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### Rationale for a Unit on Resistance Literature

During the adolescent years of students' lives many rebel from home and school and respond to the pressure of peer groups. This response to peer groups can lead to violence, gangs and improper sex. According to *Schools Under Siege and Hidden Dangers*, by Carl Bosch, "about 3 million violent crimes and thefts occur at schools every year. Since 1985 almost one million youths between the ages of twelve and nineteen have been victims of violent crimes each year." In these ever-changing times, adolescents frequently find themselves in conflict with the norms of society. With teens often rejecting adult behavior to establish themselves as individuals we must provide them with tools of critical thinking that will prepare them to handle such a responsibility. By recognizing the resistance of adolescents and teaching a unit focusing on American Resistance we hope to expose students to role-models whom resisted the world, just as many teens do, but in a positive way. Civil rights, women's suffrage, and multi-cultural education are just a few of the successful movements that have changed history. Oftentimes teens band together and form beliefs that perpetuate crimes of hate and violence. *Youth Violence* is a compilation of essays and studies on the topic of teens in trouble. According to an essay by Dean Murphy, "an unprecedented 2,003 youths were arrested for murder and non-negligent manslaughter in 1990." (60) By studying the literature of slavery, civil rights, and several minority groups, we plan to show teens that standing up against violence and bigotry is possible, and no individual need be afraid to stand up for human rights. The Los Angeles County Commission on Human Rights reports, "minority students are at the most risk of being the victim of a hate crime." Prevalent in our literature are role models who have fought against this type of hatred in a non-violent fashion; they are role models that teens can look up to and learn from.

Parents may find themselves afraid that this type of unit will encourage teens to rebel against parental rules; however, our unit is placing emphasis on resistance to acts that are detrimental to human rights. We hope to teach teens to think for themselves so when faced with a dangerous situation involving their peers, they will make a conscious choice to stay away from such things as drugs and crime. These

problems are not just affecting inner cities anymore. Drugs and violence are spreading to ill-prepared communities. According to Ronald Henkoff, "We're seeing gang activities in places where they didn't exist two years ago. The gangs are playing off the fact that law enforcement in the suburbs is not prepared to deal with them." (123) Juveniles face these situations alone when parental support is not an option. We hope that teens who see drugs or violence at home can make the choice not to take that path, and we believe the role models in our literature will provide the teens with people to emulate and look up to.

Our unit will showcase individuals who have looked critically at the world and made positive changes by promoting social awareness. This unit shall be composed of an essay genre compiled of Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience" and Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail, a poetry genre of Gwendolyn Brooks "To Those of My Sisters Who Kept Their Naturals," E.E. Cummings "I Sing Olaf Glad," and "Puerto Rican Obituary" by Pedro Pietri, and a novel by Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. A movie showcasing the same theme of resistance may be shown as a reward for the students' hard work. As teachers we must understand that there are no universal solutions to the resistance that our world faces from generation to generation. Injustices often exist in society that we are not able to perceive, which is why we must place our emphasis on individuals who have thought critically about resistance and catalyzed positive changes.

The purpose of this unit is not to have the students rise up out of their chairs and break down the establishment, but in fact to have them strengthen the infrastructure by pointing out its weaknesses. The essay portion of the unit will begin with a figure that almost every American student knows of, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. His "Letter From Birmingham Jail" is a powerful piece that will introduce the purpose and power of this unit to the students. In this letter, Dr. King illustrates the benefits of nonviolent methods of dealing with people in contrast to the thoughtless destruction inherent in violence. With all of the violence our schools have been subject to in recent times, units like this one are imperative in reshaping the way in which modern youths deal with their frustrations.

The next work follows closely with Dr. King's writing in that it was one of his inspirations for nonviolent protest. "Civil Disobedience" is an essay by Henry David Thoreau that provides a prime example of introspective thought and careful expedition of that thought. This will work well in conjunction with Dr. King to introduce the concept of civil resistance to high school students.

One type of resistance that our world has faced has been the resistance of slaves. The enslavement of Africans in the United States was dangerous business. According to the article entitled "African Resistance to Enslavement," the enslavers very early instituted a series of measures intended to ensure that Africans would neither resist nor dream of resisting the humiliation of the Great Enslavement." (Journal of Black Studies 39) Despite the efforts of enslavers, many slaves resisted the institution and sought to promote positive changes. Some of the primary sources that reveal this resistance are narratives of enslaved Africans. One of the most famous narratives is Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. [Harriet Jacobs uses the pseudonym Linda Brent in order to safely reveal some of her gruesome struggles with slavery.] Author Jocelyn Moody describes the novel as "a story of a slave mother's concern for herself and her children as she attempts to escape to freedom." (Black American Literature). By having students read such a novel they will see, and easily understand, how an individual resists a society that she wishes to change. Students can sympathize with Brent's resistance because they will have previously written memoirs explaining instances in which they have resisted a request of their parents, school, or job. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* displays many other slaves who do not

humbly accept enslavement. Through the eyes of Linda Brent, students can see how slaves eagerly wanted their freedom and how they took cautious steps toward obtaining it. Brent utilizes critical thinking skills as she is forced to leave her children, live in a cubicle for seven years, and finally persuade a white male confidant to purchase her freedom.

