

Materials Students Need:**Technology Utilized to Enhance Learning:**

- Students could use an app such as Story Creator to create digital version of their story.

Other Information:**Modifications for Special Learners/ Enrichment Opportunities**

- Students could compose the story with a partner.
- Students could make movie trailers for their story.

Ghosts of the Trail: Planning Sheet

Tone:

Will your story be funny or grim?

Backstory:

What is the ghost's backstory?

Who was he? How did he die?

Ghost:

Will he help or hinder the mushers? How?

Theme:

What will the message of your story be?

Setting:

Describe the location on the trail

Time of day or night

Stage of the race

Sequence of Events:

(continue on the back)

Ghosts of the Trail: Checklist

Does my story:

- Grab the reader's attention with a strong beginning?
- Have a sequence of events that unfolds in a logical manner?
- Use dialogue to help develop the story?
- Use descriptive language to describe the setting?
- Establish a tone?
- Use a variety of transitions to signal shifts?
- Feature a ghost with a clearly defined backstory?
- Clearly describe the help or hindrance applied by the ghost to other characters?
- Have a meaningful and appropriate ending?