

A SENSE OF SELF

**Six-week Unit
Grade Eleven**



**Jennifer Feldman
Melissa Lynn
Amy Winter**

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Grade Eleven Unit Lesson Plans

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In My Hand
by Janet S. Wong

*We stand side by side, my mother and I,
Dish towels on our shoulders,
Palms up to the light.*

*Our heart lines are weak.
Our head lines are strong.
In our family
The life lines run long.*

*Her hand looks the same as it always has
Looked,
But I can see my lines have changed*

*And one wild crease I've never seen
Is settling in this map of skin--*

*One bold line to mark the place where my own wild life
Begins.*

Rationale

High school is a crucial time for adolescents in regards to the development of their own identity. Students often feel overwhelmed in the school environment by the many pressures to fit in, act a certain way, and be accepted by their peers. According to Whitney-Thomas and Moloney, “school provides another critical context in which adolescents develop their sense of self. Supportive teachers have been described as those who ‘saw their roles as transcending the walls of the classroom to all areas of school’” (375). It is vital for students to become knowledgeable about their world and the people in it, and most importantly, to discover who

they are. Students need to become their own person and feel comfortable in their own skin. They need to develop their own personal beliefs and philosophies about life and about the role they wish to play in it. A unit focusing on “A Sense of Self” will help students in understanding the many aspects that shape one’s identity. Where we came from, our family, our friends, and our life experiences all combine to make us who we are, but ultimately, we as individuals play a significant role in shaping who we will become. Teenagers in high school encounter discrimination in many forms, and these experiences can lead them to adopt biased or even unfair perspectives. Students may face discrimination based on culture, gender, appearance, peer groups, etc., and they must find the courage to maintain their own voice and refuse to fold to roles prescribed by society. This unit aims to introduce and familiarize students with an array of multicultural texts so that they may appreciate as well as gain a deeper understanding of cultures other than their own. Throughout their lives, students will encounter people from all walks of life who each see the world through their own personal set of lenses. Students need to learn how to embrace the many differences they will inevitably encounter rather than to ignore or even judge them. Ultimately, our hope and overarching objective of this unit is for students to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their beliefs and to achieve a stronger sense of autonomy.

The short story “Everyday Use” by Alice Walker will help students obtain a better understanding of their own heritage, culture, and place. We believe that these three issues are important to personal development and self awareness. In discussing this story, students will begin to understand where they came from and why it is important to their individual identity. They will delve into traditions, rituals, and customs surrounding their cultural backgrounds. Heritage and culture come together to shape one’s self awareness and ultimate identity.

The importance of heritage is seen in many ways throughout “Everyday Use.” Dee changes her name as a rejection of where she comes from. She no longer wants to be associated with her family name. The new name that she adopts is appealing to her because it does not have a history tracing back to her slave heritage. While Dee rejects heritage in the form of her name, she demonstrates pride in her family through her desire to keep the quilt. However, it is often interpreted that she fails to understand that the quilt is not meant to be hung on the wall but to be put to good use. The quilt is given to Dee’s younger sister, Maggie, who appreciates who she is and where she comes from.

Through designing their own quilts that reflect their personal heritage, students will have the opportunity to draw upon many aspects from their family values, morals, and heritage. By understanding the role that heritage and culture play in one’s identity, students will learn to appreciate and respect where they came from. Family history will become something to understand and appreciate rather than something to reject. The personal quilt activity will be shared so that the class will acquire a deeper understanding and respect for each other and their individual cultures. Promoting an appreciation and respect of one’s heritage “allows those from different ethnic backgrounds to gain a sense of belonging as their own heritage stories are told and valued” (Patty). The students will be introduced to new cultures and new ideas. They will learn about new traditions and will have the opportunity to share their own. The students can use what they learn from their classmates in order to reach conclusions about their own personal values. Learning where they came from plays a central role in forming personal autonomy and promoting individual identity.

Through the text of *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros, students will be introduced to and obtain a deeper insight about the crucial role that heritage and culture play in

shaping one's identity. Additionally, this story is told in a series of vignettes, so students will be exposed to a new genre of writing and literature. *The House on Mango Street* addresses the issues of discrimination and racism that minorities encounter. Students will become familiarized with the writing style of vignettes, and this text will expand students' options for finding further vehicles for self-expression as well as additional avenues of experiencing literature. We will also focus on the stream of consciousness technique and show how it can be used as an effective process of thinking and reflecting. These new skills will be fostered through a variety of activities including journal writing, experimenting with their own vignettes, and quick writing. Furthermore, through this text, our hope is that students will catch a closer glimpse into the life of a young girl with dreams and self-determination. She steps out of society's prescribed role for her while still managing to preserve her personal heritage. Self-determination, as described by Whitney-Thomas and Moloney, "means knowing what one wants in life and having the mechanisms to achieve these goals. Self-determination includes having problem-solving skills, adaptability, choice and decision-making skills, self-awareness, self-regulation, self-efficacy expectations, and clarity of personal vision" (375). Also as a focus for this text, the class will be studying the cyclical form of the book and the parallel between that form and one of the themes of the book, the idea that we must always remember our roots and return to where we came from. It is important to remember and value the place and experiences that shape us. Students will engage in a number of activities, incorporating both art and music, that will encourage them to personally reflect on their own lives and how particular aspects of life help shape who they are and who they will become.

Students will delve even further into evaluating their personal sense of self through a close engagement with our final text for the unit, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale

Hurston. The protagonist of the story, Janie, participates in the rich literary tradition of storytelling as she relates her struggles and triumphs with society and with herself. Janie must overcome the challenge of being emotionally suppressed and physically silenced due to her identity as an African American woman. Throughout the course of the novel, she learns more about herself and her values. She finds her own voice and refuses to accept the fixed role prescribed to her by society. This is an important concept for our students to discuss and reflect upon, as they are attempting at this age to figure out what they believe and value and where they fit into society. The previous texts will hopefully show them that where they came from (their family, community, etc.) plays some role in shaping their ideas, values, and beliefs. This text goes further to emphasize that while everyone around us influences who we are, it is also important to find our own voice in order to shape our individual identity.

In maintaining the unit focus, students will explore some critical issues posed in this novel in order to reflect on their own lives, construct a personal philosophy, and achieve a stronger sense of their own identity. In studying the ways in which literature can be used to relate to the lives of students, Howard Gardner says “it is stories of identity – narratives that help individuals think about and feel who they are, where they come from, and where they are headed – that constitute the single most powerful weapon in the leader’s literary arsenal (Burke 90). We will explore both racial and gender issues present in the novel and discuss how women and other historically suppressed groups of people have become more empowered. We will focus particularly on how individuals representing these groups have utilized their voices to achieve higher status and respect. References can be made to characters in each of the major texts from this unit as examples of individuals who struggle against stereotypes to find their own identity. These characters also refuse to be affected by peer pressure or gossip. It is often easy for

teenagers to give into peer pressure and follow what others think or expect of them. Students will see how these characters are strong and remain true to themselves and their values. We will still emphasize the importance of family and community in developing their own sense of self. Janie does not always agree with what people think of her, and she refuses to conform to the role expected of her; she does, however, feel a deep connection to her own community and to the world around her. She feels a sense of belonging to the community and to her heritage, yet she is still independent and makes her own choices. Janie views relationships as necessary in contributing certain values, traditions, beliefs to create one's individual identity. We want students to understand that they must reflect on this and sort through the ideas that restrain them from growing and those that are truly important to them. Once they discover what they believe and what is important to them, they can make their own decisions and better control their own lives. Janie teaches us that we suppress our individuality when we fail to use our voice and allow others to silence us.

Some parents may express opposition to teaching a novel that confronts such controversial or sensitive topics. They may claim that some of the stereotypes placed on characters in the novel are hurtful. Some may even label Janie as too rebellious because she goes against the beliefs set forth by her grandmother and her community. The fact is that these issues are very much present in our students' lives, and it is detrimental to ignore them. By offering a safe learning environment for students to discuss these issues in an open and honest manner, they can learn more about each other and, in turn, learn *from* each other. They will gain a better understanding of the differences and similarities between various types of people and will see the humanity that binds us all together. They need to confront these difficult issues in order to make sense of the world and to understand that they are not alone. Open communication is the best

way to dispel inaccurate stereotypes and to feel a sense of connection to those who are different from us. Also, we are not encouraging students to rebel against their families or their traditions but rather to reflect upon what they believe and value and to weave all of that together to achieve a better sense of where they came from and who they are.

