



TEACHER WORKSHEET

CYCLE 4 • FENCING AND LITERATURE



THE ART OF BEING A (S)WORDSMITH

OVERVIEW

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:

- Compare fencing at the Olympic Games with a literary text depicting an épée duel.

SPECIFIC SKILLS:

• Reading:

Read images, composite documents (including digital), and non-literary texts.

Read literary works.

Develop an interpretation of literary texts.

• Writing:

Use the written word to think and to learn.

Use reading material to enrich one's writing skills.

• Speaking:

Participate constructively in discussions.

Utilize the expressive and creative resources of the spoken word.

INTERDISCIPLINARY SKILLS:

- **History:** Determine one's place in time.
- **PE:** Grasp, utilize, and know how to explain the principles of efficiency in technical moves (specifically in fencing).

SCHEDULE FOR SESSIONS:

- Launch project.
- Gather initial student project feedback: Ask students what they think "wordsmith" means. Can they give specific examples?
- Do activities 1-3.
- Share with class and review.
- Extend activity.

DURATION:

- 4-6 sessions (4-6 × 1 hour).

ORGANIZATION:

- Work alone and as a class.



OLYMPIC GAMES KEYWORDS:

**SELF-RESPECT AND RESPECT FOR OTHERS •
COLLABORATE/COMPETE • HEROES**



CONCEPTS ADDRESSED

FENCING AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

The history of fencing is closely tied to the history of the Olympic Games, dating back to 1896, as it is one of the four sports that have always been part of the modern Olympic program.

Fencing is a combat sport. However, it is not based solely on force, but rather on self-control and control of one's weapon. It involves scoring a touch against one's opponent with the point (i.e. tip) or the edge (i.e. side) of the blade on certain parts of the body (called "valid target" areas) without being touched. The sport promotes values such as honor and respect.

FUN FACT!

Fencing is a popular sport in France, and the country has won over 118 Olympic medals in the sport.



HEROES AND HEROISM

Studying literary excerpts featuring sword duels is an opportunity to rediscover those Olympic values, and to understand how the author highlights a character to make him into a hero. The hero is not only the main character in a story, but stands out for his or her exceptional bravery and merit. Dueling calls for bravery, agility, speed, flexibility, and dexterity, among other qualities and skills.

EPICS

The term “epic” is both an adjective and a noun. As a noun, an epic is a long poem which, in ancient times, told the heroic adventures of warriors (e.g. *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*).

Epics therefore involve combat and war, and tend to incite astonishment, admiration, or fear in the reader. The storytelling includes exaggeration of the facts, and making characters larger than life.

CLOAK AND DAGGER INTRIGUE

The expression “cloak and dagger” comes from the French *de cape et d'épée*, a literary genre popular in 18th century France. Similar to epic poems, such adventure novels often feature combat scenes, including swordsmanship. Protagonists often wear cloaks and carry daggers, thus the name. Today the expression more generally refers to situations involving intrigue, mystery, or espionage.

FUN FACT!

Examples of epic works:
The Song of Roland, an 11th-century epic poem;
The Three Musketeers, a 19th-century adventure novel by Alexandre Dumas; *Le Cid*, a 17th-century play by Pierre Corneille; and *La Légende des siècles* (The Legend of the Ages), a 19th-century poetry collection by Victor Hugo.



STUDENT WORKSHEET OVERVIEW

VOCABULARY:

Duel, emulation, epidermis, eloquence.

ACTIVITIES:

▶ ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCTION TO FENCING: AN OLYMPIC SPORT

12-13 yr | 13-14 yr | 14-15 yr

Learn about a sport and a literary genre.

Materials: Text and images.

Skills: Understand texts, documents, and images, and interpret them. Read on one’s own and search for information.

Schedule:

- Historical background.
- Reading.
- Details about the event.
- Technical vocabulary.
- “Check your reading skills” exercise.



▶ **ACTIVITY 2: THE ART OF BEING A HERO** 12–13 yr | 13–14 yr | 14–15 yr

Understand an era, art, and style by reading an excerpt from an adventure novel.

Materials: Excerpt from chapter five of *The Three Musketeers*, by Alexandre Dumas.

Skills:

- Read a text aloud clearly; recite literary text from memory; engage in a theatrical scene.
- Read, understand, and interpret literary texts by basing one's interpretation on a few simple tools for analysis.
- Situate literary texts in their historical and cultural context.
- Formulate one's thoughts on a literary work in writing.

Schedule:

- Historical background.
- Reading of an excerpt from *The Three Musketeers* by Alexandre Dumas.
- Literary analysis.

▶ **FIND OUT MORE:**

Produce a written text based on an excerpt by Alexandre Dumas.

