

Freedom and Identity:
A Unit For Ninth Grade Language Arts

Beth Wright
Jason Taylor
Sarah Mann
Meghann Hummel
Mandy Brown
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Introduction

"Freedom and Identity," a five-week unit of instruction for ninth grade Language Arts students, is centered around the study of *Night*, Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel's account of his experiences in Nazi concentration camps. Wiesel was fourteen years old when his family was deported from their home in Transylvania, and we feel that the closeness in age between the students and the central figure of the book will help the adolescents to relate to his experiences. *Night* is a compact yet harrowing narrative that not only serves to bring to life students' historical knowledge (they study World War II and the Holocaust in ninth grade social studies), but also opens the door to exploration of universal themes and questions, including freedom, oppression, and what happens to a person's identity in the face of dehumanization.

In light of this, we have chosen an inquiry-based approach to the unit - one that requires students to pose questions of themselves and their assumptions as they engage with a variety of texts chosen for their attention to our central themes. Students are encouraged to draw upon their individual strengths and knowledge in constructing their very personal responses to these questions. Our approach to literacy is wide and open - students are not only called upon to confront textual representations of dehumanization in many traditional "school" forms, but are also expected to bring their out-of-school literacies to bear on their learning.

One may criticize the unit for a lack of explicit focus on literary elements or grammar skills. However, we believe our omission of explicit attention to these elements represents a much needed expansion of what counts as a successful literacy act in the language arts classroom and, given time constraints, is important for the establishment of an inquiry classroom context where questioning and collaboration are valued over solitary pursuits for right and wrong answers. In addition, one could easily modify the unit to include attention to specific literary elements or grammar. For example, an exploration of the narrative as a genre would fit nicely in the unit or the teacher could select a few grammar skills to focus on in relation to student weaknesses that arise during the unit. Grammar mini lessons could be incorporated at the beginning of each class.

Most importantly, our goal with this unit is to provide opportunities for students to "read" their world from new perspectives and to see the connectedness among people's experiences of oppression - in other words, to learn about the Holocaust not as an

isolated atrocity, but as an example of a pattern in our history in which we must see our own condition and from which we must draw our own conclusions about our responsibilities and behavior.

Context

The ninth grade students for whom this unit was designed are thirteen- to fifteen-year-old members of a suburban community just to the Northeast of Atlanta, Georgia. They attend a large public high school, the population of which is primarily middle- to upper-middle class. A large number of the students' parents commute to the city to work, although many others are employed in the local community. The racial make-up of the school is primarily white, although there is some diversity. African American students make up about ten percent of the student body, the Hispanic community is well-represented, and students from Southeast Asia (especially Korea and Vietnam) constitute a sizeable minority. In terms of religion, Christianity predictably dominates, and the school has even faced some trouble recently because of complaints about ministering going on during school hours and on school grounds. The Jewish community is virtually invisible, and students of other religions are not represented by on-campus clubs comparable to the Fellowship of Christian Athletes - a group with a large membership and noticeable presence.

Community members here tend to be rather conservative, and although the administration pays nominal attention to eliminating prejudice and discrimination, homophobic, sexist, and racist comments are widely overheard and generally accepted. Gender roles seem firmly entrenched and, in terms of extracurricular focus, male athletic teams rule. On the other hand, the school has had much recent success in musical and dramatic competitions, so there exists a growing undercurrent of emphasis on the arts. Within this county, there is much emphasis on standards for student achievement and teacher accountability. The district as a whole is notorious for its emphasis on standardized testing as well as its rigid academic tracking system. Overall, these students are economically and socially privileged, and the majority will pursue some form of post-secondary education. Those who graduate with a "technical" diploma (a minority of the student body) will be required by the state of Georgia to fulfill additional requirements before attending a college or university. The following curricular unit is intended for use with ninth grade students in all tracks, because we believe that not only its focus (themes including identity, freedom, and their loss through oppression), but also the collaborative and inquiry-based methods of instruction used, will be relevant to all ninth grade students and will encourage thought about universal issues and concerns.

Rationale

This unit evolved in part out of our theory-based belief in the importance of incorporating multiple literacies into the classroom. The activities included have been designed to blend students' out-of-school knowledge into the work they do in the classroom. Research on the literate practices of students has concluded that students have rich and varied encounters with texts outside of the classroom, but these practices are rarely incorporated into their academic pursuits (Hull & Schultz, 2002). Out-of-school literacy can be used to enhance the learning students do in the classroom. Hull & Schultz (2002) found that "teachers can successfully engage students in high levels of reasoning about literary texts by drawing on their tacit knowledge about cultural forms out of school" (p. 35). The projects students will complete during this unit will allow them to link their personal lives with their academic pursuits in a number of ways.

One of the activities students will be required to complete, entitled "Researching Slave Narratives", will allow them to use resources from their home literacies to represent the experiences of slaves. They can create graffiti, plays, songs, or any other medium to interpret the slave narratives they read. By opening up the requirements, this assignment creates an environment where we, as teachers, are "continually alert to the ways in which children themselves bring their outside worlds into the classroom through their writing and the oral performances that encircle literacy events" (Hull & Schultz, 2002, p. 35).

Another assignment, "Act Like A Man, Be Ladylike," requires students to think about how gender stereotypes are played out in their lives. It "engage[s] students in high levels of reasoning about literary texts by drawing on their tacit knowledge about cultural forms out of school" (Hull & Schultz, 2002, p. 35). For this assignment,

students create a skit that represents an encounter where gender stereotyping occurs. In order to complete the task, students must draw on their lived experiences. They are not required to write in "standard" English and, hopefully, will represent a variety of cultures and the different ways gender issues emerge.

Another project where students explore the imprisonment of Japanese Americans in internment camps during World War II requires students to complete a webquest. This project allows them to spend time on the Internet - a huge part of many students' out-of-school literate lives - discussing and researching. By accessing a medium preferred by many students, the webquest condones the use of this home literacy in academic pursuits.

In order to encourage students to think about the loss of faith, a major theme in *Night*, students will discuss and write about what role faith plays in their own lives. For their final project students will represent oppression in some form. They might interview a friend or relative or research an individual or group of people. By requiring students to extend their learning about the loss of freedom by moving beyond the school, we hope to bring the community into our classroom. Hull & Schultz (2002) write, "funds of knowledge can be used to bridge communities to classrooms by acknowledging the expertise of parents and community members" (p. 34).

The out-of-school literate practices of students are an important resource to the English teacher. In order to make school relevant to children, the academic must connect with their personal lives, and literacy is the place to do it in the English classroom. The projects in this unit allow students to bring their experiences and knowledge to the table, and co-investigate with the teacher how the loss of freedom impacts peoples' lives.

As teachers compiling a unit based on identity, using diverse authors and works is necessary for all students to feel that the material is relevant. When discussing the loss of identity or dehumanization of individuals or groups of people, it is important to incorporate material that transcends different cultures. In addition to culturally relevant material, proper instruction and activities are necessary for a successful multicultural classroom. Ladson-Billings (1994) suggests that culturally relevant teachers "encourage a 'community of learners' and . . . encourage students to learn collaboratively. Students are expected to teach each other and be responsible for each other" (p. 55). Our curriculum encourages this through multiple group activities and projects. As mentioned above, for instance, students must share, research, and compile slave narratives for a class presentation. This allows them to build from a foundation of knowledge or preconceptions concerning slavery, and expand this knowledge through research and sharing. Many group discussions or activities concerning the Holocaust, rape, lynching, and Japanese internments camps are also important aspects of the identity unit. These readings cross cultures and provide opportunities for students to share their ideas, thoughts, and feelings concerning these subjects.

Too often, the curriculum consists of the dominant white culture with aspects of minority cultures sparsely dispersed and overshadowed. There is a conflict between unity and diversity. The main readings in our identity unit address minority religious and ethnic groups. Through discussing the historical repression of diversity, hopefully students can learn to embrace differences and understand the struggles these groups faced (and are currently facing). Ladson-Billings (1994) advocates a pedagogy that is built from the cultural knowledge students bring to the classroom: "Even with the clamor for more critical thinking, memory continues to be the most rewarded skill in the nation's classrooms. But culturally relevant teaching attempts to help students understand and participate in knowledge-building" (p. 81). She rejects the idea of a "teacher-proof curriculum" which consists of a prepackaged and predetermined curriculum that does not take into account the needs of individual students and cultures.

The goal of multicultural education is to validate the beliefs and literacies of all cultures allowing students to share their own personal experiences. It is important to use various cultural works in the unit to allow the reader "to make sense of the book by connecting his or her own relevant experience to the book's topic. We want the children to move from their life experience to the text" (Ballenger, 1999, p. 52). Freedom and identity are universal needs that have affected various groups of people differently. This unit encourages people to draw from their personal experiences to understand the struggles the readings exemplify.

Rather than encouraging conformity, our unit allows for the exploration of the individual and the religious, social, and ethnic characteristics that encompass one's

identity. "Thus we take from these books information and attitudes that speak to our larger concerns, to the conversations we are having with ourselves and with others on topics of importance to us" (Ballenger, 1999, p.74). The struggle for freedom and identity has plagued many people, so the majority of the students should be able to understand aspects of all of the readings. Exploring multicultural literature allows for a critical pedagogy that is relevant to everyone. This unit encourages all students to share any knowledge or ideas they have and to correlate with each other through group activities for collective learning.

Within this collaborative context, we have hoped to emulate the inquiry-based approach advocated by Beach & Myers (2001). Instead of the more traditional literary analysis method, the students will immerse themselves in the experiences of victims of Japanese Internment, slavery, and the Holocaust. In a sense, they will experience the tragedies along with the victims we discuss; the experiences will not seem so foreign, because students will be asked daily to reflect on their own freedoms, identities, and social worlds.

The various in- and out-of-class activities will offer students the opportunity to identify with these victims in history and their struggles, with a special focus on the victims of the Holocaust. The activities involve students making connections from Night to their own lives, allowing them to answer that inevitable question - "What does this have to do with us?" - on their own. They will be asked to contemplate questions that have no predetermined answers. Because the activities - especially the journals - are reflective, no two students will have identical experiences.

Many of the journal topics ask questions, such as: "How is your identity repressed by parents' and school's rules?" Discussion of such questions connects students' lived social worlds with Elie Wiesel's, whose identity was all but destroyed by his experiences in the concentration camps. The journal topics ask students to consider the effects that the total loss of freedom would have on a person's identity; the goal of such reflection is ultimately that students could more fully understand the plight of Holocaust victims. This deep understanding is an integral objective in inquiry-based education. Free-writing in the journals will also allow students' ideas to flow more spontaneously, hopefully eliciting a more "real" response by eliminating worries about delivering a specific, teacher-mandated response.

Again, the fact that Elie Wiesel was fourteen at the time of his internment in the concentration camps will allow students to commiserate even more with the hardships and tragedies that he endures. The 9th grade students will be better able to put themselves in his shoes and imagine what he is going through. As Beach & Myers (2001) put it: "Examining peer worlds in terms of the historical evolution of adolescence by studying portrayals of adolescents in literature or media from different historical periods offers further means of contextualizing" (p. 111).

