



# Short Stories Unit

## Diction Lesson

grades 7-10

Thank you for subscribing to my newsletter at [teachnouvelle.com](http://teachnouvelle.com)! Here's a free lesson that you can use in your secondary ELA classroom. This lesson is compatible with Interactive Student Notebooks, but I've also included a regular worksheet for you to use. I use Sandra Cisneros' "Geraldo No Last Name" for this lesson, but you can use any short story with a strong diction.

I also have a store on TeachersPayTeachers. Be sure to follow me for updates & freebies!

Thanks,  
Danielle @ Nouvelle ELA



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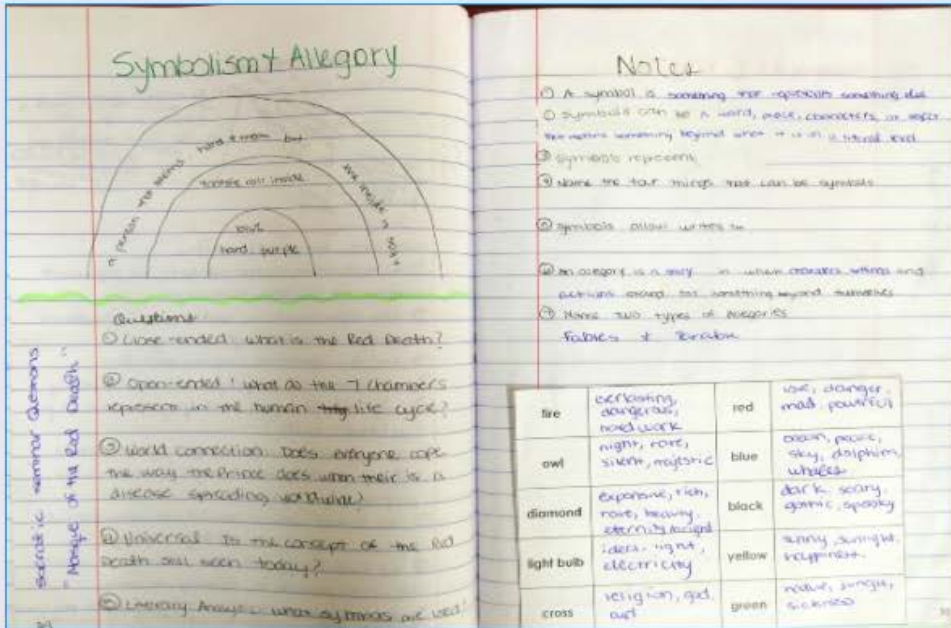
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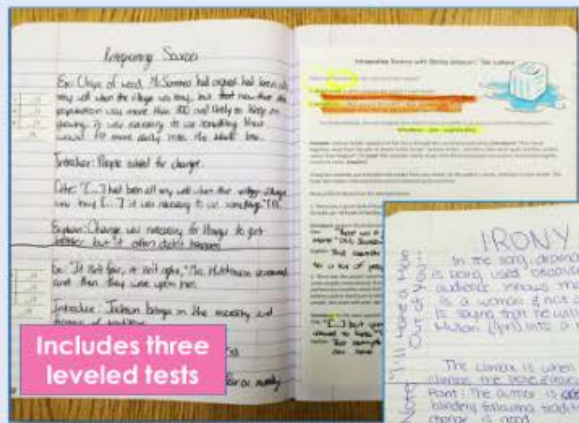
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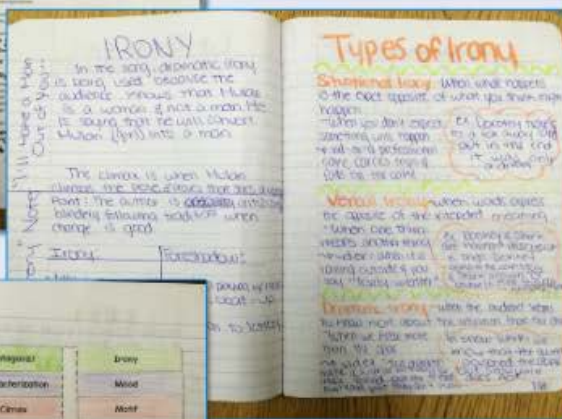
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## Short Story Unit

