

**“Everybody But Me”:  
The Historical Implications of the Struggle for Civil Rights on  
Culture, Education, and Politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

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I swear to the Lord/I still can't see/  
Why Democracy means/Everybody but me.  
(Langston Hughes)

**Overview**

While the Civil Rights era is one of mass importance in the context of American history as a whole, this era is given little attention in the current curriculum of our nation's elementary and middle schools. Perhaps it's eluded to avoid controversy or confusion, or perhaps it is due to the intricacies of the era. Thus, when students enter sixth grade and embark on their middle school journey, they bring very little background knowledge of the subject with them, and therefore, are unable to draw on the prior knowledge necessary to develop a deep understanding of movement, its implications, and its relevance in their lives. Furthermore, they are ill equipped to delve into its intricacies with the insight necessary to performing a historical analysis or making linear connections to the civil and racial happenings in today's American society.

In order to combat this phenomenon, educators must create and implement a study of the Civil Rights era in a manner that provides both historical context and proves meaningful and relevant for students. They must provide students with a counter-narrative that includes factual events. Through the exploration of relevant texts, from

both primary and secondary sources, students develop a better sense of the brevity of the era and its far-reaching implications. Students are encouraged to draw connections between the current state of education and politics in the United States with historical events and to create a linear model of these events from 1950s to present day. Texts such as SNCC Chairman, John Lewis', speech "Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word" and Phillip Hoose's *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*, provide students with both a firsthand account of the events of the era as well as a lens into the broader events of the time. Through the study of these texts, students will learn that the movement didn't simply happen overnight—rather, a series of complicated, often strategized events from lesser known individuals and groups amassed to create a larger, transforming movement. Additionally, in exploring texts such as President Obama's Second Inaugural Address and his Philadelphia address, "Speech on Race," students are further encouraged to make correlations between past and current events.

This unit will provide a means for teaching the civil rights movements in a meaningful way for students, presenting the lesser-known heroes of the movement, as well as providing context for many of the more popular events of the period. In exploring relevant themes of race, protest, and social justice in both primary and secondary texts, students will interact meaningfully with the texts and be prompted to respond to these externalities as a means of instilling a sense of empowerment in their own lives. Additionally, students will engage with a variety of texts, both fiction and nonfiction, to develop a more well-rounded sense of the movement and its complexities, as well as its relevance in today's society.

## **Rationale**

Given their lack of background knowledge on the Civil Rights movement, students are less likely to connect to its important themes, values, and the lessons it provides on social justice, as well as, the nature of change and continuity in history. Without going beyond the surface level of the "I Have a Dream" speech and Rosa Parks' momentous decision to remain at the front of the bus, educators are providing a disservice to their students. However, in providing a greater context of the Civil Rights movement and presenting in its relevance to current situations and systems in the United States, educators are able to better reach students and aid them in forging the connection of the historical period to their own lives.

While, as aforementioned, there is a vast array of texts useful in exploring the historical themes of race and education, a few of those examined in this unit include:

"Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word", a speech by SNCC Chairman, John Lewis

Although it is lesser known than King's "I Have a Dream" speech, Lewis' "Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word" was delivered on the same day at the March on

Washington. Much of Lewis' speech was censored before its delivery due to his controversial comments. Lewis was a veteran of the civil rights movement and his voice is an integral, though often forgotten, part of the movement.

*Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*, by Phillip M. Hoose

In this award-winning biography, Hoose introduces readers to Claudette Colvin, a fifteen year-old African American girl, who in 1955 refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white woman in Montgomery, Alabama. Alternating between historical background information and lengthy passages from the words of Colvin herself, Hoose shines light on a teen that stood up for her rights at a very tumultuous point in our nation's history.

"Speech on Race," a speech by President Barack Obama

Delivered during his Presidential Campaign on March 18, 2008, President Obama's "Speech on Race" is considered an enduring example of American political rhetoric. The speech was delivered at Philadelphia's Constitution Center and proved a pivotal moment in the President's campaign. It provides students with a link between the civil rights movement of the past and the nation's current political and racial situation.

"One Today," a poem by Richard Blanco

In his 2013 inaugural poem for President Obama, Blanco recounts a day in America—from sunrise to sunset—across diverse settings in our nation's landscape. The repetition of the motif of "one" throughout the poem lends to the sense of a united people who are similar in their vision of hope for the future. With the delivery of this poem, Blanco became the first openly gay and Latino Inaugural Poet.

