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Using Literature to Make Social Change: Talking about Race in the Classroom

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

Abstract

English teachers have a unique opportunity to address social questions in their classrooms through literature. Research has linked the study of literature to the development of empathy—a key skill in recognizing and understanding experiences different from our own. The Storytelling Project developed a curriculum which encourages discussions of race. This curriculum defines four story types: Stock stories, Concealed stories, Resistance stories, and Counterstories. Using literature, this paper will discuss each of these story types at length and examine how educators can tie together poetry, fiction, and nonfiction with real social issues. The lesson plans provide a foundation for how an educator might approach such topics. While obstacles do exist in our school districts, our communities, and our classrooms, we must work together to develop plans for overcoming such obstacles. This paper begins exploring these obstacles and recognizes that while many individuals have started to address these issues, we must continue to push the boundaries to excel and improve our system of education.

Keywords: Literature, Social Change, Racism, Education

Tackling Racism in the Classroom

Let's face it—for most of us, talking about racism is uncomfortable. The fear of saying the wrong thing can cause us to speak cautiously, superficially, or not at all. However, just because it's a difficult subject to address, we shouldn't pretend it does not exist. The term colorblind, which researcher Nicole Joseph defines as an approach which tends "to hide, minimalize and overlook serious issues of inequity based on race" (4), constantly comes up when reading about modern-day approaches to race and racism both in and out of the classroom. This approach mirrors the generally shared sentiment among "white Americans in general that [believe] racial discrimination is a thing of the past," that we have tired of "matters of racism" and have developed "a desire to move 'beyond' race" (Roberts 336). Christopher J. Metzler, author of "Barack Obama's Faustian Bargain and the Fight for America's Racial Soul", describes "the typical perspective of a white person in this contemporary racial moment" as a feeling that "racism is a relic of the past; formal equality should be embraced; the United States has done a great deal for Blacks, but they never seem to think it is enough; one must walk on eggshells around Blacks for fear of stating something offensive; race is often used as an excuse by Blacks for their failure; and pretending race does not matter makes race not matter" (Joseph 8). But ignoring racism will not make it disappear and in fact, studies have "shown that being 'colorblind' does not help to meet any of the…goals of reducing racial prejudice or increasing racial understanding" (Flanagan 62). Choosing a colorblind perspective perpetuates the differential treatment and prejudice that black Americans deal with daily—in the classroom as much as in the rest of society.

One thing has become strikingly clear in recent years—race does matter, and we need to talk about it. With movements such as Black Lives Matter, "the contemporarily dominant colorblind ideology is facing serious public scrutiny" (Roberts 5), but we need to take this even

further by involving more people in the conversation. While scholars recognize that "in general there's this idea that education is neutral, that we shouldn't deal with controversial issues" ("Addressing Racism" 25) in the classroom, we need to challenge that assumption. This neutrality stems from two main beliefs: 1) the belief "that ignoring race—adopting a colorblind stance—is the best way to overcome its negative power" (Tolerance.org) and 2) the belief that one does not know how to approach this topic because many "people are still struggling with their own relationship to racism" ("Addressing Racism" 25). As previously stated, choosing to ignore race and racism is not a solution at all, and while teachers may indeed struggle with how to overcome their own implicit biases and develop an approach with which they are comfortable, they can overcome these obstacles. Many individuals, such as Candra Flanagan and Anna Hindley, who discuss addressing implicit bias for educators, have taken vital steps towards developing methods for educators to overcome their own obstacles, and I will discuss these methods further in the Recognizing Obstacles section. Other educators, scholars, and researchers who do not believe in adopting a colorblind approach have worked toward creating school environments "where dialogue about racism and other social injustices are possible" (Roberts 336). To press for neutrality in schools disregards the inherent power of teaching, "and while we know that we cannot rid society of politics, what we can do as educators is link teaching pedagogy to social change" (Joseph 21). Educators cannot pretend neutrality is possible, especially when these social issues have real consequences in our classrooms and schools. Educators must remember that "both our talk and our silence about race have real ramifications for what we do and do not do about racial inequality" (Pollock 26), every step taken matters, but we need to advance even further. Especially in the realm of literature.

Often, researchers, scholars, and educators of history and social studies stand at the forefront of attempts to create democratic sites in schools. Those of us in literature must join in and use the plethora of resources at our disposal to develop a plan for addressing these issues as well. George R. R. Martin once wrote that a "reader lives a thousand lives before he dies. A man who never reads lives only one." While this quote speaks to the reader's ability to live vicariously through a multitude of different characters, something even more critical happens simultaneously—the ability to understand and empathize with the diverse lives of these fictional characters. In a time when the United States has adopted the strict standards present in the Common Core curriculum, which urges educators to move away from literary fiction and adopt, instead, more nonfiction into the curriculum, it has become imperative to prove, beyond all doubt, the importance of all literature—fiction, poetry, nonfiction, etc.—in education and in life. According to Common Core, "by fourth grade, public school students [should] devote half of their reading time in class to historical documents, scientific tracts, maps and other 'informational texts'…[and] 70 percent of the 12th grade curriculum will consist of nonfiction titles" (Mosle). This shift affects the exposure students get to literature and impacts the available opportunities for students to develop critical skills necessary for navigating the world as socially conscious individuals, skills such as empathy.

According to R.H. Fogle and J. Barnouw, empathy is "'a projection of oneself into the other or identification with the other'" (qtd. in Xerri 71). An even more compelling description of empathy comes from Peter F. Schmid who states that "'[e]mpathy bridges the gap between differences, between persons—without removing the gap, without ignoring the differences'" (qtd. in Xerri 71). Without empathy, people struggle to understand experiences outside of their

own—they fail to recognize the context of someone else's life and actions. Reading literature, particularly literary fiction and poetry, has shown to help the development of empathy.

One such study done by researchers David Comer Kidd and Emanuele Castano investigated whether a positive correlation existed between literary fiction and improvement of Theory of Mind, or the "capacity to identify and understand others' subjective states" (377). They argue that ToM "allows [for] successful navigation of complex social relationships and helps to support the empathic responses that maintain them" (377). Their study differentiates between two types of ToM—affective and cognitive. Whereas affective ToM enables individuals to "detect and understand others' emotions", cognitive ToM allows for "inference and representation of others' beliefs and intentions" (377). One important distinction these researchers made was between literary fiction and popular fiction—while literary fiction would "unsettle readers' expectations and challenge their thinking" (377), popular fiction tended "to portray the world and characters as internally consistent and predictable" (378), thereby confirming the readers' previous belief system instead of challenging it. The study revealed a positive correlation between reading literary fiction and improved ToM and confirmed Kidd and Castano's theory that "literary fiction triggers presupposition (a focus on implicit meanings), subjectification [depicting reality 'through the filter of the consciousness of protagonists in the story'(p.25)], and multiple perspectives (perceiving the world simultaneously from different viewpoints)", qualities which "mimic those of ToM" (378). In other words, reading literary fiction required the same mental faculties needed for understanding perspectives different from one's own, a key component of empathy.

While the study done by Kidd and Castano focused mainly on literary fiction, other forms of literature have also shown to develop empathy in readers. Daniel Xerri and Stephanie Xerri

Agius explored the use of poetry in stimulating empathy for immigrants in their students in Malta, a society dealing with mass immigration of peoples from Africa. Relying on the idea that "through the reading of poetry in the classroom, students 'begin to see themselves and others, and themselves through others in a safe environment'" (71), Xerri and Agius hoped to dispel the common negative perspectives of the immigrants expressed by the students at the beginning of the seminar. The students read Caasha's poem, "The Sea Migrations," a poem where the speaker's experiences varied greatly from the students' experiences. This gave the students "'the unique opportunity to enter privileged space and grow in [their] understanding of another's struggles and triumphs'" (71). After reading the selected poem, the students discussed their reactions and revisited their assumptions regarding immigrants in their country. The results showed that "the poem had enabled them to exercise their emphatic understanding by shifting from a position of distrust, fear, and apprehension of immigrants to one of sympathy and compassion" (Xerri 74). This shift and empathic growth support Anthony M. Clohesy's claim that "'empathy can make us more receptive to the transformative power of Aer, which, in return, can make us more empathically attuned to the lives of others'" (qtd. in Xerri 71).

Teachers who expose students to literature continuously attest to its impact on students' empathy. Mike Kalin, an English teacher at Noble and Greenough School in Dedham, Massachusetts, wrote of his own experience with this in his classrooms, saying that "[i]magining life through the eyes of characters helps students understand people whose experiences differ from their own" (Wbur.org). He has found that most of the noticeable development of empathy in his students happens in his English classes rather than his History classes—the course more traditionally focused on controversial topics—and he believes the role of fiction has made that difference. Kalin notes that when students enter "into the minds of even 'unlikeable' characters

[it] helps students consider worldviews they don't share," which he argues is "a skill that is much needed during our current era of intense political polarization" (Wbur.org). Kalin brings up an important subject here—in a world where it seems like everyone must pick one side or another, how can we hope to bridge that gap in a spirit of understanding and compromise? As the study of Kidd and Castano suggests, reading literature seems like a viable solution.

Division exists everywhere—even in education. While some educators believe that schools should remain neutral regarding all things political, other educators urge school involvement in such issues, arguing that students should have the opportunity to explore their own thoughts and opinions about social issues. In a study done on how youth talk about race and racism in schools, Rosemarie A. Roberts, Lee A. Bell, and Brett Murphy found that in "school-based writing and arts programs…which draw on the expressive devices of spoken word and hip-hop, youth can articulate and critique the oppressive and alienating conditions of racism" (Roberts 336). When given the opportunity to openly discuss race and racism, students openly described their own experiences and admitted that the current curriculum in schools "does little to help them affirm concealed stories of their lives and communities" (Roberts 340). This particular study on youth dialogue on race and racism used the STP (Storytelling Project) curriculum, developed by a team at Barnard College, which guided class discussion using "four key interactive concepts: race as a social construction, racism as a system that operates on multiple levels, white supremacy and white privilege as key, although often neglected, aspects of systemic racism, and color blindness as the problematic conflation of race with racism that reinforces inequalities, hierarchies, and racial divisions while insisting that race not matter" (Roberts 337). Although this study used a history teacher and an advisor to guide the instruction, teachers of literature courses can easily implement a similar approach in their classrooms.

The STP curriculum drew on four specific story types: stock stories, concealed stories, resistance stories, and counterstories. Each of these story types provides students a critical insight into studying racism as well as introducing students to reading and critical thinking strategies vital to understanding literature and the world we live in. Stock stories will challenge them to acknowledge mainstream stories, in most cases, the stories students have learned throughout their academic lives; concealed stories allow them to learn about the stories overshadowed by stock stories and ignored by the majority; resistance stories provide a unique opportunity to examine ways of combatting stock stories; and counterstories invite students to contradict stock stories and write a new story representing all voices. Using literature, teachers will leverage resources which have demonstrated a positive development of skills such as empathy—a crucial skill for such sensitive and important topics as race and racism. Using these four story types developed by the STP curriculum, English teachers can address racism in the classroom and constructively guide student discussions, helping them to develop a stronger sense of their identity and how they operate in society in the context of racism. As I discuss each of these story types in more detail, I will provide an example text which highlights the themes relevant to that story type.

The STP curriculum defines stock stories as "those told by the dominant group, passed on through historical and literary documents, and celebrated through public rituals, monuments and media representations" (Bell 8). In other words, the stories students hear repeatedly throughout their academic careers—stories about the American Dream and America as a land of equality and prosperity. Students have expressed a "general dissatisfaction with a curriculum that focuses on stock stories" (Roberts 340) and they begin to lose interest when they discuss the same historical events every year. Yet, these stock stories provide a useful jumping off point for

discussing concealed stories, resistance stories, and counterstories in the class and, in many cases, they can also satisfy the requirements of the Common Core curriculum which calls for a focus on nonfiction texts. Examining "A Chicken for Every Pot"—a political advertisement from the 1928 Hoover campaign—students can identify themes which reflect the American Dream and discuss how this dream, although presented as equally attainable by all Americans, was in fact reserved for specific individuals.

Concealed stories are "told from the perspective of people who are marginalized and often stigmatized by the dominant society" (Roberts 338). While many writers have contributed significant works we can consider concealed stories, Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" provides a concealed story which occurs at one of the most critical points in American history—the birth of racist ideology as a justification for slavery. While the stock story of the time used scientific discoveries, which claimed that black people were, genetically speaking, inferior to white people, Barrett Browning's slave woman narrator directly contradicts this claim. While Barrett Browning did not experience slavery herself, her poem focuses on the slave narrator's humanity and inherent equality with white men and women. Arguably, Barrett Browning's ability to both recognize and document universal humanity, which directly contradicted the generally accepted the subhuman status of blacks, demonstrates the divide of ideologies which has beleaguered racial constructions since their inception. Focusing on her use of the dramatic monologue allows us to recognize her goal for the readers to not only read this concealed story but to experience it as told by the narrator herself.

Resistance stories "relate how people have resisted racism and fought for more equal and inclusive social arrangements" (Roberts 338). These stories encourage discussion about resistance, what it means and how individuals can demonstrate resistance. Many writers from the

civil rights era provide exceptional resources to use for studying resistance stories. Gwendolyn Brooks—a poet who often received praise for her ability to address social issues in a subtle manner which did not overwhelm or dominate the quality of her poetry—wrote many poems involving themes of resistance. While she rejected the idea that her poetry diminished the plight of black Americans, as some critics of her time believed, she continually "brought the urban life of working-class African Americans vividly into poetic history" (Axelrod 106). Brooks's poem, "The Life of Lincoln West" tells the tale of a young boy as he grows up surrounded by racism, both from white individuals as well as his own family. This poem demonstrates the complexity of defining racism as we cannot simply describe it as one race against another, but rather a more complicated concept which transcends the strict group restrictions which races try to implement.

Counterstories are "new stories, deliberately constructed to challenge the stock stories, [to] build on and amplify concealed and resistance stories, and offer ways to interrupt the status quo" (Roberts 338). When discussing counterstories, teachers should invite students to develop their own counterstories "specific to the historical moment in which they find themselves" (Roberts 340). Teachers can discuss the idea of a colorblind society and reinforce how discussing race and racism in the classroom counters this approach. The Hate U Give written by Angie Thomas offers a compelling contemporary example of a counterstory. This novel speaks to the crimes against the black community—the crimes which inspired the Black Lives Matter movement—and urges the world to reconsider the typical response given to these atrocities. This unit's focus on present-day racism and injustice involves exploration of the Black Lives Matters movement. Students should gain a better understanding of what that movement strives to accomplish.

By using stock stories, concealed stories, resistance stories, and counterstories, we can navigate our way from the period of slavery and onset of racism as a social construct all the way to the present where racism persists.

Recognizing the Obstacles

Teachers must overcome a few obstacles prior to discussing race and racism. The first, and arguably the most important obstacle teachers face is their own resistance to discuss any social issues in the classroom—not necessarily because of a lack of desire to approach such topics, but due to the underlying fear of the consequences which they might face for bringing up these topics. In a study conducted by the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Urban Education, researchers interviewed 500 participants composed of both active teachers and teachers who would soon enter the classroom for the first time. When asked about the importance of discussing racial discrimination in the classroom, 85% of the participants agreed that race and racial discrimination were important topics and yet only 30% said they felt comfortable teaching it (Schwartz par. 3). Some of these participants indicated that they did not feel comfortable approaching the topic of race because they did not feel that it fit in well with their subject area, math for instance. However, the community dynamics of where they taught affected whether teachers felt comfortable teaching issues related to race relations far more than subject area concerns. Those less likely to approach the topics of race in their classrooms taught in a predominantly white community or a heavily conservative community and expressed fear of the responses they would receive from their students' parents regarding the subject matter. In contrast, those who taught in areas of greater racial diversity felt more comfortable discussing such topics and did not share the same fear of parental response to such topics in the classroom. Of course, this brings to light another obstacle—the lack of diversity in schools and specialized programs.

Since the time of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), desegregating schools has still not been accomplished. Rulings such as *Milliken v. Bradley* (1974), which "ruled against busing across school district lines to achieve integration between suburban areas and the inner city" (Ely

Jr. 21), severely undermined the desegregation process and as a result, school districts even today remain highly segregated. For those schools who have managed some levels of diversity, a different phenomenon takes place called "'othering', which develops when individuals or groups do not have opportunities to interact with and appreciate people who are different from themselves" (Joseph 16). Because of this separation within schools, discussing race and racism becomes even more difficult as teachers do not want to insult black students by saying the wrong thing and teachers do not want to receive negative feedback from white students for bringing in topics of racism and white privilege. Despite the difficulty, this racial disparity in schools and classes makes the topic even more relevant and even more important. Without this discussion, students miss out on an opportunity to learn about "the perspectives of people who differ from [themselves] in terms of identities, life experiences, and social locations" (Chase 113) and they do not get the chance to challenge racial stereotypes and openly discuss the effects of colorism, which "is defined as an interracial system of inequality based on skin color, hair texture, and facial features that bestows privilege and value on physical attributes that are closer to white" (Joseph 25). Furthermore, "[d]iscussing controversial issues can help students learn to deal with conflict and take on leadership roles and can teach them to clarify and justify their opinions about social and historical events" (Byford 166). These discussions may challenge both students and teachers and they may push us outside of our comfort zones, but ultimately, such discussions will provide an environment for challenging the status quo.