grades 7-11

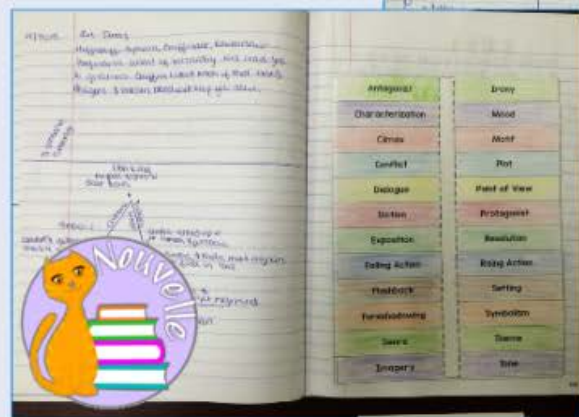


The organization & tactile advantage of the ISN for an older audience



Best,

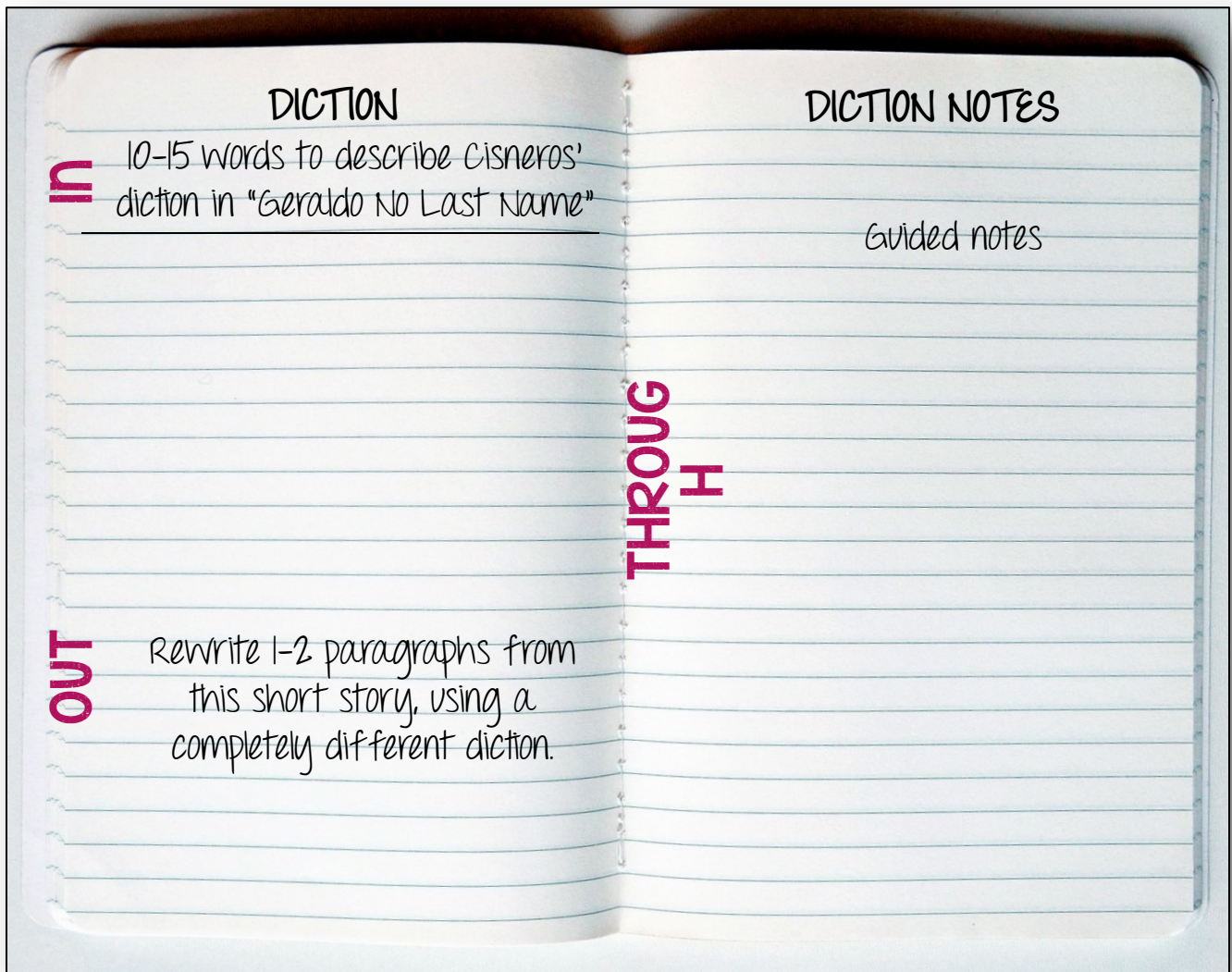
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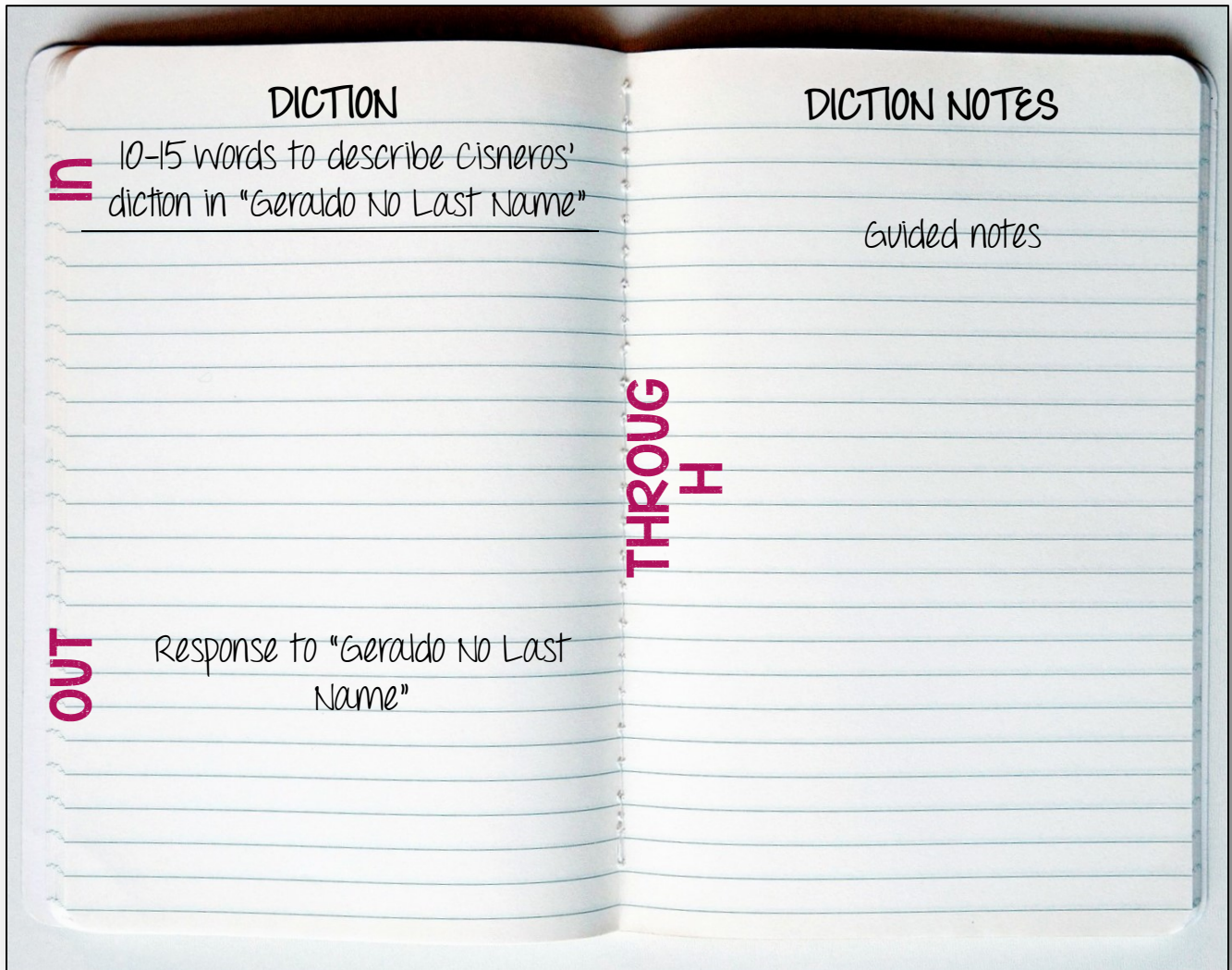
# Diction - Option #1



## Suggested Lesson Plan – creative writing option

<b>IN</b> 5-7 min.	Students read "Geraldo No Last Name" by Sandra Cisneros and describe her diction, using adjectives only (ex. Unfeeling, distant, curt). They probably don't have a huge vocabulary for this yet, but let them share their answers and brainstorm together.
<b>THROUGH</b> 25 min.	Students receive the Diction Notes handout. With a small group, they read through the concepts and work to apply them to "Geraldo". Circulate and check for understanding.
<b>OUT</b> 10 min.	Students rewrite 1-2 paragraphs from the story, using a different diction. They can share these with a partner and explore how the new diction has changed the impact of the story.