We will closely confront the important issues in this novel relevant to students' lives through literature circles. Students will meet several times in class in small groups and will initiate discussion using open-ended question prompts as well as their own questions and observations. Students will be encouraged to discuss and evaluate thoughts and situations from their own lives as they relate to Janie's experiences in the novel in order to understand the responsibility they hold in making their own choices and, thus, empowering themselves. Ideas discussed in the small groups will be presented to the entire class so that we can share a wide array of ideas and opinions. Students can use these varying ideas to decide what they believe and what they will choose to incorporate into their own personal philosophies. Students will be assessed through the literature circles based on their active participation in discussions and contributions to the group by fulfilling their specific duties. Students will also be assessed by their exploratory growth through reading logs that they will keep throughout the unit. Entries will include short responses to daily writing prompts and weekly responses to the readings and our class discussions. The daily writing prompts will serve as personal reflections on their own beliefs and as connections to the topics in the texts. The responses to the readings will allow them to raise important comments and questions that will help them formulate ideas throughout the unit. The reading logs will document their growth as readers and writers and will also allow them to keep track of their thoughts as they gain a better understanding of themselves as individuals.

Students will confront a number of important issues and will sort out many conflicting ideas about who they are and where their place is in this world. By the end of the unit, students should be more familiar and comfortable with their own beliefs and values. They will have read, analyzed, and discussed a variety of texts dealing with many of the difficult issues facing adolescents today and will use them to reflect on their own lives. Louise Rosenblatt states that “literature treats the whole range of choices and aspirations and values out of which the individual must weave his own personal philosophy” (Burke 81). As students progress through the unit, they will be instructed to constantly formulate their own philosophy of life – where they came from, who they are, what they value, and how all of these aspects are tied together. For their culminating project for this unit on “A Sense of Self,” they will create their own “Philosophy of Life” and will express it through any creative format of their choice. Examples of projects include a formal essay, painting, original song or poem, creative performance, etc. The major guideline for the project is that it must show personal reflection and growth through close engagement with topics and texts used in class. It also must clearly express a sense of their own identity and define who they are as individuals:

The most profound questions of identity relate to an individual’s perception of self. Sometimes the search for self can be revealed through a look at who readers spend their time with, who they model themselves after, and who they were at other times in their lives. “Who am I?” might be discovered through characters-- real and imagined--that are found in books (Johnson, et al, 432-440).

Many students at this age begin to experience conflicts between their personal beliefs and the role that society or their peers have prescribed for them. It is important for our students to understand where they came from and how that influences who they are and what they believe.

We want them to embrace their heritage but also to move forward as individuals. It is important to realize that they can transcend barriers placed on them due to factors such as race or social class. To do this, they must become more confident with who they are and what they believe and must use their voice as an instrument for empowerment. By the end of this unit, we hope that students will reflect on all aspects of their own lives in order to find that voice within them and to figure out who they are and where they want to go. Whitney-Thomas and Moloney state, “Focused efforts on introspection and future-oriented thinking can provide students with opportunities to clarify visions, make progress on plans, and understand themselves in terms of their strengths, needs, interests, and goals” (375). We want to give them the autonomy to make their own decisions about what they believe so they will become more responsible and self-actualized citizens. We want them to establish a stronger sense of self.

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Goals and Rubrics

Goal for Personal Journals:

Throughout this unit, you will keep a personal journal in response to “journal jump-starts” and the literature we will study during the unit. A personal journal is an open-ended opportunity for you to write whatever you think or feel in response to the unit’s content, processes, and ideas however you might be experiencing them. The journal will involve a strong component of reflection, of thinking through ideas and emotions, and of developing a personal response to the unit. Journals will be collected each Friday and returned the following Monday at the beginning of class. I will try to provide feedback to at least one of each of your entries. You must keep in mind that the writing in these journals should get you started on developing your own ideas and beliefs that will help you construct your own philosophy of life by the unit’s end. The following issues will be factors in the way I grade your journal:

- Your journal does not need to follow the conventions of textbook English. Rather, the purpose is to think about ideas from class and your own thoughts without worrying about the form your thoughts take.
- Do not simply summarize the literature we read in class. Although at times you will need to refer to these texts, the primary purpose of your journal is to think about your response to these texts, rather than provide summaries of what they say. In other words, when dealing with the texts, your journal should focus on how you have engaged with the literature.
- You are strongly encouraged to reflect on personal issues that occur to you in relation to your consideration of the literature and topics presented during the unit.
- Your journal should include a minimum of five pages of writing per week. For each entry, put the date of the writing at the beginning. We will devote some class time three days a week to personal journal reflection. Whatever length requirements you do not meet within this time, you must finish for homework.
- Keep in mind that I am required to share any thoughts or suggestions of violence, suicide, substance abuse, family abuse, or other harmful behavior with the school counselors.

Personal Journals Rubric

Your journals will be graded primarily for content and evidence of personal reflection in relation to the unit's concepts, ideas, and themes.

A journal receiving an A will:

1. Meet at least the minimum five page requirement. (I will take into account students whose writing is extremely large)
2. Provide ample evidence that you have critically reflected on many of the topics or ideas brought forth in class discussions and the literature we study.
3. Attempt to make personal connections to many of the topics or ideas brought forth in class discussions and the literature we study.
4. Be clean, clear, and legible. While I will not be counting off for grammar, your writing does need to be clear and legible. If I cannot read it, then I cannot grade it.

A journal receiving a B will:

1. Meet the minimum five page requirement.
2. Provide evidence that you have critically reflected on the topics or ideas brought forth in class discussions and/or the literature we study.
3. Attempt to make personal connections to the topics or ideas brought forth in class discussions and/or literature we study.
4. Be clear and legible.

A journal receiving a C will:

1. Have at least three to four pages of the five page requirement.
2. Provide some evidence that you have reflected on the topics or ideas brought forth in class discussions, but you fail to make connections to the readings.
3. Attempt to make minimal personal connections to the topics or ideas brought forth in class discussions.
4. Be fairly legible.

A journal receiving a D will:

1. Have only two to three pages of the five page requirement.
2. Provide minimal evidence that you have reflected on the topics or ideas brought forth in class discussions, but you fail to make connections to the readings.
3. Make minimal attempts to personally connect to the topics or ideas brought forth in class discussions.
4. Hard to read, barely legible.

A journal receiving an F will:

1. Have less than two pages of the five page requirement.
2. Provide no evidence of reflection on the topics or ideas brought forth in class discussions or the literature we study.
3. Make no attempt to personally connect to the topics or ideas brought forth in class discussions or the literature we study.
4. Not be legible.

Goals for “Everyday Use” Quilt and Poem

We have just finished reading “Everyday Use” by Alice Walker. The quilt in the story is a significant aspect of the family’s lives because it relates to their family history. In class tomorrow, we will make our own quilts that are representative of our own personal cultures and heritages. Materials will be provided, but you are welcome to bring in fabric scraps that may be important to you and your family. To accompany your quilt, you will write an “I AM” poem. The scaffolding for this poem is provided for you. You should keep in mind the following ideas when writing your poem and creating your quilt:

- Your quilt should be uniquely yours. It needs to reflect some aspect of your family heritage and culture.
- I will provide all the materials needed to do this project in class tomorrow, so you do not need to have anything prepared in terms of the quilt.
- Your assignment for tonight is to write the poem that will accompany your quilt. Please bring a typed copy of your poem to class tomorrow.
- Your poem will be graded primarily on word choice, personality, flow and rhythm, grammar and spelling. I also want to hear your voice.
- Feel free to be as creative as you wish. If you want to bring in your own fabric to use on your quilt, feel free to do so.