Some teachers simply do not believe that they should discuss race and racial discrimination in the classroom "to avoid discomfort or conflict" (Tolerance.org). And yet, this desire to remain uninvolved reinforces preexisting notions and allows for these ideologies to persist without question. Openly discussing issues such as race and racism with students engages

students in facing the issue in our society and, hopefully, starts generating ideas on how to deal with the issue. However, the idea of using discussion as an instruction method for tackling controversial issues presents another obstacle for teachers “because of school and district policy, the attendant lack of classroom control, or discomfort with students openly discussing and debating the issues at hand” (Byford 166). However, researchers and educators who have started to use the classroom as a space to discuss social issues believe that fostering a safe environment where students can openly discuss social issues grants them the opportunity to reflect on their own opinions and reshape those opinions based on learning how to listen to the experiences of others. In fact, Jeff Byford, Sean Lennon, and William B. Russell III, who led a study which focused on using discussion in social studies classes, “suggested that teaching with discussion and allowing student input improves students' ability to think. The opportunity to express opinions and be heard by others is supported by Ehman's belief that through discussion, students increase their awareness of social, political, and environmental issues” (166).

Educators should not fear open conversation in the classroom so long as students maintain respect for one another and all expressed opinions. These, of course, are learned skills and by establishing guidelines and expectations from the beginning of the module, students can actively participate in the discussions while honing these skills.

Tolerance.org, a website dedicated to providing resources for students and teachers to challenge intolerance, dedicated an entire module to issues of race and racism. They devised five basic practices for approaching lessons on the civil rights movement taught in the classroom. Practice 2 focuses on talking about race and states that “[l]earning works through a process of assimilating new knowledge into existing beliefs about the world.” Students come into the classroom with preexisting notions, influenced by parents, religion, social media, education, and

other social interactions. As educators, we need to acknowledge the existence of these ideologies before we discuss alternative perspectives. Spelman College President Beverly Daniel Tatum advises that if students and teachers do not take the time to acknowledge these preexisting opinions, students will not engage in a conversation on race and racism, thus compromising the quality of the discussion and the ability to retain any information shared in the class (Tolerance.org).

Researcher Baxter Magolda has developed an approach to providing guidance to students which centers on reflective conversation and the development of self-authorship in the student. She defines self-authorship as "the capacity to internally generate beliefs, values, identity, and social relations" (8). She also states that self-authorship "requires transformational learning that helps students 'learn to negotiate and act on [their] own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those [they] have uncritically assimilated from others'" (8). If we think back to the idea of stock stories, we can use that concept to describe the traditional responses of students as stock opinions—opinions which they have heard repeated from others, typically adults in some sort of authoritative position. Because of the tendency for students to "uncritically accept knowledge from authorities…and because many influential people in students' lives are inclined to simply offer such knowledge" (8), students must learn how to reflect on their own values and beliefs and reform them when their opinions shift due to personal experience and growth. Baxter Magolda states that developing self-authorship begins "when students encounter challenges that bring their assumptions into question, have the opportunities to reflect on their assumptions, and are supported in reframing their assumptions into more complex frames of reference" (8). She emphasizes that the key to success in this approach "is encouraging students to make sense of their experience rather than the educator making sense of it for them" (9). We should encourage

this approach when dealing with topics such as race and racism—we need to allow the students to open up about their own opinions, beliefs, and values and through that discussion, provide the support needed to help them organize and understand their thoughts and ultimately, come out with a stronger sense of their position on such issues and the ability to articulate and defend their stance to others. Only then can we truly expect students to fully engage and recognize the importance of tackling such topics.

Defining the Approach

We have already discussed the importance of tackling issues such as race and racism in the class—to challenge the status quo and the colorblind approach in our society and to help students engage in their own education and start developing their ability to self-author their opinions. We have set some preliminary ideas as to how to approach such topics by tackling the four story types as defined by the STP curriculum and by encouraging reflective conversations with students. But there are certainly other steps teachers can take to prepare themselves and their classes for dealing with such issues. Websites such as Tolerance.org offer a plethora of resources for educators of all grades and subjects to use to develop lessons which tackle important social issues. They also provide resources for professional development including workshops, training, webinars, and self-guided learning opportunities which focus on developing different methods of instruction, creating a classroom environment which supports diversity, promoting an inclusive school culture, engaging with families and communities, and providing leadership opportunities for teachers. All these resources can help teachers feel more comfortable and confident in approaching social issues, including race and racism, in their classrooms.

Tolerance.org acknowledges the challenges teachers face and that their concerns "only underscore how important it is to find ways to make the classroom a safe space in which to talk about race and ethnicity." Tolerance.org identifies the following as important elements to keep in mind when teaching about race and racism:

- Acknowledge the importance of race in your students' lives.
- Dispel ideas about a biological basis for race.
- Bone up on the history of race as a social construct and means of control.
- Create a safe environment with clear communication guidelines.
- Identify common roadblocks to productive discussion.

- Recognize the disparities that exist but need not persist.
- Speak from your own experience.
- Create opportunities for students to speak from their own experience.

Two of the most critical pieces to have in place before approaching race and racism with your students requires an established set of guidelines which describe the expectations of the conversation to ensure a secure environment where all stories, opinions, and beliefs should be heard and respected equally and outlining what types of behaviors and comments would be counterproductive and what the consequences might result from such actions. The STP Curriculum advises that this first step is critical to the success of teaching about race and racism and they suggest the following:

- Students know each other by name and have the opportunity to interact with each other in low-risk ways that enable multiple connections and supportive relationships to develop. Every student in the class should be an integral part of this process.
- The class has the opportunity to openly discuss and establish ground rules for their work together. These guidelines should be developed by the group and usually include such things as: how to listen respectfully to one another; speak for oneself and from one's own experience rather than interpret or judge the experiences of others (often defined as "I" statements); being able to express ignorance, show doubt or ask questions without shame or fear of judgment; and creating a way to indicate when one has been hurt or offended by a classmate's statement so that misunderstanding and emotional tensions can be appropriately addressed.

Once this foundation has been set, both the teacher and students should feel comfortable moving forward into the more in-depth conversations surrounding race.

Understanding the premise put forth by Tolerance.org that "[l]earning works through a process of assimilating new knowledge into existing beliefs about the world," we are reminded again about the importance for students to think about the stock stories which they have learned over the course of their lives. Teachers should also engage in this activity and try to uncover what Candra Flanagan and Anna Hindley have termed "implicit bias." Flanagan and Hindley state that despite people's preference to "think of themselves as bias free," having biases "is natural for humans," going all the way back to children learning to "categorize items such as cars, animals, and food, people continue to do it with other people" (62). Biases come naturally, but when these implicit biases start resulting in "preferential treatment for one group or neglect of another group," it's more important than ever to recognize how they function in our lives, so we can minimize their negative impact on those around us. Flanagan and Hindley recommend that teachers explore a collection of tests provided by Project Implicit that help individuals identify any inherent bias they may unconsciously possess. Flanagan and Hindley note that "implicit biases are not fixed…[t]hese biases are malleable and can be changed if addressed intentionally" (62). While many teachers resist the notion that they show bias, it is imperative that they take the time to investigate this not only for developing awareness, but also to relate to their students.

Once teachers have successfully identified any implicit bias affecting their own thoughts and actions, they should examine their own identity and offer a short biography of their racial identity, including significant moments in life when they first became aware of their race and what that meant for them. They should describe how that shaped their life and what benefits and/or disadvantages they faced because of their racial identity. This exercise will provide teachers

the means for introducing their students to the topic of race and it will start establishing a set of guidelines for this discussion.

Teachers need to educate themselves on race and racism not only historically but also how it exists presently, and this will help initiate the conversation centered around race as a social construction and what inequalities exist in society, even today. Flanagan and Hindley suggest that "it is imperative to acknowledge race as a social construct and learn the historical roots of racism" (62). While students will have already learned about the institution of slavery, teachers should explain that this concept of race was created to justify the enslavement of people and justify the deprivation of basic human rights. This discussion provides a great opportunity to examine the stock stories students have learned and their stock opinions regarding slavery, race, and racism.

Application of Theory

The units on resistance stories and counterstories rely on an understanding of W.E.B. DuBois's theory of double consciousness. This theory speaks to black American experience of struggling with two separate identities—one which preserves their blackness and one which attempts to gain approval from white society. Or, as described by Anne Warfield Rawls, "'double consciousness' involves two cultural identities, each corresponding to a different social role, one Black and one White, at war with one another within each individual African American because of the differing significance of those identities within American society" (243). When examining the texts in each unit, we will explore how double consciousness plays a part in the character's lives and their ability to integrate into society.

Background Information for Stock Stories

Before teachers begin the module on Stock Stories, they will need to spend time learning about the key concepts and resources involved in this module to ensure that the lessons provide all the key information students will need to have meaningful discussions and gain a deep appreciation for the topic. The main subjects for this module include:

- Stock Stories
- The American Dream
- The 1928 political advertisement "A Chicken for Every Pot" (See Figure 1)

In this section, we will discuss important information pertaining to each of these subjects; however, we encourage teachers to research additional resources as well.

Stock Story

Stock stories refer to the stories that reflect the majority experience or opinion and ignore or overshadow the voice of the minority—these stories remain staples in textbooks and other resources. Too often these stories skew history to support a more positive outlook on a situation. For instance, when one thinks of America, words such as opportunity, bravery, hope, freedom, equality, innovation, prosperity, and progress come to mind; phrases such as "all men are created equal" and that these men all have equal right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" have shaped our country and its history. Yet, one look at towns like Centreville, Illinois, the poorest town in America with a 96% black American population (DataUSA.io) and a "median household income of $16,715," according to Samuel Stebbins and Michael B. Sauter, quickly dispels the illusion cast by these empty words, proving the power that people grant these words, phrases, and stories simply by believing in them and repeating them time and time again. These stock stories lay the groundwork for examining the other three story types: concealed stories, resistance stories, and counterstories.

American Dream

James Truslow Adams coined the term "American Dream" in 1931 in his book *Epic of America*. While he defined it as "'not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which [Americans] are innately capable, and recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position'" (qtd. in Bush 102), the definition of the American Dream fluctuates with time and changes drastically from person to person. The "they" to which Adams refers in his definition does not exclude any individual and suggests the possibility for success despite "circumstances of birth or position." In other words, any American can hope to attain their own version of the American Dream. Adams's definition of success in the context of the American Dream pertains to an ideal more important than economic success—that of societal acceptance based on personal capability—and while this may still ring true for some Americans, for the majority, the definition of the dream has shifted drastically over the past 88 years. As Melanie E. Bush and Roderick D. Bush note from their study on the modern perspectives of the American Dream, the beliefs "about what this dream entails vary enormously, with associations being made to economic mobility (home ownership, education, wealth, endless opportunity), family and community ties, political notions of freedom, and/or spiritual well-being" (95).

Despite the difficulty in establishing a standard definition for the American Dream, the concept itself is made up of two key components—success, however an individual defines it for their own life, and the ability to attain said success despite social classifications such as race, gender, religion, or class status. For our purposes, we will prove that this concept of the American Dream fulfills the criteria of a stock story because the very components of its definition exclude the voices of minorities. That is to say, social classifications such as race,

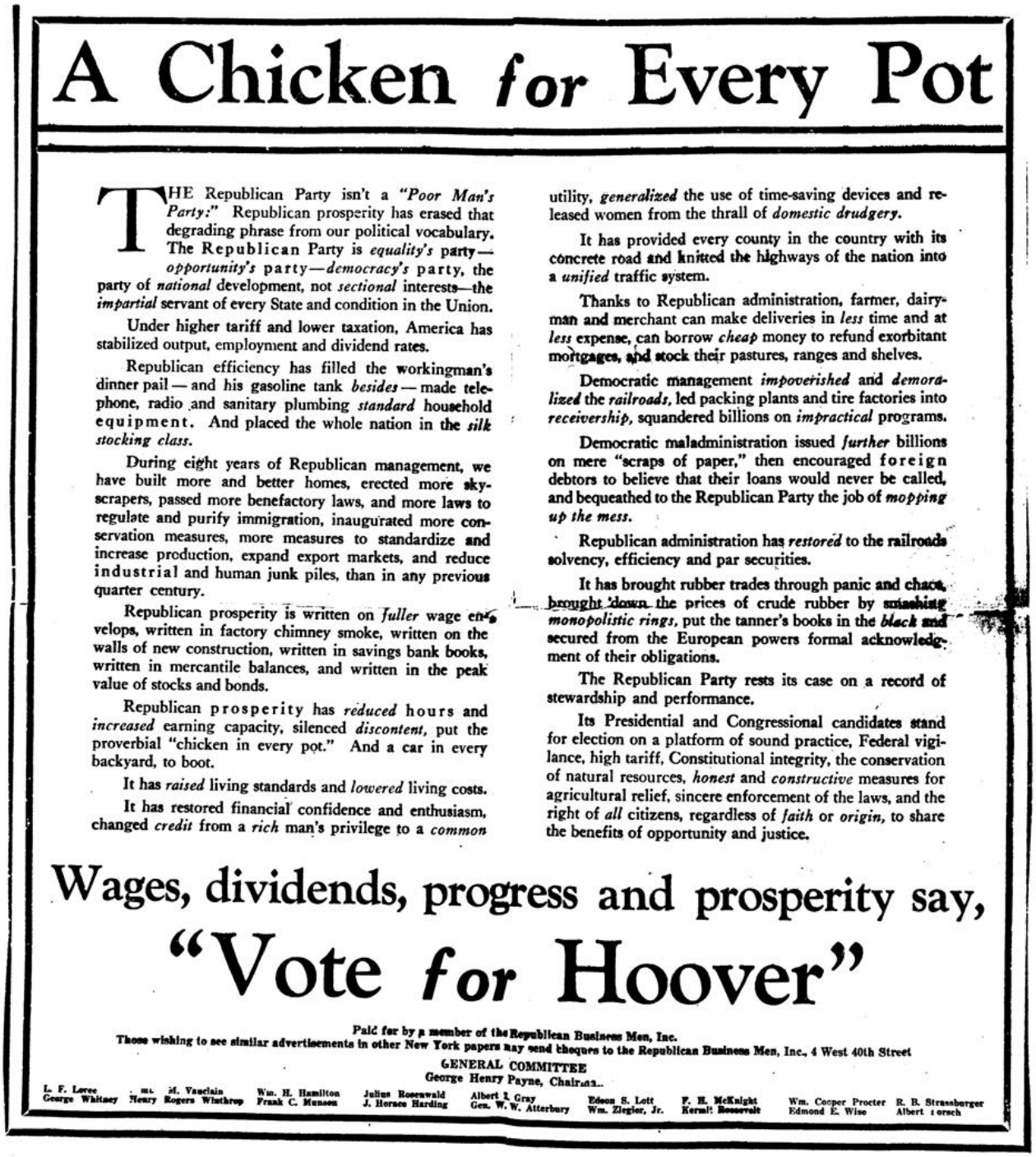
gender, religion, and class status greatly affect whether one can ever hope to achieve their American Dream.

The history of America as a nation impacts this notion of the American Dream greatly, and the "existence of the United States as a 'presumed' white nation for most of its history is of great significance to the maintenance of the story of the American Dream" (Bush and Bush 95). To be white almost serves as a prerequisite to whether someone can go after their American Dream, and this is a direct result of the social and legal structure established at the birth of the nation. When the forefathers composed the Declaration of Independence and passionately argued that "all men are created equal" and that these men are all "endowed…with certain unalienable rights", they were not, in fact, speaking of all men and women. They referred to free white men who owned property. In the same way, the American Dream cannot be equally attained by all American citizens and yet, the notion "that upward mobility is not just possible but limitless provided the rationale to garner loyalty to ideological rules and principles of capitalism and white supremacy" (Bush and Bush 95). But of course, while this white requirement could not be explicitly stated, it gave rise to the notion that "those who succeed are worthy, while those who do not succeed are not worthy or deserving" (Bush and Bush 95). This sentiment pervades our society today as we question why certain populations seem incapable of achieving some sort of financial independence and self-sufficiency.

Black Americans have always been at a disadvantage and while "a brief opening of opportunities following the 'second Reconstruction' during the 1960s" provided "a small percentage…access to the expanded wealth of the nation…most remained firmly at the bottom of the 'well'" (Bush and Bush 92). Trends have not improved greatly since that time and geographical segregation in the United States plays a significant role in ensuring the maintenance

of the status quo. Bush and Bush cite Jill Quadagno who "argues that segregation systematically builds deprivation into the residential structure of Black communities and increases susceptibility of the neighborhoods to spirals of decline" (92). So, while "historian James Truslow Adams [referred] to the American Dream in 1941 as the 'glue that kept the country together'" (Bush and Bush 96), the history of the American Dream has consistently proven itself very selective. While Adams presented this concept as impartial, the evidence indicates otherwise—the ability to attain the American Dream does depend greatly on having access to the resources and opportunities which allow personal success, and these resources and opportunities simply do not exist for most black Americans.

Figure 1. “A Chicken for Every Pot” Political Advertisement, 1928



A Chicken *for* Every Pot

THE Republican Party isn't a *"Poor Man's Party:"* Republican prosperity has erased that degrading phrase from our political vocabulary. The Republican Party is *equality's* party—*opportunity's* party—*democracy's* party, the party of *national* development, not *sectional* interests—the *impartial* servant of every State and condition in the Union.

Under higher tariff and lower taxation, America has stabilized output, employment and dividend rates.

Republican efficiency has filled the workingman's dinner pail — and his gasoline tank *besides* — made telephone, radio and sanitary plumbing *standard* household equipment. And placed the whole nation in the *silk stocking class.*

During eight years of Republican management, we have built more and better homes, erected more skyscrapers, passed more benefactory laws, and more laws to regulate and purify immigration, inaugurated more conservation measures, more measures to standardize and increase production, expand export markets, and reduce industrial and human junk piles, than in any previous quarter century.

Republican prosperity is written on *fuller* wage envelops, written in factory chimney smoke, written on the walls of new construction, written in savings bank books, written in mercantile balances, and written in the peak value of stocks and bonds.

