Analyzing Character and Setting

Curriculum Area(s): Literature	
Grade Level: 7	
Time Required: 3 – 45 minute sessions	**Instructional Groupings:** Whole group and independent
Standards: RL.7.9 Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history. RI.7.3 Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).	
Materials: Historical fiction novel, paper, pencil, computer, Internet access, Wikispaces account	
Overview: To create a website analyzing character and setting of a novel to the time period in which it was written.	
What will I differentiate? Novels, character, and setting choice are based on interest and reading levels.	
How will I differentiate? Interest and learning environment	
As a result of this lesson/unit, students will…	
Understand: Can students compare and contrast characters and setting from literature to the historical time period in which they were written?	
Know: Basic computer skills and Internet use **Vocabulary:** character, setting	**Do (Skills):** Research historical time periods. Choose a character and setting from a novel. Analyze the character and setting to the time period.
Pre-Assessment: Students will complete a character analysis graphic organizer describing the character traits of the chosen character. They will specify the appearance, attitude, behavior, and actions of the character. Students will also complete an illustration of the setting based on details from the novel.	
Steps in the Lesson: 1. After reading historical fiction novels such as *Little Women* or *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer,* students will choose a character and setting from the novel. The students will complete the pre-assessment of the character and setting based on the details from the novel.	

2. After evaluating the pre-assessment for accuracy of content, have students begin researching the time period the book was written about. Ask students to specifically look for general appearances, attitudes, behaviors, and actions of people during this time period. Have students create a Venn Diagram of the research and the character from the book.

3. Then ask students to continue their research by finding out about the setting of the book to what was actually occurring during the time period. This could include researching the city and how it was described in the book compared to what it was like during the time period. This can also be done by comparing the housing, terrain, or city to what it was like during the time period. Let students be creative when comparing the setting. Students can also complete a Venn Diagram to keep notes of the comparisons and differences.

4. After completing the research, have students design a website. Wiki is a great option for this and easily navigable by students. It might be easy to spend some time modeling to students how to use Wikispaces or let them do it on their own.

5. On their website, ask students to create a website to compare and contrast the characters and setting to the time period. Ask students to be creative in their website but tell them the expectations of portraying the characters and setting from the book to their time period.

Differentiation: Students may also take this step further and begin to look at the character interactions in the book and compare this to how people behaved during that time period. Students can also look at real events that happened during the time period that may have influenced events in the novel. This research should be added to the website as well.

Closure Activity/Wrap-up: Students can navigate and explore each other's websites or students can present their websites to the class.

Post-Assessment: Students are assessed on the content of the website. They must include a character analysis and setting analysis to a historical time period.

Additional Resources:
http://www.wikispaces.com/
http://www.weebly.com/