

# **Southwest Philadelphia: What it was and how we see it today**

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## **Overview**

My purpose in writing this unit is for 11<sup>th</sup> grade students at John Bartram High School to understand the value of learning about the history of their community, analyzing the current status of the community, and processing their observations and reflections. At this juncture in an 11<sup>th</sup> grader's life, she must become familiar with this essential thought: Where have we been and where are we going? Because it is virtually impossible to scrutinize an entity if you are missing the context, this unit emphasizes the value of establishing historical frameworks. In creating such an emphasis, I hope to strengthen a skill that is highlighted in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade American Literature course taught in the School District of Philadelphia.

Through this unit students will gain an understanding of themselves looking through the context of their community. Students will read excerpts from two books: *Row House Days: Tales from a Southwest Philadelphia Neighborhood Childhood* or *Row House Blues: Tales from the Destruction of Philadelphia's largest Catholic Parish* (by Jack Myers). These readings will be paired with personal experiences of adults who grew up in this neighborhood, in order for the students to understand the roots of the neighborhood. We will then analyze poetry by Gwendolyn Brooks and Claude McKay that portrays different members of the African-American community. The following skills will be vital in our poetry analysis: compare/contrast, responding to literature, finding self in the text/making connections to the text, critical thinking skills, and independent research that will lend itself to questioning the credibility of the author.

Students will conclude this unit by writing original poetry about their experiences with the people and places in Southwest Philadelphia. By first reading poems by strong voices of the African-American community, students will be able to understand what make a poem interesting and readable. The Brooks and McKay poems will be used as models, just like would be done with any other exemplary work. The writing of these poems will be scaffolded. Through homework assignments, students will collect observations about their neighborhood and gather primary source data through interviews with family and friends. The observations and interviews will inform their poetry writing.

Students will be highly encouraged to use poetic devices, such as rhyme, alliteration, and similes just like the poets we studied. Students will compile the completed poems into a class book, which will include original photography of the neighborhood and people, taken by the students.

This unit can easily be adapted for other communities across the country. The poems were chosen because they represent the African-American community to which this unit is being taught. An educator should feel comfortable choosing different poets and poems that better reflect the respective student population.

This theme unit will coordinate with the Core Curriculum Planning and Scheduling Timeline issued by the School District of Philadelphia. It will be implemented during April and May.

### **Rationale**

John Bartram High School is a large neighborhood comprehensive school in Southwest Philadelphia. The school was originally built in 1939 due to overcrowding at West Philadelphia High School. It was named in honor of America's first botanist, John Bartram, since his homestead is about one mile from the school. While the school currently has an enrollment of 1,500, it has room for 3,000 students. Given the sheer size of this one city block long school, it has educated many of the neighborhood's teenagers. JBHS, historically and currently, plays an integral role in this ever-changing community.

When one thinks about Southwest Philadelphia, one immediately thinks of the racial divide. During the 1960s, "white flight" was ever-present in this community. During a drive from 60<sup>th</sup> and Elmwood to 67<sup>th</sup> and Elmwood one sees that the two Catholic parishes and schools are still standing. Only one still serves as such. Philadelphia racial unrest did occur in this neighborhood in larger proportions compared to other neighborhoods. In talking to some people who grew up in the community, I learned that members of both races attempted to make the community work, but time and time again it fell victim to societal trends. This community is indicative of what happened in the neighborhoods that comprised large urban centers across the United States particularly in the Northeast and Midwest.

Now in 2009, Southwest Philadelphia is faced with a changing racial composition. There has been a significant migration of West African peoples to Southwest Philadelphia in the past 15 years. There are numerous community organizations, such as West African Refugee Assistance Program (Tamaa), in the area. This influx of newcomers has caused a similar situation in the neighborhood as was created in the 1960s when African-Americans moved into the area. Students will be given time and space to process this change in class at the end of the unit, since we will be moving chronologically.