"The Black Man Speaks" and "Democracy," poems by Langston Hughes

Overall, *Everybody But Me* will be differentiated to address multiple learning levels and learning styles. It will align with district, state, and national education standards. Through this curriculum unit, students will use a variety of modalities to read, write, respond to, conduct research, and create works related to the Civil Rights era its implications on the state of education in present day United States.

## **Background**

I intend to teach this unit in all three of my sixth grade Literacy classes at Wagner Middle School. My students are divided into three sections—each section is inclusive and is comprised of Special Education students, Emotional Support students, Gifted Education students, and Regular Education students. The school itself is a comprehensive, neighborhood school in the West Oak Lane section of Northwest Philadelphia. Our

school has seven QZAB labs (classrooms with seventeen laptops, a Promethean board and an LCD projector), and I am lucky to be in a classroom with one of them.

Nearly one hundred percent of the population comes from the immediate vicinity of the school, which is located at 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Chelton Avenue. The student body is comprised of approximately 600 students whose ethnic makeup is 97.1% African American and >3% Latino or Asian. Over 76% of students qualify for Free Lunch and 36% receive Special Education services.

This unit was written to accommodate all classrooms, regardless of access to technology or demographic variations. All of the lessons in *“Everybody But Me”* can be modified to meet the needs of educators in various circumstances, as long as a copier and reasonable access to the historical documents are attainable.

## **Objectives**

This unit is intended for use with students in an inclusive sixth grade Literacy and Social Studies classroom in a middle school setting. Students spend 75-90 minutes daily in Literacy class, with an additional 45 minutes allotted for Social Studies, and one day per week reserved for Writing. By the end of the unit, students will be able to:

- Perform a close reading of primary sources (“Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word” and “Speech on Race”)
- Determine the author’s purpose for writing a text (to persuade, to inform, or to entertain readers) and analyze how the author achieved this purpose
- Differentiate between fact and opinion in a nonfiction text to determine bias and the validity of the source
- Compare and contrast historical fiction, nonfiction, and poems with similar topics and themes
- Write an argumentative essay on the topic of education and race in the United States and support claims with logical reasoning
- Read and comprehend fiction and literary nonfiction by completing comprehension questions and related activities (for all selections in the unit)

Beyond the technical level and development of foundational standards, students will also be encouraged to continue to read and to utilize the growing list of related texts as a means of exploring the historical implications of race and education on the present system of education in the United States. In addition to completing class activities related to each of these standards, students will use the research process and expository writing skills develop their own opinion and understanding of history and its impact on present events.

## Strategies

Throughout the unit, a variety of strategies will be employed to ensure that students are analyzing, internalizing, and fully comprehending the material presented in each lesson. The strategies are used to support all types of learners in the development of their reading, writing, thinking, and listening skills as they relate in Literacy, Social Studies, and across the curriculum.

*Before, During and After (BDA):* BDA strategies will be incorporated in each lesson. The BDA strategy is a variation of the “I Do, We Do, You Do” model of classroom instruction. The strategy allows readers to interact with the text on a level that would not be reached if the teacher merely provided students with answers and explanations of the text. In the “Before” segment of the lesson, the instructor briefly introduces new materials and models how to perform activities. In the “During” segment of the lesson, students interact with the text by creating marginalia and asking questions of the text. In the “After” segment, students respond to the text in a variety of ways including analysis of the text in both written response or through the completion of comprehension questions.

*Do Now:* The “Do Now” functions tri-fold in my classroom. It occurs as part of the “Before” segment of the lesson. The “Do Now” is used to grab the students’ attention at the beginning of class, access prior knowledge about the topic at hand, and prepare them to consider the day’s objectives and material. Each day, the “Do Now” occurs as soon as students enter the classroom. Each “Do Now” lasts five minutes and is awarded five points for completion and participation. Because it happens as soon as students enter the classroom and is immediately awarded points, it holds students accountable for their class work and participation from the onset of the class period. The “Do Now” will be used throughout the unit in all three ways described above.

*Text Rendering:* Text rendering occurs during the “During” portion of the lesson. To complete text-rendering tasks, students underline, highlight and create marginalia for a given text. Text rendering is particularly useful for teaching students to interact with a text and to practice meta-cognition. In my class, student highlight key phrases and ideas, underline new vocabulary terms, and circle items that they have a question about. Text rendering is a skill that must be modeled by the educator in order to have students practice it effectively.

