

# Social and Cultural Factors in the Construction of Identity

## A Conceptual Unit for Twelfth Grade

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LLED 7408  
Fall 2010

## Table of Contents

Rationale .....	3
Goals and Rubrics .....	7
Daily Lesson Plans .....	15
Appendices .....	27
Appendix A: Introductory Activity Opinionnaire for Day 1 .....	27
Appendix B: Song Lyrics for Activity on Days 2 and 3 .....	29
Appendix C: “Girl” by Jamaica Kincaid for in-class reading on Day 4 .....	36
Appendix D: Unit Evaluation Opinionnaire for Day 25 .....	38
Appendix E: Word Selections for Vocabulary Game on Day 25 .....	40

## Materials

### Songs:

Keane – “Everybody’s Changing”  
 Christina Aguilera – “Reflection”  
 Gnarl Barkley – “Crazy”  
 Nelly Furtado – “Try”  
 Kanye West – “Welcome to Heartbreak”  
 The Ting Tings – “That’s Not My Name”  
 Amos Lee – “Soul Suckers”

### Poem/Short Story:

Jamaica Kincaid – “Girl”

### Play:

Oscar Wilde – *The Importance of Being Earnest*

### Novel:

Kate Chopin – *The Awakening*

## Rationale

The issue of identity within a social and cultural context is a relevant topic for high school seniors who are grappling with their own constructions of identity as they enter adulthood and gain a keener awareness of their own existence within a larger system. As Jussi Välimaa notes, “the questions ‘who am I?’, ‘where do I belong to?’ structure our self-understanding throughout our lifetime” (131). The texts chosen for this unit include *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde, *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin, and “Girl” by Jamaica Kincaid. These texts have been chosen for their shared themes of identity and diverse representations of the social and cultural factors that can contribute to an individual’s own behaviors, beliefs, values, and overall sense of self. It is important to note that the unit incorporates texts that present a variety of perspectives, including texts by both male and female authors which depict both male and female protagonists. In addition, *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *The Awakening* have become staples in many twelfth grade literature courses and provide opportunities to address gender and propriety in relation to the overall unit concept. “Girl” is relatively new to the high school curriculum, but it is certainly becoming more prevalent, and is an important addition to this unit in order to provide a different cultural perspective that may otherwise be marginalized.

This combination of texts provides a unique opportunity to open up discussions about what identity is and how individual identity develops in relation to social and cultural institutions. Having these types of conversations and reading the chosen works in this context encourages students to engage with the literature on a more personal level and increases their overall interest in the topic, which will likely elicit more active participation in class activities and thoughtful responses that demonstrate the students’ processes of constructing new knowledge. Terri Flowerday, Gregory Schraw, and Joseph Stevens argue that “previous research

suggests that topic interest affects deeper text processing (e.g. application and transfer) and engagement to a greater extent,” and they reference the findings of Schiefele, which indicate that “individuals who reported higher topic interest prior to reading performed better on a test of propositional recall . . . and constructed more elaborate situational models,” and the findings of Tobias, which indicate that “topic interest [is] related to metacognition and improved learning” (96).

Parents, administrators, or school board members may question the decision to teach these three particular texts in conjunction with each other, and at first glance, they may not perceive the connections between these texts or the benefits in teaching them within the same unit. Concerned individuals can be assured that great care has been taken to select texts that work together to emphasize a common theme while also presenting contrasting, diverse viewpoints. Students will find continuity across the texts as they explore the theme of identity, but they will have the opportunity to read works that originate from very different sources; they will be provided a balanced blend of perspectives, reading works written by authors of different race, ethnicity, and gender, that present both male and female protagonists, and that explore very different social and cultural contexts. Incorporating these diverse perspectives into the same unit enables the teacher to appeal to a diverse group of students; it is important that literature chosen for a course does not only address concepts that may be relevant to or representative of just one facet of the classroom population.

Another concern that parents, administrators, or school board members may have is the controversial nature of the authors, works, and ideas/lifestyles discussed in this unit. It is important for all of these individuals to know that none of these topics will be approached through means that will in any way support or advocate for one perspective or another. The goal

is to simply present a broad array of perspectives in an effort to offer balanced instruction. All of the chosen texts have been approved for classroom use, and as mentioned previously, have become staples in the twelfth grade English classroom due to their literary significance.

Parents, administrators, or school board members may also object to the seemingly personal nature of two of the three major writing assignments for this unit: the personal response journal and the creative writing piece in the style of “Girl.” All of the writing assignments are intended to help the students engage with the literature in productive ways. A personal interest in the topic is certainly one aspect of these assignments, and as discussed above, topic interest is an important part of student involvement and meaningful learning in the classroom. However, these assignments have been specifically designed so that students can maintain a certain level of personal distance from the writings if preferable. For the personal response journals, students are encouraged to make personal connections to the text and are welcome to discuss personal experiences, but they are certainly not required to do so; in addition, they have the option of marking pages that they would prefer for the teacher not to read as a way to maintain their privacy. For the creative writing assignment, the teacher will evaluate these pieces as works of fiction that are meant to demonstrate an understanding of the overarching unit concepts. This assignment aims for students to draw connections between the ways that social and cultural factors influence the construction of identity, and again, students are welcome to draw from personal experience, but they are not required to do so. Students are encouraged to maintain the level of personal involvement (or detachment) that best suits their educational needs and preferences for these assignments.

During this unit, students will gain a better understanding of the social and cultural factors that contribute to the construction of identity, exploring topics of race, ethnicity, gender,

relationships, expectations, etc. Ultimately, this exploration and understanding of identity will hopefully enable students to conceptualize and answer their own questions about social and cultural institutions as they transition to adulthood. Välimaa supports Stephen Hall's view that "identity is an idea which cannot be thought in the old way, but without which, certain key questions cannot be thought at all" (120). This unit aims to increase students' awareness of not only their own constructions of identity, but also of the ways in which different social and cultural environments affect individuals from all walks of life, ideally helping students to understand diversity and informing their social and cultural awareness for the future.

#### Works Cited

Flowerday, Terri, Gregory Schraw, and Joseph Stevens. "The Role of Choice and Interest in Reader Engagement." The Journal of Experimental Education 72.2 (2004): 93-114.

Välimaa, Jussi. "Culture and Identity in Higher Education Research." Higher Education 36.2 (1998): 119-138.

## Goals and Rubrics

### **Goal 1: Personal Response Journal**

Throughout this unit, you will be required to keep a personal response journal about the assigned readings. In your journal, feel free to include quotations, pose questions about the texts, summarize important points for yourself, and write down any thoughts, feelings, and reactions you experience in relation to the texts or in response to our class discussions and activities pertaining to the text. Your journal can take any format you like and can include drawings or any other media that help you convey your thoughts. I will be collecting journals at the end of every week during the unit and returning them at the beginning of the following week.