After reading Jacobs novel we are hopeful that students will also begin to think critically when resisting situations they have to face and try to promote positive changes instead of losing hope and joining a gang, which more often than not leads to delinquency.

Another type of resistance that America is facing is resistance to ignorance and bigotry through multi-cultural education and ethnic pride. Slavery and segregation taught society that African-Americans were inferior to whites. The message spread to people of all ethnic backgrounds. Not only were minorities affected, but women also were told they were unequal to men through voting laws, job restriction, and psychological oppression. Although many of these myths have been debunked through women's suffrage and civil rights, some prejudices have recycled down through generations.

The section of the unit dedicated to poetry will focus on poets of different races and genders and how they have promoted social awareness through ethnic and gender pride. The poem, "To Those of My Sisters Who Kept Their Naturals," by Gwendolyn Brooks, looks at the African-American woman as a symbol of beauty. In his book titled *African-American Poets*, Michael Strickland says that Brooks "wrote about being black before black was beautiful" (39). She was conscious of her role as a leader of African-American feminists and paid special attention to the difficulties that African-American women face. She has received many awards for her work as a writer, including the great honor of being the first woman Poet Laureate of the United States.

"Puerto Rican Obituary," by Pedro Pietri, looks at the loss of ethnic pride in many Puerto Ricans as they search for the American dream. His work looks at the economic and social oppression that immigrants find in society and bring upon themselves. This poem in particular uses humor, irony, and sarcasm to show how the search for wealth has overshadowed the heritage of these immigrants. Yet the poem is not a bitter look at society; it is the path that leads to finding pride within one's self and projecting it on society to implement change. The final stanza of the poem combines two languages to signal the inner space all people have inside their hearts for pride and tolerance. The Hispanic community is one the fastest growing parts of the United States today. These issues are only growing, and they must be addressed before youths use violence as an outlet for their feelings. Pietri is one of the 'nuyorican poets' who presents his ideas in published poetry and plays, with many of the latter being featured in off-Broadway shows.

E.E. Cummings is a white, American male who built his reputation as an innovator in the world of poetry. We chose to study his work to show that resistance and individual pride is not limited to minorities, but should be celebrated by everyone. Cummings is most famous for his use of common speech and experiments with grammatical forms. His poem, "I sing of Olaf glad and big" looks at an individual who stands up for his beliefs and who is shunned by society because of his actions. This poem shows how mob mentality often goes too far, and how group consensus is not always the best path. Teens can look at this poem and see that gang-like behavior is detrimental. By celebrating individuality, teens can see how standing up against violence and ignorance is more heroic than acquiescing to it. The poetry section of the unit is one way of teaching teens individualistic pride. Not only do these poems teach pride in oneself; they teach acceptance and respect for others.

There is no such thing as a perfect society, and even if we did reach something near perfection we could not maintain it indefinitely because stagnation is in itself a negative quality. A unit on resistance literature will help students to realize that change is necessary to the progression of any given society, and that the individual is integral to the enactment of change. Mike Rose, in his book titled *Possible Lives*, says, "I've come to realize that a defining characteristic of good teaching is to push on the existing order of things." (482) This statement is true today, and it will remain true for all the foreseeable future. As time goes on new problems inevitably arise, and we need members of society who are capable of dealing with these problems as they do. What better way to do this than to develop the ability to think critically in the minds of the youth? Age tends to engender complacency in human beings, and many of us become oblivious toward societal injustices because we become accustomed to them. A fresh perspective is invaluable to the pursuit of social self-betterment, and providing the tools for critical thought to our youth is a sure way to develop their minds and to enhance their sensitivities to the needs and desires of those around them.

### Materials List

*Civil Disobedience* Henry David Thoreau

*Letter From Birmingham Jail* Martin Luther King Jr.

"To Those of My Sisters Who Kept Their Naturals" Gwendolyn Brooks

"I Sing of Olaf Glad and Big" E.E. Cummings

"Puerto Rican Obituary" Pedro Pietri

Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Linda Brent

### Goals and Rubrics

#### Reading Journal

Goal #1: This journal will be constructed by each student in a two-column format. This means that a line will be drawn lengthwise across each page. Students must quote the text on the left-hand side and write their reactions on the right-hand side. There will be five turn-in dates that will be averaged in together for a grade worth twenty percent of the final grade for the unit. This journal will be assessed under the following criteria:

- Journal entries are a minimum of ½ page
- Journal contains insightful references to both the text and the student's feelings toward it.
- Journal must illustrate how well the student grasps the text. There will be no penalty for failure to understand, but the journal should be used as tool to help with the grasping of the text.

#### Rubric for Grading the Two-Column Journal

A journal receiving an A:

1. Is turned in on time
2. Is correctly split in the two-column format
3. Contains references to both the text and the relation of the text to the student's life.

4. Contains at least the minimum required number of entries, each being no less than ½ page in length.

A Journal receiving a B:

1. Is correctly split in the two-column format.
2. Contains references to both the text and the student's life.
3. Contains the minimum number of entries, each approximately ½ page in length.

A Journal receiving a C:

1. Is split into a two-column format.
2. Contains some mention of the text and some reflections by the student.
3. Contains near the expected number of entries, which may be slightly under ½ page in length.

A Journal receiving a D:

1. Contains some mention of the text and/or student reflections
2. Contains well below the expected number of entries, of less than ½ page.

A Journal receiving an F:

1. Is lacking in organized thought
2. Contains grossly fewer entries than are expected, which are of less than acceptable length.

A Journal receiving a Zero:

1. Is not turned in.

Late journals will be accepted with the penalty of one letter grade less than they would receive were they turned in on time.

## Poetry Assignment

Goal #2: Students will be placed in groups of 3 for an oral and visual representation of a poem dedicated to the resistance theme they have been focusing on. The assignment will be given at the beginning of the week and presentations will be given the following week. The assignment should go as follows:

- Students will research in library for 1 class period to find a poem dealing with a resistance theme.
- Students will make time out of class to work on an oral report, which presents the poem as one of resistance. They will do so by using what they learned in class and comparing it the other poetry already covered in class. They will also point out and explain any literary devices used in poem.
- Students will have another class period to work in their groups to make a visual representation of their poem. They will have creative freedom that may range from using posterboard for drawings or representative clothing.
- Students must first represent a reading of the poem for the class. They must also present their report on why the poem is one of resistance and explain how their visual aid is representative of the poem. A written draft of the report is to be turned in after the presentation.
- Use of notecards during oral presentation is permitted.

## Rubric for Poetry Assignment

A presentation receiving an A will do the following:

1. Present an oral report along with written draft of the report, which clearly shows the poem as one of resistance, by using examples from the poem. The report must show a clear personal, moral or social dilemma.
2. The poems studied in class are used to draw comparisons about poems of resistance.
3. Poetry devices are pointed out and explained.
4. Visual representation is presented neatly and is visible to the entire class. All visual aids must be explained with relevance to the poem.
5. Students have divided the speaking parts for each member of the group.
6. Students have presented report in a clear voice and made eye contact with the audience. Students have dressed appropriately for the occasion and presentation has been practiced, i.e., students know when his or her speaking part is, doesn't need to consult note cards frequently.

A presentation receiving a B will do the following:

1. Present oral report along with written draft of the report, which clearly shows the poem as one of resistance by using examples from the poem. The report must show a clear personal, social, or moral dilemma.
2. Poetry devices are pointed out and explained. Lacks comparisons with poems already studied in class.
3. Visual representation is neat, but may be hard for audience to see. Visual aid is explained with relevance to the poem.
4. Students have divided up speaking parts for each member of the group.
5. Students present report, but not in as clear a voice as the A groups. Eye contact is less than that of A groups, and flow of presentation shows less practice than A groups. Students show less attention to personal appearance than A groups.

A presentation receiving a C will do the following:

1. Present oral report along with written draft of the report, which does not clearly articulate the poem as one of resistance. Related claims do not show a clear personal, social, or moral dilemma.
2. Lacks examples of poetry devices and comparisons with poems already studied in class.
3. Visual representation is not as neat as A or B groups. Explanation of visual is minimal, but has relevance to the poem.
4. Students have divided up speaking parts for each group member.
5. Students present report that shows little practice. Voices are unclear and interrupted, eye contact is minimal, and personal appearance is not considered.

A presentation receiving a D will do the following:

1. Present oral report along with written draft of the report, which does not clearly articulate the poem as one of resistance. Related claims do not show clear personal, social, or moral dilemma.
2. Lacks examples of poetry devices and comparisons with poems already discussed in class.
3. Visual representation is not neatly displayed. Explanation of visual is minimal and has no relevance to poem.

4. Students do not divide up speaking parts for each member of the group.
5. Students present report that shows little or no practice. Voices are unclear and no eye contact is shown. Personal appearance is not considered.

A presentation receiving an F will do the following:

1. Provide oral report with no written draft. Poem chosen is not one of resistance, and related claims do not show poem to have a personal, social, or moral dilemma.
2. Lacks examples of poetry devices and comparisons with poems already discussed in class.
3. No visual representation is presented.
4. Students do not divide up speaking parts for each member of the group.
5. Presentation of report shows no practice. Personal appearance not considered.

A presentation receiving a zero will not be turned in.

## **Big Writing Assignment**

Goal #3: Upon the completion of the novel, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, students should write a 500-750-word essay about the reading. The assignment will require the following criteria:

- The essay should be in the five-paragraph theme format for grading purposes and to give students the experience with writing in such a format.
- Students will be graded on their thesis statement, introductory paragraph, three supporting paragraphs, and conclusion.
- Students may select their own topic, but essay has to be in relevance to the resistance theme. The topic should be selected a week before the novel is completed in order to make sure students are headed in the right direction.
- The essay is a formal piece of writing and should be typed and double-spaced.

### **Rubric for Grading Big Writing Assignment**

An essay receiving an A will do the following:

1. Be in relevance to the resistance theme we have been studying throughout the unit.

The essay should pertain to a situation in which a character resisted authority and the outcome was positive.

2. Takes the form of an expository, five paragraph, essay consisting of the following:
  - A clearly stated overall thesis
  - An introductory paragraph, which states the three supporting ideas to be covered in the upcoming three supporting paragraphs.
  - Uses 5-7 quotes from the novel, with correct citations, to support ideas
  - Warrants that explain how quotes support ideas
  - Transitional statements, which tie the paragraphs together for a coherent reading
  - A conclusion, which restates the thesis
3. Uses suitable language with little or no repetition of words/phrases

4. Displays correct grammar usage and mechanics and has clear organization
5. Consists of 500-750 words typed and double-space with a 12 point font and 1" margins
6. Includes a title page and a critiqued rough draft neatly presented in a folder

An essay receiving a B will do the following:

1. Be in relevance to the resistance theme we have been studying throughout the unit.

The essay should pertain to a situation in which a character resisted authority and the outcome was positive.