▶ **ACTIVITY 3: IMAGERY IN THE EPIC NOVEL** 12–13 yr | 13–14 yr | 14–15 yr

Create a mind map to represent a literary genre.

Materials: Excerpt from chapter five of *The Three Musketeers*, by Alexandre Dumas.

Resources: Mind map to be completed.

Skills: Use the written word to reflect; create work tools.



STUDENT WORKSHEET ANSWER KEY

▶ **ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCTION TO FENCING: AN OLYMPIC SPORT** 12–13 yr | 13–14 yr | 14–15 yr

- 1) What are the names of the fencing weapons used in Olympic competitions?
There are three different weapons used in fencing: the épée, foil, and sabre.
- 2) How many fencing events are there at the Olympic Games?
There are six individual and six team fencing events at the Olympic Games.
- 3) Who founded the modern Olympic Games?
Pierre de Coubertin.
- 4) What is the official language of fencing? Give two examples.
The official language is French, in particular for referee cues: En garde!, Halte!
- 5) Can a fencer injure his or her opponent in a fencing event? Why or why not?
The objective is not to injure but to touch one's opponent. Special precautions and gear are used to avoid accidents.
- 6) What do the terms "extension" and "prime" mean in fencing?
*An extension is an offensive position in which the body is fully extended in a forward lunge and the sword arm is outstretched.
Parry prime means that the weapon's point is lower than the hand, with the wrist pronated (like looking at a watch).*



▶ ACTIVITY 2: THE ART OF BEING A HERO

12–13 yr | 13–14 yr | 14–15 yr

A duel like any other?

- 1) Identify the technical vocabulary used to describe the duel.
“Adversaries”, “sprang toward”, “his ground and his guard”, “parrying”, “parried”, “thrust”, “his blade”, “defend himself”, “counterhits”, “fought”, “his sword hand”, “the laws of dueling”.
- 2) Identify two contrasting nouns in the following description: “...with a fury which however did not exclude a certain degree of method.”
“Fury” (in mythology, a spirit of vengeance, represented as one of three goddesses the Furies, also known as the Erinyes; a surge of violent anger) is contrasted with “method” (being methodical or systematic in thought or action). The fighters seem very violent but their moves are carefully made and thought out. They are “professionals”, guards or musketeers.
- 3) Who wins the duel in the end?
D’Artagnan kills Jussac; Aramis kills one of his two opponents and can still defend himself; Porthos is wounded but his opponent is as wounded as he is; Athos is wounded and must fight with his left hand, but d’Artagnan comes to his rescue and the excerpt ends with the words “Guardman; I will slay you!” One could therefore conclude that the King’s musketeers and d’Artagnan come out on top.
- 4) Does d’Artagnan abide by the rules of swordsmanship? Justify your answer.
D’Artagnan “departed every instant from received rules”, but the narrator emphasizes that d’Artagnan does know the rules, “though wanting in practice [he] had a sound theory”, and he knows that “according to the laws of dueling at that period, [he] was at liberty to assist whom he pleased”.
- 5) What two mistakes did Jussac make that ultimately led to his death?
Jussac gets angry, “furious at being held in check by one whom he had considered a boy” and loses patience. “[A]nxious to put an end to this [fight]”, he “aimed a terrible thrust at his adversary”, a move which then prevents him from defending himself from d’Artagnan’s parry.

Highlighting the hero

- 1) To which animals is d’Artagnan compared?
D’Artagnan is compared to a tiger and a serpent. The comparisons reflect his agility and energy, which are clearly evoked in the text: “active and energetic”, “redoubled his agility”, “with a terrible bound he sprang”.
- 2) Identify the terms that describe d’Artagnan during the duel (e.g. “active and energetic”).
“[A]ttacking him on all sides at once, and yet parrying...”, “had a sound theory”, “interpreted it”.
- 3) Does d’Artagnan have as much experience as the three musketeers?
No, d’Artagnan is not yet one of the King’s musketeers. He has just arrived in Paris and the text specifies that he lacks practice. Jussac first sees him as a child, an easy opponent.
- 4) In the last paragraph, what choice does d’Artagnan make? Do you understand his choice?
(D’Artagnan was originally there to duel with Athos.)
D’Artagnan chooses to defend Athos, because he needs the most help, but his choice is surprising and reveals the character’s development. D’Artagnan was originally there to duel with Athos. In the end, not only does he side with the musketeers, he also defends Athos. A very strong bond later unites the two characters.
- 5) Reread the beginning of the second paragraph. How does the narrator view d’Artagnan?
The narrator describes the young d’Artagnan with admiration. He shares his feelings with readers through the exclamation “God be thanked!” It is an omniscient point of view; the narrator knows how the character feels, he knows how his heart beats, and why it beats the way it does. In the lines that follow, the use of simile, and the details about the exchanged glances confirm that point of view.