“I Am” Poem and Quilt Grading Rubric

Projects receiving an A will:

- use vivid and natural word choice and language
- incorporate personal knowledge and experience
- have few or no grammar or spelling mistakes
- utilize transitions and word choice to create smooth sentence flow and rhythm
- incorporate a quilt that is unique and made to express personality

Projects receiving a B will:

- Meet four of the five above requirements

Projects receiving a C will:

- Meet three of the five requirements

Projects receiving a D will:

- Meet two of the five requirements

Projects receiving a F will:

- Meet only one of the five requirements

“I Am” Poem

I am _____
(two special characteristics)

I wonder _____
(something you are actually curious about)

I hear _____
(an imaginary sound)

I see _____
(an imaginary sight)

I want _____
(an actual desire)

I am _____
(the first line of the poem restated)

I pretend _____ (something you actually pretend
to do)

I feel _____
(a feeling about something imaginary)

I touch _____
(an imaginary touch)

I worry _____
(something that really bothers you)

I cry _____
(something that makes you very sad)

I am _____
(the first line of the poem repeated)

I understand _____
(something you know is true)

I say _____
(something you believe in)

I dream _____
(something you actually dream about)

I try _____
(something you really make an effort about)

I hope _____
(something you actually hope for)

I am _____
(the first line of the poem repeated)

Goal for Vignettes modeling *The House on Mango Street*:

In reading *The House on Mango Street*, we have looked closely at Sandra Cisneros' style of writing in vignettes. You will now more closely analyze this form of writing and emulate it by writing vignettes of your own.

Your assignment is to write two vignettes modeled after chapters in the novel. These vignettes will require you to reflect on the roles that family, culture, and heritage play in shaping your own identity.

For this assignment, you will:

- Create a list of elements of Cisneros' style in small groups
- Plan, write, and revise your vignettes
- Title the vignettes
- Type the vignettes
- Write a brief dedication for the vignettes
- Design a creative cover page for the vignettes

Remember, when writing your vignettes it is important to choose events that you care about and to write in your own unique VOICE!

Vignettes Grading Rubric

Your vignettes will be graded on how well you emulate the style of Cisneros' writing and on how well you incorporate aspects of your family, culture, and heritage into your vignettes.

Vignettes receiving an A will:

- Show evidence of planning and revising
- Accurately emulate Cisneros' writing style
- Have relevant titles and be typed
- Include a brief dedication and a creative cover page
- Will show evidence of reflection on family, culture, and heritage

Vignettes receiving a B will:

Meet only 4 of the 5 above requirements

Vignettes receiving a C will:

Meet only 3 of the 5 above requirements

Vignettes receiving a D will:

Meet only 2 of the 5 above requirements

Vignettes receiving an F will:

Meet only 1 of the 5 above requirements

Goal for Literature Circles:

You are all expected to read *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston. After completing the text, we will divide into groups and participate in literature circles to look more closely into the text. You will form small groups of four to five students, and each student will have a role within your circle. Roles include Discussion Director, Illustrator, Connector, Summarizer, and Passage Master. Depending on how many people are in your group, some groups will have to take on multiple roles. Each group (circle) of students will be in charge of leading a discussion over three chapters of the novel. Each circle should assign a role or roles to its members and adhere to the guidelines set out for your prescribed role based on a handout that I will provide. We will devote roughly two to three days in class to work in literature circles, and then each circle will lead a whole class discussion on their assigned chapters. To lead your discussion, you may adopt any format: regular English class, nonviolent talk-show format, town meeting, or other mode of your choice that I approve. Your discussion should include the following:

- Each group member should take a roughly equal part in leading the discussion.
- You should make an effort to include other class members in your discussion.
- Your discussion should reflect the time and effort your group put into discussing your assigned chapters.
- You should pose open-ended questions to the class that do not have one correct answer, and they should be questions that invite critical reflecting on aspects of the text at hand.
- The questions you pose should include at least one of the following categories:
 1. Inferences about characters or events within the text
 2. Generalizations from the text to society at large
 3. The effects of literary form and technique
 4. The purpose of a particular event in terms of the text's meaning
 5. Evaluations of the literature
 6. Emotions students experienced in response to the story
 7. Personal connections to the story
- Each group should cite specific examples from the text to back up reasons for raising the questions you did.
- Each group must turn in a summary of what you discuss in your circle and how you plan to discuss your chapters with the class.
- Each group must turn in any work you have done for your particular role in the circle.

Literature Circles Rubric
Their Eyes Were Watching God

A discussion receiving an A will be characterized by the following:

1. Each group member takes a roughly equal part in leading the discussion.
2. The discussion will include at least 75 percent of the other students in the class.
3. The group appears to have an excellent grasp of what their chapters deal with.
4. The questions raised are open-ended and invite critical reflection and thoughtfulness.
5. The questions include at least one from each of the categories laid out in the introduction to Literature Circles Handout.
6. The discussion occupies the entire class period.
7. The group attempts to engage the class in reflection and discussion that holds attention.

A discussion receiving a B will be characterized by the following:

1. Each group member takes a roughly equal part in leading the discussion, although some students speak noticeably more than others.
2. The discussion will include at least 50 percent of the other students in the class.
3. The group appears to have a good grasp of what their chapters deal with.
4. The questions raised are mostly open-ended and invite a fairly good degree of reflection and thoughtfulness.
5. The questions include at least one from each of the categories laid out in the handout.
6. The discussion occupies mostly all of the class period with no more than 10 minutes left at the end of the discussion.
7. The group attempts to engage the class in reflection and discussion that holds attention.

A discussion receiving a C will be characterized by the following:

1. Some group members speak substantially more than others.
2. The discussion will include less than half the other students in the class.
3. The group appears to have a good grasp on some of what their chapters deal with.
4. The questions posed will occasionally ask for factual information that does not serve to help explore open-ended questions, but does include some questions that invite reflection and thoughtfulness.
5. The questions include only 5-6 of the categories laid out in the handout.
6. The discussion occupies a little over half of the class period, and it ends with than 10 minutes left.
7. The group makes minimal attempts to engage the class in reflection and discussion that holds attention.

A discussion receiving a D will be characterized by the following:

1. Some group members do mostly all of the talking.
2. The discussion includes no more than 25 percent of the other students in the class.
3. The group appears to have a poor grasp of what their chapters deal with.
4. The questions frequently request only factual information.
5. The questions include less than 5 of the 7 categories laid out in the handout.
6. The discussion occupies only half of the class period, with more than 15 minutes left at the end of the discussion.
7. The group does not appear to engage the class in reflection or thoughtfulness.

A discussion receiving an F will be characterized by the following:

1. The group does not appear to have read the text nor explored their assigned chapters.
2. The group appears unprepared and uninterested in leading the discussion.
3. The group appears to have little to no grasp of what their chapters deal with.
4. The questions include less than 3 of the categories laid out in the handout.
5. The discussion ends well before the class period ends.
6. The group does not even attempt to engage the class in any kind of discussion that invites any kind of reflection.

Goal for *Philosophy of Life*

Overview:

Throughout this unit, we have confronted many important issues dealing with our personal beliefs and values. We have sorted through ideas concerning our individual families and heritage and how they have helped to shape who we are today. We have read and discussed a variety of texts dealing with these issues and hopefully have come to a better understanding of who we are and what we believe.

Assignment:

Your job now is to reflect on everything we have learned during this unit, through the texts and through your own lives, in order to create your own personal philosophy of life. You should reflect upon where you came from, who you are, what you value, and how all of these aspects are tied together. You should also use your journals as a valuable tool in organizing your thoughts. You may create an interpretive text in any form of your choice: formal essay, collage, painting, poetry, drama, performance, song, or other textual form. You are also welcome to combine forms to produce your text. As a requirement, any visual projects must be accompanied by a thorough description of your project and explanation of its meaning and significance to your learning. Your projects should include the following:

- It should show a clear understanding of your personal beliefs and values.
- It should communicate a deeper understanding and appreciation of where you came from (family, cultural background, etc.) and how that helped to shape who you are.
- You should demonstrate understanding and analysis of at least one text studied during this unit by incorporating it into your project and relating to it on a personal level
- You must prepare a brief 3 to 5 minute presentation of your project to the class in which you explain its significance and what it reflects about your understanding of this unit and yourself.