2. Takes the form of an expository, five paragraph, essay consisting of the following:
  - A clearly stated overall thesis
  - An introductory paragraph, which states the three supporting ideas to be covered in the upcoming three supporting paragraphs, although three supporting ideas stated in introductory paragraph may not be as closely related to three supporting paragraphs as would an essay receiving an A
  - Uses 5-7 quotes from the novel, with correct citations, to support ideas, although quotes might not be as clearly explained or as well cited as those in an essay receiving an A
  - warrants that explain how quotes support ideas, although that support may not be as clearly explained as in the warrants in an essay receiving an A
  - Transitional statements, which tie the paragraphs together for a coherent reading, although the coherence might not be as great as an essay receiving an A
  - A conclusion, which restates the thesis, although conclusion may not restate thesis as well as an essay receiving an A
3. Uses suitable language with little repetition of words/phrases
4. Displays correct grammar usage and mechanics and has clear organization, although organization might not be as clear, or grammar usage and mechanics might not be as correct as an essay receiving an A
5. Consists of 500-750 words typed and double-space with a 12 point font and 1" margins
6. Includes a title page and a critiqued rough draft neatly presented in a folder

An essay receiving a C will do the following:

1. Be in relevance to the resistance theme we have been studying throughout the unit.

The essay should pertain to a situation in which a character resisted authority and the outcome was positive.

2. Take the form of an expository, five paragraph, essay consisting of the following:
  - A thesis statement, which might not be as clear as that in an essay receiving a B, or might be so broad that it does not justify the selected topic
  - An introductory paragraph, which states the three supporting ideas to be covered in the upcoming three supporting paragraphs, although three ideas stated in introductory paragraph may not support the selected topic, or might simply be ideas of interest derived from the novel
  - Only uses 3-5 quotes from the novel, with correct citations, to support ideas, although quotes



might not be as clearly explained or as well cited as those in an essay receiving a B

- warrants that do not clearly explain how quotes support ideas
  - Uses poor transitional statements, to tie the paragraphs together for a coherent reading.
  - A conclusion, which does not restate the thesis
3. Use suitable language, but has some repetition of words/phrases
  4. Displays incorrect grammar usage and mechanics, and has unclear organization
  5. Use less than 500 words, but is still typed and double-space with a 12 point font and 1" margins
  6. Include a title page and a critiqued rough draft neatly presented in a folder

An essay receiving a D will do the following:

1. Be in relevance to the resistance theme we have been studying throughout the unit.

The essay should pertain to a situation in which a character resisted authority and the outcome was positive.

2. Lacks at least two of the features needed for an expository, five paragraph, essay. These features include the following:
  - A thesis statement
  - An introductory paragraph, which states the three supporting ideas to be covered in the upcoming three supporting paragraphs
  - Quotes from the novel to support ideas
  - Warrants
  - Transitional statements
  - A conclusion
3. Use language that leave readers confused, and has repetition of words/phrases
4. Displays incorrect grammar usage and mechanics, and has unclear organization
5. Use less than 500 words, but is still typed and double-space with a 12 point font and 1" margins
6. Include a title page and a critiqued rough draft neatly presented in a folder

An essay receiving an F will do the following:

1. Be irrelevant to the resistance theme we have been studying throughout the unit
2. Lack multiple features needed for an expository, five paragraph, essay, or does not follow the five-paragraph format. These features include the following:
  - A thesis statement
  - An introductory paragraph, which states the three supporting ideas to be covered in the upcoming three supporting paragraphs
  - Quotes from the novel to support ideas
  - Warrants
  - Transitional statements
  - A conclusion

2. Use language that leave readers confused and questioning the grade level of the student, and has repetition of words/phrases
3. Displays incorrect grammar usage and mechanics, and has unclear organization
2. Use less than 300 words, but is still typed and double-space with a 12 point font and 1" margins
3. Lack a title page and a critiqued rough draft neatly presented in a folder

An essay receiving a zero will not be turned in.

## WEEK 1

### Day 1

**Objective:** To illustrate to the class that they have real conflicts in life in order to spark interest in the resistance literature that will follow.

**Implementation:** (All classes will be 55 minutes in length)

5 minutes of role/housekeeping

10 minutes of asking the class what, in general, bothers them about the way the world works. It will be explained that this can be in any area be it school, government, or society in general. These reactions will be written on the board.

1 minute in which the class votes by a show of hands which issue they find most interesting. Only the top three choices shall remain on the board.

2 minutes of breaking the class up into three groups by having them line up in front of the issue that they feel most strongly about. Even distribution will be encouraged but not required.

2 minute explanation that each group must create a 5 minute (approximately) skit within the next 20 minutes that deals with that group's issue in some way.

20 minutes of groups creating skits. The teacher will visit each group during this time to help with any problems the group is encountering. The groups will be encouraged to have the conflict reach some form of resolution.

5 minutes (timed) for the first presentation.