# Diction - Option #2



## Suggested Lesson Plan – constructed response option

**IN**  
5-7 min.

Students read “Geraldo No Last Name” by Sandra Cisneros and describe her diction, using adjectives only (ex. Unfeeling, distant, curt). They probably don’t have a huge vocabulary for this yet, but let them share their answers and brainstorm together.

**THROUGH**  
25 min.

Students receive the Diction Notes handout. With a small group, they read through the concepts and work to apply them to “Geraldo”. Circulate and check for understanding.

**OUT**  
10 min.

Students write a paragraph response to the short story, focusing in particular on how Cisneros’ diction supports her message.

**Diction** refers to an author's word choice and syntax. As readers, we can examine an author's diction to more closely understand the author's intentions in the text.

Diction is shaped by words that are exact, concrete, and carry imagery.

Consider the following examples:

*That crook nicked my swag!*

*That fraud purloined my possessions!*

Each example creates a strong narrative voice for the reader, and the two voices created are very different.

Diction depends on three elements:

- **Purpose** – Is the writer's purpose to inform, persuade, or entertain? Diction elicits emotion, so the word choice should match the purpose.

What is the author's **purpose** in writing this text? What examples of word choice support your conclusion?

- **Topic** – Is the topic serious or fun? Is it tragic or carefree?

What is the **topic** here? What is the main message of the text? How is this supported by the author's diction?

- **Occasion** – Why is the author writing? Who is the author's intended audience? Writing to the President of the United States will require much different word choice than writing a friendly letter.

What **occasion** or **audience** is the author writing for? How do you know?

# Diction Notes - Foldable Version

<p><b>Diction</b> refers to an author's _____ and _____.</p> <p>As readers, we can examine an author's diction to more closely understand the author's intentions in the text.</p> <p>Diction is shaped by words that are _____, _____, and carry _____.</p>	<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>_____:</p> <p>Will contain diction that is more emotionally-driven to _____ the reader.</p> <p>_____:</p> <p>Will contain neutral, _____ word choice.</p> <p>_____:</p> <p>Will contain colorful words, full of imagery to make the piece _____.</p>
<p><b>Topic</b></p> <p>Diction helps show the author's _____ towards the topic.</p> <p>Consider these examples:</p> <p><i>The valiant soldiers fought with honor and dignity.</i></p> <p><i>The young men trudged through the mud on the battlefield, blood flowing free and sticky from their wounds.</i></p>	<p><b>Occasion</b></p> <p>Authors choose their words to suit a specific occasion.</p> <p>Write the following informal sentence in the other two registers:</p> <p><b>Colloquial</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Informal</b></p> <p>"How are you?"</p> <p><b>Formal</b></p> <p>_____</p>

# Diction Notes - Foldable Version

<p><b>Diction</b> refers to an author's <b>word choice</b> and <b>syntax</b>. As readers, we can examine an author's diction to more closely understand the author's intentions in the text.</p> <p>Diction is shaped by words that are <b>exact</b>, <b>concrete</b>, and carry <b>imagery</b>.</p>	<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p><b>Persuade:</b> Will contain diction that is more emotionally-driven to <b>convince</b> the reader.</p> <p><b>Inform:</b> Will contain neutral, <b>objective</b> word choice.</p> <p><b>Entertain:</b> Will contain colorful words, full of imagery to make the piece <b>lively</b>.</p>
<p><b>Topic</b></p> <p>Diction helps show the author's <b>tone</b> towards the topic.</p> <p>Consider these examples:</p> <p><i>The valiant soldiers fought with honor and dignity.</i></p> <p><i>The young men trudged through the mud on the battlefield, blood flowing free and sticky from their wounds.</i></p>	<p><b>Occasion</b></p> <p>Authors choose their words to suit a specific occasion.</p> <p>Write the following informal sentence in the other two registers:</p> <p><b>Colloquial</b> <b>"Shhh!"</b></p> <p><b>Informal</b> "Please be quiet."</p> <p><b>Formal</b> <b>I should be grateful if you would make less noise.</b></p>

# DICTION ANALYSIS

By Danielle @ Nouvelle ELA



# Diction

- **Diction** refers to an author's **word choice** and **syntax**. As readers, we can examine an author's diction to more closely understand the author's **intentions** in the text.
- Diction is shaped by words that are **exact**, **concrete**, and carry **imagery**.