Philosophy of Life Rubric

A grade of **A** will be awarded to projects that:

- are turned in on time
- include the minimum requirement for incorporating outside texts
- successfully connect your past, your present beliefs, and text(s) from class
- show proof of great personal reflection and growth through close engagement with topics and text(s) used in class
- show depth in synthesizing your personal beliefs and values and communicating a sense of your own identity

A grade of **B** will be awarded to projects that fail to meet one of the requirements of **A** quality.

A grade of **C** will be awarded to projects that fail to meet two of the requirements of **A** quality.

A grade of **D** will be awarded to projects that fail to meet three of the requirements of **A** quality.

A grade of **F** will be awarded to projects that fail to meet four or five of the requirements of **A** quality.

Materials

Poem:

“Where I’m From” by George Ella Lyons

Short Story:

“Everyday Use” by Alice Walker

Novels:

The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros

Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston

Daily Lesson Plans

Week One

Day 1 (Monday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(45 min) Introductory Activity (see Appendix A)

(2 min) Prepare for departure. Pass out copies of Alice Walker's short story "Everyday Use"

Homework: Read "Everyday Use." Remind students that they should bring their journals to class everyday during this unit. Also, journals will be turned in to the teacher each Friday and returned to the students each Monday.

Materials: intro activity, "Where I'm From" poem, copies of "Everyday Use"

Day 2 (Tuesday)

(Students should come to class having read Alice Walker's "Everyday Use")

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(10 min) Journal "jump-start" (Prompt: *A tradition is a custom that has repeated over generations or will repeat in future generations. For example, an American tradition is to watch the ball drop in Times Square on New Year's Eve at midnight. The value of this tradition is that it unites people together to reflect upon the events of the previous year and renew hope for the upcoming year. Traditions in families, communities, and religions all contribute to different cultures. Think of different traditions that you practice, and choose one that is a part of your cultural identity. Write about the tradition that you practice and hope to continue practicing.*)

(10 min) Sharing of journals as a whole class. (Students can raise their hands to share what they have written.)

(10 min) Brainstorming (using web organizer on Inspiration software) on the board as a whole class about what the words "culture" and "identity" mean to them.

(15 min) Make connection between journal topic and "Everyday Use." Discuss how our family, culture, and past experiences help shape who we are and how some of these aspects are present in Walker's story. Class discussion about what thoughts resonated as they read the story.

(2 min) Prepare for departure.

Materials: Inspiration software, student journals, student copies of "Everyday Use"

Day 3 (Wednesday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(10 min) Tool sharpening: Standardized testing format: word-analogy problems.

(5 min) Bridge yesterday's discussion of short story to today's activities. Recap the idea that our family, culture, and experiences all shape part of who we are. Explain that we will be thinking about our own families, cultures, experiences, etc. today to create a poem and quilt that represents us and makes us unique.

(30 min) Introduce quilt project and have students work on project for rest of the period.

Students will receive the "I Am" poem format (see Appendix C). Pass out goal and rubric for quilt activity. During class, students will begin writing their poems and creating their quilts that will reflect their culture, heritage, and family background.

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure.

Materials: Quilt goal and rubric handouts, “I Am” poem format handouts, construction paper, glue, scissors, assorted fabrics, markers, crayons, colored pencils

Day 4 (Thursday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(10 min) Tool sharpening: “Show and Tell Vocab.” (*Five vocabulary words will be selected from the story and written on index cards. Each of the cards will be given to five pairs of students, and each pair will act out a short scenario using the word in context. The class will guess the definition of the word based on the context clues of the scenario.*)

(35 min) Continuation of quilt project. Students will continue working on their poems and quilts individually, and whatever is not finished during class should be finished for homework. If students finish their project early, they may go to the media center or get their next book issued from teacher.

(2 min) Clean-up, prepare for departure.

Materials: Same as Day 3, vocab index cards

Day 5 (Friday)

(3 min) Attendance, housekeeping.

(10 min) Journal “jump-start” (Prompt: *How has doing the quilt project helped you to reflect on the roles culture, heritage, and family play in shaping one’s identity?*).

(30 min) Presentations of quilts to class. Each student will read aloud his or her poem and explain the significance of their quilts.

(5 min) Collect student journals. Issue next text, *The House on Mango Street*, to students and tell them to read the first ten vignettes over the weekend. Inform them that they will take a quiz over the reading on Monday.

(2 min) Prepare for departure.

Materials: student quilts, *The House on Mango Street* student copies

*****Presentations will continue on Monday if they have not been finished up by the end of class on Friday. After all quilts have been presented, they will be displayed on the wall in the classroom as one giant quilt.

Week Two

Day 6 (Monday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping; return journals

(5 min) Summary quiz – students will be instructed to write a short summary of what they read over the weekend. They must include key details from the beginning, middle, and end.

(10 min) Journal jump-start: *The different communities in which we live help to shape the people that we are. Proximity to our neighbors, area traditions, neighbor relationships, picturesque landscapes all contribute to the places we call home. Picture the community you think of as home. Write about an event that happened in your community that reflects its spirit.*

(30 min) Class discussion over the first ten vignettes in *Mango Street*. Open floor to questions that students may come with or experiences they want to share that relate to their reading of the novel thus far. Then bring up important themes introduced such as family, community, and stereotypes. The following topics can be posed and discussed:

- Does the condition and location of your home symbolize who and what you are? Why does Esperanza feel this way?
- What is the significance of the vignette about hair? Discuss stereotypes and how they affect Esperanza's perception of herself and others.
- What is in a name? Like a home, does it represent who you are?
- Can your family make you feel trapped or provide a safe refuge, or both? How does Esperanza feel about her family as we progress through the novel?

If time permits, read a few vignettes aloud.

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Homework: Students continue reading *House on Mango Street* (at least up to chapter 20)

Materials: student journals, notes on vignettes, novel

Day 7 (Tuesday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Tool sharpening: Roots, prefixes, suffixes.

(20 min) Introduction of vignette writing style – go over handout (see Appendix D)

(15 min) Discuss the explicit racism seen in chapter 12. Explain how stereotypes and outward appearances can cause people to hold prejudiced views of other groups of people. Ask students to share similar experiences and feelings relating to Esperanza's story.

If time permits, read a few vignettes aloud.

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Homework: Students continue reading *House on Mango Street* (at least up to chapter 30)

Materials: novel, vignette handout

Day 8 (Wednesday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Journal jump-start: *What is the best advice you have ever received? Think about who gave it to you and the effect of either ignoring or taking this advice has had on your life. In regards to this advice, what, if anything, would you do differently now?*

(35 min) Discuss what *values* are and the importance of knowing your own personal values. Ask students about the differing values of characters in the novel. What does Esperanza value and why? How can these values change? What do they take for granted?

Then hand out and explain the Personal Values Activity (see Appendix E). After working individually, students will share their rankings in small groups and explain their responses.

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Homework: Students continue reading *House on Mango Street* (at least up to chapter 40)

Materials: journals, Personal Values Activity handout, novel

Day 9 (Thursday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Tool sharpening: Homonyms; hand out list of words that are commonly confused for students to keep and refer back to. (See appendix F)

(35 min) Ask if students have any questions about the reading or experiences and thoughts they would like to share. Then begin a discussion about the theme of sexuality in the novel. Explain how Esperanza struggles in dealing with sexuality and gender differences. Explain the typically patriarchal nature of Hispanic society that Cisneros portrays in the novel, and discuss how it would pose a problem for more ambitious girls like Esperanza. Further questions to pose for discussion:

- How can a person break out of prescribed gender roles?
- Marin and Alicia are two characters that influence Esperanza's perspective on sexuality and gender roles, and they both handle the issue quite differently. What do each of these female characters do to avoid being suppressed because of their gender? Is one way more effective than another? Do these tactics actually free them or imprison them further, and why?

