

Black History Month
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Fifth Grade
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Dream Deferred

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up

Like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore--

And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?

Or crust and sugar over--

like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags

like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

Langston Hughes

Title Statement

For some time in our country, people did not act like African Americans had done anything important. Now, we have African American History Month in February. Both Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass were born during this month. These two men have been extremely important to the development of our nation. Despite very different circumstances, they both contributed to slavery in the US becoming illegal. Abraham Lincoln was the president that led the nation at the time. Frederick Douglass was a famous speaker and writer then, who had started his life as a slave. There have been many important contributions by African Americans that have changed the course of our history. Throughout the rest of the world, the same has been true. We are going to study Black History Month for February. The reason we are studying Black, instead of African American, History is that we will not only be studying Americans. We will read folk tales, listen to music, and play games from Africa. We will learn about important people from around the world who are either African or descended from Africans.

Unit Introduction

This unit, designed for Black History Month, aims to cover many topics. The students will be introduced to a range of subjects and mediums for them to interpret and express. The overarching lesson teaches students the idea of what culture is, specifically as it relates to the subject of Black History. The undergirding lesson teaches children cultural appreciation. The lessons are designed to guide the students through many different facets of African and historical African American culture and to find how to identify with individuals in those cultures. One of the ways the lesson accomplishes this subtlety is by retracing the path of African American culture.

This unit traces culture from pre-colonial Africa through to present-day Africa and African Americans. It reemphasizes some of what was covered up through Western dominance. African culture is a point of reference for interpreting American history. The system of slavery is examined in a personal nature, not so much as an economic force. Abolitionists, the Underground Railroad, and Emancipation hold much the same stature. The oppression of segregation is related through novels, poetry and music, as is the principled, peaceful fight to end it in the Civil Right Movement. The idea of repatriation is examined through the life of Marcus Garvey, as are its downfalls. Music, as it relates to many of these movements and rhythms in

history, plays a central role in this unit. Culture, in general, and its specific instances are the driving forces behind this unit.

Unit Objectives

Students will:

1. Demonstrate understanding of Black History
2. Clarify understanding of culture
3. Identify aspects of culture through a variety of mediums
4. Emulate aspects of effective communication and expression studied
5. Incorporate problem-solving abilities based on the unique situations discussed
6. Identify the relevance of music to culture
7. Identify unique expressions of musical and artistic themes as it relates to Black History, African culture, African American culture and the culture of the African Diaspora
8. Demonstrate empathy for human suffering and hardship
9. Demonstrate effective oral presentation strategies
10. Perform understanding of artistry
11. Construct an aspect of personal philosophy as it relates to social justice
12. Compare and contrast the ideas of repatriation and integration as solutions to the segregation in the United States
13. Explore possible utilizations of symbolic representation

Prerequisite Skills

Prior to beginning the unit, students should:

- Be familiar with the format of folk tales and some of the tales of the common United States' culture.
- Demonstrate appropriate game participation manners.
- Have exposure to African American History, slavery, Emancipation, segregation, and the Civil Rights Movement.
- Have been introduced to the major concepts of poetry, such as metaphor, rhythm, and freedom from prose conventions.
- Know how to identify and express common themes in music.
- Be able to demonstrate symbolic understanding.

Black History Month Content and Objectives Outline

- I. Pre-colonial Africa - Folk Tales and Culture
 - a. *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*
 - Identify culturally relevant material through folk tales
 - Compare and contrast traditional African culture with their own
 - Construct a view of culture as based on its components, including names
 - b. Oware
 - Integrate the rules of the game into logical abilities
 - Formulate a strategy based upon sequencing
 - Acquire problem-solving ability
 - Demonstrate appropriate competition awareness
 - c. African Music
 - Associate musical forms with culture
 - Express cultural evolution through musical understanding
 - Identify themes of music as it relates to culture
- II. Enslavement and Slavery
 - a. Steal Away
 - Associate musical forms with culture
 - Express cultural evolution through musical understanding
 - Identify themes of music as it relates to culture
 - b. Two Views of Christmas
 - Delineate between the concurrent cultures
 - Identify the appropriate culture by its aspects
 - Integrate the student's own culture into the larger understanding of the word
- III. Abolitionism and Emancipation
 - a. Underground Railroad Presentation
 - To describe stops on the Underground Railroad
 - To discuss the various roles and identify important examples of each
 - To produce a report on one aspect of the Underground Railroad
 - To demonstrate effective group collaboration
 - b. Harriet Tubman and the Drinking Gourd
 - Associate musical forms with culture
 - Incorporate music into communication
 - Translate music into culturally-relevant text

- c. Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt
 - Empathize with subtlety
 - Express ideas in highly symbolic form
 - Distinguish between important and irrelevant symbology in expression
- d. Juneteenth
 - Generate empathy for the individuals from this time in US History
 - Transmit the feelings associated with Emancipation through dramatic performance
- IV. Segregation
 - a. Experiment in Prejudice
 - Experience in a small way what it feels like to be treated unfairly.
 - Discuss their feelings about being on either/both sides of prejudice and unfair treatment.
 - Connect personally with the treatment of historically underrepresented groups
 - b. Marcus Garvey
 - Contrast repatriation with integration
 - Examine the origins of the repatriation movement
 - Express the pitfalls of this idea
 - Demonstrate dramatic performance concepts
 - c. Cherries and Cherry Pits
 - Associate with simple ideas
 - Elaborate thereupon
 - Express thoroughly through varied mediums
 - d. Roll of Thunder
 - Identify directly with a character of similar age subject to legislated segregation
 - e. George Washington Carver
 - Demonstrate appreciation of unique problem-solving abilities
 - Emulate unique problem-solving abilities
 - f. Pictures of Boo Hag
 - Identify with cultural similarities from other cultures
 - Compose an accurate representation within a foreign cultural framework
- V. Civil Rights
 - a. Now Let Me Fly
 - Understand the significance of the Brown v. Board case
 - b. Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Junior
 - Identify effective oral communication strategies

- Demonstrate effective oral communication strategies
- Construct valid arguments
- Develop passion for social justice
- c. Langston Hughes was a Dreamer, Too
 - To discover the poems of Hughes (cognitive)
 - To examine their relation to Black History (cognitive)
 - To relate personally to the feelings therein (affective)
 - To expand on the students' existing knowledge of poetry and the expressive arts' role in Black History (cognitive)
- Personal Poetry
 - Effectively communicate feeling through poetry
 - Explore metaphorical expression
 - Convey passion through symbolism
- VI. Contemporary African Diaspora
 - a. Kinara
 - Indicate the significance of various symbols of Kwanzaa and its relation to the African diasporas
 - Represent those symbols in visual art and written description
 - b. Bulletin Biographies
 - Convey the importance of the contributions of Africans and those of African descent to the world community through graphical representations
 - Explain that importance in small and large group discussions
 - c. Toast and Slam!
 - Incorporate rhythmic speaking into musical framework
 - Amplify poetic meaning through oral performance
 - d. The Circle Unbroken
 - Demonstrate thorough understanding of Black History through extended written response
 - Demonstrate thorough understanding of cultural expressions through extended written response

State Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.

- A. Apply word analysis and vocabulary skills to comprehend selections.
 - 1.A.2a Read and comprehend unfamiliar words using root words, synonyms, antonyms, word origins and derivations.
 - 1.A.2b Clarify word meaning using context clues and a variety of resources including glossaries, dictionaries and thesauruses.
- B. Apply reading strategies to improve understanding and fluency.
 - 1.B.2a Establish purposes for reading; survey materials; ask questions; make predictions; connect, clarify and extend ideas.
 - 1.B.2b Identify structure (e.g., description, compare/contrast, cause and effect, sequence) of nonfiction texts to improve comprehension.
 - 1.B.2c Continuously check and clarify for understanding (e.g., in addition to previous skills, clarify terminology, seek additional information).
 - 1.B.2d Read age-appropriate material aloud with fluency and accuracy.
- C. Comprehend a broad range of reading materials.
 - 1.C.2a Use information to form and refine questions and predictions.
 - 1.C.2b Make and support inferences and form interpretations about main themes and topics.
 - 1.C.2c Compare and contrast the content and organization of selections.
 - 1.C.2d Summarize and make generalizations from content and relate to purpose of material.
 - 1.C.2e Explain how authors and illustrators use text and art to express their ideas (e.g., points of view, design hues, metaphor).
 - 1.C.2f Connect information presented in tables, maps and charts to printed or electronic text.

State Goal 2: Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras and ideas.

