Instructional Unit Title: Uncovering Context

Reading, Writing, and Communicating
9th Grade

The teacher may use pre-reading activities around an anchor text (e.g., To Kill a Mockingbird) so that students can begin considering the themes that will be the focus of the unit.

The teacher may bring in videos, news reports/articles, political cartoons, etc. representing competing/ conflicting perspectives on a current topic so that students can discuss issues of inequity raised in today's cultural/social climate. [Understanding text, Responding to text]

The teacher may use videos, news reports/articles, political cartoons, etc. on a current topic to more deeply explore the issues raised by journalists and to begin analyzing authors' use of rhetorical appeals.

[Understanding text, Responding to text, Critiquing text]

The teacher may use a variety of media resources (You Tube videos, infographics, etc.) on a current economic issue so that students can begin to consider their personal perspectives and examine authors' rhetorical appeals.

[Understanding text,
Responding to text, Critiquing text]

The teacher may bring in literary resources (poems, short stories, etc.) centered around economic themes so that students can examine their personal perspectives and analyze authors' rhetorical appeals. [Understanding text, Responding to text]

The teacher may utilize small group discussion formats (e.g., literature circles) so that students can explore collaboratively the socio-economic themes raised/implied in an anchor text (e.g., To Kill a Mockingbird) and connect those themes with discussions of current issues. [Understanding text, Responding to text]

The teacher may bring in literary resources (poems, short stories, etc.) on sexual orientation themes so that students can connect themes with their personal perspectives and analyze authors' rhetorical appeals. [Understanding text, Responding to text, Critiquing text]

The teacher may bring in literary resources (poems, short stories, etc.) on age themes so that students can connect themes with their personal perspectives and analyze authors' rhetorical appeals. [Understanding text, Responding to text, Critiquing text]

The teacher may use a variety of media resources centered around gender themes so that students can examine their personal perspectives and analyze authors' rhetorical appeals. [Understanding text, Responding to text, Critiquing text]

The teacher may utilize small group discussion formats (e.g., literature circles) so that students can explore collaboratively the racial themes raised/implied in an anchor text (e.g., To Kill a Mockingbird) and connect those themes with discussions of current issues. [Understanding text, Responding to text, Critiquing text]

The teacher may use visual representations (murals, etc.) centered around racial themes so that students can connect themes with their personal perspectives and analyze authors' rhetorical appeals. [Understanding text, Responding to text, Critiquing text]

The teacher may examine current and historical song lyrics on racial themes so that students can connect themes with their personal perspectives and analyze authors' rhetorical appeals. [Understanding text, Responding to text, Critiquing text]

The teacher may bring in literary resources (poems, short stories, etc.) on racial themes so that students can examine their personal perspectives and analyze authors' rhetorical appeals. [Understanding text, Responding to text, Critiquing text]

The teacher may utilize small group discussion formats (e.g., literature circles) so that students can explore collaboratively the age and gender themes raised/implied in an anchor text (e.g., To Kill a Mockingbird) and connect those themes with discussions of current issues. [Understanding text, Responding to text, Critiquing text]

The teacher may model and guide methods of synthesizing information so that students can begin considering ways to purposefully consolidate information.

[Producing text]

The teacher may model and guide the drafting process (genre, use of context, mode, and rhetoric) so that students can begin considering effective approaches to the drafting process.

[Producing text]

The teacher may provide guidance for writing (in a workshop setting) so that students can understand the editing/refining process as central to improving written work.

[Producing text]

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT: As a community member, you have been asked to participate in a project asking teenagers to present their views and perspectives on an issue of inequity that they feel is important to address. The project is to raise awareness of others within the community. Your task is to create a multi-genre text in which you include a combination of writing that may include personal experience (memoir, observation, reportage, poetry), textual analysis, argument, infographic, and perhaps a visual representation. As Tom Romano describes it: "A multigenre paper arises from research, experience, and imagination. It is not an uninterrupted, expository monolog nor a seamless narrative nor a collection of poems. A multigenre paper is composed of many genres and subgenres, each piece self-contained, making a point of its own, yet connected by theme or topic and sometimes by language, images and content. In addition to many genres, a multigenre paper may also contain many voices, not just the author's.

This unit was authored by a team of Colorado educators. The unit is intended to support teachers, schools, and districts as they make their own local decisions around the best instructional plans and practices for all students. To see the entire instructional unit sample with possible learning experiences, resources, differentiation, and assessments visit http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunitsamples.