Colorado Teacher-Authored Instructional Unit Sample

Unit Title: The American Dream

INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT AUTHORS

Wray School District

BASED ON A CURRICULUM OVERVIEW SAMPLE AUTHORED BY

Clear Creek School District
Erica Riley

Delta School District
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Reading, Writing, and Communicating

8th Grade

This unit was authored by a team of Colorado educators. The template provided one example of unit design that enabled teacher-authors to organize possible learning experiences, resources, differentiation, and assessments. 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.

DATE POSTED: NOVEMBER 2015
## Curriculum Development Course at a Glance
### Planning For 8th Grade Reading, Writing, and Communicating

**Authors of the Sample:** Michael Badzic, Valery Billig, Madison Fitz, Kelley Rebis, Kara Shroyer, Shelly Wade  
**Course/Grade:** 8th Grade English Language Arts  
**Date Completed:** July 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Reading, Writing, and Communicating</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>8th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name/Course Code</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Grade Level Expectations (GLE)</th>
<th>GLE Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Oral Expression and Listening</strong></td>
<td>1. Communication skills and interviewing techniques are required to gather information and to develop and deliver oral presentations</td>
<td>RWC10-GR.8-S.1-GLE.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. A variety of response strategies clarifies meaning or messages</td>
<td>RWC10-GR.8-S.1-GLE.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Reading for All Purposes</strong></td>
<td>1. Quality comprehension and interpretation of literary texts demand self-monitoring and self-assessment</td>
<td>RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Quality comprehension and interpretation of informational and persuasive texts demand monitoring and self-assessment</td>
<td>RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Context, grammar, and word choice influence the understanding of literary, persuasive, and informational texts</td>
<td>RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Writing and Composition</strong></td>
<td>1. Stylistic devices and descriptive details in literary and narrative texts are organized for a variety of audiences and purposes and evaluated for quality</td>
<td>RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Ideas and supporting details in informational and persuasive texts are organized for a variety of audiences and purposes and evaluated for quality</td>
<td>RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Editing writing for grammar, usage, mechanics, and clarity is an essential trait of a well-written document</td>
<td>RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Research and Reasoning</strong></td>
<td>1. Individual research projects begin with information obtained from a variety of sources, and is organized, documented, and presented using logical procedures</td>
<td>RWC10-GR.8-S.4-GLE.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Common fallacies and errors occur in reasoning</td>
<td>RWC10-GR.8-S.4-GLE.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Quality reasoning relies on supporting evidence in media</td>
<td>RWC10-GR.8-S.4-GLE.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Colorado 21st Century Skills
- **Critical Thinking and Reasoning:** Thinking Deeply, Thinking Differently
- **Information Literacy:** Untangling the Web
- **Collaboration:** Working Together, Learning Together
- **Self-Direction:** Own Your Learning
- **Invention:** Creating Solutions

### Text Complexity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Titles</th>
<th>Length of Unit/Contact Hours</th>
<th>Unit Number/Sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The American Dream (Relationships)</td>
<td>9 weeks</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Title</td>
<td>The American Dream</td>
<td>Length of Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Focusing Lens(es) | Relationship | Standards and Grade  
Level Expectations  
Addressed in this Unit | RWC10-GR.8-S.1-GLE.2  
RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.1  
RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.2  
RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.3 | RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.2  
RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.3  
RWC10-GR.8-S.4-GLE.2  
RWC10-GR.8-S.4-GLE.3 |  
| Inquiry Questions (Engaging-Debatable): |  |  |  |
| • How does a reader develop perspective (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.1-N.1)? |  |  |  |
| • How do you recognize bias in your everyday lives (RWC10-GR.8-S.4-GLE.2-IQ.3)? |  |  |  |
| Unit Strands | Oral Expression and Listening, Reading for all Purposes, Writing and Composition, Research and Reasoning |  |  |
| Concepts |  | In reading:  
Summary, inference, figurative language, theme, characterization, author’s purpose, fallacy, interpretation, audience, context, point of view |  |
| In content:  
identity, citizenship, sacrifice, greed, perspective, fairness, justice, innovation, influence, system, diversity, conflict, values, beliefs, evidence | In writing:  
conventions, organization, topic, transitions, language, support, reasoning, synthesis, thesis, point of view, context, audience |  |

**Generalizations**  
My students will **Understand** that...  
Authors create characters and relationships that cross time periods and places in order to represent timeless themes or universal messages (RWC10-GR.8-S2-GLE.1-EO.c.iv).  
To demonstrate deep understanding of a topic, writers construct informative or explanatory texts based on a synthesis of diverse and varied information/perspectives (RWC10-GR.8-5.3-GLE.2-EO.b.i-ii).  
Guiding Questions  
**Factual**  
What is Westward expansion?  
What were the “roaring 20s”?  
What was the Great Depression?  
What is the “American Dream”?  
*all are background knowledge for (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.2-EO.a.iii)  
What does it mean to synthesize? (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.3-EO.a.vi-vii).  
When must you use facts, definitions, details, quotations, and examples to develop a topic? (RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.2-EO.b.ii)  
What is the structure of informative/explanatory writing? (RWC10-GR.8.5-GLE.3-EO.d)  
How do you connect prior knowledge with new information (RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.2-N.1)?  
How can bias influence the reader (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.2-IQ.3)?  
How do themes transcend time and place?  
How do you select a topic for writing (RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.2-EO.b.i)?  
How does the use of correct grammar, usage, and mechanics add clarity to writing (RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.3-IQ.1)?  
How do you construct a thesis statement? (RWC10-GR.8-5.5-GLE.3-EO.b.i)  
**Conceptual**  
...
Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.3-EO.b.i-iii)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is a words’ connotation? (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.3-EO.a.vi-vii)</th>
<th>What is a word’s denotation? What is figurative language (idioms, metaphors, similes, etc.)?</th>
<th>How does the author use language to influence the readers? (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.3-EO.a.iii)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.2-IQ.3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is meant by the term “societal norms” (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.3-EO.a.vi-vii)</th>
<th>What are personal beliefs and values? What does it mean to be biased?</th>
<th>When students are reading text, how do they monitor clarity and bias in reading? (RWC10-GR.8-S.4-GLE.2-IQ.3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Critical Content: My students will **Know**...

