LESSON PLAN

The Critics

GRADES	TIME	READING LEVEL
9+	50 min	4

Lesson flow



5 min

Opening Hook

Begin with a quick discussion on how students feel when they receive criticism versus praise. Ask them to share a time when they felt discouraged by a critique.

15–20 min

Story Exploration

Read "The Critics" aloud to the class. Pause at key moments to ask for predictions and encourage students to think about the characters' feelings and motivations.

15 min

Analysis Exercises

- Divide students into small groups. Ask them to analyze the characters and discuss how each one contributes to the story's theme.

10 min

Application/Reflection

Ask students to reflect on a time they received criticism. How did it affect their confidence? What could have made the experience more positive?

5 min

Assessment Strategy

Conduct a quick exit ticket where students write down one lesson they learned from the story and how they can apply it moving forward.

STORY OVERVIEW

- **Title and Moral/Theme**: The Critics; The story illustrates that criticism can often overshadow genuine appreciation, leading to the loss of beauty and talent in the pursuit of perfection.
- **Plot Summary**: In a twist of fate, Antinous, a beautiful mortal, turns to stone after Minerva inadvertently frightens him with her shield. As Minerva seeks to restore him, a sculptor and a critic arrive, critiquing Antinous's form instead of appreciating his beauty.
- **Key Characters and Their Significance**:
  - **Antinous**: Represents beauty and talent, tragically lost due to external criticism.
  - **Minerva**: Symbolizes genuine admiration and desire to appreciate beauty.
  - **The Sculptor**: Embodies the technical critic who focuses on flaws rather than the essence.
  - **The Critic**: Represents the intellectual and often dismissive viewpoint that can stifle creativity and appreciation.

LESSON FUNDAMENTALS

- **Learning Objectives**:
  - Students will understand the moral of the story and its relevance in real life.
  - Students will identify the impact of criticism on creativity and self-esteem.
  - Students will analyze character motivations and their significance to the moral.
  - Students will discuss how the story applies to their own experiences with criticism.
- **Discussion Questions**:
  1. How does the story illustrate the dangers of excessive criticism?
  2. In what ways can we learn to appreciate beauty without focusing on flaws?
  3. How can we apply the lessons from this moral story to our interactions with peers?
- **Required Materials**:
  - Copies of the story "The Critics"
  - Whiteboard and markers
  - Paper and writing utensils

✓ Original text available on the story page.