The many opportunities for collaborative group work will afford students the opportunity to learn together. These less conventional interactions will create a more practice-oriented classroom where the teacher does not solely control classroom activity. The final project-a list of various multi-media projects from which the students can choose-will encourage exploration of issues through many forms of representation. In-depth projects such as a web page or dramatic skit more closely resemble the inquiry-based activities that "are driven by purpose or motive...designed to achieve some outcome" (Beach & Myers, 2001, p. 58). More traditional assignments such as a test or an essay very often elude predictable, unimaginative answers-those which students think would most please the teacher. The multi-media final project will serve to solidify students' knowledge and ideas, rather than allowing them to memorize and then spit back information on a test-information they will most likely forget as quickly as they memorized it.

Our unit challenges students to explore questions and issues on their own; rather than listening to the teacher's lectures, they will be able to form their own opinions and knowledge of the subject matter. Like in the social worlds approach, the students will become more aware of these events in history through their own exploration of them. A sustained exploration of identity as it relates to individual freedom and oppression through the loss of this freedom reflects Howard Gardner's (1999) call for students to gain experience in understanding how disciplinarians approach questions (p. 219). By presenting a thematic unit, we hope to provide students with an experience that trains them in disciplinary thinking. The activities in the unit call on students to be

summarizers, questioners, reporters, and co-constructors of knowledge. In effect, students fulfill multiple roles during the unit. Gardner's (1999) assessment of the future job market - "To be attractive to employers, an individual must be highly literate, flexible, capable of trouble-shooting and problem finding, and, not incidentally, able to shift roles or even vocations should his current position become outmoded" (p.43) - demonstrates the importance of such an experience. Namely, it equips students with the tools to succeed in the future job market.

In addition, a focus on identity and freedom mirrors Gardner's (1999) emphasis on valuing questions. Daily discussions are framed around leading questions, written journal assignments are often responses to questions, and we believe many of the answers to these questions may include the production of new questions for students. Again, students gain experience in constructing knowledge within an inquiry context that treats knowledge as fluid rather than as a decontextualized memorization of static facts.

The unit also provides students with an opportunity to bring their own interests and talents into the classroom. Gardner (1999) acknowledges the importance of society's answers to difficult questions but places emphasis on an individual's personal questions and answers. The presence of choice regarding representation in the final assignment and the fact that students form their own conclusions concerning the relationship between freedom and identity reflects Gardner's (1999) assertion that, "There is no need for all students to begin or end with the same representation as do others; at a premium, rather, is an increasingly rich representation that is meaningful to each student and can be communicated to others" (p. 208). In addition, then, to the personal solutions and avenues students develop, the unit emphasis on students' responding through a variety of representations provides the opportunity for multiple intelligences to surface. As a result, we believe the activities included in the unit represent an education that, "take(s) into account the differences among minds... that can reach the infinite variety of students" (Gardner, 1999, p. 186).

References

- Ballenger, C. (1999). Teaching other people's children: Literacy and learning in a bilingual classroom. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Beach, R., & Myers, J. (2001). Inquiry-based English instruction: Engaging students in life and literature. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Gardner, H. (1999). The disciplined mind: What all students should understand. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Hull, G., & Schultz, K. (2002). School's out!: Bridging out-of-school literacies with classroom practice. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Daily Lesson Plans

Week One

Monday

- 5m Attendance, class business
- 10m Students will complete Freedom Opinionaire (see page 17) individually
- 30m Whole class discussion of opinionaire
- 5m pass out journal assignment (page 18) and go over directions

Tuesday

- 5m Attendance, class business
- 10m Lecture about slave narratives focusing on the importance of slave narratives both as valid accounts of history and as autobiographical struggles for identity and humanity.
- 10m Hand out lyrics and listen to "Follow The Drinking Gourd" and "Freedom" and discuss how these songs express a desire for freedom

- 15m Complete: Thinking About Freedom (see page 21) in small groups
- 10m Whole class discussion sharing answers to Thinking About Freedom assignment

Wednesday

- 5m Attendance, class business
- 10m Journal: Describe a time when your freedom was taken away from you. Have you ever been grounded or told you could not do something that you wanted to do? What was your response?
- 35m Students will complete the activity, Researching Slave Narratives, (see page 22) in the computer lab in small groups

Thursday

- 5m Attendance, class business
- 45m Students will work in small groups on the project Interpreting Slave Narratives (page 23)

Friday

- 5m Attendance, class business
- 20m Students will work in small groups to finish projects
- 25m Groups will present their work to the class

Week Two

Monday

- 5m Attendance, class business
- 45m Group presentations

Tuesday

- 5m Attendance, class business
- 10m Journal: How would you define stereotype? What are some typical examples?
- 15m Whole class discussion about stereotypes based on responses to journal.
- 20m Small groups work on "Act Like A Man" and "Be Ladylike" Skits (page 24)

Wednesday

- 5m Attendance, class business
- 20m Small groups finish skits
- 25m Groups present skits

Thursday

- 5m Attendance, class business
- 15m Read "Your Life As a Girl," Curtis Sittenfeld
- 20m Small groups will work on Gender and Freedom handout (page 25)
- 10m Each group will share their responses with the class

Friday

- 5m Attendance, class business
- 10m Read "The Massacre of The Jews"
- 15m Whole class discussion of "The Massacre of The Jew" (see discussion questions on page 26)
- 5m Handout the novel Night and assign the foreword and chapters one and two for homework
- 15m Students will begin reading silently in class

Week Three

Monday

- 5m Attendance, class business
- 35m Go to the computer lab and complete the webquest: Japanese Internment Camps at:

www.eduscapes.com/42explore/japanese.htm

8m Students will complete the journal topic: "How would you define freedom?"