Psychologically, humans deal with change and fear in one of two ways: fight or flight. Most days, in school, the tension between the African-American and African students is noticeable. These students sit in different areas of classrooms, as well as the

cafeteria. It is rare for these students to associate with each other. On February 6, 2008, the school was placed on lockdown for two hours, because a small fight between an African-American male and two African females turned into a school riot. Packs of students were roaming the halls looking for members of the opposite group. African students were secretly dismissed through the back door, while SWAT team members guarded the area. Students of both groups were arrested. The number of arrests almost hit double digits. The young man who started the fight in the cafeteria was expelled. This riot was the culmination of what is occurring regularly in the neighborhood. Even if individual people do not have problems with each other, they are “riding” with their respective group in order to “save face.”

When we approach the influx of West Africans in Southwest Philadelphia, students will be encouraged to rely on personal experiences, as well as apply the idea of “fight or flight” to the situation. In the 1960s, whites eventually left the neighborhood, but now in 2009, African-Americans are “choosing” to fight. Students will be challenged to think about African-Americans “choosing” to fight in this situation. Is this a choice they are making or is it their only option?

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To introduce this unit, students will first read short excerpts in class from *Row House Days: Tales from a Southwest Philadelphia Neighborhood Childhood* or *Row House Blues: Tales from the Destruction of Philadelphia’s largest Catholic Parish*. Upon review of this book, it seems almost hostile towards the African-American community. In order to ensure that students come to see the educational value of this book, we will broach the idea of “taking offense” and what can be learned from being offended. Students will view Nelly’s music video for his popular song *Tip Drill*. In this video, Nelly bends a female over, while she is shaking, and he slides a credit card down the center of her behind. This video will be the starting point of a conversation about feeling or not feeling offended and what can be learned from these feelings. In order to transfer the lesson and ideas learned by watching the *Tip Drill* video, I will show the students a short slideshow of the evolution of Aunt Jemima. Many students today may not realize that this particular logo changed over time or how and why it changed. I can only hope that a rich conversation develops from looking at these two pieces of popular culture. A barrier we are sure to encounter is if the students don’t understand either pieces are offensive.

Another piece of background that the students must bring to the table for a better understanding of Myers’ books is “white flight.” This 1960s demographic trend is one of the major contributing factors in *Brown v. Board of Education*. It will be important for the students to make an immediate connection between the desegregation of schools and

the white population of America leaving the urban neighborhoods. Myers' books, in combination with information on "white flight" and *Brown v. Board of Education*, will begin to create a holistic picture of Southwest Philadelphia pre-1980s.

Next, students will listen to podcasts created by the teacher that recount the personal experiences of those who grew up in the community. These individuals currently work at John Bartram High School. None of them currently reside in the community. In a class discussion, we will debrief about how these experiences sound similar or dissimilar from what was read in the short excerpts from Jack Myers' books. Students will also contemplate the implications of *Brown v. Board* in regards to the Southwest Philadelphia community. As we continue through the unit, students will simultaneously be completing two major tasks: conducting neighborhood research, through interviews and observations, and analyzing poetry in class.

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During week one of the unit, students will observe the happenings in a local park, as well as on their own block. Towards the end of the week, students will interview older family members to begin grasping what Southwest Philadelphia was like between the setting of Jack Myers' books and their own lives. Students will be instructed to speak to family members that are at least the age of their own parents. These observations and interviews will assist the students in continuing their dissection of Southwest Philadelphia's history. Their first glimpse will be through Myers' books, then through their interviews, and lastly, their own observations. Essentially, it is the hope that these three different means of research will cover three different time periods.

Furthermore, students will take pictures of the community for homework during the following week. These pictures will be used in their final group poetry books. The poetry will focus on the community, so it is only appropriate that their pictures will serve as a visual accompaniment. These three different means of independent research, observations, interviews and photography, will serve as a starting point for the students to write original poems.

As the class embarks upon week three, it will be necessary to have a varied exposure to African-American poetry. This will be accomplished through the reading of the three following poems: Gwendolyn Brooks' *We Real Cool* and *Sadie and Maud* and Claude McKay's *Outcast*.

