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Alliteration, personification, simile, metaphor, allusion, irony, and parallel structures, among our Literary Devices. These are just a few of the techniques used by authors to convey meaning. Understatement, hyperbole, and onomatopoeia are just a few examples of literary devices. What are some examples of author's craft, one might wonder? Other examples of authors' craft include: sound, smell, taste, touch, see, Epilogue, Footnotes, writing in a diary or journal style, quotes or famous sayings at the beginning of chapters, using dates or unique ways to identify chapters. How do you write an author's craft, one might wonder? When teaching author's craft, here are a few areas to consider. Teach how text organizers are organized by authors. Analyzing a text's organization structure can assist the reader in better understanding the message by "reading between the lines." Authors use writing techniques to teach them. Make Inferences about Why Authors Use Specified Craft Tools What is the author's technique here? A technique used by an individual author in his writing is known as the author's technique. It varies from author to author, and it is determined by one's syntax, word choice, and tone. Stories are examples of text written to entertain people. What kind of writing craft moves do you make? (Explaining a Craft Move) Revealing what a character is feeling or thinking, depicting a final action, teaching a lesson, or lingering on a character's memories of an event or place are just a few of the ways authors choose to end a story. What are the essentials of craft? The basic elements that bring the story to life for readers. Invoke a variety of emotions. Create intriguing and complex characters. Elicit strong emotions. Use a rich character voice to express yourself. Involve the reader in the action. Five accomplished writers demonstrate five great examples of writing techniques that bring the story to life for readers. Invoke a variety of emotions. Create intriguing and complex characters. Elicit strong emotions. Use a rich character voice to express yourself. Involve the reader in the action. Is it the author's job to set the tone? Look for descriptive words and phrases when deciding on a setting. The setting not only provides information about the location and time, but it is also a powerful tool used by authors to create atmosphere and bring the story to life. In nonfiction, what is an author's craft? An author's ability to write a text is known as a craft. Nonfiction writing primarily to convey factual information is known as informational text. Adults read the majority of printed materials in informational texts (e.g., textbooks, newspapers, reports, directions, brochures, and technical manuals). What can a writer learn from learning about an author's craft and style? A writer uses a variety of tools and techniques to craft a piece of writing, just as a woodworker uses a variety of tools and techniques to craft a piece of furniture. When people try to perfect their work, many professions learn from each other. What is the difference between craft and structure? Craft and Structure: Analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone by interpreting words and phrases as they appear in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings. Craft and structure: What is the best way to describe an author's word choice? However, an author's word choice or diction can have a significant impact on the overall tone of a story or piece of nonfiction. 27 Dictionary Words to Describe Abstract General, conceptual, and the polar opposite of concrete. Euphonious is the opposite of cacophonous in sounding pleasant. Emotional is the expression of emotions. However, an author's word choice or diction can have a significant impact on the overall tone of a story or piece of nonfiction. 27 Dictionary Words to Describe Abstract General, conceptual, and the polar opposite of concrete. Euphonious is the opposite of cacophonous in sounding pleasant. Emotional is the expression of emotions. What is the best way for authors to convey their message? Many authors use animals as symbols in literature to communicate their message to their readers. Animals are frequently used as metaphors by many writers. Because the reader understands the story better, writers' jobs are simplified in literature if their stories speak through animals. What are the four different types of narratives? Expository, Descriptive, Persuasive, and Narrative are the four different types of writing styles. What does the author's goal mean? In writing, an author's purpose is his motivation or intent. An author's goal may be to amuse, persuade, inform, or satirize the reader. An author uses narrative writing to tell a story or recent events. An understanding of author's craft is vital to a student's ability to analyze text. But the problem is, what do students really know about craft in writing? Or even the concept of craft in general. The Short Short Fiction Boot Camp that I use at the beginning of the year in AP Literature is focused on craft. It includes lessons on diction, complexity, detail, syntax, conflict and more. Yet we never really focus on those ideas as craft, just what they are and why they are included in the short stories. This year, I