Tuesday

5m Attendance, class business
5m Pass out poems Remembering Manzanar and Japanese Internment Camp by Ian M. and read aloud
23m Pass out handout "Instructions to all persons of Japanese Ancestry," have students do activity (see page 28)
10m Assign journal topic: "How would giving up all of your material possessions change your views on what is important in life?"

Wednesday

5m Attendance, class business
30m Whole class discussion about chapters 1 and 2 (see discussion questions on page 29)
15m Assign Ch. 3 and begin reading it aloud

Thursday

5m Attendance, class business
20m Faith activity (page 31)
25m Begin reading and discussing Ch. 4 as a whole class (discussion questions on page 32)

Friday

3m Attendance, class business
10m Finish reading and discussion Ch. 4
15m Read a few accounts of lynching to the class from Ida B. Wells On Lynchings, and Lewis Allan's poem, Strange Fruit.
5m Play the song version of Strange Fruit by Billie Holiday.
20m Lynching Discussion (discussion questions on page 33)
2m Assign Ch. 5 for homework

Week Four

Monday

3m Attendance, class business
45m Slugs and Royals activity (see page 35)
2m Assign Ch. 6 for homework

Tuesday

5m Attendance, class business
15m Quiz Ch. 1-5 (page 34)
10m Journal: What is something you have sacrificed to help someone else? Describe the situation and your feelings.
20m Whole class discussion of Ch. 6 (discussion questions pg. 36)

Wednesday

5m Attendance, class business
10m Journal:
Malcolm X, Malcolm X Speaks, 1965
"Self-reliance is the only road to true freedom, and being one's own person is its ultimate reward."
Explain the positive aspects of this quote. Then analyze how self-reliance leads to corruption and dehumanization in chapter seven.
15m Discuss responses to journal
20m Read and discuss Ch. 7 in class (Discussion questions on pg. 37)

Thursday

5m Attendance, class business
20m Read Ch. 8 and 9 aloud as a class
25m Poetry and Connections Activity-Levi (page 38)

Friday

5m Attendance, class business
20m Quiz Ch. 6-9 (page 40)
15m Finish Poetry and Connections Activity
5m Pass out final assessment (page 42) and explain

Week Five

Monday

5m Attendance, class business
45m Poetry and Connections Activity-Dickinson (page 41)

Tuesday

5m Attendance, class business
45m work on final project

Wednesday

5m Attendance, class business
45m Work on final project

Thursday

5m Attendance, class business
45m Present projects

Friday

5m Attendance, class business, turn in journal
45m Present projects

Freedom and Identity

For each of the following statements, circle strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. Be able to defend your answers with logic or personal example.

1. Everyone in America has the same amount of freedom, regardless of race, gender, or financial status.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. Racism no longer exists in America.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. Students who can legally buy cigarettes should be allowed to bring them to school.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. Students should be allowed to leave school during lunch.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. The government should watch people who are from the same country as a terrorist.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. Some slaves were better off before they were freed because their masters treated them

well.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. People who do not worship God are not good citizens.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. A girl cannot be raped by her boyfriend.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. I would rather die a horrible death than be at the mercy of my enemies.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. I would risk death to protect someone I love.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

Journal assignment for Night

During this unit you will complete a journal in response to the issues we discuss in class. You will complete five journals in class and ten for homework. Your journal is due on the last day of class. You may choose any ten of the following topics:

Topics:

--How would giving up all of your material possessions change your views on what is important in life? How would your priorities change?

-- What aspect of Japanese Internment did you find most disturbing from today's Webquest? Why?

--What are some of the ways in which your identity is repressed on a daily basis? Think about school rules, parents' rules, etc. How does this repression make you feel?

--How can a person's race put them at a disadvantage in today's world? What are some examples of these disadvantages you see on the news or around the community?

--Do you think the Holocaust could ever happen again, for either the Jews or another group of people? Why or why not?

--How do you envision prison? Imagine being there even though you did not commit a crime.

--What has been your greatest life challenge? Were you able to overcome this challenge and what did you have to do?

--What is your definition of identity? Describe what you consider are the factors that make up your identity.

--What is something you have sacrificed to help someone else? Describe the situation and your feelings.

--Do you have more freedom or less freedom than your parents had at your age?

--How is your freedom limited at school? Do you think this practice is justified? Why or why not?

--How would you define freedom?

--Does anyone else control you? In what way?

--How much freedom should people have?

--Compare the images in Primo Levi's poem "Buna" to Wiesel's impressions of the same camp.

--Primo Levi was older than Wiesel when he was sent to the concentration camp. Comparing his poetry to Night, do you think this difference in age made a difference in their perceptions/memories? Why or why not?

--Apply Emily Dickinson's poem "Crumbling is not an Instant's Act" to the process Elie Wiesel goes through. How does his faith in God "crumble?" His faith in humanity? His faith in himself and his ability to withstand the dehumanization?

--In "Short Black Hair," the author muses on what he knows of a particular aunt who died in a concentration camp. Choose a relative that you know about but never met and write an entry in this style. What do you know? What do you wonder about? How might you honor this person? (You may choose to write about a deceased famous person instead).

--Identify two moments in Night that were pivotal in Elie's progression from the boy he was at the beginning to the "corpse" he sees staring back from the mirror at the end. Why did you choose these?