A scene written like a performance

1) Identify the scene's stages. Would you say that the scene is organized?

This scene is particularly well organized. The excerpt opens with an overall view that tells readers who is fighting whom. The narrator then describes the fight between d'Artagnan and Jussac in greater detail before once again taking an overall view after Jussac dies.

2) How does the action unfold? Justify your answer.

The action unfolds quickly. One can also note the use of the adjective "rapid".

3) Which of the five senses is evoked? Give specific examples to justify your answer.

The sense of sight is used to clearly capture the duel. The following can be noted: "cast an anxious and rapid glance", "caught a glance", "but he could look, and with that look ask assistance".

4) Can the duel, as written by Dumas, be regarded as a performance?

The excerpt is an organized and highly visual scene. The details and descriptions help readers imagine what is happening.

5) What feelings does the author seek to incite in readers?

The author seeks to make readers' hearts race as fast as d'Artagnan's, by drawing them into the center of the duel. The author seeks to incite a mix of admiration and worry, which are intended to strengthen readers' attachment to the young hero.

An epic adventure novel

What connections could be made between fencing as a sport and the adventure-novel scene you have just studied?

Fencers use the same weapons (a sword), and demonstrate the same qualities: speed, agility, method, practice... The major difference is that in the sport, fencers only have to score a touch against an opponent to win, whereas in an adventure novel, the objective is usually to kill one's adversary. D'Artagnan would have made a very good fencer.

► ACTIVITY 3: IMAGERY IN THE EPIC NOVEL

Epics use literary devices that involve:

Vocabulary

Terms rooted in ancient times and the great epics:

"Contest" (from the French *contester* "dispute, oppose", from the Latin *contestari*); "fury" (from the Latin *furia*; Roman Furies, known as the Greek Erinyes); "sublime eloquence" (from the Latin *sublimis* and *eloquentia*).

Modal auxiliary verbs that emphasize action:

"As if it would burst" (hypothetical), "Athos would have died" (hypothetical) "but he could look" (possible).

Amplification that corresponds to the solemnity of the epic chant:

No examples in the excerpt, but students should be aware of this feature in epic works.

Syntax

Long and complex sentences that amplify action:

"Nevertheless...", "but the latter...", "and while Jussac was recovering himself..."

Exclamations that underline the narrator's feelings:

"God be thanked!"

Symmetry and parallelism that demonstrate contrast and confrontation:

Figures of speech

Simile and metaphor (i.e. comparisons), which add to the impression of power and violence:

"Fought like a furious tiger", "fell like a dead mass".

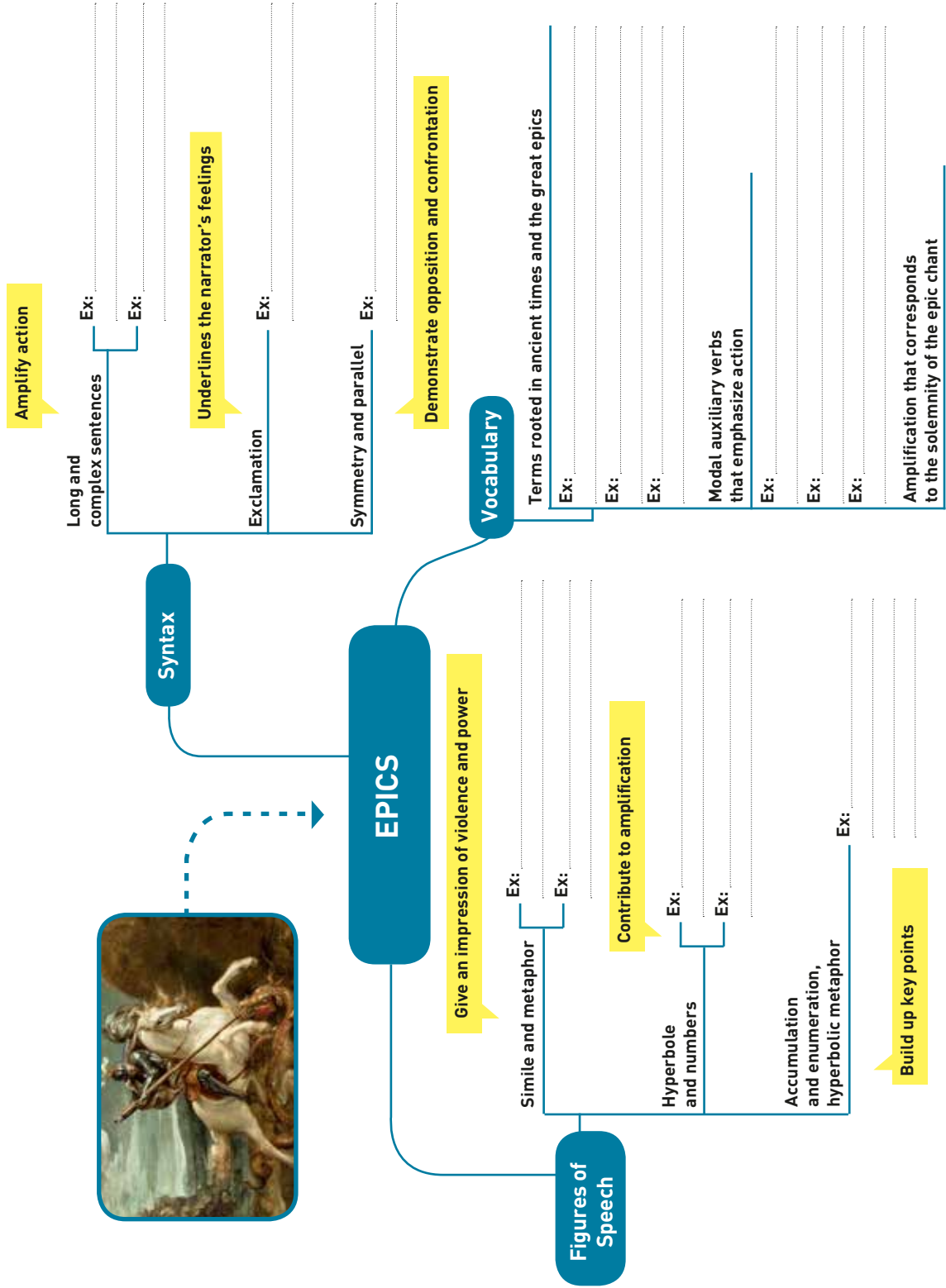
Hyperbole, or numbers that contribute to amplification:

His heart "beat as if it would burst", "turning ten times round his adversary", "changing his ground and his guard twenty times".

Accumulation and enumeration, which build up key points, and hyperbolic metaphor:

"The field of battle."

CREATE A MIND MAP





FIND OUT MORE

CNOSF EDUCATIONAL FILES

English: A passion for sports

Math: Dimensions and statistics in basketball

Math: Performance in swimming

Geography: Tokyo: A global metropolis and host city of the 1964 and 2020 Olympic Games

French: Competing in the Olympics despite all opposition: ski jumping

Moral and civic education: The Olympic flame, torchbearers, and values

Information and media literacy: The 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin: propaganda and journalism

Interdisciplinary practical education: Sports and the fight against doping

Interdisciplinary practical education: Developing a symbolic view of the Olympic Games

DIGITAL RESOURCES

About fencing:

<http://espritbleu.franceolympique.com/espritbleu/actusport.php?NSport=10>

<http://www.escrime-ffe.fr>

About the concept of the hero:

<http://www.ina.fr/video/CPD07010370>
http://classes.bnf.fr/heros/expo_uk/salle1/index.htm

In connection with physical education, an interdisciplinary practical education unit could be developed:

<http://www.livredesapienta.fr/2017/02/escrime-cycle-3.html>

Crossword puzzles:

http://escrime-toi-pour-2010.spip.ac-rouen.fr/IMG/pdf/Mots_croises_CM1_Lagarenne.pdf

<http://lesjourneessonttropcourtes.eklablog.com/mots-croises-du-vocabulaire-de-l-escrime-a103239623>

FURTHER READING FOR STUDENTS

The Three Musketeers by Alexandre Dumas, Wordsworth Editions, 1997

The Charterhouse of Parma by Stendhal, Modern Library, 2000

Le Bossu by Paul Féval, Le Livre de Poche, 1997

The Iliad by Homer, Penguin Classics, 1999

Cyrano de Bergerac by Edmond Rostand, Signet Classics, 2003

FILMS FOR STUDENTS

On Guard directed by Philippe de Broca (France, 1997)

FILMS FOR TEACHERS

Captain Fracasse directed by Pierre Gaspard-Huit (France, Italy, 1961)

ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

End of unit: "It's your turn! The art of being a (s)wordsmith" (and answer key).



STUDENT WORKSHEET

CYCLE 4 • FENCING AND LITERATURE

THE ART OF BEING A (S)WORDSMITH

Aa

VOCABULARY



DUEL: A single fight with weapons between two adversaries, one of whom has challenged the other due to an offense, each assisted by two witnesses; to duel, to fight a duel.

EMULATION:

A feeling that pushes a person to do as well as or better than another person (or other people) in various activities.