- Journals must include at least three entries per week (not including the first week, for which there will only be one entry).
- Each entry must be at least 1 page written.
- Entries must be legible. (Grammar and spelling errors will not count against you.)
- Entries must be relevant and reference the texts we are reading.
- You are welcome but not required to include reflections on any personal experiences that occur to you in relation to the readings.
- Please 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.
- If there are any pages in your journal that you do not want me to read, please place an X at the top of the page, and I will skip it.

### **Grading Rubric for Personal Response Journals**

Journals deserving a grade of "A":

- ✓ Are turned in on time.
- ✓ Are legible.
- ✓ Are of the required length.
- ✓ Contain the minimum number of entries (3 per week).
- ✓ Always address the readings, class discussions, and/or class activities.
- ✓ Always pose questions or draw conclusions about the work(s) being studied, demonstrating that the student has done the reading.

Journals deserving a grade of "B":

- ✓ Are turned in on time.
- ✓ Are legible.
- ✓ Are of the required length.
- ✓ Contain the minimum number of entries.
- ✓ Usually address the readings, class discussions, and/or class activities.
- ✓ Usually pose questions or draw conclusions about the work(s) being studied, demonstrating that the student has done the reading.

Journals deserving a grade of "C":

- ✓ Are turned in on time.
- ✓ Are legible.
- ✓ Are shorter than the required length.
- ✓ Contain the minimum number of entries.
- ✓ Sometimes address the readings, class discussions, and/or class activities.
- ✓ Sometimes pose questions or draw conclusions about the work(s) being studied, demonstrating that the student has done the reading.

Journals deserving a grade of "D":

- ✓ Are not turned in on time.
- ✓ Are illegible/difficult to read.
- ✓ Are shorter than the required length.
- ✓ Contain fewer than the minimum number of entries.
- ✓ Sometimes address the readings, class discussions, and/or class activities.
- ✓ Sometimes pose questions or draw conclusions about the work(s) being studied, demonstrating that the student has done the reading.

Journals deserving a grade of "F":

- ✓ Are not turned in at all.



## **Goal 2: Creative Piece**

Jamaica Kincaid’s piece, “Girl,” explores social and cultural influences on the development of identity through a mother’s instructions to her daughter. Write a piece like “Girl,” providing instructions/advice for appropriate behavior in your own culture, town, etc. You may take the same approach as Kincaid, speaking as a mother addressing her daughter, or you may write from a different perspective – a father to a son, a boss to an employee, a teacher to a student, a student to a new student, or any other relationship you choose (just run it by me first to make sure it fits the guidelines). Think about the advice that would be relevant in each of these social relationships. What are the activities that the person being spoken to will need to learn how to do? What, if any, rules does this person need to be aware of? What behaviors are allowed or disallowed in your chosen setting? What pieces of advice can the speaker provide?

Your piece should:

- Be approximately 1 page single spaced.
- Clearly establish who the speaker is and who is being spoken to through textual clues.
- Address each of the questions listed above at some point in your text.

## **Grading Rubric for Creative Piece**

A piece deserving a grade of “A” will exhibit the following:

- ✓ Submitted on time.
- ✓ Is of required length.
- ✓ Clearly establishes the speaker and audience.
- ✓ Addresses the four questions listed for the creative piece.

A piece deserving a grade of “B” will exhibit the following:

- ✓ Submitted on time.
- ✓ Is of required length.
- ✓ Clearly establishes the speaker and audience.
- ✓ Addresses three of the four questions listed for the creative piece.

A piece deserving a grade of “C” will exhibit the following:

- ✓ Submitted on time.
- ✓ Is of required length.
- ✓ Does not clearly establish the speaker and audience.
- ✓ Addresses two of the four questions listed for the creative piece.

A piece deserving a grade of “D” will exhibit the following:

- ✓ Is not submitted on time.
- ✓ Is shorter than the required length.
- ✓ Does not clearly establish the speaker and audience.
- ✓ Addresses one of the four questions listed for the creative piece.

A piece deserving a grade of “F” will exhibit the following:

- ✓ Not submitted on time.
- ✓ Is shorter than the required length.
- ✓ Does not clearly establish the speaker and audience.
- ✓ Addresses none of the four questions listed for the creative piece.

### **Goal 3: Student-Led Discussion**

To discuss *The Awakening*, students will break into 4 groups of roughly equal size. Each group will be assigned ten chapters (don't worry; each chapter in *The Awakening* is very short, consisting of roughly 5-6 pages on average) and will be responsible for leading a class discussion for one full period on the assigned chapters. You may conduct your class discussion in the format of a regular English class or some other format of your choosing (just run it by me first for approval).

Your discussion should meet all of the following requirements:

- Each group member participates equally in leading the discussion
- The group attempts to include every class member in the discussion
- The questions the group poses do not merely ask for factual information from the story
- The questions the group poses include at least one question in each of the following categories:
  - Inferences about characters or events in the text (e.g., How would you characterize Edna's relationship with her children?)
  - Generalizations connecting the text to a larger societal picture (e.g., What seem to be the expectations for women in late 19<sup>th</sup> century New Orleans with regard to their behavior, dress, etc.?)
  - The effects of literary form and technique (e.g., How does the symbolism of the sea throughout the novel reflect Edna's journey of self-discovery?)
  - The purpose of a particular event in the novel (e.g., What is the significance of Edna's first venture into the sea?)
  - Evaluations of the literature (e.g., What parts of the novel do you like the most/least, and why?)
  - Emotions that students have in response to the story (e.g., How did you feel when Edna reunited with Robert?)
  - Personal connections (e.g., What connections did you feel with Edna when she decided she needed to move into her own house?)

### **Grading Rubric for Student-Led Discussions**

Discussions deserving a grade of "A":

- ✓ All group members participate equally in leading the discussion.
- ✓ The discussion includes at least 75% of the other students in the class.
- ✓ The questions posed do not merely ask for factual information.
- ✓ The questions posed include at least one from each of the seven categories.
- ✓ The discussion occupies the entire class period.

Discussions deserving a grade of "B":

- ✓ All group members participate equally in leading the discussion, though some students speak more than others.
- ✓ The discussion includes at least 50% of the other students in the class.
- ✓ The questions posed do not merely ask for factual information.
- ✓ The questions posed include at least one from five or six of the seven categories.
- ✓ The discussion occupies the entire class period.

Discussions deserving a grade of "C":

- ✓ Some group members speak significantly more than others.
- ✓ The discussion includes fewer than 50% of the other students in the class.
- ✓ Some of the questions posed only ask for factual information.
- ✓ The questions posed include at least one from four of the seven categories.
- ✓ The discussion occupies most of the class period.

Discussions deserving a grade of "D":

- ✓ Some group members do most of the talking.
- ✓ The discussion includes 25% or fewer of the other students in the class.
- ✓ Most of the questions posed only ask for factual information.
- ✓ The questions posed include at least one from three or fewer of the seven categories.
- ✓ The discussion ends well before the end of the class period.

Discussions deserving a grade of "F":

- ✓ Group members struggle to lead any type of discussion and seem not to have read the book.
- ✓ The group does not have questions prepared for the class.
- ✓ The discussion ends well before the end of the class period.