--How does what you are wearing right now reflect who you are as a person? If you could wear anything to school you wanted to, what would you wear?

--Describe a time when your freedom was taken away from you. Have you ever been grounded, told you could not do something that you wanted to do? What was your response?

--A couple of quotes:

"People demand freedom of speech as a compensation for the freedom of thought which they seldom use."

Soren Kierkegaard

"You can't separate peace from freedom because no one can be at peace unless he has his freedom."

Malcolm X, Malcolm X Speaks, 1965

"Self-reliance is the only road to true freedom, and being one's own person is its ultimate reward. "

Patricia Sampson

--How important is the notion of freedom in your daily life? What role does freedom play in your life?

--Construct an image or cut out a picture that symbolizes (stands for) freedom to you. Write 3-5 sentences explaining why you believe that image symbolizes freedom.

A grade of A will be given to a journal that:

- * Is turned in on time

- * Contains 15 journal entries that demonstrate a thoughtful consideration of the topics

A grade of B will be given to a journal that:

- * Is turned in on time

- * Contains 15 journals that demonstrate adequate thought about the topics

A grade of C will be given to a journal that:

- * Is turned in on time

- * Contains 15 journals that demonstrate some thought about the topics

A grade of D will be given to a journal that:

- * Is turned in on time
- * Contains at least 10 journals that demonstrate adequate thought about the topics

A grade of F will be given to a journal that:

- * Is not turned in on time or
- * Contains less than 10 journals or
- * Contains journals that do not reflect on the topic

Thinking About Freedom

Listen to the songs "Follow The Drinking Gourd" and "Freedom," and read the lyrics below. In order to better understand freedom, your group should:

- * List the freedoms you feel were most important to runaway slaves.
- * List the freedoms that are most important to you today.
- * What is the same and what is different? How do you account for these differences?

Researching Slave Narratives

We have been discussing the concept of freedom in class. Now, we will research the concept of freedom as defined by former slaves. In order to complete the assignment your group needs to:

- * Go to the following websites:
 - * Slave Narratives-Ancestry.com
www.ancestry.com/search/rectype/biohist/slavnarr/promo.htm
 - * Excerpts from slave narratives
vi.oh.edu/pages/mintz/primary.htm
 - * Ancestry.com-search the slave narratives
www.ancestry.com/home/celebrate/blackhistory.htm
 - * American Slave Narratives
xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/wpahome.html

If there are any problems accessing these sights, do a google search and type in slave narratives.

- * Each person in your group must find an oral history, story, or narrative for your group.
- * Print two copies. (One to hand in and one for your group)
- * Every group member must read all of the selections.
- * Discuss the various narratives you read and what was interesting or unique about them.

Interpreting Slave Narratives

In order to share what you learned from your research on slave narratives you will:

- * Create a representation based on the slave narratives researched in your group. It may be a short skit, poem, speech, song, dance, artistic representation, or it may take any other form you choose.
- * If you choose to complete a project that is not written, you must include a written explanation of how your work represents the narratives.
- * You must represent each narrative your group researched in your project

* Your group will present your skit, poem, speech, or song to the class. You do not need to memorize your parts but make sure you have practiced. You may read off your script or notes.

* Your project will be graded by the following rubric.

1. Group Participation (2 points) _____

* Every member of the group is required to participate. _____

2. Creativity (2 points) _____

* The originality of your project is very important. _____

3. Content (2 points) _____

* Your presentation should accurately represent aspects or ideas found in the slave narratives you read.

4. Presentation (2 points) _____

* You must be prepared for your classroom presentation. _____

5. Written Work (2 points) _____

* You must turn in a written copy of your project and it must be followed during your presentation.

Total: _____

(10 Possible)

Act Like A Man and Be Ladylike

We have been discussing stereotypes in class today. Now, your job is to examine more closely how stereotypes affect men and women. In order to do so, you will create two short skits (or one longer skit) that illustrate these stereotypes. Your skits should:

* Clearly identify five stereotypes of men and five stereotypes of women by creating a scenario or a series of events where these issues come up. Your skits can focus on events at school, work, or during social activities. Remember the examples of stereotypes we discussed today in class as you write your skits.

* Write down your skit, you will turn it in for a grade.

* Your group will present your skit to the class. You do not have to memorize your parts. You may read off your script.

Your skit will be graded by the following rubric:

1. Group Participation (3 points)

* Every member of your group participates in the skit.

2. Topicality (6 points)

* Your skit presents a clear scenario with five examples of stereotypes of men and five examples of stereotypes of women.

3. Written work (3 points)

* You turn in a written copy of your script and follow it during your presentation.

Total (12 possible) _____

Gender And Freedom Discussion Instructions

Now that we have read "Your Life As a Girl," by Curtis Sittenfeld, your group will examine how gender stereotypes impact individual freedom. Complete the Gender and Freedom worksheet. Be ready to share your responses with the whole class. On the outside of the diagram write short answers to the following questions:

- * Where do we learn gender roles? What people teach us these stereotypes? Entertainment? Sports? Media? Give specific examples. (If you list movies, give examples of movies.)
- * What names are women called if they step out of the stereotype box?
- * What names are men called if they step out of the stereotype box?
- * What purpose do these labels and names serve?
- * What are some things women and men do to avoid being labeled?
- * How do these stereotypes limit freedom?

"The Massacre of the Jews" by Varian Fry - Discussion Questions

1. This article was written in 1942. What was known then about the mass deportations in Europe, Hitler's plans for the Jews, and the operation of the Nazis, both in and out of the concentration camps? Why is this important?