5 minutes (timed) for the second presentation.

5 minutes (timed) for the third presentation.

Any remaining time will be spent discussing the skits.

### Day 2

**Objective:** To introduce the unit and give students a conception of why this unit was chosen. The introductory activity is included in order to have the students relate this resistance to their own lives.

**Implementation:**

5 minutes of role/housekeeping

10 minutes of explanation of the purpose of the unit. This is a summarized account of the rationale of the unit in which the students will be made aware of the reasons why they are being taught this material. This includes a list of the materials we will be using.

10 minutes for the students to freewrite on their reactions to the skits that were performed the previous day. They will be encouraged to develop and express their own opinions on the matter so as to generate enthusiastic discussion.

15 minutes of discussion on student reactions. The teacher will solicit volunteers to read their freewrites to the class if this is required to spark discussion.

15 minutes in order to assign and explain the two-column journal. This is a reaction journal in which the students separate their pages into two columns. The left hand column being used to transcribe quotes that they find interesting, and the right hand column will be used to write about why they chose that quote and to provide any insight they may have about it. Each entry must be at least half a page in length. The reading of *Civil Disobedience* will also be assigned. Each student must have at least one entry by the following class period.

Day 3

Objective: To teach the students how to formulate open-ended questions and to guide them in their journal writing.

Implementation:

5 minutes of role/housekeeping

10 minute tool sharpening exercise about open-ended questions. The teacher will explain what an open-ended question is, and write examples on the board, answering questions as they come up.

30 minutes for discussion on, and questions about, the reading that was completed for this day. Students will share their journal entries on a volunteer basis, and the instructor will point out those that have most met the intention of the assignment. If discussion is not freeflowing then individual students will be called upon to read their entries.

10 minutes for students to continue their reading of *Civil Disobedience* and formulate three open-ended questions for the next class period. During this time the instructor will be available for individual student questions.

Day 4

Objective: To further the students' understanding of open-ended questions, thereby strengthening their abilities to analyze texts.

Implementation:

5 minutes of role/housekeeping

10 minute tool sharpening on parallel structure in which the instructor writes several sentences on the

board pointing out the instances where parallel structure is utilized effectively.

30 minutes of discussion about *Civil Disobedience* in which each student writes their best question on the board and the class addresses those that are most interesting.

1 minute of explanation that the first journal collection day will be day six, and the minimum required number of entries is four. Also let the class know that the reading of *Civil Disobedience* must be finished by day one of week two.

9 minutes of class reading *Civil Disobedience* and coming to the instructor for individual questions.

Day 5

Objective: To humanize the author of *Civil Disobedience* for the students through telling them about his life.

Implementation:

5 minutes of role/housekeeping

10 minute tool sharpening on the comma in which several erroneous uses of it are illustrated on the board and the instructor explains why they are wrong and rewrites the sentence in the correct fashion.

20 minute lecture about Thoreau's life and accomplishments as well as his setbacks. Thoreau's relationship with Emerson will be revealed. His failed attempts at schoolteaching will be explained. Finally, a short description of *Walden* will be given in order to clarify a bit about the author's overall persona. Questions and comments will be encouraged throughout this exercise.

18 minutes of reading aloud passages that are most interesting to the students, and discussion as to why these passages interest them. The instructor will invite any speculation that the students have about the text given the biographical information they have just received.

2 minute reminder that the journal collection will occur next class period.

## WEEK 2

Day 1

Objective: To bring closure to the discussions on *Civil Disobedience* and draw comparisons with, while sparking interest in, *Letter From Birmingham Jail*.

Implementation:

5 minutes of role/housekeeping

10 minute tool sharpening on sentence fragments in which the parts of a sentence will be identified. Several lines will be written on the board and volunteers will be called upon to say whether each line is a sentence or a fragment. Explain also that fragments are sometimes useful in creative writing, but should never be used extensively (at least for this course).

25 minutes last comments on *Civil Disobedience*. Discussion will be sparked by volunteers to read their

journal entries if necessary, and if all else fails then students will be called upon to share their favorite entries.

2 minutes for journal collection

13 minutes to tell students to begin reading *Letter From Birmingham Jail* and to explain its relation to *Civil Disobedience*, this being that Thoreau's work and theories were emulated by King.

Day 2

Objective: To build self esteem in the students by showing them that individuals may enact great changes through hard work and perseverance.

Implementation:

5 minutes role/housekeeping

10 minutes tool sharpening on a grammar error that is especially prominent in the journals that have been read.

20 minutes explaining the accomplishments that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. made toward changing the world during his lifetime without any use of violence or force. Included will be explanations of his methods -- such as organizing boycotts, marches, and protests.

2 minutes assigning the task of creating three open-ended questions on *Letter From Birmingham Jail* for the next class period.

18 minutes of individual reading of *Letter From Birmingham Jail* with the instructor available to answer personal questions.

Day 3

Objective: To improve the cooperative skills of the students while having them better understand the material.

Implementation:

5 minutes for role/housekeeping

5 minutes splitting the class up into groups of four. Students may choose their own groups, but all who take too much time will be assigned groups. Desks will be configured in a manner conducive to group work.

30 minutes assigning the task of having each group write down and answer at least eight of the open-ended questions that they have generated. The instructor will circulate throughout the room helping the students to answer their questions. One sheet of questions and answers will be collected from each group.