- A. Understand how literary elements and techniques are used to convey meaning.
 - 2.A.2a Identify literary elements and literary techniques (e.g., characterization, use of narration, use of dialogue) in a variety of literary works.
 - 2.A.2b Describe how literary elements (e.g., theme, character, setting, plot, tone, conflict) are used in literature to create meaning.
 - 2.A.2c Identify definitive features of literary forms (e.g., realistic fiction, historical fiction, fantasy, narrative, nonfiction, biography, plays, electronic literary forms).
- B. Read and interpret a variety of literary works.
 - 2.B.2a Respond to literary material by making inferences, drawing conclusions and comparing it to their own experience, prior knowledge and other texts.
 - 2.B.2b Identify and explain themes that have been explored in literature from different societies and eras.²

- 2.B.2c Relate literary works and their characters, settings and plots to current and historical events, people and perspectives.

State Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.

- A. Use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization and structure.
 - 3.A.2 Write paragraphs that include a variety of sentence types; appropriate use of the eight parts of speech; and accurate spelling, capitalization and punctuation.
- B. Compose well-organized and coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences.
 - 3.B.2a Generate and organize ideas using a variety of planning strategies (e.g., mapping, outlining, drafting).
 - 3.B.2b Establish central idea, organization, elaboration and unity in relation to purpose and audience.
 - 3.B.2d Edit documents for clarity, subjectivity, pronoun-antecedent agreement, adverb and adjective agreement and verb tense; proofread for spelling, capitalization and punctuation; and ensure that documents are formatted in final form for submission and/or publication.
- C. Communicate ideas in writing to accomplish a variety of purposes.
 - 3.C.2a Write for a variety of purposes and for specified audiences in a variety of forms including narrative (e.g., fiction, autobiography), expository (e.g., reports, essays) and persuasive writings (e.g., editorials, advertisements).
 - 3.C.2b Produce and format compositions for specified audiences using available technology.

State Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.

- A. Listen effectively in formal and informal situations.
 - 4.A.2a Demonstrate understanding of the listening process (e.g., sender, receiver, message) by summarizing and paraphrasing spoken messages orally and in writing in formal and informal situations.
 - 4.A.2b Ask and respond to questions related to oral presentations and messages in small and large group settings.
 - 4.A.2c Restate and carry out a variety of oral instructions.
- B. Speak effectively using language appropriate to the situation and audience.
 - 4.B.2a Present oral reports to an audience using correct language and nonverbal expressions for the intended purpose and message within a suggested organizational format.
 - 4.B.2b Use speaking skills and procedures to participate in group discussions.
 - 4.B.2c Identify methods to manage or overcome communication anxiety and apprehension (e.g., topic outlines, repetitive practice).

- 4.B.2d Identify main verbal and nonverbal communication elements and strategies to maintain communications and to resolve conflict.

State Goal 5: Use the language arts to acquire, assess and communicate information.

- A. Locate, organize, and use information from various sources to answer questions, solve problems and communicate ideas.
 - 5.A.2b Organize and integrate information from a variety of sources (e.g., books, interviews, library reference materials, web- sites, CD-ROMs).
- B. Analyze and evaluate information acquired from various sources.
 - 5.B.2b Cite sources used.
- C. Apply acquired information, concepts and ideas to communicate in a variety of formats.
 - 5.C.2a Create a variety of print and nonprint documents to communicate acquired information for specific audiences and purposes.
 - 5.C.2b Prepare and deliver oral presentations based on inquiry or research.

State Goal 14: Understand political systems, with an emphasis on the United States.

- C. Understand election processes and responsibilities of citizens.
 - 14.C.2 Describe and evaluate why rights and responsibilities are important to the individual, family, community, workplace, state and nation (e.g., voting, protection under the law).
- D. Understand the roles and influences of individuals and interest groups in the political systems of Illinois, the United States and other nations.
 - 14.D.2 Explain ways that individuals and groups influence and shape public policy.
- E. Understand United States foreign policy as it relates to other nations and international issues.
 - 14.E.2 Determine and explain the leadership role of the United States in international settings.
- F. Understand the development of United States political ideas and traditions.
 - 14.F.2 Identify consistencies and inconsistencies between expressed United States political traditions and ideas and actual practices (e.g., freedom of speech, right to bear arms, slavery, voting rights).

State Goal 15: Understand economic systems, with an emphasis on the United States.

- A. Understand how different economic systems operate in the exchange, production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.
 - 15.A.2a Explain how economic systems decide what goods and services are produced, how they are produced and who consumes them.
- B. Understand that scarcity necessitates choices by consumers.
 - 15.B.2a Identify factors that affect how consumers make their choices.
 - 15.B.2c Explain that when a choice is made, something else is given up.

- C. Understand that scarcity necessitates choices by producers.
 - 15.C.2a Describe the relationship between price and quantity supplied of a good or service.
 - 15.C.2b Identify and explain examples of competition in the economy.
- E. Understand the impact of government policies and decisions on production and consumption in the economy.
 - 15.E.2a Explain how and why public goods and services are provided.
 - 15.E.2b Identify which public goods and services are provided by differing levels of government.

State Goal 16: Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations.

- A. Apply the skills of historical analysis and interpretation.
 - 16.A.2a Read historical stories and determine events which influenced their writing.
 - 16.A.2b Compare different stories about a historical figure or event and analyze differences in the portrayals and perspectives they present.
 - 16.A.2c Ask questions and seek answers by collecting and analyzing data from historic documents, images and other literary and non-literary sources.
- C. Understand the development of economic systems.
 - 16.C.2a (US) Describe how slavery and indentured servitude influenced the early economy of the United States.
 - 16.C.2b (US) Explain how individuals, including John Deere, Thomas Edison, Robert McCormack, George Washington Carver and Henry Ford, contributed to economic change through ideas, inventions and entrepreneurship.
 - 16.C.2c (US) Describe significant economic events including industrialization, immigration, the Great Depression, the shift to a service economy and the rise of technology that influenced history from the industrial development era to the present.
- D. Understand Illinois, United States and world social history.
 - 16.D.2c (US) Describe the influence of key individuals and groups, including Susan B. Anthony/suffrage and Martin Luther King, Jr./civil rights, in the historical eras of Illinois and the United States.
 - 16.D.2 (W) Describe the various roles of men, women and children in the family, at work, and in the community in various time periods and places (e.g., ancient Rome, Medieval Europe, ancient China, Sub-Saharan Africa).
- E. Understand Illinois, United States and world environmental history.
 - 16.E.2b (W) Identify individuals and their inventions (e.g., Watt/steam engine, Nobel/TNT, Edison/electric light) which influenced world environmental history.

State Goal 17: Understand world geography and the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the United States.

- A. Locate, describe and explain places, regions and features on the Earth.

- 17.A.2b Use maps and other geographic representations and instruments to gather information about people, places and environments.
- B. Analyze and explain characteristics and interactions of the Earth's physical systems.
 - 17.B.2a Describe how physical and human processes shape spatial patterns including erosion, agriculture and settlement.
- C. Understand relationships between geographic factors and society.
 - 17.C.2a Describe how natural events in the physical environment affect human activities.
 - 17.C.2b Describe the relationships among location of resources, population distribution and economic activities (e.g., transportation, trade, communications).
 - 17.C.2c Explain how human activity affects the environment.
- D. Understand the historical significance of geography.
 - 17.D.2a Describe how physical characteristics of places influence people's perceptions and their roles in the world over time.
 - 17.D.2b Identify different settlement patterns in Illinois and the United States and relate them to physical features and resources.

State Goal 18: Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the United States.

- A. Compare characteristics of culture as reflected in language, literature, the arts, traditions and institutions.
 - 18.A.2 Explain ways in which language, stories, folk tales, music, media and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture.
- B. Understand the roles and interactions of individuals and groups in society.
 - 18.B.2a Describe interactions of individuals, groups and institutions in situations drawn from the local community (e.g., local response to state and national reforms).
 - 18.B.2b Describe the ways in which institutions meet the needs of society.
- C. Understand how social systems form and develop over time.
 - 18.C.2 Describe how changes in production (e.g., hunting and gathering, agricultural, industrial) and population caused changes in social systems.

State Goal 25: Know the language of the arts.

- A. Understand the sensory elements, organizational principles and expressive qualities of the arts.
 - 25.A.2a Dance: Identify and describe the elements of pathways, level, focus, range in space, sustained and percussive qualities of speed; the principles of ABA and round choreographic form, contrast and repetition; and the expressive qualities of mood and emotion.
 - 25.A.2b Drama: Understand the elements of acting, scripting, speaking, improvising, physical movement, gesture, and picturization (shape, line, and level); the principles of conflict/resolution and

theme; and the expressive characteristics of mood and dynamics.