2. Discuss the Nazi methods Fry describes. Why is it particularly terrifying that they are so methodical and efficient?

3. Fry claims that one of the Nazis' arguments for their mass extermination of the Jews was that there wasn't enough food to go around. What solution to this problem does he suggest?

4. What other possible remedies does Fry propose (think religion, politics...)? Do you think these would have made a difference? Why or why not?

5. Fry concludes his argument by saying that we "must not ignore" the situation in Europe. Reading this in 2002, it seems obvious to us that the U.S. should have been more aggressive in ending the holocaust. What might have been some reasons for holding back?

6. Can you think of any situations in the world right now that we "must not ignore?" How will people 60 years from now see our actions and our role in international affairs?

7. If you had read this article in 1942, not knowing anything else about the Nazis' treatment of the Jews, would you have believed it? What could/should an ordinary American have done or said at the time?

INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL PERSONS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY

The Following Instructions Must Be Observed:

1. A responsible member of each family, preferably the head of the family, or the person in whose name most of the property is held, and each individual living alone, will report to the Civil Control Station to receive further instructions. This must be done between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM on Monday, May 4, 1942, or between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM on Tuesday, May 5, 1942.

2. Evacuees must carry with them on departure for the Assembly Center, the following property:

- o Bedding and linens (no mattresses) for each member of the family
- o Toilet articles for each member of the family
- o Extra clothing for each member of the family
- o Sufficient knives, forks, spoons, plates, bowls, and cups for each member of the family
- o Essential personal effects for each member of the family

All items carried will be securely packages, tied and plainly marked with the name of the owner and numbered in accordance with instructions obtained at the Civil Control Station. The size and number of packages is limited to that which can be carried by the individual or family group.

3. No pets of any kind will be permitted.

4. No personal items and no household goods will be shipped to the Assembly Center.
5. The United States Government through its agencies will provide for the storage, at the sole risk of the owner, of the more substantial household items, such as iceboxes, washing machines, pianos, and other heavy furniture. Cooking utensils and other small items will be accepted for storage if crated, packed, and plainly marked with the name and address of the owner. Only one name and address will be used by a given family.
6. Each family, and individual living alone, will be furnished transportation to the Assembly Center or will be authorized to travel by private automobile in a supervised group. All instructions pertaining to the movement will be obtained at the Civil Control Station.

Signed,

J.L. De WITT

Lieutenant General, U.S. Army

Commanding

Japanese Internment Discussion

After you read the instructions above answer the following questions in small groups. Your group will turn in one copy of your answers to these questions at the end of class.

1. List the top-ten priority items you would take with you, explaining why.

2. List the top-ten priority items you would leave, and explain why.

Here are some helpful reminders for deciding what to take and what to leave:

- o You can only take what you can carry. Nothing will be shipped to you. Everything else should be sold, stored, or given away. (You can't leave things with friends because they'll most likely be going with you.)

- o Don't worry about money. Even if you do have money, you may not be able to spend it.

- o Don't worry about anything. In terms of health needs -- prescriptions, diets, dental care, eye care, respiratory ailments, current illnesses, hospitalization, pregnancies, ambulatory equipment, prosthetic devices, and your mental well-being -- there are supposed to be people and facilities to take care of you.

- o For those of you still in school, consider this a vacation.

- o Have you made sure you can carry everything? Are you sure it won't break? Is your name on everything? The government cannot be held responsible

Night Discussion Questions - Chapters 1 and 2

Chapter 1

1. What kind of a teenager was Elie? What was the most important part of his life? What were his dreams? How did his father react to this, and why?

2. Why do you think the people of Sighet didn't believe Moshe the Beadle?

3. Describe the steps of imprisonment/deportation that began with the arrest of the Jewish leaders. Why did this gradual process make resistance difficult for the people?

4. Why do you think the people left without "a backward glance" at their homes, possessions, etc.?

5. What advantages did the Jewish people of Sighet say ghetto life had over life before the ghetto? Why did Elie say it was "neither German nor Jew" that "ruled the ghetto"? What was it instead? Why?

6. Elie mentions "optimistic speeches" and "optimists" frequently. How much of their own optimism do you think the people believed? What events began to break it down?

7. Elie Wiesel was about your age when his hometown of Sighet was invaded. What would you do/think if this happened to you? Why? (Think about what was known/unknown/uncertain...)

Chapter 2

1. When Madame Schacter loses her mind and begins to have her nightmares, her little boy comforts her. Elie says that this "shook me more than his mother's screams had done." Why do you think he feels this way?
2. Describe Madame Schacter's nightmares. Why do you think Wiesel chose to relate this episode in such detail?
3. Elie describes the conditions in the cattle wagon - the thirst, the heat, the stench - but says that Madame Schacter's screams were the worst part of all. Why do you think this is?
4. Do you think psychological torture is worse than physical torment? Why or why not?

You will often hear it said that not knowing is worse than bad news. Do you think this is true? Why or why not? What were the Jews on the cattle wagons imagining? Could it have been worse than the reality?

Elie's Faith in Night

In our class discussions we have been discussing how Elie changes throughout the novel Night. Today you will trace the presence of Elie's faith for Chapters 1-3 or trace the instances of loss of freedoms Elie is exposed to in chapters 1-3.

- * The class will be divided into four small groups.
- * Two groups will respond to the question: What instances cause Elie to question his faith and what evidences are there of Elie questioning his faith?
- * The remaining two groups will respond to the question: What examples are there of Elie losing freedoms and how does this loss effect his identity?
- * Each group will nominate one scribe to record a group list of the occurrences and page numbers for the occurrences.
- * You will share your list with the class and discuss how Elie is beginning to question (lose) his faith and how his loss of freedoms is effecting his identity.