Republican prosperity has *reduced* hours and *increased* earning capacity, silenced *discontent,* put the proverbial "chicken in every pot." And a car in every backyard, to boot.

It has *raised* living standards and *lowered* living costs.

It has restored financial confidence and enthusiasm, changed *credit* from a *rich* man's privilege to a *common* utility, *generalized* the use of time-saving devices and released women from the thrall of *domestic drudgery.*

It has provided every county in the country with its concrete road and knitted the highways of the nation into a *unified* traffic system.

Thanks to Republican administration, farmer, dairyman and merchant can make deliveries in *less* time and at *less* expense, can borrow *cheap* money to refund exorbitant mortgages, and stock their pastures, ranges and shelves.

Democratic management *impoverished* and *demoralized* the *railroads,* led packing plants and tire factories into *receivership,* squandered billions on *impractical* programs.

Democratic maladministration issued *further* billions on mere "scraps of paper," then encouraged foreign debtors to believe that their loans would never be called, and bequeathed to the Republican Party the job of *mopping up the mess.*

Republican administration has *restored* to the railroads solvency, efficiency and par securities.

It has brought rubber trades through panic and chaos, brought down the prices of crude rubber by smashing *monopolistic rings,* put the tanner's books in the *black* and secured from the European powers formal acknowledgment of their obligations.

The Republican Party rests its case on a record of stewardship and performance.

Its Presidential and Congressional candidates stand for election on a platform of sound practice, Federal vigilance, high tariff, Constitutional integrity, the conservation of natural resources, *honest* and *constructive* measures for agricultural relief, sincere enforcement of the laws, and the right of *all* citizens, regardless of *faith* or *origin,* to share the benefits of opportunity and justice.

Wages, dividends, progress and prosperity say,

"Vote *for* Hoover"

Paid for by a member of the Republican Business Men, Inc.
Those wishing to see similar advertisements in other New York papers may send cheques to the Republican Business Men, Inc., 4 West 40th Street

GENERAL COMMITTEE
George Henry Payne, Chairman

L. F. Loree, George Whitney, [illegible] Henry, M. Vauclain, Rogers Winthrop, Wm. H. Hamilton, Frank C. Munson, Julius Rosenwald, J. Horace Harding, Albert J. Gray, Gen. W. W. Atterbury, Edson S. Lott, Wm. Ziegler, Jr., F. H. McKnight, Kermit Roosevelt, Wm. Cooper Procter, Edmond E. Wise, R. B. Strassburger, Albert [illegible]orsch

Although the term "American Dream" was not officially coined until 1931, the idea itself already existed. In a political advertisement in 1928 for candidate Herbert Hoover, the committee promised the American people that by voting for the Republican party, there would be the "proverbial 'chicken in every pot'. And a car in every backyard, to boot" ("A Chicken for Every Pot"). Hoover's campaign promoted a notion of "rugged individualism" and advertised a nation where it would be "the right of all citizens, regardless of faith or origin, to share the benefits of opportunity and justice" ("A Chicken for Every Pot"). The rhetoric used in this campaign advertisement resounds with the ideals of the soon-to-be-named American Dream—an opportunity for all regardless of social classifications. And yet, at the same time, to access this opportunity, Americans must vote for the Republican party. While the right to vote had technically been afforded to black males in the United States in 1870 with the 15th amendment, many states adopted the Jim Crow laws which prohibited blacks from voting based on inability to pay poll taxes, pass literacy tests, or the application of grandfather clauses. It wasn't until 1964 that poll taxes were abolished and 1965 that other discriminatory practices were deemed illegal by the United States government. Thereby, when Hoover's political campaign called for the American vote, it was directed solely to white Americans.

Looking closely at the phrases within the ad itself, they closely resemble some of the ideals promoted by the Progressive movement, which was largely motivated by white, middle-class Americans. A closer look at the advertisement demonstrates the story of a country which has ignored the plight of the minority, specifically the black American. The advertisement claimed that "America has stabilized…employment," and yet, the job market fluctuated volatilely throughout the country for black Americans. Even when the First World War opened job opportunities for black Americans, the return of white soldiers quickly replaced black

Americans in the workforce. There were areas, such as Chicago, with severe rates of unemployment, which would improve temporarily only to diminish with the "wholesale dismissal of black labor by some employers in favor of white labor" (Canaan 153).

Hoover's advertisement claimed that "Republican efficiency has filled the workingman's dinner pail –and his gasoline tank besides—made telephone, radio, and sanitary plumbing standard household equipment. And placed the whole nation in the silk stocking class." Yet, during the 1920s, many black Americans "were having difficulty paying their rents" (Canaan 153), let alone buying telephones and radios. The advertisement also claimed that "Republican prosperity has reduced hours and increased earning capacity" and yet, as Thomas N. Maloney recounts, "blacks were much less likely to hold better-paying skilled jobs, and they were more likely to work for lower-paying companies". Migration from the South to the North inspired by a vision for a better life led many black Americans to experience a different set of obstacles and discrimination. Segregation still existed in the north and "black workers had access to a limited set of jobs and remained heavily concentrated in unskilled laborer positions" (Maloney). So while this political advertisement claimed to have "silenced discontent," it did not take into consideration that black Americans were excluded from labor unions and often times, they "could be worked very intensely and could also be used in particularly unpleasant and dangerous settings, such as the killing and cutting areas of meat packing plants, foundry departments in auto plants, and blast furnaces in steel plants" (Maloney).

This political advertisement claimed that the Republican party "has raised living standards and lowered living costs," and yet, "high costs of living, lack of decent housing, and low wages" (Canaan 153) were all factors which severely increased pressure on organizations established to help the overall conditions for black Americans. Despite the vivid picture this

advertisement has concocted of the American people's wealth and prosperity, despite its claim of putting a "'chicken in every pot'" and achieving what would later be called the American Dream, the reality remained starkly different for black Americans who may not even have owned a pot to put their proverbial chicken should it ever come.

Lessons for Stock Stories

As previously discussed, stock stories are stories maintained by society and retold to support an overarching theme or purpose while often disregarding the voices of those who fall outside of the majority. Focusing on stock stories will allow students to reflect on their preexisting notions about race and racism. For our purposes, we will divide the module on stock stories into seven lessons:

1. Lesson 1: Acknowledge Preexisting Beliefs
2. Lesson 2: Background and definitions/ Self-reflection
3. Lesson 3: Historical significance
4. Lesson 4: The American Stock Story
5. Lesson 5: Critical Analysis and Rhetoric
6. Lesson 6: Make it modern
7. Lesson 7: Final Presentations

Each of these lessons will be broken down and will identify learning outcomes, teacher preparation instructions, materials required, classroom procedures, and additional resources/ actions. This unit's final assessment will require the students to prepare a presentation on a stock story they have researched throughout the unit.

Lesson 1: Acknowledge Preexisting Beliefs

This lesson should allow students to think about their preexisting beliefs surrounding certain concepts relating to the module on race and racism. This lesson will serve as the foundation from which the rest of the module gets built. Teachers should reassure students that there are no right or wrong answers and students should feel free to self-reflect on their own opinions.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to self-reflect on their preexisting beliefs surrounding certain concepts pertaining to race and racism.
- Students should capture these self-reflections for reference later in the module.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Create a handout for students that lists out the terms they will define including Slavery, Race, Racism, American Dream, Oppression, Segregation, and Civil Rights. Provide a section for students to write down examples of each of these terms and their reactions/ opinions to these examples.

Materials Required:

- Handout for students (See Figure 2)

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, remind the class of the guidelines you have created regarding how to approach topics of race and racism.

Once students are ready to begin, hand out the worksheets you have created for this lesson. This part of the lesson will encourage individual work and self-reflection, so allow students to find a place in the classroom where they are comfortable and can work quietly. Ask students to define each of these terms individually:

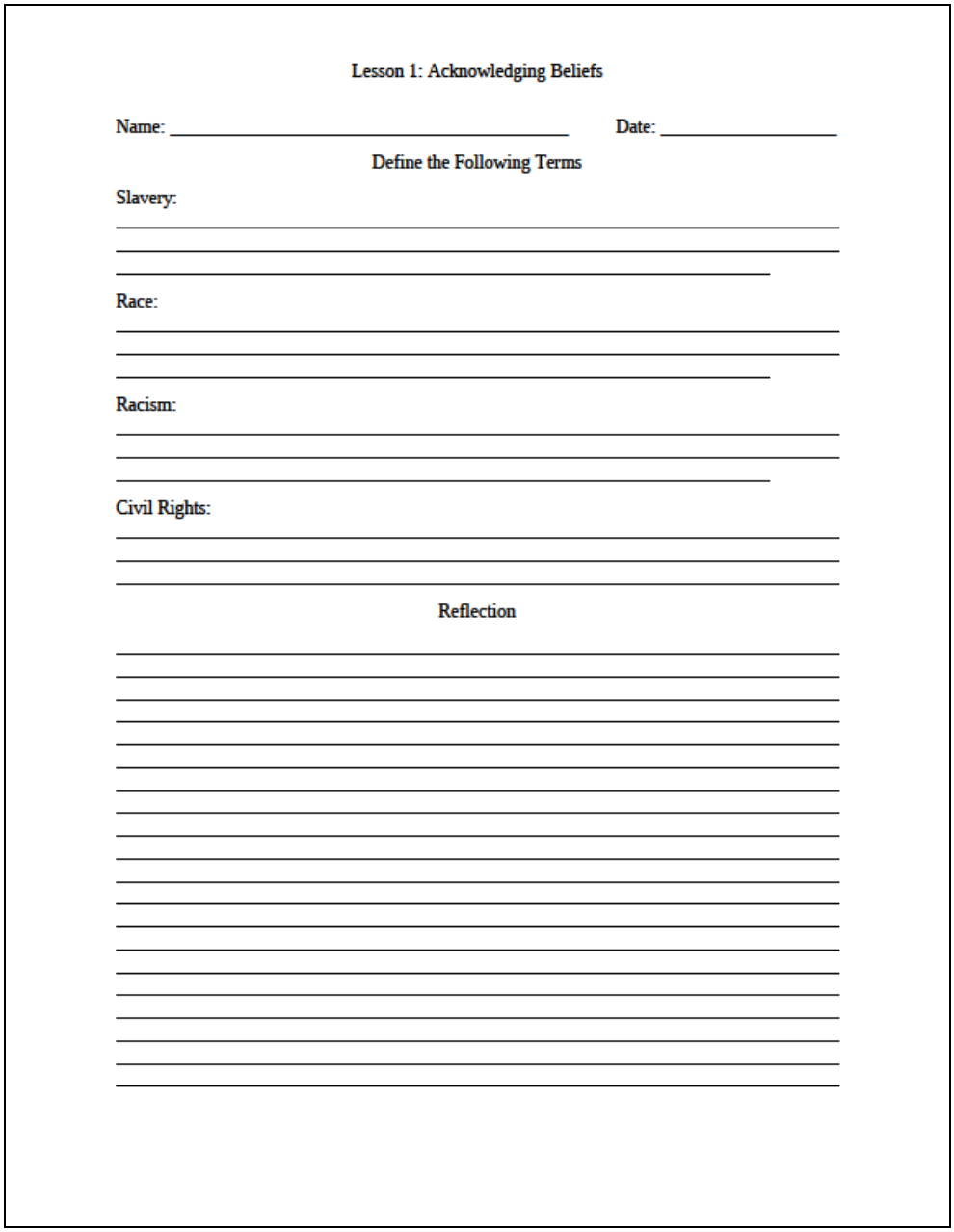
- Slavery
- Race
- Racism
- Oppression
- Segregation
- Civil Rights

As a class, discuss possible definitions of each term and make a list of the definitions created by the class. Keep this definition on a chart or someplace which you can refer to throughout this module. Prompt students to consider the following questions:

- Who or what determines a person's race?

- What are some examples of racism? What does it mean to be colorblind?
- What is oppression? Does it still exist today?
- What is segregation? Can you provide examples of segregation?
- What were the goals of the Civil Rights era? Did they accomplish their goals?

Figure 2. Sample Worksheet



Lesson 1: Acknowledging Beliefs

Name: _____ Date: _____

Define the Following Terms

Slavery:

Race:

Racism:

Civil Rights:

Reflection

Lesson 2: Background and Definitions

This lesson should introduce students to the concept of stock stories. Describe stock stories to the class and provide the example of the American Dream. As a class, create a list of other stock stories relating to slavery, race and racism, and the civil rights era. Students should spend time individually reflecting on their opinions and beliefs relating to these stock stories.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to define a stock story and provide examples.
- Students should be able to examine their opinions relating to stock stories.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Create a handout for students that defines stock stories and provides space for them to write down the examples from class. Provide a space for students to reflect on their opinions of these stock stories and capture their initial reactions and opinions.

Materials Required:

- Handout for students (See Figure 3)
- Marker and whiteboard to capture examples developed by class

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, remind the class of the guidelines you have created regarding how to approach topics of race and racism.

Once students are ready to begin, hand out the worksheets you have created for this lesson. Introduce the concept of stock stories and provide the example of the American Dream for context. Questions to consider:

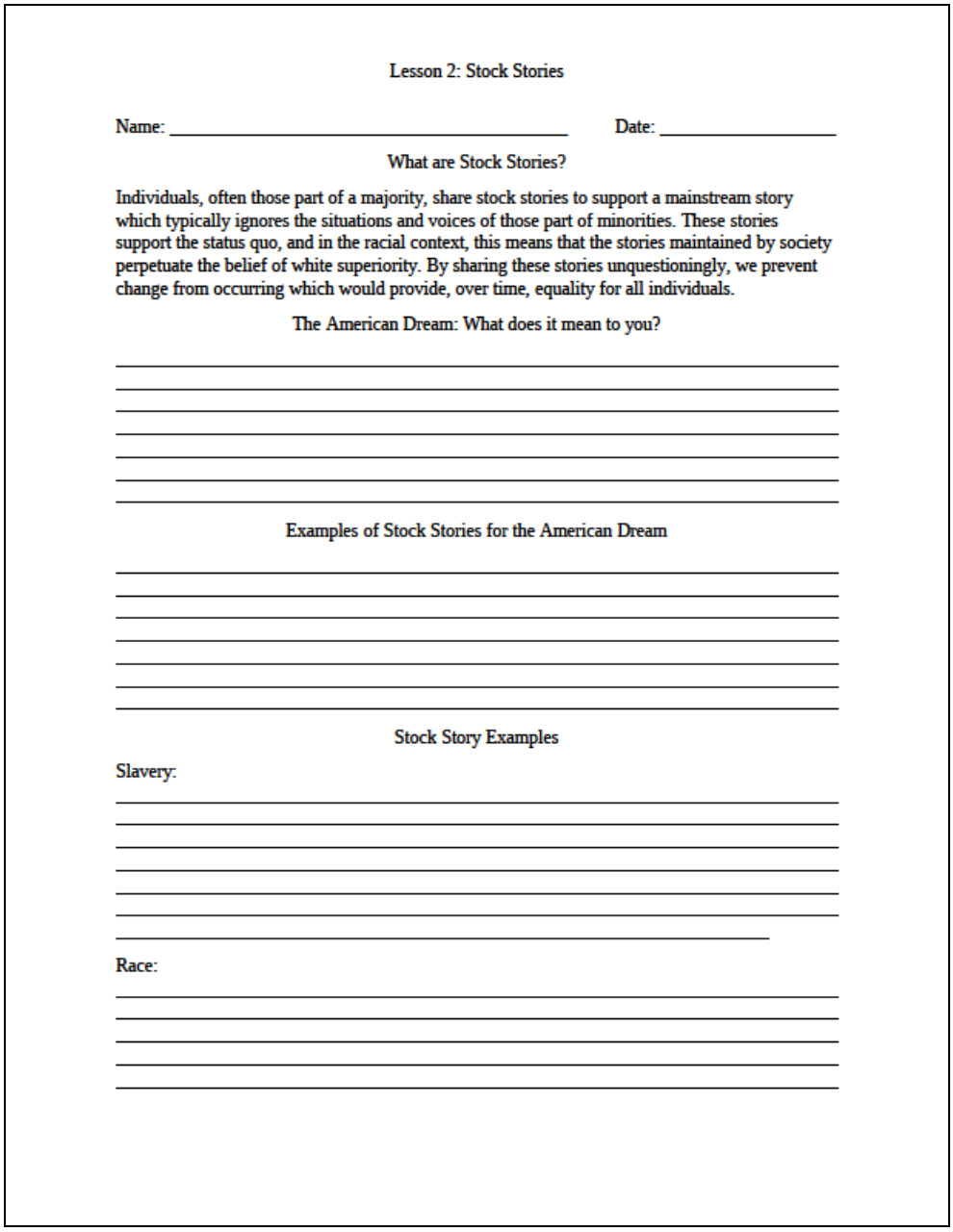
- What is the American Dream? What does the American Dream mean to you?
- How would you define success?
- Is the American Dream achievable by everyone? Why or why not?
- Does race play a role in the American Dream? Does class, gender, social status?

As a class, discuss stock stories relating to the American Dream. Some examples might include:

- The movie “The Blind Side”
- The story of Andrew Carnegie

Homework: Ask students to create a list of different stock stories relating to slavery, race, racism, and civil rights. Write the examples down on the handout provided in class. Students should spend time reflecting on these stock stories and write down their initial reactions and opinions of each example they found.

Figure 3. Sample Worksheet



Lesson 2: Stock Stories

Name: _____ Date: _____

What are Stock Stories?

Individuals, often those part of a majority, share stock stories to support a mainstream story which typically ignores the situations and voices of those part of minorities. These stories support the status quo, and in the racial context, this means that the stories maintained by society perpetuate the belief of white superiority. By sharing these stories unquestioningly, we prevent change from occurring which would provide, over time, equality for all individuals.

