

LESSON PLANS



Exploring Why We Play With Fire by Giselle Vriesen- Grades 7-8

Lesson 1: Introduction to Mythology

Objective: Students will understand the role of mythology in *Why We Play With Fire* and explore their own connection to mythology.

Materials:

- Handouts on different mythologies (e.g., Norse, Chinese, African, Greek, etc.)
- Projector/Whiteboard
- Markers/Pens
- *Why We Play With Fire* (copies for each student)

Activities:

1. Introduction to Mythology:

- Discussion: Introduce different mythologies and their influence on storytelling. Show examples of mythological elements (e.g., mother goddesses, creation myths, creatures, symbols and objects).
- Activity: Students create their own mythological object, similar to the keys in *Why We Play With Fire*. They will describe how it works, what its magical properties are, what mythology it's connected to, what its history is, draw what it looks like, then explain both why it's important to the mythology it's connected to and why they made it.

2. Reading Assignment:

- Activity: Read the first chapter of *Why We Play With Fire* aloud or have students read silently. Focus on identifying any initial characters or themes.

Homework: Read the next two chapters and note any mythological references.

LESSON PLANS: Exploring Why We Play With Fire by Giselle Vriesen- Grades 7-8



Lesson 2: Introduction to Diversity in Literature

Objective: Students explore the importance of diversity in literature.

Materials:

- Projector/Whiteboard
- Markers/Pens
- Why We Play With Fire (copies for each student)

Diversity in Literature:

- Discussion: Define diversity in literature and its significance. Discuss how diverse characters and perspectives enrich stories, why diverse characters were excluded from literature for so long, (White-owned printing presses excluded BIPOC from publishing etc.) and why only BIPOC can accurately portray themselves.
- Activity: Discuss diversity in class favourite popular tv and movies and how it impacts the story as a whole, then discuss how diversity is expressed in Why We Play With Fire.

1. Reading Assignment:

- Activity: Read the next chapter of Why We Play With Fire aloud or have students read silently, noting the experience Thea has internally while interacting in her environment.

Homework:

-Continue reading Why We Play With Fire.

LESSON PLANS: Exploring Why We Play With Fire

by Giselle Vriesen- Grades 7-8

Lesson 3: Analyzing Characters

Objective: Students will analyze the main characters in the book and how they evolve within the story.

Materials:

- Character Profile Worksheet (included)
- Why We Play With Fire (copies for each student)

Activities:

1. Character Analysis:

- Discussion: Review the characters introduced so far. Discuss their roles, backgrounds and how they reflect or contrast Thea.
- Activity: Complete Character Profile Worksheet for main characters. Focus on their heritage, personality traits, and development. Have students break into groups of three-five, each choosing one character to profile (Thea, Teal, Tiana, Zero, or Auden)

2. Group Discussion:

- Activity: In groups of three-five, students share the character profiles of who they chose (one of each character per group); discuss how their character has impacted the story, and how they might impact the rest of the book.

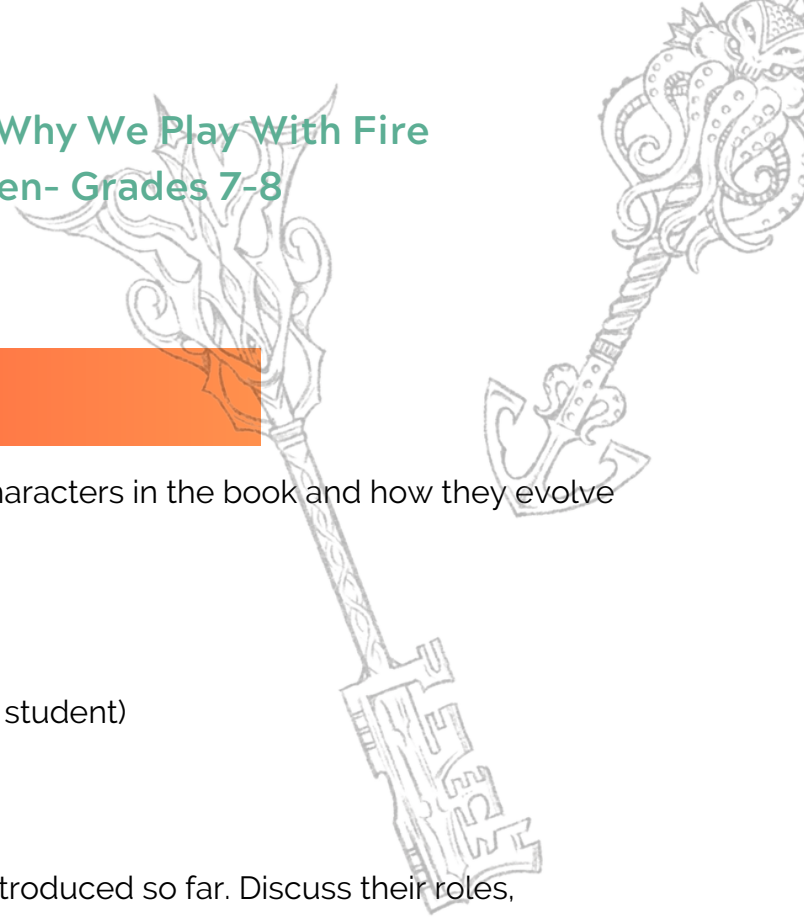
3. Reading Assignment:

- Activity: Read the next chapter, focusing on character development and interactions.

Homework:

-Write a short paragraph on how their specific character influences Thea's actions in the story. (If they have chosen Thea, write a short paragraph on how Thea's connection to the people around her influences her actions in the story).

-Continue reading Why We Play With Fire.



LESSON PLANS: Exploring Why We Play With Fire by Giselle Vriesen- Grades 7-8

Lesson 4: Mythology and Plot Development

Objective: Students will explore how mythology influences the plot and themes of the novel.

Materials:

- Mythology Tracker Worksheet (included)
- Why We Play With Fire (copies for each student)

Activities:

1. Mythology in the Plot:

- Activity: Using the Mythology Tracker Worksheet, students identify and analyze mythological references in the novel. Discuss how these elements contribute to plot development and themes.

2. Group Analysis:

- Activity: In groups, students discuss how different mythological elements impact the story's direction and character decisions. Each group presents their findings.

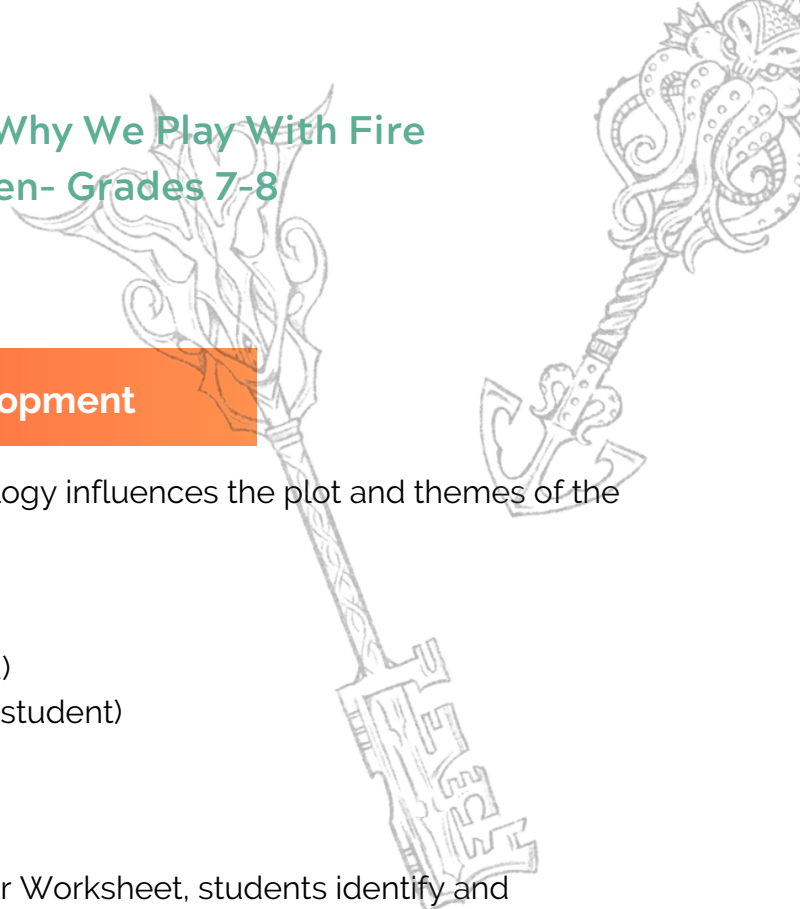
3. Class Discussion:

- Activity: Share insights from group discussions.

Homework:

-Write a reflection on how mythology in the book influences understanding of the plot or characters.

-Continue reading Why We Play With Fire.



LESSON PLANS: Exploring Why We Play With Fire

by Giselle Vriesen- Grades 7-8

Lesson 5: Exploring the Hero's Journey

Objective: Students will identify and map out the stages of the hero's journey in the novel. (Students should have read most of the book so far)

Materials:

- Hero's Journey[GV1] Map/Handout
- Why We Play With Fire (copies for each student)

Activities:

1. Introduction to the Hero's Journey:

- Discussion: Review the stages of the hero's journey (e.g., Call to Adventure, Crossing the Threshold). Use a familiar story or film as an example.

2. Mapping the Hero's Journey:

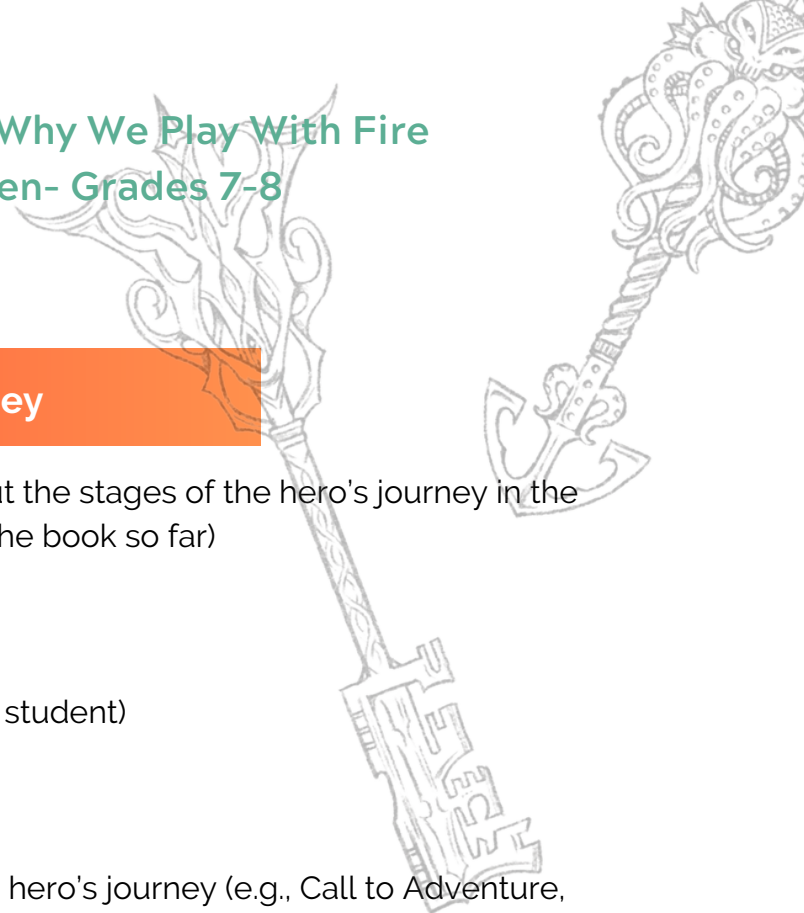
- Activity: Students work individually or in pairs to map out the hero's journey in Why We Play With Fire. Use Hero's Journey Map Worksheet to identify key stages in the story.

