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Using Critical Literacy to Build Community Among Minority Adolescents

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USING CRITICAL LITERACY TO BUILD CLASSROOM COMMUNITY AMONG MINORITY ADOLESCENTS

by

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A Capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Literacy Education

Hamline University
Saint Paul, Minnesota
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To my family,
Corey, thank you for single-handedly taking care of our children and home so many nights over the past two years—through classes, long evenings, and weekends (both for me to work and just get out and have fun). You are my pillar.

To my parents,
Thank you for inspiring me to become a lifelong learner and reader. It is because of you that I found this project and its question fascinating, rather than daunting. Mom, thanks for all the days you let me work while you watched Isi and Lor—I don’t know if I’d ever have gotten this done!

To my cohort and advisory team,
You were there for some of the most growth and learning I have experienced as an adult—thanks for your never-ending encouragement and kindness.
“Cultural racism—the cultural images and messages that affirm the assumed superiority of Whites and the assumed inferiority of people of color—is like smog in the air”

(Tatum, 2003).
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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

“The tendency to ignore the Negro’s contribution to American life and strip him of his personhood is as old as the earliest history books and as contemporary as the morning’s newspaper” (King, 1967).

In considering what my capstone focus should be, many ideas immediately jumped into my mind. Motivation, engagement, writer’s workshops, and a focus on new literacies bounced back and forth for weeks as I pondered how best to encapsulate not only my passion for teaching and learning, but also to match that with my drive to actually help the students I teach. While writing reflection after reflection, attempting to come to some sort of clear focus, and reviewing paper after paper I had written about my experiences, a motif of inequality began to emerge. I realized that what I was most passionate about not only affected me personally all the way back in elementary school, but continues to affect the students I teach today. Coupling the drive for equality and community in schools with the theme of empowering students that critical literacy invites allowed the following question to be born: How can I use critical literacy to build classroom community among minority adolescents?

Childhood and Adolescence

The summer after fourth grade, my family moved from South Minneapolis to prestigious West Bloomington. In Minneapolis, our once-duplex house had bragging rights for having the only two-car garage and the only one that did not lead your car back into the narrow alleyway. My friends played with hand-me-down toys, either from
siblings or garage sales, and my favorite item of clothing was a sweatshirt boasting the Twins’ victory at the 1987 World Series.

In Bloomington, lawns loped softly in perfect unison from one acre-sized yard to the next, and all the houses had at least a two-car garage that sprouted a perfect concrete, sometimes elaborate brick, driveway. Our new house was only average in comparison of most of the other homes on the street and positively paled next to the ones sporting pools and tennis courts. Girls played with Barbies, Beanie Babies, and American Girl dolls—only one of the three I even possessed. They wore name-brand clothes and listened to repetitive pop music, bragging about the jumbo posters over their four-poster beds. I entered my suburban fifth-grade classroom at a time when many students were just beginning to figure out popularity, fashion, and the opposite sex.

Unfortunately, I entered with the schema of a city girl who, I soon realized, now formerly lived in a poor and incredibly diverse neighborhood. Though I could never say I was the only white kid in class, as so many of the minority students I was encountering in the suburbs could easily claim, I later realized that my Caucasian race never represented more than half many populations I was a part of, in school or out.

What was most alarming to me about my new peers in my new school was the relentless focus on a quality I had always known about, but never really cared to notice: skin color. Vaguely offensive to outright racist jokes peppered conversation, always when teachers’ backs were turned, and especially when there was an easy joke upon an unsuspecting, almost always solo, black or Hispanic student in class. Maybe it was what he was wearing, or what he said, or, most likely, simply his location in relation to a bigoted peer. Many of the minority students I went to middle school and high school
with, as well as the white students making the jokes, seemed to accept this behavior as the status quo. So long as no one used the “n-word,” the humor was simply seen as dumb or silly, and the minority kids seemed to be okay with it anyway, so what was the difference? The white kids who made the jokes were sometimes even thought to be “cool enough” or “in enough” to be able to say something about another race, especially about a friend of another race, thereby elevating their status. At the same time as they made fun of it, many Caucasian students I came to know longed to be part of the exclusive, different, and very cool culture of the minority students.

For the most part, I seemed to be the only one who was made uncomfortable by constant negative humor about race. While my white peers laughed, I often looked away, pretended not to hear, or otherwise ignored the jokes. At my worst, I would occasionally give a pretend guffaw, but all throughout middle school I was made uncomfortable by the way minority students were talked about and portrayed, often by my white peers, and still sometimes by those same targeted minority students pretending to fit or even exaggerating the stereotype—acting differently in front of certain people than I knew them to act most of the time.

I was quickly realizing that I had grown up as part of a minority back in Minneapolis. A good number of the friends I had before the move from city to suburb (oh, the days before Facebook and instant messaging) were not white, and so each time that I heard a fellow white peer in the suburbs call attention to the color of someone’s skin (never white, unless to comment on how pale a nerd was, I suppose), I was ashamed. Though I realize that there was probably a level of racism that I left behind in Minneapolis, I never heard it or felt part of it. In my new district, it seemed that just being
white meant that I was “privileged” enough to be “in” on the racist jokes, and I felt a palpable sense of being different from my racially diverse counterparts in a way I never had before.

As middle school progressed to high school, and I lost touch with more and more of my diverse city friends, and acclimated myself more and more into being a white girl who lived in a rich suburb, the jokes took less and less of a toll on my person. I began to sometimes truly laugh, since I had begun to see the stereotypes that my peers were pointing out. Black people were like that. Mexicans did act a certain way. The indoctrination into being a “true” part of suburbia was beginning to feel complete, and it was fun (in my mind with a big “no offense intended”) for me to still claim that I had black friends while making fun of their race. After all, I was not really racist. Some jokes are just funny; some stereotypes just happen to be true. By that point in time, I had lost touch with nearly all of my elementary school city friends, simply from living different lives. There was not a real ending or a falling out, simply a mutual lack of contact.

College Life

As part of my freshman year of college, I was accidentally placed in a 100-level composition course. I say accidentally because, as an English major, I was not going to be getting credit for that course—I needed 200-level courses to count towards my degree. However, the lessons I learned during that semester made that class the most life-changing I had the benefit of taking part of during the course of my college career. In that course, we spent a good portion of time critically examining and analyzing stereotypes. The focus was mainly on advertisements and their marketing towards men and women, but the implications and discussions often reached much further, into other stereotypes
that America continued to perpetuate about gender and racial differences. I learned many unnerving facts about our society, including aspects of the achievement gap, the disparity of violence towards women perpetrated by men, and the ability of our brains to collect and retain information that conforms to our already-formed opinions. It was in that class that I first heard the contradiction to what had become the security blanket my ignorance clung to: “just because you have one black friend, it does not mean that you are not racist.” It was not directed at me, just to the class, but in my mind, I argued against it. That definitely did not apply to me, I told myself. I am the only one of my friends who even has one black friend—if that does not count for something, what does?

Of course, by that time that one black friend was the only minority friend I had halfheartedly maintained from elementary school, and, with the pickings seemingly slim, and the stereotypes seemingly strong, I had not gained any in my new schools, including college. From my now suburban-infected thinking, black people hung around with other black people. Hispanic people were friends with Hispanic people. The few exceptions I noted from high school who did not acted so differently from their ethnic counterparts that they were not usually considered part of the minority. They tended to be part of the populace who would either make jokes about others of their own race or “act the part” of the stereotype when called upon.

It was in that class that I began to examine the stereotypes that I held myself, and I began to think critically about the world around me. Looking at the world in a more analytical light made me reexamine earlier behaviors and activities that I no longer found as appealing. Many of the movies that I really enjoyed in high school began to lose their appeal—so many of them relied upon stereotypes for their humor. It was not as funny
being the butt of a joke after realizing the cultural inequalities that made that joke funny in the first place, or after realizing that there are still those people who think the joke content to be completely factual. Obviously, I had not thought that women were dumber than men, but I did tend to stereotype them as being more emotionally manipulative or manipulated. I had not thought that white people were smarter than minorities, but I did think that minority behavior and speech was funnier.

By that time, I had lost much of my city learning, and had been fully immersed in the white, studious culture I had chosen to put myself in for years: quiet, smart, and hard-working. I did not make the same jokes I did in high school—I had “matured” to be “color-blind,” thus ignoring the differences in culture that exist in our society.

My Awakening: Thinking Critically about Race

Often, I started to notice, white people are taught that race does not matter and that when we look at or acknowledge race, we are being racist. However, while Caucasian is still the dominant race in America, this purposeful ignorance does a disservice to our minority population. By ignoring race, we ignore our cultural differences (and thus perpetuate that “white is right”). When we ignore race, we ignore the power differences between our white and minority populace. When we ignore race, we do the same thing that I did in middle school: we allow racism to occur and continue without stopping or fixing it. We even go so far as to compound the problem by limiting the people who talk about it to minorities—allowing the dominant, white culture to keep its power while marginalizing those looking for change as people living in the past, somehow making their concerns seem overly reactive or dated while continuing to hold
the power ourselves. This, even in the wake of the events in Sanford, Ferguson, Staten Island, and others across the United States, seems to still be the majority opinion.

Thinking about my time in middle and high school, I saw how this imbalance of power affected my non-white peers. They frequently felt marginalized by the jokes being told or the characters being portrayed, some even to the point of either perpetuating the stereotype they thought they were meant to fulfill, or other ignoring their race and culture altogether—being whitewashed. Those who were “fortunate” enough to “forget” the color of their skin (or, conversely, used the color of their skin as the basis of jokes against their own race) were tentatively allowed into the white community that surrounded them. Those who did not acclimate were almost not a part of the school culture. They stayed in their own space in the mornings before school and during passing time. They often served as the joke or class clown during class. They were in trouble more often than not for being loud, not understanding, or, clearer now: not following the white rules of being permissive and quiet. They were, in short, taught that they were others, and separated from the “rest of us.” They were taught that their culture was bad, and adapting to the white culture was the way to get ahead in school.

Ignoring racial differences does not end them, it perpetuates the divide created by the difference, and often teaches minority students that they need to “act white” to do well in school: thus they must choose between their culture and their future, much like Native American children in the 1870s when American imperialists believed that they must “kill the Indian to save the child.” As history shows, our treatment of Native Americans was essentially cultural genocide, and yet it is something we continue to do in our public school system today. It is no wonder that the achievement gap still exists:
“playing white” gets you ahead, while acting out gets you in trouble—at least in most school systems, where teachers and administrators are overwhelmingly white themselves (Tatum, 2003). Far too often, minority students today find that they either cannot or will not acclimate to losing part of themselves. As long as “playing white” is synonymous with doing well in school, the achievement gap will persist. White people noticing this and being passive watchers also allows this power imbalance to continue.

My Transition to Teaching

My second year teaching, I miraculously found a placement at the high school I went to myself, teaching ninth and eleventh grade English, plus a ninth-grade team-taught support class that partnered English and social studies to supplement struggling students’ work in their regular classroom. I found that even though seven years had passed, racial imbalance was present. In fact, my school was becoming even more diverse, but the racial power imbalance still existed—and had arguably grown worse. For example, there were still not any minority teachers. Again, racial groups mostly stayed together, and the lightly-to-heavily offensive jokes about race persisted. Minority students were reminded on a daily basis that they were the “other” in a primarily white school.

Even (or maybe especially) in joke form from so-called friends, this does a disservice to those students and prevents them from feeling as though they are part of the school culture. As a teacher, I would call out those alleged jokers—the response always being “It was just a joke” or “He [the minority student] thinks it’s funny, too” or “We’re friends!”—with the stereotyped student being forced to play along. I knew then that more must be done to help my students see the negative impacts of those purported jokes.

Concluding Thoughts
I have come to understand that the differences between what I was able to experience and what any of my non-white peers experienced included the following: I was not noted for the color of my skin, I was not asked to be a spokesperson for my entire race, and I was not “on display” for my actions and behaviors. I was able to become part of the community around me without adapting my person. However, from what I saw, my non-white peers had far bigger changes that they had to make—speech, behavior, and cultural values being front and foremost—and often still would not truly be considered part of the community, even if they seemed to make those adaptations.

As a teacher still in that school and still seeing the inequality, my focus around the idea of building community for all students became a priority. From my college cohort education, I had already learned that students need a safe, welcoming environment before any learning can take place. I did not see my school as a welcoming place for minority students—it seemed to be the opposite. I also knew that the only way I had learned about these power differences was by critically examining the society and beliefs I was born in and raised with before I was able to change any of my thinking. Therefore, the question *How can I use critical literacy to build classroom community among minority adolescents?* began to form and become a priority in my mind, not only to help minority students achieve more, but to also help white students see the power imbalance they live in and are perpetuating, often without thought.

In my second chapter, I will explore the literature behind critical literacy—a key component in helping students analyze our society. I will also explore the importance of building a classroom community, since many minority students I know do not feel part of the school culture. I will also touch on minority status in America, including why diverse
students need a specific focus in school and what that focus must look like. Next, Chapter Three will discuss the foundations on which I will build a curriculum to address my research question, and Chapter Four will include the layout of the curriculum I created: lessons based around using critical literacy to build community that helps minority students (and all students, for that matter) succeed. Finally, Chapter Five will review my findings, research, and the limitations of my project.
CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

“Adolescents need to feel cared for if they are to succeed in school” (Noddings, 2005).

Introduction

The pathway to my research question How can I use critical literacy to build classroom community among minority adolescents? has been a long and personal journey, beginning with my childhood move from a diverse city to an upper-middle-class homogenous suburb. Through my undergraduate education, I learned the importance of fostering a safe environment and its significant impact on student learning. I also came to recognize differences in how white and minority students perceive and are perceived by the world, and thus differences in how building their sense of self in a classroom is best achieved. I learned the multitudinous ways these subjects overlap; therefore, their equitable importance in positively influencing many students whose needs are currently not met by their schools.

The achievement gap between white and minority students has been long-documented in schools (Vanneman), and the discrimination facing minorities both in and out of the classroom has been around as long as our country has; therein my rationale to focus on helping these students achieve success as often as their white peers is clear.

To begin, I will discuss the system of American public school education as a whole. I will continue with describing what critical literacy is, noting its effectiveness in the classroom and what critical pedagogy looks like, and narrowing in on its proven
success in building community and engaging diverse learners. I will conclude with an overview of critical literacy strategies for the secondary classroom. Following my discussion on critical literacy, I will continue my literature review by noting the importance of building a welcoming community within the classroom, describing what a successful classroom community looks like, including strategies for building that community, what impacts the development of a community within the school and classroom, and end with a focus on its effectiveness with using both critical literacy and engaging diverse learners. Finally, specific research on race relations in America will be revealed, including why minority students face a particularly difficult time succeeding in our current society.

The System of American Education

Before even beginning to show the research behind my question, the topic of American public school education must be addressed. In traditional education, students are taught to follow the rules, to not question the answers given by the teacher, and to sit still and be quiet. It seems to be the only way to educate twenty to forty (!) students in a shared room: teach them to act the same. The problem becomes that all students are not even close to being the same, and unfortunately, most education at my upper-middle-class school, and many other schools across the country, submerges its learners in white culture—it focuses strongly on how white people have shaped and impressed our world, as opposed to how other cultures and ethnicities have helped and influenced our society. This has come to be known as whitewashing (Kincheloe, 2004). The idea of whitewashing also extends to teaching students to act more like the white, upper-middle class norm, as described above (Kincheloe, 2004). This is a problematic phenomenon,
since whitewashing adds to the achievement gap, pushing away the very learners we are trying so hard to help. In brief, white culture needs to see diverse perspectives for two reasons: they need to see that it is not just white, European people who have shaped their world, and they also need to know what it is like to hear diverse perspectives and feel like the “other” for a change (Kincheloe, 2004). Fortunately, critical literacy offers this diverse focus.

**Defining Critical Literacy**

Before looking at why critical literacy has proven to be effective in classrooms, it is important to clearly define what critical literacy is. Kincheloe (2004) and Freire (1970) both assert that critical literacy is about noting the power differences in society and bringing voices that are often marginalized to the forefront, so students are exposed to more than just the dominant, privileged viewpoints. Freire (1970) goes on to argue “critical literacy views readers as active participants in the reading process and invites them to move beyond passively accepting the text’s message” (qtd. in McLaughlin & DeVooegd, 2004, p. 14). If readers do not agree with the message the text presents, they should respond with action.

In essence, critical literacy involves analyzing society, including its messages and common beliefs, rather than blindly accepting what we hear, see, and read in our everyday lives. This way, we are able to view the world around us from a fuller perspective, rather than from only the dominant, white, and upper-middle-class voice. This is incredibly useful because it allows students to transform from passive receivers of information to informed, active ones, and it values the input of voices traditionally silenced.
Allowing students to feel a sense of power and control in adolescence also helps prepare them for life outside of high school. When students are not just passive receivers of knowledge but learn to act upon their curiosities and interests, they are more prepared for taking control of future society. Sawch (2011) agrees that using the critical approach to understanding and analyzing texts gives students power and voice in what they are learning and how they are learning it, allowing them real-life skills in creating and shaping informed opinions about issues that surround their world.

The Effectiveness of Critical Literacy

The research of Kincheloe (2004) shows numerous benefits to using critical literacy. He notes that the use of critical pedagogy allows students to critique and analyze their surroundings and perceptions—a skill that is immeasurably useful in nearly every context. It allows students to become active and engaged citizens by letting them practice in the classroom (McLaren & Leonard, 1993). Kincheloe (2004) goes on to argue that teachers who use critical pedagogy “gain the ability to help students understand multiple perspectives and the influence of their own location in the web of reality on how they see the world” (p. 128). Similarly, Sawch (2011) notes that when students are able to use critical literacy strategies, they are able to take an analytical stance and question the world around them through the lens, or the viewpoints, of the texts being taught. In addition, Hall and Piazza (2008) explain that critical literacy is about students noticing power inequalities and their own voice while reading and interpreting texts, strengthening their ability to analyze and articulate their findings. Finally, for why to use critical literacy, Tatum (2003) pushes the notion that it is not better to let students live in ignorance of the societal forces working on their beliefs—they need to be made aware of
society’s common assumptions so they can stop unseen or unnecessary burdens working on their ability to achieve status and happiness.

When teaching students, especially adolescents, I have found that it is imperative they see a connection between what they are learning and how it can be used outside school walls. The ability to examine their environment and voice their thinking is important for them to live comfortably, and even more, to make an impact on their world. One of my ultimate goals is to make sure that my content is connected to their lives outside of school—I want students to know that education benefits not just their grades, but their livelihoods, and I want to help them understand that they have the power to affect the society they live in by noticing how it works and taking action. Critical literacy strategies have the power to connect to students, give them voice, and move them towards this action.

Kincheloe (1999) goes on to argue that critical literacy allows teachers to key into what makes each student passionate in their classrooms. Teachers are then able to direct those energies into goals that expressly affect both the student’s as well as the teachers’ educational and social goals for that student. By attending to students’ needs, educators are able to create enhanced benefits in their students’ academic experiences: they are able to help students personally relate to what they learn, and they are able to build positive relationships, since part of attending to students’ needs is inherently showing interest and care on the part of the teacher. Ultimately, Hall and Piazza (2008) contend that this connection leads students to see education itself as a strong method of gaining control over their own lives—a connection between learning and power that many disenfranchised students never see.
There is an animated scene in the movie *Waiting for Superman* where, in an allegedly perfect learning environment, the teacher’s job becomes walking around her classroom, opening up her students’ minds, and pouring unadulterated knowledge inside their heads. The children smile docilely as they are “enlightened.” However, students are not, and never should be, perceived as passive receivers of information if we want them to truly have the ability to take charge of the world in their adulthood (Freire, 1993). Hall and Piazza (2008) reveal that using critical literacy allows students to become active when reading—it is not just information that is poured into their brains, but information that they must fight to uncover, understand, and use to make sense of their world.

Moreover, Kincheloe (2004) argues that critical literacy done successfully in the classroom is inextricably linked to students developing a sense of self—without that, the effectiveness is lost. Ultimately, the ideas come back to Maslow’s (1999) thinking: students need to be able to assert who they are, or who they think they are, and to also understand that the process of forming one’s identity is a constantly evolving and shifting process. They should want to figure out who they are, and also know that what they decide on will grow and change as their life experiences evolve.

**The Role of the Teacher Using Critical Literacy**

As stated in the introduction, much of the customary role of education involves teachers teaching students to simply follow the rules. Critical literacy strongly challenges this archaic notion. Since not very many people would agree that our world is perfect, we must not allow our students to become passive followers of this culture, where the achievement gap continues and approximately seven thousand students are dropping out of school daily (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007). Freire (1993) asserts that teachers need to
change their instructional practices to allow for students to learn how to create a better tomorrow, rather than passively follow its current trajectory. There are several key ways teachers can best adjust their practices to help students while using critical literacy practices.

**Act as facilitator.** Through the notion of students gaining voice and finding their sense of self, many teachers misconstrue the teaching of critical pedagogy to be passive on the part of the teacher, since it involves giving up some of the authoritarian practices teachers have traditionally employed. Behrman (2006) and Kincheloe (2004) disagree with this idea, arguing that teachers do not completely relinquish their roles as leaders, but, instead of serving as the be-all-end-all to knowledge, they serve as facilitators of student questions and curiosities. Behrman (2006) believes that to be most successful, teachers must keep “the hierarchical relationship between teacher and student” in place (p. 496). Behrman also argues that in the most successful critical literacy classrooms, the “decision-making was almost always in the hands of the teacher” (p. 496). Despite allowing for more student voice and interest to come into the classroom curriculum, teachers still need to retain their leadership role to help students focus and learn. The teacher is still the person with the most knowledge about how to learn in the classroom. Therefore, teachers need to adapt from the standard authoritarian view of teaching to becoming more of a facilitator in the process of student learning.

**Employ a variety of strategies.** To be most effective when using critical literacy in the classroom, teachers must also feel comfortable navigating different critical literacy strategies as they come of need to students. Behrman (2006) found that students are often using multiple critical tasks per activity. Thus, critical literacy cannot be a curriculum
that is handed down in a step-by-step format. He asserts that many of the more successful
critical literacy activities introduced by teachers occur when students are able to use
multiple forms of critical-literacy-based learning to look differently at the text or concept
being taught. This makes it difficult to pin down exactly which methods to employ
because so much of using critical literacy in the classroom has to do with its adaptability
to both the students (their learning needs and their interests), as well as the curriculum set
by the district. Indeed, as soon as someone were to try to sell a step-by-step method, it
would inherently lose any sort of critical literacy aims—it would not be about student
voice or interest (Behrman, 2006). My curriculum in Chapter Four keeps this in mind,
being inherently adaptable to learner needs.

Know my bias. Hall and Piazza (2008) point out that teachers need to be aware of
their own biases before they engage in critical literacy teaching to not accidentally teach
their own personal stereotypes to their students. This would devalue any safe
environment created, as well as any notion that student input and voice is desired.
Students would quickly figure out what the teacher was looking for (conformity to that
teacher’s particular beliefs), and any apparent critical literacy learning would be farce.

Create classroom community. First and foremost, for students to gain the most
from critical thinking, teachers need to set up a structured, safe, and welcoming
community for their students (Freire, 1993; Hall & Piazza, 2008; Sawch, 2011). This
way, students will feel more comfortable verbalizing and bouncing ideas off of one
another. They are also better able to understand the lenses, or perspectives, of those
around them. Further research behind the importance of building a welcoming
community, including steps on how to build that community, are in the second part of my literature review.

In congruence with the importance of building community, Sawch (2011) also shows that community can be built around the concepts of critical literacy—the community does not actually have to be built first, but can be a continuing part of increasing the overall sense of community in a classroom. While working on educational tasks together where student input is asked for and encouraged, students are able to foster a sense of bonding over shared topics and interests (Sawch, 2011). Freire (1993) agrees with this notion, arguing that in the act of creating questions, ideas, and curriculum together, teachers and students are able to forge a common bond over finding out the answer to the inquiries. Hall and Piazza (2008) also contend that one benefit of using critical literacy in the language arts classroom is that students and teachers can use the text being taught as a lens from which to base discussions, so students do not have to get personal if they do not want to, and the discussion does not take away from any community that has already been built.

Know my students. Freire (1993) and Kincheloe (2004) both believe that I need to know my students to teach them critical literacy effectively. According to Freire (1993), to be a critical literacy teacher, I need to build my curriculum around the community my students live in. Then, I come up with themes, words, and ideas that reflect their world, asking students to contribute their thoughts and conversations about these student-driven topics. As a result, students begin to analyze the world around them outside of the classroom because they are used to doing it with their own beliefs in class (Freire, 1993).
Hall and Piazza (2008) agree that “understanding [my] students’ views” is one of the ways to most effectively employ critical literacy (p. 37).

**Build student-teacher relationships.** According to Freire (1993), the relationship between students and teachers is crucial in teaching students to think critically. Therefore, teachers who teach critically must create a relationship with their students where the teacher can put forth her own ideas, but must also be ready for students to disagree (Freire, 1993). This can empower the students to question and can also build connection and humanity across the school and classroom community (Freire, 1993). Further benefits from creating positive student-teacher relationships will be discussed in the second section of this literature review.

**Value student voice.** Freire (1993) argues that in teaching critical literacy, it is equally important that we both ask students (and then actually allow them) to evaluate what they most need in their own learning, which is a habit that will help them throughout life. Student voice is key in effective critical literacy teaching. I want to know what my students are thinking, which I can discover when I get to know them and their environments, and this will enable me to teach them to be active learners.

Concluding comments: The Role of the Teacher Using Critical Literacy. As Kincheloe (2004) asserts, it is difficult to teach critical pedagogy. However, learning to use critical literacy practices in the classroom is worthwhile because of its significant effect on minority students.

**Critical Pedagogy and Diverse Learners**

The use of critical literacy pedagogies specifically with diverse learners has a profound impact on both their sense of the usefulness of education as a whole and their
ability to function well within that academic world. As cited in McLaren and Leonard (1993), Freire asserts that by examining the dominant culture, as we do in critical literacy, we can empower those who feel disconnected from it. The decision of what to teach, made by a school board, curriculum developers, and teachers on a day-to-day basis, often marginalizes minority voices under the guise of teaching “the classics” or “history” (Kincheloe, 2004). Being subjected to the culture and norms of the white community in the curriculum, black and Hispanic students become isolated from many of the lessons (Kincheloe, 2004). Much of the premise of American education evokes strong feelings of assimilation to the dominant, white culture. It continues the notion that “acting white” is the way to get ahead and perpetuates the achievement gap we allege to want to close, which, in my state of Minnesota, is considered one of the worst in the nation (Yuen, et al., 2016).

As cited in McLaren and Leonard (1993), Freire argues that we need to change our definition of literacy to break away from this marginalizing and oppressive concept. As a country, we need to “incorporate critical discourses” into our current educational doctrine to hear counternarratives and add diversity (McLaren & Leonard, 1993, p. 70). As stated, by overwhelmingly presenting just one perspective, I alienate those students I most need to reach, and many others in between, perpetually showing white as the norm and minority voices as the “other.” W.E.B. Du Bois was one of the first people to note that black students, as a result of their cultural background of slavery, were constantly seen as the “other” in education, and always had to see themselves and their culture through white eyes, making both seem less than (Kincheloe, 2004). Instead of ignoring
cultural differences, as so many minority students are accustomed to seeing, we must embrace them to show minority students they are valued.

Secondly, as Kincheloe (2004) explains, the issue of students being different from one another is at the core of why critical literacy is so important. Often when we focus on the standard learning targets that prioritize white, middle-class values, we assume that students who do not do well are poor learners, as opposed to just being different kinds of learners who can show their understanding in divergent ways. In addition, he asserts that the indifference that many minority students feel in school is a very logical reaction to a system that is set up to ignore or diminish their voices. Even students who do not like the current white and male-dominated system will perpetuate it, to the detriment of their own character and person. Part of this is due to the overbearing nature of the system’s structure and how pervasive it is within our culture. Another part is due to the myth that teachers continue to perpetuate (we are there to teach them the facts, and that is all there is: the facts), and students’ jobs are to passively listen, as seen in the Waiting for Superman example. Sadly, a result is students who do not realize how they can affect the world around them (Hall & Piazza, 2008). In order to reach minority students, they need to be included in the curriculum. We also need to add to the ways they are assessed and empower them through critical thinking. Critical literacy practices are the best way to achieve these goals.

Critical Literacy Strategies

Once a teacher’s role has been established in the classroom, and positive relationships and rapport have been built, there are multiple curricular strategies that can be employed to best help students understand critical literacy and begin to use it
effectively. Though the nature of critical literacy resists a set model (and, as stated, creating a set model actually diminishes the effects of critical pedagogy in the classroom), several researchers have outlined general strategies that can be used to help teachers get started using critical literacy in their own classrooms. First, students must be taught the power structures that currently exist in their world. Students must also be shown modeling of how to effectively critique a given text and its lens, or viewpoint. Then, there is a multitude of teaching practices and classroom activities that lend themselves to critical literacy in the classroom that will be discussed.

Teach power structures. As cited in McLaren and Leonard (1993), Freire argues one of the first tasks any critical literacy teacher needs to have students engage in is to teach them the power structures that exist in society, including the mass beliefs of its citizens that harm the development of others. Students will then be able to examine them critically and teach and empower themselves. Kincheloe (2004) agrees that teachers need to use critical pedagogy to help their students understand how the power structure is set up, because only with this knowledge comes the ability to understand how to change the current system. Hall and Piazza (2008) also include “making issues of power a central focus” as one of the four ways to effectively employ critical literacy in the classroom (p. 37).

Model, discuss, and focus on language. Hall and Piazza (2008) outlined three more strategies for effectively implementing critical inquiry in the classroom. The first is to model critical analysis to students with a text and my own thinking as I am reading. This also allows students to see active thinking and questioning. An example would be reading a section of a novel and questioning why the author chooses to portray a
character a certain way, or commenting on my own opinion of a character’s actions. Hall
and Piazza (2008) note that the teacher must “pause periodically and explain the thoughts
and questions that surface about different characters and how they are positioned based
on characteristics present in the text” (p. 39). This helps students see that they have a
voice to question or challenge what they read. Using this modeling leads to students
being able to question texts on their own. Hall and Piazza’s (2008) second method is “to
have them discuss what is valued or ignored within a given text” (p. 39). They note that
the best way to help students with this is to “present students with a wide variety of texts”
(p. 39). This way, students can compare and contrast across diverse authors and vantage
points to more fully understand a topic and its different depictions. As for the third and
final step, Hall and Piazza (2008) argue that there needs to be a focus on language used.
They point out that “teachers can help students learn how spoken and written words
communicate a range of messages including who should be in power and why, who
should be ignored, and how people should define themselves if they want to be
considered successful” (p. 40). One way to effectively help students look at the different
language surrounding one topic is to use two different newspaper articles covering the
same event—perhaps a tabloid article against a New York Times write-up. Have students
read both and note how the author’s tone and textual focus impacts the reader’s
perception of the event to show students the power an author has to shape the message
being presented.