# Examples

- Consider the following examples:

*That crook nicked my swag!*  
*That fraud purloined my possessions!*

- Write these examples and another pair below your **diction** tab.
- Each example creates a strong narrative voice for the reader, and the two voices created are very different.

# Elements



Diction depends on three elements:

- Purpose
- Topic
- Occasion

# Purpose

## Persuade:

Will contain diction that is more emotionally-driven to **convince** the reader.

## Inform:

Will contain neutral, **objective** word choice.

## Entertain:

Will contain colorful words, full of imagery to make the piece **lively**.

# Topic

Diction helps show the author's **tone** towards the topic.

Consider these examples:

*The valiant soldiers fought with honor and dignity.*

*The young men trudged through the mud on the battlefield, blood flowing free and sticky from their wounds.*

What is the author's **tone** in each? How does the diction help you understand this?

# Occasion

Authors choose their words to suit a specific occasion.

There are three basic social registers that affect our word choice:

**Informal** – standard speech that you use in most classrooms and with most people.

**Colloquial** – contains more slang and abbreviations and is acceptable with your friends.

**Formal** – what you would use with adult strangers or in very strict settings, like meeting the President of the United States.

# Occasion

You try:

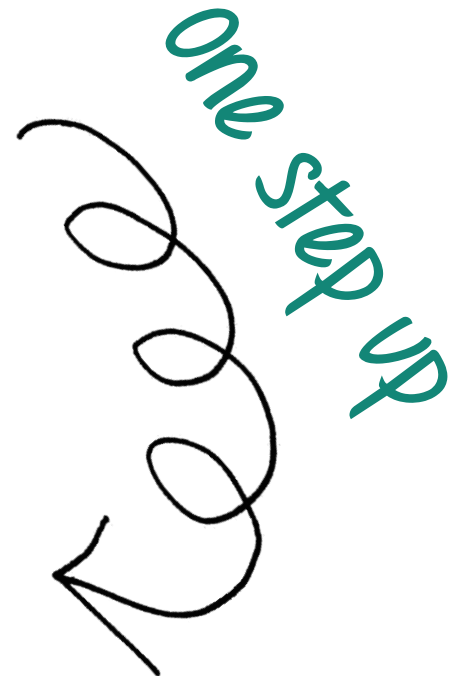
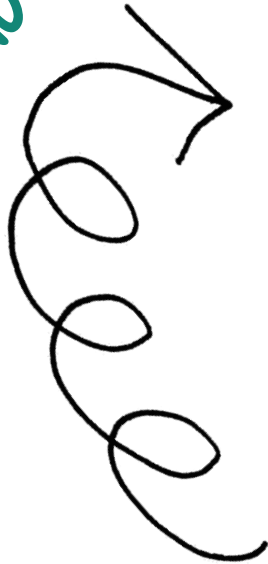
**Colloquial:**

**Informal:**

Please be quiet.

**Formal:**

*One step down*



# Zoom on Model Text

Under each flap, answer the following questions in notes form. Use the text to support each answer with an example of diction.

1. What is the author's **purpose** in writing this text?
2. What is the **topic** here? What is the main message of the story?
3. What **occasion** or **audience** is the author writing for? How do you know?



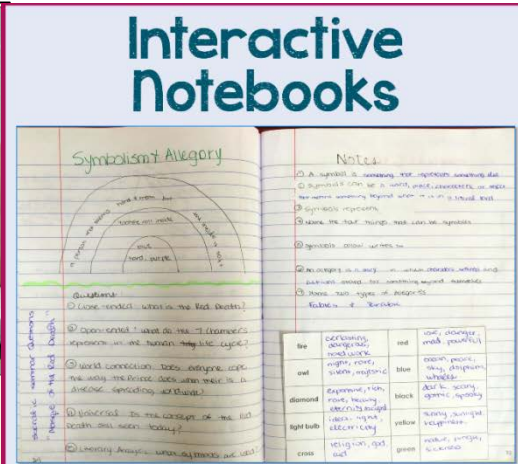


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**SYMBOLISM**

A symbol is an object that represents an abstract idea. Consider the ideas represented by the following symbols:

- a rose
- the color red
- the number 13

**SYMBOLISM & ALLEGORY**  
By Danielle @ Nouvelle

use with "Masque of the Red Death" by Edgar Allan Poe or the text of your choice

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