decided to go at it from a different angle. And the results were incredible. Author crafts are the tools that authors use to compose their work, their art. So I decided that I really wanted to begin the year not only by analyzing specific types of author's craft which is what we normally do. But also by having the students relate it to areas of life where they themselves might be participating in the use of craft. I wanted them to think about all aspects of life as containing craft. My hope is that by looking at other forms or art and even at athletes that they would see that craft is not just for authors but that it is universal. The first day of school, we hopped right in. Our bell ringer for the day was the definition of craft both as a noun and a verb. Students considered things that are craft and areas of their lives where they believe they focus on craft. We jumped into the year with an amazing discussion. We followed that discussion with stations that had students examine the idea of author craft (musician craft, artist craft) in a variety of genres including fine art, photography and music along with poetry and prose. The students moved through the stations closely examining images and listening to performances. And they really paid attention to how the artists were using and developing and using their crafts. Finally, we came back together so that the students could share out and complete an exit ticket. This was an amazing way to start the year. But it would really be great anytime you are interested in a reboot or you want to dive deeper into craft. My students used conventional stations. I had table tents set up in six places around the room. Each station included laminated copies of the prints available for the students to handle and look at closely as they reflected on six universal ideas related to craft as identified by American Craft Magazine. However, you could use a choice board, a gallery walk or digital stations to accomplish the same goal. I wanted my students up and moving around on this first day of school, but if you are pressed for time, a gallery walk would be a great option. Once we completed the stations activity, we moved through the rest of the bootcamp unit which takes a day to focus on a variety of author's crafts like diction, use of detail, syntax, characterization, conflicts and setting. The students considered these ideas with a different eye after looking craft in other aspects of life. To get these done for you stations, head over to my TPT store. This Power of Craft Stations Activity includes over 45 pages of materials including essential questions, a unit overview and calendar, a detailed lesson plan and the materials to set up six or more stations. Additionally, it includes directions on how to do the activity as a Choice Board, a Gallery Walk or as Digital Stations. Why You Should Teach Short Stories at the Beginning of the Year 9 Reasons to Teach Short Short Stories How to Teach Setting in a Short Story (The English Teacher Vault) The Power of Author's Craft Stations Short Short Fiction Boot Camp for AP Literature Teaching author's craft with short stories is the perfect way to get students comfortable with understanding and analyzing an author's purpose and message. Read on to learn the best tips and titles for teaching author's craft with short stories. Teaching author's craft isn't much of a challenge if you're looking for students to stare at plot diagrams or regurgitate definitions. However, it's time to move beyond simply summarizing and answering basic text-dependent questions. Besides, at the secondary level, students have the foundation to start thinking more deeply about how and why authors write the way they do. Now, since you're here, I have a feeling you're looking to dig a little deeper too—and you should! Understanding, analyzing, and (dare I say) appreciating the author's craft differentiates passive readers from active and engaged readers. It breaks the barrier between reader and author, allowing students to understand the author's message and purpose on a deeper level. The key here is diving in and teaching author's craft beyond definitions. Instead, it's imperative to provide explicit instruction, show examples, and use strong mentor texts. Therefore, teaching author's craft with short stories is a great place to start. Psst! Looking to jump right to the short story titles? Feel free to scroll past the following few sections. The first step to teaching author's craft is clearly understanding what it is. Because there are so many elements and layers to an author's craft, I recommend starting with a fairly basic overall definition: Author's craft refers to the intentional decisions, tools, and techniques an author uses to convey a story and develop and support a central idea in a text. It's about more than understanding what the author wrote. Author's craft is all about thinking about why they wrote it the way they did. It's about analyzing the author's intention and use of things like literary devices and text structures. It's thinking about the purpose behind an author's decisions around word choice, characters, and point of view. (You get the point.) However, since there are tons of tools and techniques authors use, the following essential questions help keep students on track: Is the author's intention with this text to entertain, persuade, or inform? (And, yes, it can be a combination of two or all three.) What idea or message is the author trying to convey to their readers? What tools and techniques are they using to convey their purpose and message? Are they successful in doing so? Why or why not? And because understanding and analyzing an author's craft is a skill that takes time to develop, it's important to have a variety of mentor texts that show different aspects of craft. Here are some examples of mentor texts that can help students understand the author's craft. 