- The significance of evidence in the support of claims/arguments (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.2-EO.a.i) and (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.2-EO.a.i)
- Key words that identify/suggest bias (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.2-RA2)
- The relationship between personal perspectives and the understanding/interpretation of a text (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.3-N.1)
- Precise meanings and underlying meanings of words in context (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.2-EO.b.i).
- Multiple and differing points of view on a given topic (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.2-EO.b.iii)
- Text structure and organization for informative/explanatory writing (RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.2-EO.b.i-vii)
- Details and information about varying time periods based on research and good, relevant evidence (RWC10-GR.8-S.4-GLE.1)
- The definition of reasoning (RWC10-GR.8-S.4-GLE.3)
- The importance of using standard grammar when writing and speaking (RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.3-EO.a)

Key Skills: My students will be able to **(Do)**...

- Present claims and findings (RWC10-GR.8-S.1-GLE.2-EO.a).
- Read for credibility and bias in authors (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.2-RA.2).
- Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.1-EO.a.iii).
- Determine the connotation and denotation of words as they are used in a text (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.2-EO.b.i)
- Recognize that there are multiple points of view on the same topic (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.3-N.1).
- Explore a variety of authors and literature to develop a relationship with literature for personal interest selection (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.1-RA.2)
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through synthesis of content (RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.2-EO.b.i-vii).
- Connect prior knowledge to new information (RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.2-N.1).
- Practice and review reasoning to determine if it is reliable (RWC10-GR.8-S.3-GLE.3-RA.3).
- Determine strengths and weaknesses of their thinking and thinking of others (RWC10-GR.8-S.4-GLE.2-EO.b)
- Compare / contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.1-EO.b.ii)
- Develop and share interpretations of literary works (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.1-EO.c)
- Read and comprehend grade level texts of various genres (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.1-EO.d.)
**Critical Language:** includes the Academic and Technical vocabulary, semantics, and discourse which are particular to and necessary for accessing a given discipline.

EXAMPLE: A student in Language Arts can demonstrate the ability to apply and comprehend critical language through the following statement: "Mark Twain exposes the hypocrisy of slavery through the use of satire."

A student in ____________ can demonstrate the ability to apply and comprehend critical language through the following statement(s):

"After reading and synthesizing texts on the ‘American Dream,’ there is evidence to support that the American Dream has not changed since the foundation of the country."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Vocabulary:</th>
<th>Interpretation, connection, perspective, relationship, synthesis, analyze, values, beliefs, support, context, construct, justice, evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical Vocabulary:</td>
<td>Audience, transitions, conventions, tone, mood, Greek/Latin roots</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Unit Description:

In this 9-week unit, students will examine the concept of the American dream. Students will read a variety of texts (informational and literary) to develop an understanding of how the concept of “the American dream” has changed and/or endured over time. The texts read will span many decades – from our country’s foundational documents up to contemporary times -- and classroom discussions will explore how text qualities such as perspective, language use, and imagery shape our perceptions and understanding. The students will synthesize the texts presented in this unit to develop a personal definition of the American dream. The unit culminates in a multi-genre project that expresses this definition of the American dream.

## Unit Generalizations

### Key Generalization:
To demonstrate deep understanding of a topic, writers construct informative or explanatory texts based on a synthesis of diverse and varied information/perspectives

### Supporting Generalizations:
- Authors create characters and relationships that cross time periods and places in order to represent timeless themes or universal messages
- Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text
- Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text

### Considerations:
This unit traces a concept – The American Dream – by looking at American Literature over time to see how the idea of “the American Dream” was expressed through the literature of distinct time periods. In this unit, students will explore literature written about or at the time of the Civil War, the European Immigration, the Roaring 20’s, the Great Depression, the Civil Rights era, and in contemporary times. Teachers could certainly consider other time periods. The unit includes literary works, political speeches, a variety of nonfiction texts, and images. The intent of providing a variety of texts is to show students a wide range of perceptions and expressions of the American Dream over time. Teachers may want to assign a novel from one of the time periods covered as a whole-class read or have students participate in literature circles covering the novel of their choice.

## Performance Assessment: The capstone/summative assessment for this unit.

### Claims:
(Key generalization(s) to be mastered and demonstrated through the capstone assessment.)

To demonstrate deep understanding of a topic, writers construct informative or explanatory texts based on a synthesis of diverse and varied information/perspectives

### Stimulus Material:
(Engaging scenario that includes role, audience, goal/outcome and explicitly connects the key generalization)

You and a classmate are a documentary team that has been hired to develop a project revealing modern day perspectives on the American Dream. Your project should be a multi-genre representation that relies on words, photographs, and images to express your understanding of the American Dream.

**Role:** a photographer/artist or a writer  
**Audience:** PBS viewers  
**Format:** a multi-genre representation of their definition of the American dream

**Topic:** the American Dream

### Product/Evidence:
(Expected product from students)

Students will complete a multi-genre project that represents their definition of the American dream. They will have explored definitions, visual representations, stories, and nonfiction writings throughout the unit, so their representation may include a variety of those sorts of texts and images. This could be a partner project or done individually. Teachers may choose to hold students accountable for a certain number of words or length of their multi-genre project. 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. The trick is to make such a paper hang together" from Blending Genre, Altering Style: Writing Multigenre Papers (2000) (x-xi).