Employ a variety of classroom activities. Behrman’s (2006) study done on critical
literacy teaching practices notes that the strategies can be broken down into “six broad
categories based on student activities or tasks” performed in the classroom:
• Reading supplementary texts
• Reading multiple texts
• Reading from a resistant perspective
• Producing countertexts
• Conducting student-choice research projects
• Taking social action (p. 492-494).

Supplementary texts. Through reading supplementary texts, students are asked to “confront social issues glossed over or avoided by traditional texts” (Behrman, 2006, p. 492). For example, supplementary fiction may be used to look more closely at serious issues, like racial discrimination, that a traditional text does not touch. This way, students are able to see that one voice does not account for all viewpoints and the author may be biased. Nonfiction can be used to much the same purpose, or teachers could extend its focus to allow students “to experience the power of language to shape thought and mobilize action” (Behrman, 2006, p. 492). For example, the word choice of “terrorist” versus “gunman” might indicate the perceived race or ethnicity of the shooter, showing how word selection is key in shaping readers’ responses. There is also the option of using film or music as a supplemental text to give students additional ways to learn about a topic.

Similarly, reading multiple texts that address the same topic “encourages students to understand authorship as a situated activity” and helps students “recognize that text is not ‘true’ in any absolute sense but a rendering as portrayed by the author” (Behrman, 2006, p. 493). This gives students more voice and authority in discussing a specific issue. As an example, To Kill a Mockingbird contains the issue of segregation, which the book
shows the effects of, but the text itself does not go into the feelings or opinions of any African American characters (those clearly most affected by segregation and the laws that promoted it in the first place). Supplementary texts could include the original Jim Crow laws and Martin Luther King Jr.’s speech about inequality continuing to give students further understanding about segregation’s true impact.

**Resistant perspectives.** Through reading from a resistant perspective, students are asked to consider varying lenses of viewing a text while reading. These can be “based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, language, sexuality, and religion,” and they help students see the “different layers of meaning” that individual readers would bring to a text (Behrman, 2006, p. 493). One way to accomplish this is to assign students a dissimilar gender, race, or socioeconomic status while reading. As an example, our society generally does not find rape funny. On the comedic television show *Parks and Rec,* however, there is a scene where a male character is reluctantly dragged off by his aggressive and overpowering girlfriend to have sex. This is written as a humorous scene because of the reversal of traditional gender roles, with the male being less interested in sex than the female. However, if students were reading from a resistant perspective, and the gender roles were reversed, one would be more likely to notice the overt rape written into a traditionally light comedy series. Allowing students to switch character roles (gender, race, sexuality) in a text lets them analyze it from different points of view.

**Counternarratives.** Similar to asking students to read a text from a different perspective, students can also be asked to create their own text that contains a counternarrative, which is “a student-created text that presents a topic from a nonmainstream perspective” (Behrman, 2006, p. 494). These can be formal or informal
pieces of writing, but their commonality is in that they “serve to validate the thoughts, observations, and feelings of students and other underrepresented groups” (p. 494). This helps students understand the power an author has to shape and focus the reader on one idea, similar to Hall and Piazza’s focus on language use denoting power. In my Master of Arts in Literacy Education graduate school cohort, we produced counternarratives about character’s voices that were not heard in the original text, allowing us to see deeper perspectives on the issues of race and racial profiling. Characters ended up being understood more clearly when we had to write with their voices, even ones who were originally harshly judged because of seemingly obvious prejudice. This would also be an activity for students to increase their writing voice and show how a character might react or experience a topic that the author did not get into, inherently giving students more control on an assignment and furthering their understanding of a text. For example, writing from Daisy’s perspective in *The Great Gatsby* would be a way to look at Gatsby’s actions from a female perspective and possibly help students see gender roles more clearly in the 1920s.

**Student topic choice.** These last two suggestions are more action-based. Allowing students choice in their research projects lessens the divide between school and personal interests that so many students, especially minority students, see regularly. Letting students choose a topic to research allows them some power and voice in the activities that they engage in while still being academic. This encourages students to view learning as positive and personal. They must see that topics relevant to them can be the subject of research and inquiry, which helps them connect school and life.
Student action. The final activity is actually allowing students to take action on their ideas to show how they can make “a real difference in their or others’ lives” and continue to diminish the within-school and outside-of-school divide many students feel (Behrman, 2006, p. 495). Students will see that their learning does not end in the classroom—it has real, true uses in the everyday world and can be used for change. For example, while doing research, students in my colleague’s class realized YouTube was blocked at our school. She told them to contact the district with an explanation of why it was a crucial element to their work and should be unblocked. The district ended up changing the filter, so now all students have access. She pointed out that their letter, which could just as easily have been an assigned persuasive essay, made real changes outside the classroom. The only way change is ever accomplished is through action, and our students should have practice being active with informed, researched voices—to match any of the opinionated, uninformed ones they are exposed to on a daily basis.

Finally, Sawch (2011) found similar strategies that proved to be helpful with students using critical literacy:

- Socratic seminar
- student-generated questions
- nonfiction research about those questions
- writing groups
- having a safe community (p. 81).

These strategies echo many of the earlier suggestions, with student voice and feelings of community being key. Sawch adds the concept of collaboration for increased success. Since my research question *How can I use critical literacy to build classroom community*
among minority adolescents? involves community, I will continue this theme by going into the research on building community through critical literacy.

**Critical Literacy and Building Community**

Critical literacy’s focus on getting to know my students and their passions is immeasurably useful for helping to build community, especially across racial divides. Landsman and Lewis (2006) argue that the act of allowing students to share what they write brings a sense of belonging and inherent multiculturalism to the classroom environment. Hall and Piazza (2008) add that by helping students examine the power structures that are present in texts and other cultures, it can show the diversity of different cultures (and that there is not just one correct culture). They also believe that “teachers will want to provide a supportive, nonjudgmental environment that allows students to examine belief systems,” proving that students need to feel a sense of comfort and community within the classroom when using a critical lens (p. 40).

To add to this discussion, in his text *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, Block (2008) argues too often as a society, we focus on problems. Instead, we need to find out what each member brings to our community. This also allows us, as community members, to recognize our own power in getting something positive done. It builds the connectedness and collective voice of the community. If something, like a novel or paper assignment is set before a student, there is not a lot of buy-in to its completion or even the activity itself. As Block goes on to assert, when students have a part in creating that very same thing, they are much more committed to its outcome. Critical literacy, because of its value of student voices, encourages this kind of involvement. In addition, when students
feel as though their input matters, it adds to their desire to be a part of the classroom community and promotes further success in their learning.

Defining Community in Adolescent Classrooms

Before I explore the benefits that come from building a classroom community, it is important to first note what a well-created classroom community looks like. In my research, I came across a variety of definitions for classroom community, but for the purposes of this capstone, Ellerbrock & Kiefer (2010) describe a classroom community as a “place where students and teachers care about and support each other, where individuals’ needs are satisfied within a group setting, and where members feel a sense of belonging and identification within the group” (p. 49). Each of these pieces is important to secure the benefits that come from keeping this shared space safe.

Why Building Classroom Community is Important

There are numerous scholars who have researched and described the benefits of creating a positive community (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007; Block, 2008; Ellerbrock et al., 2015; Goodenow & Grady, 1993; Gregory, 2000; Maslow, 1999; Sanders, 2000; Wehlage et al., 1989). Some of the benefits of building a community include safer schools, strong academic gains, and an increase in student motivation. From a psychological perspective, Maslow’s well-known Hierarchy of Needs addresses the need to feel a sense of safety, security, belonging, respect, and achievement before students are able to move up to learning and creative problem-solving. It is first most important that students feel as though they are in a safe and supportive environment—only then can students make the most gains in learning. Additionally, a sense of community creates safer schools, increases academic success and student motivation, and elevates a
student’s sense of purpose. Students are also able to take more risks in their learning and derive further benefits when they are a part of a community.

**Safer schools.** In a large study that amassed information from fourteen different secondary schools, Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, and Fernandez (1989) found that on a most basic level, helping students feel a sense of community in their school makes that school safer. Students who feel a sense of community are more likely to take their peers into consideration before acting or speaking, thus showing empathy and being less likely to engage in aggressive or bullying behaviors. Those students who feel a sense of connection with the school environment are more willing to learn, try to do well, and even follow rules and complete activities that they would normally fight against.

**Academic success, kindness, and student motivation.** Research done by Ellerbrock et al. (2015) agrees with the link between student success and caring classrooms. They found that “students in caring classroom communities enjoy school, are motivated to learn, possess strong conflict resolution skills, and develop an ethic of care, which can help them become more empathetic and contribute to the classroom community” (p. 49). They go on to say, “ultimately, addressing the need for care fosters healthy adolescent development and supports student success in school” (p. 49). One of my goals is to teach my students to become productive and thoughtful citizens, not just be able to reiterate the plot of a novel. Just like using critical literacy strategies in the classroom prepares students for analyzing the world outside of school, building community teaches real-life skills that students will be able to use to become kind and constructive members of society once they leave the school building.
Sense of purpose. Block (2008) argues that when citizens are engaged in their communities, whatever those communities may be, they are more willing to step forward and help. These citizens know the unique gifts they offer and can help make the future. His ideas also push the notion that once members feel a sense of purpose within their given community, they are not only more successful themselves, but they also can help others feel more successful, increasing this sense of purpose in others. Block goes on to assert that when people feel as though they belong somewhere, they experience “aliveness” (p. 20). When they do not feel this, they are actually within the constraints of inner conflict, which can theoretically only be resolved once they feel as though they belong. In other words, the students who are not engaged in the classroom and do not feel as though they are successful or welcome are fighting an inner battle against those who do feel a sense of belonging and purpose. This takes away from a student’s focus on school, and, as a result, impacts learning negatively.

In Towards a Psychology of Being, Maslow (1999) argues that the distinction between healthy-thinking and safety-surrounded students versus unhealthy and unsafe-focused ones is what the former are able to achieve in their minds. Healthy-thinking students are able to look at what their potential is and what they feel most passionate about. They are also able to think in the abstract and give their lives more meaning through self-reflection. Additionally, they are able to spend their time thinking about their life goals and passions, taking steps toward future success. Unhealthy-thinking students derive none of these benefits. As Maslow writes, the first step to success is feeling safe, loved, and having a sense of status in one’s environment. Only once that is achieved can unique, individual growth begin. Students who are focused on their own growth and
sense of purpose gain far more benefits than students who are simply filling needs to avoid feeling empty—this perpetuates the gap between the two camps and only makes it get worse as time goes on.

**Risk-taking to learn.** When students experience community, they are less afraid of asking questions and taking risks, which are important components of facilitating mental growth. Resnik and Klopfer (1989) argue, “researchers have discovered the importance of creating a classroom environment where solving problems is not a threatening task” (qtd. in Kagan, 1990, p. 112). Students need be able to take risks while learning, since much of the process involves trial and error. If they do not feel safe in their classroom, they are not comfortable taking risks.

Unfortunately, the test to determine whether or not students feel a sense of community is not clear-cut. Qualitative attitudinal and observational studies are the only real ways to assess whether a student feels motivated to learn or not (Maslow, 1999). Maslow further contends that it is also difficult to describe motivation—it is only the desire to want to do something. Motivation is not objective but subjective depending on the person. Getting to know my students and communicating honestly with them are the best ways to assess whether or not they feel a sense of community, and therefore are able to reap the positive benefits that result from that community in my classroom. To tie to critical literacy, teachers need to also truly know their students in order to determine whether or not they are gaining the benefits that come from being part of a strong classroom community.

**Teacher Influence and Community**
To begin examining this research, I will note Kochanek’s (2005) argument about building community: “people and the relationships they maintain with one another are the key variables affecting the outcome” (p. 87). In other words, it is not what practices are used or what strategies are the most well-researched that will determine the success of any given community, it is the relationships on which that community is built that will allow it to flourish and prosper or wither and die. As mentioned, positive relationships help students feel safe, and it is only once students feel safe that they will be able to reach their full learning potential. However, if students must choose between feeling growth or learning something new and feeling safe, students will choose feeling safe first; as argued by Maslow (1999), it is a primary need. Thus, I will reveal ways to build positive relationships with my students and to show them I care about their learning in order for students to reach higher levels of academic growth in the long run.

**Teacher Strategies to Show Care**

Ellerbrock, et al. (2015) lists eight factors educators can demonstrate to show they care about their students. A caring educator:

- Establishes a safe and academic-focused classroom culture
- Creates shared norms and values [...] allowing all to become stakeholders in the classroom
- Promotes open and honest communication
- Makes time for everyone to get to know one another
- Facilitates mutual respect
- Encourages reciprocal care and mutual responsibility
- Demands academic excellence from each student
• Uses student-centered cooperative group structures (Ellerbrock et al., 2015, p. 49).

One of the ways to facilitate mutual respect is “by holding an asset-oriented view toward every student, where the educator believes each student is special and has something valuable to contribute” (Ellerbrock et al., 2015, p. 50). This theme of respect repeatedly emerged in the research as being key for teachers creating a strong connection with their students.

**Create high expectations.** As part of building a community of successful learners, I need to make sure that I am aware of the ways that I have influence on my students. As the leader and driving force of learning in the classroom, my academic expectations of my students impact them in powerful ways. Teachers who have high expectations for their students will have students who will, in a supportive environment, strive to reach those expectations (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007; Ellerbrock et al., 2015; Kagan, 1990). Those students are also more likely to feel accepted and part of the culture of learning, impacting their ability and, more importantly for adolescents, their personal desire to listen to and apply the messages being taught. In addition, they need to know their teacher has faith that they will be able to meet and conquer academic difficulties encountered on their paths of learning.

**Build positive student-teacher relationships.** In addition to positive student-teacher relationships being important while using critical literacy, these relationships also influence a multitude of ways that a student can experience success and want to work towards being successful (Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, & Fernandez, 1989; Sanders, 2000; Ellerbrock et al., 2015). As a result, teachers are on the front line in the fight to
make sure students feel comfortable at school. As previously mentioned, the idea that students who feel comfortable in the classroom are able to go outside their comfort zone and take risks is key in helping students experience academic success (Wehlage et al., 1989). Sanders (2000) has also found that “positive teacher-student relations can improve student school behavior, increase student classroom preparation, and reduce student engagement in maladaptive behaviors—educational investments that are associated with higher student achievement” (p. 65). Therefore, my ability to talk with my students as people and create mutual respect will help them understand my role in their education and show them that I am not part of the uncaring system that does not value their voice.

Furthermore, my capacity to show my students that I care about them, in turn, affects their potential to show others they care. Ellerbrook et al. (2015) argues that students who feel cared about are able to care about others. I often hear teachers complain that students do not seem to care about anything—perhaps those students need to feel more care to show care. Teachers have the power to enact this change.

Additionally, Ellerbrook et al. (2015) makes a special note about student perception in those positive student-teacher relationships. If teachers use only their own perception when attempting to help a student, more harm may be done than good. Students need to know their teachers care, and they need to be shown in a way that is not questioned. As an example, some teachers spend years caring about their students by taking a tough love stance, but if the students do not understand that it is care they are truly being shown, as opposed to rejection, it will only harm them and any relationship that has been built (Ellerbrook et al., 2015).
Goodenow and Grady (1993) argue that by creating a sense of belonging in my classroom and showing students I genuinely care about their success, I help influence their behavior towards accepting the values I have, one being that education is the most important weapon a person can command. Beers, Probst, and Rief (2007) also believe it is through a teacher’s behavior and actions that students feel empowered to meet that teacher’s expectations and experience success. With mediation, a process that helps a positive bond form between a student and a teacher, the ultimate goal is that students come to their own “personal motivation for learning,” also showing how a positive student-teacher bond can influence students to care about their own education (p. 251).

This research recognizes the need to build a positive relationship with my students to show I appreciate them as individuals, where I communicate honestly with them and allow them to communicate honestly with me, to show them I believe they are all capable of learning (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007). This piggybacks on the critical literacy concept of allowing students to disagree with me to further their voices. Furthermore, students need to believe they can be successful to motivate themselves to try harder, and even enjoy the extra effort, especially when learning something new. This is also linked to how much support students feel from those around them. According to Goodenow and Grady (1993), when students feel comfortable struggling and trying out new ideas, they are more likely to enjoy those difficult learning activities and continue to try if they feel supported by their instructors.

Wehlage et al. (1989) adds that students need to know their teachers are more than authoritarians; they are people, too. When students are able to positively interact with educators outside of the classroom, outside of the standard student-teacher
interactions, they are able to form a bond that helps keep them from dropping out of school. By showing them that teachers are real people, and that we want them to achieve, we are able to communicate that we value both their education and their person. This helps them make the connection between what is learned in school and what can be practiced in the real world when they are no longer in school (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007). Sizemore’s (1981) study involving over 11,000 high school students argued that teachers must be aware of “the importance of developing supportive relationships with students in order to foster their cognitive and social growth” (qtd. in Sanders, 2000, p. 68). Without those supportive relationships, “many students might not benefit from even the most sophisticated instructional techniques” (p. 68). Studies show this is true in school in regards to the relationship students have with their teachers. Even the best teaching strategies cannot make up for the gains that are experienced when a student feels cared for and supported by her teacher.

In addition, Hall and Piazza (2008) argue that culture and background are important aspects to how students understand texts—therefore, those aspects of students’ lives should be important to me. According to Goodenow and Grady (1993), when getting to know students, educators must understand a student’s social life—friends, peers, family, and groups—to truly understand what motivates that student or what gets in the way of that student’s motivation. They are inextricably linked.

There are several activities teachers can regularly engage in that will help more students become motivated to experience success in school, all of which show that teachers both know their students and care for them (Wehlage, et al., 1989). These include:
• Actively engage students in positive relationships with adults.

• Tell students you are concerned and get them the help they need.

• Take the time to help students meet the standards and understand what you are teaching.

• Make sure that students know how they fit into society and what their future options could be (p. 120).

Avoid negative student-teacher relationships. Conversely, if teachers believe their students are less capable and lower their expectations, those students themselves will not expect they are capable of academic achievement (Kagan, 1990). Adolescents who feel as though the material they are being given is low level will interpret it as being unsatisfactory and either not spend their time on it, or worse, assume that this is all education actually has to offer them and become disillusioned with learning (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007). Sanders (2000) goes further and argues that neutral relationships, not even particularly negative ones, can also harm students’ academic achievement.

Unfortunately, there are many teachers who stereotype individuals within their classroom as being either academically capable or a lost cause. Once a teacher believes that a student is not particularly academic, everything that student turns in to be assessed may be negatively impacted (Kagan, 1990). That teacher’s lens had been distorted. This is most worrisome because many teachers will not change that set viewpoint throughout the year. If students see their teachers as being against them, it can become a perpetual fight between those students and those in power “forcing” them to learn (Kagan, 1990). Those students may start to believe it is part of their identity to perform poorly in school.
Therefore, teachers need to be careful about how they label students in their mind and expect all students to achieve, including students who are seen as being “at-risk.”

Kagan (1990) has found that minority children in particular suffer from the lowered expectations of teachers, which leads to a limited view of personal success. Minority students often feel as though teachers, and even administrators at the school, are in the way of their success, thus limiting their own perspective on what they are capable of achieving academically. In addition, Landsman and Lewis (2006) found that white teachers perpetuate subtle racism in their classrooms when they are surprised at minority students answering more complex questions or having knowledge outside their race. They argue that this sets up an inequality between what is expected from different races, allowing minority students to feel as though they are incapable of the same level of academic success as their white peers. Jackson and Cooper (2007) argue that these feelings of racism that pervade schools in the form of the perceived lower abilities of our students of color negatively weighs on those students’ consciouses, making it more difficult for them to succeed and believe in success than their white counterparts—adding, again, to this “otherness.” Therefore, Beers, Probst, and Rief (2007) find that black adolescent learners face a double-edged sword: many of them not only struggle to experience success within the classroom, but they also face teachers who also expect less from them. A conversation I was unwittingly part of involved the phrase “there are some who simply will not succeed.” It is this type of thinking that must be abolished.

Construct a warm classroom environment. In accordance with setting up a classroom with high expectations and positive student-teacher relationships, I also must be able to make sure that the classroom environment is a welcoming one. Maslow (1999)
argues that my job is to set a fixed environment of welcoming safety for my students so they can thrive. Thus, my ability to create a classroom that meets the safety and security needs of my students allows them not to feel pressured to act a certain way—they are able to become the masters of their own destinies (Maslow, 1999). As a result, my students will be able to create, learn, and feel empowered, getting even closer to the ideals of self-actualization, without conforming to what others want them to be (which is particularly important for minorities in a white environment). In so doing, they can be themselves, and they rule their minds and actions. They no longer feel that they have to conform to what others or society expects from them in terms of their ability to learn and succeed in school.

Include diverse literature. Another way I can show that I am welcoming to all students is through using diverse literature whenever possible, which corresponds well with critical literacy practices. Teachers need to be cognizant of how reading materials relate to students, and how it may impact their desire to continue to learn. At its best, reading and learning should encapsulate both a student’s interest and help spark further learning (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007). This aspect of creating a welcoming classroom community conforms with critical literacy practices involving using diverse literature to help engage more students.

Connect with school. The ultimate goal of teachers, then, would be to help their students achieve a sense of connection with their schools. Hirschi (1969) coined the term social bonding to describe “a social-psychological state or outcome in which a student is attached, committed, involved, and has belief in the norms, activities and people of an institution” (qtd. in Wehlage, et al, 1989, p. 68). When students socially bond with a
school, they genuinely believe in what the institution, including its teachers and lessons, has to offer and are more likely to accept what it represents in its learning goals, and students are also more likely to follow its social norms. An increase of social bonding is also linked to an increase in “self esteem, academic self-concept, locus of control and sociocentric reasoning” (Wehlage et al., 1989, p. 173). When schools respond constructively to students’ needs, there is “evidence of improved attendance and behavior, and an increase in the number of credits earned indicate these positive effects are being translated into improved academic performance” (p. 173). Since sixty-five percent of all jobs by 2020 will require some level of postsecondary learning, students need to know the value that comes with education (Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2013). Building community is one way to help students feel safe and respected, thus increasing the likelihood that they will stay in school and learn (Maslow, 1999).

Keeping this research in mind, Wehlage et al. (1989) found that teachers who

- “accept personal accountability for student success
- believe in practicing an extended teacher role
- accept the need to be persistent with students who are not ideal pupils
- express a sense of optimism that all students can learn if one builds upon their strengths rather than their weaknesses” are able to act as motivators towards student success (p. 135).

Some teachers will argue that these expectations go beyond what is traditionally asked of secondary teachers, which is a fair assessment. However, when our schools are generally only succeeding with white students, it is time to rethink what the teacher role is to bring success to all students, regardless of race.
School Influence and Community

In addition to discussing the community within a classroom, the community within a school environment must also be addressed. Those seven thousand students dropping out of school daily is a crisis (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007). The majority of the students who leave have been disconnected from school for a long time, and dropping out seems to be the final step of their disillusionment with the educational system. Wehlage et al. (1989) argues that it cannot be on students to meet unreasonable demands, but schools must adapt to a population’s specific needs. One way to combat the exorbitant number of dropouts and address the changing population is to make sure that students also feel a sense of community in the school building they attend. In my school, one of the factors getting in the way of my students experiencing community is the overall population: large schools are harder to create a sense of community in (Wehlage et al., 1989). Therefore, it is important to address not only the forces inside the classroom, but also influences outside the classroom to help students better achieve the benefits that come from feeling a sense of community.

A study by Goodenow and Grady (1993) that focused on urban early adolescent students’ sense of belonging in school was shown to correlate with both success in school and motivation to learn and succeed. The researchers looked at two different junior high schools, asking students questions about their sense of school belonging, friends’ values, their effort or persistence in school, motivation, the value they placed on academic work, and their expectation of academic success. They found that a sense of belonging in school is strongly related to a student’s academic motivation. The reason for this strong link, they argued, relates to a student’s feelings—the way a student feels while being in school
is part of the social context that making up that student’s relationship to academic success and the motivation to academically succeed, agreeing with Hirschi’s idea of social bonding. Students must feel as though they both belong in their learning environment and that they are people capable of achievement—especially from the perspective of the student/teacher relationship—to want to succeed. Interestingly, that study also found that a more important factor on academic success than even friends’ influences was a student’s sense of belonging at school and the help they felt they received from teachers and others: “friends’ values by no means overrode the stronger influence of the psychological sense of belonging and of perceived support from teachers and others in the school” (Goodenow & Grady, 1993, p. 66). Conversely, students who did not feel even a basic level of identification, welcoming, or belonging to their school were at a higher risk for dropping out altogether—it begins with basic disengagement with the learning process (the kind seen in classrooms on a daily basis: students not completing work or putting their heads down on their desks) and grows from there (Goodenow & Grady, 1993). Unfortunately, there are multiple difficulties minority learners face when trying to access a sense of community in a majority-white school.

**Minority Students and School Community**

In an article that discusses the need to pay attention to the racial climate for diverse students at primarily white institutions, Gregory (2000) argued, “the need for social supports on campus appear to be greatest for African American students on predominantly White campuses” (p. 40). Maslow (1999) agrees with the need to focus on community for diverse learners, suggesting there are factors in our society that place those students who are commonly seen as the “other,” and therefore, outside of the
majority culture, especially at risk. Fortunately, there are ways the district can adapt to help all learners feel welcome at school. There is a large body of research that focuses on how to build community specifically for diverse students in a white-majority school.

Educate staff. There is a need to help educate each faculty member about how to best help all students achieve (Wehlage et al. 1989). Even though students are subjected to the same education in the same school, Sanders (2000) found that the experiences between white and minority students can vary widely, even in counseling sessions. Richardson et al. (1989) argued that as a school, we need to be aware of how we are systematically labeling students because “the formality of such labeling can have a powerful effect on teachers’ perceptions and classroom behaviors” (qtd. in Kagan, 1990, p. 111). In addition, those working in the school would also have to critically examine their own stereotypes and prejudices about race to truly enact a positive difference (Sanders, 2000). To raise awareness and combat this disparity, teachers and administrators need cultural training that matches their individual level of racial understanding to be most effective—much like critical literacy teaching, it is not one size fits all.

Value diversity. Sanders (2000) found that for black students to experience success at primarily white schools, the school needs to make sure that it has both a philosophy that is centered around helping diverse learners and that it accepts diverse learners, both on a cultural and a structural level. Gregory (2000) found that encouraging diverse students to join school organizations would have a positive effect on their academics and help them make friends. Another way to help minority feelings of
isolation is to ensure that students have a positive circle of preferably diverse peers to develop resiliency in a primarily white institution (Sanders, 2000).

Add a black student association. A step further in combatting the feelings of cultural distance and to celebrate diversity and increase resiliency among diverse learners is to create a black student association. At schools that have them, nearly ninety percent of students regard their African-American club as important at their school (Sanders, 2000). Furthermore, having such a club helps to open a dialogue about race and is a way for schools and teachers to address racial discrepancies and help diverse students feel more accepted. Tatum (2003) argues that allowing black students to talk about what it means to be black in a white school helps them deal with the situation and bond with one another to form racial pride. It also helps eliminate the divide that can occur in schools between students who are fully black and mixed, which is positive because both are targeted by white stereotypes, and often those two groups are at odds with one another (Tatum, 2003). She states,

The opportunity to come together in the company of supportive adults allowed these young Black students to talk about the issues that hindered their performance—racial encounters, feelings of isolation, test anxiety, homework dilemmas—in the psychological safety of their own group. In the process, the peer culture changed to one that supported academic performance rather than undermined it. (Tatum, 2003, p. 72)

This research is in tune with Maslow (1999), who emphasizes that students need to feel safe first. For example, if students are with only other black individuals talking about struggles, it will not be seen as fitting into any negative stereotypes, but rather as normal
student struggles. Clearly, black students need a supportive place in white schools to talk about not just what it is like to be black, but other stresses they are having related to school (Tatum, 2003). Tatum (2003) goes on to argue that this will help students focus on school more positively in the long run.

**Discuss race.** Gregory’s research (2000) shows that in a primarily white school, I can help build community amongst all students and help ease racial tension by having students discuss race in a structured and observed format, like a classroom discussion or diversity club. Sanders (2000) also argues that schools need to talk about race to let diverse students have a voice. In spite of the fifty years since the Civil Rights Movement, true integration and acceptance are still not a part of mainstream American society, as clearly demonstrated through the continual life and strength of the Black Lives Matter movement.

**Form a positive cultural identity.** Diverse learners need to know that they are capable of success, and they need to form a positive cultural identity to do well (Sanders, 2000). One way to help students form a positive cultural identity is to regularly expose them to “images of African American academic achievement,” especially when they are young (Tatum, 2003, p. 65). Limited exposure makes students think that minority achievements are exceptions to the rule. Furthermore, as Sanders (2000) contends, just as those who are more in-tune with racial awareness realize that having a “token black character” in a story does little to combat the oppressive stereotypes facing black culture, so too do students recognize and revile the idea of promoting black culture as an add-on, or token, message to its small group of black students.
Adjust curriculum. As mentioned in the introduction, oftentimes the curriculum will not match the students’ backgrounds or experiences, especially with the ever-stressful need to “teach the classics” or the “greats,” usurping many school districts’ true need to include literature to fit all voices. Schools need to have an inclusive curriculum throughout the year to be most effective with diverse learners. For example, Landsman and Lewis (2006) have found the way we measure giftedness places a higher value on white culture and white ideals. It marginalizes students who are different and ends up perpetuating the achievement gap between white and minority learners. Numerous researchers have noted the overwhelmingly negative and culturally divisive effect a predominately white-focused curriculum has on its minority learners (Goodenow & Grady, 1993; Gregory, 2000; Hall & Piazza, 2008; Sanders, 2000; Tatum, 2003; Wehlage et al., 1989).

The primarily white curriculum leads to the fear of “acting white,” which is a problem for many minority students if they adopt the majority view on education (Gregory, 2000; Sanders, 2000; Tatum, 2003). As Gregory (2000) asserts, they face the loss of their own culture without being truly accepted by white culture. Tatum (2003) argues that this alienates students who want to achieve and keeps pressure on them to act like their peers and reject an institution that does not seem to incorporate their voices. Kincheloe found:

the cultural backgrounds of African-American, Native American […] and Latino students are often deemed by white, middle-class schools to be inferior to those of the dominant culture. Because of such perspectives, students from such backgrounds come to realize that success in school may come only with a
rejection of their ethnic and/or class backgrounds and the cultural knowledges that accompany them. (2004, p. 15)

One of the consequences of this overly white focus in the classroom curriculum is in its contribution to the racial divide and achievement gap. A way to combat this alienation is to choose texts with students in mind, making sure that there is diversity in what students are asked to read.

