



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2001 Volume IV: Race and Ethnicity in Contemporary Art and Literature

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## Through Their Eyes: Video Taping Oral History

Curriculum Unit 01.04.07  
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Today's middle school students are bombarded with stereotyped representations of gender, race, and ethnicity on television and in the movies. The intent of this unit is to create a video documentary that will show positive gender, race and ethnic images of people with whom the students can identify. I work in a K-8 school of approximately 780 students. The majority of the students are African American (56%). The second largest group of students is Hispanic (24%). The remaining students are Caucasian (13%), Asian American (4%), and 3% of the students are of other racial backgrounds. Fifty-one percent of the students are male and forty-nine percent of the students are female. This unit addresses the needs of the students by giving them a meaningful project on which to work. The result is an end product that will be a source of pride to be viewed by all of the students of the school. I intend to teach this unit to my 7th and 8th grade Broadcast Journalism classes but it may be adapted for use with other grade levels and subject areas.

This unit consists of two parts. The first part deals with the subject of race and ethnicity as it relates to stereotyping on television and in movies. It explores some of the ways in which stereotypes have been presented in order to give the teacher and the students background information on the problem.

The second part is on the use of video in school and how it can be used to record oral histories that will combat the negative images of race and ethnicity perpetuated by the broadcast media. The students will create a project in which they will record oral histories of grandparents and other senior citizens that will debunk these stereotypes. They will either interview their own grandparents or some the grandparents who hold monthly meetings at our school. This unit is aligned with the curriculum of the City of New Haven. It will allow the students to acquire the following skills:

1. To understand the issues of stereotyping
2. To acquire competencies necessary in the study of broadcast journalism and technological literacy
3. To gain a general understanding of the technology involved in video production
4. To debate the ethics of video journalism and to make decisions as to what might be included in a video production
5. To debate the benefits of video journalism and learn how video taping oral histories can benefit future generations
6. To understand that video technology has benefits but at the same time can have an effect on

the way others may perceive a race, ethnicity and gender

## Part One - Stereotyping

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### Hegemony

Movies have traditionally promoted the idea of hegemony, (political domination) by telling the folklore of the nation as it related to the Anglo power structure. Movie after movie instilled and reinforced the concept of Manifest Destiny and male dominance by those of Northern European decent. As discussed in our seminar, Race, Gender and Ethnicity conducted by Professor Bryan Wolf of Yale University, this historical view of the American culture in which the people in power, or in the center, were considered to have culture and those on the outside were considered to have no culture is called the Metropole Model. People on the periphery wanted to be assimilated quickly into the metropole, or the center since if you were not part of the culture you were not only on the outside but you were also without power. Of course it was easier for Southern and Eastern Europeans and other groups who looked similar to the Anglo-Americans to become assimilated into the culture than for African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Latin-Americans, and Native-Americans who were excluded on the basis of their looks. Only in recent years has there been a hint in movies that there may be another story that has been suppressed by those who perpetuated the traditional American myths. We see an example of this in the John Sayles movie *Lone Star* where one character has created a Seminole Museum in his home so that the contribution to America by those of both African-American and Native-American origin would not be forgotten. This historical view of the American culture is called the Borderlands Model. This model works on intersections and recognizes that people can have more than one identity. This model acknowledges that culture is everywhere and thus is a more complicated notion of culture. The Borderlands Model acknowledges that everyone has something to contribute. It acknowledges that many influences came into play to create the American Experience.

As a rule, the contributions of those in the periphery or Borderlands are not going to be found in mainstream movies or even in the historical texts. To find these stories you must dig in the archives as well as listen to the oral histories. Just as in the movie *Lone Star* where the grandfather explains the Seminole/African American story to his grandson, stories passed on through family members are the best way to get the true story. Native-American, African-American, and Latino contributions to the culture of the United States have largely been handed down through oral traditions because these stories have been ignored until recently by the history texts and by Hollywood. It is through the oral traditions that we get the real story of the settling of America since, at best, the traditional myth only deals with people of renown and not the everyday person.