#### **Goal 4: Compare and Contrast Essay**

After reading *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *The Awakening*, pick one of the male protagonists in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and compare and contrast him with Edna Pontellier in *The Awakening*. Explore the ways in which social and cultural factors influence both characters' constructions of identity. Here are some questions to consider when generating your points for comparison and contrast: Are there significant similarities or differences to address regarding how social/cultural factors affect men versus how they affect women? What expectations are placed on each character? (Take into account their gender, social status, and family relationships.) What are these characters willing to sacrifice to hold onto their constructed identities? What are they unwilling to sacrifice? How does the idea of escapism factor into both characters' construction of identity? What do these characters ultimately learn about themselves?

Your essay should:

- Describe the two characters and generate points to compare and contrast. Use the questions above to guide you.
- Make claims about similarities and differences between the two characters.
- Use examples from the texts to support your claims.
- Explain why the examples illustrate the claims.
- Draw conclusions based on your comparisons and contrasts.
- Be 4-6 pages in length, double-spaced.

#### **Grading Rubric for Compare/Contrast Essay**

An essay deserving a grade of "A":

- ✓ Is turned in on time and is of the required length.
- ✓ Contains accurate, thorough descriptions that demonstrate strong knowledge of the two characters.
- ✓ Is well organized: contains a well-articulated thesis, claims supported by strong evidence from the text, and a thoughtful conclusion that demonstrates a firm grasp of the ways in which social and cultural factors can influence constructions of identity.
- ✓ Follows MLA format and has few grammatical errors which do not distract from meaning.

An essay deserving a grade of "B":

- ✓ Is turned in on time and is of the required length.

- ✓ Contains accurate, thorough descriptions that demonstrate knowledge of the two characters.
- ✓ Is well organized: contains a somewhat clear thesis, claims supported by mostly strong evidence from the text, and a thoughtful conclusion that demonstrates a firm grasp of the ways in which social and cultural factors can influence constructions of identity.
- ✓ Follows MLA format and has more grammatical errors which do not distract from meaning.

An essay deserving a grade of "C":

- ✓ Is turned in on time but is shorter than the required length.
- ✓ Contains mostly accurate descriptions which demonstrate moderate knowledge about the two characters.
- ✓ Is not well-organized: contains a somewhat clear thesis, claims sometimes supported by evidence from the text, and a conclusion that demonstrates a weak understanding of the ways in which social and cultural factors can influence constructions of identity.
- ✓ Follows MLA format and has more grammatical errors which distract from meaning.

An essay deserving a grade of "D":

- ✓ Is not turned in on time and is shorter than the required length.
- ✓ Contains inaccurate or weak descriptions which do not demonstrate knowledge of the two characters.
- ✓ Is not well-organized: thesis is unclear, claims are rarely supported by evidence from the text, and conclusion demonstrates a weak understanding of the ways in which social and cultural factors can influence constructions of identity.
- ✓ Follows MLA format with a few mistakes and has several grammatical errors which distract from meaning.

An essay deserving a grade of "F":

- ✓ Is not turned in on time and is shorter than the required length.
- ✓ Contains inaccurate descriptions which do not demonstrate knowledge of the two characters or completely omits descriptions of the two characters.
- ✓ Is not well-organized: thesis is unclear or non-existent, claims are never supported by evidence from the text, and a conclusion is absent or demonstrates a lack of understanding the ways in which social and cultural factors can influence constructions of identity.
- ✓ Does not show signs of adhering to MLA format and has numerous grammatical errors which distract from meaning or seriously impede readability.

Daily Lesson Plans  
(Based on 50-minute periods; 5 weeks of instruction)

**Week One**

**Day 1 (Monday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**10 minutes:** Teacher will pass out opinionnaire for introductory activity and students will answer individually. (See Appendix A for Opinionnaire.)

**5 minutes:** Students will form small groups to discuss answers. Teacher will provide brief explanation of expectations for group discussions (respectful attitude, staying on task, giving everyone an opportunity to participate).

**10 minutes:** Small groups will discuss their responses to the opinionnaire.

**10 minutes:** Whole class discussion. Groups will share their responses/opinions with the class.

**10 minutes:** Teacher will introduce the unit and explain how the opinionnaire ties into the unit theme.

**Day 2 (Tuesday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**5 minutes:** Teacher will distribute copies of *The Awakening* so students can begin reading on their own.

**40 minutes:** Teacher will explain song activity. Students will break into groups of 4 or 5 and will be given a list of songs related to issues of identity. Each group will select one song from the list, and the teacher will ensure that no two groups make the same selection. Assuming approximately 25 students in the class, there should be 5 or 6 groups. Teacher will pass out copies of song lyrics for students to read through. (See Appendix B for song lyrics.)

**Assignment:** Yesterday, we began discussing social and cultural factors in the construction of identity. Building on the ideas we discussed, in small groups of 4 or 5, you will select a song from the list provided.

Keane – “Everybody’s Changing”

Christina Aguilera – “Reflection”

Gnarls Barkley – “Crazy”

Nelly Furtado – “Try”

Kanye West – “Welcome to Heartbreak”

The Ting Tings – “That’s Not My Name”

Amos Lee – “Soul Suckers”

Read through the lyrics to your chosen song, consider the following questions, and prepare to discuss your answers/ideas with the class. You will need to write down your answers to refresh your memory for the continuation of the activity tomorrow.

- 1) How does the song address the construction of identity?
- 2) Are there references to social/cultural influences, situations, relationships, etc.? If so, is it clear what these factors might be? If not, what do you imagine the song might be referencing?
- 3) Select at least three lines from the song that you consider to be most important, and prepare to explain your reasoning for each selection.
- 4) Although you have chosen one song from the list of choices, read through the lyrics provided for all of the songs. What do you notice? Are there common themes that any or all of these songs share?

Depending on how the small group discussions progress, students will either have the remainder of the period to meet and discuss, or we will begin the whole class discussion activity scheduled for the following day.

### **Day 3 (Wednesday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**5 minutes:** Groups from the previous day will reconvene and refresh their memories on their songs and important points of discussion.

**40 minutes:** The teacher will call on groups one at a time to present their answers/ideas about their song selections. Before each group begins discussing, the teacher will play the song for the entire class to listen to and, where applicable/appropriate, watch on YouTube. After everyone listens to the song, the small group will share their thoughts, and the rest of the class will have a chance to respond. This pattern (listening/watching the song, small groups' informal presentations, class responses) will continue for the 5 or 6 groups. (The teacher will have to monitor time, as each group will be allotted approximately 7-8 minutes, which will include the amount of time devoted to listening to the song. Slight adjustments will be made where necessary for longer songs to ensure that each group has adequate time to present.)

### **Day 4 (Thursday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**5 minutes:** Distribute copies of Jamaica Kincaid's "Girl," and the teacher or a willing student will read the piece out loud to the class. (See Appendix C for short story.)