**Differentiation:**
(Multiple modes for student expression)
The multigenre representation could be visual, video, digital or modified for length

**Texts for independent reading or for class read aloud to support the content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informational/Non-Fiction</th>
<th>Fiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://america.day-dreamer.de/dream.htm">http://america.day-dreamer.de/dream.htm</a> (&quot;What is the American Dream?&quot;)</td>
<td>Out of the Dust by Karen Hess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://america.day-dreamer.de/dream.htm">http://america.day-dreamer.de/dream.htm</a> (&quot;What is the American Dream?&quot;)</td>
<td>The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ongoing Discipline-Specific Learning Experiences**

1. **Description:** Students will be able to cite textual evidence to support their analysis.
   
   **Teacher Resources:**
   
   **Student Resources:**
   - [http://www.readingquest.org/edis771/column_notes.html](http://www.readingquest.org/edis771/column_notes.html) (two-column notes)
   - [http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/printouts/chart-30225.html](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/printouts/chart-30225.html) (t-chart for citing evidence)
   
   **Skills:** Using textual evidence, identifying themes and main ideas
   
   **Assessment:** Students will cite textual evidence using two-column notes and in their response to literature exit tickets.

2. **Description:** Students will be able to consider that multiple viewpoints exist.
   
   **Teacher Resources:**

Authors of the Sample: Michael Badzic, Valery Billig, Madison Fitz, Kelley Rebis, Kara Shroyer, Shelly Wade
## Prior Knowledge and Experiences

Students should understand point of view, audience, theme, perspective, research, citation, informative/explanatory writing skills, and have a 7th grade knowledge of U.S. history

## Learning Experience #1

| Task Description: **The teacher may... so that students can...** | The teacher may brainstorm the question “What is the American Dream?” so that students can begin exploring their own perspectives on the concept. |
| Generalization Connection(s): | Authors create characters and relationships that cross time periods and places in order to represent timeless themes or universal messages. Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text. |
| Teacher Resources: | http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americannovel/ideas/american_article.html (The American Dream in literature)  
http://static.dpsk12.org/gems/montbello/FullUnitStudent.pdf (resources for The American Dream)  
http://www.readwritethink.org/resources/resource-print.html?id=30925 (“Chasing the Dream: Researching the Meaning of the American Dream” – a lesson plan from readwritethink.org) |
| Student Resources: | Students, as a class, will create a word wall / poster board that captures their ideas. |
| Assessment: | The class will create a poster or word wall of their collective understanding of the American Dream. |
### Differentiation:
(Multiple means for students to access content and multiple modes for student to express understanding.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (Resources and/or Process)</th>
<th>Expression (Products and/or Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher may provide example definitions of the American dream for others to prompt reflection.</td>
<td>The student may use other definitions of the American dream to spark their own interpretation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Extensions for depth and complexity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (Resources and/or Process)</th>
<th>Expression (Products and/or Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Critical Content:
- The significance of evidence in the support of claims/assertions
- Precise meanings and underlying meanings of words in context
- Multiple and differing points of view on a given topic

### Key Skills:
- Present claims and findings
- Recognize that there are multiple points of view on the same topic
- Connect prior knowledge to new information
- Determine strengths and weaknesses of their thinking and thinking of others

### Critical Language:
American dream, theme

### Learning Experience # 2

**Task Description:**
The teacher may present various quotes and informational texts (e.g. infographics) related to the American dream so that students can begin to consider multiple perspectives around the American dream.

**Generalization Connection(s):**
Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text
To demonstrate deep understanding of a topic, writers construct informative or explanatory texts based on a synthesis of diverse and varied information/perspectives

**Teacher Resources:**
- [http://static.dpsk12.org/gems/montbello/FullUnitStudent.pdf](http://static.dpsk12.org/gems/montbello/FullUnitStudent.pdf) (presidential quotes)
- [http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Z61dIgeHKB4/T7HsA2lLJXI/AAAAAAAACuc/5R_aKLEHoA8/s1600/american_dream.jpg](http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Z61dIgeHKB4/T7HsA2lLJXI/AAAAAAAACuc/5R_aKLEHoA8/s1600/american_dream.jpg) (quotes)
- [http://www.buzzquotes.com/carlin-quotes-on-america](http://www.buzzquotes.com/carlin-quotes-on-america) (quotes)
- [https://www.newdream.org/resources/poll-2014](https://www.newdream.org/resources/poll-2014) (Infographic on the American Dream)
- [http://www.npr.org/2012/05/30/153942166/sizing-up-the-american-dream](http://www.npr.org/2012/05/30/153942166/sizing-up-the-american-dream) (Infographic on the American Dream from NPR)
- [https://www.aei.org/multimedia/american-dream/](https://www.aei.org/multimedia/american-dream/) (Infographic on the American Dream)
# Instructional Unit Development

## Unit Planning For 8th Grade Reading, Writing, and Communicating

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment:</strong></td>
<td>Students will choose one quote or other representation to interpret and explain why they agree or disagree with its message as it relates to their personal view of the American dream to be presented to the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Differentiation:</strong> (Multiple means for students to access content and multiple modes for student to express understanding.)</td>
<td><strong>Access</strong> (Resources and/or Process) <strong>Expression</strong> (Products and/or Performance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The teacher may pair students with a partner. The student may work with a partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extensions for depth and complexity:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Access</strong> (Resources and/or Process) <strong>Expression</strong> (Products and/or Performance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The teacher may require more detailed or insightful interpretation of the quote. The student may offer comparisons between different quotes or representations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Content:</strong></td>
<td>• The significance of evidence in the support of claims/assertions • The relationship between personal perspectives and the understanding/interpretation of a text • Precise meanings and underlying meanings of words in context • The importance of using standard grammar when writing and speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Skills:</strong></td>
<td>• Present claims and findings • Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals • Determine the connotation and denotation of words as they are used in a text • Explore a variety of authors and literature to develop a relationship with literature for personal interest selection • Connect prior knowledge to new information • Compare / contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style • Read and comprehend grade level texts of various genres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Language:</strong></td>
<td>Connotation, denotation, American dream, interpretation,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Learning Experience # 3

#### Task Description:
The teacher may... so that students can...

#### Generalization Connection(s):
- Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text
- Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text

#### Teacher Resources:
- [http://constitutioncenter.org](http://constitutioncenter.org) (the U.S. Constitution)

#### Student Resources:
- [http://constitutioncenter.org](http://constitutioncenter.org) (the U.S. Constitution)

#### Assessment:
The student will engage in close reading of founding documents, particularly annotation and highlighting, to analyze the language that the founding father’s used to create a vision for America.

