

“All of the Same Family” The Fictional Science that Created America

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Overview:

The following unit is constructed for students from 9th to 12th Grade in a Literacy or English program. Through reading poetry and literature, primary and secondary sources, and watching documentaries and movies about slavery and segregation, the students will engage in the process of evaluating the impact of the dominant narrative discourse in the construction of the scientific paradigms that were used to construct institutional racism in the United States. Similarly, students will encounter and analyze alternative African and African-American writers—current and past—who countered the dominant narrative by challenging the erroneous science directly, who cataloged the misuse of science in both fictional and nonfictional texts, or who posited alternative scenarios in speculative fiction to either illustrate possible solutions to our racialized present or to highlight the logical possibilities caused by our ignominious past.

This unit focuses upon the discourse by African-American writers and intellectuals constructed to counter the creation of a racialized hierarchy of humanity by Enlightenment scientists. To justify the enslavement and exploitation of peoples of color, European and American scientists concocted a fiction of racial difference that allowed for experimentation, exhibition, and oppression. By creating a fictional construct of racial difference grounded in scientific theory and method, Enlightenment scientists codified a racial discourse that permitted medical “progress” through human experimentation on African-American bodies—live and dead. In fact, many of the classic texts of science fiction stem from the historical truth of experimentation on African-Americans—enslaved and free. Far from being just factual records of authentic truths, the early “nonfiction” texts are exercises in science fiction. African-Americans existed in a reality defined by the parameters of a science fiction text. Finally, the unit serves to facilitate the student understanding of the methods of resistance and subversion, which created a

narrative to redefine mainstream scientific understanding to incorporate ideas of equality in the face of dehumanization.

Rationale:

Too often in the English classroom in public high schools, teachers emphasize literature in the classroom as necessary to understand for AP Exams or as essential for understanding as part of the canon. Deemed as being of lesser importance and often overlooked in the High School English curriculum are works by African-American writers of science fiction. Although in the past several years I prioritized African-American literature as an integral portion of the curriculum, I neglected works by contemporary writers of science fiction in favor of works that were either historical or realistic fiction or nonfiction. Yet, the shift to the use of genre literature from contemporary African-American writers of science fiction generates a space to speculate upon the alternative possibilities for America on the margins of the American discourse.

Through study of the realistic fiction and non-fiction concerned with slavery and segregation, I was unsatisfied and disappointed with student response to the literature. Although my students demonstrated understanding of the texts, I felt they possessed a lack of imagination when encountering authentic testimony of the past. For example, when studying the *Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass*, my students' attempts to make connections between the text and their own lives degenerated into comparisons of Frederick Douglass's life and their own. The apparent disconnect between Douglass's suffering as an enslaved child witnessing the brutality of plantation slavery and the relative comfortable existence of lower-middle class life in America where the child's comparison is between slave-masters whipping people and having to do homework transcends the farcical into the absurd.

Despite the importance of the material in my mind, I perceived a disconnect between the narratives and the value placed on the subject by my students. To be more specific, I was troubled by their ability to shift easily from the subject matter into more jovial aspects without any transitional time. In other words, I did not see the lesson creating much of an impact and I wanted the curriculum to inspire more of a transformation in thinking. During the Spring of 2015, I attended the Teacher's Institute of Philadelphia where I participated in a class entitled *Aliens and Others: African American [Re]Writing Genre Fiction* with the anticipation that the course would enhance the connection between my students and the content by using the material to provide a context for the students in creating an interrogation of the structures of narration that define our identities and a speculation about the possibilities of a speculation about post-racial or racial alternatives to our contemporary society.