25.A.2c Music: Identify elements and expressive qualities such as tone color, harmony, melody, form (rondo, theme and variation), rhythm/meter and dynamics in a variety of musical styles.

25.A.2d Visual Arts: Identify and describe the elements of 2- and 3-dimensional space, figure ground, value and form; the principles of rhythm, size, proportion and composition; and the expressive qualities of symbol and story.

B. Understand the similarities, distinctions and connections in and among the arts.

25.B.2 Understand how elements and principles combine within an art form to express ideas.

State Goal 26: Through creating and performing, understand how works of art are produced.

A. Understand processes, traditional tools and modern technologies used in the arts.

26.A.2c Music: Classify musical sound sources into groups (e.g., instrumental families, vocal ranges, solo/ensembles).

B. Apply skills and knowledge necessary to create and perform in one or more of the arts.

26.B.2b Drama: Demonstrate actions, characters, narrative skills, collaboration, environments, simple staging and sequence of events and situations in solo and ensemble dramas.

26.B.2d Visual Arts: Demonstrate knowledge and skills to create works of visual art using problem solving, observing, designing, sketching and constructing.

State Goal 27: Understand the role of the arts in civilizations, past and present.

A. Analyze how the arts function in history, society and everyday life.

27.A.2a Identify and describe the relationship between the arts and various environments (e.g., home, school, workplace, theatre, gallery).

B. Understand how the arts shape and reflect history, society and everyday life.

27.B.2 Identify and describe how the arts communicate the similarities and differences among various people, places and times.

State SEL Goal 1: Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.

C. Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals.

1C.2a. Describe the steps in setting and working toward goal achievement.

1C.2b. Monitor progress on achieving a short-term personal goal.

State SEL Goal 2: Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.

A. Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.

- 2A.2a. Identify verbal, physical, and situational cues that indicate how others may feel.
 - 2A.2b. Describe the expressed feelings and perspectives of others.
 - B. Recognize individual and group similarities and differences.
 - 2B.2a. Identify differences among and contributions of various social and cultural groups.
 - 2B.2b. Demonstrate how to work effectively with those who are different from oneself.
 - C. Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.
 - 2C.2b. Analyze ways to work effectively in groups.
- State SEL Goal 3: Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.
- A. Consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in making decisions.
 - 3A.2a. Demonstrate the ability to respect the rights of self and others.
 - 3A.2b. Demonstrate knowledge of how social norms affect decision making and behavior.

State Social Science Mandates

African American History

Paragraph 27-20.4

Every public elementary school and high school shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction studying the events of Black History. These events shall include not only the contributions made by individual African-Americans in government and in the arts, humanities and sciences to the economic, cultural and political development of the United States and Africa, but also the socio-economic struggle which African-Americans experienced collectively in striving to achieve fair and equal treatment under the laws of this nation. The studying of this material shall constitute an affirmation by students of their commitment to respect the dignity of all races and peoples and to forever eschew every form of discrimination in their lives and careers.

History

105 ILCS 5/27 21 (from Ch. 122, par. 27 21)

Sec. 27 21. History of United States.

History of the United States shall be taught in all public schools and in all other educational institutions in this State supported or maintained, in whole or in part, by public funds.

"The teaching of history shall have as one of its objectives the imparting to pupils of a comprehensive idea of our democratic form of government and the principles for which our government stands as regards other nations, including the studying of the place of our government in world wide movements and the leaders thereof, with particular stress upon the basic principles and ideals of our representative form of government. The teaching of history shall include a study of the role and contributions of African Americans and other ethnic groups including but not restricted to Polish, Lithuanian, German, Hungarian, Irish, Bohemian, Russian, Albanian, Italian, Czech, Slovak, French, Scots, Hispanics, Asian Americans, etc., in the history of this country and this State. The teaching of history also shall include a study of the role of labor unions and their interaction with government in achieving the goals of a mixed free enterprise system. No pupils shall be graduated from the eighth grade of any public school unless he has received such instruction in the

history of the United States and gives evidence of having a comprehensive knowledge thereof.

Learning Activities

Introductory Activity

The most appropriate way to start a unit on Black History is with a lesson on African culture. The students will identify Africa on a world map and class discussion will focus on what they already know, as well as some common misconceptions. We will then transition to talking about folk tales and what they can tell us about a culture. The teacher should show the cover to John Steptoe's *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*, and discuss with the class what they are expecting from it. Afterwards, vocabulary will be passed out and researched by student teams. Students will immediately take individual vocabulary quizzes. When quizzes are complete, the teacher should read *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* to the class.

Discuss the students' predictions. Did the story turn out the way they expected? How was it different? Is there anything they would change? How is it similar to and different from Perrault's "Cinderella?" What do these differences and similarities tell us about people and culture? Naming is very important to culture. Do any of you know where your names come from or what they mean? The teacher should have a name book or other resource available, may want to research his or her own name, and will definitely want to know a little bit about the names of the students in the class. Every culture has its own names. Discuss that names have histories in themselves and as they

relate to each of the students. It is important to remember that students may have names that are culturally important.

Folk tales often use the names of their characters to give you an idea about what they are like. Write the names “Manyara” and “Nyasha” on the board. The students will then come up to write possible meanings below each of the names. Reveal the original meanings of the names: “you have been humbled” and “merciful one.” There are many names that are unique to the Shona of Zimbabwe. For each tribe or culture in Africa, there are many more. List some names that the students may be more familiar with that have African origins.

Go over some of the other books and resources that have been made available especially for this important month. You may choose to give a brief synopsis of some of the stories and books, including the region/tribe of origin.

Have the students write a journal entry on some of the things they have learned from this lesson. They may write about names, folk tales, culture, or anything else. They should definitely write something learned and something else they want to learn about Africa and Africans.

Later, review the entries for the lesson’s success, the students’ understanding, and possible suggestions about how students might want to pursue their learning goals.

African Music

African culture holds music very closely. It serves practical, artistic, and religious purposes. Start with drumming samples—Madou Djembe’s “La Marche du Cameleon,” and Kouame Sereba’s “Kouame Ba”—and briefly speak to the importance of drumming in Africa. Seraba’s song is a good example of how music plays a central role in the traditions of African cultures. Siji’s “Oriki” can show the prayers of these musical traditions without the music, and sets the stage to introduce modern African music later in the lesson. Continue with traditional music—Samite’s “Ndere ye Kiro” and “Dawaya Mwoyo” to highlight the flute and kalimba, respectively. Vocal music in Africa should be heard through Ladysmith Black Mambazo’s “Wenyukela” and “Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring,” as they are both traditional and innovative. This is a good segue to the incorporation of Western music as seen in Fela Anikulapo Kuti’s “Water Get No Enemy” and Segun Bucknor’s “Adanri Sogbasogba.” Also, Samite’s “Yazala Abambuti” serves as another bridging point because it is a song with unique expressions in Africa and the US. Finally, it comes full circle with American Afrobeat, such as Antibalas’ “Who is this America?”

Harriet Tubman and the Drinking Gourd

Discuss with students the meaning of the word, abolitionist. The students will read individually about Harriet Tubman. The class will

discuss several questions about her and her role. Students will view the film, *Follow the Drinking Gourd*. Instruct them to listen closely to the song, and think about its role in the Underground Railroad. After the film, discuss the songs implications and meaning. Pass out copies of the lyrics and play the song (any version may be used, just make sure the lyrics are to the appropriate version), asking the students to follow along. Discuss the meaning of each of the lyrics.

Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt

The students will read Deborah Hopkinson's *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*. Review vocabulary as a class and have the students make predictions as usual, based on the cover of the book. After reading the story, the students can use art materials, especially construction paper, to build their own square of the quilt. The students should be instructed as to the sizing of the squares to be constructed and do all of the measuring and cutting individually. The squares can then be displayed together on the classroom bulletin board.

Timeline

The students will begin to construct a timeline relating to the history of African Americans. It will cover about six hundred years, but not be entirely detailed. The students will use two standard sheets of blank paper, turned lengthwise, and draw a line horizontally through the

center. They should then be able to separate the line into six equal sections to represent the centuries. Identify the leftmost section (approximately 1400-1500 CE) as “Pre-colonial Africa.” Have the students draw or write something relating to this era from what they have learned through folktales, history, or free-reading books. They should be encouraged to show that many of these traditions had begun far prior to the beginning of the timeline. US slavery should also appear, beginning in 1492 and ending in 1863, as well as the Underground Railroad that ran from 1830 to 1863. The students will keep their timelines throughout the unit and update them periodically.