#### Differentiation:
(Multiple means for students to access content and multiple modes for student to express understanding.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (Resources and/or Process)</th>
<th>Expression (Products and/or Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher may assign smaller portions of the text to be analyzed or allow students to work in pairs.</td>
<td>The student may complete the assignment with guidance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Extensions for depth and complexity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (Resources and/or Process)</th>
<th>Expression (Products and/or Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Critical Content:
- The significance of evidence in the support of claims/assertions
- The relationship between personal perspectives and the understanding/interpretation of a text
- Precise meanings and underlying meanings of words in context

#### Key Skills:
- Present claims and findings
- Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals
- Determine the connotation and denotation of words as they are used in a text
- Connect prior knowledge to new information
- Compare / contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style

#### Critical Language:
Close reading, primary document
Learning Experience # 4

Task Description:
The teacher may... so that students can...
The teacher may use literary and nonfiction texts related to or written at the time of the American Civil War (e.g. Walt Whitman’s “I Hear America Singing”) so that students can understand that authors intentionally use language and images to convey ideas related to concepts or themes (i.e. the American Dream). [Understanding text, responding to text]

Generalization Connection(s):
Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text
Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text

Teacher Resources:
http://edsitement.neh.gov/feature/literature-civil-war (edsitement’s resources entitled “Literature of the Civil War”)
http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm (Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address)
http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/375/pg375.txt (“An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge”)
https://www.gutenberg.org/files/23/23-h/23-h.htm (Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass An American Slave)
https://archive.org/stream/lifeandtimesfre00dougoog/lifeandtimesfre00dougoog_divu.txt (Life and Times of Frederick Douglass)
http://www.civilwarhome.com/ocaptain.html (“Oh Captain! My Captain!” by Walt Whitman)
http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/i-hear-america-singing (Walt Whitman “I Hear America Singing”)
http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/close-reading-literary-texts-31012.html (PD on close reading)

Student Resources:
http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm (Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address)
http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/375/pg375.txt (“An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge”)
https://www.gutenberg.org/files/23/23-h/23-h.htm (Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass An American Slave)
https://archive.org/stream/lifeandtimesfre00dougoog/lifeandtimesfre00dougoog_divu.txt (Life and Times of Frederick Douglass)
http://www.civilwarhome.com/ocaptain.html (“Oh Captain! My Captain!” by Walt Whitman)
http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/i-hear-america-singing (Walt Whitman “I Hear America Singing”)

Assessment:
The student will engage in close reading annotation to highlight the language of literature from and about the Civil War era and how it illustrates elements of the American Dream

Differentiation:
(Multiple means for students to access content and multiple modes for student to express understanding.)

Access (Resources and/or Process)
The teacher may assign smaller portions of the text to be analyzed or allow students to work in pairs.

Expression (Products and/or Performance)
The student may complete the assignment according to teacher instruction.

Extensions for depth and complexity:

Access (Resources and/or Process)
N/A

Expression (Products and/or Performance)
N/A

Critical Content:
• The significance of evidence in the support of claims/assertions
• The relationship between personal perspectives and the understanding/interpretation of a text
• Precise meanings and underlying meanings of words in context
### Key Skills:
- Present claims and findings
- Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals
- Determine the connotation and denotation of words as they are used in a text
- Connect prior knowledge to new information
- Compare / contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style

### Critical Language:
- Close reading, primary document

### Learning Experience #5

#### Task Description:
*The teacher may... so that students can...*  
The teacher may use literary and nonfiction texts related to or written during the period of European Immigration (e.g., “America and I” by Anzia Yezierska) so that students can understand that authors intentionally use language and images to convey ideas related to concepts or themes (i.e. the American Dream). [Understanding text, responding to text]

#### Generalization Connection(s):
Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text  
Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text

#### Teacher Resources:
- [http://tinyurl.com/mkkvouy](http://tinyurl.com/mkkvouy) (background on the immigrant experience and the American Dream)  
- [http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americannovel/ideas/melting_article.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americannovel/ideas/melting_article.html) (PBS American Masters documentary on “The Melting Pot”)  
- [http://www.nps.gov/stli/learn/historyculture/the-immigrants-statue.htm](http://www.nps.gov/stli/learn/historyculture/the-immigrants-statue.htm) (“The Immigrant’s Statue”)  
- [https://natickenglish.wikispaces.com/file/view/America+and+I.pdf](https://natickenglish.wikispaces.com/file/view/America+and+I.pdf) (“America and I” by Anzia Yezierska)

#### Student Resources:
- [http://www.nps.gov/stli/learn/historyculture/the-immigrants-statue.htm](http://www.nps.gov/stli/learn/historyculture/the-immigrants-statue.htm) (“The Immigrant’s Statue”)  
- [https://natickenglish.wikispaces.com/file/view/America+and+I.pdf](https://natickenglish.wikispaces.com/file/view/America+and+I.pdf) (“America and I” by Anzia Yezierska)

#### Assessment:
Students will explore how the immigrant experience is influenced by the promise of the American Dream in a short response exit ticket.

