Group Projects Setting Unit

Choose one of the following activities, which will count as your setting final project/oral interpretation speech. After the description of each activity, there is a suggested number of participants. Find others to work on your activity with you. You will receive one grade as a group, so choose those who are as dedicated and creative as you are toward doing a good job, while having some fun with literature, and creating an oral interpretation.

**Option One: The Most Dangerous Game Trial:** Harvard Outline of presentation required

1. Based on the characters and plot from the short story, change the setting to create the trial of Sangor Rainsford. Assign roles to members of the group: the prosecutor, the defense attorney, witnesses. The class will serve as the jury when you present the trial, making the ultimate decision on Rainsford’s guilt or innocence. I will be the judge, since I’m particularly judgmental, dealing with objections and other issues of fairness.

2. The prosecution and defense will determine who the witnesses are and design questions to ask them. The witnesses must be knowledgeable about the parts their characters play in the story, including captives on the island. You must use actual lines from the story and events and narration from the story, as part of the interpretation. Obviously, you can also create your own dialogue, appropriate to the questions and necessities of performance. You can use the ghost of General Zaroff, since he was killed in the story.

3. The trial will proceed like that in a normal criminal court. In the end, the jury will decide if Rainsford is justified in his killing of Zaroff or not.

**5 to 7 students** (depends on whether one person plays several roles or not)

**Option Two: The Most Dangerous Game Movie:** Harvard Outline of presentation required

1. If you were to produce and direct a movie, based on the short story, how would you do it? You are going to pitch your idea to a big-shot Hollywood studio mogul and his staff (the class), who will decide if they will fund your movie or not. If they agree to make the movie, you will have an unlimited budget.

2. Pay particular attention to setting, where would your movie be filmed and what would the necessary sets look like? Describe the setting(s) in detail? How will you shoot the film? What will sets look like? Ideas for camera techniques and mood setting devices?

3. How would you make the movie as frightening and suspenseful as possible?

4. Who would you cast for each of the roles? Why?

5. Would you have the movie narrated? If so, who would be the narrator? Would it just be acted, having the camera as the narrator?
6. What kind of music would you use? Show where in the story you’d use your music choices for optimum suspense or mood.

7. What kind of ad campaign would you use to sell the movie? What will be the slogan in your ad or on your movie posters? What scenes will you use in your movie trailers?

4-5 people You will present your ideas, through oral interpretation, as you play parts (director, producer, set designer, actors, etc). There must be oral interpretation of characters and setting, based specifically on evidence from the story. The class (as studio executives) will decide whether your film will be funded or not.

Option 3: Creating a Universe, based on the stories in the setting unit (Writing and Performance based)

The first step in the story construction process is the simplest: create a universe for your story. In other words, before you begin to put characters and events together, you must have a clear picture in your mind of the setting where the characters will interact. Setting involves three elements: place, time and milieu. The presentation will be based on the written work, but will be organized as an interesting presentation, with visual aids.

You’ll want to begin creating your universe, with a two page (around 500 words) description of place, the physical setting for your story. First, set the boundaries of your story setting. Does the story take place within a single room, a single house, several houses, a country, a state, an island? Then describe this place, making sure that your description appeals to as many of the five senses as possible. Tell the reader what the place looks like, smells like, sounds like, feels like, and, if appropriate, tastes like. If the place is a room, does it smell like fresh furniture polish or dust and mold? If the story occurs in a restaurant, is the food light and well-cooked or heavy and greasy? When you’re inside the house, can you hear leaves blowing outside or heavy trucks rattling by on an interstate. Combine elements from the stories read in the unit (through parenthetical citation), to create your universe. You can and should add to the universe, but ultimately, you’re creating a Frankenstein universe of different parts of each of the five stories.

Once you’ve written your two descriptive pages, you’ll want to write a one page (250 word) description to the second element of setting: time. In what month and season of the year does the story occur? Are major holidays approaching and do holiday preparations occupy the characters? What sort of weather can we expect? If you story is set in the past, what elements of the description will clue the reader in to the historical context? Do the characters light candles and lace up their bodices, rather than flipping light switches and zipping dresses? Do they see different animals and buildings than we do? Do they read different books? Remember all of the elements that make up time, and how these time elements affect place setting and details.

Finish the process of creating your story’s universe by writing a page or so - 250 to 300 words - describing milieu, environment. At this stage of your universe building, you want to tell how it feels for a character to exist in the environment you’ve already described. Are the characters comfortable, poverty stricken, struggling students or wealthy students in a fancy prep school
environment? Do they live in prosperity and peace, or are they threatened by sickness, war, unfriendly neighbors or even an insane villain, who threatens their lives by trapping them in their homes, as housewives? Are they free to say whatever they like or are they bound by convention? Do they live in a hole, like a hobbit? Do they go to a school for wizards?

When you’ve completed these three steps, you’ll have created the universe for your story. You will then find an interesting way to present it to your classmates, through oral interpretation, visual aids, if necessary or any way you decide to show your universe to your classmates. 3-5 students