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Homework: Students should finish reading *House on Mango Street*

Materials: Tool sharpening handout, novel

Day 10 (Friday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(5 min) Journal jump-start: *Family, the ones you love and the ones you love to hate, are all the people that are somehow intimately connected to you, whether by blood or simply by love. These people influence, teach, and shape us through their values, beliefs, and actions. Think of the people that you consider your family. Share a story about a valuable lesson that you learned from a family member.*

(35 min) Jigsaw discussion of Esperanza's character. Class will be divided into five groups of 4-6 (depending on class size), and each group will be given a topic question relating to Esperanza's character. Each group will thoroughly explore the question given to them and discuss the topic so that they are "experts" on that issue. Then, each student will be given a different number within their group, and they will regroup according to their new number (i.e. all of the "ones" in each original group will become a new group, and so on, so that each new group will have an expert on each topic). This activity will allow students to develop their own ideas in an exploratory way within small groups. The activity also requires that students know enough about their topic to teach it to their peers and will, in turn, learn new information from others. The topics for each group are as follows:

- How does Esperanza feel about her family and her home at the beginning of the novel?
- How does Esperanza seem to feel about her family and home by the end of the novel?
- Is Esperanza more concerned with being loyal to her culture and community or with breaking free from her prescribed role in society?
- Is Esperanza satisfied with the way in which society and others perceive her? Does this change at all throughout the novel?
- Does Esperanza ever find a sense of place? Consider family, community, culture, gender.

Students should be encouraged to find common links between these questions when sharing responses in the second groups in order to explore how Esperanza changes and matures over the course of the novel.

(5 min) Pass out and explain goal and rubric for vignette assignment

(2 min) Turn in journals; prepare for departure

Homework: Students should start thinking about what to write their personal vignettes on.

Materials: journals, goal and rubric handouts for students on vignettes assignment, novel

Week Three

Day 11 (Monday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping; return journals

(10 min) Journal jump-start: *What quality do you dislike most about yourself and why? Write about an experience in which possessing this particular quality affected your life or the lives of others. What are some ways you can work on improving something you dislike about yourself?*

(10 min) Begin work on vignettes. Students will break up into small groups of three or four to brainstorm a list of elements of Cisneros' style. This will serve as a helpful guide when writing their vignettes.

(25 min) Begin writing vignettes, work individually.

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Homework: Continue working on vignettes

Materials: journals, novel

Day 12 (Tuesday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Tool sharpening: Common grammar mistakes. Identify common mistakes with grammar from journals that students seem to be struggling with or forgetting. Use examples to address these grammar issues, but do not use individual students' writing as examples.

(25-30 min) Students continue working on their vignettes. Reserve computer lab so students have the opportunity to type their vignettes and design a cover page.

(5-10 min) Introduce "Lyric Days" activity (see Appendix H). This activity will allow students to reflect on their own lives and share something important to them. This will provoke them to think further about their philosophy of life for the culminating project. It will also give them the opportunity to build classroom community by sharing and learning more about each other personally.

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Homework: Completed vignettes due tomorrow. Students should bring in song and lyrics of something they personally connect with along with explanation of why they chose the song.

Materials: Access to computer lab, Lyric Day handouts

Day 13 (Wednesday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping. Students turn in vignettes.

(10 min) Journal jump-start: *Who or what has had a strong influence in your life and why? Explain how this particular person or thing has made a difference to you, and explain how not having had this influence might have made you a different person.*

(35 min) Lyric Day 1 -- students share songs and explanations with class.

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Materials: journals, stereo, students' CDs or tapes and explanations of song choices

Day 14 (Thursday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Tool sharpening: "Show and Tell Vocab." *(Five vocabulary words will be selected from novel and written on index cards. Each of the cards will be given to five pairs of students, and*

each pair will act out a short scenario using the word in context. The class will guess the definition of the words based on the context clues of each scenario.)

(35 min) Lyric Day 2 -- students share songs and explanations with class.

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Materials: Same as Day 13

Day 15 (Friday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Journal jump-start: *Do you think life is harder for a boy or a girl? Or do you think there is no difference at all? How do you believe society views gender? What are some advantages and disadvantages of being a specific gender?*

(25-30 min) Issue new text to students -- *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Introduction to book – lecture notes and discussion of author, characters, themes, time period. (see Appendix I). Present notes on overhead. Instruct students to copy notes and add in their own notes as we discuss.

(5-10 min) Hand out Philosophy of Life goal and rubric. Introduce the assignment and answer any questions. Emphasize that they should use their journals as a valuable tool in developing this project. Also, they can use any creative format to produce their text. Students should start thinking about their personal values and beliefs.

(2 min) Turn in journals; prepare for departure

Homework: Students should read chapters 1-5 by Monday; be prepared for quiz. Also, come to class on Monday with a question, favorite quotation, or interesting insight about the reading.

Materials: Journals, class set of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, lecture notes on novel, P.O.L. goal and rubric handouts

Week Four

Day 16 (Monday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping; return journals

(10 min) Tool sharpening: Common grammar mistakes from students' writing

(10 min) Summary quiz - students will be instructed to write a short summary of chapters 1-5. They must include key details from the beginning, middle, and end.

(25 min) Class discussion over *Their Eyes Were Watching God* chapters 1-5. Begin by asking for volunteers to ask a question they had over the reading or to share an interesting quote or issue they came across. This will allow students to begin making their own connections with the story and to discuss what they think is important. Then bring up important issues from the beginning of the novel by posing the following questions:

- How does language and voice play an important role in this novel? (Discuss how Janie struggles with finding her own voice and how the importance of controlling language is a major theme in the story.)
- Why do you think the pear tree seen in chapter 2 is an important symbol? (Discuss the pear tree as a reference to gender and sexuality and how it is a symbol for Janie.)
- How do the views and values of Janie and Nanny differ? (Discuss how they may differ because of the way they were raised.)
- What kind of fulfillment is Janie searching for, and how do Logan and Jody either satisfy or fail to satisfy this fulfillment?

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Homework: Read chapters 6, 7

Materials: Summary quizzes, novel

Day 17 (Tuesday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Journal jump-start: *Why do you think prejudice exists in the world? Do you think prejudice will ever go away? What are some ways we can attempt to overcome prejudice?*

(15 min) Pass out Quick Guide for Literary Elements found in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (see Appendix J). Go over the elements together as a whole class and make sure that students understand each one by giving them real-life examples and asking them for examples as well.

(20 min) Split up into small groups of about four students per group. Work together to record examples from the novel of the literary elements from the Quick Guide. They must find at least one example of each element. Each group's work will be turned in at the end of class for a daily grade.

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Homework: Read chapters 8-10; Write down on a small slip of paper one or two questions, thoughts, issues, favorite quote, etc. from the novel thus far, and bring it to class tomorrow. You should focus on the themes of race, gender, or relationships.

Materials: journals, novel, instructions for activity

Day 18 (Wednesday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Tool sharpening: standardized testing format – word analogy problems

(35 min) Activity: Fishbowl discussion of issues in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* presented thus far. (see Appendix K) Desks will be arranged in a big circle so that all the students are facing each other and can talk to each other in a conversational manner. The teacher will not participate in the discussion but will sit outside the circle to monitor the discussion and be available if needed. When students arrive, they will drop their slip(s) of paper with their questions, thoughts, issues, etc. from their readings of the novel into a fishbowl. I will pass out copies of the procedures for the Fishbowl Discussion, and the students will take over from there.

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Homework: Read chapters 11-13

Materials: novel, instructions for fishbowl activity

Day 19 (Thursday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Journal jump-start: *Write about what you think the following Native American proverb means: "Never criticize a man until you've walked a mile in his moccasins."*

(35 min) Take comments and answer any questions that students have about the book thus far to make sure that everyone is understanding the story and making connections.

SSR (Sustained Silent Reading): catch-up reading day

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Homework: Read chapters 14-17; be prepared for quiz.

Materials: journals, novel

Day 20 (Friday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Summary quiz – students will be instructed to write a short summary of chapters 14-17. They must include key details from the beginning, middle, and end.

(35 min) Activity: In-Role Writing (see Appendix L). This activity will get students thinking about scenes and events from the novel from the perspective of different characters. It will also give them the opportunity to experiment more with voice and tone in their writing.

If time permits, students will share their writing in small groups.