Since this unit will be implemented at the conclusion of the school year, research and technology will be infused into what could otherwise be a traditional unit without these elements. For each poet studied, students will conduct independent internet research, fill out a graphic organizer on *Inspiration 8* (installed on school-issued MacBooks), and maintain a list of all used websites, in Modern Language Association style. This research will enable the students to learn about the credibility of an author in

relationship to the studied content. For example, students will learn that Gwendolyn Brooks wrote *Bronzeville*, a book of poetry about that particular Chicago neighborhood, and they will also discover that Brooks resided there. Poets are the voice of their own time periods and people. Brooks provided the voice of the African-American people during a tumultuous time in American history.

In “We Real Cool”, students will study the connection between Brooks’ use of rhyme and alliteration to the rhythm of the poem. Then we will evaluate who is “real cool” in this poem. Currently, the 12th police district is one of the most violent in Philadelphia. This area is experiencing a loss of young African-American men at an alarmingly high rate. Brooks’ poem will be the foundation of a conversation about the role of young African-American men in Southwest Philadelphia. Furthermore, we will address several questions: What is Brooks saying about young men in the African-American community? Is this a justified statement? What do you think people thought of these boys when the poem was written? Are there people like this in the Southwest Philadelphia community today? How does the community view these people? Does this help or hurt who they are and what they find their cause to be?

Students then will read “Sadie and Maud”, also by Gwendolyn Brooks. An inspection of who these sisters are will come to the forefront. During the study of this poem, the essential focus will be: Which do you think is preferable for a woman—having two children out of wedlock or getting an education and a good job? Which does society seem to value? Debating this essential question is bound to bring about a lot of emotion from the female and male populations in the room. Southwest Philadelphia is fraught with teenage pregnancy and absentee fathers. The two sisters depicted in this poem are just another example of what is seen in this community.

The last poem that the students will study is Claude McKay’s *Outcast*. McKay was born in Jamaica, and moved to the United States in 1912. Here he attended Tuskegee Instituted, then moved to South Carolina, followed by New York City. His poem *Outcast* indulges the readers on the life of someone, most specifically an immigrant, who is on the outside. Southwest Philadelphia is filled with modern day immigrants from Africa, mostly West Africa. This influx of people has caused another severe schism in the community. In the poem, McKay points out that there is common ground that the African-American community must stand on. He points out Africa. This may or may not apply to the Southwest Philadelphia community today, but it is important to reinforce that there must be something similar between the two groups.

### **Objectives**

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the make-up of their community
- Demonstrate understanding of the history of their community
- Build their reading comprehension and textual analysis skills through reading, discussing, and interpreting
- Increase their note-taking skills by recording observations of the neighborhood
- Analyze three poems through use of BDA strategies

- Evaluate the ways in which poets use poetic devices to further emphasize the poem's purpose
- Utilize the internet to research the biographical background of each poet
- Summarize interviews with family and friends
- Revise peer's poems
- Compose original poems reflecting their community
- Reflect on what they have learned in order to demonstrate understanding

## Strategies

This unit requires the use of a variety of teaching strategies. The most common form of lesson planning used in my classroom is Madeline Hunter's Model of Direct Instruction. This lesson plan includes:

1. objectives
2. standards
3. anticipatory set
4. teaching
  - \* input
  - \* modeling
  - \* check for understanding
5. guided practice/monitoring
6. closure
7. independent practice.

Every lesson should include a clear set of objectives, approximately two to three. The objectives should be constructed around state and/or national standards. Pennsylvania State standards are used in this unit. Next, a teacher should instill an anticipatory set. This portion of the lesson should be at the beginning and be utilized to "hook" the students. In many classrooms nowadays, the anticipatory set is referred to as the "Do Now" or "Warm-up," among other names. A student's attention should be focused during this and his curiosity should be stimulated. The teaching/presentation should follow the anticipatory set. During the teaching, an instructor should present ("input") the information that students will need to learn. A teacher should then model what the final outcome should be, then followed by a check for understanding. Students should then be given time and space to complete guided practice. During this period, teachers should continuously rotate throughout the room to check over what students are doing. A teacher should not linger with any one student for a long period of time. A closure should be implemented to clarify any confusion, as well as to summarize any major points or main ideas that the students should have picked up during the lesson. Lastly, the most important element of this lesson planning method is the independent practice. Students need to have regular reinforcement of the skills learned during class.