Use student-relevant texts. Beers, Probst, and Rief (2007) argue that texts need to have the learner in mind to truly be effective for diverse readers. They also need to recognize there is a culture that surrounds black male learners, and address the benefits and challenges that come from that background, in order to truly meet black students’ needs (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007). Much of the research I have included shows the strong divide between the academic interest and performance of minority students—students who do not find the issues they are facing in life in their school texts do not engage with the reading, nor learn from it in any significant way—meaning they are limiting their future before they even know what their options are (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007). Therefore, teachers need to use relevant texts, helping create their students’ life stories to show them what their potential could be before students decide what it cannot be. Since black students are struggling to find texts that speak to them in the classroom, it exacerbates the divide between minority and white interest in school, leading to minority students’ continual disinterest in reading, all the way into adulthood (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007). We need to expose students to more texts to help them find voices that speak to them and their own personal experiences. Students must be able to relate to a text to learn from it and help inform their future (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007). Having a diverse
curriculum will both help students engage in learning and give them a stronger voice in
the classroom, which coincides with the aims of critical literacy.

**Hispanic students and community.** There is a special note to be made about the
importance of creating community for Hispanic students in particular. Goodenow and
Grady (1993) and Tatum (2003) found that one of the differences between Hispanic
versus white culture is the value placed on the community as opposed to individualism.
This makes it especially important that Hispanic students feel as though they belong to
their school community—they are more likely to gain value and have it impact them than
white students. Much of white American education is built on the idea of competition, so
realizing the importance and impact of a sense of community on Hispanic learners is
important.

**Additional strategies.** Furthermore, in a study that listed ways that college
campuses could improve the climate for their diverse learners, Hurtado (1999) found five
strategies that would help diverse students on a predominantly white campus:

- Creating collaborative and cooperative learning environments where students’
  learning and interaction among diverse groups can be enhanced
- Increasing students’ interaction with faculty outside of the classroom by
  incorporating students in research and teaching activities
- Initiating curricular and co-curricular activities that increase dialogue and build
  bridges across communities of difference
- Creating a student-centered orientation among faculty and staff
- Including diverse students in activities to increase students’ involvement in
campus life as well as ensure that programming for diversity involves support
services and coordinated activities for students of color (qtd. in Gregory, 2000, p. 42).

Hurtado went on to suggest “activities that would foster awareness, understanding, and acceptance of differences might include study groups, group projects, collaborative learning experiences, role-playing skits, dialogue groups, and training classes” (qtd. in Gregory, 2000, p. 42). Though these recommendations are intended for university campuses, many of these strategies can easily be adapted for and are applicable to high school students. The activities also corroborate with critical literacy practices, since much of the focus is on collaborating with students and honest communication.

Concluding comments: Minority Students and School Community. As stated, the problem of reaching at-risk students needs to be a school-wide effort to engage and help all students experience success. Since many curricular changes cannot be made at the classroom level, and teachers do not always know they are perpetuating cultural bias, it becomes the district’s responsibility to adapt to represent its many different voices. It must change a curriculum that is missing diverse voices and train a staff that looks down upon or labels its students. To promote that kind of positive transformation, teachers and administrators both must feel trust with each other (Kochanek, 2005). In addition, Wehlage et al. (1989) found that the most beneficial school programs (1) connect school experiences with student values, and (2) decrease isolation and increase self-esteem. This allows students to thrive, in spite of current setbacks and past failures. Both of these points address the specific needs that a minority student would have within a primarily white school.

The Challenges of Creating a Community for Minority Students
There are several factors that make it more difficult for minority students to feel accepted as part of a community in a primarily white school. These elements include unfair school discipline programs, additional at-risk factors faced by minority students, the “othering” on the basis of race, peer influence, increased peer aggression, and the fate that comes with “acting white.”

**Ramifications of school discipline.** An unfair discipline system is one way schools can single out or punish certain students over others. In an article about student suspensions in Minneapolis Public Schools, the *Star Tribune* found that black students were ten times as likely to be suspended over their white peers (Matos). As a result, these punitive punishments keep students out of school and end up exacerbating the achievement gap when the majority of those students punished are black. Students who have consistent problems with a discipline system they perceive as being unfair are also less likely to see the benefits of education and are more likely to drop out (Wehlage et al., 1989).

**Increased at-risk factors.** The study done by Wehlage et al. (1989) found that students of color are more likely to be in homes with a lower socioeconomic status, have parents who do not speak English, and have parents with low levels of education. Beers, Probst, and Rief (2007) also found that some of the difficulties that black teens face include poverty and community turmoil. Just as with all students, what is seen around them is reflected in what students perceive they can become. This factor is worsened by media portrayals of minority youth. Often, the troubled views that black teens get of their possible futures are not balanced by positive role models. Without a conscious choice, black male teens see what their future probably will hold (Beers, Probst, & Rief, 2007).
This can become a self-fulfilling prophecy, as students turn into what they most see, as opposed to what they want to become. All of these risk factors contribute to the likelihood a student will drop out of school. This adds to the separation that many of my diverse students feel from their white counterparts, apart from their difference in skin color.

“Othering” by peers. In a comprehensive study that looked at peer aggression among nearly a thousand children between the ages of eight and twelve, Durkin et al. (2012) found that minority students in particular feel more discriminatory aggression than do their white counterparts. This builds up into a sense of isolation from the dominant group, as diverse students are almost always noted for their “otherness.” Though the oldest participants in the study were not yet in high school, the isolation that students experience is not likely to lessen as students get older, especially if that separation is seen as the status quo. Contrarily, it is likely to increase as students continue to experience the feelings of “otherness” as they reach their more volatile and independent teenage years. Gregory (2000) and Maslow (1999) both found that when a student’s peer group at school consists of many students whose culture is different, it becomes difficult for that student to gain acceptance. High schoolers have trouble with differences, seeming to either embrace those differences (less likely) or shun them (more likely). When one’s sense of acceptance is so set by the perceptions and feelings of others, minorities in a primarily white school will, in the current culture, always be at a disadvantage—there is always someone who will see them as lesser-than, and therefore, will impede on that student’s sense of safety, status, and ability within the classroom.
When I moved from the diverse city to the upper-middle-class suburb, I realized the new environment I was in was perceptively different than my old one—but once I learned the rules of my new surroundings, I was able to adapt and gain a sense of safety and belonging amongst my peers and teachers. In other words, the environment did not adapt to me, I adapted to it. It was much the same with my peers who were part of the ethnic minority: they had to change themselves to fit in with their surroundings; their surroundings did not adapt to them.

Unfortunately, students who are lacking in community, usually students of color in a white school, are more dependent upon the appreciation of their peers, but are also more separate from them. They need their peers to accept them, but the need can be one-sided. As Maslow (1999) contends, many white peers who feel comfortable in school do not have the same need for acceptance, and this places minority students at a further disadvantage. As a result, since minority students are already noted for their differences, and white, middle-class students so rarely are, it becomes especially difficult for minorities to try to fit in.

**Proportion of diversity.** As previously stated, the school that I spent my high school years in is now the very same one in which I teach. In the five years between my past tenure and my current one, the diversity of the population has increased. As much as one may think that an increase among minority populations would help white students accept diversity more, the opposite has actually been shown to occur. Research shows that “evidence from large-scale, societal-level studies in North America and European nations indicates that discrimination and hostility toward ethnic minorities are more likely as the relative proportion of the minority group increases” (qtd. in Durkin et al.,
and “the rates of discriminatory peer aggression rose as the proportion of children of minority backgrounds increased” (p. 247). These findings suggest that as the number of minority students increases, it begins to become a threat to the majority, and the whole population responds negatively and lashes out, leading to more isolation between the different racial groups.

For example, the racist behaviors in the time that I attended high school to my employment there today seem to have increased in aggressiveness and are much more overt as the number of minority students in the school has risen. Because of this inherent difference in populations, it pushes the need to ensure that the minority students feel a sense of community in a place where they are already small in number and often seen as the “other” by their peers and their peers’ families, their teachers, and even the institution of learning as a whole that they attend.

**Bullying and race.** Though anyone who has attended school knows that bullying is clearly not only confined to the experiences of minorities (64% of majority children experience peer aggression versus 66% of minority children, which is not a significant enough difference to be noteworthy), the singling out of minority students to bully on the specific basis of racial or cultural differences is twice as likely to occur to diverse students than their white peers (Durkin et al., 2012). The fact that minority students are singled as being different than their white peers means many of those students, when facing bullying behavior, face it on the basis of their race and feel isolated. Minority students were also “more than twice as likely to report being unsure whether acts of aggression they had experienced had been discriminatory” in nature (p. 247). The authors go on to argue that “not all prejudice is overt, and in some social environments, one
might suspect that it is occurring but not have concrete evidence” (p. 249). Since part of Tatum’s argument is that negative stereotypes about race are everywhere, the idea that one might be targeted on the basis of race, but not be able to prove that fact, simply adds to the reasons that diverse peers are separated from the white community that surrounds them. Minority students are constantly on alert about the existence and effect of their race on others and question whether it is working against them. When minority students in a white school perceive that they are being negatively stereotyped, or that they are not safe, they will go into survival mode and become attuned to what white students are thinking because of their need to protect themselves (Maslow, 1999; Tatum, 2003). In this mental state, learning is compromised.

**Acting “white.”** As a result, minority students then face a treacherous (and perhaps traitorous) choice: be themselves, or succumb to the majority white culture. When they succumb to that culture, they give up part of what makes them who they are (their culture, their unique voices and perspectives). If they do that often enough, these students will lose their senses of self. This is troubling, as many high school students are just starting to gain a sense of self. In a majority-white school, minority students often have a stereotypical part that is already set for them by their peers and teachers. Either they fulfill the expectation and fit in, usually lowering their bar of achievement, or they do what they desire, and lose the white majority’s approval. Maslow (1999) argues that since they need the group to give them their sense of status and safety, students will almost always choose to have the group accept them rather than actually be their unique selves.
Some may find it surprising that this stereotyping is not confined to only white individuals. The phenomenon called internalized oppression occurs when minority groups hold stereotypes about their own culture or identity (Tatum, 2003, p. 6). For example, minority students hear the negative messages that white culture constantly proffers and actually start to believe they are less than their white peers. This imposed identity by the white majority is so perceptible by individuals who are part of the minority that negative stereotyping is even observed in children. Huo, Molina, Binning, and Funge (2010) found that “children of ethnic minority status are aware of and respond to others’ evaluations of their group” (qtd. in Durkin et. al, 2012, p. 245). Minority students in particular recognize that their majority peers set them apart in school social groupings, and they are aware of how their peers portray them.

**Clash of cultures.** This divide adds to the setback that minority students often face from their peers and family for attempting to conform to these academic “white” ideals (Wehlage et al., 1989). Both Wehlage et al. (1989) and Cookson and Persell (1991) argue that minority students live in two separate planes of existence. In the academic world, they learn facts about a history that does not belong to them and read books by people who do not look like or relate to them, being told that this is what they need to know to be successful, while in the other world they gain acceptance and community, often from people who scoff at the idea of a formal, or “white” education (Wehlage et al., 1989). Likewise, Goodenow and Grady (1993) found that diverse students are more at risk for facing a tougher peer group—one who impedes or otherwise minimizes the benefits of academic success. Being in a primarily white school, these minority students do not feel as though they fit in, and this increases their risk of dropping out or not caring about their
grades or success (Wehlage et al., 1989). The fact that the curriculum does not often reflect diverse voices marginalizes those learners in our classroom, again shaping learning into something seemingly only important to white students. In addition, Hall and Piazza (2008) found that black boys specifically have a hard time negotiating their culture with their desire to do well in school. Likewise, Goodenow and Grady (1993) found that Hispanic students similarly put less effort into doing well in school.

This alienation leads to some of the negative educational trends in our society. For example, Beers, Probst, and Rief (2007) have found that black adolescent males are among our nation’s poorest readers. They also report that minority students are more likely to be among the seven thousand students mentioned who drop out of school daily. Frequently, those students are frustrated and disillusioned with learning and often fail to understand that literacy can help them achieve success and understanding in their own lives. In order to reach these students, schools and educators must commit to “understanding and valuing their unique experiences and perspectives” (Sanders, 2000).

Minority students in particular need the academic benefits that come from a caring classroom. With all the pressure they face from their white and diverse peers, as well as taking into account any other challenges that are facing them, Ellerbrock et al. (2015) found that “a caring classroom community can provide emotional support and help students focus in the classroom” (p. 49). Students hear messages all day about their capabilities, from their peers to teachers to administrators. Those who get caught in the wrong crowd can often hear negative messages, whether they be overt or not, about their personal ability to succeed (Wehlage et al., 1989). This message is bolstered by our society, which maintains a strict and pervasive divide between white and minority
cultures. This proves the need to help minority students specifically experience community in school—it can be the difference between true academic success and disillusionment with academia as a whole.

**Race Relations in America**

Part of the American Dream is that everyone, especially those who are at a disadvantage, can pull themselves up if they work hard and act responsibly. According to Tatum (2003), to those who know what it is to work hard and act responsibly and still be at a disadvantage in our current society realize how false this idea is. For a long time, people in the lower class, which hold an overwhelming number of America’s minorities, have worked hard but been unable to get ahead (Tatum, 2003). Sanders (2000) argues we need to consider America’s history, where African American and other ethnic minorities have been mistreated since America’s founding. As a result, a huge separation is created in the culture of white citizens versus minority citizens. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s novel *Americanah* (2013) remarks on the different experiences white versus black Americans face. Through a Nigerian student who comes to America for college, Adichie illustrates this stark cultural divide clearly when she writes “American pollsters ask white and black people if racism is over. White people in general say it is over and black people in general say it is not” (p. 362).

Hacker (1992) also takes into account the current racial separation, saying, “what every black American knows, and whites should try to imagine, is how it feels to have an unfavorable—and unfair—identity imposed on you every waking day” (qtd. in Mazel, p. 63). He argues there is a palpable difference in America between living as part of the white majority and living as part of any ethnic minority: one’s skin color tends to become
all that people notice. Famously, Zora Neale Hurston noted this difference in her essay “How It Feels to Be Colored Me” after moving from a small black town to Jacksonville, Florida. She wrote, “I was not Zora of Orange County any more, I was now a little colored girl” (Hurston, 1928, para 5). Similarly, Adichie’s main character Ifemelu said, “I came from a country where race was not an issue; I did not think of myself as black and I only became black when I came to America” (Adichie, 2013, p. 292). Still in our society today, minorities are noted for their skin color, and as Tatum (2003) contends, unfortunately, the overwhelming message in the United States about race, through individuals’ actions and beliefs as well as institutional policy and practice, is that white people are superior. This message is virtually inescapable in our society, and its effects bleed into our classrooms on a daily basis through curriculum, school policy, and faculty and student interactions. To demonstrate, Adichie’s Ifemelu writes:

So whiteness is a thing to aspire to. Not everyone does, of course [...] but many minorities have a conflicted longing for WASP whiteness or, more accurately, the privileges of WASP whiteness. They probably don’t really like pale skin but they certainly like walking into a store without some security dude following them. (2013, p. 207)

This shows how minorities and the white majority live in two different versions of America.

According to the psychologist William Cross, there are five stages of identity that can be crossed by black individuals in a white-dominated culture (Tatum, 2003). The first two are generally seen in adolescent children, called pre-encounter and encounter stages. The first refers to a time when the black child believes in the same ideals as the white
child in terms of stereotypes associated with black and white culture. This can be seen in the results of the infamous “Doll Test” conducted in the 1940s, when psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark showed that, when given a choice, both black and white children between the ages of three and seven overwhelmingly prefer, and assign positive characteristics to, a white doll over an identical black one (Brown at 60: The doll test). Heartbreakingly, those young children already knew and believed society’s prejudice against black individuals. The second stage is encountered when the black child is actually forced to realize that she is in the stereotyped group, and must deal with being part of the minority. As an example, one student in my class asked to do a peaceful protest about racial injustice with Black Lives Matter last year at our school, and was told by the white school authorities that she could not (the question “Don’t all lives matter?” being a major part of the conversation). As a result, her interest in school this year has perceptively declined, her voice silenced. According to Cross, it is possible that she suffered through the change from pre-encounter to encounter, and, had we allowed her to voice her concerns to open up a true racial dialogue, she would be more interested in succeeding at school, as she once was.

To add to this discussion, when there are so many negative stereotypes that are focused around speech differences based on culture, there is the message that the black dialect is not welcome in the classroom. Landsman and Lewis (2006) argue that as teachers, we need to show students their ability to linguistically code-switch, for example, speak both in academic English and informal slang, is actually a power and a skill that they possess. We also need to make sure that we do not undermine its eloquence or complexity (Landsman & Lewis, 2006). Relating back to the idea of subtle racism
perpetuated by teachers, teachers need to be aware of the messages they send regarding different kinds of speech.

**Understanding White Privilege**

In any discussion of race, white privilege in American society must be mentioned. Though many are quick to point to the achievement gap as being a minority-only problem, to truly fix the gap, we need to help both ethnic-minority and ethnic-majority students see how biased the system has been and work towards building a new one that is more equal to both races. As Dalton (1995) argues, “We have long since grown accustomed to thinking of Blacks as being ‘racially disadvantaged.’ Rarely, however, do we refer to Whites as ‘racially advantaged,’ even though that is an equally apt characterization of the existing inequality” (qtd. in Mazel, 1998, p. 97). Additionally, Maslow (1999) agrees that while many people readily understand that minorities are at a disadvantage, so many of those same people are afraid of looking at the other side of the same coin. More precisely, Maslow argues that white society must give up some power to share with others. As long as white people only see the disadvantage of minorities, they will resist and ignore their part in perpetuating the damage. Block (2007) concurs that when we, as a society or community, assume that all of the problems we see are part of someone else, it allows us to create a “them” or an “other”—separate from “us.” As a society, we need to stop the “othering” that occurs for minority students and start over from this thinking for true change, which means that it needs to start with those in privilege.

There are several compelling arguments about the existence of white privilege and how it is defined. A strong definition comes from McIntosh (1990) in her paper
“White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,” who sees “white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets which I [as a white person] can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was ‘meant’ to remain oblivious” (p. 1). White privilege can also be defined as the ability to ignore race—only white people can say, “Why must we talk about race anyways? Can’t we just be human beings?” which inherently shows racial privilege—white people can ignore race if they so choose (Adichie, 2013, p. 347).

Psychologist Tatum (2003) shows consistently through her research that, when answering questionnaires about their identity, students from a minority group (whether it be racial, cultural, sexual, or gender-based), tend to mention that they are part of that oppressed group, while white students do not mention that they are white. Concurrently, Durkin et al. (2012) found that “only 1% of the White American students spontaneously mentioned their ethnicity in elicited self-descriptions, whereas some 17% of Black and 14% of Hispanic students mentioned their ethnicity” (p. 245). Frequently, whiteness is a fact that goes unnoticed, while those who are part of the minority feel that separation from the “norm” and note that it is an important part of who they are, or at least who they are in relation to others. They do not have the option to take their otherness for granted, while white, heterosexual males almost always do. As much as white individuals may choose to ignore race, minorities are forced to deal with it. For example, Americanah starts with Ifemelu waiting to take a train to go get her hair braided, wondering “why there was no place where she could braid her hair” in Princeton (p. 3). Similarly, Ifemelu’s aunt, also from Nigeria, is informed that she should not have natural or braided hair when she goes in for job interviews; “if you have braids, they will think you are unprofessional” (p. 120). These two examples illustrate how white culture ignores and
diminishes other cultures. Ifemelu is forced to leave town to find a hair salon, and her aunt is forced to adopt culturally white hairstyles to get a job—neither woman could choose to ignore the fact that she is black in a white society, and that blackness is something to be diminished.

**Being “color-blind.”** One of the ways I was taught to assert my non-racist beliefs was to say I was “color-blind”—race did not affect my perception at all. As Thomas (1972) asserts, too often, as a culture, white individuals pride themselves on the idea of being “color-blind” (as cited in Mazel, 1998, p. 127). This idea of being “color-blind” really only means that we ignore different cultures and pretend that everyone is the same. He further explains the problem with doing that in our society is that “the same” is characterized by the majority, and consequently white opinions, and it means that we lose the richness that comes from embracing diversity, rather than ignoring it. Illustrating the ridiculousness of color blindness, an awkward scene in *Americanah* has Ifemelu and her friend conversing with a white cashier, trying to figure out which sales clerk helped them. After a series of questions, the cashier says she will figure it out later. As Ifemelu leaves, she asks her friend “Why didn’t she just ask ‘Was it the black girl or the white girl?’” (p. 128). Her friend laughs and replies, “Because this is America. You’re supposed to pretend that you don’t notice certain things” (p. 128). We tend to problematize blackness as being something that should be lessened or ignored. When we ignore a part of a person’s identity, we lose truly learning about that person, and it shows that we still see diversity as being a disadvantage. Mazel (1998) argues that rather than ignoring color and cultural differences in classrooms, we should address them and then begin to point out
our similarities. Therefore, our job as educators is to not ignore, but to teach and to help students understand (Mazel, 1998).

Ironically, as part of teaching students about white privilege, Tatum (2003) argues that we also need to make sure that we educate students about white activists that helped the oppressed minorities overcome difficulties and did not believe in cultural stereotypes. As she further explains, this helps teachers stay away from alienating their white students and instead gives them hope that there is a place for them in the resistance. According to Maslow (1999), once I teach white students to see their bias and prejudice, they can become allies in the fight for racial equality, and help provide the feeling of acceptance that so many minority students need in school. As he further contends, teachers are one giver of this feeling of acceptance, but to students who really are deficient in love or safety, anyone can provide those needs. Gregory (2000) found that “institutions must engage the entire campus community in stimulating and meaningful dialogue to change negative perceptions and attitudes” (p. 43).

White society needs to be made aware of their prejudice to fight against inequality. Kincheloe (2004) agrees that students who are part of the dominant culture do not see the various ways that minority students are oppressed within schools, which is why it is just as important to teach white, privileged students about oppression as it is to help marginalized students see what oppressions they face. This way, both groups can work together to overcome the cultural and social norms that promote this “othering” in school. Furthermore, Sanders (2000) found that even at the college level, all students in the academic community must be engaged to help combat “negative perceptions and attitudes” that surround the perception of minority students (p. 43). Sanders (2000) also
agrees that ignoring racial differences only perpetuates the problem, and makes diverse students feel more isolated in a school where students have already singled them out. For example, Tatum (2003) found that a majority-labeled (white) individual will characterize any positive attributes he ascribes as characteristically belonging to his majority status in a minority-labeled (diverse) individual as anomalies, rather than changing that stereotypical thinking. Without the realization that this thinking is occurring in white individuals, this bias will never change.

Fortunately, Maslow (1999) argues that white students can be a big assistance in helping minority students feel a sense of community. Since many more white students in a primarily white school feel a sense of belonging, and because more of those students have been raised to see personal benefits of the educational system, they will be able to understand the concept of prejudice and its lies more easily than a student that regularly faces it daily (Maslow, 1999). They will be able to see that some people have unconscious prejudices—it is not just that there is good versus bad, but rather, a whole range of thinking and beliefs that are all based around something learned (Maslow, 1999). Adichie (2013) adds that white people in America who understand current racism have powers that black citizens do not—they have the ability to call it out, whereas if black Americans do, they are told they are “playing the race card,” effectively diminishing their argument (p. 362). Thus, in addressing my question How can I use critical literacy to build classroom community among minority adolescents?, I am truly able to reach all learners. Education still has the power to be the great equalizer, once minority students feel as though they are welcome in the culture of school and academic success.
Conclusion

In this literature review, I have explored the state of education in America, the research behind using critical literacy in the classroom, the importance of building a community and its effect on learning, and finally detailed the need to reach minority learners in America. Next, in Chapter Three, I will address the methodology used in creating a critical literacy-based curriculum. Chapter Four will include this curriculum, designed to help answer the question *How can I use critical literacy to build classroom community among minority adolescents?* Finally, in Chapter Five I will reflect upon my learning while researching my capstone topic and creating my curriculum.
CHAPTER THREE

Methods

“A pedagogy that commits to making children receptive and docile is also one that denies human dignity and freedom” John Covaleskie (2003).

In this chapter, I will examine the methodology and rationale behind how I explored the answer to my research question *How can I use critical literacy to build classroom community among minority adolescents?* To best respond to this question, I decided to focus on developing a curriculum based on the critical literacy practices I researched. First, I considered the environment in which I teach, including the students I want to reach and the required texts in my district. I follow with an explanation of the critical literacy strategies on which I base my curriculum. Finally, I give an overview of my methods and materials in the curriculum itself.

**Setting and Participants**

I teach in a fairly large suburban school district outside of the Twin Cities. The city overall has about 86,000 people in it, with two high schools, an alternative learning center, three middle schools, and ten elementary schools. The city’s population includes a breakdown by race of 82.7% Caucasian, 6.6% African American, .3% Native American, 5.1% Asian, and 5% Hispanic. It has been upper middle class, and is moving towards middle class as the population changes. My high school can be broken down by race according to the following percentages: 73% Caucasian, 11% African American, 10%
Asian, 5% Hispanic, and 1% Native American. 21% of our students qualify for free/reduced lunch, and 11% of our school population is considered Special Education.

My School’s Curriculum

My high school’s breakdown by race does not completely reflect the surrounding community, so including a critical literacy curriculum that encourages all voices to be heard is especially apt. In addition, the district’s secondary required texts do not reflect diversity. The least diverse is my eleventh grade required reading list. It is white- and male-dominated, as well as quite restrictive in terms of additional choices. Out of ten eleventh-grade options for texts, nine are written by white authors. Eight are written by men, and two are written by women. As my research has shown, this disparity alienates minority students, who have been shown to need more diverse voices to connect with. In comparison, the ninth grade curriculum I teach has five of its nine units focused on works written by white authors, two being white women. During several other ninth grade units (speech, short stories, and poetry), I am able to use a variety of texts, thus easily bringing additional diverse voices into those units. Therefore, I focused my capstone’s curriculum on attempting to repair the racial disparity at the eleventh grade level by incorporating additional minority writing and voices, and because of its lack of teacher-chosen texts, I will be using one of the required readings as the anchor text during the unit.

The Basis for Curriculum Development

Since much of the research behind using critical literacy mirrors the research in engaging minority adolescent learners, it was fairly easy to come up with many ideas for critical literacy strategies to include. For the purposes of this capstone, and to meet the requirements of my district’s curriculum, I focused on creating a six weeks of lesson
plans that are focused around a mandated anchor text. It must be noted that these plans are written as a general outline of how I plan on including critical literacy during one unit, though these strategies should be adjusted and reworked as needed by the teacher’s continual assessment of the learners in the classroom. The variability is important because of critical literacy’s focus on being receptive and adapting to the needs of its learners. That being said, I found three major components of critical literacy that were continuously repeated in the course of my research: teaching students to understand power structures, including student choice, and incorporating voice. Importantly, each of these pieces has also been shown to help meet the needs of minority learners.

Freire-oriented teaching. As discussed in Chapter Two, one the prominent authors behind critical literacy strategies and classroom community building is Freire. In support of the student choice and including voice aspects of my curriculum, Freire (1993) argues that there are three ways to make sure lessons are in tune with employing critical literacy: make sure student voices are heard and considered, ask students to take an active role, and have students work towards action (Freire, 1993). Freire goes on to state that people must be taught to see the power structures that are present and how to take action. As cited in McLaren and Leonard (1993), Freire argues that there are three stages of developing critical consciousness, which is the highest level of thinking. Most people are at the first level and view their lives in a predetermined fashion. The next level allows some action, but always in an isolated or removed format. Only in the final level do people take responsibility for adjusting the society around them and making critical changes. I want my students to reach the final level: taking charge of their world. Thus, I
need to show them the power structures that exist and give them a voice in solving what problems they see.

**Behrman’s strategies.** To come up with the lesson plan activities that accomplish my three components, I also employed Behrman’s (2006) critical literacy strategies:

- Reading supplementary texts
- Reading multiple texts
- Reading from a resistant perspective
- Producing countertexts
- Conducting student-choice research projects
- Taking social action (p. 492-494).

These strategies are important in helping students gain understanding of power structures because of their focus on additional perspectives outside of the dominant one. I will also use supplemental texts to help show students the power voice can have. We will be able to analyze the way other authors use their voices, and I will ask students to create their own texts, building their personal sense of voice. Students will also have choice in what research they want to complete and what social issues are most important to them.

**Sawch’s research.** Finally, I will be using several of Sawch’s (2011) strategies in developing my curriculum:

- Socratic seminar
- student-generated questions
- nonfiction research about those questions
- writing groups
- having a safe community (p. 81).
Much of the focus of these strategies is the students within it and promoting student choice in research and voice in writing. This list also incorporates the need for students to feel comfortable in their environment, which was conjointly emphasized in my research.

**Constructivism.** My curriculum will be based strongly in constructivist practices because of their focus on allowing students to create their own understanding, thereby increasing their voice and identity within the context of a learning environment. The term *constructivist* comes from the idea that students are able to construct their own understanding of a topic or text, based on their personal experiences in the world. Since constructivism is grounded in using teacher modeling and the gradual release of responsibility onto students, I thought its use was highly appropriate to match with a curriculum based on strengthening student voice and including student choice. Although my research question focused on minority students, I do strongly believe in constructivism’s ability to also help all students in the classroom because of the inherent differentiation and focus on students’ individual interests and understandings.

**Methods and Materials**

For my project, I focused on one of the most powerful, and powerfully misunderstood, required eleventh grade texts. Since its publication, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been controversial. Originally, it was considered inappropriate because of its use of colloquial language and the immorality and blasphemy of its title character. However, in more recent times the novel has come under fire for its repeated use of the word “nigger.” Every year I teach this novel, I focus much of the conversation in my class about race relations in order to help students understand the setting, which
takes place while slavery is legal in the United States. Although the novel is praised by many scholars to be one of the most powerfully abolitionist tales ever created, others see the novel perpetuating as much hatred on the basis of race as it works towards ending because of its white perspective on the subject of slavery. I want to help my students understand the mindset of Samuel Clemens, more famously known by his pseudonym Mark Twain, as he wrote the story, as well as help them gather an understanding of what it was like to live before the Civil War in terms of viewing the subject of slavery. I strongly believe that Twain’s depiction of Huck and Jim’s travels was a powerfully transformative narrative that helped people understand the hypocrisy and cruelty of their slaveholding past, but this message is usually lost on students in the twenty-first century. Offering supplemental readings, closely examining word choice, and allowing for more student voice during this unit should engage more students, thereby increasing learning. Furthermore, since my research shows that curriculum from one perspective is alienating to minority students in the classroom, I will be offering numerous other diverse perspectives in the supplemental readings, both on the issue of race in America today and what it was like when Twain was writing.

