Description

These two coordinating lessons introduce students to the concept of an archive and the archival process and require students to analyze several drafts of a single poem from Anne Sexton’s archive in order to illustrate the value of archival research and deepen students’ appreciation of revision and the relationship between style and meaning. Lesson 1 raises the question of the moral and ethical dilemmas behind accessing some archived items, i.e., letters, medical records, etc. Additionally, students will learn how to cite archival material correctly. In lesson 2, students will work collaboratively to compare four drafts of “The Black Art,” analyzing the changes and discussing the importance and impact of diction, and will then create a final draft of the poem and brief rationales explaining five of their craft choices. Finally in a gallery walk, the class will compare all groups’ final versions of the poem to Sexton’s published final draft.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

• Define archives and understand the importance of archival material.
• Accurately cite archival material.
• Analyze and evaluate what materials should be made available to the public and under what conditions.
• Understand the subjectivity of the archival process.
• Analyze and evaluate their own personal archives and future implications.
• Recognize, analyze, and express the diction’s significance in a text (how it can create mood, reveal meaning, etc.)
• Work collaboratively to revise a poem and provide a clear rationale for the group’s writer's craft choices.

Enduring Understanding(s) & Essential Questions

1. As an individual collects and culls the artifacts of his personal life or of his productive process, he builds an archive that conveys both his personal values and those of his period and culture.

   • What is an archive? Who engages in the archival process?
   • What does it mean to archive? How is an archive created?
   • Who has the right to determine what is included in an archive and how/when/with whom to share it?

2. When working toward a deeper understanding of an artist’s personal life, craft, and the intent behind her works, effective researchers seek to explore a variety of materials in the artist’s archive.

   • What is the relationship between and author’s life and work?
   • How can archival research lead to deeper understanding of a text?

3. Effective writers use diction to create mood and convey a particular message to their audience.

   • What is diction?
   • What is mood? What's the different between mood and theme?
   • How does diction serve to establish mood?
   • How does diction affect meaning?
Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (Target standards)

English IV, grade 12:

(3) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Poetry. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of poetry and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to evaluate the changes in sound, form, figurative language, graphics, and dramatic structure in poetry across literary time periods.

(7) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Sensory Language. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about how an author's sensory language creates imagery in literary text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to analyze how the author's patterns of imagery, literary allusions, and conceits reveal theme, set tone, and create meaning in metaphors, passages, and literary works.

(21) Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather. Students are expected to:
   (B) systematically organize relevant and accurate information to support central ideas, concepts, and themes, outline ideas into conceptual maps/timelines, and separate factual data from complex inferences; and
   (C) paraphrase, summarize, quote, and accurately cite all researched information according to a standard format (e.g., author, title, page number), differentiating among primary, secondary, and other sources.

(24) Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students will use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity.

(25) Listening and Speaking/Speaking. Students speak clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to formulate sound arguments by using elements of classical speeches (e.g., introduction, first and second transitions, body, and conclusion), the art of persuasion, rhetorical devices, eye contact, speaking rate (e.g., pauses for effect), volume, enunciation, purposeful gestures, and conventions of language to communicate ideas effectively.

Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills

- Working understanding of the following terms: ‘diction,’ ‘connotation,’ ‘denotation,’ ‘mood,’ and ‘theme’
- Some previous practice in analyzing an author’s style

Vocabulary

- Primary source
- Secondary source
- Archives
Time Required

Two 90-minute block periods *(180 minutes spread across two to four classes)*

Materials Required

- Projector and computer
- “Introduction to Archival Research” Powerpoint
- Manila folders
- Printed copies of “Letters 1-4, Sexton to Snodgrass” and “Letter 1, Snodgrass to Sexton.” *Contact Lori Hahn at the UTeach-LA office to request electronic copies of these PDFs.*
- Copies of the materials in the “Intro to Archives, handouts” to give to students
- Printed copies of “Poem Drafts 1-4, Sexton.” *Contact Lori Hahn at the UTeach-LA office to request an electronic copy of this PDF.*
- Tape and large sheets of white paper or posterboard for each group
- Anne Sexton’s final draft of *The Black Art* written on large white paper or posterboard
- Copies of the materials in the “Behind Sexton’s ‘Art’, handouts” to give to students