10 minutes of whole class discussion concerning the issues raised in the small groups. If the small groups are especially productive and need more time then this segment may be shortened or left out entirely.

5 minutes for returning two-column journals and assigning a minimum of one entry concerning *Letter*

*From Birmingham Jail* for the next class period. Also let students know that the next journal collection will be on day 10, and that they must have a minimum of four new entries as well as be finished reading *Letter From Birmingham Jail*.

Day 4

Objective: To further students' understanding of *Letter From Birmingham Jail*.

Implementation:

5 minutes of role/housekeeping

10 minute tool sharpening on a second frequently made grammatical mistake in the journals.

30 minutes of class discussion on *Letter From Birmingham Jail* based on journal entries from volunteers. Once again, students will be called upon if there are not enough volunteers. Discussion concerning the findings of the individual groups may also be included in this time.

10 minutes for reading *Letter From Birmingham Jail* and working on journal entries. This time may be taken up by discussion if it is going especially well.

Day 5

Objective: To bring closure to the discussion of *Letter From Birmingham Jail* and to bring as much clarity as possible to the students regarding this piece.

Implementation:

5 minutes of role/housekeeping

15 minutes of reading aloud passages that were most striking to the students. If there are insufficient volunteers then the instructor will choose passages to be read.

25 minutes of final thoughts on *Letter From Birmingham Jail*. If needed, then volunteers will read from their journals. If there are insufficient volunteers then students will be chosen to read aloud from their journals.

5 minutes for collection of journals.

### WEEK 3

Day 1

Objective: To prepare students to respond to poetry and to look at the life of Poet Laureate Gwendolyn Brooks.

Implementation

5 minutes role/housekeeping

15 minutes introductory activity to begin poetry section of unit. Teacher will play song "Unpretty" by rock group TLC. Students will listen to song first time and think about what it is saying. Teacher will play song through again and students will free write during song about issues and ideas they think about

as it plays.

20 minutes Teacher will lead class discussion about the song's message. Discussion will stem from the responses students wrote during the free write period.

10 minutes Teacher will provide background information on the poet Gwendolyn Brooks for next day's lesson. Will cover her role as a leader for women's rights and the African-American civil rights movement. Teacher will also discuss how Brooks promoted the beauty of being black before it was considered beautiful.

5 minutes Teacher will pass out copy of "To My Sisters Who Kept Their Naturals" to read over as homework.

## Day 2

Objective: To read over poem "To My Sisters Who Kept Their Naturals" and discuss issues raised by the poem. Also to talk about the implications the author's decision to write the poem during a time when African-Americans did not have the same rights as white Americans.

### Implementation

5 minutes role/housekeeping

10 minutes Have 2 students, 1 boy and 1 girl, each read the poem out loud to the class 2 times. During this time students will think about and write responses to the following questions

What is the poem saying?

Is there any difference in the tone of the poem if a girl or a boy reads it?

What was Brooks trying to promote by say this poem in her time? Is it only for black women or can anyone find personal meaning?

How could this poem be seen as controversial?

30 minutes Discussion led by teacher using free-write responses and discussion prompt questions.

10 minute Journal entries. Topic is a time when you or someone you know felt "unpretty" or not part of the crowd, or a time when you may have made someone feel this way and why. Journals must be turned in, but will not be shared with the class.

## Day 3

Objective: To look at poetry through music and to discuss the controversy that comes with the Vietnam War. Also to introduce the poem "I Sing of Olaf Glad and Big" by E.E. Cummings.

### Implementation

5 minutes role and taking up journal entries.

10 minutes Play song "Hard Rain" by Edie Brickell. Have students pose questions on a piece of paper as the song plays about what the song means.

15 minutes Background information about the Vietnam War. If possible, history teacher will be a guest speaker on the subject and present historical information on the war and why it was protested in the United States.

5 minutes Teacher will play song 2 more times. Students will pose questions or ideas on paper during this time about what they now think the song means. Students give possible meanings for the symbols or metaphors in the lyrics.

10 minutes Discussion about what the song is saying. Students will use their writing to compare what they think the song meant the first time and how their ideas changed after the information on the war was presented to them.

5 minutes Pass out copy of "I Sing of Olaf Glad and Big" to be read at home.

#### Day 4

Objective: To have students discuss how Cummings' poem could be looked at as an anti-war protest.

#### Implementation

5 minutes role/housekeeping

30 minutes Reread last night's poem aloud in class. Discuss what about the poem makes it anti-war, using teacher prompts such as:

Why are people treating Olaf the way they do?

Does mob mentality have a role in the poem's 'society'?

What happens to Olaf at the end of the poem?

Why does Cummings' say that Olaf is "more blond than you"?

How does Cummings' unconventional style contribute to the impact of the poem?

15 minutes Pass out copy of Pietri's "Puerto Rican Obituary" and begin reading it silently. Finish reading for homework. (poem is quite long) Have students make highlights or notes on the poem with questions, problems or comments that arise while reading it.

#### Day 5

Objective: To clear up any questions that made the poem confusing and also to discuss what Pietri is trying to say in the poem.

#### Implementation

5 minutes role/housekeeping

10 minutes 5 students will volunteer or be asked to read sections of the poem aloud in class.