As stated, for my curriculum development I incorporated strategies to be used based around understanding power structures, including student choice, and incorporating voice. Much of the research on critical literacy asks students to not only question the world around them but also learn how to create a solution. To most effectively aid their learning, the unit will be focused on the essential questions What is the power of one voice? and Why is Huck Finn controversial?
For the first part of the critical literacy piece of my research, I will be asking students to read critically and examine the power structures that exist in our society. They will use both Twain and supplemental readings to examine what voices are included in the text and whose voices are left out. Students will be asked to research and write as those missing voices, building their understanding of power imbalance while strengthening their writing voices. They will also be introduced to Thinking Maps, as described by Beers, Probst, and Rief (2007), and asked to apply their use in multiple different contexts. They consist of eight different tools for understanding new concepts. They should be taught to students so they can be used independently, which encourages students to take charge of their own understanding. Further information can be found at the Thinking Maps website (http://thinkingmaps.com). In addition, one of the maps also asks students to consider which lens, or viewpoint, they are looking from, which I use to help students view texts from the standpoint of minority voices. Students will be asked to analyze current society in terms of an imbalance of power and come up with solutions to problems they see, make others aware of them, and start the solutions’ implementations. Through these methods, students will be able to begin to see how power is divided according to race and begin to voice their ideas for change.

I will also be focused on helping my students gain voice and including student choice. Students will question what they read and observe, as well as create solutions for problems they identify. To build their voice, students will be given options when choosing projects and presenting their findings. Students will also be asked to examine other writing and speaking voices for inspiration, with a focus on building stories about themselves, showing what power their voices have. My lesson plans culminate in a
shared exchange of stories and a group action project around how to use their voices to promote change. The writing and projects will be based around working with others, therefore using critical literacy strategies to build a sense of classroom community.

Since my question also assesses classroom community, I have created an attitudinal survey to see how students’ feelings of community and sense of voice have changed as the unit progressed. Through the use of the attitudinal survey at the beginning and end of the unit, I will be able to assess whether my students gained any feelings of community and voice while using critical literacy strategies.

Given that my unit is standards-based, I use a holistic rubric for grading throughout the unit, adapted to best suit each assignment. It was originally adapted from my courses at Hamline University, and it focused on four different levels of understanding students show on an assignment, from “Not Yet” to “Strong.” I make sure to show students the rubric while they are working on the project so they are clearly aware of how they are being assessed—it should not be a surprise! Holistic rubrics allow me to prioritize whether students are meeting their learning targets and allows students to see what they still need to work on for success. My transparency in assessment ensures minimal student confusion over the expectations of an assignment, and oftentimes even allows students to guess their grade before they receive it, based on the teacher’s comments and where the assignment’s rating is on the scale of understanding.

In the past years, our district has been moving towards 1:1 technology. This year is the first in which the district has provided each student their own Chromebook, which they are required to bring fully charged to school each day. This internet accessibility has
been taken into account when planning my lessons, and there are days when students are expected to complete research and compile data with their Chromebooks.

**Conclusion**

Though my unit and supplementary materials are based around the teaching of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, I wrote my curricula in a way to be easily adapted to the teaching of any challenging text that teachers feel would benefit from critical literacy practices. I also made sure the outline is adaptable to the needs of the students, so it is not a day-by-day plan, but rather a week-by-week. Based on the ideas of Freire, Behrman, and constructivism, my six weeks of lesson plans focus on teaching students to understand power structures, include student choice, and incorporate voice. My curriculum will help address my research question *How can I use critical literacy to build classroom community among minority adolescents?* In Chapter Four, I will outline the curriculum I actually created, and Chapter Five will contain reflections on my curriculum design process.
CHAPTER FOUR

Results

In Chapter One, I included my background on the topic of racial identity in schools and saw how it could affect students in the classroom. Chapter Two detailed the research on this topic, including how feelings of community and use of critical literacy strategies have been shown to improve learning in school specifically for minority students. Chapter Three included the rationale behind the curriculum I created, all focused on answering my research question How can I use critical literacy to build classroom community among minority adolescents? Following is my entire six-week curriculum designed to bring in additional voices, being taught alongside the anchor text The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.

Curriculum Development

After considering the students I teach and which parts of my district’s curriculum would benefit from a critical literacy focus, I focused around the text The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain. My curriculum’s foundation is built on three major practices that were repeated throughout my research: teaching students to understand power structures, including student choice, and incorporating voice. I also use primarily constructivist practices as I implement the various strategies in this unit.

After considering how I want to assess students at the end of the unit, as well as how I want to direct their focus and energies as they are learning, I developed the essential questions What is the power of one voice? and Why is Huck Finn controversial?
to help maintain their focus on the ultimate goals of this unit. I will be asking students to periodically reflect on these questions throughout the unit, both as individuals and as part of a group. These questions will help students critically examine our reading and encourage them to develop their voices to create change.

Each week includes a framework of lessons and text choices, as well as options for how to adapt the lessons. It is important to have flexibility in the implementation of a critical literacy-based unit because of its focus on the needs of the learner. I also wanted to show how easily my lessons could be adapted to different contexts and texts, since there are not many critical literacy-based lesson plans I have found throughout my research. I would like to add to the sparse resources because of the power I discovered in using critical literacy practices in the classroom.

There is also a strong focus on student choice throughout my unit to engage students and enable them to work on a more personal level with their chosen focus. Each week will be focused on reading different texts to supplement *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and give more diverse viewpoints a voice. Traditionally, there tends to be a lot of “teaching the text” that usually corresponds with the inclusion of any text, and I try to avoid that by focusing on the text’s intended themes, close reading strategies to look at word choice and outside references, and student questions and reactions.

Since the curriculum at my school is very white-dominated, and there are not many options for other choices, the curriculum I created is based around a required anchor text. To that end, students will have reading assignments assigned as homework on a weekly basis. Teachers may choose to divide up these readings into nightly assignments, if they feel it would work better with their learners. However, I prefer to
give students more leeway in when they complete their reading assignments to accommodate their lives outside of school. That being said, I will incorporate weekly quizzes on the text to keep students accountable and so they do not let themselves fall too far behind.

For the group presentations, I asked students to grade themselves and I asked what they contributed to the project. I added these components to give students the responsibility of voicing their contribution to the project as well as have a say in their final grade. I also use a holistic rubric so students can easily see where they need to make improvements.

Week One Lesson Plans

**Topic:** Slavery in America

**Learning Targets:**

- View life from a slave’s perspective.
- Write about power differences between black and white Americans during slavery times.
- Read and note language in narrative writing.
- Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.
- Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth century foundational works of American literature, including American Indian and other diverse cultures’ texts and how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.
Materials:

- Student Attitudinal Survey (Appendix A)
- Presentation: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* Introduction (Appendix B)
- *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
- Copies of the homework outline (Appendix C)
- Copies of KWHL Chart (Appendix D)
- Copies of Text #1 (Appendix E)
- Copies of Text #2 (Appendix F)
- Index cards
- Copies of Week 1 Reading Assessment (Appendix G)

Supplementary Texts:

- *60 Minutes* clip: “Huckleberry Finn and the N-Word”
- Text #1: Except from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
- Text #2: Excerpt from *Twelve Years a Slave*

Lessons/Activities:

There are six different activities that I have allocated for Week One. Teachers should feel free to adjust lessons as they fit with their own students, curriculum, and school day. Some activities will only take a few minutes (the attitudinal survey), while others could take more than one class period, depending on how much time students need.

Activity #1:
Disperse and collect Student Attitudinal Survey (Appendix A). This will be used as the baseline for student feelings of voice and community. Emphasize that there are no right answers—I am trying to get a sense of where the class is at the beginning of the unit. At the end of the day, I will read through these and note which classes seem to need additional community-building activities or more help developing a strong voice.

Activity #2:
Pre-reading: Discussing the “n-word” in America’s current and past culture.

- To begin, ask students to freewrite for a few minutes about the “n-word” and what it means to them. Freewriting is when students are given time to write, sometimes around a specific focus, but the goal is to not stop writing. This allows a free flow of ideas without stopping for judgment.

- As a class, get a few opinions about what students think about the word. Usually responses will range from it “isn’t a big deal” to “it should be banned.”

- Students will then get a chance to explore the interactive website by The Washington Post about the “N-word.” On the website, they are asked to choose three opinion statements about the “n-word” and are then shown a brief video corresponding with their viewpoints. While students are viewing, they should note new statements they both agree and disagree with.
• In partners, have students discuss what their videos revealed. Then, give students a couple minutes to freewrite about the “n-word,” this time taking into account what they just viewed and discussed. How did the perspectives in the video affect their viewpoints?
• As a class, we will watch the 60 Minutes clip “Huckleberry Finn and the N-Word.” Students are expected to note new ideas on the topic while they are viewing.
• For the final freewrite, ask students to consider how the “n-word” has changed throughout America’s history, as well as what its place is in society today.
• As a class, have a second discussion, this time taking into account The Washington Post video and the 60 Minutes clip.
• As an exit slip, ask students to summarize their opinion of the “n-word” in one sentence, to be handed in as they leave. This will be the quickest way to gauge the feelings of each student as they are dealing with this highly controversial word. If needed, revisit this discussion throughout the unit, having students discuss how they feel about its use in certain contexts of the novel.

Activity #3:
Introduce the text The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and the two essential questions for the unit.
• Go through the presentation as an introduction (Appendix B).
Students are asked to freewrite about the essential questions:

*What is the power of one voice?* and *Why is Huck Finn so controversial?*

- Hand out the novel and ask students to flip through it, looking at the different chapter titles and the review on the back. Have several students make predictions about the text’s content.
- Hand out homework outline to students (Appendix C). This will allow them to easily keep track of the weekly assignments and what they should focus on while reading the anchor text.

Activity #4:

Implement the KWHL Chart.

- Hand out the KWHL Chart (Appendix D). As a class, ask students what they already know about race relations in America during the 1800s. They should fill in the “K” section with information they are already aware of. Make sure to model filling in the chart with basic information most of the class will know (i.e. *Slavery was legal in the United States. African Americans were bought and sold as property.*).
- Encourage students to come up with two to three “W” questions—what do they want to know about race relations in the 1800s? Model one to two questions to the class for students who are struggling (i.e. *Were there differences in race relations in different states?* or *How differently were slaves treated in the north versus*...)
the south?). This will help students begin to think about what their curiosities are. Teachers should feel free to model additional questions for students who are struggling. The concept of curiosity being encouraged in the classroom may trip up students at this stage—they may require additional modeling for success.

- Explain to students that this chart will be used throughout the unit, and they will base their final research project on the questions they create and desire to answer. The more thorough and complete they are in their thinking now, the easier the final project will be to complete.

**Activity #5:**

Note powerful language and examine power differences in slave vs. owner relationships.

- Hand out Douglass’ *A Narrative* to half the class (Appendix E) and Northup’s *Twelve Years* to the other half (Appendix F). For these first texts, I chose similar perspectives. The first text is from the perspective of a slave who was born into slavery, while the other is from a free man kidnapped and sold into slavery.

- Before students begin reading, explain that they will be annotating their texts as they read. It would be useful to review basic annotation—writing comments and questions, underlining what stands out, circling words or phrases they don’t understand, and, in this instance, placing a star by writing that seems powerful. This
encourages thinking while reading and will help facilitate their conversations later. Explain that students should consider what they agree with, what does not make sense to them, and what stands out in the text.

- Students will be given time to silently read their assigned text. Once again, they should be noting their thinking on the text while reading. I recommend requiring a minimum number so students can practice their use.

- Have students turn to a partner and discuss what their annotations were. After one to two minutes, ask students to share what they or their partner noted.

- Once students are done, hand out one index card to each student. Students should each write down one phrase or paragraph of powerful writing found in the text.

- Give students five minutes to walk around and share their powerful examples of writing. After students share the quotes, they should also explain why they chose those passages.

- When enough time for students to meet with several other people has passed, have students take a seat and ask the class for examples of strong language they found.

- Engage the class in a discussion about why there were certain passages that many students found. What about those passages resonates with readers?
• Have students partner with an opposite-text classmate. Partners should discuss the language similarities and differences between the two authors.
  
  o During discussion, have students focus on the language used and power differences present. Since both my texts are from the perspective of slaves, I want students to see what words are common as well as different from each text. Students should note how language and relationships are affected by situations of power.

• After discussion, students should describe what race relations were like in the 1800s, taking both perspectives into consideration. How did slavery change people (both slaves and slave owners)? Have them reference the texts as they are writing their responses. Discuss these responses as a class to gauge student understanding.

• Finally, have students add new learnings on their KWHL charts to their “K” section and another one to two questions to the “W” section.

**Activity #6:**

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* Week 1 Reading assessment: Huck’s voice.

• This activity should take place at the end of the week, or after the first reading assignment is due. Its purposes are to have students practice close reading individually and assess their understanding
of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* at this point in time in the unit. I want my students to be able to analyze texts at a close level, and having both passages from the text and open-ended questions help me see where each student’s thinking is and what it is based on. I am also combining open-ended questions with text passages to elevate the usual plot-based quizzes to a critical-thinking-based system. This will allow me to see which students need further assistance, both in reading and in analyzing.

- Hand out the Week 1 reading assessment (Appendix G), which includes passages that students are expected to put into context and an open-ended “mini-essay.” For this week, I focused specifically on the character of Huck and his voice.

- Once everyone is finished, be sure to discuss responses to the mini-essay to bring all students to the same page.

**Homework:**

- Read chapters 1-8 of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

- Focus on the character Huck Finn. What is he like? Do you agree with his opinions? Why or why not? What are the benefits and drawbacks of having such a young narrator tell this story?

**Adaptations:**

An additional text that would be beneficial throughout this unit is *To Be Free: Understanding and Eliminating Racism*. Its focus is on ending racism through discussion, using past and current events to show America’s prejudice towards minorities. Also,
teachers may like to have students act out some of the power relationships between slave owner and slave in class. Students can be given various characters and scenarios to reenact (a slave being sold at a market, etc.). I have them write as opposed to act, but there are benefits to having students get up and move around while learning. Finally, I would encourage teachers to revisit the “n-word” discussion throughout the unit as students grapple with the text and the word’s abundance.

Week one rationale. The first week is focused on setting up students for success in the rest of the unit. I introduce the KWHL chart, the essential question, and the first texts. Since there is so much new information, I allow students to work with the material and come up with their own explanations whenever possible. I also have a lot of group and partner work as students learn and struggle with these new ideas so they can help each other understand the concepts being taught. My first week’s text focus is on analyzing the power structures present when America allowed slavery, which is also the setting of the anchor text *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. I wanted to start with early race relations in America. This way, it will be easier for students to grasp how they have changed over time. I want students to use the KWHL chart throughout the unit, so they can begin to note their curiosities about the topic of race relations in America. Though it starts with a historic view, students will be able to add to the KWHL chart over the course of the coming weeks as they learn new information and come up with further questions they want answered. I also created two essential questions for this unit, which are intended to create an overall arch in the content and focus of my lessons. *What is the power of one voice?* is focused on the messages the anchor and supplementary texts include, while *Why is Huck Finn so controversial?* pulls the anchor text into the context
of race relations over the past several hundred years, allowing students to fully understand the past and current controversy.

**Week Two Lesson Plans**

**Topic:** The Civil War

**Learning Targets:**

- Read and analyze multiple perspectives.
- Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth century foundational works of American literature, including American Indian and other diverse cultures’ texts and how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.
- Write about power differences between black and white Americans in the 1800s.
- Read and note language in primary source narratives.
- Learn and demonstrate understanding of satire.

**Materials:**

- *Henry's Freedom Box* (picture book)
- Presentation: Thinking Maps (Appendix H)
- Poster Paper
- Markers
- Copies of Thinking Maps assessment (Appendix I)
- *Just Me and My Mom* (picture book)
- Copies of Adichie questions (Appendix J)
- Copies of Text #3 (Appendix K)
• Copies of Text #4 (Appendix L)
• Copies of Text #5 (Appendix M)
• Satire Group Assessment (Appendix N)
• Copies of Week 2 Reading Assessment (Appendix O)

Supplementary Texts:

• Henry’s Freedom Box
• “The Danger of a Single Story” by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (video)
• Text #3: Background on the Civil War from The Red Badge of Courage notes
• Text #4: excerpts from Sarah Morgan Dawson’s A Confederate Girl’s Diary
• Text #5: excerpts from A Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane

Lessons/Activities:

This week there are five different activities. Students are introduced to the Thinking Maps, which will help them organize information, the personal narrative assignment, satire, and different perspectives on the Civil War. I continue to scaffold for students as they get used to annotating and practicing close reading strategies. I do not want them to get frustrated, making modeling key in these early weeks. All activities may be adjusted as needed by the individual teacher and student needs.

Activity #1:

Introduce Thinking Maps.
• Read *Henry’s Freedom Box* to the class. I chose this text because it involves another narrative of experiences with slavery. Students will be able to use each of the different Thinking Maps to discuss this story, and since the format of picture books makes them more accessible, it will be easier for students to be able to understand the Thinking Maps, which is the focus, as opposed to having to figure out what the text is about.

• Go through Thinking Maps notes (Appendix H), giving examples throughout. Encourage students to come up with their own examples for their notes and ask students to share them. Explain that students will be using the picture book to create examples for the class to see as they learn to use Thinking Maps.

• Divide students into groups. Each group is in charge of creating one poster-sized Thinking Map that will be presented to class as an example for how to use that type and in what context it is most effective.

• Have students present posters to the class. Having students come up with their own examples will most easily help them remember how and when to use each type of Thinking Map. I will also make sure to hang these in the classroom so students may continue to refer to them.

• Assess student presentations (Appendix I).

**Activity #2:**
Understanding the limitations of one perspective; preview personal narrative assignment.

• Explain to students that the purpose of today’s lesson is to look at different perspectives. Read the picture book *Just Me and My Mom* aloud to the class. I chose this book because the story is simple—a mischievous anthropomorphic critter visits the big city with his mother—and it clearly only offers the child’s perspective, which is often told in a way that directly contrasts the adult experiences of the events in the story.

• After a couple pages, ask students from which perspective the story is told. As more events occur and additional characters are introduced, begin to ask which sides of the story are missing.

• When finished, let students each choose one character (i.e. the mom, the train conductor, the museum guard, etc.) and give them a couple minutes to freewrite from that character’s perspective. Discuss the myriad of different perspectives students (through their characters) bring to this one-sided story.

• At the end of the discussion, explain that one of the purposes of this unit is to help students understand that there are always at least two sides to every story, but oftentimes one or more voices are silenced when the story is told. As an example, we will be looking at one writer who talks about how she was affected by everyone assuming certain facts about her and her culture.
• Show “The Danger of a Single Story.” As they are viewing, ask students to note what she says that stands out to them.

• After watching, have students spend a few minutes freewriting about what stories they have to tell. They will revisit this freewriting in Week 4, so make sure all students have at least a couple ideas.

• Next, discuss the questions as a class (Appendix J).

• Ask students to help make a list on the board of all the books they have read in high school. They should note what race the major characters were and the race of the author. What “single stories” have they been exposed to? What other perspectives might there be?

• Allow students to pair up and choose a text they already read. They should work together to come up with a few perspectives that were missing from the story. Have them consider why those viewpoints were left out and what additional information they could bring. Have groups share these ideas with the class.

Activity #3:
Understanding different perspectives of the Civil War.

• For this week, Text #3 is about the Civil War in general (Appendix K), Text #4 if from the perspective of a Southern girl (Appendix L), and Text #5 is from the perspective of a Union soldier (Appendix M).
• To begin, ask students what they know about the Civil War. Get a few student ideas on the board, even if they are not completely accurate (i.e. *It was all about slavery* is a common idea).

• As a class, read Text #3 (Appendix K). Students should annotate as they go, noting what is surprising or goes against their previous knowledge.

• After reading, go back to the board and note what information was correct and what needs to be amended. Students should add this information to their KWHL chart under “K.” This scaffolding allows students to pull the main ideas out of a text along with the rest of the class before they are expected to do it on their own. This activity also allows students to see that their original understanding may change as they learn more information about a topic—it is okay to be wrong when brainstorming.

• Next, split the class into two groups. Half will be reading Text #4 (Appendix L), while the other half reads Text #5 (Appendix M). Students should be given time to silently read their assigned text. As they are reading, they should note what questions they have, what stands out to them, and what the writer’s mindset is like. Students should also take special note of the language the author uses.

• Once students have had time to read, have them partner with someone who has the same text. They should answer the following
questions. As partners are discussing, the teacher should walk around the room to correct any misunderstandings, point groups in the right direction, and make sure they are showing their thinking.

- **What does your narrator think about the Civil War?**
- **What parts of the text help you answer that question?** (This encourages students to go back to the writing and find specific examples, as opposed to just general statements.)

- After partners have had a few minutes to work, tell students they must find another pair of students who have the opposite text. Their assignment is to use a one of the Thinking Maps (the Tree Map, Brace Map, or the Double Bubble would work well) to track their learning about the Civil War. Students should begin their conversation by reading their question responses to their new group members, talking about the similarities and differences they see. Once again, teachers should observe group work to make sure students understand their focuses.

- After discussing, have groups answer the following questions, revisiting our essential questions. They need to use the texts as evidence in their arguments:

  - **What is the power of one voice?**
  - **How does that voice shape the Civil War?**
  - **Whose voices do we not hear?**
• Encourage students to add questions to the “W” part of their KWHL.

Activity #4:

Learning about satire. It is important for students to understand satire to appreciate some of Twain’s themes in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

• Go through the definition of satire and a couple examples with students. One example can be found at the beginning of the novel in the author’s note. I make sure to emphasize the following three rules when analyzing satire:
  o It needs to contain a moral lesson.
  o It needs to use humor.
  o It is about a shared standard of human behavior.

• Allow students to create their own groups of three to four.

Allowing students to create their own groups at this point gives them additional choice in this lesson, allowing more freedom and less nervousness about risk-taking, which is necessary when coming up with something silly, like a satirical example.

• As a group, students are asked to come up with one example of satire to present to the class. They should also address each of the above three statements in their presentation.

• During student work time, I need to be available to clear up any misconceptions about satirical examples.
• Have students present satirical examples, explaining how each is an example of satire.

• Assess (Appendix N). I also have students hand in a piece of paper documenting their contributions to the project.

Activity #5:

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* assessment: Jim’s voice.

• Distribute a copy of the Week 2 assessment to each student (Appendix O). This week focuses on Jim’s character.

• Once everyone is finished, be sure to discuss responses to the mini-essay to make sure all students are on the same page.

Homework:

• Read chapters 9-15 Of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

• Focus on the character of Jim. What do we learn about him? How would he tell the story differently than Huck?

• Look for examples of satire in Twain’s writing.

Adaptations:

An optional article titled “How Walter Scott Started the American Civil War” would show the background on some of Twain’s satire. During the Thinking Maps activity, teachers should choose an example text that also highlights a theme they are focused on. I chose *Henry’s Picture Box* because it is a true story of a slave’s experience and escape from slavery. Teachers should make sure that they text is easily understood so students can focus on learning the Thinking Map concepts. In addition, teachers should make sure their text options highlight the themes they most want their students to learn.
about. Teachers should also adjust the group activity to pertain to a concept that most fits with their anchor text. I chose satire because of its importance in understanding the purpose behind Twain’s writing.

**Week two rationale.** This week, I introduce the use of Thinking Maps and expand the KWHL charts. I also move the focus from being on slavery to the Civil War itself, which many people think was only about the issue of slavery; however, the perspectives that I ask students to read do not even mention slavery, showing how complex the issue was. I pull in the concept of satire because of its importance in understanding much of Mark Twain’s writing, including the anchor text *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. I also continue to allow students to work in groups since my research showed the beneficial effects a strong community could have on learning.

**Week Three Lesson Plans**

**Topic:** Post Civil War/Jim Crow Era

**Learning Targets:**

- Understand race relations in America after the Emancipation Proclamation.
- Research and examine Jim Crow laws and their impact on American society.
- Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including American Indian and other diverse cultures’ texts and how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.
- Create a counternarrative text.
• Read and note language in historic speeches.
• Understand group roles and dynamics.

Materials:
• Presentation: Group Communication notes (Appendix P)
• Copies of Text #6 (Appendix Q)
• Audio of “I Have a Dream”
• Copies of Text #7 (Appendix R)
• Text #8: Image of Jim Crow (Appendix S)
• Copies of Text #9 (Appendix T)
• Audio recording of “Jump Jim Crow” music
• Counternarrative rubric (Appendix U)
• Week 3 Reading Assessment (Appendix V)

Supplementary Texts:
• Text #6: Martin Luther King Jr’s “I Have a Dream” speech
• Text #7: Excerpt from Malcolm X’s “The Ballot or the Bullet”
• Text #8: Image of Jim Crow
• Text #9: “Jump Jim Crow” lyrics

Lessons/Activities:

There are five activities designed for Week 3, which introduces students to the structure of successful groups, continues strong examples of language, and asks students to write from a new perspective. There is also an increased focus throughout the week on supporting arguments with textual evidence as I move towards the gradual release of responsibility onto students.
Activity #1:
Learn to work as a group.

- Begin by having students freewrite about their experiences working as part of a group. They should feel free to write about both positive and negative experiences.
- Model using the Double Bubble Thinking Map on the board to review the positives and negatives that come from working in a group. Ask for student input.
- Explain how the final project may be completed in a group setting, so it becomes important that students know how to work in groups well.
- Review Group Communication Notes as a class (Appendix P).
- Assign student writing groups. These can be based on student choice or assigned by the teacher, but it is important that students feel comfortable with everyone in their group because they will be periodically sharing their writing with one another. Their first task is to come up with group norms. These should be listed and agreed upon by each member, including what happens when there are infractions. Students can use the Double Bubble Thinking Map to help.
- These groups will meet periodically until the end of this unit.

Activity #2:
Read and analyze word choice in famous speeches.
• Ask students to tell you about their knowledge of Martin Luther King Jr. and why he was so famous during the Civil Rights Movement.

• Play the speech “I Have a Dream” for students to hear. Ask them to pay particular attention to the words and phrases he chooses. Students should note words and phrases that stand out to them.

• Afterword, brainstorm a list of King’s noteworthy words and phrases. Explain to students that King was calling the nation to action, and his words reflect that charge. They will be reading the speech and continuing to note King’s word choices and references.

• Hand out copies of Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech (Appendix Q). Model annotating for the first several paragraphs. Then, give students time to silently finish reading and annotating the speech individually.

• As a class, go through and note the words and phrases that stand out. At the end, have students complete a freewrite explaining what King’s message to the audience is using at least three of these phrases.

• Discuss the student-found messages, making sure that each student uses evidence to support her theme. Model how I could find and argue a theme with several examples as well.

• Next, students will read excerpts of Malcolm X’s “The Ballot or the Bullet” and analyze in partners.
• Hand out the speech (Appendix R) and give students time to silently read and annotate, then time with their partners to argue Malcolm X’s message in his speech.

• Have students compare and contrast Malcolm X’s and King’s messages and word choices using a Double Bubble Thinking Map.

• Next, students should share their messages and comparisons with the class, once again focusing on supporting evidence with the text. This will allow the teacher to informally check student understanding.

• Finally, have students respond to essential question What is the power of once voice? again, this time using both speeches as evidence. They should close by adding their knowledge and any questions to their KWHL charts.

Activity #3:
Examine race relations in America after the Civil War.

• Show students the image of Jim Crow (Appendix S). Ask students to reflect on what they notice. What is its message?

• Follow by having them go beyond the text—what race was the illustrator? How would readers of different races have viewed the image? What does it say about white versus black societal power?

• Explain that the focus today is to look at America’s treatment of black Americans after the Civil War. Students will look at newspaper articles, music, and images to ascertain what it was like
to live as an African American after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed.

• Hand out the lyrics to “Jump Jim Crow” (Appendix T) and explain the context of the song. Tell students they will be reading and then completing Circle Maps from a black versus a white audience of the 1800s.

• Give students time to individually read and annotate the song. Play the violin audio in the background while they work.

• As a class, create the Circle Maps. Start with the African American lens and follow with the white lens, since it will be easier for students to note past racism from a black perspective.

• Next, ask students to compare the different viewings. What does it say about each race’s relationship with power in the 1800s?

• Explain that students will find out more about minstrel shows, Jim Crow laws, and early cartoons, all of which affected the power differences between black and white Americans after the Civil War.

• Have students use their computers to research and answer the following:
  o What are Jim Crow laws?
  o Where did the term “Jim Crow” come from?
  o List at least five ways Jim Crow laws affected African Americans.
- What are minstrel shows?
- How do they depict African Americans?
- How did early American cartoons depict non-white people?
- Using evidence from any two sources (including the Jim Crow image, “Jump Jim Crow” song lyrics, Jim Crow laws, cartoons, and minstrel shows), explain how past American society devalued African Americans.

• As a class, discuss society’s negative depiction of African Americans after the Civil War, and how it affected issues of power. Why wouldn’t African Americans have been able to gain power, even though they were no longer slaves?

• Give students time to add to their KWHL charts.

**Activity #4:**

Create a counternarrative.

- Now that students have and the opportunity to read from several different perspectives over the past two weeks, students will be creating their own perspective on a situation. Students have spent the last two weeks meeting and then getting to know Jim. They are going to choose one situation Jim has been involved in and create a narrative from his perspective.

- Explain to students the concept of a counternarrative. Behrman (2006) describes it as “a student-created text that presents a topic from a nonmainstream perspective” (p. 494). For example, both
Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. were writing from nonmainstream perspectives in America—that’s why so many people reacted so strongly to what they said. Reveal that students will be creating their own counternarratives for *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*

- Hand out rubric (Appendix U) and explain that students will create a counternarrative told from the perspective of Jim about what has happened to him in the story so far.

- Allow students time in class to craft their narrative. Refer students to previous text examples to add to their writing voice.

- Have students read their stories aloud to their writing groups when it is due.

- Assess (Appendix U).

**Activity #5:**

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* Week 3 assessment:

counternarratives

- Distribute a copy of the Week 3 assessment (Appendix V) to each student. This week focuses on counternarratives.

- Once everyone is finished, be sure to discuss responses to the mini-essay to make sure all students understand.

**Homework:**

- Read chapters 16-22 Of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*
• What themes are you seeing start to develop in the text? When and how do you see these themes?

**Adaptations:**

Teachers may choose to add the video “The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross Episode 4.” This details the treatment of black Americans from 1897 to 1940, and is about an hour long. An additional text would be exposing students to *The Birth of a Nation*, which was an extremely controversial film from 1915 negatively depicting black Americans, and asking them to respond with their reactions. Finally, *Glory* is a movie that addresses racism directed towards America’s first all-black volunteer soldiers during the Civil War. Since the movie is rated R, parental permission would be needed before showing to secondary students, but students could use the movie as a comparison to discuss the implications of racism on soldiers, from both the Confederate and Union side of the war.

**Week three rationale.** This week has several different focuses. The first is to teach students how to work in a group. I often find that student groups are very dysfunctional, no matter how carefully I plan the group members out, and that one student (maybe two) usually does the majority of work. I want to teach students the benefits that come from being a part of a successful group, as well as give group members control over their group norms, which should empower the hardworking students to hold all group members accountable. I feel it is important to help students achieve as much success as possible while working with their peers, since feeling a sense of community is imperative to student success. I provide students with true group roles as well as sound assessment by basing it on individual grades to help take the pressure off of some students and
increase the contributions of others, making each student feel success and usefulness in the group’s designated project. Also, since one of the final projects is a group project, I want to ensure as much group success as possible, and I can only do this by modeling what a strong group looks like and letting students practice working together.