EPIDERMIS:

The superficial layer of the skin (etymologically based on the Greek *epi*, “on”, and *derma*, “skin”).

ELOQUENCE:

The art of speaking well or persuasively; the ability to express oneself with ease.



ACTIVITIES

▶ ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCTION TO FENCING: AN OLYMPIC SPORT

FENCING: Uncountable noun

A combat sport between two opponents in *épée*, foil or sabre.

Etymology: Mid-15th century, meaning “defending, act of protecting or keeping (something) in proper condition” (short for “defencing”); late 1500s, meaning “art of using a sword or foil in attack and defense”.

A SHORT HISTORY OF FENCING

Fencing is based on traditional swordsmanship and has evolved over the centuries from a **military activity** to a martial art, and today it is considered a recreational or **athletic activity**.

The shift is notably due to **developments in weaponry**; in the 15th century, the invention of the rapier—a lighter, finer weapon—marked the first step towards recreational fencing.

The sport was standardized much later. Fencing was first instructed in 17th-century France by *maîtres d’armes* (masters of arms).

Individual **foil** and **sabre** events were included in the **first Olympic Games in Athens**. Pierre de Coubertin, the father of the modern Olympic Games, helped make men’s **épée** an Olympic discipline in 1900.

Women’s foil was added in 1924. Women’s *épée*, however, did not become an Olympic discipline until 1996. Women’s sabre debuted at the Olympic Games in 2004. Today, there are **six individual and six team fencing events at the Olympic Games**.



TIPS & TRICKS



You need balance to be a good fencer. You also need balance in life to feel good at school and at home. Find the right rhythm—don’t stay up too late, take time to relax when you’re tired, and eat a healthy diet.



FUN FACT!

Fencing is one of the few sports whose **official language is French**. In international competitions, fencing referees must use French in addition to special hand signals. Referees notably use the terms *En garde! Prêts? Allez! Halte!*

ABOUT THE EVENT

The event involves **scoring a touch against one's opponent** with the point (i.e. tip) or the edge (i.e. side) of the blade on certain parts of the body (called "valid target" areas) without being touched and without leaving the area of play. Fencing is not about hurting one's opponent.

Every effort is made so that no one gets hurt. That's why fencers wear **protective gear**:

- Pierce-resistant Kevlar jacket and pants.
- Thick leather glove on the fencing hand.
- Reinforced mesh mask.
- Mandatory chest protector.
- Electric jacket (called a lamé; only used in foil and sabre) to detect touches.

Blades are made of maraging steel and hardly ever break.

Introduction to fencing rules:

- Follow the referee's cues (*saluez-vous, en garde, prêts, allez, rompez, halte*).
- Salute before a bout.
- Shake hands at the end.
- Don't leave the area of play.
- Be ready at the start.
- Don't use the unarmed hand.
- Never turn one's back.
- Move forward to attack.
- Move back (retreat) to defend.
- Be able to lunge, dodge, deflect, and counter-attack.

VOCABULARY IN PICTURES

Salute



Le Salut, by Alphonse Kirchner.

Attack



The fencer on the left is in an offensive position called an **extension**, with the body fully extended and arm outstretched. He has touched his opponent in the middle of the chest.

Parry



Prime. The prime parry position is the first parry. The weapon's point is lower than the hand, with the wrist pronated and thumb facing down.



Check your reading skills

1) What are the names of the fencing weapons used in Olympic competitions?

2) How many fencing events are there at the Olympic Games?

3) Who founded the modern Olympic Games?

4) What is the official language of fencing? Give two examples.

5) Can a fencer injure his or her opponent in a fencing event? Why or why not?

6) What do the terms “extension” and “prime” mean in fencing?

▶ ACTIVITY 2: THE ART OF BEING A HERO

Reading of an excerpt from chapter five of *The Three Musketeers*, by Alexandre Dumas.