The American Dream: What does it mean to you?

Examples of Stock Stories for the American Dream

Stock Story Examples

Slavery:

Race:

Lesson 2: Stock Stories

Racism:

Civil Rights:

Reflection

Lesson 3: Historical Significance

This lesson should engage students in discussing the historical significance of the stock story examples from class and their homework assignment. Teachers should provide the 1928 political advertisement "A Chicken for Every Pot" as an example of a stock story relating to the American Dream. As a class, you should investigate how this stock story helped shape the history of America. Examine how this stock story was delivered and who played an integral role in maintaining the status quo through this story.

Suggested Time: 1-2 class periods

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to describe the historical significance of a stock story.
- Students should be able to investigate the delivery and deliverer of a stock story.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by reviewing the section on "A Chicken for Every Pot" and researching some of the additional resources suggested. If desired, teachers can create a simple handout to capture background information of the advertisement. Teachers should create copies of the advertisement to share with the class.

Materials Required:

- Handout for students with biographical information (if desired)
- PDF of advertisement

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, set the classroom up for group discussion, ideally a circle of chairs, to promote active participation and discussion. Once students are ready to begin, ask the students to define a stock story in their own words and to share some of the examples of stock stories they found. Review the concept of the American Dream together. Pass out the handouts of "A Chicken for Every Pot" and invite each student to read a passage aloud of the advertisement.

Introduce the biographical information you have discovered and tie it into the stock stories discussed relating to the American Dream. Questions to consider:

- How does this advertisement capture the ideals of the American Dream?
- What does this advertisement mean when considering its historical context?
- Does this advertisement fit the criteria of a stock story? Why or why not?
- How does this type of stock story affect the perception of America?

Homework: Ask students to choose one of the stock story examples they came up with for the previous homework assignment and investigate the historical significance of that story. Prompt them to examine how this stock story served to maintain the status quo. They should capture this information somewhere they can refer to later in the module.

Lesson 4: The American Stock Story

This lesson should investigate the concept of the American Dream further, specifically the notion that anyone regardless of race, class, gender, or social status can achieve the American Dream. The activity in this lesson should demonstrate to the students that individuals with access to resources are much more likely to succeed than those who do not have access to the same resources.

Suggested Time: 1-2 class periods

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to identify ways in which the American Dream as a concept is a stock story.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by creating a handout with the questions posed in Lesson 2 regarding the American Dream. Teachers should create index cards with one number per student starting with 1 and going in consecutive order. Teachers should create an outline describing the presentation requirements for the students' final project due at the end of this unit.

Materials Required:

- Drawing paper and colored pencils
- Timer
- Numbered index cards
- Presentation requirements handout

Classroom Procedures:

Before the class begins, set up two desks in the front of the room and assign each desk as odd or even. On desk 1, supply paper and colored pencils. On desk 2, supply scraps of paper and broken pencils. As students arrive, hand them one index card and tell them to stand by the desk corresponding to their number. Once students are standing by their appropriate desks, ask them to complete the following task:

- Using only the materials provided, draw a picture of yourself achieving your version of the American Dream. You cannot share materials between desks and you cannot access or request additional materials. You have two minutes to complete the drawing. Once the time is up, return to your desk. As a class, we will choose the top 3 drawings and those students will win a prize.

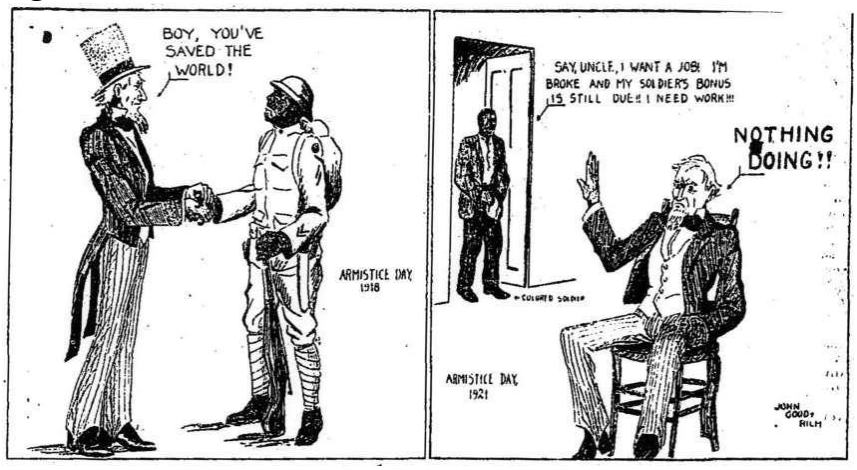
Once the timer has gone off, ask students to return to their desks with their drawings. Ask a few students from desk 1 to stand and share their drawing with the class explaining their American Dream. Ask a few students from desk 2 to stand and share their drawing with the class. Prompt students to consider the following:

- Why did students from desk 2 struggle to complete the task? Was it fair?

- Are those students from desk 2 unworthy of winning the prize? Should they have tried harder?
- What might have helped students from desk 2 accomplish their task?
- What does this activity tell us about the American Dream? How does this relate to the concept of stock stories?

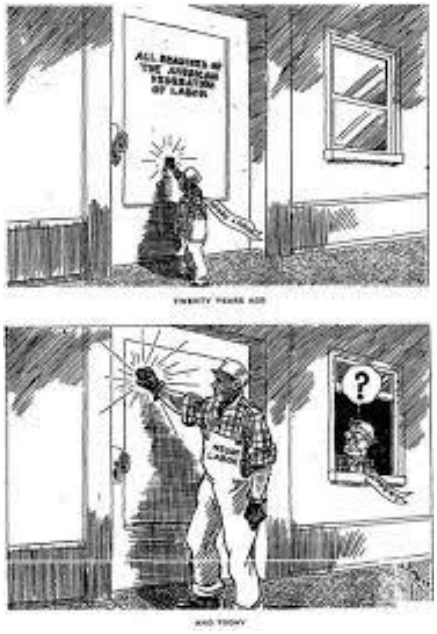
Discuss with students the disparities present in the 1920s between lives of white Americans and black Americans. You can use the following political cartoon (see Figure 4) drawn by African-American political cartoonist, John Good to explore the lack of legislative action and the political cartoon (see Figure 5) drawn by African-American political cartoonist Leslie Rogers to explore the lack of job opportunities ("The Twenties in Political Cartoons").

Figure 4.



By: John Good

Figure 5.



By: Leslie Rogers

Homework: Provide students an outline describing the presentation project due at the end of this unit. Instruct them to start investigating which platform they will use to present their stock story to the class.

Lesson 5: Critical Analysis and Rhetoric

This lesson should exemplify how "A Chicken in Every Pot" serves as a stock story supporting the ideals of the American Dream. This lesson should give students the opportunity to read "A Chicken in Every Pot" analytically and examine the messages and themes of the advertisement. Teachers should introduce key rhetorical strategies of persuasion. Students should analyze the rhetoric and literary devices used in the story which support the overall theme. Students should work together to prepare a response to one of the questions originally posed in Lesson 2.

Suggested Time: 2-3 class periods

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to work individually to read and examine the story.
- Students should be able to work in small groups to provide evidence of rhetoric pertaining to the American Dream.
- Students should be able to address one of the questions originally posed in Lesson 2.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by creating a handout with the questions posed in Lesson 2 regarding the American Dream.

Materials Required:

- Handout

Classroom Procedures:

As a class, briefly review the concepts of stock stories and the American Dream. Revisit the class activity from Lesson 4 and describe the highlights from that discussion. Ask each student to read "A Chicken in Every Pot" individually, keeping in mind the questions posed in Lesson 2:

- What is the American Dream? How can we define it?
- What does the American Dream mean to you?
- Is the American Dream achievable by everyone?
- Does race play a role in the American Dream? Does class, gender, social status?

Students should work together in small groups of 3 or 4 and compose a well-thought out response to one of these questions using examples from the advertisement.

Homework: Students should go through their selected stock story for their final presentation and create a list of questions which will help shape their overall presentation.

Lesson 6: Make it Modern

This lesson should tie everything in together. Revisit the concept of stock stories with students and highlight the example of the American Dream and "A Chicken in Every Pot". Engage students in discussing how this story fulfills the criteria of a stock story. Prompt students to consider whether the idea of the American Dream still exists and whether it has changed over time.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to describe how "A Chicken in Every Pot" fulfills the criteria of a stock story.
- Students should spend time reflecting on whether the stock story of the American Dream still exists and what it means in society today.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by noting the ways in which "A Chicken in Every Pot" fulfills the criteria of a stock story. Teachers should create a list of examples of the American Dream in present-day society and provide examples of how the concept shifts over time.

Materials Required:

- None

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, set the classroom up for group discussion, ideally a circle of chairs, to promote active participation and discussion.

Once students are ready to begin, ask them to define a stock story and identify specific criteria of a stock story. Ask them to identify the ways in which "A Chicken in Every Pot" fulfilled the criteria of stock stories. Questions to consider:

- How does the American Dream ignore or silence the voice of the minority?
- How does "A Chicken in Every Pot" relate to our class activity of drawing our versions of the American Dream?
- What does this prove about the American Dream?

Ask students to consider whether the notion of the American Dream still exists today and in what way. Ask whether it has changed over time. Revisit the questions from Lesson 2 and consider the following questions as well:

- Is the American Dream achievable by everyone?
- Does race play a role in the American Dream? Does class, gender, social status?
- Do people who live in lower-income neighborhoods have the same resources to achieve their American Dreams as middle-class or upper-class neighborhoods?

Teachers should spend time prompting students to tie together all the lessons from this module. Prompt to consider:

- In the beginning of this module, we discussed stock stories, what they are and how they shape history and society. We looked closely at the American Dream and discussed how that exemplified a stock story. Discuss how stock stories perpetuate racism in our society. How has this affected your initial thoughts and opinions of race and racism?

Homework: Students should work on completing their presentations on the stock story they have selected.

Lesson 7: Final Presentations

This lesson should allow students to demonstrate their overall knowledge of stock stories and how they operate in society.

Suggested Time: 5-10 minutes per student

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to present on their selected stock story.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by setting up the classroom with any equipment necessary for the student presentations.

Materials Required:

- Determined by student presentations

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, set the classroom up for the presentations. Advise students that questions should be left for the end of each presentation.

Background Information for Concealed Stories

Before teachers begin the module on Concealed Stories, they will need to spend time learning about the key concepts and resources involved in this module to ensure that the lessons provide all the key information students will need to have meaningful discussions and gain a deep appreciation for the topic. The main subjects for this module include:

- Concealed Stories
- Justification of Slavery
- Race as a Social Construct
- "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point"

In this section, we will discuss important information pertaining to each of these subjects; however, we encourage teachers to research additional resources as well.

Concealed Stories

Concealed stories reveal those ignored and overshadowed perspectives which stock stories disregard. Concealed stories directly address the opinions and beliefs expressed in stock stories and they serve as the other side of the story, the one which often goes unheard.

Justification of Slavery

The history of slavery is deeply complex and while this section should provide critical information, it does not offer the complete history of slavery. This section simply hopes to help teachers and students better articulate and understand slavery and its history in the United States.

Approaching the topic of slavery in the classroom is by far one of the most difficult tasks a teacher will have to accomplish during this module—difficult not only because of the content itself but also because a teacher needs to deconstruct previous knowledge learned on this subject and reconstruct it using more informed resources. Throughout K-12, students' exposure to slavery is superficial and a closer look at textbooks reveals that "recent textbook accounts of slavery have followed a 'master script,' which has not substantially changed over the decades"

(Olwell 460). This "master script" briefly addresses the institution of slavery and instead focuses most of its content on various achievements of iconic African Americans during that time. Those textbooks that do discuss slavery, in general, provide a more positive outlook describing slavery as a capitalistic success for the young nation. From "a survey of textbook accounts of slavery from 1900-1982, Leah Wasburn found that five basic themes predominated, four of which tended to justify slavery. These included a "'neutral presentation of slavery,' 'a justification of the slave system,' 'slavery as a necessary evil,' and 'slavery as a [positive] reflection of conservative values'" (Olwell 460). Although students have knowledge of slavery as part of America's history, this knowledge is skewed and to fully understand race and racism, they will need to have a better understanding of the context from which these concepts arose.

The practice of slavery had been around for centuries before it came to America. Ancient civilizations such as the Egyptians and the Ottoman Empire used slavery both as a source of labor as well as a means for economic advancement. During this time, slavery did not require justification, people simply accepted it as part of the nature of conquest.

William McKee Evans describes the history of slavery and racial construction in America in his article "How the American Racial System Began: Atlantic Slavery Becomes Market-Driven and Color-Defined." He explains the longstanding history of slavery throughout the world where slaves from all over—not only Africa—served mainly as household servants, shop workers, concubines, and even soldiers, and most of them developed a kind of kinship with their masters and could hope for eventual emancipation. What the Old World called "gang slavery" most closely resembles the practice of slavery in America, and these "slaves could not look forward to improving their lot in life; and, unless ransomed, only death brought emancipation" (Evans 14). However, this practice was rare and unusual in the Old World.

Ruth Danenhower Wilson wrote about the shifting justifications of slavery and asserted that Henry of Portugal, better known as Prince Henry the navigator, initially justified slavery, stating that the "chief purpose was to convert the native African to the true faith and secondarily to bring new territory under Portuguese rule" (408). Chiefs of different African tribes voluntarily participated in this trade to dispose of criminals and political offenders. With religious conversion, slaves were promised better treatment and eventual freedom as the focus was to rid the world of pagan beliefs and extend the reach and power of Christianity. However, the justification for slavery at that time was religion and while that justification existed for a while, many variables came into play which shifted this justification from religion to race.

To better understand the development of slavery in America, we must examine the economic factors which influenced this practice. First, the colonies developing in America at that time relied on the products from plantations, such as sugar, tobacco, and cotton, and "stable plantation production of these commodities was not possible without black slaves, who had more resistance to the killer diseases that had devastated the American natives whom they had enslaved during the early decades of the conquest" (Evans 14). Increased free labor could ensure increased production which would produce greater economic growth. With this practice, the personal relationships between master and slave diminished to nothing, and to keep the cost of buying labor, or slaves, as low as possible, a major shift took place, replacing religious education and eventual freedom with coercion and death.

As nations started developing and creating their own governments, the number of slaves from Europe decreased dramatically while at the same time, a new sea route to Africa increased the availability of black slaves. Economic factors came into play as well—the shorter distance from the coast of Guinea to the Americas decreased the cost of travel and increased the rate of

survival of slaves, thereby increasing the potential profit. Black slaves had a higher value in the Americas because the rate at which they survived "the initial 'seasoning period' [was] about three times that of a European" (Evans 19). On the other hand, white slaves were worth more in Europe because of ransom received from families or ransoming organizations which "were Muslim or Christian charitable organizations, which arose from centuries of conflict between Christendom and Islam" (Evans 19). While capitalism dramatically changed the purpose and method of slavery in America, there was also an ideological shift as well which resulted in the new justification based on race instead of religion.

As Christianity's dominance started to diminish, different sects of Christianity began to surface which severely fractured the power and influence of the church, thereby diminishing the call for converting all people, including slaves. At this point, the slave trade became vulnerable because of its dependence on free workers to continue the day-to-day operations of the trade. With the religious shift came a severe decrease in the Christians available to work and continue the slave trade. To keep slavery operating, those in charge of the trade had to widen their pool of available workers and adopt a new doctrine "that no white man, regardless of his religious beliefs, or his lack of beliefs, could be a slave" (Evans 19).

And so, "by the 1600s the idea that white skin made one free and black skin made one a slave was widely held" (Evans 20). With that came a development in the language dealing with slavery overall. A distinction was made between a slave, which was a black worker, and a captive, which was a white worker, and this "new language of color and servitude had implications that extended beyond the institution of slavery. As surely as coercion and debasement did not make a white worker truly a slave, so emancipation did not make a black one truly free" (Evans 20). Based on this premise, the reward of better treatment and/ or freedom

that could be potentially attained through religious conversion was eradicated because "Black slaves could change their religion but not their color," and at this time, it was their color which made them a slave. While the distinctions between black and white peoples did exist elsewhere, they did not affect the social makeup of a country as drastically as they did in America where "the population was becoming stabilized into two caste-like status groups, identified as 'white' and 'black'" (Evans 23). And it was this racial distinction that set racism into motion.

Race as a Social Construct

Now that we have discussed the history of slavery, we can better understand the development of race as a social construct, as a means of justifying the practice of slavery and perpetuating the development of a capitalistic society dependent on free labor without reward. So, what is race really? Is it the box you check on forms collecting your biographical information? Is it an inherited gene or uncontested biological definition? Is it a person's physical appearance? Hardly, but still it exists and still it seriously affects the lives of Americans every day.

During the 1700s, scientist Carolus Linnaeus developed a system for categorizing people into four distinct groups: Americanus, Europeaus, Asiaticus, and Afer (Olson 499). His theory asserted that these four groups passed along the same genetic material within their own group and these shared genes produced physical characteristics that defined a race. However, with the advancement of genetic science, researchers and scientists have discovered that distinct human races do not exist. At this point, the belief that race is biologically driven is a moot point. And yet, the concept of race persists and the debate regarding its importance rages on. While biology and genetics do not define race, the consequences of these racial definitions do exist in society and come with inherent privileges and disadvantages.

Despite the advances in science and other fields which have debunked the idea that biology defines race, the concept of racial classification still exists. Today, "a racial group is 'a social group which persons inside or outside the group have decided is important to single out as inferior or superior, typically on the basis of real or alleged physical characteristics subjectively selected'" (Feagan qtd. in Corlett 62). Race has also become an important statistical figure used in almost every organization to measure the inequalities which racial classification made possible in the first place.