Finally, the unit should be framed in the larger context of the American discourse to create a fiction based in the scientific discourse of our society. By couching prejudice into the faux scientific understanding of the time, the "great" thinkers dehumanized individuals from other cultures. In particular, Africans and African-Americans were defined in a paradigmatic scheme that negated their humanity. Yet, African-Americans

resisted and survived the brutality of slavery through the power of education, determination, mental resistance, and the creation of alternative scientific understandings. As Frederick Douglass recounts in *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, “You have seen how a man was made a slave, now you will see how a slave was made a man” (76). Similarly, the texts of the scientific thinkers sought to dehumanize persons of color; however, through narrations of objection and resistance, African-Americans asserted humanity and posited new future possibilities.

Goals/Objectives:

Although the goals of this unit encompass mastery of a broad spectrum of the National Common Core Standards, my overarching goal resides in the development of a location for my students to recognize how others were able to counter authoritative narratives that seek to dehumanize or silence individuals as they endeavor to participate in the human journey. Especially in a society that reduces education to a compilation of statistics about the human participants, I want to encourage my students in this unit to use their awareness of the struggle of others as the foundation for their own struggles. Without their consent, African-American students are part of a larger societal experiment to determine the impact of educational cuts on educational outcomes. Similarly, the constant desire for more standardized assessments demonstrates less emphasis on the spirit of education and more of the concept that the students are subjects of an experiment. In the spirit of the Common Core, this unit accomplishes the goal of student exposure to intertextual, multidisciplinary study of primary documents, literature, and scientific texts.

Objectives:

SWBAT conduct close readings of poetry by individuals impacted by slavery and segregation in order to identify and analyze literary techniques of narration, poetic techniques—including form, allusion, imagery, and, metaphorical language.

SWBAT cite evidence from literature in order to synthesize material from multiple literary sources into an organizational structure.

SWBAT read historical documents—secondary and primary sources--in order to identify the construction of institutional racism in the scientific community and recognize the alternative voices countering the contemporaneous scientific narrative.

SWBAT research instances of human experimentation and evaluate testimony in order to develop a formal essay about an instance of human experimentation.

SWBAT compose a multimedia project concerning human experimentation in order to present information in a whole group setting.

SWBAT participate in whole group or small group discussion, as speakers and listeners, in order to analyze methods of resistance.

Strategies:

The strategies in this unit are designed to maximize the students' interactions with the texts, to construct their individual responses, to challenge their pre-conceived ideas, and to listen, understand, and possibly contradict their classmates' opinions. To address both the Common Core Standards and the requisites of the content, the students will be encouraged to engage in higher-order thinking skills. Students will be involved in peer-to-peer teaching, Socratic Seminar, close reading of text, small group discussion, and whole group discussion, literature groups, individual research, auditing oral testimony and musical selections, viewing video clips of testimony and video representations of the Holocaust, and a power-point presentation of artwork.

***Classroom Discussion**

***Paragraph Writing**

With this in mind, each class period will open with a constructed response question about the text or about a larger philosophical idea prompted by our discussions of the text and to guide the theme of our class for the day., in which the students will formulate an argument in paragraph form. After creating their responses, the students will discuss the topic with their small group to refine their claims. During the small group discussions, the teacher will circulate in the room to audit and assess the student responses. After the small-group discussions, the teacher will solicit responses in a whole group discussion.

***Socratic Seminar**

***Annotation of Text**

When reading literature in the classroom, the primary strategies will involve close reading and annotation of the text. The poetry will be read orally in the class and then the teacher will facilitate interpretation of the text through soliciting student responses and Socratic Seminar. During the reading of the novels and nonfiction, the students will be expected to conduct independent reading and annotate the literature as they read. Likewise, the students will also be expected to respond to constructed response questions to facilitate understanding and approximate independent analysis of the text.

***Active Listening**

***Active Viewing**

To promote more complete understanding, the students will be shown several video clips containing the testimonies of survivors from the Yale Holocaust Archive, video clips from movies, and oral stories of survivors. Before viewing the testimony, the students should be instructed about how to actively listen to speakers by taking notes, making eye contact with the screen, modeling the thinking process while listening. Also, the teacher should ask for students to provide a summary of what they heard and also provide a space for the students to construct and ask questions about what they have heard. As part of the process, students should also write descriptions of the images and stories that they are seeing.