Connecticut has its own oral traditions. One such story is that of Cinque and the Amistad. Thirty years ago the story was not widely known, and except for in a few classrooms not even taught in New Haven which played

an important part in the actual events. However, the facts of the story survived until modern times in archives such as the New Haven Historical Society and were kept alive through oral tradition. Finally within the last twenty years or so people have dug in the archives and found the facts. The earliest book that I can find on the Amistad in the New Haven Public Library was published in 1969. Further research has turned up a book called *Slave Ship* (Original Title: *The Long Black Schooner*) by Emma Gelders Steren which was copyrighted 1953 by Scholastic. In talking with colleagues who went to school in New Haven I found that one heard the story from her sixth grade teacher in 1971. The rest had not studied the incident in school. Another colleague, who had not actually studied the Amistad in school, remembered that a mural exists on the wall of Troup Magnet School depicting the event. The school was built in 1925 and judging by the style of the mural, it seems to have been done between 1925 and 1935, possibly as a WPA project. This only proves the point that the story was there, but not in the mainstream until recently. This is most likely because it was part of the Borderlands story and not the Metropole story.

## **Stereotypes**

Stereotyping occurs when television and movies portray people acting in a certain way so as to instantly identify them with a certain gender, race, or ethnic group. *The American Heritage Dictionary* defines "stereotype" as (1) a "conventional, formulaic and usually oversimplified conception, opinion or belief." (2) "A person, group, event, or issue considered to typify or conform to an unvarying pattern or manner, lacking any individuality." Stereotype originally meant a metal printing plate that produced a fixed image. When the word refers to a group of people it means that a fixed image is given of that group. The image is usually negative and based on false judgments that paint every member of the group with the same brush, thus not allowing for individuality. In effect, when media producers stereotype they take away the individual differences that make us all human.

Since their invention, movies and television have perpetuated negative stereotyped images of women as well as racial and ethnic minorities. Subtle and sometimes not so subtle messages are given when the minority character is cast as the bad guy, or at best, as the sidekick while the male of northern European descent is the wise, strong, hero who has the power and makes the important decisions. It is very easy for the broadcast media to fall into the trap of pigeon holing parts for certain groups. For one thing, since television programs and movies are constrained by a limited amount of time for character development, it is a tempting short cut for lazy producers to establish character through the use of stereotypes. This is especially bad because movies and television reach such large numbers of people, especially young people who are highly impressionable. After these negative images are seen several times, the audiences begin to accept them as fact.

In *Teaching Television* by Dorothy G. Singer, Ed.D., Jerome L. Singer, Ph.D., and Diana M. Zuckerman, Ph.D., the authors emphasize the influence that television has on children.

Research studies have shown that television has far more power to influence children's attitudes than may have been previously believed. For example, when children watch programs that portray black people favorably, their attitudes toward blacks become more positive whereas programs that portray black people negatively will increase children's negative attitudes toward them. In another study, 40 percent of the white elementary school children surveyed stated that they learned about black people from television. In an instance such as this, it is impossible to ignore the impact of television on children's beliefs and attitudes.

## **How Gender is Portrayed in the Media**

In most television shows and movies females are portrayed as being weak and in the traditional role of mother and homemaker. They are rarely given roles that show them in powerful leadership positions. The ideal woman in the media is portrayed as being unrealistically skinny, which often causes problems for young women who feel they must try to attain the same body image. In *Teaching Television*, the authors conceded that in recent years, women on TV have been given roles that give them more power and show them to be more intelligent. However, new stereotypes have developed.

The new, more liberated female television character is usually young and beautiful as well as competent. If you compare female and male TV characters, you will find that the females are usually much younger, more attractive, and more likely to use their beauty than their brains.

Men are not totally immune from being stereotyped in the media. Husbands are often portrayed as being henpecked or bumbling Dagwood Bumbstead type nincompoops. At other times, men are shown in the traditional role of father and breadwinner, especially in older movies. There is a scene in the movie *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, where Jimmy Stewart is ridiculed because no one had ever seen a male waiting on tables before.

Elderly people of both sexes do not fare any better. They are shown as dumb and old fashioned. When children grow up with these representations of gender roles they come to believe that men and women are limited to certain roles and occupations. This limits them when they seek job opportunities.

## **How Racial Minorities are Portrayed in the Media**

If racial minorities are seen on television or in the movies at all, they are usually in supporting parts and rarely in the leading roles. The following are common ways in which different racial and ethnic groups are portrayed in the media: African Americans are often portrayed as criminals, uneducated, poor, or in the role of servants. This goes back to the very beginnings of movies. In 1915 D. W. Griffith's, *The Birth of a Nation*, presented the KKK as heroes and Southern blacks as villains.

Asians rarely have leading roles in movies or on television. If they do have a leading role it is the part of a martial arts expert. Usually they are shown to be villains, servants, or detectives such as Charlie Chan.

Due to the popularity of the western, Native Americans have had many roles in the movies and on television. However, they are hardly ever in leading roles and are usually portrayed as savages. If they are shown as civilized they are in the role of the sidekick such as Tonto was to the Lone Ranger. The average American thinks that he or she knows a lot about the Native Americans, however, most of what they know is probably the Hollywood myth.

## **How Ethnic Minorities are Portrayed in the Media**

In view of current events, Arabs are another target of discrimination in the media. If they are not portrayed as terrorists, they are shown as oil sheiks. Even in the Disney movie *Aladdin*, Arabs were shown as flying magic carpets and possessing a Genie in the bottle. Ever since the beginning of the movies, Italians have been portrayed as being Mafia killers, or mustachioed organ grinders with monkeys. It is common to hear their speech patterns exaggerated in imitation.

Mexicans are often seen in bandit roles. If they do get to play a good guy, they play the sidekick. They are

often portrayed as lazy and sleeping under a cactus wearing a huge sombrero.

The list can go on and on to include people of Polish, Russian, and South American descent among others. America is supposed to be the melting pot, but more accurately in the case of movies and television, it is more like a molding form. Those who do not readily fit into the mold of the Northern European image are relegated to secondary roles. Gerard Wilkenson, of the national Indian youth council, wrote in *The Indian Historian* in 1974 in reference to Native Americans but his comment applies to all minorities as portrayed on television and in the movies. "Inaccuracies and stereotypes undermine indigenous languages and cultures because the mainstream media promotes assimilation." Assimilation seems to be one of the goals of movies of the last century, especially westerns. The message that a child gets is that if they do not fit the mold they are inferior.

## Part Two - Using Video in School to Combat Stereotyping

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Too often children learn history through television and movies. Both of these often distort the facts because of the personal agenda of the producers. That agenda may be simply to change facts to make a "better" story or, worse, to promote a political or social bias. Even when accurate, history learned through television or movies at best relates the experiences of great or renowned people of an era. Rarely do these sources relate the experiences and feelings of common people. In this unit the students will videotape oral history interviews of their grandparents. Through the means of oral history interviews the student is afforded the chance to learn how someone they can identify with was affected by the events of an era. There is no better way to learn about history and to set the record straight than by hearing it first hand from someone you know and trust. Hearing about the past from someone who has lived it gives a much more accurate account than television or the movies. Most people of the older generations enjoy passing on the torch by sharing their recollections with young people. Listening to these stories gives the young person a sense of connection to the past and fosters a sense of pride. As an added benefit, the interview builds a bond between the child and the adult.

All of the interviews will be assembled on to one or two tapes to be viewed consecutively. By recording the oral histories of people of African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Caucasian backgrounds, the students will be able to celebrate the diversity between the cultures. They will be able to note that each of the cultures shares common needs and goals. In this way the project will debunk stereotypes perpetuated by movies and television.

Making their own video is an excellent means for students to learn about social issues. The January 1999 issue of *CAREER WORLD* featured a story entitled *Ryan Bank: His Video Makes a Difference*. It tells the story of a seventeen-year-old boy who created a video about homeless people called "Just Another Day" as a class project. He researched, wrote, filmed and produced the video.