Analysis of "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point"

Now that we have a better understanding of the history of slavery including the justifications established which defended the practice of slavery and we have discussed race as a social construct, we can take a closer look at the concealed stories. To reiterate, concealed stories are told by those marginalized by the dominant society, the hidden stories which are overshadowed by stock stories. In the case of slavery, the stock story is of course that those of color are lesser humans and therefore do not have the right to basic human freedoms afforded to whites. Therefore, someone part of the minority or the oppressed class, such as a slave, would share a story which contradicts the traditionally accepted stock story, the concealed story.

For our example here, we will take a closer look at Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point," a poem "involving a slave woman, who is separated from her lover, raped by her master, and finally, strangles her 'too white' infant" (Brophy 276). Through Barrett Browning's use of dramatic monologue and the black female slave narrator, Barrett Browning produces a compelling concealed story which stands to challenge the institution of slavery.

What is dramatic monologue? In what ways did Barrett Browning challenge the traditional form? What is the importance of addressing the "pilgrim ghosts" in the beginning stanzas?

Considering the choice of narrator in the poem, Barrett Browning needed to establish a connection between her reader—the wealthy, white Victorian—and the female African slave. Her decision to employ the dramatic monologue provided the means to establish that connection in that "dramatic monologues require the author and reader to imagine being the person depicted" (Schaub 558). Her choice of form forces the reader to experience the events of the poem themselves. By seeing the world through the narrator's eyes, the reader gains incomparable insight into the harsh realities she faces because of slavery.

However, the use of this form presented two distinct obstacles based on its own traditional conventions. Robert Langbaum, an American author who wrote *The Poetry of Experience: The Dramatic Monologue in Modern Literary Tradition*, states that "'the genius of the dramatic monologue is the effect created by the tension between sympathy and moral judgement'" (qtd. in Schaub 558) directed toward the speaker of the poem. By this definition, the speaker becomes the object of both the readers' sympathy as well as their judgment. However, in this poem, "the judgement function is assigned to the intradiegetic audience (first pilgrim-ghosts, then slave hunters), and the speaker herself preemptively closes off the possibility of judging her actions" (Schaub 558), effectively creating an object of sympathy, the speaker, and an object of judgment, the institution of slavery. Before readers learn of the harsh life led by the narrator, they must recognize that the "pilgrim-souls" and the slave master who "works/ sin and woe" (line 26-28) are responsible for the events that unfold. Because of them, the narrator has run "[a]ll night long from the whips" (line 25) and because the "reader of such a poem is supposed to sympathize and become immersed in [the narrator's] perspective" (Schaub 560), they too recognize the danger of these entities. By creating objects for judgment separate from the

narrator, the reader can attribute blame to the institution of slavery and not to any lack of morality on behalf of the narrator.

The reallocation of judgment helped Barrett Browning break free of the traditional form of dramatic monologue. Barrett Browning varied the form in a second way—providing an omniscient narrator. Dramatic monologues typically include moments of dramatic irony when the speaker lacks knowledge the reader has, or when the speaker unconsciously reveals aspects of themselves to the reader. However, in "The Runaway Slave," the narrator recognizes both internal and external opinions and shows "an awareness of the opinions of others and addresses herself to them" (Schaub 564), giving her a sense of omniscience. As the narrator describes herself as one of the "poor souls" (40) who "have no stars" (37)—a separation between herself and the white man and his God takes root. In stanza 4, when the narrator calls out, "I am black, I am black; / And yet God made me, they say," (lines 22-23), she simultaneously recognizes her blackness as well as the Christian belief that God created all things. She leverages this belief to call the practice of slavery into question. If God created all men, then all His creations should be treated equally. The narrator then introduces the idea that God must have thought He made a mistake in creating the black man and reflects that "if He did so, smiling back / He must have cast his work away / Under the feet of his white creatures" (24-26), thereby condoning a practice such as slavery. This omniscience allows the narrator to tell her story while also becoming a mirror for the society that forced her into this narrative. Thus, as Melissa Schaub argues "there is no issue the slave is unaware of or incompetent to judge and therefore no way for the reader's point of view to be substantially different from hers" (564). In these two ways—redirecting judgment and creating an omniscient narrator—Barrett Browning's use and manipulation of the dramatic monologue establishes a bridge between the narrator and reader, creates an

environment devoid of judgment toward the speaker, and allows the speaker to tell her story while simultaneously reflecting the white societal beliefs and often exposing their hypocrisy.

Why did Barrett Browning choose this narrator? What challenges did this choice present?

Barrett Browning has met with much resistance from critics in more recent decades who believe that a writer cannot write about something outside of their own experience. And so, these critics have contested Barrett Browning's choice of a black female slave narrator. But Barrett Browning chose this narrator strategically to demonstrate the depths of depravity within the institution of slavery and by giving the slave woman a voice, Barrett Browning helped give a voice to a population who had no way of speaking for itself at that time, thereby, opening the door to the concealed reality of slavery.

This did not happen without overcoming many obstacles, however, such as establishing a connection between her narrator and the reader, which she accomplished through her choice of dramatic monologue, as described above. The use of a female narrator also proves a strategic choice for Barrett Browning in that she relies on the bonds of motherhood to powerfully examine the lengths the narrator would go to ensure her child's freedom. By the point in the poem that the narrator commits infanticide, the reader has acknowledged the narrator's humanity and has experienced the cruelty of slavery, including the death of the narrator's lover and her rape, which resulted in her child. Because the narrator has established the pilgrim ghosts and the slave masters as the objects of judgment, the reader regards the narrator as a victim as well in this crime and shows her sympathy.

While Sarah Brophy recounts that the "motivation for infanticide is consistently explained as the desire to restore a natural 'maternal' relationship" (277), that characterization of the narrator's actions supports a somewhat selfish desire. It implicates her actions as self-serving,

choosing to kill her child to feel a connection, a connection she failed to establish because of the child's whiteness. The narrator tells the reader, "I am black, you see– /And the babe who lay on my bosom so, / Was far too white, too white for me" (114-116). This reflection is not one of race, rather what each represents—her goodness and the evil within her own child, an evil born from the sin of rape. The slave-mother decided it would be "better to kill one's child than to curse him" (Lootens 497). The curse Tricia Lootens alludes to could refer to a life of slavery as she suggests; however, it could also refer to the sin from which the child was born. Only through death could the mother claim the child's freedom from either. The narrator willingly sacrificed her own soul to ensure her child's liberty. Through her selfless sacrifice, she ultimately fulfills her maternal obligation to him and retroactively establishes her connection to him; through the murder of her child, she was able to untangle his "whiteness" from his "blackness" and his inherent evil from his inherent goodness. The child's soul, his "whiteness," which had been tainted by sin and evil, was carried away by "fine white angels" (157), and when the mother lay her child down to rest on the earth, "All, changed to black earth, –nothing white," (185). The child, now free from sin, free from his "white" soul, is returned to his blackness and restoring his purity and goodness, ultimately allowing him to find his final resting place with the earth, the "dust," the "clay."

Releasing the child from his "whiteness," the narrator fulfills her role as his mother securing her child's freedom from evil and slavery. The reader watches this transformation as the image of the white child that lies "between the roots of the mango" (137) becomes replaced by the image of the child as a "mango-fruit" (154). Once consumed by darkness and twisted by sin, represented by the roots, the child, through death, becomes the fruit of the narrator's womb, revealed as she peels back the shawl "like lifting the leaf of the mango-fruit" (154). The narrator,

who initially “dared not sing to the/ white-faced child” (line 132), can now share with the child the song of her childhood—the name of the slave whom she loved too briefly and lost too quickly. The “mother’s chanting of the name of her lost lover” (Brophy 278) secures her maternal role to the child in that she can share the most sacred piece of herself with him. This becomes even more significant when we consider what the song consists of—the “chanting of the name of her lost lover.” Not only does this grant the child the name of the person who could have, and arguably should have, fathered him through love, but it also suggests the mother’s attempt to call out to her lost lover who has returned to “dust” and to collect her child and accompany him to the eternity worthy of blacks, an eternity that she has deprived herself of the moment she killed her child, tainting her goodness, her blackness.

What are the overall themes in this poem?

Barrett Browning presents multiple themes in this poem—blackness equals goodness and whiteness equals evil; heaven as a place for the condemned and earth as a place for the righteous; and the narrator’s inherent humanity, which challenges the stock story of race.

What symbolism is present in this poem? How does it support the overall themes of the poem?

Barrett Browning uses symbolism throughout the poem to support her overall themes of blackness as goodness and whiteness as evil and to support the narrator’s humanity, the concealed story at work. Some examples of symbolism include:

- Symbolism in stanza 1: “I stand on the mark beside the shore/ Of the first white pilgrim's bended knee,” (lines 1-2). The pilgrim who sought freedom from religious persecution found liberty in this place and with a bended knee, thanked God. Yet, here the slave woman ran in search of freedom and bends her knee, but God does not grant her liberty.

- Symbolism in stanza 16: “I wore a child upon my breast, / An amulet that hung too slack” (lines 107-108). An amulet should bring good luck, and yet the image of it hanging loosely around the narrator suggests that inherent battle between good and evil within the child because of his blackness and whiteness.
- Symbolism in stanza 26: “Through the forest-tops the angels far, / With a white sharp finger from every star, / Did point and mock at what was done.” (lines 180-181). Stars usually bring light in the darkness and represent peace, tranquility, and hope, and yet, in this instance, these stars spotlight the narrator’s crime and point at her, mockingly, suggesting that these heavenly entities do not feel pity for the narrator’s fate, but rather mock her for succumbing to evil in their eyes.

Lessons for Concealed Stories

As previously discussed, concealed stories are stories told by those disregarded by the majority or dominant population. Focusing on concealed stories will allow students to reflect on their preexisting notions about slavery and race. For our purposes, we will divide the module on concealed stories into six lessons:

1. Lesson 1: Acknowledge Preexisting Beliefs
2. Lesson 2: Background and definitions/ Self-reflection
3. Lesson 3: Historical significance
4. Lesson 4: The Concealed Story
5. Lesson 5: Critical Analysis and Rhetoric
6. Lesson 6: Make it modern

Each of these lessons will be broken down and will identify learning outcomes, teacher preparation instructions, materials required, classroom procedures, and additional resources or actions. This unit’s final assessment will require the students to create a piece of art which represents the relationship between stock stories and concealed stories. Art projects can include anything from drawings, paintings, animations, sculptures, etc.

Lesson 1: Acknowledge Preexisting Beliefs

This lesson should allow students to think about their preexisting beliefs surrounding certain concepts relating to the module on slavery and race. This lesson will serve as the foundation from which the rest of the module gets built. Teachers should reassure students that there are no right or wrong answers and students should feel free to self-reflect on their own opinions.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to self-reflect on their preexisting beliefs surrounding certain concepts pertaining to slavery and race.
- Students should capture these self-reflections for reference later in the module.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should create a handout for students to capture their self-reflections about slavery and race.

Materials Required:

- Handout for students

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, remind the class of the guidelines you have created regarding how to approach topics of race and racism.

Once students are ready to begin, hand out the worksheets you have created for this lesson. This part of the lesson will encourage individual work and self-reflection, so allow students to find a place in the classroom where they are comfortable and can work quietly. Ask students to write down what they know about the following:

- Slavery- What is it? When did it begin? Why did it begin? Who owned slaves and where?
- Race- What does this term mean? What is it based on? Where do we see this term used?

As a class, discuss these reflections. Prompt students to consider the following questions:

- When did slavery begin? Did it start in America?
- How did early Americans justify the practice of slavery?
- What does it mean when we say race is a social construct?

Lesson 2: Background and Definitions

This lesson should introduce students to the concept of concealed stories. Describe concealed stories to the class and provide a situation where the students should create their own concealed story.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to define a concealed story.
- Students should be able to examine their opinions relating to concealed stories.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Create a handout for students which defines concealed stories and provides a space for students to reflect on their opinions of concealed stories and capture their initial reactions and opinions.

Materials Required:

- Handout for students
- Handout with instructions for final art project

Classroom Procedures:

Once students are ready to begin, ask them to think about Listerine, the mouth wash product. Prompt students to answer the following:

- How many have Listerine at home? How many use it after brushing their teeth?
- Who advised them to use the mouthwash? Parents? Dentists?
- How many have seen ads for Listerine? What do these ads suggest to the audience?

After answering those questions, play the following video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YdvFBxBD5g. Discuss how the marketing team created the disease halitosis to promote their product and talk about how this fake disease became a stock story in society. Questions to consider:

- What stock story existed in this situation? What concealed story existed in this situation?
- How do advertisements skew the product?
- Would you consider this misinformation?
- What are some other examples of concealed stories in society today?

As a class, discuss other examples of concealed stories. Some examples might include:

- Advertisements, especially those using statistics
- News stories

Homework: Ask students to research other examples of concealed stories and bring in these examples to discuss in class. Students should start considering what they would like to do for their final art project due at the end of this unit.

Lesson 3: Historical Significance

This lesson should engage students in discussing the historical significance of concealed story examples from class and their homework assignment. Teachers should provide an excerpt from Thomas Carlyle's "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question" as an example of a stock story relating to slavery. As a class, you should investigate how this stock story helped shape the justification of slavery and with the creation of race.

Suggested Time: 2-3 class periods

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to describe the historical significance of concealed stories.
- Students should be able to discuss how races were created.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by reading Carlyle's "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question" and reviewing the section on the history of slavery. If desired, teachers can create a simple handout to capture the history of justifications of slavery. Teachers should create copies of an excerpt from Carlyle's "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question" to share with the class (sample excerpt below).

Materials Required:

- Handout for students with historical information (if desired)
- PDF of Carlyle's "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question"

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, set the classroom up for group discussion, ideally a circle of chairs, to promote active participation and discussion.

Once students are ready to begin, ask the students to redefine a stock story and a concealed story in their own words and to share some of the examples they found. Pass out the handout of Carlyle's "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question" and take turns reading it aloud. Discuss Carlyle's argument in detail. Introduce the historical information you have discovered about slavery. Questions to consider:

- How does this text support the stock story about slavery?
- What surprised you about the history of slavery and the justifications society used to defend the practice?
- How does this affect your understanding of race?
- What does it mean when we say race is a social construct?

Homework: Ask students to reflect on the lesson and identify an aspect of the history of slavery which either confirmed or negated one of their previous beliefs regarding slavery and race.

Sample Excerpt: “The thing must be done everywhere: *must* is the word. Only it is so terribly difficult to do; and will take generations yet, this of getting our rich European white men "set to work!"' But yours in the West Indies, my obscure black friends, your work, and the getting of you set to it, is a simple affair; and by diligence, the West Indian legislatures, and royal governor, setting their faces fairly to the problem, will get it done. You are not " slaves" now; nor do I wish, if it can be avoided, to see you slaves again; but decidedly you will have to be servants to those that are born *wiser* than you, that are born lords of you -- servants to the whites, if they *are* (as what mortal can doubt they are?) born wiser than you. That, you may depend upon it, my obscure black friends, is and was always the law of the world, for you and for all men; to be servants, the more foolish of us to the more wise; and only sorrow, futility and disappointment will betide both, till both, in some approximate degree, get to conform to the same. Heaven's laws are not repealable by earth, however earth may try and it has been trying hard. in some directions, of late! I say, no well being, and in the end no being at all, will be possible for you or us, if the law of heaven is not complied with. And if "slave" mean essentially "servant hired for life," or by a contract of long continuance, and not easily dissoluble -- I ask, Whether in all human things, the "contract of long continuance" is not precisely the contract to be desired, were the right terms once found for it? Servant hired for life, were the right terms once found, which I do not pretend they are, seems to me much preferable to servants hired for the month, or by contract dissoluble in a day. An ill-situated servant, that -- servant grown to be *nomadic*; between whom and his master a good relation *cannot* easily spring up!”

Lesson 4: The Concealed Story

This lesson should investigate the concept of race further, specifically the notion that it is socially constructed. The activity in this lesson should demonstrate to the students that classifying people based on race is challenging and at times, ambiguous.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to discuss race as a social construction.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by creating a handout with lines 1-15 for students to write down a race. Teachers should prepare a presentation with 15 slides with images of 15 different individuals and then 15 slides with the same individuals and their race listed.

Materials Required:

- Handout for students
- Presentation

Classroom Procedures:

Before the class begins, set up the equipment necessary for the presentation. Once students are ready to begin, pass out the handout with the lines where they will record their responses. Explain that the students will see an image of an individual and they must write down the racial classification for that individual. Races in the United States include White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, or some other race. Once they have gone through all 15 images, start to go through the next 15 slides. Before revealing the answer, prompt some students to share what race they wrote down. This exercise should reveal the ambiguity of racial classification and the difficulty of assigning a race to an individual based on physical features. See Figures 7-9 for examples.

- Figure 6. Bruno Mars: White (Hispanic)

- Figure 7. Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson: Other (Samoan and Black Nova Scotian)

- Figure 8. M.I.A.: Asian (Sri Lanka)

Prompt students to consider the following:

- Why do you think race is still so important in society?
- How should we approach racism and discrimination?
- Why is it important to understand that race is socially constructed?

Note: This activity was modified from Nikki Khanna and Cherise A. Harris’s “Teaching Race as a Social Construction: Two Interactive Class Exercises.” They include the following footnote regarding this activity: “Depending upon the source, the information may be incorrect or unreliable; people/ biographers may make false assumptions about a person's race, celebrities may not always be completely forthcoming about their racial back grounds, and/or celebrities may not even be fully aware of their own racial ancestries. We see this as an opportunity to further discuss with students what inconsistencies and inaccuracies tell us about race” (373).