Week Three also gets further into the close reading learning targets by showing students more supplementary texts that bring in diverse voices, adding to their understanding of America’s past race relations. Students will be able to see how power structures changed after the Emancipation Proclamation and what new struggles faced black Americans. Students take these ideas one step further by creating their own counternarratives.

Week Four Lesson Plans

**Topic:** The Civil Rights Movement

**Learning Targets:**

- Examine voice and evidence in speeches from the Civil Rights Movement.
- Create a text written from a resistant perspective.
- Examine the impact of word choice.
- Argue a text’s theme, supported with apt evidence.

**Materials:**

- Copies of Personal Narrative Assignment Sheet (Appendix W)
- Copies of the Holistic Writing Rubric (Appendix X)
- Copies of Hansberry Focus Questions (Appendix Y)
- Copies of Wilkins speech questions (Appendix Z)
- Copies of Chisholm speech questions (Appendix AA)
• Copies of Week 4 Reading Assessment (Appendix BB)

Supplementary Texts:

• Text #10: “3 Ways to Speak English”

• Text #11: Lorraine Hansberry’s “The Black Revolution and the White Backlash”

• Text #12: Roy Wilkins’ speech to the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders

• Text #13: Shirley Chisholm’s speech at Howard University

Lessons/Activities:

This week formally introduces the personal narrative assignment, which students have been freewriting about since the first week. There should be plenty of time given to allow students to begin work on their personal narratives during this and next week’s downtime. Students will also want time to reread some of the texts assigned, as they are all based around using voice.

Activity #1:

Assign student narrative.

• Begin by having small groups brainstorm what Huck has learned throughout the story and what has helped him come to that understanding. An example might be Huck learning that he does not personally believe in slavery—this is based on his friendship with Jim and his willingness to go to Hell rather than turn him in.
• Hand out the Personal Narrative Assignment Sheet (Appendix W). Explain that students will be creating their own personal narrative about a story they can tell, or a unique perspective they bring.

• Have students find their previous examples of freewriting and discuss with partners their ideas. Give students at least five minutes to freewrite about times in their lives when they made a big decision, something unexpected happened, or they faced a life lesson. What did they learn, and how did it affect them?

• I like to share a personal narrative about myself at this point, so students have a model. This also furthers a positive student-teacher relationship, since I am sharing part of who I am before I ask my students to do the same.

• Give students time in class to work on the narrative, inviting them to reread any earlier texts to come up with ideas.

• Allow students to meet in their writing groups at least once during the writing process to share their narrative progress, and once more right before it is due to share their final results.

**Activity #2:**

Finding voice; looking at language.

• Watch “3 Ways to Speak English.” Ask students to focus on what the speaker’s message is.

• Discuss the speech and speaker’s message. Ask students how she used language to enhance her theme.
• Explain that students today will be brainstorming what their message is to the world. They need a sheet of paper and a writing utensil.

• Have students respond to the following prompts by freewriting. Be sure to give several minutes per prompt to allow students sufficient time to respond.
  o What is part of your identity?
  o What do others think is part of your identity? Are they right or wrong?
  o What makes you different from your peers? This could focus on your gender, race, religion, or class, but does not have to.
  o When did you first notice your difference? How did others treat you?
  o If you could teach the world anything, based on your experiences, what would it be?

• Hand out Holistic Writing Rubric (Appendix X). Students will use these answers as they begin to figure out what their Student Narrative will be about.

**Activity #3:**

Read and analyze speeches about the Civil Rights Movement; use evidence to support an opinion.
• To begin, have students freewrite what they know about the Civil Rights Movement. Discuss their ideas as a class to help all students access their previous knowledge of the Civil Rights Movement. Have students add what they know to their KWHL chart.

• Explain that students will be reading voices that will offer different perspectives of the Civil Rights Movement. Their tasks are to learn more about these opinions and analyze the evidence supporting them.

• Hand out copies of Hansberry’s speech to each student. Give some of the context of the speech—this was designed to be an open dialogue between black activists and white liberals, but many white listeners reacted negatively. Explain that students will be reading, researching, and then listening to Hansberry’s speech to find her message to the audience and whether it was appropriate.

• First, students should read the text silently, annotating as they read. They should focus on making a notation whenever Hansberry references an outside event.

• Next, ask students what references the text makes that they do not understand, making a list of their questions on the board. Teachers may also choose to supplement with the included questions (Appendix Y).

• Have students get into groups (the number of questions will affect group size, but groups of two to three is preferable). Assign each
group one question, their job being to further their understanding of the speaker’s message and its relevance to the Civil Rights Movement. They will be expected to share their answers with the class, including where they found the information.

- Give students time to research their question and come up with a presentable and supportable answer. Assist group members who need help.

- Go through the speech, and as each outside reference occurs, have the respective group explain the event or person, also listing their outside source. This encourages students to pay attention to where their information is coming from. The class should add these annotations to their copies of the speech.

- Next, play the speech for the class. This time, ask students to pay attention to the message she intends and the language she uses, most notably what she means by discussing liberals versus radicals.

- After listening, ask students to individually respond to the following questions. Encourage students to go back to the text to formulate their responses. Their goal is to come up with at least two quotes to support their argument.
  
  o What was Hansberry’s message to her audience?
  
  o How does she achieve this message?
Knowing what you do, do you agree with her message?

Why or why not?

• Discuss students’ responses as a class, ensuring that students prove their thinking with evidence.

• Next, allow students to form groups of four. Their task is to read either Shirley Chisholm’s or Roy Wilkins’ speech and answer the focus questions (Appendix Z and Appendix AA), research the speech’s references, and come up with the speaker’s message.

Hand out two copies of each speech to each group. This allows for choice in both group members and which text they read.

• Explain that students will be expected to come up with their own questions to supplement their understanding of the speech, as well as the message intended by the speaker. They should annotate their speech and conduct research, just like we did as a class.

• Allow students time to silently read, then discuss together and conduct necessary research. They also need to answer the following questions, slightly adapted from above:

  o What was the speaker’s message to the audience?
  o How does the speaker achieve this message?
  o Knowing what you do, do you agree with the message?

  Why or why not?
• In a Double Bubble Thinking Map, students should work as a group to find similarities and differences between the two speeches.

• As a class, discuss what this adds to our knowledge of the Civil Rights Movement. Encourage students to add one to two questions to their KWHL charts.

Activity #4:

Reading from a resistant perspective.

• Define “resistant perspectives” to students. As an example, explain that *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is written from a white, male perspective, and others writing the story might focus on different aspects of it. The different lenses might be “based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, language, sexuality, and religion,” and they help students see the “different layers of meaning” that different readers would bring to a text (Behrman, 2006, p. 493).

• Give an example of a resistant perspective. For example, a girl (especially one who plays softball) might find the following portion of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* rather insulting:

  o “And when you throw at a rat or anything, hitch yourself up on tiptoe and fetch your hand up over your head as awkward as you can, and miss your rat about six or seven foot. Throw stiff-armed from the shoulder, like there was a pivot there for it to turn on, like a girl; not from the wrist
and elbow, with your arm out to one side, like a boy” (63-64).

- With a partner, find a chapter of Huckleberry Finn that has already been assigned, reread it from a resistant perspective, and each create a Circle Map to document your and your partner’s thinking.

**Activity #5:**

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* Week 4 reading assessment: resistant perspective.

- Hand out the Week 4 assessment (Appendix BB). This week focuses on having students read from a resistant perspective and giving that perspective a voice.
- Discuss responses when all students have finished.

**Homework:**

- Read chapters 23-29 Of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. 
- Try reading the text from a resistant perspective (based on class, gender, race, etc.).

**Adaptations:**

A beneficial addition to the text analysis in Activity #3 would be to add nonfiction pictures and other primary source documents. Students could view these documents from several different perspectives, adding to their understanding of reading from a resistant perspective. This also encourages the notion that text is anything—not just writing, but pictures and videos as well. Adding in time for students to work on their personal narratives would also be beneficial.
**Week four rationale.** Week 4 introduces the idea of reading from a resistant perspective, allowing students to see what it is like to be in the mindset of one with less power. Students also have further opportunities of text choice this week, and are given more responsibility in understanding its message and supporting their opinions. Now that we are over halfway through the unit, I am able to step back some of my scaffolding and let students show what they know. I do continue to use and scaffold the use of Thinking Maps to help students practice organizing information, and the weeks that follow will step back on assigning certain maps—students will be able to choose the one most apt for their needs.

**Week Five Lesson Plans**

**Topic:** Modern Race Relations

**Learning Targets:**

- Examine one issue from multiple perspectives.
- Understand and use a critical lens to view an issue.
- Use multiple sources to prove an argument.

**Materials:**

- Copies of action research assignment sheet (Appendix CC)
- Copies of action research rubric (Appendix DD)
- Copies of Text #14
- Copies of Text #15
- Copies of Text #17 (Appendix EE)
- Six-Word Memoirs Assignment (Appendix FF)
- Sheets of blank paper
• Poster paper
• Markers
• Week 5 Reading Assessment (Appendix GG)

Supplementary Texts:

• “Six Tips for Writing Six-Word Memoirs”
• Text #14: Barack Obama’s “A More Perfect Union”
• Text #15: Maxine Waters’ “Youth and the Political Process”
• Text #16: #Blacklivesmatter (found at http://blacklivesmatter.com)
• Text #17: “Black Lives Matter and America’s long history of resisting civil rights protesters” by The Washington Post

Lessons/Activities:

There are five activities this week that continue to hand responsibility over to students for their own learning. They are also assigned the action research project, a group assignment allowing them to practice the group roles already taught.

Activity #1:

Assign action research project. For this project, students will be using their KWHL charts to identify one to two questions they want to explore, conduct research on how to best answer the question, and present what they learn to the class.

• First, remind students that the unit we have been working on is focused around hearing perspectives that are normally silenced, and bringing voices to those viewpoints. As a class, ask students
what other voices or perspectives are often silenced or ignored by society. Examples may include any disenfranchised group—by race, culture, ability (or perceived disability), etc.

- Once there are a good number of examples on the board, have students spend a few minutes freewriting about what or whom they would want to bring a voice to. As an example, my friend’s cousin has Down syndrome. She often spends her time talking to others and posting articles about the misconceptions that people have, adding a voice to help others understand her cousin better, and, in turn, the entire community of those with Down syndrome.

- Hand out action research assignment (Appendix CC) and rubric (Appendix DD). Explain that students will be able to work in groups of up to four to come up with what they want to research, how they will learn about it, and find a way to present what they end up learning to others. The focus should be on giving a voice to those who are traditionally silenced or ignored. They can use their KWHL charts to come up with additional ideas.

- Allow students time in class to form their groups and begin crafting a research question. I need to make sure I assist students who need help, especially at this stage. I will also allow students to choose their own groups at this point in the unit.
• On their final meeting date, have each group review their Group Communication notes (Appendix P) and discuss what process their group went through.

Activity #2:

Writing Group Work

• Prepare students to bring in their student narrative rough drafts. I usually say that a rough draft consists of wherever they are in their writing, but they should have some sort of beginning, middle, and end.

• Ask students to pull out their Student Narrative Assignment Rubric (Appendix X).

• In assigned writing groups, have each student read their narrative aloud. Group members should use the rubric to assess each of their group member’s narratives. Encourage students to be mindful as they make their constructive criticism. Their purpose is to help their peers—they should rely on the rubric and be honest.

• Give students at least one more opportunity to have their writing group peer review their text before the due date. On their final meeting date, have each group review their Group Communication notes (Appendix P) and discuss their group’s progress through the stages.

Activity #3:

Read and understand multiple perspectives on modern racism; use
evidence to support thinking.

- Allow students to choose one of the following four text options, keeping in mind that there should be an even divide of each of the supplemental texts in class.
  - Barack Obama’s speech
  - Maxine Waters’ speech
  - Blacklivesmatter.com
  - Article from *The Washington Post* (Appendix EE)

- Explain that this week’s focus is to determine how racism has changed from the Civil Rights Movement to today. They should read, annotate (the students with the online reading should take notes), and answer the following focus questions:
  - What does the speaker/writer argue is the state of modern race relations in America?
  - What evidence is used? Be sure to cite it correctly.
  - What solutions to current racism are proposed?
  - Do you think those solutions will be effective? Why or why not?
  - What type of voice does the speaker/text have? Formal or informal? Angry or pleading?

- After students have been given sufficient time, allow them to form a shared-text group of three to four students. They should review
their responses, adding information when needed, and be prepared to become the “expert” on their text.

• Have students form groups of four different-text groups. Their responsibility is to use a Thinking Map to show how each of the authors deals with race relations in America differently. They should analyze voice, word choice, evidence used, and solutions proposed.

• As an exit slip, have students respond in a 3-2-1. These responses will allow me to quickly assess student learning and can provide a focus for an in-class discussion the following day.
  o 3 things they learned
  o 2 questions they still have
  o 1 statement about their opinion of modern race relations in America.

Activity #4:
Create Six-Word Memoirs.

• Six-Word Memoirs are based around the idea of Hemingway’s alleged shortest story ever: “For Sale: Baby shoes, never worn.” The purpose of a Six-Word Memoir is for students to use the most apt words possible in crafting a personal story that only uses six words. This forces students to be hyper-aware of their word choices, and since they have begun work on their personal
narratives, I think this will help them concentrate on their writing voices.

- To begin, review the definition of a memoir and give the Hemingway example. I will also give students an example of a Six-Word Memoir for myself to continue the idea of building the student-teacher relationship. Mine might be Planned everything. Finally, let life lead.

- Explain that students will be coming up with a Six-Word Memoir for themselves and for a character in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.

- Show students the “Six Tips” video.

- As a class, we will brainstorm and create a Six Word Memoir for Huck Finn. An example could be Left home; learned abolitionism afloat Mississippi.

- Each student will be randomly assigned one character from the anchor text to write about. Students will be given time in class to create Six Word Memoirs for their respective characters and for themselves. For inspiration, students may visit sixwordmemoirs.com.

- Hand out the Six-Word Memoir Assignment (Appendix FF) for students to see. Since the memoir is so short, I also ask that students write an accompanying artist’s statement.
• On the due date, have all students with the same character get into groups and come up with two or three memoirs that best define their character. They are to write these on poster paper labeled with their assigned character to be hung in the room.

• In addition, students should also write their personal Six-Word Memoirs on a sheet of paper to attach to their shirt. Give students time to walk around the class and discuss their memoirs. I will also encourage them to submit their creation online at sixwordmemoirs.com or make it into a meme to be shared with friends. This adds to each student’s audience base, making the assessment more authentic in nature.

Activity #5:

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* Week 5 reading assessment: using evidence to support an opinion.

• Hand out the Week 5 assessment (Appendix GG). This week focuses on having students use evidence to prove what they argue.

• Discuss responses when all students have finished.

**Homework:**

• Read chapters 30-36 Of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

• What do you think of Huck Finn as a character? How would you describe him?

**Adaptations:**
Teachers may choose to use Critical Lenses to help students analyze a text, specifically the Racial Lens. This would pair well with using the Circle Thinking Map. Teachers may also have students meet several times in their writing groups to work on their narratives. More meeting times would both help individual student writing and increase the comfort and support that the group can provide.

**Week five rationale.** This week begins by introducing one of the major objectives of the unit: a student action research project. This will allow students choice in their assignment and research, as well as choice in their groups, one of the major elements in my research on engaging minority learners. This project also encourages student voice, another major research component. The Six-Word Memoir is designed to build community while focusing on word choices and discussing characters in the anchor text.

**Week Six Lesson Plans**

**Topic:** Race Relations: Where do we go next?

**Learning Targets:**

- Create and discuss complex ideas and questions using outside sources as evidence.
- Create and present a personal narrative.
- Develop, implement, and present a student-chosen action research project.
- Use evidence from multiple sources to support an opinion.

**Materials:**

- Copies of Socratic Seminar Assignment Sheet (Appendix HH)
- Poster paper
- Markers, glue, scissors, etc.
• Printer access
• Copies of Action Research Rubric (Appendix DD)
• Copies of Student Attitudinal Survey (Appendix A)
• Copies of Final unit assessment (Appendix II)

Supplementary Texts:
• Student-created narratives
• Student-created action research projects

Lessons/Activities:

There are only five activities this week, and they are all focused on students either presenting their work of the unit or showing their learning. They can be delivered in any order.

Activity #1:
Facilitate Socratic Seminar.

• Hand out Socratic Seminar Assignment Sheet (Appendix HH) a few days to a week ahead of time. Students are asked to review and come up with questions about the text in preparation for a class discussion.

• On the day of the discussion, it would be beneficial to have the desks in a formation that allows all students to see one another. If needed (and possible), use a larger space to accommodate all students—I often use the lunchroom (if lunch is not in session) or the stage floor in the auditorium.
• Explain that the Socratic Seminar is designed to help us answer all our remaining questions. Student questions are the priority, but all questions will help us focus on the novel’s impact and purpose. Students are also encouraged to use any of the supplementary texts to add to the discussion.

• Facilitate Socratic Seminar. The teacher’s role is not to lead, but to assist. If the discussion starts going too far off task, redirect students to another question. Make sure that students are using the text to support their arguments. Double-check text references, and encourage students to do the same.

• Collect Socratic Seminar Assignment Sheet.

Activity #2:

Present action-research projects.

• Have students set up their findings on poster paper. I like to give students time in class to prepare some of this data since they are working with others. I usually have booked a computer lab that has a printer for this purpose, to help take the burden off single group members.

• If possible, publicize student findings throughout the school by hanging research posters in the hallways, lunchroom, etc. This adds to the audience base, adding a layer of authenticity to the assignment.

• Assess projects (Appendix DD).
Activity #3:

Share student narratives.

- If possible, arrange desks into a circle ahead of time, or plan on using a large space so that students may sit in a circle.
- I like to choose to start by sharing my personal narrative again, especially if students are reluctant to begin. This helps build the relationship between me and my students, as they get to hear something more personal about me before they share.
- Invite volunteers to share. I find that wait time is incredibly useful during this activity in inspiring more students to participate. Since students have also already shared their stories in their writing groups, it can also relieve the pressure on students about sharing their writing, and it might inspire their peers to even begin requesting that the class hear a particular student’s narrative.
- Assess (Appendix X).

Activity #4:

Assess understanding of unit.

- Distribute Final unit assessment (Appendix II). This assessment checks students’ understanding of the Thinking Maps, the anchor text, power dynamics in the 1800s, and the essential questions. It also requires students to use evidence from the text to support their arguments.

Activity #5:
Student Attitudinal survey (Appendix A).

- Disperse and collect Student Attitudinal Survey (Appendix A).
  This should now be used to compare how student feelings of voice and community have changed over the course of the unit. It can be analyzed by class and my student body as a whole.

**Homework:**

- Read chapters 37-end Of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
- Review our essential questions.

**Adaptations:**

If teachers fear they will not have enough time to present all projects, they can alternatively have students present in groups for either the Action Research Project or the Personal Narrative Assignment. Teachers could also have students set up stations in the auditorium or lunchroom for their Action Research Project, stagger presentations over the hour, and allow students to visit ones they are most interested in. This will allow students choice in what they learn about and a chance to practice speaking in front of their peers. Another option would be to have students complete an Autoethnography instead of the Personal Narrative. This is an assignment where students reflect on their own experiences in society using outside evidence and research. It would tie in both the research and personal writing that has been a focus throughout this unit.

**Week six rationale.** This week is all about wrapping up the unit—the essential questions, the student narratives, and the research projects. I am asking students to share what they created and what they learned, as well as demonstrate knowledge of how to
organize information, analyze power structures, construct complex arguments, and support them with evidence.
CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

In Chapter One, I discussed the background of my drive to help students, especially minority students, succeed in school. Since I had the culture shock of moving from a diverse neighborhood to an incredibly homogeneous one, I was able to notice how minority individuals are treated differently by their white counterparts, to the extent that it would affect their ability to be themselves in school. Through my research, I learned that many minority students respond by either changing some aspect of themselves to fit into the school environment or disengaging from learning altogether. These issues, which lead to a strong disparity between white and minority academic success, need to be addressed because of their prevalence, not only in Minnesota, but also across the nation. While researching, I noted that many of the studies done on engaging all learners in the classroom, especially minority learners, show that they experience success by incorporating students’ voices, as well as voices that represent students’ different backgrounds and cultures. I also noticed that critical literacy continued to come up as a strong way to incorporate both of these goals while also encouraging active involvement and critical thinking.

I continued my research by delving into the information on critical literacy and how it is a strong method to build both classroom community and engagement in school, which minority students have been shown to need more than white students. I also discovered the gains in learning that come from being a part of a strong community and
how to best engage all students, even the ones usually disinterested in education. I found that many minorities in America argue that current race relations are very strained and education focuses primarily on white culture. Learning about my own ignorance of the social and cultural power I possess as a white American fueled my desire to help students learn about and overcome this burden rarely discussed. I included how best to correct the cultural missteps many white people engage in and a discussion on white privilege in American society to better help my readers understand the viewpoints I learned throughout my research.

To best implement these practices in the classroom, I focused on a constructivist approach to teaching. This would allow me to meet all students where they are, incorporate student voice, and stay engaging. I also focused on student engagement through student choice, bringing in supplementary voices, and incorporating student voice in the six weeks of activities to accompany the teaching of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain I created. I ended the unit by asking students to share personal narratives about the power they have and with a group action research project to bring forth missing voices in American society.

**Limitations and Future Research**

Since I did not have the ability to implement my curriculum this year, I was not able to include any findings about minority increase in community through the use of critical literacy strategies. Future research would look at the results of this data to see if these critical literacy practices did indeed engage more learners and increase student voice.
Additionally, with the countless examples of supplementary texts available, and the strong emphasis on student choice documented through research studies, a comparison could be done by allowing students to choose their own supplementary text, as long as it fell within a set list of attributes. I allowed bounded choice in my curriculum, which lets students choose within a pre-set list, but allowing students even more free reign could further feelings of engagement with learning.

I also focus much of my curriculum on using black voices to add to the discussion of race while reading *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, but I do not bring many other culturally diverse authors in. Using the results of the attitudinal survey, teachers could compare the results along race to see if black learners had an additional increase in their feelings of community. Supplemental texts could be further adjusted to add in additional kinds of minority voices.

Finally, I focused on a holistic model for grading my students’ work. Further research could be completed on what types of assessment best encapsulate projects and essays involving student voice.

**Final Thoughts**

While researching for and during the writing of my capstone, there were two major surprises. First, I have been continually amazed at how often the linked subjects of race and academic achievement are discussed in the news. Though my state ranks in the top in terms of education, its ability to help minority learners in the classroom is severely lacking, and there is a growing awareness of this problem in mainstream society. However, what surprised me more than the disparity itself was finding a good number of different ways to address solving the problem, as discovered by and supported with large
bases of research. With the amount of overlapping research findings, several being more than twenty years old, one would think that these practices would be more common in the secondary classroom, especially with the current alarm about the state of minority education blaring. However, many of the practices I found in research I have never, or very rarely, seen done in the classroom. Much of this is based on fear—fear of giving up control to students, fear of lowering standards. However, the growth experienced when students do get more choice and truly feel as though they have a personal stake in their own learning and classroom experiences has the potential to be remarkable, strong enough to change a student’s trajectory from dropout to graduate.

It is time for teachers to recognize that the old model of teaching—sticking to those allegedly immutable facts—does not meet the needs of all our learners, and we must meet their needs to prepare them for a successful future. There are no longer factory jobs for the uneducated, and Cathy Davidson argues “65 percent of children entering grade school [in 2011] will end up working in careers that haven't even been invented yet” (qtd. in Rosen, 2011). Students must be prepared to see themselves as lifelong learners and have the tools to enact their own future education. However, America was built on a foundation of both equality and injustice, and the cards have been unfairly stacked against a section of our population since its creation. Our role as educators is to give all students a chance, and so many minority students do not feel as though they ever had one. We must correct this miscarriage of justice and bring forth silenced and suppressed voices because everyone deserves to have a place in our society.
APPENDIX A

Student Attitudinal Survey
Student Attitudinal Survey

Directions: Using a scale of 1-10, one being the least and 10 being the most, rate your opinions on the following statements:

1. I feel a sense of belonging at my high school.
( not true) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (very true)

2. I feel a sense of belonging in Mrs. Moe’s English class.
( not true) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (very true)

3. I feel comfortable sharing my thoughts in English class.
( not true) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (very true)

4. I control my academic success in school.
( not true) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (very true)

5. My voice is important.
( not true) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (very true)

6. Please list all racial or ethnic groups you identify as:
APPENDIX B

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* Introduction
"All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*... There was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since."

—Ernest Hemingway

**Our essential question #1**

**What is the power of one voice?**

We will be examining several other texts, in addition to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, to look at powerful voices throughout history.

At the end of the unit, you will write a narrative about the power your voice has. You will also create a project showcasing what your voice can do to inspire others.
Our essential question #1
What is the power of one voice?

Spend a few minutes freewriting about your answer to this question.

Our essential question #2
Why is Huck Finn so controversial?

We will be examining supplemental texts discussing race relations in America, beginning with the early 1800s to modern day.

At the end of the unit, you will be asked to respond to this question, using the book as well as the supplemental texts to craft your response.
Our essential question #2

Why is *Huck Finn* so controversial?

What have you heard about *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*?
Name: ______________________________

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Unit Outline

During this unit, you are responsible for paying attention to certain aspects of Twain’s writing as you read Huckleberry Finn outside of class. Each reading assignment is due Friday, and you should expect a writing and reading assessment on that day.

Week 1:
• Read chapters 1-8
• Focus on the character Huck Finn. What is he like? Do you agree with his opinions? Why or why not? What are the benefits and drawbacks of having such a young narrator tell this story?

Week 2:
• Read chapters 9-15
• Focus on the character of Jim. What do we learn about him? How would he tell the story differently than Huck?
• Look for examples of satire in Twain’s writing.

Week 3:
• Read chapters 16-22
• What themes are you seeing start to develop in the text? When and how do you see these themes?

Week 4:
• Read chapters 23-29
• As you are reading, pay attention to the other characters’ perspectives. How might their narration of events be different than Huck’s?

Week 5:
• Read chapters 30-36
• What do you think of Huck Finn as a character? How would you describe him?

Week 6:
• Read chapters 37-end
• Revisit the essential questions. How would you answer them, now that you have finished the novel?

Major assignments:
• Write a narrative about one of your stories.
• Conduct a student action project and present the findings to the class (and possibly the school!).

Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX D

KWHL Chart
Name: __________________________________________

**KWHL Chart**

Directions: Over the next six weeks, we will be studying America’s relationship with African Americans, from slaveholding times through today. You will be responsible for tracking your previous knowledge and what you learn during this unit, which will culminate in a final summative project and essay. The more thorough you are now, the easier your final project will be to create.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K</th>
<th>What I already know.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>What I <strong>want</strong> to know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>How I will learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>What I have <strong>learned</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted by Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX E

Excerpt from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
Here, too, the slaves of all the other farms received their monthly allowance of food, and their yearly clothing. The men and women slaves received, as their monthly allowance of food, eight pounds of pork, or its equivalent in fish, and one bushel of corn meal. Their yearly clothing consisted of two coarse linen shirts, one pair of linen trousers, like the shirts, one jacket, one pair of trousers for winter, made of coarse negro cloth, one pair of stockings, and one pair of shoes; the whole of which could not have cost more than seven dollars. The allowance of the slave children was given to their mothers, or the old women having the care of them. The children unable to work in the field had neither shoes, stockings, jackets, nor trousers, given to them; their clothing consisted of two coarse linen shirts per year. When these failed them, they went naked until the next allowance-day. Children from seven to ten years old, of both sexes, almost naked, might be seen at all seasons of the year.

There were no beds given the slaves, unless one coarse blanket be considered such, and none but the men and women had these. This, however, is not considered a very great privation. They find less difficulty from the want of beds, than from the want of time to sleep; for when their day’s work in the field is done, the most of them having their washing, mending, and cooking to do, and having few or none of the ordinary facilities for doing either of these, very many of their sleeping hours are consumed in preparing for the field the coming day; and when this is done, old and young, male and female, married and single, drop down side by side, on one common bed, — the cold, damp floor, — each covering himself or herself with their miserable blankets; and here they sleep till they are summoned to the field by the driver’s horn.

At the sound of this, all must rise, and be off to the field. There must be no halting; every one must be at his or her post; and woe betides them who hear not this morning summons to the field; for if they are not awakened by the sense of hearing, they are by the sense of feeling: no age nor sex finds any favor. Mr. Severe, the overseer, used to stand by the door of the quarter, armed with a large hickory stick and heavy cowskin, ready to whip any one who was so unfortunate as not to hear, or, from any other cause, was prevented from being ready to start for the field at the sound of the horn.

Mr. Severe was rightly named: he was a cruel man. I have seen him whip a woman, causing the blood to run half an hour at the time; and this, too, in the midst of her crying children, pleading for their mother’s release. He seemed to take pleasure in manifesting his fiendish barbarity. Added to his cruelty, he was a profane swearer. It was enough to chill the blood and stiffen the hair of an ordinary man to hear him talk. Scarce a sentence escaped him but that was commenced or concluded by some horrid oath. The field was the place to witness his cruelty and profanity. His presence made it both the field of blood and of blasphemy. From the rising till the going down of the sun, he was cursing, raving, cutting, and slashing among the slaves of the field, in the most frightful manner. His career was short. He died very soon after I went to Colonel Lloyd’s; and he died as he lived, uttering, with his dying groans, bitter curses and horrid oaths. His death was regarded by the slaves as the result of a merciful providence.

[...]
I lived in Master Hugh’s family about seven years. During this time, I succeeded in learning to read and write. In accomplishing this, I was compelled to resort to various stratagems. I had no regular teacher. My mistress, who had kindly commenced to instruct me, had, in compliance with the advice and direction of her husband, not only ceased to instruct, but had set her face against my being instructed by any one else. It is due, however, to my mistress to say of her, that she did not adopt this course of treatment immediately. She at first lacked the depravity indispensable to shutting me up in mental darkness. It was at least necessary for her to have some training in the exercise of irresponsible power, to make her equal to the task of treating me as though I were a brute.

My mistress was, as I have said, a kind and tender-hearted woman; and in the simplicity of her soul she commenced, when I first went to live with her, to treat me as she supposed one human being ought to treat another. In entering upon the duties of a slaveholder, she did not seem to perceive that I sustained to her the relation of a mere chattel, and that for her to treat me as a human being was not only wrong, but dangerously so. Slavery proved as injurious to her as it did to me. When I went there, she was a pious, warm, and tender-hearted woman. There was no sorrow or suffering for which she had not a tear. She had bread for the hungry, clothes for the naked, and comfort for every mourner that came within her reach.