*Choice Boards:* Choice Boards are a differentiation tool that give students options as to which activities they would like to complete during a given class duration. The boards are set up to include skill sets that the students have learned and are currently being assessed in. Each board is set up like a Tic-Tac-Toe board from which students complete three tasks. These three tasks should encompass a variety of learning modalities

and skill sets. Each set of three tasks selected by an individual student must complete a Tic-Tac-Toe row. (See Appendix B)

*Tiered Activity Lists:* Tiered activity lists are also useful tools for differentiated instruction. In brief, tiered activity lists are lists of lesson activities that are tiered in terms of difficulty level for students who are performing at different achievement levels. They are designed to allow more advanced students to go further in-depth with a concept, as well as to ensure that lower level learners are able to be assessed on the concepts as well without lowering the standard of a performance product.

*Mentor Texts:* Mentor texts are texts that can be used by educators to model a certain structure or idea. These texts are valuable in aiding students in developing higher-level sentence structures or in using the writing process to create original pieces. Mentor texts can also be used by an educator to create templates for student use for various writing assignments.

*Templates:* I create templates for use in my classroom to aid students in developing structure in their writing or to emulate a particularly effective or, when applicable, a creative text. They are an invaluable differentiation tool for Writer's Workshop and can be adapted based on an individual student's skill level. Oftentimes, I begin a writing piece with students using a template and then gradually as we move through the writing process, I take sections of the template away and ask students to revise to use their own forms inspired by the mentor text.

*Close Reading:* With the introduction of the Common Core standards, greater emphasis is being placed on analyzing texts to come to a deeper understanding of the material. I use close reading assignments in my classroom as a means of accomplishing this goal. Oftentimes, I create an annotated version of the text with comprehension or thought questions embedded in the text. These questions encourage students to interact with the text and to make connections to historical and current events, other texts, and their own lives. (See Appendix C)

### **Classroom Activities / Sample Lesson Plans**

#### ***Sample Lesson #1: "Patience Is a... Virtue?": A Close Reading of SNCC Chairman, John Lewis' Speech, "Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word"***

*Description:* This five-day lesson serves as an introductory activity for the fiery speeches given during the Civil Rights era and their impact on both the tone and the events of the period. It involves the demonstrated mastery of the Literacy concepts of figurative language, nonfiction close reading and analysis, and the Social Studies topic of the Civil Rights Era and its lesser-known figures. Students will briefly review Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech to set the stage and provide recognizable context of the

era. They will then perform a close reading of SNCC Chairman John Lewis' speech, "Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word." While it is not as well-known as King's "Dream" speech, Lewis' speech delves into similar issues and provides an equally impassioned view on the situation in the United States at the time. In doing so, students will apply their knowledge of figurative language and context clues to interact with the text and to forge a deeper understanding of the text, its context, and its implications. Additionally, students will examine Langston Hughes' reactionary poems, "Democracy" and "The Black Man Speaks," studying Hughes' use of language and determining the connections between the nonfiction documents and the poetic responses. Finally, students will write an original poem that demonstrates mastery of figurative language, an understanding of the historical context of the documents and a reflection on the themes of democracy, equality, and racism.

*Learning Goals:* Students will read and analyze the speech, "Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word," by John Lewis. They will apply their knowledge of figurative language and use of context clues to improve their reading comprehension. Students will demonstrate their understanding of segregation and its place in democracy, by making connections between the Lewis and King speeches, and the Hughes' poems. Finally, students will create an original poem that demonstrates mastery of figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification, and alliteration), an understanding of the historical events of the era, as well as an understanding of the themes of democracy, equality, and racism.

*Objectives:* By the end of the five-day lesson, students will be able to:

- Interpret examples of figurative language in the speech, "Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word" and the poems, "Democracy" and "The Black Man Speaks"
- Use context clues to determine the meaning of literacy terms and content area vocabulary
- Explore the historical context of "Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word" speech
- Make connections between poetry ("Democracy" and "The Black Man Speaks") and prose ("Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word")
- Write an original poem that demonstrates mastery of figurative language, an understanding of the historical context of the documents, and a reflection on the themes of democracy, equality, and racism

*Materials:*

- Class Set of Langston Hughes' poems, "Democracy" and "The Black Man Speaks"
- Class Set of Laptops with Word Processing Software (optional)
- "Interpreting Figurative Language" Key Note presentations (One presentation for poetry and one presentation for prose)
- "Analyzing Poetry" Key Note presentation
- "Performing a Close Reading" Key Note presentation

- Do Now Materials
- Figurative Language Graphic Organizer
- Close Reading and Analysis Guide (“Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word”)
- Comprehension Guide (for both poems)
- “Patience is a Virtue” Assignment Rubric and Checklist

*Learning Plan (Five-Day Lesson):*

Day 1

*Opening Activity:*

For the “Do Now,” students will view a series of images from the Civil Rights era. They will choose one word to describe the tone of each image from a list of descriptive tone words. Students will then explain their rationale for each choice based on clues they gather from the image.