Through use of the Madeline Hunter method, this unit infuses traditional teaching methods, such as researching an author's background or using graphic organizers, with progressive teaching methods. Instead of opening a textbook and reading what has been

provided about a particular author, students will utilize the internet to conduct their own research, which will be recorded on an interactive graphic organizer by using *Inspiration 8*. This application is installed on all school-issued MacBooks. Independent internet research is a vital skill to build as we are preparing students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. Teachers should no longer be the purveyors of knowledge, but the facilitator of the knowledge gathering process.

During classroom instruction, teacher and students will participate through the use of a SmartBoard. The teacher can employ the SmartBoard during the establishing background and guided practice portions of class. At the beginning of the unit, I will solicit from the students their ideas about what community is and what Southwest Philadelphia is. Students will individually record their ideas on a graphic organizer on the SmartBoard. Again *Inspiration 8* will be used for this process. In saving these organizers, the teacher can frequently refer back to them throughout the unit, as well as share the ideas of other class sections.

The BDA (Before/During/After) method will be used while the students are analyzing the provided poems. The BDA method encourages students to interact with a text. It is best to prepare them for what they are about to read by researching the author's background, reviewing the poetic devices they will encounter and gather some opinions about the poem's topic/s. A "before" reading activity would also include a "think, pair, share" or a KWL chart, among other things. In order to interact with the poems during the reading of them, students could be asked to do a text rendering, two column notes, or a KWL. An "after" reading activity would include a class reflection discussion, a journal writing, or a think-pair-share.

There are two forms of assessment in this unit: a portfolio and a multimedia project. All portfolios will be completed independently, over the course of the unit, in class. The portfolio includes the following items: poet biographies, two journal entries, "About the Author" graphic organizers, and all versions of original poem. All portfolios will be typed, edited and printed, then presented in a folder to the teacher.

Each class section will compose an original poetry book that depicts the Southwest Philadelphia community. All books will feature the original poem that each student will write illustrating their community. These will be compiled through use of iPhoto, which will allow students to convert their work into a book. Students will insert the photographs that were taken as part of their homework assignments.

## **Classroom Activities**

### *Lesson #1*

- I. Do Now: What is your definition of "community"? What is a community?
- II. Guided Practice: On the SmartBoard, the word "community" is written (using *Inspiration 8*). Students will take turns coming to the SmartBoard, adding a circle to the concept map. We will debrief.

- III. Presentation: Southwest Philadelphia Podcast (2 minute podcast created by teacher)
- IV. Class Discussion: What are the people in this podcast saying about the community in Southwest Philadelphia when they grew up?
- V. Guided Practice: On the SmartBoard, the words “Southwest Philadelphia” is written (using Inspiration 8). Students will take turns coming to the SmartBoard, adding a circle to the concept map.
- VI. Class Discussion: How are their thoughts on the SWP different from your ideas?
- VII. Independent Practice: Complete Venn Diagram (on Inspiration 8), comparing and contrasting SWP, then and now.
- VIII. Homework: Sit in a busy park and describe at least 4 people you see and what they're doing.

### Lesson #2

- I. Do Now: Imagine you are standing on the street at night and a stranger approaches you asking for your wallet and cell phone. What do you do?
- II. Establishing Background: What is “fight or flight?” Why do some people fight? Why do some people take flight?
- III. Independent Reading: Excerpt from Dalton Conley’s *Being Black, Living in the Red* (see appendix for excerpt); while reading, students will text render (underline an interesting word, an interesting phrase and an interesting sentence).
- IV. Classroom Discussion: Students will share the words, phrases and sentences they underlined. Through this discussion, we will define “white flight.”
- V. Independent Reading: *Brown v. Board of Education*
- VI. Independent Practice: Primary Document Analysis
- VII. Exit Slip: Do you think that “white flight” and *Brown v. Board of Education* are relatable ideas? If so, how and why?
- VIII. Homework: Sit in a busy park and describe at least 4 people you see and what they're doing.

### Lesson #3

- I. Do Now: Define end rhyme and alliteration. Provide an original example of each.
- II. Review: Community and community in Southwest Philadelphia, “white flight”
- III. Presentation: Replay SWP podcast. Students will share their Venn Diagrams from yesterday.
- IV. Listen: “We Real Cool” by Gwendolyn Brooks recording (available at: <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15433> and copy of poem in Appendix))
- V. Class Discussion: Who is “real cool”? What do these “real cool” people do? What does the rest of the community think of them?
- VI. Independent Practice: Identify Brooks’ use of alliteration and end rhyme in the poem. Underline all examples of alliteration and circle all examples of end rhyme.
- VII. Homework: Interview your parents.



#### *Lesson #4*

I. Do Now: Sign out a MacBook. Open *Safari*.

II. Guided Reading: “We Real Cool” by Gwendolyn Brooks (read 2 or 3 times). *Ask students to close MacBooks, so they aren’t distracted.*

III. Research: Gwendolyn Brooks

→ Students will use the following websites to collect biographical information about Brooks:

<http://www.notablebiographies.com/Br-Ca/Brooks-Gwendolyn.html>

[http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/a\\_f/brooks/life.htm](http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/a_f/brooks/life.htm)

[http://voices.cla.umn.edu/vg/Bios/entries/brooks\\_gwendolyn.html](http://voices.cla.umn.edu/vg/Bios/entries/brooks_gwendolyn.html)

IV. Independent Practice: In groups of 2, students will complete “About the Author” graphic organizer in *Inspiration 8* using the internet research they conducted. Students should print the graphic organizer and hand into the teacher.

V. Exit Slip: Do you think Brooks’ background affected her writing of “We Real Cool”? Why or why not?

VI. Homework: Interview another older relative.

#### *Lesson #5*

I. Do Now: Sign out a MacBook. Take out this week’s homework assignments.

II. Direct Instruction: Explain to the students that they will need to type the observations they made through their homework, as well as the information gathered from the interviews.

III. Independent Practice: Students will type their observations and interviews. As they finish up, they will be permitted to research pictures on the internet that they would like to use for their podcast. Be prepared to share a 30 second update on your multimedia project.

#### *Lesson #6*

I. Do Now: How does rhyme affect your reading of a poem?

II. Independent Practice: Write a 2-paragraph summary of Brooks’ life, using your group’s graphic organizer from last week. (Students should not write name at the top of the paper.)

III. Peer Editing: Teacher will collect all summaries and redistribute them around the room. Students will use editing checklist (see Appendix) when editing.

IV. Review: Poetic Devices in “We Real Cool” and Brooks’ background

V. Homework: Using a digital camera, take pictures of your community. Be prepared to share a 30 second update on your multimedia project Thursday.

#### *Lesson #7*

I. Do Now: Think back to “We Real Cool,” what do you think the community thinks of the boys in the pool hall?

- II. Class Discussion: Are there boys in Southwest Philadelphia like those in “We Real Cool”? Referring back to your Do Now, what does the community think of those boys? What do you think of those boys? What will those boys become as they get older?
- III. Journal: Respond to the following questions→Are there boys in Southwest Philadelphia like those in “We Real Cool”? Referring back to your Do Now, what does the community think of those boys? What do you think of those boys? What will those boys become as they get older?
- IV. Guided Reading: “Sadie and Maud” (see Appendix)
- V. Class Discussion: Who is Sadie? Who is Maud?
- VI. Homework: Using a digital camera, take pictures of your community. Be prepared to share a 30 second update on your multimedia project Thursday.

### *Lesson #8*

- I. Do Now: Would you consider yourself to be Sadie or Maud? Why?
- II. Class Activity: Distribute one post-it note to each student. This is their ticket to speak during the debate. They may not speak without a post-it note. **Debate**→Go to the right side of the room if you think that it is preferable for a woman to have two children out of wedlock. Go to the left side of the room if you think it is preferable for a woman to get an education and a good job. *Allot 20 minutes for students to debate this issue.*
- III. Journal: Respond to the following questions→Which do you think is preferable for a woman—having two children out of wedlock or getting an education and a good job? Which does society seem to value?  
(from *Making Space: Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice throughout the K-12 Curriculum*)
- IV. Guided Reading: “Sadie and Maud.” While reading, students will underline any poetic devices they notice.
- V. Exit Slip: Which poetic devices did you find in “Sadie and Maud”? Provide two examples of the device.
- VI. Homework: Using a digital camera, take pictures of your community. Be prepared to share a 30 second update on your multimedia project tomorrow.