30 minutes Teacher will write some of the questions students posed from the night before on the board. As a class, students will attempt to answer these questions using examples from the poem. If questions are exhausted, then teacher will pose questions to class concerning the poem such as:



Is the message of the poem positive or negative?

Does the positiveness at the end of poem make up for the deaths of the characters in the beginning?

Is Pietri making a case for cultural inclusion or not? Why?

10 minutes Students will form into groups of 3. These will be the groups that students will be in for their oral presentation due next Wednesday and Thursday. Teacher will explain what will be expected in the poetry assignment and pass out handout with the requirements. Students can begin working on presentation over the weekend and will have class time on Monday and Tuesday of next week to continue working on it. The assignment will go as follows:

1. Students will research in library for 1 class period to find a poem dealing with a resistance theme.
2. Students will make time out of class to work on an oral report, which presents the poem as one of resistance. They will do so by using what they learned in class and comparing it the other poetry already covered in class. They will also point out and explain any literary devices used in poem.
3. Students will have another class period to work in their groups to make a visual representation of their poem. They will have creative freedom that may range from using posterboard for drawings or representative clothing.
4. Students must first represent a reading of the poem for the class. They must also present their report on why the poem is one of resistance and explain how their visual aid is representative of the poem. A written draft of the report is to be turned in after the presentation.

Use of notecards during oral presentation is permitted. At the end of the week, Friday, any late presentations will be given. All students giving late presentations can begin with a high grade of 50. Half will be taken off for late work, unless a parent calls teacher or talks to an administrator the day of or before presentation is due.

## WEEK 4

### Day 1

Objective: To give students time to research in library for resistance poetry, and work on planning of presentation. If planning is already been done, students can use the time to work on visual aid. If students have already finished visual aid, a poem will be given to them to explicate during the class period.

### Implementation

5 minutes role Explain to students that they must be working in groups on their project, and if they cannot, then they may work on an explication worksheet or read silently.

40 minutes Library time. Students may ask questions or have work critiqued by teacher during this time.

10 minutes Students will return to class and draw number from hat determining when they will present their project.

### Day 2

Objective: To give students time to work in computer lab or in classroom on visual aid.

### Implementation

5 minutes role/housekeeping

50 minutes Students work in groups on visual aid portion of their project. If visual aid is finished, then students must work on another part of project. If not, then students can complete another worksheet on poetry explication or read silently. Teacher will continue to answer questions and critique work during this period.

### Day 3

Objective: To present oral and visual report of poetry project. Presentation must be between 8-12 minutes

### Implementation

5 minutes role teacher reminds students that 2 points will be taken off his or her grade for being a rude audience member. This includes sleeping, heckling, or any other distracting actions.

45 minutes Student presentations

5 minutes Teacher tells students about poetry appreciation day. On Friday, students may bring in snacks to share with the class and a poem or song that will be played or read in front of the class. Student has option of telling class why the poem or song is meaningful to them, or why they picked it out. Any late presentations will be given at the beginning of the class, delaying poetry and snack time. All students must bring in a poem or song to be shared with the class. If not, then student without poem or song must go to the library and write a report on a poet of the teacher's choice during the class period.

### Day 4

Objective: To finish up poetry presentations.

### Implementation

5 minutes role Teacher again reminds students about taking off points for being a rude audience member.

45 minutes Student presentations

5 minutes Teacher reminds students about poetry appreciation day. Students must have poem or song to participate.

### Day 5

Objective: To celebrate the poems and songs that each individual brings in to share with class.

### Implementation

5 minutes role Students set up snacks in back of the room.

45 minutes Any students who have not presented their presentations will go at this time for half off. Afterwards, poetry appreciation day can begin. Students take turns sharing their poems and music. During the time when students read poem or share what makes it meaningful to them, students will pay

attention or be asked to leave and work in the library. Questions are welcome and students may get up at any time to get more snacks, unless someone is reading a poem or introducing what they brought in.

5 minutes Clean up room. Any students who did not get a chance to share what they brought in will have the opportunity to do so at the end of the semester if students enjoyed poetry appreciation day.

## WEEK 5

### Day One

Objective: To introduce students to the novel *Incidents in the Life of A Slave Girl*

To discuss how slaves resisted authority

Implementation:

5 minutes: role/housekeeping

25 minutes: teacher will begin discussing how slaves resisted authority. The discussion will be prompted by the reading of slavery accounts from *My Folks Don't Talk To Me About Slavery*. Teacher will be making references to the vignettes as the discussion unfolds

25 minutes: teacher ties discussion to the novel and begins reading the novel in class.

Teacher will read to the class for the remainder of the class period allowing students to ask questions at any given point. Students will be assigned to read the first 4 chapters for homework and to bring in three questions they have pertaining to the novel

### Day 2

Objective: To continue reading novel

To have students begin reflecting on novel

Implementation:

5 minutes: roll/housekeeping

15 minutes: teacher asks students to write a journal entry reflecting on any of the three questions they have written down. Students must write the question they are reflecting on at the top of the journal entry.

10 minutes: Discuss some of the questions the students have and give other students the opportunity to answer the question. Teacher should allow students to

discuss their interpretations as much as possible, but make sure discussion stays on topic and give insightful details to help students gain a clearer understanding. Discussion may run over into reading time.