*Mini-Lesson:*

Using an interactive Promethean presentation, the educator will introduce the concepts of tone and mood. Students will complete a notes handout to record the definition and an example word list for each term. Additionally, the educator will model how to

*Independent Activities:*

Students will complete a close reading of Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech using the guided reading questions and guide. After completing the close reading, students will respond in writing to their analysis (in which they address the tone of the piece) and write a creative piece inspired by the words of Dr. King in the speech.

Day 2

*Opening Activity:*

For the “Do Now,” students will read a series of figurative language statements taken from the writing and speeches of Civil Rights leaders. They will identify each type of figurative language and label it on their handouts. Students will then write the meaning of each example of figurative language (when applicable).

*Mini-Lesson:*

Educator will review figurative language with students using the “Interpreting Figurative Language in Prose” Key Note presentation. As they are presented with definitions, examples, and interpretations of each type of figurative language, students will complete a guided notes handout.

*Independent Activities:*

Students will complete Part One of their close reading of John Lewis’ “Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word” speech. They will use the Close Reading and Analysis Guide (provided



in Appendix C) to analyze the speech by Lewis and make connections between King’s speech and the words of Lewis. Additionally, students will interpret examples of figurative language to determine the meaning of the speech.

### Day 3

#### *Opening Activity:*

For the “Do Now,” students will watch the video clip on Stokely Carmichael from *The History Channel* website. As they watch, students will write character traits to describe Carmichael as well as evidence from the video to support their choices. During discussion, students will compare their impressions of Carmichael and John Lewis by citing their similarities and differences.

#### *Mini-Lesson:*

Educator will model for students how to write a response piece based on a close reading. Educator will base the modeled piece on the “I Have a Dream” speech and will identify each of the critical components for completing an effective response paragraph: a thesis statement, support from the passage, and a conclusion that sums up the author’s argument or opinion.

#### *Independent Activities:*

Students will complete Part Two of their close reading of John Lewis’ “Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word” speech. They will use the Close Reading and Analysis Guide (provided in Appendix C) to analyze the speech by Lewis and make connections between King’s speech and the words of Lewis. Additionally, students will write a response to their close reading of the speech using the prompt provided in the guide.

### Day 4

#### *Opening Activity:*

For the “Do Now,” students will listen to the poem, “Democracy” by Langston Hughes. They will select examples of figurative language from the poem and explain their meanings.

#### *Mini-Lesson:*

Educator will review figurative language with students using the “Interpreting Figurative Language in Poetry” Key Note presentation. As they are presented with definitions, examples, and interpretations of each type of figurative language, students will complete a guided notes handout.

#### *Independent Activities:*

Students will read the poem, “The Black Man Speaks” by Langston Hughes. They will complete a graphic organizer to identify the use of figurative language and other literary devices in the poem and complete comprehension questions for the selection. Additionally, students will write a response to the prompt: “In what ways to the Hughes’

poems relate to the speeches given by John Lewis and Dr. King? How is the language presented in each of these texts similar? How is the language different?"

Day 5

*Opening Activity:*

For the “Do Now,” students will define the following terms in their own words using impressions garnered from the lessons of the past week and using figurative language where relevant: Equality, segregation, freedom, race, democracy, patience, and America. Students will share their responses and educator will record a class definition of each term.

*Mini-Lesson:*

Educator will model how to write a poem using the brainstorming graphic organizer. Educator will go over each component of the poem and model the thinking process that he or she uses in producing piece of creative writing.

*Independent Activities:*

Students will complete a brainstorming graphic organizer and write a poem based on the terms defined in the “Do Now.” The poem should demonstrate mastery of figurative language and should include historical themes studied during the week of lessons.

***Sample Lesson #2: “Don’t Step Back:” Claudette Colvin, The Children’s March and the Power of Youth***

*Description:* During the middle school years, students often feel misrepresented, underrepresented, and even unimportant. During adolescence, many students also undergo an intense period of identity formation, in which they feel the desire to have their voices heard by society. In this five-day lesson, students will examine the lives of some of the unsung heroes of the civil rights movement—the children. In examining the life of Claudette Colvin and the efforts and effects of the efforts of the children involved in the Children’s March, students will bear witness to the power of youth, and will perhaps, become empowered themselves.