Night Chapter 4 Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Elie refused to give his shoes up for food, even though he knew that he will probably lose them anyway, and for nothing in return?
2. How did Elie feel when Idek beat his father? Why?
3. Elie describes his friendship with the young French girl in the electrical warehouse. What does she do that is significant to him? What do you think is the point of telling about their meeting later, after the war, in Paris?
4. During the bombing, why don't the prisoners fear death? Why are they elated?
5. Discuss the first hanging that Elie witnessed. Why does he say that this one "overwhelmed" him, when the mass murders in Auschwitz had ceased to affect him?
6. What does Julieck say before the hanging of the man who had stolen during the bombing? Why is this significant?
7. Why do you think Elie found that "the soup tasted excellent" after the first hanging?
8. Discuss the circumstances of the second hanging compared to those of the first. Why did the SS behave differently? Why do you think "the soup tasted of corpses" after the second hanging?

9. By the end of Chapter 4, what has happened to Elie's faith in God? Why? How do you know?

Lynching Class Discussion Questions

- * Compare the lynching in the United States to the hangings mentioned in Night (p. 58-62).
- * Contrast the crowds that gather around lynching to the prisoners forced to observe the hangings in Night.
- * What was the goal of lynching in the United States?
- * It has been said that the Jim Crow era of the United States (which is when lynching occurred) was in many cases worse than slavery. What do you think and why? Many people have said that it was a time of nominal freedom (false freedom).
- * How has lynching effected racial tensions in modern society? How do you society would be different if lynching had not occurred?

Night - Quiz, Chapters 1-5

Answer the following questions with 1-3 complete sentences each.

1. Moshe the Beadle goes through several stages in chapter 1. What was he like, before his deportation and then afterwards?
2. Describe at least 2 opportunities the Wiesel family had to escape.
3. Describe the conditions in the cattle wagon. Why did Elie think that the screaming of Madame Schacter was worse than anything else?
4. When Elie and his father are in line at Birkenau, they speak to 2 prisoners. What does each say, and why is it important?
5. Who was Dr. Mengele, and what happened when Elie spoke to him?
6. What did Elie see in the pits at Birkenau?
7. What did the signs on the electric fences say? Why is this ironic?
8. Why did Elie have to go to the dentist? What happened?
9. Who was the sad eyed angel?
10. Why did one Jew say he had more faith in Hitler than in God?

Night Daily In-Class Activity: Slugs and Royals

* When the students enter the classroom, they will find that the teacher has randomly placed Post-It notes on their desks. Half of the stickies will have an "S" on them and the other half will have an "R".

* The teacher will begin class by announcing the following rules:

---"Each student with an 'S' on his or her desk is a 'slug'. Everyone who has an 'R' is a

'royal'. I am the 'Great Leader'. For the remainder of the day, the hierarchy is as follows: the slugs must obey the royals, and the royals must obey me. Slugs must do the following:

1. All slugs must display the "S" sticky note prominently on their shirts.
2. Slugs may not speak until spoken to by the Great Leader or a royal, and then may reply only with a bowed head and proper deference (using 'ma'am' or 'sir').
3. Slugs must move to a designated area in the back of the room and remain there until further notice.
4. Each slug will complete his or her the work for the day in silence. The royals have the power to oversee the slugs' work and determine if it is sufficiently completed. If not, the royal may punish the slug by either sending him or her to the Great Leader to receive additional work, or by requiring him or her to stand with his or her face to the wall for five minutes.
5. Slugs may not go to the restroom or water fountain at any time.
6. Remember: slugs are lesser beings. They should be treated harshly and punished when the royals feel it is appropriate.

* The teacher will then conduct the lesson as usual for 30 minutes, speaking harshly to the slugs, if at all, and rewarding the royals frequently.

* Students should then write for 10 minutes on the following questions:

---How did you and the other members of your group feel about the others?

---How did you feel about the Great Leader?

---What issues are raised when power is arbitrarily granted/taken away?

---Would you have chosen to switch groups? Why or why not?

---Did you try to determine how the groups were chosen?

---Did you feel that you deserved to be in one group or the other?

---Royals: did you feel the urge to rebel against the Great Leader and protect the slugs, or did you simply accept your roles?

---Slugs: was there conflict among you? A feeling of camaraderie?

---What would you change about the activity and why?

* The last 10 minutes of class should be spent discussing students' responses.

Discussion questions for Chapter 6

1. Why do you think Elie and his fellow prisoners never rebelled, that they continued to obey orders from men who called them swine? (Think about Elie's comments referring to himself and the others as automatons [robots]).

2. How does dehumanization like this (being treated like animals, beaten) lower someone's will power?

3. Why do you think Elie didn't just give up during their run to the next camp?

4. Why does Elie's father (p. 86) smile at such a moment?

5. Why do you think Juliek wanted to play his violin when the threat of death was so ominous?

Class Discussion Ch. 7

* Discuss the circumstances of the journey. Compare them to those found in chapter two.

* This chapter is full of images of death. Compare the descriptive images of the living and the dead. Is there much difference?

* Discuss instances of dehumanization in the chapter. (throwing bodies out of the train, throwing bread at the prisoners to watch them fight, killing) How have people begun to

act more animalistic and what are the reasons for this change?