**20 minutes:** Teacher will explain scenario activity. Students will work in groups of 4.

**Assignment:** In Jamaica Kincaid's piece, "Girl," a mother is addressing her daughter, providing relevant advice. As a group, come up with a relationship that you will discuss. You may use the same mother to daughter relationship Kincaid uses, or you may choose one of the following relationships to consider: a father to a son, a boss to an employee, a teacher to a student, a student to a new student, or any other relationship you choose (just run it by me first to make sure it fits the guidelines). Think about the setting of the interactions between these individuals (home? grocery store? workplace? school?) and the advice that would be relevant in each of these social relationships. As a group, come up with answers to the following questions and write them down to share with the



class. When you share your answers, you will not reveal the relationship you have chosen, so try your best to include information in your answers that will help your classmates identify the relationship correctly.

- 1) What are the activities that the person being spoken to will need to learn how to do?
- 2) What, if any, rules does this person need to be aware of?
- 3) What behaviors are allowed or disallowed in your chosen setting?
- 4) What pieces of advice can the speaker provide?

**15 minutes:** Whole-class discussion. Each group will have a few minutes to orally share their answers to the questions, without revealing what relationship they chose. Classmates will try to use clues from the groups' answers to determine what the relationship is and will also have the opportunity to comment or ask questions.

**5 minutes:** Introduce personal response journal assignment. For the first entry, students will write a response to "Girl" for homework, which will be collected tomorrow (Friday).

**Assignment:** Throughout this unit, you will be required to keep a personal response journal about the assigned readings. In your journal, feel free to include quotations, pose questions about the texts, summarize important points for yourself, and write down any thoughts, feelings, and reactions you experience in relation to the texts or in response to our class discussions and activities pertaining to the text. Your journal can take any format you like and can include drawings or any other media that help you convey your thoughts. I will be collecting journals at the end of every week during the unit and returning them at the beginning of the following week.

- Journals must include at least three entries per week (not including this first week, for which you will only have one entry).
- Each entry must be at least 1 page written.
- Entries must be legible. (Grammar and spelling errors will not count against you.)
- Entries must be relevant and reference the texts we are reading.
- You are welcome but not required to include reflections on any personal experiences that occur to you in relation to the readings.
- Please 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.
- If there are any pages in your journal that you do not want me to read, please place an X at the top of the page, and I will skip it.

### **Day 5 (Friday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and Housekeeping. Teacher will collect homework (personal response journals).

**15 minutes:** Based on the small group activity from yesterday, and the written responses students generated for the questions, we will focus on how to translate this information into a piece like “Girl.” Since Kincaid does not focus on properly punctuating the instructional dialogue in “Girl,” we will not focus as much on correct punctuation as we will focus on using imperative statements. The teacher will define what imperative statements are and will provide several examples. She will also point out that the speaker in Kincaid’s piece frequently demonstrates actions using statements that begin with “This is how you . . .”

**15 minutes:** In their small groups, students will use their answers to the questions from yesterday and will work to turn their responses into imperative statements or “This is how” statements.

**15 minutes:** The teacher will call on groups one at a time to share their imperative statements and/or “This is how” statements with the class.

## Week Two

### Day 6 (Monday)

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping; return journals from last Friday.

**10 minutes:** Teacher will inform students of creative writing assignment, which will be due on Friday, and will answer any questions the students may have.

**Assignment:** Jamaica Kincaid’s piece, “Girl,” explores social and cultural influences on the development of identity through a mother’s instructions to her daughter. Building off our activities from last Thursday and Friday, you will work individually and write a piece like “Girl,” providing instructions/advice for appropriate behavior in your own culture, town, etc. Don’t be too concerned with form and punctuation. Feel free to try to mimic Kincaid’s style, writing one continuous sentence, but also feel free to write in more traditional sentences if you prefer. You may use the same relationship your group discussed last week or you are welcome to select a different relationship to write about. Again, you may take the same approach as Kincaid, speaking as a mother addressing her daughter, or you may write from a different perspective – a father to a son, a boss to an employee, a teacher to a student, a student to a new student, or any other relationship you choose (just run it by me first to make sure it fits the guidelines). Think about the advice that would be relevant in each of these social relationships. What are the activities that the person being spoken to will need to learn how to do? What, if any, rules does this person need to be aware of? What behaviors are allowed or disallowed in your chosen setting? What pieces of advice can the speaker provide?

Your piece should:

- Be approximately 1 page single spaced.

- Clearly establish who the speaker is and who is being spoken to through textual clues.
- Address each of the questions listed above at some point in your text.

**20 minutes:** To help prepare students for the tasks involved in their individual creative writing assignments, in their small groups, students will draft a narrative according to the instructions above and utilizing the relationship they came up with last Thursday, their responses to the questions, and the imperative statements and “This is how” statements they wrote on Friday. (Given the time limitation, this rough draft does not have to meet the length requirement specified above).

**10 minutes:** Groups will exchange their drafts with other groups for peer editing. One member of the group will read the piece out loud to the other group members. The group members will then determine if the piece:

- 1) Clearly establishes who the speaker is and who is being spoken to
- 2) Addresses each of the questions listed in the assignment description

They will offer written feedback on the piece and return it to the original authors.

**5 minutes:** Groups will have the opportunity to review the feedback they receive.

**Homework:** Teacher will remind students to write three journal entries in response to the readings and class activities during the week; these will be collected on Friday. Their individual creative pieces like “Girl” will also be collected on Friday.

### **Day 7 (Tuesday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**45 minutes:** Begin reading Act I of *The Importance of Being Earnest* in class. To help make the reading more interesting, students will volunteer for roles, or the teacher will assign roles, and the class will read/perform the play out loud.

**Homework:** Read the remainder of Act I by Thursday.

### **Day 8 (Wednesday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**45 minutes:** View excerpts from the 2002 film version of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, offering opportunities for questions, commentary, and discussion from the students throughout the period.

### **Day 9 (Thursday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**15 minutes:** Reading quiz on Act I of *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

**Quiz:** Please summarize the characters and happenings involved in Act I of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Summaries should be at least a half page, hand-written.

**30 minutes:** Begin Reading Act II of *The Importance of Being Earnest* out loud as a class. Students will volunteer for roles or teacher will assign roles.

**Homework:** Finish reading the remainder of Act II and Act III (short in length) of *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Monday. Students will be reminded that their creative writing assignments in response to “Girl” and their weekly reading journals are due tomorrow.

### **Day 10 (Friday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping; collect reading journals and creative writing pieces.

**45 minutes:** Students will break into groups to work on body biographies in response to *The Importance of Being Earnest*. (Activity borrowed from Smagorinsky, 2008, p. 196-197.)

**Assignment:** In small groups of three to five students, select one character from the play to represent through a “body biography.” A “body biography” is a visual and written illustration of a character and aspects of their personality and their life within the play. Be creative and analytical in your choices. Here are a few suggestions for constructing your body biography, but you are welcome to come up with your own approaches.