*Learning Goals:* Students will read *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice* by Phillip M. Hoose. They will apply their knowledge of the literacy topics of point of view, author’s purpose, plot, and theme to analyze the text and compare to other texts on the same topic. Students will make connections between the protest of Claudette Colvin and the Children’s March, and their own lives. Finally, students will create an activism plan for a topic important in their lives—public education—by researching the issue of public education in Philadelphia and creating an awareness poster to hang in their neighborhood.

*Objectives:* By the end of the five-day lesson, students will be able to:

- Determine the effectiveness of first person point of view in memoir
- Analyze the author’s purpose in a nonfiction text and evaluate his/her success in achieving that purpose
- Determine a common theme in the lives of youth involved in Civil Rights activism
- Make connections between nonfiction written texts (*Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*), documentary film (*The Children’s March*), and their own lives
- Research public education in Philadelphia and create an awareness poster on the issue

*Materials:*

- Class Set of *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice* by Phillip M. Hoose
- Class Set of Laptops with Word Processing Software (optional)
- “Point of View” and “Author’s Purpose” Key Note presentations
- “Theme” and “Conflict” Key Note presentations
- Do Now Materials
- Copy of the Film, *The Children’s March*
- Comprehension Guide (for the novel and the film)
- Public Education Assignment Rubric and Checklist

*Learning Plan (Five-Day Lesson):*

Day 1

*Opening Activity:*

For the “Do Now,” students will read a paragraph on the Montgomery Bus Boycott written by Bull Connor. They will identify the point of view of the passage (first, second, or third) and the narrator. They will then explain how the passage would be different if it was written by an African American protester who was involved in the boycott.

*Mini-Lesson:*

Using an interactive Promethean presentation, the educator will review the concept of point of view by providing key words for each point of view. Students will complete a notes chart and take part in a discussion on the effectiveness of different points of view when used in different types of texts.

*Independent Activities:*

Students will read Chapters 1-2 of *Claudette Colvin*. They will complete comprehension questions for the selection and write a constructed response based on the point of view of the passage. When they are finished, students will work on Choice Board activity. As an Exit Ticket, students will answer the following questions: What point of view is the book written from? Who is telling the story? Is this more or less effective than if someone else

told the story? Why? For homework, students will read Chapter 3 of the novel and complete a reading journal entry.

## Day 2

### *Opening Activity:*

For the “Do Now,” students will read a paragraph on an argument against segregation. They will determine the author’s purpose in the passage (to inform, to entertain, or to persuade). They will explain why this is the author’s purpose that they identified for the passage.

### *Mini-Lesson:*

Educator will review the concept of author’s purpose and provide the PIE mnemonic to help students remember the three basic types of author’s purpose. Students will fill-in a notes chart that will aid them in identifying the author’s purpose for different types of texts.

### *Independent Activities:*

Students will read Chapters 4-5 of *Claudette Colvin*. They will complete comprehension questions for the selection and write a constructed response based on author’s purpose. When they are finished, students will work on Choice Board activity. As an Exit Ticket, students will answer the following questions: What is the purpose of the book? Is it fiction or nonfiction? How do you know? . For homework, students will read Chapter 6 and complete a journal entry on the selection.

## Day 3

### *Opening Activity:*

For the “Do Now,” students will write a journal quick write entry in response to the following: Think about a time when you had a conflict in your life. What was it? How was it solved?

### *Mini-Lesson:*

Educator will present a Key Note presentation on the types of literary conflict and examples of each of these types. Information will be differentiated and presented both visually and in written form. Students will interact throughout the presentation to identify examples of conflicts and explain their choices.

### *Independent Activities:*

Students will read Chapters 7 and 8 of *Claudette Colvin* and complete comprehension questions based on the selection. They will also write a constructed response based on conflict. When they are finished, students will work on Choice Board activity. As an Exit Ticket, students will answer the following questions: What is the conflict in *Claudette Colvin*? What are the possible resolutions to this conflict? List two possible resolutions

and explain your choices. For homework, students will read Chapter 9 of the text and complete a journal response.

#### Day 4

##### *Opening Activity:*

For the “Do Now,” students will listen to the song, “We Shall Overcome.” As they listen, students will identify the theme of the song and list evidence to explain their response.

##### *Mini-Lesson:*

Educator will present a Key Note presentation on Literary Theme. Students will analyze the theme of various texts (read prior to this lesson) and explain their theme choices using textual examples.

##### *Independent Activities:*

Students will read Chapter 10 (the last chapter) of *Claudette Colvin* and complete comprehension questions related to the selection. They will then complete a constructed response based on the theme of the text and support their answer with examples from the reading. When they are finished, students will work on their Choice Board activity.

#### Day 5

##### *Opening Activity:*

For the “Do Now,” students will watch a trailer of the film, *The Children’s March* from Teaching Tolerance. As they watch, students will identify the main idea of the film and write a two-sentence summary of the clip.

##### *Mini-Lesson:*

Educator will conduct a review of the terms from the week and students will complete a quiz based on these terms.

##### *Independent Activities:*

Students will view the documentary film, *The Children’s March*. As they watch the film, students will complete a film-viewing guide (found on the *Teaching Tolerance* website). As an Exit Ticket, students will answer the following questions: How are Claudette Colvin and the children involved in the Children’s March similar? What can we learn from both the film and the biography?

#### Day 6

##### *Opening Activity:*

For the “Do Now,” students will watch a clip from a recent Philadelphia School Reform Commission meeting. They will record their reactions to the SRC proposals and then respond to the following: How will these changes affect you in your day-to-day life?

*Mini-Lesson:*

Educator will model how to conduct Internet research using viable websites. Students will complete “Conducting Internet Research” notes handout.

*Independent Activities:*

Students will conduct Internet research on public schools in Philadelphia. They will complete a Philadelphia Public Education Fact Sheet and use their research to create an awareness poster to hang in their neighborhood.

**Bibliography / Resources**

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## Appendices / Standards

*Appendix A – Common Core Standards for English Language Arts: History/Social Studies; English Language Arts: Reading, Literature; English Language Arts: Reading, Informational Text; and English Language Arts: Writing*

These standards are taken from the Common Core State Standards Initiative website:

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.9** Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7** Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8** Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.3** Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1** Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

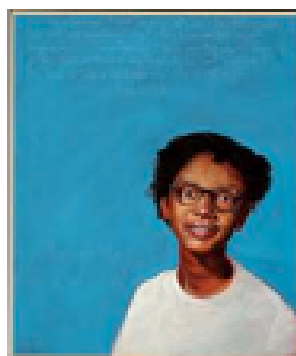
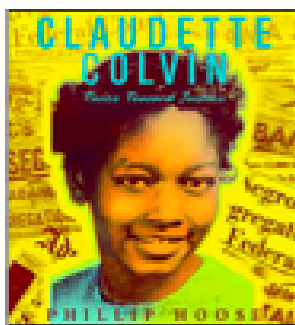


Appendix B – Sample Choice Board for *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*

**Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice Choice Board**

Instructions: Choose three activities from the board below. Your choices must make a straight line and include one activity focused on each of the three topics (character analysis, plot, and figurative language). Each box is worth \_\_\_\_\_ points for a total of \_\_\_\_\_ points for the assignment.

<p><b>Character Analysis</b> Create a Character Web in Inspiration 8 for Claudette Colvin</p>	<p><b>Plot</b> Choose a major scene from the book. Depict its events in a comic created on Comic Life (at least 6 boxes with captions and dialogue).</p>	<p><b>Figurative Language</b> Write a poem with the title, "Don't Step Back". Include at least one example of simile, metaphor, alliteration, and personification.</p>
<p><b>Plot</b> Create a book cover with a synopsis of the book. Include only the major points of the plot in your book, and be sure not to reveal the ending.</p>	<p><b>Figurative Language</b> Write a simile or metaphor to describe one of the events in the book. Use ArtPad to create a graphic representation of your simile/metaphor.</p>	<p><b>Character Analysis</b> Create a Facebook page for Claudette Colvin. Use evidence from the text to create her profile and posts from other figures in the book.</p>
<p><b>Figurative Language</b> Write a blog post to review the text. Use figurative language in your review (you must have at least 3 examples).</p>	<p><b>Character Analysis</b> Write a diary entry from the point of view of Claudette about one of the major events in the book. Use evidence from the text to support Claudette's opinion of the situation.</p>	<p><b>Plot</b> Use the Plot Analysis template on Inspiration 8 to analyze the plot of the novel. Be sure to choose symbols that relate to each event.</p>



# “PATIENCE IS A DIRTY AND NASTY WORD” BY JOHN LEWIS

CREATED BY:  
ERIN BLOOM  
for  
BloomingMinds®

READING  
&  
SOCIAL  
STUDIES

## A Common Core Nonfiction Close Reading & Analysis Guide

- \* Encourages higher order thinking and analytical skills
- \* Cross-Curricular adaptations for Social Studies/Reading classrooms