Lesson 5: Critical Analysis and Rhetoric

This lesson should exemplify how "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" serves as a concealed story. This lesson should give students the opportunity to read "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" analytically and examine the themes and poetic devices in the poem. Students should work together to demonstrate how the concealed story reacts to stock stories.

Suggested Time: 3-4 class periods

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to work individually to read and examine the poem.
- Students should be able to work in small groups to provide evidence of poetic devices and how these devices support the overall themes.
- Students should be able to contrast evidence from the concealed story to the stock story.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by creating a handout with the poem "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point". Teachers should review the section on analyzing the poem. Teachers should create handouts with different stock stories to provide student groups for the comparison piece of this lesson.

Materials Required:

- Handout of the poem
- Handout of stock story/ concealed story comparison

Classroom Procedures:

As a class, briefly review the concepts of stock stories and concealed stories. Revisit the class activity from Lesson 4 and describe the highlights from that discussion. Ask each student to read "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" individually and ask them to think about the following:

- Themes in the poem
- Symbolism in the poem
- Poetic form
- Role of the narrator

Prompt students with the following questions:

- What is dramatic monologue? In what ways did Barrett Browning challenge the traditional form?
- Why did Barrett Browning choose this narrator? What challenges did this choice present?
- What is the significance of the title "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point"?
- What is the importance of addressing the "pilgrim ghosts" in the beginning stanzas?

- What are the overall themes in this poem?
- What symbolism is present in this poem? How does it support the overall themes of the poem?

Students should work together in small groups of 3 or 4 and compare how the concealed story responds to stock stories. Discuss the examples as a class.

Homework: Students should work on completing their final art projects.

Lesson 6: Make it Modern

This lesson should tie everything in together. Revisit the concept of concealed stories with students and highlight the example of "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point". Engage students in discussing how this poem fulfills the criteria of a concealed story. Prompt students to consider why it is important to recognize concealed stories. Students will turn in final art projects.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to describe how "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" fulfills the criteria of a concealed story.
- Students should spend time reflecting on the importance of recognizing concealed stories.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by noting the ways in which "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" fulfills the criteria of a concealed story.

Materials Required:

- None

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, set the classroom up for group discussion, ideally a circle of chairs, to promote active participation and discussion.

Once students are ready to begin, ask them to define a concealed story and identify specific criteria of a concealed story. Ask them to identify the ways in which "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Pont" fulfilled the criteria of concealed stories. Questions to consider:

- How does the narrator successfully reveal her concealed story?
- How does this poem demonstrate the existence of race as a stock story? How does the narrator contrast this?

Teachers should spend time prompting students to tie together all the lessons from this module. Prompt to consider:

- In the beginning of this module, we discussed how constructing race served as a justification for slavery. Because of this construction, racism has continuously affected the lives of black Americans. Although society has adopted a colorblind approach, we have discussed many examples that prove the problems of racism still exist. Although slavery was abolished, and black Americans attained equal rights under the law, we as a country have never eradicated racism. Discuss how concealed stories start to challenge racism and discrimination in our society. How has this affected your initial thoughts and opinions of slavery, race and racism?

Background Information for Resistance Stories

Before teachers begin the module on Resistance Stories, they will need to spend time learning about the key concepts and resources involved in this module to ensure that the lessons provide all the key information students will need to have meaningful discussions and gain a deep appreciation for the topic. The main subjects for this module include:

- Resistance Stories
- The Civil Rights Movement
- Racism
- The poem "The Life of Lincoln West"

In this section, we will discuss important information pertaining to each of these subjects; however, we encourage teachers to research additional resources as well.

Resistance Stories

Resistance stories describe how people have struggled against stereotypes and racism. Resistance stories highlight both the violent and nonviolent approaches to challenging the perceptions set forth by stock stories.

The Civil Rights Movement the Black Arts Movement

An important first step in this module is spending time dedicated to understanding the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Arts Movement both as independent movements and in the context of their reactionary relationship. Most students coming into this module will have preexisting knowledge pertaining to the Civil Rights Movement strongly influenced by the stock stories surrounding that era. What the STP curriculum calls a stock story, Jennifer Frost calls "master narrative." She asserts that a "master narrative presents the chronology of the Civil Rights Movement as spanning the years of 1954 or 1955—using either *Brown v. Board of Education* or the Montgomery bus boycotts as the starting point—to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968" (439) and students commonly attribute these years to the Civil

Rights Movement. Frost asked her students at the beginning of her course on the Civil Rights Movement to reflect on their knowledge of the movement and she explained that "students who provided actual dates for the Civil Rights Movement used the typical chronology of the 1950s and 1960s" (442). Frost's course invites a reimagining of the Civil Rights Movement in that students realize that the Civil Rights Movement did not span a period of ten years, rather that it began much earlier in history and continues today. Of course, this chronological expansion "highlights the point that where historians begin and end their histories is a choice, and this fundamentally affects the stories they tell" (Frost 440). Frost's approach also questions the "top-down" approach to the Civil Rights Movement which leads students to believe that iconic figures such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and President Kennedy initiated and urged the movement forward. Instead, her focus on the "bottom-up" examination focuses on "the significance of the leadership, fundraising, and networks emerging from the 'bottom-up' in explaining the development and successes of the Movement" (440). Both the short-term interpretation and the "top-down" approach to the Civil Rights Movement students have been exposed to up to this point in their education will present significant opportunities for teachers—to show students that focusing "on the short-term prevents an assessment not only of lasting accomplishments, but also of how 'revolutions may go backwards'" (Frost 440). Recognizing that the Civil Rights Movement is not restricted chronologically, nor is it tied to specific revolutionary leaders, allows students to realize that this Movement did not end in the 1960s, and in fact, the struggle continues today.

Along with deconstructing the typical knowledge of the Civil Rights Movement, teachers should also briefly describe the goals of this movement, specifically describing that the goals shifted, and continue to shift, over time. While the movement focused on attaining political

equality in the early nineteenth century, this shifted during the 1950s and 1960s and "black leaders challenged residential segregation, poor schooling, high unemployment among members of racial minorities, and alleged police brutality" (Ely Jr. 20). For every supposed victory for the Civil Rights Movement, there is almost always a backtracking motion which significantly diminished the accomplishment. For instance, despite the groundbreaking legislation initiated because of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, segregation in schools, especially in the South, persisted for years, and little legislative action was taken to ensure that the desegregation process was followed by the states. In fact, the initiative to integrate schools by bussing students across district lines was quickly overturned in the decision of *Milliken v. Bradley*, a landmark ruling which determined that schools did not have to actively participate in desegregation so long as the schools had not played a role in the drawing of district lines. This is just one example of the back and forth of the progress during the Civil Rights movement. Understanding this volatile history of the movement provides a much better context for understanding the emergence of the Black Power movement and the Black Arts movement.

The Black Power and Black Arts movement proposed a unique approach for black Americans, one which contrasted strongly with the patient and nonviolent methods the Civil Rights movement had used for many years. Joyce M. Bell reflects on the Black Power movement in her article "Re-envisioning Black Power" and posits that the research done on that movement draws an insufficient and incomplete picture. Bell states that "Black Power not only contributed to the development of race consciousness and solidarity but also 'stimulated the formation of separatist black interest organizations, and sped up the process of black incorporation and cooptation into systemic institutions and processes'" (25). Through this newly established desire for separatism came the need to embrace and rejoice in one's blackness—and this ideology gave

rise to the Black Arts Movement. Instead of focusing solely on proving the worth or equality of black Americans, "the Black Arts Movement proposes…a separate symbolism, mythology, critique, and iconology" (Neal 55), one which celebrates blackness. No longer satisfied with trying to disprove societal perceptions that many white Americans shared due to years of faux science and discrimination, these movements called for "the necessity for Black people to define the world in their own terms" (Neal 55). And so, through these movements, a distinction was drawn between black America and white America, and most importantly, this distinction was drawn by the black Americans themselves.

Racism

We must also spend time clarifying the concept of racism because, as J. Angelo Corlett states, "[t]here are few words more misused than 'racism,' and few phenomena less understood than racism" (62). Although a general notion exists concerning racism, social scientists and psychologists have not yet produced a consistent definition of racism. This speaks to its inherent complexity. For our purposes of enhancing understanding and raising awareness, we will adopt a definition of racism, offered by Corlett, who asserts that racism "occurs when some person acts, fails to act, or attempts to act in a discriminatory manner toward another person or group of persons and based on the agent's prejudicial beliefs or attitudes about the targeted person's or group's ethnicity" (68). While most people recognize that racism can occur between groups or between individuals, there exists another method of racism which "exists within groups. This occurs when, for example, certain African Americans experience racism from other African Americans." This type of intragroup racism might occur based on skin color or other distinctive physical features.

Corlett also described the "different degrees of racism" (69), and these variances can be tied to the different motivations of racism, which are defined as "hatred of others," "perceived

inferiority of others," "'benevolence'-based racism," "superiority of others," "fear," and "power" (72). These motivations can function independently as well as in conjunction with each other and with two other bases for racism, "ignorance and ideological dogmatism" (72). Understanding these motivations and bases for racism can help us identify them and constructively address them—in the context of this module specifically, we can learn different ways to resist such racism.

Analysis of "The Life of Lincoln West"

"The Life of Lincoln West" entered the Scholastic Literature Units in 1975. Jim Prewett, Shirley Smith, and Edwyna Wheadon reviewed this poem and its inclusion in the section on "Mirrors: The Search for Identity" and proposed that poems in this section will "lead the students to probe not only the question of who he is but also the questions of who he can be and who he will be" (Prewett 62). The author, Gwendolyn Brooks, writes that "The Life of Lincoln West" portrays "'a small Black boy coming to terms with outdoor and indoor opinions of his identity'—that is, with color prejudice among both whites and blacks" (qtd. in Gould 115). This poem offers many crucial themes worth discussing and for the purposes here, approaching the poem through a series of questions for students will allow for reflective, meaningful, and honest interpretation and discussion. While offering answers and opinions to each question, these should not be regarded as implicitly correct, rather as interpretive possibilities and opportunities to engage with students and challenge their own notions of the text.

Recent critics such as Michelle Phillips have argued that removing the social context present in Brooks's poetry deprives it of interpretive possibility and enables a false sense of universality within the poetry. This false universality has affected the critical response to Brooks's poetry. Phillips argues that beneath these "misreadings is a powerful cultural mandate to read 'universal' and 'child' as inseparable concepts" (147). Exposing students to these responses allows them to

consider the importance of the individual experience present in the poem. To undercut this individual experience and to universalize the childhood of Lincoln West is to undercut his experiences, depriving them of the social impact they had on his life.

What is the significance of the title "The Life of Lincoln West"?

As the title of the poem suggests, the specific events and the subsequent emotional responses are unique to Lincoln. The title, therefore, becomes the initial instance of individuality declaring a separation between Lincoln West and the general, universal childhood experience.

Students should also consider the significance of his name—Lincoln West. Teachers should take time to allow students to consider what words they associate with "Lincoln" and "West." Phillips suggests a connection between "West" and the history of America as an expanding nation asserting that the name "suggests that this is a frontier figure, a child born to occupy and struggle at the edges of a home and of a nation" (156). This observation poses a striking situation in which Lincoln, because of his physical features which Phillips characterizes as "a visible sign of…history" (156), must continue to "struggle" for the sake of breaking through socially constructed notions. Allow students to consider Brooks's belief that "[t]o be anything in this world, as it is 'socially' constructed, is 'political'" (Gould, 107).

Some students may connect the name "Lincoln" to President Abraham Lincoln, the President who emancipated slaves. While Phillips does reference Melhem's assertion that the physical description of the child "suggest[s] Abraham Lincoln's physiognomy" (16), I would contend that the more important correlation between the two reflects internal similarities rather than an external ones, those of honesty and a struggle for freedom. The allusion to this particular president, often referred to as Honest Abe, would allow for students to characterize Lincoln West

as a figure of honesty and truth. The groundwork laid here will come into play once again when asking students about the end of the poem.

Considering Lincoln West's role as a "frontier figure" who embodies truth and freedom, ask students to contemplate whether they believe that society has broken through the social barriers which existed in the 1960s, the decade which Brooks published the majority of her poetry, including "The Life of Lincoln West". Students should now have a deeper understanding of allusion in poetry and how it can shape interpretation. They should also have a solid foundation for reading the poem as an individual experience thereby reinforcing the need to remember Lincoln West's personal context during their evaluation. At this point, students should read the poem and take note of their reactions and observations.

What are the major takeaways from the first two stanzas? How do these stanzas set up the rest of the poem, specifically Lincoln's response to the movie theatre incident?

As a class, focus on stanzas 1 and 2 and discuss the use of various poetic devices. Ask students to deliberate on how these devices help support underlying themes in the poem. For instance, in stanza 1, lines 2 and 3, we see repetition of the word "everyone." Who is the "everyone" to whom the speaker refers? Once students identify the collective entity of "everyone," it will be easier to recognize the "contrast between the condensed particularity that is Lincoln West and the universal 'everyone' who berates and reviles him" (Phillips 148), once again calling attention to the importance of individuality in the poem. The "everyone" also calls to the forefront the idea of the collective consciousness shared by society which perpetuates stereotypes associated with certain groups of people. The contrast between the individual, Lincoln West, and "everyone" questions the instinctive act of generalizing a human based solely on superficial characteristics.

In stanza 2, discuss the strategic use of punctuation, specifically the dashes found in lines 4 and 10: "—when the blue-aproned nurse came into the/ northeast end of the maternity ward/ bearing his squeals and plump bottom/ looped up in a scant receiving blanket, / bending, to pass the bundle carefully/ into the waiting mother-hands—." In this stanza, the description contained within the dashes sounds universal, resembling the general, romanticized scene of delivering a baby to his or her mother. And yet the dashes in this stanza separate Lincoln West from that universalized experience—his experience is altogether different which we find out later in the stanza. Phillips observes that "while [Brooks] 'subtly employs the image of the innocent child,' she does so in order 'to expose not-so-innocent social practices' (495)" (147). This image of innocence is overwhelming for a newborn child—one who has just entered the world and remains untainted—and yet, in the case of Lincoln West, his own physical characteristics immediately taint him. In the description of the baby, the speaker reveals his "pendulous lip," "branching ears," "eyes so wide and wild," "vague unvibrant brown of the skin," and "the great head" (lines 14-17) which spurn his mother's love. The speaker reveals that racism starts at birth, based solely on certain physical traits, traits which make up "That Look" (line 20). "That Look" refers to the 'undiluted' version of blackness to which the man in the movie theatre refers at the end of the poem. However, we find that Lincoln West eventually "reverses direction, finding ironic 'comfort' in his primitive categorization as 'the real thing'" (Phillips 145). This specific scene establishes a compelling connection between racism in the 60s and racism which exists today. Looking to the Black Lives Matter movement as the basis for understanding present racism, one of the tenets of their movement is to be "unapologetically black". Despite Lincoln's life experiences, at the end of the poem, he adopts this mindset and "rather than develop a hope despite his physical circumstance, he manages to forge an optimism out of it" (Phillips 145).

How does the structure of the poem support the overall themes present? What poetic devices are used and how do they support the overall themes present? How does this relate to W.E.B. DuBois's theory of double consciousness?

Challenge students to identify which sections of the poem are "external" situations and which are "internal". To further assist in their classification, you may want to describe "external" experience as things which happen to Lincoln West and "internal" experience as his reflection on those events. This separation between external and internal experiences mirrors the theory of double consciousness put forth by W.E.B. DuBois. Throughout the poem, Lincoln struggles between trying to please others and battling with his appearance—this struggle represents the "twoness" which DuBois speaks about in his theory. Once students have identified the external and internal instances, they should recognize a pattern which presents a section focused on an external event followed by a section focused on Lincoln's internal assessment of the event.

The process of classifying the external and internal sections of the poem allows students to consider the idea that this text "engage[s] in a spatial dialectic between interiors and exteriors," which "becomes a way for many of Brooks's child and female protagonists alike to resist the public, established narratives of their subordination" (Phillips 146) as is the case with Lincoln West.

Allow students to choose one external event and internal response to focus on and ask them to describe their own reaction to the situation. External events can include the following:

- Paternal and Maternal dismissal in stanza 3
- Familial dismissal in stanza 5
- Teacher dismissal in stanza 7
- Neighbor rejection in stanza 8

- Playground rejection in stanza 10
- Movie theatre incident in stanza 12

Each of these external events results in an internal moment of reflection for Lincoln—ask students to consider the significance of separating the external actions from the internal reflections. By disconnecting the external and internal, the speaker provides a clear distinction between the social world and Lincoln's internal world, and this "separation—the autonomization—of the child-world is one of protection and privacy, but it is also one of protest" (Phillips 155) in that Lincoln takes these moments to question the things which happen. The act of questioning is an act of protest.

Ask students to identify various poetic devices including, but not limited to, symbolism, enjambment, punctuation, dialogue, anaphora, archetypes, free verse, and omniscient narrator. Examples include:

- Symbolism in stanza 3: "put him among her hairpins and sweethearts, / dance slippers, torn paper roses," (lines 22-23). Lincoln's mother equates him with trivial accessories—an object to be looked at.
- Punctuation in stanza 7: "Lincoln / loved Everybody. Ants." (lines 44-45). Capitalization of the word "Everybody" emphasizes the plurality, no person left out or denied Lincoln's love. Even creatures as small and seemingly insignificant as "Ants" are loved by him. The use of the capital letter draws a connection between the two words— "Everybody" and "Ants"—and suggests that everything in the world is equal to Lincoln, despite physical differences.
- Anaphora in stanza 15: "too much / stared at— / too much left alone—" (lines 132-135). The repetition of the phrase "too much" further emphasizes the overwhelming amount of

staring and isolation Lincoln experiences in his life. This serves as a stark contrast to Lincoln's response to such situations in that while he "finds comfort in a sense of interior community, one that embraces a heritage seemingly rejected by society at large, he and the poem also take pride in his role as a visible sign of that history made new in his child frame" (Phillips 156).