Procedural Note

- Prior to implementing the first lesson, teachers will need to print copies of all five letters referenced (four from Sexton to Snodgrass and one from Snodgrass to Sexton, available in two PDFs) and place complete sets of them into individual manila folders, organized top to bottom by date from earliest to latest. *Make sure NOT to include the final page of these PDFs when printing as they contain the source citation the students need to decode.* Each student will need access to all five letters, so teachers will need to make a full class set of replica folders to accommodate their chosen group-work configurations.
- To ensure students’ authentic practice in citing archival material, advise students that this is a replica of the first segment of an actual folder of unique documents in the Ransom Center and that they should take care not to get the papers out of order—as not to lose track of multi-page letters. Each folder of documents should bear the following label, using the model image provided on the next page. For extra authenticity, use the HRC logo (see “HRC Logo” PDF) as a folder label:
  - Anne Sexton Papers (1912-1996)
  - Box 27, Folder 7
  - Letters, 1959-1963
  - Harry Ransom Center
  - The University of Texas at Austin
Prior to implementing the second lesson, teachers will need to print copies of the four poem drafts referenced (single PDF). In this case, teachers could choose to make one set of poem draft copies per group or create whole sets for each student to access.

Note: To comply with the Fair Use Provision of U.S. Copyright law, all of the printed copies of this material from the HRC archive must remain in the classroom. In the event that a teacher needs to provide online access to the various PDFs due to printing constraints, the materials may alternatively be posted in a secure, password-protected electronic environment, but only for the lesson day(s) during which they’re in use; this also means foregoing the citation practice exercise in lesson one as the source citation appears on the last page of each “Letter” PDF.

**LESSON 1**
**Engage**
~20 minutes

**Introduction to Archives**
Conduct a Think / Pair / Share activity using the discussion questions below (slides 1-9):

- What mementos do you save? *(EX: movie stubs, concert tickets, etc.)*
- What do you do with the items? *(EX: put in a scrapbook, stuff in an old shoebox, etc.)*
- Do you ever look at them or share them with anyone?
- Take your phone and look through your Snapchat Story, Tweets, Instagram Feed, Tumblr, Myspace, etc. *What sorts of things do you post/share?*
- How do you decide what to share? *What’s your process?*
- How would you feel about your children/grandchildren seeing these posts/feeds?
- How would you feel if strangers read your personal letters, emails,
Introduce & Explore  
~20 minutes

Implement a mini-lesson to *(slides 10-13)*:
- Define ‘archives’ and share some examples *(Harry Houdini’s ball and chain, a lock of Edgar Allan Poe’s hair, an early draft of The Crucible with handwritten notes)*
- Discuss why archives are important and what we can learn from them *(brainstorm as a class)*
- Instruct students on how to cite archival materials *(have them write down or take a picture of the Archival Citation Template, making sure to clarify that the brackets present will not be present when they have finished creating a citation)*
- Discuss potential moral / ethical dilemmas of archival materials

Explain  
~50 minutes

Provide students with a bit of background on Anne Sexton’s life and work in order to give some context for the letters they will be reading in class today, then pass out copies of the first page in the “Intro to Archives, handouts” document—“Looking at Archives”—and sets of manila folders containing the letters. Explain the directions for this activity. *(Slides 14-16)*
- For #1 on the handout, students will be noting and explaining lines from the texts that they think Anne Sexton wouldn’t want to share with the public and lines that they think have academic merit and should be shared for a total of five lines/explanations.
- For #2, students will practice independently citing archival materials using the information provided on the folder.

Notes:
- To support struggling learners’ success on #1, teachers may choose to read aloud the first letter from Sexton to Snodgrass and complete one row of the chart as a class to model an example of the content and depth of explanation expected.
- Students may be directed either a) to read the letters independently and then work as a group to complete the chart, discussing the material as they do so, or b) to independently read the letters and complete the chart first in pencil, then to discuss the work as a group and make any additions/ revisions to their individual charts based on the group discussion as needed. The pacing for this activity will correspond to the selected approach.
- To ensure independent practice on #2, teachers may direct student groups to coordinate to divide the letters such that each group member documents a different letter.

Apply & Elaborate  
~25 minutes

After reading the letters provided in the manila folders, students will work in small groups to analyze and discuss the letters according to the directions for #1 on the handout.
For #2, students will independently practice documenting archival materials using the citation format shown during the mini-lesson and the information provided on and in the manila folders to cite one self-selected letter.

**Evaluate ~15 minutes**

Once students have completed the activity on handout, facilitate a class discussion using the questions below (slide 17). *Encourage the students to share examples from their charts (handout) to support their points.*

- Should all archives be shared with the public?
- If there should be some restrictions, what should they be? *(EX: no digital access, don’t share for 70 years, etc.)*
- If someone wants his/her work hidden away forever or destroyed, should his/her wishes be honored?
- Who should decide what gets shared and how it’s shared?

**Closure ~10 minutes**

Pass out copies of the exit ticket slips found on page two of the “handouts” document for day 1. *(slide 18)*

“In your opinion, who has the right to determine what is included in an archive and how/when to share it? *Explain!*

Students will submit these tickets as they leave class.

**LESSON 2**

**Engage ~20 minutes**

**Behind Sexton’s “The Black Art” (slide 19)**

- Complete an online madlib with the class *(link included in slide 20)*, asking students to give you words with negative connotations.
- Repeat the same madlib, this time asking students to give you words with positive connotations.
- Show/read both madlibs and discuss how the mood and/or meaning changed as the diction changed.
- Review definitions and examples of diction, connotation and denotation, mood, and theme. *(slide 21)*

**Explain ~10 minutes**

Pass out copies of the first two pages in the “Behind Sexton’s ‘Art’, handouts” document—“Anne Sexton Poetry Analysis”—and printed copies of Sexton’s four drafts of “The Black Art” from the HRC. Explain the directions for this activity. *(slides 22-23)*

- For #1 on the handout, students will read closely and work with their group to analyze the diction, noting significant changes made between the drafts on their charts.
- For #2, groups will craft a final draft of the poem, drawing from Sexton’s various drafts of the piece and making any additional tweaks in diction needed in an effort to better achieve the perceived intent of the poet. Groups will then provide a rationale for five of their diction choices.
- A gallery walk will follow, during which students will jot notes to #3-4 on their handout.

**Notes:**
To support struggling learners’ success on #1, teachers may choose to read aloud the first and second poem drafts and complete one row of the chart as a class to model an example of the content and depth of description expected.

Students may be directed either a) to read and mark noted changes on the poem drafts independently and then work as a group to complete the chart, discussing the material as they do so, or b) to independently read and make notes on the drafts and complete the chart first in pencil, then to discuss the work as a group and make any additions/revisions to their individual charts based on the group discussion as needed. The pacing for this activity will correspond to the selected approach.

Apply & Elaborate
~25 minutes

In groups of 3-4, students will compare four different drafts of Anne Sexton’s “The Black Art.” They will fill out the first chart on the handout by paying specific attention to diction and taking note of significant changes and their impact. Each group will share out with the class at least one significant change and its impact.

Evaluate
~25 minutes

Next, student groups will execute task #2, determining the most effective changes in the drafts and creating a final draft. They will fill out the second chart on the handout by explaining at least five significant choices they’ve made in the course of creating this final version. They will write their final draft on the large sheet of white paper provided.

As groups complete their final drafts, they’ll tape them up around the room. Add Anne Sexton’s final published version to the wall as groups are posting their work. When all groups’ poems are in, conduct a gallery walk to examine the groups’ displayed final drafts, including Anne Sexton’s final version. Students will independently read/compare the drafts and write their observations down on their handout. (slide 24)

Closure
~10 minutes

Pass out copies of the exit ticket slips found on page three of the “handouts” document for day 2. (slide 25)

“Does your group’s final draft and Anne Sexton’s final draft have the same meaning? Why or why not?”

Students will submit their tickets as they leave class.

Future Lessons

These skills gained in this set of lessons will serve as a foundation for additional style analysis and revision exercises and for lessons that call for archival research into multiple drafts/versions of a single text.
Resources:


Letters 1-4

Letter 1
Snodgrass, William DeWitt. Handwritten letter to Anne Sexton (third sleeve pages 1-3). Box 27, Folder 7, Anne Sexton Papers, 1912-1996. Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

Poems 1-4
Sexton, Anne. Four typed manuscript drafts of “The Black Art” with author’s annotations, in All My Pretty Ones (1962), typescripts and worksheets. Box 1, Folder 3, Anne Sexton Papers, 1912-1992. Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.