“And the nine combatants rushed upon each other with a fury which however did not exclude a certain degree of method. Athos fixed upon a certain Cahusac, a favorite of the cardinal’s. Porthos had Bicarar, and Aramis found himself opposed to two adversaries. As to d’Artagnan, he sprang toward Jussac himself. The heart of the young Gascon beat as if it would burst through his side—not from fear, God be thanked! He had not the shade of it, but with emulation; he fought like a furious tiger, turning ten times round his adversary, and changing his ground and his guard twenty times. Jussac was, as was then said, a fine blade, and had had much practice; nevertheless it required all his skill to defend himself against an adversary who, active and energetic, departed every instant from received rules, attacking him on all sides at once, and yet parrying like a man who had the greatest respect for his own epidermis. This contest at length exhausted Jussac’s patience. Furious at being held in check by one whom he had considered a boy, he became warm and began to make mistakes. D’Artagnan, who though wanting in practice had a sound theory, redoubled his agility. Jussac, anxious to put an end to this, springing forward, aimed a terrible thrust at his adversary, but the latter parried it; and while Jussac was recovering himself, glided like a serpent beneath his blade, and passed his sword through his body. Jussac fell like a dead mass. D’Artagnan then cast an anxious and rapid glance over the field of battle. Aramis had killed one of his adversaries, but the other pressed him warmly. Nevertheless, Aramis was in a good situation, and able to defend himself. Bicarar and Porthos had just made counterhits. Porthos had received a thrust through his arm, and Bicarar one through his thigh. But neither of these two wounds was serious, and they only fought more earnestly. Athos, wounded anew by Cahusac, became evidently paler, but did not give way a foot. He only changed his sword hand, and fought with his left hand. According to the laws of dueling at that period, d’Artagnan was at liberty to assist whom he pleased. While he was endeavoring to find out which of his companions stood in greatest need, he caught a glance from Athos. The glance was of sublime eloquence. Athos would have died rather than appeal for help; but he could look, and with that look ask assistance. D’Artagnan interpreted it; with a terrible bound he sprang to the side of Cahusac, crying, ‘To me, Monsieur Guardsman; I will slay you!’”



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Three Musketeers was written by Alexandre Dumas and was first published as a series in the magazine *Le Siècle* from March 14 to July 14, 1844; the novel was published by Baudry that same year. The novel is the first part of a trilogy that also includes *Twenty Years After* (1845) and *The Vicomte of Bragelonne* (1850), taking readers from Anne of Austria's regency to the early years of Louis XIV's reign. In the novel, d'Artagnan is a young man from Gascony who goes to Paris to become a musketeer. Although duels are forbidden, he must meet with Athos to settle a dispute between them, sword in hand. But as they are about to duel, Cardinal Richelieu's guards come to arrest them because of the law against dueling. D'Artagnan finally decides to join forces with the Musketeers and starts fighting by their side.

FUN FACT!

The Cardinal-Duke of Richelieu

In 1625, Louis XIII reigned over France with his chief minister, Cardinal Richelieu. Louis XIII's wife was Queen Anne of Austria. But due to his lack of experience, the King relied on his chief minister, who proved to be a cunning strategist willing to do anything to get his way. Cardinal Richelieu continues to have a notorious reputation...

Literary analysis

Issue

How does the excerpt from *The Three Musketeers* highlight swordsmanship to capture the reader's attention?

Questions

A duel like any other?

The passage accurately describes the duel while emphasizing the exceptional nature of the situation.

1) Identify the technical vocabulary used to describe the duel.

2) Identify two contrasting nouns in the following description: "...with a fury which however did not exclude a certain degree of method."

3) Who wins the duel in the end?



4) Does d'Artagnan abide by the rules of swordsmanship? Justify your answer.

5) What two mistakes did Jussac make that ultimately led to his death?

Highlighting the hero

The description of the duel highlights the hero d'Artagnan who is still quite young and therefore still has things to learn.

1) To which animals is d'Artagnan compared?

2) Identify the terms that describe d'Artagnan during the duel (e.g. "active and energetic").

3) Does d'Artagnan have as much experience as the three musketeers?

4) In the last paragraph, what choice does d'Artagnan make? Do you understand his choice?
(D'Artagnan was originally there to duel with Athos.)

5) Reread the beginning of the second paragraph. How does the narrator view d'Artagnan?



A scene written like a performance

The scene described must capture the dynamics of an exchange in which the reader understands, as it is clearly indicated, what is developing at that very moment—a fourth musketeer?

1) Identify the scene's stages. Would you say that the scene is organized?

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2) How does the action unfold? Justify your answer.

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.....

3) Which of the five senses is evoked? Give specific examples to justify your answer.

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4) Can the duel, as written by Dumas, be regarded as a performance?

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5) What feelings does the author seek to incite in readers?

.....

.....

An epic adventure novel

Swashbuckler dramas are part of to the broader adventure novel genre, which focuses on cloak-and-dagger intrigue (from the French *de cape et d'épée*). Readers encounter:

- Specific themes: duels, horse-riding, ambushes, etc.
- Archetypal characters and places: the schemer, the traitor, the skilled swordsman, the king's court, the inn, etc.

Such themes imply a fairly specific time period—mainly the 16th to the 18th century.

What connections could be made between fencing as a sport and the adventure-novel scene you have just studied?

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▶ FIND OUT MORE:

WRITING: “Now, we must have badly painted the character of our adventure seeker, or our readers must have already perceived that d’Artagnan was not an ordinary man.”