***Independent Research**

As part of the unit, students will also conduct independent research in the computer lab. The teacher must facilitate development of the skills for formal research, including how to construct research questions, how to evaluate sources, proper citation, the creation of a works cited page, and the formatting of a research paper. Similarly, students will need to be able to construct a five to seven page informational paper about the instance of individual or collective resistance.

***Peer-to-peer Teaching**

As culmination of the unit, students will present their research to their classmates through a multimedia presentation about an exemplar of individual or collective resistance to the authoritative discourse of dehumanization. By presenting their research, the students develop the ability to conduct formal presentations. Likewise, the activity decenters the authority of the classroom away from the teacher to allow the students the opportunity to have ownership over the work they produce. Instead of memorization of facts, the students gain the ability to participate in the process of mastering the content that they are learning.

Texts/Approximate Unit Timeline

Texts	Approximate Unit Timeline	National Common Core Standards
Excerpt from Herodotus <i>Pseudodoxia Epidemica</i> — Thomas Browne	One 90 minute class period.	RL 8.1, 8.3, 8.4 SL 8.1
Excerpt from “The Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano”	One 90 minute class period.	SL 8.2, W8.2 a-d RL 8.1, 8.3, 8.4
Excerpt from Thomas Jefferson: <i>Notes on the State of Virginia</i> —“On the African Race.” Excerpt from “The Declaration of Independence.”	Two 90 minute class periods.	RL 8.1., 8.4, 8.10, 8.5, 8.9 SL 8.1
Benjamin Banneker “Letter to Thomas Jefferson.”	Two 90 minute class periods.	RL 8.1., 8.4, 8.10, 8.5, 8.9

M. T. Anderson <i>The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume I: the Pox Party</i>	Ten 90 minute class period.	RL. 8.1., 8.4, 8.10, 8.5, 8.9 W8.2 a-d
Phillis Wheatley Brief Biography "On Being Brought from Africa to America"	One 90 minute class periods.	RL. 8.1., 8.4, 8.10, 8.5, 8.9
Harriet Washington "Southern Discomfort: Medical Exploitation on the Plantation."	Two 90 minute class periods.	SL 8.2, W8.2 a-d L 8.5
Octavia Butler <i>Kindred</i>	Three 90 minute class period.	RL. 8.1., 8.4, 8.10, 8.5, 8.9 SL 8.2, W8.1 a-d
Paul Lombardo "Eugenics Laws Against Race-Mixing."	One 90 minute class period.	SL 8.2, W8.2 a-d
"Profitable Wonders: Antebellum Medical Experimentation with Slaves and Freedmen."	Two 90 minute class periods	SL8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6 W 8.2 a-d,8.7, 8.9
Ralph Ellison—Chapter 11 <i>Invisible Man</i>	Two 90 minute class periods.	SL 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 W8.1 a-d
Rebecca Skloot--Chapter 27 <i>The Immortal Life of Henrietta Sacks</i>	Two 90 minute class periods.	SL 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 W8.1 a-d
Stephen Jay Gould "The Mismeasure of Man." David L. Kirp "After the Bell Curve."	Two 90 minute class periods.	SL 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 W8.1 a-d
"Space Traders"—Derrick Bell	One 90 minute class period.	SL 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 W8.1 a-d
Approximate Timeline for unit	Approx. 25 90 minute class periods. (Approx. 4 weeks)	

Classroom Activities/Lesson Plans

Activity #1—Defining the other

Text: Herodotus—90 minute period

Procedures:

1. Students will respond to the paragraph response prompt:
Describe a time in which you encountered a new place? A new food? A new culture? Were there any experiences beyond your definition?
2. Allow students the opportunity to discuss the response in small groups.
3. Whole group discussion: a. During the discussion, add the questions, “How do you describe new events in your life?” b. Discuss the idea of cultural comparison.
4. Introduce Herodotus and *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* by Thomas Browne.
5. Close Reading of the text.
5. Ask questions after reading:
 - a. Why do we notice differences between people?
 - b. Do we have a need for categories?
 - c. Why do Herodotus and Browne create such negative descriptions of Africans?
6. Discuss the construction of racial categories under Linneaus.