Steal Away

Compile songs to show the students how important a role music played in the life of slaves and antebellum African Americans: “Go Tell it on the Mountain,” “Steal Away,” “Get on Board,” “Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child,” “Free at Last,” “I’ll Fly Away,” “I’ve Got a Home,” “A Prayer,” “Down by the Riverside,” “You Got to Move,” and “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot.” After a few songs, discuss the importance of the religion in these songs and the lives of the people who sang them. Discuss the lyrics thoroughly, being sure to include any recent uses of the elements of these songs.

Two Views of Christmas

The students should open their notebooks and write “Christmas” at the top, under which they will have two columns: Quarters and Big House. As you read through Patricia and Fredrick McKissack’s *Christmas in the Big House, Christmas in the Quarters*, have the students record the things they hear in the appropriate column. At the end of each section, review as a class the things that have been recorded.

Marcus Garvey

The students will give a dramatic reading of the play “Back to Africa: Marcus Garvey” to introduce repatriation. The reading should be recorded through audio or video and replayed for the students to follow along and take in. Afterwards, discuss the motivation for this kind of thinking and have the students write journal entries about their thoughts about repatriation. Later, they can revisit and revise those thoughts after learning about desegregation and the Civil Rights movement.

Kinara

Students can use various web resources to research Kwanzaa. They should gather information to write a brief piece (one to two

paragraphs) about the history and celebration of Kwanzaa. Using red, black, green, brown, and yellow construction paper, students will construct a kinara and its candles, indicating what each candle represents in both Swahili and English. The reports can then be printed out and displayed with the kinara.

Juneteenth

As a class, the students will read and act out Rose McGee's play *Juneteenth*. This will serve as an introduction to Emancipation and Frederick Douglass. As there are twelve parts, the class may be divided into two groups. Ensure that the groups are heterogeneous.

Seeds of Hope

Introduce Vera B. Williams' *Cherries and Cherry Pits*. The main character, Bidemmi, creates stories based around the people she sees around her. What do the cherry pits represent? How does this relate to the idea of African American history? The students should be able to relate to this idea from their own mental excursions, encourage its expression. The students should each create a series of somewhat unrelated stories about people that they have seen. They can be in the form of short stories, captioned illustrations, improvisational skit frameworks, musical pieces, or anything else that could convey the

creation. Have the students share extensively in small groups, and more generally with the whole class.

Bulletin Biographies

Group the students in fours. Using the computer lab and the Internet, the students will look up famous individuals of African descent in various subjects. The groups will be given categories that they will fill with three examples for each: literature, politics, science, education, sports, music, entertainment, and cultural arts. Each student will be responsible for researching two categories and sharing about them with their group mates. The students will print out pictures to use in making a group collage of the people they researched. Encourage the students to think about the symbolism of how everything is placed in relation to the rest of the piece. Display the finished collages in the classroom or hallway.

Roll of Thunder

The students will read Mildred D. Taylor's *Roll of Thunder...Hear My Cry*. Have the students keep a journal representative of one main character from the book. There should be at least one entry per chapter. The students can discuss the points of view for each of the characters and advocate for them.

Oware

The game of Oware is played all over Africa, in many different cultures, and is called several different names: Oware, Ohoro, and Mancala. Some places have parks with huge stone tables carved into game boards. It has several basic rules and is simple to play, but hard to master. The game involves strategy, perspective taking, and a good deal of mathematics. The students will learn how to play the game using the simple, purchased game boards, or it can be constructed using discarded egg cartons.

George Washington Carver

This man, in an effort to find a crop that could be as useful as but deplete the soil less than cotton, turned to peanuts. He invented over three hundred uses for the peanut. For this activity, students will cut out a peanut-shape from construction paper. They have three options for what to write about on it: Invent a new use for an everyday object and describe this new function, describe something you are excited about in the way George Washington Carver was about peanuts, or describe the process of making peanut butter from seed to sandwich.

Now Let Me Fly

Students will read Marcia Cebulski's *Now Let Me Fly*, a play about the Brown versus the Topeka Board of Education case. In the play, the ghost of his mentor approaches Thurgood Marshall as he considers the fate of this case. The pair looks at the implications of the struggle for equal rights. This play is available in three different levels and thus could be used in different kinds of classes. If coordinated correctly, it could even be revisited and elaborated on later in the students' academic careers.

Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Junior

Dr. King was well known for his role in the Civil Rights Movement, as well as his powerful speeches. One of the strategies that made his speaking so powerful was his repetition. Break up a speech of Dr. King's and distribute the segments to groups of four. Have the students restate the crux of the segment in their own words.

Encourage the students in finding the repetition in their own sections. Once they have successfully completed the summary, the class will come together to discuss some of their findings. Give plenty of time for this activity. Let the students talk about what they need to in regard to Dr. King's powerful ideas.

Passionate Speeches

Have the students write a paragraph in their journals about something for which they are passionate. Review the information learned about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: his strong position and the effective way he communicated it to his listeners. The students will be writing a speech in his style, on the subject of their choice. The subject need not be as vital as that of Dr. King (although it could be) but they should take a strong position that they can be both logical and emotional about. Take time with the students to refine their speeches, especially in helping them execute the triplicate repetition. The speeches should be presented.

Toast and Slam!

Spoken word performance has served an important role in the history of Africa and its Diaspora. Discuss this role and its importance in Africa, American slavery and the Jim Crow era, Jamaican toasting, early blues and jazz masters of ceremony, common preaching and speaking practices of African Americans, and the present expressions of Hip Hop and slam poetry. Examples should be played such as “Good Religion,” Lynton Kwesi Johnson, Pee Wee Johnson, MC Solaar, and Saul Williams. The children should perform a poem in the slam style, original or otherwise. The poem need not be from the slam genre.

Personal Poetry

After completing the lesson on Langston Hughes, the students can compose a poem in his style. Discuss Hughes unique use of metaphor in that the subject is often bluntly stated, and yet the metaphor is strikingly deep and multi-faceted. Encourage the students to write the poem on a deeply held belief. The topic from the above activity might be a good place to start. It may even provide the students with new perspective on the speeches themselves, and help them in the brainstorming or revising process. Because of the personal nature of the poems, they should not be performed in front of the class unless privately prearranged.

Pictures of Boo Hag

As a class, read Patricia C. McKissack's *Precious and the Boo Hag*. This is a cautionary tale about stranger danger in which the main character, Precious, is warned about the Boo Hag and told about some of her personality traits. The students can write their own stories about the Boo Hag, making sure to connect to these traits. They should also give a brief synopsis—like a teaser on the book jacket—that foreshadows the lesson of their tale.

Culminating Activity

Margot Theis Raven's *Circle Unbroken* is breathtakingly beautiful, in story and illustration. It details the life of one family, starting in Africa, coming to America enslaved, and its culmination in a little girl sitting on her grandmother's lap today, learning about her family's history.

To introduce the lesson, have the students write a journal entry about what tradition is. Suggest that it will be helpful for them to think of a definition for the word as well as an example. Discuss their entries and thoughts before reading the article "How it All Began: Sweet grass Basket Making in the South." Discuss traditions further. Does this alter what they think about what a tradition is or could be? Show examples of sweet grass baskets.

Read *The Circle Unbroken* to the class. Discuss the function of the baskets, as well as the metaphor, and how each changed throughout the family's history.

As an assessment, have the students create essays on how the family in the story maintained integrity through the changing times. They should provide specific examples from the story and incorporate knowledge of the time periods and what they know about culture in general. They may compare the baskets to another aspect of culture and talk about the parallels.

Prejudice Experiment Lesson Plan Outline

Mr.
Sallée

19 February
2008

Social Studies
Black History Month

Fifth Grade

Forty-five
minutes to
one hour

Preliminary Planning

Topic/Focus:

This will lesson will introduce some of the feelings of prejudice to provide an affective point of reference for African American History.

Objectives:

The students will be able to:

- Experience in a small way what it feels like to be treated unfairly.
- Discuss their feelings about being on either/both sides of prejudice and unfair treatment.
- Connect personally with the treatment of historically underrepresented groups

Materials:

- Ribbons, one per student (an equal number of two colors of ribbons, cut, with a safety pin attached to each)
- A simple reward for each student (optional)
- List of very easy spelling words for spelling bee
- List of very difficult words for a spelling bee

Preparation:

- Prepare the ribbons and safety pins

Classroom Setting:

Desks will be arranged into two groups facing each other along a center aisle.

Key Behavioral Reminders:

Behavioral reminders are given throughout the instructional plan.

State Standards:

STATE GOAL 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.

A. Listen effectively in formal and informal situations.

4.A.2a Demonstrate understanding of the listening process (e.g., sender, receiver, message) by summarizing and paraphrasing spoken messages orally and in writing in formal and informal situations.

4.A.2b Ask and respond to questions related to oral presentations and messages in small and large group settings.

- STATE GOAL 14: Understand election processes and responsibilities of citizens.
- C. Understand election processes and responsibilities of citizens.
 - 14.C.2 Describe and evaluate why rights and responsibilities are important to the individual, family, community, workplace, state and nation (e.g., voting, protection under the law).
- STATE GOAL 16: Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations.
- A. Apply the skills of historical analysis and interpretation.
- STATE GOAL 18: Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the United States.
- B. Understand the roles and interactions of individuals and groups in society.
 - 18.B.2a Describe interactions of individuals, groups and institutions in situations drawn from the local community (e.g., local response to state and national

Instructional Plan

Anticipatory Set:

1. Ask the students if they would like to participate in an experiment. (Anyone who so chooses may abstain. Allow them to sit in an alternate location where they can quietly observe.)
2. Pass the ribbons out in equal numbers to the participants. The favored color should be passed out to the students seated nearest the center aisle.
3. Today we will hold a classroom spelling bee.

Sequence of Learning Activities:

- I. Review the standard spelling bee rules and procedures.
 - a. Students must state the word, spell it correctly, and then restate the word.
 - b. Students will be eliminated from the competition with their first misspelled word.
 - c. Anyone who “helps” will also be immediately eliminated.
- II. Begin the spelling bee.
 - a. Progress systematically throughout the room.
 - b. The frequency with which the students from the two groups are called upon should vary.
 - c. Use the appropriate list for each student.
 - i. Students from the favored group should be given words from the easy list.
 - ii. Students from the disfavored group should be given words from the hard list.
 - d. Prizes may be given for right answers or good effort.
 - i. Either only give prizes to the favored group, or
 - ii. Give better prizes to the favored group.
- III. Make sure to support the “prejudice” through appropriate language.
 - a. Use short words in speaking with the disfavored group, speaking quickly and dismissively.

- b. Praise each person from the favored group excessively, whether or not words are spelled correctly.
- IV. Finish the spelling bee.
 - a. It may not be necessary to find the classroom winner, but do not stop as soon as someone figures out the discrimination between the groups.
 - b. Continue long enough that you must quiet the students in the disfavored group.
- V. Discuss.
 - a. Confirm for the students the procedures of the experiment.
 - b. Give subtle favoritism to the students from the disfavored group, in order to try to counter the negative effects of the experiment.
 - i. Call on them more often.
 - ii. Affirm them as much as possible.

Typical Discussion Questions:

- How did it feel to be on the (disfavored color) side?
 - Were you worried about spelling the words right?
 - How did you feel towards the people in the other group? What about the others in your own group?
- How did it feel to be on the (favored color) side?
 - How did it make you feel to get those spelling words?
 - How did you feel towards the people in the other group? What about the others in your own group?
- What does this experiment make you think of in history?
- Is anything like this still going on today?

Closure:

Remember how this made you feel. Remember how it made your friends, your classmates feel. In our country and the rest of the world, throughout history and even still today, there have been many people forced to live their lives with this feeling. Sometimes it can be upsetting that they actually start to believe that they *should* feel that way.

In our own country, there was a time when laws were written that did not just make it legal to treat people unfairly; they made it illegal to treat them fairly. There were laws about who should be made slaves, and whether or not they could even be considered people. After the Civil War, people were no longer allowed to make anyone submit to slavery, but they still did not have to be treated fairly. Many could not own their own land and so were forced to participate in a system that treated them similarly to how the system of slavery had. This continued for a long time in our country, up until the time of the Civil Rights Movement and in some ways continues today.

Assignment:

Take out your journals and write an entry on this experiment. You will write 1 ½ - 2 pages about the following topic: What would it feel like if this experiment never stopped? Make sure to include your experience today. Think about what it would have been like if you never knew anything else—that you were born into a world where everyday was like this and never changed. You should address both sides—the people who were treated better and the people who were treated worse. You may choose to make connections to things that you already know about history or current events.

Modifications:

Words offered to each student should be appropriate to their level. Words may be chosen from a different list on a student-by-student basis. The spelling words should be, for the favored group, easy but not too obvious, and for the disfavored group, extremely challenging but not necessarily impossible. Also, each student's group placement should be chosen carefully, keeping in mind who might have additional concerns about motivation that might be adversely affected by this experience.

The assessment will have a version in scaffold form.

Rationale:

Students should take with them a small experience to remember as they continue with the unit, and hopefully throughout life. There will always be someone who treats others unfairly and someone will always be the recipient. This should give students a little perspective to deal with being at either end of this treatment and in relating to others that have been subject to it.

Discrimination is a manifestation of prejudice. Through understanding the feelings that come from discrimination, students should be able to change their own prejudices, and maybe even understand those of others.

Post-Instructional Reflection**Evaluation of Student Learning:**

Students will be evaluated through the above writing assessment. I am looking for compassion and empathy, not necessarily knowledge. There is a higher length requirement because students may have a lot of factual knowledge, and I want to make sure that they have to reflect in order to complete the assignment.

Evaluation of Student Teaching:

This instructional method was used because the goal of the lesson was largely affective. Students were to construct feelings and emotional attachments to the ideas presented, as opposed to simple factual knowledge. Thus the goal is directly related to experience, and experiential learning was the only appropriate way to accomplish the goal.

I will evaluate my instruction and the success of the experience through the classroom discussion and the written assessments. I will be looking for deep understanding. I will also evaluate later assessments to see if connections are remembered and utilized.

Underground Railroad Lesson Plan Outline

Mr.
Sallée

19 February
2008

Language Arts
Social Studies
Black History Month

Fifth Grade

One half-hour
and five one-
hour class
units

Preliminary Planning

Topic/Focus:

This lesson will look at some aspects of the Underground Railroad in depth.

Objectives:

The students will be able:

- 1) To describe stops on the Underground Railroad
- 2) To discuss the various roles and identify important examples of each
- 3) To produce a report on one aspect of the Underground Railroad
- 4) To demonstrate effective group collaboration

Materials:

- Computer lab with access for each child
- PowerPoint software
- Internet access
- Computer, projector and screen for presentations
- Rubrics for each student to complete
- Rubric to complete for each student

Preparation:

- Pre-load all suggested websites to check for filtration status
- Copy both rubrics in appropriate numbers
- Set up and check presentation computer for projection and network capabilities on presentation day

Classroom Setting:

The research will take place in the computer lab. The presentations will take place in the classroom, with desks in usual locations.

Key Behavioral Reminders:

This may seem like a long time, but you have a lot to accomplish. I want you all to be experts.

State Standards:

STATE GOAL 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.

A. Listen effectively in formal and informal situations.

4.A.2a Demonstrate understanding of the listening process (e.g., sender, receiver, message) by summarizing and paraphrasing spoken messages orally and in writing in formal and informal situations.

4.A.2b Ask and respond to questions related to oral presentations and messages in small and large group settings.

STATE GOAL 16: Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations.

A. Apply the skills of historical analysis and interpretation.

16.A.2a Read historical stories and determine events which influenced their writing.

16.A.2b Compare different stories about a historical figure or event and analyze differences in the portrayals and perspectives they present.

16.A.2c Ask questions and seek answers by collecting and analyzing data from historic documents, images and other literary and non-literary sources.

STATE GOAL 18: Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the United States.

B. Understand the roles and interactions of individuals and groups in society.

18.B.2a Describe interactions of individuals, groups and institutions in situations drawn from the local community (e.g., local response to state and national

18.B.2b Describe the ways in which institutions meet the needs of society.

Instructional Plan

Anticipatory Set:

On the first day, direct the students to the National Geographic Underground Railroad site. "Class, for the next week, we will be working on group projects about the Underground Railroad. You will individually research an aspect of the Underground Railroad and as a group create a PowerPoint presentation. Today, I want you to get interested. Find some different facts, places, or people that you might want to learn more about. Take notes in your journal. Try to stick to the National Geographic site and those that are linked to it, but if you want to venture out just let me know, so we can look at it a little together, first." Allow them to explore it at will, maintaining availability and making contact with each student briefly throughout the time.

Sequence of Learning Activities:

- I. Break the students into groups of four and assign them each a specific role:
 - a. Conductor: You guide for the passengers on the Underground Railroad. Must know the route, the depots, and how to keep the passengers motivated.