1. "The Lottery" and/or "Charles" by Shirley Jackson While both stories make for great examples of author's craft, juxtaposing them against one another can be fun—and an effective way to teach author's craft. Despite being written by the same author, the craft behind each story couldn't be more different. While Jackson skillfully employs literary elements and devices to craft a shocking horror story in "The Lottery" to explore the notion of tradition, "Charles" explores identity in a silly, light-hearted manner. Whether these stories are taught together or independently, students will have a field day analyzing Jackson's craft. The Short Story Vault by Chomping at the Lit — Over 50 Short Stories 2. "Eleven" by Sandra Cisneros Cisneros writes a highly relatable story about a traumatizing embarrassing occurrence at school. Taking place during one day, the first-person narrator describes the event in great detail, emphasizing the impact it had on her. Ask students to consider why Cisneros chose to tell the story this way and how it adds to the overall effect on the reader. Additionally, students love discussing how Cisneros crafted such a relatable tale as they (inevitably) end up sharing memories when they, too, felt most vulnerable or embarrassed at school. Eleven by Sandra Cisneros Short Story Analysis — Reading Comprehension 3. "There Will Come Soft Rains" by Ray Bradbury Another story loved by many students thanks to its vivid descriptions and chilling plot twist! There's much to discuss regarding Bradbury's craft in this story and, honestly, any of his short stories. Between the descriptive language and personification, Bradbury brings this story to life without a single human character. The question to ask students is why? How does that decision to forego human characters emphasize Bradbury's overall message of the dangers of technology dependency? Ask students to point out the tools Bradbury uses to go from a "perfect" environment to a grim reality. 4. "The Landlady" by Roald Dahl You're missing out if you have yet to read this short story by Dahl. And, trust me, your students will love this creepy tale. Have them pay attention to how Dahl skillfully uses a limited third-person narrator, taking readers on an eerie journey filled with unsettling realizations with Billy, the story's protagonist. Dahl's choices throughout the allow for curiosity (and bit of confusion) to build in the reader over the course of the story. The Landlady by Roald Dahl — Short Story Literary Analysis 5. "The Fun They Had" by Isaac Asimov Middle-grade readers and struggling students will enjoy this quick yet powerful short story about the "old way" of education. (However, it's worth noting this story takes place hundreds of years in the future where school is 100% virtual, down to the teachers themselves.) Considering the tone captures the perspective of the 11-year-old protagonist, ask students to consider Asimov's decision to use dialogue to convey most of the story. 6. "So What Are You, Anyway?" by Lawrence Hill There is a lot of the author's craft to unpack in this short story. However, one of my favorite elements to point out is the setting: an airplane. Ask students why they think Hill chose to use an airplane as a setting for a story about racial prejudice and identity. Additionally, have them pay close attention to how Hill uses characterization and dialogue to further emphasize his message on racial prejudice and its impact on one's identity. 7. "The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe Poe is a great author to use for teaching author's craft, especially if you're doing so around spooky season. Many students are familiar with his work, or at least his name. Therefore, they "sort of" know what they are getting into. Have them pay close attention to how Poe creates the doom and gloom vibes he is well-known for through everything from characterization and mood to diction and point of view. The Tell-Tale Heart Digital Escape Room | Reading Comprehension Game 8. "How to Transform an Everyday, Ordinary Hoop Court Into a Place of Higher Learning and You at the Podium" by Matt De La Peña The only title on the list written in second person, this story shows how second-person narration takes the reader on a unique journey as if they are a character in the story. Writing in the second person is hard to do well, but de la Peña certainly mastered the skill. Students can discuss how de la Peña invites the reader into the story through descriptive words, dialogue, and second-person narration. ... because I just can't help myself! "Main Street" by Jacqueline Woodson "Secret Samantha" by Tim Federle "Cathedral" by Raymond Carver "Paper Menagerie" By Ken Liu "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman The Yellow Wallpaper Digital Escape Room | Reading Comprehension Game Due to the complexity of teaching author's craft, you don't want to stop at reading great mentor texts. The following tips and activities will inspire you to make the most out of your mentor texts and give students more opportunities for exposure and exploration of the concept. Theme Exploration: When first teaching author's craft, get students thinking with a discussion around the story's theme before reading. In turn, this will provide a foundation they can build upon as they hone in on the author's craft used to develop said theme. Slow and Steady: There's a lot to unpack with author's craft, so I don't recommend trying to fit it all into one lesson. Instead, consider making it an ongoing study in your classroom, allowing students to add to their reading and writing toolbox all year long. Consistency is Key: Keeping author's craft part of the conversation as you discuss and analyze texts all year long is key. No only will this lay a foundation for habit in the future, but it will help build students' confidence in their ability to identify, understand, and analyze an author's craft as they read independently. Copycat: This is an excellent post-reading activity that deepens students' understanding of author's craft by having them "copy" the craft in their own writing. Have students practice author's craft by mimicking the style and craft of a mentor text in a short, creative writing assignment. I'm telling you, short stories will be your secret weapon when teaching author's craft. The best part? By gaining a better understanding of the author's craft through various mentor texts, students are likely to subconsciously tuck a few skills into their writing toolbox. That means better readers and writers. Therefore, you might just find yourself grading fewer dreadful writing assignments—and if that isn't enough to get you to start teaching author's craft with short stories, I don't know what will. If you found this resource useful, I recommend checking out my other posts about using short stories to teach various literary elements, from characterization and theme to setting and point of view. Every story you read is a masterpiece shaped by the author's craft. But what exactly goes into this intricate process? Whether it's the choice of words, the development of characters, or the weaving of themes, every element plays a crucial role in bringing a narrative to life. Understanding these techniques can deepen your appreciation for literature and even inspire your own writing. Understanding an author's craft involves recognizing the specific techniques writers use to create engaging stories. These techniques include: Word Choice: An author's selection of words impacts tone and mood. For example, using harsh versus sharp can evoke different feelings in readers.Character Development: Authors build multi-dimensional characters through backstory and dialogue. Strong characters like Jay Gatsby from The Great Gatsby showcase depth through their desires and flaws.Thematic Weaving: Themes connect various elements within a story. In To Kill a Mockingbird, themes of racial injustice are intricately woven into the narrative, enhancing its impact.You can also consider how these elements interact to shape your reading experience or writing style. Analyzing these aspects deepens your appreciation for literature. Understanding the key elements of an author's craft enhances your ability to analyze and appreciate literature. These components reveal how writers construct their narratives.Style and Voice define the unique way an author expresses ideas. You can identify an author's style through their choice of words, sentence structure, and overall tone. For instance,J.K. Rowling uses a whimsical tone in Harry Potter series.Ernest Hemingway employs short, terse sentences in The Old Man and the Sea.Such choices shape readers' experiences and emotional responses.An effective Structure and Organization create a logical flow in storytelling. Authors often use various structures like chronological order or flashbacks to engage readers. Consider these examples:In To Kill a Mockingbird, Harper Lee intertwines past memories with present events. In The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald employs non-linear storytelling to build suspense.These techniques guide readers through complex narratives while maintaining clarity.Strong Character Development brings stories to life by making characters relatable or compelling. Authors flesh out characters through backstory, dialogue, and actions. Here are some notable examples:Jay Gatsby, from The Great Gatsby, reveals layers through his mysterious past.Elizabeth Bennet, in Pride and Prejudice, evolves from initial prejudice to self-awareness.Well-developed characters drive plots forward, making stories more engaging for you as a reader.Authors employ various techniques to craft engaging narratives. These methods enhance storytelling, making it more immersive and impactful for readers.Literary devices enrich texts by adding depth and meaning. Examples include:Metaphor: A figure of speech that compares two unlike things, such as "Time is a thief."Foreshadowing: Hints at events to come, creating suspense. For instance, a storm brewing can signal