(2 min) Turn in journals; prepare for departure

Homework: Finish novel over weekend (chapters 18-20); be prepared for quiz on Monday

Materials: summary quizzes, In-Role Writing handouts, novel

Week Five

Day 21 (Monday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping; return journals

(10 min) Summary quiz – students will be instructed to write a short summary of what they read over the weekend. They must include key details from the beginning, middle, and end.

(25 min) Discuss end of book and themes by posing and discussing the following questions:

- How does Janie change by the end of the novel? What does she learn about herself and love?
- Why do Janie’s black friends turn against her at her trial? (Discuss theme of race and prejudice. Can people experience prejudice from people of their own race?)
- How does the final image of Janie “pull[ing] in her horizon” contrast with the opening image of men’s “ships at a distance”? Discuss the effects of internal change and external circumstances on personal success, failure, and growth.
- Does Janie seem to find her voice by the end of the story? How can silence also be used as a source of empowerment?

Then give students the novel evaluation for teacher research (see Appendix M).

(10 min) Introduce Literature Circles. Hand out goal, rubric, and student-role handouts (see Appendix N) for literature circles. Go over the goal and explain how the literature circles will work. Make sure students understand the role of each group member. Have students go ahead and divide up into groups of four or five students each and decide who will be assigned to each role. Assign chapters to each group that they will be in charge of teaching to the class.

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Homework: Think about some issues/questions you want to address with your literature circle group from your assigned chapters.

Materials: summary quizzes, goal and rubric handouts for Literature Circles, student-role handouts, novel

Day 22 (Tuesday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Tool sharpening: Common grammar mistakes from students’ writing

(35 min) Literature Circles. Students split into their groups and begin working on their assignments for literature circles. Float around the room to listen for progress and encourage students to stay on task. Be available for any support or questions that students may have.

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Homework: Bring any materials you will need to work on your Philosophy of Life projects in class tomorrow.

Materials: Literature Circle handouts, novel

Day 23 (Wednesday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Journal jump-start: *What is most important to you in a friend and why? Do you feel you possess the qualities that are important in a friend? Why are these qualities important to you?*

(35 min) Philosophy of Life (P.O.L.) Workday: students will have the remainder of the class period to work on their Philosophy of Life projects. They will be allowed to use any available resources, including school media equipment (reserve availability ahead of time).

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Materials: journals, students' P.O.L. materials, novel, art materials (markers, crayons, colored paper, scissors, etc.)

Day 24 (Thursday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Tool sharpening: "Show and Tell Vocab." *(Five vocabulary words will be selected from the story and written on index cards. Each of the cards will be given to five pairs of students, and each pair will act out a short scenario using the word in context. The class will guess the definition of the word based on the context clues of each scenario.)*

(35 min) Literature Circles: students will break off into their literature circle groups and continue to discuss their chapters and work on their presentations.

(2 min) Prepare for departure

Materials: Literature Circle handouts, novel, art materials (markers, crayons, colored paper, scissors, etc.)

Day 25 (Friday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping

(10 min) Journal jump-start: *What four things are most important in your life and why? Have these things always been important to you, and do you think these things will continue to be important to you? Explain why or why not.*

(35 min) Literature Circles: students will break off into their literature circle groups and continue to discuss their chapters and work on their presentations.

(2 min) Turn in journals; prepare for departure

Homework: Be prepared to present with your Literature Circle Group on Monday and Tuesday

Materials: journals, Literature Circle handouts, novel, art materials (markers, crayons, colored paper, scissors, etc.)

Week Six

Day 26 (Monday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping; return journals

(10 min) Journal jump-start: *Please fill in the following thought: I wish I had the chance to.... Then I would.... Explain why you wish you had this particular chance, and how (if it did) would having this chance change your life in some way?*

(35 min) Literature Circle Presentations
(2 min) Prepare for departure
Materials: journals, presentation materials, novel

Day 27 (Tuesday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping
(45 min) Literature Circle Presentations
(2 min) Prepare for departure
Homework: Bring in materials tomorrow to work on Philosophy of Life projects
Materials: Presentation materials, novel

Day 28 (Wednesday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping
(10 min) Tool sharpening: Standardized testing format: word-analogy problems.
(35 min) Philosophy of Life Workday: students will have the remainder of the class period to work on their Philosophy of Life projects. They will be allowed to use any available resources, including school media equipment (reserve availability ahead of time).
(2 min) Prepare for departure
Homework: Complete and bring in completed P.O.L. and be ready to present to class.
Materials: journals, P.O.L. materials

Day 29 (Thursday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping
(45 min) Philosophy of Life presentations (turn them in after they present)
(2 min) Prepare for departure
Materials: P.O.L. projects

Day 30 (Friday)

(3 min) Attendance and housekeeping
(10 min) Journal jump-start: *How have the texts we've read in this unit contributed to the formulation of your P.O.L.? What did you learn about yourself from doing the P.O.L. project?*
(35 min) P.O.L. Presentations; turn in presentations
(2 min) Turn in journals; prepare for departure
Materials: journals, P.O.L. projects

***Over the weekend, I will combine all P.O.L. projects into a class booklet for each student to have his or her own copy!

Appendix A

Introductory Activity: “I Am From” Poem Quick Write

- I will read aloud the poem “Where I’m From” by George Ella Lyons (2 min)
- Students will take out a sheet of notebook paper and a pen or pencil. Each student will have approximately 12 minutes to write their own poem modeled after the one read aloud. I will hand out the following guidelines as a model for each stanza. Students will be reminded to include images and quotes that give insight into who they are, what they like, and where they come from. The format is as follows:

1st Stanza (3 min): “I am from...”: familiar places, things in your environment, sights and sounds, hobbies

2nd Stanza (3 min): “I am from...”: names of food and dishes from family gatherings, special occasions

3rd Stanza (3 min): “I am from...”: family sayings, expressions, familiar phrases

4th Stanza (3 min): “I am from...”: familiar people, friends, and pets

- Next, the class will form small groups of 4-5 students to share each poem. Each group should exchange positive feedback about each other’s poems: What is something you liked? Something that stood out to you? Something that was similar to you? Something that was different from you? Something new you found out about another student? (12-15 min)
- Then the class will come back together for a whole class discussion about what they have learned about themselves and others from the assignment and from sharing their poems. Engage in exploratory talk to generate any new ideas, thoughts, etc. from the class. (10 min)
- Explanation of assignment and connection to start of unit on “A Sense of Self.” (10 min)

Students will come to understand the following:

We are beginning a unit on “A Sense of Self.” They are all of the age when they are forming their beliefs, values, and opinions. This unit should help them to gain a better sense of autonomy and of their own identity. The “I Am From” poems will serve to show them how certain aspects of their life, including family, culture, and background, help to shape who they are. Additionally, they can see through the sharing of these poems how everyone is similar and different in various ways based on the many aspects and different experiences of their lives. The activity will also help to develop community within the classroom and will allow for essential communication and collaboration throughout the unit. During this unit, they will be reading texts and participating in activities that all will help them to formulate and further develop their personal identity and philosophy of life.

Open floor to questions and concerns. Before students leave, have them turn in their poems for a daily completion grade.

Where I'm From
by George Ella Lyons



I am from clothespins,
from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.
I am from the dirt under the back porch.
(Black, glistening
it tasted like beets.)
I am from the forsythia bush
the Dutch elm
whose long gone limbs I remember
as if they were my own.

I am from fudge and eyeglasses
from Imogene and Alafair.
I'm from the know-it-alls
and the pass-it-ons,
from perk up and pipe down.
I'm from He restoreth my soul
with a cottonball lamb
and ten verses I can say myself.

I'm from Artemus and Billie's Branch,
fried corn and strong coffee.
From the finger my grandfather lost
to the auger
the eye my father shut to keep his sight.
Under my bed was a dress box
spilling old pictures
a sift of lost faces
to drift beneath my dreams.
I am from those moments snapped before I budded

leaf-fall from the family tree.

