

**COURSE: Elements of Theatre**  
**Unit: Making Connections**  
**Lesson Topic: Assessment: "Wit" by M. Edson**

**Grade level: 9-12**  
**Student teacher: Liz Adams**  
**Length of lesson: 51 minutes**

Stage 1 – Desired Results	
<p><b>Content Standard:</b>  MA Connections Standard – Interdisciplinary Connections Standard 10.4 Continue the above [apply knowledge of other disciplines in learning in and about the arts] and integrate knowledge from various disciplines and cultural resources</p> <p>MA Theatre Standard 2 – Reading and Writing Scripts 2.11 Read plays from a variety of genres and styles; compare and contrast the structure of plays to the structures of other forms of literature</p>	
<p><b>Understandings/goals</b>  Students will understand that drama combines different kinds of texts with performance. Students will understand that adapting poetry can provide them a means of self-expression.</p>	<p><b>Essential Questions:</b>  How, and why, does a character drive a play?  How does a character's use of language shape our understanding of the character?</p>
<p><b>Student objectives – skills and knowledge</b>  Students will be able to apply their knowledge of dramatic elements to Margaret Edson's <i>Wit</i>. Students will be able to identify and discuss main ideas present in the play. Students will be able to construct a sonnet based on their own ideas.</p> <p>Students will know that plays show the most important moments of characters' lives. Students will know that language shapes what we know about a character. Students will know the structure of a sonnet.</p>	
Stage 2 – Assessment Evidence	
<p><b>Performance Task(s):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will write a poem with assigned theme and form for formal assessment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other Evidence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will participate effectively in discussion of how the text unpacks meaning</li> <li>Students will participate effectively in discussion of the issues raised by the play</li> </ul>
Stage 3 – Learning Plan	
<p><b>Learning Activities:</b></p> <p>Recap of "Wit" by Margaret Edson; prompt: "What is Vivian telling us? What does she burn to make sure we know?" She tells us all of these things because...why? She chooses to die rather than be revived. How is that part of how to be a good Greek?</p> <p>(Great observations!) Vivian uses different kinds of language to do this. She shares three poems, these sonnets – what do you know about a sonnet? Have you had this in English class yet? → Sonnet: Three quatrains (=four-line section) with rhyme, ending with two rhymed couplets (=couple! Two! You know this intuitively! So two lines)</p> <p>Different versions show up in the play: "Death be not proud" in the play is missing 4 lines – it</p>	

is two quatrains (four-line section) and a final couplet (two lines that rhyme); "If poysonous mineralls" is complete, 14 lines, 3 quatrains (sets of four) with a final couplet (two) – then there's that other fragment, which cuts off the sonnet in the middle.

For your assessment on this play, you will construct a sonnet of your own. Guidelines:

- Please try for iambic pentameter, which is fairly close to the natural rhythm of English – you can interrupt this if you wish for effect; certainly Shakespeare did
- 14 lines, pick your own rhyme scheme (what's a rhyme scheme?)
- Here is your topic: what do you burn to tell someone? This can be whatever you choose: Why is driving a car/learning to make a pizza/getting a job the most momentous experience in the life of a teenager? What should I always remember in order to be a good Greek? Why should I absolutely positively watch "Stranger Things"?

(Distribute copies of assessment sheet with "If poysonous mineralls" sonnet by John Donne - attached)

If time allows, give students time to begin working on their sonnet in class. Thank students for their work.

## Elements of Theatre

Assessment: “Wit” by Margaret Edson

due Nov. 7, 2016

Vivian lectures on this sonnet, “If poysonous mineralls” by John Donne:

If poysonous mineralls, and if that tree,  
Whose fruit threw death on else immortall us,  
If lecherous goats, if serpents envious  
Cannot be damn'd; Alas; why should I bee?  
Why should intent or reason, borne in mee,  
Make sinnes, else equall, in mee, more heinous?  
And mercy being easie, 'and glorious  
To God, in his sterne wrath, why threatens hee?  
But who am I, that dare dispute with thee?  
O God, Oh! of thine onely worthy blood,  
And my teares, make a heavenly Lethean flood,  
And drowne in it my sinnes blacke memorie.  
That thou remember them, some claime as debt,  
I thinke it mercy, if thou wilt forget.

**Construct your own sonnet.** Tell the reader something urgent!

- 14 lines
- iambic pentameter (iambic: unstress/stress rhythm; pentameter: five “feet”, of two beats each) = ten syllables per line
- rhyme scheme (= pattern) of your choice

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

7 \_\_\_\_\_

8 \_\_\_\_\_

9 \_\_\_\_\_

10 \_\_\_\_\_

11 \_\_\_\_\_

12 \_\_\_\_\_

13 \_\_\_\_\_

14 \_\_\_\_\_

**Rhymed  
couplet here  
(two lines  
that rhyme)**