

## LESSON PLAN #2: Abigail and John in Love

[1] **Curriculum framework(s):** 2.6 Analyze differences in responses to focused group discussion in an organized and systematic way. 8.33 Analyze patterns of imagery or symbolism and connect them to themes and/or tone and mood. 13.25 Analyze and explain the structure and elements of nonfiction works.

[2] **Goal of the lesson:** To analyze the “love letter” in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

[3] **Expected student outcomes:** Students will be able to read and respond to 18<sup>th</sup> century documents on love.

[4] **Assessment of expected student outcomes:** Class discussion and participation.

[5] **Instructional procedures:** 45 minutes

**Introduction:** Remind students of the great love between Abigail and John Adams. These are some of their earliest letters. Get their reactions from reading the night before.

**Activities:** First lead a discussion on the following questions:

- i. What do you notice about the original letters (pull up the digital image from the websites listed below)?
- ii. What is typical/atypical about their letters? Are their love letters like today’s?
- iii. What can we infer about the authors?
- iv. What vocabulary should we notice? (“indisposed”)

N.B. “Aurelia” is the pseudonym of Mary Smith Cranch, Abigail’s sister (Hogan interview).

Then have students complete an Epistolary Analysis handout in groups.

**Closure:** Have students report back with their findings from the handout.

**Homework:** Read the next letters in the unit and complete an Epistolary Analysis handout for them.

**Modifications:** Group work will help diverse learners. The graphic organizer also aids students with difficulty.

[6] **Material and resources:**

- 1) Smart Board
- 2) Epistolary Analysis handout
- 3) Letter from John Adams to Abigail Smith, 4 October 1762
- 4) Letter from Abigail Smith to John Adams, 11 August 1763

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Epistolary Analysis

<b>Date of letter(s)</b>	<b>Location of letter writer</b>
<b>Sender</b>	<b>Recipient</b>

<b>Topic of letter(s)</b>	
<b>Theme(s) of the letter(s)</b>	
<b>Significant quotes</b>	
<b>Historical details in the letter(s)</b>	

<b>Allusions, metaphors, similes and other figures of speech (give examples)</b>	
<b>Tone</b>	
<b>Images</b>	
<b>Diction</b>	
<b>Evidence of sarcasm or satire</b>	
<b>Vocabulary words</b>	

## Letter from John Adams to Abigail Smith, 4 October 1762

*Miss Adorable*

*By the same Token that the Bearer hereof satt up with you last night I hereby order you to give him, as many Kisses, and as many Hours of your Company after 9 O'Clock as he shall please to Demand and charge them to my Account: This Order, or Requisition call it which you will is in Consideration of a similar order Upon Aurelia for the like favour, and I presume I have good Right to draw upon you for the Kisses as I have given two or three Millions at least, when one has been received, and of Consequence the Account between us is immensely in favour of yours,*

*John Adams  
Octr. 4th. 1762*

A scanned image of the original letter is available at the following site:  
<http://www.masshist.org/digitaladams/aea/cfm/doc.cfm?id=L17621004ja>

Letter from John Adams to Abigail Smith, 4 October 1762 [electronic edition]. *Adams Family Papers: An Electronic Archive*. Massachusetts Historical Society.

## Letter from Abigail Smith to John Adams, 11 August 1763

*Weymouth August th 11 1763*

*My Friend*

*If I was sure your absence to day was occasioned, by what it generally is, either to wait upon Company, or promote some good work, I freely confess my Mind would be much more at ease than at present it is. Yet this uneasiness does not arise from any apprehension of Slight or neglect, but a fear least you are indisposed, for that you said should be your only hindrance.*

*Humanity obliges us to be affected with the distresses and Miserys of our fellow creatures. Friendship is a band yet stronger, which causes us to [feel] with greater tenderness the afflictions of our Friends.*

*And there is a tye more binding than Humanity, and stronger than Friendship, which makes us anxious for the happiness and welfare of those to whom it binds us. It makes their [Misfortunes], Sorrows and afflictions, our own. Unite these, and there is a threefold cord -- by this cord I am not ashamed to own myself bound, nor do I [believe] that you are wholly free from it. [Judge you then] for your Diana has she not this day [had sufficient] cause for pain and anxiety of mind?*

*She bids me [tell] you that Seneca, for the sake of his Paulina was careful and tender of his health. The health and happiness of Seneca she says was not dearer to his Paulina, than that of Lysander to his Diana.*

*The Fabrick often wants repairing and if we neglect it the Deity will not long inhabit it, yet after all our care and solisitude to preserve it, it is a tottering Building, and often reminds us that it will finally fall.*

*Adieu may this find you in better health than I fear it will, and happy as your Diana wishes you.*

*Accept this hasty Scrawl warm from the Heart of Your Sincere  
Diana*

A scanned image of the original letter is available at the following site:  
<http://www.masshist.org/digitaladams/aea/cfm/doc.cfm?id=L17630811aa>

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