impending trouble.Symbolism: Objects representing larger ideas; a rose might symbolize love or beauty.These devices help convey complex themes effectively.Imagery creates vivid mental pictures that engage the senses. Authors often use descriptive language to evoke emotions. Consider these examples:Visual Imagery: Describing a sunset with "fiery orange and soft purple hues" paints a beautiful picture.Auditory Imagery: Phrases like "whispers of the wind" create soundscapes in your mind.Tactile Imagery: Words such as "rough bark on ancient trees" allow you to feel textures vividly.Such details immerse readers in the story's world.Dialogue and narrative work together to develop characters and advance plots. Effective dialogue reveals character traits through their words. For example:Characters arguing about values showcase their beliefs directly.Informal conversations can illustrate relationships between characters naturally.Narrative provides context for dialogue. It sets scenes, describes actions, and conveys thoughts. Together, they build tension or highlight emotional moments in stories.Understanding the impact of an author's craft is essential to appreciating literature. It shapes how stories resonate and engage readers, making the narrative memorable.Reader engagement hinges on various techniques that authors use. Strong dialogue captivates attention and immerses you in a character's world. For example, in Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen uses witty exchanges to draw readers into Elizabeth Bennet's experiences. Additionally, vivid imagery creates a mental picture that keeps you invested. In The Great Gatsby, Fitzgerald's descriptions of lavish parties enhance your connection to the characters' lives.Emotional resonance occurs when narratives provoke feelings within readers. Character development plays a key role; for instance, in Harry Potter, J.K. Rowling crafts relatable characters whose struggles mirror your own challenges. Furthermore, thematic depth invites reflection on personal values or societal issues. For example, in The Catcher in the Rye, Salinger tackles themes of alienation that many can relate to during transitional life stages.By recognizing these elements, you gain insight into how authors construct their work to elicit engagement and emotional responses from their audience. Author's craft is an encompassing term for the various techniques and literary devices writers utilize to create engaging and thought-provoking stories. It is the intricate art of effectively combining words to impact, influence, and move the reader. Exploring the author's craft is a dynamic, fun, and compelling way of diving into a text's underlying layers. It helps the reader understand the writer's intention, style, and choices, whether in a short story, essay, or novel. Although I am writing with a student and teacher in mind in this context, remember that it all began with the basics. Revisiting these writing techniques (from our past) can help us develop and refine our writing as adults. The Essentials of Author's Craft At its heart, the author's craft consists of many literary elements deliberately selected and applied to shape a narrative. It involves choices about narrative elements, character traits, and text structure, among other literary elements. Some examples of different types of these techniques authors use include figurative language, descriptive language, and even dialogue – all designed to create a specific mood or atmosphere and convey a theme or concept. Throughout the school year, teachers might focus on various author's craft techniques to give students a more profound understanding of text structure and how writers create compelling stories. For instance, a lesson may dive into how an author uses figurative language to convey imagery or descriptive language to portray character traits. Explicit instruction to focus on these literary devices and techniques is key to developing students' understanding of the author's craft. Teaching Author's Craft through Short Stories Short stories often serve as perfect mentor texts for teaching an author's craft. They are digestible enough for students to grasp the overarching narrative elements and literary devices within a reasonable timeframe. With close reading, students can identify and analyze the author's craft techniques and apply them to their writing. Teach the author's craft by utilizing short stories and essays as a reference point for applying these techniques. It's also crucial to engage students in short answer and essay questions and essay writing, requiring them to analyze and discuss the author's craft techniques in the text. This approach allows students to apply what they've learned, reinforcing their understanding and demonstrating mastery. These methods of teaching an author's craft are not only helpful in developing reading and writing skills. They can be a valuable part of test prep. When students can identify and discuss the author's craft in their reading, they can answer questions more comprehensively and critically analyze texts. Exploring the author's craft offers readers a new perspective on reading and appreciating literature. As we further delve into how to teach this skill in the next section, remember that the ultimate goal is to equip students to