

LESSON PLAN

Cedar Hollow Case Files

Ms. Whitaker · Cedar Hollow Middle School

Subject	ELA
Grade	8
Time	50 minutes
Levels	Support, On Level, Challenge

OVERVIEW

Students play junior detectives tracking a missing trophy. They find figurative notes, name each device, and decode witness statements to choose the next stop. Then they practice on a level worksheet.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to identify five kinds of figurative language and tell figurative from literal.
- Students will be able to explain what a figurative phrase means in context.
- Students will be able to analyze how figurative language creates mood and tone.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- I can name the five kinds and point to each clue.
- I can decode what a phrase really means in the story.
- I can explain how word choice creates a mood.

VOCABULARY

Figurative language: words that mean more than they literally say.

Simile: compares two different things using like or as.

Metaphor: says one thing is another, with no like or as.

Personification: a thing acts or feels like a person.

Hyperbole: an exaggeration too big to really be true.

Idiom: a fixed, common saying with a hidden meaning.

Mood: the feeling a passage gives the reader.

MATERIALS

- Game link (one device per student or pair)
- Intro slide deck
- Level worksheets with answer keys
- Exit ticket slips

LESSON SEQUENCE

TIME	SEGMENT	WHAT HAPPENS
5 min	Hook	Slide 2: which Courier headline means exactly what it says? Turn and talk.
10 min	Mini-lesson	Slides 3 to 5: target, five devices, and the four detective questions.
3 min	Quick check	Slide 6: fingers up to name each device; confirm level codes.
12 min	Play the game	Slide 7: students crack the case at their level. Ask, "What does it really mean?"
15 min	Level worksheet	A new case file: find the note, name it, decode the lead.
5 min	Exit ticket	Slide 8: completion code, plus one labeled, decoded figurative sentence.
50 min	Total	

DELIVERING THE GAME

Example class codes (same code, same game for the whole class):

WHIT8B-1 Support

WHIT8B-2 On Level

WHIT8B-3 Challenge

- Post the game link in Canvas, Google Sites, or your website; give each group its level code.
- Students submit completion codes in the LMS; paste them into the teacher screen to verify.
- Teacher screen passphrase: **paper owl** (tap the small "Made by GBG Education" credit 5 times to open the teacher screen and check completion codes).

DIFFERENTIATION

Level 1: Support

Game: similes and idioms, hints, a retry. Worksheet: clue cards. Below grade: L.5.5a, L.5.5b, L.6.5a.

Level 2: On Level

Game: all five devices, decode leads, hints. Worksheet: find, sort, and decode.

Level 3: Challenge

Game: tricky notes, why words were chosen, no hints. Worksheet: mood, purpose, rewrite.

ACCOMMODATIONS

- Read-aloud button; tap or click only; clue cards for anyone.
- English learners: idiom "says / means" chart.

ASSESSMENT

Quick check; completion code scores; worksheet explain items (Support 8, On Level 2 and 9, Challenge 2, 4, 10); exit ticket.

OBSERVATION READY

DANIELSON FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING (2022) ALIGNMENT

- **1c Setting Instructional Outcomes** (Domain 1: Planning and Preparation): "I can" criteria match all three levels.
- **3a Communicating About Purpose and Content** (Domain 3: Learning Experiences): Target posted, then modeled.
- **3c Engaging Students in Learning** (Domain 3: Learning Experiences): Every student plays at a fitting level.
- **3d Using Assessment for Learning** (Domain 3: Learning Experiences): Quick check and instant game feedback.
- **3e Responding Flexibly to Student Needs** (Domain 3: Learning Experiences): Codes adjusted after the check.

RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGIES

- **Teacher clarity:** One target and one four-question routine across slides, game, worksheet, and exit ticket.
- **Worked examples:** Slide 5 models one sentence step by step before practice.
- **Feedback (Technology):** The game explains every answer, naming the clue.
- **Differentiation:** Three game levels and three matching worksheets.

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

- **L.8.5** (CCSS ELA): Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- **L.8.5a** (CCSS ELA): Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.
- **RL.8.4** (CCSS ELA): Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- **RI.8.4** (CCSS ELA): Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- **L.5.5a** (CCSS ELA): Interpret figurative language, including similes and metaphors, in context.
- **L.5.5b** (CCSS ELA): Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.
- **L.6.5a** (CCSS ELA): Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context.

Observation Ready section: Danielson Framework for Teaching (2022). Other frameworks available on request.