A Trail To Every Classroom (TTEC)
Curriculum Development Tool

UNIT DESIGN COVER SHEET

Author contact: unspecified (English 12: Studies
In Composition class)

School name, state and town: Middletown High School,
Middletown, MD

Title: Journeys

Abstract/Vignette: The Appalachian Trail is the site of many types
of journeys for its hikers and caretakers, but it is also a metaphor for
the individual journey that each of us is on. Students will study those
journeys and share them in their writing. Students will also partner
with special needs students, as well as participate in a Trail service
project.

Grade level(s): Please check all that apply.
☐ K-2 ☐ 3-5 ☐ 6-8 ☒ 9-12 ☐ College and Lifelong Learning

Discipline: Please check all that apply.
☐ Art and Music ☐ Health and PE
☒ Literature and Language Arts ☐ Mathematics
☐ Social Studies and Geography ☐ History
☐ Foreign Language ☐ Science
☐ Technology

Year Developed: unspecified

Period (month, week, year): varies

Teaching environment:
☒ In the Classroom (indoors) ☒ Outdoors
☐ In the Community ☐ Online/Virtual
Journeys

Middletown High School
English 12: Studies in Composition

A Trail to Every Classroom
“...The trips were a great time of fellowship with friends...”
The Trail Writers

We are all on journeys. Some are physical. Some are emotional. Others are spiritual, academic, or musical. The list is endless. The Appalachian Trail is the site of many of these types of journeys for its hikers and caretakers, but it is also a metaphor for the individual journey that each of us is on. For most of the week, we study those journeys and share them in our writing. On Fridays, we use that Appalachian Trail metaphor to try to make sense of it all. Here are our stories.

“…while sitting on a very large, brown, wet log that made my pants wet, I was sitting with sunflower seeds in my mouth listening to the rain hit the rocks and leaves all over the ground making a ‘thud’ sound. I felt the cold brisk air blowing down the mountain nipping at my ears like dogs…”

- Delusion
How it got started

An e-mail from the principal
A love of the Appalachian Trail
An application
An idea
A glitch

“…When I was younger I was a very outdoors kid, always outside and exploring my environment. I lost the connection with my outdoors self until last week when our class went hiking. The experience brought back more than just old memories…”

- Main Man
Making the connection

A theme to tie it all together: Journeys

The Trail as an Experience
The Trail as a Metaphor
The Trail as an Inspiration

“...You can see the leaves changing, you can smell the outdoors, and you can also hear people having conversations...”

- Partyhouse
“…Even though I may look out of shape, I blasted past everyone – even our guide – to every site, resting area, and the overlook. It’s fun not always being last, but it was even funnier to see everyone come up that hill huffing and wheezing something wicked…”

- Mr. Cope
“...I was hiking with the group through the woods for about three miles. The group stopped hiking at Washington Monument. There I was able to see the view...”

- Aaron Carter
The Trail as an Experience

Speakers

Kelly Buriak
Thru-Hiker

Lee Sheaffer
PATC President

Rita Hennessy
ATC Outdoor Recreation Specialist

“…at some points there was flat, soft land. It felt like heaven on my feet!”

-Menthol
“…we went up to the Washington Monument and looked off of it. We got to eat candy, also; it was pretty tight…”

- Gibson Explorer
The Trail as a Metaphor

Where we have been
Where we are now
Where we are headed

“...we were coming down the trail on the first hike; we saw a bunch of elementary school kids and we all started talking about those days...”

- Partyhouse
The Trail as a Metaphor

Where we have been = History of the trail

“My dad started to stay out a little later every night until he wouldn’t come home at all. He started to drink all the time - not to be social anymore but just to be drinking... Of course, this behavior started to take a toll on his job…This put a strain on my mom because she had to work twice as hard to support us. He became lazy and only thought about himself and no one else. My father had turned into someone I no longer looked up to.”

“...I was walking on the trail encouraging my friend to walk faster so I wasn’t all alone. My group finally got the Washington Monument and we walked up the steps like three times. It was a very dark and scary walkway...”
The Trail as a Metaphor
Where we are now = Trail maintenance

“My friend and her mom have been fighting at least every week for almost four years now. My friend’s mom is an alcoholic.”

going perm or tans. I like really deep conversations and playing pool and going around Frederick with my favorite people. I like racing down the highway smoking cigarettes and living life unplanned and exciting. That’s how most people think of me.”

 “…we were hiking in the snow and things were just barely starting to get covered in snow. We walked out into a clearing under a power line and as we walked under (it), you could hear it crackling, and it sounded like your brain cells were exploding in your head…”

- Gibson Explorer
The Trail as a Metaphor
Where we are headed = Hiking the trail

“I know now that this is what I want to do and I’m working as hard as I possibly can to pursue it. Not only for myself, but one day I will have a family of my own to support and I want to do the best possible for them. That alone is enough for me to work as hard as possible to succeed and stay on top once I get there. But for now I am stuck digging my last name out of a hole that my father dug.”

My dream is to be able to have all our tractors in a parade one day.”

“...After about 20 minutes staying with the group I left them in my dust. I was the only one who went ahead; I was the only one who didn’t stop...”

- Jet Li
The Trail as an Inspiration

“The second hiking trip that we took can be compared to my Latin class at school. On the trail, the end was not far away, but I did not want to finish. I was cold and wet and just wanted to relax before my game. I finished walking to the overlook and it felt pretty good that I made it up there when it was snowing out. This relates to Latin class because I am not too good at it and need it to graduate. There have been many times when I wanted to quit, but I haven’t because I realize that the end is in sight and I have to pass. Hopefully, class goes like the hike did and I am happy and satisfied that I passed the class.”

impossible to accomplish with finesse, but sometimes all I need is a friend to give me a few words of choice for me to ‘keep on keeping on.’”

…I was dead-beat tired…”

- Fire Man
“Seeing the snow falling through the trees just made me relax. Having that slight breeze and me being warm… nothing would make me turn back…."

- Mr. Cope
“…The rocks were slippery and wet wrapped in a blanket of slimy moss, the trail was covered with soggy leaves like corn flakes in a bowl of milk after ten minutes, and branches on either side of the trail clearly displaced by people before me…”

- Main Man
Partnering with Special Needs Students

“…It was a big learning experience for me. I went hiking and got to spend some time with the special kids at the school…”

“…As we were climbing up to the Washington monument, I was thinking about how lucky I was to be there at that time and place and how many lonely nights I had dreamed of the day when I would finally be able to do something like this…”

- Rambo
Customizing for Special Needs Students

“Dear Mr. Kady and Mrs. Bator, Thank you for inviting me to go on your class field trip. I thought it was very thoughtful for you to think of us.”

“…On the trail I have a lot of time to think and it helps me learn about myself…”

- Shorty
Advocacy Journalism

Definition:

Journalism that advocates a cause or expresses a viewpoint

“…after we got off the bus, we were given a brief presentation of the significance of the area, but not before the weather took a turn for the worse. It snowed so hard that it was difficult to keep our eyes open…”

- Main Man
Service Learning Project

Preparation
Action
Reflection

“…We hiked and had a blast messin’ with each other…”

- Stump Finder 2000