Video Links: 12th Grade ELA Lesson on Text Analysis of Symbols
Lesson Objective: Analyze literature through questions, discussion, and symbols
Compass Component and Rating: Questioning and Using Discussion Techniques (3b), *Effective Proficient ;* Engaging Students in Learning (3c), *Effective Proficient*

Common Core State Standard(s)
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.) **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9:** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Compass Component 3b: Questioning and Using Discussion Techniques (Rating: *Effective Proficient*)		
Indicators	**Evidence**	**Common Core Connection**
Teacher uses open-ended questions, inviting students to think and/or have multiple possible answers.	• As the basis for whole class discussion, the teacher uses open-ended questions written and developed by the students, such *as "Toni Morrison writes Milkman like a twelve-year-old, even though he's 22, or 17, or 31. Why?"* (1:49). This is important because it allows students to discuss the original questions of their classmates, using a variety of answers and ideas.	Students use textual evidence to prepare questions for whole class discussion and to support their statements and analysis of the text. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.1) Students spend the first five to ten minutes of class writing, using the text to help them prepare their thoughts and questions for the small group and whole class discussion and analysis of symbolism in the novel. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9)
The teacher builds on and uses student responses to questions effectively.	• Teacher builds on student responses, asking the student to provide evidence and support from the text for the response. Teacher asks, *"Paula, what was the point you were making about gender?"* Paula responds, *"Like, how Pilate*	

	dresses and acts like a man." Teacher then asks, *"So what evidence do you have for that?"* (2:02) This is important because it reminds students that their analyses need to be rooted in textual evidence.	During the whole group discussion, students identify and discuss universal symbols within the text as a building block for analyzing contextualized symbols. (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.4)
Discussions enable students to talk to one another without ongoing mediation by the teacher.	• During discussions in groups of four (0:50), students discuss what they had previously written independently. Students have the opportunity to question each other about the ideas and select content for whole class discussion without mediation from the teacher. This allows students to have autonomy over their learning and influence the group discussion.	

Compass Component 3c: Engaging Students in Learning (Rating: *Effective Proficient*)		
Indicators	**Evidence**	**Common Core Connection**
Students have some choice in how they complete learning tasks.	• Teacher says, *"…write down either something you want to discuss as a whole class, or something that was interesting that came up in your discussion"* (1:10). This provides students with some choice in what they want to contribute to the discussion and influence the direction the discussion will take.	
Materials and resources support the learning goals and require intellectual engagement, as appropriate.	• In addition to using "Song of Solomon" by Toni Morrison (0:22), the teacher provides students with symbolism guides (3:21). These scaffold the analysis of universal and contextualized symbols throughout the text and help students associate those symbols with characters.	
There is a mix of different types of groupings, suitable to the lesson objectives.	• Students begin the lesson by writing independently (0:40). Then they move to groups of four (0:50) to discuss what they have written and determine which questions/topics they will submit for whole class discussion (1:47). This allows students to develop their own thoughts and ideas and improve upon	

	or revise those ideas through small and whole group discussion.	
Learning tasks have multiple correct responses or approaches and/or demand higher-order thinking.	• Teacher asks students to generate individual questions after analyzing a text. (1:10) This task requires 'synthesis' level thinking and has a variety of possible options. • After identifying different symbols within the text, students evaluate the potential meanings of these symbols as preparation for developing archetypes. (3:21)	

WHAT COULD THIS TEACHER DO TO IMPROVE?

What did the teacher do in this lesson?	*Highly Effective* Indicators	What could the teacher do to move to *Highly Effective*? (example actions)
The teacher asks students to create the questions that will be used during the whole class discussion, then the students respond directly to the teacher.	Students extend the discussion, enriching it. (Questioning – 3b)	Create the expectation that students should respond to each other, not just the teacher. Encourage them to build on one another's responses, ask each other questions and initiate deeper analysis of each question.
The whole class discussion and identification of symbols are teacher-centered, even though the students have generated the questions.	Students invite comments from their classmates during a discussion. (Questioning – 3b)	Redistribute the student-generated questions. This will allow the discussion to be student-centered and increase the students' ownership over their learning. Allow each student to read the question on the paper and lead a short discussion on the topic. Monitor the discussion from the perimeter of the class, allowing students to engage with each other. This will shift the facilitation responsibility and cognitive work load to students.
Students are provided with reference materials to use when identifying symbols. Also, the teacher selects the student-created questions to use as a basis for discussion.	Students have extensive choice in how they complete tasks. (Engaging – 3c)	Provide students with a choice of reference materials for symbols. Allow them to determine which charts, books, internet sources, etc. will best meet their learning needs. Additionally, allowing students to choose which of their questions will be discussed as a class increases engagement and gives students more ownership over the direction and content of the conversation.