25 minutes: Teacher will read to the class for the remainder of the class period allowing students to ask questions at any given point. Students will be assigned to read the next 4 chapters for homework and to bring in three questions they have pertaining to the novel.

### Day 3

Objective: To continue reading novel

To have students reflect on novel

### Implementation

5 minutes: roll/housekeeping

15 minutes: teacher asks students to write a journal entry reflecting on any of the three questions they have written down. Students must write the question they are reflecting on at the top of the journal entry.

10 minutes: Discuss some of the questions the students have and give other students the opportunity to answer the question. Teacher should allow students to discuss their interpretations as much as possible, but make sure discussion stays on topic and give insightful details to help students gain a clearer understanding. Discussion may run over into reading time.

25 minutes: Teacher will read to the class for the remainder of the class period allowing students to ask questions at any given point. Students will be assigned to read the next 4 chapters for homework and to bring in three questions they have pertaining to the novel.

### Day Four

Objective: To continue reading novel

To have students reflect on novel

### Implementation:

5 minutes: roll/housekeeping

15 minutes: teacher asks students to write a journal entry reflecting on any of the three questions they have written down. Students must write the question they are reflecting on at the top of the journal entry.

10 minutes: Discuss some of the questions the students have and give other students the opportunity to answer the question. Teacher should allow students to discuss their interpretations as much as possible, but make sure discussion stays on topic and give insightful details to help students gain a clearer understanding. Discussion may run over into reading time.

25 minutes: Teacher will read to the class for the remainder of the class period allowing students to ask questions at any given point. Students will be assigned to read the next 4 chapters for homework and to bring in three questions they have pertaining to the novel.

Day Five

Objective: To continue reading novel

To have students reflect on novel

To introduce students to writing assignment related to essay

Implementation:

5 minutes: roll/housekeeping

15 minutes: Teacher asks students to write a journal entry reflecting on any of the three questions they have written down. Students must write the question they are reflecting on at the top of the journal entry.

10 minutes: Discuss some of the questions the students have and give other students the opportunity to answer the question. Teacher should allow students to discuss their interpretations as much as possible, but make sure discussion stays on topic and give insightful details to help students gain a clearer understanding. Discussion may run over into reading time.

25 minutes: Teacher will read to the class for the remainder of the class period allowing

students to ask questions at any given point. Students will be assigned to read the next 4 chapters for homework and to bring in three questions they have pertaining to the novel. Teacher informs students of writing assignment by putting the rubric for the assignment on the over head and passes out a copy to each student. Teacher goes over rubric and encourages students to begin thinking about what they want to write about. (insertion)

## **WEEK 6**

### Day One

Objective: To finish reading novel

To have students reflect on novel

Implementation:

5 minutes: roll/housekeeping

15 minutes: teacher asks students to write a journal entry reflecting on any of the three questions they have written down. Students must write the question they are reflecting on at the top of the journal entry.

10 minutes: Discuss some of the questions the students have and give other students the opportunity to answer the question. Teacher should allow students to discuss their interpretations as much as possible, but make sure discussion stays on topic and give insightful details to help students gain a clearer understanding. Discussion may run over into reading time.

25 minutes: Teacher will read to the class for the remainder of the class period allowing students to ask questions at any given point. Students should finish reading novel for homework and should select three questions from their journal entries that they would like to address in their essay. Students should be informed that they will begin writing in class.

### Day Two

Objective: To begin writing 5 paragraph essay

## Implementation:

5 minutes: roll/housekeeping

10 minutes: Discuss ending of the novel. Were students surprised? Did they like the ending. Allow students to ask any remaining questions about the novel.

15 minutes: Writers Workshop. Teacher should display the format of the five paragraph format on the overhead and display other models of written essays that follow the same pattern. Teacher should discuss the thesis, supporting paragraphs, and conclusions with the students. Teacher should provide students with multiple exemplars to follow.

20 minutes: Students begin writing in class. Students should follow guideline from the rubric. The rubric will be display on the overhead.

5 minutes: Teacher goes around to see how students are coming along and informs that they will be meeting in the computer lab tomorrow to begin typing essays

## Day Three

Objective: To give student time to type essays

To peer edit essays

## Implementation:

5 minutes: roll/housekeeping

10 minutes: Computer instruction, rules and regulations gone over by computer lab specialist

35 minutes: Students begin typing essays.

5 minutes: Teacher has students to print essay, whatever they have, and has students to exchange papers with a classmate to have them to peer edit the paper. All students should come tomorrow with an edited paper. Tell students to meet to meet in lab tomorrow. Teacher should be available to assists students in lab before and after school.

## Day Four

Objective: To continue typing essay

## Implementation:

5 minutes: roll/housekeeping

50 minutes: students work on essays. Students should make revisions to essays and continue developing essays. Any students who finishes early should turn in and will be assigned to assist other students who are not finished.

Teacher should assist any student in the lab who needs help before and after school. Remind students to bring in journals tomorrow.

## Day Five

Objective: To finish typing essay

## Implementation:

5 minutes: roll/housekeeping

50 minutes: students work on essays. Students should make final revisions to essays.

As students finish and turn in essays they will be allowed to browse the net and talk to their fellow classmates using their inside voices. Teacher should still be available to assist any student who needs help. Students should also turn in journals with essays.