- b. Depot: These are the locations at which the passengers will rest for a given amount of time. Be sure to include information about person, family, or group that runs the depot.
 - c. Freedman inspirer: There were so many individuals that fought their way to freedom in the North or Canada. Tell about how they freed themselves and how they tried to inspire others to keep fighting.
 - d. White abolitionist: Many white people also fought hard to end slavery. Despite threats, attacks, and ostracism, they continued to fight. Tell about one of them: What motivated this person to start and to keep going? What did they do to make it happen?
- II. Guide the students to the relevant websites.
 - III. Encourage students to keep notes on a word processor. Check in with them often, throughout the two days of research.
 - a. Notes may be somewhat freeform on the first day, but should be guided towards some shape or form by the end of the second day.
 - b. Multimedia and references should be noted, as well.
 - c. At the close of the second research day, the students should print out their notes.
 - d. Allow the students a few minutes away from the computers, as a group, to discuss their findings and how they want to present them.
 - IV. The fourth and first half of the fifth day should be dedicated to arranging and inputting information in PowerPoint.
 - a. The groups can choose a template together.
 - b. The students can then work on their own information individually, using their group mates and the teacher as a resource to make the presentation work.
 - V. For the second-half of the fifth day, students can compile the PowerPoint presentations and double-check it against the rubric.
 - a. Students can share their individual work and have one group member compile it all together.
 - b. Another group member should each member's notes file to compile a list of resources to be handed into the teacher.
 - VI. Present the PowerPoint as a group the following week.
 - a. Groups should provide self-analysis.
 - b. Audience members will also provide written feedback.

Typical Discussion Questions:

During the research process:

- How many people did this person help to escape slavery? If he or she escaped, when was it? How long was he or she free before starting to help others on the Underground Railroad? Was she or he well recognized at the time? How long did this conductor run a line? How many people on a trip at once? Did this person go the whole trip or pass the passengers on to another conductor along the way?
- Why was this location important? What route might it have been a part of? Which side of the Mason-Dixon Line does it fall on? Did the people who ran the depot know the local authorities? Were the authorities on their side? Did they know other depots on the Underground Railroad? How did they meet and become a part of it? How many people could the depot accommodate at one time and for how long?
- When did this person become free? Was there something that gave the “taste of freedom” enough to provide the motivation to escape? Were there any unsuccessful attempts? Was there ever a return to the former owner as a freedman? How did he or she learn about how to operate as a freedman?
- Why did this person feel it was so important to help others? Was there a religious movement backing him or her up? Did she or he have a history of slave ownership or an experience that caused the necessary motivation to put her- or himself in peril? Did this person run a depot?

During the presentations:

- What is something you respect about these people?
- Would you ever do something like that?
- Do you think there are Underground Railroads today?

Closure:

“The presentations were wonderful! You all have really learned a lot about the Underground Railroad, and so have I.” Give several examples of what you, as a teacher learned from the groups’ presentations.

Assignment:

The assignment is the lesson.

Modifications:

Students can be provided with more or less direct support regarding their assigned roles, depending on their level. Scaffolded notes and additional websites may be provided.

Rationale:

In the process of completing the assignment for this lesson, students learn many valuable applications. The group work aspect of the assignment helps the students to practice and understand their own role in group projects. The material further reinforces skills of delegation through the separation of the roles and the unique way in which the historical figures fulfilled those roles. The story of the Underground Railroad tells the story of a successful movement for social justice in the US that transcended the limits of location and race, and, more importantly, who was already in danger and placed themselves in danger to help others in need.

Because the research is largely self-directed, the students learn how to research a subject online that is interesting and motivating, but still educational, beyond the typical entertainment-oriented online research. Furthermore, the students utilize the PowerPoint software that has added to the revolution in presentation format, and do it in a way that encourages maintaining group goals during individual work.

Post-Instructional Reflection

Evaluation of Student Learning:

Student learning will be evaluated by informally assessing progress each day throughout the research and creation stages. Students are expected to ask thoughtful questions, showing both their initiative to discover their own answers as well as to effectively utilize all available resources (even the teacher) in order to complete the assignment in the time allotted.

Additionally, a rubric will score the presentation and accompanying PowerPoint for each student during the group presentations. The students will also complete self-evaluation rubrics. The back of the rubric will have three questions to assess learning and to be utilized in the unit test: What do you think everyone (not just in this class) should know about the person or place that you researched? What is one thing you learned from someone else in your group? What is one thing you learned from another group?

Evaluation of Student Teaching:

I will evaluate my own teaching through the success of the student learning and engagement.

- Did the students enjoy learning about the topic?
- Were they engaged the whole time?
- Was the format of collaboration successful?
- Do students hold a greater understanding of the Underground Railroad and its importance to US history and social justice?

- Was the minimal structure effective or would the process be better served as a WebQuest?
- Was the presentation effective, or was it just too much to worry about?

Langston Hughes Lesson Plan Outline

Mr.
Sallée

29 January
2008

Language Arts
Social Studies
Black History Month

Fifth Grade

Forty-five
minutes to
one hour

Preliminary Planning

Topic/Focus:

Martin Luther King's dream is well known. Langston Hughes expressed his dreams for black people through his poetry.

Objectives: The students will be able:

- To discover the poems of Hughes (cognitive)
- To examine their relation to Black History (cognitive)
- To relate personally to the feelings therein (affective)
- To expand on the students' existing knowledge of poetry and the expressive arts' role in Black History (cognitive)

Materials:

- Poems by Langston Hughes
- Computer with internet access and projector
- Opening multimedia presentation
- Closing multimedia presentation
- Presentation of poems
- Copies of the poems for the students

Preparation:

- Jim Crow and segregation lesson
- MLK lesson and famous speech presentation
- Create opening multimedia presentation
- Create presentation of poems
- Create closing multimedia presentation
- Pre-load videos and website
- Make copies of all poems for each student

Classroom Setting:

The class will be arranged as usual: desks facing towards the center aisle with clear views for each student of the projector and blackboard, facilitating whole class participation as well as easy movement to and from group collaboration.

Key Behavioral Reminders:

Respect that some people may find these poems and works emotional. We are going to talk about how they relate to our personal

dreams. Any joking or poking fun at others will be taken very seriously.

State Standards:

STATE GOAL 1: Read with understanding and fluency.

- A. Apply word analysis and vocabulary skills to comprehend selections.
 - 1.A.2b Clarify word meaning using context clues and a variety of resources including glossaries, dictionaries and thesauruses.
- B. Apply reading strategies to improve understanding and fluency.
 - 1.B.2a Establish purposes for reading; survey materials; ask questions; make predictions; connect, clarify and extend ideas.
 - 1.B.2c Continuously check and clarify for understanding (e.g., *in addition to previous skills*, clarify terminology, seek additional information.
 - 1.B.2d Read age-appropriate material aloud with fluency and accuracy.
- C. Comprehend a broad range of reading materials.
 - 1.C.2a Use information to form and refine questions and predictions.
 - 1.C.2b Make and support inferences and form interpretations about main themes and topics.
 - 1.C.2d Summarize and make generalizations from content and relate to purpose of material.
 - 1.C.2e Explain how authors and illustrators use text and art to express their ideas (e.g., points of view, design hues, metaphor).

STATE GOAL 2: Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras and ideas.

- B. Read and interpret a variety of literary works.
 - 2.B.2a Respond to literary material by making inferences, drawing conclusions and comparing it to their own experience, prior knowledge and other texts.
 - 2.B.2b Identify and explain themes that have been explored in literature from different societies and eras.
 - 2.B.2c Relate literary works and their characters, settings and plots to current and historical events, people and perspectives.

STATE GOAL 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.

- A. Listen effectively in formal and informal situations.
 - 4.A.2a Demonstrate understanding of the listening process (e.g., sender, receiver, message) by summarizing and paraphrasing spoken messages orally and in writing in formal and informal situations.
 - 4.A.2b Ask and respond to questions related to oral presentations and messages in small and large group settings.

STATE GOAL 14: Understand election processes and responsibilities of citizens.

- C. Understand election processes and responsibilities of citizens.
 - 14.C.2 Describe and evaluate why rights and responsibilities are important to the individual, family, community, workplace, state and nation (e.g., voting, protection under the law).
- D. Understand the roles and influences of individuals and interest groups in the political systems of Illinois, the United States and other nations.
 - 14.D.2 Explain ways that individuals and groups influence and shape public policy.

- F. Understand the development of United States political ideas and traditions.
 - 14.F.2 Identify consistencies and inconsistencies between expressed United States political traditions and ideas and actual practices (e.g., freedom of speech, right to bear arms, slavery, voting rights).

STATE GOAL 16: Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations.

