

You Lookin' For Me?

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Overview:

Primarily, the objective of this 3rd grade to 6th grade curriculum, taught during Black History Month, is to expose students to genres they are not usually acquainted with. Genres that invite Superheroes of color, women superheroes, detective protagonist of color, and maybe Science Fictions stories that celebrate achievements of people of color. The four week curriculum would also engage them in the analysis of the structures of these genres and how to imitate the craft at their pedagogical levels, and last but not least, to extend learning so that students become more critical of the media messages that are put in front of them and explore healthy debates about persuasion, propaganda, cause and effect and other expository opportunities that arise as a result of a holistic genre study.

Rationale:

As a Lower Writing Teacher I have the luxury of exploring genres that are not atypical to my District's curriculum. Given the skeletal planning and scheduling timelines I have found robust activities that broaden my students' concepts of writing. From using T.V. shows and websites to rehearse fundamental skills, to exploring Similes and Metaphors in poetry, I still find the genres limited. There are not enough school-based literature that reflects the lives and interest of people of color. Unless our public system has, by its own browning of color, become "... a means of programming people's worldview" as expressed in Cate G. Woodson's novel. Has the system deliberately minimized the influence of African American in order to continue to foster "oppressive mandates imposed by folks who do not place their children in test and punish

institutions.” (Vilson, 2014). It is a daunting overtaking to teach archaic Black Heroes (as expressed by my students), to teach the same facts about Black History to a new generation smoldering with “an unsettling rage beneath “... a calm exterior” (Vilson, 201) because “... our most disaffected students didn't see themselves in the curriculum and thus have to find their own outside of school. It is for this reason that I would like to develop a curriculum that uses genres of literature, that are not always made available to my student, in order to further their imaginations, as well as, gifting them with literary text that they would not have had prior knowledge of. This luxury, paired with the journal output of my students, moved me to asking how could I create authentic student writing that helps students to personally connect with the genre, while allowing them to propose resolutions to some social conflict since they are brutally aware that “... the world around them [does not] belong to them.” (Vilson, 2014). Furthermore, could the District benefit from such a curriculum and create resources and opportunities to help raise the student voices in our charges? How will this curriculum about self reflection help students to improve their self esteem, confidence, and bravery: How could I motivate my students, who are tired of feeling invisible, to create their own voice and space by using writing as an expression of their collective concerns, angst, and aspirations. To talk about how they feel then give voice to it in genres, which don't necessarily welcome our perspective? Hence, a curriculum dedicated to “writing outside of the box” would certainly raise the consciousness of students and how they value themselves and the ways they are portrayed. Secondly, by exploring human conditions, students will gain empathy for others and create outcomes, via writing, that explores the eradication of social ills through literary plans of action. Finally, students will gain an appreciation of the art form, even among standards that recognize that (...the more a students struggles, is marginalized by mainstream culture, or possesses a damaged learner identity, the more important such activation and preparation for success will be.” (Appleman, Smith and Wilhelm 2010).

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to identify and recount key details in order to determine the main idea of a text.
2. Students will be able to identify the main idea of a text in order to explain how it is supported by key details.
3. Students will be able to identify the 4 types of texts features and examples of each in order to use them to locate information relevant to a given topic.
4. Students will be able to identify what the texts say explicitly in order to demonstrate an understanding of a text.
5. Students will be able to write an informative/explanatory text in order to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

6. Students will be able to explain the point of view of the author in order to craft and structure point of view.
7. Students will be able to recount/retell stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures in order to determine the central message, lesson, or moral.
8. Students will be able to determine the central message, lesson, or moral in order to explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

Key Terms and Definitions

Determine- to conclude or ascertain after reasoning

Explain- to make something clear by describing it in ore details or by revealing relevant facts or ideas

Key Details- important words or phrases Main Idea- what the text is mostly about

Retell- retell

Hyperlink – a highlighted word or image in a document or Website that can be clicked to go to another place in the same or different document or Website

Key Word – a specific word choice in a text that strongly supports the tone, mood or meaning of the text

Locate- to find Search Tools- a tool used to locate information on the Internet (e.g. hyperlink, toolbar, search engine, etc.)

Text Features- a unique characteristic of a text that emphasizes an important idea or detail (e.g., graphic aids, informational aids, organizational aids, and print features

Central Message – most important idea or theme

Convey – to communicate or make known Culture – the behaviors and beliefs, characterizations’ of a particular group of people.

