

**Thematic Literature Lesson: "Panache"**  
(from W.P. Kinsella's *Dance Me Outside*)

**Submitted by:** Linda Beaulieu (Claremont, NH)

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**Description:**

This lesson is part of a tenth grade thematic literature unit entitled "Mirrors, Masks and Labels." The purpose of the lesson is to analyze the story to compare the way the characters see themselves with the way society sees them. Students will also look critically at the labels that the characters are given and the masks they wear to counter these labels. Because the setting of the story is both on a First Nations reservation in Canada and at a strip mine, students will explore the details of the setting and learn general details about mining and the geopolitical organization of Canada.

**Summary of Story:**

The short story "Panache" is part of a collection of W. P. Kinsella stories called Dance Me Outside about a First Nation tribe in Alberta. This particular story is about the death of Tom Pony who goes to work for the Cardinal Mining Company and runs into discrimination from white workers. In the end, Tom becomes a hero because he saves the life of one of the truck drivers, but the narrator questions what it was that motivated Tom to save the man's life. The story has humor, a strong sense of place, good characterization and action. It also juxtaposes the feelings and attitudes of the First Nation characters with those of the white world. Any student from middle school up could read the story and find it interesting.

**Grade Level(s):**

Suitable for Grades 9-10

**Subject:**

Language Arts

**Duration:**

Two eighty-five minute classes

**Goals:**

The first goal is to analyze the story in regard to the central theme of the unit, and the second goal is to analyze setting to get a sense of the location of the Province of Alberta in Canada and a sense of what strip mining is.

**Objectives:**

The student will:

- Analyze how the characters see themselves.
- Analyze how the characters see themselves through the eyes of the white people.

- Interpret the theme of the story by analyzing the title.
- Identify on a map the location of the territories and provinces of Canada.
- Define strip mining.

**Standards:**

This lesson meets New Hampshire state standards in a variety of ways.

**Background Information:**

Before beginning the lesson, students will have studied the parts of a short story and the informational summary form and the MLA form for internal citations and works cited.

**Materials:**

- A photocopied map of Canada
- Copies of the short story “Panache”
- Internet access
- Questions for “Panache” (included below)
- Assignment sheet for summary (included below)
- Essay assignment and rubric (included below)
- Atlases
- Dictionaries

**Procedures:**

1. In groups of three, fill in the map of Canada. Once this is completed, each group will find information about Alberta from the atlases and list the information on the map. Each group will then list the information on the board and as a class discuss it to draw conclusions about the location and physical terrain.
2. Keeping the same groups, the students will look up the following:
  - a. What is strip mining?
  - b. What kind of equipment is used in strip mining?
  - c. Where are coal mines located in Alberta?

When the students have completed their search, they must, as a group, write a one page summary answering the above questions. The summary must include a citation of their source.

3. Look up the following words and add them to their notebooks:

Panache  
Armor (Armour)  
Bonnet  
Stampede

4. As homework, read “Panache.” Ask students to write at least five “I don’t understand why...” questions while reading. These questions are collected and count as a quiz.
5. Have each student put an “I don’t understand why question on the board.” Create new groups of four and assign each group one or two “I don’t know why questions to discuss.” Each group will summarize its answer(s).

6. Give each group a copy of the *Mirrors, Masks and Labels* Unit Worksheet (included below). Then discuss, as a class, each group's analysis.
7. Review the students' knowledge of Canada by labeling an overhead map with the provinces. Then add more detail about Alberta.
8. Hand out the essay assignment (included below). If time permits, do a prewriting activity to help students organize their ideas.

### **Possible Extension/ Wrap Up:**

Have students read "Nothing wild about Bill Kinsella" from the *Edmonton Sun*. This is available on line at [http://www.canoe.ca/JamBooksFeatures/kinsella\\_wp.html](http://www.canoe.ca/JamBooksFeatures/kinsella_wp.html). After reading the article, pass out headlines, leads or short human interest articles from newspapers and have students develop a story or character sketch around these.

### **Assessment:**

As the final activity, students must write their interpretation of the story's theme by analyzing the title. This must be a two page analysis using quotes from the story to support their thesis. The assignment sheet with the rubric is included with this lesson. This assessment fulfills my school's curriculum requirements as well as the themes of the unit. Students might also take a quiz on the location of the provinces, specifically Alberta.

### **Works Cited:**

Kinsella, W.P. Dance Me Outside. Boston, Massachusetts: David R. Godine, Publisher, 1986.

### **Questions re "Panache"**

**Directions:** You have twenty minutes to find the answers to the following questions:

1. What is strip mining?
2. What kinds of equipment are used in strip mining?
3. Where are mines located in Alberta?

Once you have found the answers, write a one page summary that will help the reader better understand strip mining. This is an informational summary and should be in your words, not the words of the authors. At the end of the document, please cite your sources using the correct MLA format.

### **FCA's:**

1. No plagiarism 40
2. Gives adequate detail to answer each question 30
3. Correctly uses MLA 10
4. No errors in paragraphing, spelling, sentence structure or apostrophes 10
5. No use of the pronoun "you" 10

**Mirrors, Masks, Labels Unit Worksheet**  
**“Panache”**

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in proper paragraph format on a separate piece of paper..

1. From the dialogue and description given in the story, what is your perception of the characters, Frank Fence-post, Tom Pony and the narrator? Please support your answer with quotes.
2. How do Frank Fence-post, Tom Pony and the narrator see themselves in relation to white people? Support your answer with quotes from the story.
3. How is each major and minor character labeled in this story and by whom? Support your answer with quotes from the story.

**Mirrors, Masks and Labels Unit**  
**Essay - “Panache”**

**Directions:** Answer the following question using at least six quotes to support your thesis.

***At the end of the story “Panache” is inscribed on Tom Pony’s tombstone. Is this a mirror, mask or label?***

**FCAs:**

1. Organizes paper with an introduction at least three developmental paragraphs and a conclusion. 20 pts
2. States thesis that clearly answers the question. 25pts.
3. Uses at least six quotes from the story to support the ideas developed in the paragraphs. Does not tack quotes on at the end of the paragraph but explains them within the context of the paragraph. 25pts.
4. Paragraphs relate to each other and the thesis. 20 pts
5. No errors in paragraph and sentence structure or with apostrophes and spelling. 10pts.