Appendix C

“I Am” Poem

I am _____
(two special characteristics)

I wonder _____
(something you are actually curious about)

I hear _____
(an imaginary sound)

I see _____
(an imaginary sight)

I want _____
(an actual desire)

I am _____
(the first line of the poem restated)

I pretend _____ (something you actually pretend to do)

I feel _____
(a feeling about something imaginary)

I touch _____
(an imaginary touch)

I worry _____
(something that really bothers you)

I cry _____
(something that makes you very sad)

I am _____
(the first line of the poem repeated)

I understand _____
(something you know is true)

I say _____
(something you believe in)

I dream _____
(something you actually dream about)

I try _____
(something you really make an effort about)

I hope _____
(something you actually hope for)

I am _____
(the first line of the poem repeated)

Appendix D



Writing Vignettes

Vignettes are short, descriptive literary sketches. They typically depict a brief but vivid and complete scenario of a certain time and place. A vignette is a "whole piece" - short and simple but with tremendous meaning.

Sandra Cisneros writes *The House on Mango Street* in short vignettes. Each vignette tells a different story about Esperanza's life and carries its own meaning, but all of the vignettes tie together to create a more flowing, unified idea. It works the same way as a mystery: each clue is important unto itself and signifies something different in lieu of solving the mystery, but all the clues must be brought together to understand the solution as a whole. Similarly, in the novel, each vignette brings new meaning to the story and adds a slightly different perspective of Esperanza's life.

Things to remember when writing vignettes:

- Begin thinking in terms of a good short story (not your entire life) and choose events that you care about. Figure out what you learned and/or that you can teach someone else.
- Have a theme and a focus in mind. Make explicit what you learned and/or what you can teach someone.
- Be opinionated, and express your thoughts and ideas explicitly and clearly.
- Use natural language and create vivid images to express your ideas.
- Explore the events thoroughly and reflect upon them to give the reader insight into what you have learned or what you believe and what you want them to know as well.
- Write with your own unique VOICE.

Personal Values Exercise

Personal Values Exercise

Listed below are 12 terms which describe ideas that are typically referred to as *values*. These qualities determine how we act towards others, what goals we set for ourselves, and how we set standards for ourselves and others to live up to. Think about these values carefully in terms of how forceful each one is in determining the kind of person you are and how important they are to you. Then rank them, putting the MOST important as #1 and the LEAST important as #12. (Be careful not to judge on how you would *prefer* to see yourself, but on how you *actually* act and think.) After you have ranked them, write a definition for each value which will make it clear how *you* perceive that concept. Your definition may not be the same as others.

Success	Career	Material things
Health	Friends	Freedom
Love	Marriage	Religion
Money	Family	Education

*Now, write one paragraph explaining WHY you chose #1 to be first, and one paragraph explaining WHY your #12 is last on the list.

Appendix F

Words Often Confused (Homonyms)

Below is a list of words that are often confused with each other.

Each set of words sounds similar, but they are each spelled differently and used differently.

Accept: [verb] to receive with consent; to give approval to.

Except: [verb] leave out from a group; [prep] other than; but

Affect: [verb] to influence; to produce an effect upon

Effect: [noun] the result of an action; consequence

All ready: [adj] all prepared

Already: previously

All right: [adj] satisfactory; [adv] satisfactorily

(*alright* is not an acceptable spelling)

Hear: [verb] to perceive sounds by ear

Here: [adv] in this place

Its: [possessive form of *it*]

It's: [contraction of *it is* or *it has*]

Quiet: [adj] still peaceful; without noise

Quite: [adv] entirely; to a great extent

Than: [conjunction used for comparisons]

Then: [adv] at that time

Their: [possessive form of *they*]

There: [adv] at or in that place

They're: [contraction of *they are*]

Threw: [verb, past tense of throw] cast; tossed

Through: [preposition]

To: [preposition; also part of the infinitive verb form]

Too: [adv] also; more than enough

Two: number between one and three

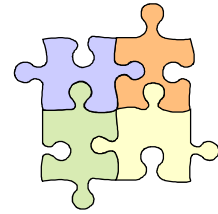
Who's: [contraction of *who is* or *who has*]

Whose: [possessive form of *who*]

Your: [possessive form of *you*]

You're: [contraction of *you are*]

Appendix G



How to have a JIGSAW DISCUSSION

- ❖ You will all be divided into five groups of 4-6 (depending on class size)
- ❖ There will be a set of discussion questions for the day to be discussed in these groups. Each group will be responsible for answering one of the questions, which will be discussed in your small groups. You should thoroughly cover all aspects of the question in depth so that each member of the group is an “expert” on the topic.
- ❖ Then, you will each be assigned a different number within your original “expert” group, and you will all regroup according to your new number (i.e. all of the “ones” in each original group will become a new group, and so on, so that each new group will have an expert on each topic).
- ❖ While in new groups, each student should discuss their assigned question so that the entire group learns about each one. You may discuss the answers further in your new groups if you have something to add or even dispute. You are always encouraged to voice differing opinions.
- ❖ I will be floating around the room for assistance. You must remain on task, and each student must actively participate to receive daily participation points.

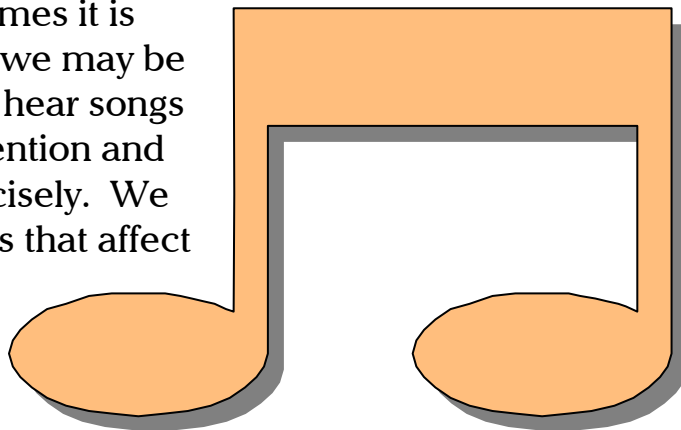
Today’s discussion questions for each group are as follows:

- 1 How does Esperanza feel about her family and her home at the beginning of the novel?
- 2 How does Esperanza seem to feel about her family and home by the end of the novel?
- 3 Is Esperanza more concerned with being loyal to her culture and community or with breaking free from her prescribed role in society?
- 4 Is Esperanza satisfied with the way in which society and others perceive her? Does this change at all throughout the novel?
- 5 Does Esperanza ever find a sense of place? Consider family, community, culture, gender.

Note:: As you discuss your answers in the send groups, try to find common links between these questions in order to explore how Esperanza changes and matures over the course of the novel.

Lyric Days!

Song lyrics have the ability to be extremely powerful. Lyrics can touch our hearts and stimulate our minds. As a focus for this unit, I have been asking you to think about who you are, and my hope is that reflecting on particular ideas and topics will help each of you reach a better sense of self. Sometimes it is words what we may be but then we hear songs grab our attention and feelings precisely. We certain songs that affect These lyrics something something



hard to put into feeling or thinking, on the radio that explain our are attracted to us in a certain way. may help us figure out or realize about ourselves.

The next two days of class are going to be devoted to sharing the lyrics of a song that has special meaning to each of us. The song may be one that makes you feel happy or sad, or it may be a song that makes you laugh or cry. Whatever the reason, the song you select to share should be appropriate (no derogatory language or insinuations of sex), and the lyrics should be hold some special value to you. Bring in the lyrics of the song and a one-page explanation of why you chose the song you did. You may also bring in an audio copy of your song to play aloud if you have one. When you come to class tomorrow, you should be prepared to share your song and your explanation with the class.

Appendix I

Their Eyes Were Watching God

Author and Background: Zora Neale Hurston was born in Eatonville, Florida, attended Howard University, and graduated from Barnard College in 1928. She moved to New York in 1925 and became active in the Harlem Renaissance. As a student of anthropology, her extensive research on rural black folklore as well as her life in Eatonville greatly influenced her writing. She is the author of four novels, a play, and books on folklore. *TEWWG* was published in 1937, after the hype of the Harlem Renaissance and in the midst of the Depression and political tension in the United States. It is said to be the most effective combination of her folklore and literary interests. The novel was criticized for not following the social realism movement popular at the time, a movement that art should be political and expose social injustice. The political novelist Richard Wright criticized the novel for not being serious enough and for having no real theme or message. However, many others argue that this is actually a strength and that the novel is rich with multiple themes and messages. Hurston's mother died when she was nine years old, and she became a strong and independent woman as well as a respected female writer. She died in January of 1960.