Drama – a play; a prose or verse composition telling a story that is performed by actors

Event – something that happens or happened

Explain – to make something clear by describing it in more detail or by revealing relevant facts or ideas

Fable – a short story, typically with animals as the characters, conveying a moral

Folklore – the traditional beliefs, customs, and stories of a community, passed through the generations by word of mouth

Folktale – an anonymous and timeless story that has been handed down orally over time among a people

Key Details – important word or phrases that support central message, lesson, or moral

Lesson – beneficial new knowledge that can be learned from a text

Moral – the lesson or principle

Myth – a traditional, ancient story, usually, with heroes and gods

Poem – a composition, usually in verse, that may be characterized by a highly developed artistic form and by the use of heightened language and rhythm

Recount - retell

Support – to hold up or serve as a foundation

Standards:

1.2: Reading Informational Text: Students read, understand, and respond to informational text – with emphasis on comprehension, making connections among ideas and between texts with focus on textual evidence.

1.3: Reading Literature: Students read and respond to works of literature – with emphasis on comprehension, making connections among ideas and between texts with focus on textual evidence.

1.4: Writing: Students write for different purposes and audiences. Students write clear and focused text to convey a well-defined perspective and appropriate content.

1.5: Speaking and Listening: Students present appropriately in formal speaking situations, listen critically, and respond intelligently as individuals or in group discussions.

Strategies:

Teacher will introduce each genre by providing background either orally, or via a worksheet on the three genres: Superhero, Detective, and Science Fiction. The teacher will then introduce an objective and a rubric that explains what skill will be measured and how each project will be graded. The teacher will then model the daily activity for the objective, demonstrating thinking aloud, questioning, note taking and asking volunteers for help. All strategies will provide background, assigned an article, excerpt from a book, movie, television show, or other media outlet, as well as mini lessons. Finally, the students will be given a pre and post assessment to measure the content knowledge, literary elements and devices.

Classroom Activities:

Week One

1. What's Your Problem; You Mad or Nah?

Objective: Students will cite textual evidence IOT support inference drawn from the text.

Materials: recent newspaper, magazine, or journal article about poverty and black children, poster sized graphic organizer, wipe off markers, pencils, and papers.

Teacher Modeling: Teacher will distribute the article and ask children to follow along as she read its.

Guided Practice: Teacher will then ask students to reread the article then use a highlighter to underline the 5Ws - who, what, when, where, why, and/or how. The

teacher will then ask students to compare their citations with his/her responses written on the graphic giant graphic organizer.

Cooperative Practice: Students will volunteer additional information.

Independent Practice: Students will then be given the task of using the 5Ws chart on their desks to reflect on the causes, conditions, and consequences of the article.

Extension of Learning (Homework/projects): Students will recall the structure and/or purpose of expository text in their notebooks. Students shall prepare a storyboard; beginning, middle, and end, using the 5Ws chart as brainstorming for a comic strip.

Week Two

2.A Hero Ain't Nuthin But A Sandwich

Objective: Students will describe the relationships between key characters and events in order to analyze how particular line of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

Materials: comic strip crayons, storyboard graphic organizer, pencils, erasers.

Teacher Modeling: Teacher will distribute revisit the expository graphic organizer from previous lesson by highlighting the literary elements necessary to create a story: characters, setting, conflict, and resolution. Students will then be given the I, Superhero worksheet and be asked to follow along as the teacher uses the graphic organizer to transfer information into a realistic fiction scenario using the worksheet.

Guided Practice: Teacher will ask students to complete their worksheets. The Teacher will walk around the room coaching the strategies needed to model the expectations. Reminding students that is should resemble their reflective piece from last with as closely as possible.

Cooperative Practice: Students will pair up and critique their first drafts, using a an narrative rubric.

Independent Practice: Students will then prepare a comic strip using a template from www.traceorman.com

Extension of Learning (Homework/Projects): Students will complete their comic strip for grading.

Week Three

3.I, Superhero

Objective: Students will identify the point of view of characters in order to analyze how differences in point of view of the characters and the audience or reader create such effects as suspense or humor.

Materials: Venn diagram, pencils, paper, wipe off markers, white board.

Teacher Modeling: The teacher will begin by explaining that for today's objective the class will be viewing Will Smith's *Hancock* and *Superman Returns*. The teacher will then discuss the classroom expectations and agreements while viewing movies. The teacher will also demonstrate using the I, Superhero worksheet how, by injecting ourselves and conflicts into a genre, we too assume hero characteristics. Before viewing students will

complete the *I, Superhero* worksheet so they can use it as a guide to monitor their engagement and take notes during the film.

Guided Practice: After the films have been viewed the teacher will then draw a Venn diagram on the board, each circle with the name of one of the viewed films. The Teacher will then place character sketch cards written on 3x5 cards on the board, using tape. The teacher will explain that the class will compare the characters of the film using the following terms: strengths, weakness, physical feature, emotional attributes, point of view, dialogue, view of self, relationship with others, other characters views, motivation.

Cooperative Practice: Students will then be divided into four groups, two will review Hancock and two will review Superman. After 10 minutes a writer will come up and fill out the Venn diagram for their character. After both characters have been reviewed, the students will discuss their findings.