3. Class Discussion:

- Activity: Discuss how the protagonist's journey aligns with or deviates from the traditional hero's journey. Share maps and compare interpretations.

Homework:

-Finish the book.



LESSON PLANS: Exploring Why We Play With Fire

by Giselle Vriesen- Grades 7-8

Lesson 6: Synthesis and Creative Expression

Objective: Students will synthesize their understanding of mythology, diversity, and the hero's journey through creative expression.

Materials:

- Art Supplies (optional for visual projects)
- Pens/pencils
- Paper

Activities:

1. Option 1 - Creative Writing:

- Activity: Students write their own short fantasy story or myth that incorporates elements from a mythology connected to their lineage, and follows a hero's journey. Provide prompts to spark creativity.

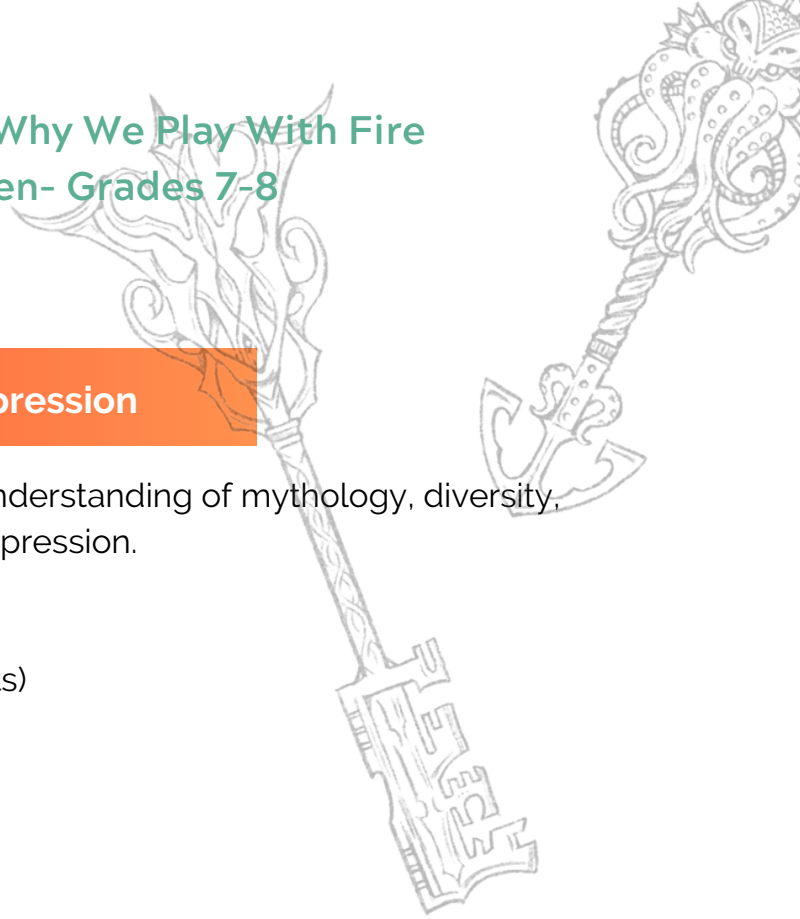
2. Option 2 - Creative Projects:

- Activity: Alternatively, students can create a visual representation (e.g., comic strip, storyboard) of a new mythological tale or hero's journey.

3. Sharing and Reflection :

- Activity: Students share their stories or projects with the class. Reflect on how their work incorporates the themes discussed in the novel.

Homework: Prepare a brief presentation or written summary about their creative project, explaining how it connects to themes in Why We Play With Fire.



CHARACTER PROFILE WORKSHEET

Name:

Age:

Pronouns:

Appearance:

Personality:

Likes:

Dislikes:

Background:

Their impact on the story (so far):

Their impact on the story (future predictions):

MYTHOLOGY TRACKER WORKSHEET

Chapter number	Mythological occurrence(s)	How it impacts the story

Resources: Why We Play With Fire by Giselle Vriesen