In making his award winning video, he learned how to interview, write, and edit. In the article he states that he won't soon forget the impact the homeless video has made on his life. "I was able to break down my stereotypes of homeless people."

In this unit the students will be responsible, with the guidance of the teacher, for compiling a list of questions for the grandparents being interviewed. These questions will explore the person's recollections of life in the neighborhood in times past, family history, and work experience as well as discussions of any prejudice they may have encountered and how they handled it.

By asking questions about gender roles, race, and ethnicity when recording the oral histories of their grandparents, the students will be able to compare what they learn of these first hand experiences to what they see on television and in the movies. It is hoped that when they hear the Borderland versions of what life was like in the past the students will be able to break down the Hollywood stereotypes. Later, when the video is presented to others they too will be able to get a true picture of life in the past.

### **Prepare for the interview**

Before the students begin the interviews the teacher should prepare them by having them research the ethnic makeup of the community in which the person being interviewed lived. This will help the students to formulate meaningful questions. Also, it is important to explain to the students that sometimes people of older generations may come to the interview with some old fashioned misconceptions about people based on their experiences. The student should become an anthropologist. It is the job of the anthropologist to dig for the truth, which may be hidden. Hopefully this will not happen, but the student should be aware that in the course of the interview the person being interviewed, for example, might say something to the effect of, "such an such a group stole our jobs." It is not the interviewers job to argue the point. Instead they can gather some useful insight to the past if they know that group A lived in a certain neighborhood and when group B moved into they neighborhood they were in competition for jobs. Usually this problem can be avoided by preparing the questions in advance. Of course, the object is to allow the grandparents to share the stories of their experiences. The students should explain to the grandparents beforehand that they want to learn about what it is was like growing up in the past. Possible questions that the students may ask could relate to school, work, or daily life. The student should think about what events the person lived through and ask questions about how those events effected them. They should try to draw out stories about these experiences without asking leading questions. The grandparents should be given the questions beforehand. At that time they should be asked if they have pictures or other items that they can show in the interview.

## **Lessons**

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The following lessons incorporate the Language arts skills of Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, Viewing and Research. It is hoped that with the following lessons the students will understand that history is made by the common man and that their parents, grandparents, and neighbors have all contributed to history. The student will be expected to write meaningful questions which will help them understand everyday life in the 20th century as well as some of the major events which affected the daily lives of their relatives. Using those questions, the student will conduct an oral history interview of a grandparent or other senior citizen to gather information about the past. The student will then analyze that information to get a better understanding of the past.

### **Lesson One**

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Title: Friendship's Field

Grade Level/Subject: 7-9; Language Arts and Diversity

Objective(s): to learn about prejudice and stereotyping.

Materials: *Video Friendship's Field*

This video may be obtained from:

Feature Films For Families

P.O. Box 572410

Murray, UT 84157-2410

1-800-326-4598)

Summary of Video:

*Friendship's Field*

Featuring Kate Maberly and Jonathan Hernandez.

Executive producer Forrest s. Baker III

Written and directed by Bruce Neibaur

Director Mathew Williams

This is the story of an eleven year-old Anglo-American girl named Ira and a Mexican boy named Oscar who developed a friendship in spite of their coming from different cultures. In 1965 when Ira's father hired migrant Mexican workers to help on his beet farm many people in the town who held stereotypical views of Mexicans became hostile. Ira, on the other hand, was able to embrace diversity and stood up for her beliefs by befriending Oscar. This video runs 84 minutes and may be shown in two class periods.

### **Activities and Procedures:**

1. Before viewing the movie the teacher should discuss the meaning of the following terms:

- migrant worker
- stereotype
- prejudice
- beliefs

2. The students should use a map to locate Mexico as well as Texas and California and other areas of the United States where migrant workers from Mexico work. It can also be pointed out that other groups besides Mexicans do migrant work and in our area individuals from Puerto Rico work on farms in Branford, Guilford and North Haven as well as in the tobacco fields of Windsor Locks, Connecticut. Some of the students may have



relatives who have worked in these places. Further, it can be pointed out that at one time some African Americans came from the south to work on farms in Connecticut. The students should then locate Puerto Rico, the southern states, and Connecticut.

3. After the movie is viewed, the teacher should lead the class in a discussion about the prejudices that the people in the town in the movie had against the Mexicans. The teacher may ask the students where they think that the people learned these prejudices. If the students do not come up with the suggestion that some of the people of the town may have learned their prejudices from television and movies, the teacher may want to direct the discussion in that direction.

Ask the students what they know about Mexicans and if they know anyone from Mexico.

- If they do not personally know anyone from Mexico, ask them where they learned what they know about Mexicans. Find out if it was from television.
- Have the students make a list of the ethnic groups that they may have seen stereotyped on television and in the movies. Include race and gender stereotypes. After discussing the list, save it for the next lesson.
- The people of the town were afraid of the Mexicans because they were different. Why was this so? Find out if the students have ever been afraid of someone who was different because of looks, language, or physical handicap.
- Lead the class in a discussion of how understanding and friendship can overcome prejudice.

This lesson conforms to the following content standards for grades 5-8. The following standards were taken from the New Haven Public Schools Web Site.

## **Content Standard 5.0**

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### **Viewing**

Students will develop strategic viewing skills by interpreting and constructing meaning from visual resources.

## **Performance Standard 5.1**

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Students will demonstrate strategic viewing skills that ensure success in viewing.

1. Students will view for enjoyment and information
2. Students will reflect, use assessments and feedback, and confer with others to plan for



improvement in viewing.

3. Students will develop confidence and view themselves as a critical viewer.

## **Performance Standard 5.2**

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Students will reflect, use assessments and feedback, and confer with others to plan for improvement in viewing.

1. Students will demonstrate strategic viewing behaviors before viewing. They will:
  - a. Establish a purpose for viewing.
  - b. Use prior knowledge to prepare for the viewing experience.
  - c. Design questions to use in viewing.
  - d. Identify criteria for specific viewing experience.
  - e. Seek information from a variety of viewing sources.
2. Students will demonstrate strategic viewing behaviors during viewing. They will:
  - a. Use graphic organizers to record information.
  - b. Make assumptions and predictions on purpose, tone, theme, and point of view.
  - c. Use active viewing strategies. (Attend to content, message and specific criteria)
  - d. Use technological information sources in an interactive manner.
3. Students will demonstrate strategic viewing behaviors after viewing. They will:
  - a. Identify purpose, tone, theme, and point of view.
  - b. Demonstrate viewing comprehension by interpreting information and responding critically.

## Performance Standard 5.3

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Students will demonstrate performance standards 5.1 and 5.2 through a wide variety of viewing tasks

1. Students will demonstrate effective viewing behaviors before, during and after visual activities.
2. Students will complete assigned viewing tasks.
3. Students will use graphic organizers or other visual aides to record information.
4. Students will view pictures, graphs, maps, videos and other sources relating to areas being studied.
5. Students will demonstrate visual comprehension by predicting, answering questions and summarizing.

## Lesson Two

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Title: The New Kids in School

Grade Level/Subject: 7-9; Language Arts and Diversity

Overview: This lesson involves role playing, writing in character, and presentation to the class. Students will visualize themselves as an outsider and write about their experience as being the student who is "different."

Purpose: The students will see how they observe and sometimes stereotype, or judge others by behavior and appearance.

Objective(s): This lesson will help students become more tolerant of others. It will also help them to become better writers.

Materials: Imagination, writing implements, and a video camera.

Activities and Procedures:

1. Using the list of ethnic groups made in the first lesson, ask the students to pick an ethnic group other than their own from the list. Using the library and the Internet, have the students research the culture and customs of this group.
2. Ask the students pretend that they are a boy or girl of this ethnic group and have them visualize what it might be like as a new student in your school. Explain to the class that this is a very unusual day in that today we have four new students, all of different backgrounds who have

joined the class. Have the "new students" and the other students role play what it might be like for those students that first day in the classroom. After the students have been role playing for several minutes ring a bell simulating the end of the period. The students will then go on to the next "class" Pick another four "new students" to role play the first day in gym, at lunch, or on the bus. Depending upon how many students you have in the class, you may have to think of other school situations for the "new students" until everyone has had a chance to role play a new student. Encourage the actors to really get into their roles.