Independent Practice: Students will be then be asked to reflect in their journals about the comparison the cite real life examples of the disparities of people of color verses other races in other mediums.

Extension of Learning (Homework/Projects): Students will then be asked to develop a story where a person of color must overcome a real world obstacle using Science Fiction as the setting.

Week Four

4. Outta This World

Objective: Students will identify the theme or central idea of a text in order to analyze the development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters setting, and plot.

Materials: Tri Fold Board 3-6, Author study worksheets from

<http://www.sanchezclass.com/reading-graphic-organizers.htm>, desktop, laptops, Ipad, Tablet, Smart Board, cell phone, pencil, paper, chapter books (3-6)

Teacher Modeling: The Teacher will ask students to help make a list of their favorite Sci fi Books, Movies, TV shows, etc. The teacher will then display a Tri Fold Author Study for the Teacher Read Aloud. The teacher will direct the students to the major areas: book title and abstract, short biography about the author, theme, settings, characters, plot/conflict and style. The teacher will set the expectation for the project and also clarify definitions, concepts new ideas. The teacher will then set the expectations for the audio books before listening.

Guided Practice: Through out the listening, teacher will stop the book and ask students to infer, and make predictions about the major literacy elements. Students will record their answers on an Author Study Worksheet throughout the whole group listening.

Cooperative Practice: Students Independent Practice: Students will be then be asked to read two books from the genre then come to class prepared to compare and contrast the two.

Extension of Learning (Homework/Projects): Students will create Tri-Fold of their favorite book for grading.

Week Five

5. The Finale

Objective: Students will analyze how a modern work of fiction draws in themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible in order to describe how the materials is rendered new.

Materials: White Board, wipe off markers, 3x5 cards, markers, tape, 4 pre-labeled, brown paper bags.

Teacher Modeling: The Teacher will ask students if they like a good mystery, then explain the game Clue and how it resembles the real life scenarios found in the genre. The teacher will also tell the students that they will be playing the classroom version by listing their name, 1 of four settings (school, home, supermarket, playground), an object they are always losing, and how they located the object on 3x5 cards. The Teacher will place his/her pre-recorded cards in each corresponding bag and distribute four cards to each student.

Guided Practice: After each student has placed a card in the bag, the teacher will ask a volunteer to pull one card from each of the brown bags and tape it face down on the white board.

Cooperative Practice: Students Independent Practice: Students will be then begin drawing the remaining cards sorting them and using the process of elimination to determine the original clues.

Extension of Learning (Homework/Projects): Students will develop the outcome into a story for grading.

Annotated Bibliographies/Works Cited/Resources:

Books For Teachers

This Is Not A Test. Jose Luis Vilson, Haymarket Books 2014
Teaching about the intersections of race, class and American

Driven by Data. A Practical Guide to Improve Instruction. Pamela Bambrick-Santoyo, Jossey Bass 2010.
The use of data driven instruction successfully.

Uncommon Core. Smith, Appleman and Wilhelm. Corwin 2014.
Using the Common Core and aligning standards to improve instruction.

Websites for teachers:

http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/03/07/23poverty_ep.h31.html?tkn=NMNF%2B6eZwZnxnt%2BpKO2pujViJZZ6pr%2BIhln4&print=1

An article of poverty roles in closing educational gaps in schools.

<http://neatoday.org/2015/01/16/shameful-milestone-majority-public-school-students-now-live-poverty/>

Article of the statistics of poverty and its affects on education.

http://teachers.yale.edu/curriculum/viewer/initiative_07.02.06_u

Curriculum unit on detective novels.

<http://www.carolhurst.com/subjects/mysteries.html>

Lesson plans on teaching Mystery Fiction in the classroom.

<http://www.goodreads.com/shelf/show/middle-grade-mystery>

Website on teaching children how to write mystery fiction.

<http://www.fictionteachers.com/fictionclass/mystery.html>

Website on teaching mini-mysters for students.

<http://www.blacksuperhero.com>

Website containing Black Superheroes; contains vlogs, images and history of the superhero.

<http://www.sanchezclass.com/reading-graphic-organizers.htm>

Author studies worksheets

www.sparknotes.com

A brief synopsis of book contents.
Online Software/Applications/Videos for Students:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=blacksuperherodoc.com

Video narrated by Dwayne McDuffie on the reality of the Black Writer in comic books.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=hancock

Sony Pictures Home Entertainment video of Hancock(2008), starring Will Smith

<http://www.hbo.com/the-no-1-ladies-detective-agency#/>

The 2008 Home Box Office video of the series *The #1 Ladies Detective Agency* starring Jill Scott.

http://www.education.com/files/485001_486000/485422/file_485422.pdf

Superhero prompt downloadable worksheet form Education..com's website

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/mystery-cube-30059.html>

Student interactive website used in helping students's ability to summarize information in order to help students synthesize what they have learned.

