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**Ideas for Teaching Literature**

For Class Time

1. Teacher-led discussions
   1. Direct instruction and commentary on author and on the selection
   2. Entry-level questions about the story to establish setting, characters, plot, theme
      1. What is the context for this? Where? When? What was going on in this place or during this time?
      2. Who are the characters? What are they like?
      3. What is the basic plot? Let’s make sure that we all are agreed about what happened before we talk about why it happened.
      4. What is the story’s theme? What point does the author want to make?
   3. Open-ended questions to stimulate discussion--e.g. about intents of characters, meaning of story, other possible outcomes, lessons to take away
      1. Why do you think that Roger believed the stranger?
      2. Did Bella become a different person after her sickness? Why?
      3. Would you have reacted the same way as Miss Alice?
      4. What do you think would have happened if Robert would have hit him?
      5. What are some similar situations in our day?
   4. Commentary and questions on writing style and literary devices
2. Student-directed discussion
   1. Divide group up into small groups and give them some prompts/questions to discuss
   2. Assign students to bring one or two discussion questions to class and then go around the room and have them present their questions
3. Individual written responses to questions or prompts from the teacher—Similar to teacher-led discussions only all responses are written; this might work to get the class started and then transition to open discussion
4. Read together in class
   1. Take turns reading through a selection
   2. Assign different characters to different readers

For Homework:

1. Read selection (sometimes out loud)
2. Answer questions in text (use complete sentences)
3. Summarize the piece in a paragraph
4. Write down 2 or 3 observations on the selection
5. Write a discussion question or two
6. Do a character analysis on one of the characters
7. Compare and contrast two characters or two settings
8. Explore a theme in a paragraph or mini-essay
9. Research an author