What does "the real thing" mean to Lincoln West? What does this contribute to the overall theme of race and racism?

Students should now feel comfortable addressing this idea of "the real thing" and what it means to the man in the movie theatre versus what it means to Lincoln West. Throughout the poem, Lincoln has repeatedly experienced isolation, deprivation of love, attention, and community, all due to his physical characteristics. As Phillips suggests, "[t]he history of the individual in modern psychology begins in childhood, which continues to occupy a central seat in human experience thereafter" (154), and this individual history provides a critical piece to understanding Lincoln's response to the man's assertion that he is "the real thing." While the man used this term negatively, linking it to "savagery" (line 110), Lincoln instead focuses on the phrase "the real thing" (lines 127-128) and chooses to find in this characterization an authenticity which sets him apart from others, thereby giving purpose to his isolation. By recognizing the underlying meaning of this phrase, that if Lincoln is "the real thing" because of his physical features then those who do not have those physical traits are fake, Lincoln is finally able to reconcile the external world and his internal world. In Lincoln's reconciliation, he finds comfort, pride, and, in a sense, an individual power in his identity.

Lincoln's embracing of his cultural identity calls to mind, once again, the tenet of the Black Lives Matter movement which calls for everyone in the black community to be

"unapologetically black"—to embrace their own identity and find beauty and power in it. Although written nearly 50 years earlier, "The Life of Lincoln West" remains socially relevant and provides a unique platform for understanding the historical significance and importance of the Black Lives Matter movement and racism in our country today.

How does "The Life of Lincoln West" function as a resistance story?

After reading through the poem and analyzing it critically, invite students to use the experiences of Lincoln West to examine their own lives and ask them to think about any time they might have witnessed or experienced racism. How did they respond to that situation? Have they ever acted in a racist manner towards another person? What did they base these actions and opinions on? Where did those opinions come from, their own experiences or from watching others interact and / or talk about other people? Do they still feel the same way now after discussing race and racism? Encourage students to take notice and to keep track of any racist activity they might see around them and ask them what they believe they can do to make a difference.

This self-reflection will not only personalize the poem "The Life of Lincoln West," as each of the students might envision themselves as either Lincoln himself or one of the people who rejected Lincoln, but it will also help students grapple with the fact that racism is something which still exists in society.

Now that teachers have already had the students describe their beliefs about race and racism, and now that the students have explored both concealed stories and resistance stories, encourage them to begin creating their own counterstories. This is the time when teachers should really take a back seat and listen to their students as they engage with each other and develop their next steps. Challenge students to consider what actions they can take individually and as a

group to help eradicate the colorblind approach that society have espoused—what can they do and what should they do to bring the issue of race and racism to the forefront of society?

Resistance Stories

As previously discussed, resistance stories are stories which demonstrate how people have resisted racism and searched for ways to establish equality in society. Focusing on resistance stories will allow students to examine different ways people have resisted racism and allow them to discuss how these acts of resistance have started to ignite actions for change. For our purposes, we will divide the module on concealed stories into six lessons:

1. Lesson 1: Acknowledge Preexisting Beliefs
2. Lesson 2: Background and definitions/ Self-reflection
3. Lesson 3: Historical significance
4. Lesson 4: The Resistance Story
5. Lesson 5: Critical Analysis and Rhetoric
6. Lesson 6: Make it modern

Each of these lessons will be broken down and will identify learning outcomes, teacher preparation instructions, materials required, classroom procedures, and additional resources/ actions. This unit's final assessment will require students to complete a 3-to-5 page research paper on a resistance story from a lesser-known individual. You can provide a list of these individuals during the first lesson for students to begin researching. Check out https://bestlifeonline.com/civil-rights-leaders/ for some examples.

Lesson 1: Acknowledge Preexisting Beliefs

This lesson should allow students to think about their preexisting beliefs surrounding the Civil Rights movement. This lesson will serve as the foundation on which the rest of the module is built. Teachers should reassure students that there are no right or wrong answers and students should feel free to self-reflect on their own opinions.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to self-reflect on their preexisting beliefs surrounding certain concepts pertaining to civil rights.
- Students should capture these self-reflections for reference later in the module.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should create a handout for students to capture their self-reflections about the Civil Rights movement.

Materials Required:

- Handout for students

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, remind the class of the guidelines you have created regarding how to approach topics of race and racism.

Once students are ready to begin, hand out the worksheets you have created for this lesson. This part of the lesson will encourage individual work and self-reflection, so allow students to find a place in the classroom where they are comfortable and can work quietly. Ask students to write down what they know about the following:

- The Civil Rights Movement: What was it? Where did it take place? Why was it started? Who started this movement? When did it take place? How did they promote the movement?

As a class, discuss these reflections.

Homework: Students should begin researching the lesser-known individuals who have resisted racism in a meaningful way and choose one to focus on for their final research papers.

Lesson 2: Background and Definitions

This lesson should introduce students to the concept of resistance stories. Describe resistance stories to the class and come up with examples of resistance stories as a class.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to define a resistance story.
- Students should be able to describe additional examples of resistance stories.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Create a handout for students which defines resistance stories and provides space to capture the examples from class. Provide a space for students to reflect on their opinions of these resistance stories and capture their initial reactions and opinions. Teachers should create a handout with the instructions for the final research paper due by the end of the unit.

Materials Required:

- Handout for students

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, remind the class of the guidelines you have created regarding how to approach topics of race and racism.

Once students are ready to begin, hand out the worksheets you have created for this lesson. Introduce the concept of resistance stories and as a class, come up with different examples of resistance stories.

Questions to consider:

- What are some ways a person can show resistance?
- What are some situations where a person might demonstrate resistance?
- Should resistance be left up to only the affected or discriminated party? Can other individuals show resistance as well? If so, how can they do this?

Homework: Students should complete further research on their chosen individual for the research paper.

Lesson 3: Historical Significance

This lesson should engage students in discussing the historical significance of resistance stories. Teachers should review an excerpt from Charles Payne's "The View from the Trenches" and discuss the stock stories regarding the Civil Rights era. Teachers should provide different examples of resistance stories from the civil rights era and discuss the difference between violent and non-violent demonstrations of resistance. In small groups, students should discuss their example and then come up with their own situation which might require resistance.

Suggested Time: 2-3 class periods

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to describe the historical significance of resistance stories.
- Students should be able to identify stock stories regarding the Civil Rights era.
- Students should be able to differentiate between violent and non-violent forms of resistance.
- Students should be able to create their own situation where resistance would be a proper response.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by reviewing the section on the Civil Rights movement and racism. Teachers should review the excerpt from Charles Payne's "The View from the Trenches" and create a handout for students (sample excerpt below). Teachers should create handouts with examples of different, lesser-known examples of resistance stories. Check out https://bestlifeonline.com/civil-rights-leaders/ for some examples.

Materials Required:

- Handout for students with historical information (if desired)
- Handout of resistance story examples
- Handout of excerpt from "The View from the Trenches"

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, set the classroom up for group discussion, ideally a circle of chairs, to promote active participation and discussion.

Once students are ready to begin, ask the students to redefine a resistance story in their own words. Introduce the historical information you have discovered about the civil rights movement. Questions to consider:

- What was the Civil Rights movement? What were they fighting for?
- Who led the movement? Who participated?
- When did it take place?
- Where did it take place?
- How did they promote the movement?

- What is the difference between violent and non-violent demonstrations of resistance? What are some examples of each?

Pass out the handout with examples of resistance stories and separate into small groups. Once each group has read through their example and discussed it, each group should share their example with the rest of the class. Prompt students to consider why some choose violence over non-violence and vice versa.

Each group should then work on developing their own situations where resistance would be a proper response.

Homework: Ask students to reflect on the lesson and identify an aspect of resistance stories which they could use in their own daily life. Continue research and begin developing paper draft.

Sample Excerpt: Written by Julian Bond: "Traditionally, relationships between the races in the South were oppressive. In 1954, the Supreme Court decided this was wrong. Inspired by the court, courageous Americans, Black and white, took protest to the street, in form of sit-ins, bus boycotts, and freedom rides. The protest movement, led by the brilliant and eloquent Dr. Martin Luther King, aided by a sympathetic federal government, most notably the Kennedy brothers and a born-again Lyndon Johnson, was able to make America understand racial discrimination as a moral issue. Once Americans understood that discrimination was wrong, they quickly moved to remove racial prejudice and discrimination from American life, as evidenced by the Civil Rights Acts 1964 and 1965. Dr. King was tragically slain in 1968. Fortunately, by that time the country had been changed, changed for the better in some fundamental ways. The movement was a remarkable victory for all Americans. By the 1970s, southern states where blacks could not have voted ten years earlier were sending African Americans to Congress. Inexplicably, just as the civil rights victories were piling up, many African Americans, under the banner of Black Power, turned their backs on American society" (qtd. in Payne).

Lesson 4: The Resistance Story

This lesson should investigate the concept of resistance further. The activity in this lesson should demonstrate the difference between violent and non-violent demonstrations of resistance.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to discuss ways to demonstrate resistance.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by reviewing the situations created by the class groups in Lesson 3 and create handouts with each of these situations.

Materials Required:

- Handout

Classroom Procedures:

Once students are ready, ask them to get into the same small groups from Lesson 3. Teachers should pass out the different situations to each group. As a group, ask the students to come up with a situation where one might demonstrate resistance. They can write this out as a short play.

Once each group has performed, discuss the resistance demonstrations as a class. Prompt students to consider the following:

- Why different methods of resistance were demonstrated? What other ways could we have demonstrated resistance to specific situations?
- How does this confirm or negate your previous beliefs about resistance?
- What are some present situations which we could resist or create resistance stories about?

Homework: Students should have a completed first draft of research paper.

Lesson 5: Critical Analysis and Rhetoric

This lesson should exemplify how "The Life of Lincoln West" serves as a resistance story. This lesson should give students the opportunity to read "The Life of Lincoln West" analytically and examine the themes and poetic devices in the poem. Students should work together to demonstrate how Lincoln resists racism.

Suggested Time: 3-4 class periods

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to work individually to read and examine the poem.
- Students should be able to work in small groups to provide evidence of Lincoln's resistance story.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by creating a handout with the poem "The Life of Lincoln West." Teachers should review the section on analyzing the poem.

Materials Required:

- Handout of the poem

Classroom Procedures:

As a class, briefly review the concepts of resistance stories. Revisit the class activity from Lesson 4 and describe the highlights from that discussion. Ask each student to read "The Life of Lincoln West" individually and ask them to think about the following:

- Themes in the poem
- Symbolism in the poem
- Poetic form
- Role of the narrator

Prompt students with the following questions:

- What is the significance of the title "The Life of Lincoln West"?
- What are the major takeaways from the first two stanzas? How do these stanzas set up the rest of the poem, specifically Lincoln's response to the movie theatre incident?
- How does the structure of the poem support the overall themes present? What poetic devices are used and how do they support the overall themes present?
- How does "The Life of Lincoln West" function as a resistance story?

Students should work together in small groups of 3 or 4 and discover evidence of Lincoln's resistance story.

Homework: Students should work on revisions and edits of paper.

Lesson 6: Make it Modern

This lesson should tie everything in together. Revisit the concept of resistance stories with students and highlight the example of "The Life of Lincoln West". Engage students in discussing how this poem fulfills the criteria of a resistance story. Prompt students to consider why it is important to recognize and develop resistance stories. Students will turn in their final research papers.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to describe how "The Life of Lincoln West" fulfills the criteria of a resistance story.
- Students should spend time reflecting on the importance of recognizing and developing resistance stories.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by noting the ways in which "The Life of Lincoln West" fulfills the criteria of a resistance story.

Materials Required:

- None

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, set the classroom up for group discussion, ideally a circle of chairs, to promote active participation and discussion.

Once students are ready to begin, ask them to define a resistance story and identify specific criteria of a resistance story. Ask them to identify the ways in which "The Life of Lincoln West" fulfilled the criteria of resistance stories. Questions to consider:

- How does Lincoln resist racism?
- How does his resistance challenge the status quo?

Teachers should spend time prompting students to tie together all the lessons from this module. Prompt to consider:

- In the beginning of this module, we discussed resistance stories, what they are and different ways to demonstrate resistance. We looked at "The Life of Lincoln West" and discussed how he resisted racism. Discuss how resistance stories challenge racism and discrimination in our society. How has this affected your initial thoughts and opinions of resistance?

Background Information for Counterstories

Before teachers begin the module on Counterstories, they will need to spend time learning about the key concepts and resources involved in this module to ensure that the lessons provide all the key information students will need to have meaningful discussions and gain a deep appreciation for the topic. The main subjects for this module include:

- Counterstories
- White Privilege
- Black Lives Matter
- The film *The Hate U Give* and novel *The Hate U Give*

In this section, we will discuss important information pertaining to each of these subjects, however, we encourage teachers to research additional resources as well.

Counterstories

Counterstories are "new stories, deliberately constructed to challenge the stock stories, build on and amplify concealed and resistance stories, and offer ways to interrupt the status quo" (Roberts 338). When discussing counterstories, teachers should invite students to develop their own counterstories "specific to the historical moment in which they find themselves" (Roberts 340). Discuss the idea of a colorblind society with students and invite them to challenge it, reinforcing the fact that discussing race and racism in the classroom is a first step. A contemporary literary resource worthy of analysis in this context is *The Hate U Give*. This story speaks to the crimes against the black community—the crimes which inspired the Black Lives Matter movement—and urges the world to reconsider the typical response given to these atrocities.

White Privilege

What is white privilege and what does it mean to students? Why is it important to discuss this concept in every classroom, no matter what level of diversity? A study of college students

who took a course which focused on white privilege uncovered that "white students resist learning about white privilege, and this resistance is often reflected in class dynamics and student evaluations of instructor competency" (Boatwright 895). Some instructors "reported that class discussions of privilege made their white students feel anxiety, guilt, and embarrassment" (Boatwright 896), and these negative feelings seemed to directly affect student comprehension of the concept overall as "students who felt personally attacked by class discussions about white privilege were less likely to understand the concept" (Boatwright 905). The conversation is difficult, but as we have stated before, that does not mean we can ignore it and simply hope it goes away.

Exploring white privilege with students allows teachers to shed light on the fact that "white privilege involves the numerous daily activities that are negatively affected by racism for persons of color and the tendency among white individuals to be unaware that they enjoy unearned privilege because they do not experience racism" (Boatwright 894). Through group discussion, teachers and students can explore the realities for those individuals who do not have white privilege and are "more likely to be suspected of shoplifting or some other crime; more likely to be denied legal or medical assistance; more likely to experience difficulty finding comfortable, safe housing; less likely to find professional mentors for career advancement; and more likely to have concerns about the physical and psychological well-being of one's children whenever they leave the home" (Boatwright 894). White privilege exists in our society today and developing an awareness of it will help us diminish its inherent power. Boatwright asserts that "understanding this concept means accepting that persons of color may consciously or unconsciously feel resentment toward white individuals" (895), and this process of understanding the other perspective helps drive open and honest communication between

individuals of various backgrounds. As Boatwright describes, “these disparities in perceptions of privilege can be a barrier in communication between individuals of different ethnicities” (895), and before we can tear down the barrier, we must acknowledge that it stands between us in the first place.

Black Lives Matter

Black Lives Matter—a movement which erupted in 2013 in direct response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman, the man who shot, and killed, Trayvon Martin—has taken its rightful place as one of the most important social movements of the twenty-first century. Three women—Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullers, and Opal Tometi—organized the movement to direct a spotlight on the injustices occurring within black communities across the United States; injustices that all too often involved heinous crimes committed by law officials or vigilantes who did not have to face repercussions for their actions. Names such as Trayvon Martin, Freddie Gray, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Jamar Clark have appeared in the news accompanied by stories of shootings or brutal beatings. According to the Black Lives Matter’s website, this movement “is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks’ humanity, our contributions to this society, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression,”—a term which has become ignored, deemed obsolete by some who would argue that racism has significantly lessened in the United States. Clearly, however, black and white Americans across the country do not agree.

The Black Lives Matters movement started as a reactive response to past transgressions—it wanted to call attention to crimes that had happened already. Arguably, this movement has expanded considerably and now strives to proactively address the systemic issues of racism and discrimination. With the desire to dispel many of the longstanding notions which

target black Americans, we should strive to educate our youth and allow for the open discussion of race and what it means on both a personal and social level.

Analysis of The Hate U Give

Written by Angie Thomas in 2017, *The Hate U Give* tells the story of a young girl, Starr Carter, who has grown up in a predominantly black neighborhood, Garden Heights, and goes to school with a predominantly white, wealthy population of students. She struggles with her own identity, creating a "Starr 2.0" persona to help navigate these two different social spheres. One night, as her childhood friend, Khalil, who is also African-American, drives her home, they get pulled over by a police officer. This officer, who claims that Khalil reached inside of his car for a gun, shoots the young boy in front of Starr. This incident forces Starr to make a decision—either remain silent to maintain her separate identities or speak up for her friend and reconcile her two voices. This novel has received many awards including The American Library Association's William C. Morris award and the National Book Awards named it to the longlist for young adult literature.

What is the significance of the title "*The Hate U Give*"?