3. After each student has had a turn to play a new student, instruct the students to return to their desks and write about the "first day of school" experience from the point of view of the character they were pretending to be.

4. After sufficient time for writing, have the students to meet in small groups to read their writing to each other.

5. Each group should then tape a "new student interview." The group should choose a person to be interviewed about how they felt being from a different culture and being new at school. The group should also select a person to conduct the interview, and a person to operate the video camera.

Summary: This activity helps students to see what it is like to be "different" and gives them a chance to experience life from a different perspective. It also gives them the experience necessary to take part in the next lesson which will be conducting real interviews.

This lesson conforms to the following performance standards for grades 5-8. The following standards were taken from the New Haven Public Schools Web Site.

## **Content Standard 2.0**

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### **Writing**

Students will progress along a developmental continuum as they become proficient writers.

## Performance Standard 2.1

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Students will develop strategic writing skills that ensure successful communication.

1. Students will organize the content of their writing and demonstrate contextual understandings.
2. Students will use the conventions of acceptable, standard English -- i.e. correct word use and punctuation.
3. Students will reflect on their writing, incorporate feedback and assessments, and confer with others to develop plans for improvement.
4. Students will develop confidence and view themselves as effective writers.

## Performance Standard 2.2

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Students will demonstrate strategic writing behaviors before, during and after specific writing tasks.

- A. Students will demonstrate effective strategies before writing. They will:
  1. Establish a purpose for writing.
  2. Determine and plan for a specific audience.
  3. Establish tone, theme, point of view, and type of writing.
  4. Use prior knowledge as a basis for writing.
  5. Design questions that focus the selection to be written.
  6. Use pre-writing strategies such as brainstorming, webbing and graphic organizers.
  7. Make lists of personal experiences, create summary charts, outline materials, and make timelines of events.
  8. Locate materials needed for writing.
- B. Students will demonstrate effective strategies while writing. They will:
  1. Write a first draft.
  2. Use holistic criteria to assess their organization, elaboration and fluency.
  3. Plan ways to revise.
  4. Add descriptive language (adjectives, synonyms, clarifying vocabulary).
  5. Elaborate on ideas; give examples; use metaphor and analogy to enhance writing.
  6. Check for logical sequence, clear content, coherency, style, and consistent verb tense.
  7. Use correct spelling, mechanics, punctuation and grammar.
  8. Use appropriate paragraphing, formatting and manuscript style.
  9. Include CMT editing standards for grades 5 through 8 and CAPT editing standards for grade 8

10. Write legibly -- either by hand or on a word processor.
  11. Complete the final edits, and submit their final draft.
- C. Students will demonstrate effective post-writing strategies. They will:
1. Reread their work.
  2. Exhibit and/or publish their writing piece.
  3. Develop confidence in writing and view themselves as effective writers.
  4. Reflect, use feedback and assessment and develop plans for improvement.

## Performance Standard 2.3

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Students will demonstrate performance standards 2.1 and 2.2 through a variety of writing tasks.

1. Use the entire procedure for process writing: writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.
2. Participate in experiences that encourage writing across the curriculum.
3. Use technology that supports and enhances effective writing.

## Lesson Three

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Title: Through Their Eyes: Video Taping Oral History

Grade Level/Subject: 7-9; Language Arts and Diversity

Overview: For this activity the students will videotape an oral history.

Purpose: To create a history based on the Borderlands Model

Objectives(s): The students will conduct oral histories of their grandparents or another senior citizen to see that history is made by the common person. The students will gain first hand knowledge of what it was like to live when their grandparents were young.

Materials: writing implements, video camera, video tape.