#### Differentiation:
(Multiple means for students to access content and multiple modes for student to express understanding.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (Resources and/or Process)</th>
<th>Expression (Products and/or Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher may assign smaller portions of the text to be analyzed or allow students to work in pairs.</td>
<td>The student may complete the assignment according to teacher instruction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Extensions for depth and complexity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (Resources and/or Process)</th>
<th>Expression (Products and/or Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Critical Content:
- The significance of evidence in the support of claims/assertions
## Instructional Unit Development

**Unit Planning For 8th Grade Reading, Writing, and Communicating**

### Key Skills:
- Present claims and findings
- Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals
- Determine the connotation and denotation of words as they are used in a text
- Connect prior knowledge to new information
- Compare / contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style

### Critical Language:
- Close reading, primary document

### Learning Experience #6

**Task Description:**
The teacher may use literary and nonfiction texts related to or written during the Roaring 20’s (e.g. “America”) so that students can understand that authors intentionally use language and images to convey ideas related to concepts or themes (i.e. the American Dream).

**Generalization Connection(s):**
- Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text
- Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text

**Teacher Resources:**
- [http://www.history.com/topics/roaring-twenties](http://www.history.com/topics/roaring-twenties) (background for Roaring 20’s from history.com)
- [https://kidskonnect.com/history/roaring-twenties](https://kidskonnect.com/history/roaring-twenties/) (background on the Roaring 20’s)
- [http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/173957](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/173957) (“America” by Claude McKay)

**Student Resources:**
- [http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/173957](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/173957) (“America” by Claude McKay)

**Assessment:**
The student will engage in close reading annotation to highlight the language of the literature during or about the Roaring 20’s that express the American dream.

**Differentiation:**
(Multiple means for students to access content and multiple modes for student to express understanding.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (Resources and/or Process)</th>
<th>Expression (Products and/or Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher may assign smaller portions of the text to be analyzed or allow students to work in pairs.</td>
<td>The student may complete the assignment according to teacher instruction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extensions for depth and complexity:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (Resources and/or Process)</th>
<th>Expression (Products and/or Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher may use literary and nonfiction texts related to or written during the Roaring 20’s (e.g. “America”) so that students can understand that authors intentionally use language and images to convey ideas related to concepts or themes (i.e. the American Dream).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Authors of the Sample: Michael Badzic, Valery Billig, Madison Fitz, Kelley Rebis, Kara Shroyer, Shelly Wade
Course/Grade: 8th Grade English Language Arts
Date Completed: July 2015
## Critical Content:
- The significance of evidence in the support of claims/assertions
- The relationship between personal perspectives and the understanding/interpretation of a text
- Precise meanings and underlying meanings of words in context

## Key Skills:
- Present claims and findings
- Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals
- Determine the connotation and denotation of words as they are used in a text
- Connect prior knowledge to new information
- Compare / contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style

## Critical Language:
- Close reading, primary document

### Learning Experience #7

**Task Description:**
The teacher may use literary and nonfiction texts related to or written during the period of the Great Depression (e.g. “The Egg” by Sherwood Anderson) so that students can understand that authors intentionally use language and images to convey ideas related to concepts or themes (i.e. the American Dream). [Understanding text, responding to text]

**Generalization Connection(s):**
- Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text
- Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text

**Teacher Resources:**
- [http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/depression/depression.htm](http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/depression/depression.htm) (resources from Modern American Poetry on the Great Depression)
- [http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse/189/3#/20607644](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse/189/3#/20607644) (“Great Depression Story” by Claudia Emerson)
- [http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse/58/2#/20582538](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse/58/2#/20582538) (“Dust Bowl” by Langston Hughes)
- [http://eldritchpress.org/tales/egg.html](http://eldritchpress.org/tales/egg.html) (“The Egg” by Sherwood Anderson)

**Student Resources:**
- [http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse/189/3#/20607644](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse/189/3#/20607644) (“Great Depression Story” by Claudia Emerson)
### Instructional Unit Development
#### Unit Planning For 8th Grade Reading, Writing, and Communicating

| **Assessment:** | Students will identify the language and images of the Great Depression and respond to how those may convey the American Dream in an exit ticket. They may write a response to a question such as “What language and images do authors use to portray America at the time of the Great Depression? How do those impact our perception of the American Dream?” |
| **Differentiation:** (Multiple means for students to access content and multiple modes for student to express understanding.) | The teacher may assign smaller portions of the text to be analyzed or allow students to work in pairs. The student may complete the assignment with teacher guidance. |
| **Extensions for depth and complexity:** | N/A |

| **Critical Content:** | The significance of evidence in the support of claims/assertions The relationship between personal perspectives and the understanding/interpretation of a text Precise meanings and underlying meanings of words in context |
| **Key Skills:** | Present claims and findings Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals Determine the connotation and denotation of words as they are used in a text Connect prior knowledge to new information Compare / contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style |

| **Critical Language:** | Close reading, primary document |

| **Learning Experience #8** |
| **Task Description:** | The teacher may use literary and nonfiction texts related to or written at the time of the Civil Rights era (e.g. “I, Too, Sing America”) so that students can understand that authors intentionally use language and images to convey ideas related to concepts or themes (i.e. the American Dream). [Understanding text, responding to text] |
| **Generalization Connection(s):** | Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text (RWC10-GR.8-S.2-GLE.3-EO.b.i-iii) |
### Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text (RWC10-GR-8.5-2-GLE.2-IQ.3)

#### Teacher Resources:
- [http://www.crmvet.org/poetry/hughes.htm](http://www.crmvet.org/poetry/hughes.htm) (poems by Langston Hughes)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oiCWngPt-L4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oiCWngPt-L4) (“I, too, Sing America” reading by Langston Hughes)
- [http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/i-too](http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/i-too) (“I, Too, Sing America” by Langston Hughes)
- [http://www.crmvet.org/poetry/arandal.htm](http://www.crmvet.org/poetry/arandal.htm) (poems by Dudley Randall)