### INCLUDED IN THIS ITEM:

THE FULL TEXT OF JOHN LEWIS’ “PATIENCE IS A DIRTY AND NASTY WORD” SPEECH

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS FOR INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

VOCABULARY AND RELATED TERMS

CLOSE READING & WRITING ASSIGNMENT

CREATIVE WRITING ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY



\*Foster a greater understanding of complex texts and rhetoric with your students

- \* Perfect for use during Black History Month or in any Black History or American History unit
- \* Easily integrated into any unit throughout the school year

## CLOSE READING & ANALYSIS GUIDE



# “Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word” Speech, p. 1

### TEXT OF THE SPEECH

We march today for jobs and freedom, but we have nothing to be proud of, for hundreds and thousands of our brothers are not here. They have no money for their transportation, for they are receiving starvation wages, or no wages at all. In good conscience, we cannot support wholeheartedly the administration's civil rights bill. There's not one thing in the bill that will protect our people from police brutality.

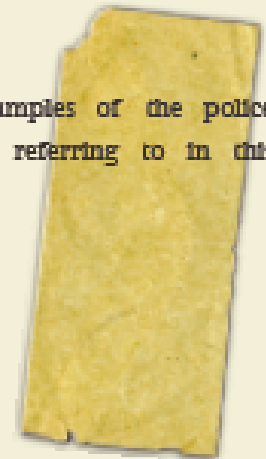
### QUESTIONS & ANALYSIS

1) What is Lewis referring to when he says, “we have nothing to be proud of” in the first paragraph of the speech?

2) What is the meaning of the word “conscience” as it is used in this passage?

3) What was the “administration's civil rights bill?” (HINT: Search 1963 civil rights legislation.)

4) What are some examples of the police brutality that Lewis is referring to in this paragraph?



## CLOSE READING & ANALYSIS GUIDE



# “Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word” Speech, p. 2

### TEXT OF THE SPEECH

This bill will not protect young children and old women from police dogs and fire hoses, for engaging in peaceful demonstrations: This bill will not protect the citizens in Danville, Virginia, who must live in constant fear in a police state. This bill will not protect the hundreds of people who have been arrested on trumped-up charges. What about the three young men in Americus, Georgia, who face the death penalty for engaging in peaceful protest? The voting section of this bill will not help thousands of black citizens who want to vote. It will not help the citizens of Mississippi, of Alabama and Georgia, who are qualified to vote but lack a sixth-grade education. "ONE MAN, ONE VOTE" is the African cry. It is ours, too. It must be ours.

People have been forced to leave their homes because they dared to exercise their right to register to vote. What is there in this bill to ensure the equality of a maid who earns \$5 a week in the home of a family whose income is \$100,000 a year?

### QUESTIONS & ANALYSIS

5) What were the “police dogs” and “fire hoses” used for?

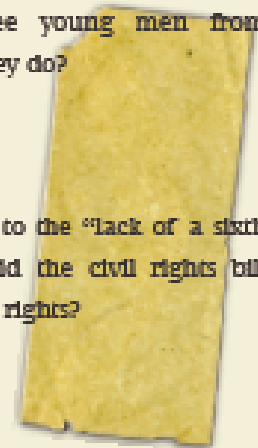
6) What was happening in Danville, VA?

7) What is the meaning of the phrase, “trumped up” as it is used by Lewis?

8) Who are the three young men from Americus, GA? What did they do?

9) Why does Lewis refer to the “lack of a sixth grade education?” What did the civil rights bill stipulate in regards to voting rights?

10) Look up the Literacy rate among African Americans in 1963. Write it here: \_\_\_\_\_





# “Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word” Speech, p. 3

### TEXT OF THE SPEECH

For the first time in one hundred years this nation is being awakened to the fact that segregation is evil and that it must be destroyed in all forms. Your presence today proves that you have been aroused to the point of action. We are now involved in a serious revolution. This nation is still a place of political leaders who build their careers on immoral compromises and ally themselves with open forms of political, economic and social exploitation. What political leader here can stand up and say, “My party is the party of principles?” The party of Kennedy is also the party of Eastland. The party of Javits is also the party of Goldwater. Where is our party?

In some parts of the South we work in the fields from sunup to sundown for \$12 a week. In Albany, Georgia, nine of our leaders have been indicted not by Dixiecrats but by the federal government for peaceful protest. But what did the federal government do when Albany’s deputy sheriff beat attorney C. B. King and left him half dead? What did the federal government do when local police officials kicked and assaulted the pregnant wife of Slater King, and she lost her baby?