<http://www.educatorstechnology.com/2013/09/6-good-websites-to-access-kids-free.html>

Educational and Mobile Learning websites that provides links to free audio books for children.

<http://comicbooks.about.com/od/buyingcomics/tp/toptenkids.htm>

Webite providing links to Comic books since they "...are a great way for kids to get interested and excited about reading as well as helping to develop their imaginations."

Articles /Books/Literature:

The Great Cake Mystery: Precious Ramotswe's Very First Case by Alexander McCall-Smith.

A picture book story that introduces Precious and how she decided to become a detective. The audio is narrated by Adjoa Andoh – wonderful!

Nate the Great by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat

"I, Nate the Great" can find no better beginning reader series, especially featuring the watchdog Fang. Series began in 70's, over 20 books.

Encyclopedia Brown, Boy Detective by Donald J. Sobol

Recently reprinted by Puffin, this classic series of a boy helping solve crimes for his police chief father still has the ability to rivet readers.

Judy Moody, Girl Detective (#9) by Megan McDonald

Judy is in a sleuthing mood and snoops until she finds a mystery to solve. References lots of Nancy Drew mystery titles. Fun and typical Judy.

Death Cloud (Sherlock Holmes, the Legend Begins) by Andrew Lane

Tutored by American Amyus Crowe, fourteen-year-old Sherlock has been placed for school break with his strange aunt and uncle in the Hampshire countryside when two unexplained deaths occur. Crowe helps Sherlock develop his powers of observation and detection. Following are *Rebel Fire*, *Black Ice* and, due out in Oct 2013, *Fire Storm*.

The Giver (Giver Quartet, Book 1) by Louis Lowry

A Science Fiction genre detailing life as a society where the past was deliberately forgotten, which would allow the inhabitants to live in a kind of peaceful ignorance. (Sparknotes)

Kindred by Octavia Butler. Doubleday 1979.

A story about a black woman protagonist who time travels and revisits slavery.

Parable of The Sower by Octavia Butler. Four Walls Eight Windows, 1993.

A novel about a female protagonist with a "gift" during anarchy.

Mockingjay, Hunger Games Trilogy by Suzanne Collins

Born out of a fascination with Greek and Roman mythology, this popular book series uses updated gladiatorial games to depict a "fictional dystopia from the Latin phrase "panem et circenses."

The Maze Runner by James Dashner

Boys mysteriously arrive in a maze and must send runners out each day to find food.

Films/Television/Media:

www.dailymotion.com/video/x2bmndg **superman-returns-full-movie**

Superman Returns movie, 2014, starring Brandon Routh.

www.audiobooks.com

website for books on line

<http://www.onlinecollegesanduniversities.net/blog/2011/the-80-greatest-science-fiction-books-for-kids/>

Website promoting Science-fiction as the “... ideal genre for kids of all ages — not the sole domain of [ponderous, provocative philosophical tomes](#) using space as a metaphor for the human condition and psyche.”

Appendix/Content Standards:

Teacher note: There are four types of text features. Not all features will appear in every piece of text. Below is an exhaustive list of text features by category. Once the students have an understanding of the text features listed above, they should be required to use these features to locate key facts or information in the text.

1. Which text features are used by the author? Identify categories and examples.
2. How do the text features help the reader to locate information on the topic?
3. What is a search tool?
4. What search tools are embedded in the website?
5. How do the search tools help the reader to locate information on the topic?

Informational	Graphic	Organizational	Print	Search Tools
Captions	Photographs	Table of Contents	Colored Font	Side Bar
Footnotes	Graphs	Glossary	Font Size	Icon
Number Stacks	Maps	Indices	Italics	Menu
Labels	Diagrams	Unit Titles	Underlining	Address Bar
Transition Words	Sketches	Chapter Titles	Font	Hyperlink
Glossaries	Drawings	Section Titles	Bold Print	Keywords
Glossed Words	Cartoons	Headings and Subheadings		Navigation Links
Pronunciation Keys	Charts and Tables	Titles and Subtitles		Search Engine
Sidebars	Illustrations	Transition Words		Bold Face
End Notes		Footnotes		Subheading
Appendices		Tables		
Works Cited		Bulleted Lists		
Bulleted Lists		Numbered Steps		
Timelines		Materials Lists		
Key				
Introductions and Overviews				
Materials Lists				

GRADING RUBRIC

Date:

Focus (Topic/Theme)(25pts)

Content (the 5 w's/at least one 5 sentence paragraph) (25pts)

Organization/Graphic Organizer (25 pts)

Language Grammar (25 pts)

FINAL SCORE: _____

O = 100 - 89

S = 88 - 75

N = 74 - 0

Comments: _____

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