Text: ‘Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano’-Olaudah Equiano

Procedures:

1. Students will respond to the paragraph response prompt:
Why do individuals allow discrimination and prejudice to occur?
2. Allow students the opportunity to discuss the response in small groups.
3. Whole group discussion: a. Add the question, “How were Europeans different from other ethnic groups in Africa?”
4. Read Excerpt from the “Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano.”
 - a. How does Olaudah Equiano describe the Europeans on the boat?
 - b. Why does he create the imagery of the cannibal?

Activity #2

Categorizing the difference

Text: Thomas Jefferson’s “On the African Race” and excerpts from “The Declaration of Independence ”—90 minute period.

Procedures:

1. Students will respond to the paragraph response prompt:
“Are we all created equal?”
2. Allow students the opportunity to discuss the response in small groups.
3. Whole group discussion.
4. Close reading of the preamble of “The Declaration of Independence.” Socratic Seminar for analysis.
5. Discuss the concept of natural law and natural rights and the difference between human and beast.
 - a. Why does Jefferson emphasize the idea of “self-evident truths?”

Text: “Letter to Thomas Jefferson” from Benjamin Banneker—Two 90 minute class period.

*Students will have read excerpts from “Letter to Thomas Jefferson” before the class.

Procedures:

1. Students will respond to the paragraph response prompt:
“How do you convince somebody of your argument? What methods of rhetoric would you use?”
2. Allow students the opportunity to discuss the response in small groups.
3. Close reading of “Letter to Thomas Jefferson” from Benjamin Banneker.
4. Socratic Seminar to emphasize methods of rhetoric and the scientific proofs of equality used by Banneker.

Activity #3

Conducting the Experiment

Texts: *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation, Volume I: the Pox Party*; Phillis Wheatley “*On being Brought from Africa to America*”; Harriet Washington—“*Southern Discomfort: Medical Exploitation on the Plantation*”—Ten 90 minute class periods.

*Students will have read and annotated chapters from *Octavian Nothing* before each class.

Procedures:

1. Before each class period, students will respond to a paragraph response prompt concerning the previous night’s reading.
Possible Prompts:
 - a. Analyze the purpose of the experiment.
 - b. Why do the experimenters use numbers to refer to each other?
 - c. Power relationships between Octavian’s mother and the college.
 - d. Comparison of Octavian’s early life to Frederick Douglass.
 - e. Is Octavian benefitting from the experiment?
2. Allow students the opportunity to discuss the response in small groups.
3. Whole group discussion.
 - a. Analysis of text through close reading.
 - Importance of the symbolism of Octavian Nothing’s name.
 - Discussion of the experimental nature of Octavian’s life.
 - Analysis of experiment being done on Octavian’s mother.
 - Anthropology as a science of discrimination.
5. Introduce Phyllis Wheatley; Discuss biographical similarities to Octavian’s experience.
6. Small Group Discussion
 - a. Compare Phillis Wheatley’s education to Octavian’s. Discuss possible benefits.
 - b. Read “On Being Brought from Africa to America.” Analyze the text.
 - Discuss the mediating influence of the power structure of white dominance in publishing and reading. Propaganda and use of Wheatley as evidence against slavery
 - Purpose of Wheatley’s poetry. Probable irony in Wheatley’s writing.
7. Read Harriet Washington’s “Southern Discomfort: Medical Exploitation on the Plantation.”

- a. Identify Washington's Thesis.
- b. Compare experiments on the plantation to the experiment on Octavian.
- c. Create a working definition of scientific racism from Washington.
- d. Analyze the behavioral and psychological maladies discussed in "Southern Hospitality."
- e. Apply Harkness Model of discussion. Students should discuss major points, clarify ideas with questions, and provide summative thoughts in a whole group discussion.

Activity #4

All of the Same Family

Texts: *Kindred* by Octavia Butler; "Eugenics Laws Against Race-Mixing" by Paul Lombardo; "The Master and the Mistress" by Eric Foner
—Five 90 minute class periods.

*Students will read and annotate *Kindred* for homework during the course of study.

1. Students will respond to the paragraph response prompt:
Should you have unconditional love for your family members?
2. Allow students the opportunity to discuss the response in small groups.
3. Whole group discussion.
 - a. Analysis of text through close reading.
 - b. Discuss multiple meanings of "Kindred."
 - c. Discuss Thomas Jefferson's multiple families. Read the book review by Eric Foner, "The Master and the Mistress."
 - d. Discuss the concept of cognitive dissonance with the part of masters.
 - e. Textual comparison between *Kindred* and "The Master and the Mistress."
4. Read "Eugenics Laws against Race-Mixing" by Paul Lombardo.
 - a. Discuss the breakdown of scientific paradigms of racial difference in the face of biological desire.
 - b. Morality of survival on the plantation.
5. Discuss concept of hybridity in post-colonial theory and the complexity of the negotiations in Creole culture.

Activity #5

Experimentation: Past, Present, and Future

Text: *Invisible Man*—Two 90 minute class periods.

*Students will have read Chapter 11 of *Invisible Man* for the class.

1. Students will respond to the paragraph response prompt:
How do you define normal?
2. Allow students the opportunity to discuss the response in small groups.
3. Discuss the annotations and questions generated by the students. —Socratic Seminar guided by students.
4. Close reading of the excerpt from *Invisible Man*.
 - a. Focus on the experimental scene. Discuss the distrust in the African-American community with the medical community.
 - b. Analysis questions for discussion:

- What are your expectations when you go to the doctors? Do you trust the doctor to act in your best interest?
- Explain how psychology defines the idea of sanity. Notions of equality as an indication of insanity in Ellison's time.
- 5. View images from the skin experiments at Holmesburg Prison and Eastern State Penitentiary.

Texts: Rebecca Skloot--Chapter 27

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks—Two 90 minute class periods.

*Students will have read the chapter before the class.

1. Students will respond to the paragraph response prompt:
After reading the article about Henrietta Lacks, who owns your DNA.
2. Allow students the opportunity to discuss the response in small groups.
3. Analysis questions:
 - a. How would you respond if you knew a doctor was experimenting on a family member?
 - b. Why should doctors gain consent from their patients for experiments?
 - c. Should Henrietta Lacks' family be compensated?

Texts: Stephen Jay Gould *The Mismeasure of Man*: "Critique of 'The Bell Curve'"; David L. Kirp "After the Bell Curve;" "Space Trader"—Derrick Bell.

*Students should read the text before the class.

1. Students will respond to the paragraph response prompt:
--Are some people naturally smarter than others? Or, more physically fit?
2. Allow students the opportunity to discuss the response in small groups.
3. Close reading of "The Critique of the Bell Curve."
 - a. Show image of a Bell Curve.
 - b. Analysis questions:
 - Explain what a Bell Curve is.
 - Explain the thesis of Charles Murray and "The Bell Curve."
 - Discuss the continuation of scientific racism and the more nuanced continuation of Jefferson's racism.
 - Science Fiction of "The Bell Curve."
4. Close reading of "After the Bell Curve"
 - a. Explain how the new scientific research described by Kirp disproves the racial thesis of 'The Bell Curve.'
 - b. How does poverty relate to education achievement?
5. Close Reading of the "Space Traders"—Derrick Bell.
 - a. Why might the "Space Traders" be attempting to buy the African-American population of the United States?
 - b. How does this story relate to the idea of experimenting on African-American bodies?

