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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute

2005 Volume II: The Challenge of Intersecting Identities in American Society: Race/Ethnicity, Gender and Nation

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## **Female Adolescent Identity Formation: Am I Powerful or Powerless?**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 05.02.02

by Dana M. Buckmir

The purpose of this unit is to utilize the literature in order to model voice, inspire the reader through perseverance, and encourage the student to make a connection outside himself, in other words to view the larger picture as an attempt to gain perspective. This unit will explore the "coming of age" process experienced by adolescent girls on their journey from children to adulthood. It will focus on the middle years or limbo period in which girls decide who they want to become as women or rather, society decides who they have to become because they are women. I will present the idea that during adolescence when girls mature into women they experience an identity crisis which inevitably alters their sense of self; that is it empowers or diminishes the way they view themselves and the world around them. I chose a topic concerning gender because as a woman I am affected by gender in my daily interactions, as an English teacher there are many themes related to gender present in the literature, and as an educator there are numerous lessons that the students can learn from the female experience that are in turn applicable to the human experience.

(Recommended for Language Arts, grades 7-12.)

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