Aspects to take note of when reading the novel:

- gender roles
- race and racism
- acceptance of an individual
- presence of God in people's lives; religion
- individual growth and acceptance of self
- love and relationships versus independence
- power and personal fulfillment
- language (speech and silence); dialect
- community
- folk tradition; influence of family and culture
- Symbols: the horizon, Janie's hair, pear tree, the hurricane

The Novel:

TEWWG is written primarily in third-person, and it is told in a "frame"

- novelist controls the story
- Four major parts:
 - (1) Janie's early years
 - (2) Life with Logan Killicks
 - (3) Life with Joe Starks
 - (4) Life with Tea Cake

Characters to take note of:

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| -Janie Crawford | -Nanny | -The porch sitters |
| -Leafy | -Johnny Taylor | -Hezekiah Potts |
| -Logan Killicks | -Mrs. Turner | |

-Joe (Jody) Starks
-Vergible "Tea Cake" Woods
Appendix J

-Mrs. Turner's brother
-Phoeby and Sam Watson

QUICK GUIDE

Literary elements in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Figurative language is writing or speech meant to be interpreted symbolically, not literally. Similes, metaphors, and personification are types of figurative language.

- A **simile** compares two things using the words *like* or *as*
- In a **metaphor**, one thing is spoken of as though it were something else. It is like a simile but does not use the words *like* or *as*
- In **personification**, a nonhuman subject is given human qualities.

Dialect is language spoken by people in a particular region or by a particular group. Pronunciation, vocabulary, and sentence structure are all affected by dialect.

A **symbol** is a person, place, or thing that stands for something beyond its own meaning.

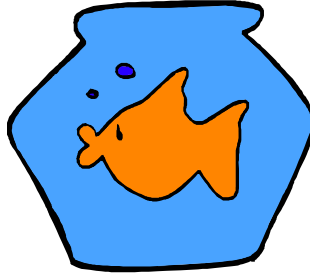
A **conflict** is a struggle between opposing forces. The characters in this novel meet **external conflicts**, in which they struggle with outside forces, such as another character, a force of nature, or society. They also face **internal conflicts**, or conflicts within themselves.

The **context** of a work is the historical and cultural setting in which the story takes place. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is set in the social and cultural world of African Americans in the South during the 1930s.

Character motivation is the reason for a character's particular behavior.

Appendix K

Fishbowl Discussion Activity



*For today's discussion, you all are in charge. There will be no teacher or discussion leader, but rather you will all decide on the questions and participate equally in the discussion. The discussion should be over the first ten vignettes in *The House on Mango Street*, and the topics are **race**, **gender**, and **relationships**.*

We will pass around the fishbowl with your questions, issues, and discussion topics, and one slip of paper will be drawn out at a time. Tackle the question or issue the best you can as a whole class, and do not move onto another slip of paper until you feel that the issue has been adequately covered.

For this discussion, I want you to talk specifically to each other and not to me. Ask each other questions and respond to classmate's comments. I will be here for clarification purposes if needed, but try to leave me out of the discussion as much as possible. You should bounce ideas off of each other and work through the issues together as a class. There are no right or wrong answers but only meaning that you generate together.

Each of you will need to take an active part in the conversation. These three topics can be extremely personal, so please remember to be respectful of each other's opinions and feel safe to share your own. We want to be open and honest, but do not say anything that would be offensive to someone else.

Appendix L

In-Role Writing

We are now well into our third text of this unit. By now you all should know the importance of voice to a story's overall effect. Stories grab our interest with the narrator's unique voice, tone, and language. The same story told by two different people would very likely turn out sounding quite different.

In your writing journal, retell an event or scene from *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. To do this, you must take on the role of one of the characters in the story. Write in first person point-of-view *as if you were the character*. Describe your thoughts, feelings, and fears as this character. Use unique and vivid language so that we can hear your voice. Remember to avoid clichés! You must write a minimum of one page, but feel free to write more if you so desire.

Characters to choose from might be:

Nanny
Pheoby

Joe Starks
Logan Killicks

Tea Cake
A porch sitter

You may choose to write as Janie, but you must make sure that the reader can hear the uniqueness of her voice as you personally interpret it.

Appendix M

Novel Evaluation

1. Would you recommend *Their Eyes Were Watching God* to a friend or family member? Yes No

Why? _____

2. Which character did you relate with the most? Least? _____

3. What do you think are the major issues of this novel? _____

4. Would you rate this text easy, average, or difficult to read and understand?

5. Did you enjoy reading this novel? Yes No

6. What did this novel prompt you to think about, question, or consider?

7. What do you think is the message or lesson of this novel?

8. Did this novel help you question or think about your own beliefs about who you are and who you want to become? Explain. _____

9. What did you like most about this novel? Least? _____

10. If applicable, please write something about how this novel has affected you in some way. _____

Appendix N

Literature Circles
Discussion Director

Name _____

Group _____

Assignment p _____ -p _____

Discussion Director: Your job is to develop a list of questions that your group might want to discuss about this part of the book. Don't worry about the small details; your task is to help people talk over the big ideas in the reading and share their reactions. Usually the best discussion questions come from your own thoughts, feelings, and concerns as you read, which you can list below, during or after your reading. Or you may use some of the general questions below to develop topics for your group.

Possible discussion questions or topics:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Sample questions:

- What was going through your mind while you read this?
- How did you feel while reading this part of the book?
- What was discussed in this section of the book?
- Can someone summarize briefly?
- Did today's reading remind you of any real-life experiences?
- What questions did you have when you finished this section?
- Did anything in this section of the book surprise you?
- What are the one or two most important ideas?
- Predict some things you think will be talked about next.

Appendix N

Literature Circles

Illustrator

Name _____

Group _____ -

Assignment p _____ -p _____

Illustrator: Your job is to draw some kind of picture related to the reading. It can be a sketch, cartoon, diagram, flow chart, or stick-figure scene. You can draw a picture of something that's discussed specifically in your book, or something that the reading reminded you of, or a picture that conveys any idea or feeling you got from the reading. Any kind of drawing or graphic is okay—you can even label things with words if that helps.

The members of your group should add input as to the best way to represent all of your ideas visually. As a group, revise the illustration so as to make it as clear as possible to other viewers in the class.

You can draw on the back of this paper, or you can use another piece of paper or other medium of your choice.

Literature Circles
Connector

Name _____

Group _____

Assignment p _____ -P _____

Connector: Your job is to find connections between the chapters your group is in charge of and the outside world. This means connecting the reading to your own life, to happenings at school or in the community, to similar events at other times and places, to other people or problems that you are reminded of. You might also see connections between this book and other writings on the same topic, or by the same author. There are no right answers here—whatever the reading connects you with is worth sharing!

Some connections I found between this reading and other people, places, events, authors....

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Literature Circles
Summarizer

Name _____

Group _____

Assignment p _____ -p _____

Summarizer: Your job is to prepare a brief summary of your group's chapters in the novel. The other members of your group will be counting on you to give a statement that conveys the gist, the key points, the main highlights, the essence of today's reading assignment. If there are several main ideas or events to remember, you can use the numbered slots below.

Summary:

Key points:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Literature Circles
Passage Master

Name _____

Group _____

Assignment p _____ -p _____

Passage Master: Your job is to locate a few special sections of the chapters assigned to your group to look back on. The idea is to help people notice the most interesting, funny, puzzling, or important sections of the text. You decide which passages or paragraphs are worth reviewing and then jot plans for how they should be shared with the group. You can read passages aloud yourself, ask someone else to read them, or read them silently and then discuss.

Location:	Reason for Picking
1.p. _____	_____
2.p. _____	_____
3.p. _____	_____
4.p. _____	_____
5.p. _____	_____

Possible reasons for picking a passage to be shared:

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Important | Informative | Surprising |
| Controversial | Funny | Well written |
| Confusing | Thought-provoking | Other (provide explanation) |

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