- A. Apply the skills of historical analysis and interpretation.
 - 16.A.2a Read historical stories and determine events which influenced their writing.
 - 16.A.2b Compare different stories about a historical figure or event and analyze differences in the portrayals and perspectives they present.
 - 16.A.2c Ask questions and seek answers by collecting and analyzing data from historic documents, images and other literary and non-literary sources.

STATE GOAL 18: Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the United States.

- A. Compare characteristics of culture as reflected in language, literature, the arts, traditions and institutions.
 - 18.A.2 Explain ways in which language, stories, folk tales, music, media and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture.
- B. Understand the roles and interactions of individuals and groups in society.
 - 18.B.2a Describe interactions of individuals, groups and institutions in situations drawn from the local community (e.g., local response to state and national
 - 18.B.2b Describe the ways in which institutions meet the needs of society.

Instructional Plan

Anticipatory Set:

Ask students what they can know about MLK and his famous “I have a dream...” speech. Review the value of the vivid imagery he used and relate it to poetry and the language of the soul. (View multimedia presentation). Present poetry as “soul-writing.” Introduce life of Langston Hughes through his website. *Today, we will be reading a few of Langston Hughes’ poems and discussing them as a class and in small groups. Then you will choose one of them and write a reaction to it.*

Sequence of Learning Activities:

Read each of the listed poems and discuss.

“Dreams”

In this poem, Langston Hughes encourages the reader to hold onto his or her dreams. Ask students: *What kinds of dreams do you think the author of the poem had? Do you think this poem could be talking to other people about their dreams too? Does it “speak” to you about the dreams you have in life?* While Hughes is clearly urging

black people to keep dreaming -- not to give up their dreams of true freedom and equality -- the poem could be inspiring to all dreamers as it encourages them to never give up on their dreams.

“I, Too, Sing America”

Ask the students: *What do you think it means to “sing America?”* In this poem, Hughes shares the dream that many black people had at the turn of the last century and beyond: the dream that one day there would be no separation of the races: that all people would be “at the table” and looked at in the same way. The black man or woman in the poem dreams and sings about an “America” (“*My country tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing...*”) just like white people do; but just singing words about liberty does not necessarily make it so. Talk about Hughes' powerful words. Talk about the first and second full stanzas, which compare the America the poet lives in and the America of his or her dreams. Ask: *Does the poet have faith that one day America might be a place of true equality?*

“Merry-Go-Round”

Before sharing this poem, briefly review “Jim Crow” laws. Those laws, which were enacted in many states, set aside “separate but equal” facilities for black people and white people. With that understanding, this Langston poem describes a black child's dream of riding a merry-go-round. It's a dream that every child, black or white, has, but this child -- who is used to riding in the back of the bus -- wonders whether he or she will be allowed to go for a ride because “there ain't no back to a merry-go-round.” Ask students to respond to the poem: *What is the child's dilemma? How does the child feel? Do you think the child will be allowed to ride?*

“Dream Deferred”

Ask students to share their own dreams in small groups. Allow the class eight minutes, alerting them to move on in two-minute intervals. Introduce the poem: *Hughes paints a vivid picture as he wonders what happens to dreams that are not realized. Different people might respond to unrealized dreams in different ways. Define “deferred.”* Read, and then display the poem. Afterwards have the students return to their groups to discuss the following: *Do you think most people live out the dream of their lives? What will happen to you if your dream is not realized? Will you be disappointed? Will it ruin your life? Or will you set aside your dream and move on? Will you take what you're given and make the best of it?* Discuss as a class how Hughes wonders all those things in this short poem.

Typical Discussion Questions:

“Dreams”

- Read poem, then display.

- What kinds of dreams do you think the author of the poem had?
- Do you think this poem could be talking to other people about their dreams too?
- Does it "speak" to you about the dreams you have in life?

"I, Too, Sing America"

- What do you think it means to "sing America?"
- Read poem, then display.
- Does the poet have faith that one day America might be a place of true equality?

"Merry-Go-Round"

- What can you tell me about Jim Crow laws?
- Read poem, then display.
- What is the child's dilemma?
- How does the child feel?
- Do you think the child will be allowed to ride?

"Dream Deferred"

- What are your dreams? They might seem big, like MLK's, and include a lot of people, or they might just be important to you.
- Read poem, then display.
- Do you think most people live out the dream of their lives?
- What will happen to you if your dream is not realized?
- Will you be disappointed?
- Will it ruin your life?
- Will you set aside your dream and move on?
- Will you take what you're given and make the best of it?

Closure:

The groups should rejoin and discuss the questions with "Dream Deferred" as a class. Discuss how poetry can relate massive feelings in just a few short lines. Special care should be taken to relate them to MLK. View closing presentation.

Assignment:

Ask students to choose the Hughes poem that spoke most vividly to them. Which poem painted the best image of the dreams that black people had for freedom and equality? Emphasize that no two people read any poem in exactly the same way. So there is no right or wrong answer to the question; their choice depends only on what they felt as they read the poem. Students should explain clearly in journal format why they chose the particular poem. They will separately submit two possible questions to be tested on.

Modifications:

The lesson is already structured to be accessible, and the multimedia format provides many entry points for student understanding. For this lesson, questions to students with special needs will be more highly structured.

Rationale:

This lesson provides an entry point for students to relate to poetry and history. It uses the most familiar speech of Martin Luther King, Junior, to make it accessible but presents it in a new light. It gives dimension to the speech, without having the children listen to it in its entirety. Langston Hughes is a valuable person to know about, and his poetry is such that it can speak to the reader on many different levels, in many different situations. This lesson is meant to introduce the work of Langston Hughes within an already existing framework of social justice and the Civil Rights Movement. This contextualizing of literary work and humanizing historical work is valuable to the students' understanding of both disciplines, particularly in its ability to be deeply personal.

Post-Instructional Reflection**Evaluation of Student Learning:**

The following questions will be answered informally through the class discussions and formally through journal entries and test questions they compose. Did the students seem to understand the poems themselves? Were they able to relate to them, both in their own lives and in the historical concepts covered? Additionally, the unit assessment may include student several questions inspired by student submissions.

Evaluation of Student Teaching:

Did the students seem engaged? Were there particular approaches that worked well? Did the multimedia presentations help the students relate to the lesson, or were they just distracting? Did the students enjoy the poems? Do any students ask for more information about Langston Hughes or his contemporaries?

List of Resources

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Assessment Plan

An accurate portrait of knowledge and abilities is vital to education. Historically, assessment has had the primary purpose of ranking students according to abilities and perceived potential. However, this ranking has had a tremendous negative byproduct in that it regularly undercuts the motivation of all but the highest performers. Additionally, formal assessment has become increasingly simplistic in its classroom execution, leaving little to help paint this important portrait. Somewhat useless factual nuggets have gained utmost importance of thorough disciplinary understanding and problem solving ability. Grading within this framework is relatively simple in that the students' answers are always either wholly right or wholly wrong, with exceptions made for the occasional good argument. The endpoint of education does is not an all or nothing proposition. The endpoint is a set of abilities, rather than a set of facts and figures. It is a conveyance of frameworks to serve myriad purposes. If the purpose of education is to equip each student with the ability to increase their own potential in any environment, assessment must reflect the varied abilities and environments to be expected after its conclusion.

The primary goal of assessment must, ironically, be reassessed. Simplistic ranking of the type used in traditional classroom assessments is akin to basing human worth on net worth: It is

obviously flawed but still the status quo. The new goal of assessment must be in helping students to gain understanding, rather than just figuring out whether or not they have it. Generally, they know. The goal of assessment, then, is in explicitly identifying for both teacher and student areas of possible improvement. While it could be argued that this is something accomplished in traditional assessment, there are important aspects lacking.

The first, and most sorely missed aspect, is that there is little to no chance for correction. An incorrect answer on a test does not disqualify a student from the possibility of having gained understanding. Students must be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding, whether or not testing has already taken place. It could be through retesting, or it could be through alternate kinds of assessment, including something as simple as class discussions. With this in mind, if the purpose of assessments in general and tests in specific is assessing student knowledge, the lack of disclosure on what is being assessed is inhibiting. It is generally accepted that students need to know what kind of questions will be on a test prior to taking it. Generally, though, the students are being given a simple list of questions, without thorough connections to the material. Surely, most people who have ever been students can identify with test anxiety. The test becomes a list of facts to be proven by the taker, no matter how well it is written. If students are expected to make deep

connections to the material, they must be guided through the assessment, let in on the deep, dark teacher secret of what is actually being assessed.