Respond to Alexandre Dumas by showing him that you have understood why d’Artagnan is not an “ordinary man”.

▶ ACTIVITY 3: IMAGERY IN THE EPIC NOVEL

Based on the reading from chapter five from Alexandre Dumas’ *The Three Musketeers* (page 3).

FUN FACT!

Epic stories are based on the reader’s reaction—admiration—to a hero’s adventures. Epic stories use embellishment and amplification (through accumulation, comparison, hyperbole, superlatives, etc.) to highlight figures that surpass ordinary realities.

What details in the excerpt identify it as an epic story? Add examples to the mind map.

Epics use literary devices that involve:

Vocabulary

Terms rooted in ancient times and the great epics:

Modal auxiliary verbs that emphasize action:

Amplification that corresponds to the solemnity of the epic chant:

No examples in the excerpt, but students should be aware of this feature in epic works.

Syntax

Long and complex sentences that amplify action:

Exclamations that underline the narrator’s feelings:

Symmetry and parallelism that demonstrate contrast and confrontation:

Figures of speech

Simile and metaphor (i.e. comparisons), which add to the impression of power and violence:

Hyperbole, or numbers that contribute to amplification:

Accumulation and enumeration, which build up key points, and hyperbolic metaphor:



REVIEW

- Fencing has been an Olympic sport since the ancient Games. It is a combat sport that upholds the values of honor and respect. Referees use French expressions to give fencers cues.
- The expression “cloak and dagger”—which refers to situations involving intrigue, mystery, and espionage—comes from the French *de cape et d'épée*, a kind of swashbuckler drama.
- Swashbuckler dramas belong to the adventure-novel literary genre, which is used by writers to keep readers on the edge of their seats.



NOW, TAKE ACTION!

- **Describe a duel.** Imagine a scene between two characters and try to describe a sword duel between them. Use the figures of speech you've learned and language components that add action to your story.
- **Go at your own pace.** If it's hard for you to concentrate while reading, try to read more slowly and pause at the end of each sentence. Can you understand what the author meant? Can you clearly visualize the scene being described? A series of images should soon unfold, and you'll be eager to find out what happens next!
- **You can rely on others, too.** You can try to deal with challenges on your own, but just like in team fencing, sometimes you have to rely on others. So if you're having an off day, know that you can count on your teammates to help you succeed.



CYCLE PROGRESS WORKSHEET

CYCLE 4 • FENCING AND LITERATURE

THE ART OF BEING A (S)WORDSMITH

The worksheet can be adapted based on the class level within cycle 4.

Literary analysis exercises are primarily intended for students 14–15 years old, and possibly 13-year-olds.

Teachers who would like to work on the excerpt with students 12–13 years old—focusing on heroic figures, for example—could remove the last two questions from the first three points addressed in Activity 2 and more clearly link class work on literary analysis to the “Heroes/heroines and heroism” program entry in a specific unit devoted to the epic genre, for example.