Activities and Procedures:

1. Review the concept of stereotypes with the students. Go back to the list of stereotypes seen on television and in the movies made by the students for the first lesson.
2. Discuss with the students the reasons why the media uses stereotypes
  - a. Quick identification of a group.
  - b. It is easier to use a stereotype than to write character development.
  - c. Prejudice
3. Explain to the students that they are going to make a video and that their goal is to debunk the stereotypes that they had on their list. For example, if the stereotype is that men and women have certain gender roles they may ask their grandfather if he ever helped to take care of the children or to do the laundry. They may ask their grandmother if she ever fixed things around the house or if she went to college. Their goal is to dig into the experiences of their grandparents to debunk the stereotypes they have learned in the movies and on television. Or they may interview someone who is a different race or from a different ethnic background from them to learn about

their culture. Find out what is similar about their culture, what is different.

4. A variation is to make a video interviewing someone who is from a different culture or of a different race to find out what is similar and what is different between the student's culture and that of the person being interviewed. Again, the goal is to break the stereotypes.

5. Make a list of questions that they want to ask the person being interviewed. If they are interviewing an older person, they may wish to ask questions about what it was like growing up. The following are some possible questions they may put on their lists. What was school like? What was the home life like? What modern technology that we have today didn't people have then? How did people make a living? What were stores like?

6. Give the questions to the person being interviewed ahead of time so that they may have time to think about them. Ask the person being interviewed if they have any pictures or other things that they can bring to the interview.

7. Make sure that the camera equipment is ready before conducting the interview. Check to see that the camera has a charged battery or have an extension cord and an AC power supply ready. Make sure that you have video tape.

8. Decide on the background and have lighting available if necessary.

9. When the interview begins, introduce the person being interviewed. Explain to the audience that you are conducting an oral history for the purpose of either learning about the past or learning about another culture.

10. Ask the questions in a clear voice. Let the person being interviewed explain their answers in their own words.

11. After the interview is over view the tape. Edit it to take out any mistakes or "dead air" but do not edit it to change the meaning of the interview.

12. Make a copy of the tape to give to the person being interviewed. Share the tape with others.



This lesson conforms to the following performance standards for grades 5-8. The following standards were taken from the New Haven Public Schools Web Site.

## **Content Standard 3.0**

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### **Speaking**

Students will develop strategic speaking skills that ensure success in verbal communication.

### **Performance Standard 3.1**

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Students will demonstrate strategic speaking skills in order to ensure success in verbal communication

1. Students will speak using acceptable, standard English. (e.g. vocabulary and grammar)
2. Students will demonstrate appropriate language of social interaction skills.
3. Students will demonstrate appropriate language and literacy skills.
4. Students will demonstrate appropriate language and thinking skills.
5. Students will reflect, use feedback and assessments and confer with others to develop plans for improvement.
6. Students will develop confidence and view self as an effective speaker.

### **Performance Standard 3.2**

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Students will demonstrate effective speaking strategies prior to speaking tasks. They will:

1. Establish a purpose for speaking.
2. Identify and plan for audience.
3. Use prior knowledge to plan for speaking.
4. Design questions to prepare for speaking.
5. Use graphic organizers that will organize speech.
6. Organize speech in logical, sequential order.
7. Think and plan before responding.

8. Formulate a list of relevant questions that might be asked by an audience and prepare for respond.

Students will demonstrate effective strategies while speaking. They will:

1. Demonstrate confidence and poise as a speaker.
2. Look at the audience.
3. Speak in clear, audible voice.
4. Present speech in logical, sequential order.
5. Use appropriate and meaningful gestures, expressions, props, etc.

## Teacher's Bibliography

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## Video

*African-American Cinema I* (1999) Library of Congress and Smithsonian Video: VHS Tape (Oscar Micheaux's *Within Our Gates*. Unseen for 75 years. This was a response to D. W. Griffith's *A Birth of A Nation*.)

*That's Black Entertainment: African-American Contributions in Film and Music 1903-1944* VHS ~ (A two part video series that gives an overview of Blacks in film from the early 1900's to the 1940's.)

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(A good discussion of how race is portrayed in the media.)

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