Slavery soon proved its ability to divest her of these heavenly qualities. Under its influence, the tender heart became stone, and the lamblike disposition gave way to one of tiger-like fierceness. The first step in her downward course was in her ceasing to instruct me. She now commenced to practise her husband’s precepts. She finally became even more violent in her opposition than her husband himself. She was not satisfied with simply doing as well as he had commanded; she seemed anxious to do better. Nothing seemed to make her more angry than to see me with a newspaper. She seemed to think that here lay the danger. I have had her rush at me with a face made all up of fury, and snatch from me a newspaper, in a manner that fully revealed her apprehension. She was an apt woman; and a little experience soon demonstrated, to her satisfaction, that education and slavery were incompatible with each other.

From this time I was most narrowly watched. If I was in a separate room any considerable length of time, I was sure to be suspected of having a book, and was at once called to give an account of myself. All this, however, was too late. The first step had been taken. Mistress, in teaching me the alphabet, had given me the inch, and no precaution could prevent me from taking the ell.

The plan which I adopted, and the one by which I was most successful, was that of making friends of all the little white boys whom I met in the street. As many of these as I could, I converted into teachers. With their kindly aid, obtained at different times and in different places, I finally succeeded in learning to read. When I was sent of errands, I always took my book with me, and by going one part of my errand quickly, I found time to get a lesson before my return. I used also to carry bread with me, enough of which was always in the house, and to which I was always welcome; for I was much better off in this regard than many of the poor white children in our neighborhood.

This bread I used to bestow upon the hungry urchins, who, in return, would give me that more valuable bread of knowledge. I am strongly tempted to give the names of two or three of those little boys, as a testimonial of the gratitude and affection I bear them; but prudence forbids; — not that it would injure me, but it might embarrass them;
for it is almost an unpardonable offence to teach slaves to read in this Christian country. It is enough to say of the dear little fellows, that they lived on Philpot Street, very near Durgin and Bailey’s ship-yard. I used to talk this matter of slavery over with them. I would sometimes say to them, I wished I could be as free as they would be when they got to be men. “You will be free as soon as you are twenty-one, but I am a slave for life! Have not I as good a right to be free as you have?” These words used to trouble them; they would express for me the liveliest sympathy, and console me with the hope that something would occur by which I might be free.

Chapter VIII

In a very short time after I went to live at Baltimore, my old master's youngest son Richard died; and in about three years and six months after his death, my old master, Captain Anthony, died, leaving only his son, Andrew, and daughter, Lucretia, to share his estate. He died while on a visit to see his daughter at Hillsborough. Cut off thus unexpectedly, he left no will as to the disposal of his property. It was therefore necessary to have a valuation of the property, that it might be equally divided between Mrs. Lucretia and Master Andrew. I was immediately sent for, to be valued with the other property. Here again my feelings rose up in detestation of slavery. I had now a new conception of my degraded condition. Prior to this, I had become, if not insensible to my lot, at least partly so. I left Baltimore with a young heart overborne with sadness, and a soul full of apprehension. I took passage with Captain Rowe, in the schooner Wild Cat, and, after a sail of about twenty-four hours, I found myself near the place of my birth. I had now been absent from it almost, if not quite, five years. I, however, remembered the place very well. I was only about five years old when I left it, to go and live with my old master on Colonel Lloyd's plantation; so that I was now between ten and eleven years old.

We were all ranked together at the valuation. Men and women, old and young, married and single, were ranked with horses, sheep, and swine. There were horses and men, cattle and women, pigs and children, all holding the same rank in the scale of being, and were all subjected to the same narrow examination. Silvery-headed age and sprightly youth, maids and matrons, had to undergo the same indelicate inspection. At this moment, I saw more clearly than ever the brutalizing effects of slavery upon both slave and slaveholder.

After the valuation, then came the division. I have no language to express the high excitement and deep anxiety which were felt among us poor slaves during this time. Our fate for life was now to be decided. we had no more voice in that decision than the brutes among whom we were ranked. A single word from the white men was enough—against all our wishes, prayers, and entreaties—to sunder forever the dearest friends, dearest kindred, and strongest ties known to human beings. In addition to the pain of separation, there was the horrid dread of falling into the hands of Master Andrew. He was known to us all as being a most cruel wretch,—a common drunkard, who had, by his reckless mismanagement and profligate dissipation, already wasted a large portion of his father's property. We all felt that we might as well be sold at once to the Georgia traders, as to pass into his hands; for we knew that that would be our inevitable condition,—a condition held by us all in the utmost horror and dread.

I suffered more anxiety than most of my fellow-slaves. I had known what it was to be kindly treated; they had known nothing of the kind. They had seen little or nothing of the
world. They were in very deed men and women of sorrow, and acquainted with grief. Their backs had been made familiar with the bloody lash, so that they had become callous; mine was yet tender; for while at Baltimore I got few whippings, and few slaves could boast of a kinder master and mistress than myself; and the thought of passing out of their hands into those of Master Andrew—a man who, but a few days before, to give me a sample of his bloody disposition, took my little brother by the throat, threw him on the ground, and with the heel of his boot stamped upon his head till the blood gushed from his nose and ears—was well calculated to make me anxious as to my fate. After he had committed this savage outrage upon my brother, he turned to me, and said that was the way he meant to serve me one of these days,—meaning, I suppose, when I came into his possession.

Thanks to a kind Providence, I fell to the portion of Mrs. Lucretia, and was sent immediately back to Baltimore, to live again in the family of Master Hugh. Their joy at my return equalled their sorrow at my departure. It was a glad day to me. I had escaped a worse than lion’s jaws. I was absent from Baltimore, for the purpose of valuation and division, just about one month, and it seemed to have been six.

Very soon after my return to Baltimore, my mistress, Lucretia, died, leaving her husband and one child, Amanda; and in a very short time after her death, Master Andrew died. Now all the property of my old master, slaves included, was in the hands of strangers,—strangers who had had nothing to do with accumulating it. Not a slave was left free. All remained slaves, from the youngest to the oldest. If any one thing in my experience, more than another, served to deepen my conviction of the infernal character of slavery, and to fill me with unutterable loathing of slaveholders, it was their base ingratitude to my poor old grandmother. She had served my old master faithfully from youth to old age. She had been the source of all his wealth; she had peopled his plantation with slaves; she had become a great grandmother in his service. She had rocked him in infancy, attended him in childhood, served him through life, and at his death wiped from his icy brow the cold death-sweat, and closed his eyes forever. She was nevertheless left a slave—a slave for life—a slave in the hands of strangers; and in their hands she saw her children, her grandchildren, and her great-grandchildren, divided, like so many sheep, without being gratified with the small privilege of a single word, as to their or her own destiny. And, to cap the climax of their base ingratitude and fiendish barbarity, my grandmother, who was now very old, having outlived my old master and all his children, having seen the beginning and end of all of them, and her present owners finding she was of but little value, her frame already racked with the pains of old age, and complete helplessness fast stealing over her once active limbs, they took her to the woods, built her a little hut, put up a little mud-chimney, and then made her welcome to the privilege of supporting herself there in perfect loneliness; thus virtually turning her out to die! If my poor old grandmother now lives, she lives to suffer in utter loneliness; she lives to remember and mourn over the loss of children, the loss of grandchildren, and the loss of great-grandchildren.
APPENDIX F

Excerpt from *Twelve Years a Slave*
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consulted me on the best method of effecting it. The fear of punishment, however, which they knew was certain to attend their re-capture and return, in all cases proved sufficient to deter them from the experiment. Having all my life breathed the free air of the North, and conscious that I possessed the same feelings and affections that find a place in the white man's breast; conscious, moreover, of an intelligence equal to that of some men, at least, with a fairer skin. I was too ignorant, perhaps too independent, to conceive how any one could be content to live in the abject condition of a slave. I could not comprehend the justice of that law, or that religion, which upholds or recognizes the principle of Slavery; and never once, I am proud to say, did I fail to counsel any one who came to me, to watch his opportunity, and strike for freedom.

I continued to reside at Saratoga until the spring of 1841. The flattering anticipations which, seven years before, had seduced us from the quiet farm house, on the east side of the Hudson, had not been realized. Though always in comfortable circumstances, we had not prospered. The society and associations at that world-renowned watering place, were not calculated to preserve the simple habits of industry and economy to which I had been accustomed, but, on the contrary, to substitute others in their stead, tending to shiftlessness and extravagance.

At this time we were the parents of three children—Elizabeth, Margaret, and Alonzo.

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eldest, was in her tenth year; Margaret was two years younger, and little Alonzo had just passed his fifth birth-day. They filled our house with gladness. Their young voices were music in our ears. Many an airy castle did their mother and myself build for the little innocents. When not at labor I was always walking with them, clad in their best attire, through the streets and groves of Saratoga. Their presence was my delight; and I clasped them to my bosom with as warm and tender love as if their clouded skins had been as white as snow.

Thus far the history of my life presents nothing whatever unusual—nothing but the common hopes, and loves, and labors of an obscure colored man, making his humble progress in the world. But now I had reached a turning point in my existence—reached the threshold of unutterable wrong, and sorrow, and despair. Now had I approached within the shadow of the cloud, into the thick darkness whereof I was soon to disappear, thenceforward to be hidden from the eyes of all my kindred, and shut out from the sweet light of liberty, for many a weary year.

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insensible. How long I remained in that condition—whether only that night, or many days and nights—I do not know; but when consciousness returned I found myself alone, in utter darkness, and in chains.

The pain in my head had subsided in a measure, but I was very faint and weak. I was sitting upon a low bench, made of rough boards, and without coat or hat. I was hand cuffed. Around my ankles also were a pair of heavy fetters. One end of a chain was fastened to a large ring in the floor, the other to the fetters on my ankles. I tried in vain to stand upon my feet. Waking from such a painful trance, it was some time before I could collect my thoughts. Where was I? What was the meaning of these chains? Where were Brown and Hamilton? What had I done to deserve imprisonment in such a dungeon? I could not comprehend. There was a blank of some indefinite
period, preceding my awakening in that lonely place, the events of which the utmost stretch of memory was unable to recall. I listened intently for some sign or sound of life, but nothing broke the oppressive silence, save the clinking of my chains, whenever I chanced to move. I spoke aloud, but the sound of my voice startled me. I felt of my pockets, so far as the fetters would allow—far enough, indeed, to ascertain that I had not only been robbed of liberty, but that my money and free papers were also gone! Then did the idea begin to break upon my mind, at first dim and confused, that I had been kidnapped. But that I thought was incredible.

There must have been some misapprehension—some unfortunate mistake. It could not be that a free citizen of New-York, who had wronged no man, nor violated any law, should be dealt with thus inhumanly. The more I contemplated my situation, however, the more I became confirmed in my suspicions. It was a desolate thought, indeed. I felt there was no trust or mercy in unfeeling man; and commending myself to the God of the oppressed, bowed my head upon my fettered hands, and wept most bitterly.

CHAPTER III.

SOME three hours elapsed, during which time I remained seated on the low bench, absorbed in painful meditations. At length I heard the crowing of a cock, and soon a distant rumbling sound, as of carriages hurrying through the streets, came to my ears, and I knew that it was day. No ray of light, however, penetrated my prison.: Finally, I heard footsteps immediately overhead, as of some one walking to and fro. It occurred to me then that I must be in an underground apartment, and the damp, mouldy odors of the place confirmed the supposition. The noise above continued for at least an hour, when, at last, I heard footsteps approaching from without. A key rattled in the lock—a strong door swung back upon its hinges, admitting a flood of light, and two men entered and stood before me. One of them was a large, powerful man, forty years of age, perhaps,

with dark, chestnut-colored hair, slightly interspersed with gray. His face was full, his complexion flush, his features grossly coarse, expressive of nothing but cruelty and cunning. He was about five feet ten inches high, of full habit, and, without prejudice, I must be allowed to say, was a man whose whole appearance was sinister and repugnant. His name was James H. Burch, as I learned afterwards—a well-known slave-dealer in Washington; and then, or lately connected in business, as a partner, with Theophilus Freeman, of New-Orleans. The person who accompanied him was a simple lackey, named Ebenezer Radburn, who acted merely in the capacity of turnkey. Both of these men still live in Washington, or did, at the time of my return through that city from slavery in January last.

The light admitted through the open door enabled me to observe the room in which I was confined. It was about twelve feet square—the walls of solid masonry. The floor was of heavy plank. There was one small window, crossed with great iron bars, with an outside shutter, securely fastened.

An iron-bound door led into an adjoining cell, or vault, wholly destitute of windows, or any means of admitting light. The furniture of the room in which I was, consisted of the wooden bench on which I sat, an old-fashioned, dirty box stove, and besides these, in either cell, there was neither bed, nor blanket, nor any other thing whatever. The door, through which
The building to which the yard was attached, was two stories high, fronting on one of the public streets of Washington. Its outside presented only the appearance of a quiet private residence. A stranger looking at it, would never have dreamed of its execrable uses. Strange as it may seem, within plain sight of this same house, looking down from its commanding height upon it, was the Capitol. The voices of patriotic representatives boasting of freedom and equality, and the rattling of the poor slave's chains.

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almost commingled. A slave pen within the very shadow of the Capitol!

Such is a correct description as it was in 1841, of Williams' slave pen in Washington, in one of the cellars of which I found myself so unaccountably confined.

"Well, my boy, how do you feel now?" said Burch, as he entered through the open door. I replied that I was sick, and inquired the cause of my imprisonment. He answered that I was his slave—that he had bought me, and that he was about to send me to New-Orleans. I asserted, aloud and boldly, that I was a freeman—a resident of Saratoga, where I had a wife and children, who were also free, and that my name was Northup. I complained bitterly of the strange treatment I had received, and threatened, upon my liberation, to have satisfaction for the wrong. He denied that I was free, and with an emphatic oath, declared that I came from Georgia. Again and again I asserted I was no man's slave, and insisted upon his taking off my chains at once. He endeavored to hush me, as if he feared my voice would be overheard. But I would not be silent, and denounced the authors of my imprisonment, whoever they might be, as unmitigated villains. Finding he could not quiet me, he flew into a towering passion. With blasphemous oaths, he called me a black liar, a runaway from Georgia, and every other profane and vulgar epithet that the most indecent fancy could conceive.

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During this time Radburn was standing silently by. His business was, to oversee this human, or rather inhuman stable, receiving slaves, feeding, and whipping them, at the rate of two shillings a head per day. Turning to him, Burch ordered the paddle and cat-o'-ninetails to be brought in. He disappeared, and in a few moments returned with these instruments of torture. The paddle, as it is termed in slave-beating parlance, or at least the one with which I first became acquainted, and of which I now speak, was a piece of hard-wood board, eighteen or twenty inches long, moulded to the shape of an old-fashioned pudding stick, or ordinary oar The flattened portion, which was about the size in circumference of two open hands, was bored with a small auger in numerous places. The cat was a large rope of many strands—the strands unraveled, and a knot tied at the extremity of each.

As soon as these formidable whips appeared, I was seized by both of them, and roughly divested of my clothing. My feet, as has been stated, were fastened to the floor. Drawing me over the bench, face downwards, Radburn placed his heavy foot upon the fetters, between my wrists, holding them painfully to the floor. With the paddle, Burch commenced beating me. Blow after blow was inflicted upon my naked body. When his unrelenting arm grew tired, he stopped and asked if I still insisted I was a free man. I did insist upon it, and then the blows were renewed, faster and more energetically, if possible, than before. When again tired, he would repeat the same question, and receiving the same answer, continue his cruel labor. All this time, the incarnate devil was uttering most fiendish oaths. At length the paddle broke, leaving the useless handle in his hand. Still I would not yield. All his brutal blows could not force from my lips the foul lie that I was a slave. Casting madly on the floor the handle of the broken paddle, he seized the rope. This was far more painful than the other. I struggled with all my power, but it was in vain. I prayed for mercy, but my prayer was only answered with imprecations and with stripes. I thought I must die beneath the lashes of the accursed brute. Even now the flesh crawls upon my bones, as I recall the scene. I was all on fire. My sufferings I can compare to nothing else than the burning agonies of hell!
At last I became silent to his repeated questions. I would make no reply. In fact, I was becoming almost unable to speak. Still he plied the lash without stint upon my poor body, until it seemed that the lacerated flesh was stripped from my bones at every stroke. A man with a particle of mercy in his soul would not have beaten even a dog so cruelly. At length Radburn said that it was useless to whip me any more—that I would be sore enough. Thereupon Burch desisted, saying, with an admonitory shake of his fist in my face, and hissing the words through his firm-set teeth, that if ever I dared to utter again that I was entitled to my freedom, that I had been kidnapped, or any thing whatever of the kind, the castigation I had just received was nothing in comparison with what would follow. He swore that he would either conquer or kill me. With these consolatory words, the fetters were taken from my wrists, my feet still remaining fastened to the ring; the shutter of the little barred window, which had been opened, was again closed, and going out, locking the great door behind them, I was left in darkness as before.
APPENDIX G

Week 1 Reading Assessment
**Passage 1:**

“Then for an hour it was deadly dull, and I was fidgety. Miss Watson would say, ‘Don’t put your feet up there, Huckleberry;’ and ‘Don’t scrunch up like that, Huckleberry—set up straight;’ and pretty soon she would say, ‘Don’t gap and stretch like that, Huckleberry—why don’t you try to behave?’ Then she told me all about the bad place, and I said I wished I was there. She got mad then, but I didn’t mean no harm. All I wanted was to go somewheres; all I wanted was a change, I warn’t particular. She said it was wicked to say what I said; said she wouldn’t say it for the whole world; she was going to live so as to go to the good place. Well, I couldn’t see no advantage in going where she was going, so I made up my mind I wouldn’t try for it. But I never said so, because it would only make trouble, and wouldn’t do no good.”

**Context:**
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**Passage 2:**

“He took it and bit it to see if it was good, and then he said he was going down town to get some whisky; said he hadn’t had a drink all day. When he had got out on the shed he put his head in again, and cussed me for putting on frills and trying to be better than him; and when I reckoned he was gone he come back and put his head in again, and told me to mind about that school, because he was going to lay for me and lick me if I didn’t drop that. Next day he was drunk, and he went to Judge Thatcher’s and bullyragged him, and tried to make him give up the money; but he couldn’t, and then he swore he’d make the law force him. The judge and the widow went to law to get the court to take me away from him and let one of them be my guardian; but it was a new judge that had just come, and he didn’t know the old man; so he said courts mustn’t interfere and separate families if they could help it; said he’d druther not take a child away from its father. So Judge Thatcher and the widow had to quit on the business.”

**Context:**
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

**Passage 3:**

“Well, then I happened to think how they always put quicksilver in loaves of bread and float them off, because they always go right to the drowned carcass and stop there. So, says I, I’ll keep a lookout, and if any of them’s floating around after me I’ll give them a show. I changed to the Illinois edge of the island to see what luck I could have, and I warn’t disappointed. A big double loaf come along, and I most got it with a long stick, but my foot slipped and she floated out further. Of course I was where the current set in the closest to the shore—I knowed enough for that. But by and by along comes another one, and this time I won. I took out the plug and shook out the little dab of quick-silver, and set my teeth in. It was “baker’s bread”—what the quality eat; none of your low-down corn-pone. I got a good place amongst the leaves, and set there on a log, munching the bread and watching the ferry-boat, and very well satis-fied. And then something struck me. I says, now I reckon the widow or the parson or somebody prayed that this bread would find me, and here it has gone and done it. So there ain’t no doubt but there is something in that thing—that is, there’s something in it when a body like the widow or the parson prays, but it don’t work for me, and I reckon it don’t work for only just the right kind.”

**Context:**
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Julia Q. Moe, 2016
Part II: Mini-Essay Response

Directions: Discuss Huckleberry Finn’s character. Use at least three examples from the reading homework to argue your points.

1. What is he like, as a character? How do you know?
2. What is his background, and how does it affect him?
3. What prejudices does he have? How does it affect him?

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Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX H

Thinking Maps Notes
THINKING MAPS

Choose how to take notes.
Take control of your information.

QUICK OVERVIEW

- There are 8 types of thinking maps.
- You will need a full sheet of paper for these notes.
Circle Map: Defining in Context

Used to:
- Define
- Brainstorm
- List
- Identify
- Tell everything you know

‘What does ______ mean?’
‘Can you define ______?’

Bubble Map: Describe with Adjectives

Used to:
- Describe using adjectives
- Identify characteristics
- Identify properties
- Identify qualities

‘How would you describe ___?’
Double Bubble Map: Compare and Contrast

Used to:
- Identify similarities and differences
- Differentiate between characters or objects
- Analyze comparisons and contrasts

‘How are _____ and _____ alike and different?’

Double Bubble Map: Compare and Contrast

Used to:
- Identify similarities and differences
- Differentiate between characters or objects
- Analyze comparisons and contrasts

How are _____ and _____ alike and different?
**Tree Map: Classifying**

**Used to:**
- Classify
- Categorize
- Sort/group
- Give sufficient and related details
- Show convergent and divergent thinking

“What is the main idea of _____?  
What are the supporting details?”

**Flow Map: Sequencing**

**Used to:**
- Sequence steps, stages, or events
- Order information
- Analyze patterns

“What is the sequence in which the events took place?”  
“How would you demonstrate the steps for solving _____?”
**Flow Map: Sequencing**

Used to:
- Sequence steps, stages, or events
- Order information
- Analyze patterns

'What is the sequence in which the events took place?'
'How would you demonstrate the steps for solving _____?'

**Multi-Flow Map: Cause and Effect**

Used to analyze:
- Causes and effects
- Impacts and/or benefits
- Reasons and/or results
- If...then predictions

'What is the impact of the author's POV on _____?'

'How would you evaluate the arguments and claims in _____? Why would you choose to do this and what are the short and long-term outcomes?'
**Multi-Flow Map: Cause and Effect**

- Doesn’t talk to parents
- Rejection by friends
- “Shameful” topic
- New school transition

**Melinda doesn’t tell anyone she was raped.**
- Becomes more withdrawn
- Loses new friend
- Stops caring about school
- Begins to self-harm

- Used to analyze:
  - Causes and effects
  - Impacts and/or benefits
  - Reasons and/or results
  - If...then predictions
  - “What is the impact of the author’s POV on _____?”
  - “How would you evaluate the arguments and claims in _____? Why would you choose to do this and what are the short and long-term outcomes?”

**Brace Map: Identifying Part/Whole Relationships**

- Texts:
  - fiction
  - memoirs
  - non-fiction

  - comedy
  - mystery
  - research paper
  - photograph

- Used to:
  - Identify the parts of a whole
  - Deconstruct problems
  - Show physical components

  - “Analyze the parts of _____ to suggest improvements.”
**Bridge Map: Seeing Analogies**

*Used to analyze:*
- Connect related ideas and relationships
- Understand analogies and metaphors

Hester Prynne — as — Tom Sawyer

*The Scarlet Letter* — *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

___ is a character in...

Relating factor

“What is the relationship between ___ and ___? How can you analyze it?”
APPENDIX I

Thinking Map Presentation Rubric
Name: _________________________  
Thinking Map Presentation Rubric  

Thinking Map type: _____________________  

Personal contribution to project:  

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Comments:  

Name: _________________________  
Thinking Map Presentation Rubric  

Thinking Map type: _____________________  

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Comments:  

Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX J

Adichie Questions
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s “The Danger of a Single Story” Focus Questions

1. What was surprising about Adichie’s story? List several ideas.

2. What does she argue is “authentically African”?

3. She mentions Mexico as being a place where she only had been hearing a single story. What “single stories” are you familiar with? Consider different cultures, people, and books, to start.

4. What does “nkali” mean?

5. How can a story from one perspective display power?

6. What would America’s story look like if it was told starting with the Native American arrows?

7. Adichie says, “The problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete.” What does this mean?

8. Adichie says, “The consequence of a single story is that it robs people of dignity.” How might one story, or perspective, do that?

9. What can we do to bring more stories to America?

10. What stories do you have to tell?
APPENDIX K

Background on the Civil War from The Red Badge of Courage
The Civil War

Born six years after the Civil War ended, Stephen Crane drew the inspiration for his best-known and most widely read novel, The Red Badge of Courage, from this terrible conflict. Sometimes called the War Between the States, the Civil War was just that—Americans were divided into two groups roughly along geographic lines. Eleven Southern states announced that they were officially seceding, breaking away from the United States to form their own government, called the Confederate States of America. The North, composed of twenty-three Northern and Western states, challenged the Southern states’ right to do so and wanted to keep the nation intact. The Northern and Southern states clashed in one of the most bloody wars the United States has ever experienced. In the decades before war broke out, the Northern and Southern states were in conflict over political, economic, social, and moral issues. In the North, the Industrial Revolution was in full swing; trade in manufactured goods was the focus of the Northern economy. In the agricultural South, cash crops like cotton, tobacco, and sugar were the economic focus. The South also relied on a labor pool of more than four million enslaved African Americans. While many Northerners found the institution of slavery reprehensible and sought to prevent new states from being admitted as slave states, the war was not fought over the issue of slavery alone. Increasingly, Southern states were finding themselves outvoted on issues such as tariffs that favored the economic interests of Northern states. Southerners were also enraged when many Northern states passed laws freeing any slaves who managed to escape to the North. The last straw for the South was a split in the Democratic party that practically guaranteed the election of Abraham Lincoln, a Republican who opposed the spread of slavery and supported acts that would strengthen the Federal government, boost the economy in the North, and help to expand the West. Soon after Lincoln’s election in 1860, Southern states announced their secession. The first shots of the Civil War were fired on April 12, 1861, at Fort Sumter, South Carolina. Both sides had certain advantages and disadvantages. The North had a larger population—22 million compared to the South’s 9 million, of which 4 million were slaves who were not eager to support the Southern cause. Some of these slaves fled to the North to claim their freedom and fight for the Union. The North was able to enlist 2 million soldiers, including almost 200,000 African Americans, while the South gathered only 900,000 soldiers. The North also had much greater manufacturing abilities, and so was able to produce more weapons, more ammunition, more uniforms, more medicine, and more shoes for its soldiers. The South, however, had an advantage in defending land it knew well; the North had to invade and crush the South into surrender, but the South merely had to defend its land until the invaders left. The South also had a proud military heritage with arguably more skilled officers than the North. The war ended on April 9, 1865, when General Robert E. Lee, leader of the Confederate forces, surrendered to U.S. General Ulysses S. Grant. The war brought an end to the institution of slavery, and emancipated, or freed, four million African Americans. It also left the South in ruins: its land burned and pillaged, its economic system shattered, and its people demoralized. Out of a nation of about 35 million people, 620,000 men were killed in the war. More Americans died in the Civil War than in any war since, including World Wars I and II.
Life as a Civil War Soldier

Henry Fleming, the main character in this novel, discovers that war is not like the romantic, daring battles that he has imagined in dreams. Most Americans came to this realization during the Civil War. At first, men rushed to enlist and bought fancy uniforms, modeled on various European nations’ uniforms. Photography was a new invention, and soldiers posed in their uniforms for portraits before heading off to war. Outside Washington, D.C., wealthy people gathered on hillsides to picnic and watch the battles unfold. This casual attitude toward war did not last long. Soon people experienced, or saw in some of the first photographs of war, the terrible death and destruction that was taking place. Life as a Civil War soldier was not romantic. Heavy artillery, or large cannons, fired explosive shells on soldiers in battle. Bullets were shaped differently than those today, and were made to shatter bone and flesh. Medicine was less advanced then, and doctors faced with a soldier shot in the arm or leg could usually only amputate the limb, not heal it. Antibiotics were not widely used, so injured men became infected. Illnesses doctors could not treat also swept through military encampments. One out of every five Northern soldiers and one out of every four Southern soldiers died during the Civil War. In some towns, a whole generation of young men seemed simply to disappear. Many of these soldiers were very young, some only fourteen or fifteen years old. Even when they were not fighting each other or fighting illness, soldiers still faced difficulties. The soldiers lived in crude camps in extreme weather conditions. They often fell short of food, and the food they did have was terrible—some of it was military rations left from the Mexican War two decades before, and soldiers complained that it was rotten and filled with vermin. Often soldiers plundered farms for food to eat. Romantic military uniforms quickly became tattered in war. The South, with its lack of manufacturing capability, was especially hard-pressed for uniforms. By the end of the war, many Southern soldiers fought barefoot and in little more than rags. The Union soldiers were only a little better off.
APPENDIX L

Excerpts from Sarah Morgan Dawson’s *A Confederate Girl’s Diary*
April 7th.

Excerpts from *A Confederate Girl's Diary* by Sarah Morgan Dawson (1842-1909), p. 4-33

Until that dreary 1861, I had no idea of sorrow or grief. . . . How I love to think of myself at that time! Not as *myself*, but as some happy, careless child who danced through life, loving God's whole world too much to love any particular one, outside of her own family. She was more childish then - yet I love her for all her folly; I can say it now, for she is as dead as though she was lying underground. Now do not imagine that Sarah has become an aged lady in the fifteen months that have elapsed since, for it is no such thing; her heart does ache occasionally, but that is a secret between her and this little rosewood furnished room; and when she gets over it, there is no one more fond of making wheelbarrows of the children, or of catching Charlie or mother by the foot and making them play lame chicken. . . . Now all this done by a young lady who remembers eighteen months ago with so much regret that she has lost so much of her high spirits - might argue that her spirits were before tremendous; and yet they were not. That other Sarah was ladylike, I am sure, in her wildest moments, but there is something hurried and boisterous in this Page 5 one's tricks that reminds me of some one who is making a merit of being jolly under depressing circumstances. No! that is not a nice Sarah now, to *my* taste.

The commencement of '61 promised much pleasure for the rest of the year, and though Secession was talked about, I do not believe any one anticipated the war that has been desolating our country ever since, with no prospect of terminating for some time to come. True the garrison was taken, but then several pleasant officers of the Louisiana army were stationed there, and made quite an agreeable addition to our small parties, and we did not think for a moment that trouble would grow out of it - at least, we girls did not. Next Louisiana seceded, but still we did not trouble ourselves with gloomy anticipations, for many strangers visited the town, and our parties, rides, and walks grew gayer and more frequent.

... April 12th.

Day before yesterday, just about this time of evening, as I came home from the graveyard, Jimmy unexpectedly came in. Ever since the 12th of February he has been waiting on the Yankees' pleasure, in the Mississippi, at all places below Columbus, and having been under fire for thirteen days at Tiptonville, Island No. 10 having surrendered Monday night; and Commodore Hollins thinking it high time to take possession of the ironclad ram at New Orleans, and give them a small party below the forts, he carried off his little aide from the McRae Tuesday morning, and left him here Thursday evening, to our infinite delight, for we felt as though we would never again see our dear little Jimmy. He has grown so tall, and stout, that it is really astonishing, considering the short time he has been away. . . . To our great distress, he jumped up from dinner, and declared he must go to the city on the very next boat. Commodore Hollins would need him, he must be at his post, etc., and in twenty minutes he was off, the rascal, before we could believe he had been here at all. There is something in his eye that reminds me of Harry, and tells me, that, like Hal, he will die young.