#### Student Resources:
- [http://www.crmvet.org/poetry/hughes.htm](http://www.crmvet.org/poetry/hughes.htm) (poems by Langston Hughes)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oiCWngPt-L4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oiCWngPt-L4) (“I, too, Sing America” reading by Langston Hughes)
- [http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/i-too](http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/i-too) (“I, Too, Sing America” by Langston Hughes)
- [http://www.crmvet.org/poetry/arandal.htm](http://www.crmvet.org/poetry/arandal.htm) (poems by Dudley Randall)

#### Assessment:
Students may engage in close reading annotation to highlight the language of the literature during or about the Roaring 20's that express the American dream.
Students may compare Hughes’ “I, Too, Sing America” with Whitman’s “I Hear America Singing”

#### Differentiation:
(Multiple means for students to access content and multiple modes for student to express understanding.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (Resources and/or Process)</th>
<th>Expression (Products and/or Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher may assign smaller portions of the text to be analyzed or allow students to work in pairs.</td>
<td>The student may complete the assignment according to teacher instruction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Extensions for depth and complexity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (Resources and/or Process)</th>
<th>Expression (Products and/or Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Critical Content:
- The significance of evidence in the support of claims/assertions
- The relationship between personal perspectives and the understanding/interpretation of a text
- Precise meanings and underlying meanings of words in context

#### Key Skills:
- Present claims and findings
- Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals
- Determine the connotation and denotation of words as they are used in a text
- Connect prior knowledge to new information
- Compare / contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style
### Critical Language:

- Close reading, primary document

### Learning Experience # 9

| **Task Description:**  
| *The teacher may... so that students can...*  
| | The teacher may present contrasting speeches (e.g. Lincoln's “Gettysburg Address,” Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream Speech,” and JFK’s inaugural address”) so that students can understand that authors intentionally use language and images to convey ideas related to concepts or themes (i.e. the American Dream). [*Understanding text, responding to text*]  

| **Generalization Connection(s):**  
| Authors create characters and relationships that cross time periods and places in order to represent timeless themes or universal messages  
| Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text  
| Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text

| **Teacher Resources:**  
| [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons_plans/i-have-a-dream-as-a-work-of-literature/](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons_plans/i-have-a-dream-as-a-work-of-literature/) ("I Have a Dream" as work of literature from PBS)  
| [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_ZgSK9ylbk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_ZgSK9ylbk) (I Have a Dream Speech)  
| [http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihaveadream.htm](http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihaveadream.htm) (I Have a Dream Speech analysis)  
| [http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm](http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm) (Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address)  
| [http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkinaugural.htm](http://www.amERICANrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkinaugural.htm) (JFK’s Inaugural Speech)

| **Student Resources:**  
| [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_ZgSK9ylbk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_ZgSK9ylbk) (I Have a Dream Speech)  
| [http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihaveadream.htm](http://www.amERicanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihaveadream.htm) (I Have a Dream Speech analysis)  
| [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons_plans/i-have-a-dream-as-a-work-of-literature/](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons_plans/i-have-a-dream-as-a-work-of-literature/) ("I Have a Dream” as work of literature from PBS)  
| [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_ZgSK9ylbk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_ZgSK9ylbk) (I Have a Dream Speech)  
| [http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm](http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm) (Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address)  
| [http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkinaugural.htm](http://www.amERICANrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkinaugural.htm) (JFK’s Inaugural Speech)

| **Assessment:**  
| The student will choose a theme/element/belief about the American dream and compare and contrast two speeches messages and interpretations of that theme in a t-chart or similar organizational structure.  
| [http://crmsliteracy.wikispaces.com/Two-column+Notes](http://crmsliteracy.wikispaces.com/Two-column+Notes) (two column notes)

| **Differentiation:**  
| (Multiple means for students to access content and multiple modes for student to express understanding.)  
| **Access** (Resources and/or Process)  
| The teacher may assign a theme and/or speeches.  
| **Expression** (Products and/or Performance)  
| The student may complete the assignment according to the teacher’s instructions.

| **Extensions for depth and complexity:**  
| **Access** (Resources and/or Process)  
| **Expression** (Products and/or Performance)
### Critical Content:
- The significance of evidence in the support of claims/assertions
- The relationship between personal perspectives and the understanding/interpretation of a text
- Precise meanings and underlying meanings of words in context
- Multiple and differing points of view on a given topic
- Details and information about varying time periods based on research and good, relevant evidence

### Key Skills:
- Determine the connotation and denotation of words as they are used in a text
- Recognize that there are multiple points of view on the same topic
- Connect prior knowledge to new information
- Compare / contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style
- Read and comprehend grade level texts of various critical levels.

### Critical Language:
- Speech, civil rights, compare, contrast, theme, interpretation

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### Learning Experience #10

#### Task Description:

*The teacher may... so that students can...*

The teacher may... so that students can understand that authors intentionally use language and images to convey ideas related to concepts or themes (i.e. the American Dream). [*Understanding text, responding to text*]

#### Generalization Connection(s):

Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text. Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text.

#### Teacher Resources:

- [http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/179708](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/179708) ("Immigrants in Our Own Land" by Jimmy Santiago Baca)
- [http://politicalsystems.homestead.com/ParadoxAndDream.html](http://politicalsystems.homestead.com/ParadoxAndDream.html) ("Paradox and Dream" – an essay by John Steinbeck)
## Instructional Unit Development
### Unit Planning For 8th Grade Reading, Writing, and Communicating

**Student Resources:**

- A Year” – article in USA Today) [http://www.becomingminimalist.com/american-dream/](http://www.becomingminimalist.com/american-dream/) ("The American Dream Does Not Cost $130,000/year” – a response to the USA Today article above from “becoming minimalist”)
- [http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/179708](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/179708) ("Immigrants in Our Own Land” by Jimmy Santiago Baca)
- [http://politicalsystems.homestead.com/ParadoxAndDream.html](http://politicalsystems.homestead.com/ParadoxAndDream.html) ("Paradox and Dream” – an essay by John Steinbeck)
- [http://www.becomingminimalist.com/american-dream/](http://www.becomingminimalist.com/american-dream/) ("The American Dream Does Not Cost $130,000/year” – a response to the USA Today article above from “becoming minimalist”)

**Assessment:**

Students will highlight and annotate one of the various texts to demonstrate understanding the language and/or imagery as it relates to the American Dream

**Differentiation:**

(Multiple means for students to access content and multiple modes for student to express understanding.)