### *Lesson #9*

- I. Do Now: If you could write a book about your neighborhood, what would you entitle it? Why?
- II. Class Discussion: “Sadie and Maud” is part of a larger publication, *Bronzeville*, by Gwendolyn Brooks. *Bronzeville* is an African-American neighborhood in Chicago. The book of poetry provides different stories about the people of Bronzeville. Given this information, what can we infer about Maud? What is her intent? What happens to her in the end?
- III. Journal: Which lifestyle of the two sisters does the poet appear to validate and admire? Do you agree? In what ways is Sadie a foil to her parents and to her sister?
- IV. Class Activity: Each student will be allotted 30 seconds to update the rest of the class on their project, sharing any necessary conclusions or interesting observations.

IV. Homework: Using a digital camera, take pictures of your community.

### Lesson #10

I. Do Now: Sign out a MacBook. After logging on, open iPhoto. Take out this week's homework assignments.

II. Cooperative Learning: In groups of 2, load pictures onto the MacBooks. You are in groups of two to assist each other. When this is finished, arrange the pictures you took this week, as well as any you found on the internet last week in order on Keynote.

III. Independent Practice: At the end of class, email the Keynote presentation as an attachment to teacher. This is being done to confirm that each student is at the proper step in order to finish the multimedia assignment on time.

### Lesson #11

I. Do Now: Sign out a MacBook. Open Safari.

II. Research: Claude McKay

→ Students will use the following websites to collect biographical information about McKay:

[http://www.english.illinois.edu/Maps/poets/m\\_r/mckay/mckay.htm](http://www.english.illinois.edu/Maps/poets/m_r/mckay/mckay.htm)

<http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/25>

III. Independent Practice: In groups of 2, students will complete "About the Author" graphic organizer in *Inspiration 8* using the internet research they conducted.

IV. Homework: Write a one-page journal reflection on your picture taking experience in the community.

### Lesson #12

I. Do Now: Have you been an outcast? Or an outsider? How did this make you feel?

II. Guided Practice: As a class, complete the K column of a KWL chart. The class will focus on the idea of being an outcast in the K column.

III. Listen: Recording of Claude McKay's *Outcast*.

IV. Guided Practice: While reading, students will collect data referring to the idea of being an outcast in McKay's poem. Then complete a KWL on the SmartBoard together.

V. Independent Practice: Complete L column of KWL chart. Students should focus on what they learned about being an outcast through the perspective of McKay.

VI. Homework: Using your observations, interviews, and photographs, write a poem about a person in your community.

### Lesson #13

I. Do Now: Would you consider anyone you know in your community to be an outsider? (Please leave out all names.)

II. Peer Revision: Put the student number at the top of each poem and make sure that each name is blacked out. Hand each poem to the teacher, who will then randomly redistribute the poems. Students will edit and revise each other's poems.

III. Independent Practice: Each student will write a second draft, then hand into the teacher.

IV. Cooperative Learning: Working as a whole class, students will begin to compile the class poetry book. They will need to load pictures and arrange which poems are going on which page, etc.

#### *Lesson #14*

I. Do Now: Sign out a MacBook.

II. Independent Practice: Each student will type a third draft of original poem. All poems will be emailed to one student, who will be in charge of placing them in the book.

III. Cooperative Learning: Working as a whole class, students will begin to compile the class poetry book. They will need to load pictures and arrange which poems are going on which page, etc.

*Students will be given approximately 4-5 days to complete the class poetry book. Each book will be titled, then after it's complete the teacher has the option to send it via the internet to get printed. This is only a possibility if the class has used iPhoto, which they will be instructed to do.*

#### *Lesson #19*

I. Do Now: Sign out a MacBook.

II. Portfolio Day

1. Revise Poet biographies
2. Type Poet biographies (be sure to include a list of sources)
3. Type two journal entries
4. Print your "About the Author" graphic organizers
5. Type the definitions of the poetic devices studied and provide examples of each from the poems that were read.

III. All portfolio items should be printed and placed in the provided manila folder.

### **Annotated Bibliography/Resources**

Allen, Tom. "Some Basic Lesson Presentation Basics." Humboldt State University.  
<http://www.humboldt.edu/~tha1/hunter-eei.html#direct>.

Allen provides an overview of the seven-step lesson plan. This template is a derivation of Madeline Hunter's ideas. He also explains why it's important to implement every step of this plan.

Avery, E.S, and Nanette. *First Aid For Readers: Help before, during, and after reading*. iUniverse, Inc, October 2007.

This short book provides a comprehensive overview of the "Before, During and After" method implemented in many literacy based classrooms. Avery not only explains

the basis for this method, but also gives her readers concrete strategies to use when employing BDA. *First Aid for Readers* is most helpful, because it lists different reading problems and pairs each with an appropriate intervention. Every teacher, particularly first year teachers, should be constantly referencing this book.

Block, Peter. *Community: The Structure of Belonging*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, September 2009.

Block addresses the idea of fixing the fragmentation in society. He suggests ways to build a community. There are many shifts and transformations that need to occur, in order to rebuild a fragmented community. When referring to community, he not only means neighborhoods, but perhaps places of work, education or worship.

Brooks, Gwendolyn. *Bronzeville*. Amistad, December 2006.

*Bronzeville* is Brooks' poetic depiction of Bronzeville, an African-American neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago. At one time, it was the prominent center of African-Americans in America. The book was first published in 1956 and has been reprinted several times. The book features children and many of the poems are "kid-friendly."

Conley, Dalton. *Being Black, Living in the Red*. University of California Press, June 1999.

Throughout this book, Conley argues that racial inequality occurs in class and property relations. Ultimately, he comes to prove that it is difficult for people to gain a great deal of wealth if their own parents did not have it. He utilizes comprehensive data to strengthen his point. There is also an appropriate infusion of primary sources and direct reference to history that it's almost impossible to miss his point.

Hunter, Madeline. *Mastery Teaching: Increasing Instructional Effectiveness in Elementary and Secondary Schools, Colleges, and Universities* (Madeline Hunter Collection Series). Corwin Press, Updated Edition, April 2004.

Hunter elaborately answers every teacher's question: How do I engage my students? She doesn't recommend putting on a song and dance, but she does provide a rigid outline on how to deliver instruction. One of the best things about this book is that it can be adapted for different grade levels, even college.

Kent, George. *A Life of Gwendolyn Brooks*. University Press of Kentucky, December 1993.

This book is the first full-scale biography of Gwendolyn Brooks. Kent covers until the death of Brooks' mother in 1978. He used a variety of sources to attain information about her, including interviews. Brooks becomes a reader friendly poet, which Kent analyzes.

Mauger, Edward Arthur. *Philadelphia Then and Now*. Thunder Bay Press, November 2008.

*Philadelphia Then and Now* is a powerful photography book because it compares and contrasts old, original pictures, with modern photographs of the same locations. This challenges the viewer to come to terms with the changes in the city that William Penn founded. The book is an appropriate companion to this unit, since throughout it students will be comparing and contrasting the past and present of Southwest Philadelphia.

Myers, Jack. *Row House Days: Tales from a Southwest Philadelphia Neighborhood Childhood*. Infinity Publishing, March 2005.

Myers' text is a fictionalized narrative of growing up in Southwest Philadelphia during the 1950s and 1960s. The main character is Myers, but he renames himself Jim Morris. He also renames locations and other people. For example, the neighborhood of Kingsessing is referred to as King's Cross in the book. While he did not lose the sense of community in the book, his writing greatly lacks style. The vocabulary is overly simple, yet the narrative is confusing to follow. This book should not be considered to be the source on Southwest Philadelphia, but rather as an ancillary that would help students paint a picture of past days in Southwest.

Myers, Jack. *Row House Blues: Tales from the Destruction of Philadelphia's Largest Catholic Parish*. Infinity Publishing, March 2006.

This is the sequel to *Row House Days*. It focuses on the "downfall" of Most Blessed Sacrament Parish in Southwest Philadelphia. At one time MBS was the largest parish in the United States. Its twin towers can be seen from the whole neighborhood. The most noticeable difference between this and the previous book is that there are introductory quotes at the beginning of each chapter. Some of these quotes could be regarded as offensive, and maybe even racist.