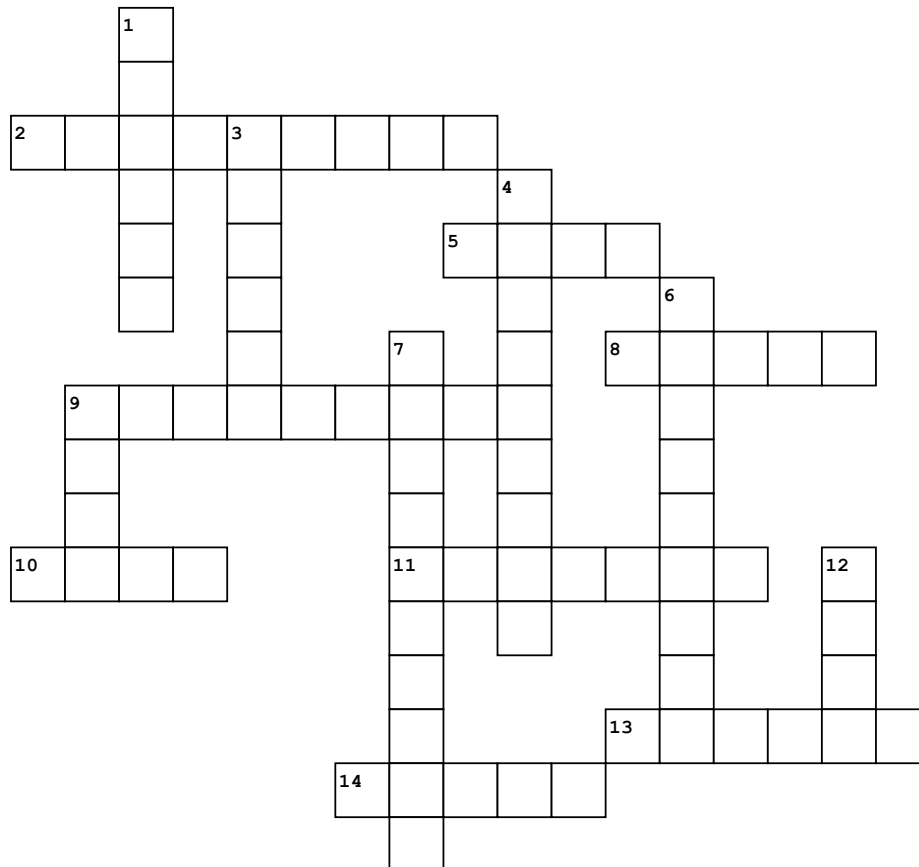


IT'S YOUR TURN!

CYCLE 4 • FENCING AND LITERATURE

ARE YOU A (S)WORDSMITH?

CROSSWORD



Across

2. A skilled user of words.
5. One of three disciplines in fencing, in addition to épée and sabre.
8. The author of the novel *The Three Musketeers*.
9. A figure of amplification, an exaggerated statement.
10. A match or combat between two fencers in a competition.
11. The ability to move quickly and easily, a key skill in fencing.
13. The official language of fencing.
14. The tip of a fencing sword, used to score a touch.

Down

1. The hero who stated, "At the envoi's end, I touch!" in Edmond Rostand's play.
3. The action performed at the start and end of a bout.
4. The father of the modern Olympic Games.
6. D'Artagnan's dream.
7. A figure of speech, another word for simile.
9. A person who is admired for courageous acts or outstanding achievements.
12. A long story about heroic deeds or adventures.

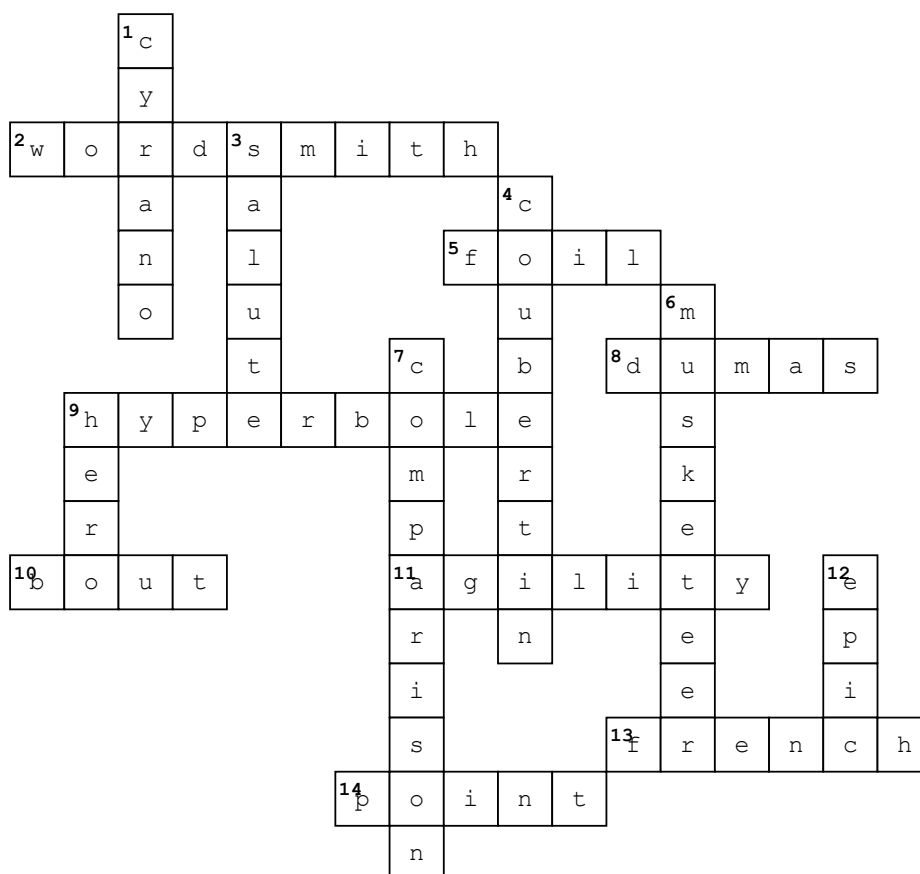


IT'S YOUR TURN!

CYCLE 4 • FENCING AND LITERATURE

ARE YOU A (S)WORDSMITH?

CROSSWORD



Across

2. A skilled user of words.
5. One of three disciplines in fencing, in addition to épée and sabre.
8. The author of the novel *The Three Musketeers*.
9. A figure of amplification, an exaggerated statement.
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