**Access (Resources and/or Process)**

The teacher may assign smaller portions of the text to be analyzed or allow students to work in pairs.

**Expression (Products and/or Performance)**

The student may complete the assignment according to teacher instruction.

**Extensions for depth and complexity:**

**Access (Resources and/or Process)**

N/A

**Expression (Products and/or Performance)**

N/A

**Critical Content:**

- The significance of evidence in the support of claims/ assertions
- The relationship between personal perspectives and the understanding/interpretation of a text
- Precise meanings and underlying meanings of words in context

**Key Skills:**

- Present claims and findings
- Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals
- Determine the connotation and denotation of words as they are used in a text
• Connect prior knowledge to new information
• Compare / contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style

Critical Language: Close reading, primary document

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Experience # 11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task Description:</strong> The teacher may present various advertisements and texts from popular culture so that students can understand how the language and idea used to convey the American Dream may influence our everyday lifestyles and decisions. [Understanding text, responding to text]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generalization Connection(s):</strong> Authors create characters and relationships that cross time periods and places in order to represent timeless themes or universal messages. Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text. Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Resources:</strong> [Hyperlinks provided to relevant resources]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Resources:</strong> [Hyperlinks provided to relevant resources]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment:</strong> Students may create their own visual representation of the American Dream. Students may critique an advertisement or popular culture image for language or ideas of the American Dream.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Instructional Unit Development

**Unit Planning For 8th Grade Reading, Writing, and Communicating**

#### Differentiation:
(Multiple means for students to access content and multiple modes for student to express understanding.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (Resources and/or Process)</th>
<th>Expression (Products and/or Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher may assign a theme and/or speeches.</td>
<td>The student may complete the assignment according to the teacher’s instructions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Extensions for depth and complexity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (Resources and/or Process)</th>
<th>Expression (Products and/or Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher may ask students to analyze the impact of differing views on the same theme/element/belief about the American dream.</td>
<td>The student may complete the assignment according to the teacher’s instructions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Critical Content:

- The significance of evidence in the support of claims/assertions
- The relationship between personal perspectives and the understanding/interpretation of a text
- Precise meanings and underlying meanings of words in context
- Multiple and differing points of view on a given topic
- Details and information about varying time periods based on research and good, relevant evidence

#### Key Skills:

- Determine the connotation and denotation of words as they are used in a text
- Recognize that there are multiple points of view on the same topic
- Connect prior knowledge to new information
- Compare / contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style
- Read and comprehend grade level texts of various

#### Critical Language:

- Speech, civil rights, compare, contrast, theme, interpretation

### Learning Experience # 12

#### Task Description:
*The teacher may... so that students can...*

The teacher may introduce the concept of bias and biased language so that students can begin to recognize bias in texts.  
*Understanding text, responding to text*

#### Generalization Connection(s):

Authors create characters and relationships that cross time periods and places in order to represent timeless themes or universal messages  
To demonstrate deep understanding of a topic, writers construct informative or explanatory texts based on a synthesis of diverse and varied information/perspectives  
Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text  
Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text

#### Teacher Resources:

- [https://learnzillion.com/lessons/1926-determine-an-authors-bias](https://learnzillion.com/lessons/1926-determine-an-authors-bias) (Bias lessons)
- [http://www.mhhe.com/mayfieldpub/webtutor/judging.htm](http://www.mhhe.com/mayfieldpub/webtutor/judging.htm) (Judging credibility)
- Texts from throughout the unit
  - [http://politicalsystems.homestead.com/ParadoxAndDream.html](http://politicalsystems.homestead.com/ParadoxAndDream.html) (“Paradox and Dream” – an essay by John Steinbeck)
### Instructional Unit Development
#### Unit Planning For 8th Grade Reading, Writing, and Communicating

**Authors of the Sample:** Michael Badzic, Valery Billig, Madison Fitz, Kelley Rebis, Kara Shroyer, Shelly Wade  
**Course/Grade:** 8th Grade English Language Arts  
**Date Completed:** July 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Student Resources:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Texts from throughout the unit  
http://politicalsystems.homestead.com/ParadoxAndDream.html ("Paradox and Dream" – an essay by John Steinbeck)  
http://www.teenink.com/nonfiction/academic/article/439502/The-American-Dream/ ("The American Dream” student article from Teen Ink)  
http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/06/teenagers-are-losing-confidence-in-the-american-dream/395780/ ("Teenager are Losing Confidence in the American Dream” – article in The Atlantic)  
http://www.nationalreview.com/article/415699/will-american-dream-hold-true-hispanics-michael-barone ("Will the American Dream Hold True for Hispanics” – from the National Review)  
http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/personalfinance/2014/07/04/american-dream/11122015/ ("American Dream Costs $130K A Year” – article in USA Today)  
http://www.becomingminimalist.com/american-dream/ ("The American Dream Does Not Cost $130,000/year” – a response to the USA Today article above from “becoming minimalist”) |  
| **Assessment:** |  
| The student will annotate one of the previous texts studied to indicate bias and write a response commenting on the language that reveals what the author’s bias is toward the subject. |  
| **Differentiation:**  
(Multiple means for students to access content and multiple modes for student to express understanding.) |  
| **Access (Resources and/or Process):**  
The teacher may assign the article and provide a framed essay structure. |  
| **Expression (Products and/or Performance):**  
The student may complete the essay based on an assigned article and/or with a framed structure. |  
| **Extensions for depth and complexity:** |  
| **Access (Resources and/or Process):**  
The teacher may assign the student a specific article that aligns with their beliefs but contains bias. |  
| **Expression (Products and/or Performance):**  
The student may confront their own bias. |  