And these days that are going by remind me of Hal, too. I am walking in our footsteps of last year. The eighth was the day we gave him a party, on his return home. I see him so distinctly standing near the pier table, talking to Mr. Sparks, whom he had met only that morning, and who, three weeks after, had Harry's blood upon his hands. He is a murderer now, without aim or object in life, as before; with only one desire - to die - and death still flees from him, and he Dares not rid himself of life.

All those dancing there that night have undergone trial and affliction since. Father is dead, and Harry. Mr. Trezevant lies at Corinth with his skull fractured by a bullet; every young man
there has been in at least one battle since, and every woman has cried over her son, brother, or sweetheart, going away to the wars, or lying sick and wounded. And yet we danced that night, and never thought of bloodshed! The week before Louisiana seceded, Jack Wheat stayed with us, and we all liked him so much, and he thought so much of us; - and last week - a week ago today - he was killed on the battlefield of Shiloh.

... May 9th.

Our lawful (?) owners have at last arrived. About sunset, day before yesterday, the Iroquois anchored here, and a graceful young Federal stepped ashore, carrying a Yankee flag over his shoulder, and asked the way to the Mayor's office. I like the style! If we girls of Baton Rouge had been at the landing, instead of the men, that Yankee would never have insulted us by flying his flag in our faces! We would have opposed his landing except under a flag of truce, but the men let him alone, and he even found a poor Dutchman willing to show him the road!

He did not accomplish much; said a formal demand would be made next day, and asked if it was safe for the men to come ashore and buy a few necessaries, when he was assured the air of Baton Rouge was very unhealthy for Yankee soldiers at night. He promised very magnanimously not to shell us out if we did not molest him; but I notice none of them dare set their feet on terra firma, except the officer who has now called three times on the Mayor, and who is said to tremble visibly as he walks the streets.

Last evening came the demand: the town must be surrendered immediately; the Federal flag Must be raised; they would grant us the same terms they granted New Orleans. Jolly terms those were! The answer was worthy of a Southerner. It was, "The town was defenseless; if we had cannon, there were not men enough to resist; but if forty vessels lay at the landing, - it was intimated we were in their power, and more ships coming up, - we would not surrender; if they wanted, they might come and

Page 24
Take us; if they wished the Federal flag hoisted over the Arsenal, they might put it up for themselves, the town had no control over Government property." Glorious! What a pity they did not shell the town! But they are taking us at our word, and this morning they are landing at the Garrison.

"All devices, signs, and flags of the Confederacy shall be suppressed." So says Picayune Butler. Good. I devote all my red, white, and blue silk to the manufacture of Confederate flags. As soon as one is confiscated, I make another, until my ribbon is exhausted, when I will sport a duster emblazoned in high colors, "Hurra! for the Bonny blue flag!" Henceforth, I wear one pinned to my bosom - not a duster, but a little flag; the man who says take it off will have to pull it off for himself; the man who dares attempt it - well! a pistol in my pocket fills up the gap. I am capable, too.

This is a dreadful war, to make even the hearts of women so bitter! I hardly know myself these last few weeks. I, who have such a horror of bloodshed, consider even killing in self-defense murder, who cannot wish them the slightest evil, whose only prayer is to have them sent back in peace to their own country, - I talk of killing them! For what else do I wear a pistol and carving-knife? I am afraid I will try them on the first one who says an insolent word to me. Yes, and repent for it ever after in sackcloth and ashes. O! if I was only a man! Then I could don the breeches, and slay them with a will!

If some few Southern women were in the ranks, they could set the men an example they would not blush to follow. Pshaw! there are no women here! We are all men!

May 14th.

I am beginning to believe that we are even of more importance in Baton Rouge than we thought we were. It is laughable to hear the things a certain set of people, who know they can't visit us, say about the whole family. . . . When father was alive, they dared not talk about us aloud, beyond calling us the "Proud Morgans" and the "Aristocracy of Baton Rouge". . . . But now father is gone, the people imagine we are public property, to be criticized, vilified, and abused to their hearts' content . . . .
And now, because they find absurdities don't succeed, they try improbabilities. So yesterday
the town was in a ferment because it was reported the Federal officers had called on the Miss
Morgans, and

all the gentlemen were anxious to hear how they had been received. One had the grace to say,
"If they did, they received the best lesson there that they could get in town; those young ladies
would meet them with the true Southern spirit." The rest did not know; they would like to find out.

I suppose the story originated from the fact that we were unwilling to blackguard - yes, that is
the word - the Federal officers here, and would not agree with many of our friends in saying they
were liars, thieves, murderers, scoundrels, the scum of the earth, etc. Such epithets are unworthy
of ladies, I say, and do harm, rather than advance our cause. Let them be what they will, it shall
not make me less the lady; I say it is unworthy of anything except low newspaper war, such
abuse, and I will not join in.

I have a brother-in-law in the Federal army whom I love and respect as much as any one in
the world, and shall not readily agree that his being a Northerner would give him an irresistible
desire to pick my pockets, and take from him all power of telling the truth. No! There are few men
I admire more than Major Drum, and I honor him for his independence in doing what he believes
right. Let us have liberty of speech and action in our land, I say, but not gross abuse and
calumny. Shall I acknowledge that the people we so recently called our brothers are unworthy of
consideration, and are liars, cowards, dogs? Not I! If they conquer us, I

acknowledge them as a superior race; I will not say that we were conquered by cowards, for
where would that place us? It will take a brave people to gain us, and that the Northerners
undoubtedly are. I would scorn to have an inferior foe; I fight only my equals. These women may
acknowledge that cowards have won battles in which their brothers were engaged, but I, I will
ever say mine fought against brave men, and won the day. Which is most honorable?

I was never a Secessionist, for I quietly adopted father's views on political subjects without
meddling with them. But even father went over with his State, and when so many outrages were
committed by the fanatical leaders of the North, though he regretted the Union, said, "Fight to the
death for our liberty." I say so, too. I want to fight until we win the cause so many have died for. I
don't believe in Secession, but I do in Liberty. I want the South to conquer, dictate its own terms,
and go back to the Union, for I believe that, apart, inevitable ruin awaits both. It is a rope of sand,
this Confederacy, founded on the doctrine of Secession, and will not last many years - not five.
The North Cannot subdue us. We are too determined to be free. They have no right to confiscate
our property to pay debts they themselves have incurred. Death as a nation, rather than Union on
such terms. We will have our rights secured on so firm a basis that it can never be shaken. If by
power of overwhelming numbers they conquer us, it will be a barren victory over a desolate land.

We, the natives of this loved soil, will be beggars in a foreign land; we will not submit to
despotism under the garb of Liberty. The North will find herself burdened with an unparalleled
debt, with nothing to show for it except deserted towns, burning homes, a standing army which
will govern with no small caprice, and an impoverished land.

If that be treason, make the best of it!
APPENDIX M

Excerpts from *A Red Badge of Courage*
There was a youthful private who listened with eager ears to the words of the tall soldier and to the varied comments of his comrades. After receiving a fill of discussions concerning marches and attacks, he went to his hut and crawled through an intricate hole that served it as a door. He wished to be alone with some new thoughts that had lately come to him.

He lay down on a wide bunk that stretched across the end of the room. In the other end, cracker boxes were made to serve as furniture. They were grouped about the fireplace. A picture from an illustrated weekly was upon the log walls, and three rifles were paralleled on pegs. Equipments hung on handy projections, and some tin dishes lay upon a small pile of firewood. A folded tent was serving as a room. The sunlight, without, beating upon it, made it glow a light yellow shade. A small window shot an oblique square of whiter light upon the cluttered floor. The smoke from the fire at times neglected the clay chimney and wreathed into the room, and this flimsy chimney of clay and sticks made endless threats to set ablaze the whole establishment.

The youth was in a little trance of astonishment. So they were at last going to fight. On the morrow, perhaps, there would be a battle, and he would be in it. For a time he was obliged to labor to make himself believe. He could not accept with assurance an omen that he was about to mingle in one of those great affairs of the earth.

He had, of course, dreamed of battles all his life—of vague and bloody conflicts that had thrilled him with their sweep and fire. In visions he had seen himself in many struggles. He had imagined peoples secure in the shadow of his eagle-eyed prowess. But awake he had regarded battles as crimson blotches on the pages of the past. He had put them as things of the bygone with his thought-images of heavy crowns and high castles. There was a portion of the world’s history which he had regarded as the time of wars, but it, he thought, had been long gone over the horizon and had disappeared forever.

From his home his youthful eyes had looked upon the war in his own country with distrust. It must be some sort of a play affair. He had long despair of witnessing a Greeklike struggle. Such would be no more, he had said. Men were better, or more timid. Secular and religious education had effaced the throat-grappling instinct, or else firm finance held in check the passions.

He had burned several times to enlist. Tales of great movements shook the land. They might not be distinctly Homeric, but there seemed to be much glory in them. He had read of marches, sieges, conflicts, and he had longed to see it all. His busy mind had drawn for him large pictures extravagant in color, lurid with breathless deeds.

But his mother had discouraged him. She had affected to look with some contempt upon the quality of his war ardor and patriotism. She could calmly seat herself and with no apparent difficulty give him many hundreds of reasons why he was of vastly more importance on the farm than on the field of battle. She had had certain ways of expression that told him that her statements on the subject came from a deep conviction. Moreover, on her side, was his belief that her ethical motive in the argument was impregnable.
At last, however, he had made firm rebellion against this yellow light thrown upon the color of his ambitions. The newspapers, the gossip of the village, his own picturings, had aroused him to an uncheckable degree. They were in truth fighting finely down there. Almost every day the newspapers printed accounts of a decisive victory. One night, as he lay in bed, the winds had carried to him the clangoring of the church bell as some enthusiast jerked the rope frantically to tell the twisted news of a great battle. This voice of the people rejoicing in the night had made him shiver in a prolonged ecstasy of excitement. Later, he had gone down to his mother’s room and had spoken thus: “Ma, I’m going to enlist.”

“Henry, don’t you be a fool,” his mother had replied. She had then covered her face with the quilt. There was an end to the matter for that night.

Nevertheless, the next morning he had gone to a town that was near his mother’s farm and had enlisted in a company that was forming there. When he had returned home his mother was milking the brindle cow. Four others stood waiting. “Ma, I’ve enlisted,” he had said to her diffidently. There was a short silence. “The Lord’s will be done, Henry,” she had finally replied, and had then continued to milk the brindle cow.

When he had stood in the doorway with his soldier’s clothes on his back, and with the light of excitement and expectancy in his eyes almost defeating the glow of regret for the home bonds, he had seen two tears leaving their trails on his mother’s scarred cheeks.

[...]
The youth thought the damp fog of early morning moved from the rush of a great body of troops. From the distance came a sudden spatter of firing.

He was bewildered. As he ran with his comrades he strenuously tried to think, but all he knew was that if he fell down those coming behind would tread upon him. All his faculties seemed to be needed to guide him over and past obstructions. He felt carried along by a mob.

The sun spread disclosing rays, and, one by one, regiments burst into view like armed men just born of the earth. The youth perceived that the time had come. He was about to be measured. For a moment he felt in the face of his great trial like a babe, and the flesh over his heart seemed very thin. He seized time to look about him calculatingly.

But he instantly saw that it would be impossible for him to escape from the regiment. It inclosed him. And there were iron laws of tradition and law on four sides. He was in a moving box. As he perceived this fact it occurred to him that he had never wished to come to the war. He had not enlisted of his free will. He had been dragged by the merciless government. And now they were taking him out to be slaughtered.

The regiment slid down a bank and wallowed across a little stream. The mournful current moved slowly on, and from the water, shaded black, some white bubble eyes looked at the men.

As they climbed the hill on the farther side artillery began to boom. Here the youth forgot many things as he felt a sudden impulse of curiosity. He scrambled up the bank with a speed that could not be exceeded by a bloodthirsty man.

He expected a battle scene.

There were some little fields girted and squeezed by a forest. Spread over the grass and in among the tree trunks, he could see knots and waving lines of skirmishers who were running hither and thither and firing at the landscape. A dark battle line lay upon a sunstruck clearing that gleamed orange color. A flag fluttered.
Other regiments floundered up the bank. The brigade was formed in line of battle, and after a pause started slowly through the woods in the rear of the receding skirmishers, who were continually melting into the scene to appear again farther on. They were always busy as bees, deeply absorbed in their little combats.

The youth tried to observe everything. He did not use care to avoid trees and branches, and his forgotten feet were constantly knocking against stones or getting entangled in briers. He was aware that these battalions with their commotions were woven red and startling into the gentle fabric of softened greens and browns. It looked to be a wrong place for a battle field.

The skirmishers in advance fascinated him. Their shots into thickets and at distant and prominent trees spoke to him of tragedies—hidden, mysterious, solemn. Once the line encountered the body of a dead soldier. He lay upon his back staring at the sky. He was dressed in an awkward suit of yellowish brown. The youth could see that the soles of his shoes had been worn to the thinness of writing paper, and from a great rent in one the dead foot projected piteously. And it was as if fate had betrayed the soldier. In death it exposed to his enemies that poverty which in life he had perhaps concealed from his friends.

The ranks opened covertly to avoid the corpse. The invulnerable dead man forced a way for himself. The youth looked keenly at the ashen face. The wind raised the tawny beard. It moved as if a hand were stroking it. He vaguely desired to walk around and around the body and stare; the impulse of the living to try to read in dead eyes the answer to the Question.

During the march the ardor which the youth had acquired when out of view of the field rapidly faded to nothing. His curiosity was quite easily satisfied. If an intense scene had caught him with its wild swing as he came to the top of the bank, he might have gone roaring on. This advance upon Nature was too calm. He had opportunity to reflect. He had time in which to wonder about himself and to attempt to probe his sensations.

Absurd ideas took hold upon him. He thought that he did not relish the landscape. It threatened him. A coldness swept over his back, and it is true that his trousers felt to him that they were no fit for his legs at all.

A house standing placidly in distant fields had to him an ominous look. The shadows of the woods were formidable. He was certain that in this vista there lurked fierce-eyed hosts. The swift thought came to him that the generals did not know what they were about. It was all a trap. Suddenly those close forests would bristle with rifle barrels. Ironlike brigades would appear in the rear. They were all going to be sacrificed. The generals were stupids. The enemy would presently swallow the whole command. He glared about him, expecting to see the stealthy approach of his death.

He thought that he must break from the ranks and harangue his comrades. They must not all be killed like pigs; and he was sure it would come to pass unless they were informed of these dangers.
APPENDIX N

Satire Group Assessment
## Group Satire Rubric

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<th>Developing</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Strong</th>
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<td>Contains a moral lesson.</td>
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<td>Contains at least one type of humor.</td>
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<td>About a shared standard of human behavior.</td>
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### Comments:

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Names:

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Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX O

Week 2 Reading Assessment
Name: ______________________________

_The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn_: Week 2 Close Reading Quiz (Chapters 9-15)

Directions: Read each of the following passages and answer the context questions. Then, on the back, you will respond to writing prompts about the character Jim.

**Passage 1:**

“Now you think it’s bad luck; but what did you say when I fetched in the snake-skin that I found on the top of the ridge day before yesterday? You said it was the worst bad luck in the world to touch a snake-skin with my hands. Well, here’s your bad luck! We’ve raked in all this truck and eight dollars besides. I wish we could have some bad luck like this every day, Jim.”

“Never you mind, honey, never you mind. Don’t you git too peart. It’s a-comin’. Mind I tell you, it’s a-comin’.”

Context: __________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

**Passage 2:**

“Blame de point! I reck’n I knows what I knows. En mine you, de real pint is down furder—it’s down deeper. It lays in de way Sollermun was raised. You take a man dat’s got on’y one or two chillen; is dat man gwyne to be waseful o’ chillen? No, he ain’t; he can’t ‘ford it. He know how to value ‘em. But you take a man dat’s got ‘bout five million chillen runnin’ roun’ de house, en it’s diffunt. He as soon chop a chile in two as a cat. Dey’s plenty mo’. A chile er two, mo’ er less, warn’t no consekens to Sollermun, dad fatch him!”

Context: __________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

**Passage 3:**

Jim looked at the trash, and then looked at me, and back at the trash again. He had got the dream fixed so strong in his head that he couldn’t seem to shake it loose and get the facts back into its place again right away. But when he did get the thing straightened around he looked at me steady without ever smiling, and says:

“What do dey stan’ for? I’se gwyne to tell you. When I got all wore out wid work, en wid de callin’ for you, en went to sleep, my heart wuz mos’ broke bekase you wuz los’, en I didn’ k’yer no’ mo’ what become er me en de raf’. En when I wake up en fine you back agin, all safe en soun’, de tears come, en I could a got down on my knees en kiss yo’ foot, I’s so thankful. En all you wuz thinkin’ ‘bout wuz how you could make a fool uv ole Jim wid a lie. Dat truck dah is trash; en trash is what people is dat puts dirt on de head er dey fren’s en makes ‘em ashamed.”

Then he got up slow and walked to the wigwam, and went in there without saying anything but that. But that was enough. It made me feel so mean I could almost kissed his foot to get him to take it back.

It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger; but I done it, and I warn’t ever sorry for it afterwards, neither. I didn’t do him no more mean tricks, and I wouldn’t done that one if I’d a knowed it would make him feel that way.

Context: __________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

Julia Q. Moe, 2016
Part II: Writing Response
Directions: Discuss Jim’s perspective and character. Use at least one example from the reading homework to argue each of your points.

1. What is Jim like, as a character? What from the text supports your response?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
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2. What do we know about Jim? How might his background affect him?
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3. How would the narrative change, if told from Jim’s perspective? Give at least one example.
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Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX P

Group Communication Notes
Small Group Communication

- Interactions among three or more people who are mutually connected through a common purpose, mutual influence, and a shared identity.

Your group will be successful if you have...

1. clear and inspiring shared goals
2. a results-driven structure
3. competent team members
4. a collaborative climate
5. high standards for performance
6. external support and recognition
7. ethical and accountable leadership.
Advantages of Small Groups

• shared decision making
• shared resources
• synergy
  ○ potential for gains in performance or heightened quality of interactions when complementary members or member characteristics are added to existing ones.
  ○ Final group product can be better than what any individual could have produced alone.
• exposure to diversity and broaden perspectives

A Negative: Social Loafing

• Group members take advantage of the anonymity of a group and engage in social loafing.
• Social loafers expect that no one will notice their behaviors or that others will pick up their slack.

DON’T BE A SOCIAL LOAFER.
Small Group Development

Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, and Adjourning

Forming

• group members begin to reduce uncertainty associated with new relationships and/or new tasks through initial interactions that lay the foundation for later group dynamics.

• group members engage in socially polite exchanges to help reduce uncertainty and gain familiarity with new members. Even though their early interactions may seem unproductive, they lay the groundwork for cohesion and other group dynamics that will play out in later stages.
**Storming**

- Conflict emerges as people begin to perform their various roles, have their ideas heard, and negotiate where they fit in the group’s structure.

- Conflict develops when some group members aren’t satisfied with the role that they or others are playing or decisions regarding the purpose or procedures of the group.

- Although this sounds negative— it can be positive and productive!

---

**Norming**

- Practices and expectations of the group are solidified, which leads to stability, productivity, and cohesion within the group.

- Norms set the tone for what group members ought to do and how they ought to behave.

- Leaders that began to emerge have typically gained the support of other group members, and group identity begins to solidify.
Performing

- group members work relatively smoothly toward the completion of a task or achievement of a purpose.

- Glitches in performance may lead the group to previous stages of the group development.

One way to build group cohesion during the performing stage is to set short-term attainable goals.

Adjourning

- Adjourning occurs when a group dissolves because it has completed its purpose or goal, membership is declined and support for the group no longer exists, or because of some other internal or external cause.

- Some groups live indefinitely and do not experience this stage. Others experience so much conflict in the storming and performing stages that they dissolve before they can complete their task.

- Adjourning can be difficult if social relationships strengthened.
APPENDIX Q

Martin Luther King Jr.'s *I Have a Dream*
I Have a Dream by Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered 28 August 1963, at the Lincoln Memorial in D.C.

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the "unalienable Rights" of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note, insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds."

But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. And so, we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.

We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of Now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. And those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. And there will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The
whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright
day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people, who stand on the warm threshold
which leads into the palace of justice: In the process of gaining our rightful place, we
must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by
drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on
the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to
degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights
of meeting physical force with soul force.

The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us
to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their
presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny.
And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom.

We cannot walk alone.

And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead.

We cannot turn back.

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?"
We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of
police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of
travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. *We
cannot be satisfied as long as the negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a
larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their self-
hood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating: "For Whites Only."* We cannot be
satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes
he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied
until "justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream."

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations.
Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. And some of you have come from
areas where your quest -- quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution
and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative
suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back
to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go
back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that
somehow this situation can and will be changed.

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair, I say to you today, my friends.

And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream.
It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.
I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification" -- one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."

This is our hope, and this is the faith that I go back to the South with.

With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

And this will be the day -- this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning:

*My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing.*
*Land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrim's pride,*
*From every mountainside, let freedom ring!*

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true.

And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire.
Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York.
Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.
Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado.
Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California.

But not only that:
Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia.
Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee.
Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi.
From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual:

_Free at last! Free at last!_
_Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!_
APPENDIX R

Excerpt from Malcolm X’s *The Ballot or the Bullet*
Mr. Moderator, Brother Lomax, brothers and sisters, friends and enemies: I just can't believe everyone in here is a friend, and I don't want to leave anybody out. The question tonight, as I understand it, is "The Negro Revolt, and Where Do We Go From Here?" or What Next?" In my little humble way of understanding it, it points toward either the ballot or the bullet.

Before we try and explain what is meant by the ballot or the bullet, I would like to clarify something concerning myself. I'm still a Muslim; my religion is still Islam. That's my personal belief. Just as Adam Clayton Powell is a Christian minister who heads the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York, but at the same time takes part in the political struggles to try and bring about rights to the black people in this country; and Dr. Martin Luther King is a Christian minister down in Atlanta, Georgia, who heads another organization fighting for the civil rights of black people in this country; and Reverend Galamison, I guess you've heard of him, is another Christian minister in New York who has been deeply involved in the school boycotts to eliminate segregated education; well, I myself am a minister, not a Christian minister, but a Muslim minister; and I believe in action on all fronts by whatever means necessary.

Although I'm still a Muslim, I'm not here tonight to discuss my religion. I'm not here to try and change your religion. I'm not here to argue or discuss anything that we differ about, because it's time for us to submerge our differences and realize that it is best for us to first see that we have the same problem, a common problem, a problem that will make you catch hell whether you're a Baptist, or a Methodist, or a Muslim, or a nationalist. Whether you're educated or illiterate, whether you live on the boulevard or in the alley, you're going to catch hell just like I am. We're all in the same boat and we all are going to catch the same hell from the same man. He just happens to be a white man. All of us have suffered here, in this country, political oppression at the hands of the white man, economic exploitation at the hands of the white man, and social degradation at the hands of the white man.

Now in speaking like this, it doesn't mean that we're anti-white, but it does mean we're anti-exploitation, we're anti-degradation, we're anti-oppression. And if the white man doesn't want us to be anti-him, let him stop oppressing and exploiting and degrading us. Whether we are Christians or Muslims or nationalists or agnostics or atheists, we must first learn to forget our differences. If we have differences, let us differ in the closet; when we come out in front, let us not have anything to argue about until we get finished arguing with the man. [...]

If we don't do something real soon, I think you'll have to agree that we're going to be forced either to use the ballot or the bullet. It's one or the other in 1964. It isn't that time is running out -- time has run out!

1964 threatens to be the most explosive year America has ever witnessed. The most explosive year. Why? It's also a political year. It's the year when all of the white politicians will be back in the so-called Negro community jiving you and me for some
votes. The year when all of the white political crooks will be right back in your and my community with their false promises, building up our hopes for a letdown, with their trickery and their treachery, with their false promises which they don't intend to keep. As they nourish these dissatisfactions, it can only lead to one thing, an explosion; and now we have the type of black man on the scene in America today -- I'm sorry, Brother Lomax -- who just doesn't intend to turn the other cheek any longer.

Don't let anybody tell you anything about the odds are against you. If they draft you, they send you to Korea and make you face 800 million Chinese. If you can be brave over there, you can be brave right here. These odds aren't as great as those odds. And if you fight here, you will at least know what you're fighting for.

I'm not a politician, not even a student of politics; in fact, I'm not a student of much of anything. I'm not a Democrat. I'm not a Republican, and I don't even consider myself an American. If you and I were Americans, there'd be no problem. Those Honkies that just got off the boat, they're already Americans; Polacks are already Americans; the Italian refugees are already Americans. Everything that came out of Europe, every blue-eyed thing, is already an American. And as long as you and I have been over here, we aren't Americans yet.

Well, I am one who doesn't believe in deluding myself. I'm not going to sit at your table and watch you eat, with nothing on my plate, and call myself a diner. Sitting at the table doesn't make you a diner, unless you eat some of what's on that plate. Being here in America doesn't make you an American. Being born here in America doesn't make you an American. Why, if birth made you American, you wouldn't need any legislation; you wouldn't need any amendments to the Constitution; you wouldn't be faced with civil-rights filibustering in Washington, D.C., right now. They don't have to pass civil-rights legislation to make a Polack an American.

No, I'm not an American. I'm one of the 22 million black people who are the victims of Americanism. One of the 22 million black people who are the victims of democracy, nothing but disguised hypocrisy. So, I'm not standing here speaking to you as an American, or a patriot, or a flag-saluter, or a flag-waver -- no, not I. I'm speaking as a victim of this American system. And I see America through the eyes of the victim. I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare.

These 22 million victims are waking up. Their eyes are coming open. They're beginning to see what they used to only look at. They're becoming politically mature. They are realizing that there are new political trends from coast to coast. As they see these new political trends, it's possible for them to see that every time there's an election the races are so close that they have to have a recount. They had to recount in Massachusetts to see who was going to be governor, it was so close. It was the same way in Rhode Island, in Minnesota, and in many other parts of the country. And the same with Kennedy and Nixon when they ran for president. It was so close they had to count all over again. Well, what does this mean? It means that when white people are evenly divided, and black people have a bloc of votes of their own, it is left up to them to determine who's going to sit in the White House and who's going to be in the dog house.
It was the black man's vote that put the present administration in Washington, D.C. Your vote, your dumb vote, your ignorant vote, your wasted vote put in an administration in Washington, D.C., that has seen fit to pass every kind of legislation imaginable, saving you until last, then filibustering on top of that. And your and my leaders have the audacity to run around clapping their hands and talk about how much progress we're making. And what a good president we have. If he wasn't good in Texas, he sure can't be good in Washington, D.C. Because Texas is a lynch state. It is in the same breath as Mississippi, no different; only they lynch you in Texas with a Texas accent and lynch you in Mississippi with a Mississippi accent. And these Negro leaders have the audacity to go and have some coffee in the White House with a Texan, a Southern cracker -- that's all he is -- and then come out and tell you and me that he's going to be better for us because, since he's from the South, he knows how to deal with the Southerners. What kind of logic is that? Let Eastland be president, he's from the South too. He should be better able to deal with them than Johnson.

So it's time in 1964 to wake up. And when you see them coming up with that kind of conspiracy, let them know your eyes are open. And let them know you -- something else that's wide open too. It's got to be the ballot or the bullet. The ballot or the bullet. If you're afraid to use an expression like that, you should get on out of the country; you should get back in the alley. They get all the Negro vote, and after they get it, the Negro gets nothing in return. All they did when they got to Washington was give a few big Negroes big jobs. Those big Negroes didn't need big jobs, they already had jobs. That's camouflage, that's trickery, that's treachery, window-dressing. [...] 

Look at it the way it is. What alibis do they use, since they control Congress and the Senate? What alibi do they use when you and I ask, "Well, when are you going to keep your promise?" They blame the Dixiecrats. What is a Dixiecrat? A Democrat. A Dixiecrat is nothing but a Democrat in disguise. The titular head of the Democrats is also the head of the Dixiecrats, because the Dixiecrats are a part of the Democratic Party. The Democrats have never kicked the Dixiecrats out of the party. The Dixiecrats bolted themselves once, but the Democrats didn't put them out. Imagine, these lowdown Southern segregationists put the Northern Democrats down. But the Northern Democrats have never put the Dixiecrats down. No, look at that thing the way it is. They have got a con game going on, a political con game, and you and I are in the middle. It's time for you and me to wake up and start looking at it like it is, and trying to understand it like it is; and then we can deal with it like it is.

The Dixiecrats in Washington, D.C., control the key committees that run the government. The only reason the Dixiecrats control these committees is because they have seniority. The only reason they have seniority is because they come from states where Negroes can't vote. This is not even a government that's based on democracy. It is not a government that is made up of representatives of the people. Half of the people in the South can't even vote. Eastland is not even supposed to be in Washington. Half of the senators and congressmen who occupy these key positions in Washington, D.C., are there illegally, are there unconstitutionally.
I was in Washington, D.C., a week ago Thursday, when they were debating whether or not they should let the bill come onto the floor. And in the back of the room where the Senate meets, there's a huge map of the United States, and on that map it shows the location of Negroes throughout the country. And it shows that the Southern section of the country, the states that are most heavily concentrated with Negroes, are the ones that have senators and congressmen standing up filibustering and doing all other kinds of trickery to keep the Negro from being able to vote. This is pitiful. But it's not pitiful for us any longer; it's actually pitiful for the white man, because soon now, as the Negro awakens a little more and sees the vise that he's in, sees the bag that he's in, sees the real game that he's in, then the Negro's going to develop a new tactic.

These senators and congressmen actually violate the constitutional amendments that guarantee the people of that particular state or county the right to vote. And the Constitution itself has within it the machinery to expel any representative from a state where the voting rights of the people are violated. You don't even need new legislation. Any person in Congress right now, who is there from a state or a district where the voting rights of the people are violated, that particular person should be expelled from Congress. And when you expel him, you've removed one of the obstacles in the path of any real meaningful legislation in this country. In fact, when you expel them, you don't need new legislation, because they will be replaced by black representatives from counties and districts where the black man is in the majority, not in the minority. [...]

I say again, I'm not anti-Democrat, I'm not anti-Republican, I'm not anti-anything. I'm just questioning their sincerity, and some of the strategy that they've been using on our people by promising them promises that they don't intend to keep. When you keep the Democrats in power, you're keeping the Dixiecrats in power. I doubt that my good Brother Lomax will deny that. A vote for a Democrat is a vote for a Dixiecrat. That's why, in 1964, it's time now for you and me to become more politically mature and realize what the ballot is for; what we're supposed to get when we cast a ballot; and that if we don't cast a ballot, it's going to end up in a situation where we're going to have to cast a bullet. It's either a ballot or a bullet.

In the North, they do it a different way. They have a system that's known as gerrymandering, whatever that means. It means when Negroes become too heavily concentrated in a certain area, and begin to gain too much political power, the white man comes along and changes the district lines. You may say, "Why do you keep saying white man?" Because it's the white man who does it. I haven't ever seen any Negro changing any lines. They don't let him get near the line. It's the white man who does this. And usually, it's the white man who grins at you the most, and pats you on the back, and is supposed to be your friend. He may be friendly, but he's not your friend.