"Scaffolding Students' Interactions with Text." Greek Central School District.

<http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ela/6-12/Reading/Reading%20Strategies/reading%20strategies%20index.htm>.

This particular website lays out chart of BDA strategies. The chart addresses when the activity should be completed—before, during or after—then describes it, so the teacher can implement with success.

[Trabaris, Chuck. "Searching for Identity: Claude McKay." Millikin University, 2006. http://faculty.millikin.edu/~rbrooks/MApoetry/studentwork2006/ChuckTrabarisOnClaudeMcKay.html.](http://faculty.millikin.edu/~rbrooks/MApoetry/studentwork2006/ChuckTrabarisOnClaudeMcKay.html)

Trabaris analyzes McKay's *Outcast*. First he historically contextualizes McKay, then analyzes different famous poems, such as *If We Must Die*. Trabaris tells us that

McKay was convinced that despite problems in the African-American community, they still have Africa in common. He stresses for African-Americans to find their own sense of identity.

## **Appendix A**

**Excerpt from *Being Black, Living in the Red* by Dalton Conley**  
(to be used in Lesson #2)

“The issue of segregation is not economically benign. Housing in black neighborhoods has a lower rate of value increase (and in some cases may decrease in worth) when contrasted to similar units in predominantly white neighborhoods. Therefore not only do racially segregated housing markets hinder the efforts of African Americans to become homeowners, but also those individuals who do manage to buy a house may find that it is worth less than a comparable house owned by a white person purely

because it is located in a black neighborhood. In this manner, social psychological realm (of racist ideology) may be directly linked to the economic arena (by determining the relative value of neighborhoods). As Chapter One discussed, property has the quality of picking up the social value conferred upon an object or idea. A rare stamp or a precious metal has no inherent productive value; rather, its value is socially conferred by the market. Likewise, black housing may be worth less because the majority group (whites) controls the market, and thus segregation is in this group's interest. White housing is worth more precisely because it is not black housing.

This dynamic is best illustrated by the process of 'white flight.' White flight usually occurs when the percentage of black residents in a community reaches a certain level (roughly 20 percent) and white homeowners begin to fear that their property values will drop. Why might they drop? Values fall because white flight creates a vacuum in the market—in other words, the anticipation of a market drop in housing prices becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. This pernicious circle sustains racist residential ideology and directly links it to economics in the housing market. The property value/racial segregation dynamic affects the life chances of black Americans in many realms since, as a result of residential segregation patterns, poor minorities are more likely to find themselves living among other poor families (that is, concentrated) than impoverished whites are. Minority families are also more likely to live in areas with abandoned buildings or in units that have multiple inadequacies. In addition, because school budgets are financed through local property taxes, the issue of school quality is tied to the value of property.

The existence of such a dual housing market—a market segregated by race, where African Americans suffer limited housing selections as a result of institutional and overt discrimination—is well documented. Furthermore, some researchers have used U.S. census data to demonstrate that levels of residential segregation have increased in the period since the 1960s, although at least one study claims that residential segregation seems to have peaked in the 1970s and declined slightly since then—with the largest percentage decreases of segregation indices in newer southern and western cities.” (Conley 38-39)

## **Appendix B**

### **PA State Standards for Literacy**

The following Pennsylvania Standards for Literacy (11<sup>th</sup> grade) are addressed within this curriculum unit:

- 1.1.D. Identify, describe, evaluate, and synthesize essential ideas
- 1.1.G. Demonstrate after reading understanding



- 1.3.C. Analyze the effectiveness, in terms of literary quality, of the author's use of literary devices
- 1.3.F. Read and respond to nonfiction and fiction including poetry and drama
- 1.4.A. Write short stories, poems and plays
- 1.6.A. Listen to others
- 1.6.B. Listen to selections of literature
- 1.6.D. Contribute to discussions
- 1.6.F. Use media for learning purposes
- 1.8.A. Select and refine a topic
- 1.8.B. Locate appropriate research materials
- 1.5.B. Write using well-developed, appropriate content
- 1.8.C. Organize, summarize, and present research