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"American Dream is Elusive for New Generation” – NY Times article. July 6, 2010  
"The American Dream” student article from Teen Ink  
"Teenager are Losing Confidence in the American Dream” – article in The Atlantic  
"Will the American Dream Hold True for Hispanics” – from the National Review  
"American Dream Costs $130K A Year” – article in USA Today  
"The American Dream Does Not Cost $130,000/year” – a response to the USA Today article above from “becoming minimalist"
### Critical Content:
- The significance of evidence in the support of claims/assertions
- Key words that identify/suggest bias
- The relationship between personal perspectives and the understanding/interpretation of a text
- Precise meanings and underlying meanings of words in context
- Multiple and differing points of view on a given topic
- Text structure and organization for informative/explanatory writing
- The definition of reasoning
- The importance of using standard grammar when writing and speaking

### Key Skills:
- Present claims and findings
- Read for credibility and bias in authors
- Determine the connotation and denotation of words as they are used in a text
- Recognize that there are multiple points of view on the same topic
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through synthesis of content
- Practice and review reasoning to determine if it is reliable
- Determine strengths and weaknesses of their thinking and thinking of others
- Read and comprehend grade level texts of various genres

### Critical Language:
Bias, credibility, explanatory writing, evidence, context, point of view

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### Learning Experience # 13

#### Task Description:
*The teacher may... so that students can...*
The teacher may present and revisit various poems around the topic of the American dream (see previous Learning Experiences) so that students can use figurative language to convey a particular concept or theme. [Producing text]

#### Generalization Connection(s):
Authors create characters and relationships that cross time periods and places in order to represent timeless themes or universal messages
Figurative language and word choice influences a reader’s relationship to the text
Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text

#### Teacher Resources:
- http://www.philosophicalsociety.com/Archives/Three%20Poems%20About%20America.htm"Let%20America%20Be%20America%20Again" ("Let America Be America" by Langston Hughes)
- http://www.ellenbailey.com/themes/patriotism.htm (Poem examples)
- http://literarydevices.net/free-verse/ (What is free verse poetry?)

#### Student Resources:
- http://www.philosophicalsociety.com/Archives/Three%20Poems%20About%20America.htm"Let%20America%20Be%20America%20Again" (Let America Be America by Langston Hughes)
### Learning Experience # 14

**Task Description:**
*The teacher may... so that students can...*

The teacher may introduce a multi-genre project on American Dream concepts that is a synthesis of texts studied so far and topics so that students can use the communicative potential of a multi-genre project. **Teacher note:** This learning experience begins the writing process for the students’ own multi-genre exploration of the American Dream. *Producing text*
### Generalization Connection(s):

- Authors create characters and relationships that cross time periods and places in order to represent timeless themes or universal messages.
- To demonstrate deep understanding of a topic, writers construct informative or explanatory texts based on a synthesis of diverse and varied information/perspectives.
- Societal norms and systems may influence personal beliefs and values that inform the understanding and appreciation of a given text.

### Teacher Resources:

- Resources found in previous learning experiences:
  - [http://www.docstoc.com/docs/104315740/Multi-Genre-Project-Examples](http://www.docstoc.com/docs/104315740/Multi-Genre-Project-Examples) (Multi-genre project exemplars)
  - [http://www.users.muohio.edu/romanots/mgrpapers.htm](http://www.users.muohio.edu/romanots/mgrpapers.htm) (Multi-genre project exemplars)
  - [http://21stcenturyskillsnmteac...sicsts.com/*MULTIGENRE+RESOURCE](http://21stcenturyskillsnmteac...sicsts.com/*MULTIGENRE+RESOURCE) (Multigenre project)
  - [http://www.users.muohio.edu/romanots/Tom_Romano.html](http://www.users.muohio.edu/romanots/Tom_Romano.html) (Tom Romano resources for multi-genre projects)
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DZy5fR-Qvl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DZy5fR-Qvl) (multigenre video example from Downtown Community Television Center, a youth media training program)

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. The trick is to make such a paper hang together” from Blending Genre, Altering Style: Writing Multigenre Papers (2000) (x-xi).

### Student Resources:

- Resources found in previous learning experiences:

### Assessment:

You and a classmate are a documentary team that has been hired to develop a project revealing modern day perspectives on the American Dream. Your project should be a multi-genre representation that relies on words, photographs, and images to express your understanding of the American Dream. Students will receive feedback throughout the writing process. The assessments for this Learning Experience are aimed at providing feedback as they craft their multi-genre project. For this Learning Experience, students will finalize their draft of the multi-genre project.


### Differentiation:

- **Access (Resources and/or Process)**: N/A
- **Expression (Products and/or Performance)**: N/A

### Extensions for depth and complexity:

- **Access (Resources and/or Process)**: N/A
- **Expression (Products and/or Performance)**: N/A
### Critical Content:
- The significance of evidence in the support of claims/assertions
- The relationship between personal perspectives and the understanding/interpretation of a text
- Text structure and organization for informative/explanatory writing
- Details and information about varying time periods based on research and good, relevant evidence
- The importance of using standard grammar when writing and speaking

### Key Skills:
- Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through synthesis of content
- Connect prior knowledge to new information
- Develop and share interpretations of literary works

### Critical Language:
- American dream, photo essay, poet’s notebook, storyboard, news article, comic strip, sheet music, legal brief