



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2000 Volume IV: Ethnicity and Dissent in American Literature and Art

Using Children's Literature and Art to Examine the African-American Resistance to Injustice

Guide for Curriculum Unit 00.04.09

by Jean E. Sutherland

This unit uses both children's literature and various works of art to help students better understand that their perception of helpless African-American victims meekly submitting to an unjust system is not a full or accurate one. They will become familiar with the presence of a forceful resistance that existed in the African-American community, beginning with the period of slavery up until the present. Special emphasis will be placed on the role played by families and seemingly ordinary people in facing the struggle. A number of books, works of art, and films present a look at these different periods in African-American history. Students will uncover the roles played by these individuals and groups of people involved in the struggles of each period. A multidisciplinary approach is used.

Though designed for a third grade classroom, material in this unit is suitable for students through middle school.

(Recommended for Reading, Language Arts, and Social Studies, grades 3-6.)

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