recognize and appreciate the skill and artistry that goes into creating a story. Incorporating Author's Craft into Writing While understanding the author's craft as a reader is crucial, applying these techniques to your writing is equally important. The more familiar students become with the various elements of the author's craft, the more adept they will become at incorporating these techniques into their writing. Let's explore ways to integrate an author's craft techniques into your writing lessons. Learning Through Examples One of the most effective ways to teach an author's craft is through examples. From narrative essays to short stories, provide a variety of mentor texts for students to analyze. Discuss the techniques the authors use to write well, like developing characters, establishing a point of view, explaining, or using descriptive language to create imagery. For example, if you want to teach the student the use of figurative language, select a short story rich in metaphor, simile, or personification. Discuss how these literary elements contribute to the story and mood. Challenge the students to create their own examples of figurative language, emphasizing the importance of these elements in their own writing. Practice Makes Perfect Provide opportunities for students to apply the author's craft techniques they've learned. Assign writing exercises focused on specific aspects of the author's craft. For instance, a student might ask them to write a short story emphasizing dialogue to reveal character traits or to write an essay using descriptive language to convey a particular mood or atmosphere. Incorporate the author's craft into test prep. As students become more confident in identifying the author's craft in their reading, encourage them to apply these techniques to their writing. This will enhance their writing and prepare them for any questions related to the author's craft in their exams. Using Author's Craft for Inspiration Remember that learning about an author's craft isn't just about analysis—it's also a source of inspiration. Encourage students to experiment with their learned techniques and not be afraid to develop their unique style. After all, every great author starts life as a student of the author's craft. Incorporating Author's Craft in School Curriculum Bringing an author's craft into the classroom, especially at the beginning of the school year, isn't a one-off lesson but an ongoing process that enhances students' reading comprehension, critical thinking skills, and writing abilities. Here are some ways to incorporate an author's craft into a first school year's curriculum. Explicit Instruction Explicit instruction in the author's craft can be a part of unit lessons where each unit focuses on a different aspect of the author's craft. For instance, one unit might be dedicated to exploring figurative language. At the same time, another focuses on character development, and another on the narrative elements. Teachers can clearly define each literary element part of the author's craft using explicit instruction, explain its purpose, and illustrate its use through mentor texts. Promote Close Reading Encourage close reading as a means of identifying the author's craft. Close reading involves carefully analyzing a text, paying attention to details, and making inferences based on the text. It can help students recognize and understand authors' various techniques to convey their message or story. Use Short Stories to Teach Literary Elements Short stories are ideal for teaching the author's craft as they often contain clear examples of various literary elements and the author's craft techniques within a compact narrative. You can use short stories to teach elements like plot structure, character development, theme, point of view, and more. By analyzing these stories, students can learn to identify and use these elements in other texts in their writing. Integration with Test Prep The author's craft can also be incorporated into test prep. Understanding the author's craft is often a key component of language arts exams, and regular practice can help students prepare for these questions. By integrating the author's craft into test prep, you can help students make connections between their learning and assessment. Mastering an author's craft as a reader and writer can empower students and deepen their love of literature. By teaching authors craft, we're equipping students with the tools to become more skilled readers, thoughtful analysts, and creative writers. Frequently Asked Questions What is an example of an author's craft? An example of an author's craft is the use of figurative language in creating a story. An author might use metaphors, similes, or personification to create vivid imagery and engage the reader's senses. For instance, "To Kill a Mockingbird," writer Harper Lee often uses symbolism and metaphor as part of her craft. What are elements of the author's craft? Elements of focus of the author's craft include plot development, character development, setting, tone, mood, dialogue, theme, point of view, figurative language (like metaphor and simile), and symbolism. These elements contribute to the overall story and how it's conveyed to the reader. How do you identify an author's craft? Identifying an author's craft involves close