* In what ways is defeat represented in this chapter? ("My mind was invaded suddenly by this realization--there was no more reason to live, no more reason to struggle." (p. 93), the death of Meir Katz, the death of the father and son fighting over bread, the near death of Eliezer's father)

* Imagine being one of the twelve survivors of Eliezer's carriage. How would you look and feel? What would give you the will to survive? What do you think keeps Eliezer going, or what serves as his motivation to live?

Poetry and Connections: 2-day group activity to be completed after students have finished reading Night.

Objective: Students will explore the ways language and genres of writing are used in different ways to express and illustrate similar experiences and thoughts. They will find parallels between Wiesel's narrative and Levi's poetry and be able to discuss the way each writer conveys meaning. Students will also be able to discuss the use of imagery and tone in the poems.

Day 1

* As a class: teacher presents a brief introduction of Primo Levi, including a biographical sketch and a brief reading from his holocaust account, Survival in Auschwitz.

* Students divide into groups of 5 or 6.

* Each group is given one of the poems above and the following instructions:

Your group is responsible for the analysis of this poem. Using the following steps, prepare a presentation that you will give to the class tomorrow.

Step 1: The poems are relatively short. Go around the circle and have each group member read the poem aloud. As the reading is going on, have each group member jot down thoughts, impressions, and points of confusion.

Step 2: Go around the group again, and discuss what each member has written. Begin making a list of points you want to make to the class.

Step 3: Discuss the following questions:

* What do you think Levi is trying to say about identity and the experience of the holocaust?

* What images does he use to convey his message?

* How does he use voice and/or tone?

* What thoughts/observations/images do you see in common between this poem and Elie Wiesel's story?

Step 4: Write a summary of the discussion that occurred in your group and turn it in before you leave.

Day 2

* Students meet again with their groups briefly to plan their presentations. They are given the following instructions:

Choose two members of the group to read your poem to the class. After the poem has been read twice, each of the remaining group members will present a point/observation/opinion based on yesterday's discussion and the questions you were asked to consider.

* With the remaining time, the class will come back together as a large group and discuss the poems and what they have to say about the holocaust, humanity, identity, and memory.

Night - Quiz, Chapters 6-9

Answer the following questions with 1-3 complete sentences each.

1. Describe the run to Gleiwitz. (Weather, what happened along the way, how they were treated...)
2. Why couldn't Elie allow himself to die?
3. Why does Juliek play the violin?
4. Compare how other boys treated their fathers with the way Elie treated his. What does that say about Elie?
5. Describe the train ride (how many prisoners got on/how many got off...).
6. Describe Elie's father's death.
7. Why couldn't Elie weep for his father?
8. What is the vision Elie can never forget? Why do you think this is?

Poetry and Connections: 1-day timed writing activity to be completed after students have finished reading Night.

Objective: Students will analyze the structure of the novel by applying concepts and words from Emily Dickinson's poem.

Directions: Students will spend a day in class writing on one of the following topics:

* In Dickinson's poem, the word "Ruin" suggests human or spiritual collapse. Write a "timeline" of the collapse or "crumbling" of Elie Wiesel's faith in Night.

* Discuss the "crumbling" of another person or two from the book (for instance, Wiesel's father, Juliek, Moshe the Beadle...)

Discuss the "Devil's work" of the Nazis - what gradual techniques did they use to "crumble" the Jewish communities and force them to comply with their demands?

Freedom and Identity Final Project

Throughout the semester we have been focusing on identity. This unit highlighted freedom and how freedom is tied to one's identity. Complete one of the following:

* Research a time other than the Holocaust when a group of people was denied certain freedoms. Discuss the event with regards to how these people responded and how their experience compares and/or contrasts with the experiences depicted in Night.

* "Does oppression produce a weaker or a stronger sense of identity?" Does Elie's experience provide a stronger sense of his own identity or leave him with a weaker sense of identity? Explain your stance. You are encouraged to provide support for your answer by drawing on some other text discussed in class, personal vignettes, interviews with other people regarding this question, and/or a text from outside of class.

You may represent your discussion via essay or a multimedia production (design a web site, construct a collage, painting, poem, or piece of music, or performance art.). If you choose a multimedia production a 2 page written explanation must accompany the piece. This explanation should be an analysis of the work as it relates to the question you

selected. If you choose to do an essay, your essay should be a minimum of 4 pages.

Final Project Rubric

A grade of A will be given to projects that

- * are turned in on time
- * clearly represent how a person or group of people responded (or continue to respond) to oppression
- * discuss whether oppression produces a stronger or weaker identity
- * include a multimedia project and two pages of written explanation or includes 4 pages of written text for an essay

A grade of B will be given to projects that

- * are turned in on time
- * clearly represent how a person or group of people responded (or continue to respond) to oppression
- * do not clearly discuss whether oppression produces a stronger or weaker identity
- * include a multimedia project and two pages of written explanation or includes 4 pages of written text for an essay

A grade of C will be given to projects that

- * are turned in on time
- * do not clearly represent how a person or group of people responded (or continue to respond) to oppression
- * do not clearly discuss whether oppression produces a stronger or weaker identity
- * include a multimedia project and two pages of written explanation or includes 4 pages of written text for an essay

A grade of D will be given to projects that

- * are turned in on time
- * do not clearly represent how a person or group of people responded (or continue to respond) to oppression
- * do not clearly discuss whether oppression produces a stronger or weaker identity
- * do not include a multimedia project and two pages of written explanation or includes 4 pages of written text for an essay

A grade of F will be given to projects that

- * are turned in after the specified due date
- * are turned in on time yet do not represent how a person or group of people responded (or continue to respond) to oppression
- * are turned in on time yet do not discuss whether oppression produces a stronger or weaker identity