Assessment: Capstone Project

1. Guide students through research questions. (See appendix.)
2. Student Presentations of research projects.
3. Read Bill Clinton's apology for the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment.
4. Focus attention on the lines:

The United States government did something that was wrong—deeply, profoundly, morally wrong. It was an outrage to our commitment to integrity and equality for all our citizens. . . . clearly racist.

—President Clinton's apology for the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment to the eight remaining survivors, May 16, 1997

Annotated Bibliography/Resources

Anderson, M.T. *The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Traitor to the Nation,*

Volume I: the Pox Party. New York: Candlewick Press, 2006. Print.

--This novel by M. T Anderson provides an excellent science fiction and historical fiction narrative detailing the experimentation on a teenaged African-American by a group of researchers at a fictional New England college. A National Book Award Winner for Young Adults, the novel captures several important aspects of the development of scientific racism and the use of African-Americans as human subjects in experiments.

Banneker, Benjamin. "Banneker's Letter to Thomas Jefferson." *Africans in America.*

Public Broadcasting Service. Web. 17 April 2015.

--Benjamin Banner's letter serves as a brilliant rebuttal to Thomas Jefferson's arguments about the innate differences between the races. Using clever rhetorical strategies, Banneker debunks the idea of inherited racial differences and emphasizes the cultural barriers to slaves demonstrating intelligence; similarly, Banneker posits the only difference as being that of hue or complexion. A first rate piece of writing, the letter also acts as evidence of the intelligence of African-American writers given an equal education to whites.

Bell, Derrick. "Space Traders." *Dark Matter: A Century of Speculative Fiction from the*

African Diaspora. Ed. by Sheree Thomas. New York: Warner, 2000. Web.

--Derrick Bell's "Space Traders" provides the contiguous logical outcome for the racist narrative of the United States. After developing the theme of African-Americans being trapped in a science fiction narrative through the history and literature of the past, Bell's story summates the facts by speculating what would happen if aliens would offer to purchase the African-American population of the United States.

Browne, Thomas. "Of the Blackness of Negroes." *Pseudodoxia Epidemica. University of Chicago.* 1 May 2015. Web.

--Browne's work is one of the primary documents in the establishment of scientific inquiry. As such, Browne serves as the originator of institutional racism and prejudice in the sciences during the Enlightenment. Many of the stereotypes and conventional prejudices towards African-Americans can be found in this document.

Butler, Octavia. *Kindred*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1979. Print.

--Octavia Butler's *Kindred* provides an excellent example of speculative fiction. Butler examines the problematized nature of African-American ancestry. Despite the fiction created by the scientific establishment asserting the separation of species between African-Americans and whites, Butler records both the biological reality of interracial parentage and the challenges placed upon enslaved women on the plantation.

Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*. New York: Vintage, 1995. Print.

--Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* provides not only a catalog of the experiences of African-Americans, but also genre bends between magical realism, historical fiction, and science fiction. In particular, Ellison provides an example of medical experimentation in Chapter 11 of the book, where the protagonist is located in a mental institution with the doctors conducting psychological experiments on him.

Equiano, Olaudah. "The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or

Gustavus Vassa, the African. Written by Himself." Project Gutenberg. 15

March 2015. Web.

In Olaudah Equiano's narrative, Equiano flips the narrative of anthropological bias by discussing the Europeans who enslaved him with the same prejudicial biases enunciated by mainstream anthropologists.

Foner, Eric. "The Master and the Mistress." *New York Times Book Review*. 3 October

2008. Web. 15 May 2015.

--This article by Eric Foner provides a book review of *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family*. Foner, a distinguished historian, discusses in the review the cognitive dissonance between the master's scientific ideas and their very real behaviors in fathering children by their slaves. Similarly, Foner discusses the use of science to disprove the fictions of white masters in denying the parentage of their children by enslaved mistresses.

Gould, Stephen Jay. "Critique of the Bell Curve." *The Mismeasure of Man*. New York:

Norton, 1996. Web.