1. Placement: You may want to focus on placement in your drawings and labels. For example, where you place your character’s heart, how you depict it, and any text you write around it may represent your character’s important relationships.
2. Virtues and Vices: What are your character’s most admirable qualities? What are your character’s worst qualities? How can you depict these?
3. Color: Since colors can often be symbolic, can you associate a color with your character? If so, why? How can you include this color in your drawing?
4. Symbols: What objects can you associate with your character that illustrate something important about him/her? Consider objects that may be mentioned within the play, or objects outside of the play that you can connect to your character.
5. Changes: How has your character changed throughout the play so far? Illustrate these changes through your text and artwork.

At a minimum, your body biography must contain the following elements in some way:

- A review of significant happenings in Act I and II of the play
- Visual symbols
- Original text
- What you consider to be the three most important lines from the play

### Week Three

#### Day 11 (Monday)

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping; return reading journals from last Friday. \*Because of the nature of the activities during this week and the following week, reading journals will not be collected on Friday of this week; they will be collected on Friday of the following week (Day 20), and three entries pertaining to *The Awakening* will be expected.

**15 minutes:** Reading quiz on ACT III of *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

**Quiz:** Please summarize the characters and happenings involved in Act III of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Summaries should be at least a half page, hand-written.

**10 minutes:** Pass out and review responsibilities for student-led discussions. (Activity borrowed from Smagorinsky, 2008, p. 209-212).

**Assignment:** To discuss *The Awakening*, students will break into 4 groups of roughly equal size. Each group will be assigned ten chapters (don't worry; each chapter in *The Awakening* is very short, consisting of roughly 5-6 pages on average) and will be responsible for leading a class discussion for one full period on the assigned chapters. You may conduct your class discussion in the format of a regular English class or some other format of your choosing (just run it by me first for approval).

Your discussion should meet all of the following requirements:

- Each group member participates equally in leading the discussion
- The group attempts to include every class member in the discussion
- The questions the group poses do not merely ask for factual information from the story
- The questions the group poses include at least one question in each of the following categories:
  - Inferences about characters or events in the text (e.g., How would you characterize Edna's relationship with her children?)
  - Generalizations connecting the text to a larger societal picture (e.g., What seem to be the expectations for women in late 19<sup>th</sup> century New Orleans with regard to their behavior, dress, etc.?)
  - The effects of literary form and technique (e.g., How does the symbolism of the sea throughout the novel reflect Edna's journey of self-discovery?)
  - The purpose of a particular event in the novel (e.g., What is the significance of Edna's first venture into the sea?)
  - Evaluations of the literature (e.g., What parts of the novel do you like the most/least, and why?)
  - Emotions that students have in response to the story (e.g., How did you feel when Edna reunited with Robert?)
  - Personal connections (e.g., What connections did you feel with Edna when she decided she needed to move into her own house?)

**10 minutes:** Teacher will define what an inference is and provide an example of a question that requires an inference. Within their groups, students will then generate their own inferential

questions and share with the class. Teacher will help clarify why each question is or is not inferential.

**10 minutes:** Teacher will define what a generalization to larger society is and provide an example of a question that requires a generalization and explain why. Groups will then generate their own questions requiring generalizations and share with the class. Teacher will help clarify why each question does or does not require a generalization.

### **Day 12 (Tuesday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**9 minutes:** Teacher will define literary form and technique and provide an example of a question about form/technique in *The Awakening*. Groups will then generate their own questions about form/technique and share with the class. Teacher will help clarify how each question addresses form/technique.

**9 minutes:** Teacher will define what a significant event is and provide an example of a question about a significant event from the novel. Groups will then generate their own questions about significant events from the novel and share with the class. Teacher will help clarify how each question addresses significant events.

**9 minutes:** Teacher will define evaluation (with regard to literature) and will provide an example of a question asking for an evaluation and explain why. Groups will then generate their own questions requiring evaluations and share with the class. Teacher will help clarify why each question does or does not require an evaluation.

**9 minutes:** Teacher will define emotional response and provide an example of a question asking about an emotional response to *The Awakening*. Groups will then generate their own questions about emotional responses and share with the class. Teacher will help clarify why each question involves an emotional response.

**9 minutes:** Teacher will define what a personal connection to a story is and provide an example of a question requiring a personal connection and explain why. Groups will then generate their own questions requiring personal connections and share with the class. Teacher will help clarify why each question does or does not require a personal connection.

### **Day 13 (Wednesday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**45 minutes:** Students work in small groups to prepare their questions and formats for leading class discussion on their assigned chapters.

### **Day 14 (Thursday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**45 minutes:** Students continue to work in their small groups to prepare questions and format for leading class discussion on their assigned chapters.

### **Day 15 (Friday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**45 minutes:** Student group leads discussion of Chapters 1-10 of *The Awakening*.

### Week Four

#### Day 16 (Monday)

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**45 minutes:** Student group leads discussion of Chapters 11-20 of *The Awakening*.

#### Day 17 (Tuesday)

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**45 minutes:** Student group leads discussion of Chapters 21-30 of *The Awakening*.

#### Day 18 (Wednesday)

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**45 minutes:** Student group leads discussion of Chapters 31-39 of *The Awakening*.

#### Day 19 (Thursday)

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**5 minutes:** Today we will begin working toward comparison and contrast essays. To start with, the teacher will ask students to suggest two people, places, things, or events and to offer verbal descriptions of the two items.

**15 minutes:** Students will be asked to think about how the two things are similar and how they are different, and the teacher will record the student-generated points of comparison and contrast on the board.

**5 minutes:** The teacher will ask the class to categorize the points they have generated. She will then define what a value judgment is and provide an example before asking the class to make a value judgment based on the comparisons and contrasts on the board.

**20 minutes:** Students will break up into small groups of 4-5 students. They will be asked to choose any two characters from the works we have studied. As a group, they will be asked to write brief descriptions of each character. They will then generate a list of similarities and differences and categorize the points they have generated. They will need to hold onto these lists for further work tomorrow.

#### Day 20 (Friday)

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping; collect reading journals.

**10 minutes:** Students will return to their small groups from yesterday. The teacher will ask a small group to volunteer to share their categories/points for comparing and contrasting the two characters they have chosen. Based on these categories, the teacher will offer an example of a claim that could be made based on one of the points of comparison or contrast.

**5 minutes:** She will ask the class to look through their texts and find passages that help to support her claim.

**10 minutes:** Students will volunteer or the teacher will call on students to share the passages they find that they believe help to support the claim. They will need to explain why their selection supports the claim, and the teacher will help clarify why/how each passage does or does not help to support the claim.

**10 minutes:** In their small groups, students will return their attention to the characters their group chose and the lists they generated yesterday. Based on the categories they came up with, they will be asked to write two claims, find support in the texts, and write justifications for why the examples from the text support their claims. By the end of the activity, students have now practiced and should possess written descriptions of the characters, lists of similarities and differences, written claims, and written support.

