

Chapter 4: Language Arts

Tiered Assignments: Exploring a Concept (Loyalty) Through Literature

Overview: These activities demonstrate that students can explore at different levels of complexity and abstractness the concepts or “big ideas” that are highlighted in the novels that they read. This particular set of tasks addresses the concept of *loyalty*, a concept highlighted by novels such as *My Brother Sam is Dead*, *The Lord of the Flies*, and many others. Students’ work with concepts addressed in literature can give teachers ample assessment data regarding students’ reading comprehension, their grasp of larger understandings related to both literature and life, and their ability to make connections. Thus, these tasks can be an informative part of the summative evaluation for a novel or literature study.

Standard:

- Connect, compare, and contrast ideas, themes, and issues across texts and with real life

Objectives:

The students will **KNOW**

- The definition of loyalty.
- The relationships among characters in the novel/story.

The students will **UNDERSTAND THAT** (**These statements should be discussed with students prior to their beginning work on the tasks outlined below.*)

- Loyalty is based on experience and values.
- Loyalties can change over time and for different reasons.
- Loyalty can be tested.
- Loyalties can lead to conflict both with others and within oneself.

The students will **BE ABLE TO**

- Explain loyalty and its influences and changes in the story and in real life.
- Discuss the role of loyalty in their own lives.

Basis for Differentiation: Student readiness with regard to:

- students’ need for complex and abstract thinking
- the ability to transfer ideas from a novel to the real world

Tier One = lower readiness

Tier Two = middle readiness

Tier Three = higher readiness

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Tier One

Choose a statement about loyalty from those we discussed in class, and support it using evidence from the novel. You must cite a variety of situations and events from the novel to support the statement fully. Your supporting evidence must span the entire novel, not just a limited part of it, and you should use quotes as appropriate.

Then prove the same statement is true using evidence from your own life. You must provide details to support the statement, and you should cite as many examples from your life as are appropriate.

Tier Two

Create a continuum, from *not loyal* to *very loyal*, that shows how loyal you think the characters in the novel are to one another and/or to the causes they support.

Now write a statement that explains the criteria that you used to create the continuum, and place the characters' loyalties on it. How did you decide where to put the characters' loyalties on the continuum?

Create a second continuum that shows how loyal you are to the people, groups, and causes in your own life. In writing, explain why you feel more or less loyal in some cases, and describe how you decided where to place your loyalties on your continuum.

Tier Three

Using evidence and details from the novel and from your own life, write a how-to paper titled *How to Determine Your Loyalties and Maintain Them When They Are Tested*. Be sure to address a variety of different loyalties and specific situations that might test them.