It seems to me that the Albany indictment is part of a conspiracy on the part of the federal government and local politicians in the interest of expediency.

### QUESTIONS & ANALYSIS

11) What is the meaning of the reference to the African cry, “One man, one vote?”

12) What is the meaning of the word “ally” as it is used in this paragraph?

13) What does Lewis imply when he asks, “Where is our party?”

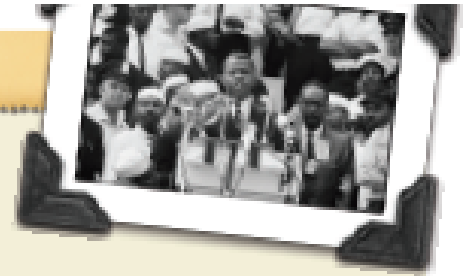
14) Who is C. B. King? What happened in this incident?

15) Who was Slater King? What happened in this incident?

16) What is the meaning of the word “expediency” as it is used in this passage?



## CLOSE READING & ANALYSIS GUIDE



# “Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word” Speech, p. 4

### TEXT OF THE SPEECH

The revolution is at hand, and we must free ourselves of the chains of political and economic slavery. The nonviolent revolution is saying, “We will not wait for the courts to act, for we have been waiting for hundreds of years. We will not wait for the President, the Justice Department, nor Congress, but we will take matters into our own hands and create a source of power, outside of any national structure, that could and would assure us a victory.”

To those who have said, “Be patient and wait,” we must say that “patience” is a dirty and nasty word. We cannot be patient, we do not want to be free gradually. We want our freedom, and we want it now. We cannot depend on any political party, for both the Democrats and the Republicans have betrayed the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence.

We all recognize the fact that if any radical social, political and economic changes are to take place in our society, the people, the masses, must bring them about. In the struggle, we must seek more than civil rights; we must work for the community of love, peace and true brotherhood. Our minds, souls and hearts cannot rest until freedom and justice exist for all people.

### QUESTIONS & ANALYSIS

17) Write the example of a *metaphor* from this paragraph.

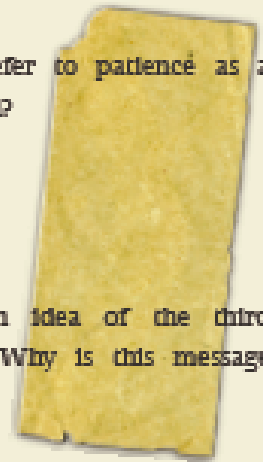
What does this metaphor mean?

18) Write the example of *personification* from this paragraph.

What is the meaning of this example?

19) Why does Lewis refer to patience as a “dirty” and “nasty” word?

20) What is the main idea of the third paragraph on this page? Why is this message integral to the speech?



## CLOSE READING & ANALYSIS GUIDE



# “Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word” Speech, p. 5

### TEXT OF THE SPEECH

The revolution is a serious one. Mr. Kennedy is trying to take the revolution out of the streets and put it into the courts. Listen, Mr. Kennedy. Listen, Mr. Congressman. Listen, fellow citizens. The black masses are on the march for jobs and freedom, and we must say to the politicians that there won't be a "cooling-off" period.

We will not stop. If we do not get meaningful legislation out of this Congress, the time will come when we will not confine our marching to Washington. We will march through the South, through the streets of Jackson, through the streets of Danville, through the streets of Cambridge, through the streets of Birmingham. But we will march with the spirit of love and with the spirit of dignity that we have shown here today.

By the force of our demands, our determination and our numbers, we shall splinter the desegregated South into a thousand pieces and put them back together in the image of God and democracy.

We must say, "Wake up, America. Wake up! For we cannot stop, and we will not be patient."

### QUESTIONS & ANALYSIS

21) What is meant by Lewis' statement: "Mr. Kennedy is trying to take the revolution out of the streets and put it into the courts?"

22) What is the meaning of the metaphor: "We shall splinter the desegregated South and put them back together...?"

23) What is the effect of the "call to action" that Lewis makes at the end of this speech?





## “Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word” Close Reading Writing Response

After reading and analyzing John Lewis’ “Patience is a Dirty and Nasty Word” speech, reflect on your analysis in response to the prompt provided below. Be sure to write in complete, grammatically correct sentences using proper punctuation and evidence from the text.

*What is one word you would use to describe John Lewis’ speech? Provide three examples from the speech and an explanation of each example to support your response.*

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