**10 minutes:** The teacher will introduce the compare/contrast essay assignment and requirements, and she will answer any questions the students may have.

**Assignment:** After reading *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *The Awakening*, you will work individually and pick one of the male protagonists in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and compare and contrast him with Edna Pontellier in *The Awakening*. Explore the ways in which social and cultural factors influence both characters' constructions of identity. Here are some questions to consider when generating your points for comparison and contrast: Are there significant similarities or differences to address regarding how social/cultural factors affect men versus how they affect women? What expectations are placed on each character? (Take into account their gender, social status, and family relationships.) What are these characters willing to sacrifice to hold onto their constructed identities? What are they unwilling to sacrifice? How does the idea of escapism factor into both characters' construction of identity? What do these characters ultimately learn about themselves?

Your essay should:

- Describe the two characters and generate points to compare and contrast. Use the questions above to guide you.
- Make claims about similarities and differences between the two characters.
- Use examples from the texts to support your claims.
- Explain why the examples illustrate the claims.
- Draw conclusions based on your comparisons and contrasts.
- Be 4-6 pages in length, double-spaced.



**Homework:** Begin a rough draft of your essay over the weekend. This can be typed or hand-written and will be checked on Monday for a completion grade.

### Week Five

#### Day 21 (Monday)

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping; return reading journals. There will be no reading journals during the last week of the unit, during which time students will focus on their essays.

**45 minutes:** Using their rough drafts as springboards, students will work on writing compare/contrast essays during class time in the computer lab.

#### Day 22 (Tuesday)

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**45 minutes:** Students will continue to work on writing compare/contrast essays during class time in the computer lab.

#### Day 23 (Wednesday)

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**45 minutes:** Students will break into groups of four to peer edit essays. (Activity borrowed from Smagorinsky, 2008, p. 218-219.) Teacher will distribute copies of three proofreading responsibilities:

1. Read the whole paper carefully. For your feedback, focus on the writer's descriptions of the two characters to be compared and contrasted. Is each description clear and thorough? Has the writer generated points to compare and contrast between the two characters? Make comments in the margins about how well the writer has crafted the character descriptions and the points for comparison/contrast. At the end of the paper, write a brief summary recommending how the writer can improve this aspect of the essay.
2. Read the whole paper carefully. For your feedback, focus on the writer's claims about similarities and differences between the two characters. Does the writer use examples from the text to support these claims? Does the writer explain why those examples illustrate particular similarities or differences? Make comments in the margins about how well the writer utilizes examples from the text to support the similarities and differences the paper discusses. At the end of the paper, write a brief summary recommending how the writer can improve this aspect of the essay.
3. Read the whole paper carefully. For your feedback, focus on the writer's conclusion. Does the writer draw conclusions/make a value judgment based on his comparisons/contrasts? Make comments in the margins about how well the writer crafts the conclusion. At the end of the paper, write a brief summary recommending how the writer can improve this aspect of the essay.

The peer editing process will proceed as follows:

1. Students will pass their papers to the left and will read and edit the paper they receive according to the first proofreading responsibility.
2. Students will pass the papers to the left again and will read and edit the paper they receive according to the second proofreading responsibility.
3. Students will pass the papers to the left again and will read and edit the paper they receive according to the third proofreading responsibility.
4. Students will pass the papers to the left again, returning the papers to their original authors. If students complete all three proofreading tasks with their groups with class time remaining, they will use that time to begin working on their revisions. Final papers will be due on Friday, including the first draft and the feedback from today's peer editing activities.

### **Day 24 (Thursday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping

**45 minutes:** Students will have one final day in the computer lab to revise and complete their essays after receiving peer feedback the previous day. Essays will be due tomorrow at the beginning of class.

### **Day 25 (Friday)**

**3-5 minutes:** Attendance and housekeeping; collect Compare/Contrast Essays.

**20 minutes:** Students will complete a Unit Evaluation Opinionnaire. (See Appendix D for Opinionnaire.)

**25 minutes:** Teacher introduces Balderdash/Etymology vocabulary game. (See Appendix E for word selections).

#### **Condensed Procedures for Etymology Game**

(Borrowed from [http://www.coe.uga.edu/~smago/Vocabulary\\_Games/Etymology.htm](http://www.coe.uga.edu/~smago/Vocabulary_Games/Etymology.htm))

1. The class forms teams of 2-3 students.
2. The teacher leads a review of what etymology means, and gives several examples.
3. The teacher writes a word on the board, and students write out a possible etymology.
4. The teacher collects all etymologies and mixes them together with the real etymology, and then reads them through twice. On the first reading students simply listen. On the second reading they vote for the etymology they believe is correct. Each student may vote only once and may not vote for his or her team's guess. Students vote individually rather than as a team.
5. Teams that have correctly written the word's etymology receive 10 points. Teams that guess the correct etymology receive 1 point. Teams receive 1 point for each vote cast for their etymology.
6. Repeat Steps #3, #4, and #5 as long as time allows.

**Appendix A:  
Opinionnaire for Introductory Activity on Day 1 (Monday)**

1. I behave in the same way in every aspect of my life – at home, at school, at work, hanging out with my friends, etc.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

2. There are aspects of my personality, things I believe, or things I want to accomplish that no one knows about.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

3. My family, my teachers, my boss, and my friends all expect certain things from me.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

4. Culture does not affect a person's values, beliefs, behaviors, or relationships.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

5. Social relationships affect the way I dress, how I act, and what career I want to pursue.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

6. I care about what other people think of me.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

7. There are certain careers that are acceptable for women but not acceptable for men, and there are certain careers that are acceptable for men but not acceptable for women.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

8. I would not be who I am without the influences of certain people and experiences.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

9. I feel that my appearance reflects who I am as a person.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

10. I identify more with people who share my cultural background than with people of different cultural backgrounds.

Strongly Agree      Agree      Not Sure      Disagree      Strongly Disagree

**Appendix B:  
Song Lyrics for Activity on Days 2 and 3 (Tuesday and Wednesday)**

**"Reflection" - Christina Aguilera**

Look at me  
You may think you see  
Who I really am  
But you'll never know me  
Every day  
It's as if I play a part  
Now I see  
If I wear a mask  
I can fool the world  
But I cannot fool my heart

Who is that girl I see  
Staring straight back at me?  
When will my reflection show  
Who I am inside?

I am now  
In a world where I  
Have to hide my heart  
And what I believe in  
But somehow  
I will show the world  
What's inside my heart  
And be loved for who I am

Who is that girl I see  
Staring straight back at me?  
Why is my reflection  
Someone I don't know?  
Must I pretend that I'm  
Someone else for all time?  
When will my reflection show  
Who I am inside?

There's a heart that must be  
Free to fly  
That burns with a need to know  
The reason why

Why must we all conceal  
What we think, how we feel?

Must there be a secret me  
I'm forced to hide?  
I won't pretend that I'm  
Someone else for all time  
When will my reflection show  
Who I am inside?  
When will my reflection show  
Who I am inside?