Assessment must reflect that there are many possible outcomes to any given situation. That for each one of those outcomes, there are countless paths to it. Assessment must allow the students to demonstrate their mastery of salient issues through appropriately varied routes. Understanding through classroom discussion is just as valuable as through a multiple-choice test, if not more so. The ability to compose a musical work based upon lessons about Black History, is no less valuable than which results in an essay, if not more so. The ability to explain why an important is exemplified in a novel, complex situation is just as valuable as using an existing situation to explain the points of that theory, if not more so. This is not to say that the abilities to write a traditional, five-paragraph essay and explain an important scientific theory through its classical examples are not important. Indeed, they are; they ought to be tested, separately. Mastery of the common academic essay scaffold is an important skill, but it does not necessarily reflect understanding—and definitely not lack of understanding—of anything other than the common academic essay scaffold. Assessment must not only reflect these varied abilities and environments, it must give them appropriate weight.

In my own plan for assessment, knowledge and understanding are most important. Discussions will be assessed twice weekly, in order to allow mind space to contemplate the effectiveness of discussions, as well as the knowledge of students. Assessments will not be given in the traditional manner. Frequent, brief assessments reduce anxiety as they increase familiarity with the format of traditional tests. These will frequently be given immediately after a lesson, and will not be given much weight in the grade book.

Journal entries will be of much greater importance. The journal format is pliable and thorough. It allows the students to express themselves in ways unique to their own, personal styles. The format is easily changed in each moment to accommodate the unique subject matter, lesson format, or moods of the students. The assessment can be tailored easily to the material being assessed, be it through short answer questions, extended essays, concept maps or other graphical organizers, free-writing, poetry, even answers to multiple choice questions. It allows modifications and adaptations to be made easily for students with special needs: no differently colored sheets, filled in answers, or “challenge questions,” just simple statements made between the students and the teacher. Because of their changing format, they are assessed purely on their own, in comparison to the same student’s other entries, rather than other students’ work.

Formal assessments that hold the greatest weight will be project-based, and will often result in student portfolio entries. Because of my firm belief that learning is as much about resource utilization as it is about gaining factual knowledge, projects provide a much more realistic portrait of learning. Each of us uses resources on a daily basis, and many of those that have become engrained have done so through repeated and supportive usage, not one instance of taking it in and then disposing of the resource. We all keep books that we refer to often in our primary workspace. The students we teach need to be given this opportunity, as well. Projects as assessments give them just that.

When formal, traditional assessments are needed, I will use the input of the students. Student motivation is at the forefront of how teachers need to approach their daily lessons. Student motivation in test taking seems woefully absent. People take time to thoughtfully answer questions that are interesting and important to their own personal experience. Students should be able to connect with the questions on a formal assessment. It need not be a lasting connection, and in some cases that connection is in allowing students to simply and easily assess, for themselves, why a teacher is interested in their answer. As such, I choose to rely more on questions that the students construct themselves. Beyond the journal entries themselves, students will be asked to create a possible test question or a succinct

statement of something learned that could be turned into a test question. As for my own contribution as more than the coordinator of student-constructed questions, I will create questions with varying lengths of written responses that will give options as to how they choose to connect and what to within the content.

My conclusion may seem rather open-ended. Assessment is constructed on a daily basis. It is a natural growth from knowledge, understanding and expression. Even the daily journal entries, while options will be explored prior to the lesson (most are recorded within the activity descriptions above) are malleable. They are subject to change with students' needs, as they should be.

Unit Alignment

Learning Activity	Unit Objective Number	Assessment
Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters	1, 2, 3, 7	Journal with test contribution
Oware	1, 3, 5	Observation
African Music	1, 2, 3, 6	Journal with test contribution
Steal Away	1, 2, 3, 6	Journal with test contribution
Two Views of Christmas	1, 2, 3, 8, 11	Journal with test contribution
Underground Railroad Presentation	1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11	Portfolio entry
Harriet Tubman and the Drinking Gourd	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8	Journal with test contribution
Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 13	Portfolio entry
Juneteenth	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12	Journal with test contribution
Experiment in Prejudice	1, 3, 5, 8, 11, 12, 13	Journal with test contribution
Marcus Garvey	1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12	Journal with test contribution
Cherries and Cherry Pits	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 13	Portfolio entry
Roll of Thunder	1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 12	Journal with test contribution
George Washington Carver	1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 11, 13	Portfolio entry, journal with test contribution
Pictures of Boo Hag	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 13	Portfolio entry, journal with test contribution
Now Let Me Fly	1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13	Journal with test contribution
Rev. Dr. MLK, Jr.	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13	Journal with test contribution
Passionate Speeches	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13	Portfolio entry
Langston Hughes	1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 12	Journal with test contribution,

		portfolio entry
Personal Poetry	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 13	Portfolio entry
Kinara	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 13	Portfolio entry, journal test contribution only
Bulletin Biographies	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13	Portfolio entry, journal with test contribution
Toast and Slam!	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13	Portfolio entry, journal with test contribution
The Circle Unbroken	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 13	Portfolio entry, formal writing assessment based on test contributions

Use of Technology

As the world changes, the goal of education continues its redefinition. Children today—and adults—live in a media-rich world of hypertext, media on demand, and nearly unlimited resources. The goal of research, which used to be locating, is now sifting through information and judging its quality. While traditional education has left much up to printed text, it is well accepted that rich experiences are preferential and creating more lasting learning. The rapid advances of technology have had two major effects on these facts. First, creating these media-rich learning environments has become increasingly easy. Second, children have been trained to expect and require them.

Teachers no longer have the option of using multiple entry points for understanding; they must. It seems there is constantly a new report about the average student's hours in front of the computer, television, or video game systems, cellular phone and text message usage, sharp increase and then sharp decrease in usage of technological products (as it is replaced, think compact disc), ability to create through technology, and so much more. This all points towards a way of life, and thus a way of educating, that is richly infused, for better or worse, with technology.

Throughout this unit, technology is consistently utilized, although somewhat subtly. The most obvious lesson is the Underground

Railroad lesson, in which the students use electronic resources to research and present information related to the Underground Railroad and abolitionism. Also, the lesson on Langston Hughes is accompanied by a multimedia slideshow. Beyond these, the lessons all use available technology for additional accessibility. Any picture book, when possible, is presented as a PowerPoint slideshow for greater visibility. Music, while available in compact disc format, is also frequently available at artist websites with accompanying video or artwork.

Diversity

Any statement about diversity must be qualified. Educating is, by my definition, largely about the diversity of learners. Diversity has many different important manifestations in education: cultural differences, special needs, learning styles, developmental paces, and much more. Effective educators must have a way of being which is accessible, regardless of encumbrances. For students to educe, they must be both safe with and challenged by their teachers. Respect for diversity is essential to any classroom. That said, there are unique considerations, especially in a unit that is specifically designed to elicit emotional responses, and even more so in that it those responses are so closely tied to cultural identity.

Africa has had a unique history and culture. It has had a profound affect on shaping that of the United States. Unfortunately, because of the cultural submission required by slavery, much of the direct lineage has been blurred. However, it comes into greater focus when held through the lens of culture as it exists and existed in Africa. The connection is firmly established from the beginning through the traditional Shona (of present-day Zimbabwe) telling of the story of Yeh-Shin, brought down through Western culture as Cinderella. It is a story, which combines rich African imagery and symbolism with something somewhat familiar. This is an easy point of connection for the students.

It is my sincere hope that this beginning will set the stage for allowing each of the students, regardless of cultural background, to access and appreciate the lessons in here for their inherent human connection. Although addressed several times throughout the plan, it cannot be stressed enough that this is a highly charged emotional subject. Students must be given the opportunity to discuss their emotions, or it may be volatile. Appropriate respect for all individuals, both studied and studying, will be utmost in importance.

Reflection

Standard 1 - The competent teacher understands the central concepts, methods of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines and creates learning experiences that make the content meaningful to all students.

I chose Black History Month as my unit because it indicates many of the things that are important to me about teaching. History is a story. It is about connecting with the past. Bridging cultures is one of its strengths in that, with the added perspective of time, it is easier to see common aspects or even derivation among cultures. This is a story that connects cultures.

The story of historically underrepresented groups deserves a sensitive and careful education to level the playing field. The history that is represented in most texts and in the minds of the teaching population is largely biased towards the majority. This is not to say it is intentional. Rather, it is culturally entrenched. Black History Month is an opportunity to say to each child that just because someone is not in her or his textbook does not mean he or she did not make a valuable contribution to this society.

Lastly, the subject is immediately relevant. This is a topic of great concern now. My hope is that everything I teach my students will be personally, immediately relevant and that it gives them skills to

investigate, interpret and interact effectively with the world that they live in.

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