So, what I'm trying to impress upon you, in essence, is this: You and I in America are faced not with a segregationist conspiracy, we're faced with a government conspiracy. Everyone who's filibustering is a senator -- that's the government. Everyone who's finagling in Washington, D.C., is a congressman -- that's the government. You don't have anybody putting blocks in your path but people who are a part of the government. The
same government that you go abroad to fight for and die for is the government that is in a conspiracy to deprive you of your voting rights, deprive you of your economic opportunities, deprive you of decent housing, deprive you of decent education. You don't need to go to the employer alone, it is the government itself, the government of America, that is responsible for the oppression and exploitation and degradation of black people in this country. And you should drop it in their lap. This government has failed the Negro. This so-called democracy has failed the Negro. And all these white liberals have definitely failed the Negro.

How can you thank a man for giving you what's already yours? How then can you thank him for giving you only part of what's already yours? You haven't even made progress, if what's being given to you, you should have had already. That's not progress. And I love my Brother Lomax, the way he pointed out we're right back where we were in 1954. We're not even as far up as we were in 1954. We're behind where we were in 1954. There's more segregation now than there was in 1954. There's more racial animosity, more racial hatred, more racial violence today in 1964, than there was in 1954. Where is the progress?

And now you're facing a situation where the young Negro's coming up. They don't want to hear that "turn the-other-cheek" stuff, no. In Jacksonville, those were teenagers, they were throwing Molotov cocktails. Negroes have never done that before. But it shows you there's a new deal coming in. There's new thinking coming in. There's new strategy coming in. It'll be Molotov cocktails this month, hand grenades next month, and something else next month. It'll be ballots, or it'll be bullets. It'll be liberty, or it will be death. The only difference about this kind of death -- it'll be reciprocal. [...] 

The black nationalists, those whose philosophy is black nationalism, in bringing about this new interpretation of the entire meaning of civil rights, look upon it as meaning, as Brother Lomax has pointed out, equality of opportunity. Well, we're justified in seeking civil rights, if it means equality of opportunity, because all we're doing there is trying to collect for our investment. Our mothers and fathers invested sweat and blood. Three hundred and ten years we worked in this country without a dime in return -- I mean without a dime in return. You let the white man walk around here talking about how rich this country is, but you never stop to think how it got rich so quick. It got rich because you made it rich.

You take the people who are in this audience right now. They're poor. We're all poor as individuals. Our weekly salary individually amounts to hardly anything. But if you take the salary of everyone in here collectively, it'll fill up a whole lot of baskets. It's a lot of wealth. If you can collect the wages of just these people right here for a year, you'll be rich -- richer than rich. When you look at it like that, think how rich Uncle Sam had to become, not with this handful, but millions of black people. Your and my mother and father, who didn't work an eight-hour shift, but worked from "can't see" in the morning until "can't see" at night, and worked for nothing, making the white man rich, making Uncle Sam rich. This is our investment. This is our contribution, our blood.
APPENDIX S

Image of Jim Crow
APPENDIX T

“Jump Jim Crow” Lyrics
OLD JIM CROW'S come again, as you must all know,
And when they come you run to jump Jim Crow.

I'm going to England, as you may all know,
I'm going to jump Jim Crow.

I'm going to jump Jim Crow,
I'm going to jump Jim Crow.

I'm going to jump Jim Crow,
I'm going to jump Jim Crow.

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APPENDIX U

Counternarrative Rubric
Jim’s Counternarrative

Directions: A counternarrative is defined as “a student-created text that presents a topic from a nonmainstream perspective” (Behrman, 2006, p. 494). Your job is to create a counternarrative for the character of Jim during one part of his adventure with Huck. You will be graded on the following rubric, with a strong emphasis on using the text as a basis for your writing.

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Comments:
APPENDIX V

Week 3 Reading Assessment
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: Week 3 Close Reading Quiz (Chapters 16-22)

Directions: Read each of the following passages and answer the context questions. Then, on the back, you will respond to prompts about different perspectives.

Passage 1:
They went off and I got aboard the raft, feeling bad and low, because I knowed very well I had done wrong, and I see it warn’t no use for me to try to learn to do right; a body that don’t get started right when he’s little ain’t got no show—when the pinch comes there ain’t nothing to back him up and keep him to his work, and so he gets beat. Then I thought a minute, and says to myself, hold on; s’pose you’d a done right and give Jim up, would you felt better than what you do now? No, says I, I’d feel bad—I’d feel just the same way I do now. Well, then, says I, what’s the use you learning to do right when it’s troublesome to do right and ain’t no trouble to do wrong, and the wages is just the same? I was stuck. I couldn’t answer that. So I reckoned I wouldn’t bother no more about it, but after this always do whichever come handiest at the time.

Context:_______________________________________________________________________
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Passage 2:
It didn’t take me long to make up my mind that these liars warn’t no kings nor dukes at all, but just low-down humbugs and frauds. But I never said nothing, never let on; kept it to myself; it’s the best way; then you don’t have no quarrels, and don’t get into no trouble. If they wanted us to call them kings and dukes, I hadn’t no objections, ‘long as it would keep peace in the family; and it warn’t no use to tell Jim, so I didn’t tell him. If I never learnt nothing else out of pap, I learnt that the best way to get along with his kind of people is to let them have their own way.

Context:_______________________________________________________________________
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Passage 3:
Somebody sings out: “Boggs!”
I looked over there to see who said it, and it was that Colonel Sherburn. He was standing perfectly still in the street, and had a pistol raised in his right hand—not aiming it, but holding it out with the barrel tilted up towards the sky. The same second I see a young girl coming on the run, and two men with her. Boggs and the men turned round to see who called him, and when they see the pistol the men jumped to one side, and the pistol-barrel come down slow and steady to a level—both barrels cocked. Boggs throws up both of his hands and says, “O Lord, don’t shoot!” Bang! goes the first shot, and he staggers back, clawing at the air—bang! goes the second one, and he tumbles backwards on to the ground, heavy and solid, with his arms spread out. That young girl screamed out and comes rushing, and down she throws herself on her father, crying, and saying, “Oh, he’s killed him, he’s killed him!”

Context:_______________________________________________________________________
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Julia Q. Moe, 2016
Part II: Mini-Essay Response

Directions: This week, choose one perspective that we do not hear and write from it to describe one of the novel’s events. Some ideas might be Boggs’ daughter, the duke, the king, etc.

1. Which character’s perspective are you writing from? __________________
2. What event(s) are you describing: __________________________________________

Other questions to consider:
• What is this character like? How does she/he act? Use examples from the reading to prove this point.
• What has affected this character in the reading assignment?
• How would this character react? Why would she/he react that way? How is it different from Huck’s point of view?

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APPENDIX W

Personal Narrative Assignment Sheet
Personal Narrative

Directions: You will be crafting a story about the voice you bring to the world—one with your own unique perspective. You may use any point in time in your life to write about, but it should be focused on a specific moment. Perhaps consider a time when you learned something new, either about you or the world around you. Use the texts we have been reading, including *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, to set up your writing.

Remember that this is a narrative story and should include your voice, as well as specific details setting up the scene you choose to include. Be prepared to share your story with the class. You will be graded on our holistic writing rubric.

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Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX X

Holistic Writing Rubric
Name: ___________________________  

**Writing Evaluation Rubric**

**Strong** – exceptional; above expectations  
**Proficient** – shows control and skill; many strengths present  
**Developing** - strengths and weaknesses are about equal; first-draft stage  
**Not Yet** - getting started, but the result is unclear, struggling, tentative; writer is searching and exploring

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<td>Identifies the focus of the paper clearly (thesis statement).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Composes a paper that is logically sequenced and well-organized with topic sentences so that the reader may move easily through text.</td>
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<td>Provides an obvious and inviting introduction that draws the reader in. (Includes attention getter, thesis, and plan of coherence).</td>
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<td>Provides a conclusion that gives closure and resolution.</td>
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<td>Includes thoughtful transitions between sentences, paragraphs and sections.</td>
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<td>Connects with audience through interesting topic focus and relevant details that reveal the writer’s ideas or points of view.</td>
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<td>Demonstrates standard spelling, punctuation and grammar.</td>
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<td>Cites sources accurately throughout the paper.</td>
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<td>Formats paper according to requirements.</td>
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APPENDIX Y

Hansberry Focus Questions
Lorraine Hansberry’s “The Black Revolution and the White Backlash”
at New York City’s Town Hall, sponsored by the Association of Artists for Freedom (15 June 1964)
Focus Questions

1. What is the “stall-in” she refers to?

2. What does the court case Hansberry v. Lee decide?

3. What happened in 1619?

4. What is the difference she is making between a liberal and a radical?

5. What is Hansberry’s message to her audience? Use evidence from the text.
APPENDIX Z

Wilkins Speech Questions
Roy Wilkins’ Speech on the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (2 April 1968)

Focus Questions

1. What was the “President’s Commission on Civil Disorders”?
   a. Why was it formed?
   b. What did it find out?
   c. What was the President’s reaction to the findings?

2. What happened in the year 1619?

3. What proof does Wilkins use to prove that there is racism in America in paragraphs 4 and 5?

4. What happened to cause the 1967 riots?

5. What does he call “hunting licenses” in paragraph 11?

6. What does it mean to “sacrifice the rule of law in the name of order” in paragraph 13?

7. What are three of his arguments against the militarization of police? Which do you find most compelling?

8. What does he call upon the media to do?

Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX AA

Chisholm Speech Questions
Shirley Chisholm’s Speech at Howard University (21 April 1969)
Focus Questions

1. How does she define “Black Power”?

2. How is it different than “White Power”?

3. What is the “factionalism” she is talking about in paragraph 17?

4. What does “Power concedes nothing” mean?

5. Based on our previous readings, would she support the ideas of Martin Luther King Jr. or Malcolm X more? What evidence supports your thinking?

6. What are three solutions Chisholm suggests?

7. Of those three, which do you find the most interesting or compelling? Why?

8. How do you think black people are asked to hide their identity, as she suggests in paragraph 30?

9. What word or phrase does she repeat in the last four paragraphs? What effect might it have on listeners?

10. What is her message to the youthful audience?

11. Based on the reading and these questions, what is a theme she intends?

Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX BB

Week 4 Reading Assessment
Then he turns around, blubbery, and makes a lot of idiotic signs to the duke on his hands, and blamed if he didn't drop a carpet-bag and bust out a-crying. If they warn't the beatenest lot, them two frauds, that ever I struck. Well, the men gathered around and sympathized with them, and said all sorts of kind things to them, and carried their carpet-bags up the hill for them, and let them lean on them and cry, and told the king all about his brother's last moments, and the king he told it all over again on his hands to the duke, and both of them took on about that dead tanner like they'd lost the twelve disciples. Well, if ever I struck anything like it, I'm a nigger. It was enough to make a body ashamed of the human race.

Context: ___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
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____________________________________________________________________________

When we got to the house the street in front of it was packed, and the three girls was standing in the door. Mary Jane was red-headed, but that don't make no difference, she was most awful beautiful, and her face and her eyes was all lit up like glory, she was so glad her uncles was come. The king he spread his arms, and Mary Jane she jumped for them, and the hare-lip jumped for the duke, and there they had it! Everybody most, leastways women, cried for joy to see them meet again at last and have such good times.

Context: ___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
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"Well, when my niece give it to me to keep for her I took and hid it inside o' the straw tick o' my bed, not wishin' to bank it for the few days we'd be here, and considerin' the bed a safe place, we not bein' used to niggers, and suppos'n' 'em honest, like servants in England. The niggers stole it the very next mornin' after I had went down stairs; and when I sold 'em I hadn't missed the money yit, so they got clean away with it. My servant here k'n tell you 'bout it, gentlemen."

Context: ___________________________________________________________________
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Julia Q. Moe, 2016
Part II: Mini-Essay Response
Directions: This week, your job is to read one of the passages from a resistant perspective (based on gender, class, race, culture, etc.). Then, write about the perspective you read from. Feel free to use the context you know from the novel to add to your ideas.
Passage #: _____
Resistant perspective: ____________________
Writing in perspective:
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APPENDIX CC

Action Research Assignment
Student Action Research Project

Directions: Alone or in a group of no more than four students, identify one or two questions you’d like to explore the answer to. This question should be focused on how to add voice to a perspective that America usually ignores or silences. You will conduct research to answer your question, come up with a way to inform others of the research, and present the information to the class (and, possibly, the school!). You will first need to identify your group and come up with the question (or questions) you’d like to explore. As you begin researching, make sure you keep track of your sources and what information came from each. Projects will be showcased in our flag hallway upon completion.

Requirements:

• Question(s):
  o Approved? _____________ (teacher signature)
  • Individual: completed KWHL chart.
  • Group: Bibliography with at least three outside sources.
  • Group: completed Reflection Questions (below). These are your focus questions for your research and your class presentation. **Answers numbers 1-3 before you begin research.**
  • Group: Presentation that **includes a poster** displaying your information (3-5 minutes).
  • Group: Action to solve problem (Reddit post, Facebook group, school campaign, etc.).

Reflection Questions:

1. Why did you decide on the question above?
2. How do you plan on researching about these voices? (H!)
3. How do you plan on giving those perspectives a voice?
4. In what way are the voices you are speaking for silenced? (How is the power system set up?) **You need to use outside research to answer this question.**
5. What does your research show is the best way to help? **You need to use outside research to answer this question.**

Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX DD

Action Research Project Rubric
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<td><strong>Ideas and Content</strong></td>
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<td>Identifies the research question(s) clearly.</td>
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<td>Answers the reflection questions thoroughly.</td>
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<td>Presentation is logically sequenced and well organized.</td>
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<td>Provides clear steps for audience to follow.</td>
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<td>Includes thoughtful transitions between ideas.</td>
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<td>Includes a poster.</td>
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<td>Gives a clear, strong voice (or how to achieve one) for those without.</td>
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<td>Includes at least three outside sources.</td>
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Adapted by Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX EE

“Black Lives Matter and America’s Long History of Resisting Civil Rights Protesters”
Black Lives Matter and America’s long history of resisting civil rights protesters

By Elahe Izadi April 19, 2016 at 7:00 AM in The Washington Post

Protesters at the courthouse in Selma, Ala., on Feb. 5, 1965. More than 400 demonstrators were arrested and marched off to a compound. (Bill Hudson/AP file)

One year ago this week, protests erupted in Baltimore following the death of Freddie Gray in police custody. After yet another high-profile death of an unarmed black man connected to police, there were riots, peaceful demonstrations and proclamations from activists that black lives matter.

The decentralized Black Lives Matter movement burst onto the national scene following the 2014 police shooting of an unarmed black teenager, Michael Brown, in Ferguson, Mo. Since then, activists have protested police brutality by stopping Black Friday sales, shutting down rail stations and becoming a fixture on the presidential campaign trail. They have disrupted Bernie Sanders, confronted Hillary Clinton and protested Donald Trump, leading to tense confrontations and violent reactions.

For these demonstrations, Black Lives Matter activists have received plenty of criticism from political candidates and their supporters and surrogates.

The majority of Americans haven't embraced the activists’ message or strategies, either; fewer than a third of Americans said Black Lives Matter focuses on real issues of racial discrimination while 55 percent said the movement distracts from those issues, according to a September PBS News Hour/Marist poll. Another poll conducted that month by NBC News and Wall Street Journal found that 32 percent of Americans had mostly positive views of the movement; 29 percent had mostly negative views and 39 percent were neutral.

Such tepid acceptance of black activism isn't surprising. This country has a history of disapproving of civil rights protests and demonstrations. And perhaps nothing better demonstrates that dynamic than the movement of the 1960s.

Martin Luther King Jr. at the 1963 March on Washington. (AP file)

Today, sit-ins, freedom rides and marches for voting rights are viewed with historical reverence. Schoolchildren across the country memorize Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech. Conservatives invoke the moral authority of the civil rights movement as a model for their own activism. Civil rights workers are viewed as national heroes.
But in their day, activists were met with widespread disapproval. A review of polling data from the 1960s paints a picture of an America in which the majority of people felt such protest actions would hurt, not help, African Americans’ fight for equality.

These surveys, compiled by Roper Center for Public Opinion Research at Cornell University, provide a snapshot of the nation’s mood throughout the decade. Collectively, they are "a corrective to the blurring of time," said Kathleen Weldon of the Roper Center.

“It’s a very clear picture — and not necessarily the picture we like to lay back on time that we see from today; it’s not necessarily the story we tell ourselves," she said. “Time passes and people can start to intentionally or not rewrite history, particularly around something that seems as amorphous as public opinion — what everyone believed, what everyone thought.”

Recognizing the deep opposition toward the civil rights movement’s tactics in its day — “the things we think of normal today and not controversial” — may cause people to “think through what their opinions are about things today, and why they have those opinions,” said Charles Cobb, who was a field secretary for the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee in the 1960s.

Coming to terms with how widespread was the resistance and ambivalence toward civil rights activists is important “because, first of all, it’s the accurate portrayal of history,” said Joyce Ladner, who was deeply involved with SNCC’s organizing in Mississippi.

“When I’m told by people, ‘Thank you for what you did,’ I almost want to look around and see who they’re talking to,” Ladner said.

Mug shots of Freedom Riders, who were arrested in 1961 in Jackson, Miss., for "breach of peace" and refusal to obey a police order after they attempted to use "whites only" restrooms and lunch counters. (Jahi Chikwendiu/The Washington Post)

Ladner said she and others “did it for ourselves. We weren’t aware of history at that time, or that one day it would go down in history, because these events were in the moment. We didn’t have time to focus on long-term strategies.”
Cobb referred to a phrase often used by one of the SNCC's co-founders, Julian Bond: “He used to say that public opinion about the civil rights movement can be boiled down to one sentence: ‘Rosa sat down, Martin stood up and then the white folks saw the light and saved the day.’”

**Opposition to the movement**

In 1961, mobs in Southern cities attacked Freedom Riders, the activists testing the federal ban on bus segregation. Most Americans weren’t on the activists’ side; 61 percent said they disapproved “of what the ‘Freedom Riders’ are doing,” according to a 1961 Gallup Poll.

That same poll found that 57 percent of Americans felt the “Freedom buses,” sit-ins at lunch counters and “other demonstrations” by African Americans would hurt their chances of being integrated in the South. Just 28 percent of Americans said these actions would help.

Mass demonstrations by blacks were viewed as even less helpful in a Gallup poll taken two years later.

These numbers don’t surprise Cobb, the one-time SNCC field secretary: “It pretty much confirms our sense of public opinion, even back then.”

Ladner, who worked on the March on Washington, also wasn't shocked by the historical data. “It was going against the grain of tradition,” she said.

The very nature of protest is fighting against the norm, Cobb said. “Whether it’s segregated lunch counters or voting rights or whether it’s police violence — that’s what protest does, and it challenges with varying degrees of intensity the status quo.”

Such numbers show people were “very uncomfortable with protest,” and especially regarding the potential for violence, said Weldon of the Roper Center.

“They weren’t particularly convinced that it was helpful,” she said.

Even the March on Washington — so revered today — wasn’t welcomed.
Just before the 1963 march, Gallup asked a nationally representative sample of adults how they felt about the coming event.

Less than a quarter of Americans said they held favorable opinions.

“Even after then, it was still a lot of resistance,” Ladner said. “Three weeks after the march, the church was burned in Birmingham that killed the four little girls,” she said, referring to the 1963 bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church.

The following year— just before Freedom Summer began in Mississippi — Gallup asked whether mass demonstrations by blacks were likely to help or hurt the fight for equality. Nearly three-fourths of Americans said they would hurt.

“People have a great view of what happened in the 1960s,” said Courtland Cox, a one-time SNCC field organizer and is now chairman of the SNCC Legacy Project, “and this country has moved forward and we’ve done all these things. We even elected a [black] president. We thought we were post this, but the reality is we’re not.”

Divides across race

While the majority of Americans may have disapproved of protest tactics in the 1960s, that doesn’t necessarily represent how black Americans felt.

In 1965, two years after the March on Washington, 94 percent of African Americans rated the job Martin Luther King Jr. “has done in the fight for Negro rights” as positive, according to a Harris survey.

But when the polling company asked white adults the next year whether King was helping or hurting the cause, just 36 percent said he was helping; half of whites said he was hurting, while 14 percent said they weren’t sure.

The divide was even starker when whites were asked about demonstrations overall; 85 percent of whites in a 1966 Harris survey said such protests actions by blacks would hurt the advancement of civil rights.
It was different for blacks; 70 percent said activities such as sit-ins, store picketing and demonstrations helped the effort to win equal rights, according to a 1969 survey conducted by Newsweek.

“For the people on one side of the equation, who sat on the side, who didn’t experience segregation, didn’t experience the various negative laws, everything was fine and what we were doing was a disruption,” said Cox, the SNCC Legacy Project chairman. “In the black community, there was a whole different view.”

When working on voter registration in the Deep South, “we could not have survived if those black communities did not have some sense that we brought value,” Cox said.

As with the Black Lives Matter protests, the civil rights demonstrations of the 1960s included non-black activists.

But in 1966, when Harris asked whites whether they’d think marches and protests would be justified if they were in the same position as blacks, more than half said no.

We can see such racial divides today in how Black Lives Matter is perceived. In the PBS News Hour/Marist poll from September, 65 percent of blacks said the movement focuses on real issues of racial discrimination. Just 25 percent of whites felt similarly.

There are notable differences between the civil rights movement and Black Lives Matter, including approaches to protests and grass-roots organizing. Some 1960s activists have significant disagreements with what young people are doing today.

But Cox sees one important similarity: “Both of them were disruptive of people’s view of the status quo.”


‘Critical’ to get the word out

Media played a big role in shaping how the public received the methods of 1960s civil rights protesters.

Compared to the technology available today, their tools were rudimentary. Back then, activists utilized phone trees and a network of organizations across the country to spread news about what was happening on the ground.

“No national television crews were coming to Mississippi in 1963," Ladner said. “It was critical to try and get the word out as quickly as possible.”
The 1965 march in Selma, Ala., demonstrated the power of media in swaying public opinion. Images of peaceful voting rights protesters beaten by policemen were broadcast across the country.

Almost half of Americans in a 1965 Harris survey said they sided with civil rights groups “in the recent showdown” in Alabama. Just 21 percent sided with the state of Alabama, while 19 percent answered neither and another 12 percent said they weren’t sure.

“If we didn’t get word to the outside world about what was happening to us, especially when confronted and beaten, we’re losing,” Ladner said. “If we’re isolated and somebody was killed — one man was killed on the courthouse lawn by a state legislator because he was trying to register to vote — if no one outside our town knew, it was all for naught.”

‘Young people, impolite’

Cobb went to a high school in a white working-class Massachusetts town, “and while people were sympathetic to the expansion of civil rights to include black people, at the same time, I think they saw us as young people, impolite.”

Compare that to how King and other older folks were viewed — “much more distinguished, certainly not impolite at any level,” Cobb said.

Back in the 1960s, “it’s young people who’s doing the sitting in, the young people — in their late teens and early 20s, just like the Black Lives Matter people are predominantly young,” Cobb said. “So they might disrupt something Clinton or Sanders is holding. It all resonates with us.”

African Americans in the 1960s debated the movement's tactics and strategies. While 71 percent of black adults in a 1963 Gallup poll said King was moving at the right speed, 21 percent said he wasn’t moving fast enough. Indeed, defining what it meant to act with “all deliberate speed” was “a big, big deal,” Cox said.
“I could see that in young people like me, that the criticism was not that you were doing it, it was that what was being done was not being done in a way that allowed us to have our vision of how we should be living in America,” he said.

Cobb said the general public may not endorse activists’ strategies because they aren’t affected the issues central to the protests, such as segregation in the 1960s or police brutality today.

“You can see yourselves in the Black Lives Matter students; you can understand their impatience with police violence,” Cobb said. “Our issue was segregation first, then we engaged in the fight for voter registration. But what we share with the Black Lives Matter people is their impatience.”

He added: “It’s their future, it’s their lives — just the way it was our future and our lives back in the day.”
APPENDIX FF

Six-Word Memoir Assignment
Name: ___________________________

**Six-Word Memoir Assignment**

**Directions:** Create both a Six-Word Memoir for yourself and for one character in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. You will be graded on your insight, creativity, and artist’s statement (directions below). Please be prepared to share one creation with the class.

**Artist’s Statement:** The artist’s statement for this project should explain each piece you submitted. This statement should include:

1. What you initially set out to explore, investigate and discover through writing this piece.
2. How your ideas developed.
3. How your perspective changed as your work took shape.
4. How your background influenced (or did not influence) your work.
5. What you learned from writing this piece.

In addition, please explain what grade you think you deserve based on your effort and final product.

**Character Assigned:** ________________________

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Name: ___________________________

**Six-Word Memoir Assignment**

**Directions:** Create both a Six-Word Memoir for yourself and for one character in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. You will be graded on your insight, creativity, and artist’s statement (directions below). Please be prepared to share one creation with the class.

**Artist’s Statement:** The artist’s statement for this project should explain each piece you submitted. This statement should include:

1. What you initially set out to explore, investigate and discover through writing this piece.
2. How your ideas developed.
3. How your perspective changed as your work took shape.
4. How your background influenced (or did not influence) your work.
5. What you learned from writing this piece.

In addition, please explain what grade you think you deserve based on your effort and final product.

**Character Assigned:** ________________________  

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Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX GG

Week 5 Reading Assessment
Name: ______________________________

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*: Week 5 Close Reading Quiz (Chapters 30-36)

Directions: Read each of the following passages and answer the context questions. Then, on the back, you will respond to a mini-essay prompt.

**Passage 1:**
“So the king sneaked into the wigwam and took to his bottle for comfort, and before long the duke tackled HIS bottle; and so in about a half an hour they was as thick as thieves again, and the tighter they got the lovinger they got, and went off a-snoring in each other's arms. They both got powerful mellow, but I noticed the king didn't get mellow enough to forget to remember to not deny about hiding the money-bag again. That made me feel easy and satisfied. Of course when they got to snoring we had a long gabble, and I told Jim everything” (Twain 265).

Context:_______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
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**Passage 2:**
“It made me shiver. And I about made up my mind to pray, and see if I couldn't try to quit being the kind of a boy I was and be better. So I kneeled down. But the words wouldn't come. Why wouldn't they? It warn't no use to try and hide it from Him. Nor from me, neither. I knowed very well why they wouldn't come. It was because my heart warn't right; it was because I warn't square; it was because I was playing double. I was letting on to give up sin, but away inside of me I was holding on to the biggest one of all. I was trying to make my mouth say I would do the right thing and the clean thing, and go and write to that nigger's owner and tell where he was; but deep down in me I knowed it was a lie, and He knowed it. You can't pray a lie—I found that out” (Twain 271).

Context:_______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
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**Passage 3:**
“Well, one thing was dead sure, and that was that Tom Sawyer was in earnest, and was actuly going to help steal that nigger out of slavery. That was the thing that was too many for me. Here was a boy that was respectable and well brung up; and had a character to lose; and folks at home that had characters; and he was bright and not leather-headed; and knowing and not ignorant; and not mean, but kind; and yet here he was, without any more pride, or rightness, or feeling, than to stoop to this business, and make himself a shame, and his family a shame, before everybody. I couldn't understand it no way at all. It was outrageous, and I knowed I ought to just up and tell him so; and so be his true friend, and let him quit the thing right where he was and save himself. And I did start to tell him; but he shut me up, and says:

‘Don't you reckon I know what I'm about? Don't I generly know what I'm about?’” (Twain 297).

Context:_______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
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Julia Q. Moe, 2016
Part II: Mini-Essay Response
Directions: This week, you are to respond to the following question: **What kind of person is Huckleberry Finn?** Use examples from at least one of the passages to prove your argument. **Be sure to accurately cite the quotes/examples you use.**

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Julia Q. Moe, 2016
APPENDIX HH

Socratic Seminar Assignment Sheet
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Socratic Seminar

Directions: To help close out the unit, you will be participating in a Socratic Seminar—a formal, graded discussion based on open-ended questions about the novel. Share at least three of your own questions and review the questions below to prepare.

My questions:

1.

2.

3.

- What makes Huck Finn so controversial?
- Should Huck be taught in school?
- What themes does Huck explore that relate to today?
- Why does Twain warn us not to analyze the story? (Dare we discuss the novel for an hour?)
- Why did Twain write in dialect? Did you like or dislike reading in dialect?
- In what ways is the novel a satire of society?
- What role does superstition play in the story?
- When Huck finds out that searchers are headed to Jackson Island to search for Jim, he doesn’t hesitate to return to Jim. He says, “they are after us!” when really, the searchers are after Jim. Why does he, too, flee down the river?
- What do we learn about Huck after the episode of the wreck? (The trash conversation.) What do we learn about Jim?
- Grangerfords and Shepherdsons: Why does Twain include this violent episode?
- The Duke and the King: Who are they? Why are they on the river? Why do they stay with Huck? Why does Huck stay with them?
- How does the tone of the novel change when Tom reappears in it?
- Jim’s escape from the Phelps’ farm is a farce. Why did Twain write it as such?
- To help Jim escape, Tom wants to do things they way they’ve always been done, even if tradition doesn’t make logical sense. How were other characters in the novel similar?
- Huck Finn is a thirteen-year-old boy. Why does Twain use a child as the center of consciousness in this book?
- Consider the role of lying in the book. Why is there so much lying? Is this an “immoral” book?
- Consider the role of family units. Huck and Widow Douglas/Miss Watson; Huck and Pap; Huck and Jim; the Grangerfords; etc.
- Discuss the place of morality in Huckleberry Finn. In the world of the novel, where do moral values come from? The community? The family? The church? One’s experiences? Which of these potential sources does Twain privilege over the others? Which does he mock, or describe disapprovingly?

Adapted from Reid, 2014 by Julia Q. Moe, 2016
Main themes/issues

- Slavery and racial division (Example: Consider Huck’s relationship to Jim throughout the novel)
- Religion (Example: Consider Huck’s spiritual progress throughout the novel)
- Superstition (Example: Consider Jim’s expertise in superstition and how it influences Huck)
- Freedom versus civilization (Example: Consider the raft versus the towns on the river)
APPENDIX II

Final Unit Test
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: Final Unit Test

Directions: You may use the novel and any of the supplemental texts and notes to answer the following questions. Please be complete and thoughtful in each of your responses. For numbers 3-5, make sure to center your argument around a solid thesis. Staple and hand in all materials when complete.

1. Use a Thinking Map to connect and describe five significant events in the novel. For each, please explain why the event was important to the novel’s theme, plot, or character development.

2. Use a Thinking Map to compare and contrast two different characters in the novel. Use as specific examples as possible.

3. Explain whether or not Huckleberry Finn should be banned in schools using at least two examples from the novel and one outside source.

4. Explain power dynamics in the 1800s using the characters of Huck, Jim, Widow Douglas, Judge Thatcher, Pap Finn, and Aunt Sally.

5. How does Huckleberry Finn’s voice have power? Use at least one example from the novel and an outside source in your response.


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