### **"Everybody's Changing" – Keane**

You say you wander your own land  
But when I think about it  
I don't see how you can  
You're aching, you're breaking  
And I can see the pain in your eyes  
Says everybody's changing  
And I don't know why

So little time  
Try to understand that I'm  
Trying to make a move just to stay in the game  
I try to stay awake and remember my name  
But everybody's changing  
And I don't feel the same

You're gone from here  
And soon you will disappear  
Fading into beautiful light  
Cause everybody's changing  
And I don't feel right

So little time  
Try to understand that I'm  
Trying to make a move just to stay in the game  
I try to stay awake and remember my name  
But everybody's changing  
And I don't feel the same

So little time  
Try to understand that I'm  
Trying to make a move just to stay in the game  
I try to stay awake and remember my name  
But everybody's changing  
And I don't feel the same

**"Crazy" – Gnarl's Barkley**

I remember when, I remember, I remember when I lost my mind  
There was something so pleasant about that place.  
Even your emotions had an echo  
In so much space

And when you're out there  
Without care,  
Yeah, I was out of touch  
But it wasn't because I didn't know enough  
I just knew too much

Does that make me crazy?  
Does that make me crazy?  
Does that make me crazy?  
Possibly

And I hope that you are having the time of your life  
But think twice, that's my only advice

Come on now, who do you, who do you, who do you, who do you think you are,  
Ha ha ha bless your soul  
You really think you're in control

Well, I think you're crazy  
I think you're crazy  
I think you're crazy  
Just like me

My heroes had the heart to lose their lives out on a limb  
And all I remember is thinking, I want to be like them  
Ever since I was little, ever since I was little it looked like fun  
And it's no coincidence I've come  
And I can die when I'm done

Maybe I'm crazy  
Maybe you're crazy  
Maybe we're crazy  
Probably

Uh, uh

**"Try" – Nelly Furtado**

All I know  
Is everything is not as it's sold  
but the more I grow the less I know  
And I have lived so many lives  
Though I'm not old  
And the more I see, the less I grow  
The fewer the seeds the more I sow

Then I see you standing there  
Wanting more from me  
And all I can do is try  
Then I see you standing there  
Wanting more from me  
And all I can do is try

I wish I hadn't seen all of the realness  
And all the real people are really not real at all  
The more I learn, the more I learn  
The more I cry, the more I cry  
As I say goodbye to the way of life  
I thought I had designed for me

Then I see you standing there  
Wanting more from me  
And all I can do is try  
Then I see you standing there  
I'm all I'll ever be  
But all I can do is try  
Try

All of the moments that already passed  
We'll try to go back and make them last  
All of the things we want each other to be  
We never will be  
And that's wonderful, and that's life  
And that's you, baby  
This is me, baby  
And we are, we are, we are, we are  
Free  
In our love  
We are free in our love



**"Welcome To Heartbreak" – Kanye West**

My friend showed me pictures of his kids  
 And all I could show him was pictures of my cribs  
 He said his daughter got a brand new report card  
 And all I got was a brand new sports car, oh

And my head keeps spinning  
 Can't stop having these visions, I gotta get with it  
 And my head keeps spinning  
 I can't stop having these visions, I gotta get with it

Dad cracked a joke, all the kids laughed  
 But I couldn't hear him all the way in first class  
 Chased the good life my whole life long  
 Look back on my life and my life gone  
 Where did I go wrong?

And my head keeps spinning  
 Can't stop having these visions, I gotta get with it  
 And my head keeps spinning  
 I can't stop having these visions, I gotta get with it

I've seen it, I've seen it before  
 I've seen it, I've seen it before  
 I've seen it, I've seen it before  
 I've seen it, I've seen it before

Oh my God, sister getting married by the lake  
 But I couldn't figure out who I'd wanna take  
 Bad enough that I showed up late  
 I had to leave before they even cut the cake  
 Welcome to heartbreak

And my head keeps spinning  
 Can't stop having these visions, I gotta get with it  
 And my head keeps spinning  
 I can't stop having these visions, I gotta get with it

And I and I can't stop  
 No, no, I can't stop  
 No, no, no, no, I can't stop  
 No, no, no, no, I can't stop

Can't stop, I can't stop, I can't stop  
 No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no  
 No, no, no, no  
 No, no, I can't stop

I can't stop having these visions  
 I gotta get with it

## "That's Not My Name" – The Ting Tings

Four letter word just to get me along  
 It's a difficulty and I'm biting on my tongue and I  
 I keep stalling, keeping me together  
 People around gotta find something to say now

Holding back, every day the same  
 Don't wanna be a loner  
 Listen to me, oh no  
 I never say anything at all  
 But with nothing to consider they forget my name (ame, ame, ame)

They call me 'hell'  
 They call me 'Stacey'  
 They call me 'her'  
 They call me 'Jane'  
 That's not my name  
 That's not my name  
 That's not my name  
 That's not my name  
 They call me 'quiet'  
 But I'm a riot  
 Mary-Jo-Lisa  
 Always the same  
 That's not my name  
 That's not my name  
 That's not my name  
 That's not my name

I miss the catch if they threw me the ball  
 I'm the last chick standing up against the wall  
 Keep up, falling, these heels they keep me boring  
 Getting glammed up and sitting on the fence now

So alone all the time at night  
 Lock myself away  
 Listen to me, I'm not  
 Although I'm dressed up, out and all with  
 Everything considered they forget my name  
 (ame, ame, ame)

Are you calling me darling?  
 Are you calling me bird?  
 Are you calling me darling?  
 Are you calling me bird?

**"Soul Suckers" – Amos Lee**

Did you believe it,  
when they told you they discovered you?  
And that everything is free,  
as long as you do what they tell you to.  
You think it's true?

But nothing could be farther from the truth,  
my love.

Did you even listen,  
When they told you to change your name?  
And that nobody wants honesty when looking at a perfect frame  
play the game.

Nothing could be further from the truth,  
my love..  
And nothing is more powerful than beauty in a wicked world.  
Play it girl,  
play it girl,  
play it girl.

Does it make you feel good,  
when they tell you what you want to hear?  
And after they suck all your soul,  
well that's when they'll disappear.  
Disappear.  
They disappear forever..

Like a prince in your little fairy tale.  
And you will find,  
one day you put your soul on sale..

Nothing could be further from the truth,  
my love..  
And nothing is more powerful than beauty in a wicked world.