reading and analysis of a text. Look for patterns in the author's word choices, sentence structure, and use of literary devices. Consider how the author develops characters and plots and how they use language to convey mood, setting, and theme. What are all the author's craft? An author's craft refers to various techniques and literary devices authors use to create a story. This includes everything from plot structure and character development to the use of figurative language, symbolism, and descriptive details. It also involves the author's choice of point of view and narrative style. Use your Voice, Make an Impact. Catherine x Email: catherine@catherinenikkel.com Join The Storytellers Café - My free training community to help you create an impact through your story Enrol in The 5-Day Content Experience - Learn how to repurpose your content like a pro...in 5 minutes a day! Need help telling your story in your own voice? Let's make it happen. Schedule a consultation with me here Teaching author's craft used to be something that intimidated me. Author's craft sometimes feels like a whirlwind of vocabulary and information. How was I going to get my students to remember all of this, much less apply it to their reading? Like any good teacher, I spent lots of time looking for resources on author's craft. I found helpful information along the way, but I could never find one comprehensive guide to how to teach this monstrosity of a topic. That's about to change. I am going to share all the things I wish I knew when I was struggling to teach author's craft. In this guide, I will talk about what is author's craft, how to teach it, and how to help students analyze a text with author's craft. Author's craft is the techniques an author uses to convey a story. The definition sounds pretty simple, but what makes author's craft a challenge for students (and teachers) is that authors can use a ton of techniques. These techniques include things like figurative language, imagery, text structure, genre, dialogue, and much more. The biggest injustice we can do to our students is simply throw vocabulary in their notebooks and walk away from it. In order to prepare our students for applying author's craft to their reading and writing, we have to build a strong foundation for them. If we want our students to be masters of author's craft, we need to break this topic down. Start by creating a unit as a glance. Essentially, you want to map out how to fit in all the elements of author's craft, so that you have time to get your students familiar and comfortable with each craft. It may help to give your students a list of all the author's craft techniques at the beginning of the unit, but don't try to explain each element for the first time in one class period. That will have you and your students feeling overwhelmed. Instead, explain to students that you will be exploring each topic over a period of time. Then, slowly work your way through each element. I would give your students an overview of a topic and then have them practice applying it to a text. For example, you might review point of view with your students. Then, read a short story with your students and have them identify the point of view. Ask students why the author chose this POV and how the story would be different if in another POV. Continue this process as you work through the different author's craft techniques. When students begin to show an understanding of author's craft, it's time to move up the bloom's chart. We want to move from simply remembering and understanding to applying and analyzing. This is where literary analysis comes in. A literary analysis is an essay that makes an argument about a text. During a literary analysis, the student is typically examining an author's theme, craft, tone, or other literary element. When writing a literary analysis, students have to move beyond basic understanding of literary devices. Not only must they recognize the device being used, but be able to explain its significance in the text and why the author chose to use it. Since we have been talking about author's craft, let's look at how they would be utilized in a literary analysis essay. A student might read a text and note that the author frequently uses flashbacks. The student would then analyze why the author uses flashbacks in the text and how it contributes to the story. In their literary analysis, they would include items such as a summary of the text, an analysis of the flashbacks, any relevant text evidence, and counterclaims. When you first begin writing literary analysis with your students, you may have to do lots of modeling – and that is totally okay! Students will become more confident with time. Not sure where to start with literary analysis essays? If you want guidance on how to get your students writing great essays, I have a full literary analysis unit for middle school students. This unit contains five weeks of lessons and provides you with all of the materials you need to teach the unit. Remember that author's craft doesn't have to stop at literary analysis. The ability to recognize and apply author craft extends well into high school and beyond. As the school year moves forward, continue to spiral in author's craft. Challenge students by having them analyze new genres or even make comparisons across genres.