Inspired by rapper Tupac Shakur, the phrase "Thug Life" stands for "The Hate U Give Little Infants Fucks Everyone," and the title of the film draws on this idea. Throughout the film, multiple characters take the time to explain what this idea means—whatever society gives to children when they are young is what will come back to affect everyone. In this context specifically, the hatred that society gives to black youth ultimately affects what happens to everyone, whether it's sustained anger and separation, riots, sit-ins, etc. Researchers Lee M. Pachter and Dr. Cynthia Garcia Coll have also studied these phenomena and reviewed over forty articles for various studies on the effects of racism on children, and they discovered that perceived racism and discrimination "were associated with depressive symptoms, low self-

esteem/self-worth, and anxiety in adolescents and in preadolescents" (par. 17). In addition to the mental effects, perceived racism also affected behavior as well in that "racism was shown to be associated with internalizing and externalizing behaviors, anger, conduct problems, and delinquent behaviors in adolescents and preadolescents" (par. 21).

The most poignant representation of this in the film happens when the youngest child of the family, Shekani, who up to this point had been continually lighthearted and joyful, holds up a gun to defend his father from an infamous drug lord and the police. At that moment, Starr steps in and asks, "How many of us have to die before you all get it?" She addressed this question to the police, her father, and the drug lord. Shekani slowly puts the gun down and a kind of transformation takes place—whereas he had only witnessed acts of violence to solve problems, he has now witnessed his sister using her power of speech to successfully diffuse a situation.

What instances of white privilege are found throughout the story?

There are two main scenes that depict white privilege: 1) when Starr asks her uncle, a police officer, how he would respond in an identical situation with a black man versus a white man, and 2) when Starr's friend, Hailey, begins to defend the police officer who shot Khalil, saying "All lives matter."

When Starr speaks with her uncle, who is also African American, about the crime, he explains all the things that go through a police officer's mind when someone who gets pulled over responds uncooperatively. As he continues through the string of thoughts, you almost start to feel sorry for the police officer in the situation who simply reacted according to his training. Yet, that brief feeling of sympathy quickly dissipates when Starr asks what would happen in the same situation if it were a white man driving a Mercedes—if he reached through his window,

would you shoot or tell him to put his hands up? Uncle Carlos admits that he would ask the white man to put his hands up first before resorting to violence.

Possibly one of the most common reactions from white America to the Black Lives Matter movement is this counter phrase that "All Lives Matter." We see this in the film with Starr's friend, Hailey, who, after using Khalil's death as a reason for skipping school, then switches sides and starts defending the police officer, claiming that he was only doing his job. She internalizes the media's depiction of Khalil as a drug dealer and a violent youth who would have died eventually. This notion that "All Lives Matter" dismisses the point of "Black Lives Matter"—many people interpret this as saying that black lives matter more, when in fact, it calls out the fact that black lives have not seemed to matter as much as white lives. Saying "All Lives Matter" shuts down the issue without ever addressing it and more importantly, without providing any sort of resolution—it turns a colorblind eye to the situation. This scene between Starr and her friend points out that somehow, from Hailey's perspective, the death threats that the police officer receives from the enraged community equals Khalil's death—as though threatening a white man's life is as devastating as taking a black man's life.

What is the significance behind Starr's name? Shekani? Seven? Khalil?

The names throughout this story are strategically chosen—Starr, meaning light, Shekani, meaning Joy, Seven, meaning perfection, and Khalil, meaning friend.

Each of these names grants the respective individual their own counterstory—while racial stereotypes try to dull or overshadow blacks, Starr is encouraged to shine her light brightly and speak out against injustice.

While life as a black American too often includes injustice, violence, and poverty, Shekani remains joyful—happiness cannot be taken from him despite the realities he must deal

with every day. As the study previously referenced described mental, emotional, and behavioral effects on children who have experienced racism and discrimination, Shekani's ability to sustain his joyfulness undercuts the power of racism.

Deprivation of resources, including quality education, sets so many black youths on a path where crime and violence are the only options for survival and ultimately, graduating from high school becomes less of a priority. Researchers describe this as the "school-to-prison pipeline" (Joseph 6) and they report that "the average freshman graduation rate (the on-time graduation rate) was substantially higher for white students (83%) than for…Black students (66.1%)" (Joseph 7). Because of these statistics, a general stereotype exists, which suggests that black intelligence or capability of learning is inferior. Seven disproves this by not only graduating from an academically challenging high school, but also by having the opportunity to go to a college of his choice. As described by Joseph, "being oneself illustrates how being someone with great intellect and the ability to do well in school is a way to disrupt racism with teachers and inside of schools" (19).

Finally, Khalil challenges the racial divide that suggests the inferiority and sub-humanity of blacks—friendship does not exclude based on race.

Where do we witness W.E.B. DuBois's theory of double-consciousness? How does Starr struggle to navigate these two worlds?

From the beginning of the film, Starr explains her struggle between navigating the world of Garden Heights and the world of her majority-white college preparatory school. She refers to herself as Starr 2.0 when she enters her school and we witness a few visible shifts take place—the removal of her hoodie and the conscious changes she makes to her language. This reflects the theory of double-consciousness proposed by W.E.B. DuBois which suggests "a source of inward

'twoness' putatively experienced by African-Americans because of their racialized oppression and disvaluation in a white-dominated society" (Pittman par. 1). Researchers discovered this "twoness" when investigating the experiences of black female students in school who felt "the need to navigate multiple identities as a result of not only wanting to express themselves to the world, but also to gain access to the culture of social power associated with the white or dominant society" (Joseph 8). Starr experiences an internal division of her social spheres and this division becomes rectified only after she decides to speak up for Khalil—using her one, true voice to speak her truth.

How does this story serve as a counterstory?

Considering the stock story of black Americans—one which perpetuates stereotypes suggesting inferiority, an inclination towards violence and crime, and a lack of morality—*The Hate U Give* directly contradicts these stereotypes and provides a new story that challenges the status quo. With Khalil, specific situations in his life—his mother battling drug addiction and his grandmother battling cancer and losing her job—have led him to seek out the only job available for him in that area—dealing drugs. Despite the common conception that black Americans "choose" a life of drugs and violence, through Khalil's story it becomes clear that the lack of choices leads them into this lifestyle. With Starr, despite her internal struggle of keeping her two worlds separate, her sense of duty to Khalil motivated her to speak out against the injustice she witnessed, proving her inherent morality.

Lessons for Counterstories

As previously discussed, counterstories are stories that build on resistance stories and challenge the status quo, inviting others to do the same. Focusing on counterstories will allow students to reflect on race in the context of present-day situations and events. For our purposes, we will divide the module on counterstories into six lessons:

1. Lesson 1: Acknowledging Preexisting Beliefs
2. Lesson 2: Background and definitions/ Self-reflection
3. Lesson 3: Historical significance
4. Lesson 4: The Counterstory
5. Lesson 5: Critical Analysis and Rhetoric
6. Lesson 6: Make it modern
7. Lesson 7: Multimedia Project Presentations

Each of these lessons will be broken down and will identify learning outcomes, teacher preparation instructions, materials required, classroom procedures, and additional resources/ actions. This unit's final assessment will require the students to create a multimedia project as a group which reflects a counterstory. These projects can include videos, songs, or other creative performances.

Lesson 1: Acknowledging Preexisting Beliefs

This lesson should allow students to think about their preexisting beliefs surrounding the Black Lives Matter movement. This lesson will serve as the foundation on which the rest of the module is built. Teachers should reassure students that there are no right or wrong answers and students should feel free to self-reflect on their own opinions.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to self-reflect on their preexisting beliefs surrounding the Black Lives Matter movement.
- Students should capture these self-reflections for reference later in the module.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should create a handout for students to capture their self-reflections about the Black Lives Matter movement.

Materials Required:

- Handout for students

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, remind the class of the guidelines you have created regarding how to approach topics of race and racism.

Once students are ready to begin, hand out the worksheets you have created for this lesson. This part of the lesson will encourage individual work and self-reflection, so allow students to find a place in the classroom where they are comfortable and can work quietly. Ask students to write down what they know about the following:

- The Black Lives Matter movement: What is it? Where is it taking place? Why was it started? Who started this movement? How are they promoting the movement?

As a class, discuss these reflections.

Homework: Read chapters 1-3 in *The Hate You Give*.

Lesson 2: Background and Definitions

This lesson should introduce students to the concept of counterstories. Describe counterstories to the class and discuss examples as a class of present day counterstories.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to define a counterstory.
- Students should be able to examine different present-day examples of counterstories.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Create a handout for students which defines counterstories and provides space to capture the various examples the class creates. Provide a space for students to reflect on their opinions of counterstories and capture their initial reactions and opinions. Teachers should create a handout with the instructions for the multimedia projects due at the end of this unit.

Materials Required:

- Handout for students
- Handout with the instructions for the multimedia projects

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, remind the class of the guidelines you have created regarding how to approach topics of race and racism.

Once students are ready to begin, hand out the worksheets you have created for this lesson. Introduce the concept of counterstories. As a class, discuss different examples of counterstories. Questions to consider:

- What counterstories exist today?
- How do counterstories differ from resistance stories?
- Do you think high school students can create a counterstory? Why or why not?

Homework: Read chapters 4-6 in *The Hate You Give*. Students should start thinking about their multimedia projects.

Lesson 3: Historical Significance

This lesson should engage students in discussing the historical significance of counterstories specifically related to present day movements. Teachers should discuss the Black Lives Matters movement and "the talk" many families have with their children regarding life as a black American. As a class, you should examine how this movement is a counterstory and how it has inspired countless others.

Suggested Time: 2 class periods

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to describe the historical significance of counterstories.
- Students should develop a better understanding of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by reviewing the section on Black Lives Matter. If desired, teachers can create a simple handout to capture the history of this movement. Teachers should determine the equipment needed to play a short video clip.

Materials Required:

- Handout for students with historical information (if desired)
- Equipment needed to show a video

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, set the classroom up for group discussion, ideally a circle of chairs, to promote active participation and discussion. Once students are ready to begin, ask the students to redefine a counterstory in their own words and to share some of the examples they found. Introduce the historical information you have discovered about the Black Lives Matter movement. Questions to consider:

- How does this movement serve as a counterstory?
- What surprised you about this movement? What did you learn from the information shared about Black Lives Matter?
- How does this affect your understanding of race in our country?
- What is Black Lives Matter trying to accomplish? How are they trying to accomplish this goal?
- What is white privilege? How does it relate to the Black Lives Matter movement?
- What happens when we say, "All Lives Matter"?

Discuss the idea of "the talk" with students and show them the following clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkaByBZbTCo

Homework: Read chapters 7-12 in *The Hate You Give*. Students should continue working on their multimedia projects.

Lesson 4: The Activity

This lesson should investigate the concept of white privilege further, specifically how it functions in modern society. The activity in this lesson should demonstrate to the students the unconscious bias of society and the inherent benefits of white privilege of which most white Americans remain unaware.

Suggested Time: 1 class period

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to discuss white privilege.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by reviewing the section on white privilege. Teachers should create two versions of a handout with a crossword puzzle for students to complete. The puzzles should be the same, but on version 1 a word bank should be included. Indicate the version on the handout, so the handout with the word bank should say version 1 and the handout without the word bank should say version 2.

Materials Required:

- Handout with crossword puzzle

Classroom Procedures:

Once students are seated, begin distributing the crossword puzzle handouts face down and instruct the students not to turn the papers over until you say. For all students with brown eyes, provide the handout with the word bank. For all students with light eyes, provide the handout without the word bank. Instruct the students that they have ten minutes to complete the puzzle. Once you have started the timer, they may turn over their papers and begin.

- When time is up, ask those students with version 1 to stand on one side of the room and those with version 2 to stand on the opposite side of the room. From the version 1 group, ask students to raise their hands if they were able to complete the puzzle. If some students were not able to finish, write down how many students had 1 blank line, 2 blank lines, etc. Repeat this for the version 2 group. The results will show a larger number of students with version 1 were able to finish or mostly finish their puzzles over version 2.
- Ask students to think about why the version 1 group had a higher rate of success. Once a few students have responded, ask one student from version 1 and one from version 2 to compare handouts. This will reveal that version 1 had a word bank while version 2 did not.

Prompt students to consider the following:

- How did this activity demonstrate white privilege?

- How did you feel when the groups were divided? How did you feel when the number of successful completions was announced for each group?
- Did the version 1 group know that they had an advantage? What does this tell us about white privilege?

Homework: Read chapters 13-16 in *The Hate You Give*. Students should continue working on their multimedia projects.

Lesson 5: Critical Analysis and Rhetoric

This lesson should exemplify how *The Hate U Give* serves as a counterstory. This lesson should give students the opportunity to watch the film *The Hate U Give* analytically and examine the themes from the movie. Students should work together to discuss the book and the movie.

Suggested Time: 3-4 class periods

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to work individually to examine the film.
- Students should be able to work in small groups to analyze the film and identify themes.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by setting up the room for watching *The Hate U Give*. Teachers should review the section on analyzing the film.

Materials Required:

- Equipment needed for watching movie

Classroom Procedures:

As a class, briefly review the concepts of counterstories. Revisit the class activity from Lesson 4 and describe the highlights from that discussion. Watch *The Hate U Give*.

Prompt students with the following questions:

- What is the significance of the title *The Hate U Give*?
- What instances of white privilege are found throughout the story?
- What is the significance behind Starr's name? Shekani? Seven? Khalil?
- Where do we witness W.E.B. DuBois' theory of double-consciousness? How does Starr struggle to navigate these two worlds?
- How does this film serve as a counterstory?
- How has reading this book and watching this movie affected your overall opinion about race?

Homework: Read chapters 17-26 in *The Hate You Give*. Students should continue working on their multimedia projects.

Lesson 6: Make it Modern

This lesson should tie everything in together. Revisit the concept of counterstories with students and highlight the examples from the film *The Hate U Give*. Engage students in discussing how this film and novel fulfills the criteria of a counterstory. Prompt students to consider how they can develop their own counterstories.

Suggested Time: 1-2 class periods

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to describe how the film and novel *The Hate U Give* fulfills the criteria of a counterstory.
- Students should spend time reflecting on how they can create their own counterstory.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by noting the ways in which the film *The Hate U Give* fulfills the criteria of a counterstory.

Materials Required:

- None

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, set the classroom up for group discussion, ideally a circle of chairs, to promote active participation and discussion.

Once students are ready to begin, ask them to define a counterstory and identify specific criteria of a counterstory. Ask them to identify the ways in which the film *The Hate U Give* fulfilled the criteria of counterstories. Questions to consider:

- How did *The Hate U Give* serve as a counterstory?
- What message did the film send? How did this message challenge the status quo?
- How did this film challenge traditional perceptions of race in our society? How does this film contradict the colorblind approach to race?

As the final lesson on race, teachers should spend time prompting students to tie together all the lessons from all the modules. Prompt to consider:

- In the beginning of our discussion on race and racism, we spent time reflecting on our opinions and beliefs surrounding these concepts. We discussed four story types: stock stories, concealed stories, resistance stories, and counterstories and with each story type, we discussed each of these concepts further and discovered some hidden truths. How have these lessons changed your initial beliefs and opinions regarding race, racism, and discrimination? How can we create our own counterstories? Why is it important to discuss race and continue challenging the status quo?

Homework: Students should complete their multimedia projects.

Lesson 7: Multimedia Project Presentations

This lesson should allow students to demonstrate their overall knowledge of counterstories.

Suggested Time: 5-10 minutes per group

Learning Objectives:

- Students should be able to present their multimedia project.

Teacher Preparation Instructions:

Teachers should prepare by setting up the classroom with any equipment necessary for the student presentations.

Materials Required:

- Determined by student presentations

Classroom Procedures:

Before beginning this lesson, set the classroom up for the presentations. Advise students that questions should be left for the end of each presentation.

Conclusion

Talking about racism in our classrooms should not intimidate us—it should empower us and our students. Discussing controversial issues helps students hone the critical skills they will need to become engaged citizens, and if we hope to create a better world, we need to realize that the students are the future. It is not simply a cliché, but the truth, and we as educators need to prepare them to accept this responsibility and engage in constructive conversation geared toward change. Giving students the opportunity to reflect on their previously established knowledge and then inviting them to challenge this knowledge allows them to take charge of their own education, fostering a deeper level of engagement and understanding. Teaching students about different perspectives challenges them to consider the voices of others whose experiences differ from their own. While there are many obstacles we face—policies, lack of diversity, fear of negatively impacting students—we need to work together to create and implement ways to overcome these obstacles. Many steps have been taken already to challenge these obstacles and we need to build on these.

Additionally, we cannot keep these conversations within the four walls of the classroom. We cannot restrict lessons about race and racism to focus solely on memorizing and regurgitating facts. Allow students to continue these conversations outside of the classroom and provide a way for them to have these discussions with students and people outside of the readily accessible environment. One way you might do this is by creating a website where students can post comments about topics in a thread, inviting conversation with students from other schools and even other districts and states. Creating an open forum event can also engage students outside the classroom. It can also actively involve parents, providing them insight into what their children learn from such discussions in school.

It is not our job as educators or parents to sweep the hard truths under the rug or to turn our students and children away from the ugliness in the world—it is our responsibility to teach them how to face the truth and how to not only see beauty, but also to create beauty where none exists. Adopting a colorblind philosophy will not solve the problems of racism in our society, and, as we have seen, this approach worsens the effects of racism. We need to promote acceptance, yes, but we cannot stop there. We need to strive for developing a deeper understanding of others, we need to stress the importance of recognizing that every person in the world has their own story, their own context, which has shaped them, and which shapes the way society perceives them. We need to teach our students how to recognize the voices of others. We need to empower our students to think for themselves and we need to challenge them to critically analyze and defend their positions on social issues—we need to remind them constantly that they have the power to act and create social change. We need to prove to the world that it is never too early to start caring about something bigger than yourself.

A stock story exists about education—that it should remain neutral, that it should focus on career preparedness. We need to rewrite this. We need to create our counterstory, one which declares that schools are democratic sites where open discussion and debate can foster individuals who excel not only in the workforce but in the world.

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