**Appendix C:  
Short Story for Day 4 (Thursday)**

**“Girl” by Jamaica Kincaid**

(Available at <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/virtualit/fiction/Girl/story.asp>)

Wash the white clothes on Monday and put them on the stone heap; wash the color clothes on Tuesday and put them on the clothesline to dry; don't walk barehead in the hot sun; cook pumpkin fritters in very hot sweet oil; soak your little cloths right after you take them off; when buying cotton to make yourself a nice blouse, be sure that it doesn't have gum on it, because that way it won't hold up well after a wash; soak salt fish overnight before you cook it; is it true that you sing benna in Sunday school?; always eat your food in such a way that it won't turn someone else's stomach; on Sundays try to walk like a lady and not like the slut you are so bent on becoming; don't sing benna in Sunday school; you mustn't speak to wharf-rat boys, not even to give directions; don't eat fruits on the street—flies will follow you; *but I don't sing benna on Sundays at all and never in Sunday school*; this is how to sew on a button; this is how to make a button-hole for the button you have just sewed on; this is how to hem a dress when you see the hem coming down and so to prevent yourself from looking like the slut I know you are so bent on becoming; this is how you iron your father's khaki shirt so that it doesn't have a crease; this is how you iron your father's khaki pants so that they don't have a crease; this is how you grow okra—far from the house, because okra tree harbors red ants; when you are growing dasheen, make sure it gets plenty of water or else it makes your throat itch when you are eating it; this is how you sweep a corner; this is how you sweep a whole house; this is how you sweep a yard; this is how you smile to someone you don't like too much; this is how you smile to someone you don't like at all; this is how you smile to someone you like completely; this is how you set a table for tea; this is how you set a table for dinner; this is how you set a table for dinner with an important guest; this is how you set a table for lunch; this is how you set a table for breakfast; this is how to behave in the presence of men who don't know you very well, and this way they won't recognize immediately the slut I have warned you against becoming; be sure to wash every day, even if it is with your own spit; don't squat down to play marbles—you are not a boy, you know; don't pick people's flowers—you might catch something; don't throw stones at blackbirds, because it might not be a blackbird at all; this is how to make a bread pudding; this is how to make doukona; this is how to make pepper pot; this is how to make a good medicine for a cold; this is how to make a good medicine to throw away a child before it even becomes a child; this is how to catch a fish; this is how to throw back a fish you don't like, and that way something bad won't fall on you; this is how to bully a man; this is how a man bullies you; this is how to love a man; and if this doesn't work there are other ways, and if they don't work don't feel too bad about giving up; this is how to spit up in the air if you feel like it, and this is how to move quick so that it doesn't fall on you; this is how

to make ends meet; always squeeze bread to make sure it's fresh; *but what if the baker won't let me feel the bread?*; you mean to say that after all you are really going to be the kind of woman who the baker won't let near the bread?

**Appendix D**  
**Opinionnaire: Unit Evaluation for Day 25 (Friday)**

Please answer the following questions. Your input will help me as I replicate and/or revise this unit for future groups of students. Please be honest; you do not have to put your name on this, though you may if you wish.

1. Please write your opinion of each piece of literature we used during this unit and recommend whether or not I should use it again next year.

Songs:

Keane – “Everybody’s Changing”

Christina Aguilera – “Reflection”

Gnarls Barkley – “Crazy”

Nelly Furtado – “Try”

Kanye West – “Welcome to Heartbreak”

The Ting Tings – “That’s Not My Name”

Amos Lee – “Soul Suckers”

Poem/Short Story:

Jamaica Kincaid – “Girl”

Play:

Oscar Wilde – *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Novel:

Kate Chopin – *The Awakening*

2. What did you learn from keeping your personal response journal? Did you enjoy keeping a journal? Should we use personal response journals in other units this year? Why or why not?
3. What did you learn from writing your compare/contrast essay? Do you feel that you were adequately taught how to write a compare/contrast essay? Why or why not?
4. What did you learn from leading your discussion? Would you recommend that students do this next year? Why or why not? Would you suggest any changes for that activity?
5. What did you learn from writing your creative piece? Did you enjoy this type of activity? Why or why not?
6. What would you recommend that I do the same when teaching this unit next year? What was your favorite part of the unit? Why?

7. What would you recommend that I do differently? What was your least favorite part of the unit? Why?
8. Can you make any suggestions for how you would like to learn about literature, writing, and language for the rest of the year?

**Appendix E:  
Words for Vocabulary Activity on Day 5 (Friday)**

(Borrowed from [http://www.coe.uga.edu/~smago/Vocabulary\\_Games/Etymology.htm](http://www.coe.uga.edu/~smago/Vocabulary_Games/Etymology.htm))

salary - from "sal," for "salt," which Roman soldiers were originally paid with

companion from "com," meaning "with," and "pan," meaning "bread": a companion was someone to share your bread with

bonfire - this was a huge fire built in the Middle Ages to destroy the bones of corpses during the plague

panic - the wild effort by nymphs to escape when the Greek god Pan appeared

trivia - from "tri," meaning "three," and "via," meaning "way" or "road": in Rome, when three roads crossed in the same spot, people on their way to market stopped to talk about "unimportant" things

curfew - from "couvre-feu," or "cover fire," in the Middle Ages in France, when peasants were told by the ringing of a bell to put out their fires for the night

alphabet - comes from "alpha" and "beta," the first two letters of the Greek alphabet

malaria - from "mal," for "bad," and "aer," for "air": people thought this disease came from the bad air in swamps

terrier - so named because it digs in the earth (terre) for small animals

preposterous - from "pre," for "before," and "post," for "after": a situation where what should come first comes last, and vice versa; in other words, ridiculous

berserk - means "bear shirt," because ancient Norse fighters would sometimes fight ferociously wearing only a bear skin

bridal - this was originally the drink, "bride ale," that was drunk at weddings

perfume - the root of this is "fume," for smoke: it comes from the smell arising from the smoke coming from incense burned in sacrifices in ancient religions

admiral - from the Arabic "amir-al-bahr," or "king of the sea."

assassin - originally "Hashashin," or "hashish eaters," a secret murder cult of Muslims in the 11th century

chauffeur - from the French word for "heat," because early steam engine cars were hot



dunce - from the religious philosopher Duns Scotus, whose followers were called Dunses and were thought to be stupid

posh - an acronym from the expression "Port out, starbord home," so that the wealthier passengers could avoid the hot afternoon sun no matter whether they were coming or going

capitol - from the Latin "caput," or head of cattle, which were an early form of wealth

checkmate - the object of chess is to trap the king. "Checkmate" comes from "shah," for "king," and "mat," for "dead."

hazard - from the Arabic word, "az-zahr," or dice, which were thought to be risky

tuxedo - from an Indian term meaning "wolf," because a tuxedo was wolf's clothing

ukulele - means "jumping flea" in Hawaiian, because the fingers move so quickly on the strings

kangaroo - the Australian word for "I don't know," which the Australians replied when asked by English visitors about the funny looking animal that lived on their continent

snafu - a Navy term, meaning "Situation normal: all fouled up"

cabbage - from an old French word meaning "head"

guillotine - named for its inventor, Dr. Guillotin

boycott - named for Charles Boycott, an Englishman who refused to reduce his rents and was therefore faced with a mass rent payment freeze by his tenants

saxophone - named after Adolphe Sax, its inventor

derby - named after the Earl of Derby, who made it popular

leotard - named after the French gymnast Jules Leotard, who developed it

graham cracker - named after the flour developed by the nineteenth century nutritionist Sylvester Graham