Stephen Jay Gould's classic work on the notorious history of anthropological establishment of hierarchical systems of race serves as an excellent resource to understand the long-established tradition in the scientific establishment of attributing intellectual differentiation amongst t

Jefferson, Thomas. "Declaration of Independence." *National Archives*. Web. 23 April 2015.

--By using the well-known assertions of natural law in the "Declaration of Independence," concerning "the self-evident truths" of "all men being created equal," this text allows for both a discussion of the changes in the paradigm concerning notions of human identity and a contrast with Jefferson's obvious statements of inequality in *Notes on the State of Virginia*.

“ .“ "Thomas Jefferson on the African Race." *Notes on the State of Virginia*. Ed. by David Voelker. Avalon Project at Yale Law School. 2006. Web. 15 April 2015.

--This text succinctly expresses and codifies the science fiction of race being developed by Enlightenment thinkers that underpinned the system of racial distinction and segregation in the American narrative.

Kirp, David L. "After the Bell Curve." *New York Times*. 23 July 2006. Web. 17 May 2015.

David Kirp's article provides a synthesis of the arguments surrounding the IQ debate and also relates new research about the impact of poverty on intelligence.

"Phyllis Wheatley." *National Women's History Museum*. Web. 27 May 2015.

--The article provides a brief biography of Phillis Wheatley.

Skloot, Rebecca. *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*. New York: Broadway Books, 2010. Print.

--Rebecca Skloot's *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* recounts the true story of unethical experimentation on the DNA of Henrietta Lacks. As a story, the Henrietta Lacks' narrative provides the motifs inherent in a science fiction narrative—the scientific search for immortality, the mad desire of scientists to progress in scientific knowledge.

Washington, Harriet. *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical*

Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to Present. New

York: Doubleday, 2006. Print.

--Harriet Washington's *Medical Apartheid* provides a meticulously researched catalog of the abuses against African-Americans both free and enslaved by the scientific establishment of the United States. From medical experimentation to human dissection, the medical and scientific establishment used the African-American body as a means to create the scientific "progress" in America.

Wheatley, Phillis. "On Being Brought from Africa to America." *Virginia*

Commonwealth University. Web. 12 April 2015.

--This website provides a copy of the poem with access to annotations of the poem.

Appendix/Standards

National Common Core Standards:

Reading:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.1

Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.3

Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.5

Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.6

Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.7

Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.9

Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.10

By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas,

Speaking and Listening:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1.a

Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1.b

Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1.c

Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1.d

Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.2

Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.3

Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.4

Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.5

Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.6

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.5

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.5.a

Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.5.b

Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.6

Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Writing:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1.a

Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1.b

Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1.c

Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1.d

Establish and maintain a formal style.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.1.e

Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.a

Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and

information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.b

Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.c

Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2.d

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.7

Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.8

Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Capstone Project

Human Experimentation Project

Name _____ Section _____ Date _____

A major concern of science fiction is the dehumanizing nature of the scientific view of humans as possible test subjects for experimentation. By asserting the power of humans to combat disease, to intervene in the natural processes of living, and to conquer the undiscovered land of death, scientists have consistently transgressed the ethical boundaries of experimentation. In particular, our course of study has examined the location of African-Americans in a nightmarish narrative of science fiction. As an assessment of our study, research an example of human experimentation and write a research paper explaining the ethical dimensions of research.



Steps to Success

1. Pick a specific example of human experimentation.
 - a. Research information about that experimentation.
 - b. Decide what is useful information for your presentation.
 - c. Summarize the information in your own words.
 - d. Determine the purpose of the experiments..

2. Write a five-paragraph essay about the experiment.
 - a. Provide a summary of the experiment?
 - b. How did this experiment benefit humanity?
 - c. Explain the ethical problems with the experiment.

3. Create a powerpoint presentation on the human experiment.
 - d. What was the experiment? Who conducted the experiment? How successful was the experiment?
 - e. Were there any ethical problems with the experiment?
 - f. How has this experiment affected our understanding of ourselves?

4. Present the powerpoint.